

PAP, FERENC
Temple as theology
(PhD thesis)



Theses for public discussion

1. The detailed description of the Temple and of the holy Temple-district (Ezek. 40-42) has to be regarded as a constitutive part of the theological conception of the vision, which is based on the reality of the holy place (*Topos*). In my opinion, the main motif of the interpretation of the whole vision is the fact, that even the Temple is theology.
2. Ezek. 40-48 is not an utopia, therefore the conception of the vision about the new birth and the new defining of Israel cannot be regarded as an utopian concept of the prophet or of the “school” of the prophet. The vision is the theological plan of the cultic re-organization of Israel, rooted in the theological tradition of Israelite priesthood.
3. The conception of Ezekiel is based on the theological principles and the divine mandates of *distinction*, *separation* and *compensation*. The future institutions of Israel can only be interpreted by their (concrete) relationship to the Temple, the holiest place.
4. The *Sacred* and the profane, the pure and the impure are basic categories of the religious and biblical world-understanding (Ezek. 44.23), which was enormously influenced by the theology of the priesthood.
5. The perfect implementation of the purified cult is equal to the beginning of the eschatology in the world-view of Ezekiel and his “school” (disciples).
6. According to Ezek. 40-48, the future and reunited Israel will be a country without a Davidic Messiah and without a high priest. Israel will function as a *Hierocracy* governed by the collective legislation of the priesthood. This future expectation must be considered as a correction by the “school” of the prophet. In this way, Israel will become a holy people and a kingship of the priests (*cf.* Exod. 19.6).
7. The vision of Ezek. 40-48 cannot be understood as a cultic and prophetic criticism from the second Temple-time or from any later epoch; rather, it witnesses in a contemporary way the searching of Israel for its identity in the exile. The exile does not merely mean the end of history, but it can be regarded as a historical chance of the new beginning; the continuity is provided for only by the honour of God (*cf.* Ezek. 1; 8-11; 43).

