

K. Sampson

October 2014

ksampson@youarethesaltoftheearth.com

- *YAHW*⁠: A PREEXILIC PHENOMENON, THE INSPIRATION FOR AN EXILIC RELIGIO-LINGUISTIC CONVENTION, A POSTEXILIC SACRED POSSESSION, AND THE SUBSTANCE OF A LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD REVOLUTION

Many students have encountered anomalies of various kinds within the pages of the biblical texts, but one particular anomaly that has been an important topic of not a few is that found in the field of ancient Hebrew onomastics regarding the compounded form(s) of the name Yahweh in personal names. The compounded forms of the name *Yahweh* in the vocalized MT are *yĕhō-* (יְהוֹ), *yô-* (יֹ), *-yāhû* (יְהוּ), and *-yāh* (יָ). *-yô* is not found at the end and *yāh-* (or even **yah-* [יָ]) is not found at the beginning of *personal names compounded with the sacred name* (PNNCSN). However, the anomaly has never really been *either* one or the *other* of these forms, but how can they be so phonologically varied, and yet descend from the one name *Yahweh*. Detecting an important previously missing methodological key, the present author utilized non-Hebrew transcriptions, ancient Hebrew orthography, and the religious contexts of the name Yahweh in the study. This paper presents the preliminary results of the groundbreaking study that has successfully accounted for *all* the variations of the compounded forms of the name and provided an important documentary upon Israelite religion, old and new, with not a few religio-linguistic surprises.

-*YAHW*-: A PREEXILIC PHENOMENON,
THE INSPIRATION FOR AN EXILIC RELIGIO-LINGUISTIC CONVENTION,
A POSTEXILIC SACRED POSSESSION,
AND THE SUBSTANCE OF A LATE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD REVOLUTION*

by

K. Sampson

o. INTRODUCTION

Ancient Near Eastern studies in general have attained a much richer and clear-cut form since the nineteenth century, but it is biblical studies in particular that have both been the major impetus for and the beneficiaries of this significant development.¹ I present here the preliminary results of a study that most certainly will rock the world of all areas of biblical studies, as it involves a much-discussed and debated issue within the field of ancient Hebrew onomastics—*personal names*

* This paper is a preliminary presentation of the key aspects of a forthcoming groundbreaking study continuing the work begun in 1966 by the late Elder Jacob O. Meyer of Assemblies of Yahweh, Bethel PA, my teacher, whose popular endeavors are a marvelous contribution to all of biblical academia's ultimate ideals, as we remember: לא לנו יהוה לא לנו כִּי־לשִׁמְךָ תָּן כְּבוֹד עַל־חַסְדְּךָ עַל־אֱמֻנָתְךָ.

¹ See John Bright, "Modern Study of Old Testament Literature," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of W. F. Albright* (ed. G. E. Wright; Garden City: DoubleDay, 1961), 3–6; and George E. Mendenhall, "Biblical History in Transition," in *The Bible*, ed. G. E. Wright, 27–36.

compounded with the sacred name Yahweh,² often called *Yahwistic* names.³ It is primarily a phonological study, but by mere definition one that views phonology in the light of that which is very sacred, an important additional step in any study of PNNCSN.⁴

² “The form *yahweh* is now accepted almost universally” as the morphological representation of the Tetragrammaton, YHWH (David Noel Freedman and Michael P. O’Connor, “יהוה YHWH,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* [ed. G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986], 5:500). Additionally, the terms that have been utilized for the name are divine name, sacred name, ineffable name, shem hamephorash, shem hameyuhad, etc. The author utilizes *sacred name* herein, the reason for which this study makes abundantly clear.

³ These names have also been *generally* referred to as theophoric names, but are now called *personal name(s) compounded with the sacred name* = PN(N)CSN.

⁴ For earlier attempts at religious/onomastic analyses, cf. Jeffrey H. Tigay, *You Shall Have No Other Gods: Israelite Religion in the Light of Hebrew Inscriptions* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986) and Jeanene D. Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew: A Comparative Study* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 49; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988). See also Scott C. Layton, *Archaic Features of Canaanite Personal Names in the Hebrew Bible* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 47; Atlanta: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1990) for Hebrew onomastics and archaic morphological features, to whom I am personally indebted for his excellent references and onomastic gems. For an earlier analysis of ancient Hebrew onomastics, cf. George B. Gray, *Studies in Hebrew Proper Names* (London: Black, 1896). For northern Israelite and Judahite/Judean onomastica (and prosopography) from the biblical period up to the Hellenistic period, cf. Ran Zadok, *On West Semites in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods: An Onomastic Study* (Jerusalem: Wanaarta, 1977); idem, *The Jews in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods according to the Babylonian Sources* (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 1979); idem, *The Pre-Hellenistic Israelite Anthroponymy and Prosopography* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 28; Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1988); and idem, *The Earliest Diaspora: Israelites and Judeans in Pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2002). See Tal Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names in Late Antiquity. Part I. Palestine 330 BCE–200 CE* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002) for Jewish onomastica and prosopography from the Hellenistic through to the tannaitic periods.

As the author considered the varied forms of the abbreviated element in these names as attested in the Masoretic Text (MT), remembering that they are all shortened from the *one* name of Yahweh (which itself is notably unattested phonologically in the vocalized MT), I meticulously examined as far back as is possible the relevant evidence pertaining to the phonological history of and, if applicable, ideological influences upon these PNNCSN, finally achieving what amounted to be a reexamination of all prior hypotheses and assumptions.⁵ In accomplishing this I followed a method that utilized three main tools in conjunction to narrow the evidence down to as close to the specific phonological shape as was possible and recover the *original form* of the element in these names, then continued

⁵ Much discussion has revolved around the orthographic and phonological complexities and inconsistencies in these PNNCSN reflected in MT with various suggestions, such as can be found in at least Samuel R. Driver, “Recent Theories on the Origin and Nature of the Tetragrammaton,” in *Studia Biblica: Essays in Biblical Archaeology and Criticism and Kindred Subjects* (ed. S. R. Driver, W. Sanday, and J. Woodsworth; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), 1–20; Godfrey R. Driver, “The Original Form of the Name ‘Yahweh’: Evidence and Conclusions,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 46 (1928): 7–25; P. Kyle McCarter Jr., “Yaw, Son of Omri: A Philological Note on Israelite Chronology,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 216 (1974): 5–8; Manfred Weippert, “Jau(a) mar Humri—Joram oder Jehu von Israel?” *Vetus Testamentum* 28 (1978): 113–18; Baruch Halpern, “Yaua, Son of Omri, Yet Again,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 265 (1980): 81–85; and Nadav Na’aman, “Transcribing the Theophoric Element in North Israelite Names,” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 1 (1997): 19–20, especially with the aim being a reconciliation of these phonological and orthographic issues, but this study achieves, I believe, a much needed resolution.

analyzing them chronologically and carefully noting periods of change. These tools were: Akkadian cuneiform and Greek transcriptions of proper names, ancient Hebrew orthography at applicable periods, and the religious contexts of the full name of Yahweh (probably the *most important tool* in the study). All of these, at some point or the other and in various degrees, were recognized as important in this specific area of study. Only after they are *all* applied can more accurate results be realized.⁶

Now, the forms of the abbreviated name in PNNCSN in the vocalized MT are *yěhō-* (יְהוֹ), *yô-* (יֹ), *-yāhû* (יְהוּ), and *-yāh* (יְה). *-yô* is not found at the end and *yāh-* (or even **yah-* [יְה]) is not found at the beginning of PNNCSN. The extrabiblical evidence appears to show a different distribution from the MT. Preexilic northern Israelite PNNCSN utilize *yw-* and *-yw* only. Judahite names attest *-yhw* in the ninth century and eighth, with *-yw-* intervening for a time in the eighth, then by the late

⁶ Also, see Christopher A. Rollston, “Prosopography, Mitochondrial DNA, Statistics, and the ‘Yeshua’ Family Tomb’: Pensées of an Epigrapher,” in *The Tomb of Jesus and His Family? Exploring Ancient Jewish Tombs Near Jerusalem’s Walls* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2013).

seventh and sixth centuries only *-yhw*.⁷ The form *-yh* is also attested at the end, but seems limited to seals or seal-style inscriptions.⁸ The postexilic (Persian) period attests to a continuation of *yhw*- prolifically and even *yh*- being documented at the beginning and mostly *-yh*, less often *-yhw*, but also even *-yw* at the end of PNCSN, with *yw*- beginning to be documented in the fourth century.⁹

A common explanation for the development of these has been as presented by W. F. Albright, where in initial position the *he* of an original **yāhû* syncopated,

⁷ Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 182, 184; Frank M. Cross, “The Seal of Miqnêyaw, Servant of Yahweh,” in *Ancient Seals and the Bible* (ed. L. Gorelic and E. Williams-Forte; Malibu: Undena, 1983), 57; Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1997), 42; and Yigal Shiloh, “A Group of Hebrew Bullae from the City of David,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 36 (1986): 32. For the ninth century, also note the *-yhw* on the Tel Dan Stele.

⁸ See Ziony Zevit, “A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 250 (1983): 1–16; and idem, “Onomastic Gleanings from Recently Published Judahite Bullae,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 38 (1988): 227–34 for attestations. Then, cf. Shiloh, “Hebrew Bullae,” 30; and Avigad and Sass, *Corpus*, 42.

⁹ Cf. Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 287–301, 332–33 for Persian period evidence on ostraca, papyri, and seals/bullae. F. M. Cross (“Personal Names in the Samaria Papyri,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 344 [2006]: 79) cites Kornfeld noting instances of Persian period Elephantine *yw*-, but *ywntn* (cf. Arthur E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923], 192 [#81:14, 29]) is actually not from Elephantine and is to be dated somewhere posterior to the fourth century B.C.E. with Cowley (*ibid.*, 191), where this orthography is more predominantly attested. Cf. *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: 1–4* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1986–1989), D8.1–13. As to *ywṭb*, the author could not locate this PNCSN for this period in either Cowley or Zadok (*Pre-Hellenistic*, 287–333), but it must likewise be from the later post-Persian period. See also Michael D. Coogan, “Patterns in Jewish Personal Names in the Babylonian Diaspora,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 4 (1973): 188.

producing *yaw*, which then contracted, leading to only *yô*.¹⁰ *Yěhô*- then is a later Masoretic hypercorrection to adapt a phonological /yō-/ to an orthographic <yhw>.¹¹ Furthermore, *yō*- cannot be found in Judahite names before the fourth century.¹² D. N. Freedman and M. O'Connor give a different development, from a postulated initial **yahwi*, then **yahw*, **yahū*, and **yah*. This final form then lengthened to produce *yāh*.¹³ But, additionally, D. N. Freedman and F. Anderson put forth that a form *yahaw*- (which developed from **yahw*) in initial position existed at some point in the fourth century (to allow for a later *yěhô* through simultaneous reduction and contraction).¹⁴ This is somewhat of a modification by Freedman of the earlier suggestion with O'Connor. But, F. M. Cross had earlier commented "That the form -*yhw*-/*yahū*/ was pronounced with the *h* sounded (and hence not merely historical spelling) is clear from Babylonian transcriptions of the early 6th century B.C.E."¹⁵

¹⁰ William F. Albright, "Further Observations on the Name Yahweh and Its Modifications in Proper Names," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 44 (1925): 158–60.

¹¹ Cross, "Personal Names," 79.

¹² See n. 9 above. Also, cf. n. 32.

¹³ Freedman and O'Connor, "יהוה YHWH," 5:512.

¹⁴ David Noel Freedman, Francis I. Anderson, and A. Dean Forbes, *Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic Orthography* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 173–74.

¹⁵ Cross, "Seal of Miqnêyaw," 57. Please see the analysis of these names in the exilic period below for an explanation of the phonological discrepancies apparent therein.

Please note his reference to historical spelling, which in itself in this particular case would mean <yhw> (orthographically) = /yaw/ (phonologically), here rejected by him.¹⁶ Cross suggested that *yaw* of the northern Israelite “court dialect” was affected “in the Judaeen court dialect of the 8th century,” but that this pronunciation did not persist and was “supplanted by the ‘rustic’ dialect of Judah from the time of Hezekiah onward.”¹⁷ It must be noted that these explanations all presume only linguistic processes as producing the variations, but an attempt is made nevertheless to account for the otherwise inexplicable changes in Judahite PNNCSN in the eighth century.¹⁸ After all, what else could it be?

¹⁶ The principle of *historical spelling* relates to the phenomenon in Northwest Semitic orthography wherein the orthography remained constant even though a phonological change had taken place, such as in the case of the diphthong /ay/, as reflected for example in the <y> in <byt>, which contracted to long ê, but at times this latter was still indicated by <y>, and not zero, as in <bt> (*bêt*) in Phoenician orthography (Yehimilk). Cf. F. M. Cross and D. N. Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography: A Study of the Epigraphic Evidence* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1952), 3.

¹⁷ Cross, “Seal of Miqnêyaw,” 58.

¹⁸ See just above where it was noted in Judahite PNNCSN that *-yw-* intervened for a time in the eighth century but then reverted to *-yhw-* by the exile—according to Cross (*ibid.*, 57) “exclusively.” Also, cf. again Avigad and Sass, *Corpus*, 42.

In 1980 Z. Zevit, while analyzing the orthography and phonology of the PNNCSN found in the Samaria Ostraca (with northern Israelite *-yw*), made an important note that may very well be able to answer this question directly:

The history of the pronunciation of this theophoric element in personal names is extremely difficult to trace for any number of reasons: 1) The data in inscriptions are distributed chronologically over many centuries, linguistically over many languages and dialects, and are represented in many orthographic systems involving unique conventions. Although equations may be established between the representation of the element in one system and its representation in another, phonetic equivalence may not be assumed unless worked out by inner reconstruction from within each system. 2) The significance of the element in Israelite personal names from the biblical period onward may have resulted in socio-linguistic factors complicating the issue even more.¹⁹

Zevit's acknowledgement in the latter point is very important and is the very reason that any study of this particular class of names in the area of ancient Hebrew onomastics needs to factor in that which is "socio-linguistic." The present author, however, specified, labeled, and categorized these factors as the *religious contexts* of the full name Yahweh.²⁰

¹⁹ Z. Zevit, *Matres Lexionis in Ancient Hebrew Epigraphs* (Cambridge: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980), 12 n. 14.

²⁰ See section 1.3 for further elucidation.

1. PREEXILIC PERIOD

1.1 Neo-Assyrian Transcriptions of PNNCSN

In the preexilic period, it was observed that the Neo-Assyrian evidence gives *ubiquitously* the forms *ia-u/ú-* and *-ia-(a-)u/ú* in initial and final positions for both Israelites *and* Judahites.²¹ This was an important initial observation. However, as a control in the study, included are the transcriptions of the toponym Yahûdâh/Yâhûd (properly so), rendered in Neo-Assyrian as ^{KUR}ia-ú-du/ia-u-di/ia-ú-di, and a name containing a diphthong, *Hawšē'*, rendered as ^la-ú-se-a' (little later as *only Hôšē'* [^lú-se-a']).²² Consequently, it is here learned that the diphthongal element in names (*aw*) and names with an /a/ followed by intervocalic /h/ then /û/ (*ahû*) are rendered the same in Neo-Assyrian transcriptions (/w/ and /û/ being transcribed with < u/ú > and *he* is represented by ø at this time).²³ One cannot use Neo-Assyrian *alone* to

²¹ Cf. Zadok, *Earliest Diaspora*, 20-26 and K. Lawson Younger, "Yahweh at Ashkelon and Calah? Yahwistic Names in Neo-Assyrian," *Vetus Testamentum* 52 (2002): 210–14.

²² For the toponym, cf. Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 302. On Hosea, see Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, *Identifying Biblical Persons in Northwest Semitic Inscriptions of 1200–539 B.C.E.* (Society of Biblical Literature, Academia Biblica 12; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 64; R. Zadok, "Notes on Syro-Palestinian History, Toponymy, and Anthroponomy," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 28 (1996): 726–27; and also idem, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 303.

²³ Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 183. This fact has also been noted in McCarter, "Yaw, Son of Omri," 6.

determine the *precise* phonology reflected in the ancient Hebrew alphabetic spellings of PNNCSN.

1.2 Ancient Hebrew Orthography and PNNCSN

Ancient Hebrew orthography paints a clearer picture. Basically, the views are *matres lexionis* (vowel letters) were not used in earlier Hebrew, but began to be used later on and more prolifically.²⁴ The letters *yod*, *he*, and *waw* were used initially only to indicate *final* long vowels—/ī/, /ā/, and *only* /ū/ (not /ō/ so early) respectively—but then began to be used to indicate the same long vowels *internally* by the end of the eighth century.²⁵ In initial position, in the earlier periods of zero (∅) representation of *internal matres lexionis* (no internal *long vowels*) into the later periods the abbreviated name in PNNCSN is consistently spelled <yhw>. (The *single* case of <yhbnh> on a seal from Beth Shemesh is anomalous.) The toponym

²⁴ See Cross and Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography* with opposing arguments in Ludger A. Bange, *A Study of the Use of Vowel-Letters in Alphabetic Consonantal Writing* (Munich: Universität, 1971). Cf. also Zevit, *Matres Lexionis*. See Freedman, Anderson, and Forbes, *Studies* for postexilic Hebrew and Aramaic orthography.

²⁵ Cross and Freedman, *Early Hebrew Orthography*, 52 n. 37; and Freedman and Anderson, *Studies*, 67–68. On the eighth century dating, cf. Christopher A. Rollston, “Scribal Education in Ancient Israel: The Old Hebrew Epigraphic Evidence,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 344 (2006), 63; and Sandra L. Gogel, *A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew* (Society of Biblical Literature, Resources for Biblical Study 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 57 and 61.

Yahûdâh, however, appears to conform to the expected pattern, being found rendered as <yhdh> (Khirbet beth Lei 1, 2; et al.) and <yhwdh> (Arad 40, 12). Therefore, ancient Hebrew orthography points to the <w> in initial <yhw> as consonantal, so that the Neo-Assyrian transcriptions (*ia-u/ú-* and *-ia-[a-]u/ú*) of Judahite names with an orthography of <yhw> could *only* reflect a preexilic *yahw-* and of northern Israelites with that of <yw> the form *yaw-* (which *is* also written *ia-u/ú-* in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, as indicated in the above-cited sources), both of which are *phonologically equivalent* (again *h* represented by \emptyset).²⁶

1.3 The Preexilic Religious Contexts of the Full Name Yahweh

The religious contexts of the full name of *Yahweh* considers: 1) the *morphological emphases* in the Pentateuch of the exclusive use of the one name (and consequently *form*) *yahweh* (3ms, *causative* imperfect) and of the inviolability of that name, against that of any other,²⁷ and 2) the diachronic development of Israel's

²⁶ Freedman and Anderson, *Studies*, 173–74.

²⁷ Exod 3:15, 20:7, 23:13; Lev 24:10–23. Cf. Jacob O. Meyer, *The Memorial Name Yahweh* (Bethel, PA: Assemblies of Yahweh, 1987) for an investigation into this biblical emphasis as doctrine. Also, D. N. Freedman, “The Name of the God of Moses,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 79 (1960): 156. Cf. n. 29 below.

religious ideology regarding use and reverence of this *one* name from all literary and extrabiblical support that define this ideology, beginning from pentateuchal times and extending even to the tannaitic period.²⁸ The former context always precludes a verbal *yahū* (as being an independent *parallel jussive* form, as per Albright above, Cross [*Canaanite Myth*, 61]), but would only tolerate a *-yahw-* as an abbreviation (if three letters [*yhw*] must be utilized in such an abbreviation and not two [as in biblical *Yāh*]) of the one *form yahweh*.²⁹ As for the latter context, it allows the *exclusive* but *free* use of the name Yahweh in religious *and* secular contexts before the exile (notably from the Mesha Stele, Lachish letters, Arad ostraca, etc.) by both Israelites *and* foreigners. Certainly, the nations were required to call upon the

²⁸ Lev 24:10–23; Josh 2:10; 9:9; Judg 6:13; 2 Kgs 18:22; Freedman and O’Connor, “יהוה YHWH,” 500–01, 502–06 and the literature cited there. Then, cf. Max Reisel, *The Mysterious Name of Y.H. W.H. The Tetragrammaton in Connection with the Names of Ehyeh ašer Ehyeh, Hu’Ha’ and Šem Hammephoraš* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1957); and Arthur Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God: I. The Names & Attributes of God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 17–40, but with some necessary adjustments to his conclusions regarding the tannaitic literature.

²⁹ J. O. Meyer, *What Is the Messiah’s Name? יהושע* (Bethel, PA: Assemblies of Yahweh, 1983), 4. Also, cf. Zevit, “Chapter,” 1–16; and idem, “Onomastic Gleanings,” 227–34 for preexilic attestations of the short element *yh*.

name.³⁰ This context then saw the ubiquitous *long* abbreviation <yhw> in names just before the exile.³¹

Therefore, all the preexilic attestations in the epigraphic sources of northern Israelite -yw- indicate *yaw*, and Judahite *yhw*- reflects *yahw*, as per Freedman and O'Connor above.³² But, Zadok also believed that “yaw < yahw” (“Old Iranian Anthroponyms and Related Material in Late Babylonian Sources,” *Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale* 98 [2004]: 7 n. 7; “Jehu,” *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 1 [1997]: 20) and that must be what he meant

³⁰ Jer 10:25.

³¹ Generally other Semitic compounds had the full name of the deities, and Freedman and O'Connor (“יהוה YHWH,” 502) says exceptions are rare. Also cf. Jer 23:6.

³² Lack of space inhibits a fuller treatment, but I will note that (as probably suspected) northern Israelite *yaw* was a monarchical ideological variation, and in the eighth century seemed *directly* responsible for the attestations in Judah, but not necessarily *directly* so at other times. Cf. Zadok in n. 36 below. In the preexilic period orthographic *yw*- indicated *yaw*- and not *yō*, which has been disputed by some. Cf. in Zevit, *Matres Lexionis*, 13 n. 16 and the literature cited there; Abraham Malamat, “On the Akkadian Transcription of the Name of King Joash,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 204 (1971): 37–39; and Na'aman, “Transcribing,” 19–20; but cf. in J. Nicholas Postgate, “The Four ‘Neo-Assyrian’ Tablets from Šēḫ Ḥamad,” *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 7 (1993): 111. In light of the study ¹*aḫi(PAP)-i-ú* (Steven W. Cole, “Aḫī-lāu,” in *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* [ed. K. Radner; Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 1998] 1:63) from the northern Israelite exile is no obstacle to *yaw* as the present author's complete study demonstrates. See Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 136, for an unparalleled *ḥyw* (*'aḥyō*) at Elephantine. And, with regards to the biblical tradition, the study revealed that in the PNCSN *yhw*' up to the fourth century B.C.E. we are to understand that *y*- = *yā*- (cf. Driver, “Original Form,” 20 n. 1). Also, cf. n. 73 below.

with the statement: “All the cuneiform spellings of *Yhw* as 2nd component reflect -
/yaw/” (*Pre-Hellenistic*, 185; phonologically speaking, not orthographically), which
Vanderhoofft indicated as being disproven when *-yāhû* was interestingly attested also
in final position by the new cuneiform texts from *āl-Yāhūdu* and *Bīt Našar*.³³

Whether Zadok expected to find *-yāhû* in final position (*Earliest Diaspora*, 14) is
irrelevant at this point, but he undoubtedly saw the preexilic form phonologically
retained in his studies of a later period that we will soon consider. Justifiably, one
may incredulously ask, “If this is our original form of the abbreviated name, why is it
not found in the vocalizations preserved in the MT?” In order for the author to
accomplish an accurate, cautious analysis and retrieve answers from the relevant
sources I again applied the same principles (where applicable) to the exilic period,
where one is faced with a different setting—the difficult reality of the exile and the
Neo-Babylonian transcriptions of PNNCSN, beginning especially with the Weidner
texts.

³³ David Vanderhoofft, “New Evidence Pertaining to the Transition from Neo-Babylonian to
Achaemenid Administration in Palestine,” in *Yahwism after the Exile—Perspectives on Israelite
Religion in the Persian Period* (ed. R. Albertz and B. Becking; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 225 n. 21.
Cf. Francis Joannès and André Lemaire, “Trois tablettes cunéiformes à onomastique ouest-
sémitique,” *Transeuphratène* 17 (1999): 17–34 for the cuneiform texts.

2. EXILIC PERIOD

2.1 Neo-Babylonian Transcriptions

The Weidner texts are well known for confirming the deportation of King Jehoiachin to Babylon.³⁴ But, interestingly enough, these are the very texts that also reveal possibly the most critical point in the study for what it (in combination with other factors) highlighted regarding Judean religious history. These particular transcriptions do not reflect more the difference between the Neo-Assyrian and the Neo-Babylonian scribal traditions than the specific transitional time period of the phonological and orthographic shape of some PNNCSN. But, to understand these names best, again, it is very important to analyze not only *their* phonology, as reflected in these texts, but also comparatively that of the toponym *Yāhûd*.

³⁴ Ernst F. Weidner, "Jojachin, König von Juda, in babylonischen Keilschrifttexten," in *Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud* (Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 30; Paris: P. Guenther, 1939), 2:923–35. Also cf. W. F. Albright, "King Joiachin in Exile," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 5 (1942): 49–55.

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF PNNCSN FROM WEIDNER TEXTS

	TEXT A (28122)	TEXT B (28178) (592 B.C.E.)	TEXT C (28186)	TEXT D (28232)
Jehoiachin	¹ ia-'ú-kīnu(DU)	[¹ ia]-'u-kīnu(DU)	¹ ia-a-ú-i[] (obv.)	[¹ ia-']-ú-kīnu(DU)
			¹ ia-ku-ú-ki-nu (rev.)	
Other PNNCSN	sa-ma-ku-ia-a-m[a]		qa-na-'-a-ma (rev.)	qa-na-a-ma
	šá-lam-ia-a-ma			

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE TOPONYM JUDAH FROM WEIDNER TEXTS

	TEXT A (28122)	TEXT B (28178)	TEXT C (28186)	TEXT D (28232)
Judah/Judean	[^{KU} R]ia-ú-du	^{KUR} ia-a-ḥu-du	ia-ku-du (rev.)	^{KUR} ia-a-ḥu-du
	^{LÚ} ia-ú-da-a-a	^{LÚ} ia-a-ḥu-da-a-a		

From the above tables, we see that the name of the king is rendered: ¹ia-'ú-
kīnu(DU) in Babylon 28122 (Text A); [¹ia]-'u-*kīnu(DU)* in Babylon 28178 (Text B),
 which is dated to 592 B.C.E.; ¹ia-a-ú-i[] (on obverse of clay tablet) and ¹ia-ku-ú-ki-nu
 (on reverse of clay tablet) in Babylon 28186 (Text C); and [¹ia-']-ú-*kīnu(DU)* in

Babylon 28232 (Text D). *Judah* (both as a toponym and as an ethnonym [Judean]) is represented as: ^[KUR]*ia-ú-du* and ^{LÚ}*ia-ú-da-a-a* (twice) in Babylon 28122 (Text A); ^{KUR}*ia-a-ḥu-du* and ^{LÚ}*ia-a-ḥu-da-a-a* in Babylon 28178 (Text B); *ia-ku-du* (twice on reverse of clay tablet) in Babylon 28186 (Text C); and ^{KUR}*ia-a-ḥu-du* (twice) in Babylon 28232 (Text D). Text A also attests to *-ia-a-ma* (*-ia-a-wa₆*) in final position, as in *šá-lam-ia-a-ma*.³⁵ One must immediately note the transcriptions of the king and of Judah in Texts B and D, which have been explained as indicating *yawkîn* and *Yāhûd* respectively, but *yaw-* is certainly odd in the early sixth century Judah.³⁶ But, yet, *yāhû-* is certainly attached to the king's name at this time as seen in Text C, ¹*ia-*

³⁵ Cf. Weidner, "Jojachin," 926–27.

³⁶ See above in preexilic period. Also, cf. Coogan, "Patterns," 188; and Vanderhooft, "New Evidence," 223 n. 14. But, as to the *Eliakim na'ar ywkn* seal, previously thought to reflect King Jehoiachin (W. F. Albright, "The Seal of Eliakim and the Latest Preexilic History of Judah, with Some Observations on Ezekiel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 51 [1932]: 77–106), this can no longer be accepted. See now Lawrence J. Mykytiuk, *Identifying Biblical Persons in Northwest Semitic Inscriptions of 1200–539 B.C.E* (Society of Biblical Literature, Academia Biblica 12; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 23–29, and the literature cited there; Cross, "Seal of Miqnêyaw," 57–58; David Ussishkin, "Royal Judean Storage Jars and Private Seal Impressions," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 223 (1976): 1–13; and idem, "The Destruction of Lachish by Sennacherib and the Dating of the Royal Storage Jars," *Tel Aviv* 4 (1977): 28–60. However, I must additionally note Zadok's (*Pre-Hellenistic*, 182) comment that *yw-* is not necessarily due to northern Israelite "physical presence or even influence," where he notes *yw'zr* from Wadi Murabba'at.

ku-ú-ki-nu, actually the only *clear* indication of such a form.³⁷ But why was not this presumed *yāhû-* in his name rendered as ¹*ia-a-ḥu-* with *Yāhûd* (^{KUR}*ia-a-ḥu-du*)? The logical explanation must take the latest preexilic onomasticon into consideration (where long <yhw> proliferates) in addition to what we learned above from Hebrew orthography and indicate that ¹*ia-’-ú-kīnu(DU)* reflected *yahwkîn*, as in Neo-Assyrian (and even in Neo-Babylonian), but ¹*ia-ku-ú-ki-nu* now indicates *yāhûkîn*. But, this cuneiform spelling was replaced a little later by the more correct ¹*ia-a-ḥu-* (as *he* was transcribed as <ḥ> but not as <k> as far back as Mari).³⁸ It is first attested in 583 B.C.E. in the PNCSN ¹*ia(?) -a-ḥu-nu-ú-ri*.³⁹ Now, why was such a phonological change necessary? Before that question is answered it must additionally be noted that one also finds *-ia-a-ú* being avoided in final position (occasionally attested as in the

³⁷ In observing these phenomena, Coogan (“Patterns,” 188 n. 1) suggested that this reflected the tendency of archaism (citing William F. Albright, “Contributions to Biblical Archaeology and Philology: The Name Yahweh,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 43 [1924]: 374) wherein an older *yahû* replaced *yaw/yô*, which he indicates as being “operative in the early sixth century but was not yet dominant.” First of all, <yhw> indicated *yahw*, not *yahû*, but the present author additionally noted that the northern Israelite form *-yaw-* in eighth-century Judah was reversed already by the seventh century and *-yahw-* became ubiquitous. Again, cf. Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 184; and Cross, “Seal of Miqnêyaw,” 57.

³⁸ F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 62.

³⁹ Zadok, *Earliest Diaspora*, 28.

patronym *ba-da^dia-a-ú* in 584 B.C.E. and elsewhere outside of the Weidner texts).⁴⁰

It was eventually superseded by *-ia-a-ma*, which in this final position became as ubiquitous in the exilic and postexilic periods as late preexilic *-yhw*, but still phonologically indicating *-yahw*. What could possibly explain these seeming anomalies? I will proceed to the next step.⁴¹

2.2 The Exilic Religious Contexts of the Full Name Yahweh

For the religious context of the name Yahweh during the exilic period I will focus on only the diachronic ideological aspect of that context.⁴² The *primary* tool now was the book of Daniel.⁴³ The presence of the name Yahweh in a purported *original* product of second century Hellenistic Judaism is remarkable and has no parallels in other literary products of the Hellenistic period.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, in the

⁴⁰ Ibid., 27. Also cf. idem, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 305, which is technically to be attributed to the postexilic period (i.e. 537 B.C.E.).

⁴¹ A study of ancient Hebrew orthography is not applicable for this period, unless it is simply assumed that Aramaic orthography (full) now affected Hebrew.

⁴² Section 1.3 above.

⁴³ I do recognize this goes against the consensus regarding the provenance of our book, but do expect a “nudging” of our consensus, as the present author too has something perhaps relevant.

⁴⁴ See George Howard, “The Tetragram and the New Testament,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96 (1977): 63–83, for a discussion of the Tetragrammaton in Ben Sira. In his comparison of the same Hebrew texts in Manuscript B (MS B) of Ben Sira from the Cairo Geniza (dated to about the twelfth

study it was observed that the book does exhibit a consistent pattern with regards to use of the name Yahweh that also finds parallels in Ezra-Nehemiah, in addition to extrabiblical postexilic sources—namely Elephantine—but no such parallels in either *original* Qumran literary products or in tannaitic sources, where the name was consciously avoided in Aramaic *and* Hebrew by various methods.⁴⁵ The pattern in Daniel is that the name was not utilized in a non-Hebrew tongue, i.e. Aramaic, but

century C.E.) and the Masada scroll (dated to about 100–75 B.C.E.) Howard noted that MS B utilizes the triple *yod* where the Masada scroll has *Adonai* (Howard, “Tetragram,” 69). The use of Adonai in the Masada scroll is quite regular. (Cf. Pancratius C. Beentjes, *The Book of Ben Sira in Hebrew: A Text Edition of All Extant Hebrew Manuscripts and A Synopsis of All Parallel Hebrew Ben Sira Texts* [Society of Biblical Literature, Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 68; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 2006] for all Hebrew texts of Ben Sira.) His suggestion that the Masada scroll “represents an early attempt to replace the Tetragram with אדני” is not probable, however. First of all the utilization of the triple *yod* in rabbinic material dates to about the eighth to tenth century C.E. and appears to be merely graphic developments from יה, used by early rabbinic commentators who maintained the traditional avoidance of the full sacred name. Cf. Jacob Z. Lauterbach, “Substitutes for the Tetragrammaton,” in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 1930–1931* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1931), 59. The triple *yod* is not to be equated with the Tetragrammaton. What Howard did observe, however, in MS B that seemed to be an avoidance of the Tetragrammaton appears in fact to be a much later phenomenon of a secondary super sanctity attained by *Adonai*, the *Qere* of יהוה (as other terms such as אלו also replaced it in MS B, 43:10), which saw it in later times also being restricted in speech and reserved for only religious purposes, resulting in phenomena such as *Adoshem*. Cf. Lauterbach, “Substitutes,” 43 n. 16.

⁴⁵ See Donald W. Parry, “Notes on Divine Name Avoidance in Scriptural Units of the Legal Texts of Qumran,” in *Legal Texts and Legal Issues. Proceedings of the Second Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies*, Cambridge 1995. Published in Honour of Joseph M. Baumgarten (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 437–49; and A. Lemaire, *The Birth of Monotheism: The Rise and Disappearance of Yahwism* (Washington: Biblical Archaeology Society, 2007), 128–30. See n. 48 below.

was surrogated with *’Ēlāh*, or *’Ēlāh* of heaven. Daniel’s prayer, however, *in Hebrew* records *yhwh* and the Masoretes’ notation, along with the variants, reveals it was attested also in Hebrew at the beginning of the book before being replaced with Adonai.⁴⁶ Simply put, the Judean exiles apparently did not speak the name Yahweh in foreign tongues, but only the “sacred” Hebrew tongue.⁴⁷ One cannot assume this tendency to be of later Hellenistic origin (and consequently presume *circular reasoning* on my part), because as just noted it is clearly different from the *religious context of the name Yahweh* in the Hellenistic and later periods.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, in the study once establishing that accurate context, it was then applied to the exilic onomasticon to determine if at all parallels could be detected in those PNNCSN.

⁴⁶ In ch. 9 James A. Montgomery (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* [International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927], 361) rendered Adonai *always* with *yhwh*.

⁴⁷ In light of the Babylonian cultural and linguistic contrast from the monarchical preexilic period, it may seem natural for this tendency to develop, especially when comparing this new setting with at least the demand of Exod 20:7, et al.; but yet, as this latter is also further qualified in the light of Ezek 20:27, 39 (cf. Isa 65:7) and we did see a difference in the preexilic period (e.g. Jonah 1:9), then inclusiveness of use by all *righteous* nations is ultimately to be understood (as expressed in Jer 10:25; Mal 1:11, 14).

⁴⁸ The lack of space inhibits expanded elucidation for the *religious context* in that period, but all that can be noted is that while in this early exilic/postexilic period the ideological “sacredness” of the name required its *use* (but *use* nonetheless) only in the Hebrew tongue, a study of the same phenomenon in all literary Jewish/tannaitic sources from the Hellenistic and Roman periods (both within and external to Judah proper) indicates that then the Hebrew tongue *by itself* was *no longer the sanctum for the sacred name*. See the last citations in n. 28 above.

It became clear that the author successfully identified the incipience of the religio-linguistic convention that may be called *Intentional Misrepresentation of the Abbreviated Sacred Name* (IMASN)—spoken and written—soon after 597 B.C.E., originating from the elites of Judean society, that sought to protect the full name of Yahweh from defilement and corruption if it is used (even if unintentional) in non-Hebrew (non-sacred) tongues (especially Aramaic). The Neo-Assyrian transcriptions of *ia-[a]-ú[-u]-* and *-ia-[a]-ú[-u]* (reflecting former *-yahw-*) also seen in the Weidner texts and elsewhere (see just above) were *now avoided* for religious/phonological reasons. *Yāhû-* was produced from ^{KUR}*ia-a-ḥu-*, the initial elements of the hypocoristic form of the toponym *yāhûd*, and is first reflected in the odd initial spelling *ia-ku-u-* (with /k/) in the PNCSN of the king, but is what made the *he* in the orthographic <yhw> intervocalic. This was the first implementation of the religio-linguistic convention and was indeed from the toponym, since it likewise exhibited an odd spelling of *ia-ku-du* (also with /k/) in the reverse of Text C, transcribed *almost exactly* with the king's name. Neo-Babylonian *-ia-a-ma* remained and did reflect Hebrew *-yahw*. This transcription, however, could not be seen to

reflect alphabetic *-yahw*, so it produced postexilic *yāh*, and even less frequently *-yaw*.⁴⁹ *Understand that yāhû (or yahû) was not connected with the name Yahweh either as an independent name or in personal names before the exile.*⁵⁰ It was a product of this religio-linguistic convention and was not necessary if the “holy” Hebrew tongue was being utilized.

I stated *-ia-a-ma* superseded the now avoided Neo-Assyrian form *-ia-[a-]ú[-u]* for phonological reasons. What were they and how could the Judeans get away with now equating Akkadian *-ia-a-ma* with alphabetic *-yāh*. Stolper presented the key to the answer and G. R. Driver (interestingly) was phonologically correct, but not in his various suggestions.⁵¹ The Hebrew diphthong /aw/ was phonologically equivalent to the lower-mid (open-mid), back vowel (= IPA /ɔ/) or to the long /ā/. This diphthongal (vowel and consonant/semi-vowel) sound alone is incorporated in *-ia-a-ma*, but *-ia-[a-]ú[-u]* could represent both that diphthongal sound as well as the well-known common one (the sound as in *cow*—actually two contiguous vowels)

⁴⁹ See below in the postexilic period.

⁵⁰ Pace Albright, “Contributions,” 373–74; and Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 61 above.

⁵¹ Matthew W. Stolper, “A Note on Yahwistic Personal Names in the Murašû Texts,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 222 (1976): 27; and Driver, “Original Form,” 20–21.

if Akkadian <-ú/u> is read as a full vowel and not an unrounded /w/.⁵² If this second pronunciation is utilized in the initial abbreviated name followed by the *appropriate predicative element* (as in a possible **yahwiākîn* = *ia-’-ú-ia-kīnu*), something to close to the sacred name could be articulated and hence that name defiled in a non-Hebrew (“non-sacred”) tongue. Simply put, the variations in forms (away from -*yahw*- phonologically) were products of the elites in the Judean community who had to deal with changing circumstances and changing ideology involving a very sacred possession, which ideology interestingly in its incipient stages is remarkably corroborated by the Weidner texts. But additionally, it was further established that even any *orthographic* variation away from -*yahw*- (= Yahweh) in the earlier preexilic period, as evident in the northern Israelite *yaw* (combined with other evidence), strongly indicated religious/ideological motivations behind those variations, and not linguistic processes (*pace* Cross [“Seal of Miqnêyaw,” 58]), as a *yaw*- (compared to

⁵² Note the phenomena of */ā/ (in Canaanite Shift) and */aw/ contracting to *ô* at different times in Northwest Semitic dialects, as in preexilic northern Hebrew. See W. Randall Gar, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000–586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 30–40. Also note the *preservation* of lengthened */ā/ from */á/ in nominal forms in the reading tradition at Tiberias (mostly southern Hebrew), which did not likewise become /ô/, as in Phoenician. Also see Gary A. Rendsburg, “Ancient Hebrew Phonology,” in *Phonologies of Asia and Africa* (ed. A. S. Kaye; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 78–79. Note also his reference to MT historically indicating distinct Hebrew dialects (and early phonological features).

yahw-) has no connection to Yahweh.⁵³ Now, at the end of the exilic period personal names had an interesting complexity, its orthography and phonology being understood in different religious contexts as per the requirements of IMASN by the elites. The phonological realizations would depend on the linguistic environment, so that orthographic forms in the Aramaic script of *yhw-* and *-yh* would reflect *yāhû-* and *-yāh* (which latter now could be seen as actually an abbreviation of *yāhû*). But, in the *Hebrew* tongue (including script) in this early period we would expect almost exclusively *-yahw-* to be understood, given the consonantal nature of the script and the fact of it being somewhat phonologically ambiguous when internal *matres lexiōnis* is in regular use.⁵⁴

3. POSTEXILIC (PERSIAN) PERIOD

3.1 *Late Babylonian Transcriptions*

For the postexilic period the goal was to determine if any further phonological changes in the form of PNNCSN occurred through the exilic period.

⁵³ Cf. n. 31 above.

⁵⁴ An orthographic form of <yhw> could reflect either /yāhû/ or /yahw/, a fact which was undoubtedly taken advantage of by the proponents of IMASN.

Therefore, again, I utilized the Akkadian data. During the postexilic period attestations of the abbreviated name in both initial and final positions are documented now at āl-Yāhūdu, Bīt Našar, as well as the Murašû firm archive. The forms of the abbreviated name in initial position are ^d*ia-a-ḫu-ú*-, ^d*ia-ḫu-ú*-, ^d*ia-a-ḫu-u*-, *ia-a-ḫu*-, ^d*e-ḫu-ú*-, ^d*ḫu-ú*-, and now even a form of *ia-a-ma*.⁵⁵ The final forms are most frequently *-ia-a-ma*, less frequently *-ia-ma*, *Ci-a-ma* (*ma-la-ki-a-ma*), *Ca-’-a-ma* (*ḫa-na-na-’-a-ma*), *Ca-a-ma* (*ḫa-ta-a-ma*), *Ce-e-ma* (*gir-re-e-ma*), and now also ^d*ia-a-ḫu-ú*.⁵⁶ All of these forms continue the pattern that began to develop from the Weidner texts at the beginning of the exile that I noted above, but with some additional confirmatory material of the conclusions. The initial form of ^d*ia-a-ḫu-u* is as I have shown above actually not found in the Weidner texts, as this innovation

⁵⁵ Laurie E. Pearce, “New Evidence for Judeans in Babylonia,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (ed. O. Lipschits and M. Oeming; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 405; idem, “‘Judean’: A Special Status in Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid Babylonia?” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context* (ed. O. Lipschits, G. N. Knoppers, and M. Oeming; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 273 (note: “Yāma-izri, the *dēkû* of āl-Yāhūdu,” recorded in IMMP 83); Zadok, *Jews in Babylonia*, 7–8; and Albert T. Clay, “Aramaic Indorsements on the Documents of the Murašû Sons,” in *Old Testament and Semitic Studies in Memory of William Rainey Harper* (ed. R. F. Harper, F. Brown, and G. F. Moore; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1908), 292.

⁵⁶ Zadok, *Jews in Babylonia*, 7–8; Joannès and Lemaire, “Trois tablettes,” 17–34; Vanderhooft, “New Evidence,” 223; and F. Rachel Magdalene and Cornelia Wunsch, “Slavery Between Judah and Babylon: The Exilic Experience,” in *Slaves and Households in the Near East* (ed. L. Culbertson; Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2011), 122.

was in its formative stage, reflected in ¹*ia-ku-ú-ki-nu*.⁵⁷ This initial form in the postexilic period thus reflects *yāhû* or the alphabetic <yhw>.⁵⁸ In addition I cursorily mentioned above Stolper’s note concerning the second element *-ia-a-ma* (now also even seen in initial position) in a postexilic PNCSN, where it appeared to reflect *-yāh* (*pi-il-ia-a-ma*, spelled *plyh* on an Aramaic endorsement).⁵⁹ But, sixth century attestations of *-yw* (*lmlkyw yhw*d [toponym always spelled *plene*]) adds more fascination to these observations.⁶⁰ Stolper concluded from his evidence “even if *-ia-a-ma* usually represents *-yaw*, a final form *-yh* was in at least occasional use as an acceptable equivalent of *-ia-a-ma* in 5th century Nippur.”⁶¹ Of course, the present author has now here in this study made a correction, so that an accurate understanding of these PNNCSN can now be obtained—the Akkadian form actually reflects *-yahw*.⁶² However, we are now dealing with religio-linguistic concerns

⁵⁷ See just above in section 2.2 in the exilic period.

⁵⁸ Clay, “Aramaic Indorsements,” 292.

⁵⁹ Stolper, “Note,” 27.

⁶⁰ Cf. Cross, “Personal Names,” 79; Zadok, *Pre-Hellenistic*, 332–33; and D. Vanderhooft, “el-mēdînâ ûmēdînâ kiktābāh: Scribes and Scripts in Yehud and in Achaemenid Transeuphratene,” in *Judah and the Judeans*, ed. Lipschits, Knoppers, and Oeming, 538.

⁶¹ Stolper, “Note,” 27.

⁶² Cf. section 2.1 above. Post-exilic *-yw* actually *resulted from -ia-a-ma*.

compounded with the expected phonological realities, so that they can only be fully understood when viewed through their religious context(s).

3.2 The Postexilic Religious Context of the Full Name Yahweh

The diachronic development of the use and reverence of the full name Yahweh in the postexilic period is a continuation of what I have identified for the name in the exilic period—the name Yahweh is not found being utilized in non-Hebrew tongues. This can be seen from an inspection of the book of Ezra (-Nehemiah), where in the Aramaic Ezra 5:1 Zechariah and Haggai prophecy “in the name of the *’Ēlāh* of Israel,” and not *Yahweh, the ’Ēlāh of Israel*, as in the Hebrew section.⁶³ This is consistent throughout the book. Even the context of use by Cyrus is Hebrew and Judeans used the name when speaking with *Samaritans* (who also knew Hebrew).⁶⁴ But, the most remarkable observation is realized when the extrabiblical evidence from the period under consideration is likewise inspected, which can be accomplished with the material from Elephantine.

⁶³ Ezra 4:1.

⁶⁴ The attributed use by Cyrus is very important. Contrast Ezra 6:3, 5; 7:12.

All of the documents recovered from the Jews of Elephantine were written in essentially Imperial Aramaic (as in Daniel), but with unique features of their own.⁶⁵ But the most important aspect of these Jews is that which has been taken for granted. It is not apparent to many that the name Yahweh is *not* found utilized in this community. What is found is <yhw>, reflecting *Yāhû*, actually the first attestation of this *independent* form. The name *Yhwh* is simply not found.⁶⁶ We also find the title *'lh Šmy'* ('Ēlāh of heaven) being utilized, which is again reminiscent of the use in the Aramaic of Daniel and Ezra.⁶⁷ But, perhaps the most important notation pertains to the communication by these Jews with the governor of Yāhûd (Bagohi) wherein they used only *'lh Šmy'* in the greeting at the beginning and then *Yāhû* after this throughout, and in the response to the Elephantine Jews the governor did not utilize *Yāhû* at all, but only *'lh Šmy'*.⁶⁸ What these all indicate is a confirmation of the analysis regarding the nonuse of the name Yahweh in foreign

⁶⁵ See Jonas Greenfield and Joseph Naveh, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the Persian Period," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 117; and Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, xv, 118–19.

⁶⁶ Cf. Porten, *Archives*, 105; and Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, xviii.

⁶⁷ Dan 2:44; Ezra 5:12.

⁶⁸ Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 123 in #32:3–4. This was also noted in Lemaire, "Birth," 111.

tongues. It is now clear that independent *Yāhû* is surely a postexilic innovation, but was not utilized by the normative Judean community maintaining the “sacred” language.⁶⁹ What is not certain, however, is whether the Egyptian Jews *independently* borrowed the element from the exilic onomasticon (through which *yāhû-* was produced via IMASN) for independent use, or was so directed in light of a linguistic deficiency, but since their antecedents reaches back to before the late sixth century (525 B.C.E. at least), the weight of the argument is with the former.⁷⁰

The religio-linguistic convention of IMASN established by the elites of Judean society during the exilic period continued to produce modifications away from the original abbreviated form of the sacred name. But, as indicated in the exilic period, we are now dealing with a very complex religio-linguistic phenomenon. During the postexilic period we still find predominantly *yhw-* in initial position and now *-yh* in final position. However, we also do see *yh-* initially (= *yāh-* < *-yāh*), as well as *-yhw*

⁶⁹ This explains the absence of *Yāhû* (or even *ya[h]ô*) from all postexilic Hebrew (and even, as a matter of fact, Aramaic) literary material from the normative community.

⁷⁰ Cf. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri*, 116. It is certain that the name Yahweh was not to be utilized in non-Hebrew tongues, as this would amount to desecration. But what if a linguistic atmosphere arose in any Jewish community in which there was no longer any desire to maintain the Hebrew language in daily life?

and even *-yw* in final position. When viewed alongside the Late Babylonian onomasticon, attesting *primarily* forms of ^d*ia-a-ḥu-ú-* initially and *-ia-a-ma* finally, then we are informed as to the orthographic and phonological desires of the postexilic Judeans. Clearly, *-yh* replaced the ubiquitous *-yhw* because final *-ia-a-ma* could not be seen as reflecting *-yhw* (hence it is mostly without the *determinative*), which would then indicate *-yahw* and possibly by extension the sacred name Yahweh. The workaround, therefore, was to utilize orthographically *-yh*, which, as already shown above, was phonologically equivalent to *-yahw* (= *-yāh*), but which could still be seen as actually abbreviating *-yāhû*.

4. SECOND TEMPLE AND TANNAITIC PERIODS

4.1 PNNCSN in the Greco-Roman Period

4.1.1 Greco-Roman Onomastics

I must admit that this point of the study is by far the most fascinating, gripping, riveting, colossal, and monumental for both its implications and especially for the corrective documentation it provides for all who are engaged in biblical,

onomastic, or other Near Eastern studies, but lack of space inhibits any significant presentation as has been done thus far, as this onomastic picture necessitates a detailed illustration to do it justice. However, I will cursorily discuss the onomastica, in preparation for that documentation. It has been well noted that the Hellenistic period sees a transformation of the Jewish onomastica, and, with regards to this study, PNNCSN saw a bit of a decline from their ubiquitous attestations in the Persian period, but not entirely.⁷¹ Important, therefore, in the analysis was to capture every significant Jewish/Israelite onomasticon from the Hellenistic and Roman periods, especially the Ptolemaic period. This was, therefore, realized with the Jewish/Israelite onomastic evidence from Judah, Egypt (Trikomia, Samareia, Edfu, etc.), and also Mt. Gerizim (Samaritans), which latter was also quite important.⁷² But, regarding PNNCSN as we enter this period, I may make an additional note.

⁷¹ Cf. Paul-Alain Beaulieu, "Yahwistic Names in Light of Late Babylonian Onomastics," in *Judah and the Judeans*, ed. Lipschits, Knoppers, and Oeming, 248 n. 7; Sylvie Honigman, "Abraham in Egypt: Hebrew and Jewish-Aramaic Names in Egypt and Judaea in Hellenistic and Early Roman Times," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 246 (2004): 283.

⁷² See Yitzhak Magen, Haggai Misgav, and Levana Tsfania, *Mount Gerizim Inscriptions: Volume I The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004) for

4.1.2 IMASN: Still a Force to Be Reckoned With

Up to this point the study has accounted for several forms of the abbreviated name, all (except one) revolving around (phonologically) the now clear original element *-yahw-*.⁷³ The exception was *yāhû*, a product of the religio-linguistic convention IMASN, with a source quite apart from the original element.⁷⁴ But, as has become obvious, one (or two) more form(s) still has not been encountered in the sources up to this point, but I did mention cursorily that it begins to be attested in the fourth century. This is the form *yô-* (יׁ), which is then associated with *yěhō-*, which, according to the argumentation so far, can be explained either with the traditional linguistic explanations of syncope and contraction (of an original

the publication of the Samaritan inscriptions from Mt. Gerizim. Also, cf. Jan Dušek, *Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Mt. Gerizim and Samaria between Antiochus III and Antiochus IV Epiphanes* (Leiden: Brill, 2012). See also Gary N. Knoppers, “Revisiting the Samaritan Question in the Persian Period,” in *Judah and the Judeans*, ed. O. Lipschits and M. Oeming for their close cultural features (including language and script) with Judah at that time.

⁷³ The study also resolved the anomaly in the PNCSN Jehu (*yěhû*), though not necessarily allowing historically that *y-* < *yahw-*, but which <y> is indeed to be seen as reflecting *yā-*, as in Neo-Assyrian on Shalmaneser’s Black Obelisk, and not *yô-*. Cf. again n. 32.

⁷⁴ See section 2.2 above.

yāhû) or via another elusive force—IMASN in the Greco-Roman period.⁷⁵ And yet, this religio-linguistic convention is inseparable from the indispensable religious context of the full name Yahweh.

4.2 Revolution in the Second Temple Period?

The term revolution tends to carry the notion of violence, but involves some type of radical change or even overthrow of a particular social system.⁷⁶ With emphasis on “radical change,” I would like to project such imagery into the late Second Temple period. Of course, the study is purely *phonological* and *religious*, as we have considered how significant the Hebrew language itself was or became in the exilic period, essential in preserving a very important sacred possession. Any revolution that arises then could be said to involve the ear and the heart. But yet, *yahw-* became very critical not merely for what it sounded like, but obviously for what it ultimately represented in a particular context. Therefore, when in the midst of the late Second Temple period its now “mysterious” preservation or perhaps

⁷⁵ It is important to mention here that there is no *direct* connection between this shortened form now in the fourth century and the preexilic shortened form *yw-* (*yaw-*) characteristic of northern Israel. The Persian period gap is quite apparent.

⁷⁶ Cf. Webster’s.

isolation should be exposed and an obvious revolution against our long-established religio-linguistic convention brought about, the products, effects, or outcomes must only go to show the powerful intimate interconnection now existent there with the innermost recesses of the heart.

5. CONCLUSION

Certainly, a study of ancient Hebrew onomastics easily becomes a study of linguistics, and this particular study of PNNCSN has certainly provided an important adjunct to ancient Hebrew phonology. But since the study is also, as it were, compounded with that which is very sacred, then I hope to have also contributed to a clearer understanding of the subtle changes apparent in religious ideologies in various social contexts, indeed very complex. And, it is in this light that method has been proven to be very critical in order that certitude can be established. For Meyer, judging from the biblical material's consistent emphasis on the *full* name Yahweh (that is certainly at least *morphological*), immediately perceived its importance for consideration of PNNCSN.⁷⁷ And Rollston has importantly indicated regarding

⁷⁷ Meyer, *Memorial Name*, 1987.

prosopographic studies that the most reliable are “those based on a convergence of epigraphic, archaeological, and (when available) literary data. However, *certain minimal controls are mandatory for such analyses to be convincing or even tenable*” (Emphasis Rollston’s).⁷⁸ I believe this report bears out the truth of these statements.

Consequently, the study highlights a *preexilic phenomenon*. The religious contexts of the full name *Yahweh* was one portraying an extremely holy name, requiring exclusive allegiance, but still, nevertheless, seemingly demanding and receiving universal recognition in the preexilic period.⁷⁹ These contexts then gave rise to the ubiquitous utilization of the compounded form of the name expressed as -*yahw*-. But in light of the unstable religious situation obtaining within Israel modifications away from this *orthography* began to develop in this period. We thus find also *yw*-.

We also perceived in -*yahw*- an *important inspiration* for an eye-opening exilic religio-linguistic convention. Different social contexts often require subtle behavioral adjustments especially pertaining to the very sacred, which we found

⁷⁸ Rollston, “Prosopography,” 207.

⁷⁹ Cf. Exo 4:22; 5:1–2, etc. See section 1.3 above.

regarding the utilization of the name Yahweh in the exilic period. It was not utilized outside of the Hebrew tongue—specifically Aramaic. But this context was also extended to the compounded form of the name, where the remarkable religio-linguistic convention of IMASN developed, producing now *yāhû*. But, the phonology perceived herein was in fact simply *borrowed* from the toponym *Yāhûd*, seen in the exilic/postexilic periods.

The form *-yahw-* was exhibited to be a postexilic *sacred possession*. Bilingual communities may show linguistic preferences in disparate social contexts, but in postexilic Yāhûd with the reestablishment of the religious Judean community, the distinction between the sacred would expectedly be maintained, so with the full name *Yahweh*. But, what of the abbreviated compounded form of the name? It, too, would have continued to follow the religio-linguistic path of the full name Yahweh—the Hebrew tongue would be reflective of *-yahw-*, now realized even in *-yāh* (= /yahw/). The innovation *yāhû* (and even *-yāhû*) would then persist in Aramaic.

But yet, also unearthed was the persistence of *yahw*—but as the substance of a late Second Temple period revolution? Clearly, the trends thus detected would only

naturally be maintained in light of the “sacred” quality characteristic of them. But, from one era to the next there must also necessarily be evident more ideological changes that would then cause the *religious context of the full name Yahweh* to become differently qualified—our compound form being no exception.