On the Date of Composition of Additions B and E to LXX Esther

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Abstract

Additions B and E to LXX Esther have been variously dated from the second century BCE to the first century CE. This study links the two Greek Additions, on the one hand, with Philo's writings through the concept of the "evil-hating justice" and, on the other hand, with the historical persons and events related to the Jewish-Alexandrian conflict of 38–41 CE, and dates their composition or final redaction to the early forties of the first century CE.

Keywords

Additions to Esther – Septuagint – Philo – Flaccus – Sejanus – Claudius

Introduction¹

The Septuagint version of the book of Esther (LXX Esther) includes six non-canonical Additions labelled A through F,² two of which, B and E, are universally considered to be not translations of Semitic texts but original Greek compositions penned by the same author.³ Addition B contains the text of a decree written in the name of King Artaxerxes by his vizier Haman, who orders

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- 2 In the present study we follow the versification and cite the Greek text of Esther according to Hanhart's Göttingen edition (*Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum*, vol. 8.3 *Esther*).
- 3 See Martin, "Syntax Criticism," 69; Jobes, *Alpha-Text of Esther*, 26–27, 172–73.

the extermination of the Jews of the Persian Empire. Addition E contains the text of another decree, this time written in the name of King Artaxerxes by the Jew Mordecai, Queen Esther's adoptive father, who becomes the new vizier after Haman falls from grace and is executed. This decree rescinds the king's former extermination order and allows the Jews of the Persian Empire to live according to their laws and customs.

The authorship and date of composition of Additions B and E have been much debated. Some scholars consider them to have been written, together with the other Additions, by Lysimachus, son of Ptolemy, who, according to the so-called colophon at the end of the LXX version (Add Esth F:11), produced in Jerusalem the Greek translation of the Hebrew book of Esther, which was then brought to Egypt "in the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra," namely, in 78/77 BCE, according to the prevailing scholarly opinion.⁴ Other scholars maintain that Additions B and E were written and integrated into LXX Esther at some later date in the first century BCE, by an author other than Lysimachus.⁵ Still others suggest that the two Additions may have originated not in LXX Esther but in a variant Greek version of the Esther story, namely, the Alpha Text (AT)⁶ or the non-extant Greek *Vorlage* of the Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*) translation of Esther.⁷ Some of the dates that have been proposed for the composition of Additions B and E are: between 167 and 161 BCE;⁸ before 130 BCE;⁹ between 126 and 116 BCE (the last decade of the reign

4 See Torrey, "Older Book of Esther," 27–28; Bickerman, "Notes," 248–50; Hanhart, *Esther*, 96; De Troyer, *End of Alpha Text*, 392, 398; Tov, "LXX Translation," 517, 519. On the date given in the colophon of LXX Esther, see Bickerman, "Colophon," 224–25.

5 See Moore, "Origins," 383–86; *Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah*, 165–66, 195. Moore argues that it is unlikely that the same author who exhibited a high mastery of Greek in composing Additions B and E would also have been responsible for the prosaic Greek in which the translation of the canonical text of Esther was couched and draws attention to a number of contradictions and inconsistencies between the Additions and the canonical portions of Esther (cf., e.g., Add Esth E:10 and Esth 3:1, 9:10; Add Esth E:18 and Esth 7:9–10, 9:6–10, 13–14), which would have been avoided if Lysimachus had authored Additions B and E.

6 See Jobes, *Alpha-Text of Esther*, 174, 224–25, 232. Jobes contends that the older form of Additions B and E is the one found in the Alpha Text, which may indicate that these two Additions were first introduced in the AT and were copied from there to the LXX. However, she is careful to point out that "the fact that the AT preserves the earlier form of additions B and E does *not* prove the direction of the copy. It means only that since the time when Additions B and E were copied, in whichever direction, they have experienced fewer changes in the AT than they have in the LXX. Though this data is consistent with the chronological priority of additions B and E in the AT, it does not prove it" (174).

7 See Haelewyck, "Texte dit 'Lucianique,'" 13, 42; "Old Latin Version," 472–73.

8 Bardtke, "Zusätze zu Esther," 27.

9 Eissfeldt, *Einführung*, 802.

of Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II);¹⁰ between 120 and 100 BCE;¹¹ before 114 BCE;¹² between 114 BCE and 94 CE;¹³ end of the second century to the beginning of the first century BCE;¹⁴ between 103 and 76 BCE (reign of Alexander Jannaeus);¹⁵ shortly after the persecution of the Alexandrian Jews by Ptolemy IX Lathyrus in 88 BCE;¹⁶ 78/77 BCE;¹⁷ between 80 BCE and 90 CE;¹⁸ around 50 BCE;¹⁹ and in the early Roman era.²⁰ As regards the place of composition of these two Additions, many scholars assign them to Egypt on the basis of their “Egyptian flavour”²¹ and the similarities that they exhibit with 3 Maccabees, a book of undeniable Egyptian provenance.²²

In this study we will argue for a date of composition or final redaction of Additions B and E to LXX Esther in the early forties of the first century CE. To this purpose we will adduce a combination of lexical, literary, and historical evidence.

1 The “Evil-hating Justice” (μισοπόνηρος δίκη) in Addition E to LXX Esther and in Philo

In Add Esth E:4, King Artaxerxes speaks of those wicked schemers—a hinted reference to Haman—who, puffed up by the boasts of those who are inexperienced in goodness, assume that they will escape the evil-hating justice of God, who always observes everything (τοῖς τῶν ἀπειραγάνων κόμπους ἐπαρθέντες τοῦ τὰ πάντα κατοπτέοντος αἰεὶ θεοῦ μισοπόνηρον ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ἐκφεύξεσθαι δίκην). Of especial interest in this verse is the combination μισοπόνηρος δίκη, “evil-hating justice,” which is not found in the other Greek versions of Esther. In the Alpha Text the two elements that make up this combination are not

10 Kottsieper, “Zusätze zu Ester,” 124, 129.

11 Haelewyck, “Old Latin Version,” 472–73.

12 Torrey, “Older Book of Esther,” 26–28.

13 Moore, “Origins,” 386; *Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah*, 165–66.

14 Passoni Dell’Acqua, “Liberation Decree,” 76.

15 Bickerman, “Colophon,” 233; “Notes,” 259; De Troyer, *End of Alpha Text*, 392–93, 398.

16 Stein, “Essai d’adaptation,” 110–11, 113–16.

17 Gardner, “Relationship of Additions,” 3–4.

18 Gregg, “Additions to Esther,” 669.

19 Motzo, “Autore e tempo,” 245; “Rifacimento greco,” 276–77; “Storia del testo,” 213–14.

20 Wynn, *Socio-Historical Contexts*, 248.

21 See Gregg, “Additions to Esther,” 665; Passoni Dell’Acqua, “Gli editti di liberazione,” 57–61; “Liberation Decree,” 75–81.

22 See Moore, *Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah*, 195–99; Hacham, “3 Maccabees and Esther,” 772–80.

coupled together,²³ whereas one of the two elements, the adjective *μισοπόνηρος*, seems not to have occurred in the Greek *Vorlage* of the *Vetus Latina* of Esther and is missing in Josephus' paraphrase of Esther.²⁴ In fact, the combination *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* is not attested anywhere else in Greek literature except in six works of Philo²⁵ and in a few late Byzantine authors.²⁶

In his works Philo uses, aside from *μισοπόνηρος*, several other nouns, adjectives, and participles as modifiers of *δίκη*, the personified Justice: *ἀδέκαστος*

23 At 7:23(4) the Alpha Text reads: ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς τῶν ἀπειραγάνων κόμποις παρελθόντες τὸ τοῦ πάντα δυναστεύοντος δικαιοκρίτου μισοπόνηρον ἐκφυγεῖν διειληφότες, τὴν δίκην. The adjective *μισοπόνηρος* is here substantivized: τὸ μισοπόνηρον (= ἡ μισοπονηρία, “the hatred of evil”) is to be taken either as object of the infinitive ἐκφυγεῖν, in which case τὴν δίκην is the object of the participle παρελθόντες (see the French translation by Cavalier, *Esther*, 213–14: “mais aussi, négligeant la justice à cause des vantardises de ceux qui ignorent le bien et décidés à fuir la haine des méchants du juste juge qui dirige tout”), or, given the distance that separates παρελθόντες from τὴν δίκην, as object of the participle παρελθόντες, in which case τὴν δίκην is the object of the infinitive ἐκφυγεῖν (see the German translation by De Troyer and Wacker [Kraus and Karrer, *Septuaginta Deutsch*, 612]: “sondern im stolzen Prahlenden derer, die vom Guten nichts wissen, sind sie auch noch davon überzeugt, sie könnten an dem Hass auf das Böse, der von dem alles gerecht beurteilenden Mächtigen (ausgeht), vorbeikommen und dem Gericht entfliehen”). The English translations of the Alpha Text by Clines (*Esther Scroll*, 241: “transgressing because of the boasts of those who know nothing of goodness, imagining that they will escape justice, the evil-hating attribute of the righteous Judge, who rules over all”) and Jobes (NETS, 437: “gone astray due to the boasts of those who are inexperienced in goodness, they even imagine they will escape the evil-hating justice of the just Judge who rules all things”) do not follow in this verse the grammatical construction of the Greek text.

24 At E:4 the *Vetus Latina* of Esther reads: dei semper omnia conspicientis malignitatem concipientes putant se evadere <iudicium> (“when they design an evil plan they think they will avoid the judgment of the god who always sees everything”; trans. Bellmann and Portier-Young, “Old Latin,” 285). Its *Vorlage*, instead of τὸ μισοπόνηρον, likely read τὸ πονηρόν/τὴν πονηρίαν, which the translator rendered by “malignitatem.” In the MS VL 151, which is thought to be closest to the oldest, unrevised form of the *Vetus Latina* of Esther, the infinitive “evadere” lacks a complement; “iudicium” was supplied by the modern editor on the basis of the revised MSS VL 123 and 109. See Haelewyck, *Hester*, fasc. 1, 43. Josephus' paraphrase (A.J. 11.275) reads: λήσεσθαι τὸ θεῖον ἐπὶ τούτοις νομίζουσι καὶ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ διαφεύξεσθαι δίκην.

25 Philo, *Conf.* 128; *Migr.* 225; *Mos.* 2.53; *Decal.* 177; *Spec.* 3.140; *Flacc.* 107.

26 Ignatius Diaconus, *Vita Nicephori*, pp. 146.4 and 205.7 (de Boor); Philagathus, *Homiliae*, 22.6 (Rossi Taibbi); Demetrius Cydones, *Epistulae*, 436.30 (Loenertz); cf. Theophanes Confessor, *Chronographia*, p. 255.8 (de Boor), ἡ μισοπόνηρος δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ. Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History* (9.7.2), likely draws on Philo, when he writes that Justice with its “sleepless hatred of wickedness” followed close on the heels of Maximinus, a persecutor of the Church: τῆς παρὰ πόδας αὐτὸν μετελθούσης ἱεράς δίκης ἡ ἄυπνος κατὰ τῶν ἀσεβῶν μισοπονηρία.

(1x), ἀειπάρθεος (1x), ἀμείλικτος καὶ ἀδικουμένων ἀρωγὸς ἀπαραίτητος (1x),²⁷ βοηθὸς καὶ ὑπέρμαχος τῶν ἀδικηθέντων (1x), ἐφεδρεύουσα (1x), ἔφορος τῶν ἀνθρωπείων/ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων (7x), ἐφορῶσα τὰ ἀνθρώπεια (1x), θεήλατος (1x), ὁπαδὸς τοῦ θεοῦ (1x), πάρεδρος τοῦ θεοῦ/τῷ θεῷ (5x), τιμωρὸς (6x), ὑπέρμαχος καὶ παραστάτις ἀδικουμένων (1x), φιλάρετος (1x).²⁸ All but two (τιμωρὸς and ἀπαραίτητος) are not previously attested in conjunction with δίκη,²⁹ which makes it likely that at least some of the combinations in which they occur in Philo's works, unless originating in literary works now lost to us, are originally Philonic.

The occurrence of μισοπόνηρος δίκη exclusively in Addition E to LXX Esther and in Philo allows us to wonder whether Philo might have drawn the combination from the former text. This does not seem very likely for a number of reasons:

1. Μισοπόνηρος is one of Philo's favourite adjectives;³⁰ he uses it twenty-four times,³¹ more than any other ancient author, whereas in the Septuagint it occurs only once, in Add Esth E:4.
2. As the juxtaposition of synonyms or antonyms is a favourite stylistic feature of Philo,³² he uses not only μισοπόνηρος in conjunction with δίκη but also φιλάρετος, "he who loves virtue" (*Conf.* 128, ἡ φιλάρετος τε καὶ μισοπόνηρος δίκη), which is another adjective that he has a fondness for, occurring sixty-four times in his works. He also uses the antonym of μισοπόνηρος, φιλοπόνηρος (2x).
3. Philo has a liking for the μισο- compounds; aside from μισοπόνηρος, he uses eleven such words.³³ Five of them—μισάρετος, μισογύναιος, μισόκαλος, μισοπονία, and μισοτεχνία—are not previously attested (although this does not mean that they were coined by Philo).³⁴

27 The combination ἀπαραίτητος δίκη occurs six times in Philo's works but it is only in *Migr.* 225 that δίκη is personified.

28 All the lexical searches in this study were carried out on the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG) online database.

29 The combination τιμωρὸς δίκη first occurs in Euripides (*El.* 675) and in Plato (*Leg.* 716a, 872e; *Epin.* 988e), and the combination ἀπαραίτητος δίκη in a tragic *adespota* (*Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta, Adespota*, fr. 495 Nauck) and in Demosthenes (1 *Aristog.* 11).

30 See van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 194.

31 Philo, *Sacr.* 28; *Conf.* 46, 49, 128, 131; *Migr.* 225; *Mut.* 108; *Mos.* 1.47, 149, 328; *Mos.* 2.9, 53, 167, 279; *Decal.* 87, 177; *Spec.* 1.55; *Spec.* 3.31, 75, 126, 140; *Spec.* 4.9; *Flacc.* 107; *Legat.* 193.

32 See Siegfried, *Philo von Alexandria*, 132–35.

33 Μισάδελφος (1x), μισάλληλος (1x), μισανθρωπία (12x), μισάνθρωπος (3x), μισάρετος (8x), μισογύναιος (1x), μισόκαλος (4x), μισόπολις (1x), μισοπονρία (1x), μισοπονία (1x), μισοτεχνία (1x).

34 See Runia, "Verba Philonica," 313–14.

4. All but two of the previously cited δίκη-combinations that Philo uses are, as far as we can tell from the extant ancient Greek sources, not borrowings from Jewish-Greek or secular Greek literature. The two δίκη-combinations that are previously attested originate in Classical Greek and not in Jewish-Greek literature, septuagintal or otherwise.
5. Aside from μισοπόνηρος δίκη, the other two μισοπόνηρος-combinations that Philo has a liking for—μισοπόνηρος φύσει, “evil-hating by one’s nature” (6x) and μισοπόνηρον πάθος, “evil-hating emotion” (7x)—are also previously unattested, and the same goes for some other combinations consisting of a μισο- compound adjective and a noun such as μισόκαλος φθόνος, “good-hating envy” (3x) and μισάρετος φθόνος, “virtue-hating envy” (1x).
6. The use of a μισο-/φιλο- compound adjective as modifier of a personified abstract concept is typical of Philo, as attested by such combinations as φιλάρετος καὶ μισοπόνηρος δίκη, μισάρετος καὶ μισόκαλος φθόνος, μισάρετος καὶ φιλοπαθῆς νοῦς/φύσις, φιλοσώματος καὶ φιλοπαθῆς νοῦς, etc.
7. In his preserved works, Philo does not quote from or allude to the book of Esther.³⁵
8. The concept that the combination μισοπόνηρος δίκη expresses is at home with Philo’s theology, as we shall see further on.

It thus seems more likely that it was Addition E to LXX Esther, a text characterized by many intertextual borrowings,³⁶ that drew the combination μισοπόνηρος δίκη from one of Philo’s treatises. That said, we cannot exclude two other, less likely and, in any case, unprovable possibilities: that Philo may have known the Greek Esther and its Additions in their LXX version but, with the exception of μισοπόνηρος δίκη, did not quote from them or allude to them as, for example, Josephus was to do about half a century later;³⁷ or, that both

35 See Ryle, *Philo and Holy Scripture*, xxvii, xxxi–xxxiii; Sterling, “Recherché or Representative,” 12 n. 58: “There is no evidence that he [Philo] knew Esther, Ruth, Cant, Lam, or 2 Macc.” Neither Leisegang, “Index locorum,” nor Earp, “Scripture Index,” list any reference or allusion in Philo’s works to the book of Esther. According to the more recent Index of Philo’s quotations from and allusions to the OT (Allenbach et al., eds, *Biblia Patristica*, 90), *Spec.* 3.140, where μισοπόνηρος δίκη occurs, contains an allusion to Esth 8:13 (*sic*) [read 8:12^d, Rahlfs/Add Esth E:4, Hanhart]. However, as we try to show above, the direction of the allusion most likely goes from Philo to the Addition E to LXX Esther rather than the other way around.

36 See Hacham, “3 Maccabees and Esther,” 772–80.

37 See Cohen, *Philo’s Scriptures*, 7 n. 21: “The fact that neither Philo, nor very many other Hellenistic authors, mention either Purim or the Book of Esther cannot be taken as proof that it was unknown to them—just that it was not relevant to the subjects of their extant writings.” See also Sterling, “Recherché or Representative,” 12: “His [Philo’s] silence should not automatically be interpreted as ignorance since he rarely cited any text outside of

Philo and the author of Addition E drew the combination *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* independently from a source unknown to us.³⁸

If we pursue further the hypothesis that Add Esth E:4 is indebted to Philo for the above-discussed combination, we may attempt to date the latter's Philonic instances in order to set a *terminus post quem* for Addition E to LXX Esther. On the basis of Cohn's tentative classification and chronology of Philo's works, two of the treatises in which *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* occurs (*De confusione linguarum* and *De migratione Abrahami*) are part of the Allegorical Commentary, two (*De decalogo* and *De specialibus legibus* 3) belong to the Exposition of the Law, and two (*In Flaccum* and *De vita Mosis* 2) belong to the Historical-Apologetic group of Philo's writings. Cohn argues that *De specialibus legibus* 3, *In Flaccum*, and likely *De vita Mosis* were written in the aftermath of the anti-Jewish disturbances that broke out in Alexandria in 38 CE during the reign of Gaius Caligula, whereas the first sections of the Exposition of the Law, preceded by the Allegorical Commentary, were written at an earlier period.³⁹ The earliest instances of *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* in Philo's extant works seem thus to be found in the two treatises of the Allegorical Commentary, *De confusione linguarum* and *De migratione Abrahami*, which were likely written somewhere between the teens and the thirties of the first century CE.⁴⁰

Of the six instances of *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* in Philo, the ones that are closest to Add Esth E:4 are *Mos.* 2.53, *Decal.* 177, and *Flacc.* 107.⁴¹ In *Mos.* 2.53, justice is the evil-hating assessor of God (ὃ πάρεδρος τῷ θεῷ *μισοπόνηρος δίκη*), who

the Torah." The absence of God and of the religious element in the canonical Esther is a strong reason why Philo may have ignored it. See Bond, *Pontius Pilate*, 30 n. 28.

38 Aside from its instances in Add Esth E:4 and in Philo, the adjective *μισοπόνηρος* and its cognates are elsewhere used in relation to God and his justice only in 2 Macc 8:4, ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν κύριον ... *μισοπονηρῆσαι*. The members of the *μισοπονηρ-* word group, attested as early as the Attic orators, were likely transferred into the religious domain from the sphere of Ptolemaic judicial terminology, as they frequently occur in petitions from the Ptolemaic, and later the Roman, period, in which the petitioners appeal to the justice and the "hatred of wickedness" of a *strategos* or even of the king himself. See, e.g., *P.Tarich.* 13 [188–187 BCE], ll. 28–31, ἔσομα[ι] | τοῦ δικαίου καὶ τῆς σῆς [μισο]πονηρίας τετευχώς; *BGU* 8.1824 [60–55 BCE], ll. 29–31, [ἀξιῶ σε] περὶ αὐτῶν διαλαβεῖν *μισο|πονηρως*, ἵν' ὦ τετευχῶς τῆς σῆς δικαιοσύνης; *PRyl.* 2.113 [133 CE], ll. 30–37, τοῦ οὖν | πράγματος δεομένου τῆς σῆς | μείζοπονηρίας | ἀξιῶ σε τὸν κύριον | καὶ δικαιοκρίτην | ἀκοῦσαί μου πρὸς | αὐτούς; *PSI* 13.1323 [147–148 CE], l. 3, τῆς σῆς ἐπάρ[χου] δικαίου *μισοπονηρίας* δεόμενος.

39 See Cohn, "Einteilung und Chronologie," 389, 421–24, 426–27, 433–34. See also Royse, "Works of Philo," 59–62, and Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria*, 3–11 and 245–46.

40 See Niehoff, *Philo of Alexandria*, 245–46, who dates the Allegorical Commentary to ca. 10–35 CE and the Exposition of the Law and the Historical Writings to ca. 40–49 CE.

41 In Philo, *Conf.* 128, *Migr.* 225, and *Spec.* 3.140, the *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* acts on her own authority and is not associated with God as in Add Esth E:4.

punishes those who practise knavery, injustice, and other vices, although God has bestowed on them an abundance of gifts such as good health, wealth, and glory; in Add Esth E:4, the evil-hating justice of God punishes those who, like Haman, show ingratitude toward and scheme against their benefactors, despite the honours that the latter have generously showered upon them. In *Decal.* 177, justice is presented as God's assessor (πάρεδρος), endowed with an inborn hatred of evil (φύσει μισοπόνηρος), who surveys the human affairs (τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἔφορος πραγμάτων) and punishes the wrongdoers and the sinners; in Add Esth E:4, the evil-hating justice is an attribute of God, who himself watches over everything (τοῦ τὰ πάντα κατοπεύοντος θεοῦ)⁴² and inflicts on transgressors like Haman the punishment that they deserve (Add Esth E:8, τὴν καταξίαν τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐπικρατοῦντος θεοῦ διὰ τάρχους ἀποδόντος αὐτῷ κρίσιν). In *Flacc.* 107, the evil-hating justice punishes Flaccus, the Roman prefect of Egypt, who, like Haman in the book of Esther, was an enemy and persecutor of the Jews. As in *Conf.* 128, *Migr.* 225, and *Spec.* 3.140, and in difference from Add Esth E:4, the evil-hating justice in *Flacc.* 107 is a self-standing, personified hypostasis. Elsewhere in *In Flaccum* (104, 189), the personified justice is also self-subsistent and independent of God, yet in *Flacc.* 146 she is assigned the same attribute, "overseer of human affairs" (τὴν ἔφορον τῶν ἀνθρωπείων δίκην), that God has in *Flacc.* 121 (τὸν ἔφορον θεὸν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων). As van der Horst remarks, "'Justice' is here, as elsewhere in Philo, nothing but a personified function of God."⁴³

The two earliest preserved instances of μισοπόνηρος δίκη in the Philonic corpus, which, as previously noted, seem to be found in *Conf.* 128 and in *Migr.* 225, do not exhibit any strong intertextual links with Add Esth E:4, as is the case with most of the later ones: in these two instances, the evil-hating justice is not presented as an assessor or an attribute of God, does not watch over human affairs, and does not punish a persecutor of the Jews. It thus seems unlikely that, the first time he made use of the concept of μισοπόνηρος δίκη, Philo was inspired by or intended to allude to Add Esth E:4.

Philo's concept of the personified Justice draws upon representations of the Greek mythological deity Dike, daughter of Zeus and Themis, in Hesiod,

42 The combination of the two attributes that God and his justice possess in Add Esth E:4—"evil-hating" and "all-seeing"—is found elsewhere only in a third-century CE binding spell from North Africa: *Audollent, Defix. Tab.* 271, ll. 35–36, τοῦ Κυρίου | α[ι]ω[νίου] ἀθανάτου παντεφόπτου μισοπονήρου.

43 See van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 219–20. Cf. 191–92 and esp. 194: "Since in §102 and elsewhere it is God himself who takes revenge on Flaccus for his misdeeds, it is clear that in fact Dikē is nothing but God in his capacity of pursuer of justice." See also Borgen, "Two Philonic Prayers," 308.

in Sophocles, in Plato, and in the Orphic hymn 62 (addressed to Dike),⁴⁴ but is also informed by the Jewish conceptions of divine justice and the contemporary circumstances of the Jewish community in Alexandria.⁴⁵ Foster points out that, in the Exposition of the Law, Philo presents Dike as the defender of the law and the punisher of its trespassers, whereas in the Allegorical Commentary and the Historical-Apologetic works Dike has the role of the avenger of the people of the law and the punisher of the enemies and persecutors of the latter.⁴⁶ According to Foster, this shift reflects Philo's response to the anxieties and tribulations of the Alexandrian Jews at a time when their *modus vivendi* with the Greeks and the Romans was on its way to collapse. Philo may have conceived the exercise of judicial functions by God in tandem with the personified Dike as a counterpart to the judicial authority exercised by the Roman emperor and his prefect in Egypt:

Philo grasped this Greek hypostasis [Dike] and used it to express a hope in the kingship and rule of God; no matter how difficult life had become for the Alexandrian Jews he could advise them to hope with certainty in God's care and in *Dike's* vengeance.⁴⁷ ... Philo constructed a theology that was parallel to the political power structure in Roman Egypt precisely because he and his community were not a part of that power structure. Philo used a Greek mythological personification of justice because it fit that system and made clear the hope he held of vindication against such an awesome opponent as the emperor.⁴⁸

Scholarship has not failed to notice that Philo's *In Flaccum* shares with Esther and 2 Maccabees the motif of the just and retributive punishment of those who attack God and his people. When Flaccus is executed at Caligula's command, Philo comments that "it was the will of justice that the butcheries which she wrought on his single body should be as numerous as the number of the Jews

44 See Foster, *Alexandrian Situation*, 141–44, 176–89; Boyancé, "Écho des exégèses," 173–78.

45 Elsewhere in the LXX, justice appears personified in two deuterocanonical books, the Wisdom of Solomon (1:8; 11:20–22), which is of Alexandrian origin, and 4 Maccabees (4:13, *passim*). See Foster, *Alexandrian Situation*, 150–61.

46 See Foster, 120–21, 148, 162. It should be noted here that Foster considers the Allegorical Commentary to be chronologically posterior to the Exposition of the Law.

47 Foster, 136.

48 Foster, 148. Other scholars (Goodenough, *By Light*, 59–63; Boyancé, "Écho des exégèses," 175; Mendelson, "Philo's Dialectic," 114, 121) point out that Philo introduces Dike as an agent of punishment in order to exempt God from the responsibility to punish and partake in vengeance himself, as he is good and can only be the cause of good.

whom he unlawfully put to death" (*Flacc.* 189 [Colson]).⁴⁹ Likewise, Haman is hanged on the pole that he had prepared for Mordecai (*Esth* 7:10), and King Antiochus IV is seized with severe intestinal pains, "and that very justly, for he had tortured the bowels of others with many and strange inflictions" (2 *Macc* 9:6 NETS). According to Pelletier, the aforementioned books share three common themes, which are typical of the aretalogical genre: misfortune (e.g., illness or persecution), divine intervention, which reverses the situation, and recognition by humans of the intervention of God. In the case of persecution, the third theme is further developed into three phases: the defeated persecutor is not spared although he acknowledges his just punishment, those saved from persecution sing hymns in which they give thanks to God, and in some cases they celebrate an annual feast commemorating their victory (the latter element is missing in *In Flaccum*).⁵⁰ Meiser and Borgen have pointed out further similarities between *In Flaccum* and 2 Maccabees, such as the striving to produce a pathopoeic effect, the all-knowing author's rendering of a character's inner thoughts (both characteristic, according to Meiser, of the "mimetic" historiography), the fictitious *ante mortem* speech and prayer (Flaccus) or vow and letter of repentance (King Antiochus IV) of the persecutor, and the emphasis on theodicy and on God's providence for his people.⁵¹

The above-named scholars do not claim, on the strength of the similarities that they adduce, that Philo was acquainted with Esther or with 2 Maccabees, although such claims have been made by other scholars.⁵² For the reasons that we previously gave, we consider it unlikely that Philo borrowed the combination *μισοπόνηρος δίκη* from Addition E to LXX Esther. Instead, we consider it likely that the author of Addition E drew this combination from Philo, and more specifically from *In Flaccum*. If this is so, Additions B and E were written (or reached their final form) after the anti-Jewish pogrom launched in Alexandria in the summer of 38 CE, during Flaccus' prefectship, after Flaccus' execution in 39 CE, after the armed Jewish uprising in Alexandria that followed

49 See Pelletier, *In Flaccum*, 16–18; Borgen, "Two Philonic Prayers," 302–3, 307–8; "Philo's 'Against Flaccus,'" 45, 53–54.

50 See Pelletier, 16–19; Borgen, "Two Philonic Prayers," 303; "Philo's 'Against Flaccus,'" 53.

51 See Meiser, "Gattung, Adressaten, Intention," 421–22, 427; Borgen, "Philo's 'Against Flaccus,'" 53–54.

52 E.g., Zeitlin, "Agrippa," 29, argues that "Philo was influenced, no doubt, by the biblical book of Esther, by the books of Judith, and the Second and Third Maccabees. Philo makes Flaccus to repent in the end just as the author of the Second Maccabees makes Antiochus Epiphanes do." Bond, *Pontius Pilate*, 30–31, thinks that the portrait of Caligula in Philo's *Legatio* may have been modelled after that of King Antiochus IV in 2 Maccabees. See further references in Domazakis, *Neologisms*, 402–3.

the death of Caligula in January 41 CE, and sometime after the publication of Philo's *In Flaccum* (40 or 41 CE)⁵³ and of Emperor Claudius' "Letter to the Alexandrians" (probably written in October 41 CE and published in Alexandria on November 10, 41 CE),⁵⁴ which was meant to settle the unrest in Alexandria.

2 A Suggested *Sitz im Leben* for Additions B and E to LXX Esther

There are strong analogies, on the one hand, between the persecution of the Jews in the Persian Empire under Artaxerxes' rule at the instigation of Haman, as described in Esther, and that of the Alexandrian Jews under Flaccus during the reign of Caligula, and, on the other hand, between Artaxerxes and Caligula's successor, Claudius. These analogies may have motivated an Alexandrian author in the early forties of the first century CE to supply the Greek translation of Esther with two Additions that could be easily read by his fellow Alexandrians, in the light of contemporary events, as texts à clef. We note below the most suggestive of these analogies as they emerge from a parallel reading of Additions B and E to LXX Esther, Philo's *In Flaccum*, and the letters that the emperor Claudius sent to Alexandria and Syria in the spring of 41 CE (Josephus, *A.J.* 19.280–285), "to the rest of the world" shortly after the previous letter (Josephus, *A.J.* 287–291), and to Alexandria in the autumn of 41 CE (*P.Lond.* 6.1912):⁵⁵

1. In Additions B and E, King Artaxerxes appears especially concerned with establishing peace and stability in his kingdom and avoiding disturbances and riots (Add Esth B:2, τοὺς τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ἀκυμάτους διὰ παντὸς καταστήσαι βίους, τὴν τε βασιλείαν ἡμερον ... παρεξόμενος ἀνανεώσασθαι τε τὴν ποθουμένην τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις εἰρήνην; Add Esth B:7, ὅπως ... εὐσταθῇ καὶ ἀτάραχα παρέχωσιν ἡμῖν ... τὰ πράγματα; Add Esth E:8, τὴν βασιλείαν ἀτάραχον τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις μετ' εἰρήνης παρεξόμεθα). Likewise, in his letters to Alexandria, Claudius appears anxious to ensure that no further disturbances arise (Josephus, *A.J.* 285, ὅπως μηδεμία ταραχὴ γένηται) and that his Alexandrian subjects live with mutual forbearance and human kindness (*P.Lond.* 6.1912, ll. 100–102, ἐάν | ... μετὰ πραότῃτος | καὶ φιλάνθρω[=ω]πείας τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ζῆν ἐθελήσῃτε). In his second letter to Alexandria, he even refers to a golden statue of the Pax Augusta Claudiana

53 See van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 4.

54 On the date of the letter, see Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern, *Corpus Papyrorum*, 2:44.

55 The authenticity of the letters of Claudius transmitted by Josephus is a much-debated issue. See Pucci Ben Zeev, *Jewish Rights*, 303, 305–26, 333.

- (*P.Lond.* 6.1912, l. 35, Κλαυδιανῆς Εἰρήνης Σεβαστῆς) that the people of the city voted to be erected in his honour and which he preferred instead to be set up in Rome. In the same year that he wrote this letter, the figure of Pax appeared on the reverse of his *aurei*, illustrating one of the central principles of his commencing reign, “Peace with gods and men.”⁵⁶
2. Both Artaxerxes and Claudius present themselves as being φιλάνθρωποι rulers (Add Esth E:11, ἦς ἔχομεν πρὸς πᾶν ἔθνος φιλανθρωπίαις; *P.Lond.* 6.1912, l. 81, ἡγεμῶν φιλάνθρω[=ω]πος).
 3. In Add Esth B:5, King Artaxerxes accuses the Jews of having an undermining effect on the stability of the Persian kingdom (πρὸς τὸ μὴ τὴν βασιλείαν εὐσταθείας τυγχάνειν); in *Flacc.* 94, Philo’s rhetorical questions, emphasizing the peaceable character of the Jews and their contribution to the political stability of Alexandria, seem to echo a similar allegation (πότε δ’ οὐκ εἰρηνικοὶ πᾶσιν ἐνομίσθημεν; τὰ δ’ ἐπιτηδεύματα, οἷς καθ’ ἑκάστην ἡμέραν χρώμεθα, ... οὐ συντείνοντα πρὸς εὐνομίαν πόλεως καὶ εὐστάθειαν);⁵⁷
 4. In their respective letters, Artaxerxes and Claudius permit the Jews to observe their laws and customs (Add Esth E:19, ἕαν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους χρῆσθαι

56 See Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern, *Corpus Papyrorum*, 2:45–46. Rostovtzeff, “Pax Augusta,” 25–28, argues that the figure depicted on the imperial coins was that of Pax-Nemesis, as was that of the golden statue that the Alexandrians wanted to erect in honour of Claudius. The statue, according to this scholar, was meant to commemorate the peace that Claudius re-established in Alexandria by suppressing the riot that the Jews had initiated in the city after the death of Caligula. Fearing that the erection of such a statue would kindle new Jewish disturbances, as it would imply that the *hybris* of the Jews was punished by Nemesis, Claudius asked that it be set up in Rome instead of in Alexandria. For a critique of this suggestion, see Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern, 2:45–46. See also Hornum, *Nemesis*, 15–17.

57 Cf. Claudius’ warning, in his second letter to Alexandria, that if the Jews do not obey his order not to bring in other Jews from Syria or Egypt, he will punish them for “fomenting a common plague for the whole world” (*P.Lond.* 6.1912, ll. 99–100, καθάπερ κοινὴν | τε[ι=ι] να τῆς οἰκουμένης νόσον ἐξεγείροντας). “Plague” (νόσος) is to be understood here as “rebellion.” See van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 184. Cf. also a fragment of the *Acta Isidori et Lamponis* (Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern, *Corpus Papyrorum*, 2:no. 156c), which contains a discussion that presumably took place in 41 CE between Isidorus, gymnasiarch of Alexandria and one of the leaders of the anti-Jewish faction, T. Claudius Barbillus, and the Jewish king Agrippa I. In it, Isidorus accuses the Jews of wishing to stir up riots in the entire world: col. II, ll. 22–24, ἐνκ[αλῶ αὐτοῖς] [sc. τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις] | [ἔτι κ]αὶ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην [ἐπιχειροῦσιν] | [ταράσ]σειν. Lastly, see *Legat.* 161, where Philo cites the instructions that Tiberius sent to the governors throughout the Roman Empire, after the death of the purportedly anti-Semite prefect of the praetorian guard, Sejanus, in 31 CE. The instructions stated that they were to regard the Jews as being of peaceable disposition and their laws as being conducive to political stability (τοὺς τε ἄνδρας ὡς εἰρηνικοὺς τὰς φύσεις καὶ τὰ νόμιμα ὡς ἀλείφοντα πρὸς εὐστάθειαν).

τοῖς ἐαυτῶν νομίμοις; *P.Lond.* 6.1912, ll. 86–87, ἀλλὰ ἐώσιν αὐτοὺς τοῖς ἔθεσιν | χρῆσθαι ὧς [=οἷς] καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ θεοῦ Σεβαστοῦ; Josephus, *A.J.* 19.285, ἐμμένουσι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἔθεσιν; 19.290, καλῶς οὖν ἔχειν καὶ Ἰουδαίους τοὺς ἐν παντὶ τῷ ὕφ’ ἡμᾶς κόσμῳ τὰ πάτρια ἔθνη ἀνεπικωλύτως φυλάσσειν).

5. Haman was one of the “Friends” of King Artaxerxes (Add Esth E:5; cf. Esth 3:1); Flaccus was one of the “Friends” of Emperor Tiberius (*Flacc.* 2, 158).⁵⁸ Haman was “second to the king” (Add Esth B:3, E:11) in the Persian kingdom; Flaccus, as *praefectus Aegypti* (*Flacc.* 152, 163), was second in authority to the emperor in one of the most important provinces of the Roman Empire.⁵⁹ Haman planned to destroy all the Jews in Artaxerxes’ kingdom (Add Esth E:15, τοὺς παραδεδομένους εἰς ἀφανισμόν Ἰουδαίους; cf. Esth 3:6, 13); Flaccus, according to Philo, intended to utterly destroy the Jews of Alexandria (*Flacc.* 116, οὓς [Ἰουδαίους] ἄρδην ἀφανίσει διεγνώκει).
6. In Add Esth E:10 (as well as in LXX Esth 9:24), Haman is designated as Macedonian (Μακεδών), although in LXX Esth 3:1 and 9:10, and in Add Esth A:17, he is called Bougean (Βουγαῖος).⁶⁰ In Add Esth E:14, he is even accused of contriving to bring the Persians under the domination of the Macedonians. This is a pseudo-historical allusion to the Macedonian conquest of the Persian Empire in the fourth century BCE, yet, as Foster notes, “in his circumstance, the writer [the author of Addition E] felt that a Macedonian was as anti-Jewish as Haman, and as hated an enemy

58 See Box, *In Flaccum*, 69; van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 91–92.

59 See van der Horst, 92.

60 Some scholars have linked Haman’s alleged intention to assassinate Artaxerxes (Add Esth E:12) with the assassinations of Artaxerxes III Ochus in 338 BCE and his son, Artaxerxes IV Arsēs, in 336 BCE, as well as with the attempted assassination of Darius III, by the eunuch Bagoas, whose position in the court of the aforementioned Achaemenid kings was comparable to that of Haman in the court of Artaxerxes in the story of Esther. According to Diodorus Siculus, Bagoas was a chiliarch in the court of Ochus (17.5.3); he was the king’s most trusted friend (16.47.3–4) and the true “master of the kingdom” (16.50.8). According to Aelian, *Var. hist.* 6.8, he was an Egyptian, just like Haman, in Add Esth E:10, is said not to have been of Persian blood. Jobes, “Assassination,” and more recently Silverstein, *Veiling Esther*, 127–34, have seen in the epithet “Bougean” used of Haman in LXX Esther an oblique reference to this Bagoas as well as to a certain Bagoses, who, according to Josephus, *A.J.* 11.297, was a general or governor of an Artaxerxes (Artaxerxes II Mnemon or, less likely, Artaxerxes III Ochus; in the latter case, he is to be identified with the Bagoas mentioned by Diodorus Siculus), who defiled the temple and imposed tribute on the Jews. Although it seems possible that the Greek translator of Esther intended to associate Haman with Bagoas/Bagoses, it is to be pointed out that the author of LXX Addition E chose to make a different association, as he supplanted the appellation “Bougean” with “Macedonian” (unlike the composer of the Alpha Text, who at 7:25(10) calls Haman “Bougean”).

as Haman.”⁶¹ “Macedonian” seems to be used here metonymically for “Greek” and may be meant to allude to Flaccus’ siding with the anti-Jewish Alexandrian Greeks.⁶²

7. Haman is characterized as insolent (Add Esth E:2, μείζον ἐφρόνησαν; E:3, τὸν κόρον οὐ δυνάμενοι φέρειν; E:12, ὑπερηφανία), which is also the case with Flaccus (*Flacc.* 124, 152, μέγα πνέοντα; cf. 41, δοξομανής). Moreover, Haman is said to have been puffed up by the boasts of those who are inexperienced in goodness (Add Esth E:4, τοῖς τῶν ἀπειραγάθων κόμπους ἐπαρθέντες). This statement has no correspondence to the canonical text of Esther, unless the author of Addition E wanted to insinuate that Haman was misled by the two chief bodyguards who sought to kill King Artaxerxes (Esth 2:21; cf. Add Esth A:17). However, the author of Addition E may have meant it as an allusion to Flaccus, who, according to Philo, was carried away by his former enemies, Dionysius, Isidorus, and Lampo, leaders of the Greek anti-Jewish party and “devisers of evils” (*Flacc.* 20, κακῶν εὑρεταί), who won him over by flattery (*Flacc.* 126, Ἰσίδωρός τε καὶ Λάμπων, οἱ ... δεσπότην καὶ εὐεργέτην καὶ σωτήρα καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀνακαλοῦντες; 172, πλῆθος ἀσύντακτον καὶ πεφορημένον, ὃφ’ οὐ κολακευόμενος ὁ δυστυχῆς ἡπατώμην). Furthermore, in Add Esth E:5 King Artaxerxes states that many rulers, duped by the persuasiveness of “friends” to whom they entrust the affairs of the state (τῶν πιστευθέντων χειρίζειν φίλων τὰ πράγματα), get involved in irremediable misfortunes (ἀνηκέστοις συμφοραῖς). In *Flacc.* 105, Philo expresses a similar idea in similar terms: during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, some governors of the provinces (ἔνιοι γὰρ καὶ ἐπὶ Τιβερίου καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Καίσαρος τῶν διεπόντων τὰς ἐπικρατείας) filled their countries with irremediable ills (τὰς χώρας ἐνέπλησαν κακῶν ἀνηκέστων).

We will go a step further and argue that the author of Additions B and E hints at events that occurred not only during Flaccus’ prefectship but also earlier, during the period when another Roman high official, Sejanus, is said to have taken anti-Jewish measures.

Sejanus had an astonishingly rapid rise to power in the teens and twenties of the first century CE.⁶³ In 15 CE he was appointed by Tiberius as praetorian prefect. In 26 CE he saved the emperor’s life and gained his unreserved trust.

61 Foster, *Alexandrian Situation*, 41–42.

62 On the term “Macedonian” used in an Alexandrian context, see Tcherikover, Fuks, and Stern, *Corpus Papyrorum*, 1:14–15, 24, 47. See also Stein, “Essai d’adaptation,” 111–13, and Wynn, *Socio-Historical Contexts*, 237–39.

63 On the rise and fall of Sejanus, see Bird, “L. Aelius Sejanus,” and Champlin, “Sejanus Augustus.”

When Tiberius moved to Capri a year later, Sejanus became the most powerful man in Rome and was treated as if he were the *princeps*.⁶⁴ The emperor made him adviser and assistant in all matters⁶⁵ and termed him his “partner in toil” (*socius laborum*) and “assistant in power” (*adiutor imperii*).⁶⁶ In 31 CE Sejanus was named consul together with Tiberius (*consulatus socius*) and was even promised to share the *tribunicia potestas* with the emperor, which would render him co-ruler of the empire and Tiberius’ successor.⁶⁷ The honours that he received included the erection of numerous statues of him, so that his face was “number two in the whole world.”⁶⁸ At the height of his power, he was accused by Tiberius of plotting a conspiracy against him and was executed in October 31 CE, followed by his children and adherents. His name and memory were blackened, as testified by an inscription from Umbria, which calls him a “most pernicious enemy of the Roman people.”⁶⁹

Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio Cassius inform us about a number of anti-Jewish measures that Tiberius took in Rome in 19 CE: he abolished the Jewish rites and obliged the Jews to burn their religious vestments and other accessories; he expelled the Jewish community from the city, drafting four thousand Jews for military service in Sardinia; he threatened those who refused to obey with so heavy a punishment as enslavement.⁷⁰ The aim of these measures, the inspiration of which has been assigned by some scholars to Sejanus,⁷¹ was probably to put a stop to the growing proselytism of Roman citizens to the Jewish faith.⁷² Philo accuses Sejanus of attacking through “false slanders” the Jews of Rome and of orchestrating a persecution of the Jews in the provinces,

64 See Dio Cassius, 58.5.1, ‘Ο δὲ Σεϊανὸς τοσοῦτος ἦν τῇ τε ὑπεροχῇ τοῦ φρονήματος καὶ τῷ μεγέθει τῆς ἐξουσίας ὥστε συνελόντι εἰπεῖν αὐτὸν μὲν αὐτοκράτορα τὸν δὲ Τιβέριον νησιάρχον τινα εἶναι δοκεῖν.

65 See Dio Cassius, 57.19.7, σύμβουλον καὶ ὑπηρέτην πρὸς πάντα ἐποιεῖτο.

66 See Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.2 and 4.7; cf. Dio Cassius, 58.4.3, κοινωνῶν τῶν φροντίδων ὠνόμαζε.

67 See Maier, “Sejanus,” 10–11; Champlin, “Seianus Augustus,” 364.

68 Juvenal, *Sat.* 10.63, ex facie toto orbe secunda. See Champlin, 373.

69 *ILS* 157: Providentiae Ti. Caesaris Augusti nati ad aeternitatem | Romani nominis, sublato hoste perniciosissimo p. R.

70 Suetonius, *Tib.* 36; Tacitus, *Ann.* 85; Josephus, *A.J.* 18.83–84; Dio Cassius, 57.18.5a. Unlike the other historians, Josephus dates these anti-Jewish measures to ca. 30 CE—erroneously, it seems. See Smallwood, “Some Notes,” 314–15, 326.

71 See Box, *In Flaccum*, 68. But see Smallwood, “Some Notes,” 324–25; *Legatio ad Gaium*, 243–44.

72 See Smallwood, “Some Notes,” 319–22.

which he did not have the time to carry out, shortly before 31 CE.⁷³ His persecution, according to Philo, aimed at destroying the entire Jewish nation—a grave accusation, which is not supported by other sources except Eusebius, who is, however, dependent on Philo.⁷⁴ The Alexandrian philosopher even considers Flaccus—who was appointed *praefectus Aegypti* by Tiberius a year after the execution of the *praefectus praetorio*—as the continuator of Sejanus' anti-Jewish policy,⁷⁵ and recounted the latter's persecution in a now lost prequel to his treatise *In Flaccum*.⁷⁶

Tiberius' anti-Jewish policy changed drastically as soon as Sejanus was removed from the political scene. Philo again informs us that, after Sejanus' demise in 31 CE, Tiberius

charged his procurators in every place to which they were appointed to speak comfortably to the members of our nation in the different cities, assuring them that the penal measures did not extend to all but only to the guilty, who were few, and to disturb none of the established customs but even to regard them as a trust committed to their care, the people as naturally peaceable (εἰρηνικοὺς τὰς φύσεις), and the institutions as an influence promoting orderly conduct (εὐστάθειαν).

Philo, *Legat.* 161 (Colson)

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- 73 Philo, *Legat.* 159–160: “And indeed it was the same under Tiberius though matters in Italy became troublesome when Sejanus was organizing his onslaughts (ἐσκευώνει τὴν ἐπιθέσιν) ... For Tiberius knew the truth, he knew at once after Sejanus's death that the accusations made against the Jewish inhabitants of Rome were false slanders, invented by him (ψευδεῖς ἦσαν διαβολαί, πλάσματα Σηιανού)” (Colson). See Smallwood, “Some Notes,” 323.
- 74 Philo, *Flacc.* 1, σύμπαν μὲν ἀδικῆσαι τὸ ἔθνος; *Legat.* 160, Σηιανού τὸ ἔθνος ἀναρπάσαι θέλοντος. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 2.5.7, Σηιανόν ... ἄρδην τὸ πᾶν ἔθνος ἀπολέσθαι σπουδὴν εἰσαγχομένη; *Chron.* p. 176 (Helm), Seianus praefectus Tiberii, qui apud eum plurimum poterat, instantissime cohortatur ut gentem Iudaeorum deleat. In the same context, Eusebius mentions Pontius Pilate's attack on the Jews in Judaea in the latter part of the second decade of the first century CE, which may be taken to imply that Pilate was implementing Sejanus' anti-Jewish policy. See discussion in Smallwood, “Some Notes,” 324, 326–28; Maier, “Sejanus,” 9–10; Hennig, *L. Aelius Seianus*, 160–79; van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 89–90.
- 75 Philo, *Flacc.* 1, Δεύτερος μετὰ Σηιανόν Φλάκκος Ἀουῖλλιος διαδέχεται τὴν κατὰ Ἰουδαίων ἐπιβολήν.
- 76 On whether this prequel was one of the five books of Philo's treatise *On Virtues* (Περὶ ἀρετῶν), which dealt with the fortunes of the Jews under Gaius Caligula and also included the *Legatio*, or a now lost section of *In Flaccum*, that preceded the text that has come down to us, see Box, *In Flaccum*, xxxiii–xxxvii; Smallwood, *Legatio ad Gaium*, 38–43; Hennig, *L. Aelius Seianus*, 164–69; van der Horst, *Flaccus*, 5–6, 50.

We can easily draw correspondences between the above-mentioned persons and events and the ones figuring in Additions B and E to LXX Esther. Sejanus was the emperor's counsellor and, having saved his life, he enjoyed his complete confidence. Similarly, in Add Esth B:3, Haman is said to have been one of the king's counsellors⁷⁷ and to have proven his firm loyalty to him (πυθομένου δέ μου τῶν συμβούλων ... βεβαία πίστει ἀποδεδειγμένος). Sejanus became Tiberius' second-in-command and practically his co-ruler just like Haman, in Additions B and E, is said to have been second to the king (Add Esth B:3, δεύτερον τῶν βασιλειῶν γέρας ἀπενηνεγμένος; Add Esth E:11, τὸ δεύτερον τοῦ βασιλικοῦ θρόνου πρόσωπον διατελεῖν) and even to have ruled the Persian Empire jointly with Artaxerxes (Add Esth B:4, τὴν ὑφ' ἡμῶν κατευθυνομένην ... συναρχίαν). Sejanus, according to Dio Cassius, was puffed up by his power just like Haman was, according to Addition E.⁷⁸ Moreover, like the biblical villain, Sejanus was an enemy and potential exterminator of the Jews (cf. Add Esth B:6, ἀπολέσαι [τοὺς Ἰουδαίους] ὀλορίζεῖ), who, by means of fabricated lies (cf. Add Esth E:6, τῷ τῆς κακοηθείας ψευδεῖ παραλογισμῷ and Add Esth B:4, which enumerates the slanders against the Jews that Haman imparted to King Artaxerxes), launched an attack on the Jews of the Roman Empire, perhaps by issuing anti-Jewish decrees that did not have the time to be carried out due to his arrest and execution, or that were eventually overturned⁷⁹ (cf. Addition B, which purports to be a copy of the letter calling for the extermination of the Jews that Haman sent in the name of King Artaxerxes to the provinces of the Persian Empire). In *Legat.* 160, Philo suggests rather implausibly that Sejanus' slanders aimed at alienating Tiberius from the Jews, who would be his sole defenders in case he fell victim to his praetorian prefect's plots and treachery.⁸⁰ Similarly, in Add Esth E:13–14, King Artaxerxes states that, by scheming against the Jews, Esther, and Mordecai, Haman aimed at isolating him (λαβὼν ἡμᾶς ἐρήμους) so as to treacherously achieve the subjugation of the Persians to the Macedonians.⁸¹ Furthermore, Sejanus was accused, perhaps without incon-

77 In the canonical Esther, Haman is named among the seven eunuchs who attended the king (Esth 1:10) but not among his counsellors (Esth 1:14).

78 Dio Cassius, 57.22.1, ἐπὶ τε τῇ ἰσχύϊ καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ ἀξιώματι ὑπερμαζήσας τὰ τε ἄλλα ὑπέρογκος ἦν; Add Esth E:2, μεῖζον ἐφρόνησαν; Add Esth E:12, ὑπερηφανίαν.

79 See Box, *In Flaccum*, 68: "According to this passage [*Legat.* 159–161] accusations had already been brought against the Dispersion in Rome, and apparently decrees of a drastic nature were about to be promulgated in all the provinces when Sejanus fell."

80 "He [Sejanus] wished to make away with the nation [of the Jews], knowing that it would take the sole or the principal part in opposing his unholy plots and actions, and would defend the emperor when in danger of becoming the victim of treachery" (Colson).

81 See Stein, "Essai d'adaptation," 112 n. 4.

testable proof,⁸² of conspiring to overthrow and assassinate Tiberius,⁸³ just as Haman was accused of plotting to assassinate Artaxerxes and usurp his throne (Add Esth E:3, τοῖς ἑαυτῶν εὐεργέταις ἐπιχειροῦσιν μηχανάσθαι; Add Esth E:12, ἐπετήδευσεν τῆς ἀρχῆς στερῆσαι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος). Sejanus was executed and his sons and associates were also put to death shortly after, while his name was exposed to infamy. Such was the fate met by Haman, too (cf. Add Esth E:18, ἐσταυρώσθαι σὺν τῇ πανοικίᾳ; Add Esth E:15, τρισαλιτηρίου). After the death of Sejanus, Tiberius adopted a non-aggressive policy towards the Jews and sent letters to his procurators throughout the empire instructing them to show proper regard for the Jewish laws, as they promoted the stability of the state. Likewise, after Haman's execution, King Artaxerxes communicated to his satraps his new pro-Jewish policy, which absolved the Jews from the accusations laid against them and allowed them to live in accordance with their laws and customs (Add Esth E:15, τοὺς Ἰουδαίους εὐρίσκομεν οὐ κακούργους ὄντας, δικαιοτάτοις δὲ πολιτευομένους νόμοις; Add Esth E:19, ἐὰν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἑαυτῶν νομίμοις).

Artaxerxes' reference to his συναρχία ("joint rulership") with Haman provides an especially strong clue for the identification of Haman with Sejanus, who was practically Tiberius' co-regent. The author of Additions B and E would have likely known that an Achaemenid despot would never have shared his power and that even a Ptolemaic or Seleucid monarch would have hardly co-ruled with a person other than a family member or used the term συναρχία with regard to his ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, "the one who is in charge of the affairs of the state" or "chief minister," as Haman is termed in Add Esth B:6. The fact that Artaxerxes' συναρχία does not involve Queen Esther, who, nevertheless, is designated in Add Esth E:13 as τῆς βασιλείας κοινωνός, "partner to the kingdom," seems to allude to a type of rulership like that exemplified by Tiberius and Sejanus rather than to a Ptolemaic or Seleucid one.⁸⁴ Artaxerxes' accusation that Haman contrived a conspiracy and an assassination plan against him—an

82 See Bird, "L. Aelius Sejanus," 88–92; Hennig, *L. Aelius Seianus*, 144–56; Champlin, "Seianus Augustus," 366 n. 13.

83 On Sejanus' alleged plan to murder Tiberius, see Tacitus, *Ann.* 6.8, consilia caedis adversum imperatorem. Valerius Maximus, a contemporary writer, speaks of Sejanus' attempted "parricide" (9.11, ext. 4, parricidii cogitatione).

84 It is to be noted that the term συναρχία occurs only in the LXX version of Add Esth B:4. The corresponding verse in the Alpha Text uses the term μοναρχία, "monarchy" [3:17(5) πρὸς τὸ μηδέποτε κατατίθεσθαι τῇ ὑφ' ἡμῶν κατευθυνόμενη μοναρχίᾳ], as does Josephus in his paraphrase of Esther (*A.J.* 11.217, ἔθνος [the Jews] ... τὴν μοναρχίαν μισοῦν). The *Vetus Latina* of Esther at B:4 reads: quod a nobis regitur ("what is decreed by us"; trans. Bellmann and Portier-Young, "Old Latin," 276). That the use of the "somewhat surprising" term συναρχία "may suggest a display of modesty on the king's part," as Fox, *Redaction*, 53, maintains, is

accusation that has no counterpart in the canonical Esther—provides another strong link between Haman's and Sejanus' lives and deeds, yet it has to be pointed out that the author of Addition E borrowed this dramatic element quasi-verbatim from 3 Maccabees, where King Ptolemy IV Philopator accuses his "Friends" of scheming to overthrow and kill him.⁸⁵

If Philo's full account of Sejanus' anti-Jewish activity was preserved, and if the full text of Tiberius' letter to his provincial governors (which Philo summarizes in *Legat.* 161) had survived as was fortunately the case for Claudius' letter to the Alexandrians, we would be in a better position to assess whether Additions B and E allude to a universal threat posed to and overcome by the Jews in 28–31 CE.

In his doctoral dissertation entitled "The socio-historical contexts of the recensions of Esther" (1990), Wynn assigned Additions B and E to the Roman era, and more specifically to the period of tension between the Alexandrian Greeks and Jews, which culminated in the anti-Jewish pogrom in 38 CE, without, however, connecting them with Flaccus and with Philo's historical treatises. Wynn remarks that "Ahasuerus may be seen in parallel to the Roman emperor, Haman to the citizens of Alexandria, and Mordecai and Esther to the Alexandrian Jews"⁸⁶ and that "the temptation is to draw a parallel between Addition E and the letter of Claudius to the Alexandrians written in 41 C.E." He adds, however, that "some hesitancy must be held in regards to dating this recensional stage of Esther to such a late date"⁸⁷ and in his conclusion he confines himself to stating cautiously that "this text [the version of Esther which included the Additions B and E] probably reflects the conditions of the early Roman era but probably not as late as the persecution documented by Philo during the reigns of Gaius and Claudius (37 C.E.) [*sic*]."⁸⁸

De Troyer is another scholar who has referred to the above-discussed period in relation to Greek Esther—though not the LXX version but the Alpha Text. She agrees with Bickerman that the translation of LXX Esther was made by Lysimachus in Jerusalem during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE) and that it included Addition E (and B), although she cannot establish with certainty whether Lysimachus composed these Additions, as Bickerman believes, or simply inserted them into his translation. She argues

rather unlikely, considering the authoritative tone of the king, who designates himself as "the master of the whole world" (Add Esth B:2).

85 3 Macc 6:24, ἐπιχειρεῖτε τῆς ἀρχῆς ἤδη καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος μεθιστᾶν λάθρα μηχανώμενοι τὰ μὴ συμφέροντα τῇ βασιλείᾳ.

86 Wynn, *Socio-Historical Contexts*, 238.

87 Wynn, 239.

88 Wynn, 248.

that this version was the *Vorlage* of the Alpha Text, which was produced in Rome in 40–41 CE, when a Jewish author, who may have been Philo, rewrote Lysimachus' version—Addition E included.⁸⁹ According to De Troyer, in composing the Alpha Text, its author had “one specific person in mind,”⁹⁰ namely, Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, who intervened to Caligula on behalf of the Alexandrian Jews, when the latter suffered under Flaccus, and on behalf of the Jerusalem Jews, when Caligula threatened to erect his statue in the temple, and who also urged Claudius to issue edicts in favour of the Jews in Alexandria, Syria, and the rest of the world.⁹¹ De Troyer holds that “Mordecai is to be identified with Agrippa I, Haman with Flaccus, the unstable governor of Alexandria, and king Ahasuerus with emperor Claudius” and that “the identity of the figure of Esther is not so easily established.”⁹² In acknowledgement of the importance of the figure of Agrippa, she even proposes to call the Alpha Text “The Agrippa Text.”⁹³

Our position vis-à-vis the above two theories is as follows.

We share Wynn's opinion that Additions B and E were not part of Lysimachus' Greek version but belong to the last redactional stage of LXX Esther, which, despite Wynn's reservations, is to be dated to as late as shortly after 41 CE.

We accept (but with regard to Additions B and E to LXX Esther, not the Alpha Text) De Troyer's identification of Haman with Flaccus (and, we add, Sejanus) and of Artaxerxes, in Addition E, with Claudius (and, we add, possibly even Tiberius). In designating Mordecai as “saviour and perpetual benefactor” (Add Esth E:13, τὸν ἡμέτερον σωτήρα καὶ διὰ παντός εὐεργέτην), the author of Addition E may have had Herod Agrippa I in mind,⁹⁴ yet this one and only reference to Mordecai in the two Additions does not allow us to further substantiate this connection, and what is more, the two epithets are not used in relation to the Jews but to King Artaxerxes, who was saved twice by Mordecai (Esth 2:22–23;

89 De Troyer, *End of Alpha Text*, 393, 396–98, 402.

90 De Troyer, 401.

91 See Philo, *Flacc.* 103; *Legat.* 179, 276–329; Josephus, *A.J.* 18.289–303, 19.278–291. Agrippa also protested to Petronius, the Roman governor of Syria, against a number of Greek youths who set up an image of Claudius in the synagogue of the Phoenician city Dora; Petronius reprimanded severely the leaders of the city and ordered that the perpetrators be brought before him to account for their actions (see Josephus, *A.J.* 19.300–311).

92 De Troyer, *End of Alpha Text*, 402.

93 De Troyer, 403.

94 The combination σωτήρ καὶ εὐεργέτης occurs only in the LXX. In the Alpha Text [6:5(3); 7:26(13)], Mordecai is designated only as σωτήρ. Literary and epigraphical sources commemorate Herod Agrippa I as εὐεργέτης, “benefactor,” but not as σωτήρ, “saviour.” See Marshall, *Jesus, Patrons, Benefactors*, 160–62, 165–70.

Add Esth E:12–13).⁹⁵ As for Queen Esther, her designation as “partner to the kingdom” (Add Esth E:13, τῆς βασιλείας κοινωνόν) tempts us to associate her with Agrippina the Younger, Claudius’ fourth wife. Tacitus gives us an idea of the empress striving for power when he presents her receiving obeisance from the captive British king Caratacus, seated on a dais next to that of the emperor, before the Roman standards. As Tacitus comments, “it was the advertisement of her claim to a partnership in the empire (*imperii sociam*), which her ancestors had created.”⁹⁶ The same historian further relates that Agrippina aimed at a partnership in the empire (*consortium imperii*) during the reign of her son, Nero, too.⁹⁷ The term *socia* or *consors imperii*, which recalls the terms *socius laborum* and *adiutor imperii* that Tiberius used of Sejanus, is equivalent to the term τῆς βασιλείας κοινωνός that we find in Addition E. However, Agrippina married Claudius in 49 CE, and Messalina, Claudius’ third wife who was empress in 41 CE, is not known to have had the political ambitions of her successor. One should keep in mind, though, that Additions B and E are not free compositions, in which the author introduced his own fictitious characters in order to allude to contemporary historical figures; he had to use the characters of the Esther story, not all of which lent themselves to identification with real-life personages. Thus, one should not expect a one-to-one identification of all the characters that appear in Additions B and E with real historical figures.

If we accept with De Troyer that the Alpha Text is a rewritten form of LXX Esther and that, in aggrandizing the role of Mordecai, its author had Agrippa I in mind, and if the date of composition or final redaction of Additions B and E that we suggest in this study holds true, we have to posit that the Alpha Text was produced shortly after the insertion of Additions B and E to LXX Esther (given that, in the opinion of many scholars, the Alpha Text imported Additions B and E from the LXX text),⁹⁸ and not long after 44 CE, when Agrippa died. Philo cannot have been the composer of the Alpha Text, inter alia, because at 7:23(4) he would not have missed the opportunity to use μισοπόνηρος δίκη, a favourite expression of his.

What we consider likely is that the author of Additions B and E was an Alexandrian, a contemporary of Philo, who lived through the plotted and

95 See Nock, “Soter and Euergetes,” 720; Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 234–36.

96 Tacitus, *Ann.* 12.37.4 (Jackson).

97 Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.11.1.

98 See Moore, *Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah*, 165, 194; Clines, *Esther Scroll*, 72, 85–86, 140; Haelewyck, “Texte dit ‘Lucianique,’” 14, 40, 43; “Old Latin Version,” 463; Fox, *Redaction*, 16. Cf. De Troyer, *End of Alpha Text*, 365: “The author of the AT did not consider Add. E as a text which was added to the LXX but was familiar with and made use of the LXX including Add. E as his *Vorlage*.”

the attempted persecutions of the Jews in Alexandria and elsewhere under Tiberius and Caligula, between ca. 28 and 38 CE, and composed the two royal letters of Artaxerxes—with the specific intention of integrating them into the Greek translation of Esther, which was already supplied with the other four Additions—right after Claudius sent his letter to the Alexandrians in late 41 CE. This author cannot have been Philo, since a writer as accomplished as the Alexandrian philosopher would not have relied so heavily on 3 Maccabees as did the author of Additions B and E;⁹⁹ yet he seems to have been acquainted with the treatise(s) that Philo had written on the persecutions of Flaccus and Sejanus and to have composed his two Additions so that the contemporary readers could easily draw the analogy between Haman, the villainous persecutor of the Jews in the Esther story, and the two Roman high officials. He also seems to have borrowed from Philo's *In Flaccum* the expression *μισοπόνηρος δίχη* (which might also have occurred in the treatise's lost prequel on Sejanus) that was likely meant to allude specifically to this Philonic work, in the same way that he seems to have borrowed from 2 Maccabees (8:34, 15:3) the adjective *τρισαλιτήριος*, “thrice-sinful,” and used it in Add Esth E:15 with reference to Haman in order to draw a connection between the latter and the anti-Jewish general Nikanor.¹⁰⁰

That said, we cannot rule out the possibility that Additions B and E entered LXX Esther sometime after the composition of 3 Maccabees, the date of which cannot, however, be pinpointed with certainty,¹⁰¹ and were then retouched and recontextualized in the early forties of the first century CE by a redactor who wanted to allude to contemporary persons and events.¹⁰² In any case, the

99 On the similarities between the letters of King Artaxerxes in Additions B and E to Esther and the letters of King Ptolemy IV Philopator in 3 Maccabees, see Motzo, “Rifacimento greco e III Maccabei,” 285–88; Moore, *Daniel, Esther, Jeremiah*, 195–99; Hacham, “3 Maccabees and Esther,” 772–80; Magliano-Tromp, “Egyptian Judaism,” 60–67.

100 See Domazakis, *Neologisms*, 236–44.

101 3 Maccabees is usually dated to between 100 and 30 BCE, although later dates have also been proposed. See Johnson, *Historical Fictions*, 129–41.

102 Another likely clue that the LXX version of Additions B and E was composed (or redacted to its final form) in the Roman period is the use of the term *διάτάγματα* (instead of *προστάγματα* that occurs in the Alpha Text) to designate the royal decrees in Add Esth B:4 (τά τε τῶν βασιλέων παραπέμποντας διηνεκῶς διατάγματα). Bickerman, “Notes,” 250 n. 41, states that the word *διάταγμα* “never occurs in Ptolemaic documents.” Modrzejewski, “Πρόσταγμα,” 205–6, affirms that “the term *πρόσταγμα* appears in the papyri of the Ptolemaic epoch as a technical term for the definition of a special kind of royal ordinances which can assume the epistolary or the non-epistolary form ... In the Roman and Byzantine epochs this term is used to design[ate] the imperial edicts and the edicts of the prefect of Egypt (promiscuously with the common term *διάταγμα*).” Passoni Dell’Acqua, “Liberation Decree,” 77, also states that *διάταγμα* “takes on technical connotations for imperial decrees during the

terminus post quem for the composition of Additions B and E to Esther can only be set by 3 Maccabees.¹⁰³ If the latter book was composed as late as in the time of Caligula, as some scholars have posited,¹⁰⁴ we may even venture to consider the possibility that its author also composed the two royal letters of Additions B and E to Esther, duplicating, so to speak, the two royal letters of King Ptolemy IV Philopator in 3 Maccabees (3:12–29 and 7:1–9).

3 Conclusion

Esther scholars contend that Additions B and E were written for the purpose of enhancing the “dramatic interest” and the “sense of authenticity” of the Esther

Roman age: during the Ptolemaic period it appears in the papyri with the sense of ‘provision, order, decree’ and does not seem to officially designate a royal decree.” However, she points out that in Add Esth B:4 “the cod. B [Vaticanus] gives *προσταγματα* in the first draft, with the *προ[σ]*- erased and *δια* written over the erasure: this can be explained by the fact that, when the correctors were at work, the most common term was *διάταγμα*, and *πρόσταγμα* might have seemed rather unusual and to be avoided.” It should be noted, though, that, with the exception of the uncertain *scriptio inferior* in Vaticanus and the minuscule 249, all the textual witnesses of LXX Esther read *διαταγματα*; moreover, had the correctors of Vaticanus found the term *πρόσταγμα* in Add Esth B:4 “unusual and to be avoided,” they would have changed it to *διάταγμα* in the canonical sections of LXX Esther, where it also occurs (2:8 τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως πρόσταγμα; 8:14, 17 ἐξετέθη τὸ πρόσταγμα; 9:4 προσέπεσεν τὸ πρόσταγμα τοῦ βασιλέως); yet, this is not the case. It seems more likely that it was the original scribe of Vaticanus who, in Add Esth B:4, found the term *διαταγματα* “unusual” and wrote *προσταγματα* instead, because elsewhere in LXX Esther the royal ordinances are designated as *προστάγματα*, and that the first of the two correctors, who was contemporary with the scribe (possibly the *diorthotes* of the scriptorium), changed *προσταγματα* to *διαταγματα*, considering the latter to be the original reading in this particular verse—a correction retained by the scribe/corrector who re-inked the Codex in the tenth or eleventh century (on the correctors of Codex Vaticanus, see Metzger, *Manuscripts*, 74, and Parker, “Codex Vaticanus,” 1:1074). Cf. LXX Esth 2:4, καὶ ἤρεσεν τῷ βασιλεῖ τὸ πρᾶγμα, where the reading of the original hand of Vaticanus is *προσταγμα*, which the corrector changed to *πράγμα*—the reading found in all the other MSS—by placing expunging dots above the letters OCT. We also refer here to Dorothy, *Books of Esther*, 192, who maintains that the form of Addition B to Esther “evidences more affinities with a Roman decree than with a Hellenistic letter.”

103 A discussion about whether Additions B and E originated outside of Egypt and underwent various redactional stages has to deal, inter alia, with the arguments advanced by Bickerman, “Notes,” 249–50, concerning the “Seleucid flavour” of these two Additions. We take this discussion up in a forthcoming study.

104 See Grimm, *Das zweite, dritte und vierte Buch*, 220–21; Kopidakis, Γ’ Μακκαβαίων, 31–34; Collins, *Athens and Jerusalem*, 124–26. For counter-arguments, see Barclay, *Jews*, 203, and Johnson, *Historical Fictions*, 132–34.

story¹⁰⁵ according to the practice of Greek historiographers and authors of historical novels who quoted official documents in their works in order to “set forth vital points” of their narratives.¹⁰⁶ Although one cannot deny that the two royal letters contained in Additions B and E to Esther served that purpose, it should also be considered that they might have arisen (or at least that their final form might have arisen) as a response to a contemporary historical situation, which, as we argued in this study, was the persecution and the subsequent reestablishment of the Jewish community in Alexandria in 38–41 CE. The same historical situation gave rise to Philo’s treatise *In Flaccum*, whose anti-Jewish protagonist is punished by the same “evil-hating” divine justice that overtakes Haman, the villainous persecutor of the Jews, in Addition E to Esther. The expression “evil-hating justice” (μισοπόνηρος δίκη), a favourite of Philo, which elsewhere occurs only in Addition E to LXX Esther, betrays the debt of the author of the latter text to the Alexandrian philosopher and allows us to glimpse the historical personalities that likely lie behind the biblical figure of Haman in Additions B and E: Flaccus, the Roman prefect of Egypt under Tiberius and Caligula, and possibly Sejanus, the all-powerful prefect of the praetorian guard under Tiberius, both of whom Philo, in his historical treatises, excoriates for persecuting the Jews. The letter of King Artaxerxes in Addition E, which rescinds his previous extermination order and allows the Jews to observe their own customs, was likely informed by the letters confirming the religious rights of the Jews that the emperor Claudius sent to Alexandria, Syria, and the rest of the Roman Empire in 41 CE—and especially by the one he addressed to the Alexandrians in the autumn of that year. It is shortly after the publication of the latter letter that we are to place the composition (or the final redaction) of Additions B and E to LXX Esther.

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¹⁰⁵ Moore, “Origins,” 383.

¹⁰⁶ Bickerman, “Notes,” 253.

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