

ON THE *CURIOSITY* OF PHILOCRATES  
(EP. *ARIST.* 1)

1. The *Letter of Aristeas* and its genre

The *Letter of Aristeas* raises many questions concerning its date,<sup>1</sup> authorship,<sup>2</sup> historical value,<sup>3</sup> and audience.<sup>4</sup> It is likely to have been written in Alexandria in 2 BC by a well-educated Jew, who presents himself as a Gentile courtier, who has taken part in the embassy to the High Priest Eleazar in order to fetch Jewish translators from Jerusalem. Addressing his brother Philocrates, he narrates the story of the translation of the Hebrew Pentateuch into Greek. The problem of the genre and the role of addressee of the *Letter* is also open for discussion. It should be mentioned that no one referred to it as ‘letter’ in antiquity.<sup>5</sup> However, there is a superscription in the form “Aristeas to Philocrates” in manuscripts, and a 14<sup>th</sup> century manuscript Q contains some fragments of the text and uses the word ‘letter’ as the heading: ἐπιστολῆς Ἀριστέως πρὸς Φιλοκράτην ἑκφρασις.<sup>6</sup> Although the editions of L. Mendelssohn, P. Wendland, H. Thackeray, H. Andrews, H. Meecham and R. Tramontano put the title *epistula or epistula ad fratrem Philocratem*,<sup>7</sup> in 1951 M. Hadas took out the word ‘letter’ from the title of the book, claiming that the book was not a letter at all, considering that the

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<sup>1</sup> For detailed discussion see Wright 2015, 21–30.

<sup>2</sup> See Wright 2015, 16–20.

<sup>3</sup> See Wright 2015, 6–15.

<sup>4</sup> For details see Tcherikover 1958, 59–85.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Flavius, retelling the most of the Letter in *Antiquitates Judaicae*, calls it τὸ Ἀρισταίου βιβλίον (*Ant. Jud.* 12. 100), Eusebius of Caesarea gives a title περὶ τῆς ἑρμηνείας τοῦ τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμου (*Praep. Ev.* 9. 38), Epiphanius of Cyprus – σύνταγμα (*De mensuris et ponderibus* 9).

<sup>6</sup> S. Honigman guesses these words misled the scribe, who eventually began to refer to it as a letter (Honigman 2003, 1).

<sup>7</sup> Mendelssohn 1897, Wendland 1900, Thackeray 1902, Andrews 1913, Meecham 1935, Tramontano 1931.

addresses to Philocrates are formal.<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that his opinion had been more or less accepted by many scholars,<sup>9</sup> recently T. Rajak,<sup>10</sup> L. Doering<sup>11</sup> and L. Michael White<sup>12</sup> returned to this question. While Rajak and White conclude that the *Letter* is a sort of literary epistle, Doering, relying on the detailed analysis of the preface, considers the writing of Aristeas as a special type of a letter: “the technical epistolary treatise”.

## 2. What do we know about the addressee of the *Letter*?

Although Philocrates is addressed by name in many sections within the book (120, 171, 295–300), most of the information about Philocrates is to be extracted from the preface (1–8) and the epilogue (322). We do not know much about the addressee of the author, since he is not featured in other sources.<sup>13</sup> In section 5 the author mentions the fact that Philocrates has recently come from an island<sup>14</sup> (προσφάτως παραγεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς νήσου πρὸς ἡμᾶς) and now is ready to hear the story he is going to tell him. In section 6 it is stressed, that the present work is not the first one transmitted to him by Aristeas (Ep. Arist. 6):<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Hadas 1951. According to Hadas it is a sort of διήγησις, which Theon, the rhetorician of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, defines as λόγος ἐκθετικὸς πραγμάτων γεγονότων ἢ ὡς γεγονότων (“discourse expository of things that happened or might have happened”) (Hadas 1951, 57). Moreover, he concludes, that according to the terminology of grammarian Asclepiades of Myrlea, who divided such treatises into three groups based on their historical veracity, the διήγησις of Aristeas is a ‘πλάσμα’, which is “an imaginative treatment of history which should preserve historical verisimilitude and present a ‘poetical’ truth”, see Hadas 1951, 57–58.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. see Pelletier 1962, 47; Murray 1967, 337 n. 1; Bartlett 1985, 11; Honigman 2003, 33; Gruen 2013, 2711.

<sup>10</sup> Rajak 2009, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Doering 2012, 217–232.

<sup>12</sup> White 2018, 43–54.

<sup>13</sup> Hadas observes that the name Philocrates is not rare and occurs in Zenon Papyri (Hadas 1951, 92); Wright also refers to various literary sources, in which the name is attested (Wright 2015, 105).

<sup>14</sup> What island is meant is not clear. Wendland argued, it was Pharos, Hadas suggests Cyprus (see Hadas 1951, 94).

<sup>15</sup> It is not clear, whether the author refers to his own work (Freudenthal 1875, 141) or to the work of Aristeas Exegete, of which we have the only third-hand citation in Eusebius (Eus. *Praep. Ev.* 9. 25). O. Murray (Murray 1967, 340–343) put forward a hypothesis about identity of two authors. For the discussion of the suggestion see Tramontano 1931, 43–46; Wright 2015, 17–18; White 2018, 205–206.

Καὶ πρότερον δὲ διεπεμψάμην σοι περὶ ὧν ἐνόμιζον ἀξιωματικῶν εἶναι τὴν ἀναγραφὴν, ἣν μετελάβομεν παρὰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν λογιστικὴν Αἴγυπτον λογιστῶν ἀρχιερέων περὶ τοῦ γένους τῶν Ἰουδαίων.<sup>16</sup>

And previously I transmitted to you, concerning those things that I considered worthy of mentioning, a record, which we received from the most learned high priests throughout the most learned (land of) Egypt, concerning the race of the Judeans.<sup>17</sup>

In the epilogue, Aristeas promises to write another work (*Ep. Arist.* 322):

Πειράσομαι δὲ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἀξιολόγων ἀναγράφειν, ἵνα διαπορευόμενος αὐτὰ κομίζῃ τοῦ βουλήματος τὸ κάλλιστον ἔπαθλον.

And I will also attempt to write down the remainder of those things worth saying so that, by going through them, you might attend to the most excellent prize of your desire.

The author constantly underlines the curiosity of Philocrates, his piety, love of learning, interest for serious things and inclination to knowledge in general (*Ep. Arist.* 5; 7; 322):

5: Πέπεισμαι γάρ σε μᾶλλον ἔχοντα πρόσκλισιν πρὸς τὴν σεμνότητα καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων διάθεσιν τῶν κατὰ τὴν σεμνὴν νομοθεσίαν διεξαγόντων, περὶ ὧν προαιρούμεθα δηλοῦν, ἀσμένως σε ἀκούσεσθαι, προσφάτως παραγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς νήσου πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ βουλόμενον συνακούειν ὅσα πρὸς ἐπισκευὴν ψυχῆς ὑπάρχει.

For I am convinced – since you, all the more, have a predilection toward matters most holy and toward the disposition of those people who conduct themselves according to the holy legislation, concerning which we propose to explain – that you will listen gladly, having recently come to us from the island, also desiring to hear whatever exists for the restoration of the soul.

7: Φιλομαθῶς γὰρ ἔχοντί σοι περὶ τῶν δυναμένων ὠφελεῖσαι διάνοιαν δέον ἐστὶ μεταδιδόναι, μάλιστα μὲν πᾶσι τοῖς ὁμοίοις, πολλῷ δὲ μᾶλλον σοὶ γνησίαν ἔχοντι τὴν αἵρεσιν, οὐ μόνον κατὰ τὸ συγγενὲς ἀδελφῷ καθεστῶτι τὸν τρόπον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὸ καλὸν ὁρμῇ τὸν αὐτὸν ὄντα ἡμῖν.

For to you, as one who has an eagerness to learn about matters that can aid understanding, it is necessary that I communicate, on the one hand, most especially with all who are like-minded, and on the other, even more so with you who possesses a genuine purpose, who has been established in character as a brother not just according to descent but also being the same as we are, with an eager desire for beauty.

<sup>16</sup> The Greek text of the *Letter* is cited according to the edition of Hadas (Hadas 1951).

<sup>17</sup> Here and below we quote the translation of Wright (Wright 2015, 99).

We do not know whether or not there is any historical figure behind the mask of Philocrates, but since the question of who Aristeeas' audience was is open for discussion, it seems important to clarify the character of the addressee, as he is portrayed in the *Letter*, even if he is in fact fictitious.

### 3. What can we learn about Philocrates from *Ep. Arist. 1*?

Since the first paragraph of the preface seems to contain key information about communication between the addresser and addressee and gives some background behind the writing, it is worth examining it in detail (*Ep. Arist. 1*):

Ἀξιολόγου δηγήσεως, ὃ Φιλόκρατες, περὶ τῆς γενηθείσης ἡμῖν ἐν-  
τυχίας πρὸς Ἐλεάζαρον τὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἀρχιερέα **συνεσταμένης**, διὰ  
τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι παρ' ἑκαστα ἑὺπομιμνήσκων† συνα-  
κοῦσαι περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί, πεπεῖραμαι σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι  
σοι, κατελιφῶς ἦν ἔχεις φιλομαθῇ διάθεσιν.

**Having composed**<sup>18</sup> a noteworthy narrative, O Philocrates, about the meeting that we had with Eleazar, the high priest of the Judeans, since you place a high value, **as you constantly mention**, on hearing about the details and purpose of our deputation, I have attempted to expound it clearly for you, having realized the disposition you have to love learning.

There are two main problems in the text. The first one is connected with the understanding of the initial genitive absolute Ἀξιολόγου δηγήσεως <...> συνεσταμένης, the second one is the reading † ὑπομιμνήσκων†, which is evidently corrupt and must be corrected.

Many scholars note that the first phrase is difficult.<sup>19</sup> M. Hadas interpreted ἀξιολόγου as a predicative with συνεσταμένης and translated it “as the account of our deputation is worth narrating”,<sup>20</sup> regarding συνεσταμένης as a copula.<sup>21</sup> B. Wright takes ἀξιολόγου as an attribute with δηγήσεως guessing that ἀξιολόγου δηγήσεως refers to the present writing. He takes the participle as a middle voice, and assumes the verb means

<sup>18</sup> Following the translation of B. Wright (Wright 2015, 99) we mark with bold those sections of translations, which are doubtful and need reconsideration.

<sup>19</sup> Especially Zuntz 1972, 107; Doering 2012, 219.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. the translation of Pelletier: “étant donné tout l'intérêt que présente la relation de notre ambassade”.

<sup>21</sup> So Hadas 1951, 93 (“as the account of our deputation is worth narrating”); Thackeray 1917, 1 (“As the story of our deputation is worth telling”); Raurell 2002, 63 (“relacio es digna”), and others.

‘to compose’ here.<sup>22</sup> G. Zuntz, admitting the difficult syntax of the phrase, argued that it would have sounded absurd, if by ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως συνεσταμένης the author had meant the present narration, which he was at the moment going to tell (πεπείραμαι σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι). In his opinion, ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως συνεσταμένης refers not to the present writing of Aristeeas, but to the narration that had already existed and that Philocrates perhaps had got acquainted with.<sup>23</sup> Pelletier<sup>24</sup> agreed with Zuntz. Doering<sup>25</sup> developed his argument further comparing the preface of the *Letter* and the preface of the *Luke’s Gospel*. Following Loveday Alexander’s analysis of the structure of the first sentence of Luke (ἐπειδὴ περ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων),<sup>26</sup> Doering concludes that the first phrase of the *Letter of Aristeeas*, like the first phrase of the *Gospel*, refers to the former tradition, which was typical for scientific prefaces in epistolary treatises.<sup>27</sup> It might seem strange that the author, introducing his own writing (πεπείραμαι ἐκθέσθαι), tries to endow with authority the writing of another person using the adjective ἀξιόλογος ‘worth narrating’. In 322 the adjective is applied to the future writing of his own (πειράσομαι δὲ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἀξιολόγων ἀναγράφειν), and in 6 Aristeeas, speaking of the record about the Jews that he has already transmitted to Philocrates, uses the word ἀξιομνημόνευτος. We could suggest that in the passage discussed ἀξιόλογος διήγησις is applied to his own work, particularly since in the epilogue he uses the word διήγησις with reference to the present writing (*Ep. Arist.* 322):

Συ δέ, καθὼς ἐπηγγειλάμην, ἀπέχεις τὴν διήγησιν.

And you have the narrative, just as I promised.

On the other hand, perhaps the adjectives ἀξιόλογος and ἀξιομνημόνευτος underline the importance of the topic rather than authorship of the narratives. Thus, Zuntz’s interpretation of the beginning of the sentence is not to be rejected. I will come back to the interpretation of the genitive after discussion of the second problem of the section, which deals with the phrase διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι παρ’ ἑκάστα ὑπομνησκῶν συνακοῦσαι.

<sup>22</sup> Wright 2015, 99.

<sup>23</sup> Zuntz 1972, 107–108.

<sup>24</sup> Pelletier 1962, 100 n. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Doering 2012, 219.

<sup>26</sup> Alexander 1986, 48–74.

<sup>27</sup> Raurell 2002, 64 argues that Luke’s prologue is directly influenced by the text of the *Letter*.

Many editors suppose that the text indicates the fact that Philocrates (σε) constantly reminded (παρ' ἑκαστα ὑπομνήσκων) Aristes he would be glad to hear (συνακοῦσαι) the story of his deputation to Eleazar.<sup>28</sup> Thackeray and Hadas<sup>29</sup> leave a *crux desperationis* here considering the reading ὑπομνήσκων attested in manuscripts to be definitely corrupt. Indeed, the participle in nominative breaks the syntax of the phrase, as there is an infinitive construction with a subject in accusative σε. If the participle relates to the subject σε, it should be in accusative. Several emendations have been proposed to solve the problem. L. Mendelssohn offered to read ὑπομνήσκοντα instead of ὑπομνήσκων.<sup>30</sup> H. Diels proposed to replace the form of participle by infinitive ὑπομνήσκειν. His conjecture, accepted in the edition of P. Wendland,<sup>31</sup> complicates the structure of the phrase<sup>32</sup> (“because you constantly remind that you put a great value to hear”), but at the same time keeps a similar interpretation.

Until the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, nobody had doubted that the phrase discussed should indicate that Philocrates, being φιλομαθής, constantly reminded Aristes that he put a great value on hearing the story. It was G. Zuntz who cast doubt on this interpretation. In 1958, he wrote a brief article<sup>33</sup> and offered another correction of the text that changed the whole sense of the passage. He supposed, first, that originally the text had a participle in genitive ὑπομνήσκοντος governed by συνακοῦσαι and, second, that ὑπομνήσκω had the same meaning as μνημονεύω (‘to recall’). In his opinion, the meaning of the sentence is the following: “as you particularly concerned (διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιθῆσθαι) to listen (συνακοῦσαι) by every chance (παρ' ἑκαστα), when I recall (ὑπομνήσκοντος), I have attempted (πεπείραμαι) to explain clearly (σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι) the details and purpose of our deputation (περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί)”. It is noticeable that the subordinate clause περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί is governed not by συνακοῦσαι or ὑπομνήσκοντος, as one may guess, but by the following predicate σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι πεπείραμαι. The emendation completely changes the syntax and the meaning. If we accept it, we get a new detail about relationship between addressor and his addressee before the *Letter* was written: it was not Philocrates who had constantly reminded

<sup>28</sup> Thackeray 1917, 1; Hadas 1951, 93; Wright 2015, 100; Raurell 2002, 63.

<sup>29</sup> Thackeray 1902, 519; Hadas 1951, 92.

<sup>30</sup> Mendelssohn, 1897, 1.

<sup>31</sup> Wendland 1900, 1: ὑπομνήσκειν cj Diels (“quod omni occasione admonebas tua multum interesse comperire”).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. the reasonable note of Zuntz, who claims that the structure is too complicated (Zuntz 1972, 108 n. 1: “Das ist selbst für Aristes zu viel”).

<sup>33</sup> Zuntz 1958, 240–246, later reprinted in Zuntz 1972.

addressor that he should tell him the story, but it was Aristetas himself who had told Philocrates his recollections of his deputation to Eleazar.

Zuntz's emendation has not been apprehended unanimously. In 1963 A. Pelletier accepted it in the critical edition, but evidently did not connect ὑπομνήσκοντος with Aristetas. As far as one can judge by his translation, Pelletier interprets the passage as follows: "As you put a great value on hearing (συνακοῦσαι) when somebody reminds (ὑπομνήσκοντος) of the details and purpose of our deputation...".<sup>34</sup> In contrast to Zuntz's suggestion, Pelletier relates the subordinate clause περὶ ὧν ἀπεστάλημεν καὶ διὰ τί το ὑπομνήσκοντος. In 2002 F. Raurell also accepted the reading ὑπομνήσκοντος in the text, nevertheless translated it "as you constantly remind me", as it were in the form of accusative ὑπομνήσκοντα.<sup>35</sup> B. Wright has misunderstood the idea of Zuntz too, claiming that the emendation ὑπομνήσκοντος should be interpreted as genitive absolute with the subject σου omitted, which means "as you, i.e. Philocrates, constantly mention".<sup>36</sup> Meanwhile the explanation of Zuntz himself does not leave any doubts: from his point of view, ὑπομνήσκοντος, being genitive absolute or genitive objective, is to be related to Aristetas, not to Philocrates. Indeed, it is nowhere stressed that Philocrates reminds Aristetas that he should tell him the story, but within the whole book Aristetas pretends to be the eye-witness who tells his own recollections to Philocrates. Thus, the interpretation of Zuntz has a reasonable advantage over the previous suggestions. Yet there are two difficulties we have to deal with, if we accept it. The first one is the unusual meaning of ὑπομνήσκω, the second one is the problem of the subject of the participle.

First of all, the verb ὑπομνήσκειν in active means 'to remind', 'to put in mind'.<sup>37</sup> Realizing the difficulties of semantics of the verb, Zuntz tried to find some occurrences, which prove that ὑπομνήσκω could be used as a synonym of μνημονεύω 'to remember', 'to recall' (Plut. *De coh. ira*, 466 a,<sup>38</sup> *De tuenda san.* 131 b; NT: 2 *Tim* 2:14, 3 *Joh.* 10. 1; *Clem. Cor.* 62. 2 et 3).

In the passage from Plutarch's *De tranquillitate animi* 466 a (if it is in fact the section which is referred to here), the verb ὑπομνήσκω,

<sup>34</sup> Pelletier 1962, 100–101: "comme tu attaches beaucoup de prix à entendre rappeler dans le détail l'occasion et l'objet de notre mission".

<sup>35</sup> Raurell 2002, 64.

<sup>36</sup> Wright 2015, 100: Pelletier follows Zuntz's emendation of ὑπομνήσκοντος, making the participle a genitive absolute, "as you constantly mention".

<sup>37</sup> LSJ s. v., 1. 2.

<sup>38</sup> Zuntz 1958, 108. The reference is evidently wrong, as Stephanus page 466 a belongs not to *De cohibenda ira*, but to *De tranquillitate animi*.



introducing the quotation of Menander, is likely to have its usual meaning ‘to remind’ (τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀφορισμένως ἓνα βίον ἄλυπον νομίζοντας, ὡς ἔνιοι τὸν τῶν γεωργῶν ἢ τὸν τῶν ἡιθέων ἢ τὸν τῶν βασιλέων, ἱκανῶς ὁ Μένανδρος ὑπομνήσκει λέγων). On the contrary, in the second example (Plut. *De tuenda sanitate* 131 b) ὑπομνήσκω obviously means ‘to mention’ or ‘to tell’ (ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἂν τις ὕστερον εὐκαίρως ὑπομνήσειε – “But this one may mention hereafter in its proper place”).

In 2 *Tim* 2:14 by ταῦτα ὑπομνήσκει apostle Paul persuades his addressee to remind the people of several faithful sayings (Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος) quoted above (*ibid.* 11–13). In 3 *Joh.* 10 the words of John being directed against Diotrophes, ὑπομνήσω is generally rendered as ‘I will remember’ or ‘I will call attention’ (Διὰ τοῦτο, ἐὰν ἔλθω, ὑπομνήσω αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα, ἃ ποιεῖ λόγοις πονηροῖς φλυαρῶν ἡμᾶς – “If I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, prating against us with malicious words”). Gaius, to whom John is going to come and to tell the truth about the arrogance of Diotrophes, is not supposed to have known the details. So in this case the verb ὑπομνήσκω is not likely to mean ‘to remind’ in its original sense (‘to tell something which has been known before’).

In the conclusive passage from the Clement’s epistle to Corinthians (1 *Clem. Cor.* 62. 2) the author underlines the erudition of those for whom he has written. So we can suppose that ὑπεμνήσαμεν indicates that ἄνδρες πιστοὶ καὶ ἐλλογιμότατοι could have known something about the topic (Καὶ ταῦτα τοσοῦτω ἥδιον ὑπεμνήσαμεν, ἐπειδὴ σαφῶς ἥδειμεν γράφειν ἡμᾶς ἀνδράσιν πιστοῖς καὶ ἐλλογιμωτάτοις καὶ ἐγκεκυφόσιν εἰς τὰ λόγια τῆς παιδείας τοῦ θεοῦ). Hence, it is better to interpret ὑπεμνήσαμεν as “we reminded”.

Thus, the examples which Zuntz referred to are not absolutely convincing. In Plut. 466 a and 3 *Joh.* 10 the verb means ‘to mention’ or ‘to make mention of’, in other examples it can be interpreted in its traditional meaning ‘to remind the thing that possibly has been known before’.

No doubt, we cannot claim that the meaning ‘to mention’<sup>39</sup> or even ‘to recollect’ for ὑπομνήσκω is not attested in classical Greek at all. Perhaps such is indeed the case in Lys. *In Agor.* 43, 6 (ἀνιῶμαι μὲν οὖν ὑπομνήσκων τὰς γεγενημένας συμφορὰς τῇ πόλει, “It saddens me **to recall** the calamities which had happened to the city”), but it is not necessary to postulate it in the passage discussed. It seems important that throughout the book and especially in the preface Aristetas underlines the curiosity of Philocrates, stating that he does not stop learning. Furthermore, in the second sentence Aristetas, speaking of φιλομαθὴς διάθεσις of

<sup>39</sup> LSJ s. v., 2. 3.



Philocrates, inserts in the text the line from Sophocles, containing the rare verb *προσμανθάνω*, which indicates the aspiration of the addressee for additional knowledge<sup>40</sup> (*Ep. Arist.* 1–2):

πεπείραμαι σαφῶς ἐκθέσθαι σοι, κατειληφῶς ἣν ἔχεις **φιλομαθῇ** διάθε-  
σιν ὅπερ μέγιστόν ἐστιν ἀνθρώπῳ,

**προσμανθάνειν** αἰεὶ τι καὶ **προσλαμβάνειν**,  
ἥτοι κατὰ τὰς ἱστορίας, ἥ καὶ κατ’ αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα πεπειραμένῳ.

I have attempted to expound it clearly for you, having realized the disposition you have to love learning. For indeed it is the greatest thing for a person “always both to increase learning and to make progress”, whether through written accounts or through the actual reality that we experience.

Perhaps the author wants to imply that Philocrates, as well as a presumptive reader of the *Letter*, already knows something about his deputy to Eleazar and the story of translation. In this case there is no need to look for special examples, proving that *ὑπομνήσκω* has here unusual meaning ‘to recollect’. It seems much more plausible that Philocrates, who has already acquainted with the story, is glad to hear what Aristeas is going to remind him of. The verb *ὑπομνήσκω*, used here in its usual meaning (‘to tell what has been already known’), underlines his curiosity.

This interpretation also strengthens Zuntz’s understanding of the initial genitive absolute *ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως συνεσταμένης*, which in his opinion implies that Philocrates, having a narration in his hands, could have got acquainted with the story before.

It is not surprising then, that the prefixed verb *συνακούω* is used here. In the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph *συνακούειν* adjoining the precedent *ἀκούσεσθαι* might have a semantic nuance of additionality. Philocrates is glad to listen in general (*ἀσμένως σε ἀκούσεσθαι*) and he in particular wants to hear, whatever concerns the soul’s edification (*Ep. Arist.* 5):

Πέπεισμαι γάρ σε <...> ἀσμένως σε ἀκούσεσθαι, <...> προσφάτως  
*παραγεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς νήσου πρὸς ἡμᾶς, καὶ βουλόμενον συνακούειν*  
*ὅσα πρὸς ἐπισκευὴν ψυχῆς ὑπάρχει.*

For I am convinced that you will listen gladly, having recently come to us from the island, also desiring to hear whatever exists for the restoration of the soul.

<sup>40</sup> As commentators state, this iambic line is either contamination of two lines (fr. 779, 662) or a quotation of a lost work (Wright 2015, 103; Pelletier 1963, 101).

Thus we can suppose that in the first paragraph συνακοῦσαι in the phrase διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι παρ' ἑκάστα ὑπομιμνήσκοντος συνακοῦσαι also underlines the fact that it is not the present writing of Aristeeas which is meant by ἀξιολόγου διηγήσεως συνεσταμένης, but other sources that Philocrates has learned before. Aside from them, he is ready to listen to something else.

The last (but not least) problem to be discussed here is the possible subject of ὑπομιμνήσκοντος. The subject being omitted, one may only guess what Aristeeas could have meant. Wright and Raurell think that the omitted subject is σου,<sup>41</sup> but if we suppose it was Philocrates, who reminds Aristeeas of his interest, there is no need for emendation ὑπομιμνήσκοντος in genitive as there is pronoun σε in accusative in the text. If the subject of ὑπομιμνήσκοντος is Aristeeas himself, who tells Philocrates the story, as Zuntz suggests, we would hardly expect omission of ἐμοῦ. Pelletier, accepting Zuntz's emendation in the text, did not connect ὑπομιμνήσκοντος with the author directly. His translation implies that Philocrates is ready to hear when *anybody* recalls or reminds of the details of the story.

Indeed, we have no subject in the text. The general tone of the preface seems to characterize Philocrates generally. Thus, we can suppose that the original reading was not ὑπομιμνήσκοντος with subject μου omitted, but the form in plural ὑπομιμνησκόντων. First, it would be easier for the form ὑπομιμνησκόντων rather than for the form ὑπομιμνήσκοντος to turn into the manuscript ὑπομιμνήσκων during textual transmission via contraction and, second, it would not accentuate whom Philocrates was ready to listen to. He places a high value (σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι) on every chance (παρ' ἑκάστα) to hear (συνακοῦσαι), when somebody reminds him (ὑπομιμνησκόντων) what he has learned from other sources. Perhaps the author wants to imply that by the time when he wrote the book, the Judeans of Alexandria, to whom the book was addressed, had already known about the history of Septuagint's appearance.

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<sup>41</sup> See notes 35 and 36 above.

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The paper deals with a difficult phrase from the beginning of the prologue of the Letter of Aristeas (Ep. Arist. 1), containing the information about Aristeas' addressee Philocrates: διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι παρ' ἑκάστα ὑπομνησκωντ' συνακοῦσαι. The manuscript reading ὑπομνησκων is impossible and definitely corrupt. The emendations of Mendelssohn (ὑπομνησκοντα) and Diels (ὑπομνησκειν) imply that Philocrates constantly reminded Aristeas he would be glad to hear the story. Many modern scholars (Wright, Raurell, White) follow this interpretation. According to Zuntz, who corrected ὑπομνησκων into ὑπομνησκοντος, the phrase indicates that Philocrates was ready to listen to Aristeas, when he recalled what he had seen himself. We suggest that original reading was ὑπομνησκόντων and by underlining the curiosity and piety of Philocrates, the author wants to imply that his addressee is glad to listen when somebody reminds him what he already knows.

В статье рассматривается трудное место из начала пролога *Письма Аристия* (Ep. Arist. 1), где содержатся сведения об адресате Аристия Филократе: διὰ τὸ σὲ περὶ πολλοῦ πεποιῆσθαι παρ' ἑκάστα ὑπομνησκωντ' συνακοῦσαι. Рукописное чтение ὑπομνησκων безусловно невозможно и указывает на порчу текста. С точки зрения Мендельсона, который предлагал конъектуру ὑπομνησκοντα, и Дильса, предлагавшего ὑπομνησκειν, здесь говорится о том, что Филократ неоднократно напоминал Аристия о необходимости написания *Письма*. Подобной интерпретации следует большинство современных издателей и комментаторов *Письма Аристия* (Райт, Раурелл, Уайт). По мнению Цунтца, который предлагал исправить ὑπομνησκων на ὑπομνησκοντος, речь идет о том, что адресат готов слушать Аристия, когда тот вспоминает о событиях, свидетелем которых он был сам. Мы предполагаем, что первоначальным чтением было не ὑπομνησκοντος, а ὑπομνησκόντων, и Аристия, подчеркивая любознательность и благочестие Филократа, хочет сказать, что его адресат рад слушать, когда ему напоминают о том, что он уже знает.

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