6 A Kuntillet ʻAjrud Awakening

The first name Baal was relatively common for deities throughout the Levant and Mediterranean, and it typically served as an alternative name or nickname for storm-gods, for whom Hadad/Adad was their original first name. There were exceptions, however, including Baal-Ḫarrān, which was a nickname for the western Moon-God-of-Ḫarrān, and Baal-Ḥamān, who has been identified with the Canaanite or Ugaritic El by modern scholars and whom Philo of Byblos and others identified with the Greek god Kronos. Because the common noun *baal* means "lord" or "master," many deities were known by this nickname, including Marduk and Dagan. Similarly, the divine name Ištar was relatively common name among Mesopotamian goddesses, and it could function as a common noun in Akkadian literature, where it was used to mean "goddess" as early as the Old Babylonian period.[1] Unlike the name Baal, however, the name Ištar seemed to serve as each goddess's primary name rather than as her nickname. As discussed in chapter 4.1, other titles or nicknames by which Ištar goddesses were known include "Lady" (*bēlet*) and "Queen" (*šarrat*). There is no reason to suspect that the name Ištar replaced other goddess names in the same way that Baal replaced Hadad and Adad names.

In contrast to the divine first names Baal and Ištar, little about the divine name Yahweh suggests that it should be interpreted as a common noun. Indeed, because the origin and meaning of the name Yahweh have eluded scholarly consensus, making an appeal to *yahweh* as a common noun is exceptionally difficult.[2] This would be true whether the appeal considered the possibility that a divine first name had become a common noun, as with Ištar/*ištar*, or the possibility that a common noun had become a title and divine nickname, as with *baal*/Baal. Also in contrast to the names Baal and Ištar, no extant texts contrast one Yahweh deity with another Yahweh deity in an individual text, and no Israelite text includes an embedded god list to suggest that there were other deities to contrast with (the unspecified) Yahweh. For these reasons, the methodology followed in chapter 3 cannot be used to determine whether the ancient Israelites distinguished one Yahweh associated with a particular location from another Yahweh at another location. However,

1 *CAD* I/J, *ištaru*; and Emerton, "New Light," 7.

2 For a recent discussion of possible meanings of the name Yahweh and its extra-biblical attestations, see Karel van der Toorn, "Yahweh," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, eds. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 913–916; see also Frank Moore Cross, "Yahweh and the God of the Patriarchs," *HTR* 55 (1962), 250–256.

our examinations of divine name formulas in the Neo-Assyrian and various Levantine texts (i.e., DN-of-GN, title-of-GN, DN//title-of-GN, and DN//Who-Resides-(in)-GN; see chapters 4 and 5) provide us with a template for evaluating the likelihood of whether previously proposed Yahweh names could have represented potentially independent and distinct localized Yahweh deities.[3]

Prior to the discovery of the texts at Kuntillet ʻAjrud (Ḥorvat Teman; see Map 1) in the 1970s, no compelling reason existed for considering Yahweh as the first name of more than one deity. Within the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh had numerous epithets that were attributed to him, including "God of Israel" (e.g., Psalm 68:36) and "God of Heaven" (e.g., Psalm 136:26), but consensus held that these were strictly epithets. With the discovery of the texts at Kuntillet ʻAjrud, new evidence introduced the possibility that the divine name Yahweh might not just be one of the several names ascribed to the ancient Israelites' national deity; Yahweh might have been the first name of different locally manifest deities. Now, we know that someone worshipped a deity that he addressed as Yahweh-of-Samaria, and he did this at a shrine dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman. Since the discovery, a handful of other phrases have been reinterpreted as full names of various localized Yahweh deities, including the Yahweh-in-Hebron and Yahweh-in-Zion. This final chapter examines the Yahweh full names that have been proposed since 1975 and explains whether they should be considered legitimate divine full names. This chapter also explains why even legitimate full names are not necessarily indicative of multiple independent and distinct Yahweh deities in the same way that Northwest Semitic and Akkadian full names indicate the existence of multiple, distinct and independent localized Baal deities and Ištar goddesses.

6.1 "Hear, O Israel, Yahweh//our-God"

Whenever biblical scholars have the opportunity to consider multiple localized Yahweh deities, they tend to do so in light of Deuteronomy 6:4, commonly known by its incipit as "the Shema": שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד. For this reason, we begin our examination of Yahweh full names by considering the potential theological and syntactical meanings of this verse. This verse has

3 "Yahweh deities/deity" should be understood as a multiplicity-neutral phrase indicating that the first name Yahweh has been paired with a specific last name. It is not intended to suggest that each Yahweh-of-GN was necessarily a distinct and independent localized Israelite god.

several possible translations, which also means that many theological possibilities exist. One translation, in particular, and its meaning go back to at least the Septuagint and Vulgate: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (Ἄκουε Ἰσραὴλ Κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν Κύριος εἷς ἐστι, LXX; and *audi Israhel Dominus Deus noster Dominus unus est*, Vulgate). In Yahwistic terms, this means that the deity is Israel's deity and that he is one Yahweh. The question then becomes "what does 'one Yahweh' mean?" In his 1910 article, "Monojawhismus des Deuteronomiums," William Bade advocated this ancient interpretation of the verse and argued that the Shema was intended as a polemical warning against the poly-Yahwism that had taken hold in ancient Israel.[4] Writing more than 65 years prior to the discovery of the divine names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Bade had no extra-biblical evidence to prompt this discussion; instead, his argument revolved around the twin issues of the centralization of Yahwistic worship in Jerusalem and the identification of Yahweh with Baal as Israelite and Canaanite religious traditions syncretized.[5]

Bade viewed the Canaanite religious communities as localized Baal fertility cults.[6] When Israelites encountered the Canaanites, he argued, they adopted the local practices and began worshipping Yahweh at cults that had been previously dedicated to Baal. Because Bade considered each Baal its own distinct deity and believed that Yahweh had been locally identified with each Baal, he envisioned a poly-Yahwism that had permeated Israelite religious thought.[7] This poly-Yahwism, he argued, not only threatened the Israelite deity's oneness but also threatened the Israelite people's oneness and promoted a tribalism that undermined the monarchy.

In response to this threat, Bade argued that the Deuteronomist sought to strengthen Israel as a united people and focus their worship on a central cult with just one national Yahweh. This was accomplished by the advent of pilgrimages to the central cult (e.g., Deuteronomy 16:16 f.), which was now considered the only legitimate place of worship.[8] In order to further sever Israelite ties to the local cults where each community worshipped its own

4 William F. Bade, "Der Monojahwismus des Deuteronomiums," *ZAW* 30 [1910]: 81.

5 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 88 and 83.

6 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 82.

7 Bade's poly-Yahwism in which different localized Baal deities are individually equated with a national deity like Yahweh may be comparable to Meinhold's proposed identification of different localized Ištar goddesses with the national Assyrian goddess Mullissu (Meinhold, *Ištar in Aššur*, 203 f.; see also chapter 4.5).

8 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 87.

localized Yahweh deity, the Deuteronomist reminded Israel that they were a unique people in a unique relationship with their deity (4:7–8). Whereas the Canaanites and other nations of the world had been allotted their gods (4:19) and could worship them wherever they wanted (12:8–16), the Israelites were only permitted to worship at the national cult, a place chosen specifically by Yahweh (12:5).[9] Bade noted that this sentiment was also espoused by the prophets Hosea and Amos, who specifically condemned the Israelite worship of Baal at illegitimate cult sites.[10] For instance, after a verbal attack against Samaria, Amos denounced worship at the famous Dan and Beersheba cult sites in Israel:

הנשבעים באשמת שמרון ואמרו חי אלהיך דן וחי דרך באר־שבע ונפלו ולא־יקומו עוד

> The ones who swear by the guilt of Samaria and say, "By the life of your God, O Dan," and "By the life of the way of Beersheba." They shall fall and not get up again. (Amos 8:14)

Amos blatantly condemned illicit worship at illegitimate cult sites because it undermined legitimate Yahwism, and Hosea explicitly blamed Israel/Ephraim for worshipping Baal in place of Yahweh (Hosea 13:1 ff.), or as Bade argued, worshipping Baal as a localized form of Yahweh. In contrast to these two prophets, the Deuteronomist decided against a negative campaign about Baal worship and instead formulated a positive call intended to inspire the Israelites to worship the singular Yahweh at his only legitimate cult site. Of course, Bade would not have denied that the Deuteronomist implemented negative campaigns against other non-Israelite deities and "foreign" cultic or idolatrous practices; after all, Deuteronomy 16:21–22 flatly forbids ašerah/Ašerah trees and stone pillars as legitimate forms of Israelite worship. However, because Bade believed that localized Baal deities had been locally equated with the national deity Yahweh, he concluded that the Deuteronomist could not explicitly condemn Baal worship without implicitly disapproving Yahweh worship in his audience's mind. For this reason, the Deuteronomist's campaign was a positive call, and that call was Deuteronomy 6:4, which Bade translated as "(Hear, O Israel,) Yahweh our God is *one Yahweh*," not the many Yahweh deities who are also many Baal deities.[11]

Like Bade, Albrecht Alt was interested in localized worship in ancient Israel and contrasted the national Yahwistic cult with regional tribal cults

9 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 90.
10 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 85.
11 Bade, "Monojahwismus," 81, emphasis mine.

devoted to other deities. Instead of focusing on the numerous localized Baal deities that were identified with the Israelite Yahweh, Alt focused on the relationships between the divine name Yahweh and the various alternative divine epithets that are presented in the Patriarchal narratives in Genesis. Guided by the Elohist (Exodus 3:1, 4b, 6, 9–14, and 18–23) and Priestly (6:2–8) accounts that claimed that the name Yahweh had not been known previous to Moses' theophany at the burning bush, Alt examined the pre-Yahwistic epithets (e.g., God-of-the-Father) and determined that these represented independent patron deities.[12] These pre-Yahwistic and pre-Israelite deities often lacked their own unique divine names and were instead identified by their relationship with humanity.[13] For example, the independent god known as God-of-Abraham was first worshipped by Abraham (Genesis 31:42); Fear-of-Isaac was first worshipped by Isaac (v. 42); and Mighty-One-of-Jacob was first worshipped by Jacob (49:24).[14] Centuries later when the Yahwistic Israelite tribes entered Canaan and interacted with the native Canaanite cults, Yahweh was first promoted as the new national deity and the patron deities remained independent. Eventually, worship of the national god Yahweh encroached upon the regional patron gods at the local sanctuaries, and each deity was identified with him.[15] Alt admitted that we cannot know when the many God-of-the-Father religions coalesced into a single Yahwistic national religion, but he believed that it was completed by the time the Elohist and Yahwist accounts were written down. If we were to apply Alt's theory to Deuteronomy 6:4, then the Shema would represent a final step in which the Israelite audience is reminded of Yahweh's singularity. As with Bade, Alt's historical reconstruction begins with distinct regional or tribal deities who became identified with the new Israelite deity on a one-by-one basis. The once independent gods were finally united in the nationally revered figure, Yahweh. Bade's and Alt's theories differ according to their perceived levels of religious tolerance in the Shema. Whereas Alt would have reckoned "Yahweh is one" as a culmination of religious syncretism on a national level, Bade envisioned Deuteronomy 6:4 and its call for a singular Yahweh as an implicit rejection of localized Baalism for the Israelites that was plaguing Israelite society and its earlier pristine Yahwism.

12 Albrecht Alt, "The God of the Fathers," in *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*, trans. R. A. Wilson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966), 11–12 and 30.

13 Alt, "God of the Fathers," 31.

14 Alt, "God of the Fathers," 47 and 55.

15 Alt, "God of the Fathers," 59–60.

In the century since Bade's article, the meaning and historical context of the Shema have been reexamined numerous times. While the possibility of multiple localized Yahweh deities continues to be noted, the focus on the role that Baal played in the Shema's creation has diminished or disappeared, largely because of the texts from Kuntillet ʻAjrud. In the 1960s, Gerhard von Rad viewed Deuteronomy 6:4 as a confession that distinguished Yahwistic Israelite worship from the Canaanite cult(s) devoted to Baal and as a proclamation meant to undermine divergent Yahwistic shrines and traditions, an idea reminiscent of Bade's poly-Yahwism.[16] Likewise, in the early 1970s before the discovery of Kuntillet ʻAjrud, Georg Fohrer suggested that the centralization of the Yahweh cult at the single sanctuary in Jerusalem occurred in response to the fear that "the conception of Yahweh might split up and finally produce several Yahwehs."[17] More than two decades after the discovery of Kuntillet ʻAjrud, Andrew Mayes, Jeremy Hutton, and Shmuel Aḥituv, Esther Eshel, and Ze'ev Meshel have also interpreted the declaration of Deuteronomy 6:4 as a response to different localized manifestations of Yahweh within Israel with little to no interest in the Yahweh-Baal equation that concerned Bade.[18]

Comprising six words, the verse has no certain interpretation. The first two words, "Hear, O Israel," prepare the audience for the rest of the sentence, of which there are several possible translations and interpretations. Because three of the four Hebrew words are nouns, and the last word is an adjective, the Shema's translation depends on where the linking verb, or the copula, is placed:

i) Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone.
ii) Yahweh our God is one Yahweh.
iii) Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one.
iv) Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one.[19]

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16 Gerhard von Rad, *Deuteronomy*: *A Commentary*, trans. Dorothea Barton, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), 63.

17 Georg Fohrer, *Introduction to Israelite Religion*, trans. David E. Green (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), 297.

18 Andrew D. H. Mayes, "Kuntillet ʻAjrud and the History of Israelite Religion," in *Archaeology and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. J. R. Bartlett (London: Routledge, 1997), 62; Jeremy Hutton, "Local Manifestations of Yahweh and Worship in the Interstices: A Note on Kuntillet ʻAjrud," *JANER* 10 (2010): 179–180 and 206; and Shmuel Aḥituv, Esther Eshel, and Ze'ev Meshel, "The Inscriptions," in *Kuntillet ʻAjrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 130.

19 R. W. L. Moberly, "'Yahweh is One': The Translation of the Shema," in *Studies in the Pentateuch*, ed. J. A. Emerton, VTSup 41 (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 210; and Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy*: *The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*, JPS Torah Commentary 5 (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 76 and 440.

Option i stresses the relationship between Yahweh and the people of Israel, whereas options ii and iii stress Yahweh's nature. Option iv, which employs two linking verbs, closely resembles option iii, and suffers from the compounded problems with the interpretations of options i and iii.[20]

By stressing the relationship between Yahweh and the Israelites, option i is in keeping with a main Deuteronomic theme, Yahweh is to be Israel's only deity. This theme is already expressed in Deuteronomy 5 as one of the Ten Commandments: "You shall not have other gods besides me" (לא־יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על־פני, 5:7). Likewise, the verses following the Shema reinforce this interpretation. According to the charge in 6:5, each Israelite must love Yahweh with "all your heart, soul, and might" (בכל־לבבך ובכל־נפשך בכל־מאדך), and vv. 13–14 remind each Israelite that he may revere, serve, and swear only by Yahweh and that he may not follow any other gods; after all, Yahweh is a "jealous God" (אל קנא, v. 15). This thematic unity between the Shema's proclamation and the rest of Deuteronomy 6 is the strongest argument in favor of option i, "Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone."[21]

Nevertheless, there are problems with option i. First, nowhere else in Deuteronomy are the words Yahweh (יהוה) and my/our/your-God (אלהי־) juxtaposed with the latter functioning predicatively, meaning "Yahweh (is) my/our/your God."[22] The Deuteronomist paired these two words as a unit nearly 300 times, and, according to R. W. L. Moberly, it is unlikely that Deuteronomy 6:4 would be the only instance in which these two words would have to be split by a linking verb in translation. Moreover, option i requires a special nuance of the Shema's final word אחד, which normally means "one" rather than "alone." The usual biblical Hebrew word for "alone" is -לבד, as it is used, for example, in 2 Kings 19:15: יהוה אלהי ישראל ישב הכרבים אתה־הוא האלהים לבדך (Yahweh//God-of-Israel//Who-Sits-(on)-the-Cherubim-(Throne), you alone are God").[23] There are a few other passages in which אחד can take on the meaning "alone," according to some scholars. [24] For example, 1 Chronicles 29:1 makes

20 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 210; and Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 439.

21 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 76 and 440; cf. Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 211.

22 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 213–214.

23 This "alone" (-לבד) appears again in 2 Kings 19:19; Psalm 86:10; and Isaiah 2:11 and 17.

24 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 358 n. 10. Tigay also suggests that אחד "possibly" means "alone" in Joshua 22:20 (see also Job 23:13) and compares the use of *'aḥdy* in Ugaritic as "I alone" (*KTU*[2] 1.4 vii 49). Likewise, Moshe Weinfeld noted that a Sumerian dedicatory inscription says, "Enlil is the lord of Heaven and Earth, he is king alone (literally: his oneness)" (^{d}en.lil$_2$ an.ki.šu lugal.am$_2$ aš.ni lugal.am$_2$, RIME 4 E4.1.4.6:1–3), and he also noted that some Greek texts that contain the phrase Εἷς Θεός that might be better translated as "God alone" than as "one god" (Moshe Weinfeld, "The Loyalty Oath in the Ancient Near East," *UF* 8 [1976]: 409 n. 266). Other classical deities that he mentioned who appear with the word "one" when "alone" might be a

sense when "alone" is used in place of "one": שלמה בני אחד בחר בו אלהים ("Solomon, my son, God chose him alone"). Only Solomon, or Solomon alone, is Yahweh's choice as the next king. In this vein, only Yahweh, or Yahweh alone, is Israel's God. Judah Kraut notes, however, that although an "alone" translational value for אחד works in 1 Chronicles 29:1, neither in this verse nor elsewhere does אחד mean "alone" indisputably; "one" makes just as much sense.[25] 1 Chronicles 29:1 works as "Solomon my son is (the) one whom God chose," and because "one" is the normal and expected meaning of the word, it should be preferred to "alone" as a translational value. The simpler possibility is the better possibility.[26] Moberly also rejects the value of אחד as "alone" rather than "one" in 29:1 because it introduces a contrast between Solomon and David's other sons that had not been addressed elsewhere in the passage.[27]

Zechariah 14:9 also seems to use אחד to indicate that Yahweh alone is God – not just the one or only God for Israel but the only God for all mankind: "Yahweh will become king over all the earth. On that day, it will be Yahweh alone and his name alone" (והיה יהוה למלך על־כל־הארץ ביום ההוא יהיה יהוה אחד ושמו אחד). Literally, the last five words of the verse can be translated, "Yahweh will-be one, and-his-name one," but interpreting these "one"s as anything other than a substitute for "alone," "only," or possibly "the one" feels awkward in English.[28] Tigay argues that the wording at the end of Zechariah 14:9 is based upon the Shema, which means that option i is the only above interpretation of the Shema that is documented within the Hebrew Bible.[29] Regardless, relying

preferred translation include Isis (*omnia*), Hermes (*omnia solus et unus*), and Zeus (Εἷς), and William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich include the definitions "single, only one" (mng. 2b) and "alone" (mng. 2c) in their discussion of "εἷς, μία, ἕν" (William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957], 230). They parenthetically cite Deuteronomy 6:4 in mng. 2c.

25 Judah Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema: Staircase Parallelism and the Syntax of Deuteronomy 6:4," *VT* 61 [2011]: 585 n. 8.

26 Kraut also considers this "one"/"alone" possibility in Joshua 22:20; Isaiah 51:2; Ezekiel 33:24 and 37:22; and Zechariah 14:9, and he concludes, "None of these examples, however, represents an unequivocal precedent in which *ʾeḥad* must be translated as 'alone'" (Kraut, "Deciphering the "Shema," 585 n. 8).

27 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 212.

28 The NRSV and NJPS translations reflect this idea: "the Lord will be one and his name one" (NRSV) and "there shall be one Lord with one name" (NJPS). NJPS adds a footnote, however, that the verse really means "the Lord alone shall be worshiped and shall be invoked by His true name."

29 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 76 and 439.

on a rare and disputed meaning of אחד and breaking up the fixed pair "Yahweh our-God" with a linking verb make option i a less than ideal translation.

This brings us to option ii, the option favored by Bade, even though the plain sense reading of the verse lacks the Yahweh-is-Baal motif that Bade envisioned: "Yahweh our God is one Yahweh." This option seems more plausible today than it did a century ago in light of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud texts that invoke Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman, but it is still problematic. On the one hand, these now extant divine names only predate Deuteronomy 6 by about a century, so the Shema could have been written in response to Israelites who thought that Yahweh-of-Samaria was distinct from Yahweh-of-Teman, (the unspecified) Yahweh, or any other localized Yahweh deity. If this were the case, then the Israelites' view of poly-Yahwism would have matched the contemporary Neo-Assyrians view regarding multiple localized Ištar goddesses. On the other hand, neither the concept of multiple Yahweh deities nor of Yahweh's non-singular nature is addressed anywhere else in the Hebrew Bible.[30] No other biblical writers showed concern about the possibility that more than one Yahweh existed. No prophets protested poly-Yahwism, nor did the authors and editors of the Deuteronomic histories list poly-Yahwism among the many sins of the Israelite or Judahite kings. Not even Deuteronomy mentions the topic of poly-Yahwism anywhere else. The rest of Deuteronomy 6 is concerned with Israel's exclusive relationship with Yahweh and, contrary to Bade's argument, Deuteronomy 12 never hints that regional Yahwistic shrines would have been a threat to Yahweh's unity.[31] If the Deuteronomist had felt that poly-Yahwism was an issue worth addressing, he would not have introduced it so conspicuously in the Shema and never approached the topic again. Throughout the Hebrew Bible, worshipping Yahweh incorrectly or worshipping other gods was a constant threat to the biblical authors, but worshipping more than one Yahweh or the wrong Yahweh was never a real concern.

Moberly does not address this poly-Yahwism issue as it relates to option ii. Instead, he focuses on his preferred option: option iii. For him, the Shema was a statement about Yahweh's nature, not his relationship with Israel. Because of the stative verb that appears in Zechariah 14:9 (יהיה), Moberly concludes that Zechariah interpreted the final two words of the Shema as a nominal sentence (i.e., "Yahweh will become one"), a conclusion that is noticeably different from Tigay's "alone" theory, and he retrojects this meaning back in time to the

30 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 439.

31 McCarter, "Aspects," 142–143.

Deuteronomist's call.[32] According to Moberly, Deuteronomy 6:4 should be interpreted to mean, "Yahweh our-God, Yahweh is one." However, despite Moberly's support, option iii still has a syntactic problem; the second occurrence of the name Yahweh is superfluous. If the point of the verse were to declare that Yahweh is one, it could have said simply "Yahweh our-God is one."[33]

Judah Kraut proposes a solution to deal with option iii's seeming redundancy. He suggests that we reinterpret the Shema as an instance of staircase parallelism.[34] Unlike synonymous (or antithetic) parallelism where the second colon restates (or negates) the first, staircase parallelism involves the repetition of one element in both cola, and the full thought is not completed without reading both cola as one idea.[35] Structurally, staircase parallelism follows an AB//AC pattern, which is a rhetorical flourish for the more common ABC pattern for a tricola. This pattern fits the Shema perfectly:

A	B	//	A	C
Yahweh (יהוה)	our-God (אלהינו)		Yahweh (יהוה)	one (אחד)

equals, or can be interpreted to mean:

A	B		C
Yahweh (יהוה)	our-God (אלהינו)	(is)	one (אחד).[36]

32 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 215.

33 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 439.

34 Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema," 590–591.

35 Kraut notes that staircase parallelism is restricted to direct speech and usually appears at the beginning of a spoken address (Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema," 599). Significantly, Tigay notes that "as the first paragraph of the Instruction that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai [the Shema] is, in a sense, the beginning of Deuteronomy proper," and Kraut argues that, given the significance of Moses's speech to the Israelites, this seems like the perfect place to employ staircase parallelism (Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 76; and Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema," 600).

36 This staircase parallelism that Kraut observes in the Shema is present in two other verses that also praise Yahweh (Kraut, "Deciphering the Shema," 599):

	MT with staircase parallelism:		without staircase element:
Exodus 15:3	יהוה איש מלחמה יהוה שמו Yahweh//Man-of-War, Yahweh is his name.	→	יהוה איש מלחמה שמו Yahweh//Man-of-War is his name.
Hosea 12:6	יהוה אלהי הצבאות יהוה זכרו Yahweh//God-of-Hosts, Yahweh is his name.	→	יהוה אלהי הצבאות זכרו Yahweh//God-of-Hosts is his name.

Kraut's punctuation for Yahweh-Man-of-War and Yahweh-God-of-Hosts has been modified slightly according to the normal divine name plus epithet formula used throughout this study. As elsewhere, two parallel lines (//) are used to indicate that a proper name and epithet are

In Deuteronomy 6:4, the second attestation of the name Yahweh is the repeated element that can be ignored in order to clarify the verse's underlying meaning. Because this interpretation effectively reduces the Shema to three words, it also simplifies our translational and interpretative possibilities. Given the frequent pairing of the divine name Yahweh (יהוה) with the epithet my/our/your-God (אלהי־) in Deuteronomy, the only reasonable place for a linking verb among these three nouns is between "our-God" and "one," which is why we can ignore option iv altogether. Kraut's interpretation, "Yahweh//our-God is one," which neutralizes the seeming redundancy of the second Yahweh, seems to be the best way to understand these three words and supports option iii.

Moberly notes this "resumptive use of *yhwh*" but attributes its origins to a pre-Deuteronomistic cultic formula rather than solve the problem syntactically as Kraut does.[37] He argues that if there were a pre-Deuteronomist cult formula behind the Shema, it involved the two words Yahweh (יהוה) and one (אחד), which the Deuteronomist expanded by prefacing it with Yahweh//our-God (יהוה אלהינו אחד). This preface was added because the phrase Yahweh//our-God (יהוה אלהינו) is the Deuteronomist's "customary idiomatic way" to refer to the Israelite deity, and he could not leave out this "intrusive use" of the epithet in this ancient declaration.[38] The result is that Moberly dismisses the Shema's redundancy as editorial clumsiness and creates a historical context in which the declaration no longer fits. We are left with "Yahweh (our-God) is one."

However, option iii still leaves us with the question: what does "Yahweh is one" actually mean? Moberly makes no attempt at solving this issue and merely promises to explore this question in a future essay:

> I conclude, therefore, that the Shema cannot legitimately be rendered "Yahweh is our God, Yahweh alone", but should best be translated "Hear, O Israel: Yahweh our God, Yahweh is one". It is not, therefore, a statement about Israel's exclusive relationship with Yahweh, although that exclusive relationship is indeed presupposed by the words "Yahweh our God". Rather, it is a statement about Yahweh; though precisely what it means to say that Yahweh is "one" is an issue to which I hope to return on another occasion.[39]

This conclusion is an admission that no persuasive answer to this question had been found.[40] If the earlier historical context that Moberly proposes did, in

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acting together with the force of a full name (e.g., Yahweh//God-of-Hosts and Ištar//Lady-of-Nineveh).

37 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 214.

38 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 214.

39 Moberly, "Yahweh is One," 215.

40 The solutions proposed by philosophers, as opposed to philologists, are beyond the purview of this study.

fact, exist, it seems unlikely that the original historical context behind the creation of "Yahweh is one" would have been Bade's anti-poly-Yahwism referendum. It is unlikely because the issue was never made explicit in sources from the biblical world. If Deuteronomy 6:4 had not existed, Bade would have had no reason to imagine poly-Yahwism in the first place. It also seems unlikely that "Yahweh is one" was meant to serve as a uniting refrain for the incorporation of the God-of-the-Father cults located throughout Canaan into the national Yahwistic cult, as Alt might have argued. According to Alt, the national Yahweh cult had already come to identify Yahweh with the patron deities of the land before the Elohist and Yahwist accounts recorded their accounts of ancient Israelite history. According to Alt, the Elohist and Yahwist only needed to treat the patron gods as epithets for the national deity in order to identify them with "Elohim" and "Yahweh."[41] Furthermore, if the entirety of the Shema was original to the Deuteronomist as is generally assumed, then we must return to the issue of Yahwistic multiplicity in which Deuteronomy has no interest when making sense of the phrase "Yahweh our-God (is) one."

In our review of the possible interpretations of the Shema we find: option i ("Yahweh is our-God, Yahweh alone") entails syntactic and lexical difficulties; option ii ("Yahweh our-God is one Yahweh") entails historical difficulties and a lack of biblical interest; our modified option iii ("Yahweh our-God is one") entails a conceptual difficulty that seems to move the discussion nowhere; and option iv has many of the same problems as options i and iii. Of these options, option ii is the option that is most consistent with the syntax and lexicography of the Shema, and its main difficulty is essentially an argument from silence. Perhaps the epigraphic references to Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman demonstrate that there was a certain amount of poly-Yahwism that the Deuteronomist wished to counter, and perhaps the Deuteronomist felt that the Shema's declaration was sufficient enough to make further discussions on the topic unnecessary. In this vein, Jeremy Hutton recently suggested that Deuteronomy 6:4 "may have been designed precisely in order to draw attention to the impropriety, both syntactic and theological, of differentiating between local manifestations of Yahweh."[42] Perhaps, even if different localized Yahweh manifestations were each recognized as the one singular and solitary Yahweh revered by the Deuteronomist and his contemporary Israelites, this was still too fragmented, or non-one, in the Deuteronomist's theology. This is a possibility that we must now consider if we are going to keep the famous Shema as a proof text for or against poly-

41 Alt, "God of the Fathers," 24 and 29.
42 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 206.

Yahwism, even if the Deuteronomist and authors and editors of the historical books reveal no concern about this issue elsewhere in their writings. We begin by examining the divine names Yahweh-of-Teman, Yahweh-of-Samaria, and potential evidence that could suggest a Yahwistic cult site in either of those places. Then we consider a known Yahwistic cult site, Jerusalem and Zion, and look in vain for a geographic last name related to that site. Finally, other proposed Yahweh full names are considered (and rejected).

6.2 The Geographic Origin of Yahweh: Teman

The Deuteronomist placed the Shema on Moses's lips near the beginning of his final speech to the Israelites before they entered into Israel near the end of their long journey from Egypt, but the Hebrew Bible contains indications that Yahweh was not native to the land of Israel or a Sinai that was part of a direct route from Egypt to Moab's Mount Nebo. Recently, Joseph Blenkinsopp revisited the possibility that both Yahweh's and the people of Judah's origins can be located in the land of Edom, and Karel van der Toorn suggests that Yahweh was originally not a Northwest Semitic deity but one of proto-Arabic origin.[43] Along these same lines, Martin Rose entertains the possibility that Yahweh was previously an Edomite deity, which he claims explains the "religious cohesion" of the Israelites, Judahites, and Edomites.[44] Beyond the cohesion claims, a handful of ancient texts and biblical verses do suggest that Yahweh's origins can be traced to somewhere southeast of ancient Israel in the Arabah.

Apart from Mitchell Dahood's belief that the divine name Yahweh was among the theophoric elements common to personal names from third-millennium Ebla, the earliest known attestations of the name Yahweh actually appear as geographic rather than divine names.[45] Of these texts, the most notable is the thirteenth-century text from Ramses II's reign that associates the name Yahweh with the cities Seir (*s'rr*), Laban (*rbn*), Payaspayas (*pyspys*, which

43 Blenkinsopp, "Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis Revisited and the Origins of Judah," *JSOT* 33 (2008): 131–153; and van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 910–911; see also Smith, *Early History*, 25 and 81.

44 Martin Rose, "Yahweh in Israel – Quas in Edom?" *JSOT* 4 (1977): 31.

45 Mitchell Dahood, "Afterword: Ebla, Ugarit, and the Bible," afterward to *The Archives of Ebla*: *An Empire Inscribed in Clay*, by Giovanni Pettinato (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 277; and van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 911. Raphael Giveon notes that the earliest text dates to the 11th Dynasty in Egypt but lacks a specific geographic context (Raphael Giveon, "'The Cities of our God' [II Sam 10 12]," *JBL* 83 [1964]: 415).

lacks a modern identification), Samath (*smt*), Turbil/r (⟨*t*⟩*wrbr*, or modern Wadi Hasa; see Map 3) in the land of the Shasu.[46] Because Seir and Laban are known

46 Donald B. Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 272; Raphael Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou des documents Égyptiens* (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 76; and William F. Albright, review of "L'épithète divine Jahvé Seba'ôt: Étude philogique, historique et exégétigue," by B. N. Wambacq, *JBL* 67 (1948): 380. This Ramesside inscription provides six geographic names in the land of the Shasu (Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*: *Translated & Annotated*: *Translations* [Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996], 2:75):

line:	**Transcription:**	**Translation:**
92	*t3-šs s'rr*	Shasu-land: Seir
93	(*t3-šs*) *rbn*	Shasu-land: Laban
94	*t3-šs pyspys*	Shasu-land: Payaspayas
95	*t3-šs smt*	Shasu-land: Samata
96	*t3-šs yhw*	Shasu-land: Yahwe
97	(*t3-šs*) ⟨*t*⟩*wrbr*	Shasu-land: ⟨T⟩urbil/r
...	...	...
103	*kn'n*(')	Canaan
104	*rḥb*	Reḥob.

("Amara West, Temple: Syrian List II," Kitchen's translation)

This thirteenth-century Ramesside inscription is actually a copy of a fourteenth-century text that dates to Amenhotep III's reign and was found at Soleb in Nubia. Note that the corresponding lines have been reversed from this earlier text:

line:	**Transcription:**	**Translation:**
B 1	*bt* ' [*nt*]	Beth A[nat]
A 1	*t3-šs trbr*	Shashu-land: Turbil/r
2	*t3-šs yhw*	Shasu-land: Yahwe
3	*t3-šs smt*	Shasu-land: Samata.

(doc 6, Giveon, *Les Bédouins Shosou*, 27)

Redford notes that the doubled *r* in Seir (*s'rr*) in the Ramesside inscription reflects late Egyptian orthography (Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 272 n. 67), so its identification is secure. He also notes that Laban can probably be identified with Libona, which is south of Amman, whereas Kenneth Kitchen suggests identifying it with the Libna that is mentioned in Numbers 33:20–21 (and Laban in Deuteronomy 1:1; Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 272; and Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions*: *Translated & Annotated*: *Notes and Comments* [Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999], 2:129). Samata can be identified with the Kenite family the Shimeathites, who are mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:55 (שמעתים), which Kitchen locates in the Arabah Valley, south of the Dead Sea (Kitchen, *Notes and Comments*, 2:129). The location of Payaspayas (*pyspys*) is uncertain, and the identification of the final name Turibal/r is more problematic. Kitchen notes that the *wrbr* that appears in l. 97 of the Ramesside inscription is a mistake for Turbil/r, which is how the name appears in the earlier text. He locates Turbil/r in either the Beqa' or north Lebanon. Redford, however, interprets *wrbr* as a variant of *ybr*, which is the transliteration of the Canaanite word "dry wadi bed" (*'ubal*), and he identifies *ybr* with Wadi Hasa, one of the major east-west wadis that leads into the Jordan rift (Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 272 n. 69).

to have been located in the southern Transjordan region, a region that is generally identified with the land of Edom, Raphael Giveon and other scholars conclude that the toponym Yahweh must have been located in this region during the second millennium.[47] These texts, however, associate Yahweh not with the Israelites but with the Shasu, a second-millennium Egyptian designation for Bedouin-like peoples, who lived in the plains of Moab and northern Edom and who were associated with lawlessness, plundering, raiding, and cattle herding.[48]

Moshe Weinfeld noted that the locations Seir and Laban were associated with the Midianites and Kenites, so they should not be located in the area near Edom. Instead, he argued that Seir and Laban denote a range of mountains west of the Arabah and south of the Dead Sea, a region much larger than the limited area known as Edom.[49] Wherever Seir actually was within the Transjordan region, Weinfeld's analysis of these geographic names fits with the Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis, which maintains that (the unspecified) Yahweh deity was first worshipped by the Midianite and Kenite tribes in the Transjordan and only later introduced to the Israelites by Moses and his father-in-law Jethro, a Midianite priest (Exodus 2:16).[50]

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47 Giveon, "'The Cities'", 415; Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 4, 319, and 421; van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 911; Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 273; Kitchen, *Notes and Comments*, 2:129; and Moshe Weinfeld, "The Tribal League at Sinai," in *Ancient Israelite Religion*: *Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, eds. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 304.

48 Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 271–272 and 278.

49 Weinfeld, "Tribal League," 304 and 310. Weinfeld noted that EA 288:26 mentions the "lands of Seir" (KUR_2. KUR_2 *še-e-ri*^{ki}; see also Joshua 11:17 and 12:7), so he located Seir near the southern border of the Jerusalemite kingdom of the Amarna Period (ibid., 304). More recently, Blenkinsopp has argued that Seir is synonymous with Edom and proposes that it simply refers to the area west of the Arabah, whereas "[t]he original Edomite homeland was east of the Arabah" (Blenkinsopp, "Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis," 136–137). Thus, Blenkinsopp also argues against limiting the potential location of Seir – and, thus, against limiting the potential location of the place Yahweh – to the land east of the Arabah. As noted above, Redford views the land of the Shasu as encompassing both northern Edom and the land of Moab (Redford, *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *and Israel*, 273). Further expanding the potential Shasu realm, Kitchen includes northern Syria and Lebanon within the "land of the Shasu" (Kitchen, *Notes and Comments*, 2:128–129); however, he agrees with everyone else that the place Yahweh was most likely located around the Sinai, Negev, Edom, or even southern Syria.

50 Weinfeld, "Tribal League," 310; van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 912; Klaus Koch, "Jahwäs Übersiedlung vom Wüstenberg nach Kanaan: Zur Herkunft von Israels Gottesverständnis," in "*Und Mose Schreib dieses Lied auf*": *Studien zum Alten Testament und zum alten Orient*: *Festschrift für Oswald Loretz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres mit Beiträgen von Freunden*, *Schülern*, *und Kollegen* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998), 441; and Blenkinsopp, "Midianite-Kenite Hypothesis," 133–136.

Yahweh's pre-Israelite association with Seir and the Transjordan region in these Egyptian texts offers extra-biblical evidence that corresponds well with the biblical evidence that locate (the unspecified) Yahweh deity in the region south and east of Israel. Of particular interest among these passages is the early poetry that is contained in Deuteronomy 33:2 and Judges 5:4–5, which describe Yahweh as coming from Seir.[51] Judges 5:4 explicitly associates Yahweh with Seir and the land of Edom, and the next verse associates the deity with Sinai:

[4]יהוה בצאתך משעיר בצעדך משדה אדום ארץ רעשה גם־שמים נטפו גם־עבים נטפו מים
[5]הרים נזלו מפני יהוה זה סיני מפני יהוה אלהי ישראל

> Yahweh, when you came out from Seir, when you marched out from the field of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens dripped, and the clouds dripped water. The mountains quaked before Yahweh-of-Sinai, before Yahweh//God-of-Israel. (Judges 5:4–5)

Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel recently proposed interpreting the זה in יהוה זה סיני as a possessive pronoun rather than a demonstrative pronoun, which significantly alters the syntax and meaning of the verse.[52] This proposal also produces a potential localized Yahweh name: Yahweh//One-of-Sinai, or informally Yahweh-of-Sinai. Notably, Yahweh-of-Sinai does not represent the DN-of-GN formula (i.e., the construct chain) that is typical of Hebrew and Northwest Semitic languages; rather, it more closely resembles the DN-*ša*-GN form that we find in Akkadian inscriptions. This by itself should not deter us from accepting this interpretation; however, there are two other mutually exclusive reasons to reject this reading. Contrary to the syntax created by the Masoretic punctuation, which is also preserved in the LXX and Vulgate, this proposed interpretation removes the parallelism and balance present in the traditional syntax of 5:5:

	Subject:	**Verb:**	**Preposition:**	**DN:**
5α:	Mountains (הרים)	Quaked (נזלו)	before (מפני)	Yahweh (יהוה)
5β:	This Sinai (זה סיני)	(Quaked)	before (מפני)	Yahweh//God-of-Israel (יהוה אלהי ישראל).[53]

51 Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman date Deuteronomy 33:2 and Judges 5:4 to the late second millennium (Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, new ed. [Livonia: Dove Booksellers, 1997], 3–4).

52 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 130. This interpretation seems to have been anticipated by Cross (Cross, "Yahweh and the God," 239 n. 61; see also Robert G. Boling, *Judges*, AB [Garden City: DoubleDay, 1975], 108).

53 The interpretation offered by Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel does retain a sense of parallelism with its A B C_1 C_2 form:

Second, the phrase "this Sinai" (זה סיני) may be a gloss from the theophany in Exodus 19:18 that was later inserted into Judges 5:5 (see the comment "frt add" in BHS). As a gloss, the potential reference to Yahweh-of-Sinai is incidental and cannot be attributed to the ancient author. If we prefer the Masoretic punctuation to the newly offered reading, we lose the Yahweh full name, but, significantly, we do not lose the association that Sinai and Yahweh share with Seir and Edom. Alternatively, if we were to accept this DN-of-GN formula as an interpretation of יהוה זה סיני then this would be the only biblical attestation of a localized Yahweh deity.

Deuteronomy 33:2 also identifies Yahweh as the one who "shone from Seir" (וזרח משעיר) and also proclaims Yahweh as the one from Sinai, Mount Paran, and Ribeboth-kodesh:

יהוה מסיני בא וזרח משעיר למו הופיע מהר פארן ואתא מרבבת קדש מימינו אשדת למו

> Yahweh came from Sinai; he shone from Seir upon them; he shone forth from Mount Paran; and he came from Ribeboth-kodesh, from the south (literally, "his right") of them the slope. (Deuteronomy 33:2)[54]

In this verse, just as in Judges 5:4, Yahweh is not associated with his famous, fiery manifestation at Sinai (see Deuteronomy 5:4) and Seir, Paran, and Ribeboth-kodesh because of his covenant with Israel. Rather, the verse states that he came from those places in order to help Israel against its enemies.[55] The thrust of these three verses is that Yahweh left his home to assist Israel before Israel entered Canaan in Deuteronomy (33:2) and after they entered the land in Judges (5:4–5). Although the Egyptian texts identify Yahweh as a place and the biblical texts identify Yahweh as a god, both groups of texts locate the name in the same general area, the mountains south or southeast of Israel, and in the same general period, the late second millennium.

Biblical and extra-biblical texts from the early first millennium also locate Yahweh in the Transjordan region. The ninth-century Mesha Inscription (*KAI* 181) is the earliest extant extra-biblical text to mention Yahweh as a divine name, and it associates him with the people/nation of Israel, stating that he

Subject:	**Verb:**	**Preposition:**	**DN:**
Mountains (הרים)	Quaked (נזלו)	before (מפני)	Yahweh-of-Sinai (יהוה זה סיני)
		before (מפני)	Yahweh//God-of-Israel (יהוה אלהי ישראל).

The verbal balance that the Masoretic punctuation provides is more satisfying.

54 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 320; BDB אשדה; see also Deuteronomy 3:17 and 4:49 for the relative locations of the Arabah and Pisgah.

55 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 319; and Weinfeld, "Tribal League," 306.

was their deity.[56] The inscription commemorates Mesha's military victory over Israel at Nebo, a border town in northwestern Moab, and it mentions Yahweh in the course of reporting on Mesha's capture of the "[ves]sels of Yahweh" (כ]לי יהוה[ת א, *KAI* 181:17–18) as part of the booty that he took from Israel and presented to his god Chemosh.[57] Although the inscription relates events that took place in the Transjordan, this text does not associate Yahweh with the region as far south as Edom; instead, it places an Israelite Yahwistic cult where Weinfeld located the Shasu, just east of the Dead Sea.

A body of extra-biblical evidence that represents the earliest Israelite writing of the divine name Yahweh links the deity with the southern Transjordan: the collection of texts from Kuntillet ʻAjrud.[58] Of the many separate texts from the site, three refer to a deity as Yahweh-of-Teman:

[1] [י]. ארכימ֯מ. וישבעו [...] יתנו. ל[ ]הוה [.] תימנ. ולאשרתה [2][ ].היטב יהוה. התי[...]

> [May] he lengthen their days, and may they be satisfied [...] may they be given by [Ya]hweh-of-Teman by [his] ašerah/Ašerah [and] Yahweh-of-the-Te[man] favored... (*Meshel* 4.1.1:1–2, ink-on-plaster)[59]

ברכתכ. לי[6]הוה תמנ [7]ולאשרתה[5]

> I bless you by [Ya]hweh-of-Teman and by his ašerah/Ašerah. (*Meshel* 3.6:5–7, Pithos B)

[1][ ]ליהוה. התמנ ולאשרתה. [2] [ ]כל אשר ישאל מאש חננ הא ואמ֯ פתה ונתנ לה יהו [3]כלבבה.

> To Yahweh-of-the-Teman and to his ašerah/Ašerah ... all that he asks from a man, he (will give) generous(ly). And if he persuades, may Yahwe(h) give to him according to his wishes. (*Meshel* 3.9:1–3, Pithos B)[60]

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56 Van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 911.

57 Kent Jackson notes that the proposed restoration "vessels" (כ]לי[) fits the context but is uncertain (Kent P. Jackson, "The Language of the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman, SBLABS 2 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], 116). van der Toorn, however, prefers the restoration ʾ[*r*ʾ]*ly*, which he leaves untranslated, but the word has been proposed as a "military term denoting more than one person," "altar hearth," "lion figure," "certain type of priest," or "cherub" (van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 911; and *DNWSI*, ʾ*r*ʾ*l* mngs. 1 and 2).

58 Emerton, "New Light," 2.

59 While the word Teman is more often spelled at Kuntillet ʻAjrud using the "expected northern orthography," i.e., a collapsed /*ay*/ diphthong "(*tmn* = */tēman/* ⟨ **tayman*⟩)" (Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 202), in *Meshel* 4.1.1:2, the word is once spelled as though the diphthong had not collapsed (e.g., [מנ]התי), reflecting a local, but not necessarily Judahite, (i.e., an eighth-century Edomite) pronunciation of the geographic name: /*tayman*/ (ibid., 200). The divine names Yahweh-of-Teman (l. 1) and Yahweh-of-*the*-Teman (l. 2) seem to be functionally equivalent, with the latter including the definite article "the" (ה-) prefixed to the geographic name.

60 This translation is based on the translation by Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel (Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 100). They translate חננ as "will give him generously," in light

The role of "his ašerah/Ašerah" has been the focus of much debate since the discovery of these texts and Ze'ev Meshel's 1979 article, "Did Yahweh Have a Consort? The New Religious Inscriptions from Sinai," but the place name Teman is our present interest.[61] Both Amos 1:11–12 and Ezekiel 25:13 associate the nation of Edom with the city or region known as Teman, and Shalom Paul notes that the city of Teman served as a "common metonymic appellation for the entire country" of Edom, so we can confidently maintain that these texts place this Yahweh deity in the region of and surrounding Edom, even if Kuntillet 'Ajrud is too far in the west to have been a part of Edom.[62] Of course, the divine name Yahweh-of-Teman is not the only Yahweh full name that has been uncovered at Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Yahweh-of-Samaria also appears in one text:

[1]ברכת אתכמ [2]ליהוה.שמרנ.ולאשרתה

I bless you by Yahweh-of-Samaria and by his ašerah/Ašerah. (*Meshel* 3.1:1–2)[63]

At first, the appearance of the divine name Yahweh-of-Samaria at Kuntillet 'Ajrud is somewhat problematic because it relates to the northern Israelite state and its capital city even though no other evidence directly associates a Yahwistic cult with the city. At the same time, however, this text has played an instrumental role in informing scholars' conclusions about local worship and religious tolerance in ancient Israel.

The site of Kuntillet 'Ajrud is about forty miles south of Kadesh-barnea on a road that connects Kadesh-barnea with the Gulf of Aqaba. Located in the

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of Psalm 37:12, where the verb is paired with "give" (נתן, חונן ונתן). They offer "urge" (and "entreat," "entice," "coax," and "implore") for פתה; "persuades" was chosen in light of Proverbs 25:15: בארך אפים יפתה קצין.

61 Ze'ev Meshel, "Did Yahweh Have a Consort? The New Religious Inscriptions from Sinai," BAR 5, no. 2 (1979): 24–34; and Ze'ev Meshel, *Kuntillet 'Ajrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012).

62 Shalom Paul, *Amos*: *A Commentary on the Book of Amos*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 67. See also Jeremiah 49:7 and 20; Obadiah 9; and Habakkuk 3:3 for further examples of this metonymic use.

63 Meshel originally rejected the possibility that שמרנ in this text referred to the geographic name Samaria, preferring instead to translate the word as the epithet "(the one who) protects us" because the divine name Yahweh never appears in the Hebrew Bible as part of a construct chain with a geographic name (Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 31).

Citing *KAI* 50:2–3 ("I have blessed you by Baal-of-Ṣapun," ברכתכ לבעל צפנ), Emerton noted that even though ברכת is a perfect verb that would normally be translated "I have blessed," because it represents a continual wish, a better translation would be, "May you be blessed" (Emerton, "New Light," 2).

eastern Sinai, it has served as a water source for travelers since antiquity.[64] Meshel, who was the primary dig excavator in the mid-1970s, suggests that Kuntillet ʿAjrud was a religious center or "wayside shrine" that served as a stop for travelers.[65] In contrast, because of the obvious lack of a temple layout and objects for ritual sacrifice at the site, Judith Hadley argues against the interpretation that there was a shrine at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, be it an official, state-run one or a foreign-sponsored heterodox one.[66] More recently, although Meshel admits that no sacrifices were performed at the site, he advances the idea that the nearby tree grove might have increased the sanctity of the area, a *bamah*-platform ("high place") might have been located in Building B, and four *maṣṣebot*-like cultic stones that were found in Building A might betray a religious nature at the site.[67] However, Brian Schmidt has warned against continuing the religious-versus-secular debate surrounding Kuntillet ʿAjrud,

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64 Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 27–28; and Meshel, "Kuntillet ʿAjrud," in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 4:103.

65 Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 34; and Meshel, "The Nature of the Site and its Biblical Background," in *Kuntillet ʿAjrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 65 f. In contrast to Meshel's proposed links between Kuntillet ʿAjrud and the northern state of Israel, which is an idea that McCarter considers (McCarter, "Aspects," 140), John Holladay notes that the shrine at Kuntillet ʿAjrud lacked any major architectural structures resembling the cultic architecture at state-run shrines in Israel and Judah, such as Megiddo, Dan, or Lachish, and he concludes that neither Israel nor Judah were responsible for the shrine at Kuntillet ʿAjrud (John S. Holladay, "Religion in Israel and Judah under the Monarchy: an Explicitly Archaeological Approach," in *Ancient Israelite Religion*: *Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, eds. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 259 and 272).

66 Judith M. Hadley, "Kuntillet ʿAjrud: Religious Centre or Desert Way Station?" *PEQ* 125 (1993): 117. She views the site as a "way station" that provided water for travelers and their animals from the nearby wells and offered housing for those passing by (ibid., 122). Some of these travelers left blessings behind as a thanksgiving for their shelter from the surrounding wilderness. The lack of local pottery – most of the pottery found at the site was from the coastal region of Judah and the north of Israel (ibid., 119; see also Jan Gunneweg, Isadore Perlman, and Ze'ev Meshel, "The Origin of the Pottery," in *Kuntillet ʿAjrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel [Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012], 279) – and lack of cult vessels suggest to her that the site did not support a permanent priestly population, although long-term residents, such as a "hostel-keeper" could not be ruled out (Hadley, "Kuntillet ʿAjrud," 120). According to Meshel, the fine linen fabrics found at the site and the 400-pound bowl found in the bench room, inscribed with a blessing that invokes (the unspecified) Yahweh (*Meshel* 1.2), are more indicative of a priestly population living there than of a lay population (Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 32–34; and Meshel, "Nature of the Site," 68). However, because of the lack of cult materials, Meshel is forced to speculate that the priests took everything with them when they abandoned the site.

67 Meshel, "Nature of the Site," 65–66.

pointing out that a fortified trade center's design could include the incorporation of religious function and ritual in the architecture.[68] He then points out that the architectural layout, texts, drawings, and physical contents of Deir 'Alla, a contemporary site in the eastern Jordan Valley, was also a mix of religious and secular usages.[69] Like Deir 'Alla, we can consider the fortified trade stop at Kuntillet 'Ajrud an atypical cult center in that worship was not the site's primary function, but, as Schmidt notes, specific rooms "were set aside and decorated … to facilitate the cultic observances of both the locals … and travelers."[70] Also allowing for a mixture of (the modern compartmentalization of) religious and secular usages at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger emphatically state, "We ought to abandon the notion, once and for all, that the site was a pilgrimage shrine or some other kind of religious center;" rather, "[t]he architecture and decoration at the site both characterize it much more clearly as a state-run caravanserai."[71] The architects responsible for Kuntillet 'Ajrud made it possible for travelers to worship their preferred deity or deities and leave offerings and texts to them, even though they would have traveled to the site for other purposes.

For paleographic reasons and because of the style of pottery upon which many texts were written, these texts – and, consequentially, the occupation of the entire site – have been dated to roughly 800 B.C.E.[72] Meshel suggests that Kuntillet 'Ajrud was occupied during the reign of Israel's King Joash/Jehoash (ca. 801–786).[73] After capturing Judah's King Amaziah, tearing down the city

68 Brian B. Schmidt, "The Iron Age pithoi drawings from Horvat Teman or Kuntillet 'Ajrud: Some New Proposals," *JANER* 2 (2002): 103.

69 The architectural layout at Deir 'Alla includes benches for receiving offerings; the textual evidence includes the famous Balaam text in the same room as the benches; the drawings include a picture of a sphinx located near the Balaam text; and the physical contents include cooking supplies, household pottery, and materials for weaving fabric (Schmidt, "Iron Age pithoi," 103).

70 Schmidt, "Iron Age pithoi," 104.

71 Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods*, *Goddesses*, *and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. T. H. Trapp (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 247.

72 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 73; Etan Ayalon, "The Pottery Assemblage," in *Kuntillet 'Ajrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 205; Israel Carmi and Dror Segal, "^{14}C Dates from Kuntillet 'Ajrud," in *Kuntillet 'Ajrud* (*Ḥorvat Teman*): *An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 61–63; Hadley, "Kuntillet 'Ajrud," 119; Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods*, *Goddesses*, 248; and Smith, *Early History*, 118. For an epigraphic analysis of the texts from Kuntillet 'Ajrud compared to the Samaria Ostraca, see Christopher A. Rollston, "Scribal Education in Ancient Israel: The Old Hebrew Epigraphic Evidence," *BASOR* 344 (2006): 55–60.

73 Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 34; and Meshel, *Kuntillet 'Ajrud* (2012), XXI–XXII.

walls of Jerusalem, and seizing the temple and palace treasuries (2 Kings 14:13–16), this Israelite king could afford to exert military and political control over Judah and beyond its borders, including down to Kuntillet ʻAjrud.[74] Meshel contends that King Joash had the site built in order to provide Israelite merchants a stop on their way to the Red Sea. This, he argues, explains why Yahweh-of-Samaria's name was invoked in the blessing on Pithos A and why Israelite personal names – as indicated by the spelling of the Yahwistic theophoric element that matches the spelling in the Samaria Ostraca – were found throughout the site.[75] Indeed, the theophoric and personal names point to a predominately northern (or Israelite), rather than a southern (or Judahite), population residing at or passing through Kuntillet ʻAjrud.

Within this predominantly northern element at Kuntillet ʻAjrud, the extant texts' nature still reveals that multiple individuals were responsible for them. One obvious distinction among these is the divine name or names included in each text. When considering the Yahweh full names, there are two groups of texts: those that mention Yahweh-of-Teman (*Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.6, and 3.9) and the one that mentions Yahweh-of-Samaria (*Meshel* 3.1). The three that explicitly mention the deity's associations with Teman place him in the southern Transjordan region near and around Edom, and the one that explicitly mentions the deity's associations with Samaria places him in the heart of the northern Israelite kingdom. Another way to group these texts is by their find spots. Two were found inside the so-called "bench room": one was found on Pithos A (*Meshel* 3.1), and the other was part of a plaster text that was presumably on the bench room wall (*Meshel* 4.1.1).[76] The other two were found

74 Meshel also entertains the possibility that the occupation of Kuntillet ʻAjrud belonged to the reigns of Jehoram, Ahaziah, or Athaliah in Judah during the mid-ninth centuries (Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 34; and Meshel, "Kuntillet ʻAjrud," 4:109). Zevit prefers to interpret the texts, artifacts, and the site's location as evidence Judahite investment and construction at Kuntillet ʻAjrud, but he admits that none of the evidence "disallows the presence of Israelians" in its construction or maintenance (Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*: *A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* [London: Continuum, 2001], 378). If the site were a product of Athaliah's reign, then her ties to the northern kingdom of Israel as the daughter of Ahab could explain why Yahweh-of-Samaria was invoked at the site whereas no Yahweh-of-Jerusalem, Yahweh-of-Judah, Yahweh-of-Zion, or Yahweh-of-Hosts was. Her northern background and influences could also explain the presence of personal names with Yahwistic theophoric elements that conform to Israelite spellings (i.e., יהו, which was likely pronounced "yau") rather than contemporary Judahite spellings (i.e., יהו, which was likely pronounced "yahu").

75 Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 32; and Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 128; see also the discussion of the Yahwistic theophoric elements and citations in Dobbs-Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 283–298, and Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods*, *Goddesses*, 247.

76 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 86 and 105; and Schmidt, "Iron Age pithoi," 93.

on Pithos B (*Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9), which was found outside the bench room and on the opposite side of the wall where the plaster-based texts were found. The third way in which these texts can be grouped is particularly revealing – official and non-official texts – especially when this grouping system is contrasted against the divine-name groupings and the find-spot groupings.

According to Keel and Uehlinger, the ink-on-plaster texts are official inscriptions, which is to say that *Meshel* 4.1.1 and its Yahweh-of-Teman "seem to have an official character about them" because they were commissioned by the state.[77] The two other officially sanctioned ink-on-plaster texts that were found in the bench room are *Meshel* 4.3 and 4.2, which further bolster the "official character" of *Meshel* 4.1.1. Unfortunately, although it was discovered *in situ* on a door jamb, *Meshel* 4.3 is too faded and is no longer legible.[78] Fortunately, *Meshel* 4.2 is legible, but like *Meshel* 4.1.1, it was found in pieces on the floor. Using *Meshel* 4.3's location as a hint, had *Meshel* 4.2 been discovered *in situ*, it would have probably been at a different door jamb in the same room because it was uncovered near the bench room's western entrance.[79] This text relates the theophany of a warrior god, who seems to be identified as El/God (אל, *Meshel* 4.2:1), the Most High ([ע]לין, l. 4), Baal/Lord (בעל, l. 5), and perhaps also Name-of-El/God (שמ אל, l. 6).[80] Although Aḥutiv,

77 Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods*, *Goddesses*, 245. Keel and Uehlinger compare the character of the ink-on-plaster inscriptions and drawings in the bench room at Kuntillet 'Ajrud with the contemporary Assyrian palace reliefs and paintings, noting that the bench room pictures are "thematically reminiscent" of their Assyrian counterparts with representations of enthroned princes and lotus blossoms (ibid., 245; compare figure 237, which is from the bench room, with figure 238a, which is an Assyrian drawing, both of which are on p. 246). Likewise, Hutton compares the quality of the official drawings on the plaster in the bench room with the "relative impermanence" of the *ad hoc* drawings on pithoi A and B (Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 199).

Hutton also agrees with Keel and Uehlinger that the official and non-official texts represent two distinct sets of individuals. The ink-on-plaster inscription of *Meshel* 4.1.1 (and the theophany described in *Meshel* 4.2) was written by a scribe with Israelite and/or Phoenician training, as indicated by his predominately northern orthographic conventions that occasionally includes uncollapsed /*ay*/ diphthongs (for example, *hyṭb* for the expected *hṭb* and *tymn* for the expected *tmn* in *Meshel* 4.1.1:2; Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 200). The individuals responsible for *Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9 on Pithos B were native Israelite travelers, and so was the individual responsible for *Meshel* 3.1 on Pithos A, and they all demonstrated a northern consistent orthography (ibid., 202).

78 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 115; and Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 286.

79 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 110.

80 Allsopp et al. interpret Baal and Most High as epithets of a Yahweh deity (Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 287 and 289), and they suggest that Name-of-God "is the deity's hypostatic presence," meaning it represents an external aspect of the Yahweh deity that is reminiscent of

Eshel, and Meshel recently suggested that "Y]HW[H" begins a new sentence at the end of l. 2, noting "no other restoration seems possible,"[81] the name Yahweh is not part of the extant text and might not have ever been part of the text. However, as Brian Mastin notes, there is nothing in this text that does not fit the biblical titles and descriptions of the biblical deity Yahweh, or perhaps some local Yahweh deity (i.e., the Yahweh-of-Teman in *Meshel* 4.1.1).[82] Further adding to *Meshel* 4.1.1's official character are the fact that it makes no appeal for private blessings from the deity and the fact that *Meshel* 4.1.1 had a permanent presence in the bench room as an ink-on-plaster text that doubled as a decoration.[83] In contrast, *Meshel* 3.1, 3.6, and 3.9 all included private blessings and were written on the very mobile pottery shards of Pithoi A and B.

Considering all three groupings at once, we observe the following: the official *Meshel* 4.1.1 inscription with its Yahweh-of-Teman was found in the same bench room as the unofficial *Meshel* 3.1 text with its Yahweh-of-Samaria, whereas the unofficial *Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9 texts with their Yahweh-of-Teman were found in an adjacent room at the site. Using this grouping matrix and the assumption that the ink-on-plaster inscription was the first text written and

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Astarte//Name-of-Baal and Tannit//Face-of-Baal as hypostases of Baal (ibid., 289; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 30).

81 Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, "The Inscriptions," 111.

82 Brian A. Mastin, "The Inscriptions Written on Plaster at Kuntillet ʻAjrud," *VT* 59 (2009): 114. Being careful not to assume *a priori* that *Meshel* 4.2 was written by an Israelite scribe, Mastin notes that while we do not know how the Phoenicians would have described a theophany, everything about this inscription fits within what we know of ancient Israelite descriptions (ibid., 113). He also notes that we cannot completely rule out the possibility that *Meshel* 4.2 and its El and Baal divine names were not representative of a Canaanite, as opposed to Phoenician and Israelite, theophany. However, because *Meshel* 4.1.1 and 4.2 are both officially sponsored inscriptions in what would have been in close proximity on the wall, Mastin ultimately identifies the deity in *Meshel* 4.2 with an Israelite Yahweh deity.

Allsopp, et al, note further connections between the Yahweh-of-Teman mentioned in *Meshel* 4.1.1 and the theophany revealed in *Meshel* 4.2 (Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 287). The first extant word in *Meshel* 4.2 is "and when he shone forth" (ובזרח, l. 1), which is the verbal root that also appears in Deuteronomy 33:2 ("and he shone from Seir upon them," וזרח משעיר למו), a verse that uses Seir, Paran, and Sinai to locate Yahweh in the region near Teman (see also Habakkuk 3:3).

83 Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses*, 245. Whereas Keel and Uehlinger compared the ink-on-plaster inscriptions and drawings with contemporary Assyrian artwork as proof of Kuntillet ʻAjrud's government-controlled origins, Hutton compares the inscriptions of *Meshel* 4.1.1 and 4.2 and the nearby drawings with the "well-planned plasters of Deir ʻAlla" that were recently discovered and the command to set up stones covered in plaster in Deuteronomy 27:2–4 and 8 (Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 199).

available to all worshippers, Hutton makes several conclusions about worship and religious tolerance at Kuntillet ʿAjrud. First, because the bench room contained an officially sanctioned ink-on-plaster reference to Yahweh-of-Teman, that room must have been officially and "deliberately claimed for the worship of a single specific regional – if not local – divine manifestation, Yahweh of Teman."[84] According to Ziony Zevit, this act of officially designating a place of worship for the local Temanite Yahweh served to inspire travelers into leaving offerings and other gifts for Yahweh-of-Teman at the Kuntillet ʿAjrud site.[85] Zevit's assertion is reasonable; each (literate) Israelite merchant or traveler who entered the bench room would have presumably read *Meshel* 4.1.1 and taken to heart that Yahweh-of-Teman along with his ašerah/Ašerah was prepared to lengthen the traveler's days and provide him with other blessings. Furthermore, if the traveler identified Yahweh-of-Teman with the divine names or epithets presented in Meshel 4.2's theophany, then he would have further reason to believe that this deity was potent enough to ensure that the individual would be blessed. The state-sponsored ink-on-plaster drawings in the bench room would have similarly inspired illiterate travelers. The two unofficial texts that invoke Yahweh-of-Teman (*Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9) reinforce the idea that Israelite travelers would be inspired to revere the local Yahweh. Second, because *Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9 were found outside out the bench room, Hutton concludes that there were several different loci of sacred space at Kuntillet ʿAjrud.[86] Had there been a prohibition against revering a deity outside of his delineated space, these texts would have been left inside the bench room. This also demonstrates that the travelers believed that the deity could receive offerings and effect blessings regardless of where in the complex he was revered. Third, even though the bench room was officially dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman, the devotee who invoked Yahweh-of-Samaria in *Meshel* 3.1 apparently felt no need to limit his petition to the officially sanctioned divine name.

This divine name distribution leads Hutton to several possible conclusions. There were no prohibitions against worshipping a "competing" deity in the shrine of another deity (i.e., worshipping a Yahweh-of-Samaria in a room officially dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman); the dedications and offerings that were left by travelers were not thoroughly vetted by overseers at the site; and an ancient "ecumenical mindset" recognized the "fundamental fluidity

84 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 202.

85 Zevit, *Religions of Ancient Israel*, 374.

86 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 202. For a discussion on how a temple or locus comes to be seen as sacred in the ancient Near East, see Pongratz-Leisten, "Reflections on the Translatibility," 417 ff.

between such fragmentary local manifestations" in ancient Israelite religious practice.[87] Hutton seems to prefer the first two (non-mutually exclusive) possibilities over the third, but he rules nothing out because of our limited evidence and because we can reconstruct the *ad hoc* unofficial texts' histories.[88] Acknowledging these limitations, Hutton concludes that the two divine names uncovered at Kuntillet ʻAjrud represent deities who "seem to have led separate lives in the experience of the worshippers," contrary to an interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:4 that maintains that "Yahweh is one."[89]

Whether Yahweh-of-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria were wholly distinct deities like their full-named Assyrian counterparts (e.g., Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela) or simply local manifestations of one singular Yahweh, at first glance their geographic last names reflect reverence from two distinct communities.[90] On the one hand, Yahweh-of-Teman and his shrine at Kuntillet ʻAjrud are located near the Temanite/Edomite region. On the other hand, Yahweh-of-Samaria's shrine would presumably have been located in Samaria,

87 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 204. Following Sommer's fluidity model that Hutton references, it should be observed that even if Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman are, in one sense "competing" deities or manifestations, in another sense, the two localized Yahweh deities are similar enough that the merchant/traveler-devotee from Samaria had no problem revering his hometown Yahweh in a shrine devoted to another Yahweh who was actually geographically closer to the shrine. Likewise, the two localized Yahweh deities were similar enough to each other that the overseer had no reason to resist the Samarian traveler's offering on behalf of the local Temanite Yahweh. Similarly, Emerton supposed that they were so similar that the devotee would have considered the both divine names as representative of the same deity (Emerton, "New Light," 13).

88 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 205.

89 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 205 and 206.

90 Meshel, Holladay, and Michael Coogan each envision Kuntillet ʻAjrud as a site representing various different cultural and ethnic strands, including Judahite, Israelite, and Phoenician ones (Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 34; Holladay, "Religion in Israel and Judah," 258; and Michael Coogan, "Canaanite Origins and Lineage: Reflections on the Religion of Ancient Israel," in *Ancient Israelite Religion*: *Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, eds. Patrick D. Miller, Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 118). Although Coogan suggests that Kuntillet ʻAjrud represents different ethnicities and their religious practices, he warns against concluding that the site was a syncretistic cult (ibid., 119). The religious views might have been concurrent but they were not all necessarily espoused by each worshipper. Likewise, Hadley espouses the view that travelers – and even a few pilgrims – of "any ethnic background" stayed at and left the blessings behind at Kuntillet ʻAjrud (Hadley, "Kuntillet ʻAjrud," 122). As noted above, Hutton's focus on the inscriptions' orthography suggests to him a predominately northern or Israelite population, and while Mastin notes we cannot rule out a Canaanite population, he also notes that nothing contained in the Kuntillet ʻAjrud texts is inconsistent with an Israelite population (Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 200; and Mastin, "Inscriptions Written on Plaster,"113).

which is in Israel. If the unofficial texts had been the only texts discovered at Kuntillet ʻAjrud, then the existence of a local community who worshipped a Yahweh deity in Teman would have been a reasonable inference. However, scholarly consensus now holds that this was not the case, and the divine name Yahweh-of-Teman and his shrine have confidently been interpreted as the result of an Israelite initiative. No native Temanite community need be assumed. It could have existed, but it need not be assumed.[91]

With the Temanite cult established and maintained by a Samarian community, the various texts could represent not only a single orthographic tradition, but they could also represent a single community's religious tradition, namely one from the northern state of Israel. Theoretically, this community could have simultaneously revered multiple Yahweh deities in much the same way that Assurbanipal revered both Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela (and even Ištar-of-Kidmuri). Yahweh-of-Samaria might have been revered as the deity whose primary residence was the nation's political capital, while Yahweh-of-Teman was simultaneously revered at the nation's newly established outpost and trading stop, a place that the biblical authors also associated with their Yahweh. Ideally, such a conclusion would be based on a text that contrasted both divine full names, as was the case with the localized Ištar divine names in numerous royal inscriptions from the eighth and seventh centuries. For instance, the following would have made a fantastic addition to the argument regarding poly-Yahwism:

יתנו. ארכ.ימם ליהוה.תמן ליהוה.שמרן ולאשרתם והיטבו.יהוה.ה תמן ליהוה.שמרן

> May they be given longevity by Yahweh-of-Teman, by Yahweh-of-Samaria, and by their ašerah/Ašerah, and may Yahweh-of-the-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria favor …

Because no comparable text is known to exist, it would be methodologically unsound to conclude that the Israelite scribes responsible for *Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.1, 3.6, and 3.9 considered the possibility that these two divine names represented two distinct and independent Yahweh deities. Before we conclude that Yahweh-of-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria would have necessarily been identified with each other by ancient Israelites or the state of Israel, we should not dismiss the fact that that our investigation of localized Baal deities in chapter 5 found that it was not unusual in the first millennium for a scribe to

91 Emerton acknowledged the role the Kenite Hypothesis could play in Yahweh's nomadic origins and subsequent development into the Israelite deity, but he doubted that a Yahwistic cult continued in Teman or Edom from the late second millennium as late as ca. 800 (Emerton, "New Light," 10).

provide a full Baal divine name when no other Baal deity was mentioned in the text. In several of these instances, it seemed as though the full names were implicitly contrasting the named deity with other deities sharing the same name. The most salient example is Baal-Ḥamān, who was contrasted with Baal-Šamêm and Baal-Magnim in a third-century votive inscription from Carthage (e.g., *KAI* 78; see Table 5.8), but who was also fully Baal-Ḥamān as the only male deity named (e.g., *KAI* 79) or the only deity named at all (e.g., *KAI* 114[7]; see Table 5.5). Whatever motivated the scribes who were responsible for *KAI* 79 and 114 and other relevant texts to identify this deity Baal-Ḥamān by his full name even when they knew that no competing localized Baal deities would appear in these texts, similar motivations could also have been behind the identification of Yahweh-of-Samaria by his full name in *Meshel* 3.1. In a decidedly polytheistic population, like the various Phoenician or Punic ones considered in chapter 5, distinguishing one Baal from another by including a geographic last name removed potential ambiguity. Whether this would also be true in an Israelite context is uncertain because scholars have not reached a consensus regarding the fully polytheistic or highly monolatrist tendencies of Israel in the first half of the first millennium. If we concede that the Israelite community from Samaria was either a monolatrist community – which is to say that the ancient Israelites revered one deity without denying the existence of other (foreign) gods – or a monotheistic community, then this Baal-Ḥamān analogy serves little purpose. If, however, we concede that this Israelite community consisted of polytheists either at the official, royal level or possibly also the lay level, then our Baal-Ḥamān example is quite illustrative: even though Yahweh-of-Samaria is never explicitly contrasted with Yahweh-of-Teman, the mere presence of the geographic last names in a text is suggestive of poly-Yahwism.

Writing before scholars had settled on the northern state of Israel's role in overseeing the site at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, McCarter asserted that the scribe responsible for *Meshel* 3.1 and the divine name Yahweh-of-Samaria was from Samaria and had called upon his hometown or regional god for a blessing.[92] McCarter then offered multiple reasons underlying the relationship between the scribes who invoked Yahweh-of-Teman in *Meshel* 3.6 and that deity, whose geographic name is a synonym for "south." They could have called upon Yahweh-of-Teman specifically because they had come from "farther south" where they had previously worshipped him or because the deity was already the established localized Yahweh within the region at the time.[93] If the former,

92 McCarter, "Aspects," 140.

93 McCarter, "Aspects," 140. McCarter notes that the geographic name Samaria in Yahweh-of-Samaria's full name could designate the capital city of Israel or the larger region containing

Yahweh-of-Teman could rightly be considered the scribe's localized Yahweh deity in much the same way that Yahweh-of-Samaria was the localized Yahweh deity for the scribe of *Meshel* 3.1. If the latter, then Yahweh-of-Teman's cult site could actually have been Kuntillet ʻAjrud. Because Hadley rejects the possibility that Kuntillet ʻAjrud could have been Yahweh-of-Teman's shrine, she rejects the possibility that there was any shrine at the site, which she claims is evidenced by a lack of cult vessels.[94] Moreover, she rejects the possibility that Yahweh-of-Teman was the local deity because the name should indicate that he was from somewhere other than the shrine at Kuntillet ʻAjrud.[95]

Hadley's conclusion leads us to a third alternative that must also be considered in light of our survey of localized Baal deities and their associated places. The geographic name Teman is associated with the divine name Yahweh in these texts not because the scribe or cult originated in Teman, but because Yahweh's mythical home was Teman. The divine name Baal-of-Ṣapun

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that city (ibid., 139; see also Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 191). However, given his preference for Teman as a region rather than a specific site or mountain in Transjordan (or even further south), if he envisions the two different Yahweh full names as reflecting parallel information, he should prefer to interpret Samaria as the region rather than the capital city. Because the GN in most other DN-of-GN full names examined in chapters 3 through 5 represent a specific place (e.g., a particular city or mountain), the Samaria in *Meshel* 3.1 should be interpreted as designating the capital city rather than the region. Similarly, the Teman in *Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.6, and 3.9 should probably be understood as a particular mountain or place rather than a region (cf. Emerton, "New Light," 9).

It should be noted, however, that Yigael Yadin would likely have agreed that the Samaria in the divine name Yahweh-of-Samaria was a reference to the region and not the capital city. This is based on his premise that there was no temple of Baal in the capital city of Samaria (Yigael Yadin, "The House of Baʻal of Ahab and Jezebel in Samaria, and that of Athalia in Judah," in *Archaeology in the Levant*: *Essays for Kathleen Kenyon*, eds. R. Moorey and P. Parr [Warminster: Aris & Phillips LTD, 1978], 129). Instead, because no archaeological evidence of a temple in the city of Samaria has been discovered, Yadin suggested that Baal's temple and its "huge *temenos*" were built in either the region of Samaria, Jezreel, or Mount Carmel (see 1 Kings 18). Wherever the exact location of this temple was, Yadin surmised that it was called "the *city* of the house of Baʻal" (עיר בית-הבעל, 2 Kings 10:25). Presumably, if there were no Baal temple in the capital, then there would have been no Yahweh temple there either.

94 Hadley, "Kuntillet ʻAjrud," 120. The 400-pound bowl is a potential exception to her inability to locate objects with cultic function (see Meshel, "Did Yahweh," 32–33). However, even though Hadley rejects the possibility that this site was a functioning religious shrine, she does not rule out the possibility that "there was a religious or emotive ambiance to the site" (Judith M. Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah*: *Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000], 111).

95 Hadley, "Kuntillet ʻAjrud," 119; and Hadley, *Cult of Asherah*, 111.

represents a localized Baal deity, who was internationally famous and whose mythical home was on Mount Ṣapun (cf. *KTU*[2] 1.1–6), and this deity could be venerated as such by a scribe, priest, or king from Ugarit, Tyre, or as far away as Egypt (i.e., *KAI* 50 is from Saqqāra).[96] Likewise, the divine name Yahweh-of-Teman could represent a localized Yahweh deity residing at his mythical home, and he, too, could be venerated by anyone, regardless of their geographic proximity. In addition to *Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.6, and 3.9, Habakkuk 3:3 links the God of Israel with Teman:

אלוה מתימן יבוא וקדוש מהר־פארן

God comes from Teman; the Holy One from Mount Paran. (Habakkuk 3:3)

Cross considered this verse's reference to Teman an "archaic tradition preserved in part of the hymn."[97] Antiquity and mythology often fit well together. Notably, this verse mentions Mount Paran, which is also mentioned in Deuteronomy 33:2 along with Seir and other geographic names in the southern Transjordan region.

Eventually, the biblical Yahweh made his home at the temple in Jerusalem during the monarchic period in Judah. According to the historical books and Amos, he was also revered within the northern kingdom of Israel at the illicit cult sites in Dan and Bethel. Presumably, but by no means definitively, Yahweh had some sort of residence in Samaria; after all, it was the capital of the northern Israelite state and *Meshel* 3.1 places the deity there. In addition to these traditions, multiple ancient texts from Egypt, the Hebrew Bible, and Kuntillet ʻAjrud come together to suggest that a Yahweh once resided somewhere among the mountains south and east of the Dead Sea in Edom. Yahweh-of-Teman could have resided at a particular mountain known as Teman in this region.[98] Perhaps these ancient associations between Yahweh and Teman led the northern state of Israel to adopt the divine name Yahweh-of-Teman for worship in the bench room shrine at Kuntillet ʻAjrud. Such an association

96 The name Baal-Ṣapun (בעל צפן) appears in Exodus 14:2 as a geographic name in Egypt near Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and the Mediterranean Sea (see Maps 47 and 48 in Yohanan Aharoni et al., *The Macmillan Bible Atlas* [3d ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1993], 45).

97 Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 70–71. He also translated "pestilence" and "plague" as the ancient Canaanite deities Dabr and Rašp, respectively, in order to highlight Habakkuk 3's association with the polytheistic Canaanite population. He capitalized Deep, Sun, and Moon for the same purpose.

98 Weinfeld suggested that there were, in fact, several mountains rather than one with multiple names that various nomadic groups closely associated with Yahweh: Paran, Edom, Midian, Kushan, Horeb, and Sinai (Weinfeld, "Tribal League," 306).

would lend an additional sense of authority and power to the deity's presence and his ability to effect blessings; moreover, this would likely result in more and larger offerings at the site. Choosing such a powerful name is especially important if there were some external sense of a competing Yahweh, at Jerusalem, Zion, Samaria, or elsewhere. Not only would this deity's shrine be run by the relatively powerful state of Israel – at least compared to Judah and the other, smaller Transjordan peoples – but this Yahweh-of-Teman would also be the ancient, local storm-god whose influence rose beyond the immediate desert region. Regardless of where the historical Teman had been, during the Israelite occupation at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, Teman was here at the site were Yahweh-of-Teman could be revered.

6.3 Yahweh and the Kingdom of Israel: Samaria

Whereas three texts at Kuntillet ʿAjrud explicitly link Yahweh with Teman, only one text links Yahweh with Samaria:

[1]ברכת. אתכם. [2]ליהוה. שמרן. ולאשרתה

I bless you by Yahweh-of-Samaria and by his ašerah/Ašerah. (*Meshel* 3.1:1–2)

This text, like the ink-on-wall plaster inscription (*Meshel* 4.1.1), was found in the bench room at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, a room that the northern state of Israel had officially dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman.[99] Unlike *Meshel* 4.1.1, however, the divine name inscribed on *Meshel* 3.1 (Pithos A) does not correspond to the divine name officially associated with that room. Hutton argues that this disconnect between the Yahweh-of-Samaria on Pithos A and its find spot, which was in an area devoted to Yahweh-of-Teman, indicates a religious tolerance between "competing" deities at the site, and he likens this tolerance to deities who were revered in the same sacred space in Mesopotamian temples.[100] In the same way that Mesopotamian deities were often revered together or would receive offerings in a temple devoted to another deity, Yahweh-of-Samaria could receive offerings in a room or shrine dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman. This analogy is somewhat inexact or limited, however, because of the lack of modern consensus regarding the nature of Israel's worldview. Because the Assyrian worldview was decidedly polytheistic, and the state needed to honor multiple gods and goddesses in order to ensure military, economic, and agricultural

99 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 203–204.
100 Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 203.

success, the idea of revering one deity in another's temple or any other form of sacred space does not so much reveal a religious tolerance as it does a religious norm. Assuming for a moment that the officials in Israel who oversaw the shrine at Kuntillet ʻAjrud were polytheists, there was no real sense of competition between Yahweh-of-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria. If they had been perceived as different deities, analogous to Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela, they would have surely been perceived as friendly deities, which is probably why Hutton uses quotes around "competing." After all, Yahweh-of-Teman was being locally promoted by the same state where Yahweh-of-Samaria's name suggests he resided. Assuming that these officials were monolatrists or monotheists, it also seems unlikely that those in charge of the shrine would have viewed Yahweh-of-Samaria anything other than the same deity as Yahweh-of-Teman. Whichever theological lens we use, we would expect that Yahweh-of-Samaria was welcomed at the Yahweh-of-Teman shrine at Kuntillet ʻAjrud.[101]

Yahweh's associations with Samaria likely began in the ninth century when King Omri of Israel established his capital at Samaria (1 Kings 16:24).[102] However, the biblical narrative never credits Omri for building a temple to Yahweh at Samaria, insisting instead that he erected an altar and temple to Baal (v. 32) and installed an ašerah pole (v. 33). Despite this lack of biblical evidence, along with a lack of archaeological evidence, several scholars have argued that there was a temple, or at least a cult presence, dedicated to Yahweh in Samaria during the Omride Dynasty. Some base their argument upon the text from Kuntillet ʻAjrud, while others argue for a Yahwistic cult presence or temple in response to the peculiarities that they find in 1 Kings 16–18.[103]

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101 However, if the overseers belonged to a super-monotheistic party, like the one that Hutton suggests could have been responsible for the "Yahweh is One" declaration (Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 206), then they might have envisioned this localized fragmentation as a threat to the singular and solitary Yahweh, whom they preferred to call Yahweh-of-Teman.

102 Lawrence Stager suggests that Omri's ancestral ties as a member of the tribe of Issachar made his purchase of Shemer's estate possible (Lawrence Stager, "Shemer's Estate," *BASOR* 277/278 [1990]: 103–104). The history of the estate itself goes back no further than the eleventh century.

103 Saul M. Olyan's suggestion that there was a shrine devoted to Yahweh in Samaria is based on the Yahweh-of-Samaria invoked at Kuntillet ʻAjrud (Saul M. Olyan, *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh in Israel*, SBLMS 34 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988], 35). In contrast, McCarter notes that the last name Samaria in *Meshel* 3.1:2 could be a reference to either Samaria the capital city of Israel or the general region surrounding Samaria (McCarter, "Aspects," 139). If Samaria is understood as a region rather than a city, then its usage is parallel with Teman in *Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.6, and 3.9, which he argues "seems to have always been a region designation" (ibid., 139).

Tikva Frymer-Kensky, for example, found it improbable that an altar to Baal would have been built in Samaria alongside an ašerah pole.[104] She reinforced this disconnect between Baal and Ašerah with a reference to the cultic battle that Elijah waged against Baal's prophets in 1 Kings 18. The goddess and her 400 prophets are only mentioned once (v. 19), whereas Baal and/or his 450 prophets are mentioned several times (vv. 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 40). After his victory, the Yahwist Elijah ordered that Baal's prophets be seized and killed (v. 40), but he said nothing about the goddess's prophets. Moreover, an ašerah pole accompanied Yahweh's cult in the official cult at Bethel (2 Kings 23:15), and Frymer-Kensky expected that this same pairing existed in what was surely an official cult in the capital city Samaria. Smith emphasizes this unlikely historical pairing of Ašerah with Baal, noting, "Asherah is not attested anywhere in coastal Phoenicia during the Iron Age," much less alongside a Baal deity.[105] As a princess from Phoenician Tyre, Ahab's wife Jezebel would not have promoted Ašerah's cult of as part of her worship of Tyrian deities because Ašerah was not a Tyrian deity. Smith suggests that when the divine name Ašerah is associated with Baal, as is the case in 1 Kings 18:19 and elsewhere within the historical books, we should substitute the Phoenician goddess Astarte for Ašerah to make better historical sense of the cultic situation.[106] Similarly, Frymer-Kensky would have had us substitute Yahweh for Baal in the Samarian cult when Ašerah is paired with Baal. Because of the association of Yahweh-of-Samaria with his ašerah/Ašerah in *Meshel* 3.1 and the general lack of connections between Baal and Ašerah as consorts in Ugaritic and Phoenician religious traditions, Frymer-Kensky's expectation seems reasonable.[107]

Similarly, Niehr argues for a Yahwistic cult in the capital city of Samaria. Niehr offers several arguments and forms of evidence, including the idea that the state's primary deity would surely have been worshipped in the capital city or royal court.[108] However, his most convincing argument for the presence of

104 Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *In the Wake of the Goddesses*: *Women*, *Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth* (New York: Fawcette Columbine, 1992), 157.

105 Smith, *Early History*, 126. Smith's discussion of Ašerah is found on pp. 126–133.

106 Smith, *Early History*, 126.

107 At Ugarit, Ašerah was El's consort, not Baal's (Smith, *Origins*, 47–49 and 55).

108 Herbert Niehr, "The Rise of YHWH in Judahite and Israelite Religion," in *The Triumph of Elohim*: *From Yahwisms to Judaisms*, ed. D. V. Edelman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 56. Niehr presents a twofold argument to explain that Yahweh was worshipped in the Omride capital city of Samaria. He first argues that the state's primary deity would surely have been worshipped in the royal city, "especially in the royal court," and he then suggests that dedicating an altar to a deity within his own temple is religiously incomprehensible (ibid., 56). Neither of these arguments is convincing. Whereas the first argument seems reasonable in

a Yahwistic cult in Samaria is based upon Sargon II's *Nimrud Prism*.[109] In this inscription, Sargon claimed to have removed "gods" from Samaria, but he did not explicitly state that he took a statue of Yahweh or his ašerah/Ašerah. Instead, he only said, "I counted the gods, their helpers, as booty" (DINGIR^{meš} *ti-ik-li-šu$_2$-un šal-la-*[*ti-iš*] *am-nu*, *Iraq* 16 179, iv 32–33, translation mine).[110] Whereas Niehr is interested in this inscription in his search for a Yahwistic cult presence in Samaria, several other scholars are more interested in the nature or number of the statues as evidence of Israelite polytheism. For instance, according to Uehlinger, "it seems plausible" that Yahweh and Ašerah would be among the anthropomorphic statues that Sargon took with him back to Assyria.[111]

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light of Yahweh's worship in the Davidic capital city Jerusalem and Assur's worship in the Assyrian capital cities Assur and Nineveh, it is not wholly compelling because there is no evidence that Assur had a temple in Calaḫ or Dūr-Šarrukīn when the Assyrian capital was moved from Assur in the ninth century and before it was moved to Nineveh at the end of the eighth century (Frame, "My Neighbour's God," 12). A chief deity need not have a temple in a capital city.

Moreover, Yadin argued against Niehr's other argument, saying that an altar (re)dedicated to the primary deity of a temple seems perfectly normal – "Obviously, if Ahab built a temple for Baʻal it comprised an altar" – although he noted that 1 Kings 16:32 originally indicated that the altar was dedicated to Ašerah (Yadin, "House of Baʻal," 129). Niehr's argument is based on more than redundancy, however. He appeals to the supposed *Vorlage* for the LXX to 1 Kings 16:32, where the Greek has "the house of his abominations" (οἴκῳ τῶν προσοχθισμάτων) in place of the Hebrew's "the house of Baal" (בית הבעל). Rather than accept that this change was a deliberate interpretation by the translator, he believes that this difference between the LXX and MT indicates that the temple in Samaria was known as "the house of Elohim" (בית אלהים), in keeping with the Psalms and Pentateuchal sources that refer to the Israelite national deity as "Elohim" (God) rather than "Yahweh" (Niehr, "Rise of YHWH," 56). This argument is not compelling either.

109 Niehr, "Rise of YHWH," 57. Niehr also appeals to the ninth-century Mesha Inscription's presentation of Yahweh as the supreme Israelite God, the invocation of a Yahweh-of-Samaria in *Meshel* 3.1, and fifth-century papyri from Elephantine that supposedly venerates Yahweh as Beth-El in Samaria as evidence of a Yahwistic cultic presence in the Omride capital of Samaria (ibid., 58).

110 Cyril J. Gadd, "Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud," *Iraq* 16 (1954): 179.

111 Christoph Uehlinger, "Anthropomorphic Cult Statuary in Iron Age Palestine and the Search for Yahweh's Cult Image," in *The Image and the Book*: *Iconic Cults*, *Aniconism*, *and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, CBET 21 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 125. In contrast to Uehlinger, who is focused on the physical nature of the statues, Niehr is more interested in Gadd's suggestion that this *Nimrud Prism* is evidence of polytheism in Samaria, whereas Bob Becking is equally interested in both the iconic nature of the statues and the polytheism they represent (Niehr, "Rise of YHWH," 59; and Bob Becking, "Assyrian Evidence for Iconic Polytheism in Ancient Israel?" in *The Image and the Book*: *Iconic*

Both Nadav Na'aman and Tigay caution against using Sargon's *Nimrud Prism* as evidence for Israelite polytheism in the eighth century, as far as the nature or the number of cult statues carried away from Samaria is concerned.[112] Whereas Bob Becking had previously suggested that Sargon's claim about despoiling Samaria of its gods was *not* merely a "literary topos," or literary flourish, but it was a real event, Na'aman maintains that the *Nimrud Prism*'s account is a "literary embellishment" and denies that the inscription is historically reliable.[113] The destruction of Samaria took place ca. 720, but the *Nimrud Prism* was not written until ca. 706, long after most of Sargon's other inscriptions. This delay gave the scribe time to "improve" the narrative.[114] Weighing data from Sargon's *Nimrud Prism* against the earlier inscriptions, Na'aman notes that the prism inflated the numbers of horses, cavalry, and deportees by two- to fourfold. If the scribe responsible for the *Nimrud Prism* had the freedom to manipulate numerical data, as well as chronological and other data, then he could have easily added the despoiling of the Samarian gods – a detail not found in earlier accounts about Samaria – with a similar lack of concern for historical accuracy. This point should be emphasized: none of Sargon's earlier records described despoiling Israelite or Samarian gods during his ca. 720 campaign.

Throughout his treatment of the *Nimrud Prism*, Na'aman is primarily concerned with the idea that Sargon's took the anthropomorphic "gods" (DINGIR^{meš}) as booty. He also concedes that cult vessels and theriomorphic or aniconic objects could have been taken from Samaria, a concession that should undermine his objection to the prism's historical reliability. For example, he notes that calf-shaped pedestals could have been looted at this time and that even the local Israelites could have mistaken these for gods.[115] Why he speculates at length about the form of the objects that could have been taken from the cult at Samaria and the Israelites' interpretation of those objects, while he simultaneously argues against Sargon's *Nimrud Prism* historical reliability is puzzling. If the claims about Sargon's taking booty from Samaria

Cults, *Aniconism*, *and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Karel van der Toorn [Leuven: Peeters, 1997], 161).

112 Jeffrey H. Tigay, *You Shall Have No Other Gods*: *Israelite Religion in the Light of Hebrew Inscriptions*, HSS 31 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 35; and Nadav Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic Graven Image: Notes on the Assumed Anthropomorphic Cult Statues in the Temples of *YHWH* in the Pre-Exilic Period," *UF* 31 (1999): 395–398.

113 Becking, "Assyrian Evidence," 165; and Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic," 398.

114 Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic," 396–398.

115 Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic," 413.

in this inscription are not historically reliable, then why bother speculating what exactly was taken as booty in the first place?

In his discussion of the *Nimrud Prism*, Tigay does not question the statement that cult objects were taken as booty. Instead, he argues that although the carried-away objects were characterized as gods (DINGIR^{meš}) by the undoubtedly polytheistic Assyrian scribe who wrote the prism, we should not necessarily assume that this outsider correctly identified what the local Israelites thought that they were. For example, the objects carried away from Samaria could have resembled the calves that Jeroboam I placed at Bethel and Dan (1 Kings 12:25–33), as Na'aman noted, but the local Samarian devotee of Yahweh could have envisioned the calves as Yahweh's pedestal rather than as Yahweh himself. The Assyrians would likely have been ignorant of this local tradition and would naturally have interpreted the objects according to what they already knew about their cults and cult objects at home. Regardless of the nature of the objects that Sargon took, any Assyrian eye could have mistaken them for gods because the Assyrian worshipped both anthropomorphic statues and non-anthropomorphic objects, such as crowns, drums, or chariots, as divine beings. Following Tigay's warning about the *Nimrud Prism* and what its author interpreted as "gods" (DINGIR^{meš}), we can only say that some objects that could be characterized as gods were removed from the state cult at Samaria. These objects could have been iconic or aniconic Yahwistic cult objects that had been promoted by the Israelite kings and their cult in the capital, or they could have been cult statues or other objects that were used in the state's service of non-Yahweh deities, like a Baal or Ašerah deity.[116]

For Tigay, this warning against assuming that the DINGIR^{meš} should be identified with actual Israelite gods – be they anthropomorphic or any other officially sanctioned shaped object (consider Deuteronomy 5:8 and 4:16–18) – fits with his larger argument that most Israelites were exclusively Yahwistic during the monarchic period. His evidence for a primarily Israelite monolatrist

116 While no definitive textual, pictorial, or archaeological evidence has turned up indicative of an iconic Yahwistic cult image, Na'aman notes that several Yahwistic shrines have yielded aniconic images or cult vessels (Na'aman, "No Anthropomorphic," 405–408). For example, the Lachish Reliefs depicting Sennacherib's campaign to Judah in 701 indicate no graven images, but they do show cult objects, including bronze incense burners among the booty (ibid., 405). Likewise, in the Mesha Inscription (*KAI* 181:17–18), the Moabite king boasted about despoiling the vessels of Yahweh from Nebo but did not mention any cult statues. In the destruction layer at the fortress in Arad, which Na'aman tentatively dates to Sennacherib's campaign, one *maṣṣebah* (standing stone) was found (ibid., 408). The *maṣṣebah* could have been a physical object representing Yahweh's presence, but because it was a blank stone it is considered aniconic by scholars.

or monotheistic population rests on the almost exclusive use of the divine name Yahweh as the theophoric element in both biblical and inscriptional Israelite personal names.[117] Tigay also warns against taking the classical prophets or the historical books' accusations of Israelite idolatry too literally, even though such accusations are plentiful.[118] After all, when the classical prophets accused the Israelites of idolatry or fetishism, they could have been employing a polemic against Samaria (or, on occasion, Jerusalem) in order to denigrate their devotion to Yahweh in light of their other moral failings.[119]

Regardless of our interpretation of the objects that Sargon took in the late eighth century, their presence in Samaria probably points to the veneration of some Yahweh deity in the capital city of Samaria. On the one hand, if the ancient Israelites were predominantly monolatrists or monotheists, as Tigay contends, then the objects would have been Yahwistic in nature because Yahweh would have been the only deity of concern to most Israelites. On the other hand, if the ancient Israelites were polytheists, then we could expect that at least one of the despoiled objects was Yahwistic in nature. Polytheists are religiously tolerant, so surely a Yahweh deity would have been venerated even in Samaria where they had a temple devoted to Baal. This tolerance for a Yahweh in Samaria – or the Yahweh-of-Samaria – should be all the more expected given that King Ahab, whom the books of Kings blamed for the Baal Temple in Samaria (1 Kings 16:32), was himself a Yahwist. He gave his two sons and successors and his daughter who ruled as queen mother in Jerusalem names containing Yahwistic theophoric elements: Ahaziah (אחזיה, "Yahweh holds," 2 Kings 1:2), Jehoram (יהורם, "Yahweh is exalted," v. 17), and Athaliah (עתליהו, "Yahweh has manifest his glory" or "Yahweh is just", 8:26).[120] Several

117 Tigay, *You Shall Have*, 19–20.

118 Several biblical texts refer to idols in Samaria: Isaiah 10:10–11; Hosea 4:17; 10:5–6; 13:2; Amos 5:26; and Micah 1:7; and 5:12 (Tigay, *You Shall Have*, 35 n. 71). Of these, Isaiah 10:10–11 (פסיליהם, "their images," v. 10; אליליה, "her worthless images," and עצביה, "her idols" v. 11) and Hosea 10:5–6 (עגלות בית און, "calves of Beth-aven") most closely resemble Sargon's *Nimrud Prism* in that they discuss sending Israelite idols from Samaria to Assyria. Similarly, Micah 1:7 (כל-פסיליה, "all her images") and 5:12 (פסיליך, "your images," and מצבותיך, "your sacred pillars") refer to the destruction of cult objects in Samaria. Hosea 4:17 (עצבים, "idols") and 13:2 (מסכה, "molten image," and עצבים, "idols") refer to objects of local devotion in Ephraim rather than their removal from Samaria, with Baal mentioned in 13:1.

119 Consider, in this vein, 1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:11–17; Hosea 6:5–6; and Amos 2:6–16.

120 Athaliah is listed as the daughter of Omri in 2 Kings 8:26 but as the daughter of Ahab in v. 22. She is also the first woman documented with the theophoric element Yahweh in her name (Winfried Thiel, "Athaliah in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman [New York: Doubleday, 1992], 1:511). Thiel notes that the non-theophoric element in Athaliah's name is not from a Hebrew verbal root. The meaning "Yahweh has manifest his glory" depends upon

post-Omride Israelite kings also had Yahwistic theophoric elements in their names, including Pekahiah (פקחיה, "Yahweh has opened [his eyes]," 15:23), whose reign was only a few decades before the destruction of Samaria. Unless one of the final two kings of Israel, Pekah or Hoshea, was an ardent anti-Yahwist, which seems highly unlikely given that the Yahwistic cult at Bethel survived into Josiah's late seventh-century reign (see 23:15) despite them, Sargon almost certainly took some kind of Yahwistic object(s) from Samaria as booty.

While Sargon's *Nimrud Prism* gives reason to assume that there was a Yahwistic cult at Samaria, an appeal to the Yahweh-of-Samaria in *Meshel 3.1* as evidence must be evaluated under an entirely different set of circumstances. The *Nimrud Prism* was officially commissioned for the Neo-Assyrian state on behalf of the king as a propagandistic piece, whereas *Meshel 3.1* has been described as an *ad hoc* inscription dedicated to a divine name not officially recognized by the shrine in which it was deposited. As an unofficial text, we cannot presume how representative it was of Israelite religiosity. Perhaps only the scribe who wrote it and his caravan companions revered a deity by the name of Yahweh-of-Samaria, but he could just as easily be representative of his entire community in Samaria or, at least, the royal court and its priests.

Ideally, the value of the *Meshel 3.1* and its Yahweh-of-Samaria would be weighed against comparable, i.e., *ad hoc*, texts. Unfortunately, none of the first-millennium inscriptions that list Baal deities are clearly non-official. They appear to have been produced by state-sponsored scribes or commissioned by state officials for cultic use.[121] Despite this difference, these Northwest Semitic inscriptions are the closest analogies to *Meshel 3.1* and Yahweh-of-Samaria available to us, so they should be considered anyway. As discussed in chapter 5, one way to describe the relationship between a deity and his or her geographic last name included mythological and/or historical cultic ties. Baal-of-Ṣapun served as the best representative of this kind of relationship as both the *Baal Cycle* and biblical tradition (e.g., Psalm 48:3) have made his divine home at Mount Ṣapun famous. Likewise, the power of Teman's mythical background could be responsible for Yahweh-of-Teman's association with his place. On a related note, although the biblical narrative has been stripped of

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the Akkadian root for a solution, and the meaning "Yahweh is just" is based upon an Aramaic root. The meaning "Yahweh is abundant" is based upon an Arabic root.

121 Perhaps personal names containing Bēl-Ḫarrān as the theophoric element (e.g., Bēl-Ḫarrān-issē'a, a dependent farmer from Que, *PNA* 1/2, 303) could be used as evidence for the DN-of-GN formula in non-official usage, where the divine name for the moon-god is intimately associated with a place containing a cult to that deity.

its mythical layers, it does contain many historical narratives that tie divine names to a particular place. Two different episodes in Numbers 22–23 and 25, which are also recalled elsewhere, relate major theological events in the early history of the people of Israel. These cult-related events took place at or near Pe'or, and because these narratives survived, the divine name Baal-Pe'or survived.

As discussed in chapter 3.2, the DN-of-GN (or the semantic equivalent in Akkadian, DN-*ša*-GN) also seems to represent a deity who was venerated at an official cult in the city that bears its last name, and these cities were often politically or militarily significant in the Neo-Assyrian Empire. This is true of Ištar-of-Nineveh, Ištar-of-Arbela, and Adad-of-Kurbail, who are all mentioned in Assur-nērārī V's treaty with Mati'-ilu of Arpad (SAA 2 2 vi 15–17). This is by no means the only reason a deity received a geographic last name (consider, for example, Ištar-of-Heaven in Table 3.11, and the Babylonian god *Palil*-of-Udannu in Table 3.18), but it is telling. Of course, most of the Neo-Assyrian texts with these DN-of-GN names are state treaties, administrative documents, and letters to the court, whereas *Meshel* 3.1 is not and so would not necessarily reflect the political and military concerns of the state. However, during the mid-ninth century, Samaria was a military and political stronghold from which Ahab led his military campaigns against Damascus and coalitions against Assyria.[122] If an Israelite DN-of-GN formulation is in any way comparable to its Neo-Assyrian counterparts, then it is not surprising that Samaria, of all ancient Israelite cities or places, would become home to a localized Yahweh deity. This being the case, it is all the more surprising that *Meshel* 3.1 is the only text providing such a formula for Samaria.

When considering the nature of Yahweh-of-Samaria's relationship with the city or region of Samaria, nothing suggests that Yahweh-of-Samaria had a mythological tie to Samaria. Also, no evidence explicitly claims that a Yahweh had a small yet significant presence in the temple at Samaria – a presence that Sargon II likely despoiled in the eighth century – but if there were cult objects for Sargon to despoil, at least some of these objects surely belonged to a Yahweh deity. Likewise, no evidence explicitly places a major cult of Yahweh in Samaria, even though several scholars have suggested that the Baal temple mentioned in 1 Kings 12:32 was actually a temple dedicated to Yahweh. However, Samaria was a powerful military capital during Ahab's reign in the mid-ninth century, and he expanded his political power and influence into

122 Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings*, AB 10 (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 498.

Judah and the Transjordan. A couple of generations later, Joash again extended his influence into and beyond Judah. Perhaps the otherwise unattested divine name Yahweh-of-Samaria from *Meshel* 3.1 reflects a militaristic or nationalistic association between the deity and the city in the same way that the divine name Ištar-of-Nineveh does. Apart from *Meshel* 3.1, no evidence directly links a Yahweh with Samaria, but indirect evidence – including, perhaps, the 1 and 2 Kings' silence concerning a Yahwistic cult presence at Samaria while focusing on Baal at Samaria in 1 Kings 16:32 and focusing on Yahweh at Dan and Bethel (12:29) – and the fact that Sargon carried off cult objects of some fashion from Samaria hint that a Yahweh had a cultic presence in Samaria. Indeed, the deity known as Yahweh-of-Samaria could have been the primary divine presence in Samaria ca. 800 or throughout Samaria's tenure as a capital city.

6.4 Yahweh and the Kingdom of Judah: Zion and the Hosts

In stark contrast to the Hebrew Bible's silence on any Yahwistic cult presence in Samaria, the Jerusalem cult in Judah played a central role in biblical history and theology from David's conquest of the city (2 Samuel 5) to Ezra's supervision of the temple's rebuilding (Ezra 7–8) several centuries later. After capturing the city from the Jebusites (2 Samuel 5:8–9), David relocated the ark of Yahweh to Jerusalem (6:15) but left the building of a permanent temple to his son Solomon (7:13). Once Solomon built Yahweh a temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 6), the Davidic dynasty and the Yahwistic cult became intertwined, and the Davidic dynasty ruled from Jerusalem for more than four hundred years until the exile of Zedekiah in 586 (2 Kings 25:7). With the force of the state religion of Judah behind the relocation of Yahweh's cult from Shiloh to Jerusalem during David's reign (see 1 Samuel 4; 2 Samuel 6; and Jeremiah 7:12–20), the royal Yahwistic cult in the capital city became the shrine for legitimate Yahwistic worship.

During the monarchic period, Jerusalem and the hilltop near the city of David, namely, Zion (e.g., 2 Samuel 5:7), became Yahweh's holy mountain and his dwelling place. In the first millennium, Zion was to Yahweh as Mount Ṣapun had been to (the unspecified) Baal in the Ugaritic *Baal Cycle*:

[2]נודע ביהודה אלהים בישראל גדול שמו [3]ויהי בשלם סוכו ומעונתו בציון

> God is known in Judah; in Israel, his name is great. In (Jeru)Salem his tent came to be. And his dwelling is in Zion. (Psalm 76:2–3)

Indeed, one psalmist literally likens Yahweh's abode in Zion to Mount Ṣapun in Psalm 48:2–3:

[2]גדול יהוה ומהלל מאד בעיר אלהינו הר־קדשו [3]... הר־ציון ירכתי צפון קרית מלך רב

> Great is Yahweh, and he is very praiseworthy in the city of our God, his holy mountain ... Mount Zion, the peak of Ṣapun, city of the great king.

Because Mount Ṣapun is located to the north of Israel, its name became synonymous with the cardinal direction "north" in biblical Hebrew, which is why the phrase "the peak of Ṣapun" (ירכתי צפון) in this verse is often translated something along the lines of "the extreme north."[123] If we recognize צפון in v. 3 as (Mount) Ṣapun, Psalm 48 not only celebrates Mount Zion as Yahweh's beautiful abode, but it also praises Yahweh by associating him with Ṣapun and, thereby, appropriating Baal-of-Ṣapun's attributes.[124] This association between Yahweh and Ṣapun became so well known that other biblical authors could allude to it through common Baal motifs.[125] Isaiah 3:1 and Zechariah 14:4 tell of Yahweh getting ready for battle on Mount Zion, and 2 Esdras 13:35 (and elsewhere) contains language that is reminiscent of Baal's getting ready for battle against the sea (Yam) on Mount Ṣapun. Other Psalms, including 74:2 and 135:21, also praise Yahweh for having chosen Zion and Jerusalem as his dwelling place.[126] The deity and his mountain in Jerusalem were closely associated in the minds of many biblical authors.

Extra-biblical graffiti found in a cave at Khirbet Beit Lei – which Cross dated to the early sixth century, and André Lemaire dates to ca. 700 – also associates Yahweh with Jerusalem.[127] Although Cross, Lemaire, and Joseph Naveh offer different readings of the text, all agree that the divine name Yahweh appears in the first line and Jerusalem is the last word of the two-line

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123 Edward Lipiński, "צפון *ṣāp̱ôn*; צפוני *ṣ^epp̱ônî*," in *TDOT* (2003), 12:440–441. This phrase appears as "in the far north" in NRSV, and "*on* the sides of the north" in KJV, but as "summit of Zaphon" in NJPS.

124 Smith, *Early History*, 88–91.

125 Smith, *Early History*, 89.

126 Psalm 74:2: הר־ציון זה שכנת בו ("Mount Zion, you dwelt upon it").

Psalm 135:21: ברוך יהוה מציון שכן ירושלם ("Blessed be Yahweh from Zion, who resides [in] Jerusalem").

127 Frank Moore Cross, "The Cave Inscriptions from Khirbet Beit Lei," in *Near Eastern Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*: *Essays in Honor of Nelson Glueck*, ed. J. Sanders (New York: Doubleday 1970), 304; and André Lemaire, "Prières en temps de crise: Les inscriptions de Khirbet Beit Lei," *RB* 83 (1976): 565.

inscription.[128] In contrast to Cross, who interpreted Jerusalem as the object of the sentence – "yea, I [Yahweh] will redeem Jerusalem" (וגאלתי . ירשלם, *BLei* 5) – both Lemaire and Naveh interpret Jerusalem as the geographic element in an epithet that refers to Yahweh: "to 'God of Jerusalem'" (לאלהי . ירשלם).[129] Whichever reading is the better interpretation, this text demonstrates that Yahweh's ancient association with Jerusalem had expanded beyond the interests of the state cult and biblical authors to members of the lay population. The locals around Jerusalem appealed to this deity in time of trouble, which, if *BLei* 5 dates to ca. 700, could be a reference to Sennacherib's besiegement of Jerusalem in 701.

Yahweh's association with Zion and Jerusalem became so strong that it far outlived the Davidic dynasty. In Ezra 1:3–4, Cyrus's decree twice addresses Yahweh as "the God who is in Jerusalem (יהוה ... האלהם אשר בירושלם), even though Yahweh's temple had been destroyed almost fifty years earlier during Nebuchadnezzar's reign (2 Kings 25:8–9). Likewise, in the letter that he wrote to commission Ezra to rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 7:12–26), Artaxerxes locates the deity in Jerusalem no less than four times. The divine name Yahweh never actually appears in the letter, but the place is unambiguous:

v. 15	לאלה ישראל די בירושלם משכנה	to "the God of Israel" whose dwelling (is) in-Jerusalem
v. 16	לבית אלההם די בירושלם	of the house of their-God who (is) in-Jerusalem
v. 17	די בית אלהכם די בירושלם	of the house of your-God who (is) in-Jerusalem
v. 19	קדם אלה ירושלם	before the "God of Jerusalem."

In addition to the epithets "God of Israel" and "God of Jerusalem," the deity is also called "God of Heaven" (אלה שמיא, 7:12, 21, and twice in 23).

Although these passages locate Yahweh in Zion or Jerusalem, the first name Yahweh never appears in the formula DN-of-GN in which the GN refers to Jerusalem. There is no good Jerusalem counterpart (i.e., Yahweh-of-Jerusalem) to Yahweh-of-Samaria or Yahweh-of-Teman. At best, if we ignore the Masoretic punctuation, Isaiah 60:14 could be translated, "they will call you, 'the city of Yahweh-of-Zion//the-Holy-One-of-Israel'" (ויקראו לך עיר יהוה ציון קדש ישראל). However, turning Yahweh-of-Zion into a divine name followed by the

128 Cross, "Cave Inscriptions," 301; Lemaire, "Prières en temps de crise," 559; and Joseph Naveh, "Old Hebrew Inscriptions in a Burial Cave," *IEJ* 13 (1963): 84.

129 Lemaire, "Prières en temps de crise," 559; Naveh, "Old Hebrew Inscriptions," 84; cf. Cross, "Cave Inscriptions," 301. Dobbs-Allsopp et al. follow Cross's reading, whereas Aḥituv does not indicate a preferred reading, and in 2001 Naveh maintained his own reading (Dobbs-Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 128; Shmuel Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*: *Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period*, trans. A. F. Rainey [Jerusalem: Carta, 2008], 233–235; and Joseph Naveh, "Hebrew Graffiti from the First Temple Period," *IEJ* 51 [2001]: 197).

epithet "the Holy One of Israel" is not a satisfying translation because it minimizes the role of the city in this verse. This artificial emendation should be rejected because the current Masoretic punctuation provides a more balanced unit, setting up a city-deity pattern in each colon: City-of-Yahweh = Zion-of-the-Holy-One-of-Israel.

Nevertheless, as we have seen in chapter 4.1, there are alternative formulas that express the relationship between deities and their cities, so we should consider whether there are any such formulas connecting Yahweh with Jerusalem. Of the three alternative full name formulas used for the various Ištar goddesses in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions (i.e., title-of-GN, DN//title-of-GN, and DN//Who-Resides-(in)-GN), none of them can be found in the Hebrew Bible as a potential Yahweh full name. Only a combination of two formulas DN//title-of-GN, where "title" here represents "God" (אלהי־), and DN-(Who)-Resides-(in)-GN resembles any pattern that could potentially be considered a Yahweh full name. As the following analysis and discussion demonstrate, there is no compelling instance of a Yahweh full name that places the deity in Jerusalem.

In response to his examination of Yahwistic epithets from the fifth-century Aramaic texts at Elephantine (see Table 6.1 and Map 1), Bezalel Porten notes several comparable epithets from the Hebrew Bible. For example, the Yahweh full names and epithets Yahweh-of-Hosts, Yahweh//God, and "God of Heaven" were common to both the Elephantine texts and the Hebrew Bible.[130] Other epithets from Elephantine that located the deity in the local Elephantine temple, (e.g., YHW//the-God in-the-Elephantine-Fortress [יהו אלהא ביב בירתא]; YHW//the-God-(who)-resides-(in)-the-Elephantine-Fortress [יהו אלהא שכנ יב ברתא]) inspired Porten to consider various biblical analogies: Yahweh//(who)-resides-(in)-Jerusalem (יהוה ... שכן ירושלם, Psalm 135:21)[131]; Yahweh-of-Hosts//(Who)-resides in-Mount Zion" (יהוה צבאות השכן בהר ציון, Isaiah 8:18); and Yahweh//your-God//(Who)-resides in-Zion (יהוה אלהיכם שכן בציון, Joel 4:17),

130 Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, 106–109.

131 Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, 107. The epithet that Porten cites in Psalm 135:21 does not immediately follow the divine name Yahweh because the phrase "from-Zion" (מציון) separates them. Porten probably associates "from-Zion" with the phrase "blessed is" (ברוך) at the beginning of the verse, which he would translate as something along the lines of "Blessed is Yahweh, (he) who resides (in) Jerusalem, from Zion" (ברוך יהוה מציון שכן ירושלם). This sentence structure (i.e., verb / subject / prepositional-phrase) is also found in Psalm 110:2; 128:5; and 134:3:

Verse:	Hebrew:	Literal Translation:	Idiomatic English Translation:
110:2	ישלח יהוה מציון	Will-send Yahweh from-Zion	Yahweh will send from Zion
128:5	יברכך יהוה מציון	May-bless-you Yahweh from-Zion	May Yahweh bless you from Zion

among others.[132] I should stress that Porten was not proposing these as Yahweh full names; he was only noting them as epithets because of their structural resemblance to those discovered at Elephantine.

Because these epithets somewhat resemble a combination of the full name formulas found in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, we, too, should consider them as potential Yahweh full names, if only for argument's sake. In particular, Joel 4:17 and 21 and Psalm 135:21 each contain the participial form of the verbal root ש-כ-ן ("to reside/dwell"), which corresponds to the Akkadian *āšib/āšibat-*.[133] Even if we allow for the combined formula, DN//title//Who-Resides-(in)-GN, none of these examples matches the Neo-Assyrian models. In Joel 4:17, the divine name is separated from the geographic name by the *bet*-locative preposition: Yahweh//your-God (who)-resides in-Zion. A *bet*-locative also interrupts the (who)-resides element from the geographic element in v. 21: Yahweh (who)-resides in-Zion (יהוה שכן בציון). Finally, in Psalm 135:21, the formula is again interrupted by another geographic element: Yahweh from-Zion (who)-resides-(in)-Jerusalem. None of these three verses provides a good correspondence to the Akkadian formula DN//Who-Resides-(in)-GN. Two contain a *bet*-locative phrase that interrupts the potential full name, and the third is interrupted by yet another prepositional phrase.

Although the Yahweh whose cult site was in Jerusalem was not known by any full names that included the geographic last name Jerusalem or Zion, the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts was closely associated with the cult in Jerusalem and should be considered as a possible reference to a specific Yahweh deity.

Verse:	Hebrew:	Literal Translation:	Idiomatic English Translation:
134:3	יברכך יהוה מציון עשה שמים וארץ	May-bless-you Yahweh from-Zion maker of-heaven and-earth	May Yahweh maker of heaven and earth bless you from Zion
135:21	ברוך יהוה מציון שכן ירושלם	Blessed-is Yahweh from-Zion Who-resides (in)-Jerusalem	Blessed from Zion is Yahweh who resides in Jerusalem.

Notably, like Psalm 135:21, 134:3 has an epithet after the "from-Zion" phrase that describes Yahweh. Regardless of how the syntax of Psalm 135:21 is parsed, however, the inclusion of the phrase "from-Zion" interrupts the potential full name formula DN//Who-Resides-(in)-GN (i.e., Yahweh//Who-Resides-(in)-Jerusalem), which would resemble the formulas used to name goddesses in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions.

132 None of these texts (i.e., Joel 4:17 and 21; Isaiah 8:18; and *TAD* B3.12:2) represent an actual Yahweh full name (Allen, "Examination," 77–78).

133 According to Tryggve Mettinger, ש-כ-ן ("to reside/dwell") is more generalized in its usage with the divine name than is its synonym י-ש-ב ("to sit/dwell/reside"), which is used to designate Yahweh's sitting upon his cherubim throne (Tryggve Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth*: *Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies*, trans. F. Cryer [Lund: Willin & Dalholm, 1982], 94).

According to Tryggve Mettinger, Yahweh-of-Hosts comprises two nouns in a construct chain, so grammatically it resembles the standard pattern, but as a non-geographic word it more closely resembles the non-geographic Hittite divine epithets used for LAMMA deities and other classes of gods (e.g., ^{d}LAMMA-^{kuš}*kuršaš*, The-tutelary-deity-of-the-hunting-bag; see also Tables 2.4 and 2.5).[134] This genitive relationship between the two nouns seems to be presupposed by the occasional Greek translation of the name: Κυρίον τῶν δυνάμεων, (Lord-of-Hosts, e.g., 2 Samuel 6:2).[135] However, Mettinger's grammatical interpretation of this Yahweh full name is only one of several possibilities. Other proposed interpretations include treating the name as two nouns in apposition (i.e., "Yahweh, the-Hosts"); as a nominal sentence (i.e., "Yahweh [is] the-Hosts"); and as a sentence in which the name Yahweh is reinterpreted as the verb (i.e., "He who creates the [heavenly] hosts/armies").[136] Whatever the grammatical and syntactical meaning of the name, Isaiah 47:4 explicitly identifies Yahweh-of-Hosts as divine full name when it states "Yahweh-of-Hosts is his name" (יהוה צבאות שמו), and Amos 4:13 and 5:27 indicate to us that the epithet and title "God" (אלהי־) can interrupt the full name without significantly altering the meaning: "Yahweh//God-of-Hosts is his name" (יהוה אלהי־צבאות שמו).[137] With this addition of "God" (אלהי־), Yahweh//God-of-Hosts syntactically resembles the full name formula DN//title-of-GN and the full name Ištar//Lady-of-Nineveh.[138]

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134 Tryggve Mettinger, *In Search of God*: *the Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names*, trans. F. Cryer (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988), 135; and McMahon, *Hittite State Cult*, 4–5. Mettinger and Emerton both claim that the Yahweh DN-of-GN names at Kuntillet 'Ajrud reinforce this interpretation of the grammatical relationship between Yahweh and Hosts as comprising a construction chain (Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 135; and Emerton, "New Light," 8).

135 H.-J. Zobel, "ṣ^{e}*b̲ā*'*ôt̲*," *TDOT* (2003), 12:219.

136 Matitiahu Tsevat, "Studies in the Book of Samuel," *HUCA* 36 (1965): 55; Zobel, "ṣebā'ôt," 219; van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 914; Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 70; and Cross, "Yahweh and the God," 252–256. Cross rejected the possibility that Yahweh-of-Hosts could be a construct chain and the possibility that it could be an adjective or participle because Hosts is plural and does not agree with the singular Yahweh. Emerton, however, approved of the construct chain interpretation in light of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud texts (Emerton, "New Light," 8). As van der Toorn points out, there are several verbal roots from various different languages that could be behind the name Yahweh (van der Toorn, "Yahweh," 915–916), which means that interpreting Yahweh-of-Hosts as a sentence has at least as many possible translation values as the meaning of the word Yahweh itself has.

137 See also Isaiah 48:2; 51:15; and 54:5; and Jeremiah 10:16; 31:35; 32:18; 46:18; 48:15; 50:34; and 51:57.

138 Although I have treated Yahweh//God-of-Hosts as a lengthened form of the name Yahweh-of-Hosts, the name Yahweh-of-Hosts could also be viewed as an abbreviated form of Yahweh//God-of-Hosts.

By Mettinger's count, the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts occurs 284 times in the Hebrew Bible, and the full name is most commonly associated with the cults at the Israelite shrine in Shiloh and the Judahite shrine in Jerusalem.[139] Mettinger, J. P. Ross, and H.-J. Zobel each locate the origins of the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts in the cult at Shiloh because of the references to the deity (1 Samuel 1:3 and 11) and the Ark of the Covenant (4:4) there during Samuel's life.[140] However, once David moved the Ark to Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 6, most of the biblical attestations of the full name appear in Judahite rather than Israelite contexts.[141] Approximately half of the attestations of Yahweh-of-Hosts occur in collections of the Judahite prophets Isaiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.[142] Ross notes that the northern prophets Elijah and Elisha only used the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts four times, and Zobel considers the reference in Hosea 12:6 a later insertion.[143] Thus, even though the name Yahweh-of-Hosts has an Israelite origin, it was eventually more widespread in a Jerusalemite context; at least, this is what the extant biblical evidence that passed through Judahite hands suggests. The name Yahweh-of-Hosts is also attested in four extra-biblical texts, one of which is in Hebrew, and the others are in Aramaic.[144]

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139 Tryggve Mettinger, "Yahweh Zebaoth," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, eds. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 920; J. P. Ross, "Jahweh ṢᴱB̲Ā'ÔT̲ in Samuel and Psalms," *VT* 17 [1967]: 82; Tsevat, "Studies," 49; and Zobel, "ṣebā'ôt," 215.

140 Mettinger, *In Search of God*, 149; Ross, "Jahweh," 80; and Zobel, "ṣebā'ôt," 222. Ross suggests that the god "Hosts" was originally a Canaanite deity at the Shiloh cult because 1 Samuel 1:4 is the first biblical occurrence of the name Yahweh-of-Host (Ross, "Jahweh," 79).

141 Citing 1 Samuel 4:4, William Albright argued that the name Yahweh-of-Host could not be conceptually severed from the Ark of the Covenant (Albright, "L'épithète divine Jahvé Seba'ôt," 378).

142 Mettinger, "Yahweh Zebaoth," 921. Because the name Yahweh-of-Hosts appears less frequently in Ezekiel, the Deuteronomistic History, and the Torah, Mettinger concludes that this full name was most popular in Jerusalem prior to the exile.

143 Ross, "Jahweh ṢᴱB̲Ā'ÔT̲," 82 and 91; and Zobel, "ṣebā'ôt," 227 and n. 94.

144 The Hebrew text is unprovenanced, but because its script resembles the script of the Khirbet el-Qôm inscription, it has been similarly dated to the first half of the seventh century (Dobbs-Allsopp, et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions*, 575). The inscription, a curse against Ḥarip, consists of two lines: צבאת [2]ליהוה חגב בנ חרפ [1]ארר (“Cursed be Ḥarip, the son of Ḥagab, by Yahweh-of-Hosts," *Nav** 1:1–2). The three Aramaic texts are from the Elephantine ostraca dating to the fifth century, and Yahweh's first name is spelled YHH in each (Porten, *Archives from Elephantine*, 106). In contrast to the strong relationship between Yahweh-of-Hosts and Jerusalem/Zion in the Bible, nothing from these three ostraca indicates that this Yahweh-of-Hosts should be disassociated from the Elephantine Fortress and the Yahweh temple (אגרא/בית) there. These three attestations of the name could suggest that the Elephantine Yahwists were from Judah rather than Israel.

When used as a common noun in Hebrew, צבא means "army, war, warfare," which is why צבאות has traditionally been translated as "Hosts" in reference to the heavenly armies accompanying Yahweh or to his earthly Israelite armies.[145] However, Mettinger, Ross, and Zobel agree that as a divine name Yahweh-of-Hosts acts more royally than militarily in the epithet.[146] According to Ross, the royal aspect of the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts is most apparent in Psalm 84, which praises the deity who dwells in Zion without any significant military language.[147] This psalm praises Yahweh-of-Hosts (vv. 2, 4, 9, and 13) as the one who is "my king and my God" (מלכי ואלהי, v. 4), who is "God in Zion" (אלהים בציון, v. 8), and in whose courts a day is a thousand times better than anywhere else (v. 11).[148] The closest the psalm comes to anything martial is the mention

145 BDB, צבא mng. 1–2 and 4; and Tryggve Mettinger, "YHWH Sabaoth – The Heavenly King on the Cherubim Throne," in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and other Essays*: *Papers Read at the International Symposium for Biblical Studies*, *Tokyo*, *5–7 December*, *1979*, ed. T. Ishida (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1979), 109–110.

146 Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 24; Ross, "Jahweh," 84; and Zobel, "ṣebā'ôt," 224. Mettinger lists more than 20 instances in which Yahweh-of-Hosts is depicted as a king (Exodus 15:18; Isaiah 24:33; 33:22; 52:7; Jeremiah 8:19; Micah 4:7; Zephaniah 3:15; Zechariah 14:9, 16, 17; and Psalms 10:16; 48:3; 68:25; 74:12; 84:4; 93:1; 95:3; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; 146:10; and 149:2), along with another dozen setting him on a throne with Zion-based theology (Isaiah 6:1; 66:1; Jeremiah 3:17; 17:12; Ezekiel 1:26; and Psalm 9:5 and 8; 47:9; 89:15; 93:2; and 103:19; Mettinger, *Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 24).

Ross claims that the strongest military connotations for Yahweh-of-Hosts is 1 Samuel 17:45, where David explains that Yahweh-of-Hosts//the-God-of-the-Ranks-of-Israel (יהוה צבאות אלהי מערכות ישראל) is a superior weapon to Goliath's sword, spear, and javelin (Ross, "Jahweh," 81), although he notes that this passage could be a later writer applying a popular etymology to the divine name. The most militaristic occurrence of the full name in the Psalms is Psalm 24:8, where the deity is praised as Yahweh//Hero-of-Battle (יהוה גבור מלחמה) and later called Yahweh-of-Hosts in v. 10 (ibid., 88). The author of Samuel prefers to present Yahweh as a divine king rather than a military general, but Yahweh-of-Hosts occurs relatively infrequently in Samuel and Kings and only in a non-royal context in 1 Samuel 17:45 (ibid., 83 and 89). Other verses that place Yahweh-of-Hosts in military contexts include Isaiah 1:24 and 21:10 and Zephaniah 2:9. Although Yahweh is not called Yahweh-of-Hosts in Numbers 10:24, this verse has been offered as a parallel to Yahweh-of-Hosts because of its earthly war associations (see, for example, Milgrom, *Numbers*, 81).

147 Ross, "Jahweh," 87.

148 Other Zion psalms include Psalm 46 and 48. The name Zion is not used in the former psalm, but Yahweh-of-Hosts appears in vv. 8 and 12. Zion appears three times in the latter psalm (vv. 3, 12, and 13), and Yahweh-of-Hosts appears in v. 9. Both of these psalms describe the deity as a refuge for the troubled. Psalm 46:10 proclaims that Yahweh-of-Hosts will put an end to wars by breaking bows and shattering spears, whereas Psalm 48 drops military language in favor of a discussion of Zion's defenses: citadels (vv. 3 and 14), towers (v.13), and ramparts (v. 14).

of shields (מגן) in vv. 10 and 12. Similarly, Isaiah's vision of Yahweh-of-Hosts in the temple in Jerusalem pictures him as accompanied by a heavenly court:

> [1]בשנת־מות המלך עזיהו ואראה את־אדני ישב על־כסא רם ונשא ושוליו מלאים את־ההיכל [2]שרפים עמדים ממעל לו ...
> [3]וקרא זה אל־זה ואמר קדוש קדוש קדוש יהוה צבאות מלא כל־הארץ כבודו
>
> In the year when the king Uzziah died, I saw my lord sitting upon a high and lofted throne, his robes' filling the temple, (and) seraphim standing around him ... each calling to one another, "Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh-of-Hosts. His glory fills the earth." (Isaiah 6:1–3)

Isaiah's famous vision depicts a Yahweh-of-Hosts who is decked out in royal robes that spill into the earthly temple and who is surrounded by a chorus of heavenly beings, praising the king (v. 3) and helping visitors prepare for their audience with him (v. 6).[149] By locating this vision in the temple in the capital city of Jerusalem, Isaiah presents the Jerusalem temple as an *axis mundi* that connected the heavens with earth.[150] Because Isaiah described the temple as the place where Yahweh-of-Hosts' robes rest below his throne, the temple was no longer merely a building wherein a deity resides but a portal between the divine and human worlds.[151]

Perhaps this interconnectedness between the divine full name Yahweh-of-Hosts and the temple in Zion/Jerusalem prevented the development of Yahweh-of-Jerusalem and Yahweh-of-Zion as divine full names. Indeed, the complete absence of a simple DN-of-GN formulation for these potential Yahweh full names suggests that, even though the divine name Yahweh appears in the Hebrew Bible over 6000 times, the deity was never known as Yahweh-of-Jerusalem or Yahweh-of-Zion. Theoretically, later scribes could have excised these full names from the biblical tradition, but we might expect that at least one vestigial Yahweh-of-Jerusalem or Yahweh-of-Zion full name would have

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149 A similar description of the heavenly court is presented in 1 Kings 22:19, in which (the unspecified) Yahweh sits on his throne with "all the Host-of-Heaven standing alongside him, on his right and left" (וכל־צבא שמים עמד עליו מימינו ומשאלו). Whereas those functioning as attendants are named seraphim in Isaiah 6:2 and the Host-of-Heaven ("Host" is singular) in 1 Kings 22:21 (and "the spirit" [הרוח], who is among the Host-of-Heaven, answers Yahweh's question in v. 21), in both instances, the attendants are described as standing around or beside Yahweh. For a fuller treatment of the beings who comprise the Hosts-of-Heaven and survey of scholarship on the topic, see Zobel, "ṣebāʾôt," 218–220.

150 Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai & Zion*: *An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1985), 122.

151 Mettinger also identifies Amos 1:2 and Psalm 11, 14, and 24 as passages reinforcing this *axis mundi* aspect of the Zion/Jerusalem and Yahweh-of-Hosts complex (Mettinger, "Yahweh Zebaoth," 923).

been left behind (comparable to the potential Yahweh-of-Sinai in Judges 5:5) or that either of these names would have eventually appeared among the extra-biblical Hebrew and Aramaic texts. We now have an extra-biblical attestation of the name Yahweh-of-Samaria from Kuntillet ʻAjrud even though we have no explicit extant reference to a temple to Yahweh in Samaria, but we do not have a single reference to Yahweh-of-Jerusalem or Yahweh-of-Zion.

This complete absence of geographic last names in biblical texts, supposing we reject the Judges 5:5 proposed by Aḥituv, Eshel, and Meshel, could indicate that the biblical authors envisioned a singular Yahweh. This would be especially true for those authors living after Jerusalem became the only legitimate Yahwistic cult site. If Yahweh's only legitimate temple was in Jerusalem, or if Yahweh's name or glory resided in the temple in Jerusalem while Yahweh himself resided in heaven, then there was no need to distinguish this Yahwistic cult and its deity from others that lacked legitimately from a state sponsor, especially after the fall of Israel and Samaria in the late eighth century.[152] Unlike the numerous Ištar goddesses and Baal deities whose geographic last names were indispensable to their identification, a singular or incomparable Yahweh needed no geographic markings from a Jerusalemite or Judahite perspective. The full name Yahweh-of-Hosts did not locate the deity but extolled his character, so the name did not reinforce the idea that the deity's sovereignty was limited geographically or was confined to the earthly realm in the same way that the names Yahweh-of-Jerusalem and Yahweh-of-Zion might have.

Those post-exilic biblical texts that explicitly locate Yahweh in Jerusalem or as the deity associated with Jerusalem are credited to the Persian kings Cyrus and Artaxerxes. Each king acknowledged that Yahweh was the God who was in heaven, but each also located the deity specifically in Jerusalem.[153] In Cyrus's decree, the deity is first mentioned as Yahweh//God-of-Heaven (Ezra

152 Weinfeld noted that the Deuteronomistic Historian does not envision Yahweh as dwelling in the temple in Jerusalem; rather, Yahweh is in heaven (e.g., 1 Kings 8:17–20, 30, 39, 43–44, and 48–49), and "Yahweh's name" is in the temple (שם יהוה, vv. 17 and 20; שמי, "my name," vv.18 and 19; שמך, "your name," vv. 44 and 48; Moshe Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992], 193). Similarly, the Priestly scribes and Ezekiel expressed Yahweh's earthly presence with his glory's presence (e.g., Exodus 16:10; 29:43; Numbers 14:10; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6; and Ezekiel 8:4; 11:23; 43:4–5; and 44:4; Mettinger, "YHWH Sabaoth," 137).

153 Blenkinsopp notes that the epithet "God of Heaven" corresponds to an epithet used for the Zoroastrian deity Ahura Mazda, but he further notes, however, that we do not know with certainty that Cyrus was a Zoroastrian (Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Ezra-Nehemiah*: *A Commentary*, Old Testament Library [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988], 75).

1:2), then as Yahweh//God-of-Israel and the-God//Who-(is) in-Jerusalem (v. 3). Because the pronouns, verbs, and pronominal suffixes in vv. 2–4 are all masculine singular, each of these three divine names or epithets can be interpreted as referring to the same deity: Yahweh//God-of-Heaven was Yahweh//God-of-Israel, who was also the-God//Who-(is) in-Jerusalem. Likewise, in Artaxerxes's letter, Ezra's deity, who was mentioned as "the God of Heaven" at the beginning of the letter (7:12) and identified as Yahweh by the narrator in the previous verse (v. 11), was "the God of Jerusalem" (7:19; with variations in vv. 15, 16, and 17). In both instances, the deity's relationship with the to-be-rebuilt temple in Jerusalem was of primary importance. The association is made between the deity and the city, but no proper name is attested in the biblical texts.

Similarly, the Judeao-Arameans living in fifth-century Elephantine at the first cataract of the Nile occasionally referred to their deity Yahweh (spelled either YHW or YHH) as "God of Heaven" and as the deity residing in the local temple.[154] Of the slightly more than three dozen occurrences of the divine name Yahweh in the Elephantine corpus (excluding the theophoric element in personal names), eight mention (the unspecified) Yahweh; sixteen mention Yahweh//the-God; two mention Yahweh//God-of-Heaven; three mention Yahweh-of-Hosts; and ten associate Yahweh with Elephantine (יב; see Tables 6.1 and 6.2).[155] For example, in *TAD* A4.7, the deity was identified as Yahweh//

154 Angela Rohrmoser describes the populations who revered Yahweh in Elephantine as "Judäo-Aramäer" because these Yahwists likely arrived there from Syria, Samaria, and Judah between the eighth and fifth centuries (Angela Rohrmoser, *Götter, Tempel und Kult der Judäo-Aramäer von Elephantine: Archäologische und schriftliche Zeugnisse aus dem persezeitlichen Ägypten*, AOAT 396 [Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014], 374; see also Botta, "Outlook," 368–369, who contrasts Aramean and Jew, with the former serving as "an ethnic-administrative designation," wheveras the latter is "an ethnic-communal designation"). The worship of Yahweh in fifth-century Elephantine differed both from the Yahwism of the monarchic period in Samaria and Judah and the Yahwism of contemporary Jerusalem. Rohrmoser notes, for example, that Syrian or Samarian populations in Elephantine brought with them the worship of Anat and Ašim(a) in the late eighth century, which is to say that these Yahwists should not be identified as monotrous or monotheists and that they were more religiously tolerant of non-Yahweh deities than their contemporaries in Judah who had recently returned from exile in Babylon.

155 A handful of texts use more than one Yahweh divine name, and none give us reason to assume that multiple Yahweh deities are intended. For example, the late fifth-century text *TAD* A4.3 names Yahweh//the-God in l. 1 and "God of Heaven" in ll. 2–3. This alternation of divine names is quite reminiscent of those in Cyrus's decree and Artaxerxes's letter, especially because one epithet is "God of Heaven" and the other identifies the deity as Yahweh. A second letter, *TAD* A4.7, first refers to the deity "God of Heaven" (l. 2), then as Yahweh//Lord-of-Heaven (l. 15), and finally as Yahweh//God-of-Heaven (ll. 27–28; A4.8, a duplicate of this text,

the-God three times (ll. 6, 24, and 26), one of which is immediately followed by "who (is) in the Elephantine Fortress" (יהו אלהא זי ביב בירתא, l. 6). Also common to Cyrus and Artaxerxes and the Elephantine archives is the use of the *bet*-locative to place the deity in his residence.

6.5 Yahweh and the *bet*-Locative

Over the past thirty years, the role of the *bet*-locative has become a central issue in analyzing divine full names in Northwest Semitic texts. In the wake of the discovery of the full names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman at Kuntillet ʿAjrud, scholars began looking for other potential localized Yahweh deities, but because the divine name Yahweh never occurs in a construct chain with a geographic name in the biblical texts, alternative divine name formulas were sought. In addition to the standard name formula DN-of-GN examined in chapters 3 through 5, the three alternative formulas introduced in chapter 4 include DN//Who-Resides-(in)-GN, title-of-GN, and DN//title-of-GN. As already mentioned, the first of these has no exact correspondence in the Hebrew Bible, but if we designate "God" (either אל־ or אלהי־) as the title in these formulas, then representatives of these two remaining alternatives – title-of-GN and DN//title-of-GN – can be found in the Hebrew Bible and at Elephantine. These representatives include Yahweh//God-of-Israel (e.g., 2 Chronicles 32:17) and "God of Jerusalem" (i.e., v. 19).[156] Despite the fact that Yahweh//God-of-Israel and "God of Jerusalem" parallel their contemporary Neo-Assyrian divine name formulas, I am unaware of scholars who interpret such references as potential names for a localized Yahweh deity. Instead, they prefer interpreting the word "Israel" in the epithet "God of Israel" as an ethnic name rather than geographic one and dismiss "God of Jerusalem" as an epithet for the previously named Yahweh. Finding no satisfactory biblical parallel to the Neo-Assyrian full

contains more lacunae, and the divine names found within it are not included in the tallies above).

156 This attestation of "God of Jerusalem" in 2 Chronicles 32:19 belongs to a summary of the words spoken by Sennacherib's men meant to undermine the Jerusalemites' confidence in their god Yahweh. For a full list of "God of Israel" and Yahweh//God-of-Israel in the Bible, see אלהי־ nos. 1254–1370, 1375–1404, 1426–1432, and 1569 (Abraham Even-Shoshan, *A New Concordance of the Bible*: *Thesaurus of the Language of the Bible*, *Hebrew and Aramaic*, *Roots*, *Words*, *Proper Names Phrases and Synonyms* [Jerusalem: Kiryat-Sefer, 1998], 72). For Yahweh-of-Hosts//God-of-Israel, see אלהי־ nos. 1452–1488; for "God of Heaven," see אלהי־ nos. 1180–1187. Psalm 68:36 and 136:26 use the element אל־ in the title-of-GN formula, producing "God of Israel" and "God of Heaven."

names, scholars have instead explored the few instances in the Hebrew Bible where the name Yahweh is followed by a geographic name contained in a *bet*-locative phrase.

In the endnotes of his study of embedded god lists in state treaties, Barré considers the various alternatives to the standard DN-of-GN formula.[157] In addition to DN-of-GN, he proposes three alternatives for Northwest Semitic divine names: the *bet*-locative DN-in-GN (e.g., Tannit-in-Lebanon, *KAI* 81:1), a variant on the *bet*-locative DN//Who-Resides-in-GN (e.g., Yahweh//Who-Resides-in-Zion, Joel 4:21), and DN//title-of-GN (e.g., Melqart//Lord-of-Tyre, *KAI* 47:1).[158] Of Barré's alternatives, the last one resembles the naming of localized Ištar goddesses in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, but in no instance does the DN-in-GN formula or DN//Who-Resides-in-GN formula serve as divine full name in Hebrew or in Northwest Semitic texts. Furthermore, these two formulas never contrast the named deity with another full-named deity who shares that first name.

Of Barré's proposed alternatives, McCarter is especially attracted to the DN-in-GN option because, he says, "[i]n Biblical Hebrew the expression DN *b*-GN ('DN-in-GN') seems to be equivalent to DN GN at 'Ajrud."[159] Using the DN-in-GN formula, McCarter retranslates Psalm 99:2, a verse already noted by Barré, so that the verse praises the deity Yahweh-in-Zion:

יהוה בציון גדול ורם הוא על־כל־העמים

> Yahweh-in-Zion is great! And he is exalted above all other gods! (Psalm 99:2, McCarter's translation, modified slightly)[160]

The words יהוה בציון גדול have traditionally been interpreted as a nominative sentence, and it makes perfect sense as one: "Yahweh is great in Zion." This

157 Barré, *God-List*, 186 n. 473. He also includes DN-from-GN as a variant form of DN-of-GN, so that Psalm 135:21 is reinterpreted as blessing Yahweh-from-Zion//Who-Resides-(in)-Jerusalem (יהוה מציון שכן ירושלם). This proposed *min*-locative divine name, like the *bet*-locative divine name examined here, should be rejected.

158 Barré also has a variant form of the DN-in-GN formula in which the *bet*-locative is replaced by a locative *he* that has been suffixed to the GN. He provides textual examples representing the same proposed divine name Milk-in-ʻAštart: *mlk bʻṯtrt* (*KTU*^{2} 1.107.42) and *mlk* ʻ*ṯtrth* (*KTU*^{2} 1.100:41; Barré, *God-List*, 186 n. 473). Smith provides an updated catalogue of potential divine-full-name formulas that, in addition to the Northwest Semitic, Ugaritic, and Akkadian names listed by Barré, includes Eblaite, Egyptian, and Epigraphic South Arabian divine names and their respective geographic names (Smith, "Problem of the God," 208–218). Smith's list of *bet*-locative possibilities can be found on pp. 214–215.

159 McCarter, "Aspects," 140.

160 McCarter, "Aspects," 141.

is precisely how NJPS, NRSV, and KJV all interpret and translate the phrase (allowing, of course, for the traditional English use of "the LORD" as a substitution for the divine name). As noted above, several psalms, classical prophets, and historical passages link Yahweh with Mount Zion in Jerusalem, such as Psalm 110:2; 128:5; 134:3; 135:21; and Joel 4:17–21. In Psalm 99:2, Yahweh is praised as the one in-Zion, but this seems to be a reference to the same deity who is called (the unspecified) Yahweh in the previous verse. Put another way, specifically in a way that rejects the idea that in Zion is Yahweh's last name, (the unspecified) Yahweh of v. 1 is the same deity as the Yahweh in v. 2 who has been located in-Zion. Verse 1's Yahweh is the king before whom the people tremble and who sits on a cherubim throne. In vv. 5, 8, and twice in 9, this deity is praised as Yahweh//our-God, and throughout the psalm all the pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and suffixes are masculine singular (the person switches between third and second person in the psalm), indicating that these different references to Yahweh all refer to a single, individual deity. Psalm 99, like numerous other psalms, locates Yahweh in Zion, but it makes no attempt to distinguish its Yahweh of interest from any other Yahweh who might be located outside of Zion.

The syntax of Psalm 99:2 also suggests that Yahweh and in-Zion should be interpreted as two distinct parts of the sentence rather than one. In other passages that contain similar elements – i.e., a name, a *bet*-locative phrase, and an adjective (specifically גדול) – the *bet*-locative phrase cannot be interpreted as part of the name, even when it follows the divine name. For instance, in Esther 9:4, in the phrase גדול מרדכי בבית המלך ("Mordecai was great in the king's house"), the person Mordecai is said to be an important figure within the palace administration. He has not been renamed Mordecai-in-the-king's-house, a man who also happens to be great. This verse is different from Psalm 99:2 because it involves a personal name followed by the *bet*-locative phrase rather than a divine name, but this difference is superficial and should not be discounted because the syntax is the same.[161]

There are several other verses containing the proposed divine name Yahweh-in-Zion in which a *bet* functions with non-locative purposes, and these too should be rejected as potential divine names. For example, the divine name Yahweh is followed by in-Zion in two other verses where the *bet* in the sentence functions as the direct object marker for the verb: בחר יהוה בציון ("Yahweh chose Zion," Psalm 132:13), and שכח יהוה בציון ("Yahweh forgot Zion," Lamentations

161 Although proper names do not appear in Psalm 76:2 and Malachi 1:11, the syntax of the *bet*-locative is comparable to that contained in Psalm 99:2 and Esther 9:4 (Allen, "Examination," 70–71).

2:6). In both verses, if the phrase in-Zion were interpreted as an element in a Yahweh deity's full name, the sentences would be grammatically complete, but the meaning of the sentences would be incomplete: "Yahweh-in-Zion chose" and "Yahweh-in-Zion forgot." Reading Psalm 99:2 in light of its own internal contexts and compared to the syntax of similar verses makes accepting the proposed Yahweh-in-Zion as a Yahweh full name highly problematic. Like all other proposed *bet*-locative full names found in Northwest Semitic texts, "Yahweh in Zion" does not function like a full name. Yahweh's devotees at the Jerusalem/Zion cult knew a deity named Yahweh, but they did not know this deity by the name Yahweh-in-Zion.

McCarter also suggests the possible divine name Yahweh-in-Hebron, which is invoked by Absalom in 2 Samuel 15:7.[162] After his lengthy house arrest, David's son asks his father for permission to return to Hebron so that he may fulfill the vow that he had had made to a Yahweh deity:

[7]אלכה נא ואשלם את־נדרי אשר נדרתי ליהוה בחברון [8]כי־נדר נדר עבדך
בשבתי בגשור בארם לאמר אם־ישיב ישיבני יהוה ירושלם ועבדתי את־יהוה

> "Let me go fulfill the vow I made to Yahweh-in-Hebron, for your servant made a vow when I was living in Aram-geshur, as follows: 'If Yahweh will bring me back to Jerusalem, I shall serve Yahweh!'" (2 Samuel 15:7–8, McCarter's translation)[163]

McCarter correctly argues that in-Hebron cannot refer to the place where the vow had been made because that took place in Aram-geshur, which is in the opposite direction from Jerusalem than Hebron. Neither can in-Hebron refer to where Absalom wants to go and fulfill his vow because, as McCarter notes, "it is most awkward as a modifier of 'Let me go.'"[164] The *bet*-locative phrase in-Hebron in v. 7 is, indeed, an awkward modifier for "Let me go" because we would expect to-Hebron (ל/אל־חברון) to accompany the verb "go." However, the verse makes more sense if we understand the phrase as modifying "and I will fulfill" (ואשלם): "and I will fulfill my vow … in Hebron." Because McCarter incorrectly associates in-Hebron with the wrong verb, his resulting interpretation is awkward, forcing him into the only option remaining for in-Hebron, one that modifies Yahweh: "Although Yahweh is worshipped in Jerusalem, Absalom has to go to Hebron to fulfill his vow, because it was to the

162 Smith also spends a few pages exploring the possibility of a deity known as Yahweh-in-Hebron (Smith, "Problem of the God," 241–243).

163 McCarter, "Aspects," 141. McCarter does *not* entertain the possibility that Absalom named Yahweh-of-Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 15:8, so that the verse might be translated, "If Yahweh-of-Jerusalem will bring me back, I will serve Yahweh."

164 McCarter, "Aspects," 141.

Hebronite Yahweh (*yhwh bḥbrwn*) that the vow was made."[165] Rather, these verses make more sense when Yahweh is understood as (the unspecified) non-localized Yahweh deity.

Because Absalom's vow predates the cultic reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, there were no restrictions preventing where he could legitimately worship Yahweh. Absalom's decision to worship Yahweh in Hebron, where David had reigned for several years before relocating his capital to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:5) and where Absalom is said to have been born (3:3), is likely due to his familial ties to that local cult. McCarter is undoubtedly correct that Absalom's vow was cult specific in much the same way that the fines imposed in Neo-Assyrian legal transactions were paid to deities who were explicitly connected to a city or temple cult (e.g., SAA 6 87; see chapter 4.1). His treatment of in-Hebron as a geographic last name for the deity Yahweh, however, is not the best or easiest solution. Absalom makes his vow to a Yahweh who is worshipped in Hebron, whom he mentions three times in these two verses as (the unspecified) Yahweh, but he did not know this deity as Yahweh-in-Hebron.

Even if we momentarily consider the possibility that Absalom did identify (the twice unspecified) Yahweh in 2 Samuel 15:8 with a deity that he knew as Yahweh-in-Hebron in v. 7, this identification is still problematic in light of our examination in chapters 4 and 5 of the various localized Ištar goddesses and Baal deities in roughly contemporaneous texts. In order to consider whether a localized Ištar or Baal full name represented an independent and distinct deity, we must determine whether the deity's geographic last name serves as an integral aspect of that deity's identity. Ištar-of-Arbela is considered an independent and distinct goddess from Ištar-of-Nineveh and other localized Ištar goddesses precisely because her geographic last name was indispensable to her identity. Her full name was used when she was the only goddess whose first name was Ištar in an embedded god list or in a prophetic oracle (e.g., *BIWA* 278 Fuchs, IIT:104; 286 Fuchs, IIT:148 and 152; and 288 Fuchs IIT:164; and SAA 9 7 and 9). Moreover, she was often called Ištar-of-Arbela when she was the only goddess mentioned in a text (e.g., SAA 9 2.3). Similarly, we consider Baal-of-Ugarit distinct from both Baal-of-Ṣapun and Baal-of-Aleppo because he was treated as though he was distinct from these other Baal deities in the ritual texts. As shown in chapter 5.2, Baal-of-Ṣapun and Baal-of-Ugarit each received their own offerings in *KTU*^{2} 1.109:32–34, and Baal-of-Ugarit and Baal-of-Aleppo each received their own offerings in an earlier section of the

165 McCarter, "Aspects," 141.

tablet (l. 16). In contrast, because Absalom never treated Yahweh-in-Hebron (2 Samuel 15:7) as a distinct deity from (the unspecified) Yahweh (v. 8) or any other potential localized Yahweh deity, and because Hebron does not seem to define this deity in any particular way in other texts, we cannot consider Yahweh-in-Hebron an independent or distinct Yahweh. If Absalom had vowed to make a sacrifice to Yahweh-in-Hebron – or better yet, Yahweh-of-Hebron (יהוה חברון) – *and* to Yahweh-of-Hosts, or an otherwise unattested Yahweh-of-Jerusalem or Yahweh-of-Zion, only then would we argue for potential localized Yahweh deities using 2 Samuel 15:7–8 as a proof text. Even though Absalom did not give an offering to a deity whom he called Yahweh-in-Hebron, these two verses do tell us that Hebron was once home to a local Yahwistic cult, a cult that might have been where Israel's elders made their covenant with David before Yahweh (5:3). Yahweh was in Hebron, but there was no localized entity Yahweh-in-Hebron.

Other divine names with the proposed DN-in-GN formula that Barré and McCarter mention include Tannit-in-Lebanon (*KAI* 81:1), Astarte-in-Sidon (*KAI* 14:16), and Dagan-in-Ashdod (1 Samuel 5:5).[166] The proposed divine name Tannit-in-Lebanon has already been discussed in chapter 5.6, and it should be rejected as a divine name for several reasons. Neither *KAI* 81 nor any other text contrasts a localized Tannit-in-Lebanon goddess with any other Tannit goddess. Also, this Punic text from Carthage only names two deities, and Tannit is the second of the two, so it is impossible to determine whether the *bet*-locative is intended for just Tannit or for both goddesses. "To the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit who *are* in Lebanon: new temples" is just as reasonable a translation of לרבת לעשתרת ולתנת בלבנן מקדשם חדשם as is "to the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit, who *is* in Lebanon: "new temples." If the text listed a third or fourth deity, then we could derive an embedded god list and determine how similar or dissimilar Tannit's treatment is compared to the others. If Tannit were the second of four deities and the only deity associated with a *bet*-locative phrase, this unique aspect would better favor the interpretation that Tannit-in-Lebanon was considered a full name by the scribe. Alternatively, if the two

166 Barré, *God-List*, 186 n. 473; and McCarter, "Aspects," 141; see also Smith, "Problem of the God," 214. In addition to the several potential Ugaritic divine full names that Smith includes in his *bet*-locative/locative *he* listing, he also offers two Phoenician/Punic texts with *bet*-locative phrases that I have not had the opportunity to examine for this article: Astarte-in-Lapethos (*ʿštrt blpš*, Lapethos 6), and Baal-Ḥamān-in-Althiburus (*bʿl ḥmn bʾltbrš*, Hr. Medeine N 1:1; Smith, "Problem of the God," 214–215). An Astarte-in-*GW* (*ʿštrt bgw*) also appears in his list, but this potential divine full name is based upon a reading offered in Krahmalkov's *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary* (p. 391), which differs from that offered in *KAI* 17:2: לעשתרת אש בגו ("Astarte, who is in *GW*"; ibid., 215 n. 62).

divine names had been reversed so that the temples were dedicated "to the ladies, to Tannit in Lebanon and to Astarte: new temples," then it would be clear that in-Lebanon only referred to Tannit and not Astarte. With only two divine names mentioned in *KAI* 81 and with Tannit as the second name, concluding that there was a goddess known as Tannit-in-Lebanon is, at best, tentative and syntactically questionable.

Likewise, there is no doubt that Astarte had a cultic presence in Ṣidon, which is indicated by both Phoenician and biblical evidence. In addition to the fifth-century Ṣidonian text *KAI* 14:16, which mentions that Ešmunazar and his mother Amotastarte (re)built her temple in Ṣidon, 1 Kings 11:5 and 33 (and 2 Kings 23:13) note that the Ṣidonians worshipped Astarte and that Solomon also worshipped her as a result of marrying his many foreign wives. Astarte could have been one of the goddesses whom Kirta had in mind when he addressed "Ašerah-of-Tyre and 'Goddess of Ṣidon'" in his vow in the Ugaritic text the *Kirta Epic* (*'aṯrt . ṣrm w 'ilt . ṣdynm*, *KTU*[2] 1.14 iv 38–39). Regardless, the proposed divine full name Astarte-in-Ṣidon that has been derived from the seventh-century Ammonite text *WSS* 876:2 (Ast⟨arte⟩ in Ṣidon, בצדנ ⟨רת⟩עשת) and *KAI* 14:16 ([Astar]te in Ṣidon//Land-of-the-Sea, ת בצדנ ארצ ימ[עשתר]) is still problematic for syntactic reasons (see chapter 5.6 and Table 5.9). As with Tannit's cultic presence in Lebanon, Astarte's cultic presence in Ṣidon is not in doubt, but the idea that the goddess was known as Astarte-in-Ṣidon is.

The final divine name with a *bet*-locative element that McCarter proposes is Dagan-in-Ashdod. Aside from this proposed attestation in 1 Samuel 5:5, (the unspecified) Dagan appears nine other times in vv. 1–5, three of which indicate that the deity had a cultic presence in Ashdod. Dagan's temple (בית־דגון, vv. 2 and 5) is mentioned twice, and Dagan's priests (כהני דגון, v. 5) are mentioned once. As with the other proposed full names with *bet*-locative elements, nothing in this passage suggests that these first nine unspecified attestations should be contrasted with the proposed Dagan-in-Ashdod at the end of the passage. Moreover, because the passage serves as an etiology for a local priestly custom in the Dagan temple that is practiced "to this day" (עד היום הזה, v. 5), the placement of in-Ashdod as the final thought in the legend makes more sense as a reminder of the story's setting than as the final element in a divine name. 1 Samuel 5 indicates that this custom is unique to the Dagan cult in Ashdod, but he does not contrast this particular Dagan with any other known Dagan deity.

We can conclude with two potential divine full names with a *bet*-locative element, which McCarter does not propose and which resemble the Dagan situation in 1 Samuel 5:5. These are Chemosh-in-Qarḥō ((בקרחה.כמש, *KAI* 181:3) and Chemosh-in-Kerioth (בקרית.כמש, l. 13), which both appear in the Mesha

Inscription.[167] Near the beginning of the inscription, Mesha claimed that he built a "high place" (במת, l. 3) for Chemosh in Qarḥō (ואעש.הבמת.זאת.לכמש.בקרחה, l. 3) because the deity saved him from his enemies. After he defeated and slew the Israelites living in Ataroth (l. 11), Mesha claimed, "I brought the cult object[(?)] from there and I dragged it before Chemosh in Kerioth" ואשב.משמ. את.אראל. דודה.וא[ס]חבה.לפני.כמש.בקרית[13].[12][168] If *bet*-locative phrases were elements found in divine names in Northwest Semitic texts, then Mesha could be thought of as contrasting these two localized Chemosh deities with (the unspecified) Chemosh, who appears in ll. 5, 9, 12, 14, 18, 19, 32, and 33.[169]

167 The city Kerioth is mentioned in Amos 2:2 and Jeremiah 48:24 in oracles delivered against the Moabites.

168 Regarding the "vessels[(?)] of Yahweh" (יהוה.כ[לי], *KAI* 181:17–18), the meaning of אראל is uncertain. The meaning of דודה (l. 12) is also uncertain, although possibilities along the lines of "noun denoting deity or comparable divine being," "defeat," and "champion" have all been offered (*DNWSI*, dwd$_3$ mngs. 1–4). For this reason, the phrase דודה . אראל has simply been translated "cult object[(?)]" here.

169 Gibson suggests that Qarḥō was possibly a city quarter within Diban rather than a distinct town (Gibson, *TSSI* 1, 78), whereas Dearman finds it more likely that Qarḥō was a suburb of Diban with a royal administrative center (Andrew J., "Historical Reconstruction and the Mesha Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman, SBLABS 2 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], 173). If Qarḥō were a royal administrative center, then it makes sense that the king would build a shrine (במת, "high place," l. 3) to Chemosh there. In another inscription, Mesha mentions a "temple of Chemosh" ([מש]בת.כ, Roland E. Murphy and O. Carm, "A Fragment of an Early Moabite Inscription from Dibon," *BASOR* 125 [1952]: 22; [ב]ת.כמש, *TSSI* 1 17:2), which Dearman places in Diban as a separate structure from the high place in the adjacent suburb of Qarḥō (Dearman, "Historical Reconstruction," 229).

A final attestation of the divine name Chemosh appears as the second element in what looks to be a compound divine name, Aštar-Chemosh (עשתר.כמש, l. 17). Gerald Mattingly notes that two general theories have been posited for the compound name Aštar-Chemosh. The first is that Aštar-Chemosh was an Ištar goddess who was Chemosh's consort (Gerold L. Mattingly, "Moabite Religion and the Mesha' Inscription," in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab*, ed. Andrew Dearman, SBLABS 2 [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], 219). The alternative is that this compound name was indicative of the assimilation of the Northwest Semitic male deity Aštar and the national Moabite deity Chemosh (ibid., 221). Because the compound name only appears in *KAI* 181:17, neither theory is certain. If we consider the Assyrian compound names that were listed in the *tākultu*-ritual texts, then the second divine name could be interpreted as defining a (new) divine attribute for the first divine name (Porter, "Anxiety," 237). In this case, Aštar would be redefined in terms of the Moabite deity Chemosh.

Yet another interpretive possibility that has been built upon other Northwest Semitic divine compound names deals with consort relationships. For example, Anat-Bethel (^{d}*a-na-ti-ba-*^{r}*a*$^{\neg}$-[*a-ti*]-^{r}DINGIR$^{\neg meš}$) appears after her (presumably) consort Bethel in King Baal of Tyre's treaty with Esarhaddon (SAA 2 5 iv 6). If Aštar-Chemosh was a female deity, then Anat-Bethel's presence after Bethel could suggest an analogous consort relationship for Aštar-Chemosh and Chemosh. A second compound divine name, which also begins with the name Anat, is Anat-

Chemosh-in-Qarḥō and Chemosh-in-Kerioth could be thought of as independent deities and distinct from (the unspecified) Chemosh, and each would have had his own cult site.[170]

The preferred alternative is that (the unspecified) Chemosh was venerated at both Qarḥō and Kerioth, which is, of course, what is universally accepted. First, Mesha built Chemosh a high place in Qarḥō, and later he brought offerings to that same deity at the cult site at Kerioth, which was several miles from Diban, nearer the Israelite city of Ataroth.[171] Next, Mesha slew the Israelites as an "offering/spectacle for Chemosh" (כמש.רית, l. 12) and brought the cult object (דודה.אראל, l. 12) to Chemosh at Kerioth, at which point Chemosh commanded the king to attack Nebo (l. 14).[172] Moreover, it makes more sense to interpret in-Kerioth as the place in the story to which Mesha dragged (חבה[ס]וא, ll. 12–13) the offering.[173] If either of these potential Chemosh deities had lacked the *bet*-locative element so that the first name Chemosh belonged to a construct chain with Qarḥō or Kerioth, then arguing for their distinctness from (the unspecified) Chemosh would be more tempting. The switch between (the unspecified) Chemosh and Chemosh-Kerioth and back in ll. 11–14, however, would still be suggestive of the identification of these two divine names with each other. Regardless, in each instance, the *bet*-locative makes more sense as a general locative phrase that indicates where these events

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Yahu, who appeared in the late fifth-century Elephantine papyrus text B7.3:3 after a deified Ḥerem and a "place of prostration" (בח[רם.אלה]א.במסגדא.ובענתיהו, "(PN swore) "by Ḥe[rem] the [-god], by the place of prostration, and by Anat-Yahu"). McCarter, however, prefers the restoration א[לה.]בית[הו to א[לה.]בח[רם in this text, which makes Yahu/Yahweh the first deity in a very unusual embedded god list: Yahu (Yahweh) / Place-of-Prostration / Anat-Yahu (McCarter, "Aspects," 154 n. 60). If McCarter were correct, then the divine name Anat-Yahu would serve as further evidence that Aštar-Chemosh was Chemosh's consort, if Aštar was, in fact, a goddess. Recently, Rohrmoser retained Porten's reading, but this does not necessarily alter the consort relationship between Anat-Yahu and Yahu at Elephantine because, she observes, the Judeao-Arameans at Elephantine were not monolatrists or monotheists (Rohrmoser, *Götter, Tempel und Kult*, 426 and 150–151). Another reason to prefer Porten's reading over McCarter's restoration is the fact that this text would contain the only embedded god list that I have encountered that includes the divine name Yahweh.

170 The theoretical Chemosh-Qarḥō: לכמש.קרחה.זאת.הבמת.ואעש[3] ("I built this high place for Chemosh-Qarḥō"). The theoretical Chemosh-Kerioth: כמש.קריתי.לפני.חבה[13]וא[ס].ואראל.דודה.משמ.את.אשב [12] ("I brought from there the cult object[?], and I dragged it before Chemosh-Kerioth," ll. 11–12).

171 Dearman, "Historical Reconstruction," 179.

172 Jackson notes that there is no consensus for the meaning of ריתי in l. 12 (Jackson, "Language," 111–112).

173 This is in contrast to McCarter's evaluation of 2 Samuel 15:7–8, where he argues that in-Hebron makes sense neither as the place where Absalom made his vow nor as the place where he was requesting to go (McCarter, "Aspects," 140–141).

happened than as a geographic element in a distinct localized Chemosh deity's full name.

If we consider the syntax of the *bet*-locative phrases in relation to the divine name Chemosh in the Mesha Inscription (*KAI* 181:3 and 13), we find that they appear at the end of their respective verbal clauses. The divine name Chemosh precedes the *bet*-locatives because the divine name is the indirect object of the verb, not because Chemosh is being defined in relation to the place. Given the typical sentence structure Verb / Subject / Direct-Object / Indirect-Object common to Northwest Semitic languages, the structural patterns we that find in *KAI* 181:3 and 13 are exactly what we should expect.[174] This is also true for in-Ṣidon in WSS 876:2, the various *bet*-locative phrases in *KAI* 14:15–18, the in-Ashdod in 1 Samuel 5:5, and the in-Hebron in 2 Samuel 15:7. The *bet*-locative plays the same syntactic role in each of these texts:

[3]ואעש.הבמת.זאת.לכמש.בקרחה

I built this high place for Chemosh in-Qarḥō. (*KAI* 181:3)

[12]ואשב.משמ.את.אראל. דודה.וא[ס][13]חבה.לפני.כמש.בקרית

I brought from there the cult object[(?)], and I dragged it before Chemosh in-Kerioth. (ll. 12–13)

[1]ש נד[2]ר לעשת בצדנ

That (Abinadab) vowed to Astarte[!] in-Ṣidon. (*WSS* 876:1–2)

[15]בנ אית בת [16]אלנמ אית [בת עשתר]ת בצדנ ארצ ימ ... [17]ואנחנ אש בנ בתמ [18]לאלנ צדנמ בצדנ ארצ ימ

We built the house of the gods, the [house of Astar]te in-Ṣidon//Land-by-the-Sea and we (are the ones) who built houses for the gods of the Ṣidonians in-Ṣidon//Land-by-the-Sea. (*KAI* 14:15–18)

[5]על-כן לא-ידרכו כהני דגון וכל-הבאים בית-דגון על-מפתן דגון באשדוד

Therefore, none of Dagan's priests or anyone entering Dagan's temple tread upon the threshold of Dagan in-Ashdod. (1 Samuel 5:5)

Returning to McCarter's take on 2 Samuel 15:7, we see that its sentence structure also places the *bet*-locative phrase after the indirect object Yahweh.

174 Note also that the six examples of *bet* used in the spatial sense (11.2.5b) in Waltke and O'Connor's *Biblical Hebrew Syntax* have the *bet*-locative phrase at the end (Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 196). *Bet*-prepositional phrases seem to fit well at the end of their clauses after all the important parts of the clause have already been presented.

Repayment is the action, Absalom is the actor, the vow is the direct object, Yahweh is the indirect object, and in-Hebron is the location of the action.

[7]אלכה נא ואשלם את-נדרי אשר נדרתי ליהוה בחברון

Let me go fulfill my vow that I vowed to Yahweh in-Hebron. (2 Samuel 15:7)

This sentence structure is also used in 1 Samuel 1:3 and 2 Kings 23:23:

[3]ועלה האיש ההוא ... להשתחות ולזבח ליהוה צבאות בשלה

That man went up ... to prostrate himself and offer sacrifices to Yahweh-of-Hosts in-Shiloh. (1 Samuel 1:3)[175]

[32]נעשה הפסח הזה ליהוה בירושלם

This Passover was made to Yahweh in-Jerusalem. (2 Kings 23:23)

Furthermore, when there is no verb in the sentence, the *bet*-locative phrase still appears at the end of the thought, such as "in-Lebanon" in *KAI* 81:1 and "on-Hawk-Island" in *KAI* 64:1:

לרבת לעשתרת ולתנת בלבנן מקדשם חדשם

To the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit, (who are/is) in-Lebanon: new temples. (*KAI* 81:1)

לאדנ לבע(ל)שמם באינצמ נצבמ וחנוטמ שנמ 2 איש נדר בע[2]לחנא

To the/my lord, to Baa(l)-Šamêm on-Hawk-Island: (these are) the stele and the 2 *ḥnwṭ* that Baalḥana vowed. (*KAI* 64:1–2)

Bet-locative phrases follow divine names not because they are elements in those divine names; rather, the scribes placed the phrases at the end of their respective clause or phrase in accordance with the customary syntax of Northwest Semitic languages.

Just because a deity was worshipped in or associated with one or more temples in a city, that deity was not necessarily known by that location. According to the *Götteradressbuch* of Assur (GAB) § 4, Nabû had a cultic presence at both Nineveh and Assur (ll. 161–163).[176] Despite this plethora of cultic presences in Assur and the deity's temples in his native Borsippa and

175 In 1902, D. Karl Budde proposed that this Yahweh-in-Shiloh might have served as a divine name that distinguished the local manifestation of Yahweh from that worshipped at other cult sites, namely, Hebron (D. Karl Budde, *Die Bücher Samuel* [Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1902], 4).

176 Menzel, *Assyrische Tempel*, 2:T159, no. 64; George, *Babylonian Topographical Texts*, 179.

Babylon, the deity is not called Nabû-of-Assur in Neo-Assyrian texts as opposed to Nabû-of-Borsippa or Nabû-of-Babylon, and he is definitely not called Nabû-in-Assur; he is simply Nabû. Likewise, just because Dagan had a cultic presence in Ashdod, Tannit had one in Lebanon, and Yahweh had one in Hebron, we should not expect that these deities had divine full names corresponding to those cultic presences. Attestations of DN-of-GN full names for non-Baal deities are relatively rare in Northwest Semitic texts and the Hebrew Bible, yet they do exist. The Kuntillet ʻAjrud texts that mention the divine full names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman could theoretically indicate such a localized phenomenon occurred in ancient Israel, but none of the DN-in-GN names with *bet*-locative phrases that have been proposed are convincing as actual divine full names for syntactic and other methodological reasons.

6.6 Conclusions

Unlike the localized Baal and Ištar full names discussed in chapters 3 through 5, the Yahweh full names discussed in this chapter are never contrasted with each other. Texts that were found in and next to the bench room at the Kuntillet ʻAjrud shrine mention either a Yahweh-of-Samaria (*Meshel* 3.1) or Yahweh-of-Teman (*Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9), but we cannot know who deposited these *ad hoc* inscriptions or what they thought about the localized Yahweh deity that they addressed compared to any other localized Yahweh deity. It is certainly possible that devotees of Yahweh-of-Teman saw the text on Pithos A that invoked Yahweh-of-Samaria (*Meshel* 3.1) after it was deposited in the bench room. It is also possible that the Yahweh-of-Samaria devotee who wrote *Meshel* 3.1 saw the texts on Pithos B (*Meshel* 3.6 and 3.9) in the adjacent room or the ink-on-plaster (*Meshel* 4.1.1) that mentions Yahweh-of-the-Teman. Moreover, it is possible that both localized Yahweh names were revered within the same Israelite communities. Yet, these are only possibilities, and because no text bears more than one Yahweh full name, no positive conclusions about the distinctness of Yahweh deities can be drawn. At most, we can say that *Meshel* 3.9:1–2 seems to identify Yahweh-of-the-Teman with (the unspecified) Yahweh. Three of these texts (i.e., *Meshel* 4.1.1, 3.6, and 3.9) could indicate that Teman represented the biblical Yahweh's mythical (mountain) home just as (the unspecified) Baal of the *Baal Cycle* was at home on Mount Ṣapun, whereas the fourth text strengthens the possibility that a Yahweh had some sort of cultic presence in Samaria.

Potentially both Yahweh-of-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria were revered by Israelites from the northern kingdom, which we know because the personal

names and the texts at Kuntillet ʿAjrud generally conform to northern Israelite orthography. In contrast to northern traditions, the official Judahite Yahweh was known as Yahweh-of-Hosts and was the deity worshipped at the Jerusalemite temple on Mount Zion. Like Yahweh-of-Teman, Yahweh-of-Hosts could be identified with (the unspecified) Yahweh (e.g., Psalm 99), which is also true of the Yahweh revered in Elephantine (see Table 6.2). This indicates either that the identification of these Yahweh deities were not as wrapped up in their geography as were many of their Neo-Assyrian and Levantine counterparts, or it means that each localized Yahweh deity was never envisioned in contrast to any other Yahweh. For example, Yahweh-of-Hosts had a history at Shiloh that predated his placement in Jerusalem, but his associations with Jerusalem and the Davidic Dynasty there became so strong during the monarchic period that Jerusalem came to be viewed as his new mythical home, the *axis mundi* between heaven and earth.

The focus of this chapter has been on Yahweh full names and not on possible additional members of an (official) Israelite or Judahite cultic system, such as his Ašerah (e.g., *Meshel* 4.1.1:1; 3.1:2; 3.6:7; and 3.9:1; and 2 Kings 16:33) or Baal (e.g., 1 Kings 16:32).[177] For this reason, conclusions about whether Israelites or Judahites, whether in official or lay circles, worshipped other deities cannot and should not be drawn from this study. When considering the evidence for potentially distinct localized Yahweh deities, this chapter routinely considered the material in light of both possible monolatrist/monotheistic and possible polytheistic populations. On the one hand, because Yahweh full names do not appear together, there is no evidence that any individual Israelite revered more than one localized Yahweh deity in the same way that Assyrians could and would revere more than one localized Ištar goddess or Northwest Semitic speakers could and would revere more than one localized Baal deity. On the other hand, given the nature and implications of the geographic last name in Assyria and the Levant, we may also conclude that any Assyrian or non-Israelite who might have encountered the divine names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman would have expected that these names represented two distinct localized Yahweh deities.

177 Although the ašerah/Ašerah was addressed in *Meshel* 3.1, 3.6, and 3.9 in the blessing along with the two localized Yahweh deities, this does not necessarily mean that the scribes responsible for these texts considered ašerah/Ašerah a goddess. Tigay observed that the altar in the Second Temple was invoked after the deity in by Rabbi Eliezer, "To Yāh and to you, O Altar!" (M. *Sukkah* 4:5; Jeffrey H. Tigay, "A Second Temple Parallel to the Blessings from Kuntillet ʿAjrud," *IEJ* 40 [1990]: 218). Needless to say Rabbi Eliezer was a monotheist and did not recognize the Temple's altar as divine in and of itself.