‘They did not settle in the land of the Lord: Ephraim settled in Egypt’ (Hos 9.3): Returning to Egypt in the Septuagint and other Hellenistic Jewish works

(Alison Salvesen)

Introduction

In the writings that came to form the Hebrew Bible, the traditions associating the patriarchs and their descendants with Egypt tend to prevail over those connecting ancestral figures with Mesopotamia.[1] Additionally, Egypt often represents unbridled sexuality, idolatry, and oppression, and so effectively functions as the archetypal ‘other’ against which Israel defines itself.[2] Since it is the Land of Israel that represents the God-given territory of covenant and blessing, any voluntary return to Egypt is unsanctioned, while the threat of a forcible return there is presented as the climax of the curses in Deut 28, reversing God’s original act of liberation of his people in the exodus.

Given that many Jews settled in Egypt between the sixth century BCE and the early second century CE, a number of questions arise. How did they reconcile their situation with the negative portrayal of Egypt in their scriptures? When these scriptures were rendered into Greek from the mid-third century BCE onwards, did the translators nuance passages relating to the idea of post-Mosaic immigration to Egypt? And to what extent did literary works composed in Egypt perceive contemporary Jewish experience there through the lens of the exodus event?

Egypt in the Hebrew Bible

As noted above, overall the portrayals of Egypt in the Hebrew Bible are mostly unfavourable. Admittedly Egypt is presented as a well-ordered land of plenty

[1] The ‘creed’ of Deut 26:5–9 unites the two traditions: ‘A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt… The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm…’

[2] ‘The apex of the seductive other’, as argued by Diana Lipton (*Longing for Egypt and Other Unexpected Biblical Tales*. Hebrew Bible Monographs 15; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2008), ch. 1.

several times in Scripture,[3] and Egyptians are even spoken of as potential worshippers of the Lord,[4] yet such references are in the minority.

Much more frequently in the corpus of Jewish Scripture, Egypt symbolises the land of slavery for Jacob's descendants, especially in Exod 1–15.[5] The books of Ezekiel and Jeremiah present Egypt as a place of idolatry,[6] Ezekiel tracing Jerusalem's infidelity to the Lord back to the people's sojourn in Egypt.[7] Although the long narrative of Joseph's career in Egypt (Gen 39–50) is largely sympathetic to Egypt and its inhabitants, the story of Sarai's abduction by Pharaoh and the story of Potiphar's wife pursuit of Joseph both present Egyptians as sexually licentious.[8] In the 'historical' books, Egypt is the cause of régime change in Judah after Pharaoh Neco's slaying of the saintly Josiah (2 Kgs 23:29–34//2 Chron 35:20–36:4). Though Egypt did not wreak the kind of devastation on Israel and Judah that the Babylonians and Assyrians did, various incursions and battles are recorded between Israel or Judah and Egypt during the monarchic period (e.g. 1 Kgs 9:16; 14:25-26//2 Chron 12:2-9).[9]

A number of prophetic texts warn that contemporary Egypt will prove an unreliable political and military ally: 'Alas for those who go down to Egypt for help…The Egyptians are human, and not God' (Isa 31:1, 3 NRSV).[10] In 1 Kings the land of Egypt gives temporary sanctuary to Hadad and Jeroboam, whom God raised up against Solomon (1 Kgs 11:14–12:2),[11] yet it is unable to protect the true prophet Uriah when he takes refuge there (Jer 26:20–23).

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[3] E.g. Gen 12; 37; 39–50; Exod 14:12; 16:3; Num 11:5.
[4] Deut 23:7–8; Isa 19:18–25.
[5] Also Deut 26:5-9; cf. Ps 105:23–25. The suggestion of Philip Davies that the Judeans at Elephantine may have been driven out by Egyptians, thus influencing the development of the exodus story, is quite speculative ('Judeans in Egypt' in ed. P. R. Davies, *Rethinking Biblical Scholarship: Changing Perspectives 4* (Durham: Acumen 2014), 104–119, esp.115).
[6] Ezek 20:4–10; Jer 44:7–8.
[7] Ezek 16:26. The lurid sexual metaphors in Ezek 23:1–3, 8, 19-21, 27 denote the spiritual and political unfaithfulness of Jerusalem and Samaria with other nations, especially the Egyptians: see W. Zimmerli, *Ezekiel*. I (Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1979), 482, 489.
[8] Gen 12:10-20; 39:7–18.
[9] See Rainer Kessler's division of the biblical material on Egypt into a political, exodus and wisdom discourses: *Ägyptenbilder der Hebräische Bibel: ein Beitrag zur neueren Monotheismusdebatte*. Stuttgarter Bibel Studien 197. (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2002); also Kessler, 'The Threefold image of Egypt in the Hebrew Bible' *Scriptura* 90 (2005), 878-884.
[10] Cf. Isa 36:6,9//2 Kgs 18:21, 24, though in the mouth of the Assyrian Rab-shakeh; Ezek 17:15, 17.
[11] Garrett Galvin, *Egypt as a Place of Refuge*. FzAT 51 Reihe 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

Various passages in the Hebrew Bible strongly discourage any return to Egypt. In the context of the Law of the King, Deuteronomy forbids the monarch from taking the people back to Egypt to buy horses (Deut 17:16). While this may allude to the disapproval of Solomon's horse-trading expressed in 1 Kgs 10:28–29, it also cites a divine prohibition on voluntarily returning to Egypt, a ban that is in fact absent in the story of the exodus and the wilderness wanderings. As previously mentioned, Deut 28:68 threatens Israel with a forced return there as a punishment for national disobedience.[12] Similar warnings are found in Hosea.[13] In Jeremiah, the Judeans wishing to escape war and famine by fleeing to Egypt are told, 'the sword that you fear shall overtake you there, in the land of Egypt; and the famine that you dread shall follow close after you into Egypt; and there you shall die' (Jer 42:16 NRSV). However, ignoring the word of the Lord that they sought through Jeremiah, they take refuge in Egypt.[14] Then, finding existing Judean settlers practising idolatry there, Jeremiah decrees their destruction when the Babylonians come to ravage Egypt (ch. 44).[15]

Such negative portrayals of Egypt seemingly had little effect on the early establishment of Jewish communities there, so it is possible that they were barely acquainted the Hebrew scriptures, even with the Torah.[16] The Aramaic-speaking Judean mercenary settlement at Yeb/Elephantine under the Persian Achaemenids is attested in documents dated from the late fifth century BCE.[17] Their local temple to 'Yaho' was destroyed by the local Egyptians, yet when they

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[12] In the full Dtr[2] edition, 'Egypt becomes a constant and ominous presence, the setting of the last and worst of the Deuteronomistic curses', fulfilled by the return of Judeans to Egypt in Jeremiah chs. 43–44 (R. E. Friedman, 'From Egypt to Egypt: Dtr1 and Dtr 2' in *Traditions in Transformation*: *Turning Points in Biblical Faith* [eds. B. Halpern and J. Levenson; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1981], 167–91, esp. 191).

[13] MT Hos 8:13b; 9:3; 11:5. See Stephen C. Russell, *Images of Egypt in Early Biblical Literature. Cisjordan-Israelite, and Judahite Portrayals* (Berlin/New York, NY: de Gruyter, 2009).

[14] See Alonso Schökel, 'Jeremías como anti-Moisés' in *De la Torah au Messie. Études d'exégèse et d'herméneutique bibliques offertes à Henri Cazelles* (eds. M. Carrez, J. Doré, P. Grelot; Paris: Desclée, 1981), 245–54.

[15] Galvin, *Egypt as a Place of Refuge,* notes that MT Jeremiah's 'primary aim is to characterize Egypt theologically as a place that cannot offer secure refuge for Israel' (p. 163).

[16] See L. Grabbe, 'Elephantine and the Torah', in *In the Shadow of Bezalel: Aramaic, Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Bezalal Porten* (ed. A.F. Botta; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 125–137.

[17] See B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1986).

wrote to the Persian governor of Judea to ask for permission to rebuild it, they showed no awareness of the Deuteronomic ban on such shrines. As Reinhard Kratz's chapter in this volume notes, they also intermarried with non-Judeans and invoked Anat-Yaho the consort of Yahweh, Khnum, and Baal.

Better knowledge of Torah and Prophets is more likely among Jews in the next phase of settlement under the early Ptolemies,[18] given the existence of a rendering of the Pentateuch in Alexandria in the mid-third century BCE and the establishment of Jewish communal buildings known as *proseuchai,* 'prayer houses' around this time.[19] Before this date, and perhaps even afterwards, it cannot be assumed that most Egyptian Jews were aware of scriptural attitudes towards their place of settlement.[20]

The period of the Ptolemaic dynasty was a time when Jews prospered in Egypt and enjoyed a reasonable degree of toleration and political protection. It may be that, as in Yeb, the free settlers originally came as soldiers.[21] The rendering of the Torah into Greek and the subsequent translations of other books were mostly carried out by Jews residing in Egypt, probably but not necessarily in Alexandria.[22] In due course these books also benefited Greek-speaking Jews

[18] For a survey of the history of Jewish communities in Egypt and helpful maps, see A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt: the struggle for equal rights* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1985), 106–67. Jewish settlements in the Graeco-Roman period were not limited to Alexandria and a few other urban centres in Lower Egypt, but also existed along the Nile well into Upper Egypt. The earliest dateable inscriptions for *proseuchai* come from the reign of Ptolemy III (247-221), from Schedia near Alexandria, CPJ III p. 141, and Arsinoe-Crocodopolis, CPJ III 1532A (for both, see Kasher, *Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt,* 106–110; and more generally on Egyptian *proseuchai*/synagogues, J. Mélèze-Modrzejewski, *The Jews of Egypt from Rameses II to Emperor Hadrian* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark 1995], pp. 88-98). Philo's accounts of activities in the *proseuchai* in Alexandria reflect later times of course, e.g. *Legat.* §156, referring to the time of Augustus.

[19] Lee I. Levine, *The Ancient Synagogue: the First Thousand Years* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 151.

[20] For a reassessment of the variety of Jewish identity and practice in the Hellenistic period, see Sylvie Honigman, 'Jewish Communities of Hellenistic Period' in *Jewish Identities in Antiquity. Studies in Memory of Menahem Stern* (TSAJ 130; eds. L. I. Levene and D. Schwartz; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 117–35. Levine notes that the sanctity accorded to the

[21] As suggested by the (fictitious) *Letter of Aristeas* (see Benjamin G. Wright III, *Letter of Aristeas.* CEJL [Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 2015]*,* 67), and in later references (E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ 175 B.C. – A.D. 135.* III.1 (revised edn. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986), 41–44).

[22] See J. K. Aitken, 'The Social and Historical Setting of the Septuagint: Palestine and the Diaspora', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint* (eds. A. Salvesen, T. M. Law, and J.

throughout the Mediterranean region. During the Hellenistic and Roman periods other works with religious content were even composed in Greek.

Returning to Egypt in Greek scriptures

Do Greek renderings of Hebrew scripture reflect any discomfort with the notion of return to Egypt or residence there? Overall, the picture is mixed. Three references in the Pentateuch to the possibility of returning to Egypt are translated rather literally: [23] Exod 14:13, Deut 17:16,[24] and Deut 28:68. In these verses, the Greek even preserves the grammatical ambiguity of the Hebrew, which could connote either a permanent reassurance of salvation from Egypt in the future or a permanent prohibition of returning to Egypt (also in the future).[25]

Joosten; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), and Aitken, 'Psalms' in *The T&T Clark Companion to the Septuagint* (London etc.: Bloomsbury, 2015), 321–23.

[23] Exod 14:13 'the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again'; Deut 17:16 '[the king] must not return the people to Egypt in order to acquire more horses, since the LORD has said to you, "You shall not return that way again'; Deut 28:68 'The LORD will return you to Egypt in ships, by the route that I told you "You shall never see it again"'.

[24] Note the early extenuating gloss 'for war' added in Temple Scroll 56:16: 'Only, [the king] shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he return the people to Egypt *for war* in order to increase for himself horses, and silver, and gold. I myself said to you, "You shall never again return that way"' (Y. Yadin, *The Temple Scroll* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), II, 253 and n. 16), and Psalm of Solomon 17:33: *οὐ γὰρ ἐλπιεῖ ἐπὶ ἵππον καὶ ἀναβάτην καὶ τόξον οὐδὲ πληθυνεῖ αὐτῷ χρυσίον οὐδὲ ἀργύριον εἰς πόλεμον* 'for he shall not hope on horse and rider or bow, nor multiply for himself gold or silver *for war*'. (D. Rosen and A. Salvesen, 'A Note on the Qumran Temple Scroll 56:15-18 and Psalm of Solomon 17:33', *JJS* 38 (1987), 99–101).

The Jerusalem Talmud limits the ban of Deut 17:16 to permanent settlement in Egypt and permits temporary residence for commercial and business purposes and for 'subduing the land', implicitly recognising the need of Jews to trade there (jSanh 10:9 (10)).

[25] This ambiguity was exploited later by the rabbis, who identify a three-fold divine prohibition on returning to Egypt: 'In three places the Lord warned Israel not to return to Egypt, as it says, "For the Egyptians you see today you must never see again" (Exod 14:13). And it says, "You must never return again this way" (Deut 17:16), and it says, "by the way that I told you that you must not see again" (Deut 28:68). Three times they returned there, and three times they fell. The first was in the time of Sennacherib, as it is written, "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help!" (Isa 31:1). The second was in the time of Johanan son of Kareach, as it is said, "The sword that you fear shall catch up with you in the land of Egypt" (Jer 42:16). The third was in the time of Trajan. Three times they returned and three times they fell'. (Mekhilta de Rabbi Ishmael, Beshallach, Wayehi, 3; Hebrew in ed. Lauterbach, I, 142). See also Noah Hacham, 'From Splendour to Disgrace. On the Destruction of Egyptian Jewry in Rabbinic Literature', *Tarbiz* 72 (2002-3), 463–88.

More difficult to interpret are the renderings of passages in Isaiah, Hosea, and Jeremiah that in their Hebrew form clearly do raise theological problems for Jewish residence in Egypt.[26]

Hosea

LXX Hosea was probably produced in Egypt in the mid-second century BCE.[27] Verses relating to a return to Egypt present a complicated picture vis à vis the Hebrew. Explanations of their form range from a historicization of the text, a misreading of the Hebrew to a different Vorlage to the text of the MT.[28]

Three verses in MT Hosea suggest that the Sinai covenant is conditional: since Israel has been unfaithful, God can reverse the exodus too and return the people to Egypt. A repeated play on words throughout the book involves *the verb* שוב *(22 occurrences) which* can mean both 'return' and 'repent'.[29] MT Hos 8:13b; 9:3; 11:5 suggest that because Ephraim refuses to return to the Lord, he must return to Egypt:

i) MT Hos. 8:13 'Now he will remember their iniquity, and punish their sins; they shall return to Egypt'[30]

ii) MT Hos 9:3 'They shall not dwell in the land of the LORD; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and in Assyria they shall eat unclean food'[31]

iii) The meaning of the text of MT Hos 11:5 is disputed because the initial words of the verse לא ישוב do not seem to fit the context. Possible interpretations are as

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[26] The portrayal of Egypt in LXX Ezekiel deserves further study but is not covered in this essay since the book does not refer to God's people returning or residing there. Andrew Mein and James Patrick are currently working on the theme.

[27] There are geographical and lexical indications of an Egyptian origin for LXX XII: Edward W. Glenny, *Hosea: a commentary based on Hosea in Codex Vaticanus* (SCS; Leiden: Brill, 2013), 17-18; E. Bons, J. Joosten, and S. Kessler, *La Bible d'Alexandrie 23.1 Les Douze Prophètes: Osée* (Paris: Cerf, 2002); E. Bons, *'Osee' in Septuaginta Deutsch. Erläuterungen und Kommentare zum griechischen Alten Testament (*Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, *2011), II, 2287–2338.*

[28] Steve Pisano has noted the importance of Egypt as a theme in MT Hosea: Pisano, 'Egypt in the Septuagint Text of Hosea' in *Tradition of the Text: studies offered to Dominique Barthélemy in celebration of his 70th birthday* (eds. G. J. Norton and S. Pisano; OBO 109; Freiburg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991), 301–8.

[29] A. A. Macintosh, *Hosea. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 330, believes that Deut 28:68 depends on Hosea for this idea.

[30] See the alternatives presented by Macintosh, *Hosea,* 331–32.

[31] Macintosh, *Hosea*, 342, renders 'They shall not *stay* in Yahweh's land', and sees the reference to Egypt as an 'explicit reversal of the themes of the exodus'.

follows:[32]

a) 'He [Israel] will not return to the land of Egypt, rather it is Assyria who is his king: because they refused to repent' [33]

b) 'Shall he not return to Egypt, and will Assyria not become his king…?' (a rhetorical question)

c) 'He shall return to the land of Egypt, and Assyria shall be his king, because they have refused to return/repent' (taking לא as לו, and joining it with the end of the previous verse).[34]

The Greek version of Hosea offers a contrasting sense to several of these passages. In the case of Hos 8:13b; 9:3; 11:5 it places the prophesied events in the past:

i) Hos 8:13b: 'Now he will remember their injustices and punish their sins; *they returned to Egypt* (αὐτοὶ εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἀπέστρεψαν) and among Assyrians will eat unclean things'[35]

ii) Hos 9:3 '*They did not settle* in the land of the Lord; *Ephraim settled in Egypt (*κατῴκησεν Εφραιμ εἰς [> some MSS] Αἴγυπτον*),* and among Assyrians they shall eat unclean things'[36]

iii) Hos 11:5 '*Ephraim settled* in Egypt (κατῴκησεν Εφραιμ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ), and Assyria himself was his king, because he was unwilling to return'.

Thus in Greek Hosea a return to Egypt is not a future punishment for lack of repentance (as in MT), but *something that has already taken place at some point in the past*.[37] Steve Pisano believes that Greek Hosea uniquely and systematically situated Ephraim's return to Egypt in the past, either aiming for historical accuracy, or to make a 'symbolic statement' about Ephraim's situation at the time

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[32] *D. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle de l'Ancien Testament* (OBO 50; Fribourg, Suisse/Göttingen: Editions universitaires/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht) III, 594–95, notes the word play on 'repent/return' here.

[33] See Macintosh, *Hosea*, 450–52.

[34] Hebrew Hosea may use 'Egypt' as a cipher for Assyria, implicitly comparing the legendary servitude of the Israelites in Egypt to Israel's contemporary servitude to Assyria. Alternatively, 'returning to Egypt' may refer merely to a pro-Egyptian policy under Pekah and Hoshea: Macintosh, *Hosea*, 331.

[35] Cf. the end of 9:3.

[36] Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain: Peeters, 2009), 391, interprets the combination of the verb plus εἰς as, 'moved into Egypt and settled there'.

[37] See Bons, 'Osee', II: 2328 on Hos 11:5.

of the prophet Hosea.[38] Edward Glenny speculates that 'the first readers of the LXX may have understood this life in Egypt to be a reality in their times.'[39] Bons, on the other hand, believes that the use of the past tense alludes to failed diplomatic contacts with Egypt.[40]

Yet the divergences between Greek and MT may not lie primarily in exegesis of the text. In the case of Hos 8:13b it is hard to do other than conclude that the translator intentionally read the Hebrew 'they return/shall return (ישובו, imperfect) to Egypt' as 'they returned to Egypt' (שבו, perfect). This may be because he understood that the prophecies regarding a return to Egypt throughout Hosea were already fulfilled and therefore needed to be framed in the past. Yet other cases can be explained by the ambiguities of the consonantal text. Though the translator rendered most of the occurrences of שוב in the book with ἐπιστρέφειν[41] and some with ἀποστρέφειν,[42] in Hos 9:3 MT ושב 'he will return' is rendered with κατοικεῖν, as if the Hebrew read ישב, 'he dwelt' (*yod* and *waw* being graphically similar). Earlier in Hos 9:3 the unvocalised word ישבו could legitimately be interpreted as the perfect form of ישב (to dwell) rather than the imperfect form of שוב (to return) as found in the vocalized MT.[43] In Hos 11:5 also the translator (or his Vorlage) read ישוב 'he returns/will return' as ישב 'he dwelt' and so also rendered with κατοικεῖν. These examples illustrate the importance of noting the confluence of interpretative and text-critical factors when evaluating LXX renderings.

If the translator was himself an Egyptian Jew, the negative view of a return to Egypt in his renderings is surprising, especially in LXX Hos 9:3 where the threat found in the Hebrew is converted to what sounds more like an accusation: "They did not settle in the land of the Lord; *Ephraim settled in Egypt'*.[44] Various

[38] Pisano, 'Egypt in the Septuagint Text of Hosea', 306.
[39] Glenny, *Hosea*, 134, cf. 155.
[40] 'Osee', p. 2318.
[41] Hos 2:9 (7 LXX); 2:11 (9 LXX); 3:5; 5:4, 15; 6:1, 11; 7:10, 16; 11:5; 12:7 (6 LXX); 14:2, 3, 8.
[42] Hos 7:16; 8:13; 14:5, cf. 8:3 for זנח.
[43] See Bons, *'Osee', II:2287–288*.
[44] Note also LXX Hos 9:6 'they shall go out from the *misery of Egypt*', ἐκ ταλαιπωρίας Αἰγύπτου, in contrast to MT where the nouns are not in construct. The future tense as well as the rest of the

explanations are possible, though none of them entirely satisfies. Perhaps a translator based in Alexandria did not consider himself to be really in Egypt! Or he may have regarded the Egypt of scripture to be merely symbolic and therefore not applicable to the location of his contemporary community.

Isaiah

Since the work of Seeligmann in 1948,[45] there has been much lively debate concerning the extent to which the many divergences between the Hebrew (MT) and LXX derive from deliberate exegesis. Some of the most intriguing differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts involve passages concerning Egypt, principally Isa 10:24–26, 11:11–16 and ch. 19. These have been examined by Seeligmann, van der Kooij, and Keunjoo Kim,[46] who each hold them to reflect both the translator's consciousness of his Egyptian Jewish identity and the theological status of his community.[47] Van der Kooij has even suggested that the translator of Isaiah was an Oniad priest in Leontopolis, perhaps even Onias IV himself.[48]

Isa 10:24, 26 in MT has the apparent sense, 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD of hosts: do not be afraid of Assyria, my people living in Zion; with the rod he will strike you, and lift up his staff against you, in the way [manner?[49]] of Egypt … The LORD Sebaoth will stir up a whip against him, as the striking of

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verse shows that the translator did not construe the words as a reference to a deliverance like the exodus.

[45] I. L. Seeligmann, The *Septuagint Version of Isaiah: a discussion of its problems* (Leiden 1948), repr. in *The Septuagint version of Isaiah and Cognate Studies* (eds. R. Hanhart and H. Spieckermann; FzAT 40; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004).

[46] 'Theology and identity of the Egyptian Jewish Diaspora in Septuagint of Isaiah'. Unpublished DPhil thesis, Oxford, 2009.

[47] Baltzer, Kabiersch, Koenen, van der Kooij, and Wilk (*Septuaginta Deutsch* commentary 'Esaias/Isaias/Das Buch Jesaja' (II: 2484–2695)) find a message of the longed-for homecoming of a group that would precede the gathering of the entire diaspora of Israel (Isa 11:16b, cf. 11:11f), and believe it likely that LXX Isaiah came from the milieu of this group in Egypt c. 140 CE (II: 2493).

[48] A. van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen des Jesajabuches: ein Beitrag zur Textgeschichte des Alten Testaments* (OBO 35*;* Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1981), 61–65, developing the position of Frankel.

[49] Eugene Ekblad notes that in Hebrew Isaiah, דרך, 'way', never refers to a physical road, and so understands 10:24 as referring to the 'aberrant ways of the people or nations' (*Isaiah's Servant Poems According to the Septuagint. An Exegetical and Theological Study* (CBET 23; Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 224–25.

Midian at the rock of Oreb; his staff will be upon the sea, and he will lift it in the manner of Egypt' (NRSV adapted). In contrast the Greek reads, 'Because of this the Lord Sabaoth says these words, 'Do not be afraid of the Assyrians, my people who live on Sion, *because* he will strike you with a rod. *For I myself bring on you a stroke so that you may see the way of Egypt* (πληγὴν γὰρ ἐγὼ ἐπάγω ἐπὶ σὲ τοῦ ἰδεῖν ὁδὸν Αἰγύπτου) … And God will stir up against them in the manner of the stroke of Madiam *in a place of affliction, and his wrath will be by the sea route to the route towards Egypt (*καὶ ὁ θυμὸς αὐτοῦ τῇ ὁδῷ τῇ κατὰ θάλασσαν εἰς τὴν ὁδὸν τὴν κατ' Αἴγυπτον)'.

The oracle in MT appears to compare God's imminent action on behalf of his people with his past salvific act at the exodus, while the Greek rendering is perhaps more reassuring, it is still vague. Seeligmann suggested that LXX Isa 10:24 refers to a Jewish emigration from Palestine to Egypt brought about by the persecution of the 'Assyrian' i.e. the Syrian Seleucid ruler, Antiochus IV Epiphanes.[50] Arie van der Kooij denies that πληγή in Isa 10:24 refers to religious persecution, but alludes instead to the situation in Jerusalem in 167 BCE that caused the Oniads' flight from Jerusalem to Egypt.[51] Yet although the Greek diverges from the Hebrew text, it is so awkwardly expressed that it is hard to be sure to what events (if any) it may refer. If τοῦ ἰδεῖν ὁδὸν Αἰγύπτου really alludes to Deut 28:68, as Seeligmann and van der Kooij argue,[52] it is strange that a translator sympathetic to the Oniads would portray their flight in terms of what is the ultimate divine punishment (as is clear in both the Hebrew and Greek of Deut 28:68).

MT Isa 11:15–16 prophesies a salvific event comparable to the exodus: 'And the LORD will destroy the tongue of the sea of Egypt and will wave his hand over the River with a scorching wind; and will strike it into seven channels and make it passable in sandals. There shall be a highway for the remnant that

[50] Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah* (1948), 85.
[51] Van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen, 39, 61–65*. See Josephus (*BJ* 1.33; *AJ* 13.64,68).
[52] Seeligmann, *Septuagint Version of Isaiah*, 85; Van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen, 39; Baltzer et al., 'Jesaja/Esaias' II:2533*.

remains of his people from Assyria, as there was for Israel on the day when they came up from the land of Egypt' (NRSV adapted). The Greek translation follows this closely in v. 15, but in v. 16 it reads, 'And there will be a passage for the remnant of my people *in Egypt*, and *it will be* for Israel as the day when they came out from the land of Egypt'. MT thus relates to a promise of liberation for the 'remnant' in Assyria, whereas LXX suggests a second exodus of the remnant of Israel from Egypt itself. This replacement of 'Assyria' by 'Egypt' is explained variously: by van der Kooij as conscious 'actualization' by the translator to refer to his own community in the Egyptian Diaspora,[53] but by Troxel as due to a difference in the Vorlage,[54] and by de Sousa as merely the result of the mechanics of an eye-skip.[55]

The other passage in Isaiah that reflects on Israel's relationship to Egypt is the extensive treatment of Egypt in MT Isa 19:16–25.[56] Arie van der Kooij has argued that the differences between MT and LXX suggest a coherent translational approach and a strong interest in the notion of 'Israel in Egypt'.[57] He relates LXX ch. 19 to the foundation of the Leontopolis temple, which was effectively legitimized by this 'prophecy'.[58]

Significant differences for those who favour such a historicizing interpretation include the following:

a) the rendering of MT Isa 19:17 'the territory of Judah', יהודה אדמת, as 'the country of *the Jews*', ἡ χώρα *τῶν Ιουδαίων*,[59] and the suggestion at the end of v. 17 that God's counsel is against this country (αὐτήν) rather than Egypt (עליו) so that even mentioning it causes fear among the Egyptians;

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[53] Van der Kooij, '"The Servant of the Lord": a particular group of Jews in Egypt according to the Old Greek of Isaiah' in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah. Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken* (eds. J. van Ruiten and M. Vervenne; BETL 132. Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 388–96, esp. 390–94.

[54] R. S. Troxel, *LXX-Isaiah as translation and interpretation: the strategies of the translator of the Septuagint of Isaiah*. SuppJSJ 124 (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 189.

[55] De Sousa, 'Isaiah' in *Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint* (forthcoming).

[56] For the Hebrew text of this passage see the full discussion by Hugh Williamson in the present volume, especially his persuasive explanation of Πόλισ-ασεδεκ in Isa 19:18.

[57] Van der Kooij, 'LXX Isaiah 19:16-25' in *VI Congress of the IOSCS, Jerusalem 1986* (ed. C. E. Cox. SCS 23; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press 1987), 127-66, also 'Esaias/Isaias/Das Buch Jesaja' II: 2493, 2552–555.

[58] See 'Esaias/Isaias/Das Buch Jesaja' II: 2554, and van der Kooij, *Die alten Textzeugen,* 54f.

[59] A unique rendering in LXX Isaiah, which normally renders יהודה as Ἰουδα or Ἰουδαια.

b) the 'five cities in Egypt speaking in the Canaanite language and *swearing by* the name of the Lord' in LXX Isa 19:18, which may indicate Jews in Egypt who would naturally swear oaths by Yahweh, in contrast to MT's allusion to non-Jewish citizens pledging religious allegiance to the Lord;

c) the clarification that the 'saviour' (מושיע) in Isa 16:20 sent by the Lord to the Egyptians who cry to him is human (ἄνθρωπον) and is the same figure as the (Jewish) ruler of 11:3–4 and judge of 16:5, and they will therefore erect an eternal, Jewish, altar (θυσιαστήριον) to the Lord on their border;

d) LXX 19:23 'the way to Egypt shall be near (the) Assyrians', perhaps implying that the Seleucid Syrians have conquered Palestine and will invade Egypt, which will then 'serve' the Seleucids;

e) LXX 19:25 LXX 'blessed be my people *that is in* Egypt, and *(my people) that is among* (the) Assyrians, and my inheritance Israel' (Εὐλογημένος ὁ λαός μου ὁ *ἐν* Αἰγύπτῳ καὶ ὁ *ἐν* Ἀσσυρίοις καὶ ἡ κληρονομία μου Ισραηλ) rather than MT 'blessed be my people Egypt, and Assyria the work of my hands etc.'.

However, other scholars refute such concrete historical references. Abi Ngunga notes some of the weaknesses in van der Kooij's analysis, though he himself places much weight on the 'saviour' figure of LXX Isa 16:20 as a messiah who will deliver the Jews of Egypt from Egyptian animosity towards their religious practices. [60]

The differences between MT and LXX Isa 19 do suggest that the translator was interested in the relationship between Jews in Egypt and their Egyptian neighbours, and that he also championed the Diaspora communities as fully equivalent to Jews in Palestine (Isa 16:25). Whether every divergence can be related to specific historical events or expectations relating to the Egyptian Jewish Diaspora is more open to debate.

Jeremiah

[60] Abi Ngunga, *Messianism in the Old Greek of Isaiah: an intertextual analysis* (FRLANT 245; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 136-45. Ngunga also believes that Egyptians rather than Jews are the subject of the sentence 'they will cry out against their oppressors'.

In contrast to LXX Isaiah, LXX Jeremiah does not display such perplexing variations from the Hebrew. However, the Greek text is shorter by one-seventh than MT Jeremiah, and the material is ordered differently.[61] Though some scholars argue that the differences are due to the translator's abridgement of the book or to extensive haplography in the Hebrew Vorlage he used,[62] in view of the variant Hebrew texts of Jeremiah from Qumran,[63] most recent research indicates that behind LXX Jeremiah was a shorter and differently ordered Hebrew text.[64] For instance, the episode of the killing of the prophet Uriah who had fled to Egypt (Jer MT26/LXX33:20–23) is fuller in MT, where extra details also serve to portray Egypt as an unsafe place of refuge. For instance in MT, Uriah comes to Egypt because he 'fears and flees (MT Jer 26:21), but in LXX he merely 'enters' Egypt.

The Egyptian setting of the LXX Jeremiah translator[65] is clear because while MT Jer 43:13 glosses '(Beth Shemesh) *that is in the land of Egypt*', to distinguish the toponym from Beth Shemesh in Palestine,[66] the corresponding verse LXX Jer 50:13 has the doublet 'Heliopolis and On': On being the Egyptian form of the place name.

The passage of greatest relevance for the Jeremiah-translator's view of the contemporary situation of Egyptian Jews is Jer MT42–44/LXX49–51. In this

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[61] Principally due to the different position and order of the Oracles Against the Nations, i.e. MT chs. 46–51, which in LXX appear after 25:13. There are also many small 'minuses' such as shorter divine epithets.

[62] Most recently J. R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: a new translation with introduction and commentary*. AB 21A, 21B (New York/London: Doubleday, 1999, 2004), and A. Vonach, 'Jeremias/Ieremias/Jeremia' in *Septuaginta Deutsch Erläuterungen und Kommentaren*, II:2696–2814), though Vonach (II:2704 n.43) implies that Lundbom's list of 330 haplographies in the Hebrew Vorlage is excessive. He himself prefers to ascribe most 'minuses' to the translation process.

[63] E.g. 4QJer^{b,d}, dated to the first half of second century BCE.

[64] See E. Tov 'The Literary History of the book of Jeremiah in Light of its Textual History' in *The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint* (ed. Tov; SupVT 72; Leiden: Brill, 1999). Carroll and McKane each follow the line that MT Jeremiah represents a later development of the book than that reflected in LXX (Carroll, *Jeremiah*, 50-55; W. McKane, *Jeremiah*. 2 vols. ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985, 1996) I.xvii, II:clxxii).

[65] As opposed to the Palestinian setting of the developed form of Jeremiah as represented by Edition II/MT. See also H-J. Stipp, *Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches. Textgeschictlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte* (OBO 136; Freiburg/ Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 51–52, on the use of the Egyptian-Greek terms παστοφόριον, ἄφεσις, διῶρυξ in LXX Jeremiah.

[66] Lundbom, *Jeremiah*, ad loc.

section, though the prophet tells the Judeans under Jochanan that the Lord warns them not to go to Egypt for refuge, Jeremiah is overruled and taken there himself against his will. Remonstrating with all the Judeans already there for their idolatry, he prophesies that they will be wiped out. Did the translator understand his Hebrew text as presenting a problem for the legitimacy of his own community? Is the prophet's message altered in Greek, or was it regarded as only relevant to the much earlier period of the Babylonian invasion and therefore not in need of nuancing?

The admonition in Jer 42/49:19 against going down to Egypt is expressed in both Hebrew and Greek as a temporary prohibition (אל תבאו; *μή* plus aorist subjunctive). Both understand that this ban applied only to that time and those circumstances.

More significant is the inconsistent rendering of the Hebrew verbs describing Judean residence in Egypt. The verb גור denotes temporary residence, and is almost always rendered in the LXX corpus by *παροικεῖν* 'sojourn.'[67] The verb ישב 'dwell' is normally rendered by *κατοικεῖν*, 'settle, reside permanently'. However, LXX Jeremiah seldom uses *παροικεῖν* for גור, especially in chapters 49–51. Of the nine instances where MT has גור in relation to Judeans settling temporarily in Egypt (and against the Lord's command): in four the translator uses *κατοικεῖν* with its connotations of permanent residence;[68] in one *οἰκεῖν* 'dwell' ;[69] and in two *ἐνοικεῖν* 'dwell'.[70] In Jer 44/51:14, in the context of a prediction that

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[67] E.g. Gen 12:10 of Abram going to Egypt in time of famine. גור with this sense occurs 81 times in the Hebrew Bible. Most cases in LXX where translators do not use *παροικεῖν* involve the cultic status of the *gēr*, the non-Israelite sojourner, or to describe animal habitats (Isa 5:17; 11:6). In Jer 35/42:7 the translator uses *διατρίβειν* 'spend time' of the Rechabites, perhaps because they are nomadic.

[68] Jer MT 42/LXX 49:15, 22; 43/50:5; 44/51:28.

[69] Jer 43/50:2. In Jer MT 42:19 the pro-Egyptian party traduce Jeremiah's words by making the prohibition permanent and adding 'to sojourn there', לגור שם. LXX 49:19 keeps the wording of the prohibition but uses *οἰκεῖν* for גור (*Μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς Αἴγυπτον οἰκεῖν ἐκεῖ*).

[70] Jer 42/49:17. LXX Jer 49:17 refers to foreigners (*ἀλλογενεῖς*) as well as Judeans deciding to settle in Egypt: echoes of the 'mixed multitude' of the Exodus story? In Jer 44/51:8 it is used of the Judeans who were burning incense to other gods in Egypt, having come to settle there (*εἰς ἣν εἰσήλθατε ἐνοικεῖν ἐκεῖ*).

The much shorter text of LXX Jer 51:12 does not cover the occurrence of **גור** in MT 44:12.

no one will remain from the Judeans sojourning there to return to the land of Judah as they had hoped, the translator does use παροικεῖν: probably because the Judeans expressed desire to return indicates that they are not permanently settled in Egypt.[71]

The translator's avoidance of παροικεῖν elsewhere as an equivalent for גור may be to stress the disobedience of Jochanan's party whom the Lord had commanded to settle in Judah (Jer MT43/LXX50:4 ישב and κατοικεῖν). This Greek version of events emphasises that Jochanan's men even removed to Egypt the 'remnant of Judah' who had returned from dispersion to settle in Judah (43/50:5 גור, here rendered with κατοικεῖν to underline that this is where God had commanded them to live). Jer 44/51:27 even has a 'plus' in the LXX, resulting in the threat of destruction applying not to 'every man of Judah in the land of Egypt', as MT, but to 'all of Judah *who inhabit* (κατοικοῦντες) the land of Egypt'. The Greek of the following verse (v. 28) also nuances the Hebrew, describing how the few who are saved from slaughter will return to Judah (MT + 'from the land of Egypt'), and the remnant of Judah who set themselves to settle down (κατοικῆσαι; MT גור) in Egypt will recognise whose word stands fast.[72]

In summary, the LXX rendering of these chapters on Judean migration to Egypt displays sensitivity to the narrative context. It heightens the disobedience of the Judeans by portraying them not only as wishing to leave Judah for a temporary stay in Egypt in defiance of the Lord's word to Jeremiah, but as planning to settle permanently there. Yet the translator appears to have been part of the Egyptian Diaspora himself.

Residence in Egypt according to Hellenistic Jewish writers

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[71] In the three other occurrences in MT Jeremiah where גור is used (MT 49:18/ LXX 30:12; 49:33/30:28; 50/27:40), the context is similar, i.e. the total destruction of a place so that neither dwelling (ישב) nor sojourning (גור) is possible. LXX varies the rendering each time (**ἐνοικεῖν**, rendering the two verbs together**;** κατοικεῖν**;** παροικεῖν).

[72] See McKane, *Jeremiah,* II: 1080-81 on the differences between MT and LXX, and Stipp, *Sondergut*, 162, who also notes that the translation does not tone down the polemic against the Egyptian Diaspora, especially in chs. 42–44 (51).

Many Egyptian Jews may have been familiar with key narratives from their national religious literature mainly through oral retellings rather than exposure to the full text of the scriptures in the context of liturgy or study. Some non-Jews were also aware of such Jewish traditions. Several hostile versions of the Exodus account circulated in antiquity, in which for instance Moses is a renegade Egyptian priest who led out of the country a band of lepers who had converted to a new religion.[73]

Thus, although literary works created by members of the Jewish cultural élite over a period of nearly three hundred years often reflect on the situation of Jews in Egypt from a theological point of view, it is not surprising to find some rather free treatments of the scriptural accounts.[74] Sources that either retell the events of the exodus from Egypt or view more contemporary situations in the light of biblical precedents cover a wide range of genres, including history, poetry, and new religious works composed in Greek.[75] None of them clearly advocate leaving Egypt as a solution to persecution or other difficulties, though several may be reacting to local antipathy towards Jews.

Fragments of Demetrius the Chronographer, writing in the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (c. 222–205 BCE), refer to events in Genesis and Exodus

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[73] Lucia Raspe, 'Manetho on the Exodus: A Reappraisal' *JSQ* 5/2 (1998), 124–155; Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival. The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 262–64, noting that reactions to anti-Jewish versions of Exodus can already be seen in the LXX translation of Exodus itself, e.g. 4:6-7 on the avoidance of reference to Moses' temporary leprosy. Later, in his work *contra Apionem*, Flavius Josephus tried to counter anti-Jewish slurs about the exodus.

Erich Gruen has suggested that what appears to be an anti-Jewish responses to the Exodus narrative did not originate with figures such as Manetho but were reactions to *oral Jewish* versions of the exodus event in which the Israelites dominated Egypt, and when driven out, plundered and destroyed the local idol shrines before settling in Canaan. He believes Egyptian Jews created such re-shapings of the exodus story. (Gruen, 'The Use and Abuse of the Exodus Story', in E. S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism. The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition (Berkeley etc./University of California Press, 1998), 41–72, esp. 71.) For criticisms of Gruen's thesis see* Louis Feldman, 'Did Jews Reshape the Tale of the Exodus?' *Jewish History* 12.1 (1998) 123–27; *K. Berthelot, 'Hecataeus of Abdera and Jewish "misanthropy"', Bulletin du Centre de recherche français à Jérusalem* [online], 19 (2008), downloaded 31/5/2017. URL : http://bcrfj.revues.org/5968) n. 27.

[74] C. R. Holladay, 'Hellenism in the fragmentary Hellenistic Jewish authors: resonance and resistance' in *Shem in the Tents of Japhet: essays on the encounter of Judaism and Hellenism* (ed. J. Kugel; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 65–91, esp. 86–87. He suggests that such recasting reflects not carelessness but reverence, demonstrating that the Jews possessed a text as canonical as Homer.

[75] The volume edited by J. Gärtner and B. Schmitz, *Exodus. Rezeptionen in deuterokanonischer und frühjüdischer Literatur* (eds.; DCLS 32; Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 2016), covers the reception of various themes of the book of Exodus.

in their LXX form. Demetrius is thus the earliest witness to the Greek Pentateuch. Holladay notes the sobriety of Demetrius's approach to the subject matter as well as his focus on explaining apparent difficulties in the narrative .[76] This may be why, disappointingly, the preserved fragments of his work do not comment explicitly on the reasons for the exodus. However, Joseph and Moses both feature prominently (fragments 2, 3, 4), and if this is not just due to the choices made by the excerptors, it may be that Demetrius had a particular interest in patriarchs associated with Egypt.[77]

The author Artapanus is more difficult to place in terms of date, ethnicity and provenance. Highly syncretistic in his outlook, he attributes the institution of the worship of sacred animals among Egyptians to Moses himself. Yet Artapanus' pride in Jewish heroes and history indicates that he was Jewish. The 'pervasively Egyptian cast of the fragments',[78] all of which also reflect knowledge of LXX, indicate that he was based in Egypt.[79] The fragments glorify in the supposed contributions to Egyptian society of Abraham, Joseph and Moses. In Artapanus's treatment of Moses many details of the story go beyond the text of Exodus.[80] Adopted as a baby from 'one of the Jews' by a barren Egyptian princess, Moses' popularity with the ordinary people and the priests provokes the envy of the pharaoh, Chenephres. Artapanus narrates various attempts on Moses's life,

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[76] C. R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*. I. *Historians* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 51-54. Also John Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan* (323 BCE–117 CE) (Berkeley etc.: University of California, 1996), 132, cf. 334: 'perhaps … [Artapanus] represented a popular Egyptianized Judaism'. Howard Jacobson is more sceptical about Artapanus's Jewishness ('Artapanus Judaeus', *JJS* 57 (2006), 210–21, because of the 'extreme stuff' he writes (p. 215). However, the evident syncretism of the Jews of late first century CE Edfu (see Margaret Williams's chapter in the present volume) makes it quite probable that someone with Artapanus's outlook could be Jewish.

[77] In contrast, the fragments of the Jewish Greek writer Eupolemus, based in Palestine in the mid-second century BCE, reflect greater interest in the Kings of Judea (hence the name of his work), though he did ascribe the invention of the alphabet to Moses (frag. 1).

[78] Holladay, *Fragments,* I, 189–91, suggests that he represents a 'less sophisticated, popular outlook, perhaps even from a center other than Alexandria'.

[79] Holger Zellentin gives some examples of dependency on LXX Exodus: 'The End of Jewish Egypt. Artapanus and the Second Exodus', in *Antiquity in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Pasts in the Greco-Roman World* (eds. Gregg Gardner and Kevin L Osterloh; TSAJ 123; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 27–73, esp. 32 n.17.

[80] See for instance the reference to Isis being identified with the earth, though the syntax of διὰ τὸ τὴν γῆν εἶναι Ἶσιν suggests that this is the Egyptians' view rather than the author's.

throughout emphasising his competence as a military leader[81] and the many benefits he brought to Egypt and Ethiopia, including the introduction of circumcision. The incident in Exod 2:11–15 where Moses slays an overseer is transformed into an act of self-defence against the assassin sent by Pharaoh. Moses flees to 'Arabia' where he marries, but resists his father-in-law's call to take up arms against Egypt. Pharaoh dies from the elephantiasis sent by God to punish him for making Jews wear linen clothing rather than wool (in order to mark them out for harsh treatment). When Moses petitions God on their behalf God tells him to march against Egypt, rescue the Jews and take them to the 'ancient fatherland'. When Pharaoh imprisons him, Moses is miraculously released. Two miracles demonstrate the power of the very name of Moses' God. Some of the signs and plagues of Exodus are recounted, and Artapanus also gives two Egyptian explanations for the miracle of the crossing of the Red Sea.

Artapanus' version of the exodus story implies that the 'Jews' needed to be liberated from Egypt because of Pharaoh's envy of Moses and because of Pharoah's desire to exploit the Jews. As in the biblical narrative, apart from Pharaoh's army, the Egyptian people are not portrayed as hostile towards the Jews. So Artapanus's work does not appear to reflect popular anti-Jewish feeling.[82]

In a recent study Holger Zellentin argues that Artapanus' narrative attempts to persuade a Jewish audience that they should leave Egypt in a second exodus and go to 'Syria' in the face of Ptolemy VIII Physcon's anti-Jewish attitude and his favouritism towards native Egyptians.[83] Several of Zellentin's points are quite persuasive, such as the appropriation of features of Sesostris by Artapanus' Moses, the allusions to the career and character of Ptolemy Physcon in the portrait of Pharaoh Chenepres, and the parallels to the re-stabilising decrees of 118 BCE. However, it is not clear that Artapanus' version of Exodus does call Jews to return to 'Syria': the story (at least in its excerpted form) peters out rather

[81] Zellentin, 'End of Jewish Egypt', 29, argues that this feature suggests an audience among 'Greco-Egyptian Jewish military officers' in the later second century BCE.
[82] See E. Koskenniemi, 'Greeks, Egyptians and Jews in the Fragments of Artapanus', *JSP* 13 (2002) 17-31, esp. 31.
[83] Zellentin, 'End of Jewish Egypt'.

abruptly with a brief reference to the forty wilderness years, the provision of manna, and the age and appearance of Moses. If Artapanus was trying to encourage Jews to emigrate back to the Holy Land, it is strange that there is no mention of the Promised Land after §21. Moreover, most of the narrative concerns Moses and his victimisation by Pharaoh, and in contrast to Exodus, the suffering of the Jews as a whole is mentioned only twice. Zellentin seems aware of this latter point, since he makes Moses stand for all Egyptian Jews and suggests that it was the Jewish military élite who were the target for Artapanus' coded message. Though it may be the case that the portrayal of Exodus in Artapanus alludes to the state of affairs for the most influential Jews in Egypt of his day, it is less clear that the narrative advocates a second exodus in the sense of a wholesale emigration to Syria. Artapanus' aim may only have been to encourage Jewish readers to trust the power of their God in times of difficulty.

Even more contentious than Artapanus is the work of the author referred to here as Pseudo-Hecataeus. Fragments attributed to a work concerning the Jews written by Hecataeus of Abdera appear in Josephus' work *contra Apionem* (also in Eusebius's *Praeparatio Evangelica*). These describe how Syria came under the control of Ptolemy I whose 'mildness and humanity' (τὴν ἠπιότητα καὶ φιλανθρωπίαν) attracted many people to go back with him to Egypt and involve themselves in state affairs (κοινωνεῖν τῶν πραγμάτων). One of these men was Ezekias, a Jewish chief priest who in an effort to persuade his associates to emigrate with him, read out to them a document on their settlement and political status status (εἶχεν γὰρ τὴν κατοίκησιν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν γεγραμμένην: *c.Ap.* I.186–89).[84] In the same passage, Josephus records 'Hecataeus' mentioning that large numbers of Jews moved to Egypt after Alexander's death 'because of the unstable situation in Syria' (διὰ τὴν ἐν Συρίᾳ στάσιν).

This is the sum total of we have of Pseudo-Hecataeus' references to Jewish communities in Egypt in the period of the Ptolemies. It is debatable whether the author of these and other remarks on Jews was even Jewish himself. However,

[84] However, as even the *Letter of Aristeas* attests, Ptolemy I was hardly benevolent, and he brought Jews down to Egypt as slaves. Hezekiah was the governor of Judea and not a priest.

Bezalel Bar-Kochva has argued that the fragments are from a Jewish author writing in the very late second century BCE, when the Hasmonean state offered security and opportunities for qualified Jews in Egypt.[85] Pseudo-Hecataeus needed to legitimize the existence of the Jewish community there, firstly, as a religious conservative with his heart in Jerusalem, he was aware of the negative attitude of the scriptures towards returning to Egypt; and secondly, in order to persuade Jews to remain in Egypt and use their influence there on behalf of their brethren in the Holy Land. Bar-Kochva believes Pseudo-Hecataeus therefore deliberately omitted any mention of the exodus event of scripture.[86]

This interpretation is intriguing, especially regarding the religiously sanctioned descent to Egypt under a priestly Hezekiah that rewrites the actual historical circumstances. Given the brevity of the excerpts amalgamated into Josephus's apologetic work, the thesis depends heavily on a hypothetical reconstruction of a much larger work, and of course on the Jewish authorship of the fragments that we do have.

Ezekiel the Tragedian's *Exagoge* portrays the exodus as an epic event under the leadership of the heroic figure of Moses.[87] The excerpted fragments begin with a reference to the descent of Jacob to Egypt in Gen 46–49 and end with Elim (Exod 15:27). So the author covered at minimum the narrative arc of the entry, sojourn, and departure of Jacob's descendants in Egypt.[88] Miracles, plagues and the Passover are all mentioned or described. The poet is fully aware of the book of Exodus in Greek and occasionally uses LXX terminology.[89]

Pinpointing a date for the work has proved difficult: it must fall between the mid-third century and mid-first century BCE given its use of words and

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[85] B. Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus, On the Jews: Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora* (University of California Press, 1996).
[86] Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus*, 251.
[87] H. Jacobson, *The* Exagoge *of Ezekiel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
[88] E. S. Gruen, 'Scriptural Stories in New Guise', in Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism,* 128–35, argues that the choice of this tale 'suggests an appeal to pride in national history and tradition produced in a qintessentially Hellenistic mode' (p. 128).
[89] Jacobson, *Exagoge*, 40. The author adds two unexpected episodes, Moses' dream of a throne apparently yielded to him by God himself, and a description of a marvellous bird, possibly a phoenix whose sighting was held to be auspicious. See P. van der Horst, 'Moses' Throne Vision in Ezekiel the Dramatist' *JJS* 34 (1983) 21–29; J. Heath, 'Ezekiel Tragicus and Hellenistic Visuality: the Phoenix at Elim', *JTS* n.s. 57 (2006), 23–41

phrases from LXX Exodus and Alexander Polyhistor's citations of the *Exagoge*.[90] It is probable but not certain that the work was written in Alexandria. Does the work reflect a period of tension between Jews and Egyptians, or are such references inherent in the biblical subject matter anyway?[91] Is the land of Canaan/Judea never specified as the Hebrews' destination because it was under Seleucid rule at the time,[92] or because the work acted as a kind of 'haggadah' for Egyptian Jews living in settled prosperity who wished to have a 'verbal liturgy to replace physical sacrifice' in order to celebrate the ancient deliverance of their people by God their 'helper' (ἀρωγός, l. 236)?[93] However, some features of the treatment are evidently responses to contemporary anti-Jewish motifs, including the despoiling of the Egyptians,[94] the enslavement of the Israelites, and Moses's leprous hand. The references to the Israelites' being 'ill-treated by evil men and sovereign power' (κακούμεθα κακῶν ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν καὶ δυναστείας χερός, ll. 4–5) and to 'the arrogance of evil men' (ὕβριν ἀνθρώπων κακῶν, l. 148) suggest that both Pharaoh and the Egyptian people are responsible for their oppression, perhaps reflecting the author's view of the contemporary situation.

The Letter of Aristeas is a completely preserved work written by a Jewish author in the persona of a non-Jewish courtier of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. 'Aristeas' reports to his friend or brother on the events surrounding the royal embassy sent to Jerusalem to secure translators for a rendering of the Jewish Law into Greek for the king's library. Probably written a century or more after the events it purports to describe, the narrative offers several features conveying the message that the situation of Jews in Alexandria of the time depicted is entirely different from that of the Israelites in the book of Exodus. Thus *Aristeas* acts as a

[90] Holladay, *Fragments,* II: *Poets*, 308-312.
[91] E.g. lines 3–13, 108, 190, refer to the Israelites' suffering, though in accordance with the biblical text.
[92] Line 167 refers only to entering 'your own land' (ἐς ἴδιον χῶρον), while in lines 154–55 God speaks of bringing them to 'another land' as promised to the patriarchs.
[93] R. Bryant Davies, 'Reading Ezekiel's *Exagoge*: Tragedy, Sacrifical Ritual, and the Midrashic Tradition' *GRBS* 48 (2008) 393–415, esp. 410.
[94] J. Allen, 'Ezekiel the Tragedian and the Despoliation of Egypt' *JSP* 17 (2007), 3–19.

'reverse Exodus' story,[95] with Ptolemy portrayed as a 'benevolent pharaoh':[96] who liberates the Jewish slaves at his own considerable expense, who sends costly gifts to the Jerusalem Temple, and who reveres the Jewish Law and its interpreters, especially the high priest Eleazar. Eleazar himself thus acts as a second Moses in his function as interpreter of the Law in its contemporary Hellenistic setting.[97] Similarly, the seventy-two translators represent the elders of Israel in Exodus. Yet the Jews of Alexandria remain where they are, acclaiming the translation of their Law in that precise form (cf. Exod 24:7; Deut 4:2) and requesting a copy for their own use. The author clearly portrays them as a legitimate, equal and parallel community to the Judean Jews: they possess a Greek Torah whose translation was sanctioned by the high priest in Jerusalem and stored in the royal library of Ptolemy. No 'exodus' is necessary: as Wright notes, '[Ps.-Aristeas] has to ignore the injunction in [Deut 17:16] that prohibits the Israelites from ever going back to Egypt. Not only have the people come back to Egypt, they are flourishing there'.[98]

The work usually referred to as 3 Maccabees famously has nothing to do with the family of the Maccabees. It is set in Alexandria and tells the story of an attempted genocide of Egyptian Jews by Ptolemy IV Philopator (late third century BCE), though the work was no doubt written later, perhaps between 100–30 BCE.[99] The narrative has parallels with 1 and 2 Maccabees in its concern with the Jerusalem Temple and the threat of apostasy, and with Esther with the theme of genocide: it has little to do with the exodus theme.

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[95] See B. J. Wright, *Letter of Aristeas,* 56, and n. 177 for further bibliography on this aspect. Noah Hacham and Sylvie Honigman emphasise strongly the reversal by Aristeas of key elements in the biblical narrative (S. Honigman, 'The Narrative Function of the King and the Library in the Letter of Aristeas', in *Jewish Perspectives on Hellenistic Rulers*, eds. T. Rajak, S. J. Pearce, et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 128–46, esp. p. 142 on the story as a as a '(non)Exodus'; N. Hacham, 'The Letter of Aristeas: a New Exodus Story?' *JSJ* 36 (2005), 1–20, esp. 8).

[96] Sylvie Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric scholarship in Alexandria: a study in the narrative of the* Letter of Aristeas (London: Routledge, 2003), 56.

[97] Wright, *Aristeas*, 58.

[98] Wright, *Aristeas,* 59.

[99] S. Raup Johnson, *Historical Fictions and Hellenistic Jewish Identity: Third Maccabees in Its Cultural Context* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2004), 136. However, it has also been argued that the work reflects a much later threat to the civic rights of Jews in Egypt, in the Roman period (see Johnson, *Hellenistic Culture,* 132 n.10 for details).

3 Maccabees' sole point of contact with the Exodus story occurs in a position of great significance, however. In his prayer of intercession for the Egyptian Jews who are about to be trampled by drunken elephants, the priest Eleazar cites it as the primary example of God's deliverance: 'Pharaoh, *the former ruler of this Egypt (*τὸν πρὶν Αἰγύπτου ταύτης δυνάστην),[100] made many his chariots, and was lifted up with lawless boldness and boastful tongue; you destroyed him by drowning him in the sea together with his proud army' (3 Macc 6:4).[101] Though the author attributes the Jews' troubles to the arrogance of the sottish king and the malevolence of his advisors (rather than to the Alexandrian Greeks),[102] there may also be some awareness of the theological problem of residence in Egypt, the land of idolatry, later on in Eleazar's prayer: 'If our life has become enmeshed in impieties during our *apoikia* (εἰ δὲ ἀσεβείαις κατὰ τὴν *ἀποικίαν* ὁ βίος ἡμῶν ἐνέσχηται), rescue us from the enemies' power, and destroy us by whatever fate you choose, Master!' (3 Macc 6:10). Literally ἀποικία means 'being away from home'. In non-biblical Greek, ἀποικία is a neutral term, used for a colony or settlement, cf. Wisd 12:7 where it refers positively to the Israelites' settlement of Canaan.[103] However, in the Greek versions of Ezra, Nehemiah and Jeremiah ἀποικία regularly translates Hebrew words for exile and captivity. If the sense of ἀποικία in 3 Macc 6:10 follows the 'biblical' Greek one, Eleazar would be

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[100] In 3 Macc 2:6–7 Simon the high priest also recalls the humiliation of Pharaoh when requesting divine aid against Ptolemy, but since Simon is in Jerusalem he does not make the association with contemporary Egypt.

[101] Tessa Rajak, *Translation and Survival. The Greek Bible of the Ancient Jewish Diaspora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 53–54.

[102] Raup Johnson, *Hellenistic Culture*, 139–40, citing passages such as 3 Macc 3:8–10. She also notes that the theme of Jewish loyalty to the court is repeatedly stressed, e.g 3:4; 6:25–26 (154–56).

[103] In both Josephus and Philo, *apoikia* has positive connotations, without the sense of exile and punishment. Birgit van der Lans notes how according to Josephus, Abraham's offspring by Hagar and Keturah were sent away to found 'colonies', *apoikiai* (*AJ* 1.216, 239, 255; 2.213) ('Hagar, Ishmael, and Abraham's Household in Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae'* in *Abraham, the Nations, and the Hagarites*, eds. M. D. Goodman, G. H. Kooten, and J. T. A. M. Ruiten (Leiden: Brill, 2010) 185-99). She also cites Betsy Halpern-Amaru's argument that Josephus saw a 'blessed Diaspora', a 'colony' that existed alongside the Jewish homeland (Halpern-Amaru, *Rewriting the Bible: Land and Covenant in Postbiblical Jewish Literature* (Valley Forge, PA; Trinity Press International 1994) 101, 113-15). Philo tends to stress the sense of movement suggested by the word – migration from or to somewhere, often in a symbolic sense.

implying that the Jews in Egypt are unwillingly resident in Egypt as part of the Diaspora. Yet given the author's mastery of literary Greek, he may intend the classical sense, hence Moses Hadas's choice of 'foreign sojourn' to render the term here.[104] Either way, the use of ἀποικία implies that Egypt is not the Jews' 'real' home. Yet the writer shows that God is able and willing to deliver them in that very place: 'just as you have said, "Not even when they were in the land of their enemies did I neglect them"' (3 Macc 6:15).[105]

The author of *Wisdom of Solomon* presents Wisdom, the 'pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty' (Wisd 7:25), as working with God throughout biblical history to deliver His people and punish the unrighteous, with the exodus story featuring as the paramount example.[106] The second half of the book alludes frequently to the exodus story[107] and also to the zoolatry for which Egyptians were notorious,[108] making it highly likely that it was written in Egypt to reassure fellow Jews there who were undergoing difficulties. Apologetic features appear, such as the reinterpretation of the 'despoiling' of Egypt (cf. Exod 12:36) as Wisdom paying the people 'a reward for their labours' (Wisd 10:17): an explicit spoiling of the Egyptians only takes place after the drowning of Pharaoh's army and refers to the Israelites taking their weapons, as was standard practice after battles (δίκαιοι ἐσκύλευσαν ἀσεβεῖς, Wisd 10.20; cf. Josephus, *AJ* II.349).[109] There is also much polemic against all forms of non-Jewish religious practice, not just idolatry and zoolatry, and the author defines the religious boundaries between

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[104] Hadas, *The Third and Fourth Book of Maccabees*. New York: Harper, 1953), 73. This would be in keeping with the conclusions of Johnson, *Hellenistic Culture*, 217, who takes the view that the work advocates a model of piety that enables Jews to participate in the Greek environment.
[105] Cf. 3 Macc 4:21; 5:28.
[106] Peter Enns, *Exodus Retold: Ancient Exegesis of the Departure from Egypt in* Wis *10:15–21 and 19:1-9* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), esp. 145.
[107] Starting with the explicit references in Wisd 10:15–21, while many other allusions to the plagues, miracles and deliverance at the Red Sea appear in the following chapters. God's preservation of Joseph in Egypt also features. For a succinct survey of the book and its themes, with especial reference to Exodus, see Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*, 181–91; also S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (JSPsSS 23; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), who sees the book as a response to the Alexandrian riot against the Jews in Caligula's reign (13; 150–53).
[108] Wisd 11:5; 12:24; 13:10, 14; 15:18, 19.
[109] See Udo Schenk-Bressler, *Sapientia Salomonis als ein Beispiel frühjüdischer Textauslegung: die Auslegung des Buches Genesis, Exodus 1-15 und Teilen der Wüstentradition in Sap 10-19* (BEATAJ; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang 1993), 104.

Jew and non-Jew very clearly. His claim that the biblical Egyptians were punished for their xenophobia towards the Hebrews who had brought good to them, is likely to refer to the current experience of Jews.[110] The reference to the Egyptians' cruel enslavement of 'those who had already shared the same rights' (τοὺς ἤδη τῶν αὐτῶν μετεσχηκότας δικαίων, Wisd 19:16) is particularly telling. The notion that the biblical Hebrews originally enjoyed the same civic rights as Egyptians is rather anachronistic, but it fits the fraught debates about the status of Jews in the Roman period.[111]

However, the author's treatment of the Exodus theme suggests that he envisages divine deliverance *within* the Diaspora situation in Egypt, rather than from it. The only reference to the Land of Israel as destination occurs in Wisd 12:7 and apparently relates only to its possession by the Israelites of old: 'so that the land most dear of all to you might welcome a fitting settlement (ἀξίαν ἀποικίαν) of God's children'.[112] The author's focus of longing is not an ἐξαγωγή or 'leading out' from Egypt, but rather an ἐπισκοπή, a divine visitation or punishment of the Egyptians for their wicked treatment of God's people (Wisd 19:15).[113]

A consciousness of the negativity of Scripture towards Jewish residence in Egypt is most marked in Philo of Alexandria. As demonstrated by Sarah Pearce, Philo's solution lies in a philosophical allegorization of the whole notion of Egypt. In this way he can advocate a largely spiritual migration from 'the Land of the Body', 'which the soul must leave to arrive at its God-given destination'.[114] What

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[110] Wisd 19:13-16: 'For they rightly suffered for their own wicked deeds, for they practised an even crueller hatred toward strangers' (χαλεπωτέραν μισοξενίαν)', i.e. even worse than that of Sodom, since 'they enslaved guests who were their benefactors' (εὐεργέτας ξένους). Cheon, *Exodus Story*, 101, notes that the Egyptians are viewed collectively as the wicked (e.g. in Wisd 19:1,13), and connects Egyptian μισοξενία in Wisdom with Philo's similar accusations in *Mos.* 1.36, *Spec. Leg.* 2.146 about the Egyptians' violations of the norms of hospitality.

[111] Schenk-Bressler, *Sapientia*, 320; Kasher, *Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, chs. VII and VIII, on the rights of Alexandrian Jews, also (253) the phrase used by Philo ἡ μετουσία πολιτικῶν δικαίων 'our participation in political rights' (*Flacc.* 53).

[112] The land of Israel is called 'holy' in Wisd 12:3.

[113] ἀλλ' ἤ τις ἐπισκοπὴ ἔσται αὐτῶν. Though the the precise meaning of the verse is debated, the idea that God will visit them with punishment best fits the context. See Cheon, *Exodus Story*, 101 n. 77.

[114] S. J. K. Pearce, *The Land of the Body: studies in Philo's representation of Egypt* (WUNT 208; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), XXI, and ch. 3. See also R. Bloch, 'Leaving Home: Philo of Alexandria on the Exodus' in *Israel's Exodus in Transdisciplinary Perspective: Text,*

is surprising is how unprecedented this biblically-driven approach seems, given the variety of other views of Jewish residence in Egypt that have been surveyed in the present chapter. In many ways Philo's view is much closer to that of the scriptural books which use Egypt as a metaphor for impurity: Hosea and Ezekiel in particular.

Conclusion

The fragmentary nature, uncertain date, and unknown provenance of many of the translations and works surveyed above mean that most conclusions must be tentative. However, it is safe to conclude that the negative portrayal of Egypt in the scriptures did not deter many Jews from settling there. Rather, it was the challenge of various difficult circumstances for Egyptian Jews that led Jewish writers to reflect on the issue of 'Israel in Egypt'. Of these, few, if any, seem to have concluded that the solution to their current problems was to leave Egypt physically and permanently.

Archaeology, Culture, and Geoscience, eds. T.E. Levy, T. Schneider and W. Propp (Cham 2015), 357-364, who also compares the attitude of Wisdom of Solomon and Ezekiel's *Exagoge* with that of Philo.