

Philo of Alexandria *On Virtues*

Introduction, Translation, and Commentary

By

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA COMMENTARY SERIES

Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 BCE–c. 50 CE) was a member of one of the most prominent families of the large and influential Jewish community in Alexandria. We know more about his brother and his family than we do about Philo. His brother, Julius Gaius Alexander, held a responsible governmental position (Josephus, *AJ* 18.159, 259; 19.276–277, 20.100) and became known to the emperor's family through Herodian intermediaries (Josephus, *AJ* 19.276–277). His *praenomen* and *nomen* suggest that the family was associated in some way with Julius Gaius Caesar. It may be that Caesar granted Roman citizenship to Alexander's grandfather for assistance during the Alexandrian War (48–47 BCE). Alexander made the most of his position and became exceptionally wealthy (Josephus, *AJ* 20.100). Josephus reported that he covered nine of the temple doors in Jerusalem with gold and silver (*BJ* 5.201–205), an act of patronage that attests his immense resources as well as his commitment to Judaism. Alexander's standing is confirmed by the roles of his two sons. The archive of Nicanor suggests that Marcus Julius Alexander was active in the import-export business that moved goods from India and Arabia through Egypt to the West. He married Berenice, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I and later partner of the emperor Titus, but died prematurely c. 43 CE (Josephus, *AJ* 19.276–277). His brother had one of the most remarkable careers of any provincial in the first two centuries of the Roman Empire. Tiberius Julius Alexander moved through a series of lower posts until he held governorships in Judea, Syria, and Egypt. When he backed Vespasian in the Flavian's bid for the throne, his career quickly rose to its apex: he served as Titus' chief of staff during the First Jewish revolt in 66–70 CE (Josephus, *BJ* 5.45–5.46; 6.237) and as prefect of the praetorian guard in Rome after the war (*CPJ* 418b). While his career strained his relationship with his native Judaism to the breaking point (Josephus, *AJ* 20.100; Philo, *Prov.* and *Anim.*), it attests the high standing of the family.

The most famous member of this remarkable family was paradoxically probably the least known in wider circles during his life. This is undoubtedly due to the contemplative nature of the life that he chose. His choice

was not total. He may have had some civic function in the Jewish community. At least this would help to explain why the Alexandrian Jewish community selected him to lead the first Jewish delegation to Rome after the pogrom in Alexandria in 38 CE, a delegation that probably included his brother and nephew of later fame (*Legat.* 182, 370; *Anim.* 54). The political arena was not, however, where his heart lay; he gave his heart to the life of the intellect (*Spec.* 3.1–6). He undoubtedly received a full education that included training in the gymnasium, the ephebate, and advanced lectures in philosophy. The final training was of enormous importance to his intellectual formation. While he knew and made use of different philosophical traditions such as Stoicism and Pythagorean arithmology, his basic orientation was Platonic. Middle Platonism (c. 80 BCE – c. 220 CE) had become a vibrant intellectual movement in Alexandria in the first century BCE, especially in the work of Eudorus (*fl.* 25 BCE). Philo became convinced that Plato and Moses understood reality in similar ways, although he was unequivocal about who saw it most clearly. His commitment to Judaism is evident in his training in the LXX: he knew it with the intimacy of one who lived with it from the cradle onwards. He also knew the works of some of his Jewish literary predecessors such as Aristobulus, Pseudo-Aristeas, and Ezekiel the tragedian. He was aware of a significant number of other Jewish exegetes to whom he alluded, but always anonymously (*Opif.* 26, 77, and *Migr.* 89–93). The most probable social setting for his literary work is a private school in which he offered instruction in much the same way that philosophers and physicians did.

One of the ways that he taught was through writing. His treatises constitute one of the largest corpora that has come down to us from antiquity. We know that he wrote more than seventy treatises: thirty-seven of these survive in Greek manuscripts and nine (as counted in the tradition) in a rather literal sixth century Armenian translation. We also have excerpts of another work in Greek and fragments of two more in Armenian. The lost treatises are known from references to them in the extant treatises, gaps in his analyses of the biblical texts in the commentary series, and *testimonia*.

The treatises fall into five major groups: three separate commentary series, the philosophical writings, and the apologetic writings. The three commentary series are Philo's own literary creations; the philosophical and apologetic series are modern constructs that group conceptually similar but literarily independent treatises.

The heart of the Philonic enterprise lay in the three commentary series. Each of these was an independent work with a distinct rationale and

form. The most elementary of the three is the twelve book *Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus* that cover Gen 2:4–28:9 and Exod 6:2–30:10. As the title suggests, Philo used a question and answer format to write a running commentary on the biblical text. The questions are often formulaic, but demonstrate a close reading of the text. The answers typically introduce both literal and allegorical interpretations. Although earlier Jewish authors such as Demetrius (FF 2 and 5) and Aristobulus (F 2) used the question and answer device, they did not write zetematic works. The closest literary parallel to Philo's commentary series is the series of zetematic works which Plutarch composed. The pedagogical character of the format and the listing of multiple interpretations suggest that Philo's *Questions and Answers* were written for beginning students in his school who needed to learn the range of possible readings.

The Allegorical Commentary shares some features in common with the *Questions and Answers*, but is profoundly different. Like the *Questions and Answers* these treatises use the question and answer technique in a running commentary. Unlike the *Questions and Answers*, the format is no longer explicit but is incorporated in a more complex form of exegesis. Literal readings are largely ignored; instead the focus is on allegorical interpretations which are expanded through the introduction of secondary biblical texts (*lemmata*). The scope is also different: the Allegorical Commentary is confined to Genesis 2:1–41:24. While these expansions give the treatises a meandering feel, there is almost always a thematic unity that makes the treatise coherent. Philo was by no means the first Jewish author to use allegory: earlier Jewish writers such as Aristobulus and Pseudo-Aristeas had used allegorical interpretation; however, they did not write allegorical commentaries. Philo's allegorical commentaries are closer in form to commentaries in the philosophical tradition, e.g., the Platonic *Anonymous Theaetetus Commentary*, Plutarch's *On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus*, and Porphyry's *On the Cave of Nymphs*. Yet even here there are considerable differences; for example, Philo's treatises have more thematic unity than his pagan counterparts. If the *Questions and Answers* were for beginning students, the Allegorical Commentary was most likely composed for advanced students or other exegetes in the Jewish community. It certainly places much greater demands on the reader, as any modern reader who has worked through them can attest.

The third series, the Exposition of the Law, is different yet. It is not a running commentary, but a systematic exposition of the law of Moses. It

focuses on literal readings and largely ignores allegorical possibilities. Its scope extends beyond Genesis and Exodus to include the entire Torah. Philo wrote an introduction to the *Exposition* in the form of a biography in the two volume *Life of Moses*. The work is similar in function to Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* which introduces readers to the *Enneads*. Philo organized his understanding of the law in three parts (*Praem.* 1–3). The first part deals with creation, demonstrating the harmony between the cosmos and the law. The second part is the historical or biographical section that consists of biographies that show how the ancestors embodied the law before it was given to Moses. The third and most complex part is the legislative. Just as some later rabbis, Philo worked through the decalogue and then used each of the ten commandments as a heading to subsume the remaining legislation in the Torah. Unlike the later rabbis, he added a series of appendices under the headings of virtues. He brought the series to a conclusion in a treatise *On Rewards and Punishments* in direct imitation of the end of Deuteronomy. The series was probably intended for a Jewish audience that included but was not limited to the school.

If the three commentary series accentuate Philo's role within the Jewish community, the last two groups of his treatises reflect his efforts to relate to the larger world. The philosophical works use Greek sources and philosophical genres to address some of the major philosophical issues Philo and his students confronted. The apologetic works were probably written—for the most part—in connection with the events of 38–41 CE. They were designed to assist Philo in his efforts to represent the Jewish community to the authorities.

This expansive corpus is the single most important source for our understanding of Second Temple Judaism in the diaspora. While some of the esoteric and philosophical aspects of his writings reflect a highly refined circle in Alexandria, the corpus as a whole preserves a wide range of exegetical and social traditions which enable us to reconstruct a number of beliefs and practices of Jews in the Roman empire. The difficulty that we face is the limited evidence from other Jewish communities.

This can be partially solved by expanding the comparisons to early Christian writings which were heavily indebted to Jewish traditions. As is the case with virtually all Second Temple Jewish texts composed in Greek, Philo's corpus was not preserved by Jews but by Christians who found his writings so irresistibly attractive that they gave him a *post mortem* conversion. In some *Catenaes* he is actually called "Philo the bishop." A number of important early Christian authors are deeply indebted to

him: Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Didymus, Gregory of Nyssa, and Ambrose in particular. While there is no solid evidence to show that New Testament authors knew his writings, they certainly knew some of the same exegetical traditions that he attests. His writings therefore serve both as a witness to some exegetical traditions of first century Christians and as a source for some second century and later Christians.

One of the factors that made Philo so attractive to Christians was the way that he combined Greek philosophy, especially Middle Platonism, with exegesis. The eclectic nature of his thought and the size of his corpus make his writings a particularly important source for our understanding of several Hellenistic philosophical traditions. The combination of Middle Platonism and Jewish exegesis also makes Philo important for the study of Gnosticism, especially for those scholars who argue that the second century Christian Gnostic systems had significant antecedents in Jewish circles.

It is remarkable that in spite of the obvious importance of these writings and their complexity, no series of commentaries has been devoted to them. The present series is designed to fill that void. Each commentary will offer an introduction, a fresh English translation, and a commentary proper. The commentary proper is organized into units/chapters on the basis of an analysis of the structure of each treatise. Each unit/chapter of the commentary will address the following concerns: the context and basic argument of the relevant section, detailed comments on the most important and difficult phrases, passages where Philo treats the same biblical text, the *Nachleben* of Philo's treatment, and suggestions for further reading. There will be some variation within the series to account for the differences in the genres of Philo's works; however, readers should be able to move from one part of the corpus to another with ease. We hope that in this way these commentaries will serve the needs of both Philonists who lack sustained analyses of individual treatises and those who work in other areas but consult Philo's works.

Most of the volumes in this series will concentrate on Philo's commentaries. It may seem strange to write and read a commentary on a commentary; however, it is possible to understand the second commentary to be an extended form of commentary on the biblical text as well. While Philo's understanding of the biblical text is quite different from our own, it was based on a careful reading of the text and a solid grasp of Greek philosophy. His commentaries permit us to understand how one of the most influential interpreters of the biblical text in antiquity read the text. The fact that his reading is so different from ours is in part the

fascination of reading him. He challenges us to enter into a different world and to see the text from another perspective.

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INTRODUCTION

1. *The Place of the Treatise in the Philonic Corpus*

There is general agreement that *De virtutibus* belongs to a set of treatises conventionally known as the Exposition of the Law, the most carefully structured and thematically cohesive of Philo of Alexandria's three commentary series.¹ Much like the first four books of Josephus' *Antiquitates judaicae*, the Exposition essentially treats the entire contents of the Pentateuch, though it does so in a more systematic fashion, a fact signaled in part by the significant number of prefatory and transitional statements inserted into the text. An examination of the most important of these statements not only indicates how Philo has organized the various treatises of the Exposition but also provides some insight as to the commentary's major themes and aims.²

The introduction to the first treatise of the Exposition, *De opificio*, begins by asserting the superiority of Moses' legislation over that of other lawgivers (§§ 1–2). Specifically, by starting with an account of creation, he was able to demonstrate that his law is in harmony with the cosmos. Anyone who observes his law, then, is “a citizen of the cosmos, directing his actions in relation to the rational purpose of nature, in accordance with which the entire cosmos is also administered” (§ 3).

The introduction to *De Abrahamo* opens with a reference to “the preceding treatise” in which “the creation of the world has been set forth in detail” (§ 2). Since the book of Genesis includes much more than an account of this event, however, in his “examination of the law in regular sequence” Philo must postpone a review of the legislation itself until he has had an opportunity to narrate the lives of the patriarchs (§§ 1, 3). This is essential, he tells us, because these lives are in fact archetypes, “laws endowed with life and reason,” of which the written laws are copies.

¹ For a description of the other series, the *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim et Exodum* and the so-called Allegorical Commentary, see the General Introduction.

² For what follows, see Sandmel 1979, 47–76; Morris 1987, 840–856; Borgen 1996; Borgen 1997, 63–79. Regarding the place of *De virtutibus* in the Exposition, the manuscript tradition is of little value, though see n. 47 below.

Moses made a permanent record of the patriarchs' virtues in the scriptures in order to show that the statutes he enacted accord with nature. Specifically, the written laws are "memorials" of the lives of ancient men who secured a perfect life by living in accord with nature (§§ 4–6). In the same vein, the conclusion to the treatise refers to Abraham as "himself a law and an unwritten statute" (§ 276; cf. *Mos.* 1.162; 2.4).

The introduction to *De Iosepho* alludes to previous treatises on those patriarchs to whom Moses assigned a special place: "I have described the lives of these three, the life which results from teaching, the life of the self-taught, and the life of practice" (§ 1). As comparison with *Abr.* 52 indicates, the reference here is to works on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, each of whom represents a different means of acquiring virtue (cf. *Mos.* 1.76). The second and third treatises of this trio have been lost, while Philo carries the series forward by describing a fourth kind of life, that of the statesman.³

Having recounted in "the preceding treatises" the lives of the "founders of our nation and in themselves unwritten laws" (*Decal.* 1), Philo then devotes a major section of the Exposition to reviewing the written laws, beginning with the general laws (*De decalogo*), then the particular statutes dependent on each of them (*De specialibus legibus*). The basic principle informing the survey is articulated in the introduction to the latter: the ten commandments, examined at length "in the preceding treatise," are "the main heads under which are summarized the special laws" (*Spec.* 1.1; cf. *Decal.* 19, 154; *Spec.* 4.132).⁴

This principle guides the structure of the commentary until we reach *Spec.* 4.133–135, where the discussion moves in a different direction. Besides assigning various laws to each of the commandments separately, it is also possible, Philo says, to show that the decalogue in its entirety accords with certain "generally beneficial" virtues: "for each of the ten oracles individually and all in common stimulate and exhort us to prudence and justice and godliness and the rest of the choir of the virtues" (4.134). Philo claims to have already adequately covered three members of this troop, the "queen," known alternatively as piety or holiness, as well

³ *Abr.* 7–46 also sketches the lives of Enosh, Enoch, and Noah, representing hope, repentance, and justice respectively. When the second, higher triad (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and Joseph are included, the total number is brought up to seven, a holy number for Philo (Geljon 2002, 21–25); cf. *Praem.* 14–56, where the seventh figure is not Joseph, but Moses.

⁴ Cf. PAPH 25.12–23; Hecht 1978.

as prudence and moderation.⁵ The next task, then, is to elaborate on those laws that most clearly exemplify the virtue of justice, a topic which occupies the remainder of the treatise (4.136–238).⁶

The introduction to *De virtutibus* begins by stating that, since the topic of justice has already been discussed, it is possible to dilate on the virtue “next in sequence,” namely, courage (§ 1). After doing so, Philo announces the next subject as humanity, the virtue he thinks is most akin to piety (§ 51).⁷

At the beginning of *De praemiis et poenis*, Philo looks back at the commentary in its entirety, explaining that the Pentateuch consists of three kinds or genres of discourse: (1) the cosmological, which deals with the creation of the cosmos; (2) the historical, which records good and bad lives from the past; and (3) the legislative, which is further divided into the ten general headings and the enactments of specific laws (§§ 1–2). Philo then states that since all of these matters “and further the virtues he assigned to peace and war have been discussed as fully as was needful in the preceding treatises,” he can “proceed in due course” to the topic of rewards for obedience and punishments for disobedience (§ 3).

Finally, a word needs to be said regarding *De vita Mosis*, especially since the cross-references in *Virt.* 52 and *Praem.* 53 assume that the audience is familiar with this two-volume treatise.⁸ Indeed, as Runia (2001, 1) points out, Philo has assumed from the very beginning of the Exposition that his readers are knowledgeable about the life and accomplishments of the author whose work he is expounding, which is precisely what *De vita Mosis* provides. However, as most experts concur, this treatise is not actually part of the Exposition, but functions in relation to it as a kind of companion piece.⁹ Further evidence for this relation can be found in *Mos.* 2.45–52, which contains statements similar to those

⁵ Cf. Cohen 1995, 86–105.

⁶ Presumably Philo includes the discussion of justice here, rather than in *De virtutibus*, so that the books would not be too unequal in length. See Morris 1987, 851; Runia 2001, 6; Royse 2006, 76; Sterling 2006, 110–111.

⁷ The cross-references in *Virt.* 16–17 and 101 are presumably to *De specialibus legibus* 1–4 (Royse 2001, 64).

⁸ In addition, the account of Moses’ death and succession in *Virt.* 51–79 supplements the brief description of his death at the end of *De vita Mosis* (2.288–291).

⁹ None of the Exposition’s introductory statements refer to it, and the treatise itself has no statements indicating its place in the sequence. In addition, its length and design differ from those of *De Abrahamo* and *De Iosepho*. See Goodenough 1933; Colson, PLCL 6.xiv–xvi; Morris 1987, 854–856; Geljon 2002, 13–30. For the opposing view, see Nikiprowetzky 1977, 195–197.

in *Opif.* 1–3 and *Praem.* 1–2. Here Philo explains that the Pentateuch falls into two parts, the historical, which can be further divided into the cosmological and the biographical, and that part which consists of commands and prohibitions (2.45–47). Moses included the former in part in order to show that those who observe the law follow nature and live in accordance with the structure of the cosmos (2.48, 52). In relating his laws to the foundation of the cosmos rather than to the founding of some “man-made city,” Moses’ legislation is superior to that of other lawgivers (2.49, 51).¹⁰

Looking at these various editorial frames and transitional statements as a whole, then, it is obvious that Philo wanted to link the treatises of the Exposition together in a way that his readers could easily follow:

(*De vita Mosis* I–II)

First Part: On Creation

De opificio mundi

Second Part: On History

De Abrahamo

[*De Isaaco*]

[*De Iacobo*]

De Iosepho

Third Part: On Legislation

General laws: *De decalogo*

Specific laws: *De specialibus legibus* 1.1–4.132

Virtues: *De specialibus legibus* 4.133—*De virtutibus*

Rewards and punishments: *De praemiis et poenis*

In addition to indicating its particular place in the sequence of treatises that comprise the commentary, consideration of these editorial frames and transitional statements prompts certain observations regarding the function and contribution of *De virtutibus* within the Exposition as a whole.

First, it is a priority for Philo to show that in framing his laws Moses created legislation that was of universal scope and significance. For example, as we have seen, he asserts that since these laws are in harmony with the cosmic order, those who follow them can achieve the goal of living in accord with nature.¹¹ Philo’s recourse to the virtues as a structural and

¹⁰ It is also superior insofar as in conveying his commands and prohibitions to the people Moses relied not on compulsion but on exhortation, i.e., reason (2.50–51).

¹¹ For Philo’s concept of natural law, see Niehoff 2001, 247–266; Martens 2003, 83–101. Both draw comparisons with Stoic sources.

thematic device in presenting the laws is consistent with this assertion insofar as virtue discourse, expressed in various forms, enjoyed a prominent place in the moral, legal, political, and philosophical thought of the time. Extended use of such discourse contributes to his aim of showing how the highest ideals of the prevailing culture are embodied by the Jewish patriarchs and set forth in the Mosaic laws. This has the effect of configuring the Jewish community, one formed by these laws, not as an ethnic group, but as a nation guided by the best philosophical principles¹² and constituting the best polity, or πολιτεία,¹³ which, as such, accords with the divine, cosmic polity.¹⁴ Because citizenship in this polity depends not on nationality or ties of kinship, but “on virtues and laws which propound the morally beautiful as the sole good” (*Spec.* 2.73; cf. 3.155), Philo can even envision a day when each nation would abandon its particular customs and “turn to honoring our laws alone” (*Mos.* 2.44). In fact, according to Philo it was Moses’ intention that through his legislation “households and cities, nations and lands, and the whole human race might advance to the highest well-being” (*Virt.* 119; cf. *Spec.* 2.48).

Second, the contribution of virtue discourse to the Exposition is not restricted to *De virtutibus*. As we have seen, the section organized according to the virtues actually begins in the immediately preceding treatise, that is, with the discussion of justice in *Spec.* 4.136–238. As with the rest of *De specialibus legibus*, what Philo offers in this section is not a running commentary on scripture but a systematic analysis of its contents. Therefore, certain laws are left undiscussed,¹⁵ while others are discussed from more than one angle.¹⁶ As we have also seen, when introducing that section in *Spec.* 4.133–135, Philo mentions a whole “choir” of virtues, namely, wisdom, justice, piety (known also as holiness or godliness), and moderation, to which he later adds courage (*Virt.* 1) and humanity (*Virt.* 51). Of these six, the first five would have been immediately recognizable as proper members of the philosophical (especially Platonic)

¹² *Opif.* 8; *Mos.* 2.212; *Decal.* 58; *Virt.* 65; Nikiprowetzky 1977, 97–116.

¹³ *Spec.* 3.167; *Virt.* 175; cf. *Spec.* 3.24, 181; *Virt.* 219; *Praem.* 4; Wolfson 1947, 2.374–395. For the various connotations that the term πολιτεία could have, see Kasher 1985, 358–364.

¹⁴ *Decal.* 97–98; cf. *Opif.* 143; *Ios.* 28–29; *Spec.* 1.314; 4.55.

¹⁵ *Lev* 12:1–14:57; *Num* 8:5–26; *Deut* 21:1–9, etc.

¹⁶ See the *Parallel exegesis* for *Virt.* 80–81.

canon,¹⁷ and references to different formulations of this canon are scattered throughout the Exposition.¹⁸ The description in *Spec.* 2.62–63 is of particular interest in this regard, because here Philo explains how education in virtue is a priority evident not only in scripture, but also in the ongoing life and practice of the communities that study it: “each seventh day there stand wide open in every city thousands of schools of prudence, moderation, courage, justice, and the other virtues,” which, he says, are treated under two main heads: “one of the duty to God as shown by piety and holiness, and the other of the duty to people as shown by humanity and justice” (cf. *Mos.* 2.216). It is probably safe to assume that one of Philo’s aims in writing the Exposition was to encourage and facilitate this practice.

In the same vein, it is apparent that the application of virtue discourse to major segments of text extends into the earlier portions of the Exposition. For example, when making the transition to the virtue section in *Spec.* 4.135, Philo asserts that he has already discussed piety/holiness, wisdom, and moderation, which would explain why they are not the subject of specially designated sections. Presumably, what he means by this is that these three virtues pertain to *Spec.* 1.1–4.132 as a whole, though he may also think that certain laws in the survey pertain more to one virtue than to others.¹⁹ At any rate, with this statement Philo signals to his readers that all of the virtues of the canon were somehow addressed by Moses when framing his legislation. It should also be noted that the use of virtues as an organizing device extends into the biographical sections of the Exposition as well. For example, *De Abrahamo* contains a major section that expounds on the patriarch’s piety (§§ 60–207), then his humanity/justice (§§ 208–224), and then finally his courage (§§ 225–244). Such a move is hardly surprising, since Philo often holds the patriarchs up as exemplars of virtue (e.g., *Abr.* 52). As is frequently noted, despite its name, the Exposition of the Law expounds on more than laws, combining an interest in historical origins and historical biography with an interpretation of the Mosaic legislation. The thematiz-

¹⁷ E.g., Plato, *Lach.* 199d; *Prot.* 330b, 349b; *Gorg.* 507c. The most well-known version of the canon, prominent especially in Platonic and Stoic circles, included prudence, justice, moderation, and courage. Further, North 1966.

¹⁸ E.g., *Opif.* 73; *Abr.* 24, 219; *Mos.* 2.185; *Praem.* 52, 160. Cf. the commentary on *Virt.* 167, 180; also the *Analysis/General comments* for *Virt.* 22–50.

¹⁹ Cf. PCH 2.285; PAM 25.284–285; also see below, n. 62.

ing of virtue represents an important way in which these two categories of discourse, the historical and the legislative, complement and reinforce one another.

Third, in both its general orientation and specific commentary, the Exposition is seen to exhibit apologetic motives. By this I mean that it embraces a broad set of strategies establishing the excellence of Judaism in response, either explicitly or implicitly, to challenges originating from the non-Jewish host culture.²⁰ For example, as we saw earlier, *Opif.* 1–3 and *Mos.* 2.49 assert the superiority of Moses' legislation to that of other lawgivers, the primary reference most likely being to Plato's *Respublica* and *Leges*, works in which the Alexandrian appears to have been well-versed.²¹ From his perspective, it only stands to reason, then, that non-Jews seeking virtue know and honor the Mosaic law (e.g., *Mos.* 2.17–25, 41; *Spec.* 2.73) and that non-Jewish legislators copied from the Pentateuch when framing their own laws (e.g., *Spec.* 4.61; *Virt.* 139). It is important to remember that such claims are being made in an environment in which the Mosaic law was sometimes criticized for enjoining peculiar or parochial customs.²² According to Philo's view, by contrast, the reason why the Jews have become "like an orphan" among the nations is because of the rigorous manner in which they observe the highest standards of virtue (*Spec.* 4.179–180), and it is probably only out of envy that certain Greek authors have expressed malice towards Moses (*Mos.* 1.1–4). Philo's apologetic tone becomes even more explicit in a passage like *Spec.* 2.167. As he explains there, offering prayers and sacrifices to God on behalf of all humanity is an essential aspect of the cult that Moses established. It therefore astonishes him "to see that some people venture to accuse of inhumanity the nation which has shown such a profound sense of fellowship and goodwill to all people everywhere" (cf. *Virt.* 141, discussed below).²³ Given that the largest single section of *De virtutibus* endeavors to demonstrate the humanity of Moses, his laws, and those who follow them, attention to such apologetic dynamics is essential to the interpretive task.

²⁰ Cf. Hecht 1984; Conzelmann 1992, 191–195; Alexandre 1998a; Pearce 1998; Barclay 2002.

²¹ For references to these texts, see PLCL 10.470–471. For comparisons with other lawgivers, cf. *Spec.* 3.13–17; 4.102.

²² See part 5 of the Introduction.

²³ Cf. Leonhardt-Balzer 2007.

2. *The Place of the Treatise in Philo's Life*

In order to grasp their full import, it is essential to bear in mind that Philo's claims about the law were not mere theoretical ruminations, but emanated from an intense personal involvement in the struggle of the Alexandrian Jewish community for civil rights.²⁴ In *Spec.* 3.1–6, he complains about being drawn into a sea of worries concerning the Jewish πολιτεία. While it is difficult to be certain, many scholars take this as a reference to the civil unrest of 38–41 CE.²⁵ In this case, the composition of the Exposition belongs to a period late in Philo's life, sometime after he led the embassy to Gaius, which he later described as “a campaign on behalf of our polity” (*Legat.* 349, cf. 193–194).

The crisis necessitating such diplomatic action had historical roots extending back almost to the foundation of Alexandria itself.²⁶ Since the early days of the Ptolemaic era, Jews there had enjoyed the right to organize as a “quasi-independent and self-governing communal organization,” referred to as a πολιτεύμα by most modern and some ancient authors.²⁷ The rights intrinsic to such an institution, which must have been essential to the preservation of the community's native customs, continued to be respected under Roman rule, a fact displayed perhaps most palpably in a stele erected in the city by Augustus.²⁸ Significantly, the monument linked official confirmation of the Jews' civil rights with an acknowledgement of the military service they had rendered representatives of Rome, in this case troops serving under Julius Caesar in 48/47 BCE.²⁹ In fact, the event commemorated by the emperor would have been just one in a series of armed interventions by Jewish forces in Egyptian politics, usually in ways that aligned Jewish interests with those of Rome.³⁰ The Alexandrian populace, denied its own governing body and despising Roman control generally, resented such interventions and the

²⁴ Philo belonged to a wealthy and politically prominent family. See Morris 1987, 814–818; Schwartz 2009.

²⁵ Cohn 1899, 433–445; Morris 1987, 843–844; Runia 2001, 4; van der Horst 2003, 2–4; cf. Terian 1991, 1997. In addition, Borgen (1997, 176–193) notes parallels that the Exposition (especially its last four treatises) shows with *In Flaccum* and *Legatio ad Gaium*, both written late in Philo's life. The suggestions of Cohen 1990 also accord with such a dating.

²⁶ For what follows, see especially Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.1–78.

²⁷ Dawson 1992, 114.

²⁸ Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.37, 61; cf. *Ant.* 14.188; Philo, *Flacc.* 50.

²⁹ Cf. Kasher 1985, 13–18.

³⁰ Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.19–25, 55–56; Smallwood 1970, 11; Barclay 1996, 35–41.

special privileges accorded the Jews. Reflective of the mood were various anti-Jewish histories of Egypt depicting them as impious invaders from the East who viciously destroyed entire cities and desecrated sacred sites.³¹ The situation was exacerbated further by the efforts of some elite, Hellenized Jews to obtain citizenship in the Alexandrian *polis*, a status closely associated with the acquisition of Greek culture, as signified especially through a gymnasium education.³² The imposition of the *λαογραφία*, or poll tax, beginning in 24/23 BCE, from which Roman citizens and citizens of Greek cities were exempt, would have created powerful social and economic incentives for them to do so. Indeed, for elite Jews living in Alexandria but lacking Alexandrian citizenship payment of the tax would have been “a mark of extreme political and cultural degradation.”³³

Jewish ambitions to improve their situation, however, met with fierce opposition from Alexandrian Greeks, who feared the “corruption” of their city’s citizen body.³⁴ These disputes regarding the Jews’ civic standing came to a head in the pogrom of 38 CE, during which the Roman prefect Flaccus (egged on by some of the city’s Greek leaders) proclaimed the Jews to be “aliens and foreigners,” a move that, in Philo’s estimation, represented an attempt “to destroy our polity” (*Flacc.* 53–54).³⁵ The communal rights of the Jews would be reinstated by Claudius some two-and-a-half years later, though with the caveat that they were no longer to seek the privileges of Greek citizenship, thereby effectively barring them from future access to the gymnasium.³⁶

In such a volatile environment, Philo followed a strategy that we can assume was embraced by most Alexandrian Jewish elites, one that sought rapprochement with Roman rule and the benefits this could provide.³⁷

³¹ On the narratives of Manetho, e.g., see Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.73–92, 227–287; *GLAJJ* 1.62–86. Further, Kasher 1985, 327–345; Conzelmann 1992, 79–91.

³² Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.38–43; Smallwood 1970, 12–14; Barclay 1996, 42, 49, 66–70.

³³ Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.61 (cf. 1.60–64; also Kasher 1985, s.v. *laographia*). Beginning in 4/5 CE, the Roman government recognized a new class, οἱ ἀπὸ γυμνασίου, Greek-educated inhabitants living outside one of the πόλεις who paid the poll tax at a reduced rate: Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.59.

³⁴ Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.38, 64–65; Barclay 1996, 50–51.

³⁵ Smallwood 1970, 14–23; Barclay 1996, 51–55.

³⁶ Tcherikover 1957–1964, 1.69–74; 2.36–55; Kasher 1985, 310–326; Barclay 1996, 55–60; cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 19.280–285.

³⁷ Cf. Barraclough 1984, 449–475; Dawson 1992, 113–126; Niehoff 2001, s.v. *Rome/Romans*.

Accordingly, it was incumbent upon him to configure Judaism's relationship with the empire in as positive a light as possible, for example, by making complimentary statements about Rome's leaders and their achievements (e.g., *Legat.* 140–161; cf. *Flacc.* 48–49). More important, in a writing like the Exposition, Philo also endeavors to construct an image of Judaism that makes such a political and cultural strategy plausible. This would have involved examining the Mosaic tradition through the eyes of its “significant others,”³⁸ demonstrating how it establishes the best polity by standards embraced by the Roman ruling classes and is therefore deserving of respect in a world dominated by Roman power. From this perspective, we can see that the Exposition is much more than Philo's commentary on the Pentateuch; it is also a “commentary on the actual history of the community to which he belonged.”³⁹ Much like the Egyptian Jews of Moses' time, the members of this group were anxious for citizenship and equal rights (*Mos.* 1.35). The image of their foundational texts, figures, and events provided by the Exposition would have been particularly relevant in an environment where the acquisition of social status and civil rights was closely tied with being culturally Greek. It is not surprising that in his apologetic reconfiguration of Jewish law and history, Philo's appropriation of Greek culture is carried out in a manner familiar from contemporary modes of Roman political and moral discourse.

3. *The Title and Integrity of the Treatise*

The exposition of the Mosaic law in *De virtutibus* does not consist of a continuous commentary or a unified thematic argument, but is divided into a number of discreet sections or subtreatises.⁴⁰ In the definitive critical edition of the text prepared by Leopold Cohn together with Paul Wendland,⁴¹ its contents are presented as follows:

- a. Περί ἀνδρείας, *De fortitudine* (= *Fort.* 1–50)
- b. Περί φιλανθρωπίας, *De humanitate* (= *Hum.* 51–174)

³⁸ Dyck 2002, 173.

³⁹ Dawson 1992, 116.

⁴⁰ As Royse (2006, 76) notes, the contents of *De specialibus legibus* and *De praemiis et poenis* “similarly consist of more or less independent sub-treatises, which have varying textual histories.” Cf. Sterling 2006, 111.

⁴¹ PCW 5.266–335. Cf. Wendland 1896; Cohn 1908, 210–215.

- c. Περί μετανοίας, *De paenitentia* (= *Paen.* 175–186)
 d. Περί εὐγενείας, *De nobilitate* (= *Nob.* 187–227)

This arrangement has been followed in subsequent translations of the work, including the one prepared by F.H. Colson for the Loeb Classical Library.⁴² It is important to note, however, that Cohn was the first editor to organize the contents of the treatise this way. In the *editio princeps* of Philo's works prepared by Adrien Turnebus in 1552, for example, the subtreatises are presented as independent works separated by other treatises, and in the order *De humanitate*, *De fortitudine*, *De paenitentia*, and *De nobilitate*,⁴³ while in Thomas Mangey's 1742 edition, *De fortitudine*, *De humanitate*, and *De paenitentia* appear together (and in that order), but *De nobilitate* is presented as a separate section after *De praemiis et poenis*.⁴⁴ Such dissimilarity in the critical editions can be accounted for when we inspect the manuscript tradition for *De virtutibus*, which exhibits considerable variation in terms of both the ordering of the subtreatises and their placement within the Philonic corpus.⁴⁵ This can be seen readily in an examination of those witnesses that preserve at least three of the sections. Below, the subtreatises are listed in the order in which they appear in each of these witnesses using the letter designations assigned above. When no separation occurs between letters, the subtreatises follow one another continuously, while a slash indicates that they are separated by one or more other Philonic works. An asterisk indicates that only a portion of the subtreatise has survived.⁴⁶

⁴² PLCL 8.157–305. Cf. PCH 2.313–377; PAMP 26.27–159.

⁴³ = G-G #391. *De humanitate* is printed after *De vita Mosis*, *De fortitudine* after *De iustitia* (= *Spec.* 4.136–238), and *De nobilitate* after *De vita contemplativa*, while (as Runia 1991, 118 explains) *De paenitentia* follows *De humanitate* without any break or title. This order was followed by the edition published by Pierre de la Rouière in 1613 (= G-G #398), the first major edition to be accompanied by a Latin translation.

⁴⁴ This was the case despite Mangey's reliance on MS S, for which see below. The 1828–1830 edition of C.E. Richter (= G-G #413) follows this placement for *De nobilitate*, as does the English translation prepared by C.D. Yonge in 1854–1855.

⁴⁵ For a conspectus of the approximately forty MSS containing all or parts of *De virtutibus*, see PCW 5.v–xv; G-G 139–154. It is not extant in either the Latin or Armenian versions of Philo's works. The only significant discovery made since the publication of PCW is a thirteenth-century palimpsest, Atheniensis Bibl. Nat. gr. 880, which contains *De paenitentia* + *De nobilitate*, surrounded by treatises from the Allegorical Commentary. See Alexander 1977.

⁴⁶ This is a selective and corrected version of the chart in Hilgert 1991, 107–108. Cf. Runia 1991, 120–121; Royse 2006, 79–80.

Manuscripts (Family)	Contents
Seldenianus XII (S)	abcd
Parisinus gr. 435 (C)	bcd
Monacensis gr. 459 (A) and three other mss	a/bc*
Petropolitanus XX A a1 (P)	b/a/d
Laurentianus plut. LXXXV.10 (F)	abc/bc*/d*
Vaticano-Palatinus gr. 248 (G)	bc*/abd
Cantabrigiensis Coll. S. Trin. B9,6	bc/a/d
Venetus gr. 40 (H) and nine other mss	bc*/a/d
Leeuwardensis gr. 40	bc*/abc/abc
Escorialensis Y,I,5	bc*/a
Oxonienis Coll. Novi 143	b/b/d/a

Evidently, there was a proclivity with the scribes to treat the four sections as self-standing, detachable units. Hence the confusing results. In many cases, the amount of material separating subtreatises in a manuscript is considerable. For example, in ms G (Vaticano-Palatinus gr. 248), “bc*” and “abd” are separated by seventeen treatises, including many treatises which are not from the Exposition.⁴⁷ Yet, for all their diversity, at least two tendencies in the manuscripts can be detected. First, in most of the witnesses *De humanitate* is immediately followed by *De paenitentia*. Second, in all but one manuscript, *De nobilitate* (when it occurs) follows after the other subtreatises, even if it appears independently of them.

Still, as the table shows, there is only a single manuscript that supports Cohn’s arrangement of the subtreatises, though, dating from the tenth- or eleventh-century, Seldenianus Supra 12 (ms S) is among the best and oldest of the Philonic manuscripts.⁴⁸ As the commentary will show, it offers a host of distinct, sometimes idiosyncratic, textual readings over against the rest of the tradition.⁴⁹ Runia goes so far as to describe it as a “remarkable” but “extremely erratic manuscript,” that is, as the product

⁴⁷ While the mss usually connect the sections of *De virtutibus* with other works of the Exposition (e.g., B, E, O, and V place *De fortitudine* between *De vita Mosis* and *De Iosepho*), this is not always the case. For example, in ms G, again, “bc*” is preceded by *Spec.* 4.55–78 and followed by *Spec.* 4.151–238, while “abd” is preceded by the *Legatio ad Gaium* and followed by *De fuga et inventione*. Cf. Barthélemy 1967, 60–66. In Eusebius’ catalogue (*Hist. eccl.* 2.18.2), *De virtutibus* is preceded by *Quis rerum divinarum heres* and followed by *De mutatione nominum*. See further Runia 1993, 17–21.

⁴⁸ See PCW 5.viii–x; G-G 151.

⁴⁹ In deciding between textual variants, in his edition Cohn shows a clear preference for ms S, especially from § 51 onwards, where a fewer number of mss preserve the text. For some of the perils accompanying this decision, see Runia 1991, 124–130; cf. Roysse 2006, 94–96.

of “that dangerous phenomenon, an independent and semi-intelligent scribe.”⁵⁰ Further evidence of its distinctiveness can be found in the large number of subheadings it inserts throughout the work.⁵¹ One might question, then, why Cohn and Wendland assigned so much value to it in determining the composition of our treatise. The answer comes from the corroborating testimony provided by Clement of Alexandria, who in book 2 of his *Stromata* draws extensively on *De virtutibus*, excerpting and paraphrasing from its four subtreatises in the same sequence we find them in MS S (see part 6 of the Introduction). This agreement between two independent sources, one of them written only a century and a half after the original autograph, must be taken seriously in any reconstruction of the treatise’s contents.⁵²

Unfortunately, despite the weight of such evidence, matters become complicated when we examine another element of the treatise’s transmission history, namely, the titles assigned to it by the manuscripts. Here again diversity is the rule.⁵³

- S: Φίλωνος περὶ γ’ ἀρετῶν ἃς σὺν ἄλλαις ἀνέγραψε Μωυσῆς περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ μετανοίας
 BEK: περὶ ἀρετῶν ἦτοι περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ μετανοίας:—περὶ ἀνδρείας
 M: τοῦ αὐτοῦ Φίλωνος τοῦ ἔβραίου περὶ ἀρετῶν ἦτοι περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ μετανοίας: περὶ ἀνδρείας
 VO: Φίλωνος περὶ ἀρετῶν ἦτοι ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ μετανοίας
 F: τοῦ αὐτοῦ περὶ ἀρετῶν, ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ μετανοίας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας
 HP: περὶ ἀρετῶν ἦτοι περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας
 A: τοῦ αὐτοῦ Φίλωνος περὶ ἀνδρείας
 G: περὶ ἀνδρείας

The title adopted by Cohn (Φίλωνος περὶ ἀρετῶν ἃς σὺν ἄλλαις ἀνέγραψε Μωυσῆς ἦτοι περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ εὐσεβείας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας καὶ μετανοίας) is a construct, based primarily on S and on Eusebius’ designation for the treatise in *Hist. eccl.* 2.18.2 (περὶ τῶν τριῶν ἀρετῶν

⁵⁰ Runia 1991, 128–129. The manuscript is also unique in appending to the treatise an incomplete commentary on Philo’s *De mandato decimo*. See Cohn 1892.

⁵¹ See the apparatus in PCW 5 for §§ 82, 88, 90, 95, 97, 102, 105, 109, 116, 125, 134, 145, 148. Many of these are also found in the margin of G².

⁵² Mention should also be made of *P. Vindob.* G 60584, a papyrus of the fifth century, which contains pieces of *Virt.* 64–65 and 69–70. See Harrauer 2002–2003. As Roysse (2006, 96–98) explains, it appears to agree almost completely with S.

⁵³ See PCW 5.266.

ἄς σὺν ἄλλαις ἀνέγραψε Μωυση̄ς),⁵⁴ and adding from the other manuscripts ἦτοι, so as to form a two-part title, and, more notably, the reference to a subtreatise on piety coming immediately after the subtreatise on courage. As to the placement of the section on piety, Cohn and Wendland took their cue from the opening sentence of *Virt.* 51: Τὴν δ' εὐσεβείας συγγενεσάτην καὶ ἀδελφὴν καὶ δίδυμον ὄντως ἐξῆς ἐπισκεπτέον φιλανθρωπίαν (“Next we must consider humanity, which is most closely related to piety, its sister and twin.”). They took this, together with the references to piety in the manuscript titles, as sufficient warrant for positing a lacuna between §§ 50 and 51, wherein originally stood a section Περὶ εὐσεβείας.⁵⁵

It is important to note that despite its ubiquity in the titles, this is a ghost work, never actually appearing in the texts themselves.⁵⁶ Although four fragments attributed to a lost Philonic treatise Περὶ εὐσεβείας have been found in the *Sacra parallela*, they indicate nothing about the work's original literary setting or relationship to other Philonic writings, and so are of little value for the current discussion.⁵⁷ While it is entirely possible that Philo actually penned a *De pietate* as part of a larger book, most scholars have expressed reservations concerning Cohn and Wendland's rationale for situating such a work within *De virtutibus*.⁵⁸ As Runia puts it, the introduction of piety into the manuscript titles is best explained “as a deduction on the basis of the transmitted text, rather than a fossilized reference to a lost part of the treatise,” that is, as the result of copyists drawing a false inference from the opening words of § 51.⁵⁹ Some copyists even inserted Περὶ εὐσέβειας (F) or Περὶ εὐσέβειας καὶ φιλανθρωπίας (HP) as a subtitle before § 51. In a somewhat more logical editorial move, the scribe of ms G inserted the subtitle Περὶ εὐσέβειας before

⁵⁴ Cf. Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 11: de tribus virtutibus liber unus. As Colson (PLCL 8.440) notes, the phrase ἄς σὺν ἄλλαις ἀνέγραψε Μωυση̄ς was probably not meant as part of the title, but as a note to avoid the impression that Moses acknowledged only three virtues.

⁵⁵ PCW 5.xxvi–xxviii, 279; PCH 2.315–316. Cf. Wendland 1896, 437; Cohn 1899, 412–414. Massebieau (1889, 39–41) conjectured that the lost *De pietate* originally functioned as a transitional work between *De vita Mosis* and *De humanitate*.

⁵⁶ Hilgert 1991, 104.

⁵⁷ For the first three fragments, see Harris 1886, 10–11. For the complex history of the fourth, see Roysse 1980; Roysse 2006, 81–94. He further conjectures that *De pietate* once stood as an independent treatise of roughly fourteen pages in a third-century papyrus codex of Philo's works.

⁵⁸ E.g., Schürer 1902, 346; Colson, PLCL 8.xiii–xiv; Roysse 2006, 92–93. In support of the theory, see especially Sterling 2006, 105–112.

⁵⁹ Runia 1991, 131. Similarly, Schürer 1902, 346; Colson, PLCL 8.xiv.

§ 34, prompted no doubt by the references to *eusebeia* in §§ 42 and 45.⁶⁰ However, it would be rash to conclude that the formulation of *Virt.* 51 necessarily refers to an earlier discussion of piety. In *Abr.* 208; *Decal.* 108–110; *Spec.* 2.63; *Virt.* 95 and elsewhere, Philo presents *eusebeia* and *philanthrōpia* as complementary pairs, and so a reference to the former in the introduction to a discussion of the latter would not be unexpected.⁶¹ Remember that neither Clement nor MS S provide evidence of a section on piety. As Royce (2006, 92) points out, Cohn's idea that such a section formed part of *De virtutibus* "requires that both S and the source used by Clement were defective at exactly the same point," while Colson thinks "Cohn should at least have noted that if it had perished in the second century, its reappearance in the next century only to perish again after some hundred years requires some explanation" (PLCL 8.xiv). These points, together with the fact that at *Spec.* 4.135 Philo states that he has already discussed *eusebeia*,⁶² lead us to the conclusion that if a Philonic *De pietate* did exist, its original place was not in our treatise.⁶³

We can conclude this section by noting briefly that the phrase *περὶ ἀρετῶν* also occurs in some of the manuscript titles for Philo's *Legatio ad Gaium*.⁶⁴ There is also some evidence that this work and the *In Flaccum* were individual contributions within a five-volume series entitled *Περὶ ἀρετῶν*,⁶⁵ while some of the manuscripts for *De vita contemplativa* refer to it as the fourth book of the *ἀρετῶν* or of the *περὶ ἀρετῶν*.⁶⁶ Despite such designations, which have long puzzled scholars, these treatises have no particular association with our *De virtutibus*.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Note also references to *δοσιότης* in §§ 34, 42, 47 and to *ὄσιος* in § 50.

⁶¹ In *Decal.* 52, Philo identifies *eusebeia* as the source of the other virtues, and the introduction to *De paenitentia* (§ 175) has a reference to it as well (cf. *Spec.* 4.135). Thus piety represents something of a theme for the treatise as a whole; cf. Runia 1991, 131. See further on *Virt.* 51.

⁶² As Colson (PLCL 8.xi–xii) suggests, most likely the principal reference here is to the treatment of the first four commandments of the decalogue in the first two books of *De specialibus legibus*. Note that *eusebeia* is used twenty-five times in those books (see especially *Spec.* 2.224; cf. *Decal.* 108–110).

⁶³ As Royce (2006, 93) points out, it "is easier to imagine the loss of some folios at the beginning or end of a work than in the middle." He therefore proposes that *De pietate* occurred after *De nobilitate*, though this theory encounters many of the same problems as Cohn's, and has the further difficulty of not explaining why the majority of manuscript titles have the section on piety listed second.

⁶⁴ See PCW 6.lviii–lx, 155.

⁶⁵ See Eusebius, *Eccl. hist.* 2.6.3; 2.18.8; Smallwood 1970, 36–43; Morris 1987, 859–864.

⁶⁶ See PCW 6.ix–x, 46.

⁶⁷ Royce 2006, 78; cf. Borgen 1997, 179–188.

4. Analysis of the Treatise's Contents

As we have seen, *De virtutibus* contains four discreet sections.⁶⁸ Their basic contents can be summarized as follows.⁶⁹

The first section, *De fortitudine*, opens with a transitional statement that connects the section with the subtreatise on justice in *Spec.* 4.136–238. The analysis of courage itself is divided into two parts, the first on peacetime courage (§§ 5–21), the other on wartime courage (§§ 22–46), flanked by an introduction (§§ 1–4) and conclusion (§§ 47–50).

Philo announces that the type of courage to be discussed is not the sort of reckless brutality admired by the ignorant masses, but courage as a form of knowledge located in the soul and cultivated by the practitioners of wisdom, whose overriding concern is the common good (§§ 1–4).

Philo explicates the meaning of this courage in peacetime first by identifying the different scenarios in which it is exhibited (§§ 5–14), then by giving examples of how the law teaches and trains its followers to behave courageously in such situations (§§ 15–21).

Virt. 5–14 reviews the circumstances calling for true courage, and what resources those who embody this virtue draw on when rising up to face them. Against poverty, to begin with, they are armed, not with the wealth that is “blind,” but with the wealth of nature, which protects the body, and the wealth of wisdom, which abets the soul’s assimilation to God (§§ 5b–9). Disgrace they overcome by winning not the praise of the thoughtless masses, but the praise earned by the virtuous elite when they demonstrate excellence of character (§ 10). Physical blindness is compensated for by the superior vision that prudence furnishes the intellect (§§ 11–12). And physical disease is alleviated by the health of the soul, which occurs when the virtue of moderation prevents the part of the soul that reasons from being overwhelmed by passion (§§ 13–14).

Philo now quickly mentions two forms of discipline prescribed by the law for cultivating this virtue. The first of these is evidenced by the various provisions (which he claims to have already covered) having to do with simplicity and the rejection of vanity (§§ 16–17). The second is evident in Moses’ intent to insulate his male followers from any unnatural taint of unmanliness, even going so far as to forbid them from wearing women’s clothes (§§ 18–21; cf. *Deut* 22:5).

⁶⁸ As a way of acknowledging the integrity of each section, in the commentary I use the abbreviations *Fort.*, *Hum.*, *Paen.*, and *Nob.* when referring to their contents.

⁶⁹ Cf. PCH 2.318–319; PAM 26.29, 58–59, 125, 137; Alexander 1993.

The discussion of wartime courage opens with an overview of the criteria established by the law concerning the selection of recruits for military service (§§ 22–23), complemented by an historical *exemplum* showing how a force thus constituted excels in war (§§ 34–46). Like their civilian counterparts, Mosaic soldiers demonstrate courage principally when their souls' ability to reason is not distressed by any passion that might distract them from their duty to the state.

Moses allows two kinds of exemption from the armed forces. First, since vice is contagious, and cowardice is a vice virtually impossible to cure, those deficient in valor are excused (§§ 23–26; cf. Deut 20:8). Further exemptions are granted to anyone who has recently built a house, planted a vineyard, or become betrothed (cf. Deut 20:5–7), a practice based not only on the principle of humanity (§§ 28–29), but also on the need to prevent the army from being debilitated by the presence of men whose minds are strained by a lurking desire for absent pleasures (§§ 27–31). Philo asserts that an army of soldiers created in accordance with these principles, and thus healthy in both body and soul, will be invincible on the battlefield (§§ 32–33).

Proof of this assertion is provided with an exemplary historical tale in which the Alexandrian recounts the incident at Baal Peor and the Israelites' war with the Midianites (cf. Num 25, 31). The latter's strategy, we hear, was to seduce the former away from their piety, the greatest source of their unity (§§ 34–38). Although twenty-four thousand of the Israelite youths were seduced and led into idolatry, their souls ensnared by passion for sex (§§ 39–40), God's swift punishment on them deterred the rest from a similar fate (§ 41). Inspired by their leader to defend the cause of piety, a picked force of twelve-thousand soldiers wreaked vengeance on the Midianites, annihilating their foes without losing a single man, proof that they had God as an ally (§§ 42–46).

Philo concludes by drawing a general lesson from the narrative: in times of both peace and war, those who are courageous in practicing the virtues of justice and holiness are assured of divine aid and the *eudaimonia* it brings (§§ 47–50; cf. Lev 26:3, 6–8; Deut 28:1, 7).

The second section, *De humanitate*, has three parts, showing how humanity is embodied and effected by Moses himself (§§ 51–79), by the legislation that he established for the nation (§§ 80–160), and by the classes ruling that nation (§§ 161–174).

In a continuation of and conclusion to the narrative in *De vita Mosis*, the lawgiver is seen to be a model of humanity in two sets of events that occurred as his earthly life drew to a close (§§ 51–79). The first proof of

his *philanthrōpia* has to do with the events surrounding his succession (§§ 53–65). Recognizing the superiority of divine judgment, Moses did not appoint one of his family members as heir, or even the virtuous Joshua, but left the decision to God (§§ 53–58; cf. Num 27:12–17). This is the only appropriate practice, he explains, for a nation which is the suppliant of the one true and eternal God (§§ 59–65).

Further evidence of Moses' humanity is to be found in his final messages as leader (§§ 66–79). Once the selection of Joshua had been approved by God, Moses joyously commissioned and charged him before the people, delivering a speech that would go on to become a standard for future rulers (§§ 66–71; cf. Num 27:18–23; Deut 31:7–8). He then sang a hymn, expressing his thanks to God and his goodwill for the people, teaching his followers the importance of gratitude and astounding the celestial hosts with his cosmically harmonized music (§§ 72–75; cf. Deut 32:1–43). Finally, his soul did not depart its earthly home until he uttered prayers to God on behalf of each of the twelve tribes, indicating their essential kinship with God as suppliants (§§ 76–79; cf. Deut 33:1–29).

In the second part of the subtreatise, Philo reviews a representative selection of laws that he thinks Moses left behind for the people in order to foster humanity in their relationships with others (§§ 80–160). As explained in an introductory transition statement (§§ 80–81), the survey is organized according to different categories of referents: people (§§ 82–124), animals (§§ 125–147), and plants (§§ 148–160). The first subsection, in turn, presents laws concerning interactions with fellow Jews (§§ 82–101), then non-Jews (§§ 102–120), then slaves (§§ 121–124).

With regard to fellow Jews, Moses' followers are forbidden to lend on interest to those who are poor; by doing so they accumulate something better than material wealth, the wealth of virtue (§§ 82–87; cf. Exod 22:24; Lev 25:35–38; Deut 15:7–11; 23:20–21). The wages of the poor are to be paid on the same day, lest they become disheartened (§§ 88; cf. Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14–15). Creditors may not enter the homes of their debtors to seize a pledge (§ 89; cf. Deut 24:10–13). Gleanings from the harvests of grain, grapes, and olives must be left for the poor to gather. This way they are not reduced to extreme want, and in their generosity the landowners show they understand that the most essential contributions to the harvest come from nature (§§ 90–94; cf. Lev 19:9–10; 23:22; Deut 24:19–22). The first fruits of agricultural produce and domesticated animals must be rendered to the priests, an act of piety as well as humanity (§§ 95; cf. Lev 27:30–33; Num 18:21–24; Deut 12:17; 14:22–29). A stray animal should be returned to its owner (§ 96; cf. Deut 22:1–3). Every seventh year arable

land is to be left fallow, so that the poor may pick whatever grows there (§§ 97–98; cf. Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:2–7). In addition, every fiftieth year private properties must be returned to their original owners (§§ 99–100; cf. Lev 25:8–13). So concludes the survey of provisions pertaining to fellow Jews (§ 101).

The first category in the subsection on non-Jews is proselytes, who are to be accorded every privilege and form of assistance, so that they might become, in effect, part of a single harmonious organism (§§ 102–104; cf. Lev 19:33–34; Deut 10:17–19). Next, in a rumination on resident aliens, Philo takes Deut 23:8–9 to mean that Jews must live peaceably with Egyptians and not hold a grudge against them, even though they treated the Jews cruelly after initially welcoming them as strangers. Egyptian children of the third generation are even eligible to become proselytes and join the Jewish polity (§§ 105–108). The third and final unit of the subsection on non-Jews concerns the treatment of enemies. In times of war, an enemy army should be offered terms of peace before launching a (defensive) attack against it (§ 109; cf. Deut 20:10–15). If someone wishes to marry a woman taken captive in war, she must be granted thirty days to grieve. This not only shows mercy on her misfortune, it also checks unbridled lust. In the case of subsequent divorce, she cannot be enslaved, but must be set free (§§ 110–115; cf. Deut 21:10–14). Even the beast of one's enemy must be treated kindly: if it collapses under its burden, assistance must be offered; if it strays, it must be returned to its owner (cf. Exod 23:4–5; Deut 22:1–4). Through obedience to such laws, one both learns not to take pleasure in the misfortunes of others and takes steps towards ending the feud (§§ 116–118). Such reconciliation, Philo says, is representative of the intent behind Moses' legislation more generally, namely, to promote concord and fellowship among individuals, peoples, and even the entire human race (§§ 119–120).

The last type of human referents are indentured servants and slaves. Those born free but reduced to forced servitude for whatever reason are to be liberated in the seventh year (§§ 121–123; cf. Exod 21:2; Deut 15:12–18). All runaway slaves are to be treated as suppliants and afforded temporary protection (§ 124; cf. Deut 23:16–17).

The second category of referents in the survey of laws promoting humanity is animals (§§ 125–147). Moses' sense of fairness extended even to creatures devoid of speech and reason (§ 125); by practicing gentleness towards them, his followers learn to show humanity in fuller measure towards beings like themselves (§ 140). Thus the law forbids them from killing newborn domesticated animals until they are at least

eight days old (cf. Lev 22:27) and, by implication, from killing their own newborn infants (§§ 126–133). Killing a mother animal and its offspring on the same day is also forbidden (cf. Lev 22:28); this includes also pregnant animals and, by implication, pregnant women (§§ 134–141). Furthermore, they are not to cook a lamb in its mother's milk (§§ 142–144; cf. Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21) or muzzle a threshing ox (§ 145; cf. Deut 25:4). Finally, they are not to yoke an ox and an ass together for plowing (cf. Deut 22:10) and, by implication, not to treat non-Jews unjustly (§§ 146–147).

The third and final category of referents in the survey of laws is plants (§§ 148–160). Moses extends fairness even to those living things that lack a soul (§§ 148). So, for example, the destruction of all food-producing plants is prohibited, even those growing on enemy territory (cf. Deut 20:19). To do otherwise both curtails nature's purpose for them and shows short-sightedness, since the foe of today can become the friend of tomorrow (§§ 150–154). Additionally, during the first three years after planting, practical steps should be taken to help ensure that the plants reach maturity and bear fruit (§§ 155–159; cf. Lev 19:23–25).

Having completed the survey of laws, Philo now explains in the third and final section of the subtreatise that one of their important implications is to curb arrogance, pretentiousness, and insolence within the polity, vices that are prominent especially among the ruling classes (§§ 161–174). To counteract this, those in positions of authority are taught by Moses to remember God with gratitude and to “make power,” that is, to imitate God's benevolence and use whatever virtues they possess to make those around them more virtuous (§§ 163–170; cf. Deut 8:11–20). In so doing, they will avoid the fate of the pretentious man, who for his offenses will be handed over to God for punishment (§§ 171–174; cf. Num 15:30).

The third and shortest subtreatise in *De virtutibus* is *De paenitentia* (§§ 175–186). The main theme is set forth in the opening paragraph: in his humanity, Moses exhorts “all people everywhere” to repent and join his polity (§ 175). While the best state is a god-like perfection, the second best is achieved when one turns from sin to a blameless life (§§ 176–177). The description of Moses' summons occupies the balance of the subtreatise, which examines the transformation experienced by proselytes from three different perspectives. First, they reject idolatry and worship the one true God (§§ 178–179). Second, they are instantly transformed from a life of complete vice to a life of complete virtue, having abandoned the worst of polities for the best (§§ 180–182). Third,

the nature of the proselyte's entire personal constitution is re-ordered, so that thought, words, and deeds are in harmony, as represented by the heart, mouth, and hands of Deut 30:14. It is only this sort of person who is acceptable to God as a suppliant, that is, one who has chosen God, just as the Israelites chose God under Moses (§§ 183–186; cf. Deut 26:17–18).

The fourth and final subtreatise in *De virtutibus* is *De nobilitate* (§§ 187–227). It has two major parts (§§ 190–210, 211–225), framed by an introduction (§§ 187–189) and a conclusion (§§ 226–227). The introduction announces the subtreatise's two-part thesis: the virtuous alone are noble, even if their lineage happens to be ignoble, while the wicked have no claim to *eugeneia*, even if they happen to come from an illustrious family (§§ 187–189).

The first major section (§§ 190–210) elaborates on the second part of the thesis. The fool born from a noble line estranges himself from the moral excellence of his ancestors (§ 190), sullies his family's reputation (§ 191), and deserves to be cut off (§ 192), his forebears' health, strength, and virtue being of no use to him (§§ 193–194). Personified Nobility then delivers a speech informing such individuals of her condemnation (§§ 195–197). This is followed by a set of biblical examples illustrating how degenerate sons can be born to good parents. The first three, Cain (§§ 199–200), Ham (§§ 201–202), and Adam (§§ 203–205), belong to humankind in general, while the last two are peculiar to Jewish history (§ 206): of Abraham's sons all but Isaac were found unworthy (§ 207), while of Isaac's sons, only the younger was well-pleasing (§§ 208–210).

The second major section (§§ 211–225) takes up the first part of the thesis, providing examples of virtuous children born to ignoble parents (§ 211). The longest discussion here (and the longest of any figure in the subtreatise) is assigned to Abraham (§§ 212–219). Rejecting his father's idolatry, he sought out the one true God and acquired faith, together with the other virtues, thus becoming "a standard of nobility for all proselytes" (§ 219). Abraham's female counterpart is Tamar, who similarly abandoned idolatry for the cause of piety (§§ 220–222a). The list is rounded out with Zilpah and Bilhah. Although they were concubines, they rose to the status of married women and gave birth to sons who were treated equally with those born to Jacob's legitimate wives (§§ 222b–225). Philo concludes by affirming that the law judges all persons according to their own conduct and not that of their ancestors (§§ 226–227).

The presence of sections on repentance and nobility in a treatise entitled *De virtutibus* raises certain interpretive questions, since Philo nowhere identifies these concepts as virtues, and these two sections

(especially the former) are significantly shorter than those that precede. In addition, these two sections lack formal introductions comparable to those of the other sections (see part 1 of the Introduction), while the section that immediately precedes them, *De humanitate*, lacks a formal conclusion, unlike *De iustitia* and *De fortitudine*.⁷⁰ For these reasons, most interpreters agree in treating *De paenitentia* and *De nobilitate* as appendices or adjuncts to *De humanitate*.⁷¹ This is particularly evident with the section on repentance (§§ 175–186), whose contents can be understood in part as an elaboration of §§ 102–104 and 108, which also discuss proselytes. Perhaps the most obvious connection in this regard occurs in § 179, where Philo’s plea that “as many did not think fit to worship the Founder and Father of all from the beginning, but later welcomed the rule of one over the rule of many, should be considered our closest friends and relatives,” echoes the argument in § 103, that Moses inculcated humanity in his followers by commanding them to love proselytes “as friends and relatives.” Meanwhile, the main thesis of *De nobilitate* (§§ 187–227), that true nobility rests not on birth but on piety and virtue, amplifies certain comments made about Moses (§ 53) and the Israelites (§ 79) in *De humanitate*.

At the same time, these two subtreatises may also be interpreted as adjuncts not only to *De humanitate*, but also to presentation of Mosaic virtue in the Exposition more generally. From this perspective, they can be seen to be elaborating on the basic argument that membership in “the best of all polities” (§ 175) is defined not in ethnic or national terms, but more decisively in religious and moral terms. This argument, according to which the Jewish *ethnos* resembles a philosophical movement or a state founded on philosophical principles, is consistent with Philo’s broader aim of demonstrating the universal scope and significance of the Mosaic law (see part 1 above). *De paenitentia* contributes to this by depicting the polity’s members as individuals who have made a choice to live an amended life and engage in processes of moral correction. For proselytes, this is represented by the choice they make for religious enlightenment and moral transformation when converting to Judaism. For those who are already members of the polity, this involves deciding to repent

⁷⁰ Sterling 2006, 110.

⁷¹ E.g., PCW 5.xxvii–xxviii; PCH 2.316; Morris 1987, 852–853. By the same token, while they are not virtues per se, the sections on repentance and nobility continue the topically organized structure of the treatise, each topic functioning as a key word for organizing illustrative material, drawn mostly from the Pentateuch.

of any transgressions they may have committed. Philo concentrates on the former, since their presence in the community demonstrates the significance of choice as a defining feature of the polity most dramatically, the sudden and sweeping nature of their transformation testifying to the excellence of its laws and institutions. *De nobilitate*, in turn, argues that the Mosaic polity does not belong to the race of Israel by birth, but to those who commit themselves to holiness and virtue. By showing Mosaic nobility to consist not in having the right ancestors but in making the right choices, the message of *De nobilitate* reinforces and complements that of *De paenitentia*, and it is significant that Philo's two most prominent examples of noble individuals born of ignoble families, Abraham and Tamar, are proselytes (§§ 212–222).⁷² Insofar as the observation that the Jewish polity attracted converts from the non-Jewish world was a feature of Jewish apologetic rhetoric,⁷³ Philo's emphasis in this regard may provide a clue as to his aims in writing, a topic to which we now turn.

5. *The Character and Aim of the Treatise*

As the analysis above has shown, over three-fourths of *De virtutibus* is devoted to humanity and ancillary topics. Seeing how Philo is here introducing “a newcomer to the classical list of virtues,”⁷⁴ questions arise as to what would have motivated him to devote such a long and rather involved section to the subject and what criteria he may have observed in the selection and organization of its contents.

Contemporary scholarship has generally tended to take Philo's arguments about *philanthrōpia* in this section as a contribution to the broader apologetic agenda of the Exposition discussed above.⁷⁵ The following comments from Katell Berthelot's monograph, which includes the fullest

⁷² Differently, Cohn (PCH 2.316) imagined *De paenitentia* as a summons for non-Jewish readers, having been convicted by the arguments in *De humanitate*, to embrace the true faith, while in *De nobilitate* Philo turns to his fellow Jews, encouraging them to accept proselytes as equals. For a critique, see PLCL 8.xv–xvii. For his part, Colson (PLCL 8.xvii–xviii), judging it to be a work of inferior quality, suggested that *De nobilitate* did not originally belong to *De virtutibus*, though the evidence of Clement's *Stromata* speaks against this; see part 3 above.

⁷³ See, e.g., Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.123, 210, 261, with Barclay 2007, 232–233, 291–292, 317–318.

⁷⁴ Konstan 2006, 66. On the same page he writes: “I do not know of a passage in which it is explicitly included in a list of virtues.”

⁷⁵ E.g., van Veldhuizen 1982; Dautzenberg 1988; Borgen 1996a.

and most recent treatment of *De humanitate*, are typical: “The presentation of the humanity of the Mosaic law represents the heart of the philonian refutation of certain accusations made by pagan authors. Whether Philo mentions the humanity of the legislator or of the legislation, in both cases it is Moses as well as the law that are defended.”⁷⁶ Above all, Philo intends to refute the sorts of charges expressed, for example, in Diodorus Siculus, *Bibl. hist.* 34/35.1.1–2, according to which “the Jews . . . alone of all nations avoided dealings with any other people and looked upon all men as their enemies.” Thus when organizing themselves as a nation, “they made their hatred of humanity into a tradition, and on this account had introduced utterly outlandish laws: not to break bread with any other people, nor to show them any good will at all.”⁷⁷

In estimating the impact of such accusations, it is important to bear in mind the broad significance of *philanthrōpia* as a cultural value in Greco-Roman antiquity.⁷⁸ Here Plutarch, who uses the term frequently, is representative. For him, the concepts of *philanthrōpia*, civilization, and Hellenism were “almost inseparable.”⁷⁹ In *Phil.* 8.1, for instance, he praises Aratus as the leader who first lifted the Achaeans from semi-barbaric obscurity to a state of power and prominence, something he accomplished by “establishing a Hellenic and humane polity” (πολιτευσάμενος Ἑλληνικὴν καὶ φιλόανθρωπον πολιτείαν) for the people. In a case like this, being humane and being Greek are virtually synonymous, particularly when it comes to determining the arrangements by which an *ethnos* organizes itself.⁸⁰ As the work of Plutarch further illustrates, humanity also had a place in the philosophical argot of the era.⁸¹ One of the more important areas in which the concept figured, for exam-

⁷⁶ Berthelot 2003, 265.

⁷⁷ Many scholars believe that Diodorus' source was Posidonius; see *GLAJJ* 1.141–144, 181–185. On the “*misoxenia/misanthrōpia* motif,” see Schäfer 1997, 15–33; Isaac 2004, 440–491; Pearce 2007 186–192; also the commentary on *Virt.* 141.

⁷⁸ For surveys, see Tromp de Ruiter 1931; Le Déaut 1964; Luck 1974; Hiltbrunner 1994; Spicq 1994, 3.440–445; Pearson 1997.

⁷⁹ Martin 1961, 167; cf. Aalders 1982, 46. The Latin *humanitas* is likewise often associated with culture and civilization, e.g., Nikolaïdis 1980–1981; Hiltbrunner 1994, 724–735; Nickel 2006.

⁸⁰ In Plutarch *philanthrōpia* can refer to such things as courteousness, sociability (especially with one's social inferiors), and clemency, though most prominently it is used to describe “an act of kindness or generosity” (Martin 1961, 171). The term is sometimes associated with the virtues of justice and piety, as Konstan (2006, 66) observes. He also notes the frequency with which the term is used by Polybius and Diodorus Siculus.

⁸¹ E.g., Hirzel 1912, 23–32.

ple, was in the promulgation of Stoic universalistic ideals.⁸² Within such a climate, then, charges of inhumanity can be understood as part of a broader effort to marginalize Jews culturally, politically, and intellectually.

According to Berthelot, Philo's response to such calumny consisted in "affirming that the *philanthrōpia* taught by Moses' law aims at the entirety of creation and not at the Jewish people alone. Indeed, the texts accusing the Jews of *misanthrōpia* are about the attitude of Jews regarding non-Jews, and not the relationships of Jews among themselves." Thus in "*De virtutibus*, he particularly seeks to demonstrate that the impact of the *philanthrōpia* prescribed by Mosaic laws is not limited to the Jewish community but extends to other categories of people as well."⁸³ The challenge that presents itself, then, is "to prove that Moses' law prescribes *philanthrōpia* towards every individual, even though it does not in fact usually legislate for the category 'every man.'"⁸⁴ Accordingly, one of Philo's priorities is to demonstrate the "universality" of Mosaic *philanthrōpia* by showcasing provisions of the law that encourage Jews to practice *philanthrōpia* in their interactions with non-Jews.

As we have already seen, the Exposition exhibits clear signs of apologetic discourse.⁸⁵ At the same time, what the topic of *philanthrōpia* contributes to this discourse may be more complicated than Berthelot's comments suggest. In particular, the question of the *referents* of Mosaic humanity in the Exposition (that is, the recipients or beneficiaries of humane action carried out by Jews) is one that warrants further scrutiny. We may begin with three sets of preliminary observations.

The first set has to do with the broader literary setting of *De humanitate*. Outside of this subtreatise, there are thirty-two occurrences of *philanthrōpia* in the Exposition. When examined in terms of referent, these fall under four basic headings.⁸⁶ In four cases, the referent is not specified. We are told, for example, that those who aspire to virtue must cultivate this trait, but with no indication as to the group or individuals towards whom humanity should be directed (*Spec.* 1.295; cf. *Mos.* 2.9; *Spec.* 1.324; 4.72). In another four cases, the referent is ambiguous. For

⁸² E.g. Baldry 1965, 151–166, 177–203; Wright 1995; Schofield 1999, 57–92. Also see the commentary on *Virt.* 140.

⁸³ Berthelot 2003, 266–267.

⁸⁴ Berthelot 2003, 268.

⁸⁵ See Part 1 of the Introduction.

⁸⁶ This does not include the three occasions in which it is divine, not human, *philanthrōpia* that is under discussion: *Abr.* 79; *Mos.* 1.198; *Virt.* 188.

example, in *Spec.* 2.141, Philo explains that it is a mark of humanity to share good things with the “worthy” (ἄξιοι), which might conceivably include non-Jews along with Jews, though this is not specified (cf. *Spec.* 2.63; 3.152; 4.18). In over half the cases, there is little doubt that the referents are fellow Jews.⁸⁷ For example, on a half-dozen occasions the referents are Jewish priests (*Spec.* 1.221; 2.183; 4.97) or members of their households (*Spec.* 1.120, 126, 129). There are even occasions when Philo can imply that the *philanthrōpia* Jews are expected to observe in their interactions with one another does not apply to their interactions with other people.⁸⁸ This leaves us with only a few passages where the referents might belong to Berthelot’s “other categories of people” (*Abr.* 107, 109; *Ios.* 94). Looking at the presentation of humanity in the Exposition as a whole, then, its application to non-Jews does not appear to be a prominent feature.

A second set of observations can be made regarding *De humanitate* itself. As we have seen, the main body of the subtreatise is a survey of Mosaic laws that Philo thinks promote humanity, organized according to the categories of people, animals, and plants. Concentrating on the question of referents here, we find references to non-Jews only in §§ 102–120, 146–147, and §§ 149–154 (assuming that ἐχθροί refers to non-Jews). In sum, then, less than one fourth of the subtreatise concerns humanity as it is expressed by Jews towards non-Jews. In addition, the first mention of non-Jews does not occur until almost half-way through the subtreatise. Finally, no reference is made to non-Jews in either the Introduction (§§ 51–79) or the Conclusion (§§ 161–174) of the subtreatise. It is significant that analyses such as Berthelot’s spend comparatively little time discussing these sections, though it is fair to assume that at least some of Philo’s reasons for writing would be communicated in one or both of them.

A third set of observations can be made regarding *Virt.* 141, one of the few places where the apologetic profile of the Exposition becomes explicit: “So let those devious slanderers continue to malign the nation as being prone to inhumanity (μισανθρώπια) and accuse the laws of encouraging uncongenial and unsocial (ἀκοινωνήτα) practices, when these laws obviously grant a share of mercy even to herds of cattle, and the people through the guidance of customs learned from their earliest

⁸⁷ Besides what follows, see *Ios.* 240; *Mos.* 1.249; 2.242; *Decal.* 164; *Spec.* 2.71, 78, 79, 104, 110, 138; 4.15, 24.

⁸⁸ E.g., compare *Spec.* 2.123; 3.137–141 with *Spec.* 2.79–80; 4.4, 15.

youth amend any disobedience in their souls to a civilized disposition.” It is noteworthy that in countering the charge of *misanthrōpia* and stating positively what it is that the law promotes, Philo says nothing here about the interaction of Jews with non-Jews. This statement concludes a section of the subtreatise dealing with Lev 22:28, which prohibits sacrificing a mother animal and its offspring on the same day (§§ 137–141). Philo contends that this statute inspired the leaders of other nations to introduce the law that prohibits executing a pregnant woman condemned to death until after her child is born. So non-Jews are indeed the beneficiaries of Mosaic *philanthrōpia*, but not as the result of any law about how Jews ought to treat them. Rather the Mosaic law itself serves as a model that inspires other lawmakers to be more humane in dealing with their own people.

Taken together, these observations indicate that Philo’s presentation of Mosaic humanity in fact incorporates a broad range of referents and social situations, including many that are internal to the Jewish community. If we were to identify a common denominator for all of this material, it seems that in each case Philo expounds on a situation in which we see, not Jews interacting with non-Jews, but those who possess means, power, or authority interacting with those who do not: landowners pay day-laborers their wages on time, victorious soldiers grant their female captives a period of mourning, farmers do not muzzle their oxen when they tread out the grain, and so on. This particular type of social dynamic is reflected also in the treatise’s Introduction (§§ 51–79) and Conclusion (§§ 161–174), comprising about one third of the subtreatise, which deal with how persons in positions of authority, especially political authority, understand and use their power.⁸⁹ In the former, Moses makes “humane” rather than selfish decisions about the choice of a successor to lead the nation. In the latter, the ruling classes are exhorted to abstain from insolence and to instead imitate God by using their resources to promote the common good.

Attention to this dimension of Philonic *philanthrōpia* suggests a different line of inquiry for investigating the Exposition, especially given the fact that the concept of humanity figured prominently in various forms of contemporaneous political discourse. To take just one example: in the literature on kingship (περὶ βασιλείας), humanity is generally included

⁸⁹ Note how the Conclusion opens with the language of ἡγεμονία (§§ 161–162), recalling the principal issue addressed by the Introduction (§§ 55, 57, 72).

among the desiderata of the ideal ruler.⁹⁰ This attribute comes to expression especially when he protects the weaker from the stronger, when he dispenses benefits to those who most need them, and when he observes restraint in executing the powers of his office. By honoring this virtue in his own character he sets an example for others to follow, and so humanity becomes a moral qualification for the ruling classes generally.

Among Philo scholars, E.R. Goodenough contributed as much as anyone to our understanding of this literature.⁹¹ In terms of its relevance to the Exposition, however, he restricted himself largely to *De Iosepho*.⁹² Among other things, this meant that relatively little attention was paid to the theme of *philanthrōpia* (the term does not even appear in the index to his book on Philo's politics). Another consequence was that relatively little attention was paid to how the sorts of virtues extolled in the kingship literature figured in other forms of political discourse. In fact, however, there are any number of different generic possibilities that might repay consideration in this regard. One genre that seems to have particular potential for comparative analysis is "the account of constitutional origins."⁹³ Much like the Exposition, examples of this kind of discourse draw extensively on the language of virtue, applying it both to the state's rulers and to the laws that they establish.

One of the fullest examples of this genre is the *Antiquitates romanae* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, published beginning in 7 BCE, a work that describes the origins of the Roman *ethnos* with particular attention to its founders and the polity they established. As he explains in the preface (1.1.1–1.8.4), Dionysius is writing in part to refute certain strains of anti-Roman propaganda, according to which Rome was founded, in essence, by a band of misfits (e.g., 1.4.1–3).⁹⁴ His thesis, to the contrary, is that from the beginning Rome was led by men fit to rule, in other words, men preeminent in virtue.⁹⁵ The elaboration of such a thesis, he says, ought

⁹⁰ See, e.g., Isocrates, *Ad Nic.* 15; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 1.18, 20; 2.26, 77; 3.39, 55; 4.24; Musonius Rufus, frg. 8.66.11; *Let. Arist.* 290. Further, Hadot 1972.

⁹¹ Goodenough 1928.

⁹² Goodenough 1938, 42–63.

⁹³ Examples of this genre might include Aristotle's *Athenian Constitution* and Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*; book 2 of Cicero's *Republic*; and some of Plutarch's biographies, such as those of Lycurgus and Numa. Also Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 1–4, for which see Feldman 2000, xxiv–xxix.

⁹⁴ Cf. Weisfenberger 2002. For the background of such propaganda, see Deininger 1971, 15–37.

⁹⁵ That such men ought to rule their inferiors is "a universal law of nature" (*Ant. rom.* 1.5.3).

to be of interest to anyone interested in ruling well, since what is being described is the best *politeia*, based on the judgments of the best leaders, especially the first kings of Rome, and especially Romulus.⁹⁶ As he puts it in 1.5.3, the aim is for his readers to learn “that Rome from the very beginning, immediately after its founding, produced infinite examples of virtue in men whose superiors, whether for piety or for justice or for life-long moderation or for warlike valor, no city, either Greek or barbarian, has ever produced.” His history will show that the institutions and customs of Roman society are not accidents of history, but in fact embody the intentional design of its founder, the superiority of whose vision and plan for the state is proven through time as it overcomes all manner of ordeals and obstacles.

Of course what Dionysius provides us is hardly an unbiased account. On the contrary, it is apparent that he has extended considerable energy reworking his source material. This is a project that entails an apologetic reconstruction of Roman origins, which are idealized especially according to the principles of Greek political culture. According to Emilio Gabba, Dionysius has accessed this culture especially through the writings of Isocrates, who, not coincidentally, wrote several kingship treatises.⁹⁷ Dionysius’ efforts in this regard follow what Gabba refers to as “the political theory proclaiming Rome’s Greekness.”⁹⁸ Specifically, in demonstrating how the Roman state realizes Greek ideals, Dionysius hopes to legitimize Rome as a civilizing power, one whose ascendancy is morally deserved and whose *politeia* is justifiably a universal *politeia*.⁹⁹ Toward this end, Dionysius employs a range of narrative strategies, each meant to prove the essentially Greek character of Rome’s first kings and the constitutional order that they established.¹⁰⁰

One of these strategies involves associating specific persons and events in Roman history with a set of conventional Greek virtues, which function as recurring themes of moral assessment. In Dionysius’ retelling, these virtues also represent the standards according to which the Roman *politeia* was founded. Specifically, in establishing institutions for the state, Romulus believed that good government rested on “first, the favor of the

⁹⁶ Cf. *Ant. rom.* 2.7.1. Dionysius’ interest in amplifying the role of the founder figure is evident, e.g., when the comparatively lengthy account in *Ant. rom.* 1.77.1–2.56.7 is compared with its counterpart in Livy, *Ab urb. cond.* 1.4.1–1.16.8.

⁹⁷ For what follows, see Gabba 1960; Gabba 1991.

⁹⁸ Gabba 1991, 117.

⁹⁹ Cf. Martin 2000; Luraghi 2003.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Cary 1937, xi–xxviii.

gods ... next, moderation and justice ... and, lastly, bravery in war” (2.18.1) Recognizing that none of these is the effect of chance, he held that it is “good laws and the emulation of worthy pursuits” that “render a state pious, moderate, devoted to justice, and brave in war” (2.18.2).¹⁰¹ As David Balch has shown, these statements belong to a larger section of the *Antiquitates* that demonstrates how the particular measures adopted by Romulus for regulating the nation fostered such virtues.¹⁰² The survey begins with a section on humanity (2.15.1–2.17.4),¹⁰³ followed by a section on piety (2.18.2–2.23.6), and a section on justice and moderation (2.24.1–2.29.2). The next section records “other deeds reported of this man, both in his wars and at home,” referring to his role in the rape of the Sabine women (2.30.1–2.31.3) and his leadership in the resulting wars (2.32.1–2.46.3).

The manner in which Dionysius treats the first of these virtues is of particular interest to the current discussion. In the first book of the *Antiquitates*, it is introduced in a way that that seems to be programmatic: “Such, then, are the facts concerning the origin of the Romans which I have been able to discover after my reading very diligently many works ... Hence, from now on let the reader forever renounce the views of some who make Rome the retreat of barbarians, fugitives, and vagabonds, and let him confidently affirm it to be a Greek city—which will be easy when it is seen to be the most social (κοινοτάτην) and humane (φιλανθρωποτάτην) of all cities” (1.89.1; cf. 14.6.6). Dionysius will go on to use the terms φιλανθρωπία and φιλάνθρωπος over seventy times, narrating how various institutions, laws, and measures enacted by Roman leaders embody and effect this virtue, creating the impression that humanity pervades and permeates Roman society. One of the ways that he does this is by showing how the virtue applies to an array of different referents, including many familiar from our analysis of *De humanitate*:

the poor	4.4.7; 5.22.1; 5.65.2; 6.78.1; 11.10.4
the hungry	4.24.5; 12.1.2–3
the dispossessed/landless	3.1.4–5; 3.31.3; 8.71.4; 8.78.1–2
debtors	4.10.1–3; 6.81.3–4; 7.30.2–4
foreign residents	1.9.4; 3.11.5; 6.56.2–3

¹⁰¹ Cf. 2.3.5: “men of bravery, justice, and the other virtues are the result of a polity that has been established wisely.” See also 2.24.2; 2.28.1.

¹⁰² Balch 1982, 111–113.

¹⁰³ The section makes no mention of *philanthrōpia* per se, though comparison with 1.9.4 (quoted below) makes such an identification feasible.

slaves	1.9.4; 4.14.4
clients	2.8.1–2.9.3
enemies, captives	5.36.2–3; 5.60.1; 5.76.4; 7.53.3; 12.6.3; 20.6.1
sedition groups	6.67.2; 6.83.3

Among other things, this catalogue is of interest inasmuch as it represents a virtual check list of what ancient political theorists generally identified as the principal sources of social instability.¹⁰⁴ And this connects precisely to a point that Dionysius makes repeatedly in his history. On occasion after occasion, the Romans are shown encountering various threats to their social order involving one or more of these groups. And in each case we learn that because those with means or authority are guided in their interactions with these groups by *philanthrōpia*, the crisis is resolved in a manner that preserves civic unity. In contrast to other states, which are forever fractured by *stasis*, the Romans have established constitutional constraints on potential abuses of power that could destabilize their society. Indeed, “so secure was the Romans’ concord (ὁμόνοια), which owed its birth to the regulations of Romulus, that they never in the course of six hundred and thirty years proceeded to bloodshed and mutual slaughter, though many great controversies arose between the populace and their magistrates concerning public policy” (2.11.2).¹⁰⁵ The cumulative effect of this narrative pattern functions as a guarantee (as Dionysius sees things) of the Romans’ moral excellence, evidenced in the strength, stability, and longevity of their *politeia*. It is no wonder that Roman rule comes to be admired and emulated by other nations, as we hear in a summary statement about Rome’s second king: “By these means (that is, by fostering acts of *philanthrōpia*) Numa came to be beloved of his subjects, the example of his neighbors, and the theme of posterity. It was owing to these measures that civil dissension never broke the concord (ὁμόνοια) of the state” (2.76.2–3).

Transitions in political leadership represented another common and much discussed source of social volatility.¹⁰⁶ Consistent with the priorities mentioned above, it is significant that narrating these sorts of scenarios provides occasions for both Dionysius and Philo to demonstrate how

¹⁰⁴ See, e.g., Finley 1983, 97–121; cf. Eckstein 1995, 118–160.

¹⁰⁵ Romulus recognized that the attributes among the citizens most important for preserving the state were courage in military affairs and unanimity (ὁμοφροσύνη) in civil affairs, the latter depending on “the moderate and just life of each citizen” (2.3.4; cf. 4.25.5–4.26.1).

¹⁰⁶ For a list of primary texts, see Talbert and Stepp, 1998.

their respective founder figures observe *philanthrōpia*. Philo does this in the Introduction to *De humanitate*, which explains that as Moses neared death he did not choose one of his relatives to succeed him as leader of the Israelites, but left the decision to divine judgment. God then selects a man who, because he is supreme in virtue, will maintain good order (εὐνομία) for the people (§§ 60–61).¹⁰⁷

Dionysius raises the issue of political succession on a number of occasions, which provide him with opportunities to explain how the Romans avoided the particular uncertainties associated with hereditary kingship.¹⁰⁸ The succession narrative of Numa in 2.57.1–2.58.3 is in many regards prototypical. We are told that he ascended the throne not by force or on account of any personal relationship with Romulus, but because he was elected to the office by the Roman Senate owing to his superior wisdom. Later these procedures are institutionalized for the entire state. Indeed, among Rome’s “most humane laws” is the provision that its magistrates are to rule only with the consent of those governed (5.19.4; cf. 2.4.1–2; 4.40.2). On the other hand, the antithesis of this ideal is embodied in the violent reign of Rome’s last king, Tarquinius “the Arrogant” (4.41.4; cf. 1.75.2). Similar language is employed in the Conclusion to *De humanitate* to summarize the treatise’s contents. Indeed, in Philo’s interpretation, the primary motivation behind Moses’ directives to the people on humanity was to set those in high office “beyond the reach of arrogance and pretentiousness” (§ 161, cf. §§ 162–165) so as to protect the civic body.

Another key to the success, and especially the growth, of the Roman state was the liberal policy it followed in granting citizenship to non-Romans, especially refugees, defeated populations, and freed-persons:

In the course of time they contrived to raise themselves from the smallest nation (ἔθνος) to the greatest . . . not only by their humane (φιλανθρώπων) reception of those who sought a home among them, but also by granting a share of the polity (πολιτείας) to all who had been conquered by them in war after a brave resistance, by permitting all the slaves, too, who were manumitted among them to become citizens, and by disdaining no condition of men from whom the commonwealth might reap an advantage (1.9.4).

¹⁰⁷ Not surprisingly, εὐνομία is extolled as a political asset by Dionysius as well, e.g., *Ant. rom.* 9.45.1; 10.19.1–2.

¹⁰⁸ Here Dionysius may betray the influence of Polybius and his theory of constitutional degeneration, esp. *Hist.* 6.7.1–9.

Of course, even if it was “humane,” this was a policy that had to be defended, particularly insofar as it impinged upon issues of ancestry and ethnic identity, issues that figured generally in the delineation of an *ethnos*.¹⁰⁹ For example, in response to charges that the influx of foreigners had corrupted the nobility of the Roman nation, King Tullus responded that the chief offices and honors of the state “are enjoyed, not by men possessed of great fortunes, not by those who can show a long line of ancestors all natives of the country, but by such as are worthy of these honors; for we look upon the nobility (εὐγένεια) of men as consisting in nothing else than virtue” (3.11.5; cf. *Virt.* 189, 198). The composition and character of the nation, then, are determined not by lineage, but by the moral excellence demonstrated by its citizens, which in turn assures that the policies of the state designed to foster such excellence are successful. The Romans’ willingness to accept virtuous non-Romans into their *ethnos* regardless of their ethnic, political, or civil status serves as confirmation of this.

To sum up: the *Antiquitates* sheds some light on how the discourse of Greek virtue could be appropriated in an apologetic project of re-describing the constitutional origins of a *politeia* as the ideal *politeia*. In particular, Dionysius illustrates the types of situations in which such a *politeia* might be expected to demonstrate the virtue of *philanthrōpia*, and what such observance was thought to reveal about the character of the state and its leaders. Presumably any state with aspirations to being a “universal” (or at least universally admired) *politeia* would need to address in its modes of self-representation issues of social unity and stability, including how moral configurations of institutional power contribute to these ends.

Philo also claims to be describing the ideal or universal *politeia*, established by the ideal founder. In concert with this, he claims the discourse of Greek political culture as his own, interpreting Greek ideals in terms of his source material and the historical and institutional particularities intrinsic to it. In this manner he demonstrates how those who belong to this *politeia* embody the highest aspirations of the host culture. This provides a different vantage point from which to understand Philo’s claims regarding Mosaic “universality,” such as expressed, for example, in *Hum.* 119: “This above all is what the most holy prophet throughout the

¹⁰⁹ Cf. 2.15.1–2.17.4, where he argues that in their manner of granting citizenship the Romans excel the Greeks.

whole of his legislation intends to provide, concord (ὁμόνοια), fellowship (κοινωνία), unanimity (ὁμοφροσύνη), and a blending of dispositions, from which households and cities, nations and lands, and the whole human race might advance to the highest well-being.” Mosaic humanity is not simply a matter of interaction between Jews and non-Jews, but in fact provides a standard by which all the major institutions of human society can thrive.

That Dionysius writes an apology about the origins of the *Roman* state makes his account especially relevant for comparative analysis. Given Philo’s geopolitical perspective, as well as his own personal experience, any thesis on his part regarding ideal constitutions would need to take into account the realities and representations of Roman rule.¹¹⁰ The evidence proffered by the *Antiquitates* suggests that claims concerning the virtue of humanity would have been ingredient to such representations, a fact that is confirmed by other sources of the era.¹¹¹ By advancing comparable claims, Philo’s re-reading of Jewish origins would have resonated with basic elements of imperial ideology and prevailing forms of political rhetoric. Indeed, it is his hope that “all future rulers would find a law to guide them right by looking to Moses as their archetype and model” (*Hum.* 70; cf. *Mos.* 2.51). The political aspirations of the dominant culture are met in the person and legacy of the Jewish lawgiver.¹¹²

At the same time, there are significant differences between these two texts as well, and attention to these differences helps to illuminate some of the Exposition’s distinctive features. Three of these may be mentioned here.

First, while they may agree as to many of the typical referents of humanity in the ideal state, the two authors have their own emphases as well. Dionysius includes the role of humanity in patron-client relations, for example, a topic of little interest to Philo, who pays attention instead to the virtue’s significance for human-nonhuman relations. In this he appears to draw on contemporary reflections, familiar from philosophical (especially Pythagorean) circles, on the idea that one can learn virtue from practicing kindness not only to fellow human beings but even to plants and animals.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Cf. Wilson 2005.

¹¹¹ See, e.g., Ehrhardt 1961; Adam 1970, 82–101.

¹¹² Dionysius similarly hopes that the current ruling classes will look to Romulus *et alii* as models of political behavior; see Schultze 1986.

¹¹³ Berthelot 2002. She notes a contrast between Pythagorean and Stoic positions in this regard.

The two authors also differ in terms of how they access Greek culture. Dionysius does this principally through Isocrates, Philo principally through Plato. Among other things, this may help to explain some of the distinctiveness in the moral argot of *De humanitate*. For instance, in explicating the nature of *philanthrōpia*, Philo depends more than Dionysius does on the language of φιλία.¹¹⁴ It is possible that this reflects the influence of Plato's *Leges*, where the observance of *philia* between citizens is emphasized repeatedly as being expressive of their unity.¹¹⁵ Even when Philo does not utilize the actual language of friendship, his interpretations seem to invoke priorities reminiscent of Plato's friendship ethic. To take just one example, in §§ 82–87 he reviews the proscription of lending at interest, which is mentioned among the commercial activities forbidden to citizens in the *Leges* as well (742c).¹¹⁶ Such steps, Plato informs us, are necessary in a state whose purpose is to make its citizens not rich, but friends (743c–d). At the same time, they are permitted to lend without interest, though the terms of even these loans are not enforceable, since legal disputes are precisely the sort of thing that should never divide φίλοι (*Leg.* 915e, cf. 743d). Philo similarly maintains that Moses' intent with these laws was to create citizens more concerned with fellowship (κοινωνία) than profit-making.

Finally, there are significant differences between the two in terms of literary structure. Dionysius weaves virtue discourse throughout the *Antiquitates*, especially in the speeches and narrative summaries.¹¹⁷ *De virtutibus*, by contrast, consists entirely of distinct sections on the virtues, and in this regard the Exposition looks more like the work of a Hellenistic philosopher.¹¹⁸ It can be compared, accordingly, with a text like Iamblichus' *De vita Pythagorica*, itself a kind of account of constitutional

¹¹⁴ See *Virt.* 55, 60, 96, 103, 109, 115, 125, 152, 173. This is not to say that such language is absent from Dionysius, only that he uses it less frequently in conjunction with *philanthrōpia* (cf. 14.6.1), and usually in connection with alliances between states or between the leaders of states, e.g., 3.6.3.

¹¹⁵ Morrow 1960, 561–562. Philo is indebted to Stoic conceptions of friendship as well; see Sterling 1997.

¹¹⁶ Cf. 921c–d; *Resp.* 465b–c, 556a–556b.

¹¹⁷ The extensive use of speeches accords with the goal of demonstrating how political differences are resolved by peaceful, rational means.

¹¹⁸ Compare, e.g., books 2 through 6 of Aristotle's *Ethica nicomachea* and book 1 of Cicero's *De officiis* (a reworking of Panaetius' Περὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος). Among philosophers it seems to have been *de rigueur* to write περὶ ἀρετῶν, e.g., Ps.-Aristotle, *De virtutibus et vitiis*; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 5.50; 7.90, 125–128, 175, 202; 9.55; Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 4.59; 24.20; Damascius, *In Phaedr.* 1.138–151.

origins.¹¹⁹ One section of the book, chapters 28–33, presents the way of life established by the philosopher/founder according to the virtues of *eusebeia/hosiotēs* (28), *sophia* (29), *dikaiosynē* (30), *sōphrosynē* (31), *andreia* (32), and *philia* (33). This approximates the schema announced by Philo at *Spec.* 4.133–135 and continued into *De virtutibus*, and all the more so if we bear in mind that *philanthrōpia* was sometimes understood as a species or extension of *philia* (e.g., Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 8.1.3).¹²⁰ The position accorded *philia* in the overall presentation is also noteworthy. In certain respects it seems to function as a culminating virtue or meta-virtue, inasmuch as one learns how to practice the other virtues through the relationships developed out of friendship. These include relationships with God, with fellow citizens and family members, and even with animals (33.229).¹²¹ Philo similarly seems to understand *philanthrōpia* as a means by which other virtues are cultivated. This is articulated most vividly in the description of ideal rulers with which *De humanitate* concludes. Their commitment to observing humanity in the exercise of their authority in fact belongs to a broader set of social objectives, which entails imparting their prudence, moderation, courage, and justice to others (*Virt.* 167). In this light, *philanthrōpia* can be understood both as a specific norm and consequence of obedience to the law as well as a catalyst for the activity of virtue more generally.

Before concluding this section, a word should be said concerning the intended audience of *De virtutibus* and the Exposition, a topic that has generated a range of opinions in scholarship. Goodenough, for example, argued that the Exposition was written for non-Jews, though this position has won few adherents.¹²² Colson, meanwhile, concluded that Philo had both Jews and Gentiles in view, though primarily the latter.¹²³ Others, including Morris, judge the evidence adduced for a Gentile audience to be unconvincing and consider the commentary to be addressed to congenial Jews.¹²⁴ To be sure, the rhetoric of the Exposition projects a

¹¹⁹ For an exploration of the broader phenomenon of “institutional history” in antiquity, see Cancik 1997.

¹²⁰ Cf. Fiore 1997, esp. 61.

¹²¹ Cf. von Albrecht 2002, 263–265.

¹²² Goodenough 1933; Goodenough 1938, 42–63; cf. Schürer 1902, 338; Böhm 2005, 201–204.

¹²³ PLCL 6.xv–xvi; 7.xiv; 8.xx; cf. PCH 2.315–317; Hilgert 1991, 111–112.

¹²⁴ Morris 1987, 817–818, 840–841, 853–854, 889; cf. Sandmel 1979, 47; Dawson 1992, 118; Reinhartz 1993, 12; Niehoff 2001, 13; Feldman 2003, 402.

world in which significant numbers of non-Jews are interested in learning about the Mosaic law (e.g., *Mos.* 2.20). However, Philo never declares explicitly who his audience is,¹²⁵ and the evidence that non-Jews actually read works written by Jews is actually quite meager.¹²⁶ Perhaps the most that can be safely said is that the more exoteric and systematic character of the Exposition would have made it accessible to a broader readership than that of Philo's other commentary series,¹²⁷ and so possibly could have included non-Jews as well as Jews.¹²⁸ As the comments above have indicated, however, I think that it is probably more instructive to discuss what kind of composition Philo has created than what kind of audience for whom that composition may or may not have been intended. In the final analysis, Ellen Birnbaum is probably correct in her suggestion that in terms of aims and audiences the Alexandrian may be simultaneously operating on a number of different levels: "Philo's occasional exhortations about disloyal Jews, apologetic remarks defending the Jews and their practices, and welcoming attitude towards proselytes suggest that the Exposition is probably aimed primarily at Jews and non-Jews—whether hostile or friendly—who know little about Jewish beliefs and practices. Philo may have several aims in mind here: to reclaim the alienated Jews, educate the less knowledgeable ones, assuage non-Jews who may be hostile, and appeal to those who might be interested."¹²⁹

6. *The Nachleben of the Treatise*

In many respects, the closest parallel to Philo's Exposition of the Law is the first four books of Josephus' *Antiquitates judaicae*, which similarly presents the entire contents of the Pentateuch from a Greco-Roman perspective. Of particular interest for the study of *De virtutibus* are Josephus' attempts at summarizing the law in *Ant.* 3.90–286 and 4.196–302.

¹²⁵ Occasionally he refers to critics of Judaism in the third person (e.g., *Virt.* 141), but he never addresses them directly.

¹²⁶ Barclay 2002, 141–142.

¹²⁷ Royse 2009, 33.

¹²⁸ It certainly would be consistent with a work intended (at least in part) for non-Jews, though it would be difficult to produce evidence proving that this would necessarily be the case.

¹²⁹ Birnbaum 1996, 20. It is worth noting that the question of Dionysius' intended audience is similarly unresolved in scholarship; see Hill 1961; Usher 1982; Luraghi 2003.

Given their common subject matter, it comes as no surprise that the two authors can often be found discussing the same biblical texts, as this chart shows:

<i>Virt.</i>	Principal Biblical Sources	<i>Ant.</i>
18	Deut 22:5	4.301
23, 28, 32	Deut 20:5–8	4.298
82–84	Exod 22:24; Lev 25:35–38; Deut 15:7–11; 23:20–21	4.266
88	Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14–15	4.288
89	Deut 24:10–13	4.268
90–91	Lev 19:9–10; 23:22; Deut 24:19–22	4.231–232
95	Lev 27:30–33; Deut 14:22–23; 26:1–11	4.68, 205, 240
96	Deut 22:1–3	4.274
97–100	Exod 23:10–11; Lev 25:2–13	3.281–282
109	Deut 20:10–18	4.296–297
110–115	Deut 21:10–14	4.257–259
116	Exod 23:4–5	4.275
122	Exod 21:2; Lev 25:39–40; Deut 15:12–18	4.273
126	Lev 22:27	3.236
134	Lev 22:28	3.236
145	Deut 25:4	4.233
146	Deut 22:10	4.228
150	Deut 20:19	4.299
156, 159	Lev 19:23–25	4.226–227

Besides significant differences in order, Philo's discussion of individual injunctions tends to be both more systematic and more expansive than what Josephus provides. The following verbal parallels (excluding common references to the biblical text) warrant particular inspection:

<i>Virt.</i> 28: νεωσι̅ δειμάμενος	<i>Ant.</i> 4.298: νεωσι̅ δειμαμένους
<i>Virt.</i> 30: πόθῳ τῆς ἀπολαύσεως	<i>Ant.</i> 4.298: πόθῳ ... ἀπόλαυσιν
<i>Virt.</i> 32: ψυχὴν ... εὐτολμίας	<i>Ant.</i> 4.298: ψυχῆς εὐτολμία
<i>Virt.</i> 82: ὁμόφυλος	<i>Ant.</i> 4.266: ὁμοφύλου
<i>Virt.</i> 82: οὐ̅ δικαίων	<i>Ant.</i> 4.266: οὐ̅ ... δίκαιον
<i>Virt.</i> 84: χρηστότητα	<i>Ant.</i> 4.266: χρηστότητι
<i>Virt.</i> 88: σώματι	<i>Ant.</i> 4.288: σώμασι
<i>Virt.</i> 90: πένητας ... ἰδίων	<i>Ant.</i> 4.231: πένησι ... ἰδίων

<i>Virt.</i> 96: ἐν ἐρημίᾳ	<i>Ant.</i> 4.274: κατ' ἐρημίαν
<i>Virt.</i> 109: ἐπικηρουκευσάμενοι	<i>Ant.</i> 4.296: κήρυκας
<i>Virt.</i> 112: τέκνων γένεσιν	<i>Ant.</i> 4.258: παιδοποιόν
<i>Virt.</i> 114: χήρα	<i>Ant.</i> 4.257: γεγαμημένην
<i>Virt.</i> 115: τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἀποπληρωθεῖς	<i>Ant.</i> 4.259: ἐμπλησθεῖς τῆς ἐπιθυμίας
<i>Virt.</i> 134: συγκαταθύειν	<i>Ant.</i> 3.236: θύειν ... ἐπὶ ταῦτό
<i>Virt.</i> 146: ἀνοικεῖον	<i>Ant.</i> 4.228: ἀνομοίων
<i>Virt.</i> 150: αἴτια	<i>Ant.</i> 4.299: αἴτια

Although they are fairly numerous, these parallels are too minor and too infrequent to constitute convincing evidence for direct literary dependence.¹³⁰ In some cases (e.g., *Virt.* 88 and *Ant.* 4.288), the similar wording may be simply a matter of coincidence. In other cases (e.g., *Virt.* 134 and *Ant.* 3.236), it may be that the two authors are drawing on common traditions of legal interpretation. On yet other occasions (e.g., *Virt.* 28, 30, 32 and *Ant.* 4.298), we may have instances of what Runia terms “long-distance reminiscence.”¹³¹ For our purposes, then, Josephus does not figure in the *Nachleben* of the *corpus Philonicum*.

We are on much firmer ground when it comes to Clement of Alexandria, who in book 2 of the *Stromata* draws extensively on material from *De virtutibus*.¹³² In her helpful study of this borrowing, Annewies van den Hoek describes *Strom* 2.78–100 as a “cursory reading” from our treatise, in which Clement “runs through his source from beginning to end in an orderly way.”¹³³ As for his method of utilization, Clement “moves rapidly across his model detaching scraps of sentences from their original contexts ... In a number of cases, transitions are very abrupt. These harsh juxtapositions of abbreviated thoughts are partly caused by Clement’s disconnected manner of excerpting, but they are also caused in part by the rich complexity of the source material itself.”¹³⁴ In any given passage, the reader encounters a mix of literal extracts, paraphrases incorporating literal components, and indirect echoes of *De virtutibus*, intertwined

¹³⁰ They are (as Runia 1991, 124 points out), therefore, of no value for reconstructing the original text of *De virtutibus*. Cf. Runia 2001, 30–31.

¹³¹ Runia 1991, 124. Note also that in reviewing the biblical exemptions listed in Deut 20:5–8, the two authors agree in treating the last exemption first. See the commentary on *Virt.* 23.

¹³² It is possible to track Clement’s borrowings from the citations of the *Stromata* in the *apparatus testimoniorum* for PCW 5, or from those of *De virtutibus* in Stählin 1960–1970.

¹³³ van den Hoek 1988, 70.

¹³⁴ van den Hoek 1988, 108–109.

with Clement's own observations and often punctuated with material culled from other, especially biblical, sources. In general, Clement is drawn to those places where Philo reformulates biblical injunctions, essentially treating the Philonic text "as equivalent to a direct and continuous reading of the Bible."¹³⁵ As a consequence, the borrowing comes mostly from the survey of laws in *Virt.* 82–160, as the following table shows:¹³⁶

<i>Strom.</i> 2.78.2–3	<i>Virt.</i> 34–35
<i>Strom.</i> 2.79.5	<i>Virt.</i> 1, 14
<i>Strom.</i> 2.80.5–2.81.2	<i>Virt.</i> 8–9
<i>Strom.</i> 2.81.3–4	<i>Virt.</i> 18, 20
<i>Strom.</i> 2.82.1–2.83.1	<i>Virt.</i> 28–29, 31
<i>Strom.</i> 2.83.3–2.84.1	<i>Virt.</i> 41, 45
<i>Strom.</i> 2.84.4–5	<i>Virt.</i> 82–85
<i>Strom.</i> 2.85.1	<i>Virt.</i> 88
<i>Strom.</i> 2.85.2	<i>Virt.</i> 89
<i>Strom.</i> 2.85.3–2.86.2	<i>Virt.</i> 90–91
<i>Strom.</i> 2.86.3–4	<i>Virt.</i> 95–96
<i>Strom.</i> 2.86.5–6	<i>Virt.</i> 97, 99–100
<i>Strom.</i> 2.87.3	<i>Virt.</i> 96
<i>Strom.</i> 2.88.1	<i>Virt.</i> 103
<i>Strom.</i> 2.88.2	<i>Virt.</i> 106
<i>Strom.</i> 2.88.3	<i>Virt.</i> 109
<i>Strom.</i> 2.88.4–2.89.2	<i>Virt.</i> 110–115
<i>Strom.</i> 2.90.1–3	<i>Virt.</i> 116–119
<i>Strom.</i> 2.91.3	<i>Virt.</i> 122, 124
<i>Strom.</i> 2.92.1	<i>Virt.</i> 126
<i>Strom.</i> 2.92.2	<i>Virt.</i> 129
<i>Strom.</i> 2.92.3–2.93.1	<i>Virt.</i> 131–133
<i>Strom.</i> 2.93.2–4	<i>Virt.</i> 134, 137, 139–140
<i>Strom.</i> 2.94.1–2	<i>Virt.</i> 142–143
<i>Strom.</i> 2.94.3–5	<i>Virt.</i> 145–147
<i>Strom.</i> 2.95.1	<i>Virt.</i> 149–150
<i>Strom.</i> 2.95.2–3	<i>Virt.</i> 156, 159
<i>Strom.</i> 2.96.3–2.97.1	<i>Virt.</i> 165–168
<i>Strom.</i> 2.97.2	<i>Virt.</i> 171–172
<i>Strom.</i> 2.97.3–2.98.2	<i>Virt.</i> 183–185
<i>Strom.</i> 2.98.3–2.99.2	<i>Virt.</i> 201–205, 207–209
<i>Strom.</i> 2.99.3–2.100.2	<i>Virt.</i> 216–217

¹³⁵ van den Hoek 1988, 114.

¹³⁶ Cf. van den Hoek 1988, 71–72.

With very few exceptions, the material in the *Stromata* is presented in the same sequence in which it appears in our treatise.¹³⁷ The borrowing is unacknowledged, though immediately after the section in which he utilizes *De virtutibus*, Clement does make reference to “the Pythagorean Philo” as an interpreter of Moses (2.100.3).¹³⁸ While it adapts no more than one seventh of the earlier writing, the *Stromata* provides important evidence both for understanding the literary integrity of *De virtutibus* (see part 3 above) and for reconstructing the treatise’s original text.¹³⁹ As for his intentions, Clement does not share the Jewish author’s apologetic agenda; rather, his objective is “to show within a Christian polemical situation directed against Marcion and his followers that law and faith cannot be detached from one another.”¹⁴⁰ Toward this end, his presentation demonstrates that “the law educates for virtue.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ See *Strom.* 2.78.2–3 and 2.86.5–6. There is also a minor deviation in order within 2.93.2–4, for which see the *Nachleben* on *Virt.* 134–144.

¹³⁸ As Runia (2001, 124) notes, “the reference is puzzling because the words attributed to Philo [there] are nowhere found in his extant works.” Cf. Runia 1995a.

¹³⁹ Cf. Wendland 1896.

¹⁴⁰ van den Hoek 1988, 114.

¹⁴¹ van den Hoek 1988, 112.