

THE RETELLINGS OF THE STORY OF JUDGES 19 BY PSEUDO-PHILO AND JOSEPHUS: A COMPARISON

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Resumen

Jueces 19 narra la truculenta historia de la violación y asesinato de la concubina de un levita por un grupo de benjaminitas. Este artículo estudia dos antiguas versiones de Jue 19: la de Josefo (*Ant.* 5.136-150a) y la del Pseudo-Filón (*LAB* 45). Comienza con algunas observaciones sobre el contexto del episodio en ambos autores y la forma textual empleada por ellos. Después compara separadamente estas dos versiones del acontecimiento con la *Vorlage* bíblica. El artículo concluye con una consideración sobre las semejanzas y las diferencias entre las interpretaciones de Jue 19 que hacen Josefo y el Pseudo-Filón.

Summary

Judges 19 tells a most disturbing story of the rape and murder of a Levite's concubine by a group of Benjaminites. This article examines two ancient rewritings of Judges 19, i.e. those of Josephus (*Ant.* 5.136-150a) and Pseudo-Philo (*LAB* 45). It begins with some remarks on the placing of the episode by the two authors and the text-forms of Judges 19 used by them. It then compares separately their versions of the happening with the Biblical *Vorlage*. The article concludes with a consideration of the similarities and differences between the Josephan and Pseudo-Philonian renditions of Judges 19.

Among the Bible's many troubling episodes, the story of the rape and murder of the Levite's concubine at Gibeah recounted in Judges 19 unquestionably ranks among the most disturbing of all.¹ In this paper I

¹ On the passage (and its sequel Judges 20-21) see recently: D.M. Hudson, "Living in the Land of Epithets: Anonymity in Judges 19-21": *JSOT* 62 (1994) 49-66; K. Stone, "Gender and Homosexuality in Judges: Subject- Honor, Object-Shame?": *JSOT* 67 (1995) 87-107; A. Bach, "Rereading the Body Politic: Women and Violence in Judges

intend to compare the retellings of the Judges story by two more or less contemporaneous ancient Jewish historians, both of whom opted to include the shocking happening in their accounts of Israel's history, i.e. Josephus² and Pseudo-Philo.³ My investigation will proceed in two steps: first, a separate comparison of Josephus' and Pseudo-Philo's versions with their Biblical sources and then of the two historians' renditions with each other. Before undertaking this two-stage comparison, I wish to make some brief remarks on two preliminary points, i.e. the placing of the story within its wider context in the three works under examination here and the text-form(s) of Judges 19 utilized by Josephus and Pseudo-Philo.

I. TWO PRELIMINARY POINTS

1. Context

In the Bible itself Judges 19 stands as part of a five-chapter "appendix" to the book whose purpose is to illustrate the abuses into which Israel fell

21": *Biblical Interpretation* 6 (1998) 1-19.

² Josephus' version of Judges 19 is found in his *Antiquitates Judaicae* (hereafter *Ant.*) 5.136-150a. For the text and translation of the works of Josephus I use H.St.J. Thackeray et al. (eds.), *Josephus*, 10 vols. (LCL; Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press-London, Heinemann, 1926-1965 [*Ant.* 5.136-150a is found in Vol. V, 62-69, ed. by R. Marcus]). I have likewise consulted the text (and translation) of *Ant.* 5.136-150a given by B. Niese, *Flavii Josephi Opera* I (Berlin, Weidmann, 1955) 319-322 and E. Nodet, *Flavius Josèphe Les Antiquités Juives. II. Livres IV et V* (Paris, Cerf, 1995) 148-151. For a summary recent treatment of Josephus' version of Judges 19, see P. Spilsbury, *The Image of the Jew in Flavius Josephus' Paraphrase of the Bible* (TSAJ 69; Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1998) 155-156.

³ Pseudo-Philo's rendition of Judges 19 occurs in his *Liber Antiquitarum Biblicarum* (hereafter *LAB*) chap. 45. I use the Latin text of *LAB* by D.J. Harrington and J. Cazeaux (eds.), *Pseudo-Philon: Les Antiquités Bibliques* 1 (SC 229; Paris, Cerf, 1976) and the English translation of this by D. J. Harrington, "Pseudo-Philo," in J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* [hereafter *OLP*], I (Garden City, NY, Doubleday, 1983) 297-377. I have also consulted the translations of *LAB* 45 given by C. Dietzfelbinger, *Pseudo-Philo: Antiquitates Biblicae* (JSHRZ 11,2; Gütersloh, Mohn, 1975) 224-225 and H. Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*, 2 vols. (AGJU 31; Leiden, Brill, 1996) 1.168-169. Cf. further the discussion of *LAB* 45 in F. J. Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo: Rewriting the Bible* (Oxford-New York, Oxford University Press, 1993) 177-179 and Jacobson, *Commentary*, 2.1027-1041.

when lacking a king (see 17:6; 19:1; 21:25). More specifically, the chapter constitutes the opening portion of the second of the two longer segments making up the book's appendix, i.e. Judges 19-21, the Benjaminite war episode (chaps. 20-21), itself set in motion by the crime perpetrated by the Benjaminites of Gibeah as described in chap. 19; this whole complex, in turn, is preceded by the narrative of Micah's idol-making and the establishment of the Dan sanctuary recounted in Judges 17-18. Pseudo-Philo adheres closely to the Biblical order in this instance. Thus, his parallel to Judges 17-21, *LAB* 44-47(48), comes at the end of his version of the Judges period (*LAB* 25-48). Similarly, he reproduces the Micah/Dan (Judges 17-18// *LAB* 44) and the Gibeah crime/ Benjaminite War (Judges 19-21// *LAB* 45-47[48])⁴ episodes in their Scriptural sequence. Josephus' order is quite different. First, he reverses the Biblical order of the two appendices Judges 17-18 (// *Ant.* 5.175-178)⁵ and 19-21 (// 5.136-174). He likewise places this whole complex at the beginning of his account of the Judges period (5.120-317) as an illustration of the misfortunes which befell the Israelites once they abandoned themselves to luxury and pleasure as described by him in 5.132-135 in loose dependence on Judg 2:11-15, the introduction to the Book of Judges.⁶

2. *Biblical Text*

My second preliminary point concerns the text-form of Judges 19 utilized by Josephus and Pseudo-Philo. Various indications suggest that both authors drew on a text of the chapter whose affinities were more with that represented by Codex Alexandrinus (hereafter A) and the Lucia-

⁴ *LAB* 48, the conclusion to Pseudo-Philo's account of the Judges period, relates the "ascension" of the High Priest Phineas. The chapter has no parallel either in the Bible or Josephus.

⁵ In his rendition of the segment Judges 17-18 Josephus leaves aside the unedifying framework story of Micah's idol, confining himself to the narrative of the migration of the Danites which is worked into this in the Bible.

⁶ On Josephus' "antedating" of the events of Judges 17-21 to the beginning of the Judges period, see D. A. Glatt, *Chronological Displacement in Biblical and Related Literatures* (SBLDS 139; Atlanta, Scholars, 1993) 89-100. Glatt points out that Josephus' procedure in this instance has a certain parallel in the Rabbinic document *Seder 'Olam Rabbah* 12.8-9 which ascribes the events in question to the period of Israel's domination by Cushan-rishaim king of Mesopotamia (see Judg 3:8), the first foreign oppressor featured in the Book of Judges.

nic/Antiochene MSS (hereafter L) of the LXX⁷ and the Old Latin (hereafter OL)⁸ as opposed to that of MT⁹ or Codex Vaticanus (hereafter B). Josephus, e.g., goes together (5.137) with AL and OL 19:2 in making reference to the woman's "irritation" with her husband, whereas MT speaks of her "playing the harlot against him" (וַתִּזְנֶה עָלָיו)¹⁰ and B of her "going from him." In agreement with the L MS g and OL 19:10 he mentions (5.138) also the "servant" who accompanies the couple as they set out for home, in contrast to the other witnesses that refer only to his concubine's being with the Levite. Following all the Greek witnesses (and OL) 19:18 he has the Levite inform (5.142) the old man of Gibeah that he is going to his (the Levite's) home as against MT where his destination is "the house of the Lord." Again, Josephus explicitly (5.149) notes the fact of the woman's being "dead" in accord with the plus of the Greek witnesses and OL 19:28 (MT states merely "and there was no answer", i.e. by the woman). With A L* and OL 19:29 he represents (5.149) the woman's *disjecta membra* being carried to the various "tribes," instead of "throughout all the territory of Israel" (so MT, B). Finally, aligning himself with A L and OL 19:30 against the shorter text of MT and B, he reports (5.149b) a verbal content for the Levite's message to the Israelites which accompanies the gruesome display he dispatches to them.¹¹

⁷ For LXX Judges I use the text and apparatus of A. E. Brooke / N. Maclean, *The Old Testament in Greek according to the Text of Codex Vaticanus*, I.IV. *Joshua, Judges and Ruth* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1917). On the various MSS groupings within LXX Judges distinguished by contemporary scholars, see the summary account in W. F. Smelik, *The Targum of Judges* (OTS 36; Leiden, Brill, 1995) 194-196.

⁸ For the OL of Judges I use U. Robert (ed.), *Heptateuchii pars posterioris Versio Latina antiquissima e codice Lugdunensi*. II. *Version latine du Deutéronome, de Josué et des Juges* (Lyon, Rey et Cie., 1900).

⁹ The Qumran MS 4QJudg^b contains a fragment of Judg 19:5-7 which- at least as reconstructed by the editor, J. Trebolle Barrera- is identical with MT. See E. Ulrich et al. (eds.), *Qumran Cave 4. IX. Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Kings* (DJD XIV; Oxford, Clarendon, 1995) 166.

¹⁰ The meaning of this Hebrew expression is in fact disputed, see the discussion in D. Barthélemy, *Critique textuelle de l'Ancien Testament*. I. *Josué, Juges, Ruth, Samuel, Rois, Chroniques, Esdras, Néhémie, Esther* (OBO 50/1; Fribourg, Editions Universitaires - Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982) 116.

¹¹ For more on Josephus' text of Judges, see Nodet, *Antiquités juives*, II, 14-15. He concludes that Josephus utilized a "proto-Lucianic" text of Judges, but had this available in Hebrew. Compare P. Harlé, "Flavius Josèphe et la Septante des Juges,"

Pseudo-Philo's shorter version of the Judges 19 story provides fewer indications concerning the Biblical text used. The following items of evidence can, however, be noted. His (delayed, see below) reference to the concubine's "having transgressed against her man" (45.3e) would seem to reflect the MT reading in 19:2 (see above). Like L and OL 19:17, on the other hand, he (45.2) specifies- as AB and MT do not- that the Gibeathite spoke "to him" (the Levite). Especially noteworthy are a series of instances in which Pseudo-Philo parallels Josephus' readings where the Biblical witnesses diverge: the woman's being "dead" (45.4a); the conveyal of her remains to the "tribes" (45.4b), and the "citation" of the accompanying message (45.4c), see above.¹² A number then of the commonalities between Josephus and Pseudo-Philo in the Judges 19 story are likely due to their joint utilization of a particular, text-form of the story, i.e. one having most affinities with that exhibited by (A)L.

II. PSEUDO-PHILO'S RETELLING OF JUDGES 19

Turning now to a consideration of the salient distinctive features of our two rewritings of the Judges 19 story, I begin with Pseudo-Philo's shorter version. This author's extreme freedom in his reproduction of the *Vorlage* is evident right from the start. From the source's lengthy exposition in 19:1-9 he takes over (45.1) only its reference to the story's protagonist, i.e. the Levite, not even mentioning his concubine at this point. To this reference he directly attaches his rendering of the "journey sequence" of 19:10-15. Here too, Pseudo-Philo goes his own way to a marked degree. In particular, whereas the Bible has the Levite pass by Jebus/Jerusalem

in G. Dorival and O. Munnich (eds.), *KATA TOYΣ O' Selon les Septante. Trente études sur la Bible grecque des Septante en hommage à Marguerite Harl* (Paris, Cerf, 1995) 129-132 (he holds that in the case of Judges Josephus used both a Hebrew and a Greek text, the latter having particular affinities with that found in the Lucianic/Antiochene MSS of the book).

¹² For more on Pseudo-Philo's Scriptural text, see D.J. Harrington, "The Biblical Text of Pseudo-Philo's *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*": *CBQ* 33 (1971) 1-17. Harrington (p. 16) concludes that for the books Joshua-Judges-Samuel Pseudo-Philo employed a text "related to the Lucianic or proto-Lucianic manuscripts." Compare Jacobson, *Commentary*, 1.255 who maintains that in the above Biblical books "... there is no compelling evidence that his text was very different from MT."

and end up at Gibeah, the scene of the subsequent crime, *LAB* 45.1 says nothing of the former site. Rather, it depicts the Levite proceeding immediately to Gibeah where, however, he is denied admittance, this leading to his moving on to "Nob," the crime site in his presentation.¹³

Pseudo-Philo's rendering (45.2) of the exchange between the Levite and his host (Judg 19:16-21) evidences a series of distinctive features as well. For one thing, he goes beyond the Bible in giving names to both figures, i.e. "Beel" and "Bethac" respectively, likewise making the latter also a Levite in contrast to 19:16 which qualifies him as "from the hill country of Ephraim" but as sojourning in Benjaminite Gibeah. He compresses and recasts (45.2b) the extended dialogue between the two men of 19:17-19 into a summary question-answer sequence in which Bethac asks whether the visitor is Beel and receives an affirmative reply. Conversely, he expatiates (45.2c) on the host's offer of hospitality (19:20), interjecting into this an element of menace foreshadowing the crime to come (as well as an explicit *Rückverweis* to an earlier such episode) with its reference to the "wickedness" of the inhabitants and to the Lord's intended "shutting up their hearts (*Dominus concludet cor eorum*)"¹⁴... as he shut up the Sodomites before the Lord."¹⁵

Pseudo-Philo relates (45.3) the crime episode itself of 19:22-26 in some detail, but also with notable divergences from the source data concerning it. The perpetrators begin (45.3a) by demanding that the host hand over to them, not only the visiting Levite (so 19:22b), but "*those who have come (qui venerunt)* to you today." They reinforce their demand with the threat to "burn" both guests and host, this taking the place of the

¹³ On Pseudo-Philo's "transfer" of the Levite's stopping place (and crime scene) from the Bible's "Gibeah" to "Nob," see recently E. Regev, "The Guilt of Nob's Priests according to Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum": *Beit Mikra* 152 (1997) 53-66 (Hebrew). Regev argues that the transfer reflects a geographical confusion on the author's part, this due to the proximity of the two sites.

¹⁴ On this phrase as a reference to the "mental blindness" the Lord will inflict on the men of Nob, see Jacobson, *Commentary*, 2.1031. Judges 19 makes no mention of God as such; Pseudo-Philo's version of the story features, as we shall be seeing, multiple mentions of him.

¹⁵ Pseudo-Philo does not, as such, relate the Genesis 18-19 story of Sodom's depravity and destruction. Here as so often in his work, he presupposes that readers will be familiar with the incidents to which he makes such passing allusion from their knowledge of the Bible itself.

rationale ("that they we may know them") for the demand cited in 19:22.¹⁶ The host's attempted dissuasion of the inhabitants (45.3b) evokes the status of the visitors as "our brothers," whereas his Biblical counterpart refers to the Levite's standing as a guest in his home. Pseudo-Philo passes over *tout court* the Biblical host's shocking counter-proposal (19:24) that the Gibeathites gratify their lust with his own virgin daughter and the Levite's concubine whom he offers to bring out to them. Instead, he proceeds directly to the group's (negative) response to the host's initial appeal that they refrain from wrongdoing, having them assert that "it has never happened that the strangers [i.e. the Levite host] gave orders to the natives [the Nobites themselves]" (45.3c, compare 19:25aα: "but the men would not listen to him"). Judg 19:25aβ depicts the visiting Levite taking the initiative at this point: he casts his concubine out to those assembled before the house. Pseudo-Philo (45.3d) transfers the initiative to the men themselves: they force their way into the house, carry off both visitors,¹⁷ but then immediately let the Levite himself go. In 19:25b the Gibeathites first rape the woman all night and finally let her go at day-break. Pseudo-Philo (45.3e) has her rather "dying" (cf. the LXX plus in 19:28 cited above) as a result of the abuse inflicted upon her. He likewise appends a moralizing "explanation" of her fate: "... because she had transgressed against her man once when she had committed sin with the Amalekites¹⁸, and on account of this the Lord God delivered her into

¹⁶ Jacobson, *Commentary*, 2.1032 points out that the wording of this threat is inspired by Judg 14:15 where the Philistines threaten to "burn" Samson's wife and her father's house unless she persuades him to disclose the riddle.

¹⁷ Their doing this is in accord with their initial demand as formulated by Pseudo-Philo, i.e. "bring out *those who* have come to you today" (45.3a); compare 19:22b where they ask for the Levite alone. The reference in 45.3d to "his (the Levite's) concubine" is Pseudo-Philo's first mention of her as such (in light of 45.1c where the reference (cf. 19:11) is to the traveling Levite's "servant" one would suppose that the Nobites' demand that the host hand over to them "those who had come" to him has in view the Levite and his servant, rather than the former and his concubine- of whom there has been no previous mention). Here again (see n. 15) Pseudo-Philo seems to presuppose readers' familiarity with elements of the Biblical story which he does not reproduce as such.

¹⁸ This reference to the woman's "transgressing against her husband" might be inspired by the MT reading in 19:2 understood to mean "she played the harlot against him", see above and n. 10. In any case, the specification that it was with the Amalekites that she committed her infidelity is peculiar to Pseudo-Philo; the specification seems designed to underscore the enormity of her offense given Amalek's status as Israel's

the hands of sinners." Having substituted mention of the woman's "death" for her release in his version of 19:25, Pseudo-Philo naturally leaves aside the description of her making her way back to the house and collapsing at the door given in 19:26.

The concluding section of Judges 19, vv. 27-30, features initiatives taken by the Levite subsequent to the assault upon his concubine. This sequence begins (vv. 27-28a) with a circumstantial account of the Levite's encountering the woman's body, his word to her, and the lack of answer to this, LXX adding mention of her being dead (see above). Again in view of the fact that the woman is already "dead," LAB 45.4a compresses: going out, "Beel" (45.2b) discovers what the reader has already heard (see 45.3e), i.e. that his concubine is "dead." In reproducing (45.4b) the series of further actions attributed to the Levite in 19:28b-29 (placing the woman's corpse on his ass, returning home, dismembering her body there, and dispatching the pieces throughout Israel, Pseudo-Philo specifies where it is he goes, i.e. to "Cades."¹⁹

In line with the A L and OL plus in 19:30 (see above) Pseudo-Philo (45.4c) records the message that accompanied the mute witness of the woman's body parts. At the same time he also repositions this message to a more logical point, i.e. prior to his "quotation" of the Israelites' response (in 19:30 A etc. response precedes citation of the message). He likewise gives the message a more definite content²⁰, i.e. a report by the Levite of what had transpired in Nob²¹, to which is appended a double

Erbfeind, cf. Exod 17:8-16; Deut 25:17-19.

¹⁹ On the question of the identification of this site, see Jacobson, *Commentary*, 2.1034 (he holds that the reference is to the Judean city, in proximity to Nob- the site of the crime according to Pseudo-Philo [45.1]- cited in Josh 15:23).

²⁰ In AL OL 19:30 the Levite directs those sent by him to pose the rhetorical question "has anything like this happened since the day that Israel when up from Egypt and until this day?" which itself largely coincides with the opening declaration made by the hearers in all witnesses of 19:30, i.e. "such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day". In AL OL 19:30 the messengers' above-cited question comes between this declaration by the hearers and the concluding words of their response to what they have been shown, i.e. "consider it, take counsel, and speak."

²¹ Pseudo-Philo clearly found inspiration for this report in a subsequent moment of the Biblical narrative, see Judg 20:4b-5, where in response to an inquiry by the assembled Israelites the Levite avers: "I came to Gibeah... I and my concubine... And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about me by night; they

statement, unique to himself, about the various, correlative courses of action open to the people and to God at this juncture, i.e.: "And if being silent pleases you, nevertheless the Lord judges. But if you wish to take revenge, the Lord will help you."²²

To his version of the conclusion of Judges 19 (v. 30) Pseudo-Philo attaches a two-fold appendix in 45.5-6. The first component of this complex consists of an anticipation of the account of the Israelite assembly given in Judg 20:1ff. Whereas, however, that assembly takes place at Mizpah according to 20:1, 45.5 situates it rather at Shiloh²³, further introducing mention of the "disturbed" (*conturbati sunt*) state of mind in which the people come together. Utilizing language attributed to the Levite in Judg 20:7 ("they [the men of Gibeah] have committed abomination and wantonness in Israel") and echoed by the people themselves in 20:10 (Gibeah is to be requited for "all the wanton crime which they have committed in Israel") Pseudo-Philo next has the assembled Israelites declare: "If such wickedness is done in Israel, Israel will cease to be."

Pseudo-Philo rounds off his version of Judges 19 with an element altogether without parallel in the source, i.e. a divine speech (45.6) addressed to "the adversary" (*ad antecimum*)²⁴. In this speech God ma-

meant to kill me, and they ravished my concubine, and she is dead." Pseudo-Philo's "anticipated" version of this statement in 45.4c reads: "... those dwelling there [i.e. in Nob] rose up against me to kill me, and they took my concubine *while I was locked up* and they killed her." In this version the italicized words lack an equivalent in the source as such; they serve to exculpate the Levite in that, being "locked up," he was unable to come to his concubine's defense. Note, however, that the Levite's report here in 45.4c does not seem to fully coincide with Pseudo-Philo's own notice on both the Levite and his concubine being dragged out by the Nobites in 45.3d.

²² This statement of alternatives by the messengers might be seen as Pseudo-Philo's transposition/concretization of the people's rather indeterminate self-exhortation as cited at the end of 19:30: "consider it [the woman's members that had been brought before them, v. 29], take counsel, and speak."

²³ This geographical shift has a counterpart in Pseudo-Philo's moving the scene of the crime itself from Gibeah to Nob in 45.1. The shift may have been occasioned by the reference in Judg 20:1 to the Israelites assembling "to the Lord" at Mizpah; given that the Lord's tabernacle had been erected at Shiloh under Joshua (see Josh 18:1; cf. Josh 22:12) that site would seem more appropriate for an assembly "before the Lord" than would the Bible's Mizpah. Note further that Shiloh does figure as a meeting place in the continuation of Judges 20-21, see 21:12ff. On the question, see further Jacobsen, *Commentary*, 2.1036.

²⁴ On the identity of this figure (likely Satan), see the discussion in Jacobson,

kes extended allusion to the immediately preceding episode of Micah's idol-making (*LAB* 44// Judges 17-18). Pointedly contrasting the people's unconcern vis-à-vis that offense to himself with their "consternation" (*conturbatus*, see *conturbati sunt*, 45.5) at the wrong done the Levite's concubine, God goes on to announce that they are to be destroyed along with "the sinners," i.e. the perpetrators of the Nob outrage. With this announcement Pseudo-Philo both prepares and provides a rationale for the high losses which the Israelite coalition will experience in its initial battles with the Benjamites, see Judg 20:21 (// *LAB* 46.2), 25 (// 46.3), this notwithstanding the Levite's assurance to them in 45.5 "If you wish to take vengeance, the Lord will help you."²⁵

In summary, Pseudo-Philo retells the story of Judges 19 with great freedom. That freedom finds expression, e.g., in his effective non-utilization of the story's whole *Vorbau* (vv. 1-9), re-localization of the crime scene, and appending of a divine speech completely invented by him. Contentually, Pseudo-Philo both theologizes the "profane" source story via his recurrent inserted mentions of God; he also moralizes it, explicitly depicting the misfortunes (to be) suffered by the woman and the Israelites as punishments for their past misdeeds. At the same time, his presentation serves to "whitewash" the role of the host and his Levite guest in the proceedings: neither of them do anything to abet the inhabitants' criminal designs (compare 19:24, 25b). Finally, his rendition introduces explicit allusions to earlier (Biblical) episodes (the sin of Sodom [45.2c] and Micah's idol-making [45.6]) as well as a foreshadowing of what will follow (i.e. the double defeat of the Israelite coalition by the Benjaminites [45.6]).

III. JOSEPHUS' VERSION OF JUDGES 19

Josephus' version (*Ant.* 5.136-138a) of the source story's extended preliminaries (19:1-10aα) already evidences a number of distinctive features. The narrative's woman figure assumes a higher status, being

Commentary, 2.1037-1038.

²⁵ As Murphy, *Pseudo-Philo*, 178, points out, the ironic disparity between human estimates of God's perspectives and intentions and those actually entertained by the Deity is a recurring feature of *LAB*.

called not the Levite's "concubine" (so 19:1), but his "wife" (γύναϊον, 5.136; compare LXX γυναῖκα παλλακῆν).²⁶ The historian develops the passing source reference to the tensions between the couple ("she was angry at him", 19:2 AL OL) into an elaborate tale of the Levite's unrequited love, the marital quarrels prompting the woman to leave him, and the husband's continued love for her which causes him to follow her (5.136b-137).²⁷ Having done this, he markedly reduces (5.138a) the lengthy description (19:4-9) of the five days of hospitality accorded the Levite by his father-in-law. At the same time, he ascribes that hospitality to both the woman's "parents" and interjects an explanation for its protracted duration (i.e. they [the parents] "were loath to part with their daughter").

Josephus recounts the Levite's movements that bring him to the crime scene in 5.138b-140 (// 19:10aβ-15a). In mentioning Jerusalem (5.139// 19:10aβ) as the first site to which the party comes, he specifies the distance between it and the parents' home (in Bethlehem, see 5.136), i.e. thirty furlongs.²⁸ He provides the servant's proposal (19:11) that they lodge there with an extended motivation that cites the hazards of nocturnal travel. By contrast, he compresses the source sequel to this proposal (19:12-15a), eliminating, e.g., the "duplicate" mention of "Gibeah" (19:12, 13 [here with "Ramah" as an alternative possibility) as the Levite's intended destination. On the other hand, he inserts (5.140) the indication that the distance between Jerusalem and "Gaba" came to twenty furlongs.

The historian's version of the exchange between the old man and the Levite in the market square of Gibeah (19:15b-21) is found in 5.141-142.

²⁶ Josephus likewise modifies the status of the Levite himself. In 19:1 he is said to be "from the remote parts of the high country of Ephraim" (RSV). In the historian's presentation (5.136) this "geographical" qualification becomes the remark that the Levite was "of the lower ranks" (τῶν δημοστικωτέρων); see Nodet, *Flavius Josephus*, II, 148*, n. 4.

²⁷ Also elsewhere Josephus accentuates the romantic/erotic aspects of Biblical narratives with a view to engaging the interest of Gentile readers familiar with contemporary Hellenistic novels where those aspects played a major part. On the point, see L. H. Feldman, "Use, Authority, and Exegesis of Mikra in the Writings of Josephus," in M. J. Mulder / H. Sysling (eds.), *Mikra* (CRINT 2:1; Assen, van Gorcum - Philadelphia, Westminster, 1988) 455-518, pp. 501-503.

²⁸ In *Ant.* 7.312 Josephus gives a divergent indication concerning the distance between Bethelhem and Jerusalem, i.e. "twenty stades." Here in 5.139 he passes over the alternative name for Jerusalem given in 19:10aβ, i.e. "Jebus."

In Josephus the former figure inquires (5.141), not whence and whither the Levite is going, as in 19:17b, but who he is and why he is traveling at night. From the Levite's reply (19:18-19) Josephus eliminates his declaration about all that he has in hand (v. 19) the purpose of which is not immediately evident. He likewise clarifies (5.142a) the rationale for the man's journey from Bethlehem to Ephraim and back again as reported by him in 19:18: "he was escorting his wife from her parents back to his own home." Judg 19:20-21 relates the upshot of the exchange: the old man takes the travelers into his home. Josephus (5.142b) supplies a threefold motivation for his doing so: "... because of their common stock, and because they belonged to the same tribe²⁹ and because chance had brought them together..."

Josephus' account of the crime that transpires at this point (5.143-147) displays numerous modifications and expansions of the source, 19:22-26. He starts off the segment (5.143) with an interjected notice on what it was that prompted the Gibeathites to approach the host's house as they are said to do in 19:22: "(having) seen the woman in the market place [see 5.141] and admired her comeliness (εὐπρέπειαν)³⁰, when they learned that she lodged with the old man, scorning the feebleness of these few...". Reversing the sequence of 19:22b-23, he gives the first word in the confrontation to the host, thereby enhancing his stature as one who takes the initiative in warding off the danger threatening his guests: "... the old man bade them begone and not to resort to violence and outrage (βίαν μηδὲ ὕβριν)³¹...". In reproducing thereafter the Gibeathites' demand from 19:22b, Josephus has them, in line with his earlier motivation of their coming (see above) call for the woman- rather than her husband (19:22)- to be handed over to them,³² and warn of "trouble" if she is not.

²⁹ This formulation appears misleading in that according to Josephus (and the Bible itself) the two parties, in fact, belong to different "tribes," i.e. Levi (5.136// 19:1) and Ephraim (5.141// 19:16). Compare *LAB* 45.2a which makes them both Levites.

³⁰ This term echoes Josephus' reference to the woman's "beauty" (τοῦ κάλλους) in 5.136; the Bible itself- like Pseudo-Philo- has nothing to say on the woman's appearance. The term of 5.143 is likewise of interest in that the same word is used by Josephus in reference to the heavenly visitors to Sodom in *Ant.* 1.200; it is the first of several such verbal links between Josephus' Sodom and Gibeah stories, see nn. 31, 35.

³¹ This collocation represents another reminiscence of Josephus' Sodom story, see *Ant.* 1.200 where the Sodomites are said to be "bent only on violence and outrage (βίαν καὶ ὕβριν)" to Lot's visitors. The phrase recurs, in reverse order, in *Ant.* 7.171.

³² With this modification Josephus eliminates the homosexual character of the men's

The host replies to the men's demand in 19:23 by twice urging them to refrain from wrongdoing, with a reference to the status of the one whom they had demanded be given them (19:22) as his guest supervening. In Josephus' version (5.144) the host begins by citing his visitor's identity as a "Levite and a kinsman" (see 5.142b)³³ and then spells out the nature of their (projected) offense: "... they would be guilty of a dreadful crime in violating the laws at the beck of pleasure (ὕφ' ἡδονῆς)." ³⁴ In 19:24 the host proposes to satisfy the men's desires with the offer of his own daughter and the Levite's concubine. Josephus is clearly embarrassed by this offer on the part of the Biblical host. In his presentation that offer is made, first of all, only after mention of the Gibeathites' threatening negative response to his preceding admonition: "they recked little of righteousness, mocked at it, and threatened to kill him if he thwarted their lusts (ἐπιθυμίας) ³⁵"; compare 19:25a where the men's refusal to listen is mentioned only after the offer of 19:24. Moreover, the Josephan host's "offer" is limited to his own daughter, an offer the historian (5.145) likewise does his best to explain and justify: "*driven to such a pass and unwilling to suffer his guests to be abused*, he offered the men his own daughter, *declaring that it would be more legitimate for them to gratify their lust than by doing violence (ὕβρεως*, cf. ὕβριν, 5.144) *to his guests, and for his part thinking by this means to avoid wrongdoing those whom*

demand. Also elsewhere he plays down Biblical intimations of homosexual activity among Jews, as L.H. Feldman, "Josephus' Portrait of David": *HUCA* 60 (1989) 129-174, pp. 170-171 remarks concerning the historian's portrayal of the David-Jonathan relationship. Thereby, he underscores a difference between his own people and their Greco-Roman *Umwelt* in which homosexuality was a prevalent and accepted practice (in *Ant.* 1.200-201 Josephus does follow the Bible in recording the Sodomites' attempt to violate Lot's male visitors; he could do so, however, without difficulty in that the miscreants here are not Jews).

³³ In what precedes the men have demanded, not the Levite, but his wife. In focussing attention on the former here, the host intimates the particular wrongfulness of his acceding to their demand, i.e. she belongs to one who is a relative of his and has the special status of a Levite.

³⁴ Josephus' introduction of this erotic terminology here- which will be picked up in what follows- recalls his- likewise inserted references- to the Levite's own "passion" for his wife in 5.136b-137.

³⁵ Also this term echoes Josephus' Sodom story; see *Ant.* 1.201 where Lot offers the Sodomites his own daughters "to gratify their lust (ἐπιθυμίας)".

he had received" (here, and in what follows I italicize elements of Josephus' presentation which lack an equivalent in the Bible as such).

Judg 19:25b tells of the men's refusal to heed the host's proposal, whereupon (19:26α) the Levite throws his concubine out to them. Josephus eliminates this callous initiative by the Levite in his version of the sequence (5.146a) which likewise underscores the host's continued efforts to dissuade the miscreants from their plan: "But they in no wise abated their passion for the stranger, being insistent in their demand to have her, *and while he was yet imploring them to perpetrate no iniquity*, they seized the woman...". In then (5.146b) recounting the men's actual commission of the crime (// 19:25b), he interjects an indication about where this took place: "they carried her off to their homes."

The source's account of the woman's rape and subsequent release (19:25b) continues (19:26) with a notice on her collapsing at the door of the host's house. With this continuation of the narrative in view, Josephus (5.147) introduces an explicit mention of her dying at this point (cf. the plus of LXX OL 19:28). He further inserts reference to the woman's emotional state in her final moments; his elaborated version of 19:26 thus reads: "She, *outworn with her woes*, repaired to the house of her host, *where, out of grief for what she had endured and not daring for shame to face her husband- since he above all, she deemed would be inconsolable at her fate*³⁶- she succumbed and gave up the ghost."

Judg 19:27-30 recounts the initiatives taken by the Levite with regard to his concubine's remains. Josephus' rendition (5.148-149a) of the opening of this sequence (vv. 27-28a) focusses on the thoughts and feelings which accompany the man's actions: "But her husband, *supposing his wife to be buried in deep sleep and suspecting nothing serious*,³⁷ tried to rouse her [compare 19:28α: He said to her, Get up, let us be going], *with intent to console her by recalling how she had not voluntarily surrendered herself to her abusers, but that they had come to the lodging-house and carried her off* [cf. 5.146]. But when he found that she was dead [so the LXX plus in 19:28, see above], *chastened by the enormity of the*

³⁶ The reference to the Levite's "inconsolability" at his wife's loss here harks back to the notices on the intensity of his passion for her in 5.136b-137.

³⁷ Josephus' notice here on what the man (erroneously) "supposes" aims to account for his subsequent attempt to "rouse" his wife who, as readers have been informed (see 5.147), is already "dead."

wrong...". Josephus has in common (5.149b) with A L OL 19:30 their plus concerning the message the Levite confides to those who carry around his wife's remains. In contrast to these witnesses, however he cites the message prior to the Israelites' reaction. He likewise- perhaps under the influence of the Levite's words to the Israelites as cited in Judg 20:4b-5 (see n. 21) gives the message a more distinctive and definite content: "(the bearers are to) state who they were who had caused the death of his wife and to recount the debauchery of the tribe [compare the concluding plus of A etc. 19:30 with its duplication of the Israelites' own words: has anything like this happened from the day the sons of Israel went up from Egypt until this day?]"

In 5.150 Josephus incorporates his notice- inspired by 19:30- on the Israelites' words concerning the "unprecedentedness" of what is shown them into his account of the people's assembling as related in Judg 20:1. At the same time he also inserts characteristic allusions to the assemblers' emotional state ("sorely moved by the spectacle and the tale of these deeds of violence... in intense and righteous wrath..."); he further relocates the assembly-site from Mizpah (so 20:1) to Shiloh, the place where Joshua had set up the tabernacle (see Josh 18:1// *Ant.* 5.68).

Overall and above all, it might be said that Josephus retells the Judges 19 story highlighting psychological and erotic dimensions that are latent/implicit in the source. Personages' motivations for speaking and acting as they do are repeatedly cited (see, e.g., the parents' reason for detaining the couple [5.138], the host's grounds for receiving the travelers [5.142], and the Levite's rationale for attempting to rouse his already "dead" wife [5.149, compare 19:28]). The woman character receives heightened (and positive) attention: she is the Levite's legitimate wife, her beauty is twice noted (5.136,143); she is the object of intense desire on the part of both her husband (5.136b-137 and the Gibeathites (who ask for her rather than the Levite himself, 5.143, compare 19:22b), while her feelings following her rape are rehearsed at length (5.147b). The historian further takes care to put a better face on the inglorious roles played by both the Biblical host (19:24, compare 5.144-146) and the Levite (19:25, no parallel in Josephus) in the episode; conversely he accentuates the threatening aggressivity of the Gibeathites (instead of having the woman handed over to them as in 19:25b, they force their way into the house and seize her, 5.146). To make room for his many psychologizing insertions, Josephus cuts down on the source's narrative details, most notably in the

case of the section concerning the Levite's time at the woman's family home in Bethlehem, 19:4-9, compare 5.138. Two noteworthy content changes in Josephus' retelling concern his having the Gibeathites demand the woman rather than her husband be given them (5.143, compare 19:22) and his transfer of the assembly from Mizpah (20:1) to Shiloh (5.150).

IV. THE TWO VERSIONS COMPARED

In concluding this presentation, I would call attention first to the similarities and then to the differences between Pseudo-Philo and Josephus in their respective retellings of Judges 19. Beyond the commonalities rooted in their joint use of a similar text-form of the source chapter (see above), the two authors also converge for a number of other points where they both diverge from the Scriptural account. I note the following such agreements between them. Both streamline the source story leaving aside extraneous details, see in particular their handling of the Levite's stay in Bethlehem (19:4-9; compare 5.138, no parallel in Pseudo-Philo). The two authors go together positively against the source especially in their description of the crime itself. They notably agree, first of all, in making, not the Levite (so 19:22), but rather the woman the true object of the inhabitants' desires: in *LAB* they ask initially for both the guests (45.3a) and then, once they have seized the pair, they immediately let the Levite go (45.3d), while in *Ant.* 5.143,146 they demand and carry off the woman alone. Both retellings go beyond the Bible as well in having the inhabitants explicitly threaten the host should he not comply with their demand (see 45.3c and 5.144). They further agree in downplaying the complicity of the host and the traveling Levite in the proceedings: Pseudo-Philo does not reproduce the host's offer (19:24) of the two women to the inhabitants; Josephus surrounds his version of that offer- in which only the host's daughter, not also the Levite's wife is mentioned- with a series of exculpatory remarks (see 5.145). As for the notice of 19:25b about the Levite's tossing his concubine out to the men, this is replaced in both *LAB* 45.3d and *Ant.* 5.146 by a reference to the inhabitants' forcing their way into the house and carrying her off. Similarly, the plus of A L OL 19:30 concerning the rather indeterminate message conveyed to the Israelites is reworded by Pseudo-Philo and Josephus- this likely under the influence of the Levite's subsequent speech to the Israelites as cited in Judg 20:4b-

5- so as to provide an explicit report of what has happened (see 45.4c; 5.146). In addition, they "reposition" mention of the message to a more logical point in the proceedings (see n. 10). Thereafter, the two authors "anticipate" the plus of A etc. 19:30 about the Levite's discovering the woman to be "dead," see 45.3e and 5.147. Finally, they both interject, as well, mention the "consternation" experienced by the Israelites (45.5 and 5.150) at what they see and here, just as they relocate the people's assembly from Mizpah (so 20:1) to Shiloh (45.5 and 5.150).

Noteworthy as are the above similarities between them, the two versions of the Biblical story evidence even more striking divergences. In the first place, the controlling interests guiding their respective retellings differ: for Pseudo-Philo these have to do with the divine role in and reaction to the affair along with the operation of the principle of retribution in the unfolding of events, as well as making explicit links to previous (Sodom, Micah's idol[s]) and subsequent episodes (the Israelite coalition's initial defeats by the Benjaminites). For Josephus, on the other hand, the emphasis in his rewriting goes to the psychological and erotic dimensions of the episode. Another major difference relates to the degree of fidelity to their common *Vorlage* displayed in the two *relectures* of Judges 19, abstraction made of the points where they agree against the source as cited above. Here, Josephus is clearly the one who adheres more closely to the Biblical prototype, his major, characteristic innovation being his insertion of references to the motives and feelings that lie behind the words and actions Scripture attributes to the story's personages. Pseudo-Philo, by contrast, treats the source story with much greater freedom as regards additions/expansions, omissions/abridgements, and modifications.

This comparative study of Pseudo-Philo's and Josephus' retellings of the Judges 19 story picks up on a number of previous, more comprehensive treatments of the two authors' similarities and differences.³⁸

³⁸ See, e.g.: L.H. Feldman, "Prolegomenon," in M. R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* (rpt.; New York, KTAV, 1971) lvii-lxvi; idem, "Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*", in L. H. Feldman / G. Hata (eds.), *Josephus, the Bible and History* (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1989) 59-80; C. A. Brown, *No Longer Be Silent: First Century Jewish Portraits of Biblical Women. Studies in Pseudo-Philo's Biblical Antiquities and Josephus's Jewish Antiquities* (Louisville, Westminster/John Knox, 1992).