

ON THE PROBLEM OF SACRED SPACE:
SOLOMON'S TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM AND TEMPLE-
PALACE IN FENGCHU (CHINA) AROUND 1000 B.C.
(A COMPARATIVE STUDY)

Marián GÁLIK
Institute of Oriental Studies, Slovak Academy of Sciences
Klemensova 19, 813 64 Bratislava, Slovakia
galikm2@gmail.com

The aim of this essay is to present a study about the problem of sacred space in comparing Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem and the temple-palace in Fengchu (China) around 1000 B.C. and later, together with the situation in the Near Eastern countries, Sumer, Assyria, Canaan (Levant), their writings and concrete buildings. Sacred continua both in sacred space and partly also sacred time in Mesopotamia, Canaan, Judah, Israel, and China are studied here on the basis of available material between approximately 1000 B.C. up to about 450 B.C. The choice of the studied material was selected in order to see the differences between the understanding of the sacred space in the countries of Near East and in China in times when there were no relations between them. This essay points to the differences in the Chinese situation which was very different from that of Hebrew tradition. If in the first up to about the first half of the 1st cent. B.C. sacred space and also sacred time was with the exception at the end of the Shang Dynasty in high esteem, and then a more secular approach was acknowledged, among the Hebrews the theocracy of God became to be absolute.

Key words: Solomon's Temple (Jerusalem), palace-temple in Fengchu (China), Near Eastern sacred continua, their dissimilarities with China, Victor (Avigdor) Hurowitz, John Monson, David N. Keightley, Edward L. Shaughnessy, Yuri Pines

In 1992 Victor (Avigdor) Hurowitz (1948 – 2013) wrote probably the best book on the subject entitled *I Have Built You an Exalted House. The Building in the Bible in the Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings*.¹ Thirteen

¹ *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*. Supplement Series 115. JSOT/ASOR Monograph Series 5.

years later, in 2005 the same author published a study “YHWH’s Exalted House – Aspects of the Design and Symbolism of Solomon’s Temple”² which brought new material not mentioned in the book, especially new findings after the publishing of this his book. According to one author before building Solomon’s Temple on the same place or nearby on the Temple Mount another small temple stood that was later replaced with one that is the subject of this study.³ There is much written about this one among the most famous temple in human history. It is also one of the buildings most writhed in mystery because no archaeological remains confirm the biblical writings about it. Since up to now nothing has been found that could be verified as something which could be regarded as trustworthy, since just few items allegedly regarded as such, are now considered as modern fake or forgery.⁴ According to knowledge before 2007 accessible to me there are two ancient temples that are to some extent comparable to the Temple of Solomon: Tell Tayinat⁵ and ‘Ain Dara⁶, both in modern Syria.

On Sacred Continua in Mesopotamia, Levant, Judah, and Israel

Sacred continua in this study are understood similarly to Mircea Eliade’s concept of sacred space as interpreted partly in *The Encyclopedia of Religion* edited by him in the essay “Sacred Space” by Joel P. Brereton⁷ and some essays which will be mentioned and consulted later.

Sacred continua instead of sacred space was used by me for the first time in 2010 in my essay “Hebrew Deuteronomist and Early Chinese Confucian

² DAY, J. (ed.). *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*. London-New York: T and T Clark International, 2005, repr. 2006, pp. 63–110.

³ NA’AMAN, N. The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on Jerusalem’s Political Position in the Tenth Century B. C. E. In *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, 1996, No. 304, pp. 17–27. This is not without a doubt, since in 2 *Samuel*, 24: 18–25 there is written that the Solomonic Temple was built on the site of a threshing floor owned by the Jeb’usite Arau’nah for fifty shekels of silver. It is not probable that a small temple stood on such a place.

⁴ HUROWITZ, V. A. YHWH’s Exalted House – Aspects of the Design and Symbolism of Solomon’s Temple. In DAY, J. (ed.). *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*, pp. 65–66.

⁵ HUROWITZ, V. A. Inside Solomon’s Temple. In *Bible Review*, 1994, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 28–29.

⁶ MONSON, J. The New ‘Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel. In *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 2000, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 20–35, 67. I am very much indebted to Professor Seymour Gitin, W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, for supplying me with this essay.

⁷ BRERETON, J. P. Sacred Space. In ELIADE, M. (Editor in Chief) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 12, pp. 526–535.

Historiography: A Comparative Approach".⁸ This concept was to some extent taken over from F. S. C. Northrop book *The Meeting of East and West: An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding* where he points to the "aesthetic continuum" when comparing the paintings of Chinese artists influenced by Daoist and Buddhist Masters from the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and defining it as: the aesthetic continuum is a single all-embracing continuity.⁹ The idea of a continuum could be used not only in the aesthetic realm, but in the different spheres of human activity and certainly also in the research of sacred spaces, especially if these spaces are practically within not always in interrupted common connection, although it could be only in one way direction. In our case this one starts from Mesopotamia and proceeds to Levant and Judah and later to Israel after constructing Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem.

Solomon's Temple is the most important subject in this first part of the study. It has been studied in innumerable essays and books, but as far as I know, never in connection with temples of sacred buildings in China. This is the first attempt to see this one of the most important sacred monuments of world architecture in this connection. We have already mentioned that nothing remained from it that could be regarded as belonging to it without a doubt. All got lost after burning it down by the victorious army led by Nebuzaradan, officer of Nebuchadnezzar II, king of Babylon, on 7Ab (July?), 586 B. C.¹⁰ "At that time, the Babylonians took as booty all the bronze, silver and gold implements remaining in the Temple."¹¹ It is not quite clear what time Solomon's Temple began to be built, but allegedly it was his fourth year of reign (c. 964 B. C.) and it was completed seven years and six months later. It is necessary to remark that it may be not quite exact and it follows the use of the "typological number" typical for Biblical and Near Eastern writings.¹² The most common typological numbers are 3, 7, 10, 12 and 40.¹³ Therefore 7 years was an ideal span of time for completing the building of this famous Temple.¹⁴

If we believe in 2 *Samuel* 8 the idea to build the Temple was raised by David, but allegedly God rejected this initiative. According to 1 *Chronicles* He said to King David: "You have shed much blood and have waged great wars;

⁸ GÁLIK, M. Hebrew Deuteronomistic and Early Chinese Confucian Historiography: A Comparative Approach. In *Frontiers of History in China*, 2010, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 343–362.

⁹ NORTHROP, F. S. C. Op. cit., pp. 332–343.

¹⁰ HUROWITZ, V. A. *YHWH's Exalted House*, p. 92.

¹¹ Loc. cit.

¹² Ibid., pp. 90–91.

¹³ See www.bible-history.com/tabernacle/TAB4Numbers_and_Scripture.htm [cit. 18 November, 2016].

¹⁴ HUROWITZ, V. A. *YHWH's Exalted House*, p. 91.

you shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me upon the earth.”¹⁵ This maybe is only the devote desire of the *Chronicles*’ author (or authors) to make the contribution of David greater than it really was. We cannot also forget the impact of the tendency of the sacred continuum of the Near East. The authors participating in the Deuteronomist historiography looked after the examples of the Mesopotamian inscriptions on their temples where the kings were mentioned and highlighted for building the sanctuaries for their gods and usually these were founders of dynasties. In the case of King David, it was probably nothing else as following the examples of the regions adjacent to Israel and Judah. In any case it was nothing that could be regarded as something new and original, but only following what has been done by their much more developed neighbours with longer historical traditions.¹⁶

The Solomonic Temple was not the only one in the territory of Israel and Judah. *Cum grano salis* we may regard as “temples” and also the houses that were regarded as the places of YHWH’s presence, the most well-known was the Ark which served as God’s palanquin and carried by priests when outside at first and later installed in the Temple after this was dedicated.¹⁷ There are certainly temples and the “temples” in the different regions of the world as we shall see in the part concerning China. A comparative study of the sacred continua has its own reason. The history of the Solomonic Temple building begins with Solomon’s message to the Phoenician King Hiram (ca. 969 – 936 B. C.).

You know that my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune. And so I purpose to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord said to David my father, ‘Your son, whom I will set upon your throne, shall build the house for my name’.¹⁸

¹⁵ All quotations from the Bible, if not pointed out differently, are taken from *The Oxford Annotated Bible With Apocrypha. Revised Standard Version*. Further cited only as *RSV*. P. B. Dirksen regards it as enigmatic. Cf. DIRKSEN, P. B. Why Was David Disqualified as Temple Builder? The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22.8. In *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 70, pp. 51–56.

¹⁶ MEYERS, C. The Israelite Empire: In Defence of King Solomon. In *Michigan Quarterly Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 412–428. This statement is taken from Hurowitz’s *YHWH’S Exalted House*, p. 106.

¹⁷ About a dozen such temples are mentioned in HENNIG, K. (ed.). *Jerusalem Bibel-Lexikon*, p. 863.

¹⁸ *1 Kings* 5, 3–6.

The building accounts, for example, from Assyrian temples inscriptions are similar. They are concerned with the restorations of the old destroyed temples or building the new ones. Assyrian King Esarhaddon (r. 680-669 B.C.) tells us the story of the temple of Assur, or likewise Assyrian King Sargon II (r. 721 – 705 B.C.) depicts his plans to build a new capital and prays to gods to help him achieve his aims and acquire their consent. Hurowitz claims in his book that “Solomon’s message to Hiram maybe considered a close parallel to the routine introductions to numerous Mesopotamian building stories, only a few of which have been cited above”.¹⁹ Before the Solomonic Temple it was Tabernacle where the Ark of Covenant (*Exodus* 25: 10–22) was put with the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Divine participation in building the temples we may observe in quite a few Mesopotamian and in Northwest Semitic inscriptions. Well-known are the divine conferences or assemblies, such as in old Sumerian, Old Babylonian, and later Neo-Babylonian texts. Hurowitz mentions the Ugaritic Baal Epic and *Enuma Elish* where gods make decisions to build the temples.²⁰ In the Bible where gods are no part present in the depicting of reality and only YHWH alone is Alpha and Omega of all creation the conferences of gods are impossible, although such conferences with him were possible, as two most important of them are in *Job*, 1: 6–12 and 2: 1–7. These are not concerned with the building, or rebuilding of the temples or Cities dedicated to gods, but they are about the two meetings about God and his good children – angels and a bad child – Satan. Although I do not have any proof for it, these two dramatic scenes are probably somehow connected with the Babylonian sources mentioning the meetings of the chief god in pantheon with the secondary gods.

The first proscenium:

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. The Lord said to Satan, “Whence have you come?” Satan answered the Lord, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Does Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not put a hedge about him and all that he has, on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he has, and he will curse thee to thy face.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power; only upon

¹⁹ HUROWITZ, V. *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, pp. 132–133.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 139–140.

himself do not put forth your hand.” So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

The second proscenium:

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Whence have you come?” Satan answered the Lord, “From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job, that there is no like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns from evil? He still holds fast his integrity, although you moved me against him, to destroy him without cause.” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.” And the Lord said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your power; only spare his life.”

In the Bible, the most prevalent method to build or rebuild the temples or parts of them was through the agencies of Prophets like Moses (*Exodus*, 25: 9–40, 26: 30, 27: 8, *Numbers*, 8: 4), Ezekiel (*Ezekiel*, 40: 48), Haggai (*Haggai*, 1–2) and probably also Gad, David’s seer (*2 Samuel*, 24: 18–25.) who asked David to buy the threshing floor for building the later Solomonic Temple. In 18–19 we read: “And God came that day to David, and said to him, ‘Go up, rear an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Arau’nah the Jeb’usite.’ So David went up at God’s word, as the Lord commanded.”

In Ezekiel’s vision we see somewhat an ideal picture of the Solomonic Temple after its destruction in 587 B. C. where he probably earlier served as a priest. The messenger whom he saw was maybe an angel characterised as a “man, whose appearance was like bronze, with a line of flax and measuring reed in his hand; and he was standing in the gateway” (40: 3). The place depicted was the former Temple area and according to *RSV* it was 25 years after the destruction of the Temple and seen upon “a very high mountain”.²¹ Divine promise we may see in *1 Kings*, 6: 11–13: Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon, “Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in my statutes and obey my ordinances and keep my commandments and walk in them, then I will establish my word with you, which I spoke to David your father. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people of Israel.”

When writing this essay, I do not have the materials from Levant, but it seems that in Mesopotamia, likewise in the Bible, temples should be built exclusively upon divine initiative. Initiative of the kings was possible, but

²¹ See *Op. cit.*, p. 1052.

God's or gods' approval was necessary. According to Hurowitz: "The stories in 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Kings 5 and assume that the King of Israel also needed divine permission to build a Temple. As far as this is concerned, there is total agreement between the biblical attitude and the numerous extra-biblical texts... As for God's refusal to agree to David's plan, this too was found to be in keeping with Mesopotamian outlooks, both in theory and in practice. David asked permission to build God a Temple, and by so doing he is no different than any of Mesopotamian monarchs ... But even in receiving a negative response, David is not alone. In being denied permission to build a temple, David has equals in Mesopotamia from the days of the Dynasties of Akkade and Ur III until the Neo-Babylonian period."²² The denial of God to build a House for Him was, according to Hurowitz, exceptional when the "deity responded negatively to the request of a king who is otherwise viewed in a positive light".²³ Maybe it was the tactical stratagem of Deuteronomist writers to show that a personality otherwise loved by God could make the mistakes in order to be attractive for the next generations. We should be careful when reading the Deuteronomist writings because these do not always present historical truth. That was not their aim. Historical truth was always a big problem in all civilised societies up to the beginning of the Enlightenment age in Europe. The narrative histories which were brought for the readers by the Deuteronomists need not to be verifiable through documentary evidence. Documentary evidences probably or often did not exist at all. If they exist they were not taken into account because the Deuteronomist narrative histories and writings were ideological. Yahwistic ideas present in these writings were not a sophisticated exercise in history writing, but rather a literature of *propaganda*. Deuteronomist writings are not possible to characterise as historical writings, although they were often, but not always, narrative histories. One good example is *Deuteronomy* 28, verses 1–6, 25–30 and 45.

In the first verses, we read all blessings of God if the children of Israel will follow his commandments.

And if you obey the voice of the Lord, being careful to do all his commandments which I command you this day, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your beasts, the increase of your cattle, and the young of

²² HUROWITZ, V. *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, p. 164. Approximate dates concerned with Mesopotamia are from about 2500 – 600 B. C.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading-through. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.

It will be completely different if the children of Israel will not follow God's commandments.

The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and you shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. And your dead body shall be food for all birds of the air, and for beasts of the earth; and there shall be no one to frighten them away. The Lord will smite you with the boils of Egypt, and with the ulcers and the scurvy and the itch, of which you cannot be healed. The Lord will smite you with madness and blindness and confusion of mind; and you shall grope at noonday, as the blind grope in darkness, and you shall not prosper in your way; and you shall be only oppressed and robbed continually, and there shall be no one to help you. You shall betroth a wife, and another man shall lie with her; you shall build a house, and you shall not dwell in it; you shall plant a vineyard, and you shall not use the fruit of it.

After a long enumeration of all chastisements in verse 45 we read: "All these curses shall come upon you and overtake you, till you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep his commandments which he commanded you."

These parts of the *Deuteronomy* were written under the impact of Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty from the year 672 B. C. with all blessings and cursing on the citizens and vassals of his kingdom in the names of the deities of his country associated with specific curses as god Sin for leprosy, god Shamash for blindness and Dilipat for rape, and pillage by foreign army.²⁴ Since *Deuteronomy* does not acknowledge any gods except the Lord God of Israel and the sons and daughters could not have other gods before Him²⁵ all the blessings and cursing were only connected with the name of God. Sometimes these are very close to the Assyrian wordings. As the cursing "for all the birds of the air" and "for the beasts of the earth" we have good examples in the *Bible*: One in the story of young David fighting Goliath in *1 Samuel* 17: 44 where Goliath said: "Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts

²⁴ Cf. LEVINSON, B. M. *Deuteronomy*. In COOGAN, M. D. (Editor in Chief). *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Books of the Bible*. Vol. 1, pp. 196–198; PARPOLA, S., WATANABE, K. (eds.). *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*. *State Archives of Assyria* 2; WEINFELD, M. *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic School*.

²⁵ *Deuteronomy* 5: 7.

of the field.” In 2 *Samuel* 21: 10 we read that Rizpah, the concubine of Saul did not follow the cursing from the *Deuteronomy*: “Then Rizpah the daughter of Ai’ah took sackcloth, and spread it for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until rain fell upon them from the heavens; and she did not allow the birds of the air to come upon them by day, or the beasts of the field by night.” It is interesting to see how the Deuteronomists forgot the cursing allegedly pronounced by God and did show the great crime by David who tried to kill all of King Saul’s male progeny except of Ish-bo’sheth.²⁶

More about the Solomonic Temple within the Sacred Continuum of the Near East

As yet we have not mentioned the dreams “the best-known (to us) way for the god to deliver a message to the king was by means of a dream. In a dream, the god would reveal to the king, either explicitly through words or symbolically through visual means, what was demanded”.²⁷ Dreams are mentioned in the building accounts of the Assyrian kings of Assurbanipal (ca. 669 – 630) and (perhaps) Esarhaddon.²⁸ In Esarhaddon’s case maybe such a dream is referred to in the poetic description of the restoration of Ešarra, Assur’s temple in the city of Assur, where it is written: “Build August Ešarra, dais of my delight! Like the writing of Heaven make its forms artistic.”²⁹

There is a dream connected with Solomon’s visit at Gibeon we have just mentioned with the crime of David and children and grandchildren of Saul. Solomon went there to sacrifice and to burn incense at the high place where Gibeon was situated. He used to offer a thousand burnt offerings upon the altar there. The inhabitants of Gibeon were not Hebrews, but they were their allies since the time of Israel’s entry into Canaan. There the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.”³⁰ Solomon responded, among others, in this way, “O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people whom thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding mind to govern thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to

²⁶ 2 *Samuel* 4: 1–12.

²⁷ HUROWITZ, V. *I Have Built You an Exalted House*, p. 143.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 144.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 145. Probably taken over from BORGER, R. Die Inschriften Assarhaddons. In *Archiv für Orientforschung*, 18, 1957 – 1958, pp. 113–118.

³⁰ 1 *Kings* 3: 5

govern this thy great people?”³¹ This dream was not connected with the construction of the temple, but with the governing of the people. We may see the self-pride of the authors of the text since they should know that the peoples of Mesopotamia at least, were more powerful, superior in numbers, and extolling Solomon’s humbleness which was certainly not an attribute of his character. God then said to him: “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honour, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.”³² All this was only an introduction to the well-known living child to her mother, or the story of his meeting with the queen of Sheba who heard of the fame of Solomon and came to test him with hard questions. “And Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing hidden from the king which he could not explain to her.”³³

All readers of the Bible are aware of many dreams both in the *Old* and *New Testament* from *Genesis* up to *Zechariah*, who very reasonably claims that “dreamers tell false dreams, and give empty consolation,”³⁴ and from *Matthew* up to *The Letter of Jude*.³⁵ In the dreams of the *New Testament* the messengers are usually the angels.

In this essay above there are the words from the letter of Solomon to Hiram king of Tyre. It prolongs with the request of to him for help: “Now therefore command that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me; and my servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set; for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sido’nians.”³⁶ Hiram answered to this letter as follows: “I am ready to do all you desire in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. My servants shall bring it down to the sea from Lebanon; and I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you direct, and I will have them broken up there, and you shall receive it; and you shall meet my wishes by providing food for my household.”³⁷

Solomon’s Temple was constructed of full, unhewn stones.³⁸ In *1 Kings* 6: 7 we read: “When the house was built, it was with stone prepared at the quarry; so

³¹ Ibid., 3: 7–9.

³² Ibid., 3: 11–13.

³³ *1 Kings* 10: 3.

³⁴ *Zechariah* 10: 2.

³⁵ *The Letter of Jude* 8.

³⁶ *1 Kings* 5: 6. The Sido’nians was a term used later for Phoenicians.

³⁷ *1 Kings* 5: 8–9.

³⁸ *YHWH’s Exalted House*, p. 69.

that neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the temple, while it was being built.” And earlier in *Exodus* 20: 25 there are the words how the altars should be done: “And if you make me altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones; for if you wield your tool upon it you profane it.” Later in *Joshua* 8: 31 the same prescription is found: “...Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded the people of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, ‘an altar of unhewn stones, upon which no man has lifted an iron tool’; and they offered on it burned offerings to the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings.” But there were two exceptions. The Temple’s foundations and the paving of the courtyard were for practical reasons built of hewn stone.³⁹ The unhewn stones from which the whole Temple was built was certainly not very attractive and it is possible that a wooden envelope made of cedars of Lebanon made it more attractive and it is possible it may have also some mythological function. As some of the researchers such as R. J. Clifford and M. Weippert claim the mountains of Lebanon were considered by the peoples of the region and were even thought of as a divine dwelling place.⁴⁰ Because of the reasons enumerated above we cannot know the external and internal dimensions of the Temple. If we may believe *1 Kings* 6: 2: “The house which King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long, twenty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.” In the *RSW* bringing us a more understandable explanation for English readers we may be informed in the notes belonging to verses 6: 2–6. In the *Good News Bible. Today’s English Version*, probably the best for modern readers, we find this translation of these verses: “Inside it was 27 metres long, 9 metres wide, and 13.5 metres high. The entrance room was 4.5 metres deep and 9 metres wide, as wide as the sanctuary itself. The walls of the Temple had openings in them, narrower on the outside than on the inside. Against the outside walls, on the sides and the back of the Temple, a three-storied annexe was built, each storey 2.2 metres high. Each room in the lowest storey was 2.2 metres wide, in the middle storey 2.7 metres wide, and in the top storey 3.1 metres wide. The temple wall on each floor was thinner than on the floor below so that the rooms could rest on the wall without having their beams built into it.”⁴¹ According to Hurowitz: “The entry to the Temple was on its eastern end the building’s axis ran east to west. The Temple was situated higher than the royal palace... In front of the Temple was the *ulam*, or forecourt, a broad-room structure with

³⁹ Loc. cit.

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 72; CLIFFORD, R. J. *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*. Harvard Semitic Monographs, 4, p. 132; WEIPERT, M. Libanon. In EDZARD, D. O. (ed.). *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie*. Vol. 6, pp. 641–650.

⁴¹ British usage edition first published in 1976, Collins, The Bible Societies.

internal dimensions”⁴² which are in the *Good News Bible* rendered as follows: “The entrance room was 4.5 metres deep and 9 metres wide, as wide as the sanctuary itself.” The Temple was covered with cedar wood, both from the outside and inside, suggesting clearly it’s deity’s house, although YHWH was not a pagan god.

In the Temple, there were two rooms. One was called the *hekal*, according to P. V. Mankowski probably of Sumerian origin meaning *e.gal* big house or palace.⁴³ This seems to be a real loan-word from Mesopotamian language and one of the proofs of the sacred continua in the Near East. There are many in the Bible. The inner room became most famous and called *debir* and known as Holy of Holies. Holy of Holies was a cubical structure on each side measuring 9 metres or 20 cubits. There two cherubs and the Arch of the Covenant stood which symbolised the presence of God. The walls as well the floor of it were covered with cedars. On its walls, there were also carvings of cherubs, palms and calyxes.⁴⁴ As to the last we read in *1 Kings* 6: 29 as follows in the *RSV* version: “He (Solomon, M. G.) carved all the walls of the house round (should be the inner sanctuary or *debir*, M. G.) with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms.” In the *Good News Bible* we read this verse also in another way: “The walls of the main room and of the inner room were all decorated with carved figures of winged creatures, palm-trees, and flowers.” I personally suppose that Hurowitz is more precise and right. According to him all the internal walls and the floor of the Holy of Holies were covered with *zahab sagur* which is also at least to some extent of Akkadian origin and designates gold that has been smelted in a particular way.⁴⁵ It is not quite certain that the Temple had windows. The *hekal* may have been illuminated by ten lamps, but the Holy of Holies had no windows and no lamps and was completely dark. In *1 Kings* 8: 12 we read in Hurowitz rendition: “The Lord decided to dwell in thick darkness.” This statement brings him near to the texts in Mesopotamia, for instance, a hymn describing the temple of Enlil in Nippur to be found in J. B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. These temples were dark inside. It means that those who entered inside could not see the god to whom the temple was consecrated.⁴⁶ Here it is also important to stress the belief that the Temple was situated on the highest mountain of the

⁴² HUROWITZ, V. *YHWH's Exalted House*, p. 69.

⁴³ MANKOWSKI, P. V. *Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew*. Harvard Semitic Studies 47, pp. 51–52.

⁴⁴ Cf. HUROWITZ, V. *YHWH's Exalted House*, pp. 73–74.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

then known world.⁴⁷ In reality Zion where the Temple was built was rather low not even 700 metres high. In *Isaiah* 2: 3 written before the year 586 B.C. we find a visionary view that: "It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." Not only this vision of Isaiah of that time is interesting, but also the one in the 11: 6–9 where he presents the future peaceful kingdom of the descendants of David: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." It is necessary to say that this vision was also already known to Sumerians. According to the *Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature* quoted from Hurowitz we may read the Sumerian myth of Enki and Ninhursag describing Dilmun: "In Dilmun the raven was not yet cawing, the partridge not cackling. The lion did not slay, the wolf was not carrying off the lambs, the dog had not been taught to make kids curl up, the pig had not learned that grain was to be eaten."⁴⁸

These views attributed to Isaiah in his young years were not recognized since after this prophesy the Babylonians came and distorted this vision. Here the Hebrews were different from their Eastern neighbours who were living mostly on the plains and when tried to come near to their gods then they should do it with the temples in the forms of ziquurat which the Mesopotamians regarded as a sacred mountain that bound together heaven and earth. Interestingly, they regarded its summing temple not as a sacred centre, but as a mediating space, in this instance a vestibule (shakhuru); for them, primary sacred space was constituted by the heavens. Before the emergence of true ziquurats in the late 3rd millennium, the platform-temples of Sumer were

⁴⁷ SCHWARTZ, J. Torah from Zion: Isaiah's Temple-Vision (Isaiah 2. 1–4). In HOUTMAN, A. et al. (eds.). *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity*, pp. 11–26.

⁴⁸ HUROWITZ, V. *YHWH's Exalted House*, p. 81. More about Dilmun, Sumerian paradise, Ninhursag and Enki see in KRAMER, S. N. (eds.). *Mythologies of the Ancient World*, p. 101. Cf. also the similarities or better to say the parallels between Dilmun and Eden in the Bible, pp. 102–103.

relatively low, consisting only of one or two stages. There too, as in the Americas, platforms grew ever higher... e.g. the 'Anu ziqqurat' at Uruk, with its fifteen-odd building phases concealed onion-like within the final structure. True ziqqurats, such as those at Ur, Assur, Dur Kurigalzu and Nimrud, were built all at one time, in several stages up to a height of some 60 or 70 metres".⁴⁹ In the *Genesis* 11: 1–9 there is a story The Tower of Babel about building of such ziqqurat which is quite peculiar because of a few reasons. In verse 1 we read: "Now the whole earth had one language and few words." The writers of this story forgot that immediately before it in 10: 5, 20 and 31 much was different than before the building this well-known tower. In verse 5 we find that the progeny of Japheth, according to *RSV*, had their own language, by their families, in their nations. According to the *Good News Bible* they were living in their different tribes and countries, each group speaking their own language. In verse 20 the sons of Ham also had their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations. In verse 31 the sons of Shem had also, just as the sons of Japheth and Ham, their families, their languages, their lands, and their nations. These three were the sons of Noah, well-known from the story of the Flood that temporarily happened before the Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel according to the Bible was situated in the country of Shinar, according to *RSV*, on the territory of Babylonia and Assyria. For the Hebrew nomads, the high ziqqurats seemed to be quite extraordinary and their Deuteronomic historians misunderstood their sacred mission as the gateways to heaven, and also the mythologised history of their own nation. Recently John Day in an excellent essay The Tower and City of Babel Story (*Genesis* 11: 1–9): Problems of Interpretation and Background⁵⁰ claims that the country was Babylonia and the Tower of Babel described in *Genesis* was one of over 30 ziqqurats from the Near East called Etemenanki of the god Marduk in Babylon from the time of king Nabopolassar (626 – 605 B.C.). This must be known to the Hebrews of that time since it was built by the father of Nebuchadnezzar II, the destroyer of Jerusalem and the Temple. The negative and distorted depiction of the Tower of Babel from the point of view of the Deuteronomic historians is understandable, although the intentions both of Solomon and later of Nabopolassar were similar: to be near to YHWH or to Marduk, the chief god of Babylonians. The history of both temples was similar: the first was destroyed by Babylonians and the second by the citizens of Babylon through the following centuries when its

⁴⁹ WIGHTMAN, G. J. *Sacred Spaces. Religious Architecture in the Ancient World*, pp. 953–954.

⁵⁰ YONA, S. et al. (eds.). *Marbeh Hokmah. Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East in Loving Memory of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz*, pp. 139–159.

baked bricks were used as a quarry for local inhabitants. Nothing remained out of it except of a hole in the place where it originally stood.

At the beginning of this essay we mentioned the temple at 'Ain Dara situated near Aleppo in Syria and was discovered by chance by a shepherd in 1954. It was built on the highest point of the tell, similarly to Solomon's Temple on Zion, and up to now after the archaeological excavations is still well preserved although for a long time it served as a quarry. It was built in three phases between 1300 – 740 B.C. of which the second phase around 1000 – 900 B.C. was probably the most decisive as a pattern for the first real temple on the territory of Judah and Israel. John Monson does not ponder over why just the temple 'Ain Dara had the greatest impact on Solomon and his builders, but it was probably caused by the fact that its position in nature, on tell or high mountain, was corresponding to the situation in Jerusalem and to the idea of sacred space corresponding to old traditions from the time at least from Moses and his experience after the exodus from Egypt. Mountains were very important for building the temples in Judah, Israel and on the mountains, or otherwise high places in Canaan. We know it from many places in the Bible and in the materials coming from other sources. Such was "Horeb, the mountain of God" where according to *Exodus* 3: 1 and according to 33: 1–3: The LORD said to Moses, "Depart, to go up hence, you and the people you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' And I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey..." Although there are many different mountains mentioned in the Bible, the most important for the Old Testament was Zion whose place we mentioned earlier. It is necessary to also point out Mount Sinai where according to the Bible God gave to Moses the Ten Commandments in two tables and the tables "were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables".⁵¹

More about Vessels and Furnishings of the Temple of Salomon

In our essay, it is important to mention the impressive bronze vessels and other works made of bronze described in detail in *1 Kings* 7: 13–47. All were done or better to say cast by artisan Hiram of Tyre, other than the king of the same name. In *Good News Bible*, his name is Hiram. All of them were deported to Babylon in 586 B.C. as well as those made of gold and silver and recast or

⁵¹ Cf. *Exodus* 20: 1–17 and 32: 16.

otherwise used there. For some unknown reason, the description of bronze vessels is very detailed, in *1 Kings* 7: 48–50. In *RSV* we read: “So Solomon made all the vessels that were in the house of the LORD: the golden altar, the golden table of the Presence (or of the bread offered to God according to the *Good News Bible*), the lamp stands of pure gold, five on the south side and five on the north, before the inner sanctuary (in the *Good News Bible*: that stood in front of the Most Holy Place, i.e. the Holy of Holies); the flowers, the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; the cups, snuffers, basins, dishes for incense, and firepans, of pure gold; and the sockets of gold, for the doors of the inner most part of the house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the nave of the temple.” The description of the bronze furnishings is long and detailed in *1 Kings* 7: 13–47, although as Hurowitz rightly remarked that “as far the cultic importance and even indispensability are concerned, the bronze vessels are of far less significance than the golden ones”.⁵² We shall mention them according to the translation in the *Good News Bible* since it could be easier understandable for the readers of this essay not accustomed to the weights and measures used in the *RSV*. In the verses just mentioned there are two bronze columns, one bronze tank and ten bronze carts. These two bronze columns each one 8 metres tall were placed at the entrance of the Temple and named Jachin and Boaz. The bronze tank for water was 2.2 metres deep, 4.4 metres in diameter and 13.3 metres in circumference. Each bronze cart was 1.8 metres long, 1.8 metres wide and 1.3 metres high. In China which will be a subject of comparison was different. There the bronze furnishings were more important and very probably during the Shang 商 dynasty (ca. 16th – 11th century B.C.) and Western Zhou 西周 dynasty (ca. 11th century – 770 B.C.) the best in the world of those times. And they were certainly the most important art works of ancient China.⁵³ There is difference between the use of gold in Israel and Judah and in China in those years. Whereas, at least in Solomon’s Temple the gold was used in great quantities, as mentioned presently, in China during the times under review, a considerable “number of gold and silver of the Shang and Western Zhou have been unearthed, but these were mainly small ornamental objects”.⁵⁴ Larger

⁵² HUROWITZ, V. *YHWH’s Exalted House*, p. 77.

⁵³ ALLAN, S. et al. *The Formation of Chinese Civilization. An Archaeological Perspective*, p. 134. Excellent specimens of this art are possible to find in many books. We mention here Hung. *Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture*, pp. 47–70 where he mentions that bronze ritual vessels, similar to the bronze and gold furnishings in Solomon’s Temple are different from the ordinary utensils. In China, like in Near East they were a part of the sacred continua, they were ritual paraphernalia, sacred and unworldly. Cf. also *Bronzi dell’ Antica Cina dal XVIII al III secolo a. C.*, 199 pp.

⁵⁴ ALLAN, S. et al. p. 209.

quantity of gold objects began to appear during the Eastern Zhou (770 – 453 B.C.) and in early Qin tombs approximately at the same time.⁵⁵

More about 'Ain Dara as a Model for Solomon's Temple

We mentioned the reasons why the builders of Solomon's Temple could not follow the ziqqurats in Mesopotamia although otherwise for much in the Bible the Hebrews were indebted to the sacred continua coming from the East. The misunderstanding of the aim of the Tower of Babel is a good example. On the other hand, the examples from Canaan were just as they needed for their purposes, the land of high mountains, as Mount Zaphon, the highest in Syria, with the myth of the dwelling place of Baal, the highest god in the area, was attractive to the theologians of Judea and Israel.⁵⁶ Likewise important was the material for the building of the Temple, especially cedars of Lebanon and cypress timber. Hiram who was responsible for all works concerning the bronze works was the son of a Hebrew woman of the tribe of Naphtali. According to Wightman the 'Ain Dara temple was situated at the edge of the town's citadel and its measures are about 21 × 32 metres⁵⁷ which means that it was larger than Solomon's Temple, but otherwise they were very similar. To some extent Solomon's Temple was a copy of the 'Ain Dara temple with one difference. According to Monson in 'Ain Dara there was one antechamber which was situated before *hekal* and *debir*. They both had a corridor around the walls of the temples. The greatest difference between them were the materials used for building. We already mentioned unhewn stones and cedar wood for Solomon's Temple. 'Ain Dara was made of hewn basalt stones beautifully decorated. Both were built at the highest elevation of the city of those times and had a courtyard in front with a staircase. Both temples had corridors around the buildings which was a unique archaeological find in the second and first millennium B.C. in temples of this kind. The foundations of corridors of 'Ain Dara are still visible and in the *Good News Bible* we read in *1 Kings* 5 and 8: "Against the outside walls, on the sides and the back of the Temple, a three-storied annexe as built,

⁵⁵ Loc. cit.

⁵⁶ CLEMENTS, R. E. Sacred Mountains, Temples and the Presence of God. In MORALES, L. M. *Cult and Cosmos. Tilting Toward a Temple-Centered Theology*, p. 73. In GORDON, C. H. *Canaanite Mythology*. In KRAMER, S. N. (eds.). Op. cit., p. 215 we read that the chief significance of the mythology of Canaan "lies in its effect on ancient Israel. Both where the Old Testament incorporates it, and where the Old Testament reacts against it, Canaanite mythology continues to exert its impact upon us through the Bible".

⁵⁷ WIGHTMAN, G. J. Op. cit., p. 195.

each storey 2.2 metres high” and “The entrance to the lowest storey of the annexe was on the south side of the Temple, with stairs leading up to the second and third storeys”. Probably because based on another source the *RSV* translation is slightly different: “He (Solomon, M. G.) also built a structure against the wall of the house, both the nave and the inner sanctuary; and he made side chambers all around.” And: “The entrance for the lowest story was on the south side of the house; and one went up by stairs to the middle story, and from the middle story to the third.”

Comparison above Ground of Solomon’s Temple with the Palace-Temple in Fengchu

Nothing has remained or was found from this palace-temple in the Western Zhou capital Fengchu (凤雏) in Shaanxi Province. “Like all timber structures built in ancient China, the above ground parts of these buildings have long since disappeared. But enough remains are left on their foundations to suggest a consistent plan.”⁵⁸ This plan is similar to one in Monson, op. cit. p. 23 and in Wu Hung, p. 87. Certainly, in the time when it was the capital of the ruling dynasty it was full of ritual bronzes having the aim “to bring down the Supreme God, as well as ancestral deities, from above”.⁵⁹ In difference to the Temple of Solomon, ‘Ain Dara temple and others in Canaan the palace-temple in Fengchu was built on the Zhou Plain Zhouyuan (周原) between the rivers Zhigou and Meiyang although Mount Qishan (岐山) is in the vicinity. This is completely different from Jerusalem where the palace of the king was lower than the Temple and it was high on the mountain. In 1976 more than 17.000 oracle bones were found in Fengchu. Some scholars suppose that it was Western Zhou 西周 (the end of the 11th century – 771 B.C.) ancestral temple. Since there are no other written documents like in the case of Solomon’s Temple, it is also possible, as some other scholars argue, that the palace-temple was the living quarters of some Zhou nobleman.⁶⁰ Chinese sacred continuum is very different from the continua in the Near East from Sumer to Canaan or Egypt. The most important was the different attitude of the rulers of countries, or better to say, of relatively small city states, or later great kingdoms to their gods or to the main gods as Marduk in Babylonia or Baal in Canaan. Chinese Supreme God Di 帝 or Shangdi 上帝 of Shang 商 Dynasty could not be comparable to these gods in

⁵⁸ WU HUNG, Op. cit., p. 83.

⁵⁹ Quoted according to *Li Ji (Book of Rites)* in WU HUNG, Op. cit., p. 87.

⁶⁰ LU LIANCHENG, YAN WENMING. Society During the Three Dynasties. In ALLAN, S. et al. Op. cit., p. 185.

the countries just mentioned, and in any case to YHWH in the Bible. The Supreme God of the Shang people “had dominion over rain, wind, other atmospheric phenomena, harvests, the fate of urban settlements, warfare, sickness, and the king’s person. He shared some of these jurisdictions with the ancestors and nature powers, but he was the supreme religious deity”.⁶¹ According to another well-known scholar Robert Eno and some others “Di was conceived as a particular high ancestor, as a collective body of high ancestors, as a single force of nature, or as Nature itself. Unlike other spirits, Di received no sacrificial offerings, yet no other spirit could match the range and force of its powers. We do not know whether the word *di* meant god or was the name of a god. The Chinese character itself is of uncertain origin. It also appears in the oracle texts as a generic title for some deceased kings and perhaps also for some nature spirits...”.⁶² In reality everything is more complicated. We know only little from oracle bones about the religious practice of Shang times. The short review of texts which Eno brings to the interested readers begins with inscriptions that concern the deity of Di which means that he was a kind of god although different from those mentioned in this essay. In this review, there are quotations of examples of 18 inscriptions of the powers of Di, of 11 inscriptions of natural deities also at least partly named Di and of 14 ancestral spirits.⁶³ This clearly shows that the Shang pantheon was different from those we know from the sources we tried to show from Mesopotamia, Canaan, Judah and Israel. Typological or parallel comparative studies are therefore important even for sacred continua of the countries of Near and Far East that were in no way connected together in the time that is subject of this study. In the book mentioned above David N. Keightley wrote the following: “...I believe that we are justified in using the inscriptions (on the oracle texts from the end of the Shang Dynasty, M. G.) as a reliable and central source for Shang concerns because it is the king who, either directly or by proxy, divined. Unless we are willing to believe that the Shang kings were hypocrites, it is clear that the topics were important to them and were felt to be important to their ancestors and retainers. *The king was a theocrat* (underscored by me, M. G.) who presumably ruled in part by virtue of his extraordinary ability to communicate with the ultrahuman powers. The bone records, therefore, are not simply a discarded priestly archive. They are religious-political records of decision making, incantations, reassurance, and communication at the highest level of *theocratic government* (underscored by me). If a topic does appear in the bones, we are

⁶¹ KEIGHTLEY, D. N. *Sources of Shang History. The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China*, p. 33.

⁶² ENO, R. Deities and Ancestors in Early Oracle Inscriptions. In LOPEZ Jr., D. S. *Religions of China in Practice. Princeton Readings in Religions*, p. 45.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 46–50.

justified in thinking that it was a topic of central concern to the Shang kings and – since there are likely to have been few atheists in *Bronze Age Theocracy* (underscored by me) – to the Shang state as a whole.”⁶⁴ In the same year as *Sources of Shang History* he published another study entitled: “The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture,” *History of Religions*, Vol. 17, Nos. 3–4, pp. 211–224, where he claims again that: “A power emanated from the *theocrat* (underscored by me. M. G.) because he was a channel, ‘the one man’ who could appeal for the ancestral blessings, or dissipate the ancestral curses, which affected the commonality... The king depended upon his ancestors.”⁶⁵ Here Keightley follows the arguments of Kwang-chih Chang that Shang Di “was not given a specific location, he was not to be sacrificed to, and his relations with the early, legendary ancestors of the Tzu clan were not very clearly defined... I would... suggest that the concept of Shang Ti was an abstraction, whereas the ancestor deities represented substance.”⁶⁶ Eleven years later Keightley wrote Chapter Four The Shang: China’s First Historical Dynasty for the book edited by Michael Loewe and Edward L. Shaughnessy *The Cambridge History of Ancient China. From the Origins of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Here he does not claim that the king was a theocrat, that the bone records and that what they represented was the highest level of theocratic government, but in the passage entitled The Upper Pantheon devotes one and half page of the text to Di, according to him the High God. He acknowledges as other authors too that the original meaning of the word *di* is hard to determine, but the kings and their retinue “believed that Di presided over a hierarchy of ancestral and other Powers that were capable of influencing the success or failure of most aspects of Shang life”.⁶⁷ In the long passage The High Powers except of High God he mentions in the Shang Pantheon the Nature Powers, as He 河 Yellow River Power, 嵩 Mount Song near the modern City of Zhengzhou, Ri 日 the Sun, then the so-called Former Lords, Predynastic ancestors, Dynastic ancestors and Dynastic ancestresses.⁶⁸ From a comparative point of view, I claim that their place and their power was like the saints in Christian denominations who ask God to help those who pray for help or the role of angels in the Old Testament. If Keightley at the end of the last century still believed in the theocratic government of Shang then this kind of theocracy

⁶⁴ KEIGHTLEY, D. N. *Sources of Shang History*, p. 136.

⁶⁵ KEIGHTLEY, D. N. Op. cit., p. 213. I am very much indebted to Dr. Barbara Hoster, Monumenta Serica Institute, Sankt Augustin, Germany, for supplying me with this essay.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 219.

⁶⁷ LOEWE, M., SHAUGHNESSY, E. L. Op. cit., pp. 252–253.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 253–255.

was different than those of Near Eastern countries, and completely different from those in Israel and Judah, or better to say, from that preached in the canonic Deuteronomist writings from the biblical book *Joshua* to *1 Kings* and *2 Kings*, and that was demanded from Hebrew kings and later urged to follow by the Prophets. The theocracy in the Bible was absolute. The kings beginning with David (ca. 1010 – ca. 967) were regarded as the sons of God and He promised them that their royal houses and thrones will be stable forever.⁶⁹ This eternal dynasty in fact ended in 586 B.C. as mentioned presently. The last years of the Shang Dynasty beginning about the reign of king Wu Ding 武丁 (ca. ? – 1189 B.C.) up to the last king Di Xin 帝辛 (1086 – 1045) much changed in the attitude to the Di and the still “theocratic” government when “the kings no longer divined about Di ordering the rain or thunder or about seeking his approval or assistance. Di’s virtual disappearance from the record suggests either the increasing confidence with which the Shang kings relied on the power of their ancestors, their increasing indifference to Di’s existence, or their increasing realisation that Di’s will was so inscrutable that it was fruitless to divine about his intentions”.⁷⁰

What was written above about Di and his attitude to the other Powers, connected with the Nature, ancestors, and ancestresses, mentioned in the passages by Eno and Keightley, and its changing character, shows us a kind of *fluidity* of the kind Benjamin D. Sommer analysed in his book *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*. The title of the book is somewhat misleading since it begins outside ancient Israel: “Religious thinkers of the ancient Near East viewed gods and goddesses as radically unlike human beings in ways that may seem baffling to people in the contemporary Western world. In the eyes of Babylonians, Assyrians, Canaanites, Arameans, and Egyptians, a single deity could exist simultaneously in several bodies. Further, a deity could have a fragmented or ill-defined self, for gods were not fully distinct from each other, at least not all of the time.”⁷¹ He devotes more attention to the situation in Mesopotamia and in Canaan. One kind of fluidity he calls *fragmentation* where some gods or goddesses “have a fluid self in the sense that there are several divinities with a single name who somehow are and are not the same deity”.⁷² He mentions goddess Ishtar, well-known in Europe as Venus, and also the Assyrian king Esarhaddon and his treaty with the king of the small state Urakazabanu, Ramataya, where she is witness as Ishtar of Arbela, Ishtar of Niniveh, Ishtar (...of) Carchemish. In the Babylonian epic *Enuma Elish* the

⁶⁹ 2 *Samuel*, 7: 14–16.

⁷⁰ LOEWE, M., SHAUGHNESSY, E. L. Op. cit., p. 261.

⁷¹ SOMMER, B. D. Op. cit., p. 12.

⁷² Ibid., p. 13.

three gods of Mesopotamia Anu, Ea, and Enlil seem to be equated with the younger god Marduk.⁷³ Where Canaan is concerned, there seems to be many gods named Baal: Baal of Mount Saphon, Baal Shamayin, of Peor, of Ugarit, of Lebanon and Baal of Sidon.⁷⁴ In the *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* 24 pages are devoted to Baal in the Bible. By the way *ba'al* means lord, owner. It reminds us the title LORD of God in the *RSV*, and as such occurs 90 times in the Old Testament.⁷⁵ The usual term for god, but also for God in the Old Testament is *Elohim*, which occurs 2570 times there but “with a variety of meanings”.⁷⁶ Other names for God are El or Eloah.⁷⁷ From above we wrote about Di, it is quite obvious that his self was likewise fluid as shown by Eno and Keightley and never clearly defined as claimed by Kwang-chih Chang.

The fluidity of the gods mentioned presently, likewise of the God of Hebrews, is different from the Chinese Di. Among the Sumerians, Akkadians, Egyptians, Canaanites, Assyrians, and Babylonians the gods were always regarded as gods without doubting their identity and substance. Among Hebrews for a long period there was the struggle between YHWH or God with different names and other gods, mostly of Canaanite origin: El, Baal and Asherah as consort of YHWH, and even Sun, but this one is more connected with Mesopotamia.⁷⁸ With Mesopotamia a lot is connected with the Bible. “Tammuz and the Bible” by Edwin M. Yamanauchi brings much about this god of Sumerian and Akkadian origin. He was called Dumuzi in Sumer and allegedly married to the goddess of Inanna or Ishtar. About him was written much in relation to the Bible, but his fluidity was caused by more misunderstanding of modern scholars than the myths about him. In this, for instance, his resurrection from death, preaching by some modern writers, was based “on nothing but inference and surmise, guess and conjecture”.⁷⁹ There is nothing bad in the worship of Tammuz. In the Bible, he is mentioned only once. In *Ezekiel* 8: 14–15 we may read that “form” that had the appearance of a man, the messenger of God, brought him “into the entrance of the north gate of the

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 13, 16–17.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 24.

⁷⁵ TORN van der, K., BECKING, B., HORST van der, P. W. (eds.). *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, p. 249.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 668. To God or gods in the Hebrew Bible and the Near Eastern countries and Egypt in the *Dictionary* are devoted 33 pages.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 669.

⁷⁸ SMITH, M. S. *The Early History of God. Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*. Cf. also NIEHR, H. Israelite Religion and Canaanite Religion. In STAVRAKOPOULOU, Fr., BARTON, J. (eds.). *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, pp. 23–36.

⁷⁹ KRAMER, S. N. (ed.). Introduction. In *Mythologies of the Ancient World*, p. 10.

house of the LORD (Solomon's Temple, M. G.); and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. Then he said to me, 'Have you seen this, O son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these'". We do not know why the Judean women wept. Probably because he was the prototype of the dying and rising vegetation god, and it was the time before the autumn and winter.

The situation in the last period of the Shang Dynasty shows that not only its theocracy weakened, but also its sacred continuum, and probably its sacred spaces, as Fengchu, became problematic. It seems that temple-palaces at 安阳 Anyang were more dedicated to ancestral tablets than to Di. Hungarian scholar András Márk Szekeres agrees with Kwang-chih Chang and Keightley about Di's remoteness and abstractness.⁸⁰ He has also the same opinion as the last mentioned "who observed that older ancestors were not only considered more powerful, but their powers were exercised in increasingly impersonal ways, losing their personalities, with only their rank being important (he found the root of Chinese bureaucratic thinking in this attitude) and Di was the most impersonal and 'bureaucratic' of all".⁸¹

Conclusion also in Relation to Sacred Time in Both Countries

From that what has been written presently ensues that even Keightley should change his opinions concerning the problem of theocracy during the reign of the Shang dynasty. His initial judgment concerning the firm theocracy of the kings and their governments at the end of the era and coming the Zhou dynasty were made probably under the impact of the theocracy as defined in the Deuteronomist writings of the Bible. Whether Keightley was informed about the situations of other Near East countries is not possible to judge from the materials I have at the disposition at the time of writing this essay. In any case he and others mentioned here were right. At the end of the dynasty not so much theocracy, but the "growing power of the ancestral spirits" together "with the regularisation of the ancestral sacrifices",⁸² a kind of *priores-cracy*, became to be prevalent in Shang China.

This began to change with the Western Zhou Dynasty, after the battle of Muye 牧野 in 1045 B.C., but has a relatively long history. For our purpose, it is enough to mention only King Wen 文王 (1099/56 – 1050) who shortly before about in 1053 led a Zhou army through southern Shanxi and defeated some

⁸⁰ SZEKERES, A. M. Early Roots of Chinese Astrological Thinking in the Religious Belief of Di. In *Studia orientalia slovacica*, 2013, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 207–226.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 221.

⁸² LOEWE, M., SHAUGHNESSY, E. L. Op. cit., pp. 261–262.

small states in the area. His son King Wu 武王 (1049/45 – 1043) dared more when he attacked the Shang army directly at Muyeh outside the capital of Zhaoge 朝歌 of the last “bad” ruler Di Xin. In a “narrative history” typical for the writings before the Christian era in different literatures of the world, inclusive China, this battle is described in the poem “Da ming” 大明 (Great brightness) of the *Shijing* 诗经 (*Book of Songs*), Mao 236, in Shaughnessy’s rendition:

The Yin-Shang legions,/ Their battle flags like a forest,/ Were arrayed on the field of Muye./ “Arise, my lords,/ The Lord on High looks down on you;/ Have no second thoughts.”/ The field of Muye was so broad./ The sandalwood chariots were so gleaming./ The teams of four were so pounding./ There was the general Shangfu./ He rose as an eagle,/ Aiding that King Wu,/ And attacked great Shang,/ Meeting in the morning, clear and bright.⁸³

In this poem is interesting that the words the “Lord on High” is an exact translation of Shangdi 上帝, allegedly the main god, even if problematic, of the Shang era. Shaughnessy’s translation “looks down on you” is rendered by James Legge as “has come to you” or even “is with you”.⁸⁴ It seems that Shangdi was helping King Wu to overcome the inhabitants of people who in the last years lost their belief in him. Be it as it may, it seems that Zhou and concretely Wen Wang and maybe even Wu Wang, who had experience with the life in Shang country, felt sympathy to the idea of Lord on High, although he was not the god of Zhou, and their descendants who wrote this poem, enjoyed the idea that Lord on High helped to defeat its own people, destroy Shang China and made the Zhou army victorious.

Shaughnessy in this treatment of the subject writes about the role of Heaven, the main god of Zhou in the royal authority of Zhou kings in the Da gao 大诰 (Great Proclamation) in the *Shang shu* 尚书 (Book of Documents) the words ascribed to King Cheng 成王 (1042/35 – 1006) shortly after the death of King Wu: “I the young son do not dare to disregard the command of the Lord on High. Heaven was beneficent to King Wen, raising up our little country of Zhou... succeeding to receive this mandate. Now Heaven will be helping the people... Wuhu! Heaven is brightly awesome – it helps our grand foundation.”⁸⁵ This was for the first time when the Mandate of Heaven (*Tian ming* 天命) was

⁸³ Ibid., pp. 309–310.

⁸⁴ LEGGE, J. *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. 4. *The She King, or The Book of Poetry*, pp. 435–436.

⁸⁵ LOEWE, M., SHAUGHNESSY, E. L. Op. cit., p. 314.

mentioned in Chinese history. Shaughnessy did not devote his attention to the theological or theocratic problems of the Zhou government as Keightley did in relation to Shang.

More about it is written in the book by Cho-yun Hsu and K. M. Linduff, *Western Chou Civilization* bringing their views on the moralisation of the Mandate of Heaven. From their speculation ensue that Zhou thus “accepted Heavenly authority as supreme and abandoned the pantheistic and shamanistic practices of the Shang in favour of a more abstract concept”.⁸⁶ The Zhou were chosen because of their worship to their patron Heaven and the moral integrity of their kings, not because of their ancestors. In the *Book of Poetry*, Mao 241, we may read in the poem Great is God (*Huang yi Shangdi* 皇矣上帝) in the rendition of James Legge:

Great is God,/ Beholding this lower world in majesty,/ He surveyed the
four quarters (of the kingdom), /Seeking for someone to give settlement
to the people. /Those two (earlier) dynasties/ Had failed to satisfy him
with their government;/ So throughout the various (States),/ He sought
and considered,/ For one on which he might confer the rule./ Hating all
the great (States),/ He turned His kind regards on the west,/ And there
gave a settlement (to king T'ae).⁸⁷

Later translation by Arthur Waley is partly different and more credible:

God on high in sovereign might/ Looked down majestically,/ Gazed down
upon four quarters,/ Examining the ills of the people./ Already in two
kingdoms/ The governance had been all awry;/ Then every land/ He
tested and surveyed./ God on high examined them/ And hated the laxity
of their rule./ So he turned his gaze to the west/ And here made his
dwelling-place.⁸⁸

If we look at Legge's rendition with intercultural eyes, we may presume that he looked similarly at Shangdi as God of Hebrews on His chosen people during the years of wandering in the desert before conquering the Promised Land. The story of King Wen and King Wu is the story of conquest similar to that of Joshua in biblical *Joshua*, although not so well written, but full of atrocities, bloodshed, and God on high is likewise a God of Battles, and the wars led by

⁸⁶ CHO-YUN HSU, LINDUFF, K. M. *Western Zhou Civilization*, p. 101.

⁸⁷ LEGGE, J. *The Chinese Classics*. Vol. 4, pp. 448–449. King Tai was one of the ancestors of Zhou. See CHO-YUN HSU, LINDUFF, K. M. Op. cit., p. 103.

⁸⁸ WALEY, A. *The Book of Songs*, p. 255. Two kingdoms mentioned are Xia 夏 and Yin 殷.

these two kings are the Holy Wars. Great God of Legge when surveyed the four quarters, after seeking for some “to give settlement to the people” found one on the west and he gave it as a kingdom to the Zhou people. God of the Hebrews found this place on the east and gave it to descendants of Jacob. By the way, Legge was the one who preferred to use Shangdi when translating the term God or YHWH from the Bible into Chinese.⁸⁹

We may proceed with the ode on King Wen, the first one of the section Da ya 大雅 Greater Odes in the translation likewise by Waley:

King Wen is on high;/ Oh, he shines in Heaven!/ Chou is an old people,
But its charge is new./ The land of Chou became illustrious,/ Blessed by
God's charge./ King Wen ascends and descends/ On God's left hand, on
His right./⁹⁰

Although Shang-Yin 商殷 were subdued by Chou, “Heaven's charge is not forever”, according to Waley's translation, I regard that the rendition by Legge of the statement 天命 (The appointment of Heaven) or Mandate of Heaven “is not constant” as more appropriate.⁹¹

Although so much was written in Zhou documents about Shangdi, the main deity of Zhou was Heaven. “Heaven as the supreme being, or the dome of the sky was worshipped as the supreme being by the Zhou... Sometimes *t'ien* was a part of a proper name, sometimes it meant ‘great’ or ‘grand’, but in no case did *t'ien* carry an anthropomorphic meaning such as ‘sky-god’.”⁹² I do not agree with such explanation and I suppose that in the concept of Tian of Zhou was both an anthropomorphic part as well as the understanding of the dome of the sky. In the last part of the poem called Reversion (*Ban* 板) from Greater Odes, Mao 254, we read in Legge's translation:

Revere the anger of Heaven,/ And presume not to make sport or be idle,
Revere the changing moods of Heaven,/ And presume not to drive about
[at your pleasure]./ Great Heaven is intelligent,/ And is with you in all
your goings./ Great Heaven is clear-seeing,/ And is with you in your
wanderings and indulgences.⁹³

⁸⁹ EBER, I. *The Jewish Bishop & the Chinese Bible*. S. I. J. Schereschewsky (1831 – 1906), p. 213.

⁹⁰ WALEY, A. Op. cit., pp. 250–251.

⁹¹ LEGGE, J. Op. cit., p. 430.

⁹² CHO-YUN HSU, LINDUFF, K. M. Op. cit., p. 106.

⁹³ LEGGE, J. Op. cit., p. 503.

The theocracy of Zhou was different from that of Shang at least for a half of millennium of the dynasty. It began to change around the second half of the Chunqiu 春秋 period (722 – 453 B.C.). We are indebted to Yuri Pines who in an extensive book dedicated Chapter 2: Heaven and Man Part Ways. Changing Attitudes toward Divine Authority, mainly to the political life of the time and underscored the following statement: “It is natural that the examination of political aspects of Zhou religion should begin with Heaven (*tian*). The importance of Heaven for discussion derives not only from its position as the supreme deity in Zhou religion, but also from its unique role as a primarily political deity.”⁹⁴ In the Zhou Song Odes 周頌, Mao 288 we read in Pines' rendition:

Be reverent! Be reverent!/ Heaven is clear-sighted./ The mandate (Mandate of Heaven, M.G.) is not easily [preserved]./ Do not say that [Heaven] is too high --/ it exalts and degrades [human] affairs/ it constantly watches us here.⁹⁵

During the whole Spring and Autumn Period the Heaven “remained the highest and the most revered deity, but its impact on everyday life changed. Chunqiu statesmen gradually abandoned the early Zhou belief in Heaven as an active deity that safeguards the political order and guides human affairs. Members of the Chunqiu educated elite questioned their ability to comprehend Heaven's intent and were no longer confident that Heaven would directly respond to human actions”.⁹⁶

In another excellent study Pines vaults over the periods of Western and Eastern Zhou, Warring States Period (481 – 221 B.C.) and partly also Sima Qian's 司马迁 (ca. 145 – 90 B.C.). He traces the bifurcation of history writings between sacred and secular in the booklet *Chunqiu* 春秋 (*Annals*), attributed to Confucius (551 – 479 B.C.), and then in two its most important commentaries *Zuozhuan* 左传 (*Zuo Commentary*) and *Gongyang zhuan* 公羊传 (*Gongyang Commentary*). According to him *Zuozhuan* approach is more secular,⁹⁷ *Gongyang zhuan* is more sacred, although it was written about a century later. *Zuozhuan* is the work from between the 5th and 4th century B.C. Sima Qian is

⁹⁴ PINES, Y. *Foundations of Confucian Thought. Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period, 722 – 453 B.C.E.*, p. 57.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 59.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

⁹⁷ Sacred is still obvious. See GÁLIK, M. King David (ca. 1037 – ca. 967 B.C.) and Duke Wen of Jin (ca. 697 – 628 B.C.): Two Paradigmatic Rulers from the Hebrew Deuteronomistic and Early Chinese Confucian Historiography. In *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 1–25, esp. p. 12.

more secular than religious historian.⁹⁸ “Heaven’s Way is distant, the human way is near”⁹⁹ is very appropriate for the Chunqiu period. In spite of the fact that the theocracy of the Zhou began with Heaven, the theological element became more dependent on political reality. During this time, the poems of *Shijing* and chapters from *Shujing* became matters of the remote past and more rationalist thinking started to prevail.

The situation in China was very different from that in the Hebrew tradition, more precise to say in the books of the Bible of the Deuteronomist orientation from *Joshua* to *Kings 1* and *Kings 2*. There the sovereignty and authority was put fully in the hands of God as we claimed above. Theocracy among the Hebrews was absolute, and certainly from King Josiah’s reform in 631 B.C., in China up to the time of the end of the Chunqiu Period was only relative. The same is also valid for the sacred and secular in both countries. In China, it was mainly through the influence of Confucius and his school, and in Judah after finding the book *Deuteronomy* in the Solomonic Temple.

REFERENCES

- ALLAN, Sarah et al. *The Formation of Chinese Civilization. An Archaeological Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press and New World Press, 2005.
- BORGER, Rykle. Die Inschriften Assarhaddons. In *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Vol. 18, 1957 – 1958, pp. 113–118.
- BRERETON, Joel P. Sacred Space. In ELIADE, Mircea (Editor in Chief). *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Vol. 12. New York-London: MacMillan Publishing Company 1987, pp. 526–535.
- Bronzi dell’antica Cina dal XVIII al III secolo a.C.* [Bronze Objects of Ancient China from 18th to 3rd Century B.C.]. Milano: Electa s.p.a., 1988.
- CLEMENS, Ronald E. Sacred Mountains, Temples and the Presence of God. In MORALES, L. Michael. *Cult and Cosmos. Tilting toward a Temple-Centered Theology*. Leuven-Paris-Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2014, p. 73.
- CLIFFORD, Richard J. *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*. Harvard Semitic Monographs 4. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1972, p. 132.
- DIRKSEN, Peter B. Why Was David Disqualified as Temple Builder. The Meaning of 1 Chronicles 22.8. In *Journal for the Study of Old Testament*, 70, pp. 51–56.

⁹⁸ PINES, Yu. Chinese History Writing between the Sacred and Secular. In *Journal for the Study of Old Testament*, 70, pp. 315–340.

⁹⁹ PINES, Y. *Foundations of Confucian Thought*, pp. 57 and 69.

- EBER, Irene. *The Jewish Bishop & the Chinese Bible. S.I.J. Schereschewsky (1831 – 1906)*. Leiden: Brill, 1999, p. 213.
- ENO, Robert. Deities and Ancestors in Early Oracle Inscriptions. In LOPEZ, Donald S. *Religions of China in Practice. Princeton Readings in Religions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, pp. 45–50.
- GÁLIK, Marián. Hebrew Deuteronomistic and Early Chinese Confucian Historiography. A Comparative Approach. In *Frontiers of History in China*, Vol. 5, No. 3. Peking: Higher Education Press and Springer, 2010, pp. 343–362.
- GÁLIK, Marián. King David (ca. 1037 – ca. 967 B.C.) and Duke Wen of Jin (ca. 697 – 628 B.C.): Two Paradigmatic Rulers from the Hebrew Deuteronomistic and Early Chinese Confucian Historiography. In *Asian and African Studies*, 2010, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 1–25.
- Good News Bible. Today's English Version*. The Bible Societies/Collins/Fontana, 1976.
- GORDON, Cyrus H. Canaanite Mythology. In KRAMER, Samuel N. (ed.). *Mythologies of the Ancient World*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books 1961, p. 215.
- HENNIG, Kurt (ed.). *Jerusalem Bibel-Lexikon*. Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänslar-Verlag 1990, p. 863.
- HUROWITZ, Victor (Avigdor). Inside Solomon's Temple. In *Bible Review*, 1994, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 28–29.
- HUROWITZ, Victor (Avigdor). YHWH's Exalted House – Aspects of Design and Symbolism of Solomon's Temple. In DAY, John (ed.). *Temple and Worship in Biblical Israel*. London-New York: T and T Clark International, 2005, repr. 2006, pp. 63–110.
- HUROWITZ, Victor (Avigdor). I Have Built You an Exalted House. The Building in the Bible in the Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings. In *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series* 115. JSOT/ASOR Monograph Series 5. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992.
- HSU Cho-yun, LINDUFF, Katheryn M. *Western Zhou Civilization*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 101, 103 and 106.
- KEIGHTLEY, David N. *Sources of Shang History. The Oracle-Bone Inscriptions of Bronze Age China*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978.
- KEIGHTLEY, David N. The Shang: China's First Historical Dynasty. In LOEWE, Michael, SHAUGHNESSY, Edward L. *The Cambridge History of Ancient China. From the Origin of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Cambridge-New York-Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. 252–255 and 261.

- KEIGHTLEY, David N. The Religious Commitment: Shang Theology and the Genesis of Chinese Political Culture. In *History of Religions*, 1978, Vol. 17, Nos. 3–4, pp. 211–224.
- KRAMER, Samuel N. (ed.). *Mythologies of Ancient World*. Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961.
- LEGG, James. *The Chinese Classics*. Vol. 4. The She King, or The Book of Poetry. Reprinted from the last editions of the Oxford University Press, Taipei, n.d.
- LEVINSON, Bernard M. Deuteronomy. In COOGAN, Michael D. (Editor in Chief). *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Books of the Bible*. Vol. 1. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 196–198.
- LOEWE, Michael, SHAUGHNESSY, Edward L. *The Cambridge History of Ancient China. From the Origin of Civilization to 221 B.C.* Cambridge-New York-Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- LU Liancheng, YAN Wenming. Society during the Three Dynasties. In ALLAN, Sarah et al. *The Formation of Chinese Civilization. An Archaeological Perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press and New World Press, 2005, p. 185.
- MANKOWSKI, Paul V. *Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew*. Harvard Semitic Studies 47. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns 2000, pp. 51–52.
- MEYERS, Carol. The Israelite Empire: In Defence of King Solomon. In *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 1983, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 412–428.
- MONSON, John. The New ‘Ain Dara Temple. Closest Solomonic Parallel. In *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 2000, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 20–35 and 67.
- NA’AMAN, Nadav. The Contribution of the Amarna Letters to the Debate on Jerusalem’s Political Position in the Tenth Century B.C.E. In *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, 1996, No. 304, pp. 17–27.
- NIEHR, Herbert. ‘Israelite’ Religion and ‘Canaanite’ Religion. In STAVRAKOPOULOU, Francesca, BARTON, John (eds.). *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*. London: T & T Clark International, 2010, pp. 23–36.
- NORTHROP, Filmer S. C. *The Meeting of East and West. An Inquiry Concerning World Understanding*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949, pp. 332–343.
- PARPOLA, Simo, WATANABE, Kazuo (eds.). *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths. State Archives of Assyria 2*. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1988.
- PINES, Yuri. Chinese History Writing between the Sacred and Secular. In LAGERWEY, John, KALINOWSKI, Marc (eds.). *Early Chinese Religion. Part One: Shang through Han (1250 BC – 220 AD)*. Leiden-Boston 2009, pp. 315–340.

- PINES, Yuri. *Foundations of Confucian Thought. Intellectual Life in the Chunqiu Period, 722 – 453 B.C.E.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 57, 59, 69 and 207.
- PRITCHARD, James B. (ed.). *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969.
- SCHWARTZ, Joshua. Torah from Zion: Isaiah's Temple-Vision (Isaiah 2. 1–4). In HOUTMAN, Alberdina et al (eds.). *Sanctity of Time and Space in Tradition and Modernity.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998, pp. 11–26.
- SMITH, Mark S. *The Early History of God. Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel.* San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1990.
- SOMMER, Benjamin D. *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- SZEKERES, András M. Early Roots of Chinese Astrological Thinking in the Religious Belief of Di. In *Studia orientalia slovacica*, 2013, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 207–226. *The Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha. Revised Standard Version.* Oxford University Press, Inc., 1965.
- TORN van der, Karel, BECKING, Bob, HORST van der, Pieter W. (eds.). *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Leiden-New York-Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995.
- WALEY, Arthur. *The Book of Songs.* London: George Allen&Unwin LTD, 1969, pp. 250–251 and 255.
- WEINFELD, Moshe. *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic School.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- WEIPERT, Manfred. Lebanon. In EDZARD, Dietz-Otto (ed.). *Reallexikon der Assyrologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie.* Vol. 6. Berlin and New York: W. de Gruyter, 1980 – 1983, pp. 641–650.
- WIGHTMAN, Gregory J. *Sacred Spaces. Religious Architecture in Ancient World.* Leuven-Paris: Peeters, 2007.
- WU, Hung. *Monumentality in Early Chinese Art and Architecture.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995, pp. 47–50. www.bible-history.com/tabernacle/TAB4Numbers and Scripture.htm [cit. 18 November 2016].
- YAMANAUCHI, Edwin M. Tammuz and the Bible. In *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1965, Vol. 84, pp. 283–290 and KRAMER, Samuel N. (ed.). *Mythologies of Ancient World.* Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1961. p. 10.
- YONA, Shamir et al (eds.). *Marbeh Hokmah. Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East in Loving Memory of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz.* Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2015, pp. 139–159.