

riod until the Exodus is briefly treated; additions and omissions are so distinct from those of *Jubilees that it has been suggested that Pseudo-Philo was correcting and supplementing that book. Especially notable are the strangely sympathetic account of Balaam, Moses' apocalyptic testament, the revisions of Joshua 22:7ff. and Judges 17–21, the novel careers of the first judge (called Kenez, as in Josephus' *Antiquities*) and his successor Zebul, Phinehas' installation of Eli, his ascension (to return as Elijah), and additional prayers, speeches, and visions, etc. throughout.

The title *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is probably a late assimilation of "Philo's" historical work to Josephus' *Antiquities*. The author (Jewish, not Christian) does not adopt any pseudepigraphical mask. He is probably from Palestine, not the Diaspora, and is totally devoid of classical allusions. The manuscript's ascription to Philo of Alexandria is impossible.

Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum is usually dated shortly after 70 C.E., the strongest argument being Moses' prediction (19:7) that the First Temple would be destroyed on the 17th of the 4th month; it is plausible, though not inevitable, that this presupposes the cessation of the *Tamid* ("the daily offering") on that date in 70. Such a date would suit the linguistic parallels with 11 *Baruch and 1V *Esdras, but the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* is demonstrably the source from which the other two have borrowed. Pseudo-Philo's Hebrew biblical text, furthermore, suggests an earlier date for at least much of the material. A few Septuagintal, Proto-Lucianic, and Palestinian readings have been noted by earlier scholars, but their number is far greater. That the translator, influenced by some form of Greek Bible, substituted its text for that of Pseudo-Philo is impossible, as such readings occur in passing allusions as well as in long quotations. More probably, the author himself used a notably pre-Masoretic form of Hebrew text – how late could he have done this? Further indications of date are unusable until the chronological system is explained.

Pseudo-Philo appears to be supplementing *Chronicles* with a history principally about Israel's cultic and national leadership from the Exodus until David. His real purpose is unclear, especially since the end is missing. The work is usually taken as a haphazard aggadic collection, with some unspecified educational or pious purpose, and the fact that many additions have parallels elsewhere suggest that not all the *aggadah* was created *de novo*. Its importance lies in the fact that it is one of the oldest substantive midrashic works extant. A. Spiro expounds it as a systematic attempt to replace the canonical history of pre-Davidic times by a version apter for anti-Tobiad and anti-Samaritan polemic. The anti-Tobiadism may be imaginary; some anti-Samaritanism is certain (there are even intriguing parallels with later Samaritan chronicles), but whether this controls the whole composition is disputable and the reason for the omissions is not yet apparent.

The affinities in Pseudo-Philo's theology and vocabulary need study; "mystical Jewish Hellenism" and "Essene Gnosis"

are not too helpful characterizations. A coincidence (23:2) with *Jubilees*-Qumran on the date of the Feast of Weeks could be important for identifying its background and praxis; but other analogous indicators have not yet been noted.

The work survives in whole or in part only in some 20 late Latin manuscripts, but is older, having been translated (second to fourth century C.E.) via Greek from Hebrew. No clear traces of either Greek or Hebrew survive; the Hebrew form in *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* was retroverted from an important lost Latin manuscript. Strangely enough the work appears to have been unknown to the *Church Fathers. After early printings, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* was almost completely neglected until 1898. Among Jewish writers until this period it was known only to Azariah de *Rossi. The work of emendation, begun by M.R. James and L. Ginzberg (*The Biblical Antiquities of Philo*, 1970), can be systematically perfected and a critical text established. Much of the work (including chronological data and proper names presumably important for Pseudo-Philo's purposes) is as yet obscure, though it is not irremediably corrupt.

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[John Strugnell]

***PHILODEMUS** (c. 110–c. 40/35 B.C.E.), Epicurean philosopher from Gadara in Palestine. He founded a school at Herculaneum, Italy, and may have been a teacher of *Horace. He wrote Cynic diatribes. According to Hadas (see bibl.) his erotic poetry shows some parallels with the Song of Songs.

PHILO JUDAEUS (Philo of Alexandria; c. 20 B.C.E.–50 C.E.), Jewish exegete and philosopher of outstanding importance for Jewish Hellenism and early Christianity. Little is known about the details of his personal life. It is clear, however, that he belonged to an extremely wealthy and distinguished Alexandrian family with connections to the Herodian dynasty and the Roman court. His brother was the high official and banker Alexander, known through Josephus, and his nephew, Alexander's son, was *Tiberius Julius Alexander. In 40 C.E. Philo headed a delegation of the Jewish community of Alexandria to the Roman emperor Gaius Caligula, in order to alleviate the situation of the Jews after the outburst of violence in the city. Moreover, Philo once visited Jerusalem, offering a sacrifice in the Temple. Philo's works, which he wrote in Greek, show intimate familiarity with Hellenistic culture and education. His Jewish training seems to have derived from growing up in a traditional Jewish home, but apparently did not include knowledge of the Hebrew language.

Living at a crossroad of cultures in Alexandria, just before rabbinic Judaism emerged and Christianity became a vis-

ible phenomenon, Philo is highly significant for a variety of reasons. Initially, he made a clear statement on Jewish identity in the midst of a multicultural metropolis, indicating patterns of negotiating Judaism with general culture. Moreover, Philo's Bible exegesis was extremely rich and methodologically diverse, offering invaluable insights into the state of Jewish Bible interpretation before rabbinic exegesis became normative. His philosophy is intrinsically connected to his exegesis, having developed mostly in the context of interpreting Scripture. Philo engaged in the contemporary discussion, offering an original approach that became especially relevant for subsequent Christian thinkers. His eyewitness reports of the events under Tiberius and Caligula, as well as his descriptions of the *Essenes and the *Therapeutae, are precious and in many respects exclusive sources of information. The former two provide a particular Jewish perspective from the province of the Roman Empire, which complements Josephus Flavius' reports from the capital. Finally, Philo's statements on women are crucial for a proper understanding of the history of gender issues.

Writings

Most, but not all, of Philo's vast output has been preserved by the Christian Church in the original Greek. Some treatises have survived only in Armenian and Latin translations. Philo's works are usually divided into the following categories:

1. Philo's exegetical works, probably written for a Jewish audience.

These are again subdivided into three categories, which, however, should not be seen as absolute divisions, since each contains pieces of exegesis belonging to the other categories.

1) The Exposition of the Pentateuch, beginning with the creation story and leading through a treatment of the Patriarchs to a systematic discussion of the legal material. Philo explains that the Pentateuch, although a law code, opens with the story of creation, because this story shows that Mosaic Law is in harmony with the Law of Nature. Everyone living in accordance with the Torah thus becomes a "loyal citizen of the world."

2) The Allegorical Commentary on select biblical passages from the book of Genesis, consisting of 18 extant treatises. Disregarding the plot and context of the biblical stories, Philo progresses in a highly associative manner, transposing biblical verses into philosophical-mystical concepts.

3) *Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus* (preserved fragmentarily in an Armenian and Latin translation). Following the Hellenistic genre of Question and Answer Literature, which flourished in Alexandria, especially in connection with the interpretation of Homer, Philo closely follows the biblical text, raising difficulties on certain details and providing answers that confirm Scripture. These treatises are valuable also for their numerous references to other Jewish exegetes whose work has not survived in any other source.

II. General philosophical writings, probably addressed to a non-Jewish as well as a Jewish audience. In these treatises

Philo hardly ever refers to Scripture, instead discussing themes of topical concern, such as *The Eternity of the World* or *Providence*. In another work he focuses on the notion of *Every Good Man Being Free*. These treatises show intimate familiarity with Hellenistic genres of philosophical discourse, such as the dialectical style, which demands that divergent views be discussed before the writer presents his own ideas. These works moreover indicate Philo's desire to participate in the general discussion, reaching out to contemporary intellectuals in Alexandria.

III. Eye-witness reports of contemporary events. Two extant treatises describe the turbulent years of unrest and violence in Alexandria (*Flaccus, On the Embassy to Gaius*). These are not historical treatises in the strict sense, because they did not aim at describing contemporary reality or discussing the reliability of the sources at hand, but rather at encouraging fellow Jews by a theologically appealing narrative. Philo also described a group of Jewish philosophers, both women and men, who had settled near Alexandria (*On the Contemplative Life*). Highly sympathetic to their life-style, he provides the only extant information about this group (*Therapeutae).

Jewish Identity

It has often been assumed that Hellenistic Jews were confronted with an existential dilemma of having to choose between two diametrically opposite cultures: Jewish monotheism, commitment to a specific people, legal code, and revealed Scriptures, on the one hand, and Greek rationalism, sense of beauty, and universal individualism, on the other. This image has increasingly been challenged. It has become clear that ancient Jews living in Alexandria may not have felt such a dichotomy. Instead, they seem to have been proud of both their heritage and their participation in the general culture. They creatively modernized their Scripture and tradition, choosing from the diversity of the Hellenistic environment whatever seemed suitable.

Philo expressed his pride in the Mosaic tradition by claiming that it is the best constitution. The particular laws of Judaism, such as Sabbath observance and kosher food regulations, reflect in his view Natural Law (Opif. 1–5). Anyone seeking to live a rational life in accordance with Nature will come to accept the Torah. The Jews are thus placed at the top of a hierarchy of cultures. Next rank the Greeks whose culture and philosophy Philo deeply appreciated. His numerous references to the sports and theater suggest that he regularly participated in these activities. He was moreover familiar with Homeric, Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, and Pythagorean writings. These, however, were not seen as alternatives, challenging his own tradition, but rather as expressions of ideas akin to the highest truth which Moses had recognized. Of the Stoics Philo explicitly said that they copied certain ideas from the Torah (Lib. 57). Plato's *Timaeus* was quoted in his interpretation of *Genesis* as if it naturally belonged to the Jewish hermeneutic endeavor (Opif. 21).

At the bottom of humanity, in Philo's view, are the Egyptians. Reflecting contemporary Roman prejudice, he never tired of stressing their unreliability, the beastly nature of their religious life, their materialism, and their inherent tendency to political unrest (Dec. 79–80, Fuga 19, Mos. 2:194–95). The Egyptians became Philo's ultimate Other against whom he outlined the contours of Jewish identity. The Romans also played a special role. Unlike the Egyptians, however, they appear as benefactors, who brought civilization and proper government to the world. Philo praised especially Augustus, even to the extent of describing and celebrating the temple in his honor in the harbor of Alexandria (Legat. 143–51). Philo felt that the Jews are akin to the rulers of the world, sharing their values as well as their wide physical distribution throughout all civilized countries.

Philo defined Jewish existence in the Diaspora by reference to the model of the *metropolis*. For Jews, he writes, “the holy city where stands the sacred Temple of the most High God” is the mother-city whence they have gone to settle in numerous other places, which have become their “fatherland” (Flac. 46). Jews living outside the homeland thus have a two-fold commitment, namely to their place of living as well as to Jerusalem. This, however, does not imply a “Zionist” orientation, because Philo considered Diaspora Jews to be intellectually more at leisure and, therefore, better equipped to engage in the elevation of the mind commanded by Moses. He neither recommended living in Erez Israel nor did he look to Jerusalem for spiritual guidance. Other exegetes mentioned by him, as far as can be established, are fellow Alexandrians rather than teachers from Erez Israel. The Temple played a central symbolical role, uniting the Jews all over the world, but was also of concrete theological importance, as Philo did his best to prevent its desecration by Caligula's statue.

Philo was observant and encouraged his fellow Jews to be so as well. His treatises on the Decalogue and the Special Laws discuss the *mitzvot* under 10 headings, providing spiritual justifications for each one of them. Unlike medieval Jewish philosophers, such as *Saadia Gaon and *Maimonides, Philo did not yet distinguish between rational and revealed commandments, but stressed self-restraint (*enkrateia*) as the value underlying all of Mosaic legislation. Philo also confronted a group of radical allegorizers among the Jews of Alexandria, who argued that the law no longer needs to be implemented once its spiritual meaning is recognized (Migr. 89–93). Philo responded to this approach by stressing the need of community life based on the *halakhah*. The latter, however, was locally colored and not necessarily identical to the *halakhah* in Erez Israel. In Leg. 2:232, for example, Philo, in accordance with Roman law in Hellenistic Egypt, assumes that the death penalty for the stubborn and wicked son is to be decided by both parents rather than a law court.

Philo's construction of Jewish identity was only one of the many voices of Alexandrian Judaism. While the works of most other Jews have not survived and can only fragmentarily be reconstructed, Philo's writings are largely extant thanks to

his popularity among the Christians. His statement on Jewish identity, however, was unheard for many centuries. It was during the Enlightenment and the period of *Wissenschaft des Judentums that his position became relevant again. Isaac M. *Jost, Heinrich *Graetz, and others identified him as a paradigmatic “modern” Jew who successfully combined Jewish tradition and general culture, thus foreshadowing the Golden Age of Spanish Judaism in the Middle Ages. In the eyes of some he also appeared as a welcome alternative to rabbinic Judaism, providing an early example of the dichotomy that many German Jews felt between their own “enlightened” religion and the “primitive” traditionalism of Polish Jews. The philosopher Moses *Mendelssohn could thus appear as a “German Philo.”

Exegesis

Philo's exegesis must be appreciated against the background of the ongoing hermeneutic efforts among Egyptian Jews. In the third and early second century B.C.E., the main types of Philonic exegesis are already visible in the sources: *Aristobulus is the first known interpreter who suggested an allegorical approach to Scripture which, he hoped, would solve the problem of the biblical anthropomorphisms; *Demetrius for the first time recorded difficulties in the biblical text for which he provided learned answers; *Artapanus wrote free paraphrases of biblical stories, adapting them to the ideals of his own time and environment. Philo also mentions numerous other interpreters without, however, identifying them more specifically. They seem to be contemporaries living in Alexandria and can be divided into two main groups: allegorical readers whose work Philo generally appreciates, and literal readers some of whom provoked Philo's anger, apparently because they adopted text-critical methods from Homeric scholarship. Philo thus assumes a relatively conservative position, insisting on the integrity of the biblical text and the absolute value of its contents. He is in fact the first Jew known to have formulated ideas of canonicity, suggesting that the Torah in its Greek translation (*Septuagint) was a perfect emanation of the Divine Logos.

Most famous and influential are Philo's interpretations of the story of creation and the Patriarchs. In both areas he enriched Scripture with motifs from Greek literature. Philo rewrote the story of creation by inserting a distinctly Platonic perspective. Relying on Plato's *Timaeus*, he argued that such a beautiful world could only have been created as a copy of an ideal model. Distinguishing between an active cause and the passive material, which is shaped into ever new forms, Philo describes the activity of God as initially creating the ideal cosmos in His own mind and then modeling the material cosmos in its image (Opif. 1–25). The question of *creatio ex nihilo* is not yet on the horizon, and Philo naturally seems to assume pre-existing matter on the basis of Gen. 1:2. Furthermore, raising the same question as the rabbis in Genesis Rabbah (chap. 8), Philo contemplates the expression “let us make man” (Gen. 1:26). He solves the problem of the plural expression “us” by

suggesting that God left the creation of man with his obvious imperfections to assistants, so as not to be responsible for the origin of evil (Opif. 72–76).

The stories of the patriarchs and Moses are retold with a view to producing biographies of ideal heroes. While the biographies of Jacob and Isaac are lost, the extant examples show a definite pattern. Philo distinguishes a main feature in each character and arranges the biblical material accordingly. Joseph, for example, is treated as the perfect statesman, whereas Moses is identified as the paradigmatic legislator and prophet of the Jews. This style of biography according to types of careers anticipates Plutarch's famous series of Greek and Roman biographies a generation later. In this framework particular attention is paid to the childhood of each hero, taken to indicate the talents that will later become publicly visible. Moses is thus said to have avoided any childish play or Egyptian dainties while growing up at Pharaoh's court. Fitting his future role, he was from the beginning drawn to serious learning, recollecting in his soul rather than acquiring outside knowledge from his teachers (Mos. 1:18–24). Abraham became the prototype of the person elevating himself above the material realm, recognizing God and even experiencing His gracious presence in what must be identified as a mystical experience (Abr. 68–80).

Worthy of particular attention are also Philo's allegorical interpretations. Sarah and Hagar, for example, are interpreted respectively as sovereign philosophy and servile school studies (Congr. 1–126). Anticipating some of Moses *Mendelssohn's thoughts in the *Biur*, Philo moreover interpreted the tree of knowledge as the virtues planted by God in man's soul (All. 1:56–62). The snake in the Garden allegorically represents lust (All. 2:59). Joseph's colorful coat is allegorized as a symbol of the politician's diversity and ultimate lack of principles (Somn. 1:210–20, 2:10–14). Sarah's pregnancy prompted by God symbolizes for Philo the soul's impregnation by the Divine spirit (Abr. 99–102). These examples show that Philo's allegorical exegesis usually translates biblical motifs into narratives about the human soul, which are meant to complement their literal sense. In this area Philo often refers to other interpreters, sometimes calling them "natural philosophers" (Abr. 99). He is thus in good company, providing his own particular perspective in a well-established field of Jewish Bible exegesis in Alexandria.

Philosophy

Living in the capital of Hellenistic scholarship, Philo was familiar with the philosophical discussion of the day. He was immensely well read, reaching even such minor treatises as Ocellus' still extant *On the Nature of the Universe* (Aet. 12). While he has often been described as an eclectic writer, who gathered more or less randomly ideas floating around, he actually has a special philosophical profile. His most outstanding characteristic is his enthusiastic appreciation of Plato as distinct from Aristotle. This position must be recognized as an unusual and novel preference in an environment overwhelm-

ingly dominated by a deep syncretism with a strong Aristotelian orientation. It was this preference for Plato that rendered Philo particularly popular among Christians. The Church historian *Eusebius relied on Philo when interpreting Christianity as a religion akin to Platonism, but diametrically opposed to Aristotle. These Platonic tendencies later also suggested to Azariah de *Rossi that Philo may be a proto-type of Medieval Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah).

Philo was familiar with the ongoing discussion of the classical philosophical works and hoped to make a lasting contribution to it. He took a particularly pronounced position on the hotly debated issue of the nature of the cosmos. Rejecting the Aristotelian notion of an eternal world and the Stoic assumption of ever recurring destructions and re-creations of the cosmos as well as Epicurean atomism, Philo emphatically called for a return to Plato's *Timaeus* (Aet. 7–16). He complained, however, that even among Plato's students this treatise was commonly read metaphorically, and thus taken as supporting Aristotle's notion of an eternal cosmos (Aet. 7–16). Philo dismissed such readings as "falsifying" Plato's original intention, which he hoped to recover. He stressed that, according to Plato, the world had really been created as an image of an ideal model, and under the "providence" of the creator god, who was therefore called "Father and Maker." This view of things, Philo insisted, closely corresponded to the Mosaic version, which, however, had been written down much earlier. Fending off Aristotelian influence was also a major concern when Philo interpreted the biblical creation account for a Jewish audience. Obviously fearing that Aristotle had already left a deep impression on the Jewish community of Alexandria, he urged his readers not to abandon the idea of a real creation. He urged that the assumption of an eternal cosmos eliminates the notion of Divine providence and thus renders true piety impossible (Opif. 9–11).

Philo's Platonic tendency is moreover visible in his distinction of a spiritual realm which is opposed to the world of the senses and material entities. Truth can only be attained on the upper, intelligible level, while the concrete world of common experience is governed by "opinion" or "probability." Given the imperfection of the material realm, Philo maintains an extreme transcendentalism regarding God whom he describes as "...transcending virtue, transcending knowledge, transcending the good itself and the beautiful itself" (Opif. 8) and as "...better than the good, more venerable than the monad, purer than the unit..." (Praem. 40). Whereas Philo sometimes speaks of God's goodness and other attributes (All. 1:5), he generally insists that God is "without quality," has no name, and is unknowable (ibid 36). This last tenet is not meant in an agnostic way. On the contrary, man has to strive to know God and God is the only object worth knowing. But whereas it is easy to know that God is, we cannot know what He is (Spec. 1:32).

Man can hope to make progress in this area when looking at God's intermediary powers and involvement in the world. God's foremost intermediary is the *Logos, His ratio-

nal part as well as His speech. Philo adopted this term from Stoic philosophy, where it referred to the Divine power immanent in the world and was sometimes identified with Zeus. Philo used this term in a new way, referring to that aspect of God which is active in the creation of the world and remains involved in earthly matters. At times the Logos is identified with the place in the mind of God where the ideal cosmos is created (Opif. 24), while on another occasion it is identified with the high priest (Somn. 2:185ff.). Similarly, the doctrine of God's two "powers," mercy and justice, is built up into a system of intermediaries. Abraham's three guests, mentioned in Gen. 18:2, are thus identified as God and His two powers (Q Gen. 4:2). Only at a close look does Abraham discover that they are one.

Man being created in the image of God, and thus with a divine spark, he can hope to encounter Him and, on occasion, even enter into a Corybantic trance which allows for a temporary union of the human mind with God. Following the example of Abraham, man has to leave for this purpose "his land, his kinfolk and his father's home," i.e., the body, the senses, and the whole material realm, as far as humanly possible (Migr. 1ff.). Unlike the moral struggle of the Stoic sage, which leads to "apathy" and freedom from the passions, Philo's student becomes jubilant and even surging into frenzy (Plant. 38). His soul becomes ecstatic, being filled with Divine spirit (Somn. 2:254) This experience is described in intensely erotic terms, which recall the terminology of contemporary mystery cults, namely as a union between God and the soul issuing forth Divine ideas in man's mind (Cher. 43–50).

Some Pythagorean features can be identified in Philo's philosophy. Foremost among these is his interest in numbers and their metaphysical significance. Philo, for example, makes a long excursion in his interpretation of the biblical creation account, devoting approximately 40 paragraphs to the meaning of the number 7 (Opif. 89–128). Adducing evidence from diverse realms, Philo thus hopes to show that the Mosaic account discloses the deeper structure of the cosmos, which can be expressed in numerical terms. Furthermore, Philo mentions some precious pieces of Pythagorean exegesis. Their original writings all having been lost, he is the earliest extant writer to mention Philolaus and the Pythagorean interpretations of Athena and Zeus as numbers (Opif. 99–100, Leg. 1:15). It has sometimes been suggested that Philo's ascetic tendencies may be Pythagorean in origin. Yet his position significantly differs from theirs: while they recommended asceticism as an end in itself, prescribing for their students long periods of abstinence from sex, food, and other instinctual needs, Philo never doubted the legitimacy of bodily needs. On the contrary, he recognized sexuality as a necessary requirement of marriage as well as reproduction, and therefore did not worry about an excess of lust within that framework (Spec. 3:32–63).

Eye-Witness Accounts of Contemporary Events

Philo witnessed important events of the Second Temple Period and, like virtually all upper-class intellectuals during the

Hellenistic period, he took an active part in politics. Philosophy and involvement in real life were by no means mutually exclusive, even though Philo once complained in an often quoted sentence that politics took him away from contemplation (Spec. 3:1). The titles of Philo's extant accounts, *The Embassy to Gaius* and *Flaccus*, suggest that they contain the proceedings of the embassy, which Philo himself headed, as well as a profile of the Roman governor. The truth, however, is that both treatises are focused elsewhere. In the *Embassy* Philo is overwhelmingly concerned to explain the benefits of Roman rule, while in *Flaccus* he shows Divine retribution effecting initially the punishment of Flaccus and then his religious conversion. Both reports are often seen as apologetic texts addressing a Roman audience, perhaps even the emperor himself. But it is rather obvious that they were not intended for foreign readers, but for Jews back home. Philo was confronted with increasing criticism from Alexandrian Jews, who even sent a second embassy in order to present a more militant view in Rome. Others altogether despaired of Roman rule and took to armed street fights. Philo made efforts to counter these trends, explaining how benevolent Rome was for the whole civilized realm. God, moreover, providentially protected the Jews and liberated them from such aberrations as Gaius and Flaccus.

Philo's reports are often compared to those of the historian Flavius *Josephus. Scholars argue which one is the more authentic and original, some opting for Josephus' copying from Philo, while others suggest that Josephus' account, even though written later, is closer to the truth. One example may suffice to illustrate the difficulty. Philo tells us that Gaius was so adamant about his plan to set up his statue in the Jerusalem Temple that Agrippa's intervention only produced a feigned reversal, while in reality Gaius continued to make preparations until God caused his assassination (Legat. 333–37). Josephus, on the contrary, reports that Agrippa's intervention was truly successful (AJ 18:289–304). Philo's version may well have originated from his overall desire to stress Divine providence, reassuring his readers that patience was called for. In any case, Philo's account perfectly fits his overall story of a beneficial Roman government that was temporarily deranged by an emperor who had given in to Egyptian lures.

Gender Issues

Philo has sometimes been identified as the "father of Western misogyny," because he embedded Classical Greek prejudices in authoritative Scripture and thus transmitted them to the Church Fathers as well as the rest of European culture. Such judgment can rely on Philo's acceptance of Aristotelian biology. He assumed that the role of the female in procreation is merely passive, providing a material and nourishing environment for the active sperm donated by the male (Ebr. 73, 211). Philo applied this concept to the spiritual realm, suggesting that virtue and *enkrateia* belong to the masculine and thus active realm (Abr. 100–1). God is conceived of as masculine, while the soul of the male student is "impregnated by His

sperm" (Cher. 43–45). Philo's view of Eve was anything but egalitarian: he considered her to be the addition of sense-perception and lust to a mind that had hitherto enjoyed the bliss of pure spirituality and masculinity (Opif. 151). Philo moreover had little sympathy for contemporary Jewish women, whom he was happy to confine to the culturally and inferior *gynaikon* (Flac. 89). His position in this respect is especially remarkable, since the Classical ideal of a wife never leaving her quarters had in Hellenistic Egypt been replaced by a far more open atmosphere, where women could assume public roles, such as queen, priestess, and even head of a philosophical school.

On the other hand, however, one must appreciate that, within an obviously patriarchal framework, Philo showed a relatively great interest in biblical women. Sarah, for example, was treated by him with remarkable empathy and respect. He praised her for her stoic endurance of hardships (Abr. 245–46) and suggested that she immediately grasped the Divine nature of the visiting "messengers" whom Abraham still took as regular guests (Abr. 111). Josephus, by contrast, consistently minimized all references to Sarah (as well as other biblical women), taking her, for example, altogether out of the scene with the messengers by stressing the presence of other servants who prepared the cakes for the guests (JA1:197). Moreover, we owe to Philo the earliest extant testimony to Jewish women philosophers, who were part of the Therapeutae. These women were not only versed in reading and writing, but also participated in the regular spiritual and exegetical activities of the group. Philo, on the whole, was highly sympathetic to this group. Nothing in his description suggests ambivalence concerning the women's activities.

Influence

Apart from Josephus, no ancient Jewish source mentions Philo, although there may be traces of Philonic influence in rabbinic Midrash, such as R. Oshaiah Rabbah's saying in *Genesis Rabbah* 1:1 echoing Philo, Opif. 16. The medieval Midrash Tadshe (in: A. Jellinek, *Beit ha-Midrash*, 3 (1967), 164–93) draws largely on Philonic material, while the first Jewish writer who mentions him is Azariah dei Rossi. Philo had a much greater influence on Christianity, not on the New Testament itself but on the Church Fathers, such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Ambrose, and many others. They eagerly drew on his exegesis and adopted many of his concepts. However, owing to their different approach, many of his distinctly Jewish notions were translated into Christian terms. H. Wolfson estimated Philo's influence to be very significant, arguing that his reconciliation of philosophy and revelation resurfaced in all monotheistic religions, whether it was with or without direct knowledge of his texts. This thesis, however, can hardly be proven, since Philo is not directly mentioned and the "Philonic" structure of thought which Wolfson identifies may well have developed out of a parallel synthesis of the Bible and Greek philosophy.

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[Yehoyada Amir and Maren Niehoff (2nd ed.)]

°**PHILO OF BYBLOS** (also called **Herennius Philo**, 64–161 C.E.), Greek author of a Phoenician history. Philo claimed that his history was a translation from the Phoenician of Sanchuniathon, whose sources go back to before the Trojan War. Many quotations from his history concerning religion are found in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* (1:9, 22–10; 8). He is also said to have written, among other works, a history of the Jews in which he criticized Hecataeus of Abdera. Only fragments of his work survive.

PHILOSOPHY. In his article on the Jewish involvement in philosophy in the *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, written over a century ago, Solomon Munk pointed out that the Jewish mission to know God and to make Him known to the world was not basically involved with philosophy. After surveying the part played by Jews in philosophy, he concluded that "the Jews, as a nation, or as a religious society, play only a secondary role in the history of philosophy." As a nation or as a religious society this may be true, but even when Munk wrote it was not the case that Jewish participation in philosophy had been insignificant. Since his day the participation of Jews in philosophical activities has become extremely important.

It used to be said that the peculiarly Jewish role in philosophy had been that of middleman, transmitting the ideas of one culture to another, as some Jewish scholars had done in Spain, translating Arabic thought into forms available to Christian Europe. This, of course, was only part of the Jewish involvement in philosophy in the Middle Ages. Since the Renaissance many thinkers of Jewish origin have made central contributions to philosophy, and have played seminal roles in the development of modern Western thought. Some have played roles as Jews; others, who are of Jewish descent,