sta invece divenendo sempre più chiara l’appartenenza di Erodoto a un orizzonte culturale del quinto secolo avanzato, insieme a un profondo coinvolgimento nel giudizio sugli sviluppi politici della Pentecontetia a lui contemporanei, ai quali molti complessi narrativi all’interno delle Storie rimandano, veicolando precise prese di posizione dell’autore. Appare evidente allora che il rapporto di Erodoto con la cultura narrativa tradizionale va in un certo senso ‘misurato’ e valutato dettagliatamente. Pare inevitabile da questo punto di vista tentare di precisare se vi siano casi in cui il senso che Erodoto attribuisce alla tradizione che rielabora è diverso dal valore che la tradizione orale aveva nei suoi contesti di formazione e trasmissione. L’A. tende a escludere si possa riconoscere ciò che in Erodoto è tradizionale e ciò che non lo è (33-34; 336-337 n. 910), ma la sua stessa discussione ripetutamente individua costruzioni di senso che risemantizzano la tradizione da parte dell’autore. L’analisi in questo senso deve dunque essere approfondita. Il bel libro dell’A., pur offrendo una lettura di ampia prospettiva del rapporto di Erodoto con la tradizione, non rende inutili scavi analitici dei materiali tradizionali a sua disposizione, anzi a ricerche del genere offre uno stimolo e un contesto interpretativo generale. La complessità del gesto culturale erodoteo è ancora lungi dall’essere compresa fino in fondo. Ma all’A. dobbiamo essere grati per aver offerto un contributo rilevante in questa direzione.

Maurizio Giangiulio


Ancient scholia have received much scholarly attention in the last few years. The important introduction to ‘Ancient Greek Scholarship’ by E. Dickey¹ and R. Nünlist’s monograph on ‘The Ancient Critic’² have made the scholia to the foremost poets available to a wider audience. Applying this newfound knowledge to contextualize the Alexandrian Jewish writings and their exegetical methods is the aim of Maren R. Niehoff (N.) in this book. N. continues her earlier work on Philo³ and broadens the scope to include other Alexandrian Jewish texts. The main thesis pervading the book is twofold, 1) Jewish scholars were deeply (and directly) influenced by Homeric scholarship in their approach to their own foundational text, the Pentateuch of Moses and 2) in Alexandria, «the Aristotelian school of thought was more influential than has often been thought» (187).

Both of these points are convincing, especially given the clear examples proffered by N., but two points of criticism must be raised at the outset. In stressing the diversity of Alexandrian Judaism, N. multiplies Jewish exegetes by supposing that «anonymous col-

leagues", erudite Jewish scholars stand behind nearly every polemical statement against diverging interpretations in the extant Jewish writings as well as behind questions raised within these texts. In some cases this is convincing (Conf. 4–5 analysed on pp. 77–82; Abr. 178–179 analysed on pp. 99–103), in other cases however this sort of mirror-reading goes far beyond the available evidence (e.g. p. 118 and 120; see below on c. 2 and 7). A second point of contention is the validity of the genealogical view of the connection between Homeric Scholarship and Jewish Bible exegesis: «They (Jewish intellectuals) seem to have been part of Aristarchus' original audience as well as subsequent admirers of his works» (14).\(^1\) While acknowledging the significant links and conspicuous similarities between the exegetical techniques of Homeric scholars and Jewish exegetes, one has to wonder whether some of the same conclusions would not also have been reached by those outside the influential sphere of Alexandria (see below on c. 3). Indeed extrapolating from the above mentioned uncertainties, N. redefines the sociological makeup of Alexandrian Jewry, assuming many Jews were integrated into the elite culture of the city (13).\(^2\)

Let us now turn to the content of the monograph, which is divided into three sections. After an introductory chapter «Setting the Stage» for the contextualization of Jewish Bible exegesis in Alexandria against the background of Homeric scholarship developed at the famous Museum, N. turns her attention to the Letter of Aristeas (henceforth Letter), Demetrius and Aristobulus in the first section entitled «Early Jewish Responses to Homeric Scholarship». Chapter 2\(^3\) focuses on certain aspects of the Letter, which she dates to the second half of Philometer’s rule (164–145 BCE) and defends the thesis that the author of the Letter was conspicuously conservative, rejecting the application of Alexandrian text-critical methods on the Greek Pentateuch. This rejection is formulated as a curse on those who «introduce an interpolation (διασκευάζω) by either adding or generally transferring something of what is written or by making a deletion» (Letter 321). N., following Meecham,\(^4\) stresses the technical significance of the word διασκευάζω in Alexandrian scholarship, a word often used by Aristarchus when referring to the deleterious interpolations of his predecessor Zenodotus (23). That this injunction fully rejects the text-critical methods current in Alexandria

\(^1\) At other times, N. is more cautious; The Jewish exegetes «were generally familiar with the academic methods developed at the Museum» (5). See below on c. 2 for dating the Jewish writings in the time of Aristarchus.

\(^2\) Even if conceded that Alexandrian scholarship had a «visible impact among the broader population of Hellenistic Egypt» (13 n. 43), it remains speculative to assume that the use of similar exegetical methods implies full integration into Alexandrian elite society. A third, more trivial point, regards the selected corpus. N. focuses her search to the A scholia of the Iliad, «in order to be on the safest possible grounds» (12) when ascertaining evidence of Aristarchean exegetical methods; this is laudable, but the examples of Aristarchan exegesis could be multiplied when the Scholia to Pindar or even the fragment of Aristarchus’ commentary on Herodotus, would have been taken into account. For the Hypomnema to Herodotus see Pap. Amh. 12. The recently collected fragments of Aristarchus from the later Grammarians were also not cited by N. see F. Schironi, I frammenti di Aristarco di Samotracia negli etimologi bizantini Etymologium Genuinum, Magnum, Symeonis, Megalae Grammaticae, Zonarae Lexicon. Introduzione, edizione critica e commento (Hypomnemata 152), Göttingen 2004.

\(^3\) Large portions of Chapter 2 appeared in German as M. Niehoff, ‘Jüdische Bibelexegese im Spiegel alexandrinischer Homerforschung’, BN 148, 2011,19–33.

\(^4\) H. G. Meecham, The Letter of Aristeas: A Linguistic Study with Special Reference to the Greek Bible Manchester, 1935, 366
for the LXX promoted by the author (this precise wording is important to understanding the Letter’s full approach) is clear, N.’s inference, ‘Aristeas’ is reacting to Jewish colleagues, who applied Aristarchus’ methods to the Greek Bible, is however highly speculative. The careful and insightful treatment of scholarly terms used both by the Letter and Alexandrian scholars (23, 26) does not override the lack of evidence for the above stated conclusion. N. writes «Aristeas’ colleagues appear to have adopted Aristarchus’ system of critical signs and marked certain biblical verses without deleting them from the manuscript» (27). One conspicuous feature of the chapter is the dating of both Aristeas and Aristarchus. N. accepts Fraser’s date 164–145 BCE for the Letter without mentioning the great discrepancy among scholars, some would date the letter shortly before 200 BCE 1 and others, a view that has emerged as a consensus, to between 116 and 113 BCE. 2 Aristarchus’ floruit is not so disputed, but here too N. departs from consensus without corroborating argumentation, and follows a minority view in accepting the dates 160–131 BCE. 3 Nearly all scholars date his death to ca. 144 BCE, shortly after Euergetes II assumed power. 4 The date of the Letter evades absolute certainty, but the arbitrary selection of both these dates artificially strengthens the genealogical claims that Jewish exegesis was directly effected by contemporary Aristarchean scholarship. Even if this chronology is conceded, the direct connection between Aristarchus’ critical signs and Aristeas’ anonymous colleagues’ use thereof is not clear, indeed the wording is anachronistic; «mark(ing) certain biblical verses» (27) is meaningless as the divisions in the Greek bible stem from much later and the stichometry of the LXX differs drastically from that of hexameter poems. For most of the Pentateuch, athetizing a certain verse would be rather difficult. Furthermore the possible function of the asterisk with an obelus within Jewish exegesis for cases of transference remains blurred. Aristarchus applied this sign to the occurrence of an epic verse which appears in two different contexts in the Homeric epics, for the one which he deemed spurious. How could this be applied to the Pentateuch? Perhaps some Jewish exegetes athetized the ten commandments in Dent 5:6–21 because they were ‘transferred’ from Exod 20:1–17. N.’s extrapolation from Aristeas’ injunction to Jewish colleagues emending the LXX rests on no secure basis, that is not to say that N. is wrong, just that the available does not bear the weight of such subtle arguments.

An actual case of transference, albeit on a larger scale than envisioned by N. is known; the prophecies against foreign nations in Greek Jeremiah stand in the center of the book

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3 Though not cited presumably A. Rostagni, Scritti minori 2, Turin 1955, vol 1, 211f.
4 Justin 38,8,2; Andron FGrH 246 Fr 1 apud Athenaeus 4,184b–c; Suidas s.v. Ἀρίσταρχος. R. Pfeiffer, History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age, Oxford 1968, 211; P. Fraser, Ptolemaic Alexandria. 3 vols. Oxford 1972, vol. 1, 432; L. Cohn, s.v. Aristarchos, RE II, 1, 1895, 862.
and not at the conclusion as in the Hebrew Vorlage. It cannot be ruled out that the author was railing against those who ‘translated’ in such a way, somehow being aware of the drastic divergence from the Hebrew version. N. could have cited actual instances of the ‘Aristarchean’ signs being applied to the Bible. Origen utilized the obelus to signify words in the Greek version which were not found in the Hebrew copies available to him and the asterisk for Greek text, often from the more recent translations, added to the fifth column of his Hexapla in order to harmonize the LXX to the Hebrew version. His application of these signs was borne out of comparison of all available versions, this method resembles a statement in the Letter (302) about the translators method «And they set out to accomplish this, bringing into accord each [detail] by comparing each other’s work» (20). At this point, N. contends that comparison (ἁντιβολὴ) and bringing into accord (σύμφωνα ποιῶ) are not technical terms of Alexandrian scholarship of the 2nd cent. BCE and cite’s M. West’s warning about anachronistically projecting manuscript collation practiced by Didymus on his predecessors Zenodorus and Aristarchus (21).4 The debate has however continued since 2001; A. Rengakos has pointed to four manuscripts of the Homeric epics from the Ptolemaic period, detailed by S. West, that «testify to the use of several manuscripts».5 M. West concedes: «Of course it was commonplace for manuscripts after copying to be checked for error against another source»,6 but the debate about whether the Alexandrian editors of the Homeric epics collated manuscripts (a systematic collation should be ruled out in view of the evidence) hinges upon the interpretation of a few instances in the Scholia to the Iliad. The most prominent example is Schol. Il. 9.222, in which Aristarchus, preserved by Didymus, opines that ‘αἰων ἐκαθάρσαν’ ἢ ‘αἰω’ ἐκαθάρσαν’ would have been preferable to εἰς ἑρον ἐντο. The scholia continues: «nevertheless, (he) did not emend (the text) due to his extreme caution, having found the reading thus in many (ἐν πολλαίς) (editions/texts)». Whether or not Didymus is accurately reporting a Aristarchan case of manuscript collation is disputed, A. Rengakos and G. Nagy interpret this text to mean that Aristarch consulted manuscripts,7 while M. West rejects this view.8 Other corroborating evidence seems to point to sporadic collation by the preeminent Alexandrian editor (see Schol. Il. 6.6; 19.386).9 Setting aside manuscript collation, comparison

1 c. 26–31 of Greek Jeremiah roughly correspond to c. 46–51 of the Hebrew text albeit unsystematically arranged. The translator(s) probably also abridged the book, leaving sections out, for a list of differences between the Hebrew and Greek versions see H. B. Swete, Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek: Additional Notes, Cambridge 1914, 315–341.

2 Not all of the omissions and juxtapositions were the creative work of the translator(s) as we can now ascertain from the Qumran finds, see E. Tov, The Septuagint Translation of Jeremiah and Baruch: A Discussion of an Early Revision of the LXX of Jeremiah 1–29 and Baruch 1:1–318 (HSM 8) Missoula, 1976.


4 In order to deny any connection between the translators activity of comparison and Alexandrian scholarship, N. adduces the lack of the word ἀντιβολή and its cognate ἀντιβολάω in Ehrse’s edition of the Scholia (21).


9 See also P. Amh. 12 II,3–4 where Aristarchus seems to discuss a manuscript variant ὁμιμίοι for ὁμίμπιοι which could be based upon pure conjecture, but is more likely reflects...
was indeed part and parcel of Aristarchus’ exegetical program as N. attests: «Aristarchus was especially committed to an investigation of the epic as a whole, explaining the recurrence of particular phenomena by comparison with each other» (124). Thus it becomes clear that comparison was part of manuscript production and scholarly Homer exegesis in the 2nd cent. BCE. The translators in the Letter are performing such a task, comparing recently written versions.

On the whole, N.’s view that the author of the Letter was aware of Alexandrian scholarship and espoused a conservative approach, should be accepted. This writer has argued in a similar vein, that the author sought to offer an alternative to the myth research, i.e. Homeric scholarship, with his own treatise (Letter 322) and was aware of Alexandrian court poetry, whose motifs he inverted, transforming Ptolemy into a god-fearing King who recognizes the Jewish philosopher’s doctrine of dependence upon the God of Israel for his position and riches. The author’s conservative approach was not however one-sided, his rejection of scholarly methods applies to the finished Greek text, but while describing the work of the translators he incorporates themes of Homeric Scholarship in order to portray the LXX as a foundational text on par with and even surpassing the Homeric epics. The very summoning of 72 scholars by the Ptolemaic regime (as I shall argue elsewhere) and recourse to the authoritative copy are themes recurring in the folklore surrounding scholarship in Ptolemaic Alexandria. The author admits that the Jewish Law was corrupted (Letter 30) but circumvents this problem by having Eleazar, the high priest, send the authoritative copy of the Law with the translators (Letter 46). The author evinces knowledge of the legend of the Ptolemaic propensity to keep these copies when he has Eleazar stress that he wants his scholars, and presumably his copy of the Law, back (Letter 46). On the whole, the author of the Letter incorporated terminology and themes of Homeric scholarship and utilized them in differing degrees of correctness both to place the translation of the Hebrew Pentateuch into Greek in the scholarly realm but at the same time to renounce the application of scholarly textual criticism on the authorized version of the Torah.

In chapter 3, N. turns her focus to the fragments of Demetrius, outlining two problems raised by Demetrius or his anonymous colleagues while reading the Biblical text, a contradiction and a problem of verisimilitude. N. places these two texts masterfully into the context of Aristotelian question and answer style and Aristarchan scholarship respectively. The implied contradiction between Exod 5:3, the Israelites depart unarmed, and Exod 17:8–9, the Israelites battle Amalek (Fr. 5 apud Eusebius, Praep.ev. 9.29.16) is solved the same way Aristarchus deals with the supposed difficulty between II. 21.17, Achilles lays aside his spear, and II. 21.67–70, Achilles is battling Lycaon again armed with a spear. According to discussion of an authentic reading which arose from the palaeographical confusion of M and N.

the Scholia (Schol. Il. 21.17b Ariston.) Aristarchus chides Zenodotus for finding 

fault at this point, stating he «does not realize that many things take place implicitly (κατὰ τὸ συνεπήμενον).» 1 This example is indeed striking but resolving such a 

menial difficulty in this manner seems to be universal, Josephus also noted the implied contradiction writing: «Moses, surmising that this too was due to the providence of God, to ensure that even in weapons they should not be wanting, 

collected them and, having accoutred the Hebrews therein, led them forward for 


Demetrius introduced this contradiction with the words Ἐπιζητεῖν δὲ τινα τῶν ... which N. assumes to be evidence of an actual question from a written commentary posed by one of Demetrius’ colleagues (46). N. analyses a second example, a problem of verisimilitude encountered in the Biblical text: why was Benjamin allotted a fivefold portion of meat? (Gen 43:34). Again, N. argues that this derives from a «scholarly discussion which had come to his (Demetrius’) notice» (47). N. places Demetrius himself in «the milieu of aporetic inquiry» (53). Finally, N. offers a new dating of Demetrius the Chronographer 3 by claiming that Fr. 6 (apud Clement Alex. Strom. 1.21.141.1–2), should be assigned to Demetrius the historian, to be distinguished from Eusebius’ Demetrius, the exegete. 

Fr. 6 contains the only datable reference: the captivity of the ten tribes and the fall of Samaria were 573 years and nine months before the time of Ptolemy the Fourth. The whole paragraph is misleading. N. writes «the style of Eusebius’ Demetrius significantly differ(s) from that of Clement... Clement’s Demetrius is a historian interested in political events ranging from late biblical times to his own period» (55). I cannot ascertain any difference in style, an undertaking which is further hindered by two facts, most of the fragments are in reported speech and are not extensive enough for such an analysis. I could only conclude that N. means content instead of style. The title of Demetrius’ work as reported by Clement ‘Concerning the Kings of Judaea’ does not present a difficulty in reconciling it’s content with that of Eusebius’ Demetrius, one could imagine fragments 1–5, which begin with Abraham, as part of a book about Jewish Kings given the promise in Gen 17:6: «kings will go out from you (Abraham)» and the fact that the work of Eupolemus also titled ‘Concerning the Kings of Judaea’ dealt specifically with Moses 4 and probably also Abraham. 5 This work on the Kings of Judaea could equally be the title of a separate work which also paraphrases the Greek scriptures closely and exhibits an interest in chronology. The same sort of summary chronology with differing fix points contained in Fr. 6, occurs also in Fr. 2, where Demetrius calculates the years from Adam to Joseph’s brother’s arrival in Egypt, from the flood to Jacob’s arrival in Egypt and again from Abraham’s calling till he arrived in Egypt (apud Eusebius, Praep.ev. 9.21.18). The events described in Fr. 6 are not primarily political events, but biblical events which overlap with political events in Israel’s history. The reasons given by N. for separating of Fr. 6 from Fr. 1–5 are therefore are not convincing. Despite this, one could salvage a post Aristarchean date so crucial to N.’s argument. Perhaps Demetrius did not write down to his own time,

1 How Zenodotus actually treated the verse is not known, see Nünlist, Critic, 159.
2 I see no reason to assume that Josephus is dependent on Demetrius at this point. Contra Thackeray, note ad loc.
4 Fr. 1 apud Clem Alex Strom 1.23.153.4
following Eratosthenes, who concluded his *Chronological Tables* with the death of Alexander.\(^1\) Or perhaps the designation in Fr. 6 «Ptolemy the Fourth» is an error, it is possible that Demetrius originally wrote Ptolemy Philometor and Clement or his source Alexander Polyhistor mistakenly changed it to Ptolemy the Fourth (Philopator) instead of Ptolemy the Sixth (precisely this error, without the cardinal number, is found in P\(\text{Oxy}^1 1241\) I.15, which places Aristarchus in the time of Philopator). The designation Ptolemy the Fourth in a second cent. writing seems to be an anachronism, a cursory search of the TLG revealed that the absolute use of the cardinal number to identify a Ptolemaic king became commonplace only in the first century BCE (Strabo 16.2.31) before this time either the epithet alone was used or the cardinal number in conjunction with the epithet (e.g. Aristophanes *Byz*, *hist animal* 2,593; Poseidonius FGrH 87 Fr. 4).\(^2\)

In chapter 4, N. shows how indebted the first Jewish philosopher, Aristobulus, was to Aristotelian methods. Aristobulus differs from his contemporaries in that he approaches Scripture with philosophical questions and solves them for a «fictional classroom situation» (59). In explaining difficulties in the Bible, one prominent example is the anthropomorphic language in the LXX, Aristobulus often resorts to a metaphorical explanation, one which «closely resembles Aristotle’s notion of „the custom of language”» (69).

In part 2, chapters 5–7, N. outlines «Critical Homeric scholarship in the fragments of Philo’s anonymous colleagues», taking a cue from David Hay, who stressed the dialogical enterprise of Philonic exegesis, (77), she reconstructs the colleague’s and opponents’ views from the scattered references in Philo’s works. Chapter 5 begins by noting that Philo’s treatise *On the Confusion of Languages* preserves a long fragment from an anonymous colleague, who compares the Tower of Babel to the episode of the Aloeidae in *Od*. 11,315–6 and the confusion of tongues with a similar version, which Callimachus presents as an Aesopic fable (*Ia*. 2, fr. 11 l. 15–16 and the summary in *Dieg.* 6.23–9). In this fable, animals originally spoke one language but after complaining to Zeus, he «transferred their voices to men» (*Dieg.* 6.27–9). This academic comparison of mythology led the exegetes to suggest that Moses improved upon the more primitive version (89 see *Conf* 9). Despite their seemingly good intentions, Philo objects to their methods and conclusions because in their assumption that Scripture and myth were equally susceptible to literary criticism, they claimed that Moses improved upon an existing myth; this cut against the grain of one of Philo’s theological presuppositions: the Mosaic Law was unchanging and eternal. For this same reason, Philo objects to the historical analysis, outlined in Chapter 6, proffered by his colleagues. They placed the binding of Isaac in it’s historical context, appealing to Greek and barbarian child sacrifice to contextualize Abraham’s act. The implication is that the colleagues explained it as a widespread contemporary custom, but by citing Moses’ injunction against such a practice (*Deut* 12:31), they

\(^1\) See FGrH 241 T 1 Suid and Fr. 13; Fraser, Alexandria, vol. 2, 660 n. 77.

\(^2\) Andron of Alexandria FGrH 246 Fr. 1 (late Ptolemaic period), Euphantos FGrH 74 Fr. 1 (beg. 3rd cent. BCE) and Phylarchus FGrH 81 Fr. 40 (3rd cent. BCE) use a participial formula βασιλεύσαντος bzw. βασιλεύοντα with the cardinal number. Athenaeus could have standardized this formula while quoting earlier authors. Even if these texts are transmitted faithfully, it shows that the absolute use of the cardinal number to designate a Ptolemy was not yet in use.
champion him as a reformer of primitive custom thereby recognizing progress in the Torah (Abr 181). This sort of historical analysis was advocated by Aristotle in explaining questionable practices in Homer (e.g. the cruelty of Achilles in Il. 24.15; discussed on pp. 153–7). Philo of course rejected such an approach.

Chapter 7 turns to evidence of textual criticism among Philo’s contemporaries, with the unfortunate title «Traces of text criticism among Alexandrian Jews». N. has already utilized the term text criticism where she probably means literary criticism (90), which should be distinguished from textual criticism. This chapter is not as clear or as persuasive as c. 5 and 6. After repeating the scant evidence for textual criticism in Aristobulus and the Letter of Aristeas, N. proceeds to interpret many examples in Philo’s writings as polemic against Alexandrian Jews who supposedly utilized Alexandrian text-critical methods on the Jewish Scriptures: «Athetesis seems to have been an accepted device among such Bible scholars» (128). N. offers three categories calling for possible text-critical activity: 1) flaws, 2) contradictions and 3) a specific example involving someone who objected to Abram’s and Sara’s namechange. In categories one and two, N. can only cite examples of Philo’s anticipatory rhetoric of an imagined interlocutor, most of which are introduced by ἵσως ἢν τίς εἴποι or an equivalent (Conf 142; Her 101) or of Philo’s own observations without the diatribal topos (Deus 140–1; Her 81–2). Even if we concede that these instances reflect actual positions of actual opponents, no where in the examples is an actual text-critical manoeuvr explicitly mentioned. A specific example from Mut 60–2, labeled «A Case of Athetesis in Scripture», in which Philo is reacting to someone who ridicules the name change from Ἀβράμ to Ἀβραάμ and the similar case with Sara, is used to make a twofold claim: 1) by translating ἀκούω as «read» and supplying ‘in a treatise’ against her earlier translation «heard», 1 N. can extrapolate written treatises on this problem in Gen 17:5 and 17:15. This translation of ἀκούω is possible but not probable. 2) N. claims that the phrase «deprecated ... all the things which seem to them not appropriate to preserve in the literal sense (πάνθ᾽ οὐ συμφέροντο ἐν λόγῳ διασοφήσει διασώζει)» implies, although διασοφήσει is not a technical text-critical term, that the anonymous colleagues athetized the ridiculous verses (Gen 17:5 and 17:14). I infer from this statement that they refused to allegorize not that they tampered with the text. Nevertheless this description would be very subtle if Philo is suggesting that his opponents really tampered with the text of the Bible.

Part three turns to the «Inversion of Homeric Scholarship by Philo». N.’s sustained comparison of the exegetical methods has led her to new conclusions about the implied audience of the Philonic treatises and their chronology. Chapter 8 outlines Philo’s exegetical technique in the Allegorical Commentary and N. concludes, it was written with a scholarly audience in mind, an audience skeptical of the allegorical method. Stressing the Aristotelian literal approach in Philo’s exegesis, which has not received as much attention as his allegorical method, N. can describe Philo’s hermeneutic in a clear way. He used the literal method to find contradictions, but unlike Homeric exegesis, not to solve them. The literal

1 Niehoff, ‘Quarrelsome Colleagues’, 172.
method was his «instrument to move from the literal to the non-literal level» (142). Chapter 9 moves to the Questions and Answers on Genesis and Exodus (Q&A) preserved in Armenian which N. places in a time when Philo has become an authoritative teacher in the Jewish community. This is corroborated by Philo’s assumption that the readers accept the allegorical approach unlike the intended audience of the Allegorical Commentary. The last chapter turns to the Exposition of the Law in which Philo abandons the running commentary format and opts to treat major themes of scripture and Jewish customs e.g. circumcision in the framework of a free narrative. N. plausibly places the Exposition in Philo’s time in Rome 38–40/1 (177) and, given the explanatory and apologetic nature of the Exposition, concludes that it was aimed at non-Jewish (Roman) readers who were under the influence of Apion, head of Philo’s rival embassy.

N.’s work contributes much to the understanding of Philo’s writings and foreshadows her upcoming intellectual biography of the prominent Jewish exegete. Both the specialist and the non-specialist will learn much from this imminently readable book.¹ Combining two formerly separate disciplines, Jewish studies and Classical Philology with a topic outside the canon of each, N. has led us to fertile ground for new research into the Jewish approach to the Torah in Alexandria. Hopefully, this book will spawn many new inquiries into the nature and context of Alexandrian Jewry.

Luke Neubert

¹ As with other works, mistakes crept into the learned treatise but they need not detain our attention here. A list was emailed to the author for the second printing, which judging from the potential impact of the book, should be warranted.
