

with the governor of a western province mentioned in the letter of Bel-duri, governor of Damascus, SAA 1, no. 172: 7 (Mattila 1999), and/or the latter with the governor of Tillê (eponym of year 709), as Luukko suggests in notes, the letter should be assigned to the western or northwestern area rather than to the central zone of Assyria.

The volume is equipped with a useful glossary and indices, following the high standards of the SAA series. In conclusion, Luukko has provided us with a volume of high quality, which will surely serve as the standard edition of the corpus for many years. Luukko's edition, as well as his penetrating studies, have contributed to a greatly improved basis for the further investigation of Neo-Assyrian letters and history. All Assyriologists and historians must welcome this excellent volume, with deepest gratitude for Luukko's contribution.

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Poetic Heroes: Literary Commemorations of Warriors and Warrior Culture in the Early Biblical World. By MARK S. SMITH. Grand Rapids, Mich.: WILLIAM B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO., 2013. Pp. xiv + 636. \$55 (paper).

In this book Mark Smith offers us a fascinating perspective on warfare in Israel and Ugarit. After a brief introduction, the book opens by looking at the basic data on pre- and postbattle practices and by defending his method of looking at history. He emphasizes that the warrior culture depicted in the texts may not reflect reality, critiquing several scholars who use later textual material to describe earlier reality, but thinks that we can recover some knowledge of early Israel, a quest that he recognizes that some will think “quixotic” (p. 36). He concludes that we cannot use prose material to learn about early Israelite history (p. 40), although his section on David and Jonathan later in the book illustrates how difficult it is to say anything about these characters without referring to the prose sections. He also seems to do what he critiques others for doing when he draws on diverse texts to illustrate a cultural point (for an example, see the discussion of the consecrated battle camp on p. 74).

Smith next examines three warrior pairs: Gilgamesh and Enkidu in the Gilgamesh Epic, Achilles and Patroklos in the Iliad, and David and Jonathan in the Old Testament. Each member of the pair is parallel at the beginning of the story, but by the end one of the pair has become much more powerful and well known. However, the death of the weaker member of the pair shows the ability of the well-known member to emote. Smith also discusses the females in the lives of the characters: goddesses often invert what is expected of human females by acting as warriors. While each of the pairs become brothers, Smith argues that this is not a physical homoerotic relationship, although the gendered language does present the warriors as a kind of married couple, devoted to each other in the context of battle.

Part three of the book focuses on Ugaritic material. In Aqhat “the narrative sets out the basic gender polarity of warrior culture, which focuses on the young male warrior and experienced female divine warrior” (p. 130). The warrior (Aqhat) risks death, an important part of warrior culture, but his state-

ment to Anat that fighting is not for females is a “category error,” since this exclusion of women from combat and hunting might be true for human females, but not for goddesses. Anat’s weeping for the dead enemy is not necessarily because of her feminine side, but shows that true warriors weep for the dead (p. 135).

On a related note, Smith suggests that the prohibition of cross-dressing in Deut. 22:5 might actually refer to a weapon and the prohibition of a woman going into combat (p. 136). The story of Aqhat not only shows how Anat’s brutality is part of warrior culture and that her role as a female divine warrior is accepted in warrior culture, but Aqhat himself also serves as an exemplar of how not to treat the goddess. (Because of his mistreatment of her, he does not move on to the next step of becoming a fighting man and developing a close friendship with another fighter.)

The chapter on the Rephaim concludes that part of the warrior ethic was celebrating the dead warriors of a past time by means of rituals involving the Rephaim. In the Baal Cycle, the three male heroes (Baal, Yam, and Mot) model the king as a warrior. Anat fights mainly humans and is Baal’s “corresponding divine warrior on the earthly level” (p. 174). Furthermore, female divine warriors also act as mentors to human (male) warriors. Finally, Smith describes ‘Athtart (and Anat) as “models of warfare as well as relationships with human warriors” (p. 208). Most of the Ugaritic literary texts involve warriors and associate those warriors with the monarchy in some way.

The final part of the book examines Israelite warrior poetry in the Early Iron Age. Smith begins by addressing the controversial topic of dating the poem in Judges 5; he is skeptical about purely linguistic data (especially given the lack of a good sample size for poetry before the eighth century), but believes that linguistic-cultural features are more helpful and point to an Iron I date for the poem. Smith argues that the historical core of the poem (Iron I) is concentrated in verses 14–30, with a few parts of verses 2–13 as well. A later compiler (Iron II?) added the other parts and provided it with literary unity. The poem might have found its home in a northern royal court (p. 261). The picture of the divine and human interaction in the poem is one of synergism, in contrast to the divine monergism of Exodus 15. The original poem presents a somewhat diverse group fighting against a stronger enemy with the help of astral bodies and the Kishon; the later composer included YHWH in the poem and changed the people into a more unified “people of YHWH” (p. 265).

Smith then moves on to look at 2 Samuel 1:19–27, once again arguing that songs were central to a warrior ethic. Smith believes that verses 19–25 reflect a public voice (perhaps an anonymous lament), while verses 26–27 represent a private voice (the Davidic voice), since they are addressed directly to Jonathan. Smith dates the poem to approximately the tenth century. The poem helps to advance the picture of David from merely a successful warrior to “a military leader who knows and feels devastating loss for himself and for Israel” (p. 282).

The next step for Smith is to examine the cultural settings for warrior poetry. Judges 5 showed the need for monarchy, while 2 Samuel 1 encouraged people to love the Davidic monarchy (as David loved Jonathan). While warrior poetry might have originally been found in rural areas (Judges 5:11), warrior poetry in the royal court and the temple (like that found in 2 Samuel 1) overtook the importance of these local retellings of warrior poetry.

In the final chapter, Smith examines how warrior poetry became warrior prose. At Ugarit, warrior poetry was only used over a short period of time and consisted of longer poems, while the Old Testament contained only short poems and was part of a very long tradition. The Rephaim traditions were also utilized in different ways: the Ugaritic monarchy employed the Rephaim as ancestors, while the Israelites attempted to make them part of the “other” (pp. 318–20). He notes that the tenth century marks a turning point, as little new warrior poetry is produced after that date. For example, David’s mighty men receive only prosaic descriptions rather than poems. The tenth century also saw the decline of warrior goddesses in Israel (as well as in Transjordan), although the bloody imagery associated with Anat and her role in teaching warriors seems to shift to YHWH (pp. 322–26).

Smith notes that poetry about warfare does not end, but changes its tone by no longer focusing on heroic men. Smith rejects a change from an oral world to a written world and an absence of royal texts as reasons for the change in the tenth century, arguing instead that the change results from “wider developments in ancient Israelite society and religion in the Iron IIB–C” (p. 331), which include such

effects as the loss of the warrior goddesses, a new view of the king's relationship to God, and the decline of the warrior culture. This change had already happened by the time that writing blossomed in Israel in the eighth century.

Smith covers an astounding amount of material in this book, often looking at texts in great detail. The endnotes are very full (244 pages!), to the point of almost being stand-alone dictionary articles. However, it seems to me that the author has included a large amount of extraneous material; while helpful for greater knowledge of the texts being studied, the book could have been a lot shorter. I also think that extra space could more profitably have been given to strengthen several areas.

In the last chapter Smith explores the reason for the change in warrior culture in the tenth century, but his final conclusion is very short and could helpfully have been explored in more depth. Smith's thesis about the change in warrior culture including a shift from synergism in warfare between the human and divine to monergism (such as expressed in Exodus 15) is also fascinating, but it needs more study, especially in relation to the dating of Exodus 15. He is unwilling to date Exodus 15 to Iron I, but devotes only one note to the topic (pp. 383–84). Given that he disagrees with the standard method of dating texts, it would have been profitable to spend at least a few pages looking at Exodus 15 to show that it is indeed a later text, as well as providing more data to demonstrate the trajectory from synergism to monergism.

Despite those critiques, the book is a great addition to the material on warfare in the ancient Near East and helpfully advances the discussion in particular by framing the topic as warrior culture, drawing together diverse pieces of evidence and thinking well about the relationship of culture, history, and ideology.

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Job 1–21: Interpretation and Commentary. By C. L. SEOW. Illuminations. Grand Rapids, Mich.: WILLIAM B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO., 2013. Pp. xxviii + 971. \$95.

The Hebrew book of Job is widely acknowledged as a literary masterpiece, but a commentary that is attuned to the book's ancient Near Eastern context, literary artistry, and philosophical and theological complexity, as well as the traditions of the book's interpretation and reception, is a rare treat. The first installment of Choon-Leong Seow's new commentary on the book of Job is illuminating in each of these areas—remarkable for its erudition, patient scholarship, and the clarity of its exposition.

Seow's commentary on Job 1–21 is the inaugural volume for the new Illuminations commentary series (with Seow himself as general editor). The commentaries in the series are meant to be broadly accessible, but without sacrificing anything of the critical rigor one expects from a full-scale academic commentary. Thus, each commentary is divided into "interpretation" sections, which furnish the author's comprehensive understanding of the chapter or passage under discussion in fluid and non-technical prose, and "commentary" sections, which supply the requisite evidence (philological, textual, historical, etc.) upon which the interpretation is based, as well as closer engagement with other scholars' positions.

One of the features that sets the series apart from other major commentary series is the integration of insights from each book's reception history—or, in Seow's preferred terminology, its "history of consequences." The series thus seeks to provide a comprehensive reference for students and scholars of biblical writings by fusing three different kinds of commentary (traditional historical-critical, literary or thematic, and reception history) into one resource. Can this be done well and still be "accessible and enjoyable" (p. xii)?

If Seow's inaugural contribution is representative of the rest of the series, the answer is a resounding "Yes!" The volume is eminently readable, and I noted only a handful of grammatical or typographical errors. The running translation is fresh and judicious, backed up in the commentary sections with