

engagement for cities within the Promised Land (vv. 16–18), and a ruling about the use of fruit trees during sieges (vv. 19–20). An issue is whether this last paragraph relates only to the second paragraph or actually relates to the first as well. According to Hasel, the fruit tree proscription appears at the conclusion of the second paragraph about the Promised Land and so should be associated only with it. Hence God's command to destroy all of Moab's trees in 2 Kings 3 does not contravene the law in Deuteronomy. There are two difficulties with this argument. In the first place, I have already pointed out that Deuteronomy probably means to prohibit the destruction of fruit trees in any and every situation, not merely during the siege itself. In the second place, the introduction to the fruit tree law in paragraph three, "When you lay siege to a city for a long time . . ." is very close to the introduction of the rules for engagement of distant cities in paragraph one: "When you march up to attack a city . . ." These introductions differ from the introduction of the second paragraph about the cities in Palestine, which begins not with *ki* but with *raq*: "Only from

the cities of the peoples which Yahweh your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not let a soul live." From this, most scholars have concluded, I think correctly, that the proscription about fruit trees is intended to address all sieges and not merely those in the land of Israel's inheritance.

This is surely a negative appraisal of Hasel's work, but I would add as well that I nevertheless find his study valuable. Hasel has greatly clarified the various ways in which ancient military powers construed the "life sustaining systems" of those they conquered. Would they follow a "scorched earth" policy that punished their enemies as an example to others? Or would they preserve as much infrastructure as possible, in order to promote economic and social stability and, hence, a source of taxes and revenue for the homeland? What Hasel brings to the table in this volume is a fascinating look into the military practices and strategies of Egypt, Hatti, Mesopotamia, and Canaan. As a study of military policies in the ancient Near East, Hasel's volume is a success; as an argument for the character and dating of Deuteronomy, it is not.

Sanctified Violence in Homeric Society: Oath-Making Rituals and Narratives in the Iliad. By Margo Kitts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. xi + 244. \$75.

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This book seeks to explain the similarities in language and form between the ways the *Iliad* depicts the slaying of warriors in battle and the killing of sacrificial animals. It offers a novel approach to understanding the similarities by viewing them through the lens of a variety of ritual theories (as opposed to literary theories and general theories on Greek sacrifice) and by placing them in a comparative context with ancient Near Eastern and biblical scenes of battle. Of particular focus are oath-sacrifice scenes in the *Iliad* (especially 3.268–301 and 19.250–68), which, Kitts argues, demonstrate a consistent pattern of words and gestures that qualifies them as "type scenes" and that ultimately derive from the actual practice of oath-sacrifice. The theoretical framework from which she proceeds contains two elements:

(1) ritual performance, and (2) ritual performers, with whom the audience to an orally performed poem might be expected to identify. So (1) ritual

will be regarded as a relatively invariant sequence of words and acts that communicate iconic analogues of primordial events to an audience or to performers, who (2) contribute to the interpretation of those analogues by virtue of their own familiarity with them and who exercise a limited capacity to accept, reject, or modify the paradigms on which the analogues are based (p. 20).

Kitts further avers that since ritual communication is by nature more restrictive in its inability to deviate from its own vocabulary and paradigms, audiences of an orally performed *Iliad* would have recognized the paradigmatic aspects of ritual speech and acts. Thus the *Iliad's* ritual and battle killing scenes represent the deliberation of the poet, "who weaves the poetic text produced by the ritual performance into the larger poetic text of the *Iliad*" (p. 21).

Kitts further argues that the fixed, formulaic nature

of oath-making rituals compels those taking the oath not to lie. This is because the authority of ritual practice was perceived to derive from a cosmological order. Seen in this way, oath-making rituals carry an ontological weight and constitute a “liturgical order.”¹ Since oath-making scenes are the least variant of all type scenes in the *Iliad*, other pericopes, especially those involving battle scenes, can evoke them with great ease.

According to Kitts, the essential liturgical components of the oath-taking scene include: “coming to solemn order, introducing victims, drawing the *machaira*, cutting the victim(s)’s hair, praying with arms raised, invoking witnesses, pronouncing terms, cursing perjurers, killing victim(s), and disposing of the corpse(s)” (p. 123). Kitts argues that these same elements reverberate in a number of battle scenes including, *inter alia*, that of Achilles slitting the throats of twelve Trojans in revenge for Patroklos’s death (18.336–37, 22.22–23; cf. 23.174–76) and, more subtly, his slaying of Lykaon (Book 21). Building upon James Fernandez and Paul Ricoeur’s theories of metaphor,² Kitts then suggests that those who take oaths in the *Iliad* are metaphorically transformed, either into avengers of the oath, if they fulfill its terms, or perjurers of the oath, in which case their fates become that of sacrificial animals. The latter is demonstrated by the Trojans, whose catastrophic end, Kitts suggests, is the result of their violation of an oath.

Moreover, the ways in which the *Iliad*’s battle scenes evoke ritual sacrifice also demonstrate the consequences of acts and utterances.

. . . utterances in oath-making rituals muster a variety of effects. They set out the terms of the oath (essentially constructing the semantic horizons for the performance), invoke mythological analogues, recite prayers and, in effect, engage cosmic response and level curses, thereby establishing the perlocutionary effects on participants and audiences (p. 42).

¹The term and concept derives from Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge, 1999).

²See, for example, James W. Fernandez, “The Performance of Ritual Metaphors,” in J. David Sapir and J. Christopher Crocker, eds., *The Social Use of Metaphor* (Philadelphia, 1977), 100–131; Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, ed. John B. Thompson (Cambridge, 1981).

This approach, which draws upon the works of anthropologists Catherine Bell, Maurice Bloch, Roy Rappaport, Stanley Tambiah, and Valerio Valeri (and dozens of others, pp. 34–36), sheds light on why the *Iliad* would bring into comparison battle victims and sacrificial animals.

. . . divine vengeance may be expected for oath-violation because the covenants forged by rituals are performed in a high register, according to canonical paradigms regarded as initiated and fixed by supernatural forces, and are regarded as on par with bonds made by blood. Bonds by ritual are deemed irreversible, and as if inscribed on the cosmos itself. In Homeric tradition, such bonds are defended by the same forces that defend blood ties, suggesting equal standing between ritual bonds and blood bonds in the eyes of the gods (p. 216).

Though she devotes most of the book to the *Iliad*, Kitts offers a number of comparative observations from Hittite, Assyrian, and biblical texts. Her final chapter in particular demonstrates a shared repertoire of images associated with divine participation in warfare. These images include a deity running in front and behind the military (a divine sign of a successful campaign), a cacophonous arousal among gods and warriors, divinely inspired terror, confusion and “natural” disasters, a landscape of devastation, and the doom of those who violate oaths, which also results in the death of the violator’s family or death by wild animals and the reduction of a city into ruins. While Kitts does not account for the parallels other than to say that the *Iliad* “falls into traditional Near Eastern patterns” (p. 215), their inclusion implies that the theoretical framework into which she places the Homeric materials might also explain the Near Eastern materials. To what extent this framework accurately applies, however, requires a more focused analysis of the cultural matrices that inform ancient Near Eastern literary production than Kitts provides here.

In general, this is a useful book, albeit a bit dense with theory. Even if readers do not accept every allusion to animal sacrifice that Kitts sees as present in the battle accounts she examines, the innovative approach to the subject, which seeks to use anthropological insights to inform literary structures, rewards the patient reader.