PART ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT AND COGNITIVE METHODS
CHAPTER ONE

PSEUDO-PHILO’S LIBER ANTIQUITATUM BIBLICARUM

1.1 Introduction to Text

Liber Antiquitatum Bibli
carum is a text written by an unknown Jewish author sometime between 50 C.E. and 150 C.E. It is generally classified as “re-written bible”, that is, a document which takes the biblical text itself as the focus of attention. Using the framework of scripture, these documents include elements from the biblical narrative but freely omit words and whole incidents and add material without any foundation in the text.

Pseudo-Philo retells the biblical narrative from creation through the rise of King David, with major emphasis on the book of Judges. New names, details and dialogue appear, paraphrases of biblical text are mixed with direct quotes, the biblical narrative is drastically revised, and large sections of scripture are summarized peremptorily. While some summaries and expansions follow naturally from the biblical text, others seem to contradict it.

1.1.1 Elements of Textual History: Language, Dating, Origin

While all extant manuscripts of Liber Antiquitatum Bibli
carum are in Latin, Harrington has argued convincingly for a Hebrew vorlage, which was translated into Greek and finally into Latin, no later than the 4th century.

1 I will also refer to this text as LAB throughout this monograph.
2 Commonly referred to as Pseudo-Philo.
3 I am following the dating of Howard Jacobson, A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo’s Liber Antiquitatum Bibli