

de Isabel Tejeda Martín “La fortuna crítica de la fotógrafa Tina Modotti”, recoge las diferentes aproximaciones que se han hecho a su trabajo, destacando las aportaciones feministas tanto en la recuperación de su obra y los vínculos establecidos con genealogías femeninas como en las lecturas realizadas desde el “giro afectivo” de las imágenes de las mujeres (indígenas, intelectuales, niñas, madres) que Modotti retrató.

MARÍA JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ MADRID

mariajosegonzalez@ub.edu

D.O.I.: 10.1344/Lectora2025.31.20

ADHUC – Universitat de Barcelona

Gendered Violence in Biblical Narrative: The Devouring Metaphor

Esther Brownsmith

London & New York, Routledge, 2024, 202 pp. ISBN: 978-1-03-219296-3

In *Gendered Violence in Biblical Narrative: The Devouring Metaphor*, Esther Brownsmith applies a combination of gender hermeneutics and metaphor analysis to three selected Hebrew Bible (HB) passages. To begin with the former, Brownsmith wishes to inspire a shift away from “the affective responses of rejection or embrace” (152), and towards an awareness that the structure of abuse that can be seen in biblical literature persists today (1-2). If we recognize this structure and how it works, we may be able to resist the lure of accepting it as “commonsense reality” (152), also in contemporary society. Brownsmith’s point is well taken, and her feminist reading of HB texts is judicious and insightful. However, I do wonder about the significance of this critical shift. Most so-called “affective” feminist critique in Biblical Studies, whether reading against the grain or pointing to overlooked female characters, also aims to call out oppression in the Bible and its impact on real women, historically and today. It seems to me that the difference between mainstream feminist critique and Brownsmith’s monograph is so subtle that it is almost imperceptible.

Brownsmith’s application of metaphor theory, on the other hand, is an innovative application of conceptual metaphor theory, popularized by the works of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and more recently by Zoltán Kövecses. Brownsmith points to the conceptual metaphor WOMAN IS FOOD, and her innovation is to study this not as a linguistic metaphor, but as a *realized*

metaphor, a metaphor that can also be expressed in images and in narratives. In the conceptual metaphor WOMAN IS FOOD, the tenor is woman, and the vehicle, the imagery used to describe the tenor, is food. Brownsmith explains: “When a metaphor is expressed with a vehicle that is literally true within the narrative, it becomes a *realized metaphor*” (11; emphasis in the original).

In its elegant simplicity, this is what Brownsmith does in the book. She analyses how the metaphor WOMAN IS FOOD is realized in three HB narratives, namely the story of the raped and dismembered *pilegesh* or secondary wife in Judg 19, the story of the rape of Tamar by her half-brother Amnon in 2 Sam 13, and the narrative of queen Jezebel, how she steals Naboth’s vineyard, dies a violent death, and is eaten by dogs, in 1 Kgs 21 and 2 Kgs 9. The former two stories are often analyzed together because of their shared theme of sexual violence, and Brownsmith’s introduction of Jezebel in this context brings out some very interesting perspectives. In her three main chapters, each dedicated to a thorough reading of these narratives, Brownsmith supplements her realized metaphor analysis with insights from Carol Adams’ book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegan-Critical Theory* (1990). Adams points to a cultural pattern, a destructive cycle, of objectification, fragmentation, and consumption that conceptually links sexual violence and butchering (44-45 and 54). Brownsmith applies this to her three narratives and shows how the realized metaphor WOMAN IS FOOD in all three examples follows this cycle. As a narrative analytical tool, this works brilliantly, and Brownsmith’s reading is astute, thoughtfully balanced and compelling.

In addition to the approach summarized above, realized metaphor in combination with Adams, Brownsmith introduces another theoretical layer in each of her main chapters. In Chapter 3 on Judg 19, this is “The Woman in the Refrigerator”, a pattern often seen in superhero comic books, and observed by Gail Simone, where a female character’s violent death or injury serves primarily as plot motivation for male characters (38). In this chapter, Brownsmith deftly reads the story of Alex DeWitt, the murdered girlfriend of the hero Green Lantern, whose body is left in a refrigerator by the villain Major Force, alongside Judg 19 and shows how the biblical story follows a similar pattern. The abuse and murder of the *pilegesh* motivates first her husband, then the tribes of Israel, to avenge a crime that the male characters of the story see themselves, not the *pilegesh*, as victims of.

In Chapter 4 on 2 Sam 13, Brownsmith dedicates significant attention to the *levivot*, the cakes baked by Tamar in the story (78-93), and to the similarities and differences between 2 Sam 13 and Song 4 (93-102). In both cases, Brownsmith’s careful engagement with the text produces new insights and unveils overlooked nuances, even if the level of detail and the multi-step argumentation sometimes create the experience of being sucked down a rabbit

hole. In this chapter, the extra theoretical perspective is brought in from Paul Ricoeur's work on metaphor, his description of metaphor as the experience of "seeing as", and the two concepts *muthos* and *mimêsis* to respectively describe the plot of a text and its "imitation" of or reference to reality (74-75). The introduction of Ricoeur does not contribute significantly to the analysis of the story of Tamar as realized metaphor, and it probably would have been better to leave it out. The same can be said about the extra perspective introduced in Chapter 5 on Jezebel, in this case conceptual blending theory (148-150). It appears as an afterthought and does not improve the otherwise compelling analysis of Jezebel and the ways in which she both defies and succumbs to Hebrew Bible gender stereotypes.

Gendered Violence in Biblical Narrative is a beautifully written book. It shows a wonderful sense of humor with chapter titles such as "Stocking the Pantry" (theory and method), and "Clearing the Table" (conclusion), and it is an inspiring and creative investigation of biblical narratives. To keep with the culinary imagery, Brownsmith's monograph is a rich and nurturing stew, and even if this reader sometimes wished for a simpler dish with fewer ingredients and flavors, it is nevertheless a delicious read and much recommended. Enjoy!

ANNE KATRINE DE HEMMER GUDME
akgudme@teologi.uio.no
 University of Oslo

D.O.I.: 10.1344/Lectora2025.31.21

Quan les dones tenien el poder. Lideratge femení a l'antiga Grècia i a Roma

Marta Oller i Gemma Puigvert

Barcelona, La Magrana, 2024, 551 pp. ISBN: 978-8-41-933442-8

Se sol afirmar que les cultures grega i romana eren societats androcèntriques en què l'espai de la dona, amb escassíssimes excepcions, quedava relegat a un àmbit íntim, privat, al marge de la vida social, pública i política. I se sol afegir que, en el cas de la societat romana, la cosa era una mica millor. Així, evidenciar la mínima presència pública de les dones comporta, al seu torn, fer-la gairebé invisible en la divulgació en recerca. En l'imaginari col·lectiu, doncs, són conegudes figures com Medea i es destaca la matrona romana o les conseqüències jurídiques que tenia per a una dona casar-se segons un o altre ritual. Més enllà d'això, poc se sabia de l'activitat de les dones en aquestes