Forschungen zum Alten Testament

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The Building of the First Temple

A Study in Redactional, Text-Critical and Historical Perspective

Mohr Siebeck

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To my friend John W. O’Malley

Preface

The project that led to this book started in 2008 when I was preparing a course on 1 Kings 1–11 at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. It was completed thanks to a generous grant from Georgetown University, which offered me a Jesuit Chair (2014). This book would not have been possible without the constant support of my fellow Jesuits, my colleagues at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and numerous friends and scholars.

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Abbreviations

A	Codex Alexandrinus
AB	Anchor Bible
ABC	A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles.* Texts from Cuneiform Sources. Winona Lake, IN: , 2000
ABD	D. N. Freedman, ed., *The Anchor Bible Dictionary,* 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
AD	S. Parpola, ed., *The Helsinki Neo-Assyrian Dictionary.* [Chicago:] Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2002
AEAD	M. Luukko, Z. Cherry, G. v. Buylaere, R. M. Whiting, S. Donovan, S. Teppo, S. Parpola, and P. Gentili, *Assyrian-English-Assyrian Dictionary.* Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project Institute for Asian and African Studies University of Helsinki, 2007
AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AHw	W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch.* 2nd ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1985
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
ANES	*Ancient Near Eastern Studies*
Ant.	Antiochian text of the Septuagint, cited according to Fernández Marcos, Busto Saiz, et al., 1989–1996
Ant.	Josephus, *Antiquities*
AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen
B	Codex Vaticanus
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BASS	*Beitrage zur Assyriologie und semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*
BDB	F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907
BHS	Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990
BIWA	R. Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals: Die Prismenklassen A, B, C = K, D, E, F, G, H, J und T sowie andere Inschriften.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996
BN	*Biblische Notizen*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.* Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1956–2011
CAH	*Cambridge Ancient History*
CAT	M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín, eds., *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places.* Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CIS	*Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*
CJB	Complete Jewish Bible (1998)

COS	W. W. Hallo, ed., *The Context of Scripture,* 3 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002
CUSAS	A. R. George and M. Civil, *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection,* Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology 17. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2011
DB	F. Vigouroux, ed., *Dictionnaire de la Bible,* 5 vols. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1895–1912
DCH	D. J. A. Clines, ed., *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew,* 8 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993–2012
EI	*Eretz-Israel*
EIN	Einheitsübersetzung der Heiligen Schrift (1980)
EJ	F. Skolnik and M. Berenbaum, eds., *Encyclopedia Judaica,* 2nd ed., 22 vols. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FBJ	Bible de Jérusalem (1973)
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GELS	J. Lust, E. Eynikel, and K. Hauspie, *Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint,* rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003
GKC	*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar,* ed. E. Kautsch; 2nd English ed., rev. A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910
HAHw	W. Gesenius et al., *Hebräisches und aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament,* 18th ed., 6 vols. Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1987–2012
HALOT	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament,* rev. ed., 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HThKat	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IEP	Nuovissima versione della Bibbia (1995–1996)
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JM	P. Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew,* 2nd ed. Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 2006
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
KAI	Donner, H., and W. Röllig. 2002. *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften.* 5th ed. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz
KJV	King James Version (1611)
LA	*Liber Annuus*
LAS II	S. Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, Part II: Commentary and Appendices.* AOAT 5/2. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LND	La Nuova Diodati (1991)
LUT	Lutherbibel (1984)
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NAB	New American Bible, rev. ed. (2010)
NAS	New American Standard Bible (1977)
NAU	New American Standard Bible, updated ed. (1995)
NEA	*Near Eastern Archaeology*

NETS	A. Pietersma and B. G. Wright, eds., *A New English Translation of the Septuagint.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2007
NIDB	Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, ed., *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006–2009
NIV	New International Version (2011)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible (1985)
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version (1989)
NRT	*Nouvelle Revue Theologique*
NRV	La Sacra Bibbia Nuova Riveduta (1994)
OL	Old Latin
Or	*Orientalia*
OTL	Old Testament Library
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
PJ	*Palästinajahrbuch des deutschen evangelischen Instituts*
RA	*Revue d'Assyriologie*
RB	*Revue Biblique*
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RIMB	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Babylonian Periods
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAAB	*State Archives of Assyria Bulletin*
SSI 3	J. C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions,* vol. 3, *Phoenician Inscriptions, including Inscriptions in the Mixed Dialect of Arslan Tash.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982
SVT	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
TA	*Tel Aviv*
TDOT	G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* 15 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974–2006
TNK	Tanak: The Holy Scriptures: The New JPS Translation (1985)
TOB	Traduction œcuménique de la Bible (1988)
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WVDOG	Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der deutschen Orientgesellschaft
ZA	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*

Chapter 1

Introduction

> *No other building of the ancient world, either while it stood in Jerusalem or in the millennia since its final destruction, has been the focus of so much attention throughout the ages*.
>
> —C. Meyers[1]

The origins of this study lie in a course on 1 Kgs 1–11 I offered at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in 2008. Immersing myself in the ocean of scholarly and popular writings on the temple of Jerusalem, I quickly noticed that authors explore the theme from a variety of angles and that they are often influenced by various religious and scholarly presuppositions, or even prejudices. Sorting through the approaches that writers have chosen, it is impossible to overlook the curiosity – and perplexity – the temple has been causing for centuries. The reasons for the never-ending curiosity are obvious. On the one hand, temples were and still are the most sacred buildings ever built on earth. They are special places where humans can encounter the divine. Temples mediate a mysterious contact between God and people; they are places to which people flow to offer their petitions and to praise God. Temples provide refuge for the rich and the poor alike (cf. 1 Kgs 8). On the other hand, a temple is also a historical memory, encoded in the form of a monument, that bears witness to how a given society thought about divinity and imagined its expression. For this reason temples and their beauty are the product of the best that the human intellect can devise in terms of architecture, statuary, and painting. People do not hesitate to part with their gold in order to turn their temples into the most precious buildings in their land. The temple of Jerusalem is no exception. The multiplicity of themes, architectural innovations, and cultic performances embraced by the temple of Jerusalem has stirred the creativity of painters and novelists and the curiosity of scholars.

Built three thousand years ago, Solomon's temple is one of the most significant and enduring cultural icons in the world. Although beginning as a rather small royal cultic center of a provincial ancient Near Eastern kingdom of only

[1] Meyers 1992, 6:350.

moderate wealth and power, Solomon's temple managed to capture the spirit and imagination of men and women like no other building in history.[2]

The angle from which this book studies the temple of Jerusalem can be illustrated by an analogy. Tourists, artists, scholars, and pilgrims are deeply impressed by St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Maderno's façade, Bernini's baldachin, and the architectural genius of Bramante, Raphael, and Michelangelo leave even the most demanding visitors breathless. However, relatively few visitors have entered the archaeological area under the basilica and explored the simple cultic site of the second–third century CE that lies under Bernini's baldachin. Suppose that early Christians used to visiting a simple shrine beyond the Tiber were to be catapulted into the future and to find themselves standing in St. Peter's Basilica. Would they recognize it? How would they react? Would they be astounded or shocked? Similarly, suppose that a priest who had served at the dedication of the temple of Jerusalem was transported to the temple just before the Babylonian invasion. What would be his reaction? Would he recognize the temple? Would he consider it the same temple he used to serve in?

In more technical terms, this book deals with the development of the temple of Jerusalem between its construction in the tenth century BCE and its destruction in the sixth century BCE. The example of St. Peter's Basilica prompts the question, Did the temple of Jerusalem change between the reigns of Solomon and Zedekiah? Do we have any evidence to prove either that the temple was altered in shape and appearance over the years, or that it remained untouched for four centuries? The best answer to this question would be provided by archaeologists unearthing the strata of the temple. A complete stratigraphy of the Temple Mount, however, will not be available anytime soon, and in any case archaeological reconstructions must always be evaluated in light of the extant textual evidence. That is the site excavated in this monograph. Examining biblical and extrabiblical texts, I try to determine whether textual evidence indicates that the preexilic temple of Jerusalem changed or remained untouched over the course of four centuries.

1.1 Previous Studies on the Temple

Anyone who ventures to dive into the ocean of literature written about the temple of Jerusalem will soon realize that merely compiling an exhaustive bibliography would require a few volumes.[3] The Bible itself presents three different descriptions of the temple (1 Kgs 6–7; 2 Chr 2–7; Ezek 40–46). Early interpreters did not hesitate to add their own contributions to the traditional accounts of the

[2] Hamblin and Seely 2007, 6.

[3] For a short summary of previous scholarship see Balfour 2012, 6–28. Studies geared toward a broader audience include Comay 1975; Peters 1985, 13–18; Edersheim 1987; Lundquist 2000; Lundquist 2008; and Balfour 2012, 21–33.

temple, as in the case of the Temple Scroll unearthed at Qumran and Josephus's description of the temple. Likewise, modern researchers keep reconstructing, reviewing, and redesigning the temple.[4] Without pretending to distill the ocean of bibliography on the temple into a few paragraphs, let me divide the scholarly literature into four groups.

The first group of temple studies represents the *commentaries* on the three biblical books of 1 Kings, 2 Chronicles, and Ezekiel. Some commentaries have become landmarks in the development of temple scholarship, in particular those on the book of Kings, including the work of J. A. Montgomery (1951), M. Noth (1968), J. Gray (1970, 1976), E. Würthwein (1977, 1984), M. Cogan and H. Tadmor (1988, 2001), and M. J. Mulder (1998). These scholars questioned previous studies and ventured to present new hypotheses. Other commentaries also rigorously addressed the temple's construction and its history and presented new insights or critically evaluated previous proposals.[5]

In addition to the commentaries, scholars have dedicated entire studies to the temple of Jerusalem. The most flourishing group of temple studies includes those that pursue a *"traditional" reconstruction of the preexilic temple*. The members of this group use biblical and extrabiblical literary and archaeological evidence to reconstruct the temple.[6] Some monographs, including those of P. L.-H. Vincent and P. A.-M. Steve (1956), T. A. Busink (1970), and W. Zwickel (1999), constitute classics in temple scholarship.[7] To this group can be added entries in major encyclopedias that presented new evaluations of the biblical and extrabiblical evidence.[8] The analyses of biblical texts, the collections of extrabiblical material, and especially the critical evaluations of temple models contained in the "traditional" studies make them an invaluable mine of ideas, examples, and possible reconstructions. Along the same lines, it would be possible to present

[4] For example, Gutmann 1976; Antonio Ramirez 1991; Martin 2000; Morrison 2011.

[5] Among the older commentaries may be recommended those of C. Keil (1872), O. Thenius (1873), I. Benzinger (1899), R. Kittel and W. Nowack (1900), C. F. Burney (1903), B. Stade and F. Schwally (1904), W. E. Barnes (1908), J. R. Lumby (1909), A. Šanda (1911, 1912), P. N. Schlögl (1911), and S. K. Landersdorfer (1927); among the more recent ones, those of S. Garofalo (1951), V. Fritz (1977), G. Hentschel (1984, 1985), G. H. Jones (1984), R. D. Nelson (1987), B. O. Long (1991), J. T. Walsh (1996), P. Buis (1997), I. W. Provan (1997), W. Brueggemann (2000), S. J. DeVries (2003), M. A. Sweeney (2007), M. Nobile (2010), and P. Zamora García (2011).

[6] Salignac Fénelon 1904, F. 27; Cole 1920, 27–66; Thompson 1954, 14–19, 52; Parrot 1957; Klein and Klein 1970, 39–45; Comay 1975, 46–59; Davey 1980; Chyutin 1997; Laperrousaz 1999, 49–90; Stevens 2006, 36–41; Jericke 2010, 37–47; Vanhemelryck 2011. This approach is problematic since it does not take into account the historical development of the biblical texts, nor does it consider possible changes in the temple. For a critique of this approach, see, for example, Ouellette 1976, 1–5.

[7] See in addition Smith 1907; Möhlenbrink 1932; Parrot 1954; and Hurowitz 1992.

[8] Of particular importance are the articles by H. Lesétre (1912), C. Meyers (1992), and J. J. M. Roberts (2009).

an endless list of scholars from antiquity to the present who have attempted to reconstruct the whole temple or cast new light on some element of the temple building. Some of them will be discussed in the following chapters.

While biblical scholars continued to produce "traditional" reconstructions of the temple, archaeologists were unearthing numerous examples of temples from the Levant that provided parallels to the biblical descriptions of the Jerusalem temple. The resulting *comparative studies* did not attempt to reconstruct the temple of Jerusalem, but rather to illuminate its context, its architectural forms, and the trends in which it participated. This scholarly effort took two forms. On the one hand, written documents from the Levant allowed scholars to contextualize the biblical building accounts; on the other hand, archaeological excavations of temples in the Levant provided numerous parallels to written descriptions of the temple of Jerusalem dating from the Iron Age II period.[9] The first comparisons advanced by scholars relied heavily on Bronze Age temples, and on the basis of similarities between the excavated structures and the biblical text, the temple of Jerusalem was considered a *migdol*-type.[10] Later, the excavation of the temple of Arad supplied an Iron II parallel for the temple of Jerusalem.[11] Recently, the most frequently cited architectural parallels to the temple of Jerusalem have been the Iron II temples of Ain Dara and Tell Tainat.[12]

In recent decades some scholars have opened up new avenues for the study of the preexilic temple. Their goal is not to propose another reconstruction of the temple or to discuss some specific feature. Rather, they explore the temple from a *theological, ideological, iconographic, or symbolic point of view*.[13] These scholars often draw on sociological theories on cult and temple, such as the segmentary model, according to which the temple of Jerusalem represents a static, centralized sacred place in contrast to the dynamic one represented by the tabernacle.[14] According to these scholars, the temple materially represented the system of symbols that determined the beliefs and behavior of the people.[15] Studying ideological aspects of the temple, C. M. McCormick concluded that "only when the reader understands that the controlling agenda is ideology and not accuracy and begins an investigation to perceive the ideology of the author are the

[9] Welten 1972; Davey 1980; Ottosson 1980; Kohlmeyer 2000; Wilkinson 2000; Albers 2004a; Wightman 2006; Boda and Novotny 2010; Jericke 2010; Elkowicz 2012; Kamlah and Michelau 2012; Mierse 2012.

[10] Lesétre 1912, 5:2038; Meyers 1992, 6:379.

[11] Fritz 1977, 41–75.

[12] Meyers 1992, 6:356.

[13] Congar 1962; Clements 1965; Haran 1977; Dumas 1983; Ben-Dov 1985; van der Toorn 1997; Van Seters 1997; Kunin 1998; Lundquist 2000; McCormick 2002; Focant 2003; Barker 2004, 2011; Day 2007; Balfour 2012; Galil 2012.

[14] Kunin 1998, 23–27. See also Smith 1987.

[15] Dumas 1983; Berman 1995; Janowski 2002, 26–32; Sonnet 2003; Balfour 2012.

difficulties resolved."[16] To this group we can also add studies that examine the building narrative in its canonical context or using synchronic methodologies.[17]

These ideological or symbolic approaches dealt with the disquieting question of the historicity of the biblical narrative in various ways, or ignored it altogether. Opinions on this key issue vary according to the approaches and methodological premises adopted. After a careful review of different positions, one of the most respected scholars in this field, V. A. Hurowitz, expressed his frustration with the results achieved to date and stated his own approach:

> Given the complexity of the issues, and the fact that new finds, interpretations and methodologies constantly demand revisions in historical reconstruction, the present study will ignore the problems of the historicity of the biblical narrative and of the Temple itself, and focus on understanding what is described. Denying that it was Solomon who built the Temple does not imply that the Temple itself never existed. In fact, it makes no difference for its essence whether Solomon built it or someone else; nor is it of any significance whether it rose in one fell swoop in a single building project or whether it grew in stages over several generations.[18]

1.2 The Premise of This Study

The question of historicity is closely linked with the question of when the biblical account was composed. Discussions of the historicity of the biblical accounts mentioning the temple of Jerusalem have a common denominator. If these biblical texts are a postexilic product, then the temple ascribed to Solomon is also a product of the religious imagination of a later author. On the contrary, if these biblical texts, or some sections thereof, can be dated to the preexilic period, then they may reflect the temple as it was before the destruction of Jerusalem. M. S. Smith's reply to C. M. McCormick is a good example of this argument. Whereas McCormick dated the temple account to the postexilic period and thus excluded the possibility that the biblical texts might reflect the preexilic temple, Smith individuated pre-Deuteronomistic strata in 1 Kgs 6–8 that could be used for the reconstruction of the preexilic temple.[19] This kind of discussion, examples of which can be easily multiplied,[20] shows that two extreme positions on the date of 1 Kgs 6–8 can no longer withstand scholarly critique. The first position is to date the whole account to Solomon, i.e., to the tenth century BC, and to assume that Solomon built the temple just as it is described in 1 Kgs 6–8. The opposing

[16] McCormick 2002, 119–120.

[17] See, for example, Sonnet 2003, 2008.

[18] Hurowitz 2005, 65.

[19] Smith 2006, 277–281, responding to McCormick 2002.

[20] Archaeological finds led some scholars to the conclusion that the temple as described in 1 Kgs 6–7 cannot be a mere literary fiction or an anachronistic account, since its architecture has parallels in temples constructed in the Levant during Iron Age II, in particular the temples of Ain Dara and Tell Tainat (Stager 1999, 187*).

position is to assume that the whole account is the product of later writers who needed to justify their political and religious politics, and therefore 1 Kgs 6–8 is the product of pious imagination and has nothing to do with reality. In other words, the temple of Jerusalem as described in 1 Kings was a religious icon and not a historical representation. To avoid these two methodological straits, this study must navigate the convoluted waters of diachronic and synchronic studies and confront archaeological and textual evidence from the Levant.

1.3 Precursors of This Project

The goal of this study is to examine biblical and extrabiblical texts in order to determine whether the preexilic temple changed over time and, if so, to describe the changes. These questions are not new.[21] The inconsistencies in the biblical accounts of the construction of the temple, its attribution to Solomon or to other kings, and the reconstruction of individual elements of the temple decorations and furniture have constituted for centuries a problem that exegetes have tried to resolve in various ways.[22] Some scholars admit that it would be difficult to maintain a temple over such a long span of time without some degree of remodeling. This idea is neatly summarized by J. Gray: "It is hardly to be supposed that there had been no developments in the structure and decoration of the Temple in the four centuries since Solomon's building."[23] C. Meyers connected the changes with monarchic power: "In the many centuries between Solomon's implementation of the bold and visionary temple project of King David and its destruction at the hand of the Babylonians, the Temple underwent countless changes, some directly recorded in the Bible, some tangentially indicated, and others no doubt left unmentioned. All these alternations were related to some extent to the waxing and waning of monarchic power."[24] Alternatively, changes in the temple could have been motivated by changes in cult, theology, or the hierarchical organization of the group responsible for its maintenance.

J. J. M. Roberts listed the most important changes in the temple and concluded, "It is apparent from even a cursory reading of these texts that the contents and even aspects of the physical structure of the temple complex changed over time."[25] Those who accept Horton's conclusion can be divided into two groups. The first group holds that the surrounding structures, courts, and gates were altered over time while the tripartite temple building itself remained unmodified.

[21] See, for example, Prestel 1902; Busink 1970, 664–680; Rupprecht 1972, 1977.

[22] The difficulties are summed up in Hentschel's (1981, 16) note: "Die Beschreibung des Tempels in 1 Kön 6 stellt nicht nur die schlichten Leser, sondern auch die Fachexegeten immer wieder vor Probleme."

[23] Gray 1976, 158.

[24] Meyers 1992, 6:362.

[25] Roberts 2009, 5:500.

"[According to] the Deuteronomistic historian (Dtr), the basic Temple in Jerusalem remained untouched throughout most of its history, even as the *temenos* around [it] changed," wrote Z. Zevit, who accepted the biblical account as accurate in this respect.[26] Scholars in the second group conclude that the basic layout of the temple itself was also changed. L. Waterman proposed that Solomon's temple was originally nothing more than a royal chapel.[27] Building on this idea, A. Lemaire concluded that the shift from a small private chapel to a national temple required significant changes in the architecture of the temple.[28]

Conclusions as to whether and how the temple changed depend above all on the analysis of both biblical texts and extrabiblical documents. Analyzing the Amarna correspondence, N. Na'aman concluded that Solomon built the temple, but on "a much smaller scale than the one built in the late monarchical period."[29] No matter how much weight is given to comparative evidence derived from extrabiblical documents, any study of changes in the architecture of the Jerusalem temple ultimately has to deal with the biblical texts, since each temple had its own history and the changes one temple underwent were not replicated in other temples. Furthermore, the biblical traditions themselves were subject to renovation and remodeling. V. A. Hurowitz captures one of the distinctive challenges of working with the biblical descriptions of the temple: "The biblical accounts as they appear before us are products of literary growth, and may telescope reflections of the Temple as it appeared at various stages of its existence."[30] In other words, research on the biblical texts presupposes that they are the result of numerous redactional interventions.[31] Even though this premise is generally shared, there is no consensus as to which verses are original and which are later additions.[32] Opinions on whether and how to use the biblical text also vary. On the one hand, S. Yeivin's comparison of the accounts in Chronicles and Kings led him to conclude that Chronicles reflects the architecture of the late preexilic temple, whereas Kings preserves an account of the architecture of the early preexilic temple.[33] On the other hand, J. Van Seters concluded that the building account is

> basically a composition of the Deuteronomistic Historian to which a number of later additions have been made. The description of the temple and its furnishings in 1 Kings 6–7 is not a historical witness to the temple in Solomon's time but is rather an attempt to establish an ideological continuity between the beginning of the monarchy under David and Solomon and its end, and to suggest the possibility of restoration and a new beginning, perhaps under a restored Davidic ruler.[34]

[26] Zevit 2002, 80.
[27] Waterman 1943, 284.
[28] Lemaire 2011, 199.
[29] Na'aman 2003, 23.
[30] Hurowitz 1992, 17.
[31] See, for example, Zwickel 1999, 72.
[32] Gray 1976, 168, 171; Würthwein 1977, 59–61; Buis 1997, 66; Zwickel 1999, 72.
[33] Yeivin 1964, 331–332.
[34] Van Seters 1997, 57.

Let me summarize some of the broader scholarly conclusions that are pertinent to this study. The problems raised by the biblical accounts rule out the possibility that the Hebrew text of 1 Kgs 6–8 was written by one author, independently of whether we would date the work to the preexilic or postexilic period. The final touches betray the pen of redactors working after the exile. Therefore the point of departure for my investigation is that 1 Kgs 6–8 is a multilayered composition. It can hardly be dated to one historical period, but incorporates a mixture of notes and additions coming from different authors and schools.

1.4 The Design of This Project

A close examination of the "traditional" reconstructions of the preexilic temple of Jerusalem shows that most of them start with the premise that the temple did not change, or that any changes were insignificant: because the temple was a sacred structure, once it was built it remained substantially untouched for four centuries. Contrariwise, scholars have no problem accepting that Herod the Great did not adhere to the ancient layout of the temple but boldly updated the temple building, its courtyards, and its gates.[35] Can we determine whether similar interventions in the architecture of the temple were undertaken by major preexilic kings such as Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, and Josiah?[36] If so, can we trace those changes and outline the phases of the development of the temple?

To answer these questions, I have divided the body of this monograph into three parts (Chapters 2–4). Chapter 2 investigates evidence from the ancient Near East. This chapter will provide background on how temples in that region changed over time, which parts of a temple were most frequently altered, and how often and for what reasons temples had to be rebuilt. Since archaeological parallels are taken up in Chapters 3 and 4, this chapter will explore mainly textual evidence from Syria-Palestine and Mesopotamia. I will argue that ancient Near Eastern temples were often remodeled, torn down, and even rebuilt.

This result leads us to our main question: What about the temple of Jerusalem? Did it remain untouched for four centuries? Chapter 3 is dedicated to the study of notes and comments in various parts of the Bible that can help us to tackle this problem. I focus on the Deuteronomistic accounts of the reigns of the kings of Judah in the book of Kings, as well as other books that describe the preexilic period, such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel. By comparing the biblical accounts and incorporating the thorough studies of other scholars, I will argue that there is enough evidence in the Bible to prove that the preexilic temple of Jerusalem underwent some important changes.

[35] Zwickel 1999, 43–46.

[36] Lackenbacher 1982, 73–81.

This conclusion leads to the final step of my investigation, and the most complicated one. Given that the temple was periodically renovated, what can we say about 1 Kgs 6–8, which attributes the construction of the temple in all its glory to Solomon? Thumbing through the commentaries on 1 Kings is sufficient to persuade even the most skeptical reader that the text is full of problems. The grammar is unclear, the syntax is often incomprehensible, and above all the textual witnesses disagree on the descriptions of the temple. Bearing in mind the complexity of this biblical text, not to mention the fact that over the last two thousand years no one has proposed a solution that explains all the problems of the text and yields a coherent picture of the temple at a particular moment in time, in Chapter 4 I approach 1 Kgs 6–8 from a diachronic point of view. The basic presupposition of this chapter is that since the temple building and its functions represented the most important institution in ancient Israel, it was only natural that the texts describing the temple underwent several redactions and were continuously glossed.[37]

At the end of both Chapters 3 and 4, I synthesize the results of each inquiry and outline the chronological development of the temple of Jerusalem according to the evidence considered in that chapter. In each case I propose a minimalist version based on the analysis of the extant textual witnesses, and then venture some suggestions for a more nuanced model. These conclusions must be tested against evidence recovered from archaeological excavation, once the results are available; at the same time, this study can reveal some nuances that only a text can preserve and no archaeologist can ever unearth.

[37] Würthwein 1977, 57.

Chapter 2

Restoration of Temples in the Ancient Near East

There is no need to argue that the rebuilding and reconstruction of temples was a normal practice in the ancient Near East.[1] Some repairs were done regularly, but most of them took place only once the temple had become dilapidated or started falling apart. The practice of temple reconstruction was not limited to one period or one region. On the contrary, we have evidence that temples were reconstructed in all periods and regions: from the Ubaid period[2] to the Roman period,[3] and from Elam[4] to Egypt,[5] including Syria-Palestine in the Iron Age.[6]

The extent of temple reconstruction varied. It might be limited to refurbishing the temple decorations, or repairs could be restricted to the dilapidated parts of the temple.[7] In more ambitious restorations, the builders might tear down the damaged walls of a temple in order to reach the foundations and then rebuild the walls according to the original pattern. In some cases the temple was enlarged[8] or completely transformed.[9]

To maintain the temple building and to repair it when necessary became an imperative for rulers, relentlessly repeated in the inscriptions left by kings to remind their successors to take care of the shrines.[10] If a king did not comply with this imperative, he jeopardized not only his own well-being but also that of the entire country, risking the anger of gods who might abandon their shrines and

[1] A good example of such remodeling is provided by the changes traceable in six temples in *Ṭabaqāt Faḥil,* Pella (Bourke 2012, 194–195).

[2] Schaudig 2010, 142.

[3] Perry 2012.

[4] Potts 2010, 49.

[5] An interesting example of the development of temple architecture is the *naos* of Nekhthorheb from Bubastis. Several different stages of the rebuilding of the temple have been identified, and each level can be connected with a particular style of decoration (Spencer, Rosenow, and British Museum, 2006). For the phases of the temple in Karnak, see Blyth 2006.

[6] Ottosson 1980; Elkowicz 2012; Kamlah and Michelau 2012.

[7] Thus Adad-nirari I mentioned in his foundation inscription that he rebuilt a gate that had become dilapidated and sagged and shook (RIMA 1 A.0.76.7:35–39).

[8] Esarhaddon enlarged the Emashmash temple in Nineveh (RINAP 4 10:6–7).

[9] Shamshi-Adad I claimed to have erected new doorframes that none of his predecessors had made, then built a ziggurat and gave the complex a new name (RIMA 1 A.0.73.1001 ii 1–20).

[10] RIMA 1 A.0.78.11:58–73. Only exceptionally was someone else in charge of the reconstruction of the temple (Schaudig 2010, 143). The extant documents report that a queen or a priest could also take charge of the reconstruction of the temple (Fitzgerald 2010, 45–47).

withdraw their protection. For this reason, the constant renovation of temples was not simply a consequence of the perishability of building materials but also a matter of paying respect to the gods.

In order to demonstrate their piety and their respect for the gods, kings boasted of the temples they had restored. They often insisted that they had not touched the foundations of the temple, but only restored its dilapidated walls and rebuilt the structure according to its original design.[11] Behind this claim was the Mesopotamian conviction that when Enlil put the gods on the earth, he assigned them dwellings that were not to be altered. As H. Shaudig explains,

> A temple is not only a mere brickwork structure where the statue is stored but *is* actually identical with the original, primeval and transcendent, sometimes "heavenly" abode of the deity after its inauguration. Thus, the shrine Eabzu is the counterpart of Enki's dwelling in the subterranean ocean. The temple Ebabbar, a human-made building that exists twice on earth in the cities of Sippar and Larsa, is the counterpart of the heavenly dwelling of the sun-god Šamaš, and the shrine Esagil in Babylon is the representation and successor of the temple built there originally by the gods for Marduk.[12]

In sum, the need to purify and restore a dilapidated temple that no longer provided a dignified abode for a god was one of the main reasons why temples were reconstructed according to their original design. In the Mesopotamian worldview, to repair a dilapidated temple while maintaining its original design was a project distinct from changing the layout of the temple itself.[13]

Royal inscriptions and archaeological evidence, however, prove that several ambitious kings not only restored temples that had fallen into disrepair, they also transformed the temples by altering their original layout.[14] Such a substantial transformation of a temple had to be adequately justified. Mesopotamian scribes were often quick to record that an architectural intervention was a response to a divine request.[15] In other words, the decision to tear down an old temple and rebuild or replace it was not a royal caprice but the will of the deity, of which the king was a mere executor.

By presenting a representative sample of inscriptions that refer to temple reconstruction, the following paragraphs will illustrate some of the changes that were introduced during the restoration of ancient temples.[16]

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[11] Schaudig 2010, 147, 149.

[12] Schaudig 2010, 141.

[13] For a study of terminology used to distinguish between temple renovations and reconfigurations, see Lackenbacher 1982, 94–101.

[14] Adad-nirari II mentioned that while he was restoring the temple of Gula, he greatly enlarged it beyond its previous extent (RIMA 2 A.0.99.2:130).

[15] See, for example, *BIWA* 140–141.

[16] A selection of archaeological parallels will be discussed in Chapter 4.

2.1 Inscriptions from the West

The first set of examples comes from the Syria-Palestine region.[17] Inscriptions from this region often mention that temples were built, destroyed, and rebuilt. For our purposes, one of the most important inscriptions is an Akkadian building report from Ugarit (RS 94.2953). In this tablet the god Ea commanded the king to insert a window in his temple as the condition for his return to the temple. Lines 3–13 read:

> Ea, the great lord, appeared at my side: "Take a spade and an axe of rage, make a window above the foundation of stone; my plan, in length and width!" As for me I paid attention to the words of Ea, my lord, the great king. I took a spade and an axe of rage, I made a window above. Its heavy foundations made of stone I set free. He came back and I had completed it all.[18]

The god Ea in an apparition commanded the king to modify an old temple: he should place a window or window opening (*ap-ta*[19]) above the foundation stone of the Baal temple (cf. the windows in the temple of Jerusalem, 1 Kgs 6:4). The spade and axe most likely had a ritual rather than utilitarian function.[20] The tablet also contains a formula indicating the completion of the temple: "I had completed it all" (cf. 1 Kgs 6:9, 14). Line 14, which follows the completion formula, is rather difficult to interpret: *a-na-ku ku-ma-a-re ú-ma-ši-ir-ma* "As for me, I again set free the accumulation." The "accumulation" could have been something outside of the temple such as a wall, a ramp, or a staircase.[21] In sum, tablet RS 94.2953 speaks about a later intervention in the Baal temple. The description has a command-fulfillment structure. The modification of the temple was carried out according to the specific command of the god Ea, using the requested instruments. In practice, it meant making a window opening in a wall of the existing temple.

Another important document for understanding the reconstruction of temples in the Syria-Palestine region is the Phoenician inscription of King Yahimilik (tenth century BCE) from the Persian period (dated to the fifth century BCE).[22] Lines 2–8 read:

> And I made for my Lady, Mistress of Byblos, this altar of bronze, which is in this [court]yard, and this opening of gold, which (is) opposite to this opening of mine, and this winged (disk) of gold, which (is) in the midst of the stone, which (is) above this opening of gold, and this portico and its columns and the capitals which (are) upon them, and its roof.[23]

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[17] For the Hittite period, see *COS* 2, no. 2.20B.

[18] For the text and a French translation, see Arnaud 2007, 201. The English translation is taken from Pitard 2010, 102.

[19] *CAD* A/2, 197.

[20] Pitard 2010, 104.

[21] Arnaud 2007, 202.

[22] Moscati 1988, 108, 304–305.

[23] For an analysis, translation, and bibliography see *CIS* I, no. 1; *KAI* no. 10, 2:11–15; *SSI* 3, 94–99; *COS* 2, no. 32.

The text describes some changes introduced into the furnishing and decoration of the temple. First, line 4 mentions that the king introduced into the temple court a new altar made out of bronze (cf. 2 Kgs 16:14). Second, lines 4 and 5 mention two openings, most likely gates or doors. One is called "the golden gate" and the other, "my [i.e., the king's] gate." From the inscription it is possible to deduce that the king's gate was built before the inscription had been written, while the golden gate was erected later, together with the altar. J. C. L. Gibson suggested that the king's gate led to the palace court and that the golden gate, which was in front of it, led into the court of the shrine (cf. 2 Kgs 15:35).[24] Third, the king added a new piece of decoration – "a winged (disk) of gold" – above the golden gate (cf. 2 Kgs 18:16; see §4.7). Finally, the king did not hesitate to add new architectural features to the temple. He made an עַרְפֶּת "colonnade/portico" (cf. 1 Kgs 6:3), its pillars with capitals (cf. 1 Kgs 7:15–22), and its roof (cf. 1 Kgs 6:9). The portico might have been a pillared and roofed extension of the gate leading to the court or to the shrine. In sum, this inscription is a good example of several important changes that King Yahimilik introduced into the temple.[25] His changes significantly affected the structure of the temple (new gates and a portico), its decoration (winged disk and objects overlaid by gold), and its cult furnishings (a new altar).

To this list, we can add several other inscriptions mentioning temple building in general.[26] Another inscription associated with Yahimilik states that he built a house (i.e., a temple or palace).[27] Similarly, the inscription of Panamuwa speaks about a house built for the gods: "I am Panamuwa […] a hou[se for the go]ds of this city. And [I built] it. And I caused the gods to dwell in it. And during my reign I allotted [the gods] a resting place. [And] they gave to me a seed of the bosom."[28] A similar inscription has been preserved in Philistia stating that Padi, king of Ekron, built a house for PTGYH.[29]

W. Pitard, analyzing this and other Semitic inscriptions, showed that they bear traces of a schema proposed by V. A. Hurowitz and concluded that "the appearance of fragments of Hurowitz' schema in the inscriptions provides evidence that the motifs found at Ugarit and in Exodus and 1 Kings were probably extant as well in the lost literatures of the other West Semitic states of the Levant."[30]

To summarize, the inscriptions coming from the west indicate that the architectural features most frequently altered were gates, porticos, pillars and their

[24] *SSI* 3, 97.

[25] The changes probably followed an Egyptian pattern (Moscati 1988, 144).

[26] Gitin, Dothan, and Naveh 1997. See also *COS* 2, no. 36.

[27] *COS* 2, no. 29.

[28] *COS* 2, no. 36, lines 19–20a. For similar notes on temple building, see also *COS* 2, no. 57, mentioning the list of the temples built or rebuilt by Eshmunazor II, and *COS* 2, no. 35, col. B, lines 9–12, mentioning that Zakkur, king of Hamath, built several temples and shrines.

[29] Gitin, Dothan, and Naveh 1997.

[30] Pitard 2010, 106.

capitals, windows, decorations, and roofs. This is not surprising, since these parts of a temple can easily be changed.

2.2 Mesopotamian Inscriptions

More textual evidence comes from Mesopotamia. An illustrative example, preserved on stone tablets, describes restoration work on the Assyrian Ishtar temple at Assur (RIMA 1 A.0.76.15). Lines 5–32 mention that Ilu-shumma built the temple and that it was restored by Sargon (I), Puzur-Ashur, and finally by Adad-nirari I.

This and other inscriptions suggest that repairing or rebuilding temples was a normal practice in ancient Mesopotamia. The main reason for the reconstruction of Mesopotamian temples was their dilapidation. Because Assyrian and Babylonian temples[31] were usually made of sun-dried bricks, the lower parts of "the buildings were damaged by salt, which was soaked up from the soil with groundwater into the socles of the walls. There, the salt crystallized and destroyed the brickwork, thus causing the walls to collapse."[32] As a result, Babylonian temples often had to be rebuilt.[33] J. Novotny, studying the temples in Assyria, similarly concluded that among the eleven possible reasons for rebuilding a temple, those most frequently cited amounted to natural decay due to the ravages of time; temples simply became dilapidated over the years. Besides the perishability of the material used for the construction of the Mesopotamian temples, damage from flood, earthquake, or fire and the sacking or destruction of a temple by an enemy were other reasons why temples were reconstructed (cf. §3.3 and §3.4).[34]

Depending on the cause and the extent of the damage, the length of time between successive reconstructions varied.[35] Natural disasters and looting usually shortened the period between reconstructions. Let me present a few examples. Tukulti-ninurta I claimed that the temple of Ishtar in Assur had not been rebuilt for 720 years; when it became old and dilapidated, he reconstructed it (RIMA 1 A.0.78.11:26–28). Tiglath-pileser I mentioned that the temple of the gods Anu and Adad became dilapidated after 641 years. Ashur-dan I started the

[31] For the dilapidation of Babylonian temples, see, for example, RIMB 2 B.6.21.1:3–6; *CUSAS* 17 76, 86; RIMA 1 A.0.39.1:88–98.

[32] Schaudig 2010, 143.

[33] For examples from the Neo-Babylonian period, see Schaudig 2010, 143–144.

[34] Other reasons for restoration or reconstruction were the demolition of a temple by a previous ruler, or simply the need to replace an aged structure or one too small for current needs (Novotny 2010, 110–114). For a study of the various causes of damage to temples, see Lackenbacher 1982, 57–81.

[35] H. Lewy (*CAH* I/2, 740–742) advanced the theory that periodic reconstructions were carried out at regular intervals of 350 years. However, according to the royal inscriptions the time between reconstructions varied.

restoration process and Tiglath-pileser I finally completed it sixty years later (RIMA 2 A.0.87.1 vii 60–70). Adad-nirari II restored the temple of the goddess Gula that Tukulti-ninurta I had built, i.e., about three hundred years after its construction (RIMA 2 A.0.99.2). Tukulti-ninurta I claimed that he restored the ruined temple of the goddess Dinitu, which had not been repaired since the reign of Adad-nirari I, i.e., for about one hundred years (RIMA 1 A.0.78.14:9–27). The Emashmash temple was restored by two successive kings, Shalmaneser I (ca. 1273–1244 BCE) and his son Tukulti-ninurta I (ca. 1243–1207 BCE); this means that the temple was restored twice in fifty years. These examples suggest that the interval between episodes of temple construction or renovation ranged from several decades up to several centuries.

Since a number of scholars have already gathered the material regarding temple rebuilding from the Mesopotamian documents, I base the following discussion on their mammoth work.[36] The first part (§2.2.1) will take a diachronic approach, examining the reconstruction of the Ishtar temple over the centuries; the second part (§2.2.2) will take a synchronic approach, studying Esarhaddon's inscriptions, in particular the reconstruction of Esharra and Esagil. The third part (§2.2.3) will deal with some Neo-Assyrian letters.

2.2.1 The Emashmash Temple in Nineveh

According to the biblical accounts, the temple of Jerusalem was not a secondary shrine but rather a national sanctuary in the capital of the Judean kingdom and the destination of pilgrims. In order to demonstrate the plausibility of renovation and remodeling at the central Judean shrine, this section illustrates that temples in important cult centers underwent regular reconstruction. The temple of Ishtar in Nineveh is a good example of the introduction of changes at a national shrine.[37]

Emashmash (é.maš.maš), a temple of Ishtar-Ninlil in Nineveh, was built by Manishtushu, king of Akkad (2269/2306–2255/2291 BCE).[38] It was renovated by Shamshi-Adad I (ca. 1813–1791 BCE), i.e., after about four hundred years.[39] Shamshi-Adad I's renovation was not limited to the repair of a temple that had grown dilapidated after a long period, but rather encompassed a substantial reconstruction. He claims to have erected new doorframes/doorjambs in the Emashmash temple (*sí-ip-pí-šu*[40]). However, the most important of Shamshi-Adad I's

[36] For the examples see Hurowitz 1992; Boda and Novotny 2010; Kamlah and Michelau 2012.

[37] George 1993, 121.

[38] For the plans, see Gut 1995, 18.

[39] No structural remains have been found from the period between Man-ishtushu and Shamshi-Adad I; however, it is possible that the temple was repaired from time to time (see Reade 2005, 361). The inscription mentions that the reconstruction took place after 7 *dāru* (RIMA 1 A.0.39.2 i18). The interval between Man-ishtushu and Shamshi-Adad I was about half a millennium, but the 7 *dāru* could have a symbolic meaning as well (Reade 2005, 362).

[40] *CAD* S, 301b.