

Tayinat's Building XVI: The Religious Dimensions  
and Significance of a Tripartite Temple  
at Neo-Assyrian Kunulua

by

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# Building XVI at Tell Tayinat: The Religious Dimensions and Significance of a Tripartite Temple at Neo-Assyrian Kunulua

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## Abstract

After the collapse of the Hittite Empire and most of the power structures in the Levant at the end of the Late Bronze Age, new kingdoms and powerful city-states arose to fill the vacuum over the course of the Iron Age. One new player that surfaced on the regional scene was the Kingdom of Palistin, which was centered at Kunulua, the ancient capital that has been identified positively with the site of Tell Tayinat in the Amuq Valley.

The archaeological and epigraphical evidence that has surfaced in recent years has revealed that Palistin was a formidable kingdom, with numerous cities and territories having been enveloped within its orb. Kunulua and its kingdom eventually fell prey to the Neo-Assyrian Empire, which decimated the capital in 738 BC under Tiglath-pileser III. After Kunulua was rebuilt under Neo-Assyrian control, the city served as a provincial capital under Neo-Assyrian administration.

Excavations of the 1930s uncovered a palatial district atop the tell, including a temple (Building II) that was adjacent to the main *bit hilani* palace of the king (Building I). Renewed excavations of recent times led to the 2008/2009 uncovering of a tripartite temple (Building XVI) located near Building II. The newly discovered temple had been occupied under Assyrian administration, but a spectacular conflagration brought its use to a fiery end in the seventh century BC. Fortunately for posterity, though not so much for the original inhabitants, the intense fire preserved some spectacular remnants.

Among the finds in the temple's cella was a cache of cuneiform tablets, including an oath tablet that can be described as a Syrian version of those found at Kalhu that recorded sworn oaths of loyalty to Esarhaddon by Median rulers. Building XVI and its artifactual finds raise new questions about religious practices at Tayinat during the Neo-Assyrian administration, including the identity of the deities worshipped in each temple and the reasons why various deities appear on the oath tablet as those who would inflict curses on all potential oath-breakers.

Therefore, the present study seeks to describe the characteristics, architectural style, and material finds of Building XVI in the context of Tayinat's citadel, in order to determine what can be learned from the religious architecture and artifacts that were excavated at the site, and to reconstruct the role and expression of religion at Tayinat, as well as can be known presently.

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## Chapter 1 Introduction and Thesis Statement

### 1 Thesis Statement and Orientation to the Topic

#### 1.1 Thesis Statement

The archaeological remains of the recently discovered (2008/2009) Building XVI at Tell Tayinat present an exceptional opportunity to study the multi-dimensional religious life of the city's ancient inhabitants. The present study seeks to describe in detail the characteristics, the architectural style, and the material finds of this temple (Building XVI) in the context of its location on Tayinat's upper mound, in order to determine what can be learned about religious practices and beliefs at ancient Kunulua during the Neo-Assyrian occupation.

#### 1.2 Orientation to the Topic

The Kingdom of Palistin/Pattin/Patina/Unqi/'Umq was located in the Amuq Valley of ancient Syria, to the west of the Mediterranean Sea and the north of the southern Levant (Figures 1, 2). In fact, the word "Amuq" is related to the term *'Umq*, as the Assyrian term Unqi evidences the shift from  $m > n$  (Younger 2016), and the plain more or less corresponds to the Kingdom of Unqi in antiquity. Twelve lines of Tiglath Pileser III's Kalhu Annals have been preserved on a fragment of a colossal slab discovered at his palace at Kalhu, where he recorded a description of the fall of Unqi and its capital, Kinalia. The text states that "[Tutammû, king of the land Unqi], neglected [the loyalty oath (sworn by) the great gods] . . . I (Tiglath Pileser III) reorganized [the city of] Kinalîa (Kunalîa) s[ubdued] the land Unqi to its full extent" (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39, 40).

Among West Semitic texts, the land of *'mq* (= *'Umq* = Amuq) occurs on the Zakur Stele (Galil 2014: 97–98; Eph'al and Naveh 1989: 195). In the ninth and eighth centuries BC, Assyrian records frequently attest to <sup>kur</sup>*Pattin* and <sup>kur</sup>*Unqi*. A horse's forehead ornament (or frontlet) from Samos reads, "That which Hadad gave our lord Hazael from 'Umqi in the year that our lord crossed the river." Therefore, reference was given to booty that was acquired from 'Umqi/'Unqi, which was the result of Hazael's having crossed the Orontes River (Eph'al and Naveh 1989: 193, 195).

The toponym *i-nw-q* occurs in the archives of Alalakh's Period 7 and Period 4 as *Unigâ* (Belmonte Marín 2001: 323–324), as well as in royal inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III: Texts 12, 14, 26, 43, 46, 49, and 50 (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39, 40, 46, 68, 109, 115, 131, 134). The

frequent occurrences of the word suggest that it was an important city, and that it gave its name to “the land of Unqi.” *Unigâ* most likely is to be associated with the modern Syrian village of Kaukanya, which lies 22 km to the northeast of Idlib (Frayne 2015: 76–77).

Undoubtedly, the recently excavated (2008/2009) Building XVI at Tell Tayinat was a structure that played a critical role in the religious activities of the inhabitants of the capital city of the Kingdom of Palistin (Bryce 2014: 111)—mentioned as such in later, Neo-Assyrian sources, culminating with Tiglath-pileser III’s (745–727 BC) conquest and destruction of the city in 738 BC (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 38), followed by its subsequent annexation (Harrison 2014: 396; Harrison 2012b: 125)—and perhaps far beyond.

By the ninth century BC, the kingdom had grown and the city had become an amalgam of religious traditions, including Luwian-speaking native Neo-Hittites, Palistinian Sea Peoples, possibly Hurrians, and eventually Assyrians and their deportees, among other possible ethnic residents. Yet the question that remains is what can be learned about the inhabitants’ religious lives, especially as it relates to the period when the city served as a provincial capital under Neo-Assyrian rule.

With archival finds at Bronze Age sites such as Ebla, Mari, Alalakh, Nuzi, Ugarit, Hattuša/Bogazköy (with information about Kizzuwatna), and more recently at Emar, much written material is available regarding Syria and its surrounding environs of this earlier period, shedding light on the religious models and practices of the day. Unfortunately, while monumental hieroglyphic inscriptions in the Neo-Hittite and Neo-Assyrian-influenced eras of northern Syria during the Iron Age are adequately numerous, their content is not lengthy or rich in descriptive data. More importantly, there are no religious archives whatsoever from this period.

Thus the amount of textual information for Iron Age Syria is non-extensive, due most likely to a local preference for writing on perishable materials. The Luwian-speaking peoples of the northern Levant mainly used wooden tablets for their writing material, while the Aramaeans primarily utilized papyrus. The Assyrians not only inscribed cuneiform tablets, but they also wrote on papyrus, especially when writing in Aramaic during the seventh century BC. The result of this dearth in extant written material is that a far greater challenge exists for all who desire to grasp the intricacies of Iron Age religious life in Syria.

Nonetheless, the archaeological and epigraphical evidence related to the newly discovered temple at Tayinat does offer particularly important insight into how the temple functioned and how elements of religious life were structured for the inhabitants at Tell Tayinat of the Iron Age.

Accordingly, this study includes the following topics related to Tell Tayinat: the temple's dimensions and architectural design, the contents found in and around the temple, the religious value of the temple's contents, Tayinat's other architectural features and spatial relationships between these structures, and any other appropriate evidence from the site.

Ancient Near Eastern scholarship is plagued by the lack of a comprehensive understanding of how deeply and intricately religion played a part in the lives of the inhabitants of the cities and towns of Syria during the Iron Age. This comparative lack stands in contrast to the situation within the Bronze Age Syrian world, which offers the witness of textual archives that have illumined scholars' understanding of religion's role in these earlier societies. In addition, the limitation of information about the religious sphere of Iron Age Syria stands in sharp contrast to the southern Levantine environment of the Iron Age, with its rich tradition of biblical material that contributes to an understanding of religious life in Israelite Canaan of this time, which includes both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Thus the significant contribution that the present writer hopes to provide in this study is some level of a bridging of this gap in the area of religious life and practice in Iron Age Syria, which undoubtedly was an integral part of not only the lives of commoners, but that of the governing authorities and administrative officials, as well as the perceived survival of the kingdom and its relationships with the other peoples of the ANE world with whom they interacted and traded on a regular basis. The greatest challenge will be the accomplishment of this task without any significant evidence from contemporary textual witnesses, other than a handful of hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions and the Neo-Assyrian texts that were discovered in the cella of the terminal phase of Tayinat's temple of Iron Age III.

## 2 Review of Previous Scholarship

While a more thorough discussion of Tell Tayinat's general occupational history can be found elsewhere (Harrison 2012b: 126–129), the focus here will be limited to its Iron Age occupation, which was founded either in the late thirteenth or early twelfth century BC (Harrison 2014: 396). The site's initial Iron Age occupation eventually became a Neo-Hittite royal city, reflecting an ethnically diverse conglomeration of various people groups, and eventually Tell Tayinat was transformed into a Neo-Assyrian provincial capital, as the evidence reveals a carefully constructed urban layout that manifested and reinforced the royal ideology of Assyrian imperial administration (Harrison 2011: 29).



## 2.1 Collapse of the Hittite Empire of the Late Bronze Age

The narrative of Iron Age Tayinat begins with the transition from the Late Bronze Age (LBA) to the Iron Age in the northern Levant. Toward the end of the LBA (late thirteenth century BC), under the final manifestation of the Hittite Empire, centralized, political power waned at the capital of Hattuša and disseminated to independent, Neo-Hittite kingdoms throughout the northern Levant (ancient Syria). Specifically, this includes lesser kingdoms such as those at Carchemish, Kunulua (Palistin), Tarhuntassa (in Anatolia), and eventually Hamath and Arpad (Hawkins 2009: 164; Janeway 2013: 38; Weeden 2013: 1).

The collapse of the Hittite Empire in *ca.* 1200 BC ushered in a period that has been dubbed the “Dark Age” in Levantine history (Janeway 2013: ii, 2; Harrison 2009a: 171; Hawkins 2002: 143; Weeden 2013: 1), mainly since so little information has been known about the northern Levant, due to the dearth of extant archaeological and epigraphical evidence (Weeden 2013: 1). As Hawkins noted in 2009, the following two centuries (1200–1000 BC) lack any sufficient corpus of written sources (Hawkins 2009: 164), thus creating what has been thought to be a historical hiatus between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages.

## 2.2 History of the Kingdom of Palistin during the Iron Age

When written sources resumed after this so-called Dark Age, a vastly different geo-political configuration appeared in Syria. The Hittites were gone from their former heartland in central Anatolia, known as the land of Hatti, and independent city-states spawned throughout the former Levantine territories that had belonged to the Hittite Empire (Weeden 2013: 6). These city-states employed architecture and sculpture that visibly derived from that of the former empire, and scribes wrote monumental inscriptions—and probably everyday documents, along with them—in the Luwian language using hieroglyphic script, which represents another Hittite imperial tradition. These states, which mainly produced monuments attributable to the period of *ca.* 1000–700 BC, still were recognized as “Hatti” and “Hittites” by their neighbors, including the Neo-Assyrian kings who attacked and ultimately destroyed them (Hawkins 2009: 164).

Only in recent years has sufficient knowledge of this period come to light, effectively casting doubt about whether this period indeed may be called a Dark Age. To an increasingly greater degree in recent years, the results of ongoing archaeological investigations—combined with a growing corpus of vital epigraphical material derived from these excavations (Weeden 2013: 2)—have begun to challenge the concept of a so-called Dark Age in Syria during the early

Iron Age (early twelfth century BC), with an emerging picture of a considerably more complex political landscape marked by both continuity and discontinuity (Harrison 2009a: 171).

While scholars long have assumed that the Neo-Hittite states of the early part of the first millennium BC were linked culturally and linguistically to their Bronze Age forebearers, up until 2008 only the “Great Kings” of Carchemish were known to have produced a dynastic line that bridges the gap from the Hittite Empire to the Neo-Hittite (minor) kingdoms of the Iron Age. Yet with the discovery of ALEPPO 6—a Luwian hieroglyphic inscription from the citadel of Aleppo, which mentions the Land of Palistin and dates to the eleventh century BC (Hawkins 2009: 169–170)—the opportunity exists to trace the historical and dynastic development of another kingdom (Harrison 2009a: 171; Hawkins 2002: 143), which is known as the Kingdom of Palistin.

Later in this chapter, an effort will be made to trace the known rulers of this kingdom. For now, it suffices to state that the intervening years since 2008 have provided an ever-expanding picture of this kingdom, its ruling monarchs, and aspects of its religious identity. The existing evidence points to the emergence of a powerful regional kingdom, essentially part of a “rump state,”<sup>1</sup> which survived the demise of the ruling Hittite Empire at Hattuša and reasserted political control over the region following a brief interlude dominated by the presence of the Sea Peoples, with their strong Aegean cultural associations (Harrison 2009a: 171).

Hawkins has referred to the Neo-Hittite state at Carchemish as the center of Iron Age Hatti (2002: 147–148), mainly because the site has produced a diverse range of sculpture and inscriptions for the period from *ca.* 1000–700 BC (Hawkins 2009: 164). However, time and further archaeological and epigraphical finds may reveal that Palistin’s earlier Neo-Hittite kingdom eclipsed that of Carchemish. Indeed, as will be demonstrated shortly, Carchemish may have been incorporated into the Kingdom of Palistin from an uncertain time until sometime during the tenth century BC. Only after the demise of Kunulua’s sovereignty over Carchemish would that city have flourished, if indeed Carchemish had been incorporated into Palistin. Perhaps time will prove conclusively whether Palistin’s kingdom ever eclipsed that of Carchemish during the Iron Age.

For the Iron Age, a scarcity of documentary sources exists for obtaining background knowledge of both the Amuq Valley and Tell Tayinat, while there is a paucity of information

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<sup>1</sup>Hawkins was the first to employ the term “rump” state (2002: 148; cf. Harrison 2009b: 187), but he was referring to Carchemish as the remnant state in ancient Syria from the Hittite Empire of the Late Bronze Age that had dissolved, further suggesting that Carchemish later split into various independent kingdoms such as Malatya, Kummuh, Carchemish, Gurgum, and Unqi.

contained within the abbreviated accounts that do exist. The earliest reference to the Kingdom of Palistin from any site within the borders of the kingdom derives from the city of Aleppo. In the hieroglyphic Luwian inscription previously mentioned, ALEPPO 6 (Hawkins 2011: 40–44; Hawkins 2009: 169; Hawkins 2013: 493–500), a King of Unqi named Taita defined himself as Pa-lá/í-sà-ti-[ni] “Palistinian” (Galil 2014: 76; Hawkins 2011: 41; Bryce 2014: 111). The same toponym—this time with [Pa-lá/í]-sà-ti-ni as the legible portion—appears in another Luwian inscription (ALEPPO 7; Hawkins 2011: 44–51).

The earliest foreign references to the Kingdom of Palistin trace back to the royal inscriptions (*ca.* 879 and 870 BC) of Ashurnasirpal II (*ca.* 885–859 BC), who referred to this Syrian kingdom as Patina (cuneiform *Pat(t)in-*) and clearly situated its capital city of Kunulua near the southern edge of the plain (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 125; Harrison 2001: 116). In Ashurnasirpal II’s annals, he mentioned three distinct settlement types: royal cities (*āl šarrūti*), fortified cities (*āl dannūti*), and regional towns (*ālāni ša limēti*), identifying Kunulua as a royal capital (Ikeda 1979: 75–78; Liverani 1992: 125; Harrison 2013a: 102).

The survey data collected from a study of the spatial distribution of Phase-O sites in and around the Amuq Valley indicate that during the early centuries of the first millennium BC, the valley was transformed into an integrated, urbanized landscape, with Kunulua as its center of power. The undisputed association of Tell Tayinat with Kunulua now has been confirmed, notably with the mention of the toponym “Kunalia” in the Esarhaddon Succession Treaty (T-1801) discovered in Building XVI during the archaeological campaign of 2009 (Lauinger 2012: 112; Harrison 2012b: 126; Weeden 2013: 12).

A struggle ensued between Palistin and the Assyrian kings for the balance of the ninth century BC, until the Palistinian Kingdom’s territory was reduced considerably at the outset of the eighth century BC. The rebellious kingdom was eclipsed and destroyed by Tiglath-pileser III in 738 BC (Harrison 2014: 396), which eventually led to the transformation of the capital of the kingdom into a Neo-Assyrian provincial administrative center (Harrison 2001: 116).

### 2.3 The Ethnicity of the Population at Kunulua

The collapse of the Hittite Empire and the Sea Peoples’ invasion of Cyprus and the Levant normally are dated to just after *ca.* 1200 BC, although the invasion often has been described as having taken place not in one massive assault, but in waves of Aegeans who entered the Levant over a period of time (Margalith 1994: 28; Dothan 1989: 59). For example, as will be discussed in

Chapter 3, the final destruction of Alalakh occurred in *ca.* 1194 BC. Moreover, recent radiocarbon studies suggest an absolute-date range of 1192–1190 BC for the terminal destruction and cultural collapse of settlements of the LBA in the northern Levant (Kaniewski et al. 2011; Manning 2008: 78), even though this highly limited range might be a bit too confined if looking to secure a firm date purely from radiocarbon evidence.

The historical record reveals that while some sites were destroyed and abandoned, others—such as Tell ʿāfis (Venturi 2013: 228)—experienced an uninterrupted occupation. In addition, new sites sprang up throughout the Levant, including the reoccupation of Tell Tayinat, which was uninhabited during the Late Bronze Age. In fact, the archaeological evidence unearthed in the areas under Taita’s control suggest the existence of a kingdom that was populated by people of diverse origins, including Luwian-speaking Hittites, newcomers from the Aegean, and possibly Hurrians, given that King Taita’s own name may betray Hurrian origins (Galil 2014: 79; Steitler 2010: 94), among other potential ethnic groups.

The Neo-Hittite regal citadels at Tell Ahmar, Tell Rifaʿat, Zincirli, and Halaf were approached through monumental gateways that restricted access and functioned as symbolic boundary zones, emphasizing the divinely sanctioned authority of the king, his vital role as protector of his subjects from the chaotic forces of the natural order, and as a bridge to the civilized world of the gods. Demographically, the populations of these Neo-Hittite states appear to have been multi-ethnic in character, with no single ethnic group dominant over the region, resulting in a dynamic social landscape resembling a poly-ethnic mosaic (Harrison 2013a: 111).

The invasion by the Aegean Sea Peoples did not result in the extermination of Hittite culture in the northern Levant. Indeed, Neo-Hittite—or Syro-Hittite, if one prefers—city-states developed and persisted throughout the northern and central Levant, including sites such as Carchemish, Tabal, and Hamath. Evidence of the persistence of indigenous Hittites of Syria at Kunulua seemingly exists in the form of hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions that were erected at the site, possibly for ideological purposes, although it must be granted that the continued use of a language does not necessarily imply the perpetuation of the original people-group.

As will be discussed in Chapter 2, fragments of such inscriptions were excavated from or below the floors of Buildings I and II, scattered on the surface of the cobblestone courtyard on the upper tell of Tell Tayinat, which chronologically corresponds to the Second Building Period (*ca.* 825–738 BC) and later. Had the newly (re-)settled site of Kunulua consisted exclusively of Aegean Sea Peoples, hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions certainly would not have been manufactured on

site, as the Aegeans did not write in this language or with this script. The multi-faceted data related to the Iron Age occupation at Tell Tayinat reflects a city that was comprised of a diverse and intriguing cultural amalgam of Aegean (transplanted Sea Peoples), Anatolian (Luwian-speaking Neo-Hittites) and Bronze-Age, West Syrian traditions (Harrison 2014: 396; Harrison 2013b: 61).

In relation to the existence of non-indigenous people at Kunulua during the early phases of the Iron Age, excavations at Tell Tayinat have yielded locally-produced Hittite Monochrome Ware mixed with a distinctively Aegean painted pottery known as Late Helladic (LH) IIIc ware, which reflects the presence of an indigenous population that was forced to begin anew after the socio-economic disruptions at the end of the LBA, and to amalgamate with the Sea Peoples who relocated to the Amuq Valley from the Aegean (Janeway 2013: iii; Harrison 2014: 399; Hawkins 2009: 172; Venturi 2007: 10). The primary form of evidence for this conclusion is that a stylistic analysis of the LH IIIc ware reveals a hybrid style of pottery that fused together Aegean shapes and motifs with local ceramic traditions (Janeway 2013: iii).

In other words, the Late Helladic IIIc wares primarily were manufactured locally with the skill and expertise of the potters who were indigenous to this part of Syria (Venturi 2010a: 9), yet were modeled after a ceramic type that previously was foreign to local ceramic manufacturing. Clearly this reality points to the presence of an ethnically mixed population in the early stages at Kunulua, which consisted of both transplanted Sea Peoples and local Hittite peoples who had survived the ravages of the political collapse at the end of the LBA in the Levant.

The evidence at Tell Tayinat is confirmed throughout the region, as Late Helladic IIIc pottery—which derived from the Aegean and is diagnostic for Philistine culture in the southern Levant—was discovered at 18 sites throughout the Amuq Valley (Yener et al. 2000: 188–189). Additionally, the Iron Age I levels in Field 1 at Tayinat have produced a wealth of small finds, including figurines and potters' marks, which seem to be of Aegean derivation, along with a faunal record that appears to reflect Western culinary practices. Contrastingly, a clay bulla, originating from FP 6C, the earliest Iron I sub-phase in Field 1, preserved a circular stamp seal impression containing a number of hieroglyphic Luwian signs (Harrison 2014: 399).

This evidence clearly reflects the cultural integration of the Luwian-speaking Neo-Hittites and Aegean Sea Peoples who shared the site of ancient Kunulua. It would appear that any such migrants were wholly assimilated into the local material culture at Tayinat within a century or so, who—according to some—may have left their name behind (Weeden 2013: 19). Until their

cultural amalgamation was complete, however, they displayed distinctive traits of the cultural norms that had traveled with them from the Aegean.

Lauinger’s association (Chapter 5) of the deity Šarrat-Ekron of cuneiform tablet T-1801—excavated from the cella of Building XVI at Tell Tayinat—with Ptgyh, the patron goddess of Ekron that was mentioned on the Ekron Royal Dedicatory Inscription, may offer even more evidence of the presence of Philistines at Kunulua (Lauinger 2012: 90–91), though at a much later time than Kunulua’s initial Iron Age settlement. As the inscription reads, “The temple (which) he built, *kyš* son of Padi, son of *Ysd*, son of Ada, son of Ya‘ir, ruler of Ekron, for *Ptgyh* his lady. May she bless him, and protect him, and prolong his days, and bless his land” (Gitin 2012: 238).

More will be said subsequently about the Philistine deity documented on the oath tablet at Tayinat (Šarrat-Ekron). For now, it may be noted that Ekron was an Assyrian vassal in 672 BC (Steymans 2013: 4), because Philistia had become a Neo-Assyrian province after Sargon II (722–705 BC) successfully besieged the city in 712 BC (Mattingly 2000: 103). For this reason, Steymans has concluded that a copy of the oath tablet would have been taken to Ekron (Steymans 2013: 4), though his assumption remains unproven, since no positive evidence for an Ekronite version of Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty has been found at the site.

Moreover, if some residents of the provincial capital of Kullania that was under Neo-Assyrian rule (i.e. from 738–672 BC) did bear Philistine ethnic roots, whether or not they ever had resided in Ekron, there could be great motivation for the Neo-Assyrian royalty to force them to swear allegiance to Ashurbanipal (668–627 BC) *by the name of a major Philistine deity* at the imminent death of his father, Esarhaddon. For even if ethnic Philistines would not hesitate whatsoever to show contempt for Neo-Assyrian, Hittite, or northern Levantine deities by breaking vows to them, they certainly would not have expressed such contempt for a Philistine deity so flippantly. Thus the inclusion of Šarrat-Ekron on T-1801 may argue for the existence of Philistine people of the southern Levant residing either at Kunulua itself, or at least within the borders of the administrative district of Palistin that was directly under Neo-Assyrian rule.

Support for this possibility is found in the provocative statement of Hawkins, who proposed that the “Palistin” ethnicon shares an etymology with the *Peleset* people who were mentioned in the Medinet Habu reliefs (Hawkins 2009: 171–72), and thus presumably also shares ethnic and historical affiliation. The *Peleset* are the only group of Sea Peoples that was named in the Medinet Habu reliefs to receive a geographical designation, specifically the “Land of the Peleset” (Harrison 2014: 405). This designation occurs in several accounts of Ramesses III’s battles against the Sea

Peoples, including his repulsion of their attempted invasion of Egypt in his Year 8 (Kahn 2011: 1–5), which dates to *ca.* 1193 BC. The connection between the Palistinians at Kunulua and the so called “Sea Peoples” from the Aegean should not be doubted, given the influx of cylindrical loom-weights, circular hearths, and Helladic-style pottery found at the site (Weeden 2013: 2–6), all of which are characteristic of contemporary Aegean culture.

## 2.4 The Rule of Taita and Kunulua’s Kinglist

As will be discussed in Chapter 3, Aleppo’s temple of the eleventh century BC reflects the rule of Taita, King of Palistin, whose kingdom was centered at Kunulua but extended eastward at least as far as Aleppo, which was long a religious center in Syria. Taita’s rule over Aleppo is confirmed by the sculpted orthostat relief that bears his image next to that of the storm god, whom he directly faces. The accompanying inscription identifies him as, “King Taita, the Hero, the Ruler of [the Land of] Palistin” (Hawkins 2011: 45; Hawkins 2009: 169–171). Of great iconographic importance, the king is wearing the short tunic and conical cap associated with divinity, meaning that he had adopted the Hittite tradition of a king who is portrayed with divine attributes when depicted in the presence of deity.

What else is known about this king who ruled Aleppo from the Kingdom of Unqi’s capital of Kunulua during the eleventh century BC? First, it should be noted that his is not the only name of a king of Unqi at Kunulua during the Iron Age after the fall of the Hittite Empire. An unattached fragment of the inscription TELL TA‘YINAT 1 mentions its king as (probably) Halparuntiya (Hawkins 2000b: 366–367; Weeden 2013: 12), although the toponym that was recorded is written *Walistin* (*wa/i-ta4-sà-ti-ni-[za-sa]*), almost certainly a variant of Palistin. The form *Walistin/Palistin* is reached by removing the Luwian ethnic suffix *-iza-*, which also is seen in *Karkamisiza-*, the local toponym for Carchemish (Galil 2014: 76). Hawkins later wrote “Palistin/Walistin” (2011: 51; cf. Harrison 2009a: 173–74; Harrison 2014: 404), while Weeden wrote “Pala/istin” or “Walastin” (Weeden 2015: 65; see Weeden 2013: 11 for the reading of a liquid rather than a dental in *Walistin*), which the latter based on his joining of two hieroglyphic fragments from Tell Tayinat (TT 2463 and TT 2713) that spell out the *W*-form of the site name. The spelling of Palistin possibly preceded the *Walistin* variant (Galil 2014: 78), although this is difficult to prove conclusively. The name of the Kingdom of *Walastin* recently appeared on two unpublished stelae that were found in a secondary context at the harbor-city of Arsuz, south of Iskenderun (Dinçol et al. 2015: 60, 61; Strobel 2011: 209; Weeden 2013: 12).

Second, it should be noted that scholars now consider there to have been more than one Taita who ruled at Kunulua. Hawkins compared the presence of Taita, King of Palistin on ALEPPO 6 with Taita, King of Walistin on the MEHARDE and SHEIZAR inscriptions, noting that the toponym appeared elsewhere on TELL TA'YINAT 1 (Hawkins 2011: 51; Harrison 2009a: 174; Bryce 2014: 111). The features that the MEHARDE and SHEIZAR inscriptions share with ALEPPO 6 were sufficient to prompt Hawkins to propose the possibility of two different Taitas, as Kohlmeyer previously had suggested (Gonnella et al. 2005: 92). This leads to the question of the role of the word *Taita*, namely whether it identifies a man's name or his title as the taita of Palistin.

The ANE world featured both dynastic titles and dynastic names for rulers who succeeded one another on the same throne. The best example of a dynastic title was “pharaoh,” the eventual designation of every ruler who was enthroned in Egypt. The dynastic title “pharaoh” derives from the phrase that literally means, “great house.” During Egypt's Old Kingdom (*ca.* 2715–2170 BC), the word was used of the royal palace. Not until sometime during the middle of Dynasty 18, slightly before the reign of Thutmose III (*ca.* 1506–1452 BC), was it used as an epithet for the Egyptian monarch (Hoffmeier 2000b: 21). Afterward, it came to have the same force that “king” (Egyptian *nsw*) previously held. Every subsequent king of Egypt was a pharaoh, and thus this dynastic title became a national fixture, which usage even was mimicked internationally.

With that as a background, one may proceed to the question of whether “Taita” is a dynastic title or a dynastic name. The best way to answer this question is to study the known kings at Kunulua and allow the results to answer the question naturally. Who are the known kings at Kunulua? Over what range of time did they rule? What were the extents of their kingdom? These are the questions that will be answered in order to understand the meaning of “Taita” dynastically.

While it has been stated already that at least two kings called Taita ruled Palistin, the paucity in the historical record currently prevents knowledge of just how many kings by this name or title actually did rule. For the sake of clarity, the earlier Taita will be called Taita I, while the later Taita will be called Taita II. Hawkins has suggested that perhaps Taita I was the grandfather of Taita II (Hawkins 2011: 51), though nothing is known presently as to whether another King Taita would have ruled between them as the son of Taita I and the father of Taita II.

The reign of Taita I: Thanks to the ALEPPO 6 and ALEPPO 7 inscriptions from the temple of the storm god at Aleppo, the existence of a large, regional kingdom in Syria has been confirmed. In fact, the discoveries at the temple of the storm god at Aleppo preserve virtually the entire



historical record related to Taita I (Harrison 2014: 403). Kunulua seemingly was the capital city of Taita I, and the king's domain also included Aleppo, ʿAin Dārā, probably ʾāfis, and possibly Carchemish, as well (Hawkins 2011: 49; Weeden 2013: 19). Since no kings of Carchemish are known from the eleventh century BC onward, signaling that the city may have lost its autonomy, this dearth of royal attestation could provide indirect evidence that the city and its environs were under Taita I's control (Galil 2014: 81). Perhaps new discoveries will clarify this question.

This chronological window of opportunity for foreign rule at Carchemish coincides well with Hawkins's statement that the Kingdom of Palistin in the Amuq Valley thrived from *ca.* 1100–1000 BC, possibly with territory that also extended into Hama, which thus would imply control over Hamath and the territory formerly under the influence of Arpad. This date is substantiated by the palaeography of the inscriptions (ALEPPO 6, ALEPPO 7) and the iconography of the associated reliefs (Hawkins 2009: 169–170, 172; Harrison 2014: 403). The corresponding Iron Age level in the Amuq is Phase O, with the phasing at Tell Tayinat being reflected in the massive remains of Buildings XIII and XIV, which were built during the city's First Building Period.

The Assyrian royal inscriptions indicate that in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, the Aramaeans spread over a considerable portion of the ANE, from Assyria and Babylonia in the east to Syria and the slopes of the mountains of Lebanon in the west. The Assyrian attack on the Aramaeans in Syria and Phoenicia is attested in the annals of Tiglath-pileser I (1115–1077 BC). These campaigns were confined to the area of Ġabal Bišrī, Tadmor, and Mount Lebanon, south of Palistin. He received tribute from Ini-Teššub II, King of Carchemish, and from the kings of Arvad, Byblos, and Sidon, but no activities were reported in the areas of Aleppo, Kinalia, Arsoz, or Hamath. Thus if Taita I did control Carchemish, his reign should be dated after 1100 BC, since Carchemish evidently was not part of Palistin during Tiglath-pileser I's reign (Galil 2014: 82–83).

The reign of Taita II: The name of Taita II, King of Walistin, is known from the stelae at Meharde and Sheizar (Hawkins 2011: 51; Harrison 2014: 403), located about 25 km to the northwest of Hama. The MEHARDE inscription is a dedication to the “Divine Queen of the Land,” and the SHEIZAR inscription is the funerary stele of Taita's wife (Bryce 2014: 111), Kupapia, who reportedly lived for one hundred years. If she indeed lived that long, she may have been the wife of Taita I, as well as the grandmother of Taita II, the king who erected both stelae. If Taita I ruled Palistin in the first half of the eleventh century BC, Taita II may have ruled the kingdom late in the eleventh century BC and early in the tenth century BC (Galil 2014: 84), which would be quite plausible if he was the grandson of Taita I.

Taita II probably enlarged the borders of his kingdom by overtaking the middle Orontes Valley and Hamath, if the latter had not been under Palistinian control already. His kingdom likely extended from Mount Amanus in the north, to the area around Hamath in the south, from the Mediterranean Sea and the Bay of Iskenderun to the west, and to Aleppo—or the Euphrates River, according to Galil—to the east (Harrison 2014: 404; Galil 2014: 84; Bryce 2014: 111). This geographical expanse corresponds closely to the combined territories of the LBA vassal kingdoms of Mukish, Niya, and Nuhašše, which were consolidated under the control of Aleppo during the reign of the Hittite emperor, Šuppiluliuma I, who administratively reorganized the region in the late fourteenth century BC (Harrison 2014: 405).

The location of the SHEIZAR and MEHARDE stelae may indicate that Taita II established the city of Hamath as his main administrative center (Galil 2014: 84), but if not that, then as a vital secondary administrative center, which is the preference of the present writer. When the Assyrians campaigned to the far reaches of Syria in the first half of the ninth century BC, the powerful and expansive kingdom of Palistin no longer existed.

Instead, the Assyrians encountered at least four kingdoms: Hamath, Patina/Unqi, Arpad/Bit Agusi, and Carchemish (Steitler 2010: 88). The territorial conflict between Hamath, Patina/Unqi, and Arpad/Bit Agusi over the lower Orontes Valley at the time of Adad-nirari III (810–783 BC) is an additional indication of the division of the Kingdom of Palistin. Thus during the tenth century BC, Palistin was divided into four separate kingdoms (Galil 2014: 85). One scholar—who was not the first to propose this association (that may have been Collins 2007: 198–199), but represents the first person to argue for it extensively—has suggested that Taita II is Toi/Tau (Steitler 2010: 95). Toi/Tou is mentioned in 2 Sam 8:9–10 and 1 Chr 18: 9–10 as the King of Hamath, which has led to speculation that Toi/Tou may have been Taita II.

Sometime after Taita II's reign, probably late in the tenth century BC or early in the ninth century BC, Halparuntiya I and Šuppiluliuma I ruled Palistin, though the latter should not be confused with the earlier ruler of the Hittite Empire by the same name. At present, it is impossible to know which of these two ruled first. Halparuntiya I is attested only once, in an unattached fragment of the TELL TA'YINAT 1 inscription (Hawkins 2000a: 365–367; Harrison 2014: 404). Given that Halparuntiya I's name is the only one mentioned on the inscription, it is possible that he was responsible for the Second Building Period at Tayinat (Galil 2014: 87), though by no means is this conjecture certain.

Some scholars identify Halparuntiya I with Qalparunda, King of Patina/Unqi, who is mentioned in the inscriptions of Shalmaneser III from 857, 853, and 848 BC (Hawkins 2009: 167), while others do not associate the two (Galil 2014: 86). Singer noted that if indeed TELL TA'YINAT 1 belongs to Tayinat's Building XIV, Halparuntiya I cannot be identical with Qalparunda who paid tribute to Shalmaneser III (Singer 2012: 465), because Building XIV dates to the First Building Period at Tayinat, near the Iron I–Iron II transition, while Qalparunda ruled Patina during the middle of the ninth century BC. What remains possible, however, is that Qalparunda may be associated with a proposed Halparuntiya II (Galil 2014: 86), who merely borrowed the name of the king who ruled earlier in Palistin's history.

Šuppiluliuma I is attested on the two previously mentioned stelae (ARSUZ 1 and 2) from the harbor-city of Arsuz (ancient Rhosus), south of Iskenderun (in the modern Hatay region of Turkey). In these two Luwian hieroglyphic inscriptions, which are almost identical, the Kingdom of Palistin is named Walistin. Šuppiluliuma I's scribes recorded his successful campaign against Hiyawa, noting that he defeated the city of Adana and routed the land of Hiyawa (Galil 2014: 87; Harrison 2014: 404). Scholars universally have dated these inscriptions to the tenth century BC (Dinçol et al. 2015: 63; Weeden 2013: 13; Strobel 2011: 209), while Dinçol et al. (2015: 76) noted that some parallels to the Arsuz stelae appear on objects dating to the ninth century BC.

The name of Šuppiluliuma I, King of Walistin, who erected the Arsuz Stelae (Dinçol et al. 2015: 60; Harrison 2014: 404), is the same as the name of Šuppiluliuma II, King of Patina, who is attested in Shalmaneser III's royal inscriptions and ruled Patina for a short time in 858 BC. Galil has suggested that they cannot be the same ruler, for several reasons: (1) Šuppiluliuma II was an ally of Que, while Šuppiluliuma I was at war with Que; (2) Šuppiluliuma I ruled Patina for a brief time, during which he engaged in two battles against the Assyrians, so it is not reasonable to suppose that he also was able to attack Que during this brief time; (3) Que is presented in the Assyrian royal inscriptions as an independent kingdom in 858 BC, with an independent king named Katia, and not as part of the Kingdom of Patina (Galil 2014: 88). Regarding Galil's first reason, it should be pointed out that perhaps a single Šuppiluliuma could have been an ally of Que at one time, but at war with him at another time.

The rule of Šuppiluliuma I should be placed in the late tenth to early ninth century BC at the very latest (Harrison 2014: 404). This period probably was one of the high points in the history of the Kingdom of Palistin, even if various parts of the kingdom struggled to maintain sovereignty over their territory against the advancing and persistent Aramaeans. In the second quarter of the

ninth century BC, the surviving realms of the kingdom were overrun and plundered by the Neo-Assyrians. During the second half of the century, the kingdom continued to decline, resulting in one of the most depressed periods yet experienced (Galil 2014: 86–87).

The number of historical references to Kunulua and the Kingdom of Patina/Unqi increased significantly during Iron II, coinciding with expanding Neo-Assyrian interest in acquiring territory in the region (Harrison 2014: 409). The first Palistinian king who ruled under Neo-Assyrian domination, Lubarna I ([874–867]–859), was mentioned in six royal inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal II that were discovered at Kalhu (RIMA 2, A.0.101.1). In the Banquest Stele (*ca.* 879 BC), Ashurnasirpal II twice mentioned Patina (Harrison 2014: 409). The Assyrian army approached Ḥazāzu, the northeastern-most city of Patina. Later they reached Kunulua, the royal city of Lubarna I, who paid a heavy tribute to the Neo-Assyrian king in 870 BC (Harrison 2014: 404).

Ashurnasirpal II even claimed to have settled Assyrian people in Lubarna I's capital. The people of Lubarna I the Patinean were exiled and settled at Kalhu, Ashurnasirpal II's new capital. The exact date of the campaign is unclear, but the expedition to the west may be dated between 877 and 867 BC, with the campaign to Patina and the coastal cities (Arvad, Byblos, Sidon, and Tyre) not occurring before 874 BC (Galil 2014: 88–89).

Ashurnasirpal II recorded the receipt of tribute from Lubarna (II), King of Patina, during a campaign to northwestern Syria (*ca.* 870 BC), in which writing he named the royal city *Kunulua*. The latter reference clearly places the Kingdom of Patina/Palistin in the Amuq Valley, and its capital of Kunulua near the Orontes River, leaving Tell Tayinat as the only plausible candidate for the city referred to by the Assyrian king (Harrison 2014: 409).

Šuppiluliuma II of Patina (859–857 BC) was a member of the northern coalition that attacked Shalmaneser III during his campaign to the west in 858 BC, near Litibu of Sam'al. The Assyrians claimed that they defeated this coalition, acquired chariots and teams of horses from them, and later erected a statue by the source of the Saluara River (RIMA 3, A.0.102.1–2), but this was only the first battle of a war that did not provide the Assyrian king with lasting success.

Later in the war, Shalmaneser III invaded the land of Patina by crossing the Orontes River and approaching Alimuš, “a fortified city of Šuppiluliuma (II) of Patina.” The Assyrian scribes claimed that the army conquered Alimuš, carried off booty, captured the great cities of the Patinean, and received tribute from the coastal kings (Galil 2014: 91–92). The Assyrian record for the campaign of 858 BC actually refers to Patina's king as Sapalulme, which clearly is the Akkadian rendering of (Luwian-Hittite) Šuppiluliuma. This king most likely is the one named in

the hieroglyphic Luwian inscription on the back of the colossal royal statue discovered at Tayinat in 2012 (Weeden 2013: 15–16; Harrison 2014: 409–410).

Halparuntiya II (857–848 [or later] BC) ruled Patina for at least 10 years, but since the coronation of his successor, Lubarna II, is not known, he may have ruled longer. His name is attested on six different royal inscriptions of Shalmaneser III (RIMA 3, A.0.102.1–2), where he was called both the King of Unqi and the King of Patina. When Shalmaneser III launched a military offensive against the northern coalition, only two members of the coalition—Bit Adini and Carchemish—were willing to join forces and face the Neo-Assyrians. Halparuntiya II, the new King of Palistin, joined Haianu of Sam'al and the kings of Gurgum and Bit-Agusi in willful submission to Shalmaneser III (Galil 2014: 93).

The tribute paid by Halparuntiya II was a heavy one, steeper than the one paid by Bit-Agusi and Bit-Gabbari. The Patinean king remained loyal to Assyria for at least the next 10 years, and probably until the end of his reign. Shalmaneser III's records of both 853 and 848 BC indicate that Halparuntiya II presented tribute to him, while the tribute of Qalparunda the Unqite also is recorded on an epigraph (RIMA 3, A.0.102.60) engraved on the base of the throne that was unearthed at Fort Shalmaneser (Galil 2014: 93–94).

Lubarna II (8??–829) is attested only once in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, where his assassination by the people of Patina is mentioned explicitly on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (RIMA 3, A.0.102.14 and reiterated in RIMA 3, A.0.102.16). In Shalmaneser III's annals, the murder is dated to his twenty-eighth *palû*, though the Eponym Chronicle dates the campaign against Unqi to 829 BC (Galil 2014: 94–95). The Black Obelisk also states that a commoner was inserted on the throne in place of Lubarna II, prompting Shalmaneser III to intercede and replace the usurper with a man of his own choosing (Harrison 2014: 410).

Virtually nothing is known about Surri (829 BC)—the non-royal king whom the people of Patina crowned after Lubarna II's assassination—including the origin of his name. His successor, Sāsi (829–8?? BC), came to the throne in the same year as Surri, which demonstrates the instability of the dynasty during a time of waning but continued Neo-Assyrian hegemony in Syria, as he was the puppet-king whom Shalmaneser III appointed to rule over Patina. Sāsi's name may suggest that his derivation was the land of Kuruşşâ. A similar toponym is attested in Shalmaneser III's inscriptions in reference to the area of Damascus, but the location of Kuruşşâ is just as obscure as the reign and regnal length of Sāsi (Galil 2014: 95–96).

After the record of Sāsi's appointment in 829 BC, no Patinean king is attested in the Neo-Assyrian sources until the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (738 BC), a gap of nearly a century. One reason for this gap probably is either that Shalmaneser III's step of installing a puppet-king led to a subsequent decision not to allow a Palistinian monarch to occupy the throne for a lengthy time, or that subsequent kings possessed such meager levels of power that Neo-Assyrian kings had no need to report campaigns to—or uprisings within—the kingdom. Another reason for this gap is that in 826 BC, a major revolt erupted in Assyria, which lasted until 820 BC. Consequently, the Neo-Assyrians gradually lost their control over the territories to the west of the Euphrates River. The Assyrians' weakness initiated a struggle between Arpad, Hamath, and Aram-Damascus for control of the territories of northern Syria (Galil 2014: 96).

During this period, Hazael, King of Aram-Damascus, consolidated his large, regional kingdom that stretched from the Euphrates to Philistia. Hazael's booty inscriptions from Samos and Eretria indicate that the Amuq Valley ('mq) had been incorporated into his expanding territorial state (Bron and Lemaire 1989: 35–44; Galil 2000: 36–37). Biblical sources clearly state that Hazael subdued his other neighbors: Israel, Judah, Tyre, the three kingdoms of Transjordan, Philistine Gath, and possibly the other four city-states of the Philistine Pentapolis (Galil 2014: 96–97).

Philistine Gath probably was destroyed and never recovered as an independent kingdom (Maeir 2012a: 393), while Dan was annexed to Aram, most likely by Bar-Hadad, son of Hazael (Galil 2001: 18). The Zakur Stele indicates that the Damascene influence also had spread throughout northern Syria and southern Anatolia. The coalition that attacked Zakur includes some kings who were not vassals of Bar-Hadad (the kings of Arpad, Que/Adana/Hiyawa, Gurgum, Sam'al, and Melid), as well as those who were his vassals, almost undoubtedly including the King of Patina, because the stele mentions a king from the Amuq ('mq). The territorial conflict between Hamath, Unqi, and Arpad over the lower Orontes Valley at the time of Adad-nirari III is another indication of the breakup of the once-great Kingdom of Palistin (Galil 2014: 97–98), which probably took place near the end of Taita II's reign.

The combination of the splintering of Palistin/Patina into four minor kingdoms, the rise of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, and the constant pressure exerted on the Neo-Hittite city-states by the Aramaeans proved too much for Palistin/Patina to maintain its sovereignty in the Levantine landscape of Iron II. Tiglath-pileser III destroyed Kunulua/Kullania in a fiery conflagration, deported its population to other lands, then transformed the Patinean capital into a Neo-Assyrian

provincial administrative center of great importance in Syria. Ostensibly, Tiglath-pileser III's destruction occurred because Kunulua's ruler, Tutammu, broke his loyalty oath with Assyria (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39). When the Neo-Assyrian king deported many of its citizens and replaced them with captives from elsewhere, he annexed the region into the empire as the Neo-Assyrian province of Kullani, under which it remained until at least the reign of Ashurbanipal (Harrison 2014: 410).

The newly discovered gate complex at Tayinat appears to have been destroyed as a result of the Assyrian conquest of the site in 738 BC. The area was paved over subsequently and converted into the central courtyard of the Assyrian sacred precinct. The smashed remains of the monumental sculptures, including many fragments of hieroglyphic Luwian stelae—particularly the TELL TA'YINAT 2 inscription that likely stood in the forecourt of the paired-temple complex (Buildings II and XVI)—provide vivid confirmation of the violence and decimation of the city (Harrison 2014: 410).

Biblical scholars long have postulated that the reference to Calno/Calneh in Isaiah 10:9–10 (Gelb 1935: 189; Machinist 1983: 719–737; Harrison 2014: 410), identified as one of the “kingdoms of the idols” in Isaiah's polemic against Assyria, alludes to Tiglath-pileser III's devastation of Kunulua. In Isaiah 10:9, the prophet asked rhetorically if Calneh is not like Carchemish, if Hamath is not like Arpad, and if Samaria is not like Damascus. The Neo-Assyrian Antakya Stele (Younger 2000: 272), found near the Orontes River and about 1.5 km outside of Antakya, hints at a decisive downturn in the political fortunes of the Kingdom of Patina, and thus Kunulua/Calneh. The inscription describes the transfer of the lands and settlements of an unknown city to Atarshumki of Arpad, apparently at the expense of Zakkur of Hamath (an Aramaean ruler of *ca.* 810–775 BC), and the realignment of the border between the two kingdoms to the Orontes River, possibly the result of action taken during the Assyrian campaign of 796 BC and associated with the events recorded on the Zakkur Stele. In this inscription, Zakkur accused Bar-Hadad of Damascus of having induced a coalition of northern kingdoms, including Patina, to attack Hamath and its ruler, Lu'ash (Harrison 2001: 119–120). If the connection of Calneh with Kunulua is a valid one, Tayinat's destroyed Luwian monuments may be both the product of this historical event and a ritual desecration as a symbolic manifestation of the consequences of the apostasy condemned in the oracle (Harrison 2014: 410–411).

As for which kings occupied the throne at Kunulua during the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation, the answer is that indigenous kings were not permitted. However, much can be said

about the role of Kunulua in the Neo-Assyrian Empire during this period, as both the Syrian-Hittite expedition and the TAP excavations have uncovered extensive remains on the upper city at Tell Tayinat. These remains document the transformation of the Neo-Hittite royal citadel into a Neo-Assyrian provincial administrative center. Historical sources attest to Tayinat's destruction having been followed by reconstruction and its establishment as a Neo-Assyrian provincial capital, known as Kunalia, and supplied with its own governor and provincial administration. Tayinat thus provides a valuable glimpse into the physical layout and organization of a provincial unit within the larger Neo-Assyrian imperial system (Harrison 2014: 411).

Renovations to the buildings in the West Central Area accounted for most of the activity assigned to the Third Building Period, which the team from the University of Chicago dated to the latter part of the eighth and the early seventh centuries (*ca.* 720–680 BC), dates that coincide well with the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation. However, a number of new edifices also were built, most notably Platform XV, a large elevated rectangular structure that enclosed the eastern side of the West Central Area's building complex (Harrison 2014: 411).

During the ensuing Fourth Building Period, the West Central Area's *bit hilani* continued to be used, but not the adjacent temple (Building II), according to the Syrian-Hittite team, which they concluded to have been abandoned. They also assigned the construction of a new structure, Building IX, to this phase. Situated on an elevated knoll in the southeastern quadrant of the upper mound, the architectural elements and layout of Building IX identify it as a proto-typical Neo-Assyrian governor's residence. The complex appears to have been built on an artificially raised platform and was approached from the east, via a processional gateway (Gateway VII) that was flanked by limestone orthostats depicting Assyrian shock troops carved in Assyrian provincial style (Harrison 2014: 411–12).

## 2.5 Summary of Excavations at Tell Tayinat

The Tayinat Archaeological Project (TAP) was conceived within the framework of the Amuq Valley Regional Project (AVRP), which systematically has been documenting the archaeological landscape of the Amuq Valley in southeastern Turkey since 1995. Within this broader regional framework, TAP was initiated as a long-term field project that was designed to explore and chronicle the archaeological record that has been preserved at the site. Given Tell Tayinat's considerable size, complex geomorphology, and lengthy settlement history, TAP investigations



have employed a field-sampling strategy that combines geophysical prospection, an extensive coring regime, and targeted excavations (Harrison 2014: 398).

When combined with the results of the surface survey, these layered data have facilitated more focused investigations of specific areas at the site, such as the West Central Area, which has demonstrated the greatest excavational potential. To date, the TAP investigations have focused exclusively on the upper mound, and they have sought to resolve long-standing questions about the stratigraphic sequence—the Building Periods of the University of Chicago’s investigations—produced by the Syrian-Hittite expedition in the West Central Area (Harrison 2014: 398–99).

Tayinat is situated strategically at the intersection that linked the Anatolian highlands with the Levantine littoral and lowlands of the Syro-Mesopotamian interior. As for the topographical features of its position and its value to the Amuq Valley and the surrounding environs, the tell consists of a low-lying mound 1.5 km east of Demirköprü and 700 m northwest of Tell Atchana (ancient Alalakh), on the northern bend of the Orontes River where it turns westward and winds around the southern edge of the Amuq Valley. The settlement morphology consists of an upper mound, or citadel, and a sprawling lower mound, now hidden by the alluvium of the Orontes floodplain, which extends from the upper mound to the north, the east, and the southeast (Harrison 2014: 396–97).

The upper and lower mounds at Tell Tayinat combine to form an area that measures approximately 35–40 ha (Harrison 2012b: 126; Harrison 2014: 397), with the lower mound currently hidden by a thick alluvial accumulation deposited by the Orontes, comprising roughly 20 ha and lying just north of the modern Antakya-Reyhanlı road. Tayinat’s position strategically straddles one of the principal transit corridors that run westward from the Syro-Mesopotamian interior to the Mediterranean, and northward to Anatolia. The wealth of natural resources in the Amuq Valley includes intensive agricultural production, minerals, and timber from the Amanus Mountains that border the plain, all of which likely facilitated settlement and accelerated the early development of complex social and economic institutions in both the valley and the outlying region (Janeway 2008: 124–25).

Earlier excavations at Tell Tayinat were conducted by the University of Chicago over four seasons between 1935 and 1938 (Harrison 2013b: 64), under the auspices of the Syrian-Hittite Expedition of the Oriental Institute. The University of Chicago’s excavations focused on the West Central Area of the upper mound, though areas also were opened up on the eastern and southern edges of the upper mound, as well as within the Lower City (Harrison 2014: 397).

The excavations of the University of Chicago yielded five distinct architectural phases, or Building Periods, which date to Phase O (*ca.* 950–550 BC), in addition to a lengthy period of abandonment that stretches back to Amuq Phase J (Harrison 2009b: 175–176). To date, the TAP excavations have uncovered Neo-Assyrian levels (*ca.* 738–672 BC or later) that primarily were encountered in Fields 1, 2, and 5 (Harrison 2011: 32).

## 2.6 Iron Age Temples at Tell Tayinat in Their Local Context

While these five Building Periods will not be discussed at any length until Chapter 2, of greatest importance to the present work is that the University of Chicago's team unearthed a tripartite temple of Iron Age II, known as Building II. While a discussion of Building II also will be reserved for Chapter 2, it is worth noting here that this temple functioned as a form of paired temple along with Building XVI, the structure that was excavated by TAP in the 2008 and 2009 seasons and eventually will take center stage in the present work.

After renewed excavations were begun under the auspices of the University of Toronto with an exploratory season in 2004, Field 2 was opened in 2005 (Harrison 2011: 32). Excavations that year uncovered a series of large, mudbrick walls immediately below the modern plowing zone. The 2006 and 2007 excavation seasons also revealed a series of substantial walls that appeared to form part of a single monumental structure, probably part of the walls from the southeastern corner of Building XIV (Harrison 2013b: 73).

In 2007, excavations were initiated to the east of Building XIV in an effort to find surfaces that might have sealed against the eastern exterior of Building XIV, revealing a cobblestone pavement that sealed an earlier surface densely packed with potsherds, predominantly consisting of Red Slipped Burnished Ware. Since the Syrian-Hittite Expedition had trenched along the exterior face of the wall, they effectively obliterated any stratigraphic connections that might have existed between these surfaces and the wall. Despite this stratigraphic break, and the lack of internal surfaces, the pottery associated with this monumental structure suggests a date of late Iron I or early Iron II (tenth to early ninth century BC) for this complex of the First Building Period (Harrison 2011: 32; Harrison 2014: 402, 406).

In 2008, two new squares (G4.38 and G4.48) were opened further to the east, which unveiled a large portion of the spectacular remains of a well-preserved Iron Age temple that measured 9 x 21 m in size (Harrison 2011: 33; Harrison 2014: 407). This building, eventually dubbed Building/Temple XVI, was approached from the south by means of a stone-paved

staircase, which led to a porticoed porch that was supported by an ornately-carved, basaltic column base (Harrison 2009b: 183–184). The excavations of 2008 uncovered only the portico and antecella, since the excavation squares did not extend far enough to determine if the temple indeed possessed a cella that extended would have extended the building beyond the antecella.

## 2.7 Gate Complex and Monumental Statuary at Tell Tayinat

In 2011 and 2012, the excavations—launched immediately to the south of Building XVI—uncovered the remains of a large gate complex that enabled the inhabitants to enter the upper citadel from below. Thus far, only the uppermost traces of the gate have been excavated, and thus its plan remains unclear. Nevertheless, deep probes to the southwest of the gate area indicate a steep slope to the south in this part of the site, most likely having been part of a trough, or shoulder, that helped to elevate and separate the northern part of the upper mound from the remainder of the settlement, forming a citadel-like acropolis (Harrison 2014: 407).

Associated with the gate complex, a magnificently carved stone lion figure was excavated, as well, measuring approximately 1.3 m in height and 1.6 m in length. The lion is poised in a seated position, with its ears back, claws extended, and mouth roaring. A second sculptured piece, found nearby, forms part of a large statue base, and it depicts the master-of-animals motif, comprised of a human figure flanked by lions (Harrison 2014: 408).

Adjacent to the lion, the upper torso and head of a colossal human figure and a carved column base was found, both hewn from basalt and buried in a paved stone surface that appears to have formed a passageway through the gate complex. The head and torso of the human figure is intact to just above its waist, standing approximately 1.5 m in height, which suggests a total body length of 3.5–4.0 m. The figure's face is bearded, with beautiful and well preserved inlaid eyes made of white and black stone, while its hair has been coiffed in an elaborate series of curls aligned in linear rows (Harrison 2014: 408).

Both arms extend forward from the elbow, each with two arm-bracelets decorated with lions' heads. The figure's right hand holds a spear, while a shaft of wheat rests in its left hand. A crescent-shaped pectoral adorns its chest. A lengthy hieroglyphic Luwian inscription, carved in raised relief across the figure's back, records the campaigns and accomplishments of Šuppiluliuma, most likely the king by that name who faced the Neo-Assyrian onslaught of Shalmaneser III as part of the Syro-Hittite coalition in 858 BC (Harrison 2014: 408).

The column base, which is semi-circular in shape and was found completely intact and lying on its side next to the human statue, is approximately 1 m in height and 90 cm in diameter. The figure of a winged bull is carved on the front of the column, with a sphinx flanking it on its left. The right side of the column is flat and undecorated, indicating that it originally stood flush against a wall (Harrison 2014: 408).

Kunulua's gate complex, with its array of monumental sculptures, is reminiscent of the great staircase at Carchemish. More concretely, the newly discovered sculptures argue strongly for the existence of a local, indigenous, Neo-Hittite, sculptural tradition, despite the longstanding view that similarly crafted monuments, including the double-lion column base found in Building II, were inspired by Neo-Assyrian prototypes (Harrison 2014: 408).

In fact, the presence of colossal human statues in the citadel gateways of Neo-Hittite royal cities of the Iron Age in Syro-Anatolia, often astride lions or sphinxes, should be viewed as the continuation of a venerable, Bronze-Age, Hittite tradition that accentuated their symbolic role as boundary zones, and the role of the king as the divinely appointed guardian, or gatekeeper of the community. By the ninth and eighth centuries BC, these elaborately decorated gateways, with their ornately carved reliefs, had come to serve as dynastic markers, legitimizing the power of the king and the ruling elite at the Kingdom of Palistin's capital city of Kunulua (Harrison 2014: 408–409).

## 2.8 Building XVI at Tell Tayinat

Building XVI formed part of a larger political and religious complex, or sacred precinct, which was constructed during the Second Building Period (late-ninth and eighth centuries BC) of the Neo-Hittite kingdom (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130, 131–139; Steymans 2013: 10), and later converted and incorporated into an Assyrian religious complex (late eighth or early seventh century BC), in an effort to transform the former Syro-Hittite royal city of Kunulua into an administrative capital under the provincial rule of the Neo-Assyrian Empire (Harrison 2012b: 6, 18). Some of the stones in the pavement directly in front of the building have been linked to a section of pavement uncovered by the Syrian-Hittite expedition in 1938, during a probe that they performed at the end of their final season of excavations (Harrison 2014: 407).

The part of the building complex that is most important here includes Buildings I, II, and VI, in addition to Building XVI (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127). Building I, the most famous of Tayinat's *bit hilani* palaces (Harrison 2011: 30), and the adjacent temple known as Building II, also were constructed during the site's Second Building Period (Haines 1971: 44–55), which was

the most extensive and best preserved architectural phase uncovered during the Oriental Institute's expedition (Harrison 2014: 406).

The focus of the present work will be on Building XVI and the finds that were yielded within it. However, since Building XVI seemingly was built and used in tandem with Building II, and possibly maintained that way during both the Neo-Hittite period and the Assyrian occupation, the nature of the relationship of these two temples also will be critical to this study. Therefore, Building XVI will be studied with a view toward understanding its role as a part of the sacred precinct within the city's royal citadel.

The discovery of Building XVI not only presented important information from the perspective of architectural design and constructional methods, but it also yielded a veritable treasure trove of material finds, thanks to the temple's state of preservation, due primarily to its destruction by conflagration. Many valuable objects made of fired clay, metal, and other materials were preserved in the destruction, and they will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2 and Chapter 5. Of greatest religious and cultural significance was the recovery of a cache of eleven cuneiform tablets that were discovered in the temple's inner sanctum, one of which provides great insight into the religious expression practiced in the ancient city during the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation of the site. This tablet answers many longstanding questions and presents many new questions that are only beginning to be addressed at present.

### 3 Order of Presentation

Chapter 2 focuses on Building XVI at Tayinat, including a presentation of its dimensions, its architectural features, the proportions and characteristics of individual rooms within it, a description of the placement and function of artifactual items found inside, and evidence that may help to date the terminal phase of the temple. A survey of the royal district on the upper mound where this temple was found will precede the discussion, including a focus on Building II, the paired-temple of Building XVI.

Chapter 3 offers a survey of contemporary Syro-Palestinian temples that may have influenced the architectural design and religious significance of the Iron Age temples at Tell Tayinat. The survey includes temples of the LBA in Syria, the LBA in Canaan, the Iron Age in Syria, and the Iron Age in the southern Levant.

The temples of the LBA, despite dating to a period that is earlier than any of the archaeological or epigraphical finds related to Building XVI, may prove to be insightful for

understanding the style of Kunulua's temples, because the site was located within the Hittite Empire before Kunulua became established as a Neo-Hittite seat of power during the Iron Age. A study of the Iron Age temples of Syria, which in some cases were contemporary with the temples at Kunulua that were renovated under the Assyrian administration by *ca.* 700–680 BC, is restricted to those that were built and operational by this same date.

Chapter 4 focuses on the identities of the deities that inhabited Building II and Building XVI at Tell Tayinat during the period of the Neo-Assyrian occupation. Epigraphical evidence discovered in the cella of Building XVI has led many to conclude that this temple was devoted to Nabu, the god of the scribal arts. The further suggestion has been offered that Nabu's consort, Tašmetu, inhabited Building II. This view will be studied, while evidence will be evaluated for the possibility that the temple instead was devoted either to Aššur, the king of the gods, or to the storm god, typically recognized and worshipped throughout the Levant as the king of the gods.

Chapter 5 discusses the details related to the inscribed cuneiform tablets that were found within the cella of Building XVI, with greatest attention devoted to T-1801, which contains a new version of Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty. These tablets, found on the podium within the cella, undoubtedly are the most important items discovered in Building XVI. The cache includes one tablet of great historical significance, which records an oath that Esarhaddon imposed on the governor of Kunalia (= Kunulua/Kullania/Tayinat) and on specified officials under his authority. Therefore, this chapter will include a discussion of the concept of royal oath-swearing, along with its relevance to the religious activity at Tayinat that is related to the oath tablet (T-1801).

Chapter 6 represents a synthesis of all of the findings that were presented in the previous chapters. Regarding the summarization, a comparative study of Kunulua's temples with those of the LBA and Iron Age that were discussed in Chapter 3 will be offered, in order to see how these temples fit into the greater pattern of architectural design of the temples that developed in the region over time. In addition, Kunulua's temples will be evaluated in light of the style and types of both earlier and contemporaneous temples, in order to determine whether any similarities in architectural design exist between Kunulua's renovated temples and other, contemporary temples.

## 4 Incidental Notations for the Reader

Given that writers invariably differ with one another as to their individual preferences in the use of literary conventions, both stylistically and in relation to their own field, space will be devoted

here to the documentation of the present writer's choices in preferential matters. The hope is that this will make the reading experience less complex and cumbersome for the reader.

#### 4.1 Abbreviation of Ancient Near East to ANE

From this point forward, the ancient Near East—which consists of Anatolia (Asia Minor), Egypt, the northern and southern Levant, Mesopotamia, and any outlying parts of the Fertile Crescent that are outside the confines of these regions—will be referred to as the ANE, which always will appear in capital letters.

#### 4.2 Abbreviation of Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty to EST

The most historically significant cuneiform tablet excavated from Building XVI at Tell Tayinat is the oath-tablet (T-1801), which contains a previously unattested version of Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty, hereafter abbreviated to EST. This treaty is best known from the cache of eight cuneiform tablets found at Kalhu by excavators from the British School of Archaeology, who found them in the throne room of the temple of Nabu. These tablets contain the sworn oaths of Median kings/rulers who pledged their allegiance to Esarhaddon and his chosen successor.

#### 4.3 Abbreviations for Archaeological and Historical Periods

The following abbreviations related to ANE archaeological periodization will be used, whether frequently or infrequently, with accompanying dates preferred by the present writer (all dates approximate): EBA for the Early Bronze Age (3100–2100 BC), MBA for the Middle Bronze Age (2100–1550 BC), LBA for the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC), OK for Egypt's Old Kingdom (2715–2170 BC), MK for Egypt's Middle Kingdom (2025–1674 BC), and NK for Egypt's New Kingdom (1560–1069 BC).

#### 4.4 Various Forms for Kunulua

The most discussed city within the present work is the capital of the kingdom that is most crucial to this study, as well. Both the city and the kingdom were called by different names throughout the course of history, both during ancient and modern times. For example, the city has gone by the following names: Kunulua, Kullania, Kunalia, Kinalia/Calno, and Tell Tayinat, the name by which it is known today. Any one of these forms may be used below, depending on the name of the city used at the time of consideration, but all of the forms should be considered interchangeable.

## 4.5 Differentiating between the God Aššur and the City of Ashur

The term *Aššur* was used mainly for two purposes: (1) to denote the Assyrian city that was one of the chief centers of Assyrian civilization dating back to the third millennium BC, and (2) to denote the deity that stood at the head of the Assyrian religious pantheon. In order to distinguish between these two uses, the present work will refer to the important Assyrian city as Ashur, while referring to the Assyrians' preeminent deity as Aššur. This choice is fairly arbitrary, and it is recognized that these spellings easily could be reversed for the two entities.



## Chapter 2

### Building XVI in Its Temporal and Spatial Context

This chapter presents an examination of the temples at Tell Tayinat, especially Building XVI, the Iron Age temple that was excavated in 2008 and 2009 under the auspices of the Tayinat Archaeological Project (TAP), led by Professor Timothy Harrison of the University of Toronto. In addition, Building II—also a temple, but which was excavated by the University of Chicago’s Syrian-Hittite Expedition in the 1930’s—will be discussed beforehand, due to its symbiotic relationship with Building XVI. The study includes a review of the characteristics of both temples, as well as the case for oath-swearing at Building XVI and the religious significance of its oath tablet. The findings from this chapter will be evaluated comparatively in Chapter 5 by studying oath swearing throughout the ANE.

## 1 The Building Complex (West Central Area) at Tayinat

### 1.1 The Excavations that Unveiled the Building Complex

The excavations at Tell Tayinat conducted by the University of Chicago were begun in the spring of 1935 and continued through the summer of 1938. The work concentrated on a large area on the West Central Area of the mound, in addition to several unrelated areas on the southern and eastern parts of the mound. A survey was made in November of 1935, which established a north-south baseline located by six concrete benchmarks and three east-west lines located by eight additional benchmarks, all of which were set and leveled (Haines 1971: 37).

The large, excavated area in the West Central Area of the mound, consisting of squares F–L 15–21, contained several buildings (some depicted in Figure 29) whose temporal relationship was difficult for the excavators to discern accurately in every situation. As the excavations proceeded, it became clear that this part of the mound was occupied by a U-shaped complex of buildings that were constructed around a large courtyard. The discovery of a gateway suggested to the excavators that the area was set apart from the rest of the city (Haines 1971: 38).

Many of the buildings were in use only for a short time during Phase O (Harrison 2014: 397), and Haines has suggested that none lasted for the entire period of occupation. The complex of buildings and structural features in the West Central Area of the mound, including the building recently excavated by TAP, has been designated as follows (Haines 1971: 38; Harrison 2012b: 3–

21; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 125–143): Buildings I, II, IV–VI, VIII, XII–XV, XVI, T 1, T 5, and T 9 (Figure 3).

All of these structures were part of the Second Building Period at Kunulua (Figure 4), with Building IV serving as a second *bit hilani* and Building VI functioning as an annex to Building I (also a *bit hilani*). The Third Building Period, which mainly consisted of renovations to the structures of the Second Building Period, coincided with the era of Neo-Assyrian hegemony over Kunulua and the Kingdom of Patina (Harrison 2014: 406).

## 1.2 Courtyard VIII, which Serviced the Building Complex

A paved courtyard (Courtyard VIII, Figure 29) was the central feature of the West Central Area's complex for the Second Building Period (Harrison 2014: 406). Courtyard VIII ended on the north at Building IV, on the east at Building VI, and on the south at Building I, measuring *ca.* 55–75 m in a north-south direction and *ca.* 85 m from east to west. A bit of stone pavement was found at the bottom of the steps leading up to Building XIII, while several other small patches of a pebblestone pavement were found in several parts of the areas that were excavated (in front of Building IV, in front of the steps to Platform XV, along the porch of Building I, etc.). There was no indication that the level of the walled-in area of the courtyard rose significantly during the later building periods (Haines 1971: 41).

## 1.3 Buildings in Proximity to the Building Complex

Building XIII (from the First Building Period), located immediately to the west of Building IV (Figure 4), clearly was recognizable as a *bit hilani* palace due to the form of its general outline. The building was roughly rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 28 (E–W) x 35 m (N–S). No part of Building XIII was preserved above the foundational walls, but it was entered on the southern side through a porticoed entrance that faced the courtyard. The porch was flanked by a guardroom on one side and a stairway on the other. A series of side rooms was arranged around a long, rectangular, central room, presumably the main reception hall. At the rear of Building XIII, access must have been obtained through the narrow anteroom to the principal room of the building. From there, one probably entered the small rooms on either side of the anteroom, as well as the rooms at the rear (Haines 1971: 38–39, pl. 94; Harrison 2009a: 177).

The eastern end of the uppermost pavement of Building IV (Figures 3, 4) was found immediately below the surface of the ground, part of a later, upper version (floor 1) of a building

that was built partially above Buildings XIII and XIV (Harrison 2013a: 105). The original phase (floor 2) of the building was excavated to the bottom of its foundations. Although only the foundations of the original walls of the floor-2 building were preserved, and the openings between the rooms were lost, the plan of the building was recognizable as that of another *bit hilani*. The only unusual feature of the plan was the double row of rooms at the rear of the building (Haines 1971: 41–42; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127).

The unbaked-brick foundational walls of Building IV were positioned well below the floor level, on a single course of rubblestone. Its porch was about the same size as the porch of Building I, and two column bases would have stood atop the porch's stairs, which were added to the plan despite that they were not found during the excavations. A third column base may have existed, similar to the three that were used with Building I. Building IV's main room measured *ca.* 33.7 m long and 9 m wide, making it the largest room in any *bit hilani* excavated at Tayinat. The width of the room also indicated that it had an exceptional roof-span (Haines 1971: 42).

Given that a doorway connected Building VI (Figure 4) with Building I, the former may be considered a northern wing/annex of the latter building (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127). The tripartite plan of Building VI is somewhat similar to the plan of the eastern section of Building I, except that the axis of the former is turned 90° clockwise from that of the latter. The western exterior wall of Building VI was observed to be missing, evidently demolished to make way for the construction of Platform XV. In their reconstruction of the missing western wall, the excavators depicted a door near the midpoint of the wall (Haines 1971: 43). Their reconstruction is justified, because the building's plan offers no other access to the inner rooms from the courtyard.

## 2 The Characteristics of Building I at Tayinat

### 2.1 General Specifications of Building I

Building I (Figure 4), the most famous of Tayinat's *bit hilani* palaces—along with the adjacent *in antis* temple,<sup>2</sup> Building II, with its beautifully carved double-lion column base—was constructed

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<sup>2</sup>An *in antis* temple features two side-wall extensions (*antae*) that project slightly beyond the building's initial (Roth 2007: 617–618), fully-enclosed room (antecella) to form a porticoed entrance, along with load-bearing (usually wooden) columns that form a line with the near end of the *antae*. The *in antis* style was a distinctively Levantine/western Syrian architectural type (Harrison 2011: 35) that thrived during the Early Bronze Age III and throughout all of the intervening periods until the close of the Iron Age. Temples of the *in antis* type never appeared in Babylonia, Assyria, or Central Anatolia (Novák 2012: 46–47).

during the Second Building Period (Harrison 2014: 406). Building I formed the southeastern corner of the buildings grouped around Courtyard VIII, having been approached from the northern, courtyard-side of the longer axis of the building.

On the west, a doorway led to stairs that rose either to a second floor or to the roof. In the center of the building, the large main room was augmented by four subsidiary rooms to the west and south. On the eastern side of Building I, a tripartite grouping of rooms consisted of a central room flanked by two smaller rooms (Haines 1971: 44).

Building I's plan essentially was that of a typical *bit hilani* palace, which contained three occupational floors (1a, 1, 2, and 3, in order of their excavation), and indications of a fourth. The occupational phase associated with floor 1 was completely rebuilt, while the porch connected to floor 2 was repaired or rebuilt, though with no indications of any other work that was performed on the rest of the building. The excavators detected that fires had ravaged all three occupational levels, which probably necessitated both of the reconstructions that were undertaken. Three decorated column bases that were found *in situ* with floor 3 betray a roofed porch that led into the interior of this largest buildings associated with the administrative complex (Haines 1971: 44, 46).

The column bases were placed on foundations of rough stone that rested on a stone-founded, unbaked-brick wall. The bases consisted of a highly ornamented upper register and a more severe lower register, both of which turned inward to a central torus (i.e. convex molding typical in a cross section of a column base) decorated with a running guilloche (i.e. ornamentation resembling interlaced ribbons). The bases were 111 cm in diameter, 70 cm high, and the depression in the top of the stone would accommodate a shaft about 75 cm in diameter. The shafts and capitals had disappeared entirely, implying that they were constructed out of wood (Haines 1971: 46).

Stone revetments and a glacis were built against the exterior face of the eastern wall of Building I, which probably transpired soon after Building I was completed, and certainly after Building II was finished. At the northern end of the steps in front of Building II, the glacis was altered into a vertical revetment that continued parallel to the northern wall of Building II, but which did not extend beyond its rear wall. The revetment against the eastern wall appeared to be the result of later reparation, as if the glacis had been torn out and the revetment had been built in its place. This was the only part of the stone construction that rose above the elevation of the original floor of Building I (Haines 1971: 45).

Both the outer and inner walls of this palace were constructed of unbaked brick, and all of the walls seemingly were covered with mud plaster. In one of the rooms that had been burned

heavily (room A), three coats of plaster were encountered, with the first two being mud plaster and the third coat consisting of white plaster. With the interior walls, two registers of fragmentary wood impressions in the horizontal grooves of the southern exterior wall revealed that longitudinal beams *ca.* 16 cm wide and 22–28 cm high were laid flush with the surfaces of the exterior walls (Haines 1971: 45).

## 2.2 The Open Porch of Building I

Wood was used extensively around the open porch, as the surfaces of the wall were built with a wood-crib construction. Horizontal beams of wood that were flush with the surface of the wall alternated with regularly placed beams that penetrated into the wall from 75–100 cm in length. With this method of construction, the surfaces of the walls around the porch structurally were formed with wooden beams, and unbaked brick was used as fill (Haines 1971: 45–46). With Building I, no pivot stones were found at the sides of the exterior opening preserved with floor 3, and since it seems likely that the opening could have been closed, a hinged door may have hung from a wooden frame (Haines 1971: 47).

Floor 2 of the porch of Building I was established on a fairly clean clay fill, and it was covered by a thin layer of black ash, with only a slight accumulation of floor debris. In the northeastern quadrant of the porch, a limestone column base was found on the floor. The depression in the top of the base could support a column of *ca.* 49 cm in diameter. Later, another clay fill was laid down, and a new floor was formed. A heavy layer of black ash on the floor and several fragments of large wooden beams indicated that floor 2 was the one in use when the building of this phase was destroyed by fire (Haines 1971: 50).

The palace of floor 1's occupation was rebuilt, but in the parts of the building that were preserved, the arrangement of the rooms remained the same. The wood and brick construction of the porch was preserved particularly well, suggesting the use of the same building methods as those used in the earlier constructions (Haines 1971: 51), which implies cultural continuity on the part of the site's occupants.

The side and rear walls of the porch were deeply founded, also having been built with a wood-crib construction. Wooden beams were placed longitudinally along the surface of the walls, and unbaked bricks were laid behind them, with transverse crossbeams set at regular intervals. In all probability, the longitudinal beams measured *ca.* 18 cm thick by *ca.* 40 cm high, while the crossbeams were *ca.* 16 cm thick by *ca.* 28.5 cm high. The reason for using such large timber must

have been to achieve structural support for the desired design. However, this became a weakness that was exploited during the building's destruction. Floor 1 of the porch was covered with heavily burned brick debris and ashes of wood. Large chunks of brick-wall construction, burning timbers, and clay roof-material had fallen into the fire and filled the porch as high as the walls were preserved (Haines 1971: 51).

## 2.3 Floor Level 1a of Building I

Little is known about Building I as it existed at the level of floor 1a. The only preserved floor-layers were found in room G, and they were not positioned far below the surface of the mound. Several doorways were blocked at the time of this latest occupation, and it seemed to the excavators that the structure was unable to function as a unit any longer. There was no evidence of a general rebuilding of the walls, but the existing doorways were filled with unbaked bricks. Probably the doorways were blocked intentionally. If the interior doorways indeed were blocked, the great amount of burning in the eastern walls of rooms K and G probably indicates the position of wooden constructions that may have served as exterior doorways (Haines 1971: 52–53).

# 3 The Characteristics of Building II at Tayinat

## 3.1 General Specifications of Building II

To the south of Building I was what the excavators referred to as a small, simply planned temple: Building II (Figure 4), which was excavated from 1935–1937. This temple was entered from the east, either by a paved street or an open area, though the latter option seems more likely after the renewed excavations of the TAP.

The portico was accessed by a stairway and a twin-columned entryway (Figures 4, 5), making this an *in antis* temple, because the columns stood between the projecting walls of the temple's longer axis (Haines 1971: 53; King and Stager 2001: 335). This architectural style indicates that these were load-bearing columns (Monson 2000: 27), which were supported by two double-lion column bases (Haines 1971: pl. 80, 81 A; Harrison 2013a: 105).

The long, rectangular temple of Building II followed a tripartite plan, with both successive inner rooms entered along the shorter axis of the building by means of the previous room. The rectangular antecella's longer axis is parallel with the longer axis of the temple. The cella is much shorter along the temple's longer axis, causing the disproportionately rectangular room's longer axis to be along the temple's shorter axis. Thus the length of Building II's cella along the longer

axis of the temple is noticeably shorter than that of Building XVI, despite Building XVI's comparatively smaller overall size.

According to Haines, Building II's architectural plan suggests a design of Western origin, or inspiration, in that it appears to have been a *prodomus* and megaron that had been altered to accommodate a religious ritual (Haines 1971: 53; cf. Harrison 2011: 30, 34–35). The task of evaluating Haines's theory will be reserved for Chapter 3.

For now, it can be stated that Haines is correct about how the plan reveals a long-room antecella with a modest cella at the closed end of the building. Due to the slope of the mound's surface, the entire southern wall and the southernmost double-lion column base had disappeared. The width of the pavings for the portico and antecella were preserved, however, and the southern wall was restored with certainty. The temple was 25.35 m long and 11.75 m wide (Haines 1971: 53), making for a ratio of 2.16:1.

This temple was constructed of the same materials—and much in the same manner—as the main palatial building (Building I). The walls were bonded by placing six square bricks along the width of the wall in one course, and three square and two long bricks in the next course. The walls were covered with mud plaster, with traces of a white finishing coat having been preserved in the antecella. In the sanctuary, some small fragments of red-and-blue-painted plaster were found between the flat stones bordering the altar (Haines 1971: 53).

Wood was used for construction as freely in Building II as it was in the palace, and it was found just as thoroughly burned. A wood-crib construction was used in the northwestern corner of the temple and at the eastern end of the portico's northern wall. Five registers of wood-crib were observed at the eastern end and four at the western end. Although the southern wall was not preserved, its foundation remained, and it is assumed that the other two corners of the wall were built in the same manner (Haines 1971: 65).

Only a single occupational floor is associated with this temple, and it remained at its original elevation, though floor-patching and repairs were evident (Haines 1971: 53–54; King and Stager 2001: 335). According to the original excavators, the Fourth Building Period saw the abandonment of the temple, although the *bit hilani* (Building I) continued to function as previously (Haines 1971: 65; Harrison 2011: 30).

### 3.2 The Portico of Building II

The dual-columned portico of Building II was 7.62 m wide and 5.92 m deep, and the side wall on the north was built in a modified crib construction. The lowest longitudinal beam was placed directly on top of the stone paving outside the surface of the southern wall's foundation. Because of this weakness in the building's construction, the interior surface of the wall leaned inward. In the fourth register, the crossbeams were placed only on the eastern end of the wall, and in the fifth and highest preserved register, the longitudinal beam ran along the length of the wall. There were two or three longitudinal beams on the western wall, but with no crossbeams (Haines 1971: 54).

Beveling was used on the sandstone paving laid on the porch of Building II. The doorway of the portico was poorly preserved, and because the triple-recess construction had separated from the surface of the wall, in some places the measurements had to be approximated. The opening of the doorway was *ca.* 2.8 m wide, and the porch was raised three steps above the pavement in front of the building. The pavement consisted of stone chips and pebbles. The steps to the entrance of the portico originally had extended entirely across the front of the building and *ca.* 25 cm beyond the northern face of the wall. Here, the stone glacis on the southern side of Building I was changed to a stepped format, and it was positioned farther on a vertical revetment (Haines 1971: 47, 54).

The steps, badly weathered, were constructed of dressed limestone blocks, and they were set on a foundational layer consisting of stone chips, mostly made of sandstone. Under the lowest step, the layer was *ca.* 5 cm thick. Under the middle step, the layer was *ca.* 15 cm thick. Under the top step, the layer was *ca.* 22 cm thick. The treads were 32–35 cm wide, and the risers were 12–13 cm high. A basaltic pedestal with a basin cut into the top had been placed on the top step in front of the end of the northern wall of the porch. The stone step was cut to receive the pedestal, and a chip of basalt was used to wedge it into place (Haines 1971: 54).

The floor of the portico was paved with cut gray sandstone blocks that were of various lengths and widths, measuring from 8–15 cm in thickness. The sides of the blocks were beveled to ensure a tight joint at the top of the stone, while the bottoms were left rough. The paving was founded on a layer of stone chips that went to a depth of 17 cm below the top of the pavement. The pavement was similar to the one laid to the east and in front of the steps that led to floor 2 of the porch of Building I (Haines 1971: 54).

The double-lion column base was set in bitumen on a single, large stone: 1.38 x 1.64 m in dimension, 52 cm thick at the front end, and 39 cm at the back end. The stone was dressed roughly on top and the upper 20 cm of the sides. Two, flat, basaltic stones that were 2.5 cm thick had been



placed under the front feet, and the hind legs were raised 10 cm above the top of the base by small, hard, white stones. The lions measured 1.12 m wide, 1.58 m long, and 72 cm high. The circular base to receive the column was 81 cm in diameter, and the central depression was 74 cm in diameter and 2 cm deep (Haines 1971: 54).

### 3.3 The Antecella of Building II

The antecella measured 7.62 m wide and 9.6 m long, with walls that were constructed simpler than those of the portico. The lowest longitudinal beam once again was placed on the floor-paving outside the wall-face of the foundation. The lowest register was six courses high, and it probably required two longitudinal beams, one on top of the other. The second register was six courses of brickwork, while the third register was probably one longitudinal beam that extended three courses high (Haines 1971: 55).

The floor was paved with cobblestones of *ca.* 8 cm in thickness, which rested on an earthen bed. The eastern part of the pavement was laid with smaller pebbles and appeared to be a later repair, though it may have been laid at the same time as the cobblestones. The elevation of the paving varied from 95.9–96.17 m, with the lower measurement being on the southern side of the room. The piers separating the antecella from the cella were 1.32 m thick, having been founded on the cobblestone pavement. They were built entirely of unbaked brick and were coated with white plaster. The bench (82 cm wide, 125 cm long, and 63 cm high) against the northern pier also was built atop the cobblestone pavement and covered with white plaster (Haines 1971: 55).

### 3.4 The Cella of Building II

Building II's cella was the same width as the antecella, but measured only 3.25 m deep, while the construction of the wall and floor-paving were the same as that of the antecella. The opening between the antecella and cella was 4.52 m wide. In the center of the opening was an area of laid, unbaked brick, which measured 1.4 m wide x 2.8 m long and was level with the adjacent paving. Also centered on the opening was an unbaked-brick stand (95 x 85 cm), or offering table, which stood partly on the mudbricks and partly on the cobblestone paving. The offering table was plastered on the front and sides, but the back was destroyed. The excavators could not tell if the table was freestanding or attached to the podium/altar (Haines 1971: 55).

The podium (3.55 m long and 2.6 m wide), preserved mainly in the northeastern corner alone, almost filled the entire cella. The sides of the podium consisted of large, reused, white and

basaltic stones. The entire podium was built of unbaked brick, and the center was filled with laid, unbaked brick. Two stone blocks were imbedded in the brick fill, but they were not considered to be found *in situ*. The small, rectangular feature at the northern wall of the room was left unpaved intentionally, but nothing is known of what had been there (Haines 1971: 55).

## 4 The Characteristics of Buildings XIII & XIV at Tayinat

Before proceeding to a discussion of Building XVI, the companion temple to Building II, a brief treatment of Building XIII and Building XIV is necessary, because the location and archaeology of Building XIV relates to the discovery of Building XVI. Buildings XIII and XIV were built in close proximity to one another, and undoubtedly they were designed to function in harmony during the First Building Period.

### 4.1 Details of Buildings XIII & XIV

The Syrian Hittite expedition of the University of Chicago achieved limited exposures of two large structures, identified as Buildings XIII and XIV, located beneath the floors and walls of buildings assigned to their Second Building Period in the West Central Area. They dated this later complex to the late ninth and eighth centuries (*ca.* 825–720) BC. Buildings XIII and XIV appear to have formed part of a large complex oriented around a central courtyard. Although only the sub-floor structural foundations of Building XIII were found intact, its general outline was reasonably clear, possessing the unmistakable characteristics of a *bit hilani* (Harrison 2014: 401).

Building XIII was roughly rectangular in its shape, measuring approximately 28 x 35 m—with entrance obtained from the south, through what appears to have been a porticoed vestibule—with a series of side rooms arranged around a long, rectangular, central room, presumably the main reception hall. The building's foundations were formed by deeply cut, vertically-faced trenches filled with unbaked brick, a distinctive constructional technique also used with many of the other monumental buildings of the West Central Area (Harrison 2014: 401).

Building XIV, though only partially excavated, appears to have been considerably larger than Building XIII. As with Building XIII, only a small amount of Building XIV's superstructure was found intact, and the excavators neither were able to reconstruct a coherent plan of the complex nor to identify its function. However, the University of Chicago's team did assemble a composite outline of the architectural remains that they encountered, which provides some indication of its enormous size, estimated to have been at least 49 x 95 m. A number of isolated

architectural finds also appear to belong to this First Building Period complex, including at least two enormous column bases that were found stratigraphically out of context, above Buildings XIII and XIV. Additionally, as many as three lion-headed orthostats found in a secondary context were reused as building material in the walls of buildings assigned to the Second Building Period (Harrison 2014: 401).

## 4.2 Buildings XIII & XIV in Their Temporal & Locational Context

In terms of spatial relationships, Building XIV was located below Buildings I, VI, and a small part of Building IV. The eastern part of Building XIII also underlaid Building IV. Since Buildings XIII and XIV were the earliest known monumental structures that were part of the complex, the University of Chicago's excavators placed them in the First Building Period, chronologically. The stone pavement—or stone-foundational layer, which was found in Area V and designated as floor 2b—may be included with these two buildings as far as its constructional horizon.

Even though the plan of Building XIV was fragmentary and its circulation was unclear, it may have served as part of the complex (though not to be confused with Courtyard VIII), along with Building XIII, facing a central courtyard (Haines 1971: 64). The floors were fragmentary, and in many places they were not preserved at all. In Building XIII, a small area of floor in one of the rooms was measured to have an elevation of 97.05 m. In Building XIV, the floor was measured at 95.0–95.3 m, while the stone paving at floor 2b in Area V varied from an elevation of 91.4 to 92.5 m. In the unrelated areas, the unbaked-brick walls below Gateway VII may have belonged to the First Building Period (Haines 1971: 64).

During the Second Building Period, Buildings XIII and XIV were razed to free the area for the structures of this subsequent building phase. Courtyard VIII probably was paved at this time, and Gateway XII was the major route of access into the area. A city wall formed the western side of the courtyard, and secondary walls may have completed the enclosure between the various buildings, although the only indication of such a wall was in Area V, along floor 2a. Building IV was constructed on the northern side of the courtyard, with Building VI on the east, and Building I on the south. Building II, situated immediately to the south of Building I, was approached from the east, but was not one of the structures grouped around Courtyard VIII (Haines 1971: 64).

### 4.3 Building XIV Encountered during the TAP's Excavations

In 2005, excavations were initiated in Field 2, to the north of Field 1, in the vicinity of the Syrian-Hittite expedition's Building I. As of 2015, Field 2 has produced the broadest horizontal exposure of any of the Iron II levels at Tell Tayinat, despite the limited nature of the excavations. The TAP's excavations in Field 2 proceeded to uncover a series of mudbrick walls that formed part of a single, monumental structure. The building's massive walls averaged more than 3 m in width, forming a tight grid pattern of small rooms, none of which was equipped with entryways (Harrison 2014: 401–402, 406).

Unfortunately, no internal surfaces or floors corresponding to the time of this complex's use have been identified so far. Clearly the foundations of this enormous structure suggest that the walls encountered here in Field 2 by the TAP team formed part of the southeastern corner of Building XIV. The extraordinary size of its walls, the monumental column bases, the carved orthostats possibly associated with it, and the rich epigraphic record concentrated in its vicinity unite to mark this structure as an unquestionably vital building, potentially part of the elite residential area of the early rulers of the Kingdom of Palistin (Harrison 2014: 402).

Buildings XIII and XIV thus reflect the exceedingly great power and wealth of the Kingdom of Palistin during the early part of its existence, seen specifically in the monumental architecture and complex design of the First Building Period at Kunulua, undoubtedly unrivaled throughout the Amuq Valley and the extended vicinity of northern Syria. The Palistinian kings must have commanded a vast labor force that was responsible for the extensive construction. While the use of these buildings did not continue throughout the entire duration of the kingdom, their significance to the kingdom's origin cannot be underestimated.

## 5 The Characteristics of Building XVI at Tayinat

### 5.1 General Specifications of Building XVI

The location of Building II is where an initial exploratory trench was opened by the TAP in 2004 (Harrison 2013b: 64; Janeway 2011: 167), and though the discovery of a second Iron Age temple there was expected, the level of its preservation came as a welcomed surprise. Full-scale excavations were initiated in 2005 to the north of Field 1 (Harrison 2014: 398), in the vicinity of Building I. Two squares were opened further to the east in 2008, where excavations revealed the well-preserved remains of a second Iron Age temple (Harrison 2011: 32–33).

Building XVI (Figures 4, 6), undisputedly identified as a temple, stood *ca.* 9 m to the east of Building I. While Buildings I and VI, its annex, are oriented slightly to the west of a purely northerly orientation, Building XVI is oriented slightly to the east of a purely northerly orientation. Therefore, Building XVI is not squarely aligned with the other buildings of the West Central Area of the mound. Nonetheless, this building was indeed an integral part of the complex of the Second Building Period.

One reason why Building XVI must be considered part of the building complex of the West Central Area is that during the temple's final phase of use (Fourth Building Period), entry into the temple was obtained from the south, by means of a monumental stone staircase (Harrison 2011: 33; Harrison 2014: 412). The significance of entry from the south is that access into the paired temples was obtained through the outer walls of each building that were closest to one another: the southern wall of Building XVI, and the eastern wall of Building II. If the two temples were compared to the hands of a clock, Building XVI would be positioned at just past 12:00, while Building II would be positioned at just short of 9:00.

Another reason for considering Building XVI as an indispensable part of the West Central Area complex is its proximity to the southeastern corner of Building I, the palace's closest corner to the temples. The importance of this simple reality of proximity cannot be overstated, because it betrays the close, symbiotic relationship between the main palace and the two temples, accentuating the king's exalted theological position in relation to the rest of Kunalia's population, and making a bold ideological statement about the king's unique ability to access the will of the gods efficiently and to disseminate it to his people accordingly.

More reason for concluding that Building XVI was part of the West Central Area is (1) the employment of the same "wood-crib" constructional technique that was used in the construction of other buildings within the complex, and (2) the nearly identical size, shape, and design of the basaltic column bases for Building XVI and Building I, which clearly link the temples architecturally to the adjacent *bit hilani* palaces (Harrison 2011: 35), marking them as an integral component of the Second Building Period that was discussed above.

A cobblestone pavement that extended eastward from Building I's *bit hilani* palace led to Building XVI, though at present it is not known how far the pavement extended to the south and east of the temple. The staircase that was used to approach the temple was constructed of four rows of hewn limestone blocks. The first two rows of stairs feature the widest and best dressed stones, with seven and seven-and-a-half wide stones, respectively. On both the third and fourth flight of

steps, wide and well-dressed stones also were laid as the first step on the left side, signaling that the stones for each row of stairs were laid in a left-to-right manner. This direction of construction is confirmed by the presence of a half-sized, well-dressed stone as the last laid stone on the right end of the second row, in contrast to all of the full-sized stones to its left.

The staircase led onto the temple's portico, a brick-paved porch that was supported by an ornately carved, basaltic column base that was set deeply into its floor. Building XVI's column base is virtually identical—in size, shape, and design—to the ones for Building I (Second Building Period) that were found by the team from the University of Chicago. Building II originally featured twin columns (double lions), with only the northern column having been preserved (Harrison 2014: 412; Harrison 2011: 33; Harrison 2009b: 184).

The measurements of Building XVI are 17.5 m long (if the staircase is not included, but 18.8 m long if it is included) and 8.3 m wide (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 132),<sup>3</sup> making for a ratio of 2.27:1. Given Building II's measurements of 25.35 m long and 11.75 m wide, with a ratio of 2.16:1, Building XVI (145.25 m<sup>2</sup>) was significantly smaller than Building II (297.86 m<sup>2</sup>) area-wise, leaving it with only 48.8% of the area that its larger counterpart possessed. The significance of this great diversity in inner size will be brought to bear in Chapter 4.

The constructional methods used to build the exterior walls of the temple are identical to those typically found in the other public buildings of the West Central Area, including the use of the distinctive wood-crib technique (Harrison 2011: 34). Building XVI existed in at least two primary phases, which is certain because the constructional method used to build the western wall of the temple differed sharply from the wood-crib technique used in making the eastern wall.

Therefore, Harrison and Osborne concluded that these two outer walls appear to preserve different phases of the temple's history, with the northern wall and the northern two thirds of the western wall representing the later phase of construction. In fact, Building XVI was a palimpsest of modifications and additions, with the initial phase having included at least the staircase, the basaltic column base, the front piers, and the exterior wall on the eastern side of the building (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 132, 133).

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<sup>3</sup>Some of the literature lists measurements of 21 x 9 m for Building XVI (Harrison 2011: 33, Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130, and Harrison 2014: 412). However, these measurements are incorrect (Harrison 2015).

## 5.2 Temporal Parameters of Building XVI's Use

As mentioned previously, Building XVI likely was constructed during the Second Building Period at Tell Tayinat (*ca.* 825–738 BC), a conclusion that is based on a comparison with the hieroglyphic Luwian fragments found on or below the floors of Buildings I and II (Haines 1971: 66; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127; Harrison 2011: 30; Harrison 2014: 406).<sup>4</sup> Significantly, the TAP expeditions also uncovered numerous hieroglyphic Luwian fragments that were scattered on the surface of the cobblestone courtyard (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 133; Tayinat Archaeological Project 08 2009: 4). Thus the initial use of the new temple now joins Building II as religious architecture at Tell Tayinat known to date to the city's neo-Hittite occupation of Iron II.

The Second Building Period likely came to an end with the conquest of the city by Tiglath-pileser III in 738 BC (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127; Harrison 2014: 396, 406), which is preferable to the date of 720 BC that was proposed by the earlier excavational team (Haines 1971: 66). This deduction is reasonable because it was in 738 BC that the Assyrian king returned to ancient Syria in his second western campaign, in order to deal severely with Tutammu, the King of Unqi (centered at Tell Tayinat), who “neglected [the loyalty oath . . .] (and thereby) disregarded his life” (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39; cf. Luckenbill 1989a: 273; Harrison 2005: 24), which provoked the Assyrians to attack his royal city of Kunulua. Moreover, the Syrian-Hittite Expedition at Tayinat recovered a composite metal roundel inscribed with the royal name of Tiglath-pileser III on it (Harrison 2011: 31), perhaps attesting to his activity at Kunalia.

In Tiglath-pileser III's eyes, Tutammu “disregarded his life” (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 39; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 126), which led to the capture of his capital city and the deportation of its population, with a separate fragment of the royal annals having reported that captives from elsewhere were settled in the territory of Unqi (Hawkins 1982: 425; Harrison 2011: 29). In fact, the most formidable piece of inscriptional evidence for the city's destruction is Tiglath-pileser III's own statement, “I reorganized [the city of] Kinalīa (Kunalīa) s[ubdued] the land Unqi, to its fullest extent” (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 40), although Luckenbill translated the initial verb as “rebuilt” (1989a: 274), a description implying Kunalia's destruction and rebuilding after the Assyrian king's invasion of the Kingdom of Unqi.

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<sup>4</sup>Recent analysis of the pottery associated with the floors of the Second Building Period confirms this date (Osborne in press, as cited by Harrison and Osborne 2012: 127).

The Assyrians thus transformed Unqi's capital city of Kunulua/Kinalia/Kullania/Kunalia into a Neo-Assyrian provincial administrative center in service of the empire (Harrison 2001: 116), where it remained under Assyrian control until at least the mid-seventh century BC (Harrison 2005: 25). Due to the recovery of a vassal treaty (T-1801) in the excavation of 2009, which records Esarhaddon's imposition of a sworn oath on the governor of Kunalia (Lauinger 2012), the *terminus post quem* for the destruction of Kunalia must postdate this event in 672 BC (Harrison 2012b: 137), probably having occurred in the latter half of the seventh century BC (Harrison 2014: 412).

Moreover, Building XVI's second phase ended abruptly by conflagration, as attested in several ways: (1) the floor of the antecella was badly burned, with a thick layer of burnt brick covering much of the floor between the two piers separating the portico from the antecella; (2) the collapsed burnt brick sealed the remnants of three heavily charred wooden beams; (3) most of the small finds of metal and valuable materials were heavily burned; and (4) a thick layer of collapsed burnt brick sealed the entire room, and in some places fused with the brickwork of the temple's outer walls, especially that of the eastern wall; (5) the firing of the cuneiform tablets preserved them permanently, which is most vividly observable with T-1801 (Harrison 2014: 412; Harrison 2012b: 130; Harrison 2011: 33; Tayinat Archaeological Project 08 2009: 4; Tayinat Archaeological Project 09 2010: 5; Harrison 2015). As Harrison appropriately noted in his report of the 2009 season at Tayinat, all of this is vivid evidence of the intensity of the conflagration that consumed the entire temple in searing flames.

### 5.3 The Portico of Building XVI

The single-columned portico of Building XVI was 5.2 m wide and 3.6 m deep, which are the same measurements as those of its cella, while the eastern (side) wall was built in a modified wood-crib construction (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 133), just as was true of the northern wall of Building II. A small, basaltic column rested on the western edge of the staircase, just in front of the building's western wall.

Unlike Building II, with its twin columns nestled within the portico, Building XVI featured a single column in the center of the portico. This discrepancy between paired temples mirrors the larger size of the former temple, when contrasted to that of the latter temple. As mentioned above, the area of Building II measures *ca.* 298 m<sup>2</sup>, while the area of Building XVI measures *ca.* 145 m<sup>2</sup>. Considering these smaller dimensions for Building XVI, including a left-to-right room-span that was 3.55 m shorter than that of Building II, the engineers seemingly determined that the load on a



single column base would suffice for Building XVI, but not for Building II. Due to Building II's greater size, the load on a single column base evidently was considered to be much too great to support the weight of the roof with just one column.

The southernmost point of the circumference of the column base of Building XVI, which fully rests within the space of the portico, is virtually flush with the northern edge of the central stairway-stone (left to right) of the fourth—and highest—row of stairs. Given the small size of Building XVI's portico, the column base comprised a sizable part of the portico's surface. The area of the temple's portico is *ca.* 19 m<sup>2</sup>, while the diameter of its column base is *ca.* .9 m.

With the addition of the area that was cut out of the floor around the column base, including the extended void to the north of the column base, *ca.* 1.3 m<sup>2</sup> of the portico's surface was off limits to anyone walking within the portico. This is equivalent to about 7% of the entire room. The lowest register of the ornately carved column base was largely hidden from view, obscured by a ceramic, tile-paved surface, suggesting that an earlier surface/building-phase lies unexcavated below the column base of the temple's final phase (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130).

The floor of the portico was lined with flat, fired-clay tiles that were shaped into virtually perfect squares of roughly .4 x .4 m in width. The number of squared tiles in each side-to-side row (i.e. west-to-east, along the temple's width) is twelve, while the number of squared tiles in each front-to-back row (i.e. south-to-north, along the temple's length) is nine. This aesthetically pleasing floor-design, which must have been beautiful when initially installed, comparatively resembles a nicely tiled floor in a modern kitchen or washroom. However, when the portico's floor was excavated, the squared-tile flooring revealed numerous cracks in virtually every square, many of which were left in such a fragmented state that they hardly resemble the original splendor and luster of their prime: the bygone era of the mighty Neo-Assyrian Empire.

## 5.4 The Antecella of Building XVI

The portico was separated from the antecella by two brick piers that bonded with the temple's exterior walls, in exactly the same format as the piers in Building II that separated the portico and antecella. The room measures 5.2 m wide x 5.8 m deep. A thick deposit of burnt brick, apparently material from the temple's collapse during the fierce conflagration, covered much of the floor between the two piers. This material, in turn, sealed three heavily charred wooden beams, at least one of which appeared to have been set directly into the floor, thus possibly signifying that it was part of a threshold for the doorway (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130; Harrison 2011: 33; Harrison

2009b: 184–185). However, it cannot be ruled out that the wooden beams represent collapsed material from the roof or the wall, rather than part of the wooden threshold of the doorway (Tayinat Archaeological Project 08 2009: 4).

The antecella's floor, though badly burned, was covered with a layer of plaster, which was preserved only in patches. The collapse above the floor contained burnt brick debris, but the room was largely devoid of pottery or organic remains. However, the room did yield a substantial quantity of bronze metal, including several riveted pieces, and several fragments of carved ivory inlay, perhaps suggesting that the room was equipped with furniture or fixtures mounted on its walls, or part of a door. The room also produced fragments of gold and silver foil, and the carved eye inlay from a human figurine. A limestone roof roller, used to maintain the consistency of the roof's outer layers, was found in the debris against the eastern wall, suggesting that the building was only one storey in height (Harrison 2014: 412; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 130; Harrison 2011: 33; Harrison 2009b: 185; Tayinat Archaeological Project 08 2009: 4).

In 2011, a probe was made in the northwestern corner of the antecella, in order to determine the sequence of the construction on the temple, and to establish whether earlier floors or phases of the building might have existed. A cross-section also was cut through the western wall of the building. Although no earlier floors were found, the probe and cross-section did produce clear evidence of two discrete constructional phases for the temple's western wall. A solid, mudbrick construction that extended across the bottom of the entire section was all that remained of the earlier of the building's two constructional phases (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 133).

This mudbrick-construction feature is reminiscent of the large, mudbrick foundations that supported the walls of Building II, most likely meaning that this feature of Building II is mirrored in the earlier phase of Building XVI's construction. In turn, this mudbrick feature was cut by a sharply delineated line marking a later foundational trench that was filled with mudbricks containing nari, or crushed limestone, a technique commonly used in the building of Iron III, the time of the Neo-Assyrian occupation (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 133; Harrison 2014: 407). When Esarhaddon rebuilt architectural structures in Babylonia, he claimed to have sought out original replacements, surveyed foundations carefully, and measured ground plans so that new buildings did not deviate from their earlier design, even by a single brick (Novotny 2010: 117). Therefore, if Esarhaddon's predecessor who rebuilt Building XVI after the city was destroyed by Tiglath-pileser III followed the same principle, one would not expect much variation between the temple's initial and final phases.

## 5.5 The Cella of Building XVI

A second set of piers and a wood-lined threshold separated the antecella from a small cella, the inner sanctuary that also is known as the *sancta sanctorum* “holy of holies,” and probably accessed originally by a doorway or curtain. Unlike the first set of piers, this set of piers was installed secondarily, during the Neo-Assyrian occupation of the site. These new piers abutted the exterior walls, rather than bonding with them. The room measured 5.2 m wide x 3.6 m deep. This northernmost room featured an elevated, rectangular platform, or podium, which filled virtually the entire cella and clearly represented a renovation to the original design and intended function of the space in this inner sanctum. The podium was constructed with fired brick, similar in shape to the bricks that paved the portico, and its sides were coated with a white plaster. The surface of the podium was paved with clay tiles and accessed by steps in its two southern corners. The cella also was burned thoroughly in the intense conflagration experienced elsewhere within the temple. The podium was accessed by four steps in each of its two southern corners, while a free-standing, plastered, mudbrick installation—possibly an altar or offering table—stood on the eastern side of the room (Harrison 2015; Harrison 2014: 412; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 131; Harrison 2009b: 185–186; Tayinat Archaeological Project 08 2009: 4; Steymans 2013: 10).

The cella also had been burned intensely by fire, preserving a wealth of cultic objects that were found strewn across the podium and around its base, including gold, bronze, and iron implements, libation vessels, a large Assyrian Glazed Ware jar, and other ornately decorated ritual objects (Harrison 2014: 412; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 132), all of which were preserved by the intensity of the fire that had destroyed the temple. The ceramic assemblage included several oil lamps, a pot stand, and a small jug, all typologically datable to the seventh century BC (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 132).

A concentration of metal objects—including damaged pieces of bronze sheet metal similar to fragments found in the central room, large and small nails, bosses, and four cotter pins—littered the surface of the podium immediately to the west of the altar-like installation, apparently part of wall fixtures or fittings for wooden furniture (Harrison 2014: 413). Also atop the surface of the podium rested a collection of Neo-Assyrian cuneiform tablets, a cache that was inscribed in Late Assyrian script, probably part of a Neo-Assyrian provincial archive that was stored somewhere within the city. There were eleven discrete texts, all but one of them preserving literary or historical documents (Lauinger 2011: 6; Harrison 2014: 413).

Eight of the documents were hemerological texts, seven of which belong to the Mesopotamian scholarly series known as *iqqur īpuš*. The cache also included a lexical text, a docket, and a lengthy oath tablet, or treaty (see next paragraph). The *iqqur īpuš* texts were formatted as tables, with the *x*-axis listing the months of the year, and the *y*-axis recounting a series of activities and eventualities (Lauinger 2011: 6). While a more detailed discussion of this textual cache from the Building XVI's cella will be reserved for Chapter 5, a few comments should be mentioned now regarding one of the tablets.

The most notable document, T-1801, records an oath that Esarhaddon imposed on the governor of Kunalia in 672 BC, which acts as a *terminus post quem* for the final use of Building XVI (Harrison 2011: 34). This tablet records the oaths taken by local rulers who obligatorily pledged support for the succession of Esarhaddon's son, Ashurbanipal, to the throne at the death of his father (Lauinger 2012: 87). Of particular note is that the oath tablet unearthed at Tell Tayinat was inscribed in the Akkadian language (Lauinger 2015; Crouch 2014: 148), which accentuates that Akkadian was universally known and used even in the far reaches of the empire, such as within the Amuq Valley of western Syria.

The cache of tablets indicates that the paired temples at Tayinat formed part of an Assyrian religious complex. This discovery closely parallels evidence from religious contexts in the Neo-Assyrian heartland, with the most notable parallel being the Ezida, or temple of Nabu complex, which was located at Nimrud, ancient Kalhu (Harrison 2014: 413). The name "Ezida" was the traditional designation for any great complex of buildings that comprised the temple of Nabu as an indispensable part of the complex (Steymans 2013: 9).

At some point during the late eighth century or early seventh century BC, both temples at Tayinat apparently were renovated and incorporated into an Assyrian religious complex (Harrison and Osborne 2012: 133; Steymans 2013: 10), with the smaller of the two possibly having been dedicated to the cult of the Assyrian god, Nabu, replicating a well-established Assyrian double tradition best exemplified by the perpendicularly positioned paired temples in the ziggurat complex on the citadel at Khorsabad, ancient Dur-Sharrukin. Tayinat's Platform XV, which is rectangular in shape and built of clay bricks (Haines 1971: 43–44)—depicted in front of the entrance to Building XVI and uncovered during a probe—might have served as an elevated platform for an Assyrian cultic monument, perhaps even a small ziggurat-like structure, given its alignment immediately to the north of Building XVI (Harrison 2011: 34, 35; Harrison 2014: 407, 413).

## 6 Summary Observations

This chapter presented an archaeological survey of the architectural structures at Tell Tayinat that relate to Building XVI, as well as a description of the newly discovered temple, itself. All of these buildings are located within the West Central Area of the upper mound. The structures that were discussed in detail include Courtyard VIII, Building I, Buildings XIII and XIV, Building II, and Building XVI, all of which were constructed during Iron II.

Many of the buildings within the West Central Area were in use only for a short time during Phase O, and perhaps none of them lasted for the entire time of the site's occupation. The complex includes the following buildings: I, II, IV–VI, VIII, XII–XV, XVI, T 1, T 5, and T 9. All of these structures were part of the Second Building Period, with Buildings I, IV, and XIII being *bit hilani* palaces and Buildings II and XVI being temples ascribed to deities.

Courtyard VIII served as a unifying architectural feature, as it ended at Building IV, Building VI, and Building I. Stone pavement was found at the bottom of the steps leading up to Building XIII, while small patches of a pebblestone pavement were found elsewhere. There was no indication that the level of the courtyard rose significantly during later building periods, so it may have preserved remarkably well over the course of time.

Buildings XIII and XIV were located beneath the floors and walls of the buildings assigned to the Second Building Period in the West Central Area. Although only the sub-floor structural foundations of Building XIII were found intact, its general outline was reasonably clear, possessing the unmistakable characteristics of a *bit hilani* palace due to its general outline making this clear. The building was roughly rectangular in shape, but none of it was preserved above the foundational walls.

Building XIII was entered from the south side through a porticoed entrance facing the courtyard. The porch was flanked by a guardroom on one side and a stairway on the other. A series of side rooms included a rectangular room that presumably was the main reception hall. The eastern end of the pavement of Building IV was found immediately below the surface of the ground, revealing that this building was constructed partially above Buildings XIII and XIV.

Building XIV, though only partially excavated, was considerably larger than Building XIII. Only a small amount of Building XIV's superstructure was found intact, and the excavators neither were able to reconstruct a coherent plan of the complex, nor to identify its function. During the Second Building Period, Buildings XIII and XIV were razed to free the area for the structures of

this subsequent building phase. Courtyard VIII probably was paved at this time, while Gateway XII was the major route of access into the area.

Building I formed the southeastern corner of the buildings grouped around Courtyard VIII, and it was approached from the northern side of the building. The plan of Building I was that of a standard *bit hilani*, with three occupational floors and indications of a fourth. Three column bases were found *in situ*, implying a roofed porch that led into the interior of this largest of all buildings associated with the administrative complex.

Stone revetments and a glacis were built against the exterior face of the eastern wall of Building I. The outer and inner walls of this palace were constructed of unbaked brick, and all of the walls seemingly were covered with mud plaster. Wood was used extensively around the open porch, as the surfaces of the wall were built with a wood-crib construction.

Building II featured only a single occupational floor, and it remained at its original elevation throughout the course of its use. This temple was accessed from the east, either by a paved street or an open area. Its portico was accessed by a stairway and a two-columned entryway, making this an *in antis* temple, as the columns stood between the projecting walls of the temple's longer axis. These load-bearing columns were supported by two double-lion column bases.

Building II followed a typical tripartite plan, with the inner rooms entered along the shorter axis of the building. The length of Building II's cella along the longer axis of the temple is noticeably shorter than that of Building XVI, despite the latter's comparatively smaller overall size. Thanks to the slope of the mound's surface, the southern wall and the southernmost double-lion column base did not preserve. The temple measured 25.35 x 11.75 m, for a ratio of 2.16:1.

The walls were bonded with square bricks covered with mud plaster, with traces of a white finishing coat preserved in the antecella. In the cella, some small fragments of red-and-blue-painted plaster were found between the flat stones bordering the altar. Wood was used for construction just as freely as with the adjacent palace, and it was found just as thoroughly burned. A wood-crib construction was used in the northwestern corner of the temple and at the eastern end of the portico's northern wall.

The northern wall of Building II's dual-columned portico was built in a modified crib construction. Beveling was used on the sandstone paving of the porch, while the doorway was poorly preserved. The portico's steps originally had extended across the entire front of the building and *ca.* 25 cm beyond the northern face of the wall. Here, the stone glacis on the southern side of Building I was changed to a stepped format.

The walls of the antecella of Building II featured a less complex construction than those of the portico. The floor was paved with cobblestones *ca.* 8 cm thick, which rested on an earthen bed, while piers separating the antecella from the cella were founded on the cobblestone pavement. They were built entirely of unbaked brick and were coated with white plaster. The bench against the northern pier also was built atop the cobblestone paving and covered with white plaster.

The cella of Building II was the same width as the antecella, and the construction of the wall and floor-paving were the same as that of the antecella. In the center of the opening was an area of laid, unbaked brick. Centered with the opening was an unbaked-brick stand, or offering table, which sat partly on the mudbricks and partly on the cobblestone paving. The offering table was plastered on the front and sides, but the back of it was destroyed.

A podium, preserved mainly in the northeastern corner, almost filled the cella. The sides of the podium consisted of large, reused, white and basaltic stones. The entire podium was built of unbaked brick, and the center was filled with laid, unbaked brick. Two stone blocks were imbedded in the brick fill, but they were not found *in situ*.

Building XVI was excavated during the 2008 and 2009 TAP excavations. Undisputedly identified as a temple, the building stood *ca.* 9 m to the east of Building I. The builders employed the same “wood-crib” constructional technique that was used to build many of the other structures in the building complex. The nearly identical size, shape, and design of the basaltic column bases for Building XVI and Building I link the temple architecturally to the adjacent *bit hilani* palaces, marking it as an integral component of the Second Building Period.

A staircase led onto the temple’s portico, a brick-paved porch that was supported by an ornately carved, basaltic column base that was set deeply into its floor, similar to Building II’s twin column bases. The measurements of Building XVI are 17.5 x 8.3 m, making for a ratio of 2.27:1. Building XVI was slightly smaller than its counterpart, and its two outer walls appear to preserve different phases of the temple’s history, with the northern wall and the northern two thirds of the western wall representing the later phase of construction. Building XVI’s final phase ended abruptly by conflagration, with vivid evidence of the intensity of the conflagration that consumed the entire temple preserved throughout.

The portico was separated from the antecella by two brick piers that bonded with the temple’s exterior walls. A thick deposit of burnt brick covered much of the floor between the two piers. This material sealed three heavily charred wooden beams, at least one of which appeared to

have been set directly into the floor, thus possibly signifying that it was part of a threshold for the doorway.

The antecella's floor, though badly burned, was covered with a layer of plaster, though preserved only in patches. The room yielded a substantial quantity of bronze metal—including several riveted pieces—and several fragments of carved ivory inlay, perhaps suggesting that the room was equipped with furniture or fixtures mounted on its walls, or part of a door. The room also produced fragments of gold and silver foil, and the carved eye inlay from a human figurine.

A number of Neo-Assyrian renovations of Building XVI transformed this temple from a typical northern Levantine / West Syrian temple *in antis* into an Assyrian *langraum* temple, a tripartite design typical of the architectural style of the Neo-Assyrian Empire. These renovations include a second set of piers, a podium, and brickwork that covered the floor of the portico.

A second set of secondarily installed piers and a wood-lined threshold separated the antecella from the cella, which probably was accessed by a doorway or curtain. This northernmost room featured an elevated, rectangular podium, which filled virtually the entire cella, much like the podium in Building II. The podium was accessed by four steps in each of its two southern corners, while a free-standing, plastered, mudbrick installation—possibly an altar or offering table—stood on the eastern side of the room.

The podium was constructed with fired brick, similar in shape to those that paved the portico, and its sides were coated with white plaster. Numerous cultic objects were strewn across the podium and at its base: gold, bronze, and iron implements, libation vessels, a large Assyrian Glazed Ware jar, and other ornately decorated ritual objects. The ceramic assemblage included several oil lamps, a pot stand, and a small jug, all dating to the seventh century BC.

Also found on the surface of the podium was a collection of Neo-Assyrian cuneiform tablets, possibly part of a provincial archive that was stored somewhere within the city (Harrison 2009b: 186), although Lauinger has made a strong case that the tablets were objects for display, and thus were in their intended places (Lauinger 2011: 5, 11; Lauinger 2012: 90; Harrison 2015). There were eleven discrete texts, all but one preserving literary or historical documents. The most notable document, T-1801, records an oath that Esarhaddon imposed on the governor of Kunalia in 672 BC, which provides a *terminus post quem* for the final use of Building XVI.

This Neo-Assyrian temple may have been dedicated to the cult of the Assyrian god, Nabu, replicating an Assyrian tradition best exemplified by the perpendicularly positioned paired temples in the ziggurat complex on the citadel at Khorsabad/Dur-Sharrukin (Harrison 2011: 35; Harrison



2012b: 14, 17; Lauinger 2011: 8, 10; Lauinger 2012: 87; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 137). The matter of whether Building XVI actually was a temple of Nabu will be taken up in Chapter 4. Platform XV, which is square in shape and built of finely-dressed limestone orthostats, might have served as an elevated platform for an Assyrian cultic monument.

## Chapter 3

### Levantine Religious Architecture of the LBA and Iron Age

In order to set the context properly for an architectural examination of Building XVI at Tell Tayinat, a study will be made of the architectural and physical features of other temples of its day (the Iron Age) and the time immediately beforehand (the LBA), both in Tayinat's native region of the northern Levant and SE Anatolia (Figure 1), as well as the nearby southern Levant (Figure 7).

The study includes numerous LBA and Iron Age temples of Syria, as well as LBA temples of southeastern Anatolia, and LBA and Iron Age temples of the southern Levant. Additionally, this study seeks to provide an overview of the principal features of contemporary religious architecture, in order to understand the nature of religious life on Tell Tayinat's acropolis during the Iron Age better, and therefore the survey will attempt to be representative but not exhaustive.

The sites that will be examined herein are listed in Table 1. Those that will not be discussed include the following northern Levantine sites: Hama, Tell Sukas; southern Levantine sites: Dan, Arad, Beersheba, Tell Motza; and Transjordanian sites: Ataruz, among others.

SITE	ERA	REGION	STYLE	CHARACTERISTICS
Ugarit	LB Age	Syria	<i>in antis</i>	bipartite temples (Baal, Dagan)
Munbaqa	LB Age	Syria	<i>in antis</i>	bipartite (Tem. 2), tripartite (Tem. 1)
Emar	LB Age	Syria	<i>in antis</i>	bipartite temples (Baal, Aštarte)
Alalakh	LB Age	Syria	tripartite	dual cella (Baal, Aštarte?) (Level III Tem.)
Hazor	LB Age	Canaan	tripartite	2 column bases within cella (1B Tem.)
Hattuša	LB Age	Anatolia	central cella	pillared halls surrounding cella
Sarissa	LB Age	Anatolia	central cella	pillared halls surrounding cella
Aleppo	Iron Age	Syria	<i>migdol</i>	broad-room cella, sealed cultic niche
ʿAin Dārā	Iron Age	Syria	<i>in antis</i>	long-room cella, columned portico
ʿĀfiṣ	Iron Age	Syria	<i>in antis</i>	long-room cella w/side entrance (Build. G)
Carchemish	Iron Age	Syria	<i>in antis?</i>	dual-columned portico, no antecella
Jerusalem	Iron Age	Canaan	tripartite	columned portico, text in long-room cella
Tel Qasile	Iron Age	Canaan	bipartite	bent-axis approach, columned cella
Ekron	Iron Age	Canaan	megaron	columned cella, hearth, <i>bamah</i>
Ashdod	Iron Age	Canaan	Aegean	columned cella, hearth, <i>bamah</i>
Gath?	Iron Age	Canaan	Aegean	twin-columned cella, <i>bamah</i>

Table 1: Comparative Chart of Temples Analyzed in Chapter 3

The sites chosen for the study are either those that bear political-historical or geographical significance in relation to ancient Kunulua, those in close enough proximity and whose regional influence is worthy of consideration in relation to Kunulua, or those whose ethnic identity might shed light on understanding the ethnic identity of Kunulua's residents.

## 1 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Ugarit

### 1.1 Historical Background

The history of Ugarit (tell Ras esh-Shamra), located on the eastern Mediterranean coast and 12 km to the north of Latakia (Figure 1), dates back to the Neolithic period, when it was established as one of the numerous farming villages that stretched along the coast. The city's zenith undoubtedly was experienced from the sixteenth through thirteenth centuries BC, which falls directly within the span of the LBA. One of its excavators has called Ugarit the most important Canaanite kingdom of the LBA in the Levant (Yon 2006: 1, 7; Yon 2008: 38–39).

Because of Ugarit's strategic location and natural resources, the site played a key role in the political, economic, and cultural affairs of the region, maintaining communication with Egypt and Cyprus, among other cultures. Its role went beyond that of a mere port city, as it became a crossroads for the surrounding regions due to the strategic policies that enabled it to influence culture and commerce from Europe to Mesopotamia and Egypt. Among the artifactual remains that have been excavated are cuneiform tablets in Ugaritic syllabic (Schaeffer 1956) and Ugaritic alphabetic (Schaeffer 1957; Pardee and Bordreuil 2008: 37–47) scripts, which have shed a great deal of light on the city's history from the fourteenth to the beginning of the twelfth century BC (Yon 2006: 1, 7), the latter being the time when the city was destroyed in a great conflagration.

The invasion of the Sea Peoples allegedly spelled doom for the city of Ugarit, as its last king, Ammurapi, explained (RS 18.147) how these invaders sailed to Ugarit in their ships, burned the cities that were under Ugarit's control, and inflicted great damage on this proud coastal power, at a time when Ugarit's troops were located in Hittite lands and their fleet was far away in Lukka (Nougarol 1968: 87–90). Thus Ugarit suffered the same fate as Hattuša, failing to survive the collapse of the Hittite Empire at the end of the LBA (Caubet 2003: 18).

### 1.2 The Temples at Ugarit

To the east of the Royal Palace (Matoian 2008: 127–147) at Ugarit is the area that is designated the acropolis. Crowning the acropolis and visible from a great distance were the temples of Baal

and Dagan (Figure 8), both of which were identified in inscribed stelae. These monumental temples were built according to virtually identical plans, each surrounded by an enclosure that delimited the sacred area. Following the street that runs eastward from the Royal Palace, and ascending slightly, one arrives at the temple of Baal. Its identity is based on a stele known as “Baal with Thunderbolt,” having been found down the slope of the acropolis to the west of the temple, probably tossed there by the Turkish governor’s forces who were looking for treasure at the site of the temple during the twentieth century, sometime before 1932 (Yon 2006: 106, 108).

The construction of this temple has its mythological setting in the Baal cycle (Smith 2007: 5–6; Wyatt 2007: 43–47), the largest literary work found in the library of the High Priest of Baal, as one of its main themes, an expression of the god’s sovereignty at Ugarit and its role as dispenser of fertility, overseeing the storehouse of rain and suitably dispensing it on earth (del Olmo Lete 2004: 28; Pitard 2010: 93). Baal represented the martial aspect of kingship, because the divine victory is a paradigm for royal victories (Wyatt 2007: 48).

The temple and its enclosure encompassed an area of about 850 m<sup>2</sup>, while the courtyard situated in front of the temple was entered by means of a door. Standing in front of the temple’s entrance was an altar, which was discovered largely intact. The lower parts of the foundations of the temple, which was entered from the south, were preserved in the form of large ashlar blocks. The rectangular building was bipartite, composed of a vestibule to the south and a cella to the north, with a door between them. A stairway led from the courtyard to the vestibule and provided access to the temple’s cella. The cella probably contained a niche—perhaps for a cultic image—that was framed by the posts of the stairway at ground level, and it was from this room that some of the stelae discovered in the vicinity would have derived (Yon 2006: 108–110).

The temple of Dagan (the Babylonian earth/atmospheric god), which also faced south, was located to the southeast of the temple of Baal and the east of the House/Library of the High Priest. All that remains of this temple are the walls of the foundation—preserved in the form of a glacis, which may indicate that the first phase of its construction dates to the MBA. The foundation’s layout enables a reconstruction that greatly resembles the plan of the temple of Baal, including a vestibule to the south that led to a rectangular room. The foundations are wide enough for two or three flights of stairs that led to the upper floors, possibly up to three in number (Yon 2006: 113).

The temple was erected in a protected space formed by its northern and western walls, along with the enclosure to the south and east. In the courtyard at the front of the entrance, which was part of the sacred area, were found two limestone stelae on which dedicatory inscriptions to

the god Dagan were inscribed in alphabetic cuneiform (Yon 2006: 134 [fig. 19]). While some have doubted the attribution of this temple to Dagan, his name appears in the Ugaritic god-lists between El and Baal, and he was mentioned frequently in Ugaritic ritual texts as a recipient of offerings (Yon 2006: 114, 135). The most significant religious texts at Ugarit are from the house that was located between the temples of Baal and Dagan, which was designated the house belonging to the High Priest of Baal, due to what was written on inscribed utensils that were found within the house (Pitard 2010: 93).

Both the temple of Baal and the temple of Dagan were designed as variations on the classic Syrian *in antis* long-room plan, with a cella that was larger than the antecella. Given that these temples featured formidable foundations and an associated stairway, they likely resembled towers and had rituals performed on their roofs (Akkermans and Schwartz 2003: 338). Yet according to the plan of the temple of Baal, the antecella was more of a long and wide hallway, forming a slight T-shape when considering its relationship to the cella.

## 2 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Munbaqa

### 2.1 Historical Background

Expanding dramatically from its EBA location high on the tell, the MBA/LBA site of Tell Munbaqa (Figure 1), located *ca.* 35 km upstream from Emar, was transformed into an enclave of *ca.* 15 ha. The geographical name *Ekalte* occurs in texts from Munbaqa, but the ancient site cannot be identified with Munbaqa with complete certainty, though it is accepted universally as such. One possibility is that a modern village beside Tell Munbaqa marks the site of ancient Ekalte (Frayne 2016). The “new” city of ancient Ekalte consisted of an inner and an outer town, with each zone protected by enclosure walls of gravel and brick above rocky foundations, while the summit was the cultic center of the city. Three gates were excavated, including a northeastern gate with a preserved mudbrick radial arch, which was reconstructed as a two-chamber installation with a 4-m-wide, interior, brick walkway. In *ca.* 1200 BC, the city was destroyed and abandoned, and the ruins were never resettled (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 2–3; Werner 1998: 54).

### 2.2 The Temples at Munbaqa

On the western crest of the tell, high above the river and floodplain, the stone foundations of three *in antis* temples were excavated (Figure 9). Unlike the sanctuaries in Mesopotamia, the Syrian *in antis* temples were not surrounded by a *temenos* wall, but were free-standing within the city limits,

as with the temple at Munbaqa. Its temples were preceded topographically by prominent points on the edge of the terrain to the river and to the wadis, and their conspicuous position made them visible from afar. The Small Temple, consisting of a single cella and built with a plan similar to that of the temple at Aleppo, served the city from about 2500–2300 BC. Temples 1 and 2, the only two that will be treated here, were renovated and expanded during the MBA, when the site expanded significantly. The possibility of another sanctuary on the site does exist, but the likelihood has diminished after the magnetic prospection that was performed next to the northern gate, which structure is known in the texts as the *bāb giparri* gate of the temple and dates to the transitional time from the MBA to the LBA (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 6; Werner 1998: 54, 57).

### 2.3 Temple 1 at Munbaqa

An entire neighborhood with important public and private buildings was joined with Temple 1 (Figures 9, 10) during the MBA. Significant hoards of bronze weapons and jewelry were found in Temple 1 of both the third and second millennium BC. Temple 1 of the MBA/LBA must have been built during the first half of the second millennium BC, over an older complex, with several modifications that were made. The width of the outer walls was up to 3 m in places, and the long-room cella measured 12 x 7.5 m. The antecella and vestibule were similar in dimension, built in rectangular shape, with the longer axis of the room running along the width of the temple. The *antae* appeared only in the most recent phase of Temple 1 (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 4–5).

### 2.4 Temple 2 at Munbaqa

Temple 2 (Figures 9, 10) was built about 50 m to the southwest of Temple 1, separated from it by a deep wadi that rises above the steep, western slope of the hill. Building phase 3 of Temple 2 represents the oldest exposed construction of the structure. Most of the superimposed findings of the second phase of construction can be inferred with certainty. The walls of Temple 2 also were huge, with projecting *antae*, although they were built with hewn stones that were not quarried as large as the ones used for Temple 1. However, the dimensions of Temple 2 exceed those of Temple 1 by about 50%, as it boasts significantly increased proportions, by comparison. However, the similarity in fixtures, architectural details, cultic systems, and orientation strongly suggests the simultaneous temporal origin and period of use as Temple 1 (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 5).

Two column bases supported a roof that covered the open portico (Figure 10), while a small, stone-paved path led to the antecella (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 5; Fritz 1987: 41). A door

probably controlled access into the cella, as the piers between the antecella and the cella extend far inside the temple (toward the center of its longer axis). A small staircase led from this doorway into the cella, while the cella was divided unevenly (i.e. placed in a position that made it non-perpendicular to the outer walls of the room/temple), for some unknown reason. Another set of stairs led downward from the initial chamber of the cella to the inner chamber of the cella.

In the extreme western corner of the cella, the excavators found the remains of two stone pedestals on which a cultic image must have rested (Figure 10). The dating of this phase to the fourteenth to thirteenth century BC is supported by the numerous pottery and small object finds in the temple, including clay oil lamps, cultic vessels, and a liver model, all considered securely *in situ*. In fact, this and the earlier phases seemed completely sealed, so more recent disturbances virtually can be excluded from consideration (Boese and Orthmann 1976: 6).

The characteristics of Temple 1 and Temple 2 at Munbaqa include (1) long, rectangular *in antis* plans; (2) direct-access approaches; (3) an open, un-columned entrance for Temple 1, and a twin-columned entrance for Temple 2; (4) a rectangular antecella for both temples; (5) rectangular cellas with longer axes along the temple's longer axes, and (6) narrow halls between *a.* the portico and the antecella of both temples, and *b.* the antecella and cella of both temples, plus a non-perpendicular divider within the cella of Temple 2.

## 3 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Emar

### 3.1 Historical Background

The ancient city of Emar (Figure 1), modern Meskene, was located on the southern bank of the Euphrates, where the road to Aleppo met the river as it turned toward Mesopotamia, after having emerged from the Anatolian mountains. Emar features a 70-ha mound that was built atop a huge, artificial terrace of gravel and clay, with a height of 327 m above sea level (Finkbeiner and Sakal 2010: ix). The city controlled the southern end of the Euphrates bend. In contrast to Carchemish, Emar yielded abundant LBA material, thanks to the chance finding of a cuneiform tablet of the second millennium BC that led to salvage excavations from 1972–1976 (Margueron 1995: 127).

The earliest mention of Emar is on tablets at Ebla dating to the twenty-fourth century BC, when Emar was the seat of a monarchy comparable to Mari or Ebla. During the nineteenth century BC, when Mari and Ebla were no longer the great powers of the region, their political successor, Aleppo, attempted to gain control over Emar. The archives at Mari paint a picture of Emar at the

beginning of the eighteenth century BC, displaying Emar as a city at the heart of the Syrian trading route between Yamḥad, Qatna, and Carchemish. The interest that the regional powers had in Emar was due to its strategic location, as it was positioned at the juncture of two trading routes between Mesopotamia (to the southeast) and Syro-Palestine, Anatolia, and the Aegean (to the north and west) (Margueron 1995: 127; Beckman 1996: 3).

As for the LBA, the excavated city belongs to the LB II period, when the Hittite Empire ruled northern Syria from its regional capital of Carchemish. Emar has yielded an impressive archive of over 1000 Akkadian tablets, if combining the tablets yielded in controlled excavations with those that have appeared via the antiquities market. A cultic calendar and rituals from a diviner's archive are among the texts that were discovered (Fleming 2000: 3, 13–47, 196–221). From the reign of the Hittite king, Muršili II (1339–1306 BC), Emar was subjugated under the direct command of the Hittite Empire (Margueron 1995: 127), as the Hittite king arrived at Aštata, went up into the city, built a citadel, fortified it with garrison-troops, then proceeded to Carchemish (Adamthwaite 2001: 220).

A cuneiform text of 1190 BC from Tell Šabi Abyad, to the east of Carchemish, speaks of problems between Emar and Carchemish (Weeden 2013: 7). LBA Emar was occupied for *ca.* 150 years, with the violent destruction of the site in *ca.* 1187 BC (Margueron 1995: 127), which date is known from a tablet of Year 2 of the Kassite king, Melišipak of Babylon (Beckman 1996: 4–5). The primary areas of excavation produced what the excavator referred to as a *hilani* palace of the local king (Margueron 1995: 127), which identification has been contested by Fleming, who suggests that the building instead served as an administrative center (Fleming 2000: 4).

### 3.2 The Temples at Emar

In addition to the LBA material cultural finds that include the enormous cache of cuneiform tablets, private homes, personal archives, and the library of the diviner who was buried in the ruins of Building M-1 (known as the “pantheon”), the excavations conducted under Margueron (1995: 127) also uncovered temples that were dedicated to Baal and Aštarte. These temples were located on the western side of the mound, on a steep slope that ascends gently from the Upper Town (Finkbeiner and Sakal 2010: ix).

All but one of the tablets discovered at Emar belong to the LBA, when Emar fell within the boundaries of the Hittite Empire, being the chief city of the border-province known as the land of Aštata. The city of this period was a new foundation on the cliffs overlooking the river valley



from the west, as the older town on the floor of the valley had been abandoned due to a change in the flow of the Euphrates River (Margueron 1995: 128; Beckman 1996: 4–5).

Emar's excavators actually found a total of four temples located in Field E. The first two were paired temples associated with a cultic terrace: the major official sanctuary of the city, situated at the pinnacle of the tell and overlooking the entire urban area and its surroundings. Building M-1, which Margueron identified as a pantheon-temple because it seemingly was dedicated to all of the gods, was unearthed in Field M. The area around this building is where the diviner's archives were unearthed, a man who was an important figure and connected to the court of the Great King of the Hittite Empire. Building M-1, located slightly to the north and not far from M-1, also was fully integrated into the urban fabric (Margueron 1995: 130, 132).

While Margueron referred to Building M-1 as a temple, Werner (1994: 70–71) proposed that this structure be regarded as a house, noting that the three extra rooms on the side do not fit the standard form of *in antis* temple (built symmetrically along one axis), and that the layout resembles that of houses at Tell Munbaqa, especially House O.

However, none of Munbaqa's houses could claim what Building M-1 at Emar featured: (1) a long hall with a full *in antis* shape and a porch for an entrance; (2) an entrance that is centered to match the porch, on one axis; and (3) an altar that stands in the proper place if it were part of a sacred temple (Fleming 2000: 5). Therefore, perhaps McClellan (1997: 30) was correct in calling Building M-1 a "side-room house," because of its size and plan, the thickness of its walls, and the cultic features that went beyond anything found in a typical residential dwelling.

On the highest point of the mound, the two *in antis* temples—to Baal (Figures 8, 11) and Aštar—were built, which were virtually twin temples. Based on a few tablets collected in a cluster within the temples, the southerly temple apparently was the one dedicated to Baal, while the northerly temple was devoted to his consort, Aštar (Margueron 1995: 130–132). The plan of these virtually parallel temples is similar to that of Munbaqa's temple, except that Emar's temple included no antecella, instead featuring a cella that was even greater in length than that of the latter.

Each of the paired temples at Emar consisted of a long-room and an unenclosed entrance formed by the extension of the walls on the temple's longer axis. No columns to support the roof of the portico were found at Emar, making it likely that the roof was uncovered. At the back of one of these temples was a raised platform reached by a staircase, probably an elevated area for a statue of the patron deity. At the back of the cella of the other temple was a walled partition;

however, because of the location of the entrance to the room, it probably was not an inner sanctuary (Fritz 1987: 41; Pitard 1996: 16–18).

Both temples featured an elongated room for the antecella, with an offering table and special paraphernalia for rituals, plus a podium for the deity in the cella. The doors opened to the east, onto the side of a street that led to a vast cultic esplanade beyond the rear of the temples. An altar was erected on the southern edge of the esplanade, and some cup-holes dotted the floor, though with no visible function (Margueron 1995: 130).

Building M-2 possessed many of the structures that were typical of the temples in Field E, including a small cultic esplanade that also was located behind the temple. One uniqueness of this temple, though, is that it featured the peculiarity of being equipped with an annex consisting of three rooms along its (longer) eastern side. The temple, which opened into a small room, was of the same generic shape as the paired temples, but it did include a deep entry. The inside was rich with glazed ceramics, pearls, and a carved caprine horn. Unfortunately, there was no way of determining which deity was worshipped in this temple (Margueron 1995: 132).

## 4 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Alalakh

### 4.1 Historical Background

Alalakh, modern Tell Atchana (Figure 1), is located in the southern part of the Amuq Valley and only 800 m from Tell Tayinat, approximately where the Orontes River bends westward toward the Mediterranean Sea. The 22-ha site rises to a height of 9 m above the level of the plain. Alalakh functioned as the capital of a small, regional state that traditionally has been called Mukish (Yener 2014: 49; Yener 2013: 12). The city of Alalakh and its province, including the site of Tell Tayinat, are referred to in ancient texts alternatively as Mukish and Alalakh (Yener 2014: 49). In a text from the Eblaite archives, *a-la-la-hu* (= Alalakh) was mentioned together with *mu-ra-ar* (Murar) and *lu-ba-an* (Lubān) as sites in ancient Syria (Archi 2006: 5; Frayne 2015: 78).

The broad horizontal exposures at the site have provided evidence of an ancient city and its material culture during the (late) EBA, the MBA, and the LBA, while more recent excavations are thought to have uncovered a (Level O) settlement of the Iron Age (Yener 2014: 49, 55; Yener 2005: 101). One of the richest material-cultural sequences from LBA western Syria was obtained from Periods 6–1 (Woolley's Levels VI–I) at Alalakh. Yener noted that Gates equated the end of Period 6 to Muršili I's (Hittite) victory over Yamḥad in his return trip from destroying Babylon in

the sixteenth century BC (Gates 1981: 35), which led her to suggest that Alalakh enjoyed autonomy for a brief period of time (Yener 2005: 102).

Major building activity of the Period 4 palace was carried out by the short-lived dynasty of Idrimi, which includes his son (Niqmepa) and grandson (Ilim-Ilimma). This palace is notable not only for its archive of administrative texts, but for its twin-columned portico, which prefigured the *bit hilani* type of royal residence that became common early in the first millennium BC. The palace was constructed during the time in which Alalakh became a vassal to the Hurro-Mitannians, in the fifteenth to fourteenth centuries BC (Yener 2005: 102).

The era of Hittite hegemony is represented by Periods 3–1, which dates to the fourteenth century BC and was administered by the Hittite viceroy at Carchemish. The so-called “fortress” of Period 3 was a monumental public building constructed in the style of Hittite palaces (Yener 2005: 102). Newly excavated sequences at several places on the site suggest strongly that Alalakh’s final phase of widespread LBA habitation ended with an abandonment in *ca.* 1300 BC (Yener 2013: 12), with the exception of the temple precinct, and that most of the site lay deserted through the thirteenth century BC (Yener 2014: 61). Hittite domination clearly ended with the destruction of Period 2, with its dating suggested by the Cypro-Helladic pictorial kraters found in the temples of Periods 3 and 2 (Yener 2005: 102–103).

## 4.2 The Temples at Alalakh

Previous excavations have recovered a sequence of temples that—along with a sequence of palaces—reflect Alalakh’s affluence and prestige (Yener 2013: 12). The beginning of the LBA at Alalakh is associated with Period 4. During the course of Woolley’s excavations there, he found 17 superimposed temples, commenting that presumably they were dedicated to the city’s patron goddess that was invoked by Idrimi (Woolley 1955: 33–90). Woolley obviously was referring to ‘Ishtar, lady of Alalakh,’ who was mentioned as such in line 2 of Idrimi’s inscription. Na’aman argued for this identification in greater detail, basing his analysis on written documents mainly from the archives of Period 7 at Alalakh (Na’aman 1980: 209–214).

The temple of Period 4 (Figure 12) consisted of a *Breitraum* cella with a niche—in the back wall, opposite from the entrance—along with two, broad-room antecellas. While Woolley was tempted to assign this as an *in antis* temple (Woolley 1955: 71), there was no material evidence found at the site to justify such a conjecture. The temple’s mudbrick walls rested on stone foundations. Traces of burnt offerings were found in the niche (Bergoffen 2005: 15).

The religious structure of Period 3 was a double temple complex built directly over the temple of Period 4, having incorporated the earlier building's walls but possessing an entirely different character. The dual-cella, *bit-hilani*-style temple may have been burnt down during rebellions at the end of Šuppiluliuma I's reign (Yener 2005: 102). A massive platform for the temple of Period 3 was created by widening the stone foundations of Period 4 with mudbrick, and then filling the chambers with mudbrick between the foundation walls to a height of 2 m, except in the southern corner, which apparently was a solid construction. The new brickwork obliterated the niche of the former temple, which was not problematic for the worshippers because the new temple's cella was upstairs. For this and other reasons, Woolley attributed Period 3's temple to Alalakh's Hittite conquerors (Woolley 1955: 73, 78; Bergoffen 2005: 15).

The builders of Period 2's temple, whose design may have reflected more of a local style (Yener 2005: 102; Woolley 1955: 78), dismantled the walls of the previous temple but reused the podium, which they leveled slightly, and removed all traces of Period 3's floors. Its plan followed that of the earlier temples, with two broad-room antecellas fronting a cella divided into two units. This double cella was a unique arrangement in the long series of temples at Alalakh and probably was intended for the worship of two deities. In the courtyard, the builders erected a mudbrick altar on top of Period 3's altar (Woolley 1955: 78–79; Bergoffen 2005: 16).

The temple of Period 1 (Figure 13), consisting of Phases A and B, followed the same plan as the previous temple, though the orientation was changed slightly. The initial phase contained a large cella, an antecella, and a courtyard that lay to the southeast. Phase A of the temple was systematically smashed apart, destroyed by fire, and rebuilt into the temple of Phase B. The back of the cella was straightened from its form that featured several recesses created by buttresses. The antecella was divided into three by cross-walls, and the most distinctive feature of the building was its approach, with a platform built against the front of the threshold. This temple is distinguished by its utter lack of Cypriot pottery, though its dating is possible through a number of historical synchronisms, including the treaty text CTH 63, which mentions a certain Tudhaliya as being a contemporary of Muršili II. The final occupation of Period 1 and its destruction took place during a regional collapse that put an end to the city of Alalakh (Yener 2005: 103; Yener 2013: 18; Woolley 1955: 82, 85–86; Bergoffen 2005: 16).

## 5 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Hazor

### 5.1 Historical Background

Hazor, modern Tell el-Qedah, which is located in the Jordan Rift Valley at the southwestern corner of the Hula basin, lies 15.5 km due north of the Sea of Galilee. The site, also known to be the Canaanite city of *ḥa-šú-ra*, is one of the most intensively investigated tells in the southern Levant (Zuckerman 2012: 99). The ancient city of Hazor was by far the largest site in Canaan, covering some 240 acres between the Upper City and Lower City. The first settlement was established during the third millennium BC, and by the first half of the second millennium BC it had become one of the principal Amorite centers of power throughout the Fertile Crescent (Yadin 1993: 594; Yadin 1972: 15).

The role of Hazor in the fourteenth century BC, as reflected in the Amarna Letters, is of particular significance. The king of Tyre accused Hazor's King 'Abdi-Tirshi of having overtaken several of their cities. Tyre's king further stated that Hazor's monarch had abandoned his allegiance to the Egyptian pharaoh in order to join forces with the rebellious Habiru (EA 148, in Moran 1992: 235). The king of Hazor still claimed allegiance to Egypt, however (Yadin 1993: 594). Archaeological evidence and the epigraphical record confirm that Hazor reached the zenith of its power and wealth during the thirteenth century BC (Petrovich 2008: 491, 493).

### 5.2 The Temples at Hazor

The temples of the Lower City during the MBA and LBA were located in Areas A, C, F, and H, stretching from Stratum 4 (MB IIB) to Stratum 1B (LB IIB). The transition from MB IIB to LB I did not include a significant organizational change in the cultic foci of Hazor, but the beginning of LB IIB marked a significant shift in the organization of the city, especially as seen with the evidence from the cultic activity throughout the site (Zuckerman 2012: 117).

The final temple of Stratum 1B in Area H (Lower City) was constructed during the fourteenth century BC, when ties between Egypt and the northern kingdoms were close (Yadin 1993: 597). As for the Upper City, the level corresponding to Stratum 2 of LB I is Stratum XV, which featured a temple that was built in Area A. This temple's plan is no more than a plain, rectangular shape with an unimpressive orthostat-entrance added to it (Yadin 1993: 600). For this reason, only the temple of the Lower City will be treated here.

The temple of Stratum 1B (Figure 14) that was constructed in Area H during the fourteenth century BC was built partly on the foundations of the Stratum 2 temple, and it featured an architectural plan that was mostly identical to that of its predecessor. However, a number of alterations were made, including the addition of a third frontal porch to the temple, where an open courtyard previously existed. The temple was comprised of three main chambers built in succession, with the doorways on a single axis leading into each chamber (Zuckerman 2012: 106; Yadin 1993: 597).

Situated on the southeastern side of the temple in Area H, the porch constituted the main innovation from the previous plan. The porch was somewhat narrower than the hall and was attached directly to the main structure of the building. The inner halls were identical to the halls of the previous temples, with a broad cella that included a rectangular niche at the center of the short axis on the northwestern side of the temple (Yadin 1993: 597). A large pit, which probably served as a *favissa* for cultic paraphernalia, was dug further to the south. Accumulations of vessels, mainly bowls, were found to the east and west of the temple, along with several cultic installations (libation tables, stone-built podiums) in the courtyard (Zuckerman 2012: 106).

In the center of the cella were two column bases that supported a roof. In its general plan, this temple resembled several of those found at Alalakh. One noteworthy feature is a row of well-dressed, basaltic orthostats that formed a dado around the lower part of the interior of the porch and the cella, which clearly reflects northern Levantine influence and has close parallels at Alalakh and other sites. On either side of the entrance to the porch stood a basaltic orthostat with a lion in relief (Yadin 1993: 598).

The temple of Stratum 1A, the final level of the LBA, was identical in plan to this one, with only minor repairs and alterations, including two round bases in front of the entrance, which had a cultic significance similar to the Jachin and Boaz pillars of the later Israelite temple. Of particular interest were the cultic furnishings, which were found in a thick layer of ash, especially in the cella, signifying that Stratum 1A's temple was destroyed in a conflagration. Among the ritual vessels, which probably originated in the temple of Stratum 1B, was a basaltic altar in the form of a square pillar. On one side was the divine symbol of the storm god depicted in low relief, demonstrating the influence of this deity in the southern Levant during the LBA (Yadin 1993: 598–599).

In Area A of the Upper City, the earliest known cultic structure on the acropolis was a rectangular building termed the “Southern Temple” by those of the renewed excavations. Part of the royal precinct, the Southern Temple was a monumental temple. During the LBA, the Southern

Temple was packed with an earthen fill that was rich in EBA pottery, probably having been hauled there from elsewhere on the site (Zuckerman 2012: 110, 112).

While the Northern Temple, also called the Long Temple, was built during LB I, it ceased to exist sometime during LB II. From then until the end of the LBA, cultic activity in Area A seems to have been concentrated in the ceremonial precinct to the south, including Building 7050 and its courtyard, together with the area atop the Southern Temple. With the Southern Temple still containing the earthen fill, a meager floor attached to the tops of its walls provided evidence of its use in the LB II as part of the ceremonial precinct. The vast precinct consisted of a monumental structure to the west, Building 7050 (Yadin's Black Building), and a spacious courtyard to the east (Zuckerman 2012: 113).

## 6 The Late Bronze Age Temples at Hattuša and Sarissa

### 6.1 Historical Background: Hattuša

The city of Hattuša, located along the bend of the Halys River in Anatolia (Figure 1) about 150 km to the east of Ankara, was the great capital of the Hittite Empire. At its peak, the city's population was *ca.* 40,000–50,000 people, covered 1.8 km<sup>2</sup>, and was comprised of an inner and an outer city, each of which was surrounded by a massive wall. The inner city featured a citadel with large administrative buildings and temples. The outer city lay to the south, with elaborate gateways decorated with reliefs depicting warriors, lions, and sphinxes (Neve 1993: 7, 19, 21).

How the empire rose to power and came to make Hattuša the capital is a difficult matter to solve. One theory is that warring states were vying for power in Anatolia, and eventually a ruler from Kussara triumphed, seized and built-up the old, ruined city of Hattuša, and emerged as the most powerful sovereign in central Anatolia. At some point, he or a successor of his imposed tight control on the previously independent cities, and Hattuša became the central ruling city of the empire that had been built. Four temples of the LBA were located at Hattuša, each with a porticoed courtyard (Neve 1993: 2–3, 23–43).

### 6.2 Historical Background: Sarissa

Sarissa, a site located in eastern Turkey about 60 km to the south of Sivas and 4 km to the east of Altinyayla, was founded in the sixteenth century BC as a midsized provincial town. The scribes from Hattuša catalogued Sarissa as being located in the “upper land” of Hatti (Müller-Karpe 2002: 177). Gates were located at the four corners of the city, with one city-gate following a Syro-

Levantine style. Sarissa was destroyed by an earthquake, immediately after which the damaged buildings were repaired (Müller-Karpe 2003: 386).

The city was sacked early in the fourteenth century BC—during the general turmoil that followed the reign of Arnuwanda I, as witnessed by arrowheads in a gateway that was rebuilt during the Hittite revival under Tudhaliya III—and finally sacked again with the other Hittite cities in the late thirteenth century BC. The city's main deity was the storm god, whose sanctuary was prominent at Sarissa (Müller-Karpe 2003: 386).

### 6.3 The Temples at Hattuša and Sarissa

Structures found within the Hittite Empire that can be regarded unequivocally as temples have been unearthed only at Hattuša and Sarissa (Müller-Karpe 2013: 335). Strong similarities exist between Hattuša's Temple 1, which was located in the city's Lower City (Neve 1993: 13 [Abb. 20: #2], 14 [Abb. 22], 23, 84 [Abb. 235, 236]), and Sarissa's Building C (Müller-Karpe 2002: 178 [see Gebäude C]), which was situated just to the south of the acropolis (Figure 15). In fact, there is a number of striking similarities between the two temples, causing the excavator at Sarissa to conclude that the earlier temple at Hattuša probably served as a model for the larger temple of the same type at Sarissa, as well as serving as a model for other Hittite temples throughout the empire (Müller-Karpe 2003: 388).

In fact, the similarities in the details between the two temples are worth noting: (1) each temple had a singular, inner-courtyard cella; (2) each temple was framed by pillared halls on two sides; and (3) the main cultic area for each temple had façades with projections and offsets. Both temples were destroyed as the Hittite Empire fell, just after 1200 BC. Hattuša's temple was built first, then copied with slight modifications at sites throughout the empire, with Sarissa's temple serving as merely one example of this copying. Thus this type of temple with a singular inner courtyard and dual-pillared halls became standardized by the Hittites during the LBA.

Strong similarities also exist between one of Hattuša's temples in the Upper City (Temple 7: Neve 1993: 24 [Abb. 51], 30 [Abb. 74]) and Temple 1 at Sarissa (Müller-Karpe 2002: 178 [see Tempel I]), which is located next to the Northern Terrace (Müller-Karpe 2002: 178 [see Nordterrasse]). The following similarities exist between these two temples (Figure 16): (1) each temple had a cella that was accompanied by a complex of rooms; (2) both cellas were located in the center of the complex of rooms, with each cella enclosed on all sides; (3) both cellas were singular rooms with walls that were proportioned with a ratio that is roughly 4:3; and (4) neither



temple featured niches, columns, or porticoed entryways. Given these striking similarities, it seems that both temples utilized the same basic plan. Once again, most likely the temple at Hattuša served as the architectural model for the corresponding temple at Sarissa.

## 7 The Iron Age Temple at Aleppo

### 7.1 Historical Background

Aleppo is located in northern Syria, roughly 100 km from the Mediterranean Sea to the west, and equidistant from the Euphrates River to the east. The city was founded at the convergence of ancient trading routes, being surrounded on a prominent mound that was encompassed by eight hills, including Tell as-Sawda, Tell al-Ansāri, and Tell as-Sett, among others. Aleppo eventually consisted of about 160 ha and is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Its vast complex of substructures, underground rooms, sprawling palaces, formidable city wall, and multiple gates made it virtually impregnable in antiquity (Kohlmeyer 2012: 55–56; Gonnella et al. 2005: 11; Saouaf 1965: 15).

In the first half of the third millennium BC, during the days of the Akkadian ruler Rimush, Aleppo was known widely as a religious center devoted to the worship of Hadad (Bryce 2014: 111). Aleppo's king, Lugal-Ushumgal, was also high priest of Hadad of Aleppo, which deity was revered as the god of beneficial rains, winds and storms, and—above all else—divination. Among others, Zimri-Lim, King of Mari, presented a statue of himself, which was fashioned from bronze and covered with silver, as a votive offering to Hadad at Aleppo (Saouaf 1965: 8).

During the LBA, the storm god was known as Teshub and continued to be worshipped at Aleppo, as well as the capital of Hattuša, where he served as a divine witness in Hittite treaties with other nations. The early Iron Age saw the storm god retain his preeminent position at Aleppo, when the Luwian-speaking people referred to him as Tarhunta/Tarhunza (Kohlmeyer 2009: 191). When Shalmaneser III conquered the city in 853 BC, this foreign king offered sacrifices to Hadad (Saouaf 1965: 8), demonstrating a recognition of and respect for local religious tradition.

### 7.2 The Temple of the Storm God at Aleppo

Ancient records reveal that Hadad (western Semitic storm god), Teshub (Hittite storm god), Tarhunza (Luwian storm god), and eventually Zeus (Greek king of the gods) were worshipped at Aleppo's temple. Records also exist that mention Shamash (Assyrian sun-god), Ishtar (Mesopotamian goddess of love and war), and other fertility goddesses such as Hepit and Atargatis

as having been connected to the temple (Kohlmeyer 2012: 55–57; Gonnella et al. 2005: 11–16; Saouaf 1965: 16).

Kay Kohlmeyer recently excavated the remains of the temple at Aleppo (Figure 1), which enjoyed an enormously long use, dating back to the EBA (middle of the third millennium BC) and featuring roughly hewn blocks with mudbrick (Kohlmeyer 2009: 190–202; Kohlmeyer 2012: 55–78). Although the storm god was accentuated from the temple's earliest use, his cult increased in significance there during the MBA of the early second millennium BC, with the rise of the Halabean Dynasty that ruled the Kingdom of Yamḥad.

The temple of this time was renovated with a broad-room cella (26.75 x 17.1 m, with a 7.8-m-deep cultic niche in the center of the northern wall), an entrance chamber, and parts of two adjacent rooms. The architectural style likely was the *midgol* type, with the best parallel being the contemporary temple at Hazor (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74).

Over the centuries, Aleppo's temple (Figure 17) underwent minor modifications, required renovations, and endured destructions by fire (Kohlmeyer 2009: 191). The temple fell under Hittite control during the fourteenth century BC, with the invasion of Šuppiluliuma I, and the period of LBA Hittite control saw the installation of a standing relief on a wall of orthostats, including that of the storm god (Figure 18) on the eastern wall of the temple, along with a collage of images of varying cultural origins (Kohlmeyer 2009: 194–95; Harrison 2014: 403).

The German-Syrian expedition uncovered a series of 26 stunning, carved reliefs along the northern wall of a large building (Harrison 2013b: 62; Harrison 2014: 403). The storm god retained his pre-eminent position under the Neo-Hittites of the Iron Age, and the temple's shape was altered (Figure 19), with the inner alignment of the northern wall shifted toward the south, and the wall's width enlarged from 10 to 13.4 m. The earlier cultic niche was sealed, and a platform was raised to the south of the new northern wall, with three reliefs placed along its front side: a mountain god and two composite beasts (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74).

Aleppo's early Iron Age temple of the storm god reflects the enormous transformation in post-imperial, northern Syria. Along the eastern wall of the cella, relief-images of false windows were inserted, as well as two bull-man images, which were arranged symmetrically on either side of a smiting storm god that was proportioned according to Hittite artistic conventions, with oversized body parts. The inner (southern) entrance of the temple was fitted with a relief of a fish-genius, which is of Mesopotamian origin, along with a sphinx, and two lion-portals, with the latter bearing a second, fragmentary inscription (ALEPPO 7) that mentions Carchemish and Egypt, as

well as featuring the final portion of Taita's royal titulary (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74; Hawkins 2011: 44, 45, 48).

Taita actually is mentioned on several inscriptions: ALEPPO 6 ("the Hero, Palistinian King"), ALEPPO 7 ("Palistinian Hero King"), which were translated by Hawkins (2011: 45, 49). Early in the eleventh century BC, Aleppo seemingly fell into the hands of Taita I, King of Palistin, who ruled from Tell Tayinat (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74). When Taita I overtook Aleppo, he erected a sculpted orthostat relief that faced the storm god in the temple and bore his own image (Figure 20), complete with an inscription (ALEPPO 6) that flanked the king (Hawkins 2011: 40–41, 43–44; Hawkins 2009: 169–170; Kohlmeyer 2009: 197–198; Weeden 2013: 13). On epigraphical grounds, Hawkins dated Taita I's inscriptions to the eleventh century BC, the time after the dissolution of the Hittite Empire and before the formation of the Neo-Hittite and Aramaean states of Unqi, Hamath, and Bit Agusi-Arpad (2011: 41; Weeden 2013: 15).

With the insertion of Taita I's figure, which directly faces the storm god, this altered configuration changed the meaning of the scene to dedicatory, and the orientation of the cultic focus switched from the LBA's direct-axis scheme back to a bent-axis approach (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74). However, the king is not wearing the usual, long, ruler's robe of the post-Hittite, petty-states era, but rather the short tunic and conical cap associated with divinity. This mirrors the Hittite tradition that mortals can adopt divine attributes when in the presence of deity (Gonnella et al. 2005: 32), and it suggests that Taita I intended his subjects to view him as possessing divinity.

According to J. D. Hawkins, ALEPPO 6 identifies this king as the previously mentioned "King Taita, the Hero, the Ruler of [the Land of] Palistin, for my lord the Halabean Storm-God I honoured the image . . ." (Hawkins 2011: 45; Hawkins 2009: 169–171; Harrison 2014: 403; Harrison 2013b: 62; Bryce 2014: 111), which kingdom Kohlmeyer called "Philistine" (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74).

This toponym also occurred in several other Luwian inscriptions. On paleographic and historical grounds, Hawkins has dated the inscription to the eleventh century BC (Hawkins 2011: 51; Bryce 2014: 111), which corresponds well with the single radiocarbon date from the site. The inscription also features some instructions for the cult of the storm god at Aleppo. Taita I clearly renovated the temple at Aleppo. He appears to have rebuilt parts of the architectural decoration, either because the original no longer existed or in order to impose his own religious and/or political ideology (Kohlmeyer 2009: 199–200).

A final restoration of the temple was performed in *ca.* 900 BC, when all but three of the reliefs that had lined the front of the platform were exchanged. The new decoration portrays the storm god, who is entering his chariot, along with his entourage. The iconography, especially of the central figures, is greatly indebted to Anatolian tradition, whereas other figures betray Syro-Mesopotamian origins, including protective winged genii such as a bird- and lion-headed *apkallu*, or a *girtablullu*. Yet before all of the renovations had been completed, the building suffered a destruction by conflagration, when the city was invaded at the end of the ninth century BC, at which point the temple was abandoned permanently (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74).

The cella of Aleppo's temple, which contained a 7.8-m-deep cultic niche in the middle of the long side (northern wall) opposite the entrance, had internal measurements of 26.75 x 17.1 m (Kohlmeyer 2012: 74). The broad-room had an inner ratio of roughly 3:2, which can be observed on the drawing of the temple. Since the short side of the temple stretched to a width of 17 m, and the walls had an amazing thickness of 10 m, this must have required a massive constructional effort and workforce. Only with cedars of Lebanon were such widths able to be spanned, because this tree alone grew to 40 m in height. In fact, some remnants of its cedars were left behind—along with winter-cut oak—discovered near some charred wood from the roof. Eight supports were necessary to secure the roof's beam on the inside (Kohlmeyer 2000: 9–10).

The cella, while large, did not possess an elaborate design with multiple sections of the room, but rather was quite simple and almost square-shaped. The outer wall on the northern side was preserved to a height of 4.5 m, consisting of a 3-m-high mudbrick structure on 1.5-m-high slabs of undecorated but well smoothed limestone. The technique of the orthostats' construction is comparable to other examples of MBA architecture. A 3.8-m-high entrance opened to the cella from the south, and two large hinges in the MBA pavement suggest the earlier presence of a two-winged door. The temple had at least one upper storey, while the entrance originally was lined with sculpture on both sides (Gonnella et al. 2005: 11–12).

## 8 The Iron Age Temple at ʿAin Dārā

### 8.1 Historical Background

Only one volume has been published on the description of the temple at Iron Age ʿAin Dārā (Abu-Assaf 1990), a site that is critical to the present study due to its close proximity to Tell Tayinat. ʿAin Dārā is located on the bank of Wadi ʿAfrin, an important tributary of the Orontes River, *ca.* 40 km

to the northwest of Aleppo (Figure 1), thus placing it within the domain of ancient Palistin's sovereignty. The site consisted of a high citadel mound measuring 125 m N-S and 60 m E-W, and a flat Lower City that measured 270 x 170 m and was adjacent to the northeastern section of the citadel (Abu-Assaf 1990: 2–3; Novák 2012: 42–43).

## 8.2 The Temple at ʿAin Dārā

The great temple of ʿAin Dārā, which overlooks the ʿAfrin Valley from the summit of a steep-sided tell, is one of the most impressive monuments of northern Syria, though the ancient city was much more than a mere religious center. Undoubtedly, ʿAin Dārā's temple is one of the best-preserved Syrian temples of the Iron Age, featuring a long-room, *in antis* plan, including a recessed portico with twin columns along the side of the temple where the entrance was located. This room was decorated extravagantly with sculptures portraying images of sphinxes and lions, which creatures were viewed as guardian sentinels at the entrance to the temple. Also prominently displayed were numerous orthostat reliefs carved with divine and mythological figures; much of the sculpture has been dated to the Iron Age I purely on stylistic grounds (Abu-Assaf 1990: 16–19), though this early dating is highly debatable (Harrison 2015).

In area, ʿAin Dārā's temple covered the northern quarter of the citadel mound, and the building proper (Figure 21) stood on an artificial terrace 70 cm high, measuring 38 m long x 32 m wide. The temple was part of a larger *temenos*, of which an extended courtyard to the south and southeast is attested and was paved with alternating basaltic and limestone slabs. A well and a stone basin, situated 14 m south of the eastern corner of the temple, either were used for purification or libation activities at the front of the temple's entrance (Novák 2012: 45–46).

On the narrow, southeastern side, the temple's terrace was accessible through an 11-m, broad-stone staircase, with four to five stairs composed of basaltic monoliths (Abu-Assaf 1990: 13–14). The initial room of the temple consisted of a broad niche between two *antae*. Two circular, basaltic column bases served to support wooden columns between the *antae* and a roof that covered the niche. The entry niche yielded to the inner rooms of the temple, the first being a rectangular antecella (15.8 m broad x 6 m deep), followed by a square cella (16.7 x 16.8 m), both of which were paved with limestone slabs (Abu-Assaf 1990: 15–17; Novák 2012: 46).

The thresholds consisted of flat limestone monoliths: two at the entrance to the antecella and one at the entrance to the cella (Abu-Assaf 1990: 15–17; Novák 2012: 46). A unique feature of the temple is a set of oversized footprints (1 m in length) on the threshold stones leading to the

antecella (left and right footprint on the first, and left footprint on the second) and cella (right footprint), presumably representing a gigantic deity entering its sacred house (Abu-Assaf 1990: 19, Taf. 11c). To date, no parallel to this peculiar feature in a temple or religious structure has been documented at any other ANE site, from any period.

The inner walls consisted of basaltic blocks of stone that originally were bases for the mudbrick superstructure, of which only poor traces have been preserved (Abu-Assaf 1990: Taf. 12a–b). These basaltic stones contrast strongly with the limestone that was used for the floors. Almost halfway inside the cella was a row of decorated orthostats that ran across the horizontal axis of the temple, which may have been a secondary wall that reduced the depth of the room, similar to the layout for the temple at Aleppo (Abu-Assaf 1990: 16–17; Novák 2012: 46).

The excavators distinguished between several building phases. Following their observations, an initial temple was erected on an earlier terrace. The second phase consisted of the new terrace and the temple proper. A gallery, built on an extension of the terrace, was added during the third and final building phase. Although the temple was open to the outside when first constructed, similar to a *peripteros* with pillars, it was able to be closed with an outer enclosure wall during the terminal phase of occupation (Abu-Assaf 1990: 20–21; Novák 2012: 46).

Both during its initial and terminal layout, the temple belonged to the well-known *in antis* style (Abu-Assaf 1990: 21 [Abb. 12]). Despite the implementation of this architectural convention, the temple at ʿAin Dārā still was characteristic of the Luwo-Aramean architecture of the Iron Age. This *in antis* temple diverges from both Assyrian and Babylonian temples, on one hand, and imperial Hittite temples, on the other hand, both of which featured a complex inner structure with central courtyards and a number of additional rooms beside the cella (Novák 2012: 46–47). One scholar has questioned whether perhaps the temple was used for the same purpose as the festival house at Aššur during the time of Sennacherib (Frayne 2016), whose floorplan features a cella immediately opposite from an enormous courtyard (Andrae 1977: 66 [figs. 45, 46], 67).

The ʿAin Dārā temple was decorated on its outer façade and inner walls with molded and deep cut reliefs on basaltic stone blocks and orthostats (Abu-Assaf 1990: Taf. 42a–b). The decoration exhibits a wide range of motifs carved in a relatively homogeneous style. The outer façade of the terrace was decorated with lions and sphinxes that appear in profile, but with heads turned *en face*. These carvings may represent the latest figures added to the temple, with some details making it most likely that they should be dated no earlier than the eleventh century BC (Abu-Assaf 1990: 13; Novák 2012: 48).

Slightly different in style were the *protomen* figures, which flanked the entrance at the entry façade of the *antae* and the inner sides of the entry niche. Stylistically and iconographically, they correspond to imperial Hittite examples from Hattuša and Aleppo. Some specific slabs situated inside the antecella derive from the same period, displaying a rectangular, framed-guilloche decoration. These slabs may have imitated windows, just as those that served this purpose at the Aleppo temple (Abu-Assaf 1990: 14; Novák 2012: 48).

Mountain deities were depicted both in the antecella and at the podium within the cella (Abu-Assaf 1990: Taf. 43a–46a). The head and torso were portrayed *en face*, whereas the feet and long skirt with parallel sheds were portrayed in profile (Figure 22). At the podium, the deities stand in alternating rows, with lion- or eagle-headed, winged deities or bull-human hybrids (Abu-Assaf 1990: Taf. 45a–b; Novák 2012: 48). Mountain gods of this type are known from imperial Hittite art, where in Chamber A at Yazılıkaya they appear both as independent gods in a row of male gods, and as subjective gods carrying the storm god in the primary scene (Seeher 2002: 116 [Fig. 7, 8]). Similarly, mountain gods constitute the base of the images of the storm god and the sun goddess at the spring sanctuary at Eflatun Pınar (Emre 2002: 222 [Fig. 4]).

Assuming a similar function for the mountain gods at ʿAin Dārā and considering the examples at the podium where their arms are uplifted in a celebratory gesture, one may conclude that the image of the storm god was standing or sitting atop the podium. All datable parallels of the storm god belong to the imperial Hittite period, including those from the temple at Aleppo and from the quarry at Yesemek (Novák 2012: 48–49).

Another important relief from ʿAin Dārā was found within the wall between the cella and the antecella, at the southwestern end of the former (Abu-Assaf 1990: Taf. 12a–13c). This relief depicts a female figure wearing a long coat that is held together by a belt, which leaves her exposed below, while turning to the right. The lower part of the coat covers her right leg, but her left leg and naked pubes are exposed. Although the head and shoulders are poorly preserved, one wing is visible, which sprouts out of her left shoulder. The iconography identifies her as Ishtar/Aštar, goddess of war and sexual love (Abu-Assaf 1990: 27–28; Novák 2012: 49).

A near parallel comes from Chamber A at Yazılıkaya, which dates to the thirteenth century BC (Seeher 2002: 114 [Fig. 2: No. 38]), the time just before the Hittite Empire fell. Aštar is situated as the only female in a row of male gods and is identified by a hieroglyphic inscription. She appears in the same way in the Lion’s Gate at Malatya (Arslantepe), where she wields a weapon (Orthmann 1971: Taf. 40 b, d).

With both the Yazılıkaya and Malatya Ishtars, her aggressive character as goddess of war is emphasized, whereas no characteristics of her sexual qualities are depicted. In contrast to this, the depiction of a nude goddess on the Long Wall of Sculptures at Carchemish, whose relief sculptures probably date originally to the late eleventh or early tenth century BC (Harrison 2013a: 100), symbolizes her sexuality in an explicit way (Orthmann 1971: Taf. 24 b).

The Carchemish Ishtar is standing *en face* and holding her breasts, while two wings protrude out of her shoulders and connect her to images of Ishtar as the war goddess. Obviously the iconography here portrays her as the goddess of love and sexuality. The relief from ʿAin Dārā, however, uniquely combines both the warring and sexual emphases of the goddess’s personification (Novák 2012: 49).

On iconographic and stylistic grounds, Orthmann dated the ʿAin Dārā relief to the late imperial or the earliest part of the Neo-Hittite period, as the finely modeled style is mostly reminiscent of the relief at the King’s Gate in Hattuša (1993: 248–250). While Novák suggested that the late imperial period is the proper dating for the relief (2012: 49), Orthmann’s attribution of the reliefs to the earliest stage of Neo-Hittite art (2002: 155–156) is considered by some to be correct (Novák 2012: 41), which is reinforced by Kohlmeyer’s dating of ʿAin Dārā’s gallery to the eleventh century BC (Kohlmeyer 2008: 123–124).

Therefore, following Orthmann and Kohlmeyer, the reliefs should be dated to a time early in the Iron Age, not long after the collapse of the Hittite Empire. The findspot for the Aštarte relief makes it quite improbable that she was the patron deity of the temple, as her image was not located at the podium, which was the building’s focal point and the typical seat of the resident deity. Due to the close connection of the mountain gods with the storm god, as attested at Yazılıkaya and Pınar, along with how they are shown carrying something or somebody standing atop the podium, the most likely proposal is to attribute the patronage of ʿAin Dārā’s temple to the storm god (Novák 2012: 49).

While this Hittite iconographic imagery connects the temple to the Hittite occupation of northern Syria during the previous age, the black-and-white decoration of the alternating limestone and basaltic orthostats has no parallels in Anatolian architecture, but only in Syrian architecture. This style is attested with Carchemish’s Long Wall of Sculpture (Marchetti 2012: 134), the backside of Guzana’s Western Palace (*hilani*), and Harran’s É-ḫul-ḫul of Sin, the moon god. Undecorated slabs and orthostats were known in northwestern Syria since early in the second millennium BC, as represented in pieces from Qatna, Alalakh, Ebla, and Aleppo, with Aleppo’s



temple to the storm god being the first example of relief-orthostats within rooms. Thus the use of orthostat-reliefs as decoration for outer façades and inner rooms is a Syrian creation, and the temples at Aleppo and ʿAin Dārā may mark the beginning of this trend (Novák 2012: 49–50).

A number of characteristics of the Iron I temple at ʿAin Dārā are worth noting for the purpose of attempting to understand its design. Following is a list of these important characteristics: (1) a monumental stairway; (2) a twin-columned portico; (3) gigantic footprints (perhaps depicting those of the patron deity); (4) a long, rectangular plan; (5) a direct-access approach (6) a rectangular antecella, with its longer axis along the temple’s shorter axis (7) a narrow hall between the vestibule and the antecella; (8) sculpted pilasters; (9) a rectangular, non-columned cella, with its longer axis along the temple’s longer axis; (10) a podium-base with deities depicted; and (11) corridors/hallways along three walls (Abu-Assaf 1990: 23–24).

Since the stylistically datable features of the plenteous sculptured reliefs at ʿAin Dārā allow the temple’s original construction to be dated to Iron I—and not centuries earlier, as is the case with the temple at Aleppo—the plan of ʿAin Dārā’s temple becomes one of great importance for the present study. Unfortunately, at present there are no other temples in Syria during Iron I that provide nearly as much architectural information. However, ʿAin Dārā’s plan was far from unique in Syria, especially when considering that early in Iron II, its basic plan was followed by temple-builders at numerous sites.

## 9 The Iron Age Temples at Tell ʿāfis

### 9.1 Historical Background

Tell ʿāfis, one of the most thoroughly published sites in the region, is located near the modern city of Idlib, in northwestern Syria. The oldest name for Tell ʿāfis may be Abdu/Abšu (Bonechi 1993: 12–13, 14), as attested in texts from Ebla that date to the Early Dynastic period (Frayne 2016). The site boasts a large tell of 25 ha lying in the district of Idlib, *ca.* 45 km to the southwest of Aleppo (Figure 1), between the fertile plain of the *Jazr* and the eastern alluvial depression of the *Madkh*. It consists of a large, circular-shaped lower town and an acropolis located on the northern half of the tell (Soldi 2009: 98). The Aramaean ruler, Zakkur (*ca.* 810–775 BC), claimed to have built Hazrek, the ancient name for Tell ʿāfis and part of the Kingdom of Hamath (Mazzoni 1994: 319–320; Younger 2007b: 139). The Aramaic name of the site is *Hzrk*, while the Hebrew name—as attested in Zech 9:1—is *Hdrk* (Younger 2007b: 139).

Pre-excavational surface surveys produced Iron Age pottery on the surface of the entire site, while extensive excavations yielded a long sequence of pottery that dates to Iron I (Mazzoni and Soldi 2013: 7). In fact, in addition to the attestation of four levels of the Iron Age, beginning with Iron Age IA, the levels reflect part of a longer sequence of occupation that spans the transition from LB II to Iron IA, in contrast to the non-transitional sequence at Tayinat (Harrison 2014: 400).

The cultural transition from Iron I to Iron II inland, in northwestern Syria, saw a change from bichrome painted pottery to a homogenized orange-reddish fabric and a great increase in open shapes. This trend, which coincides with the appearance of Red Slip Ware, is confirmed by archaeological sequences at most sites where Iron I and Iron II phases are well attested, including Hama and Tell 'āfis. This general trait is true from the flourishing, independent, Luwio-Aramean states to the lands controlled by the Neo-Assyrian Empire from the ninth through seventh centuries BC (Soldi 2013: 199–200).

In Area E<sub>1</sub> and E<sub>2</sub> on the western slope of the acropolis at Tell 'āfis, a number of characteristics accentuate the passage from Iron I to Iron II. In Levels 1–2 of Area A<sub>1</sub>, a few remains of domestic structures with narrow streets testify to a reuse of previous walls and to a rural settlement as that of previous levels of Iron I in Area E<sub>4</sub>. Levels 2 and 1 show the passage from the horizon of Iron I painted ware to the orange-reddish ware of Iron II, with burnished and slipped wares gradually supplanting painted wares. This process is the evolution of a trend already visible in previous levels (3–5), where the orange fabric overlaps to Iron I shapes with pink fabrics on the sherds. Excavations in Area E<sub>2</sub> offer a parallel sequence, with six levels of occupation identified. The excavators at Tell 'āfis proposed a date of the first half of the ninth century BC for these levels (Soldi 2013: 200).

The succeeding phase, Level 2, is divided into two sub-phases, each with new building activity, whereas Level 1 revealed only traces of scattered occupation in the area. Materials from Levels 2–1 (the eighth century until the very beginning of the seventh century BC) belong to a homogeneous orange-ware horizon, similar to the general assemblage of Area D of the lower town. The only Red Slip Ware from this trench comes from Level 1, though its chronological reliability is minimal, because it was restricted to pits. The Red Slip shapes attested are carinated and hemispherical bowls with inner and outer slip and polishing, as well as globular bowls with simple rims and bowls with triangular rims, all of which presented inner/outer slip and horizontal burnishing. By the current evidence from the western acropolis, the first Red Slip Ware appeared at Tell 'āfis no earlier than the second half of the ninth century BC (Soldi 2013: 201).

## 9.2 Temple Sequence at 'āfis

The excavations in Area A, on the western side of the acropolis, have revealed a new sequence of temples, which probably were still in use during the phase coinciding with the Neo-Assyrian occupation at 'āfis. This suggests that the production of Red Slip Ware tended to decrease and disappear during the period of Assyrian domination, corresponding to the seventh century BC. Thus the great concentration of Red Slip Ware in Area G is an interesting marker of the activities on the acropolis, most likely connected with rituals in the sacred area of one of the principal Aramaean cities of inland Syria (Soldi 2013: 214).

The sequence of temples on the acropolis documents the sacred architecture of the royal elite at this major regional site in northern-central Syria throughout Iron I–III (eleventh–sixth centuries BC). This era attests to more than 500 years of continuous use and re-planning of the temple on the citadel, as well as its gradual transformation into a sacred compound with annexes and installations for the city's worship cult. Rich materials were collected in the cultic structures inside the main hall of Iron I and in the open areas along the sides and front of the temple from the end of Iron III, when the sanctuary covered the central part of the acropolis (Mazzoni 2012: 23).

Tell 'āfis's excavators found several temples in Area A that spanned the entire Iron Age. Temple AI (Figure 23), which was used in the eighth and seventh centuries BC (Iron IIC Age), was built in the *in antis* style. Underneath Temple AI, they found sparse evidence of a second, earlier temple. This Temple AII proved impossible to reconstruct because of the deep spoliation of its structure. Under Temple AII, they excavated two other sacred buildings: Temples AIII.2–1. Temple AIII, which featured a plastered shrine, tentatively has been dated to the eleventh–tenth centuries BC (Soldi 2009: 108). As one of the excavators noted, “The sequence of the temples comes from the central acropolis (Area A). The main temple has a typical Syrian plan (i.e. *in antis*) and is dated to Iron II. A sounding below it has identified two older temples. Following the pottery, Temple AIII is dated to 1050–900 BC” (Venturi 2010b).

Area A is not the only place on the tell where a temple was built. Earlier excavations in Area E4 revealed a complete and lengthy Iron I sequence, including the presence of a northern building (Building G) on the westernmost summit that is considered by the excavators to have been used as a temple from Level 7 to Level 3, with the Level 6 temple (Figure 24) dating to Iron IB (*ca.* 975–950 BC). Building G was a rectangular temple with a room that was slightly wider to the northeast, and it featured an *in antis* entrance to the southwest, thus probably identifying the building as a long-room *in antis* temple of approximately 10 m in length (Mazzoni 2012: 27).

Building G's earliest phase, Level 7, had a NE-SW orientation, which was continued in the structures of the subsequent levels. The organization of the units indicates careful planning of the whole complex. The Northern Building had no findings confirming its use, but the plan, the dimensions, and its isolation from the other houses signifies a special function. The plan and general dimensions are similar to the somewhat smaller Shrine 1 Building at Sarepta, which also was furnished with a side entrance in its earlier phase and had a similar but inverted difference in the width of the shorter sides (Cecchini and Mazzoni 1998: 165–166).

The identification of Building G as a shrine is confirmed by the presence of an ashlar block, which probably was part of a cultic installation, offering table, or altar. A partial plan for this building exists, but it is incomplete because of poor preservation. Building G's earliest phase shows that this temple was used and rebuilt continually over four successive phases, beginning with Level 7d (*ca.* 1050–1025 BC) and including Level 7b–c (*ca.* 1025–1000 BC) and Level 7a (*ca.* 1000–975 BC). The temple's initial phase, Level 7d, has been drawn and published by the excavators (Cecchini and Mazzoni 1998: 167–168), as well as Level 7a (Mazzoni 2012: 27).

### 9.3 Temples AIII.1–2 (Iron I) at 'āfis

The sequence of the temples in Area A begins with Temples AIII.2–1, which date to Iron I. The second of these two structures was built on top of the other, both of which featured a hall with north-south orientation and walls that consisted of mudbricks that were plastered on the inside, without white-washing. Temple AIII.2, the earlier of these temples, consisted of large limestone slabs. The floor of the hall was not well preserved, but it contained sparse materials *in situ*. Five irregular blocks were aligned in two parallel lines running north-south, which probably were bases for pillars or columns that supported the roof (Mazzoni 2012: 23).

The same probably can be suggested for Temple AIII.1, which bore evidence of two well-dressed, square stones on its eastern side, which can be interpreted as cultic installations. The hall of this second temple measured 8.4 m (N-S) x 8.29 m (E-W), and the walls of its perimeter were all plastered-brick structures. A 2.5-m-wide gate opened in the southern wall, which was true of both temples. A square, plaster podium was positioned near the center of the room and was linked on its northern side by a small pit containing ashes, animal bones, and fragmented ritual vases. This temple probably was built *in antis*, as part of the western wall of the entrance was brought to light at the base of a large waste-pit that had spoiled and cut through the temples of the Iron II and Iron III temples (Mazzoni 2012: 23–25).

Neither temple revealed evidence of a destruction layer, but both temples partially were filled by bricks and debris from the demolished walls, which were leveled almost horizontally, possibly in order to provide a well-leveled layer for the foundation. Only the outer northern and western walls of Temple III.1 were lined with stones, constituting massive and irregular facades, which might have been a reinforcing device employed over the course of the apparently lengthy period during which this structure continued to be used (Mazzoni 2012: 25).

The items found in the Iron I temples constitute an assemblage of vessels used for ritual functions. In Temple AIII.2, fragments of painted *kernoi* and stemmed chalices were found along the floor, along with a hole-mouth vase á la stéatite. The painted *kernoi* find parallels in Philistia and Cyprus of the eleventh–tenth centuries BC, particularly in funerary deposits. Similar stemmed chalices were found in Level 5 of the temple in Area IV, as well as in Level 5 in Area II, at Tell Kazel, in addition to having been found at Tell Twēnī. Parallels for the vase á la stéatite, which also appeared in Area E4 at Tell 'āfis, come from the Iron I coastal horizon, in the form of cooking pots, and they now are interpreted as Cypriot imported ware. In Temple AIII.1, the vessels that were found include an incense burner, a few cylindrical and carinated cups with outflaring rims, and ring bases and pedestals. All of these were located near a small pit of ashes with residual bones of birds and other animals that was located near the podium. Another item unearthed was a painted, bull-headed *kernos* (Mazzoni 2012: 25–26).

The Iron I temple at Tell 'āfis probably was dedicated to the storm god, as indicated by a linear-style cylinder seal found in the debris of the central hall of Temple AIII.1, which depicts a god standing on a bull. This god holds a curved staff and spear and stands before a personage who is holding a standard with three globes and a bird as an offering, with a crouched quadruped and a tree nearby. The linear style executed with the use of the drill, the motifs and figurative elements, and the pointed horned-helmet are all indicative of the storm god of LBA Syrian tradition, which was passed along into the Iron Age and perpetuated (Mazzoni 2012: 26).

## 9.4 Temple AII (Iron II) at 'āfis

Beginning in Iron II, the main temple of the acropolis was rebuilt and enlarged. At the end of a process that lasted about two centuries (ninth–seventh centuries BC), it was transformed into a sacred precinct with cultic structures and annexes. Temple AII was superimposed on the eastern and western walls of Temple AIII.1, and Temple AI was built directly above Temple AII, having incorporated its substructure in its stone foundations. These foundations are the only visible

remains of an intermediate building between Temples AIII.1 and AI, and they have been interpreted as belonging to the temple of phase AII. Small remains of a floor covered by an ashy layer were preserved in the area of the vestibule at a level of the foundations of AI and might belong to a floor of this older AII phase. As for material remains of Temple AII, the only item that may have survived from the time of its use is a whitish, limestone basin that was aligned with the eastern foundation of one of Temple AI's walls (Mazzoni 2012: 29).

Corroborative evidence consisting of epigraphical finds discovered at Tell 'āfis may suggest the identity of the deity that inhabited Temple AII during Iron II. Excavations at the eastern part of the tell uncovered an inscribed potsherd in square EaV6 of Area G. The potsherd, which was found in a building with a large, open-air courtyard, dates to Iron II and possesses a religious or ceremonial function (Cecchini 2000: 201–203, as cited in Younger 2007b: 139–140). The tri-consonantal root *lwr* represents the extent of the text, signifying three of the four consonants in the name of the god Elwar (*lwr*), the deity for whom Zakkur erected his stele (Younger 2007b: 140).

Elwer was a storm god known in eastern and northern Syria (Millard 1990: 51, as cited in Younger 2007b: 140). Based on similar inscriptions on pottery, Younger (2007b: 140) suggested that the full text most likely read *l lwr* “belonging to Elwer.” Paleographically, the text seems to date to the early-eighth century BC (Cecchini 2000: 201–203, as cited in Younger 2007b: 140). Considering that the name of the storm god was inscribed on a potsherd for a ceramic vessel that was associated with a religious or ceremonial function at 'āfis, the likelihood seems strong that the storm god was the patron deity at Hazrak and worshipped in Temple AII during Iron II.

In 1997, a seal impression on the lower part of the handle of a large container was discovered within square EaV6 of Area G. The slightly ellipsoidal impression depicts a four-winged beetle with a disk on either side of the insect. Separated from the beetle by an engraved line is an inscription that reads *lb ḥww* “belonging to He-who-makes-Baal-known” or “belonging to Baal-brought-him-to-life” (Younger 2007b: 140, with modifications by the present writer). This Aramaic or Phoenician inscription may validate that the storm god was sovereign at Hazrak, unless Amadasi Guzzo (2001: 320–321, as cited in Younger 2007b: 140) is correct that the seal impression could have belonged to an individual originally from Byblos who lived at Tell 'āfis and had his seal engraved there, thus validating the patronage of Baal at Byblos, instead.

## 9.5 Temple AI (Iron III) at 'āfis

Temple AI, which measures 38/32 m long x 28 m wide, was a freestanding, tripartite building with deep foundations that supported massive external walls constructed of large limestone and basaltic blocks that were laid in different courses and separated by layers of cobblestone. Temple AI's entrance on the southern side had a vestibule with an 8.5-m-wide step of squared stones that were preserved *in situ* and framed by abutting heavy towers. The deep foundations and massive walls suggest that the building was quite tall and imposing. Evidence of blocks belonging to steps between the central long-room and the vestibule testify to how the sacred part of the temple had been raised to a higher elevation than the rest of the structure (Mazzoni 2012: 30).

Temple AI, which dates to Iron III, constitutes a distinct case of a tripartite *in antis* temple. The presence of rooms along the sides recalls the earlier 'Ain Dārā temple, with which the Tell 'āfis temple shares the gradually rising elevation as one moves toward the cella, in addition to the thick and deep stone foundations. Owing to its much later Iron III date, however, the Tell 'āfis temple's side annexes can be explained as a local adaptation of the *langraum* Assyrian temple that included side chambers. The presence of the towers' framing of the façade also might be a late trait, possibly of Assyrian inspiration (Mazzoni 2012: 30).

A number of other characteristics of the final temple on the citadel also betray possible inspiration from Assyrian architecture: (1) the tendency to emphasize symmetry, (2) the monumentality of the structure, and (3) the increased visibility and centrality in the core of the citadel as symbolical and ideological signals (Novák 1999: 332). None of the original furniture, equipment, or decoration of the temple was preserved, which is understandable since its stonework was robbed extensively down to the foundations. In fact, the floor of the antecella sat only a few centimeters under the topsoil (Mazzoni 2012: 30).

The area of the vestibule was covered by a thick layer of debris consisting of cobblestones that were used to prepare the lime floor of the central room, mixed with basaltic flakes and fragments of sculpture from different periods. A fragment of an Old Syrian stele also was found together with fragments of Syro-Hittite sculptures, such as part of a person's fringed dress, a lion's muzzle, and the head of a bull-man in frontal view. Among these finds was a fragment of a stele with an Aramaic inscription that contains most of the name, Hazael: all but the *lamed* (Amadasi Guzzo 2014: 54, 55). Hazael was the King of Damascus during the late ninth century BC (Younger 2007b: 139; Mazzoni 2012: 30–31), the Aramaean king who oppressed Israel for the latter half of the century (2 Kgs 13:22).

During the 2003 excavations, the irregularly broken basalt fragment of the large stele was discovered in Temple AI of the Basalt Stratum (Amadasi Guzzo 2014: 54; Amadasi Guzzo 2009: fig. 2). The words are divided by short, vertical strokes, as with the Zakkur Stele. Paleographical comparison suggests a date of the late ninth century BC for the inscribing, shortly before the Zakkur Stele was inscribed (Amadasi Guzzo 2014: 55). The position of the stelae may indicate that they had stood in the area around the vestibule or in a space near the entrance, or they may have been set at the main gate or incorporated into the walls and the gate, in order to be displayed as spoils, similar to the fragment of a stele found at Tel Dan (Mazzoni 2012: 32; Athas 2003: 6).

## 9.6 The Temple in Area E4 at 'āfis

The *in antis* temple in Area E4 that dates to Iron I, known as Building G, was a free-standing structure that was bordered on the southern and eastern sides with cobblestoned streets. To the north, no adjacent structures were recovered in the excavated areas. This building also underwent many phases, with a gate on the northern wall in Level 7d that later was closed and built up with bricks. The sill of the gate on the western wall, between the *antae*, was in use during Level 6. An ashlar block may have been used as an installation that belonged to Level 7 and was reused in Level 6. During Levels 5–3, the building was enlarged and probably transformed into an open space containing many installations, then destroyed by fire during Level 3 (Mazzoni 2012: 27).

Not only are Building G's plan and general dimensions equivalent to those of Shrine 1 at Sarepta, but they are similar to those of Temple G3 at Tell Sūkās, which also had a short front side that was narrower than the back wall. The asymmetrical length of the shorter sides of the temple is also a feature common to the temples of the southern Levant during Iron I, which revealed a discreet number of local variants. No material finds came from Building G, except for a small statuette of the class of "Stone Spirits" from the final temple (Level 3), indicating the presence of an ancestral cult in Syria in *ca.* 900 BC. Another statuette of this class, though more crudely carved, was found in Pillared Building B, which dates to the LB II level in this same area, possibly intended for official use (Mazzoni 2012: 28).

## 9.7 Relationship of Building G to Area A's Temple Sequence

Most of the acropolis in Iron I was occupied by a dense collection of domestic architecture, at which time two temples are known to have existed: Building G sat atop the summit of the western



acropolis and was integrated into the domestic quarter, while Temples AIII.1–2 stood more secluded in the middle of the acropolis (Mazzoni 2012: 35).

During Iron II and Iron III, the entire area was levelled, and its central part was transformed into a large sacred precinct. Temple A was rebuilt in an unprecedentedly monumental manner and was given cultic installations and structures, including the Square Court G. This monumental phase with Temples AII and AI, along with their annexes, is consistent with the Aramaeanization of the region. Accordingly, the town of Tell 'āfis was redesigned entirely and provided with a ceremonial center as an Aramaean capital, which has been identified by many as *Hazrek*, possibly to be equated with Hadrach (Mazzoni 2012: 35) of biblical history (Zech 9:1).

## 10 The Iron Age Temple(s) at Carchemish

### 10.1 Historical Background

Carchemish lies on the western bank of the Euphrates River, about 100 km to the northeast of Aleppo. The ruins of Carchemish consist of 90 ha, 55 of which (including the Inner Town) are located in Turkey, while the other 35 (namely the Outer Town) fall within the borders of modern Syria. In some places, the earthen ramparts that surround the Inner City, which were built shortly after 2000 BC, reached 20 m in height (Marchetti 2012: 133).

Sir Leonard Woolley demonstrated that before the regional collapse at the end of the LBA, Carchemish (Figure 1) had become one of the most important centers of the Hittite Empire (Woolley 1952). With the LBA collapse, Carchemish seemingly avoided the same devastating destruction that Hattuša and Ugarit experienced, as they held onto territories during the supposed Dark Age; moreover, subsequent kings of Carchemish retained the Hittite royal titulary, as seen in the title, “King of Carchemish” (Weeden 2013: 10; Harrison 2013a: 97).

Carchemish’s political domination in the region lasted from *ca.* 1175 to 990 BC, when it lost control of its imperial possessions and became a mere city-state. Most of the evidence for Carchemish of the early Iron Age dates to the twelfth and tenth centuries BC (Weeden 2013: 6). In the course of the tenth and early ninth centuries BC, the Suhis[-II]-Katuwas Dynasty at Carchemish fundamentally transformed the urban landscape of their royal city through a series of building operations.

An impressive urban ensemble was constructed immediately to the south of the citadel mound, stretching from the so-called “Water Gate” to the “King’s Gate” in the approximate center

of the Upper City (Woolley's "Inner Town"), accommodating a series of monumental structures. The King's Gate was located on the southwestern side of the square, and it probably provided access to the main axis that traversed the Inner Town (Marchetti 2012: 135). Woolley, who excavated at Carchemish, termed part of these Iron Age building-operations as the Lower Palace and Temple Court, which date either to the end of Iron I or the beginning of Iron II. "Altogether the evidence is conclusive that none of the buildings excavated in this part of the inner town are older than the beginning of the Iron Age, that during the Iron Age there was a fairly wholesale remodeling and rebuilding of the quarter, in which, however, some elements of the old constructions were re-used" (Woolley 1952: 178).

The Turco-Italian excavations that began in 2011 have recovered numerous artifacts reported by Woolley's team, including a MBA basaltic statue that mentions Carchemish's King Binami, a bronze statuette of the storm god (late tenth century BC), an inscribed Luwian hieroglyphic stele (eighth century BC), the torso of a limestone royal statue (eighth century BC), and large Iron Age sculptures such as a bull's feet, an artifact that was discovered by Woolley in the Water Gate (Marchetti 2012: 140, 141, 143).

## 10.2 The Temple(s) at Carchemish

Woolley's "sanctuary" was a small, virtually square building with a shrine in its western corner (Figure 25). Of this sanctuary, Woolley noted that "[i]f our temple was true to the 'Hilani' pattern, the entrance should have been flanked by columns standing in the door recess; nothing of the sort was found *in situ*, but there was a basalt column-base loose inside the building, whose dimensions would agree with the depth of the recess. There is no analogy for the use of a single column or columns *inside* a room of this sort. Considering the state of the ruins, neither the displacement of one column-base nor the disappearance of the other is at all unlikely" (Woolley 1952: 170). Being that this building was attached to the (misnamed) "Lower Palace" (per Marchetti 2012: 140), consisted of only a single, small sanctuary, and does not bear any of the characteristic features of a *bit hilani*, it should be considered a religious structure.

According to Woolley, a single column base was found, but he considered it unclear whether this "loose column-base" was one of a pair, whose twin has disappeared, or whether the extant column base was displaced from its original context and dumped into the sanctuary (Woolley 1952: 170–171). Marchetti referred to the location of this temple as being in Area B. The temple was just in front of the Great Staircase, and it was positioned on higher ground, reached

primarily by a ramp. He acknowledged the presence of two massive columns that were associated with the porch, which likely means that the temple was built *in antis*, especially when comparing its plan to that of the temple at ʿAin Dārā. From the cella, he referred to the finding of a bronze cylinder seal that was inscribed with Luwian hieroglyphics, which belonged to a town official. The most significant religious rituals at Carchemish must have taken place there, where for three centuries the kings of Carchemish embellished the temple in a virtual dialogue with their predecessors (Marchetti 2012: 140, 142). Therefore, the known features of this temple include the following: (1) a singular cella, (2) almost certainly an *in antis* plan, (3) a twin-columned entrance (although the second column was never discovered), (4) a direct-access approach, and (5) a narrow hall between the vestibule and the cella.

On the other side of the square and downhill from this temple, at the foot of the acropolis, was a sacred building half the size of Woolley’s “sanctuary” and surrounded by a *temenos* (Marchetti 2012: 137). This building has been called a temple to the storm god, which was postulated based on an inscription on a pair of stone door jams that were discovered *in situ* at the entrance to the temple’s cella, which seemingly states that the temple belonged to the storm god, Tarhunza (= Teshub) of Carchemish (Hawkins 2000b: 123–124), the smiting god who possessed military might and sometimes was called “Celestial Tarhunz” (Bunnens et al. 2006: 77).

Marchetti suggested that further confirmation of its identity as the temple of the storm god exists in the form of the aforementioned bronze statuette of the storm god, with its double-horned cap, which was discovered just beneath the floor of the cella and against the end wall. The statuette was broken in half, perhaps ritually; it was holding a silver dagger, while originally it had been holding a (now lost) axe in its other hand (Marchetti 2012: 137).

## 11 The Iron Age Temple at Jerusalem

### 11.1 Historical Background

The biblical text describes Jerusalem as having been a Jebusite city before the Israelites conquered it (Judg 19:10–11). Jerusalem became the capital of the Israelite (and later, Judahite) monarchy that, according to biblical chronology, would have begun in *ca.* 1043 BC (Petrovich 2008: 496). Jerusalem was located just south of the central Benjamin plateau of a topographical region known as the Central Mountain Spine.

## 11.2 The First Temple at Jerusalem

The Israelite temple of the Iron Age is known variously as the Solomonic or First Temple (Figure 26). Israel's national temple was built with Tyrian assistance during Solomon's reign (2 Sam 5:11), and it betrayed conspicuous wealth (Holladay and Klassen 2014: 42). No conclusive archaeological evidence exists that verifies the veracity of the biblical text that attests to the temple's construction (1 Kgs 6–8)—the beginning of whose construction has been demonstrated to date to 967 BC (Young 2003: 601–602; Young 2006; Young and Steinmann 2012)—or its subsequent use (2 Kgs 18:16; etc.) until the temple was destroyed (2 Kgs 25:9) during the Babylonian invasion of 587 BC (Young 2003: 600–601).

Numerous authors have treated the relationship of the Iron Age temples of Syria, especially those at ʿAin Dārā and Tayinat, to the Iron Age temple at Jerusalem described in great detail in the biblical text. Ussishkin stated long ago that the temples of Jerusalem and Tayinat (Building II) were based on similar ground-plans (Ussishkin 1966: 110). Monson (2000: 20–35) and King and Stager (2001: 335) have argued that ʿAin Dārā's temple is the closest parallel to the Solomonic temple, while others (e.g. Hurowitz 2011: 46–57) have maintained that Tayinat's temple remains the best parallel.

Monson has described the First Temple as having been built at the center of a large courtyard that was accessible by gates on all sides. During the Judahite monarchy, apparently inner and outer courts existed, which later were surrounded by chambers (Jeremiah 36; Ezekiel 42; Monson 2006: 274). The biblical description of the temple states that its central part was built according to the long-room plan.

The building had three divisions, each originally 20 cubits wide: the porch/portico, the antecella/vestibule, and the cella/sanctuary/holy of holies (1 Kgs 6:1–3; Steymans 2013: 11). According to 1 Kgs 6:1, the text states that the temple's length was 60 cubits, its width was 20 cubits, and its height was 30 cubits. The porch was 10 cubits long and was reached by a stairway (1 Kgs 6:3), being divided from the interior of the temple by its large pillars, rather than a doorway. The main hall was 40 cubits long, and it was entered through ornate wooden doors 10 cubits wide. The position of the windows and the precise construction of the roof are ambiguous in the biblical account. The cella most likely constituted a cube with sides of 20 cubits each, but many details of the cella were not recorded in the biblical text (Monson 2006: 274–275).

When comparing the temple's proportions, the building measured 70 x 20 cubits, with a height of 30 cubits. Assuming the use of a royal cubit (52.5 cm) for the biblical description of the

temple's dimensions, the temple's width was *ca.* 12 m, with a length of roughly 40 m and a height of about 15 m. According to 1 Kings and Ezekiel, the central room was enclosed on three sides by multi-storied side chambers that enveloped the hall and cella.

The biblical accounts also provide for an understanding of the constructional materials and ornamentation. Fine ashlar masonry was used throughout, while the roof was constructed of large beams, and the walls and floors were lined with cedar. Cherubs, palmettes, floral patterns, and window frames lined the walls of the two interior rooms (1 Kgs 6:29; 2 Chr 3:7), and the doors to both rooms were furnished with ornate patterns (Monson 2006: 275).

King and Stager emphasized that the temple was not a public cult, because worshippers were limited to the temple's courts. They also noted that the Hebrew words for the building—*bayit* ('house') and *hēkāl* ('palace/temple')—signify the house of a deity, or the house of a king (King and Stager 2001: 330). This temple often was called the "house of Yahweh" (1 Kgs 6:1, 37; 7:40), in conjunction with the "house of the king" (Neh 3:25; Jer 22:1, 6; 27:18) and the "house of the father" (1 Chr 26:6; 28:4), all structural analogues in the social, political, and theological spheres of ancient Israel. This three-tiered hierarchy—the deity's house, the king's house, and the family's house, along with their respective households—constitutes "the order of being" in the Israelite cosmion (King and Stager 2001: 330–331).

Hurowitz compared the plan of Tayinat's Building XVI to the Solomonic temple that was built in the tenth century BC, suggesting that Stager was wrong in stating that the ʿAin Dārā temple, excavated in the 1980's, is the closest parallel to the Solomonic temple (Hurowitz 2011: 46–47). Hurowitz previously had declared that the closest parallel to the Solomonic temple was Building II (1994: 25, 28), discovered at Tell Tay'inat in the 1930's, partly due to the strikingly similar plans (especially when comparing the temples' widths), and the two-columned porticos with twin snarling lions at Tayinat, and "Jachin and Boaz" columns at the entrance of the temple at Jerusalem (2011: 46–47), as described in 1 Kgs 7:21.

For this reason, as well as its dependence on Phoenician design and technology (2 Sam 5:11), perhaps Jerusalem's First Temple should be considered a modified form of the *in antis* architectural style. When discussing Building XVI, Hurowitz noted that, similar to the previously excavated Building II and the Solomonic temple, the newly discovered temple featured a long-room plan divided into three sections and a column base at the entrance, figuring that the temple remained in use until late in the eighth century BC or early in the seventh century BC. He then

stated that while Building XVI adds little insight to the Solomonic temple architecturally, it does feature a wealth of cultic paraphernalia (Hurowitz 2011: 56; cf. Harrison 2013a: 108).

Hurowitz noted that the greatest distinction between Building XVI and the other temples that have been compared to the First Temple at Jerusalem relates to the cache of cuneiform tablets that was found in the cella of Building XVI, especially the nearly complete copy of EST. The part of this discovery's value that Hurowitz pointed out is this: the position of the treaty in the cella (= holy of holies) of Building XVI is the closest known parallel to the alleged placement of the tablets of the covenant (between Yahweh and the Israelite people) into the cella of the Solomonic temple (1 Kings 8; Hurowitz 2011: 56).

In other words, before the discovery of Tayinat's oath treaty, there was no ANE parallel for the biblical description of a covenant between a people and their deity in written form in the cella where that deity resided. The Bible describes the Mosaic Law as having been placed into the inner sanctuary of Yahweh's temple, the holy of holies, which is the biblical equivalent of a cella (Exod 26:34; 2 Chron 5:7). The treaty that Esarhaddon required of the administrative officials at Kunalia, who swore their allegiance to both local and imperial deities, thus provides the first—and thus far, the only—archaeological attestation of the biblical practice of placing a written record of a covenant between the people and their deity inside the holiest room of a sacred temple.

## 12 The Iron Age Temple at Tel Qasile

### 12.1 Historical Background

Tel Qasile is situated in the southern Levant, at the southwestern corner of a *kurkar* ridge, and lies within the borders of Tel Aviv, 250 m north of the banks of the Yarkon River and 2 km east of the Mediterranean coast (Figure 7). The original area of the site was about 4 acres, but natural erosion and human activity have led to a somewhat smaller size. The economic life of the settlers at Qasile was dependent on the river, whose waters were used for irrigation, which enabled them to enjoy diversified agriculture. Most likely, the settlement featured an inland port, as ships sailed upstream through the Yarkon River and anchored near the mound, which theory is borne out by the discovery of imported pottery at the site. The shipment of cedars for the building of the Israelite temple at Jerusalem may have involved floating trees up the Yarkon and unloading them at a settlement on its banks, just as it occurred at Tel Kudadi or Tel Qasile (Mazar 1993: 1204; Mazar 1980: 3–4).

## 12.2 The Temple at Tel Qasile

The Iron I temples at Tel Qasile are represented in three phases (Figure 27): Stratum XII (Temple 319), which goes down to virgin soil, Stratum XI (Temple 200), and Stratum X (Temple 131). Surprisingly, the area around the temple was inhabited to a larger degree during the Stratum XII phase than during the two subsequent phases (Mazar 1993: 1204; Mazar 1980: 13).

Temple 319 was almost square in shape, but it would be described better as a parallelogram, since parallel sides were slanted in relation to the sides perpendicular to them. This initial temple featured a direct-access approach, which contrasts with the bent-axis approach of the two subsequent phases. The plan of Temple 319 consists of a one-room cella with a raised platform within it. Benches of beaten earth were found along the northern, eastern, and part of the southern walls (Mazar 1980: 13, 15).

Temple 200 of Stratum XI was not too dissimilar to its predecessor, but its size was slightly larger, and the shape of its walls is better described as trapezoidal, with two of the parallel walls differing in length. The temple was erected on the stumps of the walls of the previous temple, but the doorway was moved from the center of one side to a point near the end of the side on the northern part of the eastern wall. In its plan, two features were retained: the location of the cella and the orientation of the building. However, the second temple as a whole was built according to a new but not vastly different plan. Benches were built of red *ḥamra* brick along the walls of the temple (Mazar 1980: 21, 23).

Temple 131 (Figure 28) of Stratum X represents a rebuilding and extension of the previous temple of Stratum XI. Three of the outer stone walls were reused, and the outer contours of the building in its western part were retained. Nonetheless, radical changes were made in the internal plan: an entrance room was added; the inner division of the main hall was altered; and the floor was raised. Continuity between Temple 131 and Temple 200 is observed in the construction of a fill for the floor of the new temple, with the builders of Building 131 having commenced their building operations from the floor of the previous temple. In the cella, two round pillar-bases of stone were incorporated into the fill. The new entrance-room featured walls built at right angles, twin pilasters at the point of entry, and a foundation that was .5 m higher than that of the wall—on its western side—to which it was adjoined (Mazar 1980: 33, 34). The angle of the bent-axis approach was sharp, and benches were set along several of the walls.

Mazar had this to say about the addition of column bases to the cella: “The arrangement of the pillars along the long axis is rare and can be paralleled only in Fosse Temple I at Lachish, and

probably also in the enigmatic ‘Lion Temple’ at Jaffa. We have previously noted a similar arrangement of pillars in Mycenaean buildings at Eleusis and Asine. . . . [W]e could see a connection between this architectural element in the Aegean world and its appearance in the Philistine temple at Tell Qasile” (Mazar 1980: 70).

Since the time that Mazar penned these words, however, such pillar-bases have been found at Ekron, Ashdod, and possibly Gath. It is interesting, however, (1) that no signs exist of pillar-bases in the earlier temples at Tel Qasile, and (2) that there seems to be no evidence of an accompanying hearth at Tel Qasile, although pillar-bases were present.

## 13 The Iron Age Temples at Tel Miqne

### 13.1 Historical Background

The site of Tel Miqne is located 35 km southwest of Jerusalem and is situated on the western edge of the Coastal Plain (Figure 7). The association of Tel Miqne with Ekron was confirmed incontrovertibly by the remarkable find of the Royal Dedicatory Inscription dated to the outset of the seventh century BC. Tel Miqne overlooked the network of roadways leading to the northeast from Ashdod to Gezer, and inland via Nahal Sorek to Beth-Shemesh (Gitin 2003: 286; Dothan and Gitin 1993: 1051). The Philistine city of Ekron was founded at the site during the twelfth century BC (Gitin 2012: 223).

As one of the largest Iron Age sites in Israel, Tel Miqne is composed of a 40-acre Lower City and a 10 acre Upper City. The Lower City is flat and almost square, with a 2.5 acre, mound-shaped acropolis at its northern end. The Upper City, a rectangular-shaped ridge that juts out northward into Nahal Timnah, forms an acropolis to the northeast. The height of the tel is masked by a heavy buildup of post-Byzantine alluvium from the downflow of Nahal Sorek (Dothan and Gitin 1993: 1051).

Various phases of the Philistine temple of Iron I at Ekron were built in Field IV, which is located at the very center of Ekron’s Lower City. The long series of shrines and monumental buildings erected here attests to a continuity of cultic function from the initial phase of settlement in Stratum VII (early twelfth century BC) until the Stratum IV temple (second half of the eleventh century BC) was destroyed and abandoned early in the tenth century BC. These sanctuaries demonstrate that once sanctified, a given area continued to be sacred to the Philistine inhabitants of the city (T. Dothan 2003: 193–195).



## 13.2 The Temples at Tel Mique

A dramatic change occurred in Stratum V (1100–1050 BC), when Philistine Temple 350 was constructed over the Stratum-VI structures (Figure 29). This monumental building incorporated new architectural elements and installations, such as a megaron-style entrance, a round pebbled hearth, and a *bamah*. The vestibule had twin columns, as did the cella. These features and the associated objects attest to the consolidation and continuity of Aegean traditions, while continuing to incorporate Canaanite features. Interesting modifications to the temple were made during Stratum IVA (Figure 30), which dates to *ca.* 1100–1050 BC, when both the hearth and the twin columns were removed from the cella (T. Dothan 2003: 194–195).

During the late Iron Age II in the southern Levant (Iron III in the north), while under the *pax Assyriaca*, Ekron experienced an influx of cultural influences at the site, including Philistine, Phoenician, Assyrian, Egyptian, and Judahite. At the time, Temple Complex 650 was constructed (Figure 31), which may be the largest building of its type yet excavated in Israel. While one scholar has dated the temple to 675–650 BC (James 2006: 88), and another has dated it to the middle of the seventh century BC (Stager 1996: 70), the excavator has shown that the correct date for its construction is 700–675 BC, based on epigraphical, historical, and material cultural evidence, as well as the corroborating evidence from the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat (Gitin 2012: 245, 249).

The architectural plan of Temple Complex 650, which is unique in the region, is based on the tripartite style of Neo-Assyrian royal palaces, residences, and temples (Gitin 2012: 223, 231). One scholar has suggested that Ekron's sanctuary is modeled after contemporary private homes and public buildings with pillared halls that existed in Judah (Kamlah 2003: 116). According to Gitin (2012: 244), Kamlah is incorrect; for him, Phoenician material culture had the greatest influence on the religious practices at Ekron and the architectural style of Temple Complex 650.

Gitin's analysis of the religious practices at Ekron as having predominantly Phoenician influence is correct, based on the predominance of Phoenician orthographic and paleographic characteristics on six dedicatory inscriptions from Temple Auxiliary Building 654, more Phoenician-type pottery than that of any non-Philistine culture, the bell-shaped Phoenician-type of figurine from the inner cella (Room t) of the sanctuary (Figure 31), and the dominant Phoenician characteristics on the Ekron Royal Dedicatory Inscription (Gitin 2012: 226, 232, 233, 239).

Gitin (2012: 232) also is correct that the complex represents a hybrid of different local and foreign architectural features. As for the greatest influence on the architectural style of Temple Complex 650, however, a better choice than Phoenician seems to be Assyrian. Gitin (2012: 232)

rightly observed that the plan of the columned hall of the sanctuary reflects that of the Phoenician Temple 1 of Astarte at Kition, on Cyprus. This room is only one small part of the complex, though. The architectural plan can be described as two large, rectangular wings (with subsidiary rooms), with a slender, rectangular room that divides the wings (i.e. on opposite sides of it), which resembles the Nabu Temple Complex at Khorsabad (see Temple of Nabu, in Figure 37; fig. 13 [1] in Gitin 2012: 240), with its courtyard-dominated right wing with subsidiary rooms, set of sanctuary-related rooms on the left wing, and a slender, rectangular dividing hall (Halls 2 and 3).

By any stretch, Temple Complex 650 is not a worthy match when looking for parallels with Building XVI at Tayinat, for a number of reasons: (1) the basic architectural plan of the former is Assyrian, despite possessing several distinctively Phoenician and Philistine elements, and not the Levantine form of tripartite style built in the *in antis* tradition; (2) Building XVI offers nothing that resembles the Phoenician-style sanctuary of Room u-t; (3) Building XVI includes no colonnaded courtyard; and (4) there is no direct access approach with Temple Complex 650, in contrast to the direct access approach of Building XVI at Tayinat.

## 14 The Iron Age Temple at Ashdod

### 14.1 Historical Background

Tel Ashdod is located *ca.* 6 km to the northeast of Ashkelon (Figure 7). Unfortunately, the exact extent of the mound is difficult to determine, because the remains of the ancient settlement were partly destroyed by the cultivation of its fields over many generations and by onsite building activity. The acropolis consisted of *ca.* 20 acres, while the Lower City encompassed at least 70 acres. The final city of LB II (Stratum XIV) was destroyed and, for the most part, covered by a thick layer of ash from the conflagration. Several areas on the site revealed that Stratum XIII B was transitional, while Philistine remains clearly begin in Stratum XIII A (M. Dothan 1993: 93, 96).

According to M. Dothan (1993: 93, 96), the discovery of numerous stratified Late Helladic III C1 sherds, starting in Stratum XIII B, may indicate that a wave of Sea Peoples preceded their invasion and subsequent settlement in Year 8 of Ramses III. The first wave would have destroyed part of the Canaanite city (Stratum XIV) in the last quarter of the thirteenth century BC, while the second wave would have begun Philistine rule in the next quarter of a century. Of course, direct evidence for waves of Sea Peoples entering the Levant is difficult to establish.

## 14.2 The Temple at Ashdod

The excavations in Area H at Ashdod yielded a complex of several Iron I buildings (Figures 32, 33), including 5337 and 5233, which date to the twelfth century BC (Stratum XII) and undoubtedly represent temples. Building 5337 (Figure 32), the northernmost building-complex in Section 1-1, contained a central hall with a raised, rectangular *kurkar* hearth and two roof-supporting pillars on opposite ends of the hall. This temple also yielded Late Helladic IIIc:1b ware and Philistine bichrome pottery, as well as special finds such as bird bowls, fragments of Ashdoda-type figurines, and beads. Building 5337's northeastern-most room contained a mudbrick bench, possibly a *bamah*, and yielded Philistine pottery and a wealth of special finds, including two golden discs decorated in Aegean style, a faience amulet, and a miniature Late Helladic IIIc:1b kylix. Similar architectural plans for this building were found in Greece during the same period, suggesting an Aegean origin (T. Dothan 2003: 201; Mazar and Ben-Shlomo 2005: 26).

The hearth consisted of a core of *kurkar* stones facing upright, white-plastered mudbricks on the southern and eastern sides. A layer of ash, 6 cm in depth, was at the center of the upper part of the hearth. Based on analogies with hearths at Tell Qasile and Tel Mique, this installation evidently is a free-standing hearth within a central hall, a feature carrying clear Aegean and Cypriot allusions. The configuration of a free-standing hearth between two pillars was found in Stratum VII at Tel Mique (Mazar and Ben-Shlomo 2005: 26).

Building 5233 (Figure 33) faced the street and had a stone threshold that was composed of a long and rounded stone with two smaller stones flanking it. Three long walls ran perpendicular to the southern façade, dividing the building into two elongated spaces. Building 5233 was a unique feature in the southwestern corner of Section 1-1, partly built into W5182 on the west and W5440 on the south, and directly underlying the walls of Stratum XIB, meaning that it should be attributed to Stratum XIIA (Mazar and Ben-Shlomo 2005: 23–24).

The *kurkar* floor of Building 5233 was devoid of artifactual finds, but pottery fragments, including Late Helladic IIIc:1 sherds, were found in the fill above it. A semicircular wall survived up to two courses in height on the upper part of the building, thus surrounding the inner rectangular space. This wall curved around the southern part of the inner rectangle and met its eastern and western walls to form an apsidal structure overlying the lower rectangle. The function of this curious and unique structure, located within a larger architectural complex, could not be determined conclusively, but it was considered to have a cultic function (Mazar and Ben-Shlomo 2005: 25). It is difficult to know whether Building 5233 served as a secondary temple.

## 15 The Iron Age Temple at Tell eṣ-Şafi (Gath?)

### 15.1 Historical Background

The mound of Tell eṣ-Şafi, measuring up to 50 ha, is located *ca.* 7 km to the south of Ekron, along one of the major routes leading into the Judahite hill country and the passes heading to Jerusalem. Tell eṣ-Şafi is an imposing mound that sits atop the crescent-shaped hill in the Shephelah, the foothills between the Coastal Plain and the Central Mountain Spine (Maeir 2012b: 6). To the north of the tell runs the Elah Valley, whose water table remains high throughout the year, and which is the source of rich, alluvial soil.

Gath, one of the cities of the Philistine Pentapolis, has not been identified conclusively. However, Aren Maeir, the chief excavator at Tell eṣ-Şafi, is convinced that they have found the correct location for Gath at Tell eṣ-Şafi. Maeir has admitted that the current excavations have not produced specific epigraphic finds that explicitly confirm this site as biblical/Canaanite Gath (2012b: 6). However, he notes several compelling lines of evidence supporting the identification.

First is what the excavator calls the convincing arguments of Anson Rainey, who made a case from historical geography, using post-biblical, biblical, and contemporary sources (1966a: 30–38; 1966b: 23–34; 1975: 63–76; 1976: 353, and Rainey and Notley 2006: 154–56). The case documented by Rainey includes Assyrian sources, references in Josephus, the Madaba map, Eusebius, and Jerome (Maeir 2012b: 6), among other sources.

In the early fourth century AD, Eusebius identified Gath with the village of Saphita, from which the name *Tell eṣ-Şafi* presumably derived. Saphita also appears on the Madaba Map, and already in the nineteenth century AD, Tell eṣ-Şafi was identified as the most likely candidate for Philistine Gath. Historical sources indicate that Gath lies in northern Philistia along the Elah Valley, close to both Ekron and Ashdod, which fits well with the geographical location of Tell eṣ-Şafi (Maeir and Ehrlich 2001: 25).

Second is Maeir's own argument from the comparison between the biblical description of Gath and the stratigraphical record uncovered at Tell eṣ-Şafi, based on the archaeological evidence from excavations. The Bible portrays Gath as an important Philistine site from the early stages of the Philistine Pentapolis until no later than the early eighth century BC, which dovetails perfectly with what was uncovered at Tell eṣ-Şafi. The site revealed extensive evidence of Philistine culture from the outset of Iron I until the destruction of the site in the second half of the ninth century BC. After this, it no longer was a major—or even minor—Philistine site. It even appears to have

succumbed to Judahite control in the eighth century BC, making the presence and absence of Philistine finds in various stages of the Iron Age a strong fit when compared to the biblical description of Philistine Gath (Maeir 2012b: 6).

During excavations, stratigraphically derived material was found throughout the site: in Area A (Stratum A3) and Area E in the eastern part of the upper tell, in Area F near the summit, and in Area D in the Lower City (Maeir and Eshel 2014: 75–76). Tell eṣ-Ṣafi flourished during Iron II, and the finds at Tell eṣ-Ṣafi from Iron IIA in particular, dating to the destruction level of the late ninth century BC, have been among the most significant discoveries made at the site (Maeir and Eshel 2014: 75).

## 15.2 The Temple at Tell eṣ-Ṣafi (Gath?)

The excavations at Tell eṣ-Ṣafi only began to reach Iron-I levels as of the 2009 season. However, under a cultic installation of Iron II, the excavators uncovered what appears to be an Iron I temple, complete with two pillar bases and a *bamah* (Figure 34). “At Tell es-Safi/Gath, below what appears to be a cultic corner from St. A3 (9<sup>th</sup> cent. Destruction level), we have started to uncover architecture which is somewhat reminiscent of the Qasile temple—with two pillar bases. We are still very much in the beginning of this work” (Maeir 2010).

More recently, Maeir has stated that the temple’s two large pillars were positioned in the middle of the building, which is similar to the architectural design of Building 131 at Tel Qasile and Building 5337 at Ashdod (Maeir 2014: 1022). The pillar bases are just over 1½ m apart, so it is difficult to envision that they belonged to the cella unless its design was such that the cella was the central room (i.e. rather than the innermost room of a tripartite building). No hearth seems to have been found between the two pillars, unlike with Building 5337.

# 16 The Architectural Style of Building XVI

## 16.1 Statement of the Problem

According to Haines, the plan of Building II at Tayinat suggests a Western origin/inspiration, in that it appears to have been a *prodomus* and megaron that was altered to accommodate a local plan. He also suggested that Tayinat’s temple exhibits no influence from the earlier temples at nearby Alalakh, instead featuring an open porch with columns *in antis* in front of an Assyrian type of cella (Haines 1971: 53).

Harrison, the current excavator at Tayinat, has stated that with their monumental stepped approach and porticoed entrances, Buildings II and XVI preserve the classic plan of Neo-Hittite temples and clearly formed part of a sacred precinct (Harrison 2013a: 108). Additionally, he notes that both temples were built in the *in antis* tradition indigenous to western Syria, yet transformed during the Neo-Assyrian occupation into an Assyrian religious complex characterized as having a *langraum* plan (Harrison 2012b: 3, 18). Therefore, it must be determined as to whether the temples at Tayinat reflect origins that derive from the western Syrian *megara* style, from the Neo-Assyrian *langraum* plan, or from both traditions.

## 16.2 Evidence from the Late Bronze Age

Beginning with Ugarit, the rooms of this site's temples to Baal and Dagan are almost indistinct (Figure 8). As with a number of temples to be discussed here, Ugarit's twin temples will be compared to the ʿAin Dārā temple, which predated Buildings II and XVI at Tayinat. The reason why this comparison is helpful is that the columned portico of the ʿAin Dārā temple has its best parallels in the nearby temples at Kunulua (Novák 2012: 48). There are no signs of columned entrances at Ugarit, though its temple did have a direct-access approach.

Unlike the ʿAin Dārā temple's (Figure 21) narrow entryways between (1) the vestibule and the antecella, and (2) the antecella and the cella, Ugarit's temple featured open and unrestricted entryways. Finally, the cella of Ugarit's temple, though rectangular, had its longer axis along the shorter axis of the temple, which is the opposite of the temple at ʿAin Dārā. The LBA temple at Ugarit bore only a few similarities to the temple at ʿAin Dārā, and thus it cannot be called the model for this or any other Iron Age temple.

There are several similarities between the ʿAin Dārā–Carchemish model and the Munbaqa temples: 1) they both feature a long, rectangular plan and a direct-access approach; 2) Temple I at Munbaqa and the ʿAin Dārā temple both have an antecella whose longer axis is parallel with the shorter axis of the temple; 3) they both have cellas with the longer axes along the temples' longer axes; 4) Munbaqa's Temple II and the ʿAin Dārā temple both have a partition wall at the back of the cella.

However, there are numerous differences between these temples. (1) The open entrance at Munbaqa is contrasted with the restricted entrance of the ʿAin Dārā temple, which had a narrow entryway between the columned porch and the antecella; (2) Munbaqa's Temple I had an uncolumned entrance, while Temple II is conjectured to have had only one, although there were no

remnants of the conjectured columns found anywhere on the site; (3) Temple I at Munbaqa lacked a partition wall at the back of the cella, unlike those at both ʿAin Dārā and Carchemish; and (4) the Munbaqa temples featured a much greater disparity in the length of the cellas' longer axes versus their shorter axes: roughly 3:2 at ʿAin Dara and Carchemish, while 4.3:2 (Temple I) and 3.3:2 (Temple II) at Munbaqa. Once again, despite some similarities, this site's temples do not seem to provide the ideal model for the Iron Age temples of the northern Levant.

All of the temples at Emar belong to an architectural plan that was common throughout Syria since the third millennium BC, thus signifying that no attempts by the Hittites were made to replace them with temples of their own style (Margueron 1995: 132). As for similarities between Emar's paired temples to Baal and Aštarte versus the temple at ʿAin Dārā, (1) both have a long, rectangular plan and a direct-access approach; (2) both have a wide entrance that leads to a narrow entryway into the temple; and (3) both have a partition in the rear of the cella.

The features denoting a difference between Emar's temples and the ʿAin Dārā–Carchemish model include the following: (1) the un-columned entrance for both of the paired temples at Emar; (2) the lack of an antecella at Emar; (3) the lack of an inner sanctuary at Emar, which the temples at ʿAin Dārā and Carchemish both possess; (4) a much greater disparity in the length of the cella's longer axis than its shorter axis: roughly 3:2 at ʿAin Dārā and Carchemish, while roughly 4:2 and 5:2 at Emar; and (5) the presence of an altar in the middle of the temples exclusively at Emar. The temples at Emar thus do not seem to be appropriate models for Syria's Iron Age temples, either.

The plan of Alalakh's temples of all four of these (final) phases is paralleled best by the identical temples of Stratum 3 and Stratum 2 in Area H at Hazor, located in the Lower City, which date to the MB IIC and LB I periods. The similarities are these: (1) both temples are tripartite; (2) both temples have two, rectangular antecellas, with the longer axis being along the shorter axis of the temple; (3) both temples have a rectangular cella of about the same proportion as one another, and which are larger than their respective antecellas; (4) both temples have a noticeably narrow, un-columned entrance, with no portico; (5) both temples have a recessed niche in the far end of the cella, located at the center of the longer axis.

In contrast, there are many differences between the temples at Alalakh and ʿAin Dārā, though admittedly they both feature a long, rectangular plan with a direct-access approach. Their differences are as follows: (1) Alalakh's temple is tripartite, while ʿAin Dārā's is bipartite; (2) ʿAin Dārā's temple has a wide portico, while Alalakh's temple has none, instead featuring a narrow entrance; (3) Alalakh's temple has an un-columned entrance, while ʿAin Dārā's is columned; (4)

the longer axis of the cella in Alalakh's temple is along the temple's shorter axis, while ʿAin Dārā's is along the longer axis; and (5) Alalakh's temple has a recessed niche in the back of the cella, while ʿAin Dārā's temple has no niche at all. Thus while the temple at Alalakh bears some resemblance to ʿAin Dārā's temple, the differences far outweigh the similarities.

### 16.3 Evidence from the Iron Age

A transitional temple is the one at Aleppo, which followed the same basic plan throughout its use during the Bronze and Iron Ages. None of the Iron Age temples in Syria followed the model of Aleppo's ancient temple. However, a final restoration of Aleppo's temple was performed in *ca.* 900 BC, when all but three of the reliefs that had lined the front of the platform were exchanged.

The new decoration portrayed the storm god, who was entering his chariot, along with his entourage. The iconography, especially of the central figures, is greatly indebted to Anatolian tradition, whereas other figures betray Syro-Mesopotamian origins, including protective winged genii such as a bird- and a lion-headed *apkallu*, or a *girtablullu* (Kohlmeyer 2012: 67). This shows the influence of Assyrian religious thought at Aleppo by 900 BC, in addition to demonstrating how the protective elements of the *apkallu* were used to ward-off evil spirits at Aleppo's main temple for the royal court and the aristocracy.

The Iron I temple at ʿAin Dārā (Figure 21) also featured an *in antis* style that was popular throughout the northern Levant and characteristic of the Luwo-Aramaean architecture of the Iron Age. Yet this *in antis* temple differed from both Assyrian and Babylonian temples, and from imperial Hittite temples, both of whose styles were characterized by a complex inner structure with central courtyards and numerous additional rooms adjacent to the cella.

Only a scant amount of interaction can be offered with the temples at ʿāfis. The rectangular temple there (Building G) featured an *in antis* entrance (Figure 23), which suggests that this site near Tayinat followed the local West Syrian architectural tradition. Carchemish possessed what can be described as a temple to the storm god (Figure 25), with an entrance that featured twin columns. Thus ʿāfis and Carchemish also boasted *in antis* columned entrances.

Virtually no help for understanding Building XVI's architectural origin can be obtained from temples at Jerusalem or the Philistine pentathlon. The temple at Jerusalem, clearly built in tripartite style, is unattested in the archaeological record. The temples at Gath, Ashdod and Ekron all featured megaron-style Aegean architecture, along with the presence of a hearth and a *bamah* (except for Tell eṣ-Ṣafi, whose excavations have not been reported fully), indicating that these



Philistine temples of the southern Levant followed a different tradition than Building XVI. Temple Complex 650 at Ekron also provides no help, even though it was a contemporary of Tayinat's final Iron Age temple complex. The former temple complex follows the Neo-Assyrian architectural style of tripartite plan, rather than the Levantine tripartite plan (whether the *in antis* version or not).

Where this study has led is to basic agreement with Harrison's position, namely that the paired temples atop the citadel at Tayinat were a variation of West Syrian *megara*, designed as *in antis* structures with columned porticos, along with a narrow corridor in which the cultic statue was positioned at the far end, opposite the entrance. However, the temples did not directly follow the Neo-Assyrian *langraum* style, because by definition, cellas of *langraum*-style temples are entered through the short wall, focusing the viewer's eyes on the inanimate cult statue upon its dais or in its niche (Holloway 2002: 201), whereas the temples at Tayinat were entered on the long wall. Perhaps more can be known about earlier phases of Building XVI after further investigations probe more fully under the final temple, which was destroyed in a massive and final conflagration.

## 17 Cultural and Historical Interpretations

After having completed the presentations of individual temples of the LBA and Iron Age in Syria, Hittite Anatolia, and Canaan, as well as having identified Building XVI as a West Syrian, *in antis* style of temple, the final task of Chapter 3 will be to draw some broader observations about religious architecture in general, especially in order to articulate what this says about Tayinat's temples culturally and religiously.

### 17.1 Limitations

Before drawing these observations, it is necessary to state several limitations relative to these comments. First, a discussion focusing on religious architecture admittedly represents only one element of material culture, so the following discussion cannot account for data from the other elements of material culture that will not be featured here, such as ceramics, tools, weapons, domestic architecture, dietary items, amulets/heirlooms, burial practices, and so forth.

Second, only a small amount of ancient sites has been excavated, at least relative to the overall number of tells/sites that were occupied during antiquity. Therefore, this analysis cannot account for information that has not been collected to date. Third, excavations at Tayinat not only have not exhausted the explorable area on the upper mound, but the sprawling lower mound is virtually unexplored altogether. This means that the evidence from Tayinat, in relation to religious

architecture, is quite limited. Temples may have existed elsewhere on the site. Moreover, most of the other sites discussed in this chapter have not been excavated fully, either, thus further limiting the effectiveness of the available evidence. Nonetheless, despite these limitations, there is great value in drawing the conclusions that can be made.

## 17.2 Interpretive Conclusions Based on Survey of Temples

The undisputed regional power in the northern Levant during the LBA was the Hittite Empire, which maintained a firm grasp on Syria until its collapse, which ushered in the Iron Age. Temples at two sites in the Hittite heartland were observed, namely those at Hattuša and Sarissa, the former—being the empire’s capital city—having served as a model for the temples at Sarissa and other Hittite sites throughout the empire. This style featured an enormous inner-courtyard cella framed by pillared halls on two sides and a labyrinth of rooms on all sides of the cella.

The demise of the Hittite Empire and the outset of the Iron Age saw the end of direct, Hittite control in Syria, though many of the surviving cities maintained strong ties to Hittite culture. Since none of the temples of the Syrian sites of the Iron Age that were studied here—including Aleppo, ʿAin Dārā, Carchemish, and ʿāfis—was remotely modeled after the Hattuša prototype, this suggests that the dominant ethnic influence at these sites and Kunulua was not exclusively Hittite. Support for this conclusion comes from how these *in antis* temples were erected by the leaders of their respective cities, and how they instead followed the (also *in antis*) style that was standardized throughout most Syrian sites of the LBA, such as Ugarit, Munbaqa, and Emar. Neither did Kunulua’s temple follow the tripartite style of Alalakh’s temples (e.g. Period 4) of the LBA (modified into a double temple in Period 3), which are best paralleled by Hazor’s sequence of temples in northeastern Canaan, suggesting the implausibility that the LBA culture at Alalakh transplanted itself at Tayinat during the transition from LBA to Iron Age.

As argued in Chapter 1, the early occupational levels at Iron Age Tayinat yielded Late Helladic IIIc pottery that primarily was manufactured locally but modeled after a ceramic type that previously was foreign to local ceramic manufacturing, which is borne out by Janeway’s ceramic study, suggesting to him that the Kingdom of Unqi was a Philistine kingdom (2013: iii, 312). While it goes beyond the present study to affirm or dispute this claim, the evidence does seem to confirm that Philistine Sea Peoples of some amount composed part of Kunulua’s ethnic population. In light of this, the possibility needed to be explored as to whether dominant Philistine presence at Tayinat is reflected in the religious architecture connected to the royal precinct.

The way to address this question from the perspective of religious architecture is to study the temples of indigenous Philistine cities of the southern Levant, such as Tel Qasile, Ekron, Ashdod, and possibly Gath. The temples at these sites featured characteristics quite divergent from the *in antis* style that is diagnostic for West Syria, such as the following: a bipartite temple with a bent-axis approach at Tel Qasile, a megaron style temple at Ekron, Aegean-style temples at Ashdod and Tel Miqne (Ekron), columned cellas (not porticos) at every site, hearths at Ekron and Ashdod, and *bamoth* at Ekron, Ashdod, and Tel Miqne. None of these features characteristic of the Philistines is present with Building XVI, so unless the temple's final (Neo-Assyrian) renovations have hidden some of these features from the temple's earliest use, one can conclude that those in power at Kunulua almost certainly were not predominantly Philistine.

As for where this leaves the population of Kunulua culturally and ethnically is in close agreement to what was established in Chapter 1, namely that the city was a cultural blend of a variety of nationalities, but with traits that reflect more of a local Syrian culture than the religious moorings of immigrants from distant lands such as the Aegean or central Anatolia. More will be examined in Chapter 4 about the religious implications of the temples excavated at Tayinat, when the identities of the deities who inhabited them will be discussed, suffice to say for now that their identities probably reflect the gods most commonly worshipped in West Syria.

## 18 Summary Observations

In this chapter, a study was made of the architectural and physical features of the LBA and Iron Age temples in Syro-Anatolia and the Levant, in order to understand how Tell Tayinat's temples fit into the religious and architectural traditions of the region. The study included temples of Syria, southeastern Anatolia, and Canaan.

Four temples were excavated at Ugarit, including those dedicated to Baal and Dagan on the acropolis, the latter of which has been identified by inscribed stelae. The temple of Baal and the temple of Dagan were massive, two-room structures whose styles were variations of the *in antis* long-room plan, with a cella that was larger than the antecella. According to the plan for the temple of Baal, the antecella served as more of a long and wide hallway.

Turning to northeastern Syria, on the western crest of Tell Munbaqa (Ekalte), the stone foundations of three *in antis* temples were excavated. Temple 1, an *in antis* temple, was preceded topographically by points on the edge of the terrain to the river and to the wadis, so its prominent position made it visible from afar. Temple 1 and Temple 2 both had long and rectangular plans,

direct-access approaches, an open and un-columned entrance, rectangular cellas with longer axes along each temple's longer axis, and a narrow hall.

Emar's excavators found a total of four temples located in Field E. Two *in antis* temples, devoted to Baal and Aštarte, were uncovered on the highest point of the mound. The paired temples each possessed a long-room and a non-enclosed entrance formed by the extension of the walls on the temple's longer axis. Both temples featured an elongated room for the antecella, with an offering table and special paraphernalia for rituals, plus a podium for the deity in the cella. An altar was erected on the southern edge of the esplanade.

The Level IV temple at Alalakh consisted of a *Breitraum* cella with a niche in its back wall, along with two, broad-room antecellas. The Level III religious complex was a double temple built directly over the temple of Period 4, with a massive platform for the new temple, which obliterated the niche of the former temple. The Level II builders dismantled the walls of the previous temple but reused the podium. Its plan followed that of the previous temple, with two broad-room antecellas fronting a double cella, designed for the worship of two deities. A mudbrick altar was erected in the courtyard. The Level I temple followed the same plan as the previous temple and contained a large cella, an antecella, and a courtyard to the southeast. None of these temples followed the *in antis* architectural style so common in LBA Syria.

Turning to the southern Levant, Hazor's Stratum 1B temple was constructed during the fourteenth century BC and built partly over the previous temple. It featured an architectural design that was mostly identical to that of its predecessor, with a broad cella that included a rectangular niche at the far end of the cella. In the center of the cella were two column bases that supported a roof. The temple of Stratum 1A was identical to its predecessor in plan. Among the ritual vessels recovered was a basaltic altar in the form of a square pillar. On one side was the divine symbol of the storm god depicted in low relief, demonstrating its influence in the south. Hazor's temples were not built *in antis*, but they were tripartite in plan, and thus quite similar to Alalakh's temples.

In Anatolia, Hattuša's Temple 1 and Sarissa's Building C bore strong similarities, as each temple featured an enormous inner courtyard/cella, was framed by pillared halls on all sides, and had façades with projections and offsets in the main cultic area. Hattuša's temple was built first, then copied with slight modifications at sites throughout the empire, such as Sarissa. Strong similarities also existed between one of Hattuša's temples in the Upper City and a temple at Sarissa that was located next to the Northern Terrace (Temple 1): each cella was located in the center of a complex surrounded by rooms on all sides; each cella consisted of a singular room whose walls

had a 4:3 ratio, and neither temple featured niches, columns, or porticoed entryways. The temples at Hattuša and Sarissa thus were not built *in antis*, and they represent an architectural style that is quite diverse from that of the temples at Tayinat or any other Iron Age site in Syria.

Aleppo's temple of the LBA came under Hittite control, with Šuppiliuma I's invasion. The storm god retained his pre-eminent position under the Hittites, the earlier cultic niche was sealed, and a platform was raised to the south of the new northern wall, with three reliefs added: a mountain god and two beasts. A series of 26 stunning, carved reliefs, including a smiting storm god with oversized body parts, was added to the temple during the LBA.

Early in the eleventh century BC, Aleppo fell into the hands of Taita I, who erected a sculpted orthostat relief bearing his own image next to that of the storm god, complete with an inscription (ALEPPO 6). However, the king is wearing the short tunic and conical cap of divinity, mirroring the Hittite tradition that mortals can adopt divine attributes when in the presence of deity, and suggesting that Taita I intended his subjects to view him as divine. ALEPPO 6 also features some instructions for the cult of the storm god at Aleppo. Taita I clearly renovated the temple, possibly in order to impose his own religious and/or political ideology. However, the basic *migdol* style that had characterized the temple at Aleppo long before the Iron Age or LBA persisted during these eras, so the temple never resembled the *in antis* style.

The *in antis* temple of ʿAin Dārā included a recessed portico and a twin-columned entrance that was decorated with sculptures and reliefs portraying images of sphinxes, lions, and divine and mythological figures. The entry niche yielded to two inner rooms: a rectangular antecella and a square cella, both paved with limestone slabs. Mountain deities were depicted both in the antecella and at the podium within the cella, so—based on parallels—the image of the storm god probably stood atop the podium.

Another important—and possibly related—relief from ʿAin Dārā was found within the wall between the cella and the antecella, depicting a female figure turning to the right and wearing a long coat that is held together by a belt, but leaving her exposed below. One wing is visible, which is sprouting out of her left shoulder, identifying her iconographically as Ishtar. Given that the Levantine version of Ishtar is Aštarte, a distinct possibility exists that ʿAin Dārā's temple was dedicated to the storm god and Aštarte. Since Baal was a manifestation of the storm god, this would make ʿAin Dārā's patron deities the same as those at Emar and numerous other sites throughout the Levant.

The excavations in Area A at 'āfis have revealed a sequence of temples that documents the sacred architecture of the royal elite throughout Iron I–III. Temple AI (Iron III Age) was built in the *in antis* style. Underneath Temple AI was Temple AII, which proved impossible to reconstruct due to spoliation. Under Temple AII were two other sacred buildings: Temples AIII.2–1, which featured a plastered shrine (eleventh–tenth centuries BC).

Earlier excavations in Area E4 have revealed a complete and lengthy Iron I sequence, including Building G, an *in antis* temple. This was confirmed by the presence of an ashlar block, which probably was part of a cultic installation such as an offering table or altar. A partial plan for this building exists, but it remains incomplete because of poor preservation. Building G was used and rebuilt continually over four successive phases, beginning with Level 7d (*ca.* 1050–1025 BC) and including Level 7b–c (*ca.* 1025–1000 BC) and Level 7a (*ca.* 1000–975 BC).

Carchemish featured a temple that was attached to the so-called Lower Palace in Area B and seemingly consisted of only one inner room (cella), implying the absence of an antecella. A single column base was found by Woolley, though Marchetti referred to its having two massive columns. The known features of this temple include a square plan, probably a dual-columned entrance that likely betrays an *in antis* architectural style, a direct-access approach, and a narrow hall between the vestibule and the cella.

In the southern Levant of the Iron Age, the Israelite temple, known as the First or Solomonic Temple, was described as having been built at the center of a large courtyard that was accessible by gates on all sides. Inner and outer courts apparently existed, which later were surrounded by chambers. The biblical description of the temple states that its central part was built according to the long-room plan. The building was tripartite, with a dual-columned porch that was reached by a stairway, which suggests that the temple was built in the *in antis* style of the northern Levant.

All of this makes the First Temple at Jerusalem a close architectural parallel to the temples excavated at Tayinat. The main hall was entered through ornate wooden doors. Details of the cella were not recorded in the biblical text, but it possessed the Ark of the Covenant with the mercy seat, where Yahweh reportedly resided. The Ark of the Covenant contained the Mosaic Law, representing another parallel with Tayinat, given that the latter's oath tablet (T-1801) also was a religious text that recorded a covenant between the people and their deity. Fine ashlar masonry was used throughout, and the roof was constructed of large beams. The walls and floors were lined

with cedar wood. Cherubs, palmettes, floral patterns, and window frames lined the walls of the two interior rooms, while the doors were furnished with ornate patterns.

With Tel Qasile, attention turns to the Philistine cities of the southern Levant, which survey is important because of the presence of northern Philistines at Kunulua, the suggestion of which is beyond reasonable doubt on account of material cultural evidence. The Iron I temples at Tel Qasile are represented in three phases: Stratum XII (Temple 319), Stratum XI (Temple 200), and Stratum X (Temple 131). Temple 319, shaped almost as a parallelogram, featured a direct-access approach and a plan consisting of a single room (cella) with a raised platform. Benches of beaten earth were found along the northern, eastern, and (part of the) southern walls.

Temple 200 is similar to its predecessor, though slightly larger. This temple was built according to a new but not vastly different plan. Benches were built of red *ḥamra* brick along the walls of the temple. Temple 131 represents a rebuilding and extension of the previous temple, but with radical changes made in the internal plan: an entrance room was added; the inner division of the main hall was altered; and the floor was raised. In the cella, two round pillar-bases of stone were incorporated into the fill. None of Tel Qasile's temples is remotely related to the *in antis* style of the northern Levant.

The first Iron Age temple at Ekron, a city of the Philistine Pentapolis, is connected to Stratum V (1100–1050 BC), when Temple 350 was constructed over the structures of Stratum VI. This monumental building incorporated new architectural elements and installations, such as a megaron-style entrance, a round-pebbled hearth, and a *bamah*. The temple's vestibule showcased twin columns, as did the cella. Modifications to the temple were made during Stratum IVA, (*ca.* 1100–1050 BC), when the hearth and twin columns were removed from the cella. From the beginning of the temple sequence at Ekron, and even after the twin columns were removed from the cella, Ekron's temples reflect a megaron style rather than an *in antis* style.

Building 5337 at Ashdod, another city of the Philistine Pentapolis, contained a central hall with a raised, rectangular *kurkar* hearth and two roof-supporting pillars on opposite ends of the hall. Building 5337 contained a mudbrick bench, possibly a *bamah*, along with a hearth that consisted of a core of *kurkar* stones. A layer of ash, 6 cm in depth, was at the center of the upper part of the hearth. Based on analogies with hearths at Tell Qasile and Tel Miqne, this installation evidently is a free-standing hearth within a central hall. Therefore, the style of Ashdod's temple is clearly Aegean, with features that diverge from the *in antis* model of northern Syria.

The final city of the Philistine Pentapolis with an extant temple that was studied is Gath, if Tell eṣ-Ṣafi is to be equated with biblical Gath. Under a cultic installation of Iron II, the excavators uncovered an Iron I temple, complete with two pillar bases and a *bamah*. The pillar bases were positioned in the middle of the building, just over 1½ m apart, so the cella may have been the central room of the building. No hearth was found between the two pillars. Therefore, Gath's temple also fails to resemble the *in antis* temples that were abundant to the north.

Next, a comparative study was performed between Building XVI and the other temples that were treated here, in order to determine the architectural style of this recently excavated temple from Tell Tayinat. With its inner piers, *antae*-style walls, singular column that supported the roof of the entry portico, and lack of characteristic features of the other architectural styles of temples discussed here—including *migdol*, megaron, Aegean, imperial Hittite, and Neo-Assyrian *langraum*-plan—Building XVI was found to follow the *in antis* architectural style of ancient Syria.

Finally, some cultural and historical interpretations were offered, as a result of the study undertaken in this chapter. First, it was concluded that the ethnic identity of the people at Kunulua probably was not exclusively Hittite, but not chiefly Philistine. Second, it was concluded that the residents of Kunulua were not merely the transplanted population from nearby Alakakh during the transition from LBA to Iron Age, at least if based solely on temple architecture. Finally, it was concluded that the city of Kunulua was a cultural blend of various nationalities, but with traits more in keeping with local Syrian culture than that of immigrants from foreign lands.



## Chapter 4 Religious Life in the Sacred Precinct at Tayinat

The sacred precinct at Kunulua both before and during the Neo-Assyrian occupation may have functioned as the religious focal point for the entire site, especially considering its proximity to the palace and royal architecture in this area of the tell. At the least, Building II and Building XVI operated in harmony, and they served the king or the administrative governor, and therefore must have stood at the forefront of the community's formal religious institutions.

### 1 Identifying the Cultic Occupant of Building XVI

The question arises as to the identification of the deity that occupied Building XVI, which clearly would have reflected an identity of relevance to those in power at Tell Tayinat, if for no other reason than that Building XVI and Building II were located not only on the upper mound but were positioned adjacent to Building I, which undoubtedly served as Kunulua's largest and most important *bit hilani* palace. Therefore, it is for good reason that Harrison referred to Building 1 as the most famous *bit hilani* palace at Tayinat (Harrison 2011: 30).

Detailed discussion of the cultic occupant of Building XVI can focus only on the temple's terminal phase of use. As Harrison and Osborne noted (see Chapter 2), the lowest register of the ornately carved column base in front of Building XVI was obscured by a brick-paved surface, suggesting that an earlier phase of the temple lies unexcavated below the column base of the temple's final phase. Most likely, this earlier temple belonged to one or more of the native kings who ruled at Kunulua before the Neo-Assyrian occupation that followed King Tiglath-pileser III's destruction of the city in 738 BC. However, since excavations have not begun on the earlier phase(s) of the temple beneath Building XVI, fruitful discussion of the cultic occupant of the temple would be fairly elusive. Thus, primary concentration here will be devoted to the cultic figure that was enshrined during the final phase of Building XVI's use.

#### 1.1 Nabu View: Supporting Evidence

To date, the case for assigning the final phase of Building XVI to Nabu has been mounting (Harrison 2011: 35; Harrison 2012b: 14, 17; Lauinger 2011: 8, 10; Lauinger 2012: 87; Harrison and Osborne 2012: 137), as more of the textual and archaeological finds from the excavation of the temple have been reported and analyzed. Nabu was the son of Marduk and the Mesopotamian god of writing and patron of the scribes, as well as the male counterpart of the goddess, Tašmetu.

The meaning of Nabu's name, which derives from the Semitic root *nbi* "to call," either could mean "a herald" (if taken as a participle), or "called" (if taken as a verbal adjective with passive meaning). The latter option is supported by Nabu's epithet in Sumerian litanies of the Old Babylonian period and later: "He who has been called by a good name." Nabu began as the servant of (eventually his father) Marduk, then essentially competed with him for preeminence within the pantheon, until Nabu finally became the co-ruler of the world (Pomponio 1998: 17).

The first datable occurrence of Nabu occurs in the reign of Hammurabi, and the Old Babylonian period also is the first time when he appeared as the lord of the art of writing, as well as the scribe of Esagil. The first mention of Nabu as the son of Marduk, which was inscribed on a seal, dates to the Kassite period, while Nabu first appeared *before* Marduk in a text of Kudurri-Enlil (1254–1246 BC). A *kudurru* ("boundary stone") from the Second Dynasty of Isin describes Nabu as the king of Ezida, which is the main temple of Borsippa, and by 1000 BC he received and maintained the position of lord of Borsippa and Ezida (Pomponio 1998: 17–19).

According to the building report of Sîn-šarra-iškun (Novotny 2014: 111), a Nabu temple was built by Shalmaneser I at Ashur (Pomponio 1998: 19), which subsequently was rebuilt by Assur-rēšī-iši, and later rebuilt by Adad-nirari III (Meinhold 2009: 453 no. 11 ll. 41b–45a). A building report of Sargon II (Novotny 2014: 110) states that a Nabu temple was built by Adad-nirari III at Nineveh (Rawlinson and Smith 1870: pl. 3 no. 12 ll. 4–5). According to Assurnasirpal II, he built the temple of Nabu at Kalhu (Oates and Oates 2001: 111; Pomponio 1998: 19).

However, according to Ashurbanipal (Novotny 2014: 110), who ruled much later, Nabu's temple at Kalhu was built by Adad-nirari III (Borger 1996: 164, Prism CND x 88–90), whose rule began 48 years after the death of Ashurnasirpal II. This apparent discrepancy can be resolved by suggesting that the temple's plan and the southern courtyard were *reconfigured* by Adad-nirari III (Oates and Oates 2001: 114). Sargon II built the Ezida of Nabu at Khorsabad, which was the principal temple of his new capital. The rule of Sennacherib saw a virtually exclusive theological focus on Aššur (Pomponio 1998: 19), which basically resulted in a suppression of Nabu worship.

Under Esarhaddon—who was endowed with the title, "full of zeal for the sanctuaries of Nabu and Tašmetu"—the Babylonian deities regained prestige. Under Assurbanipal, Nabu's cult played a major role in Assyrian religion, as the king seemed to attach himself personally to Nabu (Pomponio 1998: 20). In Babylonia of the first millennium BC, meanwhile, Nabu's importance grew to such an extent that he seemingly rivaled his father's position of supremacy (Oates and Oates 2001: 111). Thus Nabu was esteemed highly during the time of Tayinat's occupation.

The following reasons may be advanced to support the proposition that Nabu is the deity that should be associated with the final phase of Building XVI's occupation: (1) Nabu, the son of the king of the gods (Marduk/Aššur), was the divine patron of the scribal arts and god who oversaw the writing, sealing, and storing of state documents. This matches well with the cache of cuneiform tablets found in Tayinat's Building XVI. (2) The cache of cuneiform tablets found at Kalhu was associated with the temple of Nabu at this important Assyrian city, as Lauinger has demonstrated succinctly (2013: 111; 2012: 87; 2011: 10).

Since the oath tablet found at Tayinat is of precisely the same literary genre and historical context as those of the Kalhu tablets (i.e. a sworn oath of loyalty, the reign of Esarhaddon, and the covenant to be loyal to Ashurbanipal upon the death of his father, etc.), the logical connection to make is that Building XVI functioned similarly to the temple of Nabu at Kalhu. (3) The tablets at Tayinat likely were mounted on the wall for display, and probably intended to be recited verbally, just as the tablets at Kalhu may have been on display near the temple of Nabu for the purpose of representing the binding nature of the Median kings' commitment to Esarhaddon through the swearing of an oath (Lauinger 2011: 11; Lauinger 2012: 90).

(4) The unusually long time of display for the tablets, during the lengthy reign of Ashurbanipal (potentially *ca.* 40 years), argues for further continuity between the temple of Nabu at Kalhu and Building XVI, given that in both cases, Ashurbanipal seemingly intended to require the reaffirmation of the swearing of allegiance to him over the duration of his reign. (5) Aššur's seal was present both on the tablet at Tayinat and the tablets at Kalhu, further linking the purpose of the various temples because of the presence of the temple of Nabu at Kalhu.

## 1.2 Nabu View: Disputing Evidence

The evidence against associating Building XVI with the temple of Nabu during the Neo-Assyrian occupation is extremely limited. Anyone arguing against this view has to account for a number of vital details: (1) Nabu, as the patron of the scribal arts, is the most logical deity to be connected with a temple under Neo-Assyrian oversight that housed at least eleven cuneiform tablets; (2) the tablets from Kalhu that document the same treaty that was described in the oath tablet at Tayinat were associated with Nabu and the temple of Nabu at Kalhu; (3) as will be documented below, the oil lamps, libation vessels, and incense-bearing pyxis from Building XVI coincide well with the fragrant oil, animal sacrifices, and burnt incense described in the Covenant of Aššur, all of which

were essential elements in the *akītu* ceremony (Lauinger 2013: 112; Harrison 2014: 419), which required a temple of the king of the gods and a temple of Nabu in order to be enacted.

## 2 Identifying the Cultic Occupant of Building II

### 2.1 Tašmetu View: Supporting Evidence

If it can be accepted as plausible—if not convincing—that Nabu was the deity that occupied the temple (Building XVI) during the Neo-Assyrian occupation at Tayinat, the question turns to the identification of the deity that occupied Building II during this period. The Oriental Institute's expedition seemingly did not seem attempt to identify this deity, at least in published form.

However, their determination of Building II's place in the stratigraphical record as belonging to the Second Building Period at Kunulua is critical, because Building XVI has been assigned to the same building period. This conviction is confirmed by—among other forms of evidence—the continuity of the cobblestone pavement that extended from Building I and serviced both Building II and Building XVI.

One potential candidate for the deity that inhabited Building II is the consort of Nabu, namely Tašmetu, which possibility has been presented in the literature already (Harrison 2014: 419). However, no argumentation has been offered to date as to why Tašmetu is or is not a viable option for the god whose temple stood adjacent to what appears to be Nabu's temple. The obvious argument is that with paired temples, sitting opposite from one another in the same precinct, the builders may have represented the dwelling places of a male deity and his female consort. In this case, Tašmetu would be that female consort if Nabu indeed inhabited Building XVI.

In earlier Babylonian mythology, Tašmetu was the daughter of the god Uraš, the patron deity of the northern Babylonian city of Dilbat. However, in Assyria of the first millennium BC, Tašmetu had become the consort of Nabu, while her role at Dilbat was taken by Nanaya, a form of Ishtar/Inanna. The proposition that a deity and his consort were given adjacent temples is anything but unprecedented.

In support of the possibility that the paired temples at Tayinat were those of Nabu and Tašmetu is the precedent of the paired temples at LBA Emar and Alalakh (Chapter 3), the latter of which has epigraphical support for temples to the storm god and Ishtar (Yener 2005: 109). On the highest point of the mound at Emar and associated with a cultic terrace were two *in antis* temples, those of Baal and Aštarte (Margueron 1995: 130, 132), which were virtually twin temples. Given

that Aštarte was the consort of Baal, this acts as an earlier Levantine model for the possibility of paired temples at Kunulua that could have represented the cultic residences of Nabu and Tašmetu.

## 2.2 Tašmetu View: Disputing Evidence

Although the hypothesis that Building II was devoted to the goddess Tašmetu absolutely remains a legitimate possibility, a number of drawbacks to this view exist. First, not every site with a temple to Nabu boasted a temple to Tašmetu. While temples to Nabu existed in important cities of the Neo-Assyrian heartland at Kalhu, Nineveh, and Khorsabad (Dur-Sharrukin), scholars recognize only Kalhu as featuring paired temples to Tašmetu and Nabu. Khorsabad's temple of Nabu has not been understood to boast an accompanying temple to Tašmetu—as its primary temples were dedicated to Shamash, Sin, and Nabu, while its lesser shrines were devoted to Ningal, Ninurta, and Adad (Loud 1936: fig. 98)—though certainly it can be argued that the smaller temple next to the temple of Nabu was devoted to Tašmetu.

It also must be granted that at Borsippa, located about 17 km to the southwest of Babylon, a temple of Tašmetu did exist, while the city's patron deity was none other than Nabu (Oates and Oates 2001: 111). The temple district of the Ezida at Borsippa featured three buildings that have been identified as temples, while a platform whose northwestern side was detected to a length of about 310 m also included not only the temples, but also enclosed a ziggurat. The temples required a width of 95–100 m and featured a three-courtyard system, with broadroom cellas at the southwestern sides of the courtyards. Its core consists of a large Courtyard A and Cella A<sub>3</sub>, with two antecellas. As for whether the temple of Tašmetu was identified with Complex B + B<sub>1</sub> or C + C<sub>1-2</sub>, the absence of clear foundational inscriptions made this difficult to determine. The remaining, or third, cella with its courtyard could have been devoted to another deity, or—as at Kalhu—assigned to Nabu and Tašmetu for special festivals that included them both (Seidl 1998: 27–28).

A second drawback to the view that Building II was the temple of Tašmetu is the relative sizes and locations of Buildings II and XVI. Based on the measurements of these two buildings that were listed in Chapter 2, the area of Building II is *ca.* 298 m<sup>2</sup>, while Building XVI measures *ca.* 145 m<sup>2</sup> in area. These calculations render Building II over twice as large within the confines of each temple. Building II was built with its northern wall less than a meter away from Building I's southern wall, the royal residence. In contrast, Building XVI was built about 9 m away from Building I's eastern wall, at its closest point.

The larger size of Building II, combined with its closer proximity to the primary royal residence on the mound, suggests that Building II was the more prominent of the paired temples. If this deduction be true, the likelihood is far stronger that the greater of the two deities occupied Building II, not Building XVI. If Nabu's temple, as that of the male deity of a conjugal pair, was smaller and further away from the residence, it stands to reason that his female consort's temple would not have been superior in size or positioned in a more prime location. After all, these ANE societies were anything but matriarchal or sensitive to gender equality. One certainly would expect Nabu's temple to be larger and more prominently positioned than that of his consort.

An example that validates this logic is observable when contrasting the sizes of the temples to Nabu and Tašmetu at Kalhu. When adding the area of each building's rooms, the area of the temple of Nabu is 197 m<sup>2</sup>, while the temple of Tašmetu measures 140 m<sup>2</sup> in area. This makes the temple of Nabu, the male deity, over 40% larger than the temple of his consort. In light of this disparity, it does not seem too plausible to theorize that the area of Tašmetu's temple at Kunalia was over twice the size of that of Nabu's temple. Regarding the temples at Kalhu, Oates and Oates (2001: 113) pointed out that NT 5 must have belonged to Nabu's consort (Tašmetu), simply because NT 5 was smaller than NT 4.

Given that the area of Kalhu's temple of Nabu (Figure 36: NT 4) was over 40% larger than that of the temple of Tašmetu (Figure 36: NT 5) at the same site, and that the area of the temple of Nabu at Khorsabad (Figure 38) is 34% larger than that of the temple of Tašmetu at the site (which will be argued below), one is hard pressed to agree that a temple possibly of Tašmetu at Tayinat was over twice the size of the temple of Nabu when measuring the area of both buildings. Only if one accepts this abnormality in size differential can Building II be attributed to Tašmetu.

A third drawback to the view that Building II was the temple of Tašmetu is related to the details of the *akītu* ceremony, which—when added together—argue in favor of Aššur or the storm god as having been the deity that was worshipped in Building II. Rather than enumerating these details here, they will be discussed in the presentation of the two subsequent views for the deity worshipped opposite Nabu on Tayinat's citadel.

## 2.3 Aššur View: Supporting Evidence

The *akītu* ceremony, which will be discussed in greater detail below, is a combination of a celebratory event that rang in the New Year on the Mesopotamian calendar,<sup>5</sup> and a complex set of ceremonies, or rituals, that—if properly executed—ensured that the New Year would begin with the favor of the gods. Essentially, the well-being and future of the king, the people, and the state were inextricably bound to the outworking of these ceremonies that were stretched out over 12 days, beginning on Day 1 of Nisannu.

In order to articulate one of the greatest strengths of the view that Aššur was the deity that occupied Building II during the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation at Tayinat, it is necessary to describe some of the details of the rituals and ceremonies that were practiced during the twelve days of the *akītu* festival. For brevity's sake, only a selected number of details will be discussed here, especially those that aid in developing a greater understanding of the festival's impact on the people and bolster the present argument.

The festival began in Babylonia, with Babylon as the focal point for the ceremony. This was a city of modest achievements until Hammurabi crowned it as the nation's capital, in which position it gradually rose to prominence (Sasson 1995: 910–15). As the chief god of the Babylonian pantheon and the patron deity at Babylon, Marduk took center stage in the ceremonies of the *akītu* festival. In fact, Marduk resided in the Esagila at Babylon, the principal temple of the city. The first mention of Nabu in the *akītu* festival comes from an Old Babylonian letter from Nippur (Pomponio 1998: 22).

The continuity of the *akītu* festival in late Assyria is demonstrated by fourteen Aramaic votive inscriptions, written from Nisan 8–11 and dating to the third century AD, which were housed in the temple at Ashur. The texts refer to the god Aššur and his consort, Sherua, substitutes in the *akītu* festival for Babylonian Marduk and Zarpānitu. These Aramaic votive inscriptions offered at the beginning of Nisannu reflect the continuation of the *akītu* in Assyria (Bidmead 2002: 37). Assyrian cults also refer to celebrations during the beginning of Nisannu (Driel 1969: 152).

Moreover, VAT 13596 reveals that the cultic statue of Aššur was taken out of the temple of Aššur (in Ashur) on 2 Nisannu, after meat was offered to him. Plus, a report concerning the celebration of an *akītu* festival at Ashur, known as Ph 4123<sup>i</sup>, seems to have been located in the

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<sup>5</sup>Lauinger has shown that the *akītu* festival may have been celebrated at times beyond just the annual New Year's celebration (Lauinger 2013: 110).

house on Day 8 of an unspecified month, almost certainly a reference to the month of Nisannu, especially given that an *akītu* festival was connected to the month of Nisannu in an inscription of Sennacherib (Driel 1969: 163, 164). Therefore, both of these documents attest to the observation of *akītu* festivals in the city of Ashur at the same time that they occurred in Babylon: in early Nisannu of each year. The following summary of relevant moments in the *akītu* festival is owed to the excellent work of Julye Bidmead and refers to numerous sources that she has cited. As a qualification, her treatment of the *akītu* festival extends from Early Dynastic times to the Neo-Babylonian period, meaning that the rituals enacted at the festival may have changed over time.

Day 1. The events of the first day of the *akītu* festival are known only vaguely. On Day 1 of Nisannu, the priest (*mubannu*) would rise at dawn, enter Markuk's courtyard, proceed to the Lofty Gate with a wooden key, perform some sort of rite involving water, then venture to the gate of the Esagila and open it (Bidmead 2002: 46–47).

Day 2. On the second day, the high priest (*šešgallu*) pulled back the linen curtain hiding the statue of Marduk and recited a prayer to the deity: the secret of the Esagila, a Sumerian-Akkadian bilingual hymn. The prayer hints at the major ideological themes of the entire festival: (1) the supremacy of Marduk, the Esagila, and Babylon; (2) the preeminence of the *kidinnu* (see below) as a protected group; (3) the magnitude of the determining of destinies; and (4) the usage of promises/oaths. After his prayer, the high priest opened the gates of the temple, allowing various priests to perform prescribed rites (Bidmead 2002: 48–49).

The high priest later performed water purifications, then recited a bilingual prayer to Bēl (= Marduk), which includes the praising of Marduk for his heroic role in *Enūma Eliš*. Marduk then was asked to enter into the same contractual agreement with the people of Babylon, particularly the *šāb kidinni*,<sup>6</sup> Babylon's privileged citizens, who were exempt from paying taxes, imprisonment, and draft duty. The high priest offered a secret prayer, then allowed several parties to enter the cella of Marduk's temple (Bidmead 2002: 49–50, 54).

Day 3. After the high priest recited a prayer to Marduk, he allowed some cultic functionaries to enter the temple through the gate. At about 9 a.m., he sent for a metal worker, a carpenter, and a goldsmith, who fashioned two small wooden images, which were taken to Nabu's temple/shrine after his statue entered Babylon on Day 6 (Bidmead 2002: 54–55).

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<sup>6</sup>The word *kidinnu* refers to an elite status characteristic of inhabitants of the major religious and political cities of first millennium BC Babylonia, to whom civic rights and tax exemption were granted (Bidmead 2002: 51).



According to letters found in the northwestern wing of the Ezida at Kalhu, the bed-chamber of Nabu was prepared on Day 3, and Nabu's statue was placed on it (Oates and Oates 2001: 119). One of the wooden statues mentioned above featured a snake in its left hand, with a raised right hand in supplication to Nabu. The second statue carried a scorpion in its left hand, with the right hand in the same position as that on the first statue. The two constructed images most likely were effigies (Black 1981: 45), as they were clothed in red-brown garments, and the likely ingredients (blood, clay, and soil) were all drawn upon in the "creation of mankind" account in the Mesopotamian cosmologies. The most likely interpretation is that the figurines represent evil and threats to mankind (Bidmead 2002: 55–58). Their significance comes into view on Day 6.

Day 4. After the high priest arose, he drew back the linen curtain from the statues of Marduk and Zarpānitu (Bidmead 2002: 59–60). After the second meal of the afternoon, the high priest recited *Enūma Eliš* from beginning to end, in front of the statue of Marduk. Meanwhile, the king entered the shrine of Nabu, where he was given the scepter of kingship before he traveled to Borsippa to retrieve the statue of Nabu from its home temple, the Ezida (Bidmead 2002: 62).

When the high priest's prayer and blessing concluded, the temple was opened and the other cultic functionaries arrived. Meals were served to the gods, and after the second meal of the afternoon, the high priest returned to the cella of Marduk, where he narrated the entire text of *Enūma Eliš* (Bidmead 2002: 62–63). While the story of the Babylonian creation epic *Enūma Eliš* need not be repeated here, which almost certainly is exemplified in the Ebla texts of the Early Dynastic IIIB period (Frayne 2016), it bears noting that the narrative presents Marduk, the cleverest and strongest of the gods, as having been begotten inside the "Chamber of Destinies."

Moreover, in anticipation of Tiamat's great battle against Marduk, she entrusted the "Tablet of Destinies" to Kingū, the chief of her rebellious army. This gave Kingū dominion and magical powers over the pantheon (Bidmead 2002: 64–65), underscoring the great value assigned to the Tablet of Destinies in Babylonian culture. The main portion of *Enūma Eliš* is an account of the deeds and glorification of Marduk, while the theological purpose of the text is a justification of Marduk's position as the greatest among the great gods of Babylon (Frayne 2016).

When Marduk killed Tiamat by shooting arrows through her mouth, which reached and penetrated her heart, he trapped her army of demons in his net, then snatched the Tablet of Destinies from Kingū. After sealing the tablet, he affixed it to his chest for safe-keeping. Marduk then presented the Tablet of Destinies to Anu. After Marduk was proclaimed king of the gods for

his heroic acts, he was awarded the Tablet of Destinies and elevated to the position of chief deity among the gods of the pantheon (Bidmead 2002: 65–66).

One should not neglect the sociological and spiritual value for all Babylonians that was inherent within the annual recitation of *Enūma Eliš*, which not only recounts the mythic origins of the universe and mankind, but mirrors future societal goals and ideals (Bidmead 2002: 66–67) and accentuates the understanding of the average Babylonian that his or her destiny was placed within the hands of Marduk. This yearly event at the *akītu* festival, whether attended by the worshipper or not, would have solidified afresh the practicality of the reality that his or her destiny was held completely within the control of the chief deity of the pantheon.

According to the ancient letters found at Kalhu, Day 4 was the wedding night of Nabu, as the god went forth from the threshing floor of the palace to the park, where a sacrifice was made. The charioteer of the gods then came with a team of horses that belonged to the gods. Nabu then was brought forth in a procession, before being returned to his temple for his wedding night, where he was joined with Tašmetu. Offerings were presented to both of them while they were present within the bed-chamber (Oates and Oates 2001: 120).

Day 5. The fifth day represents the central and climactic zenith of the festival. This busy day included prayers of intercession, an exorcism in the temple of Marduk, the construction of Nabu's shrine, and the ritual humiliation of the (Babylonian) king. At Kalhu, the ceremony for Day 5 featured a royal banquet, which included the use of a lion-headed rhyton and a *tallakku* (a cultic object) at the palace (Oates and Oates 2001: 121). The high priest, who called for the exorcist to purify Marduk's cella, was unable to view any of this purification ritual, due to the risk of becoming unclean, so he left the sanctuary for the duration of the exorcism, instead praying in the antecella or courtyard. The exorcist cleaned the temple's cella by sprinkling each of the walls with water from the Tigris and Euphrates (Bidmead 2002: 71).

The exorcist then struck a sacred kettle-drum, and as the sound resonated throughout the temple, it scared and expelled the evil spirits. Next, he moved throughout the temple with a censer and a torch, repeating his former actions, but this time with fire instead of sacred water. The text explicitly states that he was unable to enter the cella of Marduk again (Bidmead 2002: 71, 72). The reason is that, through the ritualistic ceremonies he had performed, he would have made it unclean.

Next, the Ezida, or shrine of Nabu at Babylon, was cleansed in the same manner. The exorcist then smeared all of the gates (i.e. the entrance to the cella) with cedar resin. In the middle of the antecella, he placed the silver censer that he filled with aromatics and juniper. When both

of the temples had been purified, the exorcist summoned a slaughterer, who decapitated an unblemished sheep as a sacrificial animal, then “cleaned” the temple by walking around with the dead body of the sheep while reciting an exorcism (Bidmead 2002: 71–72).

Now that the transgressions had been transferred out of Marduk’s temple and Nabu’s shrine, the preparation of the latter could begin, which was overseen by the high priest. At mid-morning, he gathered all of the artisans. A workman fetched the “golden heaven” and covered the Ezida—from its *tallu* to its foundations—with a canopy (Bidmead 2002: 74). Due to its size and dimensions, the *tallu* could be a beam, while the golden heaven could be a cloth embroidered with gold and representative of the cosmos (Çagırgan 1976: 211). The cloth would be hung on a wall behind the dais of Nabu from an overhead beam and extend to the floor of the Ezida. Addressing any demon that might be in the room, the high priest then exclaimed, “Whatever evil [be] in the temple, get out! Great demon, may Bēl kill you! May he expel you!” (Bidmead 2002: 76).

The artisans then departed from the temple, and the high priest went to the cella of Marduk’s temple and presented him with a sacrifice of roasted meat, loaves of bread, salt, and honey. After a break in the text, it states that the tray of leftover food was to be held for Nabu, who would arrive from Borsippa on a boat via canal. Nabu’s image was retrieved by the king from its native temple (Pomponio 1998: 22), the Ezida in Borsippa, 17 km away from Babylon, which probably was met with a grand parade (Bidmead 2002: 54–55, 62, 76).

Day 6. On the sixth day, Nabu, as the favored son of the chief god, was brought into the temple Eḫursagtilla. Upon the god’s arrival, the small statues that were constructed on Day 3 were brought in from Madānu’s temple. A Neo-Assyrian commentary mentioning gifts that were given in the month of Nisannu from Day 6 to Day 12 may be another indication of possible events that took place during the *akītu* festival (Bidmead 2002: 86–87).

Day 7. What occurred on Day 7 is largely unknown, because there are no cultic texts that present the details related to this day. The only text that refers to this day is a cultic commentary known as the Marduk Ordeal, which discusses a man who was the messenger of Shamash and Adad and went to the *ḫuršanu* on the seventh day, presumably to rescue Marduk, who was a captive (Bidmead 2002: 87–88).

Day 8. During the eighth day of the *akītu*, the first determination of the destinies occurred. A text from the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II discusses the meetings of the gods in a work called Dais of Destinies, which also mentions the procession to the *bīt akīti*, a temple located outside the city walls. In Dais of Destinies, the gods determined Marduk’s destiny for the New Year. The first

decreeing of destinies took place in the shrine of Nabu, which had been purified ritually. Marduk was led into his shrine of destiny, where all of the other gods had gathered (Bidmead 2002: 88).

Here, the assembly of the gods proclaimed Marduk as all-powerful and invested him with supreme authority. This first decreeing of the destinies, held in Nabu's Dais of Destinies, focused on Marduk, and presumably on the king, as well. The second determining of destinies occurred after the procession returned from the *bīt akīti*, at the Dais of Destinies of the *eumuša*, the cella of Marduk, on Day 11 (Bidmead 2002: 89–90).

While the first decreeing of destinies focused on Marduk, the second revealed the fate of the land and that of its citizens. For the second decreeing, the symbolic Tablet of Destinies was given to the king by Marduk, who established him afresh as supreme authority in Babylonia. The gods determined the destiny of both the entire world and mankind, though it was as a mechanism created by the gods to ensure their well being (Bidmead 2002: 90). The convening of the assembly of all of the magnates of the empire, referred to as “the assembly of all the lands,” was a public event that served as a visual demonstration of royal power and unity of the empire. Ideologically, it corresponded to the assembly of the gods described in the religious texts (Parpola 1995: 393).

Whatever the determining of the destinies entailed during the *akītu* festival is not known. One scholar suggested that the determination of someone's destiny originally meant something positive, the creation of fruitfulness, plenty, peace, and happiness for the upcoming year (Pallis 1926: 196). Certainly one would expect to hear an optimistic destiny. Presumably, the destinies were similar each year: a prosperous reign for the king, successful military campaigns, and fertile harvests. The destinies even may have been proclaimed at the *akītu* festival (Bidmead 2002: 92).

When Aššur determined the destinies for the Neo-Assyrian king and the empire during the reign of Assurbanipal, the conjurer Kisir-Aššur had to ensure that all of the rites were performed properly, so that the gods would be favorably inclined (Maul 2013; Maul 1997: 121). As the royal scribe, Nabu would have been responsible for writing down the destinies of the king, the people, and the nation. Although proclaimed annually by Nabu at the New Year's festival, these destinies also could be revealed through divinational means during the year, such as extispicy, oneiromancy, astrology, or other mantic devices (Bidmead 2002: 92–93).

Days 8–11. A tablet from the *Nabû ša ḥarê* temple in Babylon contains additional information for Days 8–11 of the *akītu* festival as a whole. The text describes places and chapels that Marduk visited, and it explains his divine names that were associated with the shrines. On Days 8 and 11, Marduk was said to have dwelled in the courtyard, on a seat not decorated with

gold. He then was called various names while performing various actions, including the time when he sat on the Throne of Destinies. Because the subsequent actions took place with all of the gods assembled at the *bīt akīti*, the parade from the Esagila possibly took place late on Day 8, after the decreeing of destinies, or more likely on Day 9 (Bidmead 2002: 93).

Days 9–12. The information for Days 9–12 of the festival is sketchy at best, but clearly the textual tradition points to the highlight of these days as being the procession to the *bīt akīti* with the cultic statues of Marduk, Nabu, and all of the gods of the pantheon that were present. The same procession of the gods, led instead by Aššur, was incorporated into the Neo-Assyrian festival. The celebration described during the reign of Sennacherib included a procession to the *akītu*-house, where a *qirētu* feast was celebrated (Driel 1969: 163).

According to a fragment of a ritual text, on Day 9 at the New Year’s festival in Babylon, the doors of the shrine were opened, and the priests called on Marduk to vacate his temple, because the king was awaiting him. The text details the procession that left for the *bīt akīti*, which was led and followed closely behind by the statue of Marduk. Then came Ishtar of Babylon, along with Zarpānitu and Tašmetu (Bidmead 2002: 93–94).

The cultic images of the gods represented living, breathing deities, who could enact all human gestures and display human emotions. In the context of the *akītu*, it was obvious that if the previous events at the temple did not please Marduk, then the ensuing year would not be successful (Bidmead 2002: 96–99). When the procession reached the *bīt akīti*, the statues of the gods were installed there ceremoniously. An inscription of Nabonidus states that all of the principal parties were still at the *bīt akīti* on Day 10 of the festival (Bidmead 2002: 100–101).

Day 11. On this day, there must have been a procession that led back to the Esagila, in order for the second decreeing of the destinies (Bidmead 2002: 101). Prior to this second determining of the destinies, a sacred prayer was recited, as attested in an inscription: “in the month of Nisannu, on the 11th day Bēl enters from the *akītu* house to Esagila . . .” (Cooper 1970: 54). After the second decreeing of fates, gifts and tribute were brought to the temple. On Day 11 at Kalhu, Nabu was taken out of his shrine before being brought out to the game park for the slaying of oxen. Afterward, he was returned to his temple (Oates and Oates 2001: 121).

Day 12. The twelfth day was one of departures, as Nabu and Tašmetu were returned to Borsippa, as with the other gods that may have been brought from their respective cities. The exorcist and the slaughterer were free to return to the city at this point in the ceremony, because

the festivities had concluded for the year, which acted to reestablish the normal political and social order (Bidmead 2002: 106).

Now that the 12 days of the *akītu* festival have been outlined, attention can return to the question of how this ceremony demonstrates that Aššur may have been the deity that occupied Building II at Tell Tayinat during the Neo-Assyrian occupation of the site. First, it may be stated that Harrison and Lauinger set the precedent for such a comparison by sufficiently demonstrating that the artifactual and epigraphical finds discovered at Tell Tayinat in 2009 suggest that Building XVI probably was the temple of Nabu, and that the *akītu* festival was observed there annually, and quite possibly more regularly than that (Harrison 2014: 30; Lauinger 2013: 111; 2012: 87).

Second, there is evidence attesting to Assyrian implementation of the Babylonian practice of including both the chief of the religious pantheon and his son Nabu in the celebration of the *akītu* festival. During Sargon II's campaign to Babylonia in Year 12, he wrested control of Babylon from Marduk-apla-iddina II (the Bible's Merodach-Baladan; see Fuchs and Parpola 2001: xiii), and there he led the New Year's festival. "When the month of *Nisānu* came, the month (in which) the lord of the gods comes out of (his temple), I took the hands of the great lord, Marduk (and) Nabû, the king of all of heaven and earth, and led the procession to the *bīt akītu*" (Fuchs 1994: 332; cf. Luckenbill 1989b: 19). Thus the Neo-Assyrian king practiced the veneration of Marduk and Nabu during the *akītu* festival.

Third, in defense of their view and the hypothesis presented here, it must be stated that the *akītu* festival was not held in Babylon alone. Instead, *akītu* celebrations are known to have occurred at Adab, Akkad, Arbela, Ashur, Badtibira, Borsippa, Dilbat, Dēr, Eridu, Hanat, Harran, Gaeš, Girsu, Kalhu, Kilizi, Kish, Khorsabad, Kurba'il, Isana, Lagash, Mari, Nippur, Nineveh, Sippar, Terqa, Umma, Ur, and Uruk (Bidmead 2002: 19). Therefore, an *akītu* festival at Kunalia should not be considered anomalous or unexpected, especially during the Neo-Assyrian occupation, given that the ceremony was observed in a number of important cities within the Assyrian Empire.

Fourth, the *akītu* festival features numerous component parts that are virtually indispensable to the festival. This is true despite the concession that the *akītu* rituals changed throughout time, having developed from the local agrarian fertility celebrations of Sumerian times to the complex national festival of the first millennium BC (Bidmead 2002: 169). The temple of Marduk, or that of Aššur in the case of observations of the New Year in Assyria, was the most vital object or architectural element related to the *akītu* festival. It is left to enumerate the inherent

features of the *akītu* festival that suggest the possibility that during the Neo-Assyrian occupation at Tayinat, Building II was a temple to Aššur, the chief god of the Neo-Assyrian pantheon.

The indispensable nature of the temple of Marduk for the *akītu* festival is suggested by features 1–17. (1) The festival began (Day 1) with the priest’s entry into the courtyard of Marduk’s temple, followed by his unlocking of the door to its gate, probably implying the door for entering its cella. The high priest may have served this function at the outset of the other days. (2) The high priest entered Marduk’s cella, pulled back the linen curtain that veiled the statue of Marduk, a parallel of which (i.e. the linen curtain that veiled the deity) is found in the Solomonic Temple (2 Chr 3:14; Bordreuil 2007: 94), then recited a secret prayer to the deity (Days 2, 3, 4, 5). (3) Marduk uttered an unalterable curse (Day 2) from his cella. (4) Marduk was requested to enter into a contractual agreement (Day 2) with the people of Babylon.

(5) After the high priest offered another secret prayer to Marduk, he allowed several parties to enter the cella of Marduk’s temple (Days 2, 3, 4, 5). (6) The high priest read the entire *Enūma Eliš* narrative in front of Marduk (Day 4) in his temple. Its reading solidified afresh the reality that the average Babylonian’s destiny was held completely within Marduk’s control, or—for the Neo-Assyrian subject—within Aššur’s control.

(7) Marduk, while still in his cella, was brought a meal on a tray (Day 6), which may have occurred on other days of the festival, as well. (8) The exorcist purified the temple’s cella by sprinkling the walls with river water (Day 6), banged a sacred drum, then moved throughout the temple and repeated the cleansing process, this time with fire. (9) The shrine of Nabu was cleansed in the same ritual manner (Day 6), with a smearing of the entire entrance to the cella with cedar resin. Inside the antecella, he placed the silver censer that he filled with aromatics and juniper. The purification of the dwelling places of Marduk and Nabu were of equal importance.

(10) A slaughterer then decapitated an unblemished sheep (Day 6), and the exorcist cleaned the temple again, this time by walking around with the dead body of the sheep while reciting an exorcism. (11) In the cella of Marduk’s temple, the high priest presented the god with a sacrifice of roasted meat, loaves of bread, salt, and honey. After pouring a libation of wine and offering intercessory prayer, he left a tray of food to be held for Nabu. This demonstrates the symbiotic relationship between the temple of Marduk and the temple/shrine of Nabu during the *akītu* festival.

(12) The same dynamic is observable in the humiliation of the Babylonian king (Day 6), a ritual that most likely is a personal rite whose outworking was hidden in the cellas of Nabu and Marduk, with only the high priest, king, and gods present. (13) After all of the gods were brought

into the shrine of Nabu (Day 8), which now was ritually pure, Marduk was led inside, where at the Dais of Destinies he pronounced the first determining of the destinies for the upcoming year.

(14) During the assembly of the gods at the Dais of Destinies (Day 8), they proclaimed Marduk as all-powerful and invested him with supreme authority. This acclamation was an integral part of the *akītu* ceremony, and it could not have occurred without Marduk's presence, just as it would not be possible without his having a resident temple of his own in close proximity. (15) The same argument is true for how the *akītu*-festival text describes places and chapels that Marduk visited during the latter part of the festival (Days 8–11).

(16) During the procession of the gods/king/people that left for the *bīt akīti* (Day 9), which was located outside the city gates, local officials and neighboring dignitaries who participated in this magnificent procession displayed their gifts and offerings that were left at the temples. Essential to the gifts that were offered to Marduk would have been a temple where they could be placed or stored.

(17) Although all of the principal parties remained at the *bīt akīti* on Day 10 of the festival, there must have been a procession that led back to the Esagila (Day 11), in order for the second decreeing of destinies to be performed. This second determining of destinies, which focused on the fate of the land and the citizens, occurred in the cella of Marduk (Day 11). For the second decreeing, the symbolic Tablet of Destinies was given to the king by Marduk, who established him afresh as supreme authority in the land.

In addition to the above 17 features that argue for the indispensable nature of the temple of Marduk for performing an *akītu* festival that relate directly to Marduk's/Aššur's temple are three features (18–20) that relate to the temple/shrine of Nabu. (18) The king entered the shrine of Nabu (Day 4), where he was given the scepter of kingship before journeying to retrieve the statue of Nabu from Borsippa. After the high priest offered a prayer and blessing, Nabu's shrine was opened, and other cultic functionaries arrived. The presence of the temple/shrine of Nabu thus was crucial to the *akītu* festival, even if to a slightly lesser degree than the temple of Aššur.

(19) Preparations were made in Nabu's shrine (Day 6), including the work of artisans to cover the Ezida with a golden-heaven (possibly an embroidered cloth with gold on it) canopy, from the *tallu* (possibly "beam") above to its foundations below.

(20) The king traveled to Borsippa (Day 6) to retrieve the statue of Nabu from its home temple, then brought it into the shrine of Nabu in Babylon. The importance here is that one of the two statues vital to the rituals of the festival, which was brought to Babylon from afar, had to be



transported to a shrine/temple devoted to that very deity. This suggests that the holding of an *akītu* festival at Tayinat would have been impossible without a temple or shrine devoted specifically to Aššur, the equivalent of Marduk in Assyria, or to a deity that was viewed as supreme among the gods of the local pantheon.

The only other option would be to take the statue of Nabu to a neighboring city that featured a cult to Aššur, Marduk, or the local king of the gods, which seems unlikely given Kunalia's role as the provincial capital. All of these features work together to support the possibility that a temple of Aššur may have been necessary at Kunulua/Kunalia in order for the local, provincial governor—who was under Neo-Assyrian imperial authority—to hold yearly *akītu* festivals, with all of their deliberate and indispensable elements that took twelve days to perform.

Since it has been demonstrated already that Building XVI almost certainly was a temple of Nabu, and that yearly *akītu* festivals probably were held there—given the items found in the temple, including the cache of cuneiform tablets—it stands to reason that the two most elementary components of an *akītu* festival were present in the city: a temple to Aššur and a temple to Nabu. These two buildings formed the focal point of every New Year's celebration in Babylonian and Assyrian territories, as the king of the gods and the patron god of writing/scribes were the principal players throughout the rituals performed at the festival. Their temples were as crucial to the festival events as were the gods themselves.

The temples protected and segregated the gods from mere mortals and commoners, kept secret prayers secretive, allowed exorcisms to cleanse confined areas and ward off evil spirits, permitted specific priests and dignitaries sole access to the gods, provided acoustic support for the reading of sacred reading material (*Enūma Eliš*), gave the gods private access to food and drink offerings, supplied an ideal venue for the decreeing of destinies, and housed gifts that were offered to these gods.

Fifth, there is no need to look for precedents in the Assyrian heartland where a temple of Nabu and a temple of Aššur had to coexist in the same city to perform an *akītu* festival, because the chief observance of the festival in Babylonia featured a temple of the king of the gods in one city (Babylon) and the temple of Nabu in another city (Borsippa). Therefore, in the Assyrian heartland, there were ample opportunities for an *akītu* festival to involve separate cities. For example, at Kalhu, the statue of Nabu that resided in Kalhu's Ezida throughout the year would have been transported to his country temple during the *akītu* festival (Steymans 2013: 9). Thus a

temple of Aššur was not necessary at Kalhu, although this does not mean that in the province of Kunalia a temple of Aššur and a temple of Nabu could not have coexisted in the same city.

Sixth, there is no reason to expect that cities in the Assyrian heartland would have been required to possess a temple of Aššur if a temple of Nabu was on site, simply because temples of Aššur *and* Nabu may have been present at Kunalia. Clearly, no temple of Aššur has been found either at Kalhu or at Khorsabad. These cities will be studied for this purpose, given that both sites were prominent Assyrian cities with a temple of Nabu but no known temple of Aššur. The presence of a temple of Nabu and absence of a temple of Aššur at Kalhu will be discussed first.

Although it is unknown when the first temple of Nabu was built at Kalhu, Ashurnasirpal II marked his beautification of the city in 879 BC by stating that—in addition to founding the temples of Enlil and Ninurta (Figure 35)—he rebuilt the temple of Nabu (Figure 36: NT 4). The plan of the temple in which it survived until the destruction of Kalhu is ascribed to Adad-nirari III, which was built about 80 years later. Most likely, he is the king who was responsible for the construction of the range of rooms that lined the inner courtyard of the temple complex, including the archival room for the tablets (Wiseman and Black 1996: 2).

The next stage of building for Nabu’s temple probably is to be ascribed to Sargon II, who used Kalhu as his capital and occupied the Northwest (or Burnt) Palace (Kertai 2015: 84–85; Kamlah 2003: 110 [fig. 2A])—in the opposite corner of the tell from the temple of Nabu—while his new capital of Khorsabad was under construction. Significantly, Sargon II sent a letter to Aššur and the residents of Ashur describing his campaign against Urartu in 714 BC (Hurowitz 2008: 104–120). The sending of this letter to Aššur at Ashur, where the temple of the king of the Assyrian pantheon has been located with certainty, suggests that Kalhu had no temple of Aššur of its own to where Sargon II could address the deity (Wiseman and Black 1996: 2).

Not only did the reign of Esarhaddon see the preparation of the vassal treaties found at Kalhu, but it also saw the restoration of the shrines of Nabu and Tašmetu there, according to fragments of two inscribed cylinders. Letters from Esarhaddon’s reign concern an *akītu* festival that was carried out in or near Kalhu. Ashurbanipal “restored the temple of Nabu” during his reign, according to a fragmentary prism inscription (Wiseman and Black 1996: 3).

The archaeological evidence indicates that the library of Kalhu’s temple of Nabu was in use continuously, from approximately 800 BC until the destruction of Kalhu sometime between 616 and 612 BC. While the largest part of the collection was devoted to divination, the archive also included Tablet II of *Enūma Eliš*, which evidence coincides with the knowledge that *akītu*

festivals were held at or near Kalhu. A temple library also was found for the temple of Aššur at Ashur, which contained an extensive literary corpus of over 800 tablets that belonged to a Neo-Assyrian family. The library was located by a courtyard, with a door that measured 1.5 m wide, exactly the size of the library for the temple of Nabu at Kalhu (Wiseman and Black 1996: 4, 6).

Too little is known about the libraries of the royal cities of Khorsabad and Tarbisu to draw any parallels with that of Kalhu, although the library at Khorsabad—also housed in a room off of the main courtyard from the Nabu temple—may well have paralleled the one at Kalhu (Loud and Altman 1938: 46, 56–64; Wiseman and Black 1996: 6).

The city of Khorsabad, which Sargon II made his capital in 710 BC, contained multiple temples near his palace (Kertai 2015: 85–117), as well as the temple of Nabu immediately to their south and located in the adjacent compound (Figure 37). In relation to elevation, Khorsabad's temple of Nabu stood above all of the other temples on the citadel. The gods who also possessed temples at Khorsabad were Sin, Adad, Shamash, Ningal, Ninurta, and Ea (Loud 1936: 114–28).

The limited space provided for the non-ritualistic activities in the “palace temples” may imply that the temple of Nabu served as the center for all of the priests, especially since only the inner temple shrine—located behind the central court—was devoted to the actual ritual performed in honor of Nabu. The remainder of the building was used for the quarters and the offices of the priests. The king provided an endowment for their well being, and their duties probably included both civil and religious affairs (Loud and Altman 1938: 57).

An altar of enameled bricks stood before the broad central portal that led to the inner temple, which in height surpassed that of the other sections of the building. Within, the sanctuaries rose above the cellas, while an unusual mudbrick podium served as the base for the cultic figure of the deity (Loud and Altman 1938: 57). According to Loud and Altman, the façade of the inner complex was accentuated by temples (each with an antecella and sanctuary) that were consecrated to Nabu: “How the worship of Nabu was divided between the large and small units of cella and sanctuary there is no way of telling from the architecture” (Loud and Altman 1938: 63).

Is Loud correct, however, that *both* temples were dedicated to Nabu? Undoubtedly, the reason for his conviction is that inscriptions to Nabu were found in both temples. For the larger, central temple, the steps that led from the antecella to the cella were made of alabaster, and the Nabu inscription was placed centrally and spread over the lower five treads. For the smaller, side temple, three alabaster steps led from antecella to cella, and the Nabu inscription there was cut in its entirety on the lower two treads (Loud and Altman 1938: 62, 63).

The question that Loud does not seem to have raised, however, is whether or not the presence of Nabu inscriptions in both temples is enough evidence to demand that both temples were devoted to the same deity. A number of reasons can be put forth to suggest that instead, the two adjacent temples at the Nabu complex were devoted to Nabu and his consort, Tašmetu. Moreover, there are implications that suggest even more reasons for concluding that Buildings II and XVI at Tayinat did not belong to Nabu and Tašmetu during the Neo-Assyrian occupation.

(1) When observing both sets of temples at Kalhu and Khorsabad, their layouts and proximity are virtually identical in respect to size and design. (2) At Kalhu, the temple of Nabu is over 40% larger than that of Tašmetu. At Khorsabad, the larger of the two temples (209.55 m<sup>2</sup> in area) is 34% larger than the smaller one (156.9 m<sup>2</sup> in area). The similarity in the relative difference between the larger temple and the smaller temple at each site strongly suggests that in both cases, Nabu's temple was the larger of the two, while Tašmetu's temple was the smaller. (3) In the case of both sanctuary complexes, the smaller of the two temples is located farther away from the center of the entire complex of buildings. This suggests the preeminence of the larger temple, as well as that of the deity that was worshipped within it.

The temples at Khorsabad provide additional reasoning for suggesting that the temples at Tayinat may not have been dedicated to Nabu and his consort. The heart of Khorsabad's entire temple complex was a pair of temples, including a larger one composed of Room 21 and Room 22. Broad, projecting piers divided the larger temple into two sections. The floor of the antecella was raised above that of the cella, which was reached by alabaster stairs extending from the antecella. Both rooms were paved with limestone slabs, yet both were found devoid of special decoration (Loud and Altman 1938: 62).

The cella of Khorsabad's temple to Nabu (Loud's Room 22 in Figure 35) contained a solid mudbrick podium that occupied the central position directly in front of the large niche and served as a base for the cultic figure. The niche was of a more elaborate type, with a back of reeds and rabbeted edges. The top of the podium originally was positioned at the level of the base of the niche, but the temple's destruction compromised its previous position (Loud and Altman 1938: 57, 62).

Podium and niche seemingly formed the base and background for the cultic figure. That the base consisted of mudbrick, rather than some fine stone or other material, may be a significant detail, since Nabu—as the “scribe of the universe”—might have been identified with clay, the

medium of written documents (Loud and Altman 1938: 62). As detailed previously, the podiums within the cellas of Building II and Building XVI at Tayinat also consisted of mudbrick.

The excavators considered that to a great extent the temple consisting of Room 23 and Room 24 (Figure 38) was a smaller version of the larger temple. The chief difference is in the proportion between the two sections, with the antecella being slightly greater in area than the cella. The smaller temple was interrupted by two niches in the side walls of the cella, which held either statues or temple furniture. Three alabaster steps led from the antecella to the cella, and the presence of another Nabu inscription probably is what caused the excavators to suggest that this was a second temple of Nabu, and that worship of Nabu was divided between the large and small temples (Loud and Altman 1938: 63), despite the obvious oddity of adjacent temples possibly having been devoted to the same deity.

Based on the similarities between the paired temples at Khorsabad and the paired temples at Kalhu, the far more logical deduction seems to be that—as at Kalhu—the temples at Khorsabad represent a larger temple devoted to Nabu and a smaller temple devoted to Tašmetu, his consort. The larger temple clearly belonged to the worship of Nabu, considering the mudbrick podium that occupied a large part of the cella.

The presence of a podium in the cella of a temple devoted to Nabu argues for the attribution of Building XVI at Tayinat to Nabu, as well, given that this temple also possessed a large mudbrick podium that occupied a large portion of the cella. The absence of such a podium in the smaller temple at Khorsabad argues against this as being a second temple devoted to Nabu. The presence of a Nabu inscription in the smaller temple need not require that Nabu was its cultic occupant.

If Tašmetu were the deity worshipped at the smaller of the paired temples at Khorsabad, with the larger temple belonging to Nabu, as at Kalhu, it is fair to assume that an inscription to Nabu in the former temple can be explained by his identification as Tašmetu's male counterpart. Therefore, if the smaller temples at Khorsabad and Kalhu both were devoted to Tašmetu, the two-fold strength of this evidence argues against Building II's identification as the temple of Tašmetu, given that the area of Building II is over twice the size of the area of Building XVI.

Can the understanding provided by the temples of Nabu at Khorsabad and Kalhu be enhanced by a study of any other temple of Nabu in another great city of the Neo-Assyrian Empire? A temple of Nabu was excavated at Nineveh, which originally was founded in the time of the new, great gate, according to the ancient textual evidence. The temple allegedly was restored first by Adad-nirari III (788 BC), restored again by Sargon II (by 705 BC), then had its pavements repaired

by Ashurbanipal (by 627 BC). This temple was situated just to the south of the southern corner of Ashurbanipal's palace (Thompson and Hutchinson 1929: 104; for Ashurbanipal's palace, see Kertai 2015: 167–184).

The excavators stated that the inner rectangle of the temple had been cleared by 1905, while in 1927–1928 the outer rectangle was cleared down to the surface of the massive *libn* (unburnt brick) foundation. However, the the masonry in the western corner of the temple was found to have been destroyed beyond hope of recognition (Thompson and Hutchinson 1929: 104), and the diagram of the temple (Thompson and Hutchinson 1929: pl. 63) does not distinguish as to whether the temple even had a tripartite architectural style. Therefore, the temple of Nabu at Nineveh provides no practical help for the present discussion.

Seventh, the evidence from religious centers in Neo-Assyria suggests a complex set of events related to the *akītu* festival, all of which argue for the local presence of a cult to Aššur, including a cultic statue and a *bīt akīti*. The temple of Aššur at Ashur (Figure 39) consisted of a group of cultrooms, occupied by a large number of gods. The temple is known to have included “all in the house of the Divine Judges,” who were ten in number (KAV 42 1 43), with seven “judges of the *mušlālu*” mentioned in *Belleten* 14 (lines 26–30), which connects them with the northwestern part of the temple. The location of these deities is unknown (Driel 1969: 37, 43).

The temple of Aššur included a chapel of Dagan and a chapel of Ninlil (Room x and Room y), while Šerua—Aššur's consort—resided in the cultroom of Aššur. Of course, primacy within the temple belonged to Aššur. A *bīt šahūri* was in the temple complex before Sennacherib began his building operations. According to KAH II 124, Sennacherib provided the cultroom of Aššur with a new gate in front of the statue of the deity (Driel 1969: 24, 42, 43).

Room p probably had disappeared during the reconstruction of the temple by Shalmaneser I, when the cultroom was enlarged. It does not seem farfetched to regard the *šahūru* of the temple as the room between the cultroom and Sennacherib's newly constructed court (the “Ostanbau”), probably together with the rooms to the right and left. If KAH II 124 is to be believed, Sennacherib provided the gates of the cella and the *šahūru*-house with appropriate decoration. As part of this, four pillar bases held four pillars (“sons of Shamash”), which stood in pairs on either side of the doorway at the entrance (Driel 1969: 24, 26–27).

Room o is not only the most important part of Aššur's temple, but is identified as the cultroom of the deity, as confirmed by Sennacherib's description of the work on the “Ostanbau,” which effectually excludes every other room in the temple as a legitimate candidate for the

cultroom. The door between Anteroom m and Cultroom o was walled up at this time, which probably means that the direction of the cult was changed, with entry subsequently being made from the southeast, through Room p. Esarhaddon called Room o “the inner cultroom, where Aššur, my lord, lives” (Driel 1969: 27, 37).

This major alteration effectively shifted the architectural style to a long-room, tripartite temple with the cella being the room farthest from the entrance. The result was that the temple resembled the typical architectural model for temples of the day, both in Assyria and in the Levant. Both Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal left inscriptions mentioning their memorable deeds in rebuilding or finishing the sanctuary, mainly within the cultroom (Driel 1969: 29).

Esarhaddon stated that he brought back Aššur to his cella, while Ashurbanipal declared that only he finished the building and returned the god to its place, possibly a hyperbolic statement. Both of these kings prided themselves on their glorious deeds on behalf of Aššur and Marduk. Ashurbanipal further boasted that he caused Aššur to dwell on an everlasting dais, which seems to refer to a podium on which the cultic statue rested. Two phases of a *bīt akīti* were built outside the city of Ashur, one having been built by Sennacherib (Driel 1969: 28, 29, 35, 57).

While the information about dates of religious ceremonies at Assyrian cities apart from Ashur is limited, some relevant data is available. At Nineveh, Sargon II built Assyria’s oldest known *bīt akīti*, which—according to Ashurbanipal—was located inside the city. The cultic figures of Aššur and Ninlil seem to have participated in the ceremonies there (Driel 1969: 149, 163). As with the cultic statue of Aššur at Ashur, Nabu’s statue was mobile at Kalhu, as evidenced by its entry into the *bīt erši* “bedroom” on 3 Ajar (Driel 1969: 150).

All of these matters relative to cultic practices in the heartland of the Neo-Assyrian Empire conspire to suggest a number of realities relevant to the suggested observance of an *akītu* festival at Kunalia during the time of Neo-Assyrian occupation: (1) Neo-Assyrian texts clearly describe a cultic figure of Aššur at the city of Ashur. (2) Both the Aššur statue at Ashur and the Nabu statue at Kalhu were moved out of their temples to participate in important ceremonies. (3) After Sennacherib’s reconstruction of the temple, access changed from entry on the building’s longer axis to entry on its shorter axis, while the orientation of the cult changed, and the building was made to fit the standard *langraum* architectural style of the day.

Ultimately, the remodeled design of the temple conforms quite well to the tripartite design of Building II at Tayinat. (4) Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal spared no expense to restore and improve the temple of Aššur at Ashur. This attention to the main cult of Neo-Assyria’s religious

pantheon demonstrates the primacy of Aššur to their religious agenda, which would bode well for the presence of a temple to Aššur at Tayinat. (5) Ashur's *bīt akīti* was built outside of the city, thus making it resemble Babylon's practice of celebrating the *akītu* ceremony by having the procession of gods depart from within the confines of the city walls. If the same practice was observed at Kunalia, perhaps an unexcavated *bīt akīti* remains somewhere outside the confines of the tell at Tayinat. Given that Nineveh's *bīt akīti* was located within the confines of the city, a *bīt akīti* at Tayinat also could have been positioned within the city limits, by analogy. In any event, all of the information from the cultic centers in Assyria's heartland—especially at the cities of Aššur, Kalhu, and Nineveh—provides corroborative evidence for the possibility of a cult to Aššur at Kunalia, which would have been centered at Building II.

Eighth, the fragrant oil, animal sacrifices, and burnt incense described in SAA<sup>7</sup> 9 3 (Parpola and NATCP 2015) coincide well with the oil lamps, libation vessels, and incense-bearing pyxis found inside the newly discovered temple at Tayinat. If the alleged connection between these items listed in the Covenant of Aššur and the items found in Building XVI is correct, it also is worth noting that the former involved the worship of Aššur, the king of the gods, while the latter involved the worship of Nabu.

Given that these are not one-and-the-same deity, the similar evidence from these sources (SAA 9 3 and Building XVI) suggests the presence of a necessary connection between the worship of Aššur and that of Nabu. The presence of Aššur at the renewal of the covenant in SAA 9 3 is indispensable. Yet if Building XVI was devoted to Nabu, and Building II was devoted to Tašmetu, there is no place in the equation at Tayinat for the representation of the presence of Aššur. Contrastingly, if the temples at Tayinat were devoted to Aššur and Nabu, this conflict dissipates completely, and a harmonization with the physical evidence is achieved.

Ninth, within Assyrian territory, *akītu* festivals were performed at various times during the year, and not merely during the New Year's celebration. In fact, several types of the *akītu* festival were performed. Additionally, the ceremony required the presence of Nabu in a garden or park, which almost certainly was located in the outer town (Oates and Oates 2001: 122). Since Kunulua

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<sup>7</sup>SAA 9 (or State Archives of Assyria 09) was a loose assortment of oracles, instructions, attributions of praise to the gods, and descriptions of ritualistic events. The oracles primarily relate to the reigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. Lauinger noted that the so-called Covenant of Aššur (SAA 9 3 [09 003]) was a pastiche of oracles together with instructions for (or a description of) ritualistic events that possibly were connected to Esarhaddon's coronation (Lauinger 2013: 112).



was subject to Assyrian rule during the last phase(s) that the temples on the tell at Tayinat were used, the city's leaders undoubtedly would have followed Assyrian practices, meaning that multiple *akītu* festivals were practiced at the site during the year.

Holding all of these annual festivals would have been impractical if there was no temple of Aššur on site or situated nearby. In addition, its identification with Aššur would explain better why Building II was over two times larger than Building XVI, and why it was located about 8 m closer to the royal palace. For all of these reasons, it is quite plausible to theorize that Building II may have served as the temple of Aššur during the Neo-Assyrian occupation at Kunalia.

## 2.4 Aššur View: Disputing Evidence

Support for the view that Aššur was the deity worshipped in Building II at Tayinat during the final phase of the Iron Age city is purely circumstantial. For one thing, according to publications of the excavations at Tayinat by the Oriental Institute, there is no evidence that was found in the temple that positively identifies Aššur—or any other god, for that matter—as the resident deity of the larger of the two temples on the tell, whether during the Neo-Assyrian occupation or previously.

A second dissenting argument against the Aššur view is that the oath tablets at Tayinat were stored in what would be the temple of lesser importance (Building XVI), rather than the temple of greater importance (Building II). It might seem more logical for the tablets to have been stored in Building II if this temple was devoted to the king of the gods. After all, §35 (T v 69) of Tayinat's oath tablet refers to this writing as a tablet of Aššur. One reply to this criticism is that the lesser deity in this case nonetheless was the god of the scribal arts, so it would be expected for written tablets to be housed in his temple—just as at Kalhu—rather than stored in the temple of the greater deity, who is not sovereign over scribal activity and written texts.

Another reply to this criticism relates to the tablets from Kalhu. In the text of the Kalhu tablets, as will be discussed in more detail below, Nabu bears the epithet, *nāši ṭuppi šimāt ilāni*, “bearer of the Tablet of Destinies of the gods.” The Kalhu tablets thus had to be stored by their proper custodian in Kalhu's Ezida, the temple complex of Nabu. The same could be expected of the equivalent tablet discovered at Tayinat. Moreover, the Kalhu tablets were discovered in the throne room of the Ezida (Wiseman 1958a: i; Lauinger 2012: 87), thus setting the precedent in the Assyrian heartland that the proper storehouse for such tablets is Nabu's temple.

A third dissenting argument against the Aššur view is that perhaps the temple of Aššur that was used during the *akītu* festival was located at a site in proximity to Tayinat. While it is difficult

to argue against the necessity of a temple of Aššur or Marduk for the annual celebration of an *akītu* festival, the possibility does exist that a neighboring city housed the chief deity of the Neo-Assyrian pantheon. After all, even the yearly celebrations at Babylon, which are well attested in the textual record, went on without skipping a beat, despite that Nabu and Marduk—along with their native temples—were located 17 km apart. The statue of Nabu simply was retrieved by the king by the rite of an annual pilgrimage to its patron city during the festival.

In the same way, perhaps what occurred at Kunalia is that the resident statue of Nabu was retrieved and transported to the site where the temple of Aššur stood, or that the statue of Aššur resident at a site nearby Kunalia was transported to the administrative capital. If either option were the case, one would expect the existence of a city in close enough proximity to Tayinat whose stature was high enough to rival that of Kunalia, the regional capital of the province, as well as one where the king of the gods was worshipped.

Identifying such a site is an elusive task. To begin with, Kunalia, as the capital of the province, was unrivaled in the region. There were no cities of comparable stature in the vicinity, and none is known to have featured a temple to the king of the gods, presumably Aššur. The most likely candidate would be Aleppo, once the center of religious tradition in the area and later a part of the Kingdom of Palistin. However, Aleppo was located *ca.* 55 km from Tayinat, over three times the distance from Borsippa to Babylon. More importantly, Aleppo's temple to the storm god was abandoned permanently in the ninth century BC. None of the cities in the Amuq Valley can be viewed as a legitimate candidate, at least presently.

One would expect the neighboring city that featured a temple of Aššur and reciprocated with political and priestly authorities overseeing the temple of Nabu at Kunalia by receiving Nabu's statue from them to be superior to the city that would send Nabu to them. However, Kunalia was the undisputed capital of the province, with no surrounding cities superior to it. This is confirmed by the oath tablet's mention of officials under the governor who swore loyalty to Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, officials who may have taken annual pilgrimages to Kunalia to renew their vows. If the temples of Nabu and Aššur were located at different cities during this time of annual *akītu*-festival celebrations, one even would expect for Aššur to be housed at the greater city of Kunalia, while Nabu was housed within a city of lower stature. However, the archaeological and epigraphical record conspire to render this possibility unrealistic, as no evidence exists to support any scenario with a temple of Aššur located within close enough proximity to Kunalia to satisfy the requirements of the *akītu* festival.

The fourth—and most potent—dissenting argument against the Aššur view is that not only has no evidence of a temple to Aššur been found at Kalhu or Khorsabad, but no such temple has been found anywhere within the heartland of Assyria. However, a temple of Aššur from the later Neo-Babylonian Empire was found at Uruk, which probably was established in the seventh century BC. The god Aššur did not arrive in Uruk alone, because the evidence from UCP 9/2, 57 indicates that a group of Assyrians was transplanted there to organize his cult and ensure its continuance (Beaulieu 1997: 56–65). Yet this is the only known temple of Aššur located outside of Assur, and it probably occurred only because of the special relationship that Babylonia experienced with Neo-Assyria and the transplanting of Assyrians to Babylon during the empire (Beaulieu 2016).

This paucity of competing sites with temples to Aššur has caused some Assyriologists to conclude that the Assyrians would have considered it sacrilegious for another temple to Aššur to exist outside of Assur and in the western provinces (Frayne 2016). In their minds, the king of the gods should be restricted to a single temple, located in the holiest of Assyrian cities. The question that this presents is whether the Assyrian administration would have allowed the attribution of a temple—now in Assyrian-controlled territory—to Aššur.

Not much is known about the religious ceremonies in Assyria outside of the city of Ashur (Driel 1969: 149), but it is safe to assume that Babylonian cultic forms had a substantial influence on Assyrian cultic practices, despite the terse nature of the evidence in the textual sources (Driel 1969: 151). While the texts do refer to *akītu* festivals having been held at other sites beyond Ashur, they give no provision for the presence of a temple of Aššur outside of the religious capital of Ashur. The restriction of one temple of Aššur within the entire Assyrian territories thus renders any possibility of a temple of Aššur at Kunalia as highly questionable.

## 2.5 Storm God View: Supporting Evidence

If the view that Building II was devoted to the goddess Tašmetu is flawed because of (1) the problem with this temple's size having been so much larger than that of Building XVI and (2) the material finds related to the *akītu* ceremony found in Building XVI being explicable only if a temple to the king of the gods was present nearby, and the view that Building II was devoted to Aššur is flawed by the fact that the Assyrians restricted the cult of Aššur to his temple at only one site (Ashur), apart from the unique exception of Uruk during the seventh century BC, another option for the deity worshipped in Building II must be sought.

One possibility for the deity that inhabited Building II is the storm god, by whatever name (i.e. Hadad, Teshub, Baal, etc.). The case for this possibility begins with the argument that the temple's original construction under the Neo-Hittites at Kunulua probably was accomplished with the intent of devoting this temple to the storm god, the chief deity in the local pantheon, and that during Palistin's independence the temple continued to house the storm god as the patron deity.

As discussed previously, inscriptional evidence from Aleppo (ALEPPO 6 and ALEPPO 7) connects Kunulua's Taita I to the storm god and his temple at Aleppo. Moreover, if Taita II indeed was biblical Toi, then his son would have been called Hadoram ("Hadad is exalted") for a reason: this theophoric name for Hadad is the Aramaean version of the name of the storm god, the deity for whom Halparuntiya I may have built his closest, largest, and most resplendent temple.

As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Green (2003: 65) has suggested that Dagan, a West Semitic deity that became a major player in the pantheon of the Philistines, was a storm god. However, there is no evidence for associating Dagan with the storm god (Schwemer 2001: 282; Younger 2016), but instead he is to be connected in Syria with Kumarbi (Younger 2016), the chief deity of the Hurrians and father of Teshub. Furthermore, Dagan—whose consort is Šalaš, also named as the wife of Adad—even appears as the Levantine deity, Adad, the Akkadian version of Syrian Hadad (Gelb 1944: 63). Since Hadad was the storm god in the Aramaean lands of the northern Levant, there is ample reason to suggest that the storm god may have inhabited Building II before the conquest of Tiglath-pileser III.

Additional evidence suggesting that Building II was devoted to the storm god even after the Neo-Assyrian conquest of Kunalia may be found on Tayinat's own oath tablet. In §54 A of T-1801, the text expresses the desire that Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il would "create piercing pain and ill health everywhere in" the territories of anyone breaking his or her oath to Esarhaddon. In Chapter 5, the case will be made that the Adad invoked here is the Assyrian manifestation of the storm god, as the curses depict the Levantine deities from an Assyrian—rather than Levantine—point of view (Steymans 2013: 4), as the Levantines would refer to him as Baal of somewhere.

Therefore, Esarhaddon may have included the storm god as one of the deities who would inflict punishment on any oath-taker who did not remain faithful to the oath that he/she swore to the king simply because the storm god, whose cultic image would have been present in Building II, was recognized as sovereign not only at Kunalia but at the vast majority of cities throughout West Syria. The invoking of the weather god would be of necessity if the residents of Kunalia had prioritized the worship of this deity both after and, potentially, before the Assyrians overtook the

city, because the people would feel obligated to follow through with any oath of loyalty offered to their own chief deity, which would deter them from rebellion.

If Building II originally was the temple of the storm god both before and after the Neo-Assyrian conquest, while Building XVI became the temple of Nabu after the conquest, one question that remains is the identity of the cultic occupant of Building XVI during the earlier time of Palistinian/Patinian independence. The most logical suggestion is that the temple was occupied by the storm god's consort: Aštarte/Ashtart/Asherah/Hebat. Harrison (2012b: 17) already has stated as much, having suggested that the paired temples first served as dual residences of the storm god (Teshub/Baal/Hadad) and his consort (Aštarte/Hepat).

The case for Building II's original dedication to the storm god is enhanced by the strong Levantine tradition of paired temples built to the storm god and his consort, as the list of paired temples, altars, and/or worship cults dedicated to these wedded deities that were constructed at the same site is not unimpressive: LBA Emar, LBA Alalakh, LBA Ophrah (Judg 6: 24–30), Iron II Samaria (1 Kgs 16:30–33), and Iron II Jerusalem (high places: 2 Kgs 21:1–3). Most likely, a sizable number of other Levantine cities featured such paired temples, though archaeology simply has not caught up to history in order to verify this proposition.

As documented in Chapter 2, Emar not only had paired temples that were devoted to Baal and Aštarte, but both temples were built in the *in antis* tradition, which is exactly what was found to be the case with the paired temples at Tayinat (Harrison 2012b: 6, 16), where Building II boasted a double-lion column base and Building XVI featured a single column base. LBA Alalakh uniquely possessed a temple with a double cella, which almost certainly was intended for the worship of two deities, with each having its own cella, in order to house both of the deities individually.

During the period of Israel's judges, which overlaps the LBA and Iron Age I, Gideon built an altar to Yahweh at the site of Ophrah. According to the biblical text, Yahweh then appeared to him during the night and instructed him to tear down the altar of Baal that already was there, as well as the Asherah that was beside it (Judg 6:25). While Ophrah's cultic structures were not full-scale temples, they certainly reflect the Levantine tradition of the worship of the storm god and his consort side by side. In Omride Samaria, the northern kingdom's King Ahab erected a temple to Baal (into which he placed a statue of Baal) and installed an Asherah beside it (1 Kgs 16:30, 32, 33), much like the scene at Ophrah. Here in Samaria, however, a full-blown temple of Baal was built. It is unclear from the biblical text whether a temple also was built to Asherah. At Jerusalem,

Judah's King Manasseh constructed an altar to Baal and an Asherah atop the high places around Jerusalem (2 Kgs 21:3), much like what was performed at Ophrah long before.

All of these examples make plausible the scenario that the paired temples at Tayinat originally were built to the storm god and his consort long before the Assyrians overtook the city and reconfigured the use of its sacred architecture. Unfortunately, this cannot be confirmed unless more evidence from Tayinat or elsewhere becomes available through excavation, especially the discovery of a textual archive that may be buried at the site. If the temple originally was built for the storm god, it would have been natural for the Neo-Assyrian administration to allow this deity's cult to remain at the larger of the paired temples after they conquered and rebuilt the city.

A second argument in favor of the view that Building II was devoted to the storm god during the Neo-Assyrian occupation is that, as delineated above, the observance of the *akītu* ceremony required a temple to the king of the gods, and in the Iron Age Levant the storm god would meet this requirement. Virtually all of the supporting evidence presented above for the Aššur view in relation to the *akītu* ceremony applies to the storm god view, though it need not be repeated here.

According to this view, the storm god would have assumed the role originally reserved for Marduk in the *akītu* ceremony. The Assyrians did as much in their own lands, as they chose to elevate Aššur to the ceremonial role that was reserved for Marduk in Babylonia, instead of keeping the latter god in that role. The reason they were able to make this exchange is that Marduk's role as the king of the gods in Babylonia was mirrored by Aššur's role as the king of the gods in Assyria.

In the Levant, the deity that originally possessed the most highly exalted status was El, the king of the gods. Over time, however, western Syria proper witnessed the storm god's usurpation of the most exalted position among all of the gods, as well as his increasing importance in human affairs (Green 2003: 287). As noted in Chapter 3, Hadad, Teshub, Tarhunza, and Zeus all were worshipped at Aleppo's temple over the periods of its storied history, which demonstrates a progression of the worship of the king of the gods at a site both near and connected to Kunulua.

For these reasons, it is quite possible that the storm god continued to be worshipped at Kunalia after the Assyrians arrived, and that his status as the chief of the gods in the Syrian pantheon enabled him to function in the same role during the *akītu* ceremony that was reserved for Marduk in Babylonia, and Aššur in Assyria. Such a syncretistic approach at Iron Age Tayinat would have allowed for a local deity (the storm god) in the primary temple and a deity recognized in the Neo-Assyrian pantheon (Nabu) in the adjacent, secondary temple.

A tangible precedent for the continuation of the worship of the storm god at Tayinat after the Neo-Assyrian conquest can be found at Aleppo (Chapter 3). Not only was the storm god worshipped there throughout Aleppo's pre-occupational history—whether as Hadad, Teshub, or Tarhunza—but after Shalmaneser III conquered the city, he offered sacrifices there to Hadad. If the Neo-Assyrian king made this concession to the local people at Aleppo, certainly logic dictates that the Neo-Assyrian monarchs who conquered and controlled the Kingdom of Unqi may have followed suit by recognizing the storm god at Kunalia and allowing his cult to be perpetuated there.

## 2.6 Storm God View: Disputing Evidence

One argument that may be used to challenge the storm god view is that there is no precedent for this deity's having taken over the role of chief god in the *akītu* ceremony at any other sites in the Levant or beyond. Therefore, if the storm god was involved in the festival at Tayinat, this would be the only known location where he fulfilled the role that was otherwise reserved for Markduk (in Babylonia) and Aššur (in Assyria), which would cause some to be apprehensive about its plausibility. The only appeal that could be made in defense of this criticism is that the Assyrians applied the same principle when the *akītu* ceremony became a fixture in their homeland, having substituted Aššur for Marduk in the role played by the chief deity.

A second criticism of the storm god view is connected to the preference for the Aššur view. Given that §35 (T v 69) of Tayinat's oath tablet refers to this writing as a tablet of Aššur, one may argue that it is more plausible that Building II belonged to Aššur, rather than to the storm god. According to this criticism, the presence of Aššur in a writing found in one of the paired temples at Tayinat betrays the supremacy of Aššur within the cult of the temple complex on the site.

While this criticism certainly carries some weight, proponents of the storm god view could respond by noting that the notion of the oath tablet as a tablet of Aššur says less about the deity that occupied Building II, which is not where the oath tablet was uncovered, and more about the religious commitments of the Assyrians who controlled the empire. Both Tayinat's oath tablet and the Kalhu tablets were formulated in the heartland of Assyria, by an Assyrian king and Assyrian scribes, so there is little surprise that the tablet belonged to the chief Assyrian deity. Tayinat's tablet was transported from the Assyrian heartland to the provincial capital in the periphery, so the ownership of the tablet could be unrelated to the question of the deity that occupied Building II.

### 3 Summary Observations

The attempt in this chapter was to identify the deities who occupied the paired temples (Building XVI and Building II) on the upper mound at Tell Tayinat during the terminal phase of their occupation. Building XVI undoubtedly is the temple that can be identified with the greater level of confidence when compared to its counterpart, simply because of the presence of the tablets that were found within its cella, in conjunction with the texts' meaning and the related material finds.

The identification of Building XVI with Nabu, the son of Marduk, consists of the following lines of evidence: (1) Nabu's identity as the divine patron of the scribal arts matches well with the cache of cuneiform tablets from Building XVI. (2) Since the cache of cuneiform tablets found at Kalhu was associated with the temple of Nabu, and the oath tablet from Tayinat is of the same genre and historical context, it is logical to suggest that Building XVI functioned similarly to the temple of Nabu at Kalhu. (3) Building XVI's tablets were mounted on the wall for display and used for verbal recitation, just as Kalhu's tablets were on display at the temple of Nabu to represent the binding nature of the Median kings' commitment to Esarhaddon through the agency of recitation of a sworn oath. (4) The extended duration of the display of these tablets argues for continuity between the temple of Nabu at Kalhu and Building XVI, as Ashurbanipal seemingly used the tablets to reaffirm loyalty to himself by their reciting of allegiance during his reign. (5) Aššur's seal was present both on the tablet at Tayinat and the tablets at Kalhu, further linking the purpose of the various temples.

As for the identification of the deity that inhabited Building II, one possibility is that it belonged to Nabu's consort, Tašmetu. In support of this option is the precedent of temples to Nabu and Tašmetu at Kalhu and Khorsabad, as well as the regional precedent at LBA Alalakh and Emar, where virtually twin temples of Baal and Aštarte reflect the identity of a male deity and his female consort. This earlier northern Levantine model of paired temples could act as a precedent for cultic residences of Nabu and Tašmetu at Tayinat.

However, drawbacks do exist to the suggestion that Building II was the temple of Tašmetu. First, if indeed the *akītu* ceremony was held at Kunalia, this would leave unaccounted the necessary temple for the chief deity in the pantheon, which was an indispensable component at the festival. Second, the area of Building II (298 m<sup>2</sup>) measures over twice the size of Building XVI (145 m<sup>2</sup>), which makes it highly suspect to suggest that the temple of the female deity was over two times more spacious than the temple of her male counterpart.



A second possibility for the deity that occupied Building II is Aššur, the chief god in the Assyrian pantheon. The argument of greatest support for this view is related to the details of the *akītu* ceremony, which suggest that access to a temple of Aššur and a temple of Nabu was necessary for the completion of the rituals involved in this ceremony. If the *akītu* festival was observed at Kunalia, the presence of a temple of Aššur would have allowed for the completion of the ceremonies that were an essential part of the festival.

Another argument in favor of attributing Building II to Aššur is the superior size of this building in relation to Building XVI, as well as its closer proximity to the royal residence than Building XVI, by about 8 m. The doubled size of Building II and its closer proximity to the chief royal residence together argue for the priority of Building II and suggest that the larger temple would have housed the chief deity, if choosing between these two primary temples atop the tell.

As for drawbacks to the suggestion that Building II was the temple of Aššur, one flaw is the lack of hard evidence from Building II that supports this association. The excavators from the Syrian-Hittite Expedition of the 1930's reported no evidence that links this temple directly to Aššur during the Neo-Assyrian occupation, while the TAP excavations also uncovered no such evidence.

The second drawback to the Aššur view is that—during the annual celebration of the *akītu* festival in the province—perhaps the statue of Nabu that stood inside of its temple at Kunalia was retrieved and transported to another site where the temple of Aššur stood. This ritual would parallel the movement of the statue of Nabu that was transported from Borsippa to Babylon during the Babylonian celebration of the festival. In the case of Kunalia, however, this city was the provincial capital, with no cities superior to it that were located in reasonable proximity. Therefore, this drawback does not carry with it a great deal of weight.

The third drawback to the Aššur view is that no temple to Aššur, apart from the one at Ashur, has been found anywhere in Assyrian territory or throughout their empire, with the singular exception of a late temple to Aššur at Uruk. The Assyrians restricted the localization of Aššur to a single temple, the one located in the holiest Assyrian city. While this drawback is formidable, indeed, it would be enhanced if a statement were found in an Assyrian text that explicitly states that the cult of Aššur was to be limited to one temple, just as the biblical text plainly expresses that the cult of Yahweh was limited to the temple at Jerusalem (Deut 12:2–6; 13–14).

The third possibility for the deity that occupied Building II is the storm god. The initial Neo-Hittite population probably built Building II as a temple to the storm god, which is supported by the texts in ALEPPO 6 and ALEPPO 7 that connect Taita I to the storm god and his temple at

Aleppo. In §54 A of Tayinat's oath tablet, the text refers to Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il as deities that would inflict punishment on anyone breaking the oath that was sworn to the Assyrian king. Adad is the Akkadian version of Syrian Hadad, the storm god in the Aramaean lands of the northern Levant, so the Neo-Assyrians not only recognized his sovereignty in the Levant, but appealed to him to exact loyalty from their subjects in the western periphery of the empire. The Neo-Assyrians thus would have had strong rationale for continuing the cult to the storm god at Building II as a deterrent to rebellion on the part of the new population that inhabited the city after it was rebuilt.

Another argument in favor of the storm god view is that, as the chief god in the Syrian religious pantheon, the storm god could have been the deity that took the place of Marduk in the *akītu* ceremony, which quite plausibly was performed at Tayinat during the Neo-Assyrian administration. Virtually all of the supporting evidence in this regard that was cited for the Aššur view applies to the storm god view, making this view an enticing one.

The one substantive weakness with the storm god view is that if the storm god presided over the *akītu* festival at Tayinat, this would be the only known location where he fulfilled the role that was reserved for Marduk and Aššur, which makes it difficult to be convinced of this view completely. One response to this criticism is that the Assyrians applied the same principle when the *akītu* ceremony became a regular practice in their homeland, as they substituted Aššur for Marduk in the role that was played by the chief deity.

While the available evidence is not enough to be conclusive about the identification of the deity that resided in Building II during the Neo-Assyrian occupation, the artifactual and textual evidence combine to favor the view that Building II served as the temple of the storm god, which is the most promising and least problematic view. Identifying Building XVI as the temple of Nabu is significantly more secure, though perhaps eventually evidence will surface that can identify the deities worshipped in each of these buildings with an even greater degree of certainty.

## Chapter 5

### The Oath Tablet and Its Religious Significance

This chapter will examine the religious implications of the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat, one of the epigraphical finds from Building XVI that was discovered during the excavational season of 2009, when the building's cella was both discovered and uncovered. Attention first will center on the overall cuneiform cache, and then on the details of the oath tablet in particular. From there, the focus will turn to the concept of oath-swearing throughout ANE history, since oath-swearing is a vital component in the text of Tayinat's oath tablet. Finally, a discussion of the religious significance of the oath tablet will ensue. Credit for much of the discussion about the tablets goes to Jacob Lauinger, and some of the other sources cited are those from his publications.

## 1 The Oath Tablet among Tayinat's Cuneiform Cache

### 1.1 The Cuneiform Tablets from the Cella of Building XVI

Building XVI was surrounded on its western and southern sides by a cobblestone pavement, part of an expansive open courtyard that it shared with the perpendicularly-oriented temple (Building II) to the southwest, as well as a larger religious complex, or sacred precinct (Harrison 2014: 417). Of incalculable value to the religious purpose of the newly discovered temple, at least during the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation and administration, is a particular part of the epigraphical evidence that was removed from the temple's cella.

Undoubtedly, one of the most spectacular and thrilling finds of the TAP's 2009 season, during which the present writer participated, was the small collection of eleven cuneiform texts from Building XVI. After the finds were excavated, the conservator performed an initial cleaning of all of the tablets, except for the oath tablet (T-1801), which required extensive conservation due to the delicate state of its preservation. Many of the tablets were identified by the project's epigrapher, Jacob Lauinger, as manuscripts of the Mesopotamian scholarly series *iqqur īpuš* (2011: 5). Fales (2012: 146) has pointed out that this small mix of scholarly fragments is totally consistent with the contents of a temple library, notably that of the Ezida at Kalhu.

As the 2009 excavational season was nearing its close, Lauinger instructed the conservator to focus on two important tasks: (1) establishing whether or not the oath tablet was sealed, which was the case with the oath tablets of Esarhaddon from Kalhu, and (2) cleaning the third line of the crucial tablet to determine the identity of the individual who swore the oath. What the conservator

learned is that the tablet indeed had been sealed, just as with the Kalhu tablets, and that the oath was sworn by an unnamed provincial governor at Kunalia (Lauinger 2011: 6).

A vital discovery of the 2011 season at Tayinat was that some clay fragments originally found loose in the soil underneath the oath tablet belong to the tablet's obverse and preserve part of the impression of the seal of Sennacherib known from the Kalhu tablets (Lauinger 2012: 90). This information provided ample evidence to connect the provincial tablet to those from the imperial archives at Kalhu, which was the Assyrian capital from the mid-ninth century BC until late in Sargon II's reign, who moved the capital to Dur-Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad) in 706 BC.

The eleven epigraphical finds recovered from the holy of holies of Building XVI at Tayinat include the following written materials (Lauinger 2011: 6):

1. T-1701 – *iqqur īpuš*
2. T-1801 – the oath tablet
3. T-1899 – a docket
4. T-1920 + T-1920a – an unidentified hemerology
5. T-1921 – a lexical text
6. T-1922 – *iqqur īpuš*
7. T-1923 – *iqqur īpuš*
8. T-1927 – *iqqur īpuš*
9. T-1928 – *iqqur īpuš*
10. T-1930 – *iqqur īpuš*
11. T-1931 – *iqqur īpuš*

The list reveals that every tablet is scholarly or historical in nature, except for one: a docket (T-1899). Lauinger has noted that this triangular clay docket is similar to others known from Nineveh and Kalhu (2011: 6; Herbordt 1992: 68–69; Radner 2008: 484), and that it consists of eleven lines of text and a stamp seal. The seal impression depicts an Egyptianized falcon wearing the double crown of Egypt, signifying a pharaoh who controlled both Upper and Lower Egypt. This impression probably indicates the administrative office responsible for the commodity to which the docket was attached (Lauinger 2011: 6).

The majority of the other tablets from the recently discovered temple—seven out of the ten: T-1701, T-1922, T-1923, T-1927–1931—are manuscripts of the Mesopotamian scholarly series known in antiquity as *iqqur īpuš*. These seven tablets all follow the “tabular format,” the

least attested of the various organizing schemes in which the series was written in antiquity (Labat 1965: 11–12). The tablets are arranged as a table in which the  $x$ -axis provides the sequence of months and the  $y$ -axis lists various activities and eventualities. The complete sequence is listed across the top of the tablet (Lauinger 2011: 6).

Tablet T-1923 is the best preserved of these *iqqur īpuš* tablets. The obverse is mostly preserved, having been inscribed with the introductory line, and then 37 lines of protases. Only about 1/3 of the reverse is preserved. The tablet contains a fragmentary colophon stating that it was copied and collated from the original by a scribe whose name is restored to Sîn-šumu-ibni, a name that is unattested in contemporary cuneiform texts (Lauinger 2011: 6–7). The description of a separate exemplar for this text is significant, because it probably refers to an original tablet that was kept elsewhere, most likely in the capital city of Dur-Sharrukin.

Another important feature on T-1923 is a broad, rectangular projection that was incised with double crosses and decorated with *Winkelhaken* (“an angle hook”) on both the obverse and the reverse. The projection is pierced through its horizontal axis. These features are vital for understanding not just how this tablet was used in antiquity, but also how to characterize the entire collection of tablets to which it belonged (Lauinger 2011: 7). The importance of this decorated projection and its piercing will be discussed below.

The same decoration is also present on the left side of T-1927, which features only one preserved face, with 14 lines of protases, as well as columns for the first four months (I–IV) of the year. Tablet T-1701 is a relatively large fragment that consists of the middle part of a tablet face. In what remains of it, the face is inscribed with the table for months IV–XII, with the final column possessing repeated ŠE signs, which is similar to T-1923 (Lauinger 2011: 7).

Tablet T-1930 is the largest fragment of the lot, forming the top of a tablet inscribed with the table for months IV–XII and preserving eight lines of text on only one face. Text T-1931 is a small fragment from the center of a tablet that preserves only one face, which features 13 lines of the table for months V–VIII. The smallest fragment, T-1928, presents six lines for two months on its only preserved face. The sign for only one month is fully preserved, with traces of four more present on the broken edges. However, because of the fragment’s abraded surface, it is unclear presently as to which month is indicated. Finally, T-1922 is also part of the *iqqur īpuš* genre, even if it does not preserve the tabular formula. Rather, the fragment comes from the center of a tablet’s leftmost column (protases), with 14 whole or partial signs preserving parts of six protases on six

ruled lines. The majority of the signs are abraded and difficult to read, but two signs—written in lines 3' and 4'—can be read, “he planted” (Lauinger 2011: 7–8).

Looking beyond the *iqqur īpuš* series, the fragments T-1920 + T-1920a represent parts of an unidentified hemerology, which refers to the ancient, fatalistic, cultural practice of connecting success or failure in one's actions with favorable or unfavorable days on the calendar. The joined fragments constitute the right side of a tablet with only one face preserved, having been inscribed in 15 lines. Lines 2–15 list auspicious days for the 12 months of the year, plus the two possible intercalary months (Lauinger 2011: 8). A hemerology tablet in Babylonian script was found at Kalhu, though apparently it was written by the hand of a novice (Wiseman and Black 1996: 5).

Lexical text T-1921 is the final inscription to discuss before proceeding to the oath tablet. This text exists only in fragmentary form, the lower right corner of which features a bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian lexical list inscribed on both faces. The surface of the tablet is somewhat eroded, and the lines seem to preserve a number of variant writings, but the text closely follows that of tablet III (section *giš-šim*) of the famous Mesopotamian lexical series *ur<sub>5</sub>-ra = ħubullu* (Lauinger 2011: 8), which means “interest-bearing debt” in Sumerian and Akkadian, respectively.

## 1.2 The Oath Tablet from the Cella of Building XVI

The final epigraphical find from the cella of Building XVI at Tell Tayinat to discuss is T-1801, the oath tablet that concerns the succession of Ashurbanipal (over Assyria) and Shamash-shumu-ukin (over Babylon) at the eventual death of Esarhaddon. This tablet records an oath imposed on the governor of the province of Kunalia on or close to Day 18 of Month 2 of 672 BC (Lauinger 2011: 8). The top of the numeral designating the day on T-1801 is damaged; the numeral is at least 16 but could be as high as 19. The designation of Day 18 is in accordance with the Kalhu inscriptions, two of which date to Day 18 and one of which dates to Day 16 (Lauinger 2012: 122).

The best known Neo-Assyrian parallel of the loyalty oath to Esarhaddon on T-1801 comes from Kalhu (modern Nimrud), where some 350 fragments from Esarhaddon's reign were retrieved in 1955 near a dais in a suite annexed to the north of the Ezida (Nabu's temple) and designated a “throne-room” (Oates and Oates 2001: 119; Fales 2012: 136). Eight tablets of the textual cache were called “vassal treaties” (Lauinger 2011: 5). As early as 1958, Donald Wiseman described the covenantal agreements of Esarhaddon that were excavated from the Nabu temple as vassal treaties (1958a: i), while Parpola and Watanabe followed suit 30 years later, noting that since the tablets

secondarily were put to use as treaties concluded with vassals, they could be referred to both as oath tablets and vassal treaties (1988: xxx–xxxi, as cited in Lauinger 2011: 5, 8).

Criticism of the term “vassal treaty” first appeared in 1962, with Gelb’s objection to the notion that *adê* (pl.) were parity treaties between equals (1962: 160–62). Instead, Gelb preferred to call *adê* “loyalty oaths.” In 2010, Altmann (2010: 30, n. 71) criticized Parpola and Watanabe by noting that one cannot rely on the Kalhu texts to reconstruct the structure and characteristic features of the actual Neo-Assyrian vassal treaties. The text of T-1801 probably is best described not as a vassal treaty, but as an oath tablet, in which an oath of loyalty was sworn to the Assyrian king by the appointed governor—as well as his subordinates—of the province centered at Kunalia (Lauinger 2011: 5). As Crouch (2014: 148) has stressed, the tablet was not found in a vassal state, but in an Assyrian provincial territory.

Wiseman established that the 350+ fragments found at Kalhu belong to eight different oath tablets. The oaths recorded on all eight tablets were sworn by eight different rulers of cities (Akkadian *bēl āli*) who governed areas in Assyria’s eastern periphery from the region of modern Suleimaniya (in northeastern Iraq) to Elam (Wiseman 1958a: 9–13; Lauinger 2012: 87). A number of texts from Kalhu mention Marduk, usually in connection with Nabu (Oates and Oates 2001: 111). In addition to these eight oath tablets from Kalhu, another parallel to the oath tablet from Tayinat is the three small fragments from Ashur (Weidner 1939–1941: 215; Grayson 1987: 134; Frahm 2009: 135–136; Lauinger 2011: 8). The following may be noted regarding T-1801:

(1) The tablet most likely was written on or around the same day as those from Kalhu, which establishes profound continuity between the heartland of the empire and the provinces in the western periphery of the empire. The colophons of two tablets from Kalhu are dated to Day 18 of Month 2 (Ayyāru)—while another tablet features the variant of Day 16—in the *līmu* of Nabû-bēlu-ušur (= 672 BC), the governor of Dūr-Šarrukku. The date of Day 18 is further confirmed by the colophon of a royal inscription of Esarhaddon upon the erection of the “Palace of Succession” for Ashurbanipal at Tarbišu. The Tayinat tablet’s colophon seemingly has the same date, as the top wedges of the number indicating the day are damaged, and what is preserved could be any of the numbers from 16–19 (Lauinger 2011: 9; Fales 2012: 148).

(2) The text of the oath tablet largely parallels that of the texts from Kalhu. Even among themselves, the tablets from Kalhu betray orthographic and linguistic variation, and the Tayinat exemplar continues that trend. One of the most significant variations in Tayinat’s text is the

repetition of an entire section, although with different line-breaks and some variant orthography the second time around (Lauinger 2011: 9).

(3) Just as with the Kalhu tablets, the Tayinat tablet was sealed with the divine seals of the chief deity of the Assyrian pantheon, Aššur. Unfortunately, the seal impressions are not preserved, but the edge has been preserved on the left and right sides of the obverse. At the very top of column i, the tablet reads, NA<sub>4</sub>.KIŠIB <sup>d</sup>a-šur<sub>4</sub> LUGAL DINGIR.MEŠ, “Seal of Aššur, king of the gods” (Lauinger 2011: 9; Harrison 2014: 414; Steymans 2013: 2), which is part of a caption that the Kalhu tablets have preserved fully (Lauinger 2011: 9).

(4) The Tayinat tablet displays a format similar to that of the Kalhu tablets, in which the columns proceed from left to right on the reverse, rather than from right to left (as is typical with cuneiform tablets). This format implies that the Tayinat tablet, as with the Kalhu tablets, had to be rotated along its vertical axis, and not along its horizontal axis, in order for the reader to switch from the obverse to the reverse smoothly (Lauinger 2011: 9; Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 265).

(5) The person who was swearing the oath is specified as <sup>lu</sup>EN.NAM KUR ku-na-li-a, “the provincial governor of the land of Kunalia” (i 3). Of paramount importance, this reference corroborates the identification of Tell Tayinat with Kunalia, the older name for the capital city of the Neo-Hittite state (and later Neo-Assyrian province) of Patina/Unqi. Interestingly, the oath tablet uses the older name for the city, and not the name known from contemporary cuneiform sources, which is *Kullania*. Yet, as with some of those later sources, it prefaces the name with the logogram (or determinative) KUR (“land”), and not the sign URU (“city”), with which the earlier attestations of Kunalia and its alternate form “Kunulua” are found (Lauinger 2011: 9).

The governor is not named in the text, but instead he is referred to only by his title. This manner of reference probably was employed intentionally, in order to ensure that the oath would remain valid for succeeding governors of the province (Lauinger 2012: 113). As Fales noted, the governor’s name was irrelevant, since governorships were not transmitted dynastically, and whoever was placed in power as governor of Kunalia through royal favor was expected to serve submissively (Fales 2012: 147). Furthermore, the governor was not the only person named in the text who swore the oath of loyalty (Lauinger 2011: 9).

In contrast to the exemplars from Kalhu, where a specific individual is named in each instance, the Tayinat text provides only the office of the oath taker(s): the governor of Kunalia and an additional 16 unnamed officials (or groups of officials), all part of or connected to the local, provincial administration, whether civil or military (Lauinger 2012: 113; Harrison 2014: 414).



While the opening section is fully preserved, a loose fragment from elsewhere on the oath tablet preserves text that parallels lines i 5–9 of the Kalhu manuscripts. In other words, the opening lines of the Tayinat text simply cannot continue to read on as in the Kalhu manuscripts (Lauinger 2012: 114). Therefore, it seems possible that lines i 4–12 of the Tayinat tablet name other members of the provincial administration, in addition to the governor, who undoubtedly traveled to Kalhu to swear the loyalty oath to Esarhaddon (Lauinger 2011: 9).

Before moving to a discussion of the historical background to the oath tablet from Tayinat, the final matter to be treated here is the impact of this discovery on the question of why the eight tablets containing the oaths of the Median rulers remained at Kalhu for 60 years, culminating in their subjection to a thorough smashing during the sacking of the city in 612 BC. While at present this question cannot be answered definitively, the simplest answer may be the proper one: the eight city-lords of the Zagros area may never have arrived at Kalhu to take the oath of collective fealty, as did the approximately 200 other swearers of allegiance to the Assyrian king and his heir (Fales 2012: 151).

The presence of the Kunalian oath tablet in the home-temple of its native swearer, the governor of Kunalia, strongly suggests that the bequest of the Assyrian administration in Kalhu was for each oath-swearing ruler/official to return to his native capital and display the oath tablet in a temple as a permanent reminder of the allegiance that was sworn. The presence of the tablet in a temple suggests the religiously sacred nature of the vow, as the oath included the statement that it was a tablet of Aššur (see line 37 of translation below).

Therefore, the presence of the oath tablets of eight Median rulers at Kalhu could argue for their never having sworn the oath of loyalty at Kalhu, given that if they had done so, they would have taken the tablets back to their native cities with them. Moreover, these eight tablets likely would have been displayed there as a state-enforced mandate for a permanent reminder of the oath sworn. Another possibility is that the Kalhu tablets were copies (Harrison 2015). What is more difficult to answer is why the oath tablets would have remained on display in the temple of Nabu at Kalhu during the lengthy reign of Ashurbanipal (*ca.* 40 years) and during the consecutive reigns of his three successors, who ruled until the fall of the great cities of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

Perhaps this historical oddity says more about the politico-religious marginalization of Kalhu during the final decades of the empire than it does about the importance of the tablets on permanent display in the temple of Nabu. Or, perhaps it merely speaks to the ancient scribal/administrative obsession to store such obsolete and “dated” texts for archival and historical

purposes. Another option is that the tablets may have been preserved in order for future Neo-Assyrian kings to draw upon their valued precedents as applicable occasions may have arisen during their own reigns. An example of this royal preservation of valuable documents is found in the biblical text related to a somewhat later period.

During the early part of the Medo-Persian Empire, while Cyrus was on the throne, the post-exilic Jews had returned to Judea to rebuild the First Temple. At a time when construction had been suspended for about 15 years, Zerubbabel and Jozadak once again began the work (Ezr 5:2). When word of this spread, a distant governor questioned the Jews as to who issued them a decree to rebuild the temple (Ezr 5:3), then sent a complaint to King Darius (Ezr 5:6). The Jews appealed to a permissive decree that was issued in Year 1 of Cyrus (Ezr 5:13), and they asked Darius to conduct a search of the treasure house in Babylon to find the decree that Cyrus issued (Ezr 5:17).

Yet another option as to why the tablets at Kalhu remained on display for four decades is that if Fales is correct about the Median kings' never having traveled to Kalhu to swear an oath of collective allegiance, the perpetual storage of the tablets at Kalhu may signal the expectation of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal that the oath of loyalty needed to be sworn regularly, perhaps annually. If other oath-swearers—such as the governing officials in distant Kunalia—continually re-swore their allegiance, the very sacredness of the tablets would have lingered unwaveringly both during the four years before Ashurbanipal ascended the throne and during the nearly forty years in which he sat upon it.

### 1.3 Historical Background to the Oath Tablet of Building XVI

The tablets from Kalhu that Wiseman published reveal that all of the named persons who swore continued loyalty to Assyria in anticipation of the eventual transition from Esarhaddon to Ashurbanipal were residents in Assyria's eastern periphery. Undoubtedly, the very words of the king himself were behind the oath that was demanded of the kings/rulers of Media. For in a scribe's unrelated letter to Esarhaddon (SAA 16 143: 6–11), he enthusiastically stated, "We shall write the name of the king, my lord, on the stone which we laid in the foundations of the city wall of Tarbisu. Let the king, my lord, write me what we should write (on it), and we shall write accordingly" (Liverani 2014: 375). Royal approval clearly was needed for the writing of all royal stelae/inscriptions produced under the authority of the Assyrian crown.

Lauinger (2011: 9) has asked the important question of whether the isolated place of derivation of these oath-swearing kings/rulers is meaningful, or just an accident of history. In other

words, were there other subjects of the Assyrian king in the eastern periphery who swore the same oath, but without inscriptional witness? Ashurbanipal's claim in his royal inscriptions that the loyalty oath was taken by all of Assyria is enough for many to suggest that a significant number of other examples of EST must have existed in antiquity (Lauinger 2012: 90).

In support of the position that other kings professed the same oath are Ashurbanipal's own inscriptions, which state that his father Esarhaddon "gathered the people of Assyria, great and small, from the Upper to the Lower Sea" to swear loyalty to him (Borger 1996: 15, Prism A i 18–19; Streck 1916: 4 lines 18–19). Letters from the eighth and seventh centuries BC also demonstrate that a wide variety of officials in the Assyrian administration swore loyalty oaths to the Assyrian king (Radner 2006a: 360–363). For some scholars, this evidence is enough to suggest that many other examples of the oath tablets from Kalhu existed in antiquity, but now are lost or have yet to be excavated (Watanabe 1987: 4; Grayson 1991: 129; Lauinger 2011: 9; Lauinger 2012: 87).

The very presence of the oath tablet in the temple at Tayinat dramatically reinforces the notion that the Medes, who were named among the easterners in the Kalhu tablets, possessed no special status in the Neo-Assyrian Empire that they alone had sworn the loyalty oath. According to Lauinger (2011: 10), most likely on the same day the Median rulers swore loyalty to Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, the governor of Kunalia swore the very same oath. This proposition is both plausible and quite reasonable.

As the exemplars from Kalhu indicate, each of the eight Medes received a copy of the *adê* made out in his own name. In light of T-1801's discovery, perhaps every individual at the helm of an inner or outer territory under Assyrian jurisdiction/control received a personal copy, for a grand total of roughly 200 copies. The intense scribal activity that led to the manufacturing of these potentially 200 copies of Esarhaddon's oath tablet at Kalhu took place in order to meet the requirements of the oath-swearing ceremony at the *akītu* ceremony (Fales 2012: 148).

Moreover, it will be argued subsequently that the oath-swearing of all subjugated rulers took place in Assyria's heartland. A precedent in the Amuq Valley for the kings of the region coming together to pay homage is found at Alalakh of the LBA. During the days of Idrimi, when he had established himself on the throne, he collected the kings who would become those of his confederation: "In one day, like one man, Niya, Amae, Mukiš, and Alalah, my city, turned to me. My allies heard and came before me. When they made a treaty with me, I established them as my allies" (Longman III 1997: 479). Or as the text has been translated slightly differently in German, "An einem einzigen Tag haben sich wie ein einziger Mann das Land Nihi, das Land Amae, das

Land Mukiš und Alalah, meine Stadt, mir wider zugewandt. Meine Brüder hörten (davon) und kamen zu mir. Meine Brüder beschützte ich” (Dietrich and Loretz 1981: 205).

The Kalhu tablets may have been stored at the great city because it was expected that the Median rulers or their representatives would visit the city. While provincial subjects had their payments to Assyria mediated by the governor, the Median vassals brought their tribute directly to the Assyrian central administration (Lauinger 2011: 10). While most of the tablets at Kalhu were found strewn across the floor of the Ezida’s throne room, the true “tablet storage room” (Figure 36: NT 12), or scriptorium, was located across the courtyard (Oates and Oates 2001: 115), directly opposite and to the east of the temple of Nabu. This storage room for archived tablets was looted in antiquity (Wiseman and Black 1996: 1).

The tablets found in the throne room, which Mallowan excavated during the 1955–1957 seasons (Wiseman and Black 1996: 2), seem to be the actual “oath tablets” from contemporary references. As the Kalhu tablets were sealed with the three divine seals of the god Aššur (Lauinger 2012: 87), one of which describes itself in its own seal inscription as the Seal of Destinies, the sealed tablets came to be “on the mythological plane,” Tablets of Destiny, themselves (George 1986: 141; Lauinger 2012: 87; Steymans 2013: 2).

The temple of Nabu involved the writing, sealing, and storing of state documents, not only because of the general nature of this deity as the patron god of the scribal arts (Wiseman and Black 1996: 1), but also due to Nabu’s function as “bearer of the Tablet of Destinies of the gods,” as testified by numerous sources as the god under whom important documents of state were drawn up and ratified with Aššur’s seals (Fales 2012: 137).

In the text of the Kalhu tablets, as elsewhere, Nabu bears the epithet, *nāši tuppi šimāt ilāni*, “bearer of the Tablet of Destinies of the gods.” Accordingly, the Kalhu tablets had to be stored by their proper custodian in the Ezida (George 1986: 141–142; Radner 2006a: 369; Lauinger 2011: 10). That Nabu—the son of Marduk, and thus the crown-prince of the gods—was safeguarding oaths of loyalty to the crown-prince of Assyria would have made this choice of repository all the more appropriate (Fales 2001: 232). More will be said about the Tablet of Destinies below.

The Nabu temple at Khorsabad, ancient Dur-Sharrukin, was located next to the Ziggurat temple complex on the royal citadel. The Nabu temple contained two rooms (Rooms 5 and 15) in which a pigeonhole system was used, rooms that quite likely were used for storing texts. Most of the texts appear to have been removed when the city was abandoned, but several fragments of the tablets were discovered in the debris of Room 5. Tablets also were recovered in the vicinity of the

temple of Nabu at Nineveh (Harrison 2014: 413), while a pigeonhole system for the storage of tablets not only was used at Nineveh, but also at Sippar and in Kalhu's Northwest Palace (Wiseman and Black 1996: 7).

While the presence of cuneiform texts at all of these temples of Nabu in the Neo-Assyrian heartland could be mere coincidence when considering the location of similar tablets inside Tayinat's temple during the Neo-Assyrian occupation of the city, the greater likelihood is that there was a connection between the temple, the texts, and the worship and conjuring of Nabu for specific, functional purposes.

Further connections derive from the relationship between the oath tablets at Kalhu and the oath tablet found at Tayinat. Similarities extend from the size and shape of the Tayinat tablet (40 x 28 cm), its general format (four columns on each side, proceeding from left to right), and the names and dates of the sealings with which it was sealed, most notably including the "Seal of Aššur." Moreover, the sealing of Tayinat's oath tablet appears to have coincided with important ceremonies that were performed in Assyria in 672 BC, at which the vassals, officials, and representatives of "all over whom Esarhaddon exercises rule and dominion" were assembled and swore loyalty to the Assyrian king and his son, Ashurbanipal (Harrison 2014: 414).

## 1.4 The Purpose for the Oath Tablet of Building XVI

The double crosses incised on two of the better-preserved tablets of the *iqqur īpuš* series (T-1923 and T-1927) have a precedent in a small amulet in the British Museum that was inscribed with an extract of the Erra Epic (Reiner 1960: 148–155; Maul 1994: 175–190). Reiner noticed the physical connection between the amulet and the clay tablets of the Erra Epic, given that they shared the same shape. L. W. King (1896: 51) characterized the shape as having "a rectangular projection at the top which is pierced through horizontally, and by which it was evidently intended that the tablet should be hung up." Both the tablets and Reiner's amulet were house-blessings intended to protect the residents of the home in which they were hung from the plaque, as the epilogue of the Erra Epic promised would be the case (King 1896: 53; Reiner 1960: 150–151; Lauinger 2011: 10–11).

The tablets published by King also were incised with double crosses, and Reiner connected their form and decoration to a number of *namburbî* (apotropaic texts that ritually counter evil portents) that are shaped similarly and marked with double crosses. For Reiner, the origins of these double crosses lay in the desire to prevent a later inscription from being added to blank clay that might alter or invalidate a tablet's message. She pointed to other tablets of a normal tablet-shape

whose blank reverses are crossed out in this same fashion (Reiner 1960: 151–152). Eventually, some of the triangles and squares that the double crosses formed came to be seen as magical, and could be inscribed with a formulaic invocation to Marduk (Lauinger 2011: 11).

The amuletic shape of these two *iqqur īpuš* tablets (T-1923 and T-1927) also seems to have developed from what was a purely functional form that allowed a tablet to be suspended, perhaps as amulet-shaped votive objects (Lauinger 2011: 11; Harrison 2014: 417). A wide variety of texts possesses this shape, including the Khorsabad King List and hemerologies from Ashur, Kalhu, and Sultantepe (Weidner 1941–1944: 363; Hulin 1959). This feature of suspension is critical to the inscriptional finds at Tayinat, since the newly found corpus includes its own hemerology (T-1920 + T-1920a). According to Lauinger, the implication for T-1923 and T-1927 is that they were designed intentionally for display in a religious setting (Lauinger 2011: 11; Harrison 2014: 417).

The projection on the Sultantepe tablet is not located on top of the tablet, but on its side. Reiner noted that “it does not seem impossible that what was at first a purely functional device . . . became associated with the beneficent value originally inherent only in the content, not in the shape, of the tablet, and extended to other uses” (Reiner 1960: 155; cited in Lauinger 2011: 10–11). The better-preserved tablets of the *iqqur īpuš* series from Building XVI are specimens of this class of tablet. Both T-1923 and T-1927 possess the amuletic shape, while T-1923 has a projection on its top, and T-1927 has a projection on its side. Therefore, these *iqqur īpuš* manuscripts were deliberately designed for display (Lauinger 2011: 11).

By extension, the same can be said for Tayinat’s oath tablet, T-1801. Watanabe, in a discussion of the atypical rotation of the Kalhu tablets on their vertical axis, made the same suggestion for this corpus stored within the heart of the empire (1988: 265–266). The oath tablet confirms Watanabe’s suggestion, having a piercing through its horizontal axis that would have allowed the tablet to be supported upright. As a result, Lauinger characterized the corpus from Tayinat not as an archive or a library, but as a display collection, stating that T-1801 and T-1923 clearly were manufactured with the intent of being put on display (Lauinger 2011: 11).

By hanging the tablet with a string that ran through the horizontal piercing, presumably at eye-level, the governor of Kunalia guaranteed full visibility of both faces of the document (Fales 2012: 152). To describe this more graphically, the horizontal piercing matches perfectly with the writing of the text on the reverse side, having been inscribed “upside down” in comparison with the text’s obverse (i.e. if the tablet were flipped on its vertical axis, as with a page in a book). A horizontal piercing meant that the text of both sides would appear to be “right-side up” for the

reader only if the tablet were flipped from top to bottom. In other words, the reader could read either side normally if a string ran through the tablet horizontally and he/she flipped the tablet from top to bottom, using the string that was holding the tablet in place.

A large, mudbrick installation was discovered in the northeastern quadrant of the podium in Building XVI's cella. This installation seemingly was an offering table, an altar, or perhaps a platform for the statue of a deity (Harrison 2015). The cuneiform cache was found directly opposite from the installation, in the podium's northwestern quadrant. The position and condition of the oath tablet suggest that it was discovered where it fell when the temple was destroyed by the intense conflagration. The tablet was resting facedown on the podium, with its reverse facing upwards, and it was aligned with the temple's northern and western walls, positioned only a short distance from the northern wall (Lauinger 2011: 12; Steymans 2013: 10). These details suggest that the oath tablet originally was displayed in an upright position on its lower edge in front of the temple's northern wall, only to topple forward when the wall collapsed during the temple's fiery destruction. Given that the tablets at Kalhu were stored at a location where the Median rulers were expected to visit, perhaps the oath tablet at Tayinat served in rituals renewing the loyalty oath of the governor of Kunalia and his subjects (Lauinger 2011: 12).

Steymans was the first to suggest the intriguing possibility that such tablets intentionally were kept in places where their oath-takers were expected to visit on a regular basis (Steymans 2004: 61–85; Harrison 2014: 417). Just as the eastern rulers would have recited their loyalty to the current Neo-Assyrian king and his heir, in the form of reading their oaths aloud in a sacred Assyrian temple at Kalhu, so also the officials in the province of Kunalia would have ventured to the administrative capital and recited a similar pledge on the other side of the empire, in the very temple that was unearthed by the TAP in the summers of 2008 and 2009.

As for the underlying purpose of the oath tablet, Esarhaddon's *adê* of early 672 BC seems to have been issued to ensure allegiance throughout the empire and accomplished in the form of a covenant of loyalty to the Assyrian crown in view of the planned succession of Ashurbanipal. The aging ruler imposed this covenant on the totality of the peoples within his empire, in its twofold division of Assyrian-ruled provinces and polities subjected to vassalage (Fales 2012: 147). However, it must be stated that Esarhaddon's *adê* involves more than a mere covenant of loyalty between two or more human parties. More will be said about this below.

## 1.5 Translation and Oath-Requrer of Building XVI's Oath Tablet

The text of the oath tablet from Building XVI is almost identical to that of the tablets from Kalhu: it contains the same stipulations, curses, and colophon, plus it exhibits the same variation in orthography and line-breaks as with the individual manuscripts from Kalhu. Another similarity is the inclusion of the reference to “all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are.” One unsurprising difference between the oath tablets from Tayinat and Kalhu is that in the former, the treaty-partners are the anonymous *bēl pāḥiti* of the province of Kullania: 16 additional, anonymous individuals or groups designated by occupation (Lauinger 2012: 90).

The tablet consists of a core of unbaked and disintegrating clay that is held in place by a thin, partial shell of baked clay. The reverse is mostly complete, while only portions of the obverse remain (Lauinger 2012: 91). Because the reverse of T-1801 faced upwards when the tablets fell onto the podium during the conflagration, this surface was extensively but incompletely fired, leaving its physical condition highly unstable.

Thus the reverse preserves most of SAA 2 6 344–670 (Parpola and Watanabe 1988), as well as two additional curses (§54 A and B) that are absent in the Kalhu manuscripts, the first invoking the pair of Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il, and the second invoking the goddess Šarrat-Ekron, who will be discussed subsequently. Lauinger's translation (2012: 112–113) is as follows:

§1: The *adê* of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, with the governor of Kunalia, with the deputy, the major-domo, the scribes, the chariot drivers, the third men, the village managers, the information officers, the prefects, the cohort commanders, the charioteers, the cavalrymen, the exempt, the outriders, the specialists, the shi[eld bearers (?)], the craftsmen, (and) with [all] the men [of his hands], great and small, as many as there are—[wi]th them and with the men who are born after the *adê* in the [f]uture, from the east [. . .] to the west, all those over whom Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, exercises kingship and lordship, concerning Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, the son of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, on whose behalf he established the *adê* with you.

§30: You will not look at Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, or his brothers, without reverence or submission. If someone does not protect him, you will fight them as if fighting for yourselves. You will bring frightful terror into their hearts, saying: ‘Your (pl.) father wrote (this) in the *adê*, he established it, and he has made us swear (it).’



§35: Whoever changes, neglects, violates, or voids the oath of this tablet (and) transgresses against the father, the lord, (and) the *adê* of the great gods(?) (and) breaks their entire oath, or whoever discards this *adê*-tablet, a tablet of Aššur, king of the gods, and the great gods, my lords, or whoever removes the statue of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, the statue of Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, or the statue(s) of his brothers (and) his sons *which are over him*—you will guard like your god this sealed tablet of the great ruler on which is written the *adê* of Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, the son of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, your lord, which is sealed with the seal of Aššur, king of the gods, and which is set up before you.

§54: May Aramiš, lord of the city and land of Qarnê (and) lord of the city and land of Aza'i, fill you with green water.

§54 A: May Adad (and) Šāla of Kurba'il create piercing pain and ill health everywhere in your land.

§54 B: May Šarrat-Ekron make a worm fall from your insides.

§67: Just as a shoot is [. . .], (and) seed(s) and the *sikkitu* of beer are placed within, (and) just as these seeds do not sprout, and the *sikkitu* of beer does not turn to its . . . , may your name, your seed, (and) the seed of your brothers (and) your sons disappear from the face of the earth.

§96 A: May they strike down you, your sons, and your daughters like a spring lamb or kid.

§106: May they cause the door to be soaked (in blood?) before your eyes. May your doors not open.

Lauinger offered no explanation why he left *adê* untranslated, but the meaning of the term often is taken as, “loyalty oath,” though *CAD* more generally defines it as “a type of formal agreement” (Gelb et al. 1964: 131). Admittedly, this term may mean more than a mere loyalty oath, depending on the context of its use, as the subsequent discussion will substantiate. Who is the oath-requirer who is responsible for the *adê*? T-1801 begins, “The loyalty oath of Esarhaddon,” followed by his preeminent title (“King of Assyria”) and rationale for the legitimacy of his title,

namely the successional nature of his relationship to his father (“son of Sennacherib”), who also is ascribed with the title, “King of Assyria.”

As Harrison stated, T-1801 “records a loyalty oath (*adê*) imposed by Esarhaddon on the governor (*bēl pāḥiti*) of Kunalia in 672 B.C.E., binding him to Ashurbanipal, Esarhaddon’s chosen successor, and providing a clear post-date for the destruction of the temple” (2014: 414). The reference to the loyalty oath of Esarhaddon signifies that he, and not Ashurbanipal, is the king who forged the agreement with the officials at Kunalia. At the same time, this does not preclude a once-crowned Ashurbanipal from binding his subjects to the very oath that they originally swore, or continued to swear periodically, whichever the case may be.









OFFICE	TITLE / BRANCH	CHARACTERISTICS
governor	civic	oversaw administrative province as king’s regent
deputy	‘second one’; civic	vice-governor and second in command in province
major-domo	‘chief steward’; civic	probably oversaw mobilization of military troops
scribes	civic	responsible for codifying matters worthy of recording
chariot drivers	military; 	cavalry officers who led king’s chariots in battle
third men	shield-bearers; civic	became governor’s personal officials and confidants
village managers	civic	(?) leading officials in each provincial village
information officers	civic	(?) itinerate agents who related pertinent info. to gov.
prefects	military; 	probably highest ranking officers on battlefield
cohort	military; 	officers who probably oversaw cavalry forces
charioteers	military; 	officers who drove chariots used in battle
cavalrymen	military; 	Assyrian soldiers who fought on horseback
exempt	military; 	soldiers thought to be exempt members of military
outriders	military; 	probably members of <i>kallāpu</i> infantry (separate unit)
specialists	(?) military; 	(?) served as scouts, spies, weapon-makers, etc.
shield-bearers	military; 	held support positions within army, as soldier’s aid
craftsmen	(?) military; 	(?) served as equivalent of army corps of engineers
men of his hands	civic	individuals in offices and functions in service of gov.

Table 2: Comparative Chart of Officials Named on Tayinat’s Oath Tablet (T-1801)

## 1.6 Identifying the Oath-Swearers of Building XVI’s Oath Tablet

The oath tablet from Building XVI lists those who swore loyalty to Esarhaddon (Table 2): 17 titled—but unnamed—officials or groups, followed by a generic reference to “all the men of his

hands, great and small, as many as there are.” Thus the recipient of Tayinat’s oath tablet was neither a Mede, nor a city-lord, nor a particular foreign chief (Fales 2012: 147). The 16 specified parties were named in descending order, from most important (“governor”) to least important (“men of his hands”) in the Neo-Assyrian province of Kullani.

The official identified is the governor of Kunalia, undoubtedly a faithful subject of the Assyrian crown and a diligent person. He not only took his personal copy of the sworn *adê* back home with him to the Amuq Valley, but he also resolved to obey the letter of the pact, itself (Fales 2012: 151), which obligated him to “guard like your god this sealed tablet of the great ruler on which is written the *adê* of Ashurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, the son of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, your lord, which is sealed with the Seal of Aššur, king of the gods, and which is set up before you” (Lauinger 2012: 112). This passage enjoined the recipient to consider the document that bore the loyalty oath as endowed with a divine quality or essence that emanates from Aššur through the human agency of the Assyrian monarchs. Similar to a cherished local deity or a personal god, the tablet was to be protected in permanence, specifically by “setting it up” in the presence of the recipient, himself (Fales 2012: 151).

The presence of the tablet in the cella of Building XVI confirms the governor’s adherence to the letter and spirit of the law, as this very oath tablet may have outlived the governor, himself. At minimum, it most likely survived in use at least as long as he served. The entire Assyrian administrative hierarchy was based on the concept of substitution, as the king himself was acting as the “vice-regent” (*iššakku*) of the god Aššur, and thus was the god’s earthly representative, following an ancient Mesopotamian tradition that can be traced back to the city-states of the third millennium BC (Luukko 2012).

The second official identified is the deputy, and the Assyrian word for “deputy” literally means, “the second one.” The term often is translated “vice/deputy governor.” Although the idea of having a deputy is not an innovation of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the deputy system certainly was well developed at this time. A deputyship was meant to be a permanent office, as a deputy did not replace a superior official (Luukko 2012).

The third official identified is the major-domo, which literally means, “chief steward,” or “house-minister.” The king’s major-domo at his court was the one official who had direct access to the monarch. According to the chronicle on the reigns from Nabu-Nasir to Shamash-shumu-ukin (ABC 1), in Year 2 of Esarhaddon, the king’s major-domo conscripted troops in Akkad. In the Esarhaddon Chronicle (14), the text states that during Year 4, Sidon was taken and plundered,

while the major-domo “carried out a selection [in Akkad]” (Glassner 2004: 207). This “selection” once again is a conscription of Babylonian troops, which agrees word-for-word with the entry in Chronicle 1 (Grayson 1975: 31). Therefore, while the vice governor probably assisted the governor in ensuring the smooth operation of all of the required administrative tasks within the province, the major-domo seems to have overseen the mobilization of military troops.

After the third individual official mentioned on the oath tablet, all of the subsequent offices and occupations were listed in plural. The governor’s full retinue was comprised of palatial and village administrators, many ranks/corps of military, and civilian personnel who were attached to the army (Fales 2012: 147). The first group mentioned is “the scribes,” who were responsible for the literary codification of historical, political, and other matters that kings or officials deemed worthy of having recorded.

A stone relief from Sennacherib’s (Southwest) Palace Without Rival (Kertai 2015: 122–147) depicts two Assyrian scribes counting heads after battle. The bearded scribe in the scene is writing on a hinged board, probably covered with wax, as with those at Kalhu (Lines 1955: 240). A primary goal of any Mesopotamian or Assyrian scribe was to ensure that the “name” (*šumu*) and the “glory” (*tanattu*) of the king was entrusted to his heroic achievements, which were necessary to establish an enduring memory, a process that was completed by codifying them in written form on a celebrative stele (*narû*), with the gods as the official addressees (Liverani 2014: 373).

The second group mentioned is “the chariot drivers,” who were military warriors of a prestigious rank, given the importance of charioteers in battle since the days of the *maryanu* (chariot-warriors) of the middle of the second millennium BC in the Levant. Cuneiform evidence has shown that Assyrian governors had military units and chariotry at their disposal. Chariot drivers were listed by the governors of Laḫiru, Māzama, as well as the deputy governor of Maganuba (Dezső 2012: 96). These probably were personal chariot drivers of each governor.

The third group mentioned is “the third men,” who originally were shield-bearers. Before the discovery of the oath tablet from Tayinat, 90 “third men” of the Neo-Assyrian period were known by name, plus another 42 fragmentary entries. At least 30 types and variants of the “third men” appear in the cuneiform sources, which indicates that the title was originally the “shield-bearing third man” on the chariot, a confidant of his lord (Dezső 2012: 102). However, this position became something far greater than a standard shield-bearer.

Legal texts list “third men” of Assyrian governors and other officials in their witness lists, while the royal correspondence depicts them in action. The third man of the governor of Laḫiru

appeared together with his lord (Nergal-ilāī, the governor), his deputy, and his chariot driver, all having been the owners of the village that the eunuch of the crown prince of Babylon bought from them in 670 BC. Therefore, the third man was not only the personal official of the governor, but his confidant, as well, thus implying that he would have played an important role in the administration of the province of Laḫiru (Dezső 2012: 105).

The fourth group mentioned is “the village managers,” a post that was not related to the military administration of the empire. One cuneiform text from the reign of Sennacherib mentions four officials—a eunuch of the crown prince, chief fuller, a major-domo, and a village manager—all of whose offices lack important military connotations (Dezső 2012: 159). Perhaps the village managers were the leading officials in each village within the province’s jurisdiction.

The fifth group mentioned is “the information officers,” whose role is difficult to identify conclusively. They may have carried out a set of administrative responsibilities, as itinerate agents who related pertinent information from the village managers to the governor. Perhaps they roamed the province and collected information that was deemed valuable for the provincial administrators, serving as a form of spy, or secret agent. This role would be similar to the later network of spies known as the “Eyes and Ears of the King” (Oppenheim 1968: 173), whom the Persian King Cyrus appointed to scour the empire in order to find potential threats of treason or rebellion.

The sixth group mentioned is “the prefects,” whose position is well known in the administrative system of the empire. Almost every Assyrian military unit had its own prefect (*šaknu*), or foreman. One text mentions the prefect of the cavalry as the person who—by means of an omen—enquired about the possibility of a rebellion against the crown prince, Ashurbanipal. A fragmentary letter written to Sargon II that deals with a review of cavalry and chariotry troops features a report to the king that 106 cavalymen were reviewed, because a further 94 under the command of the prefect were missing. The prefect probably was the highest ranking officer who was active on the battlefield (Dezső 2012: 42, 122).

The seventh group mentioned is “the cohort” (*ki-šir*), a military unit whose size is presently unknown. The only title that helps to reconstruct the structure of the Assyrian cavalry is the “cohort commander of cavalry,” which reveals that the cavalry was organized in cohorts. Judging by the evidence from the Nimrud Horse Lists, the *rab urâte* officer (“team commander”) was equivalent or similar to the *rab kišir* (“cohort commander”). The Horse Lists suggest that the officers of the city-units of the royal corps under the command of the Chief Eunuch were cohort commanders,

while the officers of the provincial troops with similar duties were team commanders (Dezső 2012: 43, 128).

The eighth group mentioned is “the charioteers” (<sup>giš</sup>GIGIR.MEŠ), whose position before the cavalymen reflects the higher status of charioteers than standard cavalry. Representations of armored horsemen on a bronze bowl and ivories from Kalhu dating to the eighth century BC depict charioteers wearing scale armor, a tradition that dates back to the second millennium BC. However, judging by the reliefs from the palace of Sargon II, armored horsemen disappeared from the armament of Assyrian charioteers. The reign of Ashurbanipal saw the development of leather armor for the Assyrian chariotry and cavalry. One cuneiform document mentions a “town of chariot horse trainers” that was located within the empire (Dezső 2012: 60, 111).

The ninth group mentioned is “the cavalymen” (*pet-hal-la-ti*), the branch of the Assyrian army that fought on horseback. Although the art of horse riding is known as early as the beginning of the second millennium BC, the cavalry—as an independent, regular arm of the army—cannot be identified until early in the first millennium BC. The first depictions of the cavalry as a fighting unit appear in the palatial reliefs of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 BC). The reliefs of Tiglath-Pileser III feature both armored and unarmored cavalymen. By the reign of Sennacherib, at the latest, the cavalry was divided into lancers and mounted archers. The most important weapon of the cavalymen was the cavalry lance, which they used to spear the enemy from the overarm position (Dezső 2012: 13, 19).

The tenth group mentioned is “the exempt” (*zak-ku-e*), which refers to another military position. The *zakkû* soldiers are thought to have been the exempt military. Among the soldiers listed in a famous report to Sargon II by Adad-issīa, governor of Māzama, were exempt infantry troops, though it is not certain whether they were royal garrisoned troops or provincial troops of a local governor. In a letter of Sargon II, he asked one of his governors, Mannu-kī-Adad, why he turned the exempts of the palace (1,119 able-bodied men) into recruits (Dezső 2012: 36, 42, 89).

The eleventh group mentioned is “the outriders” (*kal-la-ba-ni*), who seem to be a form of the *kallāpu* infantry. When Assurnasirpal II led a campaign to Zamua in 880 BC, he placed his *kallāpu* infantry, along with his cavalry, in position for an ambush next to the city of Parsindu, which led to the killing of 50 soldiers of Ameka, king of the city of Zamru in the plain. In a letter written during the reign of Shalmaneser IV (782–773 BC), a standard casualty list includes the deaths of three *kallāpu* soldiers. Three small tablets (CTN III 113; CTN III 102 and 108; and CTN III, 114) list two military units: presumably the *Arraphāia* on the obverse, and the *kallāpāni* on the

reverse. While these were separate military units, they were not larger divisions (Dezső 2012: 16, 18, 79).

The twelfth group mentioned is “the specialists” (*um-ma-a-ni*), which probably refers to another group of military men, given the string of various army officers that began with the second group of people mentioned on the list and continues with the group that follows the specialists. It stands to reason that these soldiers possessed special functions within the military, perhaps serving in such roles as scouts, spies, weapon-makers, and/or tactical forces.

The thirteenth group mentioned is “the shield-bearers” (*lu-a-ri-ti*), a support position in the army, and thus does not refer to a soldier who fought in pitched battle. This role should be distinguished from the earlier “third men,” who began as shield-bearers to the provincial governor but eventually became his confidants and administrative aids. The *lu-a-ri-ti* shield-bearer bore no such high position, and in fact served as nothing more than a mere soldier’s aid.

The fourteenth group mentioned is “the craftsmen” (*kit-ki-tu-u*), which is difficult to identify with confidence. Given the long string of military positions, however, it seems safe to attribute this post to some role within the army. In this scenario, perhaps the role represents the men who served as the equivalent to an army corps of engineers. The Assyrians had to cross rivers with heavy equipment, to invade rebellious cities with large siege engines, and to build all sorts of apparatuses for the movement of their army and success in battle. Therefore, the craftsmen here may be the engineers who supplied the army with all of its necessary equipment.

The fifteenth and final group mentioned is “all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are” (<sup>lú</sup>ÉRIN.MEŠ ŠU<sup>II</sup>-šú-gab-bu TUR u GAL *mal ba-šú-u*), which clearly is an inclusive statement that encompasses all of the other individuals in offices and functions that ultimately serve the Assyrian crown by assisting the governor in his task of ruling the province on behalf of his royal overlord. While Lauinger reconstructed the part of the text that reads, “his hands” (2012: 112), this phrase nonetheless ties these workers directly to the governor.

The text of the loyalty oath continues with the statement that the men who would be born after its inception, from east to west, also would be responsible to remain faithful to the oath. While the text expressly names Esarhaddon as the ruling Assyrian king, the attention shifts to the demand for loyalty to the king’s royal heir, Ashurbanipal, “on whose behalf he [Esarhaddon] established the loyalty oath with” the people of the province of Kunalia.

Several observable differences exist in the hierarchy presented in the Tayinat tablet vs. the hierarchy presented in the Kalhu tablets, which will be articulated in that order: (1) an unnamed

*bēl pāḫiti* vs. a named *bēl āli*; (2) 16 additional, unnamed officials or groups of officials, or 17 if “all the men of his hands” is added, vs. the *bēl āli*’s unnamed sons and grandsons; (3) “all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are” vs. the residents of the *bēl āli*’s city and “all the men of his hands, as many as there are” (Lauinger 2012: 113).

In contrast to the manuscripts from Kalhu, two features of T-1801 predominate: (1) the anonymity of the *bēl pāḫiti* and other officials, which perhaps was intended to ensure that the text of the *adê* remained applicable even if governing personnel at Kunalia were to change; (2) the undoubtedly intentional omission of any mention of sons and grandsons, reflecting the non-hereditary nature of the governorship at Kunalia, a mere provincial capital (Lauinger 2012: 113).

## 1.7 The Rationale for the Oath Tablet from Building XVI

Why was Esarhaddon so concerned with the eventual transition of power from himself to his son, Ashurbanipal, that he instituted this empire-wide, oath-swearing procedure that required rulers and governors to travel to distant Kalhu and return home with a document that recorded their solemn vow? The possibility exists that Ashurbanipal was not the firstborn son of his father. Esarhaddon himself was not the firstborn son, and his own firsthand experience probably included the awareness that not everyone within the empire—or even among the royalty and nobility—would abide by the monarch’s choice of a non-firstborn as heir to the throne. This adds all the more reason for Esarhaddon to anticipate a challenge to the succession plan that he had implemented, if not an outright coup dedicated to usurpation of the throne. According to Radner (1998b: 160), however, Ashurbanipal was the son of Ešarra-hammat, the principal wife of Esarhaddon. If Radner is correct, the rationale for creating EST must be sought in some other possible circumstances.

The history of the ANE is replete with examples of foreign and domestic rebellions that broke out during times of royal succession on the part of superpowers with foreign vassals and subjugated peoples feeling the sting of oppression and having their resources squeezed out of them by their demanding overlords. The death of the superpower’s king often was perceived as a moment of weakness, which either led to a challenge to the throne by those within the palace or an outright rebellion on the part of foreign peoples seeking freedom from tyranny. The loyalty oath of Esarhaddon addressed both possibilities, and it was designed to thwart any such attempts.

The text of T-1801 that continued after the seal of Sennacherib stated that the swearer was forbidden to look at Ashurbanipal, the crown prince designate, or his brothers, without reverence or submission. In simple terms, any form of revolt against the royal family was categorically



prohibited. Moreover, the oath-swearers were obligated to fight against any other subjugated peoples who refused to protect Ashurbanipal, undoubtedly with a view toward the time of his accession to the throne, as if they were fighting for their own lives. Esarhaddon commanded the oath-swearers to “bring frightful terror into their hearts” (Lauinger 2012: 112), disciplining the rebellious with a stern reminder that both parties had sworn allegiance through a sacred oath of loyalty, and that dire consequences would befall them if the terms were broken.

## 1.8 The Audience for the Oath Tablet from Building XVI

A matter of importance that cannot be overlooked is the identity of the audience for the swearing of the loyalty oath. T-1801 referred to itself as an “*adê*-tablet, a tablet of Aššur, king of the gods,” “which was sealed with the Seal of Aššur, king of the gods.” Therefore, the oath tablet and the weight of the stipulations it carried with it for those who would swear allegiance to Esarhaddon were intricately bound to the chief Assyrian deity, Aššur.

In Esarhaddon’s own Zincirli Stele, the king wrote (RINAP 4 98: Rev. 50–53), “I had a stele made, written in my name, and I had inscribed upon it the renown (and) heroism of the god Assur, my lord, (and) the might of my deeds which I had done with the help of the god Assur, my lord, and my victory (and) triumph. I set (it) up for all time for the admiration [corrected to ‘admonition’] of all the enemies” (Liverani 2014: 377–378).

Aššur, who personally was intertwined with the king’s success, thus was the primary audience of the oath-tablet discovered at Tayinat. For this reason, the king even referred to T-1801 as Aššur’s tablet. The balance of Tayinat’s oath tablet features a formula of curses and blessings, with a brief list of gods as witnesses. This part of the tablet will be discussed after a survey of oath-swearing in the ANE, which will provide the developmental basis for what is found on T-1801, in order to interpret these provisions of the oath tablet in their greater historical context.

## 2 The Case for Oath-Swearing at Tayinat’s Building XVI

### 2.1 Oath-Swearing in Mesopotamia of the Early Dynastic Period

While there is by no means an abundance of inscriptional evidence from early Mesopotamia that sheds light on the practice of oath-swearing, some examples of treaty texts in early Sumer do exist, which resemble the later Hittite and Assyrian examples (Magnetti 1978: 816). One such inscription is the Stele of the Vultures, which was discovered at Lagash and dates to the Early Dynastic III Period (*ca.* 2450 BC). The stele, found by French excavators at Tello in the 1880’s (Alster 2003:

1), commemorates the victory of Eanatum (Barrelet 1970: 258), the ruler (*ensi*) of Lagash, over the city of Umma (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 5–9; Frayne 2008: 126–140; Magnetti 1978: 816).

After Eanatum attacked and subsequently defeated the city of Umma, having reclaimed a contested area that Umma’s ruler allegedly acquired in violation of an earlier agreement, he killed its ruler, erected a border-marking stele, and imposed a treaty on the defeated city (Frayne 2008: 131; Alster 2003: 5; Magnetti 1978: 816). In the overall history of that epoch, the treaty does not stand in isolation, but is simply one vivid episode in a lengthy dispute between the two neighboring cities of Lagash and Umma (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 5).

The treaty contained a long curse-formula, which was repeated six times, all with different Sumerian deities to be invoked if the treaty were broken: Enlil, Ninhursag, Enki, Suen, Utu, and Ninki. Thus the ruler of Umma, swore an oath of loyalty to Eanatum, with the gods as the enforcers if any violation of the terms of the agreement would lead to the Ummaites’ punishment. The text reads as follows (Frayne 2008: 132–133; Magnetti 1978: 816):

. . . E-anatum gave the great battle net of Enlil to the leader of Ĝiš[a] (Umma), and made him swear to him by it. The leader of Ĝiša (Umma) swore to E-anatum: “By the life of the god Enlil, king of heaven and earth! I may exploit the field of the god Ningirsu as a(n interest-bearing) loan. A dike was dug (lit. made) to spring. F[orever and evermore, I will not transgress the territory of the god Ningirsu!]. I will not shift (the course of) its irrigation channels and canals! [I will not rip out its monuments!]. Whenever I do transgress, may the great battle net of Enlil, king of heaven and earth, by which I have sworn, descend on Ĝiša (Umma)!]”

This treaty is the oldest known inter-state treaty with a text that has survived in substantive form (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 5). If the ruler of Umma were to transgress the boundary that he had sworn not to cross, Enlil the air/wind-god would ensnare the city of Umma by hurling down his net from the sky above. Magnetti has noted that since the dispute in the Stele of the Vultures was limited to the maintaining of a territorial boundary, this text is not an example of the fully developed form of treaty that emerged in later periods, though the delineation of boundaries is a typical feature of the later treaties that were more fully developed (Magnetti 1978: 816).

There can be no question of the treaty’s role as a legal instrument; it is a treaty between two independent polities. Given that Eannatum had been the victor and could dictate terms, this was neither a parity treaty nor a vassal treaty, but rather what might be termed a superiority treaty,

by which the more powerful of the two partners could dictate the essential stipulations at the time of composition (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 9).

## 2.2 Oath-Swearing in Syria of the Early Bronze Age

The third millennium BC saw treaties not only administered in Mesopotamia, but also in the northern Levant. The regional power that arose was located at Ebla, modern Tell Mardikh, located about 50 km south of Aleppo. Its ambitious rulers established a diplomatic network of interrelationships in all directions during the twenty-fifth and twenty-fourth centuries BC, when they brought various smaller city-states into client and vassal relationships with the great city of Ebla (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 10–19).

The god Kura—who seems to manifest some of the same functions as the storm god—is attested at Ebla as early as the late third millennium BC, and it was worshipped in Syria from then until down into the first millennium BC (Younger 2009: 4). Six treaties were found in the palatial archive at Ebla—five of which concerned Ebla as the dominant player, while the sixth focused on Ebla’s chief rival, Mari—with reports of other treaties alluded to within other texts of Ebla’s archive. The six city-states involved were Abarsal, Armi, Burman, Martu, Dulu, and Manuwat. The longest and most detailed treaty was between Ebla and Abarsal (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 10–12), the only one that will be discussed here.

The Ebla-Abarsal treaty probably dates to the reign of Yigrish-Halab, third to the last king of pre-sargonic Ebla, about 50 years before Sargon of Akkad seized power in Mesopotamia. The format of the treaty is radically different than (earlier and later) Sumerian tradition, with the following sequence: stipulations, sub-title I, stipulation, sub-title II, stipulations, sub-title III, stipulations, and witness/curses (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 11–12).

The treaty communicates Ebla’s claims to rule, to be acknowledged by Abarsal, as well as a corresponding statement of Ebla’s formal acknowledgement of the legitimacy of Abarsal’s rule in its domains. Beyond normal political matters discussed (royal envoys, trade, etc.), the treaty addressed topics such as homicide, brawling, the ransoming of slaves, and dangerous domestic animals, topics normally reserved for law codes. The treaty ends with the gods as witnesses invoked against any who would break the stipulations included within the text (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 12, 14, 16–17).

## 2.3 Oath-Swearing in Mesopotamia of the Akkadian Period

The first empire to break onto the scene of human history is the Akkadian Empire, which was rooted in central Mesopotamia at the unidentified city of Akkad (Petrovich 2013: 283). While Sargon of Akkad is credited with having built the empire, the exploits of his grandson, Naram-Sin, seemingly outshone those of his grandfather. Naram-Sin inherited and maintained Akkadian rule in the Elamite region, without the need to fight any major wars (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 20). Votive and building inscriptions of Naram-Sin were found locally at Nippur, Adab, Ur, Marada, Girsu, Tutub, and abroad at Susa and Nineveh. Such inscriptions attributed to Naram-Sin—also found at Nineveh, among other Assyrian cities—suggest that his borders probably were even more expansive than those of Sargon (Stiebing Jr. 2009: 72–74).

The Naram-Sin Treaty, which was discovered at Susa, commemorates the covenant between Naram-Sin of Akkad and the King of Elam, perhaps Hita (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 20–22). The text, which probably dates to a time just before *ca.* 2200 BC, does not mention the situation that led to the alliance. The Elamites may have been conquered by Naram-Sin, because the treaty presents them in a position inferior to that of the Akkadians. Within the text, the gods of both sides were invoked, and the Elamites swore an oath of vassalage. According to the terms of the treaty, “the enemies of Naram-Sin are the enemies of Elam; the friends of Naram-Sin are the friends of Elam” (III, 10–16). The oath of fidelity was sworn several times, and various curses and blessings were included (Magnetti 1978: 817).

More specifically, the threefold document included an introductory set of 37 divine witnesses to the treaty (six Akkadian, 31 Elamite), written in typically repetitive form. Next came six major paragraphs of oath + stipulations. The closing paragraph contained an oath, a deposit of the document, and a further blessing. The stipulations placed responsibility only on the Elamite ruler, clearly a client-ruler subordinate to Naram-Sin, making this another case of a superiority treaty. Naram-Sin’s interests were shown great respect, while no corresponding advantages to Elam were mentioned in the text (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 20–21).

## 2.4 Oath-Swearing in Syria of the Old Babylonian Period

The letters from Mari in eastern Syria make direct reference to treaties sworn between early Babylonian kings. In *ca.* 1775 BC, Ishme-Dagan I of Assyria wrote to his brother, Yasmah-Adad (whom his father, Shamshi-Adad I, had placed over Mari), sometime after the death of Shamshi-Adad I (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 47), proposing the following: “Let us swear a great oath by

the gods.” Sometime after Zimri-Lim ousted Yasmah-Adad from Mari and re-seized the throne of Mari from the usurping Assyrians, he received a letter concerning Mari’s relations with Amut-pi-el of Qatna. Yarim-Lim requested for Amut-pi-el to come to him at Aleppo, optimistically noting that “we will establish good relations between me and him, (swearing) an oath by the gods and (making) a firm treaty” (Magnetti 1978: 817). Thus virtually a millennium before the Assyrians overtook the Kingdom of Palistin, both Assyria and Syria had established a history of oath-swearing between rulers, often marked by the invocation of gods to protect the terms of the treaties.

One of the older extant treaties related to western Syria is Abba-El’s bestowal of Alalakh to Yarim-Lim II (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 68; Wiseman 1958b: 129), who probably was Abba-El’s son, since Yarim-Lim II mentions Abba-El as his father in a seal inscription from Alalakh. The known agreement should be considered a treaty, however, because it is a solemn sworn-agreement between two rulers (Magnetti 1978: 817). The text goes on to state that Abba-El placed himself under oath to Yarim-Lim II, which he ratified by cutting the neck of a sheep, stating that he should die in like manner if he takes back that which he gave to Yarim-Lim II (Wiseman 1958b: 129), meaning the city of Alalakh.

For Yarim-Lim’s part, he declared to Abba-El that if he (himself) lets go of the (hem?) of Abba-El’s garment and seizes the (hem?) of another king’s garment, he would forfeit the town and its territories (Wiseman 1958b: 129), once again referring to the city of Alalakh and its territories. While Magnetti did not realize that Abba-El and Yarim-Lim likely were father and son, he did understand that Abba-El bound himself under oath to Yarim-Lim, promising protection so long as the latter’s loyalty would be unswerving (Magnetti 1978: 818).

This northern Syrian treaty shows both links and contrasts with the earlier treaties that were enacted further to the east. In similar fashion, it features oath and ceremony, the agreed-upon terms, and witnesses. In contrast, this treaty reverses the order of the elements in the treaty, features purely human witnesses, contains a historical prologue, and includes a curse that is implicit rather than clearly stated (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 68).

## 2.5 Oath-Swearing in Egypt’s New Kingdom

Although evidence of oath-swearing in ancient Egypt is sparse, some texts do illustrate the use of treaties. The oath of allegiance sworn to Thutmose III by the coalition at Megiddo in Canaan reveals the importance of the oath in guaranteeing stability and fidelity. After the siege and surrender of Megiddo, he said, “Then my majesty (i.e. ‘I, pharaoh’) caused them to swear an oath,

saying, ‘We will never again act evilly against Men-kheper-re (Thutmose III)—may he live forever, our lord—in our lifetime, because we have seen his glory’” (see Hoffmeier 2000a: 16).

While this pact is more of an example of an oath of fealty, it is still significant to note that the solemn oath was an effective element that brought peace to the region through subjection to Egypt and subsequent vassalage (Magnetti 1978: 820). The effectiveness of the pact is seen in the lack of any future uprisings by these Levantine petty kings during the lifetime of Thutmose III, despite the fact that after his first-Asiatic campaign (Year 22), he launched 16 more Asiatic campaigns over the course of his reign. These kings fulfilled the pledges that they made to him, as Thutmose III seemed to take advantage of the oath-swearing practice common in the Levant. Moreover, it is not surprising that the kings of Ashur, Babylon, and Hatti all sent ambassadors to this pharaoh, carrying costly gifts with them (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 102).

## 2.6 Oath-Swearing in the Hittite Empire

The tradition of oath-swearing with divine witnesses is well known from the treaties of the Hittite Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 85–102; Wiseman 1958a: 23). The earliest of the Hittite treaties, discovered in the royal archives at Boghazköy, date to *ca.* 1500 BC (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 85). Boghazköy’s archives of *ca.* 30,000 tablets have yielded roughly 50 treaty-texts (Weidner 1970), some of which are complete.

Composed over a period of more than 200 years, from Zidanta I to Tudhaliya IV (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 85, 93, 98), the great majority of the agreements are vassal treaties, imposed on an inferior by the Hittite king. Thus the obligations for future conduct fell to one side only: that of the vassal. The only complete parity-treaty involved Hattusili III and Ramesses II of Egypt, a treaty that was preserved on the walls of the temple at Karnak, in Upper Egypt, as well as in the Akkadian version from the archive at Boghazköy (Magnetti 1978: 818).

Formally, a Hittite vassal treaty was crafted just as the parity treaty, with one exception being that the obligation to observe the stipulations rested exclusively on the vassal’s shoulders. Of course, the political situations from which the vassal and parity relationships arose were radically different, as few Hittite rivals carried the military and political weight that Egypt possessed. The constitutive element of the Hittite treaties is not always mentioned specifically, but there must have been a mechanism by which the terms of the treaty were ratified (Magnetti 1978: 818).

Mendenhall mentioned three elements he saw in a typical treaty: (1) the formal oath of ratification, (2) some solemn ceremony that accompanied the oath, and (3) some recourse for initiating action against a rebellious vassal (Mendenhall 1955: 34–35). Hittite vassal treaties typically featured the element of a formal ceremony in which the subservient ruler swore a verbal oath of allegiance to the powerful Hittite king, whereby he pledged loyalty. The typical style observed by Kitchen and Lawrence (2012: 96) is this: (1) title, (2) stipulations, (3) divine witnesses, (4) appropriate curses, and (5) political obedience.

The frequency with which the expressions “break the oath,” and “the oath and the treaty,” occur in Hittite vassal treaties proves that ratification of the treaties required a solemn oath as a precursor to the expected observation of the stipulations. The elaborate oath by which a soldier swore allegiance to the Hittite king, combined with the various rituals performed before battle, suggests that an oath-swearing ceremony accompanied the treaty’s ratification (Magnetti 1978: 818–819).

With the imperialistic expansion of the Hittite Empire during the second half of the first millennium BC, the opportunity for suzerain-vassal relationships produced numerous treaties between the Hittite king and the client-kings under his wing. Among the treaties that were signed are the Amurru treaties of the mid-fourteenth to the late-thirteenth centuries BC, including the treaty between Šuppiluliuma I of Hatti (1370–1330 BC) and Aziru of Amurru (Kuhrt 1995: 252).

The vast territories of northern and central Syria that were seized during Šuppiluliuma I’s campaigns required a reconfiguration of the Hittites’ borders. The formula, “from the Euphrates to Mount Lebanon,” appeared several times in the historical introduction of the Šattiwaza Treaty. Besides these imposing natural borders, the treaty also provided a more exact delineation of the eastern border, which extended well beyond the Euphrates at the end of his reign (Singer 2014: 67–68).

While six duplicates of the aforementioned treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Aziru have been preserved in Akkadian, the sole Hittite version is better preserved than any of them. In the treaty, the Hittite king denounced the kings of Egypt, Mitanni, Qatna, Carchemish, and several other kingdoms for suddenly having become hostile to him. In contrast, he praised the king of Amurru for having risen up from the gate of Egypt and having submitted himself to Šuppiluliuma I’s majesty (Singer 2000: 94; Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 94–96).

The Hittite king proclaimed that under the treaty, “if I, My Majesty, send to you, Azira, to your aid either a prince or a high-ranking lord with (his) troops and his chariots, or if I send to

attack another land, and you, Azira, do not mobilize wholeheartedly with troops and chariots, and you do not attack that enemy, and you commit some [evil by saying,] ‘Although I am under oath, I do not know at all whether he will defeat the enemy or whether the enemy will defeat him,’ and if you write to [that] enemy (saying), ‘[Behold, the troops and the chariots] of Hatti are coming to attack. Be on guard!’ – thereby you will break the oath” (Singer 2000: 94). The treaty goes on to list a number of stipulations under which Azira would break terms of the agreement.

After these warnings, the Hittite king listed the divine witnesses (“the thousand gods”) whom he summoned to bear witness to the oath, and he concluded the treaty by adding curses and blessings that would come to Ariza, depending on whether or not he adhered to the terms of the pact (Singer 2000: 95). While there is no direct reference made to the moment when Azira swore his allegiance to Šuppiluliuma I, the clear statement was made that the King of Amurru had pledged his allegiance, since the Hittite king offered the hypothetical statement of Azira that “although I am under oath, . . . .” Therefore, the Amorite swore a solemn oath of loyalty.

Another important Hittite treaty dates to the reign (1330–1295 BC) of Muršili II (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 98, 99), one of the sons of Šuppiluliuma I (Kuhrt 1995: 254). Under Muršili II, three local treaties were preserved that renewed the bond with Aleppo and two Syrian vassals, namely Ugarit and Amurru (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 98). In one case, the Akkadian version of a treaty is preserved in one text, while the Hittite version exists in four duplicates. The composite translation of Itamar Singer (2000: 96) primarily is based on the Hittite version, with restorations provided by the Akkadian version and other Amurru treaties.

Muršili II harkened the attention of the Duppi-Teshub of Amurru back to Azira’s submission to Šuppiluliuma I, reminding him of how his grandfather fought alongside the Hittites when the latter were in battle against their enemies. He also reminded the Amorite king that Azira protected his father just as his father had protected Azira, and that Azira never sought to harm the Hittite king or anger him in any way, faithfully delivering the annual tribute of 300 shekels of pure gold that had been decreed in the terms of the treaty (Singer 2000: 96).

The stipulations of the treaty included not only loyalty to Muršili II, but also the promise not to alter Amurru’s allegiance to Egypt, the continued annual deliverance of 300 shekels of gold, the commitment to rally to the Hittites’ aid if some enemy would revolt against them, and the agreement to extradite into the care of Muršili II any deportees who flee to Amurru. In addition, the following statement reflects the swearing of an oath to the Hittite king (Singer 2000: 96, 97, 98):



When I, My Majesty, took care of you according to the word of your father, and installed you in the place of your father, behold, I have made you swear an oath to the king of Hatti, to the land of Hatti, and to my sons and my grandsons. Keep the oath of the king, and the hand of the king, and I, My Majesty, will protect you, Duppi-Tešub. . . . [Behold, let the thousand gods stand by for this oath! Let them observe and listen! . . . All the words of the treaty and the oath which are written on this tablet –if Duppi- Tešub [does not keep these] words of the treaty and of the oath, then let these oath gods destroy Duppi- Tešub . . . .

Despite the limitation of evidence, it appears that the common threads in the form of treaties enacted in Mesopotamia of the third millennium BC, in Syria of the first half of the second millennium BC, and in Hittite Anatolia of the second half of the second millennium BC included an appeal to the higher power of the gods, the swearing of an oath to initiate the stipulations of the agreement, and the inclusion of various curses and blessings (Magnetti 1978: 817).

## 2.7 Oath-Swearing in Syria of the Late Bronze Age

While evidence of Syro-Palestinian vassal treaties of the LBA is sparse, one example is found on the statue of Idrimi of Alalakh, a client-king subservient to Mitanni who secured his throne with the help of the Hurrians (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 86). Although Woolley dated the statue to a time no later than the first quarter of the fourteenth century BC (Woolley 1949: 2), most scholars now date its origin to the first half of the fifteenth century BC (Magnetti 1978: 819), due mainly to synchronisms with Idrimi's contemporaries. Kitchen and Lawrence date the reigns of Idrimi and his successor, Niqmepa, to the time of Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV (2012: 86), which they date to *ca.* 1440–1420. This probably represents the most accurate synchronization.

A photograph of the findspot of the statue of Idrimi was published recently (Fink 2010: 58 [photo 10]). The statue was found either in the annex of Level III (Fink) or on the floor of Level I (Woolley) of the courtyard enclosure adjacent to and below the temple, which existed from Level IV (fourteenth century BC) through Level I and was destroyed within the first 15 years of the twelfth century BC (Fink 2010 49–56; Woolley 1949: 1).

The inscription on the statue refers to a treaty that Idrimi established with the Hurrians, in which he reminded them of the loyalty of his forefathers and promised his own loyalty to them. The Hurrians had opposed Idrimi for seven years, but once they were open to Idrimi's terms of

peace, they set down in writing the “mighty oath” that was made between them. After reciting the terms of the oath that he pledged, Idrimi offered a sacrifice on a great brazier, accepted the Hurrian king’s favor, and subsequently proclaimed, “Then I became king” (Smith 1949: 17–19). The entire agreement is called a *māmītu* “oath” in Akkadian (Magnetti 1978: 819).

Woolley discovered another treaty involving Idrimi, which is known as Alalakh Tablet № 3. The text of the inscription involves the extradition of fugitive slaves between Idrimi of the Kingdom of Alalakh and Pilliya of the Kingdom of Kizzuwatna, which—based on the context—must have been located near Alalakh’s territory. Both kings obligated themselves to return fugitive slaves who sought refuge in the other’s kingdom, though only after the Hurrian king approved the agreement (Magnetti 1978: 819). Moreover, there was a written declaration that both parties swore the oath in obligation to specified deities, who were called upon to destroy either party that would transgress the covenant (Wiseman 1953: 31–32).

Another treaty from Alalakh (known as Alalakh Tablet № 2) involved Niqmepa, Idrimi’s son and successor (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 86), and Ir-Teshub, King of Tunip (Wiseman 1953: 26–31). The text, which is entitled, “tablet of the oath by the gods,” enumerates stipulations to be observed by both parties concerning fugitive slaves, inter-territorial theft, and marauders. Provisions were included for the abrogation of the treaty, should either party rebel against their common Hurrian suzerain (Magnetti 1978: 819). If either side were to lose a prisoner who was under guard, an oath was to be sworn to the gods, as a test to the innocence of the guardian (Wiseman 1953: 29).

Of the various treaty texts discovered at Ugarit, the treaty between Niqmaddu II of Ugarit and Aziru of Amurru is among the worthiest of mention (Kitchen and Lawrence 2012: 96). The political situation in Syria during the middle of the fourteenth century BC is not completely clear, but the Amurru (Amorites) apparently held a position of superiority. Lines 4–5 of the treaty state that Niqmaddu II and Aziru “make between themselves this oath.” Niqmaddu was to pay Aziru 5,000 shekels of silver, and mutual defense of the other party was guaranteed. The end of the tablet is badly broken, but the word *māmītu* (“oath”) appears several times (Magnetti 1978: 820).

## 2.8 Oath-Swearing in the Israelite Monarchy

While the ancient Israelites—including both the southern Kingdom of Judah and the northern Kingdom of Israel—left behind a virtual dearth of inscriptional records when contrasted with their neighbors, the biblical text is far from lacking in discussion about oath-instigating treaties.

According to the Pentateuch, Yahweh promised to deliver the inhabitants of Canaan into the hands of the Israelites, and to drive them out of the land (Exod 23:31). In this context, Yahweh reportedly said to Moses and the Israelites, “You shall make no covenant with them (Canaanites) or with their gods” (Exod 23:32). This statement obviously is correct in addressing the ANE practice of weaker kings’ swearing oaths of loyalty not only to more powerful foreign kings, but also to those kings’ deities. This prohibition reflects the orthodox Israelite religious belief that there was no other (living) god apart from Yahweh (Deut 4:35). Therefore, one should not expect the biblical text to document such oath-swearing treaties with foreign kings.

Magnetti admitted that it would be surprising if an actual text of a treaty made between Israel and another state were preserved (1978: 824). Before the Pentateuch appeared, at least according to the internal chronology of biblical history, Abraham established a covenant with a local ruler of Canaan (abimelech; see Chapter 1), in which the former swore loyalty to the latter:

So it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham saying, “God is with you in all that you do; now, therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me, or with my offspring, or with my progeny, but according to the kindness that I have shown to you, may you show to me and to the land in which you have lived.” So Abraham said, “I swear.” . . . Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a covenant (Gen 21: 22–24).

The text offers no indication that the pact made between Abraham and abimelech was offered in the name of any deity, but clearly the element of a sworn oath is present, with the covenant ratified by Abraham’s presentation of seven ewe lambs to abimelech (Cartledge 1997: 32). Abraham called the site Beersheba (“Well of [the] Oath”), since they swore an oath there (Gen 21:31).

When Abraham’s grandson Jacob lived in Haran, he had a dispute with Laban, his father-in-law, over the possession of flocks and their offspring (Gen 30:25–43). Jacob took his wives and secretly fled westward, crossing the Euphrates River and intending to travel to Canaan (Gen 31:1–21). Angered at these events, Laban and his men pursued Jacob and caught up with him in a week’s time in the hill country of Gilead (Gen 31:22–25). After a long conversation, Laban and Jacob made a covenant, with each man having sworn that he would not cross the point at which they had met, at least not with the intention of bringing harm on the other (Gen 31:44–52).

Laban declared that the stone pillar and heap of stones that they erected in that place of meeting would act as a witness between the two men (Gen 31:51–52). For his part, Jacob called on the God of Abraham (his close ancestor) and the God of Nahor (Laban’s close ancestor) to judge between them (Gen 31:53), which is a form of appeal to—or invocation of—a deity, as one greater than he, to oversee the terms of the oath. Jacob swore by the fear of his father, Isaac, another appeal that was made to one greater than he. In addition, Jacob offered an animal sacrifice on a nearby hill, which included a shared meal to solidify the pact (Gen 31:54).

The Israelites’ first recorded oath-swearing covenant on a national level is their pact with the Gibeonites, shortly after entering Canaan from Transjordan. When the Gibeonites heard what Joshua had accomplished at Jericho (Joshua 6) and Ai (Joshua 8), they deceived the Israelites into believing that they were citizens of a distant land (Josh 9:3–13), and thus no target in Canaan whom the Israelites needed to exterminate under divine directive. Without consulting Yahweh, Joshua made peace with them, including the cutting of a covenant (Josh 9:14–15).

When the Israelites arrived at the cities controlled by the Gibeonites, they desired to attack them as they had done at Jericho and Ai. Instead, the Israelite leaders told the congregation that the Gibeonites could not be touched, since Joshua and the leaders had sworn to them by Yahweh that they would not harm the Gibeonites (Josh 9:17–19). “This we will do to them: allow them to live, so that wrath will not be on us on account of the oath that we swore to them” (Josh 9:20). The leaders of Israel were afraid to bring harm onto the Gibeonites, because they equated doing so with the unavoidable incurring of Yahweh’s wrath. For them, the keeping of one’s promise through a loyalty oath superseded their mandate to exterminate all of the Canaanites.

During the divided monarchy, another international oath-swearing event took place when the prophet Elijah opposed the policies and deeds of King Ahab, ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel during the ninth century BC. Elijah was preparing to have an audience with the king during the time of a severe famine in Samaria (1 Kgs 18:1–2). En route, Elijah encountered Obadiah, who served as the head of Ahab’s household but also feared Yahweh greatly (1 Kgs 18:3–7), unlike Ahab, who served and worshipped Baal (1 Kgs 16:29–31).

The Israelites were strictly prohibited from worshipping the gods of the peoples around them, including Baal (Deut 6:14). Elijah told Obadiah to go to his master, Ahab, and announce that Elijah had come and wished to have an audience with the king (1 Kgs 18:7–8). Obadiah was fearful of such an idea, because “there is no nation or kingdom where my master [Ahab] has not

sent to search for you. Now when they said, ‘He [Elijah] is not here,’ he [Ahab] made that kingdom or nation swear that they could not find you” (1 Kgs 18:10).

While this narrative does not describe a peace treaty or a commitment to vassalage on the part of those nations that swore to King Ahab, it nonetheless describes an oath of truthfulness that was sworn to the Israelite (foreign) king, indicating in genuine sincerity that the whereabouts of Elijah were not known in those given realms. The Hebrew verb *šāba* (‘swore’) is used of making an oath, or binding oneself by an oath (Cartledge 1997: 32), so the nature of these sworn promises is no less binding than the oath-swearing agreements made in standard vassal treaties.

The biblical text does attest to a treaty that Ahab contracted with a foreign ruler, namely Ben-Hadad of Aram: “*Ben-Hadad* said to him, ‘The cities that my father took from your father I will restore, and you can make for yourself streets in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria.’ Then *Ahab answered*, ‘On the basis of a treaty, I will set you free.’ So he (Ahab) made a treaty with him, and he let him go” (1 Kgs 20:34).

Ben-Hadad had invaded Israel during Baasha’s reign, at the request of King Asa of Judah, and he probably had occupied certain border towns. Following his defeat at the hands of Ahab, Ben-Hadad had agreed to return the border towns and to allow the Israelites to have extraterritorial commercial rights in Damascus. The agreement, despite the stipulations imposed on Ben-Hadad, seems to have been more along the lines of a parity treaty than a vassal treaty, though practically nothing is known of the treaty’s ratification (Magnetti 1978: 827).

Another reference to a treaty between a Hebrew king and an international power is that between Zedekiah and Nebuchadnezzar, the powerful leader of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. According to the text, Zedekiah “also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear *an oath* by God (or ‘by *the gods*’)” (2 Chron 36:13). Once again, the Hebrew verb *šāba* was employed for the act of swearing an oath of non-rebellious allegiance.

According to all indications, Nebuchadnezzar had imposed a vassal treaty on Zedekiah when the latter was installed by the Babylonian king as the puppet-ruler of Judah in place of his nephew (2 Kgs 24:17; Magnetti 1978: 827), Jehoiachin, who was deported to Babylon in the spring of 597 BC (Young 2004: 21). Jehoiakim, the father of Jehoiachin, died in 598 BC after a reign of 11 years, and his young son’s subsequent reign lasted only three months (2 Chron 36:9).

Finally, the attestation of a sworn oath is found in the context of the post-exilic Jews that returned to their homeland from the Babylonian captivity. When Nehemiah had rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, though before doors had been built for the gates (Neh 6:1), two men named Sanballat

and Tobiah opposed them and desired to prevent the completion of the project (Neh 6:2–14). Once the doors were built and the wall was secured all of the way around the city, the hearts of Nehemiah’s enemies sank exceedingly (Neh 6:15–16).

At that time, the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, who wrote back to them (Neh 6:17). These letters seem to represent a co-conspiring, as the Jewish nobles reported many of Nehemiah’s words to Tobiah (Neh 6:19). As for the basis for this conspiring, “many in Judah were bound by oath to him [Tobiah], because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam, the son of Berechiah” (Neh 6:18). Therefore, Tobiah enjoyed a familial relationship with some of the prominent Jews.

As the governor of Ammon, Tobiah evidently was jealous of Jerusalem’s rising stature, whose fortified walls made it a formidable city, in turn posing the threat of becoming a rival to the territory that he was governing. Although the “oath” (*shěbû ‘āh*) was not sworn in the context of an international treaty, instead being an oath of allegiance, the swearing of fidelity in such a context reveals that the bond of allegiance became effective when an oath was sworn. Therefore, the use of an oath here is illustrative of normal practice in treaties (Magnetti 1978: 827–828).

## 2.9 Oath-Swearing in Assyria of the Iron Age II

From the mid-to-late eighth century BC, virtually all of Mesopotamia and the Levant, plus large territorial extensions in Anatolia and Iran, became a homogenous political and ideological horizon, in spite of the multiple ethnicities and cultures encompassed within these areas. The Neo-Assyrian Empire was a complex system of “absolute” rule, centered on the balance of power between the king and a palatial/governmental elite, on which all within the periphery depended. At its apex, the empire combined territorial and political domination in a core of adjacent provinces that were subjected in full to Assyrian jurisdiction and exploited for their assets of people, resources, and land (Fales 2012: 133).

The Assyrian institution of the loyalty oath (*adê*) was an important mechanism by which Neo-Assyrian kings expanded their influence and maintained internal stability.<sup>8</sup> The basic instrument employed to sanction subordinate peoples with the Assyrian state was a formal pact, for which the term *adê* was used frequently from *ca.* 825–625 BC (Fales 2012: 134). In addition

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<sup>8</sup>For detailed introductions to the *adê* as an instrument of empire, with many textual references, see Parpola and Watanabe 1988: xv–xxv, along with Radner 2006b: 351–378.

to the references to the institution of the *adê* in royal inscriptions, letters, oracle queries, and other genres, the text of loyalty oaths is preserved on a handful of tablets. Most of these tablets are archival copies that were stored at Nineveh. One group of these loyalty oaths, consisting of the eight tablets from Kalhu and the Tayinat tablet (i.e. EST), is slightly different than the rest, since it records a vow of future loyalty to Assyria when the present king (Esarhaddon) would die and his son (Ashurbanipal) would ascend to the throne (Lauinger 2012: 87).

Within Assyrian royal ideology, the text of the loyalty oath sworn before Aššur was so highly regarded as an institutional emblem of political unity and dynastic continuity that it was transformed progressively into a truly theophorous substance, endowed with the autonomous power of doling out justice and guaranteeing the correctness of legal proceedings. The transformation from a legal tool to a legal subject was sanctioned for the first time in Esarhaddon's *adê* of 672 BC (Fales 2012: 153).

Few examples of Assyrian treaties exist, possibly because the Assyrians typically conquered city-states completely, deported the survivors, and subjugated them directly under Aššur's rule (von Soden 1994: 183). Not surprisingly, the first extant Assyrian treaty-text dates to the time when Assyria's power had diminished dramatically. Assyria's Shamshi-adad V and Babylon's Marduk-zakir-shum I were the parties involved. No mention was made of an oath sworn to ratify the treaty, likely due to the poor preservation of the text (Magnetti 1978: 820).

Ashurnirari V of Assyria, whose power did not compare to that of Tiglath-pileser III, the man who usurped his throne, is known to have launched one campaign to the west, in 754 BC. In order to consolidate his position in Syria, he attempted to make the Syrian ruler, Mati'ilu of Arpad, his vassal. After the stipulations of the treaty were listed, Ashurnirari V stated, "You have sworn by Assur, king of heaven and earth" (Magnetti 1978: 821). Following this statement are the names of at least 37 other gods, probably listed as witnesses. Thus Mati'ilu's oath-swearing ceremony was integral to the ratification of the treaty.

The treaty that Esarhaddon contracted with Baal of Tyre in 677 BC is poorly preserved and offers no mention of an oath, although curses are legible in the text (Inscription 9, in Borger 1967: 107–109, as cited in Magnetti 1978: 822). At the end of the fourth column, the treaty is called the *tuppi adê*, so the stipulations imposed on Baal of Tyre seemingly were acknowledged and ratified by an oath sworn by the vassal to the suzerain, in this case Esarhaddon (Magnetti 1978: 822). Thus an oath probably existed in the lacuna.

However, it should be noted that there is a dispute as to the meaning of the term *tuppi adê* in Akkadian, especially as it concerns Neo-Assyrian treaties that relate to *akītu*-ceremonies. Either this term can be translated, “treaty-tablet,” “oath-tablet,” or “tablet of destiny” (Lauinger 2013: 99). The question of which translation best fits EST will be discussed at greater length below.

The vassal treaties of Esarhaddon that were discovered at Kalhu in 1955 consist of one fairly well preserved tablet and fragments of at least eight copies of the stipulations that Esarhaddon imposed on the petty rulers of areas to the east of Assyria. The introduction and seal impressions are followed by a long list naming the 17 gods who witnessed the making of the treaty and the vassals’ affirmation of its terms (Wiseman 1958a: 22; Harrison 2014: 414). Unlike the average ANE vassal treaty, the expressed purpose of Esarhaddon’s vassal treaties from Kalhu and Tayinat was to ensure the smooth succession of Ashurbanipal, his son, to the throne (Magnetti 1978: 822). Esarhaddon simply desired to eliminate the threat of revolt when he died.

The best preserved text of the treaties is the agreement between Esarhaddon and Ramataya of Urakazabanu. While the structure of the agreement is similar to that of regular vassal treaties—with the title of the agreement, the naming of the parties involved, the naming of the gods who acted as witnesses, stipulations imposed, the mention of the preservation of the text, and curses upon the breaking of the oath—several obvious differences are noteworthy.

Every paragraph of Esarhaddon’s pact with Ramataya was written in the form of an oath, which is not the case with standard vassal treaties. Also, the parties with whom the treaty was formulated had been subjugated to the Assyrian king already. Finally, the rulers’ unswerving loyalty in the matter of orderly succession to the throne, while only an incidental stipulation in other treaties (e.g. Ramesses II and Hattusili III treaty) is the main—even the only—object of the entire text in the vassal treaties of Esarhaddon (Magnetti 1978: 822–823).

Nonetheless, the treaties of Esarhaddon must be considered a variation of the standard ANE vassal treaty, given that they feature a solemn agreement between the Assyrian monarch and foreign rulers. In addition, these treaties also were imposed by the Assyrian king on the foreign rulers in the form of a sworn oath that established a binding agreement under the threat of curses and divine retribution, should the rulers act contrary to the stipulations spelled out in the terms of the agreement. The fact that each stipulation exists in the form of an oath, and that deities were invoked under oath, leads to the conclusion that the solemn affirmation before the gods was the common, constituent element of the Neo-Assyrian treaties (Magnetti 1978: 823).



## 2.10 Oath-Swearing in Syria of the Iron Age II

A final example of ANE oath-swearing that is worth discussing is a Syrian pact between Bir-Ga'yah of (currently unidentified) Katak and Mati'ilu of Arpad, whose vassalage to Ashurnirari V was treated above. By this time, evidently Arpad's allegiance to Assyria had ended, so the treaty did not interfere with Assyria. Three Old Aramaic texts related to the pact were discovered (Fitzmyer 1967), though it is uncertain whether these stelae are three distinct agreements or three variations of the same treaty deposited in separate sanctuaries (Magnetti 1978: 821). The three stelae date to the mid-eighth century BC, sometime prior to 740 BC (Fitzmyer 2000: 213).

The most complete text is that of Sefîre I (Fitzmyer 2000: 213–215), where the structure can be broken down into the following paradigm: (1) the title and names of the parties involved, (2) the gods who acted as witnesses, (3) the curses upon Mati'ilu should he violate the treaty, (4) the ceremony accompanying the treaty, (5) the sacredness of the treaty, (6) the stipulations of the treaty, (7) the reminder for the future observance of the agreement, (8) the blessings if the treaty were to be upheld, and (9) the curses on anyone who disturbs the stele (Magnetti 1978: 821).

One important feature of Sefîre I is that various gods were listed as witnesses to this treaty. “And the st[ele with t]his [inscription] they have set up (as) this treaty. Now (it is) this treaty which Bar-ga<sup>3</sup>[yah] has concluded [in the presence of Assur] and Mullesh in the presence of Marduk and Zarpanit . . .” (Fitzmyer 2000: 213). A total of 20 gods were listed as witnesses, in addition to heaven and earth, the abyss and the springs, and day and night. Thus these kings appealed to all of the spiritual beings and all of their vast, physical surroundings to witness the binding nature of their agreement to maintain peace and loyalty to one another.

There is no expressed provision for swearing an oath to ratify the agreement, but Sefîre I is entitled 'dy' in Aramaic, which is a cognate of the Akkadian word *adē*, likewise always plural in form. The Akkadian word appears only at a relatively late date. Wiseman defined Akkadian *adē* as a solemn charge or undertaking of an oath (Wiseman 1958a: 81). The notion that an *adē*-agreement was sealed with a solemn oath is evident from many usages: “the kings broke the *adē*-agreement with me; they did not heed the oath by the great gods”; “I made him enter an *adē*-agreement with an oath by the great gods,” making it likely that the same definition for Akkadian *adē* should be applied to the Aramaic cognate 'dy' (Magnetti 1978: 821–822).

## 2.11 Relation of Israelite Covenants to Oath-Swearing

Before concluding the section on oath-swearing, it is necessary to discuss a topic briefly that is tangential to the swearing of loyalty oaths: covenants, the ratification of covenants, and covenant renewal. Sworn oaths of loyalty essentially forge a covenant between two parties, whether as equals or as a superior with an inferior, even if they typically are not described as covenants in the literature. Since the most descriptive written source from antiquity regarding covenants is the Hebrew Bible, the discussion will focus on the implementation and expansion of this concept as it has been articulated in the biblical text.

The rich Israelite tradition of covenant (*berith*) was founded on a covenantal relationship between Abram and Yahweh, known as the Abrahamic Covenant, whose initiation is articulated in the text of Gen 12:1–3. This covenant has been described as being of completely different form than the Israelite Decalogue or the covenant made in Joshua 24 (Mendenhall 1954: 62). In this foundational covenant, Yahweh instructed Abram to leave his country (Ur: Gen 11:28 = the Third Dynasty of Ur, if based on Thiele's chronology) and his relatives, and to depart for a land that was not revealed to him at the time of the covenant's inception (Gen 12:1), which he did by way of Haran (Gen 12:4; Flanders Jr. et al. 1996: 134).

The covenant, though not an oath of loyalty, is unconditional (Hahn 2009: 11; Bautch 2009: 15), unilateral, and unmerited. Abram performed no acts deserving of the covenant (Bautch 2009: 15), was not expected to fulfill any conditions to initiate it, and had no responsibility to make any reciprocal promises to Yahweh in connection with it. Weinfeld (1970: 184, 185) referred to the Abrahamic Covenant as being of the promissory (or grant) type, which constitutes an obligation of the master to his servant, rather than an obligation of the servant to his master.

Since the covenant was unilateral, only Yahweh was required to fulfill promises to Abram, which are three in number: land, seed, and blessing (Gen 12:2–3). Yahweh promised to provide Abram and his descendants with a land (Gen 12:1), which later was described in the Pentateuch as a land flowing with milk and honey (Exod 3:8; Lev 20:24; Num 14:8; Deut 6:3). He also promised to make Abram a great nation (Gen 12:2; Hahn 2009: 104), which implies a progeny that would multiply in number to such an extent that this offspring would become a great nation on the earth. Finally, Yahweh promised that Abram would be a blessing to all of the families of the earth (Gen 12:3), implying that his family would provide some unspecified benefit to other nationalities.

The ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant is found in Gen 15:1–21, as the covenant required a typical ANE ritual to enact the covenant officially. While there is much greater depth

of meaning related to the priestly rituals of the Pentateuch (Gorman Jr. 1990: 9), the ritual involved with the ratification of the Abrahamic Covenant is not insignificant, by comparison. Of note is that the ratification of the covenant took place not in Mesopotamian Ur, but in Canaan, the Promised Land<sup>9</sup> to which the text implies that Yahweh had led Abram as initially required. The implication clearly is that the obedience of Abram to Yahweh's instruction to depart from Ur for the Promised Land was required before the covenant's ratification would be enacted.

The *berith* of Gen 15:18 was based on the cutting (*kārath*) of a covenant, as its ratification demanded a ceremony in which five sacrificial animals were cut in half and placed on an altar (in separate halves): a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon (Gen 15:9). During this event, Yahweh alone passed between the two sides of the animals' flesh, leading to the traditional designation of "the covenant between the pieces" (Hahn 2009: 104). In this ratification, Yahweh unilaterally pledged the land of Canaan—and to the east, even beyond Canaan—to Abram's line (Gen 15:7–21), which is an amplification of the promise of land originally offered to Abram while he still resided in Ur. These may be defined as the ultimate borders of Abraham's descendants, as a dispute exists over whether the eastern border of the Euphrates River implies the border of eventual Israel, or that of other people groups that would descend from Abram, such as the Ishmaelites or the Edomites.

An amplification of the promise of a seed (i.e. progeny) also is found in the ratification passage, where it states that Yahweh appeared to Abram in a vision of the night (Gen 15:1) and instructed him to gaze into outer space, in order to witness the vast array of stars visible to the eye. Yahweh then declared to him that counting the stars in the night's sky can be compared to the counting of his own descendants (Gen 15:5), signifying how Abram's offspring will be enumerable, for all practical purposes.

A covenant renewal between Yahweh and Abram took place when the patriarch was 90 years of age, the text for which is found in Gen 17:1–22, at which time his name was changed to Abraham in order to reflect how he would be the father of a multitude of nations (Gen 17:5; Coogan 2011: 73). Not only did Yahweh proclaim that he will "establish" (*nāṭan*, the other verb used with *berit*) his *berit* with Abram (Gen 17:2, 4), but he again reiterated the promise of a seed by stating

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<sup>9</sup>The territory of land that Yahweh promised for Abram and his descendants after him to have forever is the Promised Land, a central focus of the entire Bible, which remains so for modern Judaism (Coogan 2011: 11).

that he will multiply Abram exceedingly (Gen 17:2), will make him the father of a multitude of nations (Gen 17:4, 5), and will make him exceedingly fruitful (Gen 17:6).

New to this renewal of the Abrahamic Covenant in Genesis 17 is the everlasting or eternal element of the covenant that is stipulated, as Yahweh stated to Abram that it will be established between Yahweh and Abram—and between Yahweh and Abram’s descendants after him—throughout their generations for an everlasting/eternal covenant (Gen 17:7). In addition, this renewal of the covenant includes another reiteration of the promise of land, here stating that the land of Canaan will be their possession as an everlasting possession (Gen 17:8).

The renewal of the Abrahamic Covenant in Gen 17:1–22 provides a significant glimpse into the relationship between covenant and ritual. Here, Yahweh required that Abram and his descendants keep (*šāmar*) the covenant by circumcising all of their male children on the eighth day after birth, as a sign/expression of the covenant between Yahweh and Abram (Gen 17:9–12; Baultch 2009: 94). Any male not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin was to be cut off from the people, because Yahweh considered this to be a covenant-breaking act (Gen 17:14). Abram and his descendants thus were to perform the ritual of removing the foreskin of every male child and/or servant, which demonstrated their individual adherence to the covenant with Yahweh.

Given that Abraham fathered a number of children, the question exists as to whether Yahweh’s covenant with him would be extended to all of them, a question that is answered in Genesis 17. Yahweh promised Abram that his son Ishmael would be blessed, would become fruitful and multiply exceedingly, would become the father of twelve princes, and would be made into a great nation (Gen 17:20). However, Yahweh stressed to Abram that his covenant would extend only to Isaac (Gen 17:21; Hahn 2009: 106). The fulfillment of this promise is found in Gen 26:1–5, 24 (Flanders 1996: 145), where the text states that Yahweh appeared to Isaac and renewed the Abrahamic Covenant with him. Yahweh promised to give the land of Canaan to him and his descendants, to bless him, to establish with Isaac the oath that Yahweh swore to Abram, to multiply his descendants as the stars of the sky, and to bless all the nations of the earth by means of his seed (Gen 26:2–5). This last promise is a reiteration of the original promise made to Abram in Gen 12:3, Yahweh’s proclamation that through Abram, all of the families on earth would be blessed.

Just as with Abram, the Abrahamic Covenant was passed along to one of Isaac’s sons: Jacob (Gen 28:10–19; Flanders 1996: 145). In Genesis 28, Jacob rested at a place that later was called Bethel (= House of God), where he fell asleep and experienced a vivid dream (Gen 28:11–12). In the midst of the dream, Yahweh appeared to him and promised that he would possess the

land on which he was lying down, that his seed would be as the dust of the earth, that they would spread out over every direction of the compass, and that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (Gen 28:13–1). This text thus reiterates all three elements of the Abrahamic Covenant: land, seed, and blessing.

A renewal of Yahweh's promise to Jacob as an extension of the Abrahamic Covenant is recorded in Gen 46:1–5, where Jacob and his family were said to have camped at Beersheba, before their relocation to Egypt (Gen 46:1, 4). Once again, Yahweh spoke to Jacob in visions of the night, saying that he would make a great nation of Jacob's offspring while there in Egypt (Gen 46:3; Hahn 2009: 104), which is another reiteration of the promise of seed that originally was given to Abram. No such offerings of the Abrahamic Covenant needed to be given expressly to any of Jacob's sons, because Jacob's entire family was a recipient of the promise. Other covenants were extensions of the Abrahamic Covenant—such as the Palestinian (Deut 30:1–10), the Davidic (2 Sam 7:8–16), the New (Jer 31:31–34), and the (conditional) Mosaic<sup>10</sup> (Exod 20; Deut 11 et al.) Covenants—but it goes beyond the present work to delve into any of these secondary covenants.

The Abrahamic Covenant that was cut with Abram and passed down to Isaac and Jacob presents a beautiful picture of the loving relationship between them and their deity, one that is based purely on the benevolence and generosity of Yahweh. While there are noticeable differences between the biblical covenants and ANE loyalty-oaths between rulers, some common features do exist. For example, while the great majority of the loyalty-oath agreements are vassal treaties, imposed on an inferior by the Hittite king, the obligations for future conduct fell on one side only: that of the vassal. This reality compares favorably to the obligation related to the Abrahamic Covenant's having rested on only one party: in this case, on the deity. Additionally, with the Abrahamic Covenant and its ancillary covenants, the biblical writers are credited with the use of the ANE practice of oath-swearing, as dramatized in texts such as Gen 15:7–21 (Bautch 2009: 15).

### 3 Religious Significance of Building XVI's Oath Tablet

The preceding survey of oath-swearing in the ANE has demonstrated that the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat fits perfectly within the long and well-established tradition of sworn legal agreements between equals (parity treaties) or superiors/suzerains and inferiors/vassals (vassal treaties). The

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<sup>10</sup>The Mosaic Covenant imposes specific obligations on the tribes/clans of Israel, without binding Yahweh to any specific obligations (Mendenhall 1954: 62).

roots of this tradition can be traced back to Early Dynastic Mesopotamia, and its succeeding examples filtered through the great empires and the kingdoms of the Fertile Crescent and beyond. What specific parallels are found between these oaths and the one from Tayinat?

Using the following six elements that are typical of ANE treaties, an attempt will be made to evaluate the characteristics of the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat: (1) a preamble, (2) a historical prologue, (3) stipulations, (4) provision for deposit in the temple and for periodic public reading, (5) a list of gods as witnesses, and (6) a formula of curses and blessings. A study of the applicable elements of the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat will serve as a platform to articulate the religious significance contained within the tablet's text.

### 3.1 Preamble within the Oath Tablet

Tayinat's oath tablet possesses a preamble, which identifies the text as an *adê*, names the superior (Esarhaddon, the oath-requiree), notes his pertinent titles, and lists the individuals (the governor of Kunalia, etc., as above) placed under the requirements of the oath (i.e. the oath-swearers).

### 3.2 Stipulations within the Oath Tablet

While T-1801 possesses no true historical prologue, such as a typical review of the faithfulness of a vassal's forefathers to the forefathers of the superior king in the treaty, it does contain clear stipulations. The governor of Kunalia and those under him were to look at the crown prince designate of the Neo-Assyrian Empire with reverence and submission, protecting him if any person, contingent, city, or nation formerly in his service were to rebel.

### 3.3 Temple-Deposit for Public Reading within the Oath Tablet

Just as with the typical Hittite treaty, Tayinat's oath tablet includes a provision for the deposit of the tablet in the temple for periodic, public reading. First of all, the text expressly states that anyone who discards this loyalty-oath would be subject to experiencing the curses that followed. Second, the provincial governor was to guard the tablet of the oath as if it were his own cultic figure, or deity. Third, and most telling, the tablet is described as having been "set up before you," which signals its intended prominent position within the temple: the innermost sanctum.

Confirmation of the stipulation of the mounting of the tablet in the temple is found in the hole that ran through the tablet horizontally, demonstrating the intention that it be placed against the wall of the cella of the temple in such a way that it could be flipped easily, from obverse to reverse, contra Steymans's suggestion (2013:10) that its suspension would allow a person to walk

around the tablet and read it from either side. This preparation of the tablet is typical of the oath-tablets from Kalhu (EST), so the Tayinat tablet was intended to reside in the temple for regular or periodic reading, for the purpose of oath-swearing. One scholar recently has stated that since the tablet refers to the governor and 16 other officials, perhaps this suggests a number of oath-takers (Crouch 2014: 151). This assessment seems to be completely accurate.

According to the wording on the tablet, not only was the governor to swear his oath of loyalty while at Kalhu after he arrived for the grand festivities there, but seemingly every one of his subordinates—administrative and military—was to swear the same oath of unwavering loyalty. Undoubtedly, not all of these subordinates—if any, for that matter—journeyed with the governor to distant Kalhu from the Amuq Valley, especially since “all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are” were among the documented oath-swearers. Instead, they would have spoken their sacred oath at the capital of Kunalia, probably at Nabu’s temple, itself.

Since all future officials and military officers of the province also were to speak the oath, it had to be placed not only in a permanent location, but one where each new official or officer had access to the tablet. Moreover, given the appeal to the gods that was inscribed on the text, which will be discussed shortly, each governmental worker offered a sacred vow, making one of the two administrative temples a logical, onsite location where the sacred vow could be spoken. In Chapter 4, a discussion of the identity of the cultic occupants of Building XVI and Building II led to the conclusion that at Kunalia these most likely were temples of Nabu and Aššur, respectively. Therefore, the official, soldier, or worker probably would have uttered his sacred oath before one of these deities, with Nabu’s temple being the more logical option between the two.

Thus, for example, whenever a new scribe or chariot driver was trained in the province of Kunalia and about to be placed on the job, his initial task may have been to take a pilgrimage to the temple of Nabu. There, he may have entered into the temple’s holy of holies, ascended the stairs of the platform, read or heard the oath tablet read for him, and proclaimed his unwavering devotion to Esarhaddon and/or Ashurbanipal. Steymans suggested that perhaps the tablet was taken out from the inner sanctum and brought to the temple’s porticoed entrance for the public reading of the text (2013:10), where the oath was uttered. While this is possible, it probably should be considered less likely, given how the tablet was made with the horizontal hole that allowed it to be flipped for reading where it stood. Either way, the sacred vow would have been imprinted on the oath-taker’s mind and heart permanently, with no hint of rebellion in his or her thoughts.

This pattern would have been followed by all subsequent administrative officials and military personnel who rose up to serve the crown, year after year. If nothing else, the governor's vivid experience at Kalhu would have ensured his faithfulness in requiring each of his subordinates to take a similar vow of loyalty to the Assyrian crown. Moreover, the words of the tablet themselves would have stood as a permanent reminder that he was under obligation to have his own personnel swear their loyalty to the great king. The very presence of the tablet in the ruins of the temple is a vivid sign that the governor fulfilled his obligation verbatim.

### 3.4 List of Gods as Witnesses within the Oath Tablet

The Tayinat tablet also includes a list of gods as witnesses. However, this list mentions the name of only one deity by name. Within the section where the text is about to introduce the curses and blessings, it states that “this *adê*-tablet (is) a tablet of Aššur, king of the gods.” Primary appeal is made to Aššur, given that he is the king of the gods in the Assyrian pantheon, and the tablet is described as the property of Aššur.

The statement that the *adê*-tablet was the property of Aššur is of critical importance, because it is making a theological statement about the oath-tablet: since the tablet belongs to the supreme god, the governor would be risking the wrath of the king of the gods if he were to mistreat the tablet or fail to fulfill all of its prescribed stipulations. Secondary appeal in the text is made to “the great gods, my lords.”

While the other great deities of Assyria—Shamash, Marduk, Ninurta, and Ishtar—went unnamed in the pact, clearly this terse reference to the other great gods of the pantheon demands that gods such as they be considered to be equally pertinent witnesses to the oath-swearing, as was Aššur. As Fales has pointed out, the *adê*-tablet from Kalhu—in addition to listing the divine witnesses to the pact between the Median rulers and Esarhaddon—similarly features a lengthy adjuration to the recipient to swear by the principal gods of Assyria (2012: 139).

### 3.5 Formula of Curses within the Oath Tablet

Biblical scholars long have stated, albeit simplistically if not profoundly, that good things happen to those who are blessed, while bad things happen to those who are cursed. The vassal treaties and loyalty oaths of the ANE world that preceded the oath tablet at Tayinat contain both conditional curses and blessings, with various deities to be invoked if the treaty or agreement were broken: Early Dynastic (Lagash over Umma), Akkadian Empire (Akkadian king over Elam), Hittite



Empire (Hittite king over numerous vassals), Iron II Neo-Assyrian Empire (Neo-Assyrian king over numerous rulers/vassals), and Iron II Syria (Katak over Arpad). Tayinat's oath tablet contains no blessings, but it certainly possesses stern warnings through its curses. Unpleasant results would befall anyone who renounces his or her devotion to the stipulations of this sacred oath of loyalty.

The oath tablet from Tayinat preserves two curses not present in the Kalhu versions. The first invokes the divine couple, Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il, and the second invokes the goddess Šarrat-Ekron (Lauinger 2012: 113; Harrison 2014: 414; Gitin 2012: 245). Before the curses are listed, the text prescribes the potential offenses that were banned: (1) changing, neglecting, violating, or voiding the loyalty oath contained within the tablet (§35); (2) breaking the entire oath; (3) discarding the oath-tablet (§35); (4) removing (presumably from the temple) the statue of Esarhaddon, the statue of Ashurbanipal (§35), or the statue of his brothers and his sons (i.e. statues of future Assyrian kings and royals); and (5) failing to guard the sealed oath tablet (§35), since it was to be regarded just as highly as a sacred statue of a patron deity or a local god.

Next, the oath tablet articulates the seven curses that would be the desired result for committing any of the prescribed violations, the first three of which are connected to the wrath of named deities: (1) that Aramiš would fill the violator with green water (§54); (2) that Adad and Šāla would inflict piercing pain and ill health throughout the land of the violator (§54A); (3) that the goddess Šarrat-Ekron would cause a worm to burst forth from the violator's innards (§54B); (4) that the name and the seed of the violator, as well as the seed of his brothers and sons, would disappear from the face of the earth (§67); (5) that the deities would strike down the violator, his sons, and his daughters, just as a spring lamb or a kid (§96A); (6) that the deities would cause the violator's door to be soaked in blood(?) before his eyes (§106); and (7) that the violator's doors would be unable to open (§106).

Curses 1, 3, and 5 involve the experience of painful physical ordeals and trauma that undoubtedly would lead to the death of the violator. Curse 2 involves the experience of great discomfort for both the violator and his countrymen. Curse 4 involves the violator's complete eradication from memory, as well as that of his progeny, his brothers, and their sons. Curses 6 and 7 involve extremely adverse and permanent effects on the door of the violator, which implies that all of the violator's dealings, ventures, and interactions with people would end in violence and the impossibility of a successful outcome.

### 3.6 Identifying the Deities in the Formula of Curses

Of crucial importance to the religious significance of the oath tablet is the identification and derivation of the deities who are connected to the curses, since they fill a gap (lacuna) in the previous versions of EST. Aramiš, the first named deity unique to T-1801's version of EST, is known primarily from a small number of personal names. Scattered attestations in Neo-Assyrian sources bearing such names as Aramiš-et[el]-il[āni], Aramiš-iqbi, Aramiš-nāšir, Aramiš-šarru-ušur, and especially Aramiš-šar-ilāni suggest that Aramiš was the head of a local pantheon of northern Syria (Aynard and Nougayrol 1971: 87).

Aramiš-etel-ilāni means, "Aramiš is the prince of the gods," and refers to a West Syrian individual who acted as a witness during the reign of Assurbanipal (Talon 1998a: 124). Aramiš-iqbi denotes that "Aramiš has commanded/promised" and was the name of a chief of public works from Nineveh who lived during an unknown reign (Talon 1998b: 124). Aramiš-nāšir signifies that "Aramiš is the protector" and was used of a "third man" of a chariot team who served during the reign of Sargon II (Berlejung 1998: 124). Aramiš-šarru-ušur means, "O Aramiš, protect the king!" and refers to a western Syrian who acted as a witness during the reign of Assurbanipal (Talon 1998c: 124). Aramiš-šar-ilāni speaks of how "Aramiš is the king of the gods" and was used of a merchant from Carchemish during the reign of Esarhaddon (Radner 1998a: 124).

Since several theophoric names that mention Aramiš are associated with northern Syrian cities, some have suggested that this deity is restricted to the northern Levant. However, T-1801 calls Aramiš "the lord of the city and land of Qarnê," and since Qarnê (biblical Karnaim [Amos 6:13]) is the name of an Assyrian province in Transjordan (Steymans 2013: 4), to the south of Damascus and due east of the Neo-Assyrian province of Megiddo and the Sea of Galilee (Beitzel 1985: 138, map 59), Aramiš should be considered to have exerted its influence in the southern Levant, as well as in the northern Levant (Lauinger 2012: 119).

An undeniable and potentially vital connection between Qarnê and Kunulua is that both cities came under Neo-Assyrian vassalage when Tiglath-pileser III conquered a huge swath of the Levant in 732 BC (Radner 2006b: 61). Yet clearly Aramiš of Qarnê was a southern Levantine cult, located specifically in the Ḥauran, with its territory alternately under the dominion of the Israelites or the Aramaeans (Steymans 2013: 4).

The second and third deities named within the curses on the oath tablet are Adad and Šāla, whose identity and relationship are well known. The Levantine deity named Adad is the Akkadian/Assyrian version of Syrian Hadad (Green 2003: 66). Hadad, of course, is the storm god

in the Aramaean lands of the northern Levant, who goes by a plethora of other names, such as El (Byblos), Teshub (Hurrian), and Baal (southern Levant, biblical text). Therefore, Adad and Šāla are none other than the Levantine storm god, who was the king of the gods in many Levantine traditions, and his female consort (most notably called Aštarte, Asherah, Ashtart).

Adad of Kurba'il is the Assyrian manifestation of the storm god, venerated as Baal, Hadad, or Teshub by the peoples of the Levant, and the curses on Tayinat's oath tablet put the people who worshipped him in submission to Aššur's rule (Steymans 2013: 4). Both the Levant and the other territories within the Neo-Assyrian Empire are possibilities for the site of the cult to Adad and Šāla, so the only hope of identifying the cultic site mentioned in the Tayinat tablet is to isolate the city that is identified in the inscription, which is Kurba'il.

The location of Kurba'il generally has been thought to lie at some indeterminable distance to the north or northwest of Nineveh, near the Great Zab River (Steymans 2013: 4). While Kurba'il has not been located conclusively, its whereabouts just may be discerned from an inscribed statue of Shalmaneser III (859–824 BC) that was found leaning against the northern wall of Storeroom NE 50 in the northeastern courtyard of Fort Shalmaneser during excavations at Kalhu. The statue apparently had been brought to the capital city for repair, since dowel holes were bored into the opposing faces of the calcite statue's fracture. The inscription is addressed to "Adad, . . . who lives in Kurba'il in the holy sanctuary" (Kinnier Wilson 1962: 90, 91, 95; Steymans 2013: 4).

Lines 11–20 summarize the major conquests of Shalmaneser III's reign before Year 18, while lines 21–30 provide the details of Year 18, which represents the king's expedition against Hazael of Damascus. Following this is documentation of his famous trip to the Amanus Mountains to collect cedar wood, a brief sentence of which is also found on the Black Obelisk. In the closing lines, the king states that he is presenting the statue to Adad and placing it before him, which Kinnier Wilson (1962: 93, 96) theorized to signify a rather ill-lit temple-building.

One of the reasons why Shalmaneser III presented the statue to Adad is to cause "the kings, my enemies, to bow down at my feet." Such honorary language would be appropriate in an address to a national god of Assyria, which suggests that the patron-god of Kurba'il had considerable prestige and status locally. The context of the statue in the temple of Adad would be complete if it were known where this temple was and how it looked. According to Kinnier Wilson (1962: 96, 97–98), the phrase, "who lives in Kurba'il in the holy sanctuary," implies that the statue literally was placed before Adad in his temple at Kurba'il, which seems quite reasonable.

Of the Mesopotamian cities known to have erected temples to Adad, Kalhu and Ashur are included on the list. Kalhu's temple was dedicated to both Adad and Šala, while Ashur's main temple at this time was the twin-temple of Anu and Adad (in the city of Ashur), and another one of its temples was devoted to *Bēl-Kurba'il* (Bēl = Marduk = Aššur). Early in the second millennium BC, Ashur already had possessed temples to Aššur and Adad.

Esarhaddon was the fifth Assyrian king to have built or rebuilt the temple to Aššur at Ashur—along with Ušpia, Erišum I, Shamshi-Adad I, and Shalmaneser I before him—if one does not take into account Sennacherib's alterations on the temple that made its appearance different than it was during the days of his predecessors (Novotny 2014: 112). While Esarhaddon began his rebuilding of the temple at Ashur during his Year 1 (680 BC), he did not complete the project by the time of his death, so Ashurbanipal finished the task (Novotny 2014: 107).

The temple to *Bēl-Kurba'il* is known from only one inscription, in contrast to Adad's temple in Kurba'il itself, which evidently possessed a sanctuary of no small importance. For only at Kurba'il was Adad's *kišsu*, which properly refers to a god's bedroom. Plus, the penalty clause of ND.496 places the temple at Kurba'il on equal footing with that of Ishtar of Arbela and implies that it also had an established priesthood. Moreover, it would be no flattery to Adad to place a statue devoted to him in a lesser place, and with the statue of Shalmaneser III seeming important enough—along with the language of the address being sufficiently impressive—the site at issue would be fully worthy only if this temple were the central shrine, itself (Kinnier Wilson 1962: 98).

Bearing on the question of Kurba'il's location is evidence from Fort Shalmaneser that dates to the same year as the statue. One of the tablets from the fort is a list of names of persons called *ša maššarti* (EN.NUN), who were *āmīru* (IGI) of senior officers or command posts in Assyrian provinces. They were priestly observers assigned to watch for signs relating to the military fortunes of the persons or places mentioned. There was a total of 18 observers for 22 *rabûti*, a term that seems to apply to both the officers first mentioned and also to the cities. Since it would seem highly unusual for two localities to be one man's responsibility, this caused one scholar to argue for locating Kurba'il within a reasonable distance from Arpad (Kinnier Wilson 1962: 98–99), possibly at Syria's Tell Rifa'at (Harrison 2013a: 98), just north of Aleppo. This reconstruction may be considered reasonable because its location would have been on Shalmaneser III's route back from Cilicia, where he campaigned in Year 20, and it may suggest that Kurba'il is located on the northern frontier of Assyria, such as the area along the pass of Duhok (Schwemer 2001: 596).

Since the exact location of Kurba'il is unknown, Parpola and Porter (2001: 12) have listed the level of certainty within the lowest category possible (level 4 of 4): "conjectural or speculative." They have speculated, however, that the site was located *ca.* 113 km to the northeast of Kalhu, which often was associated with Kurba'il in Neo-Assyrian texts, especially in those from Kalhu, causing some to assume that the province of Kurba'il was adjacent to the province of Kalhu (Radner 2006: 47). If the identification of Kurba'il with a site to the north of Kalhu and Nineveh is correct (Postgate 1980–1983: 367), this means that the second, third, and fourth deities mentioned in the section on curses in T-1801 likely were associated with a site and religious cult in the province of Kurba'il and located slightly to the northeast of Assyria's heartland.

The fourth and final deity within the curses on the oath tablet is Šarrat-Ekron, who is unattested in cuneiform sources, but almost undoubtedly to be identified with Ptgyh, the Lady of Ekron in Philistia (Lauinger 2012: 90–91; Steymans 2013: 4; Gitin 2012: 245), as Ekron means "Queen, Lady" in Akkadian. Galil considered Lauinger's association to be logical and reasonable (2014: 80), while Harrison deemed it to be a likely identification (2014: 414–415), and Steymans accepted the choice (2013: 4). In the Ekron Royal Dedicatory Inscription, Ptgyh was invoked for a blessing on Ekron's king. Given that the goddess was not of Semitic origin, she may have been a Philistine deity, possibly of Aegean derivation, if not the Philistine version of Aštar. Ekron's status as one of the cities of the Philistine Pentapolis reinforces this assertion as highly plausible.

Ekron, whose temple was discussed in Chapter 3, was a city of the Philistine Pentapolis and located in the southern Levant. Also in the Royal Dedicatory Inscription, Ikausu (or possibly "Akishu"), the ruler (*šr*) of Ekron, was credited with having built/rebuilt (*bnh*) a temple "to Ptgyh, his lady." The semantic range for the meaning of the Semitic verb *bnh* would allow either for a temple that was built from scratch on virgin soil, one that was rebuilt over an earlier temple or that reused an existing foundation or walls, or a refurbished temple. Whichever was the case, the text expresses the wish that Ptgyh would bless Ikausu, protect him, prolong his days, and bless his land.

According to the inscription's publishers, Ptgyh undoubtedly was the name of a goddess of non-Semitic origin, perhaps an unknown Philistine or Indo-European female deity. They also asserted that since the *-yh* ending occurs in two Philistine personal names in one of the two Philistine name-lists from Tell Jemmeh, the *-yh* ending may be Philistine (Gitin, Dothan, and Naveh 1997: 9, 11–12). However, the notion that the *-yh* ending is Philistine cannot be asserted with confidence (Younger 2016), especially since the names on the ostraca from Tell Jemmeh likely are Old Iranian or those of other deportees, not Philistine (Zadok 2009: 676–677; Na'aman

and Zadok 1988: 37, 40; Davis et al. 2015: 154–155 [ft. 26]). Nonetheless, Ptgyh must have been viewed as a deity of considerable power in order to safeguard the well-being of the dynasty and city. Perhaps she was identified with the local Semitic deity Asherah, who appears on a jar inscription from Tel Migne (Gitin, Dothan, and Naveh 1997: 9, 11–12), whether the association occurred from the outset or over a period of time.

The identification of the deities in the oath tablet's section on cursing, and specifically the geographical location of the religious cults that served those deities, provides great insight into the historical environment in the Levant during the Neo-Assyrian occupation of Tayinat. The geographical derivation of the deities listed in the curses-section of the oath tablet points directly to some of the sites in the Levant that were looked upon with favor by the mighty Neo-Assyrian king. Esarhaddon was wise enough to appeal to the religious loyalty and devotion of the people whom he intended to bind to the covenant recorded on the oath tablet. Even if he could not trust their loyalty to him, certainly he could trust their loyalty to their own gods as a catalyst for achieving unwavering fidelity when his death would lead to the succession of Ashurbanipal.

### 3.7 Implications of the New Deities in the Formula of Curses

After understanding the identities of the newly known (to EST) deities and their cults, from the curses enumerated in Tayinat's oath tablet, a discussion of the religious implications is in order. One deity/cult, Aramiš of Qarnê, was located at the site of an Assyrian province in Transjordan, which is adjacent to Cisjordan. Another two deities/cults, Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il, were located either *ca.* 113 km to the northeast of Kalhu of the Assyrian heartland, or less likely in the northern Levant, *ca.* 55 km to the northwest of Tayinat. The fourth deity/cult, that of Šarrat-Ekron, was established at Ekron, one of the cities of the Philistine Pentapolis, which is located along the coastal plain of the southern Levant.

The presence and attribution of two Levantine cults on a loyalty oath produced in the heartland of Assyria (Kalhu) should not be considered an oddity. Throughout the empire, the Assyrian way of life was not coupled with a particular rigidity on religious matters. Alongside a general allegiance to Aššur as the protective deity of the king and his empire, and the veneration of other major members of the Assyrian pantheon with their local seats of worship, the populations under the yoke of Assyria were tolerantly allowed to retain traditional cultural beliefs, with their accompanying ceremonial and cultic mores in life and death (Fales 2012: 134).

Moreover, the listing of two Levantine deities/cults on T-1801 demonstrates the practical wisdom of the Assyrian administration, as they were appealing to the deities that would be most meaningful to those who were professing the oath of loyalty to the king and his rightful heir. The governor at Tayinat and his subordinates, in addition to the governors of other provincial capitals throughout the empire, would be much more inclined to fear the wrath of the deities that they themselves worshipped, rather than that of distant deities of Assyria that meant nothing to them.

The deities listed on the Tayinat tablet complement those already known to EST. The Kalhu tablets appeal to deities such as Aššur, Ninlil, Sin, Shamash, Ninurta, Ishtar, Marduk, and Nergal, which are either Assyrian or Mesopotamian deities (Wiseman 1958a: 60, 62, 64). The Akkadian deity, Adad, long had been worshipped in Mesopotamia, having been described as the son of Dagan. Adad appeared in Mesopotamian texts as early as theophoric names in pre-Sargonic times, as well as in Sargonic times and the Third Dynasty of Ur (Green 2003: 51, 68). However, the reference to this non-Levantine deity in EST should not be considered as non-applicable to Levantine people. As the storm god, Adad was the counterpart to the chief deity worshipped throughout the Levant, and probably at Kunulua before and after the arrival of the Neo-Assyrians.

Therefore, the gods newly known to EST from T-1801 reach far beyond the heartland of Assyria. The mention of these regional deities at the end of the curse section of EST undoubtedly is linked to Esarhaddon's foreign affairs policy (Younger 2016). It is safe to say that EST offered an allure to an interregional audience and secured the loyalty of distant foreigners by appealing to some of their native deities. Adad had come to be worshipped in the northern Levant as Hadad, another manifestation of the storm god, and with the invocation of this deity, an attempt was made to tailor the religious focus of the oath tablet (T-1801) to its Levantine audience (Harrison 2014: 418), though certainly its northern *and* southern Levantine audience, considering the mention of Ptgyh of Ekron and Aramiš of Qarnê.

Therefore, it probably should be considered all the more instructive that two of the three cult centers known for the first time in the curse-section on T-1801 were located in the southern Levant. The unavoidable conclusion that must be drawn is the personal importance of these southern Levantine deities—Aramiš and Šarrat-Ekron, a Philistine deity—both to the governor at Tayinat and to the governors of provinces through the western periphery of the empire. Also instructive is the great value that the western provinces possessed in the eyes of the Assyrian king.

### 3.8 Biblio-Historical Implications of the Oath Tablet

Since their discovery, the vassal treaties from Kalhu have drawn parallels to the texts related to the Mosaic covenant found in the Hebrew Bible. In Wiseman's publication of the vassal treaties (1958a: 26), he drew particular attention to the close similarities between the lengthy list of curses in the vassal treaties with the blessings and curses in Deuteronomy 28. Some scholars have since argued for direct literary dependence by the biblical authors for the writing of parts of Deuteronomy, such as Deut 28:20–44 (Steymans 2013: 1, 2, 12, who suggested that the biblical text was borrowed from a supposed Assyrian oath tablet or treaty that allegedly was kept in Jerusalem), or Deut 13:2–12 (Levinson and Stackert 2012: 131, who argued that the Judean oath was subjected to creative revision of the Neo-Assyrian exemplar).

Of course, it must be stated that no such Assyrian oath tablet or treaty has been discovered in Jerusalem, which would add considerable credibility to this theory. Nonetheless, Moshe Weinfeld, has maintained that the close relationship between the sequence of curses in Deut 28:27–35 and the order preserved in VTE §§39–42 (lines 419–424) is evidence that the biblical text derived directly from the vassal treaties (1972: 116–23). He also noted similarities between the apostasy laws in Deuteronomy 13 and VTE §10 (Weinfeld 1972: 97–99).

Much more recently, Sonnet (2013: 453–470) has attempted to demonstrate that Deuteronomy has turned the generic syntactical “if/when . . .” conditional form of casuistic laws in the vassal treaties into its principal narrative dynamics, mingling the mini-plots of the case laws with the overarching plot of the people's loyalty and the macro-plot of the divine promise. For Steymans (2013: 2, 11), a cuneiform tablet of EST was sent to Jerusalem in 672 BC, which went on display in the temple, and scribes working in the Judahite administration must have passed by it every day. The extent of these parallels has prompted some to argue that the entire book of Deuteronomy was conceived as a loyalty oath to Yahweh and adapted directly from Neo-Assyrian exemplars (e.g. Otto 1999: 68, as cited in Harrison 2014: 415).

These similarities, in turn, have contributed to the debate about the compositional history of Deuteronomy and the Pentateuch. While the issues are complex and go far beyond the scope of the present work, the existence of the oath tablet at Tayinat clearly provides physical evidence for the possibility of inferring that significant portions of Deuteronomy were formulated no later than the seventh century BC (Harrison 2014: 415). As Radner pointed out even before the Tayinat discovery (2006: 374–375, as cited in Steymans 2013: 2), similar oath tablets likely were distributed throughout the provincial capitals and subjugated principalities of the empire following



the oath-taking ceremony of 672 BC, including Jerusalem, then ruled by Judah's King Manasseh (697–642 BC), an Assyrian vassal who probably participated in that very event.

Levinson has suggested that the authors of Deuteronomy, rather than simply copying the Neo-Assyrian oath formula in VTE §4, selectively adapted and molded the formula to their own purposes. More specifically, their use of the Neo-Assyrian formulation of the standard ANE oath can be seen as a conscious effort to challenge and subvert the Neo-Assyrian imperial authority by transferring the exclusive loyalty that was demanded for “the word of Esarhaddon” (line 57) to “the word of Yahweh” inferred in Deut 13:1 (Levinson 2010: 342–344; as cited in Harrison 2014: 416).

Although the Hebrew formulation preserves the same structure as the Akkadian, it does so in inverted order, a common ANE scribal convention employed to mark textual reuse. In other words, for Levinson the chiasmic structure of Deuteronomy's reverse citation of Esarhaddon's oath allegedly signals a conscious effort to rework this carefully chosen source creatively (2010: 344–345, as cited in Harrison 2014: 416). If Levinson's assumptions about the Bible's editorial and transmissional history can be accepted, his theory is worthy of great merit.

### 3.9 Local Religious Implications of the Oath Tablet

As part of the Neo-Hittite royal citadel, these paired temples—Buildings II and XVI—continued a venerable, Syrian-paired-temples, architectural tradition best exemplified at LBA Emar of the thirteenth century BC. However, the most significant parallel was at neighboring Tell Atchana, ancient Alalakh. The paired temples at EBA Emar appear to have been dedicated to Baal (the storm god, the Levantine version of Hadad/Adad) and Aštarte (the Levantine version of Mesopotamian Ishtar), and there is good reason to believe that the same was true of the religious complex at Alalakh, as inferred by Idrimi (see Chapter 3 and this chapter, above), or alternatively their Hittite counterparts: the storm god (Teshub) and his female consort, Hebat (Harrison 2014: 417–18). Therefore, it seems reasonable to posit a similar syncretistic alignment for the double temple complex at Tayinat, a connection that is made all the more tempting with the reference on Tayinat's oath tablet to Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il, in the section with the curses invoked if the treaty were to be broken by the oath-swearers (Harrison 2014: 418).

The items found at Tayinat's paired-temples complex provide important hints that the rituals performed there were linked to ceremonies that led to the renewal of the covenant that originally had been sworn by the governor and the officials described on T-1801. The presence of

inscribed stelae in the courtyard during the phase of Neo-Hittite control suggests that the sacred precinct held an important commemorative—if not memorializing—function during this period, and that the rituals enacted were couched in the familial language of kinship (Harrison 2014: 418).

Although heavily broken and incomplete, the TELL TA‘YINAT 2 inscription (see Chapter 1) apparently was part of such a commemorative monument. The highly fragmentary text includes tantalizing references not only to various deities, but also to the king, his children, and to offerings of grain/bread and wine. Moreover, the cultic paraphernalia found *in situ* within the inner sanctum of Building XVI, while part of the subsequent phase of Neo-Assyrian use of the temple, not only included a variety of serving vessels, but also a cylindrical stone box, or pyxis, typically identified as Syro-Hittite. The pyxis frequently was portrayed as part of the tableware on Syro-Hittite funerary stelae, including the recently discovered Katumuwa Stela from Zincirli (Struble and Herrmann 2009: 26–28). Furthermore, the pyxis at Tayinat was decorated with an intricate carving of the common Syro-Hittite ancestral feasting scene memorializing the eternal quest to secure the *pater familias* (Harrison 2014: 418).

### 3.10 Significance of the Oath Tablet as a *ṭuppi Adê*

What helps to appreciate better the sacramental role of the Tayinat oath tablet is a return to one of the distinguishing features that defined these tablets as *ṭuppi adê*. However, before getting to this, the question needs to be answered as to whether *ṭuppi adê* means “treaty-tablet,” “oath-tablet,” or “tablet of destiny.” For the treatment of both of these matters, the present writer must rely heavily on the excellent work of Jacob Lauinger, whose recent argumentation is strong and persuasive. The word *adê* usually is taken to be a loanword from the Aramaic word *‘dy*, typically translated “treaty,” because the appearance of *adê* in Akkadian appears in the record at about the same time as *‘dy* appears in Aramaic (Lauinger 2013: 100).

However, Brinkman challenged this notion when he stated that “[t]here is a faint, though lingering, suspicion that this picture may not be correct if an apparent attestation of *adê* some five centuries earlier in a damaged passage of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic should be verified; this is at present an isolated and not incontrovertible witness” (1990: 81–112, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 100). Moreover, an Akkadian etymology for the word has been argued by Durand (1991: 70, n. 167, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 100), who connected the word with what the dictionaries distinguish as a homophonous word with the meaning, “work assignment, duty.”

Nonetheless, there are times when the *adê*'s emphasis on international relations makes rendering the translation “treaty” quite helpful, such as in the oracle query of Esarhaddon, when the king considered how to respond to a request delivered by envoys from the King of Scythia (SAA 4 20 obv. 2–10, cf. rev. 5–10, as translated in Lauinger 2013: 101):

Bartatua, the king of Scythia, who just now has sent his messengers to Esarhaddon, king of Assyria [c]oncerning a princess – should Esarhaddon, king of [Assyria], give a princess in marriage to him, would Bartatua, king of Scythia, honestly speak true and sincere words of peace with Esarhaddon, king of Assyria? Would he keep an *adê* of [Esarha]ddon, king of Assyria? Would he act in a [manner] that pleases Esarhaddon, king of Assyria?

This frank glimpse into Assyrian political life offered by the oracular query presents an image quite different from the mighty military machine of the Neo-Assyrian Empire of which one commonly perceives. Rather than resorting to armed conflict to neutralize a potential threat from the Scythians, the Assyrian king contemplates the use of diplomacy in the form of a marriage of state and an *adê*, and the translation “treaty” seems quite appropriate to describe the agreement that might have accompanied the marriage of state (Lauinger 2013: 101).

In addition, one of Esarhaddon's first actions after he conquered Šubria, a buffer kingdom located between Assyria and one of the other great powers of the day (Urartu), was to recapture the Assyrian and Urartian fugitives who had fled there. In doing so, he articulated that he was mindful of an *adê* that he had sworn to the King of Urartu, so he carefully separated the Urartian fugitives from the Assyrian fugitives, returning the former to their homeland. Therefore, the Assyrian king's *adê* might be described best as a parity treaty concerning the extradition of fugitives (Lauinger 2013: 101–102).

It must be noted that not all situations into which two parties entered an *adê* functioned as a treaty restricted to agreements between equals. Rulers of small kingdoms not incorporated directly into the administrative structure of the Neo-Assyrian Empire also entered into an *adê* with the Neo-Assyrian king. Accepting—and occasionally even requesting—subordination to the Neo-Assyrian Empire in this way could be a double-edged sword, avoiding Assyrian aggression but provoking unrest at home, such as the example of Pađi of Ekron, who is known from the royal inscriptions of Sennacherib (Lauinger 2013: 102–103, citing RINAP 4 033 iii 28–34).

However, at other times the translation of *adê* as “treaty” fits uneasily, because the parties involved obviously are not representatives of different political states. Such an uneasy fit is apparent in letters written by the chief scribe of Assyria, Issar-šumu-ereš, as in the following report he submitted to the king on the availability of Assyrian scribes at Kalhu to enter into an *adê*: “(As for) the scribes, those from Nineveh, Kilizi, and Arba-el can enter the *adê* (since) they have come. (But) those from Libbi-Ali [have] not [come]” (Lauinger 2013: 102–103, citing SAA 10 7 obv. 6–14). Thus the notion of an international treaty-context cannot be present in this case, because the agreement into which both parties entered is between the Neo-Assyrian king and his own scribes.

That a translation of “treaty” fails to encompass the semantic range signified by the term *adê* is not a new observation. Attempts to convey a better sense of the word’s range of meaning frequently return to the idea that the *adê* fundamentally is an oath, often with the added nuance that it is a loyalty oath, and that it only obtained an expanded role in international relations secondarily. Certainly there are strong reasons for seeing an oath as central to an *adê*. For instance, in letters and inscriptions, *adê* can appear as the direct object of the verb “to swear,” and in apposition to the word “oath” (Lauinger 2013: 105).

The syntax of an *adê* often is reminiscent of the construction of oaths in the Assyrian dialect, in which a positive assertion is constructed as a negative conditional clause in the subjunctive mood and a negative assertion, as a positive conditional clause in the subjunctive. In fact, the longest and best preserved *adê*, EST, contains what is apparently the verbatim oath sworn by the subordinate party. So, clearly the element of an oath was an important part of an *adê*, but it should be understood that it is only one element (Lauinger 2013: 105–106).

While the actual oath sworn by the contracting party is embedded in the 19 lines of EST, the oath represents only .02% of the entire text. One must understand how to classify the other 99.8% of the text, namely the 89% that is taken up with stipulations and curses. EST is a good example to study, because it was preserved in multiple exemplars, allowing scholars to confirm that both vassal rulers and Assyrian administrators entered into the same *adê*. Additionally, each extant manuscript of EST is a *tuppi adê*, or an *adê*-tablet, the Neo-Assyrian term used to describe the actual objects on which the agreement officially was inscribed (Lauinger 2013: 106, 108).

The two defining features of a *tuppi adê* are these: (1) rotation along the vertical axis, unlike with normal cuneiform tablets, which must be rotated along the horizontal axis in order for a reader to move from obverse to reverse, and (2) impressions made by three different seals of the

god, Aššur. These seal impressions are not merely decoration or a propagandistic statement about Assyria's glorious history. As the Seal of Sennacherib states (as translated in Lauinger 2013: 109),

Seal of Destinies with [which] Aššur, king of the gods, seals the destinies of the Igigi and Annunaki of heaven and earth and of man[kind]. Do not change whatever he seals! As for he who changes (it), may Aššur, king of the gods, (and) Mullissu together with their sons slay him with their mighty weapons. I am Sennacherib, king of [Assyria], the prince who reveres you. He who erases (my) written name or alters this, your Seal of Destinies – erase his name and his seed from the land!

This seal was the realization on earth of the Seal of Destinies that was determined by the supreme god, Aššur, which he used to seal the Tablet of Destinies (Lauinger 2013: 109). Therefore, a distinguishing feature that defines sealed tablets as *tuppi adê* is the presence of the Seal of Aššur, also known as the “Seal of Destinies” (Lauinger 2013: 109–115). When a *tuppi adê* is applied to a tablet, this Seal of Aššur transformed the document into a Tablet of Destinies, ratifying it as a direct communication of the divine will of Aššur, and thus not to be altered, at risk of death and total annihilation (George 1986: 139–141, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 109–110).

Since the decreeing of destinies was an integral part of the *akītu* ceremony, celebrating the Babylonian or Neo-Assyrian New Year, there is reason to believe that this ceremony included the formal swearing of an *adē*, or sacred oath (Lauinger 2013: 110–111). Significantly, the oath tablets at Kalhu were found in or near the Nabu temple's throne room (Wiseman and Black 1996: v), one in a complex of rooms devoted to this deity, where part of the annual *akītu* ceremony that included rituals involving Nabu and his consort, Tašmetu, was held (Postgate 1974: 60–61, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 110).

Not coincidentally, the part of the ceremony involving Nabu and Tašmetu occurred during Days 4, 5, and 8 of Ayyaru, the same month to which all of the extant colophons of Esarhaddon's oath tablets are dated (Lauinger 2013: 111–112), while later Babylonian evidence indicates that the throne room was the actual location of Ashurbanipal's investiture (Pongratz-Leisten 1994: 103–104; Lauinger 2013: 110).

Oates (1957: 34–36, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 111) has suggested that stone “tramlines” found leading up to the throne room's dais were used to transport Nabu's statue during the ceremony, though the consensus view about the main purpose of the tramlines in Assyrian palaces was to move wheeled braziers, in order to control the temperature (Beaulieu 2016). The Covenant

of Aššur (SAA 9 3; see Parpola and NATCP 2015) offers further insight into the oath-taking ceremony. The *tuppi adê* was brought before the king, aromatic oils were aired, sacrifices were offered, incense was burned, and the tablet was read aloud, essentially activating the *adê* in the process (Lauinger 2013: 112; Harrison 2014: 419).

The text of the Covenant of Aššur, which mentions Esarhaddon's name at least nine times (lines [ii] 10, 12, 16, 21; [ii] 33; [iii] 14, 16; [iv] 13, 14) is almost fully contemporaneous with the oath tablet from Tayinat (Parpola and N-ATCP 2015: online), making it all the more important to a proper understanding of the oath tablet. The Covenant, written by a prophet of Arbela named Ladagil-ili (line iv 31), recalls a feast at Ešarra that celebrated Esarhaddon's victory over his enemies and anticipated victory over the lands of Melid, Cimmeria, and Ellipi (lines i 14, i 35, and ii 2).

Some of the Covenant is written from the first-person perspective of a jubilant Aššur (Parpola and N-ATCP 2015: online), who came to the aid of the king when the forces opposing the Assyrian king and his army were on the verge of overwhelming them (lines ii 3–25). When Esarhaddon cried out to Aššur, the god devastated his enemies with fire and hailstones from the sky, according to the writer. The text then states that the tablet itself, called “the well-being” and representing a *tuppi adê*, was placed before the image of Aššur (line ii 26), and that the covenantal tablet of Aššur then was brought into the king's presence on a cushion (line ii 27).

At this point (Parpola and N-ATCP 2015: online), fragrant oil was sprinkled, sacrifices were made, and incense was burnt, followed by the reading aloud of the tablet in the king's presence (lines ii 28–32), which undoubtedly was an account from the annals of his military campaigns leading to the victories just mentioned. This sacred event thus was an act of praise and worship offered to Aššur, reminding the king of the faithfulness of Aššur and deepening the bond between king and god, since the tablet itself represented the covenant of faithfulness of Aššur, who interceded on behalf of the king.

Therefore, the fragrant oil, animal sacrifices, and burnt incense were necessary components for the rituals that accompanied the reaffirmation of the covenant between Esarhaddon and Aššur, implements that were necessary for the completion of the reactivation of the covenant of faithfulness and protection. The oil lamps inside the temple at Tayinat could have been used in the same way as the fragrant oil that was utilized in the covenant-renewal described in the Covenant of Aššur, while the libation vessels in Building XVI were used on animal sacrifices, exactly as was performed in the Covenant, and the incense-bearing pyxis from Tayinat could have functioned in the same way as the burnt incense was used in the Covenant.

The act of sealing the *tuppi adê* was transformative. Since the exemplars of EST became Tablets of Destinies upon being sealed with the Seal of Destinies, the stipulations on them were transformed from what otherwise would be mundane directives into the actual destinies of the various persons whose names or positions were written on the *tuppi adê* (Lauinger 2013: 110, 112–113). This can be understood practically as officially sanctioned prophetic utterance.

The transformation is visualized in the *Enūma Eliš* story, a myth that is closely associated with the *akītu* ceremony, especially the one enacted at Babylon during the New Year's celebration. Two events on Days 8 and 11 seemingly developed into symbolic representations of the two divine assemblies described respectively in Tablets 3, 4, and 6 of *Enūma Eliš*, namely the initial decree of Marduk's destiny by the assembly of gods before his confrontation with Tiamat, and that same body's second decreeing of his destiny following Tiamat's defeat and the construction of the Esagila (Lauinger 2013: 110).

At Babylon, the ritual of Days 8 and 11 involved the bringing of Marduk's statue to the *parak šīmāti*, the Shrine of Destinies where the destinies of the king and his lands were decreed. Since a *tuppi adê* literally was a Tablet of Destinies, Lauinger has suggested that the establishment of an *adê* might have been connected to the decreeing of destinies that occurred during the *akītu* ceremony (2013: 110–111).

The detail of the reading aloud of the *adê* is particularly significant (Lauinger 2013: 113), because as Lawson has observed, texts in which the tablet was used in an active way seem to indicate that it must be activated by verbal command (Lawson 1994: 130). The discovery of the new exemplar at Tayinat preserves the critical information as to who entered into the *adê* of that exemplar, as its tablet has confirmed Steymans's earlier prediction (2003: 96, as cited in Lauinger 2013: 113) that the governing factor that determined the place of deposition for the Kalhu exemplars of EST was the city's importance as a collection center for horses, since horses were the prized tribute from Assyria's eastern vassals.

If the governing principle that determined the location at which an exemplar of EST was deposited was the location to which the subordinate party delivered tribute, then one would expect the exemplar at Tayinat to have been deposited at the provincial capital and not in the Assyrian heartland, because ultimately it was the governor of Kunalia who collected taxes and levied persons within the province for military and labor service (Lauinger 2013: 113–114).

The exemplars of EST may have been deposited at the different places to which tribute was brought into the empire, because the tablets seemingly continued to be used in an annual *akītu*

ceremony in which the subordinate party's destiny was reaffirmed, and which coincided with the annual delivery of tribute long after the *adê* initially was established in 672 BC (Lauinger 2013: 114). Several lines of evidence exist to validate the veracity of the claim that tributes continued to be sent annually.

Most striking is the findspot and physical characteristics of the Tayinat exemplar, which allow one to deduce that the tablet was displayed upright in the inner sanctum of a temple directly across from the altar. How long the tablet was displayed in this manner is unclear, as the date of the destruction of Tayinat's temple is unknown. However, the exemplars at Kalhu were displayed for more than 50 years after their composition, unless perhaps they were brought there at the time of the destruction of the Median kingdoms (Harrison 2015), though their findspot within the *akītu*-house complex in the Ezida strongly implies annual tribute (Lauinger 2013: 114).

Equally illuminating is the subject matter of the ivory inlays with which the Kalhu exemplars were found, as they depict the delivery of the tribute (Mallowan 1966: 248–250). In addition, there are two intriguing passages of EST where the contracting parties were ordered to speak of the *adê* as one that Esarhaddon “wrote” and “established” (perfect tense), but which the king “causes them to swear” (present tense), signifying that the tablets continued to play a ritualistic role long after their original use (Lauinger 2013: 114). Probably the best translation of the present-tense verb is one that utilizes durative aspect, thus (an oath of loyalty that the king) “goes on causing them to swear.”

Esarhaddon's *adê* of 672 BC was an obligatory sworn-oath that was transformed and projected into the divine realm, so that it became a destiny. The method of transformation first involved the sealing of the *tuppi adê* with Aššur's seals, which changed an ordinary clay tablet into a Tablet of Destinies. Second, it involved the subordinate party's oath that established such subordination to be his destiny just as the gods' oath established their subordination to Marduk in the passage in the *Enūma Eliš* story (Lauinger 2013: 114–115).

How does this concept of a *tuppi adê* impact a proper understanding of the Tayinat tablet's use historically? The *tuppi adê* initially was used in an *akītu* ceremony that established the stipulations inscribed on it as the subordinate party's destiny. The *tuppi adê* then continued to be used in an annual *akītu* ceremony that coincided with the subordinate party's delivery of tribute to Assyria (Lauinger 2013: 114).

Likewise, since the *akītu* ceremony usually was performed (at least) annually, Harrison (2014: 419) has suggested that that the inner sanctum of Building XVI, with its displayed *tuppi*



*adê*, became the ritual setting for the annual renewal of the local ruling elite's—and, by extension, the whole community's—covenanted loyalty to the Assyrian king. In like manner, given that Kalhu was the administrative center for Assyria's entire cavalry, the vassal peoples in close proximity to Assyria—as attested by the Median rulers mentioned in the tablets found at Kalhu's Ezida—probably came to this temple in order to deliver horses as a regular tribute (Steymans 2013: 9), perhaps annually at the New Year's festival.

The presence of oil lamps, libation vessels, a sacrificial altar and a pyxis—which likely contained incense or aromatic powders—on the podium in the cella of Building XVI at Tayinat furnishes remarkable corroborating detail of the rituals involved in these ceremonies of covenant renewal, suggesting the possibility that the paired temples at Tayinat had been transformed into a vibrant part of the *akītu* ceremony, especially the roles played by Aššur (or the storm god, if worshipped locally as the king of the gods), Nabu, and Tašmetu (Harrison 2014: 419). Given that the two essential structures utilized in the *akītu* ceremonies at Babylon and in Assyria are the temple of the kings of the gods and the sanctuary of Nabu, the presence of this ritual paraphernalia in Building XVI also fits well with the proposition that Tayinat's temples were devoted to the kings of the gods and Nabu in their last phase of use, during the Neo-Assyrian occupation.

## 4 Summary Observations

In this chapter, a study was made of the religious role of oath-swearing at Tell Tayinat of Iron III, the knowledge of which is owed to the vital epigraphical find of an oath tablet among the cuneiform tablets found in the cella of Building XVI. The oath tablet possesses great religious significance related to how cultic rituals were practiced at the ancient city of Kunalia.

The 2009 excavational season at Tell Tayinat yielded eleven cuneiform tablets found atop the podium in the cella of Building XVI. The final phase of this temple served the residents of the acropolis. Conservation of the tablets was performed, and eventually the deciphering of the inscriptions began. Priority was given to the oath tablet (T-1801), with its connection to the tablets from the archive at Kalhu, which record the same oath of loyalty sworn by Median the rulers.

Of the eleven tablets found at Tayinat, all were scholarly or historical in nature, except for a single docket. The majority of the other tablets from the recently discovered temple are manuscripts of the Mesopotamian scholarly series *iqqur īpuš*. Tablet T-1923 is the best preserved of these *iqqur īpuš* tablets. Tablet T-1930 is the largest of the lot, being inscribed with the table for months IV–XII and preserving eight lines of text on only one face.

The fragments T-1920 + T-1920a are part of an unidentified hemerology, while T-1921, which exists only in fragmentary form, is a bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian lexical list. The most historically important cuneiform tablet, T-1801, records an oath imposed on the governor of Kunalia by Esarhaddon, who commanded loyalty from his subjects in anticipation of his death.

When comparing T-1801 to the tablets from Kalhu, the following notes are worthy of recognition: (1) Tayinat's oath tablet (T-1801) most likely was written on or near the same day as the Kalhu tablets. (2) The text of the oath tablet largely parallels that of the tablets from Kalhu. (3) The oath tablet was sealed with the divine seals of Aššur. (4) Tablets from both sites display a format in which the columns proceed from left to right on the reverse, rather than right to left.

The presence of the Kunalian oath tablet in the home-temple of its native swearer, the governor of Kunalia, suggests that each oath-swearing ruler/official was to return to his native capital and display the oath tablet in a temple as a permanent reminder of the allegiance that was sworn. The presence of the tablet in a temple suggests the sacred nature of the vow, as the oath included the statement that it was a tablet of Aššur.

In the text of the Kalhu tablets, Nabu bears the epithet, "bearer of the Tablet of Destinies of the gods." The temple of Nabu involved the writing, sealing, and storing of state documents, not only because he was the divine patron of the scribal arts, but also due to his function as the "bearer of the Tablet of Destinies of the gods," as testified by numerous sources as the god under whom important documents of state were drawn up and ratified with Aššur's seals.

Lauinger has demonstrated that the *iqqur īpuš* tablets at Tayinat were deliberately designed for display (Lauinger 2011: 5, 11; Lauinger 2012: 90), and by extension, the same can be said for the oath tablet, T-1801. By hanging the tablet with a string that ran through the horizontal piercing, the governor of Kunalia guaranteed full visibility of both faces of the document, thanks to the horizontal piercing that would allow the text of both sides to appear to be "right-side up" for the reader only if the tablet were flipped from top to bottom.

Esarhaddon was named as the oath-requiree responsible for the *adê*, while the oath tablet lists 17 titled officials or groups as the oath-swearers, followed by a generic reference to "all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are." The men who would be born after its inception, from east to west, also would be responsible to remain faithful to the oath.

In order to understand T-1801's loyalty oath, a survey of oath-swearing in the ANE was conducted. Examples of oath-swearing from ANE contexts that were cited include those from the Early Dynastic Period, the Akkadian Period, Syria of the Old Babylonian Period, Egypt's New

Kingdom, the Hittite Empire, Syria of the LBA, the Israelite monarchy, Assyria of the Iron Age, and Syria of Iron II. The survey of oath-swearing in the ANE demonstrated that the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat fits perfectly within the established tradition of sworn legal agreements between equals (parity treaties) or suzerains and vassals (vassal treaties).

The oath tablet articulates the seven curses that would be the desired result for committing any of the prescribed violations and identifies deities listed in the section of potential curses that would inflict punishment on anyone who would break the promise of loyalty that he had sworn. The deities listed include (1) Aramiš of Qarnê, who clearly is a southern Levantine deity; (2) Adad and Šāla, who were worshipped either to the northeast of Kalhu or, less likely, just to the north of Aleppo; and (3) Šarrat-Ekron, who is almost undoubtedly to be identified with Ptgyh, the Lady of Ekron in Philistia of the southern Levant.

Understanding the sacramental role of the Tayinat oath tablet requires a grasp of the features that defined the oath tablet as *ṭuppi adê*. Rulers of small kingdoms not incorporated directly into the administrative structure of the Neo-Assyrian Empire often entered into an *adê* with the Neo-Assyrian king, whether by choice or by compulsion. The element of an oath was an important part of an *adê*, but this is not the only element involved.

A proper understanding of the *ṭuppi adê* leads to the understanding that since a *ṭuppi adê* literally was a Tablet of Destinies, the establishment of an *adê* might have been connected to the decreeing of destinies that occurred during the annual *akītu* ceremony. Esarhaddon's *adê* thus was an obligatory sworn-oath that was transformed and projected into the divine realm, so that it became a destiny. Since the *akītu* ceremony seemingly was performed annually at Tell Tayinat, the inner sanctum of Building XVI, with its displayed *ṭuppi adê*, most likely became the ritual setting for the annual renewal of an oath of loyalty sworn to the Assyrian king by the provincial governor, all of his civic officials, and probably every rank of soldier who served the crown.

## Chapter 6

### The Multi-Faceted Religious Dimensions of Tayinat’s Building XVI

In this concluding chapter, a summary of Chapters 1–5 will be offered first. Then, conclusions in light of this present research will be added, followed by a section devoted to the potential avenues of future research for scholarship that goes beyond the scope of what was examined here.

#### 1 Summary of Chapter 1

The main focus of Chapter 1 was a review of what previous scholarship has contributed in relation to the topic of the present work. The discussion was limited to the Iron Age occupation at Tayinat, which was forged during the transition from the LBA to the Iron Age in the northern Levant. Until 2008, the only known dynastic line in Syria was that of the “Great Kings” of Carchemish. Yet with the discovery of a Luwian inscription from Aleppo, which mentions the Land of Palistin, the Kingdom of Palistin was recognized as another kingdom of great historical significance in Iron Age Syria, with Kunulua as its center of power.

The association of Tell Tayinat with Kunulua has been confirmed, as a new version of Esarhaddon’s Succession Treaty (T-1801) from Building XVI mentions the “governor of Kunalia” on the oath tablet, thus acting as a smoking gun to remove all doubt about the identity of the site in antiquity. The Palistinian kings struggled with the Assyrian kings for power in their region, until the Palistinian Kingdom’s territory was reduced considerably at the beginning of the eighth century BC. The rebellious kingdom was eclipsed and destroyed by Tiglath-pileser III in 738 BC, transforming the capital into a Neo-Assyrian provincial administrative center.

The city at Tayinat was situated at the crossroads between the Anatolian highlands and the Levantine lowlands of the Syro-Mesopotamian interior. Located 700 m northwest of Tell Atchana, Tayinat sits on the northern bend of the Orontes River and consists of a lower mound and an upper mound, combining for 35–40 ha. The Syrian Expedition of the University of Chicago unearthed a tripartite temple, Building II, which functioned in tandem with Building XVI. The latter temple, with dimensions measuring 9 x 21 m, was approached from the south by a stone-paved staircase that led to a porticoed-porch that was supported by a basaltic column base.

Building XVI formed part of a larger religious and political complex, which was constructed during the Second Building Period of the Neo-Hittite kingdom and later incorporated into an Assyrian religious complex. The part of the building complex that is most important here includes Buildings I, II, and VI, in addition to Building XVI. Building I, a *bit hilani* palace, along

with the adjacent temple (Building II), were part of the most extensive and best preserved architectural phase of the Iron Age occupation.

Building XVI yielded a wealth of material finds, thanks to the temple's state of preservation. The temple's fiery destruction preserved valuable objects made of metal and other materials, which were discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. The most important remnant that was preserved is the cache of 11 cuneiform tablets found in the temple's cella, one of which provides great insight into the religious expression practiced at Tayinat during the Neo-Assyrian occupation.

## 2 Summary of Chapter 2

Chapter 2 presented a more detailed discussion of the buildings of the West Central Area atop Tell Tayinat, with special emphasis on Buildings II and XVI, both of Iron II. Building I, a typical *bit hilani* palace, formed the southeastern corner of the buildings grouped around Courtyard VIII, and it was approached from the northern side of the building. Building I featured three column bases that were found *in situ*, betraying a roofed porch that led into the interior of this largest of all buildings associated with the administrative complex. Wood was used extensively around the open porch, as the surfaces of the wall were built with a wood-crib construction.

Building II featured only a single occupational floor, and its portico was accessed by a stairway and a two-columned entryway, making it an *in antis* temple, with columns that stood between the projecting walls of the temple's longer axis. These were load-bearing columns, which were supported by two double-lion column bases. Building II featured a tripartite plan, with the inner rooms entered along the shorter axis of the building, and a cella that was much shorter along the temple's longer axis. Building II measured 25.35 x 11.75 m (ratio of 2.16:1).

The temple was constructed of the same materials and manner as Building I, with traces of a white finishing coat preserved in the antecella. In the cella, some small fragments of red-and-blue-painted plaster were found between the flat stones bordering the altar. Wood was used for construction just as freely as with the palace (Building I), and it was found just as thoroughly burned. A wood-crib construction was used on the northern wall, in the northwestern corner of the temple, and at the eastern end of the portico's northern wall. Building II's dual-columned portico was 7.62 x 5.92 m. The double-lion column base was set in bitumen on one large stone.

The antecella of Building II measured 7.62 x 9.6 m long, with walls that were constructed simpler than those of the portico. The floor was paved with cobblestones *ca.* 8 cm thick, which rested on an earthen bed. The eastern part of the pavement was laid with smaller pebbles, possibly

a later repair. The piers separating the antecella from the cella were 1.32 m thick, having been founded on the cobblestone paving. They were built entirely of unbaked brick and were coated with white plaster. The bench against the northern pier also was built atop the cobblestone paving and covered with white plaster.

The cella of Building II was the same width as the antecella, but measured only 3.25 m deep. The construction of the wall and floor-paving were the same as that of the antecella, while the opening between the rooms was 4.52 m wide. Centered with the opening was an unbaked-brick stand, or offering table, which sat partly on the mudbricks and partly on the cobblestone pavement. The offering table was plastered on the front and sides, but the back was destroyed. A podium, preserved mainly in the northeastern corner alone, almost filled the cella. The sides of the podium consisted of large, reused, white and basaltic stones. The entire podium was built of unbaked brick, and the center was filled with laid, unbaked brick.

Building XVI employed the same “wood-crib” constructional technique that was used in the construction of Buildings I and II. The nearly identical size, shape, and design of the basaltic column bases for Building XVI and Building I, which clearly links the temple architecturally to the adjacent *bit hilani* palaces, marks the temple as part of the Second Building Period. A cobblestone pavement that extended eastward from Building I’s *bit hilani* palace led to Building XVI. The staircase accessed the temple’s portico, a brick-paved porch that was supported by an ornately carved, basaltic column base that was set deeply into its floor, similar to Building II’s twin column bases. The measurements of Building XVI are 17.5 x 8.3 m (a ratio of 2.27:1).

Given Building II’s measurements, Building XVI was less than 49% the size of its counterpart in area, although its longer axis was only slightly longer proportionally than the longer axis of Building II, in proportion to its smaller axis. The two outer walls of Building XVI appear to preserve different phases of the temple’s history, reflecting the transformation of an older temple *in antis* of Iron II (i.e. the Second Building Period) into an Assyrian *langraum* temple during Iron III (i.e. the Third Building Period), with the final phase having ended abruptly by conflagration. The eastern wall was built in a modified wood-crib construction, which also was true of the northern wall of Building II. A singular, basaltic column rested on the western edge of the staircase, immediately in front of the building’s western wall.

The portico was separated from the antecella by two brick piers that bonded with the temple’s exterior walls. A thick deposit of burnt brick covered much of the floor between the two

piers. This material sealed three heavily charred wooden beams, one probably having been part of a threshold for the doorway.

The antecella's floor, although badly burned, was covered with a layer of plaster that was preserved only in patches. The room yielded a substantial quantity of bronze metal, including several riveted pieces, and several fragments of carved ivory inlay, perhaps suggesting that the room was equipped with furniture or fixtures mounted on its walls, or part of a door. The room also produced fragments of gold and silver foil, and the carved eye inlay from a human figurine.

A second set of piers and a wood-lined threshold separated the antecella from a small cella, which probably was accessed by a doorway or curtain. This northernmost room featured a rectangular podium, which filled virtually the entire cella, much like the podium in Building II, clearly representing a renovation to the original design and intended function of the room. The podium was accessed by four steps in each of its two southern corners, while a free-standing, plastered, mudbrick installation—possibly an altar or offering table—stood to its east. The podium was constructed with fired brick, and its sides were coated with white plaster. Its surface was paved with clay tiles and accessed by steps in its two southern corners.

The fire preserved a wealth of cultic objects that were strewn across the podium and around its base: gold, bronze, and iron implements, libation vessels, a large Assyrian Glazed Ware jar, and other ornately decorated ritual objects. The ceramic assemblage included several oil lamps, a pot stand, and a small jug, all dating to the seventh century BC. Also found on the surface of the podium was a collection of 11 Neo-Assyrian cuneiform tablets, possibly part of a provincial archive that was stored somewhere within the city.

The cache of tablets indicates that the paired temples at Tayinat formed part of an Assyrian religious complex, as Building XVI may have been dedicated to the cult of Nabu, in the tradition of those at Kalhu and Khorsabad. The two temples shared a symbiotic relationship during the final phase of their use, the period of Neo-Assyrian occupation, though they undoubtedly functioned in harmony during the earlier time of Kunulua's independence, as well.

### 3 Summary of Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, a study was made of the architectural and physical features of the LBA and Iron Age temples in and around Syria, in order to understand how Tell Tayinat's temples fit into an architectural and stylistic typology of temples. The study included temples of Syria, southeastern

Anatolia, and Canaan. Later in the chapter, an analysis of the raw data was made, in order to evaluate the architectural design and tradition of Buildings II and XVI at Tayinat.

At Ugarit, four temples were excavated, including those dedicated to Baal and Dagan on the acropolis, the latter of which was identified by inscribed stela. The temples of Baal and Dagan were two-room structures whose styles were variations of the *in antis* long-room plan, with a cella that was larger than the antecella. According to the plan of the temple of Baal, the antecella served as more of a hallway, forming a T-shape when viewed in relation to the cella.

At Munbaqa, on the western crest of the tell, the stone foundations of three *in antis* temples were excavated. Temple 1 and Temple 2 include these characteristic features: (1) long, rectangular plans; (2) direct-access approaches; (3) an open, un-columned entrance for Temple 1, and the possibility of a twin-columned entrance for Temple 2; (4) a rectangular antecella for Temple 1, but no antecella for Temple 2; (5) rectangular cellas with longer axes along the longer axes; and (6) a narrow hall between the porch and cella of Temple 2; narrow halls between the portico and the antecella—as well as the antecella and the cella—of Temple 1.

Emar's excavators found four temples in Field E. Among them, two *in antis* temples to Baal and Aštarte were uncovered on the highest point of the mound, which were virtually twin temples. Their plan is similar to that of Munbaqa's temple, except that these temples included no antecella, but rather a cella that was longer than that of the antecella. Both temples featured an elongated room for the antecella, with an offering table and special paraphernalia for rituals, plus a podium for the deity in the cella. An altar was erected on the southern edge of the esplanade.

Alalakh's Period-4 temple consisted of a *Breitraum* cella with a niche in its back wall, along with two, broad-room antecellas. While Woolley was tempted to assign this as an *in antis* temple, there was no material evidence found at the site that justifies his proposal. The Period-3 complex was a double temple built directly over the temple of Period 4, but with a different character. A massive platform for the new temple was created, which obliterated the niche of the former temple. The Period-2 builders dismantled the walls of the previous temple but reused the podium and removed all traces of the previous floors. Its plan followed that of the earlier temples, with two broad-room antecellas fronting a cella divided into two units. This double cella was a unique arrangement and probably was intended for the worship of two deities.

Hazor's temple of Stratum 1B (Area H) was comprised of three chambers built in succession, with the doorways on a single axis leading into each. The porch was narrower than the hall and was attached directly to the building, while the inner halls were identical to the halls of



the previous temples, with a broad cella that included a rectangular niche at the center of the short axis on the northwestern side of the temple. In the center of the cella were two column bases that supported a roof. A basaltic orthostat with a lion in relief stood on either side of the entrance to the porch. The temple of Stratum 1A, the final level of the LBA, included cultic furnishings, which were found in a thick layer of ash, especially in the cella, demonstrating that Stratum 1A's temple was destroyed in a conflagration. On one side was the divine symbol of the storm god depicted in low relief, attesting to this deity's influence in the southern Levant.

Hattuša and Sarissa had temples with strong similarities. Hattuša's Temple 1 and Sarissa's Building C had these features in common: (1) a singular, inner courtyard/cella; (2) framed by pillared halls on two sides; and (3) a main cultic area with façades containing projections and offsets. Hattuša's Temple 1 was built first, then copied with slight modifications at sites throughout the empire, with Sarissa's Building C serving as one example. Strong similarities also exist between Hattuša's temples in the Upper City and Sarissa's Temple 1. The following similarities exist between the two: (1) the cellas were accompanied by a complex of rooms; (2) the cellas were located in the center of the complex of rooms, enclosed on all sides; (3) the cellas were singular rooms with walls proportioned with a 4:3 ratio; and (4) there were no niches, columns, or porticoed entryways. These temples clearly used the same basic architectural plan.

The temple at Aleppo consisted of roughly hewn blocks and mudbrick, with the storm god having been worshipped there since the EBA. Aleppo's temple underwent minor modifications and renovations over the centuries. The temple's shape was altered during the fourteenth century BC, with the invasion of Šuppiluliuma I. The earlier cultic niche was sealed, and three reliefs were placed along its front side: a mountain god and two composite beasts. The temple of the early Iron Age boasted a series of 26 stunning, carved reliefs along the building's northern wall. Along the eastern wall of the cella were relief-images of false windows and a smiting storm god that had disproportionately oversized body parts. Early in the eleventh century BC, Taita I erected a sculpted orthostat relief bearing his own image next to that of the storm god, complete with an inscription (ALEPPO 6), which altered the scene to dedicatory. The new decoration portrayed the storm god, who was entering his chariot, along with his entourage.

The temple of ʿAin Dārā, featured a long-room, *in antis* plan, with a recessed portico that boasted twin columns along the entrance, which was decorated with sculptures portraying images of sphinxes and lions, along with orthostat reliefs carved with divine and mythological figures. The temple's initial room consisted of a broad niche between two *antae*. Two circular, basaltic

column bases supported wooden columns between the *antae* and a roof that covered the niche. The entry niche yielded to two inner rooms: a rectangular antecella (15.8 x 6 m) and a square cella (16.7 x 16.8 m), both of which were paved with limestone slabs. Assuming a similar function for the mountain gods at ʿAin Dārā as in Chamber A at Yazılıkaya, the storm god was standing or sitting atop the podium. A relief depicts a female figure turning to the right and wearing a long coat that is held together by a belt, but leaving her exposed below, iconography that identifies her as Ishtar/Aštar, suggesting a distinct possibility that ʿAin Dārā’s temple was dedicated to the storm god (and his consort?). The characteristics of the Iron I temple at ʿAin Dārā include the following: (1) a monumental stairway, (2) a twin-columned portico, (3) gigantic footprints (of the storm god?), (4) a long, rectangular plan, (5) a direct-access approach, (6) a rectangular antecella, (7) a narrow hall between the vestibule and the antecella, (8) sculpted pilasters, (9) a non-columned cella, and (10) a podium-base with deities depicted.

The excavations in Area A at ʿāfis have revealed a sequence of temples that documents the sacred architecture of the royal elite throughout Iron I–III. Temple AI (Iron III) was built in *in antis* style. Earlier excavations in Area E4 have revealed a lengthy Iron I sequence, including Building G on the westernmost summit, a rectangular temple with an *in antis* architectural style. The identification of Building G as a temple is confirmed by the presence of an ashlar block, which probably was part of a cultic installation such as an offering table or altar.

Carchemish, which may have fallen under Palistin’s control eventually, contained Woolley’s “sanctuary,” a building that was called a temple to the storm god due to an inscription on a pair of stone door jams stating that it was a temple of the storm god, Tarhunza of Carchemish. A single column base was found, though it probably had a twin that has not been recovered. The known features of this temple include the following: (1) a singular cella, (2) almost certainly an *in antis* plan, (3) a twin-columned entrance (although the second column was never found), (4) a direct-access approach, and (5) a narrow hall between the vestibule and the cella. Thus this temple seems to have possessed an *in antis* architectural style with twin columns supporting a roof.

The Israelite temple at Jerusalem, whose presence cannot be confirmed by archaeological evidence, was tripartite and built according to a long-room plan, with each room originally measuring 20 cubits wide. The porch was 10 cubits long and was reached by a stairway, while the main hall was 40 cubits long and entered by ornate wooden doors 10 cubits wide. The cella most likely constituted a cube with sides of 20 cubits each, but this is uncertain. The central shrine was enclosed on three sides by multi-storied side chambers that complimented the hall and cella. Fine

ashlar masonry was used throughout, and the roof was constructed of large beams. The walls and floors were lined with cedar. Cherubs, palmettes, floral patterns, and window frames lined the walls of both interior rooms, while the doors to both rooms were furnished with ornate patterns.

Tel Qasile's Iron I temples are represented in three phases: Stratum XII (Temple 319), on virgin soil, Stratum XI (Temple 200), and Stratum X (Temple 131). Temple 319 was shaped almost as a parallelogram and featured a direct-access approach, which contrasts with the bent-axis approach of the two subsequent phases. The plan of Temple 319 consists of a one-room cella with a raised platform within it. Benches of beaten earth were found along the northern, eastern, and part of the southern walls. Temple 200 was erected on the stumps of the walls of the previous temple and built according to a similar plan, with benches of red *hamra* brick along the walls. Temple 131 included an entrance room, an altered main hall, a cella with two round pillar-bases of stone that were incorporated into the fill, a bent-axis approach, and benches.

The first Iron Age temple at Ekron (Stratum V), Temple 350, was a monumental building that incorporated new architectural elements and installations onto the structure of Stratum VI, such as a megaron-style entrance, a round pebbled hearth, and a *bamah*. The temple's vestibule showcased twin columns, as did the cella. These objects reflect continuity with Aegean tradition. Modifications to the temple were made during Stratum IVA, as both the hearth and twin columns were removed from the cella. This may represent a move toward the gradual shedding of the defining elements of the native culture that was left behind by the immigrants. Temple Complex 650, a contemporary of Tayinat's Building XVI during the latter's final phase of occupation, is a hybrid of an Assyrian architectural plan, with distinctively Phoenician and Philistine elements. Temple 650 thus does not compare architecturally with typical tripartite plans of the Levant.

Ashdod's Building 5337 contained a central hall with a raised, free-standing *kurkar* hearth and two roof-supporting pillars on opposite ends of the hall. This temple also yielded Late Helladic IIIc:1b ware and Philistine bichrome pottery. Building 5337's northeastern-most room contained a mudbrick bench, possibly a *bamah*, and yielded two golden discs decorated in Aegean style, a faience amulet, and a miniature Late Helladic IIIc:1b kylix. A free-standing hearth that stood between two pillars also was found in Stratum VII at Tel Mique.

The final city of the Philistine Pentapolis studied is Tell eš-Šafī (Gath?). Under a cultic installation of Iron II, the excavators uncovered what appears to be an Iron I temple, complete with two pillar bases and a *bamah*. This architecture is reminiscent of the Qasile temple sequence, with two pillar bases. These pillar bases were positioned in the middle of the building, similar to

Building 131 at Tel Qasile and Building 5337 at Ashdod. The pillar bases are just over 1½ m apart, so they probably did not belong to the cella, unless that was the temple's central room.

## 4 Summary of Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, an attempt was made to identify the deities that occupied Building II and Building XVI at Tell Tayinat during the Neo-Assyrian occupation. Building XVI can be identified with greater confidence than Building II, on account of the cache of texts that was found inside its cella, as opposed to the lack of any identifying evidence present within Building II.

The view that identifies Nabu as the god that occupied Building XVI consists of several lines of evidence: (1) His identity as the patron deity of the writing arts compares favorably to the corpus of cuneiform tablets from Building XVI. (2) Since the cuneiform cache at Kalhu was associated with Nabu's temple, and Tayinat's oath tablet is of the same genre and historical context (i.e. another variation of EST), Building XVI probably functioned similarly to the Nabu temple at Kalhu. (3) Building XVI's tablets were displayed on the wall and used for reciting, just as Kalhu's tablets were displayed at Nabu's temple to reveal the Median kings' commitment to Esarhaddon, through recited allegiance. (4) The extended duration of the display of the tablets argues for continuity between the temple of Nabu at Kalhu and Building XVI, as Ashurbanipal probably used the tablets to reaffirm loyalty to him during his reign. (5) Aššur's seal was present on Tayinat's oath tablet, as well as the tablets at Kalhu, further linking the purpose of both temples.

As for identifying the deity that inhabited Building II, Nabu's consort Tašmetu is one possibility. A precedent exists at LBA Emar, where paired temples of Baal and Aštarte housed a male deity and his female consort. This earlier northern Levantine model of paired temples would serve as a precedent for cultic residences of Nabu and Tašmetu at Tayinat of the Iron Age.

Drawbacks exist to the view that Tašmetu inhabited Building II. (1) Kalhu is the only known Neo-Assyrian city with temples to Nabu and Tašmetu. (2) The area of Building II (298 m<sup>2</sup>) measures over twice the size of Building XVI (145 m<sup>2</sup>), making it highly suspect to suggest that the temple of the female deity was over twice the size as the temple of her male counterpart.

Another possibility is that Building II instead was the temple of Aššur. The greatest strength of this view is related to the details of the *akītu* ceremony, which suggest that access to a temple of Aššur and a cultic figure of the god, in addition to the presence of a cultic figure of Nabu, was necessary to complete the rituals involved in the ceremony. If the *akītu* festival was observed

at Kunalia, the presence of a temple of Aššur would have allowed for the completion of the ceremonies that were a vibrant part of the festival.

Another argument in favor of attributing Building II to Aššur is its superior size in relation to Building XVI, as well as how Building II's position was about 8 m closer to the royal residence than was Building XVI. The doubled size of Building II and its closer proximity to the primary royal residence argue for the priority of Building II and suggest that it would have housed the greater deity between the two gods that occupied these two temples on the upper mound.

As for drawbacks to the view that Building II was the temple of Aššur, one viable criticism is that there is a lack of hard evidence from Building II that supports this association. A second drawback to the Aššur view is that the Assyrians only permitted one temple of Aššur in all of their territory, which was located at the city of Ashur. A temple of Aššur was built in Uruk, but this occurred during the Neo-Babylonian Empire and was the result of a large contingent of Assyrians that relocated there to ensure the cult's continuance. This strongly suggests that the local Assyrian administration at Kunalia would not have been allowed to attribute a temple to Aššur in the provincial capital. Of course, no known Assyrian text states that this was impermissible.

The third possibility is that Building II was the temple of the storm god, which notion may be supported by textual evidence. ALEPPO 6 and ALEPPO 7 connect Taita I to the storm god and his temple at Aleppo. The text of T-1801 refers to Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il as deities that would punish anyone breaking the sworn oath to the Assyrian king. The Neo-Assyrians may have continued the cult to the storm god at Building II to deter rebellion on the part of the native population.

Another argument in favor of the storm god view is that, as the chief god in the local pantheon, the storm god could have taken the place of Marduk in the *akītu* ceremony, which likely was performed at Tayinat during the period of Neo-Assyrian administration. All of the supporting evidence that was cited for the Aššur view applies to the storm god view, without bearing any of its drawbacks, which makes the storm god view a compelling one.

The one substantive weakness with the storm god view is that if the storm god presided over the *akītu* festival, this would be the only known place where he fulfilled the role of Marduk and Aššur, which weakens this view at least slightly. A response to this criticism is that the Assyrians applied the same principle when the *akītu* ceremony became a regular practice in Assyria, as they substituted Aššur for Marduk in the role that was played by the chief deity.

Although the available evidence is not enough to be conclusive about the deity that resided in Building II, the artifactual, textual, and historical evidence combine to favor the view that Building II served as the temple of the storm god during the Neo-Assyrian occupation, which also is the least problematic view. More confidence can be placed in the identification of Building XVI as the temple of Nabu, but perhaps evidence will surface eventually that can identify both of these buildings with a greater level of certainty.

## 5 Summary of Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, a study was conducted into the religious role of oath-swearing at Tell Tayinat of Iron Age III, which opportunity is owed to the vital epigraphical find of an oath tablet among the cuneiform cache that was recovered from the cella of Building XVI. The oath tablet possesses great religious significance and provides important information about how religion was practiced at the ancient city of Kunalia during the time of the Neo-Assyrian administration.

The 2009 season at Tell Tayinat saw the discovery of eleven cuneiform tablets made of clay, all of which were buried atop the podium that was found in the cella of Building XVI. This temple served the residents of the acropolis in its final phase of use. Of the eleven tablets, all were scholarly or historical in nature, except for a single docket (T-1899). The majority of the other tablets from the recently discovered temple (T-1701, T-1922, T-1923, T-1927–1931) are manuscripts of the Mesopotamian scholarly series *iqqur īpuš*. Tablet T-1923 is the best preserved of these *iqqur īpuš* tablets. Tablet T-1930 is the largest of the lot, being inscribed with the table for months IV–XII and preserving eight lines of text on only one face.

The fragments T-1920 + T-1920a are part of an unidentified hemerology, related to success or failure based on favorable or unfavorable days on the calendar. Text T-1921, which exists only in fragmentary form, is a bilingual Sumerian-Akkadian lexical list inscribed on both faces. Most importantly, T-1801 is the tablet that records a loyalty oath that was imposed on the governor of Kunalia et al. by Esarhaddon, who commanded loyalty from his subjects in anticipation of his eventual death, so that the transition to Ashurbanipal's succession would be without rebellion.

When comparing T-1801 to Kalhu's tablets, the following conclusions were drawn: (1) The oath tablet most likely was composed on or near the same day as the Kalhu tablets, which establishes continuity between the heartland of the empire and the provinces in the empire's western periphery. (2) The text of the oath tablet largely parallels that of Kalhu's tablets. (3) Just

as with Kalhu's tablets, Tayinat's tablet was sealed with the divine seals of Aššur. (4) Tablets from both sites atypically display columns from left to right on the reverse.

The presence of the Kunalian oath tablet in the home-temple of its native swearers, the governor of Kunalia and his subordinates, suggests that he returned to his native city, delivered the oath tablet to Building XVI, had his subordinates enter the temple and swear loyalty, then kept the tablet on display in the temple as a permanent reminder of the allegiance that was sworn. The possibility is strong that subsequent governors, officials, and soldiers all took the same oath at the temple, whether at the time they took office, at each New Year's festival, or both.

The presence of the tablet in a temple suggests the sacred nature of the vow, as the oath included the statement that it was a tablet of Aššur. The presence of the oath tablet at Tayinat implies that the Medes possessed no special status in the empire. The governor of Kunalia most likely took his oath on the same day that the Median rulers swore loyalty to Esarhaddon. The implication also is that this activity was performed throughout the empire, yet possibly without the preservation or discovery of other copies of the sacred oath-swearing.

Lauinger characterized the *iqqur īpuš* corpus from Tayinat not as an archive or a library, but as a display collection. By hanging the tablet with a string that ran through the horizontal piercing, the governor of Kunalia guaranteed full visibility of both faces of the document. Thus the reader could read either side normally if a string ran through the tablet horizontally and he/she flipped the tablet from top to bottom, using the string that was holding the tablet in place.

A large, mudbrick installation was uncovered in the northeastern quadrant of the podium in Building XVI's cella, undoubtedly an offering table or an altar. The cuneiform cache was found directly opposite from the installation, in the podium's northwestern quadrant. The position and condition of the oath tablet suggest that it was discovered where it fell when the temple was destroyed by the intense conflagration. The tablet was resting face down on the podium, with its reverse side facing upwards.

As for who was the oath-requiree responsible for the *adê*, T-1801 begins, "The loyalty oath of Esarhaddon," followed by his preeminent title ("King of Assyria") and rationale for the legitimacy of his title, namely the successional nature of his relationship to his father ("son of Sennacherib"), who also is ascribed with the title, "King of Assyria." As for who were the oath-swearers, the oath tablet lists 17 titled officials or groups, followed by a generic reference to "all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are."

A list of the oath-swearers is as follows: (1) the governor of Kunalia, who oversaw the province as the king's regent; (2) the deputy ("the second one"), who was the vice governor and second in command; (3) the major-domo, or chief steward, who had direct access to the monarch or, in this case, to the governor; (4) the scribes, who were responsible for the literary codification of matters worthy of recording; (5) the chariot drivers, who were military warriors of a prestigious rank and led the king's chariots in battle; (6) the third men, originally shield-bearers who became the governor's personal officials and confidants; (7) the village managers, a non-military post maybe implying the leading officials in each village within the province; (8) the information officers, perhaps itinerate agents who related pertinent information to the governor; (9) the prefects, probably the highest ranking officers on the battlefield; (10) the cohort, a military unit perhaps connected to the cavalry; (11) the charioteers, who drove the chariots used in battle; (12) the cavalymen, Assyrian soldiers who fought on horseback; (13) the exempt, the soldiers thought to be exempt members of the military; (14) the outriders, possibly of the *kallāpu* infantry; (15) the specialists, probably soldiers, perhaps serving as scouts, spies, weapon-makers, and/or tactical forces; (16) the shield-bearers, who held a support position in the army; (17) the craftsmen, perhaps men who served as the equivalent to an army corps of engineers; (18) all the men of his hands, great and small, as many as there are, clearly individuals in offices and functions that served the Assyrian crown by assisting the governor to accomplish his task of ruling the province.

A survey of oath-swearing in the ANE was conducted. Examples of oath-swearing from ANE contexts include those from the Early Dynastic Period in Mesopotamia, the Akkadian Period in Mesopotamia, Syria of the Old Babylonian Period, Egypt's New Kingdom, the Hittite Empire, Syria of the LBA, the Israelite monarchy, Assyria of the Iron Age, and Syria of Iron II. This survey demonstrated a distinction between parity treaties and vassal treaties. The former were covenants between virtual equals in power, while the latter were pacts cut between superior rulers and inferior rulers whom they desired to subjugate and exploit for personal gain.

The form of treaty utilized in Mesopotamia of the third millennium BC, in Syria in the first half of the second millennium BC, and in Hittite Anatolia of the second half of the second millennium BC, involved an appeal to the higher power of the gods, the swearing of an oath to initiate the stipulations of the agreement, and various curses and blessings. The treaties of Esarhaddon are a variation of the vassal treaty, imposed on foreign rulers in the form of a sworn oath that established a binding agreement under the threat of curses and divine retribution, should the rulers act contrary to the terms of the agreement. The fact that each stipulation was shaped in



the form of an oath, and that deities were invoked under oath, suggests that the solemn affirmation before the gods was the constituent element of Neo-Assyrian treaties.

The survey of oath-swearing in the ANE demonstrated that the oath tablet from Tayinat fits perfectly within the established tradition of ANE parity treaties and vassal treaties, as the oath tablet was evaluated according to the following six characteristics that are among those typical of ANE treaties: (1) a preamble, (2) a historical prologue, (3) stipulations, (4) provision for deposit in the temple and for periodic public reading, (5) a list of gods as witnesses, and (6) a formula of curses and blessings. A study of the applicable elements of the oath tablet from Tell Tayinat articulated the religious significance of the tablet's text, which has a preamble and identifies the text as an *adê*, names the superior (Esarhaddon, the oath-requiree), notes his pertinent titles, and lists the individuals placed under the requirements of the oath (i.e. the oath-swearers).

Although T-1801 has no true historical prologue, it does contain clear stipulations. The governor of Kunalia and those under him were to view the crown prince designate of the Neo-Assyrian Empire with reverence and submission, protecting him at all costs if anyone in his service or in the realm of the empire were to rebel. Tayinat's oath tablet includes a provision for its deposit in the temple for periodic, public reading, and also includes a list of gods as witnesses, though only one deity was identified by name.

As for blessings and curses, the oath tablet from Tayinat preserves two curses not present in the Kalhu versions. The first curse, which focuses on disobedience, invokes the divine couple: Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il. The second curse invokes the goddess Šarrat-Ekron. Before the curses are listed, the text prescribes the potential offenses that were banned: (1) changing, neglecting, violating, or voiding the loyalty oath contained within the tablet; (2) breaking the entire oath; (3) discarding the oath-tablet; (4) removing the statue of Esarhaddon, the statue of Ashurbanipal, or the statue of his brothers and his sons; and (5) failing to guard the sealed oath tablet, since it was to be regarded just as highly as a statue of a patron deity or a local god.

The oath tablet then articulates the seven curses that would be the desired result for committing any of the prescribed violations: (1) that Aramiš would fill the violator with green water; (2) that Adad and Šāla would inflict piercing pain and ill health throughout the land of the violator; (3) that Šarrat-Ekron would cause a worm to burst forth from the violator's innards; (4) that the name and the seed of the violator, along with those of his brothers and sons, would disappear from the earth; (5) that the deities would strike down the violator, his sons, and his

daughters, just as a spring lamb or a kid; (6) that the deities would cause the violator's door to be soaked in blood(?) before his eyes; and (7) that the violator's doors would be unable to open.

Of great importance to the religious significance of the oath tablet is the identity of the deities listed in the section of potential curses that would be inflicted on anyone who breaks the stipulations of the promised loyalty to the king. The first deity listed is Aramiš, "the lord of the city and land of Qarnê," clearly a southern Levantine deity. The second and third deities are Adad and Šāla, whose identities are well known. Adad is the Akkadian name for Hadad, the storm god, while Šāla is his female consort, known elsewhere as Aštarte.

Kurba'il's location is uncertain, but it may be discerned from an inscribed statue of Shalmaneser III in the courtyard of Fort Shalmaneser at Kalhu, which inscription is addressed to "Adad, . . . who lives in Kurba'il in the holy sanctuary." This would argue for locating Kurba'il within a reasonable distance from Arpad, modern Tell Rifa'at, just north of Syrian Aleppo. If the reconstruction provided above is correct, Adad and Šāla were worshipped near Arpad, just north of Aleppo. However, since Adad of Kurba'il is the *Assyrian* manifestation of the storm god, and since Assyrian texts may imply that the site was located in the province next to Kalhu, another strong possibility is that Kurba'il was located just to the northeast of the Assyrian heartland.

The final deity within the curses-section is Šarrat-Ekron, who is identified with Ptgyh, the Lady of Ekron in Philistia. In the Ekron Royal Dedicatory Inscription, Ptgyh was invoked for a blessing on Ekron's king. Since the goddess was not of Semitic origin, the possibility exists that she was a Philistine deity, possibly of Aegean derivation, if not the Philistine version of Aštarte. Ekron's status as one of the five cities of the Philistine Pentapolis reinforces this assertion as highly plausible.

Understanding the sacramental role of Tayinat's oath tablet requires a grasp of a *tuppi adê*, which is accomplished by studying EST. The two defining features of a *tuppi adê* are these: (1) rotation along the vertical axis, and (2) impressions made by three different seals of Aššur. This seal impression was the realization on earth of the Seal of Destinies that was determined by Aššur, which he used to seal the Tablet of Destinies. When a *tuppi adê* is applied to a tablet, this Seal of Aššur transformed the document into a Tablet of Destinies, ratifying it as a direct communication of the divine will of Aššur, not to be altered at risk of death or total annihilation.

Since the decreeing of destinies was an integral part of the *akītu* ceremony, celebrating the New Year, there is reason to believe that this ceremony included the formal swearing of an *adê*. The oath tablets at Kalhu were found in a throne room adjacent to the Nabu temple, in the *bīt akītu*,

where part of the annual *akītu* ceremony that included rituals involving Nabu and Tašmetu was held. The part of the ceremony involving Nabu and Tašmetu occurred during Days 4, 5, and 8 of Ayyaru, the same month to which all of the extant colophons of Esarhaddon's oath tablets are dated. The *tuppi adê* was brought before the king, aromatic oils were aired, sacrifices were offered, incense was burned, and the tablet was read aloud, which activated the *adê*.

If the governing principle that determined the location at which an exemplar of EST was deposited was the location to which the subordinate party delivered tribute, then the Tayinat exemplar may have been deposited at the provincial capital and not in the Assyrian heartland. The exemplars of EST may have been deposited at the different places to which tribute was brought into the empire, because the tablets seemingly continued to be used in an annual *akītu* ceremony in which the subordinate party's destiny was reaffirmed, and which coincided with the annual delivery of tribute long after the *adê* initially was established in 672 BC.

Esarhaddon's *adê* thus was an obligatory sworn-oath that was transformed and projected into the divine realm, so that it became a destiny. This involved the subordinate party's oath that established his subordination to be his destiny just as the gods' oath established their subordination to Marduk in the passage in the *Enūma Eliš* story. Since the *akītu* ceremony was performed annually, the inner sanctum of Building XVI—with its displayed *tuppi adê*—may have become the ritual setting in this province for the annual renewal of loyalty sworn to the Assyrian king.

## 6 Conclusions in Light of Present Research

The thesis statement of Chapter 1 expressed that this study seeks to describe the characteristics, architectural style, and material finds of Building XVI in the context of Tayinat's citadel (Upper City), in order to determine what can be learned from the religious architecture and artifacts that were excavated at the site, and to reconstruct the role and expression of religion at Tayinat, as well as can be known. In light of what was learned in the present study, the particulars of the thesis statement will be reflected upon below.

### 6.1 The Ethnic Composition of the Population at Kunalia

Given the lack of excavational activity in the Lower City at Kunalia, the part of the site where the majority of the population lived, the opportunity to be conclusive about the various ethnic groups that resided in the city and the percentage of the overall population that each group represented is currently not available to the archaeologist or ancient historian. Another uncertainty is whether

any native Neo-Hittite residents who survived Tiglath-pileser III's destruction of the city and deportation of its population to other lands were able to remain at the site as squatters. The production of Luwian inscriptions seems to have ceased when the city was destroyed, so at present there are no definitive signs that a native presence persisted at Kunalia after the city was rebuilt.

Currently, the most helpful gauge for determining the ethnic makeup at the site immediately after the Neo-Assyrian occupation is found in the annals of Tiglath-pileser III, which list various peoples whom the Assyrian king settled in the cities of Kunalia (Tadmor and Yamada 2011: 46), whether or not this list is exhaustive. Another source for peoples moved to Kunalia at a later time just may be the oath tablet, found in the form of deities to which the Assyrians appealed for retribution if provincial officials would violate their oath of allegiance to Esarhaddon or Ashurbanipal. The first deity in this section of the oath tablet, Aramiš of Qarnê, was centered in the Assyrian province of Qarnê in Transjordan, to the east of the Sea of Galilee, making this a southern Levantine cult located in the mountains of the Ḥauran.

The second and third deities in the curse section of the oath tablet are Adad and Šāla of Kurba'il, the names for the storm god and his consort in Mesopotamian literature. If Kurba'il is to be identified with Tell Rifa'at—which is just north of Aleppo, and most likely is Arpad—a site that is just over 55 km away from Tayinat, then these two deities would be part of a northern Levantine cult that is close in proximity to the provincial capital. This possibility is tempered by the valid view that Kurba'il instead was located in the province just over 100 km to the northeast of Kalhu.

The fourth deity in the curse section of the oath tablet is Šarrat-Ekron, which can be identified with Ptgyh, the Lady/Queen of Ekron in Philistia. She almost undoubtedly was a Philistine deity, possibly with Aegean derivation, if not the Philistine version of Aštarte. Given that Ekron is located in the Philistine Pentapolis, this deity also is connected to a southern Levantine cult.

As demonstrated in Chapter 1, the original population at Kunulua of the Iron Age was an amalgam of cultural traditions, including native Luwian Neo-Hittites, Sea Peoples, and possibly Hurrians. The most intriguing group among these is the Sea Peoples, whose presence at the site should not be doubted, on account of the influx of cylindrical loom-weights, circular hearths, and Helladic-style pottery LH IIIc ware that reveals a hybrid style that fused together Aegean shapes and motifs with local ceramic traditions.

## 6.2 The Architectural Style of the Temples at Kunalia

Building XVI, although not squarely aligned with the other buildings of the West Central Area of Tayinat's Upper City, stood *ca.* 9 m to the east of Building I. Nonetheless, this building was a vital part of the structural complex of the Second Building Period, which is known from how its eastern wall was built in a wood-crib construction, just as with the side and rear walls of Building I's porch, and the northwestern corner and the eastern end of the portico of Building II's northern wall. Building XVI also follows Building II in its plan, with twin projecting piers, lengthy *antae*, and similar dimensions of the two inner rooms, clearly making these *paired* temples atop the acropolis.

In fact, Building XVI has been identified beyond doubt as a temple of the *in antis* architectural style of northern Syria, during its original constructional phase, with its inner piers between the portico and the antecella, side walls with twin projecting *antae*, a column that supported the roof of the portico, and a lack of characteristic features of the other architectural styles of temples documented earlier, such as *migdol*, megaron, Aegean, or imperial Hittite. Only during the period when the city became a Neo-Assyrian administrative capital was the temple transformed into an Assyrian *langraum* plan, having been adapted to convey imperial ideology.

## 6.3 The Material Finds from Building XVI at Kunalia

As described at greater length in Chapter 2, Building XVI produced an important amount of material finds, most notably the following: riveted and other forms of bronze, fragments of carved ivory inlay (from furniture or fixtures?), fragments of gold and silver foil, a carved eye inlay from a human figurine, oil lamps, libation vessels, an incense-bearing pyxis, and eleven cuneiform tablets. All of these artifacts provide valuable clues about the significance of the temple's function, as well as the city's religious practices, during the Neo-Assyrian occupation.

The oil lamps, libation vessels, and incense-bearing pyxis from Building XVI coincide well with the fragrant oil, animal sacrifices, and burnt incense described in the Covenant of Aššur (SAA 9 3), all of which were essential elements utilized in the *akītu* ceremony. This harmonization of utensils strongly suggests that the more recently excavated temple (1) was used in the *akītu* ceremony at Kunalia, (2) was connected to the worship of the king of the gods—whether the storm god or Aššur—and Nabu, and (3) was devoted to the worship of one of these two deities. The choice between Aššur and Nabu as the deity ascribed to Building XVI is decided by that temple's inferior size when compared to Building II, as well as the presence of the cache of cuneiform

tablets that was found in Building XVI's cella, making Nabu the ideal candidate for its resident deity.

When considering the similarities between the archival cache at Tayinat and the one at Kalhu, it becomes manifest that Building XVI was a temple of Nabu. The following arguments verify this claim: (1) the oath tablets from both are nearly mirrored versions of EST; (2) the oath tablet(s) from each was hung on its vertical axis, allowing for an atypical rotation of the tablet with a string that pierced through it horizontally; (3) the oath tablets from Kalhu were found in the throne room of the temple of Nabu, just as the eleven tablets were found in Building XVI.

## 6.4 The Sovereignty of the Deities at Kunalia

As a paired temple with Building II during the city's Neo-Assyrian occupational phase, Building XVI was vitally connected to the life of the ruling elite at Kunalia. This is confirmed by the mention of the provincial governor on T-1801, as his presence on the tablet ties the temple to the highest local leadership. Its identification as the temple of Nabu is difficult to doubt, given the similarities between its cuneiform cache and the one from Kalhu that was found in the throne room of the temple of Nabu, which includes a similar version of EST, though the latter was addressed to Median rulers from the eastern part of the empire.

The importance of how Kalhu's oath tablets remained on display in the temple of Nabu for decades, during the lengthy reign of Ashurbanipal and the consecutive reigns of his three successors, cannot be underemphasized. While this oddity may speak only to the obsession with scribal archiving, a more logical option is that the perpetual storage of the tablets at Kalhu signals the Assyrian kings' expectation that oaths of loyalty were sworn regularly, perhaps even annually or more often. Since the oath tablet at Tayinat likely was on display for decades, as well, this implies that subsequent governors, deputy governors, chief stewards, etc. probably continued to swear oaths of allegiance there to Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal at least for the duration of the city's existence under Neo-Assyrian control.

With the likely celebration of the *akītu* ceremony at Kunalia—annually, at least—and the presence of a *tuppi adê* tablet with the Seal of Aššur, which was transformed into a “Seal of Destinies,” the divine will of Aššur was consulted during the ceremonies in order to announce what would occur in the upcoming year. Since the decreeing of destinies was an integral part of the *akītu* ceremony, there is reason to believe that this ceremony included the formal swearing of

an *adē* (sacred oath). If this be true, the *akītu* ceremony was a time when the officials at Kunalia re-committed themselves to the king by speaking the oath aloud, possibly inside Building XVI.

Equally as important, there is the assurance that the sovereignty of Aššur was recognized by the city's central authority and leading officials. Therefore, whatever were the religious allegiances held by the population at Kunalia, submission to the chief deity of the Assyrians was incorporated into their worship activities. This scenario fits well with the suggestion that was made in Chapter 4, namely that the larger of the two paired temples on the acropolis was devoted to the cult of the storm god, who was recognized alongside Aššur as the king of the gods during the Neo-Assyrian administration. Therefore, the storm god, Aššur, and Nabu seemingly comprised the most important deities recognized by the leadership, and thus together were sovereign at Kunalia.

## 6.5 The Role and Expression of Religion at Kunalia

The presence of paired temples on the citadel at Kunulua/Kunalia, whose origins date to the city's Second Building Period, indicates the high value placed on religion and cultic activity by its leadership, especially given the temples' positions in a close radius from the site's main palace, Building I. Undoubtedly from the inception of their construction, the temples were intricately bound to the expression of religious belief and worship on the part of Kunulua's royalty. How often the king visited the temple or offered sacrifices there cannot be known without inscriptional evidence, which is lacking at present.

What was suggested in Chapter 4 is that originally the storm god and his consort probably were worshipped in Buildings II and XVI, respectively. The case for this suggestion partially is based on the regional tradition of paired temples built to the storm god and his consort, with examples of this arrangement coming from LBA Emar, LBA Alalakh, LBA Ophrah (southern Levant), Iron II Samaria (southern Levant), and Iron II Jerusalem (southern Levant). Corroborative evidence for associating the storm god with Building II comes from the supremacy of this deity at non-distant Aleppo, nearby Tell 'āfis, and nearby 'Ain Dārā, with the final one of these sites having yielded evidence of the worship of both the storm god and Aštarte. Since Taita I—the king who ruled at Kunulua—was connected iconographically with the storm god at Aleppo, the argument can be made that the storm god also was the patron deity at his own capital city.

During the LBA, Teshub (storm god) continued to be worshipped at Aleppo, as well as the capital of Hattuša, where he served as a divine witness in Hittite treaties with other nations. The early Iron Age saw the storm god retain his preeminent position at Aleppo, when the Luwians

referred to him as Tarhunta/Tarhunza. Thus Aleppo's leaders continued to view the storm god as supreme, even after ethnic and/or cultural changes at the city led to the change in his name from one period to the next. At Tayinat, it also would make sense to continue the tradition of the worship of the supreme deity after the Neo-Assyrian occupation was initiated, which would mean the preeminent cult of the storm god having been reestablished at Building II.

Arguments for the assertion that Building II was devoted to the storm god after the Assyrians rebuilt the destroyed city were cited in Chapter 4 and reviewed above. The Neo-Assyrians could have used the continued primacy of the worship of the king of the gods as a logical syncretism, as the Levantine understanding of the storm god was that he was not merely the god who was sovereign over weather, storms, and fertility, but the very king of the gods.

In their minds, he was no less sovereign over the pantheon of deities than Marduk was for the Babylonians or Aššur was for the Assyrians. The logical conclusion to draw for the final phase of Iron Age activity at Tayinat is that the administrative leaders at this provincial capital introduced the worship of Nabu in Building XVI, and that the storm god and Nabu were featured during the *akītu* ceremonies that were held at least annually, while their temples fulfilled all of the necessary roles in the dramatic events particular to any and every observance of the festival.

## 7 Areas for Future Research

This final section of Chapter 6 will be devoted to the mention of several areas for future research that may have been spurred on by the present study, which in turn was spurred on by the contributions of a vast array of scholars who have gone before the present writer, many of whom were cited in the preceding chapters. The hope of the present writer is that in future generations, scholars may look back on the present time as the beginning of a golden era in the study of ancient Syria of the Iron Age.

### 7.1 The Deity of Building XVI during Pre-Assyrian Times

One of the goals of the present study has been the identification of the deities that resided in Buildings II and XVI at Tell Tayinat. While conclusiveness on this matter is not yet attainable, an attempt was made to persuade the reader that the most viable option for the deity that resided in Building II, based on current data, is none other than the king of the gods, recognized as the storm god in the Levant, Aššur in the Assyrian heartland, and Marduk in Babylonia.



While the probe of the northwestern corner and the cross-section of the western wall that were completed on Building XVI in 2011 produced no earlier floors, clear evidence of two discrete constructional phases was found. Therefore, it can be reasoned that a pre-Assyrian phase of the temple existed while the site maintained its independence as the capital of a Luwian-speaking, Neo-Hittite kingdom, which is also attested by the presence of fragments of Luwian inscriptions that were scattered on the pavement in the vicinity of the temple. All of this is in keeping with the conclusion of the University of Chicago's original excavators that Building II was part of the Second Building Period at Tayinat.

With this being the case, it is fair to assume that the deity occupying the temple in its earlier phase was not Nabu, a Mesopotamian god that would not have had a prominent seat of worship in a Neo-Hittite city-state of the Levant. Therefore, one area of future research is the identity of the deity that occupied Building XVI before the Assyrians overtook the city, which was discussed briefly in Chapter 4. Along with this, more research also can be done on the identity of the deity that occupied Building II at the same time. Certainly the likelihood is great that these paired temples originally were designed for the storm god (Teshub/Hadad, in Building II) and his northern Levantine consort (Aštar, in Building XVI), which pair was worshipped at Emar—and possibly at Alalakh, as well—during the LBA, and probably at ʿAin Dārā during the Iron Age.

## 7.2 Deities of Worship in Tayinat's Residential District

To date, excavations at Tell Tayinat have taken place exclusively on the upper mound, the home only to the ancient city's royalty and elite citizens. The lower mound thus remains a virtually untapped resource for unveiling what religious life was like for the majority of the city's residents. If Tayinat proves to be similar to the sites of Halaf and Zincirli, there may be multiple temples or chapels located not only in the upper city, but also in the lower city.

The upper mound still has much information to yield, as excavations have not encompassed nearly the entire surface area there. However, if excavations were to begin in the Lower City, certainly the potential would exist to find one or more ancient temples that served the common people who resided at the site. For example, a temple belonging to the Sea Peoples just may have been built in the Lower City, or a temple to the deity of some other ethnic group that had relocated to the site during the Iron Age. Such finds would help to understand the overall religious landscape, and perhaps many questions could be answered about the ethnic identities represented in the city,

especially if deities native to distant peoples were discovered to have been worshipped in the various temples of Tayinat's lower city.

### 7.3 Gleanings from the Eleven Tablets Found in Building XVI

Of the eleven tablets that were discovered facedown on the podium in Building XVI's cella, only one of them has been published: the oath tablet consisting of EST. While several scholars already have interacted with Lauinger's impressive transcription and translation of the treaty's text—such as Harrison, Steymans, Galil, Crouch, Fales, and Weeden—work on this inscription has just begun. Over time, many Assyriologists probably will be interacting critically with the tablet.

More can be researched about at least the following topics found in T-1801: the titulary of Esarhaddon, the various officials addressed by the king, the stipulations charged by the king, the curses inflicted on the oath-breakers, and the list of gods who would bring about retribution on the oath-breakers. Research along these lines is especially possible for future scholarship on account of the existence of comparative literature in the form of the oath tablets from Kalhu.

While the succession treaty of Esarhaddon is of great historical value to ancient historical studies, much fruit also can be gleaned from the translation and publication of the other 10 tablets from Tayinat's holy of holies. The genre of these tablets includes texts on *iqqur īpuš*, hermerology, a docket, and a lexical text. When the readings of these ten tablets become available to the scholarly community, undoubtedly more exciting contributions will be made by Assyriologists and others with a love for ANE history. Digging up temples and textual archives makes archaeology a thrill!

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# Figures

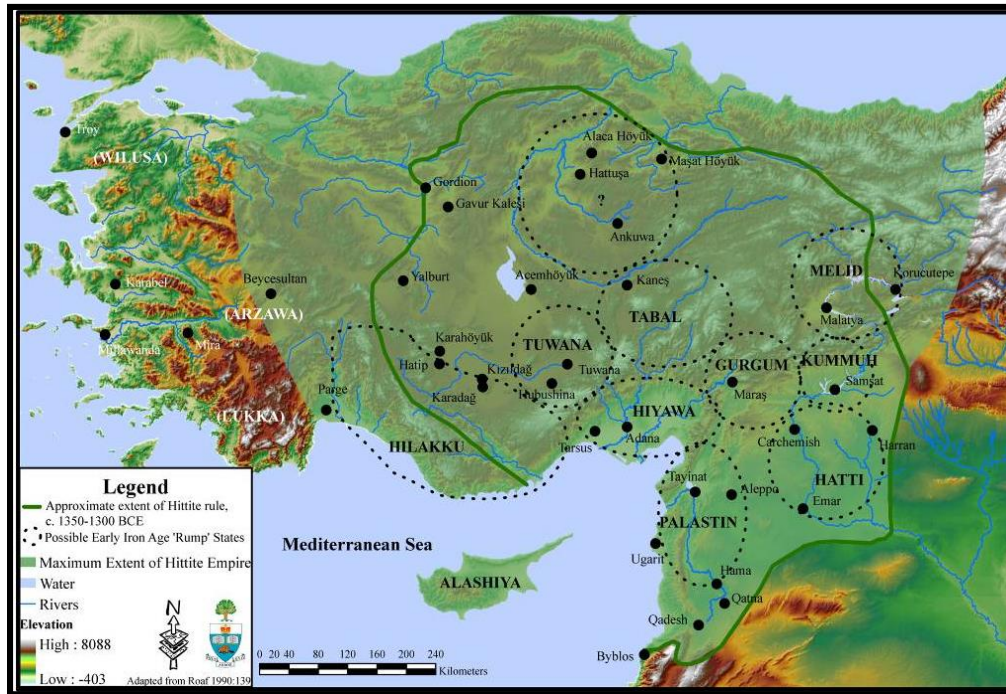


Figure 1: Kingdom of Palistin amidst Surrounding Kingdoms of the Iron Age

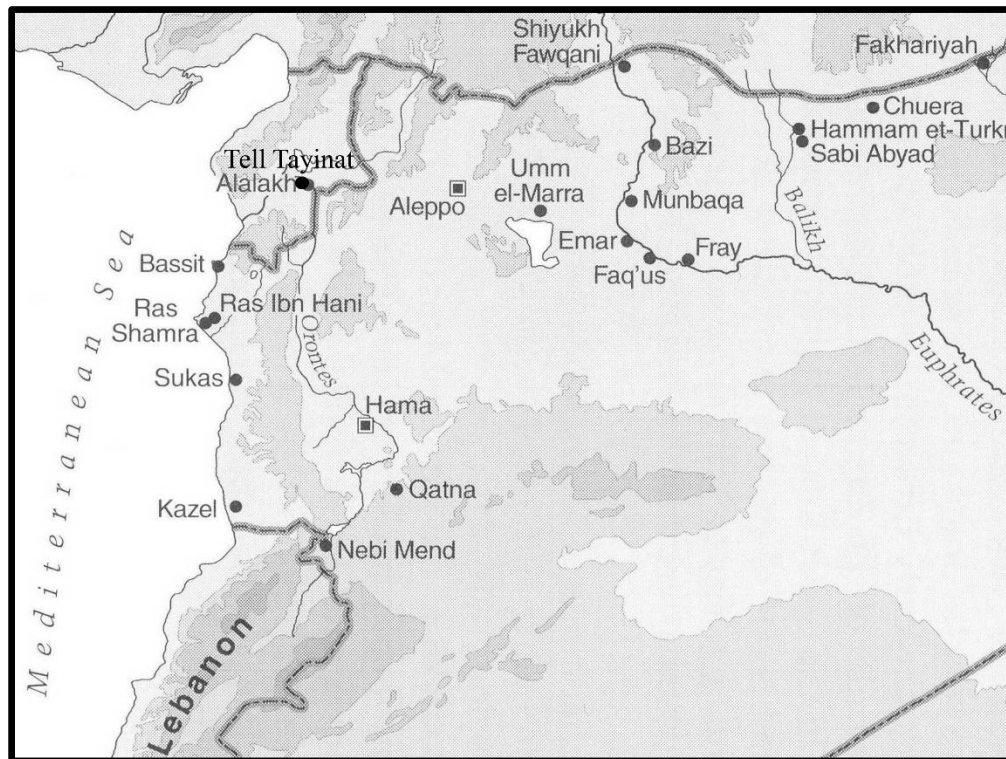


Figure 2: Tell Tayinat in the Amuq Plain (Akkermans & Schwartz, *Archaeology*, 328)

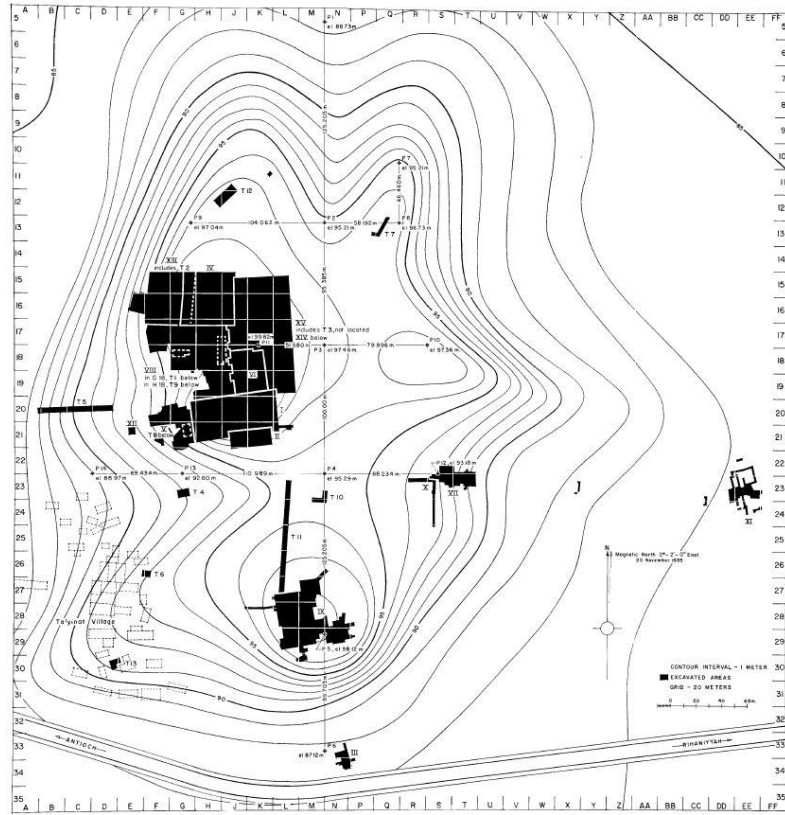


Figure 3: Plan of West Central Area at Tayinat (Haines, *Excavations*, Fig. 93)

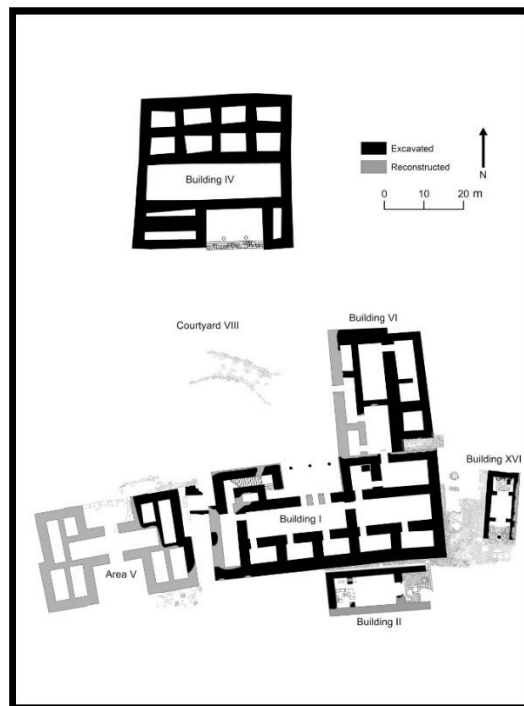


Figure 4: Tayinat's Second Building Period (Image created by S. Batiuk and J. Osborne)

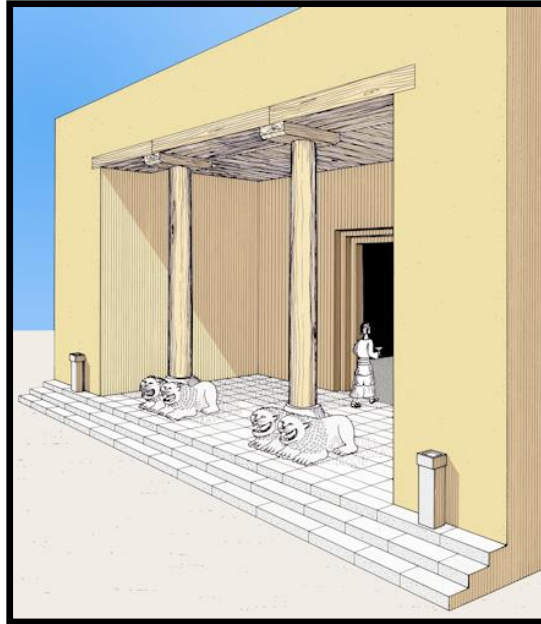


Figure 5: Drawing of Building II at Tayinat (Image created by L. Ritmeyer)

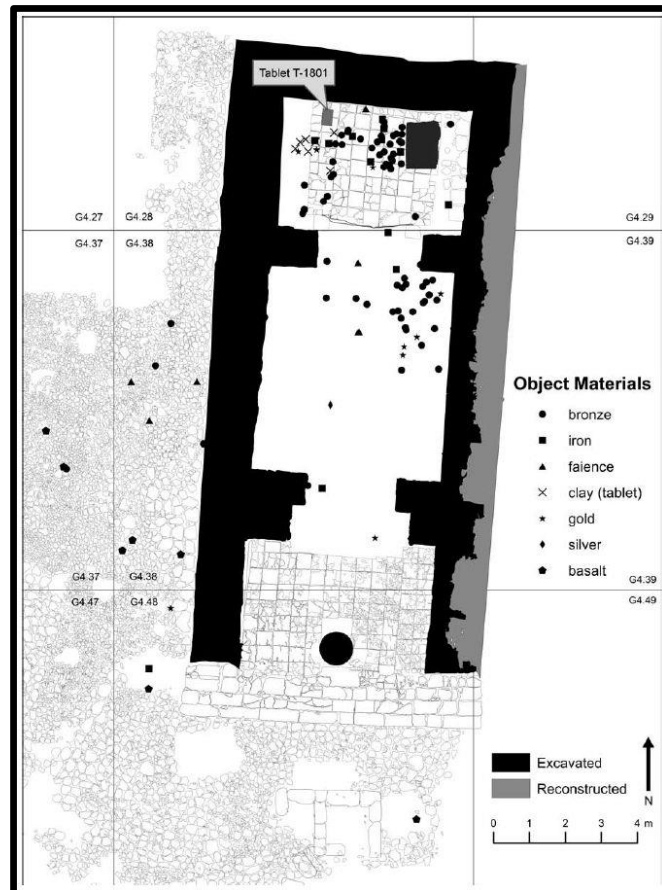


Figure 6: Building XVI at Tayinat (Image created by J. Osborne)



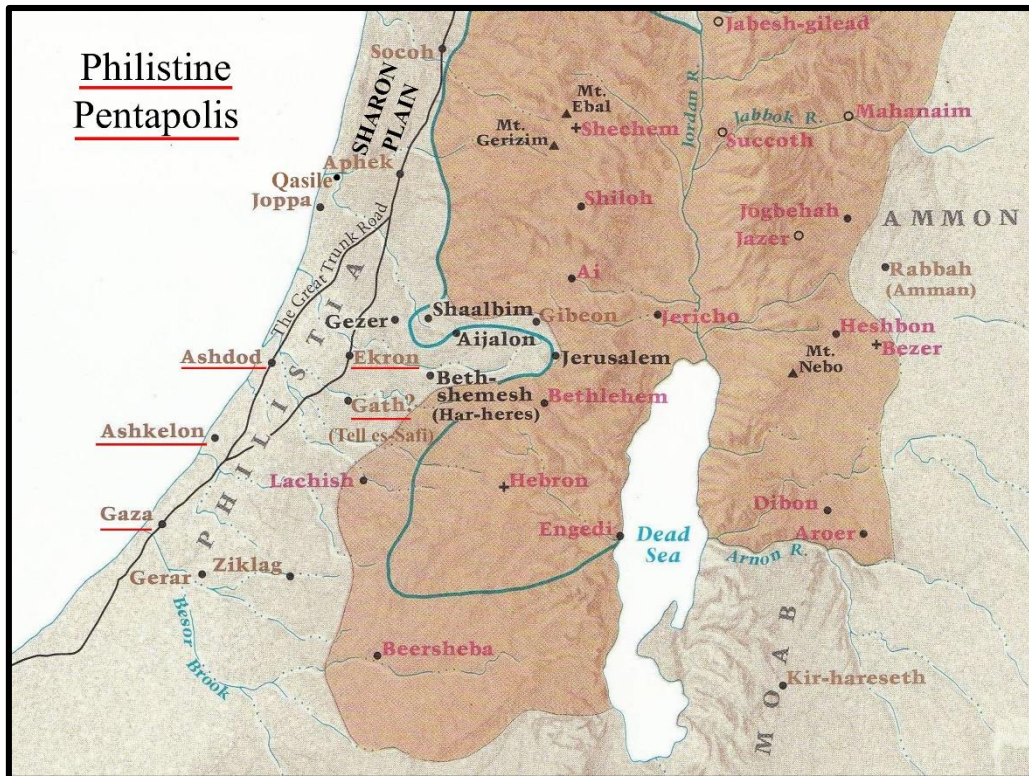


Figure 7: Philistine Sites of the Southern Levant (Beitzel, *Moody Atlas*, 103 [Map 33])

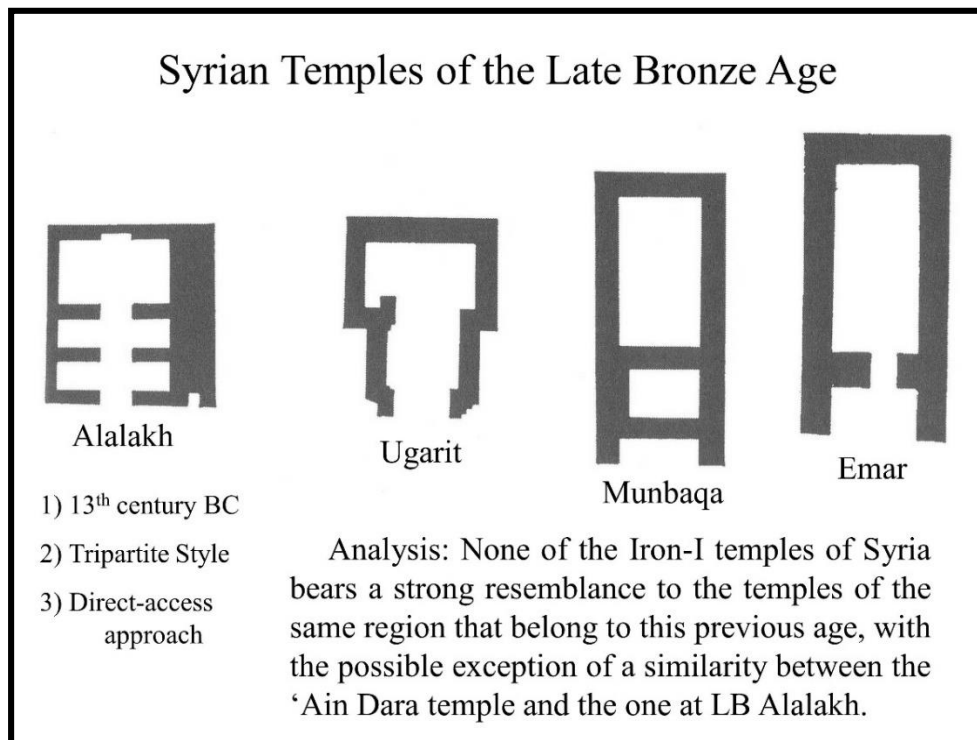


Figure 8: LBA Temples at Alalakh, Ugarit, Munbaqa, and Emar

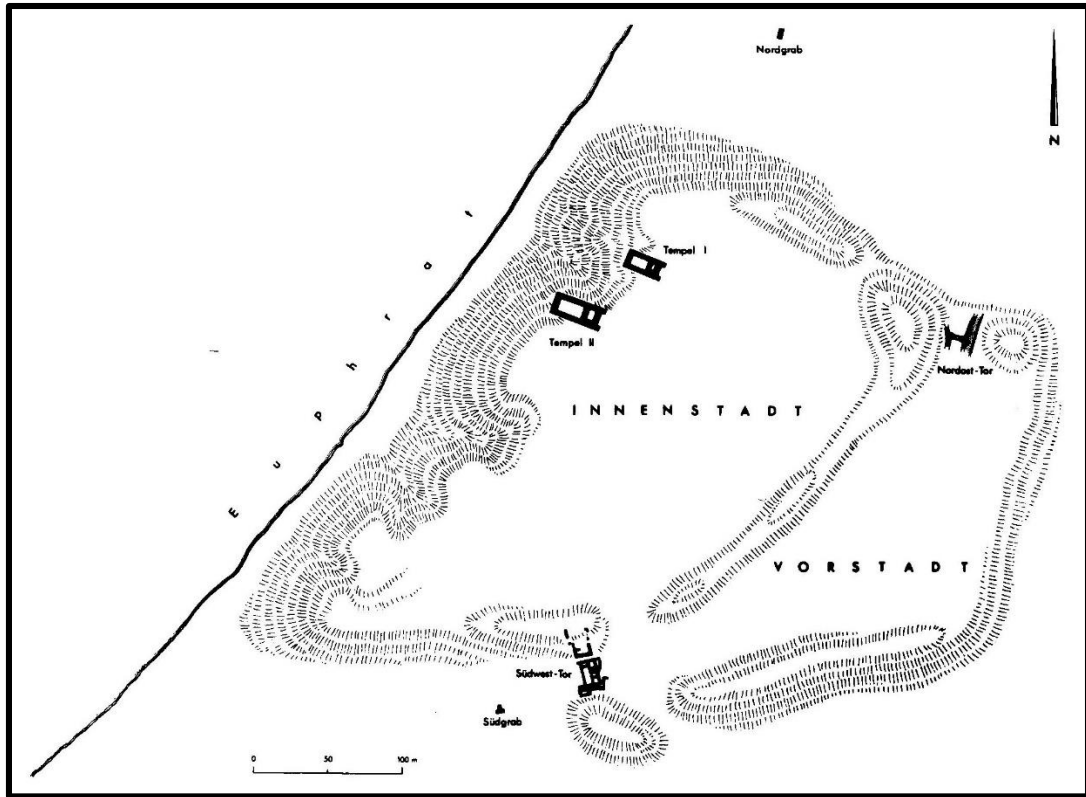


Figure 9: City Plan at Munbaqa (Boese and Orthmann, *Munbaqat*, 3 [Abb. 2])

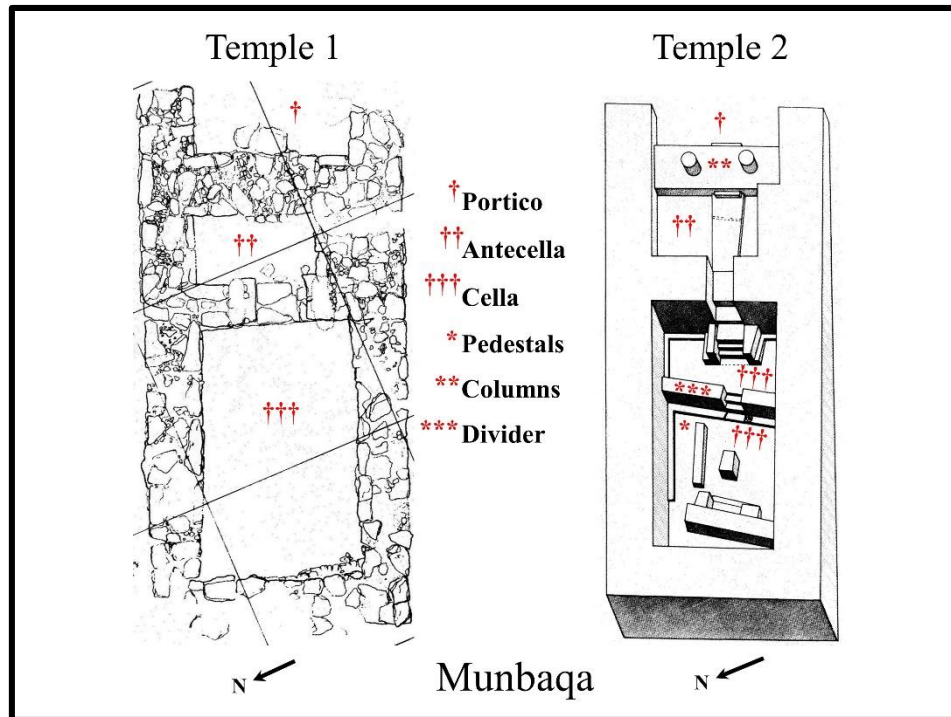


Figure 10: Temples 1 & 2 at Munbaqa (Boese and Orthmann, *Munbaqat*, 4 [Abb. 4], 5 [Abb. 5])



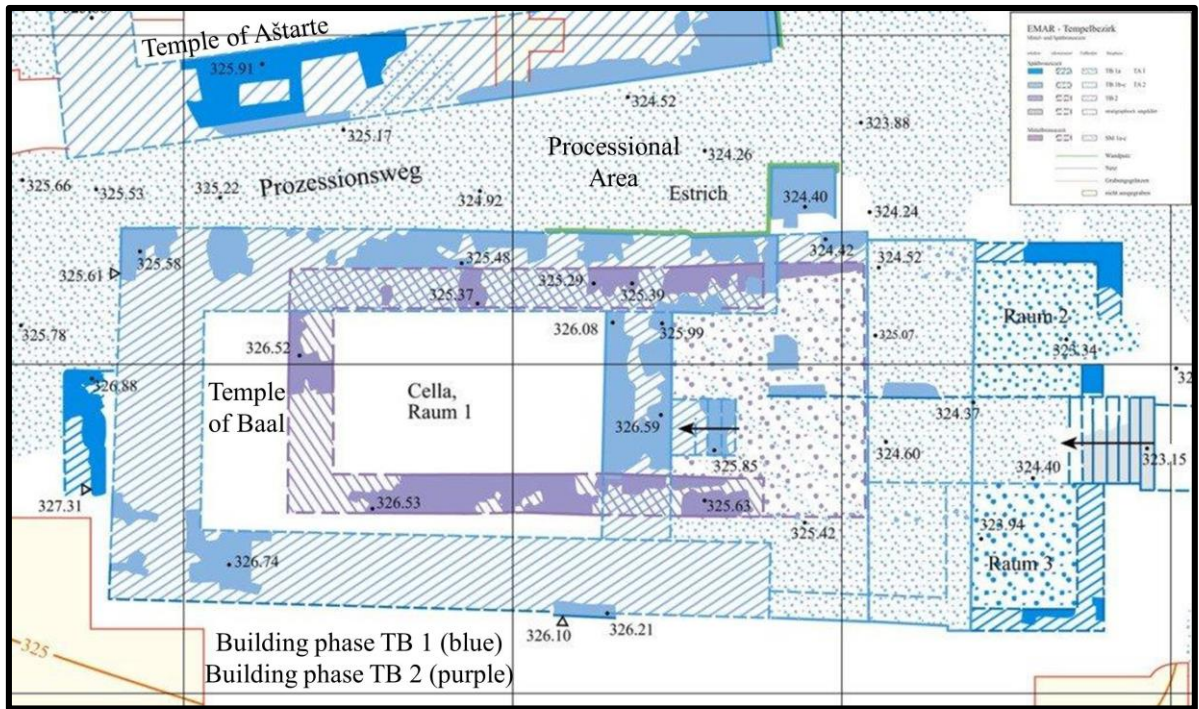


Figure 11: LBA Temple of Baal at Emar (*WiBiLex*, Emar [Abb. 16])

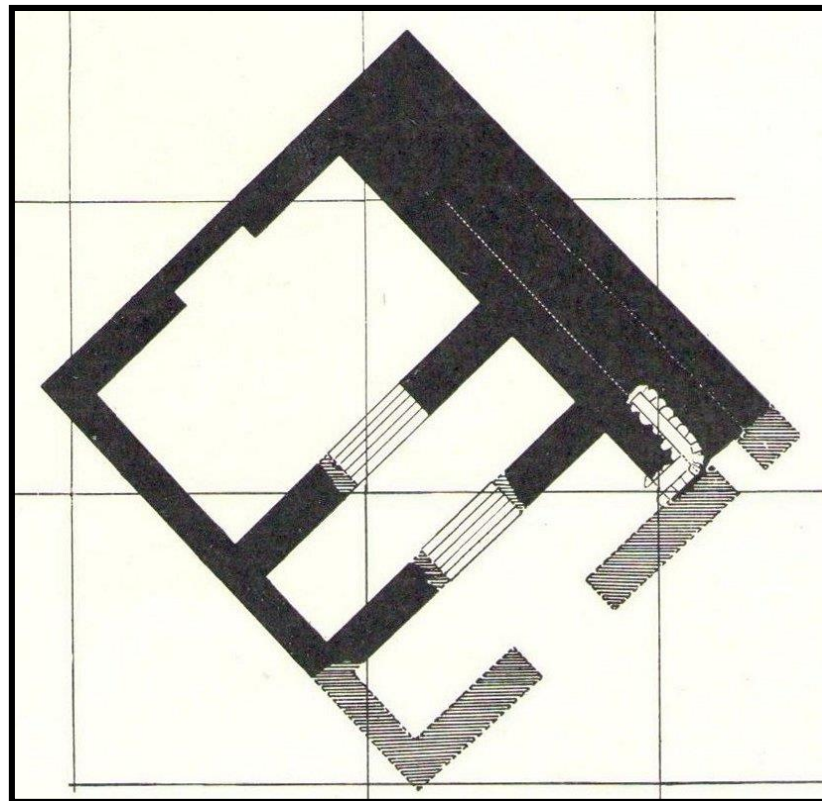


Figure 12: LBA Temple from Period 4 at Alalakh (Woolley, *Alalakh*, 72)

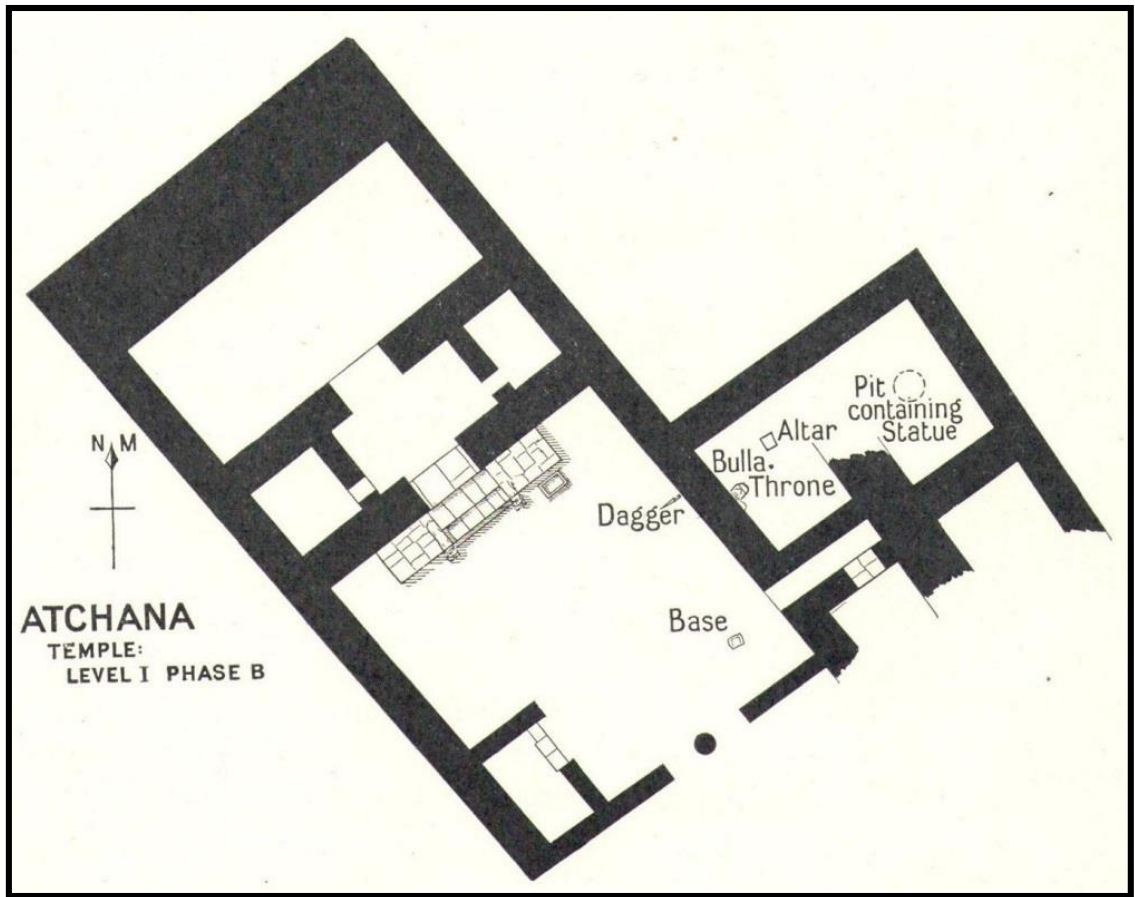


Figure 13: LBA Twin-Cella Temple from Period 1B at Alalakh (Woolley, *Alalakh*, 83)

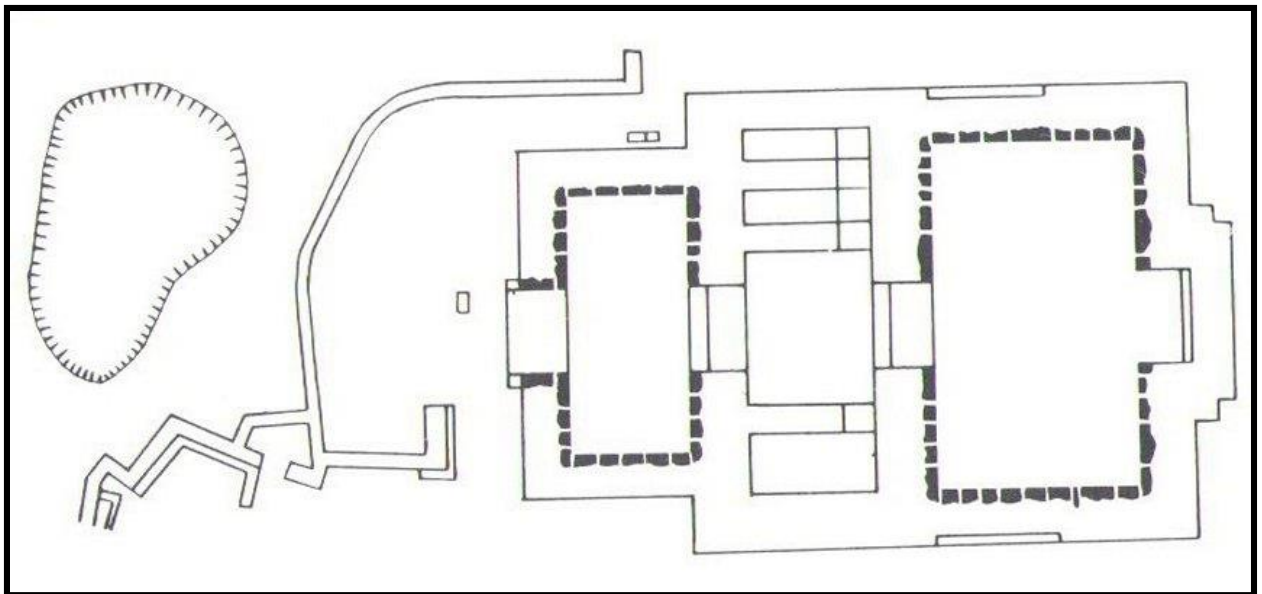


Figure 14: LB IIA Temple at Hazor, from Stratum 1B, Area H (*NEAEHL*, 587)



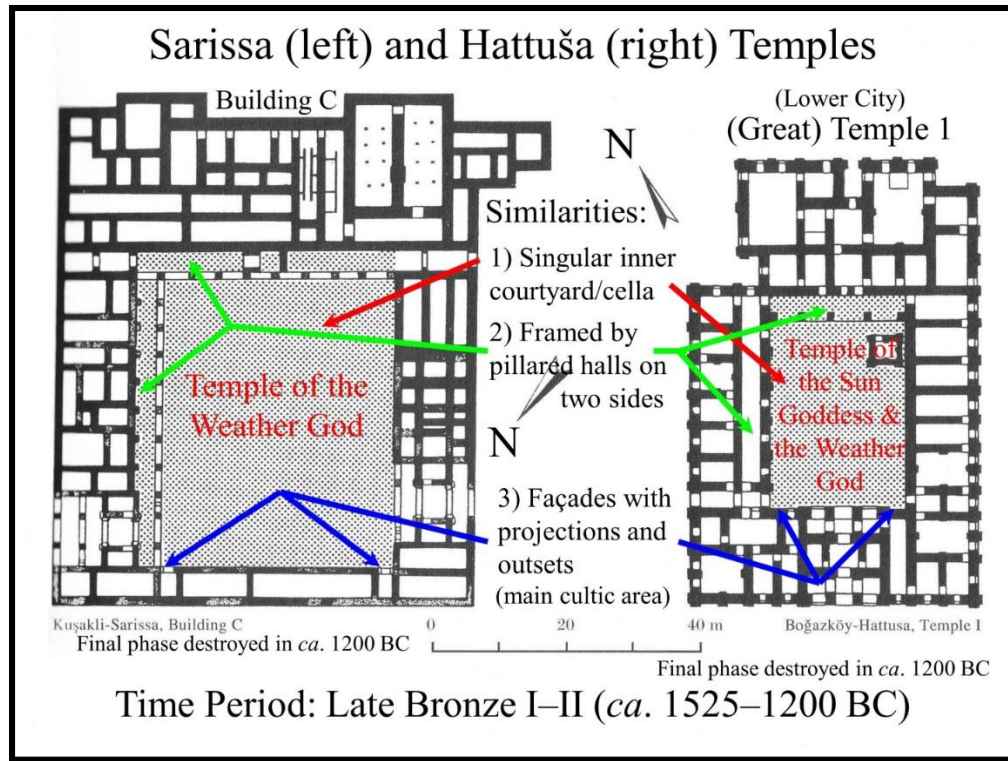


Figure 15: LBA Temples at Sarissa (left) and Hattuša (Lower City)

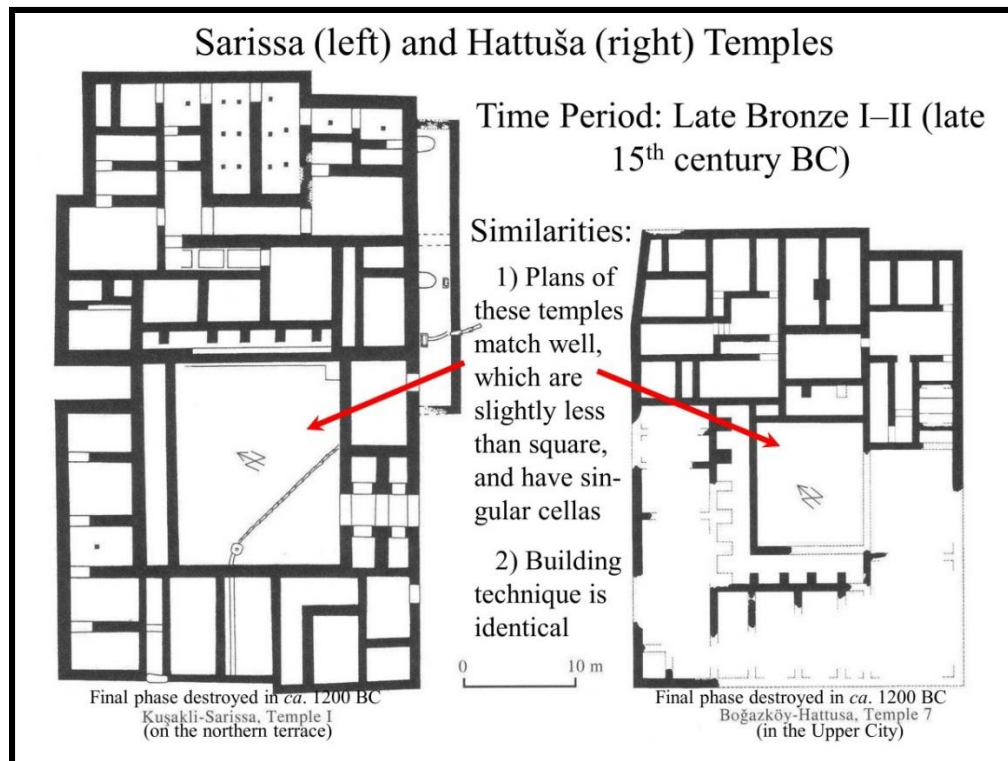


Figure 16: LBA Temples at Sarissa (left) and Hattuša (Upper City)

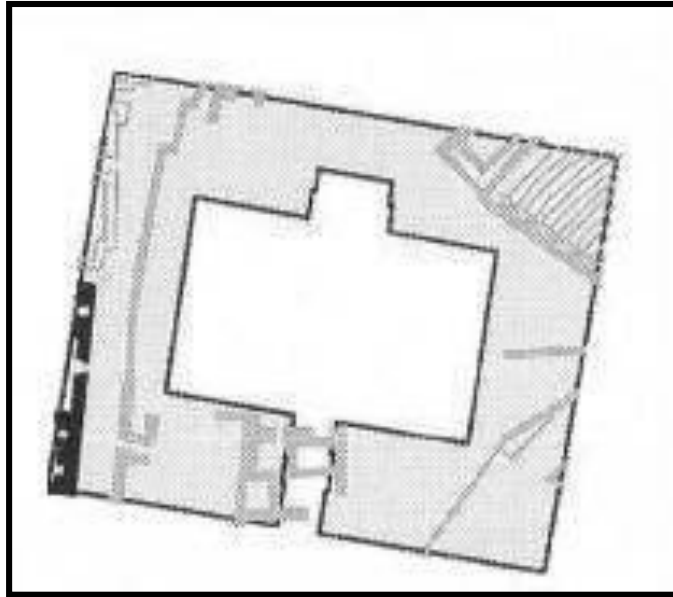


Figure 17: Aleppo's Great Temple on the Citadel

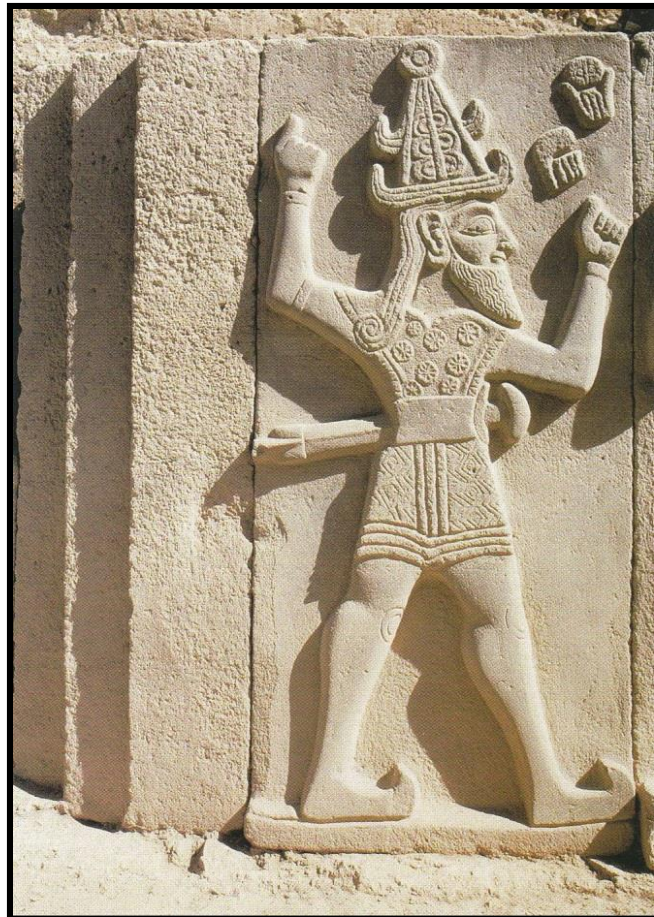


Figure 18: The Storm God, Teshub, in High-Relief, from Aleppo's Temple



Figure 19: Various Alterations to Aleppo's Temple over Time

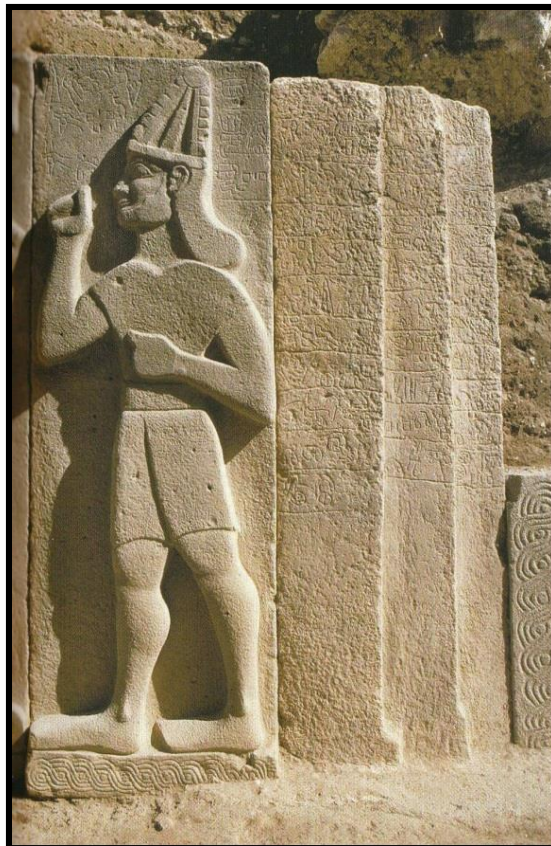


Figure 20: King Taita of Palistin in High Relief, from Aleppo's Temple



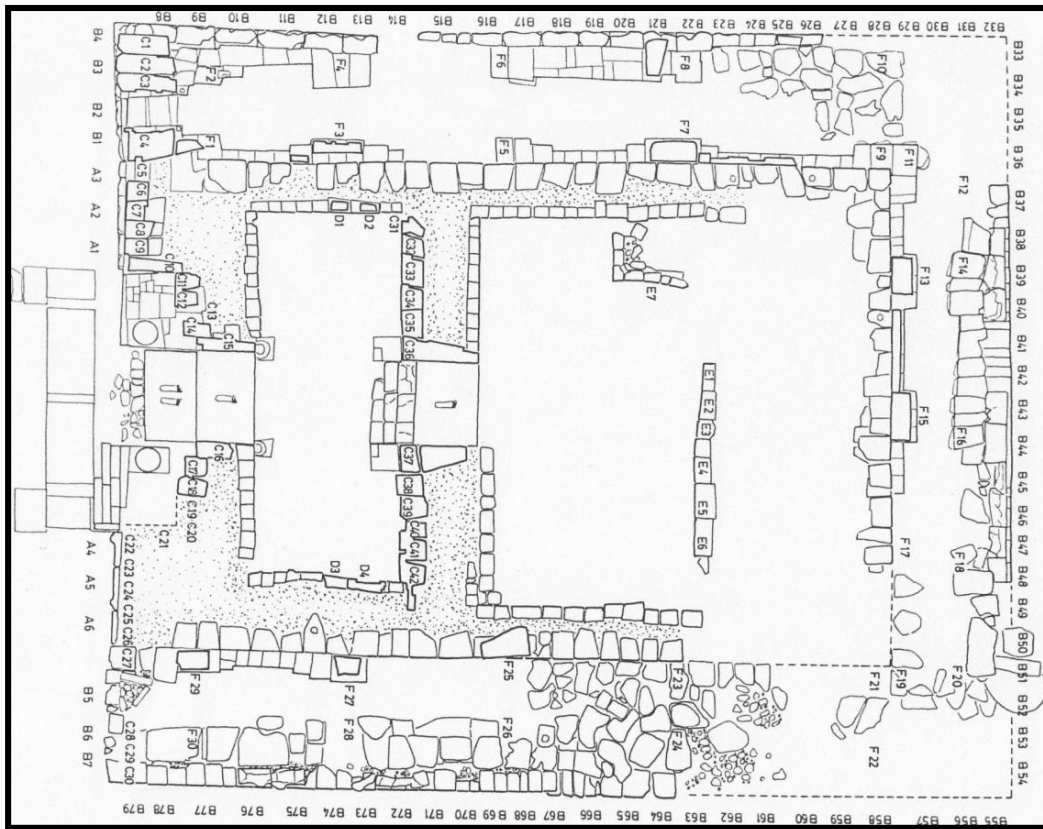


Figure 21: Iron I Temple at 'Ain Dārā, with Debris Removed

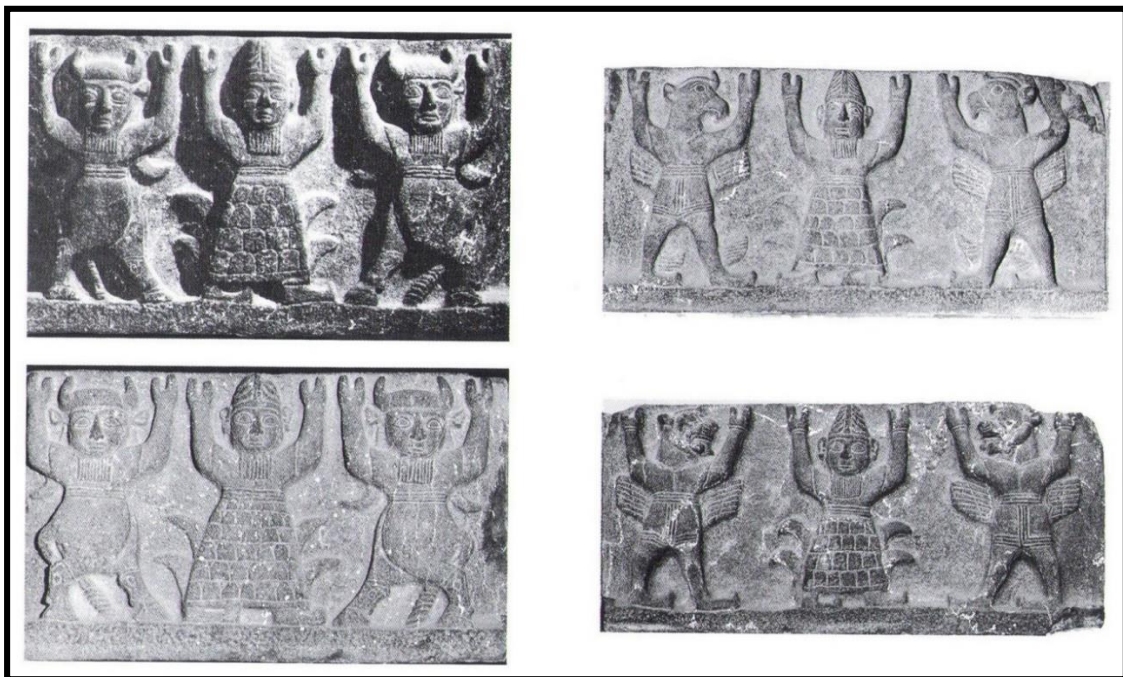


Figure 22: Mountain Deities Portrayed on Reliefs in Temple at 'Ain Dārā

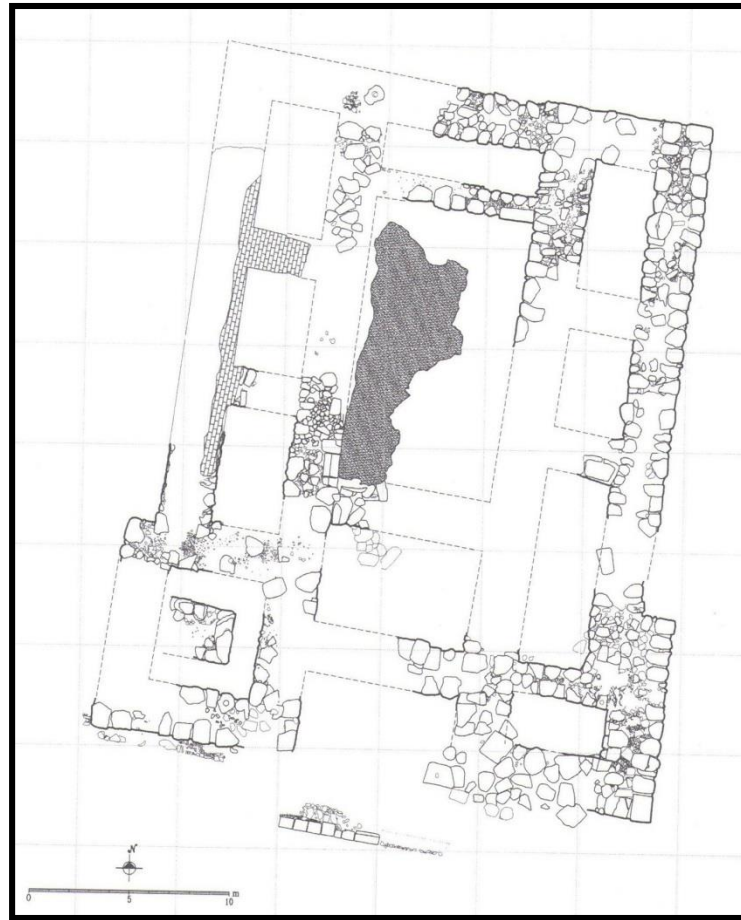


Figure 23: Temple AI in Area A at 'āfis (Iron III)

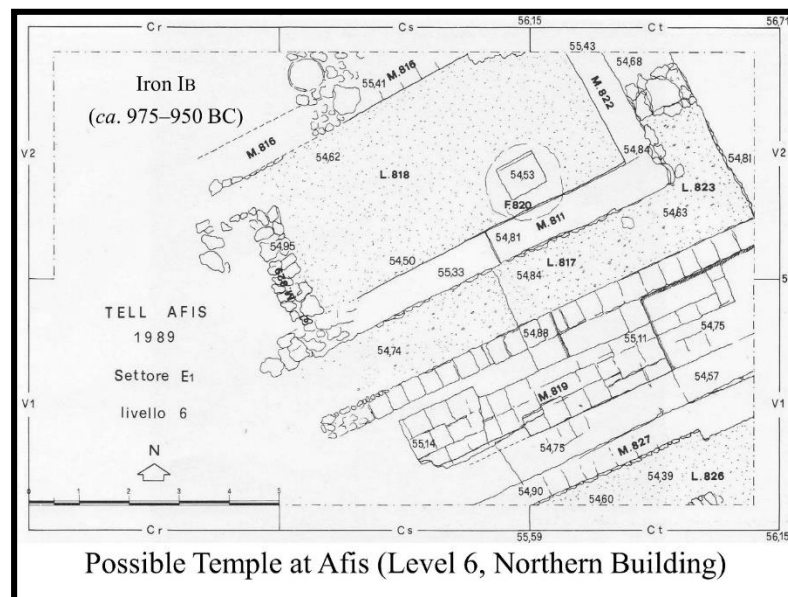


Figure 24: Northern Building (Level 6) at 'āfis (Iron IB)

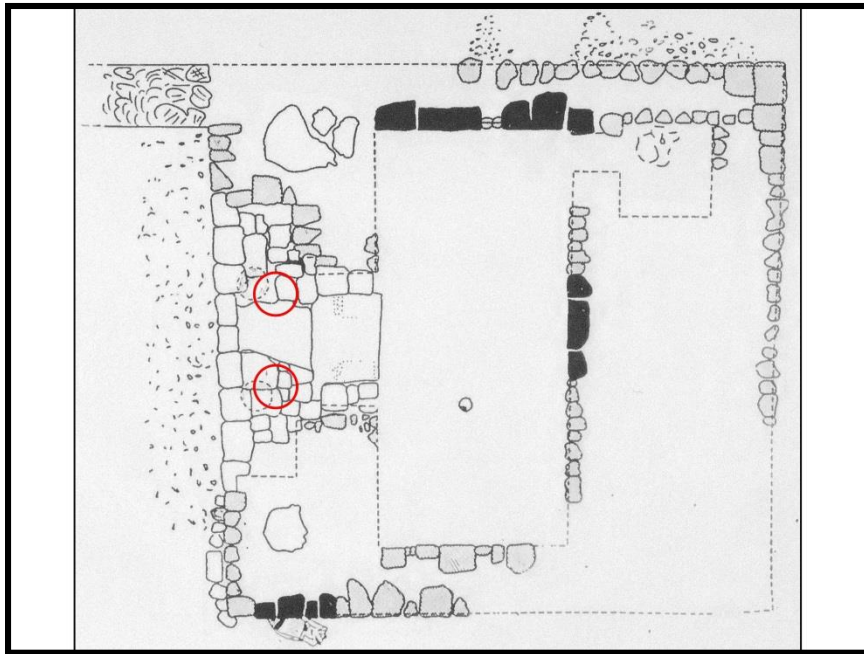


Figure 25: Royal Temple at Carchemish (Woolley's 'Hilani' Building)

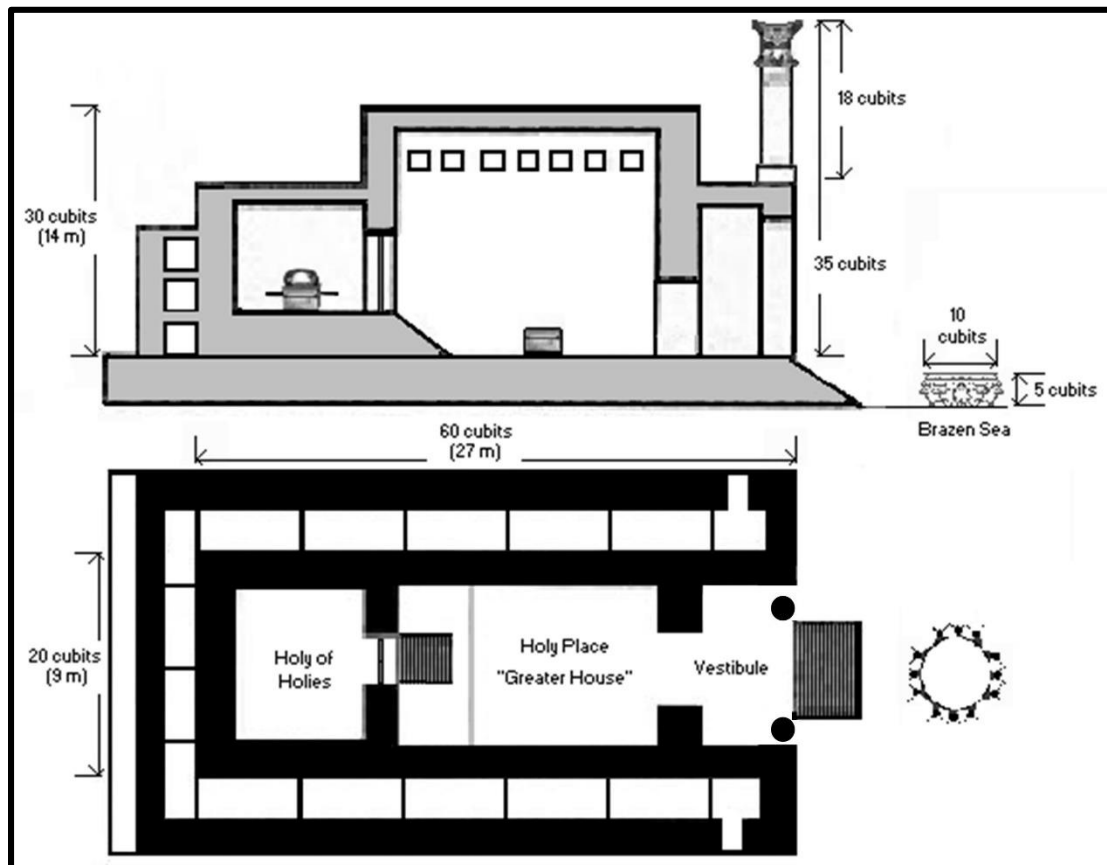


Figure 26: First Temple at Jerusalem (Solomonic Temple)



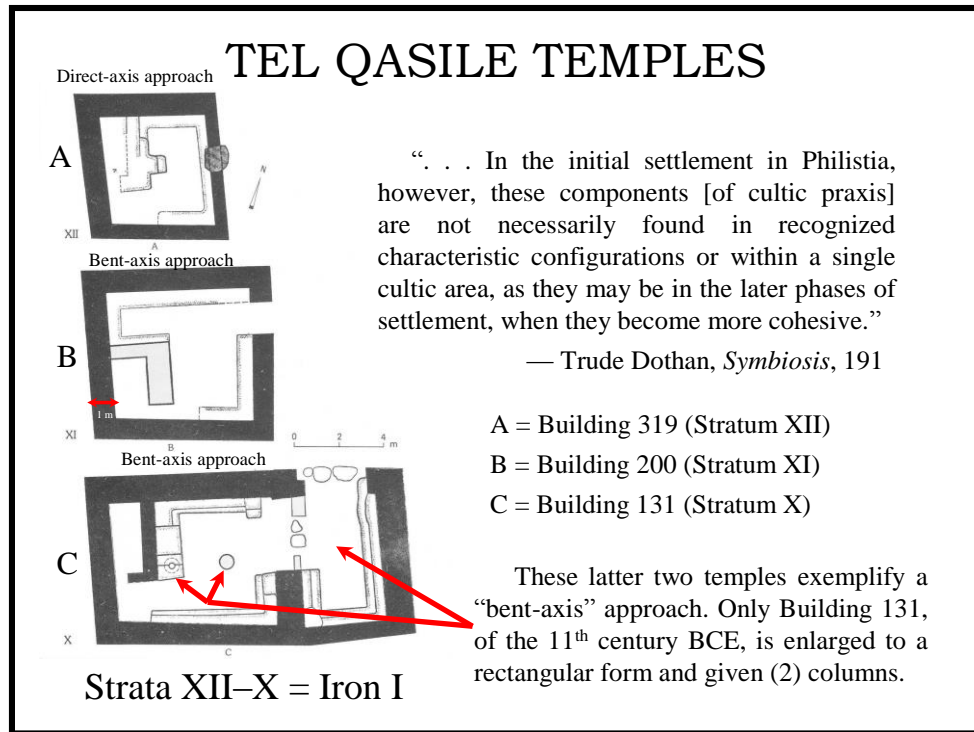


Figure 27: Three Phases of Iron I Temples at Tel Qasile

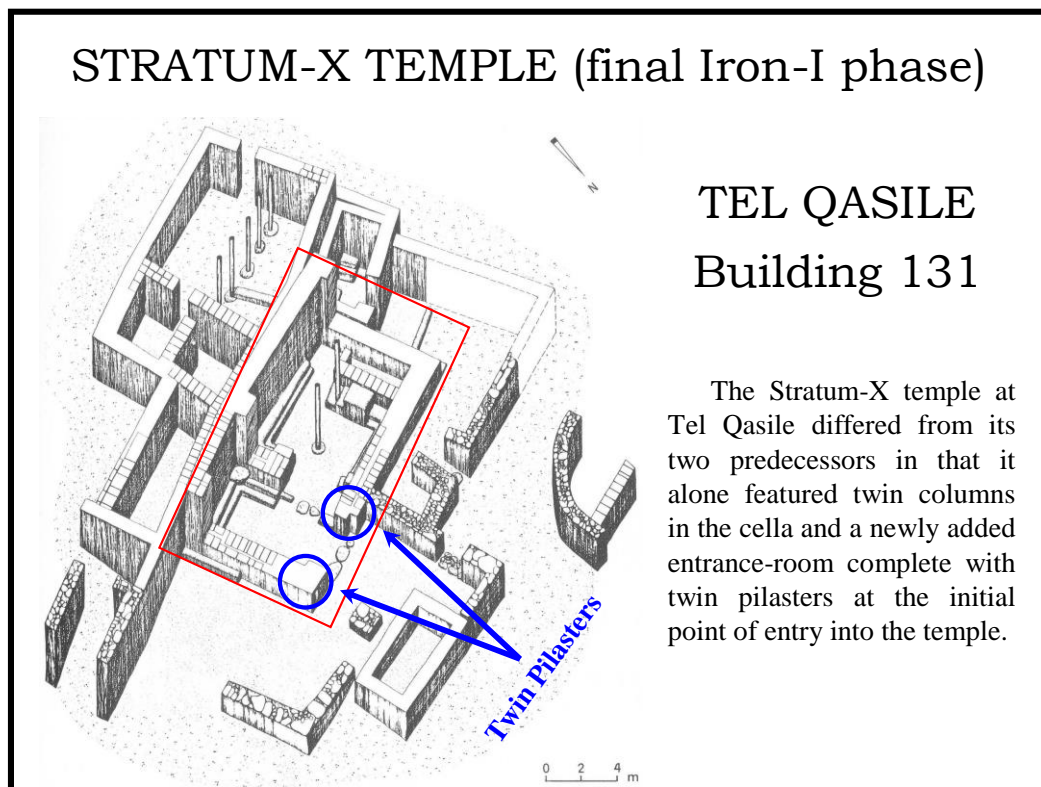


Figure 28: Stratum-X Temple at Tel Qasile (Building 131)

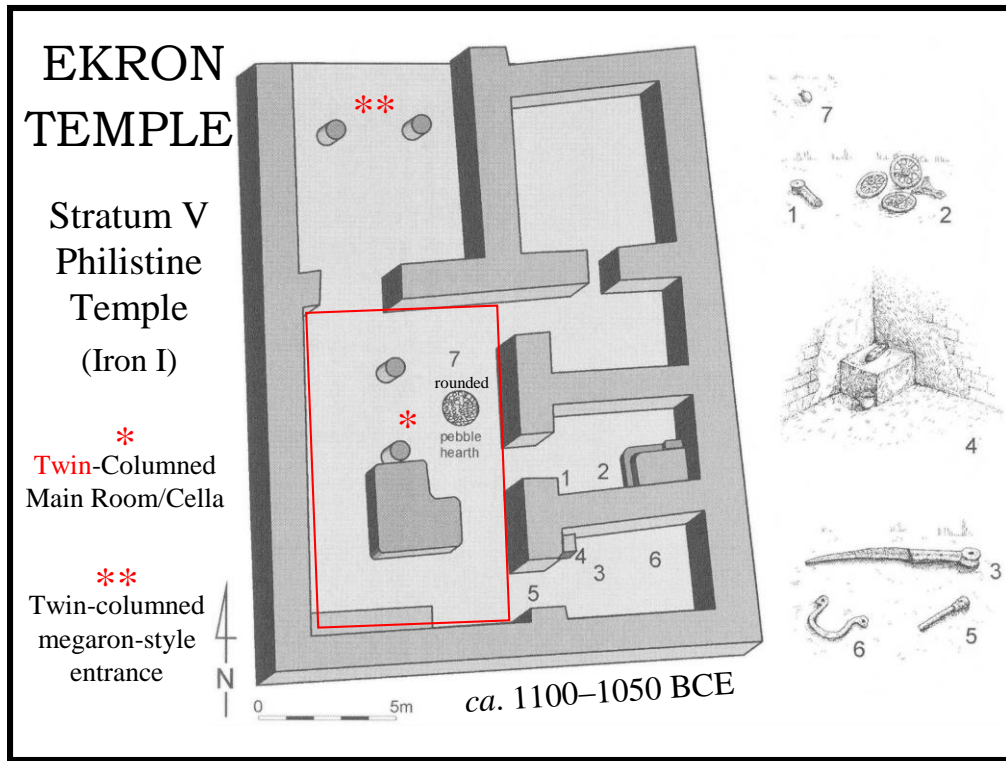


Figure 29: Temple 350 at Ekron (Stratum V)

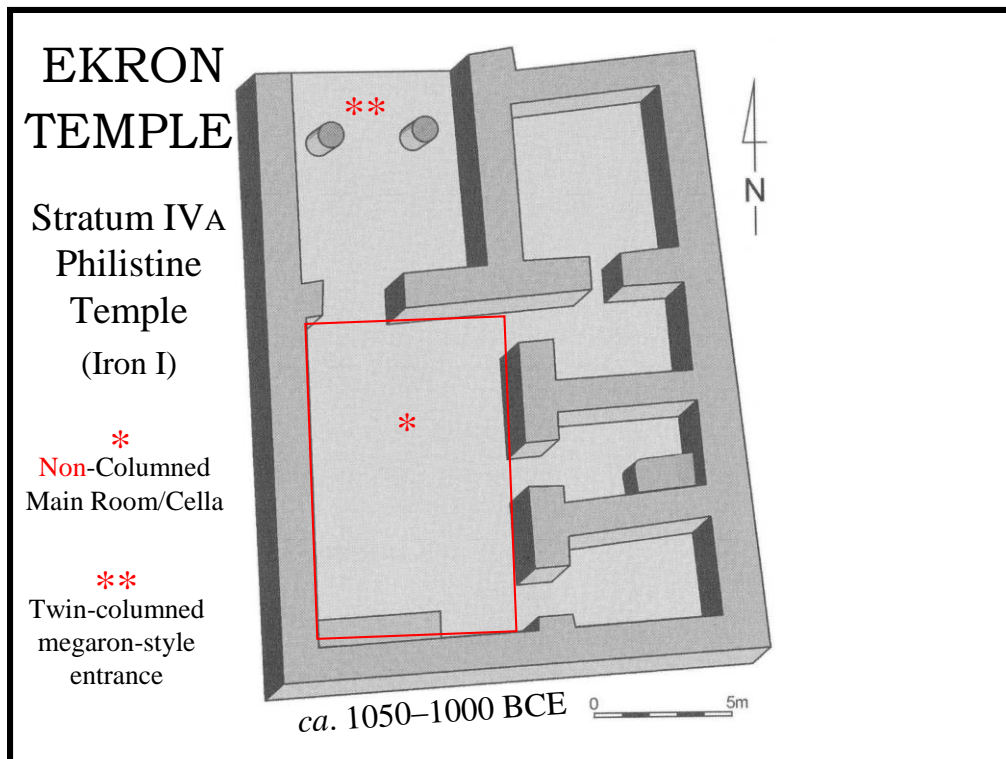


Figure 30: Temple 350 at Ekron (Stratum IVA)

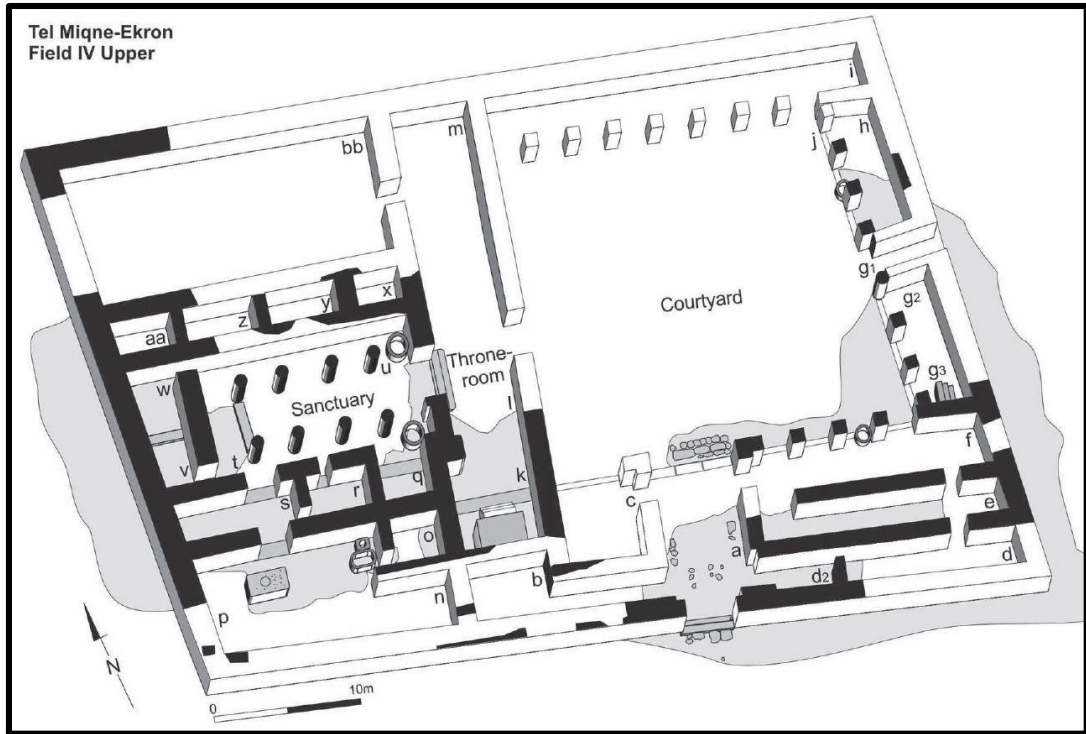


Figure 31: Temple 650 at Ekron (Stratum Ic-1b)

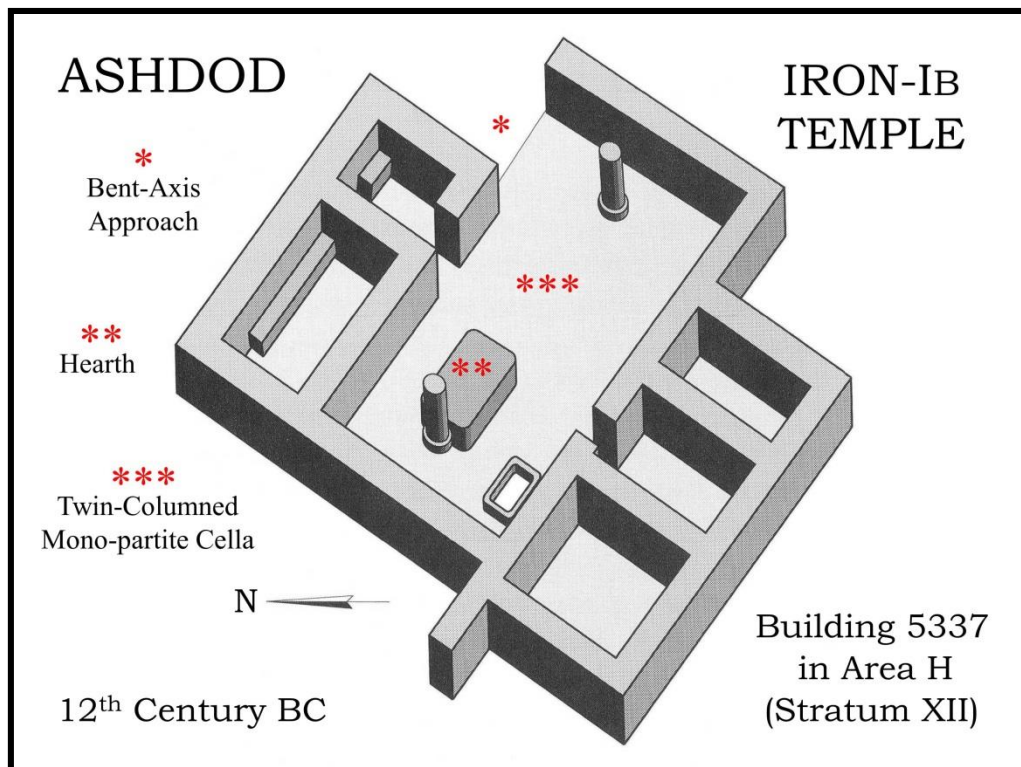


Figure 32: Building 5337 at Ashdod (Iron I)



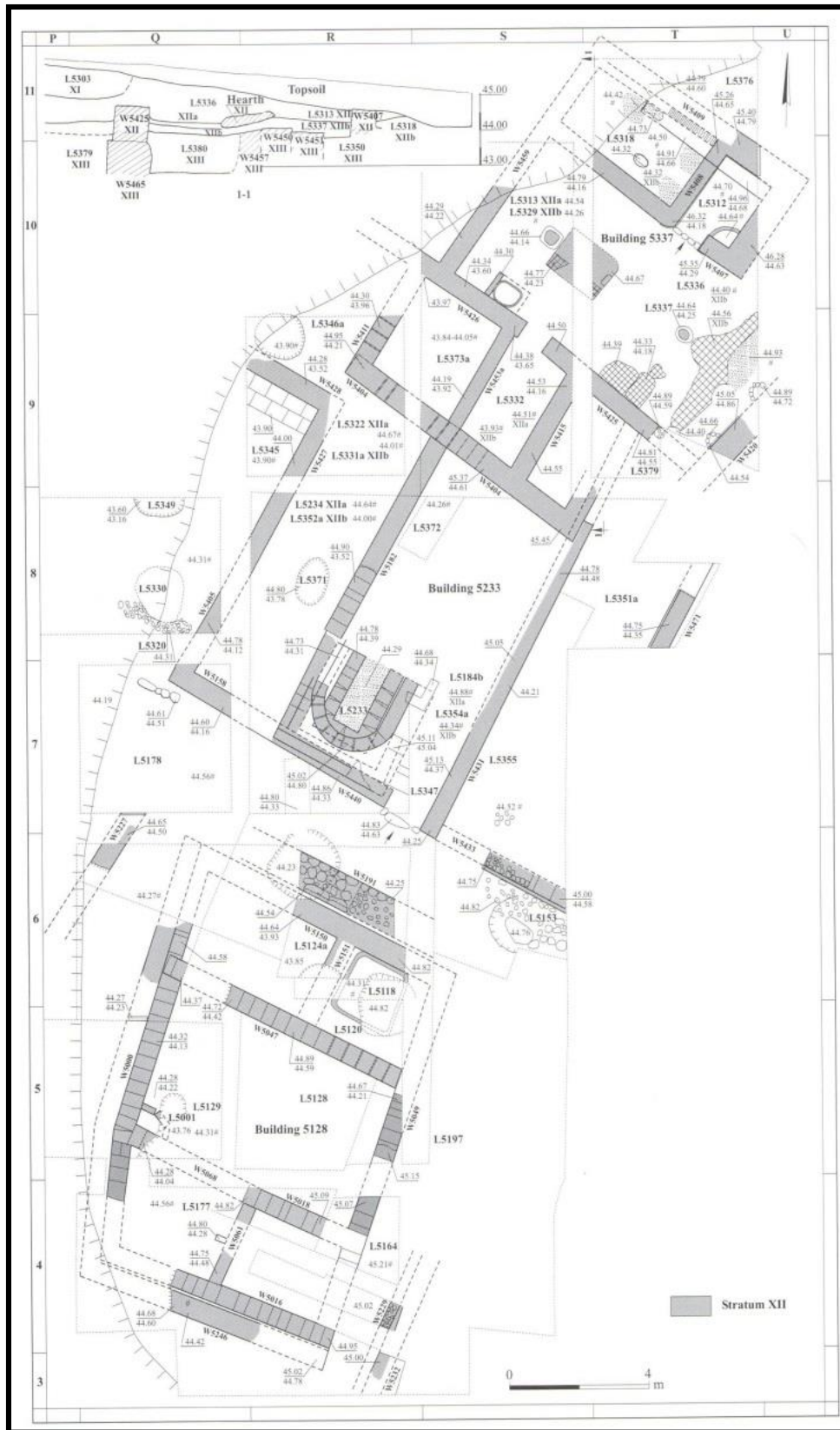


Figure 33: Section 1-1 of Stratum XII in Area H at Ashdod

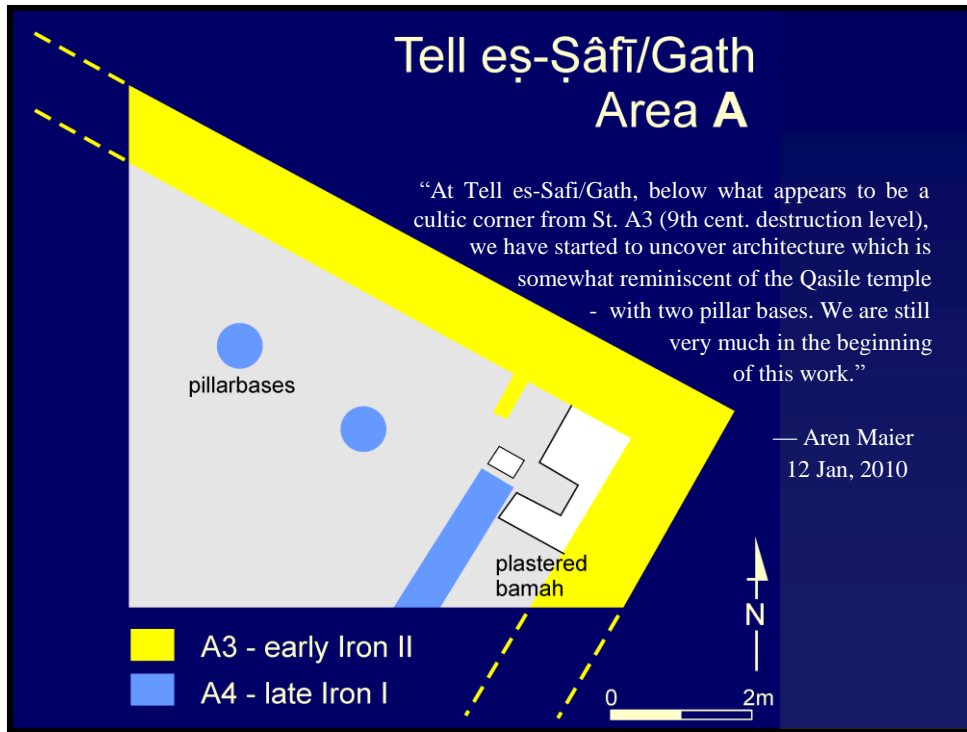


Figure 34: Iron-I/II Temple at Tell es-Şafi (Gath?)

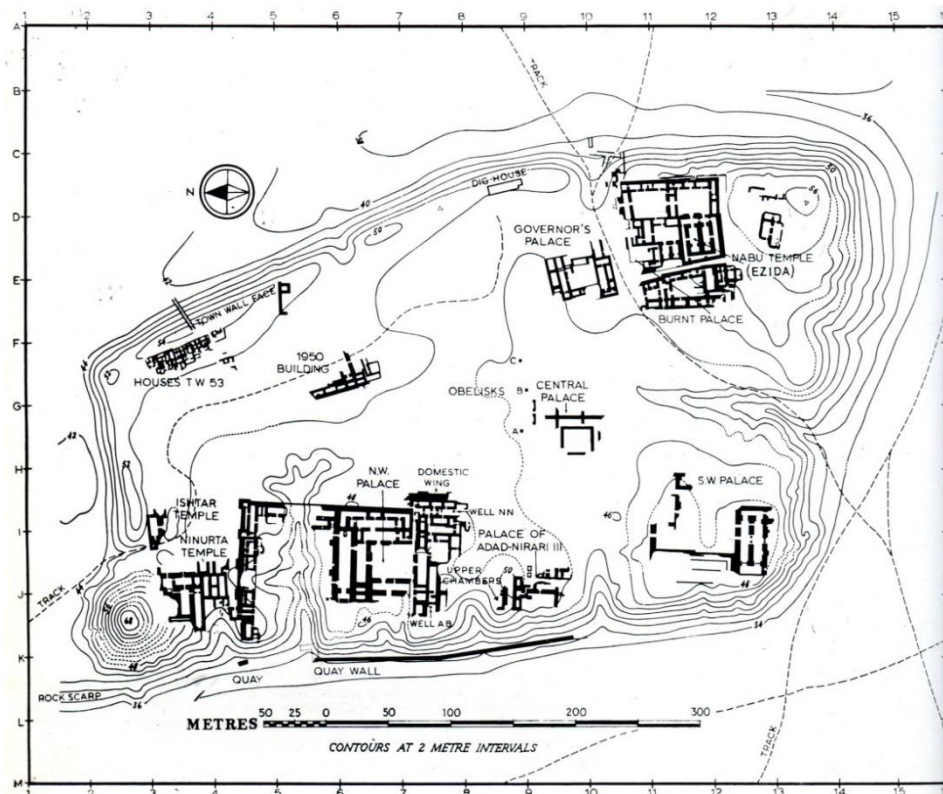


Figure 35: Plan of Kalhu (Mallowan, Nimrud, 288)

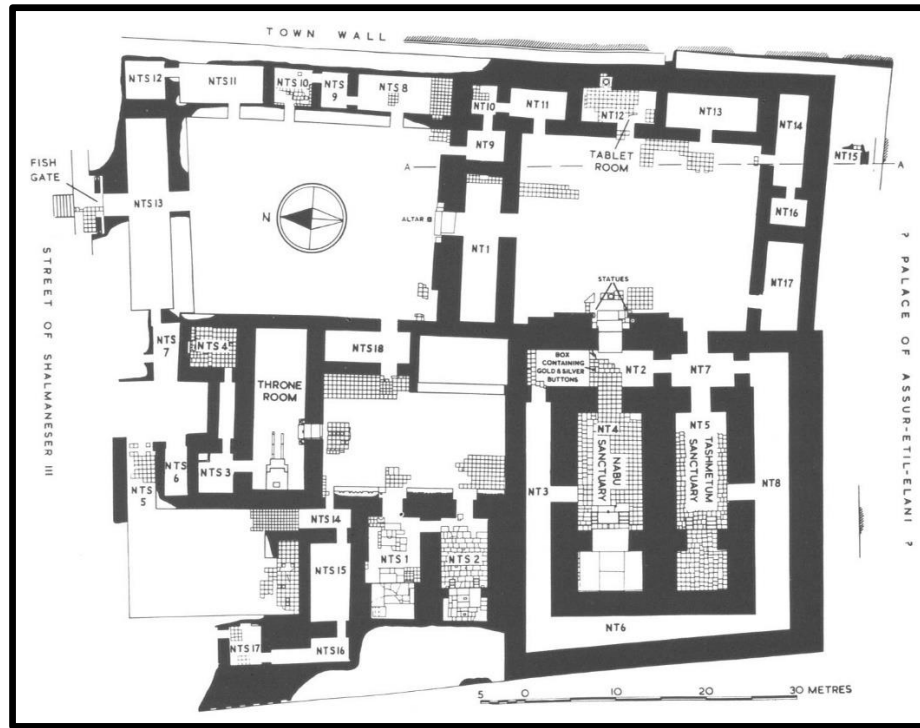


Figure 36: Ezida atop Kalhu's Tell (Wiseman and Black, *Literary Texts*, facing 1)

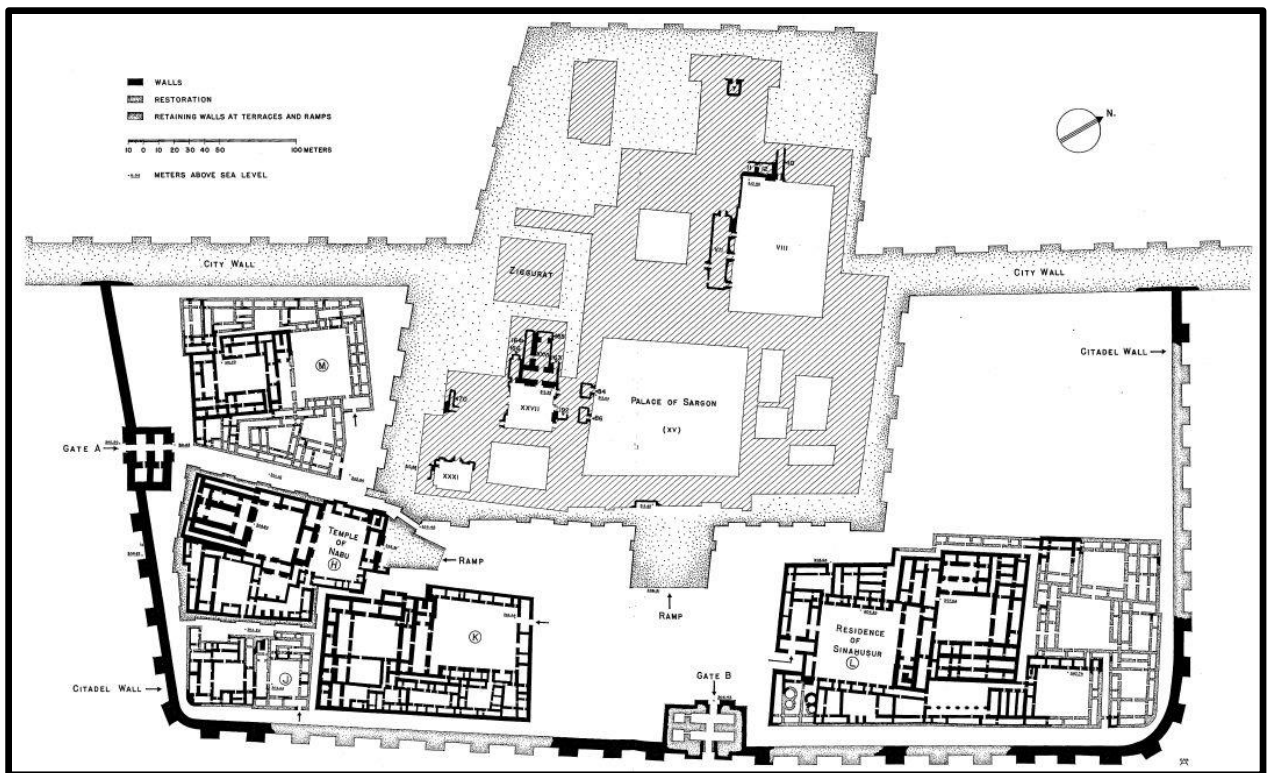


Figure 37: Plan of Khorsabad (Loud, *Khorsabad II*, pl. 70)

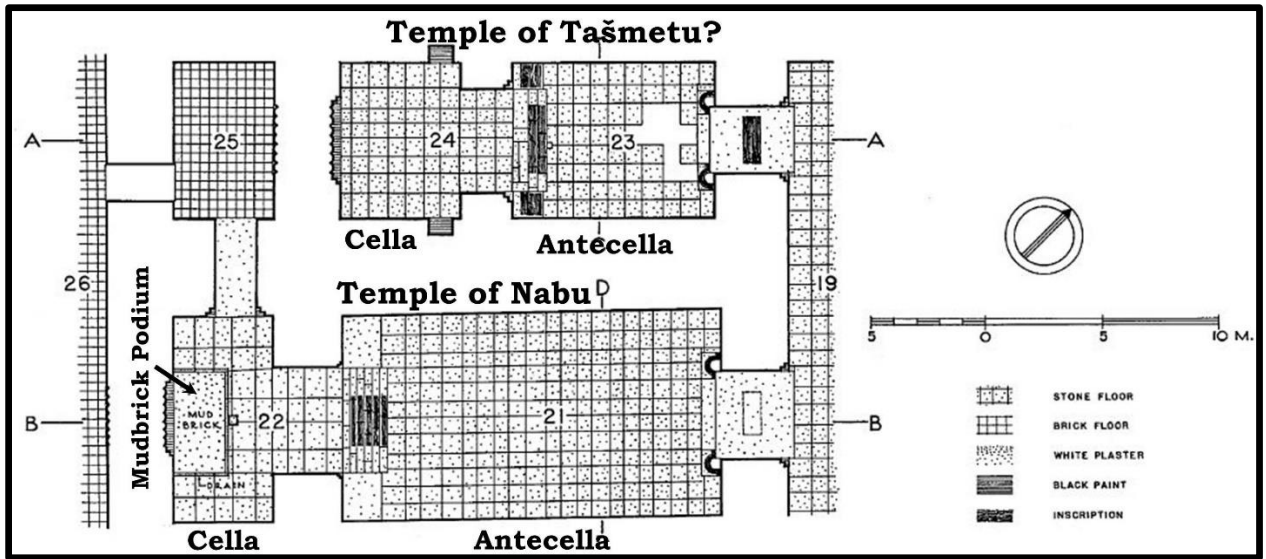


Figure 38: Temples of Nabu and Tašmetu(?) at Khorsabad (Loud, *Khorsabad II*, pl. 84)

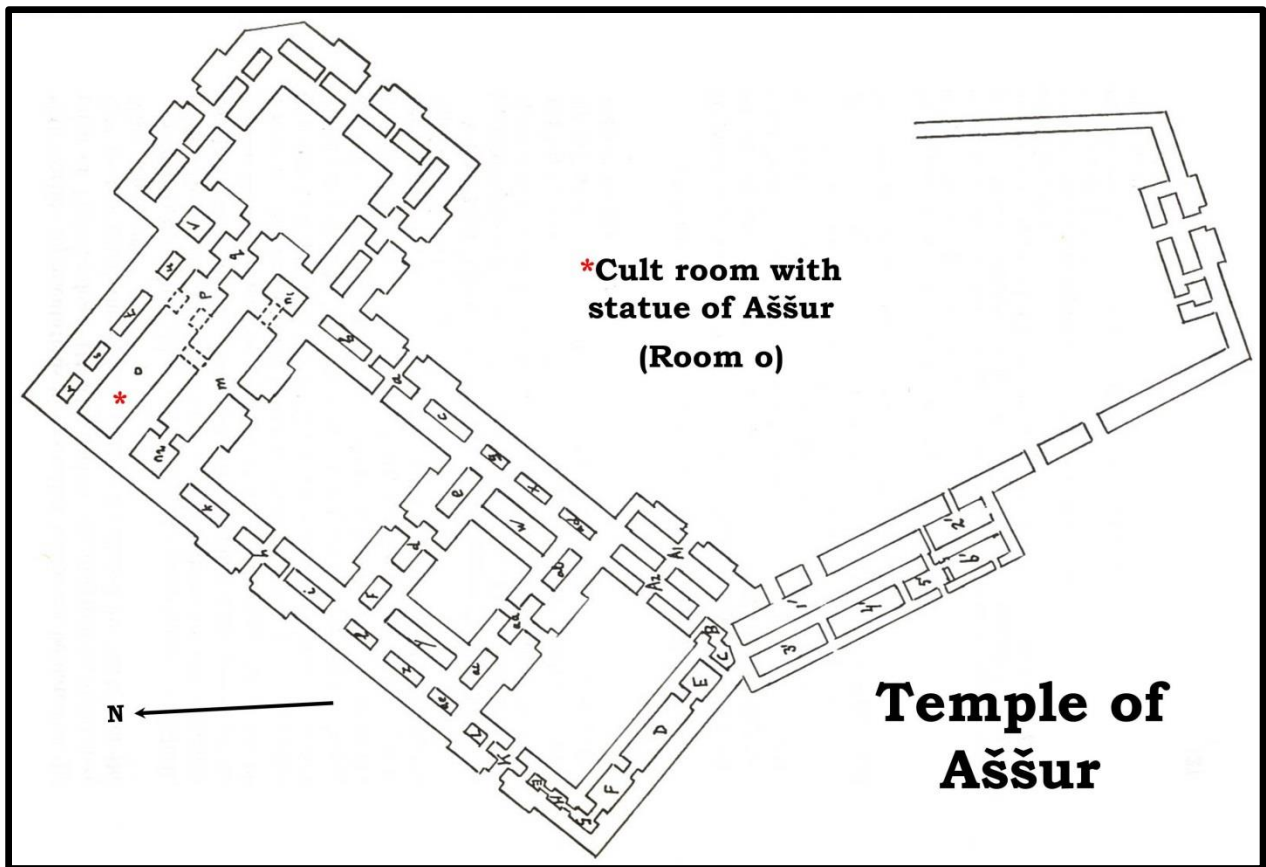


Figure 39: Temple of Aššur at Ashur (Driel, *Cult of Aššur*, 22)

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