

# The Art of Contextualizing Philo of Alexandria

Edited by  
MAREN R. NIEHOFF

*Texts and Studies in  
Ancient Judaism*  
190

---

**Mohr Siebeck**

# Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism

Edited by

Maren Niehoff (Jerusalem)  
Annette Y. Reed (Cambridge, MA)  
Seth Schwartz (New York, NY)  
Moulie Vidas (Princeton, NJ)

190





# The Art of Contextualizing Philo of Alexandria

Edited by  
Maren R. Niehoff

Mohr Siebeck

*Maren R. Niehoff*, born 1963; educated at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Free University in Berlin, Oxford University and Harvard University; Max Cooper Professor in the Department of Jewish Philosophy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

ISBN 978-3-16-164078-0 / eISBN 978-3-16-164079-7  
DOI 10.1628/978-3-16-164079-7

ISSN 0721-8753 / eISSN 2568-9525 (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism)

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliographie; detailed bibliographic data are available at <https://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2025 Mohr Siebeck Tübingen, Germany. [www.mohrsiebeck.com](http://www.mohrsiebeck.com)

This book may not be reproduced, in whole or in part, in any form (beyond that permitted by copyright law) without the publisher's written permission. This applies particularly to reproductions, translations and storage and processing in electronic systems.

The book was typeset by Martin Fischer using Minion typeface, printed on non-aging paper by Stücker in Ettenheim, and bound by Spinner in Ottersweier.

Printed in Germany.

## Acknowledgements

This volume is the product of my Martin Hengel Fellowship at Tübingen University in 2019–20. It is my great pleasure to thank the Philipp Melancthon Foundation, chaired by Volker Drecoll, for its generous support during the fellowship, the ensuing conference and the copyediting of this volume. My stay in Tübingen benefited immensely from the warm welcome and generous hospitality of numerous colleagues, especially Volker Drecoll, Mischa Meier and Irmgard Männlein-Robert. Our daily and very fruitful conversations are still vivid in my mind. The Martin Hengel Lecture, which I had the honor of delivering in December 2019, is now published both in Hebrew and German (“Tracing Hellenistic Judaism. A Jewish Scholar of Psalms in a Gloss of Origen in the Context of Rabbinic Literature” [in Hebrew], *Zion* 87 (2022): 7–36; German version in *ZAC* 27 (2023): 31–76). The gracious discussion of the German translation of my recent monograph *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography* (Yale 2018), which took place in Tübingen in January 2020, is now published as “Book under Discussion,” with contributions by Mischa Meier, Irmgard Männlein-Robert, Holger Zellentin and Volker Drecoll, *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 24 (2020): 606–31.

As part of my fellowship, I organized an international conference in Tübingen in May 2022, one of the first academic gatherings following the removal of Covid restrictions. The atmosphere was consequently characterized by a special appreciation of face-to-face exchange. The conference also transcended traditional disciplinary boundaries and gathered both Philo experts and scholars of adjacent fields, some of whom worked on Philo for the first time. I thank everybody for accepting my invitation and venturing into new territory, thus reconstructing the place Philo presumably held in ancient debates. I also thank David Runia, who came especially from Holland to chair a session, and Thomas Schmitz, who arrived from Bonn to chair another session. The articles published here incorporate not only the individual discussions at the conference, but also the input of two anonymous readers, who were respectively approached for each contribution. One article was submitted at a later stage and, inversely, not all lectures given at the conference are incorporated here. All the contributions in this volume have been meticulously reworked and display the results of close academic cooperation.

Thanks to Sarah Mandel, who edited the style of the essays, and to Sergio Marín, who took excellent care of the technical aspects of copy-editing and also compiled the indices. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem granted me a

Sabbatical leave to accept the Martin Hengel Fellowship and has been a congenial home for all the subsequent stages of editing the volume.

As usual, it has been a great pleasure working with the team of Mohr Siebeck, this time in close cooperation with Tobias Stähler, the new editor of the series *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism*. It is more than appropriate that this volume should appear in this series following David Runia's collected articles on Philo of Alexandria, which span several decades of research. This context is significant and frames the diversity of approaches in the field as well as its development over time.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	V
------------------------	---

MAREN R. NIEHOFF

Contextualization as a Scholarly Art .....	1
--	---

### Roman Contexts: Philosophy and History

LUDOVICA DE LUCA

Philo, Cicero and Vitruvius: God as Architect in Rome .....	13
---	----

SERGIO MARÍN

A Conscience on Trial. Reading <i>Ios.</i> 47–48 against a Roman Background ..	53
--	----

REBECCA LANGLANDS

Philo's Barbarian Virtue and Roman Exemplary Ethics .....	101
---	-----

MAREN R. NIEHOFF

“God is my Ruler, but no Mortal”. Philo's Paradox of Freedom in first century Rome amidst Demetrius, Seneca and Epictetus .....	127
---	-----

GRETCHEN REYDAMS-SCHILS

Philo and Musonius Rufus .....	155
--------------------------------	-----

GREGORY E. STERLING

Platonism between Alexandria and Rome: Philo and Seneca .....	169
---	-----

MISCHA MEIER

Nero's Persecution of the Christians, the Jews and a Possible “Philonic” Connection .....	191
---	-----



## New Testament Contexts

LOVEDAY ALEXANDER

Sailing to Caesar: Philo's Embassy and Luke's Paul in Rome ..... 211

MATTHIAS BECKER

Philo's Lives and Luke's Gospel – Features of Hagiographical Discourse  
in Early Imperial-Era Biography ..... 235

JOAN E. TAYLOR

Another Look at the Logos Concept in Philo and the Gospel of John.  
Cerinthus as the Missing Link? ..... 263

PHILIP ALEXANDER

Philo of Alexandria and Hebrews in the Context of the Roman Empire.  
Revisiting the Question of their Relationship ..... 287

## Greek Literature and Philosophy as Context

JASON KÖNIG

Human and Environment in Philo's *Life of Moses* and *Flaccus* ..... 321

VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL

Philo and Severus on the Unity of Soul ..... 341

List of Contributors ..... 361

Index of Names ..... 365

Index locorum ..... 367

Index of Subjects ..... 369

## Contextualization as a Scholarly Art

*Maren R. Niehoff*

Besides discoveries of new texts, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls or the library of Nag Hamadi, new contexts have played a pivotal role in humanities research. Seminal discoveries have been made by introducing new hermeneutic frameworks. Jean Astruc, for example, revolutionized Biblical studies in the eighteenth century by applying the source-critical methods of Homeric scholarship to the Book of Genesis.<sup>1</sup> Milman Parry, in turn, changed Homeric studies by comparing its poetics to that of oral cultures, which he studied especially in the former Yugoslavia.<sup>2</sup> The Code of Hammurabi was adduced by John Sampey to throw completely new light on Biblical law.<sup>3</sup> Until today, the study of the New Testament is characterized by lively debates about its proper context, namely Greco-Roman, Jewish or a combination of both.<sup>4</sup>

In the case of Philo, contextualization is a particular art, as this author falls between the departmental chairs of modern universities. As a Greek-speaking Jew of Alexandria he was not canonized by any of the fields to which he contributed, namely Jewish studies, Biblical studies, Classics, ancient philosophy, ancient history as well as New Testament studies and early Christianity. No firm disciplinary context exists for the interpretation of Philo. Much of Philonic scholarship has consequently been invested in situating him in relation to various disciplines. Classical philosophy has been a paramount reference point and scholars have identified Stoic, Platonic or Skeptical ideas.<sup>5</sup> Another prevalent context was the New Testament, especially the Gospels and Paul's letters.<sup>6</sup> The chosen framework typically directed scholars to specific texts or passages within Philo's vast oeuvre, which is unsurpassed in antiquity in its variety of genres.

The present collection of articles revisits the question of Philo's contexts in the wake of Maren Niehoff's *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography* (New Haven, 2018), which has prompted lively discussions within Philonic studies and beyond. This monograph analyzes all of Philo's diverse writings and introduces

---

<sup>1</sup> Astruc 1753.

<sup>2</sup> Parry 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Sampey 1904a, 1904b.

<sup>4</sup> The literature is too vast to be adequately represented here, see recent discussions by Sampey 2016; Zetterholm 2020; Niehoff forthcoming.

<sup>5</sup> Brehier 1950; Reydam-Schils 1999; Weisser 2021; Dillon 1977; Runia 1986; Levy 2008, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Sterling 1999, 2003; Deines 2011; Cover 2015.

the notion of his intellectual development, with an earlier Alexandrian and later Roman context. Initially, Philo addressed the Jewish community of Alexandria and offered systematic Bible commentary in the spirit of Alexandrian Platonism, which tended towards strong transcendentalism. Following the pogrom in Alexandria in 38 CE, Philo went to Rome as the head of the Jewish embassy and endeavored to assert the civic rights of the Jews. The *Intellectual Biography* argues for the first time that Philo's diplomatic activity also had significant intellectual implications. Like other diplomats in Rome, Philo used his time to build new networks and even began to write for broader Roman audiences. His style became more Stoic and this-worldly, being attuned to history, biography, law, politics and gender. In other words, Philo engaged not only with Classical Greek philosophy, but also with a broad spectrum of contemporary discourses, including a distinctly Roman form of philosophy.

The articles gathered here explore Philo's various contexts in dialogue with the insights that emerged from the *Intellectual Biography*. The collection advances the field by experimenting with different hermeneutic frameworks and examining their potential benefit in explaining Philo. Not surprisingly, the first and largest section of the collection is devoted to Roman contexts and deals with Philo in view of authors and historical figures active in the imperial capital. Moving beyond the *Intellectual Biography*, the essays investigate new aspects of Philo's participation in Roman discourses, including his engagement with ideas advocated by Cicero, Valerius Maximus, and Musonius Rufus, as well as his hitherto-overlooked Cynic tendencies. One essay furthermore treats Philo as an exponent of Alexandrian Platonism in Roman networks and another as a diplomat with close ties to the imperial administration, who may have noticed the emergence of Christ-believers in the Jewish community of Rome. The second section of this collection focuses on Philo in relation to the New Testament. Two of the essays apply a triangular perspective, taking Philo as a benchmark for Romanization, which illuminates New Testament texts such as *Acts* and the *Letter to the Hebrews*. Two others respectively investigate Philo's hagiographical style of biography in view of the Gospel of Luke and his Platonically inspired Logos theory in view of the Gospel of John. The third section places Philo in the context of Greek literature and philosophy, one essay introducing ecocriticism in relation to Roman politics and the other drawing attention to Philo as a unique witness to inner Platonic debates which fully emerge in the second century CE.

The first section opens with an essay by Ludovica De Luca, entitled "Philo, Cicero and Vitruvius: God as Architect in Rome." De Luca revisits an icon of Philonic scholarship, namely the famous section in Philo's creation account depicting the Jewish creator God as an architect. She reviews previous models of contextualizing *Opif.* 17–20 in Platonic and Stoic philosophy and then offers a new approach, namely to understand Philo in view of Cicero and Vitruvius, the Roman architect, whose opinions were widely known and thus likely to have

come to Philo's attention. De Luca shows how the motif of the architect developed in Roman discourses, ranging from proper philosophical treatises, such as Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods*, to Vitruvius' *On Architecture*, which displays especially close similarities with Philo. The motif of the architect thus emerges as a prime locus to negotiate the various philosophical traditions, enabling Philo to articulate his own innovative interpretation of the Jewish God for broader Greco-Roman audiences.

Sergio Marín follows with the article "A Conscience on Trial. Reading *Ios.* 47–48 Against a Roman Background." He, too, initially reviews previous interpretations of Philo's notion of the conscience in Classical Greek contexts and then proceeds to show that a particular passage in the *Life of Joseph* reveals a conspicuous congruence with the role played by *conscientia* in Latin sources. Philo's rhetorical embellishments of LXX Gen 39:7–20 ascribe to the conscience the same forensic role in the exposure of Joseph's hypothetical adultery, as Roman authors like Cicero attribute to *conscientia* in the retelling of court scenes. This becomes particularly evident in the physiognomic perspective that Philo adopts to describe how the workings of Joseph's conscience are manifested in the body. Likewise, Philo's dramatization of the encounter between Joseph and Potiphar engages with the wider Roman tendency to recreate vivid narratives that make use of visual cues and descriptions of physical appearance to induce the readers to visualize the scene. Marín concludes that Philo was deeply aware of legal practices and literary styles popular in Rome and prompts us to further investigate the connections between philosophy and law.

Rebecca Langlands contributes a chapter entitled "Philo's Barbarian Virtue and Roman Exemplary Ethics," which analyzes Philo's treatise *Every Good Man is Free* in light of Cicero and Valerius Maximus. She offers a survey of the whole treatise and stresses the importance of the exemplars alongside more theoretical definitions of freedom. The style and educational approach of the former correspond closely to the distinct tradition of Roman exemplarity. Langlands zooms in on a cluster of exemplars, namely Calanus the Indian gymnosophist as well as Zeno the Eleatic and Anaxarchus, who are all willing to die in their resistance to tyrants. She points to parallel interpretations of this cluster in Cicero and Valerius, highlighting that Philo is especially close to, but not identical with the latter. This correspondence between two authors writing in different languages in imperial Rome leads her to search for explanations, asking whether they independently used well-known anecdotes or directly depended upon each other. She concludes that Philo was probably aware of Valerius Maximus' work, just as Plutarch was, and employed it for his specific purposes. Philo emerges as a participant in the ongoing ethical practice of reinterpreting key precepts and examples, aligning Roman and Jewish ethical traditions.

Maren Niehoff also analyzes the Philonic treatise *Every Good Man is Free* in a chapter called "'God is my Ruler, but no Mortal.' Philo's Paradox of Freedom in

First-Century Rome Amidst Demetrius, Seneca and Epictetus". She analyzes the Sophoclean saying quoted by Philo, and investigates the notion of man becoming God's deputy in the context of Cynic philosophy. According to Philo, man shares Divine power and consequently enjoys freedom among men, thus assuming a role suggested in a famous syllogism of Diogenes of Sinope, the founder of the Cynic school. Moses is moreover interpreted in the same Cynic spirit as granting man assimilation to God and friendship with Him. These Philonic views are further investigated by comparison to three philosophers active in Rome, namely Demetrius the Greek Cynic, Seneca, the Stoic philosopher writing in Latin, and Epictetus, who arrived from the Greek East and taught Stoic philosophy in Rome. While none of them mentions the Sophoclean saying, they all address the issues Philo associates with it. Indeed, Philo emerges as an important link between Demetrius, whose work is extant only in highly fragmentary form, and Seneca and Epictetus. Philo's testimony illuminates the different degrees to which Cynic ideals were integrated in Roman discourses, especially among Roman Stoics, a school known for its initial sympathy to Cynicism. Philo ultimately provides us a hermeneutic key to appreciate the distinct nature of Roman Stoicism in comparison to its Classical predecessor. This context, Niehoff concludes, also has potential implications for Paul's notion of freedom in his *Letter to the Romans*.

Gretchen Reydams-Schils' chapter "Philo and Musonius" further illuminates the Roman context of Philo by introducing Musonius Rufus, a slightly later Stoic philosopher, as a benchmark of Roman Stoicism likely to have been available to Philo during his embassy. Reydams-Schils focuses on test-cases connected to modes of sociability and stresses Stoic contributions in comparison to the Cynic school, which shares numerous starting points of philosophical inquiry. The examples chosen here concern marriage, assimilation to God, the figure of Heracles and paideia, all being drawn from the *Exposition* and the treatise *Every Good Man is Free*. Reydams-Schils thus adds to the previous two chapters a further layer of inquiry into a particular Philonic treatise and freshly addresses the question of cross-fertilization between Stoics and Cynics. While Niehoff draws attention to the deep fascination of Roman Stoics with Cynic ideas and practices, Reydams-Schils emphasizes the Stoic domestication of Cynic excesses. In this scenario, too, Philo plays a significant philosophical role in first-century Rome.

Gregory Sterling's chapter "Platonism between Alexandria and Rome: Philo and Seneca" approaches the question of Philo's Roman context from a slightly different angle. Rather than envisioning his engagement with Roman discourses, he interprets him as an Alexandrian Platonist, who visited Rome and may on that occasion have transmitted some elements of his philosophical tradition. This hypothesis is tested via a number of parallels between Philo and Seneca's exposition of Platonic ideas in *Letters* 58 and 65, which seem to draw not only on the master himself, but also on his subsequent interpreters. Given that familiarity with Philo has been made plausible in the cases of Plutarch, Celsus, Numenius

and Plotinus, Sterling asks whether Seneca may also have drawn on his work and, if so, how he became familiar with it. Following an analysis of the parallels pertaining to metaphysics and causation, Sterling considers three major options: that both authors developed the same views independently, that they drew independently from a common pool of traditions or, alternatively, that Seneca or some of his friends heard Philo in Rome and adopted his views. Dismissing the first option as improbable, Sterling concludes that the second and third are possible, the former being the most likely. The third option relies on the observation that both authors similarly diverge from standard positions within the Platonic tradition, and Sterling cautions that it should not be dismissed purely on the grounds that Philo was Jewish and thus supposedly isolated.

The first section concludes with Mischa Meier's article "Nero's Persecution of the Christians, the Jews and a Possible 'Philonic' Connection." Meier revisits the enigma of Nero's persecution of the Christians, the historicity of which has been altogether denied in some recent scholarship. In his view, the crux of the question is whether Nero could have known that the people he persecuted were Christ-believers, given that the term only appears in the second century CE. Rather than completely dismissing Tacitus' unique account of the events, Meier seeks to reconstruct different stages of Roman awareness of Christians as a separate group. In this process the Jews played a central role, both as observers of debates taking place within their communities and as victims of imperial policies restricting them on account of various political conflicts. It would thus have been in their interest to distance themselves from the Christ-believers, in order to safeguard traditional Jewish worship and avoid the suspicion of the Roman administration. Meyer concludes that even though Philo does not mention neither Jesus nor his followers, he may nevertheless have noticed early developments and started negotiations with the Roman administration, given the networks he developed in Rome during his embassy.

The second section positions Philo in the context of New Testament writings, exploring different methods of comparison. Loveday Alexander's essay, "Sailing to Caesar: Philo's *Embassy* and Luke's Paul in Rome," argues that the widely attested first-century practice that Josephus calls "sailing to Caesar" offers an illuminating framework for understanding both Philo's *Embassy to Gaius* and Luke's account of Paul's trials and journey to Rome. Philo is not on trial, and Paul is not an ambassador, but both experiences are shaped by the same agonistic framework, and the same underlying realities of political life in the empire, in which the emperor is regularly invoked as final court of appeal in disputes between local civic communities and their governing elites. Reading Luke's account of Paul's trial in tandem with Philo brings out the differences in their relative situations, but also many similarities, such as the importance of soliciting favor from those who hold political power, the appeal to wider principles of justice, the political acumen needed to play off one power-broker against another, the

dangerous tendency of public discourse to slide from precise charges to critique of a whole way of life and, finally, the perilously thin boundary between embassy and trial. Alexander offers a detailed literary analysis of passages from Philo, Josephus and Luke to explore the dynamics between literature and politics in the shared cultural milieu of the Roman empire. Avoiding one-directional models, she points to complex dynamics and intricate entanglements of apologetics, historiography and construction of religious identity. Philo's *Legatio* is used as a central witness to such negotiations, which illuminates the literary and political strategies of *Acts*.

Matthias Becker follows with a chapter entitled "Philo's *Lives* and Luke's Gospel – Features of Hagiographical Discourse in Early Imperial-Era Biography." This essay highlights hagiographical aspects of ancient biographies, focusing on Philo's *Lives* of Moses and Abraham, on the one hand, and the Gospel of Luke, on the other. Hagiographical discourse is defined by four features, namely a focus on exceptional human individuals, who have a close relationship with God, a combination of factual and fictional components, multiple programmatic functions and, finally, overlaps with the concept of the "divine man." These categories are then applied to a close reading of Philonic and Lucan passages, which emerge as engaging similar motifs and depicting their heroes as especially endowed divine men. They love God and are loved by Him, they show special compassion for God and obedience to Him, they leave their social environment to embark on their spiritual journey, they enjoy divine providence and perform miracles. Becker concludes by stressing that these features also characterize pagan Greek biographies, such as those of Plutarch, and were part of the profile of intellectuals in the imperial period.

Joan R. Taylor contributes an article called "Another Look at Logos Theology in Philo and John," which revisits an often-discussed issue from a new angle. After surveying the initial reception history of Philo in Alexandria and beyond, Taylor turns to the intellectual milieu of the Gospel of John, which she locates in Ephesus, another mediterranean city with close ties to Alexandria. The connection between Philo and John, she argues, is not one of direct dependence, but of indirect engagement. Taking seriously early Patristic insights that the Gospel of John counters the position of a certain Cerinthus, who was associated with Egypt, Taylor reconstructs his views from fragments in Tertullian and Hippolytus and argues that he represents a Logos theory close to that of Philo. She stresses that it is impossible to know if Cerinthus – for all his "Egyptian" education – used Philo primarily or whether Philo was simply one of many authors of the Alexandrian school, who were read by Christian Jews in the city of Ephesus and elsewhere. Regardless, Cerinthus can be understood better by reference to Philo and thus Cerinthus represents a reception of Philo more clearly than we see in the Gospel of John. The biggest Cerinthian innovation pertains to Philo's Logos, and the Powers, which always remain as transcendent

as the Father. An enfleshed Power of any kind – let alone the Logos – is not found in Philo. However, this concept *was* found in Cerinthus, apparently, who asserted that the Power “Christ” arrived and dwelt in Jesus, the human being made by the Maker, who exhibited goodness worthy enough to be accounted as his son. As such, while the Gospel of John does not have Philo directly in view, it addresses Philonic concepts as they were already adapted by Christian Jews in Ephesus, namely by those who followed Cerinthus.

Philip Alexander concludes the second section with an essay on “Philo of Alexandria and *Hebrews* in the Context of the Roman Empire. Revisiting the Question of their Relationship.” Alexander starts with a detailed survey of modern research on the relationship between Philo and the author of *Hebrews*, showing that generations of scholars have not been able to offer conclusive evidence, since they focused on questions of direct dependence, which inevitably struggle in the face of significant similarities and differences between the texts. Alexander proposes instead a heuristic comparison of the two authors against the backdrop of first century Rome. This triangular approach enables us to put them into dialogue with one another, without becoming entangled in questions of literary dependence. The broad convergences of time, place, and idea would make that comparison worthwhile in its own right, but Alexander further recommends sharpening the comparison by exploiting the fact that both writers seem to be addressing a Roman audience. The essay concludes with an initial study of exemplarity as a text-case. Philo and *Hebrews* emerge as authors participating in wider, typically Roman efforts to depict a gallery of exemplary forefathers as a means of constructing identity. They even share some figures, such as Abraham, but put them to different uses, Philo soliciting empathy for Judaism in Rome, *Hebrews* inviting Roman readers to own the Biblical tradition as part of their new Christian identity.

The third section of this collection contextualizes Philo in Greek literature and philosophy. Jason König opens with an essay entitled “Human and Environment in Philo’s *Life of Moses* and *Flaccus*,” which applies insights from postcolonial ecocriticism in the study of Greek literature. While such studies have thus far focused mostly on the Classical period, König investigates Philo as a Greek author in the Roman empire, next to Plutarch and others. Philo’s deep fascination with environmental themes, which departs from the Septuagintal Exodus story and its theme of Divine providence, results in imagery that has its best parallels in Greek and also Latin rhetoric and poetry. Some of the effects achieved by Philo are relatively familiar within Philonic scholarship, such as, for example, his portrayal of the naturalness of the Jewish religion, in contrast with what he views as the unnatural character of the Egyptians’ relationship with the world around them. König moves beyond these insights and shows how Philo’s exploration of the environment also contributes to a negative representation of imperial dominance. In the opening sections of the *Life of Moses* Philo em-



phasizes the Jewish population's vulnerability to the environment, alongside attempts by the Egyptians to exercise control over the natural world. Those images are then overturned later in the narrative, as the Egyptians are themselves exposed to environmental harm through the plagues, while Moses increasingly exercises a divinely sanctioned mastery over nature. The article concludes with a comparison to similar patterns in Philo's *Flaccus*, which highlights the connections between environment, literature and politics in the Roman empire. Philo thus helps us to see the sophistication of ancient debates, which has often been overlooked in ecological investigations.

Volker Drecoll concludes the third section with an essay on "Philo and Severus on the Unity of the Soul," which analyzes Philo as an important witness to debates within the Platonic school which are not attested elsewhere in the first century CE, but fully emerge in the fragments of Severus, a second-century CE Alexandrian Platonist. Drecoll initially submits key-passages in the *Allegorical Commentary* from Philo's earlier, more Platonic period and his later Roman works, showing that the tension between Plato's references to the soul's division and unity features prominently in the former. Philo suggests for the first time a kind of solution by claiming that only the rational and divinely inspired part of the soul can truly be called soul or man's self. Philo's significance is then illuminated by comparison to Severus, whose fragments are partly preserved by Eusebius and the newly discovered treatise *On Principles and Matter* by Porphyry. Their testimonies indicate that Severus polemicized against the position of Atticus, according to whom opposite parts of the soul were held together. Severus, by contrast, argued that the soul cannot be considered as truly composite, because that assumption would negate its immortality.

## Bibliography

- Astruc, Jean. *Conjectures sur les memoires originaux dont il paroît que Moÿse s'est servi pour composer le livre de la Genese*. Brussels, 1753.
- Brehier, Emile. *Les Idées Philosophiques et Religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie*. Paris: J. Vrin, 1950.
- Cover, Michael. *Lifting the Veil. 2 Corinthians 3:7–18 in Light of Jewish Homiletic and Commentary Traditions*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2015.
- Deines, Roland, ed. *Neues Testament und hellenistisch-jüdische Alltagskultur: Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen III Internationales Symposium zum Corpus Judaeo-Hellenisticum Novi Testamenti 21–24 Mai 2009*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Dillon, John M. *The Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220*. London: Duckworth, 1977.
- Levy, Carlos. "La Conversion Du Scepticisme Chez Philon d'Alexandrie." In *Philo of Alexandria and Post-Aristotelian Philosophy*. Edited by Francesca Alesse, 103–120. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

- . "The Sceptical Academy: Decline and Afterlife." In *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Scepticism*. Edited by Richard Bett, 81–104. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Parry, Milman, ed. *The Making of Homeric Verse. Collected Papers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Reydams-Schils, Gretchen. *Demiurge and Providence. Stoic and Platonic Readings of Plato's Timaeus*. Turnhout: Brepols 1999.
- Runia, David T. *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato*. Leiden: Brill, 1986.
- Niehoff, Maren R. "Reading Strategies in the Greco-Roman World. Grammar, Allegory and Exemplarity." In *Behind the Scenes of the New Testament: Cultural, Social and Historical Context*. Edited by Shively et al. Forthcoming, Baker Academic.
- Sampley, J. Paul, ed. *Paul and The Greco-Roman World*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.
- Sampey, John R. "The Code of Hammurabi and the Laws of Moses." *Baptist Review and Expositor* 1 (1) (1904a): 97–107.
- . "The Code of Hammurabi and the Laws of Moses." *Baptist Review and Expositor* 1.2 (1904b): 233–243.
- Sterling, Gregory E. "'The School of Sacred Laws': The Social Setting of Philo's Treatises." *Vigiliae Christianae* 53 (1999): 148–164.
- . "'Philo Has Not Been Used Half Enough': The Significance of Philo of Alexandria for the Study of the New Testament." *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 30 (2003): 251–269.
- Weisser, Sharon. *Eradication ou modérations des passions. Histoire de la controverse chez Cicéron, Sénèque et Philon d'Alexandrie*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2021.
- Wendland, Paul. "Philo's Schrift *περι πάντα σπουδαίων είναι ἐλεύθερον*." *Archiv für die Geschichte der Philosophie* 1 (1988): 509–517.
- Zetterholm, M. "The Paul within Judaism Perspective." In *Perspectives on Paul*. Edited by S. McKnight and B. J. Oropeza, 170–193. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020.

Roman Contexts:  
Philosophy and History

## Index of Names

- Abraham 235, 239, 241–247, 250–251  
Adam 178, 274  
Agrippa I 215–216, 219, 225, 227  
Agrippa II 212, 219–227  
Alexandria 169, 171, 174, 184–186, 198,  
200–203, 264–268, 276, 280  
Antiochus of Aschalon 170  
Apion 200  
Aristobulus 265  
Aristotle 174–177  
Arius Didymus 170  
Artapanus 265  
Athens 169  
Attalus 173
- Caesarea 172  
Caligula 174, 200  
Cassius Dio 198–199  
Celsus 171  
Cerinthus 263–80  
Ceslas Spicq 294  
Chrestus 194–199, 202–203  
Christ 266, 269–70, 272, 276, 277–280  
Cicero 13–15, 25–30, 33–34, 38–39,  
41–42, 58, 72–89, 183  
Claudius 174, 193–195, 198, 200–203  
Corduba 173  
Corsica 174
- Demetrius 137–143
- Ephesus 264–269, 276, 280  
Egypt 172, 174, 269 321–338  
Epictetus 144–147  
Eudorus 170  
Eve 178
- Felix 217, 221, 223–224, 226  
Festus 220–221, 223–224, 226
- Herodians 215–216, 219, 221–222
- Jamnia 200  
Jerusalem 201  
Jesus of Nazareth 237–246, 249–256  
Josephus 172–173, 184, 212–225, 227  
Julia Livilla 174
- Mithriades VI 169  
Moses 235, 238–247, 249–251, 254–256,  
276  
Musonius Rufus 155–166
- Nero 174, 191–194, 196, 198, 202–203  
Nile 324–325, 328, 330, 332, 335–336  
Numenius 171
- Origen 172
- Papirius Fabianus 173  
Paul (apostle) 148, 191–192, 194, 196,  
199, 201, 211–213, 221–227, 231  
Peter (apostle) 265  
Philo of Alexandria 171, 177, 179–180,  
182–186, 192, 194, 200–203  
– *Allegorical Commentary* 173  
– codex 171–172  
– *Exposition of the Law* 173  
– Latin translation of Philo 173  
– the Philo legend 289–293  
Philo of Larissa 169  
Plato 186  
Plotinus 171  
Plutarch 171  
Poppaea Sabina 200  
Poseidonius 170
- Quintus Sextius 173
- Rome 169, 171, 173–174, 184–187,  
191–194, 198–199, 200–203, 264–  
265, 267

Seneca 59, 76, 143–144, 171, 175, 179,  
187, 202–203

Sophocles 129–137

Sotion 173

Suetonius 192–195, 197–199

Sulla 169

Syria 172

Therapeutae 265

Valerius Maximus 102, 108–109, 113–123

Varro 180

## Index locorum

### *Old Testament*

#### Genesis

1:1–5	183
1:6–31	183

### *New Testament*

Gospel of John	263–280
Gospel of Mark	278
Acts of the apostles	211–213, 215, 221–227, 231
Epistle to the Hebrews	287–289, 293–302, 304, 306, 308–314

### *Classical writings*

#### Aëtius

##### *Placita*

1.11.2	180
--------	-----

#### Alcinous

##### *Didaskalikos*

9.1.2	184
9.3	180
10.3	184

#### Augustine

##### *De civitate dei*

7.28.18–21	180
------------	-----

#### Cicero

##### *De oratore*

5–10	176
7–10	182

##### *De legibus*

1.59	185–186
------	---------

#### Heliodorus of Emesa

##### *Aethiopica*

9.9	172
-----	-----

#### Philo of Alexandria

##### *De cherubim*

124–217	178
---------	-----

##### *De opificio mundi*

17–20	13–25, 42–45
19–20	182
69	185

##### *In Flaccum*

227–228, 230, 335–338
-----------------------

##### *De Iosepho*

53–66
-------

##### *Legatio ad Gaium*

211, 214–217, 227–228, 230–231
-----------------------------------

##### *De vita Mosis*

324–335, 338
--------------

##### *Quod omnis probus liber sit*

101–122, 127–137
------------------

##### *De providentia*

1.23	178
------	-----

##### *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin*

1.58	178
------	-----

#### Philoponus

##### *In Aristotelis Physicorum Libros*

##### *Commentaria*

5.7–12	181
--------	-----

#### Plato

##### *Phaedo*

170
-----

##### *Timaeus*

14–18, 21–25, 28, 38–42, 44–45, 170
--

##### 28e

177
-----

Proclus

*In Platonis Timaeum Commentarii*

1.357.12–16      181

Seneca

*Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*

58.8–22      169

65      170–171, 175–177, 182,  
185–186

Sextus Empiricus

*Adversus Mathematicos*

10.10      180–181

Tacitus

*Annals*

15.44      191–193, 195, 197–199

## Index of Subjects

- Angel 273–274  
Anti-Epicureanism 14, 38–44  
Apologetic, *apologia* 213–214, 216, 223, 225–230  
Arbitration 214–215  
Architecture 13–14, 20–21, 25–44
- Biography, biographies 235–256
- Caesar, emperor 214–217, 219, 226–228  
Causation 176–178, 180–181  
Cause  
– efficient cause 179  
– material cause 179  
– formal cause 179  
– instrumental cause 179  
– final cause 179  
– Christians 191–199, 201–203  
– persecution of 191–194, 198–199, 202–203  
Conscience  
– *συνειδός* 62–66  
– *conscientia* 72–86  
Courtroom 82–86, 88–89, 221, 229  
Cynicism 161–164
- Docetism 277–278
- Education 103–107, 164–165  
Embassy, ambassadors 211–220, 227–231  
Environment 321–323  
Exemplarity, *exempla* 101–102, 105–113, 115–122, 306–314
- Freedom 127–149
- God 130–137, 139, 142, 144–147  
– becoming like 156–159  
– divine powers 270–277, 279–280  
– God the Father 270–275, 277, 279  
– ideas as the thoughts of 183–185  
– obedience to 245–246
- Gymnosophists 108, 111, 115–119
- Hagiographical discourse 235–256  
Holiness, holy 239–240
- Jews  
– persecution of 193–195, 198, 200–203  
Justice 214–215, 217, 221, 223, 227–228
- Logos 263–280
- Macrocosm/microcosm 185–186  
Maker, *demiourgos* 273  
Marriage 156, 163  
Midrash 278–279  
Miracles 253–254  
Monad 272  
Monogenēs 270, 272, 275, 279  
Mourning 156–158
- Nature 30–38, 322–323, 324, 326–327, 328, 330–334
- Philosophical dependence 175  
Physiognomics 67, 77–81  
*Pistis* 308  
Platonic theory 269–270  
Prepositional metaphysics 176–178, 180–181  
*Presbeia* 211–220, 227–231  
Providence 24, 27–29, 33–34, 39, 41–45, 248–250
- Reason 343–344, 356  
Romanitas 304–306  
Roman empire 322–323, 336, 338



- Roman law  
– *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* 59–60  
– *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* 60–61
- Septuagint 321, 324–334
- Sociability 156–162
- Social memory 307–308
- Solitude 246–248
- Soul  
– parts of 341–344, 350–351, 353, 357  
– unity of 344–347, 351–352, 354–356  
– creation of 344–347, 356  
– chariot of the *Phaedrus* 342, 355–356
- Stoicism 13–18, 22–30, 33–34, 40–44,  
103–108, 113–115, 155–166, 264
- Targums 263–264
- Theatricality 86–93
- Trial 212, 215, 219, 221–227, 229–231
- Tribunal 215, 217, 221–222, 224–226,  
228, 231
- Virtue 105–107, 110–112, 115–122
- Water 325–334
- Wisdom, *sophia* 250–252, 275