

that Jesus most clearly and completely reveals the Father's character (185), and that God's character is consistent (186). However, Seibert's search for this consistency of character leads him beyond OT address, since substantiating it requires him to reject both OT and NT portions of Scripture. Despite his earnest desire to follow and obey the Bible, his modifying condition for such obedience turns out to be only "insofar as it reflects the will of the God Jesus reveals (280)." To this end, each reader must develop her own "dual hermeneutic" that allows for rejection of unworthy OT portrayals of God "without regarding the passages in which they reside as theologically useless (12)." Developing this dual hermeneutic, complete with its obviously individualistic options for selection and rejection of biblical material, is the purpose of chapter 11 (209-222).

Seibert's work successfully depicts the intellectual struggle to maintain faith in the Bible while privileged with an enlightenment that, for many, has overtaken the OT's ethical unruliness. That struggle is complicated by references such as Nelson-Pallmeyer's that confuse the challenge to biblical morality by lumping together biblical accounts and awkwardly unbiblical teaching. Beyond this, Seibert's Appendix A acknowledges that he may not yet be perfectly satisfied with the NT either. He continues to pursue an interpretation of Jesus as thoroughly nonviolent as he grapples with the problem of divine mass destruction. In the end, he concedes that whereas Jesus' eschatological judgment teachings may yet involve "some degree of divine violence" (253), that violence remains "outside the space-time continuum, only for a limited period of time, and only for the sake of final punishment" (ibid.). Because the objects of that violence are sentient creatures, Seibert will likely remain committed to his project of divine recreation after the image and subject to the ethical authority of sophisticated modern humanity. Happily for those who share that vision, he is well on his way. For those interested in a contrasting reading, according to which subjectivity does not determine what is to be kept as divine or discarded as human and inhumane, Barna Magyarosi's recent work on *Holy War and Cosmic Conflict in the Old Testament* (Berrien Springs: Adventist Theological Society, 2010) may prove a helpful corrective.

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LAEL CAESAR

Suriano, Matthew J. *The Politics of Dead Kings: Dynastic Ancestors in the Book of Kings and Ancient Israel*. Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2. Reihe, 48. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010. xvi + 211 pp.

This book is an expanded revision of the author's doctoral dissertation at the University of California, Los Angeles. It consists of a sociopolitical study of the formulaic language of royal epilogues in the book of Kings. Although

most previous studies on this topic focused on religion and theology, such as the practice of ancestor worship, this book focuses on the political dimensions. Suriano proposes that the expression “lay with one’s fathers” along with the accompanying statements in the royal epilogues constitute a scribal formula for dynastic succession.

The first three chapters can be considered introductory/preliminary in nature. Chapter 1 explains the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study. It is based on the previous research of Hertz, van Gennet, Turner, and others, who propose that transition rituals serve as rites of passage, a process by which an individual’s identity is changed. These are relevant to the royal epilogue, since it, along with the funerary rites it alludes to, served as such a transition marker. Chapter 2 lists the three parts of the royal epilogue, i.e., the dynastic notice, the burial notice, and the notice of the successor, and then gives an overview of the scholarship on the royal epilogues, which consists of basically two approaches. Biblical scholars tend to view the dynastic notice as a description of a peaceful death, and archaeologists hold that it contains burial imagery. Though Suriano disagrees with the former and agrees with the latter, he suggests they do not go far enough in recognizing its formulaic significance. He then proposes that the dynastic notice is intended to highlight a successor, not the burial. Chapter 3 surveys the funerary rites, including interment, secondary rites, and desecration.

Chapters 4 to 6 deal with each of the three parts of the royal epilogue. The three statements of the epilogue serve a single purpose: the paternal descent of power. Chapter 4 discusses the dynastic notice (i.e., “PN lay with his fathers”), and argues that the phrase denotes dynastic succession. Chapter 5 treats the burial notice. Since the notice is different for Hezekiah and the remaining kings of Judah, the author addresses the issue of whether the change is literary or cultural, and concludes that it was due to the transfer of the royal tombs to a new royal cemetery. Chapter 6 discusses the notice of the successor, whose purpose was to record the continuity of power.

Chapter 7 explores possible connections between the biblical royal epilogues and references to Rephaim in Near Eastern literature. Suriano argues that the term refers to a special type of royal ancestry in Ugaritic and Phoenician texts. The concept was also known in Israel, as reflected in the references to Rephaim in the Hebrew Bible, but there they were negatively portrayed. The references to the “fathers” royal epilogues in the book of Kings reveal a royal ideology built on the concept of ancestral identity, but without reference to the Rephaim. He then argues that this patrimonial ideology was used in the book of Kings to demonstrate the primacy of the House of David over the Israelite dynasties and the continuation of the dynasty even into the exile.

Chapter 8 concludes the book with a brief summary.

Suriano's presentation is thorough and detailed. He is competent not only in the biblical text, but also in the history and archaeology of Syria-Palestine. There are no major problems with his basic argument. However, I would point out at least one error of fact. After Suriano cogently shows that the use of the Qal stem instead of the Niphal stem of רִבַּק ("to bury") occurs with kings who died a violent death, he then states on p. 122 that all of the burial notices of seventh-century kings utilize the Qal stem, "and all indicate an individualized burial place marked by the rare feminine noun, הַרְבָּקָה." That is, the use of the Qal stem is supposed to reflect the change in the burial practices that took place when their location changed in the seventh century. However, 2 Kgs 21:18 records Manasseh's burial with the Niphal stem. Therefore, a more accurate statement would have been that two of the three burial notices recorded for seventh-century kings, those of Amon and Josiah, utilize the Qal stem (2 Kgs 21:26; 23:30). Since both Amon and Josiah died violent deaths, these two out of three instances do not give evidence for any additional reasons for the use of the Qal stem. Thus, the correlation between the use of the Qal stem of רִבַּק and the change in burial practice in the time of Hezekiah is not supported.

Nevertheless, issues such as the one above do not affect Suriano's basic argument, and, therefore, do not detract from the value of his research. The book makes an important contribution by providing a new perspective on the function of the royal epilogues. The author has made a convincing case for his basic thesis, though it remains to be seen whether or not it will be widely accepted.

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TARSEE LI

Tadmor, Hayim. *"With My Many Chariots I Have Gone Up the Heights of Mountains": Historical and Literary Studies on Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel*, ed. Mordechai Cogan. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2011, xxix + 942 pp. Cloth, \$120.00.

The numerous and lasting contributions of the late Hayim Tadmor (1923-2005) to the various fields of ANE studies are well known and require no apology. The book under review presents forty-five of Tadmor's influential articles and papers that are here republished in one volume. A shorter collection of his publications in Hebrew has also recently appeared (*Assyria, Babylonia and Judah: Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Mordechai Cogan [Jerusalem: Bialik Institute and Israel Exploration Society, 2006]). Tadmor's scholarly and pedagogical legacy places him among an extremely select group of scholars and teachers. A host of grateful colleagues, students, and disciples have honored Tadmor with no less than three