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GOD'S UNITY AND GOD'S RELATIONAL CHARACTER IN THE THINKING AND BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION OF PHILO JUDAEUS

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I hereby declare that the master's thesis presented herein is my own work, or fully and specifically acknowledged wherever adapted from other sources.

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INTRODUCTION

The theme and leitmotif standing behind this thesis is, in a broader sense, the relation between Revelation and reason, God's transcendence and immanence, and the possibility of their interconnectivity in the thinking of Philo of Alexandria. This theme in general has a long-standing interest and has been vividly discussed, nevertheless, my aim is to concentrate on the figure of Philo of Alexandria since the world of Hellenism and Judaism, i.e., reason and faith, are squeezed (or faultlessly interwoven) in his thinking and they may be a source of either problems or enrichment.

My aim is to analyze some of Philo's works, where these two *cosmoi* are strongly operating. This, in my point of view, has its culmination in cases, where Philo has to deal with biblical passages, where God experiences a change of mind, anger or any human-like quality, which seems to be contrary to his character of unicity. And since one may transfer one's rendering of God via language, the possibility to do so is therefore various. We possess diverse genres in which one may depict God in different way. Therefore, a significant part of this thesis is going to be directed towards these possible renderings of God. Philo authored his works in different literal genres and, therefore, I have decided to focus on some of the different genres of his opus. I am going to analyze, how speaking about God works in different genres, while holding a hypothesis that it differs – a more narrative, imaginative, genre of his works will render God as relational and a naturally temporal figure than more philosophically based ones requiring abstract speaking of God.

The source for writing this thesis was a monograph by Francesca Calabi called *God's Acting, Man's Acting (Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria)*, where she asserts the Hellenistic and Jewish worlds contained in Philo's thinking to be compatible. Additionally, attention towards this Jewish philosopher has become very vivid in the last decades not only in the field of theology, but also philosophy - I would dare to say he has been rediscovered. The debates about the relationship between faith and reason have a long and venerable history, nonetheless I find it beneficial concentrating especially on Philo and have the possibility to bring his thinking to the surface. For me, it was more on the basis of acquaintance, a desire to ascertain and penetrate into the stream of his thinking.

The structure of this thesis is going to ensue from the general sphere into the concrete one. In the first chapter, I am going to introduce the character of Philo of Alexandria,

taking into consideration both his daily life and his life dedicated to philosophy. There has been a great amount of literature written in the last decades on his biography and thinking, and I am going to mainly derive and base my information from *The Cambridge Companion to Philo* edited by Adam Kamesar or a monograph by Mireille Hadas-Lebel called aptly *Philo of Alexandria: A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora*.

The second chapter is going to present the already mentioned dichotomy between philosophical and the biblical, narrative rendering of God. I am going to start off by outlining Philo's rendering of God with highlighting more philosophical approach toward God. The supporting stick is the already mentioned monograph by Francesca Calabi. Since Philo has one foot in this background and the other in a field of biblical reading, I am on that account going to present the Bible he was holding – a Septuagint, and focus mainly on the narrative structure of this opus, which presupposes discussing the theme of narratives. Since the Septuagint has a tendency to smoothen places in the narrative, where God experiences any kind of human property, it is inevitable to shortly discuss the theme of anthropomorphisms. At the end of this chapter, I am going to focus on how Philo perceives the narrativity of the Bible and what his evaluation of myths is in general. On this topic especially, there is an excellent piece of writing edited by Francesca Alesse and Ludovica de Luca called *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*.

This transfers us to the last, third, chapter, where I concentrate on three of Philo's differently genre-based opuses and focus on how he deals with passages in the Bible where God experiences any human-like passions and changes. The work *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis* is going to serve as a base since it deals with the theme of God's unchangeability throughout its content. I am going to focus on some of its passages, using my own translation with commentary of some of them. The same is going to be done in the other chosen, however, more narrative-like work, *De Vita Mosis*. The last of his works taken into consideration is going to be his *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin*, having a more philosophical touch, which is going to be taken from the translation by Ralph Marcus, since it was preserved in Armenian only. In addition to the debate about Philo's rendition of God's emotions, I will shortly discuss the possibility of Philo after all ascribing some kind of emotions to God (overtaking the Stoic theory about the permanent state called προπαθεια).

Throughout this thesis, I am going to use abbreviations according to The SBL Handbook of Style – both for works of Philo and transcriptions from Greek and Hebrew. Unless noted, all English translations of Philo are going to be from the series of *Loeb Classical Library* edition edited by F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker, and Ralph Marcus. During my translations I will use the *Greek-English Lexicon* by Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott and work with the tools given by the *BibleWorks* and *Concordance* softwares, while also taking into consideration the English translations made by Charles D. Yonge or that in *Loeb Classical Library*. I will, in the case of *Deus*, observe the Czech translation made by Miroslav Šedina, and in that of *Mos*. the one done by Lucie Kopecká.

1 κόσμος of Philo of Alexandria

1.1 Philo in the Hellenistic World

Granting a small portrait about "a man and his city",[1] meaning that of Philo of Alexandria (ca. 20 B.C.- ca. 50 C.E.)[2] and his city of thoughts, might be tricky since he does not offer us any type of autobiography, which can be witnessed in the case of, for instance, other Hellenistic Jew – namely Josephus Flavius. However, we come to know other people either via what they alone say about themselves, or, and it is more prominent in my point of view, by what they do not directly say, but what can be drawn indirectly from their life attitudes and perspectives on the world as such.

Steven Nadler and Tamar Rudavsky track the history of Jewish philosophy, beginning with Philo and terminating with Baruch Spinoza, while focusing most of the studies on the Medieval period, approaching them as extraordinary bookends.[3] Philo was a Jewish thinker in the Hellenistic period, in whom we see a remarkable culmination of the contact between Greek and Jewish cultures.[4] When considering the question about the relation between the Jewish and Greek world, it can be and was symbolized by the places with the greatest influence of these two – Athens and Jerusalem.[5] They became symbols for the relation between knowledge and faith or Revelation and reason. Athens was a place, where many philosophical schools were situated, and Jerusalem happened to be a holy city for Judaism (and subsequently for other monotheistic religions). It was not gratuitously that Tertullianus raised the question: "What has Jerusalem to do with Athens (…)?"[6] This unbridgeable gulf that Tertullianus postulates between these two worlds happens to be rather connected in Philo's thought.

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[1] SLY, Dorothy I. *Philo's Alexandria*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 1.
[2] There are references about him by Josephus Flavius or Eusebius (he gives us an "overall analysis"). See NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018, p. 1. Jerome asserted Philo to be a cohen. See SCHWARTZ, Daniel R. Philo, His Family, and His Times. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 9-11.
[3] See NADLER, Steven. RUDAVSKY, T.M. (eds.). *The Cambridge History of Jewish philosophy. From Antiquity through the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 1.
[4] See FRAENKEL, Carlos. God's Existence and Attributes. In NADLER, Steven. RUDAVSKY, T.M. (eds.). *The Cambridge History of Jewish philosophy. From Antiquity through the Seventeenth Century*, p. 564.
[5] There had been a deeper encounter between Jerusalem and Athens most importantly in the Hellenistic period and it took place in Egypt where Jews were settled. See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria*. Eugene: CASCADE Books, 2014, p. 1.
[6] "Quid ergo Athenis et Hierosolymis?" TERTULLIEN. *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*. VII, 9. French translation by Pierre de Labriolle. Paris: Picard, 1907, p. 16.

Asserting Philo to be a part of the Hellenistic world would not be an accurate description. He is not just a part of it, but fully absorbs this whole culture into himself[7] – which can be at first glance suggested by his typical Hellenic name. Jean Daniélou describes him as a liberal rabbi, who endeavors to show Jews as being sufficient "rivals" in a relationship with Greeks. However, he is also someone who tries to reveal the Jewish faith to the pagan world, thus his effort is two-sided.[8] Philo was also influential on the political scene. Although his residing in Alexandria was during most of his life without greater disturbances, he later had to take over the role of an Alexandrian-Jewish defender before Gaius Caligula. According to Maren R. Niehoff, his undergoing this political journey formed his "academic" realm, thus it had a great influence and created a noticeable shift in his thinking.[9] Even though he was active in the political realm, he was also attracted to the pilgrim's way of life – in this area also continues the manifestation of his two-sidedness. He himself gives us a picture of a group of Jewish monks, named Therapeutaes, living outside the town, who dedicated their life to meditation. Philo was inclined to their way of life, wrote about them, and probably tried to live among them.[10]

The question of Philo's knowledge of Hebrew is a theme still researched till these days, however, it seems it was very poor[11] and he only spoke Greek.[12] Even though he works with etymologies of Hebrew names, it seems he just uses the Greek onomastica – i.e., he was already given those names with Hebrew meanings.[13] He was reading a Greek translation of the Bible, the Septuagint, which became the law for the Jews, according to which they lived in Egypt, however, also a connection between Jewish and Greek world. Its importance is evident from the fact that Alexandrian Jews had their special

[7] There is a strong influence of Hellenism on Judaism in the realm of its drift towards universalism. This focus of Hellenistic Judaism opened a door through which Christianity later entered and opened itself (in a sense of its universalism). For Philo, even the name Israel, does not designate ethnicity, but simply "those who see God", which in his approach means all philosophers. See MACKIE, Scott D. Seeing God in Philo of Alexandria: the Logos, the Powers, or the Existent One? In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory (eds). *The Studia Philonica Annual*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2009. 21, p. 25.
[8] See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria*, p. 11.
[9] See NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 2-3. Philo incorporated more Platonic thinking as he was young, however, as M. R. Niehoff argues, he switched to Stoicism as he became older. This shift is seen as being on a higher level. See ibid., p. 10.
[10] See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria*, p. 6-9.
[11] On the other hand, Zacharias Fraenkel claims he was familiar with "Palestinian midrash". DAHL, N. A. SEGAL, Alan F. Philo and the Rabbis on the Names of God. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1978, pp. 1–28, p. 1.
[12] See BORGEN, Peder. *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete of his Time*. Leiden: BRILL, 1997, p. 33.
[13] See SANDMEL, Samuel. *Philo of Alexandria. An Introduction.* New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 131.

holiday, when they celebrated the translation of The Law into Greek.[14] Translators, who made the Septuagint, gained some knowledge of Greek philosophy and this knowledge was manifested in this translation. Bearing this in mind, we are going to discuss the importance of this piece of work below.

1.2 Philo Judaeus et Philo Philosofico-mysticus?[15]

Mireille Hadas-Lebel points out that both Philo Alexandrinus and Philo Judaeus are just two sides of the same person.[16] It is also evident from the fact he knew Bible by heart, as well as he knew Homer.[17] Philo has this type of syncretism of cultures in general (that were current in Alexandria[18]) in himself - his citizenship was Roman, even though he is a Greek-speaking Jew with a wide Greek education.[19] The two-sidedness seems to be Philo's external feature in general, however, the fact we perceive these two sides, Greek and Jewish, does not mean he did as well – it was the world into which he was born, and therefore probably did not perceive them as two strictly distinct streams.

There are a few approaches to τί ἐστιν Φιλο[20] – oscillating between a mystic, politician, philosopher, and more. The influence of Greek philosophy in his thinking is evident as well as the usage of its categories when interpreting the Bible. Peder Borgen even asserts Philo to be the first of religious thinkers, who approached philosophy as the "handmaid to religion", and also the first one who formulated that it is not *philosophia aut fides*, but rather *philosophia et fides*.[21] Philo himself even claims in *Spec*. 3,3-6:

> There was a time when I had leisure for philosophy and for the contemplation of the universe and its contents, when I made its spirit my own in all its beauty and

[14] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria*, vol. 7. Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2012, p. 63-65.
[15] I am following here an incentive raised by David Winston not to give the either/or division, but rather take both sides as being constitutional for Philo's thinking. See WINSTON, David. Philo and Rabbinic Literature. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 253.
[16] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria*, p. xi.
[17] See ibid., p. 56.
[18] During this period, we are aware of three social formations – "Alexandrians, Hellenized foreigners (including Jews), and Egyptians (non-Hellenized 'natives')." SCHWARTZ, Daniel R. Philo, His Family, and His Times. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 20. The arrival of the Romans created a problem between Alexandrians and Jews because they both wanted to get along with them –a problem occurred, for instance, in a case when Romans supported Jews, which did not appeal to the Alexandrians. See ibid., p. 22.
[19] See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria*, p. 1.
[20] "Who Philo was".
[21] BORGEN, Peder. *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete of his Time*, p. 4.

> loveliness and true blessedness, when my constant companions were divine themes and verities, wherein I rejoiced with a joy that never cloyed or sated. I had no base or abject thoughts nor grovelled in search of reputation or of wealth or bodily comforts, but seemed always to be borne aloft into the heights with a soul possessed by some God-sent inspiration, a fellow-traveller with the sun and moon and the whole heaven and universe. (…) Ah then I gazed down from the upper air, and straining the mind's eye beheld, as from some commanding peak, the multitudinous world-wide spectacles of earthly things, and blessed my lot in that I had escaped by main force from the plagues of mortal life. (…) Yet it is well for me to give thanks to God even for this, that though submerged I am not sucked down into the depths, but can also open the soul's eyes, which in my despair of comforting hope I thought had now lost their sight, and am irradiated by the light of wisdom, and am not given over to lifelong darkness.

From this citation, one could designate Philo to be exegete, philosopher and mystic in one. He emphasized the role of contemplation and also numerology. He, for example, scrutinizes the number seven and tries to show its importance in relation to Shabbat. The seventh day serves, in his eyes, as a day dedicated to philosophy (which alone is a concern of God's matter) – and it does not apply for Jews only, but for the humankind in general – Shabbat has a universal role in his approach.[22] In this emphasis on the significance of numbers, there is also catchable a savor of Pythagoreism, which is going to be considered below.

Philo is known especially for his usage of the allegorical interpretation that might be taken as the mediator between the worlds of faith and reason,[23] being one of the attributes of the Hellenism as such. This type of exegesis was already used by Pythagoreans or Stoics, when they interpreted Homer.[24] Philo adopts this type of exegesis, while applying it to a different object – the Bible. In Philo's point of view, the allegorical interpretation can be very fruitful and give us a hand in the place where

[22] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria*, pp. 110-113.
[23] It was especially his type of exegesis that caught the interest of Church Fathers (as seen, for instance, in Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Ambrose and others). See RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 211-216. According to Eusebius, there "is an essential harmony between the doctrines of Christianity and what is best in Greek and (…) Hellenistic Jewish culture." Ibid., pp. 220-1.
[24] See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria, p.* 2.

the literal sense is inadequate.[25] Nonetheless, on the other side, there are cases where it is helpful for us to employ the literal interpretation of the text.[26] Even though Philo highlights the allegorical style of exegesis (without the full rejection of the literal one), he regards an allegorical interpretation to fewer people – it is definitely not suitable for everyone. Philo likens the literal interpretation to the body, whereas the allegorical to the soul and it is significant to say that "the literal sense is not to be discarded: one must not neglect the 'body'"[27], but the goal is to pass to soul from the flesh.

To understand Philo's intellectual or spiritual role, it is essential to slightly examine, what type of philosophies were influencing him in his thinking.

1.2.1 Philosophers of Influence

Alexandria was, in Philo's time, a place where almost all the philosophical schools were encountered – such as Stoics, Sceptics, Peripatetics or Academians.[28] From whom does Philo gain his philosophical background? Some share an opinion that he was a Stoic, another locates him in the stream of Platonism or Aristotelianism.[29] How is this dichotomy possible? Hadas-Lebel says that Philo admires Plato and talks like a Stoic, but keeps distance from Aristotle and does not have a liking for Sophists.[30]

Philo is often localized[31] in the stream called Middle Platonism that was active from the 3rd century B.C to the 2nd century C.E.[32] and probably originated in Alexandria.[33] One of the representatives was Eudoxus, who took Platonism as a basis and colored it with

[25] There was, however, also a negative attitude towards Philo and his usage of the allegorical interpretation, coming from the Antiochian part of the world. Theodore of Mopsuestia says Philo "introduced the allegorical method from the pagans, mistakenly believing that he could use it to defend Scripture, whereas he in fact falsifies it and makes it similar to pagan myths." RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, pp. 222-3.
[26] See KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 82.
[27] DOMARADZKI, Mikolaj. The Value and Variety of Allegory: A Glance at Philo's De Gigantibus. In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory E. (eds.). *The Studia Philonica Annual.* Volume XXXI. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019, p. 23.
[28] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria,* p. 12.
[29] Pohlenz connects him to stoicism, Wolfson to Platonism. See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria,* p. 38.
[30] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria, p.* 57.
[31] Runia resists this classification. See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023, p. 23.
[32] See TERMINI, Cristina. Philo's Thought within the Context of Middle Judaism. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 95, cit. 2.
[33] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria, p.* 165.

Aristotelian and Stoic elements.[34] For Middle Platonism is a typical feature including Pythagoreism into Platonism, which is manifested in the mathematization of reality – this is also typical for Philo as we have seen above.[35] Middle Platonists conceive there is a transcendent (supreme principle) God and then speak of the intelligible cosmos serving as a paradigm for the physical one.[36] Plato's dialogue *Parmenides* was also influential in the Middle Platonist stream – however, they identified the One with God (being completely transcendent).[37]

1.2.2 Plato

> ἢ πλάτων φιλωνίζει ἢ Φίλων πλατωνίζει.

Philo the Jew had a great resemblance to Plato, both in diction and a way of thinking, therefore not in vain says Numenius: "Either Plato philonizes, or Philo platonizes."[38] Of course, the first case is impossible; nonetheless, this statement only highlights a strong affinity between these two thinkers. Plato is in Philo's eyes perceived as an important ally of Moses and on that account also a master of Philo.

Philo derives plenty of approaches from Plato[39] – for instance, his conception of Ideas, even though he modifies it in his own manner. In his point of view, Ideas are God's own thoughts, thus they are not separated or independent of God – Philo was the anticipator of this thought, even though, it was probably an already existing idea in his time.[40] He uses the concept of Ideas when speaking of the creation of the world, because in the Septuagint almost every day of the creation, except the first one, has an ordinal number. The first day, or to correctly say "day one", has a cardinal number. This distinguishes the day one from other days and it represents the world of Ideas according to Philo. The world is being created in three stages. Firstly, God thinks his own thoughts

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[34] See DANIÉLOU, Jean. *Philo of Alexandria,* pp. 38-39.
[35] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria, p.* 165-169. Or Middle Platonists, p. 183.
[36] See DILLON, John M. *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D. 220*. Cornell University Press, 1996, p. 51.
[37] See ibid., p. 3.
[38] My own translation. See JEROME. *De viris inlustribus liber,* 11.7. HERDINGIUS, Guilelmus (ed.). Leipzig: Teubner, 1879. Numenius was probably the first one using this statement. See SANDMEL, Samuel. *Philo of Alexandria. An Introduction,* p. 4.
[39] Philo refers to Plato's dialogues, mostly *Timaeus*, *Phaedrus*, *the Republic, Symposion*, or, as Sami Yli-Karjanmaa had pointed out, also *Phaedo*.
[40] See DUDZIKOVÁ, Markéta. Mojžíš a svět idejí. Poznání dané podle Filóna Alexandrijského izraelskému králi, zákonodárci, veleknězi a prorokovi. In *REFLEXE*, 59 (2020), pp. 53-79, p. 55. Philo adopted this conception probably from Antiochus of Ascalon, others claimed that Xenocrates was the one. See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting. Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*. Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2008, p. 6.

– the creation of Ideas - then he creates the physical but general world, and finally the physical concrete world.[41]

Moses himself is the one who succeeded in experiencing reality, someone who escaped the cave (because of his strong connection to God). We can witness this straightly when Moses stands on Mount Sinai with his mind prepared for it. He was enabled to get to the sphere that is not physical, and used only his intellect.[42] Philo also follows Plato's division into three parts of the soul and tries to connect it with the food laws in Judaism. He says that desire resides in the stomach, which is a place, where the appetitive soul is located.[43] Thus, he gives food a new dimension – food is somehow connected to the mental states of the man.

1.2.3 Stoics

If we follow the division made by M. R. Niehoff, we, in description of a philosophical background, continuously arrive at the stream of Stoic thought. Philo was strongly influenced by the Stoic usage of allegory. The Stoics of his time chose to use more symbolic interpretation when they had read Hesiodos or Homer.[44] There is a strong influence – especially in the sphere of ethics and, as I have already said, allegorical interpretation. When diving deeper and looking closely at the specific similarities, one can see it in the conviction that true slavery is not a physical one, but arrives when we are submitted to passions. A fundamental task of a philosopher is to learn to control these passions and assimilate to God (*homoiosis theo* is a theme in Plato as well), who is without passions. According to M. R. Niehoff, Philo, in the later stages of his life, defines his Jewish identity via the role of Roman values.[45] Another Stoic background lies in his concept of a man as a little world (microcosm), in which the big world (macrocosm) is being mirrored.[46]

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[41] See RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 132. He is also highly influenced by one of Plato's dialogue in this case – *Timaios*. Moses, the same as Timaios, achieved the peak of philosophy itself. See DUDZIKOVÁ, Markéta. Mojžíš a svět idejí. Poznání dané podle Filóna Alexandrijského izraelskému králi, zákonodárci, velekněz a prorokovi. In *REFLEXE*, p. 56.

[42] See ibid., pp. 63-67.

[43] See TERMINI, Cristina. Philo's Thought within the Context of Middle Judaism. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, pp. 120-121.

[44] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria,* p. 123.

[45] See NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 68.

[46] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria,* pp. 169-170.

Could it be therefore argued, Philo is a jackdaw – an eclectic, who like a jackdaw steals ideas and inserts them into his sack of thoughts?[47] David Runia argues that Philo chooses this or that philosophical doctrine which is the most suitable in this or that case, however, it fits so beautifully and creates a new, original stream of thought.[48]

1.3 Philo's Works

We have so many preserved works by Philo that have survived and owe this especially to the Early Christian Fathers (such as Clement of Alexandria, Origenes or Eusebius) of the period of the 2nd-5th centuries C.E. His works were worth preserving, otherwise they would not have been available. One of the reasons behind the preservation of his works was the usage of Greek philosophy and demonstration of its presence in Scripture, and also one cannot leave out the fact he was a contemporary of Christ.[49] He earned the status of a man of great value – moreover, there were legends about him meeting with the apostle Peter in Rome, trying to show any kind of connection of Philo towards Christianity.[50] There is either direct reference to Philo – by explicitly citing his name, or sometimes there is an enormous use of his ideas but no reference to him at all.[51]

Most of the works are written in Greek, however, there are ones only preserved in Armenian or Latin translation. The division of Philo's works is diverse, but I am going to follow the one given in *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*. First is his step-by-step exegesis of Genesis and Exodus. Then we can identify a group of his allegorical commentaries (sometimes called esoteric) in contrast with the so-called *Exposition of the Law* (sometimes called exoteric). In addition, there is a division on texts apologetic, historical, and philosophical. Philo does not use only one genre of writing but integrates also a genre of dialogue (especially in the philosophical one), thesis or diatribe.[52] His style of writing and grasping particular themes is dependent on each part of his creativity.

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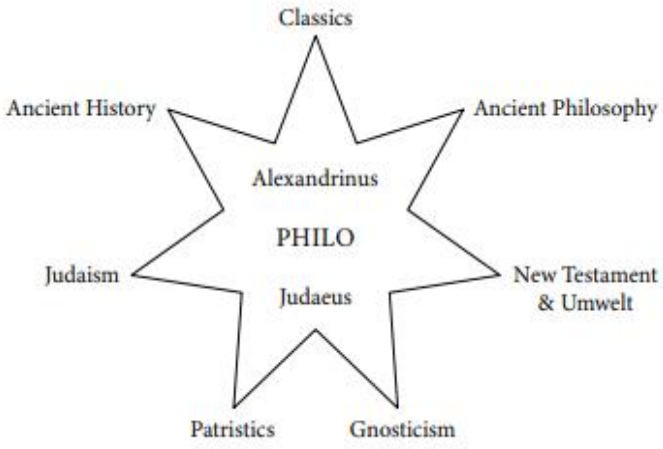
[47] See DODDS, Eric R. The Parmenides of Plato and the Origin of the Neoplatonic One. In *Classical Quarterly*, 22, 1928, pp. 129-142, p. 132. Citation taken from RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, p. 118.
[48] See ibid., pp. 128-9.
[49] RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 226.
[50] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria, p.* 215. But see also RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 210.
[51] See RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 213.
[52] See ROYSE, James R. The Works of Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*. pp. 33-34.

Is it possible to speak of any kind of leitmotif when approaching Philo's thought? Peder Borgen agrees with Erwin Goodenough as he states Philo's goal to be in leading to God.[53] The main purpose is first to understand the essence of our soul then to afterward understand the nature of the world, which is a beautiful creation and gives us impulses to wonder.[54] Philo perceives philosophy as a present, given by God to humankind, so they can discover the same that has been revealed to Jews. The Bible is in his point of view still superior to philosophy, and we could even say he regards biblical stories as being philosophical treatises and allegorical interpretation as being the most suitable of all possible tools.[55] This kind of perspective leads to a concept of philosophy that serves and is subordinated to the Bible and faith in general, but still, Philo endeavors to connect those two.

1.4 The Impact of Philo's Thinking

Philo's impact becomes stratified in many fields. D. Runia posits seven areas influenced by Philo's thinking and even very ingeniously adds that this number would be a source of delight for Philo since he admires its value on many occasions – we could thus call it Philonic![56]



We have slightly indicated Philo's possible influence on Christianity (or Early Patristics) when talking about the preservation of his works. There is something

[53] See BORGEN, Peder. *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete of his Time*, p. 3.
[54] Wonder as the source of "philosophy" is important, however, one must be aware of the Creator of this cosmos. See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism, 187,* p. 31.
[55] See RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 125.
[56] RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism*, p. 21. The following figure is reproduced on the same page of this monograph.

paradoxical about the relationship between Philo and Christians, since "Philo was neglected by his own people, to whose cause he had shown such strong devotion, and he was rescued from oblivion (…) (by) a group of people of whom he had most likely never heard, and who would later actively oppose his own Jewish religion."[57] There is also an indirect influence of Philo on the New Testament – through its reading, one can experience how the first reception of Philo's thoughts looked.[58]

There is a silence among Jews when one talks about the acceptance of Philo. How did this happen? One of the reasons could simply be the fact he writes in Greek (moreover he does not read the Bible in Hebrew), and it has been typical for rabbis not to mention those who did in this way (the same is the case of Josephus Flavius). In addition, the philosophical approach of Philo was of no interest to them.[59] It does not mean they did not master the Greek language, however, it seems they preferred another translation of the Bible – for instance, by Aquila.[60] Still, the similarity between Philo's exegesis and those of rabbinic midrash is worth mentioning – even though, it is probably not dependent on each other, but existed parallelly.[61]

Philo is said to be the "précurseur du néoplatonisme" and could be considered as the anticipator of the idea of a Princip (God in his rendition), which is endlessly creative and overflows himself in a certain sense – and this idea afterwards settled in Neoplatonism.[62] Furthermore, there is also a resemblance of this idea in Jewish mysticism. The impact pervades till these days when his influence was recognized to the

[57] RUNIA, David D. Philo and the Early Christian Fathers. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 210.
[58] Siegert did deeper research and recommended to examine especially *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, *The Pauline Corpus*, *Luke*, and more. See SIEGERT, Folker. Philo and the New Testament. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, pp. 175-7. The Epistle to the Hebrews is very reminiscent of Philo's impact – especially in the conception of the Decalogue, which is sent directly from heaven. See ibid., pp. 178-182. Another significant influence is apparent in *The Pauline Corpus* (Paul of Tarsus was not reading Philo, however, the world of "Greek Judaism" had become his background). See ibid., p. 183.
[59] See WINSTON, David. Philo and Rabbinic Literature. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 232.
[60] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria*, p. 218.
[61] One of the similar conceptions, for instance, reach the theme of repentance. See WINSTON, David. Philo and Rabbinic Literature. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 236.
[62] RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, p. 41.

extent that his works were translated into Hebrew and "integrated into the Reform Prayer Book in Israel."[63]

Since, my point is not to provide a far-reaching characterization of Philo's life, but rather scrutinize a general question concerning God's renderings (and tendencies that different tools of language have as speaking about God), I will therefore focus on this wider question before penetrating into Philo's own texts. The main interest lays in the source for Philo's interconnected features, the Hellenic and Jewish worlds.

[63] NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 2.

2 God's Unity and God's Relational Character

As I have noted above, the fact we distinguish two κοσμοῖ in Philo does not mean he did as well. They were both part of him fully, and thus he did not strongly differentiate between them. Nonetheless, these two worlds pass us distinct renderings of God. Are we then left to accent an absolute pit between God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that of philosophers as Blaise Pascal proposed?[64] My main concern is how Philo perceives God, and especially, how he deals with moments in the Bible, when God's unity is evidently put in danger. My endeavor is to set up two distinct approaches when speaking about God, as both spring from Philo's thinking background.

On account of that, the content of this chapter is, in a simplified way, going to be divided into two possible streams of God's renderings. These are to be the conceptual (philosophical-theological) speech about God and the narrative rendering of God in the Bible, which are both going to intermingle with each other – and they both are symbolized in the name of this chapter. The first one reproduces more philosophical-theological speech about God, trying to maintain his unity, whereas the second focuses more on the biblical background, where the attention is put on biblical narratives, highlighting God's relational character. As I have highlighted in the *Introduction* chapter, my hypothesis is going to assert that different genres (of Philo's writings) bring us a slightly different rendering of God.

I have decided to begin this chapter by introducing Philo's concept of God, then afterwards diving into the portrayal of God in Philo's most precious source of knowledge – the Bible.

2.1 Philo's Concept of God

When trying to reconstruct Philo's concept of God, one is left with many contradictions, and it is more difficult to systematize it since Philo does not formulate any kind of theology. A brilliant monograph was written by Francesca Calabi called *God's Acting, Man's Acting (Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria)*, where she observes Philo's treatment of God and his activity in the world, while dealing with God's dual nature. On that account, I am going to use this monograph as my guide when scouring the

[64] PASCAL, Blaise. "Pascal's Memorial". In BISHOP, Morris. *Pascal: The Life of Genius*. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1936, p. 173.

theme of God in Philo's thinking and also incorporating other authors concerning this theme.

As there is a two-fold nature in Philo's thought (in a simplified way the Platonic-Aristotelian and the biblical one),[65] there is also a two-foldness in how God is perceived – both as transcendent and immanent or the unknowable and revealed. F. Calabi's suggestion is not to view it as "an irresolvable contradiction", but rather as the "source of fertility and complexity" that is a constituent of Philo's thinking.[66] The bigger theme in the background in her monograph is the interrelation between transcendence and immanence, which is an issue that concerns us here as well.

2.1.1 Transcendent and Immanent Element

> For the Cause of all is not in the thick darkness, nor locally in any place at all, but high above both place and time. For He has placed all creation under His control, and is contained by nothing, but transcends all. [67]

Philo, having a Judeo-Greek background, has a diverse rendition concerning God's character. On one hand, he describes God in accord with a Greek philosophical rendering of him. As I have noted in the *First chapter*, Philo was influenced by the stream of Middle Platonism, which related the One from Plato's *Parmenides* to God (emphasizing his transcendency). Philo on many occasions holds a very abstract approach to God, perceiving him as a Monad in a sense of his totally isolated unity.[68] Together with God's transcendence, Philo contends on his unchangeable character,[69] which was a theme already vivid in Greek philosophy – in Plato or Aristotle.[70] The theme of God's unchangeability is found in Christian tradition and also in Scripture itself.[71]

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[65] However, there is a difference in the perception of God also on the philosophical basis – while Platonists consider God to be highly transcendent, Stoics claim to be identified with nature, i.e., more immanent. See NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 74.
[66] CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p. xii. This highlighted two-fold nature of God can be seen among the Middle Platonist circles in the speaking of an immobile God on one hand, and his intervening in the world. See ibid., p. xi.
[67] *Post*. 14.
[68] καὶ κατὰ τὴν μόνωσιν μονάδι ὄντι σπένδεται θεῷ. *Her*. 183. This identification of One (being an ontological designation) with God (being the theological one) was later typical for Neoplatonic thinking. See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p. 3.
[69] He dedicates one whole work concerning this theme - *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*.
[70] See DAVIS, Stephen T. *Logic and the Nature of God*. Macmillan Press, 1983, pp. 41-43.
[71] See ibid., p. 41.

God is the one, and only one, who is transcendent and, on many occasions, designated by Philo as a Monad.[72] In *Praem*. 40, God is even designated as ἀγαθοῦ κρεῖττον καὶ μονάδος πρεσβύτερον.[73] He transcends and is beyond what he has made – as a Monad, the One, which transcends the pair of opposites (Dyad), on which the One afterward acts.[74] In this approach Philo also interprets the Biblical ἅπαξ ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεός δύο ταῦτα ἤκουσα,[75] which shows "that God's word is unmixed and monadic, while human hearing is mixed and dyadic".[76] Therefore, whatever we say about God in our human language is insufficient since God transcends our notions. Or as D. Runia fittingly describes the "transcendence involves superiority but also some kind of teflon coat. Things don't stick."[77]

On the other hand, Philo perceives God as a personal God of Judaism, who acts in the world. Even though the divine is without mixture and totally pure, he is for Philo also immanent in this world and "fills the universe with Himself". It happened in fact at the moment of creation, when God gave humans something from himself (so they can "reconnect" with him again) and in this sense he entered this world.[78] Nevertheless, if we perceive God as a pure transcendence, how can he then relate to the created world? And if we claim God's involvement in the world, does not the changeable (i.e., created world) mar his unity?

2.1.2 Knowability of God

The transcendent character of God is connected to the question of knowing him. Philo makes an explicit distinction between God's essence and his existence. However, he does

[72] "(…) holds no company with any other has his being ordered in accordance with the One and the Monad, the truly existent." *Deus* 11; "God, who knows no mixture or infusion and is in His isolation a unity." *Her*. 183.
[73] "Superior than the Good and more ancient than the Monad" There are more passages, where Philo holds this strong transcendent concept of God. In *Contempl*. *2:* He is "superior to the good". In *Praem*. 40 he is "the primal Good and Beautiful (…) that which is superior to the good, more beautiful than the beautiful, more blessed than blessedness", or see also QG 2.44.
[74] See WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E. (ed*.). Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992, p. 21. Plotinus speaks of different "degrees of unity" and comes with examples while three of them occur already in Philo. See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, pp. 129-130.
[75] Ps 61:12. "God spoke once, I have heard two things." My own translation.
[76] DAHL, N. A. SEGAL, Alan F. Philo and the Rabis on the Names of God. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, p. 10.
[77] RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, p. 132.
[78] See FORGER, Deborah. Divine Embodiment in Philo of Alexandria. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*. Vol. 49, No. 2, 223-262, BRILL, 2018, p. 226.

not postulate any proofs for God's existence in the Scholastic fashion, but rather tries to show his existence is evident:

> (…) when one enters a well-ordered city in which the arrangements for civil life are very admirably managed, what else will he suppose but that this city is directed by good rulers? So then he who comes to the truly Great City, this world, and beholds hills and plains teeming with animals and plants, (…), the yearly seasons passing into each other, and then the sun and moon ruling the day and night, (…) must he not naturally or rather necessarily gain the conception of the Maker and Father and Ruler also? (…) In this way we have gained the conception of the existence of God.[79]

Philo rather, with the aid of allegorical interpretation, enters the world of philosophy, where one is able to observe the absolute truths – and the existence of God is one of them.[80] When distinguishing between God's essence and existence, Philo emphasizes his true existence and the possibility to know only God's existence, however, not his essence. He supports this conception by a verse in Exod 3:14 – we might know only "the one who is", God's existence, not his essence.[81] Or another biblical passage, where God speaks of the possibility to only see his back, but not his face (Exod 33:23), is used by Philo to highlight the impossibility to know God's nature.[82] This designation of God being "the one who is" has its counterpart in the Platonic "that which is" – being in neuter, which in this sense, is absent of any relationship with the one who believes.[83] Nonetheless, this Philo's rendition of God carries us into the field of philosophy.

The impossibility of knowing God lies, first of all, in our biological and ontological formation, and second reason would be God's radiancy. Philo in *Opif*. 70-71 shows this unsuccessful act because the attempt to see God fails due to God's different essence, and also his dazzling light, which makes the one trying to see God blind.[84] God's unknowability is illustrated on the metaphor of the sun (just as the physical

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[79] *Spec*. I.32-35.
[80] See RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 125.
[81] As he says in *Spec*. I.49: "Do not hope to ever be able to apprehend me or any of my Powers in our essence." But David Winston speaks of the manifestation of God's essence that is happening on two levels – the intelligible and sensible. See WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E. (ed*.). Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, p. 22.
[82] This passage was of great importance for the negative theology (and especially for Philo's *Spec*. I.32-50, as cited above).
[83] See SIEGERT, Folker. Philo and the New Testament. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 198.
[84] See MACKIE, Scott D. Seeing God in Philo of Alexandria: the Logos, the Powers, or the Existent One? In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory. (eds.). *The Studia Philonica Annual,* p. 27.

sun "illuminates the sensible world, God illuminates the intelligible").[85] Nevertheless, just as the sun cannot be seen, but only its rays, the same then goes for God.[86] This image of the sun was probably taken from that of Plato's *Republic*, where it has rather the sense of the source of knowledge; Philo with this image illustrates the blinding function of a sun and the ability to see its rays only.[87]

Regardless of the difficulty of God's knowability, it should still stay desirable for one to see God, it also being one of the main tasks of philosophy.[88] And, therefore, there are still few hints of how to know him – either through contemplation, virtue practice, or to approach God's powers.[89] Even though Philo is seen as the prominent representative fighting for the total incorporeality of God, there are cases where he, for instance, designates stars as "visible gods"[90] or elsewhere the cosmos in itself is designated as a "visible god".[91]

Philo's attempt to solve the problem of holding God's transcendence and immanence is manifested in his introduction of the powers, through which God operates in this world (and through which it was created). Philo is an outstanding figure in this so-called "Logos theology", which according to Alexander Jensen became an important "tool to hold together divine transcendence and (…) Judaeo-Christian notion that God is present and able to enter into relations" with the created world.[92]

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[85] CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p. 66.
[86] The assimilation of God to the sun can be found, for instance, in *Ebr*. 44: "The sun when it rises hides from our sight the light of the other stars by pouring upon them the flood of its own beams; even so, when the rays of the Divine Day-star, rays visible to the mind only, pure from all defiling mixture and piercing to the furthest distance, flash upon the eye of the soul, it can descry nothing else. For when the knowledge of the Existent shines, it wraps everything in light, and thus renders invisible even bodies which seemed brightest in themselves." Or see also *Somn*. I 73-76.
[87] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p. 58-62. According to Calabi, this metaphor illustrates that it is impossible to know God via intellect, but rather via an intuition. See ibid., p. 66.
[88] See MACKIE, Scott D. Seeing God in Philo of Alexandria: the Logos, the Powers, or the Existent One? In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory (eds.). *The Studia Philonica Annual*, p. 25.
[89] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, pp. 39-40.
[90] θεῶν ἐμφανῶν. In *Opif*. 27.
[91] ὁρατὸς θεός, In *Aet*. 10, This connects him to the Platonic-Aristotelian realm. See RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 129.
[92] JENSEN, Alexander S. *Divine Providence and Human Agency. Trinity, Creation and Freedom*. London and New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 34.

2.1.3 Powers of God

By the theme of God's δύναμις[93] (in singular), Philo on one hand tries to draw us closer to the idea of some possibility to know God, nonetheless also explains how the transcendent God manifests himself (how he fills "the universe with Himself"), what the relationship is between God and matter (or as F. Calabi put is – what is the relationship "between that which lies beyond all qualities and the qualified beings").[94] And it, therefore, takes us back to the theme of transcendence and immanence of God. Through δύναμις God operates in this world, and reciprocally, he might be known – or at least his existence. He still remains transcendent but pervades this world. However, according to Calabi, the introduction of powers transfers the problematic of totally transcendent God and his acting in the created world just to another level.[95] God's acting in the cosmos is manifested by his powers, however, are they to be taken as a form of his acting or should we approach them as being autonomous to God?[96] The latter would mean to state there are independent beings to God, i.e., other gods. In the monotheistic realm, it is more fitting to introduce one principle acting in diverse roles.[97]

Peculiar position in the case of powers holds the power Logos due to which God created both sensual and intelligible world. It can be understood as a divine Intellect that creates the world in forming the intelligible cosmos - κόσμος νοητός[98] (i.e., God's thoughts), and orders the physical cosmos in a cooperation with the powers.[99] God acts via Logos creating this world, which is in biblical terminology manifested by speaking, as we see in Gen 1:3 "God said, (…) and there was."[100]

What is the relationship of Logos toward other powers and what is the amount of them? As I have said above, it is difficult to reconstruct a system since it seems Philo

[93] There is larger reference to the powers of God for instance in *Cher*. 19;29.
[94] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p. 4.
[95] See ibid., p. 8.
[96] See ibid., p. 36.
[97] See ibid., p. 8.
[98] According to D. Runia, this term occurs frequently in Philo and Plotinus, however, there are not many cases in documents of Middle Platonism. See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, p. 83.
[99] See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos according to Moses. Introduction, Translation and Commentary. In STERLING, Gregory E (ed.). *Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series.* Leiden: BRILL, 2001, p. 142.
[100] In this sense, human speech can be approached as the "imitation of divine creative activity, bringing order out of disorder." ROBERTSON, David. *Word and Meaning in Ancient Alexandria. Theories of Language from Philo to Plotinus.* Hamphire: Ashgate, 2008, p. 16. However, God's speech is differentiated by its unity, which cannot be said of that of humans, being mixed with the air. See ibid., p. 25.

does his exegesis according to the allegorical context, thus Logos is sometimes the powers' sum and therefore "stands above the two powers in the ascent from concrete to abstract."[101] The scheme could then be reconstructed as following:

However, as was indicated above, there is a question lying behind this scheme, and that is if this means just a multiplicity in God's functions or does it mean a "hierarchy of reality"?[102] When talking about the theme of Logos, there are questions about its state. Roberto Radice asks if Logos is "the world of Ideas contained within the mind of God, or is it the mind of God itself, the cause of the ordering of the world? (…) Is the Logos a part of the project or a part of the architect?"[103] Is the distinction between Logos and God only conceptual? Or is Logos inferior to God on the ontological level? Peter Schäfer speaks in favor of God and Logos being identical ontologically[104] and it seems plausible that Logos and powers would represent the transcendent and immanent realm. Or as F. Calabi poses a conception veiled in the Aristotelian way: "There are not two or more gods (…) (but) two settings for the noetic world (…) – ideas in potency (in the mind of God) and ideas in act (in noetic created world)."[105] Nevertheless, the problematic relationship between transcendence and immanence is not smoothened.

Therefore, we are addressing on one hand, a "place" where Ideas are located, i.e., Logos (God's mind), but on the other hand, we could put it by saying that God's thoughts, being Ideas, can be actualized and have external existence toward God. Or to put it shorter – there are Ideas in God's mind and the one external to his mind. And this is all due to the act of creation – God thinks Ideas within himself, then project them outside of himself

[101] SEGAL, Alan F. *Two Powers in Heaven. Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism*. Boston; Leiden: BRILL, 2002, p. 175.
[102] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, p.13.
[103] RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam. *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 143.
[104] See SCHÄFER, Peter. Two Gods in Heaven: *Jewish Concepts of God in Antiquity*. Princeton University Press, 2020, p. 62.
[105] CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria*, pp. 9- 10.

into the noetic world (where they exist autonomously) and through them, the physical cosmos is created. D. Runia points at the concept of perceiving Ideas as "spermatic principles". Logos makes them to be *logoi spermatikoi*, which makes of them the creative principles intervening in the physical world.[106]

Commonly, Philo mentions one God with his two powers[107] (oftentimes meaning Logos and Sofia – while the first illustrates the intelligible world and the latter the sensible one).[108] This conception creates a, not only notional, triad.[109] The illustration of God with his two powers is illustrated by the Greek terms *kyrios* and *theos,* while the first one corresponds to Hebrew *Yahweh* and the second to *Elohim*.[110] They can indicate powers – the ruling and creative one; but also, God himself.[111] The peculiar illustration of the triad is in the story of three men visiting Abraham. Philo points out the singular usage in the biblical text when those visitors speak of themselves (Gen 18:3,10) and that, according to him, symbolizes three personas in one – one God being surrounded by two powers.[112]

As P. Schäfer shows, we cannot speak of pure monotheism in late ancient Judaism – it was rather an ideal that was fully filled up in the Middle Ages. Nonetheless, these two powers Philo speaks of are not to be considered as antagonistic (as was later seen in Gnosticism) in any way; they rather cooperate side by side.[113] The conception of approaching God as one, having two powers gained acceptance in Christianity – either

[106] Logos' role is being the sum of Ideas. The spermatic principle has its foundation in Stoicism. See RUNIA, David T. Philo of Alexandria. Collected Studies 1997-2021. In *Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 187*, p. 85.
[107] However, there are references to multiple ones. See for instance *Deus* 79.
[108] See SCHÄFER, Peter. Two Gods in Heaven: *Jewish Concepts of God in Antiquity*, p. 62.
[109] See MACKIE, Scott D. Seeing God in Philo of Alexandria: the Logos, the Powers, or the Existent One? In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory. *The Studia Philonica Annual*, p. 40.
[110] See DAHL, N. A. SEGAL, Alan F. Philo and the Rabis on the Names of God. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, p. 1.
[111] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria,* p. 23. Rabbis speak of *middath ha-tob* and *middath ha-puranuth*, however, they do not speak of powers of God, but rather of measures, according to which God "metes out His goodness and His punishment". DAHL, N. A. SEGAL, Alan F. Philo and the Rabis on the Names of God. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, p. 4.
[112] See HADAS-LEBEL, Mireille. Philo of Alexandria. A Thinker in the Jewish Diaspora. Translated by Robyn Frechet. In *Studies in Philo of Alexandria*, *p.* 137. Moreover, the concept of powers is also able to explain the plural usage in the Scripture, where God speaks of himself (such as in Gen 1:26).
[113] See SCHÄFER, Peter. Two Gods in Heaven: *Jewish Concepts of God in Antiquity*, pp. 134-5.

transforming it into Christ, surrounded by two angels, or as God, Father, occupying "a position superior to the Son and the Spirit".[114]

Thus, we have a transcendent God, who immanently has effect in the material world. And he "though transcending and being beyond what He has made, none the less has He filled the universe with Himself."[115] The Septuagint, when speaking of seeing God, applies many times the term "place" of God instead of referring to seeing God alone, which Philo regards as God's Logos.[116] David Winston uses term "transcendent immanence" of God, whose essence is manifested on two levels: "the Logos or intelligible world of Ideas, which constitutes God's image (…) and the sensible universe, which in turn is an image of that image.".[117]

We are left here with either affirming knowing God by powers, or his absolute unknowability and the impossibility to assign him any kind of quality. Those are, according to F. Calabi, two different approaches Philo himself introduces throughout his works.[118] Philo is one of the first ones who systematically talked about negative theology - the unknowability of God is not only given by the insufficiency of our language, but also by the "ontological superiority" of God (being "superior to the good, purer than the One and more primal than the Monad").[119] It is therefore more convenient to obviate positive statements about God "in order to culminate in (…) apprehension by supreme ignorance of Him who cannot be (an) object of knowledge".[120] This "negative theology" has become a counterbalance toward the positive utterance about God.[121] And hence, F. Calabi points out there are different approaches, *viae*, one may hold toward God

[114] SIEGERT, Folker. Philo and the New Testament. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 201.
[115] *Post*. 14.
[116] See MACKIE, Scott D. Seeing God in Philo of Alexandria: the Logos, the Powers, or the Existent One? In RUNIA, David T. STERLING, Gregory. *The Studia Philonica Annual*, p. 32.
[117] WINSTON, David. Philo and Rabbinic Literature. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 238.
[118] See CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria,* p. 8. Philo's expansion of negative theology was later on very influential between Neoplatonists or Neopythagoreists, however, also the fact that God is for Philo an entity that never ceases to act gives great similarities to the later concept of One in Neoplatonism. See RADICE, Roberto. Philo's Theology and Theory of Creation. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, pp. 127-130.
[119] In *Contempl.* 2.
[120] LOSSKY, Vladimir. In the Image and Likeness of God. In ERICKSON, John H. BIRD, Thomas E. *Vladimir Lossky*. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Press, 1977, p. 13.
[121] See JENSEN, Alexander S. *Divine Providence and Human Agency. Trinity, Creation and Freedom*. London and New York: Routledge, 2016, p. 15.

- *via negationis*, *via eminentiae* and *via analogiae*.[122] She argues that these *viae* are designations of one reality, however, while using distinct lenses – it is once applied to God, another time to powers relating to the world (since it is a God, who through them relates).[123]

These distinct paths toward God give us distinct renderings of him – I would accept the idea they are boundaries of philosophical speech about God, to which F. Calabi alludes. Even though it might be difficult to know God or to approach him by language, it should still remain desirable. From time of Philo, many attempts to solve the problem between God's transcendent and immanent element have been made. For Augustine, God is "not being among all beings" but rather a source for them.[124] We might thus assert that "what exalts God is not his immutable and self-sufficient perfection, but his perfect capacity to surpass himself as well as all others by taking each phase of creation into his own life".[125] The concept of God "not being among all beings" but rather the source of them is not new but was typical for Augustine or Thomas Aquinas.[126] Stephen Jensen suggests taking transcendence and immanence "as mutually complementary" – speaking of a fully transcendent God and equally of God who is subject to change.[127] The leitmotif is how can the unchanging God interact with the world, how is it possible that he undergoes alteration – changes his mind, etc. Stephen Davis believes that the traditional concept of immutability supposes timeless being.[128] To perceive God

[122] While the first one lies in "removal of attributes" to God, the *via analogiae* takes a step to designate God with positive renderings, and via *eminantiae* lies in the „illumination of the soul" and its ascent to God. O'ROURKE, Fran. The "Triplex via" of Naming God. In *The Review of Metaphysics*. Vol. 69, No. 3, 2016, pp. 519-554, p. 525-526.

[123] CALABI, Francesca. *God's Acting, Man's Acting*. *Tradition and Philosophy in Philo of Alexandria,* p. 46-53. There is also a difficulty that we could sum up together with *Parmenides* (142A), namely that unity is destroyed by a name since it adds something to the one being named (and "name involves predication, which implies plurality and relatedness"), therefore, it is impossible to attribute him properties. Ibid., p. 48. Just as Augustine says: "If you can grasp it, it isn't God." AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO. *Sermon* 117. Translated by Edmund Hill. The Works of Saint Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century. New York, 1990, vol. 3, p. 211.

[124] "Tu autem eras interior intimo meo et superior summo meo." AUGUSTINUS, Aurelius. *Confessiones*. 3.11. Lateinisch- Deutsch. Übersetzt von Wilhelm Thimme. Düsseldorf; Zürich: Artemis and Winkler, 2004, p. 98. Augustine perceives God to be both transcendent and immanent. I would accept the thought he adheres to a stance of panentheism.

[125] HARTSHORNE, Charles. The God of Religion and the God of Philosophy. In *Talk of God – Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures*. Vol. 2, Palgrave Macmillan, 1967/8, p. 153.

[126] See JENSEN, Alexander S. *Divine Providence and Human Agency. Trinity, Creation and Freedom*, p. 2.

[127] Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[128] See DAVIS, Stephen T. *Logic and the Nature of God*, p. 9.

in some respects as immutable and impassible, however, also mutable and passible, is a view Philo would not hold.[129]

The aim of this chapter is not solving the problem in general but rather introducing it – since the aim is to analyze Philo's solution. I have tried to outline there are possibilities of God's renderings, trying to hint on the more philosophical-theological one, and it is therefore essential to direct at the most important literature for this Jewish exegete.

2.2 Narrative Presentation of God in the Bible

Philo's main source of knowledge, Scripture, is in its voluminous portion made up of stories,[130] even though we do not encounter the term for "story" in the Bible at all.[131] Nevertheless, there was a real interest in the 20th century in conceiving the Bible as a literary art and focusing more on its narratological side as a whole. In doing so, it overtook philosophical hermeneutics done primarily by Paul Ricoeur and a more literary one by Erich Auerbach.[132]

And it has often been said to be essential for us humans to think within stories – that is the way we understand each other or the cultural settings we are in – or to put it as Stephen Crites says: "the formal quality of experience through time is inherently narrative".[133] Stories have, in this point of view, a mimetic role, which means they reflect the reality and our lives since they share with human lives the arrangement in time. When talking about ourselves, we tend to use stories as the mediator. And stories are therefore in a greater measure part of every culture – as far as Kalevala in Finland, Kojiki in Japan, Nibelungen in Germany or Beowulf in England and so on - as they all shape the culture they originated from.

One of the important features, when talking about narrative,[134] would be the importance of following the story as a whole – just as Socrates asks in the dialogue

[129] See JENSEN, Alexander S. *Divine Providence and Human Agency. Trinity, Creation and Freedom*, p. 6.
[130] Robert Alter speaks of a "historicized prose fiction" and asserts Hebrew writers had adopted this genre from the Greek literature (made by pagans), however, inserted it to another cultural settings. See ALTER, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative.* New York: Basic Books, 2011, pp. 34-5.
[131] See BERLIN, Adele. Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative. Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, p. 11.
[132] In his work *Mimesis*, he compares the narrative of the Bible to other narratives of the ancient world.
[133] CRITES. The Narrative quality of experience. In *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. Vol. 39, No. 3, 1971, pp. 291-311, p. 291.
[134] My aim is not to dive deep into the problematics of narrativity in general, but rather present its main idea to afterwards have them in mind when approaching Philo's reading of the Bible.

Phaedrus "ὦ φίλε Φαῖδρε, ποῖ δὴ καὶ πόθεν;".[135] By that I mean tracing the story from the outset to its end.[136] Meir Sternberg also emphasizes the importance of approaching the text itself (in the case of the Bible) as opposed to focusing on its historical or also religious foundations.[137] There are other substantially distinct genres, such as poetry or legal texts, but also in the case of those one may speak of quasi-narrative features.

According to P. Ricoeur, there is a correspondence between the temporal dimension of human life and temporal dimension of the story. And that is the theme they both share – the orderliness in time, which is one of the reasons why stories are something peculiar for us. According to him, there is dependence of a text on the reader - he is the one who enters from his world into the world of that specific narrative[138] and in him the whole narrative is finally completed.[139]

Narratives themselves play an undeniable role, while being a product of this or that specific culture. The concept of perceiving narratives as tales bearing moral or pedagogical sense that we could extract from the story might be helpful, nonetheless, the key here is to focus on the story as a whole and what it aims to say.[140] As P. Ricoeur tells us about narrative, it "does not resolve aporias, it makes them productive, which suggests that a (…) logical solution to our problems may not be required" and further on the "narrative (…) does not exhaust the power of language to resolve the aporias of time."[141] The key in understanding this or that narrative lies in the phronetic understanding - overtaking the Aristotelian vocabulary.[142] It is essential to take context

[135] "Dear Phaedrus, whither and whence are you going?" My own translation. PLATO. *Phaedrus*. 227a. Platonis Opera. BURNET, John (ed.). Oxford University Press. 1903.
[136] See NÜNLIST, René. Some Ancient Views on Narrative, its Structure and Working. In CAIRNS, Douglas. SCODEL, Ruth (eds.). *Defining Greek Narrative.* Edinburgh University Press, 2014, p. 156. This kind of approach is distinct from that of Midrash, which does not focus on the continuum of the narrative, but rather small textual pieces. See ALTER, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, p. 21. However, A. Berlin emphasizes the ability of Midrashic commentaries to approach the narrativity of the text. See BERLIN, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative,* p. 17.
[137] See STERNBERG, Meir. *Poetics of Biblical Narrative. Ideological Literature and the Drama Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987, p. 2.
[138] See MCENTIRE, Mark. *Portraits of a Mature God. Choices in Old Testament Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013. In the chapter "The God at the End of the Story". Accessible in the epud version.
[139] See WOOD, David (ed.). *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative and Interpretation.* London and New York: Routledge, 1991, p. 26.
[140] See MCENTIRE, Mark. *Portraits of a Mature God. Choices in Old Testament Theology*. In the chapter "The God at the End of the Story". Accesible in epud version, p. 28.
[141] WOOD, David (ed.). *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative and Interpretation,* pp. 5-6.
[142] See WOOD, David (ed.). *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative and Interpretation,* p. 23.

into consideration, rather than trimming it – P. Ricoeur for instance indicates the importance of narrative discourse for the faith of Israel.[143]

Adele Berlin suggests viewing narratives as "a form of representation". She nicely illustrates this perspective on the figure of Abraham, who is not a real-life person "any more than a painting of an apple is a real fruit".[144] Yet, she emphasizes this is not to judge whether there was Abraham in the history, as the same goes with apples – it does not concern the existence of apples. There must be differentiation between a historical person and a representation of a narrative figure.[145] A. Berlin when trying to illustrate this relevant difference between narrative, the representation, and reality, offers us an example of the statue that:

> Guarded the palace of Ashurnasirpal at Nimrud (…). It is a creature with the legs and body of a lion, a human head, and wings. All three of its components exist independently in real life, but here are combined.[146]

The trick lies in the portrayal of this creature since it is represented with five legs! A. Berlin clarifies that those five legs are the representation of "only four legs". The reason behind such a representation lies in the demand of convention in antiquity that:

> A side view contain(s) four legs and a front view contain(s) two legs. Even though the two views are combined, each must remain "true" to itself, and so the sum of the legs of the parts is more than the sum of the legs of the real object.[147]

On this representation of the lion's legs, A. Berlin tries to point at the difference between reality and its representation that it does not always utterly correspond to it. Nevertheless, the representation still reflects a kind of dimension of the reality. P. Ricoeur in this area suggests of even taking myth as "the way to true mimesis", being not a mere imitation but rather a redescription.[148] A specific feature of the biblical narrative lies in its main character – God. Since narrativity is a product of human creation and since

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[143] See RICOEUR, Paul. Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation. In *The Harvard Theological Review*. Vol. 70, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 3.
[144] BERLIN, Adele. Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative. Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, p. 13.
[145] See BERLIN, Adele. Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative. Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1994, p. 13.
[146] Ibid., pp. 13-14.
[147] Ibid., p. 14.
[148] RICOEUR, Paul. Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation. In *The Harvard Theological Review*, p. 24.

narratives are caught up in temporality, it might be therefore inevitable to speak of God in the boundaries of the narrative.

2.2.1 God as the Protagonist of the Bible

God is narratively portrayed as a literary figure - he enters the story of the Bible from the beginning; however, we do not learn about his life before he creates the world.[149] God is part of the narrative and is defined that way (as a God of Abraham, as the one who guided Israel out of Egypt, and so on)[150] and he is the "object and subject of representation, as maker of plot and agent, as means and end, as part and reason for the whole".[151]

Thus, could it be claimed that there is an evident difference between God in the story and the cogitated God? This is just as Jack Miles differentiates: "I write here about the life of the Lord God as—and only as—the protagonist of a classic of world literature; namely, the Hebrew Bible (…). I do not write about (…) the Lord God as the object of religious belief."[152] J. Miles therefore highlights and thus affirms the difference between God and the character of God – the former one as ontologically conceived, and the latter as a literary character.

When considering the theme of narrative as a representation suggested above by A. Berlin, we could claim the narrative representation of God is as the one of that statue at Nimrud. It passes us an image of God in its participation in reality. This introduces one of the possible evaluations of God's involvement in the story, nonetheless, the idea of narrativity being grounded on temporal basis, where God in this point becomes a part of the "physical" storytelling, obtaining a certain physicality, could be seen as problematic. Readers perceive characters in the story thanks to a protagonist's embodiment and on the ground of God's involvement in the story, the problematics of anthropomorphism may come in place. On the basis of Philo reading the Bible, he had to deal with God's involvement in the story, in the physical world, i.e., with anthropomorphisms.

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[149] See MCENTIRE, Mark. *Portraits of a Mature God. Choices in Old Testament Theology*. In the chapter "The God at the End of the Story". Accessible in the epud version, p. 43.
[150] See HOŠEK, Pavel. *Kouzlo vyprávění*, Praha: Návrat domů, 2013, p. 35.
[151] STERNBERG, Meir. *Poetics of Biblical Narrative. Ideological Literature and the Drama Reading*, p. 153.
[152] MILES, Jack. *God: A Biography*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1995, p. 10.

2.2.2 The Problem of Anthropomorphism and Anthropopatism

> And yet to say that He uses hands or feet or any created part at all is not the true account. For God is not as man.[153]

As Philo travelled to encounter the Roman emperor, he was perfectly decided to refuse to recognize him as a God.[154] The motif behind this was obvious, since Caligula was not God, however, I perceive there is a deeper foundation of Philo's anti-anthropomorphic setting. God's involvement in the stories and the language used when speaking of them had been a target of critics since Xenophanes.[155] Ascribing physical or mental attributes of humans to God felt inappropriate, thus both anthropomorphic (in human form) and anthropopathic (with human passions) – it was also concerning any physical designation, such as motion..[156] These designations felt unworthy of the totally transcendent God, signifying his resemblance toward humans and indicating he is a subject of change. The idea of God not being subject to any emotions is not purely Platonic thought since we encounter this rendition in Epicurus, Cicero and also Sextus Empiricus.[157] In Philo's point of view, talking about God, who is full of jealousy or wrath that we might experience in the mythical fiction, is not useful for those desiring to gain true knowledge. The leitmotif is how the unchanging God can interact with the world, how it is possible that he undergoes alteration, and become subject to passions – as we see in the biblical narrative.

There had been many solutions of what this colored speech means. One of them was pointing at the "human thought patterns"[158] behind it. This type of description does not refer to what God really is, but rather "evokes a human response regarding the state of affairs".[159] As Wesley J. Wildman puts it, human beings are anthropomorphic

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[153] *Conf*. 98.
[154] See NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 165-166.
[155] "But if oxen and horses and lions had hands and could draw with their hands and make statues as men do, then horses would draw gods with figures like horses, and oxen, like oxen, and each (sort of) beast would build up such bodies as they have themselves. The Greek text is preserved by Clement of Alexandria, Strom. 5.110. Cited from CLEVE, Felix M. *The Giants of Pre-sophistic Greek Philosophy. An Attempt to Reconstruct their Thoughts.* Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1965, p. 7.
[156] With the meaning of attributing human form (Anthropos + morphos) "to a non-human entity" PECKHAM, John. Theopathic or Anthropopathic? A Suggested Approach to Imagery of Divine Emotion in the Hebrew Bible. In *Perspective in Religious Studies*. Vol. 42, 4, 2015, pp. 87-101, p. 341.
[157] See VAN DER HORST, Pieter. Philo and the Problem of God's Emotions. In *Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*. BRILL, 2014, p. 37.
[158] PECKHAM, John. Theopathic or Anthropopathic? A Suggested Approach to Imagery of Divine Emotion in the Hebrew Bible. In *Perspective in Religious Studies*, p. 342.
[159] Ibid., p. 344.

instinctively in the way they think. "It is humanly contoured stories that cling to our memories, bringing comfort under pressure, and hope for something better. It is the narratives of God as an aware and active being that grab our attention, create potent social glue, and enhance our ability to define our group over against outsiders. Anthropomorphism works for our species."[160] It is, therefore, irreversible for us to anthropomorphize, since we are οἱ ανθρωποι. Metaphor is a possibility of language used when speaking about God.

John Peckham suggests not dismissing anthropomorphic/pathic speech about God, but rather viewing it as theopathic, as an attribute belonging to him. The sense of doing so lies in accepting these designations as being peculiar to God – in a sense of divine emotions. Since God's nature is different than ours, then his experience of passions is still different, but wholly his. J. Peckham then refers to the fact that God's wrath for instance is always corresponding to "an accurate appraisal of the state of affairs", being wholly appropriate unlike emotions of our own.[161]

As was asserted above, God is the protagonist of the biblical narratives. The question behind this is if the narrativity does not mar God's unchangeability? If Philo perceived God as "purer than Monad", which attitude should be held when encountering stories where God is angry? Is God's unity rather contained in the mystery of storytelling? I suggest approaching closely Philo's Bible, which, being a translation, could try to render God differently when being embodied in the narration.

2.2.3 Septuagint and its Picture of God

Philo was holding and reading the Greek translation of the Bible, however, approaching the Septuagint[162] as a mere Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible would be misleading since it incorporates more than that. It certainly translates the Hebrew language into the Greek, however, with that also naturally comes the conversion of the whole culture –

[160] WILDMAN, Wesley J. *In our own Image*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017, p. VII.
[161] PECKHAM, John. Theopathic or Anthropopathic? A Suggested Approach to Imagery of Divine Emotion in the Hebrew Bible. In *Perspective in Religious Studies*, pp. 351-2.
[162] Referring to it in Latin as "interpretatio secundum septuaginta seniors" indicates it was an interpretation done by the seventy elders. It had its birth dated to the 3rd century B.C. in Alexandria. See BOYD-TAYLOR, Cameron. What is the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021, p. 13. It is written in „the colloquial Greek of Alexandria", but on the other also biblical Greek having many Semitic elements in itself, thus it is not an unified work from the linguistic aspect. EVANS, Trevor V. The Nature of Septuagint Greek: Language and Lexicography. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint,* pp. 95-8.

being, as Natalio F. Marcos puts it, the embodiment of "the Hellenisation of Jewish monotheism".[163] Happening to be the first translation of the Pentateuch, its importance could be likened to the one of the Iliad to Hellenic world, thus we could mark the Septuagint, taking Brock's phrase, as "the Homer of the Jews".[164] The Septuagint, according to Philo, did not arise from the need of Jews but because of non-Jewish nations.[165] This Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible becomes suitable for any deeper philosophical parsing - becoming universal in a sense.

The traditional depiction of the Septuagint's origins is the fictional literary document *The Letter of Aristeas* written by its putative author Aristeas (a Greek-speaking Jew coming from Egypt,[166] who tries to gain credibility by claiming to be an eyewitness of the translational process and sends a letter to his friend Philocrates).[167] Even though the document was agreed to be a fiction, it still served as a significant document for the Alexandrian Jewry.[168] Scholars approached it from the literal point of view, thus it reveals some kind of truth about the background of this work. It does not need to reveal what actually happened during the translation, but rather, as Dries de Crom puts it, what the author "wanted his audience to believe had happened." It would be therefore useful to conceive it as a social myth describing the Alexandrian Jewry at that time – what it wanted to be and how it wanted to be perceived. [169] The *Letter* was popular among Hellenized Jews and Philo even, being the only one, tells us of an annual ritual on island

[163] MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible.* Leiden; Boston; Köln: BRILL, 2000, p. 306.
[164] BOYD-TAYLOR, Cameron. What is the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 16.
[165] See DUDZIKOVÁ, Markéta. Mojžíš a svět idejí. Poznání dané podle Filóna Alexandrijského izraelskému králi, zákonodárci, velekněz i a prorokovi. In *REFLEXE*, p. 62.
[166] The author is most of the times named as "Pseudo-Aristeas since there is no certainty of Aristeas being truly the author". See DE CROM, Dries. The Letter of Aristeas. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 122. Moreover, its dating is not without troubles and fluctuates between 3rd century B.C. to 2nd century C.E. See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, p. 41.
[167] See LAW, Timothy M. *When God spoke Greek: The Septuagint and the Making of the Christian Bible*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 36.
[168] See BOYD-TAYLOR, Cameron. What is the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 14.
[169] Even though de Crom warns about the usage of the word "myth" in this case. DE CROM, Dries. The Letter of Aristeas. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, pp. 129-131.

Pharo of celebrating the birth of Septuagint.[170] There had been also theories considering the Septuagint's origins – varying between one and multiple sources.[171]

The difference between the Hebrew Bible and Septuagint is not only in the linguistic realm but as was said above, the Septuagint differs from the Hebrew Bible also in the theological aspect.[172] The chronology of the books is different in each of these canons, however, there is not the same number of books as well. What makes the Septuagint distinct from the Hebrew Bible would be its attempt to a more anti-anthropomorphic expressing of God.[173] The God of the Hebrew Pentateuch experiences joy, jealousy or hate, which was to be avoided in the Greek Pentateuch and it is apparent from many places of the Septuagint. One of them is Num 23:19, where the Hebrew text "God is not a man" is inserted in the Greek text with the term ὡς, making it rendered as "God is not like a man."[174] The Septuagint, in general, has greater tendencies to demythologize the stories from the Scripture, which could be shared with the Homeric mythology being under the same endeavor by the critical philosophers.[175]

There is, as the last (of many) example, distinguishable difference in Exod 3:14, where God, answering Moses' question about his name, answers "ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὤν", which gives, according to Charles Dodd, more noticeable indication about God's namelessness (than the Hebrew text does). He is the Self-Existent, having truer being than created

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[170] See *Mos*. 2.37-2.

[171] These are the acquainted theories by Paul de Lagarde and Paul Kahle. The first arguing for its one autograph and the latter for multiple ones. See BOYD-TAYLOR, Cameron. What is the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 15. Moreover, the Septuagint was not the only Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. We could name the one made by Aquila, which was more faithful to the Hebrew text. See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, p. 115. Other known ones are the one by Theodotion (being closer to LXX text) or Symmachus. See ibid., p. 143-155.

[172] See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, p. 87.

[173] Nevertheless, Ch. Fritsch points at the anti-anthropomorphic tendency in the Hebrew Bible as well. See FRITSCH, Charles T. *The Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch*, Priceton: Priceton University Press, 1943, p. 5.

[174] See MÜLLER, Mogens. Theology in the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 110.

[175] See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, p. 311. It is also essential to take into consideration the philosophical background of the Septuagint. In general, there are obvious similarities between Genesis and Plato's *Timaeus*. The differentiation between the Platonic themes of an immaterial world of Ideas and the material world has its reminiscence in Genesis' chapters 1 and 2. Philo, for instance, develops this idea (making use of Plato's lenses on Genesis) more in depth in his *De Opificio Mundi*. See MÜLLER, Mogens. Theology in the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 115. There are more examples concerning the relationship of Septuagint toward Plato. See FELDMAN, Louis H. Judaism and Hellenism Reconsidered. In COLLINS, John J. (ed.) *Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism* (107). Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2006, p. 63.

things, who lack this trueness because of their dependence on God.[176] In the Greek text, it gets more philosophical coloring, which has its climax in Philo, who goes far to sometimes designate God by the neuter form as τὸ ὄν. The term ὁ ὤν stands, according to Charles Fritsch, "midway between the personal God of the Hebrew and the abstract conception of Philo".[177] The Septuagint, being in the spirit of Hellenization, uses also terms that can remind us of the ones of Plato or Homer.[178] Was the fate of the Septuagint similar to the Hebrew Bible, about which Voltaire claimed to be the "world made of Greek myths translated into Hebrew"?[179]

Thus, the Septuagint has the tendency to tone down the occurrences in the Hebrew Bible where God experiences any human properties, and it cannot be spoken of any kind of consistency of this trying since there are still cases where these anthropomorphic/pathic designations are incorporated without any changes. Therefore, as Ch. Fritsch puts it, the agenda of overcoming these designations was not too strong.[180] Even though it was not that strong, it would be a distinguishable feature of the Septuagint – an attempt of a weaker anthropomorphic rendering of God, as he happens to be anthropomorphized the moment he becomes the protagonist of a story.

Although, we have discussed the narrative structure of the Bible, the Greek ancient literature was with a great amount filled up by the narrative literature as well. Myth-tellings became a problematic field within philosophy, as was indicated in the chapter about the problem of anthropomorphism. The works made by Greek poets were viewed

[176] See DODD, Charles H. *The Bible and the Greeks,* p. 3-4.
[177] See FRITSCH, Charles T. *The Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch*, p. 23.
[178] See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible*, p. 88.
[179] THOMPSON, Thomas L. WAJDENBAUM, Philippe (eds.). *The Bible and Hellenism. Greek Influence on Jewish and Early Christian Literature*, p. 5. When following the philosophical background of the Septuagint and its endeavor to lessen the weight of statements in the Bible, where God experiences emotions, most pronounced the Platonic one, there had been a question raised about who was the one influencing and who the influenced one. It was quite common idea among the Hellenized Jews and Christians, deducing from the temporal earliness of the Moses and prophets before Plato. They considered *Timaeus* to be a reused story from the Pentateuch. See ibid., p. 5. In the current scholarship, it had been shown the influence was inverse – calling, as Niesiolowaki-Spano proposed, Genesis as a form of "a Hellenistic reiteration of Plato". Ibid., p. 9-11. On the basis of archives from Ugarit and Khattusha it seems that both biblical and Greek writers had shared one and the same background, from which they derived their mental framework. See ibid., p. 6.
[180] FRITSCH, Charles T. *The Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch*, p. 20. He also shows that the books of Genesis and Leviticus are "free from anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek, whereas Exodus has the most examples of any book in the Pentateuch" and there are also cases, when the Septuagint text has even more anthropomorphic sense than we experience in the Hebrew Bible. FRITSCH, Charles T. *The Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch*, p. 62.

as the source of a mere entertainment, but lacking any form of higher wisdom for those who criticized it. Nevertheless, this agenda cannot be taken as universal.

Plato, for instance, was extensively occupied with the theme of myths. Even though he criticizes them, it does not seem he would utterly consider myths to be the enemies of philosophy. Of course, he dismisses the portrayal of gods in myths having emotions and votes for erasing passages as such and for the reformation of mythology in general.[181] One of the remarkable acts he does is replacing the unwanted myths with myths of his own, which could be named as "philosophical". According to that, the Romanticists even believed Plato to be aware of myths having higher truth in themselves and the deficiency of ratio. Socrates in the *Republic* affirms there is a partial truth in myth.[182] It seems Plato creatively transforms the myths of poets and creates his own philosophical myths (but they still hold the position of a myth), being in a living dialogue with them – instead of using allegory to interpret them.[183]

Philo was acquainted with both Greek and biblical literature, but did he have any appreciation of the narrative structure of the Bible? What was the difference between biblical narrative and Greek myths for him? Could one perceive biblical stories as mythological ones? What is then the difference between Homer's narrative and the biblical narrative?

2.3 Philo and the Narrativity of the Bible and the Greek *Mythos*

> Let not such fables even enter our mind.[184]

Philo, dedicating three quarters of his works to the Bible, thinks within the philosophical and cultural background of the Bible. It has its special place within his world of ideas being designated as νόμος (law), χρησμός/λόγιον (oracle) or λόγος (word).[185] However, what do we mean when we use the term "Philo's Bible"? He certainly read the Septuagint,[186] which was no less perfect than the Hebrew Bible (both being in sororal

[181] See LUDWIG, Edelstein. The Function of Myth in Plato's Philosophy. In *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 10, (1949), pp. 463-481, p. 465.
[182] See ibid., pp. 464-466.
[183] According to Ludwig Edelstein, Plato's attitude lies neither in his anti-rationalism, nor his temper. See ibid., p. 477.
[184] *Leg*. 44.
[185] See PEARCE, Sarah J.K. Philo and the Septuagint. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 411.
[186] It was probably the pre-Hexaplaric one from the lingual point of view. See MARCOS, Natalio Fernández. *The Septuagint in Context. Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible,* p. 264. The concrete

relationship according to him).[187] By ascribing this special status to the Septuagint, Philo also attributes a prophetic tune to its translators when addressing the Aristean legend – they managed to translate both words and sense of the text.[188]

To understand Philo's attitude toward Scripture, we have to, at first, refer to Aristotle's division of mimetic and non-mimetic poetry. Calling poetry mimetic would mean to approach it as imitative, whereas non-mimetic poetry serves as a sort of didactics. For Philo, as indicated in *Opif*. 1-2, the Pentateuch does not have a mimetic function, which also in terms of literary criticism of Hellenistic scholars means that it is not a myth. There had been a division, in the Hellenistic times, concerning the *telos* of the literature when one accounted it with an instructive role, but another with pleasing.[189]

When talking about the theme of myths, it seems Philo contradicts himself since he on one hand highlights that Bible is without myths,[190] and on the other hand there are myths that contain a seed of truth. The question then lies, as Geert Roskam puts it, in the relationship between Πλάσματα μύθου[191] and the truth.[192] He argues that Philo does not totally dismiss myths, nevertheless appreciates their value as a tool (having ethical or educational value) that might help us when correctly used.[193] We could therefore say there is no complete rejection or acceptation of myths.

For Philo, μύθος in general is rather fictitious[194] and if we take the second commandment in its broadest sense, then it applies not only to making images of God, but also myths that contain the figure of God (at least, those where he strongly behaves

source for Philo's biblical text is quite hard to ascertain since he sometimes cites the original LXX text, sometimes reshapes it for his own philosophical reasons, thus there is no finding of it in the LXX text. And sometimes we can see a great resemblance of this citation to the Hebrew text, but it seems to be a work of later revisers of his works. However, he uses Hebrew etymology, which illustrates his loyalty to the Hebrew text as well. See PEARCE, Sarah J.K. Philo and the Septuagint. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, pp. 412-15.

[187] See BOYD-TAYLOR, Cameron. What is the Septuagint? In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 17.

[188] See *Mos*. 2.25-44.

[189] The former being the Stoics, and latter the Peripatetics. See KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). Biblical Interpretation in Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 81.

[190] See *Abr*. 243, *Det*. 125, *Mos*. 2.271 or *Gig*. 6-7 („And let no one suppose that what is here said is a myth").

[191] As the „form of a myth".

[192] See ROSKAM, GEERT. Philo's Reception of Greek Mythology. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*. Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2019. pp. 20-21.

[193] See ibid, p. 41.

[194] *Congr*. 61.

as humans).[195] We could therefore designate Pentateuch as "a Greek didactic work", which has a different role from those of Homer. This brings difficulties when talking about Philo's exegesis of the Pentateuch since in this didactic literature there was no need for allegorical interpretation – it was rather the mythical narrative needing these allegorical methods.[196] The philosophers' critique of myth and the defense of Homer was done through allegorical interpretation.

Philo sometimes acknowledges the biblical narrative to be mythical, but the allegorical type of exegesis that lies below the narrative makes the myth to be only seeming. As Adam Kamesar says, the allegorical exegesis served him as the *therapeia mythōn*– "a healing of myth".[197] However, it does not mean the myth is going to disappear, but rather it domesticates the myth.[198] Beside that, the allegorical style of interpretation is intrinsic for Philo's exegesis, and therefore he uses it while he claims the story not to be a myth at all. For instance, the story about the beginning of the world, or that of Eve and a snake do not have a "mythical value", however, they are in need of allegorical interpretation.[199] Nevertheless, he does not consider the Greek myths to be the same grade as biblical narrative, and therefore transfers, for instance, the sense of the story about the creation of Eve into the realm of allegory – as this story sounded too mythical to him.[200]

Having these two worlds within him, he adapts the Greek narrative methodology to apply it afterward on Scripture.[201] However, he comes into contact with the Greek mythology, where we find plenty of anthropomorphic usage or polytheistic concept of the deity, which are to be adjusted by philosophical myths! But even though Philo criticizes

[195] See GRUEN, Erich S. Philo's Refashioning of Greek Myth. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*, pp. 4-5.
[196] See KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, pp. 75-76.
[197] Ibid, p. 79.
[198] See BLOCH, René. Philo's Struggle with Jewish Myth. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*, p. 113.
[199] SFAMENI, Gasparro. Polytheos Doxa and Mythologein. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments,* p. 83. However, he sometimes admits there are mythical episodes in the Scripture (and the story about a snake is one of them). See BLOCH, René. Philo's Struggle with Jewish Myth. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*, p. 112. On the other hand, Wolfson, for instance, argue there is a "incompatibility of myth and Torah in Philo". Ibid, p. 109.
[200] See KOVELMAN, Arkady. *Between Alexandria and Jerusalem. The Dynamic of Jewish and Hellenistic Culture*. Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2005, p. 74.
[201] See ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*, p. vii.

the Greek myths, he still assents to their educational effect.[202] And that is a technique he uses when encountering the anthropomorphic address of God in the Bible – as he says in Somn. 1.233:

> An old saying is still current that the deity goes the round of the cities, in the likeness now of this man now of that man, taking note of wrongs (…). The current story may not be a true one, but it is at all events good and profitable for us that it should be current.

It seems he keeps a close eye on the narrative, however, rather transforming it and gives it another narrative scheme – just as Plato does. He uses philosophical myth, thus he attributes a positive function to them and to their ability to deliver some aspect of the truth. There is a difference between Greek narratives and the biblical one since the biblical serves as a pedagogical rule, according to which one can judge the myths themselves. For every narrative, there should be a theme that embraces the whole structure. In this sense, we could also argue that Philo really follows the narrative structure of the Bible by having addressed its motif. He grounds this motif in perceiving Bible as the journey of the soul ascending to God. The Bible then becomes the perfect guide to such ascent, following Moses as the embodiment of person's guide.[203]

I have subtly outlined two streams of thinking or speaking about God, the problem of transcendency and immanency, his unity and relational character. And with that in mind, I am going to narrow my sight down on where the Alexandrian philosopher stands in this, having both stances in his "sack" of thinking. Philo ought to deal with similar problems as LXX, making wider use of philosophy. This is going to be illustrated in classical passages from the Bible, on which Philo focuses in his interpretative oeuvre. When conceiving God as united and totally transcendent, it may be complicated to deal with places where he relates to the world and experiences human-like passions.

[202] See ibid., p. xi.
[203] This is a theme he and neo-Platonists adopted from neo-Pythagoreans. See KAMESAR, Adam. Biblical Interpretation in Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 86.

3 Philo's Rendering of God's Emotions in Different Literary Genres

One of Philo's attempts was to protect God's stability, conceiving him not as a subject of passions (because experiencing grief, envy and all those emotions means changing one's state of mind), in comparison to human unstableness, experiencing emotions of any sort. However, this means he is bound to deal with passages in the Bible where God is being exactly this subject of passions and this anthropomorphic portrayal of God is invariable in the Bible.

My aim is to focus on Philo's passages where he must deal with these biblical texts, while having in mind the question of his reflection of God's unity and his relational character, his transcendent and immanent feature. Moreover, my focus is going to be also on the specific literary form – as M.R. Niehoff points out, Philo chooses different types of genres according to his different "phase of creativity".[204] My research is going to focus on his opus *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*, which brings us an extensive treatise about God's unchangeability – of any sort. This opus therefore serves as a notional base, through which I am going to make journeys to another of his texts, another of the literal genres he chooses.

3.1 *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*

In this treatise, belonging to the type of allegorical commentary, Philo continues with his exegesis of Genesis (Gen 6:4-12)[205] and as the name suggests, the theme of God's unchangeability accompanies us the whole treatise - he tries to save God's perfection (in which God's unchangeability plays its role).[206] As it is typical for his allegorical treatises, Philo focuses on one biblical passage, but brings up other ones to support his exegesis, which creates a whole interconnectedness between them.[207]

My main point of concentration is going to be especially on passages 33-34, while further on considering also 51-73.

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[204] NIEHOFF, Maren R. *Philo of Alexandria. An Intellectual Biography*, p. 7.
[205] Moreover, this treatise is considered to be the continuation of another treatise – namely *De Gigantibus.*
[206] See ROYSE, James R. The Works of Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*. p. 41.
[207] See PEARCE, Sarah J.K. Philo and the Septuagint. In LAW, Timothy M. SALVESEN, Alison G. (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the Septuagint*, p. 408.

3.1.1 *Deus* 33-34

This passage directly precedes a view (28) that changeability (fickleness) is a quality only human beings experience, unlike God who is stable and never changes. He creates time (31) and it therefore does not signify him being subordinated to it. As Philo points out God "is the father of time's father" (31), which means, as he directly explains, that God's elder son is the intelligible world, whereas his younger son is the sensible world, where time and motion dwell (32). God perceives everything as present, and therefore there is nothing as a future or past for him.

This introduction precedes passage 33-34, which is going to be the source of my concern. I have structured the work with addressing the Greek text, my own translation with notes, considering the biblical text, and Philo's interpretation of it.

Greek Text

ἱκανῶς οὖν διειλεγμένοι περὶ τοῦ μὴ χρῆσθαι μετανοίᾳ τὸ ὂν ἀκολούθως ἀποδώσομεν, τί ἐστι τὸ "ἐνεθυμήθη ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἐποίησε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ διενοήθη". ἔννοιαν καὶ διανόησιν, τὴν μὲν ἐναποκειμένην οὖσαν νόησιν, τὴν δὲ νοήσεως διέξοδον, βεβαιοτάτας δυνάμεις ὁ ποιητὴς τῶν ὅλων κληρωσάμενος καὶ χρώμενος ἀεὶ ταύταις τὰ ἔργα ἑαυτοῦ καταθεᾶται. τὰ μὲν δὴ μὴ λείποντα τὴν τάξιν τῆς πειθαρχίας ἕνεκα ἐπαινεῖ, τὰ δὲ μεθιστάμενα τῇ κατὰ λιποτακτῶν ὡρισμένῃ μετέρχεται δίκῃ.[208]

Translation

Thus, it was sufficiently discussed about the Existent one[209] not experiencing any repentance,[210] let us in conformity return to what does mean "God had it in his mind[211] that he has made a man upon the earth and thought within Himself."[212] The creator of everything contemplates[213] his own works,[214] when he has chosen and always uses

[208] The Greek text is taken from PHILO GREEK The Works of Philo (PHILO-T) The Norwegian Philo Concordance Project Copyright © 2005 Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, Roald Skarsten.
[209] τὸ ὂν is in *Loeb* translated as "Existent", Yonge translates it as the "living God" and Šedina as "bytí" (being). I have decided to stick to the more literal meaning with τὸ ὂν designating the Latin philosophical term *ens*, the being. I followed the idea of perceiving God as *ens*, but the truly existing one. Therefore, I have put a capital "E" to express that I mean the one God, whose attribute is to fully exist.
[210] The word μετανοίᾳ in its broader sense means "a change of mind", however, I have decided to use its more narrow and stronger sense.
[211] Yonge translates it as "considered"; however, I am going to stick to *Loeb* translation "had it in His mind".
[212] Other possible translations are - think over, consider, intend; Yonge – "thought within himself", *Loeb* – "bethought Him".
[213] In other words "follow from above".
[214] Or "products", however, it is a "created" work, thus I have rather chosen this rendering.

these things: consciousness[215] and pondering, the firmest powers. The first one being the embedded[216] thought, and the second a thought (actively) bethought. And those who do not leave the appointed places[217] he praises because of their obedience, but those who do he chases with justice set to these deserters.

Interpretation of the Text

After Philo denies the idea of God being a subject of change, he then shifts over to Gen 6:6[218] and tries to cope with that passage. This passage in the Bible lies in the heart of the story about flood. The Hebrew sounding is as following:

וַיִּנָּחֶם יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בָּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל־לִבּוֹ[219]

In the Hebrew text[220], we encounter the usage of the verb נחם, which here truly means, being in niphal form, "to regret", "have a change of heart" or "to feel sorry". The LXX text differs from the wording in the Hebrew Bible, where it is being highlighted that the Lord "felt sorry" and "was grieved in His heart".

The Greek text of this passage renders it as following:

καὶ ἐνεθυμήθη ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ἐποίησεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ διενοήθη[221]

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[215] I am following Šedina's translation "vědomí". The other possible translations could be "thought", "thinking" or "reflecting", however, it would not create a stronger distinction between this term and the term διανόησιν that follows.

[216] *Loeb* renders it as "calm, still", which goes also in hand with the stable nature of consciousness, nevertheless, I have decided to use the term "embedded" to highlight its firm nature.

[217] I have followed the translation from *Loeb*.

[218] In Targum *Onkelos*, there is an endeavor to lessen the significance of God's grief, rephrasing it in a way that in his mind the human being becomes "an object to be troubled (punished)". SILBERMAN, A.M. *Chumash with Rashi's Commentary*. Feldheim Pub, 1985, p. 26. However, there are other explanations concentrating on and emphasizing more that God "considered" rather than repented. An interesting approach towards this passage can be found in *Midrash Rabbah*: "A gentile once asked Rabbi Joshua, the son of Korcha, saying to him, 'Do you not admit that the Holy One, Blessed be He, knows what is to happen in the future?' He replied 'Yes.' The gentile retorted, 'But it is not written "and He was grieved in His heart?"' He answered: 'Have you ever had a son born to you?' The reply was 'Yes.' He asked (the gentile): 'And what did you do?' He replied: 'I rejoiced and I made others rejoice also.' The Rabbi asked him: 'But did you not know that he must die?' The heathen replied: 'At the time of joy, let there be joy, at the time of mourning let there be mourning.' The Rabbi then said: 'Such, too, is the way of the Holy One, blessed be He: although it was clear to Him that in the end men would sin, and would be destroyed, He did not refrain from creating them for the sake of the righteous men who were to issue from them.' Ibid., p. 26.

[219] "And the Lord felt sorry, that he had made a human being on the earth and was grieved in his heart." My own translation.

[220] I am using the WTT text.

[221] "God had it in his mind, that he has made a man upon the earth and thought within himself." My own translation.

The term נחם is in the Septuagint[222] translated as ἐνεθυμήθη, which, according to Philo, does not refer to God's repentance, but it is rather a sign of contemplation – God only ponders about why he had made man upon the earth.[223] Therefore, there happens to be no change in God in a sense that he would experience any emotions but remains the same and stable. Thus, God is without an alternation (*Deus* 26), even though he contemplates the created, and always changing, world[224] – he is the one who initiates change by creating a changing cosmos. The verb נחם was, according to Fritsch, rendered by other meanings in the Greek translation.[225] There is, therefore, an obvious attempt of the LXX not to ascribe emotion of anger to God and Philo follows this endeavor.

Philo focuses on the difference between ἔννοια (consciousness) and διανόησις (pondering), with ἔννοια being a thought firmly imprinted to the mind, which could be assimilated with consciousness (as the permanent state),[226] contrary to διανόησις, being the act of thinking. He tries to make a difference between *ἔννοια* and *διανόια,* which corresponds to the Septuagint terms ἐνεθυμήθη and διενοήθη.[227] It makes the Biblical term ενεθυμουμαι (in Hebrew נחם here used in a sense of being irritated) a status that is, according to Miroslav Šedina, the permanent state of God.[228] And in the same way is pondering, thinking, the dynamic status of him.

It seems remarkable, Philo considers the firmest forces to be these quite opposite ones – for it is typical for consciousness to be stable, whereas in bethinking there happens to be a kind of dynamic. Both forces are fundamental though. What is the role of bethinking in this case? He says in *Agr*. 145 that "distinguishing without memory and without coming and going over of the things that are best is an incomplete good (as is memory without distinguishing between good things and their opposites), but the meeting and partnership of both in combination is a good most complete and perfect." Bethinking therefore necessarily completes the one stable component,

[222] I am using the BGT text.
[223] ALEXANDRISJKÝ, Filón. *O Stvoření světa. O Gigantech. O Neměnnosti Boží*. Translated by Miroslav Šedina. Praha: OIKOYMENH, 2001, p. 503.
[224] God is performing introspection into his own thoughts and evaluates his own actions (there is a kind of dynamics). In a similar sense speaks Plotinus about the reason in general – it remains the same, even though it voyages through things that are different. See PLOTINUS, Enn. VI, 7, 13. According to Šedina. See ibid, p. 504.
[225] FRITSCH, Charles T. *The Anti-anthropomorphisms in the Greek Pentateuch*, p. 17-18.
[226] That is also the way how Miroslav Šedina translates this word (as "vědomí", i.e., consciousness).
[227] See WINSTON, David. DILLON, John. Commentary. In *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: A Commentary on De Gigantibus and Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*. Brown University, 2020, p. 291.
[228] See ALEXANDRISJKÝ, Filón. *O Stvoření světa. O Gigantech. O Neměnnosti Boží*. Translated by Miroslav Šedina, p. 502.

which is a consciousness. I would say there is no temporal order of those in God, but rather an ontological one. In both cases we speak of thoughts – those saved ones and those being in motion. The two presented "activities", the motion of thoughts and their preserving, is not a temporal phase since it belongs to the realm of human beings to perceive them as such. It is certainly questionable whether the idea of God having mind and act of thinking does not ascribe him still a certain human-likeness.

Philo refers to Gen 6:6 also few verses earlier (21), where he only points out it is godless to think God repented after "seeing" the wickedness of people and therefore wanted to destroy them. Philo refers to this biblical passage also in his other works as well. In QG 1.93, he highlights that it could be thought of God experiencing repentance in that passage, however, as he says, it is not possible, since God is unchangeable. There is no sign of repentance, but rather "lucid and certain reflection" of the reasons behind the creation of a human, which is needed since many people are wicked.

Philo continues his interpretation (35-50) when explaining "God had in His mind that He had made man", with reproduction of the Stoic theory of the four classes of things which we find in nature – coherence, growth, then the threefold sense, presentation and impulse, and the last one being rational mind. That is where all the sensible matters are stored. This fourth stage is, according to him, what God "had in mind" – meaning, the wrongly used mind of a human. Rist points out that passage 33-50 is overall in the Stoic frame.[229] It is explicit by the usage of vocabulary and collocation - for instance, the concept of "embedded thought" is used in Stoic logic.[230] Philo tells us (34) about rewarding those who do not leave the given order and punishing those who leave the given order – chasing them with justice set to these deserters. Using this vocabulary and also the entire atmosphere of this section is something that was typical for the rhetors of the middle style.[231]

[229] The Stoic themes were in that time available in Alexandria. See RIST, John M. The Use of Stoic Terminology in Philo's Quod Deus immutabilis sit 33-50. In *Platonism and its Christian Heritage*. London: Variorum Reprints, 1985, p. 12. The Stoic frame of this passage slightly disrupts Niehoff's assertion of Philo's switch between Platonic and Stoic philosophy, since *Deus* would belong to the first case. However, this Stoic section is just a small portion of the overall Platonic frame this opus has.
[230] See LEOPOLD, J. Characteristics of Philo's style in the De Gigantibus and Quod Deus. In WINSTON, David. DILLON, John. *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: A Commentary on De Gigantibus and Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*, p. 145.
[231] See ibid, p. 145.

3.1.2 *Deus* 51-55

Moving on to other passages in his interpretation of Genesis, Philo focuses on Gen 6:7, where it points out on God's outrage about making human beings. The Hebrew[232] text renders it as following:

> וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶמְחֶה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָאתִי מֵעַל֙ פְּנֵ֣י הָאֲדָמָ֔ה מֵאָדָ֛ם עַד־בְּהֵמָ֥ה עַד־רֶ֖מֶשׂ וְעַד־עֹ֣וף הַשָּׁמָ֑יִם כִּ֥י נִחַמְתִּ֖י כִּ֥י עֲשִׂיתָֽם׃[233]

As we follow the Hebrew text, we see there is again the term נחם in usage while speaking of God's feelings.

The Greek[234] text renders it as following:

> καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός ἀπαλείψω τὸν ἄνθρωπον ὃν ἐποίησα ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς γῆς ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπου ἕως κτήνους καὶ ἀπὸ ἑρπετῶν ἕως τῶν πετεινῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὅτι ἐθυμώθην ὅτι ἐποίησα αὐτούς.[235]

Not only the Hebrew text, but also LXX speaks of God wanting to wipe out human beings and his anger about creating them. The special interest in Greek is going to be in "ὅτι ἐθυμώθην ὅτι ἐποίησα αὐτούς"[236]. There is a change in the verb – while in Gen 6:6 we encountered the Greek verb ἐνθυμέομαι, here in Gen 6:7 the verb is θυμόω. It is possible that in Philo's time, some were aware that Septuagint translations tended to use euphemistic paraphrases. The Hebrew text says clearly that God grieved (it grieved him at his heart). And Philo points out, one could think, that God experienced any kind of emotions, which is not surprising since the term θυμόω has these renderings. It seems that the previous section (33-34) was more about God's unchangeability, whereas now his attention shifted to the theme of God not experiencing any passion (51-73).

When dealing further on with the question of God's unchangeability regarding the biblical text, Philo brings up (53-4) two demonstrative passages in the Bible that contradict each other – those being Num 23:19 and Deut 8:5.[237] As he says briefly

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[232] I am using the WTT text.
[233] "And the Lord said: "I am going to blow out a human being, whom I have created, from the surface of the land, both the human being, and the beast, and the creeping thing, and the flying creature, for I was sorry that I had made them."" My own translation.
[234] I am using the BGT text.
[235] "And God said: "I am going to wipe out the human being, whom I have made, from the face of the land, from the human being to animal, and from creeping things to birds of the heaven because I became angry that I had made them.""
[236] In Hebrew (כִּי נִחַמְתִּי כִּי עֲשִׂיתִם).
[237] We are able to see these corrective passages in other passages in the Bible, for instance, also in 1Sam 15:29.

in *Deus* 69, "God is not as a man" and "God is as a man" serve him as two maxims connected to principles of love and fear. It is not only here where he applies these exact passages from the Bible beside each other – he does so in *Somn*. 1, 236-7[238] as well. As we find out, the structure or the manner of argumentation of these passages is very similar, thus I suggest taking a closer look at them.

In *Deus* (53-4) Philo firstly rejects the appropriateness of likening any body parts to God. However, if we encounter such expressions, then they serve as a lesson "to admonish those who could not otherwise be brought to their senses".[239] And therefore, we have two different but leading statements in the Law – "God is not as a man"[240] and the other one saying he is. When following these two statements, he comes up with the division on the so-called "soul lovers" and "body lovers" - the first ones desiring to unite with God and the others not concerning themselves with that but rather putting emphasis on other affairs.

In *Somn*. (1,231-7) he reacts to a different passage in the Bible, namely Exod 3:14. Those soul lovers have the revelation of God as he is, but on the other hand, body lovers receive his image in the form of angels – but mistake it for the original. They are not able to think of God without a body – therefore they attribute face, legs, wrath or also entrances and exits to him. And again, that is the reason of two existing statements in the Bible (specifically Num 23:19 and Deut 8:5), for the other one stands for "the ways of thinking of the duller folk". Soul lovers do not compare God to any of the created things, since he is *To on,* and characteristic is the love of God for them, in comparison with a fear that body lovers experience towards the Existent one.

I have put these two examples to show Philo possesses a framework when he speaks of God being or not being as a man. As he puts these beside each other, he then highlights the theme of fear and love, and the lovers of the body and those of the soul.

[238] But also in QG 1.55 and 2.54. It seems these two statements in the Bible serve him as a demonstration whenever he deals with the theme of God's unchangeability.
[239] Philo differentiates between common education and wisdom. These two are symbolized in the figures of Hagar and Sarah, while Hagar is a handmaid of Sarah, however, she is still essential and therefore we should not dismiss the common education on our way to wisdom. See ROSKAM, GEERT. Philo's Reception of Greek Mythology. In ALESSE, Francesca. DE LUCA, Ludovica (eds.). *Philo of Alexandria and Greek Myth. Narratives, Allegories and Arguments*, p. 30.
[240] οὐχ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ὁ θεός. Again, there is a difference between the Hebrew and Greek text, as was highlighted above.

3.1.3 *Deus* 56-57

Moving on to the other passage (56-57) where Philo still continues with his interpretation of Gen 6:7, I have decided to translate it, since it focuses more on God's character.

Greek Text

ὁ δὲ θεὸς ἅτε ἀγένητος ὢν καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἀγαγὼν εἰς γένεσιν οὐδενὸς ἐδεήθη τῶν τοῖς γεννήμασι προσόντων· ἐπεὶ καὶ τί φῶμεν; εἰ κέχρηται τοῖς ὀργανικοῖς μέρεσι, βάσεις μὲν ἔχει τοῦ προέρχεσθαι χάριν βαδιεῖται δὲ ποῖ πεπληρωκὼς τὰ πάντα; καὶ πρὸς τίνα μηδενὸς ὄντος ἰσοτίμου; καὶ ἕνεκα τοῦ; οὐ γὰρ ὑγείας φροντίζων ὥσπερ καὶ ἡμεῖς καὶ χεῖρας μέντοι πρὸς τὸ λαβεῖν τε καὶ δοῦναι· λαμβάνει μὲν δὴ παρ' οὐδενὸς οὐδέν πρὸς γὰρ τῷ ἀνεπιδεεῖ καὶ τὰ σύμπαντα ἔχει κτήματα, δίδωσι δὲ λόγῳ χρώμενος ὑπηρέτῃ δωρεῶν, ᾧ καὶ τὸν κόσμον εἰργάζετο.[241]

Translation

Since God is uncreated[242] and leads others into creation, he has none of properties belonging[243] to creatures.[244] For what are we to say?[245] If he is possessed of bodily[246] parts, he has feet for moving from one place to another.[247] But where is he to walk having filled all things? And toward whom when there is no other being of the same kind?[248] And for the sake of what (would he walk)? For it cannot be intended on health just as it is with us. And hands he must have for receiving and also giving; yet he does not also receive anything from anyone. For he is of no want of anything, he has all things as his possession, and when he gives, he employs[249] reason[250] as the minister of the gifts by which he created the world.

Interpretation of the Text

In this passage we witness a direct criticism of anthropomorphism, turning away from ascribing legs or hands (or any bodily parts whatsoever) to God. Just as Plato in *Timaeus*

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[241] The Greek text is taken from PHILO GREEK The Works of Philo (PHILO-T) The Norwegian Philo Concordance Project Copyright © 2005 Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, Roald Skarsten.
[242] Or "unoriginated", however, there is the counter conception of creating everything and therefore I have decided to use the term "uncreated".
[243] The term "δέω" designates "to bind or tie". I have used it here in non-metaphorical sense as "possess any property".
[244] γέννημα – used metaphorically of a kind or class of person ungodly and rebellious toward God.
[245] I am following Yonge's translation.
[246] I am following *Loeb*'s term, since it gives more anthropomorphic feeling, rather than the term "organic".
[247] I am using the same translation as the one found in *Loeb*.
[248] Nothing is of the same kind as God, or as *Loeb* puts it "none is his equal".
[249] I am going to follow the translations of Yonge and *Loeb*.
[250] λόγος has wider meaning (word, statement, etc.), however, I have decided to use the rendition "reason" since it expresses God's "intellectual" character.

addresses the pointlessness of adding legs to god, so does Philo.[251] When he asks of "where is he to walk having filled all things", it is in correspondence with first critics of myths about gods.[252] According to M. Šedina, he also avoids identifying God with the world, which was on the other hand characteristic for Stoic philosophy.[253] Nonetheless, Philo mentions God has "filled all things", which is quite questionable, in which sense Philo means it here.

Why did Moses choose to speak of God in the anthropomorphic way? Philo explains it by giving an example of very sick people, to whom doctors do not tell the whole truth – that they would cut their arms for instance since it would not make any good for them. Even though a doctor hides the whole truth from the patient, Moses here exaggerates and uses these statements for pedagogical reasons – "for this is the only way in which the fool can be admonished".[254] Moses uses anthropomorphism in the same way doctors do with their patients – that explains why it is not a description of God's nature as such, but rather a pedagogical tool for the masses.[255] As Aristotle says in his *Nicomachean Ethics* - many abstain from the wickedness only with the aid of fear or punishment since they only live by passion.[256]

Philo continues (71) to state that wrath is in connection to God used only in the metaphorical sense. And then (72) he points out that Moses uses the words "I was wroth in that I made them." This is instead of saying "because I made them, I was wroth." He notifies that if it was reversed, it would then indicate God's repentance or a change of mind. And because it is not that case here, then the formulation only says that the source of bad actions is rage. This whole sentence cannot be therefore taken as a casual one, giving cause to the rage, but it is rather an explanatory one.[257] In this case, Philo distorts the sense of Greek language to the benefit of philosophical attitude.[258]

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[251] See ALEXANDRISJKÝ, Filón. *O Stvoření světa. O Gigantech. O Neměnnosti Boží*. Translated by Miroslav Šedina, p. 525.
[252] See ibid, p. 526.
[253] See ibid, p. 528.
[254] *Deus* 68.
[255] See ALEXANDRISJKÝ, Filón. *O Stvoření světa. O Gigantech. O Neměnnosti Boží*. Translated by Miroslav Šedina, p. 521.
[256] ARISTOTLE. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. 1179b.Translated by David Ross. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 9-10.
[257] According to David Winston, Philo is here saying, that "through the wrath that comes from God (the wicked become wicked); and the righteous by his grace" WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E (ed.). *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, p. 32.
[258] See GOODING, D. NIKIPROWETZKY, V. Philo's Bible in the De Gigantibus and the Quod Deus sit Immutabilis. In WINSTON, David. DILLON, John. *Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: A Commentary on De Gigantibus and Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*, pp. 121-3.

Nevertheless, if the sentence is not causational, it does not eliminate the problematics of God experiencing anger and it still feels Philo is having difficulties here and gives an explanation that is quite hard to be intelligible.

This whole passage of interpretation comes into balance when Philo shifts to the next passage in the biblical text, which, on the other hand, speaks of Noah finding mercy. It seems then there is a slight blend between judgement and mercy filling the whole atmosphere of this text (and Gen 6:6-9) – the bad ones deserving God's wrath and the good ones his grace. God is grieving and is angry on one side, but merciful on the other, and that therefore produces a dualistic feeling in a manner of speaking. And it might lay in the different approaches to the nature of God – the difference between the love and fear of God.[259]

Bearing this in mind, one may say that the Bible contains contradictory statements in itself. This distinction is apparent from Philo's division on lovers of the body and friends of the soul. From this perspective we might use the Psalmist's words that seem to mark our research: "ἅπαξ ἐλάλησεν ὁ θεός δύο ταῦτα ἤκουσα".[260] Even though God alone is one and transcendent, he still manifests himself in the *cosmos* – and man, being inconsistent in a way, is the one whom he manifests.

Philo focuses on the interpretation of Gen 6:7 elsewhere in his *Quaestionem Genesin*. He interestingly asks (QG 1.94) why God threatens wiping out not only human beings but also animals, since it seems they did not commit any sins. In his answer, he gives both the literal and allegorical meaning. Since animals were made "for the sake of men", and therefore if men were destroyed, the animals would be destroyed as well - "since there no longer existed those for whose sake they had been made". Nevertheless, if we explain it by using allegorical explanation, we could say, taking man as the symbol for mind and animal as sense-perception, then if mind, as the ruler of the whole, gets corrupted by wickedness, the sense-perception is afterward destroyed together with that.

In *QG* 1.95, he focuses on the "angriness of God". He right away highlights that God is immune to angriness or any kind of passions since he is above of them. Therefore,

[259] ALEXANDRISJKÝ, Filón. *O Stvoření světa. O Gigantech. O Neměnnosti Boží*. Translated by Miroslav Šedina, p. 534.
[260] "God spoke once; I have heard two things." My own translation.

the passage about God being angry serves as exaggeration to show how bad were the deeds of men – even the passionless God experiences passion!

Was Philo successful in maintaining God's passionless and unchangeable nature? Philo derives from the LXX text, where it tends to weaken the sense of the anthropomorphic usage. Philo ascribes God the activity belonging to the rational realm (because it seems less embarrassing than emotions) and take it a step further than LXX. Philo here holds the Platonic-Aristotelian conception of God as an entity without any change or passion, which is only specific of human beings. He says, God is not looking through his eyes, but uses light (58) in the place of sun – the important component for human physical seeing.[261] He tries to reinterpret God being pictured as angry in the rational concept of his justice – God's anger is not due to his passionate nature, but it serves as a pedagogical tool for those who cannot be otherwise brought to their senses. According to A. Segal and N. Dahl, the theme of flood is here used as the illustration of God's having attributes of judgment and mercy.[262]

As follows, my aim is to briefly add and introduce another of Philo's works, where Philo also endeavors to eschew from ascribing any human-like feature to God.

3.2 *Quastiones et Solutiones in Genesin et Exodum*

In comparison to his previous work, *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin et Exodum* differs due to its form, and also preservation of the texts. Moreover, there seems to be a shift toward more mystical or Pythagorean thinking than in Philo's Allegoriae[263] - it itself has a more philosophical undertone since it raises questions and tries to give answers on them. As the name of this opus indicates, it is formed by questions and answers (otherwise also called Problems and Solutions) concerning the first two books of Pentateuch. This is not a new method used when dealing with the main work – it was vastly applied among Greek philosophers on Homeric poems.[264]

Philo is not using this method on Homer, but naturally on biblical passages by firstly posing the problem and afterwards trying to give solutions to it. His solutions, or answers,

[261] It reminds of the Sun in Plato's *Republic* (VI) – the Good being an intelligible archetype of the Sun, that was likened to God.
[262] See DAHL, N. A. SEGAL, Alan F. Philo and the Rabis on the Names of God. In *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Period*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1978, pp. 1–28, p.5.
[263] See PHILO. *Questions and Answers on Genesis.* Translated from the Ancient Armenian Version of the Original Greek by Ralph Marcus. London: Harvard University Press, 1953, p. x.
[264] See ROYSE, James R. The Works of Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 34.

have usually a twofold nature, when firstly focusing on the literal meaning and then the allegorical one of the given text.[265] Another difference lies in the language of this work, since the Greek original is mostly lost and we must therefore rely on the Armenian translation.[266] However, thanks to the similar structure of the Armenian language, it is able to adequately imitate the Greek language, and therefore does not differ too much, even though it is still a translation.[267] My main concern is going to be on two passages in this opus – 1.55 and 2.54.

3.2.1 *QG* 1.55

In this passage, Philo comments on Gen 3:22 where "God said: 'Behold, Adam became as one of us, knowing good and evil, and now he will never stretch out his hand and take the tree of life, and eat, and live till eternity.'"[268] This passage, according to Philo, implies uncertainty and emotion of envy, which is not something that belongs to God. Philo promptly brings up the same frame of thinking as we saw in the *Deus* or *Somn*. with passing two different sayings in the Scripture – God is like a man, but also that God is not like a man.[269] The first one is then the is addressed for the one preparing for the ascent to God. Philo analyzes the term "ἰδοὺ",[270] which does not, according to him, indicate that God doubts,[271] but rather indicate that it is a man who doubts. Doubting itself is based on the human's nature. With this introduction of this passage, he continues by saying:

> For whenever there comes to someone an appearance of something, there immediately follows an impulse toward the appearance, of which the appearance is the cause. And (so comes) the second uncertainty of one who is in doubt and is drawn here and there in spirit, whether (the appearance) is to be received or not. It is this second (…) ("Behold") that these words indicate. God is not envious, because "He created the world as a benefactor," - making contentious, disordered, confused and passive substance" into something gracious and lovingly mild with

[265] See ROYSE, James R. The Works of Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*, p. 35.
[266] Being itself made in the fifth century, we have at hand the version made by Aucher in nineteenth century gaining from the version from the thirteenth century. See PHILO. *Questions and Answers on Genesis.* Translated from the Ancient Armenian Version of the Original Greek by Ralph Marcus, p. v.
[267] See ibid, p. v.
[268] My own translation. The Greek text is as following: "καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεός ἰδοὺ Αδαμ γέγονεν ὡς εἷς ἐξ ἡμῶν τοῦ γινώσκειν καλὸν καὶ πονηρόν καὶ νῦν μήποτε ἐκτείνῃ τὴν χεῖρα καὶ λάβῃ τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς καὶ φάγῃ καὶ ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα."
[269] Deut 8:5 and Num 23:19.
[270] "Behold".
[271] Doubt (ἐνδοιασμός) or envy (φθόνος) are missing in God's nature.

> a great and harmonious order and array of good things! And the truly existent One planted the tree of life by His lucid understanding. Moreover, He did not use any intermediary to urge Him or exhort Him to give others a share of incorruptibility.

Philo attempts to save God's passionless state and therefore contends with the possibility of God's changeability in the case, where it is even not so obvious. There is an obvious attempt not to ascribe any doubt to God. This extract is, beside that, remarkable since it indicates that Philo might have operated with the concept of creation where there is the Prime Matter in the beginning that needs to be organized ("making contentious, disordered, confused and passive substance into something gracious"). Moreover, he highlights the non-usage of intermediaries when creating the tree of life, by which he seems to emphasize its higher position.

The endeavor to avoid any changeable feature to God is evident also in the other passage of *Quaestiones*.

3.2.2 *QG* 2.54

In this second passage (2.54) from *QG*, Philo deals with Gen 8,21, claiming that "the Lord God, scenting the aromatic odor, considered: 'I will never again curse the earth because of the deeds of humans, since the thought of human is diligently involved in evil from his youth; and I will never smite every mortal thing as I have done.'"[272] Philo, once again, points out the appearance of this statement and its indication of God's repentance or change of mind since he decides not to smite mortal things again. This idea is rejected once more due to the impossibility of God experiencing such an emotion. I find it beneficial to cite the following section since it is filled with many relevant thoughts:

> For the dispositions of men are weak and unstable, just as their affairs are full of great uncertainty. But to God nothing is uncertain and nothing is unattainable, for He is most firm of opinion and most stable. How then (did it happen) that with the same cause present and with His knowing from the beginning that the thought of man is resolutely turned toward evils from his youth, He first destroyed the human race through the flood, but after this said that He would not again destroy (them), even though the same evils remained in their souls? Now it should be said: that all such forms of words (in Scripture) are generally used in the Law rather

[272] My own translation. The Greek text is as following: "καὶ ὠσφράνθη κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας καὶ εἶπεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς διανοηθείς οὐ προσθήσω ἔτι τοῦ καταράσασθαι τὴν γῆν διὰ τὰ ἔργα τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὅτι ἔγκειται ἡ διάνοια τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπιμελῶς ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκ νεότητος οὐ προσθήσω οὖν ἔτι πατάξαι πᾶσαν σάρκα ζῶσαν καθὼς ἐποίησα"

> for learning and aid in teaching than for the nature of truth. For as there are two texts which are found in the Legislation, one in which it is said, ‘‘Not like man (is God)”, and another in which the Eternal is said to chastise as a man (chastises) his son, the former (text) is the truth. For in reality God is not like man nor yet like the sun nor like heaven nor like the sense-perceptible world but (only) like God, if it is right to say even this. For that blessed and most happy One does not admit any likeness or comparison or parable.

Philo initially refers to God’s stableness before he submerges into the question of what is said of him in Gen 8:21. As we find out, these statements, indicating he would change his mind, serve here as a pedagogical material, which Philo once again demonstrates on two distinct passages existing in the Scripture (God being and not being like a man).[273] Even though they serve for pedagogical purposes, they do not express the truth. The question then is, if they are not true in any way, what do they teach?

Philo criticizes the anthropomorphic approach to God and remarkably says he is like himself (“if it is right to say even this”). There is an endeavor to zero comparison of him, and it itself reminds of the indication or anticipation of negative theology.[274] On the other hand, Philo then asserts that reflection is a property belonging to God[275], since our mind is “unsettled” and, moreover, our mind is “extended and disseminated as it is too weak to pass very completely and effortlessly among all things”. God’s goodness and his lust for the well-being of humans is reflected in the sentence “I will never again curse the earth”.

It seems these two passages in *Quaestiones* bear the same framework as those in *Deus* – avoid, by hook or crook, ascribing any human-like feature to God or perceive him as changeable. The last work of Philo considered is going to originate from a quite different genre.

3.3 *De Vita Mosis*

In comparison to Philo’s previous treatise dedicated to the theme of God’s immutability, I find it beneficial to take a closer look at his other work, where we witness a different type of literal usage. Philo’s opus *De Vita Mosis* is going to be our guide since it rewrites

[273] Deut 8:5 and Num 23:19.
[274] The statement that he is also beyond happiness is going to be significant in opposition to the chapter about God’s positive emotions.
[275] “ὁ θεὸς διανοηθείς” in the LXX.

the biblical narratives and, according to Peder Borgen, should be considered as the rewritten Bible.[276] It is mostly placed among historical and apologetic works of Philo.[277] Its narrative seems to present the figure of Moses (we are therefore situated in the book of Exodus) to the Jewish and Greek audience as a virtuous human, true philosopher, with virtue being highly valued by both of these worlds.[278]

It is divided into two books. While the first one proceeds chronologically being concerned with the life of Moses, the second book does not progress in a chronological way, but deals with different *topos*, such as Moses' laws, some of his oracles in the Pentateuch, retelling the Septuagint story or some issues concerning a high priest.[279] The second book is much more filled with allegorical exegesis and handles Moses as a legislator, high priest and prophet.[280]

Our main focus is going to be on one passage in this second book, since it retells the passage in Exodus (32:9-14), where we come into contact with God experiencing emotions of anger.

3.3.1 *Mos*. 2.166

When inquiring into *Mos*. 2.166, one emerges in the *topos* of dealing with the figure of Moses as a high priest. It comes after the detailed characterization of the tabernacle and the vesture of a priest and deals here with the theme of the Golden Calf.[281]

Philo speaks of sacrifices (159), and then approaches the theme of the Golden Calf, beginning with the story itself:

> When Moses had gone up into the mountain, and was there several days communing privately with God, the men of unstable nature, thinking his absence a suitable opportunity, rushed into impious practices unrestrainedly, as though authority had ceased to be, and, forgetting the reverence they owed to the Self-

[276] See DAMGAARD, Finn. Philo's Life of Moses. In *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques?* BRILL, 2014, p. 233, cit. 2. But there is no agreement among scholars whether it should be taken as Moses' biography or a commentary of the Bible. See ibid, p. 234.
[277] See ROYSE, James R. The Works of Philo. In KAMESAR, Adam (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to Philo*. pp. 50-1.
[278] See DAMGAARD, Finn. Philo's Life of Moses. In *Rewritten Bible after Fifty Years: Texts, Terms, or Techniques?,* p. 239.
[279] See ibid., p. 234.
[280] PHILO. Works (Loeb Classical Library in 12 volumes) Translation with an English translation by F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker and Ralph Marcus. Cambridge; Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1929, p. 274.
[281] Ibid, p. 274.

> Existent, became zealous devotees of Egyptian fables. Then, having fashioned a golden bull, in imitation of the animal held most sacred in that country, they offered sacrifices which were no sacrifices, set up choirs which were no choirs, sang hymns which were very funeral chants, and, filled with strong drink, were overcome by the twofold intoxication of wine and folly.[282]

After this he continues and highlights (163), that Moses was pondering whether to go down to the people or to stay up in the mountains with God (however, was divinely messaged to go down). He saw how they depicted their God in the shape of a bull. And then Philo continues with saying of what did Moses do and what did God say to him (following the biblical passage Exod 32:9-14, which is the one of our interests).

Greek Text

καταπλαγεὶς δὲ καὶ ἀναγκασθεὶς πιστεύειν ἀπίστοις πράξεσιν οἷα μεσίτης καὶ διαλλακτὴς οὐκ εὐθὺς ἀπεπήδησεν, ἀλλὰ πρότερον τὰς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους ἱκεσίας καὶ λιτὰς ἐποιεῖτο συγγνῶναι τῶν ἡμαρτημένων δεόμενος· εἶτ᾽ ἐξευμενισάμενος ὁ κηδεμὼν καὶ παραιτητὴς τὸν ἡγεμόνα[283] ἐπανήει χαίρων ἅμα καὶ κατηφῶν· ἐγεγήθει μὲν γὰρ τὴν ἱκεσίαν τοῦ θεοῦ προσιεμένου, συννοίας δὲ καὶ κατηφείας μεστὸς ἦν οἰδῶν ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ πλήθους παρανομίᾳ.[284]

Translation

[Moses], as the mediator and reconciler, being astounded and also urged to believe the unbelievable events,[285] did not immediately spring down, but first made supplications and prayers on behalf of the nation, begging[286] [God] to pardon their sins. Having appeased[287] the Leader, the guardian and intercessor returned rejoicing and grieving at the same time; he indeed rejoiced for the prayer of the suppliant being accepted by God,

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[282] *Mos*. 2. 161-2.
[283] It seems there is an error in the accent in the text from The Norwegian Philo Concordance Project. In the *BibleWorks* software occurs ἡγεμόνα instead of ἡγεμόνα.
[284] The Greek text is taken from PHILO GREEK The Works of Philo (PHILO-T) The Norwegian Philo Concordance Project Copyright © 2005 Peder Borgen, Kåre Fuglseth, Roald Skarsten.
[285] *Loeb* translates it as "tales", however I am inclined to render it as "events" since it indicates it has really happened in the story and it is not a mere tale.
[286] The term "δεόμενος" means "binding", I have decided not to use this metaphorical expression, but rather the literal meaning it has for this sentence.
[287] I am here sticking with the translation of the term "ἐξευμενισάμενος" made by Yonge. Moses was appeasing the wrath of God.

yet he was full of deep thought and dejection, boiling with anger[288] based on the evil-doing[289] of a multitude.

Interpretation of the Text

Philo does not directly cite the biblical passage here, however, as continuing in retelling of the story, he addresses Exod 32:9-14. In the biblical passage, God, while speaking to Moses, decides on destroying the Israelites, "surged with anger"![290] However, Moses tries to persuade him by emphasizing the importance of leading Israelites out of Egypt - it would otherwise be all made in vain. God is persuaded and decides not to destroy them. At the end, God changes his mind and his wrath is smoothened.

God is evidently angry, since the production of a Golden Calf can either mean worshiping other gods, or also just bowing to the physical material. However, God in verse 10 says "καὶ νῦν ἔασόν με",[291] which either means "leaving place for persuasion"[292] or "to let (him) alone in peace and undisturbed".[293] According to U. Cassuto, these words indicate God's doubting, and therefore Moses gives persuasion a try, even though he is aware the Israelites had committed a great sin.[294] These indications are nevertheless absent in Philo's retelling of the story.

On one hand, it probably appears Philo does not find it problematic to be speaking of God's wrath when rewriting the biblical story. The essential term in this Philo's passage is ἐξευμενισάμενος (ἐξ-ευμενίζω, to propitiate), which is in *Loeb*'s translation rendered as of softening "the wrath of God", however, it seems it does not have this strong drive. Nonetheless, it designates "propitiating", and in this case it means propitiating God (or in other words his anger). Philo, even though he chooses a very light rendering for God's anger, is still bound to the story telling and has to incorporate it into his retelling of the story since it would otherwise make no sense.

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[288] I want to point at the distinction of those two states of mind. Therefore, I have chosen to translate the term οἰδῶν, largely meaning "swelling", metaphorically as "boiling with anger".
[289] Or "lawlessness".
[290] In the Septuagint as θυμωθεὶς ὀργῇ .The Hebrew Bible renders it similarly: "וְיִחַר־אַפִּי בָהֶם".
[291] "And now allow me."
[292] MEYERS, Carol. *Exodus. New Cambridge Bible Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 259.
[293] GURTNER, Daniel. *Exodus.* A Commentary on the Greek Text of Codex Vaticanus. In PORTER, Stanley E. HESS, Richard S. JARICK, John (eds.). *Septuagint Commentary Series*. Leiden; Boston, BRILL, 2013, p. 446.
[294] CASSUTO, Umbert. *A Commentary on the Book of Exodus*. Translated from the Hebrew by Israel Abrahams. Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 1997, p. 415.

On the other hand, as we look at the biblical passage and compare it to how Philo retells it, we find out there are some details removed. As I have said above, the LXX speaks of God destroying the Israelites, "surged with anger", and it is the God himself who claims this. However, Philo does not completely mention this part and it seems he tries his best to get rid of any indications of God experiencing anger, however he is still obliged to follow the narrative of the biblical story.

Additionally, as I have glanced into this opus of Philo's, I have discovered a retelling of another biblical passage where God's wrath is evident. It is situated in *Mos*. 1.84 and retells the story from Ex, 4:14-16, where God in the biblical narrative experiences anger. He speaks to Moses, ordering him to come to the Israelites and tell them about God. Moses is very bashful to do so, even after God shows him miracles. As Moses suggests to God that he takes someone else for this duty since he is bad at speaking, God becomes angry – in the Septuagint (as we saw in the case of Exod 32:10) again "surged with anger"[295] toward Moses. Nonetheless, Philo again totally omits the part where God feels anger toward Moses and instead continues with God's speech toward Moses. In this case, the reader of only Philo's retelling of the story, would not discover that God is angry since he simply answers Moses and there is no indication of wrath whatsoever. He asserts to be the one who gave him speech and therefore, there is no need to fear.[296]

3.4 The state of προπαθεια

With closing this chapter, I would like to in the end mention one of the possible solutions to God's experiencing any passions which can be, in my point of view, gained from the Stoic conception of προπαθειαι. It could shed more light and lessen the problematics of Scripture's anthropomorphic speaking of God. Even though Philo perceives God as being without any passions, there are cases where he does not adhere to this view – God experiences the rational equivalent of passions. Philo derives this from the Stoic theory about the permanent state called προπαθεια.

But what is hidden behind this permanent state and which attitude towards it does Philo choose? It is a rational equivalent, sometimes called "pre-emotion", which means

[295] θυμωθεὶς ὀργῇ κύριος ἐπὶ Μωυσῆν. The same rendering goes for the Hebrew text (וַיִּֽחַר־אַ֥ף יְהוָ֖ה בְּמֹשֶׁ֑ה).
[296] When looking at other works of Philo, where he refers to this Exodus story, there is no mention of God's anger (those are *Migr*. 78-79, *Mut*. 168, 208; *Det*. 39-40, 126,129,132,135,137,140).

it does not count to be an emotion, but still somehow belongs to the sphere of emotions.[297] While "the pre-emotion manifests itself in the same ways as an actual emotion", that is all they both have in common.[298] Philo uses this term throughout his opus but does not use it in its original meaning, which is a typical approach of him when using philosophical terms.

It is not only God who should have an absence of passions, but this goes for the virtuous man as well – the regular emotions are excluded, and therefore it might be beneficial to first follow how it manifests in the virtuous human, and afterwards understanding the manifestation in God. When we compare ordinary man and the virtuous one, they both may be hit by the unfortunate, but with the difference that the virtuous man experiences an emotion but of a different kind. To give an example, albeit a slightly rare one, Philo in *Abr*. 257 elevates that Abraham[299] after Sarah's death did not feel apatheia (absence of emotions), but rather metriopatheia (temperance of emotions). To be in a state of metriopatheia means to maintain emotions under reason's control rather than trying to be totally rid of them.[300] Even though, this seems to be a lone occurrence in Philo's opus, it still gives us an idea of another point of view. According to Simo Knuuttila, we could differentiate between Stoic and Platonic apatheia, with the first meaning total deprivation of emotions, but the latter trying to turn away from excessive emotions, but not totally losing an "emotional disposition", which links this type of *apatheia* closer to *metriopatheia*.[301]

Philo mostly melts προπαθειαι together with ευπαθειαι, which are good emotions – or otherwise approached as rational effects. The response of ευπαθειαι is fully grounded in the rational sphere. In the Stoic conception, there is a systematic approach to ευπαθειαι, and one could speak of three fundamental ones: "*boulesis* (willing), *eulabeia*

[297] See GRAVER, Margaret. Philo of Alexandria and the Origins of the Stoic προπαθειαι. In ALESSE, Francesca (ed.). *Philo of Alexandria and Post-Aristotelian Philosophy*. Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2008, p. 197.
[298] Ibid, pp. 202-5.
[299] The figure of Abraham is, together with Isaac and Jacob, the symbol of virtues. Those are teaching, natural perfection and practice, while Abraham represents the first one. See *Abr*. 54.
[300] See WEISSER, Sharon. Why does Philo Criticize the Stoic Ideal of Apatheia in On Abraham 257. Philo and Consolatory Literature. In *The Classical Quarterly*. Vol. 62, No. 1, 2012 (242-259), pp. 242- 243.
[301] See ibid., p. 244. On the other hand, in the Stoic sense, according to Rist, it does not mean to be totally impassive, but would recall the Platonic way of seeing. See PRIKHODKO, Maksim. Man's soul and God's World: On the Doctrine of the "Proper Emotions" in the Teaching of Philo of Alexandria. In *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*. Vol. 14, No. 1, 2024, p. 27.

(watchfulness) and *chara* (joy)".[302] And joy (χαρά) in particular plays a special role when talking about the divinity.[303] In *Cher*. 86 he says: "God alone in the true sense keeps festival. Joy and gladness and rejoicing are His alone; to Him alone it is given to enjoy the peace which has no element of war. He is without grief or fear, (…) but full of happiness unmixed. Or rather since His nature is most perfect, He is Himself the summit, end and limit of happiness."[304] Even though Philo attempts to dispose of emotions on God's side, he does so merely in the case of grief or anger, but not pointing fully when approaching positive emotions.[305] God's nature is therefore "without grief or fear and wholly exempt from passion of any kind, and alone partakes of perfect happiness and bliss."[306]

A similar speech is seen in the case of Seneca as he addresses the joy in the case of a wise man: It "is a joy unbroken and continuous. (…) The joy which attends the gods and those who imitate the gods, is not broken off, nor does it cease."[307] Philo has a very similar concept of *chara* as Seneca (being a continuous unbreakable state), however, with the difference of not addressing this permanent state to the virtuous man.[308]

There is no surprise that Isaac means "laughter"[309] in Hebrew, which is an external sign of the "joy in the mind" that Philo truly appraises as the "noblest of the higher emotions".[310] Joy is approached as a reward for the truly virtuous man and symbolizes the view of the cosmos as the "well ordered world city".[311] But, as he says in *Abr*. 202, it is not the laughter "which amusement arouses in the body, but the good emotion of the understanding, that is joy" and this rejoicing is a state "closely associated with God

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[302] WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E (ed.). *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, pp. 25-6.
[303] See GRAVER, Margaret. Philo of Alexandria and the Origins of the Stoic προπαθειαι. In ALESSE, Francesca (ed.). *Philo of Alexandria and Post-Aristotelian Philosophy,* pp. 210-11. The positive evaluation of χαρά can be found in *Mut*. 1.131 or *Praem*. 31.
[304] In *Deus* 108 it is spoken of "His blessed and happy nature". God's happy nature is stated also in *Spec*. 1, 329.
[305] This rejection of negative emotions on the side of God is in conformity with Stoics. See WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E (ed.). *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, p. 32.
[306] *Abr.* 202.
[307] WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E (ed.). *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, pp. 27-8.
[308] See ibid, p. 28.
[309] And we could even say, that since *chara* is symbolized in laughter, it is then understandable why Sarah laughed before she gave birth to Isaac.
[310] *Rewards* 31.
[311] PRIKHODKO, Maksim. Man's soul and God's World: On the Doctrine of the "Proper Emotions" in the Teaching of Philo of Alexandria. In *The International Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Society*, p. 29.

alone". And since every biblical character has its place in Philo's exegesis, then Cain is apprehended as the complete opposite to χαρά, which is ἡδονή (pleasure). Philo in this way transfers the Stoic idea into the theology of Judaism.

I was endeavoring to show that any "irrational impulse" in God is unimaginable for Philo since it would signify the destruction of his oneness. God is rationality in its purest form and a virtuous man who is on a journey of being fully *apathes* attempts to become like him.[312] Philo tried to take advantage of any situation where it looks like God experiences emotions, as we could have seen especially in his *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*. And whether it is directly indicated in Scripture that God does, Philo makes any attempt not to take it literally (and not even strongly allegorically in my opinion), and elevates the pedagogical function of it. The same could be said of his more philosophical *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin* where the pedagogical feature of anthropomorphic speaking about God is highlighted as well. It seems that the urge to conceive God as immutable and an endeavor to dismiss any assigning of emotions to God disappears when we enter the world of narration. Philo has in this case the narration in his own hands, however, he is still bound to follow a structure of the narration itself, where it is inevitable (in the case of Exod 32:9-14 or Exod 4,14:16) to follow motives in the story.

[312] See WINSTON, David. Philo's Conception of the Divine Nature. In GOODMAN, Lenn E (ed.). *Neoplatonism and Jewish Thought*, p. 24.

CONCLUSION

Is the culmination between Athens and Jerusalem explosive or do these two worlds rather float as two waves beside each other in the thinking of Philo? Is Philo's two-fold nature, as F. Calabi suggested, the source of a complexity and fertility? As I have attempted to show, his characterization of God is based on distinct sources rendering God differently – the conceptual (philosophical) one and the biblical (narrative) one. The anthropomorphic portrayal of God is invariable in the Bible, thus Philo is bound to deal with passages that mar the unity of God describing him as being angry and experiencing human-like properties.

Even though Philo could be rendered as a "king in the world of allegorical interpretation", he does not utilize this precious tool when interpreting these problematic passages. The figure of God represents God for him and nothing else - he is not interpreted allegorically. And therefore, Philo is bound to deal with these passages differently. Moreover, his typical doctrine of powers, greatly used elsewhere, is not strongly applied on these passages to explain how a totally transcendent God can be immanent in this world and experience human-like passions. Even though there might be an indication in the case of *Deus* 33-34.

I have raised the hypothesis that the rendering of God is distinct in Philo's more philosophically grounded works than the one where he retells the biblical narrative. In the first case (as was seen in *Deus* and *QG*), he tends to avoid as much as he can ascribing any passions to God or approaching him as changeable. There is an obvious Platonic and Stoic background in these cases, and he overtakes the Septuagint's agenda of weakening cases where the Hebrew Bible speaks of God in an anthropomorphic way (even though God becomes anthropomorphized the moment he enters the story). He even takes it a step further than the Septuagint in the endeavor to save God's unchangeability, to maintain his own philosophical attitude. Philo in many places highlights God's ability to reflect rather than repent and he attempts to save God's passionless state even in the case where it is not so obvious (as seen in *QG 1.55*).

Philo seems to possess a kind of agenda when it seems the Bible renders God as not being unchangeable, not being τὸ ὄν. We have seen it in many cases (*QG 1.55, 2.54; Deus 53-54; Somn. 1, 236-7*) where he helps himself with two distinct sayings in the Bible – being there highlighted God is like a man, but also that he is not like a man.

This constantly emerging example shows there are statements in the Bible that could contradict each other. These two statements in the Bible serve him as a demonstration, whenever he deals with the theme of God's unchangeability. Their existence in Scripture is due to different readers of this godly work. It is dependent on the nature of the reader – whether he is a "soul lover" or a "body lover", a lover of God or fearful of him. This anthropomorphic portrayal of God's nature exists in the Bible and has pedagogical value.

In the second case of the other literary genre, I have focused on his work *De Vita Moses* where he rewrites the biblical narrative. I would assert Philo conceives the Bible has narrative features (it itself even serves as a narration about the ascent of our soul to God). He, as Plato does with Greek myths, retells the story and creates his "own" while slightly correcting the biblical narrative. The agenda of dismissing any kind of anthropomorphic speech is still strong. Even though it seems he endeavors to lessen a rendering about God's anger, he is still bound to boundaries of story-telling. To tell this or that specific story, he is obliged to follow its sense and therefore is also loyal to a part of the story when God is angry with humans.

Narratives carry a valuable quality for Philo (he even addresses the Aristean legend and does not have a problem to mention it). As following A. Berlin and her perception of the narrative as a form of representation, Philo would agree with this approach. Biblical narratives depict God; however, Philo would claim that moments where God experiences any emotions in the biblical narrative serve only for those who cannot understand and love God. Nonetheless, these statements in the Bible seem to obtain certain participation in reality.

Philo tended to smoothen any anthropomorphic speech about God, albeit there are cases where he tends to ascribe to God some sort of emotion (as seen in the Stoic theory about the psychological, rational state of προπαθεια). On the top of this, he elsewhere ascribes good emotions to God while the state of joy, being characteristic of God, is a state the virtuous man aims to achieve. And if we apply the suggestion by John Peckham of not dismissing an anthropopathic designation of God, but rather view them as theopathic, it goes hand in hand with this Stoic idea. God experiences some kind of emotion, which is different than ours, but wholly his.

With this said, I would therefore agree with F. Calabi's assertion about the compatibility of these two worlds in Philo's thinking. Nevertheless, it would

be inevitable to explore more Philonic texts when considering a dependence of the literary genre while rendering God. Nevertheless, I hope to have shown a fertility of Philo's thinking and the compatibility of these two worlds. As Philo would, albeit in Greek, say – philosophia et fides!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abr. - De Abrahamo

Aet. - De aeternitate mundi

BGT – BibleWorks Greek LXX/BNT

Conf. - De confusione linguarum

Congr. - De congressu eruditionis gratia

Contempl. - De vita contemplative

Det. - Quod deterius potiori insidari soleat

Deus - Quod Deus sit immutabilis

Deut - Deuteronomy

Ebr. - De ebrietate

Exod – Exodus

Gen - Genesis

Gig. - De gigantibus

Her. - Quis rerum divinarum heres sit

Cher. - De cherubim

Leg. - Legum allegoriae

Lev - Leviticus

LXX - Septuagint

Migr. - De migratione Abrahami

Mos. - De vita Mosis

Mut. - De mutatione nominum

Num - Numbers

Opif. - De opificio mundi

Post. - De posteritate Caini

Praem. -De praemiis et poenis

Ps - Psalms

QG - Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesin

Rewards - On Rewards and Punishments

Sam - Samuel

Somn. - De somniis

Spec. - De specialibus legibus

WTT – Leningrad Hebrew of Old Testament

ABSTRAKT

LANDOVÁ, Barbora. Boží jednota a vztahovost v myšlení a biblické interpretaci Filóna Alexandrijského. České Budějovice, 2024. Diplomová práce. Jihočeská univerzita v Českých Budějovicích. Teologická fakulta. Katedra filosofie a religionistiky. Vedoucí práce Mgr. Viktor Ber, Ph.D.

Klíčová slova: židovská helénská filosofie, Filón Alexandrijský, židovská filosofie, antropomorfismus, Septuaginta

Diplomová práce analyzuje, jak se helénský židovský filosof, Filón Alexandrijský, vypořádává s pasážemi v Bibli, ve kterých je Bůh antropomorfizován. Práce se snaží představit dva světy uvnitř Filónovy osoby, svět filosofie a Bible, přičemž oba jsou zásadní pro jeho myšlení, ačkoli přináší odlišné podání Boha. Cílem práce je zjistit, jakým způsobem Filón, zastávaje filosofický koncept neměnného Boha, řeší ty pasáže v Bibli, při kterých se zdá, že je Boží charakter proměnlivý. Práce přichází s hypotézou, že vyobrazení Boha je svázáno s literárním žánrem, který Filón použije, když o Bohu mluví. V úvahu jsou vzaty Filónovy tři práce – Quod *Deus sit Immutabilis*, *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin et Exodum* a *De Vita Mosis,* zatímco je rozlišováno mezi jejich odlišnými žánry.

ABSTRACT

God's Unity and God's Relational Character in the Thinking and Biblical Interpretation of Philo Judaeus

Key words: Hellenistic Judaism, Philo of Alexandria, Jewish philosophy, anthropomorphism, Septuagint

The thesis analyzes how the Hellenistic Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria deals with passages in the Bible where God experiences any kind of human emotions. It aims to present the two sides of Philo's persona – the Greek and the Jewish. These two worlds (the world of philosophy and that of the Bible) are constituent for Philo's thinking, however, they also provide a distinct rendering of God. The aim is to ascertain how Philo deals with passages in the Bible where God seems to have a changeable character while holding a strong philosophical concept of him. The thesis adheres to the hypothesis that his depiction of God is bound to the literary genre he applies when rendering God. It takes into consideration Philo's *Quod Deus sit Immutabilis*, *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesin et Exodum* and *De Vita Mosis* while differentiating between their distinct literary genres.