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IS PHILO'S MOSES A DIVINE MAN?

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Introduction

The question of the divinity of Moses in Philo has been raised almost entirely as a peripheral argument in the broader quest for the roots of Christology. It is, after all, one of the great anomalies of first-century religious history that within a few short years of his death the Jewish followers of a Jewish Messiah are calling their founder 'the image of the invisible God' (Col 1:15) or even 'the Word' who was the agent of creation (John 1:1-3). It was not immediately apparent that Philo could help to solve this riddle, but at the beginning of the twentieth century many began to see the solution in the notion of an Hellenistic 'divine man' or θεῖος ἀνὴρ. Christian converts in the Hellenistic cities, we were assured, heard about a Jesus who worked wonders and they assimilated this Jewish prophet to the wonder-working god-men with whom they were so familiar.¹

Early on, however, many scholars were uncomfortable with the suggestion that the earliest Christians were sympathetic enough to Greek or Roman religion to draw on the divine man concept directly from pagan sources. Usually it was felt that some intermediary was needed, a third force which could have brought ideas about divine men from pagan circles into the heart of Jewish piety. The intermediary which was proposed, of course, was 'Hellenistic Judaism', along with its most celebrated representative, Philo of

¹ This connection was pioneered by G. P. Wetter (*Der Sohn Gottes* [Göttingen 1916]), O. Weinreich ('Antikes Gottmenschen', in *Ausgewählte Schriften II* [Amsterdam 1973] 171-97), and H. Windisch, (*Paulus und Christus* [Leipzig 1934]). It was established most firmly by the influence of Bultmann (*Theology of the New Testament* [New York 1951-55] 1.130; *History of the Synoptic Tradition* [New York 1963] 218ff.) and by the monumental work of L. Bieler (*ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ: Das Bild des 'Göttlichen Menschen' in Spätantike und Frühchristentum*, 2 vols. [Vienna, 1935-6] 1.25ff., 40, 138ff.; 2.24; et passim).

See also D. Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Philadelphia 1986); H. D. Betz, 'Jesus as Divine Man', in *Jesus and the Historian* (Philadelphia 1968) 114-33; H. Braun, 'Der Sinn der neutestamentlichen Christologie', *ZTK* 54 (1957), 353-364; F. Hahn, *Titles of Jesus in Christology* (London 1969) 288-99; T. J. Weeden, 'The Heresy That Necessitated Mark's Gospel', *ZNW* 59 (1968) 145-58; P. Achtemeier, 'The Origin and Function of the Pre-Markan Miracle Catena', *JBL* 91 (1972) 202-212; H. Koester, 'The Structure of Early Christian Beliefs' (216-219) and 'One Jesus and Four Primitive Gospels' (187-93) in H. Koester and J. M. Robinson (edd.), *Trajectories Through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia 1971).

Alexandria.² Windisch declared that Philo 'stands in the middle between Judaism and early Christianity, just as he is also the middle-man between Biblical and Greek-syncretistic religion'.³ Philo's two-part biography of Moses, so the argument runs, exalts 'this greatest and most perfect of men' (*Mos.* 1.1) to a semi-divine status, providing evidence that indeed diaspora Judaism was already turning Israel's heroes into divine men when the early Christians did the same with Jesus.

In 1977, however, Carl Holladay observed that although this Jewish divinization of biblical figures was in many ways the lynch-pin of discussions of a 'divine man' Christology, few had devoted much effort to actually showing that it had happened.⁴ What Holladay set out to demonstrate was that when we look closely at Josephus, Philo, and Artapanus we find no evidence that figures like Moses were anything like the divine men of the Greeks and Romans.⁵ For some, Holladay's analysis seems to have spelled the death of the 'divine man' as an heuristic category in the development of Christology.⁶ Others, however, have all but ignored Holladay's work, and seem to have felt little need to answer his analysis of the Jewish sources.⁷ Thus, the deification of Israel's heroes in the diaspora has largely remained, for its proponents, what Holladay objected to twenty years ago: a network of mutually reinforcing assertions without any significant exegetical basis.

Why has Holladay's monograph not prompted more response? In part this may be a consequence of his broad scope. By trying to deal with all the works of Philo and Josephus, as well as surviving fragments of Artapanus, in a single monograph, he inevitably had to pass over some material very quickly. This meant that Philo's *Vita Mosis* received only a few pages, even though it provides by far the most commonly cited example of a Jewish

² See the history of the investigation in C. Holladay, *Theios Aner in Hellenistic-Judaism*, SBLDS 40 (Missoula, Mont. 1977) 1–22.

³ Windisch *Paulus und Christus* 112. Translated in Holladay *Theios Aner* 29.

⁴ Holladay *Theios Aner* 17. Cf. R. H. Fuller, *Foundations of New Testament Christology* (London 1965) 69. See, e.g., the treatment of this 'not unessential intervening link' in Hahn *Titles* 288–290.

⁵ Holladay *Theios Aner* 44.

⁶ E.g., J. D. Kingsbury, 'The 'Divine Man' as the Key to Mark's Christology—The End of an Era?' *Int* 35:3 (1981) 249.

⁷ E.g., H. D. Betz, 'Gottmensch II' *RAC* 12 (1983) 270, 288–307; G. Corrington, *The 'Divine Man': His Origin and Function in Hellenistic Popular Religion* (New York 1986); Thomas Schmeller, 'The Greco-Roman Background of New Testament Christology', in R. F. Berkey and S. A. Edwards (edd.), *Christology in Dialogue* (Cleveland 1993) 54–65; A. B. Kolenkow, 'Paul and His Opponents in 2 Cor 10–13: THEIOI ANDRES and Spiritual Guides', in L. Bormann et al (edd.), *Religious Propaganda and Missionary Competition in the New Testament World* (Leiden 1994) 351–374; and tentatively, G. Theissen and A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus* (Göttingen 1998) 304–5.

'divine man'. On the other hand, Holladay sometimes seems to slip into special pleading to avoid similarities between, say, Moses and Apollonius. This paper, then, is intended to supplement Holladay's project by taking a closer look at Philo's biography of Moses as the most important site at which Holladay's overall thesis can be tested. Was Philo's Moses really a divine man? Does he represent a bridge between the pagan temple and the synagogue and thus also between Apollonius and Jesus?

The Features of Hellenistic 'Divine Men'

(a) The Growth of a Scholarly Construct

Before we can ask whether Philo's Moses is a 'divine man', we must first ask what such a figure would look like to first-century eyes, and here again we meet a knot of scholarly debate. Brief definitions of the θεῖος ἀνὴρ usually include some (vaguely defined) unusual relationship with the divine, unusual birth, itinerancy, miracle-working, prophesying, oracular and ecstatic utterances, wisdom, and perhaps rhetorical ability.⁸ This type was first proposed by the historian of religion R. Reitzenstein and was given its definitive shape by Ludwig Bieler in his monograph entitled *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ*.⁹ In this study we have deliberately avoided that Greek label, in part because Philo only uses θεῖος of Moses a handful of times and even then without the technical meaning which Reitzenstein envisioned.¹⁰ More importantly, though, W. von Martitz and now Du Toit have demonstrated that the term never did serve, for ancient writers, as a technical term for the kind of divine man to which scholars usually apply it.¹¹ In fact, many of the figures in Bieler's exhaustive collection of ancient sources were never called θεῖος ἀνὴρ by an ancient author. This recognition has given rise to questions about how much Bieler's influential picture of a single, defined 'archetype' for divine men was in fact created by his indiscriminate use of a single (anachronistic and imposed) title.¹² Such uncertainty is compounded by the way in which the pioneers of the θεῖος ἀνὴρ concept often fell into the

⁸ See, e.g., Achtemeier 'Origin and Function' 209ff.; Betz 'Jesus as Divine Man' 116; M. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (München 1950) 2.505–6.

⁹ R. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (Leipzig, 1906); idem, *Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen* (Leipzig 1910) 12, 122, 129, 143, 151, 159.

¹⁰ See below n. 90 and 91.

¹¹ W. von Martitz, 'υἱός, υἰοθεσία', *TDNT* 8:338–340; D. S. Du Toit, *Theios Anthropos* (Tübingen 1997) 401–2.

¹² For E. Gallagher's defence of Bieler's method, see his *Divine Man or Magician? Celsus and Origen on Jesus* [Chico 1982] 10–18. Bieler does say that his project is ahistorical (*ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.4), but it is still difficult to get around the idea that Bieler sees this ideal type as a force in history (e.g., *ibid.* 1.5–7).

typical history-of-religions pitfalls of indiscriminately combining sources and blurring important distinctions on the basis of a superficial similarity.¹³ Bieler himself compounds so many features of the 'type', many of which are represented by only one or two (often anachronistic) members, that the very notion of a unified figure begins to seem forced.¹⁴ Thus, Tiede has argued that we should think instead of a 'diversity of ways in which charismatic figures in the concentric Hellenistic and Hellenistic Jewish spheres were authenticated as having divine status'.¹⁵

The confusion surrounding the concept of the divine man highlights the need, before we look to Philo, for a broad survey of human figures in Greco-Roman literature who are portrayed as divine so that we can set out a basic typology of Hellenistic divine humans. Of course, if we abandon the idea that the θεῖος ἀνὴρ was an ancient title for a distinct type, what criterion will we use for inclusion in our survey? In short, what do we mean by *divine* men? In the past the ambiguity of this English word (and the similar flexibility of the Greek θεῖος) has often disguised the fact that very different kinds of 'divinity' are lumped together. Some ancient men can be called 'divine' in the sense that they manifest some superhuman power or special inspiration, though they remain mere mortals. Others, however, were understood as being or becoming a god or demi-god.¹⁶ Thus Betz defines *göttlich* as 'von einer Gottheit abstammend' and at the same time as simply *übermenschlich*, without recognizing that he is conflating two distinct concepts in the ancient mind.¹⁷ At times this confusion has been justified on the basis of genetic relationships in the history of religions or supposedly universal anthropological concepts such as 'Mana'.¹⁸ Yet if our concern is the awareness of a writer in the first century, what matters is neither diachronic history, nor cross-cultural psychology, but the synchronic examination of *ancient perceptions and portraits* of divine humanity around the turn of the eras. Since the background of our investigation is the use of the 'divine man' model to explain the divinization of Jesus, we will take

¹³ So Gallagher *Divine Man* 1-10; Corrington *Divine Man* 9, 17, 22 and even M. Smith, 'Prolegomena to a Discussion of Aretologies, Divine Men, the Gospels and Jesus', *JBL* 90 [1971] 192.

¹⁴ So, e.g., Jesus and Octavian are the only examples of a tendency to be opposed as infants (*ibid.* 1.40-41). Other 'typical features' are based mainly on medieval, African, or even *Tibetan* sources (see *ibid.* 1.29, 30-34, 37).

¹⁵ D. L. Tiede, *The Charismatic Figure As Miracle Worker*, SBLDS 1 (Missoula, Mont. 1972) 241.

¹⁶ C. H. Talbert was the first to clearly articulate this distinction ('The Concept of Immortals in Mediterranean Antiquity', *JBL* 94 [1975] 420; cf. Smith, 'Prolegomena' 184).

¹⁷ Betz 'Gottmensch II' 235; cf. *idem*, 'Jesus as Divine Man' 116.

¹⁸ See, e.g., Weinreich 'Antikes Gottmenschentum' 174; Wetter *Der Sohn Gottes* 186-88, et passim; Corrington *Divine Man* 89.

'divine' in the strong sense, including only those figures in our survey which are explicitly portrayed as being a god or demi-god. Our search will aim first to find features which are common to many divinized humans and then to discern whether any of these features (including divinity) are closely enough associated that the presence of one will suggest the others.

(b) Divine Heroes in Myth and Memory

Most Greeks believed that there was a wide gap between the immortal Homeric gods and mortal humanity.¹⁹ Yet this gap was not empty. It was peopled by the nymphs and satyrs, and by the many δαίμονες, those shadowy divine beings who sometimes seemed to serve the gods and sometimes worked mischief for their own inscrutable purposes. In this ontological scheme, most of those heroes (ἥρωες) who had lived as human beings were not raised very far above the level of their mortal brethren.²⁰ While many heroes were honoured with shrines, sacrifices, or even festivals, this seems to have been understood for the most part as a kind of cult of the dead, distinct from the worship of the gods. These dead men lay in their tombs, able to exercise some influence over the lives of people near their tomb or home city, but never truly escaping death.²¹ Yet the actual

¹⁹ So Betz 'Gottmensch II' 287; W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston 1955) 114. Epicurus took this gulf to an extreme with which few agreed, arguing that the gods were completely isolated from the world and had no part at all in its affairs (e.g., *Epicurus Ep. Hdt.* 76-7; See A. A. Long, *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*, 2nd ed. [Berkeley and Los Angeles 1986] 41-49). This would, of course, have ruled out the kind of divinization which we discuss below. On the other hand, Stoic theology simply identified Nature in its totality as divine and reinterpreted the Homeric deities as natural forces. This pantheism allowed for an intimate relationship between each individual and Nature, but in its own way also makes the special divinization of an individual nonsensical (Long *Hellenistic Philosophy* 108, 148-50). The only sense in which the Stoic wise man is divine is that his will is completely in accord with the basic reason or λόγος which drives Nature (ibid, 108).

²⁰ Some 'heroes' were, on the other hand, not human at all but simply 'little deities' who were either restricted to a particular region or subordinate to higher gods (See A. D. Nock, 'The Cult of Heroes' *HTR* 37 [1944] 593; David Boehringer, *Heroenkulte in Griechenland von der geometrischen bis zur klassischen Zeit*, *KLIO Beitr. zur alten Geschichte Beihefte* n.f. 3 [Berlin 2001] 31).

²¹ Emily Kearns ('hero-cult', *OCD* 693-4) observes that Greek authors seem to expect 'heroic honours' to mean a definite form of veneration which is clearly distinct from the Olympian cults. Diodorus Siculus, for example, explains how Heracles was only offered sacrifice 'as to a hero' until the Athenians worshipped him 'like as to a god' (4.39.1). Note how Pin. *P* 1.53; 4.58 treats the comparison of the heroes to the gods as metaphorical, and how in some writers the heroes join the insubstantial mass of the dead or else are simply given new life in an earthly paradise (e.g., Hes. *Op.* 161ff.). Cf. Martin P. Nilsson, *Greek Folk Religion* (New York 1961) 18-20; Nock 'Heroes' 142-3; Ian Morris, 'Tomb Bult and the 'Greek Renaissance'' *Antiquity* 62 (1988) esp. 752-4; Boehringer *Heroenkulte* 25-34.

practice of hero-cults often implies that these men often became something more, and the likes of Heracles, Aristaeus, Orpheus, Dionysus, Aesclepius, Aeneas and Romulus came to rival the Olympians themselves.²² By the first century c.e. the same kind of status was even granted to contemporary figures, men as diverse as the wonder-working sage Pythagoras, Peregrinus the Cynic philosopher, and the Emperor Augustus.

If there was often some ambiguity about the precise nature of these divine men, it is in part because Greek theology had never worked out a clear or universal understanding of the various ranks of intermediate beings. So, when Dionysius of Halicarnassus includes such heroes among the δαίμονες, the 'third order of being' (1.77.3), it is not immediately clear whether they are among lesser gods or have joined the souls of golden age humanity.²³ The term δαίμων could even refer to one of the Olympians.²⁴ It was thus not uncommon to find disagreement over where on the scale of divinity some great hero should fall.²⁵ Whatever was decided, however, it is clear that these individuals were no longer imagined merely as great mortals reaching out from their tombs. They had joined the ranks of the immortals and thus crossed the basic threshold between humanity and the divine.²⁶

Greek and Latin quotations are from the *LCL* editions.

²² See Nock 'Heroes' 144–8, 162–6 and the treatment of Dionysus and Heracles in *D.S.* 4.1.5; 4.5.4; 4.15.1; 4.29.1; 4.39.4; 5.72.5–5.73.2; 5.76.1–2. In these passages Diodorus does not appear to draw any clear theoretical division between heroes, demi-gods, and gods (so Lucian *DMort.* 10). See also Romulus and Aeneas in Ovid *Metam.* 14.805–816; 15.861–2; 15.863–67. Talbert ('Concept of Immortals' 420) distinguishes between 'immortal' heroes and 'eternal' deities on the problematic basis of having been born, but Guthrie's simple division between immortal gods and mortal humanity is surely better (*Greeks and Their Gods* 115).

²³ See F. E. Brenk, 'In the Light of the Moon: Demonology in the Early Imperial Period', *ANRW II.16.3* (1986) 2068–2145, esp. 2082–2091. For δαίμονες as the souls of Golden age men see Hes. *Op.* 121; as intermediaries see Pl. *Smp.* 202e. It is likewise unclear exactly what Athenaeus intends when he calls Orpheus one of the demigods (ἡμιθέοι) in distinction from the gods (θεοί) like Apollo (*Deipn.* 14.632c). At times, such ἡμιθέοι seem to include the whole generation of the Trojan war (Hes. *Op.* 109ff.; Guthrie *Greeks and Their Gods* 298).

Note, too, that at times the title 'heroes' could stand as the middle term in this scheme, so that other beings who had never been humans at all would then be included under the umbrella (Pin. *O* 2.1; cf. Pl. *Crat.* 397c–398e; Plu. *Def. orac.* 415b; Boehringer *Heroenkulte* 31–2).

²⁴ Brenk 'Demonology' 2083.

²⁵ See, e.g., *D.S.* 4.71 vs. Ovid *Metam.* 2.648–9 and Paus. 3.26.4 on Aesclepius.

²⁶ By the first century this was often justified on the basis of a fundamental kinship between humanity and deity (Betz 'Gottmensch II' 237; Guthrie *Greeks and their Gods* 114–16). So, when Ovid depicts Aeneas' apotheosis, the river-god washes away 'whatever was mortal' so that 'his best part remained to him' (*Metam.* 14.600–609). This remaining kernel was 'a god', *deus* (*ibid.* 14.607). See also Romulus in Ovid *Metam.* 14.823–828.

How did the ancients recognize such a divine man? Cicero relates Romulus' divinity directly to his being 'blood from gods derived' (*Resp.* 1.41) and, as Betz implied in the definition quoted above, most of these divinized heroes are said to have been either fathered or borne by a deity.²⁷ In addition, the actual act of conception or the birth of the divine man is often strange. Aesclepius, for example, was taken at the last minute from his mother's body as she burned on a pyre set by Apollo as a punishment for her unfaithfulness (*Pin. P.* 3.38–46).²⁸ We find consistent comments about the young hero's strength, beauty, or general greatness,²⁹ and the divine child is very often raised by supernatural foster-parents such as dryads, centaurs, or the gods themselves.³⁰

At the other end of life, Talbert has pointed out that divinized humans were usually said to have ascended bodily at death.³¹ This event is either witnessed directly or (more commonly) is suggested by the absence of any physical remains³² or by oracles and portentous natural wonders.³³ So:

²⁷ So Talbert 'Concept of Immortals' 422–3. See such reports for Heracles and Dionysus (D.S. 4.2.1–3; 4.9.1–2; Ovid *Metam.* 259–61), Aesclepius (Paus. 2.26.4–5; 3.26.4), Castor and Pollux (Ovid *Metam.* 6.109), Aristeas and Aesclepius (D.S. 4.71.1; 4.81.1; Ovid *Metam.* 2.600–55; Cic. *ND* 3.22; *Pin. P.* 3.38f.), Aeneas (D.H. 1.62.2), Romulus (*Plu. Rom.* 2; D.H. 1.77, 2; Cic. *Resp.* 2.2; L. A. Florus 1.1), Epimenides (D.L. 1.114), Orpheus (*Ap. Rhod. Argon.* 1.23f.; Verg. *Ecl.* 4.55–57), Pythagoras (*Iamb. VP* 3, 5–8), Lycurgus (*Plu. Lyc.* 1.2–4), Julius (Suet. *Jul.* 1.6.1), Alexander of Abonuteichos (Lucian *Alex.* 11), Apollonius of Tyana (Philostr. *VA* 1.4–6), and Parrhasius the poet (Pliny *HN* 35.71).

²⁸ So Paus. 2.26.5–7. Cf. regarding Heracles (D.S. 4.9.2–3), Dionysus (D.S. 4.2.2–3; Ovid *Metam.* 3.286–310–15), Romulus (*Plu. Rom.* 2.2–6; 3.1–3), and Apollonius (Philostr. *VA* 1.4–6).

²⁹ So Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.34–39, 50–56. See, e.g., regarding Heracles (D.S. 4.9.6; 4.10.1–2), Dionysus (D.S. 4.4.2), Romulus (*Plu. Rom.* 3.3), Alexander of Abonuteichos (Lucian *Alex.* 11), Julius (Eun. *VS* 473.44f.), Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 8.1), Alexander (Ps-Callisth. *Alex.* 1.13.5), Pythagoras (*Iamb. VP* 10), and Apollonius (Philostr. *VA* 1.7–9.19). The emphasis on the virtue of more contemporary divine men was meant to fend off the shock evident when Philip of Macedon told Menacretes to 'come to your senses!' (Ath. *Deipn.* 7.289d–f). See the polemics surrounding Alexander of Abonuteichos (Lucian *Alex.* Lucian *Alex.* 8, 23, 41–2, 56–7), Peregrinus (Lucian *Peregr.* 1, 10f., 16, 18, etc.), and Apollonius (Philostr. *VA* 1.1, 8, 13, 24, 30, 35–6; 2.7; 4.18, 37ff; 7.4, 39; 8.7), especially regarding accepting money for miracles.

³⁰ See regarding Heracles (D.S. 4.9.6), Aristeas and Dionysus (*ibid.* 4.2.3; 4.81.2; Ovid *Metam.* 3.310–315), Aesclepius (Ovid *Metam.* 2.600–55; *Pin. P.* 3.45–6), and Romulus (Cic. *Resp.* 2.2; D.H. 1.79.2–10; *Plu. Rom.* 3.4–4.2; 5.1f.).

³¹ Talbert 'Concept of Immortals' 421–23. So Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.44–49.

³² Heracles' pyre and bones are completely consumed by lightning from heaven (D.S. 4.38), so he is given 'immortal honours' (*ibid.* 4.82.6). Cf. regarding Aeneas (D.H. 1.64.4–5), Empedocles (D.L. 8.68), Pindar (Paus. 9.23.3f.), Apollonius (Philostr. *VA* 8.30) and Augustus (Suet. *Aug.* 2.100).

³³ See e.g., Romulus' ascension (Cic. *Resp.* 2:10; 6:21; Livy 1:16; *Plu. Rom.* 27.6–8; L. A. Florus 1.1; Ovid *Metam.* 14.816–828), Peregrinus (Lucian *Peregr.* 27, 39), Empedocles (D.L. 8.68), Julius (Suet. *Jul.* 1.84.3–4, 1.88), Apollonius (Philostr. *VA* 8.30).

Romulus' ascension is corroborated by the famous testimony of Proculus Julius, the aged citizen who claimed to have been visited by the divine ruler days after his death and instructed to initiate a cult in his honour.³⁴ Bodily ascension is, again, not an absolute prerequisite for divinity, since Aesclepius is generally thought to have been slain by Zeus for having the audacity to raise the dead.³⁵ The elevation from the earth to Olympus was, however, a sure sign that one had joined the ranks of the gods.

If we ask about the adult career of the 'divine man', it is rarely noticed how few of the ancient and mythic heroes can be called miracle workers. All perform amazing feats which benefit their communities. These can be military exploits,³⁶ the founding of a city,³⁷ the discovery of some cultural or technological gift to humanity,³⁸ or any other philanthropic act.³⁹ Yet while most of these prodigious feats of strength, skill, or intellect are superhuman, few are strictly 'supernatural'. Even Aesclepius' ability to raise the dead is, in some stories, understood not as a supernatural effort but as the pinnacle of his medical techniques.⁴⁰ Some element of the miraculous cannot be avoided when Heracles, Dionysus, and Orpheus make voyages to Hades (Diodorus Siculus 4.25.4; 4.26.1). Yet the general lack of miracles in these ancient tales speaks against any universal tendency for divine men to absorb reports of miracle working.⁴¹ Of course there are reports of divine seers and healers from the heroic age,⁴² but for the most part it is not their

³⁴ See Cic. *Resp.* 2:10; *Leg.* 1:3; *Plu. Rom.* 28.

³⁵ D.S. 4.71.2-3; Ovid *Metam.* 642-49; *Pin. P.* 3.55-58.

³⁶ See regarding Heracles (D.S. 4.10.3-5), Dionysus (*ibid.* 4.2.6; 4.3.1-2), Aeneas (Ovid *Metam.* 14.588) and Romulus (Cic. *Resp.* 2.2; *Plu. Rom.* 8.6; 16.4-5; 20.5; 25.3; though cf. 18.2f.; 23.2).

³⁷ See regarding Heracles (D.S. 4.29f.); Dionysus (*ibid.* 4.2.6); Romulus (Cic. *Resp.* 1.41). Cf. *Plu. Rom.* 12.2, where an eclipse heralds Romulus' final founding of that city.

³⁸ Aristeas taught humanity about cheese, bees, and olives (D.S. 4.81-3; 4.82.5). Dionysus is regarded as one of the two most philanthropic gods (along with Demeter; *ibid.* 4.3.5) because he discovered grapes and wine (*ibid.* 4.2.5), cultivation (*ibid.* 4.2.5), and numerous forms of entertainment (*ibid.* 4.5.4). Aesclepius 'made many discoveries which contribute to the health of mankind' (*ibid.* 4.71.1).

³⁹ These include Aristeas' cure of the pan-Hellenic plague (D.S. 4.82.2-3), Heracles' twelve labours (*ibid.* 4.9.4-5; see 4.11.3-4.28.4), Orpheus' enchanting music (*ibid.* 4.25.2), and his founding of religious institutions (see Betz 'Gottmensch II' 240).

⁴⁰ See Pindar *Pyth.* 3.47-53. The healings are more obviously supernatural in Ovid *Metam.* 2.642-49, but Aesclepius' sons Machaon and Podalirius are simply medical healers (Hom. *Il.* 4.192-219; D.S. 4.71.4; Ovid *Rem. Am.* 313f., 546; *Ars Am.* 2.491, 735; *Trist.* 5.6.11f.; Mart. *Epig.* 2.16.5; 10.56.7). Cf. the ambiguous way in which Orpheus' music entrances people, gods and even the elements (Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.26f., 492-518; 4.904-9; Ovid *Metam.* 10.1-73; D.S. 4.25.4; *Anthologia Graeca* 7.8).

⁴¹ Mantic prophecy is more common (see Hdt. *Hist.* 4.13; Pliny *HN* 7.56.203; Philostr. *VA* 3.44).

⁴² See Amphiarus (Strab. 9.1.22; 9.2.10; Paus. 1.34.1f.; Philostr. *VA* 2.37; 4.24; Cic. *Div.* 1.40.88), Idmon (Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1.139-45), Trophonius and Amphilochus (Lucian

cults which caught on in the popular imagination. Thus when later figures like Menacretes of Syracuse tried to bolster their own claims to deity, they usually appealed not to the most spectacular figures but to the less clearly miraculous heroes like Heracles, Aristeas, or Aesclepius.⁴³

We should remember this context, then, when we observe that later divine men are more often described as thaumaturges, working supernatural wonders such as miraculous healings⁴⁴ and manifesting powers of mantic or oracular prophecy. *Thaumaturges seem to have grown in popularity with the religious revival of the second and third centuries c.e.,*⁴⁵ but even then claims of wonder-working were not always necessary to support divine claims. Philosophers such as Peregrinus could be acclaimed as divine simply because their speculative wisdom and insight passed beyond the capabilities of mere mortals (see Lucian, *Peregr.*). Though in places it is not clear what this 'divinity' really meant to philosophical writers, it is also sometimes clearly a matter of deification.⁴⁶ On the other hand, with the rise of absolute monarchs in the Hellenistic world, we also see these rulers being deified,⁴⁷ often for nothing more than their waging of wars and building of states.⁴⁸ Even poets could be credited with deity on the strength

DMort. 10; Philostr. *VA* 4.24).

⁴³ It is thus strange that Bieler excluded such mythic heroes from the outset (*ΘΕΙΟΣ ANHP* 1.7). See regarding Menacretes (*Ath. Deipn.* 7.289b-d; D.S. 16.44), Romulus and Aristeas (*Plu. Rom.* 28.6), Perseus, Aesclepius, Heracles and Alexander of Abonuteichos (*Lucian Alex.* 10-11, 58, 60), Peregrinus and Heracles (*Lucian Peregr.* 33); Julius and Castor (*Suet Jul.* 1.10.1), Apollonius and Aesclepius (*Philostr. VA* 1.7, 12), and implicitly Augustus and the heroes in Ovid *Metam.* 15.868-70. Less directly, some of Empedocles' feats mirror those of Heracles, Aesclepius, and Orpheus (Weinreich 'Antikes Gottmenschentum' 181).

⁴⁴ Empedocles is the earliest and most famous example here. See also, e.g., Menacretes of Syracuse (*Ath. Deipn.* 7.289a-b), Simon Magus (*Acts* 8:9-10).

⁴⁵ Betz ('Gottmensch II' 248-9) points to Lucian's satires, the neo-platonic theurges in Dio Cass. 71.8.4, 9.2 and the 'Heracles' in Philostr. *VS* 2.1.552.

⁴⁶ See Tiede (*Charismatic Figure* 53-6) on the ambiguity surrounding the divinity of the Stoic wise man (*Seneca Epist.* 31.11; 41.1, 4-5; 53.11; 73.14-16) and Corrington (*Diotine Man* 88) on Socrates' semi-divine daimonion (cf. Tiede, *Charismatic Figure* 41-2). Epicurus' deity too is more ambiguous than Tiede recognizes (*Charismatic Figure* 48-52), given that he challenges traditional notions of godhood, and Betz betrays a typical lack of sensitivity to the variety of meanings for θεῖος in his discussion of Plato (see 'Gottmensch II' 264-6 and *Pl. Sph.* 216b). Still, some of the later statements about these figures are quite strong (see Gal. *Protr.* 5 regarding Socrates, Hippocrates, and Plato; Porph. *VP* 56, 58-9 regarding Plato and 127-9, 134 regarding Plotinus). D.L. even hands down a legend making Plato a child of Apollo (3.2).

⁴⁷ So Betz 'Gottmensch II' 286-7. See regarding Julius (*Suet. Jul.* 1.84-5, 88; *Aug.* 2.17), Augustus (*Ovid Metam.* 15.868-70), Lycurgus (*Paus.* 3.16.5-6; *Plu. Lyc.* 5.3, 31.3; *Philostr. VA* 8.7).

⁴⁸ So Tiede *Charismatic Figure* 90-98. See regarding Lycurgus' legislation (*Plu. Lyc.* 5.3; cf. *Cic. Resp.* 2.5, 9 regarding Romulus), Julius' political shrewdness and military prowess (*Suet. Jul.* 1.27-28, 30, 57-8, 60-70), Augustus' military or civic accomplishments (*Suet.*

of their brilliant art.⁴⁹ Of course, these various kinds of feats were not mutually exclusive. The Emperors occasionally worked wonders.⁵⁰ Divine philosophers could also work miracles or make oracular pronouncements,⁵¹ particularly after the late-Hellenistic blurring of the lines between religion and philosophy. What is crucial to note, however, is that even at the height of enthusiasm for such wonders, we continue to see some divinized philosophers who display no knack for the miraculous. Thus, the ongoing stress on miracles as central to the divine man's activity likely derives more from the overwhelming (but anachronistic) desire to compare Jesus of Nazareth with Apollonius of Tyana⁵² than from a broad reading of the extant sources. Just as with mythic heroes, so with later figures the particular kind of feat performed seems much less crucial than the fact that divine men have done something great for the human community.

(c) A 'Divine Man' Type?

We must agree with H. C. Kee, that 'except for a widespread fondness for apotheosis of great men, there is no set type or model of *theios aner*'.⁵³ Nor should we simply replace the single type popularized by Bieler with a plurality of set types. For, although divine men tended to be drawn from a handful of *social* types (philosophers, wandering thaumaturges, kings), none of these were understood to be divine *per se* until at least the time of Celsus and Porphyry.⁵⁴ In other words, there were many philosophers, thaumaturges, poets and kings who were not thought to be divine, and this is precisely why those who did claim some deity in the first century C.E. and after had to bolster those claims with appeals to the mythic heroes.

Aug. 2.8, 18, 21-22, 26 though cf. 2.20, 23, etc.).

⁴⁹ See, e.g., Plutarch (*Eun. VS* 454), Pindar (*Paus.* 9.23.3ff.), and Parrhasius (*Pliny HN* 35.71).

⁵⁰ Re. Vespasian, see *Tac. Hist.* 4.81; *Suet. Caes.* 8.7; *Dio Cass.* 65.8.1; cf. *Plu. Pyrrh.* 3.4-5.

⁵¹ See regarding Democritus (*D.L.*, 39), Epimenides (*D.L.*, 1.109-110, 114-15; *Pl. Leg.* 1.642D-E, 3.677D; *Plu. Sol.* 12), Empedocles (*D.L.*, 8.59-62; 67, 69), Pythagoras (*Jamb. VP* 134; *D.L.* 8.41), and of course Apollonius (see *Philostr. VA* 1.2, 10, 23; 4.4, 10, 18, 20, 24, 45; 5.11, 13, 30; 6.32, 39, 43; 8.10, 26).

⁵² See, e.g., F. C. Baur, *Apollonius von Tyana und Christus* (Hildesheim 1966 [1832]) and the survey in E. Koskenniemi, *Apollonios Von Tyana in Der Neutestamentlichen Exegese* (Tübingen 1994).

⁵³ H. C. Kee, *Jesus in History*, 2nd ed. (New York 1970) 152. So Gallagher *Divine Man* 174-9; Blackburn *Theios Aner* 94-96.

⁵⁴ Betz ('Gottmensch II' 236) points to Origen *Cels.* 2.49ff.; 3.3, 42f.; 6.8-11; 7.8-9, 53, but no earlier parallels can be found. Cicero's popular deified humans are clearly ancient heroes (*ND* 3.39-40) and DuToit (*Theios Anthropos* 171-2) is correct that the 'so-called θεῖου' in Philodemus of Gadara who have led a philosophical student astray (Περὶ Θεῶν, frag. 10) are probably philosophical teachers. The lists of seers, etc. in *Pl. Chrm.* 158b; *Leg.* 1.642d and *Clem. Al. Strom.* 1.133.2 say nothing about divinity.

What we may say, however, is that divinized humans in general tend to be portrayed as having remarkable parentage, birth, and death, as being remarkably beautiful, virtuous, or intelligent, and as performing some great feat for humanity (whether miraculous or otherwise). Of these features, precocious development and remarkable beauty are common modes of praise in the ancient world and were certainly not reserved for gods. Nor were the deeds of divine men always unique, and in any case they were extremely variable. Miracle working (where it appears) does seem at times to have carried overtones of deity.⁵⁵ It is, after all, when Apollonius miraculously steps out of his fetters in a Roman prison, that Damis recognizes his divinity (Philostratus *VA* 7.38). Yet not all wonder workers were thought to be gods.⁵⁶ Indeed, while the opponents of divine men would usually challenge claims of divine ancestry or ascent at death as hoaxes,⁵⁷ they needed only to recategorize the miracle worker as a morally suspect 'magician' (γοῆς) in order to undercut divine claims.⁵⁸ Thus, while someone explicitly identified as divine might in some cases absorb miracle stories along with other kinds of philanthropic deeds, miracle working can in no sense be called a set feature of some divine man archetype. Only divine parentage and heavenly ascent, the two features singled out by Talbert in his description of 'immortals', can be said to imply deity consistently and of themselves, and only these two features are so closely associated that one would commonly suggest the other.

Did Philo Portray Moses as a Divine Man?

It should be self evident that this Hellenistic pattern of divinization is foreign to the traditional Judaism which produced books like 1 and 2

⁵⁵ Note the reaction in Lystra to the healings of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14; Weinreich 'Antikes Gottmenschentum' 188). Suetonius tells us that Vespasian's healing miracles brought him 'prestige and a certain divinity (maiestas)' (*Caes.* 8.7.2).

⁵⁶ Celsus makes this point precisely (Origen *Cels.* 3.32; See Blackburn *Theios Anēr* 35, 93 [n. 574]). We find no divinization of Hermetimus of Klazomenai (Pliny *HN* 7.52.174; Plu. *Gen. Socr.* 22 [592C–D]; Apollon. *Para.* 3), Polydios (Cic. *Div.* 1.88f.), Melampus (Hom. *Od.* 11.281–97; 15.222–42; Pliny *HN* 10.70.137; Apollod., *Bibl.* 1.9.11–12; Paus. 2.18.4; 4.36.3; Hdt. 9.34; D.S. 4.68.4), or the Hyperborean magician (Lucian *Philops* 13–14).

⁵⁷ See D.L. 8.71–5; Lucian *Peregr.* 1, 39, et passim; *Alex.* 11; Hdt. 4.94f. Some thought it credible that Empedocles would have killed himself in a heroic way precisely to confirm his deity (D.L. 8.69–70).

⁵⁸ Corington *Divine Man* 22; Gallagher *Divine Man* 174–5, et passim; Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.31–47, 140–43. See, e.g., regarding Simon Magus (Acts 8:9–10, 13, 18–19) and Apollonius of Tyana (Philostr. *VA* 1.2, 13; 4.18; cf. Gallagher *Divine Man* 20). Of course, this does not stop skeptics like Lucian from attacking the authenticity of the miracles (*Alex.* 5, 10–11; 13–16; 19–22, 24, 26–7, 36–7, 48–9).

Maccabees and *Judith*.⁵⁹ This is not to deny any Hellenistic cultural influence on these cultural 'conservatives', but simply to point out that their contact with Greek culture tended, if anything, to strengthen their commitment to monotheism and their rejection of Greek religion. The question is, however, whether deeply Hellenized circles such as those represented by Philo were as firm in this rejection, or whether they were willing to see their heroes as divine. So when we turn to Philo's greatest hero, Moses, we must ask whether he too seems to draw, perhaps not on some set θεῖος ἀνὴρ type, but at least on the broad patterns of presentation which we have observed in Greek and Roman divine men.

(a) Career and Achievements

Certainly Moses does perform wonders. When he is first called in Arabia, God instructs him to perform three miraculous signs: his rod changed back from a snake when he picked it up, his hand became leprous and was healed again, and the water which he poured from the Nile became blood (*Mos.* 1.77–81).⁶⁰ Similarly, Moses' miraculous contest with the Egyptian magicians demonstrates that 'some diviner power' is at work through him (1.94), and Philo explains in the introduction to the second book of *De Vita Mosis* that the first volume included 'the works which he performed in Egypt...works which no words can adequately describe'(2.1). Indeed, in 1.155–56 we read that:

... since God judged him worthy to appear as a partner of His own possessions, He gave into his hands the whole world as a portion well fitted for His heir. Therefore, each element obeyed him as its master, changed its natural properties and submitted to his command, and this perhaps is no wonder.⁶¹

Holladay has tried to reinterpret the 'elements' over which Moses had control as his own soul,⁶² so that the passage becomes another reference to his virtue. Yet the previous verse says plainly that God rewarded Moses with 'the wealth of the whole earth and sea and rivers, and of all the other elements and the combinations which they form'(1.155). Israel's ruler thus

⁵⁹ So Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 2.24–5; Nilsson *Geschichte* 2.505; Hahn *Titles* 289. Schottroff ('Gottmensch I', in *RAC* 12 (1983) 210–214) easily points out the essential fallacy of Windisch equating the Jewish ἀνθρώπος θεοῦ with the Hellenistic divine man (see *Paulus und Christus* 90ff.).

⁶⁰ Unless otherwise noted, all parenthetical references in this section are to Philo's *Vita Mosis*.

⁶¹ All Philo quotations are from *PLCL*.

⁶² Holladay *Theios Anēr* 121–22, based on Stoic metaphysics in which the soul is a substance. See the objections of Blackburn *Theios Anēr* 68 [n. 429] who points to *Mos.* 1.201f.; 1.216; 2.154.

appears as one to whom God's sovereign power has been delegated to work such miracles as the parting of the Red Sea.⁶³

Yet the narrative descriptions of those miraculous activities make it clear how Philo understood this privilege: that Moses became the vehicle through which God acted. Goodenough had already observed that Philo seems actually to downplay or rationalize many of the miracles in the biblical account.⁶⁴ Even when Philo allows a miracle to stand, however, it is never produced by a power *resident in* Moses.⁶⁵ Unlike the wonders of Empedocles or Apollonius, those of Moses always point beyond him to God, the true holder of the power, for whom Moses serves as an agent (1.75–6). It is God who shows his will through Moses' miracles (1.95). Thus, almost all of Moses' miracles are performed in obedience to a divine instruction (e.g., 1.90). When Moses strikes the Red Sea with his staff to part the waters, he acts 'at God's command' and nature has already prepared for the miracle with portentous winds and clouds (1.176–77).⁶⁶ Moreover, Philo actually seems to distance Moses from the Egyptian plagues, for only one of which is he the sole explicit agent (1.120–21). Already in the biblical text some of the plagues are mediated by Aaron or are the direct actions of God.⁶⁷ Yet in some cases Philo has Aaron displace Moses.⁶⁸ In others where Philo retains Moses' agency, the Alexandrian skips over biblical passages

⁶³ So P. Borgen, 'Moses, Jesus, and the Roman Emperor', *NT* 38:2 (1996) 150. Borgen points out how this portion (κλήρον) overlaps with (though it outstrips) the sovereignty of Roman emperors (see Philo *Legat.* 8, 43, 49) and reminds one of the kind of κλήρον, or regional possession, granted by, e.g., Gaius to Agrippa (*Legat.* 326).

⁶⁴ E. R. Goodenough, *By Light, Light* (New Haven 1935) 187. Philo may also have downplayed Moses' miraculous works to counter the latter's reputation among pagans as a magician. See H. Remus, 'Moses and the Thaumaturges', *LTP* 52:3 (1996) 666–8; J. Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism*, SBLMS 16 (Nashville 1972) 134–61; Apul. *Ap.* 90; Origen *Cels.* 3.5; 5.41; Philo *Hypoth.* 8.6.2. Remus has even argued that the lengthy excursus on Balaam, with its contrast between Moses and that disreputable magician (e.g., *Mos.* 1.276, 283, 285), was designed to combat this misunderstanding ('Thaumaturges' 677–8). Notice, too, how the miraculous contest in the Egyptian court differentiates between Moses' power and that of 'magicians' and 'wizards' (*Mos.* 1.92).

⁶⁵ So Holladay *Theios Aner* 195; Tiede *Charismatic Figure* 134ff.

⁶⁶ Some other miraculous 'prodigies' have nothing to do with Moses (*Mos.* 1.165–66; 1.199ff.), while others come simply as a result of his prayer (1.184).

⁶⁷ As in the biblical account, Philo's final three plagues of 'dog-flies', the death of livestock, and the death of the first-born are performed with no human agency at all (*Mos.* 1.130). Likewise, Aaron's mediation of the plagues of frogs (1.103) and gnats (1.107) is in keeping with the biblical text.

⁶⁸ Philo has Aaron turn the water into blood (*Mos.* 1.99), displacing Moses from the biblical story (Exod 7:20). The plague of ulcers, Moses' work in the Bible (Exod 9:10), is here mediated along with Aaron (*Mos.* 1.126–7). The rationale for the agency of Aaron or of Moses seems for Philo to relate to the elements involved in each miracle rather than any desire to glorify the characters (*Mos.* 1.129).

which actually narrate the miraculous performance.⁶⁹ Each time, it is prayer which brings the miraculous plague to an end (e.g., 1.122). This downplaying of Moses' involvement in the miracles adds ambiguity to the leader's role in the entire exodus. For, while one might cast his leading of the people out of Egypt as a hero's mighty deed for his people (see, e.g., 1.40-42; 44; 47; 50; 51-57), in Philo's narrative Moses is often eclipsed by God himself as the main agent of the people's deliverance.⁷⁰ Unlike Aesclepius or Apollonius, Moses does not appear as a wielder of independent divine power able to perform wonders at his own whim or even against the will of a deity.

In the final evaluation, however, much of the energy expended in the debate over Moses' miracle working may have been misplaced. As we argued earlier, miraculous wonders are not a prerequisite for divinization. Much more important is the fact that Moses does perform amazing philanthropic acts, not only for Israel, but ultimately for all of humanity. At the outset Philo makes it clear that he intends to show how Moses combined in one person the roles of king, philosopher, priest, and prophet, and how 'in each he won the highest place' (2.3; cf. 1.1-4). Philo's portrait of Moses' kingship is clearly influenced by Plato's *Republic*,⁷¹ and Philo interprets his encounter at Sinai as the philosophical ascent to the Platonic realm of the ideal which was the basis for the philosopher-king's ability (e.g., 1.158).⁷² Moses was just with other nations (1.243-5, 249), did not abuse his power for selfish ends (1.150), and did not amass wealth (1.152) or make an arrogant display (1.153). On the contrary, his liberality was expressed in his showering virtuous acts on his people (1.153-4). As a philosopher, 'his mind was incapable of accepting any falsehood' (1.24), and like, e.g., Apollonius of

⁶⁹ Moses' agency is eclipsed in the plagues of hail and darkness (*Mos.* 1.118-119, 123; cf. Exod 9:23; 10:22). In *Mos.* 1.126 (cf. 1.97) Philo says that these plagues too were performed through Moses' agency, but Philo's decision not to narrate his involvement emphasizes God's power rather than Moses' own.

⁷⁰ Since, e.g., there is no human agent of the final plague, the Egyptians decide to let the Hebrews go without any influence from Moses (*Mos.* 1.139). Once delivered, the people 'sang a new song to the Deity, Who gave them the land as their portion and had, in truth, led them in their migration' (1.255).

⁷¹ Holladay *Theios Aner* 109-112. In *Mos.* 2.2 Philo refers directly to the philosopher-king of Pl. *Resp.* 5.473d. Indeed, as Holladay notes (*Theios Aner* 111) the curricula of Plato's philosopher-king and of Philo's Moses are almost identical (Pl. *Resp.* 7.522c-534e; *Philo Mos.* 1.23).

⁷² So Holladay *Theios Aner* 126. See *Mos.* 1.148-62. Holladay suggests that we compare Philo's description of the vision with Plato's analogies of the sun, divided line and cave in *Resp.* 6-7 (*ibid.* 127 [n. 144]). Holladay observes that Moses is not ascribed the philosopher-king's military virtues (see *Resp.* 6.486b, 486d, 487a; 7.536a, 537b) and is avoided in discussions of Israel's victory (e.g. *Mos.* 1.216-17, 254-6, 258-62, 284, 306). He suggests that this may betray the added influence of Pythagorean and Cynic-Stoic conceptions of kingship and compares Diotogenes' emphasis on virtue (*Stob.* 4.7.26) with the basis for Philo's kingship in *Mos.* 1.148-9 (Holladay *Theios Aner* 112-116).

Tyana, he perfectly enacts the philosophy which he learns (1.29; cf. 2.66). As priest, Moses eclipses Aaron as the real priestly leader of Israel. This is not because of his leadership in the cult itself but rather because, again much like Apollonius or Epimenides at local pagan temples, he is the one who establishes the right pattern for the worship of the Lord (2.71ff.).⁷³ As a prophet, Israel's law-giver is both given the privilege of asking direct questions of God, and endowed with oracular prophecy.⁷⁴ On the shore of the Red Sea he 'became possessed, and, filled with the spirit which was wont to visit him, uttered these oracular words of prophecy...' (1.175), assuring the nation that the Egyptians will be destroyed. This is cast as a 'prediction' (1.176) which is then confirmed as Pharaoh's army drowns behind them. It is, moreover, through the medium of this supernatural prophecy that God instructs Moses about 'all that pertains to rites of worship and the sacred tasks of his ministry' (2.67).⁷⁵

Since both rulers and philosophers could be deified, Moses' supremacy at these tasks would be ample basis for the claim that he had become a god. After all, Philo's philosophical practice made him a greater law-giver than any Greek or barbarian ruler (2:12ff.; cf. 1:49ff.).⁷⁶ If Solon could be deified, why not Moses? Yet there were many such rulers and legislators who remained mere mortals. So we must ask whether Philo gives any positive indications that Moses is more than human.

(b) Birth and Childhood

We have seen that one of the two main indices of divine humanity in the Greco-Roman world was a supernatural parent and/or birth. Moses' childhood, like that of many divine heroes, was anything but ordinary. He was, like Heracles and Romulus, exposed as an infant.⁷⁷ He was rescued and raised by foster-parents who, though not nymphs or centaurs, were nonetheless Egyptian royalty. Since, however, these were all aspects of the biblical story, it is difficult to read much into them on their own. What is

⁷³ Goodenough (*By Light, Light* 190, 192) suggested that priesthood was a standard element in the Hellenistic concept of kingship.

⁷⁴ Philo distinguishes between these two forms of revelation (2.188-190) but Moses practised both (2.191). For obvious mantic activity see 1.201; 2.67, 188, 272, 275, 280, 288. Notice the implicit contrast with Balaam, whose knowledge gained by augury, who is enticed by money (1.264-68), and is only an unwilling vehicle for prophecy (1.274).

⁷⁵ Goodenough notes that of Moses' three prophetic 'modes' (2.191) mantic activity is most emphasized (*By Light, Light* 193) and is the source for his teaching on, e.g., the Sabbath (2.265-66).

⁷⁶ His law is unique (2.14), divinely inspired (2.34), and agrees with 'eternal nature' (2.52).

⁷⁷ See D.S. 4.9.6; Cic. *Resp.* 2.2; D.H. 1.79.2-10. Yet Philo reduces the parallels by omitting the basket or ark in which the child is placed (*Mos.* 1.12-15).

more important is Philo's silence about any divine parentage. Moses' parents are said to be 'the best of their contemporaries', and Moses himself is 'seventh in descent from the first settler, who became the founder of the whole Jewish nation'(1.5), but there are no gods to be seen in his lineage. Perhaps divine parents might be too much to expect from Philo the monotheist, but if his monotheism might prevent him from making Moses the child of a god, we should be warned at the outset that it might also prevent him from making the child divine at all.

Still, when we look at the character of the child Moses the parallels with divine men are undeniable. Moses' 'beauty', 'fine condition' and virtue are all praised in grand terms,⁷⁸ but more important is Philo's emphasis on the law-giver's super-human intelligence and wisdom. From birth 'he did not bear himself like the mere infant that he was, nor delight in fun and laughter and sport...but with a modest and serious bearing he applied himself to hearing and seeing what was sure to profit the soul'(1.20). He quickly learned all the lore of Egyptians, Greeks, and other barbarians (1.23), always driven by a single-minded pursuit of truth (1.24) and by 'nature's right reason'(1.48). Nor is he content only to learn the teachings of others, for his is one of those 'great natures' which 'carve out much that is new in the way of knowledge'(1.22). As with many divine philosophers,⁷⁹ Moses' teacher found that 'in a short time he advanced beyond their capacities; his gifted nature forestalled their instruction'(1.27), and he remains guided firmly by 'the reason within him' even when exiled from Egypt (1.48). Of course, as we have observed above, this kind of praise does not necessarily imply divinity. It is thus significant that Philo says of the youth:

...his associates and everyone else, struck with amazement at what they felt was a novel spectacle considered earnestly what the mind which dwelt in his body like an image in its shrine could be, *whether it was human or divine or a mixture of both*. So utterly unlike was it to the majority, soaring above them and exalted to a grander height (1.27).⁸⁰

This passage could have been drawn directly from a description of any one of the Hellenistic divine men, particularly those of a philosophic bent. In his attempt to exalt Moses in the eyes of his audience, Philo seems to say that Moses was indeed like those whom the Greeks had deified. Yet we must notice that the Alexandrian is here simply reporting the reaction of Moses' contemporaries. He has not yet explained what he himself means by the

⁷⁸ See 1.9, 15; 18-19, 25-6, 28-29, 31-3, 48, 59, 63.

⁷⁹ Cf. Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.35; Ps.-Callisth. *Alex.* 1.13.5; Philostr. *VA* 1.19; Eun. *V S* 473.44f.

⁸⁰ Italics mine. Apollonius too was 'not the least like other men' (Philostr. *VA* 1.28; cf. Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 1.39).

'grander height' to which Moses was 'exalted'. Thus we find ourselves still in the same position as after our survey of his career; there is much here that is suggestive, but nothing that would unambiguously mark Moses as a Hellenistic divine man.

(c) Death

Nor is this ambiguity cleared up when we look for the other main index of divinity, the ascent to heaven. Moses' death is plainly beyond the ordinary. We read that,

Afterwards the time came when he had to make his pilgrimage from earth to heaven, and leave this mortal life for immortality, summoned thither by the Father Who resolved his twofold nature of soul and body to a single unity, transforming his whole being into mind, pure as the sunlight (2:288).

The question is whether this transformation is of the same order as the deification of an Aesclepius or a Peregrinus. The 'resolution' of his soul and body into a 'single unity' might be construed as a kind of physical ascent, were it not for the way in which (as Talbert observes) the following narrative includes Moses' burial:⁸¹

... for when he was already being exalted and stood at the very barrier, ready at the signal to direct his upward flight to heaven, the divine spirit fell upon him and he prophesied with discernment while still alive the story of his own death...told how he was buried with none present, surely by no mortal hands but by immortal powers; how he also was not laid to rest in the tomb of his forefathers but was given a monument of special dignity which no man has ever seen (2:291).⁸²

Thus Moses ensures that his narrative cannot be confused with the vast majority of Hellenistic deification stories in which *the absence of the body* is a central sign of the hero's translation to heaven.⁸³

Admittedly, Hellenistic divine men do occasionally leave their bodies behind in a purely spiritual ascent.⁸⁴ Yet we must ask whether Moses' transformation here does not fit better into the Platonic model of final mystical union with the Good. Philo stands in the Platonic tradition, indebted perhaps to Orphic thought, which believed that souls are immortal

⁸¹ Talbert 'Concept of Immortals' 424.

⁸² This may be a polemic against traditions which understood Deut 34:6 as describing Moses' translation (See *Sacr.* 3.8-10; W. Meeks, *The Prophet-king* [Leiden 1967] 124; L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols. [Philadelphia 1909-1938] 6.161-2 [n. 951]). Ginzberg (*Legends* 6.151-2 [n. 904]) sees a similar polemic in Moses' public burial in *T. Mos.* 1:15 and *L.A.B.* 19-20d. It is not clear, however, whether this hypothetical tradition would imply Hellenistic deification or ascent along the lines of Enoch.

⁸³ Cf. *Sacr.* 8-10.

⁸⁴ See Plutarch's treatment of Romulus (*Rom.* 28.6-8).

by nature.⁸⁵ Whereas in traditional Greco-Roman religion it was only the divine who could look forward to more than a gloomy half-existence in Hades,⁸⁶ such Platonists believed that immortality was in fact our natural state. For Philo, as for Plutarch, the *δαίμονες* are simply human souls which do not happen to be encased in bodies, so that we may all become *δαίμονες* when our physical shell gives out.⁸⁷ Moreover, in this tradition the goal for every soul, the aim of the philosophical life, was to return to or merge back into the one divine being.⁸⁸ In *De Gigantibus* Philo writes that some of the souls which have become ensnared in the body

⁸⁵ On immortality of the soul, see Pl. *Phd.* 106–114 and J. Dillon, *Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (London 1977) 96–101 (Antiochus of Ascalon); 100–112 (Posidonius); 131–33 (Eudorus of Alexandria). Plutarch makes an unusual distinction between the soul and mind and seems only to regard the latter as immortal (see Dillon *Middle Platonists* 211–214). For the connection with Orphic mythology, see Guthrie *Greeks and Their Gods* 307–328, esp. 324–5; Fritz Graf, ‘Orphism’, *OCD* 1079; Pl. *Resp.* 10.

This is in sharp contrast, not only to traditional psychology, but also to Epicurean thought in which the soul was extinguished at death (See Long *Hellenistic Philosophy* 29, 49–56) and Stoic thought in which the soul (conceived as a subtle kind of matter) had at most a limited life outside of the body (*ibid.* 170–175, 213 n. 2).

⁸⁶ Pindar exhorts his reader and his own soul not to seek the immortality which is closed to all those born mortal (*I* 5.14; *P* 3.59).

Reitzenstein compared Philo’s ‘deification’ of the soul with the apotheosis offered by the mysteries (e.g., Apul. *Metam.* 11:24; Iamb. *Myst.* 10:4–6) and equated the initiate with the *θεῖος ἄνθρωπος* (so Betz ‘Gottmensch II’ 270). Yet the mysteries still operated within the traditional Greek theology with its several finite gods. Nor did they elevate their initiates to independent equality with Isis or Mithras. The initiate hoped, not to become the divine object of a cult, but rather to find a blissful eternal existence in a bodily paradise. Guthrie (*Greeks and their Gods* 290–93) points out that this was understood only as a particular way for individuals to escape existence as a shade. See further R. L. Gordon, ‘mysteries’, *OCD* 1017–18.

⁸⁷ See *Gig.* 6–24; *Somn.* 1.134–5, 141–2; *Plant.* 14; *Sacr.* 5, 7; *Fug.* 59; *Mut.* 38; *QG* 1.85; 4.74; 3.10–11; *Conf.* 77–82; Brenk ‘Demonology’ 2099–2107. Philo explains in *Plant.* 14 that those spirits called heroes by the Greeks are those souls which have not been contaminated with impurity and live in the aetherial region. *Conf.* 171ff. represents a departure from this line of thought which is difficult to integrate with the other texts.

For this strand of thinking regarding *δαίμονες* in middle Platonism see Dillon *Middle Platonists* 47; 111–12; Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* 361c; *De gen.* 591c–f, 593d; *De fac.* 944d. For attempts to unravel Plutarch’s own views on this subject from his dialogues see Brenk ‘Demonology’ 2121–30. There are some indications that Xenocrates simply equated the human *νοῦς* with the *δαίμονες* even while in the body (Brenk ‘Demonology’ 2088), as do some Pythagoreans (*ibid.*, 2094–98).

⁸⁸ So Blackburn *Theios Anēr* 66; Holladay *Theios Aner* 139f., 163. See the return of the *νοῦς* to the sun in Plutarch *De fac.* 944d–e and the later elaboration of these ideas in Plotinus (e.g., *Enn.* 4.8 [6], 4). The direct origins of this mystical ascent lie in passages such as Pl. *Phd.* 82–4. According to Guthrie, this thread in Plato arose from the final hope in Orphic thought which was ‘to become one with the divine mind which is at the same time the fiery *aither*, at once the encompasser and the orderer of the universe. To it the soul is by nature akin, but sin...has cut it off, a fallen daemon...’ (*Greeks and Their Gods* 325).

have been able to stem the current, have risen to the surface and then soared upwards back to the place from whence they came. These last, then, are the souls of those who have given themselves to genuine philosophy, who from first to last study to die to the life of the body, that a higher existence immortal and incorporeal, in the presence of Him who is Himself immortal and uncreate, may be their portion (13-14; cf. *Plant.* 14).

This return to the one divine source, then, is not a matter of one's becoming a god oneself, but rather the fulfillment of the human creature's yearning for eternal communion with its origin. Although such Platonic systems were sometimes able to make room for the Homeric gods, they were inherently monotheistic in the sense that they imagined a kind of single divine source of reality which was unknown in traditional Greek theology.⁸⁹ The dividing line between humanity and divinity no longer runs along the divide between the mortals and the immortals, but is a radical contrast between immortal humanity and the one source from which it receives its being and in which it finds its fulfillment. So, although the story of Moses' death shows the extraordinary honour which God himself lavishes upon Moses, as well as his attainment of the Platonic philosopher's final goal, it also suggests that Philo's characterization of Israel's hero is moving in a different direction from that of the Hellenistic demi-gods.

(d) Explicit Ascriptions of Divinity

Admittedly, Philo himself does not lay out the significance of Moses' death. One might argue that we should not rule out Moses' divinization simply on the basis of a Platonic ontology which we have to infer from Philo's other writings. So does Philo say anything explicit which would suggest that Moses is a divine man? We know that a few Hellenistic divine men also lacked both divine lineage and a bodily ascent at death, but in those cases they are recognizable as divine because they are clearly called such or become the focus of a cult. So does Philo say anything similar about Moses? Once again, this is not a question which can be answered simply by looking at Philo's terminology. Even if the terms *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* or *θεῖος ἄνθρωπος* were unambiguous technical terms, Holladay points out that Philo never uses them of Moses.⁹⁰ Philo does describe Moses as a *θεῖος προφήτης* in 2.188, but this need only denote his role as a conveyer of divine words (a prophet

⁸⁹ Note how at the beginning of his allegorical interpretation of Egyptian religion Plutarch argues that all of these polytheistic rites direct one toward 'the knowledge of Him who is the First, the Lord of All, the Ideal One' (*De Is. et Os.* 352a).

⁹⁰ Holladay *Theios Aner* 341. Philo only uses the term *θεῖος ἀνὴρ* once (*Virt.* 177), probably of the Stoic Wise Man or one who has beheld of τὸ ὄν (so Holladay *Theios Aner* 176f., 194-5). While Moses may be the quintessential example of this ideal, the passage does not refer to him directly.

who is associated with God).⁹¹ We must, instead, look more broadly at Philo's statements about Moses for hints about his ontological status.

Of the two passages which are often said to imply Moses' divinity, we have already seen one. This recorded the amazed wonder with which the young Moses' contemporaries asked whether his nature was 'human or divine or a mixture of both' (1.27). As we have already observed, these comments reveal that Philo is aware of the popular deification of heroes. He even seems willing to play off those beliefs in order to praise Israel's greatest leader. It is far from clear, however, whether Philo wants the reader to stay with an understanding of Moses as a god or demi-god.

We get a much better picture of the 'grander height' which Philo actually thought Moses had attained in our second passage, 1.155-59. Here we read, first of all, that as a reward for his virtue God counted Moses one of his friends and shared with him his possessions,⁹² just as friends always do (cf. 1.148-9). This is the context in which we find the passage cited above which describes Moses' sharing in God's control over nature. Philo goes much further, though, to describe a remarkably close relationship. He writes:

Again, was not the joy of his partnership with the Father and Maker of all magnified also by the honour of being deemed worthy to bear the same title? For he was named god (θεός) and king of the whole nation, and entered, we are told, into the darkness where God was, that is into the unseen, invisible, incorporeal and archetypal essence of existing things. Thus he beheld what is hidden from the sight of mortal nature, and, in himself and his life displayed for all to see, he has set before us, like some well-wrought picture, a piece of work beautiful and godlike (θεοειδής), a model for those who are willing to copy it (1.158-9).

God shared with Moses not only control over nature, but even his divine title, θεός. This is, of course, Philo's interpretation of Exodus 7:1, where the biblical text says that God has made Moses 'god' to Pharaoh, and that Aaron is Moses' prophet (cf. Exod 4:16). This is explained by Philo as Moses' unique ability to mediate divine reality to humankind (cf. *Mut.* 18-19; 128-9). Philo interprets the Sinai encounter as Moses' mystical contemplation of the Form of the Good and then suggests that this vision of reality

⁹¹ Holladay (*Theios Aner* 160-61) suggests that in context it could be used as a synonym for ἐνθεός or the genetical τοῦ θεοῦ. Even if we resist this explanation, Blackburn is right that it need refer to nothing more than Moses' ethical conformity to God's image (*Theios Anēr* 67-8). The same may be said of QE 2.54.

⁹² Holladay (*Theios Aner* 119, 121) points out that Hellenistic conceptions of friendship with the gods (being a φίλος θεοῦ) often involved the sharing of divine possessions (see, e.g., D.L. 6.37, 72). Moses 'came to love God and be loved by Him as have been few others' (*Mos.* 2.67). Borgen emphasizes how 'friendship' with a ruler entailed gaining power and wealth ('Roman Emperor' 149).

allowed Moses to embody that divine form, making him a living revelation to the rest of humanity.⁹³

The question here is whether Moses' unique contemplation of the divine realities makes him ontologically divine, comparable to Hellenistic divine men. We cannot follow Holladay in reducing this passage to a hyperbolic description of Moses' kingship or his philosophical virtue.⁹⁴ Surely the Alexandrian wants to imply more than this when, after Moses encounter with God, we hear that the Israelites could not 'continue to stand the dazzling brightness that flashed from him like rays of the sun' (2.70). Martha Himmelfarb is likely right that we should see in Moses' mystical ascent some influence of the apocalyptic ascent stories in which human heroes like Enoch are raised up to God's heavenly presence in order to then act as a mediator to some part of creation.⁹⁵ Thus Holladay seems to be wrong in denying the hints here that Moses has in some sense become a 'heavenly figure'.⁹⁶

At the same time, it is precisely because Moses acts as a *mediator* between God and humanity that we must agree with David Runia that Moses is *not* exalted as a kind of divine vice-regent.⁹⁷ Indeed, elsewhere when Philo interprets Exod 7:1 he takes great pains to assure the reader that when Moses was called 'god' he 'did not become such in reality, but only by a convention (δόξη) is supposed to be such' (*Det.* 161; See also *Det.* 162; *Prob.* 43–44). It is not that Moses ascends to heaven and sits beside God to rule the world. Rather, on the model of the Platonic philosopher-king and the Stoic good man (ὁ σπουδαῖος) who is κοσμοπολίτης (cf. *Mos.* 1.157), Moses perceives divine reality and is thus given authority over the world *insofar as he reflects that divine reality*.⁹⁸ This is precisely why Moses introduces the Sinai event here—because that mystical event, along with the mediatorial role which it gave Moses, is the sole basis for his being called 'god'.⁹⁹ It is only

⁹³ So Goodenough *By Light, Light* 189. Cf. *Pl. Resp.* 5.480a; 6.484b; 7.540a–b where the contemplation of the philosopher king fits him to be the paradigm for the other citizens. Goodenough (*By Light, Light* 190) also points to the Pythagorean notion that the king acts as a god to the πόλις, embodying the law and carrying it out (see Stob. 4.7.61).

⁹⁴ So Borgen ('Roman Emperor', 152) who points to Moses' transcendent mediation in *Sacr.* 9.

⁹⁵ M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York 1993) 70–71. Borgen points to QE 2.28 where Moses' entry into the darkness was an ascent to the forecourt of the Father's heavenly Palace/Temple, and he argues that the motif of transformation is common in ascent texts ('Roman Emperor', 151–2; cf. Himmelfarb *Ascent* 47–51, 70–71).

⁹⁶ Holladay *Theios Aner* 129.

⁹⁷ D. T. Runia, 'God and Man in Philo of Alexandria', *JTS* 39 (1988) 63.

⁹⁸ So Holladay *Theios Aner* 126. Thus Goodenough (*By Light, Light* 184) observes that Moses' words are τὰ θεῖα insofar as the words come from God (see *Mos.* 1.84).

⁹⁹ Note, too, Runia's observation ('God and Man' 56–7) that Philo did not see the term

in this representational, metaphorical sense that Moses becomes a god for humanity. Moreover, Holladay and Meeks have both argued that the unusual connections here between godship in Exod 7:1, *kingship* over Pharaoh, and *kingship* over *Israel* depend on Targumic, Rabbinic, and Samaritan interpretive traditions. This would suggest that, as much as Philo's picture of Moses was influenced by his Platonism, something very much like it was equally at home within fairly traditional Jewish piety.¹⁰⁰

We can thus exclude any idea that Moses becomes divine in an independent, ontological sense. From one point of view, Goodenough is right that in Moses' final hymn 'the gulf between mortal and immortal, the cosmic and the human, has been bridged'.¹⁰¹ Philo conceives of the relationship as so uniquely close that he can speak of Moses being stationed beside God in heaven (*Sacr.* 8). Yet such talk is, in the end, allegorical.¹⁰² The bridge is not

θεός as the proper title for God. Rather, it has for Philo a range of appropriate applications (certain men, heavenly bodies, angels, etc.) and is only used of God 'catachrestically', that is, through a deliberate misuse of language (*Somn.* 1.228–30; *Mut.* 11–13; *Mos.* 1.75–6). Thus, 'the crucial difference is that for Moses these are personal and proper names (ἴδια καὶ κύρια ὀνόματα) which tell us something about his nature, whereas God, as transcendent Being, has no proper (i.e. legitimate) name (κύριον ὄνομα) which can indicate his essence' ('God and Man', 60).

¹⁰⁰ Holladay (*Theios Aner* 124–5) argues that Philo must know Jewish traditions like those in Targ. Onk., Targ. Jer., and the Samaritan *Memar Marqah* 1.2 which understand 'god' in Exod 7:1 to denote kingship. Meeks points to a midrashic homily which sees Moses here as a paradigm of the way in which kings can only have glory insofar as they share in God's ('God and King' 356–57). This is why he imports this passage into an extended attempt to ground Moses' role as king (see *Mos.* 1.163). The connection between a mystical ascent and Moses' kingship are likewise already established in traditional interpretation (Meeks 'God and King' 367–69; so Runia 'God and Man' 53). One might object that these traditions themselves have been deeply Hellenized, yet Rabbinic and Samaritan texts are not where we would expect to find radical challenges to traditional monotheism.

On the other hand, Runia is able to account for the association between rulership and godship here on the basis of Philo's allegory: Moses is the ruling, rational, divine principle over against the foolish and bodily realm (Runia 'God and Man' 54; see Philo, *Mut.* 128–9; *Sacr.* 8–9; *Leg.* 1.40). The cosmic scope of Moses' role would then arise from Moses' portrayal as the Stoic σπουδαίος (Runia *ibid.* 55). Still, the traditions uncovered by Holladay and Meeks would show that an image of Moses similar to Philo's could arise from within a much less hellenized matrix of thought.

¹⁰¹ Goodenough *By Light, Light* 197.

¹⁰² In *Sacr.* 8–10 Philo has just been offering an allegorical reading of the patriarchs as different internal conditions of the soul. The deaths of these figures are allegorized as different intellectual achievements, different kinds of learning. So, in being 'added' to 'the people of God', Abraham represents a pupil under a teacher (5). In going to join a 'race', Isaac becomes one who learns directly (6–7). Moses, on the other hand, attains an intellectual relationship with God which is even more direct. He is able to 'soar above species and genus alike' so that God stations him beside himself (8). This intimate relationship is left unspecified, but Philo goes on to explain that Moses was so close to God that he too was incapable of change. This is why 'when Moses was about to die we

an ontological one. Rather, Moses is transformed by the contemplation of God, so that his life mirrors the character of divine truth. Of course, there is an ontological change in Moses which distances him from the rest of humanity. We may even say that Moses is no longer simply human, but occupies a middle point between humanity and God.¹⁰³ Yet we should not imagine that this elevation above the rest of humanity reduces the ontological distance between Moses (a created thing) and ὁ ὄν. He still remains entirely dependent on the one God, claiming nothing in and of himself. It is worth pointing out the words with which Philo begins this passage: '...the good man, though he possesses nothing in the proper sense, not even himself, partakes of the precious things of God...' (1.157). This is the sense in which Moses 'partakes' in God's power and his name. As Holladay admits, when Philo has Moses share in God's title there *may* be an element of polemical assertion that Moses was even greater than Heracles, Minos, and Alexander who were merely sons of Zeus.¹⁰⁴ But the comparison, if it is to be implied, is merely rhetorical. For the basis of Moses' greatness is entirely unlike that of the divinized heroes of the Hellenistic world.

Conclusion

Gail Corrington has written that 'Moses may be for Philo the embodiment of divine virtue and wisdom, the θεῖος σοφός, but for Philo he is scarcely the *theios anēr* as the term has usually been understood'.¹⁰⁵ In places Philo does seem to have been aware of Hellenistic discussions of divine human beings,

do not hear of him 'leaving' or 'being added' like those others' (8). As with God, there was 'no room in him for adding or taking away' (8).

We must not forget, however, that this is allegory. So, just as the deaths of the patriarchs represented their ascent to a new intellectual level, Moses' different fate also stands for his superlative ethical character. Philo's point is that a soul like Moses was so advanced that no-one around him could perceive any progress or development in it: 'Nay I judge that the soul itself which is passing thus does not know of its change to better things...' (10). Thus, when Philo brings in Exod 7:1 here he explains it entirely in ethical terms. God 'gifted him with no ordinary excellence, such as that which kings and rulers have, wherewith to hold sway and sovereignty over the passions of the soul, but He appointed him as god, placing all the bodily region and the mind which rules it in subjection and slavery to him' (*Sacr.* 9). Cf. Runia's similar exegesis of this passage and his harmonization of it with *Det.* 161-2 ('God and Man' 60-61).

See also *Det.* 39f. and *Mig.* 84 where Philo completely allegorizes Exodus 7:1 in terms of Moses being the mind and Aaron speech, the mind being the most divine part of the human being which expresses itself through speech as through a prophet. In *Mig.* 169 this becomes an image of the mind ascending to the vision of God, with the help of speech its prophet.

¹⁰³ So Runia 'God and Man' 62-3 and *Somn.* 2.230-4.

¹⁰⁴ Holladay *Theios Anēr* 122.

¹⁰⁵ Corrington *Divine Man* 132.

and he is not above using parallels between Moses and those divine paragons of Hellenistic achievement to encourage his readers to adopt (or return to) his Hebrew philosophy. Yet these parallels are, in and of themselves, ambiguous, and the two traits which might imply, on their own, the deification of a hero (divine parentage and bodily ascension) are absent from Philo's life of Moses. Nor do his explicit statements about Moses' status (remarkable as they are) encourage the view that he had become a god or demi-god. On the contrary, Philo never appears to have wavered in his conviction that 'there is a vast chasm between Creator and creature', a chasm which was antithetical to the whole idea of the Hellenistic divine man.¹⁰⁶ Thus Philo's great doxological statements are directed, not to Moses or any other human being, but to the one and only God:

O Lord and Master, how can one hymn Thee? What mouth, what tongue, what else of the instruments of speech, what mind, soul's dominant part, is equal to the task? If the stars become a single choir, will their song be worthy of Thee?(2.239).

Instead of becoming the object of a cult, Moses is venerated as the founder of the one legitimate cult. Where Heracles and Peregrinus were thought to have actually become independent deities, Moses remains ever an agent of one incalculably greater than himself.

If Philo's treatment of Moses is not analogous to Philostratus' portrait of Apollonius of Tyana, then he cannot serve as a bridge between that Pythagorean sage and the early Christian treatment of Jesus of Nazareth. We have not dealt with other Jewish authors like Josephus, Artapanus, and Ezekiel the Tragedian, but there are few indications that we will find anything remarkably different there.¹⁰⁷ The burden of proof thus rests solidly on those who would still argue that Hellenized Judaism was the midwife

¹⁰⁶ Holladay *Theios Aner* 196. Philo says explicitly in *Mos.* 1.283 and 2.194 that humans cannot become gods. So Blackburn (*Theios Aner* 67) and Holladay (*Theios Aner* 105f.) who point to *Legat.* 118; *Deus* 53; *Ebr.* 30; *Migr.* 42; *Decal.* 32; *QG* 1.55; 2.54; *QE* 1; *Mut.* 181f.; and esp. *Det.* 160–62. Borgen ('Roman Emperor' 152–3) notes how Gaius is condemned for trying to cross this chasm (*Legat.* 75, 78, 93, 114, 218; cf. 353).

¹⁰⁷ Contrast Windisch *Paulus und Christus* 103–14; Bieler *ΘΕΙΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ* 2.30–36; Georgi *Die Gegner* 148–62; Tiede *Miracle Worker* 146–177 with Holladay *Theios Aner* 47–102 and Blackburn *Theios Aner* 60–64, 69–72. Ezekiel the Tragedian is the most suggestive, since here God vacates his throne and allows Moses to take his place there (in Eus. *PE* 9.29). For the debate over this text see Goodenough *By Light, Light* 290; H. Jacobson, 'Mysticism and Apocalyptic in Ezekiel's *Exagoge*', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 6 (1981) 272–93; *The Exagoge of Ezekiel* (Cambridge 1983) 89ff.; P. W. van der Horst, 'Moses' Throne Vision in Ezekiel the Dramatist', *JJS* 34 (1983) 21–9; 'Some Notes on the *Exagoge* of Ezekiel', *Mnemosyne* 37 (1984) 354–75, esp. 363ff. Runia is likely right that one must remember that Ezekiel's passage is a dream and that the interpretation in the play does not even hint at the kind of ontological implications which scholars often draw ('God and Man' 52, 63).

for the birth of a 'divine man Christology'. There remains, of course, the possibility that early Christians drew directly from pagan sources to construct their high christologies. The likelihood of such influence depends on whether we think that, within a decade of Jesus' crucifixion, the likes of Peter, James, John, and Paul would have been willing to cast their Messiah as another Aesclepius or Heracles.¹⁰⁸ Nor should we rule out the possibility that Jewish speculation about Moses did have an impact on early Christian thought. We can easily imagine that Christians who knew Moses as an exalted mediator might have portrayed Jesus in a similar light. What should now be evident, however, is that we will distort such a 'Moses Christology' if we imagine it as a 'divine man Christology' and thus as a bridge between the Church and the pagan temple.

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¹⁰⁸ We may assume that pagan converts would have thought of divine men when they heard about Jesus, and perhaps even that they would have used miracle stories to propagandize for their saviour (Blackburn *Theios Anēr* 93–4). Yet the ongoing leadership of the apostles in the early communities, the complete lack of evidence for Christological debate in the early years (unlike, e.g., the debate over the Gentile mission), and the presence of a very high Christology already in Paul's traditional sources (e.g., Phil 2:5–11; 1 Cor 15) all combine to suggest that if such pagan perceptions were a part of the origin of that Christology they must have been accepted very quickly by the apostolic core.