

other *yuefu* sources) (p. 68); “the ‘rose-gem stamens’ (*qiongrui* 瓊蕊) on which the immortals love to feast” (p. 131); the Azure Bird (p. 139 n. 206); a grotto-heaven (p. 172 n. 42); Jiang Yan’s writing brush (p. 315); “Three Disasters” and the concept of *kalpa* (p. 339 n. 212); etc. In some cases, the author makes a claim but gives no reference or example for support. One such instance is: “Shangqing was in fact a synthesis of the local southern ecstatic traditions, the late Zhou and Han traditions of immortality seekers, and the religion of the Celestial Masters, imbued with some concepts borrowed from Buddhism” (p. 19). Another example is the absence of recent scholarship on the *hun* and *po* souls from the discussion of paired terms (p. 15). Readers might also be grateful for references to pioneer works in the field when it comes to the discussions and translations of certain concepts, ideas, and views, such as *qi* 氣, translated as “pneuma,” “vital breath,” or “vital energy” (p. 14); *zhi* 芝 and *jing* 景, translated respectively as “magic mushroom” and “effulgences”; *ziran* 自然 as “what-is-so-by-itself” or “naturally-so” (p. 85 n. 20); *cun* 存 as to “visualize” or “actualize” (p. 100 n. 82). Furthermore, exact page numbers are missing in several footnotes (e.g., pp. 16 nn. 6–7, 17 n. 12, 20 n. 27, 21 n. 19, 22 n. 22, 25 n. 31, 29 n. 38, 96 n. 71).

A profusion of typographical errors detracts from the volume as well, e.g., *wu e* 五厄 is misspelled as *wu wei* (p. 29 n. 38), *sui* 綏 as *wei* (p. 348). Two important names are misspelled throughout, i.e., Lee Fong-mao (as Li Feng-mao) and Ying-shih Yü (as Yu Yingshi). Typographical errors also concern Chinese characters, as in the following cases (correct graphs follow in parentheses): 唐公訪 (房) 碑 (p. 17 n. 9); 真告 (誥) (p. 20); 建 (簡) 文 (p. 37); 駢 (軒) 轅 (p. 53); 后 (後) 漢記 (紀) (p. 75 n. 102); 貞白先生陶軍 (君) (p. 75 n. 103); 赤誦 (松) 子 (p. 83); 殷優 (憂) (p. 89); 發 (髮) 短 (p. 92); 周禮 (禮) (p. 132 n. 185); 相 (想) 爾 (p. 169); 鳥狩 (獸) (p. 229); 何宴 (晏) (p. 247); 韓終 (眾) (p. 270); 曹湔 (唐) (p. 350). In addition, there are numerous cases in which simplified Chinese is confounded with the traditional forms.

Despite these shortcomings, the monograph achieves its goal of drawing a comprehensive picture of poetry on “*xian* immortality” by shedding new light on poetic works of early medieval China. The book marks a new height in the field of religious literature and, by dint of its cross-disciplinary insights and methodology, will certainly become a stepping-stone for future discussion and developments.

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Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israel and Comparative Contexts. By T. M. LEMOS. Oxford: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2017. Pp. xiv + 225. \$80.

Anyone who encounters a Neo-Assyrian royal inscription, in text or translation, or is made aware of the cruel narratives recounted in the Torah and prophetic sections of the Hebrew Bible, is horrified and awed by the vividly described brutality that is said to have been performed. Two questions that naturally arise from these confrontations are, “How could such inhumane treatment be perpetrated?” and “Why?” With *Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israelite and Comparative Contexts*, T. M. Lemos lays out an answer to the why of these collective conundrums.

In this volume, using what she refers to as a synthetic approach, focusing not on the intricacies of the systems that encourage and indeed require such described violence (the how), but rather on *implicit* “demarcated lines of personhood,” she contends that “physical violence was pivotal in [Israelite] society to the construction of ... a personhood centered on domination and subordination and one in which dominant men could abrogate the personhood of others” (p. 3). Thus, for Lemos, inhumane treatment is tied to an accepted and expected pervasive and, as one might say today, toxic, construct of masculinity. Concentrating on a certain set of subordinated persons (foreigners, women, slaves, and children) and using a sundry selection of texts (biblical and cuneiform), the book contains an extensive and detailed reflection on the harsher methods of subjugation reported, while considering whether those subjugated were ever deemed persons in their own right. Lemos ultimately contends that the evidenced brutality

in the Hebrew Bible was common to the whole of the ancient Near Eastern region, regardless of period or textual transmission.

The volume is arranged in six chapters, with the first and sixth serving as introduction and conclusion, respectively. In the first chapter, "Dogs beneath the Tables of Men," Lemos summarily recounts some of the philosophical and anthropological arguments in defining personhood and lays out her global approach to the biblical materials. "Crushing the Insubmissive," the second chapter, details what she refers to as dehumanizing, animalizing violence against foreigners and considers the provocative term *herem*. In chapters 3 and 4, "But He Indeed Will Rule Over You" and "For He Is Your Property," Lemos questions whether wives and slaves were considered property and the ramifications of such classification. Here she is dependent on her first book, *Marriage Gifts and Social Change in Ancient Palestine: 1200 BCE to 200 CE* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2010), focusing on the language of purchase, usage, and treatment, and reviews some of the most egregious acts recorded.

In chapter 5, "Visiting the Iniquity of the Father on the Son," Lemos also considers whether children were regarded as property and returns to her work on child sacrifice and filial cannibalism. While both acts warrant assignment to the category of the egregious, neither is explicitly described in the Bible and so it is not the violence, per se, which is explicated but its indication of objectification. Although "Of Dogs and Men" contains a synopsis of the preceding contents, it is in this final chapter that Lemos relates modern contexts in which the dehumanizing violence described in ancient Near Eastern texts is perpetrated.

The backmatter contains a useful source index, as well as a subject and author index and a select bibliography.

Lemos has written several works on oppressive maltreatment in the Hebrew Bible, particularly as it concerns women and other classes of persons in jeopardy. In light of this, *Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israelite and Comparative Contexts* acts, in large part, as an accumulation of her previous investigations, and it is perhaps her familiarity with the material that prompts her to take here what seems to be a radical departure from her norm. Customarily recognizing foreign influence on social processes and the complex relationships between the peoples represented in the Hebrew Bible, the nations of the Syro-Levantine region, and the mighty empires of Anatolia, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, laying out nuanced historical and philological arguments, in this volume, Lemos, while accepting that one cannot assume shared customs within a region or ignore them, declares that her analyses and conclusions "will not fall back to an antiquated and facile diffusionism that seeks only to uncover points of origin and paths of cultural transmission" (p. 29).

Instead, in her argumentation, she employs a selection of seemingly applicable ancient Near Eastern textual materials, offering only allusion to more critical studies and sporadic reference to or discussion of genre, literary structure, author (redaction), audience, or historical/narrative context. Accepting that these texts may not be historically accurate (and, this reviewer would argue, not even mildly contemporaneous), Lemos contends that, through her approach, a consistent set of implicit beliefs (ostensibly of author and, through him, culture) are revealed, regardless of how "outlandish" they may be in detail, and that it matters not whence the text comes or, seemingly, why or for whom it was composed.

While I commend Lemos's attention to the topics of violence, domination, and the dehumanization of others, and her demonstrable and considerable awareness of her materials, I am concerned that the *synthetic* approach is too cursory and selective to move beyond the sheer gruesomeness of the texts reviewed, thereby providing too manufactured and anticipated a conclusion. As such, in her discussion of animalizing violence as a method of dehumanization, Lemos is forced to home in on the infamous brutality described in the accounts of the Neo-Assyrian kings precisely because it is so bombastic and obvious. Flaying, a butcher's act recorded chiefly in the inscriptions of the particularly macabre Aššurnāṣirpal II, in this volume is considered not a threat meant to horrify but an accepted universal procedure. Lemos does not note that for Assyrian kings the battleground was a deific theater, that they were transformed out of their mortality to become wild beasts as a positive experience. Yes, the victims of this martial violence are also treated as non-human, as prey, but for the Assyrians, these adversaries are frequently elevated; it would be insulting for them to war with the insignificant.

Likewise, performing *herem*, a divinely sanctioned (likely genocidal) form of war recorded in certain biblical passages, may have raised the Israelite warrior out of the mortal realm; however, in the performance of this type of annihilating violence, as noted by Lemos, enemies are described as an infestation; they are pervasive and sickening. It is too easy, too simple, to use animal metaphor and simile, literary tropes, as ballasts for personhood without considering the situation of the text. Are the opponents mighty bulls that must be brought to heel or are they an infiltrating swarm of vermin to be rooted out, not humiliated, but exterminated?

Even in non-martial texts, according to Lemos, if you are neither slave nor child there is but one masculinity in the Hebrew Bible and its assigned primary performance is subjugation. At no point is a different construct (e.g., one that supports it) allowed, nor does Lemos consider that imperial action is indeed imperial; it is imposing, whether performed by a man or woman, god or goddess. Employed twice in the volume, the biblical tale of Sarah and Hagar (a story in which a wife [Sarah] offers another woman [her maidservant Hagar] as a sexual surrogate to her husband [Abraham]), which Lemos accepts as “one of the patriarchal narratives in Genesis,” is never interrogated for how the socially required actions of Sarah to sexually and procreatively dominate Hagar’s body legitimize a femininity that supports a system of female oppression (pp. 99–100, 123–25). Although Lemos recognizes that Hagar is ultimately evicted by Sarah because she comes to act above her position, nowhere does she discuss how the power registers between women allow certain women security within a marriage while keeping them at odds with others.

Instead, in her return to the narrative, Lemos suggests that the reader take note of the author’s(?) choice in the term *gēberet*, ‘mistress’. She states that it “closely relates to the common word for man, *geber*,” and that “there was a connection between masculinity and dominance in this culture even when the one in the position of dominance was a woman” (p. 124), thereby taking no linguistic account that neither *gēberet* nor *geber* inherently “owns” the femininity or masculinity of the root *gbr* (‘to be strong’). If she had demonstrated a rarity for the use of the feminine form in the Bible (*gēberet* is not a wholly uncommon term for ‘mistress’, cf. 2 Kings 5:3; Ps. 123:2; and Prov. 30:23; also note, *gēbirah* ‘queen mother’) or presented a contextualized definition of *geber*, demonstrating its association with a *masculine* strength, then, perhaps, this intriguing observation could be supported.

It is notable that, in this book’s title, there is a conjunction that both distinguishes and conjoins two seemingly incompatible nouns: on the one hand an environmental state or committed action, violence, and on the other a social category of being, a person. This is significant because the latter is not so much linked to as dependent upon the former. It is too easy to say that all violence described in ancient Near Eastern texts is an oppressive masculine force that removes “personhood.” The overriding purpose of violence, in any societal (or personal) arrangement, whether physical, mental, or emotional, codified or impromptu, is to oppress, quarantine, and subjugate: to remove agency. It is meant to empower the perpetrator by disabling the target, be this in war or in community and domestic situations. *Violence and Personhood in Ancient Israelite and Comparative Contexts*, which is clearly a massive and heartfelt endeavor, lays out many of the methods used to disempower and dehumanize. And it is the pure extent of the tactics discussed that emphasize the need now to interrogate the mechanisms for *how* such subjugations *confer* personhood and how they are systematically encouraged and supported.

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Household & Family Religion in Persian-Period Judah: An Archaeological Approach. By JOSÉ E. BALCELLS GALLARRETA. Ancient Near East Monographs, vol. 18. Atlanta: SBL PRESS, 2017. Pp. xiv + 192. \$33.95 (paper).

There is much to be said in favor of Balcells Gallarreta’s new study of *Household & Family Religion in Persian-Period Judah*, an archaeologically based study that focuses on the site of Tell en-Nas-