Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria

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Published by Brown Judaic Studies

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Two Treatises of Philo of Alexandria: A Commentary on De Gigantibus and Quod Deus sit Immutabilis.


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II. PHILO'S STYLE AND DICTION
A. Philo's Knowledge of Rhetorical Theory

Philo's acquaintance with rhetorical theory might be inferred both from his interest in Hellenic education, dominated in his time by grammar and rhetoric, and from his frequent use of poetic and rhetorical devices in his own writing. But Philo has left far more specific evidence of his knowledge of the details of rhetorical theory in his use of terms and in his many reflections on language and persuasion in the texts of his essays. His own comments leave the reader in little doubt of his awareness not only of the basics of rhetorical theory as a branch of preliminary education, but also of the philosophical debates on the value and perils of rhetoric that began in the speeches and dialogues of Plato and Isocrates and were still very much alive in the time of Quintilian. In various passages scattered throughout the essays, Philo gives a definition of rhetoric that is reminiscent of that assigned to Theodorus in Quintilian II.15.16, enumerates the divisions of the subject (Invention, Arrangement, Diction, Judgment, Memory, and Delivery), refers to rhetorical genres (Judicial, Deliberative, and Epideictic, including encomiastic speeches in praise of the Lord, like the later prose hymns of Aristeides and Julian), and uses the terms for the parts of an oration (prooimia, diegēseis, pisteis, epilogoi). There can be little question that Philo was conversant with schoolroom rhetoric and that he used the terminology freely in later life. His interest in the interpretation of texts and his habit of labelling his own divisions and proofs led him to use rhetorical terms where even the best trained Greek orators would have avoided them.

In the area of rhetorical invention, Philo was aware of the reliance of Aristotelian rhetoric on the acceptability of probable rather than necessary premises in arguments aimed at a popular audience. The possibility of making formally valid arguments from probable premises is at the very heart of Aristotle's method in rhetoric and dialectic, and Philo is very uncomfortable with this aspect of conventional rhetorical theory. To Philo, probability arguments are associated with the hired lawyer whose aim is to trick the jury into accepting a bad case
or with the more sinister worldly wise sophists who corrupt the morals of their hearers (Deut. 38, in contrast to the Egyptian sophists, Moses has no talent for τὴν τῶν εὐλόγων καὶ πλανῶν εἰκαστικὴν δημοσίαν), or even the clever-talking serpent in the Garden of Eden (Agr. 96). This, along with his frequent use of the contrast between appearance (to dokein) and reality (to einai), places him firmly in the camp of the philosophers who were hostile to conventional rhetoric rather than those who sought to tame and analyze it. Philo's figures of the "Egyptian" sophists and Jethro are strongly reminiscent of Plato's attacks on probability and sophistical rhetoric in the Gorgias and Phaedrus. His attitude toward pathos, which he knows as an integral part of the conventional rhetoric, is similar, and is in keeping with the Platonic and Stoic attitudes on rhetoric rather than the tradition represented by Aristotle, Isocrates and Cicero. The only justification for pathos appeals would be in bringing the ignorant and undeveloped souls closer to a perception of the truth that would free them from the domination of the passions.  

Whatever his feelings about conventional rhetoric, Philo makes use of the language of rhetorical invention. He knows the terms enthymema, paradeigma, parabolē, and tekmerion, all of them Aristotelian or conventional in origin. In his near parody of a philosophical debate on the theme "Will the wise man indulge in drunkenness?", he refers to the distinction between "artistic" and "inartistic" proofs, a specific piece of Aristotelian lore which he probably includes in order to characterize his imaginary speaker. The same debate reveals that Philo or his source was thoroughly trained in the use of formal topics for philosophical and rhetorical argumentation. Again the pedantic introduction of the actual rules and definitions of the arguments employed seems to be intended as a reflection of the sophistical character of the imaginary speaker. The topics employed are definition (Plant. 154–155), synonymy (Plant. 150), etymology (Plant. 165, cf. Aristotle Topica 112a32ff. and Cicero Topica 35), and the joint applicability of contraries within a genus (Plant. 172, cf. Aristotle Topica 111a14ff. and 113a33ff.). Formal topics belong to the inner mysteries of rhetorical invention and are not adequately covered in most rhetorical textbooks. They are especially at home in Aristotelian rhetoric and dialectic, in the debating techniques of the New Academy, and in Ciceronian rhetoric (Topica and
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De oratore II.39,162). Cicero comments that the Stoics were very deficient in this regard, and I would suspect that Philo, like Cicero, came into contact with this method through the Academic and Peripatetic practice of debating theses through topical reasoning rather than through Stoic logic or rhetoric. Philo uses a good many of these formal topics in Deus, though he is much more subtle than in the set-piece debate in De plantatione. Among the more obvious instances of formal topics are a fortiori (Deus 105-106; 148), definition (Deus 83, 86, 179-180), cause and effect (Deus 77-79, cf. topics 17 and 24 in Aristotle Rhetoric II.23), genus-species (Deus 95, 117-119, cf. Aristotle Topica 111a14ff.), contraries (Deus 124, cf. Aristotle Topica 112a26ff.), results (Deus 75-76, cf. topic 13 in Rhetoric II.23), incredible but true (Deus 91, cf. Aristotle Rhetoric II.23, topic 21), and etymology (Deus 103, cf. Aristotle Topica 112a32ff., though here the influence of Stoic grammar may be at work). Most of these were known to Cicero as well as Aristotle and may have been current in Philo's time, but this is advanced rhetoric or dialectic, not the schoolroom variety. The proper use of these topics is not taught in basic schoolroom rhetoric and the texts that seek to explain it are very difficult; the best way to learn this system is to use it in the defense or destruction of theses with a teacher practiced in this art. It seems to me very likely that such debating formed a part of Philo's education.

Philo's Knowledge of the Terminology of Diction

Philo uses the actual terminology of Greek grammar and rhetoric more frequently than is customary in literary prose. This is not, as in the case of invention, out of any tendency to label his own rhetorical devices, but results from the necessity of interpreting particular passages in his text. This is Philo the commentator rather than Philo the debater of theses. Most of the stylistic terms that Philo uses throughout his essays are found in the immediate context of an interpretation of a Biblical text. Philo's technique here is closer to that of the Stoic allegorist or the grammarian glossing the text of a classical author for his class than to the style of the sophists and philosophers, like Plutarch, Maximus of Tyre, or Dion
Chrysostomus, who sometimes use Homer or exotic mythologies as texts from which to preach a lesson.

Philo's acquaintance with the technical language of grammar and style seems to have been very wide indeed. He knows phonology (the seven vowels, semi-vowels, etc.), the parts of speech, the Stoic classification of questions and statements, the terms for grammatical errors, and a large repertoire of figures of speech. He has a large vocabulary, as might be expected, for allegory and types of comparison: *ainigma, allēgoria, analogia, eikōn, metaphorā, symbolon, tropos,* and *hyponeia.* For most of these terms he has verbal, adjectival, and adverbial forms as well. These terms, however, must already have been established in the allegorical tradition well before Philo; most of them are found in Heraclitus, in allegorical contexts in Plutarch, and in the scholia to authors like Homer, Hesiod, and Aratus, as well as in late, Neo-Platonic allegorists, like Iamblichus, Porphyry, Sallustius, and Proclus. This is a fairly consistent tradition, and there would be little need for an author like Philo to go directly to the rhetoricians who also use these terms. Allegory, symbol, and such like terms already had quite distinct applications for the allegorist and the rhetorician.

Another class of terms that occur in the analysis of particular passages seem to belong to grammar and the Greek manuals of style, material common to rhetoric, poetics, and literary criticism: *anastrophe, glaphyrotes, episphegrizō, epiphonē, makrologia, ogkos, homonymia, paroimia, parabolē, periplokē, ptōsis,* and *sunuphainō.* Almost all of these terms can be found in the Greek literature on style, from Book III of Aristotle's *Rhetorica,* through Demetrius *On Style* and Dionysius *On Verbal Composition.* Terms not attested in Greek authors before Philo often have their Latin equivalents already in the Fourth Book of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and also occur in late Greek rhetoricians like Hermogenes. Taken as a whole, the grammatical and stylistic lore employed by Philo belongs to the specialized Hellenistic tradition on those subjects rather than to the philosophical and literary rhetorics, like Aristotle's or Cicero's, which try to place rhetorical techniques and stylistic devices in the context of a general theory of persuasion. Some of the terms listed above are distinctively grammatical, like *homonymia* and *ptōsis,* while others are found in the Hellenistic doctrine of the virtues of style, like
It is unlikely that Philo followed only one grammar or manual of style; his acquaintance with the tradition was rich enough that he could be somewhat eclectic in his use of it.

The Greek rhetorician treated figures of speech and thought as intentional devices of the author aimed at producing a particular effect in the souls of the audience. Appropriateness of style to subject matter or to the level of style sought by the author was the standard against which Demetrius or Dionysius judged the use of stylistic devices in the authors studied. This is not generally Philo's aim in using rhetorical terms; for Philo the important thing is to find a grammatical or rhetorical justification for his interpretation of a specific text. A consideration of some of the rhetorical and grammatical terms used in Deus is offered in illustration:

**Deus 1 anaphora:** Anaphora occurs as the name of a rhetorical figure in Demetrius On Style 141 and Longinus On the Sublime 20.1 (cf. also repetitio in Ad Herennium 4.13.19). To the rhetorician, this term means repetition of a word or phrase for emphasis or stylistic effect. In Philo, the word seems not to mean repetition at all, but, as Colson translates, "reference back." At any rate, there is no instance of rhetorical anaphora in the Septuagint text cited; met' ekeino is not repeated for emphasis at the beginning of adjacent clauses. Anaphora does occur as a grammatical term in Dionysius Thrax (637b16) in a sense parallel to this use in Philo.

**Deus 20 sunuphainō:** This word belongs to a family of terms that refer to interweaving of words, sounds, or ideas (Rhetorica ad Alexandrum 33.8; Dionysius of Halicarnassus On Verbal Composition 18, 23; enuphainō in Demetrius On Style 166). Frequent in Philo, who knows sunuphainō also as a music term, as a word for making connections between ideas or interpretations in the course of his exegesis. Not precisely equivalent to the rhetorical usage.10

**Deus 71 tropikos and kuriologoumenon:** For the history of these terms, see the note ad loc. The kind of distinction made here is already expressed (in different language) in Isocrates, Aristotle and the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum (haplous and metaphorēn 23.1434b34). There is no doubt about the
rhetorical and grammatical background of these terms, but, again, Philo's use of them may not be a direct application of his rhetorical training. The distinction between figurative and proper discourse may already have become a commonplace in allegorical exegesis. Plutarch has κυρίος . . . λέγουσιν in his interpretation of the Egyptian habit of associating the dog with Hermes in De Iside 11.355b and says that Plato in his Laws speaks οὐ δὲ αἰνίγμων ουδὲ συμβολίκῶς, ἀλλὰ κυρίοις ὄνομαίν ς (De Iside 47. 370f.). Similar contrasts are to be found in other Greek allegorizing texts.

Deus 72 prophora: See note ad loc. for the details. Prophora is more a grammatical term than a rhetorical one. Here it is used to introduce a point about the precise word order of the text which is intended to support Philo's interpretation of the passage.

Deus 72 anastrophē: In Quintilian 8.6.65 (cf. Rhetorica ad Herennium 4.32.44 perversion) and Hermogenes Peri ideon I.12 this is the name of a figure of speech in which the normal word order is deliberately reversed for stylistic effect. In Philo, a reversal of the order of clauses is meant, and that is important in this instance because of the implication of the text for the consistency of Moses' description of God's relationship with man. Philo's interpretation removes the suggestion that God is capable of repenting of actions, a suggestion that a more literally-minded reader might pick up from reading the narrative of the Creation and the Flood. There is no rhetorical point to be made in Philo's analysis: again he has used a familiar rhetorical term in a non-rhetorical application that suits his needs as a commentator.

Deus 141 ἁπλότης: Philo's use of this term is perfectly regular and fits both the rhetorical (Aristotle Rhetoric II.23, 1364b34) and the grammatical traditions (Dionysius Thrax 12.634b and 636b3). The analysis of inflexions for their argumentative implications was a feature of Aristotelian dialectic (Topica 106b29) and it would seem natural that one educated in debating theses would look for significance in the gender or case of a word. Argument from grammatical cases, however, may already have been established in the allegorical method before Philo.
Cicero uses it in his explanation of the name of Jove in *De natura deorum* II.25.64.

*Deus* 146 dia brakheias phōnēs: This is perhaps a genuinely rhetorical observation as well as an ethical one. Philo makes a similar comment about Moses' brevity in Op. 130, and Plutarch has an extensive discussion of loftiness of thought with brevity of expression in his *Phoion* 5.2-4, cf. also Demetrius *On Style* 103.

The main inspiration in Philo's use of terms shared by grammarians and rhetoricians seems to have been grammatical. Philo rarely uses these terms to introduce a point about Moses' style. This may be attributed to Philo's needs as a commentator building a case for his interpretation of the text rather than to any lack of interest in style on Philo's part. Philo's appreciation of style is displayed in his own use of figures and in his own diction rather than in his analysis of texts. As grammatical analysis is really part of Philo's invention or proofs, it should be noted that what he is doing is closely parallel to the analysis of premises and arguments in Greek dialectic as well as to the application of rhetorical techniques in the Greek allegorical tradition. Verbal objections, arguments from etymology, from names, and from inflexions, and analysis of the forms of statements are all used in constructing dialectical proofs in Aristotelian and Stoic logic. In the latter school, grammatical learning was a sine qua non for both dialectic and allegorical interpretation. It should not be surprising that Philo uses much grammatical terminology in the Genesis commentary and that, in doing so, his aim is more philosophical than literary.

NOTES


2The divisions of rhetoric: Som. I.205. The parts of the oration: Plant. 128; Mos. II.51. Epideictic speeches in praise of the Lord: Plant. 130-131.

3For probability as an issue, see Plato *Gorgias* 454D-455A, *Phaedrus* 272D-274A; Isocrates 13.1-3; 15.184, 271-274;
Aristotle *Rhetoric* I.1-3; II.24; Cicero *De oratore* I.30; II.107-109; Quintilian II.14-21.

4 Pathos vs. logos: *L.A.* III.116, 155; *Agr.* 78; *Cher.* 105.


6 For the various types of topics employed by Philo, see section 'E' below. The formal topics I refer to here correspond to those characterized as "dialectical" by Prof. Conley.


8 See below, section 'D', for a fuller discussion of allegorical terms.


10 Sunuphainō occurs also as a music term in *Post.* 104. It should be noted that by this time sunuphainō may have been a very dead metaphor and that in logical and grammatical contexts it may do no more than refer to a grammatical conjunction or a logical connection.
The richness of Philo's vocabulary has frequently been noticed both in this commentary and in the older literature on Philo. Philo not only draws upon a rich and eclectic fund of philosophical terms from the Academic, Peripatetic, and Stoic traditions, but also rejoices in a fullness of expression that is one of the chief ornaments of his style. Like Plutarch and "Longinus," Philo is very fond of verbal antithesis, synonymy, and other types of "doubled" expression; he rarely uses one word where two will serve. Lists and catalogues of virtues, vices, duties, attributes, and philosophical classifications abound in Philo's essays, and the words in the lists are often arranged in sets of three or five with the last member in the list suitably amplified for a crescendo effect. Such are the "triads" which have been identified in a number of the notes in the commentary. Philo is also very free with metaphors, similes, and extended comparisons, and develops these with great fullness of style. Where Teles or Epictetus would be content with a few nautical or weather terms in a storm at sea comparison, Philo regularly continues the figure, often with every idea doubled through synonymy and with a richer selection of nautical words, some of them paralleled only in the poets. Each of these factors contributes to the richness of Philo's vocabulary, and the frequency both of Platonic and poetic echoes, and of words first attested in Philo is reflected on almost every page of the commentary.

On the whole, Philo's grammar and word choice are consistent with a mildly atticizing type of literary Greek. He does not restrict himself to a narrowly classical word list culled from the prose writers of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E., but, on the other hand, he generally avoids vulgar and koïnê forms and expressions. Considering his subject matter, he is remarkably free of the influence of the Greek of the Septuagint, which he sometimes corrects in quotations from memory and paraphrases. One might say that his Greek is influenced both by the authority of the classical prose writers and by the educated usage of Hellenistic and contemporary authors who were
not strict attics. Aside from Stoic terminology, which even a strict atticist might well use despite its late origin, Philo uses many words which are found first in such sources as Polybius, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, or Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Some of his rhetorical and grammatical terms occur first in Dionysius or Philodemus and are the likely products of the elaboration of the technical language of these subjects that took place in the Hellenistic period. Since Stoic philosophy, grammar, and allegorical technique are important influences on Philo's approach to his subject matter, it seems only natural that Philo's diction as a whole should have been influenced by educated Hellenistic prose style.

Aristotle and the Stoics seem to contribute mainly technical terms to Philo's language, though there are a few favorite Stoic metaphors and similes, like wax impressions for the mechanics of Stoic phantasia (Deus 43). The Platonic tradition, on the other hand, supplies Philo both with technical terms and with a rich source of poetic language and imagery. There is a distinctly Platonic coloring to much of Philo's diction, and this derives both from the use of many individual words and phrases that are familiar from Plato's dialogues and from the extensive use of Platonic similes and imagery. The chariot, the light imagery, and the struggles of the soul in its journey from the Phaedrus myth are favorite sources of imagery for Philo, just as they are for Plutarch, Dion, and Maximus Tyrius, and Philo's allusions to Plato's poetic phrases and images from Socrates' "dithyrambic" second speech in that dialogue would have been readily recognized and appreciated by his audience. In Philo, poetic passages, usually from Plato's myths, are offered as similes or extended comparisons and are shorn of their context in a mythical utterance and the warnings that usually accompany such speeches in Plato's dialogues. The distinction between myth and dialectic, so important for Plato and maintained by Plutarch and some later Platonists, seems not to be very important for Philo. In Philo, the poetic imagery from Plato's myths is translated into figurative language with no fictional context. Philo also transforms some of his Platonic material. In Gig. 31, for instance, he develops the Platonic image of the world seen from above by the liberated soul (Phaedo 109B-110E) into the elaborate figure of the universe as a theater.
A great many words have been designated in the commentary as "first attested in Philo." Some of these are the result of stylistic variatio and Philo's need to fill out a doubled expression, as in Deus 59, where we find the Hellenistic term anthrōpomorphon balanced by the apparently original coinage anthropopathes. Other pairs also include a previously attested word and a new word, such as aklīnes and arrepes (Deus 23) and philosōmatos and philopathēs (Deus 111). Fullness of expression must often have been a factor in Philo's choice of words which are either unattested in surviving predecessors or actually coined by Philo himself. There is a much larger category of words, however, which are first attested in Philo, but occur also in Plutarch. Siegfried lists some of these and others have been noted in the commentary. As Plutarch is neither too remote in date from Philo nor likely to have been influenced by his diction, it seems likely that both authors are drawing upon the diction of educated but non-archaizing Greek prose writers from the third century B.C.E. and after. This supposition receives occasional support from words like libas (Deus 155), which occurs in Strabo, philautia (Deus 16), which is one of the Greek words in Cicero's letters, and phruattomai applied to persons (Deus 168), which is in Diodorus Siculus. Philo seems to preserve for us something of the quality of educated and literary prose before the strong influence of the Atticist movement of the first century B.C.E.

NOTES

1Antithesis and synonymy: C. Siegfried, Philo von Alexandria, Jena, 1875, pp. 132-137.

2Triads: Gig. 27, 37; Deus 107, 114, 126, 149, 182. Classical examples may be found in Demosthenes 3.26 and Cicero Pro Archia 16. A similar style is often adopted by "Longinus," cf. On the Sublime 9.6; 10.3.

3Compare Teles in Stobaeus III.1.98 (p. 41.9-14) with Philo Gig. 13ff. and Deus 26, 60, 89, 98, 129, 177.

4For Philo and LXX, see the notes on Gig. 34, 61; Deus 9, 28, 54, 89, 137, 158, 165.

5For Hellenistic diction, see the notes on Gig. 31 and Deus 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 16, 17, 18, 59, 72, 95, 138, 141, 144, 154, 155.

6For individual words and phrases, see Gig. 33, 35, 39, 50; Deus 4, 22, 27, 28, 30, 67, 86, 156, 162. There is a list of Platonic words in Philo in Siegfried, op. cit., pp. 31-37.

7 *Gig.* 31, 61; *Deus* 2, 135.

8 Siegfried, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-45.

Commentary: *Deus* 23, 34, 56, 60, 72, 75, 76, 79, 83, 111, 115, 150.
C. Characteristics of Philo's Style in the De Gigantibus and Quod Deus

The ancient literary critics maintained that style and word choice should be appropriate to the genre and subject matter of the speaker. From this point of view, Philo's style poses some interesting problems. By Philo's time, the scope of rhetorical theory had expanded to include new genres of literature, but there is no evidence that allegorical or philosophical commentaries were ever regarded as a distinct literary genre by Greek rhetoricians. The surviving ancient commentaries on authors like Homer, Hesiod, and Aratus, and the fragments of Didymus' Demosthenes commentary are largely lacking in literary pretensions of their own. Comment on classical authors is found in more literary types of writing, especially the dialogue, the symposium, and the literary or philosophical letter, but, though Philo is plainly influenced by these genres and actually makes use of the dialogue and letter forms elsewhere, he has not chosen to imitate them closely in the form of his essays in the Genesis commentary. The literary effort that Philo puts into his commentaries can be paralleled in some of the more ambitious Neo-Platonic and Christian commentaries, but even in the fourth century, when such attempts were more common, there are no literary canons for the commentary. In his own time, Philo is unique.

If one were to compose a rhetoric for philosophical commentaries of a more literary type, certain parallels might be drawn from the comments on dialogue and epideictic writing in the literary critics. A conversational style, employing periods of moderate length and an unobtrusive prose rhythm, rich in question figures, apostrophe, exempla, and analogies would seem the appropriate style for up-grading the textbookish prose of a commentary and presenting the material in an appealing way. Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch approached the problem of translating textbook philosophy into literary prose by adopting the dialogue or letter forms, already recognized as literary genres, and in the case of Cicero, there is direct evidence that non-literary textbooks and hypomnemata have been re-written as speeches in the mouths of characters. The style is Cicero's
and usually involves a florid style for the exposition of doctrine and a grander style where the subject matter provides opportunities for praise or exhortation. On at least one occasion, Cicero actually presents a commentary in literary form; in *De legibus* II-III, he explicates his own model law code, based on the Twelve Tables. The full dialogue form allows him to recite and explain the laws himself, while Quintus and Atticus raise objections and ask the questions that maintain the flow of the argument. The letter form provides similar opportunities for Seneca in his *Moral Letters* and for authors like Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his works of literary criticism. Interlocutors in a dialogue and the recipient of a letter lend dramatic significance to many of the question figures, objections, and exhortations employed by the author and justify their presence in a philosophical or scientific work. Philo seems to have been influenced by the dialogue tradition both directly, from his reading of Plato's dialogues, and indirectly, from what modern scholars have called the diatribe tradition, which makes use of many of the rhetorical devices of the dialogue style. The dialogue style offers the most obvious and effective technique for translating the textbookish subject matter of a commentary into a recognized literary form and also allows for the discussion of problems and difficulties through the speeches of the interlocutors. Plato also serves as a model for the poetic treatment of philosophical themes, and later practitioners of the dialogue form were not deterred by the criticisms of Caecilius and Dionysius in this regard. Cicero, Plutarch, and Dion Chrysostomus all include highly poetic passages in their dialogues on the model of the very *Phaedrus* myth attacked by the critics who sought to set literary standards for the dialogue style. Philo, in his own non-dramatic essays, is also an imitator of this aspect of Plato's style.

The dialogue is, however, a dramatic form. Conversational diction, apostrophe, "Du-Stil," and illustrative comparisons from daily life all fit the dramatic situation of a fictitious conversation among friends. The same devices occur, for similar reasons, in the symposia of Plutarch and Athenaeus, and, to a lesser degree, in non-dramatic but conversational literary letters. Philo's writing is non-dramatic in form and there are some non-dramatic models for what he is doing. The diatribe is not a form specifically recognized by surviving Greek rhetoricians, but it may be broadly subsumed under the handling of
general themes in display oratory and mingles some of the techniques of dialogue with those of the school orations on theses, or general questions. The dramatic features of the dialogue are maintained to some degree in a non-dramatic form by the fiction that the speaker is addressing the individual member of the audience. Philo often adopts this style when he has already proven his point through allegorical exegesis and wants to bring home the moral to his audience. In many of his essays, there is a kind of rising and falling rhythm of exegetical passages in conversational but technical style and more rhetorical passages, either poetic flights of the Platonic type or diatribe passages. Diatribe style offered Philo a technique for conveying the impression of a philosophical dialogue without the need for interlocutors. This is one of the important differences between Philo and the real diatribists like Maximus of Tyre and Epictetus; Philo is writing long, continuous discourses that form a fairly complete system of Mosaic philosophy, much more ambitious than any treatment of subject matter in the diatribists. Philo's treatment is extended and exhaustive, and the diatribe elements are not isolated sermons on the conventional themes of popular philosophy, but extended lessons based on the exegesis of a continuous text. For Philo, the diatribe technique is a method of breaking out of the textbook style and making his work more literary and more philosophical. Without fiction, he succeeds in giving something like the impression of a philosophical dialogue. I think that the more important model for Philo in this respect is Plato rather than the contemporary diatribists whose methods permit Philo to seem more Platonic in his exegesis of Jewish law.

Under the heading of appropriateness to subject matter, one might mention the various rhetorical aims which Philo assigns to Moses himself in various places. Moses teaches the Law itself and suggests its various levels of significance, he praises the Lord and His creation, he advises his people and exhorts them to virtue. For teaching, the plain style of the textbook or the conversational passages in dialogue would be appropriate; for some deeper levels of significance, the teaching may take on the form of allegory. Praise is served by a grander style, with fullness of diction and thought and poetic language to lend dignity. For the praise of the gods and of divine works, the Greek rhetoricians actually recommend the use of allegorical language, which in both Moses and Philo, can
excite awe as well as conveying a message. Advice and exhortation seem to call for a more vehement and forceful style, like the style of Demosthenes' courtroom speeches or the diatribes of the Cynics. In general Philo uses the plain style in passages of exegesis, a richer more poetic style in the exposition of philosophical doctrine, and the vehemence of the diatribists in drawing the moral, especially when it involves warning or reproof. The diatribe style also serves him in the refutation of alternative and inferior interpretations of the text. Philo actually has many styles, not only in the whole corpus of his works, but within the individual essays. Long stretches of his essays are in the florid style, richly decorated with metaphors and similes, but devoid of question figures, apostrophe, and the short kola and kommata that are characteristic of the diatribe. These passages bear a stronger resemblance to Plutarch's essays or the long speeches in Cicero's dialogues than to Epictetus or Paul. In other places, Philo mixes the diatribe figures with the more Platonic flights of poetic fancy that are found in Plutarch and Dion, but not in Teles or Epictetus. There is more than one way of giving philosophical themes rhetorical treatment, and Philo's extended pursuit of philosophical subject matter in Jewish law is too grand a plan to be contained in the form or style of the diatribist.

Levels of Style and Major Figures

Though Philo's essays in the Genesis commentary sometimes have a recognizable proem and epilogue, the arrangement of material and its stylistic treatment rarely resemble the structure of a formal speech. In Philo, style and argument follow the order of the Biblical citations in the continuous commentary and each of the members of the series is developed individually. A Biblical text is explained allegorically in the plain style, its meaning is further expounded with the aid of philosophical doctrine and parallel Biblical texts, and, where appropriate, a moral lesson is driven home in a more vehement style, employing figures that have been associated with the diatribe form. In some sections of Gig. and Deus, the middle style predominates almost to the exclusion of diatribe elements, while in others the diatribe style is followed more consistently as if Philo were delivering a short sermon drawn from the lesson in his text. In general, the individual sections of his commentary follow the
same pattern, with similar figures repeated at similar points in the development of his argument. The level of style rises and falls in rhythm with the introduction of sections of text in the commentary.

In both the middle style passages and the diatribe passages, Philo's style is rich in metaphors and similes, a general characteristic of the florid style of writing which Cicero associates especially with Demetrius of Phalerum and the oratory of those trained in the schools of philosophy. The similes often grow into extended comparisons which also serve as illustrative comparisons (parabolai) and analogies to support the proof. While it is possible to find parallels to this technique in the Stoic similitudines—most of them serving the double function of ornamentation and analogy—discussed by Cicero in De natura deorum and De finibus and in the diatribes of Epictetus, none of the writers in this tradition uses these devices as frequently or with the same fullness of expression as Philo. In Deus 33-50, for instance, Philo takes a bit of philosophical doctrine which might occupy a single short paragraph in a textbook and exploits it for its full value as a rhetorical distribution in which each part is made to yield its lesson. The passage begins with praise of order in God's plan for the universe, developed further through a metaphor from war, the rewards for those who keep their place in the rank to which God has assigned them and the punishment meted out to deserters. The distribution of the four principles that apply to bodies follows, with each of the four illustrated with similes and extended comparisons. The operation of hexis is like the circuit of the diaulos, which is itself a human imitation of the divine order of the universe (35-36). Phusis, personified as the power of growth and recalling Lucretius' Venus and the Natura of Cicero De natura deorum II, is the subject of a highly poetic passage which describes the growth of plants according to the seasons (37-40). Two related similes compare the buds of the plants to eyes and the yearly cycle of plant life to waking and sleeping; a further comparison from human or animal life refers to the unseen channels through which plants take their nourishment as analogous to breasts. The whole treatment of plant life is done in a very fulsome rhetorical style, with elaborate periodic structure and doubling of expression through synonymy and many minor metaphors. This richness of expression in the description of natural phenomena recalls Vergil's Georgias and Lucretius' De
rerum natura as well as the style attributed to Poseidonius, but not well-illustrated, in Strabo and Cicero.8 Psukhē is also explained with the aid of extended comparisons; the mind is like a treasure house for perceptions (42) and phantasia leaves its print on the mind like the impression of a sealing ring in wax (43). The rational principle, last of the series and the best, has its similes as well: light and darkness imagery (46) and another comparison elaborated almost to a parable, the slave and master analogy applied first to the relationship between men and animals and then to men themselves, when they abuse their privileges as ungrateful freedmen of the cosmic community (47-48). Even the brief conclusion to this section, which returns to a consideration of the Genesis text, has a simile of its own—the reason as an incorruptible judge. In addition to the similes and extended comparisons that serve as important illustrations for Philo's proofs, there are many minor metaphors throughout the passage. As a whole, the style of this section, with its strongly figurative language and periodic structure falls into the middle style described by Cicero in the Orator as typical of the orators who emerge from the schools of philosophy.

Deus 33-50 is almost entirely in the middle style and diatribe figures like apostrophe, hypophora, rhetorical question, and prosopopoia are absent, but Philo often mixes the two styles, enlivening his exposition with occasional appeals to the audience. This applies to much of Gig. (1-5, 6-18, and 58-67) and to parts of Deus (20-32, 70-85, and 122-139). In these sections the exposition of doctrine in the middle style is occasionally enlivened with brief appeals to the audience through apostrophe, clusters of questions, and the use of first and second person "communicative" plurals. Here I believe some caution should be exercised in attributing figures to the diatribe or homiletic styles. When Philo introduces an objection through hypophora or prokatalepsis at the beginning of a passage of exegesis (Gig. 20, 58; Deus 21-22, 51, 122), uses "Wir-Stil" in a transitional passage (Gig. 28; Deus 20, 33), or puts a syllogistic argument in the form of a series of questions (Gig. 10-11), he is doing no more than following the common practice of writers of Greek argumentative prose from the author of the Hippocratic essay On Ancient Medicine and Aristotle in his esoteric works through later writers like Dionysius and Strabo.9

This applies equally to an argumentative device which Philo uses repeatedly in Deus. When he has already made his
interpretation of the text and expounded its philosophical meaning, he often drives home the moral in an *a fortiori* comparison expressed as a conditional sentence ending in a question—*if you can accept x, how can you fail to accept the greater truth in y?* He repeats this device at similar points in the development of the argument in *Deus* 8, 26, and 78. The most felicitous of these is *Deus* 26, which begins with an extended comparison between the soul in its resistance to wickedness and a sudden storm at sea that gives way to calm, bright weather. The comparison is developed through a long series of metaphors from weather lore arranged in balanced clauses with great fullness of expression. The continuous interweaving of moral terms with weather imagery, as in the chiastic arrangement of *πνεύμα τὸ κακίας and ἐπιστήμης καὶ σοφίας αἴρεις* in successive clauses, maintains our attention and carries us along with the flow of the argument as no simple analogy could. In the second half of the sentence, we are asked, just when we are most under the influence of Philo's eloquence, how we could doubt that the consistency we have observed in the human soul applies even more to a God whose very titles suggest that He is unchanging. Again there is great fullness of expression, especially in the catalogue of divine attributes, and the whole passage ends in a series of balanced clauses illustrating some of Philo's favorite rhythms (*γνώμης μετὰθαλάσσα... ἀγαθὴς ἐπουλευσάτο... αὐτῶν μετατίθεται*). Bultmann and Thyen allude briefly to this sort of argument in the diatribe style, and similar arguments are indeed found in Stoic fragments, in Dion, and in Epictetus, but the same type of argument is also found in writers outside this tradition, including Aristotle, Dionysius, the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mundo*, and Ptolemy.\(^\text{10}\) This device might reasonably be attributed as much to the characteristics of Greek argumentative prose in general as to the diatribe tradition.

There are, however, sections of *Gig.* and *Deus* which bear a stronger resemblance to the diatribe style. These include the digression on Moses' *pneuma* in *Gig.* 24-57 and parts of *Deus* 51-69, 86-121, and 140-183. In passages like these, Philo's style rises from the florid tones of the philosophical lecturer to the force and vehemence of the orator in the grand style. Metaphors and Philo's characteristic fullness of expression are still in evidence, and far more so than in the typical authors of the diatribe style, but in these passages, Philo is actively trying to involve his audience in the argument rather than
merely presenting them with weighty thoughts in beautiful and impressive language. Clusters of question figures grow more frequent, second person singular and first and second person plural forms occur continuously rather than in isolated transitional passages, types of apostrophe peculiar to the diatribe style appear (O ὕποκχη, Gig. 44 and Deus 114; O διάνοια, Deus 4), and the sentence structure is broken up, here and there, into shorter kolα and kommata. It is also in passages like these that Philo makes use of Greek chriae (Gig. 33, Deus 146), proverbs (kat' ikhνs bainεin, Gig. 39), and exempla (Deus 91), as well as the figures prosopopoia and personification, devices rare in the florid style. While most of these devices can be paralleled in Greek political oratory and, to a lesser extent, in philosophical writing that does not fall within the diatribe tradition, there is a fairly close correspondence between Philo's practice here and that of the diatribists as characterized by Wendland, Bultmann, and Thyen.11

In the digression on Moses' pneuma, for instance, Philo drops into "Du-Stil" immediately after introducing his text (25). He then moves rapidly through a series of similes from cutting, from transferring a flame from torch to torch (25), from drawing water (25), and from shredding (26). These are introduced in short kolα and are not elaborated as are the similes in Deus 33-51. The moral is drawn in characteristically diatribe fashion; in the sentence beginning nun de . . . , we get a kommatic catalogue of six attributes of Moses' pneuma with asyndeton, balanced by an equally rapid set of antitheses in short verbal clauses (27). The use of a rapid series of metaphors or similes to characterize Moses' pneuma is a particular feature of the use of metaphor in the diatribe style, and Bultmann mentions clauses with nun de . . . as typical of the way in which diatribists draw conclusions from analogies.12

The argument in 28-31 begins with a rhetorical question in the first person plural (28) and continues through a brief comparison of human affairs with a scale (28) and a catalogue of worldly concerns that distract men from continuously receiving the divine spirit as Moses did (29). The argument is rounded off neatly in a short metaphorical epigram: πρὶν σοφίαν ἀνθρώπων, κατεμάραθαν.13 In 30-31, Philo grows more expansive, and the contrast between free souls and those still burdened with the flesh is developed in longer periods and with the rich imagery Philo uses elsewhere in the middle style passages. At
section 32, a new text is introduced, followed by a rhetorical question and Philo's usual exegesis is enlivened with a Cynic chria (34). A moral lesson follows, very much in diatribe style, with first person plural hortatory subjunctives, short kola, and vulgar diction (skorakiateon 34, and the unlovely comparison of the appetites with rabid dogs, 35).

Sections 36-43 continue in much the same vein, developing particular points from the text of Leviticus 18.6, but at 43-44 Philo employs devices new to this digression, but perhaps quite old in the diatribe tradition. If this passage were preserved in some author like Stobaeus, we might well take it as a portion of a lost diatribe. The short sentences, the stock metaphors (lipotaktēsai and automolēsai, tōn hēdonēs philtron, and hōs sideritēs lithos . . .), the love of paradoxical antithesis (blaptein men gar hotan didōi), the personification of Pleasure, and the apostrophe of the soul combined with second person singular imperatives are all typical of this style and difficult to parallel elsewhere. The apostrophe of the soul, for instance, is found in Theognis, but is rare in later Greek or Roman writers; the closest parallels to Philo's use of apostrophe are in Seneca, Epictetus, M. Aurelius, and Tertullian. The type of personification used here is found in Plato and Xenophon, and may be at home in Greek didactic literature as far back as Hesiod, but in the First and Second Centuries of the Common Era, it is especially typical of Dion, Seneca, Epictetus, and M. Aurelius.

Diatribe figures and short kola continue in the remainder of the digression on Moses' pneuma (45-57), though they are increasingly rare and subordinated to key Biblical texts and the lessons to be derived from them. The typical short and commonplace metaphors continue with the master and slave terminology at 46 (also found in Teles and Epictetus), and the proverbial measuring stick, a standby of Greek wisdom literature from Theognis to Plutarch, at 49. The war within the soul (57) and the storm at sea imagery in the same passage are also found in the diatribists. While these images are commonplace enough in all types of Greek literature that they cannot serve as direct evidence of Philo's use of the diatribe as a model, it may be significant that Philo has not given these figures the full poetic treatment here. In this section he introduces an image briefly and moves quickly on to his next point and his next image in the rapid-fire style familiar to readers of
Epictetus. This does not hold true, however, for the mystery imagery in 53-54; this is the sort of fully developed comparison in periodic style that is especially characteristic of Philo and not so easy to find, nor as impressive to read when it is found, in authors like Teles and Epictetus. In Philo, too, we get not only the full battery of mystery terms and images, but also the tent from the Exodus text and the allusion to an audience whose ears are "purified," elements which lend a specifically Jewish coloring to the otherwise Platonic mystery imagery. The effect here is of the grandeur of the poet-philosopher rather than the speed and vehemence of the Cynic preacher.

The digression on Moses' pneuma ends with a transitional passage which is not in a very vehement style. It does pose a paradox for the audience—Moses' life spanned only one hundred and twenty years, a degree of longevity matched by many mortals who were no match for him in spirit. The paradox is stated as a question, as if it were one of Aristotle's dialectical problems and a fuller exposition, or initiation (muesisthai) is promised in the future. This is a nice pedagogical style, but not at all typical of the Stoic-Cynic sermons, which are complete in themselves rather than parts of a continuous discourse. For an epilogue more suitable to the diatribe, one might turn to Deus 172-183, where the mutability of human affairs is made the subject of a kind of peroration. Philo sets out to prove that to be concerned with pleasure and the things of this world is the pursuit of a false dream. He states his conclusion in the form of a rhetorical question in the second person singular at 172 and offers exemplary proofs from the vicissitudes of the nations and empires of the past in 173-175. Short, commonplace metaphors, brief rhythmical clausulae, and clusters of questions and answers abound. This passage could have been declaimed by a student of Polemon:

Μακεδονία πάλιν ἡμώνευ, ἄλλα διαίρεσεσα, κατὰ μονάδας ἡθένησεν, ἐως ἐξ τὸ πάντελες ἀπεστάθη. This fast-paced catalogue of fallen glory ends with a final question about the present in similarly Gorgianic style, employing Philo's favorite storm at sea imagery:

καὶ συνελίξατι φράσας παῦα ἡ οἰκουμένη; Ὀδι ἄνω καὶ κάτω κλονοῦμένη.
After this series of examples in question form, Philo presents his major premise, a maxim about the cyclical dance of the divine Logos that recalls similar maxims in Herodotus and Aristotle (176). The conclusion is then re-stated and amplified. Philo has presented us in this passage with a full-fledged rhetorical epicheireme, a syllogism with all of the parts present and each premise proven or illustrated in its turn, and with the conclusion at the beginning and repeated, with amplification, at the end. This is the rhetorician's syllogism, not the logician's, and even the examples brought in to prove the premises are put in a highly ornamented rhetorical form. At 177, Philo amplifies further on his theme of mutability, this time picking up the sea imagery from 175 and developing it more fully. In 179-180, he is back with the figure of the road, which has dominated the earlier part of this diatribe section (the whole of 140-183). The conclusion of the essay as a whole comes in 181-183, with Balaam and the personified Elenchos, the bad example that serves as a warning and the divine reason that should serve as a guide on the right road. While there is no summary of the contents of the essay as a whole, as required by rhetorical theory, this figure serves as a fitting conclusion to the spirit of Deus, which combines exhortation with warnings in the vehement style in most of the diatribe passages.

Like his teacher and the subject of his essays, Moses, Philo expounds doctrine, offers praise of the Lord and His creation, admonishes the wicked and the ignorant, and exhorts the audience to virtue and the pursuit of knowledge. He has many styles, plain, florid, solemn, poetic, and vehement, and he must have had many models, Plato and later Academics as well as the Stoic-Cynic diatribists, but, in Philo, it strikes me that the tribon of the philosopher is almost always embroidered with the fancy stitching of the poet, who needs a metaphor to denounce even the least of the vices.

NOTES

1Cicero on his own technique in translating from textbook to dialogue style: Ad Atticum 12.52; 13.19; De natura deorum II.7.20; De finibus I.3.7-10; II.1.1-3; De legibus II.14-18.
Rhetorical canons for the dialogue: Aristotle *Rhetoric* III.16; Demetrius *On Style* 19-21, 223-227, 296-298; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *De Demosthene* 2, 5-8; "Longinus" *On the Sublime* 32.5-8.

Poetic flights: Cicero *Somnium Scipionis*; Plutarch *De genio Socratis* 591A-529E; Amatorius 764D-765E; Dion Chrysostomus 36.39-61.


I prefer to regard the diatribe as a useful modern construct rather than as a recognized genre of classical rhetoric. The stylistic devices of authors like Teles, Maximus Tyrius, Epictetus, Musonius, and M. Aurelius are distinctive and tend not to occur in the same combinations in authors outside the tradition. When Philo uses the same devices in the same combinations, I think that it is useful to associate his style with theirs. The diatribe is, however, not the only way of dealing with philosophical themes rhetorically, nor is it even the only way of defending an ethical thesis in popular form. Writers like Cicero, Plutarch, Dion Chrysostomus, and Seneca have a much wider range and are capable of dealing with the same theme in various styles and genres. Some of their efforts resemble the diatribe style and some do not. The remarks of Synesius on Dion (Dion Chrysostomus, *Discourses*, V., ed. H. L. Crosby, London, 1951, pp. 364-387) are instructive in this respect; a late antique reader of great rhetorical sophistication finds Dion a very difficult author to classify according to the conventional types of the philosopher, the political orator, and the sophist. To solve the problem by classifying Dion as an author of diatribes did not occur to him.

For Moses' various rhetorical aims, see *L. A.* I.93-101; II.67, 98, 105; III.244-245; *Cig.* 13, 38; *Deus* 32-33, 125; *Plant.* 128 ff.

For solemnity and the associated stylistic devices, see Hermogenes *De ideis* I.6 (pp. 242 ff. Rabe); vehemence is discussed in I.8 (pp. 260 ff. Rabe).

Cicero *Orator* 26.91-27.96. The importance of the Academic and Peripatetic schools in relation to the rhetorical treatment of philosophical themes, both in the origin of thesis declarations and in the development of the florid style is often neglected in discussions of possible models for Philo. Demetrius of Phaleron was not only an orator bred in the Peripatetic school, but a pioneer in the collection of chriae and apophthegmata, later mainstays of the so-called diatribe style.

Zeno in Cicero *De natura deorum* II.8.22; Stoics generally in *De finibus* III.6.22; IV.27.75-76; Epictetus 4.5.16-18;
4.8.35-40. For Cicero's terminology in these passages, see McCall, Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison, Camb., Mass., 1964, pp. 121-129.

For Philo's nature imagery, cf. especially the breast analogy in Lucretius De rerum natura 5.807-815. Cicero De natura deorum II is replete with rhetorical amplification on natural themes as are some of the essays in Seneca Quaestiones naturales. Strabo mentions and partially illustrates the rhetorical fullness of Poseidoniou's treatment of natural phenomena in II.3.5 and III.2.9.

Rhetorical questions: On Ancient Medicine III.49.54; VII.1-16; Aristotle An. post. 89a28-30; Dionysius De Demosthene 13; Strabo I.2.5; I.2.6; I.3.6. Dionysius and Strabo use questions in syllogistic arguments and in refutations.

Wir-Stil: On Ancient Medicine XIII.26 ff.; Aristotle Topica 101b11; Strabo I.2.31; Pseudo-Aristotle De mundo 391b3-9; 394a7.

Stoic: Cicero De natura deorum II.8.22; Epictetus 1.9.7; 1.14.10; 2.18.29.

Elsewhere: Aristotle Physica 199b26-30; Dionysius De Demosthene 37; I. Cor. 14.7-9; De mundo 6.398a6-398b14; 399b9; 400b25 (all without the question figure—question figures are unusually rare in De mundo); Ptolemy Tetrabiblos I.2.5.

The theory of the a fortiori comparison is dealt with by Quintilian VIII.4.9-14, but all of his illustrations are from courtroom speeches; Quintilian regards this as a figure of amplification.


For nun de, see Bultmann, pp. 42 ff.

For this image, cf. Plutarch Praec. ger. resp. 804E. The strikingly similar epigrams in Plutarch and Philo may have their origin in the commonplaces of the Hellenistic funerary epigram, a number of examples, including one from the First Century B.C.E., are collected by R. Lattimore Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs, Urbana, Ill., 1962, pp. 195 ff.

Stock metaphors: M. Aurelius 11,9, 20 (desertion); Plato Ion 533D and Achilles Tatius I.17 (magnet); Plutarch Numa 16 (philtrum).

Thumô: Theognis 695-696; 1029-1036; Psukhô: M. Aurelius 2.6; 11.1; Vita: Seneca Ad Marciam 20.3; Phantasia: Epictetus 2.18.24.

Personification of Pleasure: Kakia: Xenophon Mem. II.1.21-34 (Prodicus); Ηδόνη: Dion Chrysostomus 16.1; Maximus Tyrius 14.1a ff.; Seneca De vita beata 11.2; 13.4-5 (Voluptas and Virtus). This sort of personification is very common in the diatribe tradition and in Philo (cf. Elenchus in Deus 181-183); there is a discussion in Bultmann, p. 34.

Master and Slave: Plutarch Mor. 46E, 692E; Epictetus 2.1.24-28; 3.24.66-77; 4.1.33 etc.
Measuring Stick: Theognis 805-810, 995-996; Pindar Pythian I.62; Demosthenes 18.296; Plutarch Praec. ger. reip. 807D; Epictetus 1.28.28.
Many of the terms and techniques of allegorical exegesis belong also to the rhetoricians and are sometimes attested earlier in rhetorical sources than in the surviving allegorists. Riddles, similes, analogies, metaphors, and name arguments are all found in the Greek literature on style from Book III of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* through Dionysius of Halicarnassus. *Rheto-rica ad Herennium*, Cicero, and Quintilian provide further evidence, especially for allegory as extended comparison and allegory as a technique of indirection in political speeches and poetry. Philo and the rhetoricians appear to be speaking a common language and, if other evidence were lacking, it would seem reasonable to suppose that Philo applied his rhetorical training directly to his work as commentator. While this may be true of some of the details in Philo's exegesis, I think there is some reason to doubt that Philo is making any large-scale adaptation of rhetoric to the ends of allegory on his own. The Greek allegorical tradition, despite some important distinctions between Platonic and Stoic allegorizers, is remarkably consistent in its terminology and methods. The same groups of allegorical terms and characteristic phrases turn up in the Scholia to Homer, Pindar, and Aratus, in Heraclitus and Cornutus, in Philo and in Plutarch's *De Iside*. Some of these words and phrases are translated into Latin in Cicero's *De natura deorum* and appear also in the Neo-Platonic allegorists like Porphyry and Sallustius. When Heraclitus, Cicero, and Philo make similar comments about the "invented fables of the poets," or make similar arguments from etymology or from cases (*ptōseis*), it seems doubtful that any of them is being original. Indeed, the *physica ratio* of the Stoics produces similar etymologies of Kronos (from Khronos), similar explanations of the battle of the Gods with the giants, and similar interpretations of Homeric epithets like "swift Night" in many of the later authors in this tradition. ¹

Granted that Philo gets his terms and methodology partly from a pre-existing tradition and partly from his own knowledge of rhetoric and grammar, there is the further question of
Philo's awareness of the rhetorical perspective on allegory.

The rhetorical accounts of allegory, riddle, symbol, and similar devices assume that all of these devices will be used deliberately by the author in order to communicate some message to his audience indirectly. Indeed, the rhetorical textbook definition of allegory, shared also by Heraclitus as a starting definition, is saying one thing in order to communicate another. There are many techniques for doing this, but the one most often mentioned by the theorists of style is extended metaphor or extended comparison. Both Quintilian and Heraclitus quote poems which employ an extended use of the ship of state image as examples of literary allegory. For the rhetorician, there are distinct stylistic criteria for using and identifying allegory, a point which is partially acknowledged in the allegorical tradition by the frequent use of figurative analysis to identify an allegory in Homer or Moses. There are also specific rhetorical ends for the use of riddles and allegories. The most primitive and obvious of these is represented by Hesiod's fable of the Hawk and is actually stated in Phaedrus' collection of Aesop's fables—to criticize the powerful indirectly. Since the fable, myth or allegory may be interpreted in various ways by the audience, it is up to the object of the criticism to admit that it applies to him by taking offense. This is the root of the type of political allegory discussed by Cicero and Quintilian, an extended innuendo expressed in figurative language, often with the names of important men concealed under mythical or historical personae. When the rhetoricians speak of allegory and aníigma, they refer above all to this type of allegory, which was employed in political orations, in comedy and satire, and even in letters written in politically dangerous times.

Similarly, an allegory may be used to convey in brief or popular form a philosophical message that would otherwise require a long dialectical proof or even a life-time's study. Dionysius refers to Plato's use of allegory and the Stoics, from Zeno on, seem to have been very fond of the extended comparison in their teaching. The secrets of a mystery religion may be recalled for the initiate and at the same time protected by the use of myths, symbols and allegories. The last of these motives derived from subject matter is the probable source of a peculiarly rhetorical motive for allegory—allegory arouses fear, reverence, and a sense of the mysterious in the audience. The
specific connection between rhetorical allegory and religion is made in two Greek rhetoricians, Demetrius and Hermogenes. For Demetrius, allegory inspires awe because of its indirection and ambiguity, because people are more frightened by hints and suggestions than by direct statements. The mysteries derive their impressiveness from this technique, which inspires in the audience something like fear of the dark, since "allegory resembles darkness and night." Hermogenes actually advises the use of consistent allegory in order to achieve the rhetorical ideal of solemnity with religious or philosophical subject matter (the Gods and their works, nature, the deeds of great men in which the Gods took a hand). The rhetorical doctrine on allegory implies an author with a message to be conveyed indirectly, a stylistic effect to be achieved through figurative language, and an audience that will recognize that something non-literal is being said. The orator who uses these techniques must signal clearly to his audience that he is shifting from the literal to the figurative or the message will not be conveyed and the audience will not be impressed.

The allegorists vary considerably in the extent to which they show an awareness of the rhetorical implications of the type of analysis they employ. Heraclitus, Cornutus, and the author of the Pseudo-Plutarchan De vita et poesi Homeri, having once decided that Homer and Greek mythology contain a systematic account of Greek philosophy, medicine, and natural history, look for allegorical interpretations throughout the text and not only in the obviously figurative passages. Heraclitus makes a clear distinction between literary allegory, for which he quotes the textbook definition and a textbook example from Archilochus, and the allegories in Homer. The poetic allegories are mainly for stylistic effect and are subject to more than one interpretation, whereas Homer is always clear and systematic in his allegories. Allegory is not a mere figure for Homer, but a consistent technique of philosophical instruction. For Demetrius, allegory must be ambiguous to work; for Heraclitus it is important that Homer be represented as not speaking in ambiguities or giving allegories that are subject to debate. As a consequence, the allegorist cannot rely mainly on stylistic criteria for identifying allegories. The chief criteria for the Greek allegorists are the resemblances between the poet's "system" of myth and legend and the philosophical system it is supposed to express and the existence of apparently
impious or inappropriate elements in the myths that demand allegorical interpretation. If Homer has a representation of the world on the Shield of Achilles, that must encode a philosophical world with similar subdivisions. If Homer represents the gods at war, that must represent the conflicts among the elements of which the world is made or the cosmic conflict between intelligence and stupidity; this is determined both by the symbolic significance of the gods involved and by the need to refute the accusation that the story is blasphemous. In all of this, the rhetorical perspective on allegory tends to get lost and it is often forgotten that Homer is an author communicating with an audience.

Plutarch and Philo both use the old Stoic system of physical and ethical allegory and both accept the idea of systematic allegory in Egyptian myth or Jewish law, but both are also aware of the problem of author and audience and take some care in their explanations of how the allegorical message got into the text. Plutarch's Egyptian priests do hint that their wisdom is enigmatic by setting up sphinxes before their temples as a sort of prooemium to the mysteries concealed in their myths and rituals (De Iside 354C). Isis-Athena declares in the inscription on her statue at Sais: "I am all that has been, and is, and shall be, and my robe no mortal has yet uncovered." The wisdom conveyed in the Egyptian lore is still a mystery even after it has been interpreted allegorically and, like the inner mysteries of Platonism itself, it is not perfectly grasped even by the initiates. Plutarch has the advantage of defending and explicating a body of myth and ritual rather than a single text; he is at liberty to reject some versions of the myths entirely and, like Philo, he discusses alternative interpretations more than the Allegorists of Homer do. Perhaps the difference between Plutarch and the Stoic allegorists is illustrated most clearly by Plutarch's handling of the objectionable stories of wanderings and dismemberments of the gods. The Stoics saved these stories through physical allegory; Plutarch advances a theory which explains both the stories and how they came to be told. Isis and Osiris were once demi-gods, subject to the same trials and tribulations, actions and passions as mortals. After the sufferings hinted at in the myths, they were transformed into demi-gods, but before her transformation, Isis herself mixed in with the Egyptian rituals reflections (eikonas) allegories (huponotas), and representations (mimēmata) of her
sufferings to serve as a lesson in piety and a consolation in trouble for mankind. She is herself the author of the mysteries, but clarity and system were less important to her purpose than the permanent invitation and training offered by enigmas. This may help to explain Plutarch’s marked preference for *ainigma* as opposed to *allegoria* in comparison to Heraclitus and Philo. In fact, Plutarch refers to “allegory” mainly to criticize those who place too much reliance on facile allegories derived from the *physica ratio*. Plutarch’s comparative method and his interest in mysteries and enigmas impel him to take the problem of defining a figurative or allegorical approach in his sources more seriously than the Homeric allegorists.

One might almost say that Philo’s problems were the exact opposite of Plutarch’s. Philo follows one text even more closely than the Homeric allegorists and, unlike the Homeric allegorists, he starts from the premise that there is nothing mythical in Jewish law. Where the Homeric allegorists distinguish between the frivolous myths of the poets after Homer and Homer himself and Plutarch distinguishes between fictional myths and folk or religious myths as authorities, Philo has rejected the idea of myth entirely and the greater flexibility of interpretation that goes along with it. While Philo is capable of going along for many pages of the type of unrhetorical allegorical exegesis performed by the Homeric allegorists, his awareness of the problem of the author’s intentions is evident not only in certain programatic passages and asides, but even in some of the formulae with which he introduces allegorical interpretations. As a lawgiver, Moses has chosen the middle way between a bald set of commandments and the myths and fictions of the Greek poets (Op. I.1-3). In the law there is nothing mythical or superstitious, nothing impious even in the surface meaning, as Philo tries to prove through many a painstaking grammatical argument. Trivial or problematic elements in the literal text are evidence for a deeper meaning, but there are no combats, wanderings or bindings of the gods as in Homer or Egyptian myth. In the law there is nothing to corrupt or lead men astray and Plato’s motives for banning the poets do not apply. The main source of difficulty comes from passages whose literal meaning seems to permit an inappropriate interpretation. Philo quarrels more with other interpreters than with the surface meaning of his text, a contrast with the Homeric allegorists.
In *De gigantibus* and *Quod Deus*, Philo makes a number of comments on Moses' intentions as an author. In *De gigantibus*, he twice makes the point that Moses does not use myths, once with a physical explanation of the supposedly mythical reference (*Gig. 7-8*) and again on Genesis vi.4, where he goes to some length to prove that the giants mentioned are not the giants of Greek mythology but the "earth-born" among men (58-61). In the latter passage there is an implicit comparison with Plato; both Plato and Moses banish the myths and representational art from their republics on the grounds that they are full of deception and lead men away from the truth. In this case an allegorical explanation of the problem passage is combined with the comparative method that Plutarch recommends in *De audiendis poetis*. It would be contradictory of Moses to have introduced a myth, given his views on idols and the whole art of representation.

One of Philo's most glaring *aporiai* in *Quod Deus* results from a similar conflict; on the one hand, Moses has clearly indicated that God is not like men, on the other hand, in Genesis, he seems to attribute mortal attributes to God in the course of his narrative. As in Plutarch, both his theology and his use of the comparative method told him that Moses could not have meant that God really had hands and feet, that God was really subject to mortal passions. For part of his solution to this difficulty, Philo appeals to Moses as teacher and law-giver, a Moses who speaks to all men, not only to the wise. Those who are more advanced in their rational and spiritual development will immediately see that God cannot literally be angry with his people, but Moses also wishes to persuade the dense and the ignorant to accept his laws. Moses sounds oddly like a Greek philosophical lawgiver or like Cicero in his *De legibus* and *De divinatione*, where superstition is refuted but permitted as a tool for the rulers who must legislate for the masses as well as for the wise. He manipulates his two audiences through two types of emotional appeals, love of God for the wise and fear of punishment from an "angry" deity for the ignorant (*Deus 60-68*). Thus, the apparently inappropriate in the Genesis story is attributed to a calculated use of figurative language on Moses' part, aimed at a particular segment of his audience; this is a fairly sophisticated theory of how the allegories got into the text and there is nothing quite like it in the Homeric allegories. Homer is sometimes spoken of as "teaching" or "initiating" the Greeks,
but Moses not only teaches and reveals but also commands, warns, advises and exhorts his hearers on various levels (L.A. I.96-
101).

Philo also indicates his concern with this problem in some of the formulae he uses to introduce allegorical inter-
pretations. Philo accepts the term *allegoria* from the Greeks and the associated divisions of physical and ethical allegory, though he uses these term far less often than Heraclitus. In contrast to the Greeks, and above all in contrast to Plutarch, Philo avoids *ainigma* terms in his Genesis commentary. These are totally absent from L.A. I-II, and when they do occur in L.A. III, it is in the context of an attack on the *ainigmatistai* and Esebon, who represent for Philo speculative reason without divine guidance. Riddles and probabilities are inherently untrustworthy and Moses is warning us in Numbers 21.27-30 to trust in God rather than in mortal guesswork (L.A. III.225-233). Elsewhere Philo does make use of the *ainigma* terms, sometimes with an expression of doubt about his own interpretation or when listing alternative interpretations, sometimes quite casually, as in some of the Homeric allegorists. In the Genesis commentary, these terms are used rarely and often with a negative connota-
tion, as in Gig. 58 and Deus 21, where *ainittomai* is used in reference to hypothetical objectors who pose alternate and false interpretations of the text. The casual use of *ainittomai* in the sense of "allude" is more common in works like *De somnii* and *De specialibus legibus*, but even in those texts the riddle technique is not extolled as it is in Plutarch and some later Platonists like Maximus Tyrius and Julian.

For Philo, the riddle terminology simply does not fit his conception of Moses as a divinely inspired lawgiver; Moses is no Sphinx or Sibyl--his mode of prophecy and teaching is quite different from that of the Egyptian priests and the Greek oracles. The mysteries of Moses are approached through the reason of those who are spiritually prepared and they are sug-
gested through his legislation, not through enigmatic utterances. In the law, the literal interpretation must also be valid; Moses may speak to his audience on more than one level, but none of the levels can be reduced to mere myth or riddle. Philo shows a similar care in other formulae. He introduces divine speeches from Genesis by saying that Moses speaks through the *persona* of God; the words of God in the text are not literally transcribed
from a divine apparition, but spoken by the prophet, who translates from the *logos endiathetos* to the *logos prophorikos*. Philo repeatedly shows that he is aware of the rhetorical implications of an allegorical interpretation of Moses' words and, unlike the Homeric allegorists, constantly keeps before us the presence of Moses as an author speaking to an audience.

NOTES

1 *Kronos* and *Khronos*: Heraclitus *Quaestiones Homericae* 41.6; Cicero *De natura deorum* II.25.64; Cornutus *De natura deorum* II.142; Plutarch *De Iside* 363D.

Gods and Giants: Heraclitus 52 ff.; Cicero II.28.70-71; Cornutus XX.189.

"Swift Night": Heraclitus 45.3-7; Plutarch *Moralia* 410D; 923B.

The continuity of the Homeric allegory tradition is well illustrated in F. Buffière, *Les Mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque*, Paris, 1956. There are occasional curious correspondences of detail between Philo and pagan allegory. One of the oddest is between Plutarch *De Iside* 364C and Philo *L.A.* II.67. In both cases allegorical use is made of the observation that the part of the eye that sees is black, a kind of physical paradox. In Plutarch it is the name of the land of Egypt, *Chemia*, that is allegorized, while in Philo it is the Ethiopian woman, whom Moses took to wife.

2 Heraclitus 5.2, with illustrations in 5.3-11. Cf. the definitions in Tryphon *On Tropes* 3 and Gregory of Corinth *On Tropes* 1. In Latin, and of earlier date, see *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.46 (*permutatio*) and Quintilian 8.6.44 ff.

3 *Phaedrus Liber Fabularum* III.1.33 ff.; Cicero *Ad Attium* 2.19.5; 2.20.3; 7.13; Quintilian 6.3.69; 8.6.44-58.

4 Dionysius of Halicarnassus *De Demoethene* 5-8; Cicero *De natura deorum* II.8.22.


6 Heraclitus 5.12-16.

7 For Heraclitus' methods, see especially his account of the battles of god with god and gods with giants in 52 ff. (cf. Buffière, pp. 100-105 and 290 ff.). Cicero comments on a number of aspects of allegorical method in *De natura deorum* Book II: physical interpretation of myths (II.24.63 ff.), impiety and inappropriateness as criteria for identifying allegories (II.28.70-71), and systems of resemblances between mythical divisions and the divisions of physics and ethics (II.23.60 ff.). For comments on both pagan and Jewish allegory, see C. Siegfried, *Philo von Alexandrien*, Jena, 1875, pp. 160 ff., S. G. Sowers, *The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews*, Zurich, 1965, pp. 11-27, and I. Christiansen, *Die Technik der allegorischen Auslegungswissenschaft bei Philon von Alexandrien* (Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Hermeneutik 7), Tübingen, 1969. The last is
interesting as an attempt to relate Philo's method to the
technique of division in Platonic dialectic.

8 Plutarch De Iside 361D-E. For Plutarch as an alle-
gorist, see A. B. Hersman, Studies in Greek Allegorical Inter-

9 Philo's rejection of myth: Op. 1-3, 157; Gig. 7-8,
58-61.

10 Plutarch's comparative method for ethical analysis of
poetry: De audiendis poetis, esp. 14E-17F and 19A-20E.

11 Cicero De legibus I.43 (friendship and fellowship of
all rational beings as the motive for just actions), but II.16
(usefulness of the fear of divine punishment in enforcing the
laws) and II.27-31 (various primitive features of Roman religion
defended as deterrents to crime or examples of virtue). De
divinatione II.42-43, 54, 70-71 (political control through types
of divination that don't actually work).

12 Philo Op. 72 (eisagei gar ton patera ton holon tauti
legonta), Deue 23 and 109 (ek prosopou tou theou). The first
is certainly a metaphor from drama; the second may be interpreted
36-43. The whole question of prophecy in Philo is a very com-
plex one; it seems to me that Philo is sometimes referring to
Moses as an author who introduces divine speeches in his own
words and sometimes attributing the words themselves miracu-
ously to direct divine interference with the vocal cords of the
prophet (as at Spec. IV.49 and Her. 263-266). The need to dis-
tinguish the various types of utterance in the Law would be, at
any rate, an additional motive for Philo's awareness of Moses as
an author.

APPENDIX

Allegorical Terms in the Greek Tradition and Philo

This tabulation of the allegorical terms and charac-
teristic phrases used by Heraclitus, Plutarch, and Philo is
intended to provide evidence for the consistency and continuity
of the tradition and also for the deviations from it in Plutarch
and Philo. Heraclitus represents the standard Stoic approach to
Homer, allegory, while Plutarch relies on Pythagorean and Pla-
tonic as well as Stoic methods and has a comparative approach to
mythology all his own. Philo uses much of the technical appar-
tatus of the Homeric allegorists, but follows up a single text
more consistently and has a special view of the relationship
between the literal and the allegorical meanings in that text.
Like Plutarch, Philo makes specific reference to Pythagorean
allegory (Op. 100, cf. L.A. I.15) and uses numerological as well
Two Treatises of Philo

as "physical" interpretations. Such numerological interpretations are common in Plutarch (De Iside 373F-374B, 376E-F, cf. De E 387F-391E) and are also found in the Pseudo-Plutarchan De Vita et poesi Homeri, but are rare or absent in Heraclitus, Cicero De natura deorum II, and Cornutus. Both Philo and Plutarch are more eclectic in their modes of interpretation and admit more controversy than the Homeric allegorists. L.A. I-II has been chosen over Gig. and Deus for the comparison, since in that work Philo is more consistently involved with allegorical interpretations and has fewer axes to grind than in the works covered by the commentary. Heraclitus, Plutarch's De Iside, and Philo L.A. I-II are of approximately equal length and are comparable in the degree to which they pursue allegorical method. Philo's allegorical terms in Gig. and Deus are listed at the end of the comparative table.

Philo's corpus is very extensive and his use of terms changed with time and with his aims in the various works. Where a term is absent from L.A. I-II, but occurs elsewhere in Philo, I have marked the entry with an asterisk. The three works are similar in scope and length, but Philo L.A. I-II is slightly longer than Heraclitus and Plutarch De Iside.

All three of our allegorists share a common terminology for physical and ethical allegory, for the analysis of the meaning of proper names and epithets in their sources, and an interest in playing on the Greek terminology of mystery religion (concealing and revealing) as a model for the process of allegorical interpretation and the intentions of the author to be interpreted. I think that, on the whole, the mechanics of allegorical interpretation are similar in all three authors, and that, so far as they employ grammatical, etymological, physical, and ethical interpretations, Philo and Plutarch are drawing upon the same tradition as Heraclitus. There are, however, some important divergences from this tradition in both Plutarch and Philo. Plutarch and Philo make much more extensive use of the term eikōn, the earthly, mythological or religious image of a form or an idea, than the Stoic allegorists do. In Heraclitus, this term is used only of the shield of Achilles, interpreted as an image the universe, a legitimate use of the term for a Stoic; in Philo and Plutarch, the term is used much more broadly, even of the religious stories themselves as containing images or representations of the Platonic forms. The terms mimēma,
### Terms for the essential activity of the author or interpreter of a text to be allegorized:

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aporrosia, paradeigma (in its Platonic sense), and huponoia are found in close connection with eikōn in Plutarch, and these are specifically Platonic terms avoided by Heraclitus. Plutarch and Philo seem to be drawing upon Platonic and Pythagorean methods of interpretation as well as the Stoic tradition. A further distinction may be drawn between Philo on the one hand and the Greek allegorists on the other. Philo, at least in the Genesis commentary, seems to be hostile to the riddle terminology favored by Plutarch and common throughout the Greek tradition, and also rejects mythology, both literary and religious.
Allegorical Terms and Phrases in Gig. and Deus

De gigantibus: ainittomai (58), onoma (16, 17, 62), onomazō (6), metonomazō (50, 54, 62, 63), homonymia (56), hermēneuō (62 bis, 66), èmeion (33), muthos (7, 60), mutheuō (58), muthoplasteîn (58), hierophantēs (54), mueisthai (57), mustēs (54), orgía (54), teletai (54), anaptuseō (36), apophainō (2, 33), dēloō (19, 23, 34), enargēs (39), katapetasma (53 and prokaluma), apokaluptō (32, 35, 39), diaporeō (1), protrepei (32), hupographei (23, 66).

Quod Deus: ainittomai (21), huponoēin (104), onoma (86, 103, 141), hermēneuō (5 bis, 137), lexis (141, 142), ptōsis (141), symbolon (96, 128), symbolikos (96), hierophantēs (156), hierophanteō (62), mueisthai (61), mustēria (61), amudros (43), dēloō (45, 51, 103, 104, 128), emphainēi (129), emphanēs (37), enargēs (1, 4, 10, 14, 87), diaporeō (104), epipherei (124), hupographei (79, 95).

Other Sources for Allegorical Terminology

Cicero De natura deorum II.: nomen (II.61, 62, 64, 66 ter, 67 bis, 71, 72 bis), nominare (61, 62, 66 bis, 67 bis, 68, 69 bis), appellare (60, 61, 62, 64 bis, 72), casus = ptōsis (II.25.64 quem conversis casibus appellamus a iuvando Iovem), similitudo (38, 66, 70), physicus (23, 63, 64, 70), fabula (64, 66, 70, 71), mysteria (62), id est = toutesti (64 bis).

Cornutus De natura deorum: ainigma (35), ainittomai (1, 7, 17 bis, 18, 27, 28, 30, 32), allēgoria (2), allēgorikos (2), huponoia (34), huponoēin (18, 24, 31, 34, 35), physikos (19 bis, 35), onoma (14, 16, etc. 11 times), onomazō (1 bis, 4, 5, etc., 34 times), onomasia (9, etc., 7 times), eponomazō (6, 20 bis, 22, 30, 34 bis), ezonomazō (2), prosonomazō (32), homonymia (14, 16), prosēgoria (1, 13, etc., 6 times), prosagoreuō (9, 11, etc., 21 times), etymologia (1), etymologē (1, 32), douetymologē (20), kat'antiphraisin (16, 35), symbolon (9, 14, 16 bis, 20, 30, 31, 33, 35), èmeion (16, 33), òmainō and episēmainō (6, 16 bis), muthos (2, 6, etc., 10 times), muthikos (17, 35), mutheuō (3, 6, etc., 14 times), muthologia (8), muthopoīia (17), aporrētos (30), epoptēs (9, 34), mystēria
(28 bis), orgia (30), emphainō (16, 17, etc., 13 times), emphasis (15, 34), dia to plus inf. (6, 12, 13, 14, etc., frequent), apo plus gen. (14, etc., very frequent in introducing an interpretation), hoionei (1, 6, 16, etc.), toutesti (14, 17, etc.), hôsperei (18, 20).

Pseudo-Plutarch De vita et poesi Homeri 91-128: ainigma (92), ainittomai (100, 102, 126, 201), allēgorikos (102), allēgoro (96), hyponoia (92), physikos (92, 108, 109, 144, 218), onoma (103, 123, 127 bis, 128, 175 bis, 183), onomasō (133, 182), prosagoreuō (95, 99, 104, 107, 124, 126, 128, 131 bis, 148), analogia (99), analogous (102), eikōn (150, 182), symbolon (212 bis), sēmainō (92, 93, 103, 114, 131, 200, 212), sēmeton (202), muthos (101), muthikos (92), muthōdēs (114), apokaluptō (214), aporrētos (187), epikruptō (213), kruptō (209), apophainō (123, 130, etc., 9 times), dēloō (94, 103, etc., 15 times), diaeaphei (130, 138), emphainō (92, 102, 109, 110, 116, 131, 166, 169 bis, 217), enargēs (91, 118, 123, 182, 207), epipherei (142, 217), toutesti (96, 97, 102, 104, etc., 12 times).

In addition to describing Homer as "teaching" the Greeks, an idea which is common to all of the Homeric allegorists and Philo's Moses, the author of this treatise describes Homer as bearing witness (marturei 138, 168, 172, 175), advising (parainei 129, 149, 165, 178, 198, 213), and exhorting (protrepei 168). This closely parallels Philo's terminology for Moses' intentions as an author of works requiring interpretation, but is not typical of the other Greek allegorists. It indicates a greater awareness of Homer as an author addressing himself to an audience than is usual in this sort of interpretation (contrast Heraclitus and the remains of Stoic allegory).

Elsewhere in Plutarch: De aud. poet. 19E (allēgoria and hyponoia); De E ainigma (389A), ainittesthai (389A), hyponoia (386A, 391C), physikos (387B), onoma (386B, 388F, 391A, 393C, 394D), onomasō (385F, 388F, 389A, 393C), eponomasō (388A), prosagoreuō (392A), prosagoreusis (392A bis), eikōn (391C, 393D), symbolon (386B, 391C), sēmainō (392A), sēmeion (387E), apomimoumenon (388D), homoiotēs (388A), amudros (391E), apophainō (391F), dēloō (386E), emphasis (393E), kruptō (388F), muthēuma (389A); ainigma, allēgoro, emphainō, prosēgoriai, symbolikos, etc., in fr. 157.

Iamblichus Protrepticus: ainittomai (21 three times), onoma and onomasō (21), hermēneia (21), eikōn (21), symbolon (20, 21, very frequent, in reference to the Pythagorean "sumbola"), muthos (17), dēloō (8, 10, 20), emphainō (20, 21).

Porphyry Cave of the Nymphs: ainigma (21, 32), ainittomai (1, 3, 5, 18, 23, 31, 36), allēgorēō (3, 4), onoma (28), eponomasō (6, 35), episēmainō (19), eikōn (6, 12, 21, 32, 34, 36), symbolon (4, 5 bis, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 ter, 14, 15, 16, 17 bis, 18, 19, 21, 27, 29, 31, 32 bis), symbolikos (4).

Sallustius On the Gods and the World: ainigma (6.4), ainittomai (4.1, 8), theologikos (4.1), physikos (4.1, 2), psykhikos (4.1), hylīkos (4.1), miktos (4.1), mimēsis (15.2), mimothisai (3.3 bis, 4.10, 7.3, 15.2), homoiotēs (3.1, 14.2, 15.2), anomoiotēs (3.1, 14.2), sēmainō (9.6), muthos (3.1 quater, 2 bis, 3 ter, 4 bis; 4.1 bis, 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11 bis), muthologēo (4.11), teletai (3.1, 12.6), dēloō (4.5), kruptō (3.3 bis), phāneron and phainomenon in opposition to the preceding (3.3), epikruptō (3.4), prokalumma (3.4).

J. Leopold
E. Philo's Use of Topoi

Given the intellectual and educational milieu in Philo's Alexandria, it is hardly surprising to find topoi in his works, particularly in works which are generally conceded to be "rhetorical," as is the case with, e.g., Quod Omnis Probus Liber. However, topoi are found also in the allegorical works, including Gig. and Deus. Moreover, the presence of several distinct kinds of topoi in those works and the various uses to which they are put suggest, among other things, that current notions of the nature of topoi may be in need of revision if we are ever to understand properly Philo's exegetical and argumentative procedures.1

Topoi

The conception of topos as nothing more than a "motif," a fixed and established cliché, not only makes it impossible to see how Philo used topoi; it also fails to do justice to the rich rhetorical tradition concerning topoi as storehouses or places for invention which had developed by his time.

In a superficial way, it is possible to distinguish two senses of "topos" (or locus) in Hellenistic sources: (a) topos/locus as sedes argumentorum or ἔρωμα πλοτως (or ἐπικεφαλήματος);2 and (b) topos/locus as a standard "topic" on which an orator might or should speak, given the appropriate opportunities or circumstances.3 The functions of the former sort might conveniently be characterized as "analytic"; those of the latter as "cumulative."4 A close examination of the sources reveals a more complex picture yet, as, on the one side, the traditional dialectical topoi seem to be the most purely analytic; and, on the other, the stock epithets, exempla, and themes for amplification are the most purely cumulative and commonplace. Between these extremes lie the so-called philosophical topoi (divided into theoretical and practical),5 and "stasiastic" topoi (which can control the arrangement of a discussion as well as supply special topics on which the orator may hold forth).6 Instead of a simple notion of topos, therefore, the tradition distinguishes

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among a variety of "topical" types and uses, none of which could fairly be called a cliché.

Topoi in Philo: A Conspectus

An awareness of that variety enables us to approach the topoi in *Gig.* and *Deus* in a more refined way than previous commentators have done. To that end, we may survey the topoi in *Gig.* and *Deus* under three broad headings, beginning with that which most closely corresponds to the notion of topos as a stereotyped formula:

I. "Commonplaces". Philo makes extensive use of commonplace comparisons and similes, exempla, and themes in *Gig.* and *Deus*. Of the comparisons and similes, we might note, for example, the sea "imagery" (cf., e.g., *Gig.* 51; *Deus* 26, 98, 129, 177) which, though in places evidently traceable to passages in Homer or Plato, is in fact to be found all over in Hellenistic literature. Light imagery (cf. *Deus* 3, 46, 78, 129, 135), the image of the road (*Deus* 61, 142, 159f.), and athletics (*Deus* 36), all by Philo's time commonplace, appear also. Secondly, proverbs (e.g., *Deus* 75: μηδενός ἀνθρώπων τὸν ἀπὸ γενέσεως ἄκορ τελευτῆς βίου ἀπαίτειν ἑξ ἐκατον ἄρημόντος; and cp. *Deus* 90), commonplace themes (e.g., *Gig.* 14 and 28 on the uncertainty of ἀνθρώπινα πράγματα; *Deus* 27 ff. on the fickleness of man), and chriai (*Gig.* 33 ff., of Diogenes; and *Deus* 146, of Socrates) are all used by Philo in the development of his argument. Thirdly, there are apparent "school cases" (e.g., *Deus* 101, on "deposits" and perhaps *ibid.* 90, the tale of the farmer unexpectedly finding a treasure) and topical groupings (*Gig.* 51; *Deus* 58-9, 173 ff.) and lists: e.g., *Deus* 149 ff., which is reminiscent of stock epideictic topoi, and *ibid.* 17 f., a list which, though perhaps "Stoic" in origin, is by Philo's time commonplace. These latter are more or less "philosophical" in origin usage and bring us to our second set of topoi.

II. Philosophical topoi. These are generally traceable to a philosopher or to a school but had become commonplace in Philo's time. The idea that philosophy is a preparation for death (cf. *Gig.* 14, *Deus* 159 f.) is common in Hellenistic writings, as are also the themes of the constancy of the sage (cf. *Deus* 22) and that of the burden of the flesh (*Gig.* 31, *Deus* 143). The theme of "the two ways" (*Deus* 49 f., 61, etc.),
the notion of virtue as a mean (Deus 164 ff.), of God needing nothing (Deus 56), and of the kinds of psyχai (Deus 35 ff.) may also be considered not as transmissions of doctrine but as instances of the use of philosophical commonplaces. In at least one case—Deus 30, the analogy between parent and offspring and the craftsman and his product—we see a commonplace performing a distinct argumentative role, as ἀθλον μὲν οὖν . . . ἐπιστήμων εἴλατι δει . . . supplies a major premise for Philo's argument that οὗτε γὰρ ἄθλον οὗτε μέλλον οὐδὲν ἐθῇ.

III. "Dialectical" topoi. These go back to the lists of topoi collected by Aristotle in his Topics and in those parts of the Rhetoric devoted to the so-called koinoi topoi. In Gig. and Deus there are three such dialectical topoi which are noteworthy:

(a) "from etymology." Cf. Deus 42 (αἰσθησίς from εἴσ-θεσίς) and ibid. 103 (βίαν from βιάν). Etymology was not only an instrument of allegorical exegesis but part and parcel of the standard way of dealing with written texts in rhetorical settings, and a long-recognized source of arguments in the rhetorical tradition. It is a common argumentative "move" in Philo.

(b) ek to mallon kai ἥττον. The argument "from the greater and lesser" was also isolated by rhetoricians as a line of argument, and appears frequently in the works of Philo and his contemporaries. Two good examples of the use of this topos are: Deus 26: ὁποὺ γοῦν ἀνθρώπων ψυχή . . . εἰ τ' ἐν-δοιάξεις, δτὶ ὁ ἄρχωτας καὶ μακάριος . . . ; ibid. 78: ἡ νομίζεις ἄκρατον μὲν τὴν ἥλιον φλάγα μὴ δύνασθαι δεικνύει . . . τάς δὲ ἀγαθῆς ἀρα δυνάμεις ἐκείνας, . . . ἄκρατος περινοήσαι δύνασθαι; Cf. also Deus 8 where an argument for approaching temples with purified minds is based upon the observation that one may not enter a temple without cleansing one's body.

(c) ex enantιόν. This topos, too, is fairly common in Philo and is of particular interest in Gig. and Deus since it serves not only as an exegetical tool but also as an armature for Philo's homily.

(1) Philo grounds his explanation of the two parts of Gen 6:1 (at Gig. 1-3, 4-5) on topos ex enantιόν, chiefly τῷ γὰρ ἐναντίῳ τὰ ἐναντία πέρυκε πως καλλιτα γνωρίζεσθαι at §3 fin.
and ἀμφίσονος γὰρ τὰ αὐτὰ πρὸς τῶν ἐναντίων, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὰ ἐναντία μάλιν γενέσθαι at the end of §5.19 In sec. 1-3, Philo manipulates the contrariety topos by juxtaposing different kinds of contrariety: "rare" vs. "abundant" is a contrariety of a different order form "just" vs. "unjust," for instance. But the differences in kinds of contrariety discussed by rhetoricians can be overlooked in view of the belief that the just are few (cp. Migr. 59 f., citing Deut. 7:7), which may itself have been a "philosophical" topos. As for sec. 4-5, the principle of contrariety there is coherent.

(2) Deus 122 ff. Probably inspired by his text of Gen. 6:11 (ἐθάνατον ἡ γῆ ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ), Philo introduces one of the topoi ex enantion: ἐπειδὴ ἐν ψυχῇ τὸ ἄθαντον εἴδος ἀνατείλη, τὸ ὑνητὸν εὐθύς ἔθερμαι, κτλ. This topos is the "backbone" of the curious exegesis of Lev. 13:14-15 which follows in this part of Deus.21

From the brief conspectus we have given, it is obvious that, although Philo uses a number of "formulaic motifs" and stereotyped schemes of rhetorical development, it is not the case (as many scholars have been inclined to assume) that he simply transmits those formulas. Philo's reliance on topos is understandable, and not only because he was a product of his times, when rhetoric was nothing if not pervasive. He was, after all, seeking both to communicate and support his interpretations and, moreover, to impress upon his audience both the historical and ethical importance of the passages from the Pentateuch which are the subjects of his treatises. As common "places," topos served both as familiar references which rang true without explicit argumentative support and as argumentative premises which no audience could find easy to deny. Thus, the interpretations Philo offers are rendered plausible by as much as they are grounded on what his audience already knows and accepts. Philo's intentions, in short, may have been in some sense philosophical. But—as with many philosophers of his era—his methods were thoroughly rhetorical.

NOTES

1 The most firmly established (and hence most frequently encountered) conception is that which understands by "topos" a formulaic or stereotyped motif which remains constant as it is transmitted from author to author. See, for example,
Philo's Use of Topoi


3Cicero, *de Orat.* III.27.106 ff.; Aphinonious, *Progymn.* 7 (pp. II.32 Sp; I.80 ff. Walz); Theon, *Progymn.* 7: Τόπος ἀθάνατος ὁλοκομομοῦσα ὑπομάχημας ἵπταν ὁμομάχημας ἢ ἀναραγμένος (p. II.106 Sp; I.222 Walz). Such *topoi* come close to the modern sense of "commonplace" and are spoken of disparagingly by Quintilian at, e.g., II.4.28 ff., where he says that they were trotted out so frequently that they became old pieces of furniture which no one wanted to set eyes on again. Such themes as "the fickleness of fortune" and the "degeneracy of the present age," stock *loci* concerning envy, poison, and the desire of criminal parents for innocent children, descriptions of shipwrecks or of the torture inflicted upon a woman by a tyrant apparently became too common. But the fact that some *loci* appear so often in what remains of the literature of Antiquity should not prompt us to imagine that their appearance in a speech would have affected the audience the way it did Quintilian. We have to bear in mind that the very "commonness" of Hellenistic commonplaces was precisely what made them rhetorically effective. An oral culture such as the one in which Philo flourished puts a premium on expected performances, looking for proficiency, not originality. Moreover, such λόγοι ἀξιοπιστίων do not really become hackneyed until they are separated from any actual argumentative situation.

4For this distinction, see W. J. Ong, *The Presence of the Word* (Yale, 1967), pp. 79 ff. The distinction is clear, however, in Quintillian *V.*10.20 and *X.*5.12 (cf. I.11.12).

5Such *topoi* are frequently treated in connection with theoretical and practical Θεοτοκία. See Cicero, *de Orat.* III.106 ff. (Crassus speaking); Theon *Progymn.* 12 (II.120 ff. Sp; I.242 ff. Walz), where Hermagoras and Theodorus of Gadara are also mentioned; *Anon. Seguer*, loc. cit. for Neokles, etc. That these *topoi* were recognized as part of rhetorical invention is clear from, e.g., Seneca, *Controv.* I.7.17; Cicero, *Fues.* I.4.7, II.3.9; Tacitus *Dial.* 30, etc. On philosophical "theses"
This class of topoi was derived from the status causae: for the conjectural issue, for instance, there are loci ex causa, ex persona, and ex facto (Cicero, de Inv. II.5.16-12.38 f., for instance). Quintilian gives a rather more exhaustive list at V.10.53 ff. As these loci became formalized, they provided (as the authors of the handbooks intended) "check lists" and could be used as armatures upon which a speaker could shape his case. Hence, stock topics emerged for the διήγησις/narratio (cf., e.g., Quintilian IV.2.52 ff.), for encomium (cf. Hermogenes Progymn. 7 [pp. II.11 f. Sp; 1.35 ff. Walz]; Menander Rhet. ἐπιτυχ. 1.631 Walz), etc. The stock topics associated with the status causae were systematized by Hermagoras, whose authority prevails among Hellenistic rhetoricians; but the tradition of such stock topics goes back much further in time (cf., e.g., Aristotle, Rhetorico 1.5 ff.; Anaximenes Rhet. ad Alex. 7.2, 1428a 17 ff.).

Cf., e.g., Seneca Controv. 7.14, 8.6; Suss. 3.2; (Pseud. Dion.) Technē 10.17; Lucian Tox. 19; Hermot. 28; Lucan 5.597 ff.; Seneca Ep. Mor. 108.37. M. P. O. Morford surveys a great deal of storm-at-sea material in his The Poet Lucan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967), chs. 3-4. For further citations, see commentary below.


Similar topoi find their way into the younger Seneca's Epistles (cf., e.g., 20.3-4; 45.6; 52.1-2; 95-57 f.; 120.19-22) and into Hellenistic consolation literature (e.g., Seneca Vit. Beat. 1.1-3; Ad Marc. 26.2, etc.). A good survey can be found in E. Stemplinger, Das Plagiat in der griechischen Literatur (Leipzig, 1912), pp. 228-41. On chria, see H. Fischel, "Studies in Cynicism and the Ancient Near East." Religions in Antiquity (ed. J. Neusner) (Leiden, 1970), esp. at pp. 372-85: 402 ff.; On Philo's handling of such a commonplace theme ("degeneracy of the present age"), see E. J. Barnes, "Petronius, Philo and Stoic Rhetoric," Latomus 32 (1973) pp. 787-98.

The deposit case was a stock example in the schools. Cf. Cic. Tusc. III.8; De fin. III.17,58; Plond 256 (1st C. A. D.; cf. F. Kenyon "Fragmentes d'exercice de rhétorique," Mélanges Well [Paris, 1898], pp. 243-8), etc. Stock epideictic topoi (see above, Note 6) clearly inform Philo's Life of Abraham, for instance. Preissnig "Die literarische Form der Patriarchen Biographien des Philon von Alexandrien," MGWJ 73 [1929], pp.
Philo's Use of Topoi

14-55) has shown that the structure of Abr., and that of the other Lives, is dictated by rhetorical conventions of the period.

11 The fortunes of, e.g., the commonplace lists of duties that evidently originated with the Stoics are traced by J. E. Crouch, The Origin and Intention of the Colossian 'Haustafeln', FRLANT 109 (Göttingen, 1972), pp. 57-101. See also P. Wendland, Die hellenistische-römische Kultur (Tübingen, 1912), p. 86.

12 These apparently originated, respectively, with the Stoics and with Plato, but soon achieved commonplace status. Cf. Reichel, op. cit. 99 ff. A. D. Nock is always valuable on this matter. See his Introduction to Sallustius' Concerning the Gods and the Universe (Cambridge, 1926) passim, for instance.

Some putative philosophical doctrines had, in fact, a wider provenance. For instance, the connection Philo makes between flesh and servitude, mind and freedom can be found in Greek drama and hence perhaps can be considered a literary commonplace. The disquisitions at LA iii.89, Cher. 71 ff., and Agr. 57 ff. evidently draw upon Sophocles fr. 940 (cf. TrGF IV, ed. S. Radt (Göttingen, 1977) (= fr. 854N): εί σώμα δουλόν, ἀλλ' ὁ νοὸς ἔλευθερος. To this we should compare Menander fr. 722.7 f. (Korte): εἰ δ' ἦ τούχη τὸ σῶμα κατεσσύλατόν, δὲ γε νοὸς ὑπάρχει τοῖς τρόποις ἔλευθερος. Both authors were, of course, read in the schools.

Some "philosophical" issues were stock issues for dispute in the schools of rhetoric, furthermore. See, e.g., Theon Prodigm. 12.1 (p. 244 Walz) on the question εί θεός προσκύνηται τοῦ κόσμου, and, later (p. 250 ff. Walz), a list of stock arguments concerning the existence and powers of the gods. At ProL in (Hermogenes') Peri staseos (VII. 43.21 ff. Walz), we find a school exercise which consists of a prosecution of Epicurus.

13 On God needing nothing, cp., e.g., LA iii.181: χρηστὸς γὰρ οὕδενός ἐστιν δ' θεόν. See Nock, op. cit. p. xv. It is a widespread notion in Hellenistic literature: cf., among others, Plutarch Comp. Arist. et Catonis 4; Stoic. Repugn. 11(1034B) 41(1952E); Lucian Cynthia 12; Diogenes Laertius VI.105, etc.

14 Cf. Topica I.13, 105a 22 ff., and passim in Bks. II-VII; Rhetoric II.xvii, xxiii. Interest in these in Philo's time was considerable: cf., e.g., Cicero, Topica I.1 ff., II.7 ff.; de Orat. II.163-73; Quintilian V.10.53 ff.; and the lists of Minoukianos (Epich. 3: pp. 419 ff. Sp; IX.604 ff. Walz); Neokles ap. Anon. Seguer. 448-50 Sp; and Apsines Rhet. 10, I pp. 376 ff. Sp, etc. I have tried to describe the nature and function of dialectical/rhetorical koinoi topoi in my "Logical Hylomorphism' and Aristotle's koinoi topoi," Central States Speech Journal 29 (1978), pp. 92-97.

15 Cf. Cicero, Topica ii.10; viii.35; Acad. i.32 (with Reid's note); Tusc. 3.8.11.

16 In Philo, see, e.g., Plant. 165: ἀπὸ διαφοροῦσας τῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐτυμολογίαν πιθανότητος ἡκτημένος (μέθον from μέθεως); Op. 127, etc.

17 See Cicero Topica iv.23; de Orat. II.40.172. In Theon, this topos can be used in συγκρίσεις (cf. Ip. 108.4 Sp): τὸ γὰρ κατηγορούμενον ὑπ' ἡμῶν ἡ μείζονι ἐκαστοῦ συγκρίνεσεν
Aristotle considers it one of the enthematic topoi: cf. Rhetoric II.xxiii, 1397b 12 ff. In Philo, see, e.g., Sobr. 3, Heres 88 ff., Somn. II.145.

18 In Philo, see, e.g., Agr. 118; Heres 242; Somn. II.134; and Mos I.247 (to which Aristotle, Rhet. I.vi, 1362b 30 ff. may be compared). It is of course in Aristotle's Topics and Rhetoric that we first find systematic discussions of this topos: see Topics II. 112b ff., Rhet. II.xxiii, 1397a7 ff. Cf. also Cicero, Topica xi.47; Quintilian V.10.73 f., etc.

19 For the former, compare Aristotle Topics I.14, 105b 24 and 30 ff. and, perhaps, Rhetoric III.17, 1418b 5; and for the latter, cp. Topics II.7, 113a23 and especially II.9, 114b 16 ff.

20 Cf. Aristotle Topics II.7, 112b-113b 14; IV.4, 124b 15 ff.; Cicero Topica xi.47-50; Minoukianos Epich. 3, (Ipp. 422.6 ff. Sp.).

21 See now the commentary below.

T. Conley