

# Essays on the Psalms of Solomon

Edited by  
KENNETH ATKINSON,  
PATRICK POUCHELLE,  
and FELIX ALBRECHT

*Parabiblica*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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# Essays on the Psalms of Solomon

Its Cultural Background, Significance,  
and Interpretation

Edited by

Kenneth Atkinson, Patrick Pouchelle,  
and Felix Albrecht

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## Preface

Most of the essays gathered in this volume were read in the third international Meeting on the Psalms of Solomon, co-organised by the Centre Sèvres and the TDMAM (Centre Paul-Albert Février), and held in the “Maison Méditerranéenne des sciences de l’homme” in Aix-en-Provence (July 2018). After the important contributions made at the first meeting,<sup>1</sup> and the question of intertextuality raised in the second meeting,<sup>2</sup> this volume is more focused on the questions of the production and the reception of this text. The volume is divided into four parts.

The first part focuses on the Second Temple Period Jewish context of the collection. Albrecht examines the Psalms of Solomon in the context of “Palestinian Judaism”, particularly focusing on the importance of Moses and Solomon. Pajunen explores the relationship between the Psalms of Solomon and other late psalmic writings. He notices the similarities and differences between these texts, most notably with the Hodayat. He considers that the extra canonical Ps 154, the Apostrophe to Zion, and the Messianic Apocalypse were very close to our corpus. Finally, Babota explores the motif of the Temple in the Psalms of Solomon. The place of the Temple is ambivalent, but it seems to be important for some psalms while in others it is completely absent, with sacrifices probably replaced by benevolent actions. Babota puts this issue in the Herodian context where this king may have considered himself as a new Solomon building a new temple for his God.

The second part explores some major themes of the Psalms of Solomon in greater depth. Rath studies the neglected themes of the Diaspora and the Exile in the collection. Although the psalms are considered as written in a Palestinian context, the place of the *galût* seems important. Johnson manages to bring something new in the widely studied theme of messianism. Bringing together Judith and Psalms of Solomon he overcomes the classic debate between a militant or a non-militant messiah. Zurawski explores the well-known topic of *paideia* in the Psalms of Solomon. By a judicious comparison with Wisdom of Solomon, he clarifies the differences between the two texts. For instance, in the Psalms of Solomon, the *paideia* is reactive (due to the sins of the righteous) and dedicated to the righteous, whereas in Wisdom, the *paideia* is proactive (to avoid the sin of the righteous) and open to all mankind.

In the third part, the relationship of the Psalms of Solomon with the New Testament is studied. Continuing his research on the relationship between Paul and the Psalms of Solomon,<sup>3</sup> Ábel analyses the eschatological opening to the Gentiles in Paul and in Psalms of Solomon and concludes the need for analyzing in greater depth the Jewish context

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<sup>1</sup> *The Psalms of Solomon: Language, History, Theology*. Edited by Eberhard Bons and Patrick Pouchelle, EJL 40 (Atlanta: SBL, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> *The Psalms of Solomon: Texts, Contexts, Intertexts*. Edited by Patrick Pouchelle, G. Anthony Keddie, and Kenneth Atkinson, EJL 54 (Atlanta: SBL, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> František Ábel, *The Psalms of Solomon and the Messianic Ethics of Paul*, WUNT II/416 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016).

of Paul. In a short contribution, Rastoin compares the question of the horse metaphor in Acts 26:14 and Psalm of Solomon 16:4. He does not find any direct influence of the Psalms of Solomon on Acts. However, as the comparison of human (and divine) discipline with mating a horse is well known in Greek culture, he advocates for doing more research on the question of Hellenistic influences on both the Psalms of Solomon and Acts.

In the fourth and final part, the question of the history of the text is addressed. Pouchelle presents the first quotation of the Psalms of Solomon ever found: Gennadios Scholarios II, the first patriarch after the siege of Constantinople in 1453, mixed Psalms of Solomon 2 and 8 to explain why the city has fallen developing a typology of the fall of Jerusalem. The patriarch considers clearly that these psalms belong to the Scriptures. Although this discovery has little to add to the new critical edition of the Psalms of Solomon,<sup>4</sup> it has much to say about the question of the reception of the text. This last question is addressed differently by Dorival and Atkinson. Dorival raises the question of the canonicity of the Psalms of Solomon. By examining the question in the Greek, Syriac and other linguistic sphere contexts, he concludes that even if the canonicity of the Psalms of Solomon is unproven it could not be considered as nonexistent. Finally, in a complimentary way, Atkinson also offers a wide synthesis of the history of the text of the Psalms of Solomon. He concludes that they were widely used in ancient Greek and Syriac churches but gradually disappeared.

Our particular thanks go to Christophe Boudignon, who co-organised the conference in Aix-en-Provence. Thanks are also due to SCHRIFT-BILDER gGmbH (Berlin) for supporting the printing, and finally to the publishing house Mohr Siebeck – especially Elena Müller, Markus Kirchner, and Rebekka Zech – for their professional assistance.

*Kenneth Atkinson, Patrick Pouchelle,  
and Felix Albrecht*

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<sup>4</sup> Felix Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum XII/3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), cf. also idem, *Die Psalmen Salomos. Griechischer Text nebst deutscher Übersetzung und Gesamtregister* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020).

## Table of Contents

Preface.....	V
<i>Felix Albrecht</i>	
The Psalms of Solomon as a Witness of Palestinian Judaism .....	1
<i>Mika S. Pajunen</i>	
The Psalms of Solomon in the Context of Late Second Temple Period Psalms .....	11
<i>Vasile Babota</i>	
The Temple in the Psalms of Solomon .....	29
<i>Julia Rath</i>	
Exile and Diaspora in the Psalms of Solomon .....	49
<i>Nathan C. Johnson</i>	
Is the Messiah in Psalm of Solomon 17 Militant or Not? The Debate and a Proposed Rapprochement .....	69
<i>Jason M. Zurawski</i>	
Solomonic Paideia: Divine Pedagogy in the Psalms of Solomon and the Book of Wisdom.....	85
<i>František Ábel</i>	
The Question of the Eschatological Participation of the Gentiles in the Psalms of Solomon 17 and Romans 11.....	101
<i>Marc Rastoin</i>	
PsSal 16,4 et Ac 26,14 ou l'aiguillon de l'héllénisme .....	125
<i>Patrick Pouchelle</i>	
The First Greek Quotation of the Psalms of Solomon Ever Found and Its Importance for the History of the Reception of This Text .....	131
<i>Gilles Dorival</i>	
L'appartenance des Psaumes de Salomon au canon biblique .....	147
<i>Kenneth Atkinson</i>	
The Transmission History and Reception of the Psalms of Solomon .....	159
List of Contributors.....	177
Index of Ancient Sources .....	179
Index of Words .....	189
Index of Authors .....	191
Index of Subjects.....	193





# The *Psalms of Solomon* as a Witness of Palestinian Judaism\*

Felix Albrecht

The *Psalms of Solomon* (Pss. Sol.) is a collection of 18 Psalms under the name of King Solomon, largely from the first century BCE, which was completed towards the middle of the first century CE. In my estimation, two sub-collections (I. Pss. Sol. 2–8; II. Pss. Sol. 9–16) deriving from Hasmonean times (165–63 BCE) can be discerned from the text. In their core, these are related to the circle of the ‘pious’ (*hasidim*).<sup>1</sup> A continuation of the first sub-collection (Pss. Sol. 2–8) was provoked by the Roman conquest of Judea by Pompey in 63 BCE, as is reflected in Pss. Sol. 2 and 8. From this time onward, the *Psalms of Solomon* may already have been transmitted through Pharisaic circles. The compilation of both sub-collections and the consolidation of the *Psalms of Solomon* into a single collection would not have taken place until Herodian times. In my view, this can be seen from the final psalms, which were likely added over time during the Herodian era. These final psalms express a clear anti-Herodian sentiment, directed against Herod the Great. This may have been stimulated by Herod the Great’s claim to act as a Solomonic ruler. It is therefore likely that criticism of Herod the Great would have arisen in Pharisaic circles. The picture of a Davidic Messiah drawn in the final psalms 17–18 – namely, the second part of Ps. Sol. 17 (vv. 30–46) and the first part of Ps. Sol. 18 (vv. 1–9) – is, in my evaluation, the last layer of revision in the whole collection. My basic claim is that the final messianic revision of the concluding Psalms (Pss. Sol. 17–18) probably took place under the reign of Agrippa I (41–44 CE).<sup>2</sup> On the basis of these insights, it has been possible to reconstruct the oldest attainable text form of the *Psalms of Solomon*, going back to 50 CE, which is the probable date of its archetype.

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\* The present article is based on the second part of my German “Disputationsvortrag” (28 June 2017, Göttingen). Parts of it were presented in a slightly revised English version at the 2018 meeting of the Helsinki Centre of Excellence, “Changes in Sacred Texts and Traditions (CSTT)” (Academy of Finland / University of Helsinki) in Helsinki (7 December 2018), as well as in a similar version at the 2019 meeting of the SBL in San Diego, California (26 November 2019).

<sup>1</sup> On the *hasidim*, see also Mika Pajunen in the present volume, esp. 19–21.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Felix Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, Septuaginta. Vetus Testamentum Graecum auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum XII/3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018), 212–34 (‘Die Endredaktion in Herodianischer Zeit’). This argument accords with Bousset’s observations, especially regarding his discussion of messianism at the time of Caligula (37–41 CE); cf. Wilhelm Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter. In dritter verbesserter Aufl. hg. v. Hugo Gressmann. 4., photomech. gedruckte Auflage mit einem Vorwort von Eduard Lohse*, HNT 21 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1966), 204–06, esp. 205.

## 1. The Psalms of Solomon and Their Place in Hellenistic Judaism

The *Psalms of Solomon* are regarded as an artefact of Palestinian Judaism from around the turn of the era. Their theological and historical significance as a document of Palestinian Judaism seem to me to be worth exploring further. The outdated, but still influential distinctions Johann Maier made between ‘Palestinian’ and ‘Hellenistic’ Judaism are problematic as Martin Hengel has demonstrated.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, Hellenistic Judaism should by no means be equated with Alexandrian Judaism, although the latter seems to be, or at least seemed at some point to be, the dominant one.<sup>4</sup> Rather, ‘Palestinian’ and ‘Alexandrian’ Judaism should be considered as two relevant parameters. The decision, however, about which literary references can be ascribed to the one or the other is by no means unproblematic as Jan Dochhorn has emphasized.<sup>5</sup>

If one considers the two main streams of Hellenistic Judaism – Palestinian and Alexandrian – it seems that certain leading figures, namely Moses and Solomon, can be assigned *cum grano salis* to the different streams of Hellenistic Judaism, although these assignments should hardly be taken as definite and normative, as the ‘Wisdom of Solomon’ shows.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.1 Moses as a Leading Figure in Alexandrian Judaism

Moses becomes a leading figure in Alexandrian Judaism, as is evident in the writings of Hellenistic Judaism of Alexandrian provenance. For example, the founding legend of the Septuagint, described in the letter of Aristeas, deals with the translation of the Torah into Greek. Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 BCE–50 CE)<sup>7</sup> was an influential exegete of the Torah, whose marginal statement on Solomon can be found at the end of his work ‘On Mating with the Preliminary Studies’; there, Philo introduces a quotation from the Book of Proverbs, describing the author as ‘one of the disciples of Moses’ (τις τῶν φοιτητῶν Μωυσέως), by the name of Solomon.<sup>8</sup> The noticeable distance in linguistic expression,

<sup>3</sup> Johann Maier, *Zwischen den Testamenten. Geschichte und Religion in der Zeit des zweiten Tempels*, NEB.ATE 3 (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1990), 290–91. Cf. Martin Hengel, *Judentum und Hellenismus*, WUNT 10 (Tübingen 31988); Maier, *Zwischen den Testamenten*, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Maier, *Zwischen den Testamenten*, 291.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Jan Dochhorn, “Jüdisch-alexandrinische Literatur? Eine Problemanzeige und ein Überblick über diejenige Literatur, die potentiell dem antiken Judentum entstammt,” in *Alexandria*, ed. Tobias Georges, Felix Albrecht, and Reinhard Feldmeier, *Civitatium Orbis Mediterranei Studia 1* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 285–312 and Maier, *Zwischen den Testamenten*, 82–83.

<sup>6</sup> The *Sapientia Salomonis* is a prominent example of the mediation of both streams of Judaism, which seems on the one hand, in its appreciation of the Solomon figure, to attribute the developments of Palestinian Judaism to Solomon and, on the other hand, reveals its origin in Alexandrian Judaism with its broad reception of the Exodus tradition. On the relationship between *Sapientia Salomonis* and *Psalmi Salomonis*, cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 210–11.

<sup>7</sup> For Philo’s disputed biographical data, cf. Otto Kaiser, *Philo von Alexandrien. Denkender Glaube – Eine Einführung*, FRLANT 259 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 25 with n. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Philo, *De congressu eruditionis gratia* 177: ἐνθένδε μοι δοκεῖ τις τῶν φοιτητῶν Μωυσέως, ὄνομα εἰρηνικός, ὃς πατρίῳ γλώττῃ Σαλομών καλεῖται, φάναι· [...]. On Philo’s etymological analysis of ‘Solomon’, cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 220 n. 2.

which gives the impression of a teacher–student relationship<sup>9</sup>, and the lack of information about their connection with one another is hardly surprising, given that Moses and the Pentateuch are at the centre of Philo’s work. The fragmentary collection of available artefacts of Alexandrian Judaism also testifies to a rich occupation with and treatment of the Exodus tradition, as is reflected in *Artapanos of Alexandria’s* depiction of Moses (third–second centuries BCE)<sup>10</sup> and in the drama of *Ezechiel Tragicus* (second century BCE).<sup>11</sup> Although the Exodus tradition itself has sometimes been interpreted politically (Jan Assmann)<sup>12</sup>, Alexandrian Judaism hardly exhibited political ambitions, at least before the turn of the era. It was not until the first century CE that a number of conflicts that were mainly socially motivated arose in Alexandria, escalating in 38 CE and 66 CE and culminating in the Jewish uprising of 115–117 CE, whose history is substantially determined by the ‘Nachwehen des 1. Jüdischen Krieges’ (Anna Maria Schwemer).<sup>13</sup> The political impetus that led to the politicization of the conflict in Alexandria thus came from the Palestinian riots themselves.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The φοιτητής designates the pupil in strict contrast to the διδάσκαλος; cf. Passow, *Handwörterbuch* II/2:2324 s.v. φοιτητής. According to Bradley J. Embry, “The Name ‘Solomon’ as a Prophetic Hallmark in Jewish and Christian Texts.” *Henoch* 28 (2006): 47–62, here: 51: “[...] it seems that Philo understood Solomon as a type of prophet in the line of Moses.”

<sup>10</sup> On *Artapanos*, cf. e.g. Nikolaus Walter, *Fragmente jüdisch-hellenistischer Historiker*, JSHRZ I/2 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1980), 121–36; Holger M. Zellentin, “The End of Jewish Egypt. Artapanos and the Second Exodus,” in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L. Osterloh, TSAJ 123 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 27–73. For further literature see Albrecht, *Psalmen Salomos*, 14 n. 33. I would like to point out one important aspect that Zellentin has observed in *Artapanos’* view of Moses – namely, the absence of a mention of the or a Jewish temple, which accords with my thesis that the idea of the temple was not an explicit focus of Alexandrian Judaism: “Artapanos contrasts the Mosaic building activities with Egyptian temple building: the Jews found cities, not temples” (Zellentin, “End,” 71).

<sup>11</sup> On *Ezechiel Tragicus*, cf. e.g. Bruno Snell, *Szenen aus griechischen Dramen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1971), 170–93; Bernard Zimmermann and Antonios Rengakos, ed., *Die Literatur der klassischen und hellenistischen Zeit*. Volume 2 of *Handbuch der griechischen Literatur der Antike*, HAW VII/2 (München: C.H. Beck, 2014), 920–23. For further literature see Albrecht, *Psalmen Salomos*, 14 n. 34; and for a general overview of the Moses tradition in the Hellenistic age see Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian. The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 30–39.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Jan Assmann, *Exodus. Die Revolution der Alten Welt* (München: C.H. Beck, 2015, 398), who discerns a political dimension in the Exodus tradition: “In der politischen Dimension begründet der Exodus-Mythos einen Begriff des Volks als religiöser Idee und steht auch darin im Gegensatz zu Ägypten, das den Staat als religiöse Idee begründet hat.” However, can this really be called a ‘political dimension’? The Jewish idea of a ‘people’ instead of a ‘state’ is, in my opinion, clearly a-political. According to Assmann, on the contrary, the idea of the covenant would imply an anti-authoritarian and state-critical element: “Ebenso [...] liegt in der theokratischen Idee des Gottesbundes ein anti-ägyptisches, staats- und herrschaftskritisches Element [...]” (Assmann, *Exodus*, 398–99).

<sup>13</sup> Anna Maria Schwemer, “Zum Abbruch des jüdischen Lebens in Alexandria. Der Aufstand in der Diaspora unter Trajan (115–117),” in *Alexandria*, ed. Tobias Georges, Felix Albrecht, and Reinhard Feldmeier, *Civitatium Orbis Mediterranei Studia* 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 383.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Schwemer, *Abbruch*, 382.

## 1.2 Solomon as a Paragon of Palestinian Judaism

*Solomon*, on the other hand, appears to be a paragon of the politically and nationally minded Palestinian Judaism, which had a strong connection to the Jerusalem Temple, and based its hopes for a Jewish monarchy on the Davidic antetype.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the Exodus is not at the centre of theological consideration, but the monarchy; not Moses, but Solomon; not the Torah, but the Temple.

For Hellenistic Judaism in Palestine, Jerusalem and the Temple had central, symbolic meanings.<sup>16</sup> Such a meaning was directly associated with the name of Solomon. The legendary builder of the Temple in Jerusalem<sup>17</sup> was a leading figure for Palestinian Judaism, which was engaged in a struggle to defend its sanctuary and to maintain national importance. This can be seen, for example, in Eupolemos and Josephus, both of whom give the Temple in Jerusalem a significant place in literary representation: the historian Eupolemos wrote in the service of the Maccabees, who sought the restitution of the Jewish monarchy and who focused on Jerusalem and the temple in their nationalistic and centralistic aspirations. Similarly, in the work of the historian Josephus, the construction of the temple (*Antiquitates Judaicae* VIII.50–129) and the Jewish War of the years 67–70 CE both held great significance, especially as the latter culminated in the struggle for Jerusalem and, ultimately, in the destruction of the temple (*De bello Iudaico* V–VI). The emphasis of Josephus on the city of Jerusalem and on its temple is also apparent from the fact that he intended to write a separate work about it (cf. *De bello Iudaico* V.237). I believe that this special significance in the work of Josephus is apparent from the outline of the two main works, both of which have Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple at their centre. All in all, Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* are, from a literary point of view, composed skilfully in two narrative arcs: the first narrative arc (Books I–XIII) revolves around the reign of David and Solomon with the erection of the Solomonic Temple, which is the literary centre (Books VI–VIII)

<sup>15</sup> Within *Palestinian Judaism*, there are several streams and groupings that make it impossible to speak of the Palestinian Judaism. Two recognizable streams are worth mentioning: (1) On the one hand, *Samaritan Judaism*, for which Abraham was the leading figure, as, for instance, the anonymous Samaritan author, *Ps.-Eupolemos*, attests (on *Ps.-Eupolemos*, cf. Walter, *Fragmente*, 137–43). (2) On the other hand, *Qumran*: In the texts from Qumran, Solomon plays a subordinate role to the figures of the Pentateuch and also to David; cf. Martin G. Abegg, James E. Bowley, and Edward M. Cook, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Concordance*. Vol. I/2, *The Non-Biblical Texts from Qumran* (Leiden et al.: Brill, 2003), 725. 935; Johann Maier, *Einführung, Zeitrechnung, Register und Bibliographie*. Volume 3 of *Die Qumran-Essener. Die Texte vom Toten Meer*, UTB 1916 (München: Ernst Reinhardt, 1996.) 309 s.v. Salomo. This fits the transmission of the biblical texts in Qumran, where the canonical wisdom and history books are much more poorly attested than the Pentateuch, the Psalms and the books of the prophets; see the overview by Ulrich, *Scrolls*, 779–81, for the quantitative testimony to the biblical writings; cf. also Maier, *Einführung*, 10–13. Most of the textual witnesses relate to the Psalms, Deuteronomy and Isaiah.

<sup>16</sup> This applies not only to *Hellenistic Judaism* but to the discussion below. Here it should be noted that the oldest attested language of the *Psalms of Solomon* is Greek, and recent research has given compelling reasons for treating the *Psalms of Solomon* as having in fact been written in Greek, cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 181–82.

<sup>17</sup> The *Testament of Solomon*, which is commonly believed to have been written in Jerusalem in the 4th century CE, testifies to the fact that this tradition was vivid in late antique Palestinian Judaism. For the *Testament of Solomon*, see the first volume of the series “Parabiblica”: *Testamentum Salomonis*. Editionen, Texttraditionen und Studien zum Testament Salomos herausgegeben von Felix Albrecht unter Mitarbeit von Jan Doehhorn (Parabiblica 1), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023.

of the arc. The second arc (Books XIV–XX) focuses on the events that led to the outbreak of the *Jewish War*. The same applies to Josephus' *Jewish War*. This work, too, comprises two narrative arcs, the first of which (Books I–II) deals with the prehistory of the Jewish War and the second of which (Books III–VII) follows the Jewish War, depicting the fates of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple (*De bello Iudaico* V.136–237).

As Eupolemos shows, the Judaism of the Maccabean era was a return to national tradition. The Davidide Solomon was the chief source of inspiration, suitable not only as the potential prototype of *religious* Judaism, which had found its centre in the Temple cult since the Hasmonean period, but also as the exponent of *political* Judaism, which sought to renew the Jewish monarchy on the basis of the antetype of the Davidic dynasty. The Jewish monarchy of the Herodian couleure is the political reality in the background of the *Psalms of Solomon*, a reality that cannot 'measure up' to the religious expectations and demands formulated in these Psalms.<sup>18</sup> It seems that especially Herod the Great legitimized his claim of power by recourse to the Davidic dynasty, as is shown above all in the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. In view of this, the *Psalms of Solomon* can be read as a reflex to what its authors regarded as an illegitimate claim of Herod.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, these are to be assigned to a political, nationally minded Judaism.<sup>20</sup> These political ideas are joined by religious ones, and both aspects are combined with the expectation of the Davidic Messiah.<sup>21</sup> The Davidic messianism, which is theologically significant, especially with regard to the development of the Davidic idea of the Messiah, unfolded in the New Testament and linked to Jesus of Nazareth, is pictured in Pss. Sol. 17–18.<sup>22</sup> For this reason especially, the *Psalms of Solomon* are an important document for understanding the theological and historical development of Palestinian Judaism.

## 2. The *Psalms of Solomon* and Their Attribution to King Solomon

The Palestinian character of the *Psalms of Solomon* and their attribution to Solomon seem to be closely related. The crucial question, however, remains: why are, on the one hand, Eupolemos and Josephus in their writings and, on the other hand, the *Psalms of Solomon* particularly interested in Solomon? A major part of the biblical wisdom books

<sup>18</sup> On the central topos of justice in the *Psalms of Solomon*, cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 188–90. On Antiherodianism in the *Psalms of Solomon*, see the references in the following note.

<sup>19</sup> On the *Psalms of Solomon*'s quarrel with Herod the Great, cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 212–34 ('Die Endredaktion in Herodianischer Zeit'); and Albrecht, *Psalmen Salomos*, 63–64 n. 177.

<sup>20</sup> The aspect of the *national* – more specifically, the *national belief in hope* expressed in the *Psalms of Solomon* – is particularly emphasized by Bousset, *Religion*, 206.

<sup>21</sup> The expectation of the Davidic Messiah presumably reflects the general mood in Jerusalem at the turn of the era, since it appears with such openness in the *Psalms of Solomon*; cf. Bousset, *Religion*, 204–06; 223.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. e.g. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 255–59 ('Zur Wirkungsgeschichte'). On the messianism of the *Psalms of Solomon*, cf. the overview by Patrick Pouchelle, "Les Psaumes de Salomon. Le point sur les questions posées par un 'Messie' trop étudié," in *Encyclopédie des messianismes juifs dans l'Antiquité*, ed. David Hamidović, Xavier Leveils, and Christophe Mézange, BTS 33 (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 153–203. See also Nathan C. Johnson in the present volume. On the importance of Ps. Sol. 17 cf. Bousset, *Religion*, 228, and Atkinson, *Lord*, 129–79, esp. 129.

is associated with the name of Solomon. There are two reasons for this: on the one hand, Solomon's knowledge and wisdom are highly praised, so that he soon became a sage *par excellence*.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, Solomon is, next to David and Hezekiah,<sup>24</sup> the only outstanding Israelite monarch who was considered an author. The Septuagint translation of 1Kings 5:12, which increases the 1005 songs of Solomon to 5000 (3Regn 5:12), is often quoted in this context.<sup>25</sup> The second reason, however, is likely to be decisive in the case of the *Psalms of Solomon*: namely, the role of Solomon as a monarch during a legendary peacetime seems to be of crucial relevance to the legitimacy of the *Psalms of Solomon*. This emphasis becomes even more obvious when we bear in mind that two important Jewish historians from the circle of Palestinian Judaism show an unmistakable interest in Solomon: on the one hand, Eupolemos, writing at the time of the Maccabean Wars, and, on the other hand, Josephus, active at the time of the Jewish War.

### 2.1 Scenarios of Virulent Martial Threat

The reasons for the attribution of the *Psalms of Solomon* to King Solomon likely lie in the historical circumstances of their origin: the political and social situation at the times of the Maccabean Wars and the Jewish War were as tense as the virulent threat and conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey, which is described in the *Psalms of Solomon* (cf. Pss. Sol. 2; 8). The martial situation of threat described at the beginning of the collection (Pss. Sol. 1–2) is paradigmatic. These scenarios of martial threat, which concerned the centre of Palestinian Judaism – namely, Jerusalem and the Temple of Jerusalem – constitute, in my opinion, the common denominator of these writings. Both Eupolemos and Josephus, as well as the *Psalms of Solomon*, were reacting to a situation of threat and thus had recourse to the figure of Solomon, since it was this monarch who, as Josephus foregrounded at the beginning of his Solomon narrative, ‘ruled [...] in deep peace’ (VIII.21). This detail is intimately connected with the name ‘Solomon’ itself, so much so that it has often been repeatedly interpreted etymologically – for instance, in 1Chron 22:9.<sup>26</sup> The high esteem of the Solomonic peacetime thus constitutes the connecting element between the historical reality of Eupolemos at the time of the Maccabean Wars, the references in the *Psalms of Solomon* to the time of Pompey, and the time of Josephus, who had experienced the Jewish War.

<sup>23</sup> Josef A. Sint, *Pseudonymität im Altertum. Ihre Formen und ihre Gründe*, Commentationes Aenipontanae 15 (Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1960), 139, even speaks of Solomon as “Prototyp aller Weisheitslehrer;” cf. Hengel, “Judentum,” 237.

<sup>24</sup> Besides with Solomon and David, literary ambitions are only associated with the late eighth-century (BCE) King Hezekiah: Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 244–81 (‘Wisdom substrata in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic literature’), considers Hezekiah’s as the age that “marked the beginning of deuteronomistic literary activity” (ibid. 255, cf. 161–62); for him, it is finally clear that the deuteronomistic school used the figure of Solomon (cf. ibid. 256). Robert Balgarnie Young Scott, “Solomon and the Beginnings of Wisdom in Israel,” in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Martin Noth and D. Winton Thomas, VTS 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1955), 272–79, goes so far as to assume that Hezekiah took Solomon as his antetype.

<sup>25</sup> 3Regn 5:12 LXX: καὶ ἐλάλησεν Σαλωμων τρισχιλίας παραβολάς, καὶ ἦσαν ὧδαὶ αὐτοῦ πεντακισχίλια. 1Kings 5:12 MT: וַיְדַבֵּר שְׁלֹשֶׁת אֲלָפִים מִשְׁלֵי וְיְהִי שִׁירֵי חֲמִשָּׁה וְאַלְף;

<sup>26</sup> 1Chron 22:9 MT: הַנְּהִיבֵן נוֹלָד לָךְ הוּא יְהִיה אִישׁ מְנוּחָה וְהַנְּחוּתִי לוֹ מִכָּל-אוֹיְבָיו מִסָּבִיב בִּי שְׁלֹמֹה יְהִיה שְׁמוֹ: Cf. Albrecht, *Psalmi Salomonis*, 220 n. 2.

## 2.2 Nostalgia and the Idealization of the Solomonic Peaceful Past

During all three periods, a certain longing for a more secure situation seems to have been projected onto Solomon and his rule of peace. This was accompanied by a subliminal idealization of the Solomonic past and the longing for that past, which expressed itself in the form of a sentiment comparable to nostalgia.<sup>27</sup> We know from Josephus himself that he wrote the *Antiquitates Iudaicae* twenty years after the end of the Jewish War which ended up in the destruction of the Herodian Temple. Scholars with a social-psychological approach emphasize the meaningfulness of nostalgia, a state of mind that attempts to compensate for loss of meaning – like the loss of meaning for Temple-observant followers of Judaism incurred by the destruction of the Jewish Temple.<sup>28</sup> Through Solomon, Josephus reached back to an ideal form of Judaism in bygone days, for which the national state and sanctuary formed the chief points of reference and of identification.<sup>29</sup> Josephus was not alone in choosing the ‘nostalgic perspective’ as a way of coping with the heavy loss:<sup>30</sup> Eupolemos follows the same strategy in his recourse to Solomon, contrasting the reality of war in his time with the peaceful ideal of Solomon’s days. Finally, the *Psalms of Solomon* counter the threatened and threatening reality of their time with the programme of the Davidic Messiah, who bears unmistakably Solomonic features.<sup>31</sup> Thus, these psalms serve to pacify the trauma caused by Pompey’s conquest

<sup>27</sup> The psychological function of nostalgia is to adequately handle external insecurities. It manifests itself as anxiety or angst; cf. Tom Panelas, review of *Yearning for Yesterday. A Sociology of Nostalgia*, by Fred Davis. *American Journal of Sociology* 87 (1982): 1425: “It is always evoked in the context of current fears and anxieties, and looks to alleviate those fears by ‘using the past in specially reconstructed ways.’”

<sup>28</sup> On this psychological function of nostalgia, cf. Clay Routledge et al., “The Past Makes the Present Meaningful. Nostalgia as an Existential Resource,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101 (2011): 638–39. Overall, nostalgia can mitigate existential threat; cf. the empiric studies by Jacob Juhl et al., “Fighting the Future with the Past. Nostalgia Buffers Existential Threat,” *Journal of Research in Personality* 44 (2010): 309–14.

<sup>29</sup> The biblical figures of Abraham and Moses, also re-stylised by Josephus, take on another, contrasting function: they are Jewish ‘national heroes’, who, as Feldman demonstrates, are stylised according to a Hellenistic role model, as (natural) philosophers; cf. Louis H. Feldman, “Abraham the Greek Philosopher in Josephus,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 99 (1968): 156: “Josephus, for apologetic reasons, presents his Abraham, like his Moses, as a typical national hero, such as was popular in Hellenistic times, with emphasis on his qualities as a philosopher and scientist [...]”

<sup>30</sup> On the ‘nostalgic perspective’, cf. Thomas Lange, *Idyllische und exotische Sehnsucht. Formen bürgerlicher Nostalgie in der deutschen Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Scriptor Hochschulschriften. Literaturwissenschaft 23 (Kronberg: Scriptor Verlag, 1976), 31: “Die nostalgische Perspektive ist mit utopischen Momenten geladen. Die Wehmut im Rückblick auf Zustände, die als menschheitsgeschichtliche Vergangenheit begriffen werden, deutet auf ein Bewußtsein, das Geschichte nicht als abgeschlossene akzeptiert.”

<sup>31</sup> On Ps. Sol. 17, Pablo S. Torijano, *Solomon the Esoteric King. From King to Magus, Development of a Tradition*, JSJS 73 (Leiden et al.: Brill, 2002), 107, emphasizes that “[...] the author of the Psalm is depicting a ‘Son of David’ who is more like the peaceful Solomon than the rather warlike David.” Whether the Messiah of the *Psalms of Solomon* should necessarily be classified as peaceful, however, might be contested; there is rather an emphasis on his ‘militant’ traits, which Atkinson has repeatedly associated with David; cf. Kenneth Atkinson, “On the Herodian Origin of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran. New Light from Psalm of Solomon 17,” *JBL* 118 (1999): 435–60; idem, “On the Use of Scripture in the Development of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran. New Light from Psalm of Solomon 17,” in *The Interpretation of Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity*, ed. Craig A. Evans, JSPSup 33/SSEJC 7 (Sheffield: Sheffield Aca-



of Jerusalem. The desire for peace, expressed through the reference to Solomon, is all the more understandable given this warlike circumstance.

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demic Press, 2000), 106–23; idem, *An Intertextual Study of The Psalms of Solomon*; Pseudepigrapha, Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 49 (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 377–78; idem, *I cried to the Lord. A Study of the Psalms of Solomon's Historical Background and Social Setting*, JSJ.S 84 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 129. Nevertheless, the Solomonic traits of the *Psalms of Solomon's* depiction of the Davidic Messiah are, in my opinion, distinctive, although these hardly belong to the sphere of peace and the pacific.

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# Index of Words

## Greek

- ἀγίασμα 40  
ἅγιος 32, 169  
αἰχμαλωσία 52–53, 59–61, 64  
αἰχμάλωτος 52  
ἄμαρτία 36  
ἄμαρτωλός 36, 59  
ἀνάληψις 170  
ἄναξις 170  
ἀναπτέρωσις 170  
ἀνομία 36  
ἄνομος 61, 63  
ἀντιλεγόμενα 152, 163  
ἀπάγω 53, 56  
ἀπειλή 76, 78  
ἀποικεσία 52–53, 55–56  
ἀποικία 52  
ἀποικίζω 52, 56  
ἀποικισμός 52, 56  
ἀπόκρυφα 152  
ἀπόλλυμι 135  
ἀπο(ρ)ρίπτω 53, 57–58, 64  
ἀτμόω 60  
αὐτάρκεια 170  
αὐτός 134  
ἀφίστημι 53
- βασιλεύς 79
- γῆ 56  
γίνομαι 64
- δέ 168  
διασπορά 52–53, 55, 58, 64  
διάψαλμα 61  
δίδωμι 136–37  
δόξα 136  
δοξάζω 41  
δράκων 59
- ἔθνος 57  
ἐκδιδάσκω 89  
ἐκλογή 148, 170
- ἐκπετάννυμι 53, 63–64  
ἐκτρίβω 77  
ἐξασκέω 89  
ἐξουθενόω 60  
ἐξουθενός 38  
ἐξουσία 148  
ἐξόω 76  
ἐπίσημος 170
- ἥρημόω 74
- θεός 134  
θραύω 76–77, 80  
θυσιαστήριον 37
- Ἰερουσαλήμ 136  
Ἰσραήλ 136  
ἰσχυρός 135–36
- καθαίρω 38  
καθαρίζω 76  
καταβάλλω 79  
καταφορά 170  
κοίτη 63  
κραταίος 135–36  
κωλύω 134
- λαός 57  
λέγω 80  
λογισμός 89  
μέν 168  
μετοικεσία 52  
μετοικίζω 56  
μήνις 170  
μισθοφόρος 34
- νοῦς 89
- οἶκος 52  
ὀλεθρεύω 77  
ὄσιος 17  
ὅταν 168

παιδεία 89  
 παιδεύω 91  
 παροικία 52–53, 62–64  
 πατάσσω 79  
 πατήρ 135  
 πειράω 94  
 περιστολή 170  
 πλανάω 62  
 πονηρός 60  
 ποτιζώ 134  
 πώρωσις 114  
  
 σημείωσις 170  
 σκορπίζω 53, 63

σκορπισμός 53, 62–64  
 σοφία 89  
 συνάγω 80  
 συντριβή 77, 79–80  
 σφραγίς 60  
 σώζω 63  
  
 τόξον 79  
  
 υἱός 136  
 ὑποκρίνομαι 170  
  
 φεύγω 62

## Hebrew

אמן 24  
 אמר 169  
 גויה 169  
 גולה 52

גר 34–35  
 מור 169  
 בכרי 34

## Index of Authors

- Ábel, František 101, 177  
Albrecht, Felix 1, 49, 54, 61, 131–38, 149,  
164<sup>25</sup>, 165<sup>27</sup>, 166<sup>35</sup>, 177  
Assmann, Jan 3  
Atkinson, Kenneth 35, 51, 61, 72–73, 85,  
102, 148, 159, 177
- Babota, Vasile 29, 177  
Barrett, Charles K. 125–26  
Bons, Eberhard 102, 148, 160
- Charlesworth, James 70–73, 77  
Collins, John 69, 71–72  
Crossan, John Dominic 71  
Congourdeau, Marie-Hélène 132–33, 138,  
142<sup>43f</sup>.
- Delcor, Mathias 70–71, 75, 77  
Dimant, Devorah 102  
Dochhorn, Jan 2  
Donaldson, Terence 106–07  
Dorival, Gilles 147, 177  
Dunn, James 113
- Efron, Joshua 102  
Embry, Brad J. 102
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. 125
- Gandhi, Mahatma 75  
Gruen, Erich S. 50, 126
- Hann, Robert R. 102, 151, 166  
Harris, James Rendel 137, 150, 154, 163  
Hengel, Martin 2, 71<sup>10</sup>, 126  
Hilgenfeld, Adolf 136, 148, 168  
Holm-Nielsen, Svend 104<sup>11</sup>
- James, Montague Rhodes 81, 150, 155  
Jewett, Robert 113–16  
Johnson, Nathan C. 41<sup>44</sup>, 69, 177  
Joosten, Jan 49, 51, 55, 62, 148
- Klausner, Joseph 70–71
- Le Donne, Anthony 71, 75, 76<sup>40</sup>,
- MacDonald, Dennis 127  
Maier, Johann 2  
Mingana, Alphonse 154  
Müller, Ulrich 75
- Nanos, Mark 116
- Pajunen, Mika S. 11, 51, 177  
Pomykala, Kenneth 71, 74  
Pouchelle, Patrick 85, 90, 102, 131, 177
- Rahlf's, Alfred 132, 147, 149, 153  
Rastoin, Marc 125, 177  
Rath, Julia 49, 177  
Ryle, Herbert Edward 57<sup>50</sup>, 81, 150, 155
- Schmidt, Karl L. 50  
Schüpphaus, Joachim 104<sup>11</sup>  
Schwemer, Anna Maria 3  
Scott, James M. 50, 64  
Seifrid, Mark A. 104<sup>11</sup>  
Steins, Georg 50  
Stevens, Marty, E. 32  
Stone, Michael 166  
Stuckenbruck, Loren 71  
Swete, Henry Barclay 149, 151
- Trafton, Joseph 71, 102, 108<sup>27</sup>
- VanLandingham, Chris 101, 117<sup>90</sup>  
van Unnik, Willem C. 50  
von Gebhardt, Oscar 132, 134<sup>14</sup>, 149–50,  
165<sup>27</sup>, 166
- Ward, Grant 102  
Windsor, Lionel 118–19  
Winninge, Mikael 102, 104<sup>11</sup>,  
109<sup>33</sup>, 118  
Wright, Robert B. 58, 102, 132, 151,  
153, 167
- Zurawski, Jason M. 85, 177



## Index of Subjects

- Agrippa I 1  
Alexander Jannaeus 29, 31, 34, 37  
Alexander Polyhistor 31  
Alexandria 2–3, 86, 106<sup>18</sup>  
Anthedon 106<sup>18</sup>  
Antigonus 31, 33  
Antiochus IV 38–39, 56  
Antiochus VII 32, 170  
archetype 1, 134, 166<sup>35</sup>  
Aristobulus II 31–34, 38, 40, 74  
Artapanos of Alexandria 3  
Ascalon 106<sup>18</sup>
- Baiophorus 138  
Byzantine empire, period 133, 138,  
144, 167
- Caesarea 106<sup>18</sup>  
Clement of Alexandria 127  
Clement of Rome 149,–51  
collection of Psalms 1, 6, 11, 13–17,  
22–25, 29, 49, 54, 61, 65, 87–88,  
108, 159, 165  
Constantine VII 138  
Constantinople 131, 138–39, 141–44  
conquest, *see* Jerusalem  
coping strategy 7  
Crassus 33, 37, 41
- Damascus 106<sup>18</sup>  
David 6  
Davidic  
– antetype 4  
– dynasty 5  
– messiah, messianism 5, 7  
– stage 81  
Dead Sea Scrolls 171  
deportation 52<sup>27</sup>, 53, 56–57, 61, 64,  
*see also* exile; diaspora  
diaspora VII, 49, 64, 81  
divine discipline 144  
dominion 120
- eschatology 15, 41–43, 45, 63, 101  
103–07, 110–12, 114–15, 117–20
- eschatological king 69, 75  
Eupolemus 4–7, 31  
exegetis, exegete 114–15, 2  
exile 16<sup>22</sup>, 31, 49–59, 61–65, 109,  
142, *see also* deportation; diaspora  
Exodus tradition 2<sup>5</sup>, 3–4, 51, 58,  
63–65  
Ezekiel Tragicus 3
- Flavius Josephus 4–7, 30, 32,  
34–35, 37–39, 41, 43, 74
- Gadara 106<sup>18</sup>  
Gaza 106<sup>18</sup>  
Gennadius II Scholarius 131–33,  
136–39, 142, 144  
gentiles 81  
– gentile believers 120  
Greek language 171
- Hasmoneans 1, 31, 34, 36, 41, 43–44,  
73–74, 108  
Hebrew original 171  
Hellenistic, *see also* Judaism,  
Hellenistic  
– society 96  
– philosophy 86  
Herod the Great 1, 5, 29, 31, 33, 35,  
41, 43–45, 62, *see also* Herodian  
Herodian 1, 5, 7, 30, 160, *see also*  
temple, Herodian  
– anti-Herodian 1  
Hezekiah 6  
Hippus 106<sup>18</sup>  
historical figures 2, 4, 17  
holy spirit 120  
Homer 127
- idealization 7  
identity, cultural and religious 17, 30<sup>2</sup>,  
44, 103<sup>9</sup>, 116–18, 120  
incarnation 120
- Jerusalem 4–6, 8, 14, 16, 22–23, 31, 33,  
35, 38, 49, 56, 60–61, 63–64, 70,



- 74–75, 81, 86, 90, 109–11, 119,  
135–37, 142–44, 162, *see also* Zion
- Babylonian conquest 16, 51
  - Herodian conquest 54, 62
  - Pompeian conquest 1, 6–8, 14, 33,  
39, 51, 59, 62–63, 162, *see also*  
historical figures, Pompey
  - Jerusalem temple 4, 29, 32, 36, 44,  
101<sup>1</sup>, 106, 135, 142
- Jewish War, *see war*
- John Hyrcanus I 33–34
- John Hyrcanus II 31–34, 37–41, 45
- John Zonaras 152–53, 166
- Jonathan the Hasmonean 31
- Judaism
- Alexandrian 3
  - Hellenistic 2–5, 50
  - Palestinian 1–5
- justice, divine 13–15, 18, 20–23, 110,  
141
- Justus of Tiberias 31
- lexical approach 64
- liturgical 22–23
- function 12, 18
  - elements, rubrics 13–14, 18,  
22–23, 164
  - tradition 171
- loss of meaning 7
- Maccabees 4
- Maccabean era 5
  - Maccabean wars 6
- Manuscripts
- Septuagint MSS (Rahlfs)
 

A	150
S	150
149	150, 166, 168
253	133–35, 137, 150–51, 163–68
260	133–34, 137–38, 150, 166–68
336	133–34, 150, 166–68
471	134, 138, 150, 166, 168
606	133, 138, 150, 168
629	133–34, 150, 166–67
655	150, 163, 165–67
659	150, 163, 165–67
769	133–34, 150, 166–68
3004	150, 166, 168
  - Syriac MSS (Leiden Peshitta)
 

Sy <sup>10h1</sup>	133, 165
--------------------	----------
- Sy<sup>14k1</sup> 165
- Sy<sup>16g7</sup> 165
- Sy<sup>16h1</sup> 133, 165
- Matthew Blastares 152–53
- Mehmet II 131, 141–42
- Messiah 1, 81, 120, *see also* Davidic  
Monarchy, Jewish 4–5, 109<sup>34</sup>, 171<sup>54</sup>
- Moses 2–3
- nationalism 4–5, 7
- Nicolaus of Damascus 30
- nominal clause 58, 61, 64
- nostalgia 7
- Palestine 2, 4, *see also* Judaism,  
Palestinian
- peace 6–8, 69, 81, *see also* Solomonic,  
peace
- pedagogy 85–97
- Pentateuch 3, 4<sup>14</sup>, 18, 80
- Pharisees 1, 33, 86, 102, 104
- Philo of Alexandria 2–3
- Plato 127
- politics 3
- Pompey 1, 6–7, 33–34, 37–41, 44,  
59, 61–63, 74, 90, *see also*  
Jerusalem, Pompeian conquest
- pseudepigraphy 49, 70, 101, 171
- Ptolemais 106<sup>18</sup>
- reception (history) 131, 144, 159, 171
- redaction 25, 170–71
- Sabinus (Roman official) 33
- sanctuary 4, 7, 32–33, 36–41, 43, 143  
162
- school 104, 120
- deuteronomistic school 6<sup>22</sup>
  - school tradition 3
- Scythopolis 106<sup>18</sup>
- Second Temple Judaism 11–12,  
17–25, 80, 88, 107, 120
- sentiment 7
- Septuagint 2, 6
- Simon bar Kokhba 77
- social conflicts 3
- Solomon 1–2, 4–6
- Solomonic, *see also* temple, Solomonic
- peace 7
  - stage 81
- Strabo of Amaseia 31
- subjugation 81

- temple 4–7, 29–45
  - eschatological 45, *see also* eschatology
  - Herodian 35, *see also* Herodian
  - Solomonic 4, *see also* Solomon
- Theodorus Balsamon 152–53, 166
- Thomas of Aquinas 144
- Torah 2, 4, 74,
  - observance 81, 107
- trauma 7, 41
- typology VII, 144
- violence 35, 44, 69, 72–73, 75–78,
  - 80–81, 88, 90, 92–93, 97
- voice (grammatical) 56–58, 64
- war 4–8, 71, 73, 75, 81, 161
- wisdom 5, 20, 22–23, 120
- Zion, *see also* Jerusalem 16–17, 19,
  - 20–25, 41, 79, 107<sup>23</sup>, 114, 116

