

JEWISH FICTIONAL LETTERS
FROM HELLENISTIC EGYPT

WRITINGS FROM THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD

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JEWISH FICTIONAL LETTERS FROM HELLENISTIC EGYPT

The Epistle of Aristeas and Related Literature

Texts and Translations with Notes and Introductions by

L. Michael White and G. Anthony Keddie



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To the memory of Abraham Johannes Malherbe
and
Phyllis Melton Malherbe

Contents

Acknowledgements	ix
Preface.....	xi
Abbreviations.....	xiii
 The Social Reality of Fictional Letters	 1
 1. The Epistle of Aristeas	 31
1.1. Introduction	31
1.2. Genre and Form: An Outline with Epistolary Features	43
1.3. Greek Text and English Translation with Annotations	55
 2. The Early Reception of the Epistle of Aristeas.....	 173
2.1. Philo of Alexandria's Version of the Legend	173
2.2. Josephus's Paraphrase of the Epistle to Aristeas	191
2.3. Related Jewish <i>Testimonia</i> : Aristeas, Demetrius, and Hecataeus	203
2.4. The Aristeas Legend in Early Christian Writers	237
 3. Related Epistolary Literature	 275
3.1. 2 Maccabees: The Letters	275
3.2. Eupolemus: The Solomonic Correspondence	303
3.3. Additions to Greek Esther: The Letters	317
3.4. 3 Maccabees: The Letters	337
3.5. Jewish Inscriptions and Papyri from Ptolemaic Egypt	353
 Appendix: The Ptolemaic Rulers of Egypt	 367
 Bibliography	 369
Index Verborum Graecorum	393
Index of Ancient Sources.....	431

Index of Modern Scholars451

Index of Subjects.....455

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- ♦ Bradley F. King compiled scholarship and testimonia on the fragments of Aristobulus [BKF].
- ♦ Bartolo A. Natoli prepared the introduction to Josephus's paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeas and translated the Josephan text [BAN].

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Preface

This volume evolved from a graduate seminar on Epistolography and Rhetoric in early Jewish and Christian literature taught at The University of Texas (Austin). The members of the seminar were all doctoral students in classics or ancient Mediterranean religions. Part of our goal was to examine the ways that epistolary style and rhetoric coming out of the Hellenistic-Roman literary tradition influenced both Jewish and Christian literary habits. Consequently, the burgeoning of new scholarship in the classical fields, as well as the tradition of epistolary studies in the New Testament and related fields, provided the research background for new approaches and studies.

When the seminar turned to examples in Hellenistic Jewish literature, and especially the Epistle of Aristeas, three points immediately stood out: first, that the Greek text of the Epistle of Aristeas remains very inaccessible for contemporary study. In fact, the last critical edition, that of Thackeray published in the second edition of Swete's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, appeared just over a century ago. Second, it became apparent that most of the available translations over the last century are badly out of date and give little attention to its classical or Hellenistic literary context and, third, that most scholarship on the Epistle of Aristeas ignores or denies its epistolary qualities. In addition, we noted the proliferation of "embedded" letters as a prominent feature of Hellenistic Jewish historiographical literature of the second and first centuries BCE. This volume came about, therefore, as an effort to make these examples of Jewish fictional letters more accessible for study both in Greek and in English translation, with introductions and notes. Other than myself, the members of the seminar were Megan L. Case, Michael A. Flexsenhar III, G. Anthony Keddie, Bradley F. King, and Bartolo A. Natoli. All have contributed materially to this volume from the historical introductions to careful analysis of the various texts. I wish to thank all of them for their help.

G. Anthony Keddie, who studied at Yale Divinity School before coming to UT, has served as coauthor and editorial assistant for this volume. His contributions have been significant, as reflected in his recent publications on both the Eupolemus letters and 3 Maccabees, for which he also produced the translations here. The new Greek text and the translation of the Epistle of Aristeas are my own. The remainder of the Greek texts have been adapted as noted from the critical editions indicated. All other translations are my own unless otherwise noted. Thanks are also due to Bradley F. King, who compiled all the indices for the final volume, with a significant contribution by Alexandra Elizondo in assembling the Greek *index verborum* for the Epistle of Aristeas.

I also want to offer special thanks to David Konstan, Professor Emeritus of Classics at Brown University, now Professor at New York University, and past chair of the WGRW Editorial Board, who served as volume editor for this work. An outstanding classicist, David was gracious enough to lend his considerable knowledge of Hellenistic philosophical texts as well as Alexandrian poetry to this project. He gave the text and translation careful attention and offered numerous suggestions for correction and improvement. For his efforts, I am most grateful, and the translation, as a result, is far better.

Since the completion of the penultimate draft of this volume (2015), and while it was in the extensive editing process, one major new study of the Epistle of Aristeas appeared in print: the important new commentary by Benjamin G. Wright III, *The Letter of Aristeas: Aristeas to Philocrates on the Translation of the Law of the Jews* (Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015). The present text and translation were produced independently of Wright's. Moreover, because the focus of the present work is primarily on the literary character of the text as a work of epistolary fiction and on its Greek linguistic background, it was decided not to attempt an exhaustive comparison with Wright's translation and commentary. Each approach will undoubtedly yield distinctive insights on the text and its historical and literary context. We encourage interested readers to compare the translations in light of the Greek text, which is made available here, at long last, in an accessible form.

LMW
Roma, *Da Fortunato*
2016

Abbreviations

1s	first-person singular
3pl	third-person plural
3s	third-person singular

Primary Sources

Add Esth	Additions to Esther
<i>Abr.</i>	Philo, <i>De Abrahamo</i>
<i>Adul. amic.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur</i>
<i>Aet.</i>	Philo, <i>De aeternitate mundi</i>
<i>Agr.</i>	Philo, <i>De agricultura</i>
Aris. Ex.	Aristeas the Exegete
<i>Att.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>
<i>A.J.</i>	Josephus, <i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>
<i>Alex.</i>	Callixenus of Rhodes, <i>Peri Alexandreias</i>
<i>Amic.</i>	Cicero, <i>De amicitia</i>
<i>Ant. rom.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates romanae</i>
<i>Anth.</i>	Vettius Valens, <i>Anthologiarum libri ix</i>
Anth. Pal.	Anthologia Palatina
<i>Apol.</i>	Tertullian, <i>Apologeticus</i>
<i>Arat. et Eud.</i>	Hipparchus, <i>In Arati et Eudoxi phaenomena commentariorum libri tres</i>
Aris. Ex.	Aristeas the Exegete
<i>Arist.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Aristides</i>
b.	Babylonian Talmud
B. Bat.	Baba Batra
<i>Bacch.</i>	Euripides, <i>Bacchae</i>
<i>Bel.</i>	Philo of Byzantium, <i>Belopoeica</i>
<i>Bibl.</i>	Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i>
<i>Bibl. hist.</i>	Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i>

<i>B.J.</i>	Josephus, <i>Bellum judaicum</i>
<i>Brut.</i>	Cicero, <i>Brutus</i>
<i>C. Ap.</i>	Josephus, <i>Contra Apionem</i>
<i>Carm.</i>	Pythagoras, <i>Carmen aureum</i>
<i>Ceb. Tab.</i>	Cebetis Tabula
<i>Cels.</i>	Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i>
<i>Cher.</i>	Philo, <i>De cherubim</i>
<i>Chron.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i> ; Hippolytus, <i>Chronicon</i>
<i>Comm. Matt.</i>	Origen, <i>Commentarium in evangelium Matthaei</i>
<i>Comp.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De compositione verborum</i>
<i>Conf.</i>	Philo, <i>De confusione linguarum</i>
<i>Contempl.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita contemplativa</i>
<i>Cult. fem.</i>	Tertullian, <i>De cultu feminarum</i>
<i>Cyr.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Cyropaedia</i>
<i>De eloc.</i>	Pseudo-Demetrius, <i>De elocutione</i>
<i>De fluv.</i>	Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>De fluviis</i>
<i>De mus.</i>	Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>De musica</i>
<i>Decal.</i>	Philo, <i>De decalogo</i>
<i>Deipn.</i>	Athenaeus, <i>Deipnosophistae</i>
<i>Dem.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De Demosthene</i>
<i>Descr.</i>	Pausanias, <i>Graeciae descriptio</i>
<i>Deus</i>	Philo, <i>Quod Deus sit immutabilis</i>
<i>Dial.</i>	Justin Martyr, <i>Dialogus cum Tryphone</i>
<i>Dian.</i>	Callimachus, <i>In Dianam</i>
<i>Diatr.</i>	Epictetus, <i>Diatribai</i>
<i>Din.</i>	Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De Dinarcho</i>
<i>Ecl.</i>	Stobaeus, <i>Eclogae</i>
<i>Ekl.</i>	George Syncellus, <i>Ekloge chronographias</i>
<i>Ep.</i>	<i>Epistulae (Epistles)</i>
<i>Ep. Afr.</i>	Origen, <i>Epistula ad Africanum</i>
<i>Exil.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De exilio</i>
<i>Fact.</i>	Valerius Maximus, <i>Factorum et dictorum memorabilium libri ix</i>
<i>Fam.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad familiares</i>
<i>Fin.</i>	Cicero, <i>De finibus</i>
<i>Flacc.</i>	Philo, <i>In Flaccum</i>
<i>Form. ep.</i>	Pseudo-Demetrius, <i>Formae epistolicae</i>
<i>Frat. amor.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De fraterno amore</i>
<i>Fug.</i>	Philo, <i>De fuga et inventione</i>

GEA	Greek Esther A
GEB	Greek Esther B (LXX Esther)
GEL	Lucianic Greek Esther
<i>Geogr.</i>	Strabo, <i>Geographica</i>
<i>Haer.</i>	Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses</i>
<i>Her.</i>	Philo, <i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i>
<i>Hippoc. aphor.</i>	Galen, <i>Hippocratis aphorismi et Galeni in eos commentarii</i>
<i>Hist.</i>	Polybius, <i>Historiae</i> ; Thucydides, <i>Historiae</i>
<i>Hist. Alex.</i>	Quintus Curtius Rufus, <i>Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis</i>
<i>Hist. eccl.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>
<i>Hist. rom.</i>	Dio Cassius, <i>Historiae romanae</i>
<i>Hypoth.</i>	Philo, <i>Hypothetica</i>
<i>In Hippocr.</i>	Apollonius of Citium, <i>In Hippocratis de articulis commentarius</i>
<i>Ios.</i>	Philo, <i>De Iosepho</i>
<i>Jov.</i>	Callimachus, <i>In Jovem</i>
LAB	Liber antiquitatum biblicarum
<i>Leg.</i>	Cicero, <i>De legibus</i> ; Philo, <i>Legum allegoriae</i> ; Plato, <i>Leges</i>
<i>Legat.</i>	Philo, <i>Legatio ad Gaium</i>
<i>Liber de phil.</i>	Arius Didymus, <i>Liber de philosophorum sectis</i>
LXX	Septuagint
<i>Lyc.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Lycurgus</i>
m.	Mishnah
<i>Mem.</i>	Xenophon, <i>Memorabilia</i>
<i>Mens.</i>	Epiphanius of Salamis, <i>De mensuris et ponderibus</i>
<i>Migr.</i>	Philo, <i>De migratione Abrahami</i>
<i>Mor.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Moralia</i>
<i>Mort.</i>	Philodemus, <i>De morte</i>
<i>Mos.</i>	Philo, <i>De vita Mosis</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
<i>Mut.</i>	Philo, <i>De mutatione nominum</i>
<i>Nat.</i>	Pliny the Elder, <i>Naturalis historia</i>
<i>Nic.</i>	Pseudo-Scymnus, <i>Ad Nicomedem regem</i>
<i>Off.</i>	Cicero, <i>De officiis</i>
OL	Old Latin
<i>Opif.</i>	Philo, <i>De opificio mundi</i>
<i>Or.</i>	Libanius, <i>Oratio</i> ; Themistius, <i>Orationes</i>

<i>Paean Delph.</i>	Limenius, <i>Paean Delphicus ii</i>
<i>Phoc.</i>	Nepos, <i>Phocion</i>
<i>Praep. ev.</i>	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio evangelica</i>
<i>Prom</i>	Aeschylus, <i>Prometheus vincitus</i>
<i>Protr.</i>	Clement of Alexandria, <i>Protrepticus</i>
<i>Pss. Sol.</i>	Psalms of Solomon
<i>QE</i>	Philo, <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum</i>
<i>Quaest. hom.</i>	Porphyry, <i>Quaestiones homericae</i>
<i>Re eques.</i>	Xenophon, <i>De re equestri</i>
<i>Reg. imp. apophth.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata</i>
<i>Rep.</i>	Cicero, <i>De republica</i>
<i>Rer. nat.</i>	Lucretius, <i>De rerum natura</i>
<i>Resp.</i>	Plato, <i>Respublica</i>
<i>Sacr.</i>	Philo, <i>De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i>
<i>Sanh.</i>	Sanhedrin
<i>Sent.</i>	Pseudo-Phocylides, <i>Sententiae</i>
<i>Sent. Syr. Men.</i>	Sentences of the Syriac Menander
<i>Sib. Or.</i>	Sibylline Oracles
<i>Somn.</i>	Philo, <i>De somniis</i>
<i>Spec.</i>	Philo, <i>De specialibus legibus</i>
<i>Strat.</i>	Polyaenus, <i>Strategemata</i>
<i>Strom.</i>	Clement, <i>Stromateis</i>
[<i>Subl.</i>]	Longinus, <i>De sublimitate</i>
<i>T. 12 Patr.</i>	Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs
<i>T. Job</i>	Testament of Job
<i>T. Levi</i>	Testament of Levi
<i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i>	Targum Pseudo-Jonathan
<i>TGC</i>	Cornutus, <i>Theologiae Graecae compendium</i>
<i>Theat.</i>	Plato, <i>Theatetus</i>
<i>Var. hist.</i>	Aelian, <i>Varia historia</i>
<i>Vesp.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Vespasianus</i>
<i>Vir. ill.</i>	Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i>
<i>Virt.</i>	Philo, <i>De virtutibus</i>
<i>Virt. mor.</i>	Plutarch, <i>De virtute morali</i>
<i>Vit.</i>	Josephus, <i>Vita</i>
<i>Vit. X orat.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae decem oratorum</i>
<i>Vit. phil.</i>	Diogenes Laertius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i>
<i>Vulg.</i>	Vulgate
<i>Yad.</i>	Yadayim

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- AB Anchor Bible
- ABD Freedman, David Noel, ed. *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
- Aeg *Aegyptus: Rivista italiana di egiptologia e di papirologia*
- AGJU Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
- AJC Ancient Judaism and Christianity
- AJP *American Journal of Philology*
- AJSR *Association for Jewish Studies Review*
- ALGHJ Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums
- ANF Roberts, Alexander, and James Donaldson, eds. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*. 10 vols. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature, 1885–1887.
- ANRW *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. Part 2, *Principat*. Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–.
- APF Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete

APOT	Charles, R. H., ed. <i>The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament</i> . 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1913.
AWEAT	<i>Archiv für wissenschaftliche Erforschung des Alten Testaments</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BASOP	<i>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i>
BGU	Berliner Griechische Urkunden
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BIOSCS	<i>Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BSGRT	Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CahRB	Cahiers de la Revue biblique
CBP	Cahiers de Biblia Patristica
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
CCM	<i>Circe de clásicos y modernos</i>
CCWJWC	Cambridge Commentaries on the Writings of the Jewish and Christian World 200 BC to AD 200
CdE	<i>Chronique d’Égypte</i>
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
CGLC	Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics
CIJ	Frey, Jean-Baptiste, ed. <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum</i> . Rev. ed. 2 vols. New York: Ktav, 1975.
CPJ	Tcherikover, Victor, Alexander Fuks, and Menahem Stern, eds. <i>Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum</i> . 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957–1964.
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCT	Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition
EC	<i>Early Christianity</i>
EDEJ	Collins, John J., and Daniel C. Harlow, eds. <i>The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism</i> . Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

<i>EncJud</i>	Skolnik, Fred, and Michael Berenbaum, eds. <i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i> . 2nd ed. 22 vols. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007.
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>FGrH</i>	Jacoby, Felix. <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Leiden: Brill, 1954–1964.
<i>FHG</i>	Müller, Karl. <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum collegit, disposuit, notis et prolegomenis illustravit, indicibus instruxit</i> . 5 vols. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1841–1872.
<i>GCS</i>	Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
<i>GR</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>HCS</i>	Hellenistic Culture and Society
<i>HDR</i>	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
<i>Hen</i>	<i>Henoch</i>
<i>Hesperia</i>	<i>Hesperia: Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens</i>
<i>HNT</i>	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HS</i>	Hellenistische Studien
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>HUCM</i>	Monographs of the Hebrew Union College
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> . Editio Minor. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1924–.
<i>IGA</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae Aegypti</i> . Edited by Evaristo Breccia. 2 vols. Cairo, 1911. Repr., Chicago: Ares, 1976–1978.
<i>IGP</i>	Strack Max L., ed. <i>Inscriptiones Graecae Ptolemaicae: Sammlung Griechischer Ptolemäer-Inschriften</i> . Berlin, 1897. Repr., Chicago: Ares, 1976.
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSHRZ</i>	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods Supplement Series

JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSP	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LSJ	Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996.
MGWJ	<i>Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
NCLS	Nottingham Classical Literature Studies
NewDocs	Horsley, Greg H. R., and Stephen Llewelyn, eds. <i>New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity</i> . North Ryde, NSW: The Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, Macquarie University, 1981–.
NIB	Keck, Leander E., ed. <i>The New Interpreter's Bible</i> . 12 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994–2004.
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OCD	Hornblower, Simon, and Antony Spawforth, eds. <i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> . 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
OGI	Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. <i>Orientis Graeci Inscriptio-nes Selectae</i> . 2 vols. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1903–1905.
OTP	Charlesworth, James H., ed. <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> . 2 vols; New York: Doubleday, 1983–1985.
PAPS	<i>Proceedings of the American Philological Society</i>
PAST	Pauline Studies
PG	Migne, Jacques-Paul, ed. <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> [= <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca</i>]. 162 vols. Paris: Migne, 1857–1886.
Phil	<i>Philologus</i>
PhilSup	Philologus Supplement Series

PSI	Da papiri della Società italiana
PW	Wissowa, Georg, and Wilhelm Kroll, eds. <i>Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> . 50 vols. in 84 parts. Stuttgart: Metzler and Druckenmüller, 1894–1980.
RBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
RCT	Routledge Classical Translations
REG	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
RivB	<i>Rivista biblica italiana</i>
RUSCH	Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities
SB	Preisigke, Friedrich, et al., eds. <i>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten</i> . Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1915–.
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SC	Sources chrétiennes
ScrHier	Scripta Hierosolymitana
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SGPI [=IGP 1]	Strack Max L., ed. <i>Inscriptiones Graecae Ptolemaicae: Sammlung Griechischer Ptolemäer-Inschriften</i> . Berlin, 1897; repr. Chicago: Ares, 1976.
SIG	Dittenberger, Wilhelm. <i>Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum</i> . 3rd ed. 4 vols. Leipzig: Hirzel, 1915–1924.
SJOT	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
SPhiloA	<i>Studia Philonica Annual</i>
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum/Studies and Texts in Antiquity and Christianity
StPatr	Studia Patristica
StPB	Studia post-biblica
SVTG	Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum
SVF	Arnim, Hans Friedrich August von. <i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> . 4 vols. Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–1924.
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TCS	Text-Critical Studies
TED	Translations of Early Documents

TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TSK	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
UPZ	Wilcken, Ulrich. <i>Urkunden der Ptolemäer Zeit</i> . 2 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927–1935.
VAWAmst	Verhandelingen der Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VCSup	Vigiliae Christianae Supplement Series
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
WGRWSup	Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series
YCS	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

The Social Reality of Fictional Letters

Of all the literary forms that were current in the Roman period, the familiar letter appears to have altered least in the course of its descent to us.

— Peter White, *Cicero in Letters* (2010, 3)

Letters provide a unique window on the ancient world, with a degree of immediacy and pathos not found in other types of literature, even when they are essentially fictional. This fundamental observation marks an important turn in recent scholarship and is central to this study of the Epistle of Aristeas and related Jewish literature. This volume offers a collection of the original texts in Greek, with translation, introduction, and notes. At center stage stands the Epistle of Aristeas (section 1), a legendary account of the origins of the Septuagint. Further evidence of its popularity and literary importance is shown by its reception in the ancient world, as reflected in the *testimonia* literature (section 2), especially from Philo, Josephus, and early Christian writers. Section 3 presents examples of embedded letters from several other Jewish texts of the late Hellenistic period, including 2 Maccabees, the Solomon letters of Eupolemus, the Additions to Greek Esther, and 3 Maccabees. All of these texts rely on the Septuagint and show direct connections to Alexandria. That these Hellenistic writers chose to employ letters as such a prominent means of expression evinces the complex interplay between their Jewish heritage and their social and cultural location. Meanwhile, all these letters, in one way or another, bridge the spatial gap between diaspora and homeland. To see these elements in the Greek is one of the best ways to encounter their experience firsthand.

“Aristeas” and Hellenistic Jewish Letters

Aristeas to Philocrates. ... I have attempted to give a clear exposition of the matter for you, since I perceive what a disposition you possess for love of learning.

— Epistle of Aristeas §1

The ancient Greek text known as the Epistle of Aristeas tells the story of how the Jewish scriptures came to be translated into Greek in Alexandria at the behest of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 BCE). The story was widely known in the early Jewish and Christian world. Philo knew it and says that still in his day the event was celebrated annually on Pharos.¹ Josephus gives an abridged version of the text; his version makes the Greek more Attic than the original, but it is clearly derived from the same tradition.² Christian writers from Irenaeus to Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Augustine, and Epiphanius, to name but a few, epitomized or enlarged the story; they filled in the gaps and enhanced its miraculous nature—and with it the emerging significance of the Septuagint as the Christian version of the “Old Testament.”

In modern scholarship, however, the historical origins of the Septuagint (LXX) have generally been treated as its sole import, even though the story of the translation itself is actually only a small part of the text (§§301–308) and very near the end. The bulk of the story concerns the preparations (or “backstory”) for the translation. It begins with Ptolemy II consulting his advisers, notably Demetrius of Phalerum, about acquiring translations of the Jewish scriptures for his library. Demetrius then sends a memo in regard to these requests (Ep. Arist. §§29–32). Next, Philadelphus is advised to send a formal delegation to Jerusalem to seek an audience with the Jewish high priest Eleazar and to request Jewish translators to be sent to Alexandria to complete the project. In keeping with a royal embassy, Ptolemy sends a letter to Eleazar (§33–40), and Eleazar replies (§41–51). These embedded letters, ostensibly from and to Ptolemy himself, thus mark an important feature of the text, as was noted in the earliest modern collections of Greek letters.³ Meanwhile, the whole story is given as an “eyewitness” narrative (διήγησις) of the events in the form

1. Philo, *Mos.* 25–41. See §2.1 for text and translation.

2. Josephus, *A.J.* 12.18–178. See §2.2 for text and translation.

3. Hercher 1873, 218.

of a letter from Aristeas, one of the courtiers of Ptolemy II and a member of the delegation to Jerusalem, sent to his brother and correspondent Philocrates.

Long recognized as a literary fiction, the *Epistle of Aristeas* has variously been dated from the third century BCE to the first century CE.⁴ In fact, the text derives much of its language and numerous allusions from the Septuagint itself, and not just the books of Torah. Its story of the translation clearly came long after the fact. As a result, its historical value as an account of how the LXX translation came about is universally doubted, while its character as a “genuine” letter has been generally dismissed. Its epistolary features, especially those in which the putative author, Aristeas, addresses Philocrates, have largely been ignored—because it is not a “real” letter. Since the work of Moses Hadas, it is hardly considered a letter at all.⁵ This view was ratified by Victor Tcherikover’s assertion that its intended audience was really Jewish (not Greek).⁶ More commonly now it is treated merely as a pseudepigraphic Jewish apology. The majority view these days is best summed up by George Nickelsburg’s comments:

Scholars universally agree that this work was written by a Jew rather than by an Egyptian courtier named Aristeas. ... Although the *Epistle of Aristeas* is often called such, *it is not a letter*. Quite likely *it is a written speech*, which due to its direct address, *was confused with a letter*. Pseudo-Aristeas has written a thoroughly Greek book.... Nonetheless, Pseudo-Aristeas directs his writing to Jews.⁷

Nickelsburg here follows Philip Alexander’s assessment (from the same volume) of the work’s basically nonepistolary quality: “Despite its title,

4. The date and setting of the text will be discussed in §1.1 below.

5. See especially Hadas 1951, 54–49, followed by Gruen 1998, 207; Honigman 2003b, 1; and many others. The point is well summarized by Doering 2012, 217–18. On rather formalistic grounds, Doering categorizes *Epistle of Aristeas* as an “epistolary treatise” with blended genre features from historiography (following Honigman) and scientific treatises (following Langslow 2007). Note, however, that Wasserstein and Wasserstein (2006, 21–23) and Rajak (2009, 31) have found little problem with viewing *Epistle of Aristeas* as a letter. I concur but prefer to call it an epistolary novella.

6. Tcherikover 1958, 59–85, here 60.

7. Nickelsburg 1984, 77–78, emphasis added. Nickelsburg’s notes cite Hadas 1951, 5–6, 55, and 65–66, respectively. The second part of the quotation refers (in a note) to the comments of Alexander in the same volume; see next note. Compare Nickelsburg 2005, 168.

Aristeas itself is not a letter; it is not in epistolary form, nor was it recognized as a letter by the earliest writers who refer to it.”⁸ The last statement is based on the fact that the bulk of the manuscripts give its title only as “Aristeas to Philocrates” (Ἀριστεᾶς Φιλοκράτει), without the word *epistle*.

On the other hand, a look at ancient letters and letter collections shows that this is exactly how ancient letters were usually identified. The “(from) X to Y” opening formula is one of the most basic features of epistolary style.⁹ That it may also be used in other literary forms, usually as embedded dedications, is worth observing, of course, but does not alter the basic facts of personal address and communication exchange that form the core definition of epistolarity.¹⁰ In light of more recent scholarship on epistolary literature in the Greco-Roman world (to be discussed below), I have argued recently that, even though the Epistle of Aristeas is entirely fictional, a highly stylized epistolarity is central to the form, purpose, and setting of the work. Furthermore, the ideals of Hellenistic moral philosophy, delivered through epistolary exhortation and epitomized in sympotic discourse, function in the “letter” as an apologetic for both Jewish tradition and the Septuagint translation as instantiations of the Mosaic law.¹¹

In general, we begin to see a similar adaptation in Jewish historiographical literature from the late second century BCE onward, as in the letters in 1 and 2 Maccabees.¹² The Solomon letters of Eupolemus also belong to the later part of the second century BCE and reflect creative adaptation to Hellenistic epistolary conventions.¹³ Similar studies are

8. Alexander 1984, 580. The word “letter” seems to appear first in a manuscript of the fourteenth century CE (Thackeray’s MS Q = Cod. Regius [Paris Gr. 950]). Alexander surely has in mind the type of reference to the text one finds in later Christian writers. For example, in *Praep. ev.* 9.38 Eusebius describes Epistle of Aristeas with an otherwise unattested title: ὁ Ἀριστεᾶς ἐν τῷ γραφέντι αὐτῷ βιβλίῳ Περὶ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου ταῦτα ἱστορεῖ (“Aristeas narrated these things in the book written by him *On the Translation of the Law of the Jews*”). It must be noted that this “title” seems to be Eusebius’s own creation and does not appear in the work itself. See also the notes to the text and translation at §1.

9. Rosenmeyer 2001, 20; Rees 2007, 153–56.

10. That the letter shared in the dynamics of conversation or dialogue was part of its ancient definition, as will be discussed below. See also Hodkinson 2007, 289–93.

11. L. M. White 2015, 179–219.

12. On the fictional letters in 1 and 2 Maccabees, see Nisula 2005, 201–22.

13. See now Keddle 2013, 201–37.

needed for 3 Maccabees and Greek Esther (LXX). But in each of these cases, it must be noted that these “fictional letters” are embedded in otherwise narrative, historiographical works. Parts or all of these works are fictions, too, but the epistolary device is only a part of a larger quasi-historiographical intent.

The Epistle of Aristeas is a different matter. It has embedded letters, as noted already. To be sure, it also poses as a narrative of the events surrounding the translation of the LXX, but all of this has been enfolded in a fictional letter. The genre structures have been flipped. In other words, I am proposing that the epistolary addresses from Aristeas to Philocrates that run through the entire text and frame the key content sections derive consciously from the rhetoric of moral exhortation and that this ostensible setting is central to the fiction of the work. These features will be discussed at greater length in section 1 below. In genre, then, it will be argued, that Epistle of Aristeas assumes the form of a historical narrative (although fictional, to be sure) conveyed as privileged, personal communication in epistolary form. Or perhaps we should call it an epistolary novella whose purpose is to commend the moral value of the Jewish scriptures (in their Greek version). But, of course, the hortatory effect is increased significantly by the elaborate fiction of the work: by its noble setting in the Ptolemaic court, by the idealized relations and epistolary exchange between Ptolemy and the Jewish high priest, by the extended philosophical discourse at the king’s banquet, and, ultimately, by the portrayal, sparse though it may be, of the fantastic events that transpired in executing the translation. Thus, the historical fiction of what happened cannot be separated either “narratively” or literarily from the epistolary fiction in which it was encased. Or, as Patricia Rosenmeyer says, “In most cases epistolary context is just as important as content.”¹⁴ In the end, the epistolary commendations from Aristeas to Philocrates that run throughout the work function as indirect exhortations to all those who would emulate his pursuit of virtue—in other words, the audience—by accepting the sacred tradition of moral excellence of the Jewish scriptures.¹⁵

14. Rosenmeyer 2006, 4.

15. For internal allusions to the broader audience with this in mind, see esp. Ep. Arist. §7 (quoted below), plus §§128 and 296.

Fictional Letters as Literary Device

Epistolary technique always problematizes the boundaries between fiction and reality. ... the letter is a construction, not a reflection of reality.

— Patricia Rosenmeyer, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions* (2001, 5)

The study of Greek and Roman letters seems to come and go. Now it is back again, and not without profit or new insights, commencing especially with the work of Patricia Rosenmeyer (2001), Michael Trapp (2003), and the 2004 Manchester Conference on Ancient Letters.¹⁶ In general, these recent studies have taken more seriously the literary integrity and artistry of ancient letters than might have been common a generation earlier, at least in classics. Out of this arose a new appreciation for fictional letters as well. Such neglect, if that is the right term, was not so common in the New Testament field, in large part because letters and letter writing have held such a central place both in the makeup of the New Testament canon and in the development of early Christian literature. For example, it has been estimated that more than nine thousand letters are known from ancient Christian writers,¹⁷ yet since the pioneering work of Adolf Deissmann over a century ago that arena of interest has tended to focus more on the burgeoning discovery and analysis of Egyptian papyri and implications for the study of the New Testament letters, of Paul in particular.¹⁸ Deissmann's influence on the study of early Christian letters has been profound, to say the least, and it spawned a virtual subfield of formalistic studies in letters,

16. The papers of the Manchester Conference were edited by and published in Morello and Morrison 2007.

17. Stowers 1986, 15: "Something about the nature of early Christianity made it a movement of letter writers."

18. Adolf Deissmann (1866–1937) was professor of New Testament at Heidelberg (1897–1908) and Berlin (1908–1937). His extensive work on vocabulary and form from the nonliterary papyri resulted in a greater appreciation for the language of the New Testament in light of the "common" or popular elements of Koine Greek of the Hellenistic-Roman period. Four of his ground-breaking works from the first decade of the twentieth century are worth noting here: *Die Septuaginta-Papyri und andere altchristliche Texte der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung* (1905), *The Philology of the Greek Bible: Its Present and Future* (his 1907 Cambridge Lectures; ET: 1908b), *Licht vom Osten: Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt* (1908a; ET: 1927), and *Die Urgeschichte des Christentums im Lichte der Sprachforschung* (1910). See Bullard 1999, 1:264–65.

first in the 1920s and 1930s,¹⁹ then even more in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁰ But common to both fields prior to the current “renaissance” in scholarship has been a tendency to privilege “real” letters over fictional or nonreal. According to this distinction, real letters are not literary productions, whereas fictional letters are. Hence, an interesting irony in the previous scholarship emerged, since real letters were by definition excluded from many (or most) types of literary analysis, while the fictional letters were often ignored, simply because they were not *real*. To all intents and purposes, this is the kind of distinction that lies behind the usual dismissal of the Epistle of Aristeeas.²¹ Working from the literary perspective of nineteenth-century Romanticism and in light of the common (or Koine) Greek of the papyri, Deissmann considered the early Christian letters to be a lower-class phenomenon and not much indebted to Semitic influences from Jewish literature. Hence, another tendency was to privilege Christian letters (and their Hellenistic backgrounds) over Jewish letters, which tend to be less common, at least in the mainstream Jewish literature known at that time.²² But that, too, has proven to be an oversight,²³ as we shall see.

19. E.g., Exler 1923; Ghedini 1923; Dinneen 1929; Roller 1933; Schubert 1939.

20. The Society of Biblical Literature’s “Seminar on the Form and Function of Pauline Letters” ran from 1970 to 1975 under Nils A. Dahl as its chair; it was succeeded by the “Ancient Epistolography Group” (1975–1979), under John L. White as chair. A planned series of publications from the Seminar never materialized as such, but a large body of scholarly literature was generated nonetheless, through the influential scholarship of Robert W. Funk and Abraham J. Malherbe. The works of this era are too numerous to list, but we may single out the following, in part for their lasting influence on the field: Bjerkelund 1967; Doty 1969, 1973; Kim 1972; Koskenniemi 1956; Malherbe 1977, 1988, 1992; Stirewalt 1993; Stowers 1986; Thraede 1970; and J. L. White 1972a, 1972b, 1978, 1981b, 1984, 1986. The influential little volume on *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* of Malherbe (1988) was originally published in 1977 in *The Ohio Journal of Religious Studies* after the original series of the SBL Seminar failed to materialize; it also served as a primary source for Trapp’s inclusion of epistolary theorists in his anthology of ancient letters (2003). Equally influential has been Malherbe 1992, which was originally produced in 1972 and circulated widely before its much-delayed formal publication in ANRW. For the history and work of the SBL group, see J. L. White 1981a, 1–14; 1984, 1731 n.1; and the preface to Malherbe 1988.

21. See nn. 5–8 above.

22. In contrast to the prominence of letters in the early Christian literature, there is only one certain letter in the Talmud (b. Sanh. 11a); see Stowers 1986, 42.

23. Efforts to treat Jewish epistolography are not entirely lacking now. The works of Pardee (1982), Fitzmyer (1974, 1981), and Lindenberg (1994) have focused on

Troubling Dichotomies

The epistle differs from a letter, as the dialogue from a conversation. ...
The letter is a piece of life, the epistle is a product of literary art.

— Adolf Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (1927, 230).

As noted, previous work on Greek and Latin epistolography, going back to Deissmann,²⁴ focused more exclusively on the papyri and documentary letters that were objectively historical, nonliterary, and thus real.²⁵ The more literary productions, whether fictional or philosophical, he termed “epistles,” and he considered them works of literary artistry and thus somehow separated from real life. The letters of the New Testament, particularly those of Paul, were thus real and nonliterary, while those of classical authors such as Epicurus, Seneca, or Pliny were epistles. There were early criticisms of this rigid dichotomy,²⁶ to be sure, but within the New Testament and related fields the dichotomy has been difficult to shake, for two main reasons: (1) the nearly exclusive reliance on the nonliterary papyri as the main comparanda and (2) the socioeconomic assumptions that tended to exclude consideration of more literary or philosophical modes of writing.²⁷ Malherbe and others have expressed reservations about Deissmann's strict dichotomy, noting many similarities of style and rhetoric in the writings of the Hellenistic moralists, including the likes of Musonius Rufus, Epictetus, and Dio Chrysostom.²⁸ Others have tended to focus more on formalistic features such as letter openings and standard-

Hebrew and Aramaic letters. On Greek letters, the work of Alexander (1984, 579–96) has been the most thorough and influential. Taatz (1991) attempted to treat Pauline letters in the context of early Jewish letters, as does Klauck (2006, 229–97). The latter (246), like most others, says Epistle of Aristeas is not a letter: “the work as a whole lacks clear epistolary features. Nevertheless, several letter exchanges are embedded in the narrative.” In the fictional literature, he deals only with the embedded letters, even though he has a separate section on “literary letters” (103–82). The most recent and most thoroughgoing effort to survey Jewish letters, including their influence on the development of Christian epistolography, has been that of Doering 2012.

24. The most influential form of Deissmann's work comes from the 1923 fourth edition of his *Licht vom Osten* and its English translation (1927; repr., 1995).

25. Deissmann 1927, 230.

26. So Schubert 1939, 365–77; Koskenniemi 1956, 57–59; Doty 1969, 183–99; Thraede 1970, 1–10.

27. Stowers 1986, 18–20.

28. Malherbe 1992, 278–93; 1988, 1–11.

ized formulas, following the work of Schubert (1939) and Doty (1969), but for many in the field, the dichotomy remains.²⁹

For example, Luther Stirewalt framed it as a sliding scale of epistolary reality, and he called fictional letters “derivative” from those representing real writers and settings, or what he calls “normative.” He says, “Letter-settings are either normative, extended, or fictitious. They differ according to the degree to which the correspondents and the contexts move from reality to imaginary construct.”³⁰

Underlying this definition is another important distinction derived from Deissmann, namely, that real letters are personal, warm, and without artistic contrivance, while nonreal or fictitious letters are literary contrivances and thus impersonal and conventionalized.³¹ To say it another way, real letters have an immediacy to them, while fictional letters are somehow artificial and distant. As a result, the study of fictional letters as literary productions was often ignored in earlier periods of scholarship.³²

By contrast, Patricia Rosenmeyer remarks:

Epistolary technique always problematizes the boundaries between fiction and reality. . . . it has a huge impact on our reading of letters, whether literary or practical (i.e., actually sent). Whenever one writes a letter, one automatically constructs a self, an occasion, a version of the truth. Based on a process of selection and self-censorship, the letter is a construction, not a reflection of reality.³³

With this she explicitly calls the Deissmann-Stirewalt dichotomy into question while recognizing the foundational point that both fictional and real letters draw from the same formal conventions and social worlds.³⁴ She continues (a little later):

All letter writers consciously participate in the *invention* of their personas; there is no such thing as an unself-censored, “natural” letter, because

29. See Porter and Adams 2010.

30. Stirewalt 1993, 1; see also 27–47 (also quoted by Rosenmeyer 2001, 9).

31. See Stowers 1986, 19; however, for a recent effort to reassert Stirewalt’s distinction, see Pitts 2010, 269–336, esp. 300–310.

32. Klauck 2006, 103 (specifically on Stirewalt 1993, 105), citing also the views of Berger 1984, 1326–27, 1337–39.

33. Rosenmeyer 2001, 5.

34. See earlier, Stowers 1986, 19–20.

letters depend for their very existence on specific, culturally constructed conventions of form, style, and content.³⁵

Rosenmeyer thus proposes a gradual and integrated continuum between personal letters (which she calls “literary private”) and prose fictional letters, all of which are dependent on the same basic social and stylistic conventions of letter writing.³⁶

Thus key features of the letter as literary genre are *personal immediacy* and *communication exchange* across distance. Following Malherbe, then, we may start with the definition in Pseudo-Demetrius, *De elocutione*, which says,

The letter ought to be written in the same manner as a dialogue, a letter being regarded by him [Artemon] as one of the two sides of a dialogue. ... As the dialogue, too, the letter should abound in glimpses of character [τὸ ἡθικόν]. For nearly everyone reveals an image [εἰκόνα] of his own soul in his letters. ... The length of the letter, no less than the style should be kept in due bounds. ... A letter is designed to be the heart’s good wishes in brief; it is the exposition of a simple matter in simple terms. ... It may have ornament, however, in the shape of friendly bits of philophronetic advice, mixed with a few good proverbs.³⁷

It is perhaps worth noting also that the ancient interest in the literary form and conventions of letter writing seems to have emerged in the late second to first centuries BCE, to which *De elocutione* is sometimes dated.³⁸ Nor is it insignificant that this early Hellenistic tradition of studying literary and epistolary stylistics was attached to the name of Demetrius of Phalerum, who also figures prominently in the Aristeas legend.³⁹ While letters (both real and fictional) go back earlier in Greek history, the “epistolary habit,”

35. Rosenmeyer 2001, 10, emphasis added.

36. Rosenmeyer 2001, 11, following Sykutris 1931, 185–220.

37. *De eloc.* 223–235 (selected), adapted from Malherbe 1988, 19.

38. For discussion of the date and this conclusion, see Malherbe 1988, 2.

39. Demetrius of Phalerum (ca. 350–ca. 282 BCE) had served as governor and *nomothetēs* of Athens under Cassander, from 317 to 307, at which time he was expelled by Demetrius Poliorcetes. According to Hermippus of Smyrna apud Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.78–79, he then became an adviser to Ptolemy I Soter; however, in 285 he injudiciously supported an elder son (half-brother to Philadelphus) as successor. Already in advanced years, Demetrius was soon banished by Ptolemy II in 283. Demetrius died shortly after being banished from the court. In general on Demetrius’s life

as Trapp calls it, was only established widely in Greek culture beginning in the third century BCE.⁴⁰

Starting from the ancient theorists studied by Malherbe, Michael Trapp developed the following basic taxonomic definition of epistolary form:

- (1) a written message from one person (or set of people) to another
- (2) requiring (it) to be set down in a tangible medium
- (3) which itself is to be physically conveyed from sender(s) to recipient(s)
- (4) overtly addressed from sender(s) to recipient(s), by the use at the beginning and end of one of a limited set of conventional formulae of salutation (or some allusive variation on them) which specify both parties to the transaction
- (5) [usually involving] two parties [who] are physically distant (separated) from one another, and so unable to communicate by unmediated voice or gesture
- (6) normally expected to be of relatively limited length.⁴¹

Taken in concert, these two basic definitions give us what Rosenmeyer calls the “principal advantages” to choosing the letter format for writing fictional literature: (1) because they emulate intimate, personal communication, we seem to gain insight into the motivations and feelings, or hearts and minds, of the characters; and (2) because letters are associated in the human mind with documentary proof.⁴² As we shall see, both of these features are at work in *Epistle of Aristeeas* and are crucial to its rhetorical posture and literary intent. Owen Hodkinson further suggests that this is how and why letters first came to be included in ancient histories in a manner similar to the literary construction of speeches for historical characters (as

and work, see Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf 2000; O’Sullivan 2009. On the problems surrounding Demetrius and the library, see Bagnall 2002, 349–50. See further §2.3.2.

40. Trapp 2003, 7; Rosenmeyer 2001, 31–32.

41. Trapp 2003, 3; see also Rosenmeyer 2006, 5. I give here the schematized version used by Gibson and Morrison 2007, 3.

42. Rosenmeyer 2006, 5.

in Thudydides and others), and he suggests that they should be regarded as the first “literary letters.”⁴³

The point is that epistolary form developed out of the writing practices of real life, but the appropriation of those *real* habits in literary fiction are no less dependent on the cultural template of reality. Letter writing was taught as part of rhetorical education. In addition to the formal features of letter writing, one of the key techniques of that education involved composing practice letters in the voice or style of known figures from the past.⁴⁴ For example, an exercise might have gone like this: How should a member of the Athenian council have responded to the ultimatum of Philip of Macedon? Several examples are preserved in the papyri, using different historical exemplars (Demosthenes or Aristotle) for the tone of response.⁴⁵ Other letter-writing exercises involved positing a series of common scenarios with characters and situations, then having the student write letters of different types to address each situation—one laudatory, the next more consoling, another more ironic or encouraging or reproachful and so forth. Such an exercise book from the Bologna papyri gives an example of each type, first in Latin and then in Greek.⁴⁶ A telltale sign of their schoolish invention is that the names of writer and recipient change little from letter to letter. Of course, the exercise was designed to prepare the professional letter writer to produce “real” letters appropriate to the situation, just as in the epistolary handbooks; however, it also exposes the very porous boundary between *fictional* and *real*. Imagination, immediacy, and social decorum cut through it all.

Rosenmeyer’s proposed classification of letters follows those of Johannes Sykutris: (1) official (or public) letters, (2) literary private (including personal) letters, (3) letters as literary “screens” (speeches or treatises in literary form), (4) literary verse letters (often with highly fictionalized elements), and (5) fictive prose letters (or literary letters and letter collections).⁴⁷

43. Hodkinson 2007, 284–85. Hodkinson refers to the construction of the speeches of generals (e.g., Thucydides, *Hist.* 1.22.1–4) in comparison with the embedded letters.

44. See Malherbe 1988, 6–7; Stowers 1986, 32–40; Rosenmeyer 2001, 32–35.

45. See P.Oxy. 216 (first century CE, modeled on a speech of Demosthenes) and P.Oxy. 217 (third century CE, modeled on Aristotle’s *Letter On Kingship to Alexander*); cf. Cicero, *Att.* 12.40; Dio Chrysostom, *De regno iv* (Or. 4).

46. P.Bononiensis 5 (third to fourth century CE) (Malherbe 1988, 45–57); see also Stowers 1986, 33. Trapp (2003, no. 49) gives one of the bilingual exercises (out of nine preserved in the papyrus).

47. For my part, I would prefer to call the last category “literary letters and collec-

Two key points should be noted with this classification. First, what Rosenmeyer also calls “practical” letters (those that might actually be sent) appear in all of these categories, at least if we include highly edited letter collections (such as Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10 [*Epistulae ad Trajanum*]) in the last category. Second, literary, rhetorical, or fictionalized elements are found in *all* of them, as Peter White has shown in regard to the posturing and literary self-construction in Cicero’s letters.⁴⁸ No one would deny that they are entirely real letters and were sent; however, that fact does not erase elements of contrivance in self-representation and artfully constructed paradigms of friendship and intimacy. Carlos Noreña shows something similar regarding the Pliny-Trajan correspondence (*Ep.* 10);⁴⁹ however, the question remains whether the degree of editing ought to place this collection in category 5 (rather than 1 or 2). To put it another way, then, the *real* versus *fictional* scale inherited from Deissmann should no longer be used to establish the basic typology of letters,⁵⁰ since all have features in common. The same social and rhetorical conventions of epistolary form and style run throughout them all to create a sense of immediacy and familiarity.

tions” rather than making fictionality the primary defining feature, a point to which I return at the end of this section. Also on the question of classification, see Gibson and Morrison 2007, 1–16, esp. 15.

48. P. White 2010.

49. Noreña 2007, 239–77.

50. I have formulated the point differently here from Rosenmeyer (2006, 2). She says instead that “we can set aside the question of whether letters are fictional or real, historical or literary.” I think this goes a bit too far. It is quite important from both the literary and historical perspectives to recognize the role both of epistolarity and of fictionalized characters and scenarios in understanding the rhetoric and purpose of such writings. On the other hand, if her point is mainly about using fictional versus real as a defining element in the typology, then I would agree; see Rosenmeyer 2001, 11. Trapp (2003, 3–4) makes a similar point. Doering (2012, 20–25) follows suit, but his model of letter types based on mode of transmission (24) does not explicitly take epistolary rhetoric or style into account. He ultimately classifies Epistle of Aristeas, for example, as an epistolary treatise of a technical or scientific type with only superficial epistolary features (type B.3, following Langslow 2007, 216). Yet he recognizes that the second-person addresses are important for creating the sense of approval among its intended Jewish readers; see Doering 2012, 230–32. In the end, he rather downplays the fictional element, assuming that it relies on a source narrative (231), except in the role of the embedded letters to and from Ptolemy.

Soundings in Epistolary Rhetoric

Seneca to Lucilius: Good wishes. I note with approval—and rejoice—that ... you strive daily to better yourself. Not only do I urge you to continue; I even beg you to do so.

— Seneca, *Epistle* 5.1⁵¹

While the *real* versus *fictional* distinction remains important for historical and literary-critical analysis, it should not be used as a typological or genre classification. Basic to all letters is the sense of immediacy across distance, predicated in large measure on the ideals of friendship and communication exchange. Yet all letters adopt a rhetorical stance, an assumed *posture*, an exercise in self-fashioning, in deploying these elements. By *rhetoric* here, I do not mean just the formalistic elements of rhetoric associated with ancient education, although they sometimes come into play.⁵² More to the point for this discussion is what has come to be called “discourse analysis” or “sociorhetorical criticism.”⁵³ Put simply, the goal is to “hear” the text—whether performed aloud or simply read—with a view to decoding nuance and resonance through turns of phrase or literary tropes, as well as its symbolic discourse or social code, all of which would have streamed seamlessly between the ancient writer and recipient. Stowers has referred to this as a “social typification” that is embedded in and negotiated through the social relationships operative within any particular letter, and these may be adjusted depending on the socioeconomic or literary level of author and recipient/audience.⁵⁴ As Maud Gleason and others have shown, it was all part of a cultural template transmitted socially—and by socialization—through performative discourse and a rhetoric of “self-fashioning.”⁵⁵

51. “Seneca Lucilio suo salutem. Quod pertinaciter studes ... ut te meliorem cotidie facias, et probo et gaudeo, nec tantum hortor, ut perseveres, sed etiam rogo” (my translation).

52. Formalistic rhetorical analysis is well described by J. Reed 2001, 171–93; more generally Porter 2001; Kennedy 2001, 3–41. What is typically called rhetorical criticism starts from this formalist approach; see Kennedy 1984; Watson and Hauser 1994; but also Classen 2002.

53. See Robbins 1996. We may wish to call it “discursive (or discourse-oriented) socio-rhetorical criticism” to signify this difference.

54. Stowers 1988, 78–90.

55. See Spencer and Theodorakopoulos 2006b, 21–24; Gleason 1995, xx–xxiii; Gunderson 2000, 87–110; 2003; Habinek 1990, 165–85.

At the same time, such discourse often carried a persuasive intent as well, and thus its location under the aegis of rhetoric. For example, by valorizing certain cultural ideals (whether “exemplary” or “perverted”), a writer can shape perceptions, political opinion, or moral behavior. In the Hellenistic-Roman world, letters played an important part in this discursive process; Cicero called it *officium litterarum* (“the duty or work of letter writing,” *Fam.* 6.6.1). For Cicero and his friends, as Peter White argues, letter writing “figured prominently in the exchange of performances by which their relationships were forged and maintained.”⁵⁶ In part this may depend on formal elements, as well as parody, wordplay, irony, or other ploys, but catching such symbolic cues is part of the process of “decoding” the rhetorical artistry of a letter, just like any other piece of literature. As noted above, the very choice of epistolary form in and of itself created a certain set of expectations. In this light, we should reconsider the role of such rhetorical features in Sykutris’s categories.

We may take an example of official correspondence (Sykutris’s category 1) as a starting point. In some cases, we might need to consider the literary and political intent as well as the impact of framing an imperial decree in the form of a letter.⁵⁷ Even here there may be a rhetorical code. For example, we might ask what the purpose was of Emperor Claudius’s letter to the citizens of Delphi, known from an inscription set up in the Temple of Pythian Apollo in the year 51/52 CE.⁵⁸ In part we must conclude that the conscious intent of the letter’s very personal opening address to the Delphians was to stress the emperor’s kindly feelings and respect (an appropriately epistolary sentiment).⁵⁹ This sense is reinforced by the let-

56. P. White 2010, 29.

57. While it naturally fits into Sykutris’s category 1, the fact that the letter form serves as something of a screen might also allow it to go into category 3.

58. The letter was an official rescript following a report concerning the declining population of Delphi and giving orders about the status of noncitizens. The inscription was first published by Pierre Bourguet in 1905, and its significance for Pauline studies was noted by Reinach (1907, 49). A partial text with discussion was published by Deissmann in his book on Paul (1925, 261–86). The best known publication is that of Dittenberger (*SIG* 2.801D), now supplemented by Plassart 1967 and 1970, 26–32; *Inscr. Delphi* no. 286. For the volume, see <https://tinyurl.com/SBLP1643a>.

59. Following the standard address and greetings, the letter opens: “For a long time I have been not only well disposed toward the city of Delphi, but also mindful of its good fortune, and I have always supported the cult of Pythian Apollo” (lines 3–4, my translation).

ter's signal reference to an earlier report to the emperor (presumably by letter) by "L. Junius Gallio, my friend and (your) proconsul."⁶⁰ Thus the inscription is in reality a public proclamation in the form of a letter, or perhaps we should see it primarily as an official "covering letter" for decrees regarding extensions of citizenship to non-Delphians. In either case, it is easy to see that its appeal to friendship language was intended, in part, to soften the sting of the imperial edict it conveyed and the expected reaction of locals who might bristle at it. While the situation of the letter, thus envisioned, is no less real, it shows that the epistolary rhetoric of familiarity was nonetheless conscious literary artifice.

Thus, too, the sense of personal immediacy that presented a basic problem in Deissmann's dichotomy is, in fact, a key feature of all letters, whether official (1), private (2), or wholly literary inventions (5). In some cases the sense of immediacy (or "intimate space") can be part of the literary design.⁶¹ There is no better example of this conscious exploitation of the epistolary medium than Seneca's *Epistles* to his young "friend" Lucilius, whom he instructs in Stoic principles for moral progress. Brad Inwood calls them "Seneca's masterpiece" and his most influential work.⁶² The *Epistles* represent a collection of some 124 letters (as preserved), written between 62 and 65 CE (his forced suicide). Modeled in part on the letters of Epicurus and Cicero, they are now recognized to be wholly fictitious literary productions (category 5), whether or not there ever was a Lucilius.⁶³ Others have gone even further by suggesting that "Lucilius" is really a foil for Nero himself and that the whole fiction is a complex political ploy.⁶⁴ In

60. An important dimension of this letter is that this Junius Gallio (also named in Acts 18:12–17) was the brother of the younger Seneca. Born L. Annaeus Novatus, he had been adopted by the Senator L. Junius Gallio *senior* (noted prominently in the elder Seneca's *Suasoriae* 3.6–7). Seneca's treatise *On Anger* was addressed to this brother as well and may be read with certain epistolary features. It was intended in part to offer him advice for his public career; see Tsouna 2011, 183–210.

61. See Henderson 2007 and Hoffer 2007, both dealing with affected elements of intimacy in Cicero's edited letter collections. The term "intimate space" is Henderson's (2007, 45).

62. Inwood 2007, 135 and 133, respectively.

63. Inwood 2007, 134–35 and n. 8 (with other references); Inwood here follows Griffin 1992, app. B4.

64. Notably Edwards 1997, 23–38, esp. 35–36; Too 1994, 211–24, esp. 212.

this light, Diana Spencer examines *Ep.* 83, as a case study in the rhetoric of giving advice through fictional letters.⁶⁵ As Spencer says,

Reading advice into Senecan rhetoric means injecting a didactic expectation. Moreover, the act of offering advice expects some evident result.... Once this is embedded into the [epistolary] process we find that advice-giving as a discourse locates us at the heart of the complex dialectics of reciprocity and *amicitia* that saturate autocracy in late republican and imperial Rome.⁶⁶

Hence, the elaborate fiction depends on standard epistolary elements: a situation of distance, personal intimacy and friendly caring, and the goal of moral improvement through letters of advice. This rhetoric of friendship is simultaneously a symbolic discourse that undergirds these cultural ideals.⁶⁷

We see something similar in the Epistle of Aristeeas. The ploy is particularly noticeable in the personal notes from Aristeeas to Philocrates that frame the key content sections.⁶⁸ A full outline with epistolary features is provided at the beginning of section 1.2. Two examples of the trope will suffice here; the first comes from the end of the epistolary preamble (*Ep. Arist.* §7):

For since you possess a *love of learning* [φιλομαθῶς γὰρ ἔχοντί σοι] for those things that are able to benefit the mind [ὠφελῆσαι διάνοιαν], it is incumbent upon me to share these things, especially with all who have the same disposition, but all the more so [πολλῷ δὲ μᾶλλον]⁶⁹ with you, since you possess such noble principles of conduct and since you by kinship are not only my brother with respect to character but also are the self-same with me in the impulse toward goodness.

Embedded in this laudatory personal address are the same ideals of friendship and moral progress. Aristeeas later offers another framing address to Philocrates at a key transitional moment, when the Egyptian delegation

65. Spencer 2006, 84–85.

66. Spencer 2006, 80.

67. See especially Konstan 1996 and 1997, 103–21.

68. Discussed in greater detail in L. M. White 2015, 194–207.

69. A common rhetorical expression among the moralists, including Paul (see Rom 5:9; 11:12, etc.).

prepares to depart Jerusalem and return to Egypt with the seventy-two Jewish translators in tow. Once again we note the personal hortatory tone with similar commendatory phrasing:

I believe, then, that these things in our discussion have been worth narrating. That is why I have been led to make clear to you, Philocrates, the sanctity and natural meaning of the law, for the sake of your *love of learning* [δι' ἣν ἔχεις φιλομάθειαν]. (Ep. Arist. §171)

The Epistle of Aristeas is rather lacking in strong narrative devices; instead, these direct epistolary addresses from Aristeas to Philocrates serve as the principal transition and framing mechanism in the work. A similar address opens the letter (§1) and closes it (§322).⁷⁰ That this type of exhortation is particularly suited to epistolary advice is further demonstrated by the hortatory address to Heraclides, the putative recipient of *On Epistolary Types*:

Since I see how eagerly you pursue a *love of learning* [φιλομάθειαν], I have taken it upon myself, by means of certain styles, to organize and set forth (for you) both the number and distinctions between them and what they are.⁷¹

In that sense, the Aristeas “letter” is consciously and intentionally couched in terms of providing a “narrative” (διήγησις), full of insider information, of what had transpired on his journey to Jerusalem and when the seventy-two Jewish elders came to translate the scriptures, but all for the personal moral benefit of Philocrates, with terms such as φιλομάθεια (“love of learning”) and “benefit of the mind” (ὠφελεῖν διάνοιαν) as a recurrent thematic device.

Even letters of rebuke depend on the ideals of friendship and were the subject of moral advice.⁷² Their rhetoric and tone (from ironic to stinging,

70. Ep. Arist. §322 again uses the phrase “to benefit the mind” (ὠφελεῖν διάνοιαν), while §1 uses φιλομάθεια.

71. Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types*, preface [lines 6–8], in Malherbe 1988, 30. Malherbe’s translation, adapted.

72. E.g., Plutarch’s *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend* (*Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*; Mor. 48c–78c), addressed to his friend, Prince Philopappus, or Philodemus’s *De libertate dicendi* (*Peri parrhesias*), on the practice of frank criticism as a moral exercise within Epicurean circles. See Fitzgerald 1996; Engberg-Pedersen

bitter, and harsh), according to the epistolary handbooks,⁷³ were scaled either on the degree of affront to the supposed friendly relations of the correspondents or on the degree of recalcitrance of the offending friend. Choosing the right tone was thus important to the corrective intent of the writer, but it also required a degree of literary artistry to deliver adroitly. “The blaming type [of letter, *μεμπτικός*],” says Pseudo-Demetrius, “is that which *undertakes not to be considered too weighty* [or *harsh*, *ὁ μὴ νομίζεσθαι βαρεῖν προσδεχόμενος*].”⁷⁴ In other words, one should be conscious of intent and perception in the choice of rhetorical tone.

In light of Pseudo-Demetrius’s *Epistolary Types*, Seneca’s *Ep.* 83 (discussed above) may be classed as a letter of advice (*συμβουλευτικός*), as suggested by Spencer,⁷⁵ but tilted more to the dissuading side. After all, the traditional title is *On Drunkenness*. On the other hand, we should perhaps note the sharper wording at *Ep.* 83.17, when the letter shifts to its main topic: “How much better it is *to accuse drunkenness frankly* and *to expose* its vices [*Quanto satius est aperte accusare ebrietatem et vitia eius exponere*].” It may be argued that the letter at this point turns more to “admonition” (*νουθετικός*), a mild form of rebuke that “teaches what should and should not be done” (*διδάσκειν τί πρακτέον καὶ μὴ*), but with rather clear implications about the values and risks at stake.⁷⁶ Catching just this tonal shift, with its literary and semantic underpinnings and

1996; Konstan et al. 1998; Fitzgerald, Obbink, and Holland 2004. Horace’s *Satires* and *Epistles* may also be read in this light; see Morrison 2007.

73. See Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 3–9 (Malherbe 1988) for different types of rebuking letters; Pseudo-Libanius’s *Epistolary Characters* contains even more grades of rebuke, as many as twelve. See Stowers 1986, 77–90; L. M. White 2003, esp. 312–29.

74. Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 3 (Malherbe 1988), my translation.

75. Spencer (2006, 87) identified it as *sympouleutic* based on its Ciceronian model (which employs this Greek term in discussing the example of Alexander). She does not go into the matter of subtle distinctions in the types of letters, based on the handbooks; the “advising type” (*συμβουλευτικός*) is Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 11.

76. Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 7. The terminology in *Ep.* 83.17 is that of frank criticism as a form of instilling a sense of “what should and should not be done,” exactly the definition of “the admonishing type” (*νουθετικός*). That it is nonetheless a form of rebuke is made clear in Pseudo-Demetrius’s sample letter, which uses two key terms from that semantic field: “you acted badly” (*κακῶς ἐποίησας*) and “to rebuke” (*ἐπιτιμᾶν*).

its moral encoding, is exactly what is meant by symbolic discourse and sociorhetorical criticism.⁷⁷

Meanwhile, it must be remembered that the epistolary handbooks themselves give examples for each of their defined types of letters; however, these sample letters themselves are imaginary, that is, literary fictions, whose goal was to show how to write presumably *real* letters. As such, the sample letters themselves may nonetheless be placed in category 2 (literary private letters). In each case, the tone and rhetoric was carefully crafted to fit the situation and the social relations of the writer and recipient. Whether real or fictitious, then, the writer and recipient of a letter were consciously *posed* relative to one another—socially, politically, morally, sexually, or otherwise—in the very act of writing. The writer had to *know*, or at least choose, where to place himself or herself in relation to the recipient(s). Even abjectly obsequious letters from a son to his father or an inferior to a superior convey a sense of personal immediacy, because of *and despite* the required formal courtesies.⁷⁸ As the Pseudo-Demetrius author noted, oftentimes those in positions of authority were expected to write to inferiors and others in the “friendly manner” in order to get what they want (*Epistolary Types* 1).

By the time we move to the last two categories of letters (4 and 5), fictionalized elements, characters, and imagined settings are even more in evidence. Even so, they sometimes were actually sent, as in the case of the famous dinner invitation of Philodemus to Piso in the form of an epigram, full of literary artistry and innuendo, yet ultimately very intimate and undoubtedly real.⁷⁹ Indeed, its artistry and wit depend upon the shared thoughts and intimate feelings of insiders within the Epicurean literary-

77. I would argue that this reading of the “rebuking” tone fits well with the undercurrents suggested by Spencer, as we watch the letter shift from philosophical musings by the distant Seneca, about what makes for a profitable day (*Ep.* 83.1–7), to his preoccupation about the supposedly “trifling” problems of secrecy and drunkenness (83.8–17), using the plot to kill Caesar as an example, and, finally, to this sharper denunciation of drunkenness as vice.

78. Hutchinson (2007, 19–25) discusses P.Oxy. 2190 (ca. 100 CE) in this vein. My own personal favorite for observing the linguistic contortions caused by such social consciousness is P.Oxy. 292, a letter of recommendation from Theon to Tyrranus, dated 25–26 CE. See also Rees 2007, 156–68.

79. Anth. Pal. 11.44, also noted by Rosenmeyer 2001, 106. Compare Anth. Pal. 5.9 (an epigram love letter from Rufinus to Elpis), also noted by Rosenmeyer 2001, 107–8; Gibson and Morrison 2007, 8.

philosophical circle around Piso and Philodemus.⁸⁰ On the whole, verse letters tended to be more fanciful, such as the letters from the great heroines of Greek and Roman literature in Ovid's *Heroides*. No less fictionalized, however, were Ovid's letters from exile (his *Tristia* and *Ex Ponto*).⁸¹

The last category (5) is perhaps the most fictive in content, but, as noted earlier, we might also include here other, more elaborate literary letters, edited letter collections, and the like. Book 10 of Pliny's letters probably belongs here. This category also includes embedded letters in histories or drama, such as we discuss below (in 2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, and Greek Esther), along with pseudonymous letters of famous people (including the Solomon letters of Eupolemus). Then there are erotic or caricature letters (e.g., Alciphron and Philostratus), the elaborate epistolary novella (the Chion letters),⁸² and pseudepigraphic letter collections (such as the Cynic epistles attributed to Socrates, Crates, and others).⁸³ The Epistle of Aristeeus belongs here, too, as do a number of early Christian letters (such as the so-called Pastoral Epistles). In each of these cases, the role of epistolarity and the rhetorical postures of writer and recipient must be observed in order to catch the literary intent.⁸⁴

Here is the point: if anything, I would argue that fictional letters often require the authors to be even more intent on maintaining the epistolary guise of personal immediacy and familiarity between the putative writer and recipient in order to sustain the fiction.⁸⁵ In part, the new scholarly interest in fictional letters focuses on the fact that they clearly follow many of the same epistolary forms as well as social assumptions, and in the process they provide important commentary on ancient culture and social

80. Sider 1997, no. 27 (= Gow and Page 1965, no. 23); see also Sider 2004, 85–101. It is worth noting that this Piso (Philodemus's patron and Julius Caesar's father-in-law) is the same as the one depicted so negatively in Seneca, *Ep.* 83.14–16, drawn, of course, from Cicero's *In Pisonem*.

81. See Rosenmeyer 2001, 11–12; 1997; see now Natoli 2017.

82. Rosenmeyer 2006.

83. See especially Malherbe 1977.

84. See Gibson and Morrison 2007, 16.

85. Compare the observations on Alciphron's "epistolarity" by König 2007, esp. 280: "I have argued, then, that Alciphron's use of letters is very far from being an arbitrary and inert frame for his fictional world. Instead, it is an extricable part of his thematic conception, enhancing the obsession with frustrated aspiration which he returns to so often." See Rosenmeyer 2001, 259–64.

relationships.⁸⁶ They are now often called “epistolary fictions” or “literary letters,” that is, fictional compositions whose form and purpose depend on the fictive setting and tone of an epistolary communication to make a point. In that sense, then, the role of epistolarity within them becomes even more important when it is a fictional construct, as it signals a formal (in the “Cairnsian” functionalist sense)⁸⁷ as well as rhetorical strategy on the part of the author. In the final analysis, it may cause us to raise other questions regarding the historical reliability of some of the Jewish histories, notably those in 2 Maccabees,⁸⁸ while at the same time coming to a greater appreciation of how and why the epistolary medium was adopted for the writing in question.

Epistolary Literature and the Jews of Egypt

Jewish literary imagination found a fertile field in discussing the deeds—and the foibles—of Hellenistic sovereigns.

— Erich Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism* (1998, 243)

The Epistle of Aristeeas is the first full-blown epistolary fiction in the Hellenistic Jewish literary corpus. Four components of this highly stylized and entertaining story bear noting.

(1) No less than Ptolemy Philadelphus, the most illustrious and intellectual of all the Hellenistic monarchs, takes the advice of Demetrius of Phalerum and sends royal letters and a formal embassy with lavish gifts to the Jewish high priest Eleazar; Eleazar responds with his own very formal letter, attesting (in kingly fashion) to his friendly feelings for Philadelphus and authorizing a deputation of Jewish translators. (In reality, Demetrius of Phalerum was banished from Philadelphus’s court only two years after his accession. The letters follow later Hellenistic epistolary conventions.)

(2) Aristeeas, a trusted courtier of Philadelphus, leads the delegation and is highly impressed, especially after seeing Jerusalem, meeting Eleazar, and hearing his very rational and allegorical explanation of the Jewish dietary laws. (The extensive *ekphrasis* on Ptolemy’s gifts and the high priest’s vestments depends on the LXX Greek of Exodus and Deuter-

86. Summarizing the points of Hodkinson 2007, 285.

87. As argued by Hodkinson 2007, 284.

88. See Honigman 2014.

onomy. Eleazar's disquisition has been likened to Philo's allegorical treatment of the dietary laws.)

(3) On their arrival in Alexandria, the seventy-two Jewish translators are hosted by the king at a lavish seven-day banquet (*symposium*), during which he praises their wisdom and piety after each translator displays remarkable erudition and wit—all in Greek, no less—when the king poses loaded philosophical questions. (This is the longest single section of the story, spanning §184 to §300. Afterwards they are moved to a special scriptorium by Demetrius, and the translation is completed in exactly seventy-two days, one of the shortest sections of the story, §§301–308.)

(4) Sometime later, Aristes ostensibly sends a letter telling the story to his brother, Philocrates, who has been away; the account is punctuated time and again by Aristes's personal exhortations for Philocrates to recognize Jewish law and its way of life, as exemplified by the high priest and the translators, as an appropriately philosophical paradigm for an ideal and virtuous life.

That all of this is couched as a private letter—thus as privileged communication and intimate space—between two non-Jewish brothers makes for a powerful testimonial about Jewish tradition and culture. What Alexandrian Jew would not be proud, even if one chuckled over its hyperbole and slapstick moments? Whether it was recognized at the time as a fiction *or not* hardly matters. As such, its apologetic stance and cultural rhetoric deserve fuller study for its literary effort in fashioning Jewish identity in discourse with its Hellenistic environment.

All the “related literature” discussed in this volume (sections 2 and 3 below) have some connection to the Jewish community of Egypt in the later Hellenistic and Roman period. Section 2 presents *testimonia* and traditions about the Aristes legend and its key characters (Aristes, Demetrius, and Hecataeus) from Philo and Josephus as well as other ancient sources. Philo's summary (section 2.1), including his very positive portrayal of Philadelphus and the banquet, deserves special attention, as it marks the earliest reference to the story of the Epistle of Aristes. Section 3 presents other historical fictions containing letters that show literary connections to the Aristes tradition. Most of them were composed in the late second to first century BCE, and several of them, including 3 Maccabees and Greek Esther, very likely came from Alexandria itself, like the Epistle of Aristes. Egyptian connections are prominent also in 2 Maccabees, traditionally considered a Judean production, as seen from its opening lines:

“To our brothers, the Jews throughout Egypt: Greetings from your brothers, the Jews in Jerusalem and those in the land of Judaea” (2 Macc 1:1).

The book 2 Maccabees (section 3.1) is a historiography of the Maccabean revolt (178–161 BCE) written sometime in the early first century BCE; it reflects a critical stance toward the later Hasmonean dynasty.⁸⁹ The work opens, however, with two embedded letters (2 Macc 1:1–9 and 1:10–2:18) addressed from the Jews of Jerusalem to their “Jewish kin in Egypt” (1:1) and to the Jewish philosopher “Aristobulus, teacher of King Ptolemy, and to the Jews of Egypt” (1:10). The first letter records two dates, 143 and 124 BCE, and mentions earlier letters sent during a time of distress; the latter of these refers to an “upcoming” celebration of Sukkot (although in the wrong month, Kislev).⁹⁰ While it would seem to establish a time frame for the writing, most scholars now think the work is much later. The Aristobulus letter is more perplexing, as it would seem to present the primary reason for sending the text to the Jewish community of Egypt, that is, to encourage them to celebrate Hanukkah, here called “the [days of] purification (καθαρισμόν)” (2:16).⁹¹ The Jewish philosopher Aristobulus was earlier, however, a Peripatetic teacher in the court of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BCE), whose works were preserved by Alexander Polyhistor in the mid-first century BCE.⁹² The address of the letter, which names Judas, would likewise place the writing between 164 and 160 BCE (assuming that it means Judas the Maccabee, but it thus suggests that Antiochus IV had died before the temple was rededicated).⁹³ Hence there are internal discrepancies and anachronistic elements that need to be considered; Aristobulus was hardly so renowned at this early date. The remainder of the work (beginning at 3:1) then recounts the events surrounding the capture

89. Bickermann 1928, 797–800; Goldstein 1983, 84–85; Nickelsburg 2005, 121.

90. The Greek uses *σκηνοπηγία* (“booths” or “tabernacles”), typical from the LXX. Sukkot takes place in the month of Tishri; 25 Kislev is the celebration of Hanukkah. The eight days of celebration is explicitly modeled on Sukkot, as noted in 2 Macc 10:6.

91. 2 Macc 10:6–8 says that a celebration was proclaimed an annual festival by Judas following the rededication; see also 1 Macc 4:59, which uses the term “days of rededication [lit., renewal]” (*ἡμέραι τοῦ ἐγκαινισμοῦ*); 2 Macc 2:19 uses both terms: “purification” (*καθαρισμόν*) of the temple and “dedication of the altar” (*βωμοῦ ἐγκαινισμόν*).

92. So Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 7.14, 32; 8.10; 13.11–12; for text and translation see Holladay 1995; Yarbrow Collins 1985, 2:831–42. This same Aristobulus is discussed in connection with the Aristeas legend; see sec. 2.4.2 below, where the texts are given with further information on the life and work of Alexander Polyhistor.

93. See 2 Macc 9–10 compared with 1 Macc 4.

and rededication of the temple following the desecration at the hands of Antiochus IV, ostensibly an epitome of the five-volume history of Jason of Cyrene (2:19–32).⁹⁴ Clement of Alexandria even calls it the “Epitome of the Maccabean books.”⁹⁵ Apparently on this basis, in some Christian manuscripts of the Septuagint, 2 Maccabees was given the title “Epitome of the Acts of Judas the Maccabee.”⁹⁶ In Codex Alexandrinus (fifth century CE), however, it is called “Letter concerning the Acts of Judas the Maccabee”; this title may well reflect a reading of the second introductory letter as containing the epitome of Judas’s accomplishments.⁹⁷ Several other embedded letters appear within the epitome, including one from Antiochus IV to the Jews of Jerusalem just prior to his death (9:19–27). Notably these letters all use standard Greek style and greeting formulas, some of which do not appear prior to the first century BCE. In particular, the health formula *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν* in the letter to Aristobulus (2 Macc 1:10) and in the putative letter of Antiochus Epiphanes (9:19) only came into use after circa 67–60 BCE.⁹⁸ Consequently, the role of the embedded letters needs to be considered more carefully.

Similar aspects of Hellenistic epistolary style and relations to the Jewish community of Egypt can be seen in both Greek Esther and the

94. 2 Macc 2:19–32 is typically called the compiler’s or epitomizer’s “prologue/preface” (see Nickelsburg 2005, 118). The text concludes with an epilogue by the same epitomizer (15:37–39). It is thus assumed that the preceding letters were added as “covering letters” when the text was sent to Egypt. See also n. 97 below.

95. Clement, *Strom.* 5.14.97.7: *τὴν τῶν Μακκαβαϊκῶν ἐπιτομήν*. The context makes it clear, since the reference in Clement is to Aristobulus, the teacher of Ptolemy Philometor, of 2 Macc 1:10. See n. 89 above.

96. *Subscriptio* to Codex Venetus (eighth century CE).

97. *Ιουδα του Μακκαβαίου πραξεων επιστολη* (*subscriptio* to Codex Alexandrinus [Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006]). Because the prologue (2:19–32) is written in first-person plural with a second-person plural address to the readers/recipients, it could easily have been read as a continuation of the embedded letter addressed to Aristobulus (1:10–2:18). The epilogue shifts to first-person singular (15:37–38). Thus it is worth noting that the conclusion of the prologue (at 2:32) reads: “At this point, therefore, let us begin our narrative” (*ἐντεῦθεν οὖν ἀρξώμεθα τῆς διηγήσεως*). If read this way, the narrative would seem to be enveloped inside the letter, similar to that in Epistle of Aristeas.

98. Alexander (1984, 585) gives a date after 57 BCE, based on the older work of Exler 1923, 32, 46. A search of the papyrological corpora yields the following as the earliest examples: BGU 8.1880 (61/60 BCE), 8.1873 (61–52 BCE), 14.2419 (first century BCE); P.Heid. 2.212 (67/38/16 BCE); P.Ifao. 2.220 (first century BCE).

Solomon letters of Eupolemus (section 3.2). The Jewish historian Eupolemus wrote in the latter part of the second century BCE, and his works were also preserved by Alexander Polyhistor.⁹⁹ He composed letters from King Solomon to King Souron of Tyre, Sidon, and Phoenicia (i.e., Hiram of Tyre) and King Vaphres of Egypt—one letter to each and a reply. The letters to and from Hiram are based loosely on materials preserved in 1 Kgs 5–8 and 2 Chr 2–5 but are heavily dependent on the LXX versions; the letters to Vaphres are Eupolemus’s own creation. All the letters follow patterns known from Hellenistic royal correspondence.¹⁰⁰ The young Solomon, having just assumed the throne (at age thirteen) addresses the kings as “Friend of my father”; they in return address him as “Solomon, the Great King.” It has been suggested, therefore, that the inclusion of parallel letters to Syria and Egypt reflect the political situation of Judea in the later Hellenistic period, standing between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies. The nature of these letters, especially their use of epistolary conventions, apparently for apologetic reasons, portrays the monarchs of these realms as extremely deferential to Solomon.¹⁰¹ For example, the Solomon letters, like both 2 Maccabees and Epistle of Aristeas, reflect the practice of sending embassies between monarchs or seconding specialists (such as architects or translators) to assist with particular undertakings. Letters of recommendation, gift exchanges, and vows of continued friendship accompany the delegations, in keeping with the conventions of Hellenistic statecraft.

The Additions to Greek (LXX) Esther (section 3.3) include elaborate embedded decrees of the Persian king Artaxerxes in the form of letters (in the Greek version, Additions B and E, respectively). These letters, especially E, contain some of the most florid Greek style to be found in Hellenistic Jewish literature. There is also a concluding postscript (or colophon) to explain how the Greek translation was brought to Egypt by a certain Jew named Dositheus “in the fourth year of Ptolemy and Cleopatra” (11:1 LXX). Assuming that this refers to Ptolemy XII and Cleopatra VI, this reference would yield a date after circa 77 BCE.¹⁰² This colophon also gives

99. Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.26, 30–34. He is often identified with the Eupolemus of 1 Macc 8:17 and 2 Macc 4:11, with a date of 158/157 BCE, but there are problems with this date, as discussed in sec. 3.2 below.

100. See especially Welles 1934 for comparanda.

101. See Keddie 2013.

102. So Nickelsburg 2005, 173, following Bickermann 1944, 339–62. Moore (1977, 250) instead proposes Ptolemy IX and Cleopatra IV and thus a date after ca.

the work the title “the Purim Letter,” apparently in reference to the account of the events compiled by Mordecai mentioned in Esth 9:20. Among its most notable differences from the Hebrew book of Esther (MT Esther) is that it includes dreams and divine interpretations by Mordecai as well as fervent prayers by both Esther and Mordecai for divine deliverance. As noted, the date of LXX Esther is debated, but it probably belongs to the middle part of the first century BCE or later, and there are direct connections between this Greek version and 3 Maccabees, notably in the use of embedded letter decrees from the king as a central expression of the plot line (initial hatred toward Jews turns to admiration and respect after divine intervention).¹⁰³

The book 3 Maccabees (section 3.4) is clearly a variation on the basic Esther-Mordecai story; instead of being set in Assyria (or the Persian period in Greek Esther), the story is set in Ptolemaic Egypt, specifically under Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204 BCE). There are numerous other similarities in the storyline: a feast of the Jews at which they are to be rounded up for execution (3 Macc 4:1–21; Esth 8:17); an evil adviser to the king (Hermon in 3 Macc 5:1, etc.; Haman in Esth 3:1, etc.), and so forth. Yet there are key elaborations on the story, such as the fanciful scheme to have the Jews slaughtered by a rampaging heard of crazed elephants as entertainment for the king (5:1–6:29). This story is apparently based on a similar tale preserved by Josephus (*C. Ap.* 2.53–56), but the latter is set in the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon (145–116 BCE). The version in 3 Maccabees shows some confusing confluences of historical details in this regard. Erich Gruen calls it “clumsy and inelegant, a patchwork of inconsistencies and improbabilities.”¹⁰⁴ In the end, the plot turns burlesque, as the “registration” of Jews bogs down; three times over the elephants fail to “perform” as desired. The king becomes indecisive, while Hermon is increasingly castigated and befuddled. Instead, the fervent prayers of an old Jewish priest named Eleazar summon angels to save the Jews by turning the elephants back on the Egyptian soldiers. The name Eleazar seems particularly apt here, as it is also the name of the faithful martyr of 2 Macc 6:18–31 (see also 4 Macc 5–7) and the high priest of Ep.

114 BCE; however, Ptolemy IX had two wives named Cleopatra, so the date might be still later in his reign. For the Ptolemaic rulers, see the appendix to this volume.

103. On the late Ptolemaic dating of LXX Esther, see Passoni Dell’Acqua 2004, 72–88.

104. Gruen 1998, 224; nor is the version in Josephus any more realistic (228–29).

Arist. §41 (as well as the eldest of the seventy-two translators);¹⁰⁵ in each case he is depicted as a venerable and pious old priest. He thus begins to sound like a stock character of sorts. As in Greek Esther, the decrees of the king, first to arrest the Jews and then to pardon and protect them with special privileges, are given in the form of embedded letters (3 Macc 3:12–30 and 7:1–9) complete with standard Greek greeting formulas.¹⁰⁶

The precise relation between Greek Esther (LXX) and 3 Maccabees is complex, as both seem now to come from Egypt in the middle to later part of the first century BCE.¹⁰⁷ It has been argued, on the one hand, that 3 Maccabees is derived from Greek Esther with a date after 24/23 BCE, based on the use of the term *λαογραφία* for “census” in 2:28.¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, it has been argued that Greek Esther was dependent on 3 Maccabees, thus possibly suggesting a date before 77 BCE.¹⁰⁹ Either way, the two works are closer in time and language to one another, and intertextual connections are likely involved.¹¹⁰ Most recently, Anthony Keddie has proposed a late Ptolemaic date for 3 Maccabees based on the relations to decrees of *ἀσυλία* (“asylum,” literally “inviolability”) known from inscriptions and

105. Ep. Arist. 184; on the name and variants in the manuscripts, see the note there.

106. The greeting formula of 3:12 and 7:1 is *χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι*, the same as that used in Ep. Arist. §35 (in the letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar). This formula does not appear before ca. 160 BCE; so Alexander 1984, 585–86, following Exler 1923, 60, 64. Klauck (2006, 21–22) says it began to go out of style by ca. 90 BCE. Our own recent survey of the papyrological corpora shows, however, that at 160 BCE the use was still anomalous. It only came into wide usage after ca. 130 BCE and continued down to the first and second centuries CE, even after other formulas (such as *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν* or the nearly ubiquitous *πλεῖστα χαίρειν*) became popular. The *χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι* formula continues to appear in the following datable papyri from the first century BCE to the second century CE: BGU 8.1471 (63 BCE), 8.1755 (52 BCE), 8.1756 (58 BCE), 8.1757 (58 BCE), 8.1760 (50 BCE), 8.1769 (47 BCE), 8.1788 (61–60 BCE), 8.1872 (50 BCE), 8.1875 (52–51 BCE), 8.1882 (62–61 BCE), 16.2612 (15 BCE); P.Erl. 117 (first century CE); P.Mil.Cong. xiv, 102 (2 BCE); P.Princ. 3.160 (25–1 BCE); PSI 8.968 (first century BCE), 8.969 (51 BCE), 9.1079 (first century BCE), 15.1513 (108 BCE–54 CE); SB 18.13614 (second to third century CE).

107. On the late Ptolemaic dating of 3 Maccabees, see Passoni Dell’Acqua 1997, 786–94.

108. Tcherikover 1961, 11–18.

109. Assuming Bickermann’s dating of the colophon to Greek Esther (11:1 LXX), discussed above; see Nickelsburg 2005, 172.

110. Hacham 2007, 765–85.

other texts.¹¹¹ At least one of these, from the early Roman period, may deserve special notice here, as it shows the local Jews from an Egyptian village placarding an ἄσχυλον decree that had earlier been granted to their local prayer hall (προσευχή) by Ptolemy VIII.¹¹² This particular inscription shows that the same community had later received permission to republish the original decree in Greek with a Greek preamble and a *Latin codicil* from Cleopatra VII (47–31 BCE) upholding the grant of inviolability. This may say something about the value of such royal decrees in how local Jewish communities presented themselves in Hellenistic Egyptian society, and thus why all these embedded letters became important in apologetic Jewish literature of the diaspora. Still to be considered is why such elaborate, and rather far-fetched, fictions continued to be produced among and for Alexandrian Jews.

Meanwhile, various literary relationships have also been proposed between 3 Maccabees and Epistle of Aristeeas. In large measure this is due to the fact that they are both set squarely in the Alexandrian orbit, yet take quite opposite views of the attitude of the Ptolemaic court toward the Jewish population of Egypt. Stephen Tracy held that Epistle of Aristeeas was in fact a reaction to the heavy-handed polemic of 3 Maccabees.¹¹³ Moses Hadas took the opposite view, that 3 Maccabees was a reaction to the “assimilationist” message of Epistle of Aristeeas.¹¹⁴ Others, such as Victor Tcherikover, posed it as opposition of an Alexandrian Jewish aristocracy versus Palestinian “traditionalists” or proponents of the Septuagint over against the Hebrew.¹¹⁵ All these theories carry significant implications for the date and setting of both works. Hadas himself placed Epistle of Aristeeas sometime in the late second century BCE (after 132);¹¹⁶ alternatively, a literary relationship to 3 Maccabees or Greek Esther would place it much later, in the mid- to late first century BCE.¹¹⁷ At least one important study, that of Erich Gruen, suggests that the two works are in reality more similar

111. Keddie 2016.

112. *CIJ* 1449; *CPJ* 3.1449. For text with translation and discussion, see below, sec. 3.5 (no. 5).

113. Tracy 1928, 241–52.

114. Hadas 1949, 175–84.

115. Tcherikover 1958; Hadas 1951, 66–73. All these alternative theories are discussed by Gruen 1998, 212.

116. Hadas 1951, 54.

117. The dating problem will be discussed in greater detail in sec. 1.1. Based on a study of the Greek, as reflected in the translation below, my own view is that a

in their outlook toward diaspora culture and experience under the domination of Hellenistic monarchs.¹¹⁸ The stress in both is on “concord” rather than enmity; however, it would be too simple to argue that the *Epistle of Aristeas*, with its much more positive portrayal of Ptolemy II, promotes a naïve synthesis between Judaism and Hellenism.¹¹⁹ Ultimately, Gruen places all of these works, including *Epistle of Aristeas*, in the first century BCE,¹²⁰ and a compelling implication of his study is that they must all be read in some proximity to one another. In the end, it may be suggested that a fresh look at the role of epistolarity within each of these creative Jewish fictions, with its attendant stress on ideals of friendship and concord, moral progress and virtue, will shed new light on the rhetorical posture of each work, and with it their setting and purpose as reflections of the Jewish experience in the Hellenistic diaspora.

[LMW]

date in the later first century BCE (or perhaps a bit later, down to the time of Philo) is most likely.

118. Gruen 1998, 206–36, esp. 231 for the common view.

119. Gruen 1998, 233 and 221, respectively.

120. Gruen 1998, 226.

1

The Epistle of Aristeas

1.1. Introduction

The Epistle of Aristeas (Ep. Arist.) is one of the most important texts for the study of Hellenistic Judaism and the Greco-Roman world. The stated recipient of the narrative is Philocrates, the brother of the ostensible author, Aristeas (§7). Philocrates has requested a personal account of Aristeas's "audience" with Eleazar, the high priest of the Jews, including its purpose, subject, and outcome (§1). The report begins with the following episode. Demetrius of Phalerum,¹ presented as librarian to Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 BCE) in Alexandria, is attempting to collect all the books in the world (§9). When Demetrius notices that his growing collection of texts hitherto does not include the laws of the Jews, he informs Ptolemy of the gap and appries him of the language problem. These books, though extremely worthy of study, are not in Greek and thus deserve translation to make them accessible (§11). The king consequently writes a letter to Eleazar the Jewish high priest in Jerusalem requesting his assistance in making a translation of the law. The letter is carried by an official delegation led by Aristeas himself. The high priest Eleazar responds enthusiastically in a letter; he then sends seventy-two translators to Alexandria to complete the task.² Both letters and the memoranda of Demetrius are given as "embedded letters" within Aristeas's own letter. Yet not until the end of his letter (§§301–321) does Aristeas relate the famed outcome, the exact translation

1. On Demetrius of Phalerum as a historical figure, legendary persona, and character in Epistle of Aristeas, see sec. 2.3.2 below.

2. Ep. Arist. §51. However, the sixth name from the fourth tribe is missing (§48), so the total is actually seventy-one. Epiphanius (*Mens.* 9.51d) gives the fourth tribe as Judah, but he also omits the sixth name. Thackeray (1902, 560) proposes the name *Χαβρίας*.

of the Jewish law into Greek after seventy-two days. In the intervening sections (§§51–300) are a series of vignettes that reveal that the document is more complex and its contents more varied than its proem purports. Nonetheless, the text maintains the epistolary fiction throughout.

Authorship

Aristeas is the putative writer of the letter. According to Ep. Arist. §19 he is a member of the delegation Ptolemy II sends to Eleazar to request assistance on the translation. When the name Aristeas appears in the text, it is usually paired with a certain Andreas, a chief of the king's bodyguards.³ Andreas is presumably with Aristeas when Demetrius reports to Ptolemy II concerning the wanting status of the library, as well as when Aristeas first speaks to the king.⁴ This Andreas, therefore, seems to be a trusted confidant of Aristeas, although neither a title nor an exact description of their relationship is ever given. Moreover, Aristeas is depicted as a member of Ptolemy's court who is frequently in Ptolemy's presence, one able to speak directly to the king and one on whom the king looks favorably.⁵ In light of this, both Josephus in his *Antiquitates Judaicae* and Eusebius in his *Praeparatio evangelica* propagate a distinguished image for the author Aristeas.⁶ While Andreas and Sosibius are clearly identified as Ptolemy's "chief bodyguards" (ἀρχισωματοφύλακας) in Ep. Arist. §12, Aristeas is never explicitly equated with them, even though he is closely linked to Andreas within the text. Significantly, there was also another famous Andreas at the Alexandrian court, the doctor of Ptolemy IV Philopator, who was murdered in place of the king before the Battle of Raphia in 217 BCE.⁷ This is the story with which 3 Maccabees opens (1:3), although the

3. E.g., §§12, 19, 40, 43, 173. As a result, later sources identify Aristeas either as another chief guard or Ptolemy's chamberlain and confidant. See Josephus, *A.J.* 12.18.

4. Note the first-person plural in §10: παρόντων οὖν ἡμῶν. Cf. §14: τοιούτοις ἐχρησάμεθα λόγοις πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα.

5. In §10 Aristeas reports overhearing the conversation between Ptolemy and Demetrius; in §125 he reports hearing Ptolemy II utter a wise saying about good advisers and frank speech. In §§187–296 Aristeas is noted as being in earshot of Ptolemy's conversations during the seven banquets. See also §§15–17, 19 where Ptolemy is described as διανακύψας καὶ προσβλέψας ἰλαρῶ τῷ προσώπῳ.

6. Josephus, *A.J.* 12.17, 19, 24; Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* esp. 8.2–5. On Josephus's version of Epistle of Aristeas, see sec. 2.2 below; on Eusebius's version, see sec. 2.4.3.

7. See Fraser 1972, 1:358, 369.

name Andreas is omitted in favor of the “renegade Jew” Dositheos, who ostensibly saved the king.⁸

Although the putative writer Aristeas is posed as a Greek of the Ptolemaic court, the details of Jewish practices and of temple worship strewn throughout the work suggest that the unknown author is Jewish. There has been some discussion as to whether the author of Epistle of Aristeas was the Jewish historian of the same name, now typically called Aristeas the Exegete, who lived in the late second and early first century BCE.⁹ The latter produced a paraphrase of the book of Job based on the expanded LXX version; his writings were preserved by Alexander Polyhistor in the mid-first century BCE. In this volume we refer to “Aristeas the Exegete” by that name and call the author of Epistle of Aristeas “Pseudo-Aristeas”¹⁰ While later writers such as Eusebius seem to have considered them the same,¹¹ such an equation is not made explicit within the text, although it may be hinted.¹² Most scholars would now say they were two separate individuals, and on this basic point we concur.¹³ Even so, the statements in Ep. Arist. §6 about a “record [ἀναγραφὴν] *Concerning the Race of the Jews*” that Aristeas “formerly sent” to Philocrates may well suggest that Epistle of Aristeas was intended to be read this way.¹⁴ If so, it heightens the fictional conceit of the work. There are significant connections between the two works that make the association more plausible, such as the use of the distinctive term for “Syriac language” (Συριακῇ, Ep. Arist. §11), also found in

8. For this Dositheos, see sec. 3.5. (no. 7) below as well as sec. 3.4 on 3 Maccabees.

9. Freudenthal 1874, 141–43.

10. In scholarship, Aristeas the Exegete is often called Aristeas I, while the author of Epistle of Aristeas is designated Aristeas II. Aristeas the Exegete is also sometimes called Aristeas the Historian, and the author of Epistle of Aristeas is frequently labeled Pseudo-Aristeas. In this volume, when we discuss the author of Epistle of Aristeas, as opposed to the character Aristeas, we use the name Pseudo-Aristeas for the unknown author. For the *testimonia* and further discussion, see sec. 2.3.1 below.

11. *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4; Eusebius gives the title of this work as *Concerning the Jews* (Περὶ Ἰουδαίων).

12. Wacholder (1974, 5 n. 23) leaves open the possibility that the same author composed both. See also Tramontano 1931, 44. For those who argue against the same author, see Doran 1985b, 857; Attridge 1984, 168; Walter 1975, 293; Denis 1970, 259.

13. Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 22; Holladay 1983, 1:261–66; Wacholder 1974.

14. As suggested by L. M. White 2015, 201–2. For the text, see notes to Ep. Arist. §6.

the LXX of Job 42:17b, the same passage quoted by Aristeas the Exegete.¹⁵ It would further suggest that the author of Epistle of Aristeas intentionally cultivated this fiction. These are examined in the introduction to Aristeas the Exegete below (section 2.3).

Date

While scholars unanimously agree that this text must be dated much later than the time of the events it narrates, proposed dates span three centuries, from 250 BCE to 37 CE. In recent years, however, a consensus has begun to develop around a date of production in the mid- to late second century BCE. In what follows, we shall survey the internal contradictions within the work that suggest a later date, the range of scholarly proposals and arguments, and more recent evidence that may commend a date of composition even later than the emerging consensus.

A number of anachronisms in Ptolemaic court history and terminology, as well as in Judean political geography, point to a date no earlier than the second century BCE,¹⁶ but some of these may well suggest a date in the first century BCE.¹⁷ The internal setting of the text places it early in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–247 BCE). The reference to Queen Arsinoe II, sister and wife of Ptolemy II (in the epistolary address of §41) would seem to place the events described securely between 278 and 270 BCE.¹⁸ On the other hand, the ostensible setting depends on the lofty role

15. For the texts, see the notes at Ep. Arist. §11 and in sec. 2.3.1 below.

16. For example, the term ἀρχισωματοφύλακες (“chief bodyguards”) noted in Ep. Arist. §§12, 40 has been shown to be a later Ptolemaic term, so Bickermann 1930, 280–98; Meecham 1932, 94–109. Bickermann especially championed a late second-century date based on this evidence. On the evolution of these titles in the Ptolemaic court (generally belonging to the second century BCE and later), see Fraser 1972, 1:101–4; 2:970 n. 121; Mooren 1975, 27–32, 215–22.

17. A thorough discussion of the dating problem is given in Clancy 2002, 207–25.

18. Additional internal parameters on the date are provided by the reference to Ptolemy’s sister Arsinoe II (§41), who became queen in 278 BCE and died in 270 BCE. See also Fraser 1972, 1:236 and n. 367. Arsinoe I, who was not his sister, had been banished by ca. 280 BCE (Fraser 1972, 1:347, 369). Furthermore, Ep. Arist. §201 places Menedemus of Eretria in the court of Philadelphus, but he died in approximately 287 BCE, before the beginning of Philadelphus’s reign in 285 BCE (Hadas 1951, 7). It is doubtful that Menedemus was actually at the Ptolemaic court. Additionally, Ep. Arist. §§28 and 295–300 anachronistically reflect a long tradition of court records under

assigned within the story to Demetrius of Phalerum. According to other sources, however, after 307 BCE, the former Athenian statesman Demetrius (ca. 350–282 BCE) had become an adviser to Ptolemy I Soter, but in 285 BCE he imprudently supported an elder son (half-brother to Philadelphus and Arsinoe) as successor. Consequently, Demetrius was banished by Ptolemy II in 283 BCE—only two years after his accession but some five years before his marriage to Arsinoe. Demetrius died shortly thereafter.¹⁹ Later patristic *testimonia* nevertheless assign the events within the letter to the seventh or seventeenth year of Ptolemy II (i.e., 278/277 or 268/267 BCE) or somewhat later, and well after Arsinoe's death.²⁰

Furthermore, in Ep. Arist. §180 there is a reference to a royal commemoration of Ptolemy's earlier "victory in the naval battle against Antigonus," which the king himself then made a day of commemoration for the translation of the Jewish scriptures as well. That would place the translation after this major battle; however, the naval victory over Antigonus could refer either to the Battle of Kos in 258 BCE (actually a defeat) or the Battle of Andros in 247 BCE (or perhaps as late as 245 BCE, shortly after the death of Ptolemy II).²¹ Meanwhile, Philo (*Mos.* 2.41) confirms the fact that in his day there was on Pharos an annual celebration of the translation of the law by Jews and others but does not mention the Ptolemaic victory commemoration. Thus, there are substantial internal problems with the ostensible date of the letter.

the Ptolemaic kings, affirming that all state affairs "used to be carried out [διωκεῖτο] by means of decrees and with the most painstaking accuracy by these kings [τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τούτοις]" (§28; see Willrich 1900, 118–30; Février 1925, 22–31).

19. See Thackeray 1903, 337–38; Andrews 1913, 2:83; Holladay 1995, 3:213 n. 70; Gruen 1998, 209. Despite these internal problems, the reference in Ep. Arist. §12 to the conquest of Coele-Syria by Ptolemy I, there called "the king's father," makes the reference to Ptolemy II clear within the text. But this raises further problems because Epistle of Aristeas thereby makes Ptolemy II the prime mover behind the formation of the library and thus the occasion for his seeking to include the Jewish scriptures. On the problems surrounding Demetrius and the library, see Bagnall 2002, 349–50. For further discussion, see sec. 2.3.2.

20. Epiphanius (*Mens.* 332–334) gives the date as "the seventh year of Philadelphus, more or less," but other later Christian writers provide different enumerations (seventeenth, nineteenth, twentieth). In the fragments later ascribed to Aristobulus, however, the translation is placed either under Ptolemy I Lagos or Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

21. See Andrews 1913, 2:83, 111.

The basic dates scholars have assigned to the text fall into quite disparate ranges, from as early as 250–200 BCE to as late as 33–37 CE.²² Schürer, for example, assumed a date “not later than 200 BC” based on the “fact” that the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus—at least according to Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.2)—refers to its story of the translation of the Jewish scriptures. Thus Schürer assumes a date well before Aristobulus (ca. 170–145 BCE) and roughly a half-century after the events described.²³ Aside from the often-noted difficulties in determining literary dependence between the account attributed to Aristobulus and Epistle of Aristeas, it is also unclear that the work of Aristobulus even included the story of the translation.²⁴ Most scholars, however, have dated Epistle of Aristeas to the second century BCE, with dates ranging from the 170s to 145–125 BCE.²⁵ Bickermann popularized the latter date range in an influential study in which he used the text’s epistolary formulae and administrative language in concert with papyrological data to situate the text’s production in the third quarter of the second century BCE.²⁶ Building on Bickermann’s work, some scholars have proposed more specific dates, including just after 132 BCE and 128–113 BCE.²⁷ In his important recent study of

22. For the former, see Stricker 1956; Schürer 1973–1987, 3:379–82; for the latter, see Graetz 1876, 306–7; Willrich 1900, 111–30.

23. Schürer 1973–1987, 3:679–82.

24. On the relationship between Epistle of Aristeas and Aristobulus, see the discussion of the questionable fragments of Aristobulus in sec. 2.4.2.

25. For the former, see Orlinsky 1952; Pelletier 1962b; Jellicoe 1968, 47–52; Fraser 1972, 1:696; 2:970 n. 121; Shutt 1985, 2:9. For the latter, in addition to Bickerman 1930, see Thackeray 1903, 339; Meecham 1932, 94–109; Mogmiliano 1932, 161–72; Meecham and Thackeray 1935, 332–33; Hadas 1951, 3–54; Tcherikover 1958, 60; Klijn 1965, 154; Van’t Dack 1968, 263–78; Meisner 1973, 43; Bar-Kochva 1996, 271–78; J. Collins 2000, 98–101; Fernández Marcos 2001, 41; Honigman 2003b: 128–30; Doering 2012, 217 n. 11.

26. In particular, Bickermann (1930), citing the papyri and inscriptions at his disposal, made several important claims: that the epistolary greeting formula *χαίρειν καὶ ἐπρωσθαι* (§35; see also 3 Macc 3:12; 7:1) was conventionally used from the mid- to late second century BCE; that the epistolary petition formula *καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις* (§§39, 46) drops out of use around 100 BCE; that the epistolary formula *ἐὰν οὖν φαίνεται* (§32) without a dative pronoun only occurs between 163 and 70 BCE; and that the Ptolemaic administrative designation *ἀρχισωματοφύλακες* (§40) only occurs in the plural in papyri from 155 to 110 BCE. But see n. 34 below.

27. For 132 BCE, Hadas (1951) argued that Epistle of Aristeas does not promote the original LXX but a revision of it; moreover, he argued that this propaganda is a

Epistle of Aristeas, Doering also accepts this late second-century BCE date range.²⁸

There have also always been some proponents for a later date. Following Thackeray, Andrews proposed a date between 130 and 70 BCE, while Wendland narrowed the date to between 96 and 63 BCE.²⁹ Moreover, various scholars have argued for dates in the later Ptolemaic period (i.e., 100–30 BCE) for 3 Maccabees and Greek Esther, while also noting literary connections between these texts and Epistle of Aristeas.³⁰ Meanwhile, Alexander Polyhistor, who preserved many of these fragmentary Jewish sources (including Aristeas the Exegete), seems to have had no knowledge of our text. If Philo's account of the translation of the Torah into Greek (described in *Mos.* 2.25–41) presupposes that of the Epistle of Aristeas (as appears likely), then it provides the earliest clear *terminus ante quem* for the existence of the text.³¹ Therefore, a date in the final decades of Ptolemaic rule to the early Roman period is quite possible.

response to the prologue to Ben Sira (132 BCE), in which Ben Sira's grandson's comments reflect a critical stance toward the original LXX. For 128–113 BCE, Bar-Kochva (1996, 273–78) emphasized that parts of Samaria not under Judean control until after 145 BCE are described as Judean in §107 (cf. Bickermann 1930). Additionally, the description of the Jewish citadel in §§100–104 suggests independence from both the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, pointing toward a Hasmonean date after 141 BCE. See also Meisner 1973, 43; Fernández Marcos 2001.

28. Doering 2012, 217 n. 11.

29. Andrews 1913, 2:86; Wendland (1900, xvii), for example, assumed that Epistle of Aristeas has Pharos inhabited; therefore, he gave 63 BCE as the *terminus ante quem* based on Strabo (*Geogr.* 17.6), who said that Pharos was not inhabited “after Caesar's war.” Conversely, Willrich (1900, 118) assumed that Pharos should have been uninhabited at the time. For a date in the first half of the first century BCE, see also Lange 2009, 68–69; Momigliano 1932, 161–72 (citing the relationship between Epistle of Aristeas and 1 Maccabees).

30. On the late Ptolemaic dating of Greek Esther, see sec. 3.3 below. On lexical similarities between 2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, Greek Esther, and Epistle of Aristeas, see Emmet 1913, 1:156.

31. Andrews (1913, 2:91) argues that he does, although Cohn (1899, 521) takes the opposite view. Philo's description of the translation work bears striking similarities, but the issues are too complex to discuss here. The supposed date of Alexander Polyhistor (ca. 50 BCE) is often cited in this literature, since he seems to have been a major source for Eusebius (especially for his quotations from Aristobulus); however, if the problems with Aristobulus noted above are correct, it raises questions of this point, too.

In fact, there are important reasons why a date from the mid-first century BCE or later (extending into the early Roman period) should continue to merit consideration.³² First, Epistle of Aristeas evinces striking thematic, formal, and lexical similarities with 2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, and Greek Esther. In concert with the revisionist dating of these texts to the early to mid-first century BCE, Epistle of Aristeas might also be found to fit that date range. Second, in addition to several ideological and philosophical parallels between Epistle of Aristeas and Philo and the fact that they both relate the story of the LXX translation, there are also remarkable lexical concurrences between Pseudo-Aristeas and Philo.³³ Third, since the time that Bickerman set the widely accepted date of Epistle of Aristeas, new papyrological evidence has emerged that pushes his *terminus ante quem* for Epistle of Aristeas at least into the mid-first century BCE if not later.³⁴ Finally, the mention of an earlier “written record” in Ep. Arist. §6 may be understood as referring to the paraphrase of Greek Job (noted above) produced between the late second to mid-first century BCE and attributed to Aristeas in antiquity (now called Aristeas the Exegete).³⁵ Such dependence on LXX Job and its subsequent paraphrase would then push the composition of Epistle of Aristeas two stages later than the Greek version of Job itself and down to the time of Alexander Polyhistor or later.

Provenance

While the exact location is not known, Alexandria is the standard hypothesis for the provenance of Epistle of Aristeas. On the one hand, the story is set there, and the author appears to have a fair knowledge of the city, as,

32. See L. M. White 2015. Additional evidence will be addressed in a forthcoming publication by the authors.

33. Many of these will be highlighted in the notes to the text and translation below.

34. For instance, the epistolary formula *χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι* has several attestations in the mid-first century BCE, including *CPJ* 1.141 (πλ[ε]ῖστα χαίρ[ε]ιν καὶ ἔρρωσται), and even some dating to the first centuries CE. Similarly, the epistolary formula *καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις* does not disappear around 100 BCE, as argued by Bickerman, but continues through the first century BCE and also has some attestations in the Common Era. Furthermore, the epistolary formula *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν* in 2 Macc 1:10; 9:19, which may be reflected in the use of *ὑγιαίνομεν* in Ep. Arist. §41, has its earliest attestations in papyri from the mid-first century BCE (ca. 67–60).

35. For the allusions to this earlier work, see the notes to Ep. Arist. §§6 and 11 below. For Aristeas “the Exegete” in Eusebeius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4, see sec. 2.3.1 below.

for instance, in the detail of the jetty.³⁶ On the other hand, there seems to be solid apologetic evidence within the text for positing an Alexandrian setting. In Ep. Arist. §318 Ptolemy II Philadelphus invites the translators to visit him after their return to Judea, and whenever they visit, he says, he will treat them as friends with the greatest hospitality. This final invitation of Ptolemy to the Jewish envoys to return with honors could thus be understood as a founding legend for the Alexandrian Jewish communities much like the account of Pseudo-Hecataeus.³⁷

Relationship to the LXX

Epistle of Aristeas evinces significant linguistic and thematic links with contemporaneous literature by Jews in Ptolemaic and early Roman Egypt. Discussion of these individual relationships can be found in each of the other introductions in this volume, so there is no need to repeat that material here. One particular relationship is not addressed elsewhere and deserves attention here: Epistle of Aristeas's connection to the Septuagint.

As has been observed in virtually every study of the Epistle of Aristeas, its account of the translation of the Jewish law from Hebrew into Greek is relatively brief and thus should not be viewed as the *raison d'être* of the text.³⁸ Given the later date of the Epistle of Aristeas and the recognition of many anachronisms in the work, it also should not be taken uncritically as an etiology for the origins of the Greek translation of the Torah. Indeed, the text itself betrays careful engagement with the Greek scriptures—the Torah especially, but also prophetic books ranging from Job to Daniel and even the Greek version of Sirach. The standard scholarly view of the LXX's evolution is that the first Greek translations of the Hebrew scriptures were of the Torah or Pentateuch, and this occurred sometime in the third century BCE, most likely in Alexandria.³⁹ As the notes to the text and transla-

36. Ep. Arist. §301. On the other hand, the descriptions of the unspecified "city," temple of the Jewish people, and priestly duties are more specific in comparison, but this may speak to the emphasis of the particular passage or indeed the work as a whole. See Ep. Arist. §§83–120.

37. On Pseudo-Hecataeus, see sec. 2.3.3.

38. There has been a great deal of discussion concerning whether the author of Epistle of Aristeas meant "translation" or "transcription." See Wright 2008b; Dorival 1987. Approaching the study of the LXX and its translation vis-à-vis Epistle of Aristeas is common. See De Crom 2008, 141–60; Scott 2010, 1–28; Janowitz 1991, 129–40.

39. Wright 2008a: 297; Kraus and Wooden 2006, 2; Fernández Marcos 2001,

tion below indicate, Epistle of Aristeas is less an introduction to the Greek scriptures than an exposition of them, drawing on books that were not translated until the second century BCE or later. Furthermore, as Wright has noted, the idea that the translators produced an exemplary work of Greek philosophy and literature and that it was independent of its source text, prestigious, and highly acceptable in the target culture could only make sense once the LXX was independent of its Hebrew *Vorlage* and thus only after the two were considered separate.⁴⁰

Once Epistle of Aristeas is removed of its burden as historical evidence for the origins of the LXX, it emerges as a strong endorsement of the Greek scriptures from a later perspective. Several theories have been developed in this regard. Jellicoe and Meisner, for instance, thought that Epistle of Aristeas validated the LXX as an authoritative text in contradistinction to a translation from the Jewish community of Leontopolis.⁴¹ The problem is that we do not know of any such translation, and the text seems wholly unconcerned with the Leontopolis community.⁴² Another theory is that Epistle of Aristeas's emphasis on the accuracy of the translation should be understood as support for a particular translation (or revision) as authoritative contra other translations in circulation, perhaps in an effort at standardization.⁴³ This is a plausible but unnecessary theory. Keeping in mind that, beyond the account of the translation and the discourse on the Jewish law, the relationship of the Ptolemaic king to the Jews is central to the text, it is reasonable to conclude that the text uses the LXX translation as a means to demonstrate the king's abiding interest in and concern for the Jews in his kingdom.

50–53; Peters 1992, 5:1094; Schürer 1973–1987, 3:476; Bartlett 1985, 4. The scholarship on the LXX is vast. For a good introduction, see Peters 1992. For bibliographies, see Brock, Fritsch, and Jellicoe 1973; Dogniez 1995.

40. Wright 2008b, 158–59. See also the discussion in Kraus and Wooden 2006, 2–6. For a discussion of Epistle of Aristeas vis-à-vis the text of the LXX, see Borchardt 2012, 9–15.

41. Jellicoe 1966, 144–50; 1968, 50; Meisner 1973, 43.

42. See J. Collins 2000, 101.

43. Kahle 1959, 211–14; Hadas 1951, 28. The prologue to Sirach, which expresses dissatisfaction at the impossibility of translating Hebrew accurately into Greek, is important evidence for this theory. On the relation between these texts, see further Lange 2009.

Audience and Purpose

Tcherikover proposed that Epistle of Aristeas and related texts were written primarily for Jews for edification and as apologetics,⁴⁴ though not necessarily to the exclusion of non-Jewish readers. Most specialists would now agree that Epistle of Aristeas was written for the Jews in Alexandria. Recognition of the epistolary quality of the text yields fresh insights into its possible functions within the Alexandrian Jewish community.

First, the embedded epistles and the official delegations bridge the gap between Alexandria and Jerusalem, between diaspora and homeland. By including letters exchanged between the Egyptian sovereign and the Jewish high priest (§§33–40, 41–46), the text imagines some sort of official Judean validation of the Alexandrian Jewish community and its Greek scriptures. At the same time, the epistolary situation created by this exchange of letters is used to explain the exchange of persons and gifts between these authorities (§§47–82), allowing the author to claim that the translators themselves came from Judea. These epistles thus make Judean Judaism appear proximate to Alexandrian Judaism both ideologically and spatially through the mechanism of epistles.

Second, the relationship between the author and his brother serves as an authoritative, if fictitious, backdrop for the letter. Without it the document would not seem as authentic. The assumed genuineness of the epistolary form allowed the author to persuade and manipulate readers,⁴⁵ as it implied a certain candidness, importance, and authenticity that a speaker would not have. This lends greater gravitas to the claim that such prominent figures as Ptolemy Philadelphus, Demetrius, Hecataeus, Menedemus, Theopompus, as well as the Jewish high priest Eleazar endorsed the Jews of Alexandria and their Greek scriptures.

Third, the text's epistolary conceit puts the audience in the position of receiving moral instruction. Just as Aristeas has expressly recorded this account for the moral improvement and learning of Philocrates, this also goes for anyone who reads the letter. The audience of this moral advice is privy to universal aspects of Hellenistic wisdom combined with, or filtered through, a particularly Jewish exposition of God's sovereignty.⁴⁶ They are

44. Tcherikover 1956, 1958.

45. Rosenmeyer 2001, 263–64.

46. See Tcherikover 1958; Shutt 1985, 2:11; J. Collins 2000, 191–95; Klawans 1995, 296–97.

encouraged to keep the dietary laws, to honor their parents, and to live moderately with self-control, among other things.⁴⁷ One who accepts this instruction would abide by a set of Jewish ethics distinctively formulated to be commensurable with life with non-Jews in a Hellenistic city.

The final way that viewing Epistle of Aristeas as an epistolary novella helps to elucidate its purpose involves its political perspective. By crafting epistles in the name of the king, the author of Epistle of Aristeas joins the authors of Eupolemus, 2 Maccabees, Greek Esther, and 3 Maccabees in exploiting a primary medium of royal communication for an apologetic purpose. One of the foremost ways that Ptolemaic rulers were known to their subjects in Hellenistic Egypt was through epistolary decrees. It is no coincidence, then, that so many Jewish texts from this milieu feature royal letters. Whether as political critique or to craft royal acclamation, Jews used royal epistles to characterize the relationships of kings to the Jews in their kingdom, often implying (and imploring) current rulers through the cipher of earlier ones. Embedded epistles are used in Epistle of Aristeas to show that the king released the Jews from slavery, sought the approval and assistance of the high priest for the translation, and generally showed interest and favor toward the Jews.⁴⁸ This characterization is accomplished through epistles, with their distinctive language of friendship, patronage, and political alliance and through their conventions of exchange. Whatever else this author endeavored to accomplish, he sought to persuade the Jews in Alexandria of their favor in the eyes of the king.

Transmission History

The earliest certain transmissions of Epistle of Aristeas are *testimonia* from Josephus (*A.J.* 12.11), Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.1), and Epiphanius (*Mens.* 9–11). It is very likely that Philo (*Mos.* 2.25–44) is an early witness to it, but he never refers to the text explicitly. See section 2 below.

There are twenty-three manuscripts that contain the full text or excerpts of Epistle of Aristeas, ranging from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries.⁴⁹ Following Thackeray (1914), the manuscripts designated Group A seem to preserve the original form of the text better than the

47. See further L. M. White 2015.

48. Gruen 1998, 214. Cf. J. Collins 2000, 103; Murray 1967.

49. See Thackeray 1902, 501–18; 1914, 535–50; Pelletier 1962a, 8–41.

manuscripts that constitute Group B.⁵⁰ The latter contain recensions of the text that were edited by later scribes, sometimes significantly.⁵¹

[LMW, GAK, and MAF]

1.2. Genre and Form: An Outline with Epistolary Features

In much contemporary scholarship, as noted previously, the epistolary character and form of the Epistle of Aristeas has been questioned and generally dismissed, in large measure due to the fictional nature of the work. The “Aristeas” of the text was doubtless a fictional character, modeled perhaps on the earlier writer now known as Aristeas the Exegete. The “real” author (now called Pseudo-Aristeas) was almost certainly Jewish; however, that is not at all how the character “Aristeas” is presented within the text. Rather, he is a sympathetic Greek among the Friends (meaning the courtiers) of Ptolemy II. With some elaboration, that is just how Josephus depicts him as well.⁵² But to say that the character Aristeas within the fiction was Jewish, as is sometimes done,⁵³ is to miss the entire rhetorical posture and literary conceit of the work. It thus brings us to some important issues in reading the Epistle of Aristeas as Jewish fictional literature in the form of a letter. In sum, more attention ought to be given to it on the epistolary level, and, in that light, its date, rhetoric, and purpose must also be reconsidered.

50. Thackeray 1914 (a revision of Thackeray 1902). Other noteworthy critical editions include Schmidt 1867–1869; Wendland 1900; Pelletier 1962a.

51. Thackeray 1902, 501–18; 1914, 535–50. Cf. Shutt 1985, 2:8.

52. In his version of the Epistle of Aristeas (A.J. 12.12–117), Josephus says the following of Aristeas (Josephus consistently calls him Aristaios instead): “Now, there was a certain Aristeas [sic], a Friend, who was among the favorites of the king and was pursued earnestly by the king because of his moderation” (A.J. 12.17: Ἀρισταῖος δέ τις φίλος ὢν ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ σπουδαζόμενος ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ διὰ μετριότητα). These comments by Josephus form an expansion on the story but may be inferred from details within the Epistle of Aristeas itself. For the text and further discussion, see sec. 2.2.

53. See the comments of Klauck: “This work, which contains the legend of the origins of the Septuagint, presents itself as a trustworthy “narrative” or “account” (διήγησις) of the events that *the Alexandrian Jew Aristeas* writes to and for his brother Philocrates” (2006, 246, emphasis added); Shutt writes: “Presumably, Aristeas, *who was a Jew* from Alexandria, *participated in the embassy*” (1985, 2:7, emphasis added).

Epistolary Form

The Epistle of Aristeas was not referred to as an epistle (ἐπιστολή) in ancient *testimonia*, even though the title as preserved is typically epistolary in form. It was not until the fourteenth century that it began to receive the designation *letter* in manuscripts.⁵⁴ As has often been noted, the document lacks many of the formal epistolary features one might expect, such as the *subscriptio* with the name of sender and recipient or an opening salutation (the so-called *formula valetudinis*) and a closing health wish.⁵⁵ It is also quite lengthy and seems to refer to its contents as an “account” or “narrative” (διήγησις: §§1, 8, 322). For this reason, scholars have been quick to distance the text from the genre and social world of epistles,⁵⁶ with the exception of the embedded letters between Ptolemy II and Eleazar.

As noted in the introductory essay in this volume, however, the greeting formulas in these embedded letters indicate much more than dating; they convey information about genre and social relations. By presenting itself as an eyewitness account conveyed by Aristeas in written form to his brother Philocrates, the text invokes a personal epistolary situation. Noting its epistolary features, Doering recently redescribed the text as an “epistolary treatise” following the genre of scientific treatises.⁵⁷ On the other hand, the fictional nature of the work raises questions here. It is preferable to think of the text as an epistolary novella, similar to the Alexander Romance and Chion of Heraclea.⁵⁸ In the Epistle of Aristeas, a series of embedded epistles (§§29–32, 33–40, 41–46 + 47–51a; cf. the epistolary decree in §§21–27) facilitate a coherent, fictional story that is also transmitted in epistolary form and abounds in moral advice.

Key to this reading of the text is the consistent use of second-person addresses from Aristeas to Philocrates as a framing device for the main sections of the story. They appear in Ep. Arist. §§1, 4–7, 21, 51–52, 83, 120b, 128, 171, 295–300, and 322 and will be presented in this fashion in the epistolary outline that follows. The character and tone of these addresses derive consciously from the rhetoric of moral exhortation typi-

54. MS Parisinus Gr. 950. See Fernández Marcos 2001, 37.

55. For these standard letter components along with sample letters, see Klauck 2006, 18–25.

56. Among others, Hadas 1951, 54–59; Gruen 1998, 207; J. Collins 2000.

57. Cf. Doering 2012, 217–18, but he takes it to be based on some earlier legend.

58. On the epistolary novella, see Rosenmeyer 2001, 133–254.

cal of letters, and this ostensible setting is central to the fiction of the work. The “letter” is explicitly offered for the moral betterment of its recipient (§7). Here we may note the opening and closing exhortations from “Aristeas” to Philocrates:

It is also worthwhile that I should clarify these matters for you. 5 For I am convinced that, with your inclination toward holiness [πρόσκλινσιν πρὸς τὴν σεμνότητα] and toward the disposition [διάθεσιν] of men living in accordance with the holy legislation [σεμνὴν νομοθεσίαν], you will all the more readily follow the account that I propose to set forth, *since you yourself have lately come to us from the island and wish to understand all that it provides for equipping the soul.* (§§4b–5)

And now Philocrates, you yourself have my narrative [τὴν διήγησιν], just as I promised. For I think that you will delight in these books more than in those of the mythologists. *For you are inclined toward an intense pursuit of those things that can benefit the mind [ὠφελεῖν διάνοιαν] and spend much time in them.* Now I shall also attempt to record the rest of the noteworthy things, in order that, *by going through them thoroughly you may win the noblest prize for your aims.* (§322)

Meanwhile, the ostensible “narrative” of the translation proper is a miniscule part of the text, covering a mere 8 “verses” (or “sections”) out of the 322 total (following the Wendland/Thackeray enumeration of the text units).⁵⁹ Moreover, this component of the story, which only Eusebius makes the effective title of the work,⁶⁰ comes near the end (§§301–308).

59. Thackeray (1903/1914) followed the versification of Wendland (1900) in the Teubner edition of the text. The format of Wendland’s text coheres in lineametry with that of standard Teubner editions of classical texts, with ca. 15–23 lines of text per page and an *apparatus criticus*. In the Wendland/Thackeray enumeration, each verse/section number marks off basically one complete sentence in the Greek, or sometimes two, but the overall length of each numbered “verse” is relatively similar, typically ranging from 5 to 7 lines of Thackeray’s text. The shortest are just over 2 lines (§222, cf. §§85, 113, 295). The longest are just over 9 lines (§§24, 122). Thackeray’s text is 1,406 lines in total, and the average length per verse is thus just under 5 lines. It should be noted that Thackeray’s text has slightly longer lines than that of Wendland. The average length in Wendland is ca. 8 lines per verse/section, with the range being from a shortest of 3 lines to a longest of nearly 13.

60. In *Praep. ev.* 9.38, Eusebius describes the Epistle of Aristeas with an otherwise unattested title: ὁ Ἀριστέας ἐν τῷ γραφέντι αὐτῷ βιβλίῳ Περὶ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν

On the matter of length and order, we may note for comparison that the opening epistolary preamble (§§1–8) is as long as the entire seventy-two-day translation process (§§301–308) and about the same length as the embedded “royal correspondence” from Ptolemy to Eleazar (§§33–40) and Eleazar’s reply (§§41–51a). Thus the formal exchange of letters carries a good bit more weight than the translation itself.

Longer still are the sections devoted to the *ekphrastic* description of the gifts sent with Aristetas’s royal delegation to Jerusalem and the description of Jerusalem itself (§§52–82 and 84–120, or thirty and thirty-six verses, respectively). But by far the longest portion of the entire work is the description of the seven-day symposium that Ptolemy hosted for the visiting Jewish elders (§§182–300, or 118 sections in all). Significantly, all or most of these lengthy excursions are omitted in the versions of Josephus and Eusebius.⁶¹

Again, for comparison, the entire journey of the Egyptian delegation to Jerusalem takes only one “verse” (§83). Here is the comment of “Aristetas” that serves as its transitional flag:

Now since I assume the record of these gifts [sent by Ptolemy to Eleazar] to be compelling, I have described them for you. And what comes next [in our narrative] is an account of our journey to Eleazar, but I will first describe the layout of the whole country. (§83)

Similarly, their return with the Jewish translators is the same (§172). It, too, is prefaced by a second-person address of “Aristetas” to Philocrates:

I believe, then, that these things in our discussion have been worth narrating. That is why I have been led to make clear to you, Philocrates, the sanctity and natural meaning [σεμνότητα καὶ φυσικὴν διάνοιαν] of the law, for the sake of your love of learning [φιλομάθειαν]. (§171)

In each case, then, we see these epistolary addresses by “Aristetas” framing and sign-posting the successive elements of the story. Thus while the text clearly does present a “narrative” of the events surrounding the translation

⁶¹Ιουδαίων νόμου ταῦτα ἱστορεῖ (“Aristetas narrated these things in the book written by him *On the Translation of the Law of the Jews*”). The full text is given in sec. 2.4.3.

61. Eusebius includes a portion of the discussion between Aristetas and Eleazar concerning the “curiosities” in the food laws in *Praep. ev.* 8.9.

(as all recent commentators have noted), it consciously couches that narrative in epistolary terms.

The same amount of space (one section) is devoted to the description of and their move to the specially prepared scriptorium on Pharos (§301). Thus, except for the description of Jerusalem itself, which anchors the Egyptian delegation's embassy to Judea, normal descriptive features are noticeably lacking as narrative devices. Even change-of-location transitions are quite meager. As a result, it would seem out of place to view this work as any sort of historiography in overall genre (including geography and *periplus* literature), whether real or fanciful. Structurally, at least, what we have instead is the consistent use of second-person epistolary addresses from Aristeas to Philocrates running *throughout* the entire text. In fact, the direct-address sections of the work make up a total of twenty-four verse-sections in all, or triple that of the translation itself.

Meanwhile, before the delegation actually departs from Jerusalem, Aristeas is afforded the opportunity to interview the high priest Eleazar privately regarding certain "curiosities" (at least as viewed by non-Jews) of the dietary laws, again running on at considerable length (§§128–171, or forty-three verses). It is thus couched as "privileged personal knowledge" conveyed from sender to recipient, brother to brother.

In genre, then, we may argue that the Epistle of Aristeas assumes the form of a historical narrative (though fictional, to be sure) conveyed as privileged, personal communication in epistolary form. Overall, then, it functions as an epistolary novella whose purpose is to commend the moral value of the Jewish scriptures (in their Greek version). Of course, the hortatory effect is increased significantly by the elaborate fiction of the work, that is, by its noble setting in the Ptolemaic court, in the idealized relations and epistolary exchange between Ptolemy and Eleazar, in the extended philosophical discourse at the king's banquet, and ultimately in the portrayal, sparse though it may be, of the fantastic events that transpired in executing the translation. Thus the historical fiction of what happened cannot be separated either "narratively" or literarily from the epistolary fiction in which it was encased. In the end, these commendations to Philocrates function as indirect exhortations to those who would emulate his pursuit of virtue, by accepting the Jewish scriptures.⁶²

62. For a fuller version of this argument, see L. M. White 2015, 194–207; the outline with epistolary features also appears there (213–19).

In order better to see the literary character and function of these second-person address sections, we offer an outline of the entire text with the epistolary framing elements set out.

[LMW]

An Outline with Epistolary Features

1. Epistolary Preface (1–8)

a. Greeting formula and purpose of the letter (1–2)

Ἀριστεάς Φιλοκράτει

1 Ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως, ὦ Φιλόκρατες, περὶ τῆς γενηθείσης ἡμῖν ἐντυχίας πρὸς Ἐλεάζαρον τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερέα συνεσταμένης, διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι, παρ' ἑκάστα {ὑπομιμνήσκων}, συνακοῦσαι περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί, πεπειράμαι σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι σοι, κατειληφῶς ἣν ἔχεις φιλομαθῆ διάθεσιν, 2 ὅπερ μέγιστόν ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ—προσμανθάνειν αἰεὶ τι καὶ προσλαμβάνειν—ἥτοι κατὰ τὰς ἱστορίας, ἣ καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα πεπειραμένῳ. οὕτω γὰρ κατασκευάζεται ψυχῆς καθαρά διάθεσις, ἀναλαβοῦσα τὰ κάλλιστα· καὶ πρὸς τὸ πάντων κυριώτατον νενευκυῖα τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀπλανεῖ κεκρημένη κανόνι διοικεῖ.

Aristeas to Philocrates

1 Now that a noteworthy narrative has been compiled, O Philocrates, *concerning the audience afforded us with Eleazar the high priest of the Jews*, because you place such value on hearing point by point concerning what topics and why we undertook the mission, I have attempted to give a clear exposition of the matter for you, since I perceive what a disposition you possess for love of learning, 2 which is the greatest (type of disposition) for a person (to have)—“*ever to learn something more and make progress*”—whether through the study of history or by actually experiencing the events themselves. For in this way the soul's disposition is rendered pure, by taking up the noblest things, and, having fixed its aim on reverence as the noblest goal of all, it lives by adopting an unerring rule.

b. Aristeas's account of how his embassy to Jerusalem came about (3–8)

3 Τὴν προαίρεσιν ἔχοντες ἡμεῖς πρὸς τὸ περιέργως τὰ θεῖα κατανοεῖν, ἑαυτοὺς ἐπεδῶκαμεν εἰς τὸν προειρημένον ἄνδρα πρεσβείαν, καλοκάγαθῶς καὶ δόξῃ προτετιμημένον ὑπὸ τε τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ κατακεκτημένον μεγίστην

Since we possess a set purpose of gaining extensive knowledge of divine matters, we offered ourselves for an embassy to the aforementioned man [the high priest Eleazar], who was held in the highest esteem by his own citizens and by others both for his virtue and his majesty, since he was in full possession of documents of the highest value to his (fellow) citizens,

ὠφέλειαν τοῖς σὺν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους τόπους πολίταις, πρὸς τὴν ἑρμηνείαν τοῦ θείου νόμου, διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν διφθέραις Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν. 4 ἦν δὲ καὶ ἐποησάμεθα ἡμεῖς σπουδῇ, λαβόντες καιρὸν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα περὶ τῶν μετοικισθέντων εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως, πρῶτως κεκτημένου τὴν τε πόλιν καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον παρειληφότες. Ἀξιόν ἐστι καὶ ταῦτά σοι δηλῶσαι. 5 πέπεισμαι γὰρ σε μᾶλλον ἔχοντα πρόσκλισιν πρὸς τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων διάθεσιν τῶν κατὰ τὴν σεμνὴν νομοθεσίαν διεξαγόντων, περὶ ὧν προαιρούμεθα (δηλοῦν, ἀσμένως σε) ἀκούσεσθαι, προσφάτως παραγεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς νήσου πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ βουλόμενον συνακοῦειν ὅσα πρὸς ἐπισκευὴν ψυχῆς ὑπάρχει.

6 καὶ πρότερον δὲ διεπεμψάμην σοι περὶ ὧν ἐνόμιζον ἀξιολογούμενων εἶναι τὴν ἀναγραφὴν, ἣν μετελάβομεν παρὰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν λογιστάτην Αἴγυπτον λογιστάτων ἀρχιερέων, περὶ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων. 7 φιλομαθῶς γὰρ ἔχοντί σοι περὶ τῶν δυναμένων ὠφελεῖσθαι διάνοιαν δέον ἐστὶ μεταδιδόναι, μάλιστα μὲν πᾶσι τοῖς ὁμοίοις, πολλῶ δὲ μᾶλλον σοὶ γνησίαν ἔχοντι τὴν αἵρεσιν, οὐ μόνον κατὰ τὸ συγγενὲς ἀδελφῶ καθεστῶτι τὸν τρόπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ὁρμῇ τὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα ἡμῖν. 8 χρυσοῦ γὰρ χάρις ἢ κατασκευὴ τις ἄλλη τῶν τετιμημένων παρὰ τοῖς κενοδόξοις ὠφέλειαν οὐκ ἔχει τὴν αὐτήν, ὅσον ἡ παιδείας ἀγωγή καὶ ἡ περὶ τούτων φροντίς. ἵνα δὲ μὴ περὶ τῶν προλεγομένων μηχανούντες ἀδολεσχόν τι ποιῶμεν, ἐπὶ τὸ συνεχὲς τῆς διηγέσεως ἐπανήξομεν.

both those (dwelling) with him and those in foreign lands, with regard to the interpretation of the divine law; for their laws are written on leather parchments in Hebraic characters. 4 This embassy we have now accomplished with earnest zeal, having first of all found an opportunity of pleading with the king on behalf of the Jewish captives who had been transported from Judea to Egypt by the king's father, when he first took possession of this city and succeeded to (the rule of) the land of Egypt. It is also worthwhile that I should clarify these matters for you. 5 For I am convinced that, with your inclination toward holiness and toward the disposition of men living in accordance with the holy legislation, you will all the more readily follow the account that I propose to set forth, *since you yourself have lately come to us from the island and wish to understand* all that it provides for equipping the soul.

6 Now formerly, too, I sent you a record of those things I thought worthy of mention *Concerning the Race of the Jews*—the record that I had obtained from the most learned high priests of the most learned land of Egypt. 7 For since you possess a *love of learning* for those things that are able to *benefit the mind*, it is incumbent upon me to share these things, especially with all who have the same disposition, *but all the more so with you, since you possess such noble principles of conduct and since you by kinship are not only my brother with respect to character but also are the selfsame with me in the impulse toward goodness.* 8 For neither the pleasure derived from gold nor any other trappings of the possessions that are prized by shallow minds confers the same benefit as the pursuit of culture and the study that we expend in securing it. *But lest we make idle chatter by prolonging these introductory matters, we shall proceed at once to the substance of our narrative.*

2. The Background: Ptolemy, Demetrius, and the Jewish Books (9–82)
 - a. Ptolemy's charge to Demetrius of Phalerum regarding his library (9–11)
 - b. Aristes's intercession on behalf of the Jewish prisoners (12–20)
 - c. Copy of Ptolemy's Decree regarding the Jewish prisoners (21–27)

Aristes's comment on including the copy (21):

καὶ τοῦ προστάγματος δὲ τὸ ἀντίγραφον οὐκ ἄχρηστον οἶμαι κατακεχωρίσθαι. πολλῶ γὰρ ἢ μεγαλομοιρία φανερωτέρα καὶ εὐδῆλος ἔσται τοῦ βασιλέως, τοῦ θεοῦ κατισχύοντος αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σωτηρίαν γενέσθαι πλήθεσιν ἱκανοῖς.

I think it will be useful to insert a copy of the decree. For in this way the magnanimity of the king, who was empowered by God to save such vast multitudes, will be made much clearer and more manifest.

- d. The library and the Jewish books (28–29)
- e. Copy of Demetrius's memorandum to Ptolemy regarding the books (29–32)
- f. Copy of the letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar the high priest (33–40)
- g. Copy of Eleazar's reply to Ptolemy (41–46), with attachment, the list of the seventy-two elders (47–51a)
- h. Aristes's description (*ekphrasis*) of the gifts sent to Eleazar (51–82)

Aristes's introductory comment (51):

καὶ τὰ μὲν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴν τοιαύτης ἐτύγχανεν ἀντιγραφῆς [ὑπὸ] τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον.
Ὡς δὲ ἐπηγγειλάμην καὶ τὰ τῶν κατασκευασμάτων διασαφῆσαι ποιήσω. πολυτεχνία γὰρ διαφέροντα συνετελέσθη, τοῦ βασιλέως πολλὴν ἐπίδοσιν ποιουμένου καὶ παρ' ἑκάστου ἐπιθεωροῦντος τοὺς τεχνίτας, διὸ παριδεῖν οὐδὲν ἠδύναντο οὐδὲ εἰκῇ συντελέσαι. πρῶτον δὲ σοὶ τὰ περὶ τῆς τραπέζης ἐξηγήσομαι.

Such, then, was the answer to the king's letter that came from Eleazar and his circle.

Now, as I promised, I shall attempt to give a description of the gifts furnished. They were fashioned with exceptional skill, for the king spared no expense and personally superintended the workmen for each item. Wherefore, they were unable to ignore anything or to finish it negligently. First of all, I will give you a description of the table.

3. Aristes's Embassy to Jerusalem (83–120)

- a. Aristes's preliminary comment about his account (83):

Ἵπολαμβάνων οὖν καὶ τούτων τὴν
ἀναγραφὴν ἀναγκαίαν εἶναι, δεδήλωκά σοι.
τὰ δ' ἐξῆς περιέχει τὴν πρὸς τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον
ὁδὸν ἣμῖν γενομένην· τὴν δὲ θέσιν τῆς ὅλης
χωῆρας πρῶτον δηλώσω.

Now since I assume the record of these
gifts to be compelling, I have described
them for you. And what comes next [in
our narrative] is an account of our jour-
ney to Eleazar, but I will first describe the
layout of the whole country.

- b. Description of the temple (84–99)
- c. Description of the rest of the city, from the citadel (100–104)
- d. Description of the surrounding country (105–120)

4. The Jewish Delegation Prepares to Depart for Alexandria (120b–171)

- a. Aristeeas's summary comment and transition (120b):

Ὅσον οὖν καὶ περὶ τούτων ἔδει,
κεφαλαιωδῶς σεσήμαγκά σοι, ὦ Φιλόκρατες
ἀδελφέ· τὰ δὲ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐπομένους
δηλώσομεν.

Now that I have signified to you, my
brother Philocrates, was what required
concerning these matters under their
headings, in what follows I shall now
describe the matter of the translation.

- b. Eleazar's selection of the elders and instructions to Andreas (121–127)
- c. Aristeeas's editorial comment (128):

Ἄξιον δὲ ἐπιμνησθῆναι (διὰ) βραχέων τῶν
ὑποδειχθέντων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὰ δι' ἡμῶν
ἐπιζητηθέντα. νομίζω γὰρ τοὺς πολλοὺς
περιεργίαν ἔχειν τινὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ νομοθεσίᾳ
περὶ τε τῶν βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ τῶν
νομιζομένων ἀκαθάρτων εἶναι κνωδάλων.

It is worth recalling briefly what he stated
in response to our inquiries. *For I suppose
that many people have a certain curios-
ity about the things in the [Jewish] law
concerning food and drink and those about
beasts believed to be unclean.*

- d. Eleazar's exposition on the law, in reply to Aristeeas (129–169)
- e. Aristeeas's final affirmations to Philocrates regarding the law (170–171)

170 Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν καλῶς ἐνόμιζε περὶ
ἐκάστων ἀπολογεῖσθαι· καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν
προσφερομένων ἔλεγε μόσχων τε καὶ κριῶν
καὶ χιμάρων, ὅτι δεῖ ταῦτα ἐκ βουκολίων καὶ
ποιμνίων λαμβάνοντας ἡμέρα θυσιάζειν, καὶ

170 It seemed to me, therefore, that
he had made a good defense on all the
points. In reference, indeed, to the calves
and rams and goats that are offered, he
said that it was necessary to take them
from the herds and flocks, and sacrifice

μηθὲν ἄγριον, ὅπως οἱ προσφέροντες
τὰς θυσίας μηθὲν ὑπερήφανον ἑαυτοῖς
συνιστορῶσι, σημειώσῃ κεχρημένοι τοῦ
διατάξαντος. τῆς γὰρ ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς τοῦ
παντὸς τρόπου τὴν προσφορὰν ποιεῖται ὁ τὴν
θυσίαν προσάγων.

171 καὶ περὶ τούτων οὖν νομίζω τὰ τῆς
ὁμιλίας ἄξια λόγου καθεστάναι. διὸ τὴν
σεμνότητα καὶ φυσικὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ νόμου
προῆγμαι διασαφῆσαι σοι, Φιλόκρατες, δι' ἣν
ἔχεις φιλομάθειαν.

tame ones and nothing wild, so that
those offering the sacrifices might not be
conscious of any arrogance in themselves
but recognize the symbolic meaning of
the lawgiver. For one who offers a sacrifice
makes an offering also of every aspect of
his own soul.

171 I believe, then, that these things in
our discussion have been worth narrat-
ing. That is why I have been led to make
clear to you, Philocrates, the sanctity and
natural meaning of the law, for the sake of
your love of learning.

5. The Delegation arrives in Alexandria and Ptolemy's Banquet (172–300)
 - a. Eleazar offers a sacrifice for their journey (172)
 - b. They arrive in Alexandria; Aristes and Andreas go to report (173–175)
 - c. Ptolemy welcomes the delegation at court and hosts a seven-day banquet (175–183)
 - d. The banquet begins, day one (184–202); Ptolemy inquires of the elders on questions of virtue, philosophy, and law (187–202)
 - e. The banquet continues, day two (203–220)
 - f. The banquet continues, day three (221–235)
 - g. The banquet continues, day four (236–247)
 - h. The banquet continues, day five (248–261)
 - i. The banquet continues, day six (262–274)
 - j. The banquet continues, day seven (275–294), and Ptolemy concludes with final blessings and thanks (293–294)
 - k. Aristes's affirmations to Philocrates regarding the accuracy of his account of the dinner and the wisdom of the elders (295–300)

295 Ἐγὼ δὲ <εἰ πεπλεόνακα>, τούτοις, ὦ
Φιλόκρατες, συγγνώμην ἔχειν. τεθαυμακῶς
γὰρ τοὺς ἄνδρας ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον, ὡς ἐκ
τοῦ καιροῦ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ἐποιοῦντο
πολλοῦ χρόνου δεομένας, 296 καὶ τοῦ μὲν
ἐρωτῶντος μεμεριμνηκότος ἕκαστα, τῶν
δὲ ἀποκρινομένων καταλλήλως ἐχόντων
τὰ πρὸς τὰς ἐρωτήσεις, ἄξιοι θαυμασμοῦ
κατεφαίνοντό μοι καὶ τοῖς παροῦσι, μάλιστα
δὲ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις. οἶμαι δὲ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς

295 *But now if I have gone on too long
on these matters, O Philocrates, I beg
your indulgence.* For I was astonished
beyond measure at the men and how they
on the spot gave answers that required
much time, 296 while the one asking the
questions had taken great care with each
one, but when those answering had the
responses to the questions in succession,
they seemed to me and to those present,
and especially to the philosophers, to be

παραληψομένοις τὴν ἀναγραφὴν ἄπιστον φανέεται.

297 ψεύσασθαι μὲν οὖν οὐ κατῆχόν ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἀναγραφομένων· εἰ δὲ καὶ τι παραβαίῃν, οὐχ ὅσιον ἐν τούτοις· ἀλλ, ὡς γέγονεν, οὕτως διασαφοῦμεν ἀφοσιούμενοι πᾶν ἀμάρτημα. διόπερ ἐπειράθην ἀποδεξάμενος αὐτῶν τὴν τοῦ λόγου δύναμιν παρὰ τῶν ἀναγραφομένων ἕκαστα τῶν γινομένων ἐν τε τοῖς χρηματισμοῖς τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ταῖς συμποσίαις μεταλαβεῖν. 298 ἔθος γάρ ἐστι, καθὼς καὶ σὺ γινώσκεις, ἀφ' ἧς ἂν [ἡμέρας] ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀρξῇται χρηματίζειν, μέχρις οὐ κατακοιμηθῇ, πάντα ἀναγράφεσθαι τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ πρασσόμενα, καλῶς γινομένου καὶ συμφερόντως. 299 τῇ γὰρ ἐπιούσῃ τὰ τῇ πρότερον πεπραγμένα καὶ λελαλημένα πρὸ τοῦ χρηματισμοῦ παραναγίνωσκεται, καί, εἴ τι μὴ δεόντως γέγονε, διορθώσεως τυγχάνει τὸ πεπραγμένον. 300 πάντ' οὖν ἀκριβῶς παρὰ τῶν ἀναγεγραμμένων, ὡς ἐλέχθη, μεταλαβόντες κατακεχωρίκαμεν, εἰδότες ἦν ἔχεις φιλομάθειαν εἰς τὰ χρήσιμα.

worthy of admiration. *But I suppose that it will seem unbelievable to all those who will inherit my account.*

297 Rather, it is not proper to lie concerning what is recorded. And if I have gone astray in some respect, it is not sanctioned in these matters. Rather, (be it sworn): *just as it happened, so do we state it, and atone for any error.* Wherefore, since I endorsed the force of their words, I tried to obtain everything that transpired from what had been written in both the records of the king and at the banquets. 298 For it is the custom, *as you know*, from the moment the king begins to conduct matters of state until the time when he retires to rest, for a record to be taken of all his sayings and doings—a most excellent and useful arrangement. 299 For on the following day what was done and said on the previous day are read over before (new) business, and if anything is not as it should be, the matter is set right. 300 *Therefore, as has been said, having obtained everything accurately from the records, we have drawn them up, since we know what a love of learning you possess for things useful.*

6. The Translation Is Completed (301–321)

- a. Demetrius moves the seventy-two translators to a special scriptorium on Pharos and oversees their work, which takes seventy-two days (301–308)
- b. The translation is read before members of the Jewish community (309–311)
- c. A final report to Ptolemy, who gives orders about its disposition and the return of the elders, with a letter to Eleazar (312–321)

7. Aristaeas's Farewell to Philocrates (322)

Σὺ δέ, καθὼς ἐπηγγειλάμην, ἀπέχεις τὴν διήγησιν, ὦ Φιλόκρατες. τέρπειν γὰρ οἶομαί σε ταῦτα ἢ τὰ τῶν μυθολόγων βιβλία.

And now Philocrates, you yourself have my narrative, just as I promised. For I think that you will delight in these books more than in those of the mythologists.

νένευκας γὰρ πρὸς περιεργίαν τῶν δυναμένων
 ὠφελεῖν διάνοιαν, καὶ ἐν τούτοις τὸν πλείονα
 χρόνον διατελεῖς. πειράσομαι δὲ καὶ τὰ
 λοιπὰ τῶν ἀξιολόγων ἀναγράφειν, ἵνα
 διαπορευόμενος αὐτὰ κομίζῃ τοῦ βουλήματος
 τὸ κάλλιστον ἔπαθλον.

For you are inclined toward an intense
 pursuit of those things that can benefit the
 mind and spend much time in them. Now
 I shall also attempt to record the rest of the
noteworthy things, in order that, by going
 through them thoroughly you may win
 the noblest prize for your aims.

[LMW]

1.3. Greek Text and English Translation with Annotations

The Greek text printed here is a new version. It is based on that of Thackeray in the revised edition of Swete (1914, 551–606), which in turn generally followed Wendland’s 1900 Tuebner edition; however, the present version has been modified in some punctuation and paragraph breaks. The “versification” follows the numbering of Wendland 1900, which was incorporated into the later editions and translations of Thackeray (beginning with his 1903 translation).

It also follows the sigla of Thackeray’s version.

- ⟨ ⟩ a conjectural restoration by one or more of the modern editors
- [] readings in the manuscripts that should probably be omitted
- { } readings of the original manuscripts retained, even though possibly corrupt (used in place of Thackeray’s ††)

The new translation is based on a careful study of the Greek both for syntax and style, with special attention to its epistolary features. I have consulted each of Thackeray’s translations (1903, 1904, and 1917), as well as those of Andrews (1913, 83–122) and Shutt (1983, 12–34). As noted above, I greatly appreciate the suggestions and corrections of David Konstan in producing this final version.

All works cited are contained in the full bibliography at the end of this volume.

[LMW]

Aristeae ad Philocratem Epistula

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΑΣ ΦΙΛΟΚΡΑΤΕΙ¹

1 Ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως,² ὃ Φιλόκρατες, περὶ τῆς γενηθείσης ἡμῖν ἐντυχίας πρὸς Ἐλεάζαρον τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερέα συνεσταμένης,³ διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι, παρ' ἑκάστα {ὑπομιμνήσκων}⁴, συνακοῦσαι περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί, πεπείραμαι σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι σοι, κατειληφῶς ἢν ἔχεις φιλομαθῇ διάθεσιν,⁵ 2 ὅπερ μέγιστόν ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ

1. This is the title in almost all the Greek manuscripts, but it is in reality the (remnant of the) epistolary address. The other greeting formulas (“many greetings” and possibly a health petition) have dropped out, if they ever existed. The name Ἀριστεάς is sometimes rendered Ἀρισταῖος, probably following the atticizing orthography of Josephus (A.J. 12.17); cf. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.1.8; Epiphanius, *Mens.* 236. In both *Praep. ev.* 8.5.2 (in Eusebius’s version of the letter of Eleazar to Ptolemy = Ep. Arist. §43) and 9.25.1 (“Aristeas the Exegete”), however, Eusebius gives the name in the same form as here, very likely following the original text. Also in *Praep. ev.* 9.38 Eusebius describes Epistle of Aristeas with an otherwise unattested title: ὁ Ἀριστεάς ἐν τῷ γραφέντι αὐτῷ βιβλίῳ Περὶ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου ταῦτα ἱστορεῖ (“Aristeas narrated these things in the book written by him *On the Translation of the Law of the Judeans/Jews*”). In the remainder of this translation, we will not attempt to address the difficulty of rendering the term Ἰουδαῖος, -οι (and cognate forms) with its geographic versus ethno-cultural sense. On the latter issue, see Mason 2007, 457–512. On the so-called “title” in Eusebius, sometimes assumed to be original, see also n. 3 below.

2. Ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως (“a remarkable, noteworthy, or memorable narrative”) are the opening words of the letter preface. The work is called a διήγησις (“narrative” or “exposition”) again at the end of the epistolary preface (§8) and in the farewell (§322). The word ἀξιολόγος also appears again in §322, in the very last sentence. For the word in this sense, compare especially Thucydides, *Hist.* 1.1; Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.5.5; and *Cyr.* 8.1.12, noting the reference to the “(examination of) history” in §2. For the adverbial form ἀξιολόγως, see §184, another important transition.

3. The effective subtitle of the work is given in the phrase identifying the subject of the διήγησις, i.e., περὶ ἐντυχίας πρὸς Ἐλεάζαρον τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερέα (narrative “concerning the audience with Eleazar the high priest of the Jews”), where ἐντυχία

The Epistle of Aristeas to Philocrates

I. Epistolary Preface (1–8)

Aristeas to Philocrates.

1 Now that a noteworthy narrative has been compiled, O Philocrates, *concerning the audience afforded us with Eleazar the high priest of the Jews*, because you place such value on hearing point by point concerning what topics and why we undertook the mission, I have attempted to give a clear exposition of the matter for you, since I perceive what a disposition you possess for love of learning, 2 which is the greatest (type of disposition) for a person (to have)

might refer to the “petition” itself or the official “audience” at which a petition or appeal is presented (see LSJ, s.v. “ἐντυχία,” citing 3 Macc 6:40; Josephus, *A.J.* 16.299; cf. P.Tebt. 61b.26 [2 BCE]). The cognate verb ἐντυχεῖν is used of the “audience” of the elders with Ptolemy in §174. In §3 it is called πρεσβεία (“embassy,” Lat. *legatio*), also used in Josephus *A.J.* 16.293 more or less synonymously with ἐντυχία in 16.299. Note also the use of ἀποστέλλειν both in *A.J.* 16.299 and here, as well as the sending of gifts as part of the embassy in *A.J.* 16.296–297. Thus while LSJ gives the meaning “interview” for this particular passage (perhaps in view of the discourse in §§121–171, but likely following Thackeray 1904), Andrews (1913, 2:94) gives “visit,” Shutt (1985, 2:12) gives “meeting,” and Thackeray (1917, 21) gives “deputation” in §1 and “embassy” in §4. In light of the putative official correspondence between Ptolemy and Eleazar (§§35–46) and the presentation of costly gifts (§§51–82), the context seems to imagine a more formal delegation (as between heads of state), as rendered here. See also nn. 7 and 41 below.

4. The reading of the manuscripts; Wendland (1900) emended to ὑπομιμνήσκειν (following Diels), which Thackeray (1903, 1904) rendered as “which thou art constantly reminding me.” The translation here follows the manuscripts. Unless otherwise indicated, all subsequent references to Wendland are to his 1900 Teubner edition.

5. Lit. “what a *philomathic* disposition you possess.” Admittedly, the adjectival coinage possible in Greek is less felicitous in English; however, this phrasing accurately captures the syntax of the Greek. On this term (and related forms), see also note 9, below. For its role in the epistolary fiction of the work, see L. M. White 2015, 198–200, also discussed in the introduction to this volume.

—προσμανθάνειν αἰεί τι καὶ προσλαμβάνειν⁶—

ἤτοι κατὰ τὰς ἱστορίας, ἥ καὶ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα πεπειραμένω. οὕτω γὰρ κατασκευάζεται ψυχῆς καθαρὰ διάθεσις, ἀναλαβοῦσα τὰ κάλλιστα· καὶ πρὸς τὸ πάντων κυριώτατον νενευκυῖα τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀπλανεῖ κεχρημένη κανόνι διοικεῖ.

3 Τὴν προαίρεσιν ἔχοντες ἡμεῖς πρὸς τὸ περιέργως τὰ θεῖα κατανοεῖν, ἑαυτοὺς ἐπεδώκαμεν εἰς τὸν προειρημένον ἄνδρα πρεσβείαν, καλοκάγαθία καὶ δόξῃ προτετιμημένον ὑπὸ τε τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, καὶ κατακεκτημένον μεγίστην ὠφέλειαν τοῖς σὺν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τοὺς ἄλλους τόπους πολίταις, πρὸς τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τοῦ θεοῦ νόμου, διὰ τὸ γεγράφθαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν διφθέραις Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν. 4 ἦν⁷ δὴ καὶ ἐποίησάμεθα ἡμεῖς σπουδῇ, λαβόντες καιρὸν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα περὶ τῶν μετοικισθέντων εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως, πρῶτως κεκτημένου τὴν τε πόλιν καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον παρειληφότες. Ἄξιόν ἐστι καὶ ταῦτά σοι δηλῶσαι. 5 πέπεισμαι γάρ σε μᾶλλον ἔχοντα πρόσκλισιν πρὸς τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων διάθεσιν τῶν κατὰ τὴν σεμνὴν νομοθεσίαν διεξαγόντων, περὶ ὧν προαιρούμεθα (δηλοῦν, ἀσμένως σε) ἀκούσσεσθαι, προσφάτως παραγεγενημένον ἐκ τῆς νήσου πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ βουλόμενον συνακούειν ὅσα πρὸς ἐπισκευὴν ψυχῆς ὑπάρχει.

6. The phrase appears to be used as a recognized maxim. Neither Wendland nor Thackeray sets these words off as an apostrophe, as we have done here, although Thackeray's translations (followed by Andrews) placed it in quotation marks and noted the parallels to Sophocles. Shutt, however, ignores the matter altogether. The phrase is iambic trimeter and may come from tragedy, but it is not directly attested. In form, it has the ring of an aphorism or precept, with symmetrical balance of near rhyming synonyms flanking the central iambic metron. Thackeray (1904, 5) cites two fragments from Sophocles (Dindorf 1869, 165 and 157, frags. 779 and 622 [Andrews 1913, 2:94 erroneously gives 662]). Of these, the first (*apud* John Damascene in Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.31.5) is closest: *προσλαμβάνειν δὲ δεῖ καθ' ἡμέραν αἰεῖ, ἕως ἂν ἐξῇ μανθάνειν βελτίονα*; however, both Dindorf and Nauck (1964, 356, frag. 1019) consider it spurious (cf. Snell and Kannicht 1981, frag. 515a). Another unattributed fragment, likewise from Stobaeus (*Ecl.* 2.31.16a), also bears similarities: *αἰεῖ τι βούλου χρησιμον προσμανθάνειν* (so Nauck, *adespota* 516a, who classes it as a variant of his frag. 632 [1964, 282 = Dindorf frag. 622, above], ostensibly from the Φθιώτιδες). The form in Epistle of Aristeeas is nearly a perfect blend of these two, rendered as an iambic maxim. Another possible influence is as a paraphrase of the *paraenesis* of Oceanus to Prometheus (Aeschylus, *Prom.* 309–331), which uses the term *προσλαμβάνειν* (at 323). Compare the portion of this *paraenesis* to Prometheus (“kick against the goads” at 325) as a derived maxim in Euripides, *Bacch.* 794, also paraphrased in Acts 26:14 and Julian, *Or.* 8.246B, where it is called a “proverb or adage” (*παροιμία*). These examples suggest that the maxim here in §2 is likewise a secondary or tertiary derivation in proverbial usage.

—“*ever to learn something more and make progress*”—

whether through the study of history or by actually experiencing the events themselves. For in this way the soul’s disposition is rendered pure, by taking up the noblest things, and, having fixed its aim on reverence as the noblest goal of all, it lives by adopting an unerring rule.

3 Since we possess a set purpose of gaining extensive knowledge of divine matters, we offered ourselves for an embassy to the aforementioned man [the high priest Eleazar], who was held in the highest esteem by his own citizens and by others both for his virtue and his majesty, since he was in full possession of documents of the highest value to his (fellow) citizens, both those (dwelling) with him and those in foreign lands, with regard to the interpretation of the divine law; for their laws are written on leather parchments in Hebraic characters. 4 This embassy we have now accomplished with earnest zeal, having first of all found an opportunity of pleading with the king on behalf of the Jewish captives who had been transported from Judea to Egypt by the king’s father, when he first took possession of this city and succeeded to (the rule of) the land of Egypt. It is also worthwhile that I should clarify these matters for you. 5 For I am convinced that, with your inclination toward holiness and toward the disposition of men living in accordance with the holy legislation, you will all the more readily follow the account that I propose to set forth, since you yourself have lately come to us from the island and wish to understand all that it provides for equipping the soul.

7. In §4 (by asyndeton), the opening relative pronoun (ἣν) must refer back to *πρεσβείαν* in §3a. Our translation takes the aorist verb as historic-past (aorist for perfect, more typical in Hellenistic usage), but it might also be read as a simple narrative-past (“we then undertook with earnest zeal”). At the end of §3, we have adopted Wendland’s punctuation (a medial stop) over Thackeray’s (full stop), to reflect this syntax. But see Thackeray 1903, 342 n. 3, as both he and Wendland assumed a corruption before *λαβόντες* in §4. Wendland thus placed a full stop after *σπουδῇ*, while Thackeray (1903, 1904) made *ἣν* (§4) a new sentence, while emending the clause with *δὲ ... σπουδῇν*; he then continued the sentence with a comma before *λαβόντες*, thereby taking the pronoun *ἣν* to refer to something else. In his 1914 edition Thackeray reverted to Wendland’s text but retained his full stop at the end of §3. I have rendered the minimally corrected text as printed above, following Thackeray 1914, but with Wendland’s medial stop, thus making §§3–4 a full period in Greek, as seems to fit the context.

6 καὶ πρότερον δὲ διεπεμψάμην σοι περὶ ὧν ἐνόμιζον ἀξιωματικῶν εἶναι τὴν ἀναγραφὴν, ἣν μετελάβομεν παρὰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν λογιστικὴν Αἴγυπτον λογιστικῶν ἀρχιερέων, περὶ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων.⁸ **7** φιλομαθῶς⁹ γὰρ ἔχοντί σοι περὶ τῶν δυναμένων ὠφελῆσαι διάνοιαν δέον ἐστὶ μεταδιδόναι, μάλιστα μὲν πᾶσι τοῖς ὁμοίοις, πολλῶ δὲ μᾶλλον σοὶ γνησίαν ἔχοντι τὴν αἴρεσιν, οὐ μόνον κατὰ τὸ συγγενὲς ἀδελφῶ καθεστῶτι τὸν τρόπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ὁρμῇ τὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα ἡμῖν. **8** χρυσοῦ γὰρ χάρις ἢ κατασκευὴ τις ἄλλη τῶν τετιμημένων παρὰ τοῖς κενοδόξοις ὠφέλειαν οὐκ ἔχει τὴν αὐτήν, ὅσον ἢ παιδείας ἀγωγή καὶ ἢ περὶ τούτων φροντίς. ἵνα δὲ μὴ περὶ τῶν προλεγομένων μηχανούντες ἀδόλεσχόν τι ποιῶμεν, ἐπὶ τὸ συνεχὲς τῆς διηγῆσεως ἐπανήξομεν.

9 Κατασταθεὶς ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως βιβλιοθήκης Δημήτριος ὁ Φαληρεὺς ἐχρηματίσθη πολλὰ διάφορα πρὸς τὸ συναγαγεῖν, εἰ δυνατόν, ἅπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην βιβλία· καὶ ποιούμενος ἀγορασμοὺς καὶ μεταγραφὰς ἐπὶ τέλος ἤγαγεν, ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως πρόθεσιν. **10** παρόντων οὖν ἡμῶν ἐρωτηθεὶς, Πόσαι τινὲς μυριάδες¹⁰ τυγχάνουσι βιβλίων;

εἶπεν Ὑπὲρ τὰς εἴκοσι, βασιλεῦ· σπουδάσω δ' ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ πρὸς τὸ πληρωθῆναι πεντήκοντα μυριάδας τὰ λοιπά. προσήγγελται δέ μοι καὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμιμα μεταγραφῆς ἄξια καὶ τῆς παρὰ σοὶ βιβλιοθήκης εἶναι.

11 Τί τὸ κωλύον οὖν, εἶπεν, ἐστὶ σε τοῦτο ποιῆσαι; πάντα γὰρ ὑποτέτακται σοι τὰ πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν.

8. This may be a reference to a paraphrase of Job in a work *Concerning the Jews*, by a certain Aristeas, (now usually called Aristeas the Exegete), as preserved by Alexander Polyhistor (in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4). See the introduction and full text in sec. 2.3.1, below; part of the text is given in note 11 (below). In turn, this work of the earlier “Aristeas” clearly depends on the expanded LXX version of Job. If this is a reference to that work, the author of Epistle of Aristeas is intentionally writing under the name of this earlier Aristeas. Further evidence of this dependence may be seen at Ep. Arist. §11 (“Syriac language”) and note 11 (below), plus §155. For the *testimonia* in Eusebius, see sec. 2.4.3, below. At the very least, it seems that Eusebius thought they were the same person, and this is generally the assumption throughout antiquity. If so, it further suggests that the author of Epistle of Aristeas intentionally adopted the same fiction.

9. The adverbial form φιλομαθῶς occurs only thirty-five times in all the TLG, and of these, Ep. Arist. §7 seems to be by far the earliest. All of the others come from the late first to second century CE and later, and the majority (34) are in Christian writers of the patristic period, the earliest being Origen (e.g., *Cels.* 2.55.33: τὸν Ἰουδαῖον, οὐ πάνυ φιλομαθῶς ἔχοντα πρὸς τὰς Ἑλλήνων ιστορίας; cf. Hippolytus, *Chron.* 20.1). We note especially that the passage from Origen uses the same idiom seen here in Ep. Arist. §7 (with φιλομαθῶς plus a participial form of ἔχειν); cf. Antonius Diogenes (first to second century CE, *apud* Photius, *Bibliotheca* 166.111a.33). This Hellenistic syntactic

6 Now formerly, too, I sent you a record of those things I thought worthy of mention *Concerning the Race of the Jews*—the record that I had obtained from the most learned high priests of the most learned land of Egypt. **7** For since you possess a love of learning for those things that are able to benefit the mind, it is incumbent upon me to share these things, especially with all who have the same disposition, but all the more so with you, since you possess such noble principles of conduct and since you by kinship are not only my brother with respect to character but also are the selfsame with me in the impulse toward goodness. **8** For neither the pleasure derived from gold nor any other trappings of the possessions that are prized by shallow minds confers the same benefit as the pursuit of culture and the study that we expend in securing it. But lest we make idle chatter by prolonging these introductory matters, we shall proceed at once to the substance of our narrative.

II. Ptolemy and the Sacred Books of the Jews (9–82)

9 Having been appointed to oversee the king's library, Demetrius of Phalerum was furnished large sums of money for the purpose of gathering together, as far as possible, all the books in the world. By means of purchase and transcription, he carried out, to the best of his ability, the purpose of the king. **10** On one occasion *when I was present, he was asked*, “How many myriads of books are there [in the library]?”

He replied, “More than two hundred thousand, O King, and I shall endeavor in a short time to fill out the remainder, up to five hundred thousand. Now I am told also that the laws of the Jews are worthy of transcription and being in your library.”

11 “Then what is to prevent you from doing this?” replied the king. “Everything that is necessary has been placed at your disposal.”

combination (adverb + form of ἔχειν) is used frequently in Epistle of Aristeas and is likely the source for the coinage of the adverb here. Even the more usual noun and verb forms (φιλομάθεια and φιλομαθεῖν) are relatively late, appearing first in Plato and Aristotle but becoming more common in Hellenistic writers, including Polybius (*Hist.* 1.13.9; 3.59.4), Philodemus (*Mort.* 33.24; 38.8, ed. Henry), Strabo (*Geogr.* 14.1.16), and later Cornutus (*TGC* 14.7). Compare also the wording of the opening hortatory address from Pseudo-Demetrius, *Form. ep.* preface (lines 6–8, ed. Malherbe 1988).

10. Here and below (§§12–13, 19), the numbers are given as “myriads” (Greek μυριάδες), i.e., “How many tens of thousands...?” More literally, then, Demetrius’s reply is “twenty myriads” and “fifty myriads,” respectively.

ὁ δὲ Δημήτριος εἶπεν, Ἑρμηνείας προσδεῖται· χαρκτηῖρσι γὰρ ἰδίους κατὰ τὴν Ἰουδαίων χρῶνται, καθάπερ Αἰγύπτιοι τῇ τῶν γραμμάτων θέσει, καθὸ καὶ φωνὴν ἰδίαν ἔχουσιν. ὑπολαμβάνονται Συριακῇ¹¹ χρῆσθαι· τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλ' ἕτερος τρόπος.

Μεταλαβὼν δὲ ἕκαστα ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶπε γραφῆναι πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ὅπως τὰ προειρημένα τελείωσιν λάβῃ.

12 νομίσας δὲ ἐγὼ καιρὸν εἶναι περὶ ὧν πολλάκις ἡξιώκειν¹² Σωσίβιον τε τὸν Ταραντῖνον καὶ Ἀνδρέαν, τοὺς ἀρχισωματοφύλακας, περὶ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῶν μετηγμένων ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ βασιλέως

—ἐκεῖνος γὰρ ἐπελθὼν τὰ κατὰ κοίλῃν Συρίαν¹³ καὶ Φοινίκην¹⁴ ἅπαντα, συγχρώμενος εὐημερία μετὰ ἀνδρείας, τοὺς μὲν μετῴκιζεν, οὓς δὲ ἡχμαλώτιζε, φόβῳ πάντα ὑποχείρια ποιούμενος· ἐν ὅσῳ καὶ πρὸς δέκα μυριάδας ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ἰουδαίων χώρας εἰς Αἴγυπτον μετήγαγεν, 13 ἀφ' ὧν ὥσπερ τρεῖς μυριάδας καθοπλίσας ἀνδρῶν ἐκλεκτῶν εἰς τὴν χώραν κατῴκισεν ἐν τοῖς φρουρίοις (ἥδη μὲν καὶ πρότερον ἱκανῶν εἰσεληλυθότων σὺν τῷ Πέρσῃ, καὶ πρὸ τούτων ἐτέρων συμμαχιῶν ἐξαπεσταλμένων πρὸς τὸν τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν βασιλέα μάχεσθαι σὺν Ψαμμιτίχῳ· ἀλλ' οὐ τοσοῦτοι

11. The term *Syriac* here, in reference to their language, means Aramaic, understood as the vernacular of the “Syrian” (i.e., Seleucid) kingdom; the following statement is making the distinction between it and Hebrew. This use of the word *Syriac* is distinctive, but we should note especially LXX Job 42:17b (ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου); cf. 2 Macc 15:36 (Συριακή); 2 Esd 4:7 (Συριστί) for similar references. In addition, a passage in Aristeas the Exegete (as preserved in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4) is clearly based on that in LXX Job 42:17b and may suggest a further connection between Ep. Arist. §6 and this “other” Aristeas. See also §6 and note 8 above, regarding Aristeas the Exegete. For the full text and discussion see §2.3.1, below. Job 42:17b LXX: “This man [Job] is translated from the Syriac book [ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου] as dwelling in the land of Ausitis on the borders of the land of Idumea and Arabia, and his name was formerly Jobab. ... And he was (the son) of his father Zare, one of the sons of Esau, and of the mother Bosorra.” Compare Aristeas *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1, 3: “Aristeas says in his book *Concerning the Jews* [ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ἰουδαίων] that Esau having married Bossara begat a son in Edom, Job, and that this man [Job] dwelt in the region of Ausitis on the borders of Idumea and Arabia. ... And this Job was formerly named Jobab.”

12. The particular form ἡξιώκειν is not otherwise attested, but it may properly be read as a pluperfect indicative (active, 1s) of ἡξιώω. Josephus (*A.J.* 12.17–18) renders the same thought using ἔγνω παρακαλέσαι and then διαλέγεται instead. Analogous perfect forms of ἡξιώω are more common (but still only fourteen occurrences prior to the first century BCE out of more than 140); they appear, inter alia, in Josephus’s version of Aristeas (*A.J.* 12.47 // Ep. Arist. §37) and Philo, *Mut.* 19.1 (3s) and *Contempl.* 36.2 (3pl). Misreading perhaps led to the emendation in later manuscripts: ἡξιώσα συνέχως τοὺς τὸν...

Demetrius said, “They need to be translated, for in the country of the Judeans they use a peculiar alphabet (just as the Egyptians have a special form of letters) and speak a peculiar dialect. They are assumed to use *Syriac*. Not so; instead, it is a different sort.”

Now having understood each point, the king said to write a letter to the high priest of the Jews so that the aforementioned goals might be accomplished.

12 And now I for my part, thinking it to be timely for the matters concerning which I had frequently entreated Sosibius of Tarentum and Andreas, the chief bodyguards, namely, concerning the release of the Jews who had been carried off from Judea by the king’s father [Ptolemy I]

—For when by a combination of good fortune and courage the latter had invaded the whole region of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia, in bringing everyone into subjection by fear, he resettled some (of the inhabitants) but reduced others to captivity. The number of those whom he carried off from the country of the Jews to Egypt amounted to no less than a hundred thousand. **13** Of these he armed thirty thousand picked men and settled them in garrisons in the country districts. (Now even before this time large numbers of Jews had come into Egypt with the Persian [king], and in an earlier period still others had been sent to Egypt to fight as allies of Psammetichus in his campaign against the king of the Ethiopians. But these were nothing like so numerous as

The same root verb occurs also at Ep. Arist. §§18 and 245, in both cases with the sense of “prayer or entreaty,” which seems entirely consistent here (see LSJ, s.v. “ἄξιόω,” II).

13. The regional designation here of Coele-Syria (κοίλην Συρίαν), typically referring to the “vale or hollow” (κοίλον) between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon Ranges, does not appear in Greek sources before the second century BCE. A reference to it in a passage attributed to Clearchus of Soli, a student of Aristotle ostensibly quoting his teacher (late fourth to early third century BCE), is preserved in Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.179 (cf. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.5); however, it is likely anachronistic. So note Polybius, *Hist.* 1.3.1 (a reference to the war between the Seleucid Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV Philopator, ending at the battle of Raphia in 217 BCE); however, this area (along with Phoenicia and Judea) did not become formally part of the Seleucid (“Syrian”) kingdom until the victory of Antiochus III over Ptolemy V in 200/198. For other references, see Quintus Curtius Rufus, *Hist. Alex.* 4.8.9; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 18.6.3; 19.95.2; Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.2; 1 Macc 10:69; 2 Macc 3:5–8; 4:4, and Westermann 1938, 21–22. See also n. 21 below and Ep. Arist. §22.

14. Probably a reference to the battle of Gaza in 312 BCE; cf. Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.183–186 (citing Hecataeus of Abdera). But see also note 13, above.

τῷ πλήθει παρεγενήθησαν, ὅσους Πτολεμαῖος ὁ τοῦ Λάγου μετήγαγε).
14 καθὼς δὲ προείπομεν, ἐπιλέξας τοὺς ἀρίστους ταῖς ἡλικίαις καὶ ῥώμῃ
 διαφέροντας καθώπλισε, τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν χύμα πρεσβυτέρων καὶ νεωτέρων,
 ἔτι δὲ γυναικῶν, εἶασεν εἰς τὴν οἰκετίαν, οὐχ οὕτως τῇ προαιρέσει κατὰ
 ψυχὴν ἔχων, ὥς κατακρατούμενος ὑπὸ τῶν στρατιωτῶν, δι' ἃς ἐπεποίηντο
 χρεῖας ἐν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς ἀγῶσιν—
 ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐπεὶ τινα παρεύρεσιν εἰς τὴν ἀπόλυσιν αὐτῶν ἀπελάβομεν, καθὼς
 προδεδήλωται, τοιούτοις ἐχρησάμεθα λόγοις πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα.

15 μήποτε ἄλογον ἢ ἐλέγχεσθαι ὑπ' αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων, ὃ βασιλεῦ.
 τῆς γὰρ νομοθεσίας κειμένης πᾶσι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ἣν ἡμεῖς οὐ μόνον
 μεταγράψαι ἐπινοοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ διερμηνεῦσαι, τίνα λόγον ἔχομεν πρὸς
 ἀποστολὴν, ἐν οἰκετίαις ὑπαρχόντων ἐν τῇ σῇ βασιλείᾳ πληθῶν ἰκανῶν; ἀλλὰ
 τελεία καὶ πλουσία ψυχῇ ἀπόλυσον τοὺς συνεχομένους ἐν ταλαιπωρίαις,
 κατευθύνοντός¹⁵ σου τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ τεθεικότος αὐτοῖς θεοῦ τὸν
 νόμον, καθὼς περιείργασμαι. **16** τὸν γὰρ πάντων ἐπόπτην καὶ κτίστην
 θεὸν οὕτοι σέβονται, ὃν καὶ πάντες, ἡμεῖς δέ, βασιλεῦ, προσονομάζοντες
 ἐτέρως Ζῆνα καὶ Δία.¹⁶ τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἀνοικείως οἱ πρῶτοι διεσήμαναν,
 δι' ὃν ζωοποιοῦνται τὰ πάντα καὶ γίνεται, τοῦτον ἀπάντων ἡγεῖσθαι τε
 καὶ κυριεύειν. ὑπερηρκῶς δὲ σύμπαντας ἀνθρώπους τῇ λαμπρότητι τῆς
 ψυχῆς¹⁷ ἀπόλυσιν ποίησαι τῶν ἐνεχομένων ταῖς οἰκετίαις.

17 οὐδὲ πολὺν χρόνον ἐπισχών, καὶ ἡμῶν κατὰ ψυχὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν
 εὐχομένων, τὴν διάνοιαν αὐτοῦ κατασκευάσαι πρὸς τὸ τοὺς ἅπαντας ἀπολυθῆναι
 —κτίσμα γὰρ ὃν θεοῦ τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ μεταλλοιοῦται καὶ
 τρέπεται πάλιν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ· διὸ πολλαχῶς καὶ ποικίλως ἐπεκαλούμην τὸν

15. For the cognate form διευθύνω, also used in the context of clemency and kingly rule, see §§187–188 and the notes there. This form occurs again at §18 below, in the prayerful reflections of Aristaeus.

16. There is an allegorical play on the names for Zeus here, since Δία (from archaic Δῖς, Latin *Dis*) was used as the regular accusative of Zeus (Ζεύς), while Ζῆνα (the accusative of the old poetic form Ζῆν) was carried over in poetic and dialectal usage for the same; hence, both variations were typical accusative forms for Zeus. The combined reference here comes from Stoic etymologies on the divine names, according to which Δία (by assimilation to the preposition διά, meaning “through”) suggested the source or cause of all things, while Ζῆνα (by assimilation to ζῆν, the infinitive form of ζῶω) means “to live.” Cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 7.147 (SVF 2.1021): Δία μὲν γὰρ φασὶ δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα, Ζῆνα δὲ καλοῦσι παρ' ὅσον τοῦ ζῆν αἰτιός ἐστιν ἢ διὰ τοῦ ζῆν δεχώρηκεν (“For on the one hand they say *Dia*, because all things are *through him*; on the other, they call

the captives whom Ptolemy the son of Lagus carried off.) **14** As I have already said, Ptolemy selected the best of these, those in prime of age and bodily strength, and armed them, but the rest, a great crowd of older and younger men and even the women, he reduced to slavery, not that he was so disposed in soul by his set purpose, but he was compelled by his soldiers as a reward for the services they had rendered in military campaigns—

and since, as has already been stated, we had obtained such an opportunity for securing their emancipation, we addressed the king with the following arguments.

15 “Let us not be so unreasonable, O King, as to be put to shame by these actions of ours. For since the legislation that we intend not only to transcribe but also to translate was established for all Jews, what justification shall we claim for an embassy while such vast numbers of them remain in slavery in your kingdom? Rather, with perfect and rich soul release those who are held in such miserable bondage, since, as I have been at pains to discover, the God who has given them their law is the one who guides your kingdom aright. **16** For they themselves worship the God who is Overseer and Creator of all, as do all other people and we ourselves, O King, although naming him differently Zeus and Dis (i.e., life and first cause). This name was quite properly bestowed upon him by our first ancestors, in order to signify that this One, through whom all things are given life and come into being, rules and governs the universe. Now you will surpass all humankind in magnanimity by granting freedom to those being kept in slavery.”

17 After a brief interval, while we were still offering prayers in soul to God that he would so dispose the mind of the king for all of them to be set free,

—“For the race of humans, being the creation of God, is both transformed and turned back again by him. Therefore with many and diverse

(him) *Zena* inasmuch as he is the cause of *life* or contains *life*”). This allegorical sense is then explicated in the next sentence of Ep. Arist. §16, via the constructions δι’ ὃν (identical to that in Diogenes Laertius) and ζωοποιοῦνται, respectively. Compare also Cornutus, *TGC* 2.

17. For the construction λαμπρότης τῆς ψυχῆς with this sense, compare Polybius, *Hist.* 32.8.1; and Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 4.40

κυριεύοντα κατὰ καρδίαν, ἵνα συναναγκασθῇ, καθὼς ἡξίου, ἐπιτελέσαι· **18** μεγάλην γὰρ εἶχον ἐλπίδα, περὶ σωτηρίας ἀνθρώπων προτιθέμενος λόγον, ὅτι τὴν ἐπιτέλειαν ὁ θεὸς ποιήσει τῶν ἀξιουμένων· ὁ γὰρ πρὸς δικαιοσύνην καὶ καλῶν ἔργων ἐπιμέλειαν ἐν ὁσιότητι νομίζουσιν ἄνθρωποι ποιεῖν, κατευθύνει τὰς πράξεις καὶ τὰς ἐπιβολὰς ὁ κυριεύων ἀπάντων θεός.—

19 ὁ δὲ διανακύψας καὶ προσβλέψας ἰλαρῶ τῷ προσώπῳ·

Πόσας ὑπολαμβάνεις μυριάδας ἔσεσθαι; ἔφη.

παρεστῶς δὲ Ἀνδρέας ἀπεφώνητο,

Βραχεῖ πλεῖον μυριάδων δέκα.

ὁ δέ, Μικρόν γε, εἶπεν, Ἀριστέας ἡμᾶς ἀξιοῖ πρᾶγμα.¹⁸

Σωσίβιος δὲ καὶ τῶν παρόντων τινὲς τοῦτ' εἶπον·

Καὶ γὰρ ἄξιόν ἐστι τῆς σῆς μεγαλοψυχίας, ὅπως χαριστήριον¹⁹ ἀναθῇ τῷ μεγίστῳ θεῷ τὴν τούτων ἀπόλυσιν. μεγίστως γὰρ τετιμημένος ὑπὸ τοῦ κρατοῦντος τὰ πάντα καὶ δεδοξασμένος ὑπὲρ τοὺς προγόνους, εἰ καὶ μέγιστα ποιήσεις χαριστήρια, καθήκόν ἐστὶ σοι.

20 διαχυθεὶς δὲ εὖ μάλα τοῖς ὄψωνις εἶπε προσθεῖναι, καὶ σώματος ἐκάστου κομίζεσθαι δραχμὰς εἴκοσι,²⁰ καὶ περὶ τούτων ἐκθεῖναι πρόσταγμα, τὰς δὲ ἀπογραφὰς ποιεῖσθαι παρ' αὐτά, μεγαλείως χρησάμενος τῇ προθυμίᾳ, τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν πᾶσαν ἐπιτελέσαντος ἡμῶν προαίρεσιν, καὶ συναναγκάσαντος αὐτὸν ἀπολυτῶσαι μὴ μόνον τοὺς συνεληλυθότας τῷ στρατοπέδῳ τοῦ πατρός, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ τινες προῆσαν, ἢ μετὰ ταῦτα παρεισῆχθησαν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν. ὑπὲρ τὰ τετρακόσια τάλαντα τὴν δόσιν ἀπέφαινον εἶναι.

21 καὶ τοῦ προστάγματος δὲ τὸ ἀντίγραφον οὐκ ἄχρηστον οἶομαι κατακεχωρίσθαι. πολλῶ γὰρ ἡ μεγαλομοιρία φανερωτέρα καὶ εὐδηλός ἐσται

18. The king's response may be taken ironically, i.e., "no small matter."

19. The word *χαριστήριον* ("thank offering," in the sense of sacrifice or votive) occurs 210 times in the singular in all the TLG, with only three works seemingly earlier than Ep. Arist. §19: 2 Macc 12:45; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 11.26, 33; and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 1.55, 88—all writings of the first century BCE. Moreover, all three earlier examples are, in reality, found in fragmentary historians who are only preserved in much later writers, thus: Dioscurides, frag. 1.8 (*apud* Plutarch, *Lyc.* 11.7); Myrsilus, frag. 4a.15 (*apud* Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 2.31.4); and Menodotus, frag. 1.26 (*apud* Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 15.1). The term is somewhat more frequent (344x) and earlier in the plural, as used just below in Ep. Arist. §19. The form *εὐχαριστήριον* is rarer, with 125 occurrences in the TLG, and none earlier than Philo, *Mos.* 2.148 (singular) and Polybius, *Hist.* 5.14.8 (plural). See also §§37 and 227 below for the cognate adjectival

prayers I called in heart upon him who rules (all), that the king might be constrained to grant my request. **18** Indeed, I had great hopes as I uttered my arguments concerning the salvation of (these) people that God would grant fulfillment of my entreaty. For when people from pure motives perform some action in the interest of righteousness and the concern for noble deeds, God who rules all guides their actions and designs aright.”—

19 then, raising his head and looking up at me with a cheerful countenance, the king asked,

“How many thousands do you think they will number?”

Andreas, who was standing near, replied,

“A bit more than a hundred thousand.”

“Such a small thing,” said the king, “does Aristeas ask of us!”

Then Sosibius and some others who were present said,

“Yes, but it will be a worthy tribute to your magnanimity for you to offer the release of these people as a thank offering to the greatest God. For since you have been greatly honored by the All-Mastering One and glorified above your ancestors, it is fitting for you that you should render even the greatest thank offerings [to him].”

20 Extremely pleased with these arguments, he gave orders that a supplement be added to the wages (of soldiers) and that twenty drachmas should be paid (to other owners) for every slave, that a public order should be issued and that registers of the captives should be attached to it. He thereby manifested his kindly zeal, for it was God who had brought our purpose to fulfillment in its entirety and constrained him to redeem not only those who had come into Egypt with the army of his father but any who were here before that time or had been subsequently brought into the kingdom. An accounting was given that the bequest would exceed four hundred talents.

21 I think it will useful to insert a copy of the decree. For in this way the magnanimity of the king, who was empowered by God to save such

form *χαριστικός*, -ή, -όν (used synonymously in the neuter in §37). The last form is even rarer still, with only fifteen occurrences in the neuter (and only thirty-eight total), and the earliest are those here (§37) and in Philo, *Leg.* 3.106.

20. Although the recipients are not specified here, that these provisions apply to two distinct groups who were in possession of these Jewish slaves is made clear by the decree given in full in §22.

τοῦ βασιλέως, τοῦ θεοῦ κατισχύοντος αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σωτηρίαν γενέσθαι πλήθесιν ἱκανοῖς. 22 ἦν δὲ τοιοῦτο·

Τοῦ βασιλέως προστάξαντος²¹—

“Ὅσοι τῶν συνεστρατευμένων τῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν εἰς τοὺς κατὰ Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην τόπους ἐπελθόντες τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων χώραν ἐγκρατεῖς ἐγένοντο σωματῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν καὶ ταῦτα διακεκομίσασιν εἰς τε τὴν πόλιν καὶ τὴν χώραν ἢ καὶ πεπράκασιν ἑτέροις, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ εἴ τινες προῆσαν ἢ καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα εἰσιν εἰσηγμένοι, τῶν τοιούτων ἀπολύειν παραχρῆμα²² τοὺς ἔχοντας, κομιζομένους αὐτίκα ἐκάστου σώματος δραχμὰς εἴκοσι, τοὺς μὲν στρατιώτας τῇ τῶν ὀψωνίων δόσει, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλικῆς τραπέζης.

23 νομίζομεν γὰρ καὶ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν βούλησιν καὶ παρὰ τὸ καλῶς ἔχον ἡχμαλωτεῦσθαι τούτους, διὰ δὲ τὴν στρατιωτικὴν προπέτειαν τὴν τε χώραν αὐτῶν κατεφθάρθαι καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαίων μεταγωγὴν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον γεγονέναι· ἱκανὴ γὰρ ἦν ἡ παρὰ τὸ πεδῖον γεγонуῖα ἐκ τῶν στρατιωτῶν ὠφέλεια· διὸ παντελῶς ἀνεπιεικὴς ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων καταδυναστεία.

24 πᾶσιν οὖν ἀνθρώποις τὸ δίκαιον ἀπονέμειν ὁμολογούμενοι, πολλῷ δὲ μᾶλλον τοῖς ἀλόγως καταδυναστευομένοις, καὶ κατὰ πᾶν ἐκζητοῦντες τὸ καλῶς ἔχον πρὸς τε τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὴν κατὰ πάντων εὐσέβειαν, προστετάχαμεν ὅσα τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν ἐστὶ σωματῶν ἐν οἰκεταῖς (πανταχῇ)²³ καθ’ ὄντιν οὖν τρόπον ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, κομιζομένους τοὺς ἔχοντας τὸ προκείμενον κεφάλαιον ἀπολύειν, καὶ μηδὲνα κακοσχόλως περὶ τούτων μηδὲν οἰκονομεῖν· τὰς δ’ ἀπογραφὰς ἐν ἡμέραις τρισίν, ἀφ’ ἧς ἡμέρας ἔκκειται τὸ πρόσταγμα, ποιεῖσθαι πρὸς τοὺς καθεσταμένους περὶ τούτων, καταδεικνύντας εὐθὺ καὶ τὰ σώματα. 25 διειλήφαμεν γὰρ καὶ ἡμῖν συμφέρειν καὶ τοῖς πράγμασι τοῦτ’ ἐπιτελεσθῆναι. τὸν δὲ βουλόμενον προσαγγέλλειν περὶ τῶν ἀπειθησάντων, ἐφ’ ᾧ τοῦ φανέντος ἐνόχου τὴν κυρίαν ἔξειν· τὰ δὲ ὑπάρχοντα τῶν τοιούτων εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν ἀναληφθήσεται.

21. Though the decree described here is entirely fictional, Westermann (1938, 20–30) argued that it was based on an actual Ptolemaic decree of emancipation (SB 5.8008) with similar provisions. This text does not make special provisions for Jewish slaves but applies more generally to subjects still dwelling in Syria and Phoenicia. It was given by one of the Ptolemaic rulers, often presumed to be Ptolemy II, but the titlature is not clear. The full text of the decree and references are given in sec. 3.5, no. 10.

22. We follow Wendland’s text (whereas Thackeray rendered it as *παρὰ χρῆμα*). Both Wendland and Thackeray, however, place the comma after τῶν τοιούτων rather than before, as proposed here.

vast multitudes, will be made much clearer and more manifest. **22** It ran as follows:

“The king has decreed:

All who served in the army of our father in the country of the Judeans during the invasion of the Syrian and Phoenician regions and who came into possession of Jewish slaves and brought them back to the city of Alexandria and the land of Egypt or sold them to others—and in the same way also, any (other Jewish slaves) who were here before that time or were brought in afterward—those possessing (such slaves) are to set them free immediately, forthwith receiving twenty drachmas per slave, soldiers to receive it as an allotment added to their wages, the others (as payment) from the king’s treasury.

23 For we think that it was against our father’s will and against all propriety that they should have been made captives and that the devastation of their land and carrying off of the Jews to Egypt was an act of military rashness. The spoil that fell to those having served as soldiers on the field (of battle) was sufficient. Therefore the further subjugation of this people (to slavery) is altogether unjust.

24 Since it is acknowledged, therefore, that we are accustomed to render justice to all men and especially to those who have been subjugated unreasonably, and since we strive to do well in everything with both justice and customary piety, we have decreed further, in reference to the Jewish slaves who are in bondage in whatever manner anywhere in our realm, that those who possess them shall receive the stipulated sum of money and set them at liberty and that no man shall show any tardiness in discharging his obligations. Within three days after the publication of this decree, they must make lists of slaves for the officers appointed for this purpose and immediately make known the said slaves. **25** For we have determined that it will be advantageous to us and to our affairs that the matter should be brought to a conclusion. Anyone who likes may give information about any who disobey the decree in which case, if the man is proved guilty he will become his slave; his property, however, will be handed over to the royal treasury.”

23. Thackeray’s conjecture; the manuscripts read πάντα (or παντί) μὴ, corrected by Wendland to παντί καί.

26 εἰσδοθέντος τοῦ προστάγματος, ὅπως ἐπαναγνωσθῇ τῷ βασιλεῖ, τὰ ἄλλα πάντ' ἔχοντος πλην τοῦ Καί εἴ τινες προῆσαν ἢ καί μετὰ ταῦτα εἰσηγμένοι εἰσὶ τῶν τοιούτων, αὐτὸς τοῦτο ὁ βασιλεὺς προσέθηκε, μεγαλομοιρία καὶ μεγαλοψυχία χρησάμενος, ἐκέλευσέ τε τῶν διαφόρων δόσιν ἀθρόαν οὔσαν ἀπομερίσαι τοῖς ὑπηρεταῖς τῶν ταγμάτων καὶ βασιλικοῖς τραπεζίταις.

27 οὕτω δοχθὲν ἐκεκύρωτο ἐν ἡμέραις ἑπτὰ· πλεῖον δὲ ταλάντων ἑξακοσίων ἐξήκοντα ἢ δόσις ἐγεγόνει. πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἐπιμαστιδίων τέκνων σὺν ταῖς μητράσιν ἐλευθεροῦντο. προσανενεχθέντος εἰ καὶ περὶ τούτων εἰκοσαδραχμία δοθήσεται, καὶ τοῦτ' ἐκέλευσεν ὁ βασιλεὺς ποιεῖν, ὁλοσχερῶς περὶ τοῦ δόξαντος ἅπαντ' ἐπιτελῶν.

28 Ὡς δὲ κατεπράχθη ταῦτα, τὸν Δημήτριον ἐκέλευσεν εἰσδοῦναι περὶ τῆς τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν βιβλίων ἀναγραφῆς. πάντα γὰρ διὰ προσταγμάτων καὶ μεγάλης ἀσφαλείας τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τούτοις διωκεῖτο, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπερριμμένως οὐδ' εἰκῇ. διόπερ καὶ τὸ τῆς εἰσδόσεως²⁴ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ἀντίγραφα κατακεχώρικα, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀπεσταλμένων πλήθος καὶ τὴν ἐκάστου κατασκευήν, διὰ τὸ μεγαλομοιρία καὶ τέχνη διαφέρειν ἑκαστον αὐτῶν.

τῆς δὲ εἰσδόσεως^[24] ἐστὶν ἀντίγραφον τόδε·

29 Βασιλεῖ μεγάλῳ παρὰ Δημητρίου.

προστάξαντός σου, βασιλεῦ, περὶ τῶν ἀπολιπόντων εἰς τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τῆς βιβλιοθήκης βιβλίων, ὅπως ἐπισυναχθῇ, καὶ τὰ διαπεπτωκότα²⁵ τύχη τῆς προσηκούσης ἐπισκευῆς, πεποιημένος οὐ παρέργως τὴν ἐν τούτοις ἐπιμέλειαν, προσαναφέρω σοι τάδε.

30 τοῦ νόμου τῶν Ἰουδαίων βιβλία σὺν ἐτέροις ὀλίγοις τισὶν ἀπολείπει· τυγχάνει γὰρ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασι καὶ φωνῇ λεγόμενα, ἀμελέστερον δέ, καὶ οὐχ ὡς ὑπάρχει, σεσήμανται, καθὼς ὑπὸ τῶν εἰδόντων προσαναφέρεται·

24. The term used twice here (and later in §33 below) for “memorandum” (εἰσδοσις) is a rare word coinage in nominal form. The sense is made clear from the somewhat more common verb forms (from εἰσδίδωμι), as used above in §28 (εἰσδοῦναι, here meaning “to draft a memorandum”); it is also used with this sense in papyri of the second to first century BCE (P.Tebt. 72.462). In this light, the beginning of §26 above should likely be rendered as follows: “When the memorandum had been drafted, so that it might be read to the king (for his approval)” The noun form is otherwise attested only in a papyrus of the second to first century BCE (P.Lond. 4.23). The only other attestations of the noun are from Josephus, who takes it directly from Epistle of Aristee (so A.J. 12.35 and 40); the first requires an editorial correction, since some manuscripts of Josephus and the Eusebian version (*Praep. ev.* 8.2.5) read ἐκδόσεως here.

26 When the decree was brought to be read to the king (for his approval), it contained all the other provisions except the phrase “*any captives who were here before that time or were brought in afterward*,” and in his magnificence and magnanimity the king himself inserted this clause and gave orders that the grant of money required for the redemption should be deposited in full with the paymasters of the forces and the royal bankers.

27 Having thus been resolved, the decree was ratified within seven days. The bequest amounted to more than six hundred and sixty talents, for many infants at the breast were emancipated together with their mothers. When the question was raised whether the sum of twenty drachmas was to be paid for these, too, the king ordered that it should be done as well, and thus he carried out every aspect of his decision in the most comprehensive way.

28 When this had been done, he ordered Demetrius to draft a memorandum with regard to the transcription of the Jewish books, for all affairs of state used to be carried out by means of decrees and with the most painstaking accuracy by these kings, and nothing was done in a slipshod or haphazard fashion. Therefore I have inserted copies of the memorandum and the letters, the number of the presents sent and the nature of each, since every one of them excelled in magnificence and technical skill.

Here is a copy of the memorandum:

29 “To the great king, from Demetrius.

Since you have given instructions, O King, concerning the books still needed for the completion of your library, that they should be collected together and that those that are defective should be suitably repaired, I have taken the utmost care in this matter, and I now have the following to report to you in addition.

30 The books of the law of the Jews (along with a few others) are absent. They happen to be rendered in Hebrew characters and language, but they have been carelessly interpreted, and not as given originally, as has been reported in addition by those who know. For they

25. The word can also be translated “missing,” but the sense favors this more literal rendering here (cf. LSJ, s.v. “*διαπίπτω*,” with ref. to the version of Josephus, *A.J.* 12.36), although this alternative sense as double entendre may anticipate what follows.

προνοίας γὰρ βασιλικῆς οὐ τέτευχε.²⁶ **31** δέον δέ ἐστι καὶ ταῦθ' ὑπάρχειν παρὰ σοι²⁷ δηκριβωμένα, διὰ τὸ καὶ φιλοσοφωτέραν εἶναι καὶ ἀκέραιον τὴν νομοθεσίαν ταύτην, ὡς ἂν οὔσαν θεῖαν. διὸ πόρρω γεγόνασιν οἱ τε συγγραφεῖς καὶ ποιηταὶ καὶ τὸ τῶν ἱστορικῶν πλῆθος τῆς ἐπιμνήσεως τῶν προειρημένων βιβλίων, καὶ τῶν κατ' αὐτὰ πεπολιτευμένων [καὶ πολιτευομένων]²⁸ ἀνδρῶν, διὰ τὸ ἀγνήν τινα καὶ σεμνήν εἶναι τὴν ἐν αὐτοῖς θεωρίαν, ὡς φησιν Ἑκαταῖος ὁ Ἀβδηρίτης.²⁹ **32** ἐὰν οὖν φαίνεται,³⁰ βασιλεῦ, γραφήσεται πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα τὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, ἀποστεῖλαι τοὺς μάλιστα καλῶς βεβιωκότας καὶ πρεσβυτέρους ὄντας ἄνδρας, ἐμπείρους³¹ τῶν κατὰ τὸν νόμον τὸν ἑαυτῶν, ἀφ' ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἕξ, ὅπως τὸ σύμφωνον ἐκ τῶν πλείονων ἐξετάσαντες καὶ λαβόντες τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ἀκριβές, ἀξίως καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ τῆς σῆς προαιρέσεως, θῶμεν εὐσήμως. εὐτύχει διὰ παντός.

33 Τῆς δὲ εἰσδόσεως ταύτης γενομένης, ἐκέλευσεν ὁ βασιλεὺς γραφῆναι πρὸς τὸν Ἑλεάζαρον περὶ τούτων, σημάναντας καὶ τὴν γενομένην ἀπολύτρωσιν τῶν αἰχμαλώτων. ἔδωκε δὲ καὶ εἰς κατασκευὴν κρατήρων τε καὶ φιαλῶν καὶ τραπέζης καὶ σπονδείων χρυσοῦ μὲν ὀλκῆς τάλαντα πεντήκοντα καὶ ἀργυρίου τάλαντα ἑβδομήκοντα καὶ λίθων ἱκανόν τι πλῆθος—ἐκέλευσε δὲ τοὺς ῥισκοφύλακας τοῖς τεχνίταις, ὧν ἂν προαιρῶνται, τὴν ἐκλογὴν διδόναι—καὶ νομίσματος εἰς θυσίας καὶ ἄλλα πρὸς τάλαντα ἑκατόν. **34** δηλώσομεν δὲ σοι περὶ τῆς κατασκευῆς, ὡς ἂν τὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ἀντίγραφα διέλθωμεν.

26. Compare Philo, *Mos.* 2.28 (see sec. 2.1, below).

27. Compare Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.22.148 (sometimes attributed to Aristobulus, frag. 3b; see sec. 2.4.2, below).

28. The brackets here follow Wendland and Thackeray; the bracketed phrase is contained in some manuscripts but is omitted by Eusebius and Josephus. Given the proximity of this author, it may well be original.

29. This putative saying of Hecataeus has no independent witness. For similar wording, again placed on the lips of Demetrius but without attribution to Hecataeus, see §313: Διὰ τὸ σεμνὴν εἶναι τὴν νομοθεσίαν καὶ διὰ θεοῦ γεγενῆσθαι. (“Because the law is sacred and came about through God”). In §171, however, the “sanctity and natural meaning of the law” (τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ φυσικὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ νόμου) is described in a direct address from Aristaeas to Philocrates. On the problem of the so-called Pseudo-Hecataeus fragments preserved especially by Josephus, see Holladay, 1983, 277–355; and sec. 2.3.3, below. For our translation of *θεωρία* here, compare the title of Philo's *De vita contemplativa* (Περὶ βιοῦ θεωρητικοῦ) as well as the opening lines: ... αὐτίκα καὶ περὶ τῶν θεωρίαν ἀσπασαμένων ἀκολουθία τῆς πραγματείας ἐπόμενος τὰ

have not experienced a king's foresight. **31** It is necessary that their original meaning should be rendered exactly by you since this legislation, in as much as it is of divine origin, is both very philosophical and without guile. For this reason the writers of literature, both the poets and the majority of the historians, have held aloof from referring to these books and the men who have lived [and are living] in accordance with them, because "*the contemplative vision in them is so sacred and august*," as Hecataeus of Abdera says. **32** If it seems good, O King, a letter shall be written to the high priest in Jerusalem, asking him to send six men out of every tribe—those who have lived the noblest life and are elders and well-versed in matters according to their law—that we may find out the points in which the majority of them are in agreement and so, having obtained an accurate translation, may place it in a conspicuous place in a manner worthy of the work itself and your purpose. May continual prosperity be yours."

33 When this memorandum had been presented, the king ordered a letter to be written to Eleazar on the matter, giving also an account of the emancipation of the Jewish captives. And he gave fifty talents' weight of gold and seventy talents of silver and a large quantity of precious stones to make bowls and vials and a table and libation cups—and he also gave orders to those in charge of his coffers to allow the artisans to make a selection of whatever they might require for the purpose—and another hundred talents in coins for sacrifices and other needs. **34** We shall give you a full account of the workmanship once we have gone through the copies of the letters.

προσέχοντα λέξω (1.1, lines 3–4). It is noteworthy that Josephus omits this term from his version of the quotation of Hecataeus (*A.J.* 12.38); however, he uses the criticism of the Greek writers and historians from the preceding lines as a thematic device in his *Contra Apionem*. See the *testimonia* in sec. 2.3, below.

30. Or "if it please," so Andrews (1913, 2:98). Andrews, following Thackeray (1903, 348 = 1904, 12) argues that this formula using φαίνεται but omitting the pronoun σοι (as found in earlier Hellenistic usage), only became common after ca. 163 BCE and down to the mid-first century. Note that Josephus (*A.J.* 12.39) transforms it into the even more classical formula ἐάν οὖν σοι δοκῇ.

31. This term (cf. §39) shows up prominently in the later *testimonia*, especially Philo, *Mos.* 2.33, and those of Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria; see sec. 2.4, below (esp. nn. 6, 26).

ἦν δὲ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ τὸν τύπον ἔχουσα τοῦτον·

35 Βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος Ἐλεάζρῳ ἀρχιερεῖ χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι.³²

ἐπεὶ συμβαίνει πλείονας τῶν Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν χώραν κατῳκίσθαι γενηθέντας ἀνασπάστους ἐκ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων ὑπὸ Περσῶν, καθ' ὃν ἐπεκράτουν χρόνον, ἔτι δὲ καὶ συνεληλυθέναι τῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον αἰχμαλώτους· **36** —ἀφ' ὧν πλείονας εἰς τὸ στρατιωτικὸν σύνταγμα κατεχώρισεν ἐπὶ μείζοσι μισθοφορίαις, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τοὺς προόντας κρίνας πιστοὺς φρούρια κτίσας ἀπέδωκεν αὐτοῖς, ὅπως τὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἔθνος φόβος [μὴ] ἔχῃ διὰ τούτων.³³ καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ παραλαβόντες τὴν βασιλείαν φιλανθρωπότερον ἀπαντῶμεν τοῖς πᾶσι, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον τοῖς σοῖς πολίταις— **37** ὑπὲρ δέκα μυριάδας αἰχμαλώτων ἠλευθερώκαμεν, ἀποδόντες τοῖς κρατοῦσι τὴν κατ' ἀξίαν ἀργυρικὴν τιμὴν, διορθούμενοι καὶ εἴ τι κακῶς ἐπράχθη διὰ τὰς τῶν ὄχλων ὁρμὰς, διειληφότες εὐσεβῶς τοῦτο πράξαι, καὶ τῷ μεγίστῳ θεῷ χαριστικόν³⁴ ἀνατιθέντες, ὃς ἡμῖν τὴν βασιλείαν ἐν εἰρήνῃ καὶ δόξῃ κρατίστη παρ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην διατετήρηκεν· εἰς τε τὸ στράτευμα τοὺς ἀκμαιοτάτους ταῖς ἡλικίαις τετάχαμεν, τοὺς δὲ δυναμένους καὶ περὶ ἡμᾶς εἶναι, τῆς περὶ τὴν αὐλὴν πίστεως ἀξίους, ἐπὶ χρειῶν καθεστάκαμεν.³⁵

38 βουλομένων δ' ἡμῶν καὶ τούτοις χαρίζεσθαι καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς μετέπειτα, προηγήμεθα τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν μεθερμηνευθῆναι γράμμασιν Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐκ τῶν παρ' ὑμῶν λεγομένων Ἑβραϊκῶν γραμμάτων, ἵν' ὑπάρχῃ καὶ ταῦτα παρ' ἡμῖν ἐν βιβλιοθήκῃ σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις βασιλικῶς βιβλίοις.

39 καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας σπουδῆς ἀξίως ἐπιλεξάμενος³⁶ ἄνδρας καλῶς βεβιωκότας πρεσβυτέρους, ἐμπειρίαν ἔχοντας τοῦ νόμου, καὶ δυνατοὺς ἐρμηνεῦσαι, ἀφ' ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἕξ, ὅπως ἐκ τῶν πλειόνων

32. For this specific greeting formula and its implications for dating (after ca. 130 BCE), see the introduction to this volume at n. 106; also discussed in L. M. White 2015, 187–90 and n. 50; cf. Exler 1923, 32, 60, 64; Alexander 1984, 585–86. See the alternative formula in the reply from Eleazar (§41).

33. The text as corrected (apparently) by Josephus (and followed by Eusebius) omits μὴ, but the manuscripts generally preserve it, perhaps with the sense “not be afraid, thanks to them.”

34. See §19 and n. 19 above.

35. For the phrase τοὺς δὲ δυναμένους καὶ περὶ ἡμᾶς εἶναι, τῆς περὶ τὴν αὐλὴν πίστεως ἀξίους, ἐπὶ χρειῶν καθεστάκαμεν (cf. §215), compare 1 Macc 10:37: ἐκ τούτων κατασταθήσονται ἐπὶ χρειῶν τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐσῶν εἰς πίστιν (“let some of them be put in positions of trust in the kingdom”). Momigliano (1932, 164) argued that this phrase, among others, showed a dependence of Epistle of Aristea on 1 Maccabees; cf. Tramontano 1931, on §37.

The letter of the king took this form:

35 “King Ptolemy to Eleazar the high priest: *Greetings and be well.*

Since it has come to pass that many Jews were settled in our realm, having been carried off from Jerusalem by the Persians at the time of their power and many more who came into Egypt as captives with my father **36** —of whom he placed large numbers in the army and paid them higher wages than usual, and when he had proved the loyalty of their leaders he built fortresses and placed them in their charge that the native Egyptians might [not] be intimidated by them. And we, when we ascended the throne, adopted a kindly attitude toward all (our subjects), and more particularly to your fellow-citizens— **37** we have set at liberty more than a hundred thousand captives, paying their owners the appropriate market price for them, and if ever evil has been done to your people through the passions of the mob, we have made them reparation, intending to act reverently and rendering unto the supreme God a thank offering for maintaining my kingdom in peace and great glory in all the world. Moreover, those of your people who were in the prime of life we have drafted into our army, and those who were fit to be in our circle and worthy of trust at our court, we have established in official positions.

38 Now since I am anxious to show my gratitude to these men and to the Jews throughout the world and to the generations yet to come, we have determined that your law shall be translated from the Hebrew tongue that is in use among you into the Greek language, that these books, too, may be ready to hand with us in the library along with the other royal books.

39 Therefore, you will do well and (act) in a manner worthy of our earnest zeal by selecting elders, men who have lived nobly and who are well-versed in your law and able to interpret it, six from each tribe, so that from their greater number harmony may be found, for the inves-

36. The grammar here, with *καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις καὶ ... ἀξίως* (followed by a participial phrase), is commonplace in letters of friendship and recommendation, as well as various kinds of petitions and requests. See also the letter from Eleazar to Ptolemy below (§46). Compare Pseudo-Demetrius, *Form. ep.* 1, 2 (ed. Malherbe 1988, 32–33). The parallel phrasing in §40, at the end of the letter (*γράφων δὲ ... πρὸς ἡμᾶς περὶ ὧν ἐὰν βούληται*), although more variable in form, is likewise commonly found in letters of friendship, so Pseudo-Demetrius, *Form. ep.* 1 (last line).

τὸ σύμφωνον εὐρεθῇ, διὰ τὸ περὶ μειζόνων εἶναι τὴν σκέψιν. οἰόμεθα γὰρ ἐπιτελεσθέντος τούτου μεγάλην ἀποίσεσθαι δόξαν.

40 ἀπεστάλκαμεν δὲ περὶ τούτων Ἀνδρέαν τῶν ἀρχισωματοφυλάκων³⁷ καὶ Ἀριστεάν³⁸, τιμωμένους παρ' ἡμῖν, διαλεζομένους σοι καὶ κομίζοντας ἀπαρχὰς εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν ἀναθημάτων καὶ εἰς θυσιάς καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἀργυρίου τάλαντα ἑκατόν. γράφων δὲ καὶ σὺ πρὸς ἡμᾶς περὶ ὧν ἐὰν βούλῃ κεχαρισμένος ἔσῃ, καὶ φιλίας ἄξιόν τι πράξεις, ὡς ἐπιτελεσθησομένων τὴν ταχίστην περὶ ὧν ἂν αἰρή. ἔρρωσο.

41 Πρὸς ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀντέγραψεν ἐνδεχομένως ὁ Ἐλεάζαρος ταῦτα· Ἐλεάζαρος ἀρχιερεὺς βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ φίλῳ γνησίῳ. χαίρειν.

αὐτὸς τε ἔρρωσο καὶ ἡ βασίλισσα Ἀρσινόη³⁹, ἡ ἀδελφή, καὶ τὰ τέκνα, καλῶς ἂν ἔχοι καὶ ὡς βουλόμεθα, καὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ ὑγιαίνομεν.⁴⁰ **42** λαβόντες τὴν παρὰ σοῦ ἐπιστολὴν μεγάλως ἐχάρημεν διὰ τὴν προαίρεσίν σου καὶ τὴν καλὴν βουλὴν, καὶ συναγαγόντες τὸ πᾶν πλῆθος παρανέγνωμεν αὐτοῖς, ἵνα εἰδῶσιν ἣν ἔχεις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν εὐσέβειαν. ἐπεδείξαμεν δὲ καὶ τὰς φιάλας ἃς ἀπέστειλας, χρυσᾶς εἴκοσι καὶ ἀργυρᾶς τριάκοντα, κρατῆρας πέντε, καὶ τράπεζαν εἰς ἀνάθεσιν, καὶ εἰς προσαγωγὴν θυσιῶν καὶ εἰς ἐπισκευὰς ὧν ἂν δέηται τὸ ἱερὸν ἀργυρίου τάλαντα ἑκατόν,

43 ἅπερ ἐκόμισεν Ἀνδρέας τῶν τετιμημένων παρὰ σοὶ καὶ Ἀριστεάς,⁴¹ ἄνδρες καλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ καὶ παιδεῖα διαφέροντες καὶ τῆς σῆς ἀγωγῆς καὶ

37. Andrews (1913, 2:99), following Strack, argues that the plural form of the term ἀρχισωματοφυλάξ (“chief body guard”) as used here (§40 and §12), does not occur in the papyri until after 145 BCE. Fraser (1972, 2:185 n. 66), however, gives the date of the plural form in the papyri as 163–145 BCE (under Ptolemy VI Philometor), but the formulaic version using the genitive plural (as seen here) is regularized only after 140. See also note 113 below (§182). It should also be noted that the text of §12 (where the word is given in the accusative plural in MS A) has an important variant (in MSS T and Z) with ἐκ and thus more like the genitive formula here, while Josephus (*A.J.* 12.18) explicitly has the full formula in the genitive plural, just as here.

38. This passage, in conjunction with §§10, 12, and 123, seems to be the basis for later traditions that take Aristes to be a chief courtier or adviser to Ptolemy (so Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.2) or, along with Andreas and Sosibius (§12), another “chief body guard” (so Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.46–47). The full passage from Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.1.8, is given in sec. 2.4.3; the relevant portion calls Aristes “a man who, besides being very learned, was moreover engaged in managing the affairs of the second Ptolemy” (ἀνὴρ λόγιος μὲν ἄλλως, οὐ μὴν ἄλλὰ καὶ παρατυχὼν τοῖς πραχθεῖσι κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον Πτολεμαῖον). At the beginning of his account of the story of the translation (*A.J.* 12.17), however, Josephus describes Aristes as follows: “who was a Friend, being first among those close to the king, and respectfully sought after by him on account of

tigation is of the highest possible importance. We hope to win great renown by the accomplishment of this work.

40 We have sent Andreas, of the chief bodyguard, and Aristeeas—men whom we hold in high esteem—to lay the matter before you and present you with the firstfruits of dedications for the temple and for the sacrifices yet another hundred talents of silver. And you will indeed favor us, and do something worthy of our friendship, by writing to us concerning whatever you wish, so that your wishes may be carried out as speedily as possible. Fare thee well.”

41 To this letter Eleazar replied appropriately as follows:

“Eleazar the high priest to King Ptolemy, his true Friend: Greetings.

My highest wishes are for your welfare and the well-being of your sister, Queen Arsinoe, and your children. We ourselves are also well. **42** Having received your letter we rejoiced greatly on account of your set purpose and your noble counsel. And assembling the whole people, we read it to them that they might know what reverence you hold toward our God. We also showed them the cups that you sent, twenty of gold and thirty of silver, the five bowls and the table for a dedication, and the hundred talents of silver for the offering of sacrifices and for repairs as might be needed for the temple.

43 These gifts were brought (to us) by Andreas, one of those honored by you, and by Aristeeas, both good men and true, distinguished

his moderation” (φίλος ὢν ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ σπουδαζόμενος ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ διὰ μετριοτήτα). See also note 37 above and note 39 below. For the Andreas who was court doctor to Ptolemy IV Philopator, see note 113 below.

39. His sister Arsinoe II became the queen in 278 and died in 270, but these dates do not match up well with the fact that Demetrius of Phalerum was banished by Ptolemy II in 283 and died shortly thereafter. On the date, see pp. 34–35 in the introduction; for the *testimonia* regarding Demetrius of Phalerum, see sec. 2.3.2, below.

40. The health petition here is very formal and resembles Ptolemaic courtly style. Compare *CPJ* 1.132 (165–145 BCE), a letter from an Egyptian official to the Jewish priest Onias at Leontopolis. The text of this letter is given below in sec. 3.5, no. 8; see also L. M. White 2015, 189–90.

41. This reference to the gifts (see §§51–82), plus the selection of the translators (§§46–47), make it clear that Ptolemy’s letter had ostensibly been carried to Jerusalem by Aristeeas and Andreas along with the lavish gifts (described below at §§51–82) and that Eleazar’s reply was then brought by them on their return to Alexandria with the seventy-two elders. This detail further reinforces the sense that the embedded letters were conceived as “royal correspondence” between heads of state; cf. §44.

δικαιοσύνης ἄξιοι κατὰ πάντα· οἱ καὶ μετέδωκαν ἡμῖν τὰ παρὰ σοῦ, πρὸς ἃ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν ἀκηκόασιν ἀρμόζοντα τοῖς σοῖς γράμμασι. 44 πάντα γὰρ ὅσα σοι συμφέρει, καὶ εἰ παρὰ φύσιν ἐστίν, ὑπακουσόμεθα· τοῦτο γὰρ φιλίας καὶ ἀγαπήσεως σημεῖόν ἐστι.⁴² μεγάλα γὰρ καὶ σὺ καὶ ἀνεπίληστα τοὺς πολίτας ἡμῶν κατὰ πολλοὺς τρόπους εὐηργέτηκας.

45 εὐθέως οὖν προσηγάγομεν ὑπὲρ σοῦ θυσίας καὶ τῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ τῶν τέκνων καὶ τῶν φίλων.⁴³ καὶ ἠύξατο πᾶν τὸ πλῆθος, ἵνα σοι γένηται καθὼς προαιρῇ διὰ παντός, καὶ διασώζῃ σοι τὴν βασιλείαν ἐν εἰρήνῃ μετὰ δόξης ὁ κυριεύων ἀπάντων θεός, καὶ ὅπως γένηται σοι συμφερόντως καὶ μετὰ ασφαλείας ἢ τοῦ ἀγίου νόμου μεταγραφῇ.

46 παρόντων δὲ πάντων ἐπελέξαμεν ἄνδρας καλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς πρεσβυτέρους, ἀφ' ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἕξ, οὓς καὶ ἀπεστείλαμεν ἔχοντας τὸν νόμον. καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις,⁴⁴ βασιλεῦ δίκαιε, προστάξας, ὥς ἂν ἡ μεταγραφὴ γένηται τῶν βιβλίων, ἵνα πάλιν ἀποκατασταθῶσι πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀσφαλῶς οἱ ἄνδρες. ἔρρωσο.

47 Εἰσὶ δὲ πρώτης φυλῆς· Ἰώσηφος, Ἐζεκίας, Ζαχαρίας, Ἰωάννης, Ἐζεκίας, Ἐλισσαῖος. δευτέρας· Ἰούδας, Σίμων, Σομόηλος, Ἀδαῖος, Ματταθίας, Ἐσχλεμίας. τρίτης· Νεεμίας, Ἰώσηφος, Θεοδόσιος, Βασέας, Ὀρνίας, Δάκις. 48 τετάρτης· Ἰωνάθας, Ἀβραῖος,⁴⁵ Ἐλισσαῖος, Ἀνανίας, {Χαβρίας, (... ?)}.⁴⁶ πέμπτης· Ἰσακος, Ἰάκωβος, Ἰησοῦς, Σαββαταῖος, Σίμων, Λεαῖς. ἕκτης· Ἰούδας, Ἰώσηφος, Σίμων, Ζαχαρίας, Σομόηλος, Σελεμίας. 49 ἐβδόμης· Σαββαταῖος, Σεδεκίας, Ἰάκωβος, Ἰσαχος, Ἰησίας, Νατθαῖος. ὀγδόης· Θεοδόσιος, Ἰάσων, Ἰησοῦς, Θεόδοτος, Ἰωάννης, Ἰωνάθας. ἐνάτης· Θεόφιλος, Ἀβραμος, Ἀρσαμος, Ἰάσων, Ἐνδεμίας, Δανήηλος. 50 δεκάτης· Ἱερემίας, Ἐλεάζαρος⁴⁷, Ζαχαρίας,

42. This sentence is inexplicably omitted in the translation of Andrews (1913, 2:100).

43. "Friends" (φίλοι) as a designation for the Ptolemaic courtiers (also used of Aristeas in Josephus's version, A.J. 12.17; quoted at note 38 above) seems to have developed rather late. See Andrews 1913, 2:100 n. 25. More specifically, Fraser (1972, 1:102) argues that the formal shorthand using the genitive, similar to that here, arose only in the time of Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204–180 BCE). See also §182 below and note 38 above.

44. See §39 and note 36 there.

45. Wendland gives the name in this form but with rough breathing; MS B gives the name as Ἀζραῖος (Azariah).

46. The sixth name is missing, and the fifth (Χαβρίας) may well be corrupt; Epiphanius of Salamis (*Mens.* 242) reads *Zacharias* and *Chelkias* (Ζαχαρίας, Χελκίας). The corruption of Ζαχαρίας to [Ζα]Χαβρίας (pronounced [Ζα]chavrias) seems plausible. Χελκίας, with the guttural *ch* for Π, is the normal Greek rendering of the biblical *Hilkiah* (e.g., 2 Kgs 22:4 = 4 Kgdms 22:4 LXX) and may thus be taken as the likely missing

by their learning and altogether worthy of your high principles and righteous purposes. These men shared your words with us and heard from us an answer in accordance with what you wrote. **44** To all those things that are beneficial for you, even though they are contrary to nature, we will consent. For this is a token of our friendship and love. For you have bestowed upon our citizens great and never-to-be-forgotten benefits in many ways.

45 Immediately, therefore, I offered sacrifices on behalf of you, your sister, your children, and your Friends, and all the people prayed that your plans might prosper continually and that Almighty God might preserve your kingdom in peace with glory and that the translation of the holy law be carried out beneficially for you and with (all) surety.

46 In the presence of all the people I selected elders who were good men and true, six from each tribe, and I have sent them to you with a copy of our law. You will do well, then, O just King, by ordering that as soon as the translation of the books is completed, the men shall be restored again to us safely.

Fare thee well.”

47 [*The following are the names of the elders:*] Of the first tribe, Joseph, Ezekiah, Zachariah, John, Ezekiah, Elisha. Of the second tribe, Judas, Simon, Samuel, Adaeus, Mattathias, Eschlemias. Of the third tribe, Nehemiah, Joseph, Theodosius, Baseas, Ornias, Dakis. **48** Of the fourth tribe, Jonathan, Abraeus, Elisha, Hananias, Chabrias, (Hilkiah?). Of the fifth tribe, Isaac, Jacob, Jesus, Sabbataeus, Simon, Levi. Of the sixth tribe, Judas, Joseph, Simon, Zacharias, Samuel, Selemias. **49** Of the seventh tribe, Sabbataeus, Zedekiah, Jacob, Isaac, Jesias, Natthaeus. Of the eighth tribe Theodosius, Jason, Jesus, Theodotus, John, Jonathan. Of the ninth tribe, Theophilus, Abraham, Arsamos,

name. The fourth name, *Hananias*, is very clearly rendered with a rough breathing by Thackeray, following Wendland; however, in Epiphanius (*Mens.* 241) it has a smooth breathing and is usually taken to be the common name *Ananias* (so Andrews, Shutt, and others).

47. This Eleazar (same name as the high priest) is the most senior of the translators, according to the opening scene at the banquet (§184), and he receives the first of the questions from Ptolemy (§187); see the notes there. In the next line, for *Chabeu* (Χαβεῦ, presumably pronounced *Chaveu* in the Hellenistic period), Epiphanius reads *Chaleb* (Χαλέβ) instead (*Mens.* 250), again plausible letter substitutions given later patterns of Greek pronunciation. See note 46 above.

Βανέας, Ἑλισσαῖος, Δαθαῖος. ἐνδεκάτης· Σαμούηλος, Ἰώσηφος, Ἰούδας, Ἰωνάθης. {Χαβεῦ}^[47], Δοσίθεος. δωδεκάτης· Ἰσάηλος, Ἰωάννης, Θεοδόσιος, Ἄρσαμος, Ἀβιήτης, Ἐζεκῆλος. οἱ πάντες ἐβδομήκοντα δύο.

51 καὶ τὰ μὲν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴν τοιαύτης ἐτύγχανεν ἀντιγραφῆς [ὑπὸ] τῶν περὶ τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον.

Ὡς δὲ ἐπηγγειλάμην καὶ τὰ τῶν κατασκευασμάτων διασαφῆσαι ποιῆσω. πολυτεχνία γὰρ διαφέροντα συνετελέσθη, τοῦ βασιλέως πολλὴν ἐπίδοσιν ποιουμένου καὶ παρ' ἑκάστον ἐπιθεωροῦντος τοὺς τεχνίτας. διὸ παριδεῖν οὐδὲν ἡδύναντο οὐδὲ εἰκῇ συνετέλεσαι. πρῶτον δέ σοι τὰ περὶ τῆς τραπέζης ἐξηγήσομαι.

52 προεθυμεῖτο μὲν οὖν ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑπέροπλόν τι ποιῆσαι τοῖς μέτροις τὸ κατασκεύασμα. προσέταξε δὲ πυθέσθαι τῶν ἀνὰ τὸν τόπον, πηλίκῃ τίς ἐστὶν ἢ προοῦσα καὶ κειμένη κατὰ τὸ ἱερὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις. 53 ὥς δὲ ἀπεφάνησαν τὰ μέτρα, προσεπηρώτησεν, εἰ κατασκευάσει μείζονα. τινὲς μὲν οὖν καὶ τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἔλεγον μὴδὲν ἐπικωλύειν. ὁ δὲ εἶπε βούλεσθαι καὶ πενταπλὴν τοῖς μεγέθεσι ποιῆσαι, διστάζειν δὲ μήποτε ἄχρηστος γένηται πρὸς τὰς λειτουργίας. 54 οὐ γὰρ αἰρεῖσθαι τὸ κεῖσθαι μόνον ἐν τῷ τόπῳ (τὰ) παρ' αὐτοῦ, πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον χάριν ἔξειν, ἐὰν τὰς καθηκούσας λειτουργίας ἐπὶ τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ κατεσκευασμένων οἷς καθῆκε ποιῶνται δεόντως. 55 οὐ γὰρ ἔνεκεν σπάνεως χρυσοῦ τὰ προσυντελεσμένα βραχύμετρα καθέστηκεν, ἀλλὰ φαίνεται πρὸς τινα λόγον, εἶπεν, οὕτως συνεστηκέναι τοῖς μέτροις. ἔτι γὰρ ἐπιταγῆς οὔσης οὐθέν ἂν ἐσπάνιζε· διόπερ οὐ παραβατέον οὐδὲ ὑπερθετέον τὰ καλῶς ἔχοντα. 56 τῇ μὲν οὖν ποικιλίᾳ τῶν τεχνῶν ἐκέλευσεν ὅτι μάλιστα χρῆσασθαι, σεμνῶς ἅπαντα διανοούμενος καὶ φύσιν ἔχων ἀγαθὴν εἰς τὸ συνιδεῖν πραγμάτων ἔμφασιν. ὅσα δ' ἂν ᾖ ἄγραφα, πρὸς καλλονὴν ἐκέλευσε ποιεῖν· ὅσα δὲ διὰ γραπτῶν, μέτρα αὐτοῖς κατακολουθῆσαι.

57 Δύο γὰρ πῆχεων τὸ μῆκος, τὸ δὲ ὕψος πῆχεος καὶ ἡμίσεος συνετέλουν, χρυσοῦ δοκίμου στερεὰν πάντοθεν τὴν ποίησιν ἐργασάμενοι, λέγω δὲ οὐ περὶ τι περιεπτυγμένου τοῦ χρυσοῦ, τὸν δὲ ἐλασμόν αὐτὸν ἐπιδεδέσθαι.⁴⁸ 58 στεφάνην

48. This form of the word (ἐλασμόν) is otherwise unattested except in Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.* 46.36, but it is clearly derived from ἔλασμα, meaning “beaten metal” or “metal plate,” as rendered here. For the form ἔλασμα, with the sense of “span or expanse of metal,” see §§65, 69.

Jason, Endemias, Daniel. **50** Of the tenth tribe, Jeremiah, Eleazar, Zachariah, Baneas, Elisha, Dathaeus. Of the eleventh tribe, Samuel, Joseph, Judas, Jonathes, Caleb, Dositheus. Of the twelfth tribe, Isaelus, John, Theodosius, Arsamos, Abietes, Ezekiel. They were seventy-two in all.

51 Such, then, was the answer to the king's letter that came from Eleazer and his circle.

Now, as I promised, I shall attempt to give a description of the gifts furnished. They were fashioned with exceptional skill, for the king spared no expense and personally superintended the workmen for each item. Wherefore, they were unable to ignore anything or to finish it negligently. First of all, I will give you a description of the table.

52 The king was anxious that this piece of work should be of exceptionally large dimensions, and he caused enquiries to be made of those Jews local (to Egypt) with regard to the size of the table already in the temple at Jerusalem. **53** And when they reported the measurements, he proceeded to ask whether he might make a larger one. And some of the priests and the other Jews replied that there was nothing to prevent it. And he said that he was anxious to make it five times the size, but he hesitated lest it should prove useless for the temple services. **54** He was desirous that his gift should not merely be stationed in the temple, for it would afford him much greater pleasure if the men whose duty it was to offer the fitting sacrifices were able to do so appropriately on the table that he had sent. **55** For he did not suppose that it was owing to lack of gold that the former table had been made smaller. "Rather, it seems for some reason," he said, "that it was designed to these measurements. For if the order were given even now, there would be no lack of means. Wherefore we must not transgress or go beyond the proper measure." **56** Therefore, he ordered them to make special use of all the varied arts, since he purposed everything grandly, and he possessed a natural ability to imagine the final appearance of the work. Now whatever was not written down (in the scriptures), he ordered made as beautiful as possible. But for whatever was given through the scriptures, the dimensions should accord with them.

57 They made the table two cubits long and one and a half cubits high, fashioning the product solid all around of genuine gold. Now I am not speaking of a thin overlay of gold, but what was given was solid metal.

δὲ ἐποίησαν παλαιστιαίαν κυκλόθεν· τὰ δὲ κυμάτια στρεπτά, τὴν ἀναγλυφὴν ἔχοντα σχοινίδων ἔκτυπον, τῇ πορείᾳ θαυμαστῶς ἔχουσιν ἐκ τῶν τριῶν μερῶν· ἣν γὰρ τριγωνία.⁴⁹ 59 καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος ἢ διατύπωσης τῆς ἐνεργείας τὴν αὐτὴν διάθεσιν εἶχεν, ὥστε, καθ' ὃ ἂν μέρος στρέφοιτο, τὴν πρόσοψιν εἶναι τὴν αὐτὴν, κειμένου δὲ κατὰ τῆς στεφάνης τὸ μὲν εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν τράπεζαν ἀπόκλιμα τὴν διατύπωσιν ἔχειν τῆς ωραιότητος, τὸ δὲ ἐκτὸς κλίμα πρὸς τὴν τοῦ προσάγοντος εἶναι θεωρίαν.⁵⁰

60 διὸ τὴν ὑπεροχὴν ὀξεῖαν εἶναι τῶν δύο κλιμάτων συνέβαινε, μετέωρον ἐπικειμένην, ὡς προειρήκαμεν, τριγώνου κατεσκευασμένου, καθ' ὃ ἂν μέρος στρέφοιτο. λίθων τε πολυτελῶν ἐν αὐτῷ διαθέσεις ὑπῆρχον ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν σχοινίδων· ἕτερος παρὰ ἕτερον πλοκὴν εἶχον ἀμίμητον τῇ ποιήσει. 61 πάντες δ' ἦσαν διὰ τρημάτων κατελιγμένοι χρυσαῖς περόναις πρὸς τὴν ἀσφάλειαν. ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν γωνιῶν αἱ κατακλείδες συνέσφιγγον πρὸς τὴν συνοχὴν. 62 ἐκ πλαγίων δὲ κατὰ τὴν στεφάνην κυκλόθεν τὰ πρὸς τὴν ἄνω πρόσοψιν ὠθεσία κατεσκευάστο διάλιθος, {ἐκτύπωσιν ἔχουσα προσοχῆς} συνεχέσιν ἀναγλυφαῖς ῥαβδωταῖς, πυκνὴν ἐχούσαις τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα θέσιν περὶ ὅλην τὴν τράπεζαν.

63 ὑπὸ δὲ τὴν ἐκτύπωσιν τῶν λίθων τῆς ὠθεσίας, στέφανον ἐποίησαν οἱ τεχνῖται πάγκαρπον, ἐν ὑπεροχῇ προδήλως ἔχοντα βοτρυῶν καὶ σταχύων, ἔτι δὲ φοινίκων καὶ μήλων ἐλαίας τε καὶ ῥοῶν καὶ τῶν παραπλησίων. τοὺς δὲ λίθους ἐργασάμενοι πρὸς τὴν τῶν προειρημένων καρπῶν διατύπωσιν, ἔχοντας ἐκάστου γένους τὴν χροάν, ἀνέδησαν τῷ χρυσίῳ κύκλῳ περὶ ὅλην τὴν τῆς τραπέζης κατασκευὴν κατὰ κρόταφον. 64 μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ στεφάνου διάθεσιν, ὁμοίως κατὰ τὴν τῆς ὠθεσίας διασκευὴν κατεσκευάστο, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῆς ῥαβδώσεως καὶ διαγλυφῆς, (διὰ τὸ) κατ' ἀμφοτέρα τὰ μέρη τὴν τράπεζαν πρὸς τὴν χρῆσιν πεποιῆσθαι, καθ' ὃ ἂν μέρος αἰρώνται,⁵¹ ὥστε καὶ τὴν τῶν κυμάτων θέσιν καὶ τὴν τῆς στεφάνης εἶναι κατὰ τὸ τῶν ποδῶν μέρος.

49. §§57–58 contain a partial quotation of the peculiar description of the gold table in LXX Exod 25:23–25: καὶ ποιήσεις τράπεζαν χρυσοῦ καθαροῦ, δύο πήχεων τὸ μήκος καὶ πήχεος τὸ εὖρος καὶ πήχεος καὶ ἡμίσεος τὸ ὕψος. καὶ ποιήσεις αὐτῇ στρεπτά κυμάτια χρυσοῦ κύκλῳ. καὶ ποιήσεις αὐτῇ στεφάνην παλαιστοῦ κύκλῳ· καὶ ποιήσεις στρεπτόν κυμάτιον τῇ στεφάνῃ κύκλῳ (“And you shall make a table of pure gold, the length two cubits and the width one cubit and the height a cubit and a half. And you shall make for it twisted gold moldings around, and you shall make for it a rim, a handbreadth all around. And you shall make a twisted molding for the rim around”). This orthography (παλαιστιαίαν) is a later form for παλασταῖος (-α, -ον) meaning “a hand’s breadth” (from παλα[ι]στή, the “palm”), as used here in the LXX.

50. For προσάγειν used in this sense, compare Ep. Arist. §§45, 88, 95, and 170.

58 And they made a wreathed molding of a hand's breadth round about it. And there was a wreath of wave-work, engraved in relief in the form of ropes running in a marvelous way from three sides, for it was triangular in shape. **59** And the style of the workmanship was exactly the same on each of the sides, so that to whichever side it was turned it presented the same appearance. But of the two sides coming down from the wreath, the one that sloped (inward) toward the table had a very beautiful arrangement, but the one sloping to the outer side was toward the gaze of the one offering sacrifice.

60 Wherefore the projecting edge of the two slopes was acute whichever way it was turned, since it was raised up, as we have said, on the triangular foundation. And there were arrangements of precious stones on it along the middle of the ropework, and the stones were interwoven with one another by an inimitable artistic device. **61** To make (them) secure, all the stones were all fixed by golden pins inserted through holes. At the corners the ends (of the ropework) were clamped together by fastenings to make them continuous. **62** Slantwise along the wreathed molding that ran round the table, on the part facing upward, there was wrought a pattern of eggs in precious stones, and it had reliefwork on the projecting angle formed by continuous engraved flutings that were closely connected round the whole table.

63 And under the egg relief in precious stones, the artisans made a wreath containing all kinds of fruits, having at its summit, most conspicuously, clusters of grapes and heads of grain, and in addition dates and apples and olives and pomegranates and the like. They wrought precious stones in accord with the shape of the above-mentioned fruits, each of the same color as the fruits themselves, and they fastened them on the edges around the whole table with a band of gold. **64** And after the wreath of fruit had been put on, the rest of the fluting and embossed work was fashioned along the egg pattern, so that both parts of the table might be used, according to which part they prefer, so that the wavework and the wreathwork extended down to the foot part (of the table).

51. Both here and below (§65) Wendland gives *αἰρῶνται* (following the emendation of Mendelssohn), while Thackeray gives *αἵρωνται* in both instances (following the manuscripts). Wendland's reading (also followed by Andrews) is preferable and is adopted here and in the translation. All references to Mendelssohn are to Mendelssohn 1897.

65 ἔλασμα γὰρ ἐποίησαν καθ' ὅλου τοῦ πλάτους τῆς τραπέζης στερεὸν δακτύλων τεσσάρων, ὥστε τοὺς πόδας ἐνίσθαι εἰς τοῦτο, περόνας (σὺν) κατακλεῖσιν ἔχοντας ἐσφίγχειν κατὰ τὴν στεφάνην, ἵνα, καθ' ὃ ἂν αἰρῶνται μέρος, ἢ χρήσις ᾗ· τοῦτο δὲ κατὰ ἐπιφάνειαν θεωρεῖται ἀμφοτεροδεξίου τῆς κατασκευῆς οὕσης.⁵² **66** ἐπ' αὐτῆς δὲ τῆς τραπέζης μαϊάνδρον⁵³ ἔκτυπον ἐποίησαν, ἐν ὑπεροχῇ λίθους ἔχοντα κατὰ μέσον πολυτελεῖς τῶν <πολυειδῶν>, ἀνθράκων τε καὶ σμαράγδων, ἔτι δὲ ὄνυχος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων γενῶν τῶν διαφερόντων ἐν ὠραιότητι. **67** μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ μαϊάνδρου διάθεσιν ἐπέκειτο σχιστὴ πλοκή, θαυμασίως ἔχουσα,⁵⁴ ῥομβωτὴν ἀποτελοῦσα τὴν ἀνὰ μέσον θεωρίαν· ἐφ' ἣ κρυστάλλου λίθος καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον ἤλεκτρον ἐντετύπωτο, ἀμίμητον θεωρίαν ἀποτελοῦν τοῖς θεωροῦσι. **68** τοὺς δὲ πόδας ἐποίησαν τὰς κεφαλίδας ἔχοντας κρινωτάς, ἀνάκλασιν κρίνων ὑπὸ τὴν τράπεζαν λαμβανόντων, τὰ δὲ τῆς ἐντὸς προσόψεως ὀρθὴν ἔχοντα τὴν πετάλωσιν.

69 ἡ δὲ ἐπ' ἐδάφους ἔρεισις⁵⁵ τοῦ ποδὸς ἀνθρακος λίθου πάντοθεν παλαιστιαία,⁵⁶ κρηπίδος ἔχουσα τάξιν κατὰ τὴν πρόσοψιν, ὅκτῳ δὲ δακτύλων τὸ πλάτος ἔχουσα· ἐφ' ὃν ἐπίκειται τὸ πᾶν ἔλασμα τοῦ ποδός. **70** κατεσκεύασαν δὲ ἐκφύοντα κισσὸν ἀκάνθω πλεκόμενον ἐκ τοῦ λίθου, σὺν ἀμπέλῳ περιειλούμενον κυκλόθεν τῷ ποδὶ σὺν τοῖς βότρυσιν, οἱ λιθουργεῖς ἦσαν, μέχρι τῆς κεφαλῆς. ἡ δ' αὐτὴ διάθεσις ἦν τῶν τεσσάρων ποδῶν, πάντα ἐνεργῶς πεποιημένα καὶ προσηγμένα, τῆς ἐμπειρίας καὶ τέχνης τὰς ὑπεροχὰς ἀπαραλλάκτως ἔχοντα πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὥστε καὶ ῥιπίζοντος τοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἀέρα πνεύματος κίνησιν ἐπιδέχεσθαι τὴν τῶν φύλλων θέσιν, πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας διάθεσιν τετυπωμένων ἀπάντων. **71** ἐποίησαν δὲ τριμερές τὸ στόμα τῆς τραπέζης, οἶονεὶ τρίπτυχον, πελεκίνοις συναρμοζόμενα γομφωτοῖς πρὸς ἑαυτὰ κατὰ τὸ πάχος τῆς κατασκευῆς, ἀθέατον καὶ ἀνεύρετον τὴν τῶν ἀρμῶν κατασκευάσαντες συμβολήν. ἡμιπηχίου δὲ οὐκ ἐλάσσονος ἦν τὸ πάχος τῆς ὅλης τραπέζης, ὥστε πολλῶν εἶναι ταλάντων τὴν ὅλην διασκευὴν. **72** ἐπεὶ γὰρ οὐ προήρητο τοῖς μεγέθεσιν οὐδὲν προσθεῖναι ὁ βασιλεὺς, ὅσον ἔδει δαπανηθῆναι κατασκευαζομένων μειζόνων, ταῦτα ἀποδédωκε πλείονα·

52. The term ἀμφοτεροδεξίος is fairly rare (only fifty-one times in the TLG) with the occurrences in LXX Judg 3:15, 20:16 (in both cases meaning “ambidextrous”) being the only documented uses prior to Epistle of Aristeeas, while the vast majority of the later occurrences are Byzantine references to the story in Judg 3. On the basic meaning, see Galen, *Hippoc. aphor.* 42 (Kühn 1829, 147).

53. A winding pattern, named after the river in Asia Minor, perhaps based on Strabo, *Geogr.* 12.8.15, which may explain this usage. Strabo was born ca. 64 BCE and died ca. 21 CE. Otherwise this term is quite rare, being used explicitly in this sense only here in Ep. Arist. §§66–67 (and §74) and in the excerpts of it quoted by Josephus in *A.J.* 12.71–72, 79.

65 They made a metal plate under the whole span of the table four fingers thick, so that the feet might be inserted into it, and having pins with sockets to be fastened along the wreath border, so that whichever part of the table they prefer might be used. This (metal plate) was clearly visible, since the structure is able to be used from both sides. **66** On the table itself they engraved a “*maeander*,” having precious stones of various sorts on the projecting part in the middle, rubies and emeralds and an onyx, too, and many other kinds that excel in beauty. **67** And next to the *maeander* there was placed a marvelous piece of braided weave, which made the view along the middle of the table appear rhomboid, and on it a crystal and amber, as it is called, had been wrought, which produced an incomparable impression on the beholders. **68** They made the feet of the table with heads like lilies, lilies that curved under the table, whereas the inner view had leaves that stood upright.

69 The support of the foot on the ground consisted of a ruby and measured a hand’s breadth high all round. It had the position of the base and was eight fingers broad. Upon it the whole metal span of the foot rested. **70** And they fashioned ivy growing out of the stone, interwoven with acanthus along with a vine wrapped in a circle round the foot, and with clusters of grapes that were worked in stone, up to the top. There was the same arrangement for all four feet, everything wrought and fitted artfully, and with superlative skill and technique precisely in accord with reality, so that even when a breeze was blowing in the air, the position of the leaves took on the motion, with everything moulded in accord with its real disposition. **71** And they made the front of the table in three parts like a triptych, and they were fitted with dovetailed bolts along the breadth of the work, rendering the juncture of the joints invisible and undiscoverable. The thickness of the entire table was not less than half a cubit, so that the whole work cost many talents. **72** For since the king did not wish to add anything to its dimensions, he bestowed on it more than he would have had to spend if it had been made

54. Compare the wording of Philo, *Mos.* 2.109, in describing the priests’ robes: *παγκάλην καὶ θαυμασιωτάτην ἔχουσιν ἐν τοῖς ὑφάσμασι πλοκήν* (“having a great and marvelous weaving in the garments”).

55. The term *ἐρεῖσις* is a rather rare word (from the verb *ἐρείδω*), with only forty-two occurrences in the TLG; cf. LXX Prov 3:26. Of these, only seven are before the second century BCE, including the Alexandrian poets Lycophron and Callimachus.

56. Cf. §58 and note there.

καὶ κατὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν αὐτοῦ πάντα ἐπετελέσθη θαυμασίως καὶ ἀξιολόγως ἔχοντα, καὶ ταῖς τέχναις ἀμίμητα, καὶ τῇ καλλονῇ διαπρεπῆ.⁵⁷

73 τῶν δὲ κρατήρων δύο μὲν ἦσαν (χρυσοῖ) τῇ κατασκευῇ, φολιδωτὴν ἔχοντες ἀπὸ τῆς βάσεως μέχρι τοῦ μέσου τὴν διασκευὴν τῇ τορεΐα, καὶ τὴν τῶν λίθων ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν φολίδων σύνδεσιν πολυτέχνως ἔχοντες. 74 εἴτα μαϊάνδρος ἐπέκειτο πηχυαῖος ὕψει, τὴν δ' ἐκτύπωσιν ἐνυπῆρχε διὰ λιθώσεως ποικίλης, ἐμφαίνων σὺν ὡραιότητι τὸ τῆς τέχνης φιλόπονον. ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦτο ῥάβδωσις, ἐφ' ἣ διαπλοκὴ ῥόμβων, δικτυωτὴν ἔχουσα τὴν πρόσοψιν ἕως ἐπὶ τὸ στόμα. 75 τὸ δ' ἀνὰ μέσον ἀσπιδίσκοι λίθων ἐτέρων παρ' ἐτέροις, τοῖς γένεσι παραλλαγὴν ἐχόντων, τετραδακτύλων οὐκ ἔλαττον, ἀνεπλήρουν τὸ τῆς καλλονῆς ἐναργές. ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς στεφάνης τοῦ στόματος κρίνων τύψεις σὺν ἀνθεμίσι καὶ βοτρύων σχοινιαὶ διάπλοκοι διετυποῦντο κυκλόθεν. 76 οἱ μὲν οὖν διὰ τοῦ χρυσοῦ τοιαύτην εἶχον τὴν κατασκευὴν, χωροῦντες ὑπὲρ δύο μετρητάς· οἱ δ' ἀργυροὶ λείαν εἶχον τὴν διασκευὴν, ἔσοπτρον δὲ γεγонуῖαν πρὸς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θαυμασίως ἔχουσαν, ὥστε πᾶν τὸ προσαχθὲν ἀπαυγάζεσθαι σαφέστερον μᾶλλον ἢ ἐν τοῖς κατόπτροις.

77 οὐκ ἐφικτὸν δ' ἐστὶν ἐξηγήσασθαι τὰ προσυντελεσθέντα πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἔμφασιν. ὥς γὰρ ἐπετελέσθη, τεθέντων τῶν κατασκευασμάτων ἐτέρου παρ' ἑτερον λέγω δὲ πρῶτον ἀργυροῦ κρατῆρος, εἴτα χρυσοῦ, πάλιν ἀργυροῦ καὶ χρυσοῦ παντελῶς ἀνεξήγητος ἐγένετο τῆς προσόψεως ἡ διάθεσις, καὶ τῶν πρὸς τὴν θεωρίαν προσιόντων οὐ δυναμένων ἀφίστασθαι διὰ τὴν περιαύγειαν καὶ τὸ τῆς ὀψεως τερπνόν.

78 ποικίλη γὰρ ἦν ἡ τῆς ἐπιφανείας ἐνέργεια. προσορώντων γὰρ πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν τοῦ χρυσοῦ κατασκευὴν, ψυχαγωγία τις ἦν μετὰ θαυμασμοῦ, συνεχῶς ἐφ' ἑκάστον ἐπιβαλλούσης τῆς διανοίας τεχνίτευμα. καὶ πάλιν ὅτε πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀργυρῶν προσβλέψαι τις θέσιν ἤθελεν, ἀπέλαμπε τὰ πάντα κυκλόθεν, ὥς ἂν τις ἔστηκε, καὶ διάχυσιν ἐποίει μείζονα τοῖς θεωμένοις· ὥστε παντελῶς ἀνεξήγητον εἶναι τῶν ἐνηργημένων τὴν πολυτεχνίαν. 79 τὰς δὲ χρυσᾶς φιάλας διετόρευσαν στεφάνοις ἀμπέλου κατὰ μέσον, περὶ δὲ τὰ χεῖλη κισσοῦ τε καὶ μυρσίνης ἔτι δ' ἐλαίας ἀνέπλεξαν στέφανον ἔκτυπον, πολυτελεῖς ἐνέντες λίθους· καὶ

57. This elaborate description (*ekphrasis*) has been compared to the description of the golden tables and vessels in the procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus by the historian Callixenus of Rhodes (also spelled Callixeinus), *Alex.* 4; Callixenus likely dates to the second century BCE, during or after the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (based on the comments of Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 34.52). For the text, see *FHG* 3:58–65 (*apud*

larger. And everything was completed in accordance with his wish, wonderfully and worthily, inimitable in craftsmanship and outstanding in beauty.

73 Of the mixing bowls, two were wrought (in gold); from the base to the middle they had a relief pattern running round and along the middle of the recess had a link work of precious stones done very artistically. 74 Then a *maeander* a cubit in height lay over it, constituted in relief with variegated jewels, displaying along with its beauty the laboriousness of its workmanship. Upon this there was a fluting, and on this there was an interweaving pattern of rhomboids, having a netlike appearance right up to the front. 75 Along the middle, small shields made of various precious stones one upon another alternately by kind, not less than four fingers broad, completed the splendor of its beauty. Upon the wreath in front there was a reliefwork of lilies with their flowers and intertwining clusters of grapes were engraved all around. 76 The bowls, then, had such a construction in gold, and they held more than two measures. The silver bowls had a smooth workmanship, wonderfully made like a mirror for this very purpose, so that everything that was brought near to them was reflected even more clearly than in mirrors.

77 But it is impossible to describe the actual impression of the completed works. For when they had been completed and the vessels were placed one next to the other, I mean first a silver and then a golden and then again a silver and a golden, their appearance in this order became wholly indescribable, and those who came to view them were unable to tear themselves away on account of their brilliance and the delightfulness of their aspect.

78 For the workmanship of their surface was indeed varied. When people looked at the construction of the golden one, they were carried away with amazement as their minds attended successively to each artistic detail. And when in turn a person wished to gaze at the setting of the silver vessels, they reflected everything in a circle, wherever one stood, and afforded a greater delight to the onlookers. The craftsmanship of the works was thus utterly indescribable. 79 They chiseled the golden vials along the middle with vine wreaths, and around the rims they wove a wreath of ivy and myrtle and olive in relief, inserting expensive jewels in it. They finished

τὰς λοιπὰς δὲ τορείας διηλλαγμένως ἐπετέλεσαν, ἅπαντα φιλοτιμηθέντες εἰς ὑπεροχὴν δόξης τοῦ βασιλέως ποιῆσαι. **80** καθόλου γὰρ οὗτ' ἐν τοῖς βασιλικοῖς ὑπῆρχε ρίσκοφυλακίαις τοιαύτη κατασκευὴ τῇ πολυτελείᾳ καὶ τεχνουργίᾳ, οὗτ' ἐν τινὶ ἄλλῳ. πρόνοιαν γὰρ οὐ μικρὰν ἐποιεῖτο ὁ βασιλεὺς, φιλοδοξῶν εἰς τὰ καλῶς ἔχοντα.

81 πολλάκις γὰρ τὸν δημόσιον χρηματισμὸν παρίει, τοῖς δὲ τεχνίταις παρήδρευεν ἐπιμελῶς, ἵνα καθηκόντως τῷ τόπῳ συντελέσωσιν, εἰς ὃν ἀπεστέλλετο τὰ τῶν ἔργων. διὸ πάντα σεμνῶς ἐγεγόνει, καὶ καταξίως τοῦ τε ἀποστέλλοντος βασιλέως καὶ τοῦ προστατοῦντος ἀρχιερέως τοῦ τόπου. **82** καὶ γὰρ τὸ τῶν λίθων πλῆθος ἄφθονον, καὶ μεγάλοι τοῖς μεγέθεσιν, οὐκ ἔλαττον πεντακισχιλίων· καὶ ταῖς τέχναις κρατιστεύοντα πάντα, ὥστε πενταπλασίως τοῦ χρυσοῦ τιμιωτέραν εἶναι τὴν τῶν λίθων δόσιν καὶ τὴν τῶν τεχνῶν ἐνέργειαν.

83 Ὑπολαμβάνων οὖν καὶ τούτων τὴν ἀναγραφὴν ἀναγκαίαν⁵⁸ εἶναι, δεδήλωκά σοι. τὰ δ' ἐξῆς περιέχει τὴν πρὸς τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον ὁδὸν ἡμῖν γενομένην· τὴν δὲ θέσιν τῆς ὅλης χώρας πρῶτον δηλώσω.

Ὡς γὰρ παρεγενήθημεν ἐπὶ τοὺς τόπους, ἐθεωροῦμεν τὴν πόλιν μέσσην κειμένην τῆς ὅλης Ἰουδαίων ἐπ' ὄρους ὑψηλὴν ἔχοντος τὴν ἀνάτασιν. **84** ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς κορυφῆς κατεσκευάστω τὸ ἱερὸν ἐκπρεπῶς ἔχον· καὶ οἱ περίβολοι τρεῖς, ὑπὲρ ἐβδομήκοντα δὲ πήχεις τῷ μεγέθει, καὶ τὸ πλάτος ἀκόλουθον καὶ τὸ μῆκος τῆς κατὰ τὸν οἶκον διασκευῆς ὑπῆρχε, μεγαλομοιρία καὶ χορηγία κατὰ πάντα ὑπερβαλλούσῃ διωκοδομημένων ἀπάντων. **85** καὶ τοῦ θυρώματος δὲ καὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτὸ συνδέσμων κατὰ τὰς φλιάς καὶ τῆς τῶν ὑπερθύρων ἀσφαλείας ἔκδηλος ἦν ἡ τῶν χρημάτων γεγонуῖα ἀφειδῆς δαπάνη. **86** τοῦ τε καταπετάσματος ἢ διατύπωσης θυρώσει κατὰ πᾶν ὁμοιοτάτῃ ὑπῆρχε· καὶ μάλιστα διὰ τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ὑποδρομὴν ἀδιάλειπτον κίνησιν λαμβανούσης τῆς διυφῆς, διὰ τὸ ἀπ' ἐδάφους γινομένης τῆς ὑποδρομῆς (κατατείνειν) τὴν κόλπωσιν μέχρι τῆς ἄνω διατάσεως, ἡδεῖάν τινα καὶ δυσπαλάλακτον τὴν θεωρίαν ἔχοντος τοῦ πράγματος.

58. The ordinary usage would be “absolutely necessary,” but the word also carries the sense of “force” or “forcefulness,” leading to the translation “compelling” offered here.

off the rest of the reliefs variously, competing to render everything to the greater glory of the king. **80** In sum, there was no such work, whether in cost or in artistic skill, either in the king's treasury or in any other. For the king spent no little thought upon them, since he loved to gain glory for well-executed items.

81 For many times he ignored public administration and assiduously attended to the artisans so that they should complete everything in a way worthy of the place to which they were being sent. So everything was done solemnly and in a manner worthy of the king who was sending them and of the high priest who was in charge of the place. **82** For there was an abundant quantity of precious stones, no fewer than than five thousand huge in size. And everything was the best in workmanship, so that the largeness in the stones and the execution of the craftsmanship was five times more costly than the gold.

III. Aristean's Embassy to Jerusalem (83–120a)

83 Now since I assume the record of these gifts to be compelling, I have described them for you. And what comes next [in our narrative] is an account of our journey to Eleazar, but I will first describe the layout of the whole country.

When we arrived in the region, we saw the city situated in the middle of the whole of Judea on the top of a mountain of considerable height. **84** And on its summit the temple had been built with great splendor. There were three walls, more than seventy cubits high, of a length and breadth that corresponded to the structure of the edifice. Everything was constructed with an exceptional magnificence and expense in all respects. **85** It was clear that lavish expense of money had been made on the door and the fastenings along the doorposts and the stability of the lintel. **86** The configuration of the curtain, too, was in all ways in proportion to that of the door, and it especially caught an uninterrupted motion thanks to an undercurrent of wind, and because the undercurrent from the bottom <stretched> the billow right up to the swelling above, it afforded a kind of pleasure and made it hard to abandon inspection of the work.

87 ἥ τε τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου⁵⁹ κατασκευὴ (συμμέτρως ἔχουσιν)⁶⁰ πρὸς τὸν τόπον καὶ τὰ θύματα διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς ἐξαναλούμενα⁶¹ τὴν διοικοδομὴν εἶχε, τῆς δ' ἀναβάσεως τῆς πρὸς αὐτό, πρὸς τὴν εὐκοσμίαν ἔχοντος τοῦ τόπου καθηκόντως τὸ κλίμα τῶν λειτουργούντων ἱερέων κεκαλυμμένων μέχρι τῶν σφυρῶν βυσσίνους χιτῶσιν.⁶²

88 ὁ δὲ οἶκος βλέπει πρὸς ἔω, τὰ δ' ὀπίσθια αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἐσπέραν.⁶³ τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἔδαφος λιθόστρωτον καθέστηκε καὶ κλίματα πρὸς τοὺς καθήκοντας τόπους ἔχει τῆς τῶν ὑδάτων ἐπιφορᾶς ἕνεκεν, ἥ γίνεται διὰ τὴν σμῆξιν τῶν ἀπὸ τῶν θυσιῶν αἱμάτων. πολλὰ γὰρ μυριάδες κτηνῶν προσάγονται κατὰ τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν ἡμέρας. **89** ὕδατος δὲ ἀνέκλειπτός ἐστι σύστασις, ὡς ἂν καὶ πηγῆς ἔσθην πολυρρύτου φυσικῶς ἐπιρρεούσης, ἔτι δὲ θαυμασίῳ καὶ ἀδιηγῆτων ὑποδοχείῳ ὑπαρχόντων ὑπὸ γῆν, καθὼς ἀπέφαινον πέντε σταδίων κυκλόθεν τῆς κατὰ τὸ ἱερὸν καταβολῆς καὶ ἐκάστου τούτων σύριγγας ἀναρίθμους, καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος ἑαυτὰ συναπτόντων τῶν ρευμάτων. **90** καὶ πάντα ταῦτα μεμολιβῶσθαι κατ' ἐδάφους καὶ τοῦ τοίχου. ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων κεχύσθαι πολὺ τι πλῆθος κονιάσεως, ἐνεργῶς γεγεννημένων ἀπάντων. εἶναι δὲ πυκνὰ τὰ στόματα πρὸς τὴν βᾶσιν, ἀοράτως ἔχοντα τοῖς πᾶσι πλὴν αὐτοῖς οἷς ἐστὶν ἡ λειτουργία, ὡς ῥοπῇ καὶ νεύματι πάντα καθαρίζεσθαι τὰ συναγόμενα παμπληθῆ τῶν θυμάτων αἵματα. **91** πεπεισμένος δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς τὴν τῶν ὑποδοχείῳ κατασκευὴν δηλώσω καθὼς ἐπιστῶθην. προήγαγον γὰρ πλεον σταδίων τεσσάρων ἐκ τῆς πόλεως, καὶ πρὸς τινα τόπον ἐκέλευσαν κατακύψαντα συνακοῦσαι τοῦ γινομένου ψόφου τῆς ἀπαντήσεως τῶν ὑδάτων. ὥστε συμφανές μοι γεγονέναι τὸ μέγεθος τῶν ἀγγείων, καθὼς δεδήλωται.⁶⁴

59. The term θυσιαστήριον here is typically used in the LXX for the altar of Israel's God (see 1 Macc 1:54, 59), particularly that of the temple in Jerusalem, distinct from the more typical Greek word βωμός. Later Jewish authors, however, including Philo and Josephus, do not adhere to this distinction, more frequently preferring the traditional Greek term. See, e.g., Philo, *Spec.* 1.254; Josephus, *A.J.* 15.419. See also sec. 2.3.3 on Pseudo-Hecataeus.

60. The manuscripts read σύμμετρον, which could be taken adverbially. For the term, see also §105 below and LXX Jer 22:14; the syntax here (as emended by Wendland and Thackeray, following Mendelssohn) using the adverb with a form of ἔχειν is very common. Consequently, I take the adverb to go also with the εἶχε of the second clause.

61. The double-compounded form of the verb here is from the rare root (ἐξ) ἀναλόω, rather than the more common (ἐξ) ἀναλίσκω, and is thus even more rare (only

87 The outfitting of the altar involved a construction that was commensurate with the space and sacrificial offerings that were consumed by its fire, while the ascent to it was commensurate with decency, since the place had an incline for the ministering priests, who were robed in linen garments down to their ankles.

88 The edifice [sanctuary] faces the east and its back is toward the west. The whole of the floor is paved with stones and has steps leading down to the appointed places, that water may be conveyed to wash away the blood from the sacrifices, for many tens of thousands of beasts are brought there on the feast days. **89** And there is an inexhaustible supply of water, because an abundant spring gushes up naturally from within. There are, moreover, wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground, as they pointed out to me, five stades around the foundation of the temple, and each of them has countless pipes so that the different streams converge at each stage. **90** And all these were fastened with lead at the bottom and at the sidewalls, and over them a great quantity of plaster had been spread, and every part was accomplished skillfully. There are many openings for water at the base of the altar, which are invisible to all except to those who are responsible for the ministration, so that the great quantity of blood of the sacrifices that is collected is washed away in the twinkling of an eye. **91** Having been persuaded myself about the condition of the cisterns, I will now show you how I was convinced. They led me more than four stades outside the city and bade me bend over at a certain spot and listen to the noise that was made by the meeting of the waters, so that the great size of the reservoirs became manifest to me, just as they were described.

fourteen times in TLG). The first occurrence is Zeno, frag. 106 (SVF 1.106 [1:30, line 37]), or Posidonius, frag. 310, but the passage (same for both) is preserved only in Philo's *Aet.* 125 (without direct attribution), thus making the earliest direct occurrences Philo and Ep. Arist. §87. See also Philo, *Legat.* 344. All other occurrences of this double-compounded form are from the first to second century CE and later.

62. For the "linen robes" (βυσσίνους χιτῶσιν), see LXX Exod 28:39; 36:34.

63. Literally, "the dawn" (east) and "the evening" (west), or the "rising and setting" of the sun.

64. On the great reservoirs, compare Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.40, which describes Jerusalem at the time of Pompey's pacification of the Hasmonean civil war (63 BCE), including a cistern 250 feet wide and 60 feet deep cut into the rock.

92 τῶν δὲ ἱερέων ἡ λειτουργία κατὰ πᾶν ἀνυπέρβλητός ἐστι τῇ ῥώμῃ καὶ τῇ τῆς εὐκοσμίας καὶ σιγῆς διαθέσει. πάντες γὰρ αὐτοκελεύσως διαπονοῦσι πολλῆς γινομένης κακοπαθείας, καὶ ἐκάστῳ τὸ διατεταγμένον μέλει. καὶ ἀδιαλείπτως ὑπηρετοῦσιν, οἱ μὲν τὴν ξυλείαν, οἱ δὲ ἔλαιον, οἱ δὲ σεμίδαλιν, οἱ δὲ τὰ τῶν ἀρωμάτων, ἕτεροι τὰ τῆς σαρκὸς ὀλοκαυτοῦντες, ἰσχύι διαφερόντως συγχρώμενοι. 93 διαλαβόντες γὰρ ἀμφοτέραις τῶν μόσχων τὰ σκέλη, πλεῖον ὄντα ταλάντων δύο σχεδὸν ἐκάστου, ἀναρρίπτουσιν ἐκατέραις θαυμασίως ὕψος ἱκανὸν καὶ οὐχ ἁμαρτάνουσι τῆς ἐπιθέσεως. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ τῶν προβάτων ἔτι δ' αἰγῶν τοῖς βάρεσι καὶ πιμελῇ θαυμασίως ἔχει. κατὰ πᾶν γὰρ ἐκλεγομένων οἷς ἐπιμελές ἐστὶν ἀμώμητα καὶ τῇ παχύτητι διαφέροντα, τὸ προειρημένον ἐπιτελεῖται.

94 πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν τόπος αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν ἀποτεταγμένος, οὗ καθίζουσιν οἱ διαναπαύομενοι. τούτου δὲ γινομένου, τῶν διαλελοιπότων ἐγείρονται πρόθυμοι, οὐδενὸς ἐπιτάσσοντος τὰ τῆς λειτουργίας. 95 ἡ τε πᾶσα σιγὴ καθέστηκεν, ὥστε ὑπολαμβάνειν, μὴθ' ἓνα ἄνθρωπον ἐν τῷ τόπῳ παρεῖναι, πρὸς τοὺς ἐπτακοσίους παρόντων τῶν λειτουργῶν καὶ τῶν προσαγόντων δὲ τὰ θύματα πολὺ τι πλήθος· ἀλλὰ φόβῳ καὶ καταξίως μεγάλης θειότητος ἅπαντ' ἐπιτελεῖται.

96 μεγάλην δὲ ἐκπληξιν ἡμῖν παρέσχεν, ὡς ἐθεασάμεθα τὸν Ἑλεάζαρον ἐν τῇ λειτουργίᾳ,⁶⁵ τὰ τε τοῦ στολισμοῦ καὶ τῆς δόξης, ἡ συνίσταται διὰ τὴν ἔνδυσιν οὗ φορεῖ χιτῶνος καὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν λίθων· χρυσοὶ γὰρ κώδωνες περὶ τὸν ποδῆρην εἰσὶν αὐτοῦ, μέλους ἥχον ἀνιέντες ἰδιάζοντα· παρ' ἐκάτερον δὲ τούτων ἄνθεσι πεποικιλμένοι ῥοῖσκοι, τῇ χρῶα θαυμασίως ἔχοντες.⁶⁶ 97 κατέζωστο δὲ διαφόρῳ ζώνῃ διαπρεπεῖ, διυφασμένη καλλίστοις χρώμασιν. ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ στήθους φορεῖ τὸ λεγόμενον λόγιον, ἐν ᾧ συνεσφιγμένοι λίθοι δεκαδύο, διαλλάσσοντες τοῖς γένεσι, χρυσῷ κεκολλημένοι, τὰ τῶν φυλάρχων ὀνόματα κατὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς διάταξιν γενηθεῖσαν, ἀπαυγάζοντες ἕκαστος ἀνεξήγητον τῆς ιδιότητος

65. For λειτουργία (also §§92, 94, 98) and the verb λειτουργεῖν (§87) in reference to the priestly “ministrations,” note, e.g., LXX Exod 28:35, 43; 29:30; 30:20; 35:19; 36:33. The LXX also uses the word ἱερατεύειν in this regard (so Exod 28:4).

66. The key Greek terms here are drawn directly from LXX Exod 28:4 (as underlined): καὶ αὗται αἱ στολαί, ἃς ποιήσουσιν· τὸ περιστήθιον καὶ τὴν ἐπωμίδα καὶ τὸν ποδῆρην καὶ χιτῶνα κοσμησάτωσαν καὶ κίδαριν καὶ ζώνην (“And these are the vestments that they shall make—the chest piece and the shoulder-strap and the full-length robe and tasseled tunic and turban and sash”); 28:33–34: καὶ ποιήσεις ἐπὶ τὸ λῶμα τοῦ ὑποδύτου κάτωθεν ... καὶ βύσσου κεκλωσμένης ἐπὶ τοῦ λώματος τοῦ ὑποδύτου κύκλῳ· τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ

92 The ministration of the priests is in every way unsurpassed both for its physical endurance and for its orderly and silent arrangement. For they all work spontaneously, though it entails much stress, and each is occupied with his own assignment. They carry on the service without interruption—some provide the wood, others the oil, others the fine wheat flour, others the spices; others again bring the pieces of flesh for the burnt offering, employing exceptional strength. **93** For they take up with both hands the limbs of the calves, each of them weighing pretty much more than two talents, and throw them with each hand in a wonderful way quite high and never miss the landing spot. Similarly, the pieces of the sheep and also of the goats are wonderful both for their weight and their fatness. For those whose task it is select only the ones that are in every way without blemish and specially fat, and thus the business that I have described is carried out.

94 A place for rest is set apart for them, where those who are taking a break sit. When this takes place, those who have completed their turn arise eagerly, since there is no one giving orders regarding the ministrations. **95** The complete silence continues, so that one might assume that there was not a single person present, though there are around seven hundred men present for the ministry, as well as a great number who offer the sacrifices. Rather, everything is completed in fear and a manner worthy of great divinity.

96 Now it also inspired great awe in us when we saw Eleazar engaged in his ministration, for the majesty of his attire, which consisted in the way he wore his robe and the precious stones upon his person. There were golden bells at the feet, giving forth a special melodious sound, and on both sides of them pomegranates were embroidered with flowers of a marvelous hue. **97** He was girded with a belt of conspicuous beauty, woven in the most beautiful colors. On his breast he wore the so-called *Oracle*, on which twelve stones of different kinds were inset, fastened together with gold, containing the names of the leaders of the tribes, according to their original order, each one flashing forth in an indescribable way its own natural

εἶδος ῥοίσκους χρυσοῦς καὶ κώδωνας ἀνά μέσον τούτων περικύκλω· παρὰ ῥοίσκον χρυσοῦν κώδωνα καὶ ἀνθινον ἐπὶ τοῦ λώματος τοῦ ὑποδύτου κύκλω ("And you shall make on the hem of the undergarment below ... twisted linen, upon the hem of the undergarment around, and the same form, little gold pomegranates and bells between them round about. Beside a little golden pomegranate, a bell and a blossom on the hem of the undergarment around"). For the stones, see LXX Exod 28:17–23.

τὴν φυσικὴν χρoάν.⁶⁷ **98** ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἔχει τὴν λεγομένην κίδαριν,⁶⁸ ἐπὶ δὲ ταύτης τὴν ἀμίμητον μίτραν, τὸ καθηγιασμένον βασιλῆιον ἐκτυποῦν ἐπὶ πετάλῳ χρυσῷ γράμμασιν ἀγίοις ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ, κατὰ μέσον τῶν ὀφρύνων, δόξη πεπληρωμένον, ὃ κριθεὶς ἄξιος τούτων ἐν ταῖς λειτουργίαις. **99** ἡ δὲ συμφάνεια τούτων ἐμποιεῖ φόβον καὶ παραχρῆν, ὥστε νομίζειν εἰς ἕτερον ἐληλυθέναι ἐκτὸς τοῦ κόσμου· καὶ διαβεβαιούμαι, πάντα ἄνθρωπον προσελθόντα τῇ θεωρίᾳ τῶν προειρημένων εἰς ἔκπληξιν ἤξειν καὶ θαυμασμὸν ἀδιήγητον, μετατραπέντα⁶⁹ τῇ διανοίᾳ διὰ τὴν περὶ ἕκαστον ἁγίαν κατασκευήν.

100 πρὸς γὰρ τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν ἀπάντων ἐπὶ τὴν παρακειμένην ἄκραν τῆς πόλεως ἀναβάντες ἐθεωροῦμεν· ἡ κεῖται μὲν ἐν ὑψηλοτάτῳ τόπῳ, πύργους ἐξησφαλισμένη πλείοσι, μέχρι κορυφῆς εὐμήκεσι λίθοις ἀνωκοδομημένων αὐτῶν, ὡς μεταλαμβάνομεν, πρὸς φυλακὴν τῶν περὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τόπων. **101** ἴνα, ἐὰν ἐπιθεσὶς τις ἢ νεωτερισμὸς ἢ πολεμίων ἔφοδος γένηται, μηθεὶς δύνηται ὁδὸν εἰς τοὺς περιβόλους ποιήσασθαι τοὺς περὶ τὸν οἶκον.⁷⁰ ἐπικειμένων καὶ ὀξυβελῶν⁷¹ ἐπὶ τῶν πύργων τῆς ἄκρας καὶ ὀργάνων ποικίλων, καὶ τοῦ τόπου κατὰ κορυφὴν ὄντος τῶν προειρημένων περιβόλων, **102** ὥσανει φυλασσομένων τῶν πύργων ὑπὸ τῶν πιστοτάτων ἀνδρῶν καὶ τῇ πατρίδι μεγάλας ἀποδείξεις δεδωκότων· οἵτινες οὐκ εἶχον ἐξουσίαν ἐξιέναι τῆς ἄκρας, εἰ μὴ ταῖς ἑορταῖς, καὶ τοῦτο ἐκ μέρους, οὐδὲ εἰσοδεύειν εἰς οὐδένα.

103 μετὰ ἀκριβείας δὲ πολλῆς εἶχον, εἰ καὶ τις ἐπιταγὴ γένοιτο διὰ τοῦ προκαθηγουμένου πρὸς θεωρίαν εἰσδέξασθαι τινας· οἷον καὶ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐγεγόνει.

67. The Greek here follows LXX Exod 28:30: καὶ ἐπιθήσεις ἐπὶ τὸ λογεῖον τῆς κρίσεως τὴν δῆλωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ στήθους (“And you shall place in the oracle of judgment the ‘disclosure’ and the ‘truth,’ and it shall be on the chest”), but compare the wording of Sir 45:10–12: λογεῖω κρίσεως, δῆλοις ἀληθείας, κεκλωσμένη κόκκῳ (“with the oracle of judgment, for manifestations of truth, with twisted scarlet”). It is worth noting that the distinct lexical form λογεῖον appears in the LXX only in these passages dealing with the high priest’s vestments (including Sir 45:10–12 and Lev 8:8); however, the Greek of Epistle of Aristean has consistently used the cognate form λόγιον instead (cf. §177). In technical Greek usage, the difference is notable, as the former term means “a place of speaking,” while the latter means “oracle or pronouncement.” The usage in Epistle of Aristean is similar to that in Philo, who uses both terms in discussing the priestly vestments: λογεῖον (*Mos.* 2.113, 127, 130, 134; *Spec.* 1.88); λόγιον (*Leg.* 3.118–119, 126, 132). In Ep. Arist. §177, it is used of the scriptures themselves.

68. This description of the high priest’s headdress is based on the wording of LXX Exod 28:36–40, using both key terms (κίδαρις and μίτρα) found here; cf. LXX Exod 36:37. See notes 66 and 67, above.

69. The term μετατρέπειν (here with τῇ διανοίᾳ, thus meaning something akin to

color. **98** On his head, he wore the so-called *Persian tiara*, and upon this an inimitable diadem, filled with glory and resting on the middle of his brow, the consecrated royal emblem with the name of God inscribed in sacred letters on a plate of gold, which has been judged worthy of the ones in these ministrations. **99** Their appearance created such awe and trepidation that one might think he had encountered a person not of this world. I am convinced that anyone who approaches the spectacle that I have described will be struck with astonishment and indescribable wonder and be altered in his mind on account of the holy arrangement of each.

100 But to have a knowledge of everything, we ascended to the adjacent summit of the city and began to look around. It is situated in a very lofty spot and is fortified with many towers, which have been built up to the very top with large stones, as we learned, to guard the area around the temple, **101** so that, should there be an attack, whether a revolt or an incursion from enemies, no one would be able to make their way inside the outer precincts that surround the temple. On the towers of the citadel, and on the area at the top of the previously mentioned precincts, were installed missiles and various kinds of military battlements. **102** The towers were guarded, too, by most trustworthy men who had given the utmost proof of their loyalty to their country. These men were never allowed to leave the citadel, except on feast days, and then only in detachments; nor did they permit anyone else to enter it.

103 They were extremely strict, even when a command came from the chief officer to admit people to visit, and such happened to us. For scarcely

“change or conversion in mind”) does not occur in prose prior to this Epistle of Aristeas and Diodorus Siculus; cf. Philo, *Conf.* 129 (with διάνοια), 140; *Deus* 181, 183; *Abr.* 86; *Migr.* 83; *Sacr.* 114, 116; 4 Macc 6:5; 7:12; 15:11, 18; Jas 4:9. Compare also the use of μετάνοια (i.e., μετανοεῖν) at §188 below.

70. Cf. LXX Sir 50:2.

71. “Battlements” or “sharp spikes.” Compare Philo of Byzantium, *Bel.* 56.20 and 68.30 (second century BCE), which use the term in conjunction with “battlements” (ὄξυβελές ὄργανον; τῶν ὄξυβελῶν ὀργάνων), just as here (see §57); Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 17.85.7 does the same (τοῦ δὲ χώματος συντελεσθέντος καὶ τῶν ὄξυβελῶν καταπελτῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὀργάνων ἐπισταθέντων); for ἀνάχωμα (for “embankment”), cf. Ep. Arist. §301. Forms of ὄξυβελής occur more than thirty times in Diodorus Siculus, e.g., *Bibl. hist.* 14.50.4; 16.75.3; 17.24.6; 17.26.7; 17.42.1, 7; 17.45.2 17.85.7; 18.70.2; 20.49.4; 20.54.7; 20.75.4; 20.83.1; 20.85.3–4; 20.86.2; 20.88.2; 20.95.2; 20.96.3, 6; 22.10.7.

μόλις γὰρ ἀνόπλους ὄντας ἡμᾶς δύο παρεδέξαντο πρὸς τὸ κατανοῆσαι τὰ τῶν θυσιῶν. **104** ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ δι' ὅρκων πεπιστώσθαι τὸ τοιοῦτον· τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ὁμωμοκέναι, κατ' ἀνάγκην (ἐπιτελουμένους)⁷² θείως τὸ κατὰ τὸν ὀρισμὸν πρᾶγμα, ὄντας πεντακοσίους μὴ παραδέξασθαι πλεῖον ἀνθρώπων πέντε κατὰ τὸ αὐτό· τοῦ γὰρ ἱεροῦ τὴν πᾶσαν εἶναι φυλακὴν τὴν ἄκραν· καὶ τὸν καταβαλλόμενον αὐτὴν τὴν προφυλακὴν τῶν εἰρημένων οὕτως ἡσφαλίσθαι.

105 τῆς δὲ πόλεως ἐστὶ τὸ χύμα συμμετρως ἔχον,⁷³ οἷον τεσσαράκοντα σταδίῳ ὄντος τοῦ περιβόλου, καθόσον εἰκάσαι δυνατόν. ἔχει δὲ τὴν τῶν πύργων θέσιν θεατροειδῆ,⁷⁴ καὶ φαινομένων διόδων τῶν ὑποκειμένων, τῶν δ' ἐπάνωθεν (εἰθισμένων), καὶ τὰς διὰ τούτων διεξόδους. ἀνάκλασιν γὰρ ἔχει τὰ τῶν τόπων, ὡς ἂν ἐπ' ὅρους τῆς πόλεως ὠκοδομημένης. εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ διαβάθραι πρὸς τὰς διόδους. **106** οἱ μὲν γὰρ μετέωροι τὴν ὁδεῖαν, οἱ δ' ὑπ' αὐτὰς ποιοῦνται, καὶ μάλιστα διεστηκότες τῆς ὁδείας, διὰ τοὺς ἐν ταῖς ἀγνεῖαις ὄντας, ὅπως μηδενὸς θιγγάνωσιν⁷⁵ ὧν οὐ δέον ἐστίν. **107** οὐκ ἀλόγως δὲ τὴν πόλιν συμμετρία καθηκούση κατεσκεύασαν οἱ πρῶτοι, σοφῶς δὲ ἐπινοήσαντες. τῆς γὰρ χώρας πολλῆς οὔσης καὶ καλῆς, καὶ τινων μὲν πεδινῶν, τῶν κατὰ τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν λεγομένην, καὶ τῶν συναπτόντων τῇ τῶν Ἰδουμαίων⁷⁶ χώρα, τινῶν δὲ ὀρεινῶν, τῶν (συναπτόντων τῇ τῶν Ἰουδαίων χώρα, χρῆ) πρὸς τὴν γεωργίαν καὶ τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῆς γῆς γίνεσθαι συνεχῶς, ἵνα καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὗτοι τὴν εὐκαρπλίαν ἔχωσιν· οὗ καὶ γινομένου γεωργεῖται (πάντα μετὰ) δαφιλείας πολλῆς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ προειρημένη χώρᾳ. **108** τῶν δὲ πόλεων ὅσαι μέγεθος ἔχουσι καὶ τὴν ἀκόλουθον εὐδαιμονίαν, ταύταις συμβέβηκεν εὐανδρεῖν, ἀμελεῖσθαι δὲ τῆς

72. The emendation is that of Wendland, followed by Thackeray, apparently based on personal communication from Willamowitz-Moellendorff. The manuscripts read ἐπιτελουμένου (*var.* τελουμένου). Following τοιοῦτον, the remainder of the sentence should be read as indirect discourse representing the content of their oath.

73. Compare the description of Jerusalem from the early Herodian period in Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.36: ἔστι γὰρ πετρώδες, αὐτὸ μὲν εὐδρον ... τὴν δ' ἐντὸς ἐξήκοντα σταδίῳ καὶ ὑπόπετρον ("for it is rocky, and although well-watered ... [while] the space within [the city walls] is 60 stadia [in circumference], and founded on a bed of rock"). For χύμα (*lit.* "mass"), see Ep. Arist. §14.

74. The very rare word θεατροειδής occurs only twenty-two times in the TLG and not before Posidonius (*FGrHist* 87 F 70, *apud* Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.41), Diodorus Siculus (*Bibl. hist.* 2.10.2; 16.76.2 19.45.3; 20.83.2), Strabo (*Geogr.* 4.1.4; 9.3.3; 14.2.15), and here in §105. Josephus (*A.J.* 15.410) uses the same term in describing the layout of Herodian Jerusalem, with the city spread out as the "theater" facing the Temple Mount. His use is perhaps derived from Epistle of Aristaeas, although this section is omitted from his version at *A.J.* 12.84–85 (which effectively skips from §80 to

did they admit us—though we were but two unarmed men—to observe the sacrifices. **104** They asserted that they were bound by oaths of the following sort: for they had all sworn by divine penalty <to accomplish> the order to the letter, namely, that though they were five hundred in number they would not admit more than five people at the same time. The citadel was the entire protection of the temple, and the founder of the guard had fortified it in this way.

105 The size of the city is symmetrical, being about forty stadia in circumference, as far as one could surmise. It has its towers arranged theater-style and passageways through them, the lower crossroads being visible but the upper ones more frequented. For the ground ascends, since the city is built upon a mountain. **106** There are steps, too, that lead up to the crossroads, and some make their way on top, and others below the crossroad, and they keep as far apart from each other as possible on their way because of those in a state of purity, lest they should touch anything that they ought not. **107** Not without reason, then, did the first founders build the city with a fitting symmetry, and they thought it through wisely. For since the country is extensive and beautiful, and some parts of it are level, that is, those along Samaria, as it is called, and those connected with the region of the Idumeans, whereas other parts are mountainous, that is, those connected with the region of the Judeans, it is necessary for the people to busy themselves continually with agriculture and the cultivation of the soil, so that by this means they may have a plentiful crop. In this way <everything> is cultivated <with> an abundant harvest in the whole of the aforesaid land. **108** The cities that are large and enjoy a corresponding prosperity are well-populated, but they neglect the country districts, since all people are inclined

§173). In this case (§105), moreover, the reference to the “towers” makes it sound very much like the curved line of the western city gate opposite the Temple Mount, where the Hasmonean/Herodian fortress stood. Consequently, the use of the term here might be taken to suggest a late Hasmonean date (or later).

75. “To touch lightly”; the term is common among the classical poets and philosophers but infrequent in Jewish usage. It occurs in the LXX only at Exod 19:12; compare Philo, *Hypoth.* 194; *QE* 2.45b; and Heb 11:28; 12:20.

76. This later term comes from LXX and seems to reflect regional usage. See Deut 23:8; Judg 1:36; 2 Kgdms 8:14; 3 Kgdms 11:14, 17; 1 Esd 4:45, 50; Ps 51:2 (all LXX); also other later Hellenistic writings, such as Posidonius (*FGrHist* 87 F 70); Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.2.34. See also 1 Macc 4:36–59; 2 Macc 10:1–8, 15; Josephus, *A.J.* 13.257, 280–281; *B.J.* 1.63–66.

χώρας, πάντων ἐπὶ τὸ κατὰ ψυχὴν ἱλαροῦσθαι νενευκότων, καὶ τῇ κατασκευῇ πάντας ἀνθρώπους ἐπὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς εὐκαταφόρους εἶναι.

109 τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο περὶ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν ὑπερβάλλουσιν πάσας τῷ μεγέθει καὶ εὐδαιμονίᾳ τὰς πόλεις. οἱ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας εἰς αὐτὴν ἀποξενούμενοι καταμένοντες ἐφ' ἱκανὸν εἰς ἐλάττωσιν ἦγον τὰ τῆς ἐργασίας. **110** ὅθεν ὁ βασιλεὺς, ἵνα μὴ καταμένωσι, προσέταξε μὴ πλέον εἴκοσιν ἡμερῶν παρεπιδημεῖν· καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ τῶν χρεῶν ὁμοίως δι' ἐγγράπτων διαστολὰς ἔδωκεν, ἐὰν ἀναγκαῖον ᾗ κατακαλέσαι, διακρίνειν ἐν ἡμέραις πέντε.⁷⁷ **111** πρὸ πολλοῦ δὲ ποιούμενος καὶ χρηματιστὰς καὶ τοὺς τούτων ὑπηρέτας ἐπέταξε κατὰ νομοὺς, ὅπως μὴ πορισμὸν λαμβάνοντες οἱ γεωργοὶ καὶ προστάται τῆς πόλεως ἐλαττώσι τὰ ταμειᾶ, λέγω δὲ τὰ τῆς γεωργίας πρόσφορα.

112 παρεξέβημεν δὲ ταῦτα διὰ τὸ καλῶς ἡμῖν τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον ὑποδεδεχέναι τὰ προειρημένα. μεγάλη γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν γεωργουμένων φιλοπονία. καὶ γὰρ ἐλαϊκοῖς πλήθεσι σύνδενδρός ἐστι καὶ σιτικοῖς καρποῖς αὐτῶν ἡ χώρα καὶ ὄσπριοις, ἔτι δὲ ἀμπέλῳ καὶ μέλιτι πολλῶ. τὰ μὲν τῶν ἄλλων ἀκροδρύνων καὶ φοινίκων οὐδ' ἀριθμεῖται παρ' αὐτοῖς. **113** κτήνη τε πολλὰ παμμιγῇ, καὶ δαψιλῆς ἡ τούτων νομὴ· διὸ καλῶς ἔβλεψαν, ὅτι πολυανθρωπίας οἱ τόποι προσδέονται, καὶ τὴν κατασκευὴν τῆς πόλεως καὶ τῶν κωμῶν ἔθεντο κατὰ λόγον.

114 πολὺ δὲ πλῆθος καὶ τῶν ἀρωμάτων καὶ λίθων πολυτελῶν καὶ χρυσοῦ παρακομίζεται διὰ τῶν Ἀράβων εἰς τὸν τόπον. ἐργάσιμος γὰρ καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐμπορίαν ἐστὶ κατεσκευασμένη ἡ χώρα, καὶ πολύτεχνος ἡ πόλις, οὐ σπανίζει δὲ οὐδὲν τῶν διακομιζομένων διὰ τῆς θαλάσσης. **115** ἔχει γὰρ καὶ λιμένας εὐκαίρους χορηγοῦντας, τὸν τε κατὰ τὴν Ἀσκαλῶνα καὶ Ἰόππην καὶ Γάζαν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ Πτολεμαίδα τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐκτισμένην. μέση δὲ κεῖται

77. While such an edict regarding immigration from the country districts to Alexandria is not directly attested, Fraser (1972, 1:113, 699–700) suggests that it seems to reflect typical language in Ptolemaic administrative documents (including the term *χρηματιστές*). But he notes that it fits the period of the late second century BCE (specifically during the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor) and after, rather than earlier times. Moreover, this depiction of the king carefully monitoring and regulating agricultural production in the country (§§109–111) does not seem to reflect the management of royal land, but it might still reflect the problem in the late Ptolemaic and early Roman age of convincing farmers to work former royal, that is, “public” land. Compulsory leases on royal/public land (the institution known as *ἐπιβολή*) became more common in the Fayum in particular due to increased taxation and poor environmental conditions

to a life of enjoyment, for all human beings are by their constitution easily drawn to pleasures.

109 This is what happened in Alexandria, which excels all cities in size and prosperity. For when people from the country migrated to the city and settled there for a while, they brought agriculture into disrepute; **110** and so, to prevent them from settling in the city, the king issued orders that they should not stay in it for more than twenty days. And he likewise gave written instructions to those in office, that if it was necessary to issue a summons [relating to anyone who lived in the country], the case must be settled within five days. **111** And since he considered the matter of great importance, he appointed also legal officers for every district with their assistants, so that by accepting a means of earning a living, the farmers and their representatives should not reduce the “treasuries” of the city, now I mean the profits of farming.

112 I have digressed about these matters because Eleazar explained to us very well the points that have been mentioned. For great is the toil involved in cultivating the land, for their region is thickly wooded with abundant olive trees, crops of wheat and pulse, with also vines and much honey. They do not take account of the produce of other fruit trees and dates. **113** There are cattle of all kinds in great quantities and a rich pasturage for them. Thus they have rightly seen that these areas need a large population, and the arrangement between the city and the villages is set up rationally.

114 A great quantity of spices and precious stones and gold is brought into the country by the Arabs. For the country is so prepared as to be productive also for commerce, and the city is rich in skilled crafts and lacks none of the things that is brought in by sea. **115** It also has well-placed, ample harbors at Askalon, Joppa, and Gaza, as well as at Ptolemais, which was founded by our king and lies centrally in respect to the other places named, being not

rendering them undesirable to prospective tenant farmers. See further Rowlandson 1996, 88–92. Additionally, the image of the king policing the whereabouts of inhabitants from rural (farming) districts may reflect the increasing use of more or less official censuses to register persons for taxes in the first century BCE—a development also reflected in 3 Maccabees. See Keddie 2016 and sec. 3.4, below. On late Ptolemaic and early Roman censuses in the nomes, see Monson 2014.

πρὸς τοὺς προειρημένους τόπους, οὐκ ἀπέχουσα τούτων πολὺ.⁷⁸ ἔχει δὲ πάντα δαψιλῇ κάθυγρος οὓσα πάντοθεν ἡ χώρα καὶ μεγάλην ἀσφάλειαν ἔχουσα. **116** περιρρεῖ δ' αὐτὴν ὁ λεγόμενος Ἰορδάνης ποταμὸς αἰέρρους. (τῆς δὲ χώρας) οὐκ ἔλαττον ἐξακισχιλίων μυριάδων ἀρουρῶν κατὰ τὸ ἀρχαῖον οὔσης μετέπειτα δὲ οἱ γεινιῶντες ἐπέβησαν αὐτῆς ἐξήκοντα μυριάδες ἀνδρῶν ἔγκληροι καθειστήκεισαν ἑκατοντάρουροι. πληρούμενος δὲ ὁ ποταμὸς, καθὼς ὁ Νεῖλος, ἐν ταῖς πρὸς τὸν θειρισμὸν ἡμέραις, πολλὴν ἀρδεύει τῆς γῆς.⁷⁹ **117** ὃς εἰς ἕτερον ποταμὸν ἐκβάλλει τὸ ρεῦμα κατὰ τὴν Πτολεμαίων χώραν, οὗτος δὲ ἔξεισιν εἰς θάλασσαν. ἄλλοι δὲ χειμάρροι⁸⁰ λεγόμενοι κατίασι, περιλαμβάνοντες τὰ πρὸς τὴν Γάζαν μέρη καὶ τὴν Ἀζωτίων χώραν.⁸¹ **118** περιέχεται δὲ ἀσφαλείαις αὐτοφυέσι, δυσείσβολος οὓσα καὶ πλήθεσιν ἀπραγμάτευτος, διὰ τὸ στενὰς εἶναι τὰς παρόδους, κρημνῶν παρακειμένων καὶ φαραγγῶν βαθέων, ἔτι δὲ τραχείας οὔσης πάσης τῆς περιεχούσης πᾶσαν τὴν χώραν ὀρεινῆς.

119 ἐλέγετο δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῶν παρακειμένων ὁρέων τῆς Ἀραβίας μέταλλα χαλκοῦ καὶ σιδήρου συνίστασθαι πρότερον. ἐκλείπεται δὲ ταῦτα, καθ' ὃν ἐπεκράτησαν Πέρσαι χρόνον, τῶν τότε προστατούντων ποιησαμένων διαβολήν, ὥς ἄχρηστος ἡ κατεργασία γίνεται καὶ πολυδάπανος, **120** ὅπως μὴ διὰ τὴν μεταλλείαν τῶν εἰρημένων συμβῇ καὶ τὴν χώραν καταφθείρεσθαι—καὶ σχεδὸν διὰ τὴν ἐκείνων δυναστείαν ἀλλοτριωθῆναι, παρεύρεσιν λαβόντων εἰς τοὺς τόπους εἰσόδου—διὰ τὸ τὴν διαβολὴν γεγονέναι ταύτην.

Ὅσον οὖν καὶ περὶ τούτων ἔδει, κεφαλαιωδῶς⁸² σεσήμαγκά σοι, ὦ Φιλόκρατες ἀδελφέ· τὰ δὲ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐπομένως δηλώσομεν.

78. These areas did not become part of the Judean territory until the later Hasmonean period, after 104–103 BCE.

79. As Andrews (1913, 2:106) also notes, this seems to be a reference to the Ptolemaic land system of *kleruchies* of 100 *arouras*; technically, this would be an officer's share. Thus note the use of *ἐγκληρος* here to mean an allotment or plot of land. Note that Hecataeus of Abdera describes the plots of land Moses distributed in Palestine as *κλήροι* (Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 40.3.7), similarly applying the Ptolemaic language of land categorization to Palestine when referring to a period in which it was not under Ptolemaic rule. Interestingly, even though the Ptolemies did distribute parts of Palestine to veterans as *kleruchic* land, the implication in §§107–113 is that Palestine is not a Ptolemaic colony, an anachronism inconsistent with the narrative setting during the reign of Philadelphus. Cf. *CPJ* 1:13–15. See also the discussion of Ptolemaic military settlers in sec. 3.5.10 on SB 5.8008.

far distant from any of them. The country produces everything in abundance, since it is well-watered in all directions and has ample security. **116** The River Jordan, as it is called, unceasingly flows with abundance. Originally <the country> contained not less than sixty million *arouras*—though afterward the neighboring peoples made incursions against it—and six hundred thousand men settled in it in plots of a hundred *arouras* each. The river, like the Nile, rises in the days around harvesttime and irrigates a large portion of the land. **117** It runs off into another river near the region of the people of Ptolemais, and this latter one flows out into the sea. Other “*mountain torrents*,” as they are called, run down and encompass the parts about Gaza and the region of the people of Ashdod. **118** The country is thus encircled by natural protections and is difficult to attack and cannot be assailed by large forces, owing to the narrow passes, with their overhanging precipices and deep ravines, and also the rugged mountainous regions that surround the entire land.

119 We were also told that from the neighboring mountains of Arabia copper and iron were formerly obtained. They ceased doing this, however, at the time when the Persians ruled, when those who presided [over Judea?] concocted a false report that the working of the mines was useless and expensive. **120** This was so that their country should not chance to be destroyed due to the mining of these metals—because the [Persian] rulers of those areas might be turned to enemies and find an excuse for invading the region—this is why that false report was produced.

IV. The Jewish Delegation Prepares to Depart; Aristean’s Interview (120b–171)

Now that I have signified to you, my brother Philocrates, what was required concerning these matters under their headings, in what follows I shall now describe the matter of the translation.

80. The Greek *χέλμαρος* is the standard term in the LXX to translate the Hebrew נַחַל (*naḥal*), meaning *wadi*.

81. Referring presumably to the Leontes River, but the headwaters of the Jordan above Baneas, though nearby, do not flow into the Leontes.

82. Or “summarily.” The term is commonly used in letters of advice (*paraenesis*) for the organization of standard *topoi*. Compare Pseudo-Demetrius, *Form. ep.* 11 (ed. Malherbe 1988); Epicurus, *Ep. ad Herodotum* 1.82.10 (Usener 1887, 31).

121 ἐπιλέξας⁸³ γὰρ τοὺς ἀρίστους ἄνδρας καὶ παιδεία διαφέροντας, ἅτε δὴ γονέων τετευχότας ἐνδόξων, οἵτινες οὐ μόνον τὴν τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν γραμμάτων ἕξιν περιεποίησαν αὐτοῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἐφρόντισαν οὐ παρέργως κατασκευῆς. **122** διὸ καὶ πρὸς τὰς πρεσβείας εὐθετοὶ καθεστήκεισαν, καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπετέλουν ὅτε δέοι, καὶ πρὸς τὰς ὁμιλίας καὶ τὰς ἐπερωτήσεις τὰς διὰ τοῦ νόμου μεγάλην εὐφυΐαν εἶχον, τὸ μέσον ἐξηλωκότες κατάστημα⁸⁴ τοῦτο γὰρ κάλλιστόν ἐστιν, ἀποτεθειμένοι τὸ τραχὺ καὶ βάρβαρον τῆς διανοίας, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὸ κατοίεσθαι καὶ νομίζειν ὑπερφρονεῖν ἑτέρους ὑπερβεβηκότες, τὴν δ' ὁμιλίαν καὶ τὸ συνακοῦειν καὶ πρὸς ἕκαστον ἀποκρίνεσθαι δεόντως παραδεδεγμένοι, καὶ πάντες ταῦτα συντηροῦντες καὶ μᾶλλον ἐν τούτοις βουλόμενοι ὑπερφέρειν ἕτερος ἑτέρου, καὶ τοῦ καθηγουμένου πάντες ἄξιοι καὶ τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν ἀρετῆς.⁸⁵ **123** νοῆσαι δ' ἦν, ὡς ἡγάπησαν τὸν Ἑλεάζαρον δυσάποσπαστως ἔχοντες, καὶ ἐκεῖνος αὐτούς· χωρὶς καὶ τοῦ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα γεγραφέναι περὶ τῆς ἀποκαταστάσεως αὐτῶν πολλὰ παρεκάλεσε τὸν Ἀνδρέαν ποιῆσαι, συναντιλαμβάνεσθαι παρακαλῶν, καθ' ὃ ἂν δυνάμεθα.

124 καὶ ἡμῶν ἐπαγγελλομένων (τοῦ) ἀφροντίσειν⁸⁶ περὶ τούτων, ἔφη καὶ λίαν διαγωνιᾶν· εἰδέναι γάρ, ὅτι φιλάγαθος ὢν ὁ βασιλεὺς πάντων μέγιστον ἡγείται τὸ μεταπέμπεσθαι, καθ' ὃν ἂν τόπον ὀνομασθῇ τις ἄνθρωπος διαφέρων ἀγωγῇ καὶ φρονήσει παρ' ἑτέρους. **125** μετείλφη γὰρ καλῶς αὐτὸν λέγειν, ὅτι περὶ ἑαυτὸν ἔχων ἄνδρας δικαίους καὶ σώφρονας τὴν μεγίστην ἂν φυλακὴν τῆς βασιλείας ἔξειν, συμβουλευόντων παρρησίᾳ πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον τῶν φίλων· ὃ δὴ σύνεστι τοῖς ἀποστελλομένοις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. **126** καὶ δι' ὅρκων ἐπιστοῦτο, μὴ προΐεσθαι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, εἴ τις ἑτέρα χρεία πρὸς τὰ ἰδίαν αὐτῶ καταπεύγοι, πρὸς δὲ τὴν κοινὴν πᾶσι τοῖς πολίταις ἐπανόρθωσιν ἐξαποστέλλειν αὐτούς.⁸⁷ **127** τὸ γὰρ καλῶς ζῆν ἐν τῷ τὰ νόμιμα συντηρεῖν εἶναι· τοῦτο δὲ ἐπιτελεῖσθαι διὰ τῆς ἀκροάσεως πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἢ διὰ τῆς ἀναγνώσεως. προτιθέμενος οὖν ταῦτα καὶ τὰ τούτοις παραπλήσια φανερὸς ἦν τὴν διάθεσιν, ὅς ἦν πρὸς αὐτούς.

83. This verb, and what follows, has Eleazar as its subject, picking up from §112, above.

84. In this usage, *κατάστημα* refers to the intermediate or “balanced state” (of health) producing tranquility and temperance (so Philo, Plutarch). Cf. Ep. Arist. §§165, 210, 278. In §210, it is the “state or condition” of reverence.

85. Or “worthy of their leader and his virtue” (so Thackeray 1903).

86. Wendland emended here with (εὖ φροντίσειν), as followed by Thackeray. All the manuscripts read ἀφροντίσειν, presumably meaning “to be unconcerned.” Reading

121 For he [Eleazar] selected men of the finest character and the highest culture, in view of the fact that they had noble parents. They were men who had not only achieved mastery of Jewish writings but had also studied in no cursory manner the proper style of the Greek writings. **122** Therefore, they were well qualified for embassies, and they fulfilled this duty whenever it was necessary. They possessed a great facility for lectures and questions connected with the law. They strove for the middle condition, for this is always the finest, abjuring rough and barbarous thoughts; but they were likewise above conceitedness and believing that they could look down at others, and in conversation they were ready to listen and give an answer to each person appropriately. And all of them carefully observed these practices and wished to excel each other most of all in them, and they were all worthy of their teacher [Eleazar] and of his virtue. **123** And one could observe how they loved Eleazar by their unwillingness to be torn away from him and how he loved them. For besides what he wrote to the king concerning their return, he also frequently urged Andreas to make it happen, urging me to be of assistance, in whatever way we should be able.

124 And when we gave assurances <that he should> be unconcerned about the matter, he said that he was still greatly distressed, for he knew that the king loved goodness and considered it of the utmost importance to summon anyone, wherever he might be, who was named as being superior to others in culture and intelligence. **125** For I have heard that he [Ptolemy II] quite rightly says that if he had just and prudent men about him he would have the greatest protection for his kingdom, since such Friends would advise him frankly to his advantage. Indeed, those who were now being sent by him [i.e., Eleazar] had these qualities. **126** Now he frequently affirmed by means of oaths that he would never let the men go if some need regarding his private interest were pressing him, but it was for the common improvement of all the citizens that he was sending them forth. **127** For living well consists in observing the law, and this is achieved much more by harkening (to them) than by reading. By such indications and others like them, then, it was clear what was his disposition toward these men.

with the manuscripts, then, I propose to supply <τοῦ>, assuming the fuller sense of <τοῦ αὐτῶν>, before ἀφροντίσειν. I read διαγωνιᾶν (infinitive) following Wendland.

87. Compare Philo, *Mos.* 2.28 (sec. 2.1, below).

128 Ἄξιον δὲ ἐπιμνησθῆναι (διὰ) βραχέων τῶν ὑποδειχθέντων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς τὰ δι' ἡμῶν ἐπιζητηθέντα. νομίζω γὰρ τοὺς πολλοὺς περιεργίαν ἔχειν τινὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ νομοθεσίᾳ περὶ τε τῶν βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ τῶν νομιζομένων ἀκαθάρτων⁸⁸ εἶναι κνωδάλων.

129 πυνθανομένων γὰρ ἡμῶν, Διὰ τί, μιᾶς καταβολῆς οὔσης, τὰ μὲν ἀκάθαρτα νομίζεται πρὸς βρώσιν τὰ δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἀφήν—δεισιδαιμόνως⁸⁹ γὰρ τὰ πλεῖστα τὴν νομοθεσίαν ἔχειν, ἐν δὲ τούτοις {πάνυ} δεισιδαιμόνως πρὸς ταῦτα⁹⁰—οὕτως ἐνήρξατο.

130 Θεωρεῖς, ἔφη, τὰς ἀναστροφὰς καὶ τὰς ὁμιλίας, οἷον ἐνεργάζονται πρᾶγμα, διότι κακοῖς ὁμιλήσαντες διαστροφὰς ἐπιλαμβάνουσιν ἄνθρωποι, καὶ ταλαίπωροι δι' ὅλου τοῦ ζῆν εἰσιν· ἐὰν δὲ σοφοῖς καὶ φρονίμοις συζῶσιν, ἐξ ἀγνοίας ἐπανορθώσεως εἰς τὸν βίον ἔτυχον.

131 διαστειλάμενος οὖν τὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας καὶ δικαιοσύνης πρῶτον ὁ νομοθέτης ἡμῶν, καὶ διδάξας ἕκαστα περὶ τούτων, οὐκ ἀπαγορευτικῶς⁹¹ μόνον ἀλλ' ἐνδεικτικῶς, καὶ τὰς βλάβας προδήλους καὶ τὰς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ γινομένας ἐπιπομπὰς τοῖς αἰτίοις

88. For the term ἀκαθάρτον, see also §147. In this sentence the manuscripts read νομίζειν γὰρ τοῖς πολλοῖς (corrected as above by Schmidt and followed by subsequent editors); some manuscripts invert the order of ἔχειν τινὰ.

89. The term δεισιδαιμόνια and cognates is often translated “superstitious” (here as the adverb), but the real sense is “scrupulosity in observing sacred matters.”

90. Thackeray (1904) likewise takes this to be an apostrophe, hence an aside by “Aristeas.” The question of Aristeas that precedes it is taken by most translators as indirect discourse, but the emphatic position of the διὰ τί suggests that it is direct discourse instead, as rendered here.

91. The wording here has a very Philonic ring to it. The adverbial form ἀπαγορευτικῶς is quite rare (twelve times in TLG), and this is the earliest occurrence, with no others before the fourth century CE. For the verb form ἀπαγορεύειν, see Philo, *Spec.* 4.104, quoted at note 100 (§147) below. The only earlier use is in noun and adjective forms employed by Chrysippus (nine times). Especially noteworthy, however, are the occurrences in Philo, *Conf.* 141 (on Exod 23:1); *Ios.* 29; and *Fug.* 95 and 104. In *Fug.* 95, Philo uses the verb form to describe the legislative power (of the Jewish

128 It is worth recalling briefly what he stated in response to our inquiries. *For I suppose that many people have a certain curiosity about the things in the [Jewish] law concerning food and drink and those about beasts believed to be unclean.*

129 For after we inquired, Given that there is but one origin (of being), why are some animals regarded as unclean for eating and others unclean even to the touch?—*for though the legislation is scrupulous on most things, it is especially scrupulous on such matters as these*—he began thus:

130 “You observe,” he said, “what an effect our modes of life and our associations produce upon us. Thus, by associating with the bad, people catch their depravities and become miserable throughout their whole life; but if they live with the wise and prudent, they find correction of their ignorance for their way of life.

131 Our Lawgiver first of all laid down the principles of reverence and righteousness and inculcated them point by point, not merely by prohibitions but by the use of examples as well, demonstrating the manifest harms and the punishments inflicted by God upon the guilty.

law) “to prohibit what may not be done” (νομοθετικῆς μοῖρα, δι’ ἧς ἂ μὴ χρὴ γίνεσθαι ἀπαγορεύει). Compare also *Ios.* 29: λόγος δέ ἐστι φύσεως προστακτικὸς μὲν ὧν πρακτέον, ἀπαγορευτικὸς δὲ ὧν οὐ ποιητέον (“for the word of nature is that which, on the one hand, decrees what should be done and, on the other hand, prohibits what should not be done”). It is worth noting, moreover, that this last passage from Philo is a very close parallel to the usage in Chrysippus *apud* Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 2.102 (SVF 3.614): ἐπειδὴ λόγος ὀρθὸς ἐστὶ προστακτικὸς μὲν ὧν ποιητέον ἀπαγορευτικὸς δὲ ὧν οὐ ποιητέον (“since right reason enjoins what must be done and prohibits what is not to be done”); this similarity shows the underlying philosophical interpretation of the nature of the law (and the Lawgiver) both in Philo and in Epistle of Aristeeas. Compare also the description of Moses as ideal king and lawgiver in Philo, *Mos.* 2.4: βασιλεῖ προσήκει προστάττειν ἂ χρὴ καὶ ἀπαγορεύειν ἂ μὴ χρὴ· πρόσταξις δὲ τῶν πρακτέων καὶ ἀπαγορεύσεις τῶν οὐ πρακτέων ἰδίου νόμου, ὥς εὐθὺς εἶναι τὸν μὲν βασιλέα νόμον ἔμψυχον, τὸν δὲ νόμον βασιλέα δίκαιον (“It becomes a king to command what ought to be done and to forbid what ought not to be done, but the commanding of what ought to be done and the prohibition of what ought not to be done belongs especially to the law, so that the king is at once a living law and the law a just king”).

—⁹²**132** προϋπέδειξε⁹³ γὰρ πάντων πρῶτον, ὅτι μόνος ὁ θεός ἐστι, καὶ διὰ πάντων ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ φανερὰ γίνεται, πεπληρωμένου παντὸς τόπου τῆς δυναστείας, καὶ οὐθὲν αὐτὸν λανθάνει τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς γινομένων ὑπ’ ἀνθρώπων κρυφίως, ἀλλ’ ὅσα ποιεῖ τις αὐτῷ φανερὰ καθέστηκε, καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι—

133 ταῦτ’ οὖν ἐξεργαζόμενος ἀκριβῶς καὶ πρόδηλα θεὸς ἔδειξεν ὅτι, ἂν ἐννοηθῇ τις κακίαν ἐπιτελεῖν, οὐκ ἂν λάθοι, μὴ ὅτι καὶ πράξας, διὰ πάσης τῆς νομοθεσίας τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ δυνατόν ἐνδεικνύμενος. **134** ποιησάμενος οὖν τὴν καταρχὴν ταύτην, καὶ δείξας ὅτι πάντες οἱ λοιποὶ παρ’ ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωποι πολλοὺς θεοὺς εἶναι νομίζουσιν, αὐτοὶ δυναμικώτεροι πολλῷ καθεστῶτες ὧν σέβονται ματαίως

—**135** ἀγάλματα⁹⁴ γὰρ ποιήσαντες ἐκ λίθων καὶ ξύλων, εἰκόνας φασὶν εἶναι τῶν ἐξευρόντων τι πρὸς τὸ ζῆν αὐτοῖς χρήσιμον, οἷς προσκυνοῦσι, παρὰ πόδας ἔχοντες τὴν ἀναισθησίαν. **136** εἴ τι γὰρ κατ’ ἐκεῖνον τις (θεὸς εἴη), κατὰ τὴν ἐξεύρεσιν, παντελῶς ἀνόητον· τῶν γὰρ ἐν τῇ κτίσει λαβόντες τινὰ συνέθηκαν καὶ προσυπέδειξαν εὐχρηστα, τὴν κατασκευὴν αὐτῶν οὐ ποιήσαντες αὐτοί· διὸ κενὸν καὶ μάταιον τοὺς ὁμοίους ἀποθεοῦν.⁹⁵ **137** καὶ γὰρ ἔτι καὶ νῦν εὐρεματικώτεροι καὶ πολυμαθέστεροι τῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν πρὶν εἰσι πολλοί, καὶ οὐκ ἂν φθάνοιεν αὐτοὺς προσκυνοῦντες. καὶ νομίζουσιν οἱ ταῦτα διαπλάσαντες καὶ μυθοποιήσαντες τῶν Ἑλλήνων οἱ σοφώτατοι καθεστάναι. **138** τῶν γὰρ ἄλλων πολυματαίων τί δεῖ καὶ λέγειν,

92. This section seems to continue the explanation of Eleazar. I have printed here the Greek text of Thackeray, which is based on that of Wendland, who inserted dashes before §§132, 133, 135, and 139. Wendland’s dashes may suggest another apostrophe, although all translators have taken the subject (“he”) of §§132–134 to be “our Lawgiver” (ὁ νομοθέτης ἡμῶν) of §131 (and §139), which seems rightly to be resumed by the παρ’ ἡμᾶς (“except us,” meaning the Jews) of §134 (cf. §§141, 148). As such, it may be read as Eleazar’s personal commentary on the work of the Lawgiver. The phrase ὅσα ποιεῖ τις αὐτῷ φανερὰ καθέστηκε, καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα γίνεσθαι (§132) has the ring of a maxim, though it is not otherwise attested. Similarly, §§135–138 seem to be Eleazar’s commentary on the making of idols.

93. This double-compounded verb (προϋπέδειξε) is rare (only sixty-four times in TLG) and does not occur before the second to first century BCE (only twice) other than here in Epistle of Aristeeus. Both texts (Hipparchus, *Arat. et Eud.* 2.2.1; Apollonius of Citium, *In Hippocr.* 12.26) are commentaries on the work of earlier philosophers, similar to the way it is used here of Moses. From the first century CE it occurs in Philo (*Leg.* 3.95; *Her.* 50), who, like Pseudo-Aristeeus, refers to the Jewish Lawgiver. Cf. Longinus, [*Subl.*] 43.6.

—**132** For he demonstrated first of all that there is only one God and that his power is manifested throughout all things, since every place is filled with his sovereignty, and none of the things that are done secretly by people upon the earth escapes him. Rather, *All that one does is manifest to him, and all that will be.* —

133 Working out these truths carefully and having made them plain, he showed that even if someone should think of doing evil, to say nothing of actually doing it, he would not escape detection, for he made it clear that the power of God pervaded the whole of the law. **134** Beginning from this starting point he went on to show that all humans except us consider there to be many gods, though they themselves are much more powerful than the beings whom they vainly worship.

—**135** For when they have made statues of stone and wood, they say that they are the images of those who have invented something useful for their lives, and they prostrate themselves before them though at their very feet (lies the fact) that they possess no sensation. **136** For it is utterly absurd that anyone could become a god in virtue of his inventions. For the inventors simply took certain objects already created and by combining them together further revealed their utility: they did not themselves create the substance of the things, and so it is a vain and foolish thing to make gods of men like themselves. **137** For even now there are many who are more inventive and more learned than the men of former days, and yet they would never rush to prostrate themselves before them. The makers of these fictions and authors of these myths think that they are the wisest of the Greeks. **138** Why need we

94. For “statues” (ἀγάλματα), compare LXX Isa 19:3; 21:9; 2 Macc 2:2 (the only occurrences in the LXX), but cf. Sib. Or. 3:29; 4:28. It also occurs twenty-nine times in Philo; see esp. *Contempl.* 7: ἀλλὰ τοὺς τὰ ξόανα καὶ ἀγάλματα; ὧν αἱ οὐσίαι λίθοι καὶ ξύλα τὰ μέχρι πρὸ μικροῦ τελείως ἀμορφα (“But what of [those who worship] carved images and statues (of gods)? Since their substance is of stone and wood, and until only a short time ago completely without form ...”). For idols (εἰδῶλα, *vel sim.*) “of wood and stone,” compare Deut 4:28; 28:36, 64; 29:16; Isa 37:19; Wis 14:21 (all LXX).

95. The philosophical critique here attributed to Eleazar (see §§131–132 and n. 92 above) derives from the explanation of the origins of the Greek gods by Euhemerus (cf. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 3.56.4–5) combined with the critique of wise men as “inventers” in the Epicurean tradition (cf. Lucretius, *Rer. nat.* 5.1–90; Seneca, *Ep.* 95.47–53).

Αἰγυπτίων τε καὶ τῶν παραπλησίων, οἵτινες ἐπὶ θηρία καὶ τῶν ἐρπετῶν τὰ πλεῖστα καὶ κνωδάλων τὴν ἀπέρευσιν πεποίηται, καὶ ταῦτα προσκυνοῦσι, καὶ θύουσι τούτοις καὶ ζῶσι καὶ τελευτήσασι;—

139 συνθεωρήσας οὖν ἕκαστα σοφὸς ὢν ὁ νομοθέτης, ὑπὸ θεοῦ κατεσκευασμένος εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν τῶν ἀπάντων, περιέφραξεν ἡμᾶς ἀδιακόποις χάραξι καὶ σιδηροῖς τείχεσιν, ὅπως μηθενὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν ἐπιμισγώμεθα κατὰ μηδέν, ἀγνοίᾳ καθεστῶτες κατὰ σῶμα καὶ κατὰ ψυχὴν, ἀπολελυμένοι ματαίων δοξῶν, τὸν μόνον θεὸν καὶ δυνατὸν σεβόμενοι παρ' ὅλην τὴν πᾶσαν κτίσιν. **140** ὅθεν οἱ Αἰγυπτίων καθηγεμόνες ἱερεῖς, ἐγκεκυφότες εἰς πολλὰ καὶ μετεσχηκότες πραγμάτων, ἀνθρώπους θεοῦ⁹⁶ προσονομάζουσιν ἡμᾶς· ὁ τοῖς λοιποῖς οὐ πρόσεστιν, εἰ μὴ τις σέβεται τὸν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν θεόν, ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ἀνθρωποὶ βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ σκέπης. **141** ἡ γὰρ πᾶσα διάθεσις αὐτῶν ἐπὶ ταῦτα καταφεύγει. τοῖς δὲ παρ' ἡμῶν ἐν οὐδενὶ ταῦτα λελόγισται, περὶ δὲ τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ δυναστείας δι' ὅλου τοῦ ζῆν ἡ σκέψις αὐτοῖς ἐστίν. **142** ὅπως οὖν μηθενὶ συναλισιγούμενοι μηδ' ὁμιλοῦντες⁹⁷ φαύλοις διαστροφὰς λαμβάνωμεν, πάντοθεν ἡμᾶς περιέφραξεν ἀγνείαις καὶ διὰ βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ ἀφῶν καὶ ἀκοῆς καὶ ὁράσεως νομικῶς. **143** τὸ γὰρ καθόλου πάντα πρὸς τὸν φυσικὸν λόγον ὅμοια καθέστηκεν, ὑπὸ μιᾶς δυνάμεως οἰκονομούμενα, καὶ καθ' ἐν ἕκαστον ἔχει λόγον βαθύν, ἀφ' ὧν ἀπεχόμεθα κατὰ τὴν χρῆσιν, καὶ οἷς συγχρώμεθα. χάριν δὲ ὑποδείγματος ἐν ἡ δεύτερον ἐπιδραμῶν σοι σημανῶ.

144 Μὴ γὰρ εἰς τὸν καταπεπτωκότα λόγον ἔλθης, ὅτι μυῶν καὶ γαλῆς⁹⁸ ἢ τῶν τοιούτων χάριν περιεργίαν ποιούμενος ἐνομοθέτει ταῦτα Μωϋσῆς· ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἀγνὴν ἐπίσκεψιν καὶ τρόπων ἑξαρτισμὸν δικαιοσύνης ἕνεκεν

96. For ἀνθρώπους θεοῦ (“men of God”), see §179: θεοσεβεῖς ἄνδρες (“godfearing men,” used in a similar way). The reference here assumes that the title is already in use. Other than this text, however, the earliest use in the plural occurs in Philo, *Deus* 139: τοὺς γὰρ προφήτας ἐκάλουν οἱ πρότερον τοτὲ μὲν ἀνθρώπους θεοῦ, τοτὲ δὲ ὁρῶντας (“For those in former times were in the habit of calling the prophets ‘men of god’ at some times, and ‘seers’ at others”), in reference to the prophets but based specifically on LXX 1 Sam 9:8–9 (where it is in the singular). After these two occurrences, the phrase does not appear again before the second century CE, mostly in Christian writers, with the exception of Pausanias, *Descr.* 7.26.7.

97. The second participle may be taken epexegetically with the first: “from (i.e., by) associating with...” The term συναλισγέομαι is a *hapax legomenon* (TLG); other than here it occurs only in Eusebius’s quotation of the same passage (*Praep. ev.* 8.9.13). The root word is ἀλισγέω, which is likewise rather rare (sixty-nine times in

even speak of other silly people, Egyptians and the like, who place their reliance upon wild beasts and most kinds of creeping things and cattle and worship them and offer sacrifices to them both while living and when dead?” —

139 Now the Lawgiver being a wise man and specially endowed by God with a knowledge of all things, took a comprehensive view of each detail and fenced us round with impregnable ramparts and walls of iron, that we might not mingle at all with any of the other nations but remain pure in body and soul, free from all vain beliefs, worshipping the one Almighty God above the whole creation. **140** Hence the leading Egyptian priests, having looked carefully into many matters and being cognizant of (our) affairs, call us “*men of God*.” This (appellation) does not belong to the rest of mankind, unless any of them worships the true God; the rest are men of meats and drinks and shelter. For their whole disposition takes refuge in these things. **141** For among us such things are reckoned of no account, but throughout their whole life their thoughts are on the sovereignty of God. **142** Therefore lest we should acquire perversions by being sullied *or* associating with vulgar people, he hedged us round on all sides by rules of purity in regard to foods and drinks and touching, hearing, and seeing lawfully. **143** For though, in general, all things are alike in their natural principle (of reason), since they are all overseen by a single power, yet for each of these things, both those from which we abstain in use and those we use in common, there is a deeper principle. For the sake of illustration I will run over one or two points and explain them to you.

144 For you must not arrive at the contemptible argument that it was out of regard to mice and weasels and other such things that Moses took such extreme care in making his laws. Rather, they were all drawn up in a holy manner with a view to sacred inquiry and preparation of

the TLG), but none prior to the LXX translation of later prophetic or wisdom books (six times in all), specifically Mal 1:7 (twice), 12 and Daniel (both recensions) 1:8 (twice); Sir 40:29 (all concerning matters of eating or associating with outsiders). Moreover, there are no occurrences *after* these until the Christian patristic writers, most alluding to the Daniel story. Hence the reference here most likely derives from the Greek version of Daniel, while the discussion of unclean animals that follows bears strong resemblance to that in Philo (see §§147–150 and notes there).

98. LXX Lev 11:29.

σεμνῶς πάντα ἀνατέτακται. 145 τῶν γὰρ πτηνῶν, οἷς χρώμεθα, πάντα ἡμερα καθέστηκε καὶ διαφέρει καθαριότητι, πυροῖς καὶ ὀσπρίοις χρώμενα πρὸς τὴν τροφήν, οἷον περιστεραὶ τρυγόνες ἀττακοί⁹⁹ πέρδικες ἔτι δὲ χῆνες καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅσα τοιαῦτα.

146 περὶ ὧν δὲ ἀπηγόρευται πτηνῶν, εὐρήσεις ἄγρια τέ καὶ σαρκοφάγα καὶ καταδυναστεύοντα τῇ περὶ ἑαυτὰ δυνάμει τὰ λοιπά, καὶ τὴν τροφήν ἔχοντα δαπάνησιν τῶν προειρημένων ἡμερῶν μετὰ ἀδικίας· οὐ μόνον δὲ ταῦτα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἄρνας καὶ ἐρίφους ἀναρπάζουσι, καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους δὲ ἀδικοῦσι νεκρούς τε καὶ ζῶντας.

147 παράσημον οὖν ἔθετο διὰ τούτων, ἀκάθαρτα¹⁰⁰ προσονομάσας, ὅτι δέον ἐστὶ κατὰ ψυχὴν, οἷς ἡ νομοθεσία διατέτακται, δικαιοσύνη συγχρῆσθαι καὶ μηδὲνα καταδυναστεύειν, πεποιθότας ἰσχύϊ τῇ καθ' ἑαυτούς, μηδὲ ἀφαιρεῖσθαι μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἐκ δικαίου τὰ τοῦ βίου κυβερνᾶν, ὡς τὰ τῶν προειρημένων πτηνῶν ἡμερα ζῶα τὰ φυόμενα τῶν ὀσπρίων ἐπὶ γῆς δαπανᾷ, καὶ οὐ καταδυναστεύει πρὸς τὴν ἐπαναίρεσιν τῶν συγγενικῶν.

148 διὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὖν παραδέδωκεν ὁ νομοθέτης σημειοῦσθαι τοῖς συνετοῖς, εἶναι δικαίους τε καὶ μηδὲν ἐπιτελεῖν βία, μηδὲ τῇ περὶ ἑαυτούς ἰσχύϊ πεποιθότας ἐτέρους καταδυναστεύειν. 149 ὅπου γὰρ οὐδ' ἄψασθαι καθῆκε τῶν προειρημένων διὰ τὴν περὶ ἕκαστα διάθεσιν, πῶς οὐ φυλακτέον παντάπασιν τοὺς τρόπους εἰς τοῦτο κατακλασθῆναι;

150 πάντα οὖν τὰ τῆς συγχωρήσεως ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τούτων καὶ τῶν κτηνῶν τροπολογῶν¹⁰¹ ἐκτέθεται. τὸ γὰρ διχηγλεῦειν καὶ διαστέλλειν ὅπλῃς

99. A very rare word (eight times total in TLG). The feminine form ἀττάκη occurs in the LXX only in Lev 11:22. The variant with masculine ending (four times in TLG), is found first here in Epistle of Aristeeas and Philo, *Leg.* 2.105 (also citing the commands in LXX Lev 11:21–22). The context and usage in both is unusual and strikingly similar. Neither form of the word occurs afterward until the second century CE and later, largely replicating these sources.

100. This comment seems to reflect the use of ἀκάθαρτα at LXX Lev 11:29 or Deut 14:19; cf. Sir 40:15. Cf. §§128, 129, 166, 169; Philo, *Spec.* 1.100, 119, 223, etc., esp. *Spec.* 4.106 (see also §150 and note 102 there). The argument of §147 is quite similar to that in Philo, *Spec.* 4.104: ἀπαγορεύσαι καὶ τῆς τῶν ἄλλων σαρκοβόρων ἀνὰ κράτος χρήσεως, τὰ ποηφάγα διακρίνας εἰς ἡμέρους ἀγέλας, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὴν φύσιν ἐστὶ τιθασά, τροφαῖς ἡμέροις αἷς ἀναδίδωσι γῇ χρώμενα καὶ μηδὲν εἰς ἐπιβουλὴν πραγματευόμενα (“He [Moses] forbids with all his energy the eating of any carnivorous

character for the sake of righteousness. **145** For all the birds that we use are tame and distinguished by their cleanliness, feeding on various kinds of grain and pulse, such as, for instance, pigeons, turtledoves, locusts, partridges, geese also, and all others of this sort.

146 But the birds that are forbidden you will find to be wild and carnivorous, tyrannizing over the others by the strength that they possess and unjustly obtaining at the expense of the tame birds mentioned above and not only this, but they seize lambs and kids, and they even do harm to human beings, whether dead or alive.

147 Therefore, by naming them “unclean,” he gave a sign by means of them that those, for whom the legislation was ordained, must practice righteousness in their hearts and not tyrannize over anyone in reliance upon their own strength nor rob them of anything, but steer their course of life in accordance with justice, just as the tame birds, already mentioned, consume the different kinds of pulse that grow upon the earth and do not tyrannize to the destruction of their own kindred.

148 The Lawgiver handed down to us, therefore, that it is by such means that indications are given to the wise, that they must be just and effect nothing by violence, and refrain from tyrannizing over others in reliance upon their own strength. **149** For since it is considered wrong even to touch the above-mentioned birds, on account of their individual habits, ought we not to take every precaution lest our own characters should be reduced to this?

150 He set forth all these (principles), then, concerning what is agreed upon in the case of these and other creatures by way of allegory. For the division of the hoof and the separation of the claws signify that we

animal at all, selecting the herbivorous animals out of those kinds that are domesticated, since they are tame by nature, feeding on that gentle food that is supplied by the earth, and having no disposition to plot evil against anything”). For the term ἀπαγορεύσαι in Philo, compare §131 and note there. For discussion of the potential relation of Epistle of Aristeeas to Philo in these sections, see Février 1925, 22–31.

101. This seems to be the earliest use of the term (noun or verb); it does not appear again in Greek literature prior to the second century CE, beginning with Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 57.2, 114.2, 129.2, where it occurs in a debate over interpretation of the Jewish scriptures.

ὄνυχας σημείον ἐστὶ τοῦ διαστέλλειν ἕκαστα τῶν πράξεων ἐπὶ τὸ καλῶς ἔχον.¹⁰²

151 ἡ γὰρ ἰσχὺς τῶν ὅλων σωμάτων μετ' ἐνεργείας ἀπέρεισιν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὤμους ἔχει καὶ τὰ σκέλη. μετὰ διαστολῆς οὖν ἅπαντα ἐπιτελεῖν πρὸς δικαιοσύνην ἀναγκάζει {τὸ σημειοῦσθαι} διὰ τούτων· ἔτι δὲ καὶ διότι παρὰ πάντας ἀνθρώπους διεστάλμεθα.

152 οἱ γὰρ πλείονες τῶν λοιπῶν ἀνθρώπων ἑαυτοὺς μολύνουσιν ἐπιμισγόμενοι,¹⁰³ συντελοῦντες μεγάλην ἀδικίαν, καὶ χῶραι καὶ πόλεις ὅλαι σεμνύνονται ἐπὶ τούτοις. οὐ μόνον γὰρ (προάγουσι)¹⁰⁴ τοὺς ἄρσενας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τεκούσας ἔτι δὲ θυγατέρας μολύνουσιν. ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀπὸ τούτων διεστάλμεθα.¹⁰⁵

153 περὶ ὃν δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ προειρημένος τῆς διαστολῆς τρόπος, περὶ τούτου εἶναι καὶ τὸν τῆς μνήμης κεχαρακτήρικεν. πάντα γὰρ ὅσα διχηλεῖ καὶ

102. Cf. LXX Lev 11:3. This symbolic reading of the laws governing clean and unclean animals continues through §153 (noting especially the reference to “memory” there). For a similar moral allegory from the “cloven hoof,” see Philo, *Spec.* 4.106–108: βάσανον δὲ καὶ δοκιμασίαν τῶν δέκα ζώων ὑπογράφεται κοινῇ κατὰ διττὰ σημεῖα, τό τε διχηλεῖν καὶ τὸ μηρυκᾶσθαι· οἷς γὰρ ἡ μηδέτερον ἢ θάτερον αὐτὸ μόνον πρόσσεστιν, ἀκάθαρτα. ταυτὶ δὲ τὰ σημεῖα ἀμφότερα σύμβολα διδασκαλίας καὶ μαθήσεως ἐπιστημονικωτάτης ἐστίν, ἥ πρὸς τὸ ἀσύγχυτον τὰ βελτίω τῶν ἐναντίων διακρίνεται. ... τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ὁ παιδευόμενος, δεξιόμενος δι' ὧτων τὰ σοφίας δόγματα καὶ θεωρήματα παρὰ τοῦ διδάσκοντος, ἐπὶ πλεόν ἔχει τὴν μάθησιν οὐχ οἷός τε ὦν εὐθὺς συλλαβεῖσθαι καὶ περιδράξασθαι κραταιότερον, ἄχρις ἂν ἕκαστον ὦν ἤκουσεν ἀναπολῶν μνήμη συνεχέσι μελεταίς—αἱ δ' εἰσὶ κόλλα νοημάτων—ἐνσφραγίσῃται τῇ ψυχῇ βεβαίως τὸν τύπον. ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ὡς ἔοικεν ὄφελος ἢ τῶν νοημάτων βεβαία κατάληψις, εἰ μὴ προσγένειτο διαστολὴ τούτων καὶ διαίρεσις εἰς τε αἵρεσιν ὧν χρὴ καὶ φυγὴν τῶν ἐναντίων, ἧς τὸ διχηλοῦν σύμβολον· ἐπεὶ τοῦ βίου διττὴ ὁδός, ἡ μὲν ἐπὶ κακίαν, ἡ δ' ἐπ' ἀρετὴν ἄγουσα, καὶ δεῖ τὴν μὲν ἀποστρέφεισθαι, τῆς δὲ μηδέποτε ἀπολείπεισθαι. (“And he gives two tests and criteria of the ten animals thus enumerated by two signs, first, that they must part the hoof, secondly, that they must chew the cud; for those which do neither, or only one of these things, are unclean. And these signs are both of them symbols of instruction and of the most scientific learning, by which the better is separated from the worse. ... In the same manner the man who is being instructed, having received the doctrines and speculations of wisdom in at his ears from his instructor, derives a considerable amount of learning from him, but still is not able to hold it firmly and to embrace it all at once, until he has resolved over in his mind everything which he has heard by the continued exercise of his memory (and this exercise of memory is the cement which connects ideas), and then he impresses the image of it all firmly on his soul. But as it

must discriminate each of our actions with a view to the practice of virtue.

151 For the strength of our whole body and its activity depend upon our shoulders and limbs. Therefore he obliges us to perform all our actions with discrimination according to righteousness—more especially because we have been distinctly separated from the rest of humankind.

152 For most other people defile themselves by sexual intercourse, thereby accomplishing great iniquity, and whole countries and cities pride themselves on such things. For not only do they show a preference for men, but they also defile their mothers and even their daughters. But we have been kept separate from such things.

153 And he [the Lawgiver] insisted, in connection with the above-mentioned manner of separation, that the quality of memory was also related to it. For, as he clearly implies to those who understand, by “*all animals that are cloven-footed and chew the cud*” he is expounding the

seems the firm conception of such ideas is of no advantage to him unless he is able to discriminate between and to distinguish which of contrary things it is right to choose and which to avoid, of which the parting of the hoof is the symbol; since the course of life is twofold, the one road leading to wickedness and the other to virtue, and since we ought to renounce the one and never to forsake the other”).

103. An older poetic term meaning “mixing or intercourse” but usually referring to hostile interactions (as in Ep. Arist. §139). The explicit sexual sense seems to be a later connotation especially from the Hellenistic period (in Alexandrian contexts), so Callimachus, *Jov.* 1.13; *Dian.* 3.20. It is used in this way explicitly in the LXX and pseudepigraphical works, notably in later writings, so 1 Esd 8:67, 84; Prov 14:10; Ezek 16:37; T. 12 Patr. 4:23. For this sense see esp. Philo, *Cher.* 110; Vettius Valens, *Anth.* 9.2.17, 38 (second century CE). See n. 105 below.

104. The majority of the manuscripts read *προσάγουσι*, while Eusebius gives *πρὸς ἄρρενας προσάγουσιν*. Wendland follows the manuscripts. Thackeray follows Schmidt’s emendation (supported by one manuscript) as printed here. The context rather clearly demands this emendation, as supported by the sense of the cognate verb *προαγωγεύω*, meaning to prostitute or pander, also found in Pseudo-Phocylides, *Sent.* 177. While *προσάγειν* can also have the connotation of sexual advances (LSJ, s.v. “*προσάγειν*,” A.II.1), in Epistle of Aristetas it typically means “to offer sacrifice”; cf. §59 and note there (also §§45, 88, 95, 170 at the end of this same section).

105. The allegory here depends on the contrast between “separation” and “mixing”; see n. 103 above.

μηρυκισμόν ἀνάγει¹⁰⁶ σαφῶς τοῖς νοοῦσιν ἐκτίθεται τὸ τῆς μνήμης. **154** ἡ γὰρ ἀναμηρύκησις οὐθὲν ἕτερον, ἀλλὰ τῆς ζωῆς καὶ συστάσεως ἐπίμνησις. τὸ γὰρ ζῆν διὰ τῆς τροφῆς συνεστάναι νομίζει.

155 διὸ παρακελεύεται καὶ διὰ τῆς γραφῆς ὁ λέγων οὕτως· μνεῖα μνησθήσῃ κυρίου τοῦ ποιήσαντος ἔν σοι τὰ μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά.¹⁰⁷ κατανοούμενα γὰρ καὶ μεγάλα καὶ ἔνδοξα φαίνεται· πρῶτον μὲν ἡ σύμπηξις τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἡ τῆς τροφῆς διοικήσις καὶ ἡ περὶ ἑκάστον μέλος διαστολή·

156 πολλῶ δὲ μᾶλλον ἡ τῶν αἰσθήσεων διακόσμησις, διανοίας ἐνέργημα καὶ κίνησις ἀόρατος, ἣ τε ὀξύτης τοῦ πρὸς ἑκάστον τι πράσσειν καὶ τεχνῶν εὗρεσις ἀπέραστον περιέχει τρόπον. **157** διὸ παρακελεύεται μνεῖαν ἔχειν, ὡς συντηρεῖται τὰ προειρημένα θεία δυνάμει σὺν κατασκευῇ. πάντα γὰρ χρόνον καὶ τόπον ὥρικε πρὸς τὸ διὰ παντὸς μνημονεύειν τοῦ κρατοῦντος θεοῦ καὶ συντηροῦντος. **158** καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν ἀπαρξαμένους εὐθέως τότε {συγχεῖσθαι} κελεύει. καὶ μὴν καὶ ἐκ τῶν περιβολαίων παράσημον ἡμῖν μνεῖας δέδωκεν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν πυλῶν καὶ θυρῶν προστέταχε μὲν ἡμῖν τιθέναι τὰ λόγια, πρὸς τὸ μνεῖαν εἶναι θεοῦ. **159** καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν χειρῶν δὲ διαρρήδην τὸ σημεῖον κελεύει περιῆφθαι, σαφῶς ἀποδεικνύς ὅτι πᾶσαν ἐνέργειαν μετὰ δικαιοσύνης ἐπιτελεῖν δεῖ, μνήμην ἔχοντας τῆς ἑαυτῶν κατασκευῆς, ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ τὸν περὶ θεοῦ φόβον.

160 κελεύει δὲ καὶ κοιταζομένους καὶ διανισταμένους μελετᾶν τὰς τοῦ θεοῦ κατασκευάς, οὐ μόνον λόγῳ, ἀλλὰ διαλήψει θεωροῦντας τὴν κίνησιν καὶ ὑπόληψιν ἑαυτῶν, ὅταν εἰς ὕπνον ἔρχωνται, καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν, ὡς θεία τίς ἐστι καὶ ἀκατάληπτος τούτων ἡ μετάθεσις.

106. LXX Lev 11:3: πᾶν κτήνος διχλοῦν ὀπλὴν καὶ ὀνυχιστῆρας ὀνυχίζον δύο χηλῶν καὶ ἀνάγον μηρυκισμόν ἐν τοῖς κτήνεσιν, ταῦτα φάγεσθε (“Any animal that divides the hoof and splits the hooves into two parts and brings up the cud among the animals—these you shall eat” [NETS]). Cf. LXX Deut 14:6.

107. The quotation here presupposes the Greek of the Septuagint, although apparently a combination of allusions from several later texts with two rather similar passages from Deuteronomy referring to the “mighty acts” of God at the exodus. The precise combination of τὰ μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά occurs only in LXX Job 42:3 and Tob 12:22; but see also Sir 43:29b (with θαυμαστή and μέγας in the previous line). The primary allusion seems to be a combination of LXX Deut 7:18–19 (μνεῖα μνησθήσῃ ὅσα ἐποίησεν κύριος ὁ θεός σου τῷ Φαραῶ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις, τοὺς πειρασμοὺς τοὺς μεγάλους, οὓς εἶδοσαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου, τὰ σημεῖα καὶ τὰ τέρατα τὰ μεγάλα ἐκεῖνα) (“With remembrance you shall remember what the Lord your

quality of memory. **154** For the act of chewing the cud is nothing else than the reminiscence of life and sustenance. For he holds that life is sustained through food.

155 Wherefore he also urges in the scriptures, saying: “*You shall surely remember the Lord who performed in you those great and wonderful things*” [Deut 7:18–19; 10:21]. For when they are understood, they are manifestly great and glorious: first the construction of the body and the regulation of the food and the separation of each individual member (of the body).

156 And much more the organization of the senses, the operation and invisible movement of the mind, the rapidity of actions in respect to each matter, and its discovery of the arts involve an infinite resourcefulness. **157** Therefore he exhorts us to remember that the aforesaid parts are maintained by divine power and preparation. For he has marked out every time and place so that we may continually remember the God who rules and maintains (us). **158** For in fact, in the matter of meats and drinks he bids us offer the first part at once as a sacrifice and then enjoy our meal. Moreover, from our garments, too, he has given us a symbol of remembrance, and in like manner he has ordered us to put the sayings upon our gates and doors as a remembrance of God. **159** And upon our hands, too, he expressly orders the symbol to be fastened, clearly showing that we ought to perform every act with righteousness, remembering our own creation, and above all the fear of God.

160 He bids us also, when lying down to sleep and rising up again, to meditate upon God’s creation, not only by reason but by observing one’s own motion and perception by degree, when they go to sleep and also their waking, that the change in these states is something divine and incomprehensible.

God did to Pharaoh and to all the Egyptians, the great trials that your eyes saw, the signs and those great wonders,” NETS) with LXX Deut 10:21 (καὶ οὗτος θεός σου, ὅστις ἐποίησεν ἐν σοὶ τὰ μεγάλα καὶ τὰ ἔνδοξα ταῦτα, ἃ εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου) (“and he is your God, who did among you these great and glorious things that your eyes have seen,” NETS). Note also that the phrase *μεγάλα καὶ ἔνδοξα* (cf. Deut 10:21) also occurs in the second half of §155. The combination *μνεία μνησθήσῃ* occurs only in the LXX at Deut 7:18 and only in Ep. Arist. §155 among the Pseudepigrapha.

161 Δέδεικται δέ σοι καὶ τὸ περισσὸν τῆς λογίας τῆς κατὰ τὴν διαστολὴν καὶ μνείαν, ὡς ἐξεθέμεθα τὴν διχηλίαν καὶ τὸν μηρυκισμόν. οὐ γὰρ εἰκῆ καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἐμπεσὸν εἰς ψυχὴν νενομοθέτηται, πρὸς δ' ἀλήθειαν καὶ σημείωσιν ὀρθοῦ λόγου. **162** διατάξας γὰρ ἐπὶ βρωτῶν καὶ ποτῶν καὶ τῶν κατὰ τὰς ἀφὰς ἕκαστα, κελεύει μὴθὲν εἰκῆ μήτε πράσσειν μήτε ἀκούειν, μήτε τῇ τοῦ λόγου δυναστείᾳ συγχρωμένους ἐπὶ τὴν ἀδικίαν τρέπεσθαι. **163** καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κνωδάλων δὲ ταῦτόν ἐστιν εὐρεῖν. κακοποιητικὸς γὰρ ὁ τρόπος ἐστὶ καὶ γαλῆς καὶ τῶν τούτοις ὁμοίων, ὅσα διηγόρευται. **164** πάντα γὰρ λυμαίνονται καὶ κακοποιοῦσι μύες, οὐ μόνον πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτῶν τροφήν, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ παντελῶς ἄχρηστον γίνεσθαι ἀνθρώπων, ὃ τι ἂν δὴ ποτ' οὖν ἐπιβάληται κακοποιεῖν. **165** τό τε τῆς γαλῆς γένος ἰδιάζον ἐστὶ· χωρὶς γὰρ τοῦ προειρημένου ἔχει λυμαντικὸν κατάστημα· διὰ γὰρ τῶν ὠτων συλλαμβάνει, τεκνοποιεῖ δὲ τῷ στόματι. **166** καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ τοιοῦτος τρόπος τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀκάθαρτός ἐστιν· ὅσα γὰρ δι' ἀκοῆς λαβόντες, ταῦτα τῷ λόγῳ σωματοποιήσαντες, κακοῖς ἐτέρους ἐνεκύλισαν οὐ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἐπετέλεσαν, μιανθέντες αὐτοὶ παντάπασι τῷ τῆς ἀσεβείας μολυσμῷ. καλῶς δὲ ποιῶν ὁ βασιλεὺς ὑμῶν τοὺς τοιούτους ἀναιρεῖ, καθὼς μεταλαμβάνομεν.”

167 Ἐγὼ δ' εἶπα, “Τοὺς ἐμφανιστὰς οἶομαί σε λέγειν· καὶ γὰρ αἰκίας καὶ θανάτοις ἐπαλγέσιν αὐτοὺς περιβάλλει συνεχῶς.”¹⁰⁸

“Ὁ δὲ Τούτους γὰρ, καὶ λέγω· ἡ γὰρ ἐπαγρύπνησις¹⁰⁹ ἀνθρώπων ἀπωλεία ἀνόσιος. **168** ὁ δὲ νόμος ἡμῶν κελεύει μήτε λόγῳ μήτε ἔργῳ μηδὲνα κακοποιεῖν. καὶ περὶ τούτων οὖν, ὅσον ἐπὶ βραχὺ <διεξῆλθον, προσυποδείξας> σοι διότι πάντα κεκανόνισται πρὸς δικαιοσύνην, καὶ οὐδὲν εἰκῆ κατατέτακται διὰ τῆς γραφῆς οὐδὲ μυθωδῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα δι' ὅλου τοῦ ζῆν καὶ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν ἀσκῶμεν δικαιοσύνην πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους, μεμνημένοι τοῦ δυναστεύοντος θεοῦ.

108. This may be an allusion to the policies enacted by Ptolemy VIII Physcon (144–116 BCE) in dealing harshly with informers (ἐμφανιστὰς), as described in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 33.6. Cf. J. Collins 2000, 98–101. The dates for Diodorus's literary career at Alexandria and Rome are ca. 60–30 BCE. See also the mention of informants in 3 Macc 3:28.

109. For this sense, compare the participial usage in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 14.68.4, explicitly referring to the “seeking the destruction” (ἀπωλεία) of others. The noun form of this word does not occur before Epistle of Aristeeas, and it appears after-

161 The superiority of the analogy in regard to separation and memory has now been demonstrated to you, in the way we explained “*the cloven hoof and the chewing of the cud*.” For the law was not set forth at random and as though it just came to mind but with a view to truth and a sign of right reason. **162** For by setting orderly arrangements with regard to meats and drinks and particular cases of touching, he bids us neither to do nor to listen to anything randomly nor to resort to injustice by exploiting the power of reason. **163** In the case of the wild animals, too, one may discover the same thing. For the character of the weasel and of mice and such animals as these, which are expressly mentioned, is destructive. **164** Mice defile and damage everything, not only for their own nourishment but even to the extent of rendering absolutely useless to man whatever it falls in their way to damage. **165** The weasel species, too, is peculiar, for besides what has been said, it has a defiling condition: it conceives through the ears and brings forth through the mouth. **166** And on account of this, such a character manner among humans is unclean. For whatever they take in by hearing, they give bodily form to in speech, and they involve others in evils and accomplish no ordinary evil, since they are themselves altogether defiled by the pollution of impiety. And your king, as we are informed, does well in destroying such men.”

167 Then I said, “I suppose you mean the informers, for he constantly exposes them to tortures and to painful forms of death.”

“Yes,” he replied, “these are the types I mean, for to be on the watch for people’s destruction is unholy. **168** Our law forbids us to do harm to anyone either by word or deed. I have now shown you, going through as many points as I could in brief, why all these things have been prescribed with a view to righteousness and that nothing has been arranged in the Scripture randomly or as a fable, but so that throughout our whole life and in our actions we might practice righteousness toward all people, being mindful of Almighty God.

ward (twelve times) only in later Christian writers beginning with Eusebius’s quotation of this passage; other than a later reference in the Hippocratic corpus, the verb form seems to occur first in Diodorus Siculus (as noted above and *Bibl. hist.* 38/39.9, the latter concerning the military exploits of Pompey the Great).

169 περὶ βρωτῶν οὖν καὶ τῶν ἀκαθάρτων ἐρπετῶν καὶ κνωδάλων καὶ πᾶς λόγος ἀνατείνει πρὸς δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων συναναστροφὴν δικάειαν.”

170 Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν καλῶς ἐνόμιζε περὶ ἐκάστων ἀπολογεῖσθαι· καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν προσφερομένων ἔλεγε μόσχων τε καὶ κριῶν καὶ χιμάρων, ὅτι δεῖ ταῦτα ἐκ βουκολίων καὶ ποιμνίων λαμβάνοντας ἡμερα θυσιάζειν, καὶ μηθὲν ἄγριον, ὅπως οἱ προσφέροντες τὰς θυσίας μηθὲν ὑπερήφανον ἑαυτοῖς συνιστορῶσι, σημειώσει κεκρημένοι τοῦ διατάξαντος. τῆς γὰρ ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς τοῦ παντὸς τρόπου τὴν προσφορὰν ποιεῖται ὁ τὴν θυσίαν προσάγων.

171 καὶ περὶ τούτων οὖν νομίζω τὰ τῆς ὁμιλίας ἄξια λόγου καθεστάναι· διὸ τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ φυσικὴν διάνοιαν τοῦ νόμου προῆγμαι διασαφῆσαι σοι, Φιλόκρατες, δι’ ἣν ἔχεις φιλομάθειαν.

172 Ὁ δὲ Ἐλεάζαρος ποιησάμενος θυσίαν καὶ τοὺς ἀνδρας ἐπιλέξας καὶ πολλὰ δῶρα τῷ βασιλεῖ κατασκευάσας προέπεμψεν ἡμᾶς μετὰ ἀσφαλείας πολλῆς. **173** ὥς δὲ παρεγενήθημεν εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν, προσηγγέλη τῷ βασιλεῖ περὶ τῆς ἀφίξεως ἡμῶν. <παρειμένοι> δ’ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν Ἀνδρέας τε καὶ ἐγώ, φιλοφρόνως ἡσπασάμεθα τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τὰς ἐπιστολάς ἀποδεδώκαμεν τὰς παρὰ τοῦ Ἐλεάζαρου.

174 περὶ πολλοῦ δὲ ποιούμενος τοῖς ἀπεσταλμένοις ἀνδράσιν ἐντυχεῖν¹¹⁰, ἐκέλευσε τοὺς λοιποὺς πάντας ἀπολύσαι τοὺς ἐπὶ τῶν χειρῶν, καλεῖν δὲ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους. **175** οὗ πᾶσι παραδόξου φανέντος διὰ τὸ κατὰ ἔθος εἶναι, πεμπταίους εἰς πρόσωπον ἔρχεσθαι βασιλεῖ τοὺς περὶ χρήσιμον ἀφικνουμένους, τοὺς δὲ παρὰ βασιλέων ἢ πόλεων ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς μόλις ἐν τριάκοντα εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν παρίεσθαι τοὺς δὲ ἥκοντας τιμῆς καταξιών μείζονος, καὶ τὴν ὑπεροχὴν κρίνων τοῦ πέμψαντος, ἀπολύσας οὕς ἐνόμιζε περισσοὺς, ὑπέμενε περιπατῶν, ἕως ἂν παραγινομένους ἀσπάσῃται.

176 παρελθόντων δὲ σὺν τοῖς ἀπεσταλμένοις δώροις καὶ ταῖς διαφόροις διφθέραις, ἐν αἷς ἡ νομοθεσία γεγραμμένη χρυσογραφία τοῖς Ἰουδαίκοις γράμμασι, θαυμασίως <εἰργασμένου τοῦ ὑμένο>, καὶ τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα συμβολῆς

110. I.e., “grant an audience.” For ἐντυχεῖν with this sense, see note 3 at §1, where the noun ἐντυχία is used of the “audience” with Eleazar.

169 And so concerning meats and unclean creeping things and beasts, the whole reasoning aims at righteousness and righteous relations among human beings.”

170 It seemed to me, therefore, that he had made a good defense on all the points. In reference, indeed, to the calves and rams and goats that are offered, he said that it was necessary to take them from the herds and flocks and to sacrifice tame ones and nothing wild, so that those offering the sacrifices might not be conscious of any arrogance in themselves but recognize the symbolic meaning of the lawgiver. For one who offers a sacrifice makes an offering also of every aspect of his own soul.

171 I believe, then, that these things in our discussion have been worth narrating. That is why I have been led to make clear to you, Philocrates, the sanctity and natural meaning of the law, for the sake of your love of learning.

V. The Delegation Arrives in Alexandria and Ptolemy's Banquet (172–300)

172 Now Eleazar, after offering the sacrifice and selecting the men and preparing many gifts for the king, sent us on our way with great security. **173** And when we reached Alexandria, the king was at once informed of our arrival. When Andreas and I were admitted to the palace, we warmly greeted the king and handed over to him the letter from Eleazar.

174 The king was very eager to “receive” the men who had been sent and gave orders to dismiss all the rest of those in his service and to summon the men. **175** Now this seemed strange to everyone, since it is customary that those who come concerning important (state) matters are admitted to the king on the fifth day, while envoys from kings or preeminent cities are scarcely admitted to the court in thirty days—but these men he counted worthy of greater honor, and he held the one who sent them in exceptional esteem, and so he dismissed those whom he regarded as superfluous and continued walking about until they arrived so that he could greet them.

176 When they entered with the gifts that had been sent and the extraordinary parchments, on which the law was inscribed in gold in Jewish characters, for the workmanship of the parchment sheets was mar-

ἀνεπαισθήτου κατεσκευασμένης, ὡς εἶδεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τοὺς ἄνδρας, ἐπηρώτα περὶ τῶν βιβλίων. **177** ὡς δὲ ἀπεκάλυψαν τὰ τῶν ἐνειλημάτων καὶ τοὺς ὑμένας ἀνείλιξαν, πολλὸν ἐπιστὰς χρόνον καὶ προσκυνήσας σχεδὸν ἐπτάκις εἶπεν Εὐχαριστῶ μέν, ἄνδρες, ὑμῖν, τῷ δ' ἀποστείλαντι μᾶλλον, μέγιστον δὲ τῷ θεῷ, οὗτινός ἐστι τὰ λόγια ταῦτα. **178** ὁμοθυμαδὸν δὲ πάντων εἰπόντων ὑπὸ μίαν φωνήν, τῶν τε παραγεγονότων καὶ τῶν συμπαρόντων, Εὖ βασιλεῦ, προήχθη δακρύσαι τῇ χαρᾷ πεπληρωμένος. ἡ γὰρ τῆς ψυχῆς ἔντασις καὶ τὸ τῆς τιμῆς ὑπερτεῖνον δακρύειν ἀναγκάζει κατὰ τὰς ἐπιτυχίας.

179 κελεύσας δὲ εἰς τάξιν ἀποδοῦναι τὰ τεύχη, τὸ τηνικαῦτα ἀσπασάμενος τοὺς ἄνδρας εἶπε·

Δίκαιον ἦν, θεοσεβεῖς ἄνδρες,¹¹¹ ὧν χάριν ὑμᾶς μετεπεμψάμην, ἐκείνοις πρῶτον σεβασμὸν ἀποδοῦναι, μετὰ ταῦτα τὴν δεξιὰν ὑμῖν προτεῖναι· διὸ πεποίηκα τοῦτο πρῶτον. **180** μεγάλην δὲ τέθειμαι τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην, ἐν ᾗ παραγεγόνατε, καὶ κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἐπίσημος ἔσται πάντα τὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν χρόνον· συντέτυχε γὰρ καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν νίκην ἡμῖν προσπεπτωκέσαι τῆς πρὸς Ἀντίγονον ναυμαχίας.¹¹² διὸ καὶ δειπνῆσαι σήμερον μεθ' ὑμῶν βουλήσομαι. **181** πάντα (δ' ὑμῖν), εἶπε, παρέσται καθηκόντως, οἷς συγχρήσησθε, κάμοι μεθ' ὑμῶν.

τῶν δὲ ἀσμενισάντων ἐκέλευσε καταλύματα δοθῆναι τὰ κάλλιστα πλησίον τῆς ἄκρας αὐτοῖς, καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὸ συμπόσιον ἐτοιμάζειν.

182 Ὁ δὲ (ἀρχεδέατρος)¹¹³ Νικάνωρ Δωρόθεον προσκαλεσάμενος, ὃς (ᾗν)

111. For the epithet θεοσεβεῖς ἄνδρες (“godfearing men”), compare the words of Eleazar in §140.

112. The naval “victory” must refer either to the battle of Kos in 258 BCE (actually a defeat) or the battle of Andros in 247 BCE (or perhaps the following year, after the death of Ptolemy II); see Andrews 1913, 2:111. Philo confirms the fact that in his day there was an annual celebration on Pharos of the translation of the law by Jews and others in *Mos.* 2.41: διὸ καὶ μέχρι νῦν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος ἑορτὴ καὶ πανήγυρις ἄγεται κατὰ τὴν Φάρον νῆσον, εἰς ἣν οὐκ Ἰουδαῖοι μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ παμπληθεῖς ἕτεροι διαπλέουσι τό τε χωρίον σεμνουῦντες, ἐν ᾧ πρῶτον τὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐξέλαμψε, καὶ παλαιᾷς ἔνεκεν εὐεργεσίας αἰεὶ νεαζούσης εὐχαριστήσοντας τῷ θεῷ (“On which account, even to this very day, there is every year a solemn assembly held and a festival celebrated in the island of Pharos, to which not only the Jews but a great number of persons of other nations sail across, reverencing the place in which the first light of interpretation shone forth, and thanking God for that ancient piece of beneficence which was always young and fresh” [Yonge]). See further sec. 3.1.

113. The manuscripts give ἀρχίητρος, meaning “chief physician,” but this reading

velous, with the joins between them done so as to be imperceptible, as soon as the king saw the men he began asking them about the books. **177** And when they had taken them out of their coverings and unrolled the parchments, the king stood still for a long time, and then, making obeisance as many as seven times, he said, "I thank you, gentlemen, and I still more him who sent you, and most of all the god whose oracles these are." **178** And when all, both the envoys and those who were present, shouted out with one accord and with one voice, "Excellent, O King!" he was so filled with joy as to be brought to tears, for his exaltation of soul and the extreme honor compelled him to weep at his good fortune.

179 He commanded them to put the scrolls back in order and then after saluting the men, said:

"It was right, O *godfearing men*, that I should first of all pay my reverence to the books for the sake of which I summoned you here and after that to extend my right hand to you. That is why I did this first. **180** I have established this day, on which you arrived, as a great day, and it will be marked annually throughout my lifetime. For my victory in the naval battle against Antigonos happens also to coincide with it. Therefore I shall be glad to feast with you today. **181** Everything that you may have occasion to use," he said, "shall be provided (for you) in a befitting manner and for me also with you."

After they had expressed their delight, he gave orders that the best quarters near the citadel should be assigned to them and that preparations should be made for the banquet.

182 Then Nicanor, the chief steward, summoned Dorotheus, who had

is widely doubted in modern scholarship. Josephus (*A.J.* 12.94) calls him ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς τῶν ξένων ἀποδοχῆς τεταγμένος ("officer in charge of receiving guests"), that is, a chief steward. Wendland, following Letronne 1828, 105, accepted the emendation printed here (ἀρχεδέατρος), since it is a known title for the chief steward of the Ptolemaic court. It is worth noting, however, that this title is first attested only from the second century BCE onward; see Fraser 1972 1:102; 2:182 n. 57 (with references to the papyri). Notably at least one of these was also titled "among the Friends" (τῶν φίλων); cf. *P.Tebt.* 729 and 895 (both dating to the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor); see also n. 43 above. It should be noted, however, that Fraser (1972, 2:976 n. 142) at least raises the possibility that the manuscript reading is correct (or only slightly corrupted, from ἀρχιατρός) as a potentially real office in the Ptolemaic court, the spelling ἱητρός being more typical

ἐπὶ τούτων ἀποτεταγμένος, ἐκέλευσε τὴν ἐτοιμασίαν εἰς ἕκαστον ἐπιτελεῖν. ἦν γὰρ οὕτω διατεταγμένον ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως, ἃ μὲν ἔτι καὶ νῦν ὁρᾷς· ὅσαι γὰρ πόλεις (ἔθειςιν ἰδίοις)¹¹⁴ συγχρῶνται πρὸς τὰ ποτὰ καὶ βρωτὰ καὶ στρωμνάς, τοσοῦτοι καὶ προεστῶτες ἦσαν· καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐθισμοὺς οὕτως ἐσκευάζετο, ὅταν παραγένοιτο πρὸς τοὺς βασιλεῖς, ἵνα κατὰ μῆθην δυσχεραίνοντες ἱλαρῶς διεξάγωσιν· ὁ καὶ περὶ τούτους ἐγεγόνει. **183** προσεχέστατος γὰρ ὢν ἄνθρωπος ὁ Δωρόθεος εἶχε τὴν τῶν τοιούτων προστασίαν. συνέστρωσε δὲ πάντα τὰ δι' αὐτοῦ χειριζόμενα, πρὸς τὰς τοιαύτας ὑποδοχὰς διαμεμερισμένα. διμερῆ τε ἐποίησε τὰ τῶν κλισιῶν, καθὼς προσέταξεν ὁ βασιλεὺς· τοὺς γὰρ ἡμίσεις ἐκέλευσεν ἀνὰ χεῖρα κατακλῖναι, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς μετὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κλισίαν, οὐδὲν ἐλλιπῶν εἰς τὸ τιμᾶν τοὺς ἄνδρας.

184 Ὡς δὲ κατεκλίθησαν, ἐκέλευσε τῷ Δωροθέῳ τοῖς ἐθισμοῖς οἷς χρῶνται πάντες οἱ παραγινόμενοι πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας, οὕτως ἐπιτελεῖν. διὸ τοὺς ἱεροκήρυκας καὶ θύτας καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, οἷς ἔθος ἦν τὰς κατευχὰς ποιεῖσθαι,¹¹⁵ παρηγήσατο· τῶν δὲ παραγεγονότων σὺν ἡμῖν Ἐλεάζαρον¹¹⁶ ὄντα τῶν ἱερῶν πρεσβύτερον παρεκάλεσε ποιήσασθαι κατευχήν.^[115] ὃς ἀξιολόγως στὰς εἶπε

185 Πληρώσαι σε, βασιλεῦ, πάντων τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὧν ἔκτισεν ὁ παντοκράτωρ θεός· καὶ δῶή σοι ταῦτ' ἔχειν καὶ γυναικὶ καὶ τέκνοις καὶ τοῖς ὁμονοοῦσι πάντα ἀνέκλειπτα τὸν τῆς ζωῆς χρόνον.

in Ionic orthography. To this end, we observe that there was an Andreas who was the court doctor to Ptolemy IV Philopator; he reportedly died in Philopator's place just prior to the battle of Raphia (217 BCE); see Polybius, *Hist.* 5.81; Fraser 1972, 1:358, 369. Specifically, Polybius calls this Andreas τὸν ἱατρὸν τοῦ βασιλέως. Ironically, 3 Macc 1:3 identifies the "savior" of Philopator as one Dositheos, an apostate Jew in his court. See also inscription 7 at §3.5 for a known courtier by this name. Most notably, Fraser (1972, 2:531 n. 194) provides the epitaph of an Alexandrian doctor named Dorotheos from the later Hellenistic period, but without drawing any connection to this passage, perhaps because he assumed it to be too late. We should take special note of the last case, however, since the inscription identifies Dorotheos as [ἰ]ητρὸν, with the same orthography seen here, which seems to contradict Fraser's own comment regarding this orthography (2:976).

114. The text as printed above follows Wendland's emendation; this sense seems preferable in the context. The manuscripts give εἰσὶν οἷς (*var. αἷς*). Thackeray's emendation reads as follows: εἰσὶν, (αἶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς); in this he basically follows Josephus's version: κατὰ γὰρ πόλιν ἐκάστην, ὅσαι τοῖς αὐτοῖς χρῶνται ("for in each city [where] they practice their own habits in diet," *A.J.* 12.95). For Wendland's proposed ἔθειςιν ἰδίοις, we might suggest something like ἔθειςιν αὐτοῖς (or ἑαυτοῖς) as an alternative closer to the manuscripts, but with the same basic sense.

115. Κατευχή ("prayer" or "vow"), is another rather rare word (thirty-three in

been appointed to tend to them, and commanded him to make the necessary preparation for each one. For thus was it arranged by the king, which you still see even now. For some cities participate (in their own customs) in drinking, eating, and seating arrangements, and such (cities) also have special representatives in charge. And whenever they come to visit the kings, preparations are made in accordance with their own customs, in order that they may spend the time joyfully and feel no discomfort. And this happened, too, with the present envoys. **183** For Dorotheus, who was in charge of such things, was a very conscientious man. He laid out all the items that were under his control and set apart for such receptions. He made the arrangement of the couches in two rows, as the king had instructed him. For he had ordered that half the men should recline at his right hand and the rest behind his own couch, not falling short in any way in honoring the men.

The Banquet, Day One (184–202)

184 When they reclined (on the couches), he instructed Dorotheus to carry out everything in accordance with the customs that his guests from Judea practiced. Therefore he dispensed with the sacred heralds and the sacrificers and the others for whom the custom was to offer the prayers. Instead, he had Eleazar, one of those having arrived with us and the oldest of the priests, offer prayer. Standing, he spoke in a noteworthy manner (as follows):

185 “May Almighty God fill you, O King, with all the good things that he has created, and may he grant you and your wife and your children and your comrades all these things without interruption throughout your lifetime!”

TLG in noun forms, including the two occurrences in this section), with only five occurrences prior to the second century BCE.

116. Josephus reads *Ἐλισσαῖον*, while all the manuscripts read *Ἐλεάζαρον*. Thackeray followed Wendland in accepting the reading of Josephus, taking it to be equivalent to the Greek form of Elisha (*Ελισαιε*) in the LXX of 2 Kings (as in 4 Kgdms 2:1–3). The rationale seems to be that a corruption must have crept in from the name of the high priest. Andrews (1913, 2:111), rightly, I think, reverts to the name Eleazar. In support of this reading, it should be noted that *Ἐλεάζαρος* is also the name of one of the seventy-two priests/elders, the second man in the tenth tribe (§50). Moreover, while there is only one *Ἐλεάζαρος* in the list, there are three separate men named *Ἐλισσαῖος* (§§47, 48, and 50). The following section (§187) indicates that this Eleazar (though his name is not given) must be the same one who is asked the first question by Ptolemy, since it explicitly notes that they were seated by seniority. See also note 47 above.

186 Εἰπόντος δὲ ταῦτα τούτου κατερράγη κρότος μετὰ κραυγῆς καὶ χαρᾶς εὐφροσύνου πλείονα χρόνον· καὶ τὸ τηνικαῦτα πρὸς τὸ τέρπεσθαι διὰ τῶν ἡτοιμασμένων ἐτράπησαν, τῶν λειτουργιῶν ἀπασῶν διὰ τῆς τοῦ Δωροθέου συντάξεως ἐπιτελουμένων· ἐν οἷς καὶ βασιλικοὶ παῖδες ἦσαν, καὶ τῶν τιμωμένων ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως.

187 Ὅτε δὲ καιρὸν ἔλαβεν ἐκ διαστήματος, ἠρώτησε τὸν ἔχοντα τὴν πρώτην ἀνάκλινιν ἦσαν γὰρ καθ' ἡλικίαν τὴν ἀνάπτωσιν πεποιημένοι, Πῶς ἂν τὴν βασιλείαν μέχρι τέλους ἄπταιστον¹¹⁷ ἔχων διατελοῖ; **188** βραχὺ δὲ ἐπισχὼν εἶπεν,

Οὕτως ἂν μάλιστα διευθύνῃς¹¹⁸, μιμούμενος τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ παντὸς ἐπιεικές. μακροθυμία γὰρ χρώμενος, καὶ βλιμάζων¹¹⁹ τοὺς ἀξίους ἐπιεικέστερον, καθὼς¹²⁰ εἰσιν ἄξιοι, μετατιθεῖς ἐκ τῆς κακίας καὶ εἰς μετάνοιαν ἄξεις.

189 Ἐπαινέσας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς τὸν ἐχόμενον ἠρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ἕκαστα πράττοι; ὁ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη,

Τὸ δίκαιον εἰ πρὸς ἅπαντας διατηροῖ, ἑαυτῷ καλῶς τὰ ἕκαστα πράξει,

117. The term ἄπταιστος and all its cognate forms (including the adverb ἀπταίστως) occurs 521 times in TLG but has only five occurrences earlier than 100 BCE (not including Ep. Arist. §187): Xenophon, *Re eques*. 1.6; Plato, *Theat*. 144B; Callimachus, *Aetia* frag. 17; Limenius, *Paean Delph*. 43; and Sib. Or. 3.289. Note also Chrysippus, *Moralia*, but only *apud* Philo, *Sacr*. 121 (SVF 3.636). From the first century BCE there are seven more occurrences, including four times in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Dem*. 52.27, 34; *Comp*. 25.101, 261) and once each in Arius Didymus, *Liber de phil*. 87.1 *apud* Stobaeus, Pseudo-Scymnus, *Nic*. 359, and 3 Macc 6:39. From the first century CE, it is used extensively by Philo: twenty-seven times, more than any other single author in the TLG. Here and throughout, the king's questions are punctuated as direct discourse by Thackeray, as printed here. It should be noted, however, that the Greek in most, but not all, cases may properly be read as indirect discourse, as indicated by Wendland's punctuation, thus: "the king asked ... how he might keep his kingdom unimpaired to the end." For sake of consistency, we follow Thackeray's punctuation throughout this portion of the text.

118. The word διευθύνω has only 275 occurrences in all TLG, but all are first century CE and later, *beginning with Philo*, with the lone exception (?) being here. The most important of these is Philo, *Agr*. 177, where it occurs in combination with ἀπταίστως, just as it does here (see note 117 above), thus: ἀρξαμένους ὁδοῦ τῆς πρὸς εὐσέβεια ἀπταίστως καὶ ἀπνευστὶ διευθῆναι τὸν δρόμον ("For it is very difficult, for those just beginning to travel the road that leads to reverence, just like runners, to keep a straight course without stumbling and being out of breath"). In all TLG, these two words occur together only in these two passages. The philosophical background to the king's question may well presuppose the Stoic discussion of wise kingship (following

186 When he said these words, applause broke out, accompanied by shouts and joyful cheers, for a long time, and then they turned to the enjoyment of the banquet that had been prepared. All the ministrations were carried out in accordance with the arrangements of Dorotheus. Among the guests were the royal children and the others who were honored by the king.

187 Now when he found an opportunity during a pause, the king asked the man who sat in the first couch (for they had arranged the places for reclining according to seniority), How could he keep his kingdom unimpaired to the end? **188** After pausing briefly, he replied,

“Thus may you certainly keep on course, by imitating the clemency of God in all things. For by practicing forbearance and handling those who are worthy (of punishment) even more benignly than they deserve, you will turn them from evil and lead them to a change of heart.”

189 The king offered praise and asked the next man, How should he act in each and every matter? And he replied,

“If a man maintains justice toward all, he will act well in all things,

the Platonic maxim of *Resp.* 473D), best reflected in the tradition of Zeno and Chrysippus on the need for kings to be “wise,” like philosophers, as described in Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 7.122. Worth noting in this treatment is that Chrysippus (ostensibly defines kingship as “unaccountable rule” (τῆς βασιλείας οὔσης ἀρχῆς ἀνυπευθύνου), where the final term “unaccountable” (ἀνυπευθύνου) is a cognate of διευθύνω (from the root meaning “to keep or judge straight”). In turn, these philosophical notions of kingship are also summed up in Philo’s treatment of Moses as ideal king and lawgiver, especially *Mos.* 2.2: ἐὰν <ῆ> οἱ βασιλεῖς φιλοσοφῆσωσιν ἢ οἱ φιλόσοφοι βασιλεύσωσιν (“either kings should study philosophy or philosophers rule as kings”). On this notion of kingship and law-giving, see also §131 and note there, with further comparanda from Philo.

119. The word βλιμάζω is quite rare (only seventy-eight occurrences in TLG) and means to “feel, handle, or squeeze” (as one handles a hen in the nest). By derivation it means “to handle or treat” (*with care* or *roughly*, implied by context). It does not mean “to punish,” as sometimes translated here.

120. For the sense of καθώς (as an adverb of manner; LSJ), see §263 and note there. Here, in light of the preceding comparative ἐπιεικέστερον, we render καθώς with “than” to convey this sense. Schmidt (1869, 286 n. 6) emended the text with <ῆ> before καθώς to the same end, but neither Wendland nor Thackeray followed suit. We might take καθώς with a temporal sense (as in §263), thus: “*when* they rightly deserve (punishment)”; or, alternatively, with more literal sense of manner: “*in manner* or *accordingly* as they rightly deserve.” Andrews (1913, 2:112) follows a similar line: “*in accordance with* their deserts.” The meaning seems clear enough either way.

διαλαμβάνων ὅτι πᾶν ἐννόημα σαφές ἐστὶ θεῶ· καταρχὴν δὲ θείου φόβου λαμβάνων ἐν οὐδενὶ διαπίπτει.

190 Καὶ τοῦτον δὲ εὖ μάλα παραδεξάμενος ἕτερον ἐπηρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ὁμοίους ἑαυτῷ ἔχοι τοὺς φίλους; ἀκακῆνος εἶπεν,

Εἰ θεωροῖσαν πολλήν σε πρόνοιαν ποιούμενον ὧν ἄρχεις ὄχλων· σὺ δὲ τοῦτο πράξεις ἐπιβλέπων ὥς ὁ θεὸς εὐεργετῇ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος, ὁ ὑγίαιν αὐτοῖς καὶ τροφήν καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ κατὰ καιρὸν παρασκευάζων ἅπαντα.

191 Συνεπιμαρτυρήσας¹²¹ δὲ τούτῳ τὸν ἐχόμενον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ἐν τοῖς χρηματισμοῖς καὶ διακρίσεσιν εὐφημίας (τυγχάνοι) καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποτυγχανόντων; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Εἰ πᾶσιν ἴσος γένοιο τῷ λόγῳ, καὶ μηδὲν ὑπερηφάνως μηδὲ τῇ περὶ σεαυτὸν ἰσχύϊ πρᾶσσοις κατὰ τῶν ἀμαρτανόντων. **192** τοῦτο δὲ ποιήσεις τὴν διάταξιν βλέπων τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ· τὰ γὰρ ἱκετευόμενα συντελεῖσθαι τοῖς ἀξίοις, τοῖς δὲ ἀποτυγχάνουσιν ἢ δι' ὀνείρων ἢ πράξεων σημαίνεισθαι τὸ βλαβερὸν αὐτοῖς, οὐ κατὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας οὐδὲ (κατὰ) τὴν μεγαλωσύνην τῆς ἰσχύος τύπτοντος αὐτούς, ἀλλ' ἐπιεικείᾳ χρωμένου τοῦ θεοῦ.

193 Εὖ δὲ καὶ τοῦτον κατεπαινέσας¹²² ἡρώτα τὸν ἐξῆς, Πῶς ἂν ἐν ταῖς πολεμικαῖς χρεῖαις ἀήττητος εἴη; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Εἰ μὴ πεποithῶς ὑπάρχοι τοῖς ὄχλοις μηδὲ ταῖς δυνάμεσιν, ἀλλὰ τὸν θεὸν ἐπικαλοῖτο διὰ πάντων, ἵνα τὰς ἐπιβολὰς αὐτῷ κατευθύνη δικαίως διεξάγοντι πάντα.

194 Ἀποδεξάμενος δὲ καὶ τοῦτον τὸν ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν φοβερὸς εἴη τοῖς ἐχθροῖς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Εἰ τῇ τῶν ὄπλων καὶ δυνάμεων παρασκευῇ πολλῇ χρώμενος (εἰδείη) ταῦτα ὄντα κενὰ ἐπὶ πλείονα χρόνον πρὸς τὸ συμπέρασμα δρᾶν τι· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς διδοὺς ἀνοχὰς καὶ ἐνδεικνύμενος τὸν τῆς δυναστείας φόβον ἐγκατασκευάζει πάσῃ διανοίᾳ.

195 Καὶ τοῦτον δὲ ἐπαινέσας εἶπε πρὸς τὸν ἐχόμενον, Τί κάλλιστον αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ ζῆν ἂν εἴη; ἀκακῆνος ἔφη,

121. A rather rare double compound (ninety-four times in TLG) with only four occurrences prior to the first century BCE; see Polybius *Hist.* 25.6.4; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 31.28.1; Philo, *Mos.* 2.123; Heb 2:4; 1 Clem. 23.5; 43.1.

marking well that every thought is clear to God. If you take the fear of God as your starting point, you will never err.”

190 Now the king accepted this right well, too, and he asked another, How could he have friends like himself? And he replied,

“If they see you showing great forethought for the multitudes over whom you rule; you will do this if you observe how God bestows benefits on the human race, providing for them health and food and all other things in due season.”

191 After attesting to this, the king asked the next man, How in his ordinances and judgments could he gain the praise even of those who failed in their suit? And he said,

“If you are fair in speech to all and never act arrogantly by virtue of the power that attaches to you toward those who have erred. **192** And you will do this if you watch the method adopted by God. For petitions are fulfilled for those who are worthy, whereas to those who fail their harmfulness is signaled by means of dreams or events, and God does not smite them either according to their sins or the greatness of his strength but uses clemency.”

193 Praising this man highly, too, he asked the next in order, How could he be undefeated in military affairs? And he replied,

“If he did not trust to his multitudes or his forces but called upon God continually to guide his offensives so long as he conducted everything justly.”

194 Approving this man, too, he asked another, How might one be frightening to his enemies? And he replied,

“If, though he makes use of a vast supply of arms and forces he realizes that these things are useless for the purpose of drawing things toward a conclusion over much time. For God instills fear of his power into the mind by granting reprieves even as he displays (his power) clearly.”

195 This man the king praised and then said to the next, What would be the most excellent thing for him to live his life? And he answered,

122. This double compounded form (κατεπαινέσας) is not otherwise attested outside Epistle of Aristeas (three times; see also §§212, 266) prior to the Byzantine period (once). The simpler form ἐπαινέσας appears at §§189, 206, 208, 213, 225, 246, 265.

Τὸ γινώσκειν ὅτι θεὸς δυναστεύει τῶν ἀπάντων, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν καλλίστων πράσεων οὐκ αὐτοὶ κατευθύνουσι τὰ βουλευθέντα· θεὸς δὲ τελειοῖ τὰ πάντων καὶ καθηγεῖται δυναστεύων.

196 Ἐπιφωνήσας δὲ καὶ τούτῳ καλῶς λέγειν τὸν ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ἀκέραια συντηρήσας ἅπαντα τοῖς ἐγγόνοις τὴν αὐτὴν παραδιδόι διαθήσειν ἐπὶ τέλει; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Εὐχόμενος αἰεὶ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀγαθὰς ἐπινοίας λαμβάνειν πρὸς τὰ μέλλοντα πράσσειν, καὶ τοῖς ἐγγόνοις παρακελευόμενος μὴ ἐκπλήττεσθαι τῇ δόξῃ μηδὲ τῷ πλούτῳ· θεὸν γὰρ εἶναι τὸν χαριζόμενον ταῦτα, καὶ οὐ δι' ἑαυτοὺς ἔχειν τὴν ὑπεροχὴν ἀπάντων.

197 Ἐπιμαρτυρήσας δὲ τούτοις τοῦ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπυνθάνετο, Πῶς ἂν τὰ συμβαίνοντα μετρίως φέροι; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφησεν,

Εἰ πρόληψιν λαμβάνοις, ὅτι γέγοναν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντες ἄνθρωποι μετασχεῖν τῶν μεγίστων κακῶν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ἀγαθῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα τούτων ἀμιγῆ γενέσθαι· ὁ θεὸς δὲ τὴν εὐψυχίαν δίδωσιν, ὃν ἱκετεύειν ἀναγκαῖον.

198 Φιλοφρονηθεὶς δὲ καὶ τοῦτον καλῶς εἶπεν ἅπαντας ἀποφαίνεσθαι· ἐπερωτήσας δὲ ἔτι ἓνα καταλήξω τὸ νῦν ἔχον, ἵνα καὶ πρὸς τὸ τέρπεσθαι τραπέντες ἡδέως διεξάγωμεν. ἐν δὲ ταῖς μετὰ ταῦτα ἑξ' ἐξῆς ἡμέραις καὶ παρὰ τῶν λοιπῶν ἑξῆς μαθήσομαί τι πλέον. **199** εἶτ' ἐπηρώτα τὸν ἄνδρα,

Τί πέρας ἀνδρείας ἐστίν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν, Εἰ τὸ βουλευθὲν ὀρθῶς ἐν ταῖς τῶν κινδύνων πράξεσιν ἐπιτελοῖτο κατὰ πρόθεσιν. τελειοῦται δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα σοὶ καλῶς βουλευομένῳ, βασιλεῦ, συμφερόντως.

200 Ἐπιφωνησάντων δὲ πάντων καὶ κρότῳ σημηναμένων πρὸς τοὺς φιλοσόφους εἶπεν ὁ βασιλεὺς οὐκ ὀλίγοι γὰρ παρήσαν τούτοις, Οἶμαι διαφέρειν τοὺς ἄνδρας ἀρετῇ καὶ συνιέναι πλεῖον, οἵτινες ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ τοιαύτας ἐρωτήσεις λαμβάνοντες, ὡς δέον ἐστὶν ἀποκρίνονται, πάντες ἀπὸ θεοῦ τοῦ λόγου τὴν καταρχὴν ποιούμενοι.

201 Μενέδημος¹²³ δὲ ὁ Ἐρετριεὺς φιλόσοφος εἶπε,

123. Menedemus was a Greek philosopher (ca. 339–285 BCE) who founded the school of Eretria but was later exiled to Macedon (see Hadas 1951, 7). There is no indication that he was ever at the Ptolemaic court. A characteristic element of his philosophy was an emphasis on providence. See Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 2.125–144; Strabo, *Geogr.* 9.1.8.

“To know that God rules all things and that in our finest actions it is not we who achieve what we have planned; rather, God who rules brings all things to fulfillment and guides us.”

196 The king exclaimed that he, too, had answered well and asked the next, How could he keep all his possessions intact and finally hand them down to his descendants in the same condition? And he answered,

“By praying constantly to God that you may receive good ideas for all that you undertake in the future and by exhorting your descendants not to be dazzled by fame or wealth, for it is God who bestows these things and there is no preeminence over everything from themselves (alone).”

197 The king expressed his agreement with this and after this enquired of the next, How might he bear whatever befell him with moderation? And that one said,

“If you grasp the concept that all humans have been created by God share the greatest evils as well as the greatest goods and that it is impossible for a human to be exempt from these. But God, whom we must supplicate, grants courage.”

198 Being kindly disposed toward this one, too, the king said that all had spoken well. “Once I have posed a question to yet one more, I will stop for now, so that we may turn our enjoying ourselves and spend the time pleasantly.” **199** Thereupon he asked the man, What is the object of courage? And he answered,

“If what is rightly resolved in matters involving danger is brought to completion according to purpose. For by God everything is brought to completion advantageously for you, O King, since you resolve well.”

200 When all had exclaimed and made their opinion known by their applause, the king said to the philosophers (for not a few of them were among them), “It is my opinion that these men greatly exceed others in virtue and intelligence, since they catch on to these kinds of questions on the spur of the moment and answer as they should, and all have all derived the starting point of their speeches from God.”

201 And Menedemus, the philosopher of Eretria, said,

Ναί, βασιλεῦ· προνοία γὰρ τῶν ὅλων διοικουμένων, καὶ ὑπειληφόντων ὁρθῶς τοῦτο, ὅτι θεόκτιστόν ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος, ἀκολουθεῖ πᾶσαν δυναστείαν καὶ λόγου καλλονὴν ἀπὸ θεοῦ κατάρχεσθαι.

202 τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως ἐπινεύσαντος τὰ περὶ τούτων ἔληξεν, ἐτράπησαν δὲ πρὸς εὐφροσύνην. ἐπιλαβούσης δὲ τῆς ἐσπέρας τὸ συμπόσιον ἐλύθη.

203 Τῇ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα πάλιν κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν διάταξιν τὰ τῆς ἀναπτώσεως καὶ συμποσίας ἐπετελεῖτο.¹²⁴ καθὼς δὲ ἐνόμιζεν ὁ βασιλεὺς εὐκαιρον εἶναι πρὸς τὸ πυνθάνεσθαι τι τῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἐπηρώτα τοὺς ἐξῆς τῶν ἀποκεκριμένων τῇ προτέρᾳ ἡμέρᾳ. **204** πρὸς τὸν ἐνδέκατον δὲ ἤρξατο τὴν κοινολογίαν ποιεῖσθαι· δέκα γὰρ ἦσαν οἱ ἡρωτημένοι τῇ προτέρᾳ. σιγῆς δὲ γενομένης ἐπυνθάνετο, Πῶς ἂν πλούσιος διαμείνοι; **205** βραχὺ δὲ ἐπισχὼν ὁ τὴν ἐρώτησιν ἐκδεχόμενος εἶπεν,¹²⁵

Εἰ μὴδὲν ἀνάξιον τῆς ἀρχῆς μὴδὲ ἀσελγὲς πράσσοι, μὴδὲ δαπάνη εἰς τὰ κενὰ καὶ μάταια συντελοῖ, τοὺς <δ>¹²⁶ ὑποτεταγμένους εὐεργεσίᾳ πρὸς εὖνοιαν ἄγοι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς πᾶσιν αἷτιος ἀγαθῶν ἐστίν, ὃ κατακολουθεῖν ἀναγκαῖον.

206 Ἐπαινέσας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦτον ἕτερον ἐπηρώτα, Πῶς ἂν τὴν ἀλήθειαν διατηροῖ; ὁ δὲ πρὸς τοῦτο ἀπεκρίθη,

Γινώσκων ὅτι μεγάλην αἰσχύνην ἐπιφέρει τὸ ψεῦδος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, πολλῷ δὲ μᾶλλον τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν· ἐξουσίαν γὰρ ἔχοντες ὁ βούλονται πράσσειν, τίνος ἕνεκεν ἂν ψεύσαιντο; προσλαμβάνειν δὲ δεῖ τοῦτό σε, βασιλεῦ, διότι φιλαλήθης ὁ θεός ἐστιν.

207 Ἀποδεξάμενος δὲ εὖ μάλα καὶ τοῦτον <ἐπὶ τὸν ἕτερον>¹²⁷ ἐπιβλέψας εἶπεν, Τί ἐστὶ σοφίας διδασχῇ; ὁ δὲ ἕτερος ἀπεφώνησε,

Καθὼς οὐ βούλει σεαυτῷ τὰ κακὰ παρεῖναι, μέτοχος δὲ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὑπάρχειν ἀπάντων, εἰ πράσσοις τοῦτο πρὸς τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους καὶ τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, εἰ τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιεικέστερον νουθετοῖς.¹²⁸ καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἅπαντας ἐπιεικεῖα ἄγει.

124. Compare §183.

125. Compare §188.

126. Mendelssohn's emendation here of <δ>, followed by Wendland but modified to <δὲ> by Thackeray, is awkward and unnecessary if we take this as a simple conditional sentence, although set in the optative to maintain the putative context of hypothetical question and answer.

127. The text and translation here follow the emendation of Wendland, but the passage is likely corrupt; see also n. 128 below.

“Yes, O King, for since the universe is managed by providence and since we rightly believe that humankind is a creation of God, it follows that all power and beauty of speech derive from God.”

202 When the king had nodded his assent to this sentiment, discussion of these things ceased, and they turned to the festivities. And when the evening had come full on, the banquet was adjourned.

The Banquet, Day Two (203–220)

203 On the following day the arrangement of the reclining and symposium was again accomplished according to the same order. When the king thought that it was the right moment to put inquiries to the men, he asked those who sat next in order to those who had answered on the previous day. **204** He began to make conversation with the eleventh man, for there were ten who had been asked questions on the previous day. After a silence, he asked how he could continue to be rich. **205** After a brief pause, the man who had been asked the question replied,

“If he should do nothing unworthy of his rule nor act licentiously and contribute no expense for empty and vain things, he would by his benefactions make his subjects well disposed toward himself. For indeed the cause of good things to all is God, whom it is necessary to follow.”

206 The king praised him and then asked another, How could he maintain the truth? And to this he replied,

“By recognizing that a lie brings great disgrace upon all men, and more especially upon kings. For since they have the authority to do whatever they wish, why should they resort to lies? And you must presume as well, O King, that God is a lover of the truth.”

207 Having received this with great delight and looking to another, he said, “What is the teaching of wisdom?” And the other replied,

“Just as you wish for evil not to befall you, but to be a partaker of all good things, so should you act on the same principle toward your subjects and (even) offenders and admonish the noble and good among your people with great clemency. For God draws all humans to himself by his clemency.”

128. The translation above follows the text as emended by Wendland. It should be

208 Ἐπαινέσας αὐτὸν τῷ μετ' αὐτὸν εἶπε, Πῶς ἂν φιλάνθρωπος εἴη; κακέϊνος ἔφη,

Θεωρῶν ὡς ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ (πόνῳ)¹²⁹ καὶ κακοπαθείαις μεγίσταις αὖξει τε καὶ γεννᾶται τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος· ὅθεν οὔτε εὐκόπως δεῖ κολάζειν, οὔτε αἰκίαις περιβάλλειν· γινώσκων ὅτι τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζῆν ἐν ὁδύναις τε καὶ τιμωρίαις καθέστηκεν.¹³⁰ ἐπινοῶν οὖν ἕκαστα πρὸς τὸν ἔλεον τραπήσῃ· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἐλέημων ἐστίν.

209 Ἀποδεξάμενος δὲ τοῦτον ἐπυνθάνετο τοῦ κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς, Τίς ἀναγκαιότατος τρόπος βασιλείας;

Τὸ συντηρεῖν, εἶπεν, αὐτὸν ἀδωροδόκητον, καὶ νήφειν τὸ πλεῖον μέρος τοῦ βίου, καὶ δικαιοσύνην προτιμᾶν καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους φιλοποιεῖσθαι· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς φιλοδίκαιός ἐστιν.

210 Ἐπισημῆνας καὶ τοῦτον πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπε, Τί τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἐστὶ κατὰσθημα; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Τὸ διαλαμβάνειν ὅτι πάντα διὰ παντὸς ὁ θεὸς ἐνεργεῖ καὶ γινώσκει, καὶ οὐθὲν ἂν λάθοι ἄδικον ποιήσας ἢ κακὸν ἐργασάμενος ἄνθρωπος· ὡς γὰρ θεὸς εὐεργετεῖ τὸν ὅλον κόσμον, οὕτως καὶ σὺ μιμούμενος ἀπρόσκοπος ἂν εἴῃς.

211 Ἐπιφωνήσας δὲ τούτῳ πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπε,¹³¹ Τίς ὁρος τοῦ βασιλεύειν ἐστίν; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Τὸ καλῶς ἄρχειν ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ μὴ τῷ πλούτῳ καὶ τῇ δόξῃ φερόμενον ὑπερήφανον καὶ ἄσχημόν τι ἐπιθυμῆσαι, εἰ καλῶς λογίζοιο. πάντα γάρ σοι πάρεστιν ὡς οὐδέν.¹³² ὁ θεὸς δὲ ἀπροσδεής ἐστι καὶ ἐπιεικής. καὶ σὺ καθόσον ἄνθρωπος ἐννόει, καὶ μὴ πολλῶν ὀρέγου, τῶν δὲ ἱκανῶν πρὸς τὸ βασιλεύειν.

212 Κατεπαινέσας δὲ αὐτόν, ἐπηρώτα τὸν ἕτερον, Πῶς ἂν τὰ κάλλιστα διαλογίζοιτο; ἀπεκρίθη δὲ ἐκεῖνος,

noted, however, that the manuscripts read *νουθετεῖς* and that the *τοὺς* before *καλοῦς* is omitted in some, while Mendelssohn proposed emending the superfluous *εἰ* at the beginning of this clause. We would propose *καί* here instead, and we might have expected *καχοῦς* instead of *καλοῦς*, giving the following sense: "If you would act on the same principle toward your subjects, even the offenders, you should admonish both the bad and good among your people with great clemency." All references to Mendelssohn are to Mendelssohn 1897.

129. The manuscripts read *χρόνῳ*, but Wendland proposed the conjecture above, which seems to fit the context well.

208 Having praised him, he said to the one after him, How might he be philanthropic? And he replied,

“By observing that the human race increases and is born in much pain and great suffering; wherefore you must not rush to punish nor inflict torments, because you know that the life of humans is made up of grief and retribution. For if you consider everything you would turn toward mercy, for indeed God is merciful.”

209 The king received the answer with approbation and inquired of the next, “What is the most necessary manner for ruling?”

“To keep oneself,” he answered, “free from bribery and to practice sobriety during the greater part of one’s life, to honor righteousness above all things, and to make friends of men of this type. For indeed God is a lover of justice.”

210 Having given a sign his approval, the king said to another, “What is the true state of reverence?” And he replied,

“To perceive that God constantly operates and knows all things in the universe, and no man who acts unjustly and works wickedness can escape his notice. As God is the benefactor of the whole world, so you also by imitating him may avoid offense.”

211 To this he exclaimed (his approval) and said to another, “What is the definition of kingship?” And he replied,

“To rule oneself well and, if you would reason well, not to desire anything immoderate or unseemly, being carried away by wealth and fame. For everything that comes to you is as nothing. God is free from need and is clement. Give thought as befits your humanity, and desire not many things but only such as are sufficient for ruling.”

212 And praising him, he asked another, How might his deliberations be for the best? And he replied,

130. Compare Ceb. Tab. 10.2.

131. Cf. §196.

132. Wendland conjectured *ὅσα δέον* here instead of *ὥς οὐδέν*, giving the sense of “You have all that you need.” But this seems unlikely in the context. For *παρειμί* as translated here, compare §207 above.

Εἰ τὸ δίκαιον ἐπὶ παντὸς προβάλλοι συνεχῶς, καὶ νομίζοι τὴν ἀδικίαν τοῦ ζῆν στέρησιν εἶναι· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς διὰ παντὸς τοῖς δικαίοις ἀγαθὰ προσημαίνει μέγιστα.

213 Τοῦτον δὲ ἐπαινέσας εἶπε πρὸς τὸν ἐξῆς, Πῶς ἂν ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις ἀτάραχος εἴη; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Δυσασπολόγητον¹³³ ἡρώτηκας πρᾶγμα. συναναφέρειν γὰρ οὐ δυνάμεθα ἐν τούτοις τοῖς κατὰ τὸν ὕπνον¹³⁴ ἑαυτούς, ἀλλὰ περιεχόμεθα ἀλογίστῳ κατὰ <τάδε> αἰσθήσει. **214** πάσχομεν γὰρ κατὰ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπὶ τοῖς ὑποπίπτουσιν ὡς θεωρουμένοις· ἀλογιστοῦμεν¹³⁵ δέ, καθόσον ὑπολαμβάνομεν¹³⁶ καὶ ἐπὶ πέλαγος καὶ ἐν πλοίοις ἢ πολεῖν, ἢ πέτασθαι φερομένους καὶ διαίρειν εἰς ἑτέρους τόπους, καὶ τοιαῦτα ἕτερα, {καὶ ὁ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνων μὴ καθεστάναι.}¹³⁷

215 πλὴν ὅσον ἔμοιγε ἐφικτόν, οὕτω διείληφα· κατὰ πάντα τρόπον σέ, βασιλεῦ, καὶ τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ τὰ πραττόμενα πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἐπανάγειν, ὅπως (ἑαυτῷ) συνιστορῆς¹³⁸, ὅτι τὸ κατ' ἀρετὴν συντηρῶν οὔτε χαρίζεσθαι προαιρῇ παρὰ λόγον, οὐδὲ ἐξουσία χρώμενος τὸ δίκαιον αἵρει.

133. The Greek word here (δυσασπολόγητον) is very rare, occurring only twelve times in TLG and only in later Hellenistic-Roman authors, commencing with Polybius, *Hist.* 1.10.4 (d. 118 BCE); Strabo, *Geogr.* 4.1.7 (64 BCE–21 CE); and Philo, *Fug.* 108. It occurs later in Josephus (*A.J.* 16.101), as well as a few late antique and early Byzantine authors.

134. The phrasing is awkward; more literally: “in those (times) the ones according to sleep.”

135. Ἀλογιστοῦμεν is another rare word, from ἀλογιστέω rather than the more common ἀλογέω or ἀλογίζομαι. The adjectival form ἀλογίστῳ from the same root in the preceding sentence (§213) is a *hapax legomenon* in TLG. The noun form occurs once with this sense in Philodemus, *De ira* (frag. 17, col. 49.21 [Wilke 1914, 97]), while the verb form used here occurs only nineteen times in all TLG, the earliest being an attribution to the astrologer Critodemus (third century BCE) *apud* the second-century CE astrologer Vettius Valens; all the rest are first century CE and later, including Plutarch (nine times) and once in Longinus. The adverbial and adjectival forms are far more common. The adverb occurs notably in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 1.71.3 concerning kingship (in a passage associated with Hecataeus of Abdera), while the adjective occurs five times in Philo, the closest being *Ios.* 143, which similarly uses the term in conjunction with false perceptions occurring in dreams (see the discussion of συνιστορῆς at §215). See next note.

136. While Philo does not use the peculiar verb ἀλογιστέω (see previous note), the

“If he should constantly value justice above everything and consider injustice to be a privation of life. For God always proclaims the greatest good to the just.”

213 Then having praised him, he said to the next, How could he be free from disturbing thoughts in his sleep? And he replied,

“You have asked a question that is hard to answer, for we cannot bring our true selves into play during the hours of sleep but are overwhelmed by irrational sense perceptions. **214** For we suffer an affection in the soul once they [sense perceptions] enter (in our dreams) as though actually being seen. But we are not exercising reason, insofar as we assume that we are actually sailing on the sea and in boats, or flying through the air and crossing to other lands, or other such things, even though the things we may assume (to be real) do not exist.

215 But so far as it is permitted me, I have drawn this distinction: in every possible way, O King, for you to lead your words and actions toward reverence, you should thus be conscious in yourself that while maintaining virtue you do not make it your intent to show favor contrary to reason nor eliminate justice by exploiting your authority.

issue treated here, as signaled by the word ὑπολαμβάνειν, is quite similar to the discussion in Philo, *Somn.* 2.298. The phrasing in *Somn.* 2.298 is: ταῦθ' ἐστάναι, ἃ ψευδῶς ὑπέλαβεν (“these things, which it assumed falsely, were set firm”); Philo’s wording is very similar to that here in the last line of §214: καὶ ὁ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνων μὴ καθεστάναι. For my proposed emendation of this line, as reflected in the translation above, see note 137 below.

137. It should be noted that the Greek of the last line printed here in the text is generally considered to be corrupt (as marked). Thackeray had emended as follows: ἃ κατὰ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνομεν. In light of the wording of the passage from Philo, *Somn.* 2.298 (n. 136 above), I propose the following emendation: καὶ ταῦθ' ὑπολαμβάνωμεν μὴ καθεστάναι. The text is entirely omitted in some manuscripts; numerous other conjectures have been offered; cf. Andrews 1913, 2:114.

138. Συνιστορῆς (“to be conscious” or “to examine oneself”); cf. §§243 and 260. The word occurs only eighteen times in all of TLG (and three of these are in Epistle of Aristeas); the earliest use seems to be a singular instance in Menander, frag. 632.1 (an otherwise unknown work). It appears in Philodemus, *De musica* (Kemke 1884, 84), but there is no other use prior to the first to second century CE, except Epistle of Aristeas. A better sense here may be “examine yourself” and thus “counsel or exhort.”

216 ἐπὶ πλεῖον γάρ, ἐν οἷς ἕκαστος πράγμασιν ἐγρηγορῶς τὴν διαγωγὴν ποιεῖται, καὶ καθ' ὕπνον ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἢ διάνοια τὴν ἀναστροφὴν ἔχει, {ὡς}¹³⁹ δὲ πάντα διαλογισμὸν καὶ πρᾶξιν ἐπὶ τὰ κάλλιστα τρεπομένην κατευθύνει καὶ ἐγρηγορῶς καὶ ἐν ὕπνῳ. διὸ καὶ περὶ σέ διὰ παντός ἐστιν¹⁴⁰ εὐστάθεια.

217 Κατευφημῆσας¹⁴¹ δὲ καὶ τοῦτον εἶπε πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον, Ἐπεὶ σὺ δέκατος τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ἔχεις, ὡς ἂν ἀποφῆνῃ, πρὸς τὸ δεῖπνον τραπησόμεθα. **218** ἡρώτα δέ, Πῶς ἂν μηδὲν ἀνάξιον ἑαυτῶν πράσσοιμεν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Ἐπίβλεπε διὰ παντός εἰς τὴν σεαυτοῦ δόξαν καὶ τὴν ὑπεροχὴν, ἵνα τούτοις ἀκόλουθα καὶ λέγῃς καὶ διανοῇ, γινώσκων ὅτι πάντες ὧν ἄρχεις περὶ σοῦ καὶ διανοοῦνται καὶ λαλοῦσιν. **219** οὐ γὰρ ἐλάχιστόν σε δεῖ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν φαίνεσθαι· τὸ γὰρ πρόσωπον, (ὃ δέον αὐτοῖς) ἐστὶν ὑποκρίνεσθαι, τοῦτο συνθεωροῦντες ἀκόλουθα πάντα πράσσουσι· σὺ δὲ οὐχ ὑπόκρισιν ἔχεις, ἀλλ' ἀληθῶς βασιλεύεις, θεοῦ δόντος σοι καταξίως τῶν τρόπων τὴν ἡγεμονίαν.

220 Τοῦ δὲ βασιλέως εὖ μάλα συγκροτήσαντος μετὰ φιλοφροσύνης ἐπὶ πλείονα χρόνον, τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καθυπνοῦν παρεκάλουν. καὶ τὰ μὲν πρὸς τούτους ὡς ἔληξεν, ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξῆς ἐτράπησαν τῆς συμποσίας διάταξιν.

221 Τῇ δὲ ἐχομένῃ, τῆς αὐτῆς διατάξεως γενηθείσης, ὅτε καιρὸν ὑπελάμβανεν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶναι τοῦ πυνθάνεσθαι τι τῶν ἀνδρῶν, ἡρώτα τὸν πρῶτον τῶν ἀπολιπόντων πρὸς τὴν ἐξῆς ἐρώτησιν, Τίς ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ κρατίστη; **222** ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Τὸ κρατεῖν¹⁴² ἑαυτοῦ καὶ μὴ συγκαταφέρεσθαι ταῖς ὁρμαῖς. πᾶσι γὰρ ἀνθρώποις φυσικὸν εἶναι τὸ πρὸς τι τὴν διάνοιαν ῥέπειν· **223** τοῖς μὲν οὖν πολλοῖς ἐπὶ τὰ βρωτὰ καὶ ποτὰ καὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς εἰκὸς ἐστὶ κεκλίσθαι, τοῖς

139. Thackeray emends with ὁ θεός, as translated here, since all the other responses conclude with some reference to the Divine; cf. Andrews 1913, 2:114 n. 216. It must be noted, however, that the natural antecedent of *τρεπομένην* should be ἡ διάνοια, as indicated in the translation.

140. One might have expected ἔστω (perhaps *σχέε* or *σχοῦ*) here, which seems intended to parallel the phrase (ἐαυτῷ) *συνιστορῆς* in §215. The wording of §243, with a similar sentiment, combines elements of both, while §260 expresses the same ideal of virtue in the negative.

141. *Κατευφημῆσας* ("applauding" loudly or enthusiastically implied). The double-compound verb is rare (eighteen times in TLG); all are first century BCE and later: 3 Macc 7:13; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 3.18.1; and Arius Didymus, *Liber de philosophorum sectis apud Stobaeus, Ecl.* 97.2 (Mullach 1867, 53b,16–20).

216 For one mostly passes time while awake in those very same matters to which the mind also takes recourse during sleep, but ⟨God⟩ directs all thoughts and actions by [the mind] turning itself toward the noblest things both when awake and asleep. Wherefore also concerning you, let there always be stability (of mind).”

217 Having praised this man, [the king] said to another, “Since you are the tenth to answer, whenever you have made your declaration, we will turn our attention to the dinner.” **218** And then he asked, How may I do nothing unworthy of myself? And he replied,

“Look always to your own fame and your own preeminence, that you may speak and think such things as are suitable to them, knowing that all your subjects both think and talk about you. **219** For you must not appear to be worse than the actors, for they study carefully the character that they must play and perform all that is suitable to it. But you are not playing a part; instead, you truly are a king, since God has bestowed upon you rulership worthy of your character.”

220 When the king had given much applause for some time and with friendly affection, he bade the men to sleep well. So when he had finished saying these things to them, they turned to the next stage of the symposium.

The Banquet, Day Three (221–235)

221 On the following day, the same arrangement was observed, and when the king assumed it to be an appropriate time for inquiring of the men, he asked the first of those who remained for the next round of questions, What is the highest form of government? **222** And he said,

“To rule oneself and not to be carried away by impulses. For it is natural for all men to incline their minds toward one thing or another. **223** On the one hand, it is plausible that for most people to lean toward

Compare also Josephus, *A.J.* 15.421, and five times in Plutarch (esp. *Frat. amor.* 16 [487b]); all remaining occurrences are late antique and Byzantine. The more common, simpler form *εὐφημῆσας* occurs at §227; cf. 1 Macc 5:64; Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 5.49.1; 17.51.3; 37.18.1; and Philo, *Legat.* 297; *Migr.* 116; *Spec.* 2.248 (*inter alia*).

142. There is a wordplay in the Greek between “highest [*κρατίστη*] form” [of rule or government] and “to rule” (*τὸ κρατεῖν*).

δὲ βασιλεῦσιν ἐπὶ χώρας κατάκτησιν, κατὰ τὸ τῆς δόξης μέγεθος· πλὴν ἐν πᾶσι μετρίότης καλόν. ἃ δὲ ὁ θεὸς δίδωσι, ταῦτα λαμβάνων συνέχε· τῶν δ' ἀνεφίκτων μὴ ἐπιθύμει.

224 Τοῖς δὲ ῥηθεῖσιν ἀρεσθεῖς πρὸς τὸν ἐχόμενον εἶπε, Πῶς ἂν ἐκτὸς εἴη φθόνου; διαλιπὼν δὲ ἐκεῖνος ἔφη,

Πρῶτον εἰ νοῆσαι, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς πᾶσι μερίζει δόξαν τε καὶ πλούτου μέγεθος τοῖς βασιλεῦσι, καὶ οὐδεὶς περὶ ἑαυτὸν ἐστὶ βασιλεύς· πάντες γὰρ θέλουσι μετασχεῖν ταύτης τῆς δόξης, ἀλλ' οὐ δύνανται· θεοῦ γάρ ἐστι δόμα.

225 Ἐπαινέσας δὲ τὸν ἄνδρα διὰ πλείονων ἐπηρώτα τὸν ἕτερον, Πῶς ἂν καταφρονοῖ τῶν ἐχθρῶν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Ἦσκηκώς πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους εὖνοιαν καὶ κατεργασάμενος φιλίας, λόγον οὐθενὸς ἂν ἔχοις.¹⁴³ τὸ δὲ κεχαριτώσθαι πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους καὶ καλὸν δῶρον εἰληφέναι παρὰ θεοῦ τοῦτ' ἐστὶ κράτιστον.

226 Συναινέσας δὲ τούτοις τὸν ἐξῆς ἐκέλευσεν ἀποκριθῆναι, πρὸς αὐτὸν εἰπὼν, Πῶς ἂν δοξαζόμενος διαμένει; εἶπε δὲ,

Τῇ προθυμίᾳ καὶ ταῖς χάρισι πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους μεταδοτικὸς ὢν καὶ μεγαλομερὲς οὐδέποτε ἂν ἀπολίποι δόξης· ἵνα δὲ τὰ προειρημένα σοι διαμένη, τὸν θεὸν ἐπικαλοῦ διὰ παντός.

227 Εὐφημήσας δὲ τοῦτον ἕτερον ἠρώτα, Πῶς τινὰ δεῖ φιλότιμον εἶναι; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Πρὸς τοὺς φιλικῶς ἔχοντας ἡμῖν οἴονται πάντες ὅτι πρὸς τούτους δέον· ἐγὼ δ' ὑπολαμβάνω, πρὸς τοὺς ἀντιδοξοῦντας φιλοτιμίαν δεῖν χαριστική¹⁴⁴ ἔχειν, ἵνα τούτῳ τῷ τρόπῳ μετάγωμεν αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὸ καθῆκον καὶ συμφέρον ἑαυτοῖς. δεῖ δὲ τὸν θεὸν λιτανεύειν, ἵνα ταῦτ' ἐπιτελῇται· τὰς γὰρ ἀπάντων διανοίας κρατεῖ.

228 Συνομολογήσας δὲ τούτοις τὸν ἕκτον ἐκέλευσεν ἀποφύνασθαι πυνθανόμενος, Τίσι δεῖ χαρίζεσθαι; ἐκεῖνος δ' ἀπεκρίθη,

Γονεῦσι διὰ παντός, καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς πεποιήται ἐντολὴν μεγίστην περὶ

143. In rendering the sense of this final clause, Andrews supplies “to fear,” while Shutt supplies “to be obligated”; the basic sense is “not showing undue regard,” which encompasses a variety of such responses.

food and drink and pleasure, but for kings, on the other, to lean toward the acquisition of territory, in accord with the greatness of their glory. Nevertheless, moderation in all things is good. What God gives, take and keep, but do not desire those things beyond your reach.”

224 Being gratified by his words, he said to the next, How may he be free from envy? After pausing, that one replied,

“If you consider first of all that God imparts on all kings glory as well as great wealth, and no one is king from himself alone. For all men wish to share this glory, but they are not able, since it is the gift of God.”

225 And praising the man at length, [the king] then asked another, How may he disdain his enemies? And he replied,

“By practicing kindness toward all men and earning their friendship, you may give regard to no one. To be favored by all people and to receive noble gifts from God is the highest good.”

226 Having praised these words, he ordered the next man to answer, saying to him, How might he continue to be held in great honor? Then he replied,

“By being magnanimous and generous to others with zeal and graciousness, you will never relinquish glory, but in order for the aforementioned to remain yours, continually call upon God.”

227 Exclaiming his approval, he asked the next, In what ways must one show liberality? And that one replied,

“Everyone reckons it needful to do so to those who possess friendly feelings toward us, but I assume it needful to show gracious liberality to those who are opposed to us, in order that by this means we may win them over to what is proper and beneficial to ourselves. But one must supplicate God that these things may be accomplished, for he rules the minds of all men.”

228 Having expressed his agreement with these words, [the king] commanded the sixth to reply to the question, To whom must we be gracious? And that one replied,

“To parents continually, for God has even given a very great command-

144. On this word, see note 19, above.

τῆς τῶν γονέων τιμῆς.¹⁴⁵ ἐπομένως δὲ τὴν τῶν φίλων ἐγκρίνει διάθεσιν, προσονομάσας ἴσον τῇ ψυχῇ τὸν φίλον.¹⁴⁶ σὺ δὲ καλῶς ποιεῖς ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους εἰς φιλίαν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν καθιστῶν.

229 Παρακαλέσας δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἐπυνθάνετο καὶ τοῦ μετέπειτα, Τί καλλονῆς ἄξιόν ἐστιν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν

Εὐσέβεια. καὶ γὰρ αὕτη καλλονή τίς ἐστι πρωτεύουσα. τὸ δὲ δυνατόν αὐτῆς ἐστιν ἀγάπη· αὕτη γὰρ θεοῦ δόσις ἐστιν· ἣν καὶ σὺ κέκτησαι πάντα περιέχων ἐν αὐτῇ τὰ ἀγαθὰ.

230 Λίαν δὲ φιλοφρόνως ἐπικροτήσας εἶπε πρὸς ἕτερον, Πῶς ἂν πταίσας πάλιν τῆς αὐτῆς κρατῆσαι δόξης; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Σὲ μὲν οὐ δυνατόν ἐστι πταῖσαι, πᾶσι γὰρ χάριτας ἔσπαρκας, αἱ βλαστάνουσιν εὐνοίαν, ἡ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ὅπλων κατισχύουσα περιλαμβάνει τὴν μεγίστην ἀσφάλειαν. **231** εἰ δέ τινες πταίουσιν, ἐφ' οἷς πταίουσιν, οὐκέτι χρή ταῦτα πράσσειν, ἀλλὰ φιλίαν κατακτησάμενους δικαιοπραγεῖν. θεοῦ δὲ δῶρον ἀγαθῶν ἐργάτην εἶναι καὶ μὴ τῶν ἐναντίων.

232 Συναρεσθεῖς δὲ τούτοις πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπε, Πῶς ἂν ἐκτὸς γένοιτο λύπης; ὁ δὲ ἔφησεν,

Εἰ μηδὲνα βλάπτει, πάντες δὲ ὠφελοῖ, τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ κατακολουθῶν· τοὺς γὰρ ἀπ' αὐτῆς καρποὺς ἀλυπίαν κατασκευάζειν. **233** ἱκετεύειν δὲ τὸν θεόν, ἵνα μὴ τὰ παρὰ τὴν προαίρεσιν ἡμῶν ἀνακύπτοντα βλάβῃ, λέγω δὴ οἷον θάνατοί τε καὶ νόσοι καὶ λῦπαι καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. (αὐτῷ) δὲ σοὶ εὐσεβεῖ καθεστῶτι τούτων οὐδὲν ἂν προσέλθοι.

234 Καλῶς δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἐπαινέσας τὸν δέκατον ἡρώτα, Τί μέγιστόν ἐστι δόξης; ὁ δὲ εἶπε,

145. Philo uses almost exactly the same phrasing regarding this “command” in *Decal.* 106, calling it *παράγγελμα τὸ περὶ γονέων τιμῆς*. This use of the word “parents” (γονεῖς), doubtless in reference to the commandment regarding “father and mother” (Exod 20:12; Deut 5:16), does not occur in the LXX. It is quite common in pseudepigraphical works and later Jewish writers, notably Pseudo-Phocylides, *Sent.* 8 (*verbatim* in Sib. Or. 2.60): *πρῶτα θεὸν τίμα, μετέπειτα δὲ σεῖο γονῆας* (“First honor god, and next your parents.”). Cf. Sib. Or. 3.593–594; Jub. 7:20; *Sent. Syr. Men.* 2.9–10; Philo, *Spec.* 2.235. Ultimately, this form of the summary is influenced by Greek gnomic sententiae, e.g., the Pythagorean *Carm.* 1–2 and 5: *Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα θεοὺς ... τίμα καὶ σέβου ὄρκον ... σοὺς τε γονεῖς τίμα* (“First honor the immortal gods, and reverence your oath.

ment concerning honoring parents. In the next place he [God] reckons the attitude of friend toward friend, for he speaks of *‘a friend as equal to your own soul.’* You do well in making all people friends with yourself.”

229 Now encouraging this one also, he inquired of the next, What is worthy of beauty? And he said,

“Reverence, for it is the preeminent sort of beauty, and its power is love, for it is the gift of God. This you have already acquired and all the goods encompassed therein.”

230 Applauding with much friendly affection, [the king] said to another, How may one acquire his good repute once again, if he should stumble? And he said,

“On the one hand, it is not possible for you to stumble, for you have sown favors on all, which sprout forth goodwill, and this is mightier than the strongest weapons and guarantees the greatest security. **231** But if, on the other hand, some people should stumble, they must no longer do those things in which they stumbled but instead form friendships and act justly. For it is the gift of God to be a doer of good deeds and not of the opposite.”

232 Satisfied with these words, he said to another, How may he be free from grief? And he replied,

“If he should harm no one, but benefit all in conformity with righteousness; for its fruits furnish freedom from grief. **233** But we must supplicate God, lest matters arising contrary to our choice should cause harm—I mean things such as death and disease and pain or the like. But since you are firm in your reverence, no such misfortune will ever come upon you.”

234 Then, too, praising him well, he asked the tenth, What is the greatest form of glory? And he said,

... And honor your parents.”). See also §234, which repeats the command to honor God.

146. LXX/MT Deut 13:7 (= 13:6 Vulgate/ET); the precise phrasing in Greek is entirely dependent on the LXX: ὁ φίλος ὁ ἴσος τῆς ψυχῆς σου (A, B); the variant reading with the dative (τῇ ψυχῇ τὸν φίλον), as here, occurs in Codex Alexandrinus (A) of Deut 13:7, as well as in Philo, *Her.* 83, citing the same passage; cf. Sir 27:16; 37:6.

Τὸ τιμᾶν τὸν θεόν· τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν οὐ δάροις οὐδὲ θυσίαις, ἀλλὰ ψυχῆς καθαρότητι καὶ διαλήψεως ὁσίας, καθὼς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα κατασκευάζεται καὶ διοικεῖται κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ βούλησιν· ἦν καὶ σὺ διατελεῖς ἔχων γνώμην, ἥ πάρεστι σημειοῦσθαι πᾶσιν ἐκ τῶν ὑπὸ σοῦ συντελεσμένων καὶ συντελουμένων.

235 μετὰ μείζονος δὲ φωνῆς πάντας αὐτοὺς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡσπάζετο καὶ παρεκάλει, συνεπιφωνούντων τῶν παρόντων, μάλιστα δὲ τῶν φιλοσόφων. καὶ γὰρ ταῖς ἀγωγαῖς καὶ τῷ λόγῳ πολὺ προέχοντες αὐτῶν ἦσαν, ὡς ἂν ἀπὸ θεοῦ τὴν καταρχὴν ποιούμενοι. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸ φιλοφρονεῖσθαι προῆλθε διὰ τῶν προπόσεων.

236 Τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ τῆς διατάξεως τοῦ συμποσίου γενομένης, καθὼς εὐκαιρον ἐγένετο τῷ βασιλεῖ, τοὺς ἐξῆς ἡρώτα τῶν προαποκεκριμένων, εἶπε δὲ τῷ πρώτῳ, Τὸ φρονεῖν εἰ διδακτὸν ἐστίν; ὃς δ' εἶπε,

Ψυχῆς ἐστὶν κατασκευὴ διὰ θείας δυνάμεως ἐπιδέχεσθαι πᾶν τὸ καλόν, ἀποστρέφεσθαι δὲ τὰναντία.

237 Συνομολογῆσας δὲ τὸν ἐχόμενον ἡρώτα, Τί πρὸς ὑγείαν μάλιστα συντείνει; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Σωφροσύνη· ταύτης δὲ οὐκ ἔστι τυχεῖν, ἐὰν μὴ θεὸς κατασκευάσῃ τὴν διάνοιαν εἰς τοῦτο.

238 Παρακαλέσας δὲ τοῦτον πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον ἔφη, Πῶς ἂν γονεῦσι τὰς ἀξίας ἀποδώῃ χάριτας; ὃς δὲ εἶπε,

Μηδὲν αὐτοὺς λυπήσας· τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἔστιν, εἰ μὴ θεὸς τῆς διανοίας ἡγεμὼν γένοιτο πρὸς τὰ κάλλιστα.

239 Προσεπινεύσας¹⁴⁷ δὲ τούτῳ τὸν ἐξῆς ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν φιλήκοος εἴῃ; ἐκεῖνος δὲ εἶπε,

Διαλαμβάνων ὅτι πάντα συμφέρει γινώσκειν, ὅπως ἂν πρὸς τὰ συμβαίνοντα ἐκλεγόμενός τι τῶν ἡχροαμένων ἀνθυποτιθεῖς¹⁴⁸ πρὸς τὰ τῶν καιρῶν ἂν

147. Προσεπινεύω is rare (six times in TLG) and other than here is not attested prior to the third century CE (only in Porphyry, *Quaest. hom.* 5.2), while all remaining occurrences are Byzantine.

“To honor God, but not with gifts and sacrifices; rather, with purity of soul and holy judgment, inasmuch as all things are fashioned and overseen by God according to his will. And if you continue to have this attitude, by which it may be signified to all from those things that have been and are being accomplished by you.”

235 So with a loud voice the king saluted all of them and encouraged them, since all those who were present expressed their approval, especially the philosophers. For these men far surpassed them both in training and in reason, since they always made their start from God. After this the king came forward to show his kindly feeling by offering toasts.

The Banquet, Day Four (236–247)

236 On the following day after the arrangements were made in the same manner for the banquet, and when a suitable opportunity came about for the king, he began to put questions to the men who sat next to those who had already responded, and he said to the first, “Can being mindful [of good] be taught?” And he said,

“There is a constitution of the soul through divine power to receive all the good and reject the opposite.”

237 And offering his approval, he asked the next, What especially tends toward health? And that one said,

“Temperance. But it is not possible to obtain this, unless God sets our mind toward it.”

238 The king encouraged this man and said to another, “How may one worthily pay the debt of gratitude to parents?” And he said,

“By never causing them grief. But this is not possible, unless God should be the one leading our mind toward the noblest things.”

239 And nodding his assent toward this one, he asked the next, How may he become fond of listening to discourses? And that one said,

“By comprehending that all knowledge is profitable, so that when things befall, you may, by selecting from what has been learned and

148. The compound ἀνθυποτιθείς is otherwise unattested prior to the Byzantine period (once), and most other forms of the ἀνθυπο- compound are rather late.

ἀντιπράσσηται, σὺν χειραγωγίᾳ¹⁴⁹ θεοῦ· τοῦτο δ' ἐστίν,¹⁵⁰ αἱ τῶν πράξεων τελειώσεις ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.

240 Τοῦτον δὲ ἐπαινέσας πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπε Πῶς ἂν μὴθὲν παράνομον πράσσοι; πρὸς τοῦτο ἔφησε,

Γινώσκων ὅτι τὰς ἐπινοίας ὁ θεὸς ἔδωκε τοῖς νομοθετήσασι πρὸς τὸ σώζεσθαι τοὺς βίους τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀκόλουθος εἶης ἂν αὐτοῖς.

241 Ἀποδεξάμενος δὲ αὐτὸν πρὸς ἕτερον εἶπε, Τίς ὠφέλεια συγγενείας ἐστίν; ὁ δὲ ἀπεφήνατο,

Ἐὰν τοῖς συμβαίνουσι νομίζωμεν ἀτυχοῦσι μὲν ἐλαττοῦσθαι, καὶ κακοπαθῶμεν ὡς αὐτοί, φαίνεται τὸ συγγενὲς ὅσον ἰσχυρὸν ἐστὶ — **242** τελουμένων δὲ τούτων καὶ δόξα καὶ προκοπὴ παρὰ τοῖς τοιούτοις ὑπάρξει — τὸ γὰρ συνεργές¹⁵¹ εὐνόως γινόμενον ὡς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ ἀδιάλυτον πρὸς ἅπαντα.¹⁵² μετὰ δὲ εὐημερίας, μὴδὲν προσδεῖσθαι τῶν ἐκείνων· ἀλλὰ δέον (θεὸν) ἱκετεύειν, πάντα ἀγαθοποιεῖν.

243 Ὅσαύτως δὲ ἐκείνοις ἀποδεξάμενος αὐτὸν ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἀφοβία γίνεται; εἶπε δέ,

Συνιστορούσης¹⁵³ τῆς διανοίας μὴδὲν κακὸν πεπραχέναι, θεοῦ κατευθύνοντος εἰς τὸ καλῶς ἅπαντα βουλεύεσθαι.

244 Τούτῳ δὲ ἐπιφωνήσας πρὸς ἄλλον εἶπε, Πῶς ἂν προχείρως ἔχοι τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Εἰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀτυχήματα διὰ παντὸς ἐπιβλέποι· γινώσκων ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἀφαιρεῖται τὰς εὐημερίας, ἐτέρους δὲ δοξάζων εἰς τὸ τιμᾶσθαι προάγει.

149. The noun form *χειραγωγία* is otherwise attested mostly in later scholiasts and papyri of the second century BCE and later. The verb form is found in Tob 11:16 (Σ), referring to the formerly blind Tobit no longer being “lead by the hand.”

150. While this phrase might be translated differently, the sense given here seems to be indicated by comparison with the closing line of the two preceding queries (§§237 and 238).

151. This is Thackeray’s emendation. Some of the manuscripts, although from the inferior B group, read *συγγενές*, yet this reading is preferred by some editors. The translation then would read: “for kinship, when accompanied by goodwill....”

counterposing it to the [circumstances] of the moment, act in the opposing manner, with the hand-held guidance of God. And this is possible, because the completion of [our] actions is through him.”

240 Praising this one, then, he asked another, How may he do nothing contrary to law? And to this he said,

“Since you know that God has granted good ideas to those who established the laws in order to save the lives of humans, you should be their follower.”

241 And agreeing with him, [the king] said to another, “What is the benefit of kinship?” And he replied,

“If on the one hand, we believe that we are diminished by those who happen to be unfortunate and suffer as do they, then it is apparent how strong kinship is, **242** and on the other, when the trials have passed, fame and advancement will be ours with such as these—for kinship, when it arises with goodwill, is indissoluble in the face of everything. Then, after times are favorable again, we must demand nothing further from those people but supplicate God to bestow every good.”

243 And agreeing with him, just as with those before, he asked another, How may he become free from fear? And he said,

“When the mind is conscious that it has done no evil, then God guides it to resolving all things well.”

244 Then exclaiming [approval] to him, he said to another, How may he have right reason readily at hand? And he replied,

“If he would regard before all else the misfortunes of humankind, knowing that God takes away prosperity [from some], but he leads others to being honored by glorifying them.”

152. Thackeray placed the closing dash of the parenthesis here. We set off the final sentence as a hortatory maxim, in keeping with the preceding queries. Either way, the syntax is difficult to reconcile.

153. Συνιστορούσης: see also §215 and §260 plus the note there. We take the final clause to read *καλῶς (ποιῶν) ἅπαντα* (or *ποιεῖσθαι*) to complete the idiomatic expression and balance *μηδὲν κακὸν πεπραχέναι* of the first clause.

245 Καλῶς δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἀποδεξάμενος τὸν ἐξῆς ἀποκριθῆναι παρεκάλει, Πῶς ἂν μὴ εἰς ῥαθυμίαν, μηδὲ ἐπὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς τρέποιτο;

ὁ δὲ Προχείρως ἔχων, εἶπεν, ὅτι μεγάλης βασιλείας κατάρχει καὶ πολλῶν ὄχλων ἀφηγεῖται, καὶ οὐ δεῖ περὶ ἑτερόν τι τὴν διάνοιαν εἶναι, τῆς δὲ τούτων ἐπιμελείας φροντίζειν· θεὸν δὲ ἀξιοῦν, ὅπως μηθὲν ἐλλίπη τῶν καθηκόντων.

246 Ἐπαινέσας δὲ καὶ τοῦτον τὸν δέκατον (ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ἐπιγινώσκοι) τοὺς δόλω τινὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν πράσσοντας; ὁ δὲ ἀπεφώνησε πρὸς τοῦτο,

Εἰ παρατηροῖτο τὴν ἀγωγὴν¹⁵⁴ ἐλευθέριον¹⁵⁵ οὔσαν, καὶ τὴν εὐταξίαν διαμένουσιν ἐν τοῖς ἀσπασμοῖς καὶ συμβουλίαις καὶ τῇ λοιπῇ συναναστροφῇ¹⁵⁶ τ(οῦτ)ων¹⁵⁷ σὺν αὐτῷ, καὶ μηθὲν ὑπερτείνοντας τοῦ δέοντος ἐν ταῖς φιλοφρονήσεσι καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἀγωγὴν.^[154]

247 θεὸς δὲ τὴν διάνοιαν (ἄξει)¹⁵⁸ σοι, βασιλεῦ, πρὸς τὰ κάλλιστα.

Συγκροτήσας πάντας τ' ἐπαινέσας κατ' ὄνομα, καὶ τῶν παρόντων ταῦτα ποιούντων, ἐπὶ τὸ μέλειπεν ἐτράπησαν.

248 Τῇ δὲ ἐχομένη τὸν καιρὸν λαβὼν ἐπηρώτα τὸν ἐξῆς, Τίς ἐστὶν ἀμέλεια μεγίστη; πρὸς τοῦτ' ἔφη,

Εἰ τέκνων ἄφροντίς τις εἴη, καὶ μὴ κατὰ πάντα τρόπον ἀγαγεῖν (σπεύδοι)· εὐχόμεθα γὰρ αἰεὶ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, οὐχ οὕτως περὶ ἑαυτῶν ὡς περὶ τῶν ἐγγόνων, ἵνα παρῇ πάντα αὐτοῖς τὰ ἀγαθὰ. τὸ δὲ ἐπιδεισθαι παιδία σωφροσύνης μετασχεῖν, θεοῦ δυνάμει τοῦτο γίνεται.

249 Φήσας δὲ εὐλογεῖν ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν φιλόπατρις εἴη;

Προτιθέμενος, εἶπεν, ὅτι καλὸν ἐν ἰδίᾳ καὶ ζῆν καὶ τελευτᾶν. ἡ δὲ ξενία τοῖς μὲν πένησι καταφρόνησιν ἐργάζεται, τοῖς δὲ πλουσίοις ὄνειδος, ὡς διὰ κακίαν

154. The word ἀγωγή (generally meaning “conduct or way of life”) here carries the sense of “bearing or comportment” with the additional dimension of implied rules or standards governed by custom and social context. Hence at the end of the sentence, we have rendered the same word with “protocol.” For usage of the term with this sense, compare 2 Macc 8:16, where the verb used is also ἄγω (as also in the following maxim of §247; cf. note 158 below).

155. The Greek ἐλευθέριον here, meaning “liberal or freely spoken” in the sense of unguarded, is synonymous with παρρησία. Its antithesis here would be fawning or flattery (κολακεία), as in Plutarch’s treatise *Quomodo adulator* (or *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*). Compare the usage in Cicero, *Amic.* 25.91.

156. This noun form (συναναστροφή) is generally a late usage, although the verb form appears a bit earlier. The noun is used in this same sense in Wis 8:16.

245 And receiving this one well, and called on the next to answer [the question], How may he not turn to laziness nor toward the pleasures? And he replied,

“By keeping readily at hand that he rules a great kingdom and leads great multitudes, and that his mind ought not to be occupied with anything other than being thoughtful for their care, and to esteem God, so that he might fail in none of his duties.”

246 Having also praised this one, then, asked the tenth, How may he recognize those dealing with him with any sort of guile? And to this he replied,

“If he would observe that the comportment of those with him was free and proper order was maintained in their salutations and advice and all the rest of their conversation with him, exceeding in no way what was required in their friendly feelings and the remaining matters in accord with protocol. **247** But God will incline your mind, O King, to all that is noblest.”

When the king had shouted his approval and praised them all by name, with all those present following suit, they turned to celebration.

The Banquet, Day Five (248–261)

248 And on the following day, seizing the opportunity, [the king] asked the next man, What is the greatest form of neglect? And to this, he replied,

“If someone were not caring of his children and did not in every way strive to educate them. For we always pray to God, not so much for ourselves as for our children, that every blessing may be theirs. But to petition that children possess self-control—this is by the power of God.”

249 The king said that he had spoken well and then asked another, How might he be a lover of his country?

“By committing to the proposition,” he replied, “that it is good to live and die in one’s own country. The status of foreigner causes contempt for the poor and shame for the rich, as though they had been banished

157. Emendation added.

158. The manuscripts here read ἐξεί, but it has been corrected by Thackeray. For the same combination, compare 2 Macc 8:16 and note 154 above.

ἐκπεπτωκόσιν. εὐεργετῶν οὖν ἅπαντας, καθὼς συνεχῶς τοῦτ' ἐπιτελεῖς, θεοῦ διδόντος σοι πρὸς πάντα χάριν, φιλόπατρις φανήσῃ.

250 Τούτου δὲ ἀκούσας τοῦ κατὰ τὸ ἐξῆς ἐπυνθάνετο, Πῶς <ἄν> ἀρμόσαι γυναικί;

(Γινώσκων) ὅτι μὲν θρασὺ ἐστίν, ἔφη, τὸ θῆλυ γένος¹⁵⁹, καὶ δραστικὸν ἐφ' ὃ βούλεται πρᾶγμα, καὶ μεταπίπτον εὐκόπως διὰ παραλογισμοῦ,¹⁶⁰ καὶ τῇ φύσει κατεσκευάσται ἀσθενές· δέον δ' ἐστὶ κατὰ τὸ ὑγιὲς χρῆσθαι¹⁶¹, καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἔριν ἀντιπράσσειν. **251** κατορθοῦται γὰρ βίος, ὅταν ὁ κυβερνῶν εἰδῇ πρὸς τίνα σκοπὸν δεῖ τὴν διέξοδον ποιεῖσθαι. θεοῦ δ' ἐπικλήσει καὶ βίος κυβερνᾶται κατὰ πάντα.

252 Συνανθομολογησάμενος¹⁶² δὲ τούτῳ τὸν ἐξῆς ἡρώτα, Πῶς <ἄν> ἀναμάρτητος εἶη; ὁ δὲ ἔφησεν,

Ὡς ἅπαντα πράσσω καὶ μετὰ διαλογισμοῦ καὶ μὴ πειθόμενος διαβολαῖς, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ὧν δοκιμαστής τῶν λεγομένων καὶ κρίσει κατευθύνων τὰ τῶν ἐντεύξεων καὶ διὰ κρίσεως ἐπιτελῶν ταῦτα ἀναμάρτητος, ἔφησεν, ἄν εἶης, ὦ βασιλεῦ. τὸ δ' ἐπινοεῖν ταῦτα καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἀναστρέφεσθαι θείας δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ἔργον.

253 Διαχυθεὶς δὲ τοῖς εἰρημένοις τὸν ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἄν ἐκτὸς θυμοῦ γένοιτο; πρὸς τοῦτ' εἶπε,

Γινώσκων ὅτι πάντων ἐξουσίαν ἔχει, καί, εἰ χρήσαιτο θυμῷ, θάνατον ἐπιφέρει· ὅπερ ἀνωφελές καὶ ἀλγεινόν ἐστίν, εἰ τὸ ζῆν ἀφελεῖται πολλῶν, διὰ τὸ κύριον εἶναι. πάντων δ' ὑπηκόων ὄντων καὶ μηδενὸς ἐναντιουμένου, τίνος χάριν θυμωθήσεται; **254** γινώσκειν δὲ δεῖ, διότι θεὸς τὸν πάντα κόσμον

159. When used of male and female, γένος means “sex” or “gender.”

160. Literally, διὰ παραλογισμοῦ means “through false inference or reasoning,” but LSJ (s.v. “παραλογισμός,” 2) gives “weakness of reasoning power” for this particular passage (as followed by Shutt and given above). See also §275. On the other hand, διὰ with the genitive also means “between” and in conjunction with μεταπίπτον (which can mean “to change sides in a vote”) may yield a subtler sense, such as “to change one’s mind between one opinion and another” and thus “be indeliberate.” See n. 161 below and §§255–256 below, which use διαλογισμός and διαλογίζεσθαι as antonyms.

161. In this context, χρῆσθαι (“to use,” deponent with dative or genitive *rei*, like Latin *utor, usus*) typically means “have dealings or intercourse with,” where the latter can imply either sexual penetration or social relations, but generally from the perspective of a dominant male. Compare Rom 1:27 for the noun: χρῆσις τῆς θηλείας. When combined with terms relating to health, the statement implies the moral topos on

for a crime. Therefore, by bestowing benefits upon all, as you do continually, God will give you favor with all, and you will be manifestly a lover of country.”

250 Having heard this one, he inquired of the next, How may he be in accord with a wife?

“By knowing,” he said, “that the female sex is rash, both drastic in matters it desires and easily changeable through being indeliberate, and it is furnished by nature with a weak constitution. Thus one must make use [of them] in healthy ways and not conflict with them to the point of strife. **251** For life is set right when the steersman knows toward what mark he should set his course. For by calling on God life, too, is properly steered in all things.”

252 Having assented to this one, he asked the next, How may he be free from error? And he replied,

“By acting with deliberation in everything and not believing slanders, and conversely by making oneself the examiner of what is said and guiding aright in judging things received as petitions and by bringing all of them to completion through good judgment, may you, O King, be free from error,” he said. “But to know these things and to be occupied with them is the work of the divine power.”

253 Delighted with the aforementioned, he asked another, How may he be free from anger? And to this, he said,

“By knowing that he has authority over all things, and, if he were to act in anger, he would inflict death; that it would be useless and pitiful if he snatched life from so many by virtue of being lord. If all are obedient and no one opposes him, why will he be enraged? **254** One must know

self-mastery (ἐγκράτεια) and control of the passions, including both sexual desire and anger (cf. Philo, *Spec.* 4.92–100), while mental change (μεταπίπτειν, meaning internal conflict between reason and passion, opposite ἀδιάφορα or ἀπάθεια) and strife (ἔρις) are vices associated with them (see Plutarch, *Virt. mor.* 7 [446e–447a] [SVF 3.459]; Plato, *Leg.* 837A–D; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 7.109–117; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 2.22.6–7). Cf. n. 160 above and §253 below.

162. Συνανθομολογησάμενος (“affirming assent with/by”) is a singular coinage and not otherwise attested until the tenth century CE (once); the simpler συνομολογήσας occurs at §§228 and 237.

διοικεῖ μετ' εὐμενείας καὶ χωρὶς ὀργῆς ἀπάσης· τούτῳ δὲ κατακολουθεῖν ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστὶ σε, ἔφησεν, ὦ βασιλεῦ.

255 Καλῶς δὲ ἀποκεκρίσθαι φήσας τοῦτον ἐπυνθάνετο τοῦ μετέπειτα, Τί ἐστὶν εὐβουλία;

Τὸ καλῶς ἅπαντα πράσσειν, ἀπεφήνατο, μετὰ διαλογισμοῦ, κατὰ τὴν βουλήν παρατιθέντα καὶ <τὰ> βλαβερά τῶν κατὰ τὸ ἐναντίον τοῦ λόγου διάστημα, ἵνα πρὸς ἕκαστον ἐπινοήσαντες ὦμεν εὖ βεβουλευμένοι, καὶ τὸ προτεθὲν ἡμῖν ἐπιτελῆται. τὸ δ' αὖ κράτιστον, θεοῦ δυναστεία πᾶν βούλευμα <τελείωσιν ἔξει> σοι τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἀσκοῦντι.

256 Κατωρθωκέναι δὲ καὶ τοῦτον εἰπὼν ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Τί ἐστὶ φιλοσοφία;

Τὸ καλῶς διαλογίζεσθαι πρὸς ἕκαστον τῶν συμβαινόντων, ἀπεφήνατο, καὶ μὴ ἐκφέρεσθαι ταῖς ὁρμαῖς, ἀλλὰ τὰς βλάβας καταμελετᾶν τὰς ἐκ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐκβαίνουσας, καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὸν καιρὸν πράσσειν δεόντως μετριοπαθῆ καθεστῶτα. ἵνα δ' ἐπίστασιν τούτων λαμβάνωμεν,¹⁶³ θεραπεύειν δεῖ τὸν θεόν.

257 Ἐπισημῆνας δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἂν ἀποδοχῆς <ἐν> ξενιτείᾳ¹⁶⁴ τυγχάνοι;

Πᾶσιν ἴσος γινόμενος, ἔφη, καὶ μᾶλλον ἡττων ἢ καθυπερέχων φαινόμενος πρὸς οὓς ξενιτεύει. κοινῶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τὸ ταπεινούμενον προσδέχεται κατὰ φύσιν, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος τοὺς ὑποτασσομένους φιλανθρωπεῖ.

258 Ἐπιμαρτυρήσας δὲ τούτοις ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Πῶς <ᾧ> ἂν κατασκευάσῃ καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο διαμένη; πρὸς τοῦτ' εἶπεν,

Εἰ μεγάλα καὶ σεμνὰ ταῖς ποιήσεσιν ἐπιτελοῖ, πρὸς τὸ φείσασθαι τοὺς θεωροῦντας διὰ τὴν καλλονήν, καὶ μηθένα τῶν κατεργαζομένων τὰ τοιαῦτα

163. This passage continues the Aristotelian-Stoic debate over how best to control the passions. The word ἐπίστασις is relatively rare (516 times in TLG); it literally means “stoppage, care, attention, or oversight.” It is common in the Hippocratic corpus, Aristotle, and Chrysippus but also in Polybius (forty-five times). In the context here it connotes “care or oversight” in the medical sense or in the sense of exercising “control” or a “check,” as would be consistent with the Stoic ideal of extirpating the passions by remaining “apathetic” (ἀπαθής), here expressed through the equivalent term μετριοπαθῆ (i.e., “even passionate”) in the previous sentence. So compare Philo, *Leg.* 3.49: *ὅταν ἔλεγχον λαμβάνῃ καὶ ἐπίστασιν τῆς τροπῆς* (“when it [the mind] receives reproof and a check to its [errant] manner”). Note here again the combination with λαμβάνω.

that God rules the whole world with kindness and entirely without wrath, and you, O King,” said he, “must of necessity follow him.”

255 Now having said that this man had answered well, he then inquired of the next man, What is good counsel?

“To do all things well,” he declared, “with deliberation, comparing that intended with the injury of acting according to the opposite line of argument, so that by considering every point we may be well advised and so that what was intended by us may be accomplished. And again, most importantly, by the power of God every plan will have fulfillment for you, since you practice reverence.”

256 And saying that this man had also answered rightly, and asked another, What is philosophy? And he declared,

“To deliberate well concerning each matter that comes to pass and not to be carried away by impulses, but to study carefully the injuries arising from the passions, and to act appropriately according to the occasion by achieving moderation of the passions. But in order to take care of them [the passions], it is necessary to worship God.”

257 And having signaled his approval also of this man, he asked another, How may he experience a welcome reception while traveling abroad?

“By becoming equal to everyone,” he replied, “and by appearing to be inferior rather than superior to those among whom he travels. For God naturally welcomes the humble in common. And the human race is benevolent toward those who subject themselves.”

258 Having borne witness to these words, [the king] asked another, How may what he builds also endure after him? And to this he replied,

“If he should accomplish grand and august things in his constructions, so that those observing them would spare them on account of their beauty, and if he would never send away those who built such works

164. The term *ξεντεία* is relatively rare (400 times in TLG) and occurs only in later authors (but including two fragments attributed to Democritus and Critodemus). The earliest attestations are thus here and Wis 18:3 (the exodus, i.e., “travels” in the wilderness), along with Philo, *Ios.* 254; *Flacc.* 172. The word is commonly used in astrological writings in reference to the “courses” of stars and planets. In Thackeray’s edition the words (ἐν ξεντεία) are enclosed within angled brackets; however, *ξεντεία* is preserved in the manuscripts; properly speaking, ἐν is Thackeray’s emendation.

παραπέμποι, μηδὲ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀμισθὶ συντελεῖν ἀναγκάζοι τὰ πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν. **259** διανοούμενος γὰρ ὡς θεὸς πολυωρεῖ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος, χορηγῶν αὐτοῖς καὶ ὑγίαν καὶ εὐαισθησίαν καὶ τὰ λοιπά, καὶ αὐτὸς ἀκόλουθόν τι πράξει τῶν κακοπαθειῶν ἀποδιδούς τὴν ἀντάμειψιν. τὰ γὰρ ἐκ δικαιοσύνης τελούμενα, ταῦτα καὶ διαμένει.

260 Εὖ δὲ καὶ τοῦτον εἰρηκέναι φήσας τὸν δέκατον ἡρώτα, Τί ἐστι σοφίας καρπός; ὁ δὲ εἶπε,

Τὸ μὴ συνιστορεῖν ἑαυτῷ κακὸν πεπραχότι,¹⁶⁵ τὸν δὲ βίον ἐν ἀληθείᾳ διεξάγειν. **261** ἐκ τούτων γὰρ κρατίστη χαρὰ καὶ ψυχῆς εὐστάθεια σοι γίνεται, μέγιστε βασιλεῦ, καὶ ἐλπίδες ἐπὶ θεῷ καλαὶ κρατοῦντί σοι τῆς ἀρχῆς εὐσεβῶς. Ὡς δὲ συνήκουσαν πάντες ἐπεφώνησαν σὺν κρότῳ πλεῖον. καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα πρὸς τὸ προπιεῖν ὁ βασιλεὺς [λαμβάνειν] ἐτράπη, χαρᾷ πεπληρωμένος.

262 Τῇ δ' ἐξῆς καθὼς πρότερον ἢ διάταξις ἦν τῶν κατὰ τὸν πότον ἐπιτελουμένων, καιροῦ δὲ γενομένου τοὺς ἀπολιπόντας ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐπηρώτα. πρὸς τὸν πρῶτον δὲ ἔφη, Πῶς ἂν μὴ τραπεύῃ τις εἰς ὑπερηφανίαν; **263** ἀπεκρίθη δὲ,

Εἰ τὴν ἰσότητα τηροῖ, καὶ παρ' ἑκάστον ἑαυτὸν ὑπομιμνήσκει, καθὼς¹⁶⁶ ἄνθρωπος ὢν ἀνθρώπων ἡγεῖται. καὶ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς ὑπερηφάνους καθαιρεῖ, τοὺς δὲ ἐπεικεῖς καὶ ταπεινοὺς ὑψοῖ.

264 Παρακαλέσας δὲ αὐτὸν τὸν ἐξῆς ἐπηρώτα, Τίσι δεῖ συμβούλοις χρῆσθαι; τοῖς διὰ πολλῶν, ἔφη, πεπειραμένοις πραγμάτων καὶ τὴν εὐνοίαν συντηροῦσιν ἀκέραιον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ τῶν τρόπων ὅσοι μετέχουσιν αὐτῷ. θεοῦ δὲ ἐπιφάνεια γίνεται πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτα τοῖς ἀξίοις.

265 Ἐπαινέσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Τίς ἐστι βασιλεῖ κτῆσις ἀναγκαιοτάτης; Τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων φιλανθρωπία καὶ ἀγάπησις, ἀπεκρίνατο. διὰ γὰρ τούτων ἄλλυτος εὐνοίας δεσμὸς γίνεται. τὸ δὲ γίνεσθαι κατὰ προαίρεσιν ταῦτα ὁ θεὸς ἐπιτελεῖ.

165. Note the similar wording of §243: Συνιστορούσης τῆς διανοίας μηδὲν κακὸν πεπραχέναι, θεοῦ κατευθύνοντος εἰς τὸ καλῶς ἅπαντα βουλευέσθαι ("When the mind is conscious that it has done no evil, then God guides it to resolve [to do] well in all things"). The verb συνιστορεῖν also occurs in §215 above; see note there.

166. The Greek has καθὼς, literally meaning "as" or "just as," but in Epistle of Aristeas the word functions variably as an adverb or conjunction denoting manner, thus:

nor compel others to complete things without wages for his benefit. **259** For by considering how God takes care of the race of humans, granting them both health and keen perception and all the rest, he, too, will do what follows from this by giving requital to men for their sufferings. For those things accomplished out of justice also endure.”

260 And having said that this man, too, had answered well, he asked the tenth, What is the fruit of wisdom? And he said,

“That a man should be conscious that he has wrought no evil and that he should lead his life in truthfulness. **261** For from these, O mighty King, the greatest joy and health of soul accrue to yo, and good hopes in God while you rule your realm piously.” And when they all heard the answer they shouted with loud acclaim, and after these things the king, being filled with joy, turned to offering a toast.

The Banquet, Day Six (262–274)

262 Now on the next day the order of drinking courses was completed just as before, and when the opportunity presented itself the king questioned those remaining. Then to the first he said, “How may a person not be diverted into arrogance?” **263** And he answered,

“If he would maintain equality and remind himself on each occasion that he rules over human beings as a human being. God, too, destroys the arrogant and exalts the virtuous and humble.”

264 And encouraging him, he asked the next, Whom should one employ as counselors?

“Those,” said he, “who have been tested in many affairs and maintain guileless goodwill toward him and such as share his character. The manifestation of God comes to those who are worthy in this regard.”

265 And praising him, he asked another, What is the most necessary possession for a king?

“The friendliness and love of his subjects,” he replied. “For through this the bond of goodwill becomes unbreakable. God makes these things happen according to his purpose.”

“how, in the manner of” or “when.” Cf. §§188, 310 (see LSJ, s.v. “καθώς”). In this case I am assuming the temporal manner (“when, that”).

266 Κατεπαινέσας δὲ αὐτὸν ἐτέρου διεπυνθάνετο, Τί πέρας ἐστὶ λόγου; κακείνος δὲ ἔφησε,

Τὸ πείσαι τὸν ἀντιλέγοντα, διὰ τῆς ὑποτεταγμένης τάξεως τὰς βλάβας ἐπιδεικνύντα· οὕτω γὰρ λήψῃ τὸν ἀκροατὴν οὐκ ἀντικείμενος, συγχρώμενος δὲ ἐπαίνῳ πρὸς τὸ πείσαι. θεοῦ δὲ ἐνεργεία κατευθύνεται πειθῶ.

267 Εὖ δὲ λέγειν φήσας αὐτὸν ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Πῶς ἄν, παμμιγῶν ὄχλων ὄντων, ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τούτοις (ἁρμόσαι);¹⁶⁷

Τὸ πρόπον ἐκάστῳ συνυποκρινόμενος, εἶπε, καθηγεμόνα λαμβάνων δικαιοσύνην· ὥς καὶ ποιεῖς θεοῦ σοι διδόντος εὖ λογίζεσθαι.

268 Φιλοφρονηθεὶς δὲ τούτῳ πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπεν, Ἐπὶ τίσι δεῖ λυπεῖσθαι; πρὸς ταῦτα ἀπεκρίθη,

Τὰ συμβαίνοντα τοῖς φίλοις ὅταν θεωρῶμεν πολυχρόνια καὶ ἀνέκφευκτα γινόμενα. τελευτήσασι μὲν γὰρ καὶ κακῶν ἀπολελυμένοις οὐχ ὑπογράφει λύπην ὁ λόγος· ἀλλὰ ἐφ' ἑαυτοὺς ἀναφέροντες καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς συμφέρον λυποῦνται πάντες ἄνθρωποι. τὸ δ' ἐκφυγεῖν πᾶν κακὸν θεοῦ δυνάμει γίνεται.

269 Ὡς ἔδει δὲ φήσας αὐτὸν ἀποκρίνεσθαι πρὸς ἕτερον εἶπε, Πῶς ἀδοξία γίνεται; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφησεν,

Ὅταν ὑπερηφανία καθηγῆται καὶ θράσος ἄληκτον, ἀτιμασμός ἐπιφύεται καὶ δόξης ἀναίρεσις. θεὸς δὲ δόξης πάσης κυριεύει, ρέπων οὐ βούλεται.

270 Καὶ τούτῳ δ' ἐπικυρώσας τὰ τῆς ἀποκρίσεως τὸν ἐξῆς ἡρώτα, Τίσι δεῖ πιστεύειν ἑαυτόν;

Τοῖς διὰ τὴν εὖνοιαν, εἶπε, συνοῦσί σοι, καὶ μὴ διὰ τὸν φόβον μηδὲ διὰ πολυωρίαν, ἐπανάγουσι πάντα πρὸς τὸ κερδαίνειν. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀγαπήσεως σημεῖον, τὸ δὲ δυσνοίας καὶ καιροτηρησίας¹⁶⁸. ὅς γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸ πλεονεκτεῖν (ὀρμᾶται) προδότης πέφυκε. σὺ δὲ πάντας εὐνόους ἔχεις θεοῦ σοι καλὴν βουλὴν διδόντος.

167. Thackeray's edition reads: Πῶς ἄν, παμμιγῶν ὄχλων ὄντων ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ, τούτοις (ἁρμόσαι). The verb ἁρμόσαι, Thackeray's correction for ἀρμοσεῖ in the manuscripts, is undoubtedly correct, a case of iotacism. On the other hand, because of the participial phrase, we take the words ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ to go with τούτοις and thus punctuate the sentence differently.

168. The term καιροτηρησία is otherwise unattested in noun form. The verb καιροτηρέω is only attested from the late second century BCE in three papyri with sense

266 And strongly praising him, he inquired of another, What is the goal of argument? And that one replied,

“To persuade your opponent by showing him his mistakes through a subjection of order. For thus may you win over your hearer, not by opposing but by using praise for the purpose of persuasion. But by the working of God persuasion prospers.”

267 Saying that he had spoken well, he asked another, How may he live in harmony with those in his kingdom, given that they are blended of many peoples?

“By acting the proper part toward each,” he replied, “taking righteousness as your guide. As you indeed do, since God grants you good reasoning.”

268 Being kindly disposed to this one, he said to another, For what things should one suffer grief?

“At the misfortunes befalling our friends,” he replied, “when we see that they are protracted and inescapable. For reason does not prescribe grief for those who are dead and set free from evil, but all humans grieve since they ascribe (such things) to themselves and what is advantageous for them. But to escape all evil comes about by the power of God.”

269 And saying that he had answered well, he said to another, How does dishonor come about? And that one replied,

“When pride and unrelenting rashness take the lead, dishonor and loss of glory sprout forth. For God is the Lord of all glory, dispensing it where he wills.”

270 And offering confirmation to this one on his answer, he asked the next, To whom should one entrust himself?

“To those,” he said, “who associate with you out of goodwill and not from fear or excessive care, referring everything to their own gain. For the one is the sign of love, the other, the mark of ill-will and lying in wait. For the one who is eager to gain advantage is by nature a traitor. But you possess the goodwill of all, since God gives you good counsel.”

of “lying in wait” (see LSJ s.v.). The earliest occurrence of the verb with this sense in literary texts is Diodorus Siculus (*Bibl. hist.* 19.16.2; 13.22.1), fl. ca. 60–30 BCE.

271 Σοφῶς δὲ αὐτὸν εἰπὼν ἀποκεκρίσθαι, ἐτέρῳ εἶπε, Τί βασιλείαν διατηρεῖ; πρὸς τοῦτ' ἔφη,

Μέριμνα καὶ φροντίς, ὥς οὐδὲν κακουργηθήσεται διὰ τῶν ἀποτεταγμένων εἰς τοὺς ὄχλους ταῖς χρεαίαις· καθὼς σὺ τοῦτο πράσσεις θεοῦ σοι τὴν σεμνὴν ἐπίνοιαν διδόντος.

272 Θαρσύνας δὲ τοῦτον ἕτερον ἐπηρώτα, Τί διαφυλάσσει χάριτα καὶ τιμὴν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Ἀρετή. καλῶν γὰρ ἔργων ἐστὶν ἐπιτέλεια, τὸ δὲ κακὸν ἀποτρίβεται· καθὼς σὺ διατηρεῖς τὴν πρὸς ἅπαντας καλοκάγαθίαν παρὰ θεοῦ δῶρον τοῦτ' ἔχων.

273 Κεχαρισμένως δὲ καὶ τοῦτον ἀποδεξάμενος τὸν ἐνδέκατον ἐπηρώτα διὰ τὸ δύο πλεονάζειν τῶν ἐβδομήκοντα, Πῶς ἂν κατὰ ψυχὴν καὶ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις εἰρηνικῶς ἔχοι; ὁ δὲ ἀπεφάνητο,

Διαλαμβάνων ὅτι κακὸν οὐδὲν εἴργασται τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων οὐθενί, πάντες δὲ ἀγωνιοῦνται περὶ τῶν εὐεργετημάτων, εἰδότες, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ζῆν ἀποτρέχουσιν, ἐπιμελητὴν σε τῶν βίων. 274 οὐ γὰρ διαλείπεις ἐπανορθῶν ἅπαντας τοῦ θεοῦ σοι καλοφροσύνη¹⁶⁹ δεδωκότος.

Ἐπισημήνας δὲ κρότῳ πάντας αὐτοὺς ἀπεδέξατο φιλοφρονούμενος, καὶ προπίνων ἐκάστῳ πλείον τι πρὸς τὸ τερφθῆναι (ἐτράπη)¹⁷⁰, μετ' εὐφροσύνης τοῖς ἀνδράσι συνῶν καὶ χαρᾶς πλείονος.

275 Τῇ ἐβδόμῃ δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν, πλείονος παρασκευῆς γενομένης, προσπαραγινόμενων πλείονων ἐτέρων ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων (ἦσαν γὰρ ἱκανοὶ πρέσβεις), ἐπηρώτησεν ὁ βασιλεὺς καιροῦ γενομένου τὸν πρωτεύοντα τῶν ἀπολιπόντων τῆς ἐρωτήσεως, Πῶς ἂν ἀπαραλόγιστος¹⁷¹ (εἶη); 276 ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Δοκιμάζων καὶ τὸν λέγοντα καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον καὶ περὶ τίνος λέγει, καὶ ἐν πλείονι χρόνῳ τὰ αὐτὰ δι' ἐτέρων τρόπων ἐπερωτῶν. τὸ δὲ νοῦν ἔχειν ὁξὺν καὶ δύνασθαι κρίνειν ἕκαστα θεοῦ δῶρημα καλὸν ἐστίν· ὥς σὺ τοῦτο κέκτησαι, βασιλεῦ.

169. This word (καλοφροσύνη) occurs nowhere else in the TLG and is not listed in LSJ. It appears to be a neologism coined on the model of εὐφροσύνη ("cheerfulness, exultation"; cf. Ceb. Tab. 27.1); the early Byzantine lexicographer Hesychius glosses the adjective εὐφρων as meaning καλόφρων ("good-tempered"), so note the appearance of εὐφροσύνη (in reference to the king) in the very next sentence.

170. A conjecture of Mendelssohn, followed by Wendland and Thackeray.

271 Saying that he had answered wisely, [the king] said to another, What preserves a kingdom? And to this he said,

“Care and forethought that nothing evil will be done by those who are appointed to positions of service over the people. Just as you do this, since God has given you reverent judgment.”

272 Now encouraging this one he asked another, What protects gratitude and honor? And he replied,

“Virtue. For it is the fulfiller of good deeds, but evil is destroyed. Just so, you maintain a noble goodness toward all, since you have this as a gift from God.”

273 Having thanked also this one graciously, he asked the eleventh (since there were two more than seventy), How may he be at peace in soul even in times of war? And he replied,

“By comprehending that he has done nothing evil to any of his subjects and that all will fight for him in return for his benefactions, knowing that, even if they depart this life, you will take care of the living. **274** For you never fail in restoring everything, since God has given you a kindly temperament.

The king loudly applauded them all and welcomed them with friendly affection, and offering a more ample toast to each one, he turned to making merry by conversing with the men with good cheer and great joy.

The Banquet, Day Seven (275–294)

275 Now on the seventh day after greater preparations had been made, and since many others were present from the different cities (for there were a large number of delegates), when an opportune moment came, the king asked the first of those left out of the previous questioning, How may he avoid false reasoning? **276** And that one replied,

“By examining both the one speaking and what is spoken, and that about which he is speaking, and by asking the same things in different ways over much time. But having a keen mind and being able to judge each matter is a good gift of God, and you possess it, O King.”

171. For this term, compare §250.

277 Κρότῳ δὲ ἐπισημηνάμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἕτερον ἐπηρώτα, Διὰ τί τὴν ἀρετὴν οὐ παραδέχονται τῶν ἀνθρώπων οἱ πλείονες;

“Ὅτι φυσικῶς ἅπαντες, εἶπεν, ἀκρατεῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς τρεπόμενοι γεγόνασιν· ὧν χάριν ἀδικία πέφυκε καὶ τὸ τῆς πλεονεξίας χύμα¹⁷². 278 τὸ δὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς κατάστημα¹⁷³ κωλύει τοὺς ἐπιφερομένους ἐπὶ τὴν ἡδονοκρασίαν¹⁷⁴, ἐγκράτειαν δὲ κελεύει καὶ δικαιοσύνην προτιμᾶν. ὁ δὲ θεὸς πάντων ἡγεῖται τούτων.

279 Εὖ δὲ ἀποκεκρίσθαι τοῦτον εἰπὼν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡρώτα Τίσι δεῖ κατακολουθεῖν τοὺς βασιλεῖς; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Τοῖς νόμοις, ἵνα δικαιοπραγοῦντες¹⁷⁵ ἀνακτῶνται τοὺς βίους τῶν ἀνθρώπων· καθὼς σὺ τοῦτο πράσσων ἀένανον μνήμην καταβέβλησαι σεαυτοῦ, θείῳ προστάγματι κατακολουθῶν.

280 Εἰπὼν δὲ καὶ τοῦτον καλῶς λέγειν τὸν ἐχόμενον ἡρώτα, Τίνας δεῖ καθιστάνειν στρατηγούς; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

“Ὅσοι μισοπονηρίαν¹⁷⁶ ἔχουσι, καὶ τὴν ἀγωγὴν αὐτοῦ μιμούμενοι,¹⁷⁷ πρὸς τὸ διὰ παντὸς εὐδοξίαν ἔχειν αὐτούς, τὰ δίκαια πράσσουσι· καθὼς σὺ τοῦτο ἐπιτελεῖς, εἶπε, μέγιστε βασιλεῦ, θεοῦ σοι στέφανον δικαιοσύνης¹⁷⁸ δεδωκότος.

281 Ἀποδεξάμενος δὲ αὐτὸν μετὰ φωνῆς ἐπὶ τὸν ἐχόμενον ἐπιβλέψας εἶπε, Τίνας δεῖ καθιστάνειν ἐπὶ τῶν δυνάμεων ἄρχοντας; ὁ δὲ ἀπεφάνητο,

Τοὺς ἀνδρεῖα διαφέροντας καὶ δικαιοσύνη, καὶ περὶ πολλοῦ ποιουμένους τὸ σῶζειν τοὺς ἀνδρας ἢ τὸ νικᾶν, τῷ θράσει <παραβάλλοντας> τὸ ζῆν. ὥς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς εὖ ἐργάζεται πᾶσι, καὶ σὺ τοῦτον μιμούμενος εὐεργετεῖς τοὺς ὑπὸ σεαυτόν.

172. For this relatively rare word (478 times in TLG), compare §§14 and 105 plus 2 Macc 2:24 and 3 Kgdms 5:9 (LXX). These are among the earliest occurrences.

173. For *κατάστημα*, see also §§122, 165, and 210. However, some manuscripts read *διάστημα*.

174. The term *ἡδονοκρασία* (“pleasure-domination,” or “domination of pleasure”) is otherwise unattested in the TLG.

175. For the relatively rare word *δικαιοπραγεῖν* (lit. “to act honestly or justly”), compare especially P.Tebt. 1.183 (125–100 BCE); Ceb. Tab. 41.2 (first century CE), although it also appears earlier in Aristotle and Chrysippus. Here, assuming that the implied subject of *ἀνακτῶνται* is “the laws” (*νόμοι*), the sense must be that the laws prescribe or promote just action and thus “retrieve lives.” Cf. §278.

176. See §292; compare 2 Macc 3:1; 4:49 (verb); Josephus, *A.J.* 12.124; *Vit.* 311.

177. Does this statement refer to God (as in §281 and as rendered by Shutt) or to

277 And having loudly signaled his approval, the king asked another, Why do the majority of humans not embrace virtue?

“Because,” he said, “by nature all men are intemperate and bent on pleasure; on account of these there arises injustice and a torrent of avarice. **278** The state of virtue prevents people from running headlong toward being dominated by pleasure, and it bids them to prefer self-control and righteousness. God is the master of all these things.”

279 And saying that this man had answered well, the king asked, What must kings follow? And he said,

“The laws, in order that they, by promoting just action, may revive the lives of humans. So also you, by practicing the same and following the divine command, have built an everlasting memorial for yourself.”

280 And saying that this man had also spoken well, he asked the next, Whom ought we to appoint as governors? And he replied,

“Those who possess a hatred of vice and who, by imitating your own conduct, act justly, in order to have a good reputation always. So also you continue to do this, Great King,” he said, “since God has given you a crown of righteousness.”

281 Now approving him loudly and then looking to the next, he said, Whom ought we to appoint as commanders of forces?” And he declared,

“Those who are outstanding in courage and righteousness and those who reckon saving their men to be more important than being victorious by risking life out of rashness. For thus does God work good to all, and you, in imitating him, are benefactor of all those under you.”

the king, as seems to be demanded by the syntax? Wendland noted the awkwardness. The reading of the manuscripts may be accepted (as translated above) if we understand the sense as resuming the line of questioning in §279, where the clear subject of the question is *kings*, phrased in the third person: “What must *kings* follow?” This question (and the next in §281) continue using identical syntax (with δεῖ + inf. and a form of τίς as object), and we may rightly assume the word βασιλεῖς (“kings”) as the implied accusative of reference with the infinitive in both cases. In this way, the words τῇν ἀγωγὴν αὐτοῦ may properly be taken to refer to “his (i.e., the king’s) own conduct” as the object of μιμούμενοι. We have rendered these subsequent exchanges in first and second person, befitting the conversational tone; however, the use of the impersonal here might be understood as affecting a courtly style of self-reference. See also §§288–292.

178. Compare T. Levi 8.1; 2 Tim 4:8.

282 Ὁ δὲ ἀποκεκρίσθαι φήσας αὐτὸν εὖ, ἄλλον ἡρώτα, Τίνα θαυμάζειν ἄξιόν ἐστιν ἀνθρωπων; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Τὸν κεχορηγημένον δόξῃ καὶ πλούτῳ καὶ δυνάμει, καὶ ψυχὴν ἴσον πᾶσιν ὄντα· καθὼς σὺ τοῦτο ποιῶν ἀξιοθαύμαστος εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ σοι διδόντος εἰς ταῦτα τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν.

283 Ἐπιφωνήσας δὲ καὶ τούτῳ πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον εἶπεν, Ἐν τίσι δεῖ πράγμασι τοὺς βασιλεῖς τὸν πλείω χρόνον διάγειν; ὁ δὲ εἶπεν,

Ἐν ταῖς ἀναγνώσεσι καὶ ἐν ταῖς τῶν πορειῶν ἀπογραφαῖς διατρίβειν, ὅσαι πρὸς τὰς βασιλείας ἀναγεγραμμέναι τυγχάνουσι πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν καὶ διαμονὴν ἀνθρώπων· ὁ σὺ πράσων ἀνέφικτον ἄλλοις δόξαν κέκτησαι θεοῦ σοι τὰ βουλήματα συντελοῦντος.

284 Ἐνεργῶς δὲ καὶ τοῦτον προσειπὼν ἕτερον ἡρώτα, Τίνας δεῖ ποιεῖσθαι τὰς διαγωγὰς ἐν ταῖς ἀνέσεσι καὶ ῥαθυμίαις; ὁ δὲ ἔφη,

Θεωρεῖν ὅσα <παίζεται> μετὰ περιστολῆς¹⁷⁹ καὶ πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν τιθέναι τὰ τοῦ βίου μετ' εὐσχημοσύνης καὶ καταστολῆς γινόμενα <βίῳ συμφέρον καὶ καθήκον>. ἔνεστι γὰρ καὶ ἐν τούτοις ἐπισκευὴ τις. **285** πολλάκις γὰρ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐλαχίστων αἰρετόν τι δείκνυται. σὺ δὲ πᾶσαν ἡσυχῶς καταστολὴν διὰ τῶν ἐνεργεῖν φιλοσοφεῖς διὰ καλοκάγαθίαν ὑπὸ θεοῦ τιμώμενος.

286 Εὐαρεστήσας δὲ τοῖς προειρημένοις πρὸς τὸν ἑνατον εἶπε, Πῶς δεῖ διὰ τῶν συμποσίων διεξάγειν; ὁ δὲ ἔφησε,

Παραλαμβάνοντα τοὺς φιλομαθεῖς καὶ δυναμένους ὑπομιμνήσκειν τὰ <χρήσιμα τῇ βασιλείᾳ> καὶ τοῖς τῶν ἀρχομένων βίοις—ἐμμελέστερον ἢ μουσικώτερον οὐκ ἂν εὔροις τι τούτων· **287** οὗτοι γὰρ θεοφιλεῖς εἰσι πρὸς τὰ κάλλιστα πεπαιδευκότες τὰς διανοίας, καθὼς καὶ σὺ τοῦτο πράσσεις, ὥς ἂν ὑπὸ θεοῦ σοι κατευθυνομένων ἀπάντων.¹⁸⁰

179. The sense of *περιστολῇ* (literally “adornments” or “burial robes”) here is a peculiar derivative meaning, based in part on the wordplay with *καταστολῇ*, occurring twice in this section. Compare LXX Exod 33:6; Sir 45:7, and Pss. Sol. 13.8. The word is rare (one hundred times in TLG), with only three occurrences before those cited above.

180. These last three questions and responses (§§286–87, 288–290, and 291–292, respectively) in most respects epitomize the tone of the entire banquet scene in three

282 And saying that he had answered well, he asked another, What person is worthy of admiration? And he replied,

“The man who is furnished with reputation and wealth and power and possesses a soul equal to all. So also you by doing this are deserving of admiration, since God has given you your concern for these matters.”

283 And commenting favorably to this one as well, he said to another, In what pursuits ought kings to spend the most time? And he replied,

“[He ought] to spend his time in reading and records of journeys, all that chance to have been recorded for monarchies for the amendment and preservation of people, which you do and have attained glory out of reach to others, since God fulfills your plans.”

284 And replying enthusiastically to this man, he asked another, In what pastimes ought one to engage in moments of leisure and relaxation? And he replied,

“To watch such festivals as are performed with decorum and to keep before one’s eyes those things in life that occur with seemliness and moderation is profitable and appropriate to life. For there is some edification even in these things. **285** For often something choice-worthy is manifested from even the most trifling matters. And you, by practicing complete moderation in all your activities, act like a philosopher and are honored by God on account of nobility.”

286 And being pleased with what was said, [the king] said to the ninth man, How must one conduct oneself at banquets? And he replied,

“By inviting those who love learning and those able to recommend things useful for your kingdom and the lives of your subjects—for you could not find anything more harmonious or elegant than these. **287** For such people are dear to God because their minds have been educated for the noblest things, just as you also are doing, as though all your actions were directed by God.”

ways: the character of the translators, their advice on kingship in accord with the Jewish law, and the praiseworthy character of Ptolemy II. The use of φιλομαθεῖς (§286) also serves to link these virtues to Aristea’s exhortations to Philocrates regarding the value of the Jewish scriptures.

288 Διαχυθείς δὲ ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰρημένοις, ἐπυνθάνετο τοῦ μετέπειτα, Τί κάλλιστόν ἐστι τοῖς ὄχλοις, ἐξ ἰδιώτου βασιλέα κατασταθῆναι (ἐπ') αὐτῶν, ἢ ἐκ βασιλέως βασιλέα; ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Τὸ ἄριστον τῇ φύσει. **289** καὶ γὰρ ἐκ βασιλέων βασιλεῖς γινόμενοι πρὸς τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους ἀνήμεροί τε καὶ σκληροὶ καθίστανται.¹⁸¹ πολλῶ δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ τινες τῶν ἰδιωτῶν καὶ κακῶν πεπειραμένοι καὶ πενίας μετεσχηκότες ἄρξαντες ὄχλων χαλεπώτεροι τῶν ἀνοσίων τυράννων ἐξέβησαν. **290** ἀλλὰ ὡς προεῖπον, ἦθος χρηστὸν καὶ παιδείας κεκοινωνηκὸς δυνατὸν ἄρχειν ἐστί· καθὼς σὺ βασιλεὺς μέγας ὑπάρχεις, οὐ τοσοῦτον τῇ δόξῃ τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ πλούτῳ προσχών, ὅσον ἐπιεικεία καὶ φιλανθρωπία πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὑπερήκας τοῦ θεοῦ σοι δεδωρημένου ταῦτα.

291 Ἐπὶ πλείονα χρόνον καὶ τοῦτον ἐπαινέσας τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἡρώτα, Τί μέγιστόν ἐστι βασιλείας; πρὸς τοῦτο εἶπε,

Τὸ διὰ παντὸς ἐν εἰρήνῃ καθεστάναι τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους, καὶ κομίζεσθαι τὸ δίκαιον ταχέως ἐν ταῖς διακρίσεσι. **292** ταῦτα δὲ γίνεται διὰ τὸν ἡγούμενον, ὅταν μισοπόνηρος ᾖ καὶ φιλάγαθος καὶ περὶ πολλοῦ ποιούμενος ψυχὴν ἀνθρώπου σώζειν· καθὼς καὶ σὺ μέγιστον κακὸν ἤγησαι τὴν ἀδικίαν, δικαίως δὲ πάντα κυβερνῶν ἀένανον τὴν περὶ σεαυτὸν δόξαν κατεσκεύασας,¹⁸² τοῦ θεοῦ σοι διδόντος ἔχειν ἀγνὴν καὶ ἀμιγῆ παντὸς κακοῦ τὴν διάνοιαν.

293 Καταλήξαντος δὲ τούτου κατερράγη κρότος μετὰ φωνῆς καὶ χαρᾶς ἐπὶ πλείονα χρόνον. ὡς δὲ ἐπαύσατο, ὁ βασιλεὺς λαβὼν ποτήριον ἐπεχέατο καὶ τῶν παρόντων ἀπάντων καὶ τῶν εἰρημένων λόγων. ἐπὶ πᾶσι δὲ εἶπε, Τὰ μέγιστα μοι γέγονεν ἀγαθὰ παραγεννηθέντων ὑμῶν. **294** πολλὰ γὰρ ὠφέλημαι, καταβεβλημένων ὑμῶν διδαχὴν ἐμοὶ πρὸς τὸ βασιλεύειν. ἐκάστῳ δὲ τρία τάλαντα προσέταξεν ἀργυρίου δοθῆναι καὶ τὸν ἀποκαταστήσοντα παῖδα. συνεπιφωνησάντων δὲ πάντων, χαρᾶς ἐπληρώθη τὸ συμπόσιον, ἀδιαλείπτως τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς εὐφροσύνην τραπέντος.

295 Ἐγὼ δὲ (εἰ πεπλεόνακα), τούτοις, ὦ Φιλόκρατες, συγγνώμην ἔχειν. τεθαυμακῶς γὰρ τοὺς ἄνδρας ὑπὲρ τὸ δέον, ὡς ἐκ τοῦ καιροῦ τὰς ἀποκρίσεις

181. Something seems to have dropped out here; we have supplied (τύραννοι) after καθίστανται for sense, in order to balance the final clause. The corruption may be reflected by the fact that some manuscripts added οἱ after γάρ while others omitted βασιλεῖς to make the first clause viable.

288 Delighted with these words, the king inquired of the next man, What is best for the masses, that the son of a private citizen be established as king over them or a royal who is son of a king? And he replied,

“The one who is best by nature. **289** For indeed kings descended from kings, if they become harsh and severe toward their subjects, are established (as tyrants), but by how much more have those descended from private citizens, who have experienced evil and had their share of poverty, turned out to be more cruel than impious tyrants in ruling the masses. **290** But, as I said before, a good character who also has partaken of education is capable of ruling. So also are you a great king, not so much by being eminent in the glory of rule and wealth as by surpassing all people in clemency and philanthropy, since God has made a gift of these things to you.”

291 And having praised this man for a long time, he asked the last of the all, What is the greatest attribute of kingship? And this one replied,

“To establish one’s subjects in peace always and to provide justice swiftly in court cases. **292** These things come about through the one governing, when he is a man who hates evil and loves the good and deems it of greatest importance to save the soul of a person. So also you reckon injustice to be the greatest evil, and by ruling justly in everything you have established for yourself eternal glory, since God bestows upon you a mind that is pure and untainted by any evil.”

293 And when he ceased, loud and joyful applause broke forth for some time. When it stopped, the king took a cup and gave a toast both to all those present and the words that had been spoken. For all these, he said, “The greatest good has come to me from your presence. **294** I have benefited much by the teaching you have afforded me for the purpose of ruling.” Then he ordered that three talents of silver should be presented to each of them and a slave to deliver it. When they all shouted their approval, the banquet hall was filled with joy, while the king devoted himself unceasingly to good cheer.

295 But now if I have gone on too long on these matters, O Philocrates, I beg your indulgence. For I was astonished beyond measure at the men

ἐποιοῦντο πολλοῦ χρόνου δεομένας, **296** καὶ τοῦ μὲν ἐρωτῶντος μεμεριμνηκότος ἕκαστα, τῶν δὲ ἀποκρινομένων καταλλήλως¹⁸³ ἐχόντων τὰ πρὸς τὰς ἐρωτήσεις, ἄξιοι θαυμασμοῦ κατεφαίνοντό μοι καὶ τοῖς παροῦσι, μάλιστα δὲ τοῖς φιλοσόφοις. οἶομαι δὲ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς παραληψομένοις τὴν ἀναγραφὴν ἄπιστον φανεῖται.

297 ψεύσασθαι μὲν οὖν οὐ καθήκόν ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἀναγραφομένων· εἰ δὲ καὶ τι παραβαίην, οὐχ ὅσιον ἐν τούτοις· ἀλλ,

ὡς γέγονεν, οὕτως διασαφοῦμεν ἀφοσιούμενοι πᾶν ἀμάρτημα.

διόπερ ἐπειράθην ἀποδεξάμενος αὐτῶν τὴν τοῦ λόγου δύναμιν παρὰ τῶν ἀναγραφομένων ἕκαστα τῶν γινομένων ἐν τε τοῖς χρηματισμοῖς τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ ταῖς συμποσίαις μεταλαβεῖν.

298 ἔθος γάρ ἐστι, καθὼς καὶ σὺ γινώσκεις, ἀφ’ ἧς ἂν [ἡμέρας] ὁ βασιλεὺς ἄρξῃται χρηματίζειν, μέχρις οὗ κατακοιμηθῇ, πάντα ἀναγράφειν τὰ λεγόμενα καὶ πρασσόμενα, καλῶς γινομένου καὶ συμφερόντως. **299** τῇ γὰρ ἐπιούσῃ τὰ τῇ πρότερον πεπραγμένα καὶ λελαλημένα πρὸ τοῦ χρηματισμοῦ παραναγινώσκεται, καί, εἴ τι μὴ δεόντως γέγονε, διορθώσεως τυγχάνει τὸ πεπραγμένον.

300 πάντ’ οὖν ἀκριβῶς (παρὰ τῶν) ἀναγεγραμμένων, ὡς ἐλέχθη, μεταλαβόντες κατακεχωρίκαμεν, εἰδότες ἢν ἔχεις φιλομάθειαν εἰς τὰ χρήσιμα.

301 μετὰ δὲ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ὁ Δημήτριος παραλαβὼν αὐτούς, καὶ διελθὼν τὸ τῶν ἑπτὰ σταδίων ἀνάχωμα¹⁸⁴ τῆς θαλάσσης πρὸς τὴν νῆσον, καὶ διαβάς τὴν γέφυραν, καὶ προσελθὼν ὡς ἐπὶ τὰ βόρεια μέρη, συνέδριον ποιησάμενος εἰς κατεσκευασμένον οἶκον παρὰ τὴν ἡϊόνα—διαπρεπῶς ἔχοντα καὶ πολλῆς ἡσυχίας ἔφεδρον—παρεκάλει τοὺς ἄνδρας τὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐπιτελεῖν, παρόντων ὅσα πρὸς τὴν χρεῖαν ἔδει καλῶς. **302** οἱ δὲ ἐπετέλουν ἕκαστα σύμφωνα ποιοῦντες πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ταῖς ἀντιβολαῖς· τὸ δὲ ἐκ τῆς συμφωνίας γινόμενον πρεπόντως

183. The adverbial form can mean either “in succession, one after another” or “appropriately, systematically.” Philo’s account (*Mos.* 2.33) makes much of this point. See sec. 2.1 below.

184. Apparently the earliest known usage by far of this compound form, meaning an earthen embankment or, in this context, a dam or levy. Its usage in papyri may

and how they on the spot gave answers that required much time, **296** while the one asking the questions had taken great care with each one, but when those answering had the responses to the questions in succession, they seemed to me and to those present, and especially to the philosophers, to be worthy of admiration. But I suppose that it will seem unbelievable to all those who will inherit my account.

297 Rather, it is not proper to lie concerning what is recorded. And if I have gone astray in some respect, it is not sanctioned in these matters. Rather, (be it sworn):

just as it happened, so do we state it, and atone for any error.

Wherefore, since I endorsed the force of their words, I tried to obtain everything that transpired from what had been written in both the records of the king and at the banquets.

298 For it is the custom, as you know, from the moment the king begins to conduct matters of state until the time when he retires to rest, for a record to be taken of all his sayings and doings—a most excellent and useful arrangement. **299** For on the following day what was done and said on the previous day are read over before (new) business, and if anything is not as it should be, the matter is set right.

300 Therefore, as has been said, having obtained everything accurately from the records, we have drawn them up, since we know what a love of learning you possess for things useful.

VI. The Translation Is Completed and Presented (301–321)

301 Then after three days, Demetrius took the men and passed along the sea levy for a distance of seven stadia to the island and, having crossed the bridge, proceeded to the northern districts [of Pharos]; and convening the assembly in a house built by the shore—it was most elegant and set in a most peaceful location—he urged them to discharge the task of translation, since whatever they needed was suitably present. **302** They began the task, making each thing agree among themselves by means of comparisons; and what emerged properly from their agreement was thus made into a copy

suggest an Egyptian coinage; see BGU 1.197 (17–18 CE; ἀναχωματισμοῦ, as emended). All other literary attestations (fourteen times in remainder of TLG) are Byzantine.

ἀναγραφῆς οὕτως ἐτύγχανε παρὰ τοῦ Δημητρίου. **303** καὶ μέχρι μὲν ὥρας ἐνάτης τὰ τῆς συνδρείας ἐγίνετο· μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα περὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος θεραπείαν ἀπελύοντο γίνεσθαι, χορηγουμένων αὐτοῖς δαψιλῶς ὧν προηροῦντο πάντων. **304** ἐκτὸς δὲ καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν, ὅσα βασιλεῖ παρεσκευάζετο, καὶ τούτοις ὁ Δωρόθεος ἐπετέλει· προστεταγμένον γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ βασιλέως. ἅμα δὲ τῇ πρωΐα παρεγίνοντο εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν καθ' ἡμέραν, καὶ ποιησάμενοι τὸν ἀσπασμὸν τοῦ βασιλέως, ἀπελύοντο πρὸς τὸν ἑαυτῶν τόπον. **305** ὥς δὲ ἔθος ἐστὶ πᾶσι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, (ἀπονιψάμενοι)¹⁸⁵ τῇ θαλάσῃ τὰς χεῖρας, ὡς ἂν εὕξωνται πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ἐτρέποντο πρὸς τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν καὶ τὴν ἐκάστου διασάφησιν. **306** Ἐπηρώτησα δὲ καὶ τοῦτο, Τίνος χάριν ἀπονιζόμενος τὰς χεῖρας τὸ τηνικαῦτα εὔχονται; διεσάφουν δέ, ὅτι μαρτύριόν ἐστι τοῦ μηδὲν εἰργάσθαι κακόν· πᾶσα γὰρ ἐνέργεια διὰ τῶν χειρῶν γίνεται· καλῶς καὶ ὁσίως μεταφέροντες ἐπὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν πάντα.

307 καθὼς δὲ προειρήκαμεν, οὕτως καθ' ἐκάστην εἰς τὸν τόπον, ἔχοντα τερπνότητα διὰ τὴν ἡσυχίαν καὶ καταύγειαν, συναγόμενοι τὸ προκείμενον ἐπετέλουν. συνέτυχε δὲ οὕτως ἐν ἡμέραις ἐβδομήκοντα δυσὶ τελειωθῆναι τὰ τῆς μεταγραφῆς, οἷον κατὰ πρόθεσιν τινα τοῦ τοιοῦτου γεγενημένου.

308 Τελείωσιν δὲ ὅτε ἔλαβε, συναγαγὼν ὁ Δημήτριος τὸ πλῆθος τῶν Ἰουδαίων εἰς τὸν τόπον, οὗ καὶ τὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐτελέσθη, παρανέγνω πᾶσι, παρόντων καὶ τῶν διερμηνευσάντων, οἵτινες μεγάλης ἀποδοχῆς καὶ παρὰ τοῦ πλήθους ἔτυχον, ὡς ἂν μεγάλων ἀγαθῶν παραίτιοι γεγονότες. **309** ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸν Δημήτριον ἀποδεξάμενοι παρεκάλεσαν μεταδοῦναι τοῖς ἡγουμένοις αὐτῶν, μεταγράψαντα τὸν πάντα νόμον.

310 καθὼς δὲ ἀνεγνώσθη τὰ τεύχη, στάντες οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τῶν ἐρμηνέων οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πολιτεύματος¹⁸⁶ οἱ τε ἡγούμενοι τοῦ πλήθους εἶπον,

Ἐπεὶ καλῶς καὶ ὁσίως διηρμήνευται καὶ κατὰ πᾶν ἡκριβωμένως, καλῶς ἔχον ἐστίν, ἵνα διαμεῖνῃ ταῦθ' οὕτως ἔχοντα, καὶ μὴ γένηται μηδεμία διασκευή.

311 πάντων δ' ἐπιφωνησάντων τοῖς εἰρημένοις, ἐκέλευσαν διαράσασθαι,¹⁸⁷ καθὼς ἔθος αὐτοῖς ἐστίν, εἴ τις διασκευάσει προστιθεὶς ἢ μεταφέρων τι τὸ

185. Wendland's emendation (based on a correction in one manuscript) followed by Thackeray; the majority of the manuscripts read ἀπονιψάμενοις, with two reading -μένους.

186. For the term πολιτεύμα, see note 195 at the end of the text (after §322).

by Demetrius. **303** Now the work of the conclave continued until the ninth hour; after that they were given release for the care of their bodies, with everything they might want being abundantly furnished to them. **304** And beyond that, daily Dorotheus provided to them whatever was prepared for the king—for thus was it commanded him by the king. And daily in the morning they presented themselves at the court, and after saluting the king they were sent off to their own place. **305** And as is the custom of all the Jews, after washing their hands in the sea and when they had prayed to God, they devoted themselves to the reading and elucidation of each passage. **306** *Once I even asked them this: why they washed their hands and then prayed. And they explained that it was witness of having done no evil, for every deed comes about through the hands. In a noble and holy way they apply everything as a symbol of righteousness and truth.*

307 Now as we said previously, gathering every day at the place so very delightful on account of its quiet and brightness, they discharged to their task. Thus it happened that the work of translation was completed in seventy-two days, as though such a work came about by some sort of purpose.

308 When he received the completed work, Demetrius assembled the Jewish people to the place where the translation had been made and read it over to all, the translators also being present; they met with a great reception from the people as well, as they had become the cause of great benefits [for them]. **309** So also receiving Demetrius in the same way, they urged him, after making a transcription of the entire law, to share it with their leaders.

310 When the books had been read, the priests and elders among the translators and among those from the *politeuma* [who are] also those leading the people, rising said,

“Since it has been translated in such noble and holy manner, and accurately in every respect, it is good that it should remain as it is and no revision should be made.”

311 And after everyone expressed their approval to what had been said, they ordered them to curse utterly, as is their custom, anyone who should

187. From *διαράβαιναι*; this is the only occurrence of the term other than one use in the Byzantine period (tenth century CE).

σύνολον τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ποιούμενος ἀφαίρεσιν, καλῶς τοῦτο πράσσοντες, ἵνα διὰ παντὸς ἀέννα καὶ μένοντα φυλάσσηται.

312 Προσφωνηθέντων δὲ καὶ τούτων τῷ βασιλεῖ μεγάλως ἐχάρη· τὴν γὰρ πρόθεσιν, ἣν εἶχεν, ἀσφαλῶς ἔδοξε τετελειῶσθαι. παρανεγνώσθη δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ πάντα, καὶ λίαν ἐξεθαύμασε τὴν τοῦ νομοθέτου διάνοιαν. καὶ πρὸς τὸν Δημήτριον εἶπε,

Πῶς τηλικούτων συντετελεσμένων οὐδεὶς ἐπεβάλετο τῶν ἱστορικῶν ἢ ποιητῶν ἐπιμνησθῆναι;

313 ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔφη,

Διὰ τὸ σεμνὴν εἶναι τὴν νομοθεσίαν καὶ διὰ θεοῦ γεγονέναι.¹⁸⁸ καὶ τῶν ἐπιβαλλομένων τινὲς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πληγέντες τῆς ἐπιβολῆς ἀπέστησαν.

314 καὶ γὰρ ἔφησεν ἀκηκοέναι Θεοπόμπου, διότι μέλλων τινὰ τῶν προηρμηνευμένων ἐπισφαλέστερον ἐκ τοῦ νόμου¹⁸⁹ προσιστορεῖν ταραχὴν λάβοι τῆς διανοίας πλεῖον ἡμερῶν τριάκοντα· κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἄνεσιν ἐξιλάσκεισθαι τὸν θεόν, σαφὲς αὐτῷ γενέσθαι, τίνος χάριν τὸ συμβαῖνόν ἐστι. **315** δι' ὁνείρου δὲ σημανθέντος, ὅτι τὰ θεῖα βούλεται περιεργασάμενος εἰς κοινούς ἀνθρώπους ἐκφέρειν, ἀποσχόμενον δὲ οὕτως ἀποκαταστήναι. **316** καὶ παρὰ Θεοδέκτου δὲ τοῦ τῶν τραγωδιῶν ποιητοῦ μετέλαβον ἐγώ, διότι παραφέρειν μέλλοντός τι τῶν ἀναγεγραμμένων ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ πρὸς τι δρᾶμα τὰς ὅψεις ἀπεγλαυκώθη· καὶ λαβὼν ὑπόνοιαν, ὅτι διὰ τοῦτ' αὐτῷ τὸ σύμπτωμα γέγονεν, ἐξιλάσάμενος τὸν θεὸν ἐν πολλαῖς ἡμέραις ἀποκατέστη.

317 Μεταλαβὼν δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς, καθὼς προεῖπον, περὶ τούτων τὰ παρὰ τοῦ Δημητρίου, προσκυνήσας ἐκέλευσε μεγάλην ἐπιμέλειαν ποιεῖσθαι τῶν βιβλίων καὶ συντηρεῖν ἀγνῶς. **318** παρακαλέσας δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἑρμηνεῖς, ἵνα παραγίνωνται¹⁹⁰ πυκνότερον πρὸς αὐτόν, ἐὰν ἀποκατασταθῶσιν εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν, δίκαιον γὰρ εἶπε τὴν ἐκπομπὴν αὐτῶν γενέσθαι· παραγενηθέντες δέ, ὡς θέμις, ἔξειν αὐτοὺς φίλους, καὶ (πολυωρίας)¹⁹¹ τῆς μεγίστης τεύξεσθαι παρ' αὐτοῦ. **319** τὰ δὲ

188. Compare the saying, using the same word *σεμνή*, attributed by Demetrius to Hecataeus of Abdera in §31.

189. For these “previous, unreliable translations” see §30. Theodektes may be a reference to the Jewish writer, Ezekiel the Tragedian, who wrote a poetic version of the exodus story.

190. For *παραγίνεσθαι* with this sense, see esp. §184.

make revisions either by adding or changing anything in the entirety of what had been written or by making any omission, and they did well in this, in order that it should be protected always and remain ever unchanged.

312 When these things were reported to the king, he rejoiced greatly, for he thought that the intention he had held had been carried out securely. Everything was also read to him, and he was greatly amazed at the mind of the lawgiver. And he said to Demetrius,

“How is it that none of the historians or the poets have given thought to mention such great achievements?”

313 And that one [Demetrius] replied,

“Because the law is sacred and came about through God. And some who gave thought to do so were stricken by God and therefore desisted from their plan.”

314 For he said that he had heard from Theopompus that when he was about to include some things in his history from previous, rather unreliable translations of the law, he had suffered a disturbance of his mind for more than thirty days. He propitiated God for relief, and it was made clear to him why the misfortune occurred. **315** It was shown him in a dream, that he had gone too far in wishing to publish sacred things to common men, and when he desisted he was thus restored to health. **316** I myself heard, as well, from Theodektes, the tragic poet, that when he was about to adapt one of the things recorded in the book for one of his plays, he was afflicted with glaucoma in his eyes. And when he suspected that this was why the misfortune had occurred, having propitiated God for many days, he was restored.

317 Then after the king, as I said before, had received the explanation of Demetrius concerning these matters, having made obeisance, he ordered that great care be taken of the books and that they be sacredly preserved. **318** And he urged the translators as well to visit him frequently once they had been restored to Judea, for he said that it was right to bring about their departure. But on their arrival (as guests), as is right, he would consider them friends, and they would receive rich gifts from him. **319** Then he

191. Mahaffy's emendation (1894, 349), followed by Wendland and Thackeray; it would mean “hospitality.” The manuscripts read πολυδωρίας (“many gifts”), as translated here, and so rendered by both Andrews and Shutt.

πρὸς τὴν ἐκπομπὴν αὐτῶν ἐκέλευσεν ἐτοιμάζειν, μεγαλομερῶς τοῖς ἀνδράσι χρησάμενος. ἐκάστω γὰρ στολὰς ἔδωκε τῶν κρατίστων τρεῖς καὶ χρυσοῦ ταλάντα δύο καὶ κυλίκιον¹⁹² ταλάντου καὶ τρικλίνου πᾶσαν κατάστρωσιν.¹⁹³

320 ἔπειμψε δὲ καὶ τῷ Ἑλεαζάρῳ μετὰ τῆς ἐκπομπῆς αὐτῶν ἀργυρόποδας κλίνας δέκα καὶ τὰ ἀκόλουθα πάντα καὶ κυλίκιον ταλάντων τριάκοντα καὶ στολὰς δέκα καὶ πορφύραν¹⁹⁴ καὶ στέφανον διαπρεπῆ καὶ βυσσίνων ὀθονίων ἱστοὺς ἑκατὸν καὶ φιάλας καὶ τρύβλια καὶ κρατῆρας χρυσοῦς δύο πρὸς ἀνάθεσιν.

321 ἔγραψε δὲ καὶ παρακαλῶν, ἵνα, ἐάν τινες τῶν ἀνδρῶν προαιρῶνται πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀνακομισθῆναι, μὴ κωλύσῃ, περὶ πολλοῦ ποιούμενος τοῖς πεπαιδευμένοις συνεῖναι, καὶ εἰς τοιούτους τὸν πλοῦτον κατατίθεσθαι δαψιλῶς, καὶ οὐκ εἰς μάταια.

322 Σὺ δέ, καθὼς ἐπηγγειλάμην, ἀπέχεις τὴν διήγησιν, ὦ Φιλόκρατες. τέρπειν γὰρ οἶομαί σε ταῦτα ἢ τὰ τῶν μυθολόγων βιβλία. νένευκας γὰρ πρὸς περιεργίαν τῶν δυναμένων ὠφελεῖν διάνοιαν, καὶ ἐν τούτοις τὸν πλεῖονα χρόνον διατελεῖς. πειράσομαι δὲ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἀξιολόγων ἀναγράφειν, ἵνα διαπορευόμενος αὐτὰ κομίζῃ τοῦ βουλήματος τὸ κάλλιστον ἔπαθλον.¹⁹⁵

192. Both here and in §320, the manuscripts read κυλίκιον, meaning a small *kylix* (or “drinking cup”), as followed by Thackeray, but Wendland, following Willamowitz-Moellendorff (apparently a personal communication), and Andrews emended both to το κυλικεῖον, meaning a “sideboard or serving table” for drinking cups. The rationale must be the weight given for each, especially the larger size of the one in §320, which is clearly meant to accompany the other furnishings for a banquet, perhaps a silver tray (in the first case) or a table (in the second) with a set of silver cups.

193. Another very rare word (eight times in TLG), meaning literally “a spreading out.” The earliest occurrence by far is here; all remaining come from the third century CE or later, and most are from the Byzantine period.

194. One is tempted to read “ten robes of purple,” although a quantity of purple cloth or dye would also be a lavish gift.

195. For the term *πολίτευμα* in reference to the “citizenry” of a city, see 2 Macc 12:7 (in reference to Joppa). When the Jewish population of Alexandria (or Egypt more generally) was accorded this special status is debated, but it seems to be at issue by the time of Philo and the persecution of 37 CE. The passage in §310 is often cited to “prove” that they were organized in this manner from the early Ptolemaic period (so Tcherikover, *CPJ* 1:6, 9). The problem, of course, is the date of this text. Tcherikover (1:6–7) cites the example of the numerous foreign groups during the Ptolemaic period noted in this manner (1:7 n. 18: Idumeans, Phrygians, Kretans, etc.). He notes, however, that the term is not found in reference to the Jews in either inscriptions or papyri (1:7 n.

ordered preparations to be made for their departure and treated the men munificently. He gave each one of them three robes of the finest material, two talents of gold, a *kylix* of one talent, and the full layout of a *triclinia*.

320 And for Eleazar, he sent with the entourage ten couches with silver legs and all the appurtenances, a wine table of thirty talents, ten robes, purple, and a magnificent crown, a hundred weavings of the fine linen, also bowls and dishes, and two golden beakers as a dedication [to God].

321 Now he also wrote encouraging [Eleazar] that, should any of the men chose to return to him, he should not prevent them, since he thought it very important to associate with educated men, and he would bestow his wealth abundantly upon such men and not on vanities.

VII. Aristetas's Farewell to Philocrates (322)

322 And now Philocrates, you yourself have my narrative, just as I promised. For I think that you will delight in these books more than in those of the mythologists. For you are inclined toward an intense pursuit of those things that can benefit the mind and spend much time in them. Now I shall also attempt to record the rest of the noteworthy things, in order that, by going through them thoroughly you may win the noblest prize for your aims.

21). Similarly, Fraser (1972, 1:54–59) argued that the term *πολίτευμα* was not applied to the Jewish community before the late Ptolemaic or early Roman period. The term does not appear in the Jewish “*proseuchē* inscriptions” of the Ptolemaic period (see §3.5). It does appear in reference to the “Jewish *politeuma*” of Berenike, Cyrenaica, in the early Roman period; see I. Berenike 18 and 17 (8–6 BCE and 24–25 CE, respectively). A key reference in this regard is a passage from Josephus (*A.J.* 14.114–117) in which he cites Strabo’s history regarding the Jewish communities in Cyrene and Alexandria. Here Strabo (*apud A.J.* 14.117) describes the *ethnarch* of the Alexandrian Jewish community as governing “as the ruler of an independent *politeia*” (ὡς ἂν πολιτείας ἄρχων αὐτοτελοῦς). Cf. the use of *politeia* by Pseudo-Hecataeus *apud* Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.189. The Strabo extract has been taken in conjunction with Ep. Arist. §310 to “confirm” the status of the Jewish population as a *politeuma* from the earlier Ptolemaic period.

As Fraser rightly cautions, Strabo should be read only as evidence for the early Roman period, and his discussion of the situation of the Jews in Cyrene corresponds to the early Roman evidence noted from Berenike. Moreover, while Josephus uses the term *πολίτευμα* (ten times total), he never does so regarding the political organization of the Alexandrian community. Philo, likewise, commonly uses the term in a more

metaphorical sense (as in *Opif.* 143; *Spec.* 2.46; *Ios.* 69). However, in his defense of the rights of the Alexandrian Jews infringed by Flaccus in the persecution of 37 CE, Philo does use the term *πολιτεία* explicitly to refer to their “citizenship” (*Flacc.* 54–56). In his commentary on the *In Flaccum*, van der Horst (2003, 154–56) concurs that it is uncertain whether the Jewish civic body of Alexandria was formally constituted as a *πολίτευμα*. This problem has become more complicated, however, with the recent publication of a collection of mid- to late second-century BCE papyri from Herakleopolis that mention a *politeuma* of Jews (see Cowey and Maresch 2001). These papyri, then, are new evidence of the existence of Jewish *politeumata* in Egypt prior to the Roman period. Combined with the evidence of other *politeumata* from the second century BCE, some scholars would now argue that the emergence of *politeumata*, as designations for the “citizenry,” arose as ethnically organized garrisons as a function of military developments under Philometor in the mid-second century BCE (Honigman 2003a). That the term applies to the Jewish “citizenry” as a whole has not been demonstrated. Moreover, there is no evidence of the Jewish population of Alexandria, in particular, having citizenship and being organized as a *politeuma* in the Ptolemaic era. How, then, are we to understand this passage in §310? Lüderitz (1994, 183–225), followed by M. Williams (1998, 183 n. 51), suggested that the term *πολίτευμα* refers to a more limited group (e.g., a representative “council”), rather than the whole “Jewish citizenry.” The Berenike inscriptions seem to support this view (L. M. White 2011, 181–84; Lüderitz 1983), as do the Herakleopolis papyri, noted above (so Gambetti 2009, 48–49). Without further evidence, it may be best to understand *politeuma* as such in this passage. In this regard, several scholars have commented on the use of *τε* to connect the final group, the “leaders of the masses” (*οἱ τε ἡγούμενοι τοῦ πλῆθους*). Reading *οἱ τε* (like *οἱ καὶ*) as “who are also” would make the *πολίτευμα* a “council” of leaders and thus distinct from the Jewish population as a whole (but see also Tcherikover’s comment in *CPJ* 1:9 n. 24).

The Early Reception of the Epistle of Aristeas

2.1. Philo of Alexandria's Version of the Legend

For the study of Alexandrian Judaism, the prolific early first century CE Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria has traditionally overshadowed every other figure and text in this volume.¹ While this attention is not undeserved, the study of the Philonic corpus would be better served if it more often considered Philo's works in the context of other Jewish texts of Alexandrian provenance. One important intersection between Philo and the Epistle of Aristeas lies in the reception of the legend of the translation of the LXX. In his *De vita Mosis* (*Life of Moses*) 2.25–44, Philo preserves a version of the legend that betrays close similarities to the Epistle of Aristeas, while placing a distinct emphasis on God's role in the translation, the quality of the translation itself, and the annual celebration in commemoration of the event. Moreover, as illustrated amply in the notes to the text and translation above, there are numerous verbal correlations between Philo and the Epistle of Aristeas. Though debated, it is likely that Philo drew directly from the Epistle of Aristeas when crafting his own account; in any case, he is an important witness to the development of the LXX legend in Alexandria.

Biography

Not a great deal is known about Philo's life.² He was born into a wealthy family in Alexandria circa 20 BCE and probably died there after roughly

1. Sandmel exemplifies the traditional bias: "The fragments preserved in Eusebius from Greco-Jewish writers earlier than Philo are folksy in the extreme.... Philo could scarcely have failed to know some of this literature, or to have succeeded more fully in abstaining from echoing most of it" (1979, 13).

2. For attempts to reconstruct Philo's life, see Borgen 1997, 14–45; Schenck 2005, esp. 9–28; Schwartz 2009, 9–31; Sterling 2010, 1063–65.

41 CE.³ Philo clearly did not wish to delve into politics full-time like his brother Alexander and nephew Tiberius Iulius Alexander, but he occasionally played the politician. He led a Jewish embassy to the emperor Gaius Caligula in Rome in 39/40 CE to make an appeal for the Jews in Alexandria in response to the anti-Jewish persecution of 38 CE.⁴

Philo fancied himself a philosopher and was well educated in Hellenistic intellectual traditions as well as the Jewish scriptures in Greek.⁵ He is often considered a Middle Platonist, but his thinking was eclectic.⁶ Philo's prerogative was to employ the philosophical forms and strategies most useful for propounding interpretations of the Greek Pentateuch that would appeal to Greeks as much as Jews.⁷ While Philo shows knowledge of Judea and clearly visited Rome, the bulk of his time was spent in Alexandria.⁸ Specifically, he shows familiarity with the celebration of an annual festival on the island of Pharos commemorating the translation (*Mos.* 2.41–43). Philo was committed to forging common ground between the histories and ethics of Greco-Roman and Jewish cultural milieux.⁹

Date

To determine when Philo recorded his version of the LXX legend, we must seek the date of the second volume (of two) of his *De vita Mosi*.¹⁰ It is

3. Borgen 1992, 5:333; Schenck 2005, 23 n. 1.

4. On Philo's relatives, see Josephus, *A.J.* 18.159–160; 19.276; 20.100. Philo discusses the events in Alexandria leading up to the persecution in his *In Flaccum* and the embassy itself in *Legatio ad Gaium*. See further Goodenough 1938; van der Horst 2003, esp. 18–37; Gambetti 2009; *CPJ* 1:78–79.

5. Scholars debate whether Philo knew Hebrew. He clearly knew or had access to a list of some Hebrew-Greek correspondences, which he makes use of in his writings (e.g., *Her.* 1.78). But he relies on the LXX and leaves very little evidence that he may have engaged with the Hebrew text. His version of the legend affirms that he saw no reason to use the Hebrew text. Part of the reason for this may be that he did not know the language or that he had only a rudimentary knowledge of it. On this issue, see A. Hanson 1967, 128–39; Nikiprowetzky 1977, 50–81; Sandmel 1978, 107–12.

6. Dillon 1977, 139–83; Sterling 2010, 1069.

7. On Philo's brand of exegesis, see Amir 2004, 421–53; Borgen 1997.

8. On Philo in his Alexandrian context, see Sly 1996; Schwartz 2009, 14–31.

9. On culture and identity in Philo, see Mendelson 1988; Niehoff 2001.

10. All manuscripts and editions before Cohn 1902 treat *De vita Mosi* as three books. It is now recognized that the work consisted of only two. Philo says so himself in *Virt.* 1.52 (Colson 1929–1962, 6:274). Unfortunately, *De vita Mosi* does not yet have

generally assumed that Philo wrote his expository works prior to his philosophical works, and *De vita Mosis* should be classified with the expository works.¹¹ Some have even argued that *De vita Mosis* was written as an introduction to the expository works or even to the entire Philonic corpus.¹² If so, we might conclude that this work was written early in Philo's career. One gets the sense, however, that these books (or at least his incorporation of the LXX translation account into them) were a reaction to critics who doubted the authority of the Greek translation of the Pentateuch, the textual basis for most of Philo's work.¹³ If this theory is correct, then *De vita Mosis* would have been written after Philo had already established himself as a writer, perhaps relatively late in his career.¹⁴ Bloch has even suggested that Philo projects some of his own autobiography onto his biography of Moses.¹⁵ In particular, Philo connects his situation as a representative of the suffering Jews in Alexandria during the riots in 38 CE with the suffering of the Hebrews in Moses's Egypt. This is an attractive argument for a later dating, but ultimately the dating of *De vita Mosis* remains the subject of debate.

Audience and Purpose

Scholars have often considered *De vita Mosis* an apologetic work with the purpose of exalting Moses and the law in terms that would appeal to a Greek audience.¹⁶ Because the work is not overwhelming in its use of philosophical concepts and exegetical arguments, many would agree with Schenck that these volumes "were likely written for the 'beginner' of Philo's own day, the person with little knowledge of Judaism or philosophy."¹⁷

a critical commentary dedicated to it. However, Gregory Sterling is presently writing one for the Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series.

11. Goodenough 1933. Cf. Schenck 2005, 19; Sterling 2010: 1068; Niehoff 2010, 1075.

12. Sterling 1992b, 790; 2010, 1068.

13. Sandmel 1979, 52; Wright 2008a, 312–13.

14. Cf. Niehoff 2011, 169–85.

15. Bloch 2012.

16. See, e.g., Cohn 1899, 415–16; Goodenough 1933, 110–11.

17. Schenck 2005, 100. The idea that *De vita Mosis* was intended as a sort of introduction to Judaism for gentiles seems to derive from Goodenough 1933. Cf. Niehoff 2011, 171. The suggestion that the books were composed as missionary literature (so Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 39) goes too far.

Again, the assumption is that the audience is non-Jewish; however, the defensive elements of his LXX story may betray arguments over the LXX translation taking place within the Jewish communities of Alexandria. It is best to assume a broad audience of both Jews and Greeks in Alexandria.¹⁸ Philo's insistence on the singularity and literal correspondence of the translation suggests that his prerogative was to affirm the LXX as the words of God in response to his detractors. In the process, he provides support for his exegetical program, which invariably takes the exact words of the LXX very seriously.

Literary Context and Relationship to the Epistle of Aristeeas

Philo begins the first volume of his *De vita Mosis* (1.1) by stating, "I intend to write the life of Moses." The word for *life* here, βίος, was a genre designation in the Greco-Roman world that correlates most closely to the modern genre known as biography.¹⁹ The presentation of *De vita Mosis* is based on what Philo describes as the four offices of Moses. The first book, after dealing with Moses's early life and education, treats his role as king of the Israelites at the time of the exodus and in the wilderness. The second book covers Moses as lawgiver (2.12–65), high priest (2.66–186), and prophet (2.187–292). The LXX legend appears in the section on Moses as lawgiver. Although Philo's version of the legend seems to have little to do with Moses, its details (e.g., the literal correspondence between the Greek and Hebrew) support his larger argument for Moses's perfection, as well as the perfection of the law. Some of the variance in Philo's version of the legend can be understood as evidence of Philo's larger interests in *De vita Mosis*.

A comparison of the Epistle of Aristeeas and Philo's account of the translation reveals far more similarities than differences and no contradic-

18. So Borgen 1984, 235.

19. Priessning 1929, 143–55; Botte 1954, 57–62; Burridge 2004, 125–50. It has also been noted by some that the work resembles the so-called rewritten Bible genre since the books cover many of the scriptural events in the life of Moses, expanding and omitting without reservations (Borgen 1984, 234; 1997, 46–79; Najman 2003, 70–107; Niehoff 2010, 1075). However, rewritten Bible cannot precisely describe any of Philo's works without qualifications since his exegeses stand somewhere on a continuum between rewritten Bible and commentary. Furthermore, as Niehoff notes with reference to *De vita Mosis*, the second book "deviates significantly from the genres of the rewritten Bible and biography" (2010, 1075).

tions whatsoever.²⁰ Both texts agree in basic details: the king involved was Ptolemy II Philadelphus; there was a Jewish high priest involved; the location for the translation was the Pharos; the translation was performed by a group of translators from Judea; the translation was specifically of the law; and the Jewish people of Alexandria play some part in the story. There are further agreements that are so striking that they strongly suggest that Philo was familiar with the Epistle of Aristeas. First, Philo conveys the detail that the translation event involved significant philosophical discourse between the translators and the king (Ep. Arist. §§172–294):

Now when they arrived, having been invited into (the king's) hospitality and while they feasted, they in return feasted their host with witty and earnest conversation, for he tested the wisdom of each one of them, putting to them a succession of new and extraordinary questions; they, since the time did not allow of their being prolix in their answers, replied cleverly yet right on the mark, as if they were delivering sententious maxims (apophthegms) that had already been prepared. (*Mos.* 2.33).

Second, Philo also deems it important to relate that there were envoys from Alexandria to Jerusalem involved; even though he does not mention their names (Aristeas and Andreas, according to the Epistle of Aristeas) the terminology used is quite similar to that in the Epistle of Aristeas.²¹ Third, both sources agree that the purpose of the translation was for the benefit of all humans. Philo says this explicitly in 2.36 (see also 2.31), while the Epistle of Aristeas expresses this idea by declaring that the Jewish law should be included in the museum and library (Ep. Arist. §§10, 31) and by having the translators expound the benefits of the law for humans through extensive philosophical exhortation (e.g., §§190, 232). Fourth, a possible connection arises in Philo's description of the Jewish high priest also as king, an anachronism for Philo's time as well as the ostensible time of the Epistle of Aristeas.²² Because the letters between

20. For comparisons, see Jellicoe 1961, 261–71; Janowitz 1991, 129–40; Fernández-Marcos 2001, 47–50; Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 35–40; Borchardt 2012, 15–18.

21. Compare *Mos.* 2.31 (πρέσβεις εὐθὺς ἐξέπεμπε) with Ep. Arist. §3a (ἐαυτοὺς ἐπεδώκαμεν εἰς τὸν προειρημένον ἄνδρα πρεσβείαν); cf. §4 also.

22. *Mos.* 2.31: “[Philadelphus] immediately sent out ambassadors to the high priest and king of Judea—for they were the same.” Since Philo was well-informed about

Philadelphus and Eleazar in the Epistle of Aristeas are presented as letters between equals and stressing their friendly relations, Philo articulates an implied code by calling the high priest a king. At the same time, he betrays his interest in demonstrating how the offices of high priest and king were perfectly combined by Moses.²³

There are also some points at which Philo agrees with the Epistle of Aristeas but adds further emphasis. For instance, while there is a suggestion of God's involvement in the translation in Ep. Arist. §307, Philo repeatedly insists on this point. Similarly, while the Epistle of Aristeas stresses the accuracy of the translation (§§32, 310), this is even more of a driving theme in Philo's account, where there is an abiding concern over the literal correspondence between the Hebrew and Greek (e.g., *Mos.* 2.39).²⁴ Both authors even undergird this shared concern using similar language invoking LXX Deuteronomy's injunctions not to alter the text (Ep. Arist. §311; *Mos.* 2.34; cf. LXX Deut 4:2; 12:32).²⁵ Additionally, while Ep. Arist. §180 suggests

Judea, this conflation should not be considered a simple error or a historical allusion to the Hasmonean era. See further Jellicoe 1968, 39, 42; Dines 2004, 66; Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 40. See also Justin, *Apol.* 1.31.2 (sec. 2.4.1, below).

23. Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 40.

24. See Philo's descriptions of the relationship between the Greek and the Hebrew: "exactly corresponding words" (*κύρια κυρίοις ὀνόμασι*), 2.38 (on this phrase, see Colson 1929–1962, 6:606 n. §38); "do not admit any variety of interpretation" (*ποικιλίαν ἐρμηνείας οὐκ ἀνέχεται*), 2.39; "sisters" (*ἀδελφάς*), 2.40; "one and the same" (*ὡς μίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν*), 2.40. Philo's underscoring of God's role in the translation and the exact correspondence between the Greek and Hebrew generally place emphasis on textual fixity, but descriptions of the text such as "which words were alone or in the greatest possible degree destined to explain with clarity and force the matters that it was desired to reveal" (2.39) strongly suggest that Philo's version is concerned with affirming that there is only one authoritative translation and that it is the one that he uses.

25. Ep. Arist. §311: *ἐκέλευσαν διαράσασθαι, καθὼς ἔθος αὐτοῖς ἔστιν, εἴ τις διασκευάσει προστίθεις ἢ μεταφέρων τι τὸ σύνολον τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ποιούμενος ἀφαίρεσιν*; Philo, *Mos.* 2.34: *μήτ' ἀφελεῖν τι μήτε προσθεῖναι ἢ μεταθεῖναι δυναμένους, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἰδέαν καὶ τὸν τύπον αὐτῶν διαφυλάττοντας*. It seems that both statements are based on the LXX (or an alternative Greek rendering) of Deut 4:2 (and 12:32): *οὐ προσθήσετε πρὸς τὸ ῥῆμα ὃ ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν καὶ οὐκ ἀφελεῖτε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ*. Forms or cognates of the pivotal words *προστίθηναι* and *ἀφαιρέω* are common to each text. The inclusion of this verse by both the author of the Epistle of Aristeas and Philo may strongly suggest a literary dependence, but it cannot prove one since both authors could have independently invoked this well-known scriptural command in relation to the legend. Furthermore, even while both authors employ a word meaning something like "transfer" or "alter" (Ep. Arist. §311: *μεταφέρω*; Philo, *Mos.* 2.34: *μετατίθηναι*), reflecting an aspect of

that Philadelphus made the day in which a major Ptolemaic naval victory was commemorated also a day of commemoration for the translation, Philo casts the annual celebration on the Pharos as proof of the ongoing importance of the translation for Jews and Greeks (*Mos.* 2.35–36).²⁶ Taken together, these comparisons do not constitute divergences from the Epistle of Aristeas but rather elaborations of it. For Philo, it is vital to show that the translators were only God's instruments in the production of the translation and that the translation is literal and perfect in every way.²⁷ As Wright has argued, Philo might be responding to opponents who denounced the Greek of the LXX as unsophisticated.²⁸ He might also be reacting to critics who claimed that the Greek is unable to translate the Hebrew correctly in all instances and thus that the Greek was not a divinely sanctioned text in the same way as the Hebrew.²⁹ Such accusations would threaten to unhinge Philo's entire exegetical program, which was founded on the notion that the Greek scriptures are the words of God and in perfect agreement with nature. Philo, then, had goals that reach beyond the purpose of the Epistle of Aristeas but are in no way inconsistent with it.

the command not found in Deuteronomy, they do not use the same word. Correspondences like this give the impression that Philo knew the Epistle of Aristeas but either did not have the text before him or simply wished to put the text's less sophisticated Greek into his own words.

26. Wasserstein and Wasserstein rightly caution that, "because Philo is our only source for this annual celebration, we have no way of knowing whether he is giving us a description of a real event" (2006, 41 n. 31). While the historical veracity of the event cannot be determined without external corroboration, there is also no good reason to doubt that Philo is describing a real celebration among the Jews of Alexandria (Rajak 2009, 35), especially considering the suggestion of such a celebration in Ep. Arist. §180. However, apologetic details of his account (e.g., that the festival was celebrated by "not only Jews but a multitude of others," *Mos.* 2.41) deserve skepticism. See further the suggestion of Amir (2004, 442 n. 133) that a rabbinic tradition recorded in a supplement to Megillat Taanit is later evidence of the same celebration noted by Philo. The rabbinic text documents an annual celebration on the eighth of Tevet commemorating the translation of the Torah into Greek during the reign of King Ptolemy.

27. Wasserstein and Wasserstein 2006, 39; Wright 2008a, 311; Borchardt 2012, 17.

28. Wright 2008a, 311–12. Cf. Sandmel 1979, 52.

29. Accordingly, Philo might also be addressing the reception of the Greek prologue to Sirach. Written by Ben Sira's grandson when he translated the book into Greek toward the end of the second century BCE in Alexandria, the prologue bemoans the process of translation: "For what was originally expressed in the Hebrew does not have exactly the same sense when translated into another language" (v. 23).

There are some details in the Epistle of Aristeas that Philo does not relate. He does not name the envoys or give the number and names of the translators, but these specifics are unnecessary for Philo's concise account. More remarkably, Philo does not mention Demetrius of Phalerum and the library in relation to the translation endeavor. Altogether, it seems that the details Philo omitted from his summary of the legend were either deemed unnecessary or considered a potential distraction from his particular aims in the *Life of Moses*.

On the basis of these links, scholars have rightly assumed that Philo knew the Epistle of Aristeas,³⁰ but deciding the extent of his literary dependence on this text is not so simple. As the notes to the translation of the Epistle of Aristeas above show, there are some striking instances of vocabulary shared by the Epistle of Aristeas and Philo that merit further examination. Ultimately, we have every reason to believe that Philo would have known the text and that it would have influenced his version of the story. The particularly Aristeian details such as the king asking questions of the translators and being answered happily with concise apothegms (*Mos.* 2.33) demonstrate Philo's familiarity with the Epistle of Aristeas, especially given the fact that the banquet scene is the longest single segment of the story in the Epistle of Aristeas, but it is generally omitted by later epitomies (including both Josephus and Eusebius).

In light of other parallels between the Epistle of Aristeas and Philo's writings, such as their similar treatments of the Jewish dietary laws (*Ep. Arist.* §§147–153; Philo, *Spec.* 4.104–108), some scholars have argued that the Epistle of Aristeas was written by someone in Philo's circle, perhaps a student.³¹ While there is presently not enough evidence to date the Epistle of Aristeas to the time of Philo, it is possible that the generation of Alexandrian Jewish elites before Philo produced and transmitted the Epistle of Aristeas and that it strongly influenced the thought of Philo and his school.

[GAK]

30. Wasserstein and Wasserstein (2006, esp. 37–38) and Borchardt (2012, 16), among others, find it likely that Philo depended directly on the Epistle of Aristeas. Meecham (1932, 123–24) and Borgen (1997, 142) prefer to understand Philo's sources as Alexandrian traditions about the translation, broadly construed.

31. Février 1925, esp. 22–31; cf. Willrich 1900, 118–30; 1924, 86–91.

Philo of Alexandria, *De vita Mosis* 2.25–44³²

25 Τὸ δὲ τῆς νομοθεσίας ἱεροπρεπὲς ὡς οὐ παρ' Ἰουδαίοις μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ παρὰ πᾶσι τοῖς ἄλλοις τεθαύμασται, δῆλον ἔκ τε τῶν εἰρημένων ἤδη καὶ τῶν μελλόντων λέγεσθαι. 26 τὸ παλαιὸν ἐγράφησαν οἱ νόμοι γλώσση Χαλδαϊκῇ καὶ μέχρι πολλοῦ διέμειναν ἐν ὁμοίῳ τὴν διάλεκτον οὐ μεταβάλλοντες, ἕως μῆπω τὸ κάλλος εἰς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους ἀνέφηναν αὐτῶν. 27 ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐκ τῆς καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν συνεχοῦς μελέτης καὶ ἀσκήσεως τῶν χρωμένων αἰσθησις ἐγένετο καὶ ἑτέροις καὶ τὸ κλέος ἐφοῖτα πανταχόσε—τὰ γὰρ καλὰ καὶ φθόνῳ πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐπισκιασθῆ χρόνον, ἐπὶ καιρῶν αὖθις ἀναλάμπει φύσεως εὐμενεία—, δεινὸν ἡγησάμενοί τινες, εἰ οἱ νόμοι παρὰ τῷ ἡμίσει τμήματι τοῦ γένους ἀνθρώπων ἐξετασθήσονται μόνῳ τῷ βαρβαρικῷ, τὸ δ' Ἑλληνικὸν εἰς ἅπαν ἀμοιρήσει, πρὸς ἐρμηνείαν τὴν τούτων ἐτράποντο. 28 τὸ δ' ἔργον ἐπεὶ καὶ μέγα ἦν καὶ κοινωφελές, οὐκ ἰδιώταις οὐδ' ἄρχουσιν, ὧν πολλὸς ἀριθμὸς, ἀλλὰ βασιλεῦσι καὶ βασιλέων ἀνετέθη τῷ δοκιμωτάτῳ.

29 Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλάδελφος ἐπικληθεὶς τρίτος μὲν ἦν ἀπ' Ἀλεξάνδρου τοῦ τὴν Αἴγυπτον παραλαβόντος, ἀρεταῖς δὲ ταῖς ἐν ἡγεμονίᾳ πάντων, οὐχὶ τῶν καθ' αὐτὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πάλαι πώποτε γεγενημένων ἄριστος, οὗ καὶ μέχρι νῦν τοσαύταις ὕστερον γενεαῖς ἄδεται τὸ κλέος πολλὰ δείγματα καὶ μνημεῖα τῆς μεγαλοφροσύνης κατὰ πόλεις καὶ χώρας ἀπολιπόντος, ὡς ἤδη καὶ ἐν παροιμίας εἶδει τὰς ὑπερόγκους φιλοτιμίας καὶ μεγάλας κατασκευὰς Φιλαδελφείους ἀπ' ἐκείνου καλεῖσθαι. 30 συνόλως μὲν οὖν ἡ τῶν Πτολεμαίων οἰκία διαφερόντως παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας βασιλείας ἤκμασεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς Πτολεμαίοις ὁ Φιλάδελφος· ὅσα γὰρ εἷς ἔδρασεν οὗτος ἐπαινετά, μόλις ἐκεῖνοι πάντες ἄνθρωποι διεπράξαντο, γενόμενος καθάπερ ἐν ζῳῳ τὸ ἡγεμονεῦον κεφαλὴν τρόπον τινα τῶν βασιλέων.

31 ὁ δὲ τοιοῦτος ζῆλον καὶ πόθον λαβὼν τῆς νομοθεσίας ἡμῶν εἰς Ἑλλάδα γλῶτταν τὴν Χαλδαϊκὴν μεθαρμόζεσθαι διανοεῖτο καὶ πρέσβεις εὐθὺς ἐξέπεμπε πρὸς τὸν τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἀρχιερέα καὶ βασιλέα—ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἦν—τό τε βούλημα δηλῶν καὶ προτρέπων ἀριστίνδην ἐλέσθαι τοὺς τὸν νόμον διερμηνεύσοντας. 32 ὁ δ' οἷα εἰκὸς ἦσθεις καὶ νομίσας οὐκ ἄνευ θείας ἐπιφροσύνης περὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον

32. Greek text based on Colson 1929–1962, 6:460–70.

25 That the sacred character of our legislation is deemed wondrous not among the Jews only but also by all other nations is clear, both from what has been already said and from what I am about to state. **26** In ancient times our laws were written in the Chaldean language, and for a long time they remained in the same condition as at first, not changing their language as long as their beauty had not made them known to other peoples. **27** But since from the continuous, daily practice and training of those following them, perception came also to others and their fame spread everywhere, for the good, even though it may be overshadowed for a short time by envy, still over time the excellence of its nature shines forth. Some persons, thinking it a scandalous thing that these laws should be known only among a portion of the human race, namely, among the barbarians, and that the Greek nation should be wholly and entirely ignorant of them, turned their attention to their translation. **28** And since this undertaking was so great and for common benefit, not only of private persons but also of rulers, of whom there were large numbers, it was entrusted to kings and to the most illustrious of all kings.

29 Now Ptolemy surnamed Philadelphus was the third from Alexander, who had conquered Egypt, and in the virtues needed for governing he was above all the most excellent, not only of all those of his time but of all that ever lived, so that even now, after many generations, his fame is still celebrated, as having left many instances and monuments of his magnanimity in the cities and districts of his kingdom, so that even now it is come to be a sort of proverbial expression to call excessive magnificence and zeal for honor and splendor in preparation "Philadelphian," from his name. **30** On the whole, therefore, the family of the Ptolemies flourished exceedingly beyond all other kings, and among the Ptolemies Philadelphus (most of all), for all the rest put together scarcely did as many glorious and praiseworthy actions as this one king did by himself, becoming the leader, just as in a herd, and in some manner, the head of all the kings.

31 He, then, being of such character and having conceived zeal and yearning for our legislation, made up his mind to have the Chaldean translated into the Greek language and immediately sent out ambassadors to the high priest and king of Judea—for they were the same—and having clarified his wishes, he appealed to him to select by merit those who would make a translation of the law. **32** And he (the priest-king), as was natural, being greatly pleased and thinking that the king would not have become

ἔργον ἐσπουδακέναι τὸν βασιλέα, σκεψάμενος τοὺς παρ' αὐτῷ δοκιμωτάτους Ἑβραίων, οἱ πρὸς τῇ πατρίῳ καὶ τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπεπαίδευντο παιδεῖαν, ἄσμενος ἀποστέλλει.

33 ὡς δ' ἤχον, ἐπὶ ξενίαν κληθέντες λόγοις ἀστείοις καὶ σπουδαίοις τὸν ἐστιάτορα εὐώχουν ἀντεφεστιῶντες· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἀπεπειρᾶτο τῆς ἐκάστου σοφίας καινὰς ἄλλ' οὐ τὰς ἐν ἔθει ζητήσεις προτείνων, οἱ δ' εὐστόχως καὶ εὐθυβόλως, οὐκ ἐπιτρέποντος μακρηγορεῖν τοῦ καιροῦ, καθάπερ ἀποφθεγγόμενοι τὰ προταθέντα διελύοντο.

34 δοκιμασθέντες δ' εὐθύς ἤρξαντο τὰ τῆς καλῆς πρεσβείας ἀποτελεῖν καὶ λογισάμενοι παρ' αὐτοῖς, ὅσον εἴη τὸ πρᾶγμα θεσπισθέντας νόμους χρησμοῖς διερμηνεύειν, μήτ' ἀφελεῖν τι μήτε προσθεῖναι ἢ μεταθεῖναι δυναμένους, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἰδέαν καὶ τὸν τύπον αὐτῶν διαφυλάττοντας, ἐσκόπουν τὸ καθαρώτατον τῶν περὶ τὸν τόπον χωρίων ἔξω πόλεως· τὰ γὰρ ἐντὸς τείχους ἅτε παντοδαπῶν πεπληθότα ζώων διὰ νόσους καὶ τελευτὰς καὶ τὰς ὑγαινόντων οὐκ εὐαγεῖς πράξεις ἦν ὑποπτα.

35 νῆσος ἡ Φάρος πρόκειται τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας, ἥς αὐχὴν ὑποταίνιος τέταται πρὸς τὴν πόλιν περικλειόμενος οὐκ ἀγχιβαθεῖ τὰ δὲ πολλὰ τεναγώδει θαλάττῃ, ὡς καὶ τῆς τῶν κυμάτων φορᾶς τὸν πολὺν ἤχον καὶ πάταγον ἐκ πάνυ μακροῦ διαστήματος προεκλύεσθαι. **36** τοῦτον ἐξ ἀπάντων τῶν ἐν κύκλῳ κρίναντες ἐπιτηδεϊότατον εἶναι τὸν τόπον ἐνησυχάσαι καὶ ἐνηρεμῆσαι καὶ μόνῃ τῇ ψυχῇ πρὸς μόνους ὁμιλῆσαι τοὺς νόμους, ἐνταυθοῖ κατέμειναν καὶ τὰς ἱερὰς βίβλους λαβόντες ἀνατείνουσιν ἅμ' αὐταῖς καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἰς οὐρανόν, αἰτούμενοι τὸν θεὸν μὴ διαμαρτεῖν τῆς προθέσεως· ὁ δ' ἐπινεύει ταῖς εὐχαῖς, ἵνα τὸ πλεῖστον ἢ καὶ τὸ σύμπαν γένος ἀνθρώπων ὠφελῇ χρησόμενον εἰς ἐπανόρθωσιν βίου φιλοσόφοις καὶ παγκάλους διατάγμασι.

37 καθίσαντες δ' ἐν ἀποκρύφῳ καὶ μηδενὸς παρόντος ὅτι μὴ τῶν τῆς φύσεως μερῶν, γῆς ὕδατος ἀέρος οὐρανοῦ, περὶ ὧν πρῶτον τῆς γενέσεως ἔμελλον ἱεροφαντήσιν, κοσμοποιία γὰρ ἡ τῶν νόμων ἐστὶν ἀρχή, καθάπερ ἐνθουσιῶντες

so zealous for such a project except by the providence of God, considered and with great care selected the most approved of the Hebrews that he had about him, who besides their ancestral tradition also had been well educated in Greek culture, and cheerfully sent them.

33 Now when they arrived, having been invited into (the king's) hospitality and while they feasted, they in return feasted their host with witty and earnest conversation, for he tested the wisdom of each one of them, putting to them a succession of new and extraordinary questions; they, since the time did not allow of their being prolix in their answers, replied cleverly yet right on the mark, as if they were delivering sententious maxims (apophthegms) that had already been prepared.

34 Having thus been proven, they immediately began to fulfill the objects for which that honorable embassy had been sent, and considering among themselves how important the affair was, to translate laws that had been divinely given by direct inspiration, since they were not able either to take away anything or to add anything or to alter anything but were bound to preserve the original form and character of the whole composition, they looked out for the most completely purified place of all the spots on the outside of the city. For the places within the walls, as being filled with all kinds of animals, were held in suspicion by them by reason of the diseases and deaths of some and the accursed actions of those who were in health.

35 The island of Pharos lies in front of Alexandria, the neck of which runs out like a sort of tongue toward the city, being surrounded with water of no great depth, but chiefly with shoals and shallow water, so that the great noise and roaring from the beating of the waves is kept at a considerable distance and so mitigated. **36** They judged this place to be the most suitable of all the spots in the neighborhood for them to enjoy quiet and tranquillity, so that they might associate with the laws alone in their minds; there they remained, and having taken the sacred scriptures they lifted up them and their hands also to heaven, entreating of God that they might not fail in their object. And he assented to their prayers, that the greater part or indeed the universal race of humanity might be benefited, by using these philosophical and entirely beautiful commandments for the correction of their lives.

37 Therefore, being situated in a secret place, and nothing being present not among the elements of nature—that is, the earth, the water, the air, and the heaven—concerning the genesis of which they were first of all going to explain the sacred account, for the account of the creation of the

προεφήτευνον οὐκ ἄλλα ἄλλοι, τὰ δ' αὐτὰ πάντες ὀνόματα καὶ ῥήματα, ὥσπερ ὑποβολέως ἐκάστοις ἀοράτως ἐνηχοῦντος. **38** καίτοι τίς οὐκ οἶδεν, ὅτι πᾶσα μὲν διάλεκτος, ἡ δ' Ἑλληνικὴ διαφερόντως, ὀνομάτων πλουτεῖ, καὶ ταῦτὸν ἐνθύμημα οἶόν τε μεταφράζοντα καὶ παραφράζοντα σχηματίζει πολλὰ ὥς, ἄλλοτε ἄλλας ἐφαρμόζοντα λέξεις; ὅπερ ἐπὶ ταύτης τῆς νομοθεσίας οὐ φασι συμβῆναι, συνενεχθῆναι δ' εἰς ταῦτὸν κύρια κυρίοις ὀνόμασι, τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ τοῖς Χαλδαίοις, ἐναρμοσθέντα εὖ μάλα τοῖς δηλουμένοις πράγμασιν. **39** ὃν γὰρ τρόπον, οἶμαι, ἐν γεωμετρίας καὶ διαλεκτικῇ τὰ σημαίνόμενα ποικιλίαν ἐρμηνείας οὐκ ἀνέχεται, μένει δ' ἀμετάβλητος ἡ ἐξ ἀρχῆς τεθεῖσα, τὸν αὐτὸν ὡς ἔοικε τρόπον καὶ οὗτοι συντρέχοντα τοῖς πράγμασιν ὀνόματα ἐξεῦρον, ἅπερ δὴ μόνα ἢ μάλιστα τρανώσειν ἔμελλεν ἐμφαντικῶς τὰ δηλούμενα. **40** σαφεστάτη δὲ τοῦδε πίστις· ἐάν τε Χαλδαῖοι τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν γλῶτταν ἐάν τε Ἑλλήνες τὴν Χαλδαίων ἀναδιδαχθῶσι καὶ ἀμφοτέραις ταῖς γραφαῖς ἐντύχῃσι, τῇ τε Χαλδαϊκῇ καὶ τῇ ἐρμηνευθείσῃ, καθάπερ ἀδελφὰς μᾶλλον δ' ὡς μίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔν τε τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασι τεθήπασι καὶ προσκυνοῦσιν, οὐχ ἐρμηνείας ἐκείνους ἀλλ' ἱεροφάντας καὶ προφήτας προσαγορεύοντες οἷς ἐξεγένετο συνδραμεῖν λογισμοῖς εἰλικρινέσι τῷ Μωυσέως καθαρωτάτῳ πνεύματι. **41** διὸ καὶ μέχρι νῦν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος ἑορτὴ καὶ πανήγυρις ἄγεται κατὰ τὴν Φάρον νῆσον, εἰς ἣν οὐκ Ἰουδαῖοι μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ παμπληθεῖς ἕτεροι διαπλέουσιν τό τε χωρίον σεμνυνοῦντες, ἐν ᾧ πρῶτον τὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἐξέλαμψε, καὶ παλαιᾷς ἔνεκεν εὐεργεσίας αἰεὶ νεαζούσης εὐχαριστήσοντες τῷ θεῷ.

42 μετὰ δὲ τὰς εὐχὰς καὶ τὰς εὐχαριστίας οἱ μὲν πηξάμενοι σκηνὰς ἐπὶ τῶν αἰγιαλῶν οἱ δ' ἐπὶ τῆς αἰγιαλίτιδος ψάμμου κατακλινέντες ἐν ὑπαίθρῳ μετ' οἰκείων καὶ φίλων ἐστιῶνται, πολυτελεστέραν τῆς ἐν βασιλείοις κατασκευῆς τότε τὴν ἀκτὴν νομίζοντες. **43** οὕτω μὲν οἱ νόμοι ζηλωτοὶ καὶ περιμάχητοι πᾶσιν ιδιώταις τε καὶ ἡγεμόσιν ἐπιδείκνυνται καὶ ταῦτ' ἐκ πολλῶν χρόνων τοῦ ἔθνους οὐκ εὐτυχοῦντος—τὰ δὲ τῶν μὴ ἐν ἀκμαῖς πέφυκέ πως ἐπισκιάζεσθαι—.

world is the beginning of the law, they, like men inspired, prophesied, not one saying one thing and another another, but every one of them employed the selfsame nouns and verbs, as if some unseen prompter had suggested all their language to them. **38** Yet who is there who does not know that every language, and the Greek language above all others, is rich in a variety of words and that it is possible to vary a sentence and to paraphrase the same idea so as to set it forth in a great variety of manners, adapting many different forms of expression to it at different times. But this, they say, did not happen at all in the case of this translation of the law, but that in every case exactly corresponding Greek words were employed to translate literally the appropriate Chaldean words, being adapted with exceeding propriety to the matters that were to be explained; **39** for just as I suppose the things that are proved in geometry and logic do not admit any variety of interpretation, but the proposition that was set forth from the beginning remains unaltered, in like manner I conceive did these men find words precisely and literally corresponding to the things, which words were alone or in the greatest possible degree destined to explain with clearness and force the matters that it was desired to reveal. **40** And there is a very evident proof of this, for if Chaldeans were to learn the Greek language and Greeks to learn Chaldean, and if each were to meet with those scriptures in both languages, namely, the Chaldaic and the translated version, they would admire and reverence them both as sisters, or rather as one and the same both in their facts and in their language, considering these translators not mere interpreters but hierophants and prophets to whom it had been granted it their honest and guileless minds to go along with the most pure spirit of Moses. **41** On which account, even to this very day, there is every year a solemn assembly held and a festival celebrated on the island of Pharos, to which not only Jews but a multitude of others sail across, reverencing the place in which the first light of interpretation shone forth and on account of that ancient benefaction that was ever new, giving thanks to god.

42 And after the prayers and the giving of thanks some of them pitched tents on the shore, and some of them lay down without any tents in the open air on the sand of the shore and feasted with their relations and friends, thinking the shore at that time a more beautiful abode than the furniture of the king's palace. **43** In this way those admirable and incomparable and most desirable laws were made known to all people, whether private individuals or kings, and this also at a period when the nation had not been prosperous for a long time.—*Now in general the affairs of those who are not*

44 εἰ δὲ γένοιτό τις ἀφορμὴ πρὸς τὸ λαμπρότερον, πόσῃν εἰκὸς ἐπίδοσιν γενήσεσθαι; καταλιπόντας ἂν οἶμαι τὰ ἴδια καὶ πολλὰ χαίρειν φράσαντας τοῖς πατρίοις ἐκάστους μεταβαλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν τούτων μόνων τιμὴν· εὐτυχία γὰρ τοῦ ἔθνους οἱ νόμοι συναναλάμψαντες ἀμαυρώσουσι τοὺς ἄλλους καθάπερ ἀνατείλας ἥλιος τοὺς ἀστέρας.

flourishing are hidden under a cloud.—**44** But then, if they make any fresh start and begin to improve, how great is the increase of their renown and glory? I think that in that case every nation, abandoning all their own individual customs, and utterly disregarding their national laws, would change and come over to the honor of such a people only, for their laws shining in connection with, and simultaneously with, the prosperity of the nation, will obscure all others, just as the rising sun obscures the stars.

2.2. Josephus's Paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeeas

When compared with the other authors discussed in this volume, Josephus is the least controversial with regard to questions of authorship, dating, and provenance. This introduction focuses on his paraphrase of *Ep. Arist.* in *A.J.* 12.11–118. With this introduction, we provide a schematic selection from Josephus's paraphrase in order to show his dependence on and emendation of the Epistle of Aristeeas as well as elements of his stylistic reworking, particularly with regard to epistolary features.

Biography and Date

According to his *Vita* (2–5), Josephus was born into an elite priestly family in Jerusalem in 37 CE as Yosef ben Mattityahu (Mattathias).¹ When the First Jewish Revolt against Rome broke out in 66 CE, Josephus's prominence among the social and political elite led to his selection as general for the defense of Galilee. After suffering defeat at the hands of the Romans in 67 CE (*B.J.* 3.316–397), he was taken prisoner.² In 69 CE, when Vespasian was named emperor, he granted Josephus his freedom (*B.J.* 4.622–629). Soon after, Yosef acquired Roman citizenship and became Titus Flavius Josephus. Living in Rome for the rest of his life (*Vita* 423), he completed at least four historical works on the Jews: *Jewish War* (*Bellum Judaicum*) in the late 70s or 80s CE; *Jewish Antiquities* (*Antiquitates Judaicae*) in the 80s CE, finished by 93/94 CE; *Life* (*Vita*) in 94/95 CE; and *Against Apion* (*Contra Apionem*) in the 90s CE. Josephus died sometime in the decade following the publication of *Contra Apionem*.³

1. For more extensive introductions to Josephus's life, with bibliography, see Rajak 1983; Feldman 1992, 3:981–88; Landau 2006, 4; Chapman 2009, 319–31; Mason 2010, 828–32.

2. Josephus, *B.J.* 3.392–402. Cf. Suetonius, *Vesp.* 5; Dio Cassius, *Hist. rom.* 66.1.

3. On the date of *Antiquitates Judaicae*, see *A.J.* 20.267; Edmondson 2005, 7; cf. Jones 2005, 120. On the *Jewish War*, see S. Cohen 2002, 84–90.

Audience and Purpose

Because Josephus wrote the *Antiquitates Judaicae* in Greek, included several references to an implied gentile audience (including frequent explanations of Jewish culture), and identified an elite patron by the name of Epaphroditus, it is best to consider its primary audience gentiles, though not to the exclusion of a Jewish readership.⁴ Sterling views *Antiquitates Judaicae* as apologetic historiography, a growing response to the Greek ethnographic tradition exemplified in the works of Manetho and Berossus, the purpose of which was “to establish the identity of the group within the setting of the larger world.”⁵ The Josephan paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeeas dovetails nicely with the broader aims of apologetic historiography aimed at gentiles. The paraphrase provides an example of mutual respect between Ptolemaic Alexandria and the Jewish world.

Relation to the Epistle of Aristeeas

Josephus’s paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeeas is located at the beginning of book 12 of the *Antiquitates Judaicae*, sandwiched between an account of rocky Greco-Jewish relations beginning with the Ptolemaic capture of Judea and the subsequent revolt of Judas Maccabeus. In this context, the story of the translation stands out as a shining example of cooperation between the two peoples, whereas the account immediately following it relates the adoption of Greek customs that was forced upon the Jews by

4. For references to an implicit audience, see, e.g., *A.J.* 1.5, 9; 20.262. Feldman (2000: xix) identifies the following passages as instances of Josephan explanations of Jewish culture: *A.J.* 1.128–129; 3.317; 14.1–3, 186–187; 16.175; 17.254; *Vita* 1, 12. For Epaphroditus as patron, see *A.J.* 1.8; *Vita* 430; *C. Ap.* 1.1; 2.1, 296. On the audience of *Antiquitates Judaicae*, see Lindner 1972; Attridge 1976; Bilde 1988; Feldman 2000, xxxiv. While there is nothing to indicate that Josephus did not expect Jewish readers, in light of his own description of his work, it is difficult to accept Laquer’s (1970) theory that *Antiquitates Judaicae* was written for a wholly Jewish audience. Furthermore, if Josephus intended *Antiquitates Judaicae* as propaganda in support of the nascent rabbinic movement, as some have argued (Smith 1956; S. Schwartz 1990; S. Cohen 2002), one would expect him to draw an allusion in his paraphrase between the seventy-two translators of the Epistle of Aristeeas and the seventy-two elders traditionally thought to have played a role at Yavneh (e.g., *m. Yad.* 3:5). Instead, Josephus changes the seventy-two translators of the Epistle of Aristeeas to seventy (*A.J.* 12.57, 86).

5. Sterling 1992a, 17; see also 297–308. On *Antiquitates Judaicae* as apologetic historiography, see Attridge 1976, 43–57 and *passim*.

Antiochus IV Epiphanes (A.J. 12.248–256). Because *Antiquitates Judaicae* proposes a space of cultural equality between Jewish and Greek cultures as part of its apologetic program, this contrast is significant, providing historical *exempla* for how relations between the two peoples should and should not be.

The content of the Josephan paraphrase is extremely close to that of its Aristeian source, with some minor discrepancies regarding names and numerical values.⁶ Josephus has, however, removed portions of the Epistle of Aristeeas and added sections to it in order better to achieve his own narrative goals. Pelletier's *Flavius Josèphe adaptateur de la Lettre d'Aristée* (1962a), the only full study of Josephus's treatment of the Epistle of Aristeeas,⁷ identifies two major aims of the Josephan paraphrase: to present an *apologia* for Jews in the Greco-Roman world and to adhere more closely to the traditions of impersonal history.⁸ The major omissions that the Josephan paraphrase makes are:

- ♦ Ep. Arist. §§1–8: the introductory preamble to the letter is removed because Josephus is not writing a letter that follows epistolary conventions but a history.
- ♦ Ep. Arist. §§47–50: the names of the translators commissioned by Eleazar are removed. Josephus states that it is not necessary to include them (A.J. 12.57).
- ♦ Ep. Arist. §§83–171: the most conspicuous section of the letter that Josephus omits includes the narrative of the voyage to Jerusalem, the ekphrastic description of the city and the temple, and the excursus on the laws of the Jews regarding temple sacrifices. Pelletier argues that the removal of this section was due to the Roman destruction of the temple.⁹

6. Ep. Arist. §19 (βραχεῖ πλείον μυριάδων δέκα) // A.J. 12.24 (ὀλίγῳ πλείονας ... τῶν ἑνδεκα μυριάδων): the number of Jews to be freed by Ptolemy differs (110,000 to 100,000); Ep. Arist. §20, 22, 27 // A.J. , 28, 33: the ransom offered by Ptolemy increases in the Josephan account; A.J. 12.57 and 12.86 mention seventy elders instead of the seventy-two described in Ep. Arist. Also regarding names, Ep. Arist. §184 has Ἐλεάζαρον, while A.J. 12.97 has Ἐλισαῖον. See further, S. Cohen 2002, 35 n. 42; Schreckenberg 1964, 570; Pelletier 1962b, 206.

7. See also the brief study of G. Stählin 1930.

8. Pelletier 1962a, 206.

9. Pelletier 1962a, 201–2; that is, references to the temple and detailed descriptions of Jerusalem ran the risk of drawing the ire of the Flavian emperors

- ♦ Ep. Arist. §§188–300: the final and longest portion of the Epistle of Aristaeus omitted by Josephus is the *peri basileias* section, in which Ptolemy asks questions of all of the seventy-two elders. Here again Josephus acknowledges his omission and encourages the reader who wishes to know more to consult the Aristean original (A.J. 12.100).¹⁰

Aside from omitting certain sections of the Epistle of Aristaeus, Josephus also makes a few additions. For the most part, these additions are statements regarding his omissions (e.g., why he chose to omit certain portions, where readers can find the omitted material).¹¹ However, the remaining additions add credence to the character of Aristaeus and, consequently, to the account that bears his name. The two additions in question are as follows:

A.J. 12.17

Ἀρισταῖος¹² δέ τις φίλος ὢν ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ σπουδαζόμενος ὑπ' αὐτοῦ διὰ μετριότητα...

Now a certain Aristaeus, who was one of the king's closest Friends and was respected by him for his moderation...

A.J. 12.23

ἴσθι μέντοι γε, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ὥς οὔτε γένει προσήκων αὐτοῖς οὔτε ὁμόφυλος ὢν ταῦτα περὶ αὐτῶν ἀξιῶ, πάντων δὲ ἀνθρώπων δημιούργημα ὄντων τοῦ θεοῦ: καὶ δὴ γινώσκων αὐτὸν ἡδόμενον τοῖς εὖ ποιοῦσιν ἐπὶ τοῦτο καὶ σὲ παρακαλῶ.

You should, however, know, O King, that it is not because I am related to them by kind or am their countryman that I ask these things on their behalf, but I urge you to do this because all men are the handi-

10. See Pelletier 1962a, 199 (see also 178–79, arguing that Josephus gives an adequate summary of the moral questions in 12.99–100); 1989, 105–6. For an overview of *peri basileias* literature, see Murray 2008; cf. Fraade 2002, esp. 330 n. 48.

11. Examples of this type of addition are prevalent: A.J. 12.59, 63, 84.

12. Josephus has Ἀρισταῖος where the Epistle of Aristaeus has Ἀριστεάς.

work of God, and particularly because I know that he is pleased with those who do good.

In the first addition, Josephus presents Aristeas as a trusted advisor to Ptolemy whose opinion is well-respected due to his *μετριότης* ("moderation").¹³ By imbuing Aristeas with such moderation and wisdom, Josephus adds weight to the validity of the Epistle of Aristeas. This leads directly into the second addition, an appendage to Aristeas's appeal to Ptolemy regarding the release of the captive Jews. Josephus conveys the same reasons for the release as the Epistle of Aristeas; however, the addition of 12.23 changes the tone of appeal from one of entreaty to one of stronger exhortation, as there is an increase in the number of imperatives and the inclusion of *παρακαλῶ*.

The aspect of Josephus's paraphrase that is most different from its source is the style in which it is written and a shift in literary tastes. This shift is most clearly seen in the change from the Hellenistic Greek of the Epistle of Aristeas to the Atticizing style of the *Antiquitates Judaicae*.¹⁴ To account for the changes, Josephus modified his paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeas in multiple ways, including vocabulary, the use of particles, syntax, and clausulae.¹⁵ With regard to epistolary conventions, Josephus repeatedly omits and modifies greeting and farewell formulas used in the

13. Cf. Pelletier 1962a, 203.

14. Pelletier 1962a, esp. 207–49. We observe that the Greek of the Epistle of Aristeas may be more colloquial in some respects, typical of Hellenistic Egypt.

15. Pelletier (1962a) enumerated many stylistic differences: a general shift from direct to indirect speech; a major increase in the number of genitive absolutes; an insistence on balance and parallelism; the change back to classical connectives from the use of *ἵνα* and *ὅπως* typically employed in Koine (e.g., Ep. Arist. §184 // A.J. 12.97; Ep. Arist. §43 // A.J. 12.55; Ep. Arist. §182 // A.J. 12.94); the return to the classical *μέν ... δέ* construction (e.g., Ep. Arist. §36 // A.J. 12.45; Ep. Arist. §60 // A.J. 12.66; Ep. Arist. §183 // A.J. 12.96); changes in prepositions: *κατά* for *διὰ* (e.g., Ep. Arist. §74 // A.J. 12.79); *ἐν* + dative for *εἰς* + accusative when no movement is mentioned (Ep. Arist. §301 // A.J. 12.103); general changes in clause constructions: *ὥς ἂν* temporal clause for *μετά* + infinitive (Ep. Arist. §34 // A.J. 12.24); *ὅπως* result clause for *ἵνα* result clauses (Ep. Arist. §36 // A.J. 12.46); an increase in the use of the optative in subordinate clauses; a more distinct division between the active and middle voices (e.g., Ep. Arist. §180 // A.J. 12.92; Ep. Arist. §182 // A.J. 12.94; Ep. Arist. §309 // A.J. 12.108); the normalization of vocabulary, particularly local vocabulary from Ptolemaic Egypt (e.g., Ep. Arist. §15 // A.J. 12.22; Ep. Arist. §25 // A.J. 12.31; Ep. Arist. §28 // A.J. 12.35; Ep. Arist. §30 // A.J. 12.36). See also Thackeray 1967, xiv; Pelletier 1989, 106.

Epistle of Aristeeas (A.J. 12.39, 45, 50, 51). It appears, therefore, that Josephus was not interested in the epistolary elements in the text, and his deletions and emendations have led others to disregard them as well.

[BAN and GAK]

Josephus's Paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeeas:
The Embedded Letters¹⁶

Copy of the Letter of Demetrius to Ptolemy Regarding the Books
(A.J. 12.36–39 = Ep. Arist. §§21–27)

36 “βασιλεῖ μεγάλῳ παρὰ Δημητρίου.

προστάξαντός σου, ὦ βασιλεῦ, περί τε τῶν ἔτι λειπόντων εἰς ἀναπλήρωσιν τῆς βιβλιοθήκης συγγραμμάτων, ὅπως συναχθῇ, καί περί τῶν διαπεπτωκότων, ὅπως τῆς δεούσης ἐπιμελείας τύχη, πάσῃ κεχρημένος περί ταῦτα σπουδῇ δηλῶ σοι τὰ τῆς Ἰουδαίων νομοθεσίας βιβλία λείπειν ἡμῖν σὺν ἑτέροις· χαρακτῆρσιν γάρ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γεγραμμένα καί φωνῇ τῇ ἐθνικῇ ἐστίν ἡμῖν ἀσαφῆ. **37** συμβέβηκε δ' αὐτὰ καί ἀμελέστερον ἢ ἔδει σεσημάνθαι διὰ τὸ βασιλικῆς οὕτω τετυχηκέναι προνοίας. ἔστι δὲ ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι καί ταῦτα παρὰ σοὶ διηκριβωμένα· φιλοσοφωτέραν γάρ καί ἀκέραιον τὴν νομοθεσίαν εἶναι συμβέβηκεν ὥς ἂν οὖσαν θεοῦ. **38** διὸ καὶ τοὺς ποιητὰς αὐτῆς καὶ τοὺς συγγραφεῖς τῶν ἱστοριῶν οὐκ ἐπιμνησθῆναί φησιν Ἑκαταῖος ὁ Ἀβδηρίτης οὐδὲ τῶν κατ' αὐτὴν πολιτευσαμένων ἀνδρῶν, ὡς ἀγνῆς οὖσης καὶ μὴ δέον αὐτὴν βεβήλοις στόμασιν διασαφεῖσθαι.

39 ἐὰν οὖν σοι δοκῇ, βασιλεῦ, γράψεις τῷ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερεῖ, ὅπως ἀποστείλῃ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἕξ ἀφ' ἐκάστης φυλῆς τοὺς ἐμπειροτάτους τῶν νόμων, παρ' ὧν τὸ τῶν βιβλίων σαφές καὶ σύμφωνον ἐκμαθόντες καὶ τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ἀκριβὲς λαβόντες τῶν πραγμάτων ἀξίως ταῦτα τῆς σῆς προαιρέσεως συναγάγωμεν.”

16. Greek text adapted from Marcus 1937; translated by Bartolo A. Natoli.

36 “To the great king, from Demetrius.

When you charged me, O King, regarding the writings still lacking for the completion of the library, that the job might be completed, and regarding the works that are imperfect, that the job might be handled with the required care, having used all haste regarding these things, I have made it clear to you that the books on Jewish law are lacking from our library, along with others, for having been written in Hebrew characters and in that foreign language, it is unclear to us. **37** In addition, it happens that they have been translated more carelessly than they should have because they lacked royal attention. It is necessary that they be translated accurately for you, for the law happens to be quite wise and blameless, as it might be the law of God. **38** Wherefore, Hecataeus of Abdera says that both poets and the writings of historians make no mention of it, nor of men who live free according to it, because, as it is holy, it ought not be made clear by impure mouths.

39 Therefore, if it seems proper to you, O King, you should write to the high priest of the Jews, requesting that he send six elders, the most learned in the laws from each tribe, from whom we, having learned the clear and consensus meaning of the books and having received an accurate interpretation of their contents, may bring together a collection of these that is worthy of your plan.”

Copy of the Letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar the High Priest
(A./J. 12.45–50 = Ep. Arist. §§33–40)

45 “βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος Ἐλεαζάρῳ τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ χαίρειν.

πολλῶν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ κατωκισμένων Ἰουδαίων, οὓς αἰχμαλωτισθέντας ὑπὸ Περσῶν ὅτ’ ἐκράτουν ὁ ἐμὸς πατὴρ ἐτίμησεν, καὶ τοὺς μὲν εἰς τὸ στρατιωτικὸν κατέταξεν ἐπὶ μείζουσιν μισθοφοραῖς, τισὶν δὲ γενομένοις ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ φρούρια καὶ τὴν τούτων φυλακὴν

παρέθετο, ἵνα τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ὧσιν φοβεροί, **46** τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐγὼ παραλαβὼν πᾶσι μὲν φιλανθρώπως ἐχρησάμην, μάλιστα δὲ τοῖς σοῖς πολίταις, ὧν ὑπὲρ δέκα μὲν μυριάδας αἰχμαλώτων δουλευόντων ἀπέλυσα τοῖς δεσπótαις αὐτῶν ἐκ τῶν ἐμῶν λύτρα καταβαλὼν. **47** τοὺς δὲ ἀκμάζοντας ταῖς ἡλικίαις εἰς τὸν στρατιωτικὸν κατάλογον κατέταξα, τινὰς δὲ τῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς καὶ τὴν τῆς

αὐλῆς πίστιν εἶναι δυναμένων ταύτης ἡξίωκα, νομίζων ἡδὺ τῷ θεῷ τῆς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ προνοίας ἀνάθημα τοῦτο καὶ μέγιστον ἀναθήσειν. **48** βουλόμενος δὲ καὶ τούτοις χαρίζεσθαι καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην Ἰουδαίοις τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν ἔγνω μεθερμηνεῦσαι, καὶ γράμμασιν

Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐκ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν μεταγραφέντα κεῖσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐμῇ βιβλιοθήκῃ.

49 καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις ἐπιλεξάμενος ἄνδρας ἀγαθοὺς ἐξ ἀφ’ ἐκάστης φυλῆς ἥδη πρεσβυτέρους, οἱ καὶ διὰ τὸν χρόνον ἐμπείρως ἔχουσι τῶν νόμων καὶ δυνήσονται τὴν ἐρμηνείαν αὐτῶν ἀκριβῆ ποιήσασθαι· νομίζω γὰρ τούτων ἐπιτελεσθέντων μεγίστην δόξαν ἡμῖν περιγενήσεσθαι. **50** ἀπέσταλκα δὲ σοι περὶ τούτων διαλεξομένους Ἀνδρέαν τὸν ἀρχισωματοφύλακα καὶ Ἀρισταῖον ἐμοὶ τιμιωτάτους, δι’ ὧν καὶ ἀπαρχὰς ἀναθημάτων εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ θυσιῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπέσταλκα τάλαντα ἀργυρίου ἑκατόν. καὶ σὺ δ’ ἡμῖν ἐπιστέλλων περὶ ὧν ἂν θέλῃς ποιήσεις κεχαρισμένα.”

Copy of Eleazar’s Reply to Ptolemy (with Attachment, the List of the Seventy-Two Elders) (A./J. 12.51–57 = Ep. Arist. §§47–51a)

51 Τῆς οὖν ἐπιστολῆς τοῦ βασιλέως κομισθείσης πρὸς τὸν Ἐλεάζαρον ἀντιγράφει πρὸς αὐτὴν ὡς ἐνῆν μάλιστα φιλοτίμως.

“ἀρχιερεὺς Ἐλεάζαρος βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ χαίρειν.

ἐρρωμένων σοῦ τε καὶ τῆς βασιλίσσης Ἀρσινόης καὶ τῶν τέκνων καλῶς ἡμῖν ἔχει πάντα. **52** τὴν δ’ ἐπιστολὴν λαβόντες μεγάλως ἡσθημεν ἐπὶ τῇ προαιρέσει σου, καὶ συναθροίσαντες τὸ πλῆθος ἀνέγνωμεν αὐτὴν ἐμφανίζοντες

45 “King Ptolemy to the high priest Eleazar: Greetings.

There have been many Jews living in my kingdom, whom, after being imprisoned by the Persians (when they were in power), my father honored, and others whom he placed into his army with greater pay than usual, and still others to whom, having arrived in Egypt with him, he entrusted his garrisons and the guarding of these so that they would be terrifying to the Egyptians. **46** I, upon taking power, treated all men humanely, but your people above all, more than 100,000 of whom I have freed from enslavement, furnishing ransom to their masters at my own expense. **47** Those in the prime of youth I have added to the military enrollment, but others among those who are able to be around me and in the confidence of my palace I have deemed worthy of this, thinking it to be offered as the greatest offering to the god under whose providence I am. **48** And wishing both to do well by these men and by all Jews on the earth, I have decided to make an interpretation of your law, transcribing it from Hebrew into Greek, and to place it in my library.

49 Therefore, please select six good men from each tribe who are already older and, on account of their age, are experienced in the laws and able to make an interpretation of them with accuracy, for when these are completed I think the greatest repute will be for us. **50** I am sending you men with knowledge of these plans of mine, Andreas, my chief guard, and Aristeeas, men most honored by me, through whom I have sent the first-fruits of my offerings and sacrifices to the temple, along with 100 talents of silver for other uses at your discretion. Please send an account of what else you wish.”

51 Then, after the king's letter had been conveyed to Eleazar, he replied to the king with the greatest respect in two days' time.

“Eleazar, the high priest, to King Ptolemy: Greetings.

We hope that you, Queen Arsinoe, and your children are doing well. **52** Receiving your letter, we rejoiced greatly at your proposal, and, gathering together the people, we read it to them, telling them about the piety you

αὐτῷ ἦν ἔχεις πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εὐσέβειαν. 53 ἐπεδείξαμεν δ' αὐτῷ καὶ τὰς φιάλας αἷς ἔπεμψας χρυσᾶς εἴκοσι καὶ ἀργυρᾶς τριάκοντα καὶ κρατῆρας πέντε καὶ τράπεζαν εἰς ἀνάθεσιν, ἃ τε εἰς θυσίαν καὶ εἰς ἐπισκευὴν ὧν ἂν δέηται τὸ ἱερὸν τάλαντα ἑκατόν, ἅπερ ἐκόμισαν Ἀνδρέας καὶ Ἀρισταῖος οἱ τιμιώτατοί σου τῶν φίλων, ἄνδρες ἀγαθοὶ καὶ παιδείᾳ διαφέροντες καὶ τῆς σῆς ἀρετῆς ἄξιοι.

54 ἴσθι δ' ἡμᾶς τὸ σοὶ συμφέρον, κἂν ἧ τι παρὰ φύσιν, ὑπομενοῦντας· ἀμείβεσθαι γὰρ ἡμᾶς δεῖ τὰς σὰς εὐεργεσίας πολυμερῶς εἰς τοὺς ἡμετέρους πολίτας κατατεθείσας. 55 εὐθὺς οὖν ὑπὲρ σοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου καὶ τέκνων καὶ φίλων προσηγάγομεν θυσίας, καὶ τὸ πλῆθος εὐχὰς ἐποιήσατο γενέσθαι σοι τὰ κατὰ νοῦν καὶ φυλαχθῆναί σου τὴν βασιλείαν ἐν εἰρήνῃ, τὴν τε τοῦ νόμου μεταγραφὴν ἐπὶ συμφέροντι τῷ σῷ λαβεῖν ὃ προαιρῇ τέλος. 56 ἐπελεξάμην δὲ καὶ πρεσβυτέρους ἄνδρας ἕξ ἀπὸ φυλῆς ἐκάστης, οὓς πεπόμεφαμεν ἔχοντας τὸν νόμον. ἔσται δὲ τῆς σῆς εὐσεβείας καὶ δικαιοσύνης τὸ μεταγραφέντα τὸν νόμον εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀποπέμψαι μετ' ἀσφαλείας τῶν κομιζόντων.

ἔρρωσο.”

57 Ταῦτα μὲν ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἀντέγραψεν. ἐμοὶ δ' οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον ἔδοξεν εἶναι τὰ ὀνόματα τῶν ἐβδομήκοντα πρεσβυτέρων, οἱ τὸν νόμον ἐκόμιζον ὑπὸ Ἑλεαζάρου πεμφθέντες, δηλοῦν· ἦν γὰρ ταῦτα ὑπογεγραμμένα ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ.

Conclusion of Josephus's Paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristeeas Regarding Ptolemy's Letters to Eleazar (A./J. 12.118)

118 παρεκάλεσεν δ' αὐτὸν καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν, ὅπως εἰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τούτων θελήσειαν τινες πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐλθεῖν ἐπιτρέψῃ, περὶ πολλοῦ ποιούμενος τὴν μετὰ τῶν ἐν παιδείᾳ τυγχανόντων συνουσίαν καὶ τὸν πλοῦτον εἰς τοὺς τοιούτους ἡδῶς ἔχων κατατίθεσθαι. καὶ τὰ μὲν εἰς δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν Ἰουδαίοις τοιαῦτα παρὰ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου συνέβη γενέσθαι.

have toward God. **53** We also showed them the twenty golden bowls that you sent, and the thirty silver ones, and the five drinking basins, and the table for offerings, as well as the 100 talents for sacrifices and the production of what the temple needs, all of which Andreas and Aristeeas conveyed, the most honored of your Friends, men good, well-educated, and worthy of your praise.

54 Know, then, that we promise to do what is beneficial for you, even if that is something against our traditional nature. For it is necessary for us to repay your multiple good deeds bestowed on our people. **55** Immediately, therefore, we made sacrifices for you, your sister, your children, and Friends, and the people prayed that you be vigilant in your affairs, your kingdom be guarded in peace, and, for your benefit, the transcription of the law reach the conclusion you wanted. **56** Then I collected six older citizens from each tribe, whom we have sent with the laws. It will be for your piety and justice to send back to us the law safely, after it is transcribed, along with those who convey it.

Fare thee well.”

57 These things the high priest replied; however, it seems unnecessary for me to make known the name of the seventy elders who, having been sent by Eleazar, conveyed the law, for indeed these things are written in the letter.

118 He also exhorted him through letters, that he should allow it, if any of these men wished to come to him, and that he himself, considering it of high value to have a conversation with men of learning, would be happy to offer his own wealth to such men. And so such things happened for the repute and honor of Jews, brought on by Ptolemy Philadelphus.

2.3. Related Jewish *Testimonia*: Aristeas, Demetrius, and Hecataeus

The figures known as Aristeas, Demetrius of Phalerum, and Hecataeus of Abdera were each attributed literary works and legendary reputations in antiquity. Aside from the Epistle of Aristeas, the name Aristeas was also attributed to a different work on Jewish tradition now usually called Aristeas the Exegete. Meanwhile, Demetrius of Phalerum was the subject of countless, often contradictory, legends in antiquity. Hecataeus of Abdera was similarly famous but was particularly important to Jews, who considered him among their most famous apologists. In this section we examine the men known as Aristeas the Exegete, Demetrius of Phalerum, and Hecataeus of Abdera and the literature pseudonymously associated with them.

2.3.1. Aristeas the Exegete

The author now typically called Aristeas the Exegete by scholars is known circuitously.¹ His work is preserved thirdhand: Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4) cites Alexander Polyhistor's quotation of an author named Aristeas.²

1. In this volume we refer to this author as Aristeas the Exegete. In some scholarship he is also known as Aristeas the Historian or Aristeas I (a title that differentiates him from Aristeas II, the author of the Epistle of Aristeas according to this nomenclature).

2. Lucius Cornelius Alexander Polyhistor was a pivotal figure in the transmission histories of several important Hellenistic Jewish texts, including Aristeas the Exegete. Born in Miletus ca. 105 BCE, he was taken prisoner to Rome after the first Mithridatic war (88 BCE) and enslaved to a Cornelius Lentulus. He was enfranchised (and thus given his name) by Sulla (L. Cornelius Sulla Felix) after ca. 80 BCE and eventually died ca. 35 BCE at Laurentium (near Ostia). He wrote mainly geographical and ethnographical works in the Miletian tradition, including a work entitled *Assyriaka* (on Babylonian and Persian history as well as Alexander's conquests), another entitled *Italika* (on Roman history), another titled the *Lysiaka* (on Lycia and Phrygia), and others still on Syria, Arabia, Egypt, and India. He was a source of geographical information for Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* 3.6, 13.39, etc.), Valerius Maximus (*Fact.* 8.13), [Pseudo-]Plutarch (*De fluv.* 10; *De mus.* 3), and many others. Among his writings was a work called *Concerning the Jews* (so Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.21.130.3; see also *Strom.* 1.15; 3.7). He preserved many of the fragmentary Jewish writers, such as Eupolemus (and specifically

According to Eusebius's account, Aristeas's work is entitled *Concerning the Jews*.³ The text is a brief summary of the biblical story of Job. It begins with Job's genealogy, follows with a précis of his misfortunes, then lists his comforting visitors: Eliphaz, Baldad, Sophar, and Elihu. The story concludes with a statement of God's amazement at Job's courage. The short fragment was written sometime between the mid-second and mid-first century BCE. Because of its attribution, language, and date, it deserves attention in relation to the Epistle of Aristeas.

Authorship

The author appears to be Jewish, but most scholars now agree that he is not the same as the author of the Epistle of Aristeas.⁴ On the other hand,

the Solomon Letters), Artapanus, Aristobulus, Philo the Elder, Cleodemus Malchus, Demetrius the Chronographer, Ezekiel the Tragedian, and Aristeas the Exegete. He also preserved works of non-Jewish authors such as Timochares and Apollonius Molon. While it has sometimes been suggested that he was Jewish, this seems most unlikely. Josephus was familiar with Polyhistor, mentioning him as a principal source, though he explicitly cites only part of Polyhistor's epitome of Cleodemus Malchus (*A.J.* 1.239–241). However, Josephus also appears to have paraphrased Polyhistor's extract from *Sib. Or.* 3:97–161 (*A.J.* 1.118–119), which Eusebius (*Chron.* 12.1–9) attributed to Polyhistor. It is important to recognize that Polyhistor did not simply transmit these sources but redacted them to some degree. As Adler (2011) has pointed out, his editorial comments indicate that he arranged the sources chronologically according to their contents and did not preserve the entirety of all of his sources. With the exception of poetic works, in which he attempted to retain meter, Polyhistor usually quoted his works as indirect discourse. He added his own explanatory glosses to these quotations. Polyhistor's *Concerning the Jews* was preserved by Clement and Eusebius. Importantly, according to the surviving evidence, Polyhistor did not know the Epistle of Aristeas (contra Wacholder 1974, 48). The fragments of Polyhistor are assembled by Jacoby (*FGrH* 273) and Müller (*FHG* 3:210–44). The only book-length study of Polyhistor's work is Freudenthal 1874. See further Unger 1884, 1888; Holladay 1983, 8; Strugnell 1985; Cook 2004, 13–15; Stern 2007; Mendels 2010; Adler 2011. See also Inowlocki 2006a and Taylor 2009 on Eusebius's citation of Polyhistor in *Praep. ev.* books 9–13; see 9.17.1; 9.22, 24, 26. See further the discussion in sec. 2.4.2 below about the fragments of Aristobulus.

3. On the title of this work by Aristeas the Exegete, see 205–6 nn. 9–10 below.

4. Wacholder (1974, 5 n. 23) leaves open the possibility that the same author composed both. Cf. Tramontano 1931, 44. For those who argue against the same author, see J. Collins 2000, 36–37; Doran 1985a, 2:857; Attridge 1984, 168; Walter 1975, 293; Freudenthal 1874, 104. It must be remembered that the character "Aristeas" in the Epistle of Aristeas is clearly not Jewish, even though the real author likely was. See the introduction to Aristeas in section 1 above.

Eusebius and most other ancient authors seem to have assumed that they were the same. The key sentence is Ep. Arist. §6:

Now formerly, too, I sent you a record of those things I thought worthy of mention *Concerning the Race of the Jews*—the record that I had obtained from the most learned high priests of the most learned land of Egypt.

Those who argue for two different authors cite the dissimilarity between the two works, although it might be argued that the fragment of Aristeeas the Exegete is too short to gauge style, vocabulary, and theme.⁵ Still, a common view is that the authors have nothing in common except the name.⁶

Even so, the other possibility to consider is that the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas (now called Pseudo-Aristeeas) is in fact promulgating this fictional connection with Aristeeas the Exegete. For example, the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas describes the previous account as “things I thought worthy of mention *concerning the race of the Jews* [ἀξιομνημονεύτων ... περὶ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων].” The latter clause is nearly identical to the title of the work that Eusebius (via Polyhistor) attributes to Aristeeas: “And Aristeeas says in his *Concerning the Jews*...” (Ἀριστέας δὲ φησιν ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ἰουδαίων...).⁷ Later Eusebius refers simply to Aristeeas’s “concerning the interpretation of the law of the Jews,” which is a reference to the Epistle of Aristeeas.⁸ Eusebius, at least, did not distinguish between the two authors.

Finally, as Eusebius cites them, Polyhistor seems to have given the title *Concerning the Jews* (Περὶ Ἰουδαίων) to a number of Jewish works.⁹ On

5. Wacholder (1974, 5 n. 23), for instance, opines that the two different genres in the Epistle of Aristeeas and Aristeeas the Exegete would have demanded two different writing styles even if the author were the same.

6. Denis 1970, 259.

7. *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1.

8. *Praep. ev.* 9.38.1: Περὶ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου. Eusebius then quotes from Ep. Arist. §§88–89 (“on the waters of Jerusalem”). This passage is also given in sec. 2.4. below.

9. Pseudo-Eupolemus 1.1: Εὐπόλεμος δὲ ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων ... φησι; Theodotus 1.1: φησι Θεόδοτος ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων; Artapanus 2.1, 3.1: Ἀρτάπανος δὲ φησιν ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων; Pseudo-Hecataeus 2.1 (cf. 6.1): Καὶ Ἑκαταίου δὲ τοῦ ἱστορικοῦ φέρεται περὶ Ἰουδαίων βιβλίον, ἐν ᾧ προστίθεται μᾶλλον πως ὡς σοφῶ τῷ ἔθνει ἐπὶ τοσούτον, ὡς καὶ Ἑρέννιον Φίλωνα ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων συγγράμματι πρῶτον μὲν ἀμφιβάλλειν, εἰ τοῦ ἱστορικοῦ ἐστι τὸ σύγγραμμα...; Cleodemus Malchus 1.2: Κλεόδημος δὲ φησιν ὁ

the other hand, this was also the title of the work by Alexander Polyhistor himself, as is noted by Clement of Alexandria,¹⁰ and it is possible that it was somehow transferred to these fragments of the Jewish writers by an accident of attribution. Nevertheless, it is crucial that both works share the same authorial attribution (at least in name) and that no ancient writer distinguished the two authors. Furthermore, the text's literary relationships reveal a closer connection between the two works than is typically surmised, regardless of the precise lines of authorship.

Date

The *terminus ante quem* for Aristeas the Exegete must be in the mid-first century BCE when Alexander Polyhistor epitomized the work. The *terminus post quem* is determined by the LXX version of Job (42:17), on which Aristeas the Exegete depends. None of the earliest LXX manuscripts, including portions of the book Job, date prior to the mid-second century BCE.¹¹ Thus the date range for Aristeas the Exegete is from the mid-second to the mid-first century BCE.

Literary Relationships

The surviving fragment of Aristeas the Exegete is quite similar to LXX Job 42:17a–e.¹² These verses in the LXX represent an alternate, longer version compared to the Masoretic Text (MT) and contain many details

προφήτης ὁ καὶ Μάλχος ἱστορῶν τὰ περὶ Ἰουδαίων. Because Eusebius gives the title of Aristeas's work within a quotation, it is unlikely that he invented it; on Eusebius's quotation techniques, see Inowlocki 2006a, Taylor 2009.

10. Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.130.3: Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ὁ Πολυῖστωρ ἐπικληθεὶς ἐν τῷ περὶ Ἰουδαίων συγράμματι ἀνέγραψεν ("Alexander called Polyhistor wrote in his treatise *Concerning the Jews*," referring to the Solomon Letters of Eupolemus); cf. *Strom.* 1.15; 3.7. This fact may suggest that the reference to the work of Aristeas (the Exegete) in Ep. Arist. §6 was also dependent on the version in Polyhistor and thus later.

11. For discussion, see Dines 2004, 4–5; Peters 1992, 5:1094.

12. LXX Job 42:17a–e is an addition absent from the MT, 11QTgJob, the targumim, and the Peshitta. The textual history of the addition is complex, but the approximate date is between the Old Greek (OG) of Job, ca. 150 BCE, and the translation associated with Theodotion (Θ') of the early first century CE (Heater 1982, 1–2). Based on Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 15.14, the OG is apparently the basis for the fifth column of the Hexapla, which Origen reworked via Θ' Job. Then, in the sixth column, he placed Θ' Job. Cf. Origen, *Ep. Afr.*, 3. See further Swete 1902, 255–56.

unknown in any other source. For example, the Greek of both turns the city Bozrah into Bassara, the mother of Job;¹³ both claim Job was formerly called Jobab;¹⁴ and both place Job in the patriarchal period.¹⁵ Additionally, both texts have Job in Ausitis, list his possessions in the same order and language, and order his sufferings the same. Unlike the MT, both texts describe the friends who came to visit Job as kings and give distinct versions of their names: Eliphaz, Baldad, and Sophar.¹⁶ Based on these unique similarities, the majority opinion is that Aristeas the Exegete was dependent on LXX Job 42:17 and not vice versa.¹⁷

A second set of relationships hinges on LXX Job 42:17b, which claims to be derived from a Syriac book: “This is translated from the Syriac book” (οὗτος ἐρμηνεύεται ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου) (LXX Job 42:17b). The designation Συριακή is a distinct term shared by only a few texts and referring to the Aramaic language, that is, as the common language of the Syrian (Seleucid) realm.¹⁸ Significantly, the same usage of the term Συριακή occurs in Ep. Arist. §11: Demetrius, when referring to the translation of the Jewish law, says that the Jews are supposed to use the Syrian language (ὑπολαμβάνονται Συριακῇ χρῆσθαι). The form Συριακή is attested only twice in the Septuagint (2 Macc 15:36; Job 42:17b) and only in Ep. Arist. §11 among the extant pseudepigrapha; the cognate form Συριστί occurs in 2 Esd 4:7.¹⁹

13. Doran 1985a, 2:856.

14. Holladay 1992, 380. Cf. T. Job 1:1: Βίβλος Ἰὼβ τοῦ καλουμένου Ἰωβάβ (cf. 2:1).

15. Aristeas the Exegete describes Job as the great-grandson of Esau (*Praep. ev.* 9.25.3). Likewise, Pseudo-Philo, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to Genesis, and rabbinic sources place Job in the patriarchal period. Compare LAB 8.8: Job marries Dinah the daughter of Jacob; T. Job 1:6: Job is a son of Esau, and his second wife is Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah; Tg. Ps.-J. to Gen 36:11: Eliphaz, a friend who visits Job, is a son of Esau; b. Sotah 11a: Job is connected with Balaam of Num 24; b. B. Bat. 15a: Job was a contemporary of Moses.

16. Aris. Ex. 1.4 (*Praep. ev.* 9.25.4) also adds Elihu the Buzite to the list of visitors.

17. Wendland (1902, 92), Doran (1985a, 2:857), and A. Reed (2001, 39) hold that Aristeas the Exegete depends on the Septuagint version. Conversely, Freudenthal (1874, 140–43) and Walter (1975, 293) suggest that LXX Job depends on Aristeas the Exegete.

18. A. Reed 2001, 36. While it has been suggested that this “Aramaic book” is a lost common source for LXX Job 42:17 and Aristeas the Exegete, it is an unnecessary hypothesis with no other evidence. Cf. J. Collins 2000, 36; Doran 1987, 251–52. On LXX Job, see further Kraft 1974; Heater 1982.

19. A. Reed (2001, esp. 38) does not mention the attestation in the Epistle of Aristeas. She proposes a different reading of LXX Job 42:17b, contra Doran (1985a, 2:859),

Another noteworthy cultural and linguistic tie between Aristeas the Exegete and the other texts in this volume is the apologetically construed theme of amazement at the qualities or actions of the Jewish people. Aristeas the Exegete states that God was amazed (*ἀγασθέντα*) at Job's "courage" (*εὐψυχίαν*).²⁰ The relatively rare term *εὐψυχίαν* ("courage") is attested only three times in the LXX (2 Macc 14:18; 4 Macc 6:11; 9:23) and in similar thematic contexts. It occurs only twice in the pseudepigrapha (Aris. Ex. §4; Ep. Arist. §197),²¹ and Ep. Arist. §197 has King Ptolemy ask one of the Jewish guests, "How can one endure moderately those things that befall us?" The guest replies, "God ... gives courage [*εὐψυχίαν*]."²² Such parallels strengthen the association between the Epistle of Aristeas, Aristeas the Exegete, and contemporaneous Jewish literature from Alexandria.

Audience and Purpose

There is a scarcity of data available for establishing the audience and purpose of Aristeas the Exegete. The most fruitful approach is an analysis and comparison of Aristeas's portrayal of Job. Assuming that the extant fragment is the original form, the text is a "wholesale reinterpretation" of the biblical character.²³ Supernatural, theodicean, and sapiential elements are completely lacking. Instead, the work relates that God tested (*πειράζοντα*) Job to endure (*ἐμμεΐναι*) and that Job said that "even without their exhortation [*παρακλήσεως*] he would endure [*ἐμμενείν*] in piety [*εὐσεβεία*], even in such dire straits" (Aris. Ex. §4). This language reflects the notion of suffering and endurance as proof of virtue and wisdom.²⁴

and argues that "it seems most likely that the LXX Job appendix was not translated from Aramaic, but rather composed in Greek." Cf. Holladay 1983, 261–64.

20. Aris. Ex. 1.4 = Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.3: τὸν δὲ θεὸν ἀγασθέντα τὴν εὐψυχίαν αὐτοῦ.

21. Cf. Gruen 1998, 119; Dalbert 1954, 69.

22. For variants on this apologetic theme, cf. Ep. Arist. §99: Pseudo-Aristeas describes the priests of the temple as eliciting amazement (*θαυμασμὸν*); Aristobulus 2.5 (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.10.4): those with good understanding marvel at (*θαυμάζουσι*) Moses's wisdom and spirit (*πνεῦμα*); Pseudo-Hecataeus 6.12 (Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.193): it is right to marvel (*θαυμάζειν*) at the Jews for their steadfastness during Alexander's campaigns in Judaea.

23. Gruen 1998, 119.

24. Cf. Plutarch, *De tranquillitate animi*; Seneca, *De ira*. See Fitzgerald 1988, 65–67, 203–4.

Aristeas the Exegete continues that “God, amazed at his courage, released him from his illness and made him master of many possessions” (Aris. Ex. §4). This idea that God was amazed at Job’s courage has no biblical basis and puts emphasis on virtue in a markedly Hellenistic way.²⁵ It may well suggest that the text implies an audience of Hellenized Jews open to recast or “rewritten” versions of scripture.²⁶

[MAF and LMW]

25. J. Collins 2000, 37.

26. Gruen 1998, 120.

Aristeas the Exegete (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.25.1–4)²⁷

Ἄκουε δὲ οἷα καὶ περὶ τοῦ Ἰώβ ὁ αὐτὸς ἱστορεῖ.

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΒ ΟΜΟΙΩΣ

1 Ἀριστεύας δὲ φησιν ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ἰουδαίων τὸν Ἡσαΐ γήμαντα Βασσάραν υἱὸν ἐν Ἐδὼμ γεννῆσαι Ἰώβ· κατοικεῖν δὲ τοῦτον ἐν τῇ Αὐσίτιδι χώρα ἐπὶ τοῖς ὁρίοις τῆς Ἰδουμαίας καὶ Ἀραβίας. 2 γενέσθαι δ' αὐτὸν δίκαιον καὶ πολύκτηνον· κτήσασθαι γὰρ αὐτὸν πρόβατα μὲν ἑπτακισχίλια, καμήλους δὲ τρισχιλίας, ζεύγη βοῶν πεντακόσια, ὄνους θηλείας νομάδας πεντακοσίας· εἶχε δὲ καὶ γεωργίας ἱκανάς. 3 τοῦτον δὲ τὸν Ἰώβ πρότερον Ἰωβὰβ ὀνομάζεσθαι. πειράζοντα δ' αὐτὸν τὸν θεὸν ἐμμεῖναι, μεγάλαις δὲ περιβαλεῖν αὐτὸν ἀτυχίαις. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τοὺς τε ὄνους καὶ τοὺς βοῦς ὑπὸ ληστῶν ἀπολέσθαι, εἶτα τὰ πρόβατα ὑπὸ πυρὸς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ πεσόντος κατακαῆναι σὺν τοῖς ποιμέσι· μετ' οὐ πολὺ δὲ καὶ τὰς καμήλους ὑπὸ ληστῶν ἀπελαθῆναι· εἶτα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ ἀποθανεῖν, πεσούσης τῆς οἰκίας· αὐθημερὸν δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἐλκῶσαι. 4 φαύλως δὲ αὐτοῦ διακειμένου ἐλθεῖν εἰς ἐπίσκεψιν Ἑλίφαν τὸν Θαιμανιτῶν βασιλέα καὶ Βαλδὰδ τὸν Σαυχαίων τύραννον καὶ Σωφάρ τὸν Μιναίων βασιλέα, ἐλθεῖν δὲ καὶ Ἑλιοῦν τὸν Βαραχιήλ τὸν Ζωβίτην· παρακαλούμενον δὲ φάναι καὶ χωρὶς παρακλήσεως ἐμμενεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν τε τῇ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ τοῖς δεινοῖς. τὸν δὲ θεὸν ἀγασθέντα τὴν εὐψυχίαν αὐτοῦ τῆς τε νόσου αὐτὸν ἀπολῦσαι καὶ πολλῶν κύριον ὑπάρξεν ποιῆσαι.

LXX Job 42:17a–e²⁸

a γέγραπται δὲ αὐτὸν πάλιν ἀναστήσεσθαι μεθ' ὧν ὁ κύριος ἀνίστησιν. **b** οὗτος ἐρμηνεύεται ἐκ τῆς Συριακῆς βίβλου ἐν μὲν γῇ κατοικῶν τῇ Αὐσίτιδι ἐπὶ τοῖς ὁρίοις τῆς Ἰδουμαίας καὶ Ἀραβίας προὔπῃρχεν δὲ αὐτῷ ὄνομα Ἰωβὰβ· **c** λαβὼν δὲ γυναῖκα Ἀράβισσαν γεννᾷ υἱόν, ᾧ ὄνομα Ἐννών, ἣν δὲ αὐτὸς πατὴρ μὲν Ζαρέ, τῶν Ἡσαΐ υἱῶν υἱός, μητὴρ δὲ Βοσόρρας, ὥστε εἶναι αὐτὸν πέμπτον ἀπὸ

27. Greek text is from Mras 1954–1956; English translation adapted from Doran 1985a by Michael A. Flexsenhar.

28. Greek text is from Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006; English translation adapted from Doran 1985a by Michael A. Flexsenhar.

And hear also what the same author [Alexander Polyhistor]²⁹ says concerning Job:

Aristeas's Remarks Concerning Job—Similarly

1 And Aristeas says in his *Concerning the Jews* that Esau married Basara in Edom and had a son, Job. He lived in the land of Ausitis, on the boundary of Idumea and Arabia. **2** He was a righteous and wealthy man, for he owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 grazing jennies. He also had arable farmland. **3** This Job was formerly named Jobab. God tested him to endure and brought great misfortune on him. First, his donkeys and oxen were lost on account of robbers, then the sheep along with the shepherds were consumed by fire falling from heaven. Not long after, the camels also were driven away by thieves. Then his children died when his house collapsed. On the same day his body was covered with sores. **4** While he was in such a sorry state, Eliphaz the king of the Taimanites, and Baldad, the ruler of the Sauchites, and Sophar, the king of the Minneans, came to visit him. Elihu, the son of Barachiel the Zobite, also came. Although he was being exhorted by them, he said that even without their exhortation he would endure in piety, even in such dire straits. And God, amazed at his courage, released him from his illness and made him master of many possessions.

a It is written that he will rise again with those whom the Lord raises up. **b** This is translated from the Syriac book: Dwelling in the land of Ausitis on the borders of Idumea and Arabia, he was first named Jobab. **c** Taking an Arabian woman as his wife, she had a son named Ennon. His father was Zerah, a grandson of Esau, and his mother was Bosorra. Thus he was

29. *Praep. ev.* 9.22 ends as follows: Τούτοις καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς περὶ τοῦ Ἰωσήφ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς τοῦ Πολύστορος γραφῆς ἐπισυνήφθω. Then from 9.23–24 there is no transitional comment mentioning the source. Thus, the reference to the “same author” at the end of 9.24 might be either Philo the Epic Poet or Alexander Polyhistor. But since Polyhistor also seems to be Eusebius’s source for Philo the Epic Poet in 9.24, it seems most likely that Eusebius has now reverted back to Polyhistor for the quote from Aristeas the Exegete, which is borne out by the transitional comment at the end of 9.25.

Ἀβραάμ. **d** καὶ οὗτοι οἱ βασιλεῖς οἱ βασιλεύσαντες ἐν Ἐδῶμ ἦς καὶ αὐτὸς ἤρξεν χώρας· πρῶτος Βαλὰκ ὁ τοῦ Βεῶρ, καὶ ὄνομα τῇ πόλει αὐτοῦ Δενναβα· μετὰ δὲ Βαλὰκ Ἰωβὰβ ὁ καλούμενος Ἰώβ· μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον Ἀσὸμ ὁ ὑπάρχων ἡγεμὼν ἐκ τῆς Θαιμανίτιδος χώρας· μετὰ δὲ τοῦτον Ἀδὰδ υἱὸς Βαράδ ὁ ἐκκόψας Μαδιάμ ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ Μωάβ καὶ ὄνομα τῇ πόλει αὐτοῦ Γεθθαίμ. **e** οἱ δὲ ἐλθόντες πρὸς αὐτὸν φίλοι· Ἐλιφάς τῶν Ἡσαῦ υἱῶν Θαιμανῶν βασιλεύς, Βαλδὰδ ὁ Σαυχαίῳν τύραννος, Σωφὰρ ὁ Μιναίων βασιλεύς.

the fifth in line from Abraham. **d** These are the kings who ruled in Edom, which was the region, which he also ruled. First was Balak, son of Beor, and the name of his city was Dennaba. After Balak was Jobab, called Job. After him was Hasom, the principal governor of the Taimanite region, and after him was Adad son of Barad, the one who destroyed Midian in the plain of Moab, and the name of his city was Getthaim. **e** Those friends who came to him: Eliphaz of the sons of Esau, the king of Taiman; Baldad, the ruler of the Sauchites; Sophar, the king of the Minneans.

2.3.2. Demetrius of Phalerum (and Pseudo-Demetrius)

One of the most notorious men of the early Hellenistic period, Demetrius was as important in legend as he was in history.³⁰ Because the character of Demetrius in the Epistle of Aristeeas is constructed on a complex foundation of widely disseminated traditions, it is helpful to consider the roles associated with him and the ways in which these may relate to his characterization in the Epistle of Aristeeas as the chief librarian under Ptolemy Philadelphus and the one who called for the Greek translation of the Jewish law.

Unfortunately, the sources of Demetrius's life are not entirely reliable.³¹ On the basic structure of his life, however, there seems to be some agreement. Demetrius, son of Phanostatus,³² was born (ca. 350 BCE) in Phalerum, the coastal suburb of Athens. He became a student of the famous peripatetic scholar Theophrastus and a supporter of Cassander,³³ a Macedonian regent of the Antipatrid dynasty and one of the successors (Diadochi) of Alexander the Great. In 317 BCE Cassander appointed Demetrius as governor of Athens, in which capacity he reformed the legal system. By 307 Demetrius was exiled from Greece and fled to Egypt after his enemy, the Antigonid prince Demetrius I (later called Poliorcetes), captured Athens.

30. Also known as Demetrios/-us of Phaleron or Demetrios/-us Phalereus (Δημήτριος Φαληρεὺς).

31. For a useful compilation of excerpts of all of the sources relating to Demetrius of Phalerum presented in Greek or Latin with facing English translations, see Stork, van Ophuijsen, and Dorandi 2000. See also the important essays on Demetrius in Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf 2000.

32. So, inter alia, Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.75; Suda, s.v. Δημήτριος (no. 429); Aelian, *Var. hist.* 12.43; *IG* 2.2.1201. In our citation of ancient sources, we follow the numbering conventions of Stork, van Ophuijsen, and Dorandi 2000 whenever possible.

33. Esp. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 18.74.1–3; Nepos, *Phoc.* 3.1–2; Polyaeus, *Strat.* 4.7.6; Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 12.60.542F.

In Egypt, Demetrius managed to find his way into the court of Ptolemy I Soter and acted as an advisor to the king. After backing another heir to the throne, a half-brother to Philadelphus, he was exiled from the court by Ptolemy II upon the death of Ptolemy I (283); he died soon thereafter. This timeline challenges the historical reliability of the Epistle of Aristeeas, which places Demetrius in Philadelphus's court.³⁴

In the following, we survey the traditions surrounding Demetrius's roles as philosopher-king, lawgiver, advisor to King Ptolemy, and the founder of the library at Alexandria. Subsequently, some of the writings falsely attributed to Demetrius will be discussed.

Demetrius as Philosopher-King

The title "philosopher-king" is one often associated with Demetrius in scholarship, not because he was a king but because he aspired to rule Athens according to the principles of the ideal philosopher-king of Aristotelian thought.³⁵ Demetrius was, after all, a philosopher trained by Theophrastus, a leader of Aristotle's Lyceum; however, he was not strictly a king (βασιλεὺς).³⁶ Cassander set him in control of Athens in 317 BCE,³⁷ probably in the technical role of ἐπιμελητής ("superintendent of the state") but with the power of an absolute governor or dictator.³⁸ His uneventful rule ended abruptly in 307 BCE, when Demetrius I (Poliorcetes) conquered Athens.³⁹

34. L. White 2015, 184.

35. On Demetrius as philosopher-king, see Green 1990, 36–51, esp. 45; O'Sullivan 2009, esp. 197–240. The philosopher-king ideal was also summed up in the famous saying of Plato, that for the betterment of the state "either kings should study philosophy or philosophers should rule as kings" (Plato, *Resp.* 473CD, 499B, 540D; *Leg.* 711D; 712A; 713E; *Ep.* 7 [324B; 328A]). Notably the maxim is also found in Philo, *Mos.* 2.1.2. For the combination of king and lawgiver, see also *Mos.* 2.4, given below at p. 216 n. 47 in reference to Ep. Arist. §131; cf. p. 125 n. 118 on §188.

36. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.39, 75; Suda, s.v. Δημήτριος (no. 429); Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Din.* 2.2; Plutarch, *Vit. X orat.* 850B–C; Themistius, *Or.* 21.252b; Philodemus, *De rhetorica*, P.Herc. 453, frag. 4.10–13 (Crönert 1906, 67); Cicero, *Leg.* 3.6.14; *Brut.* 9.37; *De fin.* 5.19.54; *Off.* 1.1.3; Strabo, *Geogr.* 9.1.20.

37. On the political goals of Cassander and Demetrius's function in them, see O'Sullivan 2009, 241–88.

38. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 18.74.1–3. See also Ferguson 1911, 47 n. 3; Green 1990, 45.

39. Suda, s.v. Δημήτριος (no. 429); Strabo, *Geogr.* 9.1.20; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 28 [69c–d]; *Exil.* 7 [601f]; Cicero, *Fin.* 5.19.54.

The combination of the roles of philosopher and political ruler in Demetrius is a significant backdrop for the Epistle of Aristeeas. Demetrius is portrayed in the Epistle of Aristeeas as the person who convinced Philadelphus to authorize the translation of the law books of the Jews for the library and as the director of that translation project. It is all the more interesting, then, that the longest single section of the Epistle of Aristeeas (§§182–300), the symposium where Philadelphus questions the seventy-two translators, reflects the tradition of advice “on kinship.”⁴⁰ The apologetic thrust of this scene is enhanced for a reader who recognizes the character of Demetrius.

Demetrius as Lawgiver

As ruler, Demetrius committed to reforming the laws of Athens as part of a peripatetic program of moral reform.⁴¹ His teacher and friend Theophrastus wrote a work entitled *Laws* that deeply influenced Demetrius.⁴² It is possible that Demetrius referred to himself by the technical title νομοθέτης (“lawgiver”), but even if he did not, he was remembered by that role.⁴³ Titles aside, his claim to fame as ruler of Athens was lawgiving (νομοθεσία), and he was specifically known for restrictive laws regarding women, children, and burials.⁴⁴ At a later point in his career, Demetrius would endeavor to defend what he called his “lawgiving” in Athens.⁴⁵

In Ep. Arist. §313 Demetrius specifically proclaims the lawgiving (νομοθεσία) of the Jewish law as divine and sacred in origin. Even more, the Epistle of Aristeeas persistently labels Moses as “lawgiver” (νομοθέτης), for it was he who instituted the law of the Jews.⁴⁶ Here we may take special note

40. Cf. Murray 1967, 337–71; Sidebottom 2006, 126–27.

41. J. Williams 1987.

42. Dow and Travis 1943, 145; Gagarin 2000, 354–56.

43. Marmor Parium B.15–16; George Syncellus, *Ekl.* 251 (see Stork, van Ophuijsen, and Dorandi 2000, 55). Cf. Cicero, *Rep.* 2.1.2. See also the convincing restoration of IG 2.2.1201 (the Axione decree: a late fourth-century BCE statue base from Eleusis) by Dow and Travis 1943. If correct, this decree indicates that Demetrius went by the title “lawgiver.” Cf. Ferguson 1911, 40; O’Sullivan 2009, 45.

44. For various sources on Demetrius’s laws, see Gagarin 2000; O’Sullivan 2009, 45–104.

45. According to Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.80, Demetrius wrote a five-volume work titled Περὶ τῆς Ἀθηνῶν νομοθεσίας. Demetrius also describes his activity of lawgiving (νομοθετῶν) in his *Socrates* (*apud* Plutarch, *Arist.* 27.3). See Dow and Travis 1943, 153–56.

46. Ep. Arist. §§131, 139, 153, 170, 312. Considering Philo’s stated interest in

of the wording in Ep. Arist. §131 (Eleazar's disquisition on the law), which may well evoke an image of Demetrius as lawgiver.⁴⁷

Demetrius as Advisor to King Ptolemy

During Demetrius's exile in Thebes after being banished from Athens, he was invited to the court of Ptolemy I Soter on the recommendation of Theophrastus.⁴⁸ As a φίλος ("Friend") of Ptolemy I, Demetrius was responsible for advising the king on matters of philosophy and kingship.⁴⁹ However, according to Diogenes Laertius it was ultimately his advice that caused him to end his career in shame. Supposedly Demetrius advised Ptolemy I to "bestow the kingship on his children by Eurydice," the sister of Demetrius's former ally Cassander.⁵⁰ The king chose, however, to give the kingship to his son by Berenice, who in 285 was crowned as Ptolemy II Philadelphus. On the death of Ptolemy I two years later (283), Philadelphus immediately banished Demetrius to the Egyptian countryside. He died there, allegedly being killed either accidentally or intentionally by the bite of an asp.⁵¹

These details are at odds with the portrayal in the Epistle of Aristeas, which depicts Demetrius as an esteemed advisor in the court of Philadelphus. Because of the obvious apologetic intent and deviation from history in the Epistle of Aristeas, critical scholars who have considered this matter have typically concluded that the text took liberty with history.⁵² Perhaps the reason for this has to do with the tradition captured in the Epistle of Aristeas that Ptolemy I Soter was vilified for his enslavement of

portraying Moses as the perfect lawgiver in his *De vita Mosis*, it is surprising that he excludes Demetrius from his version of the LXX legend (*Mos*. 2.25–44). See next note.

47. See the notes to the text and translation there, comparing Philo, *Mos*. 2.4: ὥς εὐθὺς εἶναι τὸν μὲν βασιλέα νόμον ἐμψυχον, τὸν δὲ νόμον βασιλέα δίκαιον ("so that the king is at once a living law, and the law is a just king").

48. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.58; Aelian, *Var. hist.* 3.17.

49. Plutarch, *Reg. imp. apophth.*, Demetrius of Phalerum (189d).

50. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.78–79 (citing Hermippus and Heraclides). See Green 1990, 87–88. Cf. the discussion of N. Collins (2000, esp. 63–70), who doubts the validity of the tradition that Demetrius was banished on account of this advice.

51. Hermippus in Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.78–79; Cicero, *Pro Rabirio Postumo* 9.23.

52. So Walter 1964, 89–98; Fraser 1972, 1:321; Green 1990, 89; Holladay 1995, 213 n. 70; Barnes 2004, 64. Rajak (2009, 38–50) has an excellent discussion of this matter, rightly suggesting that it is better to discuss historical myth than history in the Epistle of Aristeas. The counterargument is waged most extensively in N. Collins 2000.

the Jews (§§12–27),⁵³ or the legend reflects the idea that the library is an institution accredited to Philadelphus even though it was planned by Soter. Regardless, the Epistle of Aristeeas depends on the tradition that Demetrius advised King Ptolemy.

Demetrius as Librarian

Even more troubling is the issue of Demetrius's association with the library. The earliest source to describe Demetrius as the head of the library at Alexandria is Ep. Arist. §9. All of the later sources that record this detail seem to have received the tradition from the Epistle of Aristeeas or later sources that depend on it.⁵⁴ In fact, the closest thing to a parallel tradition is Plutarch's note that "Demetrius of Phalerum advised King Ptolemy [I Soter] to acquire the books dealing with kingship and leadership and to read them."⁵⁵ But this statement is simply built on the tradition that Demetrius advised Ptolemy I on kingship. The library of Alexandria is not mentioned, although the reference to "books" perhaps allows this idea. If Demetrius himself was involved in the planning of the library and museum, it was as an adviser to Ptolemy I. But he was not the first librarian; Zenodotus of Ephesus probably was.⁵⁶

Writings Attributed to Demetrius

According to Diogenes Laertius and other ancient authors, Demetrius was a prolific writer.⁵⁷ Because of his fame, many later writings were falsely attributed to him. Two of the most important, which should be consid-

53. However, Pseudo-Hecataeus exalts Ptolemy I (Frag. 1 = Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.183–189); thus, the Jewish traditions regarding Soter were not all negative. Hecataeus, like Demetrius, is another historical figure from the reign of Ptolemy I. The author of the Epistle of Aristeeas, however, does not explicitly place him in the court of Ptolemy II, as he does with Demetrius. See sec. 2.3.3.

54. Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.45–47; Tertullian, *Apol.* 18.5; Epiphanius, *Mens.* 48–53; George Syncellus, *Ekl.* 517–18 (Stork, van Ophuijsen, and Dorandi 2000, 111, 123–24); Joannes Tzetzes, *Prolegomena de comedia*, proem 2.

55. Plutarch, *Reg. imp. apophth.*, Demetrius of Phalerum (189d). See Walter 1964, 89–90 n. 3.

56. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 18.67.6. On Zenodotus, see Green 1990, 86, 89, 204, 208; Barnes 2004, 68–70.

57. See the list of Demetrius's known works assembled in Stork, van Ophuijsen, and Dorandi 2000, 167–69.

ered the product of Pseudo-Demetrii, are works on epistolary theory. The first, *De elocutione* (*On Style*), was probably written in the first century CE, but its sources date to the second or first centuries BCE.⁵⁸ Among other topics, it outlines the proper style to be employed when writing a letter. The second, *Τύποι Ἐπιστολικοί* (*Epistolary Types*), is one of the two major surviving handbooks on the different types of letters one may write.⁵⁹ It was written sometime between 200 BCE and 300 CE.⁶⁰ One can only suppose that these two texts on epistolary theory were attributed to Demetrius because he was a skilled rhetorician and orator, two arts related to letter writing.

Notably, Demetrius is portrayed in the Epistle of Aristeas as the author of a letter to Philadelphus asking the king to approve of his idea to have the Jewish books translated (Ep. Arist. §§29–32).⁶¹ Demetrius quotes Hecataeus of Abdera to support his proposal. It is probably more than a coincidence that the Epistle of Aristeas, like the Pseudo-Demetrius texts, associates letter writing with the figure of Demetrius. We may presume that either the authors of these texts all knew a tradition that Demetrius was interested in rhetoric and epistolary theory or all similarly imagined Demetrius as a skillful writer of persuasive letters.

(Pseudo-)Demetrius the Chronographer

Demetrius the Chronographer may have had little or nothing to do with Demetrius of Phalerum. The six fragments attributed to this Demetrius were preserved by Polyhistor and appear in the works of Clement and Eusebius.⁶² Their author wrote in Alexandria no earlier than the reign of

58. For text, translation, and commentary, see Roberts 1932. See also Grube 1961; Malherbe 1988, 16–19.

59. For text, translation, and commentary, see Weichert 1910. See also Malherbe 1988, 4–7, 30–41. The standard Latin title is *Formae epistolicae* (*Form. Ep.*).

60. Malherbe 1988, 4.

61. Cf. Josephus, *A.J.* 12.36–39; Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 8.3.1–4. Hercher (1873, 218) presents Demetrius's epistle as an independent text.

62. Frag. 1 = Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.19.4; Frag. 2 = *Praep. ev.* 9.21.1–19; Frag. 3 = *Praep. ev.* 9.29.1–3; Frag. 4 = *Praep. ev.* 9.29.15; Frag. 5 = *Praep. ev.* 9.29.16; Frag. 6 = Clement, *Strom.* 1.21.141.1–2. For text, translation, and commentary, see Holladay 1983, 51–91; for another translation and commentary, see J. Hanson 1985, 2:843–54. For further discussion of the literary and historical issues, see J. Collins 2000, 33–6; Niehoff 2011, 38–57.

Ptolemy IV Philopator (222–205 BCE). It is likely, however, that he wrote as late as the mid- to late second century BCE.⁶³ The fragments are concerned with establishing a chronology of the events in Genesis and Exodus, as well as some of the later events in the history of Israel. This work is likely the earliest known witness to a Greek translation of the Pentateuch.⁶⁴

Clancy has suggested that this chronicle may have been attributed to Demetrius of Phalerum.⁶⁵ Josephus, for instance, conflated the two (*C. Ap.* 1.218). If this association is correct, this would mean another Jewish author was exploiting the figure of Demetrius of Phalerum earlier than when the author of the Epistle of Aristeas invoked his celebrity. While a notable connection, the name Demetrius was too common in the Hellenistic world for this to be a reasonable conclusion without further evidence.

[GAK]

63. On the dating of Demetrius the Chronographer, see Holladay 1983, 51–52; J. Hanson 1985, 2:844; Clancy 2005:144.

64. See Holladay 1983, 53–54; J. Hanson 1985, 2:844–45; Niehoff 2011, 38–57.

65. Clancy 2002, 208.

Demetrius of Phalerum: The Josephan *Testimonia*Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1.217–218⁶⁶

217 οἱ πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων ἀνδρῶν τῆς μὲν ἀληθείας τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς πραγμάτων διήμαρτον, ὅτι μὴ ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἡμῶν βίβλοις ἐνέτυχον. κοινῶς μέντοι περὶ τῆς ἀρχαιότητος ἅπαντες μεμαρτυρήκασιν, ὑπὲρ ἧς τὰ νῦν λέγειν προεθέμην. 218 ὁ μέντοι Φαληρεὺς Δημήτριος καὶ Φίλων ὁ πρεσβύτερος καὶ Εὐπόλεμος οὐ πολὺ τῆς ἀληθείας διήμαρτον. οἷς συγγιγνώσκειν ἄξιον, οὐ γὰρ ἐνῆν αὐτοῖς μετὰ πάσης ἀκριβείας τοῖς ἡμετέροις γράμμασι παρακολουθεῖν.

Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 2.44–47⁶⁷

44 ὅμοια δὲ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Λάγου περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ κατοικούντων ἐφρόνησεν· καὶ γὰρ τὰ κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον αὐτοῖς ἐνεχείρισε φρουρία πιστῶς ἅμα καὶ γενναίως φυλάξειν ὑπολαμβάνων, καὶ Κυρήνης ἐγκρατῶς ἄρχειν βουλόμενος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐν τῇ Λιβύῃ πόλεων εἰς αὐτὰς μέρος Ἰουδαίων ἔπεμψε κατοικῆσον. 45 ὁ δὲ μετ’ αὐτὸν Πτολεμαῖος, ὁ Φιλάδελφος ἐπικληθεὶς, οὐ μόνον εἴ τινες ἦσαν αἰχμάλωτοι παρ’ αὐτῷ τῶν ἡμετέρων πάντα ἀπέδωκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ χρήματα πολλάκις ἐδωρήσατο καὶ τὸ μέγιστον, ἐπιθυμητῆς ἐγένετο τοῦ γινῶναι τοὺς ἡμετέρους νόμους καὶ ταῖς τῶν ἱερῶν γραφῶν βίβλοις ἐντυχεῖν. 46 ἔπεμψε γοῦν ἀξίων ἀνδρας ἀποσταλῆναι τοὺς ἐρμηνεύοντας αὐτῷ τὸν νόμον, καὶ τοῦ γραφῆναι ταῦτα καλῶς τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν ἐπέταξεν οὐ τοῖς τυχοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ Δημήτριον τὸν Φαληρέα καὶ Ἀνδρέαν καὶ Ἀριστέα, τὸν μὲν παιδεῖα τῶν καθ’ ἑαυτὸν διαφέροντα Δημήτριον, 47 τοὺς δὲ τὴν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ φυλακὴν ἐγκεχειρισμένους, ἐπὶ τῆς ἐπιμελείας ταύτης ἔταξεν, οὐκ ἂν δήπου τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὴν πάτριον ἡμῶν φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιθυμήσας ἐκμαθεῖν, εἰ τῶν χρωμένων αὐτοῖς ἀνδρῶν κατεφρόνει καὶ μὴ λίαν ἐθαύμαζεν.

66. See Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.42.3.

67. Greek text is from Thackeray 1926.

217 In truth, the majority of the men mentioned previously have made great mistakes about the true accounts of our nation in the earliest times, because they had not read our sacred books. Concerning our antiquity, however, they have all in common afforded their testimony, concerning which I am now treating. **218** However, Demetrius Phalereus, Philo the Elder, and Eupolemus have not greatly missed the truth about our affairs, whose lesser mistakes ought therefore to be forgiven them, for it was not in their power to understand our writings with the utmost accuracy.

44 Of the same mind also was Ptolemy the son of Lagus, as to those Jews who dwelt at Alexandria. For he entrusted the fortresses of Egypt into their hands, as believing they would keep them faithfully and valiantly for him, and when he was desirous to secure the government of Cyrene and the other cities of Libya to himself, he sent a party of Jews to inhabit them. **45** And for his successor Ptolemy, who was called Philadelphus, he did not only set all those of our nation free who were captives under him but did frequently give money [for their ransom]; what was his greatest work of all, he had a great desire of knowing our laws and of reading the books of our sacred scriptures. **46** Accordingly, he desired that such men might be sent him as might interpret our law to him, and in order to compile them well, he gave the charge to no ordinary persons but ordered that Demetrius Phalereus, along with Andreas, and Aristeeas [be put in charge]. These, then, he placed in charge of this matter: Demetrius, on the one hand, being the most learned person of his age, **47** and the others, being the very ones entrusted with the guard of his own body. Nor would he have been so desirous of learning our law and the philosophy of our nation had he despised the men who made use of it or had he not indeed had them in great admiration.

2.2.3. Hecataeus of Abdera (and Pseudo-Hecataeus)

In the Epistle of Aristeas, Demetrius of Phalerum quotes Hecataeus of Abdera in support of his case that the king should approve the translation of the Jewish law books. Hecataeus, like Demetrius, is a figure whose authority in the storyworld of the Epistle of Aristeas is derived from history and legend. Hecataeus was a well-known ethnographer who served in the court of Ptolemy I Soter around 300 BCE and wrote more or less sympathetically about the Jews. His invocation in the Epistle of Aristeas, however, reflects the later Jewish tradition that Hecataeus was an admirer of the Jews. For this reason, later works attributed to Hecataeus by Jewish authors are important for understanding the Jewish appropriation of this figure in the Epistle of Aristeas.

Hecataeus as Ethnographer of the Jews

Hecataeus of Abdera was a famous Greek philosopher, grammarian, and ethnographer who served in the court of Ptolemy I around 300 BCE.⁶⁸ His ethnographies, *Concerning the Egyptians* and *Concerning the Hyperboreans*, were used as models by later ethnographers.⁶⁹ Most of his work has not survived, although a significant excursus about the Jews, most likely from his *Concerning the Egyptians*, was preserved by Diodorus Siculus in the first century BCE.⁷⁰ Hecataeus's treatment of the Jews is, for the most part, learned and objective.⁷¹ He focuses especially on Moses and the exodus, suggesting that the expulsion of the Jews from Egypt was the impetus for many of their laws, institutions, and customs, including their "unsocial and intolerant mode of life."⁷² Thus Hecataeus attributes to Egyptian rulers a major influence on the Jewish way of life.

68. For more information about the genuine Hecataeus and his works, see Jacoby 1912, 2750–69; Holladay 1983, 277, 291 nn. 1–9; Bar-Kochva 1996, 7–43; Meister 1996, 671; Berthelot 2010, 718–19. Note that this Hecataeus is not the sixth-century BCE Hecataeus of Miletus, who was also a famous ethnographer.

69. *FGrH* 3:37–38; Murray 1970, 150, 166–69; Fraser 1972, 1:497; Bar-Kochva 1996, 9.

70. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 40.3.1–8 *apud* Photius, *Bibl.* 244. The text is available in Walton 1967, 277–87, and is discussed at length in Bar-Kochva 1996, 18–43.

71. However, as Gruen (1998, 52) notes, Hecataeus does make some errors.

72. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 40.3.4 (cf. 40.3.8). See Gruen 1998, 51; Berthelot 2010, 719.

Whether for his fame as an ethnographer, association with the Ptolemaic court, fair report on the Jews, or some combination, Hecataeus's name was often cited to demonstrate Greek endorsement of the Jews and their history. One important work of a Pseudo-Hecataeus is known as *Concerning the Jews*.⁷³ It comprises two fragments preserved in Josephus's *Contra Apionem*.⁷⁴ These fragments discuss Jewish affairs in the time of Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I Soter, extolling Ptolemy I and claiming that many Jews migrated to Egypt because of his benevolence. The work also addresses Jewish customs, provides a favorable description of Jerusalem and the temple, mentions Judea's colonization of neighboring lands, and offers an anecdote about a Jew confronted with popular Hellenistic religion. Although Josephus expressly attributes these fragments to the genuine Hecataeus (*C. Ap.* 1.183), scholars are divided as to whether they should be considered authentic. Those who support their authenticity take note of shared themes and generally do not find the favorable and apologetic account of *Concerning the Jews* to be an unimaginable extension of what many consider the balanced treatment by the genuine Hecataeus;⁷⁵ however, the arguments in support of authenticity are unable to account for anachronisms in the work. While the work of Hecataeus of Abdera can confidently be dated to circa 300 BCE, the time of Ptolemy I,⁷⁶ the fragments of Pseudo-Hecataeus's *Concerning the Jews*, which evidently employ the genuine Hecataeus's work on the Jews as a model,⁷⁷ reflect conditions during or just after the reign of John Hyrcanus (134–104 BCE). They should be assigned an approximate date of 100 BCE and an Egyptian provenance.⁷⁸

73. On the other Jewish works preserved by Polyhistor under the title *Περὶ Ἰουδαίων*, see p. 205 n. 9. It is quite possible that *Concerning the Jews* was simply the descriptive title that Polyhistor gave to any Jewish work he transmitted that did not already have a distinct title.

74. Frag. 1 = Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.183–204; Frag. 2 = *C. Ap.* 2.42–43. Some have questioned whether the two fragments come from the same work (Wacholder 1974, 266; Doran 1985c, 2:905–7).

75. Schlatter 1972, 398 n. 50; Lewy 1932, 117–32; Tcherikover 1999, 426–27; Gager 1969, 130–39; Stern 1974, 20–44; Gauger 1982; Doran 1985c, 2:914–16; Sterling 1992a, 78–91.

76. On the date of the genuine Hecataeus of Abdera, see Meister 1996, 671; Berthelot 2010, 718–19. Josephus has the correct date and provenance for the genuine Hecataeus in *C. Ap.* 1.183, even if he did not cite a genuine work of his.

77. Bar-Kochva 1996, 219–31.

78. Those who assign the work *Concerning the Jews* preserved in *Contra Apionem* to a Pseudo-Hecataeus include Schürer (1901–1909, 3:605–8); Jacoby (1912, 2766–67;

An additional fragment attributed to Hecataeus, from a work called *Concerning Abraham*, is unanimously accepted as inauthentic. Preserved by Clement, this short fragment preserves a quotation falsely attributed to Sophocles but was probably produced by a Jewish author different than the author of *Concerning the Jews*.⁷⁹

Pseudo-Hecataeus's *Concerning the Jews* and the Epistle of Aristeas

In Ep. Arist. §31 Pseudo-Aristeas has Demetrius of Phalerum use Hecataeus's words in his letter to Philadelphus to convince the king that the books of the Jews deserve his interest. Demetrius cites Hecataeus as saying that "*the contemplative vision in them is so sacred and august*" (ἀγνήν τινα καὶ σεμνήν εἶναι τὴν ἐν αὐτοῖς θεωρίαν). This quotation is nowhere to be found in the surviving passage from Hecataeus of Abdera, nor is it consistent with

FGrH 3:46–52, 61–74); Wacholder (1974, 272–73); Hengel (1974, 1:69, 256); Walter (1976b, 144–53); Holladay (Holladay 1983, 283, 288); Gruen (1998, 202, 205); J. Collins (2000, 53); Barclay (2006, 338–40). On anachronisms, see Bar-Kochva 1996, 122–36; Holladay 1983, 281. The mention that priests, not Levites, receive tithes (*C. Ap.* 1.188), a statement suggesting a developed ideology of martyrdom (1.191), an account of the Jews destroying pagan temples (1.193), and an etiology for the annexation of Samaria (2.43; cf. Ep. Arist. §107), among other things, reflect conditions in Judea toward the end of the career of the Hasmonean dynast John Hyrcanus or later. The most extensive and insightful discussion on the date of *Concerning the Jews* is Bar-Kochva 1996, 122–42, although his argument that Pseudo-Hecataeus depends on the Epistle of Aristeas and therefore must have been written later is difficult to accept. For counterarguments on dating, see Doran 1985c, 2:914–16. An Egyptian provenance is indicated by the text's positive etiology of and legitimization for the Jewish community in Egypt as well as its inaccurate description of Jerusalem and the location of the temple. See Holladay 1983, 289; Bar-Kochva 1996, 232–54; J. Collins 2010, 718; Walter 1976b, 148, 151.

79. Frag. 3 = Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 5.14.112.4–113.1–2 (see also his *Protr.* 7.74.2). See *FGrH* 3:75; Walter 1976b, 144–53, contra Schürer 1901–1909, 3:605–8; Schaller 1963, 26, claiming all three fragments are from the same author. The author of Frags. 1 and 2 is sometimes called Pseudo-Hecataeus I and the author of Frag. 3 Pseudo-Hecataeus II to differentiate them. The work *Concerning Abraham* is mentioned by Josephus (*A.J.* 1.159). The title of the work preserved by Clement (*Strom.* 5.14.113.1) is actually *According to Abraham and the Egyptians*. Holladay (1983, 279, 335 n. 58) is probably right that this title is a conflation of the titles *Concerning Abraham* by a Pseudo-Hecataeus and *Concerning the Egyptians* by the genuine Hecataeus. The name *Concerning Abraham* is generally accepted for this fragment because Josephus knows of it as a work by (Pseudo-)Hecataeus separate from *Concerning the Jews*, and he is the most reliable witness to the works attributed to Hecataeus.

the approach of his ethnography, although this is debatable.⁸⁰ It is often assigned to Pseudo-Hecataeus, yet this quotation is also absent in the surviving pseudonymous fragments.⁸¹ This same basic sentiment is repeated in Ep. Arist. §313, again on the lips of Demetrius of Phalerum. As a result, it appears to be part of the literary fiction of the work. Nevertheless, Ep. Arist. §31 plainly puts stock in the reputation and authority of the genuine Hecataeus of Abdera, just as the fragments of Pseudo-Hecataeus do.

Literary dependency cannot be determined with any certainty because the quotation is not found in the surviving work of any Hecataeus. Thus, for a basis of comparison, we must rely primarily on thematic parallels. Like Pseudo-Hecataeus, the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas sought to eradicate animosity from the story of the beginnings of the Jewish community in Egypt (§§12–27).⁸² Although he admits that Ptolemy I forced many Jews to relocate to Egypt and enslaved a considerable number of them, he mollifies much of this information. In the Epistle of Aristeeas, Ptolemy I enlisted many of the Jews in his military, providing wages for their work, and he sold Jews into slavery only because his troops pressured him into it. Moreover, the magnanimous Ptolemy II, when petitioned, was more than happy to release the Jewish slaves, even paying each of them. Instead of portraying Ptolemy I as the benevolent king at the origins of the Jewish community in Egypt as Pseudo-Hecataeus did, the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas assigned this role to Ptolemy II.

Because the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas does not simply retell the legend in Pseudo-Hecataeus, which clearly serves his purposes, Bar-Kochva argues that Pseudo-Hecataeus must not yet have been written.⁸³ It is more reasonable, however, to conclude that the author of the Epistle of Aristeeas knew the story in Pseudo-Hecataeus but offered a different version in order to conflate traditions about the migration of the Jews to Egypt

80. Proponents of the view that Ep. Arist. §31 is from the genuine Hecataeus include Gager (1969, 132–34), Doran (1985c, 2:911–12), and Bar-Kochva (1996, 140–41).

81. The quotation is not consistent with the genuine Hecataeus's surviving work because he never inserts himself overtly into his narrative. While he might give this quotation as the belief of the Jews, he would not impose on his ethnography his own belief in this way. Those who argue, in one way or another, that the quotation belongs to Pseudo-Hecataeus include Schürer (1901–1909, 3:604), Jacoby (*FGrH* 3:62), Schaller (1963, 30), and Holladay (1983, 289).

82. Gruen 1998, 204–5.

83. Bar-Kochva 1996, 142.

with traditions about the translation of the scriptures during the reign of Philadelphus. There are other themes shared by the Epistle of Aristeeus and Pseudo-Hecataeus that strongly suggest a literary dependence (the description of Judaea and the temple as well as the annexation of Samaria), but this cannot be proven definitively.⁸⁴

[GAK]

Pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, *Concerning the Jews* (Josephus, C. Ap. 1.183–204 [Frag. 1])

183 ... Ἐκαταῖος δὲ ὁ Ἀβδηρίτης, ἀνὴρ φιλόσοφος ἅμα καὶ περὶ τὰς πράξεις ἱκανώτατος, Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ συνακμάσας καὶ Πτολεμαίῳ τῷ Λάγου συγγενόμενος, οὐ παρέργως, ἀλλὰ περὶ αὐτῶν Ἰουδαίων συγγέγραφε βιβλίον, ἐξ οὗ βούλομαι κεφαλαιωδῶς ἐπιδραμεῖν ἓνια τῶν εἰρημένων. **184** καὶ πρῶτον ἐπιδείξω τὸν χρόνον · μνημονεύει γὰρ τῆς Πτολεμαίου περὶ Γάζαν πρὸς Δημήτριον μάχης, αὕτη δὲ γέγονεν ἑνδεκάτῳ μὲν ἔτει τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου τελευτῆς, ἐπὶ δὲ Ὀλυμπιάδος ἑβδόμης καὶ δεκάτης καὶ ἑκατοστῆς, ὡς ἱστορεῖ Κάστωρ. **185** προσθεῖς γὰρ ταύτην τὴν Ὀλυμπιάδα φησὶν ·

“ἐπὶ ταύτης Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Λάγου ἐνίκα κατὰ Γάζαν μάχῃ Δημήτριον τὸν Ἀντιγόνου τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Πολιορκητήν.”

Ἀλέξανδρον δὲ τεθνάναι πάντες ὁμολογοῦσιν ἐπὶ τῆς ἑκατοστῆς τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτης Ὀλυμπιάδος. δῆλον οὖν ὅτι καὶ κατ’ ἐκεῖνον καὶ κατὰ Ἀλέξανδρον ἤκμαζεν ἡμῶν τὸ ἔθνος. **186** λέγει τοίνυν ὁ Ἐκαταῖος πάλιν ταδε, ὅτι μετὰ τὴν ἐν Γάζῃ μάχην ὁ Πτολεμαῖος ἐγένετο τῶν περὶ Συρίαν τόπων ἐγκρατής, καὶ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πυνθανόμενοι τὴν ἡπιότητα καὶ

84. Holladay (1983, 289, 297 n. 61) believes that the Epistle of Aristeeus depends on Pseudo-Hecataeus, citing a parallel between C. Ap. 1.186 and Ep. Arist. §§12–13, both of which deal with the migration of the Jews to Egypt. Bar-Kochva (1996, 139–41) also cites parallels but in order to show that Pseudo-Hecataeus was dependent on the Epistle of Aristeeus. He compares C. Ap. 1.195 with Ep. Arist. §107; 1.197 with Ep. Arist. §§105 and 113; and 1.198 with Ep. Arist. §83. To be sure, there are some important thematic convergences: the description of Judea as beautiful, the interest in the length of the perimeter of Jerusalem (although each text gives a different number!) and the population of the country, and the emphasis on the middle (μέσον; μέσῃ) in describing Jerusalem/the temple. However, there are no significant overlaps in language, and for as many thematic similarities as there are, there are just as many focal differences. The parallels offer suggestive but not conclusive evidence of literary dependence.

183 ... Of a different nature is the evidence of Hecataeus of Abdera, at once a philosopher and a highly competent man of affairs, who rose to fame under King Alexander and was afterward associated with Ptolemy, son of Lagus. He makes no mere passing allusion to us but wrote a book entirely about the Jews, from which I propose briefly to touch on some passages. **184** I will begin with fixing his date. He mentions the battle near Gaza between Ptolemy and Demetrius, which, as Castor narrates, was fought eleven years after the death of Alexander in the 117th Olympiad. **185** For under the head of the Olympiad he says:

“In this period Ptolemy, son of Lagus, defeated in a battle at Gaza Demetrius, son of Antigonus, surnamed Poliorcetes.”

And all agree that Alexander died in the 114th Olympiad. It is evident, therefore, that our race was flourishing both under Ptolemy and under Alexander. **186** Hecataeus goes on to say that after the battle of Gaza Ptolemy became master of Syria and that many of the inhabitants, hearing his

φιλανθρωπίαν τοῦ Πτολεμαίου συναπαίρειν εἰς Αἴγυπτον αὐτῷ καὶ κοινωνεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων ἡβουλήθησα.

187 “ὦν εἷς ἦν,” φησίν, “Ἐζεκίας ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἄνθρωπος τὴν μὲν ἡλικίαν ὡς ἐξήκοντα ἐξ ἐτῶν, τῷ δ’ ἀξιώματι τῷ παρὰ τοῖς ὁμοέθνοις μέγας καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν οὐκ ἀνόητος, ἔτι δὲ καὶ λέγειν δυνατὸς καὶ τοῖς περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, εἴπερ τις ἄλλος, ἔμπειρος. **188** καίτοι,” φησίν, “οἱ πάντες ἱερεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων οἱ τὴν δεκάτην τῶν γινομένων λαμβάνοντες καὶ τὰ κοινὰ διοικοῦντες περὶ χιλίους μάλιστα καὶ πεντακοσίους εἰσίν.”

189 πάλιν δὲ τοῦ προειρημένου μνημονεύων ἀνδρὸς “οὗτος,” φησίν, “ὁ ἄνθρωπος τετευχὼς τῆς τιμῆς ταύτης καὶ συνήθης ἡμῖν γενόμενος παραλαβὼν τινος τῶν μεθ’ ἑαυτοῦ τὴν {τε} διαφορὰν ἀνέγνω πᾶσαν αὐτοῖς · εἶχεν γὰρ τὴν κατοίκησιν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν γεγραμμένην.”

190 εἶτα Ἐκαταῖος δηλοῖ πάλιν πῶς ἔχομεν πρὸς τοὺς νόμους, ὅτι πάντα πάσχειν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ παραβῆναι τούτους προαιρούμεθα καὶ καλὸν εἶναι νομίζομεν.

191 “τοιγαροῦν,” φησί, “καὶ κακῶς ἀκούοντες ὑπὸ τῶν ἀστυγειτόνων καὶ τῶν εἰσαφικνουμένων πάντες καὶ προπηλακιζόμενοι πολλάκις ὑπὸ τῶν Περσικῶν βασιλέων καὶ σατραπῶν οὐ δύνανται μεταπεισθῆναι τῇ διανοίᾳ, ἀλλὰ γεγυμνωμένως περὶ τούτων καὶ αἰκίαις καὶ θανάτοις δεινοτάτοις μάλιστα πάντων ἀπαντῶσι, μὴ ἀρνούμενοι τὰ πάτρῳα.”

192 παρέχεται δὲ καὶ τεκμήρια τῆς ἰσχυρογνωμοσύνης τῆς περὶ τῶν νόμων οὐκ ὀλίγα. φησὶ γάρ, Ἀλεξάνδρου ποτὲ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι γενομένου καὶ προελομένου τὸ τοῦ Βήλου πεπτωκὸς ἱερὸν ἀνακαθᾶραι καὶ πᾶσιν αὐτοῦ τοῖς στρατιώταις ὁμοίως φέρειν τὸν χοῦν προστάξαντος, μόνους τοὺς Ἰουδαίους οὐ προσσχεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλὰς ὑπομεῖναι πληγὰς καὶ ζημίας ἀποτίσαι μεγάλας, ἕως αὐτοῖς συγγνόντα τὸν βασιλέα δοῦναι τὴν ἄδειαν. **193** ἔτι γε μὴν τῶν εἰς τὴν χώραν, φησί, πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀφικνουμένων νεῶς καὶ βωμοὺς κατασκευασάντων ἅπαντα ταῦτα κατέσκαπτον, καὶ τῶν μὲν ζημίαν τοῖς σατράπαις ἐξέτινον, περὶ τινων δὲ καὶ συγγνώμης μετελάμβανον. καὶ προσεπιτίθησιν ὅτι δίκαιον ἐπὶ τούτοις αὐτοὺς ἐστὶ θαυμάζειν. **194** λέγει δὲ καὶ περὶ τοῦ πολυανθρωπώτατον γεγονέναι ἡμῶν τὸ ἔθνος · πολλὰς μὲν γὰρ ἡμῶν, φησίν, ἀνασπάστους εἰς Βαβυλῶνα Πέρσαι πρότερον {αὐτῶν} ἐποίησαν μυριάδας, οὐκ ὀλίγα δὲ καὶ μετὰ τὸν Ἀλεξάνδρου θάνατον εἰς Αἴγυπτον καὶ Φοινίκην μετέστησαν διὰ τὴν ἐν Συρίᾳ στάσιν. **195** ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς οὗτος ἀνὴρ καὶ τὸ μέγεθος τῆς χώρας ἦν κατοικοῦμεν καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἰστόρηκεν ·

kindliness and humanity, desired to accompany him to Egypt and to associate themselves with his realm.

187 “Among these (he says) was Ezechias, a chief priest of the Jews, a man of about sixty-six years of age, highly esteemed by his countrymen, intellectual, and moreover an able speaker and unsurpassed as a man of business. **188** Yet (he adds) the total number of Jewish priests who receive a tithe of the revenue and administer public affairs is about fifteen hundred.”

189 Reverting to Ezechias, he says: “This man, after obtaining this honor and having been closely in touch with us, assembled some of those in his company and read to them [a statement showing] all the advantages [of emigration], for he had in writing the conditions attaching to their settlement and political status.”

190 In another passage Hecataeus mentions our regard for our laws and how we deliberately choose and hold it a point of honor to endure anything rather than transgress them.

191 “And so,” he says, “neither the slander of their neighbors and of foreign visitors, to which as a nation they are exposed, nor the frequent outrages of Persian kings and satraps can shake their determination, for these laws, naked and defenseless, they face tortures and death in its most terrible form rather than repudiate the faith of their forefathers.”

192 Of this obstinacy in defense of their laws he furnishes several instances. He tells how on one occasion Alexander, when he was at Babylon and had undertaken to restore the ruined temple of Bel, gave orders to all his soldiers, without distinction, to bring materials for the earthworks and how the Jews alone refused to obey and even submitted to severe chastisement and heavy fines, until the king pardoned them and exempted them from this task. **193** Again, when temples and altars were erected in the country by its invaders, the Jews razed them all to the ground, paying in some cases a fine to the satraps and in others obtaining pardon. For such conduct, he adds, they deserve admiration. **194** He then goes on to speak of our vast population, stating that, although many myriads of our race had already been deported to Babylon by the Persians, yet after Alexander’s death myriads more migrated to Egypt and Phoenicia in consequence of the disturbed conditions of Syria. **195** The same writer has referred to the extent and beauty of the country that we inhabit in the following words:

“τριακοσίας γὰρ μυριάδας ἀρουρῶν σχεδὸν τῆς ἀρίστης καὶ παμφορωτάτης χώρας νέμονται,” φησὶν· “ἡ γὰρ Ἰουδαία τοσαύτη πλήθός ἐστιν.”

196 ἀλλὰ μὴν ὅτι καὶ τὴν πόλιν αὐτὴν τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα καλλίστην τε καὶ μεγίστην ἐκ παλαιοτάτου κατοικοῦμεν καὶ περὶ πλήθους ἀνδρῶν καὶ περὶ τῆς τοῦ νεῷ κατασκευῆς οὕτως αὐτὸς διηγεῖται·

197 “ἔστι γὰρ τῶν Ἰουδαίων τὰ μὲν πολλὰ ὀχυρώματα κατὰ τὴν χώραν καὶ κῶμαι, μία δὲ πόλις ὀχυρὰ πεντήκοντα μάλιστα σταδίων τὴν περίμετρον, ἣν οἰκοῦσι μὲν ἀνθρώπων περὶ δώδεκα μυριάδες, καλοῦσι δ’ αὐτὴν Ἱεροσόλυμα. **198** ἐνταῦθα δ’ ἐστὶ κατὰ μέσον μάλιστα τῆς πόλεως περίβολος λίθινος, μῆκος ὡς πεντάπλεθος, εὖρος δὲ πηχῶν ρ’, ἔχων διπλᾶς πύλας· ἐν ᾧ βωμός ἐστι τετράγωνος ἀτμήτων συλλέκτων ἀργῶν λίθων οὕτως συγκείμενος, πλευρὰν μὲν ἐκάστην εἴκοσι πηχῶν, ὕψος δὲ δεκάπηχυ. καὶ παρ’ αὐτὸν οἶκημα μέγα, οὗ βωμός ἐστι καὶ λυχνίον, ἀμφότερα χρυσᾷ δύο τάλαντα τὴν ὀλκὴν. **199** ἐπὶ τούτων φῶς ἐστὶν ἀναπόσβεστον καὶ τὰς νύκτας καὶ τὰς ἡμέρας. ἀγαλμα δ’ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲ ἀνάθημα τὸ παράπαν οὐδ’ ἐφύτευμα παντελῶς οὐδὲν, οἷον ἀλσῶδες ἢ τι τοιοῦτον. διατρίβουσι δ’ ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὰς νύκτας καὶ τὰς ἡμέρας ἱερεῖς ἀγνείας τινὰς ἀγνεύοντες καὶ τὸ παράπαν οἶνον οὐ πίνοντες ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.”

200 ἔτι γε μὴν ὅτι καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ συνεστρατεύσαντο καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα τοῖς διαδόχοις αὐτοῦ μεμαρτύρηκεν· οἷς δ’ αὐτὸς παρατυχεῖν φησιν ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς Ἰουδαίου κατὰ τὴν στρατείαν γενομένοις, τοῦτο παραθήσομαι.

201 λέγει δ’ οὕτως· “ἐμοῦ γοῦν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν βαδίζοντος συνηκολούθει τις μετὰ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν παραπεμπόντων ἡμᾶς ἱππέων Ἰουδαίων ὄνομα Μοσόλλαμος, ἄνθρωπος ἱκανῶς κατὰ ψυχὴν, εὖρωστος καὶ τοξότης δὴ πάντων ὁμολογουμένως καὶ τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων ἄριστος. **202** οὗτος οὖν ὁ ἄνθρωπος διαβαδίζοντων πολλῶν κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν καὶ μάντεώς τινος ὀρνιθευομένου καὶ πάντας ἐπισχεῖν ἀξιοῦντος ἠρώτησε, διὰ τί προσμένουσι. **203** δείξαντος δὲ τοῦ μάντεως αὐτῷ τὸν ὄρνιθα καὶ φήσαντος, ἐὰν μὲν αὐτοῦ μένη προσμένειν συμφέρειν πᾶσιν, ἐὰν δ’ ἀναστὰς εἰς τοῦμπροσθεν πέτῃται προάγειν, ἐὰν δ’ εἰς τοῦπισθεν ἀναχωρεῖν αὐθις, σιωπήσας καὶ παρελκύσας τὸ τόξον ἔβαλε καὶ τὸν ὄρνιθα πατάξας ἀπέκτεινεν. **204** ἀγανακτούντων δὲ τοῦ μάντεως καὶ τινων ἄλλων

“They occupy almost 3,000,000 arourae of the most excellent and fertile soil, productive of every variety of fruits. Such is the extent of Judea.”

196 Again, here is his description of Jerusalem itself, the city that we have inhabited from remote ages, of its great beauty and extent, its numerous population, and the temple buildings:

197 “The Jews have many fortresses and villages in different parts of the country but only one fortified city, which has a circumference of about 50 stades and some 120,000 inhabitants; they call it Jerusalem.

198 Nearly in the center of the city stands a stone wall, enclosing an area about 5 plethra long and 100 cubits broad, approached by a pair of gates. Within this enclosure is a square altar, built of heaped up stones, unhewn and unwrought; each side is 20 cubits long and the height 10 cubits. Beside it stands a great edifice, containing an altar and a lampstand, both made of gold and weighing two talents; **199** upon these is a light that is never extinguished by night or day. There is not a single statue or votive offering, no trace of a plant, in the form of a sacred grove or the like. Here priests pass their nights and days performing certain rights of purification and abstaining altogether from wine while in the temple.”

200 The author further attests the share that the Jews took in the campaigns both of King Alexander and of his successors. One incident on the march, in which a Jewish soldier was concerned, he states that he witnessed himself. I will give the story in his own words:

201 “When I was on the march toward the Red Sea, among the escort of Jewish cavalry that accompanied us was one named Mosollamus, a very intelligent man, robust, and by common consent the very best of bowmen, whether Greek or barbarian. **202** This man, observing that a number of men were going to and fro on the route and that the whole force was being held up by a seer who was taking the auspices, inquired why they were halting. **203** The seer pointed out to him the bird he was observing and told him that if it stayed in that spot it was expedient for them all to halt; if it stirred and flew forward, to advance; if backward, then to retire. The Jew, without saying a word, drew his bow, shot and struck the bird, and killed it. **204** The seer and some others were indignant and heaped curses upon him. ‘Why so mad, you poor

καὶ καταρωμένων αὐτῶ, “τί μαίνεσθε,” ἔφη, “κακοδαίμονες;” εἶτα τὸν ὄρνιθα λαβὼν εἰς τὰς χεῖρας, “πῶς γάρ,” ἔφη, “οὗτος τὴν αὐτοῦ σωτηρίαν οὐ προῖδὼν περὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πορείας ἡμῖν ἂν τι ὑγιὲς ἀπήγγελλεν; εἰ γὰρ ἡδύνατο προγιγνώσκειν τὸ μέλλον, εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον οὐκ ἂν ἦλθε, φοβούμενος μὴ τοξεύσας αὐτὸν ἀποκτείνῃ Μοσόλλαμος ὁ Ἰουδαῖος.”

The Fragments of Pseudo-Hecataeus⁸⁵

Pseudo-Hecataeus of Abdera, *Concerning the Jews* (Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.42–43 [Frag. 2])⁸⁶

42 ... οὐ γὰρ ἀπορία γε τῶν οἰκησόντων τὴν μετὰ σπουδῆς ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ πόλιν κτιζομένην Ἀλέξανδρος τῶν ἡμετέρων τινὰς ἐκεῖ συνήθροισεν, ἀλλὰ πάντας δοκιμάζων ἐπιμελῶς ἀρετῆς καὶ πίστεως τοῦτο τοῖς ἡμετέροις τὸ γέρας ἔδωκεν. **43** ἐτίμα γὰρ ἡμῶν τὸ ἔθνος, ὡς καὶ φησιν Ἑκαταῖος περὶ ἡμῶν, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἐπιείκειαν καὶ πίστιν, ἣν αὐτῶ παρέσχον Ἰουδαῖοι, τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν χώραν προσέθηκεν ἔχειν αὐτοῖς ἀφορολόγητον.

Hecataeus: Additional Josephan *Testimonia*

Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1.213–215⁸⁷

213 Ὅτι δὲ οὐκ ἀγνοοῦντες ἔνιοι τῶν συγγραφέων τὸ ἔθνος ἡμῶν, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ φθόνου τινὸς ἢ δι’ ἄλλας αἰτίας οὐχ ὑγιεῖς τὴν μνήμην παρέλιπον, τεκμήριον οἶμαι παρέξειν · Ἰερώνυμος γὰρ ὁ τὴν περὶ τῶν διαδόχων ἱστορίαν συγγεγραφώς κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν μὲν ἦν Ἑκαταίῳ χρόνον, φίλος δ’ ὢν Ἀντιγόνου τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν Συρίαν ἐπετρόπευεν. **214** ἀλλ’ ὅμως Ἑκαταῖος μὲν καὶ βιβλίον ἔγραψεν περὶ ἡμῶν, Ἰερώνυμος δ’ οὐδαμοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν ἐμνημόνευσε καίτοι σχεδὸν ἐν τοῖς τόποις διατετριφώς. τοσοῦτον αἱ προαιρέσεις τῶν ἀνθρώπων

85. Greek text and English translation of Pseudo-Hecataeus’s *Concerning the Jews* are from Holladay 1983.

86. Josephus goes on to mention Demetrius of Phalerum in *C. Ap.* 2.44–47, which is presented in the *testimonia* to Demetrius in sec. 2.3.2.

87. Greek text is from Thackeray 1926.

88. In the preface to *C. Ap.* 1, this is one of the principal misconceptions that Josephus cites as the occasion for the writing. He says: ἐπεὶ δὲ συχνούς ὁρῶ ταῖς ὑπὸ

wretches?’ he retorted; then, taking the bird in his hands, continued, ‘Pray, how could any sound information about our march be given by this creature, which could not provide for its own safety? Had it been gifted with divination, it would not have come to this spot, for fear of being killed by an arrow of Mosollamus the Jew.’

42 ... for Alexander did not therefore get some of our nation to Alexandria because he wanted inhabitants for this his city, on whose building he had bestowed so much pains, but this was given to our people as a reward because he had, upon a careful trial, found them all to have been men of virtue and fidelity to him; 43 for, as Hecataeus says concerning us, “Alexander honored our nation to such a degree that, for the equity and the fidelity that the Jews exhibited to him, he permitted them to hold the country of Samaria free from tribute.

213 Now that some writers have omitted to mention our nation, not because they knew nothing of us but because they envied us or for some other unjustifiable reasons,⁸⁸ I think I can demonstrate by particular instances, for Hieronymus, who wrote the history of Alexander’s successors, lived at the same time with Hecataeus, and being a Friend of King Antigonus he administered Syria. 214 But for all that Hecataeus even wrote an entire book concerning us, while Hieronymus never mentions us in his history, although he was bred up very near to the places where we live. Thus different from one another are the inclinations of men: while the one thought we

δυσμενείας ὑπό τινων εἰρημέναις προσέχοντας βλασφημίαις καὶ τοῖς περὶ τὴν ἀρχαιολογίαν ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ γεγραμμένοις ἀπιστοῦντας τεκμήριόν τε ποιουμένους τοῦ νεώτερον εἶναι τὸ γένος ἡμῶν τὸ μηδεμίᾳ παρὰ τοῖς ἐπιφανέσι τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἱστοριογράφων μνήμης ἡξιῶσθαι (“But since I see a great number of people paying heed to blasphemies spoken out of ill-will by certain ones, disbelieving the things written by me concerning our *antiquity* and being given proof that our race is newer by the fact that it was deemed worthy of no mention at all by the most famous of the Greek historians,” C. Ap. 1.2). See also n. 90 below.

διήνεγκαν. τῷ μὲν γὰρ ἐδόξαμεν καὶ σπουδαίας εἶναι μνήμης ἄξιοι, τῷ δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν πάντως τι πάθος οὐκ εὐγνωμον ἐπεσκότησεν. **215** ἀρκοῦσι δὲ ὅμως εἰς τὴν ἀπόδειξιν τῆς ἀρχαιότητος αἱ τε Αἰγυπτίων καὶ Χαλδαίων καὶ Φοινίκων ἀναγραφαὶ πρὸς ἐκείναις τε τοσοῦτοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγραφεῖς.

Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 1.158–159⁸⁹

158 Μνημονεύει δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβράμου Βηρωσός, οὐκ ὀνομάζων, λέγων δ' οὕτως· μετὰ δὲ τὸν κατακλυσμὸν δεκάτῃ γενεᾷ παρὰ Χαλδαίοις τις ἦν δίκαιος ἀνὴρ καὶ μέγας καὶ τὰ οὐράνια ἔμπειρος. **159** Ἐκαταῖος δὲ καὶ τοῦ μνησθῆναι πλέον τι πεποίηκε· βιβλίον γὰρ περὶ αὐτοῦ συνταξάμενος κατέλιπε.

89. Greek text is from Thackeray 1926.

deserved to be carefully remembered, as some ill-disposed passion blinded the other's mind so entirely that he could not discern the truth. **215** And now certainly the foregoing records of the Egyptians, and Chaldeans, and Phoenicians, together with so many of the Greek writers, will be sufficient for the demonstration of our antiquity.⁹⁰

158 Berosus mentions our father Abram without naming him, when he says thus: "In the tenth generation after the flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great and skillful in the celestial science." **159** But Hecataeus does more than barely mention him, for he composed and left behind him a book concerning him.

90. The preface to *C. Ap.* 2 opens on this same note: *Διὰ μὲν οὖν τοῦ προτέρου βιβλίου, τιμώτατέ μοι Ἐπαφρόδιτε, περὶ τε τῆς ἀρχαιότητος ἡμῶν ἐπέδειξα τοῖς Φοινίκων καὶ Χαλδαίων καὶ Αἰγυπτίων γράμμασι πιστωσάμενος τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν Ἑλλήνων συγγραφεῖς παρασχόμενος μάρτυρας* ("In the former book, most honored Epaphroditus, concerning our great antiquity I have demonstrated its truth by offering faithful testimony from the writings of the Phoenicians and Chaldeans and Egyptians and by producing many of the Greek writers as witnesses," *C. Ap.* 2.1).

2.4. The Aristeas Legend in Early Christian Writers

2.4.1. References to the Legend in Second-Century Writers

The earliest direct testimony of the Aristeas legend among Christian writers comes from Justin and Irenaeus, both writing in the latter half of the second century CE. Both of them may show a dependence on Philo's version of the legend given above. While their accounts clearly depend on the basic storyline in the Epistle of Aristeas (and Irenaeus even more so than Justin), their *testimonia* nonetheless evince some confusion over names and dates that will linger into later versions of the legend. More specifically, it should be noted that the tradition preserved by Irenaeus bears striking verbal similarities to that in Clement of Alexandria that have not been examined closely.¹

[LMW]

1. The similarities between Irenaeus and Clement, to be discussed below, were noted by earlier editors; see Harvey 1857, 2:111–14 (following Grabe); Wendland 1900, 125; O. Stählin 1905–1936, 3:92.

Justin Martyr, *1 Apologia* 31.1–6²

1 Ἄνθρωποι οὖν τινες ἐν Ἰουδαίοις γεγέννηται θεοῦ προφῆται, δι' ὧν τὸ προφητικὸν πνεῦμα προεκήρυξε τὰ γενήσεσθαι μέλλοντα πρὶν ἢ γενέσθαι· καὶ τούτων οἱ ἐν Ἰουδαίοις κατὰ καιροὺς γενόμενοι βασιλεῖς τὰς προφητείας, ὡς ἐλέχθησαν ὅτε προεφητεύοντο, τῇ ἰδίᾳ αὐτῶν Ἑβραϊδὶ φωνῇ ἐν βιβλίοις ὑπ' αὐτῶν τῶν προφητῶν συντεταγμένας κτῶμενοι περιεῖπον.

2 ὅτε δὲ Πτολεμαῖος, ὁ Αἰγυπτίων βασιλεὺς, βιβλιοθήκην κατεσκεύαζε καὶ τὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων συγγράμματα συνάγειν ἐπειράθη, πυθόμενος καὶ περὶ τῶν προφητειῶν τούτων, προσέπεμψε τῷ τῶν Ἰουδαίων τότε βασιλεύοντι Ἡρώδῃ ἀξιῶν διαπεμφθῆναι αὐτῷ τὰς βίβλους τῶν προφητειῶν. 3 καὶ ὁ μὲν βασιλεὺς Ἡρώδης τῇ προειρημένῃ Ἑβραϊδὶ αὐτῶν φωνῇ γεγραμμένας διεπέμψατο. 4 ἐπειδὴ δὲ οὐκ ἦν γνώριμα τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς γεγραμμένα τοῖς Αἰγυπτίοις, πάλιν αὐτὸν ἠξίωσε πέμψας τοὺς μεταβαλοῦντας αὐτὰς εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα φωνὴν ἀνθρώπους ἀποστεῖλαι.

5 καὶ τοῦτου γενομένου ἔμειναν αἱ βίβλοι καὶ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις μέχρι τοῦ δεῦρο, καὶ πανταχοῦ παρὰ πᾶσιν εἰσιν Ἰουδαίοις...

Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.21.2 (apud Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.11–15)³

11 τούτοις ἐπιφέρει μετὰ βραχεία λέγων·

“πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ Ῥωμαίους κρατῦναι τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῶν, ἔτι τῶν Μακεδόνων τὴν Ἀσίαν κατεχόντων, Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Λάγου φιλοτιμούμενος τὴν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ

2. Justin Martyr died in Rome in ca. 164 CE, under the proconsul Q. Junius Rusticus. His *First Apology* was addressed to Antoninus Pius (emperor 138–161 CE); a date of composition during the mid-150s may be inferred from his comment in *Apol.* 1.46.1: πρὸ ἐτῶν ἑκατὸν πεντήκοντα γεγενῆσθαι τὸν Χριστὸν λέγειν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ Κυρηνίου (“we say Christ was born 150 years ago in the time of Quirinius”). Justin’s account may be dependent in part on that of Philo, given above. Greek text is from Goodspeed 1914.

3. Irenaeus was originally from Asia Minor and became bishop of Lyon in Roman Gaul during the 170s to 180s CE. Much of the text of his *Against All Heresies* is preserved only in the Latin version. This portion of the Greek text of book 3 is preserved in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.11–15. The Latin text shows, however, that Eusebius’s version remains close to the Greek original. For purposes of comparison, we give the Latin text of this passage at the end. Greek text from E. Schwartz 1903–1909.

1 Among the Jews, then, certain men had become prophets of God, through whom the prophetic Spirit proclaimed beforehand things that were to come to pass, even before it happened. And those being the kings among the Jews at the time carefully preserved their prophecies, just as they had been spoken when they were delivered, having taken possession of them once they had been arranged in books by the prophets themselves in their own Hebrew language.

2 Now when Ptolemy king of Egypt established a library and attempted to assemble the writings of all people, and having heard also of these prophets, he sent word to Herod,⁴ who then was king of the Jews, to consent that the books of the prophets be sent to him. 3 And King Herod did indeed transmit them, written in their Hebrew language, as was said before. 4 But since the things written in them were unintelligible to the Egyptians, he once again deemed it advisable to send (a request) that men be dispatched to translate them into the Greek language.

5 And when this was done, the books have remained with the Egyptians until the present day. They are also in the possession of all Jews everywhere....

11 After a little he [Ireneaus] follows this, saying:

“For before the Romans mastered their kingdom, while the Macedonians still held Asia, Ptolemy the son of Lagus,⁵ since he had ambitions to

4. This glaring anachronism must arise from the fact that the name of the particular Ptolemaic ruler was not specified. On the request between kings, it should be noted that Philo explicitly refers to a priest-king of the Jews as Ptolemy's correspondent. By inference, the Epistle of Aristeas may be read this way as well, based on the epistolary greetings in the “royal letter” from Ptolemy to Eleazar and Eleazar's reply, noting especially the highly formalized greetings in the latter. Overlapping with the reign of Herod, Cleopatra VII and her brothers (Ptolemy XIII and XIV) ruled from 51 to 31 BCE. See Jellicoe 1968, 42; Fernández-Marcos 2001, 48.

5. Presumably this means Ptolemy I Soter (also called Ptolemy Lagus or “son of Lagus”); he ruled 323–285 BCE. The “son of Lagus” might lead to some confusion, however, since Ptolemy II might also, although inappropriately, be called “son of Lagus.” See the notes below on Clement.

κατεσκευασμένην βιβλιοθήκην ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ κοσμήσαι τοῖς πάντων ἀνθρώπων συγγράμμασιν ὅσα γε σπουδαῖα ὑπῆρχεν, ἡτήσατο παρὰ τῶν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν εἰς τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν διάλεκτον σχεῖν αὐτῶν μεταβεβλημένας τὰς γραφάς.

12 οἱ δέ, ὑπήκουον γὰρ ἔτι τοῖς Μακεδόσιν τότε, τοὺς παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐμπειροτάτους τῶν γραφῶν καὶ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν διαλέκτων, ἐβδομήκοντα πρεσβυτέρους, ἔπεμψαν Πτολεμαίῳ, ποιήσαντος τοῦ θεοῦ ὅπερ ἠβούλετο.

13 ὁ δὲ ἰδίᾳ πεῖραν αὐτῶν λαβεῖν θελήσας εὐλαβηθεὶς τε μή τι ἄρα συνθέμενοι ἀποκρύψωσι τὴν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς διὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἀλήθειαν, χωρίσας αὐτοὺς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ἐκέλευσε τοὺς πάντας τὴν αὐτὴν ἐρμηνείαν γράφειν, καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν βιβλίων ἐποίησεν.

14 συνελθόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ παρὰ τῷ Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ συναντιβαλόντων ἐκάστου τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐρμηνείαν, ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἐδοξάσθη, αἱ δὲ γραφαὶ ὄντως θεῖαι ἐγνώσθησαν, τῶν πάντων τὰ αὐτὰ ταῖς αὐταῖς λέξεσιν καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀναγορευσάντων ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι τέλους, ὥστε καὶ τὰ παρόντα ἔθνη γινῶναι ὅτι κατ' ἐπίπνοιαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσιν ἐρμηνευμένοι αἱ γραφαί.

15 καὶ οὐδέν γε θαυμαστὸν τὸν θεὸν τοῦτο ἐνηργηκέναι, ὅς γε καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ Ναβουχοδονόσορ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ διαφθαρειῶν τῶν γραφῶν καὶ μετὰ ἐβδομήκοντα ἔτη τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀνελθόντων εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν, ἔπειτα ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις Ἀρταξέρξου τοῦ Περσῶν βασιλέως ἐνέπνευσεν Ἐσδρά τῷ ἱερεῖ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λευὶ τοὺς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀνατάξασθαι λόγους καὶ ἀποκαταστήσαι τῷ λαῷ τὴν διὰ Μωυσέως νομοθεσίαν.” τοσαῦτα ὁ Εἰρηναῖος.

6. The word *ἐμπειρίαν* (“well-versed”) occurs specifically in Ep. Arist. §39 (in the letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar); a variant form appears here and in Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.149.1 (the latter being closer in form to Ep. Arist. §39). Generally, the wording here is similar to that in Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.148.2–149.3 (see below). Also, Irenaeus, like Clement and Josephus, gives the number as seventy instead of seventy-two. Like

adorn the library that he had founded in Alexandria with the writings of all peoples that were of merit, made request to the Jerusalemites, to have their Scriptures translated into the Greek language.

12 Now they [the Jerusalemites]—for at that time they were still subject to the Macedonians—sent seventy elders who were very well versed in the Scriptures and in both the languages⁶ to Ptolemy, for God to do as he willed.

13 But he [Ptolemy] decided to test them by welcoming each one of them,⁷ but then fearing that they might conspire together and conceal the truth in the Scriptures through their translation, he separated them from each other and commanded them all to write the same translation. He did this with respect to all the books.

14 But when they came together in the same place before Ptolemy, and they compared the translation of each one, God was glorified, on the one hand, and the Scriptures, on the other hand, were acknowledged to be divine, as all of them read out the same things in the very same words and with the very same names from beginning to end, so that even the gentiles present came to know that the Scriptures had been translated by the inspiration of God.

15 And yet there was nothing astonishing for God to have done this, he who—when the Scriptures had been corrupted during the captivity of the people under Nebuchadnezzar and when, after seventy years, the Jews had returned to their own land, then, in the times of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians—inspired Esdras the priest, of the tribe of Levi,⁸ to set in order all the words of the former prophets and to restore the Mosaic legislation to the people.”

So says Irenaeus.

Clement, Irenaeus also asserts that the translation included the Prophets. The words underlined in the Greek text indicate close verbal similarities to Clement (below). See also the synoptic chart on pages 262–65 below.

7. This seems to refer to the king’s individual questioning of the elders at the seven-day symposium; cf. Philo, *Mos.* 2.33, who also calls it a “testing” (ἀπεπειράτο).

Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 3.21.2⁸

Prius enim quam Romani possiderent regnum suum, adhuc Macedonibus Asiam possidentibus, Ptolemaeus Lagi filius, cupiens eam bibliothecam, quae a se fabricata esset in Alexandria, omnium hominum dignis conscriptionibus ornare, petiit ab Hierosolymitis in Graecum sermonem interpretatas habere Scripturas eorum. Illi vero, obediebant enim tunc adhuc Macedonibus, eos quos habebant perfectiores Scripturam intellectores, et utriusque loquela, septuaginta seniors miserunt Ptolemaeo facturos hoc quod ipse voluisset. Ille autem experimentum eorum sumere volens, et metuens ne forte consentientes, eam veritatem quae esset in Scripturis, absconderent per interpretationem, separans eos ab invicem, iussit omnes eadem interpretari Scripturam: et hoc in omnibus libris fecit. Convenientibus autem ipsis in unum apud Ptolemaeum, et comparantibus suas interpretations, Deus glorificatus est, et Scripturae vere divinae creditae sunt, omnibus eadem, et eisdem verbis, et eisdem nominibus, recitantibus ab initio usque ad finem; uti et praesentes gentes cognoscerent, quoniam per aspirationem Dei interpretatae sunt Scripturae. Et non esse mirabile Deum hoc in eis operatum, quando in ea captivitate populi quae facta est a Nabuchodonosor corruptis Scripturis, et post septuaginta annos Iudaeis descendentibus in regionem suam, post deinde temporibus Artaxerxis Persarum regis, inspiravit Hesda,⁹ sacerdoti tribus Levi, praeteritorum prophetarum omnes rememorare sermones, et restituere populo eam legem quae data est per Moysen.

Tertullian, *Apologeticum* 18.5–8¹⁰

5 Quos diximus praedicatores prophetae de officio praefandi vocantur. Voces eorum itemque virtutes, quas ad fidem divinitatis edebant, in thesauris litterarum manent, nec istae latent. Ptolemaeorum eruditissimus, quem Philadelphum supernominant, et omnis litteraturae sagacissimus, cum studio bibliothecarum Pisistratum, opinor, aemularetur, inter cetera memoriarum, quibus aut vetustas aut curiositas aliqua ad famam patro-

8. Latin text from Harvey 1857; 3.21.2 (ed. Massuet) = 3.24.1 (ed. Harvey 2:111).

9. Cf. Tertullian, *Cult. fem.* 1.3: quemadmodum et Hierosolymis Babylonia expugnatione deletis omne instrumentum Iudaicae litteraturae per Esdram constat restauratum.

10. Tertullian lived and wrote in Carthage, ca. 193–220 CE. His *Apology* is usually

[For the translation, see the Greek text above.]

5 These heralds about whom we have spoken are called prophets, from the office of telling things beforehand. Their words, as well as the deeds given for belief of their divine source, remain in the treasury of writings, nor are they hidden. The most learned of the Ptolemies, surnamed Philadelphus, the most clever with all literature, in my opinion, rivaling Pisistratus in his zeal for libraries, among other of the memorials for which either antiquity

dated to ca. 197 CE. Because his *Prescription against Heretics* shows some dependence on Irenaeus, it is possible to see some connections between the two in this passage as well (see previous note); specifically, the opening emphasis on the prophetic tradition is similar to that in Irenaeus. Nonetheless, Tertullian seems also to be dependent on the version in Josephus (see next note). Latin text is from Souter 1917.

cinabatur, ex suggestu Demetri<i> Phalerei, grammaticorum tunc probatissimi, cui praefecturam mandaverat, libros a Iudaeis quoque postulavit, proprias atque vernaculas litteras, quas soli habebant. **6** Ex ipsis enim et ad ipsos semper prophetae peroraverant, scilicet ad domesticam dei gentem ex patrum gratia. Hebraei retro, qui nunc Iudaei; igitur et litterae Hebraeae et eloquium.

7 Sed ne notitia vacaret, hoc quoque a Iudaeis Ptolemaeo subscriptum est septuaginta et duobus interpretibus indultis, quos Menedemus quoque philosophus, providentiae vindex, de sententiae communione suspexit. Affirmavit haec vobis etiam Aristaeus.

8 Ita in Graecum stilum exaperta monumenta reliquit; hodie apud Serapeum Ptolemaei bibliothecae cum ipsis Hebraicis exhibentur.

or curiosity somehow commended to fame, at the suggestion of Demetrius Phalereus, most renowned of the grammarians of that time and to whom he had committed the prefecture of these things, he [Ptolemy] sent a request to the Jews for their books (the ones peculiar to them and in their native tongue), which they alone possessed. 6 For from them (had they come), and to them had the prophets always pled their cause, as a favor for the household of God, for the descendants of their fathers. Called Hebrews in ancient times, they are now called Jews (Judeans); therefore, both their writings and their speech are Hebrew. 7 But so that knowledge of their books might not be lacking, this also was subscribed to Ptolemy by the Jews, granting seventy-two interpreters, whom also the philosopher Menedemus, the advocate of Providence, regarded as holding this opinion in common. And even Aristeas confirmed this fact for you.¹¹ 8 Thereupon he [Ptolemy] left them as monuments in Greek accessible to all; to this day, at the Serapeum, they are exhibited in the library of Ptolemy, together with the Hebrew originals.

2.4.2. The Aristeas Legend in the So-Called *Testimonia* of Aristobulus, as Preserved by Clement and Eusebius

By tradition, Aristobulus was a Jewish philosopher in Alexandria, a follower of the Peripatetic school who served as teacher to Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BCE). This “renowned Aristobulus” shows up prominently in later Jewish legends and *testimonia* due to this position in the Ptolemaic court. One such reference serves as the literary fiction behind the second embedded letter in 2 Macc 1:10–2:18, where he is called “Aristobulus, the teacher of King Ptolemy, who is of the line of the anointed priests” (1:10). Both Clement (*Strom.* 5.14.97.7) and Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 8.9.38) refer to him as the one mentioned in 2 Maccabees. Extracts from his writings (usually in the form of speeches delivered to Ptolemy VI) were collected by Alexander Polyhistor in the mid-first century BCE. These *testimonia* are then preserved as fragments assembled by Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea, both of whom occasionally mention Alexander Polyhistor as a source.¹² Other *testimonia* are preserved by Jerome, Cyril of Alexandria,

11. Cf. Josephus, *A.J.* 12.101; *Ep. Arist.* §201.

12. Lucius Cornelius Alexander Polyhistor (ca. 105–ca. 35 BCE) was an ethnographer from Miletus who wrote in Rome. He is a pivotal figure in the transmission histories of several important Hellenistic Jewish texts, including Eupolemus and Aristeas the

Rufinus, and the *Chronicon Pascale*. The full collection of these fragments has now been assembled and studied, with a thorough introduction, by Carl Holladay.¹³ Most of the fragments of Aristobulus concern philosophical issues; because they do not deal with the Aristeas legend, they will not be reproduced here.

One fragment of Aristobulus (3a–b) is of considerable interest as it seems to refer to the story of the translation of the Jewish scriptures at the behest of Ptolemy II and Demetrius of Phalerum.¹⁴ As a result, it has been quite important in the history of scholarship on the Epistle of Aristeas. If genuine, it would represent the earliest attestation of the base legend and would thus provide a *terminus ante quem* for it. For example, Schürer's arguments for an early date of the text of the Epistle of Aristeas (ca. 250–200 BCE) relied heavily on the evidence of Aristobulus fragment 3 in the Eusebian version.¹⁵ While most other scholars would now date the Epistle of Aristeas later than the time of Aristobulus, many of them have continued to use the putative Aristobulus *testimonia* as evidence for an earlier historical “kernel” behind the Aristeas legend.¹⁶ Moreover, since the fragments of Aristobulus were reportedly preserved by Alexander Polyhistor, it would seem to yield a date *no later than* the mid-first century BCE for an established reception of the basic legend. There are several problems that must be considered.

Aristobulus fragment 3 comprises two parts (a and b) based on its distinctive order in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1–2. Fragment 3b, in the Eusebian version, contains what is often thought to be Aristobulus's own version of the Aristeas legend. But while it comes after the introduction of Aristobulus (3a) in Eusebius's version, the parallel passage in Clement's version

Exegete; however, Polyhistor does not seem to know the Epistle of Aristeas. See further p. 203 n. 2 above. See also Inowlocki 2006a and Taylor 2009 on Eusebius's citation of Polyhistor in *Praep. ev.* books 9–13; cf. 9.17.1; 9.22, 24, 26.

13. Holladay 1995.

14. It should be noted, however, that the various parts of this fragment as preserved in both Clement and Eusebius (to be discussed below) *do not* cite Alexander Polyhistor as source.

15. Schürer 1885–1891, 1:309–10; 1973–1987, 3:679–82. Wendland (1900, 125n) noted that the passage in Clement was assumed to be taken from Aristobulus, presumably referring to the views of Schürer, Schlatter, and others of the day, but see the notes below.

16. See Honigman 2003b, 1, 160; Doering 2012, 231–32; Fernández-Marcos 2001, 35–50.

(*Strom.* 1.22.148.1) comes before any mention of Aristobulus. Eusebius gives a second version of fragment 3a (only) in *Praep. ev.* 9.6.6–9 (called frag. 3a supp). It is nearly identical to that in Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.150.1–5, and Eusebius attributes it to Aristobulus *by way of Clement*.¹⁷ Only Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1–3 gives the two parts together in a-b order and as a statement of Aristobulus; he then continues the passage to incorporate another quotation from Aristobulus (frag. 4). The traditional view is that Eusebius preserves the more authentic form of these fragments and that Clement, working from the same basic sources a century earlier, had treated them more freely, sometimes improving the Greek.¹⁸

A close look at fragment 3b, however, suggests the opposite, for the version in Eusebius is considerably shorter than that in Clement and has been inserted into the middle of a continuous passage between sections directly attributed to Aristobulus (frags. 3a and 4). It has also been turned more directly into a speech of Aristobulus, who addresses Philometor and refers to Philadelphus as “your ancestor.” Thus fragment 3b is clearly attributed to Aristobulus by Eusebius; however, fragment 3b is not attributed to Aristobulus in Clement’s own version. The portion of the sentence that precedes it is clearly Clement’s own personal comment (“as set down here by us”), and the sentence continues without a stop. The remainder of the passage in Clement is rather clearly a summary of the Aristeas legend with close verbal similarities to that preserved by Irenaeus (given above). The open-

17. Section 6 of *Praep. ev.* book 9 from which it comes is about Clement.

18. This is the view of Walter 1964, 118 (specifically on Frag. 3a); he assumes, for example, that Clement had “improved” the syntax in the first part of Frag. 3a (including the omission of *καί*) and had “omitted” *κατεχώρισεν* at the end of Frag. 3a. For discussion, see Holladay 1995, 215–17 nn. 74–88, who is followed by Inowlocki 2006a, 148–49, 192, without additional evidence. Inowlocki does not analyze the Aristobulus fragments directly but generally assumes that Eusebius is more careful in *Praeparatio evangelica* than in other works (2006, 221). In other cases, however, Inowlocki (2006a, 168–72) demonstrates the heavy-handedness of Eusebius’s editorial treatment of his sources; overall the evidence from Eusebius is variable and dependent on his theological agenda (see 2006a, 190–91, 222–23). Specifically, “when he gives an exact citation [in *Historia ecclesiastica* and *Eclogae*], he almost always *claims* to cite *literally*” (191, emphasis added). Thus it is worth noting that in the all-important version of Aristobulus in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1–3, Eusebius does *not* directly assert the faithfulness of his citation as he does in several other cases from books 8 and 9. Comparison between the two versions of Aristobulus Frag. 3 in Eusebius shows that the version in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1–3 has received more editorial modification. See also the notes below. For Eusebius’s theological agenda regarding the translation, see p. 256 n. 42.

ing statement, then, may most naturally be read as Clement's own prefatory comment on this summary of the legend.¹⁹ It appears, therefore, that Eusebius reworked and repositioned Clement's opening comment about the translation under Philadelphus to transform it into a quotation from Aristobulus. It is worth noting, then, that the critical editions of Clement do not treat the passage in *Strom.* 148.1 (so-called frag. 3b) as a quotation from Aristobulus.²⁰

Moreover, Clement attributes only the first portion of fragment 3a (the comment about Plato) directly to Aristobulus; the reference there to Demetrius may also be taken as part of Clement's own commentary on the quote from Aristobulus.²¹ Alternatively, in this simpler version of Clement, the reference may not be to Demetrius of Phalerum.²² The specification "of Phalerum" is also an addition by Eusebius (only in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1). The fact that Eusebius also quotes the same passage from Clement in *Praep. ev.* 9.6.6–9 intact (without "of Phalerum" and without the entire frag. 3b paragraph) shows that Eusebius clearly knew the text from Clement and changed it in the version in *Praep. ev.* 13. By contrast, in its original context in Clement's version, fragment 3b naturally continues a sentence of Clement's own commentary (from the preceding section on chronology), as noted above.²³ The pertinent sections from both authors are presented

19. See van den Hoek 1988, 196–97, in regard to his additional use of Philo.

20. The GCS editions of O. Stählin's text (vol. 2: 1st ed. 1905–1936; 3rd ed. Früchtel, Stählin, and Treu 1970) present no quotation marks whatsoever in *Strom.* 148.1–149.3; the only quotation marks appear in 150.1–3 (after the direct attribution to Aristobulus) and again in 150.4 (after the direct attribution to Numenius). The ANF translation (2:334, from Wilson 1867, 448–49) likewise indicates no quotations in the first portion of the text, down to the attribution to Aristobulus (equivalent to 148.1–149.3) but then ends the quotation from Aristobulus after the first sentence about Plato (equivalent to 150.1 only). The passage beginning "Before Demetrius" is not treated as part of the Aristobulus quotation, as reflected also in the punctuation in the edition of Migne (PG 8:891–94).

21. As rendered in the ANF translation; see previous note.

22. Alternatively, Walter (1964, 97–98) argued that the reference to Demetrius (in *Strom.* 1.22.150.2) was merely a reference to the Jewish writer Demetrius the Chronographer. In other words, there was no reference to the Aristeas legend by Aristobulus in Frag. 3a until Eusebius reworked it and inserted Frag. 3b into the text. See Holladay 1995, 3:213 nn. 69–70, where other variations on this reading are also discussed.

23. Compare Eusebius's quotation of Frags. 4a and c in *Praep. ev.* 13.13.21, 26, which in turn is quoted from Clement, *Strom.* 5.14.99.3, 101.4.

here in their original text order for close comparison. The textual issues will be discussed in the notes.

In the final analysis, the version of fragment 3b from Clement (*Strom.* 1.22.148.1) should not be considered a *testimonium* from Aristobulus regarding the Aristeas legend; instead, it is Clement's own summary of the story based on the Epistle of Aristeas itself. His version is also much longer, continuing from *Strom.* 1.22.148.1 to 149.3, and may well rely on the summary of Irenaeus. Comparison with Eusebius's summary and excerpts of the Epistle of Aristeas in *Praep. ev.* 8.1.6–8 (next section), moreover, shows additional verbal similarities with this summary from Clement and Irenaeus and gives further evidence of Eusebius's editorial activity. Fragment 3a, then, while attributed by both Clement and Eusebius to Aristobulus, may not include the reference to Demetrius in the Aristobulus quotation, and if it does, it likely does not refer to Demetrius of Phalerum and thus the Aristeas legend. By implication, then, it further removes Alexander Polyhistor as a *terminus ante quem* for the legend via Aristobulus. Ultimately it was Eusebius who transformed all these elements into a “*testimonium*” from Aristobulus about the LXX translation. Wendland had identified fragment 3b in the version of Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 13.12.2) as Pseudo-Aristobulus but did not consider the reference to Demetrius in fragment 3a (in either Clement or Eusebius) to be about the Aristeas legend at all.³⁴ In order to see this, we start with the preceding passage from Clement to establish the context.

[LMW with BFK]

24. Wendland 1900, 124–25. To be more precise, Wendland considered only the last lines of Frag. 3b in Clement, *Strom.* 148.1, possibly to be drawn from Aristobulus, thus: ἐπὶ τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου ἐπικληθέντος, τὴν μεγίστην φιλοτιμίαν εἰς τοῦτο προσενεγκαμένου Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως {καὶ} τὰ περὶ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ἀκριβῶς πραγματευσαμένου. He notes also that the first part of this passage likely comes from Irenaeus, given above. Similarly, Harvey (1857) suggests that Clement was copying directly from Irenaeus in this passage.

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 1.21.147.2–22.150.2²⁵

21.147.2 ... Φλαύιος δὲ Ἰώσηπος ὁ Ἰουδαῖος ὁ τὰς Ἰουδαϊκὰς συντάξας ἱστορίας καταγαγὼν τοὺς χρόνους φησὶν ἀπὸ Μωυσέως ἕως Δαβὶδ ἔτη γίνεσθαι φπε', 3 ἀπὸ δὲ Δαβὶδ ἕως Οὐεσπεσιανοῦ δευτέρου ἔτους ,αροθ'. εἴτα ἀπὸ τούτου μέχρι Ἀντωνίνου δεκάτου ἔτους ἔτη οζ', ὡς εἶναι ἀπὸ Μωυσέως ἐπὶ τὸ δέκατον ἔτος Ἀντωνίνου πάντα ἔτη ,αωλγ'.²⁶

4 ἄλλοι δὲ μέχρι τῆς Κομόδου τελευτῆς ἀριθμήσαντες ἀπὸ Ἰνάχου καὶ Μωυσέως ἔτη ἔφησαν γίνεσθαι ,αωμβ', οἱ δὲ ,αλκα'.

5 ἐν δὲ τῷ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγελίῳ ἡ ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ γενεαλογία μέχρι Μαρίας τῆς μητρὸς τοῦ κυρίου περαιοῦται· “γίνονται γάρ,” φησὶν, “ἀπὸ Ἀβραὰμ ἕως Δαβὶδ γενεαὶ ιδ', καὶ ἀπὸ Δαβὶδ ἕως τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος γενεαὶ ιδ', 6 καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μετοικεσίας Βαβυλῶνος ἕως τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁμοίως ἄλλαι γενεαὶ ιδ',” τρία διαστήματα μυστικά ἐξ ἑβδομάσι τελειούμενα.

Frag. 3b
(so-called)

22.148.1 Καὶ τὰ μὲν περὶ τῶν χρόνων διαφόρως πολλοῖς ἱστορηθέντα καὶ πρὸς ἡμῶν ἐκτεθέντα ὧδε ἐχέτω, ἐρμηνευθῆναι δὲ τὰς γραφὰς τὰς τε τοῦ νόμου καὶ τὰς προφητικὰς ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ἑβραίων διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλωττᾶν φασιν ἐπὶ βασιλείᾳ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Λάγου ἢ ὡς τινες ἐπὶ τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου ἐπικληθέντος, τὴν μεγίστην φιλοτιμίαν²⁷ εἰς τοῦτο προσενεγκαμένου Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως {καὶ} τὰ περὶ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ἀκριβῶς πραγματευσαμένου.

25. Greek text from Früchtel, Stählin, and Treu 1970.

26. The actual sum of the numbers listed is 1,841 years (which in Greek should be ΑΩΜΑ'); if written in uncials, it is easier to imagine how MA became ΛΓ (perhaps by ligation). The final group (77 years) seems to be from 70 CE (second year of Vespasian and the year in which the temple was destroyed) to 147/148 (the tenth year of Antoninus Pius). These chronologies generally do not compute.

27. The words underlined in the Greek text represent similarities of vocabulary and phrasing between the versions of Clement and Irenaeus (above). See also the synoptic chart at the end of this section.

28. In Clement, this passage is (1) part of a continuous sentence that refers to the work of Clement himself (πρὸς ἡμῶν ἐκτεθέντα ὧδε) and (2) not at all attributed to Aristobulus. The attribution to Aristobulus is based solely on Eusebius's reworking of the passage from Clement.

21.147.2 ... Flavius Josephus the Jew, who composed the history of the Jews, computing the periods, says that from Moses to David were 585 years; **3** and from David to the second year of Vespasian was 1,179 years; then from that to the tenth year of Antoninus was 77 years. So that from Moses to the tenth year of Antoninus there are, in all, 1,833 years.

4 Now some, counting from Inachus and Moses to the death of Commodus, say there were 1,842 years, but others [say] 1,921 years.

5 And in the Gospel according to Matthew, the genealogy that begins with Abraham is continued down to Mary the mother of the Lord. "For," it is said, "from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; **6** and from David to the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon until Christ are likewise other fourteen generations"—three mystic intervals completed in six weeks.

22.148.1 So, then, let this suffice for the things narrated variously by many writers concerning dates and *those set down here by us*;²⁸ now, it is said that the scriptures, both the Law and the Prophets, were translated from the dialect of the Hebrews into Greek language by King Ptolemy [son of] Lagus,²⁹ or, *as some [of us] would say*,³⁰ by the one surnamed Philadelphus, when Demetrius of Phalerum brought to bear the greatest ambition to this undertaking, {and}³¹ by attending to matters pertaining to translation with utmost accuracy.

29. Clement must be referring here to the tradition preserved in Irenaeus (given above). As noted above, Irenaeus clearly calls him Ptolemy "son of Lagus" (using the genitive of filiation). See next note.

30. It is generally recognized that the latter view is Clement's own preference, as the following comment makes explicit. Since it is clear he is borrowing from Irenaeus in this passage, the reference to Ptolemy I ("as some would say") refers directly to Irenaeus as well. The passage quoted below from Anatolius (also preserved in *Historia ecclesiastica*) might be taken as a blend of these two traditions, by placing the translation under Philadelphus "and his father" (i.e., Ptolemy Lagus/Soter).

31. The {καί} is an emendation by the editors, taken from Eusebius's version at *Praep ev.* 13.12.2 (below); in Clement's syntax it is superfluous. Eusebius's rendering gives the sentence a slightly different sense by forcing the clause τὴν μεγίστην φιλοτιμίαν ... προσενεγκαμένον to apply to Ptolemy rather than to Demetrius, as in Clement. But see Holladay 1995, 217 n. 85.

2 ἔτι γὰρ Μακεδόνων³² τὴν Ἀσίαν κατεχόντων φιλοτιμούμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ πρὸς αὐτοῦ γενομένην βιβλιοθήκην πάσαις κατακοσμήσαι γραφαῖς ἤξιωσε καὶ τοὺς Ἱεροσολυμίτας τὰς παρ' αὐτοῖς προφητείας εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον ἐρμηνεύσαι.

22.149.1 οἱ δὲ ἅτε ἔτι ὑπακούοντες Μακεδόσι τῶν παρὰ σφίσιν εὐδοκιμωτάτων περὶ τὰς γραφὰς ἐμπείρους³³ καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς διαλέκτου εἰδήμονας ἐβδομήκοντα πρεσβυτέρους ἐκλεξάμενοι ἀπέστειλαν αὐτῶ μετὰ καὶ τῶν θείων βίβλων.

2 ἐκάστου δὲ ἐν μέρει κατ' ἰδίαν ἐκάστην ἐρμηνεύσαντος προφητείαν συνέπνευσαν αἱ πᾶσαι ἐρμηνεῖαι συναντιβληθεῖσαι καὶ τὰς διανοίας καὶ τὰς λέξεις · θεοῦ γὰρ ἦν βούλημα μεμελετημένον εἰς Ἑλληνικὰς ἀκοάς.

3 οὐ δὲ ξένον ἐπιπνοία θεοῦ τοῦ τὴν προφητείαν δεδωκότος καὶ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν οἰοεῖ Ἑλληνικὴν προφητείαν ἐνεργεῖσθαι, ἐπεὶ κὰν τῇ <ἐπὶ> Ναβουχοδονόσορ αἰχμαλωσία διαφθαρεῖσιν τῶν γραφῶν κατὰ τοὺς Ἀρταξέρξου τοῦ Περσῶν βασιλέως χρόνους ἐπίπνους Ἐσδρας ὁ Λευίτης ὁ ἱερεὺς γενόμενος πάσας τὰς παλαιὰς αὐθις ἀνανεούμενος προεφήτευσεν γραφὰς.³⁴

Frag. 3a

150.1 Ἀριστόβουλος δὲ ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν πρὸς τὸν Φιλομήτορα κατὰ λέξιν γράφει·

“κατηκολούθηκε δὲ καὶ ὁ Πλάτων τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς νομοθεσίᾳ, καὶ φανερός ἐστι περιειργασμένος ἕκαστα τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ λεγομένων.”

2 διηρμήνεται δὲ πρὸ Δημητρίου³⁵ ὑφ' ἐτέρων, πρὸ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου {καὶ}

32. What follows immediately (beginning in *Strom.* 22.148.2 and continuing through 22.149.3) is rather clearly Clement's summary of the Epistle of Aristee tradition itself. The wording closely resembles that in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.21 (presented above), including the final passage regarding the divine preservation of the scriptures during the time of the Babylonians and Persians.

33. Compare Ep. Arist. §39 (*ἐμπείριαν*), in the letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar; a superlative form (*ἐμπειροτάτους*) appears in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.21.2 (*apud* Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.8.12), also in reference to their facility with Hebrew and Greek dialects.

34. For this passage, compare Irenaeus *Haer.* 3.21 (above).

35. The reference here seems to be part of Clement's own commentary (rather than continuing the quotation of Aristobulus); it refers back to the discussion of Demetrius and the translation of the LXX given above at 148.1–149.3. This summary of the Aristee tradition, then, is Clement's own, rather than belonging to Aristobulus.

2 For since the Macedonians still held Asia, the king, being ambitious to adorn the library being built for him in Alexandria with all writings, deemed it proper also for the Jerusalemites to translate their prophets into the Greek dialect.

22.149.1 So, they [the Jerusalemites], still being subject to the Macedonians, having selected seventy elders from the most distinguished among them, those well-versed in the scriptures and skilled in Greek dialect, they sent them to him (the king) with the divine books.

2 Now when each one on his own part had translated each prophet in private and all their translations being compared, they agreed both in sense and words. For it was God's will being exerted for Greek hearers.

3 Nor was it alien to the inspiration of God, who had given the prophecy (in the first place), also to produce the translation, as if it were a Greek prophecy. For even when the scriptures were corrupted during the captivity of Nebuchodonosor, in the time of Artaxerxes king of the Persians, Esdras, the Levite and priest, becoming inspired, likewise became a prophet and restored all the ancient scriptures once again.

150.1 Now Aristobulus, in the first of his books to Philometor, writes in these words,

“Now even Plato followed the legislation that is ours, and he is conspicuous for having worked carefully over each of the matters expressed within it.”

2 And so, even before Demetrius, it had been interpreted by others, prior

If we assume that the quotation ends at 150.1, then Clement's commentary resumes at *Strom.* 1.22.150.2, continuing his preceding discussion. Alternatively, Walter (1964, 97–98) argued that the simpler reference to Demetrius here might have been attributed by Clement to Aristobulus (thus continuing the quotation) but merely as a reference to the Jewish writer Demetrius the Chronographer, the point being that this latter Demetrius, who dates to the third century BCE, quotes portions of LXX Genesis. The first-person possessives (“our”) here and §3 below have been taken as evidence that the quotation from Aristobulus continues at least through §3 and §4a. However, we should also note that the use of the first-person in §5 (“by us”) is properly read as continuing the commentary of Clement himself, as seen in the beginning of §148.1 above. Thus, the question remains where the actual quotation from Aristobulus ends in this earlier version of Clement. For example, *ANF* (2:334) makes only §§1 and 4a quotations; the rest is Clement, including the earlier passage regarding Philadelphus and the references to Demetrius and “the mastery of Alexander.” See n. 18 above and n. 42 below.

Περσῶν ἐπικρατήσεως, τά τε κατὰ τὴν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐξαγωγήν τῶν Ἑβραίων τῶν ἡμετέρων πολιτῶν καὶ ἢ τῶν γεγονότων ἀπάντων αὐτοῖς ἐπιφάνεια καὶ κράτησις τῆς χώρας καὶ τῆς ὅλης νομοθεσίας ἐπέξηγησις·

3 ὥστε εὐδὴλον εἶναι τὸν προειρημένον φιλόσοφον εἰληφέναι πολλά γέγονε γὰρ πολυμαθῆς, καθὼς καὶ Πυθαγόρας πολλά τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν μετενέγκας εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δογματοποιίαν.”

4 Νουμήνιος δὲ ὁ Πυθαγόρειος φιλόσοφος ἄντικρυς γράφει· “τί γάρ ἐστι Πλάτων ἢ Μωυσῆς ἀττικίζων;” οὗτος ὁ Μωυσῆς θεολόγος καὶ προφήτης, ὡς δέ τινες νόμων ἱερῶν ἑρμηνεὺς ἦν.

5 τὸ γένος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς πράξεις καὶ τὸν βίον ἀξιόπιστοι κηρύσσουναι αὐταὶ αἱ γραφαί, λεκτέον δὲ ὅμως καὶ ἡμῖν ὡς ὅτι μάλιστα <δι' ὀλίγων>.

Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.6.6–9³⁶

6 Ἐτι πρὸς τούτοις ὁ Κλήμης Ἀριστοβούλου τοῦ Περιπατητικοῦ καὶ Νουμηνίου τοῦ Πυθαγορείου μνημονεύει λέγων·

“Ἀριστόβουλος δὲ ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ τῶν πρὸς τὸν Φιλομήτορα κατὰ λέξιν γράφει·

‘Κατηκολούθηκε δὲ ὁ Πλάτων τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς νομοθεσίᾳ καὶ φανερός ἐστι περιειργασμένος ἕκαστα τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ λεγομένων.

7 διηρμήνευται δὲ πρὸ Δημητρίου ὑφ' ἐτέρων, πρὸ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου {καὶ} Περσῶν ἐπικρατήσεως, τά τε κατὰ τὴν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου ἐξαγωγήν τῶν Ἑβραίων τῶν ἡμετέρων πολιτῶν καὶ ἢ τῶν γεγονότων ἀπάντων αὐτοῖς ἐπιφάνεια καὶ κράτησις τῆς χώρας καὶ τῆς ὅλης νομοθεσίας ἐπέξηγησις·

36. Greek text is from Mras 1954–1956. See also the translation of Gifford 1903.

37. The emendation of {καὶ} by the GCS editors is based on Eusebius (see *Praep. ev.* 9.6.7 below) to bring it into conformity with *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1. If omitted, the clause would read “before the mastery of Alexander *over* the Persians.” Eusebius’s emendation pushes the historical referent further back, in keeping with his agenda.

38. The natural referent of “before Demetrius” and “prior to the mastery of Alexander” seems to be the preceding passage (*Strom.* 1.22.150.1–2), in which Clement, using the quotation from Aristobulus, seeks to affirm that Plato, Pythagoras, and Numenius had already known the Jewish law because it had been interpreted to them *prior* to the time of Alexander the Great. It also naturally connects to the earlier reference in 148.2–149.1 to Macedonian, meaning Ptolemaic, rule over Judea (clearly by Clement). On the other hand, Walter (1964, 89–90) attributes the reference to the

to the mastery of Alexander {and}³⁷ over the Persians, with respect to both the events surrounding the exodus of the Hebrews, our countrymen, from Egypt and the manifestation of all that had happened to them and the mastery of the region and a detailed explanation of the whole legislation.

3 So it is perfectly clear that the above-mentioned philosopher [Plato] derived a great deal from this source, for he was very learned, as also Pythagoras, who transferred many things of ours to his own system of doctrines.³⁸

4 And Numenius the Pythagorean philosopher expressly writes: “For what is Plato but Moses speaking in Attic Greek?” This Moses was a theologian and prophet and, as some say, an interpreter of sacred laws.

5 His family, his deeds, and life are related by the Scriptures themselves, which are worthy of all credit, but have nevertheless to be stated *by us* also as well as we can.

6 Besides this Clement also mentions Aristobulus the Peripatetic and Numenius the Pythagorean, saying:

“Aristobulus, in his first book addressed to Philometor, writes in these words:

‘Plato, too, has followed our legislation and has evidently studied carefully the several precepts contained in it.

7 And others before Demetrius, and prior to the supremacy of Alexander {and}³⁹ of the Persians, have translated both the narrative of the exodus of our fellow countrymen the Hebrews from Egypt and the fame of all that happened to them and their conquest of the land and the exposition of the whole law.

Persians to Aristobulus himself. It may be significant that the Greek uses the word *διερμηνεύω* (“to interpret”) here rather than *ἐρμηνεύω* (“to translate”), as he does in reference to the “translation” at the time of Philadelphus and Demetrius in 148.1 above (on this point, cf. Holladay 1995, 215 n. 72). Even Ep. Arist. §§30–32 carries a note to this effect, by having Demetrius of Phalerum complain in his memorandum to Ptolemy that their previous copies and extracts from the Jewish law had been “carelessly” done (§30), so that they needed an accurate “translation” (*ἐρμηνεία*, §32). Some have suggested that this was also the intent of the reference to Demetrius, but meaning Demetrius the Chronographer rather than Demetrius of Phalerum (see n. 35).

39. Added by the GCS editors based on *Praep. ev.* 13.12.1. The punctuation given here, and reflected in the translation, follows that of Mras 1954–1956.

8 ὥστε εὐδὴλον εἶναι τὸν προειρημένον φιλόσοφον εἰληφέναι πολλά· γέγονε γὰρ πολυμαθὴς καθὼς καὶ Πυθαγόρας, πολλὰ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν μετενέγκας εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δογματοποιίαν.'

9 'Νουμήμιος δὲ ὁ Πυθαγορικὸς φιλόσοφος ἀντικρυς γράφει· 'Τί γάρ ἐστι Πλάτων ἢ Μωσῆς ἀττικίζων;''⁴⁰

Ταῦτα ὁ Κλήμης.

Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 13.11.3–12.4⁴¹

13.11.3 ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἡμεῖς μὲν ταῦτα ἐκ τῶν Πλάτωνος ἀνελεξάμεθα· φιλόκαλος δέ τις ἄλλος καὶ τούτων ἔτι πλείω ἂν εὔροι παρὰ τῷ αὐτῷ σύμφωνα τοῖς ἡμετέροις δόγμασι, τάχα δὲ καὶ παρ' ἐτέροις. ἐπεὶ δὲ τῆς αὐτῆς ἡμῖν ὑποθέσεως προλαβόντες ἐφήψαντο καὶ ἄλλοι, εὖ μοι δοκεῖ ἐπισκέψασθαι δεῖν καὶ τὰ τούτοις πεπονημένα.

παραθήσω δὲ πρώτου Ἀριστοβούλου, τοῦ ἐξ Ἑβραίων φιλοσόφου, τὰς οὕτως ἐχούσας φωνάς·

13.12.

ιβ'. ΟΠΩΣ ΚΑΙ Ο ΠΡΟ ΗΜΩΝ ΕΞ ΕΒΡΑΙΩΝ ΑΡΙΣΤΟΒΟΥ-
ΛΟΣ Ο ΠΕΡΙΠΑΤΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡ' ΕΒΡΑΙΟΙΣ ΦΙΛΟ-
ΣΟΦΙΑΣ ΩΜΟΛΟΓΕΙ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΛΛΗΝΑΣ ΩΡΜΗΣΘΑΙ· ΕΚ
ΤΩΝ ΑΡΙΣΤΟΒΟΥΛΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΩΙ ΠΡΟΣΠΕ-
ΦΩΝΗΜΕΝΩΝ.

Frag. 3a

13.12.1 Φανερόν ὅτι κατηκολούθησεν ὁ Πλάτων τῇ καθ' ἡμᾶς νομοθεσίᾳ καὶ φανερός ἐστι περιειργασμένος ἕκαστα τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ. διηρμηνεύται γὰρ⁴² πρὸ Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως δι' ἐτέρων, πρὸ τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου

40. In this case Eusebius replicates the passage from Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.150.1–4, closely but stops before the final comment of Clement in §§4b–5. The last section (§§4b–5) clearly returns to Clement's own commentary (see n. 20 above) and would seem to be the basis for Eusebius to end the quotation earlier. This fact may be taken to indicate that Eusebius *assumed* that the quotation of Aristobulus ran through §4a, as the Eusebian heading suggests by including "Numenius the Pythagorean." That same assumption must have served as the basis for Eusebius's more substantial reworking of the passage in *Praep. ev.* 13.12.

41. Greek text is from Mras 1954–1956.

42. This passage in 13.12 seems to reflect Eusebius's overall agenda in changing both Clement and the Aristobulus fragments. Picking up the thread of the earlier passage (9.6.6–9, quoted just above), he argues here that Greek philosophy through

8 So it is perfectly clear that the philosopher before-mentioned has borrowed much, for he is very learned, as also was Pythagoras, who transferred many things of ours into his own system of doctrines.’

9 ‘And Numenius the Pythagorean philosopher writes expressly: “For what is Plato, but Moses speaking in Attic Greek?” [omits §§4b–5 from Clement]⁴²

So says Clement.

13.11.3 But in truth though I have made these selections out of the writings of Plato, any other student might find still more points of agreement with our doctrines in the same author, and perhaps in others also. Since, however, others before us have touched upon the same subject, I think it would be right for me to look at the results of their work also.

And I will quote first the words of the Hebrew philosopher Aristobulus, which are as follows:

13.12

12. How Aristobulus the Peripatetic, from the Hebrews before our time, acknowledges that the Greeks began from the philosophy of the Hebrews. From the statements of Aristobulus addressed to King Ptolemy.

13.12.1 “It is evident that Plato closely followed our legislation and has carefully studied the several precepts contained in it. For before Demetrius of Phalerum and prior to the supremacy of Alexander

Plato and even previously (through the revered Pythagoreans, such as Numenius) had already imbibed the divine truths of the Jewish scriptures in Greek, and that this “fact” is further validation for the supreme authority of the LXX translation. The Aristobulus “quotations,” as concocted by Eusebius, are thus meant to prove that it was true even “before Demetrius of Phalereum.” Eusebius changes the Greek here to make this sentence more continuous with the preceding quotation of Aristobulus. Clement reads διηρμήνευται δὲ πρὸ Δημητρίου ὑφ’ ἐτέρων (“even before Demetrius it had been translated”). Whereas in Clement, this is Clement’s own commentary, Eusebius has transformed it into the words of Aristobulus by continuing the quotation. Eusebius will extend the quotation from “Aristobulus” through 13.12.2 by repositioning the next paragraph, which Clement places *before* the reference to Aristobulus.

καὶ Περσῶν ἐπικρατήσεως, τὰ τε κατὰ τὴν ἐξαγωγὴν τὴν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου τῶν Ἑβραίων, ἡμετέρων δὲ πολιτῶν, καὶ ἡ τῶν γεγυμένων ἀπάντων αὐτοῖς ἐπιφάνεια καὶ κράτησις τῆς χώρας καὶ τῆς ὅλης νομοθεσίας ἐπεξηγήσις, ὡς εὐδὴλον εἶναι τὸν προειρημένον φιλόσοφον εἰληφέναι πολλὰ· γέγονε γὰρ πολυμαθής, καθὼς καὶ Πυθαγόρας πολλὰ τῶν παρ ἡμῖν μετενέγκας εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δογματοποιίαν κατεχώρισεν.⁴³

Frag. 3b
Eusebius

2 ἢ δ' ὅλη ἐρμηνεία τῶν διὰ τοῦ νόμου πάντων ἐπὶ τοῦ προσαγορευθέντος Φιλαδέλφου βασιλέως, σοῦ δὲ προγόνου, προσενεγκαμένου μείζονα φιλοτιμίαν,⁴⁴ Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως πραγματευσαμένου τὰ περὶ τούτων.

Frag. 4a
(section 1)

3 Εἴτα μεταξὺ τινὰ εἰπὼν ἐπιφέρει λέγων·

Δεῖ γὰρ λαμβάνειν τὴν θεῖαν φωνὴν οὐ ῥητὸν λόγον, ἀλλ' ἔργων κατασκευάς, καθὼς καὶ διὰ τῆς νομοθεσίας ἡμῖν ὅλην τὴν γένεσιν τοῦ κόσμου θεοῦ λόγους εἴρηκεν ὁ Μωσῆς. συνεχῶς γὰρ φησιν ἐφ' ἑκάστου· καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός, καὶ ἐγένετο.

4 δοκοῦσι δέ μοι περιειργασμένοι πάντα κατηκολουθηκέναι τούτῳ Πυθαγόρας τε καὶ Σωκράτης καὶ Πλάτων λέγοντες ἀκούειν φωνῆς θεοῦ, τὴν κατασκευὴν τῶν ὅλων συνθεωροῦντες ἀκριβῶς ὑπὸ θεοῦ γεγонуῖαν καὶ συνεχομένην ἀδιαλείπτως

43. Eusebius has inserted this word (κατεχώρισεν) into the text inherited from Clement.

44. The use of the term φιλοτιμία (and its verb forms) is characteristic of the passage in Irenaeus (above), which was taken over by Clement and thus militates against it deriving from the distinctive wording of Aristobulus.

and of the Persians, it was translated, both the narrative of the exodus of the Hebrews our fellow countrymen from Egypt and the fame of all that had happened to them and the conquest of the land and the exposition of the whole law, so that it is manifest that many things have been borrowed by the aforesaid philosopher, for he is very learned, as also Pythagoras transferred many of our precepts and inserted them in his own system of doctrines.

2 'But the entire translation of all the contents of the law was made in the time of the king surnamed Philadelphus, your ancestor, who brought greater ambition to the work, when Demetrius Phalereus was attending to these matters.'⁴⁵

3 Then, after interposing some remarks, he [Aristobulus] continues, saying: 'For we must understand the divine voice not as words spoken but as construction of works, just as Moses through the Law has spoken to us of the whole creation of the world as words of God. For he continually says of each work, "And God said, and it was so."

4 Now Pythagoras, as well as Socrates and Plato, having investigated everything carefully, seem to me to have become followers of this man [Moses] in saying that they heard the "voice of God" when they were considering the arrangement of the cosmos as accurately made and indissolubly combined by God.'

Another comment by Eusebius in his presentation of Aristobulus fragment 1 is also worth noting in this connection. In it Eusebius (or his source) identifies this same Aristobulus as one of the actual translators of the Jewish Law under Ptolemy II. This glaring anachronism may also say something about how and why Eusebius attributes more awareness of the legend to Aristobulus in fragment 3 and connects him to the fuller exposition of the

45. Eusebius has severely truncated Clement's full account of the Aristeas legend (which continues from *Strom.* 148.2–149.3) by reducing it to this first paragraph alone (equivalent only to *Strom.* 148.1); moreover, Eusebius has repositioned it here (as Frag. 3b). Notice that the a–b order of Frag. 3 is thus thoroughly a product of Eusebius's editorial reworking, which includes both the position and the internal wording.

Aristeas tradition in *Praep. ev.* 8.1–8.9 (below). The text is Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.32.16 (from the *Paschal Canons* of Anatolius).⁴⁶

16 ἔστιν δ' οὐχ ἡμέτερος οὗτος ὁ λόγος, Ἰουδαίοις δὲ ἐγινώσκετο τοῖς πάλαι καὶ πρὸ Χριστοῦ ἐφυλάττετό τε πρὸς αὐτῶν μάλιστα· μαθεῖν δ' ἔστιν ἐκ τῶν ὑπὸ Φίλωνος Ἰωσήπου Μουσαίου λεγομένων, καὶ οὐ μόνων τούτων, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἔτι παλαιότερων ἀμφοτέρων Ἀγαθοβούλων, τῶν ἐπὶ κλην διδασκάλων Ἀριστοβούλου τοῦ πάνυ, ὃς ἐν τοῖς ο' κατειλεγμένος τοῖς τὰς ἱερὰς καὶ θείας Ἑβραίων ἐρμηνεύσασι γραφὰς Πτολεμαίῳ τῷ Φιλαδέλφῳ καὶ τῷ τούτου πατρί, καὶ βίβλους ἐξηγητικὰς τοῦ Μωυσέως νόμου τοῖς αὐτοῖς προσεφώνησεν βασιλεῦσιν.

16 And this is not merely our argument, but it was known to the Jews long ago, even before Christ, and was certainly defended by them. It may be learned from what has been said by Philo, Josephus, and Musaeus and not only from these but also from those even older, such as the two (named) Agathobulus, who are surnamed “teacher,”⁴⁷ and from the *renowned* Aristobulus. The latter was numbered among the seventy who translated the sacred and divine scriptures of the Hebrews for Ptolemy Philadelphus and his father, and he dedicated his commentaries on the law of Moses to the same kings.

A basic problem here, as elsewhere in Eusebius, is precisely where to demarcate the limits of the quotation from his source. The references to these earlier Jewish writers, which seem to depend on specific works of Philo and Josephus, may come from Eusebius himself, but Anatolius had also lived and taught in Alexandria. The last part of the passage is the most intriguing, as it places Aristobulus a full century⁴⁸ earlier than the time of

46. The full excerpt from Anatolius is *Hist. eccl.* 7.32.14–19. Anatolius was an Aristotelian Christian teacher in Alexandria who later moved to Caesarea and then Laodicea. He died ca. 282 CE. See Holladay 1995, 129–30 and 198 n. 1. Greek text from E. Schwartz 1903–1909.

47. See Holladay 1995, 198–201. For the reference to Philo, see, e.g., *QE* 1.1 and *Mos.* 2.41; for Josephus, see, e.g., *A.J.* 1.80–81 (Holladay 1995, 201 nn. 10–11). The “Jewish” writers Musaeus and the two Agathobuli are not known (Holladay 1995, 201–2 nn. 12–14, but see now Inowlocki 2006b; 2006a, 146).

48. Ptolemy II Philadelphus reigned 285–247 BCE; his son, Ptolemy III Euergetes, reigned 246–222. Ptolemy VI Philometor was the son of Ptolemy V Epiphanes and Cleopatra I (204–180 BCE). For the full list of Ptolemaic rulers, see the appendix.

Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BCE) and identifies him as one of the “seventy translators” under Ptolemy Philadelphus. This is a clear reference to the Aristeas tradition; however, the name Aristobulus nowhere appears in the lists of the translators (cf. Ep. Arist. §§47–50), including the later versions (such as Epiphanius, *De mens. et pond.* 3, lines 235–252). Whether this information comes from Eusebius himself or his source (Anatolius), it is seriously at odds with other information regarding Aristobulus. For example, Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.150.1 (frag. 3a, part 1) clearly identifies his royal patron as Ptolemy (VI) Philometor, as does Clement’s later comment on the Aristobulus of 2 Maccabees (1:10).⁴⁹ In *Praep. ev.* 9.6.6, Eusebius, (quoting Clement) says the same. Finally, it should be noted that the fragment says that the work of Aristobulus as translator was undertaken for Ptolemy Philadelphus and “his father” and that Aristobulus then dedicated commentaries on the law to “the same (two) kings.”

Despite the problems, there seems to be a vague coherence between this fragment and the so-called Aristobulus fragment 3b. The corresponding passage in Clement—which is *not* attributed to Aristobulus—notes that some people placed the translation under Ptolemy I (Lagus or Soter) instead of Ptolemy Philadelphus. As noted above, this comment of Clement may derive from his own awareness and use of the summary of the Aristeas tradition by Irenaeus, who places it under Ptolemy I. It would seem, then, that fragment 1 (ostensibly from Anatolius, an Alexandrian) was likewise potentially influenced by the tradition seen in Irenaeus. Moreover, fragment 1, like Irenaeus, Clement, and Josephus, likewise gives the number as “seventy” (rather than seventy-two) translators.⁵⁰ Thus, despite Eusebius’s clear references to Aristobulus at the time of Philometor (*Praep. ev.* 9.6.6) and in conjunction with the letter of 2 Maccabees (*Praep. ev.* 8.9.38), all this suggests a greater degree of instability regarding the transmission of these traditions and how Aristobulus might have known about the Aristeas legend. This fact may help to account for how and why Eusebius so closely weaves Aristobulus into the end of his summary of the Epistle of

49. Cf. *Strom.* 5.14.97.7: Ἀριστοβούλῳ δὲ τῷ κατὰ Πτολεμαῖον γεγονότι τὸν Φιλομήτορα, οὗ μένηται ὁ συνταξάμενος τὴν τῶν Μακκαβαϊκῶν ἐπιτομήν (“and by Aristobulus, who lived at the time of Ptolemy Philometor, whom the compiler of the epitome of the Maccabean books mentions...”).

50. Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 8.8.5) quotes in full the letter of Eleazar to Ptolemy (Ep. Arist. §§41–46) but omits the list of the translators. Even so, it does explicitly state that “six (elders) from each tribe” (and thus seventy-two) would be sent to translate the scriptures.

Aristeas in *Praep. ev.* 8.1.6–8, 9.38, which will be presented next. Of course, for Eusebius it also underscores his theological agenda of establishing the great antiquity of the Greek translations of the scriptures (“even before Alexander”) and their influence on Greek thought.⁵¹

By way of conclusion, then, we give here a synoptic chart of the main portions of the Aristeas legend proper from the versions of Philo, Irenaeus, Clement, and Eusebius as presented above. It is hoped that by this means the verbal similarities become more obvious and the lines of transmission more apparent.

The Aristeas Legend in Irenaeus, Clement, Philo, and Eusebius

Irenaeus, <i>Haer.</i> 3.21.2 apud Eusebius, <i>Hist. eccl.</i> 5.8.11–15	Clement, <i>Strom.</i> 1.22.148.1–149.3
<p>11 τούτοις ἐπιφέρει μετὰ βραχέα λέγων· “πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ Ῥωμαίους <u>κρατῦναι τὴν</u> <u>ἀρχὴν αὐτῶν, ἔτι τῶν Μακεδόνων</u> <u>τὴν Ἀσίαν κατεχόντων, Πτολεμαῖος ὁ</u> <u>Λάγου φιλοτιμούμενος τὴν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ</u> <u>κατεσκευασμένην βιβλιοθήκην ἐν</u> <u>Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ κοσμήσαι τοῖς πάντων</u> <u>ἀνθρώπων συγγράμμασιν ὅσα γε</u> <u>σπουδαῖα ὑπῆρχεν, ἡτήσατο παρὰ</u> <u>τῶν Ἱεροσολυμιτῶν εἰς τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν</u> <u>διάλεκτον σχεῖν αὐτῶν μεταβεβλημένας</u> <u>τὰς γραφάς.</u></p>	<p>148.1 ... ἐρμηνευθῆναι δὲ τὰς γραφὰς τὰς τε τοῦ νόμου καὶ τὰς προφητικὰς ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ἑβραίων διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶτταν φασιν ἐπὶ βασιλέως <u>Πτολεμαίου</u> <u>τοῦ Λάγου</u> ἢ ὥς τινες ἐπὶ τοῦ Φιλαδέλφου ἐπικληθέντος, τὴν μεγίστην <u>φιλοτιμίαν</u> εἰς τοῦτο <u>προσενεγκαμένου</u> Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως {καὶ} τὰ περὶ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν ἀκριβῶς πραγματευσαμένου.</p>
<p>12 οἱ δέ, <u>ὑπήκουον γὰρ ἔτι τοῖς Μακεδόσιν</u> <u>τότε, τοὺς παρ’ αὐτοῖς ἐμπειροτάτους τῶν</u> <u>γραφῶν καὶ ἀμφοτέρων τῶν διαλέκτων,</u> <u>ἐβδομήκοντα πρεσβυτέρους, ἔπεμψαν</u> <u>Πτολεμαίῳ, ποιήσαντος τοῦ θεοῦ ὅπερ</u> <u>ἠβούλετο.</u></p>	<p>148.2 ἔτι γὰρ <u>Μακεδόνων τὴν Ἀσίαν</u> <u>κατεχόντων φιλοτιμούμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς</u> <u>τὴν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ πρὸς αὐτοῦ γενομένην</u> <u>βιβλιοθήκην πάσαις κατακοσμήσαι</u> <u>γραφαῖς ἠξίωσε καὶ τοὺς Ἱεροσολυμίτας</u> <u>τὰς παρ’ αὐτοῖς προφητείας εἰς τὴν</u> <u>Ἑλλάδα διάλεκτον ἐρμηνεύσαι.</u></p>

51. On Eusebius’s theological agenda regarding the translation and the place of the Jewish scriptures, see p. 256 n. 42 above.

 Philo, *Mos.* 2.30–34a

 Eusebius, *Praep.* ev. 13.12.2

30 συνόλως μὲν οὖν ἡ τῶν Πτολεμαίων οἰκία διαφερόντως παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας βασιλείας ἤκμασεν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς Πτολεμαίοις ὁ Φιλάδελφος· ὅσα γὰρ εἰς ἔδρασεν οὗτος ἐπαινετά, μόλις ἐκεῖνοι πάντες ἄθροοι διεπράξαντο, γενόμενος καθάπερ ἐν ζῳῳ τὸ ἡγεμονεῦον κεφαλὴ τρόπον τινὰ τῶν βασιλέων.

31 ὁ δὲ τοιοῦτος ζῆλον καὶ πόθον λαβὼν τῆς νομοθεσίας ἡμῶν εἰς Ἑλλάδα γλῶτταν τὴν Χαλδαϊκὴν μεθαρμόζεσθαι διανοεῖτο καὶ πρέσβεις εὐθύς ἐξέπεμπε πρὸς τὸν τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἀρχιερέα καὶ βασιλέα — ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἦν — τό τε βούλημα δηλῶν καὶ προτρέπων ἀριστίνδην ἐλέσθαι τοὺς τὸν νόμον διερμηνεύοντας.

32 ὁ δ' οἷα εἰκὸς ἦσθεις καὶ νομίσας οὐκ ἄνευ θείας ἐπιφροσύνης περὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἔργον ἐσπουδακέναι τὸν βασιλέα, σκεψάμενος τοὺς παρ' αὐτῷ δοκιμωτάτους Ἑβραίων, οἱ πρὸς τῇ πατρίῳ καὶ τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐπεπαίδευτο παιδείαν, ἄσμενος ἀποστέλλει.

2 ἡ δ' ὅλη ἐρμηνεία τῶν διὰ τοῦ νόμου πάντων ἐπὶ τοῦ προσαγορευθέντος Φιλαδέλφου βασιλέως, σοῦ δὲ προγόνου, προσενεγκαμένου μείζονα φιλοτιμίαν, Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληγρέως πραγματευσαμένου τὰ περὶ τούτων.

13 ὁ δὲ ἰδίᾳ πείραν αὐτῶν λαβεῖν θελήσας εὐλαβηθεὶς τε μή τι ἄρα συνθέμενοι ἀποκρύψωσι τὴν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς διὰ τῆς ἑρμηνείας ἀλήθειαν, χωρίσας αὐτοὺς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων ἐκέλευσε τοὺς πάντας τὴν αὐτὴν ἑρμηνείαν γράφειν, καὶ τοῦτ' ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν βιβλίων ἐποίησεν.

14 συνελθόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ παρὰ τῷ Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ συναντιβαλόντων ἑκάστου τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἑρμηνείαν, ὁ μὲν θεὸς ἐδοξάσθη, αἱ δὲ γραφαὶ ὄντως θεῖαι ἐγνώσθησαν, τῶν πάντων τὰ αὐτὰ ταῖς αὐταῖς λέξεσιν καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἀναγορευσάντων ἀπ' ἀρχῆς μέχρι τέλους, ὥστε καὶ τὰ παρόντα ἔθνη γινῶναι ὅτι κατ' ἐπίπνοιαν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσιν ἐρμηνευμένα αἱ γραφαί.

15 καὶ οὐδέν γε θαυμαστὸν τὸν θεὸν τοῦτο ἐνηργηκεῖν, ὅς γε καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ Ναβουχοδονόσορ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ διαφθαρεισῶν τῶν γραφῶν καὶ μετὰ ἑβδομήκοντα ἔτη τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀνελθόντων εἰς τὴν χώραν αὐτῶν, ἔπειτα ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις Ἀρταξέρξου τοῦ Περσῶν βασιλέως ἐνέπνευσεν Ἐσδρά τῷ ἱερεῖ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λευὶ τοὺς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀνατάξασθαι λόγους καὶ ἀποκαταστήσαι τῷ λαῷ τὴν διὰ Μωυσέως νομοθεσίαν.”
τοσαῦτα ὁ Εἰρηναῖος

149.1 οἱ δὲ ἄτε ἔτι ὑπακούοντες Μακεδόσι τῶν παρὰ σφίσιν εὐδοκιμωτάτων περὶ τὰς γραφὰς ἐμπείρους καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς διαλέκτου εἰδήμονας ἑβδομήκοντα πρεσβυτέρους ἐκλεξάμενοι ἀπέστειλαν αὐτῷ μετὰ καὶ τῶν θείων βιβλίων.

2 ἑκάστου δὲ ἐν μέρει κατ' ἰδίαν ἑκάστην ἐρμηνεύσαντος προφητείαν συνέπνευσαν αἱ πᾶσαι ἑρμηνεῖαι συναντιβληθεῖσαι καὶ τὰς διανοίας καὶ τὰς λέξεις · θεοῦ γὰρ ἦν βούλημα μεμελετημένον εἰς Ἑλληνικὰς ἀκοάς.

3 οὐ δὴ ξένον ἐπίπνοια θεοῦ τοῦ τὴν προφητείαν δεδωκότος καὶ τὴν ἑρμηνείαν οἰοῖναι Ἑλληνικὴν προφητείαν ἐνεργεῖσθαι, ἐπεὶ κἀν τῇ <ἐπὶ> Ναβουχοδονόσορ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ διαφθαρεισῶν τῶν γραφῶν κατὰ τοὺς Ἀρταξέρξου τοῦ Περσῶν βασιλέως χρόνους ἐπίπνοιας Ἐσδράς ὁ Λευίτης ὁ ἱερεὺς γενόμενος πάσας τὰς παλαιὰς αὐθις ἀνανεούμενος προεφήτευσεν γραφάς. [For closer comparisons to the wording in Eusebius, see the *proemium* on Moses in his version of the Epistle of Aristeas (*Prep. Ev.* 8.1.6–8; the text is presented in sec. 2.4.3).]

33 ὡς δ' ἦκον, ἐπὶ ξενίαν κληθέντες λόγοις
 ἀστείοις καὶ σπουδαίοις τὸν ἐστιάτορα
 εὐώχουν ἀντεφeskτιῶντες· ὁ μὲν γὰρ
 ἀπεπειράτο τῆς ἐκάστου σοφίας καινὰς
 ἀλλ' οὐ τὰς ἐν ἔθει ζητήσεις προτείνων,
 οἱ δ' εὐστόχως καὶ εὐθυβόλως, οὐκ
 ἐπιτρέποντος μακρηγορεῖν τοῦ καιροῦ,
 καθάπερ ἀποφθεγγόμενοι τὰ προταθέντα
 διελύοντο. 34 δοκιμασθέντες δ' εὐθὺς
 ἤρξαντο τὰ τῆς καλῆς πρεσβείας ἀποτελεῖν
 καὶ λογισάμενοι παρ' αὐτοῖς, ὅσον εἴη τὸ
 πρᾶγμα θεσπισθέντας νόμους χρησιμοῖς
 διερμηνεύειν, μήτ' ἀφελεῖν τι μήτε
 προσθεῖναι ἢ μεταθεῖναι δυναμένους,
 ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἰδέαν καὶ τὸν τύπον
 αὐτῶν διαφυλάττοντας, ἐσκόπουν τὸ
 καθαρῶτατον τῶν περὶ τὸν τόπον χωρίων
 ἔξω πόλεως·

2.4.3. Eusebius's Version of the Epistle of Aristeas

Eusebius's *Praep. ev.* 8 is one of the most important ancient witnesses to the Epistle of Aristeas. Where Eusebius quotes from the Epistle of Aristeas, he generally follows the Greek text rather closely, although he leaves out much of the story, specifically the symposium and the epistolary framing addresses to Philocrates. As with most later Christian writers, his interest focused more on the role of Ptolemy II and Demetrius and how the translation was completed under divine inspiration. Hence he preserves the embedded letters (as does Josephus, whom he also cites at 8.8.56) and Eleazar's disquisition on the food laws (8.9.1–37). The opening proemium with its praises for Moses and direct mention of Aristeas also seems to adopt language from the summaries of Irenaeus and Clement given above. We present here an abridgement of his discussion of Aristeas and the translation of the Jewish scriptures. In it we identify but leave out the exact quotations from the Epistle of Aristeas and present instead Eusebius's framing narrative and descriptive information. It should be noted that here, too, Eusebius returns at the end to discuss the testimony of Aristobulus (frag. 2, *Praep. ev.* 8.9.38). A small section of Ep. Arist. §§88–90, describing the

temple area and the reservoirs of Jerusalem, also shows up later in *Praep. ev.* 9.38, where it is paired with a description from Philo the Epic Poet, drawn from Alexander Polyhistor.

[LMW]

Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 8.1.6–8

8.1. α. ΠΡΟΟΙΜΙΟΝ· ΚΑΙ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΤΑ ΜΩΣΕΑ ΘΕΟΣΕΒΟΥΣ

6 ... θεὸς αὐτὸς ὁ τῶνδε τῶν ἀγαθῶν αἴτιος, προλαβὼν τὸ μέλλον ὡς ἂν θεὸς τῇ προγνώσει, τὰς περὶ τοῦ πάντων ἀνθρώπων οὐκ εἰς μακρὸν ἀναφανησομένου σωτῆρος διδασκάλου τε εὐσεβείας ἐνὸς τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ πᾶσι τοῖς ὑφ' ἡλίου ἔθνεσι καταστησομένου προρρήσεις ἀποκαλυφθῆναι τοῖς πᾶσιν εἰς φῶς τε ἐλθεῖν ἐπ' ἀκριβὲς μεταβληθείσας δημοσίαις τε βιβλιοθήκαις ἀνατεθείσας διοικεῖται, βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ τοῦτο πρᾶξαι κατὰ νοῦν ἐμβαλὼν, εἰς προπαρασκευήν, ὡς ἔοικε, τῆς τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων ὅσον οὕτω μελλούσης ἐξ αὐτῶν ἔσεσθαι μεταλήψεως. 7 ὧν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως ἐτύχομεν παρὰ Ἰουδαίων, ἀποκρυψάντων ἂν τὰ παρ' αὐτοῖς λόγια διὰ τὸν πρὸς ἡμᾶς φθόνον, τούτων ἐκ τῆς θεόθεν οἰκονομηθείσης ἐρμηνείας ἠξιώθημεν πρὸς τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τε συνέσει καὶ τῇ πατρίῳ παιδείᾳ δεδοκιμασμένων ἀνδρῶν μεταβληθέντων.

8 γράφει δὲ ταῦτα Ἀρισταῖος, ἀνὴρ λόγιος μὲν ἄλλως, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ παρατυχὼν τοῖς πραχθεῖσι κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον Πτολεμαῖον, τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Φιλάδελφον, καθ' ὃν τὰ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν γραφῶν διὰ σπουδῆς τοῦ βασιλέως γεγόμενα τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρειαν βιβλιοθηκῶν ἠξιώθη.

ἐπακοῦσαι δὲ αὐτοῦ καιρὸς τόνδε πρὸς λέξιν ἱστοροῦντος τὸν τρόπον.

8.2. β. ΑΡΙΣΤΑΙΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑΣ ΤΩΝ ΠΑΡΑ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙΣ ΓΡΑΦΩΝ

1 “Κατασταθεὶς ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως βιβλιοθήκης Δημήτριος ὁ Φαληρεὺς ἐχρηματίσθη πολλὰ διάφορα πρὸς τὸ συναγαγεῖν ἅπαντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην βιβλία, καὶ ποιούμενος ἀγορασμοὺς καὶ μεταγραφὰς ἐπὶ τέλος ἡγαγεν ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως πρόθεσιν....”

[8.2.1b–4]

8.1. Proemium: On the Piety of Moses

6 ... and then God himself, the author of these blessings, anticipating the future by his foreknowledge as God, arranged that the predictions concerning him who was to appear before long as the Savior of all humanity and to establish himself as the teacher of the religion of the One Supreme God to all the nations under the sun, should be revealed to them all and be brought into the light by being accurately translated and set up in public libraries. So God put it into the mind of King Ptolemy to accomplish this, in preparation, as it seems, for that participation in them by all the nations that was so soon to take place. **7** For we should not otherwise have gotten from the Jews those oracles that they would have hidden away for their jealousy of us; but these in consequence of the divinely ordered interpretation were vouchsafed to us in a translation by the men who were approved among them both for intelligence and their education in the tradition of the fathers.

8 All these things writes Aristeas, a man who, besides being very learned, was moreover engaged in managing the affairs of the second Ptolemy, surnamed Philadelphus, in whose reign the translation of the Jewish Scriptures, made through the zeal of the king, was deemed worthy of a place in the libraries of Alexandria.

But it is time to listen to the author himself relating the matter word for word in the following manner:

8.2 Aristeas on the translation of the Jewish Scriptures

1 "Having been appointed to oversee the king's library, Demetrius of Phalerum was furnished large sums of money for the purpose of gathering together, as far as possible, all the books in the world. By means of purchase and transcription, he carried out, to the best of his ability, the purpose of the king...."

[The quotation above runs from Ep. Arist. §9 to §11, then skips to Ep. Arist. §§28–29, as follows:]

5 “Ὡς δὲ κατεπράχθη ταῦτα, τὸν Δημήτριον ἐκέλευσεν εἰσδοῦναι περὶ τῆς τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν βιβλίων ἀναγραφῆς. πάντα γὰρ διὰ προσταγμάτων καὶ μεγάλης ἀκριβείας τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τούτοις διωκεῖτο καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπερριμμένως οὐδὲ εἰκῇ. διόπερ καὶ τὸ τῆς εἰσδόσεως καὶ τὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ἀντίγραφα κατακεχώρικα καὶ τὸ τῶν ἀπεσταλμένων πλῆθος καὶ τὴν ἐκάστου κατασκευήν, διὰ τὸ μεγαλομερεία καὶ τέχνη διαφέρειν ἕκαστον αὐτῶν.
τῆς δὲ εἰσδόσεώς⁵² ἐστὶν ἀντίγραφον τόδε.”

8.3. γ. ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΦΑΛΗΡΕΩΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΝ ΤΟΝ ΑΙΓΥΠΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΑ

[8.3.1–5]

6 “...δηλώσομεν δέ σοι περὶ τῆς κατασκευῆς, ὥς ἂν τὰ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ἀντίγραφα διέλθωμεν. ἥν δὲ ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ τὸν τύπον ἔχουσα τοῦτον.”

8.4. δ. ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΠΡΟΣ ΕΛΕΑΖΑΡΟΝ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΑ

[8.4.1–4]

“Πρὸς ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀντέγραψεν ἐνδεχομένως ὁ Ἐλεάζαρος τάδε·

8.5. ε. ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΕΛΕΑΖΑΡΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΩΣ ΠΡΟΣ ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΝ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΑ

[8.5.1–5]

6 Τούτοις ἐξῆς, πολλὰ διὰ μέσου περὶ τῆς προτεθείσης εἰπὼν πραγματείας, μετὰ τὴν τῶν γραφῶν ἐρμηνείαν ἐπιφέρει αὐτοῖς ῥήμασι·

“Καθὼς δ’ ἀνεγνώσθη τὰ τεύχη, στάντες οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τῶν ἐρμηνέων οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πολιτεύματος οἱ τε ἡγούμενοι τοῦ πλήθους εἶπον·

52. The manuscripts read ἐκδόσεώς here; emended by Mras following Ep. Arist. §28 (see p. 70 n. 24).

5 “When this had been done, he ordered Demetrius to draft a memorandum with regard to the transcription of the Jewish books, for all affairs of state used to be carried out by means of decrees and with the most painstaking accuracy by these kings, and nothing was done in a slipshod or haphazard fashion. Therefore I have inserted copies of the memorandum and the letters, the number of the presents sent and the nature of each, since every one of them excelled in magnificence and technical skill.

Here is a copy of the memorandum.”

8.3 Letter of Demetrius Phalereus to Ptolemy, king of Egypt

[The quotation continues with the Letter of Demetrius to the king, from Ep. Arist. §29 to §33, then ends with §34:]

6 “We shall give you a full account of the workmanship once we have gone through the copies of the letters.

The letter of the king took this form:”

8.4 Letter of King Ptolemy, to Eleazar the high priest of the Jews

[The quotation now continues at Ep. Arist. §§35–41, ending with the transition to the Letter of Eleazar thus:]

“To this letter Eleazar replied appropriately as follows:”

8.5 Letter of Eleazar the high priest to King Ptolemy

[The quotation includes Ep. Arist. §§41–46, and the section concludes at §310 as follows:]

6 [Aristeas] next interposes many statements concerning the proposed business and after his account of the translation of the Scriptures adds in exact words:

“And as soon as these volumes had been read, the priests and the elder men among the interpreters and those from the *politeuma* and the leaders of the people stood up and said:”

[8.5.7–10]

10 “...μεταλαβὼν δὲ ὁ βασιλεύς, καθὼς προεῖπον, περὶ τούτων τὰ παρὰ τοῦ Δημητρίου, προσκυνήσας ἐκέλευσε μεγάλην ἐπιμέλειαν ποιεῖσθαι τῶν βιβλίων καὶ συντηρεῖν ἀγνῶς.”

11 Ταῦθ' ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ δηλωθέντος ἐπιτετμήσθω γραφῆς. φέρε λοιπὸν καὶ τὸ πολίτευμα τῆς κατὰ Μωσέα νομοθεσίας ἐκ τῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἀνδράσι διαφανῶν θεασώμεθα. πρῶτα δὲ θήσω Φίλωνος τὰ περὶ τῆς ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου πορείας τῶν Ἰουδαίων, ἣν πεποίηνται Μωσέως ἡγουμένου, ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου συγγράμματος ὧν ἐπέγραψεν Ὑποθετικῶν, ἔνθα τὸν ὑπὲρ Ἰουδαίων, ὡς πρὸς κατηγόρους αὐτῶν, ποιούμενος λόγον ταῦτά φησιν·

8.8

56 Ταῦτα μὲν καὶ ὁ Ἰώσηπος περὶ τῆς κατὰ Μωσέα Ἰουδαίων πολιτείας. περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐν τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ θεθεῖσι νόμοις ἐπεσκιασμένης καὶ ἀλληγορικῆς θεωρίας πολλὰ ἔχων εἰπεῖν ἐπαρκεῖν ἡγοῦμαι τὰς Ἐλεάζαρου καὶ Ἀριστοβούλου διηγήσεις, ἀνδρῶν τὸ μὲν γένος Ἑβραίων ἀνέκαθεν, τὸν δὲ χρόνον κατὰ τοὺς Πτολεμαίων χρόνους διαπρεψάντων. **57** ὧν ὁ Ἐλεάζαρος καὶ τῷ τῆς ἀρχιερωσύνης ἀξιώματι τετιμημένος μικρῷ πρότερον ἡμῖν ἐδηλοῦτο, ὃς δὴ τοῖς παρὰ βασιλέως ὡς αὐτὸν ἤκουσι <διὰ> πρεσβείας ἔνεκα τῆς τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν λόγων ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα μεταβολῆς, τὸν τρόπον ὑποτυπούμενος τῆς ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς νόμοις ἀλληγορουμένης ἰδέας, τοιαύτην πεποίηται τοῦ λόγου τὴν διδασκαλίαν·

8.9 θ. ΕΛΕΑΖΑΡΟΥ ΑΡΧΙΕΡΕΩΣ ΥΠΟΤΥΠΩΣΙΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΙΕΡΟΙΣ ΝΟΜΟΙΣ ΑΛΛΗΓΟΡΟΥΜΕΝΗΣ ΔΙΑΝΟΙΑΣ

[8.9.1–37]

[The quotation runs from Ep. Arist. §310 to §317, ending as follows:]

10 “And after the king, as I said before, had accepted the explanation of Demetrius on this point, showing obeisance he ordered that great care be taken of the books and that they be sacredly preserved.”

11 Let this abridgement from the writing of the aforesaid author [Aristeas] suffice: so now let us take a view of the polity established by the legislation of Moses from authors illustrious among that people. And I will give the first place to the remarks of Philo on the journeying of the Jews from Egypt, which they made under Moses as their leader, quoting from the first book of what he entitled *Hypothetica*, where, in making his defense of the Jews as against their accusers, he speaks as follows:

8.8 [A final section of quotation from the Epistle of Aristeas is contained in *Praep. ev.* 8.9. Eusebius prefaces it with the following comments at the end of 8.8:]

56 These are the statements of Josephus concerning the political constitution of the Jews established by Moses. But with regard to the allegorical meaning shadowed out in the laws enacted by him, though I might say much, I think it sufficient to mention the narratives of Eleazar and Aristobulus, men originally of Hebrew descent and, as to date, distinguished in the times of the Ptolemies. **57** Of these Eleazar, as we showed a little above, had been honored with the dignity of the high priesthood, and when the ambassadors had come to him from the king for the sake of the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek tongue, he sketches out the nature of the allegorical sense in the sacred laws and presents the doctrine of his discourse in the following form:

8.9 Eleazar the high priest's sketch of the thought allegorically expressed in the sacred laws. From the writings of Aristeas:

[The section quoted here runs from Ep. Arist. §128 to §171, then ends with the following editorial comments from Eusebius in preparation for a quotation:]

38 Ταῦτα μὲν ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς τοῖς ἡκουσιν ὡς αὐτὸν Ἑλλῆσι περὶ τῆς ἀλληγορουμένης ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς νόμοις ἰδέας διεστείλατο, ὡς ἂν μέλλουσι ταῖς ἐκδοθησομέναις περιτεύξεσθαι τῶν γραφῶν ἐρμηνείαις.

ὁ δὲ Ἀριστόβουλος καὶ τῆς κατ' Ἀριστοτέλην φιλοσοφίας πρὸς τῇ πατρίῳ μετεिल्χώς, ὅποια περὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς βίβλοις φερομένων ὡς περὶ θεοῦ μελῶν διῆλθεν ἐπακοῦσαι καιρός· οὗτος δ' (αὐτὸς ἐκεῖνος, οὗ καὶ ἡ δευτέρα τῶν Μακκαβαίων ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς βίβλου μνημονεύει) ἐν τῷ πρὸς Πτολεμαῖον τὸν βασιλέα συγγράμματι τοῦτον καὶ αὐτὸς διασαφεῖ τὸν τρόπον·

Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* 9.38.1–3⁵³

1 Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐν τῇ Ἱερουσαλὴμ ὑδάτων καὶ ὁ Ἀριστέας ἐν τῷ γραφέντι αὐτῷ βιβλίῳ Περὶ τῆς ἐρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου ταῦτα ἱστορεῖ·

2 ΑΡΙΣΤΕΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΙΕΡΟΥΣΑΛΗΜ ΥΔΑΤΩΝ

“Ὁ δὲ οἶκος ἀποβλέπει πρὸς ἡῶ, τὰ δ' ὀπίσθια αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἐσπέραν. τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἔδαφος λιθόστρωτον καθέστηκε καὶ κλίματα πρὸς τοὺς καθήκοντας τόπους ἔχει τῆς τῶν ὑδάτων ἐπιρροῆς ἕνεκεν, ἥ γίνεται διὰ τὴν σμῆξιν τῶν ἀπὸ τῶν θυσιῶν αἱμάτων· πολλαὶ γὰρ μυριάδες κτηνῶν προσάγονται κατὰ τὰς τῶν ἐορτῶν ἡμέρας.

3 ὕδατος δὲ ἀνέκλειπτός ἐστι σύστασις, ὡς ἂν καὶ πηγῆς ἔσωθεν πολυρρύτου φυσικῶς ἐπιρρεοῦσης, ἔτι δὲ θαυμασίων καὶ ἀδιηγῆτων ὑποδοχείων ὑπαρχόντων ὑπὸ γῆν, καθὼς ἐπέφαινον, πέντε σταδίων κυκλόθεν τῆς κατὰ τὸ ἱερὸν καταβολῆς, καὶ ἐκ τούτων σύριγγας ἀναρίθμους, καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος ἑαυτὰς[ς] συναπτόντων τῶν ρευμάτων· καὶ ταῦτα πάντα μεμολιβῶσθαι κατ' ἐδάφους καὶ τῶν τοίχων, ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων κεχύσθαι πολὺ πλῆθος κονιάσεως, ἐνεργῶς γεγενημένων ἀπάντων.”

53. Greek text is from Mras 1954–1956.

38 These are the accurate distinctions concerning the idea set forth allegorically in the sacred laws, which the high priest gave to those Greeks who had come to him, thinking them likely to meet with the translations of the Scriptures that were about to be published.

But it is time to hear what Aristobulus, who had partaken of Aristotle's philosophy in addition to that of his own country, declared concerning the passages in the sacred books that are currently understood to refer to limbs of God's body. This is that very man who is mentioned in the beginning of the Second Book of Maccabees, and in his writing addressed to King Ptolemy he, too, explains this principle in this manner:

[What follows is the quotation of Aristobulus frag. 2]

1 But Aristeas also, in the book that he wrote *Concerning the Translation of the Law of the Jews*, narrates the following account of the waters in Jerusalem:

2 From Aristeas, on the waters of Jerusalem.

"Now the house [temple] looks toward the east, and the back part of it to the west. The whole site is paved with stone and has slopes toward the proper places for the influx of the waters for the purpose of washing away the blood from the sacrifices, for many myriads of cattle are offered on the several feast days.

3 And there is an inexhaustible reservoir of water, as would be expected from an abundant spring gushing up naturally from within, there being moreover wonderful and indescribable cisterns underground of five furlongs, according to their showing, all around the foundation of the temple, and countless pipes from them, so that the streams on every side met together. And all these works have been fastened with lead at the bottom and the side walls, and over these has been spread a great quantity of plaster, all having been carefully wrought."

The extract above is taken from Ep. Arist. §§88–90a. We supply the text here for comparison:

88 ὁ δὲ οἶκος βλέπει πρὸς ἑω, τὰ δ' ὀπίσθια αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἐσπέραν· τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἔδαφος λιθόστρωτον καθέστηκε καὶ κλίματα πρὸς τοὺς καθήκοντας τόπους ἔχει τῆς τῶν ὑδάτων ἐπιφορᾶς ἕνεκεν, ἣ γίνεται διὰ τὴν σμῆξιν τῶν ἀπὸ τῶν θυσιαῶν

αϊμάτων. πολλὰ γὰρ μυριάδες κτηνῶν προσάγονται κατὰ τὰς τῶν ἑορτῶν
ἡμέρας. **89** ὕδατος δὲ ἀνέκλειπτός ἐστι σύστασις, ὥς ἂν καὶ πηγῆς ἔσωθεν
πολυρρύτου φυσικῶς ἐπιρρεούσης, ἔτι δὲ θαυμασίῳ καὶ ἀδιηγήτῳ ὑποδοχείῳ
ὑπαρχόντων ὑπὸ γῆν, καθὼς ἀπέφαινον πέντε σταδίων κυκλόθεν τῆς κατὰ τὸ
ἱερὸν καταβολῆς καὶ ἐκάστου τούτων σύριγγας ἀναρίθμους, καθ' ἕκαστον μέρος
ἐαυτὰ συναπτόντων τῶν ρευμάτων. **90** καὶ πάντα ταῦτα μεμολιβῶσθαι κατ'
ἐδάφους καὶ τοῦ τοίχου. ἐπὶ δὲ τούτων κεχύσθαι πολὺ τι πλῆθος κονιάσεως,
ἐνεργῶς γεγεννημένων ἀπάντων.

3 Related Epistolary Literature

3.1. 2 Maccabees: The Letters

A complex composition that utilizes a variety of literary genres, 2 Maccabees regales the heroic deeds of Judas Maccabeus, the liberator of the Jerusalem temple from Seleucid hegemony. Through the actions of Judas, the temple is restored to its rightful place as the center of Jewish worship, an event commemorated through the celebration of Hanukkah. This festival is urged upon the diaspora Jews in Egypt in an attempt to unite all under one temple.

The text likely came into its present form in the vicinity of Alexandria between the late second and early first century BCE. It combines epistolarity and historiography in order to convey a generally anti-Hasmonean message and urge the Jews in Egypt to unite with Palestinian Jews in support of the singular Jewish temple in Jerusalem. It is of interest here because of its many literary relationships with the other texts in this volume and its familiar use of epistolarity in support of an apologetic and propagandistic purpose.

Author

The surviving form of 2 Maccabees is an anonymous work. Its author, commonly referred to as the epitomizer, redactor, or abridger by scholars, is said to have condensed (2:23) Jason of Cyrene's five-volume Maccabean history into a single volume (2:23). Because Jason's work no longer survives, scholars are not easily able to separate the original source material from the work of the epitomizer. Only in the prologue (2:19–32) and epilogue (15:37–39) of 2 Maccabees can we clearly hear the epitomizer's voice.

In addition to the main body of the text (the epitome), 2 Maccabees also contains two prefixed letters at its opening (1:1–9; 1:10–2:18).¹ In the first letter, “the Jews in Jerusalem and those in the land of Judea” write “to our brothers, the Jews throughout Egypt” (1:1). The second letter is addressed: “The people of Jerusalem and of Judea and the council and Judas to Aristobulus, who is of the family of the anointed priests, teacher of King Ptolemy, and to the Jews in Egypt” (1:10b). A question of authorship arises with the addition of Judas to the list of the senders of the second letter. Though not stated explicitly, the Judas referred to here is Judas Maccabeus, the focus of the epitomizer’s work.² Because of the valorization of Judas throughout the work, the appearance of his name here has generally been considered an instance of pseudepigraphy.³ The possible connection between Judas and Aristobulus will be discussed further below.

The abridgement of Jason’s history contains an additional five letters (9:19–27; 11:16–21, 22–26, 27–33, 34–38), all attributed to foreign rulers or officials. Letter 1 (9:19–27) is attributed to Antiochus IV Epiphanes, while the remaining four letters are set during the reign of Antiochus V Eupator. Letters 3 (11:22–26) and 4 (11:27–33) are attributed to Eupator, letter 2 (11:16–21) to his regent Lysias, and letter 5 (11:34–38) to Roman envoys supporting Antiochus V. Attridge, however, argues that only one letter (letter 3, 11:22–26) actually belongs during the reign of Antiochus V (163–161 BCE), while the rest belong during Antiochus IV’s reign (175–164 BCE). Scholars interested in using these letters as authentic historical sources disagree not only about their authorship but also their correct chronological order.⁴ Attridge suggests the following order:⁵

letter 1 (9:19–27)

letter 4 (11:27–33)

1. Scholars debate whether the correct division between these two letters is before or after the dating formula in 1:9b (in some editions, 1:10a). If divided before 1:9b, then the dating formula would be positioned at the beginning of the second letter, but this is an awkward place for the date in ancient letters. The division 1:1–1:9, 1:10–2:18 is adopted for the present discussion. See Moffatt 1913, 129.

2. Doran 2012, 40.

3. Goldstein 1983, 158–59. With an opposing view, Fischer (1992, 4:444) argues that this letter is “really the sole authentic surviving record of Judas Maccabeus himself”

4. For example, Fischer (1992, 4:444) places the letters in the following order: 11:27–33; 11:34–38; 9:19–27; 11:22–26; 11:17–21.

5. Attridge 1984, 182. See also Doran 2012, 227–30.

letter 2 (11:16–21)

letter 5 (11:34–38)

letter 3 (11:22–26)

Whereas the text attributes letters 2–5 to Antiochus V, Attridge contends that Letters 4, 2, and 5 should be placed during the reign of Antiochus IV. More specifically, he considers these genuine letters, attributing them to Antiochus IV and his regent Lysias, as they discuss a military campaign and the subsequent negotiations in 164 BCE.

One should exercise extreme caution, however, in using these letters for historical reconstruction, since, at the very least, they have been redacted and temporally altered by the epitomizer (possibly, but not necessarily, on the basis of earlier source material). The second prefixed letter (1:10–2:18) and the letter of Antiochus IV (9:19–27) in particular reveal fictive elements such as the attribution to Judas in the former and the king's tone of "supplication" (9:18) in the latter. Moreover, the date given in the letter attributed to Antiochus V (11:27–33), as well as in the letter from the Roman envoys (11:34–38), is earlier than the death of Antiochus IV.⁶ Ultimately, the letters in their current form, embedded in 2 Maccabees, should be viewed as fictive letters designed by the epitomizer, possibly, but not necessarily, on the basis of earlier source material. It is unreasonable considering the ubiquity of fictive letter writing by ancient authors to attribute authorship of the letters in 2 Maccabees to those leaders presented as their senders.

Date

While scholars continue to debate the precise date of 2 Maccabees, most agree to a time period between 124 and 63 BCE.⁷ The date of the first letter, 124 BCE, is taken as the *terminus post quem*. It is significant that this date marks a notable turn in the situation of Egyptian Jews under Ptolemy VIII Physcon.⁸ Furthermore, the statement in 15:37 that Jerusalem had remained in the hands of the Jews since the time of Judas Maccabeus strongly suggests that the epitomizer finished his work before the Roman

6. See the notes to the texts of the letters below.

7. Van Henten 1997, 51–53.

8. On this date, see also the Jewish inscriptions given in sec. 3.5 below (no. 2).

general Pompey entered the city in 63 BCE.⁹ While a few scholars dispute this dating, most agree with the general time frame.¹⁰

It is possible to narrow the dating even further, however. Nickelsburg and Attridge each argue that a more precise dating of 2 Maccabees can be inferred based on the scope of the epitomizer's work. The focus of the epitomizer on the figure of Judas Maccabeus specifically, while ignoring the rest of the Maccabean family, suggests an anti-Hasmonean but pro-Judas stance.¹¹ Taking this consideration alongside the intertextual relationships with the other works in this volume, it is possible to narrow the date of 2 Maccabees to the time of the later Hasmonean rulers. The tension between the Hasmoneans and their subjects beginning with the end of the reign of John Hyrcanus (103 BCE) has thus been taken to suggest a date from the end of the second through the early first century BCE.¹² Consideration of epistolary formulae in the embedded letters (to be discussed below) support these later dates, commencing in the 60s BCE.

Provenance

Most scholars situate the production of 2 Maccabees in Alexandria, though a growing minority argues for Jerusalem.¹³ Both of the introductory letters are addressed to Egyptian Jews, and the insistence of celebrating the purification of the Jerusalem temple can best be understood in the context of the Jewish temple at Leontopolis built by Onias IV.¹⁴ As told in 2 Maccabees, the rightful high priest of the temple in Jerusalem, Onias III, was ousted by his brother Jason (4:7–10) and eventually killed under the command of Menelaus, the next high priest (4:30–34). Onias III's son, Onias IV, fled to

9. It is commonly suggested that the letter from the Roman envoys in 11:34–38 also indicates a more positive view of Rome than one would expect in a Jewish text after 63 BCE. But the negative view of the later Hasmonean rulers implied within the text and the role of the Romans in quelling the civil war might allow for some later perspectives from the early Roman period (63–40 BCE).

10. For an interesting dissention, see Wacholder 1978, 89–133.

11. By contrast, 2 Maccabees only mentions Simon and Jonathan, and most often in a negative light; see Nickelsburg 2005, 109.

12. Nickelsburg 2005, 110; Attridge 1984, 177. Cf. Goldstein 1983, 83; Doran 2012, 14–15.

13. For theories of a Jerusalem provenance, see Barclay 1996, 12; Van Henten 1997, 50; Lichtenberger 2008, 385–403. The claim of an Antioch provenance made by Zeitlin (1954, 19) has not been accepted.

14. Nickelsburg 2005, 110.

Egypt and eventually founded a temple at Leontopolis under Ptolemy VI.¹⁵ Moffatt claims that the epitomizer was an Alexandrian Jew who composed 2 Maccabees “in order to foster reverence for the temple in Jerusalem ... as a bond of union between the Jews of Palestine and Egypt.”¹⁶ Additionally, Doran argues convincingly that the extensive concern with Jews engaging in the culture of the gymnasium in 2 Macc 4:10–17 reflects problems facing Jews in a diaspora city such as Alexandria, not Jerusalem (particularly in comparison to the one-line mention of the gymnasium in 1 Macc 1:14, likely a text of Judean origin).¹⁷

Especially considering 2 Maccabees’s connections to the other texts in this volume written in Egypt, there is little reason to suggest any other point of origin than Alexandria for the work of the epitomizer.¹⁸ The two opening letters, if not considered part of the epitome as a whole, could have been composed in Jerusalem, but their audience is still clearly a diasporic Jewish audience.

Form

In 2 Maccabees, several literary elements are blended together into one complex work: seven separate letters, an abridgement of the five-volume history from Jason of Cyrene, and original material from the epitomizer. The majority of the book was originally written in Greek, but the first letter shows at least the influence of a Semitic language.¹⁹ Scholars often refer to the genre of the main body as pathetic history or tragic history, in which the epitomizer, rather than systematically presenting history, appeals to the audience’s emotions.²⁰

15. Tcherikover 1999, 274–79.

16. Moffatt 1913, 129; Doran 1981, 11–12; J. Collins 2000, 81.

17. Doran 2012, 16–17. Note that 2 Maccabees also appears to be influenced by the language of Ptolemaic royal decrees (van Henten 2007), which further supports, but does not require, an Egyptian provenance.

18. Moffatt 1913, 130–31; Fischer 1992, 4:443; Schwartz 2008, 45–55; Doran 2012, 15–17.

19. Goldstein 1983, 139.

20. Fischer 1992, 4:445; Nickelsburg 2005, 106. For a detailed discussion of the development of the term *tragic history* as related to 2 Maccabees and contemporaneous writings, see also Doran 1979, 107–14. Doran (2012, 6–7; see also 1979, 114) argues against distinguishing this as a separate genre and situates 2 Maccabees in the subgenre of “local history,” claiming that it follows the common pattern “challenge to the deity,

The letters in 2 Maccabees show a familiarity with Greek epistolary form and follow Greek letter-writing conventions.²¹ For example, four of the letters employ the opening formula “A to B *χαίρειν*” (11:16, 22, 27, 34). The greeting in the letter attributed to Antiochus IV (9:19–27) is more elaborate, however, and also inverts the order: “To B *πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὖ πράττειν* A.” This greeting suits the purpose of the letter, which was written as a supplication (9:18). The letter to Aristobulus (1:10–2:18) opens with just a slight addition to the typical greeting: “A to B *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν*.” Finally, the first letter (1:1–1:9) blends a version of the conventional Greek epistolary prescript “To B *χαίρειν* A” with a form of the conventional Semitic wish for the “good peace” (*εἰρήνην ἀγαθὴν*) of the addressees.²² The formula *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν*, which appears in the embedded letters at 1:10 (to Aristobulus) and 9:19 (from Antiochus) deserves special notice, since it does not appear before the first century BCE and is not well attested before the 60s.²³

Two of the letters in 2 Maccabees also have a *formula valetudinis* (9:20–21; 11:28). In the latter case, Antiochus V Eupator uses words resembling a common formula (*εἰ ἔρρωσθε εἴη ἂν ὡς βουλόμεθα καὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ ὑγιαίνομεν*);²⁴ in the former, Antiochus IV Epiphanes employs a much-elaborated phrase that ends not with a wish for good health (*ὑγιαίνομεν*) but with a message of ill health. The reversal of this formula is noteworthy because, as Nisula

battle, victory of the deity, celebration concerning the temple” familiar from biblical and nonbiblical literature.

21. However, we should not ignore the possibility of influence from the Semitic letter-writing tradition. As mentioned above, the first letter was originally composed in a Semitic language, most likely Hebrew or Aramaic. Furthermore, both letters claim to be from Judean Jews to Jews in the diaspora.

22. Doran (2012, 24–5) offers a helpful suggestion on how to understand the awkward syntax in the opening formula of 2 Macc 1:1: “I therefore suggest that the accusative *εἰρήνην ἀγαθὴν*, literally ‘good peace,’ is similar to the wish formula found in the Lachish letters: *שלם וטב*, literally ‘peace and good.’ ... One should presuppose a verb such as ‘we send,’ *שלחנו* in Hebrew.” On this subject, see also Bickerman 1933, 245; Nisula 2005, 208; Klauck 2006, 266. The addition of a form of *εἰρήνη* here is considered an element of Semitic influence (viz. *שלם*, *שלום*) in Jewish epistolography. See also 1 Thess 1:1; Gal 1:3; Rom 1:7.

23. The date is after ca. 67–60 BCE; some of the earliest uses of this greeting formula are BGU 8.1880 (61/60 BCE), BGU 8.1873 (61–52 BCE), BGU 14.2419 (first century BCE), P.Heid. 2.212 (67/38/16 BCE), P.Ifao. 2.220 (first century BCE). See also Goldstein 1983, 157–67, and p. 25 n. 98 above.

24. Nisula 2005, 208.

claims, “One did not conclude a ‘how are you?’ question with an ‘I am *not* fine’ answer.”²⁵ Only three of the letters in 2 Maccabees end with a salutation: two with the conventional ἔρρωσθε (11:21, 33)²⁶ and the third with the unusual ὑγιαίνετε (11:38). The latter is a later formula reflecting the influence of the Latin salutation *valet* and might have been employed in order to lend historical verisimilitude to the one letter in 2 Maccabees attributed to Romans.²⁷ Finally, four of the letters in 2 Maccabees conclude with dates (1:9; 11:21, 33, 38).

Common epistolary phrases are also used in some of the letters in 2 Maccabees, such as the conventional “polite request” formula prevalent in Greek letters: καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε (2 Macc 2:16).²⁸ A variant of this formula is found in 2 Macc 11:26: εὖ οὖν ποιήσεις. These letters all bear, to a certain extent, marks of the cultural conventions of friendship integral to any epistolary situation, real or fictional. For instance, the letter from Antiochus IV seems almost overly familiar, though written from the king to his Jewish subject. Likewise, the letter ends in an unmistakable recommendation of his son and heir, Antiochus V, to the Jewish people (2 Macc 9:26–27).²⁹ Like the commendatory letter type in Pseudo-Demetrius’s *Epistolary Types*, the king closes this letter with a comment on the benefits that will befall the Jews if they welcome and accept his son as the new king, just as he asks.³⁰ While this is just a brief sketch of certain epistolary features, it should be noted that all of the letters in 2 Maccabees conform to the formal and functional conventions of Hellenistic epistolography and should be interpreted as such.³¹

25. Nisula 2005, 210. Habicht (1976b, 3–7), on the other hand, argues that this letter is an obvious literary invention because of the variations in the prescript and greeting formulas.

26. Cf. Ep. Arist. §§40, 41, 46; 3 Macc 3:12; 7:1, 9. See sec. 3.4 below.

27. Cf. Ep. Arist. §§41. See Habicht 1976a, 12; Doran 2012, 225.

28. Cf. Ep. Arist. §§46, 228; 1 Macc 12:18, 22; Eupolemus, frag. 2 (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.34.1). As Doran (2012, 60) notes, this formula is typically used by those in authority writing to those of lesser authority.

29. With its emphasis on the succession of a ruler, this letter bears striking similarities to the Solomonic correspondence in Eupolemus, frag. 2, which repeatedly use epistolarity to underscore the continuity of rule between David and Solomon.

30. Malherbe 1988, 32–33; Nisula 2005, 215–16.

31. For a more detailed look at the epistolary features in 2 Maccabees, see Nisula 2005.

Literary Relationships

It has often been argued that 2 Maccabees, or at least the history of Jason of Cyrene, is a response to 1 Maccabees.³² Since these two works share material, some scholars conclude that they used a common source or that they are alternative versions of the same account.³³ Besides the history of Jason of Cyrene, possible sources of the various letters, and potential connections to 1 Maccabees, the text of 2 Maccabees also suggests use of the LXX and Hebrew Scriptures as sources. The connection to the LXX, specifically Greek Esther, can be found in several different places, most notably with the reference to Mordecai in 15:36.³⁴ In fact, 2 Maccabees appears to talk about Hanukkah in a way similar to how Greek Esther refers to the Day of Nicanor. Both letters use an already established religious festival as a point of reference for the newly established festival. In 2 Macc 1:18, the author uses Sukkoth as the reference point for Hanukkah, while in Greek Esther 15:36 the author uses Purim in a similar way for the Day of Nicanor.³⁵ In both cases the authors are attempting to encourage diasporic Jews to celebrate a newly created festival that commemorates a victory over a foreign power. There is another possible reference to Esther in 9:21.³⁶ In addition, twice when referring to Nicanor (2 Macc 8:34; 15:3), the epithet *τρισαλιτῆριος* (lit. “thrice sinner or thrice guilty”) appears. This rare term also appears in Greek Esther 8:12p (LXX Add E), in reference to Haman, who is further identified as a Macedonian rather than a Persian. It may suggest that either the epitomizer of 2 Maccabees was familiar with some form of Greek Esther or that the author of Addition E knew 2 Maccabees.³⁷

32. Goldstein 1983, 62–89.

33. Goldstein 1983, 37–48. This view is criticized in Doran 1981, 17–19.

34. The reference here is to the Festival of Purim, which is typically associated with Esther, not Mordecai. Goldstein (1983, 502) argues that the author is making a connection between the characters of Mordecai and Judas as two figures who led the Jews to victory over their oppressors.

35. Burns 2006, 13–15.

36. Moffatt 1913, 129.

37. Goldstein 1983, 503. Further investigation shows that the word *τρισαλιτῆριος* occurs only thirty-eight times in all the TLG, and these three occurrences in Greek Esther and 2 Maccabees are the earliest by far; it is several centuries before the word appears again in late antique and Byzantine writers. It thus seems to confirm some form of borrowing. On the dating of Greek Esther, see sec. 3.3 below.

Aside from Greek Esther, there are other more or less substantial literary links that should be discussed. The text known as 3 Maccabees, which was written in Egypt in the same general period, shares both style and language with 2 Maccabees.³⁸ They were both written in the same kind of literary Greek and share over two dozen words or phrases that are not found anywhere else in the LXX.³⁹ They also share many of the same events and ideas, such as miraculous visions, a stress on the sanctity of the temple, and an emphasis on celebrating memorial feasts.⁴⁰ The character of the wizened, righteous Eleazar also appears. While there are distinct correlations between these two books, their differences do not allow for a common author nor for a direct dependence between the two;⁴¹ however, both works show literary connections to Greek Esther, its later additions (E), and the Epistle of Aristeas. An interactive network of Alexandrian literary activity during the mid- to later first century BCE may thus be indicated (see pp. 23–30 above and Gruen 1998, 226).

Connections also exist between the Epistle of Aristeas and 2 Maccabees. As discussed in the Aristeas the Exegete section (section 2.3.1), the Epistle of Aristeas uses the rare term *Συριακή* to refer to the Aramaic language in §11.⁴² This term is attested only twice in the LXX: Job 42:17b and 2 Macc 15:36.⁴³ This rare coincidence might indicate a link between these works. There is also a plausible connection between 2 Macc 4:12 and Ep. Arist. §§100–104. This verse in 2 Maccabees references the citadel built by the temple, which is discussed in greater detail in the Epistle of Aristeas passage.⁴⁴

The final connections that deserve consideration here are 2 Maccabees's references to Eupolemus and Aristobulus. First, Eupolemus is mentioned in 2 Macc 4:11 as the ambassador Judas Maccabeus sent to attempt to establish an alliance with Rome, in agreement with 1 Macc 8:17–18. Most scholars assume that this Eupolemus was also the author of the frag-

38. Nickelsburg 1984, 83.

39. Emmett 1913, 1:156.

40. For a complete list of shared themes, see Emmett 1913, 1:156.

41. Emmett (1913, 1:157) notes that many scholars assume that the author of 3 Maccabees used 2 Maccabees but without attempting to present any proof.

42. See sec. 2.3.1 above at n.18.

43. 2 Macc 15:36: ἐδογμάτισαν δὲ πάντες μετὰ κοινού ψηφίσματος μηδαμῶς ἔασαι ἀπαρασήμαντον τήνδε τὴν ἡμέραν ἔχειν δὲ ἐπίσημον τὴν τρισκαιδεκάτην τοῦ δωδεκάτου μηνὸς Ἀδαρ λέγεται τῇ Συριακῇ φωνῇ πρὸ μιᾶς ἡμέρας τῆς Μαρδοχαϊκῆς ἡμέρας.

44. See also Neh 7:2.

ments of a history of the Jews preserved under the same name, but there are also good reasons to doubt this association, as noted in section 3.2 below.

Second, 2 Macc 1:10 (the greeting of the second prefixed letter) claims to be from Judas the Maccabee and thus dated between 164 and 160 BCE; it explicitly identifies the recipient Aristobulus as the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher of this name, “the teacher of King Ptolemy.” This Aristobulus was supposedly the teacher of Ptolemy VI Philometor (r. 180–145 BCE), which would indeed make him contemporaneous with the time of Judas the Maccabee; however, this does not necessarily prove the authenticity of this letter.⁴⁵ Since this seems to be the earliest reference to the work of Aristobulus, the date of this composition becomes important. Willrich, for example, raised serious questions regarding the authenticity of these traditions about Aristobulus from the early second century BCE.⁴⁶ One must also question whether the renown of Aristobulus as “teacher of King Ptolemy [VI]” had already grown to such a degree in Judean circles by such an early date.⁴⁷ That the epitomizer wished to link them seems noteworthy nonetheless.⁴⁸ Given the later dates now suggested for the composition of 2 Maccabees, and specifically the work of the epitomizer, these traditions should be treated with caution.⁴⁹

Audience and Purpose

On the basis of the first two letters in 2 Maccabees, it seems that the Jewish epitomizer wrote for other Jews in the diaspora. In 2 Maccabees, the epitomizer relates the story of Judas Maccabeus and the cleansing of the temple. The epitome supports the request in the first two letters for the Jews of Alexandria to commemorate this cleansing with the observance of the festival we know today as Hanukkah. Onias III set up a temple at Leontopolis after his escape from Jerusalem when Antiochus IV came to power. The request for commemorating the cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem has added significance when viewed in this context. The celebration of the

45. Yarbro Collins 1985, 2:833; Holladay 1995, 45–72.

46. Willrich 1895, 162–68; Wendland also doubted their authenticity, cf. Holladay 1995, 52–53.

47. The dates assigned to Aristobulus are based on this same assumption; see Holladay 1995, 45–46.

48. Doran 1994–2009, 4:181–299.

49. For other difficulties with the Aristobulus traditions specifically relating to the Epistle of Aristeas, see sec. 2.4.2 above.

temple is a practice that could bring together the two worshiping communities centered in Judea and Egypt, as indicated in 2 Maccabees through the medium of epistolarity, while at the same time asserting the importance of the temple in Jerusalem.⁵⁰

[GAK and MLC]

50. Moffatt 1913, 129.

2 Maccabees 1:1–9: The First Prefixed Letter from the Jews in Judea to the Jews in Egypt⁵¹

1 Τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον Ἰουδαῖος χαίρειν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῆς Ἰουδαίας.

Εἰρήνην ἀγαθὴν 2 καὶ ἀγαθοποιῆσαι ὑμῖν ὁ θεὸς καὶ μνησθεῖν τῆς διαθήκης αὐτοῦ τῆς πρὸς Ἀβραάμ καὶ Ἰσαάκ καὶ Ἰακώβ τῶν δούλων αὐτοῦ τῶν πιστῶν· 3 καὶ δῶν ὑμῖν καρδίαν πᾶσιν εἰς τὸ σέβεσθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ποιεῖν αὐτοῦ τὰ θελήματα καρδίᾳ μεγάλῃ καὶ ψυχῇ βουλομένη 4 καὶ διανοῖξαι τὴν καρδίαν ὑμῶν ἐν τῷ νόμῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς προστάγμασιν καὶ εἰρήνην ποιῆσαι 5 καὶ ἐπακούσαι ὑμῶν τῶν δεήσεων καὶ καταλλαγείῃ ὑμῖν καὶ μὴ ὑμᾶς ἐγκαταλίπειν ἐν καιρῷ πονηρῷ. 6 καὶ νῦν ὧδέ ἐσμεν προσευχόμενοι περὶ ὑμῶν.

7 Βασιλεύοντος Δημητρίου ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ ἐξηκοστοῦ ἐνάτου ἡμεῖς οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι γεγράφαμεν ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ θλίψει καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀκμῇ τῇ ἐπελθούσῃ ἡμῖν ἐν τοῖς ἔτεσιν τούτοις ἀφ' οὗ ἀπέστη Ἰάσων καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀγίας γῆς καὶ τῆς βασιλείας 8 καὶ ἐνεπύρισαν τὸν πυλῶνα καὶ ἐξέχεαν αἷμα ἀθῶων· καὶ ἐδεήθημεν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ εἰσηκούσθημεν καὶ προσηνέγκαμεν θυσίαν καὶ σεμίδαλιν καὶ ἐξήψαμεν τοὺς λύχνους καὶ προεθήκαμεν τοὺς ἄρτους.

9 Καὶ νῦν ἵνα ἄγητε τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς σκηνοπηγίας τοῦ Χασελευ μηνός.

Ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ ὀγδοηκοστοῦ καὶ ὀγδόου.

51. Greek text of the 2 Maccabees letters is adapted from Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006. English translation adapted by G. Anthony Keddie in light of the NRSV, NETS, Doran 2012, and other sources.

52. There is much debate over how to understand the role of the accusative phrase εἰρήνην ἀγαθὴν in the letter form. The NRSV and NETS take it with the greeting, assuming a missing καί, which Habicht (1976a, 43) suggests as one option. Doran (2012, 25), partially following Goldstein (1983, 141), takes the phrase with verse 2 instead of the greeting, as part of the wishes for well-being. Doran cites evidence from Aramaic letters to support his understanding of the phrase as a wish formula rather than a greeting and therefore its separation from the To B (dative) χαίρειν A (nominative) greeting formula. The greeting formula, too, as a variation of the more common A (nominative) to B (dative) χαίρειν, may also be influenced by Aramaic epistolary conventions.

53. The formatting and translation of vv. 7–8 as a letter embedded within the letter of 1–9, unlike the NRSV and NETS but along with most commentators, follows the analysis of Bickermann (1933, 233–54). The problem is that the year given in v. 7 (169 of the Seleucid era) conflicts with the date of the letter in v. 9 (188 of the Seleucid era). Thus Bickermann argued that γεγράφαμεν in v. 7 must be taken as a historical perfect referring to an earlier letter, not as an epistolary perfect. Whether quotations

1 To our brothers, the Jews throughout Egypt: Greetings from your brothers, the Jews in Jerusalem and those in the land of Judea.

2 Good peace,⁵² and may God do good to you and remember his covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, his faithful servants. **3** May he give you all a heart to worship him and to do his will with a strong heart and a willing spirit. **4** May he open your heart to his law and his commandments, and may he bring peace. **5** May he hear your prayers and be reconciled to you, and may he not forsake you in time of evil. **6** We are now praying for you here.

7 In the reign of Demetrius, in the year 169, we Jews wrote to you: “In the critical distress that came upon us in those years after Jason and his company revolted from the holy land and the kingdom **8** and burned the gate and shed innocent blood, we prayed to the Lord and were heard, and we offered sacrifice and grain offering, and we kindled the lamps and set out the loaves.”⁵³

9 Now see that you keep the days of Sukkoth in the month of Kislev.⁵⁴
In the year 188.⁵⁵

around the embedded letter are merited in the English translation remains an open question, since the reference does not necessarily imply exact quotation of earlier correspondence. On these issues, see further Goldstein 1983, 143–53; Doran 2012, 28–29.

54. Since the Torah stipulates that the Festival of Sukkoth should be observed in the seventh month (Tishri), this letter’s request that the Egyptian Jews observe Sukkoth in Kislev (the ninth month) reflects a variation in practice, perhaps induced by the special circumstances of that time. See Lev 23:39–43; cf. Deut 16:13–16.

55. Note that some editions include the date formula (v. 9b here) in v. 10 and therefore separate the first two letters between 10a and 10b. To accentuate epistolarity, we have separated the date from the body of the letter, departing from the NRSV. See Goldstein 1983, 153; Doran 2012, 33. The date at the end of a letter usually has the year in the genitive first, followed by the day and month in the dative (see 11:21, 33). Since there is no day and month here, the NRSV and some commentators connect the dating formula with the festival in the month of Kislev in v. 9, but there are no comparanda for referring to a festival in this way, particularly an annual one. Doran suggests that the day and month might have dropped off in transmission. The year given in the letter, 188 of the Seleucid era, corresponds to 125/124 BCE. See Doran 2012, 33.

2 Maccabees 1:10–2:18: The Second Prefixed Letter from the Jews in Judea to the Jews in Egypt

10 Οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις καὶ οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ γερουσία καὶ Ἰούδας Ἀριστοβούλῳ διδασκάλῳ Πτολεμαίου τοῦ βασιλέως ὄντι δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν χριστῶν ἱερέων γένους, καὶ τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ Ἰουδαίοις χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν.

11 Ἐκ μεγάλων κινδύνων ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σεσφωσμένοι μεγάλως εὐχαριστοῦμεν αὐτῷ ὥς ἂν πρὸς βασιλέα παρατασσόμενοι· **12** αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐξέβρασεν τοὺς παραταξαμένους ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ πόλει. **13** εἰς τὴν Περσίδα γενόμενος γὰρ ὁ ἡγεμὼν καὶ ἡ περὶ αὐτὸν ἀνυπόστατος δοκοῦσα εἶναι δύναμις κατεκόπησαν ἐν τῷ τῆς Ναναίας ἱερῷ, παραλογισμῷ χρησαμένων τῶν περὶ τὴν Ναναίαν ἱερέων. **14** ὥς γὰρ συνοικήσων αὐτῇ παρεγένετο εἰς τὸν τόπον ὃν τε Ἀντίοχος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ φίλοι χάριν τοῦ λαβεῖν τὰ χρήματα πλείονα εἰς φερνῆς λόγον **15** καὶ προθέντων αὐτὰ τῶν ἱερέων τοῦ Ναναίου κάκεινου προσελθόντος μετ' ὀλίγων εἰς τὸν περίβολον τοῦ τεμένους, συγκλείσαντες τὸ ἱερόν, ὥς εἰσῆλθεν Ἀντίοχος, **16** ἀνοίξαντες τὴν τοῦ φατνώματος κρυπτὴν θύραν βάλλοντες πέτρους συνεκραύνωσαν τὸν ἡγεμόνα καὶ μέλη ποιήσαντες καὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἀφελόντες τοῖς ἕξω παρέρριψαν. **17** κατὰ πάντα εὐλογητὸς ἡμῶν ὁ θεός, ὃς παρέδωκεν τοὺς ἀσεβήσαντας.

18 Μέλλοντες ἄγειν ἐν τῷ Χασελευ πέμπτη καὶ εἰκάδι τὸν καθαρισμὸν τοῦ ἱεροῦ δέον ἡγησάμεθα διασαφῆσαι ὑμῖν, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἄγητε σκηνοπηγίας καὶ τοῦ πυρός, ὅτε Νεεμίας ὁ οἰκοδομήσας τό τε ἱερόν καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον ἀνήνεγκεν θυσίας. **19** καὶ γὰρ ὅτε εἰς τὴν Περσικὴν ἦγοντο ἡμῶν οἱ πατέρες, οἱ τότε εὐσεβεῖς ἱερεῖς λαβόντες ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρός τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου λαθραίως κατέκρυψαν ἐν κοιλώματι φρέατος τάξιν ἔχοντος ἄνδρον, ἐν ᾧ κατησφαλίσαντο ὥστε πᾶσιν ἄγνωστον εἶναι τὸν τόπον. **20** διελθόντων δὲ ἐτῶν ἱκανῶν, ὅτε ἔδοξεν τῷ θεῷ, ἀποσταλεῖς Νεεμίας ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως τῆς Περσίδος τοὺς ἐκγόνους

56. The mention of Judas (Maccabeus) here is one of the only indicators of the date that the letter implies. If 1:14–17 reflects the death of Antiochus IV, then the letter situates itself between 164 (the death of Antiochus IV) and 160 BCE (the death of Judas). The overwhelming majority of scholars, however, views this letter as fictive (or “inauthentic”). Among other reasons, the greeting formula *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν* is as of yet unattested in letters prior to the first century BCE. See the extensive discussion in Goldstein 1983, 157–67, and in n. 97 of the introduction to this volume, as well as the introduction to 2 Maccabees at n. 22.

57. The NRSV seems to follow, or at least be influenced by, the emendation of Bruston (1890, 115), accepted by most scholars, according to which *παρατασσόμενοι* should be *παρατασσεμένῳ*. The plural makes little sense, since this word seems to describe God, especially in light of v. 12 (Doran 2012, 39). See, however, the NETS translation: “we thank him greatly as men drawing up in battle-order against the king.”

10 The people of Jerusalem and of Judea and the council and Judas to Aristobulus, who is of the family of the anointed priests, teacher of King Ptolemy, and to the Jews in Egypt: Greetings and good health.⁵⁶

11 Having been saved by God out of grave dangers, we thank him greatly for taking our side⁵⁷ against a⁵⁸ king, **12** for he drove out those who fought against the holy city. **13** For, when the leader reached Persia with a force that seemed irresistible, they were cut to pieces in the temple of Nanaia by a deception employed by the priests of the goddess Nanaia. **14** For on the pretext of marrying her, Antiochus came to the place together with his Friends, to secure most of its treasures as a dowry. **15** When the priests of the temple of Nanaia had set out the treasures and Antiochus had come with a few men inside the enclosure⁵⁹ of the sacred precinct, they closed the temple as soon as he entered it. **16** Opening a secret door in the ceiling, they threw stones and struck down the leader and his men; they dismembered them and cut off their heads and threw them to the people outside. **17** Blessed in every way be our God, who handed over those acting impiously.⁶⁰

18 About to celebrate on the twenty-fifth of Kislev the purification of the temple, we thought it necessary, in order that you yourselves might celebrate, to make a clear statement about Sukkoth and the fire when Nehemiah offered sacrifices after building the temple and the altar.⁶¹ **19** For when our ancestors were being led captive to Persia, the pious priests of that time took some of the fire of the altar and secretly hid it in the hollow of a waterless cistern, where they took such precautions that the place was unknown to all. **20** But after many years had passed, when it pleased God, Nehemiah, having been commissioned by the king of Persia,

58. The NRSV and NETS insert a definite article, but there is none in the Greek.

59. The NRSV and NETS have “wall” for *περιβόλον*, but “enclosure” is a more accurate translation.

60. The translation of the last clause follows Doran (2012, 39), who stays much closer to the Greek than the NRSV, which imposes the language of judgment here.

61. V. 18 follows Doran (2012, 46). There are many difficulties in this verse, as attested by its variants in the manuscripts. Almost every translator has done something different with it, but Doran’s insistence that there is nothing wrong with the major witnesses is convincing. The “festival of fire” in the NRSV translation, as also proposed by Wacholder (1978, 112–17), has little support.

τῶν ἱερέων τῶν ἀποκρυψάντων ἔπεμψεν ἐπὶ τὸ πῦρ· ὡς δὲ διεσάφησαν ἡμῖν μὴ εὐρηγένοι πῦρ, ἀλλὰ ὕδωρ παχύ, ἐκέλευσεν αὐτοὺς ἀποβάψαντας φέρειν. **21** ὡς δὲ ἀννέχθη τὰ τῶν θυσιῶν, ἐκέλευσεν τοὺς ἱερεῖς Νεεμίας ἐπιρρᾶναι τῷ ὕδατι τὰ τε ξύλα καὶ τὰ ἐπικείμενα. **22** ὡς δὲ ἐγένετο τοῦτο καὶ χρόνος διήλθεν ὃ τε ἥλιος ἀνέλαμψεν πρότερον ἐπινεφῆς ὢν, ἀνῆφθη πυρὰ μεγάλη ὥστε θαυμάσαι πάντας. **23** προσευχὴν δὲ ἐποίησαντο οἱ ἱερεῖς δαπανωμένης τῆς θυσίας, οἳ τε ἱερεῖς καὶ πάντες καταρχομένου Ἰωνάθου, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν ἐπιφωνούντων ὡς Νεεμίου·

24 ἦν δὲ ἡ προσευχὴ τὸν τρόπον ἔχουσα τοῦτον Κύριε κύριε, ὁ θεὸς ὁ πάντων κτίστης, ὁ φοβερὸς καὶ ἰσχυρὸς καὶ δίκαιος καὶ ἐλεήμων, ὁ μόνος βασιλεὺς καὶ χρηστός, **25** ὁ μόνος χορηγός, ὁ μόνος δίκαιος καὶ παντοκράτωρ καὶ αἰώνιος, ὁ διασώζων τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ παντὸς κακοῦ, ὁ ποιήσας τοὺς πατέρας ἐκλεκτοὺς καὶ ἀγιάσας αὐτούς, **26** πρόσδεξι τὴν θυσίαν ὑπὲρ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ σου Ἰσραὴλ καὶ διαφύλαξον τὴν μερίδα σου καὶ καθαγιάσον. **27** ἐπισυνάγαγε τὴν διασπορὰν ἡμῶν, ἐλευθέρωσον τοὺς δουλεύοντας ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, τοὺς ἐξουθενημένους καὶ βδελυκτοὺς ἔπιδε, καὶ γνώτωσαν τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν. **28** βασάνισον τοὺς καταδυναστεύοντας καὶ ἐξυβρίζοντας ἐν ὑπερηφανίᾳ. **29** καταφύτευσον τὸν λαόν σου, εἰς τὸν τόπον τὸν ἁγίόν σου καθὼς εἶπεν Μωυσῆς.

30 Οἱ δὲ ἱερεῖς ἐπέψαλλον τοὺς ὕμνους. **31** καθὼς δὲ ἀνῆλθῃ τὰ τῆς θυσίας, καὶ τὸ περιλειπόμενον ὕδωρ ὁ Νεεμίας ἐκέλευσεν λίθους μείζονας καταχεῖν. **32** ὡς δὲ τοῦτο ἐγενήθη φλόξ ἀνῆφθη· τοῦ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου ἀντιλάμψαντος φωτὸς ἐδαπανήθη.

33 Ὡς δὲ φανερόν ἐγενήθη τὸ πρᾶγμα, καὶ διηγγέλη τῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν Περσῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν τόπον, οὗ τὸ πῦρ ἔκρυψαν οἱ μεταχθέντες ἱερεῖς τὸ ὕδωρ ἐφάνη, ἀφ' οὗ καὶ οἱ περὶ τὸν Νεεμίαν ἤγνισαν τὰ τῆς θυσίας, **34** περιφράξας δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς, ἱερὸν ἐποίησεν δοκιμάσας τὸ πρᾶγμα. **35** καὶ οἷς ἐχαρίζετο ὁ βασιλεὺς πολλὰ διάφορα ἐλάμβανεν καὶ μετεδίδου. **36** προσηγόρευσαν δὲ οἱ περὶ τὸν Νεεμίαν τοῦτο νεφθαί, ὃ διερμηνεύεται καθαρισμός· καλεῖται δὲ παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς νεφθαί.

2:1 Εὐρίσκεται δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἀπογραφαῖς Ἰερεμίας ὁ προφήτης ὅτι ἐκέλευσεν τοῦ πυρὸς λαβεῖν τοὺς μεταγενομένους, ὡς σεσήμανται, **2** καὶ ὡς ἐνετείλατο

62. This translation follows Risberg (1915, 33–35) and Doran (2012, 46–47) in reading ἡ μὴν here instead of ἡμῖν, on the grounds that there is no reason to think the writer is trying to show that he is using an eyewitness source, as some have claimed.

63. Translations, including the NRSV, usually insert “the materials for the sacrifices” as the unstated subject here, but what is brought seems to be the liquid from the previous line. However, instead of placing “[the liquid]” in brackets (Doran 2012, 47), we have simply translated “it.” See Wilhelm 1937, 19–20.

sent the descendants of the priests who had hidden the fire to get it. And when they reported that truly⁶² they had not found fire but only a thick liquid, he ordered them to dip it out and bring it. **21** When it⁶³ was brought, Nehemiah ordered the priests to sprinkle the liquid on the wood and on the things laid upon it. **22** When this had been done and some time had passed, and when the sun, which had been clouded over, shone out, a great fire blazed up, so that all marveled. **23** And while the sacrifice was being consumed, the priests offered prayer—the priests and everyone. Jonathan led, and the rest responded, as did Nehemiah.

24 The prayer was to this effect: “O Lord, Lord God, creator of all things, you are awe-inspiring and strong and just and merciful, you alone are king and are kind, **25** you alone are bountiful, you alone are just and almighty and eternal. You rescue Israel from every evil; you chose the ancestors and consecrated them. **26** Accept this sacrifice on behalf of all your people Israel and preserve your portion and make it holy. **27** Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the gentiles, look on those who are rejected and despised, and let the gentiles know that you are our God. **28** Punish those who oppress and are insolent with pride. **29** Plant your people in your holy place, as Moses promised.”

30 Now⁶⁴ the priests were singing the hymns, **31** but, just as the materials of the sacrifice were consumed, Nehemiah ordered that the liquid that was left should be poured on large stones. **32** When this was done, a flame blazed up; but when the light from the altar shone back, it went out.

33 When this matter became known and it was reported to the king of the Persians that, in the place where the exiled priests had hidden the fire, the liquid had appeared with which Nehemiah and his associates had burned the materials of the sacrifice, **34** the king investigated the matter and enclosed the place and made it sacred. **35** And with those persons whom the king favored he exchanged many excellent gifts. **36** Nehemiah and his associates called this *nephthar*, which means “purification,” but by most people it is called *naphta*.

2:1 Now one finds in the records that the prophet Jeremiah ordered those who were being deported⁶⁵ to take some of the fire, as has been men-

64. In 1:30; 2:1, 4, 9, and 13, “Now” translates *ἔτι* and is viewed as a structuring device for the body of the letter. See Doran 2012: 46–47, 54–55.

65. The translation “those who were being deported” reads *μεταγομένους* instead of *μεταγενομένους* (Rahlf's and Hanhart 2006). This reading has strong manuscript support and makes better sense in context (Doran 2012, 54).

τοῖς μεταγενομένοις ὁ προφήτης δοὺς αὐτοῖς τὸν νόμον, ἵνα μὴ ἐπιλάβωνται τῶν προσταγμάτων τοῦ κυρίου, καὶ ἵνα μὴ ἀποπλανηθῶσιν ταῖς διανοαῖς βλέποντες ἀγάλματα χρυσᾶ καὶ ἀργυρᾶ καὶ τὸν περὶ αὐτὰ κόσμον· **3** καὶ ἕτερα τοιαῦτα λέγων παρεκάλει μὴ ἀποστήναι τὸν νόμον ἀπὸ τῆς καρδίας αὐτῶν.

4 Ἦν δὲ ἐν τῇ γραφῇ ὡς τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν ἐκέλευσεν ὁ προφήτης χρηματισμοῦ γενηθέντος αὐτῷ συνακολουθεῖν· ὡς δὲ ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὸ ὄρος, οὗ ὁ Μωυσῆς ἀναβὰς ἐθεάσατο τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ κληρονομίαν. **5** καὶ ἐλθὼν ὁ Ἱερεμίας εὗρεν οἶκον ἀντρώδῃ καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν καὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον τοῦ θυμιάματος εἰσῆνεγκεν ἐκεῖ καὶ τὴν θύραν ἐνέφραξεν. **6** καὶ προσελθόντες τινὲς τῶν συνακολουθούντων ὥστε ἐπισημάνασθαι τὴν ὁδὸν καὶ οὐκ ἐδυνήθησαν εὑρεῖν. **7** ὡς δὲ ὁ Ἱερεμίας ἔγνω, μεμψάμενος αὐτοῖς εἶπεν ὅτι καὶ ἄγνωστος ὁ τόπος ἔσται, ἕως ἂν συναγάγῃ ὁ θεὸς ἐπισυναγωγὴν τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἴλεως γένηται· **8** καὶ τότε ὁ κύριος ἀναδείξει ταῦτα, καὶ ὀφθήσεται ἡ δόξα τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἡ νεφέλη, ὡς ἐπὶ Μωυσῆ ἔδηλοῦτο, ὡς καὶ ὁ Σαλωμών ἠξίωσεν ἵνα ὁ τόπος καθαγιασθῇ μεγάλως.

9 Διεσαφεῖτο δὲ καὶ ὡς σοφίαν ἔχων ἀνήνεγκεν θυσίαν ἐγκαινισμοῦ καὶ τῆς τελειώσεως τοῦ ἱεροῦ. **10** καθὼς καὶ Μωυσῆς προσηύξατο πρὸς κύριον, καὶ κατέβη πῦρ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τὰ τῆς θυσίας ἔδαπάνησεν, οὕτως καὶ Σαλωμών προσηύξατο, καὶ καταβὰν τὸ πῦρ ἀνῆλωσεν τὰ ὀλοκαυτώματα. **11** καὶ εἶπεν Μωυσῆς Διὰ τὸ μὴ βεβρώσθαι τὸ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἀνηλώθη. **12** ὡσαύτως καὶ ὁ Σαλωμών τὰς ὀκτὼ ἡμέρας ἤγαγεν.

13 Ἐξηγοῦντο δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἀναγραφαῖς καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνηματισμοῖς τοῖς κατὰ τὸν Νεεμίαν τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡς καταβαλλόμενος βιβλιοθήκην ἐπισυνήγαγεν τὰ περὶ τῶν βασιλέων βιβλία καὶ προφητῶν καὶ τὰ τοῦ Δαυὶδ καὶ ἐπιστολὰς βασιλέων περὶ ἀναθεμάτων. **14** ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ Ἰούδας τὰ διαπεπτωκότα διὰ τὸν γεγονότα πόλεμον ἡμῖν ἐπισυνήγαγεν πάντα καὶ ἔστιν παρ' ἡμῖν· **15** ὧν οὖν ἐὰν χρεῖαν ἔχητε τοὺς ἀποκομιοῦντας ὑμῖν ἀποστέλλετε.

16 Μέλλοντες οὖν ἄγειν τὸν καθαρισμὸν ἐγράψαμεν ὑμῖν· καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε ἄγοντες τὰς ἡμέρας. **17** ὁ δὲ θεὸς ὁ σώσας τὸν πάντα λαὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ

66. Hanhart (1961, 52) and Doran (2012, 54) read the noun ἔλεος here instead of the adjective ἴλεως (Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006).

67. Doran (2012, 55) argues that the omission of βιβλία in the q recension makes more sense than the present reading, noting that this word breaks up the connection made by the single article between “the kings and prophets.” He instead translates “and gathered the materials about the kings and prophets.”

tioned, **2** and that the prophet, after giving them the law, instructed those who were being deported not to forget the commandments of the Lord or to be led astray in their thoughts on seeing the gold and silver statues and their adornment. **3** And with other similar words he exhorted them that the law should not depart from their hearts.

4 Now it was also in the same document that the prophet, having received an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should follow with him and that he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God. **5** Jeremiah came and found a cave-dwelling, and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense; then he sealed up the entrance. **6** Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the way but could not find it. **7** When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: "The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy."⁶⁶ **8** Then the Lord will disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated."

9 Now it was also made clear that, being possessed of wisdom, he offered sacrifice for the dedication and completion of the temple. **10** Just as Moses prayed to the Lord, and fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifices, so also Solomon prayed, and the fire came down and consumed the whole burnt offerings. **11** And Moses said, "They were consumed because the sin offering had not been eaten." **12** Likewise Solomon also kept the eight days.

13 Now the same things are reported in the records and in the memoirs of Nehemiah, and also that he founded a library and collected the books⁶⁷ about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings. **14** In the same way Judas also collected all the books that had been lost on account of the war that had come upon us, and they are in our possession. **15** So if you have need of them, send people to get them for you.

16 Since, therefore, we are about to celebrate the purification, we write to you. You will do well, therefore,⁶⁸ to keep these days. **17** Now, it is God

68. This translation emphasizes the common epistolary formula *καλώς οὖν ποιήσετε*, which the NRSV does not properly translate.

ἀποδοὺς τὴν κληρονομίαν πᾶσιν καὶ τὸ βασίλειον καὶ τὸ ἱεράτευμα καὶ τὸν ἁγιασμόν, **18** καθὼς ἐπηγγείλατο διὰ τοῦ νόμου· ἐλπίζομεν γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ταχέως ἡμᾶς ἐλεήσει καὶ ἐπισυνάξει ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τόπον· ἐξείλετο γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐκ μεγάλων κακῶν καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκαθάρισεν.

2 Maccabees 9:18–27: Letter of Antiochus IV to the Jews on the Succession of Antiochus V

18 οὐδαμῶς δὲ ληγόντων τῶν πόνων, ἐπεληλύθει γὰρ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν δικαία ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ κρίσις, τὰ κατ’ αὐτὸν ἀπελπίσας ἔγραψεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τὴν ὑπογεγραμμένην ἐπιστολὴν ἱκετηρίας τάξιν ἔχουσαν, περιέχουσαν δὲ οὕτως

19 Τοῖς χρηστοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς πολίταις πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὖ πράττειν βασιλεὺς καὶ στρατηγὸς Ἀντίοχος.

20 Εἰ ἔρρωσθε καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰ ἴδια κατὰ γνώμην ἐστὶν ὑμῖν· εἰς οὐρανὸν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχων **21** ὑμῶν τὴν τιμὴν καὶ τὴν εὐνοίαν ἐμνημόνευσον φιλοστόργως ἐπανάγων ἐκ τῶν κατὰ τὴν Περσίδα τόπων καὶ περιπεσῶν ἀσθενείᾳ δυσχέρειαν ἐχούσῃ ἀναγκαῖον ἡγησάμην φροντίσαι τῆς κοινῆς πάντων ἀσφαλείας. **22** οὐκ ἀπογινώσκων τὰ κατ’ ἐμαυτόν, ἀλλὰ ἔχων πολλὴν ἐλπίδα ἐκφεύξεσθαι τὴν ἀσθενείαν, **23** θεωρῶν δὲ ὅτι καὶ ὁ πατήρ, καθ’ οὓς καιροὺς εἰς τοὺς ἄνω τόπους ἐστρατοπέδευσεν, ἀνέδειξεν τὸν διαδεξάμενον, **24** ὅπως, ἐάν τι παράδοξον ἀποβαίῃ ἢ καὶ προσαγγελθῇ τι δυσχερές, εἰδότες οἱ κατὰ τὴν χώραν ὧ καταλέλειπται τὰ πράγματα μὴ ἐπιταράσσωνται. **25** πρὸς δὲ τούτοις κατανοῶν τοὺς παρακειμένους δυνάστας καὶ γειτνιῶντας τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῖς καιροῖς ἐπέχοντας καὶ προσδοκῶντας τὸ ἀποβησόμενον, ἀναδέδειχα τὸν υἱὸν Ἀντίοχον βασιλέα, ὃν πολλάκις ἀνατρέχων εἰς τὰς ἐπάνω σατραπείας τοῖς πλείστοις ὑμῶν παρεκατετιθέμην καὶ συνίστων· γέγραφα δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν τὰ ὑπογεγραμμένα.

69. The implied date of this letter is shortly before the death of Antiochus IV in 164 BCE.

70. The translation of this greeting is an adaptation of Doran 2012, 184. The NRSV does not preserve the order and formulaic sense of this epistolary prescript.

71. As Doran (2012, 193) notes, this wish for the health of recipients (see also 11:28) is conventional in personal correspondence but rare in royal letters. While there are exceptions (Welles 1934, no. 71, Seleucid royal letters of 109 BCE cited by Doran), one should not be surprised to find elements of personal correspondence slipping into these fictive royal letters.

who has saved all his people and has returned the inheritance to all, and the kingship and the priesthood and the consecration, **18** as he promised through the law. For we have hope in this God that he will soon have mercy on us and will gather us from everywhere under heaven into his holy place, for he has rescued us from great evils and has purified the place.

18 But when his sufferings did not in any way abate, for the judgment of God had justly come upon him, he gave up all hope for himself and wrote to the Jews the following letter in the form of a supplication. This was its content:

19 “To his worthy Jewish citizens from the King and Commander Antiochus:⁶⁹ Much greeting and good health and prosperity.⁷⁰

20 If you and your children are well and your affairs are as you wish, I am glad.⁷¹ As my hope is in heaven,⁷² **21** I remember with affection your esteem and goodwill. On my way back from the region of Persia I suffered an annoying illness, and I have deemed it necessary to take thought for the general security of all. **22** I do not despair of my condition, for I have good hope of recovering from my illness, **23** but I observed that my father, on the occasions when he made expeditions into the upper country, appointed his successor, **24** so that, if anything unexpected happened or any unwelcome news came, the people throughout the realm would not be troubled, for they would know to whom our state affairs⁷³ were left. **25** Moreover, I understand how the princes along the borders and the neighbors of my kingdom keep watching for opportunities and waiting to see what will happen. So I have appointed my son Antiochus to be king, whom I have often entrusted and commended to most of you when I hurried off to the upper satrapies; and I have written to him what is written here.

72. As Nisula (2005, esp. 209, 217) remarks, the positive mention of οὐρανὸν here, combined with the description of the letter as a “supplication” (1:18), the excessive well-being wishes (1:20), and the submissive tone of this letter all clearly betray its fictive quality.

73. The use of τὰ πράγματα to refer to official state affairs is widespread. See, e.g., *CPJ* 1.132 (sec. 3.5 below [no. 8]); see also 2 Macc 9:24; 11:19; 3 Macc 3:13, 26; 7:1, 2; Add Esth 3:13f, g; 8:12e.

26 παρακαλῶ οὖν ὑμᾶς καὶ ἀξιῶ μεμνημένους τῶν εὐεργεσιῶν κοινῇ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν ἕκαστον συντηρεῖν τὴν οὖσαν εὖνοιαν εἰς ἐμὲ καὶ τὸν υἱόν· **27** πέπεισμαι γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐπεικῶς καὶ φιλανθρώπως παρακολουθοῦντα τῇ ἐμῇ προαίρεσει συμπεριενεχθῆσθαι ὑμῖν.

2 Maccabees 11:16–21: Letter from the Seleucid Regent Lysias to the Jews

16 Ἦσαν γὰρ αἱ γεγραμμέναι τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ἐπιστολαὶ παρὰ μὲν Λυσίου περιέχουσαι τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον

Λυσίας τῷ πλήθει τῶν Ἰουδαίων χαίρειν.

17 Ἰωάννης καὶ Αβεσσαλῶμ οἱ πεμφθέντες παρ' ὑμῶν ἐπιδόντες τὸν ὑπογεγραμμένον χρηματισμὸν ἡξίουσιν περὶ τῶν δι' αὐτοῦ σημαινόμενων. **18** ὅσα μὲν οὖν ἔδει καὶ τῷ βασιλεῖ προσενεχθῆναι διεσάφησα· ἃ δὲ ἦν ἐνδεχόμενα, συνεχώρησεν. **19** ἐὰν μὲν οὖν συντηρήσῃτε τὴν εἰς τὰ πράγματα εὖνοιαν, καὶ εἰς τὸ λοιπὸν πειράσσομαι παραίτιος ἀγαθῶν γενέσθαι. **20** ὑπὲρ δὲ τούτων καὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἐντέταλμαι τούτοις τε καὶ τοῖς παρ' ἐμοῦ διαλεχθῆναι ὑμῖν.

21 Ἐρρωσθε.

Ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου,

Διὸς Κορινθίου τετράδι καὶ εἰκάδι.

2 Maccabees 11:22–26: Letter of Antiochus V to His Regent Lysias

22 Ἡ δὲ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ περιεῖχεν οὕτως

Βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος τῷ ἀδελφῷ Λυσίᾳ χαίρειν.

23 Τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν εἰς θεοὺς μεταστάντος βουλόμενοι τοὺς ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας ἀταράχους ὄντας γενέσθαι πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἰδίων ἐπιμέλειαν **24** ἀκηκόοτες τοὺς Ἰουδαίους μὴ συνευδοκοῦντας τῇ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐπὶ τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ μεταθέσει, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀγωγὴν αἰρετίζοντας ἀξιοῦντας συγχωρηθῆναι αὐτοῖς τὰ νόμιμα, **25** αἰρούμενοι οὖν καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔθνος ἐκτὸς ταραχῆς εἶναι κρίνομεν τὸ τε ἱερὸν

74. NRSV has only the singular “letter,” but the Greek plural seems to imply that the text of this letter was copied and distributed.

75. The name of this month is corrupt, and there are many variants in the manuscripts. Habicht (1976a, 473–74) convincingly argues that the first month of the Macedonian calendar, Dios (beginning in October), was most likely intended. Year 148 of the Seleucid era corresponds to 165/164 BCE, and Dios of 148 would be October 165 BCE. See further Goldstein 1983, 411–14. As Doran notes, this date makes little sense

26 Therefore, I urge and beg you to remember the public and private services rendered to you and to maintain your present goodwill, each of you, toward me and my son. **27** For I have persuaded him to follow closely my own policy and treat you with moderation and kindness.”

16 The letters⁷⁴ written to the Jews by Lysias were to this effect:

“Lysias to the populace of the Jews: Greetings.

17 John and Absalom, who were sent by you, have delivered your signed communication and have asked about the matters indicated in it. **18** I have informed the king of everything that needed to be brought before him, and he has agreed to what was possible. **19** If you will maintain your goodwill toward the state affairs, I will endeavor in the future to help promote your welfare. **20** And concerning such matters and their details, I have ordered these men and my representatives to confer with you.

21 Fare thee well.

In the year 148, the twenty-fourth of Dioskorinthios.”⁷⁵

22 In response, the king’s letter ran thus:

“King Antiochus to his brother Lysias: Greetings.

23 Now that our father has gone on to the gods,⁷⁶ we desire that the subjects of the kingdom be undisturbed in caring for their own affairs. **24** We have heard that the Jews do not consent to our father’s change to Hellenic customs but prefer their own way of living and ask that their own customs be allowed them. **25** Accordingly, since we choose that this nation also should be free from disturbance, our decision is that their temple be

for the letter, which recounts events usually dated to late autumn of 164 BCE. Thus the date given in this letter is inconsistent with the events recounted in 1 and 2 Maccabees, causing scholars who view the letter as authentic to assign it a later date. On issues of chronology and authenticity for these letters, see Attridge 1984, 182; Doran 2012, 227–30.

76. This reference implies a date for this letter shortly after Antiochus IV died in November/December 164 BCE. See further Doran 2012, 228.

ἀποκατασταθῆναι αὐτοῖς καὶ πολιτεύεσθαι κατὰ τὰ ἐπὶ τῶν προγόνων αὐτῶν ἔθῃ. **26** εὖ οὖν ποιήσεις διαπεμψάμενος πρὸς αὐτοὺς καὶ δούς δεξιάς, ὅπως εἰδότες τὴν ἡμετέραν προαίρεσιν εὐθυμοί τε ὦσιν καὶ ἡδέως διαγίνωνται πρὸς τῇ τῶν ἰδίων ἀντιλήμψει.

2 Maccabees 11:27–33: Letter of Antiochus V to the Jews

27 Πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἔθνος ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιστολὴ τοιάδε ἦν

Βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος τῇ γερουσίᾳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἰουδαίοις χαίρειν.

28 Εἰ ἔρρωσθε, εἴη ἂν ὡς βουλόμεθα· καὶ αὐτοὶ δὲ ὑγιαίνομεν. **29** ἐνεφάνισεν ἡμῖν Μενέλαος βούλεσθαι κατελθόντας ὑμᾶς γίνεσθαι πρὸς τοῖς ἰδίοις. **30** τοῖς οὖν καταπορευομένοις μέχρι τριακάδος Ξανθικοῦ ὑπάρξει δεξιὰ μετὰ τῆς ἀδείας **31** χρῆσθαι τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοῖς ἑαυτῶν δαπανήμασιν καὶ νόμοις, καθὰ καὶ τὸ πρότερον, καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτῶν κατ' οὐδένα τρόπον παρενοχληθήσεται περὶ τῶν ἡγνοημένων. **32** πέπομφα δὲ καὶ τὸν Μενέλαον παρακαλέσοντα ὑμᾶς.

33 Ἐρρωσθε.

Ἐτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου, Ξανθικοῦ πεντεκαίδεκάτῃ.

2 Maccabees 11:34–38: Letter from Roman Envoys to the Jews

34 Ἐπεμψαν δὲ καὶ οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐπιστολὴν ἔχουσαν οὕτως

Κόιντος Μέμμιος, Τίτος Μάνιος, πρεσβῦται Ῥωμαίων, τῷ δήμῳ τῶν Ἰουδαίων χαίρειν.

35 Ὑπὲρ ὧν Λυσίας ὁ συγγενὴς τοῦ βασιλέως συνεχώρησεν ὑμῖν, καὶ ἡμεῖς συνευδοκοῦμεν. **36** ἃ δὲ ἔκρινεν προσανενεχθῆναι τῷ βασιλεῖ πέμψατέ τινα παραχρῆμα ἐπισκεψάμενοι περὶ τούτων, ἵνα ἐκθῶμεν ὡς καθήκει ὑμῖν· ἡμεῖς γὰρ προσάγομεν πρὸς Ἀντίοχειαν. **37** διὸ σπεύσατε καὶ πέμψατέ τινας, ὅπως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐπιγνώμεν ὁποῖας ἐστὲ γνώμης.

77. The epitomizer of 2 Maccabees situated this letter as a letter of Antiochus V Eupator consistent with his letter to Lysias in 11:22–26. Scholars are quick to note, however, that the date and assumed historical situation of the letter indicate that this letter should be attributed to Antiochus IV (Doran 2012, 227–30). While an earlier epistolary source may be repackaged here, any historical reconstruction based on it would be tenuous. Moreover, it is important not to overlook the epitomizer's positioning of this letter in 2 Maccabees as an epistle of Antiochus V.

restored to them and that they shall live according to the customs of their ancestors. **26** You will do well, therefore, to send word to them and give them pledges of friendship, so that they may know our policy and be of good cheer and go on happily in the conduct of their own affairs.”

27 To the nation the king’s letter was as follows:

“King Antiochus⁷⁷ to the council of the Jews and to the other Jews: Greetings.

28 If you are well, it is as we desire. We also are in good health. **29** Menelaus has informed us that you wish to return home and look after your own affairs. **30** Therefore, those who go home by the thirtieth of Xanthikos will have our pledge of friendship and full permission **31** for the Jews to enjoy their own food and laws, just as formerly, and none of them shall be molested in any way for what may have been done in ignorance. **32** I am sending⁷⁸ Menelaus to invite⁷⁹ you.

33 Fare thee well.

In the year 148, the fifteenth of Xanthikos.”⁸⁰

34 The Romans also sent them a letter, which read thus:

“Quintus Mammius, Titus Manius, Roman envoys, to the people of the Jews: Greetings.

35 With regard to what Lysias the kinsman of the king has granted you, we also give consent. **36** But as to the matters that he decided are to be referred to the king, as soon as you have considered them, send someone promptly so that we may make proposals appropriate for you, for we are on our way to Antioch. **37** Wherefore, make haste and send messengers so that we may have your judgment.

78. The translation in the NRSV and NETS of *πέπομφα* as historical perfect obscures the epistolary context. This verb should be translated as an epistolary perfect (Doran 2012, 224).

79. Doran’s (2012, 224) translation of *παρακαλέσονται* as “invite” instead of “encourage” (NRSV) here seems preferable based on other Hellenistic letters in Welles 1934.

80. The date of this letter corresponds to 12 March 164 BCE. Thus the timeframe by which the Jews are expected to return home (by 30 March, i.e. the fifteenth of Xanthikos according to v. 30) is entirely impractical.

38 Ὑγιαίνετε.

Ἔτους ἑκατοστοῦ τεσσαρακοστοῦ ὀγδόου, Ξανθικοῦ πεντεκαιδεκάτη.

38 Be in health.⁸¹

In the year 148, the fifteenth of Xanthikos.”⁸²

81. The translation “farewell” in the NRSV and NETS here does not show the differentiation between ἐρρῶσθαι and ὑγιαίνετε as we have endeavored to here. Ὑγιαίνετε here is very likely a Latinism, on par with Latin *valete* (Habicht 1976b, 12 n. 24). Consequently, the question is whether it is a *real* Latinism or part of the fictional construction of a letter from Romans.

82. As in the letter of 11:27–33, the date of this letter corresponds to 12 March 164 BCE. Thus as in 11:27–33, this letter dates itself prior to the death of Antiochus IV (November/December 164 BCE), but the epitomizer of 2 Maccabees clearly casts it as a Roman affirmation of Antiochus V and Lysias’s policies toward the Jews.

3.2. Eupolemus: The Solomonic Correspondence

Five fragments of a Greek work attributed to a mid- to late second-century BCE Jewish historian named Eupolemus were preserved by Alexander Polyhistor¹ in the mid-first century BCE and survive in the writings of Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea.² The first fragment describes Moses as the first wise man and credits him with giving the alphabet to the Jews, from whom the Phoenicians and Greeks received it. The second fragment continues into the time of the united monarchy, concentrating on the foreign relations of David and Solomon and the construction of Solomon's temple. Fragment 3, a short excerpt, preserves only the conclusion of the author's treatment of Solomon. The fourth fragment resumes the history during the career of the prophet Jeremiah and relates the destruction of the temple. It casts Jeremiah as the one responsible for safeguarding the temple ark and tablets. Fragment 5 is Clement's summary of Eupolemus's chronology.

As a whole, Eupolemus's history is noteworthy for the liberties it takes with scriptural sources, its manipulation of Hellenistic epistolary conventions as a technique for rewriting history, and its pro-Hasmonean yet decidedly international political position. Despite the fact that it may be the only composition of Palestinian provenance in this volume, Eupole-

1. On Alexander Polyhistor, see p. 203 n. 2 above (sec. 2.3.1)

2. From Clement, *Strom.* 1.23.153.4 = frag. 1; *Strom.* 1.21.130.3 = frag. 2; *Strom.* 1.21.141.4–5 = frag. 5. From Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.26.1 = frag. 1; *Praep. ev.* 9.30.1–34.18 = frag. 2; *Praep. ev.* 9.34.20 = frag. 3; *Praep. ev.* 9.39.1–5 = frag. 4. On Clement's citation technique, see van den Hoek 1996; on Eusebius's, see Inowlocki 2006a. Between Clement and Eusebius, six fragments were technically assigned to Eupolemus. The sixth (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.17.2–9) is appropriately considered the work of a Pseudo-Eupolemus because it differs in content from Eupolemus and was likely written by a Samaritan. Freudenthal (1874, 85–89) was the first to separate this fragment from the fragments of Eupolemus. He grouped it with an anonymous Samaritan fragment quoted by Eusebius (*Praep. ev.* 9.18.2). Most scholars now accept these two fragments as the work of Pseudo-Eupolemus. Doran (1985b, 873–78) is the main proponent of the minority view that the sixth fragment is from the genuine Eupolemus.

mus is an important parallel to the other literature because of its interest in Egypt and apologetic use of epistolary conventions.

Authorship

The name Eupolemus is not mentioned in the surviving fragments of his work. In the end of the first century CE, Josephus grouped a certain Eupolemus with Demetrius of Phalerum and the elder Philo³ as non-Jewish historians whose accounts of Jewish traditions were exceptionally accurate (*C. Ap.* 1.218).⁴ This citation has led some scholars to believe that the pagan Eupolemus known to Josephus must have been the author of these fragments.⁵ The main difficulty with this theory is that the contents of the fragments betray Jewish authorship.⁶ Additionally, no other ancient source identifies the author Eupolemus as a pagan.

Most scholars prefer to link Eupolemus the historian with a Jewish ambassador from the period following the Maccabean revolt. According to 1 Macc 8:17, Judas Maccabeus chose Eupolemus son of John of Accos to go to Rome to establish an alliance. There is no evidence in 1 Maccabees, the fragments of Eupolemus, or other ancient authors to corroborate the identification of this Eupolemus with the author of the fragments. Even Josephus, when he rewrites parts of 1 Maccabees in his *Antiquitates judaeae* (12.415), does not relate Eupolemus the ambassador to Eupolemus the

3. Not to be confused with the more famous Philo of Alexandria, the elder Philo was a Jewish epic poet who allegedly wrote sometime before Alexander the Great. Fragments of his work *On Jerusalem* are preserved in Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.20.1; 9.24.1; 9.37.1–3.

4. Paradoxically, Eusebius quotes this passage from Josephus without hesitation in *Praep. ev.* 9.42.3, even though he knew that Eupolemus was a Jew.

5. Kuhlmeier (1840, 10–26) and Willrich (1895, 157–61), among others, maintain this view. Evidence adduced to support this position typically includes the ostensible errors Eupolemus makes in his history (e.g., David as the son of Saul in frag. 2). However, most of these errors were not actually errors; they were revisions (e.g., Bartlett 1985, 62–63). For more about this debate, see Wacholder 1974, 1–5; Holladay 1983, 98–99 n. 2.

6. The description of Moses, focus on Solomon, tone of the correspondence, and tradition about Jeremiah preserving temple artifacts all reflect a measure of Jewish superiority that far exceeds the amount of admiration for a foreign people that one would expect from pagan ethnographic literature. Compare, for instance, the balanced account of the pagan author Hecataeus of Abdera (Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 40.3.1–8). Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 6.13.7) and Jerome (*Vir. ill.* 38) explicitly label Eupolemus a Jew.

writer. Nevertheless, the majority view among scholars is that these two figures are the same.⁷ Due to the paucity of evidence, however, this is far from conclusive.⁸ The view taken here is more cautious (as discussed below on the date of the work).

Another aspect of authorship that deserves attention is the issue of pseudonymity. While it is not clear that the ambassador Eupolemus and the author of our texts were one and the same, it is noteworthy that the figure of Eupolemus the ambassador was renowned during the Hasmonean period, just as the ambassador Aristeeas was in Alexandria. Eupolemus was distinguished by birth as a member of the powerful priestly family of Accos (1 Macc 8:17), only to gain more prestige as an ambassador for Judas.⁹ For this reason, the epitomizer of 2 Maccabees considered Eupolemus worthy of an unconventional citation in a discussion of the diplomatic activities of his father, John (2 Macc 4:11).¹⁰ If the fragments of the historian were not actually written by this Eupolemus, they were at least attributed to a Eupolemus by the mid-first century BCE when Alexander Polyhistor preserved his work.¹¹ Thus, another possible scenario is that the author of the fragments attributed them to Eupolemus the ambassador, just as the author of a fragment of so-called Pseudo-Eupolemus did.¹² In any case, the fact remains that there is no evidence in the surviving fragments and *testimonia* explicitly connecting the author Eupolemus with the ambassador.

Date

The primary basis for most discussions of the date of Eupolemus is frag. 5, a summary of the dating schema for the history that is recorded only in Clement's *Strom.* 1.21.141.4–5. Clement writes that “Eupolemus also says

7. Freudenthal 1874, 127; Jacoby 1907, 1227–29; Hengel 1974, 1:92, 2:63 n. 269; Wacholder 1974, esp. 4–21; Walter 1976a, 93–98; J. Collins 2000, 46; Holladay 1983, 93; Attridge 1984, 162–63; Bartlett 1985, 57; Fallon 1985, 863; Sterling 1992a, 207–79.

8. For counterarguments, see Willrich 1895, 167; Gruen 1998, 140–41.

9. On the influence of the Accos family, see 1 Chr 24; Ezra 2:61; Neh 3:4, 21; 7:63 (Wacholder 1974, 7–21; Holladay 1983, 99 n. 6).

10. The text has “John the father of Eupolemus.” While it is quite ordinary for a son to be identified by his father, the converse is unusual. As Tcherikover (1999, 384–85) points out, this designation indicates that Eupolemus was known to the audience of 2 Maccabees.

11. Freudenthal 1874, 17–34.

12. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.17.2–9.

that all the years from Adam until the fifth year of the reign of Demetrius, in the twelfth year that Ptolemy ruled over Egypt, total 5,149 years.” The summary proceeds to synchronize this date with the dates of two Roman consulships of circa 40 BCE, but this anachronism was likely added by Polyhistor, Clement, or another redactor.¹³ Freudenthal argued that Eupolemus must be referring in this fragment to the fifth year of Demetrius I Soter and the twelfth year of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon, which overlap in 158/157 BCE.¹⁴ This is generally accepted now not only as Eupolemus’s reference date but as his date of composition, placing the author in the time of the ambassador Eupolemus.

That being said, the date 158/157 BCE is by no means certain. Ptolemy VIII was technically in the thirteenth year of his rule during the fifth year of Demetrius I.¹⁵ Additionally, Ptolemy VIII did not rule over Egypt at that time, in accordance with the fragment; rather, he was king of Cyrene.¹⁶ For these reasons, some scholars have recently challenged the consensus date.¹⁷ Clancy claims that the date provided in frag. 5 is 141 BCE, the fifth year of the reign of Demetrius II Nicator and the twelfth year of the reign of Ptolemy VIII, if only the years that the latter ruled in Egypt are counted.¹⁸ Interestingly, this date coincides with the Jewish achievement of independence from Seleucid rule (1 Macc 14:35–37; Josephus, *A.J.* 13.213–217; *B.J.* 1.50, 53), an appropriate historical event to use as a reference point for such a history. Thus, 141 BCE is a worthy alternative to the traditional scholarly date of Eupolemus. But even if 141 BCE may be accepted as the author’s date for his scriptural chronology, it does not follow that it was also the date of the history’s composition.¹⁹ It is more likely that the history would

13. The last line of frag. 5, “And from that time until the time of the consuls of Rome Gnaeus Domitius and Asinius totals 120 years,” could not possibly have been written by Eupolemus. This phrase was probably added by Polyhistor (Sterling 1992a, 209) or Clement (Walter 1966, 314–20). In any case, the textual tradition for this sentence is corrupt and unintelligible without emendation. The reconstruction above (from Holladay) is based on information about the consuls in Josephus, *A.J.* 14.389. See Holladay 1983, 155–56 n. 121; Kulhmey 1840, 34; Wacholder 1974, 40–44.

14. Freudenthal 1874, 123, 212–3. Cf. Holladay 1983, 154–55 n. 118.

15. Holladay 1983, 154–55 n. 118.

16. Wacholder 1974, 41.

17. Clancy 2009, 277; Keddie 2013, 225–29.

18. Clancy 2009, 277. Cf. *FHG* 3:208.

19. Gruen 1998, 140.

have been written at least a decade after 141 BCE during the career of the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus.²⁰

Provenance

The provenance of the fragments of Eupolemus is confidently assigned to Palestine. While an Egyptian provenance is not impossible,²¹ there are good reasons for preferring Palestine, as scholars almost unanimously do. Most significantly, the author seems to know the scriptures in Hebrew, even though he typically follows Greek translations. He translates Hebrew words that were only transliterated in the Greek, and he sometimes uses Hebrew proper names instead of their Greek equivalents.²² Furthermore, he uses Hebrew cors as measuring units.²³ If the calculation of a reference date according to the reign of a Seleucid king in frag. 5 is original to Eupolemus, this would also suggest a Palestinian provenance.²⁴

Form

The fragments of Eupolemus in their original state probably constituted a history of the kings of Israel beginning with Moses and either concluding with the Babylonian exile or continuing into the time of the Maccabees. Clement probably preserves the title of the work correctly as *Concerning the Kings in Judea* (Strom. 1.23.153.4), although the titles *Concerning the Jews* (Clement, Strom. 1.21.130.3) and *Concerning the Prophecy of Elijah* (Eusebius, Praep. ev. 9.30.1) are also applied to Eupolemus's history.²⁵ There is no cause to assume that the original language was anything other

20. Keddie 2013, 225–29.

21. See Gibley (1963, 546–47, 552), who argued that Eupolemus was a refugee in Egypt when he wrote his history. Contra this possibility, Hengel (1974, 1:92) claimed that the work could not have been written in Egypt because of its “patriotic character” and “serious linguistic and stylistic deficiencies.” It is more likely that Eupolemus's interest in an alliance with Egypt is a function of the Palestinian author's political stance.

22. On the translation of Hebrew words, see Freudenthal 1874, 106–14, 119–20; on the use of Hebrew names, see Holladay 1983, 101 n. 15.

23. Holladay 1983, 99 n. 3.

24. Holladay (1983, 99 n. 3) believes that the references to Ptolemy and the Roman consuls in frag. 5 should be attributed to later redactors, but he maintains that Eupolemus genuinely dated his work according to Seleucid reigns.

25. Freudenthal 1874, 89–92, 208–9; Wacholder 1974, 21–26. On the ubiquity of

than Greek, although, as Jacoby observed, the author's use of that language is "miserable."²⁶ His vocabulary is simple, and he uses unconventional constructions.

Eupolemus's historiography is characterized by apologetic tendencies. Like other Hellenistic historians, Eupolemus labored to demonstrate the superiority of his people and their traditions.²⁷ To do so, he employed exegetical techniques similar to those used in texts considered part of the rewritten Scriptures phenomenon.²⁸ Working closely in his scriptural sources, Eupolemus often harmonized the accounts, rearranged them, and made omissions and additions that betray his own motives.

One interesting feature of Eupolemus's history is his use of epistles as a device for portraying the affairs of King Solomon in a different, distinctly Hellenistic, light. Four epistles stand out in the narrative in frag. 2: Solomon's letters to King Vaphres of Egypt and King Souron of Tyre and their responses to him. In order to depict the kings of Egypt and Tyre as supporters of Solomon and his project for building the temple, Eupolemus employs standard Hellenistic epistolary conventions. As a result, the letters project a different meaning than the scriptural letters they are based on.²⁹

Not only does Eupolemus open the letters with the typical prescript (A nominative to B dative: *χαίρειν*), but he continues to incorporate epistolary elements throughout the letters. The epistles of Solomon to Vaphres and Souron both address the king as "Friend of my father." This places an immediate emphasis on succession and continuity in a dynasty (see 2 Macc 9:19–27), while also depicting the foreign kings as φίλοι, not "friends" in the modern sense but subordinate diplomatic advisors to the Jewish king.³⁰

the title *Concerning the Jews* as an attribution given to texts by Polyhistor, or possibly Clement, see p. 205 n. 9.

26. Jacoby 1907, col.. Cf. Holladay 1983, 100 n. 13.

27. Attridge 1984, 163.

28. Holladay 1983, 96; Sterling 1992a, 218; Balch 1998, 35; Keddie 2013, 229–31.

29. 1 Kgs 5:1–12 (MT)/3 Kgdms 5:15–26 (LXX); 2 Chr 2:2–15 (MT/LXX). Eupolemus used the letters exchanged between Solomon and Hiram/Huram in the scriptures as the basis of his epistles of Solomon and Souron. The letters to and from Vaphres do not have a scriptural basis, although they are modeled on the other two letters, which do. When Eupolemus's epistles are compared with their sources, it becomes evident that the changes and additions the author made prominently involved the conventions of Hellenistic royal correspondence (Keddie 2013).

30. Holladay (1983, 145 n. 49) proposes this meaning as a possibility. On friendship in the Hellenistic court, see Hermann 1987, esp. 1–40; Mooren 1975. Cf. Ep. Arist. §§40–41, 228; 1 Macc 10:26–27; 3 Macc 5:19.

Because of this political friendship, the kings are obligated to send Solomon people to help build the temple when he asks for them, and, indeed, they did, according to Eupolemus.³¹ Souron even uses commendatory language to describe a master architect whom he will send Solomon.³² After agreeing to send people, the kings conclude their letters by requesting that Solomon attend to the needs of their men, suggesting that this was his obligation to them.³³ Outside of the letters, Eupolemus provides another epistolary feature: when Solomon returns the workers to their countries, he sends them back with presents for their kings.³⁴ Eupolemus employs and exploits these epistolary features, among others, as a historiographical method for rewriting the relationships between ancient kings and peoples.³⁵ Thus for Eupolemus, the Egyptian (read: Ptolemaic) and Tyrian (read: Seleucid) kings admire and support the Israelite (read: Hasmonean) monarchy, and they are emphatically subordinate to the Jewish king.

31. Part of diplomatic friendship involves the rhetoric of common things. See Nisula 2005, 201–22, esp. 213–15 (referring to 1 and 2 Maccabees). The return of Jewish slaves functions similarly as a prerequisite for friendship in Ep. Arist. §§12–17 and 3 Macc 7:1–9. A king can hold nothing belonging to his Friends that he has not been granted. See also 1 Macc 12:23.

32. In Chronicles, Solomon requested that Hiram send him a skilled artisan (2 Chr 2:7), and Hiram obliged (2 Chr 2:13–14). However, Eupolemus does not include a request from Solomon regarding an architect; instead, he crafts Souron's reply in the semblance of a familiar letter of recommendation, complete with all the rhetorical conventions of reciprocal obligations. See also 1 Kgs 7:15–44; 2 Chr 3:1–4:22.

33. Interestingly, Vaphres commands Solomon with the imperative *φρόντισον*, whereas Souron makes a polite request using the conventional formula: *καλῶς ποιήσεις* + participle. For the latter, see Ep. Arist. §§46, 228; 1 Macc 12:18, 22; 2 Macc 2:16; and Pseudo-Demetrius, *Form. ep.* 1 and 2, in which this convention appears in the examples of friendly and commendatory letters.

34. According to Eupolemus frag. 2, Solomon sent various food goods to Vaphres and a golden pillar to Souron (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 34.17–18). The former has antecedents in 1 Kgs 5:11 (see also 9:11), but the golden pillar for the temple of Zeus has no place in the Scriptures. This tradition appears in other sources, notably Theophilus (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.34.19), although Eupolemus may be its earliest witness. See Wacholder 1974, 217–23; Holladay 1983, 152 n. 101.

35. For more on the role of epistolarity and friendship language in Eupolemus, see Keddie 2013.

Literary Relationships

Eupolemus is one of the earliest surviving witnesses to Greek translations of scriptures other than the Torah. He follows the accounts of 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and 1 and 2 Chronicles closely at times but loosely for the most part.³⁶ It is quite likely that he knew and used other scriptural books as well.³⁷

Some have argued that Eupolemus utilized the letters in the Epistle of Aristeas as a model for his epistles, but this probably was not the case.³⁸ The points of similarity between the two works do not reflect a direct dependence but have much more to do with shared conventions of Hellenistic epistolography.³⁹ To be sure, there are many similarities between the Epistle of Aristeas and Eupolemus. Both are interested in foreign affairs, royal standards, the relation of the Jews to their neighbors, and the role of the temple, and both use epistles as a method for characterizing famous figures. These same features can also be found in most of the other texts in this volume.

Audience and Purpose

The primary audience of Eupolemus was probably Palestinian Jews, although a secondary audience of diaspora Jews is also possible.⁴⁰ Hengel described the work as strongly nationalistic because it exalts the Jewish king and “heralds” the Hasmonean expansionist policy.⁴¹ Under the assumption that Eupolemus was the ambassador, Hengel’s view that this work is a uto-

36. Holladay (1983, 136–56) provides thorough notes on Eupolemus’s modifications of scriptural sources.

37. Holladay (1983, 153–54 nn. 106–14) is certainly correct that frag. 4 is based largely on Jeremiah. Wacholder’s (1974, 160–61) contention that Eupolemus depends on 1 Esdras as a model for his Solomonic correspondence is overstated, although echoes of 1 Esdras throughout frag. 2 do account for Eupolemus’s divergences from the scriptural description of the first temple.

38. Freudenthal 1874, 110 n.; Jacoby 1907, 1229.

39. Wacholder 1974, 168–69.

40. As Holladay (1983, 97) observes, although Eupolemus probably did not target a pagan audience, at least one pagan, Alexander Polyhistor, was reading his history. Contra Bartlett 1985, 56.

41. Hengel 1974, 1:94. However, see Sterling (1992a, 220) and Keddie (2013, 229–31), who argue that David’s campaigns in Eupolemus reflect (rather than herald) Hasmonean expansionist policies.

pian vision for the Hasmonean kingdom has gained popularity.⁴² Gruen, however, has argued persuasively that Eupolemus composed his history to give Hellenistic Jews “the sense of a proud heritage.”⁴³ These views are not mutually exclusive.

By rewriting history, Eupolemus promotes a Jewish national identity that is not hostile toward gentiles or their gods.⁴⁴ He goes beyond his sources by expanding David’s conquests into Seleucid territory, showing that he envisions the glorified time of the united monarchy as continuous with the period of the Hasmonean kings.⁴⁵ However, to see the text as a vision for the future, as Hengel does, takes it for granted that Eupolemus wrote soon after the Maccabean revolt. Instead of understanding Eupolemus as a vision for a future state that would expand its borders, this work could also be interpreted as propaganda to continue a current peaceful state of affairs by maintaining alliances with the Ptolemies and Seleucids.⁴⁶ If Eupolemus is ascribed to a later date, perhaps toward the end of the second century BCE, his motive for rewriting the Scriptures becomes obvious: he intended to map recent Hasmonean history onto the Israelite past to show that the actions of the Hasmoneans are consistent with those of David and Solomon and that the Jewish nation has been restored to its former glorious state.

[GAK]

42. Wacholder 1974, 137–39; Mendels 1987, 35–36.

43. Gruen 1998, 143.

44. J. Collins 2000, 47.

45. Accordingly, Solomon is equated with the Hasmoneans, Vaphres with the Ptolemies, and Souron with the Seleucids (Bartlett 1985, 62–63; Sterling 1992a, 220–21; Keddle 2013).

46. The expansion of Judea into Seleucid territory did not occur until the reign of John Hyrcanus (*A.J.* 13.254–258, 275–283; *B.J.* 1.62–66; see also 1 Macc 10–11; *Ep. Arist.* §107). It is much more reasonable to understand the fragments as reflecting a current reality than a prediction of future prosperity.

The Solomonic Correspondence in Eupolemus (Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.31.1–34.3)⁴⁷

31.1 ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΟΣ

Βασιλεὺς Σολομῶν Οὐαφρῇ βασιλεῖ Αἰγύπτου φίλω πατρικῷ χαίρειν.

Γίνωσκέ με παρειληφότα τὴν βασιλείαν παρὰ Δαβίδ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ μεγίστου, {καί} ἐπιτεταχότος μοι οἰκοδομῆσαι ἱερὸν τῷ θεῷ, ὃς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν ἔκτισεν, ἅμα δέ σοι γράψαι ἀποστεῖλαί μοι τῶν παρὰ σοῦ λαῶν, οἱ παραστήσονται μοι μέχρι τοῦ ἐπιτελέσαι πάντα κατὰ τὴν χρεῖαν, καθότι ἐπιτέτακται.

32.1 ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΟΥΑΦΡΗ ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΦΟΣ

Βασιλεὺς Οὐαφρῆς Σολομῶνι βασιλεῖ μεγάλῳ χαίρειν.

Ἄμα τῷ ἀναγνῶναι τὴν παρὰ σοῦ ἐπιστολὴν σφόδρα ἐχάρην καὶ λαμπρὰν ἡμέραν ἤγαγον ἐγώ τε καὶ ἡ δύναμίς μου πᾶσα ἐπὶ τῷ παρειληφέναι σε τὴν βασιλείαν παρὰ χρηστοῦ ἀνδρὸς καὶ δεδοκιμασμένου ὑπὸ τηλικούτου θεοῦ. περὶ δὲ ὧν γράφεις μοι, περὶ τῶν κατὰ τοὺς λαοὺς τοὺς παρ' ἡμῖν, ἀπέσταλκά σοι μυριάδας ὀκτώ, ὧν καὶ τὰ πλήθη {καί} ἐξ ὧν εἰσι διασεσάφηκά σοι· ἐκ μὲν τοῦ Σεβριθίτου νομοῦ μυρίους, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Μενδησίου καὶ Σεβεννύτου δισμυρίους· Βουσιρίτου, Λεοντοπολίτου καὶ Ἀθριβίτου ἀνὰ μυρίους. φρόντισον δὲ καὶ τὰ δέοντα αὐτοῖς καὶ τὰ ἄλλα, ὅπως εὐτακτῇ, καὶ ἵνα ἀποκατασταθῶσιν εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν, ὡς ἂν ἀπὸ τῆς χρεῖας γενόμενοι.

33.1 ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΟΣ

Βασιλεὺς Σολομῶν Σούρωνι τῷ βασιλεῖ Τύρου καὶ Σιδῶνος καὶ Φοινίκης φίλω πατρικῷ χαίρειν.

Γίνωσκέ με παρειληφότα τὴν βασιλείαν παρὰ Δαβίδ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ μεγίστου, ἐπιτεταχότος μοι οἰκοδομῆσαι ἱερὸν τῷ θεῷ, ὃς τὸν οὐρανὸν

47. Greek text adapted from Holladay 1983 and translated by G. Anthony Keddie.

48. The friendship language, in particular the title “Friend of my father,” in the letters to Vaphres and Souron casts the foreign kings as Solomon’s subordinate vassals (Holladay 1983, 145 n. 49; Keddie 2013, 210–14). See also Welles 1934, no. 25.17–26; P.Tebt. 1.59. Although the language is different, the letter of Antiochus IV with regard

31.1 Epistle of Solomon

King Solomon to Vaphres, king of Egypt, Friend of my father:⁴⁸ Greetings.

Know that I have received the kingdom from David my father through God the greatest (and) that he has commanded me to build a temple to the God who created the heaven and the earth and at once to write to you to send me some of your people to help me until everything necessary has been completed, just as it has been commanded.

32.1 Epistle of Vaphres: A Copy

King Vaphres to Solomon, the great king: Greetings.

As soon as I read the letter from you, I rejoiced exceedingly, and both I and all my realm observed a joyous day for your having received the kingdom from a man who was noble and had been approved by so great a God. Now concerning the things about which you wrote to me, regarding some people from us, I am sending eight myriads to you, of which the numbers and where they are from I now report to you: from the Sethroite nome, on the one hand, one myriad; from the Mendesian and Sebennyte nomes, on the other hand, two myriads; and from the Bousirite, Leontopolite, and Athribite nomes, a myriad each. Now attend to their needs and anything else so that they are orderly and so that they may be returned to their own homeland whenever they have fulfilled their obligation.

33.1 Epistle of Solomon

King Solomon to Souron,⁴⁹ king of Tyre and Sidon and Phoenicia, Friend of my father: Greetings.

Know that I have received the kingdom from David my father through God the greatest (and) that he has commanded me to build a temple to the

to the succession of Antiochus V in 2 Macc 9:19–27 rests on the same assumptions of continuity of friendships and obligations upon accessions deemed legitimate.

49. While the letters involving Vaphres are the author's invention, the correspondence with Souron is based on Solomon's exchanges with Hiram of Tyre in LXX 3 Kgdms 5:15–26 and LXX 2 Chr 2:2–15. For discussion, see Keddie 2013.

καὶ τὴν γῆν ἔκτισεν, ἅμα δὲ καὶ σοὶ γράψαι ἀποστεῖλαί μοι τῶν παρὰ σοῦ λαῶν, οἱ συμπαραστήσονται ἡμῖν μέχρι τοῦ ἐπιτελέσαι τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ χρεῖαν, καθότι μοι ἐπιτέτακται. γέγραφα δὲ καὶ εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν καὶ Σαμαρεῖτιν καὶ Μωαβῖτιν καὶ Ἀμμωνῖτιν καὶ Γαλαδῖτιν χορηγεῖσθαι αὐτοῖς τὰ δέοντα ἐκ τῆς χώρας, κατὰ μῆνα κόρους σίτου μυρίους· ὁ δὲ κόρος ἐστὶν ἄρταβῶν ἕξ· καὶ οἴνου κόρους μυρίους· ὁ δὲ κόρος τοῦ οἴνου ἐστὶ μέτρα δέκα. τὸ δὲ ἔλαιον καὶ τὰ ἄλλα χορηγηθήσεται αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας, ἱερεῖα δὲ εἰς κρεωφαγίαν ἐκ τῆς Ἀραβίας.

34.1 ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ ΣΟΥΡΩΝΟΣ

Σούρων Σολομῶνι βασιλεῖ μεγάλῳ χαίρειν.

Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός, ὃς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν ἔκτισεν, ὃς εἴλετο ἄνθρωπον χρηστὸν ἐκ χρηστοῦ ἀνδρός· ἅμα τῷ ἀναγνῶναι τὴν παρὰ σοῦ ἐπιστολὴν σφόδρα ἐχάρην καὶ εὐλόγησα τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ τῷ παρεληφέναι σὲ τὴν βασιλείαν.

34.2 περὶ δὲ ὧν γράφεις μοι, περὶ τῶν κατὰ τοὺς λαοὺς τοὺς παρ' ἡμῖν, ἀπέσταλκά σοι Τυρίων καὶ Φοινίκων ὀκτακισμυρίους καὶ ἀρχιτέκτονά σοι ἀπέσταλκα ἄνθρωπον Τύριον, ἐκ μητρὸς Ἰουδαίας, ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς τῆς Δαβίδ. ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσης τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν πάντων κατ' ἀρχιτεκτονίαν, ὑφηγήσεται σοι καὶ ποιήσει. **34.3** περὶ δὲ τῶν δεόντων καὶ ἀποστελλομένων σοι παίδων καλῶς ποιήσεις ἐπιστείλας τοῖς κατὰ τόπον ἐπάρχοις, ὅπως χορηγῇται τὰ δέοντα.

God who created the heaven and the earth and at once to write to you to send me some of your people to assist us until the need of God has been completed, just as I have been commanded. Now I have written also to Galilee and Samaria and Moab and Ammon and Gilead to provide for their needs from the country: every month a myriad of cors of wheat (a cor is six artabae) and a myriad of cors of wine (a cor of wine is ten measures). Now the olive oil and other things will be supplied to them from Judea but cattle for meat from Arabia.

34.1 Epistle of Souron

Souron to Solomon, the great king: Greetings.

Blessed be the God who created the heaven and the earth, who chose a noble man, the son of a noble man. As soon as I read the letter from you, I rejoiced exceedingly and blessed the God for your having received the kingdom. **34.2** Now concerning the things about which you wrote to me, regarding some people from us, I have sent eight myriads of Tyrians and Phoenicians to you, and I have sent you an architect, a Tyrian, the son of a Judean mother from the tribe of David.⁵⁰ As to anything under heaven relating to architecture that you might ask him, he will lead the way and carry it out for you. **34.3** Now concerning the servants, which you need and which are being sent to you, you will do well to send letters to your governors at each place so that they supply their needs.⁵¹

50. This section of the letter resembles the language of a letter of recommendation (Keddie 2013, 219–21).

51. The request at the end of this letter closely resembles the request in the “friendly” letter type of Pseudo-Demetrius (Malherbe 1988, 33): “You will do well [καλῶς ποιήσεις], therefore, to watch closely over those in my household lest they have need [ἔχῃσι χρεῖαν] of something, to assist [συμπαριστάμενος] them in whatever they may need [οἷς ἂν δέωνται], and to write us concerning what you should choose.”

3.3. Additions to Greek Esther: The Letters

The book of Esther¹ in the Hebrew Bible tells a story of Jews living in the Persian court, where Haman, the king's second in command, convinces King Artaxerxes² to eliminate all the Jews. The heroes of the story, Esther and Mordecai, reveal the true nature of Haman to the king and convince him to allow the Jews to defend themselves. The so-called Greek Additions to Esther found in the LXX notably include prayers of Mordecai and Esther (Add Esth C, 7:17a–z)³ as well as the texts of two epistolary edicts issued by Artaxerxes (Add Esth B, 3:13a–g; Add Esth E, 8:12a–v). Another addition (Add Esth G, 10:3l) in the form of a colophon, or *subscriptio*, provides clues to the potential dating of Greek Esther.⁴ Though it is a matter of great debate, it is likely that Greek Esther with all of the additions except B and E dates to 77 BCE, while B and E were written sometime in the following decades. In total, seven additions (A–G) appear in the LXX version of Esther, as well as one further addition, a letter of Mordecai, which is only in another Greek version known as the Alpha Text (GEA).⁵

1. The Hebrew title given to this book is usually Megillah (Scroll), whereas Christians have traditionally known the book as Esther. See Moore 1977, 220.

2. In the MT, the king's name is Ahasuerus.

3. This volume uses the LXX numbering for the Greek Additions to Esther, rather than the Vulgate numbering system.

4. Add Esth G by our notation is often considered part of Add Esth F. We separate them to indicate that there are no clear grounds for this association.

5. The Old Latin, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions of Esther are based on Greek Esther, while the Vulgate clearly followed MT Esther, although Jerome did include Add Esth at the end of his translation. The OL does not include a portion of Add Esth A (1:1m–r) nor a portion of Add Esth C (4:17n–r). The two targumim of Esther remain faithful to MT Esther, as does the version in the Protestant canon, although the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox canons preserve the Additions to Esther found in the LXX. Josephus also lacks these portions in his paraphrase of the story of Esther in *A.J.* 11.6, although he lacks all of Additions A and F as well. On the reception and transmission history of Esther, see Gregg 1913, 668; Moore 1977, 166–68; Levenson 1997, 27.

Author

There is no indication in either Greek Esther or MT Esther as to the author(s)/redactor(s) of this composition, with few exceptions. Both the MT version and Greek Esther state in 9:20 that Mordecai, “recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far” (NRSV). Thus the authorship of Esther can be considered, in a sense, pseudepigraphic. As for the Additions, they appear to have been originally composed in Greek and written at a much later time than MT Esther.

Two of the Additions include the fictive texts of two of Artaxerxes’s edicts. While the edicts are referred to in Esth 3:12–13 and 8:9–12, the copies of the edicts themselves appear only in Greek Esther. Esther 3:13 claims that letters were sent to all the provinces, while Esth 3:14 indicates that copies of the edict were to be publically displayed in each province. The first edict, Greek Esther 3:13a–g, sits between these two verses in the LXX version. Likewise, the second edict is sandwiched between the initial order for the writs to be issued (Esth 8:9–10) and the order that they be publicly displayed (Esth 8:13). These edicts are written in a more elegant and formulaic style than the rest of Greek Esther, suggesting that both were originally composed in Greek rather than translated from some earlier text.⁶ Due to the different styles of the Additions, it is highly unlikely that the same person composed them all.

Because of the difference in the style and tone of Additions B and E when compared to the rest of Greek Esther, only these two passages seem to be actual Additions in the fullest sense. The other Additions are not out of place in Greek Esther but rather flow naturally in the course of the narrative. They match the style of the rest of Greek Esther, so while scholarship has generally labeled them as Additions⁷ due to the fact that they add elements to the MT version of Esther, they should not be considered Additions in the same way as Add Esth B and E.

6. Levenson 1997, 75, 113.

7. This tradition dates back to Jerome (ca. 340–420 CE), who believed these were additions because they did not appear in the Hebrew text. He removed them from their locations in the LXX and placed them at the end of his canonical translation. See Moore 1977, 153–54.

Date

Our best indication of dating appears in a *subscriptio* at the end of Greek Esther (Add Esth G, 10:3l), which reads,

In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Dositheus, who said he was a priest and a Levite, and Ptolemy his son, brought [to Egypt] the preceding Letter on the Phrourai [Purim], which they said to be [genuine?] and Lysimachus, son of Ptolemy, had translated, from those in Jerusalem.

Scholars debate which Ptolemy and Cleopatra are indicated by this Addition. As a result, the possible dates for this *subscriptio* range from the late second century BCE to the mid-first century BCE. Some scholars understand the text to refer to Ptolemy VIII Physcon, which suggests an approximate date of 114 BCE.⁸ Bickerman has argued for a dating of the translation during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE),⁹ more specifically during the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy XII Auletes and Cleopatra V (78–77 BCE).¹⁰ Thus by this theory, 77 BCE can be taken as the *terminus post quem* for Greek Esther including all Additions except B and E, which were composed even later.¹¹ The only indication that we have for a *terminus ante quem* for Greek Esther, including Add Esth B and E, is circa 95 CE, when Josephus paraphrased additions B, C, D, and E in his *Antiquitates judaicae*.¹²

8. Jacob 1890, 274–80; Gregg 1913, 665–84; Moore 1973, 383.

9. Bickerman 1967, 227–34.

10. Bickerman 1944, 347. See also Burns 2006, 18. For a Jewish inscription honoring these same two monarchs, see sec. 3.5 below (no. 3), with discussion of the date.

11. There are mixed views as to when each of the Additions was interpolated into the text. The reference to the “preceding” letter about Purim in the colophon perhaps suggests that the entirety of Greek Esther was included by this date, but not all scholars agree on this point, as Gregg (1913, 665) and Levenson (1997, 136) note. Moreover, Gregg (1913, 665) argues that the additions were most likely composed in the early first century BCE due to similarities between Greek Esther and the Wisdom of Solomon, written by an Alexandrian Jew in the first century BCE. On the other hand, Moore (1977, 166) argues that the similarities between Additions C and D and Judith suggest that they originated in the second century BCE. Menn (2005, 70), discussing Esther’s prayer in Addition C: 12–30 (Vulg. 14:1–19), suggests that this addition originated in Palestine around the late second or early first century BCE.

12. Gregg 1913, 669; Moore 1977, 164. Gregg also notes that the fact that Josephus does not use Additions A and F does not mean they were not yet composed.

Additions B and E, the two official edicts, can most likely be dated to the first century BCE due to their similarity to other writings at that time. As will be discussed further below, Add Esth B closely resembles Ptolemy IV's letter in 3 Macc 3:12–29. Since 3 Maccabees was most likely written in Egypt in the early to mid-first century BCE, Add Esth B and E can also probably be attributed to the same approximate time and place.¹³

Provenance

The provenance of Greek Esther is debatable, with scholars arguing for both Palestine and Alexandria.¹⁴ A compromise view contends that the translation of Esther into Greek was undertaken in Judea, rather than in Egypt, but that the final product was intended for diasporic Jews.¹⁵ The *subscriptio* (Add Esth G) states that Dositheus brought the “preceding Letter on the Phourai” from Jerusalem, ostensibly to Egypt, although this does not necessarily suggest Jerusalem as the location of the original translation of MT Esther into Greek nor for the composition of the Additions. Bickerman argues that the presence of the colophon itself points to Alexandria as the most likely provenance.¹⁶ He suggests that the impetus for the creation of the LXX, as described in the Epistle of Aristee, relates to the presence of the colophon. These *subscriptions* at the ends of texts supply the names of their authors or editors in order to establish their authenticity and authority for ancient readers. Because the Hebrew books had received no such attention, they could be considered inauthentic. It is for this reason, so the theory goes, that careful translation of the Hebrew books under the guidance of Alexandrian scholars was proposed.¹⁷ The connection between the Additions to Esther and 2 Maccabees further suggests that, even if Alexandria was not the original place of translation/composition, the intended audience was Alexandrian and other diasporic Jews. Finally, the links

13. Passoni Dell'Acqua 2004; Hacham 2007. On the literary relationship between 3 Maccabees and Greek Esther and its implications for dating each text, see sec. 3.4.

14. For Palestine, Menn 2005, 70; Moore 1977, 161; For Alexandria, Bickerman 1944, 349–50; Gregg 1913, 668.

15. Burns 2006, 18.

16. Bickerman 1944, 340. While Bickerman acknowledges that colophons appear much earlier on cuneiform tablets, he claims that the use of colophons at the end of scroll is “a product of the Alexandrian school of criticism, and appears in literary papyri from the first cent. B.C.”

17. Bickerman 1944, 343–44.

between the royal edicts in Greek Esther (Add Esth B and E) and 3 Maccabees strongly suggest Alexandria as the place of composition for at least those Additions.

Textual History

In terms of composition, we can only briefly address the complex textual history of Esther here.¹⁸ Two different versions of the book exist in Greek: the LXX (also known as the Beta Text or GEB) and the Alpha Text (AT, also known as the GEA or the T-text). The LXX appears to be a free translation of the Masoretic Text (MT) or a Hebrew text close to the MT,¹⁹ with seven additions (A–G).²⁰ The AT is significantly shorter because it omits and condenses much of the material even while including these additions as well as one further addition (AT 7:33b–38). Notably, the AT is much closer to the MT than the LXX.²¹ Clines suggests that the *Vorlage* of the AT,²² different from the *Vorlage* of both the LXX and the MT, is actually older than the proto-Masoretic text.²³ Some scholars claim that the AT has a Hebrew *Vorlage*,²⁴ while others argue that the AT is a rewriting of the LXX text.²⁵ Those who argue that the AT is a rewriting of the LXX text tend to think that it is an attempt to conform to a Hebrew text. For instance, De Troyer

18. For detailed descriptions of Esther's stages of composition, see Clines 1984; Moore 1977; Gregg 1913, 665–84.

19. Clines 1984, 69; Moore 1977, 162–64.

20. As Gregg (1913, 667) recounts, the labeling of the six Greek Additions with the letters A–F originated with Henry Barclay Swete on a suggestion from a Dr. Holt. See Swete 1902, 257 n. 557. Some scholars provide the colophon with its own label, G, while others leave it as a part of Add Esth F. The latter is preferable, as the colophon is clearly attached to Greek Esther and is not a separate Addition. Regardless, it is very often simply referred to as “the colophon” in scholarship.

21. Moore 1977, 162–64; Jobes 1996.

22. Emanuel Tov (1982, 10) argues that the AT represents the Lucianic version of the text, based on the LXX, not a Hebrew *Vorlage*, although the editor also had a Hebrew or Aramaic text that differed from the LXX and corrected the LXX “towards that text.” Clines (1984, 72) disagrees.

23. Clines 1984, 93.

24. In favor of the view that the AT has a Hebrew *Vorlage*: Clines 1984; Moore 1977; Fox 1991.

25. In favor of the view that the AT is a rewriting of the LXX: De Troyer 2000; 2003, esp. 59–89; Hanhart 1966; Tov 1982.

posits that the AT rewrites the LXX toward the MT, whereas Tov thinks that it was rewritten toward another Hebrew text.²⁶

Form

Epistolarity strongly influenced the Greek version of Esther. While the majority of Greek Esther is a translation of a Hebrew version of Esther, the two edicts known as Additions B and E unquestionably were composed originally in Greek.²⁷ The resemblance in language and content between these letters and those recorded in 3 Maccabees supports their Greek composition. In 3 Macc 3:12–29, Ptolemy IV uses the letter form to decree to the officials throughout his kingdom the annihilation of the Egyptian Jews. Similarly, Addition B in Greek Esther is an edict from Artaxerxes to the officials throughout his kingdom that portrays the king and Haman positively, while the Jews are considered to be a threat to the stability of the empire.²⁸ In 3 Macc 7:1–9, Ptolemy IV issues another edict reversing the original one, showing favor to the Jews and blaming “certain of our Friends” with instigating their persecution. In Greek Esther, Addition E is similarly a letter that counters the first, describing Haman as a deceitful “Friend” and allowing the Jews to defend themselves.²⁹

The letters in Greek Esther contain conventional Greek epistolary features. Aside from the friendship language prevalent in the letters, the edicts in Add Esth B and E have conventional addresses. Only Add Esth E has an actual greeting (χαίρειν, 8:12b), however. Both edicts have the king reference the state of his affairs (τὰ πράγματα, 3:13f, g; 8:12e), a common feature of Ptolemaic edicts.³⁰ Addition E also ends with a request using the ubiquitous epistolary formula “you will do well, therefore” (καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε, 8:12r). The edicts do not include final salutations or dates. An additional letter from Mordecai only included in the Alpha Text after the second royal edict, however, concludes by recording the date that the king attempted to

26. De Troyer 2003, 88–89; Tov 1982, 10.

27. See, e.g., Passoni Dell’Acqua 2004.

28. For a concise comparison of Add Esth B and 3 Macc 3:12–29, see Moore 1977, 195–98.

29. Levenson (1997, 74–75, 111–14) has also noted, interestingly, that in this decree Artaxerxes portrays himself as someone who fears the God of Israel in a way reminiscent of King Cyrus in Ezra 1:2; 6:12.

30. Cf. 2 Macc 9:24; 11:19; 3 Macc 3:13, 26; 7:1, 2; *CPJ* 1.132 (sec. 3.5 below [no. 8]).

kill the Jews. While not a formal letter date, its appearance at the end of a letter is suggestive.

Further emphasizing the role of epistolarity in the world of Greek Esther, its *subscriptio* (Add Esth G) indicates that Dositheus brought the “foregoing letter of Purim” from Jerusalem to Egypt.³¹ While the exact identity of this letter of Purim is unknown, one possible interpretation is that this was the name by which the book of Esther was originally known.³² Although not similar to standard formations of letters, this letter of Purim might have received its name because of the paraenetic function of the book. Esther functions both as an exemplary tale providing advice on how Jews should act in a gentile world or in times of crisis and as an etiological story providing the origin of the Festival of Purim.³³

Literary Relationships

In addition to the way that Greek Esther resembles the Epistle of Aristeas in its overarching themes involving Jews in the court of a foreign king and in its use of epistolary conventions to characterize the king’s treatment of Jews, Greek Esther also has strong literary links to both 2 and 3 Maccabees. The earliest reference to the Festival of Purim, outside of Esther, occurs in 2 Macc 15:36, though here it is referred to as “the day of Mordecai.” While this does not clearly indicate whether Greek Esther was in circulation before 2 Maccabees, certainly the audience of 2 Maccabees was familiar with the story and the festival. This passage creates another link when taken in conjunction with 2 Macc 1:18, where the author of the second introductory letter uses Sukkot, or the Festival of Booths, as a point of reference for the institution of Hanukkah. In 2 Macc 15:36 the author employs Purim in a similar way, having it serve as a referent for the new day of Nicanor.³⁴ Both the “letter” of Greek Esther and the introductory letters of 2 Maccabees serve a similar purpose: they are sent to remind

31. This refers back to Esth 9:20 in the MT version, where Mordecai sends out letters to all the Jews describing the events depicted in the book of Esther.

32. Levenson 1997, 136.

33. J. Collins (2000, 112) argues that Greek Esther is a piece of Hasmonean propaganda urging Jews in Egypt to celebrate Purim like other Jews and also advocating a separatist religious attitude that does not interfere with any political allegiances. This interpretation links Greek Esther even closer to 2 Maccabees, the first two letters of which urge the Jews in Egypt to celebrate the festival of the temple’s rededication.

34. Burns 2006, 13.

diasporic Jews to observe an extra-Torah religious festival associated with a victory over an outside power.

The story of Esther is also closely linked to 3 Maccabees, which seems to retell and reinterpret much material from Esther. The stories of 3 Maccabees and Esther are remarkably similar: both are diasporic tales in which a king issues an edict to destroy the Jews, and in both cases the edict is eventually rescinded and Jews establish festivals to celebrate their salvation. There can be little doubt that the author of 3 Maccabees knew the story of Esther in some form, but there is not enough evidence to form a certain theory of this relationship. It is possible that 3 Maccabees simply relied on the story of Esther, not on the actual Greek translation, and therefore predates Greek Esther. On the other hand, Greek Esther could have preceded 3 Maccabees, whose author then used the actual text, not simply the stories, as a source.³⁵ However, although a Hebrew Esther clearly predates 3 Maccabees,³⁶ that does not mean that 3 Maccabees did not influence parts of Greek Esther, especially Add Esth B and E, the most distinctive Additions to Greek Esther. Actually, it is quite likely that the author of Additions B and E knew 3 Maccabees. The fact that these Additions were originally composed in Greek, not translated from Hebrew or Aramaic, like the rest of Greek Esther, supports this theory. Thus, one gets the impression that 3 Maccabees may have relied on Greek Esther minus Add Esth B and E, while Add Esth B and E then depended on 3 Maccabees. This complex relationship between Greek Esther and 3 Maccabees is addressed in more detail in the introduction to 3 Maccabees.

Audience and Purpose

In some ways Greek Esther has a purpose and function similar to that of 2 Maccabees. Greek Esther was translated/composed for a Jewish diasporic audience, probably for Egyptian Jews, and sought to remind its Jewish audience of the origins of a festival not found in the Torah, Purim, thereby encouraging its continued celebration. Since this celebration would bring Jews in the diaspora into concord with Jews in Judea, Greek Esther may also serve a nationalistic purpose, perhaps as propaganda for the Hasmoneans.³⁷

35. For an overview of this debate, see Hacham 2007, 765–85.

36. Moore 1973, 385.

37. See J. Collins 2000, 112.

Greek Esther also promotes religious beliefs and practices not articulated in the Hebrew book. For instance, the Additions introduce a theistic tone into the book, thereby making explicit a divine dimension that was implicit at best in the Hebrew text.³⁸ Moreover, the inclusion of explicit descriptions of the religious activities and beliefs of Esther and Mordecai, the two main Jewish characters, helps to turn the story into an exemplary tale. This type of tale, according to Clines, “not only records divine deliverance or divine-human co-operation but also gives advice on how a Jew should behave religiously in a foreign environment or a situation of crisis.”³⁹ In Greek Esther, the Additions emphasize proper daily actions for Jews through the characters of Esther and Mordecai.

[GAK and MLC]

38. De Troyer 2003, 27–28; Clines 1984, 170.

39. Clines 1984, 171.

Selected Greek Additions to Esther⁴⁰Addition B. Artaxerxes's First Decree (GEB 3:13a–g; Vulg. 13:1–7)⁴¹**GEB 3:13a [Vulg. 13:1]** τῆς δὲ ἐπιστολῆς ἐστὶν τὸ ἀντίγραφον τόδε.

Βασιλεὺς μέγας Ἀρταξέρξης τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἕως τῆς Αἰθιοπίας ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι ἐπτὰ χωρῶν ἄρχουσι καὶ τοπάρχαις ὑποτεταγμένοις τάδε γράφει

3:13b [2] Πολλῶν ἐπάρξας ἔθνῶν καὶ πάσης ἐπικρατήσας οἰκουμένης ἐβουλήθη, μὴ τῷ θράσει τῆς ἐξουσίας ἐπαιρόμενος, ἐπεικέστερον δὲ καὶ μετὰ ἡπιότητος αἰεὶ διεξάγων, τοὺς τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ἀκυμάτους διὰ παντὸς καταστήσαι βίους, τὴν τε βασιλείαν ἡμερον καὶ πορευτὴν μέχρι περάτων παρεξόμενος ἀνανεώσασθαι τε τὴν ποθουμένην τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις εἰρήνην.

3:13c [3] πυθομένου δέ μου τῶν συμβούλων πῶς ἂν ἀχθείη τοῦτο ἐπὶ πέρας, σωφροσύνη παρ' ἡμῖν διενέγκας καὶ ἐν τῇ εὐνοίᾳ ἀπαραλλάκτως καὶ βεβαίᾳ πίστει ἀποδεδειγμένος καὶ δεύτερον τῶν βασιλείων γέρας ἀπενηνεγμένος Ἀμὰν **3:13d [4]** ἐπέδειξεν ἡμῖν ἐν πάσαις ταῖς κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην φυλαῖς ἀναμεμῖχθαι δυσμενῇ λαόν τινα τοῖς νόμοις ἀντίθετον πρὸς πᾶν ἔθνος τὰ τε τῶν βασιλείων παραπέμποντας διηνεκῶς διατάγματα πρὸς τὸ μὴ κατατίθεσθαι τὴν ὑφ' ἡμῶν κατευθυνομένην ἀμέμπτως συναρχίαν. **3:13e [5]** διειληφότες οὖν τόδε τὸ ἔθνος μονώτατον ἐν ἀντιπαραγωγῇ παντὶ διὰ παντὸς ἀνθρώπῳ κείμενον διαγωγὴν νόμων ξενίζουσιν παραλλάσσον καὶ δυσνοοῦν τοῖς ἡμετέροις πράγμασιν τὰ χεῖριστα συντελοῦν κακὰ καὶ πρὸς τὸ μὴ τὴν βασιλείαν εὐσταθείας τυγχάνειν. **3:13f [6]** προστετάχαμεν οὖν τοὺς σηματομένους ὑμῖν ἐν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ὑπὸ Ἀμὰν τοῦ τεταγμένου ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ δευτέρου πατρὸς ἡμῶν πάντας σὺν γυναιξὶ καὶ τέκνοις ἀπολέσαι ὀλορρίζει ταῖς τῶν ἐχθρῶν μαχαίραις ἄνευ παντὸς οἴκτου καὶ φειδοῦς τῇ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτῃ τοῦ δωδεκάτου μηνὸς ἸἸαδρ τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος ἔτους, **3:13g [7]** ὅπως οἱ πάλοι καὶ

40. Greek text has been adapted by LMW from Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006; Vulgate numbering is given in brackets; the translation and notes are by LMW.

41. GEB (Greek Esther B) is the LXX text. The decree represents an expansion on Esth 3:8–13, specifically the ἀπεστάλη (for Hebrew מִן־פֶּרַס, 3:13) sent out from Haman regarding the extermination of the Jews, but the wording seems to play off the opening of the continuation at 3:14 in the Greek, which also refers to “copies of the letter” (see the note on GEB 3:14 at the end of this passage).

42. In the Hebrew of canonical Esther (MT), the name of the king is Ahasuerus, a rendering of the Persian form of Xerxes I (486–465 BCE), and the MT specifies the seventh year of his reign (Esth 2:16). Artaxerxes I (464–424) was his successor;

GEB 3:13a [Vulg. 13:1] Here is a copy of the letter:

The great King Artaxerxes⁴² to the princes and toparchs serving under them of the 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia, herewith writes.

3:13b [2] Having become ruler of many nations and having mastered an entire realm,⁴³ I decided—not exulting in the overboldness of power but ever executing my affairs fairly and with gentleness—to order the lives of my subjects in perpetuity with tranquility, both by making my kingdom civilized and safe for travel throughout its borders and by restoring the peace sought after by all people. **3:13c [3]** When I asked my advisers how this might be accomplished, Haman, who excels in prudence among us and who is approved for his unswerving goodwill and firm faithfulness and who has (thereby) attained the second rank in the kingdom, **3:13d [4]** has shown us that mixed in among all the tribes in our realm is a certain hostile people that is opposed by its laws to all nations and constantly disregards the ordinances of the king, so that the dominion blamelessly directed by us has not been set in place. **3:13e [5]** Now then perceiving that this nation alone stands perpetually in opposition to all peoples, living perversely by an alien arrangement of laws, and is ill-disposed to our affairs, effecting the most harm they can, so that our kingdom may not attain stability, **3:13f [6]** therefore we have decreed that those persons identified for you in the documents written by Haman, who commands our affairs and is our “second father,” all of them, together with their wives and children be destroyed to the roots by the swords of their enemies without pity or mercy, on the fourteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar, of the present year, **3:13g [7]** so

Artaxerxes II (405–359) was the son of Darius II. According to Greek Esther (but not mentioned in the MT) Mordecai had been taken captive with Jeconiah, an alternative form of the name Jehoiachin (1 Chr 3:16) who was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BCE. To imagine that Mordecai would have still been alive at the time of Xerxes I, much less Artaxerxes I or later, begs many questions, but given the fictive world of Greek Esther, they are of little importance. Compare Josephus, *A.J.* 11.184–296.

43. The word here and in 3:13d is *οἰκουμένη* (lit. “world”), but just as in Luke 2:1, it refers to the “managed realm.” See also Ep. Arist. §§9, 37, 38; Ezekiel the Tragedian, *Exagoge* 87.

νῦν δυσμενεῖς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ βιαίως εἰς τὸν ἄδην κατελθόντες εἰς τὸν μετέπειτα χρόνον εὐσταθῇ καὶ ἀτάραχα παρέχωσιν ἡμῖν διὰ τέλους τὰ πράγματα.

Addition E. Artaxerxes's Second Decree (GEB 8:12a–x; Vulg. 16:1–24)⁴⁴

GEB 8:12a [Vulg. 16:1] Ὡς ἐστιν ἀντίγραφον τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τὰ ὑπογεγραμμένα.

8:12b [2] Βασιλεὺς μέγας Ἀρταξέρξης τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἕως τῆς Αἰθιοπίας ἑκατὸν εἴκοσι ἐπτὰ σατραπείαις χωρῶν ἄρχουσι καὶ τοῖς τὰ ἡμέτερα φρονοῦσι χαίρειν.

8:12c [3] πολλοὶ τῇ πλείστη τῶν εὐεργετούντων χρηστότητι πυκνότερον τιμώμενοι μεῖζον ἐφρόνησαν καὶ οὐ μόνον τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους ἡμῖν ζητοῦσι κακοποιεῖν, τὸν τε κόρον οὐ δυνάμενοι φέρειν καὶ τοῖς ἑαυτῶν εὐεργέταις ἐπιχειροῦσι μηχανᾶσθαι. **8:12d [4]** καὶ τὴν εὐχαριστίαν οὐ μόνον ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀνταναιροῦντες, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς τῶν ἀπειραγάνων κόμπους ἐπαρθέντες τοῦ τὰ πάντα κατοπτεύοντος αἰεὶ θεοῦ μισοπόνηρον ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ἐκφεύξεσθαι δίκην. **8:12e [5]** πολλάκις δὲ καὶ πολλοὺς τῶν ἐπ' ἐξουσίαις τεταγμένων τῶν πιστευθέντων χειρίζειν φίλων τὰ πράγματα παραμυθία μεταίτιους αἱμάτων ἀθῶων καταστήσασα περιέβαλε συμφοραῖς ἀνηκέστοις **8:12f [6]** τῷ τῆς κακοηθείας ψευδεῖ παραλογισμῷ παραλογισαμένων τὴν τῶν ἐπικρατούντων ἀκέραιον εὐγνωμοσύνην.

8:12g [7] σκοπεῖν δὲ ἔξεστιν, οὐ τοσοῦτον ἐκ τῶν παλαιότερων ὧν παρεδώκαμεν ἱστοριῶν, ὅσα ἐστὶν παρὰ πόδας ὑμᾶς ἐκζητοῦντας ἀνοσίως συντετελεσμένα τῇ τῶν ἀνάξια δυναστευόντων λοιμότητι, **8:12h [8]** καὶ

44. The expansion is based directly on 8:10–12 as given above.

45. The main text resumes at 3:14–15 and continues through 4:17, but it, too, is expanded slightly in the Greek: **3:14** τὰ δὲ ἀντίγραφα τῶν ἐπιστολῶν ἐξετίθετο κατὰ χώραν, καὶ προσετάγη πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐτοίμους εἶναι εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν ταύτην. **3:15** ἐσπεύδeto δὲ τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ εἰς Σουσαν· ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς καὶ Ἀμὰν ἐκωθωνίζοντο, ἐταράσσeto δὲ ἡ πόλις (“Copies of the letters were posted in the provinces, along with the edict for all the nations to be prepared for that day. The matter was promoted zealously also in Susa. But the king and Haman continued in getting drunk together, while the city was thrown into confusion”). The Hebrew here also mentions “a copy” (גִּשְׁתָּה) of the decree; see 4:8.

46. For this term as a Ptolemaic epithet, see *CIJ* 2.1442 (sec. 3.5 below [no. 2]).

47. The “Friends of the king” is a standard Hellenistic term for officials and courtiers as well as client-kings and allies. See Hermann 1980/81, 103–49; 1987; Mooren 1975; Keddie 2013, 210–14. A number of key terms in this passage come from the standard

that those being hostile for so long and even now, by going down violently in a single day to Hades, they shall afford us secure and untroubled affairs henceforth and forever.⁴⁵

GEB 8:12a [Vulg. 16:1] A copy of the letter follows:

8:12b [2] The great king Artaxerxes, to those governing the provinces from India to Ethiopia, the 127 satrapies, and to all those well-disposed toward our affairs: Greetings.

8:12c [3] Many people being honored with much kindness from their benefactors⁴⁶ frequently become all the more haughty, and not only do they seek to do harm to our subjects, but, being unable to bear prosperity, they even undertake to scheme against their very own benefactors.

8:12d [4] And not only canceling the gratitude from humans but also, being buoyed by the pompous words of know-nothings, they assume that they will escape the evil-despising justice of the ever-all-seeing God. **8:12e**

[5] And many times, too, many of those set in positions of authority are ensnared in incurable disasters as accessories to the shedding of innocent blood by the counsel of Friends entrusted to handle their state affairs,⁴⁷

8:12f [6] who deceive the harmless goodwill of their sovereigns with the lying fraud of an evil disposition.⁴⁸

8:12g [7] Now it is possible to see what has been wickedly accomplished by the pestilence of those wielding power unworthily, by searching out matters close at hand,⁴⁹ not so much from the older narratives that we delivered.⁵⁰ **8:12h [8]** It is also possible to pay close attention to the future

vocabulary of these highly ritualized relationships, much of which is predicated on the concepts of friendship.

48. The sentence in 12e–f is here rendered in the passive to capture the king’s characterization of his complicity as a deception. Gregg (1913, 680) followed a similar path but with more emendations. If read literally, it would go as follows: “For how often does the counsel of Friends entrusted to handle their state affairs who deceive the harmless goodwill of their sovereigns with the lying fraud of an evil disposition ensnares in incurable calamities many who are set in positions of authority as accessories to the shedding of innocent blood.” Read in this way, the majority reading of *μετόχους* (for *μεταίτιους*, as here) makes equally good sense, inasmuch as they are nearly synonymous.

49. An idiom, literally “under your feet” (so Gregg 1913, 681).

50. I take this to refer to the king’s earlier edict (B), penned, as the story goes, under

προσέχειν εἰς τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα εἰς τὸ τὴν βασιλείαν ἀτάραχον τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις μετ' εἰρήνης παρεξόμεθα **8:12i** [9] <οὐ> χρώμενοι ταῖς μεταβολαῖς, τὰ δὲ ὑπὸ τὴν ὄψιν ἐρχόμενα διακρίνοντας αἰεὶ μετ' ἐπεικεστέρας ἀπαντήσεως.

8:12k [10] ὥς γὰρ Ἀμὴν Ἀμαδάθου Μακεδών, ταῖς ἀληθείαις ἀλλότριος τοῦ τῶν Περσῶν αἵματος καὶ πολὺ διεστηκῶς τῆς ἡμετέρας χρηστότητος, ἐπιξενωθεὶς ἡμῖν **8:12l** [11] ἔτυχεν ἥς ἔχομεν πρὸς πᾶν ἔθνος φιλανθρωπίας ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ὥστε ἀναγορεύεσθαι ἡμῶν πατέρα καὶ προσκυνούμενον ὑπὸ πάντων τὸ δεύτερον τοῦ βασιλικοῦ θρόνου πρόσωπον διατελεῖν, **8:12m** [12] οὐκ ἐνέγκας δὲ τὴν ὑπερφηανίαν ἐπετήδευσεν τῆς ἀρχῆς στερεῖσαι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος **8:12n** [13] τόν τε ἡμέτερον σωτήρα καὶ διὰ παντὸς εὐεργέτην Μαρδοχαῖον καὶ τὴν ἁμεμπτον τῆς βασιλείας κοινωνὸν Ἑσθήρ σὺν παντὶ τῷ τούτων ἔθνει πολυπλόκοις μεθόδων παραλογισμοῖς αἰτησάμενος εἰς ἀπώλειαν· **8:12o** [14] διὰ γὰρ τῶν τρόπων τούτων ὥθη λαβὼν ἡμᾶς ἐρήμους τὴν τῶν Περσῶν ἐπικράτησιν εἰς τοὺς Μακεδόνας μετάξει. **8:12p** [15] ἡμεῖς δὲ τοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ τρισαλιτηρίου παραδεδομένους εἰς ἀφανισμόν Ἰουδαίους εὐρίσκομεν οὐ κακούργους ὄντας, δικαιοτάτοις δὲ πολιτευομένους νόμοις, **8:12q** [16] ὄντας δὲ υἱοὺς τοῦ ὑψίστου μεγίστου ζῶντος θεοῦ τοῦ κατευθύνοντος ἡμῖν τε καὶ τοῖς προγόνοις ἡμῶν τὴν βασιλείαν ἐν τῇ καλλίστῃ διαθέσει.

8:12r [17] καλῶς οὖν ποιήσετε μὴ προσχρησάμενοι τοῖς ὑπὸ Ἀμὴν Ἀμαδάθου ἀποσταλεῖσι γράμμασιν, [18] διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν τὸν ταῦτα ἐξεργασάμενον πρὸς ταῖς Σούσων πύλαις ἐσταυρῶσθαι σὺν τῇ πανοικίᾳ, τὴν καταξίαν τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐπικρατοῦντος θεοῦ διὰ τάχους ἀποδόντος αὐτῷ κρίσιν, **8:12s** [19] τὸ δὲ ἀντίγραφον τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ταύτης ἐκθέντες ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ μετὰ παρρησίας ἔαν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἑαυτῶν νομίμοις καὶ συνεπισχύειν αὐτοῖς [20] ὅπως τοὺς ἐν καιρῷ θλίψεως ἐπιθεμένους αὐτοῖς ἀμύνωνται τῇ τρισκαιδεκάτῃ τοῦ δωδεκάτου μηνὸς Ἄδαρ τῇ αὐτῇ ἡμέρᾳ· **8:12t** [21] ταύτην γὰρ ὁ πάντα δυναστεύων θεὸς ἀντ' ὀλεθρίας τοῦ ἐκλεκτοῦ γένους ἐποίησεν αὐτοῖς εὐφροσύνην. **8:12v** [22] καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἐν ταῖς ἐπωνύμοις ὑμῶν ἐορταῖς ἐπίσημον ἡμέραν μετὰ πάσης εὐωχίας ἄγετε, ὅπως καὶ νῦν καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα σωτηρίᾳ ἧ ἡμῖν [23] καὶ τοῖς εὐνοοῦσιν Πέρσαις, τοῖς δὲ ἡμῖν ἐπιβουλευούσιν

the influence of Haman, rather than to some earlier historical records. The latter is the way it was understood by Josephus: τοῦτο δὲ οὐκ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχαιοτέρων οὐδ' ἀκοῇ γνωρίμων ἡμῖν οὕτως ἰδεῖν ἔστιν ἔχον ἀλλ' (A.J. 11.276). Gregg (1913, 681) also discusses the difficulty of the wording.

51. The text here is probably corrupt. Two manuscripts read οὐ before χρώμενοι, and Gregg (1913, 681) proposes reading διαβολαῖς for μεταβολαῖς (as supported by one minor manuscript). In this way, it would read, "Not by relying on slanders, but by..."

for us to make the kingdom tranquil with peace for all persons, **8:12i** [9] <not> by making changes,⁵¹ but always by judging those things that come before our eyes with more moderate attention.

8:12k [10] For Haman son of Hammedatha, a Macedonian (really an alien to the Persian blood and quite devoid of our kindliness), having become our guest, **8:12l** [11] enjoyed so fully the goodwill that we have for every nation that he was called our father and was continually bowed down to by all as the person second to the royal throne. **8:12m** [12] But, unable to restrain his arrogance, he undertook to deprive us of our kingdom and our life **8:12n** [13] and with intricate craft and deceit asked for the destruction of Mordecai, our savior and perpetual benefactor, and of Esther, the blameless partner of our kingdom, together with their whole nation. **8:12o** [14] He thought that by these methods he would catch us undefended and would transfer the kingdom of the Persians to the Macedonians. **8:12p** [15] But we find that the Jews, who were consigned to annihilation by this thrice-cursed man, are not evildoers but are governed by most righteous laws **8:12q** [16] and are children of the living God, most high, most mighty, who has directed the kingdom both for us and for our ancestors in the most excellent order.

8:12r [17] You will do well, therefore, by not executing the letters sent by Haman son of Hammedatha, [18] since he, the one who did these things, has been hanged at the gates of Susa with all his household—for God, who rules over all things, has speedily inflicted on him the punishment that he deserved. **8:12s** [19] Therefore post a copy of this letter publicly in every place, and permit the Jews to live under their own laws. And give them reinforcements, [20] so that on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, Adar, on that very day, they may defend themselves against those who attack them at the time of oppression. **8:12t** [21] For God, who rules over all things, has made this day to be a joy for his chosen people instead of a day of destruction for them. **8:12v** [22] Therefore you shall observe this with all good cheer as a notable day among your commemorative festivals, so that both now and hereafter it may represent deliverance for us [23] and the loyal Persians but that it may be a reminder of destruction

This reading is further supported both by parallelism with the previous sentence and by Josephus's version of the passage: *ὡς διαβολαῖς μὲν καὶ κατηγορίαις μὴ προσέχειν* (A.J. 11.276). We might also propose that the original wording was something like *οὐ μὲν χρώμενοι* and that in a continuous uncial manuscript the repeated letters were confused or simply omitted.

μνημόσυνον τῆς ἀπωλείας. **8:12x [24]** πᾶσα δὲ πόλις ἢ χώρα τὸ σύνολον, ἥτις κατὰ ταῦτα μὴ ποιήσῃ, δόρατι καὶ πυρὶ καταναλωθήσεται μετ' ὀργῆς· οὐ μόνον ἀνθρώποις ἄβατος, ἀλλὰ καὶ θηρίοις καὶ πετεινοῖς εἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον ἔχθιστος κατασταθήσεται.

A Further Addition in the Greek Alpha Text of Esther

The Alpha Text of Greek Esther (GEA) represents a further embellishment of GEB as found in the LXX. Specifically, it adds a letter from Mordecai that follows and accompanies the second decree of Artaxerxes (Add E above). In GEA, Addition E (GEB 8:12a–x) is numbered 7:22–32. The new text is added immediately after GEB 8:13 (also given above = GEA 7:33a) and is numbered 7:33b–38. The text is as follows, using the numbering of GEA.⁵²

GEA 7:33b καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐνεχείρισε τῷ Μαρδοχαίῳ γράφειν ὅσα βούλεται. **7:34** ἀπέστειλε δὲ Μαρδοχαῖος διὰ γραμμάτων καὶ ἐσφραγίσατο τῷ τοῦ βασιλέως δακτυλίῳ μένειν τὸ ἔθνος αὐτοῦ κατὰ χώρεος ἕκαστον αὐτῶν καὶ ἐορτάζειν τῷ θεῷ. **7:35** ἡ δὲ ἐπιστολή, ἣν ἀπέστειλεν ὁ Μαρδοχαῖος, ἦν ἔχουσα ταῦτα

7:36 Ἀμὲν ἀπέστειλεν ὑμῖν γράμματα ἔχοντα οὕτως, Ἔθνος Ἰουδαίων ἀπειθὲς σπουδάσατε ταχέως ἀναπέμπψαι μοι εἰς ἀπώλειαν. **7:37** ἐγὼ δὲ ὁ Μαρδοχαῖος μηνύω ὑμῖν τὸν ταῦτα ἐγρασάμενον πρὸς ταῖς Σούσων πύλαις κεκρεμάσθαι καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ διακεχειρίσθαι. **7:38** οὗτος γὰρ ἐβούλετο ἀποκτεῖναι ἡμᾶς τῇ τρίτῃ καὶ δεκάτῃ τοῦ μηνός, ὅς ἐστιν Ἄδαρ.

52. For discussion of the significance of this Addition, see De Troyer 2003, 59–89. She argues that GEA is indeed a Greek work that is later than the version of GEB, upon which it is partially based, but older than Josephus, Origen's Hexapla, and the Lucianic Greek text (GEL), which depended on Origen. Consequently, GEA represents a further Greek expansion and interpretation of the Greek Esther tradition datable to before the end of the first century CE. She proposes further that this is the version of the story of Greek Esther that Philo presented in Rome at the time of the Jewish delegation after the persecution of 37 CE. See also DeTroyer 2000. In general, on the relation of the Greek versions of Esther, including GEB, GEA, and GEL, to the Hebrew original(s), see Tov 1982, 1–25.

53. The main text resumes at 8:13: τὰ δὲ ἀντίγραφα ἐκτιθέσθωσαν ὀφθαλμοφανῶς ἐν πάσῃ τῇ βασιλείᾳ, ἐτοίμους τε εἶναι πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους εἰς ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν πολεμῆσαι αὐτῶν τοὺς ὑπεναντίους (“Let copies of the decree be posted conspicuously in all the kingdom, and let all the Jews be ready on that day to fight against their enemies”). It then continues to 10:3, where the MT ends.

for those who plot against us. **8:12x [24]** Every city and country, without exception, that does not act accordingly shall be destroyed in wrath with spear and fire. It shall be made not only impassable for human beings but also most hateful to wild animals and birds for all time.⁵³

GEA 7:33b Now the king appointed⁵⁴ to Mardochaïos to write whatever he wished. **7:34** And Mardochaïos sent by way of writings, and he sealed (them) with the king's seal, for his people to remain each of them in his own province and to feast to God. **7:35** And the letter that Mardochaïos sent was as follows:

7:36 "Haman sent you a letter with the following: 'Make every effort in my name immediately to send unto destruction the recalcitrant nation of the Jews.' **7:37** But now I Mardochaïos remind you that the one who enacted all these things has been hanged at the gates of Susa, and his household has been handed over (for execution). **7:38** For this very man wished to kill (all of) us on the thirteenth of the (twelfth) month, which is Adar."

54. This compounded form of *χειρίζειν* is not otherwise attested in LSJ, while the uncompounded form occurs only once in the entire LXX, at GEB 8:12e (in Addition E above). It is thus possible to read it here as *ἐν ἐχείρισε τῷ Μαρδοχαΐῳ*, with the preposition forming a hyperbaton with *τῷ Μαρδοχαΐῳ*; however, the verb is strained a bit by the preposition in its usual instrumental sense. It would have to be translated "The king appointed by (or to) Mardochaïos to write whatever he wished." The grammar of the rest of this addition is also weak and has Semitic elements, such as rendering all senses of Hebrew *בְּ* with Greek *ἐν*. That may be partly what is going on in the case of the verb construction, but *ἐν* here, whether as preposition (in hyperbaton) or compounded verb, is decidedly more Greek than Semitic. Also, the use of the verb *χειρίζειν* seems entirely consistent with the Greek elaborations in E above. It probably suggests that we should just take it in a more vernacular sense, as given above.

Addition G. *Subscriptio*: The Purim Letter (GEB 10:3l; Vulg. 11:1)

This passage is usually given as part of F, as reflected in its numbering both in the LXX and Vulgate. Gregg (1913: 682–83) assumed that it belongs to the same stage of redaction as the preceding addition, albeit with some caution. The date is discussed in the notes below. While Josephus makes no mention of either Mordecai's dream (A) or its interpretation (F), he does know the tradition of use by Alexandrian Jews, as reflected in this *subscriptio* (sometimes called the colophon).

10:31 [11:1] Ἐτους τετάρτου βασιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου καὶ Κλεοπάτρας εἰσήνεγκεν Δωσίθεος, ὃς ἔφη εἶναι ἱερεὺς καὶ Λευίτης, καὶ Πτολεμαῖος ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ τὴν προκειμένην ἐπιστολὴν τῶν Φρουραι, ἣν ἔφασαν εἶναι καὶ ἐρμηνευκέναι Λυσίμαχον Πτολεμαίου τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ.

55. On the regnal dating the best possibilities are Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II (180–145 BCE); Ptolemy IX Soter and Cleopatra IV (116–107 BCE) or Ptolemy IX and Cleopatra V Selene (101–88 BCE); and Ptolemy XII Auletes and Cleopatra VI (80–51 BCE). Gregg (1913, 683–84), following Jacob, proposes a date of 114 BCE but places it under Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon (144–116 BCE); his dates seem to be off by current reckoning of the Ptolemaic dynasty. As shown in sec. 3.5 below (no. 2), both wives of Ptolemy VIII, each named Cleopatra, tend to be listed with him. This leaves the dates for Ptolemy XII, as suggested above, as the most likely. Moreover, Ptolemy VI (the first option above) did not marry and elevate his sister, Cleopatra II, to the throne until ca. 172 BCE, thus making a date “in the fourth year” somewhat problematic, unless one assumes that the regnal sequence was revised at the point of their marriage. Similar problems obtain with the other pairings above as well. The fictional setting thus leaves the situation in some doubt. However, Bickerman (1944, 339–62) offers a convincing interpretation of the *subscriptio* (which he calls the colophon) and dates it to the fourth year of Ptolemy XII (78–77 BCE). Such a date would be consistent with the other evidence for GEB and the related texts. For a Jewish inscription honoring Ptolemy XII and Cleopatra VI, see sec. 3.5 below (no. 3).

56. The pairing of “priest and Levite” is perhaps not as anomalous as suggested by Moore (1977, 250–51), particularly in this period. Note that Ezra (Esdras) is called a Levite and priest in Clement, *Strom.* 1.22.149.3 (quoted at p. 253).

57. *Phrourai* (Φρουραι) is the same term used in GEB 9:26: διὰ τοῦτο ἐπεκλήθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι αὗται Φρουραι διὰ τοὺς κλήρους, ὅτι τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν καλοῦνται Φρουραι. Josephus (*A.J.* 11.295) uses nearly the same form of the word (Φρουραῖος, thus Φρουραῖοι

10:31 [11:1] In the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra,⁵⁵ Dositheus, who said he was a priest and Levite,⁵⁶ and Ptolemy his son, brought [to Egypt] the preceding Letter on the Phrourai [Purim],⁵⁷ which they said to be [genuine?] and Lysimachus, son of Ptolemy, had translated, from those in Jerusalem.⁵⁸

in the nominative), drawn apparently from this version. The Purim Letter here designates the entire story as presented; it takes its name from the reference in Esth 9:20 MT to the fact that Mordecai “recorded these things and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces of King Ahashuerus, both near and far.” See Swete 1914, 258; Gregg 1913, 684n. GEB 9:20 adds the fact that “this very Mordochaios wrote these words in a book and sent them out” (Ἐγραψεν δὲ Μαρδοχαῖος τοὺς* λόγους τούτους εἰς βιβλίον καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ὅσοι ἦσαν ἐν τῇ Ἀρταξέρξου βασιλείᾳ, τοῖς ἐγγύς καὶ τοῖς μακρὰν). A close look at Codex Sinaiticus shows that the standard reading of v. 20 from the LXX given above needs to be emended in light of the superfluous article before λόγους. The text of Ⲭ actually reads ΤΟΥΤ’C (with a *keraia* above and a final lunate sigma [C] showing faintly), thus apparently τούτ(ο)ς (“this very Mordochaios”). If a second hand, it might have been intended as a correction for the superfluous τοὺς or understood as a *testimonium* on the authorship of the book.

58. Some of the manuscripts were emended to read τὸν instead of τῶν (so Gregg 1913, 684, citing the editions of Fritzsche and Lagarde). The reading of Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲭ), however, is clearly Τϣ and thus the genitive plural τῶν. Even so, the referent here is not clear. It may be taken to mean “those dwelling in Jerusalem” (so Gregg 1913, 683–84; Moore 1977, 250–52), as would certainly be the sense of the accusative article. In the genitive, however, it might also be taken to refer to books or copies in Jerusalem used by Lysimachus, as the source for his translation, perhaps as a continuation of the *testimonium* formula ἣν ἔφασαν εἶναι, thus “which they said was among those in Jerusalem and Lysimachus translated....” Since the translator seems to be the grandson of the priest Dositheos who supposedly brought the text to Egypt, this latter possibility should not be too quickly dismissed, as he is apparently from Egypt.

3.4. 3 Maccabees: The Letters

The title 3 Maccabees is a misnomer, since the text has nothing to do with the Maccabees.¹ Its story is actually set earlier, during the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204 BCE). It begins with an account of Ptolemy IV's military victory over the Seleucid monarch Antiochus III at Raphia, a city near Gaza in Palestine. After the battle, Ptolemy IV attempts to enter the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. God thwarts his intrusion, however, by smiting the king. After recovering and returning to Alexandria, Ptolemy IV seeks vengeance against the Jews. He requires all Jews in Alexandria either to subscribe to the worship of the Alexandrians or to be subjected to a registration involving a tax and reduction of status. But even this punishment does not satisfy the king; he proceeds to send a letter to his generals throughout Egypt ordering the arrest of all Jews. The king plans to have the Jews trampled to death by inebriated elephants in the hippodrome of Alexandria, but three times God hampers his plot. The third time, the elephants actually turn on the king's army in the hippodrome. Subsequently, Ptolemy IV is transformed and shows favor on the Jews. The Jews celebrate their deliverance with a seven-day festival.

The work 3 Maccabees appears to have been written by a Jewish author in Egypt in the early to mid-first century BCE. It shows several similarities with the Epistle of Aristeas, 2 Maccabees, and Greek Esther, including the use of letters (3:12–29; 7:1–9).

Authorship

Unlike much of the other Jewish literature out of Hellenistic Egypt, 3 Maccabees is not explicitly pseudepigraphic; in fact, the surviving text furnishes no pertinent information about its author. It is reasonable to assume that the author was a Greek-speaking Jew living in Egypt at either the end

1. Emmet (1913, 155) suggests, intriguingly, that *Ptolemaika* may have been the original title. However, there is no proof to support this view. The traditional title probably became attached to the book as a result of its “collocation with the other books of Maccabees” in codices of the Greek Bible.

of the Hellenistic period or the beginning of the Roman period. It is also likely that he was from the same general social context as the authors of the Epistle of Aristee, 2 Maccabees, and Greek Esther, all of which employ similar vocabulary and syntax as well as common themes.²

Date

Proposed dates for the composition range between the early first century BCE to the mid-first century CE. There is virtual agreement, however, that the text was not written around the time of the events it narrates, in the late third century BCE.

One important reference date comes from another witness to the story of the elephant massacre in 3 Maccabees. Josephus tells a strikingly similar story of Jews threatened by inebriated elephants in *C. Ap.* 2.53–55, but he dates the event to approximately 145 BCE, in the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (Physcon) (146–117 BCE). Josephus and 3 Maccabees have both dramatized the same event, but it is Josephus who probably gives the more genuine time frame associated with this legend (regardless of its historicity).³ Consequently, 3 Maccabees must have been written after 145 BCE. The evidence of an allusion in 3 Macc 6:6 to the Greek apocryphal Additions to Daniel (Add Dan 26–27; LXX Dan 3:49–50), however, pushes the *terminus post quem* even later, to approximately 100 BCE.⁴

The *terminus ante quem* of 3 Maccabees is 70 CE, the date of the destruction of the Jerusalem temple.⁵ The description of the temple in 3 Macc 1:9–10 and the tone of the narrative set before the temple in 3 Macc 1–2 give every impression that the temple was still standing at the time of composition.

Between these bounds, scholars generally support one of three date ranges: late Ptolemaic (100–30 BCE), Augustan (soon after 24 BCE), or Caligulan (during or just after the events of 38–41 CE). While the Cal-

2. See Emmet 1913, 158.

3. Emmet 1913, 159–60; Hadas 1953, 11; Tcherikover 1961, 7–9; Barclay 1996, 38, 194; J. Collins 2000, 123–24; Nickelsburg 2005, 200; Johnson 1996, 82–93; 2004, 184–87.

4. Note, however, that the precise date of LXX Daniel is unclear; 100 BCE is a popular estimate. On this connection, see Grimm 1857, 220; Emmet 1913, 158; J. Collins 2000, 124; Johnson 2004, 130–31.

5. See Emmet 1913, 156; Anderson 1985, 510–11; D. Williams 1995, 24; Johnson 2004, 132.

igulan dating is no longer popular,⁶ the Augustan date, built on the premise that the *λαογραφία* (registration involving taxation) in 3 Macc 2:28 refers anachronistically to an Augustan policy, still has strong advocates.⁷ Opponents increasingly point to late Ptolemaic *λαογραφία* receipts as counterevidence.⁸ The emerging majority opinion among scholars is that 3 Maccabees was written in the early to mid-first century BCE.⁹ In support of this dating are parallels in themes and language with other texts from this period (2 Maccabees, Greek Esther, the Epistle of Aristeeas);¹⁰ the presence of the greeting formula *χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι* (“greetings and prosperity”) in both of the text’s epistles (3:12, 7:1; see Ep. Arist. §35), a formula *en vogue* in the late second century to early first century BCE but rare in the Roman period;¹¹ the direct literary influence of 3 Maccabees on Additions B and E to Greek Esther, which were probably written in the mid-first century BCE;¹² and the text’s close familiarity with Ptolemaic practices and

6. This theory, based on the idea that Ptolemy IV is a cipher for Caligula in 3 Maccabees, was popularized by Ewald 1852, 4:535–38; Grimm 1857, 215–19; and Willrich 1904, 256. Its strongest recent advocate is J. Collins 2000, 125.

7. J. Cohen 1941, 13–14; Hadas 1953, 17–21; Tcherikover 1961, 12–18; Barclay 1996, 448. Cf. J. Collins 2000, 125. On the papyrological evidence, see CPJ 2:60–64.

8. See P.Tebt. 103, 189, and P.Ryl. 667, in which forms of *λαογραφία* seem to denote a “census.” See the important discussions of the term in its Ptolemaic context and in 3 Maccabees in Johnson 2004, 134–35; Gruen 2002, 75–77; cf. Keddie 2016. The *λαογραφία* appears to have been used in the Ptolemaic period for the purpose of collecting a tax from the rural population of Egypt (Monson 2014). Thus, if it were imposed on the Alexandrian Jews as in the narrative of 3 Maccabees, it would indeed be perceived as degrading (2:28).

9. Emmet 1913, 155; Motzo 1977, 274 (orig. 1924); Bickerman 1928, 798; J. Cohen 1941, 23–25; Moreau 1941, 111; Anderson 1985, 512; D. Williams 1995, 24; Passoni Dell’Acqua 1997; Gruen 1998, 226; Johnson 2004, 141; Croy 2006, xiii; Mélèze-Modrzejewski 2008, 123; Keddie 2016.

10. Emmet 1913, 156–57. See the section on Literary Relationships below.

11. Emmet 1913, 157–58; Bickerman 1928, 798; Tcherikover 1961, 11; Anderson 1985, 512; Johnson 2004, 139. For the typically cited date range of the formula, see Exler 1923, 105–7. While Emmet, Bickerman, and Johnson have tried to use this formula to set not only a *terminus post quem* but also a *terminus ante quem* prior to the Roman period for 3 Maccabees, the changing state of our papyrological evidence cautions against confidence in this regard. See, e.g., the use of this formula in P.Princ. 3.160 (25–1 BCE), BGU 16.2612 (15 BCE), and P.Mil.Cong. XIV, 102 (2 BCE). It now seems that the formula was popular from the late second to mid-first century BCE but was still used sometimes in Roman Egypt.

12. See the subsection on Literary Relationships below.

administrative language.¹³ Altogether, the support for a date in the early to mid-first century BCE is the most cogent and the most difficult to refute.

Provenance

Scholars are nearly unanimous that the text was written in the vicinity of Alexandria by a Jewish author living there.¹⁴ Although the evidence is not extensive, a provenance in Alexandria is reasonable because much of the plot of 3 Maccabees is set in Alexandria and evinces a striking interest in the institutions of that city (e.g., the cult of Dionysus, the hippodrome, citizenship) and the Ptolemaic court present there; 3 Maccabees betrays similarities with other Jewish texts likely written in Alexandria: the Epistle of Aristee, 2 Maccabees, and Greek Esther—including the author’s penchant for “pseudo-classicalism” in his language;¹⁵ the author seems to have known the scriptures only in Greek;¹⁶ and the author reveals familiarity with the “technical language of Ptolemaic decrees” (3:12–29; 7:1–9).¹⁷ Taken together, these features point toward a Ptolemaic provenance, particularly one in Alexandria.

Recently, however, some scholars have proposed that 3 Maccabees might have been written in the Egyptian Fayyum rather than Alexandria.¹⁸ Proponents of this theory emphasize that 3 Maccabees shows more of a concern for the Egyptian *chōra* (“country”) than any other surviving Jewish text: Ptolemy IV explicitly targets Jews in the *chōra* (3:1) and stages the persecution in a hippodrome specifically situated between *polis* and *chōra* (4:11); the text has the king enforce policies by sending letters to his officials throughout Egypt (3:12; 7:1); and, in celebration of their deliverance, the Jews commemorate a prayer hall and celebrate a festival not in Alexandria but in Ptolemais in the Fayyum (7:17).¹⁹ Additionally, the interest in royal control over access to sacred places throughout the text as well as the depiction of a Ptolemaic *λαογραφία* as exploitative might reflect specifically

13. Passoni Dell’Acqua 1997; Keddie 2016.

14. See, among others, Hadas 1953, 22–23; Anderson 1985, 512; Johnson 2004, 169–81.

15. Emmet 1913, 161; Anderson 1985, 510.

16. Tcherikover 1961, 18; Hadas 1953, 22.

17. Anderson 1985, 512.

18. Alexander and Alexander 2007; Keddie 2016.

19. On the festival, see Tromp 1995, 317–18; Alexander 2001, 326–39; Burns 2006, 19–21. For further evidence of Jewish life in the Fayyum, see sec. 3.5 below.

Fayyumic concerns.²⁰ Ultimately, whether the author composed the text in Alexandria or the Fayyum, one cannot overlook his interest in the interactions between the two.

Form

Third Maccabees is preserved in several LXX manuscripts but seems to be missing the opening of the narrative.²¹ Despite this, it is clear that the work draws upon the conventions of Hellenistic historiography.²² Included in the text are references to historical persons and events, geographical place names, and official documents such as royal correspondence. However, the historical forms and referents are recast and interspersed with embellishments making the narrative “too fabulous” to conform to even the standards of Hellenistic historiography (e.g., five hundred elephants, too many Jews to register, angels).²³ The result is a literary product that might best be considered *sui generis*.²⁴

A significant feature of 3 Maccabees’s historiographic conceit is the use of letters. Two royal edicts (3:12–29; 7:1–9) from Ptolemy IV to his officials throughout Egypt are embedded at pivotal points in the narrative. The first indicts the Jews as traitors and calls for them to be conveyed to the capitol for punishment. In the second, Ptolemy IV revokes these charges, blaming his Friends for instigating them, and extols the Jewish God. Both letters underscore the connectivity of the Ptolemaic bureaucracy and satirize the well-known Ptolemaic use of letters to enforce and control policies throughout the kingdom.²⁵ While only the second letter has a valediction (ἐρρωσθε, 7:9), both letters have conventional prescripts employing the greeting χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι (“Greetings and prosperity,” 3:12; 7:1), which is also used in Ep. Arist. §35. As noted above, this formula was popular in the first century BCE. With this gesture toward verisimilitude, the text offers a realistic, if hyperbolic, depiction of the king’s character in a way that simple narration could not. At the same time, the letters contribute to

20. Keddie 2016.

21. Grimm 1857, 219; Hadas 1953, 4–5; Tcherikover 1961, 2 n. 5; Nickelsburg 1984, 80 n. 266; Anderson 1985, 512–13; Parente 1988, 145; Croy 2006, xvii.

22. Johnson 2004, 190–216. Cf. Tromp 1995, 317; Wills 1995, 19; Barclay 1996, 195; Gruen 1998, 224–25; J. Collins 2000, 124.

23. Johnson 2004, esp. 190–92.

24. Johnson 2004, 5, 53.

25. Keddie 2016.

the historiographic conceit of the work, while also offering a subtle critique of the Ptolemaic power network.

Literary Relationships

Third Maccabees evinces striking similarities with Esther, 2 Maccabees, and the Epistle of Aristeas, among other folkloric texts from Jewish antiquity.

That a literary relationship exists between Esther and 3 Maccabees is beyond doubt. The precise nature of this relationship is complicated, however, by the complex evolution of the text of Esther around the time of the composition of 3 Maccabees.²⁶ But for this very reason, the relationship between these two texts has significant implications for the dating of each.

Even the casual reader of Esther and 3 Maccabees will note that these texts exhibit an array of thematic and structural similarities. In both books there is a diaspora setting, a king issues an edict to destroy the Jews but later withdraws it, and the Jews establish a holiday to commemorate their rescue. More specific common themes can also be stated: there are many feasts, a Jew hinders a plot to kill a king, royal officials (as opposed to the king) are considered responsible for the attempted persecution of the Jews, and after their rescue the Jews kill three hundred of their enemies (Esth 9:15; 3 Macc 7:14–15). These and additional parallels suggest an undeniable affinity between these two texts.²⁷

If we may presume that the story of Esther was in circulation among the Jews in Egypt in some form (oral or written, Hebrew or Greek) prior to the writing of 3 Maccabees,²⁸ then the obvious conclusion would be that the author of 3 Maccabees modeled his work on the story of Esther. There is, however, an additional stage of literary dependence that needs to be taken into account. Hacham's important study of intertextuality and literary correspondences between Esther and 3 Maccabees has demonstrated that the two latest Additions to Greek Esther, B and E, are dependent on 3 Maccabees. Greek Esther and 3 Maccabees have nine words in common that

26. See further the introduction to Greek Esther in sec. 3.3 above and the sources cited there.

27. The parallels mentioned here are based on Hacham 2007, 767–72. On thematic parallels, see also Motzo 1977; Hadas 1953, 6–8; Alexander 2001; Mogliano-Tromp 2009.

28. As evidenced by, among other things, the mention of Mordechai's day in 2 Macc 15:36.

appear nowhere else in the LXX; seven of these appear in additions B and E.²⁹ Additional statistics that take into account syntax, linguistic expressions, and other rare words further support this dependence.³⁰ Because the correspondences with 3 Maccabees are largely contained in B and E (as opposed to throughout Greek Esther), the theory is that these Additions must have been written after 3 Maccabees.³¹ Many scholars would date Additions B and E to 77 BCE, but 77 BCE is the date for only the Greek translation and colophon.³² B and E were probably added to the Greek translation sometime in the following decades.

Thus, the author of 3 Maccabees modeled his story on Esther, but Add Esth B and E depend on 3 Maccabees. Unfortunately, there are not enough literary correspondences between Greek Esther (minus B and E) and 3 Maccabees to conclude that the author of 3 Maccabees knew Esther in its Greek translation. That he was likely writing in Egypt, however, does suggest that he would have known Esther in Greek, not Hebrew. If 3 Maccabees does depend on Greek Esther, then it must be dated after 77 BCE but before additions B and E were written. This would give us a date in the mid-first century BCE for 3 Maccabees. But since 3 Maccabees's dependence on Greek Esther cannot be proven affirmatively, the early end of the possible date range for 3 Maccabees still includes at least the first quarter of the first century BCE.

The relationship between 2 Maccabees and 3 Maccabees is not quite as impressive. Although 3 Maccabees is not actually a sequel to 2 Maccabees, as its misleading title would suggest, the book does share some of the same themes and stylistic and linguistic proclivities as 2 Maccabees. The most striking thematic parallel is between the divine punishment of Ptolemy IV in 3 Maccabees (2:21–24) and the Heliodorus incident (3:22–31) and

29. Hacham 2007, 772–74. The nine words are as follows, *παραπέμπω* (Add Esth B, 3:13d; 3 Macc 1:26), *διηγεῖσθαι* (Add Esth B 3:13d; 3 Macc 3:11, 22; 4:16), *δυσμενής* (Add Esth B 3:13d, g; 3 Macc 3:2, 7, 25), *δυσνοέω* (Add Esth B 3:13e; 3 Macc 3:24), *ὑπερχαρής* (Esth 5:9; 3 Macc 7:20), *μηχανάομαι* (Add Esth E 8:12c; 3 Macc 5:5, 22, 28; 6:22, 24), *κόμπος* (Add Esth E 8:12d; 3 Macc 6:5), *ὀλεθρία* (Add Esth E 8:12t; 3 Macc 4:2; 5:5), *κώθων* (Esth 8:17; 3 Macc 6:31). See further Mogliano-Tromp 2009.

30. Hacham 2007, 774–77.

31. Hacham 2007, 778–80. This theory of the literary relationship is supported by C. Moore 1973, 383–86; 1977, 198–99; Paul 1987, 322–23; Alexander 2001, 333–39; Nickelsburg 2005, 201–5; Burns 2006, 20.

32. See Bickerman 1944. Cf. Hadas 1953, 8; Moore 1977, 161; J. Collins 2000, 111 n. 221; Burns 2006, 18.

punishment of Antiochus IV (9:4–12) in 2 Maccabees, but a list of further similarities has been compiled.³³ Moreover, 2 Maccabees and 3 Maccabees share at least twenty-five words and phrases in common that are not found anywhere else in the LXX, as well as an abundance of other rare words and formulations. This could suggest that the author of 3 Maccabees knew 2 Maccabees, but there is only enough evidence to indicate that they emerged from the same provenance at proximate dates.³⁴

The similarities in language, style, imagery, and subject matter between 3 Maccabees and the Epistle of Aristeeas have long been noted.³⁵ Both stories are set in Egypt, and a Ptolemy is the central figure. In each, a Ptolemy acknowledges the greatness of the Jewish God and his protection of the Jews (3 Macc 7:6; Ep. Arist. §§16, 19, 37) and submits an offering of thanks to the Jewish God in the Jerusalem temple (3 Macc 1:9: *χάριτας ἀποδιδούς*; Ep. Arist. §37: *χαριστικὸν ἀνατιθέντες*), thereby inspiring in beholders a sense of awe or wonder (3 Macc 1:10: *θαυμάσας*; Ep. Arist. §99: *θαυμασμὸν*).³⁶ In each text a priest named Eleazar plays a pivotal role in the outcome of the story (3 Macc 6:1–15; Ep. Arist. §§41ff–50, 128–171), specifically regarding the fate or standing of the Jews vis-à-vis the Ptolemaic court. Finally, 3 Maccabees and the Epistle of Aristeeas have similar apologetic programs by which the Jews are exalted through a triumph that reveals them as a pious and respectable people.

Third Maccabees also parallels the Epistle of Aristeeas linguistically, sharing an outstanding number of words and phrases.³⁷ For example, the key directive that the God of the Jews is the overseer of all (*ὁ πάντων ἐπόπτης θεός*) is revealed to Ptolemy in each text (3 Macc 2:21; Ep. Arist. §16). What is more, ten terms shared by these works do not appear elsewhere in the LXX, while eight of those ten do not appear elsewhere in the extant pseudepigrapha.³⁸ As Emmet noted a century ago, however, the

33. Emmet 1913, 156.

34. So Emmet 1913, 157. Cf. Hadas 1953, 11–12; Anderson 1985, 511, 515–16.

35. Johnson 2004, 141; Emmet 1913, 156–57; Hadas 1953, 11–12; Anderson 1985, 515–16; Delcor 1989, 495.

36. Delcor 1989, 495.

37. Emmet (1913, 157) lists twenty-five pairs of words or phrases that these texts share.

38. In the following list of terms used in 3 Maccabees and the Epistle of Aristeeas but not in the LXX, those also not found elsewhere in the pseudepigrapha are marked with an asterisk: **ἄλγκτος* (3 Macc 4:2; Ep. Arist. §269); **ἀλόγως* (3 Macc 6:25; Ep. Arist. §107); **ἀνέφικτος* (3 Macc 2:15; Ep. Arist. §§223, 283); **ἀπόλυσις* (3 Macc 6:37;

most striking resemblances between 3 Maccabees and the Epistle of Aristeas are found in the epistolary conventions employed in the official letters, or decrees, from Ptolemy.³⁹ So close is the relationship between these in 3 Maccabees and the Epistle of Aristeas that many scholars have proposed they were different responses to a similar issue.

Audience and Purpose

There have been many hypotheses concerning the audience and purpose of 3 Maccabees, but in general the arguments have fallen along two lines: the text is concerned with Jewish life in the diaspora or with the relationship of diaspora Judaism to Palestinian Judaism.⁴⁰ Correspondingly, questions have been raised as to whether the text reflects a time of harmony, thereby suggesting a Hellenistic date,⁴¹ or a time of crisis, implying a Roman date.⁴² It is important to recognize, however, that, while 3 Maccabees should be considered pertinent to a particular group in a distinct context, it is not necessarily a response to a particular historical crisis.⁴³ As historical fiction, it is flexible and may address many issues both directly and indirectly. That is, 3 Maccabees simultaneously provides entertainment and addresses tensions between Jews, Greeks, and “those of other kinds” (3:6), as well as between Jews and the Ptolemaic bureaucracy. Moreover, part of the text’s function is also etiological, inasmuch as it provides a legend related to the liberation festival annually celebrated by Jews in Egypt.⁴⁴

[GAK and MAF]

Ep. Arist. §6); *ἄπταιστος* (3 Macc 6:39; Ep. Arist. §187); **ἐντυχία* (3 Macc 6:40; Ep. Arist. §1); *ἕως* (3 Macc 5:46; Ep. Arist. §88); **ιδιότης* (3 Macc 7:17; Ep. Arist. §97); **κατευφημεῖν* (3 Macc 7:13; Ep. Arist. §217); **μεγαλομερής* (3 Macc 5:8; Ep. Arist. §§226, 319).

39. Emmet 1913, 157.

40. Hadas 1949, 175–84; Nickelsburg 1984, 82–83; Barclay 1996, 201–2; Gruen 1998, 231–34; Tromp 1999, 411–17; Alexander 2001. For general discussion, see deSilva 2002, 304–22.

41. Anderson 1985, 512; Gruen 1998, 232–33; Johnson 2004, 181.

42. Tracy 1928, 241–52; Hadas 1949, 175–84; Nickelsburg 1984, 82–83; Barclay 1996, 201–2.

43. Gruen 1998, 227; J. Collins 2000, 122. Instead of a single crisis, Cousland (2003, 2011) has suggested that the text encourages orthopraxy in response to the ongoing sense of alienation and disenfranchisement among Egyptian Jews.

44. Tromp 1995; 1999, 322; Alexander 2001; Johnson 2004, 53–54.

3 Maccabees 3:11–30: Letter from Ptolemy IV to His Generals and Soldiers in Egypt⁴⁵

11 Ἐκεῖνος μὲν οὖν τῇ κατὰ τὸ παρὸν εὐημερία γεγαυρωμένος καὶ οὐ καθορῶν τὸ τοῦ μεγίστου θεοῦ κράτος, ὑπολαμβάνων δὲ διηνεκῶς ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ διαμενεῖν βουλῇ ἔγραψεν κατ' αὐτῶν ἐπιστολὴν τήνδε

12 Βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος Φιλοπάτωρ τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον καὶ κατὰ τόπον στρατηγοῖς καὶ στρατιώταις χαίρειν καὶ ἐρῶσθαι.

13 Ἐρρωμαὶ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ πράγματα ἡμῶν. **14** τῆς εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν γενομένης ἡμῖν ἐπιστρατείας, ἥς ἴστε καὶ αὐτοί, τῇ τῶν θεῶν ἀπροπτῶτω συμμαχίᾳ κατὰ λόγον ἐπὶ τέλος ἀχθείσης **15** ἡγησάμεθα μὴ βία δόρατος, ἐπεικείᾳ δὲ καὶ πολλῇ φιλανθρωπίᾳ τιθνήσασθαι τὰ κατοικοῦντα Κοίλην Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην ἔθνη εὖ ποιῆσαι τε ἀσμένως. **16** καὶ τοῖς κατὰ πόλιν ἱεροῖς ἀπονείμαντες προσόδους πλείστας προήχθημεν καὶ εἰς τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀναβάντες τιμῆσαι τὸ ἱερὸν τῶν ἀλιτηρίων καὶ μηδέποτε ληγόντων τῆς ἀνοίας. **17** οἱ δὲ λόγῳ μὲν τὴν ἡμετέραν ἀποδεξάμενοι παρουσίαν, τῷ δὲ πράγματι νόθως, προθυμηθέντων ἡμῶν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν ναὸν αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς ἐκπρεπέσιν καὶ καλλίστοις ἀναθήμασιν τιμῆσαι **18** τύφοις φερόμενοι παλαιότεροι εἴρξαν ἡμᾶς τῆς εἰσόδου λειπόμενοι τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀλκῆς δι' ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους φιλανθρωπίαν. **19** τὴν δὲ αὐτῶν εἰς ἡμᾶς δυσμένειαν ἔκδηλον καθιστάντες ὡς μονώτατοι τῶν ἐθνῶν βασιλεῦσιν καὶ τοῖς ἑαυτῶν εὐεργεταῖς ὑψαυχενοῦντες οὐδὲν γνήσιον βούλονται φέρειν. **20** ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ τούτων ἀνοίᾳ συμπεριενεχθέντες καὶ μετὰ νίκης διακομισθέντες εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον τοῖς πᾶσιν ἔθνεσιν φιλανθρώπως ἀπαντήσαντες καθὼς ἔπρεπεν ἐποιήσαμεν, **21** ἐν δὲ τούτοις πρὸς τοὺς ὁμοφύλους αὐτῶν ἀμνησικακίαν ἅπασιν γνωρίζοντες· διὰ τε τὴν συμμαχίαν καὶ τὰ πεπιστευμένα μετὰ ἀπλότητος αὐτοῖς ἀρχῆθην μύρια πράγματα τολμήσαντες ἐξαλλοιῶσαι ἐβουλήθημεν καὶ πολιτείας αὐτοῦς

45. Greek text of the 3 Maccabees letters is adapted from Rahlfs and Hanhart 2006. English translation is based on the NRSV, partially adapted with notes by G. Anthony Keddie.

46. Here and in 3 Macc 7:1, ἐρῶσθαι is translated as “be well” instead of “good health” (NRSV) in order to differentiate its translation from that of ὑγιαίνειν (Ep. Arist. §35; 2 Macc 1:10; 9:19; 11:38).

11 Then the king, boastful of his present good fortune and not considering the might of the supreme God, but assuming that he would persevere constantly in his same purpose, wrote this letter against them:

12 “King Ptolemy Philopator to his generals and soldiers throughout Egypt and all its districts: Greetings and be well.⁴⁶

13 I myself and our state affairs⁴⁷ are faring well. **14** When our expedition took place in Asia,⁴⁸ as you yourselves know, it was brought to conclusion, according to plan, by the gods’ deliberate alliance with us in battle, **15** and we considered that we should not rule the nations inhabiting Coelesyria and Phoenicia by the power of the spear but should cherish them with clemency and great benevolence, gladly treating them well. **16** And when we had granted very great revenues to the temples in the cities, we came on to Jerusalem also and went up to honor the temple of those wicked people, who never cease from their folly. **17** They accepted our presence by word but insincerely by deed, because when we proposed to enter their inner temple and honor it with magnificent and most beautiful offerings, **18** they were carried away by their traditional arrogance and excluded us from entering; but they were spared the exercise of our power because of the benevolence that we have toward all. **19** By maintaining their manifest ill-will toward us, they become the only people among all nations who hold their heads high in defiance of kings and their own benefactors and are unwilling to regard any action as sincere. **20** But we, when we arrived in Egypt victorious, accommodated ourselves to their folly and did as was proper, since we treat all nations with benevolence. **21** Among other things, we made known to all our amnesty toward their compatriots here, both because of their alliance with us and the myriad affairs liberally entrusted to them from the beginning, and we ventured to make a change by deciding both to deem them worthy of Alexandrian citizenship and to

47. The use of *τὰ πράγματα* to refer to official state affairs is widespread. See, e.g., *CPJ* 1.132 (sec. 3.5 below [no. 8]). See also 2 Macc 9:24; 11:19; 3 Macc 3:13, 26; 7:1, 2; Greek Esther 3:13f, g; 8:12e.

48. The implied date of this letter is shortly after Ptolemy IV Philopator’s return to Egypt after his victory at the battle of Raphia in Palestine on 22 June 217 BCE (3 Macc 1:1–7).

Ἀλεξανδρέων καταξιώσαι καὶ μετόχους τῶν αἰεὶ ἱερῶν καταστήσαι. 22 οἱ δὲ τοῦναντίον ἐκδεχόμενοι καὶ τῇ συμφύτῳ κακοηθείᾳ τὸ καλὸν ἀπωσάμενοι, διηνεκῶς δὲ εἰς τὸ φαῦλον ἐκνεύοντες 23 οὐ μόνον ἀπεστρέψαντο τὴν ἀτίμητον πολιτείαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βδελύσσονται λόγῳ τε καὶ σιγῇ τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὀλίγους πρὸς ἡμᾶς γνησίως διακειμένους παρ' ἑκαστα ὑφορώμενοι μετὰ τῆς δυσκλεεστάτης ἐμβιώσεως διὰ τάχους ἡμᾶς καταστρέψαι τὰ πράγματα. 24 διὸ καὶ τεκμηρίοις καλῶς πεπεισμένοι τούτους κατὰ πάντα δυσνοεῖν ἡμῖν τρόπον καὶ προνοούμενοι μήποτε αἰφνιδίου μετέπειτα ταραχῆς ἐνστάσης ἡμῖν τοὺς δυσσεβεῖς τούτους κατὰ νώτου προδότας καὶ βαρβάρους ἔχωμεν πολεμίους 25 προστετάχαμεν ἅμα τῷ προσπεσεῖν τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τήνδε αὐθωρὶ τοὺς ἐννεμομένους σὺν γυναιξὶ καὶ τέκνοις μετὰ ὕβρεως καὶ σκυλμῶν ἀποστεῖλαι πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐν δεσμοῖς σιδηροῖς πάντοθεν κατακεκλεισμένους, εἰς ἀνήκεστον καὶ δυσκλεῖ πρέποντα δυσμενέσι φόνον. 26 τούτων γὰρ ὁμοῦ κολασθέντων διειλήφαμεν εἰς τὸν ἐπίλοιπον χρόνον τελείως ἡμῖν τὰ πράγματα ἐν εὐσταθείᾳ καὶ τῇ βελτίστῃ διαθέσει κατασταθήσεσθαι. 27 ὃς δ' ἂν σκεπάσῃ τινὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀπὸ γεραίου μέχρι νηπίου καὶ μέχρι τῶν ὑπομαστιδίων, αἰσχίσταις βασάνοις ἀποτυμπανισθήσεται πανοικία. 28 μηνύειν δὲ τὸν βουλόμενον, ἐφ' ᾧ τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ ἐμπίπτοντος ὑπὸ τὴν εὐθυναν λήμψεται καὶ ἐκ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς δισχιλίας καὶ τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ στεφανωθήσεται. 29 πᾶς δὲ τόπος οὗ ἂν φωραθῇ τὸ σύνολον σκεπαζόμενος Ἰουδαῖος, ἄβατος καὶ πυριφλεγῆς γινέσθω καὶ πάσῃ θνητῇ φύσει καθ' ἅπαν ἄχρηστος φανήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰεὶ χρόνον.

30 Καὶ ὁ μὲν τῆς ἐπιστολῆς τύπος οὕτως ἐγγράπτο.

make them participants in our regular sacred⁴⁹ rites. **22** But in their innate malice they took this in a contrary spirit and disdained what is good. Since they incline constantly to evil, **23** they not only spurn the priceless citizenship, but also both by speech and by silence they abominate those few among them who are sincerely disposed toward us; in every situation, in accordance with their infamous way of life, they secretly suspect that we may soon alter our policy. **24** Therefore, fully convinced by these indications that they are ill-disposed toward us in every way, we have taken precautions so that, if a sudden disorder later arises against us, we shall not have these impious people behind our backs as traitors and barbarous enemies. **25** Therefore we have given orders that, as soon as this letter arrives, you are to send to us those who live among you, together with their wives and children, with insulting and harsh treatment and bound securely with iron fetters, to suffer the sure and shameful death that befits enemies. **26** For when all of these have been punished, we are sure that for the remaining time our state affairs will be established for ourselves in good order and in the best state. **27** But those who shelter any of the Jews, whether old people or children or even infants, will be tortured to death with the most hateful torments, together with their families. **28** Any who are willing to give information will receive the property of those who incur the punishment and also two thousand drachmas from the royal treasury and will be awarded their freedom.⁵⁰ **29** Every place detected sheltering a Jew is to be made unapproachable and burned with fire and shall become useless for all time to any mortal creature.”

30 The letter was written in the above form.

49. The NRSV translates *ἱερῶν* as “religious rites.” I have changed this to “sacred rites,” following the NETS, to avoid the problem of imposing an isolated concept of religion on antiquity.

50. The majority manuscripts (A, V) have the genitive *ἐλευθερίας* here, but following a suggestion of Deissmann on the basis of one codex, Rahlfs and Hanhart (2006) emend this to *ἐλευθερία*, and English translations follow suit. See further Emmet 1913, 167. Although the language is different, the negative light thrown on informants here is similar to Ep. Arist. §167, which praises the king who puts informants (*ἐμφανιστὰς*) to death. Perhaps this is indicative of a shared Ptolemaic political context.

3 Maccabees 6:41–7:9: Letter of Ptolemy IV to His Generals and Officials in Egypt

6:41 συναινέσας δὲ αὐτοῖς ὁ βασιλεὺς ἔγραψεν αὐτοῖς τὴν ὑπογεγραμμένην ἐπιστολὴν πρὸς τοὺς κατὰ πόλιν στρατηγοὺς μεγαλοψύχως τὴν ἐκτενίαν ἔχουσαν

7:1 Βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος Φιλοπάτωρ τοῖς κατ' Αἴγυπτον στρατηγοῖς καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς τεταγμένοις ἐπὶ πραγμάτων χαίρειν καὶ ἐρρῶσθαι.

2 Ἐρρώμεθα δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ καὶ τὰ τέκνα ἡμῶν κατευθύναντος ἡμῖν τοῦ μεγάλου θεοῦ τὰ πράγματα, καθὼς προαιρούμεθα. **3** τῶν φίλων τινὲς κατὰ κακοήθειαν πυκνότερον ἡμῖν παρακείμενοι συνέπεισαν ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸ τοὺς ὑπὸ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἰουδαίους συναθροίσαντας σύστημα κολάσασθαι ξενιζούσας ἀποστατῶν τιμωρίαις **4** προφερόμενοι μηδέποτε εὐσταθήσειν τὰ πράγματα ἡμῶν δι' ἣν ἔχουσιν οὗτοι πρὸς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη δυσμένειαν, μέχρι ἂν συντελεσθῇ τοῦτο. **5** οἱ καὶ δεσμίους καταγαγόντες αὐτοὺς μετὰ σκυλῶν ὡς ἀνδράποδα, μᾶλλον δὲ ὡς ἐπιβούλους, ἄνευ πάσης ἀνακρίσεως καὶ ἐξετάσεως ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνελεῖν νόμου Σκυθῶν ἀγριωτέραν ἐμπεπορημένοι ὠμότητα. **6** ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐπὶ τούτοις σκληρότερον διαπειλησάμενοι καθ' ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους ἐπιείκειαν μόγις τὸ ζῆν αὐτοῖς χαρισάμενοι καὶ τὸν ἐπουράνιον θεὸν ἐγνωκότες ἀσφαλῶς ὑπερησπικότα τῶν Ἰουδαίων ὡς πατέρα ὑπὲρ υἱῶν διὰ παντὸς συμμαχοῦντα **7** τὴν τε τοῦ φίλου ἣν ἔχουσιν βεβαίαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ τοὺς προγόνους ἡμῶν εὐνοίαν ἀναλογισάμενοι δικαίως ἀπολελύκαμεν πάσης καθ' ὄντινον αἰτίας τρόπον **8** καὶ προστετάχαμεν ἐκάστω πάντας εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἐπιστρέφειν ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ μηθενὸς αὐτοὺς τὸ σύνολον καταβλάπτοντος μήτε ὀνειδίζειν περὶ τῶν γεγεννημένων παρὰ λόγον. **9** γινώσκετε γὰρ ὅτι κατὰ τούτων ἐάν τι κακοτεχνήσωμεν πονηρὸν ἢ ἐπιλυπήσωμεν αὐτοὺς τὸ σύνολον, οὐκ ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ τὸν πάσης δεσπόζοντα δυνάμεως θεὸν ὕψιστον ἀντικείμενον ἡμῖν ἐπ' ἐκδικήσει τῶν πραγμάτων κατὰ πᾶν ἀφεύκτως διὰ παντὸς ἔξομεν.

Ἐρρωσθε.

51. The implied date of this letter is immediately after the Jews completed their celebrations following their deliverance by God from Ptolemy IV's attempt to massacre them in the stadium at Schedia. According to 3 Macc 6:40, the feasting ended, the Jews requested their dismissal, and the king wrote this letter on the fourteenth of Epeiph, corresponding to 25 August. The text (6:38) also indicates that the registration of the Jews took place from the 25th of Pachon to the 4th of Epeiph (7 July – 15 August), and the massacre was set for the 5th to the 7th of Epeiph (16–18 August). According to the Raphia Decree and Pithom Stela (no. ii), the battle of Raphia with which the story of 3 Maccabees begins (1:1–7) was fought on the 10th of Pachon of 217 BCE, that is, 22 June. Since it is unlikely that the author imagined the king's return to Egypt after the

6:41 The king granted their request at once and wrote the following letter for them to the generals in the cities, magnanimously expressing his concern:⁵¹

7:1 “King Ptolemy Philopator to his generals throughout Egypt and all in charge of our state affairs: Greetings and be well.

2 We ourselves and our children⁵² are faring well, the great God guiding our state affairs according to our desire. **3** Certain of our Friends,⁵³ frequently urging us with malicious intent, persuaded us to gather together the Jews of the kingdom in a body and to punish them with barbarous penalties as traitors; **4** for they declared that our state would never be firmly established until this was accomplished, because of the ill-will that these people had toward all nations. **5** They also led them out with harsh treatment as slaves, or rather as traitors, and, girding themselves with a cruelty more savage than that of Scythian custom, they tried without any inquiry or examination to put them to death. **6** But we very severely threatened them for these acts, and in accordance with the clemency that we have toward all people we barely spared their lives. Since we have come to realize that the God of heaven surely defends the Jews, always taking their part as a father does for his children, **7** and since we have taken into account the friendly and firm goodwill that they had toward us and our ancestors, we justly have acquitted them of every charge of whatever kind. **8** We also have ordered all people to return to their own homes, with no one in any place doing them harm at all or reproaching them for the irrational things that have happened. **9** For you should know that if we devise any evil against them or cause them any grief at all, we always shall have not a mortal but the ruler over every power, the most high God, in everything and inescapably as an antagonist to avenge such acts.

Fare thee well.”

battle and all of the events of 3 Maccabees prior to the registration taking place in two weeks, it is best to suppose that the implied date of this letter is 25 August 216 BCE, if not the same date in a later year.

52. Contra the mention of τὰ τέχνα ἡμῶν here, according to the surviving sources Ptolemy IV only had one legitimate son, Ptolemy V, who was not born until 210/209 BCE.

53. As in the Eupolemus letters, we capitalize “Friends” to indicate that this is a quasi-official term for a Ptolemaic official. See further Keddie 2013, 210–14.

3.5. Jewish Inscriptions and Papyri from Ptolemaic Egypt

1. Inscription for Ptolemy III Euergetes and Berenike II by Local Jewish Communities in the Delta, Schedia (on the Canopus canal, Near Kafr ed-Dauwar), and Crocodilopolis (in the Arsinoite Nome). Circa 246–221 BCE (?). *CIJ* 2.1440 and *CPJ* 3.1532a (Lifshitz 1967, no. 92; Horbury and Noy 1992, nos. 22 and 117).¹

1440	1532a
Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου καὶ Βασιλίσσης Βερενίκης ἀδελ- Φῆς καὶ γυναικὸς καὶ τῶν τέκνων τὴν προσευχὴν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι.	Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ Βασιλίσσης Βερενίκης τῆς γυναικὸς καὶ ἀδελφῆς καὶ τῶν τέκνων οἱ ἐν Κροκ[ο]- δίλων πόλει Ἰου[δαῖ]- οι τὴν προ[σευχὴν] [— — —]
On behalf of King Ptolemy and Queen Berenike, his sister and wife, and for their children, the Jews (dedicated) the prayer hall.	On behalf of King Ptolemy, son of King Ptolemy and Queen Berenike, his wife and sister, and their chil- dren, the Jews of Crocodilopolis (dedicated) the prayer hall.

The village of Schedia is mentioned in 3 Macc 4:11 as the port from which Jews were shipped to Alexandria, purportedly during the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–205 BCE). The Ptolemais mentioned in 3 Macc 7:17 as

1. The primary text of all entries is taken from the first source cited, unless otherwise noted. The texts of the inscriptions have been checked against the photos where possible and corrected by LMW. Translations, introductions, and notes by LMW, except for no. 10, introduction and translation (adapted) by GAK.

the place where the Jews celebrate their deliverance and construct a prayer hall likely refers to Ptolemais Hormou, the main port village on the Nile in the Arsinoite nome.

As noted above, Horbury and Noy assign this inscription to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes and Berenike II (246–221 BCE) but offer no discussion; they are apparently following Tcherikover in *CPJ* 1:8 n. 23 (*OGI* 2.726) and Lewis in *CPJ* 3.1440 (cf. *IGA* 2.11; Horsley 1978, no. 94). If these inscriptions are properly dated to the reign of Ptolemy III, they represent some of the oldest Jewish inscriptions in Egypt. It must be noted, however, that Berenike II was neither the sister nor half-sister of Ptolemy III; instead, she was the daughter of King Magas of Cyrene and his wife Apama II and was born in 273 BCE. The true sister of Ptolemy III is usually called Berenike the Syrian; she was married to the Seleucid king Antiochus II and was murdered in Syria in 246, the same year that Ptolemy III assumed the throne. Even so, inscriptions from the reign of Ptolemy III clearly refer to Berenike II using the honorific Ptolemaic titulature of “sister and wife” (following the precedent set by Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II). For texts, see *IGP* 1.38 (the Canopus Decree of 238), 40, and 43. Another possible pairing might be Ptolemy X and (Cleopatra) Berenike III (101–88 BCE); see *IGP* 1.137–139.

A *proseuche* (prayer hall) “next to the canal” is also mentioned at Crocodilopolis, on a land survey (*CPJ* 1.134, second century BCE). See also *CPJ* 1.19, a record of court proceedings at Crocodilopolis during the reign of Ptolemy III (in the year 226 BCE) between a Jewish man and woman, named Dositheos and Herakleia. On Jews in the Arsinoite nome, see further Kasher 1985, 135–58.

2. Two Invocations for Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon by the Jewish Community at Nitriai (Wadi Natrun) and Xenephyris (near Damanhur in the Western Delta). Circa 124 (or 140)–116 BCE. *CIJ* 2.1441–1442 (Lifshitz 1967, no. 93; Horbury and Noy 1992, nos. 24–25).

1441

Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου
καὶ Βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας τῆς
ἀδελφῆς καὶ Βασιλίσσης Κλε-
οπάτρας τῆς γυναικὸς, οἱ ἀπὸ
Ξενεφύρεος Ἰουδαῖοι τὸν

1442

Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου
καὶ Βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας
τῆς ἀδελφῆς καὶ Βασιλίσσης
Κλεοπάτρας τῆς γυναικὸς
Εὐεργετῶν, οἱ ἐν Νιτρίαῖς

πυλῶνα τῆς προσευχῆς,
προστάντων Θεοδώρου
καὶ Ἀχιλλίωνος.

Ἰουδαῖοι τὴν προσευχὴν
καὶ τὰ συνκύροντα.

On behalf of King Ptolemy and
Queen Cleopatra, his sister, and
Queen Cleopatra, his wife, the
Jews of Xenephryris (dedicated)
the gateway of the prayer hall,
when Theodore and Achillion
were presiding.

On behalf of King Ptolemy and
Queen Cleopatra, his sister, and
Queen Cleopatra, his wife, the
Euergetes, the Jews of Nitriai
(dedicated) the prayer hall and
its appurtenances.

The distinctive titulature for both inscriptions indicates the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (Physcon), who was married both to Cleopatra II (his sister) and to Cleopatra III (his niece and daughter of Cleopatra II). The earlier portion of his reign saw considerable tension between the two wives and over certain policies. Cleopatra II and Ptolemy VI Philometor (the brother of Physcon) had been very favorable toward Jews; Onias IV had established the Jewish temple colony at Leontopolis under their auspices. On this point, see the letter in number 8 below, which shows that that the younger brother Physcon was also operative as co-regent during this earlier period. The latter was not favorable toward Jews, at least not in the first years of his own reign (just after 140 BCE). Consequently, a date after 124 BCE is perhaps more likely for these inscriptions, when the joint regency of the two Cleopatras was finally settled and the situation of Jews was again more favorable.

A date between 124 and 116 BCE has further significance in light of the fact that it is the same date given in the first prefixed letter in 2 Maccabees (1:9); see section 3.1 above.

3. Two Invocations for Ptolemaic Monarchs by Jewish Benefactors at Athribis (Banha, Tel el-Atrib), near Leontopolis, in the Heliopolitan nome. Second or first century BCE. *CIJ* 2.1443–1444; *CPJ* 3.1443–1444 (Lifshitz 1967, 95–96; Horbury and Noy 1992, nos. 27–28).

1443

Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου
καὶ Βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας
Πτολεμαῖος Ἐπικύδου
ὁ ἐπιστάτης τῶν φυλακῶν
καὶ οἱ ἐν Ἀθρίβει Ἰουδαῖοι
τὴν προσευχὴν
Θεῶι Ὑψίστῳ

On behalf of King Ptolemy and
Queen Cleopatra, Ptolemy son of
Epikydos, prefect of police, and the
Jews in Athribis (made) the prayer
hall to God Most High.

1444

Ὑπὲρ Βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου
καὶ Βασιλίσσης Κλεοπάτρας
καὶ τῶν τέκνων
Ἑρμιάς καὶ Φιλοτέρα ἡ γυνή
καὶ παιδία τὴνδε ἐξέδραν
τῇ προσευχῇ(ι) 5

On behalf of King Ptolemy and
Queen Cleopatra and their chil-
dren, Hermias and Philotera, his
wife, and children, (made) the
exedra for the prayer hall.

The names are not specific enough to yield a clear date. The best possibilities are Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II (180–145 BCE); Ptolemy IX Soter and Cleopatra IV (116–107 BCE); Ptolemy IX Soter and Cleopatra V Selene (101–88 BCE); and Ptolemy XII and Cleopatra VI (80–51 BCE). Lifshitz (1967, 79) favored the first of these. David M. Lewis (*CPJ* 3.1444) follows Tcherikover (*CPJ* 1:8, 17) in assigning to 1443 the broad uncertain date given in the heading above, but Lewis suggests a somewhat later date for 1444, probably coming from the reign of Ptolemy XII (80–51 BCE). It should be noted, also, that this pair of names is the same found in the subscription to the Greek text of Esther (Add Esth G), also called the Letter of Purim, which places the transmission of the text to Egypt in the “fourth year” of their reign. This regnal formula would thus yield a date of circa 78/77. The same range of dates thus applies to this text.

A “prefect of police” (ἐπιστάτης τῶν φυλακῶν) was a state (i.e., royal) appointment. On Jews in the military and other public offices such as this during Ptolemaic times, see especially Tcherikover in *CPJ* 1:11–15.

4. Invocations for Cleopatra VII and Ptolemy XIV by Jewish Benefactors. From Alexandria (Gabbary quarter). Circa 37 BCE. *CIJ* 2.1432; *CPJ* 3.1432 (Lifshitz 1967, no. 86; Horbury and Noy 1992, no. 13). On a plaque of limestone with a width of 24 cm and a height of 33 cm.

1432

[Ῑπὲρ] Βας[ιλίς-]

[ση]ς καὶ Β[ασι-]

[λ]έως θεῶι [με-]

γάλω[ι] ἐ[πηκό-]

ωι Ἄλυπ[ος τήν]

5

προσε[υχήν]

ἐπο(ί)ει

(ἔτους) ιε' Με[χείρ - -]

On behalf of the queen and king, Alypos made this prayer (hall?) to the Great God who hears (our prayers). In the fifteenth year in the month of Mecheir

CIJ 2.1432 (Horbury and Noy 1992, no. 14) is quite similar, with an opening honorific for the queen, but the text is more fragmentary. The word Ἰουδαῖοι may confidently be restored in the last line as the dedicators.

5. Ptolemaic-Early Roman Bilingual Proclamation of Asylum to a Prayer Hall. Circa 47–31 BCE, replacing an earlier inscription. *CIJ* 2.1449; *CPJ* 3.1449 (Horbury and Noy 1992, no. 125; corrected by L. Michael White from photographs of the stone). Location uncertain; on a plaque of alabaster, 44 cm. high.

1449

Βασιλίσσης καὶ Βασι-

λέως προσταξάντων

ἀντὶ τῆς προανακει-

μένης περὶ τῆς αναθέσε-

ως τῆς προσευχῆς πλα-

5

κὸς ἢ ὑπογεγραμμένη

ἐπιγραφῇτω. (vac.)

Βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος Εὐ-

εργέτης τὴν προσευχὴν
(vac.) ἄσυλον. (vac.)

10

REGINA ET
REX IUSSER(UN)T.

By order of the queen and king, let the edict appended below be inscribed in place of the plaque set up previously concerning the dedication of the prayer hall.

**King Ptolemy Euergetes (hereby declares) the prayer hall
inviolate.**

(in Latin) **THE QUEEN AND KING SO ORDERED.**

Lines 8–10 (here printed in bold) are clearly set off as the earlier decree reinscribed, with the all-important word ἄσυλον centered on its own line for emphasis. Both the preamble (lines 1–7) and the Latin subscript (lines 11–12) refer to the subsequent reauthorization under Cleopatra VII. The original decree most likely dates to the reign of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (145/144–116 BCE); so Horbury and Noy (1992, 214; following Fraser), based on the fact that grants of asylum were not usual before the second century. However, in Egypt in particular, known asylum inscriptions all date between 96 and 30 BCE (Rigsby 1996, 540–73), further commending a later date. If so, we should likely expect a date after 124 BCE, for the reasons noted above in no. 2. Authorization for the republication of the decree dates either to the reign of Cleopatra VII and her brother Ptolemy XIV (47–44 BCE) or Cleopatra VII and her son Ptolemy XV (Caesarion, 44–31 BCE).

The hand may well be the same in both the Greek and Latin portions of the text. The letters of the last two lines in Latin are double the height of those in the main portion of the text, again to stress the royal protection being shown to the local Jewish community.

6. Papyrus Letter from Herakles to Ptolemaios about Conditions for Jews Traveling in Memphis and Tebtynis. First half of the first century BCE. CPJ 1.141.

141

Ἡρακλῆς Πτολεμαίων ἡν[.] .κητ[.] πλ(ε)ῖστα χαίρ(ε)ιν
καὶ ἔρρωσται. ἡρώτησα Ἰππ[.] ἐν Μέμφι ὑπὲρ τοῦ
ιερέως τοῦ τῆς Τεβτύνεος κ[.] .[.] πε. γράψαι αὐτῶι

ἐπιστόλιδιν ἵνα ἴδω ὥτι αὐτ[ῶι.] ἐστίν. ἐρωτῶ σε
 ὥπως οὐ κατασκηθήσεται. χιλαγωγῆσον 5
 [...]ον ἐν οἷς ἐὰν χρήζῃ . ζ[...]. .[ο]ὔτω ποιῶν
 λωιποῖς · Ἀρτεμίδωρος δ[...]. εμο[.] πρὸς
 τὸν ἱερέα καὶ σὺν αὐτῶι καταλ .. ατιν. οἶδας
 γὰρ ὥτι βδέλυσ(σ)ονται Ἰουδαίους. ἀσπάζου
 .[....]. τβαν κα[ῖ] Ἐπιμένην καὶ Τρύφωναν 10
 [.....]. κα[.....] ἐπὶ τὸ [.....] ἐπιμέλου

Herakles to Ptolemaios: ... many greetings and be well.

I have asked Hipp[alos?] in Memphis to write him a letter concerning the priest of Tebtynis in order that I may know what is the matter. I beg you that he not be detained. Make every effort (?) [to assist him] in whatever [enquiries?] he may need, thus performing the rest (of his tasks). Now Artemidoros ... to the priest and ... with him. For you know how they abominate Jews.

Greet ... and Epimene and Tryphona ...(and) take care....

1–2. For the greeting formula *χαίρειν καὶ ἔρρωσται*, compare Ep. Arist. §35 (the letter of Ptolemy to Eleazar); 3 Macc 3:12; and 7:1. This formula is not attested in letters prior to about 160 BCE but is not commonly used until circa 130 BCE. It went out of common usage about the middle of the first century BCE (see Exler 1923, 32, 60, 64; J. L. White 1978, no. 55). The formula in Ep. Arist. §41 combines a form of the health petition using *ἔρρωσο* with a longer formula using a variant with *ὑγιαίνειν*. The formula *χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν* is also found in the second covering letter (to Aristobulus) in 2 Macc 1:10 and in the ostensible letter of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 2 Macc 9:19–27; however, it is not attested in papyrus letters before the mid-first century BCE (see Exler 1923, 32, 46).

3. Tcherikover follows the original transcription of this previously unpublished papyrus in restoring this line with a dot between the words *κ[.]π[.]ε* and *γράφαι* (as printed above). His note indicates that the reading was apparently supported by C. H. Roberts. But Tcherikover takes the dot as a full stop (a period) rather than a missing letter (as it clearly must be in the next line in the restoration of *αὐτ[ῶι.] ἐστίν*). He thus translates lines 2–4 as two separate sentences, the second one opening with an instruction to the recipient, Ptolemaios, to “write a letter” regarding the situation. I have punctuated the sentence differently by reading the dot before *γράφαι*

as a missing letter. Taking γράψαι as the ordinary aorist infinitive forms the natural continuation of the previous clause and suggests that Herakles has instead asked (ἡρώτησα) Hipp[alos] “to write a letter.” A nearly identical construction is found in P.Oxy. 292. This reading also makes more sense of the following sentences in which Herakles now makes his requests of Ptolemaios to facilitate the efforts of Hipp[alos] to resolve the situation in Tebtynis. There is some debate about whether the problems for Jews are in Tebtynis or Memphis (see further Rémondon 1960).

5. Alexander Fuks (*CPJ* 1:256 n.) proposes χειραγωγήσον for χιλαγωγήσον (even though this substitution is not otherwise attested and the word is rather late); he offers the meaning “manage (him),” that is, to take him in hand or guide him. This meaning certainly fits the sense; however, I offer a more natural reading of the word as it appears, even though it is otherwise unattested as a verb. But taking χιλαγωγεῖν as meaning “go beyond” or “make the effort” (lit. “go a thousand”) would also be consistent with the imperative in this context and is typical in letters of recommendation and requests for aid of this sort. Compare the phrase in the sample letter of Pseudo-Demetrius, *Epistolary Types* 1: καλῶς οὖν ποιήσεις πυκνότερον ἐπισκοπῶν τοὺς ἐν οἴκῳ (ἵνα) μὴ τινος ἔχωσι χρεῖαν καὶ συμπαριστάμενος ἐν οἷς ἂν δέωνται καὶ γράφων ἡμῖν περὶ ὧν αἰρῇ. A similar phrase is used in the letter of Herodes to Onias below (no. 8). In this light, we might expect a participial construction (in the nominative) following the imperative (or a ἵνα plus the subjunctive), something like χιλαγωγήσον [παριστάς αὐτ]ὸν ἐν οἷς ἐὰν χρῆζι ζ[ητήμασι] [ο]ὔτω... (or χιλαγωγήσον [ἵνα παριστῇς]...).

7. Notices concerning Dositheos Son of Drimylos at the Court of Ptolemy III Euergetes and Ptolemy IV Philopator. *CPJ* 1.127.

According to 3 Macc 1:3, a Dositheos son of Drimylos was an apostate Jew (τὸ γένος Ἰουδαῖος, ὕστερον δὲ μεταβαλὼν τὰ νόμιμα καὶ τῶν πατρῶν δογμάτων ἀπηλλοτριωμένος) serving in the court of Ptolemy IV just prior to the battle of Raphia in 217 BCE. This could be the source of the name Dositheos mentioned by Josephus in conjunction with the military forces of Onias (*C. Ap.* 2.49), but the dates are off. Dositheos son of Drimylos is credited by the author of 3 Maccabees with saving the life of Ptolemy IV in an attempted assassination. Whether the event is historical or not is debated; however, the existence of this person is attested by several letters, a selection of which is given here. The full collection of papyri assembled by Tcherikover (as *CPJ* 1.127) shows that his career spanned well over

twenty years. By 240 BCE he held the office of ὑπομνηματογράφος, or one of the two heads of the royal secretariat, under Ptolemy III (*CPJ* 1.127a.24). He traveled on official visits with Ptolemy III in the following years (*CPJ* 1.127c), and by 222 he was also serving as eponymous priest of the deified Alexander and deified Ptolemies (*CPJ* 1.127d–e), the highest priesthood in Ptolemaic Egypt. We give here one brief example of the last office from the collection. On Dositheos as a typically Jewish name, see also *CPJ* 1:27–29.

CPJ 1.127d; P.Tebt. 815, col. II, frag. 3 recto. Hibeh (Fayyum). 5 February 222 BCE.

Βασιλεύοντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου καὶ Ἀρσινόης θεῶν Ἀδελφῶν
 ἔτους πέμπτου καὶ εἰκοστοῦ ἐφ' ἱερέως Δωσιθέου τοῦ Δριμύλου
 Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶ[ν]
 Ἀδελφῶν καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν, κανηφόρου Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου
 Βερενείκης τῆς Πυθαγέλου, μηνὸς Γορπιαίου Αἰγυπτίων δὲ Χοίαχ
 μιᾷ καὶ εἰκάδι, ἐν Ἀρσινόῃ τῇ ἐπὶ τ[οῦ]
 χώματος τῆς Θεμίστου μερίδος τοῦ Ἀρσινοίτου νομοῦ.

In the twenty-fifth year, while Ptolemy (III), son of the Sibling Gods, Ptolemy (II) and Arsinoe, was ruling, when Dositheos son of Drimylus was priest of Alexander and the Sibling Gods and the Benefactor Gods, when the kanephoros of Arsinoe Philadelphos was Berenike daughter of Pythangelos, on the twenty-first of the month Gorpaios, in Egyptian Choiach, in Arsinoe, which is on the embankment, of the division of Themistes in the Arsinoite nome.

8. Papyrus Letter from the *Dioketes* Herodes to Onias, a Local Official of Some Standing. The regnal dating puts it in Ptolemy VI Philopator's reign and near the end of the Maccabean revolt. *CPJ* 1.132; P.Par. 63; *UPZ* 1:473–96 (no. 110). 21 September 164 BCE. Sarapieion, near Memphis.

Tcherikover argues that the recipient is none other than Onias IV, founder of the Jewish temple colony at Leontopolis, even though the dating of this papyrus is at odds with Josephus's chronology for Onias's flight to Egypt (*A.J.* 12.387; see also *C. Ap.* 2.50; see also the discussion in *CPJ* 1:44–47). At the very least, the phrasing of the letter shows great respect for Onias, who is “burdened” with administrative responsibilities for his workers. The greeting formulas are also of considerable interest.

132

Ἡρώδης Ὀνί[αι] χαίρειν. ἔρρωται μὲν Βασ[ιλεὺς]
 Πτολεμαῖος καὶ Βασιλεὺς Πτολεμαῖος ὁ ἀδελφὸς κ[αί]
 Βασίλισσα Κλεοπάτρα ἡ ἀδελφὴ καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ
 τὰ πράγματ' {ατ} αὐτοῖς ἔχει κατὰ τρόπον · (ε)ἰ δὲ
 καὶ σὺ ὑγιαίνεις καὶ τᾶλλά σοι κατὰ λόγον ἐστίν, εἴ- 5
 η ἂν ὡς βουλόμεθα, καίτοι δ' ἰ{ι}κανῶς ἐπανή-
 γομεν. τῆς πρὸς Δωρίωνα τὸν ὑποδιοικητὴν
 ἐπιστολῆς ὑπόκειται σοι τὸ ἀντίγραφον. διαλα-
 βὼν οὖν ὡς ἡ περὶ [τ]ῶν κατὰ τὸν σπόρον φρον-
 τὶς κοινῇ πᾶσιν ἐπιβάλλει τοῖς τῶν πραγμά- 10
 των κηδομένοις, καλῶς ποιήσεις τὴν πα-
 σαν προσενεγκάμενος ἐκτένειαν καὶ πρ[ο]νο-
 ηθεῖς, ὅπως μήτε{ν} τῶν ἀδυνατούντων γε-
 ωργεῖν περισπᾶται μηθεῖς μήτε τῶν δυνα-
 μένων σκεπάζεται κατὰ μηδεμίαν παρ- 10
 εὔρεσιν, ἕκαστα δ' ἐπιτελεσθῇ κατὰ τὸν ὑπο-
 δεδειγμένον ἐν τῷ πεμφθέντι σοι παρ' ἡμῶν
 ὑπομνήματι τρόπον. ἐπιμελούμενος δὲ καὶ σαυ-
 τοῦ, ἵν' ὑγι{γ}αιάνῃς, ἔρρωσο. (ἔτους) ς' Μεσ[ορ]ῇ κδ.

Herodes to Onias: Greetings.

King Ptolemy (VI) is well, and king Ptolemy (VIII) his brother and queen Cleopatra his sister and their children, and their affairs are as usual. If you are well, then, and all else is in order for you, it would be as we wish; whereas we too are progressing sufficiently. The copy of the letter addressed to Dorion the *hypodiotikes* is subjoined. Now, perceiving that care over those engaged in sowing the seed is common to all those burdened with administration, you will do well to make every effort and give due consideration so that none of those who are unable to work the fields is impressed nor that any of those who are able are sheltered (from doing so) on any pretext at all; and further that each task be brought to completion according to the manner designated in the memorandum sent to you by us. You will do well also to take care toward yourself so that you remain healthy.

Fare thee well.

Year 6, Mesore 24

On the date and the possibility that Onias IV had fled for Egypt prior to 164, see also J. L. White 1986, no. 36. More generally, this letter is dated from the joint accession of Ptolemy VIII with his brother Ptolemy VI, which occurred in 169. This small scroll contains seven columns of text comprising three different letters of the *dioiketes* Herodes and thus a small archive. Leontopolis was a village in the Heliopolitan nome near Memphis.

9. Ostrakon with Contributions to Jewish Feasts. *CPJ* 1.139; P.Meyer 2.368. Among the contributors is a priest named Josephus. From Apollonopolis Magna (in the Thebaid, Upper Egypt). First century BCE.

139

τ̅ε τρίτη πόσις
 Θεουξου[...]
 Λυσίμαχος σο[φός ?]
 Σεφθαίς ένα(?) ε[
 Ἰώσηπος ἱερεὺ(σ) 5
 ἐν[(γίνονται) Ἀ
 ἱς τετάρτη πόσις
 Θημᾶς ισοτοωτ.[
 Ἰώσηπος ἱερε(ὺς) [
 Τεύφιλος τ[10
 τὰ ἐπιδόμ[α-
 τα] . ας φ
 φ ...

The 15th. Third Feast.

Theux (?) ...

Lysimachos, the sage (?) ...

Sephthais ena ? ...

Josephos, priest, 5
 (total) 1,000

The 16th. Fourth Feast.

Themas, isotont ... ?

Josephos, priest ...

Teuphilos ... 10

The contributions
 (total?) ...

10. Ordinances about the Registration of Livestock and Prisoners in Syria and Phoenicia. *SB* 5.8008; *C.Ord.Ptol.* 21–22; *C.Ptol.Sklav.* 3. 261/60 BCE.

The following papyrus from the Rainer collection in Vienna contains two third-century BCE Ptolemaic *prostagmata* addressing the registration of livestock and slaves in Syria and Phoenicia, which were governed by the Ptolemies at this time. The first decree proclaims that all livestock in the villages of Syria and Phoenicia must be registered within sixty days after the publication of this decree. We reproduce only the second decree here, since it is of particular interest as a comparandum for Ptolemy's Decree regarding the Jewish Prisoners in *Ep. Arist.* §§21–27. According to the second decree, anyone who had bought or imprisoned and detained free natives had to register them within twenty days after the publication of the decree. Herbert Liebsny (1936), who published the *editio princeps* of the papyrus, set its date as 261/60 BCE on the basis of references in the first decree to the twenty-fifth year of the king. While the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (r. 246–222) may have also extended into a twenty-fifth year at a time in which Phoenicia and Syria were still under Ptolemaic control, Liebsny and subsequent commentators have found it more likely that these are decrees from the twenty-fifth year of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Similarities between these decrees and some of the Zenon papyri (esp. P.Cairo Zenon 1.59093), our other main sources for the Ptolemaic administration of Palestine in the mid-third century BCE (Durand 1997; cf. the Tobiad Romance in Josephus, *A.J.* 12.154–236), support this dating.

Liebsny was the first to propose that the second decree bears some relation to *Ep. Arist.* §§21–27. Wilcken (1937) quickly took up Liebsny's hypothesis, arguing that this papyrus proves the authenticity of Philadelphus's decree on the Jewish prisoners in the Epistle of Aristeeas. In response, Westermann (1938) addressed the situation of this papyrus and its bearing on the Epistle of Aristeeas at length. He noted important differences between these sources, particularly that the Epistle of Aristeeas records a decree of the emancipation of prisoners captured under Ptolemy I, whereas the Rainer decree makes no reference to Ptolemy I and does not call for the emancipation of the captives, but only their official registration. The decree reflects the Ptolemaic practice of trying to mitigate the tendency of Greek military settlers to enslave non-Greek natives (Bagnall and Derow 2004, 111). Nevertheless, there are important similarities of language. The Rainer decree repeatedly uses the official territorial title "Syria and Phoenicia," just like Philadelphus's decree in *Ep. Arist.* §22, whereas elsewhere the author of the

Epistle of Aristeas uses the official title “Coele-Syria” (§12), first attested in the second century BCE, and the description “country of the Jews” (§§13, 22). Among other striking similarities of language (see the chart on Westermann 1938, 20) is the avoidance of the usual terms for slave (δοῦλος, ἀνδράποδον). Both decrees consistently discuss σώματα (“bodies”) instead. Westermann points out that this is because the Rainer decree addresses the registration of de facto slaves who are still technically free. The Epistle of Aristeas also deals with Jewish captives whom it alleges are actually free but are unjustly being detained as slaves. Ultimately, Westermann makes a good case for the author of the Epistle of Aristeas using the Rainer decree or an official source of its sort as a model for §§21–27.

The Greek text is the SB edition. The English translation is from Bagnall and Derow 2004, 111–13, adapted by G. Anthony Keddie.

8008

βασιλέως προστάξαντος· εἴ τινες τῶν κατὰ Συρίαν καὶ	Col. I
Φοι[νίκην] ἀγοράκασιν σῶμα λαικ[ὸ]ν ἐλεύθερον ἢ ἐξενέν-	
[κασιν κ]αὶ κατεσχ[ή]κασιν ἢ κατ’ ἄλλον τρόπον κέκ[τη]-	35
[νται.....].αι...[.]! σῶμα[...].τις α. των []	
[] πρὸ[ς τὸν οἶκον]όμον τὸν ἐ[ν ἐκάστη]	
ὑπαρχεῖαι καθεστηκότα, ἀφ’ ἧς ἂν ἡμέρα[ς] τὸ πρόστα-	Col. II
γμα ἐκτεθῇ, ἐν ἡμέραις κ. ἐάν τις μὴ ἀπογρά-	
ψηται ἢ μὴ ἀναγάγῃ τοῦ τε σώματος στερηθῇ-	40
σεται καὶ προσεισπραχθήσεται εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν	
ἐκάστου σώματος (δραχμᾶς) Γ καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς περὶ	
αὐτοῦ διαγνώσεται. τῷ δὲ μηνύσαντι δοθήσον-	
τα[ι το]ῦ ἐ[κά]σ(του) σώματος (δραχμαὶ) [] ἐάν τις τ[ῶ]ν σωμάτων	
τ[ῶν ἀ]πογραφέντ[ων] καὶ ἀναχθέντ[ων] ἐ[πι]δεικνύωσιν	45
[ῆγορα]κότες ὄντα οἰκετικὰ ἀποδίδοσθα[ι] αὐτοῖς. τῶν	
[δὲ ἐ]ν ταῖς βασιλικαῖς ἀπαρτεταῖς πεπραμένων σω-	
[μάτ]ων, ἐάν τινα φάσκηι ἐλ[ε]ύθερα εἶναι, κυρίας εἶναι τὰς κτή-	
[σεις] τοῖς ἐωνημένοις. τῶν δὲ στρα-	
τευομένων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν κατοικούντων	50
ἐν Συρίαι καὶ Φοινίκῃ, ὅσοι συνοικοῦσιν γυναιξὶ	
λαικαῖς, [ᾶς] ἀνειλήφασιν, μὴ ἀπογραφέσθωσαν. καὶ	
εἰς [τὸ] λοιπ[ὸν] δὲ μηδενὶ ἐξέστω ἀγοράζε[ιν] μη-	
δὲ [ὑ]ποτί[θε]σθαι σώματα λαικὰ ἐλεύθερα παρευ-	

ρέσει μηδ[ε]μιᾷ, πλὴν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ διοικοῦντος 55
 τὰς κατὰ Συρίαν καὶ Φοινίκην προσόδους ἐν προσ-
 βολῇ διδ[ο]μένων, ὧν ἡ πρᾶξις καθήκει, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ
 σώματος γίνεσθαι, καθότι ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῷ
 ἐπὶ τῆς μισθώσεως γέγραπται. εἰ δὲ μή, τοῖς 60
 αὐτοῖς ἐπιτίμοις ἔνοχοι ἔσονται, ὁμοίως δὲ
 καὶ οἱ ἀ[π]οδόμενοι καὶ οἱ ὑποθέντες. τοῖς δὲ
 πρ[ο]σαγγείλασι δοθήσεται ἐκ τῶν πραχθη-
 σομένων ἐκάστου σ[ώμ]ατος (δραχμαὶ) τ

By order of the king: If anyone in Syria and Phoenicia has bought a free native person or has seized and held one or acquired one in any other manner—to the *oikonomos* in charge in each *hyparchy* within twenty days from the day of the publication of the ordinance. If anyone does not declare or present him, he shall be deprived of the slave, and there shall in addition be exacted for the crown 6,000 drachmas per head, and the king shall judge about him. To the informer shall be given ... drachmas per head. If they show that any of the registered and presented persons were already household slaves when bought, they shall be returned to them. As for those persons purchased in the royal auctions, even if some of them claim to be free, the sales shall be valid for the purchasers.

Whoever of the soldiers on active duty and the other military settlers in Syria and Phoenicia are living with native wives whom they have captured need not declare them.

And for the future no one shall be allowed to buy or accept as security native free persons on any pretext, except for those handed over by the superintendent of the revenues in Syria and Phoenicia for execution, for whom the execution is properly on the person, as it is written in the law governing tax-farming contracts. Otherwise, they shall be liable to the same penalties, both sellers and mortgagers. Informers shall be given 300 drachmas per head from the sums exacted.

Appendix: The Ptolemaic Rulers of Egypt

The following table first lists the ruler (bold), then the ruler's parents, birth year, regnal year(s), and marriage(s). All dates are BCE.

Parents	Birth Year	Regnal Years	Marriages
Ptolemy Lagos (I Soter)			
Arsinoe + Lagos (or Philip II?)	367	323–283	1. Artakama 2. Eurydike (321) 3. Berenike I (ca. 317)
Ptolemy II Philadelphus			
Ptolemy I + Berenike I	309	285–246	1. Arsinoe I 2. Arsinoe II (sister)
Ptolemy III Euergetes (I)			
Ptolemy II + Arsinoe I	284	246–222	Berenike II of Cyrene (246)
Ptolemy IV Philopator			
Ptolemy III + Berenike II	244	221–205	Arsinoe III (sister, 217)
Ptolemy V Epiphanes			
Ptolemy IV + Arsinoe III	210	204–180	Cleopatra I (Seleucid, 193)
Ptolemy VI Philometor			
Ptolemy V + Cleopatra I	ca. 186–184	180–145	Cleopatra II (sister, 176)
Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator			
Ptolemy VI + Cleopatra II	ca. 170	145	(Cleopatra II continued as co-regent)
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (Physcon)			
Ptolemy V + Cleopatra I (brother of Ptolemy VI)	182	144–116	1. Cleopatra II (sister, 144) 2. Cleopatra III (niece, 140/ 139)
Ptolemy IX Soter II			
Ptolemy VIII + Cleopatra III	138	116–107, 88–80	1. Cleopatra IV (sister) 2. Cleopatra V Selene (Cleopatra III continued as co-regent until 101)

Ptolemy X Alexander I			
Ptolemy VIII + Cleopatra III (brother of Ptolemy IX)	136	107–88	1. Cleopatra V Selene (sister) 2. Cleopatra Berenike III (niece; daughter of Ptol- emy IX + Cleopatra IV)
Ptolemy XI Alexander II			
Ptolemy X + ?	ca. 100/99	80	Cleopatra Berenike III (stepsister)
Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos (Auletes)			
Ptolemy IX + ?	ca. 99	80–51	Cleopatra VI Tryphaena (sister; daughter of Ptolemy X + Cleopatra III)
Cleopatra VII			
Ptolemy XII + Cleopatra VI	69	51–30	1. Ptolemy XIII 2. Ptolemy XIV
Ptolemy XIII			
Ptolemy XII + Cleopatra VI	63	51–47	Cleopatra VII (sister)
Ptolemy XIV			
Ptolemy XII + Cleopatra VI	59	47–44	Cleopatra VII (sister)
Ptolemy XV Caesar Philopator-Philometor (Caesarion)			
Cleopatra VII + Julius Caesar	47	44–30	(Cleopatra VII continued as co-regent)

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Index Verborum Graecorum

The following index presents the words in all of the Greek literary texts, inscriptions, and papyri in this volume with the exception of those in the LXX (2 Maccabees, 3 Maccabees, and the Additions to Greek Esther). For concordances of the LXX texts, we refer readers to Edwin Hatch and Henry A. Redpath, eds., *A Concordance to the Septuagint* (repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), as well as the following titles in the Computer Bible series: J. David Thompson, *A Critical Concordance to the Septuagint: Esther* (Wooster, OH: Biblical Research Associates, 1999); Thompson, *A Critical Concordance to the Apocrypha: 2 Maccabees* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2002); and, Thompson, *A Critical Concordance to the Apocrypha: 3 Maccabees* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 2002).

This index is partially based on the index verborum for the Epistle of Aristeeas in Wendland's edition (1900), but we have standardized Wendland's entries and made other significant expansions and alterations. We adopted the following conventions:

- ◆ Each entry with a siglum marker (§) refers to the relevant section within the Epistle of Aristeeas.
- ◆ Citations without section markers (i.e., bare numbers) refer to the pages of this volume. These entries are separated from the Epistle of Aristeeas entries by a diamond (◆).
- ◆ If a word appears more than once in a section (for the Epistle of Aristeeas) or on a page (for the other texts), a superscript plus (+) indicates more than one occurrence.
- ◆ For especially common words, we have provided illustrative rather than exhaustive lists.
- ◆ We have limited the size and number of entries for articles, conjunctions, pronouns, and particles with the intent, again, of providing illustrative examples.

Ἀβδηρίτης	§31 ♦ 196, 220	ἀδικία	§146, §152, §162, §212, §277,
Ἀβιήτης	§50	§292	
Ἀβραῖος	§48	ἄδικος	§210
Ἀβραῖμος	§49 ♦ 234	ἀδόλεσχος	§8
Ἀβραάμ	212, 250 ⁺	ἀδοξία	§269
Ἀγαθοβούλων	260	ἀδύνατος	362
ἀγαθοποιεῖν	§242	ἀδωροδόκτης	§209
ἀγαθός	§56, §185, §196, §197, §205, §207, §212, §229, §231, §248, §293 ♦ 198, 200, 266	αἰ	§2, §196, §248 ♦ 186
ἄγαλμα	§135 ♦ 230	αἰδεῖν	182
ἀγανακτεῖν	230	αἰεττός	§116
ἀγαπᾶν	§123	ἀένναος	§279, §292, §311
ἀγάπη	§229	Ἀζώτιοι	§117
ἀγάπησις	§44, §265, §270	ἀήρ	§70 ♦ 184
ἀγάσθαι	210	ἀήσητος	§193
ἀγγεῖον	§91	ἀθέατος	§71
ἄγειν	§9, §109, §188, §205, §207, §247, §248 ♦ 186, 266, 312	Ἄθριβις	356
ἄγιος	§45, §98, §99	Ἀθρίβιτος	312
ἀγνεία	§106, §142 ♦ 230	ἀθρόος	§26 ♦ 182
ἀγνεύειν	230	αιγιαλίτιδος	186
ἀγνοεῖν	232	αιγιαλός	186
ἄγνοια	§130	Αἰγύπτιος	§11, §36, §138, §140 ♦ 198, 234, 238 ⁺ , 361
ἀγνός	§31, §139, §144, §292, §317 ♦ 196, 270	Αἴγυπτος	§4 ⁺ , §6, §12, §23, §35 ♦ 182, 198, 220, 228 ⁺ , 254 ⁺ , 258, 268, 270, 312
ἀγοραζεῖν	365 ⁺	Αἰθίοψ	§13
ἀγορασμός	§9 ♦ 266	αικία	§167, §208 ♦ 228
ἄγραφος	§56	αἶμα	§88, §90 ♦ 272, 273, 274
ἄγριος	§146, §170	αἶξ	§93
ἀγχιβαθής	184	αἶρειν	§215
ἀγωγή	§8, §43, §124, §235, §246 ⁺ , §280	αἰρεῖσθαι	§40, §54, §64, §65, §285 ♦ 314
ἄγων	§14	αἵρεσις	§7
ἀγωνίζεσθαι	§273	αἰσθησις	§156, §213 ♦ 182
Ἄδαδ	212	αἰσχύνη	§206
Ἀδαῖος	§47	αἰτεῖν	184, 240
ἄδεια	228	αἴτιος	§131, §205 ♦ 232, 266
ἀδελφή	§41, §45 ♦ 186, 200, 353 ⁺ , 354 ⁺ , 362	αἰχμαλωσία	240, 252
ἀδελφός	§7, §120 ♦ 361 ⁺ , 362	αἰχμαλωτεύειν	§23
ἀδιάκοπος	§139	αἰχμαλωτίζειν	§12 ♦ 198
ἀδιάλειπτος	§86, §92, §294 ♦ 258	αἰχμάλωτος	§33, §35, §37 ♦ 198, 220
ἀδιάλυτος	§242	ἀκαθαρσία	§166
ἀδιήγητος	§89, §99 ♦ 272, 274	ἀκάθαρτος	§128, §147, §166, §169
ἀδικεῖν	§146	ἄκανθος	§70
		ἀκατάληπτος	§160
		ἀκέραιος	§31, §196, §264 ♦ 196

ἀκμαῖος	§37	ἄλυτος	§265
ἀκμάζειν	198, 226	ἄμα	§304 ♦ 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺
ἀκμή	186	ἀμαρτάνω	§93, §191, §207
ἀκοή	§142, §166 ♦ 252	ἀμαρτήμα	§297
ἀκολουθεῖν	§201	ἀμαρτία	§192
ἀκόλουθος	§84, §108, §218, §219, §240, §259, §320	ἀμαυροῦν	188
ἀκούειν	§5, §43, §162, §250, §314 ♦ 210, 228, 258	ἀμείβειν	200
ἄκρα	§100, §101, §102, §104, §181	ἀμέλια	§248
ἀκρατής	§277	ἀμελεῖσθαι	§108
ἀκρίβεια	§103 ♦ 220	ἀμελής	§30 ♦ 196
ἀκριβής	§19, §32, §133, §300 ♦ 198, 250, 258, 266, 268	ἀμετάβλητος	186
ἀκριβοῦν	§310	ἀμιγής	§197, §292
ἀκροᾶσθαι	§239	ἀμίμητος	§60, §67, §72, §98
ἀκρόασις	§127	ἀμισθί	§258
ἀκροατής	§266	Ἀμμανῖτις	314
ἀκρόδρυα	§112	ἀμοιρεῖν	182
ἀκτή,	186	ἄμπελος	§70, §79, §112
ἀλγινός	§253	ἀμφοτεροδέξιος	§65
Ἀλεξάνδρεια	§109, §173 ♦ 184, 220, 238, 252, 266	ἀμφότερος	§64, §93 ♦ 186, 230, 240, 260
Ἀλέξανδρος	182, 220, 226 ⁺ , 228 ⁺ , 230, 232, 252, 254, 256, 361	ἀμώμητος	§93
ἀλήθεια	§70, §77, §140, §161, §206, §260, §306 ♦ 220 ⁺ , 234, 240	ἄν	§33, §40 ⁺ , §42, §55, §56, §59, §64, §65, §78, §123, §124, §125, §164, §175, §239 ⁺ , §246, §250, §252, §258, §298
ἀληθῶς	§219	ἄνα	§52, §60, §67, §73, §75, §183 ♦ 312
ἄληκτος	§269	ἀναβαίνειν	§100
ἀλλὰ + καί	§7, §15, §20, §121, §131, §146, §152, §154, §160, §164	ἀνάβασις	§87
ἀλληγορικός	270	ἀνάγειν	§153 ♦ 365 ⁺
ἀλληγορουμένη	270 ⁺ , 272	ἀναγιγνώσκειν	§310 ♦ 198, 268, 312, 314
ἄλληλος	§62, §176	ἀναγίνεσθαι	228
ἀλλήλων	240	ἀναγκάζειν	§151, §178, §258
ἄλλος	§33, §40 ♦ 182, 184, 220, 250, 312, 365 ⁺	ἀναγκαῖος	§83, §110, §197, §205, §209, §265 ♦ 196, 200
ἄλλοτε	186	ἀνάγκη	§104
ἄλλοτριοῦν	§120	ἀναγλυφή	§58, §62
ἀλογιστεῖν	§214	ἀνάγνωσις	§127, §283, §305
ἀλόγιστος	§213	ἀναγορεύειν	240
ἄλογος	§15, §24, §107	ἀναγράφειν	§283, §297, §298, §300, §316, §322
ἀλσώδης	230	ἀναγραφή	§6, §83, §296, §302 ♦ 234, 268
ἄλυπία	§232	ἀναδεῖν	§63
Ἄλυπος	357	ἀναδιδάσκειν	186
		ἀναθεῖν	198
		ἀνάθεσις	§42, §320 ♦ 200, 357

ανάθημα	\$40 ♦ 198 ⁺ , 230	ανεπαίσθητος	\$176
άναιρεῖν	\$166	ανεπεικλής	\$23
ἀναίρεσις	\$269	ανεπίληστος	\$44
ἀναισθησία	\$135	ἀνέρχεσθαι	240
ἀνακαθαρός	228	ἄνεσις	\$284, \$314
ἀνάκλασις	\$68, \$105	ἀνέυρετος	\$71
ἀνάκλισις	\$187	ἀνέχειν	186
ἀνακομίζω	\$321	ἀνέφικτος	\$223, \$283
ἀνακτάομαι	\$279	ἀνήμερος	\$289
ἀνακύπτειν	\$233	ἀνὴρ	\$3, \$176, \$199, \$274 ♦ 196, 198,
ἀναλαμβάνειν	\$2, \$25, \$175 ♦ 182, 365	200 ⁺ , 220 ⁺ , 228 ⁺ , 230 ⁺ , 234, 266 ⁺ ,	
ἀναλέγειν	256	270 ⁺ , 312, 314	
ἀναμάρτητος	\$252	ἀνθεμῖς	\$75
ἀναμηρύκησις	\$154	ἄνθος	\$96
ἀνανέεσθαι	252	ἄνθραξ	\$66, \$69
Ἀνανίας	\$48	ἄνθρωπος	\$2, \$5, \$18, \$95, \$99, \$108,
ἀνάξιος	\$205, \$217	\$126, \$140, \$174, \$183, \$197, \$201,	
ἀνάπαυσις	\$94	\$211, \$263, \$283 ♦ 182, 184, 226, 228 ⁺ ,	
ἀναπλέκειν	\$79	230 ⁺ , 232, 238 ⁺ , 240, 266, 314 ⁺	
ἀναπληροῦν	\$75 ♦ 196	ἀνθυποτιθέναι	\$239
ἀναπόσβεστος	230	ἀνιέναι	\$96
ἀνάπτωσις	\$187, \$203	ἀνιστάναι	210 ⁺ , 230
ἀνάρητος	\$89 ♦ 272, 274	ἀνόητος	\$136 ♦ 228
ἀναρπάζειν	\$146	ἀνοικεῖωσις	\$16
ἀναρρίπτειν	\$93	ἀνοικοδομεῖν	\$100
ἀνασπαστός	\$35 ♦ 228	ἄνοπλος	\$103
ἀναστρέφεσθαι	\$252	ἀνόσιος	\$167, \$289
ἀναστροφή	\$130, \$216	ἀνοχή	\$194
ἀνάτασις	\$83	ἀντάμειψις	\$259
ἀνατάσσειν	\$144 ♦ 240	ἀντιβολή	\$302
ἀνατείνειν	\$169 ♦ 184	Ἀντίγονος	\$180 ♦ 226, 232
ἀνατέλλειν	182	ἀντιγράφειν	\$41 ♦ 198, 200, 268
ἀναπιθέναι	\$19, \$37 ♦ 266	ἀντιγραφή	\$28, \$51
ἀναφέρειν	\$268	ἀντίγραφος	\$21, \$28 ⁺ , \$34 ♦ 268 ⁺ , 312,
ἀνάχωμα	\$301	362	
ἀναχωρεῖν	230	ἀντιδοξεῖν	\$227
Ἀνδρέας	\$12, \$19, \$40, \$43, \$123, \$173	ἀντικεῖσθαι	\$266
♦ 198, 200, 220		ἄντικρυς	254, 256
ἀνδρεία	\$12, \$199, \$281	ἀντιλέγειν	\$266
ἀνείλημα	\$177	ἀντιπράσσειν	\$239, \$250
ἀνέκαθεν	270	Ἀντώνιος	250 ⁺
ἀνέκλειπτος	\$89, \$185 ♦ 272, 274	ἀνυπέρβλητος	\$92
ἀνέκφευκτος	\$49, \$268	ἄνειν	\$62, \$86
ἀνελίσσειν	\$177	ἀνωφελής	\$253
ἀνεξήγητος	\$77, \$78, \$97	ἀξιοθαύμαστος	\$282

ἀξιόλογος	§1, §72, §184, §322	ἀποθεοῦν	§137
ἀξιομνημόνευτος	§6	ἀποθνήσκειν	210
ἀξιόπιστος	254	ἀποκαθιστάναι	§46, §294, §316, §315,
ἄξιος	§4, §10, §19, §29, §32, §37, §40,	§318 ♦ 240	
§43, §98, §122, §171, §188 ⁺ , §192,		ἀποκαλύπτειν	§177 ♦ 266
§229, §238, §264, §282, §296 ♦ 200,		ἀποκατάσσεις	§123
220 ⁺ , 234, 238		ἀπόκλιμα	§59
ἀξιοῦν	§12, §17, §18, §19, §245 ♦ 196,	ἀποκρίνεσθαι	§122, §189, §200, §203,
198, 230, 238, 252, 266 ⁺		§206, §228, §212, §245, §255, §263,	
ἀξίωμα	228, 270	§265, §268, §269, §271, §279, §282,	
ἀόρατος	§90, §156	§296	
ἀπαγγέλλειν	232	ἀπόκρισις	§217, §270, §295
ἀπαγορεύειν	§146	ἀποκρύπτειν	240, 266
ἀπαγορευτικός	§131	ἀπόκρυφος	184
ἀπάντησις	§91	ἀποκτείνειν	232
ἀπαντᾶν	§36 ♦ 228	ἀπολαμβάνειν	§14
ἀπαρallάκτως	§70	ἀπολάμπειν	§78
ἀπαρallόγιστος	§275	ἀπολείπειν	§29, §30, §221, §226, §262,
ἀπαρτία	365	§275	
ἀπάρχεσθαι	§158	ἀπολιμπάνειν	182
ἀπαρχή	§40	ἀπολλύναι	210
ἄπας	§17, §195 ♦ 184, 254	ἀπολογεῖσθαι	§170
ἀπανυγάζεσθαι	§76, §97	ἀπολογία	§161
ἀπειθεῖν	§25	ἀπολύειν	§15, §17, §22, §24, §139, §175,
ἀπελεύνειν	210	§174, §268, §303, §304 ♦ 198, 210	
ἀπέραστος	§156	ἀπόλυσις	§14, §16, §19
ἀπέρεισις	§138, §151	ἀπολυτροῦν	§20
ἀπερριμμένως	268	ἀπολύτρωσις	§12, §33
ἀπέχειν	§115, §143, §315, §322	ἀπομερίζειν	§26
ἄπιστος	§296	ἀπονέμειν	§24
ἀπλανής	§2	ἀπονίζειν	§305, §306
ἀπό	§13, §24, §36, §39, §46, §73, §86,	ἀπονίπτειν	§305, §306
§232		ἀποξενοῦν	§109
ἀποβλέπειν	272	ἀποπειρᾶσθαι	184
ἀπογλαυκοῦσθαι	§316	ἀποπέμπειν	200
ἀπογράφειν	365 ⁺	ἀπορία	232
ἀπογραφή	§20, §24, §283	ἀπορρίπτειν	§28
ἀποδεικνύειν	§159	ἀποστέλλειν	§1, §28, §32, §40, §42, §46,
ἀπόδειξις	§102 ♦ 234	§81 ⁺ , §125, §174, §176, §177 ♦ 184,	
ἀποδέχεσθαι	§194, §207, §209, §241,	196, 198 ⁺ , 220, 238, 252, 268, 312 ⁺ ,	
§243, §245, §273, §274, §281, §297,		314 ⁺	
§309		ἀποστολή	§15
ἀποδιδόναι	§36, §37, §72, §173, §179,	ἀποστάσειν	§94, §182 ♦ 271
§238, §259 ♦ 220, 365, 366		ἀποτελεῖν	§67 ⁺
ἀποδοχής	§257, §308	ἀποτιθέναι	§122

ἀποτίνειν	228	Ἀρσινόη	\$41 ♦ 198, 361 ⁺
ἀποτρέχειν	\$273	Ἀρσινοΐτης	361
ἀποτρίβειν	\$272	ἀρτάβη	314
ἀποτυγχάνειν	\$191, \$192	Ἀρταξέρξης	240, 252
ἀποφαίνειν	\$19, \$20, \$53, \$89, \$198, \$207, \$217, \$228, \$241, \$246, \$255, \$256, \$273, \$281 ♦ 274	Ἀρτεμίδωρος	359
ἀποφέρειν	\$39	ἀρχαῖος	\$116
ἀπραγμάτευτος	\$118	ἀρχαιότης	220, 234
ἀπροσδεής	\$211	ἀρχεδέατρος	\$182
ἀπρόσκοπος	\$210	ἄρχειν	\$190, \$204, \$211, \$218, \$281, \$286, \$289, \$290, \$298 ♦ 182, 184, 212, 220, 240
ἄπταιστος	\$187	ἀρχή	\$97, \$205, \$221, \$261, \$290 ♦ 184 ⁺ , 186, 198, 220, 238, 272
ἄπτεσθαι	\$149	ἀρχιερέυς	\$1, \$6, \$11, \$32, \$35, \$41, \$81 ♦ 182, 196, 198 ⁺ , 200, 228, 268 ⁺ , 270, 272
ἀπώλεια	\$167	ἀρχιερωσύνη	270
Ἀραβία	\$119 ♦ 210 ⁺ , 314	ἀρχισωματοφύλαξ	\$12, \$40 ♦ 198
Αράβισσα	210	ἀρχιτεκτονία	314
Ἄραψ	\$114	ἀρχιτέκτων	314
ἀργός	230	ἄρωμα	\$92, \$114
ἀργύρεος	200	ἀσαφής	196
ἀργυρικός	\$37	ἀσέβεια	\$166
ἀργύριον	\$33, \$40, \$42, \$294 ♦ 198	ἀσελγής	\$205
ἀργυρόπους	\$320	ἀσθενής	\$250
ἀργυροῦς	\$42, \$76, \$77, \$78 ⁺	Ἄσιος	238, 252
ἀρδεύειν	\$116	Ἀσκάλων	\$115
ἀρέσκειν	\$224	ἀσκεῖν	\$168, \$225, \$255, \$285
ἀρετή	\$122, \$200, \$215, \$272, \$277, \$278 ♦ 182, 200, 232	ἄσκησις	182
ἀρῆν	\$146	ἄσμενος	184
ἀριθμεῖν	\$112 ♦ 250	ἀσμένως	\$5
ἀριθμός	182	Ἄσομ	212
Ἀρισταῖος	198, 200, 210 ⁺ , 266	ἀσπάζεσθαι	\$173, \$175, \$179, \$235 ♦ 359
Ἀριστέας	\$19, \$40, \$43 ♦ 220, 272 ⁺	ἀσπασμός	\$246, \$304
ἀριστίνδην	182	ἀσπιδίσκος	\$75
Ἀριστόβουλος	252, 254 ⁺ , 256 ⁺ , 260, 270, 272	ἀστεῖος	184
ἄριστος	\$14, \$121, \$289 ♦ 182, 228, 230	ἀστήρ	188
Ἀριστοτέλην	272	ἀστυγείτων	228
ἀρκεῖν	234	ἄσυλος	358
ἀρμόζειν	\$43	ἀσφάλεια	\$28, \$45, \$61, \$85, \$115, \$118, \$172, \$230 ♦ 200
ἀρμός	\$71	ἀσφαλής	\$46, \$312
ἀρνέεσθαι	228	ἀσφαλίζειν	\$104
ἄρουρα	\$116 ♦ 230	ἄσχημος	\$211
Ἄρσαμος	\$49, \$50		
ἄρσην	\$152		

ἀσχήμων	§211	βαδίζειν	230
ἀτάραχος	§213	βαθύς	§118, §122, §143
ἄτε	§121 ♦ 184	Βαλακ	212 ⁺
ἄτμητος	230	Βαλδὰδ	210, 212
ἀτιμασμός	§269	βάλλειν	230
ἄττακος	§145	Βαναίας	§50
ἀττικίζειν	254, 256	Βασέας	§47
ἀτυχεῖν	§241	Βαραδ	212
ἀτύχημα	§244	Βαραχιήλ	210
ἀτυχία	210	βάρβαρος	182, 230
αὖ §255		βάρος	§93
αὖθις	182, 252	βασιλεία	§15 ⁺ , §20, §24, §36, §37, §45, §125, §187, §209, §245, §267, §271, §286, §283, §291 ♦ 312 ⁺ , 314
αὐθήμερος	210	βασιλῆιος	§98 ♦ 186
αὐλή	§37, §173, §175, §304 ♦ 198	βασιλεύειν	§211 ⁺ , §219, §294 ♦ 212, 361
αὐξάνειν	§208	βασιλεύς	§29, §35, §41, §46, §175, §182, §261, §279, §280, §283, §290, §304 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 184, 196 ⁺ , 198 ⁺ , 200, 210 ⁺ , 212 ⁺ , 226, 228 ⁺ , 230, 232, 238 ⁺ , 240, 250, 252 ⁺ , 256, 258, 260, 266 ⁺ , 268 ⁺ , 270 ⁺ , 272, 312 ⁺ , 314, 353 ⁺ , 354 ⁺ , 356 ⁺ , 357 ⁺ , 362 ⁺ , 365 ⁺
Αὐσίτις	210 ⁺	βασιλική, -ός	§22, §25, §26, §30, §38, §80, §186 ♦ 196, 365 ⁺
αὐτίκα	§22	βασίλισσα	§41 ♦ 198, 353 ⁺ , 354 ⁺ , 356 ⁺ , 357 ⁺ , 362
αὐτοκελεύστως	§92	βάσις	§73, §90
αὐτός	§2, §7, §8, §15, §20, §26, §41 ⁺ , §42, §57, §59 ⁺ , §66, §70, §76, §78, §90, §91, §104, §123, §134, §163, §166, §176, §183, §186, §193, §195, §196, §203, §216, §221, §230, §234, §236, §241, §246, §247, §252, §259, §276, §309, §316, §318, §321	Βασάρα	210
αὐτοφυής	§118	βδελύσσεσθαι	359
αὐχὴν	184	βέβηλος	196
ἄφαιρέσθαι	§147, §244, §253	Βερενίκη	353 ⁺ , 361
ἄφαιρέσις	§311	Βεωρ	212
ἄφειδής	§85	βηλός	228
αφελεῖν	184	Βηρωσός	234
ἄφθονος	§82	βία	§148
ἄφή	§129, §142, §162	βιβλιοθήκη	§9, §10, §29, §38 ♦ 196, 198, 238 ⁺ , 252, 266 ⁺
ἄφηγεῖσθαι	§245	βιβλίον	§9, §10, §28, §29, §30, §31, §38, §46, §176, §317, §322 ♦ 184, 196, 198, 226, 232, 234, 238, 240, 266, 268, 270, 272
ἄφικνεῖσθαι	§175 ♦ 228	βίβλος	§316 ♦ 210, 220 ⁺ , 238 ⁺ , 252, 260, 272 ⁺
ἄφιξις	§173		
ἄφίστασθαι	§77, §313		
ἄφοβία	§243		
ἄφορμή	188		
ἄφορολόγητος	232		
ἄφοσιούν	§297		
ἄφροντις	§248		
ἄχρηστος	§21, §53, §119, §164		
Βαβυλών	228 ⁺ , 250 ⁺		

βίος	§130, §147, §209, §240, §260, §251, §273, §279, §284 ⁺ , §286 ♦ 184, 254	γενεαλογία	250
βιοῦν	§32, §39	γένεσις	184, 258
βλαβερός	§192, §255	γενναῖος	220
βλάβη	§131, §256, §266	γεννᾶν	§208 ♦ 210
βλάπτειν	§232, §233	γένος	§6, §17, §63, §66, §75, §97, §165, §190, §208, §250, §257, §259 ♦ 182, 184, 254, 270
βλαστάνειν	§230	γέρας	232
βλέπειν	§88, §113, §192 ♦ 273	γέφυρα	§301
βλιμάζειν	§188	γεωμετρία	186
βόρεια	§301	γεωργεῖν	§107, §112 ♦ 362
Βοσπορα	210	γεωργία	§11, §107 ♦ 210
βότρυς	§63, §70, §75	γεωργός	§111
βουκόλιον	§170	γῆ	§89, §107, §116, §132, §147 ♦ 184, 210, 272, 274, 312, 314
βούλεσθαι	§5, §25, §38, §40, §41, §53, §122, §180, §206, §207, §250, §269, §315 ♦ 226, 228, 240, 362	γίνεσθαι	§1, §16, §21, §22, §23 ⁺ , §27, §31, §33 ⁺ , §35, §45 ⁺ , §46, §53, §76, §77, §81, §83, §85, §90, §91, §101, §103 ⁺ , §109, §120, §182, §191, §197 ⁺ , §204, §221, §232, §236 ⁺ , §238, §253, §262, §275 ⁺ , §277, §293, §297, §298, §299, §303, §307, §308, §310, §313, §314, §316, §318 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 188 ⁺ , 198, 200 ⁺ , 210, 220, 226 ⁺ , 228 ⁺ , 230, 238 ⁺ , 250 ⁺ , 252 ⁺ , 254 ⁺ , 258 ⁺ , 266, 272 ⁺ , 273, 274, 312, 366
βουλεύεσθαι	§195, §199 ⁺ , §243, §255 ♦ 198, 220	γινώσκειν	§195, §206, §208, §210, §218, §239, §240, §244, §253, §254, §298 ♦ 198, 220, 240 ⁺ , 260, 312 ⁺ , 359
βούλειμα	§255 ♦ 182	γλῶσσα	182 ⁺ , 186, 250
βουλή	§42, §255, §270	γνήσιος	§7, §41
βούλημα	§283, §322 ♦ 252	γνώμη	§234
βούλησις	§23, §234	γνώριμος	238
βοῦς	210 ⁺	γομφωτός	§71
Βουσιρίτης	312	γονεύς	§121, §228 ⁺ , §238
βραχύμετρος	§55	Γορπιαίος	361
βραχύς	§19, §128, §168, §188, §205 ♦ 238	γράμμα	§3, §11, §30, §38 ⁺ , §43, §121, §98, §176 ♦ 198, 220
βρῶσις	§129	γράφειν	§3, §11, §33, §32, §40, §56, §176, §311, §321 ♦ 186, 196 ⁺ , 210, 220 ⁺ , 228, 232, 238 ⁺ , 240, 252, 254 ⁺ , 256, 266, 272, 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺ , 358, 366
βρωτός	§128, §169, §223, §182, §158, §140, §142, §162	γραφή	§155, §168 ♦ 186, 240 ⁺ , 250, 252 ⁺ , 254, 268, 270, 272
βύσσινος	§87, §320	γυμνοῦν	228
βωμός	228, 230 ⁺		
Γάζα	§115, §117 ♦ 226 ⁺		
Γαλαδίτις	314		
γαλή	§144, §163, §165		
Γαλίλαια	314		
γαμεῖν	210		
γάρ	§19, §112, §137, §158, §167, §170, §194, §205, §207, §208, §209, §212, §228, §229, §235, §289, §314		
γε	§19		
Γεθθαιμ	212		
γειτνιάν	§116		
γενεά	234, 250 ⁺		

γυνή	§14, §185, §250 ♦ 210, 353, 354+, 356, 365	Δημήτριος	§9, §11, §28, §29, §301, §302, §308, §309, §312, §317 ♦ 196, 220+, 226+, 250, 252, 254, 256, 258, 266, 268+, 270
γωνία	§61	δημόσιος	§81 ♦ 266
Δαβίδ	250+, 312+, 314	δηποτοῦν	§164
Δαθαῖος	§50	διά + gen.	§114, §130, §141, §151, §168, §252, §276, §286
Δάκις	§47	διά + acc.	§23, §37, §42, §270, §292
δακρύειν	§178	διαβαδίζειν	230
δάκτυλος	§65, §69	διαβάσθαι	§106
Δανίηλος	§49	διαβάς	§301
δαπανᾶν	§72, §147	διαβεβαιοῦν	§99
δαπάνη	§85, §205	διαβολή	§119, §120, §252
δαπάνησις	§146	διάγειν	§283
δαψίλεια	§107	διαγινώσκειν	365
δαψιλής	§112, §115, §303, §321	διαγλυφή	§64
δεικνύναι	§133, §134, §161, §285	διαγορεύειν	§163
δεῖ	§7, §31, §42, §54, §72, §106, §120, §122+, §138, §147, §159, §170, §200, §206, §208, §219+, §227+, §228, §242, §246, §245, §250, §251, §254, §256, §256, §264, §268, §269, §270, §279, §280, §281, §283, §284, §286, §295+, §299, §301 ♦ 196+, 200, 258, 312, 314+	διαγωνιᾶν	§124
δεῖγμα	182	διάδοχος	230, 232
δείκνυσθαι	230	διάθεσις	§1, §2, §5, §59, §60, §64, §67, §70, §77, §92, §127, §141, §149, §196, §228
δεινός	210+, 228	δαίρειν	§214
δειπνεῖν	§180	διακεῖσθαι	210
δείπνον	§217	διακομίζειν	§22, §114
δεισιδαιμόνως	§129+	διακόσμησις	§156
δέκα	§12, §19, §37, §204, §320+ ♦ 198, 314	διακριβοῦν	§31 ♦ 196
δεκαδύο	§97	διακρίνειν	§110
δεκάπηχys	230	διάκρισις	§191, §291
δέκατος	§50, §217, §234, §246, §260 ♦ 226, 228, 234, 250+	διαλαμβάνειν	§25, §37, §93, §160, §189, §210, §215, §234, §239, §273 ♦ 362
Δενναβα	212	διαλέγειν	§40 ♦ 198
δεξιά	§179	διαλείπειν	§94, §224, §274
δεσμός	§265	διαλεκτικός	186
δεσπότης	198	διάλεκτος	238, 240, 250, 252+
δεῦρο	238	διάλιθος	§62
δεύτερος	§47, §143 ♦ 250, 266, 272	διαλλάσσειν	§79, §97
δή	§4, §56, §76, §121, §125	διαλογίζεσθαι	§212, §256
δῆλος	182, 196, 226, 228	διαλογισμός	§216, §252, §255
δηλοῦν	§4, §5, §34, §83+, §91, §91, §120 ♦ 186, 200, 268, 270+	διαλύειν	184
		διαμαρτάνειν	184, 220+
		διαμένειν	§204, §226+, §246, §258, §259, §310 ♦ 182
		διαμερίζειν	§183

διαμονή	§283	διαφανής	270
διανακύπτειν	§18	διαφέρειν	§14, §28, §43, §51,
διαναπαύειν	§94		§66, §92, §93, §121, §124, §145, §200,
διανιστάμεναι	§160		§281 ♦ 200, 220, 234, 268
διανοεῖσθαι	§56, §218 ⁺ , §259	διαφερόντως	186
διάνοια	§7, §17, §78, §99, §122, §156,	διαφθείρειν	240, 252
	§171, §194, §216, §222, §227, §237,	διαφορά	228
	§238, §243, §245, §247, §287, §292,	διάφορος	§9, §97, §176 ♦ 250, 266
	§312, §314, §322 ♦ 228, 252, 270	διαφυλάσσειν	§272 ♦ 184, 200
διανοεῖσθαι	182	διαχεῖν	§20, §253, §288
διαπέμπειν	§6 ♦ 238 ⁺	διάχυσις	§78
διαπίπτειν	§29, §189 ♦ 196	διδασκαλία	270
διαπλάσσειν	§137	διδάσκαλος	260, 266
διαπλέειν	186	διδάσκω	§131, §236
διαπλοκή	§74	διδαχή	§207, §294
διάπλοκος	§75	διδόναι	§27, §33, §33, §110, §158,
διαπονεῖν	§92		§181, §185, §194, §197, §219, §223,
διαπορεύεσθαι	§322		§240, §249, §267, §270, §271, §274,
διαπρέπειν	270		§280, §282, §292, §294, §319 ♦ 228,
διαπρεπής	§72, §97, §301, §320		232, 252, 365, 366 ⁺
διαπράσσειν	182	διεξάγειν	§5, §182, §193, §198, §260,
διαπυνθάνεσθαι	§266		§286
διαράσασθαι	§311	διεξελεῖν	§168
διαρρήδην	§159	διέξοδος	§105, §251
διασαφεῖν	§51, §171, §297, §306 ♦ 196,	διερμηνεύειν	§15, §308, §310 ♦ 182, 184,
	272, 312		252, 254, 256
διασάφησις	§305	διέρχεσθαι	§34, §301 ♦ 268, 272
διασημαίνειν	§16	διευθύνειν	§188
διασκευάζειν	§311	διηγέεσθαι	230
διασκευή	§64, §71, §73, §76, §84, §310	διήγησις	§1, §8, §322 ♦ 270
διάστασις	§86	διστάναι	§106
διαστέλλειν	§131, §150, §151, §152 ♦ 272	δικαιοπραγεῖν	§231, §279
διάστημα	§187, §255 ♦ 184, 250	δίκαιος	§24 ⁺ , §46, §125, §147,
διαστολή	§110, §151, §153, §155, §161		§148, §169, §179, §189, §193, §212,
διαστροφή	§130, §142		§215, §280, §291, §292, §318 ♦ 210,
διασώζειν	§45		228, 234
διάταξις	§97, §192, §203, §220, §221,	δικαιοσύνη	§18, §43, §131, §144, §147,
	§236, §262		§151, §159, §168 ⁺ , §169, §209, §232,
διατάσσειν	§92, §147, §162, §170, §182		§259, §267, §278, §280, §281, §306 ♦
διατελεῖν	§187, §234, §322		200
διατηρεῖν	§37, §189, §271, §272	δικτυωτός	§74
διατορεύειν	§79	διμερής	§183
διατρίβειν	§283 ♦ 230, 232	διό	§17, §23, §31, §51, §60, §81, §113,
διατυποῦν	§75		§122, §137, §155, §157, §179, §180,
διατύπωσις	§59, §63, §86		§184, §216

δίοδος	§105, §106	δύναμις	§132, §143, §146, §157, §193, §194, §236, §248, §252, §268, §281, §282, §297 ♦ 312
διοικεῖν	§2, §28, §201, §234, §254 ♦ 228, 266, 268, 366	δύνασθαι	§7, §37, §51, §77, §101, §123, §213, §224, §276, §286, §322 ♦ 198 ⁺ , 228, 232, 362
διοίκησις	§155	δυναστεία	§120, §132, §141, §162, §194, §201, §255
διοικοδομεῖν	§84	δυναστεύειν	§168, §195 ⁺
διοικοδομή	§87	δυνατός	§9, §39, §105, §133, §139, §229, §230, §290 ♦ 228
διόπερ	§28, §55, §297	δύο	§50, §57, §60, §73, §76, §93, §103, §273, §307, §319, §320 ♦ 230
διορθοῦν	§37	δυσάπλλακτος	§86
διόρθωσις	§299	δυσάπολόγητος	§213
διότι	§130, §151, §168, §206, §254, §314, §316	δυσάποσπάστως	§123
διπλός	230	δυσείσβολος	§118
δισμύριοι	312	δύσνοια	§270
διστάζειν	§53	δυσχεραίνειν	§182
διυφή	§86	δώδεκα	230
διυφαίνειν	§97	δωδέκατος	§50
διφθέρα	§3, §176	δωρεῖσθαι	§290 ♦ 220
διχηλής	§153	δώρημα	§276
διχηλεύειν	§150	Δωρίων	362
διχηλία	§161	Δωρόθεος	§182, §183, §184, §186, §304
δόγμα	256	δῶρον	§172, §176, §225, §231, §234, §272
δογματοποιία	254, 256, 258	Δωσίθεος	361
δοκεῖν	§26, §312 ♦ 196, 200, 234, 256, 258	ἐάν	§32, §54, §101, §110, §130, §133, §237, §241, §273, §318, §321
δοκιμάζειν	§276 ♦ 184, 232, 266, 312	ἐάν	§14, §102
δοκιμαστής	§252	ἐαυτοῦ	§3, §3, §9, §32, §71, §89, §121, §125, §146, §147, §148, §152, §159, §160, §164, §170, §170, §183, §189, §190, §196, §205, §209, §211, §213, §213, §215, §215, §217, §217, §222, §224, §227, §228, §228, §242, §248, §248, §260, §263, §268 ⁺ , §270, §304
δόκιμος	§57 ♦ 182, 184	ἐβδομάς	250
δόλος	§246	ἐβδομήκοντα	§33, §50, §84, §273, §307 ♦ 200, 240 ⁺ , 252
δόμα	§224	ἐβδομος	§49, §275 ♦ 226
δόξα	§3, §21, §37, §39, §45, §79, §96, §98, §139, §196, §218, §223, §224, §224, §226, §230, §234, §242, §282, §269, §269, §283, §290, §292 ♦ 198, 200	Ἑβραϊδός	238 ⁺
δοξάζειν	§19, §226, §244 ♦ 240	Ἑβραϊκός	§3, §30, §38 ♦ 196, 198, 270
Δοσίθεος	§50		
δόσις	§20, §22, §26, §27, §82, §229		
δουλεύειν	198		
δράμα	§316		
δρᾶν	§194 ♦ 240		
δράσειν	182		
δραστικός	§250		
δραχμή	§20, §22 ♦ 365 ⁺ , 366		
Δριμύλος	361		
δυναμικός	§134		

Ἑβραῖος	250, 254 ⁺ , 256 ⁺ , 258, 260, 270	200 ⁺ , 210, 228, 234, 254, 260 ⁺ , 266,
ἔγγονος	\$196 ⁺ , \$248	312, 314, 362, 365
ἔγγραπτος	\$110	εἶπα \$10, \$20, \$167, \$178, \$182,
ἐγείρειν	\$94, \$216 ⁺	\$184, \$186, \$195, \$205, \$226, \$256,
ἐγερσις	\$160	\$271, \$279, \$280
ἐγκατασκευάζειν	\$194	εἰρηκέναι \$104, \$120, \$224, \$253, \$260,
ἔγκληρος	\$116	\$288, \$293, \$311
ἐγκράτεια	\$278	Εἰρηναῖος 240
ἐγκρατής	\$22 ♦ 220, 226	εἰρήνη \$37, \$45, \$291 ♦ 200
ἐγκρῖνειν	\$228	εἰρηνικῶς \$273
ἐγκυλίνδειν	\$166	εἰς \$130
ἐγκύπτειν	\$140	εἰς \$129, \$143 ⁺ , \$178, \$198 ♦ 230, 266,
ἐγώ	\$10, \$12, \$91, \$167, \$170,	361
	\$173, \$181, \$215, \$227, \$293, \$294,	εἰσάγειν \$22, \$26
	\$295, \$296, \$316	εἰσαφικνέεσθαι 228
ἐγχειρίζειν	220 ⁺	εἰσδέξασθαι \$103
ἔδαφος	\$69, \$86, \$88, \$90 ♦ 272 ⁺ , 273,	εἰσέρχεσθαι \$13
274		εἰσδιδόναι \$26, \$28 ♦ 268
Ἑδῶμ	210, 212	εἴσδοσις \$28, \$33 ♦ 268 ⁺
ἐθέλειν	\$78 ♦ 198, 200, 240	εἰσοδεῖναι \$102
ἐθισμός	\$182, \$184	εἴσοδος \$120
ἐθνικός	196	εἶτα \$74, \$77, \$199
ἔθνος	\$36, \$139 ♦ 186, 188, 226, 228,	εἶτε \$136
232 ⁺ , 240, 266 ⁺		ἔκαστος \$1, \$51, \$59, \$89, \$97, \$150,
ἔθος	\$175, \$182, \$184, \$298, \$305, \$311	\$189, \$256, \$263, \$297, \$307 ♦ 230,
♦ 184		240, 252 ⁺ , 254, 268, 274, 365 ⁺ , 366
Ἑξέκλητος	\$50	Ἑκαταῖος \$31 ♦ 196, 226 ⁺ , 228, 232 ⁺ ,
Ἑζεκίας	\$47 ⁺ ♦ 228	234
εἰ	\$19, \$20, \$22, \$26, \$37, \$44, \$53,	ἐκάτερος \$93, \$96
	\$102, \$103, \$140, \$236, \$238	ἐκατόν \$33, \$40, \$42, \$320 ♦ 200
εἰδέναι	\$30, \$42, \$124, \$194, \$251, \$273,	ἐκατοστός 226 ⁺
	\$300 ♦ 182, 186, 200	ἐκατοντάρουρος \$116
εἰδήμων	252	ἐκβαίνειν \$256, \$289
εἰθισμένως	\$105	ἐκγίγνομεσθαι 186
εἰκάζειν	\$105	ἐκδέχεσθαι \$85, \$205
εἰκῇ	\$28, \$51, \$161, \$162, \$168	ἐκδιδόναι 272
εἰκός	\$223	ἔκδοσις \$28 (var. εἴσδοσις), 268 n. 52
εἰκοσαδραχμία	\$27	ἐκεῖνος \$179, \$190 ♦ 226
εἰκοσι	\$10, \$20, \$22, \$42, \$110 ♦ 200,	ἐκζητεῖν \$24
230, 361 ⁺		ἐκθαυμάζειν \$312
εἰκών	\$135	ἐκκεῖσθαι \$24
εἶναι	\$11, \$34, \$37, \$40, \$82, \$93, \$114,	ἐκκόπτειν 212
	\$123, \$153, \$163, \$176, \$182, \$187,	ἐκλάμπειν 186
	\$197, \$216, \$235, \$237, \$238, \$245,	ἐκλέγειν \$13, \$93, \$239 ♦ 252
	\$255, \$282, \$304 ♦ 184 ⁺ , 196 ⁺ , 198 ⁺ ,	ἐκλείπειν \$119

ἐκλογία	§33	Ἑλλην	§137 ♦ 186, 230, 234, 256, 272
ἐκμαθεῖν	220	Ἑλληνικός	§38, §121 ♦ 182, 184, 186 ⁺ ,
ἐκμανθάνειν	196		198, 240, 252 ⁺
ἐκπέμπειν	182	ἐλπίδα	§18, §261
ἐκπίπτειν	§249	ἐμβάλλειν	§117 ♦ 266
ἐκπληξίς	§96, §99	ἐμμελής	§286
ἐκπλήττεσθαι	§196	ἐμμενεῖν	210 ⁺
ἐκπομπή	§318, §319, §320	ἐμπειρία	§39, §70
ἐκπρεπῶς	§84	ἐμπειρος	§32 ♦ 196, 198, 228, 240,
ἐκτένεια	362		252 n. 33, 264
ἐκτιθέναι	§1, §20, §150, §153, §161	ἐμπειροτάτος	240, 262
♦ 250, 365		ἐμπίμπτειν	§161
ἐκτίνειν	228	ἐμπνεῖν	240
ἐκτος	§48, §228	ἐμποιεῖν	§99
ἐκτός	§59, §99, §224, §232, §253, §304	ἐμπορία	§114
ἐκτυπος	§58, §66, §79	ἐμφαίνειν	§74
ἐκτυποῦν	§98	ἐμφανίζειν	198
ἐκτύπωσις	§62, §63, §74	ἐμφανιστής	§167
ἐκφέρειν	§256, §315 ♦ 365	ἐμφαντικός	186
ἐκφυγεῖν	§268	ἐμφασις	§56, §77
ἐκλαία	§63, §79	ἐν + dat	§116, §180, §198
ἐλαϊχός	§112	ἐν + gen	§29, §31
ἐλαιον	§92 ♦ 314	ἐναντίος	§231, §236, §255
ἐλασμα	§65, §69	ἐναντιοῦσθαι	§254
ἐλασμός	§57	ἐναργής	§70, §75
ἐλαττοῦν	§111, §241	ἐναρμόζειν	186
ἐλαττον	§71, §75, §82, §116, §219, §285	ἐνάρχεσθαι	§129
ἐλάττωσις	§109	ἐνατος	§49, §286, §303
Ἑλεάζαρος	§1, §33, §35, §41 ⁺ , §50,	ἐνδείκνυσθαι	§133, §194
§51, §83, §96, §112, §123, §172, §173,		ἐνδεικτικῶς	§131
§320 ♦ 196, 198 ⁺ , 200, 268 ⁺ , 270 ⁺		Ἐνδεμίας	§49
ἐλέγχεσθαι	§15	ἐνδέκατος	§50, §204, §273 ♦ 226
ἐλεήμων	§208	ἐνδεχομένως	§41 ♦ 268
ἔλεος	§208	ἐνδοξος	§121, §155
ἐλέσθαι	182	ἐνδυσις	§96
ἐλευθέριος	§246	ἐνεῖναι	§285
ἐλεύθερος	365 ⁺	ἐνεκα	§55, §88, §144, §206 ♦ 270, 272,
ἐλευθεροῦν	§27, §37		273
εἰλικρινής	186	ἐνεργάζεσθαι	§130
Ἑλιοῦ	210	ἐνέργεια	§59, §78, §82, §151, §159,
Ἑλισσαῖος	§47, §48, §50, §184		§266, §285, §306
Ἑλίφας	210, 212	ἐνεργεῖν	§78, §156, §210 ♦ 240, 252
ἐλκοῦν	210	ἐνεργῶς	§90, §284 ♦ 272, 274
Ἑλλάς	182, 238, 250, 252, 270	ἐνέχειν	§16
ἐλλείπειν	§183, §245	ἐνήρμεῖν	184

ἐνησυχάζειν	184	ἐξιέναι	\$102, \$117
ἐνηχεῖν	186	ἐξιλάσκεισθαι	\$314, \$316
ἐνθουσιάζειν	184	ἐξις	\$121
ἐνθύμημα	186	ἐξούσιος	\$102, \$206, \$215, \$253
ἐνιαντός	\$180	ἐξω	184
ἐνιέναι	\$65, \$79	ἐοικέναι	186, 266, 268
ἐννοεῖν	\$133, \$211	ἐορτή	\$88, \$102 ♦ 186, 272, 273
ἐννόημα	\$189	ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι	\$51, \$124, \$322
Ἔννων	210	ἐπαγρύπνησις	\$167
ἐνοπτρος	\$76	ἐπαθλον	\$322
ἔνος	220	ἐπαινεῖν	\$189, \$195, \$206, \$208, \$213,
ἔνοχος	\$25 ♦ 366		\$225, \$234, \$240, \$246, \$247, \$265,
ἐντασις	\$178		\$291
ἐνταῦθα	230	ἐπαινος	\$266
ἐνταυθοῖ	184	ἐπακούειν	272
ἐντευξίς	\$252	ἐπαλγής	\$167
ἐντολή	\$228	ἐπανάγειν	\$215, \$270 ♦ 362
ἐντος	\$68	ἐπαναγιγνώσκειν	\$26
ἐντυγχάνειν	\$174 ♦ 186, 220	ἐπαναίρεσις	\$147
ἐντυποῦν	\$67	ἐπανήκειν	\$8
ἐντυχεῖν	220	ἐπανορθοῦν	\$274
ἐντυχία	\$1	ἐπανόρθωσις	\$126, \$130, \$283 ♦ 184
ἐνυπῆρχε	\$74	ἐπανωθεν	\$105
ἐξ	\$32, \$39, \$46, \$198 ♦ 198, 200, 228,	ἐπαρκεῖν	270
	250, 314	ἐπαρχος	314
ἐξαγωγή	254 ⁺ , 258	ἐπεῖ	\$14, \$35, \$72, \$217, \$310
ἐξακισχίλιοι	\$116	ἐπέρχεσθαι	\$12, \$22
ἐξακόσιοι	\$27	ἐπερωτᾶν	\$176, \$190, \$198, \$199, \$203,
ἐξαναλίσκειν	\$87		\$206, \$212, \$225, \$248, \$262, \$264,
ἐξαποστέλλειν	\$13, \$126		\$272, \$273, \$275, \$276, \$277, \$306
ἐξαρτισμος	\$144	ἐπερώτησις	\$122
ἐξασφαλίζειν	\$100	ἔπεσθαι	\$120, \$228
ἐξέδρα	356	ἐπεξήγησις	254 ⁺ , 258
ἐξεῖναι	365	ἐπήκοος	357
ἐξετάζειν	\$32	ἐπί + gen	\$54, \$170, \$195
ἐξετασττθέναι	182	ἐπί + dat.	\$98, \$67, \$74, \$231
ἐξεύρεσις	\$136	ἐπιβάλλειν	\$78, \$312, \$313 ♦ 362
ἐξευρίσκειν	\$135 ♦ 186	ἐπιβλέπειν	\$190, \$207, \$218, \$244, \$281
ἐξηγέεσθαι	\$52, \$77	ἐπιβολή	\$18, \$193, \$313
ἐξήκοντα	\$27, \$116 ♦ 228	ἐπιγινώσκειν	\$246
ἐξῆς	\$83, \$193, \$198 ⁺ , \$203, \$209,	ἐπιγνωσις	\$100, \$139
	\$213, \$220, \$221, \$226, \$236, \$239,	ἐπιγράφειν	270, 357
	\$245, \$248, \$250, \$252, \$262, \$264,	ἐπιδεικνύειν	\$42, \$266 ♦ 186, 200, 226
	\$270 ♦ 268	ἐπιδεῖν	\$57
ἐξηγητικός	260	ἐπιδέσθαι	\$248

ἐπιδέχεσθαι	§70, §236	ἐπισημαίνειν	§210, §257, §274, §277
ἐπιδιδόναί	§3 ♦ 365	ἐπισημος	§180
ἐπίδοσις	§51 ♦ 188	ἐπισκευή	§5, §29, §42, §285 ♦ 200
ἐπιείκεια	§192, §207, §290 ♦ 232	ἐπίσκεψις	210
ἐπεικλής	§188, §207, §211, §263	ἐπισκένπτεσθαι	256
ἐπιέναι	§236, §299	ἐπισκιάζειν	182, 186, 270
ἐπιζητεῖν	§128	ἐπισκοτεῖν	234
ἐπίθεις	§93, §101	ἐπίστασις	§256
ἐπιθεωρεῖν	§51	ἐπιστάτης	356
ἐπιθυμεῖν	§211, §223 ♦ 220	ἐπιστέλλειν	198, 314
ἐπιθυμητής	220	ἐπιστολή	§28, §34 ⁺ , §41, §42, §51, §173 ♦ 198 ⁺ , 200 ⁺ , 268 ⁺ , 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺ , 362
ἐπιθυμία	§256	ἐπιστολίδιον	359
ἐπιλέγειν	198, 200	ἐπισυνάγειν	§29
ἐπικαλεῖν	§17, §193, §226 ♦ 182, 220, 226, 250, 266	ἐπισχεῖν	230
ἐπικεῖσθαι	§60, §67, §69, §74, §101	ἐπισφαλής	§314
ἐπικλῆν	260	ἐπιταγή	§55, §103
ἐπικλησις	§251	ἐπιτάσσειν	§94, §111 ♦ 220, 312 ⁺ , 314
ἐπικρατεῖν	§35, §119	ἐπιτέλεια	§18, §272, §282
ἐπικράτησις	254 ⁺ , 258	ἐπιτελεῖν	§17, §20, §25, §27, §39, §40, §40, §72, §77, §79, §93, §95, §104, §122, §127, §133, §148, §151, §159, §166, §182, §184, §186, §199, §203, §227, §249, §252, §255, §258, §262, §265, §280, §301, §302, §304, §307 ♦ 198, 312, 314, 362
ἐπικροτεῖν	§230	ἐπιτέμνειν	270
Ἐπικύδης	356	ἐπιτήδειος	184
ἐπικυροῦν	§270	ἐπίτιμος	366
ἐπικαλύειν	§53	ἐπιτρέπειν	184, 200
ἐπιλαμβάνειν	§130, §202	ἐπιτρέχειν	§143 ♦ 226
ἐπιλέξας	§14, §39, §121, §172	ἐπιτυχία	§178
ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν	§197, §258	ἐπιφάνεια	§65, §78, §264 ♦ 254 ⁺ , 258
ἐπιμαστιδίος	§27	ἐπιφαίνειν	272
ἐπιμέλεια	§18, §29, §107, §245, §282, §317 ♦ 196, 220 ⁺ , 270	ἐπιφέρειν	§206, §253, §278 ♦ 238, 258, 268
ἐπιμελεῖσθαι	359, 362	ἐπιφθέγγεσθαι	184
ἐπιμελής	§81, §93 ♦ 232	ἐπιφορά	§88 ♦ 273
ἐπιμελητής	§273	ἐπιφροσύνη	182
Ἐπιμένη	359	ἐπιφύεται	§269
ἐπιμιμνήσκειν	§128, §312 ♦ 196	ἐπιφωνεῖν	§196, §200, §211, §244, §261, §283, §311
ἐπιμιγνύναι	§139, §152	ἐπιχεῖν	§293
ἐπίμῃσις	§31, §154	ἐπλεχειν	§17, §188, §205
ἐπινεύειν	§202 ♦ 184	ἐπόπτῃς	§16
ἐπινόειν	§15, §107, §208, §252, §255		
ἐπίνοια	§196, §240, §271 ♦ 240		
ἐπίπνοια	252		
ἐπιπομπή	§131		
ἐπίπνους	252		
ἐπιρρεῖν	§89 ♦ 272, 273		
ἐπιρροή	272		

έπτα	§26, §301	ἔτι	§14, §35, §55, §63, §66, §79, §89,
έπτάκις	§177		§93, §112, §118, §145, §152, §151,
έπτακισχίλιοι	210		§137, §182, §198
έπτακόσιοι	§95	έτοιμάζειν	§181, §186, §319
έργάζεσθαι	§57, §63, §133, §176, §210,	έτοιμασία	§182
§249, §273, §281, §306		ἔτος	186, 228, 250 ⁺ , 357, 361, 362
έργασία	§109	εὖ	§20, §124, §178, §190, §193, §207,
έργασιμος	§114		§220, §255, §260, §267, §279, §281,
έργάτης	§231		§282 ♦ 186
έργον	§18, §81, §168, §252, §272 ♦ 182,	εὐαγγέλιον	250
184, 258		εὐαισθησία	§259
έρεῖν	226, 258	εὐανδρεῖν	§108
έρεισις	§69	εὐαγής	184
Έρετριεύς	§201	εὐαρεστεῖν	§286
έρις	§250	εὐβουλία	§255
έριφος	§146	εὐγνώμων	234
έρμηνεία	§3, §11, §32, §120, §301, §308	εὐδαιμονία	§108, §109
♦ 182, 186 ⁺ , 196, 198, 240 ⁺ , 250, 252 ⁺ ,		εὐδηλος	§21 ♦ 254, 256, 258
258, 266 ⁺ , 268 ⁺ , 272 ⁺		εὐδόκιμος	252
έρμηνεῖς	§310, §318	εὐδοξία	§280
έρμηνεύειν	186, 210, 220, 240, 250,	εὐεργεσία	§205 ♦ 186, 200
252 ⁺ , 260		εὐεργετεῖν	§190, §210, §249, §281
έρμηνεύς	254	εὐεργέτημα	§273
Έρμίας	356	Εὐεργέτης	354, 357–358, 361
έρπετον	§138, §169	εὐημερία	§12, §242, §244
έρρωμένος	198	εὐθετος	§122
έρυθρός	230	εὐθυβόλως	184
έρχεσθαι	§99, §144, §160, §175 ♦ 200,	εὐθύς	§24, §45, §158 ♦ 182, 200
210 ⁺ , 212, 232, 266		εὐκαιρος	§115, §203, §236
έρωτᾶν	§10, §187, §189, §191,	εὐκαρπία	§107
§193, §194, §196, §204, §213, §217,		εὐκατάφορος	§108
§221, §227, §234, §236, §237, §239,		εὐκόπως	§208, §250
§243, §246, §249, §252, §253, §256,		εὐκοσμία	§87, §92
§257, §258, §260, §265, §267, §270,		εὐλαβέεσθαι	240
§279, §280, §282, §284, §291, §296 ♦		εὐλογεῖν	§249 ♦ 314
220, 230, 314, 358, 359		εὐλογητός	314
έρωτησις	§200, §205, §221, §275, §296	εὐμένεια	§254 ♦ 182
Έσδρας	252	εὐμήκης	§100
έσπέρα	§88, §202 ♦ 272, 273	εὐνοια	§205, §225, §230, §264, §265,
έστιαν	186	§270	
έστιάτωρ	184	εὐνός	§242, §270
Έσχλεμίας	§47, §48	Εὐπόλεμος	220
έσωθεν	§89 ♦ 272, 273	εὕρεσις	§156
έτερος	§16, §60, §75, §77, §92, §122,	εὕρεματικός	§137
§194, §214 ♦ 182, 186, 196		εὕρεσις	§39, §146, §163, §286

εὐρίσκειν	256	ἐφάπτειν	256
εὐρος	230		
εὐρωστος	230	Ζακαρίας	\$47, \$48, \$50
εὐσέβεια	\$2, \$24, \$42, \$131, \$210, \$215, \$229, \$255 ♦ 200 ⁺ , 210, 266	Ζαρε	210
εὐσεβής	\$37, \$233, \$261	ζεῦγος	210
εὐσήμως	\$32	Ζεύς	\$16
εὐστάθεια	\$216, \$261	ζηλοῦν	\$122 ♦ 182
εὐστοχεῖν,	184	ζηλωτός	186
εὐσχημοσύνη	\$284	ζημία	228 ⁺
εὐτακτος	312	ζῆν	\$127, \$135, \$138, \$146, \$154, \$195, \$208, \$212, \$249, \$253, \$273, \$281
εὐταξία	\$246	ζήτησις	184
εὐτυχεῖν	\$32 ♦ 186, 188	Ζωβίτης	210
εὐφημεῖν	\$227	ζωή	\$154, \$180, \$185
εὐφημία	\$191	ζώην	\$97
εὐφροσύνη	\$202, \$274, \$294	ζῶον	\$147 ♦ 182, 184
εὐφροσύνου	\$186	ζωοποιεῖν	\$16
εὐφυῖα	\$122		
εὐχαριστεῖν	\$177 ♦ 186	ἦ	\$2, \$22, \$26, \$76, \$101, \$188, \$257, \$281, \$286, \$311 ⁺
εὐχαριστία	186	ἦ	\$234
εὐχεσθαι	\$17, \$45, \$196, \$248, \$305, \$306	ἡγεῖσθαι	\$16, \$124, \$278, \$292, \$309, \$310 ♦ 182, 268, 270 ⁺
εὐχή	184, 186, 200	ἡγεμονία	\$219 ♦ 182
εὐχρηστος	\$136	ἡγεμών	\$238 ♦ 186, 212
εὐψυχία	\$197, \$301 ♦ 210	ἡγεμονεύειν	182
εὖωχεῖν	184	ἡδεσθαι	182 ⁺ , 198
ἐφαρμόζειν	186	ἡδέως	200
ἐφικτός	\$77, \$215, \$283	ἡδη	\$13 ♦ 182
ἐφιστάναι	\$177	ἡδονή	\$108, \$223, \$245, \$277
ἐφοδος	\$101	ἡδονοκρασία	\$278
ἔχειν	\$5, \$7, \$11, \$12, \$15 ⁺ , 18, \$23, \$24, \$25 ⁺ , \$28, \$34, \$36 ⁺ , \$41, \$42, \$54 ⁺ , \$55, \$56 ⁺ , \$58, \$60, \$63, \$67, \$69, \$70, \$72, \$73, \$76, \$80, \$84, \$87, \$88, \$90, \$93, \$96, \$103, \$105 ⁺ , \$107, \$123, \$125 ⁺ , \$129, \$135, \$143, \$150, \$151, \$157, \$159, \$171, \$183, \$189, \$191, \$195, \$196, \$198, \$216, \$217, \$219, \$221, \$224, \$225, \$227 ⁺ , \$234, \$237, \$244, \$245, \$248, \$255 ⁺ , \$273, \$280 ⁺ , \$281, \$295, \$296, \$300, \$307, \$310, \$318 ♦ 198 ⁺ , 200 ⁺ , 210, 228 ⁺ , 232, 250, 256, 268, 270, 272, 273, 362	ἡδύς	\$86, \$198
ἐχθρός	\$194, \$225	ἦθος	\$290
ἔως	\$74, \$88, \$175 ♦ 182	ἡϊών	\$301
		ἦκειν	\$99 ♦ 184, 270, 272
		ἡλικία	\$14, \$187 ♦ 198, 228
		ἥλιος	188, 266
		ἡμεῖς	\$3, \$4, \$19, \$36, \$37, \$43, \$123, \$20, \$22, \$23, \$35, \$42, \$44, \$131, \$168, \$173, \$180, \$233
		ἡμέρα	\$110, \$116, \$180, \$198, \$203, \$204, \$275, [298], \$299, \$301, \$314 ♦ 182, 230 ⁺ , 272, 273, 312, 365 ⁺
		ἡμερα	\$145, \$146, \$147, \$170

ἡμέτερος	§35, §39 ♦ 220 ⁺ , 232 ⁺ , 254 ⁺ , 256, 258, 260	θεοφιλῆς	§287
ἡμιπῆχιον	§71	Θεόφιλος	§97
ἡμισυς	182	θεραπεία	§303
ἡπιότης	226	θεραπεύειν	§256
Ἡρακλῆς	358	θερισμός	§116
Ἡρώδης	238 ⁺ , 362	θέσις §11, §62, §64, §70, §78, §83, §195	
Ἡσαΰ	210 ⁺ , 212	θεσπιστιθέναι	184
ἡσυχία	§301, §307	θεωρεῖν §65, §67, §83, §100, §130, §160, §190, §190, §208, §214, §258,	
ἥττων	§257	§284, §268	
ἦχος	§9 ♦ 184	θεωρία §31, §59, §67 ⁺ , §77, §86, §99, §103 ♦ 270	
Θαιμαν	212	θῆλα	§250 ♦ 210
Θαιμανιτος	210, 212	Θημᾶς	363
θάλασσα	§114, §117, §301, §305 ♦ 184, 230	θηρία	§138
θάνατος	§233 ♦ 228 ⁺	θιγγάνειν	§106
θαρσύνειν	§272	θνήσκειν	226
θαυμάζειν	§282, §295 ♦ 182, 220, 228	θράσος	§269, §281
θαυμάσιος	§89, §93 ⁺ , §176 ♦ 272, 273	θρασύς	§250
θαυμασμός	§78	θυγάτηρ	§152
θαυμαστός	§155 ♦ 240	θύνειν	§138
θεᾶσθαι	§78, §96 ♦ 270	θύματα	§87, §90, §95
θεατροειδής	§105	θυμός	§253 ⁺
θεῖος §3, §3, §31, §104, §157, §160, §189, §236, §252, §279, §315 ♦ 240, 252, 260		θυμοῦσθαι	§254
θειότης	§95	θύρα	§158
θέλειν	§224, §318	θύρωμα	§85
Θεμιστος	361	θύρωσις	§86
Θεοδέκτης	§316	θυσία §33, §40, §42, §45, §88, §103 §170 ⁺ , §172, §234 ♦ 198, 200 ⁺ , 272, 273	
Θεόδωρος	355	θυσιάζειν	§170
Θεδόσιος	§47, §49, §50	θυσιαστήριον	§87
Θεόδοτος	§49	θύτης	§184
θεόθεν	266	Ἰάκωβος	§48, §49
θεόκτιστος	§201	Ἰάσων	§49 ⁺
θεόλογος	254	ιδέα	184, 270, 272
Θεόπομπος	§314	ιδιάζειν	§96, §165
θεός §16, §18, §19, §37, §45, §140, §157, §134, §139, §168, §185 ♦ 184, 186, 196, 198, 200, 210 ⁺ , 238, 240 ⁺ , 252 ⁺ , 258 ⁺ , 266 ⁺ , 272, 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺ , 356, 357, 361 ⁺		ἴδιος §11 ⁺ , §182, §126, §249 ♦ 188, 238, 240, 252, 312	
θεοσεβής	§179	ιδιότης	§97 ♦ 182, 186
θεωθεῖη	§136	ιδιώτης	§288, §289
		Ἰδουμαῖα	§107 ♦ 210
		ιερεῖον	314
		Ἱερεμίας	§50

ἱερεύς	§53, §87, §92, §140, §184, §310 ♦ 184, 228, 230, 252, 268, 358, 359, 361, 363	ἱστορία	§2 ♦ 196, 232 ⁺ , 250
ἱεροκῆρυξ	§184	ἱστορικός	§31, §312
ἱεροπρεπής	182	ἱστός	§320
ἱερός	§40, §42, §52, §84, §89, §100, §104 ♦ 220 ⁺ , 228, 230, 240, 254, 260, 270 ⁺ , 272 ⁺ , 274, 312 ⁺	ἱσχύς	§92, §147, §148, §151, §191, §192
ἱεροσόλυμα	§32, §35, §52 ♦ 230 ⁺ , 272 ⁺	ἱσχύειν	§241
ἱεροσολυμίτης	240, 252	ἱσχυρογνωμοσύνη	228
ἱεροφαντήσιν	184	Ἰωάννης	§47, §49, §50
ἱερώνυμος	230, 232	Ἰώβ	210 ⁺ , 212
Ἱησίας	§49	Ἰωβάβ	210 ⁺ , 212
Ἱησοῦς	§48, §49	Ἰωνάθας	§48, §49
ἱκανός	§13, §15, §21, §23, §33, §93, §109, §211, §275 ♦ 210, 226, 230, 362	Ἰωνάθης	§50
ἱκετεύειν	§192, §197, §233, §242	Ἰώσηπος	250, 260, 270, 363 ⁺
ἱλαρός	§18, §182	Ἰώσηφος	§47 ⁺ , §48, §50
ἱλαροῦσθαι	§108	καθαγιαῖζειν	§98
ἵνα	§8, §17, §38, §42, §45, §46, §65, §81, §101, §107, §110, §168, §182, §193, §198, §218, §226, §227, §233, §248, §255, §256, §279, §310, §311, §318, §322, §321	καθελεῖν	§263
Ἰναχος	250	καθάπερ	§11
Ἰοππη	§115	καθαρίζειν	§90
Ἰορδάνης	§116	καθαριότης	§145
Ἰουδαία	§4, §12, §83, §184, §318	καθαρός	§2
Ἰουδαιικός	§22, §24, §28, §121, §176 ♦ 250, 266, 268	καθαρότης	§234
Ἰουδαῖος	§1, §6, §10, §11, §11, §12, §15, §22, §23, §30, §35, §38, §305, §308 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 186, 196 ⁺ , 198 ⁺ , 200, 210, 220, 226, 228 ⁺ , 230 ⁺ , 232 ⁺ , 238 ⁺ , 240, 250, 260, 266, 270 ⁺ , 272, 353 ⁺ , 354, 356, 359	καθηγεῖσθαι	§122, §195, §269
Ἰούδας	§47, §48, §50	καθηγεμών	§140, §267
ἱππεύς	230	καθήκειν	§19, §54 ⁺ , §81, §87, §88, §107, §149, §181, §227, §245, §284, §297 ♦ 272, 273, 366
Ἰσάηλος	§50	καθίζειν	§94 ♦ 184
Ἰσακος	§48	καθιστάναι	§9, §24, §37, §55, §88, §95, §116, §122, §132, §143, §145, §134, §137, §139, §171, §208, §214, §228, §233, §256, §280, §281, §288, §289 ♦ 272, 273, 365
Ἰσαχος	§49	καθό	§11, §203 ♦ 312, 314
ἴσος	§191, §228, §257, §282	καθόλου	§80, §143
ἰσότης	§263	καθοπλίζειν	§13, §14
ἰστάναι	§78, §184, §310 ♦ 268	καθόσον	§105, §211, §214
ἰστορεῖν	210, 226, 228, 250, 266, 272	κάθυγρος	§115
		καθυπερέχω	§257
		καθυπνοῦν	§220
		καθώς	§14 ⁺ , §15, §17, §30, §45, §89, §91 ⁺ , §116, §166, §183, §188, §207, §234 236, §249, §262, §263, §271, §272, §279, §280, §282, §287, §290, §292, §298, §307, §310, §311, §317, §322

καιρός	\$4, \$12, \$187, \$190, \$200, \$221, \$239, \$248, \$256, \$262, \$275, \$295 ♦ 182, 184, 238, 266, 272	κατακλίνειν	\$183, \$184 ♦ 186
καιροτηρησία	\$270	κατακλυσμός	234
κακία	\$133, \$188, \$249	κατακοιμῶν	\$298
κακοδαίμων	232	κατακολουθεῖν	\$56, \$205, \$232, \$254, \$279 ♦ 252, 254, 256, 258
κακοπάθεια	\$95, \$208, \$259	κατακρατέειν	\$14
κακοπαθεῖν	\$241	κατακτεῖσθαι	\$3, \$231
κακοποιεῖν	\$164 ⁺ , \$168	κατάκτησις	\$223
κακοποιητικός	\$163	κατακύπτειν	\$91
κακός	\$37, \$130, \$166, \$197, \$207, \$210, \$243, \$260, \$268, \$268, \$272, \$273, \$289, \$292, \$306 ♦ 228	καταλαμβάνειν	\$1, \$61 ♦ 188
κακοσχόλως	\$24	καταλήγειν	\$198, \$293 ♦ 260
κακουργεῖν	\$174	καταλιμπάνειν	234
καλεῖν	\$174 ♦ 182, 184, 212, 230	καταλλήλως	\$296
καλλονή	\$56, \$72, \$75, \$201, \$229 ⁺ , \$258	κατάλογος	198
κάλλος	182, 228	κατάλυμα	\$181
καλοκάγαθία	\$3, \$272, \$285	καταμελετᾶν	\$256
καλός	\$2, \$7, \$43, \$46, \$97, \$107, \$122, \$181, \$189, \$195 ⁺ , \$207, \$212, \$216, \$223, \$225, \$236, \$238, \$247, \$249, \$287 ⁺ , \$288, \$301, \$306, \$310, \$322 ♦ 182, 184, 198 ⁺ , 220, 230, 314, 362	καταμένειν	\$109, \$110
καλοφροσύνη	\$274	κατανοεῖν	\$3, \$103, \$155
καλύπτειν	\$87	καταξίως	\$81, \$95, \$219
κάμηλος	210 ⁺	καταξιούν	\$175
κανονίζω	\$168	καταπέτασμα	\$86
κανών	\$2	καταπίπτειν	\$144
καρδία	\$17	καταπράσσειν	268
καρπός	\$63, \$112, \$232, \$260	κατεπράχθη	\$28
Κάστωρ	226	καταχράεσθαι	232
κατά + gen.	\$59, \$65	καταρρηγύναι	\$186, \$293
κατά + acc.	\$4, \$111, \$124	κατάρχειν	\$201, \$245
καταβάλλειν	\$104, \$279, \$294 ♦ 198	καταρχή	\$134, \$189, \$200, \$235
καταβολή	\$89, \$129 ♦ 272, 274	κατασκάπτειν	228
κατάγειν	250	κατασκευάζειν	\$2, \$17, \$53, \$54, \$60, \$62, \$64, \$70, \$71, \$72, \$84, \$107, \$114, \$139, \$172, \$176, \$232, \$234, \$237, \$250, \$258, \$292, \$301 ♦ 228, 238, 240
καταδεικνύναι	\$24	κατασκευάσμα	\$51, \$52, \$77
καταδυναστεία	\$23	κατασκευή	\$8, \$28, \$33, \$34, \$63, \$65, \$71, \$73, \$76, \$78, \$80, \$87, \$91, \$99, \$108, \$113, \$121, \$136, \$157, \$159, \$160, \$236 ♦ 182, 186, 230, 258 ⁺ , 268 ⁺
καταδυναστεύειν	\$24, \$146, \$147 ⁺	κατάστημα	\$122, \$165, \$210
καταζώννυναι	\$97	καταστολή	\$284, \$285
κατακαίειν	210	κατάστρωσις	\$319
κατακαλεῖν	\$110	κατασχεθεῖν	359, 365
κατακλᾶν	\$149	κατατάσσειν	\$168 ♦ 198
κατακλείς	\$61, \$65	κατατιθέναι	\$321 ♦ 200 ⁺ , 266 ⁺

καταύγεια	\$307	κισσός	\$70, \$79
καταφαίνεσθαι	\$296	Κλεοπάτρα	354 ⁺ , 356 ⁺ , 362
καταφεύγειν	\$141	κλέος	182 ⁺
καταφθίρεσθαι	\$23, \$120	Κλήμης	254, 256
καταφρονεῖν	220	κλίμα	\$59, \$60, \$87, \$88 ♦ 272, 273
καταφρονοίη	\$225	κλίνη	\$320
καταφρόνησις	\$249	κλισία	\$183 ⁺
καταχωρίζειν	\$36, \$21, \$28, \$300 ♦ 258, 268	κνώδαλον	\$128, \$138, 163, \$169
κάτειμι	\$117	κοῖλος	\$12
κατεπαινεῖν	\$193, \$212, \$266	κοινολογία	\$204
κατεπείγειν	\$126	κοινός	\$126, \$257, \$315 ♦ 228, 362
κατεργάζεσθαι	\$119	κοινωνεῖν	\$290 ♦ 228
κατευθύνειν	\$15, \$18, \$193, \$195, \$216, \$243, \$252, \$266, \$287	κοινῶς	220
κατευφημεῖν	\$217	κοινωφελής	182
κατευχή	\$184 ⁺	κοιτάζεσθαι	\$160
κατέχειν	238, 252	κολάζειν	\$208
κατήγορος	270	κολλᾶν	\$97
κατισχύειν	\$21, \$122, \$230	κόλπωσις	\$86
κατοίεσθαι	\$122	κομίζειν	\$20, \$22, \$24, \$40, \$43, \$291, \$322 ♦ 198, 200 ⁺
κατοικεῖν	210 ⁺ , 220 ⁺ , 228, 230, 365	Κομόδος	250
κατοίκησις	228	κονίαισις	\$90 ♦ 272, 274
κατοικίζειν	\$13, \$35, \$76	κόρος	314 ⁺
κατόπρον	\$76	κορυφή	\$19, \$37, \$84, \$99, \$100, \$101, \$210, \$227, \$230, \$254, \$261
κατορθοῦν	\$251, \$256	κοσμεῖν	238
κεῖσθαι	\$15, \$52, \$54, \$59, \$83, \$100, \$115 ♦ 198	κόσμος	\$99, \$210, \$254 ♦ 258
κεκλίσθαι	\$223	κρατεῖν	\$19, \$37, \$222, \$227, \$230, \$261 ♦ 198
κελεύειν	\$26, \$27, \$28, \$33, \$33, \$56, \$91, \$158, \$159, \$160, \$162, \$168, \$174, \$179, \$181, \$182, \$183, \$184, \$226, \$228, \$278, \$311, \$317, \$319 ♦ 240, 268, 270	κρατῆρ	\$33, \$42, \$73, \$77, \$320 ♦ 200
κενόδοξος	\$8	κράτησις	254 ⁺ , 258
κενός	\$137, \$194, \$205	κρατιστεύειν	\$82
κερδαίνειν	\$270	κράτιστος	\$37, \$221, \$225, \$255, \$261, \$319
κεφάλαιος	\$24	κρατύνειν	238
κεφαλαιώδης	226	κραυγή	\$186
κεφαλαιωδῶς	\$120	κρεωφαγία	314
κεφαλή	\$70, \$98 ♦ 182	κρημνός	\$118
κεφαλίς	\$68	κρηπίς	\$69
κίδαρις	\$98	κρίνειν	\$36, \$98, \$175, \$276
κίνδυνος	\$199	κρίνον	\$68, \$75
κίνησις	\$70, \$86, \$156, \$160	κρινωτός	\$68
		κριός	\$170
		κρίσις	\$252
		κροκόδειλος	353

κρόταφος	§63	§117, §119, §125, §138, §155, §167,	
κρότος	§186, §200, §261, §274, §277,	§170, §196, §215, §218, §233, §252,	
§293		§267, §276 ⁺ , §280, §298, §300 ♦ 182,	
κρύσταλλος	§67	220, 226, 228 ⁺ , 230, 234, 238 ⁺ , 252,	
κρυφίως	§132	254 ⁺ , 258	
κτᾶσθαι	§4, §229, §276, §283 ♦ 210, 238	λεῖος	§76
κτῆνος	§88, §112, §150 ♦ 272, 273	λείπειν	196 ⁺
κτῆσις	§265 ♦ 365	λειτουργεῖν	§87
κτίζειν	§36, §115, §185 ♦ 232, 312,	λειτουργία	§53, §54, §90, §92, §94, §96,
314 ⁺		§98, §186	
κτίσις	§136, §139	λειτουργός	§95
κτίσμα	§17	Λεοντοπολίτης	312
κτίστης	§16	λεκτέος	254
κυβερνᾶν	§147, §251, §251, §292	λέξις	186, 240, 252 ⁺ , 254, 266
κυκλόθεν	§58, §62, §70, §75, §78, §89	Λευί	240
♦ 272, 274		Λευίτης	§48 ♦ 240, 252
κύκλος	§63 ♦ 184	λήγειν	§202, §220
κυλικεῖον	§319, §320	ληστής	210 ⁺
κύμα	184	λίαν	§124, §230, §312 ♦ 220
κυμάτιον	§58, §64	Λιβύη	220
κυρεία	§25	λίθινος	230
Κυρήνη	220	λίθος	§33, §60, §63 ⁺ , §66, §67,
κυριεύειν	§269	§69, §70, §73, §75, §79, §82, §96, §97,	
κύριος	§155, §253 ♦ 186 ⁺ , 210 ⁺ , 250,	§100, §114, §135 ♦ 230	
365		λιθόστρωτος	§88 ♦ 272, 273
κυροῦν	§26	λιθουργή	§70
κωλύειν	§11, §278, §321	λίθωσις	§74
κώδων	§96	λιμήν	§115
κώμη	§113 ♦ 230	λιτανεύειν	§227
		λογεῖον	§97
Λάγος	§13 ♦ 220, 226 ⁺ , 238, 250	λογίζεσθαι	§141, §211, §267 ♦ 184
λαϊκός	365 ⁺	λογία	§161
λαλεῖν	§218, §299	λόγια	§158, §177
λαμβάνειν	§11, §32, §42, §68, §86,	λόγιος	§6 ⁺ ♦ 266 ⁺
	§111, §116, §120, §136, §166, §170,	λογισμός	186
	§196, §197, §200, §223, §225, [261],	λόγος	§14, §18, §55, §113, §143,
	§266, §293, §308, §316 ♦ 182, 184,		§160, §161, §162, §166, §168, §169,
	188, 196, 198, 200, 210, 228, 232, 240,		§191, §200, §201, §215, §244, §235,
	254, 256, 258 ⁺		§266, §268, §293, §297 ♦ 240, 258 ⁺ ,
λαμπρός	188, 312		260, 270 ⁺ , 362
λαμπρότης	§16	λοιπός	§10, §14, §22, §64, §79, §134,
λανθάνειν	§132, §133, §210		§140, §146, §152, §174, §183, §190,
λαός	240 ⁺ , 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺		§198, §246, §246, §259, §322 ♦ 270,
λέγειν	§30, §38, §53, §57, §67,		359, 365
	§77, §97, §98, §104, §107, §111, §116,	λύειν	§202

λυμαίνεσθαι	\$164	μέλει	\$92
λυμαντικός	\$165	μελετᾶν	\$160 ♦ 186, 252
λυπεῖν	\$238, \$268 ⁺	μέλι	\$112
λύπη	\$232, \$233, \$268	μέλλειν	\$132, \$196, \$314, \$316 ♦ 182, 184, 186, 232, 238, 266 ⁺ , 272
Λυσίμαχος	363	μέλος	\$96, \$155 ♦ 272 ⁺
λύτρον	198	μέλπειν	\$247
λυχνίον	230	Μέμφις	358
Μαδιαμ	212	Μενδήσιος	312
μαϊάνδρος	\$66, \$67, \$74	Μενέδημος	\$201
μαίνεσθαι	232	μένειν	\$182, \$311 ♦ 186, 238
Μακεδών	238, 240, 252 ⁺	μερίζειν	\$224
Μακκαβαῖος	272	μέριμνα	\$271
μακρηγορεῖν	184	μεριμνᾶν	\$296
μακροθυμία	\$188	μερίς	361
μακρός	184, 266	μέρος	\$58, \$60, \$64, \$65, \$102, \$117, \$209, \$301 ♦ 184, 220, 252, 272
μάλα	\$5, \$7, \$7, \$24, \$24, \$32, \$36, \$54, \$56, \$76, \$86, \$106, \$122, \$127, \$156, \$177, \$188, \$206, \$235, \$237, \$257, \$289, \$296, \$322 ♦ 186 ⁺ , 198	Μεσορή	362
μάλιστα	230 ⁺ , 254, 260	μέσος	\$73, \$83, \$115 ♦ 230, 268
μᾶλλον	186	μετά + gen.	\$180, \$181, \$320
μανθάνειν	\$198 ♦ 260	μετά + acc.	\$64, \$67, \$184, \$301, \$20, \$22, \$26, \$179, \$198, \$203, \$235, \$261, \$303
μάντις	230 ⁺	μεταβάλλειν	182, 188, 238, 240, 266 ⁺
Μαρία	250	μεταβολή	270
μαρτυρεῖν	220, 230	μετάγειν	\$12 ⁺ , \$13, \$227
μαρτύριον	\$306	μεταγράφειν	\$15, \$309
μάταιος	\$134, \$138, \$139, \$321	μεταγραφή	\$9, \$10, \$45, \$46, \$307 ♦ 186, 198, 200 ⁺ , 260, 266
Ματθαῖος	250	μεταγωγή	\$23
Ματτατίας	\$47	μεταδιδόναι	\$7, \$43, \$309
μάχεσθαι	\$13	μεταδοτικός	\$226
μάχη	226 ⁺	μετάθεσις	\$160
μεγαλομέρεια	\$21, \$26, \$28, \$84 ♦ 268	μεταλαγχάνειν	270
μεγαλοφυχία	\$19, \$26	μεταλαμβάνειν	\$6, \$11, \$100, \$125, \$166, \$297, \$300, \$316, \$317 ♦ 228, 270
μεγαλωσύνη	\$192	μετάληψις	266
μέγας	\$2, \$19, \$39, \$42, \$53, \$78, \$82, \$177, \$208, \$230, \$234, \$291, \$312 ♦ 182, 196, 198 ⁺ , 210, 220, 228 ⁺ , 230 ⁺ , 234, 250, 258, 268, 270, 312 ⁺ , 314, 357	μέταλλον	\$119
μέγεθος	\$53, \$72, \$82, \$84, \$91, \$108, \$109, \$223, \$224 ♦ 228	μεταλλεία	\$120
μεθερμηνεύειν	\$38	μεταλλοιούν	\$17
μεθηρμोजειν	182	μετάνοια	\$188
μεθιστάναι	228	μεταξύ	258
		μεταπίθεται	228
		μεταπέμπεσθαι	\$124, \$179
		μεταπίπτειν	\$250

μετατίθεσθαι	\$188 ♦ 184	μνήμη	\$153 ⁺ , \$159, \$279 ♦ 232, 234
μετατρέπειν	\$99	μνημονεύειν	\$157 ♦ 226, 228, 232, 234,
μεταφέρειν	\$306, \$311 ♦ 254 ⁺ , 258	254, 272	
μετέπειτα	\$38, \$116, \$229, \$255, \$288	μολιβοῦν	\$90 ♦ 272, 274
μετέχειν	\$140, \$197, \$224, \$248, \$264,	μόλις	\$103, \$175 ♦ 182
\$289		μολύνειν	\$152 ⁺
μετέωρος	\$60, \$106	μολυσμός	\$166
μετοικεσία	250 ⁺	μόνος	\$54, \$132, \$139 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 186 ⁺ ,
μετοικίζειν	\$4, \$12	188, 220, 260	
μέτοχος	\$207	Μοσόλλαμος	230, 232
μετρητής	\$76	μόςχος	\$93, \$170
μετριοπαθής	\$256	μουσικός	\$286
μετρίως	\$197	μυθολόγος	\$322
μετριότης	\$223	μυθοποιεῖν	\$137
μέτρα	\$52, \$53, \$55, \$56 ♦ 314	μυθωδῶς	\$168
Μεχείρ	357	μυριάς	\$10, \$12, \$13, \$19 ⁺ , \$37, \$88,
μέχρι	\$86, \$87, \$298, \$303 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 240,	\$116 ⁺ ♦ 198, 228, 230, 272, 273, 312 ⁺ ,	
312, 314		314 ⁺	
μηδεῖς	\$24 ⁺ , \$53, \$95, \$101, \$106,	μυρσίνη	\$79
\$139, \$139, \$139, \$142, \$147 ⁺ , \$148,		μῦς	\$144, \$163, \$164
\$162, \$168, \$170 ⁺ , \$182, \$191, \$205,		μυστικός	250
\$217, \$232, \$238, \$240, \$242, \$243,		Μωαβ	212
\$245, \$246, \$254, \$258, \$306, \$310		Μωαβίτις	314
μῆκος	\$57, \$84 ♦ 230	Μωσέως	270 ⁺
μηκύνειν	\$8	Μωσῆς	256, 258
μῆλον	\$63	Μωυσῆς	\$144 ♦ 186, 240, 250 ⁺ , 254 ⁺ ,
μήν	314, 361	260 ⁺	
μήν καί	\$158	Ναβουχοδονόσορ	240, 252
μηγύνειν	365	ναί	\$201
μήποτε	\$15, \$53	ναός	230
μήπω	182	Νατθαῖος	\$49
μηρυκισμός	\$153, \$161	ναυμαχία	\$180
μήτε ... μήτε	\$162, \$168	νεάζειν	186
μήτηρ	\$27 ♦ 210, 250, 314	Νεεμίας	\$47
μιαίνειν	\$166	Νεῖλος	\$116
μικρός	\$19, \$80 ♦ 270	νέμειν	228
μιμεῖσθαι	\$188, \$210, \$280, \$281	νεύειν	\$2, \$108, \$322
μιμνήσκειν	\$155, \$168 ♦ 234	νεῦμα	\$90
Μιναῖος	210, 212	νεωτερισμός	\$101
μισθοφορία	\$36 ♦ 198	νήσος	\$5, \$301 ♦ 184, 186
μίσθωσις	366	νήφειν	\$209
μισσοπνηρία	\$280	νικᾶν	\$281 ♦ 226
μισσοπνήρος	\$292	Νικάνωρ	\$182
μίτρα	\$98	νίκη	\$180
μνεία	\$155, \$157, \$158 ⁺ , \$161		

Νιτρίαι	354	οικετικός	365
νοεῖν	§123, §153, §224	οἶκημα	230
νομή	§112 ♦ 210	οἰκία	210
Νουμήνιος	254 ⁺ , 256	οικοδομεῖν	§105 ♦ 312 ⁺
νομίζειν	§6, §12, §18, §23, §99, §122, §128, §129, §134, §137, §154, §170, §171, §175, §203, §212, §241 ♦ 182, 186, 198 ⁺ , 228	οικονομεῖν	§24, §143 ♦ 266
νομικῶς	§142	οικονόμος	365
νόμιμα	§10, §127	οἶκος	§84, §88, §101, §301 ♦ 272, 273
νόμισμα	§33	οἶνος	230, 314
νομοθεσία	§5, §15, §31, §128, §129, §133, §147, §176, §313, 182 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 186, 196 ⁺ , 240, 252, 254 ⁺ , 256, 258 ⁺ , 270	οἶονεῖ	§71, §307 ♦ 252
νομοθετεῖν	§144, §161, §240	οἶος	§103, §105, §130, §145, §233
νομοθέτης	§131, §139, §148, §312	ὀκτακισμύριοι	314
νόμος	§3, §15, §30, §32, §38, §39, §45, §46, §111, §122, §168, §171, §279, §309, §314 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 184 ⁺ , 186, 188, 196, 198 ⁺ , 200 ⁺ , 220 ⁺ , 228 ⁺ , 250, 254, 258, 260, 270 ⁺ , 272 ⁺ , 366	ὀκτώ	§69
νομός	312, 361	ὀλίγος	§10, §30, §200 ♦ 182, 228 ⁺ , 254
νόσος	§233 ♦ 184, 210	ὀλκή	§33 ♦ 230
νουθετεῖν	§207	ὀλοκαυτοῦν	§92
νόος	§276 ♦ 266	ὀλος	§37, §62, §63, §65, §71 ⁺ ♦ §83 ⁺ , §139, §151, §152, §201, §210 ♦ 254, 258 ⁺
νύξ	230 ⁺	ὀλοσχερῶς	§27
Ξεनेφύρις	354	ὀλυμπιάς	226 ⁺
ξενιος	184	ὀμιλεῖν	§130, §142 ♦ 184
ξενιτεία	§249, §257	ὀμιλία	§122 ⁺ , §130, §171
ξενιτεύειν	§257	ὀμνύναι	§104
ξένος	252	ὀμόεθνος	228
ξυλεία	§92	ὀμοθυμαδόν	§178
ξύλον	§135	ὅμοιοις	§7, §22, §36 64, §86, §93, §110, §115, §122, §137, §143, §163, §190 ♦ 182, 220
ὄγδος	§49	ὁμολογεῖν	§24 ♦ 226, 230, 256
ὀδεῖα	§106 ⁺	ὁμονοεῖν	§185
ὀδός	§83, §101 ♦ 230	ὀνειδος	§249
ὀδύνη	§208	ὄνειρος	§192, §315
ὀθεν	§110, §140, §208	ὀνίας	362
οἶεσθαι	§21, §39, §167, §200, §227, §296, §322 ♦ 186, 188, 232	ὄνομα	§97, §98, §247 ♦ 186 ⁺ , 200, 210 ⁺ , 212 ⁺ , 230, 240
οἰκεῖν	§9, §37, §38 ♦ 186, 198, 230, 232	ὀνομάζειν	§124 ♦ 210, 234
οἰκετεία	§14, §15, §16, §24	ὄνος	210 ⁺
		ὄντως	240
		ὄνυξ	§66, §150
		ὄξυβελής	§101
		ὄξύς	§60, §276
		ὄξύτης	§156
		ὀπίσθιος	§88 ♦ 272, 273
		ὀπλῆς	§150

ὅπλα	\$194, \$230	οὐ	\$94, \$269, \$308
ὅποιος	272	οὐ	\$147, \$196, \$321
ὅπου	\$149	Οὐαφρῆς	312 ⁺
ὅπως	\$11, \$19, \$26, \$29, \$32, \$36, \$39, \$45, \$106, \$111, \$120, \$139, \$142, \$170, \$215, \$239, \$245 • 312, 314, 359, 362	οὐδαμὸς	232
ὅρᾶν	\$176, \$182, \$270	οὐδε	\$17, \$102
ὄρασις	\$142	οὐδεῖς	\$28, \$51, \$55, \$72, \$94, \$102, \$114, \$132, \$141, \$154, \$168, \$183, \$189, \$210, \$211, \$224, \$225, \$233, \$271, 273, \$273, \$312 • 230
ὄργανον	\$101	οὐδέποτε	\$226
ὄργή	\$254	Οὐεσπασίανος	250
ὀρέγειν	\$211	οὐκέτι	\$231
ὀρεινός	\$107, \$118	οὖν	\$11, \$52, \$53, \$56, \$76, \$133, \$168, \$170, \$171, \$223, \$297
ὀρθός	\$68, \$199, \$201	οὐράνιος	234
ὀρίζειν	\$157	οὐρανός	184 ⁺ , 210, 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺
ὀριος	210	οὗς	\$165
ὀρκισμός	\$104	οὔτε ... οὔτε	\$80, \$147, \$208, \$215
ὀρκος	\$104, \$126	οὔτος	\$4, \$16, \$19, \$27, \$41, \$102, \$129, \$166, \$201, \$219, \$223, \$227, \$259, \$248, \$267
ὀρμάν	\$270 • 256	οὕτως	\$2, \$14, \$16, \$26, \$182, \$182, \$184, \$188, \$215, \$248, \$266, \$302, \$315
ὀρμη	\$7, \$37, \$222, \$256	ὀφθαλμός	\$284
Ὀρνίας	\$47	ὀφρῦς	\$98
ὀρνιθεύειν	230	ὄχλος	\$37, \$190, \$193, \$245, \$267, \$271, \$288, \$289
ὄρνις	230 ⁺ , 232	ὄχυρός	230
ὄρος	\$83, \$105, \$119	ὄχύρωμα	230
ὄρος	\$211 • 210	ὄψις	\$77, \$316
ὄς	\$1, \$4, \$5, \$6, \$12, \$12, \$14, \$16, \$18, \$24, \$25, \$35, \$40, \$42, \$43, \$46, \$54, \$93, \$96, \$106, \$107, \$119, \$124, \$125, \$127, \$134, \$143, \$146, \$147, \$171, \$175, \$182, \$185, \$190, \$236, \$238, \$250, \$257, \$280, \$300, \$303, \$312	ὀψώνιον	\$20, \$22
ὄσιος	\$297, \$306, \$310	πάγκαλος	184
ὀσιότης	\$18	πάγκαρπος	\$63
ὄσος	\$5, \$8, \$9, \$12, \$13, \$22, \$24, \$44, \$56 ⁺ , \$72, \$108, \$120, \$132, \$145, \$153, \$163, \$166, \$241, \$264, \$280, \$283, \$284, \$290, \$301, \$304	πάθος	234
ὄσπερ	\$2, \$43, \$253	παιδεία	\$43, \$121, \$290 • 184, 200 ⁺ , 220, 266
ὄσπρια	\$112, \$145, \$147	παιδεύειν	\$287, \$321 • 184
ὄστις	\$24, \$102, \$121, \$138, \$177, \$200, \$308	παιδία	\$248
ὅταν	\$160, \$251, \$268, \$269, \$292	παῖς	\$186, \$284 • 314, 356
ὅτε	\$78, \$122, \$182, \$187, \$221, \$308	παίζω	\$284
ὅτι	\$56, \$125, \$133, \$277, \$315	πάλαι	182, 260
		παλαιός	182, 186, 230, 252, 260
		παλαστιαῖος	\$58, \$69

πάλιν	§17, §46, §77, §78, §203, §230 ♦	παράνομος	§240
210, 226, 228 ⁺		παράπαν	230 ⁺
παμμυγής	§112, §267	παραπέμπειν	§258 ♦ 230
παμπληθής	§90 ♦ 186	παραπλήσιος	§63, §127, §138
πάμφορος	228	παράσημον	§147, §158
παντάπασι	§149, §166	παρασκευάζειν	§190, §304
πανταχοῖ	182	παρασκευή	§194, §275
πανταχοῦ	238	παρατηρεῖν	§246
παντελής	230	παρατίθεσθαι	§255 ♦ 198
παντελῶς	§23, §77, §78, §129, §136, §164	παρατυγχάνειν	230, 266
παντοδαπός	184	παραφέρειν	§316
πάντοθεν	§57, §69, §115, §142	παραφράζειν	186
παντοκράτωρ	§185	παραχρήμα	§22 ♦ 220
πάνυ	184	παρεδρεύειν	§81
πανήγυρις	186	παρεῖναι	§10, §19, §46, §95 ⁺ , §173, §181, §200, §207, §211, §234, §235, §247, §248, §293, §296, §301, §308 ♦ 184, 240
πάρα + gen.	§29, §38, §42, §43, §173	παιρεισάγειν	§20
πάρα + dat.	§31, §38	παρεκβαίνειν	§112
πάρα + acc.	§96	παρέλκειν	230
παραβαίνειν	§55, §297 ♦ 228	παρεπιδημεῖν	§110
παραβάλλειν	§281	πάρεργος	226
παραγίνεσθαι	§5, §13, §83, §103, §104, §122, §173, §175, §178, §180, §182, §184, §184, §190, §277, §293, §304, §318, §318	παρέργως	§29, §121
παραδέχεσθαι	§103, §104, §122, §190, §277	παρέρχεσθαι	§176
παραδιδόναι	§148, §196	παρέχειν	§96 ♦ 228, 232 ⁺
παράδοξος	§175	παρεύρεσις	§14, §120 ♦ 362
παραθεῖν	230, 256	παριέναι	§81, §173, §175
παρατεῖσθαι	§184	παριστάναι	§19 ♦ 312
παραίτιος	§308	πάροδος	§118
παρακαλεῖν	§123 ⁺ , §184, §220, §229, §235, §238, §245, §264, §301, §309, §318, §321 ♦ 200, 210	παροιμία	182
παρακολουθεῖν	220	παρορᾶν	§51
παρακεῖσθαι	§100, §118, §119	παρρησία	§125
παρακελεύεσθαι	§155, §157, §196	πᾶς	§9, §15, §16, §17, §19, §20, §24 ⁺ , §26, §36, §38, §42, §43, §45, §69, §78, §84, §86, §88, §90, §92, §93, §99, §104, §107, §109, §118, §126, §133, §134, §139, §139, §141, §169, §170, §174, §180, §185, §186, §195, §207, §207, §210, §223, §242, §251, §266, §268, §292, §297, §229, §248, §254, §297, §305, §309, §310
παράκλησις	210	πάσχειν	§214
παρακομίζειν	§114	πάταγος	184
παραλαμβάνειν	§4, §36, §286, §296, §301 ♦ 182, 198, 228, 312 ⁺ , 314	πατάσσειν	230
παραλείπειν	232		
παραλλαγή	§75		
παραλογισμός	§250		
παραναγινώσκειν	§42, §299, §308, §312		

πατήρ	\$4, \$12, \$20, \$22, \$35 ♦ 198, 210, 232, 260, 312 ⁺	περιεργία	\$128, \$144, \$322
πατρικός	312 ⁺	περιέργως	\$3
πάτριος	184, 188, 220, 266, 272	περιέχειν	\$83, \$118, \$156, \$213, \$229
πατρίς	\$102	περικλείειν	184
πατρώιος	228	περιλαμβάνειν	\$117, \$230
παύειν	\$293	περιμάχητος	186
πάχος	\$71 ⁺	περίμετρον	230
παχύτης	\$93	περιπατεῖν	\$175
πεδινός	\$107	περιπατητικός	254, 256
πεδῖον	\$23 ♦ 212	περιποιεῖν	\$121
πείθειν	\$5, \$91, \$147, \$148, \$193, \$252, \$266 ⁺	περιπολεῖν	\$214
πειράζειν	210	περιπτύσσειν	\$57
πεῖραν	\$1, \$264, \$289, \$297, \$322 ♦ 238, 240	περιρρεῖν	\$117
πέλαγος	\$214	περισπᾶν	362
πελέκινος	\$71	περισσός	\$161, \$175
πέμπειν	\$175, \$320 ♦ 200 ⁺ , 220 ⁺ , 238, 240, 362	περιστερά	\$145
πεμπταῖος	\$175	περιστολῆς	\$284
πέμπτος	\$48 ♦ 210, 361	περιτυγχάνειν	270
πένης	\$249	περιφράσσειν	\$139, \$142
πενία	\$289	περόνη	\$61, \$65
πεντακισχίλοι	\$82	Πέρσης	\$13, \$35, \$119 ♦ 198, 228, 240, 254 ⁺ , 258
πεντακόσιοι	\$104 ♦ 210 ⁺ , 228	Περσικῶν	228
πενταπλάσιος	\$82	πέταλον	\$98
πεντάπλεθρος	230	πετάλωσις	\$68
πενταπλός	\$53	πεταννύναι	230
πέντε	\$42, \$89, \$104, \$110 ♦ 200, 274	πέτασθαι	\$214
πεντήκοντα	\$10, \$33 ♦ 230	πηγή	\$89 ♦ 272, 273
περαιοῦν	250	πηλίκη	\$52
πέρας	\$199, \$266	πήσσειν	186
πέρδιξ	\$145	πήχεος	\$57 ⁺ , \$84
περί + gen.	\$27, \$273	πηχυαῖος	\$74
περί + acc.	\$57, \$79, \$96, \$100, \$101	πῆχυς	230 ⁺
περιάπτειν	\$159	πιμελή	\$93
περιαύγεια	\$77	πίνειν	230
περιβάλλειν	210	πιπράσκειν	\$22 ♦ 365
περιβόλαια	\$158	πίπτειν	210 ⁺ , 228
περίβολος	\$84, \$101 ⁺ , \$105 ♦ 230	πιστεύειν	\$270
περιγενήσθαι	198	πίστις	\$37 ♦ 186, 198, 232 ⁺
περιειλεῖσθαι	\$70	πιστός	\$36, \$102 ♦ 220
περιεργάζεσθαι	\$15, \$315 ♦ 252, 254, 256, 258	πιστοῦν	\$91, \$104, \$126
		πλάγιος	\$62
		πλάξ	357
		πλάτος	\$65, \$69, \$84
		πλεῖστος	184

πλέκειν	§70	πολεμικός	§14, §193
πλεονάζειν	§273, §295	πολέμιος	§101
πλεονεκτεῖν	§270	πόλεμος	§273
πλεονεξία	§277	πολιορκητής	226
πλέος	234, 256	πόλις	§4, §22, §111 ♦ 182, 184 ⁺ , 212 ⁺ , 220, 230 ⁺ , 232, 353
πλευρά	230	πολιτεία	228, 270
πληγή	228	πολιτεύειν	[31] ♦ 196
πλήθειν	184	πολίτευμα	§310 ♦ 268, 270
πλήθος	§15, §21, §28, §31, §33, §42, §45, §82, §90, §95, §112, §114, §118, §308, §308, §310 ♦ 198, 200, 230 ⁺ , 268 ⁺ , 272, 274, 312	πολίτης	§3 ⁺ , §36, §44, §126 ♦ 198, 200, 254 ⁺ , 258
πλήν	§26, §90, §215, §223	πολλάκις	§12, §81, §285 ♦ 220, 228
πληροῦν	§10, §98, §116, §132, §178, §185, §261, §294	πολλαχῶς	§17 ♦ 186
πλησίον	§181	πολυανθρωπία	§113
πλήσσειν	§313	πολύανθρωπος	228
Πλάτων	252, 254 ⁺ , 256 ⁺ , 258	πολυδάπανος	§119
πλοῖον	§214	πολυειδής	§66
πλοκή	§60, §67	πολύκτηνος	210
πλούσιος	§15, §204, §249	πολυμαθής	§137 ♦ 254 ⁺ , 258
πλουτεῖν	186	πολυμερής	200
πλοῦτος	§196, §211, §224, §282, §290, §321	πολύρρυτος	§89 ♦ 272, 274
πνεῦμα	§70, §86 ♦ 186, 238	πολύς	§17, §19, §21, §27, §32, §35, §36, §39, §72, §90, §91, §93, §95, §100, §104, §107, §110, §114, §115, §116, §123, §128, §129, §134, §138, §138, §152, §177, §186, §194, §198, §200, §208, §209, §216, §220, §223, §225, §235, §261, §274, §274, §275, §275, §276, §277, §283, §290, §293, §294, §295, §314, §322 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 184 ⁺ , 198, 200, 220 ⁺ , 226, 230, 250, 274, 358
ποδῆρης	§96	πολυτέλεια	§80
πόθος	182	πολυτελής	§60, §66, §79, §114 ♦ 186
ποιεῖν	§1, §4, §8, §9, §12, §14, §16, §18, §19, §20, §24, §29, §39, §46, §51, §52, §54, §68, §71, §78, §80, §101, §106, §111, §119, §134, §136, §138, §144, §166, §170, §172, §174, §183, §184, §187, §190, §200, §204, §210, §216, §228, §228, §235, §251, §281, §284, §292, §295, §301, §302, §304, §311, §317, §321 ♦ 198, 200 ⁺ , 210, 228, 234, 240 ⁺ , 266, 270 ⁺ , 314 ⁺ , 357, 359, 362	πολυτεχνία	§51, §78
ποίησις	§57, §60, §258 ♦ 198 ⁺	πολύτεχνος	§73, §114
ποιητής	§31, §312, §316 ♦ 196	πολυχρόνιος	§268
ποικιλία	§56 ♦ 186	πολυωρεῖν	§259
ποικίλειν	§96	πολυωρία	§270, §318
ποικίλος	§17, §74, §78, §101	πονεῖν	256
ποιμήν	210	πορεία	§283 ♦ 232, 270
ποίμνιον	§170	πορεύεσθαι	§160
		πορισμός	§111
		πόρρω	§31
		πορφύρα	§320
		πόσις	363

πόσος	\$10, \$19	\$146, \$147, \$149, \$153, \$157, \$165,
ποταμός	\$116, \$117	\$226, \$286, \$290, \$307, \$317
ποτήριον	\$293	προερμηνεύειν \$314
πότος	\$262	προέρχεσθαι \$235
πούς	\$64, \$65, \$68, \$69, \$70, \$135	προέχειν \$235, \$290
πράγμα	\$2, \$19, \$25, \$32, \$56, \$86, \$104, \$130, \$140, \$213, \$216, \$250, \$264, \$283, \$312 ♦ 184, 186 ⁺ , 196, 220, 228 ⁺ , 362 ⁺	πρόθεσις \$9, \$199, \$307, \$312 ♦ 184, 266
πραγματεία	268	προθυμίσθαι \$52
πραγματεύειν	250, 258	προθυμία \$20, \$226
πράξις	\$18, \$150, \$168, \$192, \$195, \$216, \$239 ♦ 184, 254, 366	πρόθυμος \$94
πράσσειν	\$37, \$40, \$162, \$189, \$191, \$205, \$217, \$219, \$240, \$243, \$246, \$255, \$256, \$259, \$260, \$280, \$299, \$299, \$311 ♦ 226, 266 ⁺	προιδεῖν 232
πρέπειν	\$267, \$302	προϊεσθαι \$126
πρεσβεία	\$3, \$122 ♦ 270	προϊστάναι \$182 ♦ 355
πρέσβις	\$275 ♦ 182, 184	προκαθηγείσθαι \$103
πρέσβυς	\$275 ♦ 196, 198, 200 ⁺ , 220, 240, 252, 268	προκεισθαι \$24, \$307 ♦ 184
πρεσβύτερος	\$14, \$32, \$39, \$46, \$137, \$184	προκηρύσσειν 238, 254
προάγειν	\$70, \$91, \$171, \$178, \$244 ♦ 230	προκοπή \$242
προαίρειν	\$5, \$72, \$33, \$38, \$45, \$215, \$303, \$321 ♦ 200, 228 ⁺	προλαμβάνειν \$206 ♦ 256, 266
προαίρεσις	\$3, \$14, \$20, \$32, \$42, \$72, \$233, \$265 ♦ 196, 198, 232	προλέγειν \$8
προαποκρίνειν	\$236	πρόληψις \$197
προβάλλειν	\$212	προνοεῖν 362
πρόβατον	\$93 ♦ 210 ⁺	πρόνοια \$30, \$201 ♦ 196, 198
προγιγνώσκειν	232	προπαρασκευή 266
προγίγνεσθαι	240	προπηλακίζειν 228
πρόγνωσις	266	προπέμπειν \$172
πρόγονος	\$19 ♦ 258	προπέτεια \$23
πρόδηλα	\$63, \$133	προπίνειν \$261, \$274
προδηλοῦν	\$14, \$131	πρόποσις \$235
προδότης	\$270	πρόρρησις 266
προεκλύειν	184	πρός \$2, \$3, \$11, \$33, \$40, \$56, \$61, \$63, \$76, \$77, \$129, \$151, \$206, \$240, \$246, \$248, \$253, \$258
προεῖναι	\$20, \$22, \$26, \$36, \$52	προσαγγέλλειν \$10, \$25, \$173 ♦ 366
προερεῖν	228, 238, 254 ⁺ , 258, 270	προσάγειν \$45, \$59, \$70, \$76, \$88, \$95, \$152, \$170 ♦ 200, 272, 273
προλέγειν	\$3, \$11, \$14, \$31, \$60, \$63, \$93, \$99, \$101, \$107, \$112, \$115,	προσαγορεύειν 186, 258
		προσαγωγή \$42
		προσαναφέρειν \$27, \$29, \$30
		προσβλέπειν \$18, \$78
		προσδεῖσθαι \$11, \$113, \$242
		πρόσδεχεσθαι \$257
		προσεῖναι \$140
		προσकुνειν 186, 270
		προσλέγειν \$284
		πρόσειναι \$77
		προσεπερωτᾶν \$53

προσεπινεύειν	§239	προτιθέναι	§18, §127, §249, §255 ♦ 220, 268
προσεπιτιθέναι	228	προτιμάω	§3, §209, §278
προσέρχεσθαι	§99, §233, §301	προτρέπειν	182
προσευχή	353 ⁺ , 355 ⁺ , 356 ⁺ , 357 ⁺ , 358	προϋπάρχειν	210
προσεχής	§183	προϋποδείκνυναι	§132
προσέχειν	228	προφυλακή	§104
προσθήκειν	§29	πρώιος	§304
προσημαίνειν	§212	πρωτεύειν	§229, §275
προσπέμπειν	238	πρώτος	§4, §16, §47, §52, §107, §132, §155, §179, §187 ♦ 184, 186, 210 ⁺ , 212, 226, 228, 252, 254, 270 ⁺
προσιστορεῖν	§314	προφητεία	238 ⁺ , 252 ⁺
προσκαλεῖν	§182	προφητεύειν	186 ⁺ , 238, 252
πρόκλις	§5	προφήτης	238 ⁺ , 240, 254
προσκυνεῖν	§135, §137, §138, §177, §317	προφητικός	238, 250
προσλαμβάνειν	§2	πταίνειν	§230 ⁺ , §231 ⁺
προσμανθάνειν	§2	Πτολεμαῖς	§115, §117
προσμένειν	230 ⁺	Πτολεμαῖος	§4, §12, §13, §22, §35 ♦ 182 ⁺ , 198 ⁺ , 200, 220 ⁺ , 226 ⁺ , 228, 238 ⁺ , 240 ⁺ , 250, 256, 260, 266 ⁺ , 268 ⁺ , 270, 272, 353 ⁺ , 354 ⁺ , 356 ⁺ , 357, 358, 361 ⁺ , 362 ⁺
πρόσδοξος	366	πτηνός	§145, §146, §147
προσονομάζειν	§16, §140, §147, §228	Πυθαγγελος	361
προσορᾶν	§78	Πυθαγόρας	254 ⁺ , 256, 258 ⁺
πρόσοψις	§59, §62, §68, §69, §74, §77	Πυθαγορικός	256
προσοχή	§62	πυκνός	§62, §90, §318
προσπαράγινεσθαι	§275	πύλη	§158 ♦ 230, 355
προσπίπτειν	§180	πυνθάνεσθαι	§52, §91, §129, §197, §203, §204, §209, §221, §228, §229, §250, §255, §288 ♦ 226, 238
πρόσταγμα	§20, §21, §24, §26, §28, §279 ♦ 268, 365	πῦρ	§87 ♦ 210
προστασία	§183	πύργος	§100, §101, §102, §105
προστάσσειν	§22, §24, §29, §46, §52, §110, §158, §183, §294, §304 ♦ 196, 228, 357, 365	πυρόν	§145
προστατεῖν	§81, §119	πῶς	§149, §187
προστάτης	§111	ράβδωσις	§64, §74
προστίθεναι	§20, §26, §72, §311 ♦ 184, 226, 232	ράβδωτός	§62
προσυντελέειν	§55, §77	ραθυμία	§245, §284
προσυποδεικνύναι	§136, §168	ρέπειν	§222, §269
προσφάτως	§5	ρέυμα	§89, §117 ♦ 272, 274
προσφέρειν	§170 ⁺ ♦ 250, 258, 362	ρήμα	186, 268
προσφορά	§170	ρήγος	258
πρόσφορα	§111	ρήγος	258
προσφωνεῖν	§312 ♦ 260	ρήμιζειν	§70
πρόσωπον	§18, §175, §219		
προτείνειν	§179		
προτείνω	184 ⁺		
πρότερος	§6, §13, §119, §262 ♦ 270		

ρίσκοφύλαξ	§33	σιτικός	§112
ρίσκοφυλάκιον	§80	σῆτος	314
ρόα	§63	σιωπᾶν	230
ρόϊσκος	§96	σκέλη	§93, §151
ρόμβος	§74	σκεπαζεῖν	362
ρόμβωτός	§67	σκέπη	§140
ρόπή	§90	σκέπτεσθαι	184
Ῥωμαῖος	238	σκευάζειν	§182
ῥώμη	§14, §92	σκέψις	§39, §141
ῥωννύναι	§35, §40, §41, §46 ♦ 200, 358, 362 ⁺	σκηνή	186
		σκληρός	§289
		σκόπαν	184
Σαββαταῖος	§48, §49	σκοπός	§251
Σαμαρείτης	232	σμάραγδος	§66
Σαμαρίτις	314	σμήξις	§88 ♦ 272, 273
σαρκοφάγος	§146	Σολομών	312 ⁺ , 314
σάρξ	§92	Σομόηλος	§47, §48, §50
σατράπης	228 ⁺	σός	§15, §19, §32, §36, §43 ⁺
Σαυχάιος	210, 212	Σούρων	312, 314 ⁺
σαφής	§1, §76, §153, §159, §189, §314 ♦ 186, 196	σοφία	§207, §260
σεαυτοῦ	§191, §207, §218, §279, §281, §292	σοφός	§107, §130, §137, §139, §271
σεβασμός	§179	σπανίζειν	§55, §114
Σεβέννυτος	312	σπάνις	§55
σέβεσθαι	§16, §134, §139, §140	σπείρειν	§230
Σεβρίθιτος	312	σπονδεῖον	§33
Σεδεκίας	§49	σπόρος	362
σεμίδαλις	§92	σπουδαῖος	184, 234, 240
σεμνός	§5, §31, §56, §81, §144, §258, §271, §313	σπουδάζειν	§10 ♦ 184
σεμνότης	§5, §171	σπουδή	§4, §39 ♦ 196, 232, 266
σεμνύνειν	§152 ♦ 186	στάδιον	§89, §91, §105, §301 ♦ 230, 272, 274
Σεφθαίς	363	στάσις	228
σημαίνειν	§30, §33, §120, §143, §192, §315 ♦ 186, 196	στάχυς	§63
σημεῖον	§44, §150, §159, §270	στενός	§118
σημειοῦσθαι	§148, §151, §234	στερεός	§57, §65
σημείωσις	§161, §170	στερεῖν	365
σήμερον	§180	στέρησις	§212
σιγή	§92, §95, §204	στεφάνη	§58, §59, §62, §64, §65, §75
σίδηρος	§119	στέφανος	§63, §64, §79 ⁺ , §280, §320
σιδήρεος	§139	στῆθος	§97
Σιδών	312	στολή	§319, §320
Σίμων	§47, §48 ⁺	στολισμός	§96
		στόμα	§71, §74, §75, §90, §165
		στρατεία	230
		στρατεύειν	365

στράτευμα	§37	συμφανής	§91
στρατηγός	§280	συμφέρειν	§25, §44, §45, §45,
στρατιώτης	§14, §22, §23 ♦ 228		§125, §199, §227, §239, §268, §284,
στρατιωτικός	§23, §36 ♦ 198 ⁺		§298 ♦ 186, 200 ⁺ , 230
στρατόπεδον	§20	σύμφορον	§284
στρέφειν	§58, §59, §60	συμφωνία	§302
στρωμή	§182	σύμφωνος	§32, §39, §302 ♦ 196, 256
στόμα	196	σύν	§3, §13 ⁺ , §27, §30,
σύ	§1, §15, §40, §42, §185		§38, §70 ⁺ , §74, §75, §157, §176, §184,
συγγένεια	§241		§239, §246, §261
συγγενής	§7, §241	συνάγειν	§9, §42, §90, §307, §308
συγγενικός	§147	♦ 196 ⁺ , 238, 266	
συγγιγνώσκειν	220, 226, 228	συναθροίζειν	198, 232
συγγνώμη	§295 ♦ 228	συναιεῖν	§226
σύγγραμμα	196, 238, 240, 270, 272	συνακολουθεῖν	230
συγγράφειν	196, 226, 232, 234	συνακούειν	§1, §5, §91, §122, §261
συγγραφεύς	§31 ♦ 232	συνακμάζειν	226
συγκαταφέρεισθαι	§222	συναλίσγειν	§142
σύγκεισθαι	230	συναναγκάζειν	§17, §20
συγχρῆσθαι	§12, §92, §143, §147, §158,	συναναστροφή	§169, §246
	§162, §181, §182, §266	συναναφέρειν	§213
συγχώρησις	§150	συνανθομολογέσθαι	§252
συζῆν	§130	συναντιβάλλειν	240, 252
σύλλεκτος	230	συναντιλαμβάνεσθαι	§123
συλλαμβάνειν	§165	συνάπτειν	§89, §107 ♦ 272, 274
συμβαίνειν	§35, §60, §108, §120,	συναρέσκειν	§232
	§197, §239, §241, §256, §268, §314	συναρμόζειν	§71
♦ 186, 196 ⁺ , 200		συναπαίρειν	228
συμβολή	§71, §176	σύνδενδρος	§112
συμβουλεύειν	§125	σύνδεσις	§73
συμβουλία	§246	σύνδεσμος	§85
σύμβουλος	§264	συνεδρία	§303
συμμαχία	§13	συνέδριον	§301
συμμετρία	§107	συνεῖναι	§125, §270, §274, §321
συμμέτρως	§87, §105	σύνεσις	266
συμμίσγεσθαι	§142	συνέχειν	182
συμπάρειναι	§178	συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν	§191
σύμπας	§16 ♦ 184	συνεπιφωνεῖν	§235, §294
συμπέρασμα	§194	συνεργής	§242
σύμπηξις	§155	συνέρχεσθαι	§20, §35 ♦ 240
συμπλήρωσις	§29	συνετός	§148
συμποσία	§203, §220, §297	συνέχειν	§15, §223
συμπόσιον	§181, §202, §236, §286	συνεχής	§8, §62, §78, §107, §167, §212,
σύμπτωμα	§316	§249 ♦ 258	
συμφάνεια	§99	συνήθης	228

συνθεωρεῖν	§139, §219 ♦ 258	σῶμα	§20, §22 ⁺ , §24 ⁺ , §139, §151, §155, §303 ♦ 210, 220, 365 ⁺ , 366 ⁺
συνιέναι	§200	σωματοποιεῖν	§166
συνίστασθαι	§1, §55, §96, §119, §154	Σωσίβιος	§12, §19
συνιστορεῖν	§170, §215, §243, §260	σωτήρ	232, 266
συνκύροντα	355	σωτηρία	§18, §21
συνοικεῖν	365	σωφροσύνη	§237, §248
σύνολον	§311	Σωφάρ	210, 212
συνόλως	182	σώφρων	§125
συνομολογεῖν	§228, §237	τάγμα	§26
συνιδεῖν	§56	ταλαιπωρία	§15
συνουσία	200	ταλαίπωρος	§130
συνοχή	§61	τάλαντον	§20, §27, §33 ⁺ , §40, §42, §93, §294, §319, §319, §320 ♦ 200, 230
συνόχως	258	ταμειῖον	§111
συνπνέειν	252	τάξις	§69, §266
συντάσσειν	234, 238, 250	ταπεινός	§263
σύνταξις	§186	ταπεινοῦν	§257
συντείνειν	§237	τάσσειν	§37 ♦ 220
συντελεῖν	§51 ⁺ , §57, §81, §152, §205, §234 ⁺ , §258, §283, §192, §312	ταχέως	§66, §67, §74
συντηρεῖν	§122, §157 ⁺ , §196, §209, §215, §264, §317 ♦ 270	Τεβτῦνις	358
συντιθέναι	§136 ♦ 240	τεθήπειν	186
συντρέχειν	186 ⁺	τείνειν	184
συντυγχάνειν	§180, §307	τεῖχος	§139 ♦ 184
συνυποκρίνεσθαι	§267	τεκμήριον	228, 232
Συρία	§12, §22 ♦ 226, 228, 232, 365, 366	τέκνον	§27, §41, §45, §185, §248 ♦ 198, 200, 210, 353 ⁺ , 356, 362
Συριακός	§11 ♦ 210	τεκνοποιεῖν	§165
Σύριος	365	τελεῖν	§242, §259, §308
σῦριγξ	§89 ♦ 272, 274	τέλειος	§15
σύστασις	§89, §154 ♦ 272, 273	τελειοῦν	§195, §199, §307, §312 ♦ 250
συστρατεύειν	§22 ♦ 230	τελείωσις	§239
συσφίγγειν	§61, §97	τελευτᾶν	§268 ♦ 226
σφεῖς	252	τελευτή	184, 250
σφίγγειν	§65	τέλος	§187 ♦ 200, 240, 266
σφόδρα	312, 314	τεναγώδης	184
σφυρόν	§87	τέρπειν	§186, §198, §274, §322
σχεδόν	§93, §120, §177 ♦ 228, 232	τερπνός	§77
σχεῖν	240	τεσσαράκοντα	§105
σχῆμα	§105	τέσσαρες	§65, §70, §91
σχηματίζειν	186	τεσσαρεσκαιδέκατος	226
σχιστός	§67	τέταρτος	§48 ♦ 363
σχοινιά	§75	τετράγωνος	230
σχοινίς	§58, §60	τετραδάκτυλος	§75
σῶζειν	§240, §281, §292		
Σωκράτης	258		

τετρακόσιοι	\$20	τραχύς	\$118, \$122
Τεύφιλος	363	τρέπειν	\$17, \$162, \$186, \$245, \$305,
τεῦχος	\$179, \$310 ♦ 268		\$277, \$216, \$208, \$217, \$220, \$198,
τέχνη	\$28, \$56, \$70, \$72, \$74, \$82 ⁺ , \$156 ♦ 268		\$202, \$261, \$274, \$247, \$262, \$294 ♦ 182
τεχνίτευμα	\$78	τρεῖς	\$13, \$84, \$301, \$319 ♦ 250
τεχνῖται	\$33, \$51, \$63, \$81	τρήμα	\$61
τεχνουργία	\$80	τριάκοντα	\$42, \$175, \$314, \$320 ♦ 200
τῆδε	\$213	τρίγωνος	\$58, \$60
τηλικούτος	\$312 ♦ 312	τρίκλινος	\$319
τηνικαῦτα	\$179, \$186, \$306	τριμερής	\$71
τηρεῖν	\$263	τρίπτυχος	\$71
τιθέναι	\$15, \$32, \$77, \$113, \$133, \$136, \$147, \$158, \$180, \$284 ♦ 270	τριακόσιοι	230
τίκτειν	\$152	τρισχίλιοι	210
τιμᾶν	\$19, \$183, \$186, \$234, \$244, \$285 ♦ 198, 232, 270	τρίτος	\$47 ♦ 182, 363
τιμή	\$37, \$178, \$228, \$272 ♦ 200, 228	τρπολογεῖν	\$150
τίμιος	\$82 ♦ 198, 200	τρόπος	\$7, \$11, \$24, \$44, \$144, \$149, \$153, \$163, \$166, \$170, \$209, \$215, \$219, \$227, \$248, \$264, \$276 ♦ 182, 186 ⁺ , 266, 270, 272, 362 ⁺ , 365
τιμωρία	\$208	τροφή	\$145, \$154, \$155, \$164, \$190
τίς	\$129, \$138, \$206, \$251, \$282	τρυβλία	\$320
τίς	\$8, \$10, \$19, \$30, \$31, \$33, \$40, \$52, \$52, \$76, \$78, \$80, 86, \$90, \$95, \$104, \$107, \$126, \$136, \$160, \$198, \$211, \$229, \$245, \$259, \$274, \$285, \$307, \$321 ♦ 182	τρυγών	\$145
τιτρώσκειν	\$183	Τρύφωνα	359
τιμῆμα	182	τυγχάνειν	\$10, \$29, \$30 ⁺ , \$51, \$121, \$130, \$166, \$191, \$237, \$283, \$299, \$302, \$308, \$318 ♦ 196, 200, 220, 228, 266
τοιγαροῦν	228	τύπος	\$34 ♦ 184, 268
τοιούτος	\$14, \$21, \$22, \$25, \$26, \$51, \$80, \$144, \$145, \$148, \$166 ⁺ , \$183 ⁺ , \$200, \$209, \$214, \$242, \$258, \$264, \$307, \$321	τυποῦν	\$70
τοῖχος	\$90 ♦ 272, 274	τύπτειν	\$192
τοξεύειν	232	τύπωσις	\$75
τόξον	230	τύραννος	\$289 ♦ 210, 212
τοξότης	230	Τύριος	314 ⁺
τόπος	\$22, \$52, \$100 ♦ 184 ⁺ , 226, 232, 272, 273, 314	Τύρος	312
τορεία	\$58, \$73, \$79	τύχη	196
τότε	\$119, \$158	ὑγεία	\$190, \$237, \$259
τραγωδία	\$316	ὑγιαίνειν	\$41 ♦ 184
τρανώσειν	186	ὑγιής	\$250 ♦ 232 ⁺ , 362 ⁺
τράπεζα	\$22, \$33, \$52 ♦ 200	ὑδωρ	\$88, \$89, \$91 ♦ 184, 272 ⁺ , 273 ⁺ , 274
τραπεζίτης	\$26	υἱός	210 ⁺ , 212
		ὑμῶν	\$38, \$177, \$179, \$179, \$180, \$181 ⁺ , \$293, \$294

ὑμῆν	\$176, \$177	ὑποδρομή	\$86 ⁺
ὑπαιθρος	186	ὑποκεῖσθαι	\$105
ὑπακοῦειν	\$44 ♦ 240, 252	ὑποκρίνεσθαι	\$219
ὑπάρχειν	\$15, \$25, \$30, \$31, \$38, \$60, \$80, \$84, \$86, \$89, \$193, \$207, \$242, \$290 ♦ 210, 240, 272, 274	ὑπόκρισις	\$219
ὑπαρχος	212, 365	ὑποκριτής	\$219
ὑπερ + gen.	\$45	ὑπολαμβάνειν	\$11, \$19, \$83, \$95, \$201, \$214 ⁺ , \$221, \$227 ♦ 220
ὑπερ + acc.	\$19, \$295	ὑπόληψις	\$160
ὑπεραίρειν	\$16, \$290	ὑπομένειν	\$175
ὑπερβαίνειν	\$122	ὑπομιμνήσκειν	\$1, \$263, \$286
ὑπερβάλλειν	\$84, \$109	ὑπόνοια	\$316
ὑποβολεύς	186	ὑποπίπτειν	\$214
ὑπογράφειν	200	ὑποπτος	184
ὑποδιοικητής	362	ὑποταίνιος	184
ὑποδεικνύειν	362	ὑποτάσσειν	\$11, \$205, \$207, \$257, \$265, \$273, \$289, \$291
ὑπόθεσις	256	ὑποτυποῦν	270
ὑποθετικός	270	ὑποχείριος	\$12
ὑποκεῖσθαι	362	ὑστερος	182
ὑπομένειν	200, 228	ὑποτιθέναι	365, 366
ὑπόμνημα	362	ὑψηλείσθαι	314
ὑποτύπωσις	270	ὑψηλός	\$83, \$100
ὑπερηφανία	\$262, \$269	ὑψιστος	356
ὑπερήφανος	\$170, \$211, \$263	ὑψος	\$57, \$74, \$93 ♦ 230
ὑπερθεῖν	\$55	ὑψοῦν	\$263
ὑπέρθυρα	\$85		
ὑπέρογκος	182	φαίνεσθαι	\$25, \$32, \$55, \$105, \$155, \$175, \$219, \$241, \$249, \$257, \$296
ὑπέροπλος	\$52	Φαληρεὺς	220 ⁺ , 250, 256, 258, 266, 268
ὑπέροχῃ	\$60, \$63, \$66, \$70, \$74, \$79, \$175 ⁺ , \$196, \$218	φᾶναι	\$31, \$135, \$19, \$167, \$195, \$197, \$249, \$255, \$260, \$267, \$269, \$282 ♦ 196, 210 ⁺ , 226, 228 ⁺ , 230 ⁺ , 232, 250 ⁺ , 270, 365
ὑπερτείνειν	\$178, \$246	φανερὸς	\$21, \$127, \$132 ⁺ ♦ 252, 254, 256
ὑπερφέρειν	\$122	φάραγξ	\$118
ὑπερφρονεῖν	\$122	Φάρο	184, 186
ὑπήκοος	\$254	φάσις	186
ὑπηρετεῖν	\$92	φαῦλος	\$142 ♦ 210
ὑπηρέτης	\$26, \$111	φείσασθαι	\$258
ὑπνος	\$160, \$213, \$213, \$216	φέρειν	\$197, \$211, \$214 ♦ 228, 270, 272
ὑπο + acc.	\$63, \$68, \$89, \$106, \$178, \$281 ♦ 274	φθάνοιεν	\$137
ὑποβαίνειν	\$116, \$147	φθόνος	\$224 ♦ 182, 232, 266
ὑπογράφειν	\$268 ♦ 357	φιάλη	\$33, \$42, \$79, \$320 ♦ 200
ὑπόδειγμα	\$143	φιλάγαθος	\$124, \$292
ὑποδείκνυναι	\$112, \$128		
ὑποδοχεῖον	\$89, \$91 ♦ 274		
ὑποδοχῇ	\$183 ♦ 272		

φιλάδελφος	182 ⁺ , 200, 220, 250, 258, 260, 266, 361	φόβος	\$12, \$36, \$95, \$99, \$159, \$189, \$194, \$270
φιλαλήθης	\$206	Φοινίκη	\$12, \$22 ♦ 228, 312, 314, 365 ⁺ , 366
φιλανθρωπεῖν	\$257	Φοινίκων	234, 314
φιλανθρωπία	\$265, \$290 ♦ 228	φοῖνιξ	\$63, \$112
φιλόανθρωπος	\$36, \$208 ♦ 198	φοιτάω	182
φιλεῖν	186	φολιδωτός	\$73
φιλήκοος	\$239	φολίς	\$73
φιλία	\$40, \$44, \$225, \$228, \$231	φορά	184
Φιλοκράτης	\$1, \$120, \$171, \$295, \$322	φορεῖν	\$96, \$97
φιλικῶς	\$227	φρονεῖν	\$236 ♦ 220
φιλοδίκαιος	\$209	φρόνησις	\$124
φιλοδοξεῖν	\$80	φρόνιμος	\$130
φιλόκαλος	256	φροντίζειν	\$121, \$124, \$245 ♦ 312
φιλόκρατες	\$1, \$10, \$15, \$120, \$171, \$177, \$179, \$252, \$254, \$295, \$322	φροντίς	\$8 ♦ 362
φιλομάθεια	\$171, \$300	φρούριον	\$13, \$36 ♦ 198, 220
φιλομαθής	\$1, \$7, \$286	φύειν	\$147, \$270, \$277 ♦ 186
Φιλομήτορα	\$249 ⁺ ♦ 254	φυλακή	\$100, \$104 ⁺ , \$125 ♦ 198, 220
φιλοποιεῖσθαι	\$209	φυλακίτης	356
φιλοπονία	\$112	φύλαρχος	\$97
φιλόπονος	\$74	φυλάσσειν	\$102, \$149, \$311 ♦ 220, 260
φίλος	\$41, \$45, \$125, \$190, \$228 ⁺ , \$268, \$318 ♦ 200 ⁺ , 212, 232, 312 ⁺	φυλή	\$32, \$39, \$46, \$47 ♦ 196, 198, 200, 240, 314
φιλοσοφεῖν	\$285	φύλλα	\$70
φιλοσοφία	\$256 ♦ 220, 256, 272	φυσικός	\$89, \$97, \$143, \$171, \$222, \$277 ♦ 272, 273
φιλόσοφος	\$31, \$200, \$201, \$235, \$296 ♦ 184, 196, 226, 254 ⁺ , 256 ⁺ , 258	φύσις	\$44, \$56, \$250, \$257, \$289 ♦ 182, 184, 200
Φιλοτέρα	356	φύτευμα	230
φιλοτιμεῖσθαι	\$79 ♦ 238, 252	φωνή	\$11, \$30, \$235, \$281, \$293 ♦ 196, 238 ⁺ , 256, 258 ⁺
φιλοτιμία	\$227 ♦ 182, 250, 258	φώς	230, 266
φιλότιμος	\$227 ♦ 198	Χαβεῦ	\$50
φιλοφρονεῖσθαι	\$198, \$235, \$268, \$274	Χαβρίης	\$48
φιλοφρόνησις	\$246	χαίρειν	\$35, \$41, \$42, \$312 ♦ 188, 198 ⁺ , 312 ⁺ , 314 ⁺ , 358, 362
φιλοφροσύνη	\$220	Χαλδαῖκος	182 ⁺ ♦ 182 ⁺ , 186 ⁺
φιλοφρόνως	\$173, \$230	Χαλδαῖος	186 ⁺ , 234 ⁺
φιλομήτωρ	252	χαλεπός	\$289
Φίλων	220	χαλκός	\$119
φιλία	\$85	χαρά	\$186, \$261, \$274, \$293
Φίλων	260	χαρακτήρ	\$11 ♦ 196
Φίλωνος	270	χαρακτῆρίζειν	\$153
Φλαύιος	250		
φοβεῖν	232		
φοβερός	\$194 ♦ 198		

χάραξ	\$139	χρυσογραφία	\$176
χαρίζεσθαι	\$38, \$40, \$196, \$215, \$228, \$273, \$319 ♦ 198 ⁺	χρυσός	\$42, \$61, \$73, \$77 ⁺ , \$79, \$96, \$98, \$320 ♦ 230
χάρις	\$8, \$144, \$143, \$179, 226, \$230, \$249, \$254, \$272, \$277, \$306, \$314	χρώμα	\$97
χαριστήριος	\$19 ⁺	χύμα	\$14, \$277
χαριστικός	\$37	χώρα	\$12, \$13, \$22 ⁺ , \$23, \$35, \$83, \$107 ⁺ , \$108, \$109, \$112, \$114, \$115, \$117 ⁺ , \$118, \$120, \$152, \$223 ♦ 182, 210, 212 ⁺ , 228 ⁺ , 230 ⁺ , 232, 240, 254 ⁺ , 258, 314
χαριτοῦν	\$225	χωρεῖν	\$76
χεῖλη	\$79	χωρίζειν	240
χειμάρροος	\$117	χωρίον	184, 186
χεῖν	\$90 ♦ 272, 274	χωρίς	\$123, \$165, \$254 ♦ 210
χεῖρ	\$159, \$183, \$305, \$306 ⁺ ♦ 184, 232	Ψαμμήτικος	\$13
χειραγωγεῖν	359	ψάμμος	186
χειραγωγία	\$239	ψεύδος	\$206
χειρίζειν	\$183	ψεύσασθαι	\$206, \$297
χῆν	\$145	ψόφος	\$91
χίλιοι	228	ψυχαγωγία	\$78
χίμαρος	\$170	ψυχή	\$14, \$15, \$17, \$108, \$139, \$147, \$170, \$214, \$273, \$282, \$292 ♦ 184, 228, 230
χιτών	\$87, \$96	ῥμος	\$151
Χοίαχ	361	ῥνεῖσθαι	365
χορηγεῖν	\$115, \$259, \$303, \$282 ♦ 314 ⁺	ῥοθεσία	\$62, \$63, \$64
χορηγία	\$84	ῥρα	\$298, \$303
χοῦς	228	ῥραιότης	\$59, \$74
χράεσθαι	182, 220	ῥς	\$28, \$30, \$31, \$34, \$40, \$46, \$53, \$77, \$78, \$83, \$89, \$90, \$96, 105, \$123, \$173, \$176, \$177, \$184, \$210, \$217, \$220, \$235, \$242, \$249, \$252, \$261, \$287, \$293, \$301, \$305, \$308
χρᾶν	184, 198, 359	ῥσανεῖ	\$102
χρεία	\$126, \$271, \$301, \$11, \$258, \$193 ♦ 312 ⁺ , 314	ῥσαύτως	\$158, \$197, \$243, \$309
χρήμα	\$85	ῥσεῖ	\$13
χρηματίζειν	\$9, \$298 ♦ 266	ῥστε	\$59, \$64, \$65, \$70, \$71, \$76, \$78, \$82, \$91, \$99, \$307
χρηματισμός	\$81, \$191, \$297, \$299	ῥφέλεια	\$3, \$8, \$23, \$241
χρηματιστής	\$111	ῥφέλειν	\$7, \$232, \$294, \$322 ♦ 184
χρή	\$2, \$11 ⁺ , \$14, \$20, \$26, \$56, \$145 ⁺ , \$170, \$184, \$188, \$192, \$194, \$215, \$231, \$250, \$253, \$264		
χρῆν	196		
χρήσιμος	\$135, \$175, \$286, \$300		
χρήσις	\$64, \$65, \$143		
χρησμός	184		
χρηστός	\$290 ♦ 312, 314 ⁺		
Χριστός	250, 260		
χρόα	\$63, \$96, \$97		
χρόνος	\$157, \$208, \$295 ♦ 182, 186, 198, 226, 232, 240, 250 ⁺ , 252, 270 ⁺		
χρύσεος	200		
χρυσόιν	\$33, \$57, \$63, \$78, \$319		

Index of Ancient Sources

In the following index, references to the Hebrew Bible are presented according to the standard English versification. The MT and LXX are differentiated only where there are not equivalents; in these cases, LXX citations are provided in brackets.

	HEBREW BIBLE	11:21–22	110 n. 99
		11:22	110 n. 99
Genesis		11:29	109 n. 98, 110 n. 100
36:11	207 n. 15	23:39–43	287 n. 54
Exodus		Numbers	
19:12	97 n. 75	24	207 n. 15
20:12	140 n. 145		
23:1	104 n. 91	Deuteronomy	
25:23–25	82 n. 49	4:2	178, 178 n. 25
28:4	92 n. 65–66	4:28	107 n. 94
28:17–23	92–93 n. 66	5:16	140 n. 145
28:30	94 n. 67	7:18	114–15 n. 107
28:33–34	92 n. 66	7:18–19	114 n. 107, 115
28:35	92 n. 65	10:21	114–15 n. 107, 115
28:36–40	94 n. 68	12:32	178, 178 n. 25
28:39	91 n. 62	13:7	141 n. 146
28:43	92 n. 65	14:6	114 n. 106
29:30	92 n. 65	14:19	110 n. 100
30:20	92 n. 65	16:13–16	287 n. 54
33:6	160 n. 179	23:8	97 n. 76
35:19	92 n. 65	28:36	107 n. 94
36:33	92 n. 65	28:64	107 n. 94
36:34	91 n. 62	29:16	107 n. 94
36:37	91 n. 68		
		Judges	
Leviticus		1:36	97 n. 76
8:8	94 n. 67	3	84 n. 52
11:3	112 n. 102, 114 n. 106	3:15	84 n. 52

<i>Judges (cont.)</i>		3:21	305 n. 9
20:16	84 n. 52	7:2	283 n. 44
		7:63	305 n. 9
1 Kingdoms/1 Samuel			
9:8–9	108 n. 96	Esther	
		2:16	326 n. 42
2 Kingdoms/2 Samuel		3:1	27
[1:36]	97 n. 76	3:8–13	326
[8:14]	97 n. 76	3:12–13	318
		3:14	318, 326
3 Kingdoms/1 Kings		5:9	343 n. 29
5–8	26	8:9–10	318
5:1–12	308 n. 29	8:9–12	318
[5:9]	158 n. 172	8:13	318
5:11	309 n. 34	8:17	27, 343 n. 29
[5:15–26]	308 n. 29, 313 n. 49	9:15	342
7:15–44	309 n. 32	9:20	27, 323 n. 31, 334–35 n. 57
9:11	309 n. 34		
[11:14]	97 n. 76	Job	
[11:17]	97 n. 76	42:3	114 n. 107
		42:17	206–7, 207 n. 18
4 Kingdoms/2 Kings		42:17a–e	206, 206 n. 12, 210–11, 210
2:1–3	123 n. 116	n. 28	
[2:1–3]	123 n. 116	42:17b	34, 62 n. 11, 207, 207–8 n.
22:4	78 n. 46	19, 283	
[22:4]	78 n. 46		
		Psalms	
1 Chronicles		51:2	97 n. 76
3:16	326–27 n. 42		
24	305 n. 9	Proverbs	
		3:26	85 n. 55
2 Chronicles		14:10	113 n. 103
2–5	26		
2:2–15	308 n. 29, 313 n. 49	Isaiah	
2:7	309 n. 32	19:3	107 n. 94
2:13–14	309 n. 32	21:9	107 n. 94
3:1–4:22	309 n. 32	37:19	107 n. 94
Ezra		Jeremiah	
1:2	322 n. 29	22:14	90 n. 60
2:61	305 n. 9		
6:12	322 n. 29	Ezekiel	
		16:37	113 n. 103
Nehemiah			
3:4	305 n. 9		

Daniel		4c	248 n. 23
3:49–50	338		
		Artapanus	
Malachi		2.1	205 n. 9
1:7	108–9 n. 97	3.1	205 n. 9
1:12	108–9 n. 97		
		Cleodemus Malchus	
Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha		1.2	205 n. 9
Additions to Daniel		Epistle of Aristeas	
26–27	338	1	2, 18, 31, 44, 57 n. 3, 118 n. 110, 345 n. 38
Additions to Esther		1–8	46, 193
1:1m–r	317 n. 5	2	58 n. 6
3:13a–g	317, 326–28	3	57 n. 3, 58 n. 7, 177 n. 21
3:13d	343 n. 29	4	57 n. 3, 58 n. 7, 177 n. 21
3:13e	343 n. 29	4–7	44
3:13f	295 n. 73, 322	4b–5	45
3:13g	295 n. 73	6	33, 34 n. 14, 38 n. 35, 205, 206 n. 10, 345 n. 38
4:17n–r	317 n. 5	7	6 n. 15, 17, 31, 45, 60 n. 8, 61 n. 9
7:17a–z	317	8	44, 56 n. 2
7:33b–38	332–33	9	31, 327 n. 43
8:12a–v	317	10	32 nn. 4–5, 76 n. 38, 177
8:12a–x	328–32	11	31, 33, 38 n. 35, 60 n. 8
8:12b	317 n. 5	12	32, 32 n. 3, 34 n. 16, 76 n. 37, 76 n. 37, 76 n. 38, 365
8:12c	343 n. 29	12–13	226 n. 84
8:12d	343 n. 29	12–17	309 n. 31
8:12e	295 n. 73, 322	12–27	225
8:12r	322	13	365
8:12t	343 n. 29	14	32 n. 4, 96 n. 73
10:3l	317, 319, 334–35	15–17	32 n. 5
Aristeas the Exegete		16	65 n. 16, 344
1.4	207 n. 16, 208–9	18	63 n. 12, 64 n. 15
Aristobulus		19	32, 32 n. 3, 32 n. 5, 67 n. 19, 193 n. 6, 344
2:5	208 n. 22	20	193 n. 6
3a	247 n. 18, 248 n. 22, 249, 252–53, 256–57, 261	21	44
3a supp.	247	21–27	44, 364–65
3a–b	246–47, 259 n. 45	22	67 n. 20, 193 n. 6, 364–65
3b	248, 248 n. 22, 249, 249 n. 24, 250–51, 258–59, 261	25	195 n. 15
4	247	26	70 n. 24
4a	248 n. 23, 258–59	27	193 n. 6
		28	34 n. 18, 70 n. 24

Epistle of Aristeas (cont.)

29–32	2, 44, 218	66–67	84 n. 53
30	168 n. 189	69	80 n. 48
30–32	255 n. 38	74	84 n. 53, 195 n. 15
31	168 n. 188, 177, 224, 225	83	44, 46, 226 n. 84
32	36 n. 26, 178	83–120	39 n. 36
33	70 n. 24	83–171	193
33–40	2, 41, 44, 46	84–120	46
34	195 n. 15	85	45 n. 59
35	28 n. 106, 36 n. 26, 339, 341, 346 n. 46, 359	87	91 n. 61
36	195 n. 15	88	82 n. 50, 113 n. 104, 345 n. 38
37	63 n. 12, 67 n. 19, 327 n. 43, 344	88–90	265
38	240 n. 6, 327 n. 43	95	82 n. 50, 113 n. 104
39	36 n. 26, 73 n. 31, 240 n. 6, 252 n. 33	97	345 n. 38
40	32 n. 3, 34 n. 16, 36 n. 26, 75 n. 36, 76 n. 37, 281 n. 26	99	208 n. 22
40–41	308 n. 30	100–104	37 n. 27, 283
41	34, 34 n. 18, 38 n. 34, 74 n. 32, 281 nn. 26–27	105	90 n. 60, 96 n. 74, 226 n. 84
41–46	41, 44, 261 n. 50	107	37 n. 27, 224 n. 78, 226 n. 84, 311 n. 46, 344 n. 38
41–50	344	107–113	100 n. 79
41–51	2, 46	109–111	98 n. 77
43	32 n. 3, 56 n. 1, 195 n. 15	112	103 n. 83
44	77 n. 41	113	45 n. 59, 226 n. 84
45	82 n. 50, 113 n. 104	120b	44
46	36 n. 26, 75 n. 36, 281 n. 26, 81 n. 28, 309 n. 33	121–171	57 n. 3
46–47	77 n. 41	123	76 n. 38
47	123 n. 116	125	32 n. 5
47–50	193, 261	128	6 n. 15, 44
47–51a	44	128–171	47, 344
47–82	41	131	106 n. 92, 111 n. 100, 125 n. 118, 215 n. 46, 216
48	31 n. 2, 123 n. 116	131–132	107 n. 95
50	123 n. 116	132	106 n. 92
51	31 n. 2	132–134	106 n. 92
51–52	44	133	106 n. 92
51–82	57 n. 2, 77 n. 41	135	106 n. 92
51–300	32	135–138	106 n. 92
52–82	46	139	106 n. 92, 113 n. 103, 215 n. 46
57–58	82 n. 49	140	120 n. 111
59	113 n. 104	141	106 n. 92
60	195 n. 15	147	104 n. 88, 110 n. 100
65	80 n. 48, 83 n. 51	147–153	180
		148	106 n. 92
		153	215 n. 46
		155	60 n. 8, 115 n. 107
		165	102 n. 84

167	349 n. 50	247	146 n. 154
170	82 n. 50, 113 n. 104, 215 n. 46	253	149 n. 161
171	18, 44, 46, 72 n. 29	255–256	148 n. 160
172	46	260	135 n. 138, 136 n. 140, 145 n. 153
172–294	177	263	125 n. 120
173	32 n. 3	265	127 n. 122
174	57 n. 3	266	127 n. 122
177	94 n. 67	269	344 n. 38
180	35, 178, 179 n. 26, 195 n. 15	275	148 n. 160
182	195 n. 15	278	102 n. 84, 158 n. 175
182–300	46, 215	279	159 n. 177
184	28 n. 105, 56 n. 2, 79 n. 47, 168 n. 190, 193 n. 6, 195 n. 15	281	158–159 n. 177
184–300	23	283	344 n. 38
187	79 n. 47, 123 n. 116, 124 n. 117, 345 n. 38	286–292	160 n. 180
187–188	64 n. 15	292	158 n. 176
187–296	32 n. 5	295	45 n. 59
188	153 n. 166	295–300	34 n. 18, 44
188–300	194	296	6 n. 15
189	127 n. 122	301	39 n. 36, 195 n. 15
190	177	301–308	2, 23, 45, 46
197	208	301–321	31
201	34 n. 18, 245 n. 11	307	178
206	127 n. 122	309	195 n. 15
208	127 n. 122	310	153 n. 166, 170 n. 195, 178
210	102 n. 84	311	178, 178 n. 25
212	127 n. 122	312	215 n. 46
213	127 n. 122	313	72 n. 29, 215, 225
214	135 n. 136	318	39
215	134 n. 135, 145 n. 153, 152 n. 165	319	3445 n. 38
217	345 n. 38	320	170 n. 192
222	45	322	18, 18 n. 70, 44, 45, 56 n. 2
223	344 n. 38	1 Esdras	
225	127 n. 122	4:45	97 n. 76
226	345 n. 38	4:50	97 n. 76
227	67 n. 19, 137 n. 141	8:67	113 n. 103
228	149 n. 162, 281 n. 28, 309 n. 33	8:84	113 n. 103
232	177	2 Esdras	
234	141 n. 145	4:7	62 n. 11, 207
237	144 n. 150, 149 n. 162		
238	144 n. 150	Eupolemus	
243	135 n. 138, 136 n. 140, 152 n. 165	1	303, 303 n. 2
245	63 n. 12	2	281 nn. 28–29, 303, 303 n. 2, 304 n. 5, 308, 309 n. 34, 312–15
246	127 n. 122		

<i>Eupolemus (cont.)</i>		3:1	158 n. 176
3	303, 303 n. 2	4:10–17	279
4	303, 303 n. 2	4:11	26 n. 99, 283, 305
5	303, 303 n. 2	4:12	283
		4:49	158 n. 176
Ezekiel the Tragedian, <i>Exagoge</i>		6:18–31	27
87	327 n. 43	8:16	146 n. 154, 147 n. 158
		8:34	282
Jubilees		9–10	24 n. 93
7:20	140 n. 145	9:18–27	294–96
		9:19	38 n. 34, 346 n. 46
Liber antiquitatum biblicarum		9:19–27	308, 312–13 n. 48
8:8	207 n. 15	9:24	295 n. 73, 322 n. 30, 347 n. 47
		9:26–27	281
1 Maccabees		10:1–8	97 n. 76
1:14	279	10:6	24 n. 90
1:54	90 n. 59	10:6–8	24 n. 91
1:59	90 n. 59	10:15	97 n. 76
4	24 n. 93	11:16–21	296–97
4:36–59	97 n. 76	11:22–26	296–98
4:59	24 n. 91	11:26	281
5:64	136–37 n. 141	11:27–33	298–99
8:17	26 n. 99, 304, 305	11:34–38	298–301
8:17–18	283–84	11:38	346 n. 46
10–11	311 n. 46	12:7	170 n. 195
10:26–27	308 n. 30	12:45	66 n. 19
10:37	74 n. 35	14:18	208
10:69	63 n. 13	15:3	282
12:18	309 n. 33	15:36	62 n. 11, 207, 283, 283 n. 43,
12:22	309 n. 33	323	
12:23	309 n. 31		
14:35–7	306	3 Maccabees	
		1–2	338
2 Maccabees		1:3	121–22 n. 113, 360
1:1	24, 280	1:9	344
1:1–9	24, 286–87	1:9–10	338
1:10	24–25, 25 n. 95, 38 n. 34, 245,	1:10	344
	284, 346 n. 46	1:26	343 n. 29
1:10–2:18	24, 245, 288–94	2:15	344 n. 38
1:18	282, 323	2:21	344
2:2	107 n. 94	2:28	339
2:16	281, 309 n. 33	3:2	343 n. 29
2:19	24 n. 91	3:5–8	63 n. 13
2:19–32	25 n. 94	3:7	343 n. 29
2:24	158 n. 172	3:11	343 n. 29

3:11–30	346–49	4 Maccabees	
3:12	36 n. 26, 281 n. 26, 359	5–7	27
3:12–29	320, 322, 322 n. 28	6:5	94–95 n. 69
3:12–30	28	6:11	208
3:13	295 n. 73, 322 n. 30	7:12	94–95 n. 69
3:22	343 n. 29	7:14–15	342
3:24	343 n. 29	9:23	208
3:25	343 n. 29	15:11	94–95 n. 69
3:26	295 n. 73, 322 n. 30, 347 n. 47	15:18	94–95 n. 69
3:28	116 n. 108		
4:1–21	27	Psalms of Solomon	
4:2	343 n. 29, 344 n. 38	13:8	160 n. 179
4:4	63 n. 13		
4:11	353	Pseudo-Eupolemus	
4:16	343 n. 29	1.1	205 n. 9
5:1	27		
5:5	343 n. 29	Pseudo-Hecataeus	
5:8	344–45 n. 38	2.1	205 n. 9
5:19	308 n. 30	6.1	205 n. 9
5:22	343 n. 29	6.12	208 n. 22
5:28	343 n. 29		
5:46	344–45 n. 38	Pseudo-Phocylides, <i>Sententiae</i>	
6:1–15	344	8	140 n. 145
6:5	343 n. 29	177	113 n. 104
6:6	338		
6:22	343 n. 29	Sentences of the Syriac Menander	
6:24	343 n. 29	2.9–10	140 n. 145
6:25	344 n. 38		
6:31	343 n. 29	Sibylline Oracles	
6:37	344–45 n. 38	2:60	140 n. 145
6:39	124 n. 117, 344–45 n. 38	3:29	107 n. 94
6:40	56–57 n. 3, 344–45 n. 38, 350	3:97–161	204 n. 2
n. 51		3:289	124 n. 117
6:41–7:9	350–51	3:593–594	140 n. 145
7:1	36 n. 26, 281 n. 26, 295 n. 73, 322	4:28	107 n. 94
n. 30, 346 n. 46, 347 n. 47, 359			
7:1–9	28, 309 n. 31, 322	Sirach	
7:2	295 n. 73, 322 n. 30, 347 n. 47	prologue	37 n. 27, 40 n. 43, 179 n. 29
7:6	344	27:16	141 n. 146
7:9	281 n. 26	37:6	141 n. 146
7:13	344–45 n. 38	40:15	110 n. 100
7:17	344–45 n. 38, 353	40:29	108–9 n. 97
7:20	343 n. 29	43:29b	114 n. 107
		45:7	160 n. 179
		45:10–12	94 n. 67

<i>Sirach (cont.)</i>		12.11	42
50:2	95 n. 70	12.11–118	191
		12.12–117	43 n. 52, 56 n. 1
Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs		12.17	32 n. 6, 43 n. 52, 76 n. 38, 78
4:23	113 n. 103	n. 43, 194	
		12.17–18	63 n. 12
Testament of Job		12.18	32 n. 3, 76 n. 37
1:1	207 n. 14	12.19	32 n. 6
1:6	207 n. 15	12.22	195 n. 15
2:1	207 n. 14	12.23	194, 195
		12.24	32 n. 6, 193 n. 6, 195 n. 15
Testament of Levi		12.28	193 n. 6
8:1	159 n. 178	12.31	195 n. 15
		12.33	193 n. 6
Theodotus		12.35	70 n. 24, 195 n. 15
1:1	206 n. 9	12.36	71 n. 25, 195 n. 15
		12.36–39	196–97, 218 n. 61
Tobit		12.38	73 n. 29
11:16	144 n. 149	12.39	73 n. 30, 196
12:22	114 n. 107	12.40	70 n. 24
		12.45	195 n. 15, 196
Wisdom of Solomon		12.45–57	198–99
8:16	146 n. 156	12.46	195 n. 15
14:21	107 n. 94	12.47	63 n. 12
18:3	151 n. 164	12.50	196
		12.51	196
DEAD SEA SCROLLS		12.55	195 n. 15
		12.57	192 n. 4, 193, 193 n. 6
11Q ^{Tg} Job	206 n. 12	12.59	194 n. 11
		12.63	194 n. 11
ANCIENT JEWISH WRITERS		12.66	195 n. 15
		12.71–72	84 n. 53
Josephus, <i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>		12.79	84 n. 53
1.5	192 n. 4	12.84	194 n. 11
1.8	192 n. 4	12.84–85	96 n. 74
1.9	192 n. 4	12.86	192 n. 4, 193 n. 6
1.80–81	260 n. 47	12.92	195 n. 15
1.118–119	204 n. 2	12.93	121 n. 113
1.128–129	192 n. 4	12.94	195 n. 15
1.158–159	234–35	12.95	122 n. 114
1.159	224 n. 79	12.96	195 n. 15
1.239–241	204 n. 2	12.97	193 n. 6, 195 n. 15
3.317	192 n. 4	12.100	194
11.276	330 n. 50, 331 n. 51	12.101	245 n. 11
11.295	334 n. 57	12.103	195 n. 15

12.108	195 n. 15	1.183–186	63 n. 14
12.118	200–201	1.183–189	217 n. 53
12.124	158 n. 176	1.183–204	223 n. 74, 226–33
12.154–236	364	1.188	224 n. 78
12.248–256	193	1.189	171 n. 195
12.387	361	1.191	224 n. 78
12.415	304	1.193	208 n. 22, 224 n. 78
13.213–217	306	1.195	226 n. 84
13.254–258	311 n. 46	1.198	226 n. 84
13.257	97 n. 76	1.213–215	232–35
13.275–283	311 n. 46	1.218	304
13.280–281	97 n. 76	2.1	192 n. 4, 235 n. 90
14.1–3	192 n. 4	2.42–43	223 n. 74, 232–33
14.114–117	171 n. 195	2.43	224 n. 78
14.186–187	192 n. 4	2.44–47	232 n. 86
14.389	306 n. 13	2.45–47	217 n. 54
15.410	96 n. 74	2.46–47	76 n. 38
15.419	90 n. 59	2.49	360
15.421	137 n. 141	2.50	361
16.101	134 n. 133	2.53–55	338
16.175	192 n. 4	2.53–56	27
16.293	57 n. 3	2.296	192 n. 4
16.296–297	57 n. 3		
16.299	57 n. 3	Josephus, <i>Vita</i>	
17.254	192 n. 4	1	192 n. 4
18.159–160	174 n. 4	12	192 n. 4
19.276	174 n. 4	311	158 n. 176
20.100	174 n. 4	423	191
20.262	192 n. 4	430	192 n. 4
20.267	191 n. 3		
		Philo, <i>De Abrahamo</i>	
Josephus, <i>Bellum judaicum</i>		86	95 n. 69
1.50	306		
1.53	306	Philo, <i>De aeternitate mundi</i>	
1.62–66	311 n. 46	125	91 n. 61
1.63–66	97 n. 76		
3.316–397	191	Philo, <i>De agricultura</i>	
3.392–402	191 n. 2	177	124 n. 118
4.622–629	191		
		Philo, <i>De Cherubim</i>	
Josephus, <i>Contra Apionem</i>		110	113 n. 103
1.1	192 n. 4		
1.2	232–33 n. 88	Philo, <i>De confusione linguarum</i>	
1.179	63 n. 13	129	95 n. 69
1.183	223, 223 n. 76	141	104 n. 91

Philo, <i>De decalogo</i>		Philo, <i>De somniis</i>	
106	140 n. 145	2.298	135 nn. 136–37
Philo, <i>De fuga et inventione</i>		Philo, <i>De virtutibus</i>	
95	104 n. 91	52	174 n. 10
104	104 n. 91		
108	134 n. 133	Philo, <i>De vita contemplativa</i>	
		1	72 n. 29
Philo, <i>De Iosepho</i>		7	107 n. 94
29	104 n. 91	36	63 n. 12
69	172 n. 195		
143	134 n. 135	Philo, <i>De vita Mosis</i>	
254	151 n. 164	1.1	176
		2.1–2	214 n. 35
Philo, <i>De migratione Abrahami</i>		2.2	125 n. 118
83	95 n. 69	2.4	105 n. 91, 214 n. 35, 216 n. 47
116	137 n. 141	2.12–65	176
		2.25–41	37
Philo, <i>De mutatione nominum</i>		2.25–44	42, 173–189
19.1	63 n. 12	2.28	72 n. 26, 104 n. 87
		2.30–34a	263, 265
Philo, <i>De opificio mundi</i>		2.31	177, 177 n. 21, 177 n. 22
143	172 n. 195	2.33	73 n. 31, 164 n. 183, 177, 180, 241 n. 7
Philo, <i>De sacrificiis Abelis et Caini</i>		2.34	178, 178 n. 25
114	95 n. 69	2.35–36	179
116	95 n. 69	2.36	177
121	124 n. 117	2.38	178 n. 24
		2.39	178, 178 n. 24
Philo, <i>De specialibus legibus</i>		2.40	178 n. 24
1.88	94 n. 67	2.41	35, 120 n. 112, 179 n. 26, 260 n. 47
1.100	110 n. 100	2.41–43	174
1.119	110 n. 100	2.66–186	176
1.223	110 n. 100	2.109	85 n. 54
1.254	90 n. 59	2.113	94 n. 67
2.46	172 n. 195	2.123	126 n. 121
2.235	140 n. 145	2.127	94 n. 67
2.248	137 n. 141	2.130	94 n. 67
4.92–100	149 n. 161	2.134	94 n. 67
4.104	104 n. 91	2.148	67 n. 19
4.104–108	180	2.187–292	176
4.106	110 n. 100		
4.106–108	112 n. 102	Philo, <i>In Flaccum</i>	
		54–56	172 n. 195

172	151 n. 164	11:12	17 n. 69
Philo, <i>Hypothetica</i>		Galatians	
194	97 n. 75	1:3	280 n. 22
Philo, <i>Legatio ad Gaium</i>		1 Thessalonians	
297	137 n. 141	1:1	280 n. 22
344	91 n. 61	2 Timothy	
Philo, <i>Legum allegoriae</i>		4:8	159 n. 178
2.105	110 n. 99		
3.49	150 n. 163	Hebrews	
3.95	106 n. 93	2:4	126 n. 121
3.106	67 n. 19	11:28	97 n. 75
3.118–119	94 n. 67	12:20	97 n. 75
3.126	94 n. 67		
3.132	94 n. 67	James	
		4:9	94–95 n. 69
Philo, <i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum</i>			
1.1	260 n. 47	RABBINIC WORKS AND TARGUMIM	
2.45b	97 n. 75		
		b. Baba Batra	
Philo, <i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i>		15a	207 n. 15
50	106 n. 93		
78	174 n. 5	b. Sanhedrin	
83	141 n. 146	11a	7 n. 22
Philo, <i>Quod Deus sit immutabilis</i>		b. Sotah	
139	108 n. 96	11a	207 n. 15
181	95 n. 69		
183	95 n. 69	m. Yadayim	
		3:5	192 n. 4
NEW TESTAMENT			
		Targum Pseudo-Jonathan	
Luke		Gen36:11	207 n. 15
2:1	327 n. 43		
		OTHER EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITINGS	
Acts of the Apostles		1 Clement	
18:12–17	16 n. 60	23.5	126 n. 121
26:14	58 n. 6	43.1	126 n. 121
Romans		Clement of Alexandria, <i>Protrepticus</i>	
1:7	280 n. 22	2.31.4	66 n. 19
1:27	148 n. 161	7.74.2	224 n. 79
5:9	17 n. 69		

Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i>		6.13.7	304 n. 6
1.15	203 n. 2	7.32.14–192	60 n. 46
1.21.130.3	203 n. 2, 206 n. 10, 303 n. 2, 307	Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio evangelica</i>	
1.21.141.1–2	218 n. 62	7.14	25 n. 92
1.21.141.4–5	303 n. 2, 305	7.32	25 n. 92
1.21.147.2–22.150.2	254	7.32.16	260
1.22.148.1	72 n. 27, 248, 249, 249 n. 24	8.1–8.9	260
1.22.148.1–149.3	240 n. 6, 248 n. 20, 249, 262–64	8.1.6–8	249, 262, 266–74
1.22.148.2–122.149.1	254 n. 38	8.1.8	76 n. 38
1.22.148.2–122.149.3	252 n. 32, 259 n. 45	8.2	76 n. 38
1.22.149.2	334 n. 56	8.2–5	32 n. 6
1.22.150.1	248 n. 20, 261	8.2.5	70 n. 24
1.22.150.1–2	254 n. 38	8.3.1–4	218 n. 61
1.22.150.1–4	256 n. 40	8.5.2	56 n. 1
1.22.150.1–5	247	8.8.5	261 n. 50
1.22.150.2	248 n. 22, 253 n. 35	8.8.56	265
1.23.153.4	303, 307	8.9	46 n. 61
3.7	203 n. 2	8.9.1–37	265
5.14.97.7	261 n. 49	8.9.13	108 n. 97
5.14.97.7	25, 245	8.9.38	245, 261, 265
5.14.112.4–113.2	224 n. 79	8.10	25 n. 92
5.14.113.1	224 n. 79	8.10.4	208 n. 22
		9.5	63 n. 13
		9.6.6	261
		9.6.6–9	247, 248, 254–56
		9.6.7	254 n. 37
Epiphanius of Salamis, <i>De mensuris et ponderibus</i>		9.17.1	204 n. 2, 246 n. 12
3	261	9.17.2–9	303 n. 2, 305 n. 12
9–11	42	9.19.4	218 n. 62
9.51d	31 n. 2	9.20.1	304 n. 3
48–53	217 n. 54	9.21.2–19	218 n. 62
236	56 n. 1	9.22	204 n. 2, 246 n. 12
241	79 n. 46	9.22–25	211 n. 29
242	78 n. 46	9.24	204 n. 2, 246 n. 12
250	79 n. 47	9.24.1	304 n. 3
332–334	36 n. 20	9.25.1	56 n. 1, 205
		9.25.1–4	33 n. 11, 60 n. 8, 62 n. 11, 203
Eusebius, <i>Chronicon</i>		9.25.3	207 n. 15
12.1–9	204 n. 2	9.25.4	207 n. 16
		9.26	26 n. 99, 204 n. 2, 246 n. 12
Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>		9.26.1	303 n. 2
5.8.11–15	238–41, 238 n. 3, 262, 264	9.29.1–3	218 n. 62
5.8.12	252 n. 33	9.29.15	218 n. 62

9.29.16	218 n. 62	Origen, <i>Epistula ad Africanum</i>	
9.30–34	26 n. 99	3	206 n. 12
9.30.1	307		
9.30.1–9.34.18	303 n. 2	Tertullian, <i>Apologeticus</i>	
9.31.1–9.34.3	312–315	18.5	217 n. 54
9.34.1	281 n. 28	18.5–8	242–45
9.34.17–18	309 n. 34		
9.34.19	309 n. 34	Tertullian, <i>De cultu feminarum</i>	
9.34.20	303 n. 2	1.3	242 n. 9
9.37.1–3	304 n. 3		
9.38 4 n. 8, 45 n. 60, 56 n. 1, 262, 266		OTHER GREEK AND LATIN AUTHORS	
9.38.1	205, 205 n. 8		
9.39.1–5	303 n. 2	Aelian, <i>Varia historia</i>	
9.42.3	304 n. 4	3.17	216 n. 48
13.11–12	25 n. 92	12.43	213 n. 32
13.11.3–12.4	256–59		
13.12	256 n. 40	Aeschylus, <i>Prometheus vincitus</i>	
13.12.1 42, 248, 254 n. 37, 255 n. 39		309–331	58 n. 6
13.12.1–2	246		
13.12.1–3	27, 247 n. 18	Anthologia Palatina	
13.12.2 249, 251 n. 31, 257 n. 42, 263		5.9	20 n. 79
Irenaeus, <i>Adversus haereses</i>		Apollonius of Citium, <i>In Hippocratis de articulis commentarius</i>	
3.21	252 nn. 32–34	12.26	106 n. 93
3.21.2	238–41, 262, 264		
3.24.1	242–43		
Jerome, <i>De viris illustribus</i>		Arius Didymus, <i>Liber de philosophorum sectis</i>	
38	304 n. 6	87.1	124 n. 117
		97.2	136 n. 141
Justin Martyr, <i>Apologia i</i>		Athenaeus, <i>Deipnosophistae</i>	
31.1–6	238–39	5.197C–203C	87 n. 57
31.2	178 n. 22	12.60.542F	214 n. 33
Justin Martyr, <i>Dialogus cum Tryphone</i>		15.1	66 n. 19
57.2	111 n. 101		
114.2	111 n. 101	Callixenus of Rhodes, <i>Peri Alexandreias</i>	
129.2	111 n. 101	4	86 n. 57
Origen, <i>Contra Celsum</i>		Callimachus, <i>Aetia</i>	
2.55.33	61 n. 9	frag. 17	124 n. 117
Origen, <i>Commentarium in evangelium Matthaei</i>		Callimachus, <i>In Dianam</i>	
15.14	206 n. 12	3.20	113 n. 103

Callimachus, <i>In Jovem</i>		Dio Chrysostom, <i>De regno</i>	
1.13	113 n. 103	iv	12 n. 45
Cebetis Tabula		Diodorus Siculus, <i>Bibliotheca historica</i>	
10.2	133 n. 130	1.71.3	134 n. 135
27.1	156 n. 169	2.10.2	96 n. 74
41.2	158 n. 175	3.56.4–5	107 n. 95
		4.40	65 n. 17
Cicero, <i>Brutus</i>		5.49.1	137 n. 141
9.37	214 n. 36	11.26	66 n. 19
		11.33	66 n. 19
Cicero, <i>De amicitia</i>		13.22.1	155 n. 168
25.91	147 n. 156	14.50.4	95 n. 71
		14.68.4	116 n. 109
Cicero, <i>De finibus</i>		16.75.3	95 n. 71
5.19.54	214 n. 36, 214 n. 39	16.76.2	96 n. 74
		17.15.3	137 n. 141
Cicero, <i>De legibus</i>		17.24.6	95 n. 71
3.6.14	214 n. 36	17.26.7	95 n. 71
		17.42.1	95 n. 71
Cicero, <i>De officiis</i>		17.42.7	95 n. 71
1.1.3	214 n. 36	17.45.2	95 n. 71
		17.85.7	95 n. 71
Cicero, <i>De republica</i>		18.6.3	63 n. 13
2.1.2	215 n. 43	18.67.6	217 n. 56
		18.70.2	95 n. 71
Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>		18.74.1–3	213 n. 33, 214 n. 38
12.40	12 n. 45	19.16.2	155 n. 168
		19.45.3	96 n. 74
Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad familiares</i>		19.95.2	63 n. 13
6.6.1	15	20.49.4	95 n. 71
		20.54.7	95 n. 71
Cicero, <i>In Pisonem</i>		20.75.4	95 n. 71
	21 n. 80	20.83.1	95 n. 71
Cicero, <i>Pro Rabirio Postumo</i>		20.83.2	96 n. 74
9.23	216 n. 51	20.85.3–4	95 n. 71
		20.86.2	95 n. 71
Cornutus, <i>Theologiae Graecae compendium</i>		20.88.2	95 n. 71
2	65 n. 16	20.95.2	95 n. 71
14.7	61 n. 9	20.96.3	95 n. 71
		20.96.6	95 n. 71
Dio Cassius, <i>Historiae romanae</i>		22.10.7	95 n. 71
46.36	80 n. 48	31.28.1	126 n. 121
66.1	191 n. 2	37.18.1	137 n. 141
		39.9	117 n. 109

40.3.1–8	222 n. 70, 304 n. 6	Galen, <i>Hippocratis aphorismi et Galeni in eos commentarii</i>	
40.3.4	222 n. 72		
40.3.7	100 n. 79	42	84 n. 52
40.3.8	222 n. 72		
		George Syncellus, <i>Ekloge chronographias</i>	
Diogenes Laertius, <i>Vitae philosophorum</i>		251	215 n. 43
2.125–144	128 n. 123	517–518	217 n. 54
5.39	214 n. 36		
5.58	216 n. 48	Hipparchus, <i>In Arati et Eudoxi phaenomena commentariorum libri tres</i>	
5.75	213 n. 32, 214 n. 36	2.2.1	106 n. 93
5.78–79	10 n. 39, 216 n. 50, 216 n. 51		
5.80	215 n. 45		
7.109–117	149 n. 161	Hippolytus, <i>Chronicon</i>	
7.122	125 n. 118	20.1	61 n. 9
7.147	64 n. 16		
		Joannes Tzetzes, <i>Prolegomena de comedia</i>	
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>Antiquitates romanae</i>		proem 2	217 n. 54
1.55	66 n. 19	Julian, <i>Orationes</i>	58 n. 6
1.88	66 n. 19		
3.18.1	136 n. 141	Limenius, <i>Paeon Delphicus ii</i>	
		43	124 n. 117
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De compositione verborum</i>		Longinus, <i>De Sublimitate</i>	
25.101	124 n. 117	43.6	107 n. 93
25.261	124 n. 117		
		Lucretius, <i>De rerum natura</i>	
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De Demosthene</i>		5.1–90	107 n. 95
52.27	124 n. 117	Marmor Parium	
52.34	124 n. 117	B.15–16	215 n. 43
Dionysius of Halicarnassus, <i>De Dinarcho</i>		Nepos, <i>Phocion</i>	
2.2	214 n. 36	3.1–2	213 n. 33
Epictetus, <i>Diatribai</i>		Ovid, <i>Ex Ponto</i>	21
2.22.6–7	149 n. 161	Ovid, <i>Heroides</i>	21
Epicurus, <i>Epistula ad Herodotum</i>		Ovid, <i>Tristia</i>	21
1.82.10	101 n. 82		
Euripides, <i>Bacchae</i>		Pausanias, <i>Graeciae descriptio</i>	
794	58 n. 6	7.26.7	108 n. 96

Philo of Byzantium, <i>Belopoeica</i>		Plutarch, <i>Aristides</i>	
56.20	95 n. 71	27.3	215 n. 45
68.30	95 n. 71		
Philodemus, <i>De ira</i>		Plutarch, <i>De exilio</i>	
frag. 1, 49.21	134 n. 135	7 [601f]	214 n. 39
Philodemus, <i>De libertate dicendi</i>	18 n. 72	Plutarch, <i>De fraterno amore</i>	
		16 [487b]	137 n. 141
Philodemus, <i>De morte</i>		Plutarch, <i>De virtute morali</i>	
33.24	61 n. 9	7 [446e–447a]	149 n. 161
Philodemus, <i>De musica</i>	135 n. 138	Plutarch, <i>Lycurgus</i>	
		11.7	66 n. 19
Philodemus, <i>De rhetorica</i>		Plutarch, <i>Moralia</i>	
4.10–13	214 n. 36	48c–78c	18 n. 72, 146 n. 155
Photius, <i>Bibliotheca</i>		69c–d	214 n. 39
166.111a.33	61 n. 9		
244	222 n. 70	Plutarch, <i>Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata</i>	
Plato, <i>Epistulae</i>		189d	216 n. 49, 217 n. 55
7	214 n. 35		
Plato, <i>Leges</i>		Plutarch, <i>Vitae decem oratorum</i>	
711D	214 n. 35	850B–C	214 n. 36
712A	214 n. 35		
713E	214 n. 35	Polyaenus, <i>Strategemata</i>	
837A–D	149 n. 161	4.7.6	214 n. 33
Plato, <i>Respublica</i>		Polybius, <i>Historiae</i>	
473C–D	125 n. 118, 214 n. 35	1.3.1	63 n. 13
499B	214 n. 35	1.10.4	134 n. 133
540D	214 n. 35	1.13.9	61 n. 9
		3.59.4	61 n. 9
		5.14.8	67 n. 19
Plato, <i>Theatetus</i>		5.81	122 n. 113
144B	124 n. 117	32.8.1	65 n. 17
Pliny the Elder, <i>Naturalis historia</i>		Porphyry, <i>Quaestiones homericæ</i>	
3.6	203 n. 2	5.2	142 n. 147
13.39	203 n. 2		
34.52	86 n. 57	Pseudo-Demetrius, <i>De elocutione</i>	
		223–235	10
Pliny the Younger, <i>Epistulae</i>			
10	13		

Pseudo-Demetrius, <i>Formae epistolicae</i>	2.31.16a	58 n. 6
preface	18 n. 71, 61 n. 9	2.102
1	20, 360	105 n. 91
1–2	75 n. 36, 309 n. 33, 315 n. 51	Strabo, <i>Geographica</i>
3	19 n. 74	4.1.4
3–9	19 n. 73	4.1.7
7	19 n. 76	9.1.8
11	19 n. 75, 101 n. 82	9.1.20
ll. 6–8	18 n. 71, 61 n. 9	9.3.3
		12.8.15
Pseudo-Libanius, <i>Characteres</i>	14.1.16	61 n. 9
<i>epistolici</i>	19 n. 73	14.2.15
		16.2.2
Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>De fluviis</i>	16.2.34	97 n. 76
10	203 n. 2	16.2.36
		16.2.40
Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>De musica</i>	16.2.41	96 n. 74
3	203 n. 2	17.6
		37 n. 29
Pseudo-Scymnus, <i>Ad Nicomedem regem</i>	Suda	
359	124 n. 117	429
		213 n. 32, 214 n. 36, 214 n. 39
Pythagoras, <i>Carmen aureum</i>	Suetonius, <i>Vespasianus</i>	
1–2, 5	140 n. 145	5
		191 n. 2
Quintus Curtius Rufus, <i>Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis</i>	Themistus, <i>Orationes</i>	
4.8.9	63 n. 13	21.252b
		214 n. 36
Seneca the Elder, <i>Suasoriae</i>	Thucydides, <i>Historiae</i>	
3.6–7	16 n. 60	1.1
		56 n. 2
Seneca the Younger, <i>De Ira</i>	16 n. 60	Valerius Maximus, <i>Factorum et dictorum memorabilium libri ix</i>
		8.13
		203 n. 2
Seneca the Younger, <i>Epistulae morales</i>	Vettius Valens, <i>Anthologiarum libri ix</i>	
5.1	14	9.2.17
83	17, 19	9.2.38
83.1–7	20 n. 77	113 n. 103
83.8–17	20 n. 77	113 n. 103
83.14–16	21 n. 80	Xenophon, <i>Cyropaedia</i>
83.17	19, 19 n. 76	8.1.12
95.47–53	107 n. 95	56 n. 2
Stobaeus, <i>Eclogae</i>	Xenophon, <i>De re equestri</i>	
2.31.5	58 n. 6	1.6
		124 n. 117

Xenophon, <i>Memorabilia</i>		3.1449	29 n. 112, 357–58
1.5.5	56 n. 2	3.1532	353–54
INSCRIPTIONS AND PAPYRI		C. Ptol. Sklav.	
		3	364–66
<i>BGU</i>			
1.197	165 n. 184	Horbury and Noy 1992	
8.1471	28 n. 106	13	357
8.1755	28 n. 106	14	357
8.1756	28 n. 106	22	353–54
8.1757	28 n. 106	24–25	354–55
8.1760	28 n. 106	27–28	356
8.1769	28 n. 106	117	353–54
8.1788	28 n. 106	125	357
8.1872	28 n. 106		
8.1873	26 n. 98, 280 n. 23	I.Berenike	
8.1875	28 n. 106	17	171 n. 195
8.1880	26 n. 98, 280 n. 23	18	171 n. 195
8.1882	28 n. 106		
14.2419	26 n. 98, 280 n. 23	IG	
16.2612	28 n. 106, 339 n. 11	2.2.1201	213 n. 32, 215 n. 43
<i>CIJ</i>		<i>IGA</i>	
1432	357	2.11	354
1440	353–54		
1441	354–55	<i>IGP</i>	
1442	328 n. 46, 354–55	1.38	354
1443	356	1.40	354
1444	356	1.43	354
1449	29 n. 112, 367–58	1.137–139	354
C. Ord. Ptol.		Inscr. Delphi	
21–22	364–66	286	15 n. 58
<i>CPJ</i>		Lifshitz 1967	
1.19	354	86	357
1.127	360–61	92	353–54
1.132	77 n. 40, 295 n. 73, 322 n. 30,	93	354–55
347 n. 47, 361–63		95–96	356
1.134	354		
1.139	363	<i>OGI</i>	
1.141	38 n. 34, 358–60	2.726	354
3.1432	357		
3.1443	356	P.Bononiensis	
3.1444	356	5	12 n. 46

P.Cairo Zenon		P.Tebt.	
1.59093	364	59	312 n. 48
		61b.26	57 n. 3
P.Erl.		72.462	70 n. 24
117	28 n. 106	103	339 n. 8
		183	158 n. 175
P.Heid		189	339 n. 8
2.212	26 n. 98, 280 n. 23	729	121 n. 113
		815	361
P.Herc.		895	121 n. 113
453	214 n. 36		
		SB	
P.Ifao.		5.8008	68 n. 21, 100 n. 79, 364–66
2.220	26 n. 98, 280 n. 23	18.13614	28 n. 106
P.Lond.		SIG	
4.23	70 n. 24	2.801D	15 n. 58
P.Meyer		UPZ	
2.368	363	110	361–363
P.Mil.Cong XIV		Welles 1934	
102	28 n. 106, 339 n. 11	25.17–26	312 n. 48
		71	295 n. 71
P.Oxy.			
216	12 n. 45		
217	12 n. 45		
292	20 n. 78, 360		
2190	20 n. 78		
P.Par.			
63	361–363		
P.Princ.			
3.160	28 n. 106, 339 n. 11		
P.Ryl.			
667	339 n. 8		
PSI			
8.968	28 n. 106		
8.969	28 n. 106		
9.1079	28 n. 106		
15.1513	28 n. 106		

Index of Modern Scholars

Adams, Sean A.	9	Collins, John J.	36, 40–42, 44, 116,
Alexander, Loveday	340	204, 207, 209, 218, 224, 279, 305, 311,	
Alexander, Philip S.	3, 4, 8, 25, 28, 74,	323–24, 338–39, 341, 343, 345	
340, 342–43, 345		Collins, Nina L.	216
Amir, Yehoshua	174, 179	Colson, F. H.	174, 178, 182
Anderson, Hugh	338–41, 344–45, 369	Cook, John G.	204
Attridge, Harold W.	33, 192, 204, 276–78,	Cowey, James M. S.	172
297, 305, 308		Croy, N. Clayton	339, 341
Bagnall, Roger S.	11, 35, 364–65	Dalbert, Peter	208
Balch, David L.	308	De Crom, Dries	39
Bar-Kochva, Bezalel	36, 37, 222–26	Deissmann, Adolf	6–9, 13, 15, 349
Barclay, John M. G.	224, 278, 321,	Delcor, Matthias	344
338–39, 341, 345		Denis, Albert-Marie	33, 205
Bartlett, John R.	40, 304, 305, 310–11	Derow, Peter	364–65
Berger, Klaus	9	DeSilva, David A.	345
Berthelot, Katell	222–23	De Troyer, Kristin	321–22, 325, 332
Bickermann, Elias J.	36, 38, 280, 319–	Dillon, John	174
20, 334, 339, 343		Dindorf, Karl Wilhelm	58
Bilde, Per	192	Dines, Jennifer M.	178, 206
Bjerkelund, Carl J.	7	Dinneen, Lucilla	7
Borchardt, Francis	40, 177, 179–80	Doering, Lutz	3, 8, 13, 36–37, 44, 246
Borgen, Peder	173–74, 176, 180	Dogniez, Cécile	40
Botte, Bernard	176	Doran, Robert	33, 204, 207, 210, 223–
Brock, Sebastian P.	40	25, 276, 278–82, 284, 286–87, 289–92,	
Bruston, Charles	288	294, 297–99, 303	
Bullard, J. M.	6	Dorandi, Tiziano	213, 215, 217
Burns, Joshua Ezra	282, 319–20, 323,	Dorival, Gilles	39
340, 343		Doty, William G.	7–9
Burridge, Richard A.	176	Dow, Sterling	215
Clancy, Frank	34, 219, 306	Durand, Xavier	364
Classen, C. Joachim	14	Edmondson, Jonathan	191
Clines, David J. A.	321, 325	Edwards, Catherine	16
Cohen, Jakob	339	Emmet, Cyril W.	37, 337–41, 344–45,
Cohen, Shaye J. D.	192, 193	349	
Cohn, Leopoldus	37, 174–75	Engberg-Pedersen, Troels	18

- Ewald, Heinrich G. A. 339
- Exler, Francis Xavier J. 7, 25, 28, 74, 339, 359
- Fallon, Francis T. 305
- Feldman, Louis H. 191–92
- Ferguson, William S. 214–15
- Fernández Marcos, Natalio 36–37, 39, 44, 177, 239, 246
- Février, James-Germain 35, 111, 180
- Fischer, Thomas 276, 279
- Fitzgerald, John T. 18–19, 208
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. 7
- Fortenbaugh, William W. 11, 213
- Fox, Michael V. 321
- Fraade, Steven 194
- Fraser, Peter Marshall 32, 34, 36, 76, 78, 87, 98, 121–22, 171, 216, 222, 358
- Freudenthal, Jacob 33, 204, 207, 303, 305–7, 310
- Fritsch, Charles T. 40
- Früchtel, Ludwig 248, 250
- Fuks, Alexander 360
- Gagarin, Michael 215
- Gager, John G. 223, 225
- Gambetti, Sandra 172
- Ghedini, Giuseppe 7
- Giblet, J. 307
- Gibson, Roy K. 11, 13, 20, 21
- Glad, Clarence E. 121, 295
- Gleason, Maud W. 14
- Goldstein, Jonathan A. 24, 276, 278–80, 282, 286–88, 296
- Goodenough, Erwin R. 174–75
- Goodspeed, Edgar J. 238
- Green, Peter 214, 216–17
- Gregg, J. A. F. 317, 319–21, 329–30, 334–35
- Griffin, Miriam T. 16
- Grimm, Carl L. W. 338–39, 341
- Grube, George M. A. 218
- Gruen, Erich S. 3, 22, 27, 29–30, 35, 42, 44, 208–9, 222, 224–25, 283, 305–6, 311, 339, 341, 345
- Gunderson, Erik 14
- Habicht, Christian 281, 286, 296, 301
- Hacham, Noah 28, 320, 324, 342–43
- Hadas, Moses 3, 29, 34, 36, 40, 44, 87, 128, 338, 339–45
- Hanhart, Robert 25, 210, 286, 291–92, 321, 326, 346, 349
- Hanson, Anthony 174
- Hanson, J. 218–19
- Harvey, William W. 237, 242, 249
- Hauser, Alan J. 14
- Heater, Homer 206–7
- Henderson, John 16
- Hengel, Martin 224, 305, 307, 310–11
- Henten, Jan Willem van 277–79
- Hercher, Rudolf 2, 218
- Hermann, Gabriel 308, 328
- Hodkinson, Owen 4, 11–12, 22
- Hoek, Annewies van den 248, 303
- Hoffer, Stanley E. 16
- Holladay, Carl R. 24, 33, 35, 72, 204, 207–8, 216, 218–19, 222, 224–26, 232, 246–48, 251, 255, 260, 284, 304–8, 310, 312
- Holland, Glenn S. 19
- Honigman, Sylvie 3, 22, 36, 172, 246
- Horbury, William 353–54, 356–58
- Horsley, G. H. R. 354
- Horst, Pieter W. van der 172, 174
- Inowlocki, Sabrina 204, 206, 246–47, 260, 303
- Inwood, Brad 16
- Jacob, Benno 79, 207, 287, 319, 334
- Jacoby, Felix 204, 222–23, 225, 305, 308, 310
- Janowitz, Naomi 39, 177
- Jellicoe, Sidney 36, 40, 177–78, 239
- Jobes, Karen H. 321
- Johnson, Sara Raup 338–41, 344–45
- Jones, Christopher P. 191
- Kahle, Paul E. 40
- Kannicht, Richard 58
- Kasher, Aryeh 354
- Keddie, G. Anthony 4, 26, 28–29, 99, 286, 306–13, 315, 328, 339–41, 346, 351, 365
- Kemke, Johannes 135

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| Kennedy, George A. | 14 | Natoli, Bartolo N. | 21, 196 |
| Kim, Chan-Hie | 7 | Nauck, Augustus | 58 |
| Klauck, Hans-Josef | 8–9, 28, 43–44, 280 | Nickelsburg, George W. E. | 3, 24–26, 28, 278–79, 283, 338, 341, 343, 345 |
| Klawans, Jonathan | 41 | Niehoff, Marin | 174–76, 218–19 |
| Klijn, Albertus F. J. | 36 | Nikiprowetzky, Valentin | 174 |
| König, Jason | 21 | Nisula, Timo | 4, 280–81, 295, 309 |
| Konstan, David | 17, 19, 55 | Noreña, Carlos F. | 13 |
| Koskenniemi, Heikki | 7, 8 | Noy, David | 353–54, 356–58 |
| Kraft, Robert A. | 207 | Obbink, Dirk | 19 |
| Kraus, Wolfgang | 39–40 | Ophuijsen, Jan van | 213, 215, 217 |
| Kuhlmey, Carl G. A. | 304 | Orlinsky, Harry M. | 36 |
| Landau, Tamar | 191 | O'Sullivan, Lara | 11, 214–15 |
| Lange, Armin | 37, 40 | Pardee, Dennis | 7 |
| Langslow, David R. | 3, 13 | Passoni Dell'Acqua, Anna | 27–28, 320, 322, 339–40 |
| Levenson, Jon D. | 317–19, 322–23 | Paul, André | 343 |
| Lewy, Hans | 223 | Pelletier, André | 36, 42–43, 193–95 |
| Lichtenberger, Hermann | 278 | Peters, Melvin K. H. | 40, 206 |
| Lindenberger, James M. | 7 | Pitts, Andrew W. | 9 |
| Lindner, Helgo | 192 | Plassart, André | 15 |
| Lüderitz, Gert | 172 | Porter, Stanley E. | 9, 14 |
| Malherbe, Abraham J. | 7–8, 10–12, 18–19, 21, 61, 75, 101, 218, 281, 315 | Priessnig, Anton | 176 |
| Marcus, Ralph | 196 | Rahlfs, Alfred | 25, 210, 286, 291–92, 326, 346, 349 |
| Maresch, Klaus | 172 | Rajak, Tessa | 3, 179, 191, 216 |
| Mason, Steve | 56, 191 | Reed, Annette Yoshiko | 14, 207 |
| Meecham, Henry George | 34, 36, 180 | Rees, Roger | 4, 20 |
| Meisner, Norbert Hans | 36–37, 40 | Reinach, A.-J. | 15 |
| Meister, Klaus | 222–23 | Rémondon, Roger | 360 |
| Mélèze-Modrzejewski, Joseph | 339 | Rigsby, Kent J. | 358 |
| Mendels, Doron | 204, 311 | Risberg, Bernhard | 290 |
| Mendelson, Alan | 174 | Robbins, Vernon K. | 14 |
| Menn, Esther | 319–20 | Roberts, William Rhys | 218, 359 |
| Migne, J.-P. | 248 | Roller, Otto | 7 |
| Moffatt, James | 276, 279, 282, 285 | Rosenmeyer, Patricia A. | 4–6, 9–13, 20–21, 41, 44 |
| Momigliano, Arnaldo | 37, 74 | Sandmel, Samuel | 173–75, 179 |
| Moore, Carey A. | 26, 317–22, 324, 334–35, 343 | Schaller, Berndt | 224–25 |
| Moreau, Jacques | 339 | Schenck, Kenneth | 173–75 |
| Morello, Ruth | 6 | Schlatter, Adolf | 223, 246 |
| Morrison, Andrew D. | 6, 11, 13, 19–21 | Schmidt, Moritz | 43, 104, 125 |
| Motzo, Bacchisio | 339, 342 | Schrekenberg, Heinz | 193 |
| Mras, Karl | 210, 254–56, 268, 272 | Schubert, Paul | 7–9 |
| Müller, Karl | 204 | Schürer, Emil | 36, 40, 223–25, 246 |
| Murray, Oswyn | 42, 194, 215, 222 | | |
| Najman, Hindy | 176 | | |

Schütrumpf, Eckart	11, 213	Tsouna, Voula	16
Schwartz, Daniel R.	173–74, 279	Unger, F. G.	204
Schwartz, Eduard	238, 260	Wacholder, Ben Zion	33, 204–5, 223–24, 278, 289, 304–7, 309–11
Schwartz, Seth	192	Walter, Nikolaus	33, 204, 207, 216–17, 224, 247–48, 253–54, 305–6
Shutt, R. James H.	36, 41, 43, 55, 57–58, 79, 138, 148, 158, 169	Walton, Francis R.	222
Sider, David	21	Wasserstein, Abraham	3, 33, 175, 177–80
Sly, Dorothy I.	174	Wasserstein, David J.	3, 33, 175, 177–80
Smith, Morton	192	Watson, Duane F.	14
Snell, Bruno	58	Weichert, Valentinus	218
Souter, Alexander	243	Welles, C. Bradford	26, 294, 299, 312
Spencer, Diana	14, 17, 19, 20	Wendland, Paulus	37, 43, 45, 55, 57–59, 68–69, 72, 78–79, 83, 90, 96, 102, 106, 113, 121, 123, 125, 130–33, 156, 159, 169–70, 207, 237, 246, 249, 284
Stählin, Gustav	193	Westermann, William L.	63, 68, 364–65
Stählin, Otto	237, 248, 250	White, John L.	7, 359, 363
Sterling, Gregory E.	173–75, 192, 223, 305–6, 308, 310, 311	White, L. Michael	4, 17, 19, 33, 38, 42, 47, 57, 74, 77, 172, 214, 357
Stern, Menaḥem	204, 223	White, Peter	13, 15
Stirewalt, M. Luther	7, 9	Wilcken, Ulrich	364
Stork, Peter	213, 215, 217	Wilhelm, Adolf	290
Stowers, Stanley K.	6–9, 12, 14, 19	Wilke, Carolus	134
Strack, Max Lebrecht	76	Williams, David S.	338–39
Stricker, Bruno Hugo	36	Williams, James M.	215
Strugnell, John	204	Willrich, Hugo	35–37, 180, 284, 304–5, 339
Swete, Henry Barclay	55, 206, 321, 335	Wills, Lawrence M.	341
Sykutris, Johannes	10, 12	Wilson, William	248
Taatz, Irene	8	Wooden, Glenn R.	39, 40
Taylor, Joan E.	204, 206, 246	Wright, Benjamin G.	39–40, 175, 179
Tcherikover, Victor A.	3, 28–29, 36, 41, 170, 223, 279, 305, 338–41, 354, 356, 359–61	Yarbro Collins, Adela	24, 284
Thackeray, Henry St. J.	31, 35–37, 42–43, 45, 55, 57–59, 68, 72–73, 79, 83, 90, 96, 102, 104, 106, 113, 123–25, 130, 135–36, 145, 147, 156, 166, 169–70, 195, 220, 232, 234	Zeitlin, Solomon	278
Theodorakopoulos, Elena	14		
Thraede, Klaus	7–8		
Too, Yun Lee	16		
Tov, Emanuel	321–22, 332		
Tracy, Sterling	29, 345		
Tramontano, Raffaele	33, 74, 204		
Trapp, Michael	6, 11–13		
Travis, Albert H.	215		
Treu, Ursula	248, 250		
Tromp, Johannes	340–43, 345		

Index of Subjects

- Additions to Daniel. *See* Daniel, Additions to
- Additions to Esther. *See* Esther, Additions to
- Additions to Greek Esther. *See* Esther, Additions to
- Ahasuerus, 317 n. 2, 318, 326 n. 42
- Alciphron, 21, 21 n. 85
- Alexander the Great, 19 n. 75, 183, 213, 223, 227, 229, 231, 233, 254 n. 38, 255, 262, 304 n. 3, 361
- “mastery of,” 252–53 n. 35, 254 nn. 37–38, 255, 257
- Alexander Polyhistor. *See* Polyhistor (Alexander)
- Alexander Romance, 44
- Alexandria, 38–39, 41–42, 43 n. 53, 69, 98 n. 77, 99, 119, 170 n. 195, 170–72 n. 195, 173–77, 185, 192, 218, 233, 275, 278, 283, 320, 340
- and Aristeeas legend, 2, 23, 31, 38–39, 51–52, 69, 77 n. 41, 99, 119, 180 n. 30, 208, 305
- Jews in, 1, 23, 29, 41–42, 170 n. 195, 170–72 n. 195, 173–77, 179 n. 26, 180, 221, 279, 284, 320–21, 337, 339 n. 8, 353
- library of, 31, 214, 217, 241, 253, 267
- Alexandrinus (Codex), 25, 25 n. 97, 141 n. 146
- allegory, 111, 112 n. 102, 113 n. 105
- altar, 24 n. 91, 90 n. 59, 91, 231, 289, 291, 293
- Andreas, 51–25, 63, 67, 76–77 n. 38, 77, 103, 119, 121–22 n. 113, 199
- Andreas (cont.)*
- and Aristeeas, 32–33, 77, 201, 77 n. 41, 177, 201, 221
- Andros, battle of, 35, 120 n. 112
- Antioch, 278, 299
- Antiochus II, 354
- Antiochus III, the Great, 63 n. 13, 337
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes, 24–25, 63 n. 13, 192–93, 276–77, 280–81, 284, 289, 294–95, 297 n. 76, 301 n. 82, 312–13 n. 48, 344, 359
- Antiochus V Eupator, 276–77, 280–81, 288 n. 56, 296–97, 298–99, 298 n. 77, 301 n. 82, 312–13 n. 48
- Aramaic language, 7–8 n. 23, 62 n. 11, 207, 207 n. 18, 207–8 n. 19, 280 n. 21, 283, 286 n. 52, 321 n. 22, 324
- Aristeeas. *See* Aristeeas the Exegete; Epistle of Aristeeas
- Aristeeas the Exegete, 33 n. 10, 38–39 n. 35, 60 n. 8, 62 n. 11, 203–9, 203–4 nn. 1–2, 205
- date of, 206
- and Epistle of Aristeeas, 33–34, 37–38, 43, 56 n. 1, 205 n. 5, 245–46 n. 12, 283
- literary relationships of, 207–8
- audience and purpose of, 208–9
- Aristobulus, (Pseudo-), 24–25, 24 n. 92, 25 n. 95, 36, 37 n. 31, 72 n. 27, 245–49, 252 n. 35, 265, 271, 273, 276
- fragments of, 36 n. 20, 203–4 n. 2, 250–61
- letter of, 24, 25 n. 97. *See also* Eusebius of Caesarea, on Aristobulus (*Testimonia* of)

Aristobulus, (Pseudo-) (cont.)

- in 2 Maccabees, 276, 280, 283–84, 28, 359
- Aristotle, 12, 60–61 n. 9, 63 n. 13, 150 n. 163
- Arouas, 100 n. 79, 101
- Arsinoe I, 34–35 n. 18, 367
- Arsinoe II, 34, 34–35 n. 18, 77 n. 39, 354, 367
- Arsinoite nome, 353–54, 361
- Athens, 10–11 n. 39
 - and Demetrius of Phalerum (and Pseudo-Demetrius), 213–16
- Athribis, 356
- Ben Sira, 36–37 n. 27
- Berenike II, 353–4, 361, 367
- Berenike inscriptions, 170–72 n. 195
- Caligula, 174, 339 n. 6
- Callimachus, 85 n. 55, 113 n. 103, 124 n. 117
- Callixeinus, 86–87 n. 57
- Chion of Heraclea, 21, 44
- Cicero. *See* epistolography, Cicero on citadel, 36–37 n. 27, 51, 95, 97, 121, 283 citizenship, 170–72 n. 95
 - in 3 Maccabees, 347, 349
 - at Delphi, 16
 - of Josephus, 191
- Clement of Alexandria, 2, 73 n. 31, 206, 218, 237, 247 n. 18, 247–48, 249 n. 24, 255, 257, 261–62
 - on the Aristeas legend, 25, 237 n. 1, 245–49, 250–54, 254 n. 38, 250 nn. 27–28, 252 n. 32, 252–53 n. 35, 254–55 n. 38
 - in Eusebius, 255, 256 n. 40, 256–57 n. 42, 259 n. 45. *See also* Eusebius of Caesaria, on Aristobulus (*Testimonia* of)
 - on Eupolemus, 303, 303 n. 2, 305–6
 - and Polyhistor, 206 n. 10, 218 n. 62, 224, 246 n. 14, 306, 306 n. 13, 306–7 n. 25. *See also* Polyhistor (Alexander), *Concerning the Jews* and Hecataeus, Pseudo-, 224 n. 79

Clement of Alexandria (cont.)

- Stromateis*, 25 n. 95, 203–4 n. 2, 206 n. 10, 218 n. 62, 224 n. 79, 245 n. 24, 246–49, 249 n. 24, 250–54, 256 n. 40, 261–62, 303 n. 2, 305–6, 334 n. 56
- Cleopatra, 26, 26–27 n. 102, 319, 335, 334 n. 55, 354, 355–57, 362, 367–68
- Cleopatra I, 260 n. 48
- Cleopatra II, 334 n. 55
- Cleopatra III, 355
- Cleopatra IV, 26–27 n. 102, 334 n. 55
- Cleopatra V, 319, 334 n. 55
- Cleopatra VI, 26, 334 n. 55
- Cleopatra VII, 29, 239 n. 4, 358
- Coele-Syria, 35 n. 19, 63, 63 n. 13, 365
- Crocodilopolis, 353–54
- Cyrene, 25, 170–72 n. 195, 221, 275, 279, 282, 306, 354
- Daniel, Additions to, 338
- David, 251, 251 n. 29, 293, 303, 310 n. 41, 311, 313, 315
- dietary laws, 22–23, 42, 47, 180
- Demetrius I Soter, 213–15, 217 n. 53, 232, 306
- Demetrius II Nicator, 306
- Demetrius (the Chronographer), 203–4 n. 2, 218–19, 219 n. 63, 248 n. 22, 252–53 n. 35
- Demetrius of Phalerum, 2, 10, 10–11 n. 39, 22, 31, 31 n. 1, 35, 50, 61, 77 n. 39, 180, 203, 213 n. 30, 213–19, 220–21, 249
 - as advisor to Ptolemy, 216–17
 - as lawgiver, 215–16
 - as librarian, 217–18
 - as philosopher-king, 215–16
- diaspora, 1, 29–30, 41, 275, 280 n. 21, 284, 310, 324, 342, 345
- Diodorus Siculus, 222
- Diogenes Laertius, 10 n. 39, 124–25 n. 118, 215 n. 45, 216, 217
- Dionysus, 340
- Dis, 64–65 n. 16, 65
- Dositheus son of Drimylus, 26, 81, 319, 320, 323, 335

- ekphrasis, 22, 50, 86–7 n. 57
- Eleazar, high priest, 2, 27, 28 n. 106, 31–22, 41, 48, 59, 79 n. 47, 89, 93, 99, 102–3, 107 n. 95, 119, 123, 171, 193, 344
and correspondence with Ptolemy, 22, 28, 31–32, 44, 46–47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 56 n. 1, 57, 73, 74 n. 32, 75, 77, 198–201, 239 n. 4, 261 n. 50, 268–71, 359
- Epiphanius, 2
on the Aristeas legend, 31 n. 2, 35 n. 20, 42, 78–79 n. 46, 261
- Epistle of Aristeas, 31–172. *See also* Epistolography; Epistolary rhetoric
audience and purpose of, 41–42
authorship of, 32–34, 342–43
date of, 34–38
Clement of Alexandria on, 246, 249, 252 n. 32
Demetrius in, 213–19, 222
epistolary features of, 3–4, 3 n. 5, 44–48, 345
and Esther (Greek), 283–84, 322
Eusebius's version of, 265–74
and Eupolemus, 310
greeting, 3–4, 36 n. 26, 38 n. 34
and Hecataeus (Pseudo-), 224–26, 226 n. 84
Josephus's paraphrase of, 191–201
as moral exhortation, 4–5, 18, 23, 41, 44–45
outline of, 48–54
provenance of, 38–39
Philo's version of, 172–80
relationship to LXX, 39–41
text and translation of, 56–172
title of, 45, 45–46 n. 60, 56–7 nn. 1–3, 205–6 n. 9. *See also* Eusebius of Caesarea, on the Epistle of Aristeas
transmission history of, 42–43
- Epistle of Solomon, 313
- epistolary rhetoric, 14–23, 308–9, 323, 345, 360. *See also* Epistle of Aristeas, epistolary features of; epistolary formulae; epistolography
- epistolary formulae, 309, 322
greeting, 3–4, 4 n. 9, 36 n. 26, 38 n. 34
- epistolography, 7–8, 7 n. 20, 22–24, 345
Christian, 7–8 n. 23
Cicero on, 15–16
and fictional letters, 6–13, 21–22
and greeting formulas, 3–4, 4 n. 9, 25 n. 98, 36 n. 26, 38 n. 34, 280 n. 23
Hellenistic, 4–5, 25–26, 281, 303–4, 310
Jewish, 7–8 n. 23, 22–24, 280 n. 22
and moral exhortation, 4–5, 18, 23, 44–45, 177–78
- epistolary novella, 3 n. 5, 5. *See also* Epistle of Aristeas, epistolary features of
epitomizer. *See under* Maccabees, Second Book of
- Esther, Greek, 1, 5, 21, 23, 25, 27–29, 37, 317 n. 5, 318–25, 326–27 n. 42, 332, 337–38
dating, 37 n. 30, 38, 42, 282–83. *See also* Esther, Additions to
and 2 Maccabees, 282–83, 282 n. 37
and 3 Maccabees, 342–34, 347. *See also* Maccabees, Third Book of
- Esther, Additions to, 27, 317–36, 318, 323 n. 31, 326, 326 n. 42, 334–35 n. 57, 343 n. 29
and 2 Maccabees, 320–21, 320 n. 13
and 3 Maccabees, 322–23
literary relationships of, 323–24
- Eupolemus, 26 n. 99, 42, 203–4 n. 2, 221, 303–16, 303 n. 2, 351 n. 53
in 2 Maccabees, 283
authorship of, 304–5
dating, 305–7
provenance, 307, 307 n. 21
Solomon letters of, 1, 4, 21, 25–26, 203–4 n. 2, 206 n. 10, 312–315
- Eupolemus, Pseudo-, 205–6 n. 9, 303 n. 2
- Eusebius of Caesarea, 2, 4 n. 8, 32–33, 37 n. 31, 173 n. 1, 238 n. 3, 256–57 n. 42
on Aristobulus (*Testimonia* of), 245–49, 245–46 n. 12, 247 n. 18, 248 nn. 20, 22, 250 n. 28, 251 n. 31, 256–57 n. 42, 254–62, 265–74

Eusebius of Caesarea (cont.)

- on Aristeas the Exegete, 203–5, 210, 211 n. 29
- on the Epistle of Aristeas, 45, 45–46 n. 60, 46, 56 n. 1, 56–7 nn. 2–3, 60 n. 8, 62 n. 11, 205–6 n. 9, 260–62, 263–65
- on (Pseudo-)Demetrius the Chronographer, 218, 218 nn. 62–63
- on Eupolemus, 303, 303 n. 2, 312–315
- Praeparatio evangelica*, 4 n. 8, 24 n. 92, 32, 42, 56 n. 1, 76 n. 38, 247 n. 18, 265–74
- on the *Testamonia* of Aristobulus. *See* Eusebius of Caesaria, on Aristobulus (*Testimonia* of)
- Exagoge* (Ezekiel the Tragedian), 327 n. 43
- Ezechias, high priest, 229
- festivals, 24 n. 91, 120 n. 112, 161, 174, 187, 275, 323–24
- in 2 Maccabees, 282–84, 282 n. 34, 287 n. 54–55, 289 n. 61
- in 3 Maccabees, 337, 340, 340 n. 19, 345
- in Additions to Greek to Esther, 323–24, 323 n. 33, 331. *See also* Greek Esther, Additions to
- friendship, 13–14, 16–18, 26, 30, 42, 77, 79, 139, 281, 299, 309 n. 31
- letters of, 14, 75 n. 36
- rhetoric of, 14, 16–18, 42, 312, 322. *See also* epistolary rhetoric
- genre, 3 n. 5, 5, 10, 14
- and 2 Maccabees, 279, 279 n. 20
- of the Epistle of Aristeas, 43–54, 176
- Greek Esther. *See* *Esther*
- Hanukkah, 24, 24 n. 90, 275, 282, 284, 323. *See also* festivals
- Hasmoneans, 24, 91 n. 64, 275, 278, 278 n. 9, 303, 309–11, 311 n. 45, 323 n. 33, 324
- Hebrew language, 29, 39–40, 40 n. 43, 174 n. 5, 178 n. 24, 197, 245, 257, 307, 321–22, 324–25

Hebrew language (cont.)

- and 2 Maccabees, 280 n. 21
- in the Epistle of Aristeas, 71, 75, 239
- Josephus on, 197
- Philo on, 179, 179 n. 29, 199
- Hecataeus of Abdera, 23, 41, 72 n. 29, 197, 203, 218, 222–33, 304–5 n. 6
- in the Epistle of Aristeas, 73, 100 n. 79
- as ethnographer, 222–25, 225 n. 81
- Hecataeus of Miletus, 222 n. 68
- Hecataeus, Pseudo-, 39, 39 n. 37, 90 n. 59, 170–72 n. 95, 205, 217 n. 53, 222–33
- Heliodorus, 343
- Herakleopolis papyri, 170–72 n. 195
- high priests, 5, 22–23, 41–2, 48, 49, 61, 94 n. 68, 177–78, 205, 278. *See also* Eleazar, high priest
- Hiram of Tyre, 206, 308 n. 29, 313 n. 49
- Hyrchanus, John, 223, 223–24 n. 78, 278, 307, 311 n. 46
- identity, Jewish, 23, 192, 310–11
- inviolability, 28–29
- Jannaeus, Alexander, 319
- Jason of Cyrene, 25, 275–76, 279, 282
- Jeremiah (prophet), 291, 293, 303, 304 n. 6, 310 n. 37
- Jerusalem, 22, 24, 77 n. 41, 91 n. 64, 84, 205 n. 8
- and Alexandria, 41, 47, 177
- delegations to, 2–3, 18, 46, 47, 48–50
- description(s) of, 96–97 nn. 73–74, 193 n. 9, 223, 223–24 n. 78, 231, 273, 275, 277, 278
- temple (Jewish) in, 81, 90 n. 59, 265–66, 278–79, 284–85, 337, 338, 344
- Job, 33–34, 38, 60 n. 8, 62 n. 11, 204, 206, 206 n. 12, 207, 207 nn. 15 and 17, 208–9, 210–11, 213, 283
- Job, Testament of, 207 nn. 14–15
- John of Accos, 304–5, 305 n. 9
- Josephus, 179–72 n. 195, 191–96, 251, 260–61, 265, 271, 360–61, 364
- on 3 Maccabees, 338. *See also* Maccabees, Third Book of

Josephus (cont.)

- on Additions to Esther, 317–18 n. 5, 319, 329–30 n. 50, 334. *See also* Esther, Additions to
- Antiquitates judaicae*, 32, 192, 192 n. 4, 196–200, 234–35
- Contra Apionem*, 27, 220–21, 226–33, 235 n. 90.
- on Hecataeus, 223, 223 n. 74, 224 n. 79
- paraphrase of the Epistle of Aristaeas, 2, 27, 27 n. 104, 32, 42, 43 n. 52, 56 n. 1, 76–77 n. 38, 191–201
- on Alexander Polyhistor, 203–4 n. 2. *See also* Polyhistor (Alexander)
- Judas Maccabee, 24–25, 24 n. 90, 192, 275–78, 276 n. 3, 282 n. 34, 283–84, 288 n. 56, 289, 293, 304–5
- kingship, 124, 124–25 n. 118, 134 n. 135, 217, 295
 - advice on, 133, 160–61 n. 180, 163, 216
- Kislev, 24, 24 n. 90, 287, 287 nn. 54–55
- Kleruchies, 100 n. 79
- Kos, battle of, 35, 120 n. 112
- law, Jewish, 4, 18, 35, 52, 65, 70–71, 72 n. 29, 103, 104–5 n. 91, 107, 112 n. 102, 117, 159, 175, 186–89, 197, 205, 229
- dietary, 22–23, 42, 46 n. 61, 51, 47, 105, 109, 115, 180, 265–66, 299
- descriptions of, 48–49, 51–52, 59, 61, 254–55 n. 38, 260, 327, 331
- translation(s) of, 31–32, 35, 39–40, 75–76, 79, 120 n. 112, 169, 177, 183, 185, 199, 201, 207, 213, 215, 222, 255, 259
- regarding sacrifice, 115, 119, 193, 199
- regarding the temple and priesthood, 23, 115, 193, 199, 291–93
- lawgiver, 52, 105, 104–5 n. 91, 106 n. 92–93, 109, 111, 113, 119, 169, 176, 214, 214 n. 35
- Demetrius as, 169, 214–16. *See also* under Demetrius of Phalerum
- Moses as, 104–5 n. 91, 106 n. 92, 215–16 n. 46, 124–5 n. 18, 176, 271

- Leontopolis, 40, 77 n. 40, 355–56, 363
 - Jewish temple in, 278–79, 284, 361
- Levites, 223–24 n. 78
- Library of Alexandria. *See* Alexandria, library of
- Lucianic text, 321 n. 22, 332 n. 52,
- Maccabean revolt, 24, 95, 192, 304, 311, 361. *See also* Maccabees, Second Book of
- Maccabees, First Book of, 4–5, 4 n. 12, 37 n. 29, 304
 - and 2 Maccabees, 282, 296–97 n. 75
- Maccabees, Second Book of, 1, 4–5, 4 n. 12, 21, 275–301, 296–97 n. 75, 305
- Aristobulus in, 245, 261, 273
- authorship of, 275–77
- and the Epistle of Aristaeas, 38
- date of, 277–78
- epitomizer of, 25 n. 94, 275, 277–79, 282, 284, 298 n. 77, 301 n. 82, 305
- form of, 279–81
- historical reliability of, 22
- letters embedded in, 275–77, 282
- literary relationships of, 282–84
- provenance of, 23–24, 278–79
- Maccabees, Third Book of, 1, 5, 21, 98–99 n. 17, 283, 337–351, 360
- authorship of, 337–38
- date of, 338–41, 350–51 n. 51
- and the Epistle of Aristaeas, 38
- and Esther, Additions to, 232–24
- form of, 341–42
- literary relationships of, 342–45
- provenance of, 23–24, 27–29, 32, 320
- Maccabees, Fourth Book of, 27, 94–95 n. 69, 208
- martyrdom, 223–24 n. 78
- Menedemus of Eritrea, 34–35 n. 18, 41, 128 n. 123, 129, 244–45,
- Memphis, 10, 359–60, 361, 363
- monotheism
 - moral progress, 4–5, 16, 17–18, 30, 215. *See also* Epistle of Aristaeas, as moral exhortation; epistolography, and moral exhortation

- Mordecai, 27, 282, 282 n. 32, 317–18, 322, 323, 323 n. 31, 325, 326–27 n. 42m 337, 332, 334, 334–35 n. 57
- Moses, 100 n. 79, 106, 178, 187, 222, 251, 255, 259, 303, 304 n. 6, 307
 in 2 Maccabees, 292–93
 in the Epistle of Aristes, 109, 110–11 n. 100, 215–16
 Eusebius's Proemium on, 265, 267–73 as ideal king, 104–5 n. 91, 125 n. 118.
See also lawgiver, Moses as
 Philo's treatment of, 124–25 n. 118, 175–76, 178, 215–16 nn. 46–47
 and Plato (comparisons with), 255, 257
- Mosollamus, 231, 233
- Nicanor, Day of, 282, 323
- Nile River, 101, 354,
- Nitriai, 354–55
- Origen, 60 n. 9, 206 n. 12, 332 n. 52
- paraenesis, 58 n. 6, 101 n. 82,
- pathetic history, 279
- Pharos, 2, 35, 37 n. 29, 47, 53, 120 n. 112, 165, 174, 177, 179, 185, 187
- Philo of Alexandria, 104–5 n. 91, 170–72 n. 195, 239, 271
 on the Aristes legend, 23, 35, 38, 42, 173–80, 260, 262, 263–65
De vita Mosis, 182–89
- Philo the Elder, 203–4 n. 2, 221
- Philocrates, 2–5, 17–18, 23, 31, 41, 43–44 n. 53, 44–48, 51–53, 57, 72–73 n. 29, 101, 119, 160–61 n. 180, 163, 171, 265
- Philodemus, 20–21, 60–61 n. 9
- philosopher-king, 125–25 n. 118, 214, 214 n. 35
 Demetrius of Phalerum. *See* Demetrius of Phalerum, as philosopher-king
- Philosophy, 151, 175, 214 n. 35, 216, 221, 256–57 n. 42, 257, 273
- Phocylides, Pseudo-, 113 n. 104, 140–41 n. 145
- Piso, 20–21, 21 n. 80
- Plato, 60–61 n. 9, 214 n. 35, 248, 248 n. 20, 253, 254–55 n. 38, 255, 256–57 n. 42, 257, 259
- Pliny the Elder, 8, 21, 86–87 n. 57, 203–4 n. 2
- Pliny the Younger, 13
- Plutarch, 18–19 n. 72, 66–67 n. 19, 134 n. 135, 136–37 n. 141, 217
politeuma, 167, 170–72 n. 195, 269
- Polybius, 60–61 n. 9, 63 n. 13, 66–67 n. 19, 121–22 n. 113, 150 n. 163
- Polyhistor (Alexander), 24, 24 n. 92, 26, 33, 37, 37 n. 31, 38, 60 n. 8, 203, 203 n. 2, 205–6, 205 n. 9, 206 n. 10, 211, 211 n. 29, 223 n. 73, 245–246, 245 n. 12, 246 n. 14, 249, 266, 303, 303 n. 1, 305, 308 n. 25, 310 n. 40
Concerning the Jews, 203–4 n. 2, 206 n. 10, 307–8 n. 25
- Porphry, 142 n. 147
- Posidonius, 90–91 n. 61, 96–97 n. 74, 97 n. 76
- prayer hall, 29, 340, 353–58
- priests, 81, 91, 93, 123–24 n. 116, 167, 208 n. 22, 223–24 n. 78, 229, 231, 245, 269, 276, 289, 291
- propaganda, 36–37 n. 27, 192 n. 4, 311, 323 n. 33, 324
- pseudepigraphy, 3, 21, 113 n. 103, 140 n. 145, 276, 276 n. 3, 318, 337
- Ptolemais, 99, 101, 340, 353–54
- Ptolemy I Soter, 10–11 n. 39, 35, 35 n. 19–20, 63, 214, 216–17, 217 n. 53, 222–23, 225, 239 n. 4, 239 n. 5, 261, 267, 364, 367–68
 as Ptolemy Lagus, 239 n. 4, 251 n. 29–30. *See also* under Ptolemy II Philadelphus
- Ptolemy II Philadelphus, 2–3, 5, 30, 32 n. 5, 34–35, 35 n. 19–20, 39, 41, 43, 61, 65, 68 n. 21, 86–87 n. 57, 103, 120 n. 112, 160–61 n. 180, 177, 183, 195, 208, 213–14, 216, 217 n. 53, 221, 225, 246, 259–60, 260 n. 48, 261, 265, 267, 354, 364, 367–68
 and correspondence with Eleazer, 22, 28, 31–32, 44, 46–47, 48, 50, 51, 53, 56 n. 1, 57, 73, 74 n. 32, 75,

Ptolemy II Philadelphus, and correspondence with Eleazer (cont.)

- 77, 198–201, 239 n. 4, 261 n. 50, 268–71, 359. *See also* Eleazer, high priest, and correspondence with Ptolemy
 as Ptolemy (son of) Lagus, 239 n. 4, 251 n. 29–30. *See also under* Ptolemy I Soter
 Ptolemy III Euergetes, 260 n. 48, 353–54, 360–61, 364, 367–68
 Ptolemy IV Philopator, 27, 32, 63 n. 13, 76–77 n. 38, 120–22 n. 113, 218, 320, 322, 337, 340–41, 343, 346–49, 350–51, 360–61, 367–68
 as Caligula (3 Macc), 339 n. 6
 Ptolemy V Epiphanes, 63 n. 13, 78 n. 43, 260 n. 48, 367–68
 Ptolemy VI Philometor, 24, 24 n. 95, 76 n. 37, 98–99 n. 77, 120–22 n. 113, 245, 260 n. 48, 261, 261 n. 49, 279, 284, 334 n. 55, 355, 356, 361–62, 367–68
 Ptolemy VIII Physcon, 27, 29, 116 n. 108, 277, 306, 319, 334 n. 55, 338, 354, 355, 358, 362–63, 367–68
 Ptolemy IX, 26–27 n. 102, 334 n. 55, 356, 367–68
 Ptolemy X, 354, 367–68
 Ptolemy XII Auletes, 26, 319, 334 n. 55, 356, 367–68
 Ptolemy XIII, 239 n. 4, 367–68
 Ptolemy XIV, 239 n. 4, 357–58, 367–68
 Ptolemy XV, 358
 Purim, 27, 282 n. 34, 319, 319 n. 11, 323, 323 n. 33, 324, 335, 356
 Raphia, battle of, 32, 63 n. 13, 121–22 n. 113, 337, 347 n. 48, 350–51 n. 51, 360
 rewritten Bible/rewritten scriptures, 176 n. 19, 209, 308, 322
 rhetoric, 5, 8, 13 n. 50, 14–23, 14 n. 52, 30, 43–44, 218, 309 nn. 31–32
 Rome, 17, 116 n. 108, 174, 191, 238 n. 2, 245–46 n. 12, 278 n. 9, 283, 304, 332 n. 52

- Samaria, 36–37 n. 27, 97, 223–24 n. 78, 226, 233, 315
 Samaritan, 303 n. 2
 Schedia, 350–51 n. 51, 353
 Seleucids, 26, 36–37 n. 27, 62 n. 11, 63 n. 13, 207, 275, 286–87 n. 53, 287 n. 55, 296, 306, 309, 311, 311 nn. 45–46, 337, 354
 Semitic language, 279, 279 n. 19, 280 n. 21, 280 n. 22, 333 n. 54,
 Seneca, 8, 14, 14 n. 51, 16–17, 19, 20 n. 77, 21 n. 80
 Septuagint, 1–4, 43–44 n. 53, 207 n. 17
 versus Hebrew text, 29, 114–15 n. 107
 relationship with the Epistle of Aristeas, 39–40
 translation of, 38
 Sinaiticus, 334–35 n. 57, 335 n. 58
 slaves, 42, 65, 67, 67 n. 20, 68 n. 21, 69, 163, 225, 291, 309 n. 31, 351, 364–66
 Solomon, 26, 281 n. 29, 293, 303, 304–5 n. 6, 308, 308 n. 29, 309, 309 nn. 32–34, 311, 311 n. 45, 312–13 n. 48. *See also* Epistle of Solomon
 Sophocles, 58 n. 6, 224
 Souron, 26, 308, 308 n. 29, 309, 309 nn. 32–34, 311 n. 45, 312–13 n. 48, 313, 313 n. 49, 315
 Strabo, 37 n. 29, 84 n. 53, 91 n. 64, 96–97 nn. 73–74, 97 n. 76, 128 n. 123, 170–72 n. 195
 Syria and Phoenicia, 63, 63 n. 13, 68 n. 21, 69, , 229, 347, 364, 366,
 Syriac language, 33, 60 n. 8, 62 n. 11, 63, 207
 taxation, 98–99 n. 77, 337, 339, 339 n. 8, 366
 temple (Jerusalem), 81, 90 n. 59, 265–66, 278–79, 284–85, 337, 338, 344. *See also* Jerusalem, temple (Jewish) in
 Tertullian, 242–43, 242–43 n. 10
 Theophilus, 79, 309 n. 34
 Thucydides, 56 n. 2
 Tobit, 144 n. 149
 Trajan, 13

Tyre, 26, 308, 313

Vaphres, 26, 308, 308 n. 29, 309 n. 33, 309
n. 34, 311 n. 45, 312–13 n. 48, 313, 313
n. 49

Xenephyris, 354

