

Hurban: The Making of an Archetype

I. Biblical chronicle, 2 Kings 25

Dry as dust

Military defeat; king's eyes gouged out, etc.

Who did what to whom

[Where's the king in other responses?]

II. Psalm 137

A. Jerusalem/Zion-as-locus of longing

- The main Jewish memory site
- From "We" to "I"
- Our tormentors taunted us to sing a Song of Zion
- The enemy can hit us where we are most vulnerable
- From a Song of the Vanquished = A Song of Zion-in Captivity

B. Call for revenge

"Reminding" God

Recall a passage from Lam.

God will not take revenge

Cf. ending of Lam. 3

III. Lamentations

A. Lament or theodicy? Invoke or provoke?

Q: where is the sin-retribution-restoration narrative?

1. Greenstein & Cooper: ANET lament on

destruction of city or temple

plea to an unanswering god

personified, apostrophized destroyed city

detailed description of carnage

kaleidoscopic changes of person

2. God = relentless, pitiless

3. forced confession

totally unintegrated

where's the master narrative?

B. Poetics of sacrilege

Prob. composed @ time of the Jerusalem temple's rebuilding, some 70 years later. Its function was liturgical and commemorative, not historical or reportorial; its writing was an act of purgation, not penitence (Greenstein 2010: 77-78).

Q: Who is authorized to speak? Whose point-o-view is privileged?

A catastrophe = something so terrible that only art can approximate it.

- City / sanctuary / Temple cult destroyed
- Unprecedented disaster
- Judah sent into Babylonian exile
- People of Israel subject to ridicule
- Can this mean that the covenantal relationship is severed?

THE PRIESTS

THE PROPHETS

THE KING & HIS ROYAL SCRIBES, Davidic dynasty

THE CHRONICLE

THE PSALM

LAMENTATIONS

PROPHECY: Ezekiel = both priest and prophet

TPOLOGY

Q: Will these forms have an afterlife?

A: Yes, even prophecy, in 20th cent.

A: New ed. of Lamentations.