

# JERUSALEM AS 'MOTHER-CITY' IN THE WRITINGS OF PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA\*

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## 1. Introduction

Philo of Alexandria, first-century Jewish exegete of the Pentateuch and sometime political representative of the Jews of Alexandria, appears to have been the first to state that Jews think of Jerusalem as their μητρόπολις, their 'mother-city' (van Unnik 1993: 136). This idea is repeated twice, and appears in the two works written by Philo on the political and social crisis for the Jews in Alexandria between 38–41 CE. In the *In Flaccum*, a work dealing with the downfall of Flaccus, governor of Egypt, Philo tells us that this Roman official, acting at the instigation of the Jews' enemies in Alexandria, cooperated in persecuting the Jews illegally from 38 CE. These activities began with the desecration of the synagogues of Alexandria by the installation in them of images prohibited by Jewish law, allegedly to honour the emperor Gaius (*Flacc.* 42–43). In this context, Philo contemplates the likely consequences of this unlawful action as filling the whole world with ethnic conflict (ἐμφυλίων πολέμων), emphasizing the potential for widespread violence against Jews because there are so many of them:

For no single country can contain the Jews because of their multitude, and for this reason they inhabit the most extensive and wealthiest districts in Europe and Asia both on islands and on mainlands, and while they regard the Holy City (ἱερόπολις) as their mother-city (μητρόπολις), in which is founded and consecrated the temple of the most high God, yet they severally hold that land as their fatherland (πάτριδας) which they have obtained by inheritance from fathers and grandfathers and great-grandfathers and still more remote ancestors for their portion to dwell in, in which they were born and reared. Into some of these they came at the very moment of their foundation, sending a colony to do a favour to the founders (εἰς ἑνίας δὲ καὶ κτιζομένας εὐθύς ἦλθον ἀποικίαν στείλάμενοι). (*In Flaccum* 46; trans. H. Box; *Philonis Alexandrini, In Flaccum*)

In this case, Philo himself observes that Jews in many places regard Jerusalem as their mother-city.

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In the *Legatio ad Gaium*, however, he also attributes this view of the relationship between Jews and Jerusalem to the Judaeen king Agrippa I. The *Legatio* presents an account of the embassy led by Philo himself to the emperor Gaius, in order to resolve the injustices being perpetrated against the Jews of Alexandria. The embassy was thrown off course, however, by news of the emperor's plan to desecrate the Jerusalem Temple by installing in it an image of himself as Zeus. In the end, according to Philo, Gaius's plan was only averted by his assassination in January 41. But he reports at length the protests of Agrippa I, the Herodian king recently appointed to the throne of Judaea by his friend Gaius. These protests are recorded in a very long letter, purportedly addressed by Agrippa to Gaius. In this letter, which we should probably take as primarily representing Philo's voice (Schwartz 1990: 200–202), the opening argument centres on the idea of the natural patriotism which is common to all, including Agrippa and the emperor himself: 'All men, my emperor, have planted in them a passionate love of their native land (πατρίς) and a high esteem for their own laws; and on this there is no need to instruct you, who love your native city as you honour your own customs' (277). In speaking of the Jews as a people, Agrippa stresses their piety towards the emperor through their prayers and sacrifices; they are a people who 'love [their Caesar] in very truth' (280). The plea for the Temple is reserved for the final part of the letter (290). Before this, however, Agrippa continues to dwell on the Jews' devotion to the emperor:

As for the holy city (ἱερόπολις), I must say what befits me to say. While she... is my native city (πατρίς) she is also the mother-city (μητρόπολις) not of one country Judaea but of most of the others in virtue of the colonies (ἀποικίαι) sent out at divers times to the neighbouring lands Egypt, Phoenicia, the part of Syria called the Hollow and the rest as well and the lands lying far apart, Pamphylia, Cilicia, most of Asia up to Bithynia and the corners of Pontus, similarly also into Europe, Thessaly, Boeotia, Macedonia, Aetolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth and most of the best parts of Peloponnese. And not only are the mainlands full of Jewish colonies (ἀποικίαι) but also the most highly esteemed of the islands, Euboea, Cyprus, Crete. I say nothing of the countries beyond the Euphrates, for except for a small part they all, Babylon and of the other satrapies those where the land within their confines is highly fertile, have Jewish inhabitants. So that if my own home-city (πατρίς) is granted a share of your goodwill the benefit extends not to one city but to myriads of the others situated in every region of the inhabited world... It well befits the magnitude of your great good fortune that by benefiting one city you should benefit myriads of others also so that through every part of the world your glory should be celebrated and your praises mingled with thanksgiving resound (*Legat.* 281–84, trans. F.H. Colson; Loeb Classical Library).

The share of goodwill in question is the emperor's accession to a 'very modest request' (287) (made on behalf of the first eastern city to acknowledge the emperor): that he should safeguard the ancestral institutions (322, 327, i.e. the Temple) and thereby defend Agrippa's own duty of loyalty towards his homeland (328). While Agrippa's letter is ultimately concerned with the defence of the Temple, in this particular context he refers to the mother-city's relationship to its (east-Mediterranean) colonies in order to stress that so very many Jewish 'colonists' will feel goodwill towards Gaius for any benefit shown towards their mother-city.



It is widely agreed that Philo's application of the term μητρόπολις to Jerusalem employs a distinctively Greek vocabulary for conceptualizing the relationship of colonial Greeks to their mother cities to express the attachment of Diaspora Jews to Jerusalem (Amir 1983: 53–55; Kasher 1979: 50). The language of μητρόπολις and ἀποικία employs the vocabulary used by Greeks to represent the emigrations of Greeks to new settlements which were, literally, 'away from home' (ἀποικία), away from the mother-city (μητρόπολις) from which the emigrants set out. The question I want to ask in this study is what did Philo intend by applying this language to the relationship between Jews and the city of Jerusalem? What does it mean to describe Jews as 'colonists' of Jerusalem, the 'mother-city'? Philo's image of Jerusalem as mother-city of the Jews has been invested with great significance by a number of scholars, who, in different ways, claim that this colonial model reveals a tension between Philo's sense of attachment to Diaspora homelands, on the one hand, and allegiance to Jerusalem, on the other (Heinemann 1948–49; Smallwood 1970: 293–94; Kasher 1979, 1985; Amir 1983 [1980]; Borgen 1984: 269; Carlier 1991;<sup>1</sup> Niehoff 2001). In particular, Philo's naming of Jerusalem as 'mother-city' has often been read by such scholars as an assertion of the centrality of Jerusalem, even as the 'true homeland', for Diaspora Jews. I begin my discussion of what Philo means by Jerusalem as 'mother-city' with a detailed examination of some of the more substantial arguments belonging to this general approach, focusing, in particular, on the work of Amir, Kasher and Niehoff. The evidence, I suggest, does not support an interpretation of Philo as claiming the centrality of Jerusalem over against other homelands for Jews; an alternative reading of Philo's image of Jerusalem as mother-city is proposed, which approaches the question via close attention to Philo's writing context and particularly from the viewpoint that Philo writes primarily as an interpreter of Scripture.

## 2. *The Centrality of the Temple?*

One influential interpretation of Philo's language emphasizes his concern to explain the importance of the Temple cult for Diaspora Jews and to make the centrality of the Temple comprehensible in meaningful terms for a Hellenized readership.<sup>2</sup> In his reading of the colonial language in the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio*, Yehoshua Amir sees not only Philo's apologetic defence of the attachment of Diaspora Jews to their homelands, but also, and particularly, a defence of their commitment to the practice of sending offerings to the Jerusalem Temple. Accordingly, Philo draws attention to the cultic status of the μητρόπολις Jerusalem by referring to it in these passages as an ἱερόπολις and as a city in which the Temple stands. The language of mother-city and colony is meant to remind the Hellenized reader of the cultic bonds that existed in Greek antiquity between colonists and their mother cities, ties which included the sending of offerings from the colonies to the religious festivals

1. This is based on the printed summary of Carlier's thesis of which, unfortunately, I have been unable to consult the original.

2. See also, for example, Klauck 1986.



of the mother-city.<sup>3</sup> Any reader educated in Greek tradition would, according to Amir, understand why Diaspora Jews were obliged, like the Greek colonists of antiquity, to take part in the sending of offerings to the Temple (Amir 1983 [1980]). In other words, Philo uses the image of Jerusalem as mother-city to explain Jewish practice with regard to the Jerusalem Temple, by appealing to a comparison with ancient (and therefore much approved) Greek practice. To call Jerusalem μητρόπολις, in this context, is an apologetic strategy to defend the peculiar position of Jews as the only people in the Roman Empire for whom cultic devotion was permitted at one place only, the Jerusalem Temple.

There can be no doubt that, for Philo, the Temple, both in its symbolic meaning and in the practice of its sacrificial cult, is a fundamental part of Judaism. But I do not believe that Amir's theory correctly explains the significance of Philo's characterization of the holy city as a μητρόπολις. Why should Philo's readers have thought that, in doing so, Philo referred to the sending of offerings to the mother-city? The subject is not mentioned in either context in the *In Flaccum* and *Legatio*.<sup>4</sup> The connection with the sending of cult offerings can only be made by conflating these passages with others in Philo's writings that do treat the subject but which do not use the colonial language.<sup>5</sup> It is also proper to query whether Philo's readers would indeed have thought of the sending of gifts to the mother-city's cult when presented with the image of the mother-city/colony relationship.<sup>6</sup> The sending of

3. See also Kasher (1979: 49–50), who comments that though Philo may have considered pilgrimage not dissimilar from the way Greek settlements used to maintain contacts with their mother-city, Philo also recognized the uniqueness of the Jewish phenomenon.

4. Elsewhere in the *Legatio*, Philo refers twice to Augustus's approval of the Jewish practice of sending first-fruit offerings to the Jerusalem Temple (*Leg.* 156, 313–15). The examples are adduced to show that, contrary to Gaius's intention to desecrate the Temple, his illustrious ancestor had given orders that it be honoured, orders which include the protection of the practice of sending offerings.

5. Amir refers in this context to *Spec.* 1.77–78 which describes the collection of first-fruits offerings: 'As the nation is very populous, the offerings of first-fruits are naturally very abundant. In fact, practically in every city there are banking places for the holy money where people regularly come and give their offerings. And at stated times there are appointed to carry the sacred tribute envoys selected on their merits, from every city those of highest repute, under whose conduct the hopes of each and all will travel safely. For it is on these first-fruits, as prescribed by the law, that the hopes of the pious rest' (78).

6. Amir cites G. Busolt (Busolt 1920–26: 1270 n. 2) who summarizes the inscriptional evidence as well as literary references in Thucydides 1.25.3; Diodorus 12.50.5. The importance of religious relations between colony and mother-city in the ancient Greek world cannot be doubted (Graham 1964: 154–65, 216), though the specific practice of sending offerings from the colony to the mother-city cults is just one, by no means universally attested element in a very varied range of practices – there was no standard model to which Philo might appeal here. Even the major piece of literary evidence in Thucydides (1.25.3) does not show conclusively that colonists sent offerings to the cult in the mother-city. Describing the complaint of Corinth against its colonists who neglected their religious obligations towards the mother-city, Thucydides comments: 'For they neither gave the customary offerings at the common festivals, nor did they give the first portion of the sacrifice to a Corinthian, as the other colonies did'. It is not in fact clear whether the offerings for the common festivals refer to rites held in the mother-city or in the colony itself. Parallels in inscriptions



offerings is but one element in the varied religious practice of mother-city/colony relationships in antiquity and not one, so far as the evidence suggests, which has the status of a widely held expectation such as Philo might have wished to appeal to. In the absence of explicit references to the sending of offerings to the Jerusalem Temple in Philo's texts, it is hard to imagine even the best-educated Greek reader thinking first of a comparable practice in the classical and Hellenistic Greek world.

### 3. *Mother-City as True Homeland?*

Other interpretations of Philo, notably those of Kasher and Niehoff whose arguments are discussed in detail below, seek to show, in different ways, that the image of Jerusalem as mother-city serves to show that allegiance to this city must come first for Diaspora Jews, that Jerusalem is constructed as the true homeland of Jews in contrast or opposition to other Diaspora homelands. If Philo does indeed represent Jerusalem as the true homeland for Jews, in contrast to any other Jewish homeland, his position is very significant for the history of Jewish attitudes towards the city. Such explicit affirmation of loyalty to Jerusalem above all other homelands is difficult to find in earlier Jewish Diaspora writings. Furthermore, in the context of Philo's own work, such a view represents a striking difference from the dominant theme of his commentary on Scripture which, while insisting on the observance of the Temple cult, treats the holy land and the holy city as symbols of the heavenly realm to which the wise aspire (Halpern-Amaru 1986). His characteristic detachment from the concrete reality of place is expressed most vividly in the only passage in the whole of his vast scriptural commentary where he discusses Jerusalem by name, interpreting this name as 'vision of peace', in exegesis of Ps. 46.4:

Therefore do not seek for the city of the Existent among the regions of the earth, since it is wrought not of wood or stone, but in a soul... For what grander or holier house could we find for God...than the vision-seeking mind (*Somn.* 2.250–51).

Outside Philo's symbolic world of Scripture, when he writes of political realities, and on those rare occasions when he offers a glimpse of his life, there is strong evidence of fierce loyalty to Alexandria as home, fatherland, for himself and for other Alexandrian Jews. I have argued elsewhere (Pearce 1998) that when Philo writes of the persecution of the Jews of Alexandria in the late 30s CE, what he always emphasizes is outrage at the attempt to dispossess those Jews of their homeland in Alexandria; of being made, temporarily, exiles, foreigners, aliens. Alexandria is always the centre; there is never any thought of looking elsewhere for refuge. In other contexts, too, Philo is also like other Jews of the Hellenistic-Roman period in talking of his city as his fatherland, his πατρίς; and he assumes a common sense of emotional attachment to local homelands when he portrays pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple as the severest test requiring temporary abandonment of the fatherland and family for life abroad (*Spec.* 1.68). Devotion to the Jerusalem Temple is unques-

favour the former interpretation, and thus support Amir's view, though scholarship is divided on the interpretation of Thucydides here (Graham 1964: 161).



tionably central to Philo's Judaism. But this does not mean that his commitment to the Temple should be read in terms that marginalize his local allegiance (Pearce 1998: 97–105). The claim that Jerusalem, the mother-city of the Jews, is the true homeland over all other Jewish homelands does not, of course, sit easily with such a picture of Philo's local allegiances. So, is there a tension between fatherland and mother-city in Philo's thought, as some scholars – indeed most who have commented on this question – have claimed? Does Philo really claim that Jerusalem should be viewed as the true homeland for Jews in contrast to Diaspora homelands? Although they arrive at it by different ways, the work of Aryeh Kasher and Maren Niehoff points towards this conclusion: by calling Jerusalem the mother-city of the Jews, Philo means that Jews should owe greater loyalty to Jerusalem than to any local community. Their arguments are now considered.

#### 4. Kasher: Diaspora as 'Second Homeland'

Kasher's explanation of Philo's colonial language is presented most recently in his study of the Jews of Hellenistic Egypt (Kasher 1985: 233–61), in which the overall thesis challenges any notion that Jews wanted to feel at home in the Diaspora. He follows the view, widespread in scholarship until recently, that Jews in Egypt lived in self-contained ethnic communities, designated in Greek terms as *πολιτεύματα*; and that these bodies had the right of self-government, legally independent of the Greek cities in which they were located. Thus, when Jews described themselves as citizens of Alexandria, or the city as their fatherland, they meant their citizenship and patriotic devotion to the independent Jewish community there, the *πολίτευμα*, in the city from which they came. The crisis in Alexandria under Flaccus occurred, according to this view, when the Roman governor sought to dissolve the Jewish *πολίτευμα* and its rights to self-government. What Philo and other Jews wanted was the restoration of the *πολίτευμα*: the struggle for citizen rights was a fight for the rights of the independent Jewish community. The complex details of the nature of the struggle over citizenship in Alexandria must be left to one side here.<sup>7</sup> My purpose here is to examine Kasher's explanation of Philo's description of Diaspora Jews' relationship to Jerusalem in terms of a colony/mother-city relationship.

With regard to the interpretation of the key passages in the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio*, Kasher argues that Philo's image of Diaspora Jews as colonists of the mother-city Jerusalem is meant to underline the independence of the Jewish community from its local environment, recalling the fact that Greek colonies 'generally had an independent political character' (Kasher 1985: 237):

Evidently Philo attempted to describe the status of the Jews in terms the Greek reader was familiar with. Consequently he presented them as ordinary immigrants who laid the foundation for a 'colony' which according to its organization and rights was an independent body (such as a *politeuma*) (Kasher 1985: 237).

Thus, Philo's language about Jewish colonies is taken to reflect the situation of the Jewish *πολίτευμα* in the Diaspora.

7. See on this complex issue Barclay 1996: 60–71.



The significance of the mother-city/colony relationship, as Philo conceives it, is explained by Kasher through a passage in Philo's scriptural commentary dealing with the question of why the good man, according to the sayings of the patriarchs, regards himself as only a sojourner in the realm of the body:

Their souls are never colonists leaving heaven for a new home (ἀποικίαν). Their way is to visit earthly nature as men who travel abroad to see and learn... To them the heavenly region, where their citizenship lies, is their fatherland (πατρίδα); the earthly region in which they became sojourners is a foreign country. For surely, when men found a colony (ἀποικίαν), the land which receives them becomes their fatherland (πατρίς) instead of the mother-city (μητρόπολις), but to the traveller abroad the land which sent him forth is the mother to whom he yearns to return (*Conf.* 77–78).

Philo's allegory, which is so characteristic of his exegesis of the patriarchs' relationship to the Promised Land and to their places of sojourning outside that Land, stresses the detachment of the wise person from the realm of the body: the ancestors' sojourns mean that they were never at home in the body. Their entry into the world of the body is merely visiting, but not settling, abroad. Instead, like the true contemplative philosophers that they represent in Philo's thought, their true home is the heavenly realm, the true significance of the promised holy land of the Pentateuch. For the ancestors, that realm is both fatherland *and* mother-city. Philo's contrast is between sojourners, tourists in the bodily realm, and colonists who stay put in their new lands: they become detached from the mother-city and the land that receives them becomes the fatherland.

This complicated allegory is taken by Kasher, on account of 'wording and import' as containing a political message for Philo's readers, which illuminates the meaning of πατρίς in *In Flaccum* 46:

The true meaning of 'homeland' [i.e. πατρίς] in *In Flaccum* 46 is undoubtedly 'host homeland' or 'second homeland', in contrast to the genuine original one, which was and always will be, Jerusalem (Kasher 1985: 238).<sup>8</sup>

Kasher concludes that Philo views Alexandria as a homeland

only in the political sense, for it was a place in which a Jewish 'colony' – organised as a separate ethnic union with a recognised political and legal status (politeuma) – had been established (Kasher 1985: 238).

For Kasher, Philo's reference to Diaspora Jewish communities as colonies reveals that the fatherland, or 'colony', the Diaspora Jewish community, is of secondary importance in comparison with the mother-city, Jerusalem, which is regarded as the genuine home of all Jews.

This interpretation is difficult to sustain, however. There are serious questions, in the first place, to be asked about Kasher's emphatic claim that Jews did not want to be citizens of the Greek cities in which they lived. The evidence suggests otherwise:

8. Kasher stresses the similarity of this conception of true homeland with that expressed by Romans such as Cicero (*Leg.* 2.5) asserting the priority of loyalty to Rome over all ties to native lands.



some Jews, though never many, clearly did have citizenship in Alexandria and other Greek cities; there is not a lot of evidence for this, but, in the case of Alexandria, we must remember how little documentary evidence for this period has survived anyway.<sup>9</sup> More directly of concern to the issue in hand is the interpretation of Philo's colonial image in terms of the *πολίτευμα* and the use of this as evidence for Jews' ultimate attachment to Jerusalem over other places such as Alexandria. The comparison of the Greek colony (*ἀποικία*) with Kasher's construction of the *πολίτευμα* is problematic: Greek colonies were indeed independent, but their independence was from their mother-city; they did not think of the mother-city as the true home to which they would ultimately return. Moreover, as surviving foundation decrees show, colonists were often, perhaps usually, discouraged from returning, and did not have a right of return. A further, and crucial difficulty for Kasher's thesis is the model of the *πολίτευμα* itself. This is a scholarly construction of Diaspora Jewish communities that has been around since its invention in the nineteenth century, emphasizing the detached nature of Hellenistic and Roman-period Jewish communities from their local environments, and their sense of living in an alien world. The validity of this construction is seriously undermined by recent analyses which indicate that there seems to be clear evidence for a Jewish community so designated only in Berenice and, as we now know from recently published evidence, in Ptolemaic Heracleopolis (Cowey and Maresch 2001); Jewish communities of the period were not homogeneous in their organization and were designated by a wide variety of titles (Zuckerman 1988; Lüderitz 1994; Williams 1998a,b; Ashworth 1999). With regard, in particular, to the Jews of Alexandria, it is no longer possible to agree with the near-universal consensus of recent times that the Jews of Alexandria were organized in a *πολίτευμα*. The evidence for this view is actually very slim and comes only in the form of a casual reference to 'those (probably elders) belonging to the *πολίτευμα*' in the Hellenistic fiction of the *Letter of Aristeas* (310). Careful analysis shows that what we are meant to think of here, most probably, is the leaders of the citizen body of the city of Alexandria whose king, according to the letter, had commissioned the translation of the Pentateuch.<sup>10</sup> By Strabo's time, the Alexandrian Jews were apparently led by a monarchic figure, an ethnarch, responsible for arbitration and internal religious matters.<sup>11</sup> From the time of Augustus, a body of elders (*γερούσιαι*) represents the Jews of Alexandria, but there is no evidence that the Jews of Alexandria lived as a legally constituted autonomous body such as the *πολίτευμα* is meant to represent.

Based on this evidence, does Philo construct Jerusalem as the true homeland in contrast with Diaspora settlements? The answer must be no. The image of the colony cannot be taken as a plausible representation for the independent *πολίτευμα*. Nor does Philo support, in the texts cited, any sense that Jewish 'colonies' were to be regarded only as secondary homelands in comparison with Jerusalem. The notion that Jerusalem is constructed as the genuine home is reached only by wrenching

9. See discussion in Barclay 1996: 66–70.

10. This conclusion is suggested by linguistic usage and context. When *πολίτευμα* refers to a body of aliens, this is normally specified.

11. Josephus, *Ant.* 4.117: 'Like the head of an autonomous civic community'.



Philo's allegory of the patriarchal sojourners in *De Confusione* out of context and missing the point: for them, fatherland and mother-city are the same; they are not colonists. It sheds no light on what Philo means by fatherland or mother-city in the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio*.

### 5. Niehoff: Mother-City as Rhetorical Construct

Most recently, the image of Jerusalem as mother-city in Philo has been claimed as a central part of Philo's innovative construction of Jewish identity. Thus Maren Niehoff argues that, in the *In Flaccum* and *Legatio*, Philo is responsible for inventing a myth of Jewish origins in Jerusalem centring on Jerusalem as the mother-city of Jews worldwide. This conceptual invention, according to Niehoff, was a political strategy designed to encourage certain Alexandrian Jews to identify primarily with Jerusalem rather than their local homeland. The argument is complex and deserves close attention.

In her interpretation of the image of the mother-city in Philo, Niehoff, like Amir, suggests that Philo's language is meant to recall the religious relationships of colonists to their mother-city. In referring to the relationship between Jews and Jerusalem, Niehoff argues, Philo suggests that Jews should 'construct their identity in analogy to Greek colonists, who looked up to the cult of their mother-city and modelled their own religious practice on it' (Niehoff 2001: 29). The purpose of this strategy is to promote a particular self-definition among Jews who are to think of themselves, like Greek colonists, as 'a distinct group among others' in first-century Egypt:

Philo wanted them to remember their particular origins and behave like Greek colonists, who continued to live with an emotional attachment to their roots (Niehoff 2001: 30).

Moreover, the sense of attachment to Jerusalem which Philo seeks to promote through the image of Jerusalem as mother-city is, according to Niehoff, given 'an unmistakably Roman dimension' (Niehoff 2001: 36). This is clearest, she argues, in Philo's emphasis on the 'universal distribution of the Jewish colonists':

Philo's association of Jerusalem with the ends of the earth echoes the famous identification of Urbs with Orbis... Loyalty to Jerusalem would provide [Jews] with the same kind of identity as Roman citizenship – an identity which, though ethnic in origin, transcended the narrow boundaries of a specific state and created the sense of a world-wide community (Niehoff 2001: 30–31).

The comparison of Jewish attachment to Jerusalem with that of Roman citizens towards Rome can also be seen, according to Niehoff, in Philo's reference in the *Legatio* to Jews sending offerings, not to the Temple, but to Jerusalem:

Philo clearly echoed a Roman perspective when speaking in the *Legatio* about Jewish donations to the city rather than the Temple of Jerusalem. He might well have been inspired by the contemporary veneration of the city of Rome. The capital of the empire received numerous envoys with financial dedications and offerings which were collected by the priests of the goddess Roma all over the world. These



features of Rome's position in the empire were assimilated by Philo and transposed to Jerusalem (Niehoff 2001: 37).

In constructing Jewish identity in terms that appeal to distinctively Roman categories, Niehoff argues, Philo intended to persuade certain Jews not to take up a radical position of hostility towards Rome in the context of the crises connected with Flaccus and Gaius. To whom might such allusions have appealed? Niehoff posits an intended readership of 'Romanized' Alexandrian Jews, to whom Philo writes to dissuade them from adopting a hostile position towards Roman rule in view of the crises under Flaccus and Gaius.<sup>12</sup> According to this view, Philo was well aware of the strong hostility towards Rome of most Alexandrian Jews, who favoured a more aggressive stance on the defence of their rights and against Roman repression than that being promoted by Philo's embassy in Rome, which put the crisis over Gaius's plans for the Temple first. In order to deter others from following the radical agenda, therefore, Philo appealed to upper-class Alexandrian Jews like himself: they were to put demands for justice for Alexandrian Jews to one side in view of the crisis looming for the mother-city, Jerusalem, with Gaius's plans for his statue:

Philo's appeal to Jerusalem was intended to counter rival views and divergent constructions of Jewish identity... Jews should...make the city and the Jerusalem Temple their first priority. Local issues should not unduly engage their attention and evoke dissatisfaction with Rome (Niehoff 2001: 36).

Jews are reminded by Philo, through the description of Jerusalem as mother-city, that their first allegiance belongs there, and not to their rights in Alexandria; Philo's language about Jerusalem as mother-city is also meant to allude to Roman citizens' feelings for Rome, and thus to appeal to the 'Romanized' Jews among his readership. He wrote to persuade Jews that radical positions towards Rome were unwise and doomed.

Niehoff's arguments for Roman influences on Philo's construction of Jewish identity raise important questions about the interpretation of Philo and serve usefully to remind us of the need to address the particular Roman context of Philo's writings. But the reconstruction of that context is notoriously difficult both in general terms, because of the complexity and variety of what it means to be 'Romanized', what attitudes or perspectives may be reckoned to be distinctively Roman; and, more specifically, because of our lack of knowledge about the situation in Philo's Alexandria:

Unfortunately, we do not know how much exposure Philo had to the 'Roman' elite in Alexandria before he went on the delegation to Rome, or to turn that around, how much or in what respects the intellectual and social elite in Alexandria were 'Romanised' in the first half of the first century (Barclay 2003).

To what extent, and in what sense, Philo is to be regarded as 'Romanized', articulates 'Roman' perspectives, or addresses 'Romanized' Jews, is a highly problematic area.

12. The existence of such Jews is discussed in Tcherikover 1957-63: I, 65-69; II, 36-55.



Furthermore, as far as Philo's description of Jerusalem as mother-city is concerned, I believe there are difficulties facing Niehoff's interpretation. In the first place, the significance accorded to the μητρόπολις image is itself problematic. While it is reasonable to maintain that this implies a suggested comparison with colonists' sense of attachment to the mother-city, it is not legitimate to conclude from this analogy, as Niehoff does, that a colonist's primary allegiance is to the mother-city rather than to the colony. Moreover, as I shall argue in the next section, there is good reason to think that Philo's image of the mother-city should not be construed as putting the emphasis on the mother-city itself but rather on the 'colony'. In addition, it is difficult to see how Philo's use of the mother-city image, which in Niehoff's theory is so central to Philo's conceptual invention, could figure in an appeal to what she otherwise identifies as distinctively Roman themes. Certainly, some Romans did speak of Rome as their mother, and of Rome as worthy of greater loyalty than local attachments to place, but they did not, so far as I know, conceive of this sense of attachment in terms of the relationship of colonies to the mother-city.<sup>13</sup> For Roman citizens, including members of Roman colonies, their attachment to Rome was through their citizenship, and not a sense that it was, as for most of them it was not, the home of their ancestors. In the Roman context, colonial language could not play a role in a 'myth of origins' centring on Rome.

Niehoff herself argues that the most prominent evidence for Philo's appeal to Roman influences is in his emphasis on the widespread distribution of Jewish colonies, which she reads as alluding to the Romans' identification of Rome with the extent of the world. She is certainly right to draw attention to the theme of the vast expanse of the Jewish people which is emphasized in both the *In Flaccum* and the *Legatio*. That this emphasis is to be interpreted in terms of Roman notions of the expansion of empire is, however, to be questioned. It must be observed that the populousness (πολυανθρωπία) of the Jews and their myriad (μυριάδες) numbers is a favourite theme in many of Philo's writings which he usually expresses with the vocabulary employed here. In some places, it is introduced in connection with the Exodus, reflecting earlier traditions about the great number who left Egypt with Moses. In others, Philo reflects various Greek connotations of these words, associating populousness with prosperity as well as, more prosaically, with the size of military forces.<sup>14</sup> In other words, this language and the ideas it expresses are common in Philo and their appearance in the *In Flaccum* and *Legatio* is not remarkable.

13. Cicero, *Leg.* 2.5; Ovid, *Pont.* 1.8.41–42. Galenus, writing on medicine in the second-century CE, refers very casually to Rome as the μητρόπολις in the context of a discussion on treating venomous bites (*De Theriaca* in Kühn 1821–33: 14. 296). This usage reflects the writer's Hellenistic context, as a native of Pergamum, in which it was normal to refer to capital cities in this way.

14. The Roman Petronius is said to have feared disturbing the Jews for this reason: 'He be thought him of the vast number of the people comprised in the nation (ὅσον ἐστὶν ἐν πολυανθρωπία) which needed to contain it not like every other the circumference of a single country allotted to itself alone, but, one might also say, the whole habitable world. For it is spread abroad over all the continents and islands so that it seems to be not much less than the indigenous inhabitants. To draw all these myriads into war against him was surely very dangerous' (*Legat.* 214); see also, for example, *Abr.* 180.



Neither is the sense in which he employs this language in the particular contexts under discussion. In the *In Flaccum*, as elsewhere, Philo's connection of the populousness of the Jews with colonization takes up a Greek cliché linking the origins of colonies with overpopulation at home.<sup>15</sup> In the *Legatio*, he refers to the 'myriads' of Jews to emphasize the huge extent of the glory to be gained for Gaius by benefiting the Jews. Neither of these contexts seems to me to supply a suitable parallel to the Roman identification of the Urbs with the Orbis, expressed most famously by Ovid:

Other peoples have been allotted a certain defined portion of the earth; for the Romans, the boundaries of the city are the boundaries of the world (*Fasti* 2.683–84).<sup>16</sup>

The Roman ideology (by no means embraced positively by all Romans) expresses Rome's political domination in the world and the subjugation of peoples and land to Rome's power, and not a vast expanse of Roman citizens. In Philo's time, of course, Roman citizens did not constitute anything like a vast expanse but were rather a minority of the Empire's population.

Third, the interpretation of donations for the city of Jerusalem as intending a comparison with donations to the city of Rome would work well were it not for the fact that, when Philo's references to such donations are read in context, it is clear that he means offerings for the Temple: the emperor Augustus is said to have known that Jews sent money from their first fruits to Jerusalem 'by persons who would offer the sacrifices (διὰ τῶν τὰς θυσίας ἀναξόντων)' (*Legat.* 156); similarly, Augustus's approval of the sending of first fruits to Jerusalem is connected with the honour due to the Temple (*Legat.* 291, 315).<sup>17</sup> In referring to the sending of gifts to Jerusalem, it is possible that Philo reflects a Roman formulation of that process (it is always mentioned in the context of approval of this by Augustus), as Niehoff suggests, but the context of such references indicates that offerings to the Jerusalem Temple are meant. On this reading, Philo does not provide evidence for a Jewish parallel to the sending of gifts to the city of Rome.

What of Philo's intended readership? Did Philo really need to persuade other Jews that the defence of the Temple mattered? It is difficult to imagine: one of the few certainties about almost all the Jews of the Roman Empire is their shared loyalty to the Jerusalem Temple, as witnessed, in particular, by the sending of offerings for the cult. What evidence there is for radical Jews in Alexandria who might have taken the opposite view, insisting solely on pursuing the interests of Alexandrian Jews, is pretty slight.<sup>18</sup> Philo tells us only of Flaccus's unfounded suspicions that the Jews were amassing arms in Alexandria (*Flacc.* 90–91). It is more than

15. See also *Mos.* 2.232; *Hypoth.* 6.1.

16. Niehoff notes that Philo's image may also be related to Stoic ideas about citizenship of the kosmos. While such ideas were certainly embraced by some Romans (e.g. Cicero), they cannot be said to be distinctively Roman.

17. See also *Legat.* 313: Augustus commanded that no one should hinder the Jews from meeting or subscribing or sending envoys to Jerusalem according to their ancestral practice (διὰ πεμπομένοις κατὰ τὰ πάτρια εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα). But it is not clear that this refers to sending offerings to the city.

18. Though see Tcherikover 1957–63: I, 65–69.



likely that Philo's account obscures details which would portray Jews as the aggressors in the conflict, though he does admit that retaliation from Jews was to be expected (*Flacc.* 48). Josephus provides more positive evidence in his brief account of the conflict between Alexandrian Jews and Greeks after Gaius's assassination (Josephus, *Ant.* 19.278–79), in which the Jews are clearly understood as motivated by revenge for their humiliations under Gaius and at the hands of the Alexandrians. The evidence does not make clear that these were attacks on Roman rule in general. Finally, the existence of a Jewish faction in Alexandria, characterized by an aggressive stance on their rights and opposed to the more moderate view represented by Philo, has been connected with details in the papyrus copy of Claudius's letter to the Alexandrians (*CPJ* 153). Written towards the end of 41 CE, and addressing, among other things, the relations of the Jews with the Alexandrians, this document might well be expected to shed light on this situation. Unfortunately, the implications of Claudius's prohibitions concerning the Jews of Alexandria are less than clear:

The Jews, I order...not in future to send two embassies as if they lived in two cities, a thing which has never been done before... Nor are they to bring in or invite Jews coming from Syria or Egypt (*CPJ* 153 ll. 88–93).

The idea that a second Jewish embassy indicates the existence of a group opposed to Philo's strategy, or aiming at a more aggressive stance on Jewish rights, is purely speculative. In spite of the impressive support enjoyed by this interpretation, it must be admitted that we do not know why a second Jewish embassy was sent, nor whether its views differed from those of Philo. The reasons for Claudius's prohibition of the introduction of non-Alexandrian Jews to the city, though interpreted by some as evidence for suspected Jewish militancy (Bell 1924: 18; Tcherikover 1957–63: II, 54), are best understood in the light of the previous section on the Jews which warns them 'not to aim at more than they have previously had':

Taking this context into consideration, the prohibition of bringing Jews from Syria...or Egypt into Alexandria is not directed against Jewish attempts 'to strengthen themselves [militarily] for their struggle against the Alexandrians' but against attempts to strengthen the Jewish population of Alexandria in order to give vigor to their claim for civic rights (Schäfer 1997: 152).<sup>19</sup>

### 6. *An Alternative Reading*

Much of my criticism of the arguments reviewed has focused on problems in the detail of the argument. In proposing an alternative reading of Philo's image of Jerusalem as mother-city of the Jews, I want to suggest that greater attention be given to the particular contexts of *In Flaccum* 46 and *Legatio* 281–82, as well as the broader setting of Philo's writing enterprise. Beginning with the particular, Philo writes in the *In Flaccum* of different ways of thinking about Jewish attachment to

19. See earlier Bickerman 1931, cols. 321–22.



homelands away from the Holy City: such places are conceived of in terms of ancestral fatherlands in which Jews were born and brought up; or as colonies in which Jews lived from the time of their foundation. Philo's language uses the characteristic vocabulary of Greek colonization, referring to the μητρόπολις (mother-city) and the ἀποικία (colony), and applying the classical cliché associating the origins of colonization with overpopulation. Philo's concern in this passage is to emphasize the threat of the spread of unlawful actions against Jews rooted in communities throughout the world, through imitation of the attacks on Jews in Alexandria. The context of Philo's statement shows that he does not portray Jerusalem as having greater or less significance than the fatherlands or colonies: rather, the μητρόπολις is mentioned in order to introduce the colonies on which Philo focuses attention. The emphasis is on the widespread phenomenon of Jews who feel rooted in other lands where, as in Alexandria, they are prepared to defend their institutions to the point of death (*Flacc.* 48) (Pearce 1998: 102).

As for Philo's account of the *Legatio* which does directly address the threat to the Temple, that threat is defined as one which endangers 'the whole body of the [Jewish] nation' (184), in relation to which the citizenship dispute in Alexandria is a small matter. This is how Philo expresses the matter:

For what religion or righteousness is to be found in vainly striving to show that we are Alexandrians, when we are menaced by the danger which threatens a more universal interest, the corporate body of the Jews? For it is to be feared that the overthrow of the Temple will be accompanied by an order for the annihilation of our common name and nation... (194).

Philo does not demand sole identification with the Temple city (as Niehoff suggests) nor does he say that the struggle for Jewish rights in Alexandria was inferior to and less legitimate than the struggle for the Temple and the genuine Jewish homeland (as Kasher argues), but his fear is for Jews everywhere as a consequence of the desecration of the Temple. He puts the same thought into Agrippa's mind:

For the danger which had fallen upon him was no trifle but one which involved the expulsion, enslavement, and wholesale spoliation of the Jews who dwelt not only in the Holy Land but everywhere through the habitable world (330).

This concern for the universal community of Jews, without regard for place, is fully consistent with Philo's conception of Judaism throughout his writings, and particularly of the Temple as representing the worldwide community. While Agrippa's letter is ultimately concerned with defending the Temple, he refers to the mother-city's relationship to its colonies in order to stress that the colonists (Jews worldwide) will feel goodwill towards Gaius for any benefit towards their mother-city. The point here is the proposed amplification of Gaius's glory and the assurance of the Jews' loyalty towards him.

I have suggested that in neither of the key passages in the *In Flaccum* or the *Legatio* is the μητρόπολις in fact the centre of attention. This conclusion begs the question why Philo employs this apparently novel image to represent the relationship of Jews to Jerusalem. What significance can in fact be attributed to the designation of Jerusalem as μητρόπολις of the Jews? In this final part of my study I



suggest that several factors are likely to have affected Philo's construction of Jerusalem.

First, and most importantly, Philo's central point of reference in interpreting the world is Jewish Scripture: it is the ideas, and sometimes the language, of the Greek Jewish Scriptures which dominate his outlook.<sup>20</sup> From the traditions of the Greek Bible, we may posit two influences behind the description of Jerusalem as mother-city of the Jews. In the first place, Scripture provides the roots of the image of Jerusalem as mother, an image which appears quite often in Second Temple period writings (Isa. 50.1; Ps. 86.5; 4 *Ezra* 9–10; Gal. 4.26) (*TDNT* 7.292–338; Murray 1975: 143–50). It is not difficult to see why this image should also have led to the concept of Jerusalem as a mother-city though, in fact, the term is only used of Jerusalem once in the Greek Bible, in a prophetic text about the city's future:

Καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα κληθήσῃ Πόλις δικαιοσύνης, μητρόπολις πιστῆ Σιων (LXX Isa. 1.26).

This translation, which is to be dated prior to Philo in the second century BCE (Harl *et al.*, 1988: 97), must have influenced later thinking about Jerusalem and its relationship with Jewish settlements elsewhere (Bar-Kokhva 1996: 246).

It must be granted that, prior to Philo, this amounts to very little evidence for Jews (or anyone else) calling Jerusalem a μητρόπολις. Nevertheless, the ancient Greek versions of Scripture provide much stronger evidence as to why Jews, especially ones like Philo who were immersed in the thought-world and language of Greek Jewish Scripture, might well make this identification. The crucial term here is ἀποικία, the word used by Philo in the *In Flaccum* and *Legatio* to refer to Jewish settlements outside Jerusalem. Philo's primary influence here is not Greek descriptions of colonization, but the language of the translators of the Greek Bible.<sup>21</sup> It was in the Greek versions of the histories of Israel and Judah that Philo found the usual translation of Hebrew terms for Jewish communities abroad (*galut*, *golah*) by the word used in conventional Greek usage to designate a colony (ἀποικία). Within this tradition, the Exile is conceived of in Greek terms as emigration, in which God sends out the emigrants.

As Méléze-Modrzejewski puts it, by using the language of colonization, the Greek Bible provides evidence for 'the assimilation of the idea of captivity to that of colonisation; in presenting the *golah* as a colony, [the translators] retrospectively aligned the Jewish past with the Greek past' (Méléze-Modrzejewski 1993: 70). But in the context of Hellenistic Egypt, the reality that Jews had indeed taken part in the colonial enterprise since the beginning of the Hellenistic period indicates that it is perhaps not surprising that the Jewish community should see itself in these terms: as Méléze-Modrzejewski suggests, with reference to Philo's statement in *In Flaccum* 46, 'The Jew's perception of his own history bears the mark of the Greek

20. This is true chiefly of the Pentateuch, to which Philo devotes most of his attention, but he also reveals explicit knowledge of other books including the accounts of the history of ancient Israel and Judah in the Books of Kings and Chronicles. This world of reference is not confined to the scriptural commentaries: the *In Flaccum*, for example, alludes to the curse in Deut. 28.67.

21. Against van Unnik 1993: 136.



example. The present dictates the interpretation of the past' (Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1993: 70).

Philo, like other Greek-speaking Jews of the Second Temple Period, follows in the tradition of the histories of the Greek Bible in conceiving of Jewish settlements outside the Holy Land as colonies.<sup>22</sup> (Except when he is citing the Greek Bible, Philo never applies the term διασπορά, coined by the translators of the Greek Bible to represent the banishment of the people in prophetic texts, to the Jewish community, probably because the idea of the 'scattering' of peoples was foreign to Greek idiom). Within a Hellenistic framework, colonies (ἀποικία) go together with mother-cities (μητροπόλεις); if Jews are colonists, they must also have a mother-city. The identification of the mother-city with Jerusalem is derived from Scripture since the *golah*, or in Greek-Jewish terms the ἀποικία, derives from that city. It is primarily in Scripture that we should look for the origins of Philo's reference to Jerusalem as μητρόπολις: the starting point, however, for this conceptualization is in the designation of communities outside Judaea as ἀποικία.

To claim the Greek Bible as the primary influence behind Philo's construction of Jerusalem as μητρόπολις is not, however, to exclude other sources of influence. Greek cultural tradition undoubtedly plays a part. For a person like Philo, steeped in Greek culture, it would come naturally to think of Jerusalem the Temple city as a μητρόπολις, since one of the distinctive features of Greek μητροπόλεις was that they were regarded, like Jerusalem, as sacred cities, founded by a divinity, with great temples. Philo uses the term ἱερόπολις, or 'sacred city', of Jerusalem in the same way.

A third and final factor which must also be taken into account in Philo's construction of Jerusalem as μητρόπολις may also reflect a more widespread practice among Jews who, like other members of Greek-speaking societies of the Roman Empire, were used to referring to capital cities as μητροπόλεις, especially ones with great temples, without necessarily associating them with colonization. In terms of Philo's own works, the designation μητρόπολις is rarely applied to Jerusalem and, apart from the passages already discussed, appears only in the *Legatio*.<sup>23</sup> In most of these examples, μητρόπολις refers to Jerusalem in ways that suggest that this was a normal way of speaking of the city. Thus, Philo reports that the emperor Gaius planned to set up a statue in 'the temple of the μητρόπολις' (*Legat.* 203). Agrippa's letter to Gaius refers to the city as the μητρόπολις as he reminds the

22. Prior to Philo, Hecataeus uses ἀποικία of the Hebrews' colonization of Jerusalem (Diodorus, 40.3); Josephus in *Apion* 2.38 refers to Jews in Alexandria and Antioch and elsewhere as colonists, contrary to Apion; see also Josephus's interpretation of Genesis in which God commanded the descendants of Noah, in view of the increasing population, to send out colonies (*Ant.* 1.110–12).

23. In terms of word-counting, μητρόπολις is not a very important word in Philo's writings apart from the *In Flaccum* and *Legatio* and is not used outside those works to refer to Jerusalem. In the allegorical treatises, Haran is described as 'mother-city' of the senses (*Somn.* 1.41); the land promised to Jacob (Gen. 28.13) is virtue, the heavenly abode which is the soul's metropolis (*Somn.* 1.174, 181) (sometimes πατρίς is also used in this sense); μητρόπολις is used in Philo's allegory of the Divine Word as mother-city for refuge (*Fug.* 94); and, finally, μητρόπολις appears in the context of Philo's commentary on the significance of the good man regarding himself as a sojourner in the body (*Conf.* 78).



emperor of past honours and protection granted to the city by Rome: the visit of M. Agrippa who came up 'from the coast to the μητρόπολις situated in the centre of the land' (*Legat.* 294); and Tiberius's order that Pilate remove offensive shields from the μητρόπολις to Caesarea (*Legat.* 305). And, finally, Gaius's order deals with the protection of people living outside the μητρόπολις who intend to set up cult places in their own localities (*Legat.* 334). In these examples, μητρόπολις functions sometimes casually as a way of referring to the city of Jerusalem as the capital of Judaea.

Significantly, though a generation later than Philo, Josephus employs μητρόπολις a great deal, especially of Jerusalem but also of other capital cities (e.g. Gadara of Peraea). I do not think that this reflects his dependence on Philo. Josephus's widespread application of μητρόπολις to Jerusalem suggests that this idea was acceptable among his likely readers, that at least some Jews were likely to think of Jerusalem in such terms, and that the idea had been around for long enough to gain such acceptance. Paraphrasing Leviticus's law on Tabernacles (*Lev.* 23), Josephus explains that it takes place in that city 'which because of the Temple they will have as a μητρόπολις' (*Ant.* 3.245). Here, clearly, Jerusalem is described as a μητρόπολις by virtue of its having a Temple. The vast majority of Josephus's references to Jerusalem as μητρόπολις refer to the time of the Jewish War, about thirty years after Philo's activity. Pro-Roman Jews and rebels alike are made to call Jerusalem the μητρόπολις. At the end of his speech urging his followers at Masada to embrace death rather than capture by the Romans, the rebel leader Eleazar laments the destruction of Jerusalem as the μητρόπολις of the whole Jewish people (Josephus, *War* 7.375). Particularly interesting are Josephus's descriptions of non-Judaeans such as John of Gischala and the Idumaeans who come to Jerusalem to join the rebel cause. The Idumaeans case is especially instructive. Jesus, an aristocratic priest, berates the Idumaeans in terms recalling the best known duty of colonists towards their mother-city: defence against the enemy (who, in this case, are other Jews):

Here...are you, come to assist these most abandoned of men...with such alacrity as was hardly to be looked for even had the mother-city (μητρόπολις) summoned you to meet a barbarian invasion (*War* 4.238).

The Idumaeans are reminded that the 'duty which has the highest claims on you is to defend the μητρόπολις' (*War* 4.258). The theme is also taken up by the leader of the Idumaeans: he accuses the priests of closing against 'this nation the city common to us all', of refusing 'to entrust to their kinsmen the protection of the mother-city' (*War* 4.274). These are Josephus's speeches, of course, providing certain evidence for nothing but his own point of view. But according to that view, chief priests and Idumaeans alike shared the view that Jerusalem was their common city and, like the Greek μητρόπολις, had a claim for protection on those who called it mother, and could summon its children to its defence, as their highest duty.

There remains the question of why Philo refers to Jerusalem as μητρόπολις only in his works on the events under Flaccus and Gaius. The answer, I suggest, is relatively simple, and lies in the fact that, in other writings, Philo either deals with



subjects having nothing to do with Jerusalem, or, as is the case for most of Philo's writings, he comments on the Pentateuch.

The Pentateuch makes no explicit reference to Jerusalem, only to 'the place' which Philo never identifies with any concrete place. The only time he does refer to Jerusalem by name, as we saw earlier, is in the interpretation of the city in Ps. 46.4 as the 'vision of peace' which the wise seek beyond the earthly realm (*Somn.* 2.250–51). Philo's Pentateuch-centric piety guides his conception of the holy land as a place to be journeyed towards: from the standpoint of the reader of the Pentateuch, it is a place not yet reached.

Philo may have been the first to articulate the concept of Jerusalem as mother-city, but in doing so he drew on traditions with strong roots in Jewish Scripture, in a language comprehensible to the Hellenistic world, and perhaps also, as Josephus's writings suggest, using a designation and understanding of Jerusalem that was current among first-century Jews. I do not believe, however, that Philo's mother-city/colony language expresses any sense that Jerusalem is the only genuine home for Jews in contrast with temporary fatherlands or colonies outside Judaea. I conclude that, in the writings of Philo, there is no tension between the notion of Jerusalem as mother-city and Alexandria as home.