

JOHN GRANGER COOK

The Interpretation  
of the Old Testament  
in Greco-Roman  
Paganism

*Studien und Texte zu  
Antike und Christentum*

23

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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of the Old Testament  
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For my doctoral fathers,  
Prof. David Hellholm and the late Prof. William Beardslee,  
with heartfelt gratitude



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# Introduction

## *The Septuagint's Reception in the Greco-Roman World*

While writing *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism* it became apparent that the pagan authors were concerned with the Christians' extensive use of the Old Testament to support and understand their faith<sup>1</sup>. I also realized that I could not include much of the OT material in the book. There will inevitably be some overlap between the two books, but I will not repeat all of the introductory material concerning the authors themselves and their works. This monograph will survey the responses to the OT literature in Celsus (II C.E.), Porphyry (III C.E.), and Julian (IV C.E.)<sup>2</sup>.

I have intentionally adopted the term "Old Testament" in the title even though that is a specifically Christian name for the scriptures of Israel<sup>3</sup>. More academically neutral terms such as "First Testament"<sup>4</sup> or "Hebrew Bible" are not as relevant to my project because it was the advent of Christianity that seems to have finally generated a close reading of the OT on the part of pagan intellectuals<sup>5</sup>. Such a judgment can only be based on the extant sources. It is

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<sup>1</sup> J. G. COOK, *The Interpretation of the New Testament in Greco-Roman Paganism*, STAC 3, ed. C. MARKSCHIES, Tübingen 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Still of importance is the survey of E. STEIN, *Alttestamentliche Bibelkritik in der späthellenistischen Bibelkritik*, Lwow 1935 (offprint of the article that originally appeared in *Collectanea Theologica Societatis Theologorum Polonorum* 16, 1935, 38-83).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Melito of Sardis (II C.E.) apud Eus., H.E. 4.26.14 (the books of the Old Testament; τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης βιβλία), Origen, *De Princ.* 3.1.16 (Origenis de principiis libri IV, *Texte zur Forschung* 24, ed. and trans. H. GÖRGEMANNS/H. KARPP, Darmstadt 1976, 224,11 [p. 520, the editors use KOETSCHAU's page and line numbers in the margins, and I will include their own page numbers in brackets]), Clement Alex., *Strom.* 3.6.54.4, 4.21.134.2 (GCS Clemens Alex. II, 221,15; 307,32 STÄHLIN/FRÜCHTEL). 2 Cor 3:14 has similar language.

<sup>4</sup> Even this term is too close to Heb 9:15 to be "neutral" between Judaism and Christianity.

<sup>5</sup> J. FREUDENTHAL, *Alexander Polyhistor und die von ihm erhaltenen Reste jüdischer und samaritanischer Geschichtswerke*, *Hellenistische Studien* 1-2, Breslau, 1875, 180 remarks with regard to Celsus and Julian that it was Christianity's struggle against paganism that led all eyes to look at the Bible which was Christianity's foundation. W. NESTLE, *Die Haupteinwände des antiken Denkens gegen das Christentum*, *ARW* 37, 1941 (51-100) 59 makes the important point that Christians like Justin derived the entire life of Jesus from the

possible that the Greek translation of the OT (Septuagint, LXX) was read extensively before Christianity, but the evidence is not available at this time. Arguments from silence are notoriously dangerous. The evidence may have been lost due to any number of reasons<sup>6</sup>.

Victor Tcherikover took this position half a century ago: "The fact, however, is that the translation of the Holy Scriptures into Greek made no impression whatever in the Greek world, since in the whole of Greek literature there is no indication that the Greeks read the Bible before the Christian period."<sup>7</sup> There are some exceptions to the rule as Louis Feldman has pointed out<sup>8</sup>. I will briefly survey those exceptions in this introduction. To round out the picture I will also consider the question of OT traditions in magical texts and in the Hermetic literature<sup>9</sup>. The fascinating references in rabbinic literature to certain Cynic philosophers (who are aware of biblical traditions) will not appear in the following survey<sup>10</sup>.

OT. See Justin, *Apol.* 1.30.1 (PTS 38, 76,1-7 MARCOVICH) and the entire *Dialogue with Trypho* including *Dial.* 29.2, 40.1-41.4 (PTS 47, 116,10-2; 136,1-138,26 MARCOVICH). Consequently the critics had to read the OT.

<sup>6</sup> Could the texts (left by pre-Christian readers of the LXX) have been destroyed due to the revolt of 115-17 in Egypt (a conjecture of Prof. HENGEL in a personal letter)? Most of the (pagan) Greek literature concerning the Jews written between IV B.C.E. to II C.E. has been lost, as a glance at F. JACOBY's *FGH* will show.

<sup>7</sup> V. TCHERIKOVER, *Jewish Apologetic Literature Reconsidered*, *Eos* 48, 1956, (169-93) 177. He refers to previous authors such as W. BOUSSET, *Die Religion des Judentums*, HNT 21, ed. H. GRESSMANN, Tübingen, 1926<sup>3</sup>, 437 (the LXX was not read in literate circles, but was possibly used for propaganda among people visiting synagogues) / H. B. SWETE, *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, Cambridge 1914<sup>2</sup>, 22. A. D. NOCK has a similar view also (*Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo*, Oxford 1933, 79). NOCK's judgement is shared by A. M. A. HOSPERS-JANSEN, *Tacitus over de Joden*, Groningen 1949, 68-9. L. FELDMAN discusses the issue in *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World. Attitudes and Interactions from Alexander to Justinian*, Princeton 1993, 311-12. M. STERN, *The Jews in Greek and Latin Literature*, in: *The Jewish People in the First Century*, ed. S. SAFRAI/M. STERN, CRINT, Vol. II, Philadelphia 1976, (1101-59) 1139 argues that the LXX had "little effect on Greek literature." A general discussion can be found in G. DORIVAL, *La Bible des Septante chez les auteurs païens (jusqu'au Pseudo-Longin)*, in: *Lectures anciennes de la Bible*, *Cahiers de la Biblia patristica* 1, Strasbourg 1987, 9-26 / C. AZIZA, *L'utilisation polémique du récit de l'Exode chez des écrivains alexandrins*, *ANRW* II.20.1, 1997, 41-65.

<sup>8</sup> FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 311-14.

<sup>9</sup> In his discussion of the ancient world's knowledge of the LXX, H. J. CADBURY mentions the case of Ps. Longinus, *On the Sublime* 9.9 (to be discussed below) as the "single exception that 'proves the rule'." He concludes: "The influence of the LXX is probably first manifest in less literary circles, as in the *Corpus Hermeticum* and in the magical papyri" (*Septuagint*, *OCD*<sup>2</sup>, 978-79).

<sup>10</sup> For Abnimos (who is probably Oenomaus of Gadara) see M. LUZ, *Oenomaus and Talmudic Anecdote*, *JSJ* 23, 1992, 42-80 / *Idem*, *A Description of the Greek Cynic in the Jerusalem Talmud*, *JSJ* 20, 1989, 49-60 / *Idem*, *Abnimos, Nimos, and Oenomaus: A Note*,

Patristic writers came to call the Greek translation of the OT the "Septuagint" since according to the *Letter of Aristeas* seventy-two translators had produced a Greek version of the first five books under Ptolemy II Philadelphus (282-246 B.C.E.)<sup>11</sup>. Modern scholars have judged the letter to be largely a matter of legend, but have retained the date of Ptolemy II for the translation of the Pentateuch. Hengel notes that a Christian author first used "Septuagint" for the seventy (-two) translators in reference to this collection of writings<sup>12</sup>. One can conclude from the *Letter of Aristeas* that the Pentateuch was translated at some time during Ptolemy II's reign, perhaps towards the middle of the third century (B.C.E.). The rest of the documents were probably translated by the end of the first century (C.E.)<sup>13</sup>. The letter itself contains an interesting if legendary explanation of the silence of Greek literature concerning the LXX. The librarian of Alexandria, Demetrius, answers Ptolemy II's question concerning why the Greek historians and poets do not mention the LXX: "Because the legislation was holy and had come from God, and indeed, some of those who made the attempt were smitten by God, and refrained from their design."<sup>14</sup> Two examples of unfortunate Greeks are the historian Theopompus and the poet Theodectes (both IV B.C.E.)<sup>15</sup>. While one cannot attribute much historical value to this statement it does show the author's own understanding of the lack of awareness of the LXX on the part of the ancient world.

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JQR 77, 1986-7, 191-5. I thank RICHARD GOULET for the reference to Abnimos. Whatever the historical value of the Rabbinic anecdotes, they show how the "Cynic-type was conceived" during the period. See LUZ, Oenomaus, 52.

<sup>11</sup> Ep. Arist. 10, 309. See the edition: Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate (SC 89, 104, 232 PELLETIER).

<sup>12</sup> Josephus, Antiq. 12.56, 57 mentions seventy-two translators and then reduces the number to seventy. Cf. M. HENGEL/with the assistance of R. DEINES, Die Septuaginta als „christliche Schriftensammlung“, ihre Vorgeschichte und das Problem ihres Kanons, in: Die Septuaginta zwischen Judentum und Christentum, ed. M. HENGEL/A. M. SCHWEMER, WUNT 72, Tübingen 1994, (182-284) 187-8. See Justin, Dial. 68.7, 124,3 (188,50-51; 285,14-5 MARC.).

<sup>13</sup> HENGEL, Die Septuaginta, 183-4. A. RAHLFS argues that most of the OT was translated towards the end of the second century B.C.E. Cf. History of the Septuagint Text, in: Septuaginta, Stuttgart 1935, (LVI-LXV) LVI. He appeals to Sirach, Prologue, in support of this position. Cp. the similar position in HENGEL, Idem, 244-51.

<sup>14</sup> Ep. ad Arist. 312-13 (234 PELL.). ET from OTP II, 33. Demetrius was not actually the librarian of Ptolemy II with whom he had had a falling out. See PELLETIER, Lettre, 66-70 / C. R. HOLLADAY, Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors. Volume III. Aristobulus, SBLTT 39, Pseudepigrapha Series 13, Atlanta 1995, III, 213 n.70.

<sup>15</sup> Ep. ad Arist. 314-16 (234-36 PELL.).

### 0.1 Hecataeus of Abdera (ca 300 B.C.E.)

Exceptions can certainly be found to Tcherikover's generalization in Menahem Stern's collection of Greco-Roman authors who refer to the Jews<sup>16</sup>. One of the first authors to write an account of the Jews was Hecataeus of Abdera who lived during the time of Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I<sup>17</sup>. Stern calls attention to one of Hecataeus' statements describing the practices of the Jews: "At the end of the laws (τοῖς νόμοις ἐπὶ τελευτῆς) is added the statement that 'Moses when he heard these things from God told them to the Jews'" (Μωσῆς ἀκούσας τοῦ θεοῦ τὰδε λέγει τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις)<sup>18</sup>. Although this is not a direct quote from the LXX — which probably did not exist yet — it is close enough to texts such as Lev 26:46, 27:34, Num 36:13 and Deut 32:44 that one wonders if the author was aware of the biblical tradition<sup>19</sup>. John Gager notes that the Alexandrian Jews might have had some informal Greek translations that Hecataeus heard orally from Jewish acquaintances<sup>20</sup>. It seems impossible to demonstrate here that Hecataeus had

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<sup>16</sup> M. STERN, ed., *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism*. Vol. I, From Herodotus to Plutarch, Jerusalem 1974; Vol. II, From Tacitus to Simplicius, Jerusalem 1980; Vol. III, Appendixes and Indexes, Jerusalem 1984. FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 312 lists several of the most important exceptions.

<sup>17</sup> On Hecataeus see G. RINALDI, *La Bibbia dei pagani*. I. Quadro storico, *La Bibbia nella storia* 19, Bologna 1998. *La Bibbia dei pagani*. II. Testi e Documenti, *La Bibbia nella storia* 20, Bologna 1998, I, 71 n.126 / STERN I, 20-5 / J. G. GAGER, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism*, Nashville/New York 1973, 26-37 / J. C. DAROCA/P. F. GONZÁLEZ, *Hécatee d'Abdère*, *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques*, ed. R. GOULET, Vol. 3, Paris 1989, 505-25.

<sup>18</sup> STERN I, § 11 = Diod. Sic. 40.3.6. Cf. DAROCA/GONZÁLEZ, *Hécatee*, 512-3, 518-20 who argue for an interpretation which recognizes the ambivalent attitude of Hecataeus towards the Jews.

<sup>19</sup> STERN, *The Jews*, 1106 believes that Hecataeus' comment is "an almost direct quotation from the Bible."

<sup>20</sup> GAGER, *Moses*, 32. Some (admittedly questionable) support for this hypothesis can be found in Ep. Arist. 30 (118-20, PELL.) which may imply the existence of some Greek versions that were in competition with the LXX. On the question (with much bibliography) see R. J. H. SHUTT's note in OTP I, 14. G. ZUNTZ shows that the text in no way proves the existence of pre-LXX translations. See Idem, *Aristeas Studies II: Aristeas on the Translation of the Torah*, in: *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations*, ed. S. JELICOE, New York 1974, 208-225 (= JSS 4, 1959). PELLETIER (Lettre, 118 n.3) in his comment on the text, is in agreement with ZUNTZ. He calls attention, however, to another (probably legendary) statement by Aristobulus that there existed translations of the exodus, the conquest, and the laws before the translation in Demetrius' time. A. implies that Plato and Pythagoras used such a translation. Cf. Aristobulus F. 3a = Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 1.22.150.1-3 (HOLLADAY, *Fragments*, III, 150,1-154,43; see also HOLLADAY's remarks in III, 67-8, 215). E. TOV argues that one can accept the existence of a translation of most texts in the OT prior to the LXX translation in: *Die griechischen Bibelübersetzungen*, ANRW II.20.1, 1997, (121-89) 132-33.

a direct knowledge of an OT text, although he clearly had a good source. His reference to “the end of the laws” is the first appearance in extant Greek literature of a reference to the Bible and probably is a kind of title — like the later mention of the law and the prophets that appears in texts such as the Prologue to Sirach<sup>21</sup>. It was a commonplace in the ancient world that certain lawgivers received their laws from a divinity, and Hecataeus may be merely viewing Moses in that perspective<sup>22</sup>. Hecataeus was aware of an exodus tradition through his informants although it is again not possible to show that he had a Greek version of the book — if such even existed before that of the LXX. In brief, according to his version, there was a plague in Egypt and foreigners are blamed. Among the foreigners expelled from Egypt were certain individuals sent to Judaea whose leader was Moses. Because of their expulsion from Egypt, Moses introduced a misanthropic and inhospitable way of life. He founded the temple, established the division of the people into twelve tribes, and appointed priests to judge the people (Deut 19:17, 21:5). He allowed no images of the gods and believed that Heaven is god. Moses also divided the land into equal shares for common people and gave the priests a greater allocation<sup>23</sup>. The commoners cannot sell their land (Lev 25:13)<sup>24</sup>. Hecataeus’ account probably reflects the situation in postexilic Israel where land ownership was a great concern<sup>25</sup>. The people also must raise their children (implying no infanticide)<sup>26</sup>. There are inaccuracies in his account of Israelite origins from the perspective of the biblical tradition (e.g. Moses gives the legislation in Judaea which he never set foot in according to the Bible). However, what is undeniable is the fact that Hecataeus had a Jewish source — one that was ultimately based on the OT<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Sir, Prolog. 24-5: “the law and the prophets and the other scrolls.”

<sup>22</sup> See § 1.28.3. See also Diodorus and Strabo below (§ 0.7, 0.9).

<sup>23</sup> See Num 35, Josh 21 for priestly cities. They (priests and Levites) have no land according to Deut 10:9, 12:12, 18:1 and Num 18:24. GAGER, Moses, 33 calls attention to Ezek 48:8-14 where priests receive allotments of land.

<sup>24</sup> STERN I, § 11 = Diod. Sic. 40.3.1-7. Diodorus also writes that the Egyptians colonized the nation of the Jews (with voluntary colonists) in 1.28.2 = STERN I, § 55. GAGER, Moses 28-29 notes that one can attribute the earlier version to Hecataeus also.

<sup>25</sup> STERN I, 32 / GAGER, Moses, 33.

<sup>26</sup> See Tacitus below (§ 0.11) and STERN II, 41 on the practice in antiquity and its rejection by the Christian apologists such as Tert., Apol. 9.8 (CChr.SL 1, 103,31-6 DEKKERS) and Min. Felix, Oct. 30.2 (BiTeu 29,5-8 KYTZLER).

<sup>27</sup> This is also the conclusion of DORIVAL, La Bible, 12 who hypothesizes a Jewish informant that summarized Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers for Hecataeus. Cp. DAROCA/GONZÁLEZ, Hécatée, 519-20 who note that Hecataeus’ text does not imply the existence of a translation of Jewish texts prior to the LXX, but it is nevertheless a response to Jewish texts.

## 0.2 Manetho (III B.C.E.)

A figure who presents numerous literary difficulties is the Egyptian author Manetho who lived as a priest in Hierapolis during the era of Ptolemy I and II<sup>28</sup>. The two main excerpts of his work that deal with the Jews are sometimes separated into various strands of a Manetho and Ps. Manetho<sup>29</sup>. For the purposes of this introduction I will provisionally accept Stern's and Claude Aziza's judgment that both fragments are genuine<sup>30</sup>. In the first fragment Manetho describes an invasion of Egypt by the Shepherds (Hyksos) whom Josephus equates with the Israelites (C. Ap. 1.91) — an identification that Manetho probably also made. In the second text, Josephus writes that Manetho, by his own admission, records myths and talk concerning the Jews (τὰ μυθεύόμενα καὶ λεγόμενα περὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων)<sup>31</sup>. A pharaoh, Amenophis, wants to see the gods<sup>32</sup>. A seer tells him that he can only do that if Egypt is cleansed of lepers and other polluted people. The Egyptian lepers are put in stone quarries. They are later allowed to move to an old Shepherd city (Avaris) and appoint a priest of Hierapolis (Osarsiph) as their leader<sup>33</sup>. He commands them not to worship the gods or to abstain from eating any of

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<sup>28</sup> AZIZA, L'utilisation, 48 / RINALDI, La Bibbia dei pagani, I, 70 n.127.

<sup>29</sup> STERN I, § 19 = Jos., C. Ap. 1.73-91; STERN I, § 21 = C. Ap. 1.228-52. Manetho becomes a legendary magician in the magical papyri. See PGM III, 440; XIII, 23 and H. D. BETZ, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, including the Demotic Spells*, Chicago/London 1986, 30 n.92, 172 n.8.

<sup>30</sup> STERN I, 63-4 / AZIZA, L'utilisation, 53-5. Cf. also E. SCHÜRER, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.—A.D. 135)*, ed. and rev. G. VERMES/F. MILLAR/M. GOODMAN, Vols. 1-3, Edinburgh 1986, III/1, 596. P. SCHÄFER argues that the equation of Osarsiph and Moses is secondary (Judeophobia. Attitudes toward the Jews in the Ancient World, Cambridge, Mass./London 1997, 19).

<sup>31</sup> Jos., C. Ap. 1.229.

<sup>32</sup> It is an interesting coincidence that the *Oracle of the Potter* is addressed to Pharaoh Amenophis. In it hated foreigners (the belt-wearers), who have oppressed Egypt, are finally punished. When a messianic king comes from the Sun (or east) those who have died ask to rise to take part in the blessings. The sun which has been darkened during the time of the evil doers (probably the Greeks) will shine again when it brings punishment to the evil. See P. Oxy. XXII, 2332 / L. KOENEN, *Die Prophezeihungen des Töpfers*, ZPE 2, 1968, 178-209. References are to P<sub>3</sub> (Oxy.) col. 3, 63-71, P<sub>2</sub> (Rainer), col. 2, 47-55 (207-8 KOENEN). On the text cf. M. HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism. Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine in the Hellenistic Period*, Vols. 1-2, Philadelphia 1974, I, 184-5.

<sup>33</sup> Other authors who identify Moses as a priest are: Pompeius Trogus (STERN I, § 137 = Justinus, *Hist. Philip.* 36, *Epit.* 2.16); Strabo 16.2.35 (STERN I, § 115); Chaeremon apud Jos., C. Ap. 1.290 (STERN I, § 178). He is closely associated with Egyptian priests in the Hellenistic Jewish author Artapanus, F. 3 = Eus, P. E. 9.27.4, 6 (C. R. HOLLADAY, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors. Volume I. Historians*, SBLTT 20, Pseudepigrapha Series 10, Chico, CA 1983, I, 210,3-5.10-13). Cp. FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 522 n.67.

the Egyptian sacred animals (Exod 20:3-6; cp. Lev 11, 18:3). He also demands that they only associate with their own kind. With the help of the Shepherds they conquer Egypt, burn temples, and roast the sacred animals. They are later expelled to Syria. Manetho (or Ps. Manetho) equates Osarsiph with Moses, but qualifies the statement in the following way: "it is said that the priest who set down their polity and laws was Osarsiph of Hierapolis ... who later changed his name to Moses."<sup>34</sup> D. Mendels argues that Manetho "... attempts to refute the Jewish version of the Exodus which was probably published at the time in Greek."<sup>35</sup> While this conclusion is too strong, it is difficult not to believe that Manetho had a Jewish informant — probably an oral and not a written source. The LXX was almost certainly later than Manetho (but not later than the proposed Ps. Manetho). Aziza also finds it likely that in Manetho's time and before there was an ancient Egyptian version of the exodus that was a response to the Jewish form of the story<sup>36</sup>. The Egyptians suffer the plague of a skin disease in Exod 9:8-12, and in the

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<sup>34</sup> Jos., C. Ap. 1.250. According to AZIZA (L'utilisation, 53-4) an interpolator would not have written "it is said" to identify Osarsiph and Moses, but would have made the identification without any qualifications. The full account is in STERN I, § 21 = C. Ap. 1.228-52. HENGEL identifies Osarsiph with Joseph (Judaism, II, 176-77). Cp. STERN I, 85 who notes that possibly Io (the Jewish God) was removed from Joseph's name and replaced with Osiris.

<sup>35</sup> D. MENDELS, The Polemical Character of Manetho's *Aegyptiaca*, in: Purposes of History. Studies in Greek Historiography from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries B.C. Proceedings of the International Colloquium Leuven, 24-26 May 1988, ed. H. VERDIN/G. SCHEPENS/E. DE KEYSER, *Studia Hellenistica* 30, Louvain 1990 (91-110) 108-09. He refers to a study by A. KASHER, The Propaganda Purposes of Manetho's Libellous Story about the Base Origin of the Jews, in: *Studies in the History of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel*, Vol. 3, ed. B. ODED et al., Haifa 1974, 69-84 (in Hebrew). KASHER argues that Manetho sought to counter the Ptolemaic interest in Israel's Law (and the likely tarnishing of the image of Egypt in the exodus tradition) by attacking the Jews with a set of calumnies (in 72-3 he argues for the authenticity of Manetho's text in Josephus). GAGER is probably correct in holding that there were ancient Egyptian stories in which invaders (Hyksos, Syrians, etc.) devastated Egypt and were later driven out by hero-kings. This account then later was given Jewish features. Cf. GAGER, *Moses*, 116 / P. W. VAN DER HORST, *Chaeremon: Egyptian Priest and Stoic Philosopher*, Leiden 1984, 49 n.1. Nevertheless the Egyptian writers had to have Jewish informants or sources to be able to reformulate the stories in accord with Exodus. Cp. GAGER, *Moses*, 116 n.6 on the argument that Hecataeus fused "Egyptian and Jewish elements."

<sup>36</sup> AZIZA, L'utilisation, 46, 53-4. He also calls attention to C. Ap. 1.251 where Josephus mentions after Manetho's account that "the Egyptians tell these things about the Jews." STERN, *The Jews*, 1114 is willing to argue that the Jewish version of the exodus could "have been circulated in some form or other earlier" than the LXX in Egypt. HOSPERS-JANSEN, *Tacitus over de Joden*, 35-6, 119 appears to approve Josephus' claim that Manetho responded to the Jewish version of the exodus with his own account. Manetho did not make the identification of Osarsiph with Moses, however, according to HOSPERS-JANSEN.



Egyptian version the Jews themselves suffer from leprosy. Aziza thinks that the Egyptians have reversed the story. In Exodus Moses is a Hebrew who becomes an Egyptian prince, while in the Egyptian tradition he is an Egyptian who becomes leader of the Hebrews (Exod 2:5-10). The laws of Moses (Osarsiph) are reminiscent of the Decalogue<sup>37</sup>. Manetho probably felt some jealousy towards the favors enjoyed by the Jews under Ptolemy I and II<sup>38</sup>.

### 0.3 *Ocellus Lucanus (II B.C.E.)*

Philo knows the Pythagorean Ocellus of Lucania in Southern Italy and refers to him in his discourse on the eternity of the universe (De aetern. 12) for the view that the world is uncreated and indestructible. In the fourth chapter of Ocellus' own work *On the Nature of the Universe*, he includes a discussion of the origin of humankind. The date of the treatise may be II B.C.E. or I B.C.E.<sup>39</sup>. The purpose of human sexuality is not for pleasure but for generation:

Reflecting on these things first, it is not necessary to approach sexual pleasures like irrational animals, but to accept as necessary and good what good people think is necessary and good — namely that houses will not only be filled with inhabitants and most of earth's area will be filled (τὸν πλείονα τῆς γῆς τόπον πληροῦσθαι<sup>40</sup>), (for the human is the most civilized and best living being of all) but what is the greatest thing, that they will abound in good people.<sup>41</sup>

Gen 1:28 has “increase and grow in number and fill the earth” (αὐξάνεσθε καὶ πληθύνεσθε καὶ πληρώσατε τὴν γῆν). Harder and Stern argue that there is a reference to Gen 1:28 in Ocellus<sup>42</sup>. It would not be astonishing for a Greco-Roman researcher to find a Pentateuch in a nearby ghetto, according to

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<sup>37</sup> AZIZA, L'utilisation, 54.

<sup>38</sup> AZIZA, L'utilisation, 55. GAGER, Moses, 118 dates Ps. Manetho to 40 C.E. — the era of Apion and Chaeremon's version of the exodus. That was also a time of conflict between Jews and Gentiles.

<sup>39</sup> STERN I, 131-32 / R. HARDER, *Ocellus Lucanus — Text und Kommentar*, Berlin 1926, 31, 149 / H. DÖRRIE, *Pythagoreismus*, PRE XXIV, 1963 (268-77) 272 / FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 204, 312 / W. D. ROSS, *Ocellus*, OCD<sup>2</sup>, 745 / H. DÖRRIE, *Ocellus*, KP IV, 1972, 270.

<sup>40</sup> The verb stands only in the Marcianus 263 MS. HARDER, *Ocellus*, 128 defends the reading as likely given the context.

<sup>41</sup> *Ocellus Lucanus*, De universi natura 46 (22,14-20 HARDER) = STERN, I § 40 = H. THESLEFF, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period*, Åbo 136,4-9 / RINALDI, *La Bibbia dei pagani*, II, 78. Author's ET.

<sup>42</sup> HARDER, *Ocellus*, 128- 32 / STERN I, 131 / R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians*, Oxford 1949, 22 / Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 204, 312.

Harder — given their own interest in barbarian laws<sup>43</sup>. The contexts in Genesis and in Ocellus are similar since both are referring to the call of God to humanity to procreate. On the other hand this could all be coincidence<sup>44</sup>. It is, however, possible that Ocellus was aware of Jewish tradition. Other philosophers were aware of Judaism. Some Peripatetic philosophers such as Theophrastus (IV B.C.E.) and Clearchus were very sympathetic towards Judaism. After a discussion of the differences between Jewish and Greek sacrifice (the Jews burn the sacrifices and so do not consume them like the Greeks), Theophrastus calls the Jews “a people who are philosophers (φιλόσοφοι τὸ γένος ὄντες).” They speak with each other about the divine and at night observe the stars<sup>45</sup>. Clearchus (IV B.C.E.) creates an account in which Aristotle meets a Jew who not only speaks Greek but “who has the psyche (or spirit, soul ψυχή) of a Greek.” Aristotle also admires the Jews’ “amazing perseverance” (θαυμάσιον καρτερίαν) and prudence (σωφροσύνην). The ancestors of the Jews are Indian philosophers according to Clearchus’ Aristotle<sup>46</sup>. Hermippus (200 B.C.E.) traces the origins of Pythagoras’ philosophy to the Jews<sup>47</sup>. These opinions on the relationships between the Jews and the philosophers such as Aristotle and Pythagoras show that Ocellus could have been drawn to Genesis. Proof is lacking since the evidence is so slender, but one can assert that Ocellus may have known Genesis in its LXX version.

#### 0.4 *Lysimachus*

A virulently anti-Jewish version of the exodus appears in the writer Lysimachus who may have lived in the second or first century B.C.E. and

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<sup>43</sup> HARDER, Ocellus, 131.

<sup>44</sup> DORIVAL, *La Bible*, 17-9 argues against Ocellus’ use of Genesis.

<sup>45</sup> STERN I, § 4 = Porphyry, *De abst.* 2.26.

<sup>46</sup> STERN I, § 15 = Jos., *C. Ap.* 1.176-83. On the Jews as a nation of philosophers see the comments in J. GAGER, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism. Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, New York/Oxford 1983, 39, 69, 74, 76. SCHÜRER, *History*, III/1, 17 accepts the authenticity of the reported meeting between Aristotle and the Jew. Megasthenes (ca 300 B.C.E.) also compares the Brahman philosophers of India with the Jews, both being philosophers outside of Greece (STERN I, § 14 = Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 1.15.72.5). Numenius also includes the Jews along with his reference to Brahmans, Magi, and Egyptians as a source of Pythagoras (STERN II, §364a = F. 1a DES PLACES).

<sup>47</sup> STERN, I § 25 = Jos., *C. Ap.* 1.162-65; § 26 = Origen, *C. Cels.* 1.15. See also § 2.2.7. Aristobulus (F. 3a = Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 1.22.150.1-3 [III, 150,1-154,43 HOLLADAY]) and Josephus believe Pythagoras was dependent on Moses’ understanding of God (*C. Ap.* 2.167-68).

who was probably from Egypt<sup>48</sup>. According to him, during the reign of Pharaoh Bocchoris, the Jews who had leprosy, scabies, and other diseases begged in temples. When the crops began to fail, the oracle of Ammon told the king to drown the lepers and those with scabies and to drive the others into the wilderness<sup>49</sup>. In the wilderness at night they light fires and torches, fast, and ask the gods to save them. The next day “a certain” Moses counsels them to make for inhabited land, show kindness (εὐνοήσειν) to no one, to give only the worst counsel to outsiders, and to destroy the temples and altars of the gods. They mistreat the people they come upon and finally build a city called Hierosyla (“temple robberies”). They later call it Hierosolyma because of the disgraceful name<sup>50</sup>. Lysimachus numbers the fugitives as 110,000<sup>51</sup>. Aziza thinks the occasion of the text could be Ptolemy VI Philometor’s grant of a temple site in Leontopolis (ca 160) to the priest Onias IV — a refugee from Palestine<sup>52</sup>. Stern mentions the religious policy of the Hasmonean conquerors of Palestine as another possible context (to mirror the destruction of temples in Lysimachus’ story)<sup>53</sup>. Lysimachus may refer to the Jewish practice of Sabbath lights, but this is unclear<sup>54</sup>. Feldman also notes that the depictions of the Jews as beggars and as guilty of exclusiveness were commonplaces in antiquity<sup>55</sup>. One can agree with Aziza that Lysimachus uses an anti-Jewish version of the exodus that is probably different from the one

<sup>48</sup> HENGEL, *Judaism*, II, 172 dates Lysimachus to I B.C.E. See also A. GUDEMAN, *Lysimachus* (20), *PRE XIV*, 1928, 32-9 / RINALDI, *La Bibbia dei pagani*, I, 70 n.128 / *STERN I*, 382.

<sup>49</sup> Pompeius Trogus also mentions the exiles as the ones afflicted with leprosy and scabies (*STERN I*, § 137 = Justinus, *Hist. Philip.* 36, *Epit.* 2.12).

<sup>50</sup> *STERN I*, § 158 = Jos., *C. Ap.* 1.304-11. Tacitus probably made use of Lysimachus for one of his versions of Israelite origins. See § 0.11 below (FELDMAN, 192-94).

<sup>51</sup> *STERN I*, § 160 = Jos., *C. Ap.* 2.20.

<sup>52</sup> AZIZA, *L’utilisation*, 57. Onias founded a temple on the site of an old ruined temple. See SCHÜRER, *History*, III/1, 47-48, 145-46 / HENGEL, *Judaism*, II, 186. Cf. Jos., *Antiq.* 12.387, 13.70. AZIZA does not explain how this context would explain the temple robberies.

<sup>53</sup> *STERN I*, 385. Hyrcanus destroyed the temple on Gerizim (Jos., *Antiq.* 13.255-56; SCHÜRER, *History*, I, 207; II, 18-9). The Maccabees tore down altars and sacred precincts (2 *Macc* 10:2).

<sup>54</sup> *STERN I*, 386 / FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile*, 163, 166.

<sup>55</sup> Beggars: Martial 12.57.13 (= *STERN*, I § 246); Juvenal 3.10-6; 6.542-47 (= *STERN*, II § 296, 299). Jewish exclusiveness or misanthropy: Hecataeus apud Diod. Sic. 40.3.4 (= *STERN*, I § 11); Apollonius Molon apud Jos., *C. Ap.* 2.148 (= *STERN*, I § 49); Diod. Sic. also has a statement that one of the laws was to show good will to no other nation (μηδ’ εὐνοεῖν) 34-5.1.2 (= *STERN*, I § 63); Apion mentions an oath to show good will to no foreigner (μηδεὺς εὐνοήσειν ἀλλοφύλω) and his verb is the same that Lysimachus uses apud Jos., *C. Ap.* 2.121 (= *STERN*, I § 173); cp. also Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.1 (= *STERN*, II § 281) and Juvenal 14.103-06 (= *STERN*, II § 301). On this issue see FELDMAN 125-31, 143-44, 171-72 / HENGEL, *Judaism*, I, 172 n.26.

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