THE JEWS OF PTOLEMAIC EGYPT
IN THE LIGHT OF THE PAPYRI

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ongoing under the directorship of Prof. Tal Ilan from the Freie Universität of Berlin and Prof. Noah Hacham from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The continuation of the work of V. A. Tcherikover, A. Fuks and M. Stern has long been the aim of different scholars. The late Itzhak F. Fikhman undertook the composition of CPJ IV decades ago, but his health conditions and death did not make possible the publication of his research work. His unfinished manuscript has been offered to Tal Ilan and Noah Hacham who, in the framework of the CPJ IV project, will finally publish all of Prof. Fikhman’s research with substantial reworking. The new volume will contain not only Greek papyri, but also Aramaic, Hebrew and Demotic texts. I am deeply indebted to Tal Ilan for giving me full access to Fikhman’s manuscript as well as to her own research material about the Jews of Egypt. Although I had already prepared my corpus of Jewish papyri before arriving to Berlin, I profited much from the research work of the above-mentioned scholars. There are some Greek papyri that escaped my attention when I was looking for Jewish papyri, and I am grateful to Tal Ilan to have drawn my attention to these texts: O.Ont.Mus. II 74, O.Eleph. DAIK 6, SB XXIV 16272, BGU XIV 2423 + BGU X 1938, P.Dion. 22 and P.Col. IV 77. Since the Demotic papyri related to Jews and Judaism had not been collected previously, I offered my Demotic material to the project with pleasure and prepared the documents for publication. Besides, Prof. Ilan entrusted me to rework the Ptolemaic Greek documentary papyri collected by Prof. Fikhman, which basically overlapped with my corpus and PhD topic. Prof. Fikhman’s notes were precious and thoughtful, thus, I mentioned his point of view several times in this thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Papyri, Ostraca:

All abbreviations for editions of papyri and ostraca are cited according to J. F. Oates et al. (eds.), Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets (BASP Suppl. 9, Oakville CT 2001), which is available and continuously updated online: http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html

Journals, periodicals:

Acta Antiqua  Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae
Aegyptus  Aegyptus, Rivista italiana di egittologia e di papirologia
AJP  Archiv für Papyrushreibung und verwandte Gebiete
AJPh  American Journal of Philology
AncSoc  Ancient Society
AOAW  Anzeiger der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften
BASP  The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists
BCH  Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique
Bibl.Orient.  Bibliotheca Orientalis
BIFAO  Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale du Caire
BSAA  Bulletin de la Société archéologique d’Alexandrie
BSER  Bulletin de la Société Ernest Renan
CdE  Chronique d’Égypte, Bulletin périodique de la Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth
Enchoria  Enchoria, Zeitschrift für Demotistik und Koptologie
Eph. Epig.  Ephemeris Epigraphica
ESE  Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik
EVO  Egitto e vicino oriente: Rivista della sezione orientalistica dell’Istituto di Storia Antica, Universita degli Studi di Pisa
Hellenika  Hellenika: philologikon, historikon kai laographikon periodikon sygramma
HTR  Harvard Theological Review
ICS  Illinois Classical Studies
IEJ  Israel Exploration Journal
JEAJ  The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JJJP  The Journal of Juristic Papyrology
JJS  Journal of Jewish Studies
JNES  Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JQR  Jewish Quarterly Review
JRSA  Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRS  Journal of Roman Studies
JSJ  Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Periods
JSP  Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
Kurzberichte  Kurzberichte aus den Giessener Papyrus Sammlungen
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maarav</td>
<td>Maarav, A Journal for the Study of the Northwest Semitic Languages and Literatures</td>
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<td>MDAIK</td>
<td>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo</td>
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<td>Mizraim</td>
<td>Mizraim, Journal of Papyrology, Egyptology, History of Ancient Laws and their Relations to the Civilizations of Bible Lands</td>
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<td>Mnenosyne</td>
<td>Mnenosyne-Bibliotheca Philologica Batava</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPAIBL</td>
<td>Mémoires présentés à l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</td>
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<td>NESE</td>
<td>Neue Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik</td>
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<td>OLA</td>
<td>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</td>
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<td>OLZ</td>
<td>Orientalistische Litteraturzeitung</td>
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<td>Orientalia</td>
<td>Orientalia, commentarii trimestres a Facultate Studiorum Orientis Antiqui Pontificii Instituti Bibliici in lucem editi</td>
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<td>OrSu</td>
<td>Orientalia Suecana</td>
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<td>PEFQS</td>
<td>Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement</td>
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<td>Philologus</td>
<td>Philologus, Zeitschrift für Antike Literatur ihre Rezeption</td>
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<td>PSBA</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology</td>
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<td>RdE</td>
<td>Revue d’égyptologie</td>
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<td>RAr</td>
<td>Revue Archéologique</td>
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<td>RB</td>
<td>Revue Biblique</td>
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<td>REG</td>
<td>Revue des Études Grecques</td>
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<td>REJ</td>
<td>Revue des études juives</td>
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<td>RÉS</td>
<td>Répertoire d’épigraphie sémitique</td>
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<td>RHJE</td>
<td>Revue de l’histoire juive en Égypte</td>
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<td>RpH</td>
<td>Revue de philologie</td>
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<td>Semitica</td>
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<td>Traditio</td>
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<td>Transeuph.</td>
<td>Transeuphratène, Recherches pluridisciplinaires sur une province de l’Empire achéménide</td>
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<td>TvR</td>
<td>Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis</td>
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<tr>
<td>TWWNT</td>
<td>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tyche</td>
<td>Tyche, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte, Papyrologie und Epigraphik</td>
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<td>Vetus Test.</td>
<td>Vetus Testamentum</td>
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<td>YCIS</td>
<td>Yale Classical Studies</td>
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<td>ZAC</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</td>
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<td>ZÄS</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde</td>
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<td>ZAW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<td>ZPE</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is the Jews of Ptolemaic Egypt in the light of papyrological sources. For such a study it is necessary to use or compile a papyrus corpus related to Jews and Judaism in Egypt. The first attempt to collect all the published and then known Jewish papyri and ostraca from Egypt was the still usable and indispensable Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum I-III edited by V. A. Tcherikover, A. Fuks and M. Stern, and published between 1957 and 1964. The first volume of this corpus contains papyri and ostraca from the Ptolemaic period (332-30 BCE), the second volume those from the Early Roman period (30 BCE-117 CE), and the third volume those from the Late Roman and the Byzantine period (117-642 CE). It is important to emphasize that Tcherikover and his co-editors collected only Greek documentary sources, i.e. they took neither Greek literary sources nor non-Greek material into consideration.

To write an up-to-date study on the Jews of Ptolemaic Egypt involving all the available sources, it was necessary to collect the new material that could not have been known to the editors of the CPJ. The main difference between the methodology of CPJ I and that of my corpus of Jewish papyri is that I included non-Greek material too: besides the Greek papyri and ostraca, there are several Aramaic and Demotic sources that are available to us. In my view it is important to take them into account because they contribute to a multicoloured picture of the Jews of Egypt.

First, some words about the corpus. When compiling a collection of papyri, one needs to follow a system of criteria. The main concern of the CPJ editors was to decide how to distinguish between “Jewish” and “non-Jewish” papyri. What makes a papyrus “Jewish”? Because of the relevance of the issue, I quote the criteria that were employed by the editors of the CPJ. The following papyri were considered “Jewish:”

1. Papyri and ostraca in which the word Ιουδαίος or Εβραίος appears.
2. Papyri and ostraca in which technical terms such as προσευχή or σάββαθα are attested, because they point to Jews or Judaism.

1 V. A. Tcherikover & A. Fuks & M. Stern, Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum I-III (Jerusalem 1957-1964), henceforth CPJ.
2 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. xvii-xix.
3. Papyri and ostraca originating from places that were known as exclusively Jewish settlements, for instance the Jewish quarter of Edfu.

4. Papyri and ostraca containing Jewish names.

When selecting the new material, I mostly followed these criteria, but sometimes I was more rigorous, especially in case of the third and fourth criteria. Concerning the third criterion, it must be noted that we do not know of any settlement that was exclusively inhabited by Jews. Moreover, in case of several papyri that were acquired by purchase, we simply do not know their provenance. Therefore, in my view, this criterion is difficult when looking for Jewish papyri. The fourth criterion is also problematic. Names as such will always remain the most uncertain criterion of identifying Jews, and yet, this is our commonest method in our research, since in several cases the sources do not refer to the ethnic origin of the people mentioned. Only a Hebrew name can be considered an unquestionable indicator of Jewishness. However, Jews carried not only Hebrew names, but also common Semitic, Greek and even Egyptian names in Ptolemaic Egypt. Any of these names should be treated with reservation as has also been done by the editors of the CPJ. Some instances enumerated by V. A. Tcherikover: Ὁνής is not a variant of Ὄνιας (חוני) but an Egyptian name (Ḥwn), Ἀρων is not the biblical Ἄρων (אהר) but the hypocoristic form of Grecized Egyptian names beginning with Ἀρ, and the names Σαλαμών or Μάλχος are not specifically Hebrew names but common Semitic names. People bearing such names are excluded from CPJ unless they are explicitly stated to be Jews.

In the case of Greek names, the criteria are, however, less rigid. Although Tcherikover notes that the Greek names should be treated with caution, he has accepted the Jewishness of Greek-named persons in the following cases:

1. When both father and son bear theophoric names.
2. When there are at least two or three people bearing theophoric or other uncertain (for instance common Semitic) names in the same document.

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4 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. xvii, where they note that Hebrew names, except for Sambathion, were never used by non-Jews in Egypt before the Christian era.
5 Ibid., p. xviii, n. 6.
6 Ibid., p. xix.
3. When the papyrus containing a theophoric name comes from a “place known as an important center of Jewish settlement.”

4. When the papyrus is dated to a period when the given theophoric name was preferred by Jews.

Besides, he considered the name Dositheos to have been an almost exclusively Jewish name. As a result of these criteria, several documents are included in the CPJ based on Greek theophoric names, occasionally in association with common Semitic names. It is true that the presence of two or three uncertainly Jewish names in the same text increases the probability of their Jewishness, but it still remains uncertain.

In my view, one needs to be even more rigorous when distinguishing between “Jewish” and “non-Jewish” papyri. Persons bearing Greek theophoric names are included in the present corpus only if they were relatives of certainly Jewish persons. In any other case, I have not identified them as Jews. I am aware of the fact that in this way, I may have excluded some texts referring to Jews, but it is more useful to use less, but certainly Jewish texts in our study. Following this system of criteria, I have collected 89 new texts that record Jews or can be linked to Jews or Judaism. These texts together with the CPJ documents constitute the basic material for the present study.

The intellectual questions of identity do not form part of this study for the following reasons: first, on these issues there exists an abundant secondary literature; secondly, the papyrological material is not appropriate for such a study. What we have at our disposal are mostly economic, administrative and legal documents, which are not necessarily informative about the cultural identity of the Jews mentioned. However, they constitute valuable evidence as to how these Jews lived in a culturally mixed society among Greeks, Egyptians and other immigrants, and how they arranged their public and private affairs. The thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 offers a general review of the available papyrological sources related to Jews. In order to remain coherent, I have reconsidered all the documents included in CPJ I and classified them either as “Jewish papyri” or as “doubtful Jewish papyri.” The reason why I have chosen this or that category concerning a given text is explained in footnotes. Following this system, I have excluded 54 CPJ documents from further study because their

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7 In this, I follow T. Ilan, who applied a quite rigorous criteria system in her Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity. Part III: The Western Diaspora 330 BCE-650 CE (Tübingen 2008).
8 This may be filial or marital. Although mixed marriages were frequent in Ptolemaic Egypt and the origin of the spouses is sometimes unclear, persons married to Jews should be taken into consideration in a corpus of Jewish papyri.
Jewishness is not convincing. Yet, even after removing these texts, there remain 185 papyrological sources at our disposal, which constitutes sufficient material for the study of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt. The relevant texts are listed in both chronological and geographical order so that the reader can gain a general view of the sources. Chapter 2 aims to provide a complete picture of the Jewish onomastics in Ptolemaic times. Since the names constitute our most important method of identifying Jews, this chapter can serve as a good starting point to understand the problems of identification and the general trends of Jewish onomastics too. Chapter 3 turns to social issues and studies the place of the Jews in the Ptolemaic army. The military service and the remuneration system were among the main reasons why the Jews immigrated to Egypt as early as the beginning of the Ptolemaic period. Chapter 4 continues to tackle social issues, and the focus is on the civil life of the Jews with a special interest in their professions and business affairs. Chapter 5 presents different aspects of Judaism that are recorded in the sources (Sabbath observance, synagogues). It also discusses the first signs of “anti-Judaism,” which emerged in Egyptian priestly circles. Finally, Chapter 6 is devoted to the study of the Jewish politeuma in Herakleopolis.

What becomes immediately clear when reading these papyrological sources is that the Jews of Egypt should not be regarded as members of a homogeneous community centered in Alexandria. To be clear, Alexandria was indeed the cultural center of the Egyptian Jewry as well as the home of the largest Jewish community in Ptolemaic Egypt, but regional differences certainly existed between the communities. This is well demonstrated in the choice of language for instance. V. A. Tcherikover emphasizes the change of language from Aramaic / Hebrew to Greek at the beginning of the Hellenistic period.\(^\text{10}\) This is indeed true, the dominance of the Greek language cannot be denied, but in my view, it is also important to point out that the community of Edfu further in the south continued to speak Aramaic.\(^\text{11}\) This was mainly due to the fact that the members of this community were not new immigrants influenced by Hellenism, but descendants of the former Aramaic-speaking military community that had once lived at Elephantine. This connection has convincingly been shown by S. Honigman based on naming practices, which undoubtedly reflect the local tradition of common Semitic names that were popular in the Persian period.\(^\text{12}\) Yet, in other parts of the country, Hellenism arrived quickly and the new immigrants adopted not only the Greek

\(^{10}\) V. A. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic civilisation and the Jews* (Philadelphia 1959), p. 347. Although he notes that the Semitic languages did not disappear, he finds negligible the importance of the Aramaic sources. I agree that the majority of the Jews switched to Greek, but to demonstrate the regional differences as well as the diversity of Egyptian Jewry, I find it important to study the Aramaic and the Demotic sources as well.

\(^{11}\) Further on this community see Chapter 1.2.1.7.

language, but also Greek names and the Greek law.\textsuperscript{13} The influence of Hellenism can be revealed in several areas. However, Hellenism was not the only culture to which the Jews were exposed in Ptolemaic Egypt. The ancient Egyptian culture was as strong as the Greek one, and its influence on the Jews has not yet been thoroughly investigated. This study is the first attempt to pay attention to the Egyptian sources, which show us that the Jews were actually influenced by the Egyptian culture too. However, it is important to emphasize that in spite of these influences, clear signs of Judaism can also be revealed in the documentary sources. There is firm evidence that at least some Jewish communities observed the Sabbath, founded synagogues, used the Septuagint, took biblical names and made references to the “ancestral laws.” Thus, the spectrum was wide, and the culturally mixed Ptolemaic society was able to accommodate all of these approaches.

Now, some words about the terminology. As far as possible, I attempt to be coherent, therefore I use the term “Jew” both to translate the ethnic designation Ἰουδαῖος and to denote members of the Jewish community in Egypt. Whether or not the English term “Jew” is appropriate for translating the Greek term Ἰουδαῖος has been the subject of continuous debate. It has been argued that the English term “Jew” is primarily a religious term and designates only persons practicing the Jewish religion, while the Greek term Ἰουδαῖος is originally an ethnic-geographic term and refers to members of an ethnic group living in or coming from the ancient land of Judea, which is why it should be translated as “Judean.”\textsuperscript{14} This is true, but I find it somewhat artificial to employ such a distinction in English because ancient sources do not distinguish between “Jews” and “Judeans.” Both the ethnic-geographic and the religious meanings are expressed by the ethnic designations יהוד (Yehud) and Ἰουδαῖος. The sources do not indicate that these ethnic-geographic terms underwent serious changes in the Hellenistic period and were supplemented by religious meaning. In Ptolemaic Egypt, the ethnic designations including the term Ἰουδαῖος expressed the ethnic background as well as the legal status of the people mentioned. The degree of their Jewishness in terms of religion is something that, in most cases, we cannot determine. Labeling someone “Judean” or “Jew” based on a lease contract for instance would be an arbitrary choice, thus, I use the term “Jew” to express the ethnicity of Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt.

\textsuperscript{13} Most of the documentary sources are written in Greek, not to speak of the abundant Hellenistic Jewish literature that flourished in Alexandria throughout the period, see the bibliography in Grabbe (2008).

\textsuperscript{14} S. J. D. Cohen, The Beginning of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties (Berkeley 1999), pp. 69-106. He argues that the term Ἰουδαῖος appears as a religious and political term for the first time only in the second half of the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE (2Macc 6:1-11) and that all the attestations of the term before this date should be translated as “Judean.” See also S. Mason, “Jews, Judeans, Judaizing, Judaism: problems of Categorization in Ancient History,” JSJ 38 (2007), pp. 457-512 with reference to earlier bibliography.
By the term Palestine, I refer to the geographical area that was under the rule of the Ptolemies throughout the IIIrd century BCE. The official name of this territory was “Syria and Phoenicia,” but this is a political term, which was valid only in the IIIrd century BCE. Therefore, following the editors of the CPJ, I employ the more general term Palestine.

Finally, some technical remarks: in the case of Greek proper names, I follow, as far as possible, the original writing of the names except for the kings, queens and well-known people, because their names are well established in English (for instance I use the form Ptolemy instead of Ptolemaios to denote the Ptolemaic kings). Egyptian names are mostly given in their Grecized forms, and rare Semitic names are vocalized according to the main edition of the texts. Also, when speaking of a certain name in general, I use its general English form (for instance Jacob instead of Iakoubis). Geographical names are transliterated according to the database of Trismegistos (http://www.trismegistos.org/geo/index.php).

\[15\] Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 5.
CHAPTER 1

Framework of the Study

The first volume of the CPJ consists of 141 numbered documents while in fact there are 150 texts because some papyri related to the same person have been edited under the same number, like for instance the fragments that were drawn up during Zenon’s journey in Judea (CPJ I 2a-e) or the documents that concern Dositheos son of Drimylos (CPJ I 127a-e). To this collection I have added 104 documents that were either published after CPJ I (1957) or not included in that corpus because their language was not Greek. By adding not only the newly published Greek papyri but also all the Aramaic and Demotic texts, 239 documentary sources are at our disposal to study the history of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt. In order to have a complete picture of all these sources I have prepared two different lists: the first one shows the chronological distribution, while the second one the geographical distribution of the papyri.

Nevertheless, it must be noted that the Jewishness of certain papyri included in CPJ I is uncertain, and thus, these documents are listed separately below. I do not claim that they are not Jewish, but the names based on which they were considered Jewish are either Greek names (although indeed preferred by Jews) or common Semitic names that could be borne by other Semites too. The problem of identification rises especially in case of tax receipts in which the taxpayers are usually recorded only by their names without the ethnic designation “Jew,” and the personal name is the only criterion for distinguishing a Jew from a non-Jew. Therefore, most of the doubtful texts are tax receipts from Upper Egypt. In his introduction to Section V, V. A. Tcherikover notes himself that he was “less rigid here as to the ‘doubtful’ names, like Dositheos, Simon, and even Theodoros, since some of these names appear in the ostraca in connection with Hebrew, and so we may suppose that even in cases when such connection is lacking the person in question was nevertheless a Jew.”16 This criterion is indeed less rigid than the one applied in general by the editors of the CPJ, and it can only be acceptable, in my view, when these doubtful names appear in connection with biblical names. As a result, those document in which a person is named for instance Simon son of Abdious

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(CPJ I 73) or Japheas son of Dositheos (CPJ I 95), are accepted as Jewish texts, but those in which we find a certain Simon son of Horaios (CPJ I 91) or Apollonios son of Dositheos (CPJ I 70-72), are listed as doubtful documents. I am aware of the fact that in this way some Jewish documents are probably excluded, but we are certainly on a more solid ground in our study.

The name Sabbataios/Sambathaios also requires some notes. It has traditionally been considered a uniquely Jewish name at least during the Ptolemaic period. This problematic name will be discussed later in detail, but it is important to note here that in this corpus the name Shabbethai/Sabbataios is not considered a uniquely Jewish name, and each person bearing this name is regarded as an “uncertain Jew,” if no other criterion is attached to their name (Jewish patronymic for instance). Therefore the papyri that were included in CPJ based on this name only are listed among the doubtful texts.

1.1. Chronological Distribution of Jewish Papyri

The table below shows well that most of the documents date from the IIIrd (99 texts) and IIrd century BCE (103 texts). Compared to these centuries the 1st century BCE is lacking papyri (10 texts), and the possible reason for this will be discussed below. By adding the Aramaic and Demotic sources it becomes clear that the traditional assumption according to which Jews used almost exclusively the Greek language during the Ptolemaic era cannot be held anymore. It is true that 158 texts (85,5 %) are still in Greek, but 16,5 (9 %) Aramaic and 10,5 (5,5 %) Demotic texts significantly contradict the language homogeneity. One ostracon (O.Dem.Wien 284) contains two texts (one in Aramaic and one in Demotic), which is why I listed them as two half documents. There are some other bilingual documents among our sources (O.Dem.Wien 129, O.Leid. 377, BGU VI 1454), but in those cases only the countersignature was written in a different language (Greek or Demotic), thus, they are counted as either Greek or Demotic texts according to their main language.

17 See Chapter 2.3.2.
18 See Chapter 1.1.2.
22 W. Schubart & E. Kühn (eds.), Papyri und Ostraka der Ptolemäerzeit (Berlin 1922), pp. 143-144.
1.1.1. *Brief summary of the political history of the Jews in Egypt*

The literary sources, which are definitely more informative about the Jewish history, will not be discussed here in detail since these documents have been widely studied and commented upon.\(^{23}\) However, a brief summary of the main political chronology will be useful in order to see how the documentary sources correlate with the literary ones.

The Ptolemaic period brought great changes in the history of the Jews of Egypt, because after the conquest of Alexander the Great (332 BCE) quite a few Jews emigrated from Palestine to Egypt. When did they arrive exactly? According to Josephus the emigration of the Jews began already under Alexander himself (sometime between 332 and 323 BCE),\(^{24}\) but this information is in general regarded as questionable. In *BJ* II 487 and CA II 35 Josephus claims that it was Alexander who gave the Jews permission to settle in Alexandria in return for their loyalty, based on their equal rights with the Greeks. Considering that Josephus wrote this with apologetic purposes and that no other sources support emigration of Jews under Alexander, it should be treated with reservations.\(^{25}\)

Other literary sources ascribe the arrival of the Jews to the reign of Ptolemy I Soter (323-282 BCE). Josephus quotes from the book of Hecataeus of Abdera,\(^{26}\) who claims that Ptolemy I Soter conquered Syria, and after the battle of Gaza in 312 BCE a group of Jews headed by the high priest Hezekiah followed Ptolemy I to Egypt. This testimony is usually considered to be reliable by scholars, but is still far from accurate because no other sources provide evidence of a high priest named Hezekias. Moreover, Ptolemy I is reported by other sources to have been very unkind to the people conquered.\(^{27}\) According to Agatharchides of

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\(^{24}\) Josephus, *BJ* II 487; CA II 35.


\(^{26}\) Josephus, CA I 186-189.

Cnidus, who is quoted again by Josephus,\(^28\) Ptolemy I Soter conquered Jerusalem by a trick on the Sabbath, after which the Jews were delivered to him and were led to Egypt. This tradition is supported by the so-called \textit{Letter of Aristeas} too,\(^29\) which reports that Ptolemy transported 100,000 Jewish prisoners to Egypt among whom he chose 30,000 men for the Ptolemaic army and placed them in military fortresses, while the women and children were sold into slavery. Although the number is certainly exaggerated, we may probably not be wrong in accepting that several Jews were deported by Ptolemy I from Palestine to Egypt. These early events of the history of the Egyptian Jews are unfortunately not supported by documentary sources: thus, we are forced to draw conclusions on the basis of literary sources.

It seems certain that the first wave of Ptolemaic period Jewish immigrants were forced to come to Egypt under Ptolemy I Soter, but it is also very likely that later on many more arrived voluntarily because Palestine was part of the Ptolemaic empire throughout the III\(^{\text{rd}}\) century BCE and people could migrate freely.

In the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos (282-246 BCE) Egyptian Jewry grew both in number and in importance. The center of the Jewish population was certainly Alexandria, which became the metropolis of the whole ancient world by the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. The two most important things that should be mentioned in connection with Jews are both preserved in the above-mentioned \textit{Letter of Aristeas}. First, we learn from the text that Ptolemy II freed all the Jewish prisoners who were deported from Palestine by his father as well as those who had already lived in Egypt.\(^30\) The second important thing is the main story of the \textit{Letter}, namely the translation of the Torah into Greek.\(^31\) According to the

\(^{28}\) Josephus, \textit{AJ} XII 5-60.


\(^{30}\) \textit{Letter of Aristeas} § 22-25. The author of the letter quotes a royal ordinance issued by Ptolemy II Philadelphos, which may or may not have been a forgery, it runs as follows: “All who served in the army of our father in the campaign against Syria and Phoenicia and in the attack upon the country of the Jews and became possessed of Jewish captives and brought them back to the city of Alexandria and the land of Egypt or sold them to others - and in the same way any captives who were in our land before that time or were brought hither afterwards - all who possess such captives are required to set them at liberty at once, receiving twenty \textit{drachmae} per head as ransom money.” According to Tcherikover there are several details that seem to be authentic (such as the language of the decree, which is typical of the Ptolemaic administration), but others (such as the high number of the liberated Jews) should be considered an exaggeration, see Tcherikover (1959), pp. 273-274.

\(^{31}\) The legendary story of the translation is also told in an abbreviated version by Josephus in \textit{AJ} XII 7-118, but his source was obviously the \textit{Letter} itself. Further on this see most recently A. Wasserstein & D. J. Wasserstein, \textit{The Legend of the Septuagint. From Classical Antiquity to Today} (Cambridge 2006).
text Ptolemy II Philadelphos intended to collect all the important works of the then known literature into the Great Alexandrian Library. The chief librarian was Demetrius of Phalerum at that time, who had previously heard about the Torah and suggested to the king to obtain it. He was, however, aware of the fact that it needed to be translated since it was written in Hebrew. Thus, the king decided to write to Eleazar, the high priest in Jerusalem, to let him know about his project. The high priest was delighted by Ptolemy’s request and sent seventy-two translators (six from each tribe) to Alexandria to translate the Torah into Greek. They were assembled on the island of Pharos, where they could work in peace, and the translation was finished precisely seventy-two days later. Ptolemy II appreciated the result and approved the Law of the Jews.

This story may have some truth in it, but it should be regarded as a historical legend. The Septuagint was indeed created in Egypt sometime in the IIIrd century BCE but the circumstances of the translation are unknown.\(^{32}\) J. M. Modrzejewski has convincingly argued that the Greek version of the Jewish Law should be regarded as the translation of a law book that was necessary from legal point of view. As he has shown, not only the laws of the Jews, but also the laws of the Egyptians were translated into Greek, and they were integrated into the Ptolemaic legal system.\(^{33}\) In the absence of royal regulations and ordinances (prostagma

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\(^{33}\) J. M. Modrzejewski, “La Septante comme nomos. Comment la Torah est devenue une ‘loi civique’ pour les Juifs d’Égypte,” in *Annali di scienze religiose* 2 (1977), pp. 143-158; English version: “The Septuagint as Nomos: How the Torah Became a ‘Civic Law’ for the Jews of Egypt,” in J. Cairns & O. Robinson, *Critical Studies in Ancient Law and Legal History. Essays in Honour of Alan Watson* (Oxford 1997), pp. 183-199. The same research is summarized in J. M. Modrzejewski (1995), pp. 99-112. The ancient Egyptians did not have a corpus of written laws, but according to a papyrus dated to the end of the IIIrd century BCE (P.Paris BN dem. 215) Darius ordered the satrap of Egypt to collect and codify all the Egyptian laws prior to the Persian conquest of 525 BCE. The codification of the laws was completed after sixteen years, and its result was two copies: one in Aramaic and one in Egyptian. There is good reason to assume that the text mentioned here is the same as the manual called “Demotic Legal Code” or “Demotic Case Book,” which was published more than once: G. Matthä & G. R. Hughes, *The Demotic Legal Code of Hermopolis West* (Cairo 1975); K. Donker van Heel, *The Legal Manual of Hermopolis* (P.Mattha), *Text and Translation* (Leiden 1990). This Case Book was not a code establishing general norms but a collection of special cases with practical instructions. Now, Modrzejewski has shown that a IIrd century CE papyrus (P.Oxy. XLVI 3285) can be considered the Greek translation of a variant of the “Demotic Case Book.” Although we do not know when the Case Book was translated into Greek, it is tempting to assume that it was done under the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. If so, the parallel between the two law books (the Demotic Case Book and the Torah) is noteworthy.
and *diagrammata*) the Jews, being Greek-speaking immigrants, were judged by the Greek dicasteries based on “civic laws” (*nomoi politikoi*). A juridical case attested in *CPJ I 128* (218 BCE) clearly demonstrates that the civic law of the Jews was most probably the Septuagint, the Greek Torah, which found its place among other civic laws in Ptolemaic Egypt. In this light, we may conclude that the true story of the Septuagint may lie somewhere in the middle: it was neither exclusively the result of a royal ordinance nor a necessary manual of the assimilated Egyptian Jews, but the two combined together. It was indeed necessary, but “the practical concerns of the monarchy were convergent with the religious needs of the Jews of Egypt” – as J. M. Modrzejewski formulates his conclusion. That the Torah was translated sometime in the IIIrd century BCE is also ascertained by some early Septuagint fragments attested on papyri. The oldest known manuscript of the Septuagint is *P.Rylands 458*, which has been paleographically dated to the IInd century BCE and which consists of eight fragments. *P.Fouad 266* originates from a bit later. It is the second oldest Septuagint fragment after *P.Rylands 458* since it has been identified as dating from the Ist or even IInd century BCE. It is believed that both manuscripts come from the Fayum, where Jewish synagogues were certainly found. It seems logical to assume that these early papyri were used by the communities in the synagogues. However, these papyri and other Septuagint fragments from the Ptolemaic period are not listed below, because they are literary sources, and thus, they do not form part of the present study.

In connection with the Jews under the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos, a bunch of Aramaic papyri from Upper Egypt (*TAD C3.28-TAD D11.26*) must be mentioned. They are not precisely dated, but based on paleographic grounds on the one hand, and the presence of Greek names on the other hand, they have been assigned to the IIIrd century BCE and provide evidence of an Aramaic-speaking Jewish community in Upper Egypt that survived the Macedonian conquest. The main concern of these papyri is the economic life of the Jews at Apollinopolis Magna, and the community does not seem to have been deeply affected by the

34 Further on this papyrus see Chapter 6.3.2.
Macedonian conquest. Apart from some Greek names nothing in the texts suggests that these documents were written in the Ptolemaic era.

The political events of the period are better reflected in the Greek papyri. The well-known Zenon archive is by far our best evidence for the political and economic relations between Egypt and Palestine (often called simply Syria in the archive) in the IIIrd century BCE. 39 Palestine was part of the Ptolemaic empire throughout the IIIrd century BCE, and these territories were closely connected. It is clear from the archive that the Ptolemaic kings kept Palestine under strict control. Zenon was an agent of Apollonios dioiketes, the minister of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. In 259 BCE he travelled to Palestine, and during his journey he visited many places such as Jerusalem, Jericho, Abella and Surabbit, the land of Toubias. 40 After his return to Egypt, Zenon brought many documents with him, and he even stayed in contact with some residents of Palestine. His archive was discovered in Philadelphieia where he later administered Apollonios’ gift estate, but he also conducted many private business affairs, thanks to which he became a wealthy man. The Zenon papyri are important not only regarding Palestinian Jews, but also regarding those who lived in Egypt, because these are the oldest Greek papyri mentioning Jews in Egypt. Most of the IIIrd century Greek papyri are from the Fayum, which is not surprising since this area was developed and enlarged by the first Ptolemies. The Jews like other soldiers of the Ptolemaic army received so-called kleroi (landholdings) after their military service and these lands were all located in the Fayum.

No literary sources have been preserved from the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222 BCE). However, based on documentary sources we can conclude that the Jewish population continued to flourish throughout the country. Jews were apparently allowed to build synagogues, since the earliest attestations of ancient synagogues in Egypt date from the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes. 41 At present, we know of two Jewish synagogues erected on his behalf: one in Schedia and one in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis. Although archeological remains of the buildings have not been preserved, two dedicatory inscriptions clearly show

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39 The Zenon archive is one of the most important archives from Ptolemaic Egypt. It contains almost two thousands edited papyri, but several fragments are still unpublished. Most of the documents related to Jews are included in CPJ I, but P.L.Bat. XX 35 and P.Lond. VII 2184 are two newly published papyri of the archive, while P.Iand.Zen. 52 is the reedition of CPJ I 3 completed by three fragments that belong to the same papyrus. For a detailed bibliography of the Zenon archive see P. W. Pestman, A Guide to the Zenon archive (P. L. Bat. 21, Leiden 1981).
40 A list of Zenon’s itinerary has been preserved in CPJ1 2.
41 It must be noted, however, that these attestations are epigraphical. No archeological evidence of synagogues has yet been unearthed in Egypt. Further on the synagogues in Egypt see Chapter 5.1.2.
that the Jews established synagogues in honour of king Ptolemy III and queen Berenice.\footnote{The two dedicatory inscriptions are \textit{CIJ} II 1440 = \textit{JIGRE} 22 and \textit{CIJ} II 1532a = \textit{JIGRE} 117 published most recently in W. Horbury and D. Noy, \textit{Jewish inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt} (Cambridge 1992), henceforth \textit{JIGRE}.} This means that the Jews became more and more organized and, by the time of Ptolemy III Euergetes, we can indeed speak of communities that gathered in the synagogues. They were, however, certainly not isolated from other immigrants because the documentary papyri dated to the reign of Ptolemy III come from the Fayum, and they show that Jews were in close commercial and/or social contact with both Greeks and Egyptians.\footnote{See for instance the \textit{P.Count} papyri (\textit{P.Count.} 2, 15, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 36, 42) or \textit{O.Dem.Wien} 129, \textit{CPJ} I 14, \textit{CPJ} I 15, \textit{CPJ} I 126, \textit{O.Leid.} 377, \textit{P.Count.} 2, \textit{CPJ} I 20, \textit{CPJ} I 19, \textit{SB} XX 14107, which are all dated to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes.}

The reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator (222-204 BCE) also lacks literary evidence, although the \textit{Third Book of Maccabees} ascribes to him the “story of the hippodrome.” The book has been preserved in some manuscripts of the Septuagint and is far from being a historical document.\footnote{The most important editions of the texts are the followings: M. Hadas, \textit{The Third and Fourth Book of Maccabees} (New York 1953, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed.: Philadelphia 1976); D. J. Constantelos, “The Third Book of the Maccabees,” in B. M. Metzger, \textit{The Apocrypha of the Old Testament, Revised Standard Version} (Oxford 1977), pp. 294-308; H. Anderson, “3 Maccabees,” in J. H. Charlesworth, \textit{The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha II} (London 1985), pp. 509-529; A. Passoni dell’Acqua, “Il terzo libro dei Maccabei, Introduzione, traduzione, note e bibliografia,” in P. Sacchi, \textit{Apocrifi dell’Antico Testamento IV} (Brescia 2000), pp. 573-664; E. Kautzsch, “Das sogenannte dritte Buch der Makkabäer,” in E. Kautzsch, \textit{Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des Alten Testaments I: Die Apokryphen des Alten Testaments} (Tübingen 1900, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed.: Hildesheim 2002), pp. 119-135; J. M. Mudrzejewski, \textit{Troisième Livre des Maccabées} (Paris 2008). See also N. Hacham, \textit{The Third Book of Maccabees: Literature, History and Ideology} (PhD thesis, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2002) [Hebrew]; N. Hacham, “3 Maccabees: An Anti-Dionysian Polemic,” in Jo-Ann A. Brant & Ch. W. Hedrick & Ch. Shea (eds.), \textit{Ancient Fiction: The Matrix of Early Christian and Jewish Narrative} (SBL Symposium Series 32, Atlanta 2005), pp. 167-183.} The story begins on the eve of the battle of Raphia in 217 BCE, in which Ptolemy IV Philopator defeated Antiochus III the Great, and he preserved his control over Palestine. From Raphia, Ptolemy is said to have marched to Jerusalem where he was impressed by the beauty of the Temple and wanted to see each part of it. When he intended to enter the Holy of Holies in spite of the disapproval of the high priest, he became paralyzed and, thus, was punished by God. After his return to Egypt, still angry with the Jews, he decided to take vengeance on their Egyptian compatriots. He issued a decree according to which the Alexandrian Jews were obliged to offer a sacrifice to Dionysos before entering a synagogue. Most of them did not obey, therefore they were all enslaved and transported to Schedia near Alexandria. They spent forty days in the hippodrome to be registered, but they were so numerous that the process was aborted. After this, five hundred drunken elephants were sent into the hippodrome to trample the prisoners to death, but then a miracle occurred. The elephants did not kill the Jews but turned against the spectators, and the Jews were saved...
by God. The king immediately annulled the decree and issued a second one in which he announced that he pardoned the innocent Jews.

This story is indeed interesting, and it certainly has some historical value. This is also ascertained by documentary sources, because a certain Dositheos son of Drimylos, a renegade Jew, who saved the king’s life on the eve of the battle of Raphia. The very existence of Dositheos son of Drimylos was already shown in CPJ I 127a-e, but we now have three new papyri (SB XX 14107, P.Berl.Dem. 3096 and SB XVIII 14013) documenting him as eponymous priest, which was the highest priestly office in Ptolemaic Egypt. Whether he was at the battle of Raphia or not is unknown, but these documents ascertain that he indeed existed and was an influential man of his time.

Josephus also knew the story of the hippodrome, but he placed this event in the time of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (145-116 BCE). According to him, after Ptolemy VI Philometor’s death Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (also called Physcon) left Cyrene to dethrone Cleopatra II and the late king’s son, Ptolemy VII, but Cleopatra was supported by Onias, the leader of the Jewish military settlement near Leontopolis, who took up an army against Ptolemy VIII. Ptolemy did not face Onias’ army, but, in response, arrested all the Jews of the city with their families and exposed them to be trampled to death by drunken elephants. The elephants, however, did not touch the Jews, but instead turned against Ptolemy’s friends. We may agree that the story is the same except for the chronological background in which it is placed. Which one shall we prefer? Tcherikover and Modrzejewski opted for Josephus’ version, because the event described fits better Ptolemy VIII’s time and attitude towards the Jews. It is true that he had more grounds to execute Jews than Ptolemy IV Philopator, but both stories should be treated with reservations.

The reign of Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204-180 BCE) did not yield any literary sources in connection with the Jews of Egypt. However, one important event happened during his reign, namely the loss of Palestine in 198 BCE. The battle of Raphia in 217 BCE was the last victory of the Ptolemies in their long war against the Seleucids, and Ptolemy V Epiphanes

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45 Further on Dositheos son of Drimylos see Chapter 4.2.
49 Josephus, CA II 49-55.
50 Kasher agrees with Tcherikover that Josephus’ account is more credible as a historical source than the Third Book of Maccabees, but he raises the possibility that the two episodes do not necessarily refer to a single event, see Kasher (1985), p. 9. The two episodes are so similar that Josephus obviously used the Third Book of Maccabees as his source for retelling the same story.
was just a child when he acceded to the throne in 204 BCE. Antiochos III took advantage of the chaotic political situation in Egypt and invaded Palestine again, while Ptolemy V Epiphanes had to face serious economic problems and rebellions in Upper Egypt.\textsuperscript{51} In order to focus on the solution of his internal problems, Ptolemy V was forced to sign a conciliatory treaty with Antiochos III in 195 BCE, which ratified the loss of Palestine. This event did not directly influence the life of the Egyptian Jews, but after the detachment, even more Jews emigrated from Palestine to Egypt.

Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BCE) was one of the most "philo-semite" kings among the Ptolemies. It was undoubtedly during his reign that the Jewish communities of Egypt reached their zenith. Where did his sympathy come from? The Ptolemies did not acquiesce to the loss of Palestine and they were continuously searching for possibilities to gain some influence on it. In this period, Palestine was part of the Seleucid empire. It faced struggles between "traditionalists" and "Hellenists," Antiochos IV Epiphanes’ new policies introduced in 167 BCE and, as a result of all these, came the revolt of the Maccabees (167-160 BCE).\textsuperscript{52} According to Josephus’ \textit{Antiquitates}, Onias III, who was the high priest of Jerusalem and who was against the Hellenization of Judea, was killed in ca. 171 BCE on the command of the Hellenist group. Onias’ son, Onias IV, continued the power struggle with the political rivals of his father, but he was defeated and fled to Egypt. When this happened exactly is a subject of debate, but most probably sometime in the 160s BCE. Onias found a loyal ally in Ptolemy VI Philometor and enjoyed his support. Onias did not only take part in the king’s political games, he also founded a military colony in the Delta, where he built a Jewish Temple known as Onias’ temple.\textsuperscript{53} The geographical problems of this temple will be discussed later: we now focus on chronology.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{51} The biggest uprising in Egypt broke out after the Fourth Syrian War that required enormous expenses from the state as well as the military service of some 20,000 Egyptian soldiers. That was the first time that native Egyptians were enlisted by the Ptolemies. The exploitation of the people led to the rebellion of the Egyptians, who established a domestic state in Thebes, which lasted 20 years until 186 BCE. As a result of this revolt, the Ptolemaic government placed Greek officers in the Thebaid and created the office of \textit{epistrategos} residing in Ptolemais. Further on this revolt with a detailed bibliography see G. Hölbl, \textit{Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches. Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Großen bis zur römischen Eroberung} (Darmstadt 1994); English version: \textit{A History of the Ptolemaic Empire} (London / New York 2001), pp. 153-159.

\textsuperscript{52} Further on the political events of this period see Davies & Finkelstein (1989), pp. 278-291. Some scholars argue that the Maccabean revolt was not an uprising against the Seleucid rule but a civil war between traditionalist and Hellenized Jews, in which Antiochos IV Epiphanes supported the Hellenized Jews and took reformist measures in their favour, see for instance J. R. Bartlett, \textit{The First and Second Books of Maccabees} (Cambridge 1973).

Josephus’ testimony raises some problems. As Tcherikover facetiously notes: “Josephus mentions the building of this Temple four times, and it is a pity that he did not do so only once, but with sufficient clarity and without contradicting himself.” The problem is that in the BJ he claims that the temple was founded by Onias III, the high priest in Jerusalem, who, after the desecration of the Jerusalem Temple by Antiochos IV, i.e., in 167 BCE, fled to Egypt. In the AJ, however, he ascribes the foundation of the Temple to the son of Onias III, namely to Onias IV, who, according to this version, left Jerusalem only after the death of Menelaus, when the high priesthood was given to Alcimus, i.e., in 162 BCE. Scholars have different opinions regarding the person of the temple builder, but the second version gained more support recently. Tcherikover convincingly argues that the first theory (that of Onias III as founder) cannot stand up under scrutiny and that AJ is more credible than BJ. Modrzejewski agrees that the Temple was founded by Onias IV, and he thinks that he did so in response to the profanation of the Temple in Jerusalem by Antiochos IV. It was during three years (from December 167 to December 164 BCE) that the Temple in Jerusalem was desecrated and then purified by the Maccabees. Even if the response to Antiochos IV was part of Onias’ ambitions, it is certain that he fled to Egypt to accomplish his own political goals too. He certainly wanted to take vengeance on the Hellenist group for Alcimus having been preferred to him as high priest (although Onias was the legitimate successor after his father). Whatever the precise goal of Onias in fleeing to Egypt was, he certainly made a good decision, because Ptolemy VI Philometor welcomed him and gave him permission to build a temple at Leontopolis. From a strategical point of view, the temple together with its military settlement was very important for Egypt since it was located in the eastern part of the Nile Delta. This was a geographically weak spot in Egypt because the country could easily be invaded from that direction. This may have been the reason why the importance of this Jewish settlement increased over the time.

We hear about Onias again cc. twenty years later, when - according to Josephus - Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II appointed Onias and his friend Dositheos as

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54 For the geographical issues see Chapter 1.2.1.3.
56 Josephus, BJ 133, VII 423.
commanders of the whole Ptolemaic army. Although it seems to be an exaggeration that they were leaders of the entire Ptolemaic army, they surely became influential military officials. Their role became especially important after Philometor’s death (145 BCE), when both the Alexandrians and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II rebelled against the widowed Cleopatra II and her son, Ptolemy VII. Onias remained loyal to Cleopatra, and entered Alexandria at the head of a little military troop to defend the queen. Kasher supposes that if Onias’ army had indeed been small, their attempt to protect the queen could only have been successful with the help of the Alexandrian Jews. With or without the support of the Alexandrian Jews, it is clear that Onias and his military troops took part in the political struggles, but they could not prevent Ptolemy VIII Physcon’s assumption of the throne, and he became king (145-116 BCE). Cleopatra II was forced to compromise with Ptolemy VIII in the form of a marriage and joint rule. Ptolemy VIII Physcon had sufficient grounds to hate the Jews, who were the clients of his late brother and his widow, and who ventured to oppose him. That is why most scholars agree to ascribe the story of the hippodrome told by the Third Book of Maccabees to the reign of Ptolemy VIII, and not to that of Ptolemy IV. If so, we may suppose that the miracle in the hippodrome happened in 145 BCE, right after Ptolemy VIII assumed the throne. Kasher suggests another possible date, namely 124 BCE following the civil war of 131-124 BCE. Around 131 BCE the people of Alexandria rioted against the royal family, because in the 130s Ptolemy VIII Physcon seduced and married Cleopatra III, the daughter of Cleopatra II without divorcing the mother. In this civil war, the whole country supported Ptolemy VIII and Cleopatra III except for Alexandria, which remained loyal to Cleopatra II. Presumably the Jews also supported Cleopatra II as they did twenty years earlier. In the end, Ptolemy VIII, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III all remained on the throne, and a general amnesty was issued in 116 BCE. That Ptolemy VIII forgave the Jews at some point in his reign is also obvious from two inscriptions, both being honorific dedications of synagogues. The first one was dedicated by the Jews in Nitriai (presumably present-day Wadi Natrun) “on

59 Josephus, CA II 49-55.
60 Kasher (1985), p. 9. That Onias’ troop and Cleopatra II were helped by the Jews of Alexandria is supported, in Kasher’s view, by the location of the Jewish quarter “Delta” in the vicinity of the royal palace.
61 But see Modrzejewski (1995), pp. 141-153, according to whom this is an explanatory myth, and both monarchs are good applicants. He studies three main points of the story: the Dionysianism of the king, the elephants and the census of the Jews. First, Ptolemy IV Philoptor was a great admirer of Dionysos, which is supported by C.Ord.Ptol. 29. Secondly, it is well-known that in the battle of Raphia Ptolemy IV Philopator used war elephants, and thus, their fearful presence in Alexandria fits better the time of Ptolemy IV than that of Ptolemy VIII. Thirdly, it is quite probable, in Modrzejewski’s view, that a census took place before the Fourth Syrian war, as was normal in periods of war, mainly to increase taxes and to cover the expenses of the war. Jews traditionally did not like to be counted, and this fearsome event may have left its trace on the book.
behalf of king Ptolemy and queen Cleopatra the sister and queen Cleopatra the wife.”

The foundation of a synagogue, as that of any other religious building, needed the approval of the king. Had Ptolemy VIII still been angry with the Jews, he would not have given his permission. The second inscription is from Xenephyris (present-day Kom el-Akhdar), and the dedication was made again on behalf of Ptolemy VIII, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III.

Regarding the relationship between Ptolemy VIII and the Jews, even more important is the fact that in his reign the Jews certainly had at least one (but presumably more) politeumata in Egypt. The politeuma archive, which contains twenty Greek papyri, documents a Jewish politeuma in Herakleopolis Magna between 144 and 133 BCE (P.Polit.Iud. 1-20). With the publication of this archive it seems certain that Ptolemaic politeumata were ethnic organizations with leaders (archontes), who were entitled to enforce protective measures, but not to take legal decisions. Jews, as other immigrants, were judged by the Greek dicasteries, but they could petition the archons of the politeuma to enforce their rights. Unfortunately, the documents do not reveal when this politeuma was founded, but it is reasonable to assume that they existed even earlier.

To conclude, we may assume that the IInd century BCE was a very eventful one. The life of the Jewish communities flourished throughout Egypt, especially in the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor. They became active participants of the political life as well as loyal supporters of Ptolemy VI and Cleopatra II, and they were granted the right of forming politeumata similarly to other military groups. However, all these also suggest the decline of the royal power, and that the government was in need of these forces. The documentary sources present rich material regarding the IInd century BCE Egyptian Jewry. Including the politeuma archive, 91 texts date from this century. It is important to note that most texts are written in Greek, which does not mean that Aramaic disappeared entirely, but it certainly became less important. It is probable that the Aramaic-speaking communities slowly switched to Greek because our sources from Upper Egypt are now all in Greek or in Demotic. Most of these sources are tax receipts written on ostraca, which were naturally drawn up in one of the two administrative languages of the country.

The end of the IInd and the beginning of the Ist century BCE was marked by serious royal struggles, which weakened Egypt so much that the country became a protectorate and a

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63 CIJ II 1442 = JIGRE 25.
64 CIJ II 1441 = JIGRE 24.
puppet of Rome.\textsuperscript{66} Ptolemy VIII Physcon, on his death in 116 BCE, left the country to his wife Cleopatra III and to one of their sons. Cleopatra, under the pressure of the Alexandrian people, chose his elder son, Ptolemy IX Lathyris. The Jews remained loyal to Cleopatra III, and as Josephus claims, in exchange of this loyalty, the queen appointed Chelkias and Ananias, the sons of Onias IV, high officers in her army.\textsuperscript{67} This loyalty proved to be very useful later, when Cleopatra sent Ptolemy IX away, and took Ptolemy X Alexander I, her younger son, as her coregent (114/113 BCE). The Alexandrians were enraged by this, and a new civil war broke out. In this war, Ptolemy IX Lathyris was supported by the Seleucids.\textsuperscript{68} Although Chelkias was killed in a battle, Ananias continued to command Cleopatra’s army, and he was entitled to advise the queen. During her campaign Cleopatra III besieged Ptolemais (present-day Acre), where she was approached by Alexander Janneus, king of Judea. Some of her friends wanted to persuade her that she should invade Janneus’ country, but Ananias managed to convince her that this would be an “unjust action.”\textsuperscript{69} Had Cleopatra indeed tried to reconquer the long-lost territory of the Ptolemies, she would have certainly offered a high position to Ananias. It is unknown why Ananias refused the attack, but he certainly took into account the political situation.\textsuperscript{70} What is certain is that Ananias indeed held an important advisory position and influenced greatly the queen’s decisions. Cleopatra finally defeated Ptolemy IX Lathyris, and she presumably enhanced the status of the Jews in Egypt. Nevertheless, the growing power of the Jews may have displeased many people, and generated anti-Jewish feelings.

In the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE there were two other instances in which Jews intervened in the political decisions of Egypt, and both of them are related to the Oniad settlement at Leontopolis. The first one occurred in 55 BCE. Ptolemy XII Auletes (80-58 BCE, 55-51 BCE), who was more a Roman puppet than a king, was not beloved by the Alexandrians. In 58 BCE the people of Alexandria rebelled against Ptolemy XII Auletes and the Roman influence over their country, and forced Ptolemy to leave the city. The Jews were certainly


\textsuperscript{67} Josephus, AJ XIII 284-287, where Josephus cites Strabo to reinforce his story. See also Tcherikover (1959), p. 283; Kasher (1985), p. 11. In addition, there is a very fragmentary inscription (CII II 1450 = JIGRE 129) that mentions Chelkias strategos, but it is uncertain whether it refers to our Chelkias or to a homonymous Jew. Furthermore, see SB XIV 11269, which is a papyrus attesting another Chelkias strategos, but the problem is that on paleographic grounds it can be dated to no earlier than the mid-first century BCE – which is later than our period.

\textsuperscript{68} On this war see E. van’t Dack et al., The Judean-Syrian-Egyptian Conflict of 103-101 B.C. A Multilingual Dossier Concerning a “War of Sceptres” (Brussels 1989).

\textsuperscript{69} Josephus, AJ XIII 353-354.

\textsuperscript{70} Further on this see Bohak (1996), pp. 32-34.
involved in the fights, and presumably on the side of Ptolemy XII. In 55 BCE the Roman proconsul of Syria, Gabinius wanted to enter Egypt to restore Ptolemy XII Auletes to the throne, and the Jews, who guarded the post at Pelusium, opened the gate to him, because he enjoyed the support of Antipater the Idumean (Herod the Great’s father), who ordered the Jews to let him through the border.71 More or less the same occurred in 48/7 BCE during the Alexandrian war, when Julius Caesar was in Alexandria. He was waiting for his auxiliary troops marching from Pergamon to Egypt and led by Mithridates and Antipater, Herod’s father. Although they besieged Pelusium, in the land of Onias they were stopped by the Jews. Antipater assured the Jews that they enjoyed the support of Hyrcanos II, the high priest in Jerusalem, which is why they let the troops march through their land.72 These stories are the last ones telling us something about the history of the Jews in the last decade of the Ptolemaic period.

None of these events are preserved in documentary sources, and in general it is striking how few sources (10 texts) are at our disposal from the 1st century BCE. This under-representation of the Jews during the last century of the Ptolemaic rule does not reflect the real situation since there is no reason to suppose that their number decreased at that time. As we may have seen, the situation is quite the contrary. In line with the decline of the Ptolemaic rule, their military importance became more pronounced, and the rulers, especially Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III, heavily depended on their support. All this suggests that in the course of time the Jews grew in importance and supposedly also in number, but unfortunately the literary sources cannot be confirmed by documentary papyri. This under-representation is partly due to the fact that the ethnic designations, which constituted the most secure method of identifying Jews, decreased in the 2nd century BCE, and disappeared by the 1st century BCE. This means that in the 1st century BCE Jews can be identified only based on their biblical names. Thus, they certainly did not decrease in number, but bearing Greek names they simply became unrecognizable in the documentary sources. We may only hope that in the future further papyrological evidence will reveal more about Jews living in the 1st century BCE.

72 Josephus, AJ XIV 131-132; BJ I 190; CA II 61. See also Bohak (1996), pp. 35-36.
1.1.2. List of Jewish papyri according to date

IIIrd century BCE

1. *CPJ I 18* (April 260 BCE – Phebichis, Herakleopolite nome)
3. *CPJ I 2a* (259 BCE – Palestine)
4. *CPJ I 2b* (259 BCE – Palestine)
5. *CPJ I 2c* (259 BCE – Palestine)
6. *CPJ I 2d* (259 BCE – Palestine)
7. *CPJ I 2e* (259 BCE – Palestine)
8. *CPJ I 3* (259 BCE – Palestine)
9. *CPJ I 35* (259/8 BCE – Fayum)
10. *CPJ I 6* (5 April 258 BCE – Palestine)
11. *CPJ I 4* (12 May 257 BCE – Transjordan)
12. *CPJ I 5* (12 May 257 BCE – Transjordan)
13. *CPJ I 7* (257 BCE – Berenike Hormos, Fayum)
14. *CPJ I 8* (256 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
15. *CPJ I 9a* (17 September 253 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
17. TAD D8.13 (23 March 252 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
18. CPJ I 9b (250 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
19. CPJ I 10 (Probably 282-246 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
20. CPJ I 12 (Probably 282-246 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
21. CPJ I 13 (Probably 282-246 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
22. CPJ I 16 (Mid-III\textsuperscript{rd} BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
23. CPJ I 17 (Mid-III\textsuperscript{rd} BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
24. CPJ I 125 (Mid-III\textsuperscript{rd} BCE – Fayum)
25. P.Count. 26 (254-231 BCE – Trikokia, Fayum)
26. P.Count. 27 (254-231 BCE – Anoubias, Fayum)
27. P.Count. 29 (254-231 BCE – Trikokia, Fayum)
28. P.Count. 31 (254-231 BCE – Anoubias, Fayum)
29. P.Count. 34 (254-231 BCE – Fayum)
30. P.Count. 36 (254-231 BCE – Fayum)
31. P.Count. 42 (254-231 BCE - Fayum)
32. SB XXIV 16272 (275-226 BCE – Sakkara)
33. P.Col. IV 77 (248-245 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
34. O.Dem.Wien 129 (29 July 244 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
35. CPJ I 14 (7 March 241 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
36. CPJ I 15 (20 January 240 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
37. CPJ I 126 (238/7 BCE – Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
38. O.Leid. 377 (2 August, 235 BCE? – Unknown provenance)
39. P.Count. 2 (16 June-15 July 229 BCE – Ghoran)
40. CPJ I 20 (228-221 BCE – Tebtynis, Fayum)
41. CPJ I 19 (226 BCE – Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
42. SB XX 14107 (17 November 223 BCE – Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
43. CPJ I 127d (5 February 222 BCE – Arsinoe, Fayum)
44. CPJ I 127e (January/February 222 BCE – Tholthis)
46. SB XVIII 14013 (5 June 222 BCE – Fayum)
47. P.Sorb. III 103 (16 January 221 BCE – Mouchis, Fayum)
48. CPJ I 38 (11 May 218 BCE – Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
49. CPJ I 128 (11 May 218 BCE – Magdola, Fayum)
50. CPJ I 129 (11 May 218 BCE – Alexandrou Nesos, Fayum)
51. *P.Lille.Dem.* II 94 (14 April-13 May 216 BCE – Ghoran)
52. *CPJ I* 21 (20 August 210 BCE – Apollonias, Fayum)
53. *CPR* XVIII 7 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
54. *CPR* XVIII 8 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
55. *CPR* XVIII 9 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
56. *CPR* XVIII 11 (December 207-January 206 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
57. *CPJ I* 22 (12 August 201 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
58. *CPJ I* 33 (III BCE – Psenyris, Fayum)
59. *CPJ I* 39 (III BCE – Fayum)
60. *CPJ I* 112 (III BCE – Upper Egypt)
61. *O.Heid.* 1 (III BCE – Unknown provenance)
62. *P.Petrie* III 90 (III BCE – Fayum)
63. *P.L.Bat.* XX 35 (III BCE – Philadelpheia, Fayum)
64. *P.Lond.* VII 2184 (III BCE – Philadelpheia, Fayum)
65. *TAD* C3.28 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
66. *TAD* D1.17 (III BCE – Upper Egypt, probably Apollinopolis Magna)
67. *TAD* D8.3 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
68. *TAD* D8.4 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
69. *TAD* D8.5 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
70. *TAD* D8.6 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
71. *TAD* D8.7 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
72. *TAD* D8.8 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
73. *TAD* D8.9 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
74. *TAD* D8.10 (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
75. *TAD* D7.55 (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
76. *TAD* D7.56 (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
77. *TAD* D7.57 (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
78. *CPJ I* 40 (III-II BCE – Trikomia, Fayum)\(^{73}\)
79. *CPJ I* 113 (III-II BCE – Upper Egypt)
80. *TAD* D8.11 (III-II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)

\(^{73}\) *CPJ I* 40 is a fragment of an account, and the only possibly Jewish name in it is Marion. It is true that the root mar, on which this name is formed, is Aramaic, but Marion, as a female name, is attested only in Egypt and in Cyrenaica. It was most probably a variation of the biblical name Mariam. This text is from the region of Trikomia similarly to other taxlists (*P.Count.* 26-42) in which the name Marion is recorded with certainly Jewish people. Therefore, I am inclined to accept Tcherikover’s decision to consider, in this case, Marion a Jewish woman.
81. TAD D9.15 (III-II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
82. P.Count. 15 (III-II BCE – Boubastos, Fayum)
83. O.Petrie Pl. 24 (III-II BCE – Tell el-Yehudiyeh)
84. O.Ont.Mus. II 74 (III-I BCE – Diospolis Magna)
85. CPJ I 109 (III-I BCE – Upper Egypt)

II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE

86. P.Heid. VIII 417 (19 November 190 or 17 February 189 BCE – Herakleopolis)
87. P.Mich. XVIII 781 (186/5 BCE – Fayum)
88. CPJ I 130 (183 BCE – Ibion Argaiou, Fayum)
89. CPJ I 23 (4 November 182 BCE – Krokodiopolis, Fayum)
90. BGU X 2009 (22 December 179 BCE – Unknown provenance)
91. BGU XIV 2381 (2 August 176 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
92. CPJ I 24 (16 April 174 BCE – Trikomia, Fayum)
93. CPJ I 25 (24 September 173 BCE – Hephaistias, Fayum)
94. CPJ I 26 (172/1 BCE – Fayum)
95. CPJ I 48 (171/170 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
96. BGU VI 1454 (30 March 167 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
97. CPJ I 50 (10 September 165 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
98. CPJ I 132 (21 September 164 BCE – Serapeion, near Memphis)
100. CPJ I 73 (26 June 162 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
101. SB XX 14976 (29 March 161 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
102. CPJ I 49 (4 May 161 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
103. O.Dem.Bodl. 686 (8 February 160 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
104. CPJ I 74 (22 September 160 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
105. CPJ I 75 (160/159 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
106. CPJ I 77 (30 March 158 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
107. CPJ I 27 (12 June 158 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
108. O.Dem.Brooklyn 12768-1672 (9 February 156 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
109. CPJ I 104 (27 July 156 BCE – Upper Egypt)
110. CPJ I 86 (27 and 29 November 156 BCE and 30 March 155 BCE – D. Magna)
111. CPJ I 78 (30 March 155 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
112. CPJ I 100 (155/4 BCE – Upper Egypt)
113. CPJ I 28 (155 or 144 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
114. CPJ I 66 (23 November 155 BCE or 20 November 144 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
115. CPJ I 105 (155 or 144 BCE – Upper Egypt)
116. CPJ I 87 (9 April 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
117. CPJ I 89 (1 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
118. BGU XIV 2453 (27 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
119. CPJ I 61 (14 September 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
120. P. Diosk. I (16 October 154 BCE – Herakleopolis)
121. CPJ I 117 (c. 154 BCE – Upper Egypt)
122. CPJ I 101 (154/3 BCE – Upper Egypt)
123. CPJ I 102 (154/3 BCE – Upper Egypt)
124. CPJ I 107 (154/3 BCE – Probably Diospolis Magna)
125. CPJ I 90 (12 February 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
126. O. Wilck. II 731 (9 July 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
127. CPJ I 133 (17 July 153 BCE or 15 July 142 BCE – Samareia?, Fayum)
128. CPJ I 64 (24 September 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
129. CPJ I 62 (2 December 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
130. O. Mattha 233 (153/2 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
131. P. Köln. III 144 (2 February 152 BCE – Alexandrou Nesos, Fayum)
132. CPJ I 63 (27 March 152 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
133. CPJ I 42 (152 or 141 BCE – Unknown provenance)
134. CPJ I 79 (19 June 151 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
135. CPJ I 65 (20 June 151 – Diospolis Magna)
136. O. Heid. 18 (151/150 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
137. BGU XIV 2423 + BGU X 1938 (ca. 150 BCE – Unknown provenance)
138. CPJ I 29 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
139. CPJ I 30 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
140. CPJ I 41 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum or Herakleopolis)
141. SB XXVI 16801 (24 August 147 or 21 August 136 BCE – Phenebeius)
142. P. Polit. Iud. 17 (February 143 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
143. P. Polit. Iud. 15 (143-132 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
144. P. Polit. Iud. 16 (143-132 BCE – Herakleopolite nome?)
146. *P. Polit. Iud.* 18 (30 September 142 BCE – Peenpasbytis)
148. *P. Polit. Iud.* 3 (140 BCE – Herakleopolis)
149. *P. Polit. Iud.* 10 (138/7 BCE – Herakleopolis)
150. *P. Polit. Iud.* 13 (June/July 135 BCE – Herakleopolis)
151. *P. Polit. Iud.* 12 (6 July 135 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
152. *P. Polit. Iud.* 1 (7 October 135 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
154. *P. Polit. Iud.* 14 (July 135 or July 134 BCE – Herakleopolis)
156. *P. Polit. Iud.* 6 (March 134 BCE – Herakleopolis)
157. *P. Polit. Iud.* 7 (June/July 134 BCE, Herakleopolis)
158. *P. Polit. Iud.* 4 (134 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
159. *P. Polit. Iud.* 8 (15 March 133 BCE – Herakleopolis)
160. *P. Polit. Iud.* 11 (133/2 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
162. *PSI* Congr. XVII 22 (114 or 78 BCE – Fayum)
163. *P. Rein.* I 10 (13 February 111 BCE – Hakoris)
164. *CPJ* I 43 (II BCE – Philadelpheia, Fayum)
165. *CPJ* I 47 (II BCE – Fayum)
166. *CPJ* I 95 (II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
167. *CPJ* I 114 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
168. *CPJ* I 118 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
169. *CPJ* I 135 (II BCE – Thebais)
170. *O. Eleph. DAIK* 6 (II BCE - Elephantine)
172. *CPJ* I 134 (Late II BCE – Arsinoe, Fayum)
173. *CPJ* I 46 (II-I BCE – The Syrian Village, Fayum)
174. *CPJ* I 103 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
175. *CPJ* I 120 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
176. *CPJ* I 121 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
1st century BCE

177. *O.Camp.* 1925.103 (14 July 94 or 5 July 51 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
178. *O.BM* 25139 (12 April-11 May 91 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
179. *CPJ* I 136 (12 August 51 BCE – Herakleopolites)
180. *CPJ* I 137 (6 November 50 BCE – Probably Herakleopolites)
181. *CPJ* I 140 (8 October 49 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
182. *CPJ* I 141 (First half of I BCE – Unknown provenance)
183. *CPJ* I 138 (Second half of I BCE – Unknown provenance)
184. *CPJ* I 139 (I BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
185. *SB* XIV 11269 (I BCE – I CE – Herakleopolite nome?)

1.1.3. *List of doubtful Jewish papyri according to date*

IIIrd century BCE

186. *CPJ* I 11 (Probably 282-246 BCE – Philadelphia, Fayum)\(^{74}\)
187. *CPJ* I 127b (246-203 BCE – Magdola, Fayum)\(^{75}\)
188. *CPJ* I 36 (23 January 240 BCE – Boubastos, Fayum)\(^{76}\)
189. *CPJ* I 127a (240 BCE – Philadelphea, Fayum)
190. *CPJ* I 127c (225/4 BCE – Hibeh, Fayum)
191. *CPJ* I 37 (28 January 222 BCE – Heraklea, Fayum)\(^{77}\)

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\(^{74}\) *CPJ* I 11 is an account of barley that was included in *CPJ* I based on the name Chanounaios. According to the editors this name could be derived either from Χανάαν (Χανάαν in LXX) or from חנניה (Ἀνανίας), and they prefer the second option since it was a well-attested Jewish name in Egypt. This might be true, but the orthography of the name is unusual, which is why Ilan questions the Jewishness of this person (2008, p. 92, n. 12). Honigman (1995) does not mention this name in her list of Semitic names.

\(^{75}\) *CPJ* I 127 a, b and c are three papyri considered to be related to Dositheos son of Drimylos, the famous renegade Jew. This assumption is, however, uncertain because the patronymic Drimylos appears in none of these documents. Based on the single name Dositheos, it is, in my view, impossible to accept the identification.

\(^{76}\) The inclusion of *CPJ* I 36, which is a fragment of a property-declaration, was based on the name Ieab, but see Honigman (1995, p. 86) according to whom the identification of this name with the biblical יֶהוֹב is impossible. She thinks that Ieab was an Aramaic name attested among other Semitic people too. Ilan (2008, p. 105) also expresses her doubts about the Jewishness of this name.

\(^{77}\) This is a petition concerning a contract of lease written by Theodotos, Gaddaios and Phanias. As is also noted by Tcherikover & Fuks (1957, p. 184, n. 1), Gaddaios is a common Semitic name used by other Semites too (such as Arabs or Syrians). Theodotos, a Greek theophoric name, was indeed favoured by Jews, but it cannot be considered an indicator of Jewishness. Further on this document see Honigman, “The Birth of a Diaspora: The Emergence of a Jewish Self-Definition in Ptolemaic Egypt in the Light of Onomastics,” in S. J. D. Cohen & E. S. Frerichs, *Diasporas in Antiquity* (Atlanta 1993) pp. 93-127 at pp. 110-113. The third person, Phanias was not necessarily Jewish either, see Ilan (2008), p. 147, n. 6.
192. *CPJ* I 34 (III BCE – Fayum)\(^78\)
193. *CPJ* I 96 (III-II BCE – Ombos) Sabdaio\(^79\)
194. *CPJ* I 97 (III-II BCE – Upper Egypt)\(^80\)
195. *CPJ* I 122 (III-I BCE – Upper Egypt)

II\(^\text{nd}\) century BCE

196. *CPJ* I 119 (16 August 191/190 BCE – Upper Egypt)
197. *CPJ* I 131 (11 December 178 BCE or 8 December 167 BCE – Fayum)\(^81\)
198. *CPJ* I 98 (28 June 161 BCE – Upper Egypt)\(^82\)
199. *CPJ* I 76 (159 or 92 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
200. *CPJ* I 80 (11 January 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)\(^83\)
201. *CPJ* I 81 (6 March 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
204. *CPJ* I 84 (14 July 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
205. *CPJ* I 85 (7 July 156 BCE – Diospolis Magna)\(^84\)
206. *CPJ* I 108 (155/4 BCE – Diospolis Magna)\(^85\)

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\(^78\) This document was considered Jewish based on the name Sabathis, the female form of Shabtai/Sabbathaios, on which see Chapter 2.3.2. Both Sabathis and Sabbathaios are problematic and cannot be considered an indicator of Jewishness.

\(^79\) *CPJ* I 96, just as *CPJ* I 122 and *CPJ* I 119, is a tax receipt for the epigraph that Sabdaio\(s\) son of Ptolemaio\(s\) measured into the granary on behalf of Ombites. Tcherikover assumes that Sabdaios was either an unusual form for Zabdaios or a mistake for Sabbathaios. In the first case he might have been a Syrian too, and the second name is also problematic, thus the Jewishness of this person is doubtful.

\(^80\) The receipt was included in the *CPJ* based on the name Sambathaios, which cannot be considered an indicator of Jewishness, further on this name see Chapter 2.3.2.

\(^81\) As is noted by Tcherikover himself, there is no evidence that Theodotos son of Dositheos was Jewish. Yet, because of the coincidence of two theophoric names this text is included in *CPJ* I. Identification of Jews based on Greek theophoric names is not accepted in this corpus. Following this concept, not only this document but several others containing names such as Dositheos, Theodoros or Theodotos are not considered certainly Jewish texts. These are the following (in the same chronological order as they are listed above): *CPJ* I 76, 81, 82, 83, 84, 106, 169, 31, 32, 70, 71, 72 and 111.

\(^82\) *CPJ* I 98 is a tax receipt issued to Iapheas, who is considered Jewish by the editors. This name is indeed recorded in the Bible for a son of David (2 *Sam* 5:15), but also for the Canaanite king of Lachish (*Josh* 10:3), and the form *yf* is a recorded name for Arabs, see Ilan (2008), pp. 696-697, n. 1. Therefore, it is not certain that this person was Jewish. Honigman (1995) does not list this name in her work.

\(^83\) The name Abdaios, which is attested both in *CPJ* I 80 and in *CPJ* I 32, is formed on the root הש. This was common for all the Semites, therefore it cannot be an indicator of Jewishness, see Honigman (1995), p. 36 and Ilan (2008), pp. 142-143.

\(^84\) Theochrestos son of Salamis attested in *CPJ* I 85 was not certainly Jewish. The Greek form Salamis may correspond either to הש or to הש, and both were popular among other Semites too, for this name see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 201; Honigman (1995), p. 137; Ilan (2008), pp. 160-161. The same holds true for *CPJ* I 68 and 45.
207. \textit{CPJ I} 99 (155 or 144 BCE – Upper Egypt)
208. \textit{CPJ I} 51 (155/4 BCE – Diospolis Magna)\textsuperscript{86}
209. \textit{CPJ I} 52 (7 February 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
210. \textit{CPJ I} 53 (22 February 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
211. \textit{CPJ I} 54 (15 April 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
212. \textit{CPJ I} 88 (16 June 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
213. \textit{CPJ I} 55 (7 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
214. \textit{CPJ I} 56 (11 August 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
215. \textit{CPJ I} 57 (15 August 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
216. \textit{CPJ I} 58 (25 September 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
217. \textit{CPJ I} 59 (18 November 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
218. \textit{CPJ I} 60 (28 December 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
219. \textit{CPJ I} 91 (7 August, 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
220. \textit{CPJ I} 92 (153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
221. \textit{CPJ I} 106 (11 June 152 BCE – Upper Egypt)
222. \textit{CPJ I} 69 (15 March 151 BCE or 12 March 140 BCE – Koptos)
223. \textit{CPJ I} 67 (9 July 150 BCE or 6 July 139 BCE – Diospolis Magna)\textsuperscript{87}
224. \textit{CPJ I} 68 (25 August 150 BCE or 20 August 139 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
225. \textit{CPJ I} 31 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
226. \textit{CPJ I} 32 (Probably mid-II BCE – Gurob, Fayum)
227. \textit{CPJ I} 93 (17 August 121 BCE – Upper Egypt)
228. \textit{CPJ I} 70 (119 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
229. \textit{CPJ I} 71 (5 September 104 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
230. \textit{CPJ I} 72 (End of II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
231. \textit{CPJ I} 124 (Late II BCE – Upper Egypt)
232. \textit{CPJ I} 110 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
233. \textit{CPJ I} 115 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{CPJ I} 108 is considered Jewish based on the name Simon, the Grecized form of the biblical \textit{שמעון}. This was indeed a biblical and very popular name among Jews, but when it is transcribed into Greek, it is difficult to distinguish it from the Greek name \textit{Σίμων}, see Honigman (1995), pp. 147-149 and Ilan (2008), pp. 165-173. Therefore, this name alone is not considered an indicator of Jewishness in this corpus. For the same reason, the following documents are listed as doubtful texts: \textit{CPJ I} 99, 88, 91, 92, 93, 124, 123 and 94.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{CPJ I} 51 is a tax receipt issued to the tax farmer Sambathaioi. He is attested in ten receipts (\textit{CPJ I} 51-60), and was a farmer of the tax of \textit{πορθμίδων}, a tax paid by persons who farmed the ferry-boats across the Nile. On the name Sambathaioi and its doubtful Jewishness see Chapter 2.3.2.

\textsuperscript{87} This document contains the name Sollaios, which is formed on the root \textit{שלח}. This root is, however, common Aramaic and is a recorded name for Nabateans, thus the Jewishness of this person is doubted, see Honigman (1995), p. 150 and Ilan (2008), pp. 679-680.
1.2. Geographical Distribution of Jewish Papyri

Based on the documentary sources at our disposal, it is instructive to draw a geographical picture of the Jewish communities in Egypt. This topic has already been studied in the past, and the most thorough study is still that of A. Kasher. What I offer here is an addition to his data based on the new material, and, in certain cases, a clarification of problematic questions.

1.2.1. Jewish settlements in Ptolemaic Egypt

1.2.1.1. Alexandria

When discussing the geographical distribution of the Jewish communities in Ptolemaic Egypt, the most natural place to begin is Alexandria. The Alexandrian community was by far the largest and certainly the most important, though its documentation in the papyri, at least regarding the Ptolemaic period, is one of the poorest. To date, unfortunately, there are no Ptolemaic period papyri at our disposal from Alexandria. This regrettable fact is due to the difficulties of archeological excavations in the modern city on the one hand, and to the

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88 The name Nathan is biblical, but it was used by other Semites too, see Honigman (1995), p. 121; Ilan (2008), pp. 141-142.
90 Due to low subsidence of the soil the coastal region of the ancient city is now submerged some kilometres out to sea, which makes the excavations much difficult. Since 1992 a team of submarine archeologists led by the European Institute for Underwater Archeology has been mapping and excavating the area of the ancient eastern
humidity of the region on the other, because papyri can hardly survive in humid places such as the Nile Delta.

However, we do have information about a necropolis east of Alexandria, which was located at present-day Chatby, El-Ibrahimiya, Hadra and Mustafa Pasha. These settlements are now part of the modern city, but in ancient times they were supposedly outside the eastern wall of the city close to the eastern district, which has been traditionally identified as the Jewish quarter. In this eastern necropolis many Jewish graves, ossuaries and tombstones have been found, but one has to be cautious when trying to identify Jews, because they were buried along with other Semites. A dozen tombstone inscriptions have been attributed to Jews, of which three are written in Aramaic. These Aramaic inscriptions are also included in this corpus (TAD D21.4-6 = JIGRE 3-5), because my intention is to present a comprehensive Aramaic corpus containing both papyri and inscriptions. The presence of the Aramaic language is very suggestive. All three inscriptions are from the site of El-Ibrahimiya, which was dated by E. Breccia to the reign of Ptolemy I Soter (323-282 BCE) and Ptolemy II Philadelphos (282-246 BCE) based on coins and vases found in the cemetery. This may suggest that the new immigrants arriving to Egypt this time were not yet assimilated by language, and still spoke Aramaic. However, the direct contact with Greeks is already reflected in their choice of names: while one of the inscriptions reads Akabiah son of Elionai, which is a biblical name, the other bore the Greek name Apollo(doros) or Apollo(nios) depending on how we restore the abbreviated name. These inscriptions are paralleled by the Aramaic tombstone inscriptions from Apollinopolis Magna in Upper Egypt (TAD D21.7-15).

1.2.1.2. Nile Delta

Several Jewish settlements were scattered in the Nile Delta, though very few papyri have been preserved from this region. Our knowledge of the Jews living in the Delta is mainly based on inscriptions. A. Kasher extensively studied these settlements, among them Schedia, Xenephyris, Nitriai, Athribis and Leontopolis.

91 Further on this see P. M. Fraser, Ptolemaic Alexandria, 3 vols. (Oxford / New York 1972), vol. 1, p. 35.
92 The most recent publication and discussion of these tombstones is that of Horbury and Noy (1992), pp. 1-19 (JIGRE 1-12) with a detailed bibliography. For the ossuaries and other Jewish symbols in Egypt see E. R. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, 13 vols. (New York 1953-68), vols 2-3.
Schedia, the present-day Kafr ed-Dawar, was located at cc. 20 km east of Alexandria on the main canal leading through the Canopic branch of the Nile, and it was an important customs post. The Jewish presence is confirmed by both literary and epigraphical sources. We may certainly not be wrong in assuming that the Jews were somehow connected with the policing of the Nile. Josephus mentions that in the Roman period the Alexandrian Jews were allowed to retain the “charge of the river” that was entrusted to them by the Ptolemies.\textsuperscript{95} V. A. Tcherikover,\textsuperscript{96} followed by A. Kasher\textsuperscript{97} assumed that this police service may have been identical with the ποταμοφυλακία attested in some ostraca.\textsuperscript{98} Another literary source mentioning Schedia is the \textit{Third Book of Maccabees}.\textsuperscript{99} According to its author the port of Schedia was the place to which the Jews were transported to be publicly exposed and humiliated. We have already encountered the problematic historicity of the \textit{Third Book of Maccabbes}, but it seems certain that a Jewish community existed there. The most important archeological finding from this site is a Greek inscription engraved on marble,\textsuperscript{100} which records an honorific dedication of a synagogue. It is important to note that this is one of the earliest inscriptions mentioning a synagogue building. The dedication was on behalf of king Ptolemy and queen Berenice, his sister and wife, thus, it certainly refers to Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-222 BCE) and Berenice. From this inscription we may conclude that the construction of this synagogue was approved by the king and that a large number of Jewish settlers must have lived in Schedia. They were not simply large in number, but the presence of a synagogue supposes a well-organized community with leaders. Moreover it is also clear that Ptolemy III Euergetes granted the Jews – as any other foreign settlers – the right to live according their ancestral law.

A similar community might have existed in Xenephyris in the vicinity of Alexandria. This site has yielded an honorific dedication of a synagogue as well.\textsuperscript{101} According to the inscription the gateway (πυλῶν) of the synagogue was dedicated to Ptolemy VIII Physcon (145-116 BCE), Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III, the latter being already the (second) wife of the king. Thus, the time interval of this foundation can be narrowed to 140-116 BCE. It may be assumed that only the gateway was built during that time, while the synagogue itself was constructed earlier. From this inscription we also learn that the leaders of the community were

\begin{flushright}
95 Josephus, \textit{CA} II 64.
99 \textit{Third Book of Maccabees} IV 11.
100 \textit{CIJ} II 1440 = \textit{JIGRE} 22. Further on this and other synagogues see Chapter 5.1.2.
101 \textit{CIJ} II 1441 = \textit{JIGRE} 24.
\end{flushright}
called *prostatai*, which was a general Hellenistic term for leaders of a certain group. They were certainly at the head of the Jewish community, however, their precise function remains unclear. According to Kasher “they may have been managers of the local synagogue” or even “representatives of the community before the authorities.” In any case, they were recognized leaders of the community, which is clearly established by this inscription.

Nitria was located in the Wadi Natrun, and our main evidence for the existence of a Jewish community is another honorific dedication of a synagogue, also dated to the reign of Ptolemy VIII Physcon, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III. In this case the entire synagogue and its appurtenances were built at the same time. Wadi Natrun was far from other settled area of the Nile Delta, but – as also indicated by its name – it was one of the richest sources of salt and alum, which was an important component of glass. I agree with Kasher that the Jews, who lived here, may have been involved in the policing of the area, and that they were probably part of a military unit that stationed there. Since the salt production was controlled and monopolized by the state, it seems logical to assume that it was in their interest to protect the harvesting of the salt.

The fourth settlement that yielded honorific dedications in the Nile Delta is Athribis located near Benha some 45 km north of Cairo. One inscription records the dedication of a synagogue by Ptolemy son of Epikydes, chief of police, and the Jews in Athribis, while another one is the dedication of an *exedra*, a building attached to the synagogue, by Hermias, his wife Philotera and their children. The dating of both inscriptions is uncertain, since they were written on behalf of “Ptolemy and queen Cleopatra,” which means that Ptolemy V Epiphanes, Ptolemy VI Philometor, Ptolemy VIII Physcon or Ptolemy IX Lathyrus could all be the king mentioned in the inscription, since each of them had a queen called Cleopatra. What is certain is that it was carved in the IInd or the Ird century BCE. It is clear from the first inscription that the synagogue was dedicated to the Highest God (θεὸς ὑψιστος), a very frequently attested name for the Jewish God. Whether or not the dedicator, Ptolemaios

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102 Kasher (1985), p. 112. Kasher gives a detailed study of the sources, in which this title is attested in connection with Jews. The possibility that it also involved some political function may be suggested based on Hecataeus of Abdera (*Diod.* XL 3, 5) on the one hand, who mentions this title when speaking of the leadership of the people, and on Josephus (*Ant.* XII 161, XX, 238) on the other hand, who attributes this title to Onias II, the high priest and the leader of the nation.

103 *CIJ* II 1442 = *JIGRE* 25.


105 At least in the IInd century BCE, that is, exactly in the period of the synagogue foundation, the trade of the salt was auctioned by the royal administration as shown by a papyrus dated to the middle of the IInd century BCE (*P.Tebt.* III 732).

106 *CIJ* II 1443 = *JIGRE* 27.

107 *CIJ* II 1444 = *JIGRE* 28.
son of Epikydes was Jewish, is a subject of debate. V. A Tcherikover and A. Fuks argue that a non-Jewish chief of police would not have participated in the dedication of a synagogue.\textsuperscript{108} According to A. Kasher it is very probable that this chief of police had a Jewish unit under his command, and that the Jews living in Athribis were mainly engaged in police service.\textsuperscript{109} However, G. Bohak\textsuperscript{110} and T. Ilan\textsuperscript{111} both argue that the fact that somebody is mentioned along with Jews in a document does not automatically make him/her Jewish. They reject any “false identification” of this kind emphasizing that Jews did not live in closed communities. This is indeed a reasonable argument, and Ptolemaios did not need to be Jewish. As to the second inscription, the attachment of the \textit{exedra} raises a question: what kind of structure was it exactly? It was most probably a public building, a sort of open hall attached to the synagogue, where people could meet, sit, make discussions and teach the Torah.\textsuperscript{112} If so, it ascertains the fact that a synagogue never stood alone, but was part of an enclosed area with other buildings such as the gate house, the ritual bath house, the communal archive, sometimes kitchen, food stores or school as well.

The last settlement in the Delta that should be examined in detail is Leontopolis, or more precisely, a site called Tell el-Yehudiyeh (“Mound of the Jews”), which is traditionally identified with Leontopolis, and which is located in the Eastern Nile Delta near the present-day Shibin al Qanatir, cc. 30-35 km north of Cairo. Much ink has been spilled over this site, and even more questions have been raised by scholars trying to identify Leontopolis, where Onias had once built his temple. We have already tackled the chronological issues of the temple, and have accepted that it was most probably built by Onias IV, the son of the high priest Onias III, after he fled to Egypt.\textsuperscript{113} Now, we will turn to the geographical problems. In \textit{AJ} Josepbus quotes an exchange of letters between Onias and the Ptolemaic royal couple.\textsuperscript{114} In his letter Onias informed the Ptolemaic couple that he had found an ideal place for the temple of the Jews, which would be dedicated to the Highest God, and he asked the

\textsuperscript{108} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 17, n. 46.
\textsuperscript{109} Kasher (1985), pp. 118-119.
\textsuperscript{110} Bohak, \textit{Akten} (1997), pp. 105-112 at 105-107. He emphasizes that many scholars tended to identify Jews based on association with Jews. One of the best examples he gives is the cemetery at Tell el-Yehudiyeh, where people of different ethnic origins were buried side by side, and nobody should be considered Jewish automatically.
\textsuperscript{111} Ilan (2008), p. 364.
\textsuperscript{112} There is also another identification of the \textit{exedra} suggested mainly by Goodenough, vol. 2 (1953), p. 85. He understands it as a raised podium, that is, the seat of honour in the synagogue, but this interpretation seems to be less likely. For a detailed discussion of the \textit{exedra} see Horbury & Noy (1992), pp. 49-50.
\textsuperscript{113} See above Chapter 1.1.1.
\textsuperscript{114} Josephus, \textit{AJ} XIII 66-71.
permission of the king and the queen to start the construction. He also used as an argument a prophecy of Isaiah, who foretold the following:

*Isa. 19:19:* “On that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians and a stele to the Lord at its border.”

After presenting Onias’ letter to Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Josephus immediately quotes the answer of the royal couple giving him permission to build the temple and granting him a ruined and abandoned temple called *Bubastisagria* in Leontopolis in the Heliopolite nome.

However, in *BJ* no mention is made of Leontopolis, but he says that the Jewish settlement was called Oneion after the high priest Onias, who fled from Antiochos to Egypt, was well received by Ptolemy VI Philometor, and asked his permission to build a Jewish temple somewhere in Egypt. Ptolemy gave him a place 180 *stadia* from Memphis, in the Heliopolite nome, where Onias built a fortress and a temple.

The question is where was the temple located? Needless to say that an archeological excavation at Tell el-Yehudiyeh would advance the research. However, the main difficulty originates from the actual conditions and possibilities of an archeological excavation. That is to say, there is little chance that in the near future the site of Tell el-Yehudiyeh will be properly excavated, because recent requests in this domain have been refused by the Supreme Council of Antiquities in Egypt. Thus, we fall back upon the results of previous excavations and surveys. Since the XIXth century several archeologists attempted to find the temple, but no one has been able to discover the slightest trace of it due to the fact that it was totally destroyed by the Romans in the early 70s CE. Among the first archeologists we must mention E. Naville, F. Griffith and W. Flinders Petrie. Based on the work of these scholars the site of Onias’ temple has traditionally been identified with Tell el-Yehudiyeh. Naville and Griffith discovered there a late Ptolemaic-early Roman period cemetery with Jewish funerary inscriptions, based on which they assumed that there had been a Jewish settlement. Moreover, one of the funerary inscriptions found at the site refers to the “Land of Onias” (‘Ovίον γῆ), which would confirm the connection between the site and Onias’ temple. Petrie, after

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115 For the English translation see the NETS edition, which is accessible online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/ (accessed on 08 January 2016).
117 To my knowledge, the last archeologists who intended to excavate the site of Tell el-Yehudiyeh were J. Hoffmeier and K. Sowada, but the permission was denied by the SCA. In 2009 I was told in a personal correspondence with Karin Sowada that she was still interested in working at the site, and that she intended to submit a request in 2012. Currently, I do not know of any actual or future excavation at Tell el-Yehudiyeh.
120 *CIJ* II 1530 = *JIGRE* 38.
excavating the site, also argued that Tell el-Yehudiyyeh was the place, where Onias’ temple had once stood relying mainly on Josephus’ accounts and on the following: the geographical location of this village (186 stadia distance from Memphis) is close to what Josephus mentions in BJ (180 stadia); the settlement was certainly inhabited by Jews in the antiquity: this is ascertained by the name of the present-day village and the presence of the ancient Jewish cemetery; a tripartite temple structure was found on the top of the hill; the ruins of an Egyptian fortress were excavated next to the site; and finally, it is highly possible that the settlement was called Bubastisagria, since a figure of Hor holding the shrine of Bastet was found by him, and he concluded that this sculpture definitely confirmed the cult of Bastet.

Although Petrie’s identification was widely accepted, it has been challenged by some scholars. Most recently G. Hata studied the question claiming that there are at least four modern sites where the Jewish temple might have stood: Tell el-Muqdam (ancient Leontopolis), Tell Basta (ancient Bubastis), Tell el-Yehudiyyeh and another village called Tell Yahood (the name clearly denotes a Jewish settlement). After visiting each site, Hata has come to the conclusion that among the four sites, Tell el-Muqdam (Leontopolis) and Tell Yahood do not seem to have any connection with the temple, so we are left with Tell el-Yehudiyyeh and Tell Basta (Bubastis). He argues against Tell el-Yehudiyyeh saying that Petrie’s arguments do not constitute enough evidence to prove the identification. He argues in support of Tell Basta, because its name and the presence of the ancient Bastet temple suggest the identification with Bubastisagria. Hata may be right, but I have some reservations with this identification: first, if we rely on Josephus, and we must do so despite all his contradictions, we should take seriously one detail that is mentioned in both accounts, namely that the temple was built in the Heliopolite nome. Tell Basta was not located in the Heliopolite nome, but further in the north in the Bubastite nome. Secondly, in Tell Basta, so far nothing has been excavated in connection with the temple of Onias, and nothing proves that Jews had ever lived there at all. Even Hata admits in his paper that a new excavation would be necessary to prove his suggestion.

121 Petrie (1906), p. 20. 122 See esp. Bohak (1996), pp. 27-29; Hata, Flavius (2011), pp. 177-191 and Piotrkowski (2014, unpublished PhD thesis). Du Mesnil du Buisson accepts the identification of Leontopolis with Tell el-Yehudiyyeh, but he suggests that the temple itself did not stand at the top of the mound but rather next to it on the ruins of the Hyksos camp. He argues that a fortress may have stood on the mound, but the entire temple certainly not, simply because there was not enough space for it, see R. Du Mesnil du Buisson, “Le temple d’Onias et le camp Hyksôs à Tell el-Yahoudiyyé,” BIFAO 35 (1935), pp. 59-71. After personal visit of the site I agree that the mound itself is too small to have a temple on it, and du Buisson’s suggestion seems to be reasonable. 123 Hata, Flavius (2011), pp. 184-185.
Now, let us turn our attention to a small potsherd (O.Petrie Pl. 24), which contains only some lines of Demotic writing, but its importance goes well beyond this because it was found by Petrie at Tell el-Yehudiyyeh on the top of the mound.\textsuperscript{124} Petrie’s colleague, Griffith dated the ostracon to the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, probably the time of Ptolemy VI Philometor. This date seems to be supported by the fact that the coins, discovered on the top of the hill, were all of the later Ptolemies after Philometor. The photo of the ostracon was published by Petrie in 1906, but it was transliterated and translated by W. Spiegelberg in 1907,\textsuperscript{125} and later republished by W. Brunsch.\textsuperscript{126} The ostracon contains a list of brick suppliers recording how many bricks they supplied on a certain day. In the first line we read $Ps$ hrw 1(?) meaning “day 1,” and then the preposition $n$-dr.(t), which can be translated as “by” or “through.” The next lines record the names of the brick suppliers. The structure of each line is identical. First the name is written, then the word “brick” ($tb$), and then presumably the quantity of bricks that are unfortunately lost in each line. The most interesting feature of this ostracon is without doubt the onomastics. Two of the brick-suppliers are certainly Egyptians, since both of them bear the Egyptian name Harchebis son of Teos. However, the two other persons are more interesting from our point of view. $sbrm$ is clearly the Egyptian transliteration of the Semitic name אברם (Abram) and of its Greek version Ἄβραμ / Ἄβραμος, while Šbty is the Egyptian version of the name שבטיה (Shabbethai). Both names are recorded several times in Aramaic, Greek and Demotic among the Jews of Egypt. Although the Jewishness of both names are sometimes disputed by scholars\textsuperscript{127} and one must indeed be cautious when studying these names, in our case – taking the provenance and the date of the ostracon into account – I consider both Abram and Shabtai Jewish. If so, it proves that Jews participated in a certain kind of construction work at Tell el-Yehudiyyeh. It is naturally not certain that this construction was that of the Jewish temple, but if we believe Josephus who claims that the area was totally abandoned at that time, it is logical to suppose that there was no other construction work in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, and that our Jewish builders participated in the construction of the Jewish temple. Taking everything into consideration it is still Tell el-Yehudiyyeh that yields at least some archeological evidence in connection with the temple, and I support this identification.

\textsuperscript{124} Petrie (1906), p. 26. and Pl. XXIV.
\textsuperscript{125} W. Spiegelberg, “Ein demotisches Ostrakon mit jüdischen Eigennamen,” OLZ 10 (1907), pp. 595-596.
\textsuperscript{127} Further on Abram and its Jewishness see Chapter 2.4.1., and for Shabbethai see Chapter 2.3.2.
1.2.1.3. Memphis

Memphis was undoubtedly one of the most important cities in the history of Egypt because it was a royal residence as well as an administrative and religious center. However, in the Ptolemaic period, with the foundation of Alexandria, which became the capital of the country, the Ptolemies desired to show the beginning of a new era. Although Memphis lost much of its importance with this decision, it must be noted that Alexander the Great was first buried there, and Ptolemy I Soter ruled from it during his first years. The city was very lively in antiquity, and the Greeks were present there at least from the VIth century BCE as mercenaries. Thus, it is not surprising that by the beginning of the Ptolemaic period Memphis was not a homogenous Egyptian city, but full of foreign ethnic minorities.

Taking this multicultural environment into account we would also expect the presence of Jews in the city. However, literary sources remain silent about the Jews in Memphis, and in the CPJ we find one single papyrus that was unearthed in Sakkara, the necropolis of the city. In our corpus, there is another text, SB XXIV 16272, which comes from Sakkara. It is a list of payments enumerating daily incomes and payments, and it contains only one certainly Jewish name, Annaios. This provides only scanty evidence for the presence of Jews in Memphis, but we must mention an Egyptian stela that may further clarify the question. The stela in question is a bilingual funerary stela written for Chahap son of Paneith, who lived in the IIIrd century BCE, was the army-chief of the Matoi as well as an appreciated Memphite of his time. From the hieroglyphic text we learn that he held several different priestly titles such as the “prophet of the spirit of Osiris,” or the “scribe of the treasury,” and he was also the “scribe of the divine records in the “granary of the chief artificer” in the district of the

128 See for instance Herodotos II 152-154, who describes how Psammetichos II (664-610 BCE) used mercenaries in his fight for the throne, and how he settled them at Pelusium near the eastern border of the country. Later, Amasis (570-526 BCE) moved these mercenaries to Memphis.
129 Further on ethnic minorities living in the city see D. T. Thompson, Memphis under the Ptolemies (Princeton 1988), pp. 82-105.
130 According to Thompson (1988, p. 85), Jews may have served as mercenaries in Memphis already under the Persians, but there is no decisive evidence supporting this view.
131 CPJ I 132, which was found in the Serapeion near Memphis, is a letter sent by the dioiketes Herodes to Onias concerning the organisation of agricultural work on the estates of the king. Based on his name Onias was certainly Jewish.
Jews. This title, although highly symbolic with a reference to an unknown place called “granary of the chief artificer,” undoubtedly confirms the existence of a Jewish quarter. Vittmann suggests that this place might have been identical with the Jewish Camp (Castra Iudaeorum) mentioned by Josephus and located in the south of the Delta, but this does not seem to me very likely, since Chahap’s all other titles are related to Memphis. It seems much more likely that a Jewish quarter existed in Ptolemaic Memphis similarly to the Greek, the Ionian and Idumean ethnic quarters. Unfortunately, the precise geographical location of this Jewish quarter is at present unknown.

1.2.1.4. Arsinoite nome (Fayum Oasis)

The area of the Fayum oasis is one of the richest sites regarding Ptolemaic period papyri. This part of the country was already important in pharaonic times, but it was developed and extended mainly by the first Ptolemies. Especially Ptolemy II Philadelphos reclaimed many agricultural lands and organized the area as a nome, which was named after her sister and wife, Arsinoe. This area became the center of the new settlers and the cleruchs, thus, it is not surprising that the oasis yielded many papyri recording Jews.

The metropolis of the Fayum was Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis (present-day Medinet el-Fayum), where Jews certainly had a well-organized community as ascertained by a dedicatory inscription of a synagogue on behalf of Ptolemy III Euergetes I and his sister and wife, Berenice found there. The wording of the text is very similar to that of the above-mentioned inscriptions found in the Nile Delta. This inscription, besides the one from Schedia, is the earliest synagogue dedication ever found. There is also a papyrus from Arsinoe that mentions a synagogue built on the outskirts of the town. It is a land survey in which the Jewish synagogue is described to have been situated in the northwestern part of the city between two “consecrated gardens.” One of them was a private property of Hermione, while the other one was leased to an Egyptian tenant, Petesouchos. It seems that the latter was part of the synagogue, and its name (ἱερὰ παράδεισος) designates its legal status as “sacred land” (ἱερὰ γῆ), which was one of the land categories in Ptolemaic Egypt. We do not know

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135 As to which Ptolemy started the development see K. Mueller, Settlements of the Ptolemies. City Foundations and New Settlement in the Hellenistic World (Studia Hellenistica 43, Leuven 2006), pp. 149-151.
136 CIJ II 1532a = JIGRE 117.
137 CPJ I 134.
whether this synagogue is identical with the one mentioned in the dedicatory inscription, but it is not impossible that there were more than one synagogue in the town. As to the legal status of the Jews in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Kasher suggests that they were organized as a politeuma, based on a document that mentions the “civic laws” (πολιτικοί νόμοι). In his view, this term applied to “regulations which were based on ancestral laws of Greek-speaking immigrants to Egypt being authorized to constitute autonomous poleis and politeumata.” From this, he concludes that the two Jewish persons mentioned in this document were πολίται, and since Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis was not a polis, this designation can be interpreted only as members of the politeuma. The term “civic laws,” as shown by J. M. Modrzejewski, can indeed be interpreted as a term applied to the Septuagint, but in general it referred to the law of Greek-speaking immigrants: thus, it became a term for “the common law.” It is, of course, possible that a Jewish politeuma existed in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, but this document does not provide sufficient evidence for it.

Besides Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis there was certainly a synagogue in Alexandrou Nesos as well, which was another village in the meris of Themistos. CPJ I 129 I tells the story of a woman complaining that a certain Dorotheos stole her mantle. The document in question is a petition written in the usual form of an ἐντευξίς and is quite fragmentary. The woman’s mantle ended up somehow in the local Jewish synagogue (ἐν τῇ προσευχή τῶν Ἰουδαίων) and with the intervention of a man called Lezelmis, it was deposited with Nikomarchos, the νακόρος (attendant) of the synagogue until the case was tried. We do not know whether all the persons in the case were Jews, but what is important for us is that there was a synagogue in Alexandrou Nesos and that its attendant was called nakoros. This term, which is the Doric

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139 According to Tcherikover the two sources (JIGRE 117 and CPJ I 134), in all probability, refer to one and the same synagogue, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 247, discussion of CPJ I 134. They add, however, that a metropolis like Arsinoe-Krikodilopolis may have had several synagogues. See also Kasher (1985), p. 138, according to whom there certainly were several synagogues in the town, even though there is no evidence for them.

140 CPJ I 19 contains the official report of the Greek court in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis. Both the litigant Dositheos and the defendant Heraklea were Jews. Dositheos lost the case because he did not show up at the court, but what is really important for us is that according to the document the juridical principle that should be considered in a trial between Jews is the “civic laws” (after the royal diagrammata).


144 Tcherikover and Fuks suppose that Nikomachos was certainly Jewish, and note that the Jewishness of the woman and that of Dorotheos is less certain. As to Lezelmis, they consider him Thracian based on his name, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 239-240. Kasher, however, argues for the Jewishness of all the persons, included Lezelmis, see Kasher (1985), pp. 146-147.
form of *neokoros* (custodian/attendant of a temple), was interpreted by Tcherikover and Fuks as the Greek term for the Hebrew **חן** (*hazzan*) referring to the caretaker of a synagogue.\(^{145}\) Although the Greek term *neokoros* was taken from the pagan cult, it was used by Josephus and Philo in reference to the functionaries in Jerusalem.\(^ {146}\) Thus in the context of this papyrus it may be suggested that the *nakoros* was in charge of the maintenance of the synagogue.

Interestingly, a newly published papyrus may indirectly refer to one of the above-mentioned or to a hitherto unknown synagogue in the Fayum. *PSI* Congr. XVII 22\(^ {147}\) is a private account dated to 114 or 78 BCE, and it shows the typical layout of contemporary economic accounts: revenues and expenses are registered in chronological order, day by day. The revenues are introduced by the expression ἔχω παρὰ PN (I have received from PN), while the expenses by the expression ἔχει PN (PN has received). Within one day the revenues are recorded first, then the expenses with a total at the end, and sometimes the difference is also given. Among the expenses we find the word νακορικὸν, which is a derivation of the word *nakoros*, and probably denotes the contribution of the community “for the *nakoros*.” This *nakoros*, of course, might have belonged to a pagan temple, but there is another sign supporting the possibility that he belonged to a Jewish synagogue. In the account, the 1st of Hathyr is marked out by the word Sabbath, and no transaction occurred that day. This may suggest that the writer of the account was member of a Jewish community, which observed the Sabbath, and which possessed a synagogue. It is possible that they paid the *nakoros*, which is why the term *nakorikon* is listed among the expenses. The exact provenance of the papyrus is unfortunately unknown, thus it may refer to the synagogue of Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, to that of Alexandrou Nesos or to a still unknown synagogue anywhere in the Fayum.

Besides these villages, we find some other settlements in the Fayum that were inhabited by Jews. In light of the new material it is now clear that in the village of Trikomia a relatively large Jewish community was concentrated. A group of tax-registers were published by H. Harrauer in 1987,\(^ {148}\) and then extensively studied and republished by W. Clarysse and D. Thompson in 2006,\(^ {149}\) who have demonstrated that Jews were living in several villages in the Themistos meris of the Arsinoite nome. *P.Count*. 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 36 are all tax-registers from the Themistos meris, and come from the same mummy cartonnage, except for

P.Count. 26. None of the texts are dated, but based on the rate of the salt tax (rate B), they can be safely dated to the period 254-231 BCE. The most instructive piece of this group of texts is definitely P.Count. 26, which is the longest document by far in our corpus. It is a composite list of tax-registers including both a list of tax arrears and a category listing. From this document it is clear that the Hellenes formed a separate category, at least for purpose of taxation. Who were these Hellenes? Certainly, they were non-Egyptians, thus, most probably immigrants. Since they are not recorded with their regular ethnic designation required in legal context, in order to identify them we must rely on their names. Based on these, the category of Hellenes included any kind of new settlers in Egypt such as Greeks, Macedonians, Thracians, Jews and other Semites. From a taxation point of view, all the immigrants formed one category, and the reason why they are listed separately is that they enjoyed a tax-privileged status: they are listed with one drachma tax-liability without the addition of the obol tax. All these Hellenes, who were exempt from the one-obol tax, are grouped in Maron’s quarter. According to the first editor the heading ἐν τῇ Μάρωνος refer to a house, but Clarysse and Thompson convincingly argue that the number of the taxpayers listed here (89 persons) is too high for a single house. Thus, it must refer to a village quarter. Althought the taxpayers are not identified by their regular ethnic designation (since from fiscal point of view they were “Hellenes,” and not Macedonians, Athenians or Jews), based on the cluster of biblical names, it may be suggested that most of the taxpayers in Maron’s quarter were Jewish. The fact that they were not separated from other Hellenes in this and other lists prove that they were recognized as “Hellenes.” As Clarysse and Thompson suggest, this privileged status remained unchanged regardless of the fact that in a IInd century BCE document Jews are separately listed. This change affected not only the Jews, but other “Hellenes” too since the whole category is subdivided. Therefore it may have been a later development.

Another settlement in the Fayum that yielded notable new material concerning Jews is Samareia. CPJ I contains only two documents from Samareia. Kasher notes that the name of the village may have referred to the origin of the settlers from Samareia in Palestine.

152 CPJ I 22 and CPJ I 28.
which is possible, but by the end the IIIrd century BCE the ethnicity of the inhabitants had been definitely varied. The possibility that the whole population of Samareia at this time was Jewish, as Tcherikover suggests it, is to be ruled out.\textsuperscript{154} \textit{CPJ} I 22, a contract concerning the cession of a quarter was drawn up, for instance, between a Paeonian\textsuperscript{155} and four Egyptian peasants. Even \textit{CPJ} I 28, based on which this possibility was mentioned, records only four certainly Jewish persons: Ioannes son of Antipatros (l. 20), Iakoubis son of Iakoubis (l. 22), Sambathion daughter of Ionathas (l. 26) and Marion daughter of Iakoubis (l. 27). All the other persons have Greek pagan or Greek theophoric names, which cannot be considered as a proof of Jewishness. What can certainly be argued is that the whole village was of a military character. This is undoubtedly shown by both documents, and may be confirmed by four new papyri: \textit{CPR} XVIII 7, 8, 9 and 11.\textsuperscript{156} These papyri have been preserved on the same mummy cartonnage and are related to the same Jewish family residing in Samareia. They are extracts of various contracts, in which the contracting parties are all designated ʔιουδαίος τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, that is, “Jew of the Epigone” or ʔιουδαία, that is, “Jewess.” Based on the term Epigone, we definitively find ourselves in a cleruchic milieu.\textsuperscript{157} The other thing that can be demonstrated by these papyri is that the population of Samareia was quite mixed. The four extracts in question together with several others have been preserved on one single huge scroll (P.Vindob.G. 40618 A), but in fact, there are five extracts from Samareia.\textsuperscript{158} The reason why the fifth one is not included here is that it concerns a Persian and a Thracian soldier. Thus, it may be suggested that Samareia, similarly to any other villages and settlement in the Fayum, was inhabited by a mixed population, mostly by new settlers and cleruchs, and certainly also by Egyptians.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{154} See Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 171, discussion of \textit{CPJ} I 28, where they write that “One wonders whether the whole population of Samaria at this time was Jewish or whether the present list concerns only one group of settlers, namely the Jewish one.”
\item \textsuperscript{155} Tcherikover questions that the contractor, who is styled a Paeonian, was indeed from Paeonia. He finds very strange that in a contract witnessed by Jews none of the contracting parties was Jewish, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 161, n. 6. In my view, however, it is possible that a Hellene, although Paeonian, asked other Hellenes (in this case Jews) to testify his contract. Another example of the friendly understanding between Jews and Greeks is that Jewish women had sometimes Greek guardians, see for instance the above mentioned \textit{CPJ} I 19.
\item \textsuperscript{156} B. Kramer (ed.), \textit{Griechische Texte XIII, Das Vertragsregister von Theogenis (P.Vindob. G40618)} (Vienna 1991), pp. 140-160.
\item \textsuperscript{157} Further on the Jews of the Epigone see Chapter 3.2.2.
\item \textsuperscript{158} The fifth contract from Samareia is \textit{CPR} XVIII 10. It certainly comes from that village, since the contracts were arranged in accordance with their provenance. This is ascertained by the note at the end of \textit{CPR} XVIII 11: ἐγράφη (ἐτύμη) τις Δαισίου, (γίνεται) ε Ἐσσαρείας that is “Written in year 16, Daisios. (Total) 5 (contracts) from Samareia.”
\end{itemize}
1.2.1.5. Herakleopolite nome

The Herakleopolite nome was situated south of the Fayum, and it was always considered an area where Jews were supposedly present during the Ptolemaic era. However, in *CPJ I* we find only three papyri from the Herakleopolite nome, which concern Jews.\(^{159}\) This number increased recently due to the discovery of the above-mentioned Jewish *politeuma* archive in Herakleopolis Magna (*P.Polit.Iud. 1-20*).\(^{160}\) The twenty papyri belonging to this archive are actually scattered in several papyrus collections in Europe (Heidelberg, Cologne, Munich and Vienna). The reason why the editors, J. Cowey and K. Maresch suppose that they originate from the same place is that they were found on the same mummy cartonnage, and they show both formal and lexical similarities.

It seems certain that the *politeuma* of the Jews was based in Herakleopolis Magna (present-day Ilnasya el-Medina), a harbour town located on the river banks of the western

\(^{159}\) *CPJ* I 118 (260 BCE), a deed of renunciation between two Jews; *CPJ* I 136 (51 BCE), a summon of a Jew to appear before the tribunal, and *CPJ* I 137 (50 BCE), a *prostagma* of the king and queen, the copy of which was published by an official bearing the non-biblical Jewish name Onias.

\(^{160}\) Cowey & Maresch (2001). For a detailed bibliography see Chapter 6.
Nile branch in Middle Egypt. This is confirmed by two papyri, *P.Polit.Iud. 8* and *P.Polit.Iud. 20*, in which the archons are called “the archons of year 37 of the *politeuma* of the Jews in Herakleopolis” and “the archons of [the *politeuma*] of the Jews in Herakleopolis” respectively. It is, however, noteworthy that in at least four documents the Jewish petitioners were from other villages or even from other nomes: 1. In *P.Polit.Iud. 6*, the petitioner Theodotos son of Theodotos was almost certainly from a village called Onnes, since the defendant was from that village, and their case was already judged by the elders in Onnes. 2. In *P.Polit.Iud. 8* the petitioner was another Theodotos son of Theodotos, a Jew from the village named Teei located in the Oxyrhynchite nome. 3. In *P.Polit.Iud. 9* Berenike daughter of Archagatos, a Jewess from Aphrodites polis addressed to the *politeuma* in Herakleopolis, but her village was most probably located in the Aphroditopolite nome. 4. Finally, in *P.Polit.Iud. 13*, all of the three petitioners, Hippalos, Theodotos and Poly.n. were residents of Peenpasbytis, a village located in the Herakleopolite nome. It is thus clear that the geographical competence of the Jewish *politeuma* extended far beyond Herakleopolis, and Jews residing in other nomes were also entitled to turn to the *politeuma* in Herakleopolis.

There were certainly more Jewish *politeumata* in Egypt, but not in every settlement where Jews were living. We may therefore ask why exactly was Herakleopolis the base of a Jewish *politeuma*? This question is also discussed by the editors\(^\text{161}\) as well as by others.\(^\text{162}\) One of the reasons was certainly related to the geographical position of the town. Herakleopolis was located not far from the Fayum and was connected to the western Nile branch. The town may have been considered an entrance to the Fayum and was certainly important from a strategic point of view. This fact led A. Kasher to assume that Herakleopolis was part of the security system called the “river guard,” that is, the above-mentioned *fluminis custodia* including the military communities of Schedia and Athribis too.\(^\text{163}\) Although it is hard to prove this assumption, the military character of the settlement seems to be supported by another papyrus (*P.Diosk. 1*),\(^\text{164}\) from which we learn that there was a fortress in the harbour of Herakleopolis and its *phourarchos* (garrison commander) was a certain Dioskourides. The presence of a fortress implies an important military function: it supposedly played a similar role to other fortresses at the border of Egypt (Philae, Syene, Elephantine).

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\(^{161}\) Cowey & Maresch (2001), pp. 3-4.


The military garrison of Herakleopolis, which included Jews and non-Jews as well, was certainly part of the Ptolemaic army, and the Jewish politeuma was also linked to it. The editors are therefore right in assuming that this politeuma functioned as a military colony.

1.2.1.6. Diospolis Magna (Thebes)

Moving further to the south, the next town that must be discussed is Diospolis Magna, which always played an important role in Egyptian history. The Theban sources differ greatly from those found in Lower Egypt. Unfortunately, in this region there are no traces of synagogues or politeumata that would give us some information about the organization of the local Jewish communities. Instead, we possess thousands of ostraca, among which there are quite a few recording Jews. As I have already mentioned above, Tcherikover and Fuks included many doubtfully Jewish ostraca in Section V of CPJ I. The main difficulty with the ostraca is that the ethnic designation “Jew” does not appear in them, thus, the only criterion for distinguishing Jews from non-Jews is the onomastics. This is far from being a secure criterion, thus one has to be cautious when studying this type of sources.

It was already pointed out by the editors of the CPJ that most of the ostraca from Diospolis Magna record tax receipts, which provide one-sided information about the inhabitants. Thus, the information that can be retrieved from these receipts is either the social status of the Jews (whether they were taxpayers, tax collectors or tax farmers) or their onomastic characteristics. The former is discussed by Tcherikover who points out that the Jews attested in the Theban ostraca were mainly tax collectors, chaff collectors and employees in the storehouses. He assumes that most of the high-ranking and important offices were held by Greeks, and that the Jews could not compete with them for positions like strategos, toparch or banker. In his view, the office of tax collector was unpleasant enough to be less attractive to Greeks, and thus, it could be held by Jews.

That the Jews mostly filled the position of tax collector is true, but based on some new documents it is clear that higher offices could be also obtained by them. O.Camp. 1925.103, a beer-tax receipt issued by Abetes, proves for instance that Jews were not necessarily tax

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collectors: they could gain higher positions such as that of the tax farmer. Another ostracon, O.Lyon inv. 807 + O.Ashm.Shelt. 42 shows that not only the economic elite, but also the administrative one included Jews from time to time. From this memorandum, it is clear that a certain Abietes obtained the highest-ranking administrative position in the Thebaid, that of the epistates, who was directly subordinate to the strategos. Thus, Jews were part of the upper class similarly to other ethnic minorities among the Hellenes, and had the same chance to fill high-ranking offices.

As to the onomastics, S. Honigman has recently revealed a very interesting fact about the Jewish community in Thebes. She has extensively studied the names attested in Upper Egyptian sources both from Thebes and from Edfu, and has recognized that a common Semitic, non-biblical name, Abieti, can be found in both onomastic records: in Thebes mainly in its Hellenized form Abietos/Abietes, while in Edfu in its Aramaic form אביתי (Abieti). This alone would not be very surprising, but the fact that the name Abieters cannot be found anywhere else in Near Eastern sources, makes this occurrence special. The use of this name was most probably due to a local tradition, because even within Egypt, it is present only in the Upper Egyptian sources. Since in the Edfu ostraca the bearers of this name can be safely identified as Jews, we are probably not wrong in assuming that in the Theban region we should consider each Abietes Jewish too, especially if the name is attested with biblical names. In other words, the presence of this name indicates an onomastic link between Edfu and Thebes, and Honigman concludes that there were most probably close ties between the Jewish communities of Edfu and Thebes.

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167 Besides Abites we know of another Jewish tax-farmer, Simon son of Iazaros, who is attested in CPJ I 61-63, 90, 107. In CPJ I 90 and 107 he is explicitly styled tax-farmer (ἐξειληφώς) similarly to Abetes in our document.

168 The text has been preserved on two separate ostraca: the first one was published by J. C. Shelton as O.Ashm.Shelton 42 in J. C. Shelton, Greek Ostraka in the Ashmolean Museum (Papyrologica Florentina XVII, Florence 1988), p. 48, while the second fragment, located in the Museum d'histoire naturelle de Lyon, has recently been added by G. Gorre, “Une première mention d’Hippalos, stratège de la Thébaïde?” CdE 85 (2010), pp. 230-239.

169 Honigman, BASP 40 (2003), pp. 63-118. There are all together 17 documents that record 20 times the name Abietes either in Aramaic (TAD C3.28 (2x), TAD D7.57 (2x), TAD D8.4, TAD D8.9, TAD D8.10, TAD D9.15) or in Greek (CPJ I 48, 74, 87, 101, 105, 117, 118 (2x), O.Heid. 1, O.Lyon inv. 807 + O.Ashm.Shelt. 42, O.Camp. 1925.103) or in Demotic (BGU VI 1454).

170 The only Palestinian occurrence that Ilan lists is attested in the Letter of Aristeas § 50, see T. Ilan, Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity. Part I: Palestine 330 BCE-200 CE (Tübingen 2002), p. 430. Abites was one of the Septuagint translators, who came from Palestine, but since this literary work was written in Egypt, it probably reflects more the Egyptian onomastics than the Palestinian one.

171 Honigman, Studies (2009), p. 122. Besides Abietes Honigman has found other Aramaic names with Greek equivalents: Obadiah / Abdious, Abram / Abramos, Delalaih / Dellaias, Dallui / Dellous and Iashib / Iasibis, for the attestations see Honigman, BASP 40 (2003), pp. 75-81 and Chapter 2.1. In each case we meet rare names that are typical of the Persian period and rare in the Ptolemaic period.
Apollinopolis Magna, located midway between Thebes and Elephantine in Upper Egypt, was an important town and was inhabited from the Old Kingdom. The overwhelming majority of its population was Egyptian, but it would be a mistake to suppose that no other ethnic groups settled there. As to Jews, their presence is confirmed since the Ptolemaic period, but the Greek material is quite poor. All together there are seven Greek papyri included in CPJ I and ascribed to Edfu,\textsuperscript{172} which provide scanty evidence about the Ptolemaic period Jewish community. As already been pointed out by J. Schwartz, CPJ I 70, 71, 72 and 111 are most probably not relevant at all, since they record a tax farmer called Apollonios son of Dositheos, who may or may not have been Jewish. Based on his name, it is impossible to reveal his ethnic background, thus, these documents should not be taken into account. CPJ I 95, a harvest-tax receipt issued by the granary, is more likely to originate from Diospolis Magna than Apollinopolis Magna because Hermokrates, the countersigner of the receipt was a well-known employee of the granary in Diospolis Magna.\textsuperscript{173}

Thus, we are left with CPJ I 139 and 140. CPJ I 139 is a list of contributors to common feasts, among whom we find a certain priest called Iosephos. Based on his name he was certainly Jewish, but Jewish priests were generally involved in the temple-cult of Jerusalem. However, it has been suggested that the priests may have had some function in the synagogue.\textsuperscript{174} This may be true, but it is also possible that it was a fictive title recording a priestly lineage. In the same document there is another contributor whose name is Lysimachos, and his title σοφός (sage) – if the reading is correct – probably stands for the Hebrew חכם (wise man), a designation used for Jews versed in the Jewish Law.\textsuperscript{175} If so, he was also Jewish, and there were probably even more Jews among the contributors, and the document may refer to a Jewish feast. CPJ I 140 is a list of names, but its exact purpose is

\textsuperscript{172} CPJ I 70, 71, 72, 95, 111, 139 and 140. There are other 19 papyri (see the list below) that come from Upper Egypt, but their precise provenance is unknown. Some of them may come from Edfu, but see J. Schwartz, “La communauté d’Edfou (Haute-Égypte) jusqu’à la fin du règne de Trajan,” in R. Kuntzmann & J. Schlosser, \textit{Études sur le judaïsme hellénistique} (Paris 1984), pp. 61-70, especially p. 63, who envisaged the possibility that CPJ I 48 – 124 all come from Thebes.

\textsuperscript{173} See for instance CPJ I 79, 88, 90 and 91, which were all countersigned by Hermokrates.

\textsuperscript{174} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 255; Kasher (1985), p. 162, but see A. Kerkeslager, “Jewish Pilgrimage and Jewish Identity in Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt,” in D. Frankfurter (ed.), \textit{Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt} (Leiden 1998), pp. 99-222, especially p. 217, n. 406. Based on the archeological findings of the site, he questions the theory of a highly organized, unassimilated Jewish community “centered on the activities of the local synagogue.” He agrees that a synagogue may have existed in the city, but even if so, the assimilation of the Jews to the Egyptian environment is very striking.

\textsuperscript{175} Further on this see E. Urbach, \textit{The Sages}, 2. vols. (Jerusalem 1975).
unclear. The ed. princ. suggests that the people mentioned in it were wine merchants,\textsuperscript{176} while Fuks thinks that they were members of a Roman garrison.\textsuperscript{177} The fact that the list includes several Roman names implies that it must date from the second half of the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE if not later. Among the names there is one most probably Jewish person, Abdelos (אבדאל in Hebrew), and some others, who might also have been Jews: Lotkis, Zannais and Euieis. That is all that we can retrieve from the Greek material published in \textit{CPJ I}.

It is, however, very interesting that in the early Roman period Jews clearly represented an important ethnic minority based on several ostraca that were found at the site.\textsuperscript{178} These tax receipts suggest that many of the Jews lived in a certain quarter of the city during the Roman period. We may, then, suspect that they are simply underrepresented in the Ptolemaic period. This is where the non-Greek material becomes very important. That is to say, there is a group of documents written both in Aramaic and in Demotic, and they show that a Jewish community had indeed existed there at least since the beginning of the Ptolemaic era if not earlier.

The Aramaic material consists of two papyri (\textit{TAD C3.28, TAD D1.17}), fourteen ostraca (\textit{TAD D7.55-TAD D11.26}) and nine funerary steles (\textit{TAD D21.7-TAD D21.15}). These documents are not precisely dated, but most of them can be assigned to the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE on paleographic grounds, which finds support in the presence of Greek names. We have already mentioned this Aramaic material and the non-biblical name Abieti, which is attested in these documents in Aramaic, while in the Theban sources we find it mainly in Greek. Honigman found not only the link between the Jewish communities in Thebes and Edfu, but also concluded that the majority of the biblical names in the Aramaic documents are typical of the Persian period. However, we also find some names such as Simon and Shalomzion that are typical of the Ptolemaic period.\textsuperscript{179} Based on the onomastic profile, Honigman reached the conclusion that the Jews might have arrived in Edfu still in the Persian era (probably from Elephantine), and a new wave of immigration at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period may explain the presence of the newly established names such as Simon and Shalomzion.

The Demotic material consists of only two ostraca, but they provide important information about the assimilation of the Jews in Edfu. \textit{O.Dem.Wien 284} and \textit{O.Dem.Wien 176}.


\textsuperscript{177} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 255.

\textsuperscript{178} Section IX of \textit{CPJ II} is entirely devoted to the ostraca from the Jewish quarter of Edfu introduced by a detailed discussion. All together, Tcherikover and Fuks collected almost 250 ostraca recording mainly tax receipts, see V. A. Tcherikover & A. Fuks, \textit{CPJ II} (Cambridge, MA 1960), pp. 108-177.

\textsuperscript{179} Honigman, \textit{BASP} 40 (2003), pp. 87-88. Further on these names see Chapter 2.1.
are both tax receipts relating to the same family. What is interesting is that *O.Dem.Wien* 284 is a bilingual ostracon on which two texts were inscribed perpendicular to each other, one in Aramaic and one in Demotic. The former was issued to Taese, daughter (?) of Shabbethai in Aramaic, then ten years later another receipt was drawn up for Tapaoueris wife of Shabbethai in Demotic. The language of the receipt is decisive in both cases. It seems certain that Shabbethai was a Jewish man who married an Egyptian woman called Tapaoueris, but for their daughter the receipt was written in Aramaic. Apparently the family was bilingual and this text provides solid evidence of intermarriage between Jews and Egyptians. Certainly, they were not the only mixed couple in Edfu or in Upper Egypt.

This document casts new light on the archeological and documentary evidence from Edfu. When discussing the Roman period ostraca from Edfu, V. Tcherikover notes the frequency of Egyptian names, and he concludes that the Jews were more influenced by the Egyptian environment than by the Greek one.\(^{180}\) A. Kerkeslager argues that the Jews in Upper Egypt were strongly influenced by the Hellenized Egyptian traditions and that most scholars passed over the archeological evidence. The Franco-Polish excavators found in the Jewish quarter potteries decorated with animal and Dionysiac forms, a relief with Hathor, images of Harpokrates and ithyphallic figures representing Harpokrates.\(^{181}\) Given the fact that these statues were found among the Jewish ostraca, it seems quite likely that they were common in Jewish homes. These findings should not be ignored because they reveal the assimilation and the social integration of the Jews in the Egyptian environment. This high degree of assimilation can be explained by two facts. First, Upper Egypt, in general, was always less Hellenized than the Delta or the Fayum in Lower Egypt, and there were certainly far less Greeks there. Secondly, as a result of this, mixed marriages between Hellenes (including Jews) and Egyptians – as we have seen in *O.Dem.Wien* 284 too – may have been more common here than elsewhere in the country. Mixed households can be considered one of the best propagators of assimilation, and in this way it is understandable how the rate of assimilation could be higher in Edfu (or probably in the whole Upper Egypt) than in Lower and Middle Egypt. The case of this Jewish community shows a very interesting and peculiar phenomenon of ethnic identity and refers to the fact that the Jews of Egypt should not be regarded as one united ethnic minority, but each community had its own character according to its geographical and social environment.

\(^{180}\) Tcherikover & Fuks (1960), pp. 116-118.

\(^{181}\) For a detailed bibliography of these archeological findings see Kerkeslager, *Pilgrimage* (1998), pp. 218, n. 409.
1.2.2. List of Jewish papyri according to provenance

Outside of Egypt (Palestine)

2. *CPJ I 2a* (259 BCE – Palestine)
3. *CPJ I 2b* (259 BCE – Palestine)
4. *CPJ I 2c* (259 BCE – Palestine)
5. *CPJ I 2d* (259 BCE – Palestine)
6. *CPJ I 2e* (259 BCE – Palestine)
7. *CPJ I 3* (259 BCE – Palestine)
8. *CPJ I 6* (5 April 258 BCE – Palestine)
10. *CPJ I 5* (12 May 257 BCE – Transjordan)

Nile Delta and surroundings

11. *SB XXIV 16272* (275-226 BCE – Sakkara)
13. *CPJ I 132* (21 September 164 BCE – Serapeion, near Memphis)

Arsinoite nome (Fayum)

14. *CPJ I 35* (259/8 BCE – Fayum)
15. *CPJ I 7* (257 BCE – Berenike Hormos, Fayum)
16. *CPJ I 8* (256 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
17. *CPJ I 9a* (17 September 253 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
18. *CPJ I 9b* (250 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
22. *CPJ I 16* (Mid-IIIrd BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
23. *CPJ I 17* (Mid-IIIrd BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
24. *CPJ I 125* (Mid-IIIrd BCE – Fayum)
26. *P. Count.* 27 (254-231 BCE – Anoubias, Fayum)
27. *P. Count.* 29 (254-231 BCE – Trikomia, Fayum)
28. *P. Count.* 31 (254-231 BCE – Anoubias, Fayum)
29. *P. Count.* 34 (254-231 BCE – Fayum)
30. *P. Count.* 36 (254-231 BCE – Fayum)
31. *P. Count.* 42 (254-231 BCE – Fayum)
32. *P. Col.* IV 77 (248-245 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
33. *CPJ* I 14 (7 March 241 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
34. *CPJ* I 15 (20 January 240 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
35. *CPJ* I 126 (238/7 BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
37. *CPJ* I 20 (228-221 BCE – Tebtynis, Fayum)
38. *CPJ* I 19 (226 BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
39. *SB* XX 14107 (17 November 223 BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
40. *CPJ* I 127d (5 February 222 BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
41. *SB* XVIII 14013 (5 June 222 BCE – Fayum)
42. *P. Sorb.* III 103 (16 January 221 BCE – Mouchis, Fayum)
43. *CPJ* I 38 (11 May 218 BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
44. *CPJ* I 128 (11 May 218 BCE – Magdola, Fayum)
45. *CPJ* I 129 (11 May 218 BCE – Alexandrou Nesos, Fayum)
46. *P. Lille. Dem.* II 94 (14 April-13 May 216 BCE – Ghoran)
47. *CPJ* I 21 (20 August 210 BCE – Apollonias, Fayum)
48. *CPR* XVIII 7 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
49. *CPR* XVIII 8 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
50. *CPR* XVIII 9 (November-December 207 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
51. *CPR* XVIII 11 (December 207-January 206 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
52. *CPJ* I 22 (12 August 201 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
53. *CPJ* I 33 (III BCE – Psenyris, Fayum)
54. *CPJ* I 39 (III BCE – Fayum)
55. *P. Petrie* III 90 (III BCE – Fayum)
56. *P. L. Bat.* XX 35 (III BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
57. *P. Lond.* VII 2184 (III BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
58. *CPJ* I 40 (III-II BCE – Trikomia, Fayum)
59. *P.Count.* 15 (III-II BCE – Boubastos, Fayum)
60. *P.Mich.* XVII 781 (186/5 BCE – Fayum)
61. *CPJ* I 130 (183 BCE – Ibion Argaïou, Fayum)
63. *BGU* XIV 2381 (2 August 176 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
64. *CPJ* I 124 (16 April 174 BCE – Trikokia, Fayum)
65. *CPJ* I 125 (24 September 173 BCE – Hephaistias, Fayum)
66. *CPJ* I 26 (172/1 BCE – Fayum)
67. *CPJ* I 28 (155 or 144 BCE – Samareia, Fayum)
68. *CPJ* I 133 (17 July 153 BCE or 15 July 142 BCE – Samareia?, Fayum)
69. *P.Köl*n. III 144 (2 February 152 BCE – Alexandrou Nesos, Fayum)
70. *CPJ* I 129 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
71. *CPJ* I 30 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
72. *CPJ* I 41 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum or Herakleopolis)
73. *PSI* Congr. XVII 22 (114 or 78 BCE – Fayum)
74. *CPJ* I 43 (II BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
75. *CPJ* I 47 (II BCE – Fayum)
76. *CPJ* I 134 (Late II BCE – Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, Fayum)
77. *CPJ* I 46 (II-I BCE – The Syrian Village, Fayum)

**Herakleopolite nome**

78. *CPJ* I 18 (April 260 BCE – Phebichis, Herakleopolite nome)
79. *P.Heid.* VIII 417 (19 November 190 or 17 February 189 BCE – Herakleopolis)
80. *P.Gen.* III 128 (163-156 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
81. *P.Diosk.* 1 (16 October 154 BCE – Herakleopolis)
82. *SB* XXVI 16801 (24 August 147 or 21 August 136 BCE – Phnebieus)
83. *P.Polit.Iud.* 17 (February 143 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
84. *P.Polit.Iud.* 15 (143-132 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
85. *P.Polit.Iud.* 16 (143-132 BCE – Herakleopolite nome?)
86. *P.Polit.Iud.* 20 (143-132 BCE – Tebetny)
87. *P.Polit.Iud.* 18 (30 September 142 BCE – Peenpasbytis)
89. *P.Polit.Iud.* 3 (140 BCE – Herakleopolis)
90. *P.Polit.Iud.* 10 (138/7 BCE – Herakleopolis)
91. *P.Polit.Iud.* 13 (June/July 135 BCE – Herakleopolis)
92. *P.Polit.Iud.* 12 (6 July 135 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
93. *P.Polit.Iud.* 1 (7 October 135 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
94. *P.Polit.Iud.* 2 (135 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
95. *P.Polit.Iud.* 14 (July 135 or July 134 BCE – Herakleopolis)
96. *P.Polit.Iud.* 5 (135/4 BCE – Herakleopolis)
97. *P.Polit.Iud.* 6 (March 134 BCE – Herakleopolis)
98. *P.Polit.Iud.* 7 (June/July 134 BCE, Herakleopolis)
100. *P.Polit.Iud.* 8 (15 March 133 BCE – Herakleopolis)
101. *P.Polit.Iud.* 11 (133/2 BCE – Herakleopolite nome)
102. *P.Polit.Iud.* 9 (20 June 132 BCE – Herakleopolis)
103. *CPJ* I 136 (12 August 51 BCE – Herakleopolites)
104. *CPJ* I 137 (6 November 50 BCE – Probably Herakleopolites)
105. *SB* XIV 11269 (I BCE – I CE – Herakleopolite nome?)

**Tholthis**

106. *CPJ* I 127e (January/February 222 BCE – Tholthis)

**Hakoris**

107. *P.Rein.* I 10 (13 February 111 BCE – Hakoris)

**Diospolis Magna (Thebes)**

110. *CPJ* I 48 (171/170 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
111. *BGU* VI 1454 (30 March 167 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
112. *CPJ* I 50 (10 September 165 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
113. *CPJ* I 73 (26 June 162 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
114. *SB* XX 14976 (29 March 161 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
115. *CPJ I* 49 (4 May 161 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
117. *CPJ I* 74 (22 September 160 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
118. *CPJ I* 75 (160/159 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
119. *CPJ I* 77 (30 March 158 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
120. *CPJ I* 27 (12 June 158 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
122. *CPJ I* 74 (22 September 160 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
123. *CPJ I* 75 (160/159 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
124. *CPJ I* 66 (23 November 155 BCE or 20 November 144 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
125. *CPJ I* 87 (9 April 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
126. *CPJ I* 89 (1 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
127. *BGU* XIV 2453 (27 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
128. *CPJ I* 61 (14 September 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
129. *CPJ I* 107 (154/3 BCE – Probably Diospolis Magna)
130. *CPJ I* 90 (12 February 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
131. *O.Wilck.* II 731 (9 July 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
132. *CPJ I* 64 (24 September 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
133. *CPJ I* 62 (2 December 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
134. *O.Mattha* 233 (153/2 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
135. *CPJ I* 63 (27 March 152 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
136. *CPJ I* 79 (19 June 151 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
137. *CPJ I* 65 (20 June 151 – Diospolis Magna)
138. *O.Heid.* 18 (151/150 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
139. *CPJ I* 135 (II BCE – Thebais)
140. *O.Lyon* inv. 807 + *O.Ashm.Shelt.* 42 (II BCE – Diospolis Magna)
141. *O.Camp.* 1925.103 (14 July 94 or 5 July 51 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
142. *O.BM* 25139 (12 April-11 May 91 BCE – Diospolis Magna)

Apollinopolis Magna (Edfu)

144. *TAD* D8.13 (23 March 252 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
145. *O.Dem.Wien* 129 (29 July 244 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
146. *TAD C3.28* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
147. *TAD D1.17* (III BCE – Upper Egypt, probably Apollinopolis Magna)
148. *TAD D8.3* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
149. *TAD D8.4* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
150. *TAD D8.5* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
151. *TAD D8.6* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
152. *TAD D8.7* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
153. *TAD D8.8* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
154. *TAD D8.9* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
155. *TAD D8.10* (III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
156. *TAD D7.55* (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
157. *TAD D7.56* (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
158. *TAD D7.57* (Late III BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
159. *TAD D8.11* (III-II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
160. *TAD D9.15* (III-II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
161. *CPJ I 95* (II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
162. *CPJ I 140* (8 October 49 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
163. *CPJ I 139* (I BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)

**Elephantine**

164. *O.Eleph.DAIK 6* (II BCE - Elephantine)

**Upper Egypt**

165. *CPJ I 112* (III BCE – Upper Egypt)
166. *CPJ I 113* (III-II BCE – Upper Egypt)
167. *CPJ I 109* (III-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
168. *CPJ I 104* (27 July 156 BCE – Upper Egypt)
169. *CPJ I 100* (155/4 BCE – Upper Egypt)
170. *CPJ I 105* (155 or 144 BCE – Upper Egypt)
171. *CPJ I 117* (c. 154 BCE – Upper Egypt)
172. *CPJ I 101* (154/3 BCE – Upper Egypt)
173. *CPJ I 102* (154/3 BCE – Upper Egypt)
174. *CPJ I* 114 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
175. *CPJ I* 118 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
176. *CPJ I* 103 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
177. *CPJ I* 120 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
178. *CPJ I* 121 (II-I BCE – Upper Egypt)

Unknown provenance

180. *O.Heid.* 1 (III BCE – Unknown provenance)
181. *BGU* X 2009 (22 December 179 BCE – Unknown provenance)
182. *CPJ I* 42 (152 or 141 BCE – Unknown provenance)
183. *BGU* XIV 2423 + *BGU* X 1938 (ca. 150 BCE – Unknown provenance)
184. *CPJ I* 141 (First half of I BCE – Unknown provenance)
185. *CPJ I* 138 (Second half of I BCE – Unknown provenance)

1.2.3. *List of doubtful Jewish papyri according to provenance*

Arsinoite nome (Fayum)

186. *CPJ I* 11 (Probably 282-246 BCE – Philadelphiea, Fayum)
187. *CPJ I* 127b (246-203 BCE – Magdola, Fayum)
188. *CPJ I* 36 (23 January 240 BCE – Boubastos, Fayum)
189. *CPJ I* 127a (240 BCE – Philadelpheia, Fayum)
190. *CPJ I* 127c (225/4 BCE – Hibeh, Fayum)
191. *CPJ I* 37 (28 January 222 BCE – Herakleia, Fayum)
192. *CPJ I* 34 (III BCE – Fayum)
193. *CPJ I* 131 (11 December 178 BCE or 8 December 167 BCE – Fayum)
194. *CPJ I* 31 (Mid-II BCE – Fayum)
195. *CPJ I* 32 (Probably mid-II BCE – Gurob, Fayum)
196. *CPJ I* 44 (99/8 BCE – Fayum)
197. *CPJ I* 45 (Early I BCE – Fayum)
Ombos

198. CPJ I 96 (III-II BCE – Ombos)

Koptos

199. CPJ I 69 (15 March 151 BCE or 12 March 140 BCE – Koptos)

Diospolis Magna (Thebes)

200. CPJ I 76 (159 or 92 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
201. CPJ I 80 (11 January 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
202. CPJ I 81 (6 March 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
203. CPJ I 82 (29 January 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
204. CPJ I 83 (25 November 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
205. CPJ I 84 (14 July 157 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
206. CPJ I 85 (7 July 156 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
207. CPJ I 108 (155/4 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
208. CPJ I 51 (155/4 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
209. CPJ I 52 (7 February 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
210. CPJ I 53 (22 February 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
211. CPJ I 54 (15 April 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
212. CPJ I 88 (16 June 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
213. CPJ I 55 (7 July 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
214. CPJ I 56 (11 August 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
215. CPJ I 57 (15 August 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
216. CPJ I 58 (25 September 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
217. CPJ I 59 (18 November 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
218. CPJ I 60 (28 December 154 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
219. CPJ I 91 (7 August, 153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
220. CPJ I 92 (153 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
221. CPJ I 67 (9 July 150 BCE or 6 July 139 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
222. CPJ I 68 (25 August 150 BCE or 20 August 139 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
223. CPJ I 94 (30 August 97 BCE – Diospolis Magna)
Apollinopolis Magna (Edfu)

224. *CPJ* I 70 (119 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
225. *CPJ* I 71 (5 September 104 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
226. *CPJ* I 72 (End of II BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)
227. *CPJ* I 111 (89/8 or 86/5 BCE – Apollinopolis Magna)

Upper Egypt

228. *CPJ* I 97 (III-II BCE – Upper Egypt)
229. *CPJ* I 122 (III-I BCE – Upper Egypt)
230. *CPJ* I 119 (16 August 191/190 BCE – Upper Egypt)
231. *CPJ* I 98 (28 June 161 BCE – Upper Egypt)
232. *CPJ* I 99 (155 or 144 BCE – Upper Egypt)
233. *CPJ* I 106 (11 June 152 BCE – Upper Egypt)
234. *CPJ* I 93 (17 August 121 BCE – Upper Egypt)
235. *CPJ* I 124 (Late II BCE – Upper Egypt)
236. *CPJ* I 110 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
237. *CPJ* I 115 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
238. *CPJ* I 116 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
239. *CPJ* I 123 (II BCE – Upper Egypt)
CHAPTER 2

Onomastics of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt

Analyzing the names is always an important part of a social study, but in the case of the Jews, its role is probably even more important.\textsuperscript{182} Given the fact that the Egyptian Jews are designated by their ethnic label Ἰουδαῖος/ία only in legal documents, the onomastics will always remain the most decisive criterion for identifying them. Unfortunately, it is not the most secure method, and scholars have different views on what we should consider a Jewish name. This chapter is devoted to the onomastic study of the Jews based on mainly documentary sources.

Collecting names attested in different sources from Ptolemaic Egypt is not a new enterprise. The very first, but still usable onomastic dictionary was compiled by F. Preisigke containing all the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Arabic and other Semitic names preserved in documentary sources.\textsuperscript{183} This dictionary is now superseded by an extensive project named \textit{Prosopographia Ptolemaica}, which has been collecting all inhabitants of Ptolemaic Egypt.\textsuperscript{184} This series was founded in 1950 at the University of Leuven, and is now being extended to the Roman and Byzantine period. These useful corpora are, however, general in their nature, and it was not before the 1970s that ethnic onomastic dictionaries appeared.

First and foremost we must mention the lexicon compiled by S. M. Ruozzi Sala, who collected the Semitic names preserved in Greek papyri from 323 BCE until 70 CE.\textsuperscript{185} This lexicon heavily depends on two previously published corpora, the \textit{Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum} and the \textit{Corpus Inscriptionum Judaicarum}, and lists all the Semitic names

\textsuperscript{182} This chapter is based on two papers I gave: the first was presented at the 27\textsuperscript{th} International Congress of Papyrologists (University of Warsaw, Warsaw, 29 July 2013) under the title “Contribution à l’onomastique des Juifs de l’Égypte hellénistique,” while the second was presented at the conference “Les Juifs et le pouvoir politique dans l’Antiquité” under the title “Le rôle du pouvoir politique dans l’onomastique des Juifs d’Égypte” (Institut National d’Histoire de l’Art, Paris, 13 November 2013).

\textsuperscript{183} F. Preisigke, \textit{Namenbuch enthaltend alle griechischen, lateinischen, hebräischen, arabischen und sonstigen semitischen und nichtsemitischen Menschennamen, soweit sie in griechischen Urkunden (Papyri, Ostraka, Inschriften, Mumienschildern usw) Ägyptens sich vorfinden} (Heidelberg 1922). This was later supplemented by D. Foraboschi, \textit{Onomasticon alterum papyrologicum. Supplemento al Namenbuch di F. Preisigke} (Testi e documenti per lo studio dell’antichità 16, Milano 1967-1971).


\textsuperscript{185} S. M. Ruozzi Sala, \textit{Lexicon nominum Semiticorum quae in papyris Graecis in Aegypto repertis ab anno 323 a.Ch.n. usque ad annum 70 p.Ch.n. laudata reperiuntur} (Testi e documenti per lo studi dell’antichità 46, Milano 1974).
attested in the papyri, ostraca and inscriptions available at that time. However, as the title also indicates, it is a collection of Semitic names, i.e. not specifically Jewish names, but names that were used by other Semitic people too.\textsuperscript{186} Here lies the difficulty of our task, because certain names are very problematic and sometimes it is simply impossible to decide whether a certain person bearing a Semitic name was a Jew, an Aramean or of any other Semitic ethnos.

The onomastic study of the Egyptian Jews progressed significantly with the work of S. Honigman who, in her MA thesis, collected all the Semitic names in the documentary sources of Greco-Roman Egypt.\textsuperscript{187} She listed the occurrences of the names with a detailed description of each document in which they were mentioned. This research was extended in her PhD dissertation, in which she updated her data, and entered several new occurrences left out from the first list.\textsuperscript{188} She clarifies in both of her studies that one should not automatically assign common Semitic names to Jews, and that instead of using the term “Semitic names” it would be more useful to distinguish between Hebrew, Aramaic, Phoenician and Arabic names. This is indeed necessary, because common Semitic names may have been borne by Jews, but also by other Semites. That is why she lists each name with an extensive commentary on its geographical and ethnic origin. It is for the very same reason that we exclude from our study several texts included in the CPJ.

A similarly cautious approach characterizes the work of T. Ilan, who has recently provided a detailed lexicon of the Jewish names in late antiquity.\textsuperscript{189} She started the collection with the names in Judea and Palestine and then extended her research to the Western and the Eastern Diaspora. The significance of this series lies in the fact that it gives a very coherent picture of the ancient Jewish onomastics both in their homeland and in the entire Diaspora. Another important fact is that she studied not only the documentary sources as did the authors of the previously discussed corpora, but also the abundant literary sources such as the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, the Apocrypha, the works of Josephus, Philo and the Church fathers. Although she lists all occurrences that refer to Jews or that were considered by the editor to refer to Jews, she distinguishes clearly the undoubtedly Jewish persons from the doubtful

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\textsuperscript{186} The problem with Ruozzi Sala’s concept is that she followed the editors of the CPJ in considering several Semitic names exclusively Jewish. This confusion originates from the fact that ancient authors often called the Jews Syrians like any other Semite groups. This, however, should not be followed by modern scholars.


\textsuperscript{188} Honigman (1995).

\textsuperscript{189} T. Ilan, Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity, 4 vols. (Tübingen 2002-2012). The series consists of four volumes. Besides the one that we constantly use in our work (Vol. 3, 2008), there are three other volumes: the first two collect the names of Judea/Palestine (330 BCE - 200 CE and 200 – 650 CE), while the fourth one concerns the Eastern Diaspora (330 BCE – 650 CE).
ones. The applied criteria was the following: one can be identified as Jewish if s/he is designated Ἰουδαῖος/ία, Ἑβραῖος/ία or Ἱσραηλίτης; if s/he is in blood relationship with a certainly Jewish person; if s/he certainly belongs to a Jewish association such as a synagogue or a politeuma; if s/he bears a biblical name or if there are any other circumstances ascertaining the Jewishness of the person in question (for instance the payment of the Jewish tax after 70 CE). In any other case, she indicates in a footnote why the editor or other scholars identified him/her as Jewish and why there are doubts about the Jewishness. This is indeed a rigorous system of criteria, but that is the only way to decrease the possibility of including non-Jews.

The goal of this chapter is to give a complete overview of the onomastics of the Egyptian Jews on the basis of Ilan’s lexicon as well as on my own research. I will rely on Greek, Aramaic and Demotic sources. The Demotic material is unfortunately not included in Ilan’s lexicon, although it is important and reveals some Jews, who would be neglected otherwise. For the identification of Jews in Demotic sources, I have followed the same criteria that Ilan did in the Greek and Aramaic material.

All in all, I have found 1043 persons who could be regarded as Jews. Of these, 509 (49%) are certainly Jews, either because they are designated so (Ἰουδαῖος/ία) or because they bear biblical names or fulfill another decisive criterion. Yet, more than half of them, i.e. 534 individuals (51%) are problematic, and their Jewishness is questionable. They were probably Jews, but on the basis of the information currently available to us, this is not sufficiently proven. For this study as well as for the final statistics, I have taken into account only the certainly Jewish persons. By examining the names borne by these persons, it becomes possible to see their onomastic practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jews</th>
<th>Doubtful Jews</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>1043</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2. Distribution of the names borne by Egyptian Jews*

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190 Ilan (2008), pp. 26-59. In the case of family relationships she notes that the strongest association was blood relationship, but marital relationship was also strong enough to indicate ethnic and religious affinity. On the other hand, persons, who were mentioned as business partners, friends or neighbors of a Jew, are – justly – not considered Jews, because this is a false association.
2.1. Early Semitic Names in Upper Egypt – Local Particularity

Taking a chronological point of view we will begin with the Jews of Upper Egypt. It is a well-known fact that during the Persian period a community of Jewish soldiers flourished in the south, on the island of Elephantine. They spoke Aramaic, which was the official language of the Persian empire. The traces of that Jewish community are well preserved in the Vth century BCE Aramaic papyri found at the site.\(^{191}\)

As mentioned above, an Aramaic-speaking Jewish community most probably survived the Macedonian conquest in Edfu.\(^{192}\) The Aramaic dossier, which consists of more than twenty documents including ostraca, papyri and funerary stelae (\textit{TAD C3.28}– \textit{TAD D11.26}; \textit{TAD D21.7} – \textit{TAD D21.15}), was extensively studied by S. Honigman. She arrived at fundamentally important conclusions regarding the Jewish communities in Edfu and Thebes.\(^{193}\) Most of the documents record proper names with numerical data referring to either wages or taxes. Most of the documents record proper names with numerical data referring to either wages or taxes. In the material, Honigman found almost fifty “Hebrew names” as she labels them (such as Abram, Eliezer, Johanan, Iashib, Nathan and Shimeon) and some fifteen common Semitic names (such as Nadbi).\(^{194}\)

In this material the most striking fact is that the majority of the names are typical of the Persian period. This observation was made by Honigman based on the followings.\(^{195}\) First, some of the names were frequently used in the Persian period, but became less popular and finally went out of fashion in the Ptolemaic period,\(^{196}\) like for instance הָגִּיז (Haggai), מִשְׁלָם

\(^{191}\) The origin of this colony should be analyzed in light of contemporary political events. After the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 587 BCE, the Jews were deported to Babylon, and it was only a half-century later that the Persians freed them, and gave them permission to rebuild the Temple. In 525 BCE Egypt was also conquered by the Persians, and they established a military colony at Elephantine, which was an important fortress and customs post at the southern border of Egypt. Most of the soldiers, who protected the interests of the Persian empire, were Arameans and Judeans. The documents they left behind provide precious information about the daily life of one of the earliest Jewish communities in the Diaspora. For a detailed bibliography on the subject see B. Porten, \textit{Archives from Elephantine: the Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony} (Berkeley 1968); for a collection of texts see Porten & Yardeni (1986-99) and B. Porten & J. J. Farber & C. J. Martin & G. Vittman et al. (eds.), \textit{The Elephantine Papyri in English : Three Millenia of Cross-Cultural Continuity and Change} (Leiden 1996).

\(^{192}\) See Chapter 1.2.1.7.

\(^{193}\) Honigman, \textit{BASP} 40 (2003), pp. 63-118.

\(^{194}\) For a complete list of these names see Honigman, \textit{BASP} 40 (2003), Appendix, pp. 107-112.


\(^{196}\) As a point of comparison see the lexicon compiled by Zadok regarding the pre-Hellenistic period: R. Zadok, \textit{The Pre-Hellenistic Israelite Anthroponymy and Protopgraphy} (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 28, Leuven 1988).

\(^{197}\) \textit{TAD C3.28}, l. 87 (son of Diophoros), \textit{TAD C3.28}, l. 91 (father of Shimeon), \textit{TAD C3.28}, ll. 100, 101 (father of Shabbethai), \textit{TAD D1.17}, l. 2 (father of Delaiah), \textit{TAD D8.5}, l. 4 (father of Dallui) and \textit{TAD D8.9}, l. 15 (son of PN).
Secondly, other names are diminutives, i.e. short forms of original names, such as Deliah (Dallui) for Delah (Delaiah) (both are recorded in the dossier), Toar for Zerarah (Zechariah), Hashub for Shabbethai and Shallum for Shelemiah, and this word-formation pattern is typical of the Persian period. Thirdly, some names are formed with an Aramaic root, but suffixed with the yahwistic ending –yah such as Deliah (Delaiah), Dvrdv or Dvrdv (Obadiah).

However, it must be emphasized that there are some names, in particular Shelamzim (Shelamzion) and Shemesim (Shimeon) that are present in this Aramaic corpus, but are not evident in the Persian era: quite the contrary. Shelamzion was a new name in the Second Temple period, and was also borne by the famous Hasmonean queen, Shelamzion Alexandra, who reigned in Palestine from 76 to 67 BCE. Her name became very popular in her country as shown by Ilan too who counts no less than 25 women bearing this name either in Hebrew (Shelâzm) or in Greek (Σαλαμψιώ). This relatively high proportion of the occurrences makes Shelamzion the third most popular female name in Palestine. Its earliest attestation in Palestine dates from the 1st century BCE, while the last one from 130 CE, which suggests that it went out of use quite soon. However, as we have seen, this name appeared in Egypt, in our Aramaic dossier long before its Palestinian appearance. It has three attestations dated to the 3rd century BCE, which is quite early, and has no parallel in the Greco-Roman world. It is not recorded in Egypt later in the Ptolemaic period, neither does it have an attestation in Greek or Demotic. All this suggests that this female name originated in Egypt in the Aramaic-speaking community of Edfu (or in a larger sense Upper Egypt), but it soon went out of

198 TAD C3.28, l. 107 (son of Azgad), TAD D8.9, l. 1 (father of Shabbethai) and TAD D21.7 (son of Azgad), who is probably the same person as in TAD C3.28.
199 TAD C3.28, l. 116 (son of Abieti), TAD D8.5, l. 2 (father of Dallui) and TAD D8.6, l. 1 (son of Shimeon).
200 TAD C3.28, l. 102 (father of Johanan), TAD C3.28, l. 115 (son of Zeira), TAD D1.17, l. 2 (father of PN), TAD D8.4, l. 7 (father of Shimeon), TAD D8.5, l. 2 (son of Idleh), TAD D8.5, l. 4 (son of Haggai), TAD D8.5, l. 6 (father of PN), TAD D8.7, l. 3 (father of Judith), TAD D8.9, l. 13 (son of Abieti),
201 TAD D1.17, l. 2 (son of Haggai), TAD D8.7, l. 2 (son of Iotakum).
202 TAD C3.28, ll. 98, 99 (father of Obadiah).
203 TAD D8.6, l. 11.
204 TAD D8.5, l. 3 (son of Shabbethai).
205 TAD D1.17, l. 2 (son of Haggai), TAD D8.7, l. 2 (son of Iotakum).
206 TAD D1.17, l. 2 (son of Obadiah).
207 TAD C3.28, ll. 98, 99 (son of Zaccur), TAD C3.28, l. 117 (son of Pachios / Pachis / Pachois / Pachos), TAD D8.5, l. 5 (physician), TAD D8.6, l. 1 (father of Nathan) and TAD D21.8, l. 1 (son of Shimeon).
208 TAD C3.28, l. 80, TAD D8.9, l. 8, TAD D21.7, l. 2 (daughter of Azgad).
209 TAD C3.28, ll. 91, 93, 96 (son of Nathan), TAD D8.4, l. 7 (son of Dallui), TAD D8.6, l. 2 (father of PN), TAD D8.6, l. 9 (father of Idleh), TAD D8.8, l. 8 (corrected from Meon), TAD D8.11, l. 9, TAD D21.8, l. 2 (father of Obadiah), TAD D21.9, l. 2 (father of Nathanai).
211 Only Mariam and Salome were more popular with 80 and 63 occurances respectively, see Ilan (2002), p. 57.
fashion, and later reappeared in Palestine to become a very popular Second Temple period name.\(^{212}\)

The name Shimeon is somewhat different, because it is a biblical name,\(^{213}\) therefore it was always in the onomastic repertoire of the Jews. It did not gain much popularity, however, before the Hellenistic era.\(^{214}\) For this reason it is striking that we meet some persons named Shimeon in the Aramaic papyri early in the Ptolemaic period. These are in fact the first attestations of this name in Egypt. Later on, it became one of the most popular names both in Palestine and in Egypt, the possible reasons of which we will discuss later.

There is a third name that is also interesting from this point of view: Eleazar. This is an early biblical name, which was not in use for a long time, and reappeared in Palestine only in the 1st century BCE. In Egypt, in the contemporary Elephantine archive it is not attested at all, and its first attestation can be linked to the IIIrd century Aramaic dossier.\(^{215}\) Later in the Greek sources it becomes a popular name with several occurrences. One of them is extremely important, since it comes form Elephantine, and thus, provides some links to the earlier Jewish community.\(^{216}\)

It is instructive to compare this Aramaic material from Edfu to the contemporary Greek and Demotic sources that we have at our disposal from Upper Egypt. Honigman studied nine particular Semitic names that are attested in the Aramaic dossier, and she found Greek equivalents of the same names in the Theban sources. Thus, the Greek forms correspond to Semitic names: Ἀβδίας and Ἀβδιός to שביה (Abdi) and הֶבְדֵי (Obadiah) respectively,\(^{217}\) Ἀβραμός to Abram,\(^{218}\) Ἀσηπίς to השיב (Hashub),\(^{219}\) Δελλαίας to שליה (Delaiah),\(^{220}\) Δέλλούς to דלוי (Dallui),\(^{221}\) Ἱασιπής to ישיב (Iashib),\(^{222}\) Σεφθάις to ספטא (Septha) and Σεπτα to ספטא (Septha) respectively.

\(^{212}\) It is even possible that Shelamzion Alexandra’s family originated from Egypt.
\(^{213}\) Gen 29:33. He was the son of Jacob, and eponymos of one of the twelve tribes of Israel.
\(^{214}\) Zadok lists all together two occurrences of the name Shimeon in pre-Hellenistic times: the patriarch attested in Gen 29:33 and the son of Harim attested in Esd 10.31, see Zadok (1988), p. 454. In Egypt there was no one named Shimeon in the Elephantine archive, see Porten (1968), p. 148.
\(^{215}\) TAD D8.7. It is an account that lists names with different sums of money, and one of them was Eliezer.
\(^{216}\) O.Eleph.DAIK 6.
\(^{217}\) In Hebrew both forms exist. Honigman aligns שביה (Abdi) to the Greek form Ἀβδίας, while הֶבְדֵי (Obadiah) to Ἀβδιός, see Honigman, BASP 40 (2003), p. 76, n. 33. However, it is not certain at all that in Greek there was a distinction of this kind, because the form Ἀβδίας is not recorded in the nominative. The genitive form Ἀβδίου, which is attested in CPJ I 75 and in BGU X 2009, could be well connected to the nominative Ἀβδιός, since we are dealing with an Egyptinized form. For the same approach see Ilan (2008), pp. 142-144. The Greek form Ἀβδίου is recorded at least eight times: CPJ I 65, l. 6; CPJ I 73, l. 5; CPJ I 75, l. 3; CPJ I 109, ll. 2 and 9; BGU VI 1454, l. 3; BGU X 2009, ll. 3 (2x) and 4.
\(^{218}\) Abram is recorded in Aramaic in TAD D8.4, l. 23, while in Greek in CPJ I 50, l. 3.
\(^{219}\) Hashub is attested in TAD D8.6, l. 11, while Asibis in CPJ I 114, l. 2.
\(^{220}\) Two different persons bear the name Delaiah in the Aramaic dossier from Edfu (TAD D1.17, l. 2; TAD D8.7, l. 1), while the Greek form Δελλαίας is attested in CPJ I 121, l. 3.
What may be the history of these two communities in Upper Egypt? Since most of the Aramaic sources date from the IIIrd century BCE, while the Greek ones are from the IIrd century BCE, it is logical to consider the possibility of a relocation of the same community, i.e. the Edfu community, attested in Edfu in the IIIrd century BCE, moved to the Theban region and left its trace there in the IIrd century BCE. However, as Honigman argues, this is not very likely, since some of the particular Semitic names are still present in Edfu in later centuries, such as for instance the name Septhais recorded along with a Iosepos in the Ird century BCE. For this reason, it is almost certain that we are dealing with two distinct communities, one in Edfu and one in Thebes, which is also confirmed by their different use of language. Yet, they certainly had a close relationship. What kind of relationship it was exactly is unknown because the Theban ostraca, recording mostly tax receipts, do not tell much about the organization of the community. They may have had commercial or matrimonial connections for instance.

221 Dallui is the diminutive form of Delaiah and is recorded in several Aramaic documents: TAD C3.28, ll. 102 and 115; TAD D1.17, l. 2; TAD D8.4, l. 7; TAD D8.5, ll. 2, 4 and 6; TAD D8.7, l. 3; TAD D8.9, l. 13. The Greek version Δέλλος is attested once in CPJ I 107.
222 ḫasename (Shefatiah) is attested in TAD D7.56, l. 1 and in TAD D8.9, l. 3, probably also l. 2. Its Greek form Ἰασπίς is recorded in one document: CPJ I 27, col. II, l. 7 and col. III, l. 1.
223 ḫasename (Shefatiah) is not recorded in the Aramaic material, but we find two Greek names in the Greek sources that most probably denote this name: Σαβατις in BGU X 2009, l. 4 (2x) and Σεπταθ in CPJ I 139, l. 4. Note that Ilan considers Σαβατίς a variation of Shabtai, see Ilan (2008), p. 152.
224 ḫasename (Abieti) is attested in Aramaic in the following documents: TAD C3.28, ll. 29, 30 and 53; TAD D7.57, l. 2 (2x); TAD D8.4, l. 25; TAD D8.9, l. 13 and TAD D8.10, l. 11. In Greek, as Ἀβιετός or Ἀβιητός, we find it in CPJ I 48, l. 4; CPJ I 74, l. 4; CPJ I 87, l. 3; CPJ I 101, l. 2; CPJ I 105, l. 5; CPJ I 117, l. 1; CPJ I 118, l. 2; O.Camp. 1925.103, l. 1; O.Lyon inv. 807 + O.Ashm.Shelt. 42, l. 1, and most probably also in CPJ I 65, l. 5, where one should probably read Ἀβιητός instead of Ἀβιητός. Besides these names, Honigman aligns the Greek form Ἰοζής (attested in CPJ I 90 and 117) to the biblical name Ἰοζής (Ioezer), and she reveals the latter in TAD C3.28, l. 107, but I cannot confirm this reading. Also, she mentions a Demotic contract from the British Museum (BM 10517) in which a certain Iazaros is attested, but according to the online catalogue the name in question should be read as Tazarios, and thus, it is not relevant for us, see Honigman, BASP 40 (2003), p. 78.
225 The name Haggai is attested five times in Aramaic (for the occurrences see above n. 172), while in Greek it has one attestation in BGU XIV 2453.

226 CPJ I 139, l. 4.
As to the origin of the two communities the onomastic repertoire is conclusive. About 75% of the names in the Aramaic documents are typical of the Persian period, which definitely refers to a pre-Hellenistic period origin. However, we recall the presence of some typically Hellenistic period names such as Shelamzion, Shimeon and Eleazar. These two factors would suggest a late IVth or early IIIrd century BCE immigration to Edfu, but Honigman argues for another scenario. According to her, the community existed in Edfu already in the Persian period, and later, after the Macedonian conquest, a new wave of immigrants might have arrived there bringing newly adopted names (Shimeon, Shelamzion, Eleazar). This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the fact that later in the Ptolemaic period, as well as in the Roman period, other typically Hellenistic period names, such as Jacob and Isaac, are attested in Greek and Demotic ostraca from Edfu, and these names are missing from the early Aramaic material. Thus, it seems that the immigration to Edfu was continuous, but the first group of Jews might, indeed, have arrived in the Persian period. At least, this would explain why they preserved their language and their onomastic identity well after the Macedonian conquest.

It remains to be explained why the Theban community used the Greek language if they were closely linked to the Aramaic speaking Edfu community. In my view, the Theban community was younger than the Edfu one since there is no evidence of their existence before the Hellenistic period. While some groups of immigrants migh have arrived in Edfu at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, other immigrants might have settled in Thebes. Be that as it may, the fact that the Theban community used the Greek language shows that they were more influenced by the Greek environment than their fellows in Edfu. It is also certain that more Greeks settled in Thebes than in Edfu, which definitely speeded the Hellenization of the inhabitants. Unfortunately, nothing more precise can be said about the origin of these two Upper Egyptian communities, but what is obvious is that they were unique in their onomastic habits.

Let us conclude this part of our study with some remarks about the Elephantine community. It is well-known that the late Jewish community of the Vth century BCE disappeared after the destruction of the Jewish temple at Elephantine (410 BCE). At any rate,

227 Honigman, BASP 40 (2003), pp. 87-88.
228 For the presence of these typically Hellenistic period biblical names in early Roman Edfu see B. Menu, “Reçus démotiques romains provenant d’Edfou (O.D. Ifao: 2e série) [avec 5 planches doubles],” BIFAO 79 (1979), pp. 121-141 and idem, “Reçus démotiques romains provenant d’Edfou (O.D. Ifao: 3e série) [avec 6 planches doubles],” BIFAO 80 (1980), pp. 171-190. They confirm the immigration of Hellenized Jews throughout the Ptolemaic period. The name Joseph is attested in Greek at the end of the Ptolemaic period (CPJ I 139), while a certain Isaac son of Thaumastos is attested in O.Dem. 51, and he may have been the brother of Iakob recorded in O.Dem. 106. Another Iakob, who appears in O.Dem. 462, may have been their grandfather.
there is no evidence of this community existing in the IV\textsuperscript{th} century BCE. However, Elephantine was continuously inhabited, and after the Macedonian conquest soldiers of the Ptolemaic army quickly appeared in the region as shown by the Greek papyri dating from the late IV\textsuperscript{th} and the early III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE.\textsuperscript{229} It is striking how varied the ethnic origin of the soldiers, who went to Elephantine, was. We meet Greeks from Sicily, Cyrene, Alexandria, Crete, Rhodes among others, but also from the region of Arcadia, Thrace and Temnos. Bearing in mind that Jews were also part of this Greek flow as members of the Ptolemaic army, I find it quite plausible that some of them went to Elephantine. It seems quite likely that the Greek-speaking Jewish immigrants, who settled in Thebes and in Edfu, also reached the very southern settlement of Syene and the island of Elephantine. A Greek ostracon (\textit{O.Eleph.DAIK} 6\textsuperscript{230}) records the typically Hellenistic period name Eleazar, which definitely supports the hypothesis that some people coming with the early Ptolemaic period Jewish immigrants went further down to Elephantine. This is supported by the fact that the name Eleazar, which had never been used in Egypt before, appears for the first time in Edfu (\textit{TAD D8.7}), and later in Elephantine (\textit{O.Eleph.DAIK} 6). Although one ostracon cannot serve as evidence for the existence of a community, it shows that some Jews certainly lived at Elephantine in Ptolemaic times.

\textbf{2.2. Effects of the Hellenization}

In spite of the fact that in the communities of Upper Egypt a considerable part of the names can be regarded as the heritage of the Persian period, in other parts of Egypt (like in the entire Hellenistic world) the onomastic practices of the Jews changed dramatically. As Tcherikover notes: “The choice of personal names by Jews during their long history has always been influenced by two opposing tendencies: faithfulness to national tradition, and the wish to conform to the usages of their environment.”\textsuperscript{231} This is all the more true, because after the Macedonian conquest, direct contact with Greek culture was inevitable. The naming practices never remain unaffected by society, and Hellenistic culture had an important impact

\textsuperscript{229} Porten & Farber & Martin & Vittman et al. (1996), pp. 407-425. One of the earliest dated Greek papyri in Egypt comes from Elephantine and contains four texts: \textit{P.Eleph.} 1 (310 BCE) is a marriage contract between a man from Temnos and a woman from Cos, \textit{P.Eleph.} 2 (284 BCE) records a will written by a Greek couple from Temnos, while \textit{P.Eleph.} 3 and 4 (283-282 BCE) contain a pair of business documents drawn up between a Syrian woman and her Greek guardians. These contracts show how diverse the origin of the Greek-speaking immigrants was.


\textsuperscript{231} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 27.
on the onomastics of the Jews. This change was definitely more visible in Egypt than in Palestine, although each part of the Hellenistic world was influenced to a certain extent. In this subchapter I will study how Hellenization affected the Jewish onomastics in Egypt, first focusing on the possible influence of the political power and contemporary political events, and then I will move on to Greek names, theophoric names, and finally I will conclude the chapter with the special case of the name Shabbethai/Sabbataios.

2.2.1. Reflection of the political power on Jewish onomastics

2.1.1.1. Hasmonean names

It is of interest to inquire whether the political power and contemporary historical events played a part in the change of Jewish naming practices. It has already been noted that in 198 BCE, when the Seleucid Antiochus III had a decisive victory over Ptolemy V Epiphanes in the Fifth Syrian War, the Ptolemies lost their grip on Palestine. The reign of the Seleucids was not long either, because the Maccabean revolt (168-140 BCE) ended their power in Palestine. These political events are important from our point of view, because according to Ilan this revolt and the Hasmonean dynasty had a great influence on the onomastic practices of the Jews in Palestine. Based on her research, it has become clear that the names of the heroes of the revolt, מתתיח (Matityahu), יוחנן (Johanan), שמעון (Simon), יהודה (Judah), אלעזר (Eleazar) andJonathan (Jonathan) came into fashion thanks to the popularity of this family. Over 30% of the male population bore one of the six Hasmonean names, which is a significant proportion.

If we turn our attention to Egypt, the following question arises: did the Hasmonean names have such an influence in Egypt too? Were the Jews of Egypt affected by the echo of the revolt? Let us take a look at the sources. If we take for example the name of the initiator of the revolt, מתתיח (Matityahu), or its Greek form, Ματταθίας, it is surprising that we do not find a single example of it in Egyptian documents.

232 Ilan (2008), pp. 6-8.
233 She has found all together 879 people bearing one of these Hasmonean names (128 Johanan, 257 Simon, 179 Judah, 188 Eleazar and 75 Jonathan), but after removing all the non-relevant attestations (such as doubtful persons, people mentioned before the time of the revolt and members of the Hasmonean family) we are left with 792 persons out of 2509.
As to the names Johanan and Jonathan, there are ten attestations of Johanan written either in Aramaic (יוחנן) or in Greek (Ἰωάννης), and eleven occurrences of Jonathan written again either in Aramaic (יונתן) or in Greek (Ἰωνάθας). With regard to the amount of sources from Egypt, a name with ten or eleven attestations may already be considered popular, and at first glance we might assume the influence of the Maccabean revolt, but there are other factors to be taken into account such as for instance the date. We must definitely exclude documents dated to the time before the rebellion, since in these cases, occurrences of Hasmonean names cannot be the result of the influence of the revolt. If we remove those documents, we are left with three Johanan and two Jonathan.

The same phenomenon can be seen in the case of the name Judah. It is attested six times in Egyptian sources, but among them there are only three, who date from the contemporary or post-rebellion period. These results do not confirm the decisive influence of the revolt on Jewish onomastics in Egypt. Rather, they show that in Egypt these names were already in use before the revolt.

The name Eleazar is attested seven times in the documentary sources and four of them most probably date from the period after the revolt. This would suggest the influence of the Hasmonean Eleazar, but we must take the Egyptian context into consideration. A certain Eleazar is mentioned in the Third Book of Maccabees 6:1-15. This Eleazar was a well-known priest, who pleaded with the Egyptian king not to kill the Jews of Egypt. Whether or not this Eleazar was existing historical figure, this case clearly shows that in Egypt other factors may have been responsible for the use of this name as well.

The last Hasmonean name that must be studied is Shimeon. This name requires further explanation because it poses problems. We have already mentioned above that this name did not gain much popularity before the IIIrd century BCE. Later, however, it became one of the most popular names both in Palestine and in Egypt. Ilan argues that in Palestine it was the

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234 Five attestations are written in Aramaic: TAD C3.28, ll. 91, 93, 95, 96, (4x), TAD D8.4, l. 7; the others are in Greek: CPJ I 24, CPJ I 28, P.Count. 26, l. 148, JIGRE 57 (2x).
235 The name is written twice in Aramaic: TAD C3.28, ll. 90, 104 (2x), and nine times in Greek: CPJ I 24, CPJ I 28, CPJ I 126, CPJ I 128, CPR XVIII 7, ll. 125, 126 (2x), CPR XVIII 9, l. 177 (the same person is attested twice), P.Count. 36 and Kom Aushin inv. no. 647.
236 CPJ I 28, JIGRE 57 (2x).
237 CPJ I 28, Kom Aushin inv. no. 647.
238 One attestation is in Aramaic: TAD C3.28, l. 18; another one is in Demotic: P.Count. 2, l. 249; and three others are in Greek: CPJ I 24, CPJ I 43 and JIGRE 54 (2x). The last three are contemporary or later than the period of the revolt.
239 The sole Aramaic occurrence is TAD D8.7, l. 4, and the others are all in Greek: O.Eleph.DAIK 6, JIGRE 42, JIGRE 62, JIGRE 115, JIGRE 123, JIGRE 124. JIGRE 42, JIGRE 62 were certainly, and JIGRE 123, JIGRE 124 were most probably written after the Maccabean revolt.
popularity of the Hasmonean dynasty that boosted the use of this name. This is true to some extent, but this name owes its popularity at least in part to its double nature even in Palestine. The biblical name שמעון (Shimeon) was phonetically very close to the Greek name Σίμων. In the Septuagint שמעון (Shimeon) is transcribed as Σωμεών, but the name of Simon son of Mattathias was written as Σμον. This latter was itself a widespread Greek name meaning “Flat-Noose,” and was quickly adopted as the equivalent of the biblical Shimeon. In a culturally Hellenized environment it was certainly fitting for Hellenized Jews. As N. Cohen points out, the name Shimeon became widespread only among Jews who lived in Hellenized areas, that is, in Palestine and in the Western Diaspora, while in the Eastern Diaspora it was hardly present. Completing this picture with the archeological findings in Palestine, which attest the economic contact between Jews and Greeks from the VIIth century BCE onwards, it becomes clear that Greek influence was probably more responsible for the appearance of the name Shimeon / Simon than the Hasmonean Simon.

From our point of view it is important to ask whether the same holds true for Egypt. Shimeon or Simon came into fashion in Ptolemaic Egypt to such an extent that it was the fourth most popular name with eighteen certainly Jewish occurrences. The emergence of this name should certainly be explained in the same way in Egypt as in Palestine, i.e. that the Greek influence played the most important role in it. The other phenomenon that was discernible in Palestine, i.e. that the Hasmonean Simon son of Mattathias and the revolt of the Maccabees promoted the use of this name, is far less convincing in Egypt. First and foremost, among the eighteen Egyptian attestations of the name Shimeon / Simon there are only four that date from the period after the revolt, and most documents can be dated to the IIIrd century BCE. Secondly, half of the sources, in which this name is mentioned, were written in Aramaic, and come from the Edfu community. Finally, it must be noted that Simon son of

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240 It must be noted, however, that the name re-entered the onomastic repertoire well before the revolt of the Maccabees – as is shown by N. G. Cohen, “The Jewish Names as Catural Indicators in Antiquity,” JSJ 7 (1976), pp. 97-128, esp. p. 113. Simon the Just (Sirach 50.1; AJ XII 43), Simon, Joshua’s son (Sirach 50.27) or Simon, Mattathias’ grandfather (1 Macc 2.3; AJ 12.265) for example all lived before the revolt. See also Iban (2002), p. 218.

241 Gen. 29:33.

242 1 Macc. 2:3.

243 Cohen, JSJ 7 (1976), pp. 97-128, esp. 112-117.

244 Nine attestations are written in Aramaic: TAD C3.28, ll. 93, 95 and 96 (the same person); TAD D8.4, l. 7; TAD D8.6, ll. 2 and 9 (2x), TAD D8.8, l. 8; TAD D8.11, l. 9; TAD D21.8, l. 2; TAD D21.9, l. 2 and TAD D8.13, l. 1. There are several attestations of this name written in Greek, but given the fact that Simon was also a Greek name, it is not always clear whether we are dealing with a Jew or a Greek. In the following cases the person in question was certainly Jewish: CPJ I 20, CPJ I 61 & 62 & 63 & 90 & 107 (the same person is mentioned on each of these ostraca), CPJ I 101, CPJ I 118, P.Count. 26, ll. 49, 142 (2x), 148, 158, P.Köln. III 144, ll. 5 & 21 (the same person) and P.Polit.Iud. 11, l. 3. Finally, there is also a Demotic ostracan that provides an Egyptian attestation: BGU VI 1454, l. 1.
Mattathias was not the only Simon in the Jewish history. Above all, we must mention Simon, the son of Jacob and Leah.\textsuperscript{245} If we take all these facts into consideration, it becomes clear that the popularity of the name Simon in Egypt was not due to Simon son of Mattathias, but to the vivid Greek influence that was present all over the country.

Finally, let us see an even more interesting case, namely the name שלםציון (Shelamzion). We have already noted that the name of the famous Hasmonean queen became very popular in Palestine after her reign (76-67 BCE), and also that it had already appeared in Egypt in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE Aramaic documents from Edfu.\textsuperscript{246} The name Shelamzion had existed in Egypt long before the reign of the queen, and this fact definitely confirms that the Hasmonean names had been used in Egypt throughout the Hellenistic period. Thus, the Maccabean revolt had no influence on the Jewish name-giving practices.

\subsection*{2.1.1.2. Names of the Ptolemaic dynasty}

I will analyze now the local political power, that is, the Ptolemies under whose reign the Jews lived in Hellenistic Egypt. After having seen that contemporary Palestinian events did not influence the onomastics of the Egyptian Jews, it is interesting to ask whether the Egyptian political events or the popularity of the ruling dynasty had any impact on their practices.

How was the relationship between the Jews and the Ptolemies? We know from Josephus that Ptolemy I, during his expeditions in Syria (320, 312 and 302 BCE), enslaved many Jews and brought them with him to Egypt, and that there were also several Jewish immigrants, who were enticed by the land of Egypt, and followed him voluntarily.\textsuperscript{247} Since there was no border between Egypt and Palestine during the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, it was easy to move and settle in Egypt. As we know, many of the immigrants served in the Ptolemaic army, and these Jewish soldiers, like any other soldiers in the army, received plots of land in exchange for their military services.\textsuperscript{248} They were certainly grateful to the king, and the best way of showing gratitude was to name their children after the king or the queen. This may be the most probable reason why we find a certain amount of royal names in the Jewish onomastics in Egypt.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{245} Gen. 29:33.
\item \textsuperscript{246} TAD C3.28, l. 80; TAD D8.9, l. 8; TAD D21.7, l. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{247} Josephus, AJ XII 1.
\item \textsuperscript{248} For a detailed bibliography about Ptolemaic army see most recently: S. Scheuble-Reiter, \textit{Die Katökenreiter im ptolemäischen Ägypten} (München 2012), C. Fischer-Bovet, \textit{Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt} (Cambridge / New York 2014).
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Let us start the discussion with the name of the great conqueror, Alexander the Great. He enjoyed great success and recognition among the Jews, because he gave them the right to "live according to their ancestral laws" - as he did with all the peoples of his empire. In Egypt, he followed the official protocol by making his famous pilgrimage to the sanctuary of Amon in the oasis of Siwa, and thus legitimizing his power. With respect to these facts it is understandable that the name Alexander became popular among the Jews, and in the sources we find at least seven certainly Jewish men named Ἀλέξανδρος. In a deed of renunciation dating from 260 BCE we meet a certain Alexandros son of Andronikos (Ἀλέξανδρος τοῦ Ἀνδρονίκου Ἰουδαίου), who was a soldier on active service as a dekanikos. The contract was concluded between him and a certain Andronikos, member of the Epigone (Ἀνδρονίκος τοῦ Ἐπιγόνης), whose ethnicon is unfortunately lost. Although Tchrikover tentatively suggests the restoration Ἀνδρονίκος τοῦ Ἐπιγόνης, this is very hypothetic, therefore we cannot be sure of his ethnic identity. This document comes from the Herakleopolite nome like other documents mentioning the name Alexandros. In a document from Herakleopolis we find Alexandros son of Isakis who, despite his obligation, did not appear in court. What a pity that we do not know the outcome of this case. Then, in the archive of the Jewish politeuma there are two petitions that were addressed to Alexandros politarches (Ἀλεξάνδρως πολιτάρχῃ). No doubt he was a Jew, who filled an important position in the Jewish politeuma. Another Alexandros, son of Stephanos (Ἀλέξανδρος τοῦ Στεφάνου) is mentioned in the same archive. He was being held in a Jewish prison, from where a certain Straton intended to release him. Still in the same archive, a letter exchange between the local authorities in Peenpasbytis and the politeuma in Herakleopolis reveals a certain Alexandros mentioned together with the judges in Peenpasbytis (Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ οἱ ἐμὸν Πεισιστοβύτης κριταί). This Alexandros was probably the representative of the judges in Peenpasbytis, who informed the judges in Herakleopolis concerning a certain case. Based on this archive, it seems quite certain that the politeuma of Herakleopolis - like all other

249 According to Josippon, the medieval chronicle, the Jews of Jerusalem were so grateful to Alexander that they promised him to name the male children born during the following year (330 BCE) after him. Although it is impossible to prove the historicity of this legend, it shows the popularity of Alexander the Great among the Jews, see Modrzejewski (1995), p. 54.
250 All the attestations of the name Alexandros are in Greek: CPJ I 18, CPJ I 136, P.Count. 26 (2x), P.Polit.Iud. 1, 2 (the same person is recorded in both documents), P.Polit.Iud. 17, P.Polit.Iud. 18.
252 P.Polit.Iud. 1, 2.
253 P.Polit.Iud. 17.
254 P.Polit.Iud. 18.
politeumata in Ptolemaic Egypt - was of military nature. In this light it seems fit to assume that the name of Alexander the Great was popular among the military persons and their descendants, precisely because they were grateful to him for the benefits he granted.

Other dynastic names that must be examined are those of the Ptolemaic kings and queens. The Ptolemies considered themselves the successors of Alexander the Great. They elevated the deceased Alexander to the level of a state god and established a cult in his honour, which was soon expanded to include their own cult. Ptolemy II Philadelphos was the one who not only elevated his deceased father to the rank of Theos Soter, but also decided to link the living royal couple to the cult of Alexander. On the one hand, this collective dynastic cult was definitely part of their royal propaganda, with the help of which they wanted to legitimize the dynasty and to popularize themselves. On the other hand, some Ptolemaic kings were indeed quite “philo-semite,” such as for instance Ptolemy VI Philometor, which may have given another reason to the Jews to adopt the dynastic name Ptolemaios. The documentary sources provide six certainly Jewish persons named Πτολεμαῖος. In the politeuma archive we find a Ptolemaios son Simon (Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Σίμωνος Ιουδαίου). The document is not complete, but it is clear that Ptolemaios wrote the complaint to the archons, because he was wronged by a certain Arsames, who did not pay him the price of the wine, but was seeking excuses. In a contract from the village of Trikomia dating from 174 BCE, another Ptolemaios appears, whose son Agathokles took a loan from another Jew, Iudas son of Iosephos, who was a Jew of the Epigone. All participants of the contract are Jews, and we know that Agathokles’s son Ptolemaios belonged to the detachment of infantry under the direction of Molossos, and was a taktomisthos stationed in the Herakleopolite nome (Αγαθοκλῆς Πτολεμαίου Ιουδαίου τῶν Μολοσσῶν ἐν τῷ Ἑρακλεόπολιτῃ τεταγμένων πεζῶν τακτομίσθῳ[1]). Another contract from the Arsinoïte nome dating from 178 BCE reveals a Ptolemaios son of Sabbataios, Jew of the Epigone, who concluded a contract with a Jewish woman, whose name is unfortunately lost. In all, three other military persons bear a

Further on this see Chapter 6.2.3.

Hölbl (2001), pp. 94-95. This may have happened around 272 BCE. With this decision he definitely determined the nature of the cult for the future. This dynastic cult was unique in the Hellenistic world. Besides, in 269 BCE at latest, Ptolemy II elevated his beloved sister and wife, Arsinoe II as well to the level of an individual goddess, and she was given an individual annual priestess named kanephoros. She was also mentioned in the dating formula of the official documents after the priest of Alexander.

One attestation is in Aramaic (TAD D8.6), the others are in Greek: CPJ I 24, CPJ I 35, O.Leid. 377, BGU XIV 2381, P.Polit.Iud. 11 and JIGRE 122.

P.Polit.Iud. 11.

CPJ I 24.

Further on the term taktomisthos see Chapter 3.2.1.

BGU XIV 2381.

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dynastic name, which seems to support the assumption that dynastic names were popular among the people of the army.

Let us mention another interesting example of the name Ptolemaios. We find it in an Aramaic text from Edfu. The document in question is a list enumerating several Jews bearing biblical names. Among these names there is a certain Ptolemaios, whose name is written in Aramaic: פתלמיס. Whether he was a Jew bearing a Greek name or a Greek living in an Aramaic-speaking community in unknown, but the context probably suggests the former. At any rate, this example reveals an interesting phenomenon, i.e. that not only Semitic names were Grecized, but also Greek names could enter the onomastic pool of the Edfu community in a semiticized version. Thus, this document provides further evidence for Ptolemaios being a fast-spreading dynastic name.

As for the female dynastic names, we must mention three names that were extremely popular in the Ptolemaic dynasty: Arsinoe, Berenike and Cleopatra. Arsinoe was adopted by the Jews relatively early. An Aramaic document from Edfu reveals an Arsinoe daughter of Johanan:Arsינתה ברת יוחנן. We can see here the same phenomenon as with Ptolemaios. The fact that the first attestation of the name is in Aramaic shows us that the Aramaic language and the geographical distance from Alexandria did not hinder the spread of Greek dynastic names. That Ptolemaios was one of the first dynastic names appearing in Upper Egypt is quite understandable, but how could the name Arsinoe enter so early the onomastic pool? In my view, the followings should certainly be taken into consideration when dealing with this name: in the royal family there were three women named Arsinoe, who became queens in the IIIrd century BCE: Arsinoe I, daughter of Lysimachos of Thrace, who married Ptolemy II Philadelphos sometime in the 280s BCE; Arsinoe II, sister of Ptolemy II Philadelphos, who became his second wife around 275 BCE; and Arsinoe III, daughter of Ptolemy III Euergetes, who married her brother, Ptolemy IV Philopator around 220 BCE. As I have mentioned earlier, the cult of the Ptolemaic couples was associated with the cult of Alexander the Great, who were venerated throughout Egypt. Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II became the “gods Adelphoi,” Ptolemy III and II Berenike the “gods Euergetai,” and so on. Due to her position

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263 TAD D8.6.

264 It must be noted, however, that Ptolemaios is not the only Greek name appearing in this archive. Besides Ptolemaios we meet the name Apollonios (Ἀπόλλωνιος) in TAD C3.28, TAD D7.56 and TAD D21.6, Bakchios (Βακχίς), Diapyros (Διάπυρος), Hermias (Ἑρμιάς) and Lysimachos (Λύσιμχος) in TAD C3.28, Eumachos (Εὐμαχός) in TAD D8.6 to mention just some examples.

265 TAD C3.28.

266 The marriage of Ptolemy II Philadelphos and Arsinoe II, who were full siblings, was without precedent. From a Greek point of view it was a scandal. However, from an Egyptian point of view it was an accepted tradition following the example of Isis and Osiris.
as a queen, Arsinoe II began to appear in the opening formula of official documents that were used in the whole country. This means that the people in Egypt encountered these dynastic names not only through their cult, but also in the administrative life. Thus, one of the propagators of the name Arsinoe may have been her presence in the official documents. Besides, another factor must also be mentioned: due to her individual cult established by Ptolemy II around 270 BCE, not only her image was displayed in all of the temples, but coins were also minted bearing the portrait and the name of the queen. Coins were always the most important medium of political propaganda, and the Ptolemies did not constitute an exception. I find it very likely that the name Arsinoe (as well as other dynastic names) spread very quickly throughout the country and entered the onomastic pool at an early date due to the administrative documents on the one hand, and to the coins on the other hand, since both of them were used everywhere in Egypt.

As to the name Berenice, it appeared even earlier in the royal family than Arsinoe. Berenice I, being of Macedonian origin, became the third wife of Ptolemy I Soter. Later the couple became the “gods Soteres,” but their title was added to the official formula only by Ptolemy IV Philopator at the end of the IIIrd century BCE (around 215 BCE). There was another Berenice who appeared earlier in the dating formula, namely Berenice II from Cyrene. She married Ptolemy III Euergetes around 250 BCE. From this date on, the name Berenice also became part of the official dating formula. Furthermore, she was also given an individual cult, and after her murder, Ptolemy IV Philopator created the priestesshood athlophoros in her honour. In light of these events, it is not surprising that the name Berenice appeared in the onomastic pool in the second half of the IIIrd century. Jews, like other Hellenes, were not averse to the adoption of this name, and it is significant that we meet two Jewish women named Berenike in the IInd century Herakleopolis among members of the politeuma. Both were certainly Jewish, since in P.Polit.Iud. 6 the son of Berenike, Theodotos son of Theodotos is explicitly stated to be Jew, while in P.Polit.Iud. 9 Berenike daughter of Archagathos herself is stated to be Jewess. It seems to me very likely that the spread and the

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267 A relevant example of the dating formula mentioning Arsinoe II both as a queen and as the possessor of the priestesshood kanephoros is for instance that of SB XVIII 14013: [βασιλειόντος Πτολεμαίου τοῦ Πτολεμαίου [καὶ Αρσινόης θεῶν ἄδελφων ἐτος πέμπτου [καὶ ἐκοστοῦ ἐφ᾿ ἵππῳ] Δωσιθέου τοῦ Δριμύλου [Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ θεῶν ἄδελφων καὶ θεῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετών Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετών Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργετών Εὐεργετῶν Εὐεργ
popularization of these royal names was considerably facilitated by the dating formula of the official documents and the cult of the queens.

To conclude, I would like to highlight three points to bear in mind about the influence of political power on onomastics of the Jews of Egypt. First, the Jews of Egypt were members of an independent community. They did not follow the onomastic traditions of the Jews of Palestine, and we cannot see the influence of the Maccabean revolt. Secondly, the Jews of Egypt were certainly grateful to Alexander the Great and the Ptolemaic kings for the benefits they had granted them, and many of them, especially in military circles, showed their gratitude by naming their children after them. Thirdly, the royal propaganda also played an important role in the popularization of royal names. Yet, the picture would not be complete without mentioning the fact that in the onomastic records of the Jews, dynastic names occupied only a small portion (about 5%), at least, this is the affirmable proportion. Certainly, there were many more Jews bearing dynastic names like Alexandros and Ptolemaios, but without indicating their *ethnicon* their Jewishness remains unknown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year BCE</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>290 BCE</td>
<td>The priesthood of Alexander is created in Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281 BCE</td>
<td>Ptolemy I is elevated to “god Soter”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Adelphi” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy II Philadelphos and Arsinoe II, his sister)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>269-268 BCE</td>
<td>The priestesshood <em>kanephoros</em> is created for Arsinoe II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>245 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Euergetai” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy III Euergetes and Berenike II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Philopatores” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy IV Philopator and Arsinoe III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>215 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Soteres” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy I Soter and Berenice I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211 BCE</td>
<td>The priestesshood <em>athlophoros</em> is created for Berenice II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199 BCE</td>
<td>The “god Epiphanes” is added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy V Epiphanes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199 BCE</td>
<td>The priestesshood <em>hierieia</em> is created for Arsinoe III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194 BCE</td>
<td>The “god Epiphanes” is changed to the “gods Epiphaneis” (Marriage of Ptolemy V Epiphanes with Cleopatra I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179-178 BCE</td>
<td>The “god Philometor” is added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy VI Philometor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175 BCE</td>
<td>The “god Philometor” is changed to the “gods Philometores” (Marriage of Ptolemy VI Philometor with Cleopatra II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Euergetai” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy VIII Euergetes and Cleopatra II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130 BCE</td>
<td>The priestesshood <em>hieropolos</em> is created for Cleopatra III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116 BCE</td>
<td>The “gods Philometores Soteres” are added to the cult of Alexander (Ptolemy IX Soter II and Cleopatra III)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The priestesshood _stephanophoros_, _phosphoros_ and _hiereia_ are created for Cleopatra III

Table 3. Important dated in the history of royal ideology until the end of the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE after Hölbl (2001), Appendix\textsuperscript{269}

### 2.2.2. Greek names

Besides the political power, Hellenistic culture also had an impact on the onomastic practices of the Jews. Tcherikover was probably right in assuming that Hellenization found its first external expression in the changing of personal names.\textsuperscript{270} This tendency is well illustrated especially in the region of the Fayum, where Jewish soldiers and military settlers lived side by side with their Greeks fellows. Similarly to what was the case with dynastic names, the same phenomenon can be seen in the case of common Greek names, i.e. that mostly, the Jews of the Fayum were influenced by Greek naming practices. Tcherikover gives some examples and claims that in the Fayum only 25% of the names were biblical, all the others were Greek. Taking into consideration that Jews bearing Greek names and showing no sign of Jewishness remain hidden from our view, the proportion of biblical names is probably even less. The high proportion of Greek names certainly refers to well assimilated Jewish soldiers and settlers, which may be explained by their coexistence in everyday life in the service in mixed military units.\textsuperscript{271} The adoption of Greek names had, however, different stages and forms, and we must definitely distinguish some categories.\textsuperscript{272}

#### 2.2.2.1. Double names

First, I discuss the phenomenon of double naming. According to Tcherikover, at the beginning of the Jewish immigration to Egypt, Jews desired to make their Greek names as similar as possible to their old Semitic names by translation or by assimilation. He also claims that the first immigrants probably used double names, one Semitic and one Greek, and that the Greek name was intended to serve as the equivalent of the Semitic one.\textsuperscript{273} He admits, however, that there is not a single instance that would undoubtedly demonstrate a relationship

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\textsuperscript{269} By the end of the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, the dating formula became so complicated that it was shortened by omitting the names of the priest, thus eponymous priests were no longer named in official documents. The last attestation of a _hieropolos_ is from 104 BCE, see Hölbl (2001), p. 288.

\textsuperscript{270} Tcherikover (1959), p. 346.

\textsuperscript{271} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 28.


\textsuperscript{273} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 28.
between two names of a given person. Despite the lack of evidence, it has commonly been assumed that Greek-named Jews had Semitic names as well, which simply never appeared in the sources.274

In Palestine, the Hasmonean rulers indeed had double names,275 but the question is what was the situation in Egypt? In general, double naming was quite common in Ptolemaic Egypt, and especially among people active in the administration and the army. As shown by W. Clarysse, some instances of double-naming prove that the choice of name depended on context.276 That is to say, an Egyptian, bearing both an Egyptian and a Greek name, used his Egyptian name when in an Egyptian context, but applied his Greek name when the milieu was Greek. The reason for doing so was that certain occupations such as banker or eponymous priest remained “Greek,” while others such as the village scribe continued to be considered “Egyptian.” If a “Greek” position was filled by an Egyptian, he did not use his Egyptian but his Greek name.277 Thus, it seems that the names were more linked to the occupations than to the people, and the use of double names was a very natural phenomenon. Egyptian Jews, however, were not among those who commonly used double names, as convincingly argued by M. Williams.278 Indeed, in the whole Egyptian material, papyri and inscriptions included, there are altogether four examples of double naming.279 In CPJ I 24 a Theodoros son of Theodoros is recorded, who is also known as Samaelos. This Theodoros alias Samaelos was one of the witnesses in the contract, which was drawn up in order to renew a loan between two Jews in 174 BCE. CPJ I 126 is a Greek will, and in it, a certain Apollonios is mentioned, who is also known by the Syrian name Ionathas. Unfortunately the papyrus is fragmentary, thus it is unclear what kind of relationship Apollonios had with the testator. JIGRE 6 is also a well-known and widely cited example of double naming. It is an inscription from the cemetery of El-Ibrahimiya near Alexandria. The inscription bears only two names: Ioanna

275 The most famous example is probably that of the Hasmonean queen Shalomzion, who was also called Alexandra, see Josephus AJ XII 384 and XIII 320.
277 One of the best-known cases is Menches son of Petesouchos, the village scribe of Kerkeosiris, who also had a Greek name, Asklepiades. However, when he was acting as a village scribe, he always used his Egyptian name, see Clarysse, Aegyptus 65 (1985), pp. 58-59.
279 In fact, there is a fifth example in CPJ I 47, a list of names in which a certain Sabbaios, also called Marios is attested, at least according to Tcherikover’s tentative reading. This reading, however, has not been accepted by Williams, see Williams, JSJ 38 (2007), p. 310, n. 13. The restoration is indeed highly doubtful, and even if so, the Sabbataios does not necessarily denote a Jew.
Euphrosyne. The Jewish Ioanna had, for some reason, a Greek name too. Our new material increases the number of this group of documents by one. *P.Polit.Iud. 8* is a petition written to the archons of the Jewish politeuma, and in it, a certain Dorotheos, also called Zenon, is mentioned as one of the debtors, against whom the plaintiff Theodotos son of Theodotos initiated proceedings. As of today, these are the only instances of double naming among the Jews of Egypt. We are certainly right in claiming that this number is rather modest in comparison to the quantity of documentary sources that we have at our disposal. The most likely reason for this is well formulated by Williams: we may assume that in Egypt, Jews sought to show that they belonged to the Greek social class, and thus, those who became or wished to become Hellenized, may have preferred the use of Greek names only.

It is, however, important to ask what may have been the reason in the above-mentioned cases of using double names? According to M. Williams Diaspora Jews used alternative names for three reasons: 1. to distinguish between homonymous members of the same community; 2. to facilitate their situation in Greek environment; 3. to advertise their religious conversion.\(^{280}\) I think that in case of the Jews, the most reasonable is to assume that they wished to adapt to the Greek environment. Only one case is less clear: in *P.Polit.Iud. 8* Dorotheos has in fact two Greek names. Although Dorotheos can be considered the translation of Jonathan, in this form it was a Greek name, and his other name, Zenon was also Greek. What was then the reason for using two Greek names? One of the possible explanations might be that his original, although already Grecized name was Dorotheos, but since it was a very common and popular name among the Jews of Egypt, there might have been more Dorotheos in the community, in which he was living. In such a case, it is reasonable to assume that he adopted the genuine Greek name Zenon in order to distinguish himself from other Jews named Dorotheos.

2.2.2.2. Greek names phonetically close to biblical names

Passing from double names to Greek names, we discuss now some names that are phonetically close to biblical names. Such names are for instance Simon, which we have already encountered, Iason, Mnaseas and Mousaios.

The names Ἰάσων and Ἰάσων definitely remind us of Jewish names beginning with the element Ya- or Yaho. It is, thus, not surprising that it appears very early for Jews in

Egyptian sources. Like some dynastic names, it is already attested in the Aramaic archive of the Edfu community as יסן (Iason). The person in question, the father of a certain Apollonios, was most probably, but not certainly, Jewish. If we accept that he was Jewish based on the fact that the majority of the people mentioned in that list were Jews and that the document was written in Aramaic, it means that Iason was among the first genuine Greek names that were adopted by the Aramaic-speaking Jewish community. Certainly, the phonetical similarity between this and the yahwistic names made it at least partly acceptable for adoption. This name is of course also recorded in Greek documents mainly from the Fayum: CPJ I 22, a contract concerning the cession of a quarter, mentions a certain Theodotos son of Iason, who was one of the six Jewish witnesses, while in CPJ I 24 Nikanor son of Iason was also the witness of a contract together with the above mentioned Theodoros son of Theodotus, alias Samaelos.

The next name with a parallel biblical name is Μνάσων or Μνασέας. It has been suggested that the form Mnaseas may be seen as the transliteration of the biblical name מנהש (Manaseh), or the translation of זכרייה (Zachariah). Mnaseh (Manaseh) is transcribed in the Septuagint as Μανασσῆ, while Josephus uses both Μανασση and Μανασσῆς. These Grecized forms are attested a couple of times in Palestine, but never in Egyptian documentary sources. For this reason it is not unreasonable to assume that instead of these forms, Jews adopted genuine Greek names, Μνάσων and Μνασέας, which are quite similar. Mnason is attested only once in CPJ I 28 as the father of Iason, while Mnaseas has two occurrences in P.Count. 26. It is, however, uncertain whether any of these persons were Jewish, because besides their name, nothing confirms their Jewishness.

We now turn to the name Μουσαῖος. This Greek name undoubtedly reminds us of the name מֹשֶה (Moses). There has been many scholarly debates concerning the question whether

281 TAD C3.28, l. 5.
282 In fact, there are other documents recording the name Iason, but there are serious doubts about the Jewishness of those persons. CPJ I 28 is a list of sheep and goat owners from the village of Samareia, and indeed records many Jews. However, there are several Greek names in the list, and simply because they are enumerated together with Jewish owners, they should not be considered Jews. One of these Greek-named person is Iason son of Mnason. Tcherikover writes in the introduction to the text that “nearly all the owners of cattle are Jews” (see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 171), but Iason could very well have been Greek. The other document is P.Polit.Iud. 19, in which Iason was one of the persons who were summoned to appear before the Jewish court. Although the editors of the text (Cowey & Maresch (2001), p. 150) think that they were Jews, nothing confirms this assumption.
285 Gen 41:51.
286 Josephus, AJ II 92.
288 For the Palestinian attestations see Ilan (2002), pp. 188-190.
the Jews used the name of their biblical hero. In 1997 T. Derda put forward his hypothesis according to which Jews did not use the name of Moses. He did not find a single convincing attestation of the name from the Greco-Roman period. He further argues that among Christians the name seems to be used commonly, and also that the first certainly-dated texts mentioning persons named Moses can very well refer to Christians.

Indeed, the name in its biblical form מְשָה (Moses) was avoided by Jews, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora. As to its Greek form, both the Septuagint and Josephus transcribe the name as Μωυσῆς or Μωσῆς which is again not attested in Palestinian sources. The only text, which mentions the name Moses in the form Μωσῆς is P.Mur. 91 from the Judean desert, but the reading is uncertain. From Egypt there are several documents at our disposal recording the name Μωυσῆς or Μωσῆς, but even the earliest ones date from the IVth century CE, thus, those persons were probably Christians.

M. Williams, in a reply to T. Derda, argues that Derda’s hypothesis is incorrect. According to her, even if we set aside the uncertain texts, there remains sufficient evidence to show that Diaspora Jews used the name Moses. She quotes an inscription from Asia, which records the name [Μ]ωσῆ, who is designated “Ebreos,” and another one from Athens, a tombstone, on which we read κοιμητήριον Θεοδολαι[ς] καὶ Μωσ[ῆς], that is, “burial-place of Theodoula and Moses,” and there is a menorah depicted on the tombstone. In both cases there is no doubt about the Jewishness of Moses, but both readings are reconstructed, thus, not entirely certain.

After all, the use of the name Moses among Jews, either in Hebrew or in Greek, is questionable in general, and is certainly unattested for the Hellenistic period. However, the Greek name Μουσαίος definitely deserves attention. Artapanos, the Judeo-Hellenistic author, who was active in the IInd century BCE Alexandria, wrote a book entitled Περὶ Ἰουδαίων, that is “Concerning the Jews,” and in it, he claims that the Greeks called Moses Mousaios.

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290 Ex 2:10, Josephus, AJ 1:29.
291 Ilan lists four papyri from Egypt, which probably mention Jews named Moses: CPJ III 476, P.Oxy. 4612, Stud.Pal. 10 182 and P.Sta.Xyla 4. However, as she notes as well, none of them constitutes convincing evidence for the use of this name among Jews. Although in P.Oxy. 4612 Moses was certainly Jewish, the document dates from the VIIIth century CE with an Arabic text on the back of the papyrus. Thus, it is not clear whether it was written or simply reused during the Arabic era.
292 M. H. Williams, “Jewish Use of Moses as a Personal Name in Graeco-Roman Antiquity – A Note,” ZPE 118 (1997), p. 274.
293 CIJ II 793 (Vth-VIth century CE)
294 CIJ I 713 (Vth-VIth century CE)
Moreover, he identified him with the pre-Homeric figure named Mousaios. Based on this, has been suggested by Mussies, and later supported by Williams, that Jews may have adopted the Greek name Mousaios because of this reference and its similar sound. If they indeed avoided the use of the name Moses, because they considered it too sacrosanct to be borne by ordinary people, the choice of a phonetically close Greek name such as Mousaios was certainly a good solution. We have at least one example, where a Jew was called Mousaios in Ptolemaic Egypt: in CPJ I 20 we hear about a cleruch named Μουσαίος Σίμωνος Ἰουδαίος τῆς ἑπιγονής, who lent some money to another Jew of the Epigone.

2.2.2.3. Greek theophoric names

One of the most popular categories of names was definitely theophoric names. For instance all the neutral theophoric names including the element “theos” belonged to this group. These names were undoubtedly extremely popular among Egyptian Jews because they could be considered the equivalents of biblical names. Especially common were the names Θεόδωρος translating Johanan (“God’s gift”), Θεόδωτος translating Nathanael (“Given by God”), Δωσίθεος translating Mattatiya or Mattityahu (“Gift of God”) just to mention the most popular ones. The name of the Jewish God was simply translated as “theos” being the most neutral Greek term for God. Apart from this word, there was only one god in the Greek pantheon whose name could be associated with the name of the Jewish God: Zeus himself. Thus, as shown by Mussies, it is not surprising that Jews adopted names such as Διόδωτος or Διόφαντος too. For the Jews who wished to belong to Greek society on the one hand, and wanted to show their Jewishness on the other, it must have been quite convenient to choose a Greek and at the same time originally biblical name.

It must be stressed, however, that these Greek names are simply translations of the above-mentioned biblical names. They were often considered to be “Jewish names,” but this is incorrect, and they can never serve as indicator of Jewishness. Several examples prove that Greeks bore these names as well. Suffice it to mention the pagan philosopher Theodoros cited

296 Eusebius, Preap. Ev. 9:27, where it runs as follows: ‘He [the king] begat a daughter Merris, whom he betrothed to a certain Chenephres, king of the regions above Memphis (for there were at that time many kings in Egypt); and she being barren took a supposititious child from one of the Jews, and called him Mouses (Moses): by the Greeks he was called, when grown to manhood, Musaeus.’
298 Mussies, Studies (1994), pp. 245-246. See also the Jewish author Aristobulos, who identified Zeus with the Jewish God, Eusebius, Preap. Ev., 13:12.
299 For Diodotos see CPJ I 19, for Diophantos CPJ I 22.
by Mussies,\textsuperscript{300} or the different inscriptions recording some pagan Dositheos cited by Honigman.\textsuperscript{301}

Nevertheless, several texts are included in \textit{CPJ} I based on the fact that they record theophoric Greek names. To quote some examples: \textit{CPJ} I 31 is a list of military settlers from the Fayum, in which several people are enumerated including Seuthes son of Dositheos and Theodotos son of Dareios. These persons could of course be Jews, but there is also the possibility that they were Greeks. Moreover, as noted by Tcherikover, “the national provenance of the settlers is varied; Macedonians and Persians are referred to.”\textsuperscript{302} Another example is \textit{CPJ} I 37, an \textit{enteuxis} petition concerning a contract of lease. It was included in the \textit{CPJ} collection because the plaintiffs are three farmers named Theodotos, Gaddaios and Phanias. Theodotos and Phanias, being good Greek names, can very well allude to Greeks. Gaddaios, as shown by Honigman, originates from the name of the Syrian god Gad, and its bearer was more likely a Syrian than a Jew.\textsuperscript{303} Thus, none of the three names can be considered an indicator of Jewishness. They may have been Jews, but based on their names this is not necessary.

Some other \textit{CPJ} documents require some notes too. \textit{CPJ} I 28, which is a list of sheep and goats from the village of Samareia enumerating several owners of cattle, lists biblical names such as Ioannes son of Antipater or Iakoubis son of Iakoubis. These men were without doubt Jews. The list contains several Greek theophoric names too, like for instance Theodoros son of Dositheos or Dositheos son of Theodotos, which are also considered Jewish by the editor, who writes: “One wonders whether the whole population of Samareia at this time was Jewish.”\textsuperscript{304} This claim has certainly no basis. Just to quote one example that shows the contrary: \textit{CPR} XVIII 10, a draft of a contract from Samareia, was drawn up between a Persian and a Thessalian.\textsuperscript{305} As is clear from this, the small village of Samareia in the Fayum had a very mixed population consisting of several ethnic groups. One cannot claim the Jewishness of a person named Theodoros simply because he is listed with other certainly Jewish persons. The same holds true for \textit{CPJ} I 47, which gives a list of names containing both biblical and

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{mussies} Mussies, \textit{Studies} (1994), p. 244.
\bibitem{honigman} Honigman (1995), p. 204, n. 80.
\bibitem{tcherikoverfuks} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 176-177. He also notes that “Psenyris, the village in the neighbourhood, numbered many Jews among its inhabitants,” but this is not a convincing argument for the Jewishness of the people mentioned.
\bibitem{honigman2} Honigman, \textit{Diasporas} (1993), pp. 110-112.
\bibitem{tcherikoverfuks2} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 171.
\bibitem{cpr} This draft was written on the same papyrus scroll as \textit{CPR} XVIII 7, 8, 9 and 11. At the end of \textit{CPR} XVIII 11 the scribe, who registered the documents, wrote a remark indicating that the previous five contracts were from Samareia. This ascertains that \textit{CPR} XVIII 10 is from that village.
\end{thebibliography}
Greek theophoric names. According to Tcherikover the people listed in this papyrus were Jews, which is undoubtedly true for Aristippos son of Iakoubis, but much more doubtful for Theodotos son of Alexander.

However, among the theophoric names Dositheos is the most problematic. Although it is a good Greek name, the editors of the CPJ consider it an almost exclusively Jewish name saying that “it was practically unknown in the pre-Hellenistic period, and it seems that Jews almost monopolized it from the very beginning of the Hellenistic age.” This claim cannot be held anymore, because, as we have seen above, we know of several non-Jews bearing this name. Any Dositheos who is included in the CPJ based only on his name should be excluded from the list of Egyptian Jews. Such texts are for instance CPJ I 67, a bank receipt signed by the banker Dositheos, who may very well have been Greek. Also, among the documents related to Dositheos son of Drimylos, there are three texts that do not contain the patronymic Drimylos but only Dositheos. Yet, it was suggested by the editors that these texts may point to the renegade Dositheos son of Drimylos. This identification as well as the Jewishness of the documents are, however, highly doubtful. All in all, one has to be very cautious when working with Greek theophoric names, because none of them, not even Dositheos, can serve as an indicator of Jewishness. This is also the reason why we have excluded several CPJ texts form our study. We disregard any text that was considered Jewish based on a Greek or a common Semitic name.

Even applying this cautious approach, some theophoric names such as Theodotos, Theodoros and Dositheos are ranked among the most popular names borne by Egyptian Jews. Excluding all the dubious cases, the name Theodotos has twelve attestations. In each of these cases, there is an information attached to the name, which makes sure that the person named Theodotos was Jewish. In P.Heid. VIII 417, P.Polit.Iud. 6, Polit.Iud. 8, P.Polit.Iud. 13 all Theodotos are explicitly stated to be Jew, in P.Polit.Iud. 17, the fact that he is apparently an official of the politeuma confirms the hypothesis that he was Jewish. In CPR XVIII 8 the daughter of Theodotos is designated Jewess, from which it is clear that he was also Jewish, while in P.Count. 34, his sister’s name was Saras, which does not make entirely certain that they were Jews, but at least it is very likely.

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307 It is highly doubtful whether CPJ I 127a, b and c refer to Dositheos son of Drimylos. For a detailed explanation see Chapter 4.2.
308 See the separate list of papyri in Chapter 1.1.3 and Chapter 1.2.3.
309 CPJ I 22 (2x); P.Count. 34; CPR XVIII 8; P.Heid. VIII 417; P.Polit.Iud. 6 (2x); P.Polit.Iud. 8 (2x); P.Polit.Iud. 13; P.Polit.Iud. 17; JIGRE 121.
The same holds true for the name Theodoros, which has at least seven certainly Jewish attestations.\textsuperscript{311} The person in question is either designated Jew like in \textit{P.Köln.} III 144 and in \textit{CPR} XVIII 11, or is indirectly proven to be Jew like in \textit{P.Polit.Iud.} 6, in which Theodoros is designated one of the appointed judges of the \textit{politeuma}, thus was certainly Jewish. As to Dositheos, very few \textit{CPJ} documents record undoubtedly Jewish Dositheos (only \textit{CPJ} I 19, 21, 30, 43 out of 25 texts), and among the new texts there are three documents: \textit{CPR} XVIII 8 mentions two different Dositheos, both Jews of the \textit{Epigone}, while \textit{BGU} VI 1454 enumerates several Jewish farmers, and one them was called Dositheos son of Shabbethai. In this case, in association with the name Shabbethai, it seems very likely that he was Jewish. Besides, Dositheos son of Drimylos has also three new attestations, two in Greek (\textit{SB} XX 14107, \textit{SB} XVIII 14013) and one in Demotic (\textit{P.Berl.Dem.} 3096).\textsuperscript{312}

The other group of Greek theophoric names is those derived from the name of Greek pagan gods such as Apollo, Dionysos, Hermes, Athene or Herakles, and it seems that the Jews did not hesitate to adopt these names. The most popular among them was Apollonios with four certainly Jewish attestations,\textsuperscript{313} but Demetrios was also quite popular.\textsuperscript{314} Needless to say that in case of such names too, only an ethnic designation or kinship with a certainly Jewish person give us some clue about the Jewishness of the person in question. Such Greek names, both neutral theophoric and pagan theophoric, occupy an important part of the onomastic melting pot (38%). It is almost certain that there were many more Jews bearing Greek names, but without further trace, their Jewish ethnic background remains unknown.

2.3. Egyptian Environment

2.3.1. Influence of the Egyptian environment

It was not only the Greek environment that had an impact on Jewish onomastics, the Egyptian one influenced it too. Apart from the newly established Greek cities such as Alexandria and Ptolemais, a high number of newcomers settled down in the Egyptian countryside as well as in historically Egyptian cities such as Thebes or Edfu. Consequently,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{311} \textit{CPJ} I 24 (2x), \textit{CPR} XVIII 11 (2x), \textit{P.Köln.} III 144, \textit{P.Polit.Iud.} 6, \textit{JIGRE} 24.
\item \textsuperscript{312} Apart from the documentary sources, there are two certainly Jewish Egyptian Dositheos mentioned in the works of Josephus: \textit{AJ} XIV 236, \textit{CA} II 49.
\item \textsuperscript{313} \textit{CPJ} I 23, \textit{CPJ} I 126, \textit{TAD} D21.6, \textit{CPR} XVIII 7.
\item \textsuperscript{314} \textit{TAD} D21.5, \textit{P.Polit.Iud.} 9.
\end{itemize}
they lived side by side with Egyptians, and this coexistence resulted in the adoption of certain Egyptian names. This is true for any foreign ethnic groups, and also for Jews.

I take as an example the name Pa-sy (Pasis). This name is all the more interesting because it reflects the interaction of different cultures. Being a very common Egyptian name deriving from the name of the god Osiris, it spread throughout the country to such an extent that it was quickly adopted by Greeks as well as Jews.\textsuperscript{315} Its Hellenized form was Πάσις, which is often attested in the papyri, and sometimes it was used by Jews. We know at least one Πάσις Ἰουδαῖος in the Greek papyri: CPJ I 9a and b, both belonging to the Zenon papyri, record him as one of Zenon’s employees carrying out his orders.\textsuperscript{316} Thus, this Egyptian name entered very quickly the onomastic repertoire of the Hellene social class. This is understandable in light of the high degree of cultural exchange in general.

More interesting is the fact that not only the Greek-speaking Jews adopted this name, but also the Aramaic-speaking community in Edfu. It is attested four times in the Aramaic texts written in different ways, either as פסיס (Pasis) or as פסי (Pasi). TAD D8.7 is a list of names with different amounts of silver. The name Pasis is recorded first as the patronymic of Beruchah, and then as a personal name, whose father was named Hori. Since both Beruchah and Hori are biblical names and most of the names in this list point to Jews, we may assume that both men named Pasis were Jewish. We find the name again in Aramaic in two tombstones from the cemetery of Edfu. TAD D21.12 is the tomb inscription of a certain Pasi son of [PN]. Although the patronymic is illegible, the fact that it was written in Aramaic and was found together with other certainly Jewish inscriptions makes it likely that this person was Jewish too. The same holds true for TAD D21.14, a tombstone, in which we read the inscription “Pasi, officer/woodcutter.” Again, the patronymic is missing, but the deceased was most probably Jewish. Other Egyptian names can also be found in the Aramaic sources such as for instance פחס (Pachis),\textsuperscript{317} פﺎطرویس (Pateuris),\textsuperscript{318} and probably also פנסיר / פנסיר (Tanufe).\textsuperscript{319} The fact that we find these Egyptian names in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE as part of the Aramaic-Jewish name stock, reinforces our assumption presented in Chapter 1, namely that the Jewish

\textsuperscript{315} For its attestations in Demotic papyri see E. Lüddeckens et al., \textit{Demotisches Namenbuch, 18 vols.} (Wiesbaden 1980-2000), p. 412.

\textsuperscript{316} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 134.

\textsuperscript{317} TAD C3.28, l. 117. פחס, vocalized either as Pachis, Pachios, Pachois or Pachos, was certainly Jewish, because the name of his son was Obadiah, which was exclusively used by Jews.

\textsuperscript{318} TAD D8.6, l. 2. The reading of the name is uncertain. If it is this one, he was most probably Jewish because his patronymic was Shimeon.

\textsuperscript{319} TAD D8.4, l. 11. The name Tanufe or Thanouphis, as Ilan vocalizes it (2008), p. 654 most probably but not certainly denotes a Jew. It is listed with biblical names, but the name of his son is illegible, thus, nothing confirms his Jewishness. According to Ilan (2008), p. 654, perhaps the same name is attested in l. 24.
community of Edfu was considerably influenced by Egyptian culture and was not that closed as scholars tended to think. Quite the contrary. Taking into consideration their onomastic practices and the archeological finds, it seems very likely that this community was deeply absorbed in the Egyptian environment.

Although in Greek sources it is definitely difficult to identify Jews bearing Egyptian names, sometimes we can find some of them with the help of their ethnic designation. A good example is the Jewish family residing in the Syrian village attested in CPJ I 46. In this agreement father and son agreed with three Egyptian potters (also father and his sons) about the joint use of a pottery in Neiloupolis in the Fayum. The name of the father was Sabbataios son of Horos, and his son was called Dosas. They are designated in the contract Ἰουδαῖοι, without which we would not have known that they were Jews. Based on the name Horos, a derivative of the name of the god Horus, and the name Dosas, the Egyptian abbreviation of Dositheos, we would certainly associate these names with a Greek family influenced by the Egyptian environment. Yet, they were Jews. The context of this agreement, namely that a Jewish family concluded a contract with an Egyptian family about joint work, shows very well that the coexistence of Jews and Egyptians is traceable not only in Upper Egypt, but also in the Fayum. After all these examples, it is not surprising that they adopted some elements of each other’s culture.

2.3.2. The special case of the name Shabbethai / Sabbataios

The same way as the Jews borrowed some names from the Egyptians, the latter adopted some names from the Jews. It is in this context that the name שבטי (Shabbethai) will be discussed.\(^{320}\) Shabbethai was one of the most popular names among Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt. Jewish festal names in general had long been in use, but they gained popularity in particular from the Persian period onwards.\(^{321}\) Although Shabbethai and Haggai were formulated only in the Persian period, they quickly came into fashion in the Diaspora. The name, which probably means “born on the Sabbath day,” was most likely originally given to children who were indeed born on Sabbath, and perhaps later its use was expanded, and it was given to any male child regardless of his birthday. Its extreme popularity in the Diaspora can

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\(^{320}\) In detail about this name see N. Cohen, “The Name ‘Shabtai’ in the Hellenistic-Roman Period,” in: A. Demsky (ed.), *These are the Names : Studies in Jewish Onomastics* (Ramat Gan 1999) pp. 11-28. [Hebrew]

\(^{321}\) Further on this see M. H. Williams, “Jewish Festal Names in Antiquity – A Neglected Area of Onomastic Research,” *JSJ* 36 (2005), pp. 21-41.
be considered a sign of Jewish identity, because for the Jews living far from the Jerusalem Temple the significance of the Sabbath observance may have likely risen.

With the beginning of the Hellenistic period, Shabbethai became very popular, and several different forms were formulated. The Septuagint transcribes the name as Σαββαθαῖ, while in the Letter of Aristeas two of the translators were named Σαββαταῖος. It is attested many times in the Aramaic papyri from Edfu, while Greek documentary sources record it either as Σαββαταῖος or as Σαμβαταῖος.

In the Greek sources we meet some certainly Jewish Sabbataios. For instance, CPJ I 22, a contract concerning the cession of a quarter, was witnessed by six Jews, and one of them was called Sabbataios. There are three other documents in the CPJ, which record different persons named Sabbataios. They are all designated Jews, thus, there is no doubt about their ethnic background. One of them is CPJ I 30, which is a list of Jews and Macedonians, and each soldier is listed with his ethnicon that was necessary in military and legal context. The second one is the aforementioned CPJ I 46, an agreement between a Jewish and an Egyptian family about the joint use of a pottery, in which the Jewish father was called Sabbataios son of Horos. The third one is CPJ I 133, a complaint of assault written to a village scribe by a Jew, Sabbataios, whose pregnant wife was insulted and injured by another Jewish woman. The new material also contains some papyri, in which there are some certainly Jewish Sabbataios. P.Count. 29 is a tax-collection register from Trikonia, and in it, a man called Sabathais is listed as a taxpayer together with his daughter, Mariam. Taking both names into consideration, it seems quite certain that they were Jews, even if there is no ethnicon attached to their names. BGU XIV 2381 is a fragmentary loan contract, but it is clear that one of the parties was a certain Ptolemaios son of Sabbataios, Jew of the Epigone. In all of these cases, we can be certain about the Jewishness of the men called Sabbataios.

However, there are several other Greek papyri in the CPJ, which contain the name Sabbathaios without the ethnic designation Ἰουδαῖος. How can we identify them? Tcherikover and Fuks consider them Jews based on their name. Does this assumption have any

322 Letter of Aristeas § 48, 49.
323 TAD C3.28, ll. 73 (Shabbethai), 86 (Shabbethai son of Iashib) and 100 (Shabbethai son of Haggai), TAD D7.56, l. 2 (Iashib son of Shabbethai), TAD D8.3, l. 6 (Shabbethai son of Yedla), TAD D8.5, l. 3 (Shallum son of Shabbethai), TAD D8.9, ll. 11 (Shabbethai son of Horis), 12 (Shabbethai son of Meshullam), TAD D11.26, l. 2 (Shabbethai).
325 The following CPJ papyri contain the name Sabbathaios without further ethnic designation: CPJ I 28, ll. 9 ([...os son of Sambathaios), 16 (Sambathaios son of Theodoros), CPJ I 39, l. 49 (Idellas son of Sabathaioi), CPJ I 42, l. 9 (Sambathaioi son of Pinas), CPJ I 44, l. 61 (Horos son of Sabatais), CPJ I 51-60 (Sambathaioi), CPJ I 64, l. 3 & 104, l. 4 (Sambathaioi son of Sollumis), CPJ I 87, l. 3 & 117, l. 1 (Sambathaioi son of Abites).
grounds? Were these people indeed Jews? To clarify these questions it is instructive to turn to the Egyptian material.

Demotic papyri did not form part of the research conducted by Tcherikover and Fuks, nor have they been included in the lexicon compiled by T. Ilan. Although S. Honigman has prepared a list of Semitic names attested in Demotic sources, since her studies were published several new Demotic papyri have been published. Among the ten Demotic papyri included in our corpus, six record the name Shabbethai written as Šḥty. In each case there is good reason to assume that the person named Shabbethai was Jewish.

_O.Dem.Bodl._ 686 for instance is a Demotic receipt of measurement drawn up for two persons, Iapit son of Oupesia, an Egyptian man, and Shabbethai son of Hananiah. From his patronymic it is clear that Shabbethai was Jewish, since Hananiah was a biblical name exclusively used by Jews. Thus, there can be no doubt about the ethnic background of Shabbethai. That his name is recorded in Demotic can be best explained by the fact that the scribe himself was an Egyptian, who naturally wrote the receipt in his mother tongue. Given the fact that the receipt was issued in Diospolis Magna, where a great part of the administration remained in the hand of Egyptian officials, it is not surprising that most of the receipts were drawn up in Demotic.

Another similar receipt of measurement is _BGU_ VI 1454, which was also written by an Egyptian scribe. It was issued to numerous people, who were all lessees of a plot of land. The name Shabbethai is recorded three times among the lessees: firstly we meet a Platon son of Shabbethai, then a Shabbethai son of Abdi, and finally a Dositheos son of Shabbethai. It goes without saying that neither Platon nor Abdi nor Dositheos were exclusively Jewish names, but in the context of this text, at least Shabbethai son of Abdi and Dositheos son of Shabbethai were most probably Jews. Other lessees such as Tobias son of Simon, Aristomenes son of Ioseph and PN son of Abietes were certainly Jews, thus it seems that almost all the lessees were Jews.

_O.Petrie_, Pl. 24 is a Demotic ostracon containing a list of brick suppliers, among whom one was called Shabbethai. The probability that he was Jewish is supported by two

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I 97, l. 4 (Sambathaios), _CPJ_ I 103, l. 5 (Sambathaios), _CPJ_ I 114, l. 2 (Sambathaios son of Asibis), _CPJ_ I 115, ll. 2 (Sambathe), 4 (Sambathon), _CPJ_ I 119, l. 3 (Sambathaios), _CPJ_ I 122, l. 1 (Sambathaios).


The provenance of the ostracon is unknown, but it seems to be certain that it comes from the Theban region based on two details: first, it is a receipt of measurement, which were always drawn up in Upper Egypt, and secondly, one of the persons appearing in l. 1, Aristomenes son of Ioseph, might be identical with Aristomenes attested in _CPJ_ I 49, a tax receipt originating from Thebes.
facts: first, the name of another builder was Abram. This name, which will be discussed later, was the Egyptian transliteration of the name אברֵם (Abram) and should be identified with the biblical name אבֵרְם (Abraham). Secondly, as we have already noted earlier, the ostracon was found at Tell el-Yehudiyyeh, which has traditionally been identified with Leontopolis. Whether these builders constructed the Jewish temple or something else is unclear, but we are probably not wrong in assuming that both Abram and Shabbethai were Jews.

The most interesting example of the name Shabbethai in an Egyptian context is recorded in O.Dem.Wien 284, which is an Aramaic-Demotic bilingual salt tax receipt. This is the ostracon, on which two salt tax receipts were inscribed perpendicular to each other. The first one was inscribed in Aramaic by Ioseph for a certain Taese daughter (?) of Shabbethai concerning the payment of the salt tax. Ten years later, another salt tax receipt was drawn up on the same ostracon, but this time in Demotic by an Egyptian scribe, Paoueris son of Petosiris. This receipt was also written for a woman, Tapaueris wife of Shabbethai. It seems that Shabbethai appearing in both texts is the same person. The family apparently used the same ostracon for Taese and then for Tapaueris. Tapaueris was most probably an Egyptian woman who married a Jew, Shabbethai. In fact, the only detail which reveals that Shabbethai was Jewish is that the receipt for his daughter was drawn up in Aramaic by a Jewish scribe. We may assume that the whole family was bilingual, and their tax receipts were written both in Demotic and in Aramaic. The same wife appears in O.Dem.Wien 129, which is again a salt tax receipt, but it was written earlier.

Among the six documents O. BM 25 139 is the less certain as to whether or not it records a Jewish Shabbethai. This is another receipt of measurement issued to Dositheos son of Shabbethai. In this case, there is no additional information that would support the Jewishness of Shabbethai, but based on his and his son’s name, perhaps he can be considered a Jew.

Until now we have discussed texts that are included in our corpus, and almost certainly refer to Jews bearing the name Shabbethai. Now, we turn to some other Demotic documents that undermine the exclusive Jewishness of this name. The most decisive source from this point of view is P.Brux.Dem. 5 = P.Survey 3, which is a deed belonging to the archive of the Theban choachytes. This is a bilingual, but fundamentally Demotic archive containing more than 80 texts. The Greek part was very quickly published, while many of the Demotic texts are still unpublished. Pestman wrote an important survey, in which he placed
each text of the archive in its context. He arrived at the conclusion that in fact we are dealing with two different archives, that of Osoroeris son of Horos and that of Panas son of Pechytes. Both families were choachytai, lit. “water-pourers.” They were Egyptian funerary priests fulfilling some role in the cults of the dead such as for instance caring for the tombs or making libations and offerings. \textit{P.Brux.Dem. 5} belongs to the archive of Panas son of Pechytes, and its main character is Horos son of Horos. The document lists all the tombs in his possession with the names of the tomb owners. In this list we find the name Shabbethai, which means that a certain person named Shabbethai was buried according to Egyptian traditions. It is unnecessary to emphasize that this is not exactly what we would expect from a Jew. In my view, there are two possibilities: either he originated from a Jewish family, but was attracted to the Egyptian religion and at some point of his life he decided to follow it; or he was Egyptian, but his family liked and adopted the originally Jewish name Shabbethai. Whichever is the case, we are facing a problem of ethnic identity here.

Another interesting text is \textit{P.Tor.Botti} 22, a marriage contract dated to 108 BCE, which was drawn up between Pakis, a servant of the falcon god Montu, and Semmuthis, an Egyptian woman. Clearly, both families were Egyptians as were all the witnesses enumerated on the back of the contract. One of the witnesses, however, bears the name Harmiusis son of Shabbethai. Was he Jewish or Egyptian? This is something that we do not know, but the context seems to be purely Egyptian. Other Ptolemaic period texts, in which the name Shabbethai is recorded are the followings: \textit{O.Dem.Leiden} 526 from Diospolis Magna, \textit{O.Dem.Berlin} 8758 from Pathyris and \textit{TG} 2487 from Tuna el-Gebel. In all of these

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331 The \textit{ed. princ.} reads the name as \textit{Hr-mlt-ḥši ṣṣ St-ḥrt} (Harmiusis son of Sawerti), see G. Botti, \textit{L’Archivio demotico da Deir el-Mединeh} (Florence 1967), p 128, but based on the photograph the patronymic is clearly Ṣḥty (Shabbethai).

332 See M. A. A. Nur el-Din, \textit{The Demotic Ostraca in the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden} (Leiden 1974), p. 359. \textit{O.Dem.Leiden} 526 is a broken fragment from Diospolis Magna, on which Nur el-Din reads the name Ṣḥt(? ) ṣṣ ṣḥrt(?) . The reading is uncertain, and even if it is correct, nothing supports his Jewishness.

333 See U. Kaplony-Heckel, “Demotische Texte aus Pathyris,” \textit{MDAIK} 21 (1966), pp. 133-170 at p. 142, no. 2. The text is an account from Pathyris drawn up for Shabbethai (Ṣḥḥt), but this is the only name that may denote a Jew. Taking into account that all the other names in the text are Egyptian, his Jewishness is highly doubtful.

334 See M. Ebeid, “Demotic Inscriptions from the Galleries of Tuna el-Gebel,” \textit{BIFAO} 106 (2006), pp. 57-73 at p. 67, no. 18. Tuna el-Gebel was the resting place of sacred animals. \textit{TG} 2487 is a limestone coffin of a sacred animal, on which a supposed variant of the name Shabbethai (Ṣḥḥ) was inscribed. Even if this form corresponds to Shabbethai, a person bringing a sacred animal to be buried in the galleries of Tuna el-Gebel is far from being a Jew.
documents, Shabbethai is the only non-Egyptian name and nothing confirms the Jewish identity of the bearers.

In addition, we must mention another interesting case of the name Shabbethai. As pointed out by B. Porten, this biblical name appears in some 5th century BCE Aramaic letters from Syene and Elephantine. He is, however, not convinced about the Jewishness of these men called Shabbethai, because they appear in purely non-Jewish Aramean context. Out of four attestations of the name, two are highly doubtful: TAD A2.1 records a certain Shabbethai son of Shug among several Aramean soldiers at Syene, while TAD B3.9 mentions another Shabbethai, whose son, Sinkishir witnessed an adoption contract drawn up at Syene.

Taking these examples into consideration the following question must be raised: should the name Shabbethai be considered Jewish or not? Before answering the question let us recall what the editors of the CPJ write concerning the name Shabbethai. In CPJ III a whole chapter is devoted to the problem of the so-called “Sambathions,” where they claim: “In the Roman period, especially in the second century A.D., we are faced with a new and a rather strange phenomenon: the name, now written Sambathion, is no less common, but it is no longer confined to Jews. We find it, as a single biblical name, in a purely Egyptian environment such as the Fayum villages, Karanis, Theadelphia, Philadelphia, Hermoupolis Magna, the Mendesian nome, and so on.” The bearers of this name could not be Jews, since their kinsmen were all Egyptians. Tcherikover calls these persons “pagan observers of the Sabbath,” because they certainly practiced this Jewish rite, but were not Jews, and probably did not have any connection to Jewish communities. The Sambathions were Egyptians influenced by Judaism and their name clearly reflect their veneration for the Sabbath.

Thus, in the Roman period, Sambathion, the elaborated version of the name Shabbethai, could not serve as an indicator of Jewishness any more. As to the Ptolemaic period instances of the name, according to Tcherikover and Fuks all of the people named Shabbethai were Jewish. However, they studied only the Greek material. In the above-mentioned Demotic papyri the name appears suddenly in purely Egyptian environment. It goes without saying that in this context its Jewishness is highly doubtful. This phenomenon can be explained in two ways: either the Egyptians adopted this name much earlier than Tcherikover thought, or the Jews bearing this name were deeply influenced by the Egyptian culture and religion. Whichever is the case, this example shows very well the intercultural

impact of Jews and Egyptians. The best example illustrating this situation is the already mentioned *O.Dem.Wien* 284, the bilingual ostracon from Apollinopolis Magna. We recall that the husband Shabbethai was Jewish, and his wife Tapaoueris was Egyptian. This is clear evidence for Egyptian-Jewish mixed marriages, which certainly played an important role in cultural exchange. Already the fact that a family became bilingual, gave a good base for this exchange. We also recall that it was exactly the site of Apollinopolis Magna that yielded interesting archeological findings pointing to the high degree of Egyptization of the local Jewish community. I think that this particular social situation may have been the propagator of name borrowings, and based on Porten’s examples, this phenomenon may have its origins even earlier, in the Vth century BCE military colonies of Syene/Elephantine. All in all, we may conclude two important things: first, that the name Shabbethai should be studied not only in Hellenistic-Jewish context, but also in Egyptian-Aramean-Jewish context, and secondly, that its Jewishness is not as self-evident as we have thought until now.337

2.4. Biblical Names and Biblical Heroes

After having seen how the Jews were affected by the Hellenistic and the Egyptian environment, one subject is left to be discussed: how did they approach their biblical heroes and their own national history? Did they consciously use biblical names such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses, and if yes, to what extent?

Among the names of the biblical heroes, Moses has already been encountered.338 We saw that the name was used neither in its biblical form מֶשֶׁה (Moses) nor in its Greek form Μωυσῆς or Μωσῆς during the Ptolemaic period. However, the Greek name Μουσαῖος might have served as a variant of the biblical name because of its similar sound, and there is evidence for its use by Jews. In the following part, we will study the names of other biblical heroes, who had an important role in collective ethnic identity.

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337 The Greek papyri must also be reconsidered, because the *CPJ* contains several texts, in which Shabbethai is the only name that may refer to a Jew. The editors of the *CPJ* consider Shabbethai an exclusively Jewish name, but in light of the Demotic texts, the Greek documents should also be treated with reservation. On the basis of this concept, I have excluded the following *CPJ* papyri from further study: *CPJ* I 44, *CPJ* I 51-60, *CPJ* I 97, *CPJ* I 103, *CPJ* I 115, *CPJ* I 119 and *CPJ* I 122. However, I have accepted the inclusion of the following texts because in them, the name Sabbataios/Sambathaios is associated with another most probably Jewish name: *CPJ* I 64 and 104 (Sambathaios son of Solloumis), *CPJ* I 87 and 117 (Sambathaios son of Abietes), *CPJ* I 114 (Sambataios son of Asibis), *CPJ* I 118 (Simon son of Sambathaios).

338 See above Chapter 2.2.2.2.
2.4.1. Abram(-os) instead of Abraham?

If somebody was especially important and symbolic in Jewish history and may have had a great impact on Jewish onomastics, it was definitely Abraham. It is an interesting question to ask whether the Jews used this name in Ptolemaic Egypt or they felt it too sacrosanct to be used by common people. To be clear, the name is attested in its biblical form אברם (Abraham) neither in Palestine nor in Egypt. As to its Greek forms, the Septuagint transliterates it as Ἀβραὰμ with a double alpha, a form that is not recorded in the documentary sources. However, there is another name that may be identified with the biblical name Abraham: אברם (Abram) or in its Greek version Ἄβραμ / Ἄβραμος. Whether or not this identification is correct has been disputed in the last decades.

N. Cohen, in her study about the Jewish names, points out the rarity of the name אברם (Abraham) during the Second Temple period, when other biblical names were undoubtedly frequent. Because of this absence, she supposes that the Greek form Αβράμ / Ἄβραμος cannot be considered a variant of the biblical name. According to her, the Greek form originates more likely from a Persian or Iranian non-Jewish name, which would explain its appearance in both Jewish and pagan sources. That different variants of the name Abram are attested in some non-Jewish inscriptions is true, but the problem with Cohen’s suggestion is that the form Αβράμ or Ἄβραμος itself is unattested in Asia Minor either. This variant is recorded only in Egypt.

G. Bohak agrees with Cohen that the Greek form Ἄβραμ / Ἄβραμος was borne by non-Jews as well, but he suggests a common Semitic origin. Since both אב (“father”) and רם (“to be exalted, high”) are common to all West-Semitic languages, the name Abram might very well have been used by non-Jews too. This is also true, but again, the form Ἄβραμος is attested only in Egypt, and should be treated in this light.

The question is whether we can prove the Jewishness of the Greek form Ἄβραμος. Let us investigate the kind of sources we have in favour of the Jewishness of this name. First of all, the literary sources: although the Septuagint, the New Testament, Philo and Eusebius use Ἀβραὰμ or a similar form to transliterate Abraham’s name, Josephus always uses Ἄβραμος.

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339 Gen 17:5.
341 This suggestion was argued based on the fact that some non-Jewish sources record variations of the name Abram: an inscription at Dura-Europos from the IIIrd century CE (CIJ 828 and 830) attests the name Αβραμος; a burial cave of a Palmyrean family at Beth-Shearith (CIJ 1053) records the name Αβρα, while an inscription from Thessalonica dated probably to the IIrd century CE has the name Αβραμος, see Cohen, JSJ 7 (1976), p. 100.
when writing about the patriarch.\textsuperscript{343} Another interesting example is the \textit{Letter of Aristeas}, in which we meet again the form Ἀβραμός borne by one of the translators of the Hebrew Bible, and obviously, there can be no doubt about his Jewishness.\textsuperscript{344} The documentary sources record the name as Ἀβραμός in the Ptolemaic period: for instance \textit{CPJ} I 50, a tax receipt from Thebes and \textit{CPJ} III 1530a = \textit{JIGRE} 39, a metrical epitaph most probably from Tell el-Yehudiyyeh, where a Jewish settlement certainly existed.

Besides the Greek attestations, it is instructive to study the non-Greek material too. As we recall, S. Honigman has studied the Aramaic material from Edfu parallel to the Greek material from Thebes, and she has concluded that many onomastic similarities existed between the two communities.\textsuperscript{345} Among the Aramaic ostraca \textit{TAD} D8.4 records the name אברם (Abram), which was convincingly linked by Honigman to the Greek form Ἀβραμός found in \textit{CPJ} I 50. She argues that the Aramaic and the Greek form of the name support each other, and cannot be misinterpreted. אברם (Abram) and Ἀβραμός was only one of the name pairs she has revealed in Upper Egypt. In addition, the Demotic attestation of the name in \textit{O.Petrie}, Pl. 24 further confirms this identification, since \textit{sbrm} is clearly the Egyptian transliteration of אברם (Abram) and of its Greek version Ἀβράμ / Ἀβραμός. The fact that Abram is attested with a certain Shabbethai as a brick supplier and that the ostracon was found in Tell el-Yehudiyyeh near the almost exclusively Jewish cemetery, makes it very likely that he was a Jew, like his Upper Egyptian fellows in \textit{TAD} D8.4 and in \textit{CPJ} I 50. In my view, it seems quite certain that the Aramaic, the Greek and the Demotic forms refer to the same name, and were recognized forms of the biblical name Abraham, at least in Ptolemaic Egypt.

In fact, even the attestation of the \textit{Letter of Aristeas} supports this view. According to the story of the letter, the elders, including Abramos, were from Jerusalem, but we are dealing with a literary text here, in which the characters are most probably fictitious. It is generally assumed by scholars that the \textit{Letter of Aristeas} was written in Alexandria by a Hellenized Jew who was certainly more inspired by the Egyptian onomastic habits than by the Palestinian ones. Thus, we may assume that the names of the elders reflect the Egyptian rather than the Palestinian onomastic stock of the Jews.\textsuperscript{346} The fact that one of the Jewish elders was called Abramos confirms the accuracy of this Greek form.

\textsuperscript{343} Josephus, \textit{AJ} I 158. Note that this is not the only case, when Josephus uses a form different from that of the Septuagint. In general, he Grecized the original forms by adding the ending –ος similarly to the name Abramos.

\textsuperscript{344} \textit{Letter of Aristeas} § 49.

\textsuperscript{345} See above Chapter 2.1. and also Honigman, \textit{ZPE} 146 (2004), pp. 294-295.

\textsuperscript{346} Contra this see N. G. Cohen, “The Names of the Translators in the Letter of Aristeas: A Study in the Dynamics of Cultural Transition,” \textit{JSJ} 15 (1984), pp. 32-64. She treats the letter as a historical source, and uses its name list as a base to reveal a cultural transition of the Judean educated upper-class (to which the elders
2.4.2. Jacob, Isaac and Joseph

Besides Abraham it is instructive to study the names of other patriarchs too. Concerning the names יָעַכַב (Jacob), יִצְחָק (Isaac) and יוֹסֵף (Joseph) two important things are to be emphasized. First, the difference between Egypt and Palestine. In Palestine none of these names were in use during the Hellenistic period: both Jacob and Isaac have two attestations, all of them in the Letter of Aristeas. As for Joseph, it has ten occurrences dating from the Hellenistic period, and four of them concern again the translators of the Septuagint in the Letter of Aristeas. However, as we have already noted in the case of the name Abraham, these fictitious Palestinian attestations of the letter reflect more probably the naming practices in Egypt.

The other fact to be noted is the absence of these names in the Aramaic documents from Upper Egypt. Their introduction into the onomastic stock of the Egyptian Jews can be dated to the Ptolemaic period, and they are recorded mainly in Greek documents in their Hellenized forms. Jacob, for instance is mostly attested as Ἰακοῦβ or Ἰάκουβος. CPJ I 28, which is a list of cattle owners, enumerates several Jews bearing biblical names, and among them the name Iakoubis is attested three times: Iakoubis son of Iakoubis in l. 22 and Marion daughter of Iakoubis in l. 27. CPJ I 47 records again a list of names, in which probably, but not certainly, all the persons were Jews bearing names such as Theodotos son of Alexander son of Theodotos or Dosithea daughter of Theodotos son of Theodoros. Iakoubis is mentioned as the father of Aristippos in l. 6. Among the new documents included in our corpus, we find this name in P.Polit.Iud. 6 too, in which Iakoubis was one of the appointed judges of the Jewish politeuma who interrogated the mother of the plaintiff in the village of Onnes. Besides the papyri, Jacob is also attested in some inscriptions: JIGRE 56 and JIGRE 81, both epitaphs from Tell el-Yehudiyeh, record Iakobos as the name of the deceased, while JIGRE 107, another epitaph from the cemetery of Demerdash, was inscribed for Isaak son of Iakob.

The name Isaac was as popular as Jacob. The Hellenized forms of the name, Ἰσάκις and Ἰσάκιος are attested six times in the Greek sources from Egypt: in CPJ I 42, a fragment of an account, we find the name twice, first as Isakis son of Hareselthos in l. 11, then as Isakis in l. 12. Unfortunately the papyrus is very badly preserved, thus, the purpose of the account is

supposedly belonged) in the IVth-IIIrd centuries BCE from their former Aramaic orientation to their new Hellenistic-Greek orientation.

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348 Letter of Aristeas § 47 (2x), 48, 50, see Ilan (2002), p. 150.
349 In fact, the editor reads the name Iakkobios in CPR XIII 21 too, see Harrauer (1987), p. 249, but this reading is rejected by Clarysse, Proceedings (1994), p. 194, and thus, the text is not included in the present corpus.
unclear. Then, *CPJ* I 136 records a certain Alexandros son of Isakis, who was summoned before a tribunal but did not obey this order. The papyrus breaks off in the middle of the text, thus, we do not know the outcome of the case. The name Isaac was used in Upper Egypt too, where it is attested both in Greek and in Demotic documents. *CPJ* I 78 and 79 are two tax receipts belonging to the same Jewish family residing in Thebes. This family was studied by W. Clarysse, who was able to reconstruct four generations of it based on the following texts: *CPJ* I 77, 78, 79, *O.Wilck.* II 731, *O.Mattha* 233 and *O.Dem.Brooklyn* 12768-1672. Isakis, one of the youngest members of the reconstructed family tree, is attested in five receipts: in *CPJ* I 78 and 79 he pays the grain harvest tax to the granary at Thebes. In fact, *O.Wilck.* II 731 is also a Greek tax receipt, which records the payment of the grain harvest tax by Isakis, but his name was misread by the first editor, and therefore it was not included in *CPJ* I. To these Greek documents we may now add the above-mentioned two Demotic ostraca, which also concern Isakis among other members of the family. *O.Mattha* 233 is a grain harvest tax receipt written to Isakis in Demotic about the payment of the tax in 153/2 BCE, while *O.Dem.Brooklyn* 12768-1672 is a receipt of measurement drawn up for Isakis, his father Straton and his grand-father Jesous. It confirms that in that year (156 BCE) after the inundation of the Nile the cultivated part of the land owned by the family was 10 arouras in size. This receipt served as a base for the calculation of the grain harvest tax.

Isaac was not the only biblical name that was used by this family. Other two members of the family bore the name Joseph. As can be seen in *O.Dem.Brooklyn* 12768-1672, Jesous’s father was called Joseph, and he pays the grain harvest tax with his son and his grand-son for a land that earlier belonged to Joseph son of Jesous, who was then the grand-son of the other Joseph. Based on the family tree reconstructed by W. Clarysse, it is clear that this Theban family used both biblical and Greek names. The name Joseph is further attested in Demotic in *BGU* VI 1454, which is another receipt of measurement issued to several Jews including Aristomenes son of Joseph. This Aristomenes is the same person who is also attested in *CPJ* I 49 and in *SB* XX 14976 as tax collector of the wine tax (οἶνου τέλος).

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352 Mattha (1945), pp. 174-175.
354 Wilcken reads the name as Κᾶκις, see Wilcken (1899), vol. 2, p. 194, corrected later by Bilabel into Ἰσάκις, see F. Bilabel, *Berichtigungsliste der Griechischen Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1929-33), p. 75. It is, however, not included in the *CPJ*.
Besides these Demotic attestations, Joseph appears mostly in Greek sources. In *CPJ* I nine papyri record this name either as Ἰώσηπος or as Ἰωσῆφις. Most of them are ostraca from Thebes, in which either the taxpayer was called Joseph, like in *CPJ* I 75 (Iosepos son of Abdious), *CPJ* I 89 (Pythangelos son of Iosepis), or the official who issued the receipt, like in *CPJ* I 100, 101, 102 (all of them were issued by the same Iosepos). *CPJ* I 113 is too fragmentary to know what was the role of Iosepos son of Menodoros. *CPJ* I 139 is also an ostracon from Edfu, although not a tax receipt: it records a list of contributors to common feasts, and among the contributors there was a certain priest called Iosepos. *CPJ* I 24 is the only text with the name Joseph, which has been preserved on papyrus and not on ostraca. It originates from the Fayum, and contains a renewal of a loan contract drawn up between Iudas son of Joseph and Agathokles son of Ptolemy, both of them being soldiers of the Ptolemaic army.

Apart from these *CPJ* attestations several newly published texts record the name Joseph. It is attested so many times that based on the sources at our disposal, this was the second most popular name after Shabbethai among the Jews of Egypt. Not only the above-mentioned Demotic texts are to be added, but also a couple of Greek documents. *P.Count.* 26, our longest document from Trikomia, lists the name four times, of which two concern the same person: Iosephis, Areto’s husband is attested both in l. 40 an in l. 111. In l. 58 and in l. 150, two other Iosephis are recorded. *P.Count.* 27, another tax-register from the Fayum, lists a taxpayer whose father was named Iosephis. The name of the son is unfortunately broken off. *P.Petrie* III 90, again a list from the Fayum, records another Iosephos. As for the ostraca, we have already mentioned *SB* XX 14976 recording Aristomenes son of Ioseph, the tax collector of the wine tax, while *O.Heid.* 18 was written by the same Iosepos as *CPJ* I 100, 101 and 102, an official of the chaff store. *O.Heid.* 1 mentions Abietes son of Iasepos, while *O.Lyon inv.* 807 + *O.Ashm.Shelt.* 42 another Iosephos, both alluding to a so far unknown person bearing this extremely popular name. Finally, there are also two Greek epitaphs, one from the cemetery of Chatby near Alexandria (*JIGRE* 1) and one from the cemetery of Demerdash (*JIGRE* 110), which were both inscribed for men called Iosepos.

Among the names of the biblical heroes, Joseph is the only one that is attested in Aramaic too (יוסף) in *TAD* D8.13 and *O.Dem.Wien* 284. Even more interesting is the fact that these Aramaic ostraca record the same person, namely Joseph the scribe who issued two salt

358 Ibid., p. 3.
tax receipts, one for Shimeon son of PN and his wife, and another one for Taese daughter of Shabbethai. Both receipts are from Edfu like the other Aramaic documents, thus, it can be assumed the Joseph was a member of the Jewish community in Edfu.

Thus, Joseph was one of the most popular names among Jews, and it was used all over the country. It must be noted, however, that like other biblical names, its appearance cannot be traced back to earlier than the beginning of the Ptolemaic period.

2.5. Summary

If we summarize the results of our study, the statistics will show the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Name</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semitic</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(of which biblical)</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Distribution of the names borne by Jews according to origin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attestations</th>
<th>Type of Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shabbethai</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Joseph</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Abietes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Semitic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Simon</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Greek / Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Theodotos</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Dositheos</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Jonathan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Johanan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallui</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Semitic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Nathan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honi</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Semitic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Jacob</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Semitic (biblical)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. List of the most popular names borne by Jews

From these tables we can clearly see which were the most popular names among the Jews of Egypt. However, these data must be treated with caution for two reasons. On the one hand, the Greek names are certainly underrepresented, because Jews bearing Greek names and showing no sign of Jewishness are unfortunately excluded from the survey. On the other
hand, biblical names are overrepresented in that the name Simon is recorded in this category, while it was also a Greek name.

Following these results, the question naturally arises whether there is any explanation for the choice of names. On the one hand, the Hellenization and the onomastic assimilation was clearly very fast. We can see that 37% of the names borne by the Jews of Egypt were Greek. The Egyptian environment also influenced the Jewish onomastics, because 4.7% of the names are of Egyptian origin. This Egyptian influence on the Jewish population of Egypt is not surprising. They lived side by side, and as we have seen, there was an intensive social interaction between them, especially in Upper Egypt.

This trend seems to be overwhelmed by the appearance of biblical names, especially those of the great heroes of the Bible. Their introduction into the onomastic stock was prompt and powerful. The high proportion of the biblical names requires an explanation. Their role in Egypt is even more surprising given the fact that in Palestine they were not in use at all, and there, the most fashionable names were those of the Maccabean heroes: Mattathias, Johanan, Simon, Judah, Eleazar and Jonathan. That is to say, in Palestine the onomastics of the Jews was influenced by contemporary historical events, while in Egypt the Hebrew Bible was more decisive.

How can we then explain the appearance of the biblical names in Egypt? The local conditions of the Egyptian Diaspora definitely played an important part in this phenomenon. The Jews of Egypt formed quite an independent Diaspora. The extreme popularity of the name Joseph shows that they began to consider the biblical Joseph a national hero. This name as well as the other biblical names have one common reference: the Septuagint. The possible influence of the Septuagint on Jewish onomastics in Egypt has already been suggested by S. Honigman in connection with the name Abraham, and, in my view, our study largely confirms this assumption. The living conditions of the Jews were different in Egypt than in Palestine, and the adoption of biblical names in Egypt was due, at least in part, to the desire to show the Jewish identity of their bearers. Proper names always functioned as a strong marker of identity. The Septuagint played a unifying role. The Greek version of the Torah must have spread very rapidly in the country, and certainly influenced the Jews. This influence was not limited to the religious and social life, but affected the choice of names too. It was this Greek version of the Law that was used by all the Jews in the synagogues. It should not be forgotten that the oldest synagogue dedications of the Jewish history have been found in Egypt, and in

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these circumstances, it seems likely that the names of great biblical heroes quickly penetrated the public consciousness. The Septuagint certainly played an important role in maintaining Jewish identity, and served as a source for the choice of names that expressed the Jewish origin.
CHAPTER 3

Jews in the Ptolemaic Army

One of the most important pieces of information that the papyri can reveal is the social status of the Jews in Egyptian society. Their situation in public life can be analyzed according to two dimensions: their role in the military sphere, and their occupations in the civil life. This chapter studies their role in the army, while Chapter 4 examines their situation in civil society.

3.1. Aramaic-speaking Military Settlers in Upper Egypt

It was already emphasized by the editors of the *CPJ* that the contribution of papyrology is especially of great importance when it comes to Jewish soldiers.\(^{360}\) Literary sources telling about the Jewish presence in the Egyptian army were once considered dubious by certain scholars. However, with the publication of documentary papyri listing Jewish soldiers, these sources gained truthworthiness.\(^{361}\) The relevant material in this domain are the V\(^{th}\) century BCE Elephantine papyri and the Hellenistic period Greek papyri. Both groups of papyri confirm without doubt that Jews served in military garrisons such as Elephantine and were active members of the Egyptian army from the Persian period onwards. Our corpus broadens the group of documentary sources recording Jewish presence in the Ptolemaic army by several new Greek and Aramaic texts, which shed light on the social life of the Jewish soldiers. The life of these soldiers should be studied from two different geographical points of view: those settled in Upper Egypt and those settled in Middle and Lower Egypt. This differentiation is not the result of an arbitrary decision, but the consequence of the different nature of Jewish communities in Upper- and Lower Egypt. As we have already seen, in Upper Egypt we have evidence of an Aramaic-speaking community, which constitutes the remains

\(^{360}\) Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 11.

\(^{361}\) We have already mentioned the *Letter of Aristeas* § 12-14 (see Chapter 1.1.1.), which speaks of 100 000 Jewish prisoners transported by Ptolemy I Soter from Palestine to Egypt, of which – according to the Letter – 30 000 were settled in military fortresses. Even if the number is exaggerated, in light of the papyri there is no ground for doubting the genuineness of this report. Another literary source that mentions Jews as soldiers is Josephus, *AJ* XII 148-153, who speaks about the transfer of 2000 Jewish families from Mesopotamia and Babylonia to Asia Minor because of the rebellions in that area, and the king thought that the Jewish soldiers would be of good service to defend the fortresses. As to how this passage was evaluated by scholars see Tcherikover (1959), pp. 287-288.
of the Persian-period community, while in Lower Egypt, most of the Jewish communities consisted of Greek-speaking settlers who arrived in Egypt in the aftermath of the Macedonian conquest.

As to the soldiers of Upper Egypt, the relevant sources are the Aramaic papyri from Edfu. Although most of them are economic in nature, we can reveal some telling details that may refer to the military character of the community. To begin with, from TAD D1.17 recording a letter written by the judges in Edfu to probably some officials probably, we learn that the settlement was called “Edfu the fortress.” This definitely reminds us of the Vth century BCE Aramaic papyri from Elephantine that record several times the name of the settlement as “Elephantine the fortress.”362 From the same papyrus it is also clear that the Jewish community of Edfu had so-called “judges,” which recalls again the earlier Elephantine papyri, where such officials appear regularly.363 In other papyri, namely in TAD D8.6 and TAD D8.8, we hear about the “scribes” of the community. The presence of scribes is not surprising: we find scribes in the Elephantine papyri too, and the Temple of Khnum had also some official scribes. Thus, the scribes of the Edfu community might have acted either in the service of the community to draw up official documents and contracts, or in the service of a religious institution such as a synagogue. The last detail that needs to be mentioned is the presence of Jewish “priests” in TAD C.28. First, a certain “Johanan the priest” is mentioned in an account of grain (l. 85), then “Strm[ ] the priest” is recorded in an account of wine (l. 113). To be precise, these are not the only documents from Egypt mentioning Jewish priests: CPJ I 120, 121 and 139 are all Greek sources from Upper Egypt and record different persons with the title “priest.”364 Besides, a Greek epitaph from the cemetery of Tell el-Yehudiyyeh, JIGRE 84, attests another person, a woman with this title.365 Who were these priests and priestesses?

362 See for instance TAD A4.6, TAD A4.7, TAD A4.8, TAD A4.9, TAD A4.10, TAD B2.2, TAD B2.3, TAD B2.9, TAD B2.11, TAD B3.1, TAD B3.3, TAD B3.5, TAD B3.6, TAD B3.8, TAD B3.10, TAD B3.11, TAD B3.12, TAD B4.6, TAD B5.5, in all of which we find the name “Elephantine the fortress,” and for a parallel example see TAD A4.7, TAD A4.8, TAD B2.8, TAD B3.9, TAD B3.13, in which we encounter the name “Syene the fortress” being a very similar military settlement on the other side of the Nile. At all times both Elephantine and Syene were important customs posts at the southern border of Egypt, which is why they were provided with military fortresses and soldiers.

363 At Elephantine, the judge is in general recorded as a person before whom a petitioner could go to be heard like in TAD A5.2, TAD B2.3, TAD B3.1, TAD B3.2, TAD B3.12, TAD B5.1.

364 CPJ I 120 and 121 are Greek ostraca from Upper Egypt: in the former one, we meet the priest Ismaelos, while in the latter another priest appears, whose name is illegible, but it starts with the element “Theo-.” Interestingly, CPJ I 139 is also from Edfu, and records a list of persons, who contributed to a feast. Among the contributors we meet a certain “Iosepos the priest.”

365 JIGRE 84 was inscribed for a woman called Marion, who was ἱερεία, i.e. “of priestly family.” What this term means exactly in case of a woman was a subject of debate. In the discussion of the inscription Horbury and Noy (1992, p. 158) cite B. Brooten’s three possible explanations of this term, i.e. that it denotes either a woman of priestly descent, or a priestess in the cultic sense (service in a temple at Leontopolis), or a woman with
Jewish priests, although traditionally associated with the temple-cult of Jerusalem, were often mentioned in Diaspora sources. The presence of Jewish priests in Egypt is quite understandable in Elephantine. Given the fact that the Jewish community of Elephantine had a temple, Jewish priests certainly served there in the cultic sense. Their appearance in some sources from Edfu, however, raises some questions. In this case too, there are three possibilities: 1. they simply wanted to emphasize their family background, i.e. that they came from a priestly family, 2. they fulfilled a position involving some function in a synagogue, 3. they were indeed “priests” in the cultic sense and served in a temple. J. Schwartz attributes to these priests some function in a synagogue. According to S. Honigman this explanation “raises more problems than it solves.” Based on her assumption, according to which the Jews of Edfu formed a community already in pre-Hellenistic times, the presence of a synagogue in Edfu before the Hellenistic period would question the nature of this institution. That is why she suggests that the presence of Jewish priests in Edfu can be best explained by supposing the presence of a temple there such as the one in Elephantine in the Persian period. Based on the above-mentioned similarities between the community of Edfu and that of Elephantine, Honigman assumes the similar nature of these communities. In my view, the two communities were certainly similar in their nature, but this does not imply the presence of a temple in Edfu. At least, lacking archeological evidence, it remains highly hypothetical. The same holds true for the existence of a synagogue because this is also something that is possible but cannot be proven without extensive archeological excavations. Without going as far as Honigman did, I am still inclined to accept the probable explanation that these “priests” simply desired to show their priestly descent. I accept, however, Honigman’s other assumption, namely that the Edfu community might have existed already in the Persian era and that its character was most probably very similar to that of the Elephantine community. Based on the available information, it may be assumed that these Jews once formed a military settlement controlling an important strategic point of Egypt in the south. It seems also quite probable that this military community survived the Macedonian conquest, and at the beginning of the new era, several merceneries of Greek and Mediterranean origin may have joined their army. As to their organization, the Jewish soldiers stationing at the southern

synagogue functions. Horbury and Noy opt for the first explanation, because nothing proves that in Egypt it “would indicate anything other than hereditary status.”

366 For these sources see also L. Levine, _The Ancient Synagogue_ (New Haven / London 2005), pp. 519-529.
368 Honigman, _Jewish Identities_ (2009), pp. 120-122.
confines of Egypt seem to have followed old traditions, which may have gradually changed with the arrival of new Greco-Macedonian mercenaries.

It is well demonstrated by the Greek papyri found at Elephantine that Greek-speaking mercenaries arrived in Upper Egypt right after the Macedonian conquest. *P.Eleph.* 1-4 are the earliest Greek papyri ever found in Egypt (they were written between 310 and 282 BCE), and they attest the diverse ethnic background of the Greek military settlers. There is no room for doubt that these settlers, among whom there were most probably Jewish soldiers as well, had an impact on the inhabitants of the area.

### 3.2. Greek-speaking Military Settlers

In the northern area of the country, the dominant Greek-speaking minority took the leading role very quickly. Most of the newcomers were military men. With the foundation of Alexandria in the north and Ptolemais in the south, the Greco-Macedonian population had proper Greek *poleis* to settle in. Besides, the new rulers also had to elaborate a new system for the army. It is a well-known fact that Ptolemy I Soter’s army consisted of mercenaries, some of them from Macedonia, others from elsewhere in the Greek world, and still others from Egypt, from the armies of the former Persian empire.\(^{369}\) To maintain the potent army that Ptolemy needed in his continuous wars of the Successors, it was necessary to ensure that the soldiers remain loyal to him. Also, it was desirable to settle them in Egypt so that they be available when needed. It is mainly for this reason that the Ptolemies established the system of cleruchs, i.e. military settlers, who received *kleroi* (plots of land) from the king in return for their military service. In this way, they combined military service with agricultural productivity.\(^{370}\) To carry out such a large scale project, the Ptolemies needed a huge amount of arable land, which they gained by the canalization of the Fayum. This oasis with its extensive arable lands became one of the most fertile areas in Ptolemaic Egypt as well as the main center of military settlers in the Egyptian countryside.

According to Diodoros, Ptolemy I Soter took several prisoners to Egypt after the battle of Gaza in 312 BCE.\(^{371}\) As to the Jews, we have already mentioned the tradition represented by the *Letter of Aristeas* § 12-14 concerning 100 000 Jewish prisoners transported by him

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\(^{369}\) Further on this see Fischer-Bovet (2014), pp. 116-117.


\(^{371}\) Diodoros XIX 85.
from Palestine to Egypt.\footnote{372} Josephus too speaks about the Jewish migration after the battle of Gaza.\footnote{373} Thus, it seems quite likely that a large group of Jews indeed arrived in Egypt during the reign of Ptolemy I. Like many other prisoners of war, they, or at least many of them, were incorporated into the Ptolemaic army. They were recruited and trained, and it was in the state’s interest to keep them in the country. The cleruchic system was a good solution for providing these soldiers with a reason to stay in Egypt. By receiving land from the king, even if it remained in the possession of the king, their living was ensured, and, in fact, they became part of the well-to-do, but rather small Greek-speaking upper class. Therefore, we can conclude that, at the beginning of the Ptolemaic era, soldiers were given a privileged status due to the fact that they played an important role in the foreign policy and wars of the Ptolemaic kings.

The cleruchic system, however, was not created from one day to another. It was gradually developed, especially during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos and Ptolemy III Euergetes.\footnote{374} The same holds true for the Fayum oasis, which could not turn into a fertile paradise within one year, but required years and even decades of hard work, in order for the king to exploit its potential and allot land to the soldiers. Many of the Fayumic settlements were founded during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. Consequently the papyrological sources that survived in the sands of the Fayum date either from his reign or from later periods.\footnote{375} As noted by P. A. Johstono, the earliest evidence of a military settlement in Middle- and Lower Egypt comes from the Herakleopolite nome and dates from the 280s BCE.\footnote{376} From this date onwards, the amount of papyri documenting military settlements and soldiers increases. As to Jewish soldiers, there are no less than 27 papyri from the Ptolemaic period that record them. The following table lists all these sources in chronological order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Papyrus</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position in the Army</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 18</td>
<td>260 BCE</td>
<td>Alexander son of Andronikos</td>
<td>Jew of Zoilos’ troop, dekanikos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\footnote{372}{See Chapter 1.1.1.}
\footnote{373}{Josephus, CA I 186.}
\footnote{374}{Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 120. Although there is no evidence, it is possible that the exploitation of the Fayum was already started by Ptolemy I Soter, see J. G. Manning, \textit{Land and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt. The Structure of Land Tenure 332-30 BCE} (Cambridge 2003), p. 104.}
\footnote{375}{Further on the Ptolemaic settlements see Mueller (2006).}
\footnote{376}{Johstono (2012), p. 132. The papyrus in question is \textit{P.Hib.} I 30, which attests the existence of an eponymous unit of Alexandros. Most of the soldiers were Macedonians. The thesis is available online: http://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/dspace/handle/10161/5855 (accessed 07 October 2015).}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Year BCE</th>
<th>Name of Person</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 20</td>
<td>228-221</td>
<td>Mousaios son of Simon</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 19</td>
<td>226 BCE</td>
<td>Lasaites son of Iz…is</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 21</td>
<td>210 BCE</td>
<td>Theophilos son of Dositheos</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR XVIII 7</td>
<td>232/1 or 207/6 BCE</td>
<td>Jonathas son of Jonathas Apollonios son of Philippos Philopatros son of Teres</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR XVIII 8</td>
<td>232/1 or 207/6 BCE</td>
<td>Diagoras son of Diokles Dositheos son of Theogenes Dositheos son of Theophilos</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR XVIII 9</td>
<td>232/1 or 207/6 BCE</td>
<td>Pythokles son of Diokles Menestratos son of Jonathas Philistion son of Neon</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR XVIII 11</td>
<td>232/1 or 207/6 BCE</td>
<td>Pythokles son of Diokles Menestratos son of Jonathas Theodoros son of Theodoros</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 22</td>
<td>201 BCE</td>
<td>Theodotos son of Iason Diophantos son of Theodotos Hieroos son of Timotheos Milon son of Zosimos Demokrates … (Sabbataios) …</td>
<td>Jew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II	extsuperscript{nd} century BCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Heid. VIII 417</td>
<td>190-189 BCE</td>
<td>Theodotos son of Ion Glaukon son of Andronikos</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Mich. XVIII 781</td>
<td>186-185 BCE</td>
<td>Theogenes son of Euelthon</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 23</td>
<td>182 BCE</td>
<td>Apollonios son of Protogenes Sostratos son of Neoptolemos</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGU XIV 2381</td>
<td>176 BCE</td>
<td>Ptolemaios son of Sabbataios</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

377 C. Römer & T. Gagos (eds), 
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name of Individual</th>
<th>Position/Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 24</td>
<td>174 BCE</td>
<td>Judas son of Iosephos</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone, Judas of the detachment of Molossos, taktomisthos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agathokles son of Ptolemy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deinias son of Aineas</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thraseas son of Sosibios</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theben son of Phanokles</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Samaelos son of Ioannes</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theodoros son of Phanokles, alias Samaelos</td>
<td>Jew, 80 arourai holder, of the first hipparchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nikanor son of Iason</td>
<td>Jew, 80 arourai holder, of the first hipparchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 26</td>
<td>172-171 BCE</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Jew of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 27</td>
<td>158 BCE</td>
<td>Iasibis</td>
<td>epistates of the hipparchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 28</td>
<td>155-144 BCE</td>
<td>Angais son of Demetrios</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ioannes son of Antipater</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Iakoubis son of Iakoubis</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Diosk. 1</td>
<td>154 BCE</td>
<td>Iason son of Iason</td>
<td>Jew of the infantry under the command of Hermotimos and Meleagros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Köl n. III 144</td>
<td>152 BCE</td>
<td>Simon son of Theodoros and his partners</td>
<td>Jews of … (being) taktomisthoi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGU XIV 2423 + BGU X 1938</td>
<td>ca. 150 BCE</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Jew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 30</td>
<td>Mid II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE</td>
<td>… son of Hippodamos</td>
<td>Jew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPJ I 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>… son of Sabbataios</td>
<td>Jew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Polit.Iud. 5</td>
<td>135-134 BCE</td>
<td>Polyktor son of Polyktor</td>
<td>Macedonian from Demetrios’ cavalry mercenaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Polit.Iud. 8</td>
<td>133 BCE</td>
<td>Dorotheos, also called Zenon</td>
<td>Jew, designated in the contract Persian of the Epigone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.Rein. I 10 = P.Dion. 22</td>
<td>111 BCE</td>
<td>Onias son of Ammonios</td>
<td>Macedonian from the cleruchs at Kleopatras kome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Jews and their position in the Ptolemaic army

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3.2.1. Jews on active service

First, I will discuss the Jewish soldiers on active service, but even before this, here is a short description of the Ptolemaic military organization. There are a few recent and thorough monographs that examine different aspects of the Ptolemaic army. The organization of the army was similar to that of other Hellenistic Macedonian-type armies. It has long been recognized that in the history of the Ptolemaic army, it is necessary to distinguish different stages, because the organization of the army changed over time. Earlier scholars differentiated two periods: that of the IIIrd century BCE and that of the IIrd and Ist centuries BCE. When exactly the military reform had been carried out was a subject of debate, but most scholars agreed that it must have happened sometime in the first half of the IIrd century BCE. Armoni, followed by Fischer-Bovet, however, propose another scenario. They suggest that the military reform did not happen from one day to another: it was a slow and gradual transformation. Armoni claims that the period of transformation took place between the end of the IIIrd century and the 180s BCE, while Fischer-Bovet assumes a longer transitional period lasting from about 220 BCE until 160 BCE (Period B in her periodization).

What is certain is that before the reforms, the Ptolemaic army consisted of foreign soldiers who were trained in the Macedonian fighting style and knew very well the international battlefield. The two main forces of the army were the cavalry and the infantry, the former representing about 16% of the land forces according to Fischer-Bovet. Papyri from the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphos attest that the cavalrymen were initially organized around so-called eponymous commanders. Later, from the time of Ptolemy III Euergetes, they were grouped into hipparchies (hipparchia) being either numbered hipparchies (First, Second, Third hipparchy etc.) or ethnic hipparchies (hipparchy of the Thessalians, of the

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381 The most recent monographies are that of Fischer-Bovet (2014), which examines the Ptolemaic army in a social context, that of Johstono (2012), which tackles not only the military institutions of Egypt, but also those of other Hellenistic kingdoms, and S. Scheuble-Reiter, Die Katōkenreiter im ptolemäischen Ägypten (München 2012), which studies one particular section of the military society, namely the katoikoi, i.e. cavalry men settled on land. See also earlier studies, which are still usable: J. Lesquier, Les institutions militaires de l’Égypte sous les Lagides (Paris 1911); G. T. Griffith, The Mercenaries of the Hellenistic World (Cambridge 1935); F. Uebel, Die Kleruchen Ägyptens unter den ersten sechs Ptolemäern (Berlin 1968); E. Van ’t Dack, Ptolemaica Selecta. Études sur l’armée et l’administration lagides (Studia Hellenistica 29, Leuven 1988).

382 For a bibliography see Fischer-Bovet (2014), pp. 132-133.


385 According to Johstono (2012), p. 132, based on P.Hib. I 30 it is likely that the structuring of the Ptolemaic cavalry started as early as the 280s BCE, but it seems that the system of eponymous officers became pervasive only in the 260s and 250s BCE.
Thracians etc.). There were at least five numbered and six ethnic hipparchies.\textsuperscript{386} The numbered hipparchies were mixed groups of soldiers from the beginning, while the ethnic hipparchies had initially some real ethnic background, that is to say, a big part of the soldiers serving in the hipparchy of the Thessalians may indeed have been of Thessalian origin.\textsuperscript{387} At any rate, whatever background the soldiers had, they were supposed to use their personal ethnic designation to identify themselves, but obviously this did not always correlate with their ethnic hipparchy designation. Jews, for instance, did not have a separate ethnic hipparchy, thus, they were enlisted either into numbered or into mixed ethnic hipparchies. The hipparchies included cc. 400-500 men, and were commanded by the hipparchos.\textsuperscript{388} Each hipparchy was divided into two ilai commanded by the ilarchoi, and each ile was divided into two lochoi commanded by the lochagoi. The lowest-ranking officer in the hierarchy was the dekanikos, who was responsible for the command of 10-15 men. This was the smallest unit in the cavalry.\textsuperscript{389}

The infantry was also organized according to the Macedonian structure.\textsuperscript{390} In the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE the largest unit was the chiliarchia, which consisted of 1024 men and was commanded by the chiliarchos. Each chiliarchia was divided into two pentakosiarchoi consisting of 512 men. These regiments were commanded by the pentakosiarchos. The pentakosiarchoi were further divided into two syntagma of 256 soldiers, who were commanded by the syntagmaarches. The smallest unit was the taxis, which composed of 128 men and was led by the taxiarches. In the infantry there were no units organized based on ethnicity, instead, all of them were numbered.

The remuneration of the Ptolemaic cavalry and infantry was based on a mixed system. Basically, the soldiers can be assorted into two groups: mercenaries (misthophoroi, stratiotai, taktomisthoi) receiving wages and the above-discussed settlers or cleruchs (kleruchoi) receiving plots of land in return for their military service. Besides, there were other minor groups such as the misthophoroi kleruchoi and taktomishtoi kleruchoi, which were

\textsuperscript{386} The ethnic hipparchies known so far are the followings: Thracians, Thessalians, Mysians, Persians and Other Greeks. The sixth one, that of the Macedonians, which is mentioned in an unpublished petition (P.Vindob. G 40160), was presumably a mixed hipparchy, since the name referred to the Macedonian equipment worn by the soldiers, and not to their ethnic origin. Although it is possible that initially this hipparchy included soldiers of Macedonian origin, this tendency became far less rigid over time, see Fischer-Bovet (2014), pp. 125-128.

\textsuperscript{387} However, it would be a mistake to suppose that the ethnic hipparchies were homogenous. See also Johnston (2012), p. 224, who, based on the texts of CPR XVIII, supposes that the ethnic hipparchies were never organized along ethnic divisions in reality.

\textsuperscript{388} Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 125.

\textsuperscript{389} See CPJ I 18 for instance, which mentions a Jewish dekanikos.

\textsuperscript{390} For a table illustrating the organization of the infantry see Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 134.
presumably mixed groups but their precise nature is still a subject of debate. Merceneries recruited at the beginning of the IIIrd century BCE were foreign soldiers and served in garrisons. The cleruchic system, as noted above, was mostly developed during the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphos and Ptolemy III Euergetes. The cavalry- and infantry-settlers received land allotments of different sizes according to their position in the army. In the IIIrd century BCE sources, the most common size of land that cavalry-officers of numbered hipparchies were granted is 80 and 100 arouras, while those of the ethnic hipparchies received 70 arouras, and the infantry-settlers 25 and 30 arouras.

From the IIIrd century BCE there are only two documents attesting Jewish soldiers on active service. The earliest one is CPJ I 18, a deed of renunciation drawn up between a certain Andronikos, whose ethnicon is unfortunately broken, and Alexandros son of Andronikos, a Jewish soldier, who was associated with someone else. The name of the latter is illegible, but on the basis of the word μετὰ and the lacuna following Alexandros’ name, it is clear that he was in partnership with another soldier. We also know that they both belonged to the cavalry unit commanded by Zoilos, who was a well-known eponymous officer. It has been noted above that before the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes, the cavalrymen were simply organized around eponymous commanders, and this text is a good example of this phenomenon. More important is the fact that Andronikos is designated dekanikos, which means that he was not simply a cavalry soldier, but a commander of circa 10 soldiers. Kasher notes that Andronikos’ cavalry unit was most probably an ethnically mixed troop because we meet at least five different ethnic designations in the contract: Among the witnesses we find a Chalkidian, a Kromnian, an Erythrian and a Boeotian. All these people are of Greek and Macedonian origin, and Alexandros is the only one who can definitely be considered Jewish. We do not know how large his land was, but he must have been an upper-class member of a cavalry unit and certainly enjoyed all of its privileges.

The second document recording Jewish soldiers in the IIIrd century BCE is CPJ I 22, which is dated to 201 BCE. This text is a contract concerning the cession of a quarter, and

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391 As noted by Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 122, these groups of soldiers are attested only from the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes until 173 BCE in the Fayum. Several different hypotheses were elaborated to explain the nature of these groups, but Van’t Dack may be right that the misthophoroi kleruchoi and taktomishtoi kleruchoi were cleruchs who were later hired to serve permanently in the army, see E. Van’t Dack, “Sur l’évolution des institutions militaires lagides,” in E. Van’t Dack (1988), pp. 1-46 at p. 19.

392 The editors of CPJ suggest that Andronikos, whose ethnicon is illegible, may have been Jewish too on the basis of a possible reading restored by Tcherikover. He suggests to read [Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ Ἰουδαίου τῆς ἐπιγονwebkit-0393}

was drawn up between Theodotos son of Kassandros, designated Paeonian, and four Egyptian farmers. However, all the witnesses are Jews, and one of them is also the keeper of the contract.\textsuperscript{394} They are simply designated “Jews,” therefore we do not know their status within the army. If Theodotos asked them to witness his contract, it seems reasonable to assume that they knew each other and were probably members of the same military unit. That is all we can retrieve from the primary sources about the Jewish soldiers of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE. The following period will be more fruitful.

In the second half of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, especially during the decades preceding the Fourth Syrian War and the battle of Raphia (217 BCE), the Ptolemaic army began to reform. Ptolemy IV Philopator’s goal was to defeat the Seleucid Antiochus III, and to reinforce the sovereignty of Palestine. To ensure success, important preparations took place in the army. Ptolemy IV incorporated 20,000 Egyptians who had been trained in the Macedonian style and were called \textit{machimoi} into the infantry.\textsuperscript{395} Before this war, Egyptians had served in the Ptolemaic army only occasionally,\textsuperscript{396} but this time, they became a regular force in the infantry. Besides, several other soldiers must also have been recruited, among whom there were in all likelihood several Jews. It is a pity that the Ptolemaic infantry is far less documented than the cavalry, and therefore, it is more difficult to follow its development. Those, who are documented, are in any way designated Macedonian, even if they were Thracians, Thessalians or Jews. Consequently, without a telling Jewish name, it is impossible to trace Jewish infantrymen in the Ptolemaic army. According to Johstono, the Ptolemaic infantry may have been enlarged by fifty percent or even more in preparation for the Fourth Syrian War.\textsuperscript{397} This is a considerable number and it will have had serious consequences in the future history of the country. In any case, as described by Polybius, the Ptolemaic infantry with its numerous Egyptian soldiers brought victory to Ptolemy IV Philopator at the battle of Raphia in 217 BCE, and therefore, he returned to Egypt victorious.

The great efforts and huge expenses of this war, however, made an impact on the economy and society of Egypt. Soon after the war, the state had to face a serious rebellion in

\textsuperscript{394} In spite of the fact that Theodotos is styled Paeonian in the contract, both Tcherikover and Kasher consider him Jewish. Tcherikover emphasizes that the witnesses were, in general, selected from the same nation to which at least one of the contracting parties belonged. He suggests that Theodotos might have been Jewish but belonged to a non-Jewish military unit, which is why he was styled Paeonian. This, however, cannot be proven – as Tcherikover notes it as well, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 161; Kasher (1985), p. 45.

\textsuperscript{395} Polybios V 67.9-13.

\textsuperscript{396} Two periods can be mentioned, when Egyptians were used to reinforce the Ptolemaic army: first, in 312 BCE in the battle of Gaza (Diodoros XIX 80) that was fought by Ptolemy I and Seleukos against Demetrios son of Antigonus, and later in the Chremonidean war, see Hölbl (2001), p. 130.

\textsuperscript{397} Johstono (2012), p. 296.
the country, which lasted approximately twenty years (206-186 BCE). Rebels in the southern part of Egypt, and especially in the Thebaid chose their own native pharaoh. During the years of the revolt, Thebes and other territories in Upper Egypt - and for a short period even parts of the Delta - were under the control of the rebels. It was only in the last phase of the rebellion, around 187-186 BCE, that the Ptolemaic army managed to make some military progress, and they regained the control in the Thebaid. The rebellion was suppressed without considerable destruction and loss of life. The Ptolemaic government did not resort to too much brutality but inclined towards reforms and conciliatory policies.

As a result of these events, the army underwent serious changes. The incorporation of Egyptian soldiers into the Ptolemaic army did not end after the war. Quite to the contrary. With the reforms of the Ptolemies, the army became more open and thousands of native Egyptian soldiers were recruited. This offered a new and not-to-be-missed opportunity not only for common soldiers, but also for the elite, since its members could now access high-ranking positions in the army. The newly recruited Egyptian and Greco-Egyptian soldiers were put into ethnically mixed units. They were not cleruchs but professional soldiers receiving wages for their service. They were called *mithrophoroi*, that is, mercenaries regardless of their ethnic background. The rate of their wages varied according to their position within the army. Fischer-Bovet emphasizes the difference between these soldiers and those of the IIIrd century, stating that the new soldiers were recruited within Egypt, and had no previous experience in international battlefields. On the one hand, the extended access to the military social class was a major step in integrating the Ptolemaic army into Egyptian society. On the other hand, it goes without saying that the status of the Hellenes, which was then given to Egyptian soldiers, became less prestigious.

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398 Military, economic and social reasons may all have played a certain role in the outbreak of the revolt. The fact that Egyptians were enrolled in the Ptolemaic army in the Fourth Syrian War makes it clear that they became well-trained soldiers who now had all the potential to revolt at the appropriate time. Also, the cost of the war certainly consumed much of the economic power of the country, which is also demonstrated by the enormous devaluation of the silver drachma and the monetary problems of the state. Finally, social tensions must be mentioned as well since, in the eyes of the Egyptians, the privileges of the Greco-Macedonian social class were certainly not welcome, see W. Clarysse, *The Great Revolt of the Egyptians* (205-186 BC), lecture given in Berkeley 2004, available online: http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/lecture/revolt (accessed 12 October 2015). Further on this uprising with an extensive bibliography see A.-E. Veisse, *Les “révoltes égyptiennes” : Recherches sur les troubles intérieurs en Égypte du règne de Ptolémée III à la conquête romaine* (Studia Hellenistica 41, Leuven 2004).


400 Suffice it to mention the Rosetta decree issued in Memphis in 196 BCE as part of the coronation celebration of Ptolemy V Epiphanes, which clearly illustrates a shift in the Ptolemaic approach to the conflict. The decree expresses the goal of the royal court to abolish the causes of the revolt. For this reason, they made several “philanthropic” decisions – as Johstono (2012), p. 383, labels them – that served the interest of the people and especially that of the Egyptian priests.

In connection with the ethnically more diverse military society, the army was reorganized as well. It is assumed that ethnic hipparchies were integrated into the numbered hipparchies. This is clearly shown by the sources, because the quantity of the numbered hipparchies increased to at least eight in the second century BCE, while ethnic hipparchies are last mentioned in the 170s BCE. Armoni emphasizes the political side of this measure, namely that with the growing number of Egyptians in the hipparchies, it was more appropriate to eliminate the ethnic hipparchies. This may be true, but there is surely some truth in Fisher-Bovet’s hypothesis too, according to which this decision was more practical than political. Since the ethnic hipparchies lost their original meaning, and were not “ethnic” any more, in Fisher-Bovet’s view, it was more efficient to unify the cavalrymen in numbered hipparchies. Cavalrymen of 70 arouras are still sometimes attested in the papyri, but the standard size of allotments given to cavalrymen was 80 arouras throughout the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE. As to the infantry, in which the Egyptian soldiers were incorporated before the war, the number of mercenary soldiers, who were however permanently settled in Egypt, increased after the revolt. These paid soldiers were grouped into flexible, and ethnically mixed units.

Let us analyze now the situation of the Jews under these new conditions. The sources of the II\textsuperscript{nd} and I\textsuperscript{st} centuries BCE shed some light on the position of the Jews in the reformed Ptolemaic army. \textit{CPJ} I 24, for instance, acquaints us with two Jewish cavalrymen: Theodoros son of Theodoros and Nikanor son of Iason, who were both “80-arourai holders of the first hipparchy settled by Dositheos.” They witnessed a loan contract that was drawn up between Ioudas son of Iosephos, the creditor, and Agathokles son of Ptolemaios, the debtor, whose designation is “of the detachment of Molossos, \textit{taktomisthos}.” There are quite a few interesting points here. First, this is the earliest document that attests Jewish soldiers in numbered hipparchies. However, this does not mean that in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, there were no Jews in those units. On the contrary, it seems quite logical to assume, as we have already noted above, that Jews were incorporated into numbered or ethnically mixed hipparchies. By the time of this papyrus (174 BCE), only numbered hipparchies existed. Both Theodoros and Nikanor were members of the first hipparchy and were granted allotments of 80 arouras. This size of the allotment was practically the highest possible one could obtain in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century

402 Scholars generally accept that a reform occurred in the infantry took place, but its rapidity is debated. Daniel and Sekunda place the reform after 170 BCE, see R. W. Daniel, “Two Michigan papyri,” ZPE 24 (1977), pp. 75-88; N. Sekunda, \textit{Hellenistic Infantry Reform in the 160’s BC} (Studies on the History of Ancient and Medieval Art of Warfare 5, Oficyna Naukowa MS 2001). However, Armoni and Fischer-Bovet support the theory of a slow reorganization, which started after the battle of Raphia, and lasted throughout the whole first half of the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, see Armoni, \textit{ZPE} 137 (2001), pp. 237-239; Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 133.


BCE. This fact definitely places our Jewish cavalymen in the upper-class of the military society, and, in a larger sense, of the whole Ptolemaic society. The eponymous commander of their hipparchy was Dositheos, who is, in fact, known from other papyri too. Secondly, it is also clear that both of them were members of the military settlement of Trikonia, where the proportion of Jews among the inhabitants of the village must have been quite high. The Jewish presence in this village is well illustrated by this text too. Not only Theodoros and Nikanor, but all the participants of the contract were Jews. Four witnesses are designated “Jews of the Epigone,” which refers to a special status within the army. Finally, Agathokles’ designation requires some further notes. He was member of Molossos’ detachment and taktomisthos. This term has long been a subject of debate. V. A. Tcherikover adopts Lesquiers’ interpretation, according to which it was an administrative position in the military, probably a paymaster. This opinion is also followed by A. Kasher and J. M. Modrzejewski. Grabbe defines the term as “military rank of some sort” leaving the question open for discussion. Recent research conducted on the Ptolemaic army reveals that the term taktomisthos is most probably an equivalent of the misthophoros, that is, “paid soldier” or “mercenary” as opposed to a cleruch. The term is attested both before and after the military reform, but in connection with Jews only in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE. Thus, it does not imply a social status within the army, but indicates simply that the person in question, in the present case Agathokles, was a soldier serving for pay.

Another text that records a Jewish taktomisthos is P.Kön. III 144. This is a lease of work, in which Simon son of Theodoros and his Jewish partners contracted all the viticultural work from Euarchos son of Heliodoros, who was one of the diadochoi. They did not rent the vineyard but undertook only its cultivation, for which they received wages. It may be assumed that the owner of the vineyard did not have time to tend it or did not live in the area. The vineyard, however, did not belong to Euarchos but to Melankomos designated archisomatophylax and strategos, consequently an official of the Alexandrian court.

\footnotesize{405} Tcherikover raises the possibility that Dositheos was Jewish on the basis of the Jewishness of Theodoros and Nikanor, the two soldiers settled by him, but this is very hypothetical.


\footnotesize{407} For a detailed discussion of this term see Chapter 3.2.2.

\footnotesize{408} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 147.

\footnotesize{409} Kasher (1985), p. 45, n. 69.


\footnotesize{411} Grabbe (2008), p. 195.

\footnotesize{412} Johstono (2012), p. 214, n. 15.

\footnotesize{413} Further on this document with an extensive commentary see J. S. Kloppenborg, The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine (Tübingen 2006), pp. 476-479.
Euarchos, thus, may have been an intermediary agent or the lessee of the vineyard, who subleased the work to other people. These other people were Simon and his partners, whose name are, however, unknown. What we know of them is that they were all taktomisthoi, that is, mercenaries. There is one important detail in this case that must be noted: although we do not know how many partners Simon had, it is clear that they undertook this task besides their military service. What may have been their reason to do so? Since this neglected vineyard required years of work to come into full production, and the Jewish taktomisthoi did not work for wine but for wages, the most plausible explanation is that they were short of money, and were looking for viticultural jobs to supplement their wages received for military service. The only detail that remains unclear is how these soldiers found time to coordinate this work and their military duties.

Finally, there remains one papyrus that must be mentioned: P. Diosk. 1. It is a petition dated to 154 BCE and written by a certain Theon son of Theon, a Cyrenaean soldier against Iason son of Iason, a Jewish fellow combatant. The subject of the complaint is an intrusion: according to Theon, while he was having dinner with Theodotos, Iason broke into his house and abused Theodotos. Theon had to call a subordinate of the phrurarchos to handle the situation. Both Theon and Iason (and probably also Theodotos) were members of the infantry under the command of Hermotimos and Meleagros, which means that they were fellows and served together in the Ptolemaic army. It seems that the relationship between the soldiers was not always excellent.

To sum up, Jews were undoubtedly present in the Ptolemaic army, both among the cleruchs and the mercenary soldiers. They did not have a separate ethnic hipparchy, but were scattered in the numbered or mixed hipparchies. With the reforms taken after the Fourth Syrian War and the Great Egyptian Revolt, important changes were instituted and the army became ethnically more diverse with the recruitment of Egyptian soldiers. Tcherikover’s assumption, according to which a separate Jewish unit was formed in the time of Onias, is doubtful.414 We have already encountered the story of Onias and his Jewish settlement in Leontopolis. As confirmed by the cemetery, it is certainly true that a Jewish community existed at present-day Tell el-Yehudiyyeh. It is also highly possible that the soldiers residing

414 V. A. Tcherikover, RHJE 1 (1947), p. 117. He bases this hypothesis on the testimony of Josephus about Onias and his powerful troops stationed in Leontopolis (CA II 49-56). Kasher (1985), pp. 40-44, went even further claiming that the existence of separate Jewish units can be traced back to before the time of Onias. He refers to the testimony of Hecataeus of Abdera quoted by Josephus (CA I 186-205) and to the Letter of Aristeas to prove his theory, but these texts provide ambiguous evidence.
there were organized as a *politeuma*. However, as of today, no papyrus confirms the fact that they formed a “Jewish troop” as described by Josephus. Onias and Dositheos, and later Onias’ sons, Chelkias and Ananias may indeed have been military commanders of the Jewish soldiers, but we remain uninformed about the position of these soldiers in the Ptolemaic army.

### 3.2.2. Jews of the Epigone

As can be seen in the table above, more than half of the Jewish soldiers attested in the Ptolemaic period papyri are designated as “Jew of the *Epigone.*” This term is present in the sources from the IIIrd and IIrd centuries BCE, and concerning Jews, the earliest document dates from 228-221 BCE (*CPJ I* 20), while the latest one is from 172/171 BCE (*CPJ I* 26). This enigmatic designation has been discussed and debated by numerous scholars over the last decades. Most recently Cs. Láda, W. Clarysse & D. Thompson, P. A. Johnstono and C. Fischer-Bovet studied the question, and they all made important progress on this subject.

It has generally been accepted that the members of the *Epigone* were offsprings of soldiers. One of Láda’s main observations is that the Greek term τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, lit. “of the offspring” or “of the descent” and the Demotic term *ms n Kmy*, lit. “born in Egypt,” were each other’s equivalents. Although the literal meaning of these two terms are different, Láda’s conclusion was reached based on the following: both the Greek τῆς ἐπιγονῆς and the Demotic *ms n Kmy* are always attested after a one-word ethnic designation, they both stand with only male ethnic designations, and they are never associated with other occupational or status titles. Láda also showed that the designation *ms n Kmy* was, in fact, the abbreviation of a longer phrase found in *P.dem.Ryl. 21* (112/111 BCE) following a personal name: *ms n Kmy ἴμι νς ὑρτ.ω νς σρτυς*, lit. “born in Egypt among the children of the *stratiotai.*” The word *srtyς* is the Demotic transliteration of the Greek στρατιώτης, “soldier,” and thus, the whole phrase denotes descendants of foreign soldiers, i.e. Greek and other non-Egyptian soldiers, who were already born in Egypt. Láda further argues in favour of this hypothesis by showing

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415 Further on this see Chapter 6.2.4.
that the Greek term ἐπίγονοι, lit. “offsprings” found in P.Count. 47, a Greek household salt-tax register, refers to the same group of people as the term τῆς ἐπιγονῆς because three individuals of the register are also attested in other documents - where they are designated τῆς ἐπιγονῆς.\textsuperscript{418} It is, thus, clear that ἐπίγονοι and τῆς ἐπιγονῆς both referred to the descendants of military settlers. Since the ἐπίγονοι were somehow connected to the army, as shown by Scholl,\textsuperscript{419} Láda’s final conclusion is the following: “the τῆς ἐπιγονῆς and ms n Kmy expressions signified membership of a particular status group, the members of which were descendants of foreign soldiers, and had some connection with the military… (they) were either active soldiers themselves or potential recruits or reservists for the army.”\textsuperscript{420}

Láda’s conclusion seems to be right and has now been widely accepted. W. Clarysse and D. T. Thompson also accepts Láda’s view in the commentary of P.Count. 47, but they note that the epigonoi themselves were not necessarily military men.\textsuperscript{421} They argue that only the eldest son could inherit his father’s kleros, while the younger sons were either enrolled in the infantry or remained civilians. They further point out that some epigonoi owned allotments of 25 arouras, while others received wages.

The recruitment and the settlement of the epigonoi is indeed a topic that requires further study. P. A. Johstono has recently offered a convincing explanation for how this came about.\textsuperscript{422} He does not agree with the general view that the epigonoi constituted a normal part of the army, served for a wage, and then inherited their father’s land. He points out that there is no evidence of widespread military service by epigonoi, but there is evidence that some epigonoi did military service. He assumes that these epigonoi were wartime conscripts who did not inherit their father’s allotments but were given allotments of their own at the conclusion of their military service. They maintained the designation tes epigoneslepigoni because their status was special and obtained their kleroi in an unusual way, not by inheritance but by wartime military service. That they did not inherit the kleroi of their father is also clear from P.Mich. I 33, in which a father traveled to the Arsinoite nome to see his son’s kleros. Johstono further points out that the settlement of the epigonoi began in 254 BCE at the conclusion of the Second Syrian war (260-253 BCE), when several epigonoi received land allotments in the Arsinoite nome, and they were called twenty-five aroura epigonoi. It is, thus, clear that the designations “members of the Epigone” and “epigonoi” cover a group of

men who were certainly the sons of military settlers, and some of them entered the army receiving either wages or kleroi, while others may have remained civilian.

Jews were part of this process, and the question arises: what do we know about the Jews of the *Epigone*? There are altogether eleven documents that concern Jewish *epigonoi*, but they shed light on their social and legal status, not on their military situation. We have already mentioned that the earliest document recording Jewish *epigonoi* (CPJ I 21) dates from 228-221 BCE and contains the abstract of a loan contract drawn up between two Jews, Mousaios son of Simon and Lazaites son of Iz…is. The abstract itself is very short and fixes only the most important details of the original contract. Both parties were members of the *Epigone*, but we do not know whether or not they had *kleroi*. What we know, however, is that Mousaios must have been a wealthy man if he had the means to lend 108 drachmas to Lazaites. The loan was given at the usual interest rate, that is, 2 drachmas per month, and the keeper of the contract was a certain Dositheos who may or may not have been Jewish.423

Similarly, *CPR* XVIII 7, 8, 9 and 11 are also abstracts of contracts written on a large papyrus roll and kept in the local records office (*γραφεῖον* of Theogonis in the Arsinoite nome. Although they are dated, their exact date of issue is uncertain. B. Kramer, the editor of the texts, supposes that the regnal year 16 refers to the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes, that is to 232/231 BCE,424 but K. Maresch does not agree with him.425 He suggests that the date refers to the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator, namely to 207/206 BCE, based on two facts: first, the extracts were all registered in the Egyptian month of Pharmouthi, and in the year 207/6 BCE, this Egyptian month was closer to the Macedonian months Artemisios and Daisios, when the documents were written, than in the year 232/1 BCE.426 Secondly, the

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423 According to Tcherikover Dositheos was Jewish as well, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 157, n. 21. Moreover, he assumes that all the witnesses, whose names are omitted in the abstract, were Jews based on the general trend that the witnesses were from the same ethnos as the contracting parties. Both claims are possible, but cannot be proven. Jewish soldiers lived in a multicultural environment, and they could ask any member of the *Epigone* to keep or witness their contracts. This long register itself shows well the international milieu of the army since we find several ethnicities among the contracting parties such as Cyrenian of the *Epigone* (*P.Tebt. 815*, Fr. 2 Recto, l. 10), Thracian of the *Epigone* (l. 25), Persian of the *Epigone* (l. 26) or Cretan of the *Epigone* (l. 50) just to quote some examples.
426 The Egyptian and the Macedonian calendar systems were different. While the dates of the Egyptian solar calendar can be precisely converted to their equivalents in the Julian calendar, the Macedonian lunar calendar was always shifting. The date of issue of the contracts is indicated according to the Macedonian calendar (Artemisios and Daisios), while the date of registration according to the Egyptian calendar (Pharmouthi). The month Pharmouthi is equivalent to May/June in the Julian calendar, but the Macedonian months Artemisios and Daisios fell on different months in each year: in 232 BCE on August/September and September/October, while in 207/206 BCE on November/December and December/January. If we date the contracts to the year 232/231 BCE, it means that that they were drawn up in September-November 232 BCE, and they were registered only
prices are given in copper drachmas instead of silver drachmas, and the new copper standard was introduced around 210 BCE. From this date on, all monetary values were defined by this currency. S. von Reden supports Maresch’s down-dating because of the price of the wine indicated in CPR XVIII 7. However, P. A. Johnstono shares Kramer’s view and argues that the overall picture drawn from the register accords better with 232/231 BCE than with 207/6 BCE. He also notes that many eponymous commands mentioned in the register are known from the Petrie wills, which date from 238-225 BCE. If this register was indeed written in 232/231 BCE, it is not simply earlier than CPJ I 21, but the earliest document mentioning Jews of the Epigone. However, I support Maresch’s down-dating of the registers because of the monetary values recorded in the contracts.

These four contracts acquaint us with ten Jewish epigonoi but the interesting fact is that none of the contracts mention military affairs. CPR XVIII 7 and CPR XVIII 11 are both lease contracts: CPR XVIII 7 concerns a vineyard that was leased by a non-Jew to two Jewish epigonoi, while CPR XVIII 11 deals with an orchard, part of which was leased by a Jewish woman to her ex-son-in-law, who, beside the cultivation of his own share, also undertook the cultivation of the remaining part of the orchard for wages. The other two documents concern marriage-related affairs: CPR XVIII 8 is a dowry receipt acknowledging the transfer of the dowry from the bride to her husband, while CPR XVIII 9 is another receipt recording the return of a dowry from the husband to the mother of the ex-wife. These leasing and marital issues will be discussed later in detail. From a military point of view, the main interest of the document lies in the fact that these Jewish epigonoi were apparently settled soldiers who were married, had families, leased vineyards and worked on the fields. All this gives the impression that they were not always on active service.

There are two other documents from the IIIrd century BCE that mention Jews of the Epigone: CPJ I 19 from Krokodilopolis dated to 226 BCE and CPJ I 21 from Apollonias dated to 210 BCE. CPJ I 19 is the official report of a trial before the Greek court called dikasteria. The plaintiff was Dositheos, a Jewish epigonus against Herakleia, a Jewess. Since Dositheos did not appear in the court, neither did he present a written statement, the court dismissed the case. The document has more importance from legal than from military point of view.

eight months later, in May/June 231 BCE. According to Maresch, this time gap is too long, which is why he prefers to date the register to the year 207/206 BCE. If so, it means that the contracts were drawn up in November-January 207/206 BCE, and were registered in May/June 206 BCE.


For marital issues see Chapter 6.3.2. and for leasing matters see Chapter 4.4.
view,\textsuperscript{430} since all we know about Dositheos’ military life is that he was a member of the local community. \textit{CPJ} I 21 is also a legal document because it is a report forwarded by the village scribe to the royal scribe concerning a robbery. Three Jewish \textit{epigoni} from Kerkeosiris raided a fruit garden of a certain Peitholaos, robbed grapes from his estate and maltreated the guard. This text also sheds some light on the military and social background of the Jewish \textit{epigoni}, although it would be interesting to know the motives of the crime.

In the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE we meet Jews of the \textit{Epigone} in five texts: three of them have already been included in the \textit{CPJ} (\textit{CPJ} I 23, 24 and 26), while two others are new: \textit{P.Heid. VIII} 417, \textit{BGU XIV} 2381. The \textit{CPJ} documents as well as \textit{BGU XIV} 2381 are all loan contracts drawn up according to Greek law. These texts follow common Hellenistic pattern, even though the contracting parties were Jews of the \textit{Epigone}, and in certain cases also the witnesses (\textit{CPJ} I 24) or the guarantor of the debtor (\textit{CPJ} I 26). \textit{BGU XIV} 2381 is unfortunately very fragmentary: apart from the dating formula at the beginning of the contract, only the name of one of the parties has been preserved. He was Ptolemaios son of Sabbataios, Jew of the \textit{Epigone}, who concluded a loan contract with a Jewish woman. \textit{P.Heid. VIII} 417, our last document concerning Jewish \textit{epigoni} is also a loan contract, which was written in the form of a double document.\textsuperscript{431} This kind of document was written privately, without direct involvement of the state. The contract records the repayment of a loan given by Arsakes, a Macedonian on active service, to Glaukon son of Andronikos, Jew of the \textit{Epigone}. The amount of the loan was 10,800 copper drachmas, which was, however, not repaid by Glaukon, but by his surety Theodotos son of Ion, who was also a Jewish \textit{epigono}.

To conclude our study about the Jews of the \textit{Epigone}, two important details must be emphasized: first, the amount of the loans (two talents 3000 copper drachmas in \textit{CPJ} I 23, two talents 500 copper drachmas in \textit{CPJ} I 24) show that some Jewish \textit{epigoni} had a good financial background. Even in case of the debtors, it is not certain that they were short of money (at least based on the value of the house that served as security in \textit{CPJ} I 23). It is not unreasonable to assume that some \textit{epigoni} took loans for business purposes. Secondly, the names of the Jewish \textit{epigoni} are strikingly Hellenized. Of the 27 Jewish \textit{epigoni} known to us, only five bear biblical names or patronymics: Ionathas son of Ionathas (\textit{CPR} XVIII 7), Menestratos son of Ionathas (\textit{CPR} XVIII 9 and \textit{CPR} XVIII 11), Ptolemaios son of Sabbataios

\textsuperscript{430} The main interest of the document is that it casts light on the Egyptian legal system by describing the order of the basic principles for the decisions to be taken by the Greek \textit{dikasteries}: the most important was “the royal ordinances,” then “the civic laws,” and finally “the most equitable view,” i.e. the reasoning of the judges. Further on this see the commentary of Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 151-156; Kasher (1985), pp. 48-50.

\textsuperscript{431} Further on the double document, other types of contracts and money-lending among the Jews of Egypt see Chapter 4.3.3.
Ioudas son of Iosephos and Samaelos son of Ioannes (CPJ I 24). All the others have Greek pagan or theophoric names such as Theophilos son of Dositheos (CPJ I 21), Apollonios son of Philippos (CPR XVIII 7), Diagonas son of Diokles (CPR XVIII 8) or Philistion son of Neon (CPR XVIII 9). All this is undoubtedly due to the fact that most of the Jewish epigonoi living in the Fayum were highly Hellenized. The society of the Fayum was very multicultural, and the only thing that the different soldiers had in common was the Greek language and culture. Jews, as other members of the army, were influenced by this culture. Moreover, they also wished to show that they belonged to the ruling class of the Hellenes. This attitude is perfectly reflected in their choice of names, which was definitely more “Greek” than “Jewish,” at least in this part of Egypt.

3.2.3. Jews as “Macedonians” and “Persians of the Epigone”

We have seen that the designation Jew of the Epigone was used until the 170s BCE. What happened after this date? It is not a coincidence that there are no further sources recording this designation because after the reorganisation of the army the use of ethnic designations began to recede, until they disappeared completely. There are, however, two ethnic designations that were used differently and are still present after the 170s BCE: these are “Persian” and “Macedonian.” Scholars label them in general pseudo-ethnic designations, because in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE (or probably even earlier) they did not refer to the ethnic background anymore, but to their status in the army. This is certainly correct, but it has been problematic to identify who these Persians and Macedonians were exactly.

In the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE the designation Macedonian referred most probably to soldiers coming from the Greek world and/or serving in the “hipparchy of the Macedonians.”\textsuperscript{432} As to the Persians, their origin is more obscure than that of the Macedonians. Several scholars suppose that they were of Persian or Iranian origin.\textsuperscript{433} However, Clarysse,\textsuperscript{434} followed by Vandorpe,\textsuperscript{435} suggest that they were Greeks, whose

\textsuperscript{432} It is attested in an unpublished petition dated to 184 BCE: P.Vindob. G40160, with Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 127.


ancestors had already lived in Egypt under Persian occupation. That they were somehow connected to the Greek social class is supported by the fact that in the P.Count tax-lists several “Persians” bore Greek names, and like the “Hellenes,” they were exempt from the obol-tax.\textsuperscript{436} Thus, it is clear that the Persians, or tax-Persians, as Clarysse and Thompson label them, constituted a privileged class, and the main difference between them and the Hellenes may indeed have been only their origin (the Persians being descendants of Greeks, who arrived in Egypt in the Persian era, while the Hellenes being Greeks, who arrived in the Ptolemaic era). To sum up, in their view, the name of the “Persians” refers rather to the military service of their ancestors in the Persian era than to their ethnic background. Fischer-Bovet proceeds cautiously when trying to define who the Persians were, and she concludes that they were the descendants of either Persian or Greek soldiers, who served in Egypt under the Persians.\textsuperscript{437} Even more delicate is the question of the “Persians of the Epigone,” a designation, which is attested a few times already in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE,\textsuperscript{438} and one of them can be found in CPR XVIII 7, where the lessor Ptolemaios son of Asklepiades is designated so. It may be assumed that people designated “Persian of the Epigone” in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE were the descendants of the “Persians” discussed above.

Be that as it may, after the reorganization of the army all of these ethnic designations lost their original sense and became pseudo-ethnics. From about 150 BCE the same person could be designated “Persian,” “Persian of the Epigone” and “Macedonian” alternatively, and suddenly we find several authentic Egyptian names among the “Persians.” Moreover, by this time the designation “*tes Epigones*” was used only with the ethnicon “Persian.” This aspect is also demonstrated by the Pathyris papyri studied most recently by K. Vandorpe.\textsuperscript{439} According to her, followed by Fischer-Bovet,\textsuperscript{440} the key to resolve the question of these pseudo-ethnic designations lies in the reorganisation of the army. We have already discussed this question and noted that after the Great Revolt several Egyptians were enrolled into the Ptolemaic army: they were called *misthophoroi*, that is, professional soldiers serving for wages.\textsuperscript{441} These *misthophoroi* were put in the newly established Upper Egyptian military garrisons. Vandorpe shows that these soldiers were registered in the social class of the Persians, as is clear from the Greek documents, in which the designation “Persian” is often added to the title of

misthroporos. Their daughters were called “Persians”, while their sons “Persians of the Epigone” until they were recruited. Once they became soldiers themselves, their status changed to “Persian,” but this status may have changed again to “Persian of the Epigone” when they were temporary unemployed. Thus, their status alternated depending on whether or not they were on active service.\(^{442}\)

That the case was most probably the same in Middle Egypt is shown by a document from the politeuma archive: P.Polit.Iud. 8 is a petition written by Theodotos son of Theodotos, a Jew residing in the Oxyrhynchite nome, who appealed to the archons of the Jewish politeuma because in year 33 (138/7 BCE) he gave to Plousia and her son Dorotheos, both Jews, a loan of 12 copper talents. What is interesting now for us in this petition is that Dorotheos is designated “Jew,” but in the loan contract he was labeled “Persian of the Epigone.” J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch, the editors of the document, consider this designation a pseudo-ethnic, and interpret it according to the prevailing hypothesis formulated by J. F. Oates as well as by P. W. Pestman, and followed by M. Chauveau.\(^{443}\) They suppose that from the end of the II\(^{nd}\) century BCE this term was no longer connected to a military context, and that it referred to the juridical status of debtors (liable to exceptional execution) like later in the Roman period.\(^{444}\) In this case this document would provide the earliest evidence of this use of the term as also noted by U. Yiftach.\(^{445}\) The two texts based on which this interpretation was formulated is P.Ryl. IV 588 from Krokodilopolis dated to 78 BCE and P.Dion. 30, a contract from the archive of Dionysios son of Kephalas, and dated to 105/104 BCE. In P.Ryl. IV 588, the repaying debtors are designated Μακεδονικοὶ καθὰ συνῆλθὰς τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, which is translated as “Macedonians, but according to

\(^{442}\) As shown by Vandorpe, AfP 54 (2008), p. 96, the career of Horos son of Nechouthes is a good example of how the status of a mercenary soldier may have changed over time: he was misthroporos (soldier serving for pay) in his young years (124-110 BCE), then “Persian of the Epigone” between 108 and 104 BCE, then he became “Persian” in 103-101 BCE (he was most probably recruited for the campaigns of the Judean-Syrian-Egyptian war), after the war, he was again “Persian of the Epigone,” that is temporarily unemployed; in 96-95 BCE he was again recruited for a campaign in Diospolis Mikra and was called “man from Syene” or “misthroporos,” but after this campaign he was again non-active soldier from 93 BCE.


\(^{444}\) The juridical meaning of the designation “Persian of the Epigone” in the Roman period was already discussed by V. A. Tcherikover, see Tcherikver & Fuks (1957), p. 51, n. 10 with reference to earlier bibliography. In the early Roman sources (also in CPJ II 146 and 149) the designation “Persian of the Epigone” occurs very frequently in contracts, where it designates debtors subject to the ἀγώγιμος-clause: this clause deprived the person in question of the traditional right of Egyptians to seek shelter in a temple.

the terminology of their agreement, Persians of the Epigone." In *P.Dion.* 30 too the debtors are labeled Μακεδονικότους ἄνευς ἡγεμονίας, ὧς δὲ [- ca.11 - συγγραφεῖς Πέρσης τῆς ἐπιγονής], which is translated by the editors as “Macédonien, mais comme il a contracté…” Persès tès epigonês." K. Vandorpe, however, convincingly argues that both expressions should be translated as “Macedonian, but at the time of the agreement Persian of the Epigone,” that is, when they draw up the loan contracts, the status of the debtors was “Persian of Epigone,” but by the time of the repayment they were promoted to “Macedonian.” The case of Dorotheos in *P.Polit.Jud.* 8 is very similar. At the time of the conclusion of the loan contract, his status was “Persian of the Epigone.” He was designated so to show his non-active soldier status rather than his debtor status. It is possible that due to his situation of unemployment, he was in short of money and needed to take some loan together with his mother. The only difference compared to the above-discussed texts is that Dorotheos’ actual ethnic designation is “Jew,” and not “Macedonian.” This is an interesting case of ethnic designations because, as we have noted above, in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE legal ethnic designations were used less systematically, and by the I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE they disappeared. As to the Jews, among the documents that can be dated with certainty, the politeuma archive (143-132 BCE) provides the latest examples of legal ethnic designations. Apart from the politeuma papyri, no text dated to after 150 BCE mentions the ethnic designation “Jew.” This corresponds precisely with the general trend and the destiny of other ethnic designations such as “Thracian,” “Cyrenian,” “Cretan” or “Athenian.” The reason of this decline is certainly due to the more and more intensive Hellenization of the entire population. The ethnic designations pointing to the origin of somebody’s ancestor were less and less meaningful. In general, by the middle of the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, the society of Egypt became Greco-Egyptian in a cultural sense. The Egyptian elite entered the society of the Greeks, and this process was speeded up by the reorganization of the army. In the case of the politeuma archive the situation is somewhat different, and in my view, the petitioners emphasized their Jewish ethnic background because they appealed to the Jewish politeuma, and they certainly desired to win the case. To sum up, I support Vandorpe’s view concerning the designation “Persian of the Epigone,” and it seems very likely that in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE this status marker was still connected, although in a modified sense, to the army referring to non-active soldiers.

446 C. H. Roberts and E. G. Turner, *P.Ryl. IV. Documents of the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Manchester 1952), pp. 54-56.
448 Vandorpe, *AP* 54 (2008), p. 106. This hypothesis was also accepted by Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 188.
Moving on to the other pseudo-ethnic designation, the “Macedonian,” we are facing a long-disputed issue. Josephus claims that the Jews were allowed to call themselves “Macedonians” and that they even had a tribe called “Macedonians” in Alexandria. These statements have been commented upon by different scholars who all attempt to explain how the Jews could be called “Macedonians.” In the CPJ there are two documents mentioning “Macedonian” Jews (CPJ II 142, 143), based on which Tcherikover concludes that this designation was applied to a military unit and that people designated so were simply soldiers, even if they lived in Alexandria. The two papyri concern the same people. They are designated “Macedonians,” but were certainly Jews, since one of them drew up his will in the Jewish notary’s office.

That the term “Macedonian” was used in military context is certainly true, but now we have further evidence to clarify the question. It is again the archive of Dionysios son of Kephala that can serve as a good starting point for showing who the Macedonians were. What is certain is that the ethnic designation “Macedonian” should be interpreted in connection with the terms “Persian” and “Persian of the Epigone” because they were apparently used in the same context. Dionysios himself was “Persian of the Epigone” until he was recruited around 110 BCE, when he became “Persian.” Later, he is called again “Persian of the Epigone,” but around 105 BCE his status was “Macedonian.” The alteration of these pseudo-ethnic designations certainly denotes different military status, “Macedonian” being probably the most prestigious one. At the time of the conclusion of P.Rein. I 10 = P.Dion. 22 (111 BCE), which a loan contract, Dionysios is designated Persian of the Epigone, therefore, he was not recruited. What is, however, more important for us is that in the same contract, his creditor was a certain Onias son of Ammonios, who, based on his name, was certainly Jewish. Onias is labeled in the contract “Macedonian from the cleruchs at Kleopatras kome.” There are a few things that must be noted: first, Onias is designated “Macedonian,” thus, he was apparently on active service. Secondly, he is labeled “cleruch,” which means that he was no longer a mercenary soldier serving for pay, but at some point in his life he was given a plot of

450 Josephus BJ II 488: “they [the Ptolemies] also gave them this further privilege, that they should be called Macedonians;” CA II 34-35: “In fact, however, it was presented to them as their residence by Alexander, and they obtained privileges on a par with those of the Macedonians. I do not know what Apion would have said if the Jews had been quartered in the neighbourhood not of the palace, but of the necropolis! Down to the present time their local tribe bore the name of Macedonians.” Josephus’ claim that the Jews could be called “Macedonians” is true, but the way he interprets the term “Macedonian” is incorrect, see also Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 14.

451 Earlier scholars suggest that the Macedonians constituted the high aristocracy of Alexandria and that the Jews had equal rights with them, see the references given by Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 14, n. 39. However, based on the papyri, it has become clear that the title “Macedonian” had nothing to do with the Alexandrian citizenship.
land. It is, however, unknown when this happened exactly, because it seems that there is no connection between the pseudo-ethnics and the mercenary/cleruch status of the soldiers. Thus, he may have become cleruch even when he was still a “Persian,” but it is also possible that first he was promoted to “Macedonian,” and then he received his kleros. Thirdly, the case of Onias shows well the difficulty that we face in the II\textsuperscript{nd} and I\textsuperscript{st} centuries BCE. Soldiers bearing the pseudo-ethnic designations “Persian of the Epigone,” “Persian” and “Macedonian” reveal rarely their real ethnic background, if it was still a factor at all. Although Jews are traditionally believed to have remained quite well-recognizable in society as well as in the sources, the truth is that they could not escape the general trend and, like other ethnic designations, the term Ioudaios gradually disappeared from the sources. This implies that Jews bearing Greek names are not recognizable any more. Only the use of biblical, or non-biblical but exclusively Jewish names like Onias, can give us some clues about the Jewishness of the people.

The only exception, as already noted, is the politeuma archive, in which the parties are often designated “Jew” or “Jewess,” most probably because it may have had legal importance given the fact that the petitions were submitted to the Jewish archons. P.Polit.Iud. 5 provides another example of a “Macedonian” Jew. The petitioner Polyktor son of Polyktor, despite his Greek name, was certainly Jewish, since he petitioned the Jewish politeuma. He is, however, designated “Macedonian serving in the cavalry under Demetrius.” Polyktor was therefore an active soldier serving in the army as a cavalryman. We do not know, however, whether he was a mercenary or a cleruch because the papyrus is very fragmentary and an significant part of the text is missing. What we know is that he married a woman called Sostrate who may or may not been Jewish, and received a dowry of 12 talents as well as a share of a house from his mother-in-law. The subject of his complaint was probably this house, but it remains unknown what happened exactly.

We have seen that both the politeuma archive and the Dionysios archive played an important role in recent researches about the organisation of the Ptolemaic army. Thanks to Vandorpe’s study, the pseudo-ethnic designations used in military context are now better

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\textsuperscript{452} As noted by Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 188, in the same archive we meet a mercenary soldier, Dionysios son of Ptolemaios, who was a “Macedonian” already before he became a cleruch, while Dionysios son of Apollonios was still a “Persian” when he received his kleros.

\textsuperscript{453} It would be logical to assume that there was then some functional difference between the designations “Persian” and “Macedonian:” for instance that soldiers designated “Persian” may have been infantrymen, while the “Macedonians” cavalrymen. This is, however, not very likely. As Fischer-Bovet shows, the “Macedonians” could be either infantrymen or cavalrymen, see fischer-bovet.info (accessed on 05 November 2015). Thus, the difference between the two status-markers remains unclear.

\textsuperscript{454} Further on the association of politeumata with military settlements see Chapter 6.2.3.
understood. Based on the Pathyris archive, she has recognized that the modified use of ethnic designations in Upper Egypt was connected to the reorganization of the army. The importance of the politeuma archive and the Dionysios archive lies in two facts: first, they show us that in Middle Egypt (and probably also in the Fayum) the situation was the same, and the use of pseudo-ethnic designations followed the Upper-Egyptian practice; secondly, they also prove that Jews were part of this process, since the texts of the two archives acquaint us with three Jewish soldiers, who were designated either “Persian of the Epigone” or “Macedonian.” Yet, they were Jews. Thus, Greek-speaking Jewish soldiers were not any different from their non-Jewish fellows, and they adapted to the Ptolemaic military system. This did not imply the loss of their Jewish identity but, as part of the army, they were supposed to follow the rules.
CHAPTER 4

Jews in the Civil Society

Although many Jews were employed in the Ptolemaic army, others found their place in the civilian sphere. The tax-registers reedited by W. Clarysse and D. T. Thompson (P.Count. 2, 15, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 36, 42) are of great importance when attempting to create an overview of the Jews in the Ptolemaic society. These registers list civilians who pay small sums of money corresponding in general to salt tax and obol tax. However, certain social classes were clearly exempt from these taxes. As noted by Clarysse and Thompson, the privileged tax-status demonstrates the best evidence for the priorities of the state. Which were these privileged classes? First of all, all social classes involved with teaching and practicing Greek culture: teachers, athletic coaches, victors in Alexandrian games and actors. These social groups enjoyed full exemption from the salt and obol tax. There were, however, other social groups that were obligated to pay the salt tax, but were exempt from the further obol tax. These groups were the “Hellenes,” the “Persians” and the “Arabs.” The amount of the obol tax, as also indicated by its name, was only one *obolos*. This was a very small sum, but all the more symbolic, since its payment or non-payment symbolized to which social class one belonged. The most important group from our point of view is that of the “Hellenes,” who are, in fact, hard to identify. “Hellenes” is a very general term, and its actual interpretation highly depends on the context, in which it is used. Clarysse and Thompson rightly assume that this group included all the immigrants who arrived in Egypt after the Macedonian conquest and are described in legal documents with an ethnic designation. In light of this, it is not surprising that the Jews were also part of this group. According to the calculations of Clarysse and Thompson, these “Hellenes” or “tax-Hellenes,” as they label them, formed about 16.5 % of the adult civilian population in the Arsinoite nome, but in certain villages, such as

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455 The first editor of the texts was Harrauer (1987), then they were reedited by Clarysse & Thompson (2006).
457 For the Hellenes, the Persians and the Arabs in these registers see Clarysse & Thompson (2006), vol. 2, pp. 138-161. The status of the Persians and the Arabs was similar to that of the Hellenes: they were exempt from the obol tax. They were, however, a smaller and even more mysterious groups. The problematic group of the Persians has already been mentioned, and I accept that they were most probably of Greek origin, but their ancestors may have arrived to Egypt earlier in the Persian period, while those of the Hellenes arrived after the Macedonian conquest. They were very few in number (0.3 % of the civilian population in the Arsinoite nome), and bore mostly Greek names. The group of the Arabs was also very small, but somewhat larger than that of the Persians (1.7 % in the Arsinoite nome). It is hard to identify them because very few of them bore Arabian names, and we find several of them bearing Egyptian names.
Trikomia for instance, the proportion of the Hellenes was much higher (42% in Trikomia). These numbers confirm the high proportion of immigrants in the Arsinoite nome.

_P.Count._ 26 is certainly the longest and probably the most important tax-list in this material since it contains the names of several Jewish, presumably civilian, settlers who came under the heading of “Hellenes.” In this register, people are generally listed with the salt and obol tax, but the “Hellenes,” who are grouped in Maron’s quarter, are listed only with the salt tax. Almost 40% of the population of Trikomia lived in this quarter. Since no legal ethnic designation is attributed to these persons, we are dependent on the names, among which we find some certainly Jewish ones, such as Iosephis (l. 40 and l. 111), Akabias (l. 50), Iosephis (l. 58), Ath[.].ios son of Salymis (l. 115), Iouodeitis his wife (l. 116), Salymis son of Ananis (l. 134), Iosephis son of Trikkaios (l. 150), Akabias (l. 155), Iouodeitis (l. 157), Ananias son of Si[mo]n (ll. 158; 346), Ioanna (l. 161), Ananis (l. 164), Ioanis (l. 165), Annis (l. 167), Ioannas (l. 169), Mariam (l. 171), Annas (l. 184) and Sousanna (l. 195). These people were certainly Jews, and based on kinship, we may also consider the following people Jews: Areto, the wife of Iosephis (l. 40 and l. 112), Alexandros, the son of Ath[.].ios son of Salymis and Iouodeitis (l. 117), Zenodora, the wife of Salymis son of Ananis (l. 135), Alexandros son of Agathon, the husband of Iouodeitis (l. 156), Theudota, the wife of Ananias son of Si[mo]n (ll. 159; 347), Nikanor son of Agathon, the husband of Ioanna (l. 160), Theudota son of Diokles, the husband of Mariam (l. 170) and Phileas son of Io[.], the husband of Sousanna (l. 194). Besides them, there are some others who, based on their Semitic names or their kinship to Semitic-named people, may have been Jews, but this is not certain: [...]souchos son of Sabathaios (l. 48), Pantagathos (l. 118), [S]abateitis his mother (l. 119), Nikanor son of Iason (l. 120), Marion his wife (l. 121), Alkaios son of Salymis (l. 122), Simon son of Simon (l. 142), Irene his wife (l. 143), Theomnestos his brother (l. 144), Timandra daughter


459 What we mean by “kinship” must be clarified: not only the filial association is considered kinship, but also the marital one. As noted by Ilan (2008, p. 30), both associations are strong enough to denote ethnic and religious background. I must note, however, that mixed marriages were not rare in Ptolemaic Egypt, and there is evidence for marriage not only between Jews and Greeks, but also between Jews and Egyptians, see Chapter 1.2.1.7. Thus, there are two difficulties concerning the Greek-named spouses of this document: first, we do not know whether they were originally Greeks or Greek-named Jews; secondly, if they were originally Greeks, it is also impossible to know whether they joined the Jewish community of their spouses or not. It is generally assumed that they did, but it is not totally unthinkable that husband and wife mutually influenced each other and lived in a culturally mixed milieu.

460 On the Jewishness of the name Sabathaios and its derivatives see above Chapter 2.3.2.

461 Sabateitis was the female form of Sabathaios and as such, also raises problems, see Ilan (2008), pp. 186-191.

462 Marion was a common Semitic name, see Ilan (2008), pp. 684-685.

463 Salymis, the Greek transliteration of שלום (Shalum) was also used by other Semites, see Ilan (2008), pp. 160-161.

464 On the name Simon in detail see above Chapter 2.1.1.1.
of Simon (l. 148), Artemidoros son of Megakles (l. 174), Maron[is] his wife (l. 175)\textsuperscript{465} and Iadoulis (l. 185).\textsuperscript{466}

From a financial point of view, all these Jews belonged to the “Hellenes” and were freed from the obol tax. This was a prestigious status in society, which certainly brought benefits to its holders. We may assume that many officials of Ptolemaic administration belonged to this social class since they received Greek education. However, Jews were not only present in the administration, but in several other classes of the Ptolemaic society as well. In the following part, we will discuss different civil occupations that are attested in connection with Jews.

4.1. Civil police

One of the most important civil occupations was certainly that of the policeman. Policemen were called \textit{phylakitai} and their local chief was the \textit{archiphylakites}. They were engaged in several activities in the realm of law enforcement at village- and town-level: they investigated crimes, visited crime scenes, interrogated witnesses and suspects, arrested criminals, transferred prisoners to a trial or to jail, received petitions from the population, and prepared reports.\textsuperscript{467} These were their most important tasks, which were very similar to those of the modern policemen. However, as J. Bauschatz has convincingly shown, their competence was not limited to law enforcement because they had other kind of tasks as well, for example security guarding. \textit{Phylakitai} guarded for instance crops or grain shipments on boats. Although they were the lowest-ranking officials in the police, they were sometimes given great responsibilities. They were normally the addressees of official circular letters sent by upper level government officials. They were also the main addressees of petitions written by the civilians, thus, they may have had some organizational responsibility.

The status of the policemen, especially that of the lowest-ranking \textit{phylakitai}, was inferior to the status of the soldiers. This is clearly demonstrated by the size of the land allotments they received for their services. As noted by Kasher, ordinary policemen were

\textsuperscript{465} Ilan interpreted Maron(is) as a derivative form of Marion, for which see Ilan (2008), pp. 684-685.

\textsuperscript{466} Iadoulis may have been either the Greek transliteration of יידלה (Yidleh), and thus a Jewish name or a Greek name containing the word doulos with Ia being a theophoric component, see Ilan (2008), p. 309.

\textsuperscript{467} Further on the basic tasks of the \textit{phylakitai} see J. Bauschatz, \textit{Law and Enforcement in Ptolemaic Egypt} (Cambridge 2013), pp. 54-59.
granted lands of 10 arouras.\textsuperscript{468} Higher-ranking police-officers may have been allotted 25 or 30 arouras similarly to the infantrymen. Another possibility was that they were remunerated by wages. Papyri record this form of remuneration, and the wage could be alternatively money, wine or grain.\textsuperscript{469} Besides, it must be mentioned that there was a tax called \textit{phylakitikon}, that is, guard-tax, which was paid either in kind or in money. It was levied on anything (including agricultural products, animals or institutions) that required protection. The income from this tax was most probably used to pay the wages of the \textit{phylakitai}.

The positions of the police could be filled by various ethnic groups. Tcherikover assumes that mainly foreigners served in the police because the Ptolemies did not trust the native Egyptians and tried to keep them out of the army and the police.\textsuperscript{470} This is, however, not the case. As we saw, Egyptians were enrolled into the army from the end of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, and we can similarly find them among the \textit{phylakitai}.\textsuperscript{471} Besides the Greeks and the Egyptians, other ethnic minorities could also serve in the police.\textsuperscript{472} It is, thus, not surprising that we find some Jews among the policemen. \textit{CPJ} I 25, which is a loan contract from the Arsinoite nome dated to 173 BCE, records a Jewish policeman. The contract was drawn up between two military settlers and was witnessed among others by a Jew, whose names is unfortunately broken off, but his title was \textit{phylakites}.

\textit{P.Count.} 31 is a tax-collection register from the Arsinoite nome, in which taxpayers are listed with payments for salt and obol tax similarly to the other tax-registers from Vienna dated to the period 254-231 BCE (\textit{P.Count.} 2, 15, 26, 27, 29, 31, 34, 36, 42). In this fragmentary list, we find mainly Egyptian names, but one of the taxpayers was called Pasis son of Sabathaios, and he is designated \textit{phylakites}. Althought Pasis is clearly an Egyptian name and Sabathaios is problematic, it is probably about a Jewish policeman.\textsuperscript{473} In favour of his Jewishness we may argue that his tax due was 3.5 obolos, that is, the normal rate of the salt tax without obol tax. This means that like the other people listed, he was a “\textit{Hellene},” not an Egyptian from a fiscal point of view.

\textsuperscript{468} Kasher (1985), p. 56.
\textsuperscript{469} For the references see Bauschatz (2013), pp. 63-64.
\textsuperscript{470} Tcherikover (1947), p. 118; Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 17.
\textsuperscript{471} Policemen with Egyptian names are attested in several papyri: \textit{BGU} VI 1253, \textit{BGU} XIV 2437, \textit{P.Stras.} VII 662 with Bauschatz (2013), p. 66, n. 39.
\textsuperscript{472} The high number of Arabs in the Ptolemaic police has already been noted by Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 17, n. 47. They recognized that Arabic policemen were so frequent that the term \textit{吖pα} was used sometimes to denote a policeman. See also Clarysse & Thompson (2006), vol. 2, pp. 159-161, 175-176 and Bauschatz (2013), pp. 156-157 with the relevant bibliography. Further on the Arabs see J. Retsò, \textit{The Arabs in Antiquity. Their History from the Assyrians to the Umayyads} (London / New York 2003).
\textsuperscript{473} Further on the Egyptian name Pasis and its use by Jews see Chapter 2.3.1, and for Sabathaios see Chapter 2.3.2.
Another interesting but uncertain example of Jews in the police is given by an inscription: *CIJ* II 1443 = *JIGRE* 27. The inscription is from the Fayum, more precisely from Athribis, and it records the dedication of a synagogue by the Jews of Athribis and Ptolemy son of Epikydes who is designated *epistates phylakiton* (chief of police). That the synagogue was dedicated by the Jews is clear, but the Jewishness of Ptolemy raises some questions since he is not explicitly stated to be so. We have already noted that Tcherikover and Kasher, followed by Horbury and Noy, the re-editors of the text, consider him Jewish, while Bohak and Ilan are not convinced.\(^{474}\) If, however, Ptolemaios was a Jewish chief of police, the inscription confirms that Jews served not only as common *phylaitai*, but also as high-level police officers. The *epistates phylakiton* was a primarily a judicial and administrative position and in the hierarchy, he stood above both the *phylaitai* and *archiphylaitai*.\(^{475}\) He was the nome-level chief of the police, and it seems that he was subordinate to the nome-level civil chief, the *strategos*.\(^{476}\)

Now, we turn to other officials of civil life: the rank *epistates* should be differentiated from the *epistates phylakiton*. The term *epistates* literally means “man in charge,” which had several meanings. Indeed, this title could allude to both civil and military officers. In *CPJ* I 27 we meet the title *epistates* in military context. It is the receipt of a payment made by a certain Damon, who was a soldier. He bought a house at an auction and among those who arranged it, some officials are mentioned, both civil and military. Besides the *phrourarchos* and the *archiphylakites*, the *epistates* of a hipparchy is also mentioned, and he bore the name Iasibis, which seems to confirm his Jewishness. His title, “the *epistates* of a hipparchy” implies more a military than a civil rank. Yet, it is highly possible that he had civil duties as well.\(^{477}\)

In a civil sense, the *epistates* was the chief official at town- and village-level.\(^{478}\) We meet a Jewish *epistates* in *O. Lyon inv. 807 + O.Ashm.Shelt. 42*, a letter written by a member of the military administration.\(^{479}\) The addressee is Abietes designated “*epistates* of Peri-

\(^{474}\) See above Chapter 1.2.1.2.

\(^{475}\) Further on the *epistates phylakiton* see Bauschatz (2013), pp. 79-90.

\(^{476}\) According to Kasher (1985), p. 57, there is a third document that records a Jewish *archiphylakites*: this is *P.Ent. 82*, a petition written by a woman from Trikomia to the *strategos*. An employee of the local bath-house poured boiling water on her and caused her serious burn injuries. That is why she requested the *strategos* to order Simon the *epistates* and the *archiphylakites* to investigate the case. This papyrus is not included in *CPJ*, but Kasher considers Simon a Jewish police officer. This is, however, far from certain and there is no reason to label this document a Jewish text.

\(^{477}\) I see, however, no reason to go as far as Kasher does (1985), p. 48, who assumes that Iasibis was connected with a Jewish unit. Nothing in the text supports such a hypothesis.

\(^{478}\) Further on the tasks of the *epistates* see Bauschatz (2013), pp. 101-111.

\(^{479}\) The sender of the letter, PN son of Straton, designates himself τὸν ἐξω τάξεως, which means literally “outside the ranks.” The precise nature of this title is still a matter of debate: Van’t Dack supposes that some of those with this title were active soldiers, see E. Van’t Dack, ““Exo taxeō” et “semeia” dans des papyrus
Thebes.” The text is very fragmentary, and has been pieced together just a few years ago. The sender was a member of the army and he reported a case involving somebody from the unit under the command of Ptolemaios son of Pausanias, the strategos. Therefore, the context is military, but the precise content of the letter remains a mystery. We may assume that it was a sort of petition on the basis of the formula σοι φαίνηται (“if it seems right”), which was a term usually applied in the Ptolemaic period hypomnema (memorandum). More important is that Abietes, the epistates of Peri-Thebes, to whom the report was written, was presumably Jewish. What kind of position his title may imply? When the papyri make reference to a geographical domain for the post of epistates, it is the name of the village that is mentioned most frequently, but not always. There are other instances, in which epistatai of merides, regions or other toparchies are recorded. The status of Peri-Thebes has been debated: it is generally assumed that it was a nome in itself, but M. Abd el-Ghani has recently challenged this theory and suggested that Peri-Thebes was a toparchy throughout the Ptolemaic period, and as such part of the Pathyrite nome. Be that as it may, in the case of O. Lyon inv. 807 + O.Ashm.Shelt. 42, the position of the epistates seems to imply a civil position rather than a military one. Epistatai, as civil chiefs of villages, towns or other administrative territories such as Peri-Thebes, had different duties such as resolving legal cases, bookkeeping and administrative duties. They served as the main connection between the officials of their territory and the nome strategos. Besides, they also had some duties in the realm of policing. They supervised the phylakitai and even the archiphylakitai of the region, and sometimes they took over their duties. They visited crime scenes, led investigations, questioned witnesses and suspects, and received petitions too. This text also proves this. Although the two ostraca are very fragmentary, we can accept Gorre’s hypothesis according to which it was a petition. We may only wonder why it was addressed to the epistates instead of a lower-ranking phylakites. Unfortunately, the text is too fragmentary to answer this question. At any rate, it is clear that Abietes was an upper-level official in the Ptolemaic administration, which indicates well that Jews sometimes achieved prestigious high positions.

démotiques,” in Van’t Dack (1988), pp. 65-84. According to Sekunda, this term was the equivalent of the Latin principales, see Sekunda (2001), p. 42. Fischer-Bovet, however, does not find this equivalence very convincing, see Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 146. What seems to be certain is that they were non-active soldiers, who did not go into combat and were most probably part of the military administration.


There is another rank that we see in both civil and military context: the strategos (general). In other Hellenistic armies, the military strategoi were commanders of four chiliarches (4000 infantrymen).\textsuperscript{483} However, we cannot be certain that in Egypt they had the same tasks. It is generally assumed that military strategoi in Ptolemaic Egypt were the chief military commanders at nome level. We are, however, better informed about another type of strategos, who is generally called “nome-strategos” by papyrologists. He was the top officer of the nome in a civil sense and represented the highest power after the king. He was in contact with the civil epistatai and other civil officials. It is now believed by scholars that the military and the civil strategoi were, in fact, the same officials.\textsuperscript{484} According to this view the military strategoi were originally responsible for the cleruchs but their function gradually extended in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE and they finally took over some civil functions too.\textsuperscript{485} Thus, the border between their two roles is quite ambiguous and, in certain cases, they had both civil and military functions. If the term strategos is followed by the name of an eponymous officer or an aulic title,\textsuperscript{486} the context is certainly military, while the name of a nome following the title strategos denotes civil functions.\textsuperscript{487} However, in several cases we find only the title strategos, and thus, the only thing we have at our disposal is the context of the papyrus.

Let us begin with Josephus’ testimony. We have mentioned above that according to Josephus Ptolemy VI Philometor and Cleopatra II appointed Onias and Doitheos as commanders of the whole Ptolemaic army.\textsuperscript{488} He designates them strategoi, and he certainly uses this title in its military sense. Although the claim that they were strategoi cannot be supported by documentary sources, they may have indeed become influential military officials. Another interesting document is CPJ I 132, a letter written by the dioiketes Herodes to Onias in 164 BCE. In the reedition of the text, U. Wilcken suggests that Onias may have been the strategos of the Heliopolite nome.\textsuperscript{489} Tcherikover goes even further and claims that the addressee of the letter was not simply a strategos, but he was very likely identical with

\textsuperscript{483} Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 156.
\textsuperscript{484} See especially H. Bengtson, Die Strategie in der hellenistischen Zeit: ein Beitrag zum antiken Staatsrecht (Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte 36, München 1952) and R. S. Bagnall, “Some Notes on P.Hibeh 198,” BASP 6 (1969), pp. 73-118.
\textsuperscript{485} Before the Macedonian conquest, the nome-level civil chief official was the nomarch. We may assume that Alexander the Great did not change the administrative system, but his successors certainly wanted to centralize power in the hands of the Greek military strategoi.
\textsuperscript{486} Further on the aulic titles and their correlation with the military functions see L. Mooren, The Aulic Titulature in Ptolemaic Egypt: Introduction and Prosopography (Brussels 1975).
\textsuperscript{487} Fischer-Bovet (2014), p. 156.
\textsuperscript{488} See Chapter 1.1.1.
\textsuperscript{489} U. Wilcken, Urkunden der Ptolemäerzeit I (Berlin / Lepzig 1927), pp. 487-488.
Onias, the high priest and founder of the Jewish temple in Leontopolis. This theory cannot be proven, but if so, Onias’ high administrative position, as deduced from the letter, would fit his high military rank.

Now, let us study other papyri that provide clearer examples of Jewish strategoi. In SB XIV 11269, we meet a strategos called Chelkias, who was Jewish based on his name. The text is unfortunately very fragmentary and the only thing we know is that it concerns a house located in the quarter of a hellenion (Greek sanctuary). Something may have happened with/in the house, which is why the sender, Tekosis, wrote to the strategos. The details of the case are unclear, but it seems that we are dealing with a legal appeal. Thus, Chelkias, as a nome-strategos, must have been entitled to resolve judicial cases. Who was this Chelkias exactly? More than one version of identification could be suggested. JIGRE 129, the so-called “Chelkias stone,” an honorific decree, refers to a high-positioned Chelkias, who (or whose son) was strategos. It is a pity that both the provenance and the date of the inscription are uncertain, not allowing any certain connection with Chelkias of our papyrus. Another identification is suggested by T. Ilan, who assumes that Chelkias of our papyrus may have been identical with the famous Chelkias, son of Onias IV, who is described by Josephus as the general (ἡγεμόν) of Cleopatra III. We have already encountered Josephus’ report, according to which the sons of Onias IV, Chelkias and Ananias, were appointed high officers of Cleopatra III’s army for their loyalty. According to Josephus, their role was extremely important in the Judean-Syrian-Egyptian conflict of 103-101 BCE, in which Chelkias is said to have been killed. Unfortunately, none of the above-mentioned identifications can be confirmed; thus, we must be content with the knowledge of the fact that some Jews indeed obtained high-ranking positions both in the Ptolemaic administration as did Chelkias of SB XIV 11269 and in the Ptolemaic army as did Chelkias, son of Onias IV.

490 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 245-246. See also Kasher (1985), pp. 60-61, who inclines toward accepting Tcherikover’s arguments, but hesitates whether Wilcken did or did not read the name correctly. Modrzejewski (1995), p. 124 accepts the identification.
492 The inscription is fragmentary, and the name is given in the genitive: […] Χελκίου στ[ - - ]. Thus, it is not clear whether Chelkias or his son was the strategos. Horbury and Noy assume that the son of Chelkias was the strategos rather than Chelkias himself, see Horbury & Noy (1992), pp. 219-220.
4.2. Officials in the administration

Many Jews are attested in the sources as state officials. As also noted by Tcherikover, the papyri provide a diverse picture of the Jewish officials in the service of the king. How many Jews obtained high administrative positions is a subject of debate, but the papyri undoubtedly acquaint us with some high-ranking Jews. Onias and his sons, Chelkias and Ananias, all filled important positions in the army, just as the above-mentioned Chelkias, who held the civil office of strategos did. Now, I will study another Jew most probably the most famous of them all: Dositeos son of Drimylos.

Dositeos son of Drimylos is one of the few Jews whose existence is not only proven by literary sources, but also by documentary evidence. The historical value of the Third Book of Maccabees was denied during a long time. This book begins with the story of a conspiracy against Ptolemy IV Philopator on the eve of the battle of Raphia in 217 BCE, which was foiled by Dositeos son of Drimylos. In the text he is described as “a Judean by race who later changed his customs and became estranged from his ancestral beliefs.” Thus, at some point in his life he converted and had a prestigious career at the Ptolemaic court. Since the publication of the Greek papyri collected under the number CPJ I 127, we know that Dositeos did indeed exist and was an influential man at the court of Ptolemy III and Ptolemy IV. CPJ I 127d and 127e clearly record his full name as Dositeos son of Drimylos. As noted by A. Fuks, the name Drimylos was so rare in Ptolemaic Egypt that there can be no doubt that the papyri mention the same Dositeos son of Drimylos as the Third Book of Maccabees. This is certainly right, and the historicity of Dositeos son of Drimylos, can be accepted. Even more interesting is the fact that in both CPJ I 127d and 127e he is recorded as the eponymous priest of Alexander the Great and the deified Ptolemies. This is information that we glean only from the papyri. The eponymous priesthood was the most prestigious one in Ptolemaic

495 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 17.
496 According to Kasher (1985), pp. 58-59, several Jews were directly connected to the royal court. He even notes that they may have been ranked as “the king’s friends,” or “the men powerful at court” mentioned by Josephus (AJ XII 215). This is indeed possible, but both the Letter of Aristeas and Josephus’ accounts should be treated carefully.
498 At the beginning of the book we read the followings: “A certain Theodotos, intent on carrying out the plot, took along the best of the Ptolemaic soldiers previously assigned to him and crossed over to Ptolemy’s tent by night in order to kill him single-handed and in this way put an end to the war.” For the English translation see the NETS translation: Pietersma & Wright (2007), which is also accessible online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/ (accessed on 26 November 2015).
Egypt. This office was founded by the Ptolemies, and thus, it is not surprising that no Egyptian name can be found among the priests and priestesses holding it. Dositheos, being a descendant of Jewish immigrants, was thus entitled to be eponymous priest; moreover, the fact that he renounced his original religion certainly helped to elevate him to the post. This might have been either a prerequisite or a consequence of filling this position. In fact, we do not know when and why he converted to paganism. It is possible that he was simply a Hellenized Jew, but in the eyes of the author of the Third Book of Maccabees, he was a renegade.

The other three documents, CPJ I 127a, 127b and 127c, also require a short discussion. A. Fuks was convinced that all of them refer to Dosithios son of Drimylos, but in fact, none of them record his full name with patronymic. All of them attest a certain Dosithios who may or may not have been our Dosithios son of Drimylos. CPJ I 127a is a letter written to the famous Zenon and dated to 240 BCE. A certain Hermokrates was in prison for some reason, but the royal court must have decided in his favour. He was expected to be released after the documents acquitting him of all charges had been submitted to the king by Dosithios, the hypomnematographos, lit. memorandum-writer. The hypomnematographos was one of the two secretaries of the king and was responsible for the royal correspondence. In the long chain of officials surrounding the king he was the last step before any kind of document reached the ruler for approval. Based on this, V. A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks, followed by A. Kasher and J. M. Modrzejewski, suppose that Dosithios could not be anybody else but Dosithios son of Drimylos. In their view, Dosithios appears in the same role in CPJ I 127b, which is a plaint about an inheritance issue. A certain Diodoros claims to have inherited from his deceased relative Diogenes, but a woman usurped a part of this inheritance. Diodoros did what he had to do: he wrote the complaint and went to Alexandria to obtain a decree in order to get back his inheritance. In Alexandria, Dosithios issued the decree to Diodoros, and J. M. Modrzejewski claims that “there can be no doubt that we are dealing here with the all-powerful royal secretary, the hypomnematographos Dosithios son of Drimylos.” Finally, CPJ I 127c dated to 224 BCE records another Dosithios who is travelling to the Fayum with the king. It is true that all of these persons named Dosithios apparently held high offices, but the name Dosithios was so popular in Egypt that, in my view, it cannot be taken an indicator of personal identification.

We must also mention H. Hauben according to whom P.Rylands IV 576 also attests Dositheos son of Drimylos. This papyrus dates from the last third of the IIIrd century BCE and mentions a wealthy shipowner named Dositheos. This Dositheos owned among others a small boat that was presumably involved in the state grain transport system. Hauben assumes that Dositheos moved in royal circles and he found just one Dositheos who did so in the period, when the papyrus was drawn up: Dositheos son of Drimylos. This identification, like the others already discussed above, is not improbable, but lacks any real basis.

More important is the fact that in our corpus there are three new papyri that certainly record Dositheos son of Drimylos: SB XX 14107, P.Berl.Dem. 3096 and SB XVIII 14013. The existence of P.Berl.Dem. 3096 is mentioned in CPJ, but the text itself is not included in the corpus. This document is an agreement for the sale of 1/3 share of a house and other lands, written by an Egyptian women, Tanefer to her daughter, Tasheritem. Its form follows perfectly the standard formula of Demotic sale contracts used during the Ptolemaic period. We are, however, more interested in the opening formula of the document, because Dositheos son of Drimylos is recorded again as eponymous priest. This opening formula is very similar to those found in Greek documents: it begins with the regnal year and the name of the king, then continues with the name of the eponymous priest, in the present case, Dositheos son of Drimylos. It should be noted that the Demotic transcription of Greek names is not an easy task. Many priests are known only from Demotic texts, thus their Greek names have to be reconstructed from Demotic. In the case of Dositheos son of Drimylos, we are in a lucky situation, because he is also known from Greek papyri, which helped decipher his name in Demotic.

In contrast to this Demotic contract, the other two Greek documents, SB XX 14107 and SB XVIII 14013 were published only in the 1980s and 90s. SB XX 14107 is a Greek contract drawn up between Aristomachos son of Aristodemos and Straton concerning a house. The opening formula including the name of Dositheos son of Drimylos as eponymous priest is a restoration, but the name of the kanephoros has been preserved, and thus, the restoration of the rest could be done quite safely. The other document, SB XVIII 14013, is also a Greek contract drawn up between Portis son of Petenouris, his daughter Tapiomis and Tasis, all of them Arabs. We meet Dositheos son of Drimylos again as eponymous priest in the opening

formula. This text is also quite fragmentary, but based on the date, which has survived, the restoration was easily made. All in all, these papyri do not provide any new information about the life or career of Dositheos son of Drimylos, but they confirm the fact that he was the eponymous priest of Alexander and the deified Ptolemies in year 25 of Ptolemy III Euergetes, that is, from September 223 to August 222 BCE. Among the five documents mentioning him SB XX 14107 is the earliest one (17 November 223 BCE), then CPJ I 127e (January-February 222 BCE), CPJ I 127d (22 February 222 BCE), P.Berl.Dem. 3096 (April-May 222 BCE), and finally SB XVIII 14013, which is dated to 5 June 222 BCE. In fact, all the official documents written in year 25 of Ptolemy III Euergetes should contain his name, therefore we may expect that he will show up in the future in newly published papyri.

Turning to lower-ranking officials, such as the scribes, CPJ I 137, for instance, acquaints us with a secretary called Onias who was certainly Jewish based on his name. The document is a prostagma issued on behalf of Ptolemy XIII and Cleopatra VII concerning the buying and exporting wheat. In the subscription, Horos the topogrammateus claims that the edict was published by Onias the scribe.507 This case shows well that in the chora, Jews and Egyptians often worked together and sometimes the Egyptians were in higher-ranking positions than the “Hellene” immigrants.

The Aramaic papyri from Edfu also reveal some Jewish scribes, although their function may have been different. The case of TAD D8.13 and O.Dem.Wien 284 seems to be clear. TAD D8.13 is a salt tax receipt written in Aramaic to Shimeon and his wife, while O.Dem.Wien 284 is the famous bilingual ostracon on which two salt tax receipts were inscribed perpendicular to each other. These receipts were issued to Taese, the daughter of Shabbethai in Aramaic, and to Tapauoueris, her mother in Demotic. TAD D8.13 and the Aramaic part of O.Dem.Wien 284 were both written by Joseph the scribe. He was obviously a Jewish scribe issuing tax receipts to Jewish families. Since this post was that of an official, he was certainly in the service of the state like thousands of other scribes.

However, in two other documents the function of the scribes is far less clear. TAD D8.6 mentions Haniah the scribe, while TAD D8.8 records the term “the scribes” without naming any of them. Both documents were drawn up in Aramaic in the Jewish community of Edfu. We have already mentioned this appearance of Jewish judges, priests and scribes in this community.508 Judging by the similar character of the Jewish communities in Edfu and in

507 Tcherikover (1959), p. 341 assumes with reason, that the publication of the document was ordered by Horos, the topogrammateus, and that Onias, who carried out the order, was his assistant.
508 See Chapter 3.1.
Elephantine, there are two possibilities for explaining this role: the Jewish scribes were either in the service of the community as state officials, or in the service of a religious institution such as a synagogue, although the existence of such an institution is not yet proven.

The next category to discuss is that of the collectors of chaff. Chaff was an important crop in Egypt: it was used for different purposes such as baking bricks or heating.\(^{509}\) It was delivered to the chaff-stores (ἀχυροθήκαι) where the state officials issued receipts to chaff-payers. CPJ I 97-103 are all receipts for the delivery of chaff, and we may add one text to this group of ostraca: *O.Heid.* 18, which is a newly published chaff receipt from Thebes. Of these texts CPJ I 97, 98, 99 and 103 have not been accepted as documents referring to Jews because none of the names on them, which were considered Jewish (Sambathaios, Japheas, Soulis and Simon), can be safely attributed to Jews. However, CPJ I 100, 101 and 102 certainly record a Jew as chaff collector: all of these receipts were issued by Iosepos whose Jewishness cannot be questioned. CPJ I 100 was issued to Psenamounis son of Horos, presumably an Egyptian chaff-payer, CPJ I 101 was drawn up to Simon son of Abietos who was Jewish, while CPJ I 103 was given to Hermon son of Perienes, a Greek or Hellenized Egyptian chaff-payer. Moreover, *O.Heid.* 18 can also be attributed to Iosepos: although the letters of the proper name are hard to read, based on the handwriting the editors of the ostracon were able to recognize that the signature was by the same hand, that of Iosepos. Also, the date and the provenance match those of CPJ I 100, 101 and 102. Thus, we know at least one Jewish chaff collector whose activity can be followed at least from 155 to 150 BCE.

4.3. Jews in the banking life

We have definitely more information about the Jewish tax collectors and tax farmers. Section V of CPJ I contains only ostraca from Upper Egypt (mainly from Thebes and Edfu) and most of them are tax-receipts issued by either royal banks or tax farmers. The identification of Jews in tax-receipts is far from easy since the taxpayers, the tax collectors and the tax farmers are never identified by an ethnic designation. Thus, all that we have at our disposal are the names, which, as we know, do not always give clear-cut information about

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\(^{509}\) The use of chaff and straw dates back to Pharaonic times. Chaff was mostly used for making bricks: this was the less valuable part of the wheat plant, but it was good enough for mixing with mud, and used as temper. The making of sun-dried bricks was a very old practice in Egypt, and was widely used in domestic, military and even religious architecture, see B. Kemp, “Soil (including mud-brick architecture),” in P. T. Nicholson & I. Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* (Cambridge 2000), p. 79.
the ethnic background of the people. The editors of the CPJ were also aware of this difficulty and, in this case, they were apparently less rigid with doubtful names. Many of them such as Dositheos, Simon and so on, they accepted as Jewish names. However, I see no grounds to be certain about their Jewishness. Therefore, out of the 76 tax-receipts included in Section V of CPJ I, I have accepted 34 receipts as sources referring to Jews. By adding the receipts included in the present corpus, all together 45 tax-receipts inform us about Jews who were either taxpayers or tax collectors or tax farmers. To be able to evaluate the role of the Jews in the banking life of Ptolemaic Egypt, a short study of the banking system is necessary.

4.3.1. Banking system in Ptolemaic Egypt

Banks like coins, were introduced into Egypt by the Greeks. Although weighed metal filled certain monetary functions already in pharaonic Egypt, the use of minted coins having a nominal value can be linked to the Greeks. The earliest coins found in Egypt were mainly imitations of Greek coins, especially Athenian tetradrachmas, dated to the VI century BCE. It is not surprising that the appearance of the first banks in Egypt is linked to Greek traders, who began their activities as private bankers. We are not well informed about these early private bankers, but based on a well-preserved account of transactions, it seems that their name was simply τράπεζα and that they fulfilled most of the basic banking functions: they certified currency, made deposits and gave loans.

These early private banks, however, did not exist over a long period of time, because Ptolemy II Philadelphos intervened. One of the most important papyri that has survived from

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510 See the list of doubtful texts compiled in Chapter 1.1.3. and Chapter 1.2.3.
511 In the V century BCE the Jewish military colony at Elephantine used for instance weighed silver as means of payment with different units: hallur, zuz, shekel and karsh. These were not minted coins. They were equated in weight with the Greek coins: two shekels were equivalent to one Athenian tetradrachma, see Porten (1968), pp. 62-70.
512 The first Greek coins used in Egypt were imported, but later they were minted locally. According to Herodotos IV 166, coins were minted in Egypt already in the reign of Dareios I, but this cannot be supported by excavated coins. What is certain is that Tachos and Nectanebo, two pharaohs of the XXX dynasty (380-342 BCE), and later Artaxerxes III and his satraps during the Second Persian era (342-332 BCE) already issued Athenian tetradrachmas in Egypt, because several copies survived. These coins were most probably used for paying Greek mercenaries or for commercial affairs (like the buying of Egyptian products such as grain, papyrus or linen for instance). Further on this see R. Bogaert, Trapezi aegyptiaca. Recueil de recherches sur la banque en Égypte gréco-romaine (Florence 1994), p. 33; and von Reden (2007), p. 32.
513 The earliest papyrus mentioning a banker is P.Hib. I 110 from 270 BCE. This is an account list of a private person including revenues and expenses related to grain transportation and among the expenses we can also find the following payment: τραπεζίτη δοκιμαστικό[υ] . It is clear that the owner of this account paid a certain sum to a banker for a service. The word δοκιμαστικόν is attested only in Egypt, but it obviously derives from the word δοκιμαστής (examiner, tester), which allows us to assume that one of the main functions of these early private banks was certification of currency, see Bogaert (1994), p. 34.
514 P.Tebt. III.2 890.
his reign is the so-called *Revenue Laws Papyrus* (*P.Rev.*), which dates from 259 BCE.\(^{515}\) Based on this text we get to know that Ptolemy II brought the whole banking sector under state control (cols.73-78). Money exchange became a state monopoly, executed by very few banks that were all farmed out. From that time on, currency certification and money exchange were to be performed only by those banks who bought the right to carry out this function. Those who did not get this concession, had to shut down. Thus, private banks as such either ceased to exist or became state banks. These monopoly banks are designated τράπεζα like the former private banks, but their function was quite different.

Why was it necessary to exchange money? There are two main reasons: on the one hand, Ptolemy I Soter developed a closed currency system in Egypt, which means that in comparison to the standard Athenian tetradrachma containing 17.3 gram silver, the Ptolemaic tetradrachma contained only 14.3 gram silver.\(^ {516}\) The Ptolemaic coins were lighter than other tetradrachmas circulating in the Mediterranean basin, which is why the heavier foreign silver coins began to be hoarded and were slowly excluded from circulation.\(^ {517}\) On the other hand, aside from the silver coins, fractions of the silver tetradrachma (3, 2, 1 obols, 4, 1 chalkous) began to be minted in the form of bronze coins, which were part of the same currency system as the silver coins but represented different units. Bronze coins could be exchanged with silver coins only by the monopoly banks, and a so-called agio (ἄλλαγή) of about 10% had to be paid for the exchange.\(^ {518}\) The most important function of the monopoly banks was therefore the exchange of money, and they flourished until they could benefit from the high profit rate of the exchange.\(^ {519}\) By the end of the III\(^ {rd}\) century BCE, however, the silver coinage

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\(^{515}\) The *Revenue Laws Papyrus* is certainly the most important ancient source regarding the royal economy of Ptolemaic Egypt because it casts some light on various aspects of the economic system. Although it is fragmentary and sometimes hard to interpret, it may be deduced that it was not a coherent, systematic royal decree, but rather a collection of several royal regulations. The most important editions of the papyrus are the followings: B. P. Grenfell, *Revenue Laws of Ptolemy Philadelphus* (Oxford 1896); J. Bingen, *Papyrus Revenue Laws: Nouvelle Édition du texte. SB Bk. 1.* (Göttingen 1952); R. S. Bagnall & P. Derow, *The Hellenistic Period. Historical Sources in Translation* (Malden MA / Oxford 2004), pp. 181-195. Further on the papyrus see C. Préaux, *L’économie royale des Lagides* (Brussels 1939); J. Bingen, *Hellenistic Egypt* (Berkeley / Los Angeles 2007), pp. 157-188 with reference to earlier bibliography.

\(^{516}\) The reason for the use of lighter silver coins was most probably the poor silver supply of the country. There was an increasing demand for silver coins, with which the mints could not keep up: the demand simply exceeded the supply. By reducing the silver content of the tetradrachma, Ptolemy I Soter created a confusing situation: the nominal value of the Ptolemaic tetradrachma remained the same as that of the Athenian tetradrachma, but its actual value was lower. Therefore, less silver was necessary to mint the Ptolemaic coins, but they could be used only within Egypt.

\(^{517}\) See especially von Reden (2007), pp. 43-48, who argues that the withdrawal of foreign coins from circulation in Egypt was not the result of a central decree, but a natural response to the appearance of lower-value coins.


\(^{519}\) As noted by von Reden (2007), p. 259, not only monopoly banks could exchange money, but they were the sole beneficiaries of the fees. *PCZ* I 59022, for instance, records a royal banker, Stratokles, who changed
disappeared almost entirely in the *chora*, probably due to the decline of silver resources in Egypt. A little after 210 BCE, bronze coinage became an independent currency, which did not represent the usual fractions of silver currency any more. This new bronze drachma had a much lower value than a quarter of a silver tetradrachma, it was worth more or less 1/60 of the silver drachma.\(^5\) From this time on, each price or wage was defined in this currency and there was no need any more for the silver drachmas. Obviously, the profit generated by the monopoly banks by the exchange of the bronze into silver coins and vice versa disappeared. Thus, it is not surprising that the monopoly banks disappeared from the sources at the end of the III\(^{rd}\) century BCE.

There was, however, an even more important bank institution created by the Ptolemies: the royal banks called βασιλικὴ τράπεζα. Their appearance can be linked to Ptolemy II Philadelphos, and their earliest mention dates from 265 BCE.\(^5\) Although the royal bank itself was a Ptolemaic invention, the model was the δημοσία τράπεζα, which is well-known from classical Greece.\(^5\) The difference between the two concepts of banks was that the model of a Greek *polis* had to be applied to a country now, whose territory was much larger than that of a *polis*. Thus, not one royal bank was established in Egypt, but a whole network of royal banks. So far, we know of 22 royal banks founded in regional centers (Alexandria, Diospolis Inferior, Athribis, Létopolis, Memphis, Aphroditopolis, Krokodilopolis, Hérakleopolis, Oxyrhynchos, Hermopolis, Lykopolis, Anteopolis, Dendra, Koptos, Diospolis Magna, Pathyris, Latopolis, Eileithuias Polis, Apollinopolis Magna, Elephantine-Syene, Ptolemais, Halikarnassos), but there were also subordinate branches, either banks (τράπεζα) or tax offices (λογευτήριον) in the smaller towns and villages, although the tax offices are attested only in the III\(^{rd}\) and the beginning of the II\(^{nd}\) century BCE.\(^5\)

This multi-level system of the royal banks was quickly established throughout Egypt and the state used it exclusively for its own purposes. Their most important functions were to collect the state revenues and to allocate the expenditures, i.e. they functioned like a cashier’s

\(^{5}\) currency for Zenon. Royal banks were entitled to change money, but they had to transfer the agio for money exchange to the monopoly banks.


\(^{5\text{b}}\) P. Hib. I 29.

\(^{5\text{c}}\) It was previously assumed that the origin of the state banks was Egypt. R. Bogaert, however, convincingly argues based on an inscription (IG II 1672) that in Athens a δημοσία τράπεζα existed already in 329 BCE and that the model of the state banks spread across the Hellenistic world from there and not from Egypt, see Bogaert (1994), pp. 38-40.

office. The largest part of the state revenues originated from the farming of taxes, from monopolies (olive oil, beer, salt, linen) and from the public lands. Most of the taxes in Ptolemaic Egypt were monetary, and they went either to the royal banks or were used locally. The investigation of the different taxes is not the goal of this study, but it is worth noting that R. Bogaert counted no less than 73 different taxes based on payment receipts recorded on ostraca.524

The Ptolemies adopted the Greek system not only in the establishment of the banks, but also in the collection of taxes. All monetary taxes were farmed out to tax farmers (τελῶναι). Each year everybody had the chance to purchase a tax at a public auctions. The person who offered the highest sum for a certain tax was granted the right to collect it. If he did not manage to collect the tax from the people, it was his loss, since he had to pay it to the state by any means possible. In the same way, if he collected more than necessary, it was his profit. This system worked in a very similar way in Greece, but the Ptolemies introduced a new element: while in the Greek cities the tax farmers collected the tax themselves, in Egypt they were simply responsible for securing the annual amount of the tax. That is, they guaranteed the amount of the tax by their bid, but in practice the tax collectors (λογευταί) collected the tax with their employees (ὁπηρέται), who were all state-officials.525 Besides, the oikonomos, who represented the state in this process, appointed a controller. The tax farmers were profit-oriented. Thus, the intervention of the controllers obviously served the interest of the people, who were thus protected from the abuses of the tax farmers. As noted above, theoretically anybody had the right to make a bid to purchase a tax, but in practice, tax farmers had to guarantee a surety or a mortgage at the value of their bid, which means that only well-to-do people could become tax farmers.

Among the tax-receipts that have survived, several were issued by royal banks. As suggested by U. Wilcken526 and affirmed by V. A. Tcherikover,527 the taxpayers mentioned in the tax receipts were not always individuals but tax farmers because sometimes more than one person paid the tax and the amounts paid were quite irregular. Indeed, the tax farmers were obliged to pay monthly to the royal banks and the amount of the money depended on how much the tax collectors managed to collect in that month. Tax farmers always received

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524 R. Bogaert, “Les opérations des banques de l’Égypte ptolémaïque,” AncSoc 29 (1998), pp. 49-145. In this study, Bogaert counts only the taxes levied in cash and to be paid to the banks. Thus, all the taxes levied in kind and collected by other institutions such as the granary should be added to this sum.

525 The entire process of the tax farming was precisely regulated by the Revenue Laws Papyrus (1-22 cols.), further on it see Bingen (2007), pp. 163-169.

526 Wilcken (1899), vol. 1, p. 72.

receipts from the banks, which confirmed the payment of the sum. However, tax farmers or tax collectors also issued receipts to the taxpayers when they received money. Due to this multi-level system, several hundreds of ostraca have come down to us, thus, we are well informed about this system. The receipts were written according to different formulas but, quite understandably, always in Greek.

4.3.2. The role of the Jews in banking life

As to the Jews in the banking system, first of all, it must be noted that the part played by Jewish bankers in Ptolemaic Egypt had been exaggerated for a long time. V. A. Tcherikover was the first scholar to emphasize that this was an erroneous hypothesis, and that the long list of Egyptian bankers drawn up by A. Calderini included no Jews at all.\textsuperscript{528} Indeed, more recent studies of R. Bogaert confirm this claim, since they clearly show that the origin of the bankers in question was Greek. Among the approximately 50 bankers known to us at present, he has not found a single biblical name.\textsuperscript{529} It is of course not impossible that some Greek names belong to Jews, but this we do not know lacking any evidence for their Jewishness.\textsuperscript{530} The following table shows the presence of Jews in bank receipts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of documents</th>
<th>Banker</th>
<th>Tax farmer</th>
<th>Taxpayer</th>
<th>Other (scribe)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receipts issued by banks</td>
<td>11\textsuperscript{531}</td>
<td>2 (?)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipts issued by tax farmers</td>
<td>7\textsuperscript{532}</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Table 7. Jews in the banking system}


\textsuperscript{530} In the same way, many Greek names may belong to Egyptian bankers. It has been noted by W. Peremans that some of the Greek names were, in fact, Greco-Egyptian names, which could easily be borrowed by Hellenized Egyptians, see K. Vandorpe & W. Clarysse, “Egyptian Bankers and Bank Receipts in Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt,” in K. Verboven & K. Vandorpe & V. Chankowski (eds.), \textit{Pistoi dia tèn technèn. Bankers, Loans and Archives in the Ancient World. Studies in Honour of Raymond Bogaert} (Leuven 2008), pp. 153-168 with reference to Peremans’ studies.

\textsuperscript{531} Although \textit{CPJ} 1 48-72 are all tax receipts issued by royal banks, many of them have been discarded as “Jewish texts,” see the list and the explanation in Chapter 1.1.3 and Chapter 1.2.3. The eleven receipts that certainly record Jewish tax farmers are the followings: \textit{CPJ} 1 48, 49, 50, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, \textit{SB} XX 14976, \textit{SB} VI 9623.

\textsuperscript{532} From the receipts issued by tax farmers, the following texts have been accepted as certainly referring to Jews: \textit{CPJ} 1 104, 105, 107, 109, \textit{TAD} D8.13; \textit{O.Dem.Wien} 284; \textit{O.Dem.Wien} 129.
After removing several tax receipts included in *CPJ*, which I consider not proven to be Jewish, we are left with eighteen texts, of which five are presented in our corpus. This is not a high number compared to the large amount of tax receipts surviving from the Ptolemaic period, but they shed some light on the general tendencies. As to the receipts issued by banks, I have put no. 2 with a question mark in the category of the bankers, and this requires some explanation. *CPJ I* 65 is a receipt issued by the royal bank in Diospolis Magna, and its banker was called Ptolemaios. The receipt was written by him, but after him another person also countersigned the receipt: Abdious son of Karouris. Even if he was a Jew, which is uncertain, his position is not clear. According to U. Wilcken, he was a banker because his signature appears on a receipt issued by the bank.\(^{533}\) V. A. Tcherikover is uncertain about this suggestion, but he notes that Abdious’ name had probably no connection with the text of the ostracon.\(^{534}\) In my view, Abdious was an official of the bank rather than a second banker. *CPJ I* 69 is another tax receipt that shows the opposite situation. It was issued by Dositheos who is explicitly stated to have been the head of the bank in Koptos. In this case, there can be no doubt that he was a banker, but his Jewishness is uncertain. This is the reason why I have excluded this text from this study.\(^{535}\) Consequently, there is not a single Jew in the tax receipts, who was certainly a banker.

At lower levels of the banking system, however, we find several Jews. It is clear from the table above that they appear in different positions vis-à-vis banking: as tax farmers, taxpayers or other tax officials. All the eleven tax receipts, issued by royal banks to Jewish tax farmers, are from Diospolis Magna. These Jewish tax farmers were responsible for the collection of different taxes: Abietos farmed the wine tax\(^{536}\) in 171/170 BCE with his partners (\textit{CPJ I 48}) just as did Aristomenes in 161 BCE (\textit{CPJ I 49}, \textit{SB XX} 14976), Abramos purchased the pasture tax\(^{537}\) in 165 BCE (\textit{CPJ I 50}), Simon the fisher’s tax\(^{538}\) at least from

\(^{533}\) Wilcken (1899), vol. 1, p. 636.
\(^{534}\) Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 200.
\(^{535}\) For the name Dositheos and its non-Jewishness see Chapter 2.2.2.3.
\(^{536}\) The wine tax was called οἶνου τέλος. This was a tax levied on the production of vineyards, that is, on wine. Further on it see Préaux (1939), p. 184; Tcherikover & A. Fuks (1957), p. 196; Bogaert, \textit{AncSoc} 29 (1998), p. 68.
\(^{537}\) The pasture tax was a kind of per capita animal tax, and was normally paid into the bank as is also shown by \textit{CPJ I} 50. Its name is derived from the word νομή meaning “pasturage,” further on it see Préaux (1939), pp. 226-227; Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 196; Bogaert, \textit{AncSoc} 29 (1998), p. 61; B. Muhs, \textit{Tax Receipts, Taxpayers and Taxes in Early Ptolemaic Egypt} (Chicago 2005), p. 60.
\(^{538}\) This tax, which is mainly known as τετάρτη ἁλίζων or as τετάρτη ἱχθυκῶν, was paid by fishermen at the rate of a quarter of their income and its collection was farmed out. Further on this tax see Wilcken (1899), vol. 1, pp. 137-141; Préaux (1939), pp. 206-207; M. I. Rostovtzeff, \textit{The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World} (Oxford 1941), p. 297; Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 197; Bogaert, \textit{AncSoc} 29 (1998), p. 69.
154 to 152 BCE (CPJ I 61-63), Sambathaios son of Sollumis farmed the *apomoira* tax\(^{539}\) in 153 BCE (CPJ I 64), Abielos was one of the farmers of the shoe-maker’s tax\(^ {540}\) in 144 or in 155 BCE (CPJ I 66), while Abetes farmed the beer tax\(^{541}\) in 94 or 61 BCE (SB VI 9623\(^{542}\)). They are the Jewish tax farmers known to us from the bank receipts.

How do we know that they were tax farmers? Several signs in the receipts confirm that they were tax farmers rather than individual taxpayers. First, in some cases, the tax farmers did no act alone, but were members of tax farming companies. This is the case in CPJ I 48, where Abielos made his payment together with his partners, and also in CPJ I 66, where Abielos paid the tax with Paion, who was presumably his tax farming partner. Secondly, the tax farmers went to the royal banks each month to pay the money collected on behalf of their tax during the month. Thus, we may expect that they received from the banks more than one receipt per year, while individual taxpayers paid their tax once a year as a rule. This is clearly demonstrated by CPJ I 61, 62 and 63, which were all issued to Simon, the farmer of the fisher’s tax (τετρακίας ἁλιέων) in years 28 and 29. These receipts were all written by Ptolemaios, the head of the royal bank in Diospolis Magna, and list very different sums: CPJ I 61 from year 28 (154 BCE) 2 talents 3645 drachmas, CPJ I 62 from year 29 (153 BCE) 2140 drachmas, while CPJ I 63 again from year 29 (152 BCE) 580 drachmas, a relatively small sum. It is, thus, clear that after each payment Simon received a receipt. Thirdly, the sums paid by the tax farmers (even the relatively small sums) are in general too high to be the taxes of a single taxpayer: as we have seen, Simon, for instance, paid 2 talents 3645 drachmas in CPJ I 61, which is an extremely large amount of money. Furthermore, sometimes there are other documents at our disposal which make clear that the person in question was a tax farmer. CPJ I 107 for instance is a semi-official tax receipt issued by Simon, a tax farmer, to a taxpayer. The tax farmer designates himself “Simon son of Iazaros, tax farmer of the 25 per cent of fisher’s tax for the 28\(^{th}\) year” (Σίμων Ἰαζάρου ὁ ἐξειληφὼς τὴν τετάρτην τῶν ἁλιέων εἰς τὸ κη ἔτος). There is no doubt that this is the same Simon who paid the same tax in the same year to the royal bank in CPJ I 61. By CPJ I 107 it is also confirmed that he was Jewish, since his patronymic Iazaros certainly denotes a Jew. As to their formula, these semi-official tax

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\(^ {539}\) The *apomoira* (lit. "portion") was the name of the harvest tax levied on vineyards and orchards. It was levied in kind, but in practice it could be paid either in kind or in money. Its collection was farmed out to tax farmers like money taxes. Further on this tax see Muh (2005), pp. 63-66.

\(^ {540}\) On the shoe-maker’s tax see Bogaert, AncSoc 29 (1998), p. 68.

\(^ {541}\) This tax, called ἄνθρα, was levied on consumers rather than on sellers, see Préaux (1939), p. 157; Bogaert, AncSoc 29 (1998), p. 62; Muh (2005), pp. 79-81.

receipts are similar to those issued by the banks: they contained the name of the taxpayer, that of the tax farmer, the name and amount of tax paid and the date of the payment. Some of them, like CPJ I 107, were written in the form of a letter and started with the formula “PN to PN greetings” (χαίρειν). An interesting fact is that Simon himself was unable to write the receipt because he was illiterate. One should not draw definitive conclusions based on one single text, but it may serve as an indication that tax farmers were not always well-educated. It is likely that in many cases they were land-owners living in the countryside. In fact, in the case of Simon we know that he was indeed a land-owner, since CPJ I 90 records him again as “Simon son of Iazaros, tax farmer.” However, this time he is an individual taxpayer who paid 90 artabas of wheat to the granary of Diospolis Magna. The receipt does not name the tax that he paid, but we know that only the grain harvest tax was paid to the granaries, which means that Simon had land, or more precisely quite large land. Based on the amount of his tax (90 artabas), V. A. Tcherikover concludes that Simon must have been a well-to-do landowner. Indeed, to purchase tax-farming, one had to have the means to guarantee the sum of his bid. This is one of the rare cases where we have five documents related to one single tax farmer. These documents give us at least an overview concerning the social standing of the tax farmers.

Besides CPJ I 107, we have six other receipts issued by tax farmers. One of them, CPJ I 105, acquaints us with another Jewish tax farmer, Abietes, who issued the receipt to Tachnoumis concerning the payment of an unnamed tax. In the other five receipts, Jews are recorded either as taxpayers or as state officials assisting the payment process. What is certainly important to note is the linguistic diversity of the receipts issued by the tax farmers. Contrary to the official bank receipts, which were written in Greek, the language repertoire of the tax farmer receipts is very diverse. In many cases, as we have seen in the case of Simon, the tax collector or one of his assistants drew up the receipt instead of the tax farmer. The reason for doing so was not always the illiteracy of the tax farmer: linguistic differences may also have posed some problems. Although the official language of the country was Greek, the native inhabitants or the Semitic immigrants did not necessarily spoke Greek, at least in the IIIrd century BCE. Among the tax collectors and assistants there were several Egyptians and

543 The Ptolemaic grain harvest tax was a relic of the earlier tax system that used to be based on redistributive economy. To our knowledge, it was never farmed out and each land owner paid individually his tax to the granaries based on the annual measurement of the harvest. The name of the tax was ἐπιγραφή in Greek and šmw in Demotic, but many times the name of this tax is omitted in the receipts, most probably because it was always the same tax that was paid to the granaries. Further on the Ptolemaic grain harvest tax see Bogaert, AncSoc 29 (1998), p. 62; Vandorpe, AJP 46 (2000), pp. 169-232; Muhs (2005), pp. 61-70 with reference to earlier bibliography.

other foreign immigrants such as Jews. Generally, they spoke more than one language, thus, they could represent a certain intermediary between the tax farmers and the local population. Suffice it to mention *O.Dem.Wien* 284, the bilingual ostracon, with two different tax receipts on it. As we know, the Aramaic receipt was issued to Taese, daughter (?) of Shabbethai in 253 BCE concerning the payment of the salt tax. We have accepted the assumption that Shabbethai must have been Jewish, not only based on his name, but also based on the fact that his daughter received a tax receipt that was written in Aramaic. Moreover, Ioseph, the scribe who wrote the receipt, was certainly Jewish also. *TAD* D8.13, written some months later, was also issued by him in Aramaic again to a Jewish couple. In his case, it seems to be clear that he was a state official who might have helped the tax farmer to issue tax receipts in Aramaic when it was needed. The same holds true for the Egyptian language, because Egyptian scribes were also highly demanded in the process of tax collection. The second tax receipt inscribed on *O.Dem.Wien* 284 in 243 BCE was written in Demotic by an Egyptian scribe. In this case the receipt was issued to Tapaoueris, the wife of Shabbethai. Obviously, the ostracon was used by different members of the same Judeo-Egyptian family. The only thing that can explain this phenomenon is that Tapaoueris was an Egyptian woman. The fact that some state officials spoke both Greek and Egyptian, has already been known, and it was not an uncommon phenomenon. The assistance of a Jewish scribe, however, was presumably far less common. Jews generally received Greek tax receipts, but it is now clear that this was not always the case. They were sometimes given Aramaic (*TAD* D8.13, *O.Dem.Wien* 284), and even Demotic tax receipts (*O.Mattha* 233). How widespread was this phenomenon is unknown, but at present, we know of these two ostraca that were written by and to Jews.

4.3.3. Money lending among Egyptian Jews

When studying the role of the Jews in the banking life of Ptolemaic Egypt, it is inevitable to discuss the practice of money lending. Money lending as such worked in a different way in Ptolemaic Egypt compared to classical Athens, where professional bankers and private creditors were both entitled to lend money. In Ptolemaic Egypt monopoly banks occasionally could give loans to merchants for instance, but the credit market, in general, was mostly populated by private creditors.545 Thus, it was a non-professional activity, in which

both the creditors and the debtors needed guarantees. In many cases, loans were given based on oral agreements, but only written contracts were fully enforceable legally.\(^{546}\) However, any written agreement entailed cost and formalities. Thus, we may assume that probably only a small part of the loans were noted in a written agreement.

The Greek immigrants brought the forms of lending from their homelands. Greek loan contracts used in Ptolemaic Egypt can be categorized according to their format:\(^{547}\) we may differentiate the so-called double document, the agoranomic contract and the informal *cheirographon*.\(^{548}\) The double document is the earliest standardized type of Greek legal documents, it was introduced in Ptolemaic Egypt as early as the late IV\(^{\text{th}}\) century BCE, when public archives did not exist yet.\(^{549}\) Such documents are for instance *CPJ* I 24, *P.Dion.* 22 and *P.Köln.* III 144.\(^{550}\) In this type of contract the text was written twice as its name also indicates: the upper part, the so-called *scriptura interior* was sealed, while the lower text, the *scriptura exterior* could be consulted whenever it was necessary. A specific type of double documents were the six-witness contracts, which were drawn up privately in the presence of six witnesses, and their form was regulated by the state already in the III\(^{\text{rd}}\) century BCE.\(^{551}\) It was guarded by a keeper of the contract (*syngraphophylax*), who was one of the six witnesses, and whose high social standing ensured its safekeeping.\(^{552}\)


\(^{547}\) Loans could be given not only based on written contract, but also based on a pledge (the loan is given against valuables of the debtor, which could be clothes, jewellery and so on) as well as based on mortgage (larger sums were given on the security of real estates). These forms of money loan, however, will not be discussed here, because Jews are not recorded in this kind of documents. Further on them see von Reden (2007), pp. 162-174.


\(^{550}\) There are other double documents concerning Jews, but those do not deal with loan: *CPJ* I 18 records a deed of renunciation, *CPJ* I 22 is contract drawn up concerning the cession of a quarter, *P.Heid.* VIII 417 is the acknowledgement of a paid debt, while *P.Köln.* III 144 is a lease of viticultural work.

\(^{551}\) See *BGU* XIV 2367, which preserves the law that regulated self-identification in contracts: civilian parties were obliged to declare their name, fathers’ name, place of origin and the category they belonged to, while military men had to state their units and ranks too. Moreover, the law also regulated the sealing of the contract by the parties, the sureties and the witnesses as well as its deposition with the keeper of the contract. Based on the fact that all these elements are present in the double documents from the late 270s BCE, U. Yiftach-Firanko suggests that this law must have been included in Ptolemy II Philadephos’ *Justizdiagramma* around 275 BCE, see Yiftach-Firanko, *AAP* 54/2 (2008), p. 212, n. 29. For an English translation of the fragment see Bagnall & Derow (2004), pp. 211-212.

Later, around the middle of the IIIrd century BCE Greek public archives started to emerge throughout the country, offering the possibility to register private documents. These archives functioned basically as record offices, and several private contractors felt more secure if their contracts were registered there. This registration was generally carried out by drawing up an abstract of the original document, which was then deposited in the archive. *CPJ* I 20, *CPR* XVIII 7, 8, 9 and 11 are all good examples of abstracts of this kind. *CPR* XVIII 7, 8, 9 and 11 were for instance registered on the same roll together with other abstracts. Based on the subscription in *CPR* XVIII 11 it is also clear that the documents were registered and grouped according to their provenance. These abstracts contained only the most important informations of the transaction: the name of the parties and the keeper of the contract, the nature of the contract (the amount of the loan and the interest rate in *CPJ* I 20 or the amount of the dowry and some conditions of the marriage in *CPR* XVIII 8 for instance).

Public archives, in general, were set up in every town, and even in smaller villages. With the passing of time the double documents kept with a syngraphophylax changed their form: by the late Ptolemaic period the *scriptura interior* became shorter and more cursive, and finally by the Roman period it totally disappeared. For a long time scholars assumed that this change was due to the emergence of public archives. This traditional view has been challenged by U. Yiftach-Firanko, who convincingly argues that it was not the public archive that caused the degeneration of the *scriptura interior*. Indeed, nothing proves that complete double documents were ever deposited in the public archives. Even after the emergence of public archives, double documents remained the most widely used methods to safekeep the documents and they did not change their format up until the 130s and 120s BCE. It was only after this date that the *scriptura interior* no longer contained the full version of the original contract, but only an abstract reporting the main informations about it. This change, however, had nothing to do with the public archives, which were already in operation for more than a century. According to U. Yiftach-Firanko the change was much more

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553 (γίνεται) ε Σαμαρείς(ίας) meaning “Total of documents 5 from Samareia.”

554 See the references in Yiftach-Firanko, *AfP* 54/2 (2008), p. 205. The two main arguments based on which this was assumed were (1) that the *scriptura interior*, which served to authenticate the content of the *scriptura exterior*, no longer contained a full version of the original contract, and (2) that the writing of the *scriptura interior* was careless, and became almost illegible.

555 See for instance *P.Dion*. 22, which shows well the degeneration of the *scriptura interior*. The *scriptura exterior* shows the loan contract in its full lengh, in which Onias son of Ammonios lent a certain amount of wheat to Dionysios son of Kephalas. The *scriptura interior*, however, records only the names of the parties and the six witnesses, the date and the amount of the loan. Among the ten six-witness double documents that have come down to us from the archive of Dionysios son of Kephalas, only *P.Dion*. 18 preserves a real double document with two copies of the contract in the *scriptura exterior* and *interior*, see Boswinkel & Pestman (1982), pp. 220-226, and for a general discussion of the six-witnessed double documents in the archive see pp. 176-193.
probably connected to a royal decree issued in 146 BCE, which introduced the registration of Demotic legal documents by a state office called γραφεῖον.556 From at least 113 BCE onwards (but probably even from an earlier date) both Demotic and Greek documents, including the double documents, were registered in the grapheia, which had a different, much shorter pattern for recording the scriptura interior. The degeneration of the scriptura interior was, thus, due to the obligatory registration by the state.

The second type of loan contracts were the agoranomic contracts. The agoranomos was a Greek notary, whose existence is attested in Lower Egypt from the middle of the IIIrd century BCE onwards, while in Upper Egypt only from 174 BCE onwards. They could be found only in the metropoleis of the Arsinoite, Herakleopolite and Oxyrhynchite nome. Thus they were not easily accessible. These notary offices were responsible among other things for the composition of Greek contracts: at first only loan and surety contracts, but in the late Ptolemaic period they issued every type of legal document, and they also stored them.557 In case of agoranomic contracts, there was no need for witnesses, since the agoranomos acted as a notary who authenticated the contract. These contracts were normally inscribed only once, except if the transaction recorded was a land-cession or sale, in which case it was necessary to write the text twice.558 Concerning Jews, the following agoranomic loan contracts have survived: CPJ I 23 and CPJ I 26. Thus, by the end of the IIIrd century BCE the contracting parties had the choice as to how they wanted to document (if at all) their transaction: either they went to an agoranomic office (mainly the inhabitants of the nome metropoleis or the surrounding villages) or they continued to use the private double document witnessed by six people, and to register it in a public archive.

There was a third possible form to document mainly small-scale loans between people who knew and trusted each other: the so-called cheirographon, which was not a bilateral contract like the double documents or the agoranomic documents, but a simple acknowledgement of the debt written by the debtor. This kind of document required neither witnesses nor an agoranomos, but only the two parties. Occasionally, if the debtor was illiterate, a third person was involved in the process of writing the document. It must be noted, however, that this kind of contract did not have the same legal status as a formal contract.559

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556 This is evident from P.Par. 65 = Sel.Pap. II 415, a letter written by Paniskos to Ptolemaios, in which Paniskos describes a procedure, introduced in the preceding year, according to which any Demotic contract drawn up by an Egyptian temple scribe had to be summarized in Greek, and then registered on a special list, see U. Yiftach-Firanko, Handbook (2009), p. 547.
558 Yiftach-Firanko, AfP 54/2 (2008), p. 213.
We will now analyze in some detail loan contracts. The size of the loans secured by written contracts was in general not very high. According to S. von Reden it ranged between 14 and 1000 bronze drachmas. As to the interest rates, at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period they were extremely high: we have evidence of 30% and even 48% rates of interest. However, in the middle of the century, Ptolemy II Philadephos regulated the rate of interest, and he maximalized it at 2% per month, that is, 24% per year. This was already a more reasonable rate of interest and it was maintained throughout the Ptolemaic period. For loans in kind (called ἡμιόλιον in the sources) the interest rate was higher, regularly 50%, regardless of the duration of the loan.

Jews are recorded from time to time in Greek-type loan contracts. It is instructive to have a look at how they lent or borrowed money, and how this practice clashed with biblical law. Among the five loan-business related documents, in which at least one of the parties was Jewish, two loans were given at the regular interest rate of 2 drachmas per mina per month (CPJ I 20 and CPJ I 24), that is 24% per year, two others were given without interest (ἄτοκος) (CPJ I 23 and P.Dion. 22), while the nature of BGU XIV 2381 remains unclear, since the papyrus is very badly preserved. In other words, two loans seem to have been given according to Greek practice, while two others “without interest.” Before discussing this term, let us see what Jewish law says concerning money lending. The following passages mention and regulate the question of money lending among Jews:

Ex 22:25 “Now if you lend silver to a poor brother near you, you shall not press him; you shall not apply interest to him.”

Lev 25:35-7 “Now if your brother is needy and with you becomes weak in his hands, you shall help him as a guest and a resident alien, and your brother shall live with you. You shall not take interest from him, not even in any amount, and you shall fear your God; I am the Lord. And your brother shall live with you. You shall not give him your money at interest; neither shall you give him your food in excess.”

Deut 23:19-20 “You shall not charge interest to your brother, interest in money and interest on provisions and interest on any thing that may be lent. To a stranger you shall charge interest but to your brother you shall not charge interest, so that the Lord your God

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560 A loan of 14 bronze drachmas is attested in P.Tebt. III.1 815 fr. 8 r col. II. 15 on the same roll as CPJ I 20, while the large sum of 1000 drachmas is recorded in P.Ryl. IV 584 with von Reden (2007), p. 159.


562 The text of the decree itself has not been preserved, but P.Col.Zen. II 83 mentions both the diagramma and the earlier high interest rates are mentioned. The decree must have been issued sometime between 249 and 245 BCE because the documents before 249 BCE mention higher interest rates, see P. Pestman, “Loans bearing no interest?” JJP 16/17 (1971), pp. 7-29.

563 There are two other documents, CPJ I 25 and CPJ I 26, which mention Jews in loan businesses, but in these cases they only assisted the drawing of the contract as witnesses.
may bless you in all your works in the land into which you are entering there to inherit it.

These passages are very telling. It is clear that Jewish law, which also served as the nomos politikos of the Jews in Egypt, prohibits any kind of interest given by a Jew to another Jew. Yet, the picture that emerges from the papyri does not seem to be in conformity with biblical law, for in two cases we see that a Jew lent money to another Jew at an interest. Yet, in two other cases we find loans given “without interest.” The meaning of this term has been widely disputed since these are not the only documents in which we see it. In the Adler papyri there are no less than four documents recording loans given “without interest.” What is more interesting is that these loans were not given by or to Jews. In fact, all of the Adler papyri come from the archive of Horos son of Nechouthes, a Persian of the Epigone living in Pathyris, and mostly Egyptians are attested in these contracts. It is not a coincidence that I mention the Adler papyri here, because according to E. N. Adler, one of the editors of these papyri, the loan “without interest” must have been in connection with Jewish law. In his view, the practice of giving loans “without interest” reflects Jewish law, which was observed by the Egyptian Jews. Since this kind of loan is attested in the archive of Horos in a non-Jewish environment, Adler suggests that the Jewish practice influenced Hellenistic law as well as the customs of several persons mentioned in the archive and that these persons were not Jews but sympathizers of the Jewish Law: so-called god-fearers (θεοσεβεῖοι).

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564 Translations of the NETS edition, Pietersma & Wright (2007), which is accessible online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/ (accessed on 08 December 2015).
565 On which see above Chapter 1.1.1.
567 P. Adler 4, 6, 10, 15 and 19, P. Adler Dem. 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 15, 22, 24, 25, 26 and 27. Further on the bilingual archive of Horos son of Nechouthes see K. Vandorpe & S. Vaebens, Reconstructing Pathyris’ Archives: A Multicultural Community in Hellenistic Egypt (Brussels 2009), pp. 127-141.
569 That Horos was not a practising Jew is also clear from the fact that in several documents he is called the “servant of the god Harsemtheu,” as noted by E. N. Adler himself, see Adler & Tait & Heichelheim & Griffith (1939), p. 4.
570 It was believed by several scholars that the term “god-fearers” was only a literary creation of Luke (Acts 10:1, 22; 13:16, 26; 16:14; 18:7). Based on two inscriptions from Aphrodisias, it seems that the god-fearers indeed existed. What this term means is a subject of debate. Some scholars think that they were semi-proselytes who did not convert to Judaism, but sympathized with it and, in some respect, they followed the Jewish law, see J. M. Reynolds & R. Tannenbaum, Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias: Greek Inscriptions with Commentary (Cambridge 1987). See, however, T. Ilan, “Once again on Yael and the Aphrodisias Inscription,” Zutot 4 (2004), pp. 44-49, who thinks that these god-fearers could equally be non-Jewish donators. It is highly possible that Greeks were attracted to Judaism, but it is hard to believe that Horos, as a servant of the god Harsemtheu, would have been a god-fearer.
Adler’s theory has been widely criticized by different scholars. H. I. Bell was the first to claim that Adler’s argument concerning the influence of Jewish law is not very convincing.\textsuperscript{571} V. A. Tcherikover and F. M. Heichelheim discuss the question in a long joint article, in which Tcherikover rejects Adler’s suggestion.\textsuperscript{572} He shows that Adler’s argument according to which papyri from the I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE and the I\textsuperscript{st} century CE give evidence of Persians of the Epigone descending from Jewish immigrants,\textsuperscript{573} cannot serve as a proof for any connection between them and Judaism, because the proportion of Jews among the Persians of the Epigone was very small.\textsuperscript{574} He also points out that the format and the wording of Horos’ contracts show the regular pattern of Greek contracts drawn up in the agoranomic office and that the loans “without interest” occasionally weighed more heavily on the debtor than the usual ones, because they were granted for short periods, and in case of non-repayment the penalty could be higher than the normal interest rate of 24\%.\textsuperscript{574}

Furthermore, Tcherikover argues that loans bearing no interest were, in fact, widespread throughout the ancient Orient.\textsuperscript{575} They are known from Babylonia and Assyria, in sources that are older than the Hebrew Bible. This line of reasoning is taken up by P. W. Pestman who, by studying not only the Greek papyri but also the Demotic ones, arrives at interesting conclusions.\textsuperscript{576} First, he points out that in loan contracts not only the word ἄτοκος (lit. without interest) can appear, but also the word ἔντοκος (lit. bearing interest). How should these terms be interpreted? What is certain is that both terms served to refine the nature of the loan and to clarify what the debtor had to pay. Pestman rightly shows that in several cases, when the loan was ἔντοκος, we know that the debtor had to pay interest above the amount stated in the loan.\textsuperscript{577} That is to say, the word ἔντοκος indicated that the regular interest was not included in the amount stated in the contract, but was to be paid above the amount of the loan. What was then the loan ἄτοκος? According to Pestman, these loan contracts indicate that the debtor had to repay the amount stated in the contract and no more. If somebody was granted a loan of 1000 drachmas ἄτοκος according to the loan contract, it means that this sum already included the interest. This theory seems to be logical and, in fact, is confirmed in

\bibitem{Tcherikover} V. A. Tcherikover & F. M. Heichelheim, “Jewish religious Influence in the Adler Papyri?,” \textit{HTR} 35 (1942), pp. 25-44. See also Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 35-36.
\bibitem{Adler} Adler & Tait & Heichelheim & Griffith (1939), p. 3. In fact, Jews were present among the Persians of the Epigone already from the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, as we can see in the case of \textit{P.Polit.Iud.} 8.
\bibitem{Tcherikover2} Tcherikover & Heichelheim, \textit{HTR} 35 (1942), p. 27.
\bibitem{Tcherikover3} Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 36, esp. n. 94.
\bibitem{Pestman} Pestman, \textit{JJP} 16/17 (1971), pp. 7-29.
\bibitem{Tebt} See \textit{P.Tebt.} II 312 in which the debtor states in the subscription that the amount of his loan is 120 drachmas ἔντοκος, while in the contract itself he promises to pay back the loan of “120 drachmas and the interest.”}
Demotic loan contracts. The best example of parallel loan contracts are those from Pathyris and Krokodilopolis, where both Greek and Demotic loan contracts were drawn up in the agoranomic office. Based on a comparison of the Greek and Demotic loan contracts it becomes clear that the Greek word ἄτοκος corresponds to the Demotic ḫw ḫny=xw meaning literally “while their addition (i.e. interest) is included in them.” In the Demotic loan contract, this term was exactly used to express that the loan was given at an interest, and it was already included in the amount stated in the contract.578 As noted by Pestman, it is hard to believe that in the same town, all Demotic loans were made at an interest and, at the same time, all Greek loans were made without interest.579 In other words, it is clear that the term ἄτοκος in Greek loan contracts denotes loans including the interest.

Consequently, the contracts mentioning Jews with loans ἄτοκος should be interpreted accordingly. Although it cannot be excluded that in certain cases the creditors were driven by good will in giving loans ἄτοκος,580 in most of the cases it seems more likely that the Jews simply followed the Hellenistic practice of money lending. The difference in expressing the amount of the loan, which can be found in Greek contracts, was, in fact, a matter of choice: those written according to Greek practice indicated the loan by separating the capital and the interest rate, while those written according to Egyptian practice indicated the final sum including the capital and the interest.

4.4. Farmers and Land-holders

We are quite well-informed about Jewish farmers and land-owners throughout the country. Papyri and ostraca regarding Jews working in agriculture have survived in great quantities. I will start with those in Lower Egypt especially in the region of the Fayum, because it was in this part of Egypt that Jews first received land allotments as military settlers. We have already mentioned the cleruchic system, which was mainly developed by Ptolemy II Philadelphos, and that its main importance lies in the exploitation of agricultural

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578 In Demotic loan contracts, the capital and the interest were never separated. This results from the different nature of Demotic loan contracts in comparison with Greek ones: Demotic contracts were not bilateral agreements between creditor and debtor, but an acknowledgements of debt written by the debtor. They were documents of claim, which simply stated the final amount of money (including the capital and the interest) and were kept by the creditor until the loan was repaid.


580 Goodwill may have been the motive for the interest-free loan in P. Lond. III 1203 for instance, which records a loan between a father and a son. For further examples see Pestman, JJP 16/17 (1971), p. 18.
productivity.\textsuperscript{581} The soldiers who received land allotments, settled in the Fayum. The development and the canalization of this region was one of the most impressive socio-economic projects of the Ptolemies. By reclamation of land, the Ptolemies could gain control over a big parcel of arable land and they could create royal lands, which they directly controlled.\textsuperscript{582} According to J. G. Manning, arable land was tripled by this project to the size of cc. 1200 and 1600 km\textsuperscript{2}, that is, 5-7\% of the total cultivable land in the country.\textsuperscript{583} The area was organized as a separate nome called “Arsinoite” after Arsinoe II, the sister and wife of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. By the second half of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, its administration was also in full operation.

Some land registers have survived from Kerkeosiris, which may give us some clues about the distribution of lands in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE Fayum.\textsuperscript{584} According to these registers, 52\% of the arable land was royal land (βασιλικὴ γῆ), 33\% was cleruchic land (κληρουχικὴ γῆ), and 16\% temple land (ἱερὰ γῆ). It is certain that the soldiers, who received land allotments and became cleruchs, were in a privileged position due to their importance in the wars of the Ptolemies. Depending on their position in the army, these soldiers received land allotments that could be as large as 80 arouras, as we can see from \textit{CPJ I 24} mentioning two Jewish cavalry officers, both of them 80 arouras holders. The cleruchic lands supplied the cleruchs with a fixed income and they certainly belonged to the well-to-do upper class. In general, they subleased their lands to farmers who paid a rent for it.

We are certainly not wrong in assuming that the largest part of the arable land in the Fayum was royal land. These lands were not allotted to soldiers but belonged to the king and were directly leased out to farmers, called royal farmers (βασιλικοὶ γεωργοί) in the papyri. For a long time it was assumed that these farmers were closely controlled by the state, but recent research has shown that the leaseholds of the farmers often lasted indefinitely and lease contracts of one-year duration were used only in rare cases.\textsuperscript{585} Thus, it seems that for the Ptolemies, continuous land cultivation and, consequently, continuous income coming from the rents were the most important factors. As to the ethnic identity of these royal farmers, many of them were Egyptians but we can also find Jews among them. The Zenon papyri acquaint us

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{581} See above Chapter 3.2.
  \item \textsuperscript{582} Manning (2003), p. 104. Creating royal lands was important to the Ptolemies from two points of view: first, they generated an important sources of revenue; secondly, they gained not only economic, but also political power over this territory, which became their hinterland inhabited primarily by Hellenic immigrants.
  \item \textsuperscript{583} Manning (2003), p. 107.
  \item \textsuperscript{585} A. Monson, \textit{Royal Land in Ptolemaic Egypt: A Demographic Model} (Stanford 2007), p. 7.
\end{itemize}
with a good quantity of Jewish farmers working on the gift estate of Apollonios. These papyri have been analyzed in detail by A. Kasher, but for the sake of completeness, we mention them briefly: *CPJ* I 8 attests a certain Antigones the Jew, who leased a vineyard; *CPJ* I 9a and 9b record Pasis the Jew, who leased a piece of land from Zenon; *CPJ* I 13 is a memorandum written by the Jewish Ismaelos and his partner Alexander, who cultivated 3 ½ arouras and asked Zenon to give them the agreed loan. *CPJ* I 14 and 15 mention two vine-dressers, among whom Samoelis was certainly Jewish: they had leased a vineyard from Zenon and Sostratos, but then intended to abandon it due to difficulties that the neighbors put in their way to accessing the vineyard. Unfortunately, we do not know the outcome of the story.

That the Jews were sometimes engaged in vine cultivation is also attested by *P.Köln.* III 144, in which Euarchos leased out the viticultural work on Melankomas’ vineyard to the Jewish Simon and his partners. The Jews did not get possession of the vineyard, but undertook only its cultivation, for which they received wages. What is more interesting is that Simon and his partners were not simply farmers, but *taktomisthoi,* that is, soldiers serving for pay. The reason for which they undertook some extra work besides their military duties may have been that they were short of money.

Apart from the Zenon archive there are other papyri attesting to Jewish farmers in the Fayum. *CPJ* I 35 for instance shows some lines of a list of recipients of seed allotments, presumably royal farmers, among whom we find some Jews: Ptolemaios son of Ananias and Darios son of Ionas.

As noted by R. Kugler, the royal farmers were granted different privileges in exchange for insuring the productivity of royal lands. Normally, they were protected from extortion of money and land, seizure of their property, farming equipment or livestock. However, they were sometimes defenceless against powerful state officials. This is clearly shown by two documents: *CPJ* I 43 and *SB* XXVI 16801. *CPJ* I 43 is a petition written by a Jewish farmer, Judas son of Dositheos, who was wronged by the village scribe Marres. Judas leased a 3-aroura plot of land, and invested a lot of work in it. The normal annual rent for this piece of

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586 Gift estates (δωρεά) were granted only to top-level officials of the Ptolemaic kingdom such as Apollonios, the dioiketes of Ptolemy II Philadelphos. These gift estates were temporary grants and never became hereditary, see A. Monson, “Dorea (gift, gift estate),” in R. S. Bagnall et al., *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (Blackwell 2013), pp. 2210-2211.


588 According to Kasher (1985), p. 68, not only they, but also Simeon (l. 4), Theophilos (l. 6) and Theodoros (ll. 19, 25, 62) were Jewish. As in the case of any Greek theophoric name, this is indeed possible, but still uncertain.


land was 4 artabas of wheat per aroura. Juda had to pay this rent to a state official (in this case to the village scribe), since he rented royal land. However, the village scribe arbitrarily raised the amount of the rent from 4 to 5 2/3 artabas per aroura, taking Judas by surprise. I agree with A. Kasher that Judas may have improved the productivity of the land, and the village scribe probably visited the land, and set a new rate. 591

SB XXVI 16801 presents another case of arbitrary extortion. Peton’s father, Philoxenos rented a 4-aroura prosodos land from Herakles and Demetrios. The term prosodos is attested for the first time in the papyri but we may assume, following Armoni, the editor of the papyri, that it was most probably a kind of royal land. The difference between prosodos lands and common royal lands may have been that the prosodos lands were most probably confiscated from cleruchic lands that had previously been neglected. Indeed, leaving cleruchic land to neglect was certainly not in the state’s interest. The primary goal of the Ptolemies was the productivity of the economy, thus, if a cleruchic land’s potential was not exploited, it was confiscated by the state. In our case, it seems that the land in question had once belonged to Chauros, but the state confiscated it and leased it to royal farmers. Herakles and Demetrios were, thus, royal farmers who subleased the whole land, or part of it, to Peton’s father. This case makes clear that royal farmers were entitled to sublease the land that they rented from the state. If this happened, the sublessees had to pay the rent to the sub-lesseors, not to the state officials. This is how Peton’s father acted when he paid the rent to Herakles and Demetrios. However, later during the year, Apollonios, the overseer of the prosodos, who was a state official, requested the rent a second time. We do not know the reason why Apollonios asked Philoxenes to pay the rent again, but Kugler assumes that some rental payment may have still been owed, which he requested directly from the sublessee, and not through the royal farmers. 592 All in all, the land tenure in Lower Egypt was marked by royal and cleruchic lands cultivated by local farmers, who could be either Egyptians or Hellenes.

In Upper Egypt the situation was quite different. Thebes became the cultic center of the country in the New Kingdom, since the temple of Amon-Re was located there. The high-priests of Amon were powerful and the administration of the lands was mainly under their control. This did not change much in the Late period and the status of the whole region of Thebes, the so-called Thebaid running from the Lycopolite nome until Elephantine, was different from that of Lower and Middle Egypt. K. Vandorpe has nicely shown that this

The situation started to change in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, especially after the Great Revolt of 206-186 BCE, when the state reorganized the region of the Thebaid. The districts that were included in the nome of Thebaid, became nomes themselves,\(^{596}\) and the state confiscated many lands from the temples, which were then sold at public auctions. The purchasers of these confiscated lands did not become owners of the land, but held them on a hereditary lease: they could sublease or sell them as they were the real owners.\(^{597}\) This was a new approach on the part of the Ptolemies since in Lower and Middle Egypt all the lands that they confiscated were simply transferred into the category of royal or cleruchic land. In Upper Egypt, however, there was a tradition of “private” land since the New Kingdom, and the Ptolemies presumably respected this.

These confiscated and sold lands were not subject to rent but to tax. The grain tax was not a Ptolemaic invention, it had also existed in pharaonic times.\(^{598}\) However, in Ptolemaic times, as shown by K. Vandorpe, it is necessary to distinguish between the tax imposed on grain-bearing private and temple lands in the Thebaid and the tax imposed on grain-bearing cleruchic and temple land in Middle and Lower Egypt.\(^{599}\) While in Upper Egypt the earlier pharaonic grain tax was uphold (Gr. \(\varepsilon\pi\gamma\rho\alpha\varphi\eta\), Dem. \(\ddot{\text{s}}\text{mw}\)), which had to be paid on the

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\(^{595}\) Vandorpe, \textit{AfP} 46 (2000), p. 173, although she notes that Edfu may have been an exception, because a small settlement of cleruchs had been found in that region dating from the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE. If there were soldiers serving at Edfu, they may have received their land allotments in the same region.

\(^{596}\) Originally, the whole Thebaid was governed by one \textit{strategos} while its districts were governed by different \textit{epistatai}. After the reorganization of the region, the districts became nomes, the \textit{epistatai} gradually became \textit{strategoi}, and the function of the older \textit{strategos} of the Thebaid was probably assumed by the \textit{epistrategos}, see Vandorpe, \textit{AfP} 46 (2000), p. 173.


\(^{598}\) Muhs (2005), pp. 2-3.

productive part of the land only.\textsuperscript{600} in Middle and Lower Egypt the grain tax was paid based on the size of the land regardless of whether it was cultivated or not, thus, it was basically a land tax (Gr. ἡ ἀποτελαμένη ἀρτάβη τῆς ἀροῦρας, Dem. \textit{pzd rdb r l šḥ}).

The Upper Egyptian grain harvest tax, which was always paid into the granaries (θησαυροί), is attested from the end of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, but most of the receipts were issued after the Great Revolt of 206-186 BCE, which means that most of the lands were confiscated as a result of the political instability in that period. The grain harvest tax receipts are mostly preserved on ostraca, and among the countless taxpayers there were some Jews too. This was already demonstrated by Section V of \textit{CPJ} I, which acquaints us with several Jewish taxpayers: Simon son of Abdious (\textit{CPJ} I 73), Indos son of Abiestos (\textit{CPJ} I 74), Iosepos son of Abdious (\textit{CPJ} I 75), Straton son of Straton (\textit{CPJ} I 77, 78), Isakis son of Straton (\textit{CPJ} I 78, 79, \textit{O.Wilck.} II 731, \textit{O.Mattha} 233), Noubion son of Onias (\textit{CPJ} I 86), Sambataios son of Abietes (\textit{CPJ} I 87), Pythangelos son of Iosepis (\textit{CPJ} I 89), Simon son of Iazaros (\textit{CPJ} I 90), Iapheas son of Dositheos (\textit{CPJ} I 95), Agaumis son of Aggaios (\textit{BGU} XIV 2453\textsuperscript{602}). It is, however, difficult to make assumptions about the social status of these taxpayers. The amount of tax being in proportion to the amount of the productive part of the land could be informative, but the problem is that the payment could be either on a full annual rate or for one instalment only.\textsuperscript{603} It is therefore hard to define how much harvest the taxpayers may have had. As to the social status of the taxpayers, according to U. Wilcken they were all tax farmers,\textsuperscript{604} but, in fact, they were individual payers, because, as far as we know, the grain harvest tax was never farmed out.\textsuperscript{605} In certain cases we are better informed about the social situation of these individual taxpayers: for instance, we know that Simon son of Iazaros, the taxpayer of the grain harvest tax in \textit{CPJ} I 90 was a well-to-do landowner and the tax farmer of the 25% fisher’s tax. That he had a large estate is indicated by the high sum of money that he paid as grain harvest tax.

\textsuperscript{600}\textit{Judgement} concerning the nature of the tax called ἐπιγραφή has changed over time. For an overview of the different opinions see Vandorpe, \textit{AfP} 46 (2000), pp. 178-179.

\textsuperscript{601}No less than twenty-four grain tax receipts are collected in this section (\textit{CPJ} I 73-96), but only eleven have been accepted as “Jewish sources,” see the list and the explanation in Chapter 1.1.3. and Chapter 1.2.3.

\textsuperscript{602}Brashear (1981), pp. 257-258.

\textsuperscript{603}Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 198. For partial payments see \textit{CPJ} I 75 and 78.

\textsuperscript{604}Wilcken (1899), vol. 1, pp. 59, 100-101. His assumption is based on the case of Simon son of Iazaros of \textit{CPJ} I 90 (see below). Since the same Simon is explicitly stated to be the tax farmer in \textit{CPJ} I 107, according to Wilcken a certain kind of receipt could be issued only to one kind of people, in this case to tax-farmers. This is, however, not the case, as also noted by Tcherikover, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 195-197.

\textsuperscript{605}Muhs (2005), pp. 61-62.
Besides the tax receipts, some other documents relate to Upper Egyptian grain harvest tax: 


These are so-called *r-rh=w* receipts, which were all drawn up in the Thebaid. During the last decades, U. Kaplony-Heckel published several *r-rh=w* receipts. In her view, these receipts are connected to the grain harvest tax receipts issued by the granaries. She thinks that these documents were land allotment receipts and that people were obliged to lease and cultivate a piece of deserted land as well as to pay the *epigraphe* or *šmw* as a rent for these plots of land. Accordingly, she translates the expression *r-rh=w* at the beginning of the receipts as “that which they assign (to PN).”

K. Vandorpe, however, offers another hypothesis in her study of the Ptolemaic grain harvest tax. She agrees with Kaplony-Heckel about the *r-rh=w* receipts being connected with the grain harvest tax but, in her view, their purpose was different. She argues that the *epigraphe*, which was the main tax imposed on grain-bearing land, was calculated each year after the inundation of the Nile. The agricultural lands were surveyed twice every year: once immediately after the Nile inundation (September-November), which was the so-called survey of land usage, but in these periods the harvest could not be estimated yet. That is why a second survey took place during spring (February-April), when the crops were already growing, and the harvest tax could be established. Vandorpe points out that all the *r-rh=w* receipts were written in the period between February and April. Thus, she is most probably right in assuming that the *r-rh=w* receipts were issued to the lessees on the occasion of the second survey. The purpose of these receipts was to register the size of the productive part of the land and to establish the harvest tax. In this case, the expression *r-rh=w* is to be interpreted as “that which was measured (for PN).” The size of the cultivated part of the land changed every year, since it depended on the Nile-inundation level, and consequently, the

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harvest tax had to be established every year. It is therefore logical to assume that the owners or lessees of the land went to the granary with these receipts to pay the harvest tax in kind.

As to Jews, BGU VI 1454, O.Dem.Bodl. 686, O.Dem.Brooklyn 12768-1672 and O.BM 25139 are all receipts of this kind. If my reading is correct, the Jews mentioned in BGU VI 1454 were all lessees of the land of PN son of Horos, who must have been the tenant of the land. The receipt of measurement was issued to the Jewish lessees on 29 Mecheir, year 3, that is, on 30 March 167 BCE, during the period of the second survey. Among the lessees mentioned, almost everybody can be considered Jewish: Tobias son of Simon, Aristomenes son of Ioseph, PN son of Abiites, Shabtai son of Abdi were certainly Jews, and, under the circumstances, most probably Platon son of Shabtai, Dositheos son of Shabtai and Aratos son of PN were also Jews. These Jewish lessees formed most probably a group of farmers, who may have had other professions as well. We know, for instance, that Aristomenes son of Ioseph was also the farmer of the wine tax (οἶνον τελος) in 161 BCE, since two of his receipts have been preserved (CPJ I 49 and SB XX 14976), in both of which he paid a quite large sum of money to the bank in Diospolis Magna. It can be assumed that he had other estates too to secure his bid, and that the cultivation of this land in partnership with other Jewish lessees was only a small part of his activity.

O.Dem.Bodl. 686 is another receipt of measurement written by an Egyptian scribe for two persons, Iapit son of Oupesia who was clearly Egyptian, and Shabtai son of Hananiah who was certainly Jewish. It seems that they cultivated a plot of land together. Like the previous receipt, this text too was issued on the occasion of the second survey of the land and registers that the size of the productive part of the land that Iapit and Shabtai rented or owned

610 According to my reading, line 4 reads as follows: lw n ḫṣy n pr 3ḥ [... ss Hr šts 16: The ed. princ. suggested the following translation: “Gemessen hat Pe…, der Sohn des Horos (Hr), diese (?) 16 Artaben.” The verb ḫṣy indeed means “to measure,” but the formula lw n ḫṣy used in r-Rh-w receipts should be understood as “receipt of measurement.” PN son of Horos was most probably the owner of the land that the Jews rented, and the productive part of this land was 16 arouras in that year. Although the editors suggested the reading “16 artaba” the word šts (aroura) is legible before the number 16, and we expect here the word aroura, because the size of the productive land was always mentioned first. The tax amount per aroura expressed in artaba was either mentioned or omitted. Moreover, the size of the productive land is repeated in Greek in l. 7 (ἄρωρας δόκα ξέ), thus, it is almost certain that in l. 4 too it is aroura (šts) that one should read.

611 My reading of the date is ḫṣ.t-sp 3 lḥt 2 prt 29 and (ἔτους) γ Μχ(γχρ) κθ. The dating in Demotic is hardly legible. In Greek the reading of (ἔτους) γ (year 3) and that of κθ (29) is certain, while the name of the month is abbreviated. Based on the beginning Me- there are two options: Mesore (which was suggested by the editors) or Mecheir. I suggest Mecheir, because it fell on March, that is, exactly on the period of the second survey.

612 The editors read the name as mn… šs …., but for the patronymic I suggest sbṭj, which most probably refers to the Semitic name ṣbṭj (Abiites) and the Greek Ἀβιτίς (Abiites).

613 Pltn denotes a Greek name Platon or Palation. The patronymic was read by Kühn as Btw.s, but I suggest the reading ṣbṭj, which is the Demotic transliteration of the biblical name ג个多 (Shabbethai), for which see Chapter 2.5.2.

614 The editors of the ostracon, read “Platon (Pltn), der Sohn des Btw.s, sn …., der Sohn des …...” in l. 2, and “Dositheos (? ṣṭṭ[lus]), der Sohn des .mnts” in l. 3, see Schubart & Kühn (1922), pp. 143-144.
was 23 arouras, of which the high land (situated above the inundation level of the Nile) was 20 arouras, while the low land (lit. new [land], a plot of land acquired from the Nile) measured 3 arouras.

*O.Dem.Brooklyn* 12768-1672 was issued to Ies(ous) son of Ioseph, Isaak son of Straton and Straton son of Ies(ous). These persons represent three generations of the family, Ie(sous) being the eldest, Straton his son and Isaak his grandson. The document confirms that the productive part of the land of 10 arouras, which they cultivated together, was 9 1/2 1/4 1/8 1/16 1/32 arouras (9.96875 arouras) in 156 BCE. The land, to which this receipt refers, belonged first to Ioseph son of Ies(ous), that is, the brother of Straton. Some members of the family bear biblical names like Ioseph, Ies(ous) and Isaak, but two carry the Greek name Straton. The receipt is connected to *CPJ I* 77, 78, 79, *O.Wilck. II* 731, *O.Mattha* 233, which all belong to the same family archive.615

Finally, *O.BM* 25139 was issued to Dositheos son of Shabtai, who was probably Jewish. The land that he cultivated was planted with date palms, and in that year, 3/4 aroura was measured in his case. Palm tree production was prominent in Upper Egypt, and new lands were often used for palm plantations.616 All these Jewish lessees or tenants cultivated confiscated lands that they purchased (as in the case of *O.Dem.Brooklyn* 12768-1672) or they rented (as in the case of *BGU VI* 1454). At any rate, it can be assumed that several Jews earned their living by tilling the soil both in Lower and in Upper Egypt. As we have seen, their social status varied from peasants to well-to-do landowners.

### 4.5. Merchants and Craftsmen

Tcherikover notes in his study of the Jews that there is hardly any evidence of Jewish merchants in the papyri.617 Indeed, there is not a single document that would present a Jewish merchant, but it is unlikely that there were no Jewish merchants in Ptolemaic Egypt. Later on during the Roman times, literary and documentary sources point in another direction.618 According to Philo, for instance, commerce had an important role in Jewish life.619 He even

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615 Clarysse, *JJP* 32 (2002), pp. 7-9. See also above Chapter 2.4.2.
617 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 16.
619 Philo, *Flacc.* 57. In fact, Philo’s family was also involved in commerce. Josephus informs us (*AJ* XVIII 159, 259; XIX 276; XX 100) that Philo’s brother, Alexander was the *alabarch* of Alexandria, that is, the inspector-in-
listed different classes of the Alexandrian people involved in the commerce in different ways. The first group, the capitalists, did not directly deal with commerce but financed it by investing money. Most of these capitalists, like Philo’s brother, lived in Alexandria, which was one of the commercial centers of the Mediterranean world. The second group consisting of ship-owning merchants was also part of the Alexandrian society, since all the products of Egypt passed through the port of Alexandria. The third group, however, which consisted of simple merchants, may have been present all over the country and may have constituted the majority of the Jewish merchants in Egypt. These merchants took part in the local commerce and, as noted by Tcherikover, the difference between them and the craftsmen was probably not considerable since in Ptolemaic times the craftsmen were also the retailers of their own products.

As to craftsmen, we are not any better informed about them by the documentary papyri. Craftsmenship certainly played an important role in the life of the Egyptian Jews. Both Philo and the Talmud confirm the existence of Jewish craftsmen in Alexandria. According to the Talmud, they even had strong professional organizations. In this regard, it is surprising that the papyri give us so little information about Jewish artisans. There are altogether three papyri that can be mentioned in this context. CPJ I 46 is an agreement drawn up between two Jewish potters from the so-called Syrian Village and three Egyptians concerning the joint use of a pottery in the village of Neiloupolis. They agreed that they would use the workshop together for seven months and that they would pay the taxes together, each according to their percentage in the partnership. It is important to note that these Jewish potters shared the workshop with Egyptians, which indicates that they were in good relations. Given the fact they they all lived at the countryside and practiced the same profession, there is no reason to assume that the Jews had any issues with the Egyptians as business partners or vice versa.

Another document to study is CPJ I 95, a tax receipt from Upper Egypt, which records a Jewish weaver, Japhneas son of Dositheos who paid his harvest tax (10 7/12 artabas of wheat) to a granary sometime in the IIrd century BCE. It is clear that besides his profession as chief of customs. He was an extremely wealthy man, the “Rothschild of Antiquity” in the words of U. Wilcken, see Modrzejewski (1995), p. 135.

620 Alexander the Alabarch was Philo’s brother. He was responsible for customs in Alexandria, and he also lent money to Agrippa I, when he was indebted to Rome, see Josephus, AJ XVIII 159-160.
621 Philo, Flacc. 56-57.
622 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 16.
623 The pottery originally belonged to Paous son of Sabbataios, who was very likely the brother of Dosas. If so, he may have been away for some time, which would explain why his father and brother shared the use of the workshop with other potters for such a short time.
weaver, Japheas also cultivated a plot of land, which may allude to the fact that he was a person of diverse skills. Unfortunately, we know nothing else about him.

In the present corpus there is another text referring to a Jewish artisan: *O.Eleph. DAIK* 6 from Elephantine. It is dated to the 2nd century BCE and lists textile artisans, among them a certain Eleazar. Although the text is very short, it is interesting because the first line reads “the fullers,” in l. 2 Ammon is designated “weaver,” and in l. 3 the profession of Eleazar/Lazaros is not indicated. Fullers and weavers were different branches of the textile industry. Thus, it is unclear what Eleazar’s profession may have been. According to I. Fikhman this document can be explained in two ways: either it was a list of fullers and for some unknown reason the weaver Ammon was also included in it, in which case Eleazar must have been a fuller too; or it was a list of artisans belonging to different branches of textile industry, in which case we do not know Eleazar’s profession. At any rate, he was certainly working in the textile industry. That is all we know about Jewish merchants and artisans in Ptolemaic Egypt. We may hope that further publications of papyri will reveal more information about them.
In the last two chapters we studied the situation of the Jews in the Ptolemaic society and we saw that their lives did not differ much from that of Greeks and Egyptians, at least from a professional point of view. There are, however, a few things that made the life of religious Jews living in Egypt different: Sabbath observance, synagogue attendance and participation in Jewish communal life. These are the most important and most obvious features of Jewish life, which made the Jews immediately recognizable. In the following part, I will ask whether any of these factors can be detected in the documentary sources.

5.1. Practicing Judaism in Ptolemaic Egypt

5.1.1. Sabbath observance

The Sabbath is a fundamental institution of Jewish religious life. It is mentioned several times in the Hebrew Bible and was recognized as an appointed feast and a day of holy rest from earliest times, in remembrance of the first creation. The biblical records of the commandment concerning the Sabbath read as follows: 624

Exod. 20:8-9. “Remember the day of the sabbaths to consecrate it. For six days you shall labor and do all your labor, but on the seventh day there is Sabbata to the Lord your God.”

Lev. 23:3. “Sixt days you shall do acts of work, and on the seventh day there is Sabbata, a rest, designated, holy to the Lord; you shall do no work; it is Sabbata to the Lord in your every settlement.

Deut. 5:12-13. “Keep the day of the sabbaths to consecrate it, as to Lord your God commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your labor, but on the seventh day there is Sabbata to the Lord your God.”

624 The translations are from the NETS edition, see Pietersma & Wright (2007), which is accessible online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/ (accessed on 08 January 2016).
It is clear that the Jews had to keep the seventh day holy by not doing any work on it, but it must be noted that the biblical references do not give details about the nature of the Sabbath worship. H. A. McKay, after analyzing the biblical references concerning the Sabbath, states that most of the references mention the cessation of work by ordinary people and the sacrifices offered by priests. None of the references mentions communal worship or prayer taking place on that day. It seems that “Sabbath was not a sacred day with worship rituals for ordinary people,” since all the instructions to be done on the Sabbath refer to cultic officials. Only the priests were obliged to carry out certain extra rituals on the Sabbath, but for the ordinary people, the Sabbath was simply a day of rest.

It was with the destruction of the first temple (587 BCE) that the importance of the Sabbath increased and was given religious significance. During the Babylonian exile the observance of the Sabbath became a symbolic sign for the Jews as well as part of their self-consciousness. It was Ezekiel who emphasized several times during the Babylonian exile the importance of the Sabbath by citing how many times the Jews did not observe it.

Although the Sabbath became so significant for the Babylonian Jews, we may raise the question whether the same holds true for the Egyptian Diaspora. This question can be answered in the positive, because in the Elephantine papyri of the Vth century BCE we can find unambiguous evidence for the observance of the Sabbath. B. Porten collected four ostraca that all make reference to the Sabbath. The first one, which was written to Jedaniah, is quite obscure, but certainly refers to the “day of Sabbath” following a gap in the text. The second one was addressed to a woman named Islah, in which she is instructed to meet the boat carrying vegetables on the Sabbath. The writer of the message threatened the woman

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625 The Torah contains several instructions as to what was prohibited on the Sabbath: baking and cooking (Ex. 16:23), harvesting (Ex. 34:21), lighting fire (Ex. 35:3) and gathering wood (Num. 15:32). For a detailed study of these and other prohibitions on the Sabbath see G. F. Hasel, “The Sabbath in the Pentateuch,” in K. A. Strand (ed.), The Sabbath in Scripture and History (Washington 1982), pp. 21-43.
626 H. A. McKay, Sabbath and Synagogue. The Question of Sabbath Worship in Ancient Judaism (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 122, Leiden 1994), pp. 11-42.
627 Individual and communal prayer were of course an important part of the Jewish religion, but nothing proves that communal prayers took place on the Sabbath, see H. A. McKay (1994), pp. 19-20. S. Talmon, for instance, is convinced that prayer was always ad hoc and individual rather than communal, see S. Talmon, “The Emergence of Institutionalized Prayer in Israel in the Light of the Qumran Literature,” in M. Delcor (ed.), Qumran: Sa Piété, sa théologie et son milieu (Paris 1978), pp. 265-284.
630 See for instance Ez. 44:24.
that in case of failure, she would lose her life. It can be deduced that the business woman did not want to perform such a task on the Sabbath, and consequently, she may have been a Sabbath observer. These are only indirect evidences of Sabbath observance, but the third and the fourth ostraca certainly confirm it, since both of them refer to something that had to be done before the day of the Sabbath.\footnote{CG 186, for which see A. Dupont-Sommer, “‘Yahô,’ et 'Yahô-Ṣebû'ôt' sur des ostraca araméens d'Éléphantine,” CRAI (1947), pp. 175-191; and CG 204, see idem., “Sabbath et parascève à Éléphantine d’après des ostraca araméens inédits,” MPAIBL 15 (1960), pp. 67-88.} All in all, it seems certain that the Jews of Elephantine were aware of the Sabbath. Yet, it is hard to conclude about the degree of their Sabbath observance, since no detailed information is given by these texts. Porten notes that the Jewish Sabbath must have been attractive for non-Jews too based on the fact that some of them named their children Shabtai.\footnote{Porten, JNES 28 (1969), p. 121. Further on this question see above Chapter 2.3.2.}

After such a clear sign of Sabbath observance in the Jewish community of Elephantine, it is not surprising to find further evidence of it later on in the Ptolemaic period. Among the Ptolemaic period sources, there are two instances, where Sabbath observance is traceable: CPJ I 10 and PSI Congr. XVII 22. CPJ I 10 from Philadelpheia is part of the Zenon archive, and records an account of an economic nature. The document is certainly connected to construction works carried out on the estate of Apollonios. It was most probably drawn up by a mason or the overseer of a construction work, and lists the number of bricks that were brought to the estate during one week from the 5\textsuperscript{th} to the 11\textsuperscript{th} of Epeiph of an unknown year. The bricks were carried by a certain Demetrios and another person from Tanis whose name is unknown. What makes this text interesting is that the 7\textsuperscript{th} of Epeiph is marked by the word Σάββατα, and on that day there was no transaction. Σάββατα is the Greek form of the Hebrew נ的语言 (Shabbat), which is also the usual form of the word used in the Septuagint. It is, thus, clear that somebody, either one of the transporters or the overseer himself, observed the Sabbath and did not work on that day. V. A. Tcherikover, followed by A. Kasher, rightly suppose that a transporter could have easily been replaced by someone else, it is therefore more likely that the work was interrupted because of the overseer.\footnote{Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 136; Kasher (1985), p. 66.} The same form of the word Sabbath is attested in PSI Congr. XVII 22, which is an economic account and which has already been discussed above.\footnote{See above Chapter 1.2.1.4.} What interests us here is that the 1\textsuperscript{st} of Hathyr is marked by the word Σάββατα in the same way as in CPJ I 10, and no transaction occurred that day. We may therefore suppose that the writer of the account was Jewish and observed the Sabbath.
Based on these sources, it is certain that the Sabbath was observed by at least some Jewish communities in Egypt. Further, we may raise the question: what did Sabbath observance entail? What did the Jews do exactly on the Sabbath? As noted above, the Hebrew Bible does not give details about the nature of Sabbath observance except for the fact that it was a day of rest. Unfortunately, the documentary sources are also quite obscure and they do not tell us much about the practices. However, certain literary sources give us some clues since both Philo and Josephus discuss Sabbath observance. It is not my intention to give a detailed study of their views about the Sabbath, but the key features of their testimonies should certainly be summarized.639

Philo considered himself an observant Jew and lived in the Jewish community of Alexandria.640 Regardless of the fact that he wrote his books as an apologist, his testimony about the Sabbath should be taken into account. He discusses Sabbath observance in several instances in his works, and most fully in the De Specialibus Legibus when he writes about the festivals.641 From his testimony, two main topics should be mentioned: first, the interpretation of the biblical law, and secondly, the practices of the Alexandrian Jews on the Sabbath. As to the first one, Philo stresses that Sabbath was the day when people were supposed to rest and abstain from all works.642 He also emphasizes that the law is not to promote idleness because it hates those who desire to be indolent, and it commands the people to work for six days. However, on the seventh day, people are supposed to rest instead of work. Abstention from work concerns not only the masters, but also the servants, since the law gave the day of rest to everybody.

As to the practices carried out on the Sabbath, he does not mention worship but describes different gatherings that took place in the Alexandrian synagogues. According to him, people took “lessons of prudence, and temperance, and courage, and justice, and all other virtues” on the Sabbath.643 In these lessons held by the learnt Jewish teachers, people were supposed to sit, keep silent and pay attention to the instructions of the Law. Both aspects of the Sabbath are repeated in the De Vita Mosis where Philo stresses again that on the Sabbath, the Jews were supposed to abstain from all works and businesses, “which are

641 Philo, Spec. Leg. II 56-67. See also De Vita Mosis II 213-220, De Opificio Mundi 30-31, 33-43; De Abrahamo 28-30; De Decalogo 97-102; De Vita Contemplativa 3-4 just to quote the most important ones.
642 Philo, Spec. Leg. II 59.
643 Ibid. II 62.
connected with the seeking of means of living,” and to dedicate their time to the study of philosophy. It is also important to note Philo’s terminology for he uses συναγώγιον for Sabbath assemblies of Jews and προσευχή for the gathering places of the Jews. It is reasonable to think that the source of Philo’s knowledge was the Great Synagogue of Alexandria where he most probably went quite often. We may then conclude that by the time of Philo (first half of 1st century CE) the Sabbath was not only a day of rest any more but also a day of gatherings in the local synagogues in order to study the ancestral Law. This is indeed a picture of educational gatherings where religious, social and moral topics were discussed.

When it comes to Josephus, his approach to the Sabbath is quite similar. There are three key features emphasized in his writings in connection with the Sabbath: first, the explanation of the biblical law, secondly, the tactical advantage that the adversaries of the Jews took of their Sabbath observance in times of war, and thirdly, the right of the Jews to observe the Sabbath according to their ancestral laws. Regarding the first, Josephus repeats more than once that Jews abstained from work on the Sabbath and that they usually gathered in order to study Torah. When he discusses the Law, he stresses that the Lord “permitted the people to leave off their other employments, and to assemble together for the hearing of the law, and learning it exactly,” and that this happened not only once or twice, but every week. He also quotes other sources that mention this strange Jewish custom. The most important of all of these is probably Agatharchides of Cnidus who describes the Jews as a people who “inhabit the most strongly fortified city, and who have the custom of abstaining from work every seventh day, when they do not take any agricultural operation, nor do they bear arms, but pray with outstretched hands in the temples until the evening.” We do not know how much of these thoughts were those of Agatharchides and which those of Josephus, but it is clear that here, like in Philo’s report, the essence of Sabbath observance was not only

644 Philo, Mos. II 211.
645 Ibid. II 215-16.
646 The word proseuche means “prayer,” and is attested in the Septuagint (Isa. 56:7). That the proseuche was the ancient term for the synagogues seems to be confirmed by documentary evidence. In inscriptions from Egypt, this word is always used for a building: “house of prayer.” The term proseuche is recorded in this sense in ten Egyptian inscriptions, of which five are explicitly Jewish: CIJ II 1441 = JIGRE 24, CIJ II 1442 = JIGRE 25, CIJ II 1443 = JIGRE 27 and CPJ III 1532a = JIGRE 117. Moreover we find the term in three Ptolemaic period papyri too: CPJ I 129, 134, 138. Further on the terminology of the synagogues see below Chapter 5.1.2.
648 Josephus, CA II 175. For a new translation and commentary of Contra Apionem by the Leiden Josephus project see J. M. G. Barclay, Against Apion (Flavius Josephus. Translation and Commentary 10, Leiden 2007).
649 Josephus, CA I 209.
abstention from work but also the gatherings in their “holy places,” i.e. in the synagogues. Apparently, by this time, the Sabbath became more meaningful in terms of piety.\textsuperscript{650}

As to the second point, the tactical advantage gained by the adversaries, the most important event to mention in this respect is the capture of Jerusalem by Ptolemy I Soter who took advantage of the fact that the Jews abstained from fighting on the Sabbath.\textsuperscript{651} Josephus, whose source is again Agatharchides of Cnidus, writes that Ptolemy marched to Jerusalem on the Sabbath, and the Jews did not oppose him because they did not suspect any hostile act. Due to their lack of suspicion, Ptolemy seized the city without difficulty.\textsuperscript{652} The same passage is repeated by him in \textit{Contra Apionem} where he also adds that Agatharchides considers the Sabbath observance a “mad custom” and “foolish practice.”\textsuperscript{653} Josephus, however, defends the Jews by claiming that everybody who looks at this Jewish practice without prejudice thinks that it is a great custom because the Jews “constantly prefer the observation of their laws, and their religion towards God, before the preservation of themselves and their country.”

Finally, the third claim that he emphasizes more than once is the right of the Jews to live according to their ancestral Law. From our point of view, this is probably the most important one since the Jews and their rights depended on the actual political power. Observing the Sabbath was part of the Jewish religion, and V. A. Tcherikover is definitely right in claiming that “the Jewish religion could not exist in the Greco-Roman world without certain priviledges.”\textsuperscript{654} These priviledges guaranteed for them not only exemption from participation in the cult of the Greek gods, but also the abstention from work on the Sabbath. Probably this is the reason why Josephus finds it necessary to emphasize twice the Jewish right to live according to their religious laws. The first appearance of this claim can be found in the letter of Antiochus III written to his official Ptolemaios after his arrival to Jerusalem in 198 BCE following the Seleucid conquest of the country. In this letter, Antiochos describes how honorably the Jews received him in the city and how they supported the Seleucid troops during their fighting against the Ptolemies. In return for their help, Antiochos announced

\textsuperscript{650} Weiss (2003), p. 67.  
\textsuperscript{651} This capture is also mentioned briefly by Appian, Syr. XI 50.  
\textsuperscript{652} Josephus, \textit{AJ} XII 4-6. Ptolemy conquered Palestine four times during the Wars of the Successors (320, 312, 302 and 301 BCE), and according to Tcherikover’s reconstruction of the events, this account refers most likely to the conquest of 302 BCE: further on the chronology see Tcherikover (1959), pp. 56-58.  
\textsuperscript{653} Josephus, \textit{CA} I 209-211. In fact, Ptolemy was not the only monarch who captured Jerusalem in this way. According to the \textit{First} (1 Macc. 1:30-33) and the \textit{Second Book of Maccabees} (2 Macc. 5:24-26), in 168 BCE Antiochos IV Epiphanes arrived at the city peaceably, waited until Sabbath, and when he saw that the Jews did not work, he ordered his troops to parade under arms and killed great numbers of people.  
\textsuperscript{654} Tcherikover (1959), p. 305.
several priviledges that he accorded (or confirmed) to the Jews. Among these priviledges we read that “all the members of the nation shall have a form of government in accordance with the laws of their country.” After this source, Josephus quotes another letter that Antiochos wrote to Zenxis, the general of his army and the satrap of Lydia concerning a sedition in Phrygia and Lydia. In this letter, Antiochos confirmed again the above-mentioned right by claiming that the Jews should observe their own law since he promised this right to them.

Why are these proclamations so important? Mainly because we have nothing similar from the previous period when Palestine was still under Ptolemaic occupation. Although these decrees deal with the Seleucid period, they provide important references to the situation of the Jews under Ptolemaic rule. As noted by V. A. Tcherikover, Antiochos III did not invent anything new when he used the expression “ancestral law” because he simply applied a well-known term of the Hellenistic offices. We may agree with E. Bickermann who states in his discussion of the first letter that the right to live according to the ancestral law was already granted to the Jews by Alexander the Great. In fact, the Jews were not the only ones, who enjoyed this privilege since all the people he conquered were treated the same way.

V. A. Tcherikover gives the following examples: we know that Alexander permitted the Sardians and the Lydians to enjoy their ancient laws and to be free; he restored the laws of the Greek cities in Asia Minor; and he gave to the Arabs their ancestral autonomy. We may then assume with reason that he did not behave differently with the Jews and guaranteed to them the possibility to live according their Law and traditions. In the same way, there is no ground to assume that the Ptolemies changed anything concerning the religious liberties of the minorities.

To conclude about what we know concerning Sabbath observance in Ptolemaic Egypt, it is important to emphasize that the Jews of Egypt, or at least some communities,

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655 Josephus, AJ XII 138-144. The authenticity of this decree was much debated in the past, but since Bickermann’s study it is widely considered to be authentic, see E. Bickermann, “La Charte séleucide de Jérusalem,” REJ 100 (1935), pp. 4-35. Reprinted in revised form in E. Bickermann, Studies in Jewish and Christian History II (Leiden 1980), pp. 44-85. In this study, Bickermann analyzes all the details of the letter and shows several parallels of the measures of Antiochos in the Greek world. The document, therefore, seems to be authentic.

656 Josephus, AJ XII 142.

657 Ibid. XII 148-153.

658 Ibid. XII 150.


660 Ibid., p. 49.

661 Arrian, Anabasis I 17:4.

662 Ibid. I 18:2.

663 Strabo, Geographica XVI 1.11.
undoubtedly observed the Sabbath as is clear from the papyrological sources (CPJ I 10, PSI Congr. XVII 22). As to how they observed it, we know only that they certainly abstained from work. All other information comes from the literary works. Based on Philo and Josephus, it seems that on the Sabbath, the Jews went to the synagogues to spend time on learning the Law with the help of their sage leaders. There is no reason to reject these claims since synagogues existed in Egypt as early as the IIIrd century BCE.

5.1.2. Synagogue attendance

We now arrive at the topic of ancient synagogue, which were undoubtedly the most important Jewish institution in the Greco-Roman world. It offered a new form of communal and religious practice, which was now separated from the Temple worship. During the Second Temple period, the Temple of Jerusalem was still the center of worship, but the synagogues served the interest of local communities, especially those living in the Diaspora far from Jerusalem.

The question of the origins of the synagogue is still debated. Over the last decades, research on the synagogues has provided several different scholarly theories about the subject. No mention is made of synagogues until the 1st century CE. The earliest literary sources mentioning synagogues are Philo and Josephus, while the earliest archeological evidences attesting the existence of synagogue buildings date from the IInd and Ist century BCE. Several well-known theories have been elaborated in the past regarding the place of origin of this institution, which mainly fall into the following categories: 1. Babylonian Diaspora 2. Palestine 3. Egyptian Diaspora.

666 As of today, the earliest synagogue building is located on the island of Delos, and most probably dates from the IInd or the Ist century BCE. In Palestine, recent excavations discovered Second Temple period buildings, which have been identified as synagogues: Gamla, Masada, Herodion, Jerusalem, Qiryat Sefer, Modii’in, and most recently Migdal. One could also Capernaum and Jericho. These locations, except ofr Migdal, are, however, considered inconclusive by many scholars, because no actual proof has been found that would confirm that they were used as synagogues, see Hachlili (2013), p. 23 and the reference to earlier bibliography.
According to a long-standing tradition, which goes back to the Middle Ages, the synagogue as a social institution was first established in Babylon during the VIth century BCE supposing that the Jews, who lived far from the Temple of Jerusalem, needed meeting places where they could hold local gatherings as an alternative form of worship.\footnote{For an extensive bibliography see Levine (2005), p. 25, n. 12 and Hachlili (2013), p. 14.} According to this view, the tradition of gatherings in local houses was established in Israel on their return. However, no archeological findings have been discovered that would confirm this supposition.

The representatives of the second opinion propose a Palestinian origin. They disagree, however, about the date of origin because some scholars maintain that the synagogue emerged at the time of the Deuteronomic Reformation of king Josiah in 621 BCE, which prohibited sacrifices outside of Jerusalem.\footnote{J. Morgenstern, “The Origin of the Synagogue,” Studi Orientalistici in onore Giorgio Levi della Vida 2 (1956), pp. 192-201; M. Weinfeld, Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School (Oxford 1972). See also the references cited by J. Gutmann, “Deuteronomy: Religious Reformation or Iconoclastic Revolution?” in J. Gutmann (ed.), The Image and the Word: Confrontations in Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Missoula 1977), pp. 5 and 16.} L. Levine suggests that the biblical city-gate, with its exterior and interior spaces could serve as a forerunner of the synagogue because it was the center of communal life.\footnote{Levine (2005), pp. 28-34.} Others link its appearance to the Second Temple period and suggest that the synagogue originated from the Torah reading conducted in the Temple courts on Sabbaths and festivals.\footnote{Levine (2005), pp. 28-34.} Still others propose a II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE origin. They argue that the appearance of the synagogue can be linked to the Hasmonean revolt and that later the Pharisees developed this institution to be the communal and religious meeting-place of the Jews.\footnote{S. Zeitlin, “The Origins of the Synagogue: A Study in the Development of Jewish Institutions,” in J. Gutmann (ed.), Ancient Synagogues: the State of Research (Brown Judaic Studies 22, Chico 1981), pp. 1-4.}

All of these theories promote the Palestinian origin of the synagogue. It is, however, important to note that they are all conjectures without any affirmative evidence.

rather than archeological, but it undoubtedly proves that synagogues existed in Egypt already in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE. The following table summarizes the different sources from Ptolemaic Egypt:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Type of source</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedia</td>
<td>246-221 BCE</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1440 = JIGRE 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis</td>
<td>246-221 BCE</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1532a = JIGRE 117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexandrou Nesos</td>
<td>218 BCE</td>
<td>papyrus</td>
<td>(CPJ) I 129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xenephyris</td>
<td>140-116 BCE</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1441 = JIGRE 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitriai (el-Barnugi)</td>
<td>140-116 BCE</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1442 = JIGRE 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown place</td>
<td>140-116 BCE (orig.)</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1449 = JIGRE 125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis</td>
<td>II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE</td>
<td>papyrus</td>
<td>(CPJ) I 134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayum</td>
<td>114 or 78 BCE</td>
<td>papyrus</td>
<td>(PSI Congr.) XVII 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athribis (Benha)</td>
<td>II\textsuperscript{nd}-I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE</td>
<td>inscriptions</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1443 = JIGRE 27 (CIJ) II 1444 = JIGRE 28</td>
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<td>inscription</td>
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<td>37 BCE</td>
<td>inscription</td>
<td>(CIJ) II 1432 = JIGRE 13</td>
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<td>papyrus</td>
<td>(CPJ) I 138</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexandria (the Great Synagogue)</td>
<td>I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE – I\textsuperscript{st} century CE</td>
<td>literature</td>
<td>Tosefta Sukkah IV 6 Jer. Talm. Sukkah V 55, Bab. Talm. Sukkah 51b Philo, Legatio 134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8. Synagogues in Ptolemaic Egypt in chronological order

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674 This list differs only slightly from that of Tcherikover, see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 8. It does not include the instances of the Roman period, but increases by one the sources of the Ptolemaic period (\(PSI Congr.\) XVII 22). JIGRE 105 does not form part of the list because the restoration of the word προσε[χ]ν - - ] is uncertain.
These documentary sources are more than enough to conclude that the synagogue as a communal institution was part of Jewish life in Egypt. Both CIJ II 1440 = JIGRE 22 from Schedia and CIJ II 1532a = JIGRE 117 from Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis date from the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 BCE), and record the honorific dedication of synagogues on behalf of the king.\footnote{Further on the inscription from Schedia see Chapter 1.2.1.2., on the one from Arsinoe-Krikodilopolis see Chapter 1.2.1.4.} Still from the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, we have evidence of another synagogue...
in the Fayum, in the village of Alexandrou Nesos. *CPJ I* 129 records a petition written by a woman against a certain Dorotheos who had stolen her mantle, which somehow ended up in the local synagogue.676

From the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, we know of at least another four, but probably even more, synagogues in Egypt. Two of them, the synagogues in Xenephyris and in Nitritai, were dedicated to Ptolemy VIII Euergetes, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III. The third one, which was founded in Athribis, has been preserved in two inscriptions: *CIJ II* 1443 = *JIGRE* 27 records the dedication of the synagogue itself, while *CIJ II* 1444 = *JIGRE* 28 that of the *exedra*.677 The fourth one was in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis, as attested by *CPJ I* 134, and this synagogue was probably the same as the one recorded by the above-mentioned inscription from the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE (*CIJ II* 1532a = *JIGRE* 117).678 *PSI Congr.* XVII 22 can also be considered an indirect evidence of a synagogue since it lists among the expenses the term *nakorikon*: most probably some kind of contribution for the salary of the *nakoros*, the attendant of the synagogue.679 It is, however, regrettable that the exact provenance of the papyrus is unknown, so that it may refer to any of the above-mentioned synagogues in the Fayum or even to a hitherto unattested synagogue.

From the late Ptolemaic period, there are two texts that refer to Jewish synagogues: the first one is *CPJ I* 138, the second one is *CIJ II* 1449 = *JIGRE* 125. Most probably, both of them were written in the second half of the I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE. Finally, two inscriptions have been preserved from Alexandria, both of which are dedicatory inscriptions: the synagogue attested in *CIJ II* 1433 = *JIGRE* 9 was probably founded in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, while *CIJ II* 1432 = *JIGRE* 13, which comes from Gabbary, a suburb of Alexandria, can be dated to the reign of Cleopatra VII. In fact, it is very likely that all the Jewish communities of a considerable population had a synagogue, and we may hope that further evidence will come to light to confirm this assumption. In Chapter 1 we have already discussed most of these sources, so now I will emphasize the main aspects of the Jewish synagogues in Ptolemaic Egypt.

Let us begin with the terminology. In the inscriptions from Egypt, the term προσευχή is used for buildings erected by Jews. Originally, this term means “prayer,” and it is also

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676 See also above Chapter 12.1.4.
677 Further on the synagogues of Xenephyris, Nitritai and Athribis see Chapter 1.2.1.2.
678 Tcherikover (1957), pp. 247-248, followed by Modrzejewski (1995), p. 89, assumes that it was most probably the same synagogue, but Kasher (1985), p. 138 notes that given the big size of the town, there were certainly more than one synagogue. Thus the reference may also be for another.
679 Further on this papyrus see above Chapter 1.2.1.4.
attested in the Septuagint in this sense.\textsuperscript{680} I accept the general view according to which the use of this word by Jews for a building must have referred to a “house of prayer,” i.e. a synagogue.\textsuperscript{681} This is confirmed by different sources too. CPJ I 138, for instance, is a badly preserved papyrus, which seems to refer to a meeting held in a proseuche (συναγωγὴ ἐν τῷ προσευχη). From this text it is clear the the word synagoge was reserved for the community or for the meeting itself, while the term proseuche designated the building where they met. Although the synagoge is not explicitly stated to be Jewish, the use of these terms together makes it almost certain that we have a Jewish association here that held a meeting in the local proseuche.\textsuperscript{682} In addition, the literary sources also used this term in the sense of “house of prayer.” It is important to mention that Philo almost always uses the term proseuche or a derivative of it for the synagogues in Alexandria,\textsuperscript{683} and that Josephus applies this term to the synagogue at Tiberias.\textsuperscript{684} Moreover, not only in Egypt, but also elsewhere in the Diaspora we find this designation, for example in the inscriptions of the synagogues of Delos and Bosphorus.\textsuperscript{685}

As we have seen, almost all of the epigraphical sources (except for CJ II 1449 = JIGRE 125) are honorific inscriptions. The preposition ὑπέρ at the beginning of the inscriptions can be best translated as “on behalf of.” The custom of dedicating proseuchai on behalf of the kings is a unique phenomenon and is very rarely recorded outside of Egypt.\textsuperscript{686} L. Levine is certainly right in assuming that this custom expressed the “loyalty and gratitude of the Jewish communities towards the king and the queen” on the one hand, and “the centralized control exercised by the Ptolemies” on the other hand.\textsuperscript{687} That all the minorities depended on the Ptolemaic kings seems to be certain because the same phenomenon is attested in non-Jewish sources too.\textsuperscript{688}

\textsuperscript{680} Isa. 56:7
\textsuperscript{682} Unfortunately the text is very mutilated, which does not allow us to draw any conclusion about the nature of this association, but Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 252 raised the possibility of a burial association, which was not unknown in the Hellenistic world.
\textsuperscript{683} See the references in Mayer (1974), p. 247.
\textsuperscript{684} Josephus, Vita 54.
\textsuperscript{685} For both of them see Levine (2005), pp. 81-134.
\textsuperscript{686} Levine (2005), p. 84 mentions two other examples, but both date from the Roman period: one dedicatory inscription is from Qatzion in Upper Galilee, while the other one is from Mursa (present-day Osijek in Croatia). Besides, we know of synagogues in Italy that were named after prominent Romans, but this is only a similar custom, not an identical one.
\textsuperscript{687} Ibid., p. 83.
\textsuperscript{688} Ibid., p. 84, n. 21.
There were certain aspects of the synagogue that the Jews adopted from the Hellenistic environment. The most important to mention here is the name of their God in Greek: “Highest God” (θεὸς ὕψιστος). Among the Egyptian sources two inscriptions mention that a synagogue was erected to the Highest God, \( CIJ \ II 1433 = JIGRE \ 9 \) and \( CIJ \ II 1443 = JIGRE \ 27 \). \( CIJ \ II 1433 = JIGRE \ 9 \) from Alexandria (Hadra) is a fragmentary inscription, it is, however, clear that “the proseuche and its appurtenances” were dedicated to Theos Hypsistos. We meet the same term in \( CIJ \ II 1443 = JIGRE \ 27 \), according to which the Jewish community of Athisibis dedicated the proseuche to Theos Hypsistos. It is important to mention another inscription, namely \( CIJ \ II 1432 = JIGRE \ 13 \) from Gabbary, which can be dated to the reign of Cleopatra VII. The donator of this Alexandrian synagogue was a certain Alypus, probably a Jew himself. The synagogue was dedicated to Theos Megalos (the Great God) instead of Theos Hypsistos. Yet, since it is a synagogue, the designation Theos Megalos certainly denotes the Jewish God. That the Jews chose a name for their God familiar to the Greeks is not surprising, because other corresponding terms such as kyrios would have been too obscure for the Greeks.\(^689\) For the same reason, however, one must be cautious with this designation, since it was also used by pagans.\(^690\)

Another Greek feature was the way the Jews called the leaders of the synagogue. The most common title that we meet in the sources is archisynagogos,\(^691\) but in Ptolemaic Egypt this term is not attested.\(^692\) Instead, we find the title nakoros in \( CPJ \ I 129 \) and the term nakorikon in \( PSI \ Congr. \ XVII \ 22 \).\(^693\) Another title that most probably appears in \( CIJ \ II 1441 = JIGRE \ 24 \) is the prostates. There is no doubt that Theodore and Achilion, the prostatai of the synagogue, had leading positions in the community. According to A. Kasher, they may have been managers of the synagogue or even official representatives of the community before the


\(^{691}\) See for instance the well-known Theodotos inscription from Jerusalem (\( CIJ \ II 1404 \), in which Theodotos son of Vettenos is stated to be priest and archisynagogos: G. M. FitzGerald, “Theodotus Inscription,” \( PEFQ \ 53 \) (1921), pp. 175-181.

\(^{692}\) There is an honorific decree in the Alexandria Museum, which attests the title archisynagogos, but this text can be dated to 3 CE. As noted by Horbury & Noy (1992) p. 29, the other supposed occurrence of the word in Egypt is a restoration, and the surviving text reads only \( −γωγος \), for this inscription see E. Bernand, \( Recueil \ des \ inscriptions \ grecques \ du \ Fayoum \ 1, \ no. \ 9 \) (Leiden 1975), pp. 35-36.

\(^{693}\) Further on these terms see Chapter 1.2.1.4.
authorities. In this regard, it is also noteworthy that in CPJ I 134 the synagogue in Arsinoe-Krokodilopolis is claimed to be “represented by Pertollos,” which may refer to a similar if not the same position as the term prostates.

As to the architectural appearance of the synagogues in Egypt, we are in a complicated situation for there is no archeological evidence of it at our disposal. Some inscriptions may, however, be telling. CIJ II 1444 = JIGRE 28 for instance records the dedication of an exedra in the synagogue of Athribis. It seems that it was a sort of open hall attached to the synagogue where people could sit and discuss about Torah. Whatever its precise function, it is clear that the synagogue did not stand alone, but was surrounded by other buildings. Another interesting attachment was the pylon dedicated by the Jews of Xenephyris in CIJ II 1441 = JIGRE 24. This Greek word means “gateway,” but it also meant the “entrance” of the Egyptian temples. We do not know whether the pylon of the synagogue looked like the entrance of an Egyptian temple or not, but it may have had a similar function. That is all we know at present of the architectural elements of the synagogues in Ptolemaic Egypt.

Now will investigate the significant topic of juridical rights granted to the synagogues by the Ptolemies. Our main source is CIJ II 1449 = JIGRE 125, another inscription, and because of its importance I quote it here:

“On the order of the queen and the king, in place of the previous plaque about the dedication of the proseuche let what is written below be written up. King Ptolemy Euergetes (proclaimed) the proseuche inviolate. The queen and king gave the order.”

The text was written in Greek except for the last sentence, which is in Latin: Regina et rex iusser(un)t. This bilingual inscription records the granting of the right of asylum to a

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694 Kasher (1985), p. 112. He notes that the term itself was also used in Palestine as some literary sources such Josephus (AJ XII 158) or the Second Book of Maccabees (II 4) record it.

695 See Chapter 1.2.1.2.

696 Ibid.

697 As noted by Griffith, Ancient Synagogues (1995), p. 11, synagogues were often influenced by local traditions. Thus it seems logical to assume that the pylon of the synagogue followed Egyptian architectural customs, see for instance the synagogue at Capernaum, the general plan of which shows Roman influence. In addition, Griffith uses the appearance of the pylon attached to a synagogue as evidence for the Egyptian origin of the synagogue.

698 The situation is not any better outside of Egypt since archeological evidence is available only for Delos and Italy. For points of comparison, see the architectural structures of these synagogues in Levine (2005), pp. 104-113.

699 Further on this inscription see most recently S. Pfeiffer, Griechische und Lateinische Inschriften zum Ptolemäerreich und zur Römischen Provinz Aegyptus (Berlin 2015), pp. 181-190 with reference to earlier bibliography.
synagogue in Egypt.\textsuperscript{700} It is in fact the confirmation of a previous order issued by Ptolemy Euergetes. This name gives two possibilities: Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 BCE) or Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II (170-116 BCE). Although it is not impossible that Ptolemy III Euergetes is our donator here, Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II seems to be a more reasonable candidate because, as noted by W. Horbury and D. Noy too, asylum was very rarely granted in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE.\textsuperscript{701} The provenance of the inscription is uncertain, thus, it can refer to any known or hitherto unknown synagogue.\textsuperscript{702} As to the identification of the queen and the king who reissued the prostagma, there are more possibilities. The use of Latin is definitely surprising, which is why many scholars exclude the Hellenistic period, and assume that it must have been renewed in the Roman period. If so, who would have confirmed the right of asylum to a synagogue in Egypt? Following Th. Mommsen, most modern scholars attribute the text to Zenobia, queen of Palmyra and to her son Vaballathus, which would place this inscription in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century CE.\textsuperscript{703} Zenobia started a revolt against the Roman Empire after that she assumed the throne in 267 CE. She also invaded Egypt, where Probus, the Roman prefect attempted to stop her without success. Zenobia proclaimed herself queen of Egypt, and ruled the country for years until Aurelian (270-275 CE) defeated her and took her as hostige to Rome. Zenobia considered herself to be the “descendant” of Cleopatra VII and the Ptolemies, and she is also known for having a good relationship with the Jews, which would explain why she renewed the right of asylum to a synagogue. All in all, this hypothesis is possible, but J. Bingen suggests another version, namely that the donators were Cleopatra VII and one of her sons, either Ptolemy XIV or Ptolemy XV Cesarion.\textsuperscript{704} This would mean that the inscription was carved between 47 and 31 BCE, when several Egyptian temples were granted the right of asylum. I prefer the latter option: first, granting this right fits better the policy of the last Ptolemies, secondly, both the Greek and Latin lettering of the inscription allude to a late Ptolemaic date,\textsuperscript{705} and thirdly, the presence of Latin would be in fact understandable, because we may assume that Cleopatra wanted the Roman troops, the actual

\textsuperscript{700} In general on this inscription see K. J. Rigsby, “A Jewish Asylum in Graeco-Roman Egypt,” in M. Dreher (ed.), Das antike Asyl: kultische Grundlagen, rechtliche Ausgestaltung und politische Funktion (Cologne 2003), pp. 127-142 with reference to earlier bibliography.


\textsuperscript{702} Rigsby suppose that it comes from Leontopolis, see K. J. Rigsby, Asyla: Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World (Berkeley / Los Angeles / London 1996), p. 540.


military force in the country, to be able to read and respect the content of this inscription.\textsuperscript{706} The fact that no other similar Latin inscription has been found in Egypt does not help us resolve the question.

Now, we turn to the question of asylum. That a synagogue was granted the right of asylum is not exceptional. We know of other temples that were given the same right of sheltering refugees.\textsuperscript{707} What is interesting is that the sources attesting the right of asylum all date from the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE. This undoubtedly indicates that the policy of the last Ptolemies changed regarding the temples in Egypt. The donatary inscriptions found in Egypt had little in common with the rest in the Greek world, since they continued the tradition of the pharaonic steles. The Egyptian stele were used for the presentation of dedications and scenes in which the pharaoh offered something to a certain god or goddess.\textsuperscript{708} As a rule, these steles were reproduced in four copies, and then set up at all four sides of a temple. The Ptolemaic period Greek steles granting the right of asylum followed this line of tradition rather than that of the Greek cities. In Egypt, the right of asylum was exclusively given to temples, while in the Greek cities, not only temples but entire cities or other territories could also request this right. The exact objective of the granting asylum is also a subject of debate. Some scholars suppose that the temples claimed this right at their own initiative, while others think that the royal power declined so seriously in the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE that they were obliged to cooperate with the still powerful Egyptian temples and other religious associations.\textsuperscript{709} At any rate, this inscription shows very well that the Jewish synagogues were treated in the same way as pagan temples, which means that they were considered “holy places” by the authorities. In this respect, no difference was made between religions by the Ptolemies.

Finally, let us devote some words to what we know about the rituals carried out in the synagogues. Unfortunately, documentary sources are not very informative about this either. However, a rabbinic tradition regarding the Great Synagogue of Alexandria that has been preserved in three different versions is worth mentioning: first in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century CE Tosefta,

\textsuperscript{706} Rigsby notes that “the Ptolemies granted asylum in the sense the Romans understood it, religious immunity from civil law,” see Rigsby (1996), p. 540.

\textsuperscript{707} Besides this Jewish synagogue, we know of at least a dozen temples, which were granted asylia during the 1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE: the temple of Harkentechthai in Athrībīs, the temple of Herōn in Magdola, the temples of Isis Sachypsis, Isis Eseremphis, Heracles Callinicus and Phnephros in Theadelphia, the temple of Psōsnaus, Phnephros and Soxis, and that of Ammon in Euhemeria, and finally the temple of Isis in Ptolemais, for the sources of these grantings see Rigsby (1996), pp. 540-573.


\textsuperscript{709} Ibid., p. 544.
and later both in the *Jerusalem* and the *Babylonian Talmud*. This tradition has been studied by several scholars, but because of its importance I quote it here:

“Whoever has never seen the double colonnade [the basilica-synagogue] of Alexandria in Egypt, has never seen Israel’s glory. They said it was a kind of large basilica, with one colonnade inside another. Sometimes there were twice as many people there as those who went forth from Egypt. Now there were seventy-one golden thrones set up there, one for each of the seventy-one elders of the Great Sanhedrin, each one worth twenty-one talents of gold, with a wooden platform in the middle. The minister of the synagogue stands on it, with flags in his hand. When [one began to read, and] it came time to answer “Amen,” for each and every blessing. Then that one would wave the flags, and they would answer, “Amen.” They did not sit in a jumble, but the goldsmiths sat by themselves, the silversmith by themselves, the weavers by themselves, the bronze-workers by themselves, and the blacksmiths by themselves. All this why? So that when a poor traveler came along, he could find his fellow craftsmen, and on that basis he could gain a living for himself and his family.

This description is quite unique in that no other source gives such details about the physical appearance of the synagogue of Alexandria and the practices carried out inside. However, L. Levine rightly addresses the issue of historicity of this tradition. He points out that this text recalls the description of the Jerusalem Temple found in rabbinic literature: the designation of the building as a double colonnade, the placing of the platform in the center of the synagogue and the custom of waving the flags are all reminiscent of practices carried out in the Jerusalem Temple. In addition, several details seem to be exaggerated: the number of people attending the synagogue (twice as many as those going forth from Egypt) or the description of the golden chairs should not be taken literally. Nevertheless, according to Levine, there is no reason to reject the entire content of this passage. He thinks that nobody would invent such an exaggerated depiction, and then repeat it more than once. Moreover, the synagogue at Sardis was indeed vast and had a table in the middle of the hall as the archeological findings show. It is, thus, not unreasonable to suppose that in a city like Alexandria that was home to one of the largest Jewish communities, there was a large-sized and impressive synagogue. In fact, even Philo may have been referring to the very same synagogue when describing the Alexandrian pogroms of 38 CE. He says that there were several synagogues in each section of the city, and he designates one of them “the greatest and most magnificent of the synagogues in Alexandria.”

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712 Levine (2005), pp. 95-96.
714 Philo, *Legatio* XX 134.
The most interesting part of the description is the special seating arrangement in the synagogue. This detail suggests that the synagogue had other functions in addition to Sabbath gatherings and Torah study. According to the text, people did not sit randomly. Everybody sat according to his profession: the goldsmiths together, the silversmiths together and so on. Many scholars have concluded from this detail that the synagogue had also some commercial function serving as a marketplace.\textsuperscript{715} Levine explains this phenomenon by referring to parallels from the non-Jewish world. He argues that in Roman public spaces, such as theaters and amphitheaters, the same structured and differentiated seating arrangements were found.\textsuperscript{716} For him, the Alexandrian synagogue simply reflected Roman practices, which is indeed highly possible.

To conclude this subchapter about the Jewish synagogues in Ptolemaic Egypt, it is important to emphasize the followings: first, although we have no archeological evidence, the epigraphical sources acquaint us with the earliest evidence of Jewish synagogues in history. Secondly, the synagogues were built with the permission of the rulers and they belonged to the same category as the Egyptian and Greek temples. They were also entitled to request the right of \textit{asylum}. Thirdly, the practices carried out in the synagogues are known from literary sources only, based on which we have to assume that the main function of the synagogues was to give place to the Sabbath gatherings, the study of the Torah, and most probably also served as communal and social institution for the Jews.

5.2. Signs of “Anti-Judaism”

5.2.1. Anti-Jewish Greco-Egyptian literature

The Jews formed an important part of the Ptolemaic society, and some elements of their way of life, such as Sabbath observance, were very apparent and naturally raised the curiosity of the Greco-Egyptian environment. The phenomenon of anti-Jewish attitude in the ancient world has been shown on many occasions. The question has been tackled by several

\textsuperscript{715} See especially S. Krauss, \textit{Synagogale Altertümer} (Berlin / Vienna 1922, reprint Hildesheim 1966), pp. 261-263; Fraser (1972), p. 285; B. Z. Rosenfeld & J. Menirav, “The Ancient Synagogue as an Economic Center,” \textit{JNES} 58 (1999), pp. 259-276. The latter article argues that the synagogue had several other functions such as being a commercial center, a court of law, a place of arbitration and a place of execution, but for all of these function the premise is argued based on late rabbinic sources.

\textsuperscript{716} Levine (2005), p. 95.
scholars in the past who elaborated their theories based on literary sources. My aim is to summarize the testimonies of Greco-Egyptian authors about Judaism and to draw attention to some Ptolemaic period documentary sources that may fill some gaps in the history of “anti-Judaism.”

Greek and Latin authors mention the Jews and their religion several times. The earliest testimonies about the Jews were in fact favorable. It is sufficient to mention Theophrastus, the disciple of Aristotle, who considers the Jews to be a “people of philosophers,” or Hecataeus of Abdera, who characterises Moses as “outstanding both for his wisdom and for his courage.” For Theophrastus, it was strange that the Jews burnt the animal sacrifices at night. He even disapproves this form of worship, yet, he does not show any dislike toward the Jews. The very first author who undoubtedly spoke of the Jews with antipathy, was Manetho, and his followers, Lysimachus, Apion and Chaeremon became the main representatives of the ancient anti-Jewish propaganda. Their works did not survive the vicissitudes of time, but have been preserved in Josephus’ apologetic work entitled Contra Apionem.

The most interesting and the most powerful propaganda of their writings is undoubtedly the Egyptian story of the Exodus. In the following section, I will briefly discuss the testimony of each author as well as their similarities and differences. In fact, Manetho is not the first in non-Jewish literature who writes about the story of the Exodus. Hecataeus of Abdera, who lived in the time of Alexander the Great and Ptolemy I, visited Egypt and wrote a book about it around 300 BCE. His writings are lost but parts of them are cited by Diodorus Siculus (Bibliotheca Historica) as well as by Josephus (Contra Apionem).

The reason why I did not mention him as an anti-Jewish author is that his testimony about the Jews seems to be mostly free of anti-Jewish feelings. It is, however, important to know his Exodus account in order to understand those of his anti-Jewish successors. According to Hecataeus, in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt. At that time, many different foreigners dwelt in Egypt who

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718 For the Greek and Latin sources about the Jews see M. Stern, Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism, 3 vols. (Jerusalem 1976-84).


practiced different religions. The Egyptians assumed that “unless they removed the strangers, their troubles would never be resolved.” Thus, the foreigners were removed from the country, and the most outstanding and active among them went to Greece, while “the greater number were driven into what is now called Judea.” The latter group is said to have been led by a man called Moses, who later founded the renowned city of Jerusalem. The Jews are not explicitly mentioned by Hecataeus, but from the mention of Judea, Moses and Jerusalem it is clear that he was speaking of them. This account might be considered as the general Egyptian understanding of the *Exodus* as it survived through the generations, since there is no reason to assume that Hecataeus, a Greek visitor, invented it.

The next *Exodus* narrator is Manetho, an Egyptian priest from Sebennytos who lived in the IIIrd century BCE. He was well versed in Egyptian history and traditions, and he was the first Egyptian who wrote the history of his country in Greek. This work is also lost, but some details have been preserved in Josephus’ *Contra Apionem*. Manetho gives two different accounts of the *Exodus* story. In the first version, he describes the rule of the Hyksos in Egypt, who had a Shepherd-king with a center in Memphis, and who founded a city called Avaris in the Delta. According to Manetho, they had been ruling over Egypt for 511 years, when the kings of the Thebaid and the rest of Egypt revolted, and expelled the Shepherds from Egypt. We are informed only at the end of the account that Manetho identifies these Shepherds with the Jews, since he claims that “in the land now called Judea they built a city, […] and gave it the name of Jerusalem.” The second version attributes the story to the reign of the Egyptian king Amenophis (most probably Amenhotep III: cc. 1390-1352 BCE). According to Manetho’s story, this king desired to see the gods, and asked a sage man, Amenophis son of Paapis how he could achieve it. He was told to cleanse the whole land of “lepers and other

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721 Hecataeus does not give a precise date for the events described above. M. Stern is certainly right in claiming that the expression “in ancient times” gives the impression of a mythical past, see Stern, vol. 1 (1976), p. 29.

722 Most scholars believe that Hecataeus gave a positive picture of the Jews, especially regarding his description about the Jewish state, in which he mentions the establishment of the Jerusalem Temple, the twelve tribes, the non-human form of the Jewish God, the sacrifices, the judges guarding the laws and the customs, the high priest acting as a messenger between the Jews and their God and the strict laws of Moses. P. Schäfer is, however, not convinced about Hecataeus’ pro-Jewish attitude, because at one point of his description Hecataeus claims that “as a result of their own expulsion from Egypt, he [Moses] introduced an unsocial and intolerant mode of life.” Based on this, Schäfer thinks that Hecataeus was the first in history who combined the *misoxenia* with the *Exodus* story, hereby creating a strong bias against the Jews, see Schäfer (1997), p. 17.


725 Amenophis son of Paapis, or in Egyptian Amenhotep son of Hapu, was a real and important person in the time of Amenhotep III (c. 1390-1350). He was an architect, priest and state official. He was deified after his
polluted persons.” Amenophis collected 80 000 such people, and sent them to stone quarries. Later, these people begged the king to give them Avaris, the deserted city of the Shepherds as refuge. They obtained the city and used it as a base for revolt. They appointed a priest of Heliopolis called Osarseph leader, and he created laws completely opposed to Egyptian customs. This priest also sent an embassy to the Shepherds in Jerusalem and convinced them to attack Egypt. The Egyptian king fled to Ethiopia, and the Solymites (i.e. people of Jerusalem) with the polluted Egyptians treated the people impiously and savagely. They set towns and villages on fire and used the sanctuaries to roast sacred animals. Like the first version, it is only at the end of the account that Manetho applies the story to the Jews, when we learn that Osarseph, the Heliopolite priest of the polluted Egyptians, changed his name and was called Moses henceforth. Later, Manetho adds that Amenophis returned from Ethiopia leading a large army, and together with his son Ramses they defeated the Shepherds and the polluted Egyptians, and pursued them until the borders of Syria.

These are Manetho’s stories about the Jews, and we now turn to Lysimachus who lived probably in the 1st century BCE and was one of the most vigorous anti-Jewish Greco-Egyptian writers. His negative attitude is very close to that of his successors, Apion and Chaeremon. We know his testimony through Josephus, who quotes it in Contra Apionem. Lysimachus’ Exodus story shares some similarities with that of Manetho: the Jews are said to be “lepers and cripples,” who took refuge in the temples, and the land of Egypt had to be cleansed of them. It is, however, different regarding the chronology of the events. He places the story in the reign of Bocchoris (725-720 BCE), a king of the 24th dynasty, who sent to consult the oracle of Amon about the failure of crops. The god told him to purge the temples of the lepers and other impure and impious persons: to drown the lepers and to drive the impious persons into the wilderness. Bocchoris ordered to draw a list of such persons: the lepers were indeed drowned, and the others were sent off to the desert. The expelled people in the desert assembled, and a certain Moses suggested to go to another inhabited country and to show goodwill to nobody. So they traversed the desert, maltreated all the inhabitants they met along the way until they arrived in the country now called Judea, where they built a city originally called Hierosyla, but later renamed Hierosolyma. Lysimachus mentions neither the death. With the mention of his name it becomes clear that the king to whom Manetho attributes the story is Amenhotep III, see Stern, vol. 1 (1976), p. 84.

726 Manetho is the only author who calls Moses by this name. He connects the polluted people to the Jews by this identification.

727 Josephus, CA 1 304-411 = Stern, vol. 1 (1976), No. 158.
Hyksos rule nor the Egyptian origin of Moses and announces at the beginning of his account that he is speaking of the Jews.

The next Greco-Egyptian author we will discuss is Apion, a writer and scholar of Egyptian origin who lived in the 1st century CE. His writings are known through the quotations of Tatianus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius and Josephus. Undoubtedly, he is the most famous and the most dangerous of the anti-Jewish propagators. However his Exodus story is not very informative. He claims that Moses was a native of Heliopolis and that after the expulsion, he lead the expelled lepers. He also adds that after reaching Judea, “Moses went up into the mountain called Sinai, which lies between Egypt and Arabia, remained in concealment there for forty days, and then descended and gave the Jews their laws.” It is also important to note that Apion places the Exodus in the first year of the seventh Olympiad when the Phoenicians founded Carthage.

Our last Exodus narrator is Chaeremon, a Stoic philosopher and Egyptian priest living in the 1st century CE. M. Stern notes the similarity between Chaeremon and Manetho in that Chaeremon also took great pride in his country’s past that he wrote in Greek. His fragment on the Exodus of the Jews is quoted by Josephus. In it, we see again the name of Amenophis like in Manetho’s account, but according to Chaeremon, it is Isis who appeared to the king in his sleep, and reproached him the destruction of her temple in war-time. Also, the name of the sage is different because here a certain Phritibautes interpreted the king’s dream and told him to purge the land of the contaminated population. From here on, some details are similar, some are different. According to Chaeremon, Amenophis collected 250 000 contaminated persons and expelled them from Egypt. Their leaders were scribes, Moses and Joseph. When they reached Pelusium, their number increased to 380 000 and the king refused to give them permission to cross the border, which is why they marched upon Egypt. Amenophis fled to Ethiopia, and it was only his son, Ramses, who later drove the Jews into Syria and became the savior of Egypt.

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728 According to Josephus (CA II 3) Apion was not born in Alexandria, but in the Siwa oasis. Yet, somehow he received Alexandrian citizenship, and played an important role in the city’s political and intellectual life.
729 As noted by Stern, the first year of the seventh Olympiad was 752 BCE, which means that Apion’s chronology is in accordance with that of Lysimachos who dates the story to the reign of Bocchoris, see Stern, vol. I (1976), p. 397.
732 In contrast to Amenophis son of Paapis, the sage mentioned by Manetho, Phritibautes was not a historical person and his name is known only from Chaeremon.
733 The name of Joseph as a leader of the Jews appears only in the account of Chaeremon, although the name Osarseph in Manetho’s account can be considered a variation of Joseph, with Osiris replacing the element Ya, the God of Israel.
All in all, these are the variations of the Exodus story that approach the same subject differently. They are, however, not as different as they seem to be at first glance. J. Yoyotte argues in one of his influential articles that all these Greco-Egyptian stories of the Exodus can be traced back to one common Egyptian origin, which existed well before Ptolemaic times. He analyzes four versions of the story, those of Hecataeus of Abdera, of Manetho, of Lysimachus and of Chaeremon along six lines: the opening situation, the characters, the literary form of the stories, the circumstances of the war against the impure, the acts of the enemies and their impurity. In three stories we find the same opening situation: the king turns to a sage or to a god for some reason, and is instructed to cleanse the land of Egypt of impure people. In Manetho’s account it is Amenophis son of Paapis, in Lysimachus’s story it is the oracle of Amon, while in Chaeremon’s account it is Isis who approaches the king, and the scribe Phritibautes who interprets the dream. This is a subject that recurs very often in Egyptian literature. Yoyotte mentions some examples of it: the Westcar Papyrus, in which king Cheops consults the magician Djedi because he wants to see the secret documents of the god Thoth so that he could design his pyramid; the Prophecies of Neferti, in which king Snofru asks the sage Neferti about the future of Egypt, or the Oracle of the Potter, in which again King Amenophis gets informed by a potter about the future chaos that will follow the foreign rule of the Greeks. Thus, although the sages are different in each Exodus story, the opening situation is basically the same. The same holds true for the person of the king: Manetho and Chaeremon date the story to the reign of Amenophis, while Lysimachus (followed by Apion) attributes it to the reign of Bocchoris. However, as noted by J. Schwartz, the name of the king is not of great importance, since both Amenophis and Bocchoris are imaginary and interchangeable Egyptian king fighting against impure polluters of Egypt. As to the literary form of the stories, they all belong to the same category as the above-mentioned political prophecies, a traditional Egyptian literary form. Thus, from this point of


737 The Prophecies of Neferti was written during the Middle Kingdom as part of the political propaganda of Amenemhat I, and served for his glorification. For the text see Lichtheim (1973), pp. 139-144.

738 The Oracle of the Potter was originally composed in Demotic, but has been preserved in Greek fragments dated to the IIth and IIIrd century CE. It is almost certain that it was written in the Ptolemaic era since it is directed against the Greeks. For the edition of the text see L. Koenen, “Die Prophezeiungen des Töpfers,” ZPE 2 (1968), pp. 178-209.

view, they can be considered as propaganda literature against foreign occupation of the country. Turning now to the impure people and the Jews, their main guilt was that they treated the people impiously and savagely, they set towns and villages on fire, and used the sanctuaries to roast sacred animals. The motif of the temples polluted by the impure people is present in all the versions. It is especially strong in Chaeremon’s account, in which the goddess Isis becomes furious because of the destruction of her temple, which is why the king decides to expel the polluted people.

Where does this antipathy come from? It is certainly true that we cannot locate the Egyptian expulsion story historically, though several scholars have attempted it. R. Weill already showed at the beginning of the XX\textsuperscript{th} century that these stories may indeed have a historical origin (the Hyksos occupation), but they reflect the continuous recurrence of the topos of foreign invaders, their rule and their expulsion from Egypt. It seems reasonable to assume that this motif was applied in different times to different historical situations. In the case of our Exodus stories, I must agree with J. Yoyotte that the historical context of the impiety of the foreign people must have been the two Persian conquests of Egypt (in 525 BCE by Cambyses and in 343 BCE by Artaxerxes III). The Greek sources are extremely condemnatory about the Persians’ attitude toward the Egyptians: suffice it to mention Herodotus, according to whom Cambyses was a madman who desecrated the body of Amasis, destroyed Egyptian temples and killed the sacred Apis bull. It is generally assumed that the Greek authors exaggerated the negative attitude of the Persians toward the Egyptian temples and traditions, and that their writings reflect the nationalistic anti-Persian propaganda that emerged in Egypt in priestly circles under the first Persian occupation (525-404 BCE). The main argument that confirms this general assumption is provided by the autobiography of Udjahorresnet who was an Egyptian naval commander during the reign of Amasis (570-526 BCE) and Psammetichos III (526-525 BCE). After the Persian invasion, he was appointed priest of Neith. His statue inscription suggests that both Cambyses (525-522 BCE) and his successor Darius (522-486 BCE) adopted the traditional Egyptian model of kingship, respected Egyptian customs, maintained the administration with minimal changes, organized the burial of Apis bulls, and initiated construction works. The general picture of the Persian

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{740} Schäfer (1997), p. 163.
\item \textsuperscript{741} In general about the impact of Persian rule see L. S. Fried, \textit{The Priest and the Great King: Temple-palace Relations in the Persian Empire} (Winona Lake 2004), pp. 63-92.
\item \textsuperscript{742} Herodotus, \textit{The Persian Wars} III 27-38. For Cambyses’ misdeeds in Egypt see also Plutarch, \textit{Isis and Osiris} 44; Diodorus Siculus, \textit{Bibliotheca} I 46; Strabo, \textit{Geographica} XVII 1.27.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
rule gained from this source is very different from the one depicted by the Greek authors. Which one is correct? In my view, the truth lies somewhere between these two extremities. Udjahorresnet was a collaborator with the Persians, whose motivation was very likely to please the rulers and justify his own actions. As L. S. Fried points out, he lost his military titles as a result of the Persian conquest, but he managed to retain a high-ranking official position.\textsuperscript{744} In this light, it is understandable that he described Cambyses as a pharaoh, who assumed the throne of Egypt by divine permission. In contrast to him, the Greek authors obtained their information from Egyptian priests, who were certainly not as satisfied with Cambyses as Udjahorresnet.

There are some sources that may help us to elucidate the state of the affairs. The first detail that must be mentioned is recorded in Udjahorresnet’s inscription itself. The overall positive picture of Cambyses is interrupted at one point in the text as follows:

“If I made a petition to the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Cambyses, about all the foreigners who dwelled in the temple of Neith, in order to have them expelled from it, so as to let the temple of Neith be in all its splendor, as it had been before. His Majesty commanded to expel all the foreigners who dwelled in the temple of Neith, to demolish all their houses and all their unclean things that were in the temple.”\textsuperscript{745}

Although this part of the text portrays Cambyses in a good light, it suggests that the Persians had indeed occupied the temple of Neith in Sais. Thus, the recurring motif of unclean foreigners who desecrate Egyptian temples appears again, in this case applied to the Persian invaders. Another interesting detail, which has survived on the back of the Demotic Chronicle, is a decree of Cambyses that drastically reduced the revenues of the temples. Donations were forbidden and the temple lands were confiscated.\textsuperscript{746} It is also most probable that Cambyses removed cult statues from Egyptian temples, since some Ptolemaic period texts suggest that certain statues were returned by the Ptolemies from Syria to Egypt.\textsuperscript{747} These measures of Cambyses certainly did not increase his popularity among Egyptian priests.\textsuperscript{748} Based on all these, it seems to me quite likely that the Egyptians, especially the Egyptian priests, had a negative experience with the Persians, which was at least as bad as their

\textsuperscript{744} Fried (2004), p. 64.
\textsuperscript{745} Lichtheim (1980), p. 38.
\textsuperscript{746} Fried (2004), p. 73.
\textsuperscript{747} See the inscriptions collected by D. Devauchelle, “Le sentiment anti-perse chez les anciens Égyptiens,” Transeuphratène 9 (1995), pp. 67-80. He lists the Stelae of the Satrap (312 BCE), the Stelae of Pithom (279 BCE), the Canopus Decree (238 BCE) and the Raphia Decree (217 BCE), which all claim that one of the Ptolemies brought back to Egypt the statues of the gods that the Persians removed. See also Fried (2004), p. 72.
\textsuperscript{748} Devauchelle, Transeuphratène 9 (1995), pp. 67-80 at p. 75.
experience centuries before with the Hyksos. This negative historical experience may indeed have been the source of the revival of anti-foreign feelings.

Turning back to the impiety of the unclean foreigners that is mentioned in all of the expulsion stories, there is one important detail that still needs to be explained: when and why the impiety of the foreigners was attributed to the Jews? It is clear that the Exodus stories have two layers: one tradition against foreigners in general, which may be as early as the Hyksos rule itself, and one tradition against the Jews, which was added either by Manetho and his successors or by the Egyptians earlier. Is there any evidence from pharaonic Egypt that shows not simply anti-foreign but specifically anti-Jewish feelings of the Egyptians? Two inscriptions must be mentioned in this regard: one of them is in the temple of Amon-Re built by Amenhotep III at Soleb, and the other one is in a temple erected by Ramses II at Amarah-West, both of them located in present-day Sudan. These inscriptions aroused the scholarly interest quite early, because they provide the earliest mentions of the name Yahweh in Egyptian (Yhw). Both inscriptions are topographical lists recording African and Asian place names. Ramses’ list was almost certainly copied from that of Amenhotep III. The name of Yahweh is included in the following toponym: tš šś Yhw that is, “Shasu-land: Yahweh” or “the land of the Shasu of Yahweh” depending on how we interpret the name of Yahweh. Scholars are divided on whether the term tš šś Yhw refers to Shasu-people from Yahweh or to the Israelites, i.e. whether Yahweh is a geographical or a divine name. It is not my intention to decide which one is more likely. Instead, I would like to emphasize that even if this term refers to the Israelites, they are mentioned here as one of the several foreign people who were traditionally considered the enemies of Egypt. They were indeed enemies but not the sole enemy of Egypt. The term “Shasu” can be found in Egyptian texts quite often and was primarily used for designating nomadic or semi-nomadic people living in the area of Syria, Libanon, Canaan and Transjordan. In the present list too, this toponym is mentioned along other toponyms referring to different places such as tš šś šrr, that is “Shasu-land: Seir” (Edom according to Redford) for instance. Thus, I see no reason to assume that the general

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751 It most probably derives from the Egyptian verb šś meaning “to wander,” see Redford (1993), p. 271.
anti-foreign feelings of the Egyptians turned into specifically anti-Jewish feelings during the New Kingdom. We should look for this transition in a later period. In my view, P. Schäfer is right in assuming that the answer to this question lies in the Persian period, more precisely in the history of the Jewish colony at Elephantine.

Jewish merceneries started to settle in Egypt well before the Persian period, most probably from the reign of Psammetichus I (664-609 BCE). Egyptians, Jews and Arameans lived together peacefully regardless of religious differences because they had a common interest, i.e. serving the Egyptian king by guarding the southern border of Egypt. The Elephantine papyri inform us about the last century of their cohabitation only (Vth century BCE) when Egypt was already under Persian rule.\textsuperscript{752} When the Persians invaded Egypt, the Jews welcomed them. In one of the papyri, the Jews claim that Cambyses destroyed all the Egyptian temples, but did not touch the Jewish Temple.\textsuperscript{753} Even if this claim is exaggerated, P. Schäfer is right in emphasizing the Jewish attitude, i.e. they considered themselves to be allies of the Persians.\textsuperscript{754} From the Persian conquest onwards, they served the interest of the Persian commanders rather than that of the Egyptian natives. This became a continual source of tension between Egyptians and Jews, leaving its traces even in the documents. The most important of all is probably the \textit{Passover letter}, which points out the increasing conflict between the Jews and the Egyptian priests of the ram-god Khnum. The main reasons for this conflict were the commemoration of the \textit{Exodus} on the one hand, and the sacrifice of the paschal lamb on the other hand.\textsuperscript{755} P. Schäfer notes that this conflict had a religious and a political side as well. The religious side, i.e. the anger of the Egyptian priests is understandable, but the Jews had been living on the island for centuries, and nothing suggests that there was any similar religious conflict before the Persian era. This is where the political side of the conflict becomes important, because the fact that the Jews supported the Persian rulers instead of the Egyptian natives changed the peaceful balance between the parties. This stressful situation culminated in the destruction of the Jewish Temple is 410 BCE, in which the Egyptians were, in fact, backed by a local Persian commander named Vidranga.

\textsuperscript{752} For texts of the archive see Porten & Yardeni (Jerusalem 1986-99); Porten & Farber & Martin & Vittman et al. (1996). For a discussion of the papyri see Porten (1968).

\textsuperscript{753} \textit{TAD} A4.7, in which we read the followings: “And from the days of the king(s) of Egypt our fathers had built that Temple in Elephantine the fortress and when Cambyses entered Egypt […] that temple, built he found it. And the temples of the gods of Egypt, all (of them), they overthrew, but anything in that Temple one did not damage.”

\textsuperscript{754} Schäfer (1997), p. 122.

\textsuperscript{755} \textit{TAD} A4.1. The letter belongs to the Jedaniah archive, and dates from 419 BCE. The sacrifice of the paschal lamb was very abusive to the Egyptian priests of the ram god Khnum, who was the principal god of the region and whose temple stood in the vicinity of the Jewish Temple.
Persian government, however, revealed the conspiracy, punished Vidranga, and supported the Jews again, who petitioned for the reconstruction of their Temple.

From this archive it becomes clear that the reason why the Jews became hateful in the eyes of the Egyptians during the Persian rule was that they did not join them in their struggle against the invaders, but served them as they had served the Egyptian kings before. In Egyptians’ eyes, they became collaborators with the Persians, and as such, hated foreigners. The *topos* of the unclean foreign invaders, who were the enemies of the Egyptians was, thus, connected to the Jews, who became the main target of the Egyptian anti-foreign nationalistic attitude. In this light, it is clear that Manetho and the other Greco-Egyptian authors did not invent the Exodus stories, but reported the contemporary Egyptian attitude toward the Jews as they experienced it.

5.2.2. Documentary sources reflecting anti-Jewish attitude

Until now we have seen that the anti-Jewish attitude is well documented in the Greco-Egyptian literature. We may, however, rightly raise the question whether it has any traces in documentary sources. Among the Greek papyri, the earliest text that reflects anti-Jewish feelings is *CPJ* I 141 from Memphis and dated to the first half of the 1st century BCE. This papyrus was first published by V. A. Tcherikover in the *CPJ*, and later reinterpreted by R. Rémondon. I quote here the latter version adopted by R. Bagnall and P. Derow too:

> “Herakles to Ptolemaios the *dioiketes*, hearty greetings and good health. I asked lap … in Memphis on behalf of the priest in Tebtynis to write to him a letter so that I may know what his situation is. I ask you to see how he can escape traps and lead him by the hand: when he had need of anything giving it to him as you do for Artemidoros and in particular do me the favour of furnishing the priest with the same lodging – for you know that they are nauseated by Jews. Embrace … ibas, Epimenes, Tryphonas, …, and take care [of yourself].”

The papyrus is badly preserved, but according to Rémondon’s version, the writer of the letter, Herakles informed Ptolemaios, the *dioiketes*, that he asked somebody, whose name is illegible, to inquire about the situation of a Jewish priest in Tebtynis. Herakles asked Ptolemaios to help the priest to escape traps as well as to provide him with the same lodging as Artemidoros. Herakles emphasizes at the end of his letter that these measures are

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758 Bagnall & Derow (2004), No. 175, pp. 283-284.
necessary, because some locals are nauseated by Jews (οἴδας γὰρ ὅτι βασιλέως ὁ συνταγματαί Ἰουδαίους). The hostile environment surrounding the Jews is well expressed by this papyrus. Whether it is the Greeks or the Egyptians who are referred to as being nauseated by Jews is unknown, but we may imagine that, in the international environment of Memphis, both groups may have had such hostile feelings.

It is generally assumed that this is the earliest documentary evidence of “anti-Judaism” in Egypt, but in fact there is even earlier hieroglyphic evidence at our disposal, as pointed out by J. Yoyotte. One of the sources leads us to the Bucheum, the burial place of the sacred Buchis bulls located at Hermonthis south of Thebes. Like the Apis bull, Buchis was considered the physical manifestation of the sun god Re. Each Buchis bull was chosen on the basis of special marks, and after death, they were mummmified and placed in their catacomb, the Bucheum. The burials of the Buchis bulls were in use from cc. the IVth century BCE until the IVth century CE. Bucheum stela 9 records the life of a Buchis bull, who lived from 162 to 145 BCE, and it reads as follows:

“Year 36 corresponding to year 25, Mesore 27, the eleventh hour of night, as the morning of the 28th day dawned, under the majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt; the son of the Manifest gods, whom Ptah-Khepre has chosen, who brings forth the order of Amon-Re, Son of Re, Ptolemy, living forever, beloved of Ptah, beloved of the Osiris Buchis, living Ba of him-who-is-on-his-bier, who repeats the life of all the gods. On this day the majesty of this noble god, Buchis, the living Ba of Re, manifestation of Re, who was born of Ti-Khnumet went up to heaven. The length of his life was 17 years, 5 months, and 20 days. He was born in the year 19, Phamenoth 3 in the Northern Field of Per-Heauf. He was led to the nome of Hut-Snofru. Then came priests, the royal inspectors, and the soldiers from Hut-Tjaui to Hut-Snofru. He was brought to Esna. Then the prophets, the priests, the watchmen of the temple, the royal inspectors together with all the people of Hermonthis sailed upstream to Esna. A great oblation was made, the brazier was set up [with] the leg of an ox, and offerings were made. Then this good god, Buchis the beautiful, Amun who goes on his four feet, was rowed to that city, the victorious Thebes, the place of his enthronement from time primeval, [and he was taken] into the Ht-nb in the Opet, for there were no longer any foreigners of Yahu in the Temple of Amun. His enthronement was performed by his own priests, … an official decree having been made in the presence of his Majesty(?) Then the king himself and his followers sailed upstream to Thebes. Amenopet, the god of the city, appeared in procession. His Majesty went in front of him, Amenopet came to a stop directly across from this god; likewise the king, together with his courtiers, the prophets, the priests, the people of the House of Life, and all troops of the entire land, who had come with him to Thebes. This good god was enthroned

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in the year 24 (of Philometor I), the last day of Phaopi. Then [this good god?] sailed upstream to [Her]monthis in the month of Pakhons, in the first year (?). He appeared on his throne in life. May he give all health [to] the son of Re, Ptolemy, living forever, beloved of Ptah; … the mother-loving gods …”

The text of this funerary inscription is narrative, and follows a standardized formula. After a long introduction enumerating the different laudative titles of king Ptolemy we learn the date of death of the Buchis bull, the length of his lifetime, and then his biography: when and where he was born, how he was transported to Esna, where he was inspected and chosen to be Buchis bull by priests and royal inspectors from Hermonthis, and how his installation happened. The text acquaints us with the long journey of the Buchis bull in a procession through different locations. Finally, he was taken to Thebes, the traditional place of his enthronement, where both the king and his entourage travelled from Alexandria to participate in the event. There is, however, an interesting claim at this point of the text: “[Buchis was taken] into the Hi-nb in the Opet, for there were no longer any foreigners of Yahu in the Temple of Amun.” This suggests that Buchis could be taken in the Opet, because “the foreigners of Yahu,” i.e. the Jews were not there any more. Regarding the question who these Jews were and why they were installed in the temple of Amun, another Bucheum stela could provide some information. Bucheum stela 8 is the funerary stele of the previous Buchis bull that died in 162 BCE, and his stela informs us of the following.761

“There was an attack by many foreign countries against Egypt in the year 12 and great civil strife broke out in Egypt. The great wall of Thebes was manned by foreigners. Thereupon the burghers of Hermonthis came to Thebes the mighty. Then their hearts were sore afraid for this god, and they performed the ceremonies of transporting him to Hermonthis in year 12, Eep (sic) the third epagomenal day.”

From this text we learn that the installation ceremony of the previous bull could not take place in Thebes for there was an attack against Egypt: the temple of Thebes was invaded by foreigners and the priests thought it was safer to transfer the sacred bull to Hermonthis and to perform all the ceremonies there. This inscription refers to the invasion of Egypt by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 169 BCE when he occupied the country without any difficulty, due to the civil war between Ptolemy VI Philometor and Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II.762 The

762 This action on behalf of Antiochus IV Epiphanes is to be regarded as part of the Sixth Syrian War (170-168 BCE). Since he assumed the throne in 175 BCE, Egypt wanted to reoccupy Palestine. In 170 BCE Antiochus IV marched into Egypt, took Pelusion, and occupied a large part of Lower Egypt. Although in 169 BCE he had to return to Syria due to local unrest, in 168 BCE he returned to Egypt, and marched into Memphis without having
Romans finally forced Antiochus to leave Egypt but it is certainly true that for some time the Seleucid soldiers, among whom there must have been Jewish mercenaries too, invaded the Egyptian temples. This incident was most probably so painful for the Egyptians that they felt it necessary to mention it even in the inscription of the next Buchis bull, whose installation ceremony could now take place in Thebes, because there were no Jewish foreigners there any more.

What I would emphasize concerning these inscriptions is the recurring topos of the foreign invaders in Egyptian temples, which indeed happened again. What is even more interesting is that, in the eyes of the Egyptians, the Jews were again on the side of the invaders. This certainly boosted the already existing anti-Jewish feelings of the Egyptian priests as well as the identification of the Jews as hated foreigners.

The same idea is reflected in another hieroglyphic inscription from Tanis, which was written much later, sometime in the reign of Ptolemy XII Auletes (80-58, 55-51 BCE). It is an autobiographical statue of an official (San 91-200), whose name remains unknown, because a large part of his inscription is lost. What we know about him is that he was a contemporary of Panemerit, the governor of Tanis. It is also likely that they were in contact since Panemerit is mentioned in this inscription too:

“The venerable, excellent, distinguished in his town, whose name is known by the people of his district, honoured, favoured, near his lords Amon and Horus, who performs whatever they desire […], accountant-scribe in the region of Naret-Pehet and in its town (?), administrator of the fields of his Ennead, who creates prosperity in his town of Khentet-Iabtet (“the foremost of the East”), who takes care of the matters of the gods, Amon and Osiris […] general in chief, prophet of Amon-Re, lord of To-Bener, Panemerit, to ask the sovereign that he may give order to expel forever from the territory of your region the foreigners, who are called Jews […].”

The first part of the inscription is formal, and enumerates the titles of the statue owner. Undoubtedly, he was a high-ranking official in Tanis and a companion of Panemerit. We are, however, more interested in the last line of the inscription. Although the first half of the sentence is missing, it is clear that the sovereign was asked to give orders to expel the

to fight his way. When he approached Alexandria, Rome felt it necessary to intervene in the conflict, and they sent a delegation to Egypt. When the two parties met near Alexandria, the Romans, led by Popilius Laenas, forced Antiochus to retreat from Egypt. Antiochus decided that he did not have a choice and left Egypt in 168 BCE. Further on this conflict see Hölbl (2001), pp. 143-148.

foreigners from his region, who, it turns out, were Jews. This claim becomes more understandable in the light of another text: one of the statues of Panemerit (D 88 = Cairo JE 67094) that comes from the same site, records a very similar phrase: “I have requested the king to expel the foreigners who commit abominations towards the gods and settled in the temple of Amun of Opet and its pylon, which have been replaced by brick-built habitations (?), for many years they have been there.”

The only difference is that on the statue of Panemerit the sentence is written in first-person singular, while on this anonymous statue we find an infinitive structure. It is, thus, clear that it was Panemerit, the powerful governor of Tanis himself who asked permission from the king to expel the foreigners from the temple of Tanis, while the owner of the present statue may have been one of his colleagues or subordinates. He probably had to enlist Panemerit in order to obtain the permission of the king. Although in Panemerit’s inscription the foreigners are not described as Jews, it is clear that both inscriptions refer to the same event.

In the case of the Bucheum stela 9, we have seen that the text had some authentic basis, and Jewish merceneries may indeed have settled in the temple of Amun in Thebes. But what may have been the case in the present text? It seems certain that it is not about soldiers from a foreign army, but most probably about stationed merceneries. The Jewish community of Leontopolis under the command of Onias, which was based in the Delta, certainly served the Ptolemaic kings. Josephus also informs us that the Ptolemaic kings and queens were protected by Jewish troops. Thus, it seems quite likely that the importance of the Jews indeed grew in the Ptolemaic army, and it is not unreasonable to think that they were ordered to be stationed in the precinct of temples.

I, however, find the recurring topos of the Jews as foreign invaders in Egyptian temples more important. As we have seen, the identification of Jews with foreign invaders emerged in the Persian period, and then is traceable in both literary and documentary sources. Manetho, Lysimachus, Apion and Chaeremon all testify to the development of this association, and the above-discussed hieroglyphic inscriptions undoubtedly confirm the negative attitude of the Egyptian priests towards them. It seems that the relative well-being of the Jewish community in Egypt as well as their growing importance in the Ptolemaic army did not decrease the antipathy of the Egyptians. The tension between Egyptians, Jews and Greeks was growing gradually at the end of the Ptolemaic period, and it was only a question of time before it would culminate in an open attack on the Jewish community of Egypt.

765 See above Chapter 1.1.1.
However, until the end of Ptolemaic rule the Jews enjoyed the support of the kings and queens, and were not maltreated. It was only later on, in the Roman period, that open “anti-Judaism” became acceptable.
CHAPTER 6

The Jewish *Politeuma* in Herakleopolis

It is beyond doubt that the publication of the Jewish *politeuma* archive constitutes an important contribution to our knowledge about the Jews of Ptolemaic Egypt.\(^{766}\) This archive consists of twenty Greek papyri that reveal the existence of a Jewish *politeuma* at Herakleopolis in the Egyptian countryside. These papyri provide the very first documentary evidence that the Jews were indeed organized, at least in certain towns, in official bodies called *politeumata*. Before the publication of this archive the lack of documentary evidence made it impossible to evaluate correctly the sole literary source that mentions a Jewish *politeuma* in Alexandria (*Letter of Aristeas* § 310). It is for this reason that scholars developed different views about Jewish *politeumata* in Ptolemaic Egypt.

To be clear, the Jewish *politeuma* archive is not the first attestation of ethnic *politeumata* in Ptolemaic Egypt, but the sources we have concerning other *politeumata* are mainly epigraphical, and do not tell us much about the nature and the function of this institution. The isolated pieces of evidence led to several different interpretations about this form of organization in the scholarly world. In the followings, we will summarize these views about Hellenistic *politeumata* based on what was available before the publication of the Herakleopolite archive. Then, we will analyze the Jewish *politeuma* itself and discuss its main character. Also, we will try to place it in context by comparing it with other ethnic *politeumata*. Finally, we will evaluate the role of this institution in the life of Egyptian Jewry with special reference to questions of identity.

6.1. Research History

6.1.1. Different meanings of the word “politeuma”

The word *politeuma* has a wide range of meaning in the Greek world and this caused much confusion when scholars attempted to interpret the Hellenistic *politeumata* in Egypt. As

\(^{766}\) Cowey & Maresch (2001).
pointed out by G. Lüderitz, this word can designate either a political body or other organized groups of people. Naturally, even as a term designating a political body it has a different meaning in an oligarchy and in a democracy. In an oligarchic constitution, it denotes a group of citizens, that is, the ruling class who exercise the political power. A good example of this meaning can be found in the peculiar constitution of Cyrene that was reformulated by Ptolemy I Soter in 321 BCE when he was still satrap. In a democratic system, however, the *politeuma* refers to the whole body of citizens, because it was the people (δῆμος) who exercised the political power. To demonstrate this meaning of the term we may mention the constitution of Chios, where Alexander established a democracy and the *politeuma* was the people themselves.

As to the second type of *politeuma*, different groups of people were designated so in the ancient sources. G. Lüderitz collects these *politeumata* systematically. First, we know of a *politeuma* of women in the temple of Zeus Panamaros located in Caria. Every second year a Hera festival was celebrated here, when both free and slave women, but only women, went to the temple and received wine and money. Among the several inscriptions that have been preserved from this site three mention “the *politeuma* of the women” (πολ[εί]τευμα τῶν γυναικῶν). Based on other inscriptions from the temple it is clear that all the women participated in the festival, thus, it seems certain that “the *politeuma* of the women” referred to women in general and was a kind of “temporary association lasting only for the time of the feast” as Lüderitz calls it.

Secondly, a *politeuma* of the supreme goddess Sachypsis existed in the Fayum in the Roman period. The name Sachypsis was a surname of Isis and the *politeuma* was named both for this goddess and for Harthotes the Great who might have been its founder. G. Lüderitz compares this *politeuma* to a cult association (σύνοδος or κοινόν), which is indeed a reasonable assumption.

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670 The decree has been preserved in an inscription (SEG IX 1 & SEG XVIII 726) from which it is clear that the *politeuma* of Cyrene was a group of the “Ten Thousand” (οἱ θεσσαλοὶ) and the condition of the membership was the real property worth twenty Alexandrian minas. It seems that Ptolemy simply enlarged the *politeuma* because the same functions had been exercised earlier by the “Thousand” (οἱ χίλιοι), see Lüderitz, *Studies* (1994), pp. 185-186.

671 *SIG* 283.


673 *SB* I 5793 = *Fayoum* II 121.
Thirdly, a politeuma of soldiers stationing in Alexandria is attested in a dedicatory inscription. They had a chairman and a secretary who are also designated founders (κτίσται), presumably of the politeuma. However, we do not know the origin of these soldiers, only that they were brought to Alexandria.

Finally, the last type of politeumata is the ethnic politeuma, which will be discussed in detail.

6.1.2. Ethnic politeumata in the Hellenistic world

In ethnic politeumata people are grouped according to either their city of origin or their larger geographical or ethnic origin. As an example for the first one, we may mention the politeumata recorded in the inscriptions from Sidon dated to the end of the IIIrd century BCE. These are mostly painted stelae with grave inscriptions, on which soldiers are represented. Three different politeumata are mentioned by name: that of the Caunians, that of the Pisidians from Termessus and that of the Pinarers. The members of each politeuma were originally citizens of Caunus in Caria, Termessus in Pisidia and Pinara in Lycia. They lived in Sidon as members of their own politeuma. In the case of the Caunians and the Pisidians the deceased is designated “citizen” (πολίτης), which most probably means that they were also from Caunus and Termessus. It seems logical to assume that the deceased soldiers were honoured by their fellow-citizens who granted them funerary stelae. As to the second type of ethnic politeumata, the term politeuma is generally followed by an ethnic label indicating the origin of the community like for instance in the Herakleopolite archive, where we meet the expression “the politeuma of the Jews.”

This type of politeumata were not rare in Ptolemaic Egypt, and one of the the earliest ethnic politeumata in Egypt is that of the Cilicians attested on an inscription from the Fayum. It can be dated to the IIIrd or IInd century BCE and in it, a pylon was dedicated “to Zeus, Athene and the politeuma of the Cilicians by Arrenides son of Coderdos from Syrbenda who was a high-ranking military official.”

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776 SB IV 7270 = SEG VIII 573.
is not very informative. Thus, we do not learn much about the structure of this politeuma. The importance of the cult is, however, evident as also noted by M. Launey.\footnote{M. Launey, Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques (Paris 1949/50), vol. 2, p. 1068.}

The next ethnic politeuma to mention is that of the Boeotians attested again in an honorific inscription from Xoix in Lower Egypt and dated to the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE.\footnote{SEG II 871 = SB III 6664.} According to this inscription, a certain Caphisodoros son of Caphisodoros, Boeotian, who was chief of the body-guards, governor of the Xoitian district and priest of the politeuma, together with his sons and the Boeotians gathered in Xoix dedicated a temple to Zeus Basileus and the other ancestral gods. It must be stressed that here, the politeuma itself is not designated politeuma of the Boeotians. It is Caphisodoros who is explicitly stated to be of Boeotian origin. Since he was also the priest of the politeuma and co-founder of the temple, it seems logical to assume that the politeuma itself was that of the Boeotians. According to C. Zuckerman, the “Boeotians gathered in Xoix” were military settlers under Caphisodoros’ command, while the sympoliteuomenoi, mentioned along with the Boeotians, might have been “their civil compatriots or other Greeks who joined the worship of Boeotian ancestral gods without being members of the politeuma.”\footnote{Zuckerman, SCI 8/9 (1985/88), pp. 171-185, at p. 175.}

Still from the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, we know of a politeuma of the Cretans in the Fayum as attested by a papyrus dated to 145 BCE.\footnote{P.Tebt. I 32 = W.Chr. 448.} The papyrus is badly preserved with many lacunae. Thus, several details remain unclear. What we certainly know is that it is an official letter forwarded to Eumelos by Aristippos who himself received it through different officials. The original letter was written by Sosos and Aigyptos who were probably appointees of the politeuma of the Cretans ([ca.9- προ]χειρισθέντων ὑπὸ τ[o] βοιετηματ[ος τῶν Κρητῶν]). It concerns the transfer of Asklepiades son of Ptolemaios, a Macedonian of the ephodoi, to the fifth hipparchy of the 100-aroura-men. Before, Asklepiades was member of a body of 500 men who were somehow attached to the politeuma of the Cretans. With his promotion, the above-mentioned appointees of the politeuma gave Pankrates, the supervisor of the cavalrymen, some personal data on Asklepiades. That is all we can retrieve from this text.

Most well-known among all the Ptolemaic politeumata is probably that of the Idumaeans in Memphis attested in an inscription dated to 112-111 BCE.\footnote{OGIS 737 = SB V 8929. Further on this politeuma see U. Rapaport, “Les iduméens en Égypte,” RPh 43 (1969), pp. 73-82. As noted by Thompson, this Dorion is also known from Egyptian sources, see Thompson, Atti (1984), p. 1070.} It is a decree written in honour of Dorion who held both administrative and priestly offices: he was
strategos and priest of the troop of sword-bearers. He repaired the temple of Apollo / Qos, the main god of the Idumaeans, at his own expense, for which he was honoured by “the politeuma and the Idumaeans of the city” (συναγωγή τοῦ πολιτεύματος καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως Ἰδουμαίων). There was a meeting (συναγωγή) in the temple itself, where he was honoured for his entire life, and he was also awarded a palm-branch according to local (Idumaean) custom. The decree was to be posted in the temple itself. We do not know exactly when these Idumaeans came to Egypt. It is possible that they arrived together with the Jews at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, but we cannot exclude a later date either. Rapaport suggests, for instance, that they immigrated to Egypt after John Hyrkanos took over power in Idumaea in 125 BC, and forcibly converted the Idumaeans to Judaism. What is particularly interesting in this text is the differentiation of the politeuma and the Idumaeans of the city. Who were the members of the politeuma mentioned separately from the Idumaeans of the city? Some scholars consider them to have been Greeks of the city, but I agree with D. Thompson, followed by others, that the politeuma was that of the Idumaeans. First, I see no reason why the Greeks would have been grateful to Dorion for the renovation of the temple of an Idumaean god. Secondly, we know from another inscription that the sword-bearers, whose priest was Dorion, were part of the Idumaean unit stationing in the city. Thus, it seems that the politeuma was indeed that of the Idumaeans and its members were military men, while the expression “the Idumaeans of the city” designates most probably the civil fellows of the Idumaean merceneries (including women and children). D. Thompson suggests that the term city (πόλις) in l. 23 of the decree may refer to the totality of this ethnic community within the larger city of Memphis. This differentiation of the military and civil sphere of the community will be important in the case of the Herakleopolite Jewish politeuma too.

From later centuries, there are three other politeumata that were ethnic in their nature. Although they all date from the Roman period, we briefly mention them for the sake of completeness. From an inscription dated to 2 BCE and found in the temple of Zeus in Pompeii we are informed that Iulius Hephaistion, former priest of the politeuma of the

786 SB I 681.
Phrygians, erected a statue to the Phrygian Zeus. This was presumably an ethnic politeuma of the Phrygians, which seems to have existed in Pompeii. If so, it means that the institution of the Hellenistic politeumata may have spread in the Roman world.

In the II\textsuperscript{nd} century CE we meet a politeuma of the Lycians in Alexandria. It is mentioned in an inscription recording a copy of a record, in which a certain Ulpianus son of Potamion and some others from the politeuma of the Lycians claimed, “in the presence of the secretary Dionysios from the village secretariat of the Marea district, that the guardianship of cemeteries belong to them.”

Finally, we must mention the politeuma of the Jews in Berenice, which was the only known ethnic politeuma of the Jews before the publication of the Herakleopolite archive. Berenice was a Greek town in Cyrenaica founded by Ptolemy III Euergetes (246-221 BCE) and belonged ever since to the political sphere of Egypt. Although the Jewish politeuma is attested in the Roman period (1\textsuperscript{st} century BCE - I\textsuperscript{st} century CE), it is important to discuss it since, based on the sources, we may assume that its nature and structure was very similar to that of the Herakleopolite Jewish politeuma. The politeuma of Berenice is mentioned in three inscriptions recording different decrees. The first one is quite fragmentary and was written for Decimus Valerius Dionysios who stuccoed the floor and decorated the walls of the building called amphitheatron. For this benevolent contribution, the politeuma decided to crown him at every gathering with olive-branches and ribbons. This decision was apparently made by the archons of the politeuma, but many details remain unclear including the exact date. Based on the form of the letters G. Lüderitz dates the text to the I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE. The second inscription, dated to the second half of the I\textsuperscript{st} century BCE, is better preserved and in it, we meet again the archons. It is clear that they were the leaders of the Jewish politeuma, which is explicitly mentioned in the text. The decree records the decision of the archons about Marcus Tittius, a fine and good man, who “has been exercising his governorship humanly and rightly,” and was to be crowned at every gathering and new moon with a crown of olive-

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788 OGIS 658 = SB V 7875 = IGR 1458.

789 Since the text is dated according to the Egyptian calendar the place of origin of this politeuma is not without problem. I agree with Zuckerman, SCI 8/9 (1985/88), p. 178 that the institution of the politeuma was exported from Egypt to other parts of the Roman world, but we cannot exclude the possibility that the politeuma emigrated from Egypt to Pompeii or that the stone itself was transported from Egypt. For these assumptions see Lüderitz, Studies (1994), p. 198, n. 43.

790 SB III 6025 = SB V 8757 = IGR I 1078 = SEG II 848. For the translation of the text see Lüderitz, Studies (1994), pp. 198-199.

791 CIG III 5362 = SEG XVI 931.

792 CIG III 5361. For the translation of the text see Lüderitz, Studies (1994), pp. 211-212.
branches and ribbons. It was to be set up in the amphitheatron, which is apparently the same building as the one mentioned in the first inscription. G. Lüderitz argues that this amphitheatron was not a public Greek amphitheatre for two reasons: first, Greek amphitheatres used for games had no stuccoed floor and walls, and secondly, the Jewish politeuma certainly did not have the right to set up inscriptions in public places. That is why he assumes with reason that the amphitheatron was a building that resembled a town hall with seats and was used by the Jewish community for meetings. Finally, a third inscription also testifies to this Jewish politeuma: it is dated to the 2nd year of Nero that is to 55 CE. What is most interesting about this inscription is that the term “synagogue” is used in the same sentence in two different meanings: once to designate the Jewish community itself and then their building. The “synagogue,” i.e. community of the Jews decided to inscribe the names of contributors who helped to repair the “synagogue,” i.e. their meeting place. The inscription is broken off, but eighteen names have been preserved, among which there were ten archons. These are the pieces of information at our disposal about the Jewish politeuma in Berenice.


*SEG* XVII 823.
6.1.3. What was an ethnic politeuma?

Based on all these politeumata connected to Greco-Roman Egypt, several views have been put forward concerning the meaning of the word politeuma. Basically, we can differentiate two groups: those who argue that members of the politeumata had political rights and were in fact “citizens,” and those who consider the politeumata private religious
associations. The pioneer of the first group was P. Perdrizet, the editor of the Sidonian inscription recording the \textit{politeuma} of the Caunians. From the inscription, it is clear that members of this \textit{politeuma} were named \textit{politi}, i.e. “citizens.” Perdrizet interpretes this word in its political sense and, comparing the \textit{politeuma} of the Caunians to that of the Jews in Berenice, he supposes that the \textit{politeuma} members had equal rights with the citizens of a Greek city without taking part in the Greek cults. He contrasts the \textit{politeuma} to the \textit{koinon} and assumes that the \textit{koinon} was a religious association of foreigners who had nothing to do with the city affairs, while the \textit{politeuma} also regrouped foreigners, but its nature was political and its members were citizens.\textsuperscript{796}

Whether the \textit{politeuma} had some political right or not is indeed the key for understanding this institution and placing it in the political and social context of the Hellenistic world. Following Perdrizet there are other scholars too who suppose that the \textit{politeumata} must have been public associations with certain political rights. Among these scholars we must mention M. Engers, W. Ruppel, V. A. Tcherikover, Cl. Préaux, H. Strathmann and M. Smallwood.\textsuperscript{797} Most members of this group agree that “the \textit{politeuma} was a recognized, formally constituted corporation of aliens enjoying the right of domicile in a foreign city and forming a separate, semi-autonomous civic body, a city within the city.”\textsuperscript{798} They suppose that the rights of \textit{politeumata} were set down in a written charter and that they enjoyed an official status in the Greek cities.

A. Kasher goes even further in assuming that the \textit{politeuma} membership provided members with an equal political status to that of the Greek cities. In his study about the rights of the Jews, he seeks evidence in support of the equal legal status of the Jews vis-à-vis the Greek citizens.\textsuperscript{799} Since there is only one literary source mentioning the term \textit{politeuma} in connection with Jews (\textit{Letter of Aristeas} § 310), he presents several assumptions regarding the Jewish communities in the Egyptian countryside. For instance, he considers the dedicatory inscriptions of synagogues as proof of the legal status of the Jews. Since the synagogues were

\textsuperscript{796} Perdrizet, \textit{RAr} 35 (1899), p. 47.


\textsuperscript{798} Smallwood (1981), p. 225.

certainly built with the approval of the king. Kasher supposes that the Jews were organized into legal entities recognized by law. Moving forward, he assumes that these entities were, in fact, politeumata having the same political right as Greek citizens.

Kasher’s view, as well as his predecessors’ more cautious opinion, have been strongly criticized by C. Zuckermann, G. Lüderitz and J. M. Modrzejewski. C. Zuckermann, in his review of Kasher’s book, criticizes the way he approached the institution of the politeuma and the hypothesis he elaborated about its legal status. After reviewing all the sources about Hellenistic type politeumata, Zuckermann concludes that the evidence presents the “typical Ptolemaic politeuma as a cult association most commonly following the particular ancestral rite of its members, or just united on a “professional” basis, as in the case of Alexandrian soldiers.” According to him nothing suggests that the politeuma would have enjoyed any political right or official status. He considers the politeuma to have been private associations whose members certainly had the right to follow their ancestral laws and rites, but without any legal status or political right. A very similar approach is taken by G. Lüderitz who finds no difference between the politeuma and other types of associations such as clubs. In his view, the politeuma should not been seen as a public institutions, but as private associations that were free to constitute themselves without supervision by the state. Not only Zuckerman and Lüderitz, but also J. M. Modrzejewski expresses his doubts about the politeuma as a civic autonomous body in Ptolemaic Egypt. According to him the only literary attestation of the word politeuma in the Letter of Aristeas is not convincing and he assumes that “the concept of Jewish politeuma as independent political units must be regarded as a historiographical legend.”

Some year ago, the publication of the Jewish politeuma archive put an end to the scholarly debate about the nature of this institution. To settle what kind of institution were the ethnic politeumata in Ptolemaic Egypt, we will study the Herakleopolite archive in detail.

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6.2. The Politeuma Archive of Herakleopolis

6.2.1. Jewishness and structure of the politeuma

The twenty papyri that have been brought together in one volume by J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch shed light on several aspects of the Jewish politeuma. The petitions were written between 144/3 and 133/2 BCE during the reign of Ptolemy VIII Physcon, but it is highly possible that the politeuma existed already before this date since we can see in these papyri an elaborate and well-functioning system of jurisdiction.

We will first discuss the Jewishness of the politeuma. In the archive there is only one document that designates the politeuma as that of the Jews: P.Polit.Iud. 8. This petition was written “to the archons of year 37 of the politeuma of the Jews in Herakleopolis” (τοις ἀρχονσι τὸ λς (ἐτος) τοῦ Ἑρακλέους πόλει πολίτευμα τῶν Ἰουδαίων), and is basically the only document that directly associates the archons with the politeuma. Based on this evidence it has generally been assumed that the politeuma was headed by annually appointed archons. However, as I have mentioned earlier, B. Ritter recently questioned this association. He argues that this evidence is problematic, and thinks that here the archons are primarily associated with the Jews and that their association with the politeuma is secondary. He translates the above mentioned phrase as “to the archons of the Jews, of the politeuma in Herakleopolis, for the year 37.” Thus, he separates the Jewish archons from the politeuma of Herakleopolis and assumes that the archons were Jewish archons, but not the leaders of the politeuma. According to him, the politeuma was not an ethnic Jewish association but a civic body of the citizens of Herakleopolis headed by the politarches, while the Jewish archons were considered a Jewish board of leaders with a distinct jurisdiction over the Jews of the city and the nome.

Ritter’s view, however, is not very probable for several reasons. First, the translation he offers is artificial. Based on the syntax of the phrase there is no reason to assume that the association of the archons with the politeuma is secondary.

Secondly, there is other indirect evidence in the archive suggesting that the archons belonged to the politeuma. P.Polit.Iud. 17 is not a petition but a letter sent by a certain Straton to five officials ordering the release of some people associated with Alexandros son of Stephanos from prison. The decision for their release was made by the politarches and the...

archons, and their association is clear from the sentence “since the politarches Euphranor and the archons, ... in Tebetny ...” (τοῦ πολιτάρχου Εὐφράνορος τῶν ἀρχόντων τῶν ἐν Τεβέτνῳ [ ]). According to the editor, the word “archons” is connected with the politarches and, thus, with the politeuma in Herakleopolis, while the reference to the village of Tebetny is to be interpreted as the place where the politarches and the archons made their decision. B. Ritter does not accept this interpretation and assumes that the archons were “the archons in Tebetny,” that is, village administrators, and not necessarily Jews. However, I agree with Maresch because, based on the syntax of the sentence in which they are mentioned, Ritter’s interpretation is untenable. In the entire politeuma archive, when a title is connected to a geographical location, it is expressed as follows: οἱ ἐμὴ περιπατητέα κριταὶ (the judges in Peenpasbytis) in P.Polit.Iud. 18, τῶν ἐν Πενεῖ πρεσβυτέρων (the elders in Peene) in P.Polit.Iud. 19 and τῶν ἐν Τεβέτνῳ πρεσβυτέρῳ (the elders in Tebetny) in P.Polit.Iud. 20. Thus, the term sequence τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐν Τεβέτνῳ (with the localizing adjective after the noun “archons”) suggest that the last two words should be associated with the following participle, for which Maresch suggests διεγνωκότων (having given judgment) or διεγγυωμένων (having taken bail).

Thirdly, Ritter’s reasoning that such a Jewish ethnic politeuma has no clear parallels is not convincing either. He briefly surveys all the ethnic politeumata known from Greco-Roman Egypt and agrees with C. Zuckermann that “the typical Ptolemaic politeuma was primarily a cult association without official status or authority over its members” and that a Jewish ethnic politeuma, as J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch reconstructed, would represent a significant departure from the existing evidence for politeumata. Indeed. The main contribution of this archive is exactly that it casts light on those aspects of the ethnic politeumata that no other source has revealed yet. As we have seen above, most of the ethnic politeumata are attested on inscriptions, which represent a different sort of source material than papyri. The decrees and the funerary steles preserved on stone do not tell us much about the structure of these politeumata. However, exactly among the inscriptions we find two texts showing that the politeuma of the Jews in Berenice was, in fact, headed by annually appointed archons. This is a very telling information and implies that the structure and the nature of the politeuma in Berenice must have been very similar to that of the politeuma in

806 For Ritter, it seems immaterial where the archons rendered their decision and he thinks that the association of the archons with Tebetny would be more understandable since Alexander son of Stephanus was from that village. For Ritter’s arguments see Ritter, SCI 30 (2011), pp. 31-32.
808 CIG III 5362 = SEG XVI 931 and CIG III 5361.
Herakleopolis. Both decrees attesting the Jewish *politeuma* in Berenice contain a list of archons who headed it. If in Berenice the Jewish *politeuma* was clearly headed by archons, why should we not accept the obvious assumption confirmed by *P.Polit.Iud.* 8 that the Herakleopolite *politeuma* too was lead by Jewish archons? I see no reason to reject the structure of the Jewish *politeuma* as reconstructed by J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch.\(^8\) It seems quite clear that the *politeuma* was headed by archons and the *politarches* was a kind of *primus inter pares* to quote the editors.\(^8\) No doubt, the *politarches* had a higher rank than the archons: this is also clear from *P.Polit.Iud.* 1 and 2, in both of which the *politarches* is mentioned by name. In the other petitions, which were mostly written to the archons of this or that year, the archons are never named. It also seems certain that the archons changed annually, while the *politarches* could hold his office for longer period: it is even possible that it was a life-long office.

Besides the *politarches* and the archons, there were other officials too working for the *politeuma*. *P.Polit.Iud.* 6, *P.Polit.Iud.* 19, *P.Polit.Iud.* 20 and probably also *P.Polit.Iud.* 3 mention “elders” (πρεσβύτεροι) who must have represented the Jewish jurisdiction body in the neighboring villages.\(^8\) All these texts imply the fact that the elders were subordinate to the archons in Herakleopolis: *P.Polit.Iud.* 6 is a petition written by a certain Theodotos son of Theodotos, whose case was first brought before the elders, most probably in the village of Onnes and only later, when it was not resolved at village-level, it came before the archons. *P.Polit.Iud.* 19 and *P.Polit.Iud.* 20 are both administrative letters, *P.Polit.Iud.* 19 was written by the elders in Penei presumably to the elders in Herakleopolis (although the latter is a suggested restoration), and *P.Polit.Iud.* 20 was sent by the elders in Tebetny to the archons in Herakleopolis. These letters are unfortunately badly preserved, but it is clear that the elders informed the archons about the procedure of some of the cases in question. According to A. Kasher, the mention of the elders in the *politeuma* archive confirms the authenticity of the *Letter of Aristeas* § 310, which records not only the *politeuma* but also the elders of Alexandria.\(^8\)

We also meet “judges” (κριταί) in *P.Polit.Iud.* 6 and in *P.Polit.Iud.* 18. The case of *P.Polit.Iud.* 6 is highly interesting: Theodotos complains to the archons that his case was already judged before the elders of the village, but they failed to issue a sentence. In the same

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\(^8\) See the introduction in Cowey & Maresch (2001), pp. 10-18.


\(^8\) In *P.Polit.Iud.* 3, ll. 17-18 the sentence το[ι]ς ἐν Τε[β]έτ[ν]ο[ι]ς πρεσβύτεροις (to the elders in Tebetny), is in fact a restoration suggested by the editors.

document the three appointees, who did not write a sentence, are labeled “judges,” based on which it may be assumed that the judges were the elders themselves. *P.Polit.Iud.* 18 is an official letter written by Alexandros and the judges in Peenpasbytis to Straton and the judges in Herakleopolis. Alexandros was most probably an appointed judge somehow connected to the elders of the village. In the same way, the judges in Herakleopolis were also somehow connected to the archons. It is certain that the judges belonged to the administration of the Jewish *politeuma*, but their precise function is unclear. They may have been chosen from among the elders in the villages and the archons in Herakleopolis to resolve a given case, but it is also possible that they were permanent judges, whose task was to investigate the cases.\(^\text{813}\)

The office of *hyperetes* is mentioned only once in the archive (*P.Polit.Iud.* 9) in the context of an administrative procedure. What seems to be certain is that he was a kind of assistant of the archons. Most probably, the *hyperetes* was not the only assistant in the administration of the *politeuma*, and there may have been other officials too. To sum up, we may conclude that this Jewish *politeuma* was a well-organized institution with extensive administrative personnel. It was certainly headed by the archons, whose seat was in Herakleopolis. The elders were subordinate to the archons and may have represented the Jewish jurisdiction in the neighboring villages with sufficient competence to resolve local affairs. The judges were also officials of the *politeuma* either as permanent investigators or as appointed judges. Among the low-level officials we only meet the *hyperetes*, but supposedly there were other assistants as well.

**6.2.2. Geographical and social competence of the politeuma**

We will now turn to the competence of the *politeuma*, both in geographical and social terms. It is clear from the administrative hierarchy that the competence of the archons extended beyond Herakleopolis. In most of the cases, the petitioners are from Herakleopolis, but some texts were submitted by people from elsewhere. *P.Polit.Iud.* 9 for instance was written by a certain Berenike, daughter of Archagathos, who is labeled a resident of Aphrodites polis. Which Aphrodites polis is meant here is unclear because there were different villages with this name and Berenike did not indicate the precise location of her

\(^{813}\) According to D. Thompson the elders and the judges “appear to be interchangeable terms,” see D. J. Thompson, “Ethnic Minorities in Hellenistic Egypt,” in O. M. van Nijf & R. Alston (eds.), *Political Culture in the Greek City after the Classical Age* (Leuven 2011), pp. 101-118 at p. 111.
village. The defendant of the same petition was Demetrios, residing in Peenpasbytis. This village was located in the Herakleopolite nome and is also attested in two other documents of the archive. *P.Polit.Iud.* 13 is a petition, in which the plaintiffs, namely Hippalos, Theodotos and Poly.n., designate themselves residents of Peenpasbytis, while *P.Polit.Iud.* 18 is an official letter written by Alexandros and the judges in Peenpasbytis. Thus, it seems that there was a Jewish community living in this small Herakleopolite village, at the head of which there may have been Jewish elders.

The archive records other villages, in which the politeuma had juridical power: *P.Polit.Iud.* 19 is an administrative letter sent by the elders in Peene to the archons in Herakleopolis to inform them that they ordered the enumerated people to appear before the court of the politeuma. The name of the village is not conclusive. Peene is attested in various versions in different nomes, but never as Πέννης or Πέννιος, which would be the nominative form of Πενει. There was a village called Πενή in the Arsinoite nome, another one called Πεννη in the Hermopolite nome, and even Πενη in the Delta, but the editors opt for the identification with the village Πεενη, which was located in the Herakleopolite nome.

*P.Polit.Iud.* 20 is another administrative letter, whose text is very fragmentary, and allows much speculation about its content. It was published earlier than other texts of the archive, but J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch republished it, and changed its original interpretation. According to their interpretation the letter was sent by the Jewish elders in Tebetny to the archons in Herakleopolis. Tebetny was a village located in the Herakleopolite nome and is also attested in *P.Polit.Iud.* 17 as the hometown of Alexandros, son of Stephanos.

Even more surprising is the fact that the competence of the politeuma did not end at the border of the Herakleopolite nome, but reached out to other nomes as well. This is clear from *P.Polit.Iud.* 8 for instance, which is a petition written by Theodotos, son of Theodotos concerning a loan agreement. Theodotos was a resident of the Oxyrhynchite nome, and so too

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815 It must be noted, however, that the name of this village is written differently in each petition: we read Peimpasbytis in *P.Polit.Iud.* 9, Peimpazbytis in *P.Polit.Iud.* 13, and Peenpasbytis in *P.Polit.Iud.* 18. On this village, located in the Herakleopolitie nome see TM Geo 1645 on http://www.trismegistos.org/place/1645 (accessed on 21 March 2016).


817 The first editor of the papyrus, D. Hagedorn, considers the text a letter from the archons of the Jewish politeuma to the Jewish elders residing in Tebetny, see D. Hagedorn & R. Hübner & J. C. Shelton (eds.), *P.Münch. III = Griechische Urkundenpapyri der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek München*, Part I (Stuttgart 1986), pp. 8-10. Having considered other pieces of the Jewish politeuma archive, especially *P.Polit.Iud.* 19, Cowey and Maresch were able to improve the reading of the text, and they convincingly argue that the direction of the letter was the opposite.

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were most probably the Jewish defendants, Plousia and her son Dorotheos, taking into consideration that the vineyard in question was situated in the region of Palosis in the Oxyrhynchite nome. This means that Jews from outside the Herakleopolite nome had the right to petition the politeuma in Herakleopolis. If there had been any Jewish politeuma in the Oxyrhynchite nome, Theodotos would have certainly turned to that one. We may then assume with reason that there was no other Jewish politeuma in the region, or in Middle Egypt.

Turning to the social competence of the politeuma, it must be noted that the ethnic background of the people concerned is not always clear. Since the juridiction of the politeuma served the interests of the Jews, it is reasonable to assume that the petitioners were all Jews. Some of them are simply designated “Jew” or “Jewess,” (Petaus in P.Polit.Iud. 2, Theodotos in P.Polit.Iud. 6, another Theodotos in P.Polit.Iud. 8, Berenike in P.Polit.Iud. 9, Ptolemaios in P.Polit.Iud. 11, Nikanor in P.Polit.Iud. 12, Hippalos, Theodotos and Poly.n. in P.Polit.Iud. 13) while others are explicitly stated to be “member of the politeuma” (τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πολιτεύματος), like Andronikos in P.Polit.Iud. 1, Philotas son of Philotas in P.Polit.Iud. 4 and Dorotheos in P.Polit.Iud. 7. The case of P.Polit.Iud. 1 is especially interesting because in it, we meet the designations politai and allophyloi. Andronikos who complains to Alexandros politarches against Nikarchos, a resident of the harbour, emphasizes that the latter insulted him in public in the presence of both politai and allophyloi. The meaning of these terms in this context is debated. The editors are convinced that the word πολίτης (citizen) means “member of the politeuma” as opposed to ἀλλόφυλος (stranger, foreigner referring to another ethnicity), who would then be a “non-Jew.” As an argument they cite the use of the same term by Josephus paraphrasing the famous “warning inscription” of Herod’s temple as well as the appearance of the term in the Septuagint in the sense of non-Jews. This interpretation of the term has been accepted by both A. Kasher and S. Honigman, but neither B. Ritter nor R. Kugler follows them. Ritter quotes W. Clarysse and D. Thompson, who understand the term allophyloi in Ptolemaic registers as a category implying probably “an origin elsewhere.”

818 In the case of some petitions, however, the only thing suggesting the Jewishness of the plaintiff is that the petition was written to the Jewish archons. See for instance Protomachos in P.Polit.Iud. 3, Ptolemaia in P.Polit.Iud. 10, Ammonia in P.Polit.Iud. 14 or Straton in P.Polit.Iud. 17.
820 For the warning inscription see OGIS II 598 = CIJ II 1400 = SEG VIII 169. It is, however, interesting to note that the inscription itself does not use the term ἄλλοφυλος, but ἄλλογενής. It is only Josephus later (BJ V 194), who applies this term to the foreigners who were not supposed to enter the Jerusalem temple.
823 Clarysse & Thompson (2006), vol. 2, pp. 186-187. The term allophyloi is attested alongside favoured tax-cATEGORIES in the Fayum (for instance in P.Count. 1, 23 and 50), which may refer to the fact that this group was
meaning, and considers the *allophyloi* to be geographical outsiders, that is, non-citizens, while the *politai* would be citizens of Herakleopolis.\textsuperscript{824} The same point of view is taken by R. Kugler, who also thinks that the words *politai* and *allophyloi* are not to be interpreted in the context of the *politeuma*, but in that of city.\textsuperscript{825} Based on the Ptolemaic registers, he also suggests that in *P.Polit.Iud*. 1 the term *allophyloi* labels outsiders, that is, people who were not residents of Herakleopolis, while the *politai* were most probably citizens or permanent residents of Herakleopolis, and not members of the *politeuma*. To confirm his theory he cites several documents, in which the term *politai* refers to either citizens of Greek cities in Egypt or residents of other cities like Herakleopolis. In fact, this meaning makes more sense than the one offered by the editors of the *politeuma* archive, and Kugler seems to be right in claiming that Andronikos mentioned the presence of residents and non-residents of Herakleopolis in order to emphasize “the severity of his public shaming.”\textsuperscript{826} In sum, whether or not the *politai* and the *allophyloi* were Jews remains an open question, since these terms do not seem to be connected to ethnicity but to civic status. What is certain is that the petitioners who label themselves “member of the *politeuma*,” should be considered Jews.

Another interesting question is that of the people who are described as “residents of the harbour” (τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὅρμου), which is also a disputed designation. There are three documents mentioning people from the harbour: *P.Polit.Iud*. 1, *P.Polit.Iud*. 10 and *P.Polit.Iud*. 11. In *P.Polit.Iud*. 1 it is the defendant Nikarchos, who is described as a harbour resident. The editors of the papyrus supposed that he was a non-Jew, not just because his name is not attested for Jews in Egypt,\textsuperscript{827} but also because his designation “resident of the harbour” is contrasted with the label “member of the *politeuma*.\textsuperscript{828} In *P.Polit.Iud*. 10 too it is the defendant Tetoys, who is labeled harbour resident. The plaintiff Ptolemaia entrusted to her some work, and she paid half of the agreed wage in advance. Tetoys, however, did not complete the work, which is why Ptolemaia turned to the archons of the Jewish *politeuma*. In *P.Polit.Iud*. 11 it is again the defendant Arsame, who is described as “resident of the harbour.” In this case, the petitioner Ptolemaios appealed to the archons, because Arsame still owed him the price of some wine. Arsame was probably a wine-merchant or a retail-dealer who was supposed to deliver the wine to Ptolemaios, but she failed to do so. Thus, in all of

\textsuperscript{825} R. Kugler in *CPJ* IV (forthcoming).
\textsuperscript{826} Kugler in *CPJ* IV (forthcoming).
\textsuperscript{827} However, outside of Egypt, the name was in use among the Jews, see for instance *P.Yadin* 36 in which a certain Jew carried the name Eleazar son of Nikarchos.
the above-mentioned documents always the defendants are labeled “residents of the harbour.”
J. M. S. Cowey and K. Maresch, followed by A. Kasher\textsuperscript{829} and S. Honigman\textsuperscript{830} emphasize the
distinction between the designations “member of the politeuma” and “resident of the
harbour,” and they suppose that the latter refers to non-Jews. There are, however, other
possible explanations for this distinction. R. Kugler thinks for instance that in these petitions,
the plaintiffs’ main concern was not related to the ethnic background of their opponents, but
more probably to their social status.\textsuperscript{831} In this regard, it is the social standing of the harbour
area which is important. It is a well-known fact that in Herakleopolis, which was an important
port town in Middle Egypt, the area of the harbour was separated from the town itself. We
also know from the archive of Dioskourides that there was a military fortress in
Herakleopolis, and it most probably stood in the harbour area.\textsuperscript{832} Given the fact that the
harbour area may have been a densely populated quarter inhabited by different kinds of
people, Kugler supposes that the residents of this area were raffish people and that the
petitioners simply wished to emphasize the inferior social status of the defendants by
mentioning that they were from that area. In this way, they may have hoped a positive
judgment concerning their case. Kugler’s hypothesis is logical in terms of legal reasoning.
However, one needs to be cautious when considering the residents of the harbour area to be
all raffish people. Being a busy port, Herakleopolis’ harbour area certainly gave home to
some trouble-makers, but in some cases, like in \textit{P.Polit.Iud}. 10 and \textit{P.Polit.Iud}. 11, the
defendants’ place of residence had most probably nothing to do with the actual complaint. In
both cases, the defendants owed money or another commodity to the plaintiffs, which may
have been due to their financial problems rather than to their place of residence. Yet, Kugler
is certainly right in assuming that the petitioners’ concern may have been to show their
defendants in the worst possible light, and they apparently exploited the bad reputation of the
harbour quarter in order to win their case.

In sum, it seems that neither the distinction made between \textit{politai} and \textit{allophyloi} in
\textit{P.Polit.Iud}. 1, nor the contrast between “member of the politeuma” and “resident of the
non-Jews. What is clear is that people labeled “members of the politeuma” were certainly

\textsuperscript{830} Honigman, \textit{SCI} 21 (2002), p. 252.
\textsuperscript{831} Kugler in \textit{CPJ IV} (forthcoming).
\textsuperscript{832} Dioskourides was the \textit{phrourarchos} (garrison commander) in Herakleopolis and an entire archive has been
preserved relating to him. \textit{P.Diosk}. 1 was written to him by a Cyrenaean soldier against Iason, a Jewish soldier.
For this archive see Cowey & Maresch & Barnes (2003). We also know from \textit{P.Berl.Zill}. 1 and \textit{P.Berl.Zill}. 2
that this fortress was built not much earlier than the time of Dioskourides.
Jews and belonged to this Jewish institution. The other designations, however, do not concern ethnic identity, but legal or social status, which means that we do not know whether or not they were Jews, and we certainly cannot label them “non-Jews” simply because they were harbour residents or allophylloi. The same holds true for those people who are recorded only with their name without further designation. While there is good reason to assume that the petitioners were Jews, this is not the case with the defendants. Unless they bear biblical names or they are designated “Jew” or “Jewess,” one cannot consider them Jewish simply because they were accused by Jews before the Jewish archons. Thus, in several cases we do not know the ethnic identity of the defendants: Euphranor in P.Polit.Iud. 3, Lysimachos in P.Polit.Iud. 4, Timotheos in P.Polit.Iud. 6, another Euphranor in P.Polit.Iud. 13 and Theodote in P.Polit.Iud. 14 may or may not have been Jews. If they were not Jews, it means that the competence of the politeuma extended not only to its members, but also to Greeks or other non-Jewish people.\(^{833}\) This is certainly an interesting phenomenon, which leads us to another question, namely to the limits of the competence of the politeuma.

What was the politeuma allowed to do? Where were the limits of its competence? Based on the petitions, it was a far more important institution than a private religious association. Its members certainly had the right to follow ancestral laws and rites, but the texts concern legal affairs too. The politeuma was a recognized, formally constituted corporation and in a legal sense, the jurisdiction of the archons was similar to that of any Ptolemaic legal body in Egypt. As also concluded by S. Honigman, they had the right to enforce certain measures concerning any legal issue, in which at least one of the parties was Jewish: to summon people to court (P.Polit.Iud. 1, P.Polit.Iud. 3, P.Polit.Iud. 6, P.Polit.Iud. 9, P.Polit.Iud. 10, P.Polit.Iud. 11, P.Polit.Iud. 12, P.Polit.Iud. 15, P.Polit.Iud. 16), to release people from prison (P.Polit.Iud. 2), to give orders to subordinate officials (P.Polit.Iud. 17) or even to the elders in smaller villages (P.Polit.Iud. 19).\(^{834}\) Thus, the politeuma apparently possessed some autonomy in resolving disputes.

However, it is also clear that the archons did not have the same right as the Greek dicasteries, since they were not entitled to undertake investigations or to decide in judicial questions. This is clearly shown by the petitions, in which the archons are never asked to

\(^{833}\) Cowey and Maresch suggest that the physical center of the Jewish politeuma may have been the harbour area, which is why the archons had jurisdiction over people labeled “resident of the harbour,” see Cowey & Maresch (2001), p. 12. This explanation is, however, not very convincing for two reasons: first, because we do not know whether the harbour residents were Jews or not; secondly, as is clear from the above-mentioned documents, some defendants were not from the harbour area and the jurisdiction of the Jewish archons over these people cannot be explained by the geographical location of the politeuma.

make legal decisions, but to proceed in the cases by means of their authority. Legal decisions could be made only by the Greek dicasteries, even if the parties were Jews.

P. Sänger is certainly right in claiming that the Jewish politeuma should not be classified as a special politeuma. Jews, like other ethnic minorities such as Boeotians, Cilicians, Cretans, Lycians, Phrygians or Idumaeans, were members of the Hellene society. As we have seen above, all these minorities had a politeuma at their disposal, and even more ethnic politeumata may have existed. I agree with Sänger that probably all the ethnic politeumata “held the same rights or the same semi-autonomous position in the state structure.”

6.2.3. Military and political role of the politeuma

Another important aspect of the politeumata is that they were all related to the army. This was already concluded by earlier studies in connection with other ethnic politeumata. Most of the texts and inscriptions mention military men in connection with the politeumata: the benefactor of the Cilician politeuma was a high-ranking military official; the letter recording the Cretan politeuma concerns the promotion of a military man belonging to the ephodoi to be part of the fifth hipparchy of the 100-aroura-men; Dorion, who was honoured by the Idumean politeuma was not only strategos, but also priest of the troop of sword-bearers; and finally the inscription recording the Boeotian politeuma differentiates the “Boeotians gathered in Xoix” and their “sympoliteuomenoi,” and according to Zuckermann, the first group represented the military men while the second one the civilians.

The archive of the Herakleopolite Jewish politeuma decisively reinforces the link between the army and the politeuma. In certain cases the petitions explicitly mention military men. P.Polit.Iud. 5 was written by Polyktor, son of Polyktor who is designated Macedonian from Demetrios’ cavalry mercenaries. We have already treated the question of the ethnic designation “Macedonian” and, based on the archive of Dionysios son of Kephalas, we have seen that it should be interpreted in connection with the terms “Persian” and “Persian of the Epigone,” which all became pseudo-ethnic designations and were exclusively used in military

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835 Sänger, Migration (2014), pp. 51-68, at p. 60.
836 Ibid., p. 60.
It seems certain that they referred to different military positions. Soldiers not yet recruited or temporarily not on active service were called “Persians of the Epigone,” while active soldiers were designated either “Persians” or “Macedonians,” the latter being probably a more prestigious title. Another petition in the politeuma archive mentioning a military man is P.Polit.Iud. 8. One of the defendants, Dorotheos alias Zenon is explicitly described as a Jew, but in the loan contract, which was the subject of the petition, he was designated “Persian of the Epigone.” Thus, at the time of the conclusion of the loan contract, he was a non-active soldier and later he may have been recruited. At any rate, it is clear that he had links with the army. Finally, the presence of a fortress in Herakleopolis is also meaningful. As noted by the editors, the military fortress in the harbour area is certainly not a coincidence. This fortress was most probably as important in Middle Egypt as the fortresses of Elephantine and Syene in Upper Egypt or that of Memphis in Lower Egypt. Although the Herakleopolite fortress had its own leader (phrourarchos) as is clear from the archive of Dioskourides, it seems logical that it had close links with the Jewish politeuma. In sum, the sources on the Herakleopolite politeuma support the prevailing view that Hellenistic politeumata were military in nature. By accepting this hypothesis, it also becomes clear why we meet different designations in the texts. People labeled “members of the politeuma” were most probably all military men, while their family members were described as Jews and Jewesses. The first group formed the Jewish politeuma proper, while the second represented the civilian sphere of the city. The structure of the Jewish community in Herakleopolis seems to have been the same as the Idumean community in Memphis and the Boeotian community in Xoix as already shown by S. Honigman and D. Thompson. Thompson rightly points out that these ethnic politeumata were, in fact, military rather than political or religious institutions.

This conclusion leads us to our last point to be discussed in this section. If Hellenistic ethnic politeumata were indeed military institutions, what is the proper context, in which one needs to place them? In other words, where, when and why were they created? We have seen above the geographical extension of ethnic politeumata. We have met eight ethnic politeumata in the Hellenistic period: that of the Caunians, that of the Pisidians from

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839 See above in Chapter 3.2.3.
841 S. Honigman rightly supposes that the jurisdictional power of the Jewish archons may have been similar to that of the phrourarchos of the fortress, see Honigman, AncSoc 33 (2003), p. 64. With the publication of the archive of Dioskourides, it has become clear that the military power of Dioskourides phrourarchos, the leader of the fortress, extended to the civilian sphere, see Cowey & Maresch & Barnes (2003), and P.Diosk. 1, in which the petitioner asked the phrourarchos to place a copy of his complaint in his archive.
Termessus, and that of the Pinarers in Sidon, that of the Cilicians and that of the Cretans in the Fayum, that of the Boeotians in Xoix, that of the Idumaeans in Memphis and that of the Jews in Herakleopolis. Besides, in the Roman period we come across the politeuma of the Phrygians and that of the Lycians in Egypt, while the politeuma of the Jews is attested in Berenice in Cyrenaica. Thus, most of these ethnic politeumata were based in Egypt. More important is the origin of the people gathered in the different politeumata. In a very recent paper, P. Sänger convincingly argues that not only the physical location of these politeumata, but also the place of origin of the people active in them can be connected to Egypt.\footnote{Sänger, Migration (2014), pp. 51-68.}

As pointed out by Sänger, Cilicia, Idumaea, Judea and Lycia all belonged to Ptolemaic possessions outside of Egypt throughout the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, and even Crete, Phrygia and Boeotia came under its sphere of influence.\footnote{Ibid., p. 57.} Only the three politeumata in Sidon pose some problems: the inscriptions recording the politeumata of the Caunians, the Pisidians from Termessus and the Pinarers cannot be dated with certainty, only roughly to the end of the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE. Thus, they can be attributed either to Ptolemaic or to Seleucid rule (the area together with Sidon came under Seleucid rule after the Fifth Syrian war in 202-198 BCE). Sänger, however, shows that these politeumata must have dated from the time of Ptolemaic rule, because “Caunos, Termessos Minor and Pinara were all situated in territories which were under Ptolemaic control up to the Fifth Syrian war, whereas this correlation would not occur in relation to the Seleucids.”\footnote{Ibid., p. 61.} After the war, Caunos did not come under the control of the Seleucid Empire, but was sold by Egypt to Rhodes, and Sänger is certainly right in assuming that in this situation, it is difficult to imagine that Caunian soldiers would have formed a politeuma to serve the Seleucids. It seems, therefore, quite likely that all of these politeumata in Sidon were still created under Ptolemaic rule, and not only Sidon, but also the place of origin of the soldiers belonged to the Ptolemaic empire. In sum, as has already been suggested by Zuckermann, and is now confirmed by Sänger, the institution of politeuma existed only in the Ptolemaic empire; therefore it was a Ptolemaic creation.\footnote{Zuckerman, SCI 8/9 (1985/88), p. 174; Sänger, Migration (2014), p. 61.}

As to when this form of organization was created, the prevailing view is that ethnic politeumata were first created in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE, probably under the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-145 BCE).\footnote{This was suggested by Launey (1949/50), vol. 2, p. 1077 based on the then available evidence. He notes, however, that we do not know whether or not they existed earlier and that in military circles there was always a tendency to form associations. Thus, he considers it possible that the initial forms of the politeumata may have} This opinion is mainly based on the fact that we come across
all the relevant sources in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE. In light of Sänger’s study, however, this assumption must be reconsidered. If the \textit{politeumata} in Sidon were indeed founded by the Ptolemies in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, the conclusion is clear: ethnic \textit{politeumata} must have emerged not in the II\textsuperscript{nd}, but earlier in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE.

Finally, turning to the reasons why these ethnic \textit{politeumata} were created, the best suggestions have been made by D. J. Thompson and P. Sänger. D. Thompson emphasizes that the creation of \textit{politeumata} must be interpreted in a military context. She supposes that the foundation of ethnic \textit{politeumata} was an approach of the Ptolemies to resolve the problem of military loyalty.\textsuperscript{848} In her view, in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE soldiers were granted plots of land in order to settle them in the country, and later in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE the institution of \textit{politeuma} served to reinforce their loyalty, since “it gave them both an identity not restricted to their military role and a means of access to those in positions of authority.”\textsuperscript{849} That the \textit{politeumata} may have helped the soldiers to maintain their identity is certainly true, but recalling the multiculturalism of the Ptolemaic army in the III\textsuperscript{rd} century BCE, in my view, the question of identity was important in the II\textsuperscript{nd} century BCE as well.

The same holds true for political integration, which is the main point of P. Sänger’s argumentation. Since the beginning of the Ptolemaic period, the state needed foreign soldiers to be settled in the country, and quite reasonably, it was in its interest to integrate them into society and the political system. Since the political competence of the \textit{politeumata} was limited, they did not constitute a danger to the state, but represented “institutionalized parts of the kingdom’s administrative structure” to quote Sänger’s conclusion.\textsuperscript{850} Their main importance lies in the fact that they ensured some religious and legal autonomy to their members and that they were recognized by the state. Both Thompson and Sänger agree that through the \textit{politeumata}, ethnic minorities could probably easier communicate with the authorities, because they had an official representative body.\textsuperscript{851} Thus, these institutions were quite advantageous to the ethnic communities, but the state also profited from them.

The government’s aim was to make sure that the minorities, who constituted the basis of the Ptolemaic army, stayed in the country in the service of the Ptolemies. Based on the

\textsuperscript{849} Thompson, \textit{Atti} (1984), p. 1075.
\textsuperscript{851} Sänger, \textit{Migration} (2014), pp. 63-64, it is even possible that in the district where they lived, the leaders of the \textit{politeumata} were authorized to exercise juridical power over the population. This supposition is, however, uncertain.
Sidonian politeumata, the establishment of these unique Ptolemaic institutions must have started in the IIIrd century BCE. The fact that all the ethnic politeumata in Egypt proper are attested in the IInd century BCE might be simple coincidence. We may hope that in the future, further evidence will show up supporting the existence of ethnic politeumata in the IIIrd century BCE.

6.2.4. Jewish politeumata in Leontopolis and Alexandria

The Herakleopolite archive does not simply show us a hitherto unknown Jewish politeuma in Middle Egypt, but also casts new light on some sources that have already been available before its publication. Three sources must be mentioned in this context: CPJ III 1530a = JIGRE 39, a tombstone written to a certain Abramos, CIJ II 1450 = JIGRE 129, the famous „Chelkias stone,” both of them related to the community of Leontopolis, and the Letter of Aristeas § 310 referring to the community of Alexandria.

The Abramos tombstone is related to the Jewish community of Tell el-Yehudiye. The inscription originates from the late-Ptolemaic and early-Roman underground cemetery located northeast of the mound where Onias’ temple may have once stood. Although most of the inscriptions were written in Greek, the form of the tombs and the names occurring in the funerary inscriptions demonstrate the influence of Phoenicia and Palestine. In this inscription, Abramos is described as “honoured by holding a city magistracy in two places.” The text uses the verb πολιταρχῶ, the meaning of which was debated in the past. This expression means most probably “to be a politarches,” and L. Robert was the first to suggest that this title must be related to a politeuma, of which Abramos was the leader. This hypothesis has been accepted and followed by A. Kasher who agrees that there must have been a Jewish politeuma in the city. However, the word politeuma itself is not mentioned, which is why Robert’s and his followers’ view has been challenged by Lüderitz. He argues that based on this inscription one cannot suppose the existence of a Jewish politeuma and that the title

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852 For the geography of this site see above Chapter 1.2.1.2.
853 CPJ III 1530a = JIGRE 39. The relevant part of the text runs as follows: δισσῶν γάρ τε τούτων πολιταρχῶν αὐτὸς ἐπαιμῦ, according to the translation of Horbury & Noy (1992), p. 95: “For you were honoured by holding a city magistracy in two places.”
854 L. Robert, Hellenica: Recueil d’épigraphie, de numismatique et d’antiquités grecques, vol. 1 (Limoges 1940), pp. 20-21. According to him the text has further evidence supporting the existence of the politeuma: in II. 5-6 we read that ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀρχὴ πανόψιμῳ ἐθνικῆ ἐστιέρετ’ ἐν σοφίᾳ, translated by Horbury & Noy (1992), p. 95 as “[Abramos] was crowned in his wisdom with a communal magistracy over all the people,” and Robert argued that the word ethnos referred to the Jewish people, of which Abramos was the leader.
politarches could also mean “city magistrate.” All this is true, but the publication of the Herakleopolite archive clarifies the question. From P.Polit.Iud. 1 and P.Polit.Iud. 2 it has become clear that the politeuma was indeed headed by the politarches, and there is no reason to assume that other politeumata were organized in a different way. The politeuma archive undoubtedly confirms that in this inscription the verb πολιταρχῶ means “to be a politarches.”

If Abramos was a politarches in Leontopolis, it is reasonable to assume that the Jewish community was organized there as a politeuma.\(^\text{857}\) In fact, I must agree with S. Honigman, who claims that the Herakleopolite archive indisputably confirms Robert’s hypothesis.\(^\text{858}\) Considering the nature of the Leontopolis community, i.e. that is was founded by Onias as a military colony, it is not surprising at all.

Josephus’ report about the Leontopolis community also supports the existence of a politeuma. He claims that Onias founded not only a temple but also a fortification, i.e., a military settlement called “Land of Onias.”\(^\text{859}\) As we have already seen above, this Jewish military force took active part in the political struggles of the Ptolemies.\(^\text{860}\) Based on this fact, it seems that the Jews of Leontopolis formed a very influential military community organized as a politeuma. Moreover, based on the above mentioned inscription, we may even suppose that there were more than one Jewish politeuma in the surrounding area, but unfortunately the lack of evidence does not allow us to identify where Abramos’ other community was located.

The second inscription mentioned above, the so-called “Chelkias stone” (CIJ II 1450 = JIGRE 129) brings further evidence that there was a politeuma in Leontopolis. This inscription is quite badly preserved, but it clearly records a decree published in honour of Chelkias strategos or of his son by the “multitude of those in the sacred precinct.”\(^\text{861}\) The text uses the word πλῆθος to denote the community, and A. Kasher rightly points out that the same word was applied to the Alexandrian Jewish community in the Letter of Aristeas § 310 as well as to the Memphite Idumaean politeuma in OGIS 737 = SB V 8929.\(^\text{862}\) Indeed, the decree written in honour of Dorion, the strategos and priest of the troop of sword-bearers, makes clear that the body of sword-bearers was called πλῆθος. Since we know that the sword-bearers were part of the Idumaean unit of Memphis, it is reasonable to assume that they were part of the Idumean politeuma.\(^\text{863}\) At any rate, the Idumean politeuma and the plethos were closely

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\(^{859}\) Josephus, BJ I 190, AJ XIV 131.

\(^{860}\) See Chapter 1.1.1.


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connected. The same holds true for the Letter of Aristeas § 310, in which the Jewish plethos and the politeuma are recorded together. In this passage of the Letter, we read the followings: στάντες οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ τῶν ἐρμηνέων οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ πολιτεύματος οἳ τῆς ἡγούμενοι τοῦ πλήθους, that is “the priests and the elders of the translators and of some members of the Jewish community (politeuma) and the rulers of the people stood up.”

Plethos is also mentioned elsewhere in the Letter as πλήθος τῶν Ἰουδαίων, that is “multitude of the Jews,” it is therefore clear that plethos denotes the Jewish community of Alexandria.

As to the politeuma mentioned along with the plethos in this passage, the differentiation is important. While plethos undoubtedly stands for the whole Jewish community of Alexandria, politeuma clearly designates a different group. To explain this differentiation, several theories have been suggested over the past few decades. Those scholars, according to whom Hellenistic politeumata were official bodies with some political right, thought that this attestation of the term must denote a Jewish ethnic politeuma in Alexandria. A. Kasher also argues in favour of this hypothesis, and claims that the Jewish population of Alexandria was composed of different segments: the plethos representing the “outer circle comprising all the Jewish residents,” the politeuma being “the middle circle, comprising the organized privileged entity,” both of them attested in this passage of the Letter and finally “the innermost circle, which included the exclusive aristocracy,” mentioned by Josephus.

However, the Letter of Aristeas is a literary source, which is why the very existence of this Alexandrian Jewish politeuma has been questioned by several scholars. C. Zuckerman labels this text “a historiographic legend,” and supposed that the politeuma here denotes the idealized Jewish state in Palestine with Jerusalem as a “perfectly situated polis surrounded by abundant chora.” G. Lüderitz follows Zuckerman in his reservations regarding the Jewish politeuma in Alexandria, but he suggests another possibility: for him, the politeuma most probably stands for the body of citizens, that is, for the politeuma of the polis Alexandria, and

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864 Translated by Thackeray (1914).
865 Letter of Aristeas § 308.
866 See the references cited above in Chapter 6.1.3.
868 Josephus, CA II 36.
870 Ibid., p. 183.
in this case “the elders of the translators and of those belonging to the politeuma” would be “the representatives of the polis Alexandria.”

These suggestions are indeed interesting, but were formulated before the publication of the Jewish politeuma archive. Fortunately, thanks to its publication, now we know that at least one Jewish politeuma did exist in Ptolemaic Egypt. In light of the Herakleopolite archive, we must take seriously the isolated sources referring to other Jewish politeumata in Egypt. Just as Abramos’ epitaph can now be taken as evidence for the Leontopolite Jewish politeuma, the reference of the Letter of Aristeas must also be evaluated accordingly. In fact, the differentiation made between the politeuma and the plethos in the quoted passage of the Letter of Aristeas is in accordance with the evidence of the Idumaean community in Memphis, where the politeuma is mentioned separately from the “Idumaeans of the city,” as well as with the structure of the Herakleopolite Jewish community as reflected in the documents of the archive. Clearly, not all the petitioners were members of the politeuma, since many of them are simply designated “Jew” or “Jewess,” not to mention the petitioners residing in other villages. The politeuma does not denote the community itself, but only a small segment of it, supposedly the military core in the service of the Ptolemies. In this context, it may be assumed that in Alexandria the situation was the same: the politeuma denoted soldiers, who were part of the Ptolemaic army, and the plethos referred to all members of the Jewish community, including women, children and men with civil occupations. It remains unknown when the Alexandrian Jewish politeuma may have been created, but if we believe Sänger’s hypothesis, according to which ethnic politeumata must have emerged in the III\(^\text{rd}\) century BCE, it was most probably among the first ones.

6.3. Politeuma and Jewish Identity

In this subchapter, we will study some interesting points related to the identity of Jews submitting petitions to the Jewish politeuma. In the previous chapters we have seen that the Jews of Egypt adapted to the Hellene social class in many aspects of life: they did not only adopt Greek names, but also followed Greek legal practices. As emphasized by S. Honigman, Jews were not obligated to apply to the Jewish politeuma, but were also entitled to

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873 See above in Chapter 4.3.3.
petition the Greek authorities by virtue of their legal position. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the Jews who turned to the archons with their legal issues, took advantage of the religious and legal autonomy that these institutions offered, and tried to arrange their disputes according to Jewish Law. However, the picture that emerges from the petitions submitted to the archons of the politeuma is somewhat different from what one would expect.

6.3.1. Financial matters

We have already treated the issue of money lending. We concluded that the Jews followed the Greek practice of money lending and used the usual interest rate of 24% per year (CPJ I 20, CPJ I 23, CPJ I 24, P.Dion. 22). In the Herakleopolite archive, there are a few petitions that shed some light on other financial practices. In P.Polit.Iud. 8 the case, which is presented to the archons of the politeuma, is related to a loan agreement. The petitioner, Theodotos, son of Theodotos, lent to Plousia and her son 12 copper talents with interest at two drachmas on the security of a 1 ½ aroura vineyard. Since they failed to repay the debt in time, the loan contract was renewed, but still without repayment. After taking possession of the vineyard, Theodotos gave another option to the debtors to repay the debt within two years in two installments: half of it in Mesore of year 36, and the other half with the interest in Mesore of year 37. The petition was written before the second part of the repayment was due, because only a little part of it (3 metretes of wine and 1 talent 4700 copper drachmas) was repaid to Theodotos. Although both contracting parties were Jews, the legal terms of the petition point to Greek law. The loan agreement was clearly drawn up according to Greek practice at the usual annual interest rate of 24%. Like the above-mentioned Greek contracts involving Jews, this case also seems to ignore the biblical prohibition on money lending at interest among Jews. Why bring then such a case before the archons of the Jewish politeuma instead of a Greek court? R. Kugler argues quite convincingly concerning this matter. In his view, the fact that Theodotos appealed to the politeuma shows that he supposed the “openness” of the archons to other legal systems. Regardless of the fact that the loan was given at interest, he apparently expected the archons to deal with this case. Moreover, he certainly hoped to win the case: otherwise he would not have urged the archons to enforce the debtors to settle the debt. It would be very interesting to know what the response of the archons was, but in its

875 Ex 22:24, Lev 25:35-37, Deut 23:19-20. For the citation of these passages see above Chapter 4.3.3.
876 Kugler in CPJ IV (forthcoming).
absence, we may only conclude that the petitioners appealing to the Jewish *politeuma* did not seem to have escaped the general trend, and followed common Greek law in their daily life.

Taking a look at *P.Polit.Iud. 9* and *P.Polit.Iud. 12* is also instructive. *P.Polit.Iud. 9* was written by a Jewish woman called Berenike who appealed to the archons of the Jewish *politeuma* against Demetrios because he did not fulfill his obligations. Demetrios bought a slave woman and her child from Berenike, who cites in the petition the content of the contract. According to this contract, Demetrios should have given her the agreed price of the slaves in the month of Pauni of the same year, that is, four months after the contract was concluded. In addition, he was also expected to pay for the nursing of the child during this four-month period, but he paid neither for the slaves nor for the nursing, which is why Berenike appealed to the Jewish archons. What interests us here is that the original contract, which recorded the details of the purchase, is called “letter of the ancestral oath” (ἐπιστολὴ ὀρκου πατρίου), and Demetrios is said to have transgressed the “ancestral law” (πάτριος νόμος) by not fulfilling the conditions of the original contract. How should these terms be interpreted? We have already mentioned J. M. Modrzejewski’s hypothesis, according to which the composition of the Septuagint served not only the interest of the Jews, but also that of the Ptolemaic court. As we know, he supposes that the Septuagint became the civic law (*politikos nomos*) of the Jews just as the Greek version of the *Demotic Legal Code* became the reference law book of the Egyptians.\(^{877}\) S. Honigman considers the attestation of the “ancestral law” in the *politeuma* archive as serving as confirmation of Modrzejewski’s view.\(^{878}\) Indeed, what else could the ancestral law of the Jews mean if not their own law book? Given the fact that *P.Polit.Iud. 9* was written to the Jewish *politeuma*, which had some religious autonomy, there is no reason to deny that the ancestral law refers here to the Jewish law, that is, to the Septuagint. Now, we need to see whether the original contract mentioned in the petition was drawn up according to Jewish law. Although we do not have the original copy of the contract and we are informed about its details only through this petition, it is clear that the sale of the slave woman and her child must have been according to Greek law. Not

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\(^{877}\) See above Chapter 1.1.1.

\(^{878}\) She argues that the *Demotic Legal Code* or *Demotic Manual of law* as she labels it, was indeed used in legal practice. For the use of its Greek translation she quotes the proceedings of Hermias’ trial in 117 BCE known from *UPZ* 162. In this document Hermias’ lawyer mentions “national laws” based on which the *laokritai* (i.e. the Egyptian law court) judged the cases brought before them. It thus seems certain that the ancient Egypt law book was used by the Ptolemies, and this makes it quite likely that the same happened with the Jewish law book, see S. Honigman, *The Septuagint and Homeric Scholarship in Alexandria. A Study in the Narrative of the Letter of Aristeas* (London / New York 2003), p. 110. To prove the use of the Septuagint in Greek law courts Modrzejewski cites *CPJ* I 128, which indeed mentions the “national law of the Jews,” but it is only a supposed reconstruction of the fragmentary text.
only the terminology of the contract points to Greek law, but also the condition that in case of non-payment, Demetrios was to pay not only the price of the slaves to Berenike, but also a penalty of 50%. In the present petition, she explicitly requests the archons to summon Demetrios to pay her the full price of the slaves together with the 50% penalty. Although the sum to be paid is not increased here by interest as in P.Polit.Iud. 8, the payment of penalty in case of non-payment clearly and undoubtedly reflects common Hellenistic practice, and it has nothing to do with the “ancestral law” of the Jews. Why, then, did Berenike emphasize the transgression of the “ancestral law”? Two suggestions can be mentioned in response of this question. First, S. Honigman draws a parallel between the Demotic Legal Code and the Septuagint. Based on S. Allam’s study on the Demotic Legal Code,879 Honigman argues that the different laws collected in the Egyptian law book were not all composed in the IIIrd century BCE: some of them were indeed new regulations, but some others were apparently outdated. She assumes that the old, outdated regulations were not updated, but simply included in the book as they were found.880 Since the presence of such outdated regulations did not hinder the Egyptians from using the Demotic Legal Code as a book of reference, Honigman argues that, in a similar way, the presence of “material irrelevant to the legal context”881 might not have bothered the Jews in using the Septuagint as a book of reference. Very clearly, Berenike did not notice any contradiction between the conditions of the contract that she concluded with Demetrios and the “ancestral law” of the Jews. Secondly, as R. Kugler points out, it is also possible that Berenike mentioned the transgression of “ancestral law” because she wished to emphasize her Jewish background as well as to conciliate the favour of the Jewish archons in order to receive her money.882 In other words, she probably wanted to take advantage of the fact that the “ancestral law” of the Jews was an authoritative norm in the Ptolemaic legal system.

As to the reference to the “ancestral oath,” it can be said that swearing an oath was indeed a Jewish custom, but they were not alone with this.883 In Ptolemaic Egypt, there were several types of oaths, not to mention the so-called royal oath, the use of which was obligatory for legal proceedings in the law-courts. This oath was always taken in the name of

880 She mentions two facts supporting this hypothesis: first, the archaism found in the terminology of some regulations, and secondly, the fact that the 30th of Hathyr is stated to be harvest time in the text. In the IIIrd century BCE Hathyr fell in January-February, which could not be harvest time. The last time when Hathyr fell in May-June, that is in the real harvest time, was in the IXth and VIIIth century BCE, see Honigman (2003), p. 110.
882 Kugler in CPJ IV (forthcoming)
the Ptolemaic kings. R. Kugler refers to a forthcoming study of J. M. Modrzejewski, who argues that the “ancestral oath” of the Jews might have had the form of a royal oath, but given the fact that for the Jews it was forbidden to swear an oath by a human king, they swore it by their ancestral custom. Both Modrzejewski and Kugler are right in considering this phenomenon to be a good example of how the Jews accomodated with the Ptolemaic legal system, and how the Ptolemies tolerated the Jewish religion. Yet, swearing an oath in a legal context as Berenike did with Demetrios should not be regarded a specifically Jewish feature, because it was an obligatory element of any legal case in Ptolemaic Egypt. In my view, its mention in the petition is due to the same reason as the reference to the “ancestral law.” Berenike did her best to convince the archons that she was right.

This seems to be supported by the fact that the “ancestral oath” is mentioned no less than three times only in the politeuma archive. Besides the above-mentioned P.Polit.Iud. 9, we meet this term also in P.Polit.Iud. 12 and in P.Polit.Iud. 3. P.Polit.Iud. 12 is a petition written by Nikanor against Andromachos, who rented a land of three arouras from Nikanor’s father, but failed to pay the rent for it. Nikanor complained to the archons that Andromachos was even avoiding meeting him by making excuses. The most interesting feature of the document is that the agreement between Nikanor’s father and Andromachos is said to have been concluded according to a “letter of the ancestral oath” (ἐπιστολὴ ὀρκου πατρίου) like the agreement mentioned in P.Polit.Iud. 9. Since the parties were both Jews and the petition was submitted to the Jewish archons, it may be assumed that we have here another reference to the same type of document recording an oath as in P.Polit.Iud. 9. Also, there is no reason to suppose that Nikanor’s intention was different from that of Berenike by claiming that “the letter of the ancestral oath” was not respected by Andromachos. He probably wanted to emphasize his Jewish background as well as to obtain the favour of the archons. Yet, the lease contract seems to have been concluded according to common Greek law.

P.Polit.Iud. 3 is another petition, written by a certain Protomachos whose ethnic background is not indicated in the text. However, since the petition was submitted to the Jewish archons, he was most probably Jewish, while the ethnicity of the defendant Euphranor is unknown. The subject of the petition is related to marriage. Euphranor was the father or the guardian of Protomachos’ wife, and promised to his son-in-law to give him a part of a vineyard in connection with the dowry that the bride brought into the marriage. Whether or

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884 Ibid.
885 The editors suppose that Euphranor was Jewish as well simply because the plaintiff was Jewish. This is, however, far from certain.
not it was actually part of the dowry is a question, and the petition itself does not clarify it.\textsuperscript{886} From our point of view, it is more interesting that Euphranor swore an “ancestral oath” (ὀρκοῦ πατρίου) concerning his agreement with Protomachos, but the transaction never took place. This is the second time that Protomachos appeals to the politeuma, because the judges in Tebetny already made a decision in favour of Protomachos, but Euphranor did not fulfil his obligation. For this reason, Protomachos submitted a new petition to the archons of the politeuma. The “ancestral oath” seems to play the same role in this document as in \textit{P.Polit.Iud. 9} and \textit{P.Polit.Iud. 12}. Although the plaintiff can be considered Jewish, the agreement was apparently drawn up according to Greek law. Protomachos, like Berenike in \textit{P.Polit.Iud. 9} and Nikanor in \textit{P.Polit.Iud. 12}, wished to win the case and receive the vineyard, the transfer of which was promised and sworn by Euphranor. Besides the language of the petition, there is an even stronger argument for supposing common Greek law behind this agreement: the details of the marriage that was concluded between Protomachos and Euphranor’s daughter point to Greek rather than Jewish marriage. In order to interpret their situation correctly, it is necessary to point out the differences between Jewish and Greek marriages.

\textbf{6.3.2. Marriage-related questions}

First, we will briefly summarize the structure of Greek marriage.\textsuperscript{887} The focal point of a Greek marriage was always the act of ἔκδοσις, that is the “handing over” of the bride from her father or, in his absence, her closest male relative to the groom. In classical times it was purely a matter between two men, since women were under the guardianship of their closest living male relative (κύριος). Closely connected to the act of ekdosis was the handing over of

\textsuperscript{886} According to the editors (Cowey & Maresch (2001), pp. 52-53) the vineyard was not part of the dowry but a separate gift from the bride’s parents to the newly weds. U. Yiftach-Firanko, however, suggests that it belonged to the dowry, because he interprets the reference to the vineyard as an explanation of the dowry rather than as a new element, as Cowey and Maresch do, see U. Yiftach-Firanko, \textit{Marriage and Marital Arrangements. A History of the Greek Marriage Document in Egypt, 4th century BCE-4th century CE} (München 2003), p. 113.

the dowry. In classical Athens, the dowry was called προίξ and consisted of money, land and slaves. The function of this type of dowry was to secure the “succession of property” for any offspring. In the Hellenistic period, although the substance of the marriage remained the ekdosis, some details underwent serious changes, which have been well collected by S. R. Llewelyn. The most important thing to note is that the marriage became a private affair between the couple. Secondly, the mother could also perform the ekdosis, as well as give the dowry to her daughter. Thirdly, the dowry became the possession of the bride and in case of divorce it was returned to her rather than to her family. Fourthly, the dowry was called φερνή, in contrast to the classical προίξ, and its content could be different: now it could also consist of personal goods such as money, clothes and jewellery. These changes are very clearly documented in P.Eleph. 1 (310 BCE), the earliest Greek marriage contract from Ptolemaic Egypt, in which Herakleides from Temnos and Demetria from Cos concluded their marriage. The contract, which is designated syngraphe synoikesiou, records the act of ekdosis, but it was different from the one we would expect, since it is stated not from the point of view of the father but from that of the groom, who “takes Demetria (λαμβάνει) as his lawful wife.” Moreover, he takes her not only from her father but also from her mother. Also, it is the bride, who brings the dowry into the marriage, which indicates that it became her possession. The dowry is called pherne and consists of clothes and jewellery to the value of 1000 drachmas.

888 Further on the function of the marriage in classical poleis see Wolff, Traditio 2 (1944), pp. 43-95, and Modrzejewski (1981), pp. 231-268.
890 In fact, there is also evidence for auto-ekdosis: P.Giss. 2 (173 BCE) is a marriage contract from Krokodilopolis, in which the act of ekdosis was performed by the bride herself, although her father was still alive. According to Yiftach-Firanko it was probably her second marriage, and her financial independence could motivate the auto-ekdosis, see Yiftach-Firanko (2003), p. 44.
891 According to Häge (1968), pp. 33-36, the classical proix consisted mostly of land and slaves that served the husband and the entire family too, while the Hellenistic pherne was mainly composed of money, clothes and jewellery for the personal needs of the wife. However, Yiftach-Firanko, who recently studied the question, points out that this conception is not always correct, since we do have evidence for pherne that included either slaves (P.Giss. 2) or land (SB VI 8974 and P.Polit.Iud. 3), see Yiftach-Firanko (2003), pp. 105-124. Moreover, in many Ptolemaic dowry receipts, the scribes did not bother to make a precise inventory of the pherne but indicated its value. Thus, in these cases we simply do not know what was included in the pherne. Yiftach-Firanko goes even further by examining the value of the pherne based on the amount of money required for the maintenance of a family, and he shows that the pherne could be a large amount of money contributing to the family budget.
892 It is not only the earliest marriage contract, but also one of the earliest Greek documents from Ptolemaic Egypt. The future Ptolemy I Soter was still satrap when this document was drawn up.
The dowry was essential in a Greek marriage. The husband was obligated to maintain his wife only in return for the dowry that the wife brought into the marriage. As we can also see in *P. Eleph. 1*, the groom was obligated to “supply to his wife all that is proper for a freeborn wife.” In other words, as we are also reminded by Llewelyn, the dowry “gave to the married woman some security and right against neglect.” *894* Besides, its value also served as a basis for the penalties to be paid if one of the parties violated his/her moral obligations. These obligations were always indicated in the marriage contract as is also clear from *P. Eleph. 1*. The husband was not entitled to take another wife, to have children by another woman or to treat his wife shamefully. If any of these was proven, the husband was obligated to give the dowry (or its value in money) back to the wife increased by a penalty of 100% of the value of the dowry. In the same way, if Demetria did anything shameful to her husband, she was deprived of her dowry.

These were the details of a Greek marriage at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period. The focal point of the marriage remained the same throughout the Ptolemaic period: the bride along with her dowry was taken by the groom. However, some important changes must be mentioned. R. Katzoff demonstrates these changes with the help of *P. Tebt. I* 104 (92 BCE), which is a marriage contract drawn up between Philiskos and Apollonia in the form of a dowry receipt. The most important change to note is that the act of *ekdosis* is not mentioned in the contract any more. The giving of the dowry is, however, explicitly stated together with all the moral obligations of the wife and husband. How do we know then that the *ekdosis* was still part of the conclusion of a legal marriage? Yiftach-Firanko convincingly argues that the *ekdosis* did not disappear: it just went unmentioned in cases when it “was performed by a person who would have performed it in the natural course of things – that is, the father, mother, or the wife herself.” *895* This does not mean that it did not happen. On the contrary. The delivery of the dowry to the groom constituted enough guarantee that the *ekdosis* would be performed. Finally, it must also be mentioned that the size of the penalty decreased considerably, since in this document it was only 50% of the value of the dowry. Yet, the dowry was, and remained, the very essence of a Greek marriage throughout the Hellenistic period, and even later in the Roman period.

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894 Llewelyn (1992), p. 3.
895 Yiftach-Firanko (2003), p. 52. He also mentions cases (2003, p. 49), where it was necessary to mention the *ekdosis*, because it was performed by someone unexpected: in *P. Amst. I* 40 (1st century CE) it was the bride’s brother-in-law, while in *CPR I 27* (190 CE) it was her guardian, who performed the *ekdosis*. Thus, in order to secure the lawfulness of the marriage, it was wiser to state it explicitly.
Now, some words about Jewish marriage. We are dealing with the same legal and social institution and yet, the aspects of a Jewish marriage were different from those of a Greek one. Jewish marriage consisted of two distinct stages: the first one was called “betrothal” (qiddushin), while the second one was designated “marriage” (nissuin). It was the bride’s father who gave his daughter in betrothal in return for the bride-price or mohar, which was a gift given by the groom to the bride’s father. It could be paid in kind, in labor or in money, and its value was then given to the couple. With the payment of the mohar, the consent of the father and that of the prospective bride, the woman was betrothed to the groom and the couple was considered legally married. In other words, the woman could not be betrothed to another man, because the betrothal could not be dissolved without a formal divorce initiated by the husband. However, the couple was not entitled to live together or to have sexual intercourse until the second stage of the marriage, the nissuin, took place. Between the two stages several months or even years could pass.

This state of affairs is well reflected not only in the Bible, but also in the Elephantine papyri, among which there are some marriage contracts. Taking the marriage document of Mibtahiah and Eshor as an example (TAD B2.6), one can see that Eshor gave a five-shekel mohar to the father of Mibtahiah, which was then included in the woman’s dowry. The content of the dowry (garments, vessels, toiletries) is very thoroughly described and its value is calculated. There are also penalty clauses in the contract to guarantee the security of the bride. In case of a repudiation, the husband had to give back the dowry, he lost the mohar, and he also had to pay a compensation sum. Thus, biblical law was apparently in operation among the Jews of Elephantine in the Vth century BCE.

However, it is important to emphasize that later, Jewish marital practices underwent considerable development, and by the time of the composition of the Mishnah (1st-2nd century


898 The husband had a unilateral right to divorce his wife by writing a simple “letter of repudiation” (ἀποστασίου βυβλίον) as stated in Deut. 24:1-4.

899 Apart from this document there are also other marriage contracts discovered at Elephantine: TAD B3.3 (449 BCE), TAD B3.8 (420 BCE) and TAD B3.11 (402 BCE).
CE), one can observe several changes in the formalization of Jewish marriages. The most important and obvious change is that the *mohar* was replaced by the *ketubbah*. The *ketubbah* is a written contract given by the groom to the bride, in which not only his responsibility and obligations are outlined, but also his promise to pay a pre-settled sum of money to his wife upon divorce or his death. In other words, the payment of the biblical *mohar* was postponed, and it came to be paid only if the marriage was dissolved. This future and prospective payment was secured by a pledge over all the property of the husband. Thus, the timing of the payment changed, but technically, both the *mohar* and the *ketubbah* had the same purpose: financial security and protection for the wife in the event of divorce or widowhood. Every man could now get married regardless of his financial position, because he had to pay nothing to the father of the bride. Yet, the father was obligated to give dowry to his daughter, at least fifty *zuz*.

It is generally assumed that this process of transformation was concluded by the reform of Shimeon b. Shetah in the 1st century BCE who determined that all the property of the husband was a guarantee for the payment of the *ketubbah*.

Since the publication of the papyri discovered in the Judean desert it has become clear how Jewish law worked in the reality. All together there are eight marriage contracts preserved on papyrus from the Judean desert: three of them were written in Aramaic (*DJD* II 20, *DJD* II 21, *P.Yadin* 10), while five others were written in Greek (*DJD* II 115, *DJD* II 116, *P.Yadin* 18, *P.Yadin* 37, *XHev/Se Gr. 2, Inv. No. 870). *DJD* II 20 and *DJD* II 21 are unfortunately very fragmentary, but *P.Yadin* 10, the Aramaic marriage contract of Babatha and of her second husband dated to 122-125 CE, explicitly mentions the *ketubbah* in ll. 5-6:

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900 The *Mishnah* gained its final form around 200 CE. The relevant tractate in which the the marriage and the *ketubbah* are treated is *m. Ketubbot*.

901 For reference to the sources see Ilan (1995), pp. 89-90. As noted by Ilan, the *ketubbah* is already mentioned in *Tobit* 7:14 whose composition is traditionally dated to the IIIrd-IInd century BCE.


907 H. M. Cotton, “A Cancelled Marriage Contract from the Judaean Desert (XHev/Se Gr. 2),” *JRS* 84 (1994), pp. 64-86. This contract was republished as *DJD* XXVII 69 in Cotton & Yardeni (1997), pp. 251-274.
“And I will [feed] you and clothe you, and pursuant to your ketubbah, I will bring you into (my house). And you have a binding claim on me (for) silver (in the amount of) four hundred denarii (zuzin), which equal one hundred Tyrian (tetradrachmas).” Thus, the mohar appears here as a standing debt in the form of the ketubbah, which was paid upon dissolution of the marriage. This is the earliest documentary evidence of this phenomenon.

Nothing similar can be found in the Greek marriage contracts. As pointed out by H. Cotton, most of the Greek contracts are acknowledgements of dowries that were brought by the bride into the marriage and as such, they represent an essentially different social system. The direction of the payment is reversed between the Jewish and the Greek system: the biblical mohar was given from the groom to the father of the bride, while the Greek dowry was paid by the father of the bride to the groom. In DJD II 115, P.Yadin 18, P.Yadin 37 and XHev/Se Gr. 2, Inv. No. 870 it is always the dowry which is acknowledged. I agree with A. Wasserstein and H. Cotton that these Greek contracts, at least their forms, cannot be considered “Jewish documents,” that is, Greek translations of Aramaic ketubbot. As Cotton notes, the two dotal systems were obviously used in the same family (see Babatha’ Aramaic marriage contract and her step-daughter’s Greek contract) depending on the language of the contract: marriage contracts drawn up in Aramaic followed the ketubbah-system, while those written in Greek followed the dowry-system. The fact that the Greek contracts answered the requirements of the Greek courts is not surprising: if somebody wanted to proceed in a Greek court of law, the contract certainly had to be written according to Greek practice: they were all double documents, they included the act of ekdosis and the acknowledgement of the dowry by the groom, and therefore, they are essentially Greek contracts. It is another question to what extent these contracts reflect the Jewishness or the Hellenization of the people concerned.

909 Cotton, JRS 84 (1994), p. 82.
910 There was a debate as to whether P.Yadin 18, which is written in Greek, reflects Jewish or Greek marital practice. According to R. Katzoff the document is a mixture of Roman, Greek and Jewish legal elements, but it was essentially formulated according to Jewish practice. He bases his argument on different formulas found in the contract, and argues that they can be interpreted in a Jewish perspective. Just to quote one of them, he thinks that the phrase κατὰ τοὺς νόμους (“according to the laws”) can be interpreted as the Greek translation of the traditional Jewish formula וישראל משה כדת (“according to the law of Moses and of Israel”) because this Greek formula is not attested in marriage contracts, see N. Lewis & R. Katzoff & J. C. Greenfield, “Papyrus Yadin 18,” IEJ 37 (1987), pp. 229-250, esp. 236-247. This is, however, a common Greek phrase as A. Wasserstein pointed out in his article, where he rejects most of Katzoff’ arguments, see A. Wasserstein, “A Marriage Contract from the Province of Arabia Nova: Notes on Papyrus Yadin 18,” JQR 80 (1989), pp. 105-130. See also the reply of Katzoff: R. Katzoff, “Papyrus Yadin 18 Again: a Rejoinder, JQR 82 (1991), pp.171-176; and Cotton, JRS 84 (1994), pp. 81-85.
911 Ibid., p. 84.
In this light, it is instructive to turn back now to *P.Polit.Iud.* 3 and to discuss the details of the marriage concluded between Protomachos and Euphranor’s daughter. Which system can be assumed based on the petition? Protomachos appealed to the archons of the *politeuma* because his wife’s father, Euphranor had wronged him. The latter promised to Protomachos to give him a vineyard in connection with the dowry of the bride. The dowry is explicitly called φερνή, which was the usual term to express the dowry in the Ptolemaic period Greek papyri and the direction of the payment cannot be doubted: it was the father of the bride who gave the dowry to the groom. Thus, Protomachos and Euphranor’s daughter must have drawn up a Greek marriage contract.

Another document that is of great importance from this question is *P.Polit.Iud.* 4. The petition was written by Philotas who is explicitly stated to be member of the *politeuma*, thus, he was certainly Jewish. The complaint concerns a marriage-related affair. Sometime before the compilation of the petition Philotas engaged Nikaia, whose father swore to give her to Philotas as together with the dowry negotiated for her. They made terms and conditions in common, and an oath was also taken that became binding. However, after this, Lysimachos married Nikaia off to another man without receiving from Philotas the customary “deed of divorce.” This is why he appeals to the archons and asks them to summon Lysimachos.

There are a few things to note. The editors, followed by M. Kister and J. M. Modrzejewski, interpret this document in a Jewish context based on the following elements of the petition:912 1. ἐμνηστευόμην (“I betrothed/ I engaged”) is the verb that we also find in the Septuagint to express the first stage of a Jewish marriage, i. e. the qiddushin;913 2. οὐ μόνον[v] ὁ ῥήσμων γενομένων καὶ[τῇ] κοινῶν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸν νόμον ἀπωμο[σίας]ς γενθείσης οἰς δ[εσμὸν] . . . (“Not only did we make determinations/oaths in common, but also according to the law an oath became binding”), where according to the editors followed by M. Kister and M. J. Modrzejewski, the expression κατὰ τὸν νόμον (“according to the law”) definitely refers to Jewish law; 3. τὸ εἰθησμένον τοῦ ἀποδιαστούν τῇ [τὸ] βυβλίαν (“the customary letter of repudiation”) are the same words that are also mentioned in the Bible as a necessary document written by the groom to dissolve a legally binding betrothal.914 Based on these elements, according to the above-mentioned scholars, the situation of Philotas and Nikaia

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reflects a marriage concluded according to Jewish law. Philotas betrothed Nikaia, the size of the dowry was agreed upon, and they completed the first stage of a Jewish marriage, the *qiddushin*. As we have outlined above, this stage already created a legal marriage, which could be dissolved only through a formal divorce initiated by the husband. Lysimachos, however, gave Nikaia to another man. The problem was that Philotas did not give her any “letter of repudiation,” which means that officially she was still betrothed to Philotas when she was given away again. M. Kister quotes, with relation to this document, a rabbinic tradition related to a situation in Hellenistic Alexandria. According to this passage, Hillel, who was active in the late 1st century BCE, was asked to judge whether it is adultery if someone takes a betrothed Jewish woman as his wife. Based on what was written in the marriage contracts (*ketubbot*) of the people concerned, he replied that a woman would become wife according to the law of Moses and of the Jews only when she entered the house of her husband. Thus, he did not consider the betrothal as a legally binding act. Based on this passage, Kister suggests that the case presented in *P.Polit.Iud.* 4 becomes more understandable if we assume that Nikaia’s father probably followed the Jewish practice of Hillel’s time, and considered the stage of betrothal “to be less obligatory than normative Jewish law would have it.”

This text indeed raises the question of normative Judaism in Ptolemaic Egypt. Did the Jews practice marriage as shown by Hillel? Did they follow Jewish customs as we may conclude based on Philotas’ reaction? Or, did they follow Greek marital customs as we have seen in the Greek contracts from the Judean desert? The question is important and the text requires a nuanced interpretation.

Besides M. Kister and J. M. Modrzejewski, R. Kugler also studied this petition, and his conclusion is somewhat different. As he points out, the petition contains as much Greek and Egyptian elements as Jewish ones. As to the verb ἐμνηστευσάμην (“I betrothed/ I engaged”), Kugler suggests that it reflects more the Egyptian “romance culture” in which the groom courted directly the woman rather than the Jewish betrothal. It is true that the verb ἐμνηστεύειν is also mentioned in the Septuagint to express Jewish betrothal, but M. Satlow convincingly argues that the Septuagint’s translators could not understand the institution of Jewish betrothal expressed in Hebrew by the term נישָׂה, and they replaced it with the verb

916 mKetubbot 4:9.
The term ἐγγύη (engagement practiced in classical Athens) would have been much closer to the Hebrew שֶׁ֖כֶכ, yet, we find always the verb ἐμνηστεύειν in the Septuagint. This term actually expresses a legally not binding Greek practice, i.e. a “semiformal agreement that a marriage will take place.” Taking this into consideration, I must agree with R. Kugler that what took place between Philotas and Nikaia could also be a common Hellenistic agreement. Concerning the phrase οὐ μόνον [ν] ὤρισμόν γενομένων κα[τ]ὰ κοινὸν ἄλλα καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸν νόμον ἀπομο[σίας] γενομένης ἐξ ἑ[σμον]... (“Not only did we make determinations/oaths in common, but also according to the law an oath became binding”), let us note again that swearing an oath was not a specifically Jewish custom, especially not in case of marriages. Moreover, Kugler argues that the word ὄρισμός is used in other papyri to refer to property boundaries, and its interpretation as “oath” recalls Num. 30:2, where it is written: “If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceeded out of his mouth.” Based on this parallel, Kugler seems to be right that Philotas simply fortified his legal reasoning by citing norms from the Septuagint. Finally, the mention of the ἄποστασιοῦ [τὸ] βοβλίον (“letter of repudiation”), which also echoes the Septuagint, may have served the same interest. Besides, there are other details in the petition that cannot be interpreted as elements of Jewish marriage. First, we meet again the term φερνή similarly to in P.Polit.Iud. 3, which definitely points to Greek custom. The fact that it was also “negotiated” supports even more a Greco-Egyptian influence because this was an Egyptian rather than a Jewish custom. Secondly, the formula ἐφ’ ἤτι καμοῦ εὐδόκοιντος (“with which I was pleased”) definitely echoes a Demotic formula applied in marriage contracts and deeds of sale: ἡζ.τ-γι ntr.w n.ίm-w (“my heart is satisfied with it”), as pointed out by Kugler.

To conclude, it is important to emphasize that it unquestionably contains expressions echoing the Septuagint. To what extent these references to the Jewish law reflect the Jewishness of our couple and of their marriage is another question. I incline to accept R. Kugler’s cautious opinion, namely that Philotas might have included all these references in his petition to enforce his legal reasoning and to take advantage of the politeuma that had the privilege to judge cases based on Jewish Law. Just as we saw in the case of other petitions, Philotas quotes norms from the Septuagint but, at the same time, he seems to rely on common

922 Ibid., n. 15. For parallels see the Egyptian marriage contracts collected by P. W. Pestman, Marriage and Matrimonial Property in Ancient Egypt (Leiden 1961). It seems very likely that this expression was adopted by Jews even earlier, because in the marriage contracts from Elephantine we find a very similar term of satisfaction, see for instance TAD B2.6.
Hellenistic law, which was itself influenced by Egyptian law. What we see here is a mixture of different customs reflecting most probably how Jews arranged their affairs in the multicultural world of Ptolemaic Egypt.

From a certain point of view, the same contradiction can be revealed in *CPJ* I 128, which is a complaint written by Helladote against her husband in 218 BCE. In her petition, she states that their marriage with Ionathas was concluded [...] κατὰ τὸν νόμον πιστικὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων, i.e. “according to the civil law of the Jews.” Although the reading is uncertain, the restoration seems to be reasonable.²²³ If so, this is the only documentary attestation of the “civil law of the Jews,” which could not be anything other than the Septuagint. Did Helladote and Ionathas indeed marry according to Jewish law? The continuation of the text provides interesting informations. Helladote complains that Ionathas “shut her out of her house … and absolutely wronged her in every respect.” Helladote was shocked at this injustice and her husband’s behavior. Her complaint is understandable in terms of Greek law rather than in terms of Jewish law. According to Greek marital customs, in the case of divorce, husband and wife had almost equal rights. The Greek marriage contracts all contain a clause according to which the husband was not legally entitled to throw his wife out of the house. Jewish law was different at this point. According to it, only the husband had the right to initiate a divorce by writing a “letter of repudiation” and sending his wife out of his house. Thus, what Ionathas did was indeed illegal in terms of Greek law, but was totally legal in terms of Jewish law. To put it differently, there is a vivid contradiction between Helladote’s claim, i.e. that they were married according to Jewish law, and her legal reasoning. To resolve this contradiction, J. M. Modrzejewski suggests that Helladote must have been Greek, and she most probably did not know that her husband acted, in fact, according to Jewish law.²²⁴ This is indeed possible, and if she was Greek, her ignorance is acceptable. The important question is, however, what kind of marriage contract did they draw up and what was written in it. This is something that we do not know, but it could well be a Greek matrimonial contract. This is what J. M. Modrzejewski argues based on other things: 1. the verb συγγράφεσθαι (“to draw up a contract”) in Helladote’s petition can be understood as a reference to the form of their marriage contract, which was then a συγγραφή, i.e. a Greek contract; 2. Helladote can hardly be referring to a Jewish *ketubbah*, since there is no evidence for the existence of ketubbot as early as the IIIrd

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²²³ For other possible restorations see Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), p. 238, n. 2.
To these points, we may also add that Helladote wrote her petition in the form of a common Greek document, the *enteuxis*. In my view, we must assume that they drew up a Greek marriage contract as did other Jews in the Egyptian *chora*. Whether this Greek contract indeed followed Jewish law, or Helladote simply wanted to enforce her legal reasoning by referring to its Jewish nature, remains an open question. At any rate, if their marriage had been concluded according to Jewish law, Helladote’s complaint would be senseless. It is a pity that we do not know the reply of the Greek authorities.

Finally, let us study some other Greek papyri related to marriage, which are much clearer concerning their legal background. Two texts are of great importance in this regard: *CPR* XVIII 8 and *CPR* XVIII 9. *CPR* XVIII 8 is an abstract of a dowry receipt deposited in the public archive. It is drawn up by Diagoras acknowledging that he received the dowry from Nikopole. Both the parties were Jewish, but the document does not show the slightest trace of Jewishness. First, we must mention the legal situation of Nikopole, who is assisted by her guardian Dositheos. This is a purely Greek practice, because Greek women could not appear in the law court without a guardian. This phenomenon is also discussed by V. Tcherikover, who points out that Jewish women never needed to be represented by a guardian. Secondly, in this document too, we are dealing with the *pherne*, the traditional Greek dowry, which was given by the bride’s family to the groom. No mention is made of biblical *mohar*. Thirdly, apart from this dowry receipt, no less than six other dowry receipts were written in the same scroll (*CPR* XVIII 6, 12, 13, 17, 20, 28). If we take a look at *CPR* XVIII 6 for instance, we can immediately see the resemblance to *CPR* XVIII 8: not only the content of the text is precisely the same, but also its form and wording. Obviously, the same scribe wrote all of these receipts probably based on a model that he had before him. Although we do not have the original contracts, based on these extracts, it may be assumed that the same type of document

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925 Volterra suggests that the formula attested in this document […] κατὰ τὸν νόμον πολιτικὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων can be interpreted as the Greek version of the traditional Jewish formula ה’משה וישראל (“according to the law of Moses and of Israel”), which can be found later in Jewish *ketubbot*, see E. Volterra, “Intorno a P.Ent. 23,” *JJP* 21 (1965), pp. 21-28. This is, however, not very likely as we have also pointed out earlier. For the refutation of this hypothesis see also Modrzejewski, *Critical Studies* (1997), p. 194.

926 That these receipts are only extracts of marriage contracts is obvious based on two points: first, the document is not signed by witnesses, although a marriage contract, like other contracts written in the IIIrd century BCE, was signed by witnesses, and deposited with a *syngraphophylax*. Secondly, an original contract was always drawn up on a separate papyrus, but in our case several extracts are drawn up on the same scroll by the same scribe.

927 Tcherikover & Fuks (1957), pp. 34-35.

928 For these texts see Kramer (1991).
was drawn up for every cleruch regardless of his ethnicity. The Jews were not exempt from this practice and they followed Greek law.929

The other document, CPR XVIII 9 is also a receipt, but in this case for the return of dowry. The contracting parties were all Jews. The bride’s mother, Philoumene acknowledges that she received the dowry of her daughter from Menestratos. This is the only divorce document preserved on the Vienna scroll, but even without parallel receipts it is clear that this text also follows Greek law. Apart from the name of the ex-husband’s father, which is Ionathas, and the ethnic designation of the parties, nothing seems to be Jewish in this receipt. The dowry is designated again pherne, and it seems certain that Philoumene’s daughter and Menestratos once concluded their marriage according to Greek law. At least, this can be surmised based on the following phrase found in ll. 178-181: “she has received […] the five hundred … copper drachmas that he took as the dowry of her (Philoumene’s) daughter according to the marriage contract (syngraphe synoikesiou) deposited with Dositheos.” Thus, it is clear that they followed the above-mentioned procedure, which was undoubtedly Greek without the slightest trace of Jewishness.

In conclusion, I think it is important to emphasize that the above-analyzed five documents (P.Polit.Iud. 3, P.Polit.Iud. 4, CPJ I 128, CPR XVIII 8 and CPR XVIII 9) are the first marriage-related texts from Ptolemaic Egypt concerning Jews. While P.Polit.Iud. 3, CPR XVIII 8 and CPR XVIII 9 reflect purely Greek practice, P.Polit.Iud. 4 and CPJ I 128 are more problematic. They are generally considered to show Jewish marital practice, but, as I have shown, their interpretation is not unambiguous. Although they contain references to Jewish law, they can also be interpreted in terms of Greek law, and, as it seems, both P.Polit.Iud. 4 and CPJ I 128 represent a mixture of different legal systems: Greek, Jewish and Egyptian. It may well be that Philotas, Helladote and certainly others too intended or thought to have followed Jewish law, but what they had in their mind was obviously something different from what we would call normative Judaism.

929 The editor of the document, Kramer (1991), pp. 53-62, followed by I. Fikhman, interprets this text according to Wolff’s theory (1939), pp. 7-34, who assumes that at the beginning of the Ptolemaic period a Greek marriage was documented by two different contracts: syngraphe homologias and syngraphe synoikesiou. The first contract, in his view, represented a prenuptial agreement and confirmed the delivery of the dowry, while the second one recorded the act of the ekdosis. Based on this theory, our document would be a syngraphe homologia, a simple dowry receipt. However, as pointed out by Yiftach-Firanko, there is just one document in the papyrological record (P.Eleph. 1) that connects the act of ekdosis to the contract designated syngraphe synoikesiou, and this is not sufficient to establish the connection. Moreover, he is right in assuming that it was not common to draw up pure dowry receipts such as our document, in which there is no provision for regulating the terms of joint life. It is reasonable to assume that the original contracts of these extracts contained all the necessary details of a marriage contract including the terms for a joint life and, thus, validated the marriage. The purpose of the second contract was not the confirmation of the marriage as Wolff believes, but the making of the marriage public, see Yiftach-Firanko (2003), pp. 55-72.
CONCLUSION

The goal of this thesis has been to draw a general picture of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt based on papyrological evidence. I reconsidered all the texts included in \textit{CPJ} I, and collected 89 new documents related to Jews and Judaism. The system of criteria I applied was more rigorous than that of V. A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks, and I excluded several \textit{CPJ} documents from further study. The corpus of Greek, Aramaic and Demotic papyri supplemented by epigraphical evidence provides a diverse picture of the Jewish social, economic and cultural life in Ptolemaic Egypt.

The Jews of Egypt were part of the Diaspora, and were exposed to different people and cultures. In light of the previous chapters, the most important fact to conclude is that their life in Egypt must be studied not only in Jewish and Hellenistic, but also in Egyptian perspective. The strong influence of Greek language, law and names cannot be denied, but the Demotic and Aramaic documents definitely nuance the picture.

The influence of Hellenism on Jews has been well known for a long time. Several details that were concluded by the editors of the \textit{CPJ} can be confirmed by the new papyri. Many Jews were deeply influenced by Hellenism, which is clearly visible in all areas of their life. They adopted Greek names: not only theophoric, but also dynastic and even pagan Greek names. They used the Hebrew Bible in Greek translation (Septuagint papyri), and most importantly, they adopted Greek law. Since they arrived in Egypt with the Macedonian conquerors, they became members of the Hellenic society as opposed to the native Egyptians. This social class had certain privileges: its members were exempt from some taxes for instance. As to their legal situation, the contracts concluded between Jews show us that they followed common Hellenistic law even if it clashed with biblical law. The best example is provided by loan- and marriage contracts. Although biblical law prohibited money lending at an interest among Jews, the picture that emerges from the papyri does not seem to be in conformity with this law. Jews clearly used the regular interest rate of 24\% per year even in those cases that were brought before the Jewish \textit{politeuma} at Herakleopolis. The same holds true for marriage contracts. The new material provides some documents related to marriage, and most of them undoubtedly reflect common Hellenistic law. No traces of biblical \textit{mohar} can be revealed. What we find in the documents is Greek dowry. Jews did not differ much
from Greeks and other immigrants of the Hellenistic world, and arranged their private life according to Greek norms.

It is undoubted that Greek culture became dominant among the Hellenes, especially in those areas of the country where several Greeks and other immigrants settled, e.g. in Alexandria, the Nile Delta and the Fayum. Yet, in other parts of Egypt, especially in Upper Egypt, the Greek influence was less evident. This was due to at least two facts: first, the remote area of Upper Egypt remained always less Hellenized than the northern part of the country; secondly, not all the Jews were new immigrants in the south. During the Persian period, a community of Jewish soldiers flourished on the island of Elephantine. The members of this community spoke Aramaic, practiced Judaism and built a Jewish temple. Although we lose trace of this community at the end of the Vth century BCE, an Aramaic-speaking community shows up in Edfu in the aftermath of the Macedonian conquest.

Based on the names attested in the texts, this community may have had links to the earlier Aramaic-speaking community of Elephantine. It is even possible that some of them were descendants of the Elephantine community, while others may have been new immigrants. Whether they were military men or not remains unknown, but some details in the texts suggest that their function may have been similar to that of the soldiers at Elephantine, i.e. military service and the defense of the southern border. What seems to be certain is that this community was strongly influenced by the Egyptian environment. I studied the name Shabbethai in this context, and showed the intercultural impact of Jews and Egyptians. It is not surprising that in the south, Jews were more influenced by the Egyptian culture than by the Greek one. After all, they lived together with local Egyptians, and we also know that Egyptian-Jewish marriages existed. There is hardly a better way to exchange cultural aspects than to live in a culturally mixed household.

Finally, it must be mentioned that Judaism also left its traces in the sources, and this shows that not all the Jews were Hellenized or Egyptianized. First of all, the names of biblical heroes did not simply appear in the onomastic cluster, but became very popular throughout the country. Given the fact that in Palestine they were not in use at all, it seems that their popularity was due to local conditions. Since names always functioned as a strong marker of identity, I assume that, by adopting names like Joseph or Isaac, Jews wished to show their Jewish identity. An important institution related to Jewish identity was the synagogue. As we know, the earliest synagogue inscriptions originate from Egypt, and they indicate that synagogues existed in the country as early as the IIIrd century BCE. What kind of functions the synagogues had exactly remains unclear, but we are certainly not wrong in assuming that
they must have served as communal places where members of the community could gather, study and read the Torah. It seems also logical that the papyri recording Septuagint fragments were primarily used in the synagogues.

Jewish politeumata were also considered by scholars as institutions preserving Jewish identity. However, if one expects to reveal the preservation of Jewish identity in the politeuma archive, s/he will be disappointed. Before the publication of the archive, those scholars who believed in the existence of such an institution (e.g. V. A. Tcherikover), were convinced that the politeuma had ensured that Jews be allowed to preserve their identity by letting them use their national law. It was also assumed that the Jews must have been seeking to follow their ancestral law. Apparently, this was not the case. As pointed out by J. M. Modrzejewski, Jews did not need to be organized into politeumata to follow their law.930 With or without politeumata they enjoyed a privileged civic status as opposed to the Egyptians, because they were members of the Hellene social class. Their national law was incorporated into the Ptolemaic legal system as one of the politikoi nomoi and as such, the Septuagint became an authoritative legal text in Ptolemaic Egypt. In other words, they had the possibility to maintain their identity, and the existence of politeumata was not a condition for this. Yet, what we see in the papyri is that most of the documents reflect Greek law. Although the petitions of the politeuma archive echo the Septuagint several times (references to ancestral law, ancestral oath, deed of divorce), these references may well have served to enforce the legal reasoning of the petitioners. It is most natural that the politeuma members wished to take advantage of the relative autonomy of the Jewish archons, who were certainly supposed to judge based on Jewish law. From this point of view, it is not surprising at all that those Jews, who appealed to the Jewish archons instead of the Greek authorities, did everything in their power to emphasize their own Jewish background, especially if the case required it. Also, the politeuma certainly gave a sense of identity to its members and it helped them to belong to a given ethnic group, which was important in the multicultural world of Ptolemaic Egypt.

The main purpose of the Jewish politeuma as of any other ethnic politeumata in the Ptolemaic empire was, however, military and political. The Jewish politeuma in Herakleopolis constituted primarily a military group, whose main task was to defend the strategically important military station of Herakleopolis. The politeuma consisted of Jewish soldiers who, together with their families, formed the local Jewish community. From political point of view, it was not a dangerous institution because its power was limited to enforcing

administrative and legal measures. From military point of view, however, its importance is certain because it gave some ethnic minorities a reason to remain in Egypt in the service of the Ptolemies. At any rate, the emergence of this unique institution well represents how the Ptolemaic state sought to keep foreign people in its service and, at the same time, politically integrate them. How successful this integration was remains an open question, but the Jews apparently did not find it difficult to play according to the Greek rules as long as their privileged status was protected. Things changed only after the Roman conquest, but that would be the subject of another thesis.
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