Up For Interpretation: Considering the Allegorical Tendencies of the Derveni Author and Flavius Josephus

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Abstract:

This thesis adopts the case-study approach to explore the interaction between textuality and authority, particularly how aspiring intellectuals used their interpretations of authoritative and credible writings to construct their legitimacy and authenticate their own persuasiveness. It focuses on the Derveni papyrus, an exegete of an Orphic poetic cosmogony, which the Derveni author believed contained enigmatic divine wisdom, encoded by Orpheus; and Josephus, a Flavian historian with his own affinity for dream and prophetic interpretation, whose skills are undergirded by alleged expertise in and interpretation of sacred Judean texts (or scripture, or writings he characterises as oracular, among other values he assigns them).

The discussion of the Derveni papyrus considers the author's authenticating strategy for their own claim to expertise and efficacy through an association to a previously authenticated text. Many contemporary rival practitioners and intellectuals were vying for the same type of position and authenticity within a highly competitive environment. The second author studied in the thesis, Flavius Josephus, uses the allegorical tradition to portray his own interpretive methods and to characterise whom he believes to be good examples of interpretive intellectual experts. The thesis then reflects on both case studies in dialogue with one another, observing the similarities and key differences in their engagements with the broad phenomenon of allegorical reading. It demonstrates the profitability of extending this methodological approach to symbolic reading developed by Peter T. Struck, among others, to new and less conventional case studies. Ultimately, the thesis contributes to a richer and more diversified understanding of the spread and interactivity of Greek intellectual culture in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds, one that also decentres what we mean by "Greek" intellectualism in these periods.

Résumé:

La thèse suivante traitera de l'interaction entre la textualité et l'autorité; en particulier de la manière dont les intellectuels en développement utilisèrent leurs propres interprétations d'écrits crédibles et faisant autorité afin de construire leur légitimité et d'authentifier leur propre force de persuasion. Mon argumentation s'articulera autour du papyrus Derveni, exégète d'une cosmogonie poétique orphique, laquelle contenait une sagesse divine énigmatique selon notre auteur, intégrée par Orphée; et de Josèphe, historien de la période flavienne, avec sa propre affinité pour le rêve et l'interprétation prophétique, deux compétences qui sont sous-tendues par un prétexte de compétence et d'interprétation des textes (ou des écritures et écrits qu'il caractérise comme oraculaires, entre autres valeurs qu'il leur attribue).

Ma discussion sur le papyrus Derveni portera sur la stratégie d'authentification de l'auteur pour ses propres prétentions à l'expertise et à l'efficacité par une association à un texte auparavant authentifié. De nombreux praticiens et intellectuels rivaux contemporains de notre auteur se disputaient le même type de position et d'authenticité dans un environnement hautement concurrentiel. Avec mon deuxième auteur, Flavius Josèphe, je retracerai comment il utilise la tradition allégorique pour décrire ses propres méthodes d'interprétation et pour caractériser ceux qu'il considère comme de bons exemples d'experts intellectuels interprétatifs. Pour finir, je réfléchirai sur les deux études de cas en mettant l'une et l'autre en dialogue, tout en observant les similitudes et les différences principales dans leurs engagements avec le phénomène de lecture allégorique. En fin de compte, j'ai l'intention de démontrer la rentabilité d'étendre le type d'approche de la lecture symbolique développé par Peter T. Struck, entre autres, à des études de cas nouvelles et moins conventionnelles. Les résultats de ce type de recherche devraient contribuer à une compréhension plus riche et plus diversifiée de la diffusion et de l'interactivité de la culture intellectuelle grecque dans les mondes hellénistiques et romains, une compréhension qui décentralise également ce que nous entendons par « intellectualisme grec » à cette époque.

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Chapter 1—Origin Stories: The Beginnings of the Interpretive Tradition

> *What do we expect from poetry? Is it an entertaining diversion? An edifying tale? A craft whose masters delight and move us with their elegance and fine workmanship? Yes, perhaps. But a few bold souls, ancient as well as modern, have it in mind that poetry will do something more for us. They suspect that the poets' stories might say more than they appear to say, and that their language might be more than just words.*[1]

It is the attitude and nature of one of these very (although I would perhaps not say either bold or few) souls that inspired this project. I have always been fascinated by understanding why and how texts, or literary productions more broadly, come to mean something to the people who read them. Although poetry is not everyone's cup of tea today, books, film, and television are all presumed to have some hidden meaning beneath the surface. "*Moby Dick* isn't really a whale", the "stairs in *Parasite* (2019) represent more than just literal stairs", and "the lighthouse (from *The Lighthouse* 2019) was not really a lighthouse" are all comments either I or one of my friends have made in the last year. It seems so very routine to think this way. From English class to binge watches on Netflix to an art gallery, all the art we consume contains some kernel of truth or some message beneath the surface that, using the above phrase, "says more than [it] appears to say"; it is almost a given for modern readers and watchers.

Although it may be taken for granted by some contemporary readers, the notion of a non-literal understanding of texts has only recently become a commonplace understanding of readers in antiquity. Heidi Wendt has commented that classics and the study of the ancient world "has witnessed a surge of interest in specialized intellectual practices employed in the context of religious activity".[2] Wendt, along with Peter Toline Struck, Sarah Iles Johnston, Radcliffe G.

[1] Struck (2004) 1.
[2] Wendt (2016) 129.

Edmonds III, and others, have observed that the principle that texts contain truth and knowledge beyond the literal surface is not a modern invention but was part and parcel of the ancient literary world. This tide in scholarship is much indebted to the pioneering scholarship of Struck, whose monograph, *Birth of a Symbol*, while influential in many circles, holds the possibility of even greater significance for "Judeo-Christian" literature. Through an intricate observation of the language of literary symbolism and its link with allegorical or interpretive readings of texts, Struck traces the notions of uncovering hidden knowledge within texts from the early classical period with authors such as Plato and Aristotle—though some less typical writers as well—through to the early Middle Ages with Dante and others.[3] Struck argues that although "the notion that language is autonomous and creates a world rather than passively labelling it, and the view of the poet as a solitary genius attuned to the hidden truths of the cosmic order" are typically seen as concerns of the modern reader, all of these principles have roots in the intellectual environments of the ancient world.[4] These signs and symbols often convey "some truer resonance, [a] subtle and profound knowledge that arrives in a concealed form and is waiting for a skilled reader to liberate it from its code".[5] This current project is concerned with the authors and intellectuals, who composed texts under these assumptions.

This thesis will observe the interaction between textuality and authority, particularly how aspiring intellectuals used their interpretations of authoritative and credible writings to construct their legitimacy and authenticate their own persuasiveness. While there are many authors who

[3] Struck (2004 n.2): offers a very helpful definition of interpretive describing it as "a mode of criticism that sees the text primarily as a repository of hidden wisdom and envisions its task as the extraction of these meanings." The label of allegorical and interpretive will be taken for the most part as synonymous, in the same vein as Struck uses them. Geralds Bruns (1988) and A. A. Long (1992) suggest that we should rename the tradition, the interpretive tradition, rather than the allegorical, Struck (2004: 113) adds however while "[s]uch a move is attractive, provided that one not lose sight of the extended tradition of such reading—whatever we call it."
[4] Struck (2004) 13
[5] Ibid 1.

could meet this criteria, the following paper will focus on two: the Derveni papyrus, an exegete of an Orphic poetic cosmogony, which our author believed contained enigmatic divine wisdom, embedded by Orpheus; and Josephus, a Flavian-period historian, with a personal affinity for dream and prophetic interpretation, underpinned by his alleged expertise in—and interpretation of—sacred Judean texts (or scripture, or writings he characterizes as oracular, among other values he assigns them). The phenomenon of symbolic reading was widespread and had many applications: philosophical, literary, and religious. *Religious* interpreters, following on Stanley K. Stowers' definition, applied symbolic reading towards religious practices in order to supply, for example, meaning attached to an initiation rite.[6] I believe both Josephus and the Derveni author, while not without philosophical or literary aspects, operated within such a religious subset. Both serve to show how Struck's theory of the allegorical method manifests in two different but equally competitive intellectual environments. While scholars have typically considered the Derveni author to be among the earliest allegorical readers of antiquity, few have considered Josephus' place within this heterogenous tradition.

Theoretical Foundations

Literary symbolism in an ancient context, as modern readers understand it, is best understood in Struck's analysis by tracing the diverse and heterogeneous conceptualisation of *symbola*. In the classical period, *symbolon,* from the verb συμβάλλω meaning 'to bring or set things together' had a rather strict and narrow definition.[7] As Müri has previously noted, it often acted as a placeholder for any token, or marker, authenticating a contract, agreement, or hospitality.[8]

[6] Stowers (2011) esp. 45-48.
[7] Struck (2004) 178-179.
[8] Müri (1976); Struck (2004: 178) synthesises Müri's findings that there are three main usages of *symbolon* in antiquity: "as hospitality token (and uses traceable to that one); as a marker of legal rights granted a foreigner; and as a sign. Müri's first two categories are in keeping with the current findings. His third category strikes me as almost entirely divisible into the first two. It consists of uses of the term that are influenced by the meaning of hospitality

However, as it developed the *symbol* began to develop associations to divine omens and other opaque wisdom that could be interpreted from an ambiguous message. Such associations can be found in Plato's *Symposium*. In Aristophanes creation myth, after Zeus divided the powerful "double people" into two separate individuals, Plato describes these two new individuals as a σύμβολον of a human (*Symp.* 191d: ἕκαστος οὖν ἡμῶν ἐστιν ἀνθρώπου σύμβολον, ἅτε τετμημένος ὥσπερ αἱ ψῆτται, ἐξ ἑνὸς δύο: ζητεῖ δὴ ἀεὶ τὸ αὑτοῦ ἕκαστος σύμβολον). The implication was that without their other half each individual then exists in a state of depravation only remedied by investigation—not so distinct from the types of interpretive symbols later authors will use.[9] Struck notes that such an understanding traces its origin to "the Greek habit of reading coincidence as a divine message"; this sense of the word originates more from another use of the verb συμβάλλω: 'to meet'.[10] The scarcity of sources complicates our understanding the relative weight of these two aspects, obfuscating a clear or "exclusive lineage" of the term.[11] Nonetheless the two-fold nature of a σύμβολον is clear, and as Struck argues, the term could stand both for a marker or a token as well as a mysterious enigma in need of interpretation. Moreover, the two aspects are not diametrically opposed, but likely exist along a spectrum of understanding and meaning. Any token is a placeholder or stand-in with meaning attached, however, that meaning can only emerge from a reader response, much like—as we shall come to see—with αἴνιγματα. This extrapolation of such hidden wisdom and divine truth beyond the literal reading is characterised as an allegorical or

token—whose sense Müri himself says is "nearly always beside it" (20, cf. 18)—or that are connected with divination, the Pythagorean texts, and the mysteries. It seems to me a better arrangement of the evidence to split the notion of symbol as sign (= σημεῖον) into the respective categories out of which the more general uses must have grown—be they the authenticating device of the hospitality token or the interpretable enigma of divine speech—as I will do here." Furthermore, Müri (1976: 13-14) identifies certain phonological details of the noun. By comparing the parallel forms of other -βάλλειν he identifies that first-declension forms in -βολη typically mark "the abstract nominalization of the verbal idea", while "the masculine omicron forms in -βολος typically act as *nomen agentis* and the neuter omicron forms in -βολον as *nomen rei qua agitur*."

9 Struck (2004) 79.

10 Ibid 178

11 Ibid.

interpretive reading of a text. This, Wendt comments, reflects a "dynamic and coextensive relationship in the parallel developments of allegorical reading and divination."[12]

Another phrase often employed in service of interpretive readings of a particular text is the language of ambiguity and opacity. This language could be of παράβολοι ('parables': *Ant.* 8.44) or ἀμφίβολοι ('ambiguities': *BJ* 3.352). Our modern term allegory is etymologically linked to a Greek term, ἀλληγορία, although in antiquity the term only played a minor role in the tradition. Instead, the term αἴνιγμα and its cognates appear most frequently in ancient writing. Struck notes that σύμβολον is the second most common, then followed by the terms which contemporary scholars often reference in the tradition, ἀλληγορία and ὑπόνοια.[13] Used as both a noun (αἴνιγμα) and as a verb (αἰνίσσομαι or αἰνίττομαι), Gregory Nagy's philological investigation links both the verb and noun etymologically with αἶνος ('praise'), which through the verb form αἰνίτετται produces αἴνιγμα.[14] Nagy's theory of the epinician poetic trope of an "ideology of exclusiveness", according to Struck, "suggests that the enigma's sense of interpretable puzzle grew out of what might be termed a quirk of the epinician genre of praise poetry."[15] Struck finds this especially compelling considering that the poet Simonides, credited as the inventor of the epinician ode in 520 BCE, speaks enigmatically about justice according to Plato (*Republic* 332b-c: ἠινίξατο ἄρα, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὁ Σιμωνίδης ποιητικῶς τὸ δίκαιον ὃ εἴη).

Plato, however, had a complicated and inconsistent relationship with this type of interpretive readings. Sometimes, Plato seemed to be hesitant about the efficacy of such interpretative works. Struck and others assume that the dynamics of αἰνίττεται and its relationship

[12] Wendt (2016) 130.
[13] Struck (2004) 3 n.1 notes that "'Allegory' has the disadvantage of invoking a genre of writing, not developed until the early medieval period, in which a writer personifies abstract ideas and encodes a formulaic, one-to-one correspondence between each character and some concept, abstract principle, or element of the physical world. This kind of allegory has only a little to do with the ancient tradition…"
[14] Nagy (1980) 239; see discussion of Nagy analysis in Struck (2004) 179.
[15] Struck (2004) 179.

with allegorical interpretation were orbiting intellectual circles in fourth century Athens when Plato wrote.[16] Therefore, since Plato did not theorise or write in a vacuum, it is inevitable that he had had some degree of familiarity—likely a hyper-familiarity given his intellectual reputation—of the connotations of such vocabulary. Any slight, snub, or derogatory remark found in his work would have been intentional. In his *Republic*, while speaking about the absurdity of a literal reading of Simonides, he says, ἠινίξατο ἄρα, ἦν δ᾽ ἐγώ, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὁ Σιμωνίδης ποιητικῶς τὸ δίκαιον ὃ εἴη (*Rep*. 332b–c [trans. Struck]: "As it turns out, Simonides was speaking enigmatically, in a poetic manner, about what the just is").[17] The derivative and condescending tone suggested by ἄρα…ὡς[18] reflect the little value Plato placed on these arguments. 'Oh obviously' he was speaking enigmatically, 'so it seems', as if Plato tirelessly sighs at how often such an argument is used to justify absurdity.[19] Struck comments:

> At several additional places in the corpus, Plato uses the notion of "speaking in enigmas" as a trope of subtle mockery in addressing the ideas (or in his view, dogmas) of others. In these cases, Plato tests a chestnut of wisdom passed down from an ancient authority, a poet or philosopher, runs into aporia, then claims (with tongue firmly in cheek) that the saying must have been an "enigma" for something else, since the ideas turn out to be so far-fetched that the putatively wise speaker simply cannot have meant what he said.[20]

In Plato's *Republic* 2, Socrates would seem to concede that hidden meanings and allegories are contained in many poetic works. However, Plato bans these sections of the text from his perfect society "whether they are written with allegories or without them," because "a young man is unable to discern what is an allegory and what is not" (*Rep*. 378d: οὔτ᾽ ἐν ὑπονοίαις πεποιημένας οὔτε

[16] Struck (2004) 47. Struck writes "Knowing what we do about the role of αἰνίττεται in allegorical reading, it is difficult to imagine such a statement being made absent a rather general currency of such an approach."
[17] Struck (2004: 47) notes that "Given the word order, the verb and the adverb have an almost appositional character in the sentence."
[18] *Cf.* Smyth 2798 for the rejecting tone that can be supplied by the ἄρα…ὡς. Many of Smyth's observations about ἄρα reflect a contradictory and 'obvious' tone about the statement that follows.
[19] Struck (2004: 47) Struck comments that this is typical of Plato to use "the ἄρα with subtle but cutting ironic effect—a grace note of mock surprise at an actually well-foreseen conclusion."
[20] Ibid 47.

ἄνευ ὑπονοιῶν. ὁ γὰρ νέος οὐχ οἷός τε κρίνειν ὅτι τε ὑπόνοια καὶ ὃ μή). [21] His criticism continues in his *Ion*, wherein the titular poet, who self-associates himself with famous allegorical readers, believes the true goal of a Homeric scholar should be to uncover διάνοιαι (which shares a root with ὑπόνοια) from Homer's verses.[22] Afterall, as Ion claims, since Homer knew everything, and as an expert interpreter of Homer, so too can his experts. Struck has noted that this view became very popular among later allegorical readers of Homer.[23] Even so, the fact that Plato saw it fitting to mock allegorical interpretation rather than other forms of textual criticism suggests that these methods were popular among his contemporaries.

Elsewhere, Plato had no hesitancy in using opaque myths to present cosmological or ontological truths—that is, he wrote enigmatically so as to present a greater truth about nature, the universe, and the afterlife—that he could not express in typical prosaic language; *e.g.* the myth of Er in his *Republic* (Plat. *Rep.* 10.614–10.621) or the myth of Atlantis (*Timaeus* 24e-25d; *Critias* 108e-end).[24] Furthermore, we can see in *Protagoras* that Plato was familiar with allegorical modes of interpretation of myths and stories of the divine.[25] Although the question remains whether *mythography* in itself suggests that myths requires interpretation, or if *mythography* represents such interpretation. However, the impossibility of certain aspects of Plato's myths would suggest that some degree of allegorising is required. Moreover, in *Alcibiades* 2 (147d), Socrates says that the nature of poetry is enigmatic and requires a specialised interpreter to unpack—ἔστιν τε γὰρ

[21] All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.
[22] For the associations between Ion and allegorical readers see Struck (2004) 43.
[23] Struck (2004) 43.
[24] For a discussion of the Plato's use of myth see McCabe (2000) esp. chapter 5. For the potential allegorical readings of the myth of Er myth see Dillon (2015) who notes that there may even be potential problems for later Platonists in their persistence that the myth should be read allegorically.
[25] Baltussen (2004) notes that the nature of Socrates' unpacking of the Simonides poems in this dialogue shows that Plato's account of exegesis is related to the methods of the allegorist. Moreover, he maintains that Socrates' word by word analysis of the poem at *Prot*agoras 344 B-347 is similar to the approach of the Derveni author in their treatise (e.g., *P.Derv*. 23, 7-10).

φύσει ποιητικὴ ἡ σύμπασα αἰνιγματώδης καὶ οὐ τοῦ προστυχόντος ἀνδρὸς γνωρίσαι ('poetry altogether is by nature enigmatic and not every person can understand it'), so perhaps Plato's mythography has a similar nature.[26] David Kontans notes that the story of Prometheus represents a general tendency of philosophers to construct allegorical narratives "in the service of their moral or anthropological theories".[27]

The allegorical aspects of Plato do not end there, however. Struck has noted that in his *Cratylus*, Plato presents an etymological allegory similar to the type found in the Derveni Papyrus.[28] In this text, Hera is equated with the air (404c) and people interpret (ἐξηγούμενοι) Athena as the mind and intellect (407a-c).[29] While in his *Theaetetus*, Plato appears to demonstrate the flaws of an allegorical argument, the narrative has the intellectual contest end in an implied draw between allegoresis and other forms of philosophy (*e.g.* the Ionian philosophy of Heraclitus). Furthermore, in that dialogue, Socrates would seem to allegorically read certain passages and lines in the *Iliad*—notably the moment where Zeus claims all the other gods combined could not drag him down from his hegemonic position (*Theaet.* 153d). All this to say, Plato, while very familiar with the allegorical techniques, had a complicated relationship with their application. Although he used these methods from time to time, he expressed considerable hesitation of their value on other occasions.

Likewise, other authors expressed reservations toward allegorical readings of texts. Near contemporary with Plato, the comedian Aristophanes mocked the absurdity of some allegorical explanations of the mundane. In his *Peace*, two servants consider the deeper meaning or wisdom 'some beardless youth' and his Ionian mentor might extrapolate from a dung-beetle:

[26] For a discussion of this line see Rusten (2014) 122.
[27] Konstan (2005) xix.
[28] Struck (2004) 43-44.
[29] On Hera and the air, see Murrin (1980) 3–25.

Servant A: What a foul, stinky, fat thing! I don't know what god is responsible for that thing! It doesn't seem to me to be either Aphrodite or the Graces.

Servant B: Who is it then?

Servant A: No doubt this is Zeus, God of the Thundercrap![30]

Servant B: Nevertheless, some spectator—a youth, posing as a wise philosopher—would say: "what is this thing? What does the dung-beetle mean?

Servant A: I bet some Ionian sitting next to him says, I think this thing enigmatically represents Creon, who eats crap shamelessly! Anyways, to going to get a drink for the dung-beetle.

Οι.α: μιαρὸν τὸ χρῆμα καὶ κάκοσμον καὶ βορόν· | χὥτου ποτ' ἐστὶ δαιμόνων ἡ προσβολὴ | οὐκ οἶδ'. Ἀφροδίτης μὲν γὰρ οὔ μοι φαίνεται, | οὐ μὴν Χαρίτων γε.

Οι.β: τοῦ γάρ ἐστ';

Οι.α: οὐκ ἔσθ' ὅπως | οὐκ ἔστι τὸ τέρας τοῦ Διὸς σκαταιβάτου.

Οι.β: οὐκοῦν ἂν ἤδη τῶν θεατῶν τις λέγοι | νεανίας δοκησίσοφος, "τόδε πρᾶγμα τί; | ὁ κάνθαρος δὲ πρὸς τί;"

Οι.α: κᾆτ' αὐτῷ γ' ἀνὴρ | Ἰωνικός τίς φησι παρακαθήμενος· | "δοκέω μέν, ἐς Κλέωνα τοῦτ' αἰνίσσεται, | ὡς κεῖνος ἀναιδέως σπατίλην ἐσθίει." | ἀλλ' εἰσιὼν τῷ κανθάρῳ δώσω πιεῖν. (Aristophanes *Peace* 38-49)

When Aristophanes criticises pseudo-intellectual types—especially youths trying too hard to be wise without the ability—inserting 'meaning' into places where there is none, he elected to use an allegorically-charged vocabulary. The absurd symbolic interjection by Servant A says that the Ionian believes the dung-beetle enigmatically represents Creon: ἐς Κλέωνα τοῦτ' αἰνίσσεται, although Aristophanes makes it clear later on that his interpretation is incorrect (*Peace* 127). Struck comments that this is Aristophanes way of criticising professional interpreters "in their own terms".[31] He used the typical vocabulary of these intellectuals to poke fun at their interpretive practices. Aristophanes' play reveals that both allegorical intellectuals, their methods, and their associated vocabulary were familiar to an Athenian audience in the fifth century; at least they were

[30] Translation of the term καταιβάτης was borrowed from Struck (2004: 40). The translation captures the absurdity of the dialogue.
[31] Struck (2004) 41.

recognizable enough that Aristophanes could get a laugh for it in his comedy. Ralph Rosen notes the caricature of the 'Ionian' pushing the allegorical methods onto the impressionable, wannabe youth, may be parodying the influx of intellectuals from Ionia to Athens during that time.[32] However, Struck suggests Aristophanes could be mocking a particular famous Ionian immigrant of the fifth century, Anaxagoras, who, while in Athens (c. 480–c. 450 BCE), had a reputation for allegorising. If the Ionian were Anaxagoras, then perhaps the beardless youth was his student Diogenes of Apollonia, who Aristophanes criticised in his *Clouds* for allegorically reading Homer (*Clouds* 223-34).[33]

Later in the Hellenistic period, some commentators likewise expressed concern for the absurdity of allegorical interpretation. Aristarchus criticised those who read beyond what the poets—in particular Homer—had intended in their verses:

> Aristarchus thought that [people] should understand the things shown by the poet [to be] more mythic, according to poetic authority, and [they] shouldn't analyse outside the things shown by the poet.[34]
>
> Ἀρίσταρχος ἀξιοῖ τὰ φραζόμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ Ποιητοῦ μυθικώτερον ἐκδέχεσθαι, κατὰ τὴν Ποιητικὴν ἐξουσίαν, μηδὲν ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Ποιητοῦ περιεργαζομένους. (D-scholion Il. 5.385)

James I. Porter notes that this passage only makes sense if "it is directed against allegorizing interpretations of the passage."[35] When other critics find certain lines or section of Homer's poetry confusing, out of the ordinary, or wacky in the epic narrative, Aristarchus "counsels that they ought

[32] Rosen (1984) 389-90.
[33] D-K 61 A 1; Struck (2004) 41.
[34] I understand the sense of 'should' is not contained in the mood of the verb—that is I am not suggesting that ἀξιοῖ be taken as either an optative or a subjunctive, rather as the contract form of the third person indicative. However, the sense ἀξιοῖ suggests a requirement or a loose demand. The 'should' acts to capture this advisory sense that I believe the Greek contains.
[35] Porter (1992) 70. *Cf.* Eustathius (*ad loc*. 56, 29. cited in Porter): "It is an allegory, even if Aristarchus thought it inappropriate to waste time on any of the mythical elements in the poetry (τὶ τῶν παρὰ τῇ ποιήσει μυθικῶν) by interpreting them allegorically, beyond what the poet has said (ἔξω τῶν φραζομένων)."

not to expend a great deal of energy generating imaginative explanations for it."[36] Rather scholars of Homer should Ὅμηρος ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν ('elucidate Homer from Homer'),[37] relying on parallels within the Homeric corpus and not incorporating 'outside' (ἔξω) criteria to understand the text.[38] Many grammarians, following the Aristarchean tradition, accused practitioners of allegorical reading of going beyond the text and writing ἐξηγήσεις βεβιασμένας ('violent exegeses').[39] These intellectual attacks forced later allegorists to be defensive of such accusations and set themselves apart from such readings. Porphyry defended his own work, saying οὐ δεῖ δὲ τὰς τοιαύτας ἐξηγήσεις βεβιασμένας ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ εὑρεσιλογούντων πιθανότητας (*Antr.* 36: 'it is not proper that this sort of exegesis be considered contrived or coming from inventing plausibility').

Despite the attention of sceptical intellectuals, many authors in antiquity believed that certain literary works were not only aesthetically pleasing but contained a series of σύμβολα ('symbol') and αἴνιγματα ('enigmas') from which an expert interpreter could extrapolate a greater meaning that transcended the contents of the page. In the service of literary criticism, particularly concerned with Homeric poetry, Heraclitus, writing in the first century CE, took it for granted entirely that Homer's poetic language was deeply figurative.[40] He engaged in sustained allegorical criticism of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey,* interpreting the many hidden messages embedded

[36] Struck (2004) 21.
[37] *D-Scholium Il.* 5.385.
[38] Porter (1992) 70; Struck (2004) 22. Although, in rejecting certain practices of the allegorical or interpretive intellectual (i.e. the 'competitors' of Aristarchus) Aristarchus makes an appeal for primacy akin to certain 'freelance' figures—so named by their lack of institutionalised authority—who typically employed this same interpretive technique.[38] Unlike these figures, Aristarchus had an institutional context defined by the library at Alexandria and the circles of intellectuals that it supported. Aristarchus does not outright reject any interpretive readings, but rather any readings which he believes the author did not intend. Like our Derveni commentator, he was delegitimising the work of his contemporaries whom he believed missed the original poet's intended sense.
[39] Porph. *Antr.* 36: Laks (1997) 138 n.60.
[40] For a discussion of Heraclitus see Konstan (2005). The Heraclitus mentioned here is the later first century grammarian, credited with writing the *Homeric Allegories* sometimes called the *Homeric Questions*, not the fifth century philosopher.

within the poetic verses. Later, Neoplatonists engaged in interpretive and exegetical exercises of the works of Pythagoras, Orpheus and Homer for what Akçay calls the "dialectic and logic in the Neoplatonic mission to save the human soul".[41] In particular, the Neoplatonist Porphyry, writing in the third century CE, thought it was unthinkable that stories—prose or poetry—were written exclusively for the amusement of the reader. In his view, many myths, especially the verses of Homer, contained opaque αἴνιγματα that covered doctrinal truth beneath the surface. In his work, *De Antro Nympharum*, he outlines this approach to the poetry of Homer:

> τοιούτων ἀσαφειῶν πλήρους ὄντος τοῦ διηγήματος πλάσμα μὲν ὡς ἔτυχεν εἰς ψυχαγωγίαν πεποιημένον μὴ εἶναι, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἱστορίας τοπικῆς περιήγησιν ἔχειν, ἀλληγορεῖν δέ τι δι' αὐτοῦ τὸν ποιητήν…
>
> Since the story is full of such obscurities, then it does not happen that [the story] was made for amusement, nor does it have a description of a historical place, but the poet allegorises something through this place. (Porph. *Antr*. 4.7)

However, Porphyry, did not emphasise his role as the interpreter heavy-handedly. He is emphatic that it is the work of a skilful poet that embedded obscured truth within his epic verses; the *De Antro Nympharum* just drew attention to Homer's wisdom. Porphyry believed that if readers truly wanted to take this wisdom to heart, they had to submit to their own curiosity and engage with the hidden knowledge on their own—ἀλληγορεῖν τι καὶ αἰνίττεσθαι διὰ τούτων τὸν ποιητήν, πολυπραγμονεῖν ἀναγκάζοντα τίς μὲν ἀνθρώπων πύλη, τίς δὲ θεῶν (Porph. *Antr*. 3.2: 'the poet allegorises something and speaks enigmas through the verses, necessitating *that we be curious* about which is humanity's gate, and which is the gods?').

As previously mentioned, not all acts of interpretation were philosophical, however, as these methods were employed for a variety of intellectual endeavours, including authors who

[41] Akçay (2019) 11. They comment further that, "Allegoresis, which has its roots half a millennium earlier, gains fresh significance as a tool to connect the sensible world with higher truths, and Neoplatonic allegorical interpretation treats the texts of the poets, notably Homer, as worthy of philosophical reflection in themselves and in step with the dialogues of Plato at a fundamental, symbolical level."

believed these skills could be put to the task of religious activity. Symbolic thinkers used interpretive reading in the service of all sorts of enterprises, including philosophy, initiation, or doctrinal exposition, or literary criticism of Homeric poems, to name but a few potential intellectual *telē*. Although, as Wendt argues, these "interpreters might differ considerably with respect to their motivations for applying allegorical methods to a text."[42] Wendt notes that many writers, "such as the author of the Derveni papyrus or the experts who produced the Orphic *lamellae*, drew on these skills and methods to develop and authorize seemingly proprietary religious teachings."[43] Regardless of their motivations, these authors, as Struck has shown, often tend to employ a similar terminology—or perhaps more loosely an expected and proverbial jargon—to frame both their intellectual engagement with the text and particular aspects of certain texts which make it compatible with these sorts of interpretive intellectual exercises. The language of ambiguity, opacity, symbolism and enigmas is ubiquitous among others who subscribe to an interpretive reading of texts. It will be these "consistencies" or "commonalities" within the tradition—although I am hesitant to use either of these words in a strict sense—that will link the case studies in this thesis, despite their differing manifestations and applications of this intellectual framework. Even thinking of a 'tradition' per se is a bit of a misnomer, for it may give the false impression of a phenomenon that is easy to map, rather than something sprawling, diffuse, unregulated, unpredictable, and subject to constant adaptation and innovation.

Ultimately, the intellectuals of the allegorical or interpretive tradition employed a particular method of reading which was, as Laks notes, distinct from so-called "deliberate" allegory for

[42] Wendt (2016) 129.
[43] Ibid 130. The Derveni papyrus will be discussed in detail below. For a discussion of Orphic *lamellae* Wendt suggests, *cf.* Edmonds (2011) 15– 67; Graf and Johnston (2007) 1– 49.

example used by Dante in his *Divine Comedy*.[44] Struck acknowledges that "some ancient writers, notably Ovid and Vergil, surely incorporated the insights of allegorical readers in their poems, ancient *allegorism* is a phenomenon of reading, not writing."[45] The dual intentionality of textual production and the interpretation of pre-existing texts are both part and parcel of a broader intellectual discourse that began during the late classical period and had a profound influence well into late-Antiquity; this phenomenon is not, however, diachronically homogenous. This thesis hopes to trace only a few iterations and manifestations of these intellectual *topoi*. These examples do not exist in a vacuum nor are they the work of fringe counterculture authors. the authors of these texts are deeply engaged with and actively respond to a broad intellectual environment of many competing voices and perspectives. Therefore, not all acts of allegorical interpretation had to be explicitly religious, although the two case studies developed for this project—the Derveni author and Josephus—should be considered religious rather than philosophical.

Struck, André Laks and Glenn W. Most, among others, have noted the importance of the Derveni papyrus for our understanding of ancient allegory. Laks and Most contend that the text "permitted scholars to glimpse for the first time directly and concretely a literary genre to which access had previously only been indirect and abstract."[46] Interpreting a poetic cosmogony credited to the mythic writer Orpheus, the author of the papyrus responded to this intellectualized—and highly competitive—atmosphere of textual interpretation to argue for the primacy and exclusivity the author's own initiatory rites. Yet, as Edmonds has noted, the Derveni author's analysis of the *minutiae* of the text is not dissimilar to the methods employed in service of interpreting oracles or

[44] Laks (1997) 138. See above n. 3 on the synonymity of allegorical and interpretive. I have generally adopted the term interpretation rather than allegorism to make a clear distinction from the modern associations with allegory and composition.
[45] Struck (2004) 3 n.1.
[46] Laks and Most (1997) 4.

the kind of textual criticism applied to the Simonides poem in Plato's *Protagoras* (338e-348c); the latter emphasises the need for the interpretation to be καλῶς τε καὶ ὀρθῶς.[47] Edmonds further observes, much like the interlocutors in Plato's dialogue, our Derveni author used his text to demonstrate and perform "his own *sophia*, his acuity and cleverness in explicating the details as well as his understanding of the significance of the text as a whole."[48] The Derveni papyrus offers but one example from antiquity of an intellectual who applied allegorical interpretation and other specialised reading methods to opaque poetry with philosophical or religious applications in mind. Similar to sophist interpreters of Simonides' poem in Plato's *Protagoras*, the challenge for the Derveni author was "to determine the true meaning of the existing and authoritative text."[49] However, the Derveni author, unlike the sophist interpreters in the *Protagoras*, understood the texts they used to be divinely inspired—the author is explicit that the truth contained within the cosmogony was embedded into the poetic verses by the divine figure Orpheus (col. 7.5–7 = *OF* 669i B)—so that their interpretation amounted to a form of divination, albeit a highly specialized or skilful example thereof. This is what makes the Derveni text religious rather than philosophical or literary (although the margins of these categories are hazy). Then, in turn, for our author, the meanings that produced these interpretative techniques are employed to justify certain ritual practices and religious teachings and could inform or actuate the benefits of a religious rite (*e.g.* initiation).[50]

[47] Edmonds (2013) 124-25. The phrase καλῶς τε καὶ ὀρθῶς is used countless times during this Simonides episode, for example it is used three times from 339b7-9.
[48] Ibid 126.
[49] Edmonds (2013) 125; see Betegh (2004: 365): "The task does not consist in proving that the pronouncement is true, but in understanding how it is true."
[50] For a discussion of the initiation practices of Orpheus *cf.* Graf and Johnston (2007) 171-72 and 175-184 and for the initiatory implications of the Derveni text among many others *cf.* Graf and Johnston (2007) 149-150; Betegh (2004) throughout but 74-83 might be a good starting point.

In a similar vein, Josephus' work, unlike the more philosophical intellectuals within the interpretive tradition, had a distinct religious pay off, even as he operated in various intellectual circles and wrote as an historian; a prosaic style and historical tone distinct from a conspicuously religious writer like our Derveni author. Whereas the Derveni author connected his interpretations with rites of initiation and afterlife benefits, Flavius Josephus' religious dimension is subtler and possibly subordinate to/in the service of his primary interests. Regardless, his intellectual environment was as equally competitive as the Derveni author's. After briefly serving as a general in Galilee, Josephus found himself switching allegiances to back the future Flavian Emperor Vespasian. As a captive of the then General Vespasian, Josephus revealed a prophecy—delivered to him in a dream (*BJ* 3.350-54)—predicting the ascension of Vespasian at a time when he was not considered the likely inheritor of the position. He then was brought back to Rome, where he lived the rest of his life in the imperial circle under the patronage of the Flavians. Scholars have often downplayed Josephus' central role as an ethnic priest of a foreign god in legitimating the Flavians for various reasons, but acknowledging it places him on a par with the likes of Thrasyllus, Balbillus, and other hybrid religious-philosophical intellectuals orbiting around the imperial court in the first centuries BCE-CE.[51] After all, Josephus is explicit (ἐξ ἱερέων) about his priestly linage

[51] Wendt (2016) 46-47 n.19; 139; and elsewhere Wendt notes the similar privileges shared by Flavius Josephus and the Julio-Claudian astrologers and advisors Thrasyllus and Balbillus in their respective royal courts. For a discussion of Thrasyllus see Secord (2012) esp. 128-130 and for a discussion of both see Wendt (2016)—Thrasyllus: 26, 46– 47, 75, 82, 122; Balbillus 27n79, 46– 47, 10, noting on a few occasions that it is rumoured that Balbillus was the son of Thrasyllus (Tacitus, *Ann*. 6.22; Suetonius, *Ner*. 36.1). Mason (2005b) has often disputed to what degree Josephus' work sought to legitimise the Flavian dynasty. Considering the cultural context of Rome wherein there were multiple narratives of the Flavians in and about the intellectual environment of the day, Josephus could only go so far in presenting a flattering image of Titus, Vespasian, and Domitian. Mason (2003b) contends that this was a particularly delicate line to tread during Domitian's reign of terror in which he became increasingly brutal towards subversive intellectuals in his court. "From at least the autumn of 93 CE, Domitian too became adept at reading between the lines. He executed Hermogenes of Tarsus for certain 'allusions' (*figurae*) in his history (Suet. *Dom*. 10.1), Rusticus Arulenus and Herennius Senecio for praising long-dead critics of Nero and Vespasian (Suet. *Dom*. 10.3; Tac. *Agr*. 2.1; Plin. *Ep*. 7.19.5; Cass. Dio 67.13.2). Within a year or two of these actions Domitian's wrath reportedly came to encompass 'many' (πολλοί), even high-ranking family members, who had drifted 'into the customs of the Judaeans' (ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἤθη; Cass. Dio 67.14.2; cf. 68.1.2)" (Mason 2003b: 560). Therefore, Josephus had to strike a very careful balance between portraying his benefactors in a positive light—after all they had provided him with Roman

in his *Vita*; emphasising the εὐγένια of his father and his other relatives but also their ἐπίημος, 'distinguishedness', during his brief genealogy at the beginning of the work (*Vita* 1-8). Within this genealogy Josephus deliberately draws a direct lineage to a 'high priest' (ἀρχιερεύς), fashioning a traditional Judean authority for his own interpretive and predictive skills, clearly aligning his background with one expected from a rabbi or Judean exegete.[52] To the extent Josephus might have been angling for religious expertise in an institutional capacity (*i.e.* if the temple were rebuilt, or, in its absence, the equivalent of priestly authority). Additionally, Josephus credits his lineage and priestly position for his intricate knowledge of "the prophesies of the sacred books" when justifying the legitimacy of his prophetic dreams in his *Bellum Judaicum* (τῶν γε μὴν ἱερῶν βίβλων οὐκ ἠγνόει τὰς πρφητείας ὡς ἄν αὐτός τε ὤν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος: *BJ* 3.352). Furthermore, Josephus acts as an interpreter of the hidden truth, uncovering it from an ambiguous text (*e.g. BJ* 3. 352) similar to the role our Derveni author undertook with respect to Orpheus' divine knowledge (*e.g.* col. 7).[53] Josephus did not operate in an entirely different sphere as the Derveni author had, but with much higher ambitions and more elite and even imperial audiences in mind.[54] While the Derveni author operations were likely confined to local residents who would offer their ears, Josephus orbited around the imperial court and likely had the Flavians in mind for his potential readers. These associations to a traditional priestly lineage indicate at least some desire for some

citizenship, accommodation in Vespasian's former private house, and a pension/allowance of some sorts, and potentially spouses (*Vita* 423; 427)—while also contending with the less than flattering narratives of writers like Suetonius who portrayed the Flavians in a negative light. For example, Titus was portrayed as a brute prior to his accession (*Tit.* 1, 6-7); a narrative which would likely have been familiar to Roman audiences at the time of reading Josephus' narrative (Mason 2005b: esp. 261-266). For a general discussion of foreign elites in imperial courts *cf.* Bowersock (2005).

52 For a discussion of why I elect to use Judean rather than Jewish throughout this thesis *cf.* Mason (2007)

53 *BJ* 3.352: ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἱκανὸς συμβαλεῖν τὰ ἀμφιβόλως ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου λεγόμενα; Col. 7: ἔστι δὲ ξ[ένη τις ἡ] πόησις | [κ]αὶ ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι[γμ]ατώδης, [κε]ἰ [Ὀρφεὺ]ς αὐτ[ὸ]ς | [ἐ]ρίστ' αἰν[ίγμα]τα οὐκ ἤθελε λέγειν, [ἐν αἰν]ίγμασ[ι]ν δὲ | [μεγ]άλα. I discuss this passage and others in the following chapter.

54 For Josephus' potential intended audiences, *cf.* Mason (2011), (2003b), (2005c) 71– 100; Cotton and Eck (2005) 37– 52; as well as my discussion in my Josephus chapter.

religious payoff. Josephus does convey an expertise beyond the bounds of what would be required for a typical historian. Josephus also demonstrates his desire for authority beyond this intellectual framework akin to that of an initiatory interpretive expert.

Both of these interpreters engaged in a highly specialised form of exegetical interpretation which was, as Wendt says, "predicated on a shared attitude toward particular writings, namely, that they were divinely inspired and harboured concealed knowledge or mysteries that could be elucidated through specialized interpretation."[55] As Madeleine Henry and Struck have shown in the Derveni papyrus—which I will show applies to Josephus as well—these sorts of interpreters apply their tools to poetic texts, dreams, and oracles, without any "self-conscious difficulty, suggesting a parallelism between these objects of his attention."[56] Exegesis for these authors had, as Wendt says, "grander consequences than other forms of literary criticism".[57] The knowledge both these interpreters uncovered amounted to divine truth which could inform the religious experience of those who were persuaded by their particular interpretation. For the Derveni author that meant garnering more initiates, whereas for Josephus he may have attracted some converts to Judaism, but likely his intentions were slightly more self-serving;[58] a positive reaction would both affirm his place in the imperial circle, and potentially establish him as a respected Judean religious authority.

The methodological approach taken in this thesis to compare the Derveni papyrus with Josephus is, in some ways, unconventional and peculiar. The subjects have many differences that cannot be ignored. They are writing in very different historical contexts with I think different

55 Wendt (2016) 130.
56 Henry (1986) 152; Struck (2004) 32; Konstan (2005: xiii) makes a similar point in reference to Heraclitus, saying "allegory could be and was employed for any number of purposes, such as literary elegance or persuasiveness in oratory. Heraclitus is making a particular use of it to salvage Homer's reputation in respect to religious piety."
57 Wendt (2016) 130.
58 For a discussion of potential conversion explanations of the Flavians at the conclusion of Josephus' Triumph narrative *cf.* Wendt (2015b).

audiences in mind and with very different authorial techniques. However, this speaks to the heterogenous nature of the interpretive tradition and the authors who used it. Struck, after all, defines an allegorical or interpretive reader as someone who views the author of a particular text—be it a poem ascribed to Orpheus or a particular prophecy—as "primarily a font of subtle insight into the basic workings of the world".[59] Such a broad definition, intentionally, encompasses a wide swath of authors and intellectuals who held the simple principle that written works can provide insight and truth beyond their literal reading. It is not suggested here that either of these two sources are representative or emblematic examples which speak to the whole tradition between the late classical and Flavian periods. Rather this project selects these two as singular nodes within a broad geographic and diachronic network of intellectuals that use and engage with this broader cultural phenomenon that is the allegorical/interpretive tradition. Such an approach sheds light on the different types of authors that may be engaged with this intellectual current and the diversity of their interactions with it. The intellectual milieu, while incredibly diverse in the ancient world, was hyper-connected, a conversation which this project hopes to participate in and contribute to.

The chapters that follow examine the Derveni papyrus, considering in depth the competitive context in which the fascinating text was composed. This discussion will reflect on the author's strategy to authenticate their own claims of expertise and efficacy through an association to a previously authenticated text. The following chapter turns to Josephus, observing how he then uses the allegorical tradition to portray his own interpretive methods and to characterise those whom he considers to be good examples of interpretive intellectual experts. Josephus then constructs these experts, and particularly the prophets Joseph and Daniel, as foils to his own intellectual and interpretive talents. The thesis then turns, finally, to reflect on both case

[59] Struck (2004) 13

studies in dialogue with one another, observing the similarities and key difference in their interaction within the broad phenomenon of allegorical reading. Ultimately, it demonstrates the profitability of extending the sort of approach to symbolic reading developed most fully by Struck, among others, to new and less conventional case studies. The research will contribute to a richer and more diversified understanding of the spread and interactivity of Greek intellectual culture in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds, one that also decentres what we mean by "Greek" intellectualism in these periods.

Chapter 2: The World of and According to the Derveni Author

But others, by more curious humour led,
Pause to examine;—these are very few,
And they learn little there, except to know
That shadows follow them where'er they go.
Percy Shelly *On Allegory* (1824)[60]

This chapter outlines the intellectual environment of the Derveni author and their rivals to observe how they used the interpretive tradition to their benefit in the midst of a highly competitive climate with many intellectual rivals and competitors appealing to the same audience.[61] The Derveni text is one manifestation of the interpretive tradition from the late classical period that lays the groundwork for the type of interpretive interactions that could take place as the tradition was beginning. The theoretical framework for this chapter will then be applied to the second case study of Flavius Josephus in the first century BCE at Rome.

Background and Archaeological Context for the Derveni Papyrus

On 15 January 1962, during the widening of the national road leading from Thessalonica to Kavala, a large undisturbed cist grave was discovered at Derveni, some 10 km north of Thessaloniki. Theokritos Kouremenos *et al.* describe the subsequent survey that uncovered a further six grave sites, presumed to be connected to the nearby Lete which had been continuously

[60] Published posthumously by Mary Shelly in *Posthumous Poems*.

[61] I will throughout this chapter and my thesis use the non-gendered pronoun 'they' to refer to the Derveni author. When there is any potential confusion or ambiguity regarding to whom the pronoun refers, I will use 'Derveni author' instead. While this may seem unconventional, it is for two reasons. First, I do not want to presume the gender of the writer. Although perhaps it is more likely that the author was male, there were many female diviners and would-be intellectuals floating around intellectual circles at this time (esp. among 'freelancers': *cf.* Johnston 2008: esp. 63-64 and 84-85) making the possibility of female authorship worthy of consideration. Secondly, I have opted for the plural pronoun to allow for the possibility that this text was not the work of a singular person but perhaps the accumulation of a group or guild-of-sorts of initiators using Orphic texts as their source of inspiration. For an explanation of why I have avoided and will continue to avoid the term Orphic initiators or initiators of Orphism or Orphism more broadly *cf.* Edmonds (2013: esp. 6-10, 71-94 and 2011) and Graf and Johnston (2007: Chapter 2 A History of Scholarship on the Tablets, esp. 56-61). Both are remarkable works of scholarship which cover extensively the Christian inventions and emphasis of Orphism as a convenient category and also how previously scholars have overemphasised the homogeneity of the category Orphism.

inhabited from the Archaic period; Ioanna Papadopoulou says that the find was not directly in Lete's cemetery but in a graveyard about 2 km away.[62] The tombs and their grave goods proved to be of outstanding importance in many respects, but the two most notable objects were the stunning bronze krater with a Dionysiac scene found in Tomb B, and the carbonized papyrus discovered on the slabs covering Tomb A, along with other remains from the cremation of the deceased.[63] There were more than 200 fragments recovered consisting of 26 columns—22 of which we can reconstruct—containing an exegesis of a poetic cosmogony ascribed to Orpheus.[64] Gabór Betegh notes that although the humidity of Greece often prevents the conservation of papyri, "the fire of the pyre evaporated all the humidity from the fibres, and the resultant carbonisation saved the roll from putrefaction";[65] it was by good fortune more than anything else that this papyrus exists today. While the tomb and the papyrus date to the end of the fourth or beginning of the third century BCE, the widespread consensus is that the text was likely around for a century before it was written here and can be dated to the beginning of the fifth century.[66] Tsantsanoglou *et al.* conclude that "the work was about a century old when the roll was burnt and it probably had been around for some decades when the roll was written, too short a time for the text to have been considerably corrupted in the process of transmission but also for spelling peculiarities of the archetype to have been corrected."[67]

[62] Kouremenos et al (2006) 2; Papadopoulou (2014) ix.
[63] Betegh (2004) 56-57; Kouremenos et al (2006) 2; Papadopoulou (2014) ix.; Fitzgerald (2014) 235; Rusten (2014: 116) comments that "books buried with a body have multiple possible meanings. They might be the books written by the entombed—Propertius (2.10.25ff) imagines his funeral attended by no one but the books he has written for his girlfriend, whereas a malicious Horace (*Satires* 1.10.63–64) points out that Lucilius wrote far too much, so that his body could be completely burnt by his collected works without the need for any additional fuel. The sarcophagus of the Etruscan Laris Pulenas depicts him proudly holding a copy of his treatise on divination (Bonfante 2006), not really comparable with Greek burials but included here because of its religious connection and because it is more or less contemporary with the Derveni Papyrus."
[64] Kouremenos et al (2006) 7-8; Betegh (2004) 60; Funghi (1997) 25; Fitzgerald (2014) 235.
[65] Betegh (2004) 59.
[66] For the tomb/papyrus dating see Tsantsanoglou et al (2006) 9 and Themslis and Touratsoglou (1997) 183-185. For the date of the text contained see Tsantsanoglou et al (2006) 10; Burkert (1970) 443; Janko (1997) 43;
[67] Tsantsanoglou et al (2006) 10.

We know little about the author of this fragmented text, although there are many scholarly hypotheses which connect the writer to other figures of the ancient world. Euthyphro, Diogenes of Apollonia, and Democritus are among some of the intellectuals suggested, but none have attracted broad scholarly consensus.[68] However, scholars do agree that the Derveni author was an intellectual without any institutional affiliations, neither a temple priest nor other personnel. Sarah Iles Johnston characterises the author as "an independent ritual practitioner who could operate as a diviner, an initiator, and perhaps other things as well," and the author's objectives were "to clarify for his audience the significance of some of the rituals that he offered".[69] They had no ordinary claim to religious authority and, therefore, had to self-fashion their expertise and persuade others of its legitimacy, often through displays of intellectual skills and learning.[70] It is likely for this reason that the Derveni author makes constant allusions to other authors and texts—mentioning,

[68] Janko (1997) offers the most comprehensive overview of the many possible authors. Funghi (1997) 36 offers a condensed overview of a few different figures suggested. Rusten (2014: 115) that the temptation "to attach an author's name to the Derveni Papyrus is natural for everyone who reads it, which should remind us of why pseudepigrapha were so popular in the ancient world." However, this thesis will not attempt to engage in this discussion. Janko (1997: 70) lists a possible nine authors who have been suggested, and subsequently (1997: 70-94) discusses each potential option suggested by scholars including but not limited to this nine; he concludes that the author could be Diogenes of Apollonia or a student of his Diagoras. Kahn (1997) suggests Euthyphro could potentially be the author of the papyrus; Tsantsanoglou (2014) revisited the question and sided with Kahn to suggest Euthyphro as the possible author. Betegh (2004) discusses some of the atomistic and pre-Socratic influences on the Derveni text, as well as exploring Janko's arguments about Diagoras of Melos (*cf.* Betegh 2004: 373-380). Burkert (2014:112) comments that although it may be surprising to some "we might seriously consider the possibility that the Derveni text is just Democritus' book Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου". He notes (2014: 112) both a very uncommon noun used by the Derveni author (col. XXVI 14: ἐν τῆι συγ...) is also used by Democritus, and "that one sentence of the Derveni text is practically identical with a sentence of Democritus—the universe is being called "Zeus" (XIX 2 =Democritus B 30)". Although Burkert is merely playing potentialities, he does not offer this as a definitive solution. Instead, he concludes (2014: 112), "[w]e shall go on to deal with an anonymous author, somehow between Diogenes and Democritus." It is in this same article (2014: 112) that Burkert lists Anaxagoras as another potential figure, or otherwise a potential school of thought to which the author proscribed. Previously Burkert (1986) suggested Stesimbrotus of Thasus as another potential option. Sider (1997: 136-38) offers a discussion rejecting the possibility that Anaxagoras could be the author despite some theological similarities between the authors. Calme (2014: 176) writes that "Anaxagoras, Diogenes of Apollonia, Euthyphro, and Leucippus have all been mentioned in turn by modern scholars…as possible sources of inspiration for the Derveni commentator". Generally, there is a lot of discussion surrounding authorship and potential sources of inspiration of the papyrus with little scholarly consensus about either.

[69] Johnston (2014) 89.

[70] Janko (2008) suggested that in fact the Derveni author was an enlightened intellectual who mocks, partly at least, divinatory practices (this last hypothesis is based mainly on col. V). Although this thesis does not seriously engage with this hypothesis, it does provide insight into the highly intellectual nature and potential capabilities of the author of this papyrus.

for example, Heraclitus of Ephesus (fl. 500 BCE) by name (col. 4.8–10). Fitzgerald notes that even though they do not mention him by name, our author "is particularly indebted to the physics of Anaxagoras (ca. 500–428 BCE), and [the Derveni author's] thought has pronounced affinities to that of Diogenes of Apollonia (fl. 440–430 BCE), a thinker who was himself indebted to the thought of Anaxagoras and is generally regarded as the last of the pre-Socratic philosophers", as well as other theories of physical science and initiation.[71] This reflects a deep desire by the author of the papyrus to display their own intellectual capability and learnedness.[72]

The text is primarily concerned with an exegesis of cosmogonic poem credited to Orpheus. The author claims that Orpheus wrote in mysteries and enigmas that contained divine truth if properly interpreted; and the Derveni author makes the case that they are that specialised expert interpreter. The author also claims to be a divinatory priest acting as an intermediary between the initiator and the divine.[73] They mention their oracle-reading capabilities (cols. 5, 11) and allude to other divinatory-esque practices.[74] The text makes reference to initiations undergone in a competitive environment and with afterlife consequences (*e.g.* col. 20). Our author is, moreover, in explicit competition with other Orphic initiators and *magi*, mentioning both types of figures by name, for acquiring initiators to the cult they offer (col. 6).[75] Their "deal" is to claim that the sort of rites you might come across with one of these figures are incomplete without understanding their correct "meanings," which they alone have adduced from text through allegorical interpretation. The majority of our author's exegesis concerns a punishment of the wicked and

[71] Fitzgerald (2014) 236; *cf.* Betegh (2004) 350-59.
[72] As an example of the broad types of intellectual milieux the Derveni author dabbles in, Betegh (2004: 355 n.19) notes the inclusion of a vocabulary typical used in medical texts, e.g. θάλψις in col. 9.7, as well as a "the technical vocabulary describing the mixing and conjunction of entities". He continues "as noted above (*cf.* 273 with n. 136), some of his physical explanatory principles – most notably the strong connection between fire and motion – are better documented in medical texts than in the doctrines of the natural philosophers."
[73] Struck (2004) 32.
[74] Stowers (2011) 48.
[75] For the interaction between the Derveni author and these *magoi* see Edmonds (2008) and Betegh (2004) 350-59.

ignorant, who are too lazy to learn and understand the proper protocol of the rituals which can save them—rituals which our author offers through both initiation into and the receipt of further instruction about the mysteries contained in Orpheus' poem.[76]

A Competitive Atmosphere

The Derveni text cannot be treated in a meaningful way without consideration of the environment in which it was composed. Although the Derveni papyrus is a unique source for modern scholars, it likely would not have been as idiosyncratic for ancient readers. It is likely that many similar texts were produced at the time by different purveyors and practitioners. They were all written during a period scholars have noted for its 'literisation', that is, the turn towards the textual production of religious and philosophical writings, which served only to benefit the 'freelance' or self-proclaimed practitioner.[77] After all, as Wendt comments, "the ability to commit one's teachings to writing invited exponentially more elaborate religious programs buttressed by learned exegesis, mythmaking, and narratives of human decline that might then be remedied by the expert who had thus diagnosed some resulting defect".[78] Furthermore, textual production allowed an author to extend their sphere influence beyond their home *polis* and to foster relationships with followers beyond their own backyard.[79] The ubiquity of the Orphic *lamellae* or 'gold-tablets' around the Mediterranean and the Black Sea reveal the extensive networks of textual distribution that these initiatory practices possessed.[80] Walter Burkert writes "[t]he very catalogue of Democritus' writings, or of Antisthenes' writings, and the fairly contemporary collection of Hippocratic writings show what a hubbub of books was already around by that time, about and

[76] *Derv. Pap*. Col. 1-7; Struck (2004) 32-33; Wendt (2016) 131.
[77] Edmunds (2013) 116-117; Wendt (2016); Johnston (2008); Struck (2004); among others.
[78] Wendt (2016) 19.
[79] Ibid 19.
[80] *Cf.* Graft and Johnston (2013) there is a particularly helpful map, which demonstrates the wide-reaching findspots, on page 2.

after 400 BC."[81] Our Derveni author was an example of a freelance intellectual—a would-be intellectual of sorts, vying for a place among other philosophers and religious experts as a person of wisdom—who popped up during the textual turn in the late-classical period. These freelance figures, as Wendt observes, "catered principally to 'private' interests—that is, interests not financed by or undertaken on behalf of the state— and offered services that were less tangible than something such as aqueduct design: education, moral instruction or another form of self-improvement, healing, divination, a better afterlife, and so forth."[82] As we shall see, the Derveni author was advocating for the primacy of their position, responding to a competitive atmosphere operated within which success was determined by one's ability to convince those around you of the efficacy of the services offered.[83]

The kind of textuality that the Derveni author represents, despite what has been long presumed by scholars, was not distinct to so-called 'Orphica'.[84] Radcliffe Edmonds III, working against this presumption, writes that Orphic textuality is not unique and should not be marked as 'special' by ancient world standards, but rather in the ancient context "books are merely the tools of the trade characteristic of this kind of expert, but this kind of expert is not limited to the Orphic

[81] Burkert (2014) 112.
[82] Wendt (2016) 11.
[83] A brief digression on the nature and identities of the potential clientele of these freelance intellectuals: In ancient Greece, insofar as men and women correlated more regularly with public and private areas, respectively, the type of religious activity considered above unfolded in the "private" realm, suggesting an interesting gender dimension. Observing the gender identities of the initiates within the Orphic cults could reveal certain areas which expert initiators would occupy or travel to in order to attract more initiates. Plato in his Republic tells, for instance, of self-proclaimed priests travelling door to door with a "hubbub of books" to convert potential Orphic initiates (Plato. *Rep.* 364e). Considering the demographics of the household, on wonders whether one may be able to uncover whether these initiators found more success among certain subaltern identity groups, particularly, women and slaves (for a discussion of subaltern *cf.* Spivak 1988 and 2010); indeed, many extant lamellae name women initiates (*cf.* Graf and Johnston 20007). Perhaps even the rhetoric employed by these initiators had a particular audience—divided along gender lines—when engaging in interpretive activities. Although these are merely conjectures and thoughts and this point, I think considering such dynamics can for the time being heed reservation in assigning genders to both the freelancers (like the Derveni author) and their clientele.
[84] *Cf.* Edmonds (2013) esp. 96-99 who works to revise and redefine—as the title reflects—many of the assumptions made by scholars when it comes to Orphic texts and especially the long-held category of 'Orphism'.

practitioner."[85] Johnston names some of these many hats that could be worn by these many practitioners that she calls 'freelancers', including but not limited to: "*chrēsmologoi* (readers or interpreters of earlier oracles) and "belly-talkers" (*engastrimuthoi*) who had second voices speaking out of their stomachs."[86] She continues by noting that "lists compiled by late antique encyclopaedists multiply the possibilities even further: flour diviners, barley diviners, bowl diviners, fire diviners, and so on" adding, "although it is likely that most of these titles actually represent roles that one and the same diviner could adopt as he pleased (and also reflect the list-mania of the encyclopaedists themselves)."[87]

Occasionally, these interpretive figures and their seemingly wacky interpretations were the subject of ridicule. Athenian comedian Aristophanes mocked freelance interpreters in his *Knights* when he staged an intellectual competition between a Paphlagonian, representing Creon, and a Sausage seller, representing the *demos*.[88] Edmonds comments that in Aristophanes' depiction "each [has] a huge collection of books with oracles, indicating their avant-garde intellectual pretensions" and the contest centres on their ability to 'perform' interpretations. Their interpretations are "absurd and scatological" and rife with sexual innuendos.[89] Parodies of freelancers continued with the later writer Theophrastus who mocked the excessive services that an overly anxious person could consult to ease their worries. His *deisidaimōn* ('divine-fearer')

[85] Edmonds (2013) 99. Edmonds earlier (2013: 97) gestures to a passage in Pausanias (1.37.4 = OF 649i B = OT 219 K) wherein he makes little distinction between the ritual nature of Eleusis and the supposed textual nature of 'Orphism', which offers insight into how ancient readers perceived both textuality and ritual as two aspects of a broad spectrum of ancient 'religion' and spirituality. For a full discussion of Orphic textuality and in particular the Pausanias passage see Edmonds chapter on the subject: "Orphic Textuality" esp. 97-98 for the Pausanias discussion.
[86] Johnston (2008) 137 and 109. Wendt (2016) also adopts this language of the Freelancer in her work on religious expertise among Judeans, early-Christians, astrologists, philosophers, in early Rome. I would add the qualifier to Johnston's reference that she is not talking exclusively about kinds of intellectual experts: the belly-talker perhaps wasn't enlisting texts in this form of divination. However, this does provide a list of potential 'hats' the literate intellectual expert could wear to provide a service to a client.
[87] Johnston (2008) 109.
[88] This comic portrayal of the freelancers is discussed by Edmonds (2013) 121-122.
[89] Edmonds (2013) 122.

went monthly to an *Orpheotelestēs* (πρὸς τοὺς Ὀρφεοτελεστὰς 'initiators of Orpheus'), with their partner—and if their partner was too busy their wet nurse—and their children for initiation into the cult (*Char*. 16.12); John T. Fitzgerald comments that there was a "particular opprobrium" reserved for so-called *Orpheotelestai*.[90] Despite the ubiquity of such freelance experts, their activities fostered substantial ridicule and hostility from other intellectuals.

This crowded and competitive context of freelance interpreters allows us to better understand the treatise of the Derveni author.[91] Unable to use the traditional techniques of prominent, or "mainstream", religious rituals that relied upon heritage—*ta patria* and *ta nomima* ("what our fathers did" and "what we customarily do")—to authenticate the service they offered, Johnston observes that "upstart cults sought legitimation through affiliation with figures whose reputation as religious leaders was impeccable"; this was likely a highly competitive atmosphere among many diverse practitioners.[92] Johnston in her work on divination has noted that this interpretive phenomenon has a particular ubiquity among these many freelance intellectuals in the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods trying to establish new cults in local neighbourhoods. The Derveni text provides a single insight into a sort of activity that was ubiquitous from this

90 Fitzgerald (2014) 234; The full parody of the freelancer is: Theophrastus *Characters* (16. 1-2, 6, 11, 13): ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων τοιοῦτός τις, (2) οἷος ἐπιχρωνῆν ἀπονιψάμενος τὰς χεῖρας καὶ περιρρανάμενος ἀπὸ ἱεροῦ δάφνην εἰς τὸ στόμα λαβὼν οὕτω τὴν ἡμέραν περιπατεῖν…καὶ ἐὰν μῦς θύλακον ἀλφίτων διαφάγῃ, πρὸς τὸν ἐξηγητὴν ἐλθὼν ἐρωτᾶν τί χρὴ ποιεῖν, καὶ ἐὰν ἀποκρίνηται αὐτῷ ἐκδοῦναι τῷ σκυτοδέψῃ ἐπιρράψαι, μὴ προσέχειν τούτοις, ἀλλ᾽ ἀποτραπεὶς ἐκθύσασθαι…(11)καὶ ὅταν ἐνύπνιον ἴδῃ, πορεύεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς ὀνειροκρίτας, πρὸς τοὺς μάντεις, πρὸς τοὺς ὀρνιθοσκόπους, ἐρωτήσων, τίνι θεῶν ἢ θεᾷ εὔχεσθαι δεῖ. καὶ τελεσθησόμενος πρὸς τοὺς Ὀρφεοτελεστὰς κατὰ᾽ μῆνα πορεύεσθαι μετὰ τῆς γυναικός, ἐὰν δὲ μὴ σχολάζῃ ἡ γυνή, μετὰ τῆς τίτθης καὶ τῶν παιδίων…(13) κἄν ποτε ἐπίδῃ σκορόδῳ ἐστεμμένον τῶν ἐπὶ ταῖς τριόδοις, ἀπελθὼν κατὰ κεφαλῆς λούσασθαι καὶ ἱερείας καλέσας σκίλλῃ ἢ σκύλακι κελεῦσαι αὐτὸν περικαθᾶραι… (The divine-fearer guy is the sort who washes their hands, sprinkles themselves with water from a shrine, puts a sprig of laurel in their mouth and walks around that way all day. If a mouse eats a hole in a sack of barley, he visits the theologian and asks what he should do; if the answer is to give it to the tailor to be patched, he pays no attention, but hurries off and performs an expiation. (11) And whenever he should see a dream-vision, he goes the dream-interpreters, or to the *manteis*, or to the birdwatchers, asking whether it is necessary to pray to one of the gods or to a goddess. And he goes to the initiators of Orpheus monthly so that they may be initiated with their partner, and if their partner is too busy, they will with their child and wet nurse…(13) If he ever notices someone at the crossroads wreathed in garlic he goes away, takes a shower, summons priestesses and orders a deluxe purification by sea onion or dog…[Trans: Rusten with some personal amendments])

91 Edmonds (2013) 99.

92 Johnston (2008) 139.

period onwards. Such texts reflect, in Wendt's analysis, "how the exegesis of mythic literature might inform religious practice while simultaneously bolstering the authority and teaching of the self-authorized exegete."[93]

Often these freelance or itinerant figures faced political pressures as well. The Athenian Onomacritus, according to Herodotus, was a *chrēsmologos* and 'arranger' of the oracles of Musaeus ('ἄνδρα Ἀθηναῖον, χρησμολόγον τε καὶ διαθέτην χρησμῶν τῶν Μουσαίου: Hdt. 7.6.3). Despite previously having political and personal ties to the Peisistratids (specifically Hipparchus), he was expelled by Hipparchus after he was caught supposedly misrepresenting the nature of one of Musaeus oracles.[94] The account is detailed in Book 7,

> ἐξηλάσθη γὰρ ὑπὸ Ἱππάρχου τοῦ Πεισιστράτου ὁ Ὀνομάκριτος ἐξ Ἀθηνέων, ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ ἁλοὺς ὑπὸ Λάσου τοῦ Ἑρμιονέος ἐμποιέων ἐς τὰ Μουσαίου χρησμόν, ὡς αἱ ἐπὶ Λήμνῳ ἐπικείμεναι νῆσοι ἀφανιζοίατο κατὰ τῆς θαλάσσης
>
> Onomacritus was expelled from Athens by the Peisitratid, Hipparchus, after he was caught in the act/red-handed by Hermioneus of Lasos inserting into the prophecy of Musaeus that the islands near Lesbos would disappear down into the sea. (*Herodotus* 7.6.3)

Herodotus uses ἐμποιέων ('inserting') to characterise the offense Onomacritus committed, which offers a great deal of insight into the intellectual expectations for these freelance figures. Both the present tense of the participle ἐμποιέων and the idiomatic phrase ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ indicate the simultaneity between the misinterpreting and being caught; Dillery says that Onomacritus was caught 'red-handed', to capture this simultaneity.[95] The idiomatic description 'red-handed' should not be taken literally here; it is unlikely Lasus was looking over his shoulder while he wrote.

[93] Wendt (2016) 131.
[94] *Cf.* Dillery (2005) 167 and 189-192 for a discussion of this episode. Dillery (2005: 189-190) notes the suggestiveness of διαθέτην toward Onomacritus being an expert of written work—almost a 'editor' or 'redactor' of sorts.
[95] Dillery (2005) 189. Although Dillery notes that despite the uniqueness of the phrase ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ, "[t]here can be no doubt what Herodotus meant". Dillery (2005: 189) notes that Herodotus uses the same phrase earlier in book six when King Leotychidas of Sparta is caught 'in the act of sitting' (ἐπ᾽ αὐτοφώρῳ δὲ ἁλοὺς…ἐπικατήμενος) upon a glove full of coins with which he had been bribed (Hdt. 6.72.2).

Rather, it is more likely that he was caught reciting his allegedly misleading oracle before a crowd or in some other public format.[96] Onomacritus was not criticised and penalised for misunderstanding the work of Musaeus, but rather maliciously adding something to the oracle that the author had not intended. Andrew Laird has commented that one of the risks of considering ancient allegory and interpretation, as a result of the rather inconsistent and arbitrary conceptualisation—by both ancient and modern readers—of allegory, is the presumption of intent by the author.[97] Frequently, interpreters will fraudulently attribute their own interpretations or options to a popular author or poet; the *faux pas* Onomacritus was accused of committing.

This hypersensitivity to presenting the 'correct' interpretation was likely a common concern for interpretive readers. Theognis (1.805-10) indicates that there was an issue in the ancient world with messengers to oracular shrines (*theôroi*) alter or fudge written oracles before their recipient received them—it seems there were often additions or deletions made.[98] Dillery says "Quite simply the messenger is to repeat the oracle he heard and not introduce any changes, either by adding or removing words. This is what Onomacritus must have done. Neither the *chresmologue* nor the *theôros* was authorised to produce the oracle in question, only to 'perform' it." It goes to show that even if the work of allegorising or interpreting involves a degree of subjectivity, as Laird suggests, this subjectivity is not without qualification or restriction.[99] That is

[96] Dillery (2005) 90.
[97] *Cf.* Laird (2003) 154-155 and see my own n. 95 below discussing subjectivity and the allegorical tradition.
[98] There are obvious parallels of actors' or rhapsodes' interpolations here. While this is slightly outside the scope of this project, longform performance of memorised text necessitates interpolation or deletion through the limitations of memory mechanics. Although, Theognis idea of additions or deletions within oracles as distinct from poetic interpolation. For a discussion of poetic interpolation see Nagy (1996).
[99] Here I favour the description of subjective when characterising the nature of allegorising or categorising a particular text as allegorical. This is building off Laird (2003: 153) in that "the detection of allegory is really a subjective issue, or to be more accurate, a question of ideology. Someone's detection of an allegory is more likely to be determined by culturally induced expectations than by any personal perspective." However, this is not to suggest that allegorical interpretations were or are in any way forced, despite their assigning of authorial intent. I have the same reservations as Struck (2005: 149) when regarding allegorical readings and interpretations as forced, of course some individual readings are forced, it would be too extreme to hold that the entire diverse tradition of allegory was forced. As Struck

to say, while freelancers could offer their own interpretation to prophecies or, in the case of the Derveni author poems, the divine wisdom they extrapolated, it had to be embedded and supported by the text. It is not, though, a question of truth or lies, but rather in a volatile climate like Onomacritus' Athens, the ability to be able to back up your claims and support them with evidence from the text to which you refer. Otherwise you leave yourself susceptible to accusations of fraud and deceit, especially if one caught the attention of powerful political figures within the *polis* as was the case of Onomacritus. Since his readings were not convincing nor persuasive enough in convincing his audience that such wisdom was actually contained within the prophecy of Musaeus, he could well have been accused of misrepresenting the original author. Of course, sometimes political factors superseded these efforts of persuasion, and this may have been the case. However, it does provide insight into the kinds of intellectual appeals that were expected of these figures whose claim to credibility rested on own self-authorised and self-fashioned efficacy. This may explain the constant defensive tone and intellectual rigour that we will come to see persists in the Derveni papyrus.

Freelancers like our Derevni author faced competition not only among like-minded practitioners or local benefactors and politicians but also from more canonised writers, like Plato, who had an institutionalised reputation through his links to his Academy. This group, with a more institutionalised claim to authority, sought to limit much of their fields of inquiry, boasting a highly focused and specialised field of knowledge which in turn delegitimise all those who claimed wide-ranging and diverse expertise. Kendra Eshleman, Peter Struck, Heidi Wendt, and others have argued much of this occurred at a time when there was little conscious or static division between

says, "Hera's anvils may no longer seem connected to the land and the sea, but the shield of Achilles still probably strikes most readers as more than just a shield."

'genres' or 'disciplines' within the complex and fluctuating dynamic of academic fields.[100] Struck warns that "such classifications, like generic boundaries, run to the limits of their usefulness if they prevent us from seeing the cross-fertilization of ideas and intellectual practices from one field to the next."[101] People may have differentiated between the types of textual productions by Plato and Hippocrates—one might say that Hippocrates seemed to be more concerned with the needs of the body whereas Plato spoke of the soul, or some other artificial and arbitrary distinction.[102] However, imagining that many saw the two as being intellectuals of two distinct 'fields' is an overestimation. Observers often conflated these practitioners who from the surface seemed to have few distinctions; the majority would have lumped these authors altogether into one intellectual elite category.[103] Edmonds has argued for such a dynamic in the Greek world within which figures like Plato and Hippocrates (as well as their followers) sought to create strict disciplinary distinctions, at a time when these categories had hazy and ill-defined boundaries. Eshelman has made a similar argument for independent intellectuals versus high-profile, canonised authors in the Roman contexts.[104] As Eshelman writes: "[t]he prestigious title 'philosopher' was 'not an absolute but a differential category,' maintained at the cost of an unending labor of discursive and social distantiation from the others who marked its boundaries (the layperson, the charlatan, the sophist, and, eventually, the Christian)."[105] By arguing for clear boundaries between scholarly expertise,

[100] For disciplinary formation in general, see Eshleman (2012); Wendt (2016) esp. "Introduction"; Edmonds (2013) esp. Chapter 6 where he discusses the haziness of many of these categories; Johnston (2008) 1– 32; Graf and Johnston (2007) esp. 70– 78, 82– 94; Struck (2004) through but especially 10-14; these are but a few examples of scholarship which have argued in favour of a more malleable and hazy understanding of disciplinary categories in the ancient world.

[101] Struck (2004) 12.

[102] *Cf.* Edmonds (2013; *esp*. 95-138) and (2008) for a discussion of these 'disciplinary' disputes.

[103] Edmonds speaking of people labelled as magicians and healers (2011: 31) says, "Only the Hippocratic doctors or the Platonic philosophers, they claim, offer a truly superior alternative to normal practice—normal here being household polytheism; the quack magicians and healers, or the *agyrtai* and sophists may claim extra-ordinary status, but their practices are as inferior, if not more so, than the normal ones."

[104] Eshelman (2012) and Whitmarsh (2001).

[105] Eshelman (2012: 1). The intext quote is from Whitmarsh (2001: 159).

they advocated for their own superiority within these narrow 'disciplines'. Plato in turn labelled all those working against his thinking as imposters and pseudo-intellectuals:

> ἀγύρται δὲ καὶ μάντεις ἐπὶ πλουσίων θύρας ἰόντες πείθουσιν ὡς ἔστι παρὰ σφίσι δύναμις ἐκ θεῶν πoριζομένη θυσίαις τε καὶ ἐπῳδαῖς, εἴτε τι ἀδίκημά του γέγονεν αὐτοῦ ἢ προγόνων, ἀκεῖσθαι μεθ' ἡδονῶν τε καὶ ἑορτῶν…τούτοις δὲ πᾶσιν τοῖς λόγοις μάρτυρας ποιητὰς ἐπάγονται οἱ μὲν κακίας πέρι…βίβλων δὲ ὅμαδον παρέχονται Μουσαίου καὶ Ὀρφέως, Σελήνης τε καὶ Μουσῶν ἐκγόνων, ὥς φασι, καθ' ἃς θυηπολοῦσιν, πείθοντες οὐ μόνον ἰδιώτας ἀλλὰ καὶ πόλεις, ὡς ἄρα λύσεις τε καὶ καθαρμοὶ ἀδικημάτων (365) διὰ θυσιῶν καὶ παιδιᾶς ἡδονῶν εἰσι μὲν ἔτι ζῶσιν, εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ τελευτήσασιν, ἃς δὴ τελετὰς καλοῦσιν, αἳ τῶν ἐκεῖ κακῶν ἀπολύουσιν ἡμᾶς, μὴ θύσαντας δὲ δεινὰ περιμένει.
>
> *Agyrtai*[106] and *manteis*, going to the doors of the rich, persuade them that there is a power being brought to them from the gods by sacrifices and incantations, if they or their ancestors committed injustices to make amends with pleasures and festivals/feasts…And as witnesses (μάρτυρας) for all these assertions, they bring in the poets…And they present a cacophony of books by Musaios and Orpheus, children of Selene and the Muses, as they say, according to whom they perform sacrifices/rituals. Persuading not only individuals (ἰδιώτας) but entire *poleis* that there are deliverances and purifications from injustices through sacrifices and the pleasures of games, both for the living and for after they have died. These things which they call *teletai*, they release us after from evil, but terrible things come to those who do not perform the rituals. (Plato *Rep*. 364b5-c5, 365a1-3 = OF 3 = 573B)[107]

The dynamics of the competition are described as βίβλων ὅμαδον, which Edmonds translates as "a hubbub of books". This translation encompasses both the cacophonic dynamic and a certain mobishness of the people crowding the streets, indicating a crowded field of competition as well as the high stakes nature of the game being played.[108] In Betegh's words it is obvious "that Plato in his old age saw the itinerant salvation-mongers as a morally and theologically dangerous lot".[109] The picture Plato paints of a dense crowd of competitors may be perhaps slightly exaggerated, but

[106] Collectors or beggars; door to door salesman may be a good modern analogy to express the irritative and negative connotations contained here.
[107] The *OF* refers to the collections of Bernabé (2004), (2005), (2007). However, the numbers in this case are provided by Edmonds (2013) 98.
[108] For the 'hubbub of books' see Edmonds (2013) 99.
[109] Betegh (2004) 351.

it was large enough presence that it he felt he should respond to it. The popularity of such itinerant interpreters must have been considerable, given the threat it seemed to pose to Plato and the utopian Republic he constructed. In reaction to the high traffic of freelancers, especially in a *polis* the size of Athens, a threatened Plato extols his own skills above and beyond the 'masses'. Plato sets himself apart intellectually from his cacophonous street-level competitors, who offer 'noise' compared to his refined, educated philosophical works. The characterisation of these practitioners as a mob or a crowd is a pronounced reflection of Plato's own mistrust of democracy—the use of the democratically charged term ἰδιώτες to characterise their clientele points to these political sentiments.

Plato was not alone in his critiques of freelance figures. Hippocrates and his followers launched similar attacks on these practitioners for their false claims of healing and medical knowledge. Like Plato, they believed there were distinct areas of expertise and would could not in good conscious or responsibly dabble in so many different areas of expertise:

> Ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκέουσιν οἱ πρῶτοι τοῦτο τὸ νόσημα ἱερώσαντες τοιοῦτοι εἶναι ἄνθρωποι οἷοι καὶ νῦν εἰσι μάγοι τε καὶ καθάρται καὶ ἀγύρται καὶ ἀλαζόνες, οὗτοι δὲ καὶ προσποιέονται σφόδρα θεοσεβέες εἶναι καὶ πλέον τι εἰδέναι. οὗτοι τοίνυν παραμπεχόμενοι καὶ προβαλλόμενοι τὸ θεῖον τῆς ἀμηχανίης τοῦ μὴ ἔχειν ὅ τι προσενέγκαντες ὠφελήσουσι, καὶ ὡς μὴ κατάδηλοι ἔωσιν οὐδὲν ἐπιστάμενοι, ἱερὸν ἐνόμισαν τοῦτο τὸ πάθος εἶναι·
>
> Those who first thought this disease was from the gods seem to me in this day and age the same sorts as *magoi*, purificators, *agyrtai*, and charlatans, who pretend to be excessively religious and to know something more [than others]. Such persons, then, disguising themselves and hiding behind the divine, they try to help their own lack of ability, and so that their own ignorance would not be allowed to manifest, they call this disease sacred. (Hipp. *The Sacred Disease* 2.1-10)[110]

[110] For a discussion more fully of this passage *cf.* Edmonds (2008).

The Hippocratic doctors loathed the freelancer's excessive services they offer to cure wounds or other medical ailments in place of the 'real' medicine their followers offered. Betegh notes that "there is strong evidence to show that religious practitioners, and Orphic initiators among them, were also occupied with magical healing."[111] Likely feeling threatened by these initiators and their potential success Hippocrates attacks the intentionality of their malice; they are wilfully disguising themselves and mispresenting what they really know. There is shared vocabulary between Plato and Hippocrates as well, and both use the term *argytai* as an umbrella for the freelancers who offer a diverse range of services. Furthermore, they both equate *magoi* and purveyors of purifying rituals with other whom they consider ignorant and disingenuous quacks. Edmonds says, "Only the Hippocratic doctors or the Platonic philosophers, they claim, offer a truly superior alternative to normal practice—normal here being household polytheism; the quack magicians and healers, or the *agyrtai* and sophists may claim extra-ordinary status, but their practices are as inferior, if not more so, than the normal ones."[112]

These philosophers or medical experts hoped to brand the freelancers' appeals to 'extra-ordinary' expertise as false, all the while making a similar case for their own primacy.[113] However, as Edmonds warns, "it is important not to accept uncritically the polemical portrayals by Aristophanes, Plato, or others with their own axes to grind."[114] They are playing the same game as the freelancers, just using a different strategy. Ironically, the sorts of attacks launched by Plato and Hippocratic writers were analogous to the criticisms of false practitioners by our own Derveni

[111] Betegh (2004) 355-56. Betegh (2004: 356 n.20) cites Plato *Phdr*. 244d5–245a1; Eur. *Alc*. 966–71 for examples of where these kings of healing services are offered. In particular, he says, "Eur. *Alc*. 966–71 where the parallel reference to Orphic and Hippocratic medicine is especially notable (there is no cure against Ananke: οὐδέ τι φάρμακον | Θρήσσαις ἐν σανίσιν, τὰς | Ὀρφεία κατέγραψεν | γῆρυς, οὐδ᾽ ὅσα Φοῖβος Ἀ- | σκληπιάδαις ἔδωκε | φάρμακα πολυπόνοις | ἀντιτεμὼν βροτοῖσιν.) Additioanlly, *cf.* Eur. *Cyc.* 646-8.
[112] Edmonds (2008) 31.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Edmonds (2013) 131.

author at column 20 (but more on this below). While some intellectuals sought to restrict and limit the confines of intellectual adroitness, freelancers or itinerants preferred a broad, jack-of-all-trades appeal that best established their primacy and bolstered their capability. That is to say, using Johnston's terminology, these figures "could wear a lot of different hats as occasion demanded."[115] These would-be specialists of divine wisdom, initiation rites, and other practices involving the gods and similar beings (heroes, the dead, etc.) employed exegesis and literary composition to justify not only their own status, but also the need for—and efficacy of—the services they brokered. All the while, the Platos of antiquity narrowed disciplinary definitions so as to portray the latitudinous intellectual appeals of the freelancers as cursory and their work as superficial and scanty. The freelancers—in an attempt to validate the quality, accuracy, authenticity of their interpretations and to silence their detractors— they sought "legitimation through affiliation with figures whose reputation as religious leaders was impeccable, and then, to eliminate any concern about whether the ideas of those figures had been properly transmitted to the new cults' leaders, they invoked texts composed by the figures themselves".[116]

While Plato and Hippocratic followers rebuke freelance figures, others do not adopt such a derogatory tone in describing these individuals. Strabo characterised Orpheus as one such door-to-door initiator, but with a much broader geographic and long-lasting cult following.[117] According

[115] Johnston (2008) 137. Johnston (2008: 109) names some of these many hats that could be worn by what she and Wendt (2016) call a freelancer; see above quote. Edmonds (2013) in his discussion of Orphic textuality in part two addresses nature of these itinerant experts, especially during a discussion of the passage from Plato cited above. However, Dillery (2005) offers the most comprehensive study of the negative complaints typically launched against mobile intellectuals.

[116] Johnston (2008) 139. Johnston marks that this turn toward textuality (production and engagement) is part of a broader trend among freelancers and *manteis* at this time. Johnston (2008: 138-139) writes: "The *chresmologues'* use of older oracles fits within a broader trend, which began in the late archaic period, of validating current behaviour and decisions by looking to ancient texts: this was the period when the poems of Orpheus were used as the basis of new mystery cults in honour of Dionysus, for example, and when the Eleusinian mysteries began claiming that legendary poets, such as Orpheus and Musaeus, had transmitted their sacred stories."

[117] Strabo writes that Orpheus was ἐνταῦθα τὸν Ὀρφέα διατρῖψαί φησι τὸν Κίκονα, ἄνδρα γόητα, ἀπὸ μουσικῆς ἅμα καὶ μαντικῆς καὶ τῶν περὶ τὰς τελετὰς ὀργιασμῶν ἀγυρτεύοντα τὸ πρῶτον, εἶτ᾽ ἤδη καὶ μειζόνων ἀξιοῦντα ἑαυτὸν καὶ ὄχλον καὶ δύναμιν κατασκευαζόμενον: 'an itinerant wizard (*goēs*) who first peddled music along with divination

to Philochorus, Orpheus offered healing, poetry, and divining to his clientele. In these contexts, Philochorus identified him as a *mantis* ('diviner').[118] Orpheus' insight into such matters allowed him to understand the nature of the physical world, predict future events, interpret dreams, communicate with animals, speak and perform for the gods, heal diseases, and perform spells and miracles, all services which are later offered by different street-level diviners mentioned above.[119] Additionally, our Derveni author in his interpretation acknowledges this characterisation of Orpheus, emphasising the diversity of his knowledge, trusting his cosmological, poetic, divinatory, and eschatological expertise.

According to the Derveni Author's Interpretation

In order to display his intellectual capabilities to his potential clientele, the Derveni author credited their cosmogenic exegesis to the mythic writer Orpheus.[120] A cosmogony, as Laks, and Burkurt before him, have noted, "whose overall pattern is strikingly similar to that of Pre-Socratic physics, although it is not identical with any one of its instantiation."[121] Our author's particular interpretation concerns the proper etiquette of ritual practice and emphasises the importance of understanding the purpose of the rituals: it is only through truly understanding that one can learn the rituals and perform them correctly.[122] Betegh comments that the Derveni author elects for a

and mystery rituals, but later thought more highly of himself and attracted crowds and power.' (Strabo 7. frag. 18: Trans. Graf and Johnston). Graf and Johnston (2007: 171) note this parallel to the types of figures Plato lambasts saying "Strabo (or his source) imagined Orpheus as one of the seers and begging priests berated by Plato, but one whose mystery rituals gained a much wider acceptance than those of others."

118 Phil. Περι μαντικῆς fr. 76–9 *FGrHist.* For a discussion of this reference and its implications see Betegh (2004) 359-60. Dirk Obbink has suggested that Philochorus knew the Derevni text, reflecting the overlap between these intellectual milieu. *Cf.* Obbink (1994) and (1997) 49 n. 16; also see Betegh (2004) 98 n. 20 and 360. Disclaimer: Although my thesis cites the scholarship of Dirk Obbink, I by no means condone nor excuse his alleged actions in his former position as the head of the Oxyrhynchus collection.

119 *Cf.* Edmonds (2011) 3-6; Graf and Johnston (2007) 165-174; Fitzgerald (2014) 232-34.

120 Edmonds (2013) 124; Translations of the Derveni papyrus are my own but informed by the reconstruction in Betegh (2004); Janko (1997), (2002), and (2008); and Kouremenos et al (2006).

121 Laks (1997) 123; Burkert (1968).

122 *Derv. Pap.* Col. 5.

mutatis mutandis strategy, claiming to offer a genuine expertise opposed to his false rivals.[123] The author here responds to the intellectualised—and highly competitive—atmosphere of textual interpretation to argue for the primacy and exclusivity of their rites and with a competition at every doorstep. The Derveni author had to distinguish their interpretation and services above and beyond their many rivals. Our author blacklists non-allegorical interpreters as people οὐ γινώσκοντες ('those who don't know': 9.2; 12.5; 18.14; 23.5; 26.8; see also 20.2). Wendt comments that our author maintains that "literal readings of this poem fail to disclose its true message; only those who have correctly deciphered the difficult riddles found in the texts of Orpheus achieve the sort of understanding he advocates."[124] The Derveni author also equates the unknowledgeable with those who committed the cardinal sin of not learning/studying (οὐ μανθάνουσιν), they are ἀμαθίη (ignorant: 5.9–10) and ἐξαμαρτάνουσι ('misunderstand': 12.4–5) Orpheus' poetry. Whereas, as Fitzgerald notes, allegorists like our Derveni author are among a select group who τοῖς ὀρθῶς γινῶσκουσιν ('correctly understand': 23.2) "because they have deciphered the difficult riddles found in the texts of Orpheus (7.4–5)."[125] At column 20 they continue their criticism and write, ἀπέρχονται ἐπιτελέσαντες πρὶν εἰδέναι (col. 20); other freelancers had it wrong and they left their client unsatisfied and having wasted their money. The Derveni author distinguishes not only their "learned religious expertise" as superior, but also their own capabilities as an intellectual.[126] That is to say, the Derveni author, displayed their refined knowledge and understanding of the text through a line-by-line—or rather word-by-word—explication of a mysterious poetic text. This

123 Betegh (2004) 354.
124 Wendt (2016) 132. *Cf.* Edmonds (2013) 133-135. Wendt (2016: 132n. 72) gestures to Fitzgerald (2015: 21) who notes to the expressions of regret later in the text by the Derveni author towards people were swindled and wasted their money on consulting initiations and private instructions that they cannot understand (col. 20.3– 12), then rectifies "the problem by imparting to readers the knowledge that they ought to have received at the time of initiation but did not".
125 Fitzgerald (2014) 238.
126 The phrase "learned religious expertise" is from Wendt (2016) 132.

interpretation is not a 'cheat-code' or secret doctrine that guarantees salvation in the afterlife; rather, as Edmonds aptly puts, "it is his skill at exegesis itself that demonstrates his religious competence…The ultimate justification for his disparagement of rivals is his superior understanding of Orpheus, the ideal extra-ordinary religious authority."[127]

Without overemphasising the fact, it is worth acknowledging that our author emphasises the cerebral nature of Orpheus' theories. Within the Orphic cosmogony 'the mind is worth everything' (col.16: ἄξιον πάντων [τὸν Νοῦν ἔφησεν ε]ἶναι). Mental activity and cognition are central to the cosmogony of Orpheus. The Orphic poem, cited directly a couple lines later, describes the νοῦς as a βασιλεύς—conflated with god, Zeus—within the ancient theology our author articulated. Therefore, these interpretive thought experiments, are a central component in the nature of the universe and within Orpheus' cosmogony. That is why at column 7 our author emphasises that neither their treatise nor Orpheus' poem speak to τοῖς πολλοῖς but only those who are really willing to listen and mentally engage with the material. After all, without understanding the ritual is worthless (col. 5). This tenant justifies the treatise itself as well as the very intellectual work the Derveni requires from their initiates.

The competitive culture previously discussed likely explains the scrupulous intellectual rigour throughout the text. The author supports each of their interpretations, analysis, and doctrines with justifications from the Orphic poem to legitimise and perform the breadth of their knowledge. That is to say, each intellectual decision has a rationale and pretext. Betegh and Heinrichs refer to this technique as a *symbolische Deutung* ('symbolic interpretation') as opposed to aetiological or historical rationale; each feature has a symbolic significance which justifies its inclusion, timing,

[127] Edmonds (2008) 33. Wendt (2016: 131-133) discusses this passage and the dynamics of competition. She also gestures to Stowers (2011) 48, who discusses and theorises intellectual religious activity from the ancient world.

repetition etc.[128] It is this method of interpretation that leads Betegh to associate techniques of the Derveni author with that of the *exegetai*. This was but another potential hat a freelancer might have worn to "provide professional interpretation of the relevant sacred laws, and give advice on the correct performance of diverse cult activities, such as sacrifices and purification rituals."[129] Although we have very scarce evidence, these figures were known to publish texts such as Cleidemus of Athens, who wrote treatises called *Exegetikon*.[130]

Our author has a scrupulous attachment to the poem, quoting it some twenty-four times, emphasising that the spiritual knowledge contained is entirely the work of Orpheus' intentional hiding of it in his poem—our Derveni author is merely the highly skilled interpreter capable of uncovering it.[131] After all, part of the Derveni author's sales pitch was his claim to be "an up to date believer in divine providence and omnipotence" who claimed that Orpheus was "his central spiritual authority".[132] As shown above, he dismissed his competitors as ignorant and lazy, but our author takes his appeal for authority one step further, extrapolating an internal justification for his interpretation. The papyrus reads, ὅτι μὲμ πᾶσαμ τὴμ πόησιν περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰνίζεται κ[α]θ' ἕπος ἕκαστον ἀνάγκη λέγειν (col.13: 'because he writes about things enigmatically throughout the poem, it is necessary to analyse each word').[133] There is an explicit explanation of the intellectual trajectory of the exegesis that is grounded in the authority of Orpheus, which justifies the very

[128] Betegh (2004) 83; Heinrichs (1998) throughout but discussed in relation to allegory at 45. Betegh says as opposed to an aetiological justification "the explanation is given not via the mythical antecedents (or mythical paradigm) of the action, but rather by listing those factors and forces that are at work in the actual current performance."
[129] Betegh (2004) 359. Betegh suggests seeing *e.g.* Demosthenes 47.68; Jacoby (1949) ch. 1; Garland (1990) 81.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Fitzgerald (2014) 235 provides the count for direct references the poem of Orpheus.
[132] Laks (1997) 138; Most (1997) 122.
[133] This comment occurs during the Derveni authors discussion of the phallus (αἰδοῖον), presumably of Ouranos the first-born god, which he interprets to be the sun, since a phallus and the sun are generators of new life. I also agree with Edmonds (2013: 126) and Betegh (2004) among others that αἰδοῖον was probably understood to be a phallus in the original poem rather than supporting the suggestion by West (1983) and others that understanding is something the Derveni author introduced to the text.

need for the authorial interpretation. For our author the Orphic cosmogony was "a repository of great (and even sacred) hidden truths, which are conveyed in riddles through the whole poem, in a manner that resembles the semantically dense language of oracular speech, esoteric philosophy, and cultic practice."[134] Because Orpheus had this opaque tendency—with an implied editorialization that the author of the Derveni text has a special understanding of him—it justifies the author's rigorous methods while simultaneously providing opportunity for the Derveni author to demonstrate their vast lexical knowledge.

Jeremy Rusten has noted that the Derveni author has three forms of lexical interpretation that include constructing equivalencies, etymological allegorising of divine names, and redefining a word either by etymology, citation of parallel passages, or synonyms. In constructing equivalencies, the Derveni author identifies terms with similar stems or syllabic sounds to establish an entirely new meaning of the word. Rusten notes the following occurrences of this technique:

Col. 5: πιστίη = μαθίη (μανθάνω = γινώσκω)

Col. 10: λέγειν = διδάσκειν = φωνεῖν

Col. 11: χρῆσαι = ἀρκέσαι

Col. 21: μίσγεσθαι = θόρνυσθαι ("mount") = φροδισιάζειν

Col. 21: εἴκειν = πείθειν[135]

A similar method is applied to the second of these lexical interpretive tools, wherein our author identifies the 'origins' of the names of particular gods. Some examples include, Oceanus = Zeus = Aer (col. 23); Ὄλυμπος = χρόνος (col. 12);[136] Cronus = Zeus; etc.[137] This method was not

134 Struck (2004) 38. Struck in particular here is referencing column 7, when the author comments that Orpheus composed great truths into his poetry in an enigmatic way, which this chapter discusses in detail below (ἔστι δὲ ξ[ένη τις ἡ] πόησις | [κ]αὶ ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι[γμ]ατώδης, [κε]ἰ [Ὀρφεὺ]ς αὐτ[ὸ]ς | [ἐ]ρίστ' αἰν[ίγμα]τα οὐκ ἤθελε λέγειν, [ἐν αἰν]ίγμαᾳ[ι]ν δὲ | [μεγ]άλᾳ [*Derv*. *Pap*. Col. 7]).

135 Rusten (2014: 123 n.11) suggest that a similar 'soundplay' can be found in the in the fragment of Heraclitus quoted in col. 4, between εὕρους and ἐξευρήσουσι.

136 *Cf*. Betegh (2004) 250 for a discussion of this argument.

137 For a full list see Rusten (2014) 123-124.

uncommon in intellectual circles at that time—Plato offers these sorts of etymological interpretations in his *Cratylus* (404c: Hera and air 406a-c: Athena as the mind and intellect); Heraclitus claims that Dionysus and Hades were one in the same (DK 15); and Anaxagoras and Diogenes of Apollonia claim that principles, like *Aer*, were known by many names despite being a single entity.[138] Finally, the Derveni author will reject a more traditional meaning of a term in place of a new definition which elucidates a confusing phrase from the Orphic poem; *e.g.* in column 10, our author claims that πανομφεύουσαν καὶ πάντα διδάσκουσαν τὸ αὐτὸ εἶναι ('all-pronouncing and teaching are the same thing').[139] These methods are undergirded by the author's claims of lexical thoroughness and an intimate knowledge of Orpheus' linguistic tendencies. At column 12 our author asserts that Orpheus never used the epithet 'wide' but always preferred 'long' (εὐρὺμ μὲν οὐδέποτε, μα[κρὸν δέ.]) when he spoke of Olympus. This offhanded remark presents their extensive knowledge of Orpheus' poetic corpus and his authorial tendencies as well as their profound lexical knowledge.

The performance of their sophistication justifies the author's philosophical and even theological claims; in this particular case the heavens and Olympus are distinct entities. Each lexical intricacy or idiosyncrasy our author highlights boast their intellectual calibre and introduces more ambiguity that our author can interpret for his own ends. This subtle language is a constant in the treatise and they are often not outrageous or remarkable but bland and predictable; it is the repetition and the bulk of examples which make the technique so effective.[140] By overwhelming their audience with examples, one cannot help but be convinced of the presence of ambiguity in

[138] Laks (1997) 127-134; Struck (2004) 43-44; Rusten (2014) 123. Additionally, see Morand (2001) 156-158 and 337-338 for a discussion of *les rapprochements de dieux*.
[139] Ineke Sluiter (1994) has shown that the same etymological method was used by grammarians in Alexandria as shown by a *scholium* on *Iliad* 5.408–409. For a discussion of the use of etymology within *scholia* see Sluiter (1994) and (2015). For more examples of this practice in the Derveni treatise see Rusten (2014) 124.
[140] Rusten (2014) 126.

Orpheus' poem and, moreover, the preparedness and the capability of the Derveni author to interpret this confusion.

We see the specific language of ambiguity and enigmas highlighted by Struck to justify an interpretive exercise for the purpose of understanding and proper etiquette when it came to initiation and sacrifice. The author emphasised Orpheus' composition with *ainigmata* to justify the need for interpretation. They wrote:

> ἔστι δὲ ξ[ένη τις ἡ] πόησις | [κ]αὶ ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι̣[γμ]ατώδης, [κε]ἰ [Ὀρφεὺ]ς αὐτ[ὸ]ς | [ἐ]ρίστ' αἰν[ίγμα]τα οὐκ ἤθελε λέγειν, [ἐν αἰν]ίγμαᾳ̣[ι]ν δὲ | [μεγ]άλ̣α
> Some poetry is strange and enigmatic for people; and Orpheus himself did not wish to speak contentious enigmas, but in an enigmatic way he wished to tell great [truths]…(*Derv. Pap*. Col. 7.)[141]

Laks notes that this column 7 acts as the introduction of sorts before the line by line—or as the Derveni author says a few columns later 'word by word' (col. 13: κ̣[α]θ' ἔπος ἕκαστον ἀνάγκη λέγειν)—allegorical commentary of the poem which begins on the next column.[142] First, as Fitzgerald observes, rather atypically this technique is not a "piecemeal application of allegorical interpretation to particular passages that are morally unseemly or problematic in other ways," but rather a comprehensive interpretive reading of the entire poem.[143] The Derveni author uncovers that all divine beings—Sky, Kronos, Zeus, Earth, Ocean, Air, Mother, Rhea, Aphrodite, Fate, Harmony, Persuasion, etc.—regardless of gender, are merely Orpheus' poetic polyonomy the same God.[144] Our Derveni author comments that Orpheus "speaks enigmatically about matters [περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων] throughout entire poem" (col. 13.5-6: ὅτι μὲν πᾶσ̣αν τὴν πόησιν περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰνίζεται), leading Fitzgerald to suggest that the poem is one extended cosmological allegory about

141 I struggled here with how to construe ἐριστ᾽. Presumably modifying αἰνίγματα, I have used 'contentious,' though with the understanding that this may not entirely capture the spirit of competition contained in the adjective. Betegh (2004: 17) uses captious, which I find interesting, but I feel does not quite capture the competitive aspects of ἐριστά.
142 Laks (1997) 123.
143 Fitzgerald (2014) 236.
144 Ibid 236-238; see esp. *Derv. Pap.* col 21.5–7 and 22.7–11; Janko (2002) 3.

the physical universe.[145] Secondly, the Derveni author implicitly advocates for the necessity of his intellectual engagement by stating that there are hazy aspects of Orpheus' poetry—that is to say there are ambiguities in the text that need to be interpreted by a capable interpreter. However, as ἐριστά suggests, while the poem may be hazy and riddling, it is not unspecific. That is, although the outer shell of the text is obscure, there remains a truth beneath the surface; a singular and unequivocal truth. There is a sense of dismissiveness towards the author's rivals, but also an anticipation of alternative interpretations. With a single adjective the Derveni author rejects the validity of another competing interpretation of the Orphic poem, elevating their own as the primary reading. A fascinating appeal for expertise is at work here, for not only does the author presume to know and be able to interpret the truth behind the obscure poetry, but they presume to know the intentionality of the poet.[146] The Derveni author claims to know that Orpheus wrote in enigmas and he knows that beneath these enigmas are specific truths which Orpheus carefully hid beneath the surface.

[145] Ibid 236.

[146] Laird (2003: 154-155) suggests that ancient interpretive readers often presumed authorial intent when regarding a particular aspect or action as meant to be representative of a broader concept such as temptation or human folly or commenting that a particular character *stands for* another figure like Jesus or Zeus. A modern parallel to explain this phenomenon could be C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe.* Readers have often noted the similarities between the character Aslan and the figure of Jesus Christ—Aslan, having faced ridicule and mockery walked himself to an alter and sacrificed his physical body for the sake of others, only to be found missing from his final resting place and then later resurrected. However, despite a wide academic consensus, Lewis adamantly maintained that neither the character of Aslan nor his books generally were allegorical; any Christian parallels found were merely coincidental inclusions by a man of deep faith. For an ancient parallel uses the ancient example of Prudentius, Cathemerinon (9.141–4): O tortuose serpens, | qui mille per meandros | fraudesque flexuosas | agitas quieta corda. "Oh twisting serpent who agitates tranquil hearts through a thousand meandering turns and through sinuous deceits." (Trans. Laird with amendments) Although we may concede that the snake here need not be understood as a literal creature agitating human organs and that a consideration of Christian scripture may lead us to associate the snake with the one in the garden of Eden. Readers may then say that this snake is allegorical. However, Laird adds that nonetheless "it remains the case that, when we say Prudentius' serpent stands for temptation, we are also presupposing that the business of 'standing for' is somehow 'in' Prudentius' text— even though Prudentius' text actually says nothing whatsoever about signification of any kind. Thus, to claim that Prudentius' serpent 'stands for' anything is also to say something (potentially allegorical) about the status of Prudentius' text and how it means. Just as simple description of a text collapses into interpretation of that text, so interpretation collapses into allegory even more rapidly and regularly, though this is a process which it is not popular to scrutinize."

The emphasis on this opacity as well as the interpretive reading work, according to Fitzgerald, as an apology of Orpheus for those who believe the literal reading of the poem is ridiculous or potentially unsettling.[147] The author doesn't mince words about the fact that up to now Orpheus' poetry, and in particular this cosmogony, seem confusing, as they admit ἔστι δὲ ξ[ένη τις ἡ] πόησις [κ]αὶ ἀνθρώ[ποις] αἰνι[γμ]ατώδης (col. 7: 'the poem is something strange and enigmatic for people'). However, while the poem may seem wacky, an allegorical reading reveals that the unconventional verses contain divine wisdom. For our author allegorical reading is fundamentally a religious practice, and the wisdom and knowledge uncovered "pertained to divine beings, and their decipherment was a form of divination."[148] But, as Fitzgerald and Janko have noted, and as is suggested above in the discussion of νοῦς, it has broader implications than that. Fitzgerald says that it is "a necessary practice when approaching religious mythology because ignorance is tantamount to lack of faith (5.10)". Prioritising literal readings of myths over allegorical one is, in Janko's opinion, "to risk losing one's faith"[149]. It is for this reason that the main group criticised by the Derveni author are individuals ignorant to the "terrors of Hades" but instead are overcome by pleasures and their flaws, neither learning nor believing what the Derveni author offers (col. 5.7-9: ὑπό [τε γὰρ] ἁμαρτ[ί]ης καὶ [τ]ῆς ἄλλης ἡδον[ῆ]ς νενικημέν[οι, οὐ] μαν̣θ[άνο]υσιν [οὐδὲ] πιστεύουσι).[150]

Not all scholars find this performance by the Derveni author as that of a humble interpreter of the divine wisdom convincing. Both Burkert and West have noted that our author is merely

147 Fitzgerald (2014) 239

148 For the notion that of allegory as a religious practice see Laks (1997) 138; Fitzgerald (2014) 239; and also see Stowers (2011), although not focusing specifically on allegory the notion of literate religious figures is very applicable. The intext quote is from Wendt (2016) 130; for the other discussions of allegory as a kind of divination can be found in Struck (2014) 32 and Johnston (2014).

149 Janko (2002) 3.

150 The phrase 'terrors of Hades' is also from column 5 and I narrowed the translation of that phrase from Betegh (2004: 13) because I liked the menacing tone conveyed. Fitzgerald (2014: 239) discusses briefly this passage.

using the cosmogony to authenticate his own theologies and ideas. West writes, the Derveni author "is no humble servant of the poet, but a man with decided views of his own which it is his primary purpose to expound. The Orphic text merely serves him as a prop."[151] Burkert adds that the allegory provided at first seems "arbitrary" and "violent": "Nur durch gewaltsame Allegorese kann unser Autor das Orphische seinem 'vorsokratischen' Weltverstandnis adaptieren".[152] Although I am not trying to argue against these conclusions, I am not advocating that the Derveni author was either earnest or disingenuous. The desired outcome for our author's intellectual practice was to provide the justification and desideratum for the initiatory service they offered, both then and hopefully continuously in the future. Johnston notes that the means for this justification is "an idiosyncratic, cerebral religious system that can justify the individual planks of its doctrines with reference to existing beliefs and practices."[153] It served our author to have some associations with credibility when making an intellectual appeal to potential clientele whether on the streets or on papyrus. In antiquity, the intellectual environment was one that was better served to bolster one's own claims by grounding these doctrines, ideas, theologies, etc., in an authenticated text. Wendt comments that our author's "eschatological tapestry is not only purposive, in the sense that it lends significance to the author's scheme as a whole but also deliberately enmeshed in cultivating its own obscurity, exclusivity, and rarified mystique."[154] It seems, within the hyper-competitive environment of freelance religious figures, the best way to achieve these qualities was through an association to a previously authenticated text.

151 West (1983) 78.
152 Burkert (1968) 101, although eventually Burkert does conclude that arbitrary is not arbitrariness but is more likely down to a whim of eccentricity. Laks (1997) 135 discusses both the West and Burkert comments, launching a defence against the claims of arbitrariness.
153 Johnston (2014) 103-14.
154 Wendt (2014) 134.

Conclusion

The *omnium gatherum* of intellectual practices employed by our Derveni author of exegesis, the incorporation of Pre-Socratic and other philosophical notions and techniques, and committing of these ideas to text, and what Wendt calls" the ascription of special meanings to ordinary religious activities",[155] are collectively traits of what Stowers calls "religion of the literate cultural producer."[156] Stowers writes, "These people were specialists, by virtue of the skills, prestige, and legitimacy derived from their belonging to the perhaps 2 percent or less of people who were literate enough to produce and authoritatively interpret complex, written texts. Although small in number in any one location, they formed a large network … united by a set of common literate practices that allowed skills, ideas, motifs, and so on to cross ethnic, linguistic, and status boundaries."[157] However, these type of experts aren't sequestered to the late Classical or early Hellenistic periods. Stowers includes later figures, like Josephus, in this grouping of intellectuals. Specialists such as Josephus and his contemporaries, shared similarities with our Derveni author, including being a part of a highly competitive and volatile intellectual environment. Unlike the Derveni author, writers such as Josephus received imperial patronage and "were considerably freer than their more institutionally embedded or otherwise constrained counterparts to combine and apply intellectual practices in innovative ways, especially in the medium of writing." It is at this point then we move out of the Classical period in Greece and consider the intellectuals orbiting the imperial court and see what their manifestation of the interpretive tradition shared with their predecessors. The thesis now turns to the writer Josephus to see how he adapted the tradition to better serve him in his Flavian contexts.

155 Ibid 134.
156 Stowers (2011) 41.
157 Ibid.

Chapter 3—Unfamiliar Face: Bringing Josephus into the Mix

A Man's life of any worth is a continual allegory –
and very few eyes can see the Mystery of his life
- a life like the scriptures, figurative…[158]
John Keats

In the first century CE, during Vespasian and Titus' campaign to squash the Judean Rebellion in the east, for unknown reasons—and with a fair share of hesitancy (*Vita* 17-19)—Josephus found himself serving as a general on the Galilean front.[159] The revolt ultimately could not outlast the formidable Roman forces and Josephus surrendered and, in the words of Carlin A. Barton and Daniel Boyarin, 'changed colours' in favour of Vespasian and his son Titus in July 67 CE.[160] In retrospect Josephus would frame the decision as a part of "a divine mission" of sorts to announce and usher in the Flavian dynasty. His 'divine mission' culminated in his auspicious interpretation of a 'prophecy' predicting Vespasian to be the next Emperor of Rome at a time when Flavian was not even considered a dark horse to be the next imperial family (*BJ* 3.340–408).[161] He was released after two years of following the eastern legions' acclamation of Vespasian (*BJ* 4.616–29). Steve Mason notes that he "assisted Titus during the final phase of the Jerusalem campaign" (*BJ* 5.361–420, 541–7; 6.96–129; *Apion* 1.49) and then followed the victorious Vespasian to Rome in early 71 CE (*Vita* 422).[162] Having been made a Roman citizen, Josephus spent the rest of his life (20

158 *The Letters of John Keats*, ed M. B. Forman, Oxford, 1947
159 Mason (2003b) 561, characterises Josephus and his class' involvement in the war as 'much debated' among scholars. For an overview of the debate Mason suggests *cf.* Drexler (1925) 277–312; Cohen (1979); Rajak (1983); Goodman (1987) Mason (2003b: 561n10) notes that "Drexler and the latter two attempt to eke out of his narrative a historical picture that contradicts his at the major points" and also suggest for Josephus' view of the Romans' place in history: Lindner (1972).
160 Barton and Boyarin (2016) 155. At (2016: 155 n1) Barton and Boyarin comment on their choice of words noting "Considering that Hebrew has the same figure of speech in which 'bowing down' signifies all manners of veneration, it is even possible that the usage of the Septuagint has had an impact here on Josephan Jewish Greek, as well."
161 I place prophecy in scare quotes simply to highlight that "prophecy" is in the eye of the beholder rather than being a self-evident category in regard to biblical writings. That is, the notion that biblical texts contain prophecies is itself an outgrowth of the phenomenon I'm mapping. Mason (2003b: 561) uses the phrase divine mission and announcement, I have added the language of ushering in to create a subtle gesture to the language often used to describe John the Baptists role in relations to Jesus and the messiah in the New Testament.
162 Mason (2003b) 561.

years) writing in Rome, living in Vespasian's pre-imperial house and provided with a monthly stipend by his Flavian patrons (*Vita* 423: καὶ γὰρ καὶ κατάλυσιν ἔδωκεν ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τῇ πρὸ τῆς ἡγεμονίας αὐτῷ γενομένῃ πολιτείᾳ τε Ῥωμαίων ἐτίμησεν καὶ σύνταξιν χρημάτων ἔδωκεν…). He was also supported by the literary patron Epaphroditus (*Ant* 1.8; *Contra Ap.* 1.1), who Maren Niehoff comments, likely "hosted public discussions of [Josephus'] work in Rome".[163] While at Rome Josephus, as Barton and Boyarin put it, "not only changed his mind but also his name: the new *nomen*, Flavius, honouring his new patrons."[164]

During his literary years in Rome, Josephus, just as nearly every other author of the ancient world, did not write in an intellectual vacuum isolated from the broader literary discourses around the Mediterranean. Like a Livy, Tacitus, or even a Vergil, Josephus was well-read in the extant classical corpus and beyond. It is even likely that much of his education, especially when he arrived in Rome, was based in and covered extensively ancient Greek and Latin authors. Yet, among scholars of classical literature, Josephus has often been neglected. Steve Mason notes the many literary devices and techniques employed in Josephus' writings, "including the shape of each work, the coherence of the corpus and his exploitation of rhetorical devices" have often been ignored by discussions of Josephus and his work.[165] Typically, Josephus' vast corpus of textual production is used by ancient historians to either confirm or deny the historicity of certain events or practices,

[163] Niehoff (2016) 136.

[164] Barton and Boyarin (2016) 155; On the same point Mason (2005b: 559 n1) notes that our author "refers to himself only as Ἰώσηπος ('Josephus'). The *nomen* 'Flavius' is given by later Christian users of his work (e.g., Euseb. *Hist. Eccl*. 1.5.3). Since Josephus took the imperial *nomen*, it is highly likely that he completed his citizen's name with the popular praenomen Titus, shared by all three Flavian rulers."

[165] Mason (2003b) 559; Mason (2005a) 71. Mason (2005b) has argued that Josephus wrote with "an artistry and playfulness" that would have been typical for Roman audience. According to Mason, despite the characterisation that Josephus was merely a mouthpiece for the Flavian dynasty, his writing often used ironic and sarcastic undertones to undermine the Flavian rulers personal character ambitions. This is all to suggest that Joseph is a much more complex literary figure than we give him credit for.

as is the case for Mary Beard's research on Roman triumph.[166] So often, "scholars have occupied themselves with the referential aspect of his corpus, therefore with such techniques for verification as *Quellenforschung* and the testing of his claims through archaeology."[167] It is only recently that scholars (*e.g.* Mason, Niehoff, and Wendt) have started to consider Josephus as a multidimensional literary figure rather than a prosaic historian.

Unlike our Derveni author, Josephus is rarely included in scholarly discussion of the interpretive tradition. However, Josephus should be considered as a literary figure, who uses allegory and interpretive techniques borrowed from the exegetical and allegorical traditions of Alexandria and beyond.[168] This thesis further contends that he ought to be considered in the same vein as -- and part of a comparable intellectual environment to the freelancer discussed in the previous chapter, albeit with careful attention to important differences in their respective social locations and apparent interests. While some may argue that his religious intentions are secondary to the historical, they are an essential part of understanding Josephus both as an individual and as an author. Josephus translates the narrative of the Hebrew Bible, with certain additions and amendments, into a Greco-Roman cultural vocabulary for a Roman audience, to construct a series of parallel narratives depicting prophets and Judean religious figures such as Joseph, Moses, and Solomon with exemplary traits similar to the ones Josephus claims to have held.[169] By framing his skill set as being synonymous with theirs, Josephus fashions himself as the intellectual successor,

166 Beard (2009); Beard (2003). The earlier of these two works written as a part of an edited volume which deals specifically with Flavian Rome and in particular Beard's chapter addresses the dual triumph of Vespasian and Titus depicted by Flavius Josephus.

167 Mason (2003b) 559.

168 For a full discussion of the Jewish exegetical tradition at Alexandria and its allegorical connections see Niehoff (2011); For a more comprehensive discussion of one of the key figures at the allegorical tradition, Philo of Alexandria *cf.* Niehoff (2018).

169 I use the phrase Greco-Roman since much of Masons work demonstrates that Josephus is deliberately enlisting Roman concepts as he presents Judean history, rendering notions of kingship, piety, and so forth in symbols with more traction among his Roman audience.

taking up the mantle from these figures. It is this in the creation of this trajectory that frames Josephus as the newest iteration of a long line of Judean experts and legitimises his claims both in the current *Antiquities* and the claims previously made by his prophecy predicting the rise of Vespasian and the Flavian Dynasty.

The competitive environment observed in the late Classical period was not confined geographically to Greece and, as Eshleman and Wendt have argued, a similar discourse was present in Flavian Rome. Much scholarship has observed that the intellectual environment in which Josephus lived was equally rife with contention and conflicts among intellectuals, freelance or otherwise.[170] In other words, the environment of the Derveni author would have been fairly similar to that of Josephus.[171] This is all the more so given the added ethnic tensions that surrounded Josephus and his Judean heritage in the Roman period. Like foreign elites before them, the Judeans orbiting the imperial court, Josephus and the Herodian royals, were the subject of much malicious gossip.[172] This criticism was not limited to Judeans in Rome either. Conservative Romans had long posed issue with non-Roman intellectuals having a voice and a platform in Rome. Maren Niehoff notes that some "Athenian ambassadors delivered public lectures while in Rome and caused much alarm among Roman conservatives, such as Cato the Elder (Plut. *Cat. M.* 22)."[173] Likewise, Mason acknowledges often in his work that slanders of Judean heritage and customs were ubiquitous in first century Rome (*e.g.* Tacitus *Hist.* 5.1-13).[174] These anti-Judean sentiments were likely

170 For a discussion of the competitive dynamics of Rome see Wendt (2015) and (2016); Eshelman (2012); and Secord (2012).
171 Josephus also often faced criticism from contrasting intellectuals, his *Contra Apionem* offers insight into some of the criticisms he faced (often with anti-Semitic tones) and how he responded to them.
172 Bowersock (2005) 53. Josephus was not the first foreign elite brought into the imperial court, nor would he be the last. However, like his predecessors he faced a lot of criticism from Roman elites both for his background, and especially in his case, Josephus face intense criticism for the supposed betrayal of his own people. *Cf.* Bowersock (2005) esp. 55-58.
173 Niehoff (2016) 135.
174 Mason (1994) 167. Mason suggests to see Whittaker (1984) 35-84.

exacerbated during and in the aftermath of the Judean revolt. In addition, the popularity of the writings of thinkers such as Apion and the Stoic philosopher Chaeremon, with their anti-Judean perspective, gained huge cultural capital in Rome before Josephus' arrival that subsequently impacted his treatment when he was brought back by the Flavians. Niehoff notes that their works "had such an impact on public opinion with their writings that Josephus a generation later still felt compelled to refute them".[175]

More broadly, as Wendt has noted, intellectuals around Rome applied different "intellectual practices in innovative ways, especially in the medium of writing" although this innovation has often been understated in contemporary scholarship.[176] Stowers comments that the lack of scholarly appreciation often results in these figures being "misdescribed as eclecticism and syncretism", but in fact, Flavian thinkers "well understood the doctrines that they adapted and endeavoured to integrate these into their larger intellectual and practical projects."[177] Although, perhaps unlike our Derveni author—in part due to their respective historical contexts—Josephus and other intellectuals, such as Thrasyllus, Balbillus, and other hybrid religious-philosophical thinkers navigating imperial and elite circles in Rome, naturally had larger elite and imperial audiences in mind when he composed his texts. The same dynamics of competition discussed above are evident with Josephus and it is to these potential audiences we now turn.

Josephus' Audience

"Audience matters" Mason writes, and specifically for Josephus' works, questions of audience are "crucial for interpretation."[178] Typically, Josephus' early works (notably his *Bellum*

[175] Niehoff (2016) 136. Niehoff also suggests Tcherikover *et al*. (1960) 2:39 and Barclay (2016) for further reading on *Contra Apionem*.
[176] Wendt (2016) 134.
[177] Stowers (2017) 1-23, quote at 17.
[178] Mason (2005a) 71; Frisch (2017) 183-192; Cotton and Eck (2005); Barton and Boyarin (2016: chapter eleven); among others, emphasise the importance of audience for studying Josephus' works.

Judaicum) are thought primarily to legitimise, praise, and flatter his Flavian imperial benefactors, though this may perhaps be too simple of an assessment. There are moments in the narrative which portray both Titus and Vespasian positively, but this is neither a homogeneous nor consistent attitude on the part of Josephus throughout the *Bellum Judaicum*. Commentators tend to agree that the *Antiquities* is much more nuanced in the intention of the narrative; it is seen as less straightforward without the obvious Flavian pandering of the *Bellum Judaicum*. This is in part due to the fact that Flavians do not play a central role in the narrative in the same way that Vespasian and Titus had in his *Bellum Judaicum*. It is for this reason that some have argued that "[t]he *Antiquities* and later works were…instruments of repentance or at least opportunistic rehabilitation, directed at 'Roman authorities' to win support for a punitive new rabbinic leadership at Yavneh or perhaps at the Yavnean rabbis themselves."[179] However, a complete reorientation generalises the intention of a massive text, especially in light of scholarship which argues that these rabbis not only were disinterested in their displaced compatriots' work but likely would not have read Greek.[180] After all, Greek was Josephus' second language, and according to Niehoff, he only wrote in the language "to reach a broad audience in Rome as well as in the larger intellectual community abroad."[181]

On the other hand, Cotton and Eck have noted, while the *beneficia* provided to Josephus may seem incredibly generous and a potential sign of a special affinity for Josephus, we must recall "that countless people in Rome and all over the empire received Roman citizenship from Vespasian (and his sons)—as is shown by the great number of new citizens bearing the name T.

[179] Mason (2005a) 72. Mason suggests for some further reading on this matter in n. 6. Some of the literature includes: Smith (1956), 72; Neusner (1973); Cohen (1979), 86, 145, 209; Attridge (1984) 200–203; Schwartz (1990), 10, 199–201.
[180] Mason (2003a) 73.
[181] Niehoff (2016) 136. However, she suggests to see Mason (2016) for a more in depth study of this issue.

Flavius."[182] Josephus still maintains certain privileges not afforded to other clients of the Flavians. Notably, his patron Vespasian provided him with his former residence from before he was emperor and a new wife when he was set up in Rome (*Vita* 423).[183] Cotton and Eck dispute, even if we take Josephus at his word, whether the Flavian accommodation would have been particularly unique or special and may not have been indicative of Josephus' privileged position. They note that Josephus did not stay on the Palatine in Vespasian's imperial residence, but in a "more modest *domus* located on the Quirinal in *regio* VI of the city of Rome".[184] Moreover, it was fairly typical for the imperial house or patrons more generally to put up clients, at least temporarily, in their own homes. However, Josephus' narrative does mention his accommodation in the context of the special gifts given to him by the imperial house along with a new wife. Therefore, Josephus appears to use his residential privilege to indicate an intimate relationship with the imperial family, but whether this was actually the case is another matter. Notwithstanding, the permanence of the accommodation seems unique in comparison with what Cotton and Eck mention patrons typically provided for their clients. Perhaps there is a healthy medium to be drawn in which some credence is given both the existence of intimacy while still leaving room for the potential for exaggeration and embellishment.

While the we can dispute the degree of Josephus' imperial intimacy—that is, whether Josephus was an intimate member of the imperial circle or just one more client of a wealthy imperial patron is up for debate—he was still provided with greater support and privileges than the average Roman citizen. Most importantly, he was privileged with a certain esteem that came

[182] Cotton and Eck (2005) 40. Later in the chapter they list further examples of these types of rights being afforded to favoured foreigners.
[183] Cotton and Eck (2005) are hesitant to take Josephus at his word and are very weary of potential exaggerations from Josephus. *Cf.* Cotton and Eck (2005) esp. for a discussion of the house 38-39. However, the majority of the chapter is fairly dubious of many of Josephus' claims to intimacy and privilege.
[184] Eck (1995); Cotton and Eck (2005) 39.

with the Flavian *nomen*.[185] This title alone would have guaranteed that Josephus' works would have orbited imperial and elite intellectual circles, especially since they discussed the eventual successor(s) of the emperorship.[186]

Audiences constitute an important methodological aim in Josephus' work. In both his *Bellum Judaicum* and *Contra Apionem* he wishes to distinguish himself from his Greek historical predecessors.[187] Niehoff observes that "Josephus stresses that he presents his account "as a foreigner," distancing himself from the "native Greeks," who are incompetent "in the matter of history, where veracity and laborious collection of facts are essential".[188] He goes further to slight Greek historians saying, τιμάσθω δὴ παρ᾽ ἡμῖν τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας ἀληθές, ἐπεὶ παρ᾽ Ἕλλησιν ἠμέληται (*BJ* 1.16: 'among us let us honour the truth of history, since it is not it overlooked among the Greeks'). Earlier Josephus says κἀγὼ…ἀλλόφυλος ὢν Ἕλλησί τε καὶ Ῥωμαίοις τὴν μνήμην τῶν κατορθωμάτων ἀνατίθημι (*BJ* 1.16: 'I being a foreigner set forth this memorial of great achievements for the Romans and the Greeks.'), he has no aversion to making such cutting statements a line or two later. Equally, in the case of the *Bellum Judaicum* where the narrative audience appears to be 'straightforward', Mason argues that the characterisation of Vespasian and Titus is full of nuance even as they both have a prominent role in the narrative.[189] Therefore, neither of his target groups are saved from subversive criticism.

185 Mason (2003b: 559) notes that along with adopting the imperial *nomen*, Flavius, "it is highly likely that [Josephus] completed his citizen's name with the popular *praenomen* Titus, shared by all three Flavian rulers."
186 Titus was the only guaranteed successor but with the benefit of hindsight we know that Domitian would also been emperor one day, albeit a much less popular leader.
187 Niehoff (2016) 137 suggests the following literature on this issue: Goodman (1999) 45–58; Barclay (2007) 365–366; Cohen (2010) 121–132; Mason (2016a), (2016b), (2016c); Barclay (2016).
188 Niehoff (2016) 137. The quotes within are from *BJ* 1.16, and the translation she uses are from Thackeray, LCL. The only amendment I may make on the translation is to take a closer look at the word translated as foreigner. The Greek word here is
189 Mason (2005b) esp. 271-73.

Elsewhere, particularly in his *Contra Apionem*, Josephus makes other slights at Greek historiography. With a particular disdain for Apion and Chaeremon, Niehoff notes that Josephus believed the majority of Greek Historians, "relied on contradictory conjectures, because the Greeks neglected to keep official records of current events (*Apion* 1.19–21)" and were also more concerned with their own vanity and self-presentation, for they did not write "in order to discover and present the truth, but rather to 'display their literary ability' in comparison to others (*Apion* 1.24–25)."[190] Despite these indictments of Hellenic historiography, Feldman has argued extensively that Josephus' portrait of Abraham relied heavily on Hellenistic tropes and literary forms, which not only would have been discomforting and not intended for Judean readers, but also seems hypocritical in light of Josephus' in-text comments about Hellenic writers.[191] Although Niehoff regards many of these slights as an attempt by Josephus—being hyper aware of his marginal status at Rome—to appeal to Romans and their prejudices and contribute "to the construction of Roman identity" and encourage pride in the native Roman historiographical tradition.[192] This is not a straightforward matter either.

Josephus should not be thought of as one-dimensional or narrow-minded in either his early or later works; they contain a multitude of substantial nuances. Because of the complexity of Josephus' narrative perspective, Barton and Boyarin describe him as having a 'divided mind'.[193] While Josephus often highlights the benevolence of the Flavians it is not without moments of sarcastic and ironic undertones.[194] For example, while he often praised Titus' "humanistic virtues", his portrayal of the Flavian ruler undermines his image of an assertive and commanding leader

[190] Niehoff (2016) 137; Again, the translations are from Thackeray, LCL.
[191] Feldman (1968) 143-56; (1984-85) 212-52; (1987) 133-53; (1998) 223-89. See Reed (2004) where she makes a similar observation about Feldman's scholarship and contributes to the discussion about Greco-Roman aspects of the Abraham in Josephus' *Antiquities* which may have been discomforting to Judean audiences.
[192] Niehoff (2016) 137.
[193] Barton and Boyarin (2016) *esp*. Chapter 11: A Jewish Actor in the Audience: Josephan Doublespeak
[194] Mason (2005b). 272.

when his troops ignored his orders on multiple occasions; often a rogue soldier will act without Titus' knowledge or directive (*e.g*. burning down the temple while Titus was far way sleeping in his tent: *BJ* 6.252-254).[195] Similar cutting undertones can also be found in Josephus' *Antiquities*. Mason has noted some striking resemblances between his depiction of Tiberius and Domitian when he narrates the event between Tiberius' last days and Claudius' accession (*Ant.* 18. 205–304; 19. 1–226).[196] These seemingly self-contradicting aspects also appear in Josephus' treatment of the Galilean revolt for whom he was previously a general. While Josephus ends up switching sides from the Galileans to back and aid Vespasian and Titus (*BJ* 5.361–420, 541–7; 6.96–129; *Apion* 1.49; *Vita* 416-419), he expresses great admiration for the Judean rebels for their patient endurance amid Roman onslaught and for their continued practice of the daily laws/customs (τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν νομίμων) after the Temple had been captured (*BJ* 1.148).[197] As these examples and the following brief case study illustrate, Josephus' intended audience is not a straightforward matter, but that his writing was dynamic and contained many subtle nuances, often simultaneously supporting and undermining his patrons and the Roman elite.

There are marked moments in Josephus' *Antiquities* where his presentation of a prophetic episode exemplifies the complex relationship Josephus has to his alleged Greco-Roman audience. In his *Antiquities* (10.203-210), Josephus recounts how Daniel witnessed a strange vision

[195] Mason (2005b) 265.

[196] Ibid 273-74: "Both were absent from the capital for long periods, giving the impression of aloofness and arrogance and requiring a secretarial post *ab actis senatus*, so that they could remain informed of senatorial discussions; this appointment fell into disuse between their reigns (Tac. *Ann.* 5. 4). Both were bald, childless, and devoted to astrology (Suet. *Tib.* 14; *Dom.* 15–16). Indeed they were born, made Caesar, and designated *princeps* under the same three astrological signs (Scorpio, Cancer, Virgo) and, if one accepts Sauron's reconstruction of Tiberius' magnificent cave at Sperlonga, Domitian's Alban villa was a deliberate imitation of Tiberius' retreat. Suetonius famously alleges that Domitian's reading was confined to Tiberius' acts and memoirs (*commentarios et acta*, *Dom.* 20. 3). After the fire of 80 CE, Domitian was concerned to rebuild (among other things) the *domus Tiberiana* on the Palatine, which had become the imperial residence, and which he connected with his own new palace. Though we should not conclude from these parallels that Domitian was universally seen as a 'new Tiberius', they would presumably have encouraged an audience listening to specific criticisms of Tiberius *on these issues* to make connections with Domitian."

[197] Passage discussed at length in Barton and Boyarin (2016) 182-183. They present a few instances where Josephus expresses sympathy and admiration for his compatriot's cause.

preserved in his surviving book. While much of what the prophet describes accords with the vision sequence of the biblical text, there are subtle differences that suggest Josephus's own self-interested interpretation. In his description of a great, multimedia statue, Josephus makes no mention of the 'division of the feet into iron and clay', describing the statue's feet as made entirely of iron (*Ant.* 10.209), and redacting any mention of the vulnerability and eventual destruction of the feet.[198] The bronze belly and thighs were interpreted to represent the Greek hegemony, the golden head the Babylonian kings, and the silver arms and shoulders both Persia and Medea, that subsequently suggests that the iron legs and feet were the Roman Empire, which will dominate all "because it is stronger than gold, silver, and bronze" (10.209). Although Josephus leaves any specifics of the fall of Rome out of his narrative, other accounts of this vision exist wherein the iron, too, is turned to dust when the boulder crushes it. Before diving into this apparent discrepancy, the Josephan account is as follows,

> ἐδήλωσε δὲ καὶ περὶ τοῦ λίθου Δανίηλος τῷ βασιλεῖ, ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐκ ἔδοξε τοῦτο ἱστορεῖν τὰ παρελθόντα καὶ τὰ γεγενημένα συγγράφειν οὐ τὰ μέλλοντα ὀφείλοντι, εἰ δέ τις τῆς ἀκριβείας γλιχόμενος οὐ περιίσταται πολυπραγμονεῖν, ὡς καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων τί γενήσεται βούλεσθαι μαθεῖν, σπουδασάτω τὸ βιβλίον ἀναγνῶναι τὸ Δανιήλου· εὑρήσει δὲ τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς γράμμασιν.
>
> And Daniel also explained to the king about the stone, yet it seemed to me proper not to recount this, being obligated to record past events and things that have happened but not what is about to happen. But if anyone, anxious for precision, will not be deterred from being curious to the extent of even wishing to learn about the opaque—what is to happen—let him make the effort to read the book of Daniel. He will find this among the sacred writings.199 (Ant. 10.210)

Commentators have often dismissed Josephus' stated motive as a thinly disguised attempt to predict the fall of Rome while demonstrating his unwillingness to offend Roman readers by being explicit.[200] However, Mason concluded that Josephus "wants to leave the impression that the

[198] Frisch (2017) 183-192.
[199] Trans. Begg with amendments *Flavius Josephus Online*.
[200] Bruce (1965) 160; Mason (1994) 172-173.

Jewish scriptures contain all sorts of oriental mysteries beyond what he as a historian can presently discuss."[201] Additionally, Mason maintains that Daniel's prediction would not have been alarming for Roman audiences and even if it were, Josephus's writing was apathetic to the concern.[202] Elsewhere, Josephus claims that Daniel spoke of the Roman Empire in his predictions of the rise and fall of nations (*Ant* 10.276) and the eventual supremacy of Israel (*Ant.* 4.125), showing that Josephus had no issue with discussing the eventual decline of Roman hegemony. Furthermore, by emphasising the sturdiness of the iron, Josephus takes away any apocalyptic urgency from the prediction.[203]

To fully appreciate Josephus, it is important to consider briefly the topic of Biblical 'divergences', especially considering the complications of navigating the manuscript traditions of the texts that exist.[204] Essentially, the text of the Hebrew Bible (HB) comes from the 11C CE, though the reliability of that (Masoretic) text was more or less confirmed by material discovered at Qumran. However, the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) reveal some variability within texts, including if not especially Daniel, with sections written in Aramaic and others in Hebrew was certainly cobbled together from sources, which is attested at Qumran alone, in at least two languages. In other words, a departure from the HB version of Daniel may be less significant than it would appear since we have so few contemporaneous copies of the writing (or any eventually canonical text).[205] However, with consideration of the emotive conditional in *Ant*. 10.210 ('εἰ δέ τις τῆς

[201] Mason (1994) 173.
[202] Mason has noted elsewhere that at least some of Josephus' intended audience would have been Roman to a degree. He notes, "a variety of literary evidence indicates a keen interest among some Romans in things Judaean" (Suet. *Dom*. 12.2; Tac. *Hist*. 5.5; Arr. *Epict. Diss*. 2.9.20; Juv. *Sat*. 5.14.96-106). See Mason (2003b) 562; (2005a) 70–100. For a discussion as to the 'publishing' (a term Mason dislikes) of Josephus' writings *cf.* Mason (2011) 81-94.
[203] Mason (1994) 173
[204] For the scholarly discussion of Josephus' divergences from the Hebrew text *cf.* Feldman (1998).
629-658; For a discussion of which source Josephus was reading see: Vermes (1991) 149-66; Bruce (1965).
[205] For a longer discussion of this complicated tradition of transmission and the many linguistic profiles, *cf.* Mason, (1994) 161-163.

ἀκριβείας γλιχόμενος οὐ περιίσταται πολυπραγμονεῖν, ὡς καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων τί γενήσεται βούλεσθαι μαθεῖν, σπουδασάτω τὸ βιβλίον ἀναγνῶναι τὸ Δανιήλου· εὑρήσει δὲ τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς γράμμασιν.'), Josephus seems to be aware that there is something beyond the paraphrase he has included.[206] Regardless then of which linguistic version(s) Josephus read himself—regardless of the similarity to what is regarded as the Bible for contemporary readers—Josephus (to some degree) amended the commonly known version of Daniel's vision. Perhaps his gesturing to his own source indirectly is Josephus' attempt at transparency about this alteration. Such nuances further complicate our understanding of Josephus. In other words, placing Josephus in a box of either being pro-Roman or anti-Rome, apologising for the Flavians or undermining the Flavians, is not as easy as some may have argued. However, Josephus' apprehension towards the apocalyptic side of Daniel's narrative is not without intrigue, and it remains unclear what motivated his decision to leave out the degradation of the iron.[207] Mason believes that Josephus simply did not expect anyone to consult another tradition of Daniel in reality, but rather hoped his narrative would replace the original within Rome.[208] Moreover, as a historian, Josephus doesn't think he is qualified to discuss future events. According to Mason he was well aware "of his task as a historian, and this accounts for his omission of elaborate eschatological scenarios"; this seems to be the case

[206] It is worth noting the conditional used by Josephus is the Future Emotional (Smyth 2328). Essentially, in "Emotional Future Conditions" the protasis commonly suggests something undesired, feared, or independent of the speaker's will and the apodosis commonly conveys a threat, a warning, or an earnest appeal to the feelings. Now Josephus' tone here likely conveys the latter of these three options. However, this furthers emphasises Josephus' awareness of certain content being excluded from his account of the prophetic vision of Daniel described in the Hebrew tradition. Similar invitations to read further are found in *Ant.* 16.398 (on the Jewish 'philosophies') and *Vita* 6 (on Josephus' genealogical records).

[207] For some suggested motivations see Bruce (1965); Mason (1994); Feldman (1987) and (1998); and Frisch (2017) 183-192.

[208] Mason (1994) 173.

elsewhere in his work.[209] Perhaps, then, we can concede his omission was to some degree for stylistic reasons or due to a desire for a straightforward narrative thread.

Generally, Josephus' account reflects his extensive knowledge of the Hebrew stories that he reproduced. Perhaps Josephus used this as an opportunity to perform his "Judeanness" for those compatriots who were dubious of his allegiances to his native land. After all, Josephus describes a climate of continual accusations of infidelity toward his traditional culture by other Judeans (*Life*. 424-9). Perhaps a comparison to the competitive environment of the fifth century BCE—when our Derevni author wrote—may offer some insight. Similarly to the Derveni author's performance of their intellectual capabilities, Josephus could be performing his own. Throughout his *Antiquities* Josephus displays an intricate knowledge of Hebrew scripture and Judean history, all the while putting forth a sense of deference to the Judean prophets, customs, and religious texts. If there is any ambiguity, then it may well be a homage of sorts to the opacity of many of the Hebrew prophet's dreams and prophecies. Moreover, the advice to consult the original text may be reflective of Josephus' own devotion and admiration to these texts; especially since the grammar suggests an editorialising tone, it seems that Josephus was aware of other traditions beyond his own account.[210]

While an understanding of the implications of the audience is important, it is also worthwhile to consider some of the interpretive *topoi* at work. In the passage quoted above Daniel is described as ἀκριβείας γλιχόμενος ('anxious for precision') and πολυπραγμονεῖν… περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων ('curious to learn about the opaque'), ideal traits for the type of expert Josephus claims to

[209] Mason (1994) 173. Mason writes, "[w]e are obliged to concede that elsewhere he deliberately neglects large sections of the Jewish scriptures in the pursuit of a single historical thread, excluding all of the wisdom literature and most of the minor prophets; even from his beloved Jeremiah he excerpts the historical material alone."
[210] For an example of some scholarship on Josephus' awareness of other narrative and for potential sources he may have used *cf.* Mason (2017); Feldman, Louis H. and Hata Gōhei (1989); Feldman (1998); and Goud (1996).

be and terms he uses elsewhere to describe himself. Moreover, these traits are likely connected to his historiographic efforts towards accuracy. In his *Vita*, when Josephus made an investigation into the Galilean leaders, he describes himself likewise as πολυπραγμονῆσαι (in the aorist here, 'curios to learn': *Vita* 312). In his youth, Josephus offered ἀκριβέστερόν ('more precision': *Vita* 9) on legal matters at the request of the Judean high priests and principal men; both men share an affinity for ἀκρίβεια. Additionally, both terms are often associated with Daniel's dream interpretation, especially when combined with περὶ τῶν ἀδήλων which shared associations with divinely inspired dream interpretation. In fact, in the account of Daniel at *Ant.* 10.269, it is from the writings of Daniel that "he made clear (ἐποίησε δῆλον) the precision (τὸ ἀκριβὲς) and accuracy of his prophesies". As Niehoff identifies, the notion of ἐποίησε δῆλον is often found in the allegorical and the exegetical work of Judeans in Alexandria and in particular, Aristobulus. Josephus was likely well aware of the allegorical tradition at Alexandria and the identical terminology gestures to this intellectual tradition. Aristobulus comments,

> It is set forth (δηλοῦται) that 'the mountain was burning with fire' (Deut. 5:23), as the Law says, because of the Divine descent, while there were the voices of the trumpets and the fire irresistibly burning. (*Ap.* Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 8.10.13 = fr. 2; ed. Holladay 1983-96, vol III, p. 142. Trans. Niehoff)

Niehoff says the verb δηλόω demonstrates the Aristobulus' emphasis upon the clarity of the meaning of scripture, even if the wisdom was not obvious to every reader.[211] Likewise, Josephus emphasises the intelligibility of Daniel, but also the effortlessness in which he understood his writings and visions. Josephus could well have said "the divine wisdom is obvious to me and I'm capable of explaining it for you". While Josephus emphasises his faithfulness to the literal books of Daniel, he also draws attention to his necessity as an interpreter of these texts;[212] it was a double

[211] Niehoff (2011) 63.

[212] Ibid (2011: 63) also makes a similar point with regards to Aristobulus commenting that "He neither adopts the language of secrecy nor implies that Moses has intentionally hidden his message…" As such this is a rather different

demonstration both of his intellectual expertise and his fidelity to the biblical story. Furthermore, the allusions these words make to divine interpretation only serve to further legitimise Josephus' role as a prophet for the Flavian hegemony in his own right. Through these associations it becomes clear that Josephus was cultivating and demonstrating his own efficacy and capability as an intellectual and an interpreter. Indirectly, he marks himself as a researcher and an intellectual with such a deep curiosity and capability that, if we agree with Mason, he did not believe anyone else had. Josephus' efforts would ultimately help to bolster the authenticity of his intellectual capabilities, and in turn legitimising the basis of his prophetic abilities that provided him with freedom, property, some social standing, and an intellectual platform in Rome.

Josephus' most famous act of interpretation was delivered to Vespasian during the Galilean revolt. In one account the wisdom he uncovers appeared to him in a dream, delivered from God the night before, predicting the ascension of Vespasian and the Flavian Dynasty (*BJ* 3.351-52: ἀνάμνησις αὐτὸν τῶν διὰ νυκτὸς ὀνείρων εἰσέρχεται, δι᾽ ὧν ὁ θεὸς τάς τε μελλούσας αὐτῷ συμφορὰς προεσήμανεν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τὰ περὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖς ἐσόμενα). In another portrayal of the events, Josephus refers to an ambiguous prophecy in the holy writings that only he interpreted correctly. His ability to interpret prophecies is elsewhere noted when he claims that he is "not ignorant of the prophecies of the sacred books" (*BJ* 3.352: τῶν γε μὴν ἱερῶν βίβλων οὐκ ἠγνόει τὰς πρφητείας). In this episode, our author notes that many wise men misunderstood the interpretation of the prophecy (*BJ* 6.310-13: πολλοὶ τῶν σοφῶν ἐπλανήθησαν περὶ τὴν κρίσιν), since the oracle referred not to a Judean but to the Flavian, Vespasian, as Josephus was able to correctly ascertain. Despite this narrative discrepancy, Wendt notes that three (at least)

approach than other allegorical interpreters. Niehoff herself comments the lack of dramatic flair on the part of Aristobulus in this respect, and I would add Josephus, in comparison with a figure like the author of the Derveni Papyrus, who also employs the term δηλόω as a hermeneutic device.

contemporaneous or subsequent Roman historians mention this prophecy. Tacitus and Suetonius reproduce the tradition about an oracle which they attribute to some Judean priestly figure, although Dio and Appian both acknowledge Josephus by name (*e.g.* Dio 65.1.4: Ἰώσηπος δὲ ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος).[213] All this to say, while there may be some confusion about the exact nature of the interpretation, the episode gained some traction among historians.

Josephus' interpretation functions similar to that of the allegorical methods employed by our Derveni author in the previous chapter. Just as the Derveni author claimed to be unpacking and interpreting the mysteries hidden beneath the words of Orpheus so, too, is Josephus' claiming to reinterpret old prophecies written in Judean law. Again, like the Derveni author, he is making claims that certain material is prophetic in the first place. The mention of the many other failed interpreters (*BJ* 6.310-13) functions as a demonstration of primacy within the competitive environment and sounds awfully similar to the claims of the misguided priests in the Derevni text (*e.g.* col. 5-6). Josephus acts as an interpreter of the hidden truth, uncovering it from a text with many ἀμφιβόλως.

It is worth noting here that part of Josephus' justification of his capability is derived from his linage and priestly position, especially for the wisdom he has of "the prophesies of the sacred books" (*BJ* 3.352: τῶν γε μὴν ἱερῶν βίβλων οὐκ ἠγνόει τὰς πρφητείας ὡς ἄν αὐτός τε ὢν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος). As Mason notes, for Josephus and other intellectuals of the Judean priestly class, textual knowledge is inseparable from priestly authority, and just as it is the source of Josephus' wisdom and mysterious power, it is also for other individuals of priestly lineage who

[213] Tacitus *Hist*. 5.13; Suetonius *Vesp*. 4.5– 6; Cassius Dio, 65.1.1– 4; Appian apud Zonaras 11.16. Wendt (2016: 93) notes that the "latter two authors disagree, however, about the type of prophecy: the former states that Josephus ascertained these events through dream interpretation, the latter, by discovering an oracle in the sacred Judean writings."

possess prophetic abilities.[214] The attention Josephus attracted from Judean priests at an early age for his accuracy and proficiency in reading the laws sets him apart from the others, however. Rebecca Gray notes that throughout Jospehus' narratives, "as in the case everywhere in Jewish tradition, this kind of esoteric wisdom is regarded by Josephus partly as an acquired skill and partly as a gift from God".[215] This pattern applies to himself as well, and is not dissimilar to the intellectual skill of our Derveni author. In his *Bellum Judaicum*, Josephus notes that while he had a particular ability for interpreting dreams, the ambiguous truth contained within comes directly from God (*BJ* 3.352: ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἱκανὸς συμβαλεῖν τὰ ἀμφιβόλως ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου λεγόμενα·). Similarly, although the Derveni author was a better interpreter than his rivals and had a more in depth understanding of Orpheus than they, it was still the poet who embedded divine wisdom into the verses.

Josephus's writings contain many references and slights toward his competitors whom he labels as "false prophets" (ψευδοπροφῆται) and "charlatans" or "imposters" (γοήτες). He blames one such 'false prophet' for the deaths of women and children taking refuge in the Jerusalem temple at the time of its siege since he urged them to go up to the court to receive signs of their salvation (*BJ* 6.285-86: τὰ σημεῖα τῆς σωτηρίας). This fraudster was, in the opinion of Josephus, merely one of many "rogues and pretenders of God" who tricked and deceived people at that time (*BJ* 6.288: οἱ μὲν πατεῶνες καὶ καταψευδόμενοι τοῦ θεοῦ τηνικαῦτα παρέπειθον). Between his *Antiquities* and *Bellum Judaicum* Josephus lists a number of prophets who fit this description, including a Judean *pseudo*-expert who used Mosaic wisdom to steal from Fulvia during the reign of Tiberius; John, son of Levi, who incited rebellions during the Judean War among the inhabitants of a small Galilean town; and Theudas, who, styling himself a prophet, rallied thousands of

[214] Mason (2003a) 49; Wendt (2016) 94 n.87; *cf. BJ* 3.356.
[215] Gray (1993) 68.

spectators to the banks of the Jordan River to witness his Moses-esque miracle of parting the waters.[216] All these criticisms serve to affirm Josephus' own claims, as Wendt notes, "his denunciations of would-be prophets and exegetes ultimately function as foils to his own prophetic and intellectual talents."[217]

At the same time in his *Antiquities*, Josephus represents a number of biblical figures (Solomon, Daniel, Joseph, etc.) as models of "good" and learned religious expertise, emphasising the accuracy of their prophecies and their learned nature. In his representation of these famous Judean interpreters and prophets, Josephus emphasises the excellence of their interpretive capabilities and their inclination for textual production.[218] In the *Antiquities*, Solomon is said to have composed three thousand mystery-rich books of "parables and allegories" (*Antiquities* 8.44: συνετάξατο δὲ…καὶ παραβολῶν καὶ εἰκόνων βίβλους τρισχιλίας). Because God taught Solomon "the techniques regarding the *daimones*" (τὴν κατὰ τῶν δαιμόνων τέχνην), the wisdom contained beneath Solomon's enigmas aided a Judean named Eleazar to perform healings and exorcisms before the Flavians and their armies (*Ant.* 8.44-49).[219] In the same way the Derveni author benefited from his associations to Orpheus so, too, does Josephus benefit from his connections to these Judean figures. We also have to recall that Josephus was likely not well regarded by the many intellectuals who were dubious of his alleged newfound intimacy with the Flavians—of course,

[216] For these references to Josephan slights of false prophets see Josephus, *Ant* .18.65– 84 (Mosaic Wisdom); *BJ* 4.84–85 (John); *Ant.* 20.97– 99 (Theudas); and for more *BJ* 2.261– 62; *AJ* 20.169– 71. See Wendt (2016) 89 for a discussion of all these episodes, it was her work that provided me with these references. For another brief discussion of these figures and episodes see Aune (1982) 419-21.

[217] Wendt (2016) 93.

[218] In his *Antiquities* Josephus' narratives of both Daniel and Solomon note their production of books and texts which contain the many prophecies and in the case of Solomon specifically enigmatic versus. *E.g*. *Ant.* 8.44 (Solomon); 10.269, 10.272, etc.

[219] Josephus in this same passage regarded Solomon and the wisdom he received and subsequently embedded into his writings that Judeans have such effective methods for dealing within *daimones*. For a discussion of this passage see Wendt (2016) 88-89; and for general scholarship that deals with Judean exorcism see Bohak (2008) 105-122 and Frankfurter (2014) 20-21.

this was informed by racial and xenophobic stereotypes both of foreign religious experts and Judeans in Rome.[220] Any of the appeals for authority and legitimacy would have been targeted toward these elite circles with whom Josephus would have desperately desired to accept and to affirm his intellectual capability.

Josephus' Parallel Lives

Josephus often alludes to a variety of parallels between himself and other historical intellectuals and diviners**,** to the extent these figures can even be seen as distinct. These types of intellectuals are hardly mutually exclusive in the writings of Josephus. Such figures include Joseph, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Daniel.[221] Drawing narrative connections and aligning their capabilities to his own through the language that he employs, Josephus constructs a series of parallel narrative structures in an attempt to self-fashion a similar authority and legitimacy. David Daube has noted the comparisons Josephus fashions between himself and Jeramiah. There are parallel circumstances in which both are granted freedom from generous generals due to their prophetic predictions.[222] The prophet is one of the more straightforward associations considering their shared interpretative capabilities and the special attention Josephus pays him as a dream interpreter specifically, to say nothing of their shared name.

[220] Mason (2003b) 561-62; Niehoff (2011) 176. Mason comments that Judeans both during and prior to the Flavian dynasty faced xenophobic criticism at Rome. Mason (2003b: 562) notes that during and after the Judean revolt, "anti-Judaean reprisals broke out in various cities" (*BJ* 2.457–93, 559; 7.108–11, 367–8), possibly in Rome too, although we have no direct evidence of that." Josephus criticises the early Roman narratives for its negative characterisation of the Judeans and their adulation of the Romans (*BJ* 1.1–3, 6–8). Niehoff (2011: 176) additionally notes the "persistent criticism" toward circumcision that Josephus responded to in his *Contra Apionem*. Josephus contended that the Egyptians too practiced circumcision, it was not exclusively a Judean practice. According to Josephus, the Greek historian Herodotus stressed that the Egyptians "informed us that they Have taught others to circumcise" (*Ap.*1.142. Trans. Niehoff). Regardless of the particulars of the *apologia* Josephus presented, the need for such appeals speaks to the anti-Semitic sentiments present in Rome.

[221] *Cf.* Daube (1980): 18-36.

[222] Josephus *BJ* 5.9.3.362, 391, 406, 411. Additionally, upon his release Jeramiah requests the release of his friends and family, an appeal which Josephus also claims to have made to Titus in his *Vita* (419)

Notably, Josephus and Joseph have the shared ability to understand and interpret dreams, which they show promise for at an early age (Josephus: *Vita* 8-9 and 208; *BJ* 3.352 and Joseph: *Antiquities* 2.9–17 esp. 10-11 and 74–86).[223] The language of ὄναρ is used in both cases to mark the dream they receive (Josephus: *BJ* 3.352 and 353 and Joseph: *e.g. Ant.* 2.12 and 2.15) and it is made clear that the dream comes from God, using θεῖος in both cases—*BJ* 3.352 (Josephus) and *e.g. Ant* 2.13 (Joseph). Both dreams and their interpretation mark the ascension of certain figures to an imperial position—Joseph predicts his own ascension as an ally of the Pharaoh and Josephus predicts Vespasian's. They both deliver these prophecies as a captive only to be freed as a result of their coming to fruition.[224] In addition, both are rewarded subsequently with a wife from their royal patron along with many other gifts (Joseph: *Ant* 2.89-91 and Josephus: *Vita* 414 and 423). In both cases the virginity of the wives is marked in the text (Vespasian to Josephus: *Vita* 414; Pharaoh to Joseph: *Ant* 2.91).

Josephus and Joseph are both, we are told, the subjects of considerable jealousy and envy for their interpretive skills. Although Danube comments that this recurring jealousy may be a feature of Josephus' "interest in psychological refinement and [is] indebted to Hellenistic motifs."[225] Nevertheless, Josephus' editorialization about Joseph's brothers—ζηλοτυπούντων ἄρα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὰς τῶν οἰκειοτάτων εὐπραγίας (*Ant*. 2.10) 'so jealous were the men of the successes of their closest family')—Josephus could well have been speaking about his own situation. While τῶν οἰκειοτάτων, meaning closely related or those from the *oiko*s, likely does refer to very close family or relatives, especially in the superlative, it should be marked that Josephus does not say brothers or use any language to imply sibling jealously; sibling rivalry was

[223] The Joseph comparisons are also discussed by Daube (1980: 27).
[224] Danube (1980) 27.
[225] Ibid

present in Josephus' life, since he is sure to emphasise that while given the same education as his brother he far surpassed him (*Vita* 8). However, the absence of ἀδελφοί or any other fraternal language, which Josephus uses elsewhere, leaves some space for ambiguity that could gesture to jealousy from his fellow Judeans, especially if *oikos* implies homeland rather than the literal household. Otherwise, the *oikos* here could allude to the imperial household which too, according to Josephus, was filled people jealousy of his success of the Judeans orbiting the imperial court.[226]

Finally, to reiterate from above, it is hard to ignore their shared name. While in English we distinguish between Joseph and Josephus, the Greek makes no such distinction: Ἰώσηπος is used for both. Often as one reads the Joseph narrative, one naturally finds themselves unintentionally blending together and conflating their narratives. However, while Josephus characterises the prophet Josephus with both structural and linguistic equivalencies to his own life, he had a stronger affinity for the prophet Daniel. It is perhaps no coincidence then that the Daniel narrative is placed in the exact centre of the *Antiquitie*s.[227] It is for this reason that scholars generally agree that Daniel is central to understanding Josephus's self-positioning and possible aims.

For Josephus, Daniel was "one of the greatest prophets" (*Ant* 10.266), he was able to predict with precision the course of subsequent history and so too offered the secrets to understanding the contemporary period.[228] Moreover, he notes that Daniel alone predicted good things, whereas the others had foreseen catastrophes (*Ant* 10. 268). Mason notes that "[b]y the mid-nineties, when he

[226] Bowersock (2005) 53-58.
[227] Mason (1994) 171.
[228] Josephus is not the only author who had a particular interest in Daniel. For example, Mason notes that many were interested in the *exemplary* value of the connect stories in Daniel - the fiery furnace and the lion's den (4 Macc 16:21; 3 Macc 6:7; Heb 11:33-34). He says, "This use of Daniel completely sidesteps the problem of his unfulfilled expectation of God's kingdom after the death of Antiochus IV. His faith becomes a model for all times and places." However, most readers valued apocalyptic agenda found in his writings. Mason also notes, "Another way of appropriating Daniel's eschatological programme was to suppose that God's kingdom was being established through the agency of divinely chosen leaders, whether the Hasmonean brothers or those who led the rebellion against Rome." *Cf.* Mason (1994) 165-67.

wrote the *Antiquities*, Josephus had developed a sustained interest in Daniel. He knew at least two Greek versions (OG and Theodotion) as well as the Hebrew/ Aramaic text and some extrabiblical traditions."[229] Josephus admired Daniel's ability to not only predict "the things to come, just as the other prophets, but he specified a specific time at which these things will come to pass" (*Ant* 10.267). The latter admiration perhaps explains Josephus' strange (and confusing) emphasis on the dates—to the day—of the destructions of the Jerusalem Temple (*BJ* 6.268-70). However, it becomes clear through his *Jewish Antiquities* that for Josephus, Daniel was not only a great prophet and interpreter (in Hebrew: משכיל, 1:17, 20; 2:30, 47; 5:11-12), but his work (and Josephus' as well) was highly philosophical, and could be read alongside Greek and Roman counterparts.[230] After all, Josephus tells us that he is an expert in the Judean philosophical schools (*Vita* 10), and is able to 'philosophise' (φιλοσοφεῖν) to persuade his compatriots during the war (*BJ*: 3.62). He also gestures to other, Greek, philosophical schools to tie his work to the more philosophically inclined, notably the Epicureans for their belief that God was uninvolved in human affairs, for their rejection of the types of divine interventions that Josephus claims he and other Hebrew prophets experienced (*Ant* 10.277-280).[231]

By forging a parallel between his life and intellectual capabilities with that of Daniel, Josephus attempted to gain credibility by association. His persistency in his efforts to affirm the respect and honour (and, in turn, credibility) that Daniel garnered from both his contemporaries

229 Mason (1994) 167.

230 Mason (1994) 168; Other commentators like Weiss (1979: 421-433) have noted that Josephus generally regards the Judean prophets as being highly philosophical. Mason (1994: 168) says "he Jewish view of God's nature is sophisticated and philosophical, Josephus says, which is why Jewish law accords so perfectly with natural law (φυσιολογία: *Ant*. 1.18-20/ τῇ τῶν φύσει: *Ant*. 1.24). Moses' teaching will be found "highly philosophical" (λίαν φόλοσοφος) by those who care to investigate it (*Ant* 1.25). Just as the Greco-Roman schools have their own prescriptions for εὐδαιμονία, Judaism offers this as a reward to those who obey the laws (Ant 1.14, 20). Throughout the following story, Abraham, Moses, and Solomon all appear as wise philosophers, and the Jɛwish sects are schools (φιλοσοφίαι or αἱρέσεις) of the national philosophy (*Ant* 13.171-173; 18.11-25)."

231 Niehoff (2016: 141-144) notes that there are distinct Roman stoic motifs contained in Josephus' writings.

and from subsequent generations, work to authenticate Daniel's work, which in turn then legitimises Josephus' own literary and intellectual efforts.[232] In the same way the Derveni author's associations with Orpheus' legitimacy help to authenticate their own interpretation and initiatory rites. Josephus desired his writings to be read with the same regard with which he and others read Daniel. By demonstrating the efficacy of his interpretation of the 'books' and 'visions' of Daniel, Josephus forged a clear parallel with Daniel and his best traits: exegesis, interpretation, and literary composition.

Although, it is too simplistic to say that Josephus would have wanted to be seen as a 'modern Daniel'. After all he distanced himself from the apocalyptic side of Daniel. Moreover, Alexandria Frisch has noted other discrepancies between the 'traditional' version of Daniel and Josephus' narrative—for example, book seven and the vision of the four beasts.[233] Granted, it is unclear how formulated and static the biblical tradition of Daniel was by the Flavian period. It's possible that a set of traditions about Daniel existed that was broader than we can see from just the LXX/HB accounts and even Josephus' own version. Therefore, without a clear baseline for Daniel, one cannot know to what extent Josephus innovated upon or altered an authoritative tradition; if Daniel was, indeed, a differently elaborated character, maybe Josephus and the LXX/HB versions were just variations on any number of possible themes.[234] Within this environment, Josephus constructed a Daniel on his terms, presenting an adaptable character who advocated the need for and efficacy of the services Josephus desired to broker—these services being the interpretation of

[232] For a discussion of Daniel own personal renown and the renown his 'writings' gained in the ancient world see Daube (1980) 28; Begg (1993) 540; Frisch (2017) 183-192.
[233] Frisch (2017) 185
[234] I intentionally here refer to the "Hebrew tradition(s)", knowing full well the difficulties of navigating through and using the appropriate terminology to discuss the complex linguistic and literary profiles of the Book of Daniel. There appear to have been many and various copies (with different linguistic profiles) attested among the DSS alone. However, I do not have a background and in the full breadth of the complexities as of yet. As such, I will be consistent in juxtaposing the Hebrew tradition and the Josephan tradition, but well aware that these are somewhat unsatisfactory categories within such a complex discourse.

the vision that predicted the rise of Vespasian and the Flavian house, among other skills he claimed and alleged to have deployed.

Josephus in his *Antiquities* goes to great lengths to distinguish Daniel not just from other prophets as a general category, but also to set him apart from and over other Judean prophets in particular. Appearing at the centre of the *Antiquities'* narrative, Daniel's story succeeds the many prior prophets and intellectuals to whom Josephus has already devoted considerable attention, notably Joseph and Solomon.[235] However, it is important to consider this placement and how it provides Daniel with a particular esteem not afforded to the other individuals whom Josephus praises (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc.). It is no surprise that prior to the premonition at Susa or the vision of the statue, Josephus includes a narrative demonstrating Daniel's efficacy above his contemporaries. Devoting over fifteen sections to this narrative, it becomes clear, despite the humility of Daniel, who suggested that he not be "esteemed as wiser than the Chaldeans or the *magoi,*" that he was regarded as far superior to the experts of divining that purveyed similar services during the Babylonian exile.[236]

Josephus' praise continues highlighting the distinguished childhood of Daniel as an exiled Judean in the court of Nebuchadnezzar.[237] According to both Josephus and the biblical account, Daniel was one of many Judean youths from the family of Sacchias, captured and held at the

[235] Frisch (2017: 185) notes the placement of the Daniel narrative in the middle of the text. Although, I would contend that I do not believe that Josephus would categorise Joseph as a subordinate figure to Daniel. First of all, Joseph is rarely considered a prophet within the Hebrew categories and as such would fall under a different set of expectations than Daniel. Secondly, there are so many parallels between the narratives of Daniel and Joseph that I believe he is too part of this network of association between Josephus and the figures whom he discusses. *C.f* Gnuse (1996) 25-26. See note below on why this source is used so scarcely in this paper.

[236] *Ant*. 10.203: When he entered the king's presence, Daniel first begged the king's leave that he should not esteem him wiser than the other Chaldeans and magi because none of them had been able to discover the dream whereas he himself was about to declare it. (Εἰσελθὼν δὲ πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Δανίηλος παρητεῖτο πρῶτον μὴ σοφώτερον αὐτὸν δόξαι τῶν ἄλλων Χαλδαίων καὶ μάγων, ὅτι μηδενὸς ἐκείνων τὸ ὄναρ εὑρεῖν δυνηθέντος αὐτὸς αὐτὸ μέλλοι λέγειν·)

[237] The Brill commentary (10.186 n.2) notes these variant spellings: Ναβουχοδονόσορος, Ναβουχοδονόσαρος (e.g. *Ant*. 10.222), Ναβουχαδανάσσαρος (e.g. *Ant*. 10.220, P; –άσαρος, S), Ναβουχοδονόσωρ (e.g. *Ant*. 10.195, Exc.). MT (Jer *e.g.* 2:1) נבוכדראצר ,(Dan1:3) נבוכדנצר ,(Dan 1:18) נבכדנצר ,(Dan 1:1) נבוכדנאצר

Babylonian court. Despite negative portrayal that Sacchias receives in the biblical tradition, Josephus transmits this royal lineage for Daniel (see also *Ant* 10.188), perhaps to parallel his distinguished genealogy mentioned at *Vita* 2 and *BJ* 5.419, since both have a traditional Judean status.[238] Together with a royal linage these Judean youths were admired for their physical beauty and perfection.[239] It was at the Babylonian court that Daniel was educated by, as Begg has noted as, Hellenic-esque structure and method; his tutors are referred to as παιδαγωγοί, traditionally implying Hellenic tutors.[240] Biblical accounts speak of a ἀρχιευνοῦχος (LXX Daniel 1:3; 'chief eunuch' or a 'palace master'), which would have been more common in eastern royal courts. The Hellenic language may perhaps have been to relate to the type of education afforded to an elite Roman. The ability to potential adaptability of the narrative of Daniel may explain Josephus' affinity for him.

[238]10.186 n.6 "It is striking that Josephus chooses to associate Daniel and his friends with Zedekiah even though the biblical account passes negative judgements on him (2 Kgs 24:19; 2 Chron 36:12). Josephus himself echoes this perspective in *Ant* 10.103 when he states that Zedekiah "scorned what was just and requisite" (Begg, BJP) and turned a blind eye to outrages committed by the mob. However, in *Ant* 10.120 Josephus refers to Zedekiah's "kindness and personal justice" (Begg, BJP) in his treatment of the prophet Jeremiah."

[239] The term Josephus to describe the immaculate appearance or form of the young Judeans (ὄψεων), shares a common stem with the word ὄψις, the noun later used by Josephus to refer to the 'vision' Daniel receives from God (*Ant* 10.272). Josephus may be alluding to this vision that Daniel receives in the plain in Susa, or potentially this could be a pun of sorts gesturing to the Daniel's famous abilities. Regardless of the intention, there is a clear lexical connection. The emphasis of his physical form also alludes to the mention of Joseph's favouritism on account of his physical beauty and high-born status (*Ant.* 2.9). Although the reference is subtle, Josephus was often careful to select a particular vocabulary which resonated with an intellectual audience. As such, these minor lexical allusions are part and parcel of Josephus' particular style and his tactic towards integrating his writings within the intellectual discourses within Flavian Rome. Additionally, ὄψις is not exclusive to the realm of dream and vision interpretation and reception. Elsewhere (e.g. *BJ* 2.170), the term is used more generally to denote any kind of sight or spectacle, in this particular case it is used to describe the 'sight' of Pilate's introduction of the standards to Jerusalem—"those who were close to the sight were shocked" (οἵ τε γὰρ ἐγγὺς πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν ἐξεπλάγησαν). Although, we may perhaps regard this as an insufficiency in the English translation. This particular usage may still be charged with a certain forebode or premonition of the negative reaction of the Judeans to this introduction and therefor the revolt that would later occur in the narrative; it is difficult to say for sure whether this is the case. I think there can be a lot more work done to explore the particularities of ὄψις in Josephus and its particular connotations and implications particularly when used in a prophetic context.

[240] *FJO* 10.186 n.9. Begg has noted the Hellenic connotations of this practice, "[i]n Hellenizing fashion, Josephus has the youths' education entrusted to tutors (παιδαγωγοί) rather than to the "palace master" (NRSV) or "chief eunuch" of the biblical narrative (Dan 1:3)." He further notes that this may be an interpretation/adaptation building of the LXX's use of the verb ἐκπαιδεῦσαι, "to educate," although other versions (Θ) prefer θρέψαι 'to nourish'. The Greek verb ἐκπαιδεῦσαι is a more direct translation of the Hebrew term.

Daniel's curriculum was "in Chaldean literature" and as such became "adept in the wisdom" in these sorts of interpretations, refining the skills for which he would later become famous (*Ant.* 10.187).[241] The innate nature of Daniel's wisdom is repeated a few sections later by Josephus, emphasising his aptitude for dream interpretation. Likewise, with the justification his own prophecy for Vespasian in his *Bellum Judaicum*, Josephus is emphatic that he too was a proficient dream interpreter and could comprehend the divine wisdom contained in God's messages (*BJ* 3.352: ἦν δὲ καὶ περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἱκανὸς συμβαλεῖν τὰ ἀμφιβόλως ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου λεγόμενα). Jospehus borrows the interpretive vocabulary using συμβαλεῖν to denote this comprehension. The Greek mimics the phrase used with regard to Daniel's wisdom, emphasising his *natural* talent for interpretation at *Ant*. 10.194: μάλιστα δὲ Δανίηλος ἱκανῶς ἤδη σοφίας ἐμπείρως ἔχων περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων ἐσπουδάκει, καὶ τὸ θεῖον αὐτῷ φανερὸν ἐγίνετο. Similarly, Josephus uses the prepositional phrase περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων, for both himself and Daniel, noting their affinity for dream interpretation. In addition, both passages share a common use of the term ἱκανὸς—although in the adverbial form ἱκανῶς in the case of Daniel. Both descriptions conclude by gesturing to the further insight provided into τὸ θεῖον—for Josephus into the opaque words spoken by God (ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου) and Daniel begins to gain insight more broadly τὸ θεῖον. As Gray notes, both have wisdom that is in part from acquisition and in part from a divinely ordained special privilege.[242]

[241] Josephus wasn't explicit as to whether Daniel was a eunuch himself, but did say that some of the Judeans were castrated, although it is unclear whether Daniel was included among this group *Flavius Josephus Online* 10.187 n.10: Feldman (1998: 632) suggests that this tradition would have constituted a delicate problem for Josephus, as it did for the rabbis, because the biblical text states that the youths were "without blemish" (Dan 1:4). Be that as it may, it is difficult to understand why Josephus included the reference at all since it is not found in the book of Daniel itself, nor is it a necessary implication of anything in the biblical text. Still, Josephus does not explicitly include Daniel and his companions among those who were castrated, though he does not rule out the possibility either. Vermes (1991: 153) notes that in the Lives of the Prophets 4.1 Daniel was only thought to be a eunuch because of his chastity.
[242] Gray (1993) 68. See above for quote.

An analysis of the Greek for both of their childhoods reveals further deliberate parallels and allusions in both language and content between the description of Daniel's early life and the beginning of Josephus' *Life.* He was educated (Josephus in both cases favouring the Greek verb παιδευ-) in prophetic works, an education only afforded to individuals with a fortunate status—Daniel in the royal court, and Josephus as the decedent of a high priest (*Vita* 1-7). Both had a certain predisposition to studying generally, as Josephus forged ahead in his education on account of his "good memory" (μνήμῃ τε καὶ συνέσει δοκῶν διαφέρειν), his interpretive skills, and "book-loving" (τὸ φιλογράμματον: *Vita* 8-9). Comparably, Josephus boasts an intricate knowledge of Judean written law, anecdotally recounting how chief priests and the 'first men' of the *polis* would consult Josephus for interpretations more accurate than their own when he was only fourteen-years-old (συνιόντων ἀεὶ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως πρώτων ὑπὲρ τοῦ παρ᾽ ἐμοῦ περὶ τῶν νομίμων ἀκριβέστερόν τι γνῶναι: *Vita* 9-10). Daniel also excelled in such a manner and shared Josephus' enthusiasm and affinity for education (τούτους ὁ βασιλεὺς δι᾽ ὑπερβολὴν εὐφυΐας καὶ σπουδῆς τῆς περὶ τὴν παίδευσιν καὶ σοφίας ἐν προκοπῇ γενομένους εἶχεν ἐν τιμῇ καὶ στέργων διετέλει: *Ant.* 10.189). A section later, Josephus describes Daniel as determined to "discipline himself" (σκληραγωγεῖν ἑαυτὸν: 10.190); a phrase used to describe himself in his *Vita* (σκληραγωγήσας οὖν ἐμαυτὸν: *Vita* 11).

These parallels continue as they both matured. Daniel's aptitude for dream interpretation is not dissimilar to Josephus' own in *BJ* 3.352. Both are described as περὶ κρίσεις ὀνείρων (Daniel: *Ant.* 10.194; Josephus *BJ* 3.352). At critical junctures in their lives in moments of worry or concern, both Josephus and Daniel turn to prayer as a refuge (Daniel: *Ant.* 10.198; Josephus *BJ* 3.354). Both are the subject, according to Josephus, of a sort of fortune in finding such success in life, for Daniel all things happened in paradoxically fortunate way (αὐτῷ παραδόξως…εὐτυχήθη:

Ant. 10.266), and Josephus was the subject of εὐτυχέστατον (*Vita* 209). Furthermore, Josephus marks a parallel between the premonitions of imperial succession that both he and Daniel make (*cf.* Daniel: *Ant.* 10.205–210, 270–275; Josephus: *BJ* 3.401; 4.623, 626). Additionally, both are thrown into a pit: Joseph in Jotapata and Daniel famously was thrown into the lion's den.[243] Finally, Josephus forms a link along their shared fascination with dreams.[244] The particular skill of interpreting dreams, however, was reserved for a few: his patriarchal namesake Joseph (*Ant.* 2.11-7, 63-87), his most admired prophet Daniel (*Ant.* 10.195-210, 216), and his beloved Essenes (e.g., *BJ* 2.112-13), and finally for himself he ascribes the ongoing ability to interpret dreams (*BJ* 3.352 & 407).

Of course, their natural skills and subsequent praises garnered a certain jealousy among their contemporaries. Notably, as previously mentioned, Joseph had several jealous brothers who developed a deep "envy" and "hatred" toward their brother both because of the favouritism his skills attracted from their father Jacob, but also for his eventual ascension to an esteemed position within the royal court.[245] Daniel, too, experienced this sort of jealousy, leading to a plot against his life.[246] The close relationship Daniel fosters with King Darius is the explanation given by Josephus

[243] Throughout the discussion of Daniel (esp. 10.258-261) Josephus described Daniel as being in a "pit" (λάκκον), he uses the same word when he describes the pit in Jotapata. Furthermore, I noticed that Josephus used the same term λάκκον when he describes the pit which Joseph is throw into by his brothers.

[244] Josephus incorporated some 54 such episodes of dreams in his narrative demonstrating his fascination with the subject. Gnuse (1996) includes all the extensive accounts of dream and dream interpretation within Josephus as well as an interesting discussion of Josephus as a prophet.

[245] *Ant.* 2.9 (Brother' jealousy of their father's favouritism): The warm affection of his father evoked envy and hatred against him by his brothers, as did the happiness proclaimed by the dreams that he saw and disclosed to his father and to them, so jealous are men of the successful enterprises of their closest kinsmen. (τούτῳ παρὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἥ τε τοῦ πατρὸς στοργὴ φθόνον ἐκίνησε καὶ μῖσος ἥ τε ἐκ τῶν ὀνειράτων, ἃ θεασάμενος τῷ τε πατρὶ καὶ τούτοις ἐμήνυσεν, εὐδαιμονία καταγγελλομένη, ζηλοτυπούντων ἄρα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τὰς τῶν οἰκειοτάτων εὐπραγίας.) (Their resent towards his dreams): They, however, realizing that the vision presaged might and greatness of power for him and dominion over them, disclosed nothing of these things to Joseph, as though the dream were not intelligible to them but made vows that nothing of what they suspected should come to fruition for him... (οἱ δὲ συνέντες ἰσχὺν αὐτῷ καὶ μέγεθος πραγμάτων τὴν ὄψιν προλέγουσαν καὶ κατ' αὐτῶν τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἐσομένην τῷ μὲν Ἰωσήπῳ τούτων οὐδὲν ὡς οὐ γνώριμον αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄναρ ὂν διεσάφησαν, ἀρὰς δ' ἐποιήσαντο μηδὲν εἰς τέλος αὐτῷ παρελθεῖν ὧν ὑπενόουν)

[246] *Ant.* 10.212: Moreover, having given him the name of his own god, he made him administrator of his whole kingdom along with his relatives, who because of jealousy and malice happened to fall into danger when they offended the king for the following reason. (οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν προσηγορίαν αὐτῷ τοῦ ἰδίου θεοῦ θέμενος ἁπάσης ἐπίτροπον

to explain the jealousy from others in the imperial circle (*Ant.* 10.251). This charge is awfully similar to the one Josephus had against his rivals at Rome. According to Josephus, the favouritism provided to Josephus by the Flavians attracted jealousy and envy during his time at Rome, even at times from his compatriots (*Vita* 422-423).[247] However, because he acted noble in the face of such critics, divine kept him safe (*Vita* 80-82), just as God preserves Daniel in the Lion's den (*Ant.* 10.260).[248] We see elsewhere Flavius Josephus' uses his critiques as a means to bolster his own efficacy and provide an opportunity for rebuttal against the charges laid upon him by non-Judean authors like Apion, Apollonius, and Lysimachus.[249] Josephus continues this trend in his *Vita*, too, which he concludes by reiterating the function of this text as a self-legitimation against the accusations of his many detractors (*Vita* 423: κρινέτωσαν δ' ἐξ αὐτῶν τὸ ἦθος ὅπως ἂν ἐθέλωσιν ἕτεροι). All this to say, the jealousy of rival intellectuals was common to both Daniel and Flavius Josephus.

τῆς βασιλείας ἐποίησε καὶ τοὺς συγγενεῖς αὐτοῦ, οὓς ὑπὸ φθόνου καὶ βασκανίας εἰς κίνδυνον ἐμπεσεῖν συνέβη τῷ βασιλεῖ προσκρούσαντας ἐξ αἰτίας τοιαύτης·)

247 *Vita* 424: He gave me a stipend for supplies, and continued the honours until his departure from life, taking back nothing of his goodness toward me— which brought me into danger on account of envy. (σύνταξιν χρημάτων ἔδωκεν καὶ τιμῶν διετέλει μέχρι τῆς ἐκ τοῦ βίου μεταστάσεως οὐδὲν τῆς πρὸς ἐμὲ χρηστότητος ὑφελών, [ὅ μοι] διὰ τὸν φθόνον ἤνεγκε κίνδυνον·). *Vita* 425: For a certain Judean by the name of Jonathan, having fomented sedition in Cyrene and helped to persuade 2000 of the natives [to join in], became with them an agent of destruction… Lying certainly did not escape Vespasian's notice, but he passed a sentence of death and, having been handed over, he was put to death. (Ἰουδαῖος γάρ τις Ἰωνάθης τοὔνομα στάσιν ἐξεγείρας ἐν Κυρήνῃ καὶ δισχιλίους τῶν ἐγχωρίων συναναπείσας, ἐκείνοις μὲν αἴτιος ἀπωλείας ἐγένετο…οὐ μὴν Οὐεσπασιανὸν ψευδόμενος ἔλαθεν, ἀλλὰ κατέγνω θάνατον αὐτοῦ, καὶ παραδοθεὶς ἀπέθανεν.)

248 Passage is discussed by Gray (1993) 77.

249 *Against Apion* 2.2 Trans. Mason *FJO*: I shall now begin to refute the remaining authors who have written something against us, and in venturing a counterstatement against Apion the "scholar," it occurred to me to wonder whether it is necessary to make the effort. (ἄρξομαι δὲ νῦν τοὺς ὑπολειπομένους τῶν γεγραφότων τι καθ' ἡμῶν ἐλέγχειν καὶ τοῖς τῆς πρὸς Ἀπίωνα τὸν γραμματικὸν ἀντιρρήσεως τετολμημένοις ἐπῆλθέ μοι διαπορεῖν, εἰ χρὴ σπουδάσαι·) *Against Apion* 2.145 (Apollonius and Lysimachus) Trans. Mason *FJO*: But since Apollonius Molon and Lysimachus and certain others, partly out of ignorance, but mostly from ill-will, have made statements about our legislator Moses and the laws that are neither just nor true—libeling Moses as a charlatan and fraudster. (Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ Ἀπολλώνιος ὁ Μόλων καὶ Λυσίμαχος καί τινες ἄλλοι τὰ μὲν ὑπ' ἀγνοίας, τὸ πλεῖστον δὲ κατὰ δυσμένειαν περί τε τοῦ νομοθετήσαντος ἡμῖν Μωσέως καὶ περὶ τῶν νόμων πεποίηνται λόγους οὔτε δικαίους οὔτε ἀληθεῖς, τὸν μὲν ὡς γόητα καὶ ἀπατεῶνα διαβάλλοντες.) We can presume here too that the charges (or similar charges) made here against Moses were probably also made toward the writings of Josephus and his own boast of skill.

The *Antiquities* often fixates upon the longevity and literary components of Daniel's texts. Josephus repeats the phrase κατέλιπεν δὲ γράψας several time between sections 266 to 281, perhaps emphasising his personal familiarity with Daniel's writing as well as their mutual dedication to literary production. Moreover, Josephus uses the Greek verb (γράφω), with alternating prefixes, on at least six different occasions between *Antiquities* 10.180–228 in order to qualify the indirect discourse describing Josephus' account of Daniel's narrative. Three of these usages are accompanied by the verb καταλείπω (in the aorist or perfective tenses), emphasising that the τὰ βιβλία τοῦ Δανιήλου survived for Josephus to read. As both Mason and Wendt have noted, for Josephus textual knowledge is inseparable from prophetic authority, and it is this textual knowledge which provides him with the wisdom and capability of prediction, just as was the case for others of priestly lineage who had an aptitude for prophetic skills.[250]

Christopher Begg finds it peculiar that Josephus opts to use the plural τὰ βιβλία (10.267).[251] This is, indeed, rather peculiar**,** since elsewhere Josephus refers to a single book of Daniel (*Ant.* 10.210 and 11.337). This may mean that Josephus referred to other books of Daniel that have not survived for us or he may be referring to the different sections of Daniel—*i.e.* Daniel 1:2 and Daniel 1:3 were each a single βιβλίον. Begg elsewhere has argued that the use of the plural orientates the Daniel narrative 'to parallel his own self presentation.'[252] However, I do believe there would have had to have been enough flexibility in the perception and divisions of Daniel's work that would have made it acceptable to refer to Daniel's writings as τὰ βιβλία, otherwise this

[250] Wendt (2016) 94 n. 87; Mason (2003) 49; Josephus, *BJ* 3.352 & 3.356).

[251] *Ant.* 10.267 n.14: "The biblical canon contains only one book ascribed to Daniel. Either Josephus is simply using language carelessly or a more extensive Daniel literature is no longer extant. Collins (1993: 38 n. 335) suggests that this is probably a reference to the different visions in Dan 7–12, 'as there is nothing to indicate that Josephus knew other Danielic literature.'"

[252] Ibid: Begg 1993, 543 and n. 19, has suggested that this is yet another way in which Josephus shapes the Daniel narrative to parallel his own self-presentation (cf. *BJ* 7.454–455; *Ant.* 20.258–260; *Vita* 361–367, 430). At *Ant.* 10.210 and 11.337 Josephus refers to a single book of Daniel.

error would have made Josephus look amateurish. It has been noted elsewhere, however, by Wendt that the Judean "laws" (νόμοι), "oracles" (λόγιοι), "holy books" (ἱερά βιβλία), and "prophecies in the holy writings" (χρησμοί ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς γράμμασιν) "seem to be largely interchangeable when he refers to this corpus collectively".[253] Perhaps there is a certain interchangeability in this context as well. Regardless, there must be some qualification that could warrant the plural usage here otherwise it would undermine Josephus' claims of expertise of Daniel.

There are generalities and ambiguities when Josephus speaks to his audience, suggesting some sense of a universalising. He uses the indefinite τις to reflect that anyone from anywhere would regard him with amazement (θαυμάσαι). I would not over emphasise the indefinite pronoun, as there is something to be said about conventionality in its usage. However, it reflects a certain cross-cultural and diachronic audience for the amazement of both Daniel and Josephus' narrative (*Ant* 10.266-268). Josephus makes this claim in no uncertain times shortly afterwards saying that the 'memory' or 'memorial' (μνήμην) of him is 'eternal' (αἰωνιον). Perhaps Josephus wants his audience to think of the *Antquities* as the μνήμην, a literary monument of sorts for Daniel, that will have the eternality alongside its protagonist. The parallel is made more explicit when we consider that Josephus refers to his *Bellum Judaicum* as a τὴν μνήμην τῶν κατορθωμάτων (*BJ*: 1.16). The sentiment is not dissimilar to Thucydides' famous intent that his narrative will be a κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ (*Thuc.* 1.22).[254] While Thucydides' objective captures the tangibility of his narrative (can be held forever), Josephus marks the commemorative aspect of his work as if his narrative were almost a literary shrine for Daniel and his achievements.

[253] Wendt (2016) 95.

[254] Greenwood (2006: 4) borrowing an approach from John Moles comments that "Thucydides introduces his work as a text that encompasses all dimensions of time through the suggestive repetition of the adverb 'always' (aiei) at chs 1.21-2: 'there are repeated presents [1.21.2], there are always different presents [1.22.1], and since Thucydides' work covers both, it is an always possession [1.22.4]' (Moles 2001: 206). For a discussion of Thucydides and his intellectual practices there is a vast corpus of scholarship. I would recommend Greenwood both for her fascinating discussion of Thucydides and his *History* but also for the vast bibliography she provides on the subject.

The question still remains, why bother? It is obvious at this point that some if not many of the parallels traced above are fairly subtle. It should be said, nonetheless, that this does not discount their intentionality. As previously mentioned, Josephus was a highly learned and crafty writer, the similarities in language and narrative structure between he and Daniel are no happy accident. That is why part of this chapter's intention is to shake the perception that Josephus was a boring, prosaic, mimic of previous Roman historians. He was a highly innovative and crafty writer, playing many of the same intellectual games as the philosophers and hybrid-intellectuals contemporary with him in the so-called second sophistic. However, unlike these authors who seemed to have authority handed to them by nature of their elite status and/or native Roman identity, Josephus had to work a little harder. Although Josephus claimed to be a priest and to have a priestly lineage, it is unclear whether this traditional and authoritative Judean heritage carried much cultural capital in Rome. Therefore, just like our Derveni author, he had no ordinary claim to authority, and so Josephus had to self-fashion it. Likewise to the Derveni author, who shed light onto the opacity and ambiguity of Orpheus' cosmogony, Josephus had to translate (figuratively and literally) the Judean texts for his audience. Like our Derveni author Josephus framed himself as an interpreter, not a composer of wisdom. Consequently, he attached the authority to the very people whom his *Antiquities* authenticated in Roman terms. Although there are marked differences between these figures as well (some of which will be explored in the subsequent chapter), the two writers share certain methods with each other and the allegorical phenomenon. The parallels Josephus constructed, as circular as it sounds, then worked to authenticate his position, platform, and privilege in Rome. At the same time, Josephus incorporates allegorical language to frame the nature of his interpretive and prophetic capabilities just like the Derveni author. He needed his audience to believe in the authority of Daniel that his narrative presents and in turn accept his claim to be part and parcel of

his and the others' intellectual milieu. Perhaps then they may validate—or at least be content with—Josephus' acquired alleged intimacy with the Flavian household.

Conclusion

Josephus had to perform his own legitimacy as a 'true' prophet, among the many false purveyors of divine knowledge in Rome. Throughout his narratives he seeks to distinguish himself from those whom he deems to be false (*BJ* 6.285–299, 310–15) and align himself with the 'true' interpreters, a title he reserves only for Daniel, Joseph, the Essenes, and himself.[255] As such, Josephus, in Danielic fashion, laces the narrative of his life with the same interpretive and intellectual language that he uses to characterise the Hebrew prophets.[256] It has been noted that writers such as Josephus often depicted Judean (as well as Greek and Roman) would-be prophets, exegetes, and experts as foils to his own intellectual and interpretive talents.[257] By situating Daniel within broader category of 'legitimate' intellectual expertise—interpretation, prediction, philosophising, and initiating—Josephus elevates the writings of Daniel, as well his own, to this category. After all, it seems that Josephus fancied himself to be the Daniel of his day—although it was not that simple. Despite claims that after he predicted Vespasian's ascendancy, ὁ δὲ Ἰώσηπος εἰληφὼς ὑπὲρ τῶν προειρημένων γέρας τὴν ἐπιτιμίαν ἤδη καὶ περὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἀξιόπιστος ἦν (*BJ* 4.629: 'Josephus took his privilege as the prize for his predictions and by this time his predictive ability was validated'), it is safe to assume that his authority was not so assured. It is clear he saw himself already as the next successor of this rich tradition. Josephus, after all, intended his *Vita* to be the 21st book of the *Antiquities.* While scholarship has divided them into separate

255 Mason (1994) 117.
256 Danube (1980) 18-36 and Mason (1994) 190.
257 Wendt (2016) 94.

works, this is a fairly anachronistic decision. It is only at the end of his *Vita* that he concludes his *Judean Antiquities*. Josephus writes,

> These, then, are the events that occurred throughout my entire life; from them may others judge my character completely as they might wish. Having given back to you, Epaphroditus best of men, the entire record of the *Antiquities* up to the present, I conclude the narrative here.
>
> ταῦτα μὲν τὰ πεπραγμένα μοι διὰ παντὸς τοῦ βίου ἐστίν, κρινέτωσαν δ' ἐξ αὐτῶν τὸ ἦθος ὅπως ἂν ἐθέλωσιν ἕτεροι. σοὶ δ' ἀποδεδωκώς, κράτιστε ἀνδρῶν Ἐπαφρόδιτε, τὴν πᾶσαν τῆς ἀρχαιολογίας ἀναγραφὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἐνταῦθα καταπαύω τὸν λόγον. (Vita 430)

Therefore, not only did Josephus' work deliberately framed himself, linguistically and structurally, as a counterpart to authenticated biblical figures like Daniel and Joseph, but also suggests that he was the latest successor of this rich Judean tradition of interpretive intellectuals, authenticating his position in and intimacy with the Flavian imperial household.

While his efforts obviously legitimised his position, it is slightly unclear the benefit of continued intimacy with the imperial Flavian household, aside from the obvious material perks which he may have been given regardless of his literary endeavours.[258] In part, Josephus aspired, as Wendt says, "to serve as an—if not *the*—authority on Judean religion and religious texts for the benefit of the Flavian emperors and other aristocratic or intellectual audiences at Rome";[259] perhaps in the hope of positioning himself as the imperial specialised priestly instructor.[260] Goodman has suggested the possibility that Josephus' attempts to cosy up to the Flavians were in the hope to angle himself to be appointed the high priest of a newly reconstructed Jerusalem temple.[261] Whether or not Goodman is correct, the suggestion that Josephus was so ambitious is not absurd. Other foreign religious experts who orbited the imperial family, regardless of their degree of

[258] See Cotton and Eck (2005) who suggest many clients were given money and accommodation by their patrons.
[259] Wendt (2016) 106-107.
[260] For a discussion of these sorts of intellectual experts in the imperial court see Bowersock (2005).
[261] Goodman (2008) 447-48; Wendt (2016) 107.

intimacy, often were afforded great privileges in Rome.[262] In both the Joseph and Daniel stories, our prophets are made trusted advisors and councillors to the Pharaoh and King Darius, respectively (Joseph: *Ant* 2.88-89; Daniel *Ant* 10. 250-51). After all, we cannot ignore, as Wendt has noted, that while scholarship has often fixated on the Flavian iconography of Rome's victory over *Iudaea capta*, we should not diminish the "the instrumental role of Judean religion and religious texts in confirming Vespasian as Rome's new emperor.[263] Therefore, Josephus had a vested interest in introducing his native gods, religious practices, and institutions to Roman audiences to produce normative accounts of their native religion that might then be used to discredit rivals working within the same idiom.[264] By positioning himself as the foremost Judean intellectual within the imperial orbit, Josephus positioned himself as the favourite to receive any and all benefits that the Flavians could distribute whether at Rome or at a newly constructed Temple in Jerusalem.

[262] Bowersock (2005) esp. 54-57; Secord (2012).
[263] Wendt (2015b) 106. Mason (2018: 225) makes similar point about the over emphasis on "the simple images disseminated in the Flavian triumph, coins, and monuments, and the flood of pseudo-historical literature" that portrays the Flavians of conquers of Judea.
[264] Wendt (2016) 107.

Chapter 4—Conclusion: Classical Literature and Deeper Meanings

I dislike Allegory – the conscious and
intentional allegory – yet any attempt to
explain the purport of myth or fairy tale must use allegorical language.
J.R.R. Tolkien, *Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*

Struck has observed that the allegorical/interpretive tradition in antiquity was as diverse and complex as the many intellectuals who has written about it. This thesis has contributed to the growing expanse of this broad phenomenon by arguing that there are many aspects of the symbolic yet to be explored. While Struck's research has become influential in many circles, this thesis contends that the potential exists for even greater analysis of the "Judeo-Christian" literature if we wish to advance our knowledge of the symbolic phenomenon in antiquity. There is much to be gained from extending Stuck's approach to symbolic reading to new and less conventional case studies. Josephus is one of them. This thesis shows that many unique and diverse intellectuals in the ancient world "appropriate[d] and reshape[d] the notion of the symbol for their own idiosyncratic ends". Moreover, various notions of the symbolic have been revised and edited many times in the diverse and wide-ranging contexts and conditions, however, never *ex nihilo*.[265] Josephus was one such contributor to a highly intellectual and competitive discourse that expanded across the Mediterranean; our Derveni author was but another voice among a euphony of allegorical readers. There is considerable crossover and shared methods and interests between the two individuals considered here even if there are some significant distinctions and contrasts between them.

The intellectual similarities between our Derveni author and Flavius Josephus are both striking and significant. Both operated in a comparable intellectual environment, marked by competition and various rival practitioners; the ethnic tensions that surrounded Josephus and his

[265] Struck (2004) 276-77.

Judean heritage complicated his place in the Roman period.[266] Both questioned the capabilities of their rivals as well, framing them as ignorant imposters. Josephus's language warned of "false prophets" (ψευδοπροφῆται) and "charlatans" or "imposters" (γοήτες), whereas the Derveni author preferred the characterisation his adversaries as being lazy and unwilling to learn (οὐ μανθάνουσιν), being ignorant (ἀμαθίη: col. 5.9–10) and misunderstanding the text (ἐξαμαρτάνουσι: col. 12.4–5). They both derive a legitimising benefit through their associations with previously authenticated texts and figures: Orpheus and Judean intellectuals and prophets, respectively. These divine figures, Orpheus and God, embedded many mysteries and enigmas into their poetry and/or visions and dreams from which a skilled form of divination could uncover divine wisdom about the afterlife or prophecies of ascension.

Despite the similarities between the two principles discussed in this thesis, it does not suggest, of course, that Josephus and the Derveni author are identical, even when accounting for different temporal and geographical contexts. While it is important to acknowledge some of the shared interests that unite them, it is also worthwhile to note key differences. Certainly, both needed to display and defend their authority in contexts, replete with rivals, and neither is institutional in a traditional sense in his respective setting. There is a marked difference in the types of symbolic language they elect to adopt. Josephus uses σημεῖον (*e.g. BJ* 6.285-86), σύμβαλον (*e.g. BJ* 3.352), δῆλον (*e.g. Ant* 2.269), παραβολή (*Ant.* 8.44), and he is much less frequent in his use of αἴνιγμα, all commonplace language in the allegorical tradition, the αἰνίγματα are a crucial component for the Derveni authors in their approach to Orpheus. Josephus, on the other hand, uses this language on five occasions: three times in the *Antiquities* and twice in his *Contra Apionem*.[267]

[266] Bowersock (2005) 53. As mentioned in the previous chapter this tension came from Roman and Judean compatriots. *Cf.* Bowersock (2005) esp. 55-58.

[267] *Ant* 8.30; 8.148; 8.149; *Apion* 1.114; 1.115. Data provided by a TLG canon search of the works of Josephus. Of these usages, the most allegorical is at *Ant* 8.30. During the famous episode, Solomon is asked to adjudicate which of

Regardless, the language of αἰνίγματα is not a prominent feature of the Josephus writing, wherein the Derveni papyrus this language holds a central role.

The ambitions for Josephus were far bolder than those of the Derveni author. Our Derveni author presumably had simple aspirations: to gather initiates, probably get paid, to distinguish himself among like competitors, etc., all undertaken within a fairly limited scope and short-term benefit for our writer. Josephus and other hybrid religious-philosophical thinkers of this period, however, navigated imperial and elite circles naturally with these audiences in mind. Moreover, and as noted at the end of the previous chapter, Josephus was potentially positioning himself to inherit the position of high priest in Jerusalem, should the planned Temple be rebuilt.[268] It is for that reason that Josephus made such an effort to emphasise his intimacy with the imperial family. His far-reaching ambitions are much more institutional than those of the Derveni author who seemed to have had parochial ambitions.

Within this paradigm, then, Josephus, unlike the Derveni author, presents himself as an institutionalised priest,[269] the priestliest kind of priest, with not only a natural talent for the work of prophetic interpretation but also as a traditional priestly family that he presents to his audience at *Vita* 1-8. He makes a similar claim just before his famous Vespasian prophecy that he is ὢν ἱερεὺς καὶ ἱερέων ἔγγονος (*BJ* 352: 'he is a priest and a descendant of priests'). In his native city Josephus functioned as a member of the social elite, with an inherent claim to authority. Our Derveni author, by contrast, doesn't appear to have been afforded this luxury, even though his

two women a particular child belongs to. He issues his famous response that the child be divided, and each woman would get half. When one woman is unwilling to harm the child and the other is, Solomon the discovers that the protective woman is the real mother. Before the case is brought before Solomon, Josephus comments that the people were at a loss for what to do, "but as if about an enigma, everyone there was blind to the answer" (*Ant* 8.30: ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐπ' αἰνίγματι περὶ τὴν εὕρεσιν αὐτοῦ πάντων τῇ διανοίᾳ τετυφλωμένων). However, Solomon, a skilled interpreter, is able to unpack the confusion.

[268] See concluding remarks in my previous chapter. *Cf.* Goodman (2008) 447-48; Wendt (2016) 107.

[269] Institutionalised referring to religious institutions, temples, priestly hierarchies, hereditary lineages, etc.

readers seem wealthy enough to afford ornate burials, perhaps best evidenced by the burial site in which the text was found. Josephus finds himself in his position in spite of being a member of the social elite with its institutional authority in his native context, precisely because of the complex dynamics of ethnicity and foreignness that operated in the Roman world. While Josephus is similar in many respects to our Derveni author, his native social status and the status of the patrons he wished to attract and impress, distinguished him from the freelance figure who composed the Derveni papyrus.

Josephan Reflections

This thesis, moreover, offers a reflection on the value of drawing a "Jewish" author into the classical orbit. One objective at the outset was to help to further normalise the status of Josephus within the classical literary canon and, by extension, that of Roman-period Judaism and biblical literature within a Greco-Roman milieu.[270] Josephus, like other writers—Judean, Greek, or Roman—did not write in a vacuum. He was highly engaged with philosophical, literary, and religious currents that predated him and were contemporary with him. Like any intellectual of any temporal period, he not only had read many of the earlier great works, but his writings are filled with allusions and gestures—subtle and conspicuous—to these many authors. As Struck has made the case in response to categories in the ancient world, "such classifications, like generic boundaries, run to the limits of their usefulness if they prevent us from seeing the cross-fertilization of ideas and intellectual practices from one field to the next."[271] We run the same risk by sequestering Josephus. The cross-fertilisation that existed between his work and the work of other

[270] We do also have to remember as well that is among some circles, particularly as Edith Hall (2008: 392) has noted among working-class household in Ireland and the United Kingdom during the nineteenth century, Josephus and his writings were (for reasons of theology as much as a desire for classical learning) part and parcel of the classical of the classical corpus.
[271] Struck (2004) 12.

authors is part and parcel of understanding Josephus as a complex and nuanced author. Wendt comments that "Judean writings, not to mention their specialized interpreters, were at home in a broader phenomenon of literary divination that flourished in the imperial period."[272] That is to say, while we may consider Judean texts as distinct from Greco-Roman in this period, in fact the two literary cultures were incredibly intertwined, amounting to one broad phenomenon rather than two distinct traditions with considerable crossover. On the other side of the coin, we cannot ignore the potential Josephan crossover to author sources, especially those within the Second Sophistic. Mason describes Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum* as "a rich contribution to Greek literature, saturated with classical allusions."[273] In the same way we have to presume that Josephus read others, and we have to assume the opposite is the case as well and that other intellectuals in antiquity read Josephus.

Moreover, Josephus' work informs our understanding of the development of Judaism from the Second Temple period.[274] He provides a picture of a Judean writing at the centre of a diverse and, increasingly, international empire.[275] He embraced the intellectual trends floating about in the first century, such as the allegorical tradition, and incorporated the language and methods of these currents into a traditional Judean framework. Furthermore, he made Judaism and the Judean history accessibly for both Greek and Roman audiences. Niehoff writes that "rabbis who assumed leadership after the destruction of the Second Temple and the demise of numerous apocalyptic movements also worked largely in cooperation with Rome and engaged both Roman and Greek

[272] Wendt (2015b) 106.
[273] Mason (2018) 201.
[274] Niehoff (2018: 244) makes a similar case for Philo.
[275] See Mason (2005b) on how Josephus incorporated both Greco-Roman and Judean concepts and philosophy into his writing and how in many ways is representative of both perspectives to a degree.

discourses (Rabbi Akiva and some other opponents notwithstanding)."[276] It is safe to assume that Josephus and his works were among the Greek texts these rabbi may have read.

The Josephus chapter is a manifesto of sorts and is intentionally titled: "Bring him into the fold". He and other Judean writers, such as Philo, have been sequestered by classical scholars from the Greek tradition because of their ancestry. Niehoff's work on Philo, for instance, draws him decisively into a distinct intellectual milieu, complicating the notion that Jews or Jewish authors were somehow segregated from their Greco-Roman contemporaries. The analysis presented here suggests Josephus should also be drawn into this milieu alongside new and different *comparanda,* while also enriching constructions of "Judaism," in all its variety, in the Roman world. Niehoff writes of Philo that he "addressed all the burning issues of the first century CE, engaging in a wealth of literary genres and negotiating Jewish, Greek, and Roman traditions."[277] The same hold true for Josephus. Bringing him into the fold of intellectual and innovative writers enriches our understanding of both Greco-Roman and Judean sources of this period.

Symbolic Afterthought

The case studies chosen for this thesis are no less of an odd or unconventional pairing than when I first began. The writings of Josephus and the Derveni author are, without question, very different works and written in different—although not entirely dissimilar—historical contexts. However, the heterogenous nature of the interpretive tradition and the many manifestations of the intellectual phenomenon, foster what might be considered odd or unorthodox pairings. The language, methods, techniques, and approaches used to consider texts are shared by many authors beyond what has been covered in this project. This thesis has considered a subset of a small subset

[276] Niehoff (2018) 244.
[277] Ibid 242.

that presumes these texts convey divine wisdom, whereas many intellectuals who have literary or philosophical intentions, employ these same methods in their reading. Yet, despite the seeming polarity between these two diverse writers, they shared the belief that texts can provide "subtle insight into the basic workings of the world".[278] At the beginning of my thesis, it was noted that this broad and encompassing principle is intentionally inclusive. The sources chosen for the analysis here are by no means representative or emblematic of the entire tradition between the late Classical and Flavian periods, however. Rather, they act as singular manifestations within a broad geographic and diachronic network of intellectuals who use and engage with the broader cultural phenomenon that is the allegorical and interpretive traditions. Perhaps, more than a decade after Struck's influential scholarship, it has become clear that it is not just a few brave souls who believe literature contains a deeper meaning, but a great number, both in our contemporary world and in antiquity, have come to believe it too.

[278] Struck (2004) 13

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