



Lea's Daughter Dinah: Unknown Variants of Genesis 34 in the Octateuch Manuscripts

Lea'nın Kızı Dinah: Oktateukhos El Yazmalarında Yaratılış 34'ün Bilinmeyen Varyasyonları

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Abstract

Genesis 34, an obscure narrative in the Torah, tells the story of Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah. The biblical story unfolds as Dinah goes out to see the local girls, a seemingly innocent act, and her life is thrown into darkness when Shechem, the prince of the land, harasses her. The following chain of events involves Dinah's brothers, Simeon and Levi, and their cunning deception of Shechem and his clan, revenge, and confrontation with their father, Jacob.

This study examines the complex layers of Genesis 34, exploring its disconnection from the broader Genesis narrative and the absence of moral clarity or divine presence in the text. The narrative raises unanswered questions about Dinah's fate, the consequences of vengeance on Shechem, and God's silence throughout the events. Including this story in Bible has puzzled early commentators, prompting them to reflect on the moral lesson and overall message intended to be drawn from it.

The article has two parts. The first part analyses the sources from the period between 1000 and 1300 CE that mentions the story of Dinah and gives an idea about the interpretations and reflections of this episode in the Bible at that time. In the second part, the study analyses the illustrations of Dinah in the Middle Byzantine Octateuch manuscripts, shedding light on the visual interpretations and representations of the story in the context of medieval art.

Öz

Lea'nın Kızı Dinah: Oktateukhos El Yazmalarında Yaratılış 34'ün Bilinmeyen Varyasyonları Tevrat'ta anlaşılması güç bir anlatı olan Yaratılış 34, Yakup ve Lea'nın kızı Dinah'ın hikâyesini anlatır. Kutsal Kitap'ta geçen hikâye Dinah'ın görünüşte masum bir hareket gibi görünen yerel kızları görmek için dışarı çıkması ve devamında ülkenin prensi Shechem'in onu taciz etmesiyle hayatının karanlığa dönüşmesiyle gelişir. Bunu izleyen olaylar zinciri, Dinah'ı kardeşleri Simeon ve Levi'nin Shechem ve halkını kurnazca aldatmalarını, intikamlarını ve babaları Yakup'la yüzleşmelerini içerir.

Bu çalışma, Yaratılış 34'ün karmaşık katmanlarını inceleyerek, daha geniş Yaratılış anlatısından kopukluğunu ve metinde ahlaki netlik veya ilahi varlığın yokluğunu araştırmaktadır. Anlatı, Dinah'ın kaderi, Şekem'den alınan intikamın sonuçları ve olaylar boyunca Tanrı'nın sessizliği hakkında cevaplanmamış sorular ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Bu hikâyenin Kutsal Yazılar'da yer alması eski yorumcuların kafasını karıştırmış, onları bu hikâyeden çıkarılması amaçlanan ahlaki ders ve genel mesaj üzerinde düşünmeye itmıştır.

Makale iki bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümde, MS 1000 ve 1300 yılları arasında Dinah'ın öyküsünden bahseden dönem kaynakları incelenerek, o dönemde Kutsal Kitap'taki bu bölümün yorumları ve yansımaları hakkında fikir verilmektedir. İkinci bölümde ise çalışma, Orta Bizans Oktateukhos el

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As the study progresses, it attempts to unravel the mystery surrounding Dinah's story, exploring its significance, moral implications and potential cultural or historical implications. The juxtaposition of textual and visual analyses adds depth to the exploration of this biblical narrative and invites readers to reflect on the ongoing enigma of Genesis 34 and its complex lessons.

Keywords: *Byzantine art, Byzantine manuscripts, Octateuchs, Old Testamanet women.*

yazmalarındaki Dinah resimleri analiz ederek, Orta Çağ sanatı bağlamında hikâyenin görsel yorumlarına ve temsillerine ışık tutmaktadır.

Çalışma ilerledikçe, Dinah'nın hikayesini çevreleyen gizemi çözmeye çalışmakta, önemini, ahlaki çıkarımlarını ve potansiyel kültürel veya tarihsel etkilerini araştırmaktadır. Metinsel ve görsel analizlerin yan yana getirilmesi, bu Kutsal Kitap anlatısının araştırılmasına derinlik katmakta ve okuyucuları Yaratılış 34'ün süregelen muamması ve içerdiği zor dersler üzerinde düşünmeye davet etmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Bizans Sanatı, Bizans el yazmaları, Oktateukhos El Yazmaları, Tevrat kadınları.*

Introduction

Although much has been written about it, Genesis 34, like many stories in the Torah, is an undecipherable text. There is no explicit reference to Genesis 34 in the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament. However, this section includes Lea's only daughter, Dinah, one of the few Bible girls identified by her mother's name¹. Understandably, this story remains unresolved. Because the story is stuck in the story of Jacob's escape from Esau and is a chain of events that happens quickly.

The story commences as a young woman departs from her home to observe local girls (Genesis 34:1) and culminates in a pivotal question posed by her brothers to their father (Genesis 34:31). In the interim, distressing incidents unfold. Following Dinah's excursion to observe the local girls, Shechem, the land's prince, perpetrates a heinous act by raping her. As per several translations, Shechem develops strong feelings for Dinah and desires to marry her. Nevertheless, his intentions are met with scepticism by his brothers. They employ a clever ruse to deceive the prince, his father Hamor, and the townspeople, convincing them to undergo circumcision.

On the third day, while the people of Salem suffer circumcision, the brothers save Dinah from Shechem's house and kill all the men in the city. Hearing these events, Dinah's father, Jacob, breaks his previous silence and gets angry. He blames his sons for causing trouble. Then the brothers ask Jacob: (But) should he² treat our sister like a prostitute?

¹ Only here and in Genesis 36:39 does a mother's name identify a daughter. Dinah is "the daughter of Leah" and Mehetabel is "the daughter of Matred, daughter of Mezahab". In Ruth 1:8, Naomi does not explicitly name the mothers of her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah: "Go back each of you to your mother's house."

² "They" is written in Septuagint. Probably to show that the Hivites generally encouraged the act of Shechem and thus shared in the responsibility for it.

The story of Dinah is a solitary episode without a noticeable tie to the rest of Genesis. Dinah does not reappear, and the Old Testament does not mention if she became pregnant after being raped, nor if she ever married anyone else; virtually, she disappears. Likewise, the consequences of revenge on Shechem were not mentioned in the Old Testament. Jacob's Canaanite threat of retaliation at the end of the story never materialized. In this case, Dinah's story seems utterly unrelated to the larger historical epic. Of course, this adds to the mystery of its general meaning to ancient commentators. So why was this story included in the Scriptures? For most commentators, the story was supposed to contain some moral lesson, but the overall message it wanted or wanted was not clear. At the same time, God is not mentioned anywhere in the story. At the end of the story, we have no idea whether this act of vengeance was met with divine approval or approval.

In the first part of the study, the sources mentioning the story of Dinah written between 1000 and 1300 AD are mentioned. As a method, period sources were referred to according to the story's chronology. In the second part of the study, Dinah illustrations in the Middle Byzantine manuscript Octateuchos were analysed.

Jewish and Early Christian Readings about Dinah

The Legends of the Jews, a collection by Ginzberg (Ginzberg, 1913), includes multiple references to Dinah (Ginzberg, 1913, p. I: 394-403), a character from Jewish Scriptures. The basic storyline of Dinah's dishonour and revenge is similar in Legends and Genesis 34. The degradation of Dinah is depicted as a component of the Divine's "curse" inflicted upon Jacob in I: 395 (Ginzberg, 1913).

Besides, I: 411 - 412 reads:

If a man voweth a vow, and he does not fulfill it in good time, he will stumble through three grave sins, idolatry, unchastity, and bloodshed. Jacob had been guilty of not accomplishing promptly the vow he had taken upon himself at Beth-el, and therefore punishment overtook him-his (412) daughter was dishonored, his sons slew men, and they kept the idols found among the spoils at Shechem (Ginzberg, 1913).

In various legends and ancient texts, there are more accounts of Jacob making mistakes, although the specifics can differ. In Legends I: 395 (Ginzberg, 1913) suggests that his arrogance in positioning himself as God's earthly representative displeased the Divine. Another explanation, found in Legends I: 395-396 (Ginzberg, 1913), revolves around Jacob's refusal to marry off his daughter Dinah to Esau. Instead, he hid Dinah away from Esau (Genesis Rabbah³ 76.9 (Freedman, 1961, p. II: 709)), which incurred God's reprimand. According to this tradition, God allowed Dinah to become a victim of Shechem's unwelcome advances as a consequence of Jacob's actions. This particular version

³ Jacob Neusner describes Genesis Rabbah as "the first complete and systematic Judaic commentary to the book of Genesis. In normative and methodical Judaism, Judaism reached its original expression in the Mishnah (ca. A.D. 200) and came to the final statement in the Talmud of Babylonia (ca. A.D. 600), Genesis Rabbah, therefore, takes an important position (Neusner, 1985, p. ix, x).

of events is not present in the Book of Genesis. It underscores the belief that the mere act of a man seeing a woman could lead swiftly to sexual activity, as implied in Genesis 34:2. Nevertheless, Legends emphasizes that Jacob's decision to withhold Dinah from Esau ultimately led to her falling prey to Shechem. Genesis does not include this specific tradition.

Dinah is depicted as completely passive, emphasizing her lack of personal agency in the narrative (Ginzberg, 1913, p. I: 411). However, Legends adds new information, such as Dinah's pregnancy and the birth of a daughter named Asenath. The narrator in Legends (II: 38 (Ginzberg, 1913, p. II: 38)) develops the characters in more detail than Genesis 34.

The Midrashic Texts contain much information about Dinah's birth. Two sources mention the tradition of Dinah being conceived male, namely Tanhuma⁴ 8.18 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223) and Genesis Rabbah 72.6 (Freedman, 1961, p. 666-667). However, the specifics of her gender transformation differ in each account. Tanhuma states that after giving birth to six sons, Leah prayed for a daughter and was granted Dinah, who was then associated closely with her mother. Meanwhile, Genesis Rabbah claims that Rachel was the one who prayed for the gender change.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that when these texts were written or edited, it was significant to portray Dinah as Jacob's only daughter. This can be seen in Genesis Rabbah 84.21 (Freedman, 1961, p. 785-786) and Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 36 and 39 (Friedlander, 1965, p. 272-273, 303-304). Interestingly, Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 36 alone suggests that Dinah was born without a partner—additionally, the references to Dinah alternate between describing her as Jacob's or Leah's daughter. Notably, Asenath, Dinah's daughter, is only mentioned in Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 36 and 38 (Friedlander, 1965, p. 287-289).

The texts of Genesis Rabbah, Tanhuma and Leviticus Rabbah make it clear that Dinah's sexual assault was linked to Jacob's wrongdoing. Jacob's misbehaviour may have caused Divine disapproval, with his boasting being a particular concern. According to Genesis Rabbah 79.8 (Freedman, 1961, p. 735), Jacob's arrogance had become excessive, as he claimed to be a "god in the terrestrial sphere." It is suggested that this misconduct led to Dinah's dishonour, also mentioned in 80.4 (Freedman, 1961, p. 737) in connection to Jacob's belief that he was a deity on earth. Furthermore, other accounts depict Jacob hiding Dinah in a chest. Genesis Rabbah 76.9 (Freedman, 1961, p. 709) and Tanhuma 8.19 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223) claim that Jacob concealed Dinah from Esau. The issue of Jacob failing to fulfil his vow is highlighted in Leviticus Rabbah 37.1 (Israelstam & Slotki, 1961, p. 465) and Tanhuma 8.20 and 8.22 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223). Likewise, Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 38 (Friedlander, 1965, p. 287-289) suggests that Jacob had "leaned his hand against the wall," indicating that he may have ventured too close to the Hivites with his family.

AND HE ERECTED THERE AN ALTAR AND CALLED IT EL ELOHE ISRAEL (XXXIII, 20). He [Jacob] declared to Him: 'Thou art God in the celestial spheres, and I am a god in the terrestrial sphere.' R. Huna commented in the name of R. Simeon b. Lak-

⁴ Tanhuma, a homiletical text in Palestine, was finalized by the ninth century (Bader, 2008, p.54).

ish: [God reproved him]: 'Even the synagogue superintendent cannot assume the authority of himself, yet thou didst take the authority to thyself.' Tomorrow thy daughter will go out and be dishonoured!' Hence it is written, And Dinah the daughter of Leah went out, etc. (Gen. XXXIV, 1). (Freedman, 1961, p. 735)

In Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum (Pseudo-Philo) (Harrington, 1986), Theodotus (Fragments 3-4) (Fallon, 1985), Jubilees 33:22 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 120)⁵, Demetrius's Fragment 2, v. 9 (Hanson, 1985, p. 849), which presents Dinah was born of Leah. The passage from Jubilees 28:23 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 110) is unique in that it is the only reference to Dinah's being a twin of Zebulun. Jubilees' allegation remains consistent as it places Dinah's name after the listing of Zebulun and his sons (44:17-18 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 135)).

The Testament of Levi⁶ presents Dinah first in 2: 2 (Charles, 1908, p. 26) as the sister of Levi and Simeon⁷. The emphasis is on Dinah's being Levi's sister, as "sister" is the only noun used for Dinah.

In the Testament of Job, Dinah is introduced as a mother and Job's wife⁸; Dinah's wifehood and motherhood are emphasized. Dinah is portrayed as the mother of ten children born from Job after his suffering. Jacob uses rather round about language to explain how he had a child with Dinah.

Dinah's story begins by stating that Dinah "went out to visit the girls" of the land. It clarifies that Dinah did not intend to meet another man, as she was said to visit the girls. But interpreters were skeptical about this issue and made various assumptions, such as Theodotus when reconsidering the story: "she wished to see the city" (Fallon, 1985, p. 792).

In texts where Dinah is depicted as having "went out," her actions are often portrayed negatively. Dinah is frequently characterized as a wanderer, as seen in Genesis Rabbah 18.2 and 80.5 (where she is also accused of behaving immodestly) (Freedman, 1961, p. 141-142, 738), Leviticus Rabbah 37.1 (Israelstam & Slotki, 1961, p. 465), and Tanhuma 8.17 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223). Three of these passages are very similar and suggest that Dinah and other well-known women in the Hebrew Bible disregarded God's advice and reproof, which disappointed the Divine.

The Ecclesiastes Rabbah (X.8.1) (Cohen, 1961, p. 268-269) passage suggests that Dinah was responsible for her violation. The text initially portrays Dinah as the one who had "broken through a fence" and "had been bitten by a snake". The ancient rabbis believed that Dinah had violated a socially proscribed boundary, thus making herself responsible for what happened to her. A similar

⁵ Probably written by a priest in Hebrew in the 2nd century BCE (Charles, 1913, p. 1)

⁶ Written in Hebrew during the later years of John Hyrcanus, The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs was probably authored after his ultimate triumph over the Syrian power and before his falling out with the Pharisees, sometime between 109 and 106 BCE. The author, a Pharisee, demonstrated a combination of unwavering devotion to his party's finest customs with unbridled reverence for Hyrcanus (Charles, 1913, p. 777-778)

⁷ Then 5:3, 6:3, 6:8, and 7:3 (sometimes all Levi's brothers sister) (Charles, 1908, p. 38, 41, 41, 42)

⁸ In the canonical Job, the first wife is not named, and the second is not mentioned. In Testament of Job, the wife of Job's trials is named Sitis, while the mother of the ten children mentioned, before whom Job reveals this "testament", is Dinah, daughter of Jacob and Leah (Gen 20:31; 46:15) (Spittler, 1983, p. 839)

thought is expressed in Tanhuma 8.12 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223), where Dinah is blamed for “causing herself to come to corruption”. The text alleges that Dinah's actions, such as going out into the marketplace and failing to conceal herself, “gave an opening” to Shechem. According to the rabbis, this behaviour made it easier for Shechem to do what he did. In other words, Dinah's actions played a significant role in paving the way for the violation, making her partly responsible for what happened to her.

Genesis Rabbah contains a refrain repeated three times, suggesting that Dinah is going out caused several events. Her going out in passages 80.2 and 80.12 (Freedman, 1961, p. 736, 744) made Jacob's clan public property. According to 80.3 (Freedman, 1961, p. 737), her going out led directly to the slaughter of Hamor and Shechem. These passages depict the actions of one person as having a direct impact on others. The text also suggests that Dinah was punished for something Jacob did or neglected to do. In both Genesis Rabbah 84.3 and 84.21 (Freedman, 1961, p. 770-771, 785-786), Dinah is presented as a source of trouble, disquiet, or sorrow for her father, Jacob. These passages underscore the idea that people's actions have a direct impact on the fate of others. Dinah fares particularly poorly in these texts. She was said to have been immoral in a number of references: Genesis Rabbah 80.1 (Freedman, 1961, p. 735), Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 38 (Friedlander, 1965, p. 287-289), Leviticus Rabbah 37.1 (Israelstam & Slotki, 1961, p. 465), and Tanhuma 8.14 and 8.15 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223). She is associated with unchastity in Tanhuma 8.20 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223) and is sometimes compared to her mother, Leah, as seen in Genesis Rabbah. She is accused of immorality in multiple references, including Genesis Rabbah 80.1 (Freedman, 1961, p. 735) and Tanhuma 8.14 and 8.15 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223).

As in Genesis 34, Simeon and Levi are prominently featured in the midrashim concerning Dinah. Several texts explicitly connect them with Dinah, including Genesis Rabbah 98.5, and 99.7 (Freedman, 1961, p. 952-954, 979-981), Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 38 (Friedlander, 1965, p. 287-289), and Tanhuma 8.19 and 22 (Townsend, 1989, p. 216-223).

There are midrashic accounts of three different marriages of Dinah. She is referred to as the wife of Shechem in Genesis Rabbah 76.9 and 80.8 (Freedman, 1961, p. 709, 740-741), the wife of Job in Genesis Rabbah 19.12, 57.4, 80.4 (Freedman, 1961, p. 157-158, 478-480, 737), and Tanhuma 8.19 (Townsend, 1989), and the wife of Simeon in Genesis Rabbah 80.11 (Freedman, 1961, p. 743-744).

These texts conclude their accounts of Dinah like the Hebrew Bible. They indicate that she went to Egypt with Jacob and his family, as understood in Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer 39 (Friedlander, 1965, p.303-304). However, unlike the Hebrew Bible, Genesis Rabbah 80.11 (Freedman, 1961, p. 743-744) mentions her death and burial, preserving the tradition that she was buried in Canaan by Simeon, her brother and husband.

The Targums Neofiti (McNamara, 1992, p. 162-164), Onkelos (Grossfeld, 1988, p. 118-121), and Pseudo-Jonathan (Maher, 1992, p. 117-119) provide accurate retellings of the Genesis 34 story, with minor discrepancies regarding

the reason for Dinah's outing, the details of Shechem's actions, the wisdom of her brothers' words, Dinah's virginity, and how Simeon and Levi wished to commemorate the event. Targum Job (Mangan, 1991, p. 26-27) differs from these three Targums in that it focuses on Job's book instead of Genesis and depicts Dinah in a more negative light, placing blame on her for going out. These Targums demonstrate the diversity of traditions about Dinah and what occurred in Shechem.

The portrayal of Dinah in Targums Neofiti, Onkelos, and Pseudo-Jonathan consistently uses terms such as daughter, sister, and maiden. However, Targum Job only refers to her as Job's wife (2:9), casting her in a negative light as someone who acted shamefully from her father's house. Leah, Dinah's mother, is not blamed for Dinah's actions in any of the Targums.

The blame for the events in Shechem is consistently placed on Shechem himself in Targums Neofiti, Onkelos, and Pseudo-Jonathan, although the specific terms used to describe his actions vary. In contrast, Targum Job places the blame on Dinah for acting disgracefully.

Overall, the story of Dinah and what happened in Shechem held great significance in the targumim era.

The group of pseudepigraphical texts has very few references to Dinah going out. This contrasts the midrashim, where her actions were often interpreted as an infraction and a primary focus. Theodotus Fragment 4 (Fallon, 1985, p. 791) is the only text that mentions her going out, stating that she "came into Shechem when there was a festival since she wished to see the city". The vast majority of the focus in these texts is on Shechem's defiling or raping Dinah. Because these texts downplay this action, there is no reference to Dinah as a prostitute and Simeon and Levi do not allege that Shechem treated her as one.

Two of these texts provided specific ages for Dinah when she met Shechem. Jubilees 30:2 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 112) claims that "she was little, only twelve years old," while Demetrius (Hanson, 1985, p. 850) records that Dinah was sixteen and four months old when Shechem defiled her. According to Demetrius' chronology, Dinah and Levi were four years apart in age. Apart from noting Dinah's age at her defilement, Theodotus offers the most information about her. In Fragment 3 (Fallon, 1985, p. 791), he introduces Dinah and states she "had a beautiful form, and admirable frame, and a noble spirit." The following fragment details that Dinah had worked with wool and was still a virgin when Shechem first encountered her.

Dinah was dishonoured by Shechem, which caused great anger in Levi according to the Testament of Levi 6:3 (Charles, 1908, p. 40-41). The Shechemites or the sons of Hamor, were responsible for this abomination. Testament of Levi 6:8 (Charles, 1908, p. 41) alleges that they intended to do the same thing to Sarah and Rebecca that they did to Dinah, establishing the Shechemites as sinners. Another passage, Testament of Levi 7:3 (Charles, 1908, p. 42), describes their offence as folly in Israel.

In contrast, the Testament of Job (Mangan, 1991, p. 26-27) does not mention the incident between Shechem and Dinah. Instead, it focuses on Dinah as Job's

wife and the mother of his children. *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* does mention the Shechem episode in 8:7 (Harrington, 1986, p. 313-314), where Shechem "raped Dinah, his (Jacob's) daughter and humiliated her" before recording that Job took Dinah as his wife. Simeon and Levi claim in Joseph and Asebeth 23:14 (Burchard, 1985, p. 240) that the Lord God punished the insult of Shechemites, who had insulted the sons of Israel due to Shechem's defilement of Dinah. Theodotus wrote in Fragment 4 (Fallon, 1985, p. 791-792) that Shechem loved Dinah and, after seizing her, carried her off and ravished her. Later in Fragment 6 (Fallon, 1985, p. 791-792), he referred to Shechem's assault on Dinah as "a violent attack".

The Book of Jubilees (Wintermute, 1985, p. 240), written against the damaging effects of Hellenism, based the story of Dinah on the principle that Israelites should not give daughters to foreigners. We are also informed before the story begins that Dinah is very young, 12 years old (Jubilees 30:2 (Wintermute, 1985, p.112)). Demetrius mentioned that Dinah was 16 years and four months old when Shechem defiled her. This verb "defile" is used throughout Jubilees 30:3-6 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 112), with v. 4 using "polluted." Verses 17-18 suggest that Shechem had risen against Israel. Jubilees 30:24 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 114) describes how the children of Israel brought Dinah back to Jacob from the house of Shechem. Theodotus's Fragment 8 (Fallon, 1985, p. 793) also mentions this return/rescue of Dinah. In Jubilee, however, the crime is not that Dinah was raped but that Israelis give daughters to Gentiles. At the same time, only two Pseudepigraphic texts mention Dinah's virginity (Theodotus's Fragment 4 (Fallon, 1985, p. 791-792), Jubilees 30:6 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 112)). The passage in Jubilees implies that Dinah was a virgin when Shechem defiled her. It should be added that Theodotus is the source that provides the most information about Dinah, except for the age of Dinah at the time of her defilement.

"And the Lord delivered them into the hands of the sons of Jacob that they might exterminate them with the sword and execute judgment upon them, and that it might not thus again be done in Israel that a virgin of Israel should be defiled" Jubilees 30:6 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 112)

And Dinah, still a virgin, came into Shechem when there was a festival, since she wished to see the city. - Theodotus's Fragment 4 (Fallon, 1985, p. 792).

Dinah is also mentioned as one who went to Egypt with Jacob and his clan in Jubilees 44:18 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 135) and Demetrius 2:17 (Hanson, 1985, p. 851). Finally, Jubilees 34:15-17 (Wintermute, 1985, p. 121) provides information about Dinah's death and burial place, stating that she was buried opposite the tomb of Rachel, where Bilhah was also buried. Thus, these texts provide a complete narrative of Dinah's life, from birth to death.

The concise recounting of Dinah's rape in the Deuterocanonical Writings in *The Book of Judith* includes several alterations or supplementary details compared to the biblical narrative—one notable addition surfaces in Judith's depiction of the actual incident.

"Lord, the God of my ancestor Simeon, into whose hand you put a sword to take revenge on the foreigners who had violated the virgin's womb, uncovering her thighs to her shame and polluting her womb to her dishonor. For you said, 'This shall not be done!' Yet they did it. So you handed over their leaders to slaughter and

their bed, blushing for her deceived, to blood-shed. You struck down the slaves with the princes and the princes upon their thrones. You handed over their wives for rape and their daughters for slavery and all their spoils for distribution among your beloved children, who had been so zealous for you and had been ap-palled at the pollution of their blood and had called upon you for help. God, my God, hear me also-a widow!" Judith 9:2-4 (Moore, 1995, p. 16)

In Judith 9:2, the Testament of Levi 5-7, and Genesis 30, the actions of Simeon and Levi are not condemned or need justification. Instead, they are portrayed as divinely sanctioned, suggesting that God inspired the idea in their minds. Rather than being perceived as an act requiring an apology, their actions are characterized as revenge rather than conversion (Feldman, 2004, p. 275).

The first chapter of the 4 Maccabees is an introduction to the question of whether human reason is sovereign over human emotions. The author then cites Genesis 34 in the second chapter. In 4 Maccabees 2:18-20 (Cotton, 1832, p. 226), 17:1 (Cotton, 1832, p. 270) and 18:7-24 (Cotton, 1832, p. 273-276), direct and indirect references to Dinah can be traced. The rule of reason over emotion is affirmed through Jacob in 2:18-20. Simeon and Levi are criticised for their anger.

Furthermore, In 4 Maccabees 18:7-24, the mother of seven compares her life to Dinah's. She claims to have acted correctly as a young woman by guarding her virtue and not engaging in sexual transgressions. As an adult, after witnessing the brutal deaths of her seven sons, she chose to end her own life rather than allow herself to be defiled by a Gentile. The mother of seven in 4 Maccabees is a powerful example of a woman who valued her purity and refused to allow her body to be violated by those who sought to harm her and her family. In contrast, Dinah's story depicts her as a victim of sexual violence and shame. The mother's unwavering commitment to her beliefs, even in the face of death, starkly contrasts Dinah's situation, highlighting the stark differences between the two women's experiences.

Philo utilized the narrative of Dinah from Genesis 34 as an allegory for the spiritual journey of every individual. He chose to present Dinah as the subject in the passive voice to emphasize that she was the one on the journey. Throughout the story, Dinah symbolizes the tribunal of the soul and judgment. As Philo developed the illustration further, "Dinah" represented the judgment of the soul and judgment (Migration 39.223 (Yonge, 1993b, p. 275)). She met Shechem, who attempted to pollute and defile her, representing those who act and speak inappropriately. Her brothers intervened, and her virginity of Dinah was restored because she had either committed no wrong or unintentionally done so. Migration 39.225 (Yonge, 1993b, p. 275) clarified that the soul had only appeared to be defiled, and it returned to its pristine state. In this section, Philo referred to Dinah as "the patient."

In his second interpretation of the story in *On the Change of Names*, Philo once again presented Dinah as a virgin (Names 36.194) (Yonge, 1993b, p. 357-358). In this passage, he expanded on the reference from Genesis 34:3, which discussed Shechem speaking to the heart of Dinah. Philo referred to Dinah as both a virgin and a damsel. He used the verb "humbled her" to express the sen-

timent he had described in Migration 39.224 (Yonge, 1993b, p. 275) as "polluted and defiled."

Philo depicted Dinah in Names 36:194 (Yonge, 1993b, p. 357-358) as "incorruptible judgment," "justice, the attribute seated by God," "the Everlasting Virgin," and "judgment or justice." He continued to speak of the offence against Dinah, that "fools, then laying violent hands upon and attempting to defile her...by the plausibility of their speech escape conviction." He wrote of the plural attempt to defile Dinah. He also used this opportunity to develop the characterization of Shechem, who represented all those whose speech and actions were incongruous. Throughout, Dinah was the "ever-virgin virtue." Such men missed no "opportunity of insulting and violating her when they could" (Names 36.196) (Yonge, 1993b, p. 358). Modern readers might interpret this as either a successful or attempted rape. The language of "violent hands" contributes to that impression.

Dinah was a victim/survivor of wrongs that were not her fault. She had left her father's house to seek wisdom, but folly found her. Philo encouraged people to continue their journeys, even when encountering obstacles that were not their fault. He concluded with a positive and laudatory portrayal of Dinah, emphasizing that people should remain steadfast on their spiritual journey.

Josephus (Whiston, 1988) presents the episode from Genesis 34 in a manner that is more faithful to the Masoretic Text than Philo's account. However, some discrepancies between Josephus' version and the Masoretic Text still need to be clarified. For instance, Josephus sets the event during a Shechemite festival and claims that Dinah went into the city to admire the local women's attire. In the introductory section, he also refers to Dinah as Jacob's only daughter.

Like Philo, Josephus mentions that violence was involved in Shechem and Dinah's sexual encounter. He writes that Shechem "defiled her by violence" when he saw her. Josephus also includes Shechem's desire to marry Dinah, referring to her as a "damsel" in his account. On the other hand, Jacob is presented as troubled by the situation and unsure how to refuse Hamor or Shechem. He requests some time to consider his options before informing his sons of the defilement of their sister (Whiston, 1988, p. 51-52).

Like the Hebrew Bible account, Simeon and Levi play a prominent role in Josephus' version. Both accounts emphasize that the brothers were Dinah's maternal siblings. Josephus describes the brothers' strategy in a manner that suggests he is an all-knowing narrator, and Dinah is removed from Shechem's house by her two brothers. The episode ends in both accounts with no additional information about Dinah's fate back in Jacob's household (Whiston, 1988, p. 51-52).

Both Josephus and the Hebrew Bible mention that Dinah went to Egypt with the rest of Jacob's clan. She is Jacob's only daughter and is usually noted alongside her twelve brothers, six of whom were born of her mother, Leah (Whiston, 1988, p. 64).

The incident of Dinah is not mentioned in the New Testament, and the Church Fathers rarely refer to it.

Tertullian, who lived between 160 CE and 220 CE, discussed it in Chapter X (Roberts & Donaldson, 1995, p. 164-167) of his work, "An Answer to the Jews". He used Genesis 49:5-7 and 34:25-31 (Roberts & Donaldson, 1995, p. 165) to foreshadow the execution of Christ by the Pharisees symbolically. Tertullian was not concerned with ethical guidance in his interpretation of the text. Nonetheless, he strongly disapproved of Simeon and Levi's actions in the massacre of the Shechemites, at least in that it foreshadowed the Jewish leaders' massacre of Jesus. Simeon and Levi were considered zealous Jews by Jewish interpreters and Tertullian, but one's attitude towards zealous Jews could affect one's evaluation of their actions (Parry, 2004, p. 95).

Ambrose, who was the Bishop of Milan and lived between 339 CE and 397 CE, referred to the story of Dinah three times. His ideas are best articulated in Book I, Chapter XXV.120 of "Duties of the Clergy" (Schaff, 1995, p. 21). He discusses the virtues of wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance, which are all exemplified in the lives of Abraham and Jacob. Ambrose cites Jacob's response to the rape of his daughter as an example of temperance. Jacob's moderation is evident in his decision to hide his daughter's shame rather than seek revenge, even though enemies surround him. He believed it was better to gain their goodwill than provoke their anger. This passage is noteworthy because it is the first known interpretation of Genesis 34 that approves the marriage alliance and condemns the massacre. Ambrose agrees with Jacob's reasoning in 34:30.

Jerome, who lived between approximately 340 CE and 420 CE, referred to Genesis 34 three times. In Letter CVII.6 (Schaff & Wace, 1995, p. 192) to the mother of Paula the Younger, he discusses the parents' responsibilities towards their children. He emphasizes the need to protect daughters from harmful influences, such as the "hammer of the whole earth", the golden cup of Babylon, and the company of frivolous friends. He also mentions Dinah and cautions against allowing daughters to mix with the daughters of a foreign land, which led to Dinah's destruction. In his letter to the virgin Eustochium, Jerome advises against going into the public sphere and suggests that women should remain at home to avoid danger. He warns against seeking a husband in the public squares and going about the corners of the city. In summary, Jerome believes that parents should protect their daughters from harmful influences and that women should avoid the dangers of the public sphere (Parry, 2004, p. 96).

In conclusion, the story of Dinah, as depicted in various ancient texts, reflects a complex and multifaceted narrative that has been interpreted, expanded upon, and reimagined by different traditions. From the Biblical account in Genesis to Midrashic texts, Targums, Pseudepigrapha, Philo, Josephus, and the writings of Church Fathers like Tertullian, Ambrose, and Jerome, Dinah's tale undergoes diverse interpretations, moral evaluations, and allegorical transformations. The differing perspectives on Dinah's actions, the consequences of her encounter with Shechem, and the roles of Simeon and Levi in avenging her honour highlight this narrative's interpretative richness and cultural significance. The ancient texts surrounding Dinah offer a lens through which we can explore themes of morality, agency, and familial responsibility, showcasing the endur-

ing impact of this old testament episode across various religious and cultural traditions.

Dinah in Octateuch Manuscripts

The illustrated Octateuchs are a remarkable achievement in the annals of Byzantine art history. These magnificent manuscripts hold a special place in art lovers and scholars' hearts, thanks to their profound influence on our modern understanding of Byzantine culture and society.

Within the Byzantine realm, a collection of six illustrated manuscripts dating from approximately 1050 to 1300 AD features the Octateuch text accompanied by catena or biblical commentaries. These manuscripts include Vatican City's Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 747 (from the latter half of the 11th century); Smyrna/Izmir's Greek Evangelical School, A-01 (from the first half of the 12th century); Istanbul's Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi, Seraglio (cod. 8) (from the first half of the 12th century); Vatican City's Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 746 (from the first half of the 12th century); Athos's Vatopedi Monastery, cod. 602 (from the latter half of the 13th century); and Florence's Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Laur. Plut. 5.38 (from the late 12th or early 13th century). While the first five manuscripts, each boasting numerous illustrations, share close affiliations, the sixth manuscript, Laur. Plut. 5.38 is separate (Takiguchi, 2017, p. 214).

Indeed, the illustrated Octateuchs are a testament to Byzantine society's artistic and intellectual achievements and a reminder of the profound impact they have had on our modern understanding of ancient culture.

Dinah's narrative within the Octateuch manuscripts is exclusively present in Vat. gr. 747, Smyrna, and Vat. gr. 746.

Among the earliest dated Octateuch manuscripts is Vat. gr. 747 fol. 55v⁹, unlike the other Octateuches, contains the scene of Shechem Asks that Dinah Be His Wife. The painting consists of two scenes; on the right side is the scene of Shechem Seizes Dinah, which is also seen in the other Octateuches. In the right half of the picture, Shechem grips Dinah's arm in front of the walls, representing the city of Shalem. Dinah is represented as shy, not frightened and does not resist Shechem, who in Smyrna and Vat. 746 is clad in an uncommon tunic with its left sleeve extending over the arm, a costume often used for dancers in Byzantine art.

In the right half of the picture, Shechem firmly grips Dinah's arm in front of the walls, representing the city of Shalem, which is depicted as a circular wall enclosing central two-story buildings. Despite portraying Dinah as shy, she does not appear frightened and offers no resistance to Shechem. In Smyrna fol. 47v (fig. 1) and Vat. 746 fol. 110r¹⁰, Shechem is depicted wearing an uncommon tunic with its left sleeve extending over the arm, a costume often associated with dancers in Byzantine art. However, in this picture, Shechem is clad in a

⁹ https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.747/0105

¹⁰ https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.746.pt.1/0124

richly embroidered tunic and chlamys, resembling a Byzantine prince, suggesting that his costume may have been a later replacement.

The scenes in the same two manuscripts (Smyrna and Vat. 746) depict city residents observing a festive gathering from their buildings, unrelated to the events described in Genesis 34:1-2. Instead, these details represent an original and more challenging narrative interpretation. Rather than directly aligning with the biblical account, they appear to convey moral concerns about the assault on Jacob's daughter by a pagan dancer.

These additional elements seem to have originated from an external source, likely connected to Jewish expansions of the story found in Genesis Rabbah 80:5 and Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer 38:1. According to these sources, Dinah attended a festival in Shalem featuring dancing and singing women, participating in the street celebration. A fragment from Theodotos's *On the Jews* suggests that Shechem, captivated by Dinah, took her as his own and forcibly took her away.

The scene in the left half of the picture corresponds in position and essentially also in a compositional scheme with the representation of Jacob's sacrifice before Salem in Smyrna and Vat. 746. Jacob and his sons discuss Shechem's request that Dinah be his wife. The foremost figure should be Jacob, represented as an aged man and erroneously nimbed like a patriarch, vividly gesturing in speech with Shechem's father, Emmor. Between Emmor and the Israelites, the young Shechem, clad in tunic and chlamys, hair and face shape, stands in frontal view, listening to the discussion. Shechem, on the right side of the picture, is depicted with a similar dress colour, hair and face shape.

In Seraglio fol. 117v, there is a blank space for a blank image next to Genesis 34:16. It is probably reserved for this scene.

Smyrna fol. 47v with the scene "Jacob's Sacrifice at Shalem" on the left and the scene "Shechem Seizes Dinah" on the right, which is the subject of this study. In this scene, the inscription reads: "καὶ ἡ τῆς δεινάς ὕβρις" (and the hubris of Dinah). Shechem is positioned at the open gate, where he seizes Dinah by her veil. Dinah's seemingly voluntary compliance is noteworthy as she accompanies him into the city, depicted as a towered fortress¹¹. Within the city walls, two inhabitants of Salem observe the abduction through windows, with a visible couple engaged in conversation, adding a layer of everyday life to the narrative. Shechem is portrayed in a tunic with a left sleeve extending over his hand, a characteristic often found in Byzantine depictions of dancers.

¹¹ Only the Targum Neofiti Genesis 44:18 mentions the fortress of the city of Salem (McNamara, 1992, p. 200).



Fig. 1: Smyrna fol. 47v (Weitzmann & Massimo, 1999, fig. 442)

Vat. 746 fol. 110r's picture is very close to the picture in Smyrna fol. 47v. Vat. 746 fol. 110r, on the right side of the picture, the inscription reads $\kappa(\alpha\iota) \eta \tau\eta\varsigma \delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\varsigma \upsilon\beta\rho(\iota)\varsigma$ (and the hubris of Dinah). Instead of Smyrna, a third person with carmine hair follows Dinah and Shechem. The image is next to Genesis 32:31; its proper place is two spaces beside Genesis 34:16.

Even if the scenes after these pictures are about the violation of Dinah, Dinah does not take part in them. These scenes are Circumcision of the Shechemites¹² and Slaying of the Shechemites¹³.

As a result, the analysis of these manuscripts reveals a narrative complexity that goes beyond biblical depictions and includes moral considerations and external sources. Dinah's abduction is recorded in Smyrna and Vat. 746, with added details and commentary, emphasises the complex nature of Byzantine artistic expression and the potential impact of Jewish expansions on biblical narratives. These manuscripts provide details of the cultural richness of Byzantium, where artistic production and narrative reinterpretation played a crucial role.

Conclusion

Modern readers, primarily those interested in the role of women in biblical narratives from a feminist perspective, may raise legitimate concerns about God's approach to the story of Dinah in these examples. Criticisms might focus on a deity who condones sexual crimes against women in order to punish men. A similar example can be seen in 2 Samuel 12:11, where the divine consequences include David's wives being given to other men as punishment for his offences with Bathsheba. This treatment of the subject raises many questions

¹² Vat. gr. 747 fol. 56r (left side), Smyrna fol. 47v or 48r (left side), Vat. 746 fol. 111v (left side)

¹³ Vat. gr. 747 fol. 56r (right side), Smyrna fol. 47v or 48r (right side), Vat. 746 fol. 111v (right side)

about the ethical implications of this use of women's experience in the broader theological context.

The story of Dinah did not receive much attention in early sources, probably because of the complex moral dilemma presented in Genesis 34. In a culture where rape was rarely discussed, a story about a woman being raped and her rapist being killed was unlikely to attract much attention. As this story illustrates, in male-dominated societies, ravishment is often ignored or blamed on the victim.

There are different interpretations of Dinah's "going out" in Jewish readings. Some believe she went out to find a man, which is associated with unchastity. Others argue that she became pregnant with Asenath after being raped. She is sometimes compared to her mother, Lea.

Although Dinah's story is not explicitly mentioned elsewhere, early commentators found an inference to it in Genesis 49:5-7, where Jacob blesses his sons. Jacob's mention of Simeon and Levi killing "a man" in anger clearly references the revenge taken on Shechem.

Simeon and Levi are brothers, weapons of violence are their stock-in-trade. Into their company let me not come, in their assembly let me not rejoice. For in their anger, they killed a man; and when in a good mood, they maimed an ox! Cursed be their anger, so fierce, and their wrath-how unyielding! I will divide them up in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

Some see what happened to Dinah and the behaviour of Simeon and Levi as a moral lesson in anger management; Simeon and Levi went too far in their revenge, even if it was Simeon's fault. However, most early commentators praised Simeon and Levi's behaviour as entirely appropriate and even honourable. This may be because, in later times, the Levi clan became more critical or because Simeon and Levi were their own, while Hamor and Shechem were foreigners.

Therefore, many commentators concluded that the Dinah story's purpose is to contrast Shechem's wickedness and depravity with the heroism of Simeon and Levi. Interestingly, elsewhere in the Bible, the punishment foretold by God is much less severe:

If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes and lies with her, and they are found, then the man who lay with her shall give to the father of the young woman fifty pieces of silver, and she shall be his wife as a result of his having violated her; he may not divorce her all his days (Deuteronomy 22: 28-29).

Another question is why Shechem is killed in this story. After all, he wanted to marry Dinah, as the law required and was willing to pay more than was demanded. However, Jacob and his sons do not accept his proposal. This raises a more profound issue about the relationship between religion and culture. In ancient times, marriage was often seen as a way of forming alliances between tribes or clans. In this context, the law requiring a man who raped a woman to marry her may have been seen as a way to reconcile the two families and prevent further conflict. However, Jacob and his sons reject this idea in the case of Shechem and Dinah. They refuse Shechem's offer, even if the law is to be fulfilled. In this situation, Jacob and his sons reject the cultural norm of marriage to ally. They are ready to break the law to protect the sanctity of the family and

their daughter. This tension between religion and culture is not unique to the story of Dinah and Shechem. Religious laws have been interpreted differently depending on the cultural context.

In addition, many biblical texts suggest that God disapproved of, or even forbade, intermarriage between Israelites and Canaanites. Moreover, after the return of the Jews from exile in Babylon, intermarriage between Jews and Gentiles became a significant issue, with some commentators stating that Shechem's proposed marriage was also forbidden. Therefore, the fact that Jacob and his sons not only opposed marriage that was not sanctioned by religion but also stipulated circumcision may have been intended to control the community. It could also be an attempt to eliminate differences with the other community, to conquer and show power, and to impose their ideology.

In conclusion, the narrative of Dinah and Shechem prompts reflection on the ever-present interplay between religious traditions and cultural norms. As readers grapple with the complexities of divine justice, the treatment of women, and the intricate balance between adherence to religious law and conformity to cultural values, the story of Dinah remains intriguing for exploring the ethical dilemmas that persist within biblical literature.

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