

God's name: readable but unpronounceable, why?

Abstract. The understanding of God's name YHWH is so controversial that it is eventually the controversy of controversies, or the ultimate controversy. Indeed, why most of competent Hebrew scholars propagate patently false explanations about God's name? Why do the Jews refuse to read God's name as it is written and read Adonay "my Lord" (a plural of majesty) instead of it? Why God's name is usually punctuated e,â (shewa, qamats) by the Masoretes what makes its reading impossible, because the 4 consonants of the name YHWH must have at least 3 vowels (long or short) to be read, like the words 'aDoNâY and 'eLoHîM "God" (a plural of majesty), which have 4 consonants and 3 vowels? At last, why the obvious reading "Yehowah", according to theophoric names, which all begin by Yehô-, without exception, is so despised, and why the simple biblical meaning, "He will be" from Exodus 3:14, is rejected.

The name of the God of Abraham (written YHWH in Hebrew) is really paradoxical because, despite being the best known God today on earth—he is worshipped by at least one billion Christians and one billion Muslims, and his name is held in high esteem—the Lord's prayer begins by *Let your name be sanctified* and all the Surahs of the Quran (except the 9th) begin by *In the name of God*, it remains an enigma, even for the most brilliant scholars. As a result, for most Christians the name of the God of Abraham is the Lord, for Muslims it is Allah and for Jews it is Adonai. Consequently the first paradox is: most people think it logical of worshiping the same God whereas their God does not even have the same name. Second paradox: most people think logical to use a title for naming God: my Lord (Adonai), Allah (the God), Father, etc., rather than using YeHoWaH, his proper name in the Hebrew Bible. Third paradox: most people think it is logical that the name of the Almighty has been lost, in spite of the fact that most Egyptian gods were able to preserve their names (Râ, Amun, Thoth, Isis, Horus, Aten, etc.), but not the god of the Bible: *Then God said once more to Moses: This is what you are to say to the Israelites, Jehovah the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is how I am to be remembered from generation to generation* (Ex 3:15). I quoted several official translations to illustrate how the scholarly “delirium” performs. Indeed I noticed that, very often, smart people become irrational when they study God's name. For example, given that the information regarding the name YHWH—its pronunciation and meaning, come exclusively from the Bible, one would have to take them into account more than any scholarly guesses, but incredibly it is not the case. Even if you don't know Hebrew, it is very easy to find the pronunciation and meaning of God's name. The (religious)¹ meaning of God's name is 'ehyeh “I shall [prove to] be” according to Exodus 3:15, this verbal form is found just before and just after “I shall [prove to] be with your mouth (Ex 3:12; 4:12)”. This verbal form at the 3rd person singular is “it will [prove to] be (Ec 11:3)”.

How to pronounce God's name? When Jesus read aloud a passage from Isaiah's scroll in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk 4:17-21) he inevitably pronounced the divine name (YHWH), since the quoted passage mentions it: *The spirit of Lord YHWH is on me for YHWH has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the news to the afflicted, to soothe the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison, to proclaim a year of favour from YHWH and a day of vengeance for our God, to comfort all who mourn* (Is 61:1-2). Some sceptics quibble that we do not know exactly how Jesus uttered God's name, which is strictly true (indeed, we unfortunately did not record his reading), but this is also true for all other Hebrew names without exception. However, it is reasonable to assume that the name Jesus (from Iesous in Greek) was pronounced Yehôshûa‘ in Hebrew, often abbreviated as Yeshûa‘ (Yeshû in

¹ Yehowah means nothing in Hebrew because Moses, who obviously knew Hebrew, asked God to know its meaning.

Aramaic), in the same way that John was pronounced Yehôhanan, Jonathan was pronounced Yehônathan, etc. It is easy to see that all theophoric names, which include the divine name YHW- at their beginning, are always pronounced Yehô- (or Yehow-), without exception (or Iô- in the Septuagint because it there is no H in Greek). This elementary observation allows us to deduce that the divine name YHWH had to be pronounced **Yehowah** because all the Hebrew proper names ending in -WH in Hebrew are always read -wah (or -wâ)², again without exception³, like Alwah (Gn 36:40), (Eve) Hawwah (Gn 4:1), Ishwah (Gn 46:17), Iwwah (2R 19:13), Puwah (Nb 26:23) and Tiqwah (2K 22:14). However, this obvious fact only appears in Hebrew because in Aramaic, final gutturals (H, ‘ and ’) were not any more pronounced already in the 3rd century BCE, which has influenced some Greek transcriptions like Eve instead of Hawwah, Iesou instead of Yeshûa, Tekoue instead of Tiqwah, etc., but -weh is never found (except for Yahweh!).

In order to muddle common people, specialists deliberately confuse the great name of God YHWH with its shorten form YH, which appears in the New Testament (Rv 19:1-3) in the famous Hebrew expression “Alleluia” which means “Praise Yah”, not “Praise God” (Alleluel). In the Bible there is a clear distinction between the great name Yehowah (Ps 83:18), the short name Yah (Ps 68:4), which can appear together (Is 12:2, 26:4) and the ancient Hebrew substitute *hû* “He/ Himself” understood⁴ as “[God] Himself”:

Name	MT	LXX	Meaning	Reference
Abihu	Abi-hû	Abi-oud	My Father : He (only)	Ex 6:23; Lv 10:1
Abijah	Abi-yah	Ab-ia	My Father : Yah	1Ch 3:10
Abijah	Abi-yahû	Ab-ia	My Father : Yah-himself	2Ch 13:20
Joab	Yô-ab	Iô-ab	Y(eh)ow (ah) : Father	2Sa 8:16
Jehu	Ye-hu	Ie-ou	Ye (howah) : Himself	1Ch 2:38
Elihu	Eli-hû	Eli-ou	My God : He (only)	Job 32:2,4
Elijah	Eli-yah	El-ia	My God : Yah	Ezr 10:21
Elijah	Eli-yahû	Eli-ou	My God : Yah-himself	1Ki 17:1
Joel	Yô-el	Iô-el	Y(eh)ow (ah) : God	1Ch 5:12

As a result there are three kinds of theophoric names, those having as prefix a part of the great name (YHWH), those having as suffix the short name YH, sometimes with the substitute HW “He” (YHW). A paramount remark concerns the respective place of the great name (Yehowah) and small name (Yah or Yahû) in theophoric names. For example, the famous French rabbi Rashi of Troyes (1040-1105) explains in his commentary on Numbers 26: 5 that all God-bearing names begin with Yehô- or end up with -yah (or yahû): *Therefore, the Holy One, blessed is he, appended His Name to them, the letters of H' [YHWH] at the beginning and Y. [YH] at the end, as if to say “I bear witness for them, that these are the sons of their fathers.” This is stated explicitly by David « the tribes of Yah, testimony to Israel » (Ps. 122:4) —this Name testifies for them regarding their tribes.* There is absolutely no exception, including in the Septuagint, no theophoric name begins with Yah- (or Yahû-) or ends up with -yehô:

Name	LXX	MT	Meaning	Reference
Nathan	Nathan	Nathan	He has given	2Sa 7:2
Nethaniah	Nathan-ias	Nethan-yah	He has given - Yah	1Ch 25:2
Nethaniah	Nathan-iou	Nethan-yahû	He has given - Yah himself	Jr 36:14
Jonathan	Iô-nathan	Yehô-nathan	Yehow [ah] - has given	1Sa 14:6
Jonathan	Iô-nathan	Yô-nathan	Y(eh)ow [ah] - has given	1Sa 14:1
Eliehoenai	El-iô-naï	El-yehô-‘enay	Toward Yehow [ah] my eyes	1Ch 26:3
Eliehoenai	El-iô-naï	El-yô-‘enay	Toward Y(eh)ow [ah] my eyes	1Ch 4:36

² The final H being a vowel it should be noted â. It is for this reason that many authors write Juda instead of Judah.

³ Even the Assyrian name “Nineveh” (Gn 10:11), which is spelled NYNWH in Hebrew, is written ^{𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎶𐎶}NINAKI in cuneiform (probably from NIN.AN “Lady of Heaven”) and is read Ninua in Akkadian or Ninuwa in Mari letters dated 18th century BCE.

⁴ This substitute is sometimes written *hû’ah* or *hû’hâ* at Qumran.

Some grammarians argue that the prefix in theophoric names (Yehô- or Yô-) would not be an abbreviation for Yehowah but would come from a former Yahû because of the phonetic laws (Yahû >> Yehô), in the same way that the name Nabou-chodonosor (LXX) became Nebu-chadnezzar (MT) or Nathanyah became Nethanyah. It is easy to see that this assumption is false because the change of pronunciation (fall of the 1st vowel) took place during the 3rd century BCE, that is why the majority of names in the LXX have kept the old vocalization. Consequently, if the old vocalization of Yehô-nathan was Yahû-nathan we would have had to find Iaou-nathan many times, but there is absolutely none!

The perfectly regular vocalization among more than one thousand theophoric names, as well in the Masoretic text as in the Septuagint, imposes a vocalization "Yehowah" for the Tetragrammaton. If God's name (YHWH) had been vocalized Yahweh, or Yahwoh, as some claim, there should have some theophoric names beginning with Yahw- or Yah- (like Janathan or Jasus for example), yet there are absolutely none, not a single one. Even within the Hebrew proper names in the Bible, God's name remained Yehô-, not Yah or Yahû. For example Eliehoenai (1Ch 26:3) is written El-yehô-‘enay “toward Yehow[ah are] my eyes” in Hebrew (not El-yahû-‘enay) or El-iô-nai in the Septuagint.

Wilhelm Gesenius, who was a renowned German orientalist and Biblical critic, recognized that theophoric names were giving a powerful argument in favour of Yehowah in his *Hebräisches und Chaldäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (1834): *Several consider that יְהוָה (Yah'wah) is the true pronunciation (...) others as Reland (...) following the Samaritans, suppose that יְהוֹה (Yah'weh) was anciently the true pronunciation (...) Also those who consider יְהוֹה (Y'howah) was the actual pronunciation are not altogether without ground on which to defend their opinion. In this way can be abbreviated syllables יְהוֹ (Y'hô) and יְ (Yô), with which many proper names begin, be more satisfactorily explained⁵. It is for this reason that Samuel Cahen, who produced for Jews the first French translation directly from the Hebrew text, began (in 1834) to systematically use the Iehova vocalization (see below) in his French text instead of Eternal.*

139	DEUTÉRONOME. XXXII.	כרבים	קט
2.	Qu'elle ruisselle comme la pluie, ma doctrine ; Que ma parole coule comme la rosée, Comme une averse sur l'arbuste, Comme des torrens d'eau sur l'herbe.	הַל בָּטַל אִמְרִי וְכַרְבִּים עַל עֵשֶׂב הָבִי גֶרֶל לְאַחֲזִיט כִּי כִלְדִּרְכִּי מִשֶּׁטַּט צִדִּיק וְיֵשֶׁר הוּא	2 יֵעָרַף בְּפִטְרֵי לִקְחִי בְּשִׁעֻרִים עַל יְרֵדֶשָׁא 3 כִּי שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא 4 הַעֲזֵר חַמִּים פָּעִל אֵל אֲמִנָה וְאֵין עֵל
3.	Car c'est le nom de Iehova que j'invoque; Apportez de la magnificence à notre Dieu.		
4.	Le rocher ! parfaite est son œuvre ; Car, dans toutes ses voies, juste, Dieu de vérité, sans iniquité, Il est droit, il est intègre.		
<p>(Iar'hi). אֶקְרָא שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא Je veux invoquer ou plutôt célébrer le nom de Iehova. Le Samaritain a בָּשֵׁם comme Isaïe, ch. 12, v. 4; Jérém.,</p> <p>2. יערה — ערה Au propre signifie distiller, laisser tomber des gouttes; en syriaque עורפל signifie nuage, en chaldéen עורפילא une pluie fine; la version samaritaine dit ירסם — רסם En arabe signifie un peu de pluie. Septante « προσέσχετο », qu'il attende ma parole; celui qui attend a le cou (ערה) tendu. La signification probable du mot est donnée par תזל (de בזל) de l'hémistiche suivant, couler, descendre; Voy. Ps. 65, v. 12, et infra, ch. 38, v. 28. Ounklousse et le Ierous-chalmi ont ירסם être suave, agréable; soit qu'ils aient lu יערב ou bien</p>			

Several Jewish translators systematically used the name Jehovah in their translation of the Hebrew Bible⁶ (left below: Joseph Magil, right: Rabbi Lazarus Goldschmidt):

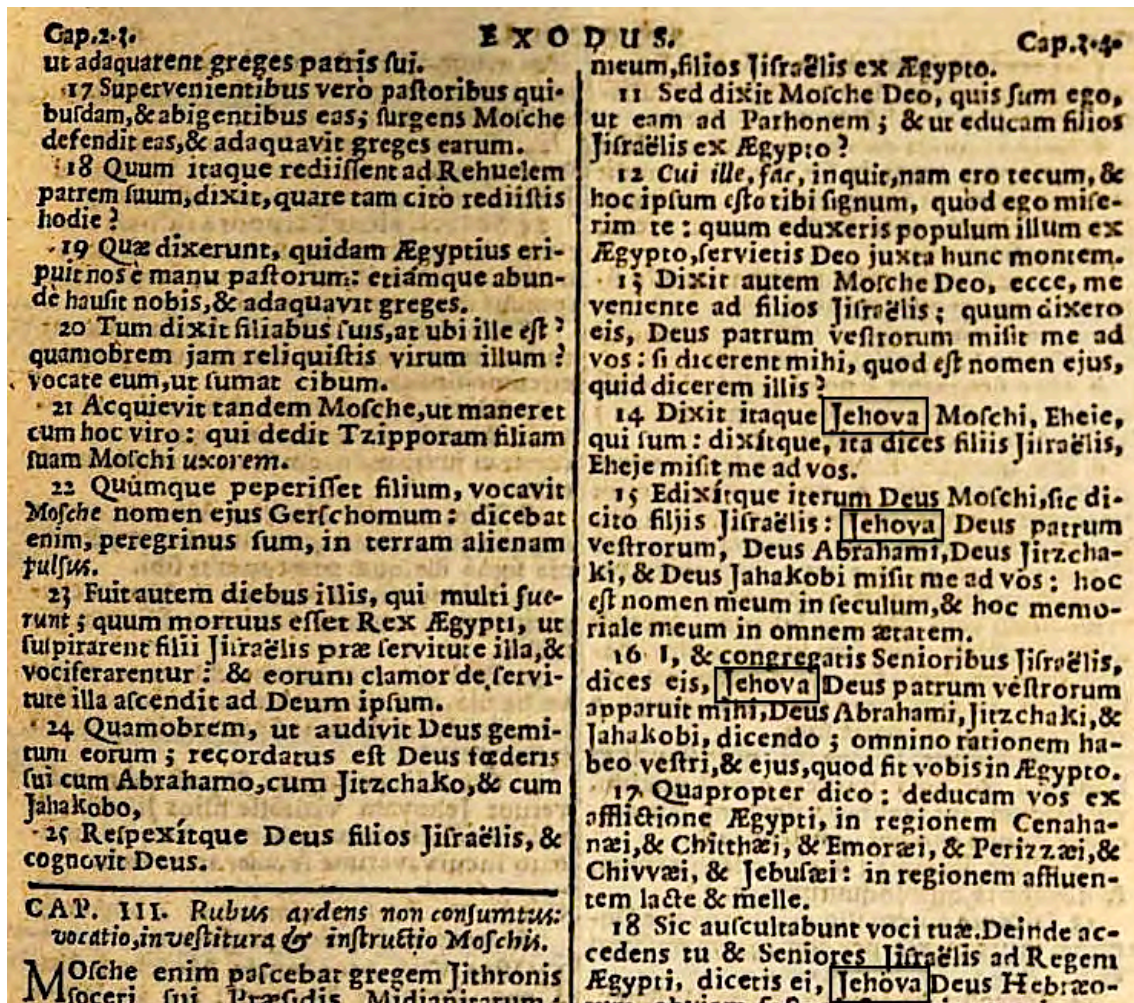
4. Hear, O Israel, Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is one.	4. שִׁמְעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד	Land das Milch fließt und Honig. O Ho- re Jihrael, Jhovah ist unser Gott, Jhe- vah ist einig. Liebe deinen Gott Jhovah
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⁵ H.W.F. GENESIVS—Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament
Grand Rapid, Michigan 1979, Ed. Baker Book House, p. 337.

⁶ J. MAGIL—Magil's Linear School Bible (1910 reprint) 1899 New York, Ed. J. Magil's Publishing Co.

L. GOLDSCHMIDT—Die heiligen Bücher des alten Bundes übertragen durch Vol. 1 (The Holy Books of the Old Covenant, translated by Berlin, Ed. Rosenthal & Co. 1925).

Contrary to a fairly widespread idea, Jewish scholarly authorities acknowledge without difficulty that the name Jehovah is the genuine name of God in Hebrew. For example it can be seen in a technical book written for the Jews⁷, prefaced by the French Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk (1987-2008), that: *the name Ye.bo.va (Jehovah), written with the Hebrew letters Yod, He Vav, He, is considered as the genuine name of God*. Most people ignore this basic truth because Jewish scholarly authorities are much less known than the Jewish religious authorities that teach God's name is Adonay. For example, the Jewish professor J.H. Levy explained in his article published in 1903 in *The Jewish Quarterly Review*⁸ that the vowel-points of the Tetragram (e,o,â) are not those of Adonay (a,o,â) and Yâhû (יהו) is not a real name because the final û (י) is simply the old nominative affix (which means “he”, therefore Yâhû means “Yah [is] He”). He concluded his article: *My solution of that problem may be tersely stated in the words of Isaiah xxxvi. 4: יהוה יהי* “Y’bowah is Yah”. These issues are not new, since some Jewish scholars of the past, who had edited grammars of Hebrew and translated the Bible into Latin, had already used the name Jehovah in their books. For example, Immanuel Tremellius, an Italian Jewish convert to Christianity, who was known as a leading Hebraist and Bible translator⁹, wrote a “Chaldaic” and Syriac grammar (1569) and translated the Hebrew Bible into Latin (1579) in which he systematically used the name Jehova (see below) and did not translate the first Eheie (“I shall be”):



⁷ A.J. KOLATCH – *Le Livre Juif du pourquoi ?* tome 1
Genève 1993, Ed. MJR Editions, pp. IX, 347.

⁸ J.H. LEVY – *The Tetra(?)grammaton*
in: *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (Oct., 1902), pp. 97-99.

⁹ He also translated John Calvin's Geneva Catechism into Hebrew (Paris, 1551).

Baruch Spinoza was a Dutch philosopher and was raised in the Portuguese Jewish community in Amsterdam¹⁰. He too used the name Jehova several times in his Hebrew grammar (*Compendium grammatices linguae hebraeae*), which was published in 1677. Similarly Alexander Harkavy¹¹, who was a lexicographer and linguist, used Jehova several times in his translation of the Bible from the King James version (The Holy Scriptures, 1916). If today the vast majority of people believe that the God of the Bible has no name, but just a title "Lord (Adonay)", or that this name has been lost, it is not the fault of Jewish scholars, but of the Jewish religious leaders condemning those who use God's name (Jehovah). That's why Nehemia Gordon, a Karaite Jew who holds a Master's degree in Biblical Studies from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem¹², published a book *Shattering the Conspiracy of Silence* in which he explains that the fact of not mentioning God's name is unfounded and on the contrary one must pronounce this name Yehovah¹³ (in modern Hebrew).

When Hebraists are asked why they read God's name "Adonay", instead of Yehowah, they usually respond that it is for sake of the Jewish custom inspired by one of the 10 commandments, not to blaspheme God's name. Once again these Hebraists induce people into error because the Torah by no means forbids the pronouncing of God's name, but only not to use it in vain for worthless things: *You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain, for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain* (Exodus 20:7, *The Complete Jewish Bible With Rashi Commentary*). So this custom is not observed by all Jews, it is generally respected in Rabbinism¹⁴, the majority tendency of Judaism, but not in Karaism. This unbiblical practice emerged around the middle of the 2nd century CE. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 101a; 10:1) warns against the magical use of certain biblical quotations such Exodus 15:26, and says that those who do it will not participate in the world to come. The rabbi Abba Saul added (c. 130 CE): *as one who "pronounces the name according to its letters" will not have his share in the world to come*. The term "to pronounce the Name according to its letters" means to pronounce the name as it is written, or according to the sound of its letters which is different of spelling a name according to its letters. Indeed, it was allowed to spell the name YHWH according to its letters, as the Talmud itself does, that is to say in Hebrew: Yod (Y), He (H), Waw (W), He (H); in contrast, it was forbidden to pronounce it according to these letters. In the Talmud the Tetragram is designated by the term *Shem Hamephorash*, which means "the name read distinctly" or "the name read according to its letters". Some Kabbalists claim that the word *mephorash* means "hidden" but, once more, this statement contradicts the sense that the Bible gives to this word: *And they read in the scroll, in the Law of God, distinctly, and gave sense, and they explained the reading to them* (Neh 8: 8, *The Complete Jewish Bible With Rashi Commentary*). The ban of not reading the name of God according to its letters has therefore nothing mysterious or esoteric, it simply means that one should not pronounce the name of God as it is written. For example, the name

¹⁰ He developed highly controversial ideas regarding the authenticity of the Hebrew Bible and the nature of the Divine. The Jewish religious authorities issued a cherem (excommunication) against him, effectively excluding him from Jewish society at age 23. His books were also later put on the Catholic Church's Index of Forbidden Books.

¹¹ He was a Russian-born American writer. After the antisemitic pogroms of 1880 in Russia, Harkavy joined the Jewish Am Olam (Eternal People) back-to-the-land movement.

¹² He was born to a Jewish family of rabbis. He rejected the idea that the Talmud has divine authority and became a Karaite. Nehemia is a native of Chicago but has lived in Jerusalem, Israel since making Aliyah in 1993. Until recently Gordon served on Universal Karaite Judaism's "Religious Council" (which is the lower religious council in the Karaite Organization), and on the Board of Directors of the ancient Karaite synagogue in Jerusalem. He is also a co-founder of the World Karaite Movement, a Karaite revival group. He coordinates aviv searches each year and releases information on the crescent new moon sightings in Israel. From 2007 to 2008, Nehemia Gordon served in the position of senior academic administrator of the Karaite Jewish University. He assisted in the translation of texts contained in The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader, was an assistant on the Dead Sea Scrolls Publication project coordinated by Emanuel Tov, and worked as a researcher on the Hebrew University Bible Project under the auspices of Shemaryahu Talmon.

¹³ N. GORDON – *Shattering the Conspiracy of Silence* Arlington 2012, Ed. Hilkiyah Press, pp. 191-207.

¹⁴ The Rabbanite Jews are the successors of the Pharisees, they consider that the Oral Law (Talmud), which was finally written after 200 CE, is higher than the written law (Torah), in contrast the Karaite Jews (such as the Masoretes) have the opposite point of view.

YHWDH is spelled Y, H, W, D, H and is pronounced, according to its letters: IHUDA (Ihûdâ, Yehûdah in Masoretic Hebrew, Iouda in Greek), because the Y and W are semi-consonants (or semi-vowels noted î and û) and the final H is pronounced â (A) otherwise the letter is inaudible. Similarly, the name YHWH is spelled Y, H, W, H and is pronounced, according to its letters: IHUA (Ihûâ, Yehûah in Masoretic Hebrew, [Ioua] in Greek).

God's name is really an amazing paradox, because despite it being one of the easiest names to read, since it is pronounced as it is written, theologians with the help of grammarians succeeded to convince ordinary people that the pronunciation had been lost and that through their great knowledge they had managed to find again the probable pronunciation of God's name: Yahweh (based on a late Samaritan testimony in Ιαβε) or Yahwoh (from a Greek papyrus of the Septuagint with Ιαω at Qumran). According to Catholic theologians, Jesus had called God "Lord" since we read in the Jerusalem Bible, the official Bible of Catholicism since 1955: *He came to Nazara, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written: The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them: This text is being fulfilled today even while you are listening* (Lk 16-21). What is funny, is that the scroll of the prophet Isaiah is also quoted: *The spirit of Lord Yahweh is on me for Yahweh has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the news to the afflicted, to soothe the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison, to proclaim a year of favour from Yahweh and a day of vengeance for our God, to comfort all who mourn* (Is 61:1-2). The comparison of these two quotes illustrate an absurdity: God's name could not be both "Lord" and "Yahweh".

Translators who claim that all New Testament manuscripts, without exception, have the name "Lord (Kurios in Greek)" are liars, because that name LORD is never written KURIOS in Greek but only ΚΥ, from 150 to 400 CE, in accordance with the principle of sacred names (*nomina sacra*). As a result, if translators wanted to be absolutely faithful to the oldest manuscripts they should write LD, instead of LORD. Before 150 CE there were no New Testament manuscripts (except for a tiny fragment, the P52 dated 125 CE), in contrast all the manuscripts of the Septuagint, which is often quoted in the Gospels, have kept God's name in Hebrew (YHWH) within the Greek text¹⁵, not Kurios. Consequently, the text of Isaiah read by Jesus was: *to proclaim a year of favour from YHWH*. In the first century CE, the prohibition of pronouncing God's name did not exist, on the contrary, in certain special circumstances it was even mandatory to pronounce it aloud, for example when the high priest was in the Temple to deliver the blessing from Numbers 6:24-27 during the Yom Kippur feast. If Jesus used the name, he did it respectfully and never wanted to unnecessarily offend his listeners because in his time the respect of the name had become an obsession. For example, the Talmud says that one should remove the divine name of the jar stamps to preserve the holiness of the Name (Arachin 6a; Shabbat 61b). Similarly, one had to avoid using the name in conversation, as evidenced the following recommendations in a Jewish apocryphal book written around 200-175 BCE: *Do not accustom your mouth to an oath, and do not become used to the naming of the Holy One. For just as a domestic who is constantly scrutinized will not be wanting for a bruise, so also he who swears and always speaks the name will never be cleansed from sin (...) Then as he descended, he raised up his hands over the entire assembly of Israel's sons, to give a blessing of the Lord from his lips and to boast in his name* (Sirach 23:9-10: 50:20). After the 2nd century BCE, the Jews believed that the privilege to

¹⁵ The name Ιαô mentioned in a copy of the Septuagint dated c. 100 BCE corresponds to the Hebrew substitute Yahû "Yah himself".

pronounce God's name was reserved only for the Temple and that one should not disclose the name to foreigners (Greek), as it is written (c. 50 BCE): *And this became a hidden trap for mankind, because men, in bondage to misfortune or to royal authority, bestowed on objects of stone or wood the name that ought not to be shared* (Wisdom of Solomon 14:21). One consequence of this excessive sacralisation of God's name has paved the way for the ban. Indeed, the translators of the Septuagint had already (c. 280 BCE) changed some Bible verses: *And speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them: If a person, a person should curse God, he shall assume guilt. Whoever names the name of YHWH —by death let him be put to death; let the whole congregation of Israel stone him with stones. Whether a guest or a native, when he names YHWH, let him die* (Lv 24:15-16). Paradoxically, as noticed Philo (-25 to +50) in his book on the life of Moses that: *it was worse to name God (in Greek) than even to curse him* (De vita Mosis II:203-206)! During the intermediate period before the destruction of the Temple, the Talmud says that, in the Palestinian liturgy, substitutes were used for the divine name (Sotah 7.6 Tamid 33b). These substitutes were many, as can be seen in the literature of that time (2M 1:24-25; 15:3; Wisdom 23:4; 50:14-19). The usual substitute in the Palestinian liturgy was Adonay in Hebrew (Talmud Sotah 40b 7.6) and sometimes Elohim (Damascus Document XV:1).

Regarding the divine name in the 1st century, Philo give some accurate details: *there was a gold plaque shaped in a ring and bearing 4 engraved characters of a name which had the right to hear and to pronounce in the holy place those ones whose ears and tongue have been purified by wisdom, and nobody else and absolutely nowhere else. And this holy prophet Moses calls the name, a name of four letters, making them perhaps symbols of the primary numbers (...) above this mitre is a golden leaf, on which an engraving of four letters was impressed; by which letters they say that the name of the living God is indicated, since it is not possible that anything that it in existence, should exist without God being invoked; for it is his goodness and his power combined with mercy that is the harmony and unity of all things* (De vita Mosis II:115,132). The testimony of Philo confirms several points: the name of God was still pronounced in the 1st century but only by a small group of people (the priests in the temple), this sacred name was made up of four letters that Philo could not read any more (because it was ancient Hebrew), and he concluded in his comment on Exodus 3:14 that paradoxically God had no proper name (De vita Mosis I:75)! The strange conclusion of Philo is explained by the fact that he did not know Hebrew, but only Greek. Regarding the pronunciation of God's name, Flavius Josephus (37-100 CE) gives a more reliable witness because he was familiar with the Bible and was able to read it in Hebrew (he explained that as belonging to a priestly family he had wanted to become a rabbi), in addition, he wrote all his books in Aramaic then translated them later into Greek (The Jewish War I:3). Contrary to Philo, Josephus says that some Jews (those who spoke Hebrew) knew the proper name of God: *when those people thought they had got clear of the enemy, they snatched from them what they had brought with them, even while they had frequently entreated them, and that by calling upon the tremendous name of God* (The Jewish War V:438). Regarding the pronunciation of God's name, Josephus writes: *The high priest had his head dressed with a tiara of fine linen embroidered with a purple border, and surrounded by another crown in gold which had in relief the sacred letters; these ones are four vowels* (The Jewish War V:235). This description is excellent; moreover, it completes the one found in Exodus 28:36-39. However, as we know, there are no vowels in Hebrew but only consonants. Regrettably, instead of explaining this apparent abnormality, certain commentators influenced by the hypothetical form Yahweh mislead the readers of Josephus by indicating in a note that this reading was "IAUE", which is absurd since the "four sacred letters (tetragrammaton)" had been written in paleo-Hebrew, not in Greek¹⁶. In addition, this reading would imply to read IAUDE in Greek the name YHWDH (Juda) whereas it is read IHUDA (Y^hudah) in Hebrew.

¹⁶ Even in heaven, all proper names, like God's name (Rv 14:1) are still in Hebrew, not in Greek (Rv 9:11).

For those who know the Bible and history (unfortunately a small minority) the comment of Josephus is strictly accurate. The Hebrew language of the 1st century was not vocalized by vowel-points (appeared only after 500 CE), but by “mothers of reading (*mater lectionis*)”, which were used as a basic way for vocalizing names, mainly proper names (as is still the case today in Israel). At Qumran some names are written with a redundancy of these vowels letters. Josephus speaks of *phone-enta* φωνήεντα “sounds¹⁷” which is translated into “vowels”, because a consonant (which means in Latin: *with a sound*) needs a “sound” to be pronounced. For example the letters: *l, m, n, o (...)* *s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z* are pronounced *el, em, en, ô (...)* *es, te, ú, ve, úú, ex, úú, ze*. In old Hebrew, the principle of vocalization was simple and easy to use: in order to pronounce consonants, the Hebrews used the “a” sound, for the sound î/ê, they used the semi-consonant Y (I), for the sound û/ô, the semi-consonant W (U) and for the sound â at the end of names, they used the letter H (A). For example the name David is frequently written DWD (דוד) in Hebrew and vocalized Dawid (דויד), but sometimes it is also written DWYD (דויד) and vocalized Dawîd (דויד). Although this vocalization system is fairly basic it gives good results, which are sometimes closer to the Septuagint's text than to the Masoretic text (highlighted).

Reference	Consonants	Vowel letters	MT	LXX	Not read (MT)
Gn 25:19	YŠHQ	IŠaHaQ	YiŠHaQ	Isaak	YaŠHaQ
Gn 26:34	YHWDYT	IHUDIT	YeHUDIT	Ioudeit	YaHaWeDaYaT
Gn 29:35	YHWDH	IHUDA	YeHUDaH	Iouda	YaHaWeDeH
Gn 46:13	PWH	PUA	PUaH	Poua	PuWeH
Gn 46:17	YŠWH	IŠUA	YiŠWaH	Iesoua	YaŠWeH
Ex 17:9	YHWS'	IHUŠa'	YeHOŠu'a	Iesou	YaHaWeŠu'a
Lv 26:42	Y'QWB	I'aQUB	Ya'aQOB	Iakôb	Ya'aQaWeB
Nb 26:23	PWH	PUA	PuWaH	Poua	PuWeH
Dt 3:21	YHWSW'	IHUŠUa'	YeHOŠU'a	Iesoi	YaHaWeŠU'a
Jos 12:23	GWYM	GUIM	GOYiM	Gôim	GaWaYiM
Jg 10:1	PW'H	PU'A	PU'aH	Poua	Pa'WeH
Jg 16:4	DLYLH	DaLILA	D'eLILaH	Dalila	D'eLILeH
2Sa 12:25	YDYDYH	IDIDIA	YeDIDYaH	Jeddedi	YaDaYaDYeH
1Ch 2:38	YHW'	IHU'	YeHU'	Ieou	YaHaWe'
1Ch 3:5	YRWŠLYM	IRUŠaLIM	YeRUŠaLaiM	Ierousalem	YaRaWeŠaLaiM
1Ch 11:26	DWDW	DUDU	DODO	Dôdô	DaWaDaW
1Ch 24:11	YŠW'	IŠU'a	YeŠU'a	Iesou	YaŠaWe'a
1Ch 27:4	DWDY	DUDI	DODaY	Dôdia	DaWeDaY
Ezk 34:23	DWYD	DUID	DaWID	Daüid	DaWeYaD
2Ch 27:1	YRWŠH	IRUŠA	YeRUŠaH	Ierousa	YaRaWeŠeH
Mesha Stele	YHWH	IHUA	YeHUaH	(Ioua)	YaHaWeH

Generally, specialists in ancient Hebrew consider that this simplistic system was mainly used when the Hebrew language ceased to be spoken (from 539 BCE) but that it did not exist before. For example, they argue that the Tetragram that appears in the Mesha Stele (dated around 850 BCE) was to be vocalized Yahweh or Yahwoh, but absolutely not Ihûâ. Once more, their statements are groundless and worse, they contradict facts. It is true that after their return from exile, many Jews no longer knew Hebrew (Ne 13:24) and it is for this reason that Daniel wrote his book in Aramaic (Dn 2:4), however the books of Ezra and Nehemiah were written in the both languages. The Hebrew language has remained read, written and spoken at least until 200 CE, for example, Bar Kokhba, who died in 135 CE, wrote several letters in Hebrew to his officers. As a result, the statement of Josephus

¹⁷ The Greek word *phone*, which is founded in telephone or phonetic, means “sound”.

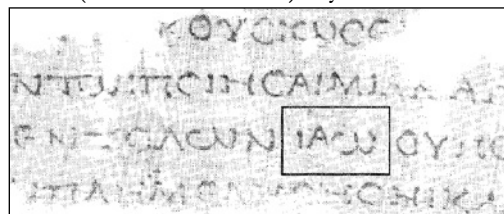
of his knowing the Bible in Hebrew is confirmed. In addition, the orthography of the Aramaic portion of the Tell Fekherye Bilingual¹⁸ (dated around 850 BCE) proves that for a long time three “vowel letters” were used: W for U, Y for I, and H for final A. For example, numerous Aramaic words vocalized into syllabic cuneiform were read “according to their natural reading” in this old inscription, not consonantal¹⁹. As a general rule the ‘natural reading’ was mainly used to vocalize proper names.

Writing	Reading	Not read	Writing	Reading	Not read
ṬBH	ṬaBA	ṬaBeH	BTNWR	BaTaNUr	BaTaNaWaR
TYṬB	ṬiṬaB	ṬaYaṬaB	YGTZR	YiGTiZaR	YaGTiZaR
DMWT	DaMUṬa	DaMaWaṬa	ḌQWR	‘aDaQUr	‘aDaQaWaR
GWGL	GUḠaL	GaWaḠaL	YLQH	YiLQaḠ	YaLQaḠ
LYM	‘aLiM	‘aLaYaM	NHR	NaHaR	NaHaR
ṬSLWTH	ṬaSLUṬa	ṬaSLaWaṬa	LMT	LaMaT	LaMaT
WLKBR	WaLaKaBaR	WaLaKaBaR	RḤMN	RaḤMaN	RaḤMaN

Alphabetic	Syllabic	Akkadian	Not read	MT	LXX	reference
ḤBWR	Ḥa-bur	ḤaBUR	ḤaBaWaR	ḤaBOR	Abôr	2K 18:11
NYRGL	Ne-iri-gal	NIRGaL	NIRGaL	NeRGaL	Nerigêl	2K 17:30
GWZN	Gu-za-ni	GUZaN	GaWaZaN	GOZaN	Gôzan	2K 18:11
HDDSKN	Adad-si-ka-ni	HaDaDSiKaN	HaDaDSiKaN	HaDaD-[-]	Adad-[-]	Gn 36:35
SSNWRY	Šamaš-nu-ri	SaS-NURi	SaS-NaWaRaY	SiS-[-]	Sos-[-]	1Ch 2:40
YBLM	Ye-be-le-‘a-mu	(Egyptian)	Yable‘am	Yible‘am	Ieblaam	Jg 1:27
YHWH	I-eh-u-a	YiHUA	YaHaWeH	Yehowah	Iooa	

Consequently when Josephus explained that God's name was written with four vowel letters, his comments involves the vocalization: Y-H-W-H = I-°H-U-A because the letter H is used as a vowel only at the end of names (the letter aleph ‘ is sometimes used to mark the vowel A within some names). The transcription of this name into Greek has two difficulties: the letter H does not exist in Greek and the brief sound called *shewa* (°) corresponding into English to the apostrophe (') in e'vry (every), is difficult to restore. The translators of the Septuagint have generally transcribed the *shewa* (°) as an epsilon (e) or nothing. Given these difficulties, the Hebrew vocalization of the name I-°H-U-A can be transcribed into Greek as Ieôa (Ιεωα), Ioua (Ιουα) or Iooa (Ιωα), because the Greek sound u was pronounced ü (like the French u) not û (ou).

Have we found some of these Greek transcriptions of God's name (YHWH)? Yes, but unfortunately in very small numbers and above all, what is puzzling, with two kinds of vocalization, one Ieôa/Iôa and another Iaô/Iaoue. Instead of trying to understand this apparent anomaly, experts choose the second (Iaô) arbitrarily assuming that the vocalization I(e)ôa is unreliable. The choice Iaô (Ιαω), used to justify the vocalization Yahwöh, is mainly based on a manuscript of the Septuagint (below) dated around 100 BCE found at Qumran. This vocalization being confirmed (around 50 BCE) by Diodorus of Sicily (90-20 BCE), a Greek historian, and Terentius Varro (116-27 BCE), an ancient Roman scholar and writer. In addition, the famous scholar Jerome (347-419 CE), who translated the Hebrew Bible into Latin, wrote that the Tetragram was pronounced Iaho.



¹⁸ D.N. FREEDMAN, A.D. FORBES, F.I. ANDERSEN – Studies in Hebrew and Aramaic Orthography in: *Biblical and Judaic Studies* vol.2 (Indiana 1992) Ed. University of California, pp. 137-170.

¹⁹ For example the word YHWDH is read IHUDA (vowel letters) in Hebrew but YaHuWDaH (consonantal) in Arabic. Similarly the name YHWHNN is read IeHOHaNaN (John) in Hebrew but YaH(aNaN)yah in Arabic.

It is obvious that Iaô is the Greek transcription of the Hebrew substitute: YHW read Yahû ("Yah himself", which was pronounced "Yahoo") and not the transcription of the Tetragrammaton (YHWH pronounced "Adonay") for the following reasons:

- We would have to admit it strange that Varro and Diodorus who were both pagans and knew neither Hebrew nor the Bible, knew the pronunciation of God's name while the New Testament writers who were Jewish and knew the Bible, even the high priest (Jo 18:15; Ac 9:1-2), did not know its pronunciation! To avoid this absurd conclusion, some claim that the early Christians had replaced God's name by "Lord (*Kurios*)" but this statement generates a new absurdity because the New Testament never mentions such an innovation (which would have been crucial, the least we can say), on the contrary it continues even to mention the short form Yah in the famous expression Alleluia ("Praise Yah"). For example, the apostle John wrote (c. 98 CE): *And I heard a sound like that of many multitudes, and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunders saying, "Hallelujah! For THE LORD JEHOVAH God Almighty reigns* (Revelation 19:6, *Aramaic Bible in Plain English*). In the oldest copies (dated c. 150 CE) it is written in Greek: "Alleluia" and "K̄s (unpronounceable)", not "Praise the Lord" and "Lord".
- The phonetic evolution from Iaô into Iô- is impossible to prove, in contrast, the shortening of I(e)ôa into Iô- (or sometimes Ie- as in "Jesus" or "Jehu") is widely attested in theophoric names. For example the name "John" is written Iôannes in Greek (Rv 1:4) and comes from the Hebrew name Y^ehōḥanan "Yehô[-] has been gracious", which is a combination of two Hebrew words: Y^ehow[ah] and ḥanan "He has been gracious". The first word Y^ehō- has been transcribed Iô- in Greek and the second word ḥanan has been transcribed either *annes* or *annas* (Lk 3:2). Consequently if Iaô (Yahwoh) was God's name, the Hebrew name Yahôḥanan (John) would have been transcribed Ia[ô]annes in Greek or Iannes (i.e. Yann), like in 2 Timothy 3:8 (Jannes). This transformation is impossible since in the Septuagint all names beginning with Y^ehō- are always transcribed Iô- and those beginning with Yah- are transcribed Ia⁻²⁰, without any exception.
- The abbreviation Y^ehowah >> Y^ehow(ah) >> Y^e(h)ow(ah), is well documented in Hebrew, which would correspond in Greek to the following: I(e)ôa >> Iôa >> Iô(a). Similarly, the Hebrew substitute Yahû could be accurately transcribed Iaou or Iaoo/Iaô into Greek. As a result, God's name Y^ehowah, its substitute Yahû and its abbreviation Yah, from Y^e(how)ah, are accurately transcribed into Greek by: I(e)ôa for Y^ehowah (YHWH), Iaô for Yahû (YHW) and Ia for Yah (YH). In contrast, if Yahwoh was God's name, the transcriptions Ieôa and Iôa are impossible to explain (except by magic). In addition some variations in Greek transcriptions can be explained easily in an Aramaic context because in this language the names YHW and YW were pronounced identically before 200 BCE: Yahû and Yaw, since the letter H was inaudible. This fact can be verified in that all theophoric names which ended in *-yahû* in Judaea, where Hebrew was spoken, were written *-yaw* in territories outside Judaea²¹ (Samaria) where Aramaic was spoken. Actually, it is thought that there were two periods for Aramaic: from 700 to 200 BCE there was an official Aramaic, which became from 200 BCE to 200 CE middle Aramaic. Hebrew encountered approximately the same periods when the Hebrew of the second temple became rabbinical Hebrew or Mishnaic Hebrew. The main changes concerned precisely the pronunciation of the letters Y and W (ay >> ê, aw >> ô, hû >> ô/w, êhû >> aw, etc.)²². The end result was that the pronunciation of the letter W in

²⁰ Jahdai (1Ch 2:47); Jahaz (Nb 21:23; Dt 2:32; Jos 21:36; Jg 11:21; 1Ch 6:78; Is 15:4; Jer 48:21,34); Jehalelel (1Ch 19:12).

²¹ A. MENDEL – Épigraphie et paléographie israélites aux IX^{ème} et VIII^{ème} siècles avant notre ère Paris 2003, Ed. Sorbonne, pp. 1-161.

²² J.A. FITZMYER – A Wandering Aramean California 1979 Ed. Scholars Press pp. 61,82 §95,181 §69.

Aramaic varied successively in time: *w* >> *v* >> *h*, rendered in Greek by: *û* >> *ô/ü* >> *h*. For example, the Aramaic word Yaw (יָו), corresponding in Hebrew to Yahû (יְהוּ), progressively became in Greek: (Iaou) >> Iaô >> Iaüe >> Iabe. Furthermore, the existence of the Aramaic substitute Yaw (Yaû), explains an amazing anomaly in the Hebrew numbering system. When the Jews changed their system of numbering between the 3rd and the 1st century BCE (numbers were written in full before), they modified the numbers “fifteen” and “sixteen”. Instead of using YH (10+5) and YW (10+6) to represent these numbers, they used in their place TW (9+6!) and TZ (9+7!).

If biblical experts knew the historical background of the Bible more than its religious background which depends on their religion, they could have easily identified the Greek name Iaô with the ancient Hebrew substitute Yahû, not with God's name Y^ehowah. First of all one should be aware that the Israelites commonly used and pronounced God's name before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, as confirmed by archaeology. For example, some writings dated around 800 BCE have been found At Kuntillet Ajrud,

near the Sinai; they contain either the name YHW or YHWH. The inscription below reads: *to Obadyaw son of Adnah may he be blessed by Yhw* (l'bdyw bn 'dnh brk h' yhw)



One can also read the following sentences: *I bless YOU by Yhw of Samaria and by [his] asherah (brkt 'tkm lyhw Šmrn w'l'srth); I bless you by Yhw of Teman and by [his] asherah ('t brktk lyhw tmn w'l'srth), asherah being a sacred pole, tree or totem (Dt 16:21-22); and let Yhw give unto him as to his heart (wntn lh yhw klbbh); does good, Yhw (hyth lyhw)*

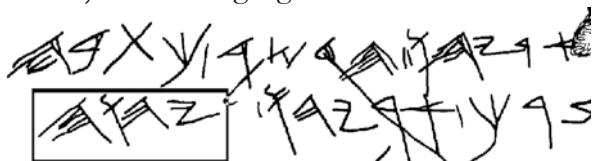


Dated c. 775 BCE, a seal was found with the following inscription: *Miqneyaw servant of Yhw / to Miqneyaw servant of Yhw* (mqnyw 'bd lyhw / lmqnyw 'bd lyhw).



What is noticeable in these inscriptions is that these theophoric names end in *-yaw* and not in *-yahû*. How can this anomaly be explained? The reason is simple: the name *Yaw* was pronounced in fact *yaû*, which is a phonetic equivalent of *yahû*, because the *h* was hardly audible, especially in an Aramaic context. Indeed, one observes this anomaly only in inscriptions found outside Judaea, because in this territory theophoric names were always written with *-yahû* at the end not with *-yaw*. It is thought that Judaeans spoke a more correct Hebrew than the Hebrews of the North (Samaria) whose language was more relaxed. At Khirbet el-Qom, about 30 km south-west of Jerusalem, an epitaph dated c. 750 BCE was discovered, with the inscription:

Uriyahu the rich has written it, blessed be Uriyahu by Yhw ('ryhw h'sr ktbh brk 'ryhw lyhw).



Hebrew inscriptions (dated c. 700 BCE) may be read on the walls of a burial cave at Khirbet Beit Lei near Jerusalem. The Tetragram appears in the following sentences (below left)²³: *Save us [Y]hwh // [Yhwh] the god of the whole earth (...) be merciful forgive Yh Yhwh*. A limestone scaraboid (dated c. 700 BCE) found at Mamillah²⁴, near Jerusalem, reads (below right): *Belonging to Yehowah'shen, daughter of Paqu'oth (יהוהחזן בת פקעת)*. A bullae from Samaria²⁵ (dated c. 690 BCE), reads (right): *[The] name of [Yhwh] on Manasseh (šm yhwh 'l mnšh)*.



Two silver plaques have been found at Ketef Hinnom (near Jerusalem) dated 650-600 BCE. On plaque II there are 3 Tetragrams, both contain the famous priestly blessing²⁶ recited in the temple for Yom Kippur. The exact quotation of Numbers 6:24-26 in an amulet shows that the Bible was known and read since several centuries. As the Bible was read only in the temple and in Hebrew, it is unreasonable to expect finding any evidence outside Israel, because Hecataeus of Abdera, a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher, was the first who mentioned the Bible, he wrote (315-305 BCE): *at the end of their laws there is even appended the statement: These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares unto the Jews.*

Plaque II

1	ה'ו ברוך ה	1.
2	[א] ליהו[ה]	2.
3	העזר ו	3.
4	הגער ב	4.
5	[ר]ע יברך	5.
6	יהוה י	6.
7	שמך	7.
8	יאר יה	8.
9	[ר]ה פניו	9.
10	[אל]יד וי	10.
11	שם לך ש	11.
12	[ל]ם	12.
13		

Plaque I

1	יהו ...	1.
2	...	2.
3	גדל שמר	3.
4	הברית ו	4.
5	[ה]חסד לאהב	5.
6	יו שמרי [מצ]	6.
7	[ותו] ...	7.
8	תה על ג.	8.
9	[ה]ברכה מכל [פ]	9.
10	ח ומהרע	10.
11	כי בו גאל	11.
12	ה כי יהוה	12.
13	[מ]שיבנו [ר]	13.
14	צור יבר	14.
15	י יהוה ו	15.
16	[י]שמך [י]	16.
17	[א]ר יהוה	17.
18	פנ [יר] ...	18.

The priestly blessing (Nb 6:24-26) is highlighted in blue in the translation thereafter:

²³ A few letters are hard to read but the two words Yh Yhwh are clearly legible.

²⁴ R. DEUTSCH – Three Hebrew Seals from the Iron Age Tombs at Mamillah, Jerusalem in: *Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context* (Eisenbrauns 2006), pp. 316-318.

²⁵ R. DEUTSCH – New bullae: "The Name of Yahweh on Manasseh"

in: *Haiyrit Weahyoteha* Vols. 2-3 (Haifa 2002-2003) p. 183.

²⁶ G. BARKAY, A.G. VAUGHN, M.J. LUNDBERG, B. ZUKERMAN – The Amulets from Ketef Hinnom: A New Edition and Evaluation in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 334 (2004) pp. 41-71.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. [may he] be blessed | 1. Yehow[ah ..] |
| 2. [-] by Yehowah | 2. ... |
| 3. the helper and | 3. grea[t .. who keeps] |
| 4. the rebuker of | 4. the covenant and |
| 5. Evil. <i>May bless you</i> | 5. Graciousness toward those who love |
| 6. <i>Yehowah, may</i> | 6. [hi]m and those who keep [his] |
| 7. <i>he keep you</i> | 7. [commandments] ... |
| 8. <i>May he make shine</i> | 8. [?] |
| 9. <i>Yehowah his face</i> | 9. blessing more than any |
| 10. <i>upon you and</i> | 10. [sna]re and more than Evil. |
| 11. <i>grant you</i> | 11. For redemption is in him. |
| 12. <i>peace</i> | 12. For Yehowah |
| 13. | 13. is our restorer [and] |
| 14. | 14. rock. <i>May bless</i> |
| 15. | 15. <i>you Yehowah and</i> |
| 16. | 16. <i>[may he] keep you. [May] he</i> |
| 17. | 17. <i>make shine Yehowah</i> |
| 18. | 18. <i>[his] face [upon you ..]</i> |

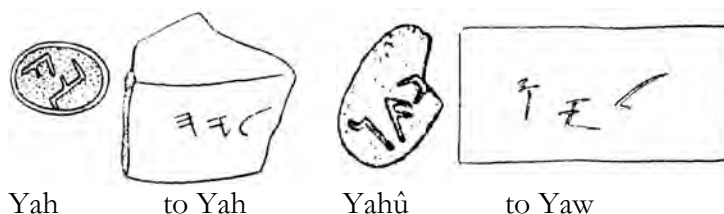
A few ostraca have been discovered at the site of Tell Arad. These texts date from 700 to 600 BCE. For example in ostracon N°18 we find the following text:

1) 'l 'dny.'ly	To my lord Elia-
2) šb.yhwh yš	-shib may Yhwh seek
3) 'l lšlmk.w't	your welfare. And now
4) tn.lšmryhw	give to Shemaryahu
5)	
6)	
7)	
8)	
9) byt.yhwh	temple of Yhwh

A few ostraca of the same period have been found at the site of Lakish dated c. 600 BCE with the following inscription on ostracon N°2 (this inscription agrees with the events which were described in Jeremiah 34:6-7).

1) 'l 'dny.y'wš yšm'	
(1) 2) yhwh 't 'dny. šm't šl	
(2) 3) m.'t kym 't kym my.'bd	
(3) 4) k klb ky.zkr 'dny 't.	
(4) 5) [']bdh.ybkr.yhwh 't'	
(5) 1) To my lord Yoash May 2) Yhwh	
(6) make my lord bear to a news of peace	
3) in this very day, in this very day.	
Who is your servant, 4) a dog, in order	
for my lord to remember his servant? 5)	
May Yhwh allow my lord ...	

Consequently the Tetragram was widely used in daily life until 600 BCE. From an archaeological point of view, the Tetragram disappeared just after the destruction of the first temple (c. 600 BCE), except in the Bible. In the period from 900 to 600 BCE about 40 Tetragrams can be found. Thus, the Tetragram played a major role in worship, even though, as indicated in the Bible, the short name Yah was also used alone. The only difference is with regard to the divine name Yahû, which was never used on its own in the Bible but only at the end of theophoric names. Furthermore the spelling of this name is always *-yahû* in the Bible. The main reason for this exception is that Yahû is a constructed form *Yah-hû*²⁷. As a result, this name was used for less formal occasions as in theophoric names or in engravings on jars. For example, several jars have been found dated around 750 BCE with names Yah and Yahû stamped on them. Notice that these names are sometimes preceded by the Hebraic particle L which means “to, for” implying that these objects were intended for the Temple, perhaps as tithes. In a few cases the name YHW, during the period of the second temple, is surmounted by a Hebrew symbol ש which means “shekel”, that is the collection for the sanctuary (Ex 30:13). During this period there are also some parallel inscriptions of LMLK which means “to the king”. One notices also that the letter H is sometimes written backwards and deformed, imitating its Aramaic equivalent. From this we can conclude that the Aramaic language had to begin influencing the Hebraic language very early, in its pronunciation as well as its writing.



The pronunciation of YHW and YW had to be similar because an engraving found at Tell Djedeideh has the double spelling²⁷ *-yahû/-yan*:

Shebanyahû Azaryahû (שבניהו עזריהו)

Shebanyaw Azaryaw (שבניו עזריאו)

The destruction of the first Temple had significant consequences for worship and later the pronunciation of the Name. As archaeology confirms, before this destruction the Name was widely used by the Hebrews, but, as Maimonides pointed out, it also confirms that the Name did not possess any mystical power. Knowing the proper pronunciation was for the Hebrews neither a material advantage, nor a protection against their enemies. For example, when Pharaoh Necho defeated King Josiah (c. 600 BCE) then established Eliakim “God will raise up” as vassal and perhaps as provocation, changed his name to Jehoiakim “Yehô will raise up”. This proves that Necho knew the great name of the God of the Hebrews (2K 23:34). Some years later, in a similar way and in the same context, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar would establish as vassal King Mattanyah “gift of Yah” and change his name to Zedekiah “rightness of Yah”. This proves that Nebuchadnezzar knew the divine name, but only the more familiar form Yah, and not the form of the great name (2K 24:17).

It is easy to understand the chain of events after the destruction of the Temple. For the Hebrew people it was a terrible humiliation to be defeated by pagans. Likely at this time they took good care in the use of the holy name in order not to profane it (Ezk 36:20,21; Mal 1:6) and they surely remembered previous warnings on the subject (Is 52:5; Am 6:10).

²⁷ J.A. FITZMYER – A Wandering Aramean
California 1979 Ed. Scholars Press pp. 61,82 §95,181 §69.

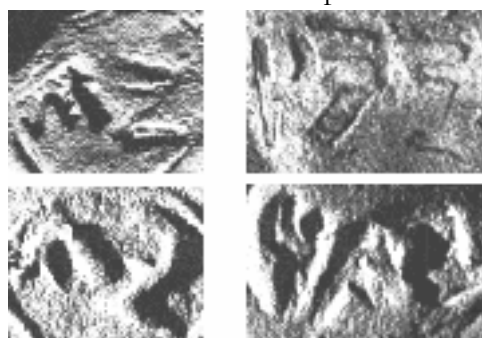
It is noteworthy that after the return from exile even the prophets avoided using the Name with non-Jews. For example, Daniel used the Tetragram (Dn 1:2 9:2-20) but he used several substitutes with non-Jews: *God in the heavens* (Dn 2:28), *Revealer of secrets* (Dn 2:29), *God of heaven* (Dn 2:37,44), *the Most High* (Dn 4:17,24,32), *the heavens* (Dn 4:26). In the same way Ezra (who died around 400 BCE) and Nehemiah used the Tetragram with the Jews (Ezr 3:10,11 8:28,29; Ne 4:14 8:9) but they used several substitutes with non-Jews: *God* (Ezr 5:17), *the great God* (Ezr 5:8), *God of the heavens* (Ezr 5:12; Ne 2:4,20), *God of the heavens and the earth* (Ezr 5:11). Furthermore, these non-Jews no longer used the Tetragram in their answers to the prophets. Cyrus was probably the last (just after 539 BCE) who used the name Jehovah (Ezr 1:2). In the book of Esther there is no Tetragram, but the last book (Malachi) written for the Jews, contains it.

Another very important consequence of the destruction of the first temple is the Jews' 70 years of captivity in Babylonia during which time the people learnt Aramaic. Thus, from this period some parts of the Bible were written in this language (Dn 2:4-7:28; Ezr 4:8-6:18 7:12-28). Therefore, when the Jews came back to Jerusalem, many of them had forgotten their mother tongue (Ne 13:24). Hence, to make the Bible more readable, around 450 BCE, Ezra changed the old Hebrew characters into Aramaic characters or "modern Hebrew" (Talmud Sanhedrin 21b) and to help the people to understand, read the text and explained it (Ezr 7:6; Ne 8:8,9). On the other hand, the old Hebrew style was retained by the Samaritans in their writings (Ezr 4:7-10).

Despite the fact that the Jews of the time of Ezra had abandoned their former writing, paleo-Hebrew, to square Hebrew characters, they continued, out of nostalgia, to use the former script for prestigious inscriptions such as coins, seals, and of course to write the divine names. However, the

influence of Aramaic, which affected slightly the pronunciation of Hebrew also affected its writing²⁸. One can moreover observe, in the study (above) of inscriptions on stamps and seals, a wide variety of shapes in paleo-Hebrew²⁹. This variety is less evident on the seals than on the stamps. No doubt, this conservatism in seals exists because they were made by professional "printers". Among the hundred jars with the divine names stamped on them, dated between 500 and 300 BCE, about 60 have the name YH and 40 the name YHW³⁰. At first, these stamps were read Yah (YH) and Yahû (YHW), but under the influence of Israeli specialists, all these stamps are now both read Yehud YH and YHD despite two implausibilities³¹: the name YHD (Yehud) would have been shortened into YH (= Yehud!), which is unprecedented, and the province of Yehud would

Stamps	Seals	
י	ד	d
ה	ו	w
י	ח	h
ו	י	y



²⁸ N. AVIGAD - A New Class of Yehud Stamps
in: *I.E.J.* vol.7 n°3 1957 pp. 146-153.

²⁹ C.C. MCCOWN - Tell En-Nasbeh, Archaeological and Historical Results
New Haven 1947 Ed A.S.O.R. pp. 156-174 pl. 57.

³⁰ Y. AHARONI - Excavations at Ramath Rahel 1954
in: *I.E.J.* vol.6 n°3 (1956) pp. 144-151.

Y. AHARONI - Excavations at Ramath Rahel 1961-62
Roma 1964 Ed. Centro di studi semitici pp. 20-46 pl.19,20.

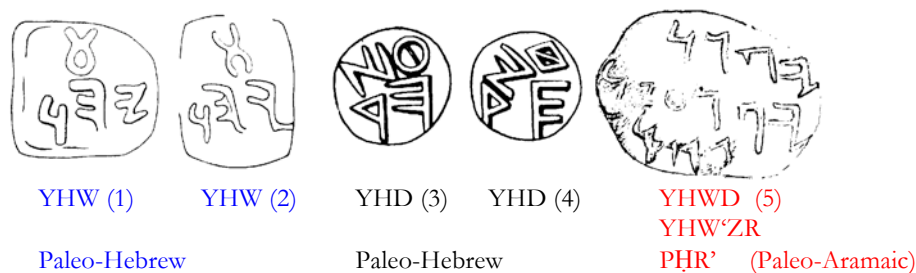
³¹ C.E. CARTER - The Emergence of Yehud in the Persian Period
in: *J.SOT* n°294 (1999, Sheffield Academic Press), pp. 22-29.

have appeared around 750 BCE, date of the oldest inscriptions, whereas historically the province has appeared only after 539 BCE³² because after the fall of Jerusalem (587 BCE), the province of Judea was governed by inspectors or superintendents not by governors.

An Aramaic seal³³ (opposite figure), dated c. 550 BCE, with the inscription: *Inspector of Judaea* (LPQD YHD), shows the precision of biblical terms, because the Bible makes a distinction between the inspector's title PQD (*paqid*), which Gedaliah received (2K 25:19-23) and the governor's title PHH (*pehah*), that was first received by Zerubbabel (Hg 1:14) then by all his successors (Ne 5:15). This inscription is easy to read, because the two letters D and W cannot be confused. Although Babylonians may have preferred to use the expression Yehud (YHD) for the name Yehudah (YHWDH), the Jews of Egypt, on the other hand, from the 5th to 3rd century BCE, preferred to write this name in "full writing" as YHWDH or YHWD, but rarely YHD³⁴. In addition, one would have to suppose that there was an evolution of the writing of the proper name YHWDH in full writing read Yehûdâ, as on Arad (ostracon n°40)³⁵, dated around 750 BCE, into the name Yehud (YHD)³⁶ written defectively, which goes against normal evolution and would constitute a unique event of reverse evolution. Then, it would be necessary to suppose that the Jews preferred in this case to use a foreign script, paleo-Aramaic, rather than their own paleo-Hebrew³⁷. This would be contrary to the fact that, out of nationalism, the Jews always favoured their former type of writing, paleo-Hebrew, on their coins, at least until Bar-Kochba's revolt in 135 CE.



The resemblance between the Aramaic name Yehud (YHD) and the Hebrew name Yahû (YHW) certainly favoured the emergence of the Hebrew name Yehud (Judea) on stamps and coins, because, as seen, this defective spelling in Hebrew is abnormal. Furthermore, when in observing the chronological frequency of these two names, one notices that, at about the 3rd century BCE, there is a reversal of the trend, with inscriptions of Yehud (YHD) replacing inscriptions of Yahû (YHW). The confusion in reading between Yahû and Yehud began when coins that actually were marked Yehud (YHD/ YHWDH) were found. For example, at present all the stamps below (1 to 5) are read Yehud!



³² After the fall of Babylon the jurisdictional district of Judah (Ezr 5:8) with its governors appeared (Hg 1:1). One can note that the Hebrew name Yehudah (Ezr 4:6) is pronounced Yehud in Aramaic (Ezr 7:14).

³³ A. CAQUOT - Charges et fonctions en Syrie-Palestine

in: Comptes rendus de Janvier-Mars 1986 (Paris. Éd. Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres), pp. 305-307.

³⁴ B. PORTEN A. YARDENI - Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, 1 Letters.

1989 Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. 67-70.

B. PORTEN A. YARDENI - Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, 3 Literature

1993 Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. 258-259.

³⁵ G.I. DAVIES - Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions, Corpus and Concordance

Cambridge 1991 Ed. Cambridge University Press, pp. 25,364-365.

³⁶ J. NAVEH - The Development of the Aramaic Script

in: *Proceedings of the Israel academy of sciences and humanities* vol.5 Jerusalem 1976 pp. 1-59.

³⁷ U. RAPPAPORT - The First Judean Coinage

in: *Journal of Jewish Studies* 32 (1981), pp. 1-17.

J. NAVEH - Early History of the Alphabet

Jerusalem 1982 Ed. The Magnes Press pp. 112-119.

Even without being an expert, one can note an aberration in reading. Stamps n°3 and 4 are read YeHuD (YHD) because they are written in paleo-Hebrew³⁸. Stamp n°5 is read YeHUD (YHWD) because it is written in paleo-Aramaic. By observing closely, one sees that the shape of the letter H is different, yet this shape is typical because at this time there is no confusion of letters in paleo-Aramaic³⁹. Therefore, in stamps n°1 and 2, the H cannot be paleo-Aramaic but only paleo-Hebrew. So, if one letter is written in paleo-Hebrew the rest of the word would be too, because it would absolutely be illogical to suppose that a writer wrote the letters of stamp using two different scripts.

As result, although the Tetragram YHWH disappeared after 600 BCE (except in the Bible), the two other divine names Yah (YH) and Yahû (YHW) remained in use until 300 BCE. For example numerous Aramaic papyri, written in Aramaic by Jews from 514 to 398 BCE, have been found in the towns of Elephantine⁴⁰ containing the names: YHW very often (opposite figure), YHH sometimes (it has also been found in 12 ostraca⁴¹) and YH once⁴², but none with YHWH. However, the verbal form *yhwh* “it will be (*yih'weh*)” was used without problem like in the following phrase: *If they do this until the temple is rebuilt, it will be (yhw) a righteous deed on your part before the God Yahû (Yhw), more so than if one were to offer him burnt offerings*⁴³.



Some scholars read however the two names YHW and YHH in the same way. Based on the hypothesis that these two names are identical in pronunciation, they deduce that only sound common to the two final *matres lectionis* is the sound ô, because the letter W can be read in vowel either û or ô, and the H final can be read or â or sometimes ô. This hypothesis is wrong, for at least two reasons. In the first place, while Hebrew does exceptionally encounter the anomaly of a final H vocalized ô, this peculiarity does not exist in Aramaic⁴⁴, the language in which these letters are written. Secondly, as the letter H had become almost inaudible, it was frequently doubled, as in the feminine suffix of the third person singular, written interchangeably H/ YH/ YH'/ YHH⁴⁵. Thus, in Aramaic, the pronunciations: Yâ (YH), Yah (YHH) and Ya' (Y') were the same. It is of note that all the theophoric names found at Elephantine are written with a rather free spelling (phonetic in fact), which contrasts enormously with the rigor of the Masoretic text. In an Aramaic context, the authors of these missives wanted to dissociate the divine name YH from the vocative particle YH meaning “Oh!” as these two words are homonyms in Aramaic. What is more, it had the advantage of making the H more audible. One finds these same

³⁸ E. STERN - The Material Culture of the Land of the Bible in the Persian Period Jerusalem 1973 Ed. I.E.S. pp. 200-205.

M. KOCHMAN - “Yehud Medinta” in the Light of the Seal Impression in: *Cathedra* 24 (Jerusalem 1982 Ed. Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Publications) pp. 4-29.

³⁹ F. MOORE CROSS - Judean Stamps

in: *Eretz-Israel* vol.9. Jerusalem 1969 Ed. I.E.S. pp. 20-27.

Y. MESHORER, S. QEDAR - The Coinage of Samaria in the Fourth Century BCE in: *Numismatic Fine Arts International*. Jerusalem p. 43.

⁴⁰ P. GRELOT - Documents Araméens d'Égypte

in: *Littératures anciennes du Proche Orient* n°5 (Paris 1972 Ed. Cerf).

J.A. FITZMYER - A wandering Aramean

California 1979, Ed. Scholars Press, pp. 219-230.

⁴¹ A. DUPONT-SOMMER - Yaho et Yaho-Sebaoth sur les ostraca araméens inédits d'Éléphantine in: *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 91:1 (1947), pp. 175-191.

⁴² B. PORTEN A. YARDENI - Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, 2 Contracts Jerusalem 1989, Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. XLIV,64,74,75.

⁴³ J.M. LINDENBERGER - Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters Volume 4 Atlanta 1994, Ed. Scholars Press, pp. 63-68,82-84.

⁴⁴ F.I. ANDERSEN A.D. FORBES - Spelling in the Hebrew Bible Rome 1986 Ed. Biblical Institut p. 324.

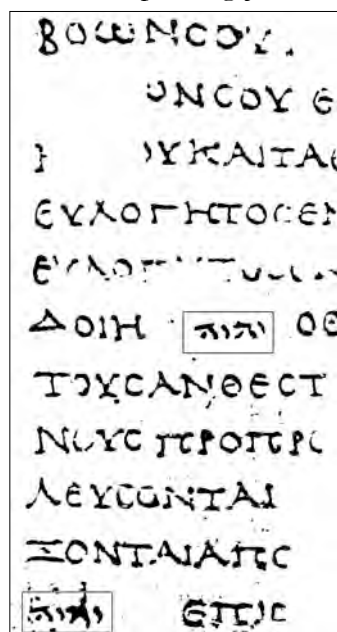
⁴⁵ E. QIMRON - The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls

in: *Harvard Semitic studies* n°29 (Atlanta 1986 Ed. Scholars Press), p. 23 §100.7 p. 58 §322.

fluctuations in the biblical text, which indicates by a point inside the letter (*mappiq*) if the final H must be pronounced or not. In the Bible all theophoric names ending in *-yah* are written without *mappiq* with the exception of Yedidyah (2S 12:25) and should thus be pronounced *-yâ* (יָא). On the other hand, the divine name Yah alone is always written with a *mappiq* except in Song of Solomon 8:6, and should be pronounced *Yâh* (יְה) not *Yâ*.

These subtleties of pronunciation are without consequence in any case as to the meaning, or even the pronunciation of these words. It simply shows that the Masoretes wanted to keep all the nuances which had been passed on to them by tradition. Hence, they noted that word Yah could sometimes be pronounced *Yiah* (יִיָּה) as in Psalms 94:7,12; 118:18, etc.⁴⁶. Those that would pronounce the name YHH as *YaHô*, must remember that in the Bible there are no names ending in *-HH* which are vocalized *-Hô*. The names ending by *-HH* are always vocalized *-Hâ*, as *Bilhâ* (Gn 29:29), *Yogbehâ* (Nb 32:35), etc. In addition, at Qumrân, words ending by *-HH* are always vocalized either *-Hâ*, or *âH*.

At the beginning of the 3rd century most people in Judea spoke Aramaic, and most tradesmen also spoke Greek. The Jewish aristocracy spoke Greek and Hebrew but this latter language was probably a little different to the Biblical Hebrew, just as common Greek, or Koine is a little different from literary Greek. Thus, in order to improve the people's comprehension, the Hebrew text of the Bible was paraphrased in Aramaic. This vernacular translation was called the Targum. Mainly to help the Greek speaking Jews of the Diaspora, a Greek translation of the Pentateuch, the Septuagint was made around 280 BCE. It is noteworthy that, given the name *Yahû* was still used by Jewish people at this time, "to protect" this substitute for the Tetragram, all theophoric names ending with *yahû* were modified to *ia* or *ion*, according to the preference of the translator induced by Greek declensions. Thus, in the Septuagint, in spite of thousands of theophoric names, there are none ending in *iaou*. Furthermore the number of theophoric names using *yahû* declines sharply from this period on⁴⁷. The Talmud (Yoma 39b) indicates that at about the 3rd century BCE, at the time of high priest Simon the Just, the use of the Tetragram was reserved for the Temple only, and it specifies that in time even the divine names stamped on jars would be removed to protect their holiness (Shabbat 61b, 'Arakin 6a). In addition, among all the manuscripts of the Septuagint dated before 150 CE, the Tetragram is always written in Hebrew in the Greek text.



According to the historic testimonies of the Talmud, the Letter of Aristeas, a Hellenistic work probably written around 170-150 BCE, and Josephus (Jewish Antiquities XII:43), the translation of the Septuagint and the disappearance of God's name in Israel were contemporary events, since all these accounts indicate that Ptolemy Philadelphus and Simon the Just lived at the same moment⁴⁸. Strangely, the famous scholar Augustine of Hippo⁴⁹ wrote that: *Varro was rightly writing that the Jews worship the god Jupiter (deum Iudaeorum Iouem putauit)*! Augustine confused the name of Jupiter (Iovi, coin below) with God's name

⁴⁶ In the same way, they noted that word 'divinity' pronounced Eloah in Hebrew is both noted with a *mappiq* (Jb 3:4; 6:4; 16:21), or Eloa, without a *mappiq* (Jb 4:9; 11:7; 15:8).

⁴⁷ Z. ZEVIT - A Chapter in the History of Israelite Personal Names in: B.A.S.O.R. 250 pp. 3-14.

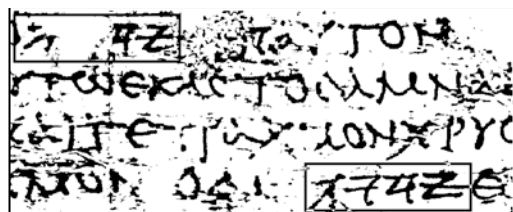
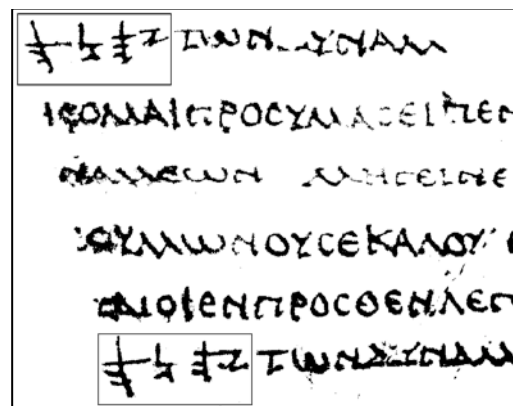
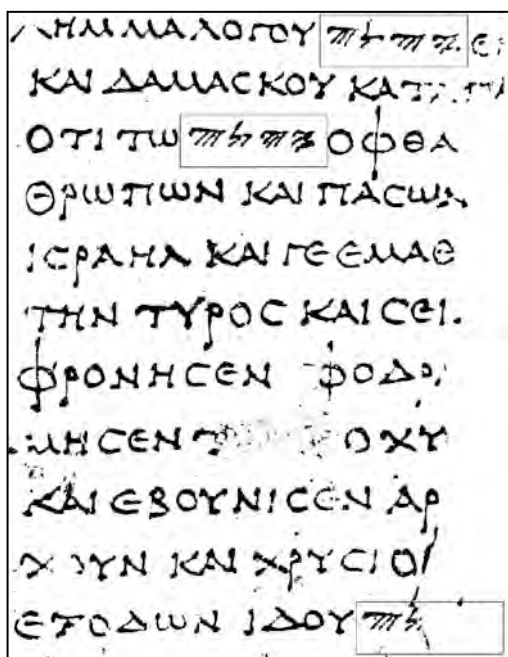
⁴⁸ R. MARCUS - Jewish Antiquities Books XII-XIII Cambridge 1998 Ed. Loeb Classical Library pp. 462-466.

⁴⁹ S. AUGUSTINI - De consensu evangelistarum Paris 1845 Éd. Migne Patrologiae Latina XXIV pp. 1055-1058.

in Latin. Valerius Maximus, a Latin historian who was also a contemporary of Philo wrote in his book, quoted by Ianuarius Nepotianus at the end of the fifth century, that in 139 BCE: *Gnaeus Cornelius Hispalus, praetor peregrinus in the year of the consulate of Marcus Popilius Laenas and Lucius Calpurnius, ordered the astrologers by an edict to leave Rome and Italy within ten days, since by a fallacious interpretation of the stars they perturbed fickle and silly minds, thereby making profit out of their lies. The same praetor compelled the Jews, who attempted to infect the Roman custom with the cult of Sabazj Iovis, to return to their homes.* However, as the Romans already worshipped the god Jupiter (Iovi-pater) which was never the case for the Jews, this strange name Sabazi Iovis must be an approximation for the Hebrew name "Sabaoth Iove", which is a more plausible conclusion⁵⁰, because the Hebrew expression: YHWH Sabaoth "YHWH of armies") was well known, it appears in the New Testament under the form Κ[υρι]ος Σαβαωθ "L[or]d Sabaoth" in The New Testament (Ro 9:29; Jas 5:4)! Varro (116-27 BCE) also explained in his book about the Latin language that the name Ioua meant "Iovis' girl": *Thus we do not say Jove or Jova to denote a son or daughter of Jovis*⁵¹ (De lingua latina IX:55).



The incident mentioned in 139 BCE proves that the God of the Jews was not called Yahwoh (Yahû) because Valerius Maximus would have spoken of "Sabaoth Iaho", not "Sabaoth Iovi". In fact, as supreme god the Jewish god had a position similar to Jupiter (Zeus) as explains the letter of Aristeeas (c. 150 BCE): *They worship the same God —the Lord and Creator of the Universe, as all other men, as we ourselves, O king, though we call him by different names, such as Zeus or Dis (...) the royal diadem full of glory with the name of God inscribed in sacred letters on a plate of gold* (§§15,98). The Jews therefore did not mention God's name in public and consequently refused to vocalize it in the Greek text of the Septuagint as we can see (below) in all the manuscripts dated before 150 CE. The Tetragram is written in ancient Hebrew inside the Greek text.



How the Tetragram was pronounced, given that after the 2nd century BCE, the Jews believed that the privilege to pronounce God's name was reserved only to the Temple and

⁵⁰ M. SIMON— Jupiter-Yahvé Sur un essai de théologie pagano-juive in: *Numen* Vol. 23:1 (1976) pp. 40-66.

⁵¹ *contra deorum liberos et servorum non itidem, ut Iovis filium et filiam, Iovem et Iovam.* The name "Ioue pater", which means "Jove father" in Latin, became in time Iu-piter (Jupiter). The Latin letter "v" was pronounced "u".

that one should not disclose the name to foreigners (Greek), as it is written in a Jewish book dated to 50 BCE: *And this became a hidden trap for mankind, because men, in bondage to misfortune or to royal authority, bestowed on objects of stone or wood the name that ought not to be shared* (Wisdom of Solomon 14:21). The answer to this question depends on several important factors: was the informant Jewish or not (like Pilatus), did he know Hebrew or only Greek (like Cornelius), did he know any priests who were officiating in the Temple of Jerusalem (like Josephus)? At that time, Hebrew language was known mainly by those who were attending the Temple priests because people generally only spoke Aramaic: *This became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their language Akeldama, that is, "Field of Blood"* (Ac 1:19). The word *hagel-dema* is Aramaic because in Hebrew this word was *sadeh-badam*, as well the word *sabaqtani* (Mt 27:46) is Aramaic because in Hebrew we read: *azabtani* (Ps 22:1). If one had asked Pilatus: *what is the name of the god worshiped in the temple of Jerusalem?*, he would have answered as Livy, a Roman historian, when he commented around 10 BCE on the taking of Jerusalem by general Pompey in 63 BCE: *They (the Jews) do not mention to which deity pertains the Temple at Jerusalem, not any image found there, since they do not think the God partakes any figure* (History of Rome CII)⁵².

According to Eusebius, there were translations of the Bible into Greek during the 4th century BCE (Preparation of the Gospel XIII:12), but the letter of Aristee (§§312-316) specifies that the quotations of these translations failed⁵³. Even so, Greek prevailed very early in synagogues, as proven by one of the earliest (dated 246-221 BCE) of the dedicatory inscriptions⁵⁴ from Schedia (near Alexandria). As a result from the very 3rd century BCE a Greek proselyte could hear God's name during a reading of the Bible.



*On behalf of king
Ptolemy and
queen
Berenice his sister
and wife and
their children,
the Jews (dedicate)
the place of prayer*⁵⁵

Given that God's name was embedded in a Greek text (LXX), the reader had to know how YHWH was pronounced in Hebrew. We know that when the scribes made copies of the Bible under dictation they sometimes confused the word Adonay with the Tetragrams (YHWH) pronounced Adonay. This way of copying was inadvisable, because it engendered errors, but as it saved time it was regrettably used. The Sopherim, who were the precursors of the Masoretes, fortunately found these 134 places, as seen by reading the Masoretical note of Genesis 18:3, where a Tetragram was replaced by Adonay. For example, in the oldest scroll of Isaiah (1Qa), dated 150-100 BCE, 16 times "Adonay" took place of the Tetragram. Many peculiarities from these scrolls may be explained⁵⁶. The use

⁵² P. SCHÄFER – Judeophobia: Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Ancient World
Harvard 2009, Ed. Harvard University Press, pp. 36-39.

⁵³ Theopompus (378-323) and then Theodektes (375-334) tried to translate the Bible, but they received "divine punishment, temporary madness for the former and momentary cataracts for the latter".

⁵⁴ W. HORBURY, D. NOY - Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt
1992 Ed. Cambridge University Press, Inscription n°22, pp. 35-37.

⁵⁵ The place of prayer was an elementary synagogue according to the text of Acts 16:13,16.

⁵⁶ M DELCOR -Des diverses manières d'écrire le tétragramme sacré dans les anciens documents hébraïques
in: Etudes bibliques et orientales de religions comparées (Leiden 1979, Brill), pp. 1-29.

L.H. SCHIFFMAN -The Use of Divine Names

in: Sectarian Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Ed. Scholars Press), pp. 132-154.

[illegible]

Substitute	Reading in Hebrew (1)	Reading in Aramaic (2)	Reading in Arabic (3)	Meaning (Hebrew)	Transcription from		Greek translation
					Hebrew	Aramaic	
'DWNŸ	Adônay	Mara'	Rabb	My Lord	Adonai	Mara	The Lord
YHW	Yahû	Yaw	Yahuw	Yah himself	Iaô	Iave	Him, Yah
HW'H	Hû'ah	Huw'a	Huw'ah	Him	Oua	Uva	Him
'LHYM	'Elohîm	'Elala'	'Allah	The god	Eloim	Eloa	God
YHWH	Y ^e howah	Yahweh	Yahwah	YHYH	YHWH	YYY	-

⁵⁹ J.P. AUDET - La Didachè, instructions des apôtres in: *Études Bibliques* (1958, Gabalda) pp. 188-191.

contradictory, of the testimonies about God's name.

- ❖ Aristaeus wrote to Philocrates (c. 150 BCE): *They (the Jews) worship the same God —the Lord and Creator of the Universe, as all other men, as we ourselves, O king, though we call him by different names, such as Zeus (Iovi) or Dis* (Letter of Aristaeus §§15,98).
- ❖ Terentius Varro (c. 50 BCE), reported by Johannes Lydus (490-570): *But the Roman Varro, when discussing him, says that among the Chaldeans, in their mystical [writings], he is called "Iaô," meaning "mentally perceived light" in the language of the Phoenicians, as Herennius [Philo] says. And he is frequently called "Sabaôth," meaning the one who is "above the seven heavenly spheres" —that is, the creator* (De mensibus IV:53).
- ❖ Diodorus Siculus (c. 50 BCE): *among the Jews Moyses referred his laws to the god who is invoked as Iaô* (The Library of History I:94:2).
- ❖ Livy (c. 10 BCE): *The Jews do not mention to which deity pertains the Temple at Jerusalem, not any image found there, since they do not think the God partakes any figure* (History of Rome CII).
- ❖ Philo of Alexandria (c. 40 CE): *there was a gold plaque shaped in a ring and bearing 4 engraved characters of a name which had the right to bear and to pronounce in the holy place those ones whose ears and tongue have been purified by wisdom, and nobody else and absolutely nowhere else. And this holy prophet Moses calls the name, a name of four letters, making them perhaps symbols of the primary numbers* (De vita Mosis II:115,132).
- ❖ Dioscorides Pedanius (c. 80 CE): *Wherever I am in the cosmos, which is subject to me, be thou with me, lord God Iaô, Iaô* (On the Peony XI:2).
- ❖ Flavius Josephus (c. 95 CE): *The high priest had his head dressed with a tiara of fine linen embroidered with a purple border, and surrounded by another crown in gold which had in relief the sacred letters; these ones are four vowels* (The Jewish War V:235).

The testimonies of Varro and Diodorus do not relate to God's name in Hebrew but its substitute “Yahû” written Iaô in Greek or Iaho in Latin. “The Chaldeans” was the term used at the time to designate any magicians. Those Chaldeans were ignoring Hebrew because the name Yahû means “Yah, himself”, not “*mentally perceived light*”, and Sabaôth means “*armies*”, not “*above the 7 heavenly spheres*”. The first-century medical author Dioscorides⁶⁰ (40-90) who mentions Iao's name in a prayer among his books shows the degree to which Iao's name was known among the Greeks, and was also invoked by them⁶¹. Lucius Apuleius (125-180) stressed the importance in worship of calling upon the name of God, which had to be kept secret, as he explained in his book written (c. 155 CE) for the defence of magic: *For no thought of personal safety shall induce me to reveal to the uninitiated the secrets that I have received and sworn to conceal (...) There he was initiated by their priests into the mighty secrets of their ceremonies, passing all belief (...) Not content with these sciences, he next approached the Chaldeans and the Brahmins, a race of wise men who live in India* (Apologia §§ 56,184). The Yahû substitute was mainly used in the synagogues of Palestine but very little in those outside the country. It is noteworthy that many magicians, even among Jews, preferred using the Hebrew name Yahû (YHW) rather than its usual substitute Adonay “my Lord”, in order to increase the efficiency of their invocations.

The name Yahû (YHW) played a great role in Jewish esoterism as one can see in a book written c. 80 CE: *Go, Jaœl, and by means of my ineffable Name raise me yonder man, and strengthen him (so that he recover) from his trembling.” And the angel came, whom He had sent to me, in the likeness of a man, and grasped me by my right hand, and set me up upon my feet, and said to me: “Stand up, [Abraham,] Friend of God who loves thee; let not the trembling of man seize thee! For, lo! I have been sent to thee to strengthen thee and bless thee in the name of God—who loves thee—the Creator of the celestial and terrestrial. Be fearless and hasten to Him. I am called Jaœl by Him who moves that which*

⁶⁰ Dioscorides, who studied under Areius of Tarsus, was known mainly for his extensive *De materia medica*, in which he lists the effects of drugs employed in medicine and alludes to products of Judaea.

⁶¹ G.H. VAN KOOTEN - The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses. Leiden 2006, Ed. Brill, pp. 126-128.

exists with me on the 7th expanse upon the firmament, a power in virtue of the ineffable Name that is dwelling in me (The Apocalypse of Abraham X:3-7). The name of Jaoel is represented as a being possessed of the power of the ineffable name, a function assigned in the Rabbinical writings to Metatron, *whose name is like unto that of God Himself* (Sanhedrin 38b). The name Yahoei “Yahô is God” is evidently a substitute for the ineffable name. A cryptic story in the Babylonian Talmud states that: *On the eve of every Shabbat, Judah HaNasi's pupils, Rab Hanina and Rab Hoshaiah, who devoted themselves especially to cosmogony, used to create a delicious calf by means of the Sefer Yetzirah, and ate it on the Sabbath* (Sanhedrin 65b, 67b). The Sefer Yetzirah (c. 150 CE), the earliest extant book on Jewish esotericism, reads⁶²: *With three of the simple letters seal "above". Choose three and place them in His great Name: YHW. With them seal the six extremities. Face upward and seal it with YHW* (Sefer Yetzirah I:15). The great Name used in Jewish magic was therefore YHW (Yahû), not YHWH (Y^ehûah), because the pronunciation of God's name was prohibited to avoid blasphemy (Sanhedrin 101b). The comparison (below) between the Jewish amulets written (from 150 to 400 CE) in Hebrew⁶³ and Greek confirms the equivalence between YHW (Yahû) and Iaô as well as YH (Yah) and Ia.



As one can see among these samples (above), numerous amulets of this time, written in Greek, contain the name Iaô, occasionally written backwards⁶⁴. Sometimes other names like: Ia, Sabaot/Sabao, Adonai, etc., are found, but the most frequently found in these Greek amulets is Iaô⁶⁵. Origen (185-253) who was the greatest textual critic of the

⁶² A.P. HAYMAN - Sefer Yesira: Edition, Translation and Text-critical Commentary Tuebingen 2004, Ed. Mohr Siebeck, pp. 89-90.

⁶³ J. NAVEH - A Recently Discovered Palestinian Jewish Aramaic Amulet in: Arameans, Aramaic and the Aramaic literary tradition (Tel-Aviv 1983, Bar-Ilan University Press), pp. 81-88. J. NAVEH, S. SHAKED - Amulets and magic bowls Jerusalem 1985 Ed. Magnes Press pp. 40-61.

J.A. MONTGOMERY - Aramaic Incantation Texts from Nippur Philadelphia 1913 Ed. University Museum, pp. 145-146, 165, 209-210.

⁶⁴ K. PREISENDANZ - Papyri Graecae Magicae I Leipzig 1928 II Berlin 1931 Stuttgart 1974 XVIIa 1-2.

⁶⁵ M. PHILONENKO - L'anguipède alectorocéphale et le dieu Iaô in: C.R.A.I.L. Paris 1979 Ed. Klincksieck pp. 297-304.

early Christian Church wrote (c. 250 CE): *and from the Hebrew Scriptures him who is termed in Hebrew Iaô or Jah, and Sabaoth, and Adonaus, and Eloaeus. Now the names taken from the Scriptures are names of one and the same God* (Against Celsus VI:32). For Iaô means etymologically *lifting up, elation*. Now the Word comes to men who formerly could not receive the advent of the Son of God who is the Word (Commentary on John II:1). His comment shows⁶⁶ that he was well aware of substitutes for God's name but, despite the fact he was the most skilled Christian scholar of his time, he did not know the genuine pronunciation of the Tetragram and he believed that Iaô meant etymologically: “*lifting up, elation*” (instead of “*Yah himself*”).

Around the 4th century, Greek itself was supplanted by Latin. Thus Jerome (347-419) began in 382 CE his new Latin translation of the Bible “The Vulgate” which officially replaced the Old Latin (Vetus Latina), a Latin translation of the 2nd century. This famous translator gave some worthwhile information in his commentary on Psalm 8:2⁶⁷: *The name of the Lord in Hebrew has four letters, Yod He Waw He, which is the proper name of God which some people through ignorance, write IIIII [instead of יהוה] in Greek and which can be pronounced Iaho*. He wrote in his prologue of the books of Samuel and Kings: *That the Hebrews have 22 letters is testified also by the Syrian and Chaldaean languages, which for the most part correspond to the Hebrew; for they have 22 elementary sounds which are pronounced the same way, but are differently written (...) and we find the four-lettered name of the Lord [Tetragram] in certain Greek books written to this day in the ancient characters* (Prologus Galeatus). It is noteworthy that Jerome wrote the Tetragram *can be pronounced Iaho* instead of *is pronounced Iaho in Hebrew*. If one collects all the historical evidence regarding the pronunciation of God's name between 200 BCE and 400 CE, one notices that they are mainly about the substitute Yahû (YHW) and not on the Tetragram itself, which was pronounced inside the temple of Jerusalem (before 70 CE):

YHWH	From	To	Author	Source	Date
Ieüô	Phœnician	Greek	Sanchuniathon	<i>Phœnician History IV</i>	200 BCE <
Iovi	Hebrew	Greek	Aristeas	<i>Letter of Aristeas</i> §§15,98	c. 150 BCE
Iaô	Hebrew	Greek	Essenian?	<i>Pap. 4Q120 (4QLXXI^{Lev})</i>	c. 100 BCE
Iao	Hebrew?	Latin	Terentius Varro	<i>De mensibus IV:53</i>	c. 50 BCE
Iaô	Hebrew?	Greek	Diodorus	<i>The Library of History I:94:2</i>	c. 50 BCE
-	Hebrew?	Latin	Titus-Livius	<i>History of Rome CII</i>	c. 10 BCE
(Adonai)	Hebrew	Greek	Philo of Alexandria	<i>De vita Mosis II:115,132</i>	c. 40 CE
Iaô	Hebrew?	Greek	Dioscorides Pedanius	<i>On the Peony XI:2</i>	c. 80 CE
(Ieôa)	Hebrew	Greek	Josephus Flavius	<i>The Jewish War V:235</i>	c. 95 CE
יהוה/Ia	Hebrew	Greek	Apostle John	<i>Book of Revelation XIX:1-3</i>	c. 98 CE
Ieêuouôa	Aramaic?	Coptic	Egyptian Gnostic	<i>The Gospel of the Egyptians</i>	c. 150 CE
יהו	Hebrew	Aramaic	(Judah the Prince?)	<i>The Sefer Yetzirah I:15</i>	c. 150 CE
Iaô	Hebrew	Greek	Irenaeus of Lyons	<i>Against Heresies I:21:3</i>	c. 170 CE
Yaüie	Aramaic?	Coptic	Egyptian Gnostic	<i>The Apocryphon of John II:1,24</i>	c. 180 CE
Iaoue	Aramaic?	Greek	Clement of Alexandria	<i>The Stromata V:VI:34:5</i>	c. 200 CE
Ieôa	Hebrew	Greek	Papyrus of magic	<i>Pap. gr. CXXI l.528-540</i>	c. 200 CE
Iao	Hebrew	Greek	Tertullian	<i>Against the Valentinians XIV:3</i>	c. 210 CE
Iaô	Hebrew	Greek	Origen	<i>Against Celsus VI:32</i>	c. 250 CE
(Ieûa)	Hebrew	Greek	Evagrius Ponticus	<i>Onomastica sacra</i>	c. 380 CE
Iaho	Hebrew	Latin	Jerome	<i>Commentary on Psalm 8:2</i>	c. 400 CE

All of this evidence establishes the following reconstruction of events: from 150 BCE the Jews avoided pronouncing God's name in order not to profane it, they preferred

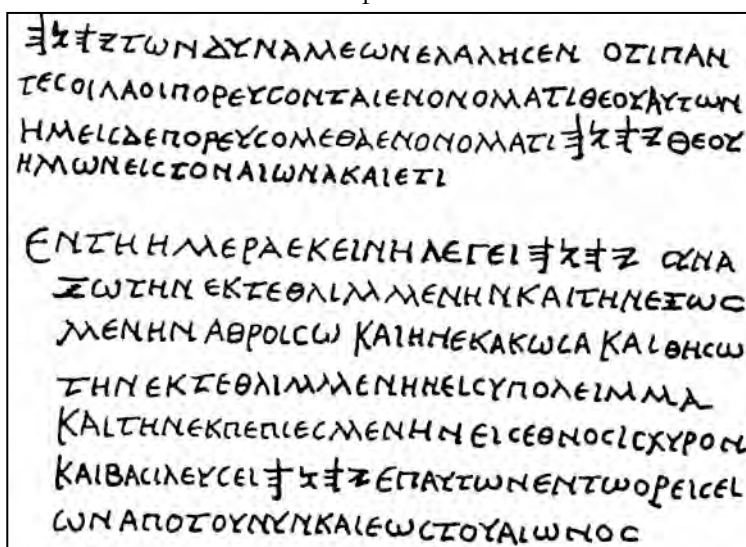
⁶⁶ He directed the production of the massive Hexapla ("Sixfold"), an Old Testament in six columns: Hebrew, Hebrew in Greek characters, the Septuagint, and the Greek versions of Theodotion, Aquila of Sinope, and Symmachus. He was one of the greatest biblical scholars of the early Church, having written commentaries on most of the books of the Bible.

⁶⁷ ST JEROME - S. Hieronymi presbyteri opera in: *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* vol. LXXII (Ed. Brepols 1959), p. 191.

to use some substitutes like "the Lord", "God", "Yahû", "Hû'â", etc. In the Essenian community it was forbidden to pronounce the name of its leader (who was only named the "Master of justice") as well as God's name, under excommunication penalty, in contrast some substitutes like Hû'a "He, himself" or Yahû "Yah, himself" were authorized. Obviously Philo of Alexandria and Josephus knew the system of substitutes, but given that Philo didn't know Hebrew he was not able to give more information, in contrast, Josephus knew Hebrew quite well, but as a former Pharisee he did not want to offend his fellow Jews by unveiling the pronunciation of the Tetragram. If this pronunciation was Iaô he would have given to his readers since it was already known before him, but Josephus knew it was the substitute Yahû and not the Tetragram (Yahû was pronounced Yaw in Aramaic hence the Greek forms Iaoue/ Iaüe). Although he does not literally gives the pronunciation of the Tetragram, his information enable us to find it under the form I(e)ôa, which is confirmed by several magical papyri. Indeed, if the pronunciation of God's name was Iaô, the forms Ieôa/ Ieêuôa have no reason to appear. Given the early Christians no longer knew Hebrew (after 100 CE), they were not able to give more information.

- ❖ Justin Martyr (c. 155 CE): *And all the Jews even now teach that the nameless God spoke to Moses (...) we have the unbegotten and ineffable God as witness* (First Apology I:61:1; II:12:4).
- ❖ Irenaeus of Lyons (170 CE): *Thy name, O Saviour of truth! Such are words of the initiators; but he who is initiated, replies: I am established, and I am redeemed; I redeem my soul from this age (world), and from all things connected with it in the name of Iaô, who redeemed his own soul into redemption in Christ who lives. Then the bystanders add these words: Peace be to all on whom this name rests* (Against Heresies I:21:3).
- ❖ Clement of Alexandria (c. 200 CE): *Further, the mystic name of 4 letters which was affixed to those alone to whom the adytum was accessible, is called Iaoue, which is interpreted, "Who is and shall be." The name of God, too, among the Greeks contains 4 letters* (The Stromata V:VI:34:5).
- ❖ Tertullian (c. 210 CE): *so as to exclaim at her LAO! just as we hear the cry "Porro Quirites" ("Out of the way, Romans!"), or else Fidem Caesaris!" ("By the faith of Caesar!"), whence (as they will have it) the name LAO comes to be found in the Scriptures* (Against the Valentinians XIV:3).

Paradoxically the main cause of the disappearance of God's name in the Christian world was not the ignorance of Hebrew (indeed, a very few Christian scholars still knew it), but the influence of Greek philosophy. For example, Justin (100-165), a Christian philosopher, often commented in his works that it was impossible for man to name God (Apologies I:10:1; I:61:11; I:63:1; II:12:4), and his main argument came from *Timaios*, a work of Plato (Apologies II:6:1). Some anomalies are found in his quotes, like the passage of Mika 4:1-7 in his *Dialogue with Tryphon* (§109), which enables us to conclude that he knew the writing of God's name. His quotes did not correspond exactly with the Septuagint or with the Masoretic text but only with the texts found at Qumran.



ΘΕΟΥ ΤΩΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΩΝ ΕΛΛΗΝΕΝ ΟΣΙΠΑΝ
 ΤΕΣΟΙΛΑΟΙΠΟΡΕΥΟΝΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΘΕΟΥ ΧΑΥΤΩΝ
 ΗΜΕΙΣ ΔΕ ΠΟΡΕΥΟΜΕΘΑ ΕΝ ΟΝΟΜΑΤΙ ΘΕΟΥ
 ΗΜΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΑΙΩΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΤΙ
 ΕΝ ΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ ΕΚΕΙΝΗ ΛΕΓΕΙ ΘΕΟΣ
 ΣΩΤΗΡ ΗΝ ΕΚ ΤΕΘΛΙΜΜΕΝΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΣΩΣ
 ΜΕΝΗΝ ΑΒΡΟΛΩ ΚΑΙ ΗΝ ΕΚΑΚΩΛΑ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΣΩ
 ΤΗΝ ΕΚ ΤΕΘΛΙΜΜΕΝΗΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΟΛΕΙΜΜΑ
 ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΕΚ ΠΕΠΙΕΣΜΕΝΗΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΘΝΟΙΣ ΧΥΡΟΝ
 ΚΑΙ ΒΑΛΕΥΣΕΙ ΘΕΟΣ ΕΠΑΥΤΩΝ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΟΡΕΙΣ
 ΩΝ ΑΠΟ ΤΟΥ ΝΥΝ ΚΑΙ ΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΙΩΝΟΣ

Mika 4:1 (picture line 1): **YHWH** ΤΩΝ ΔΥΝΑΜΕΩΝ instead of **YHWH** ΠΑΝΤΟΣ ΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ (LXX)

In spite of the Tetragram clearly appearing in paleo-Hebrew in this Greek text⁶⁸, Justin did not understand it as a proper name. Perhaps he thought that it was an archaic procedure for writing the word “Lord”. At this time, even Irenaeus of Lyons (130-202) believed that the word *Iaô* meant “Lord” in primitive Hebrew (Against Heresies II:24:2). Because they did not understand Hebrew, as all Gentile Christians, Justin and Irenaeus of Lyons believed that God's name was Jesus!:

- ❖ Justin Martyr (c. 150 CE): *Moreover, in the book of Exodus we have also perceived that the name of God Himself which, He says, was not revealed to Abraham or to Jacob, was Jesus, and was declared mysteriously through Moses* (Dialogue with Trypho LXXV).
- ❖ Christian gnostic (c. 150-170 CE): *The Son is his name. He did not, therefore, keep it secretly hidden, but the son came into existence. He himself gave a name to him. The name, then, is that of the Father, just as the name of the Father is the Son* (The Gospel of Truth).
- ❖ Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 170 CE): *But what other name is there which is glorified among the Gentiles than that of our Lord, by whom the Father is glorified, and man also? And because it is [the name] of His own Son, who was made man by Him, He calls it His own. Just as a king, if he himself paints a likeness of his son, is right in calling this likeness his own, for both these reasons, because it is [the likeness] of his son, and because it is his own production; so also does the Father confess the name of Jesus Christ, which is throughout all the world glorified in the Church, to be His own, both because it is that of His Son, and because He who thus describes it gave Him for the salvation of men. Since, therefore, the name of the Son belongs to the Father, and since in the omnipotent God the Church makes offerings through Jesus Christ, He says well on both these grounds, And in every place incense is offered to My name, and a pure sacrifice* (Against Heresies IV:17:6).

These statements seem contradictory but the historical and linguistic context explains these apparent inconsistencies. After the destruction of the Temple (70 CE) and the official malediction⁶⁹ of Christians of Jewish origin by the Jews (c. 90-100 CE), profound changes occurred. First of all, Hebrew practically ceased to be spoken after the 2nd century⁷⁰. Furthermore, with the internationalization of Christianity, the strange Jewish custom of writing YHWH that one usually pronounces ‘Lord’ would be abandoned by mostly the Gentile Christian copyists⁷¹ (between 70 et 135 CE) and they would simply to write the word KS “L[or]d” in place of the strange Hebrew Tetragram. However, the sequence ‘Kurios YHWH’ posed a problem of translation, which became: ‘Kurios Kurios/ Kurios Theos/ Kurios Adonay’ or just ‘Kurios’. This sequence also generated a lot of variants⁷², which explain the inexplicable number of errors leading to confusion between the terms ‘Lord’ and ‘God’ in the Gospel. The expression ‘Kurios YHWH’ is much rarer in the Gospels than in the Septuagint, but as the title ‘the Lord’ is frequently applied to Jesus that led to confusion with the other ‘Lord’, the translation of YHWH. So, some copyists, to avoid this confusion, preferred to translate YHWH by ‘God’ (Theos) instead of ‘Lord’ or simply to omit this name, as noted in some verses⁷³ with a considerable number of variants⁷⁴. Why did translators stumbled over the reading or understanding of such simple

⁶⁸ D. BARTHÉLEMY - Les devanciers d'Aquila
in: *Vetus Testamentum, Supplements* vol. X (Leiden 1963), pp. 203-212.

⁶⁹ S.C. MIMOUNI - Le judéo-christianisme ancien, essais historiques
Paris 1998 (collection Patrimoines Éd. Cerf), pp. 161-188.

⁷⁰ M. HADAS-LEBEL - Histoire de la langue hébraïque
Paris 1986, Ed. Publications Orientalistes de France, pp. 117-158.

⁷¹ P.E. KAHLE - The Cairo Geniza
Oxford 1959 Ed. B. Blackwell pp. 222-225.

C.H. ROBERTS - Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt
Oxford 1979 Ed. University Press, pp. 28-31.

⁷² L. VAGANAY C.B. AMPHOUX - Initiation à la critique textuelle du Nouveau Testament.
Paris 1986, Ed. Cerf, pp. 138-147.

⁷³ Lk 1:68; Ac 2:17; 6:7; 7:37; 10:33; 12:24; 13:5,44,48; 15:40; 19:20; 20:28; Rm 14:4; Col 3:13,16; 2 Tm 2:14; Jm 3:9; Jude 5; Rv 18:8.

⁷⁴ B.M. METZGER - A Textual Commentary on the Greek new Testament
Stuttgart 1975 Ed. United Bible Societies.

and well known words as 'God' and 'Lord' The best explanation is to admit that several times 'Lord' (ΚΣ) or 'God' (ΘΣ) as *nomina sacra* took the place of YHWH⁷⁵.

After the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135 CE), several significant changes would occur that would impact on the divine name: 1) around 130 CE the Talmud forbids the pronouncing the name of God as it is written (Sanhedrin 101a; 10:1); 2) after 135 CE, Hebrew is no longer spoken except by some rabbis; 3) Christian philosophers claim that God's name is either "He who is" (etymology) according to the Septuagint (Ex 3:14) and therefore has no proper name, or "Lord" (pronunciation) according to the New Testament: *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. There is the same Lord [o autos kurios] over all, who is rich toward all those calling on him. For: everyone who calls on the name of YHWH [kurion] will be saved* (Rm 10:12-13). The quotation comes from the Old Testament: *And everyone who calls on the name of YHWH [Iaô] will be saved* (Jl 2:32). One must know that Rabbi Tarphon, related the problem (90-130 CE) of the destruction of Christian texts which contained the Tetragram⁷⁶ (Shabbat 116a). The reading of YHWH had to be puzzling, because a Christian had to read: "the name of YHWH" as "the name of Lord", obviously not "the name of the Lord" because there is no article before "Lord", as a result the word "Lord" was understood as a name not as a title, on the other hand a Christian who knew Hebrew could read YHWH as "Iaô" or "Adonai", words which also meant "Lord" (according to the low knowledge of that time). The main difference between Christians and Jews was actually the meaning of the name "Lord" (not its pronunciation): Jesus for Christians but Jehovah for Jews. All these factors explain why there is almost no evidence of God's name in Greek. In addition, the Hebrew language has been written without vowel points until around 500 CE.

Even if the majority of Jews no longer pronounced the name of God as it is written, but secretly used the Yahû substitute (Iaô in Greek), some pious Jews continued to use it at the risk of their lives, as mentions the Talmud (c. 135 CE): *They then brought up R. Hanina b. Teradion and asked him: Why hast thou occupied thyself with the Torah? He replied: Thus the Lord my God commanded me. At once they sentenced him to be burnt, his wife to be slain, and his daughter to be consigned to a brothel. The punishment of being burnt came upon him because he pronounced the Name according to its letters. But how could he do so? Have we not learnt: The following have no portion in the world to come: He who says that the Torah is not from Heaven, or that the resurrection of the dead is not taught in the Torah. Abba Saul says (c. 130 CE): Also he who pronounces the Name according to its letters? He did it in the course of practising, as we have learnt: Thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations, but thou mayest learn [about them] in order to understand and to teach. Why then was he punished? —Because he was pronouncing the Name in public (...) The Executioner then jumped and threw himself into the fire. And a bathkol⁷⁷ exclaimed: R. Hanina b. Teradion and the Executioner have been assigned to the world to come* (Abodah Zarah 17b-18a).

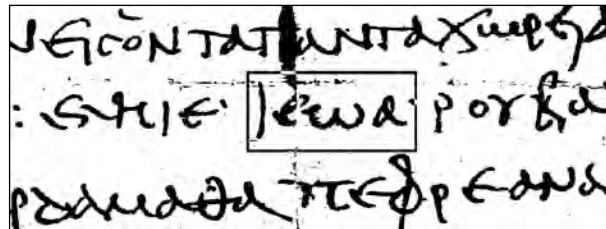
Despite their efforts not to reveal the true name of God to the Gentiles some Jewish magicians have used it in their magical writings as well as some Christian scholars of Syriac origin who have mentioned it in some of their biblical commentaries.

- ❖ Philo of Byblos, a Punic writer of grammatical and historical works, quoted by Eusebius wrote (c. 100-120 CE): *Of the affairs of the Jews the truest history, because the most in accordance with their places and names, is that of Sanchuniathon of Beirut, who received the records from Hierombal the priest of the god Ieüô (Ιεωω); he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses, as is shown by the*

⁷⁵ G.D. KILPATRICK -The Principles and Practise of New Testament Textual Criticism
in: Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium XCVI, pp. 207-222.

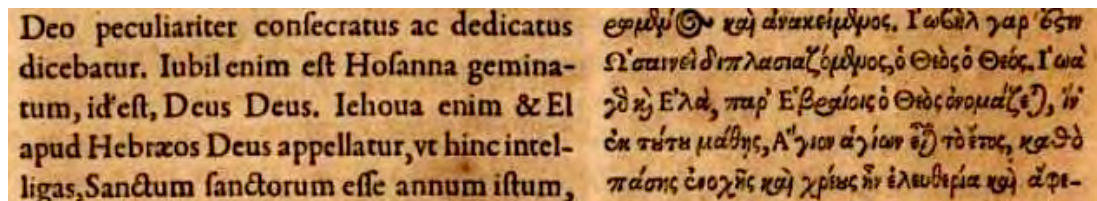
⁷⁶ D. JAFFÉ - Les Sages du Talmud et l'Évangile selon Matthieu
in: Revue de l'histoire des religions Tome 226:4 (2009), p. 583-611.

⁷⁷ A *bathkol* ("daughter of voice") is a voice descending from heaven according to Daniel 4:21.

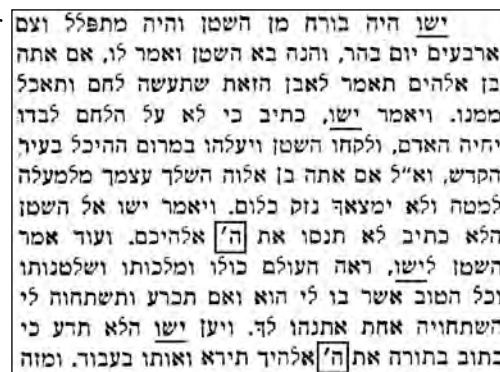


εληιε Ιεωα ρουβα (“my God Ιεôa greater”)

- ❖ Evagrius Ponticus wrote (c. 380 CE): *The Tetragram, which is ineffable, was written in Hebrew: Ioth, e, ouau, e, that is to say, πιπι the God*⁷⁹. He also explained that the name of the Lord (Jesus) is: *ioth, e, ouab, eth, with the Hebrew letter “s” (called shin) in the middle*. Maybe he meant that the name Jesus was pronounced Iesûa in Hebrew⁸⁰, involving Ieûa for God’s name, because the name Jesus is written Iesoua (Dt 1:38) in the Septuagint of Aquila.
- ❖ Severi of Antioch (465-538), used the form Iôa (c. 500 CE) in a series of comments on chapter 8 of John’s gospel (Jn 8:58), pointing out that it was God’s name in Hebrew⁸¹.



- ❖ *The Book of Nestor the idolatrous priest (Sefer Nestor Hakomer)*⁸² is a dispute between a Nestorian and Monophysite which is commented by a Jewish scribe in the 7th century⁸³. This book teaches us two things: some Christian scholars had contact with Jews who (at that time) were using the Hebrew substitute Hashem (HŠM) which means "The Name", abbreviated in H' (framed) in place of the Tetragram. Note also that Jesus (underlined name) is written



⁷⁸ J.M. ROBINSON - The Nag Hammadi Library
Leiden 1988 Ed. E.J. Brill pp.210,217.

⁷⁹ P. DE LAGARDE - *Onomastica Sacra*

Hildesheim 1966 Ed. Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung pp. 205,206,230.

⁸⁰ Ad tomum III operum S. Hieronymi appendix
in: *Patrologiæ Latina* XXIII (J.P. Migne, 1845), pp. 1275-1280.

⁸¹ Baltasar Cordeiro - *Catena patrum graecorum in Sanctum Ioannem* Paris 1630 (officina Plantiniana) p. 244.

Roma Biblioteca Vallicelliana ms. E40 (10th CE) fol. 153v line 33.

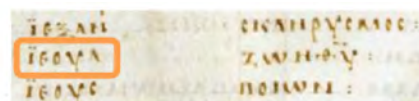
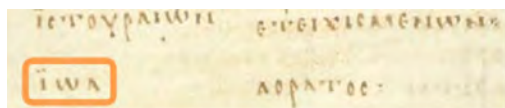
⁸² J.D. EISENSTEIN - Ozar Wikuhim

Israel 1969 pp. 310-315.

⁸³ D.J. LASKER, S. STROUMSA -The Polemic of Nestor the Priest

in: *The Jewish Quarterly Review* Vol. 91:3/4 (2001, University of Pennsylvania Press), pp. 471-474.

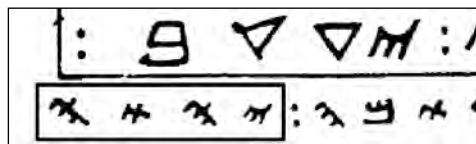
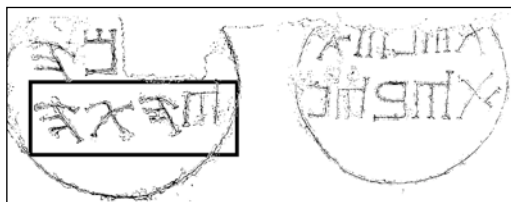
phonetically in Hebrew Yeshû (YŠW) in this passage from Matthew 4:1-10 instead of the classic Yeshûa' (YŠW'). In its *onomasticon sacrum*, the Codex Coislinianus 1 (dated 7th century CE) explains (figures below fol. 4r et 3v) the God's name Īôa means "invisible" (αορατος) and Īéoua "Life of G[o]d" (ζωη θυ):



These few testimonies show a very important point: after 100 CE even if the name of God was no longer known in the Christian world and was yet pronounced secretly Yahû in the Jewish world, it was still known by a small group under the form I(e)ôa (Y^ehowah).

Those who claim that the pronunciation of God's name is lost, not only contradict historical facts but the Bible itself, which says that this name will last forever: *Jehovah the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is my name forever, and this is how I am to be remembered from generation to generation* (Ex 3:15). *O Jehovah, your name endures forever. O Jehovah, your fame endures for all generations* (Ps 135:13). *Then Jesus said to him: Go away, Satan! For it is written: It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service* (Mt 4:10). *As he (Jesus) says: I will declare your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you with song* (Heb 2:12). *Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name* (Ac 15:14), as well as logic, because if God is truly all-powerful how does one explain that he failed to preserve his great name which had to be known of all the earth: *So, then, it depends, not on a person's desire or on his effort, but on God, who has mercy. For the scripture says to Pharaoh: For this very reason I have let you remain: to show my power in connection with you and to have my name declared in all the earth* (Rm 9:16-17). Although the period from 100 CE (death of John the last Apostle) to 1200 CE (preaching of the Bible initiated by Peter Waldo and accurate explanations about God's name written by Moses Maimonides in his famous book: *The Guide for the Perplexed*, mainly the chapter 64 of Book I) was a "dark age" for the divine name (parable of the weeds)⁸⁴, some testimonials allow us nevertheless to understand how this name has been preserved during this long period of time. First of all, few rare Christians knew yet that God's name had been written in Hebrew in the Bible.

If the Jews ceased to use ancient Hebrew for writing God's name, some Samaritans continued to use it as one can see in the Samaritan inscription⁸⁵ (below left) found at Syracuse (dated 2nd century CE): *Do arise, YHWH, and let your enemies be scattered* (Nb 10:35), or in this inscription⁸⁶ (below right) dated 3rd century CE.



[QW]MH YHWH WYPŠW 'YBYK

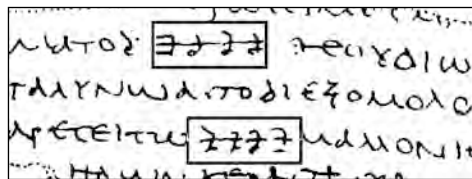
⁸⁴ *The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man (Jesus); the field is the world; as for the fine seed (the truth), these are the sons of the kingdom; but the weeds (zizanie) are the sons of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things, and the reapers are angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things. The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will collect out from his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and persons who are doing lawlessness (...) At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let him that has ears listen* (Mt 13:36-43). In a way a kind of hibernation.

⁸⁵ V. MORABITO - Les Samaritains de Sicile

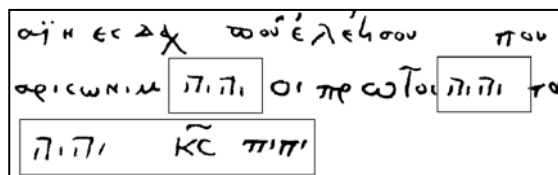
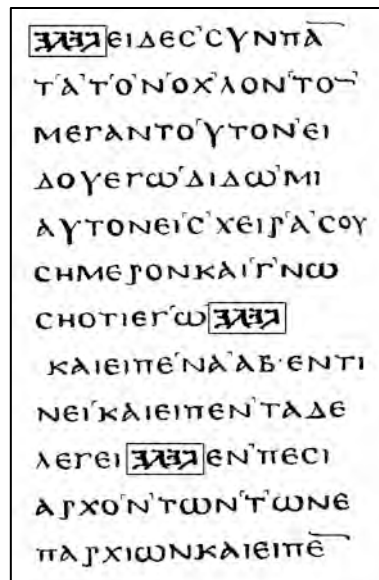
in: *Études sémitiques et samaritaines* (1998 Éd. Zèbre), pp. 195-197.

⁸⁶ J. NAVEH - *Early History of the Alphabet*
Leiden 1982 Ed. E.J. Brill p. 124.

Contrary to Christians, Jewish copyists carried on the use of writing the Name in paleo-Hebrew until c. 300 CE. The Tetragrams is written in paleo-Hebrew in a copy of the Septuagint of Symmachus⁸⁷ (dated c. 300 CE, Psalm 69:30-31), an Ebionite (Judeo-Christian) who had revised the Septuagint around 165 CE.



Origen noticed (c. 250 CE), in his comment on Psalms⁸⁸, the Jewish custom of writing the Tetragram in old Hebrew embedded in the Greek text as one can see in this copy (right) of Aquila's translation⁸⁹ dated 5th century CE. After 300 CE, Eusebius and Jerome pointed out that the Jews used again modern Hebrew to write the Name, and regrettably these Hebrew letters (יהוה) were confused with Greek characters of similar shape (ππι), as one can observe in many hexaplar (six columns) copies⁹⁰. Accordingly, Pseudo-Denys, a Christian theologian and philosopher, probably Syrian, demonstrated (c. 530 CE) in his book *The Divine Names* that: *it is impossible for man to name God*, despite the name Iaō is still mentioned in some copies of the Septuagint (in reference to theophoric names) and in some Apocryphal Christian writings. In commenting on a work of Severi of Antioch, the famous scholar James of Edessa made clear in a technical comment (c. 675 CE), that the copyists of the Septuagint (of his time) were divided over whether to write the divine name Adonay, to keep it within the Greek text in the form ΠΙΠΙ (corresponding in fact to the Hebrew name YHYH as he mentioned), or to translate it as Kurios and write it in the margin of the manuscript⁹¹. One can see the use of modern Hebrew in the Ambrosiano O39 manuscript⁹² (below) dated c. 900 CE.



As one can imagine, these rapid changes would also have an impact on the LXX of Jewish origin in which God's name in Hebrew occurred. The Christian copyists, in copying out these manuscripts, would first transform these names יהוה became ππι, then replace them by the Greek abbreviation KC. There was also a case where the copyist actually read the word ππι in Greek, or Pypy. For example, Bishop Paul of Tella, in his Syriac translation of the Septuagint (c. 616 CE), used this strange name Pypy to refer to God⁹³.

⁸⁷ C. WESSELY - Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyruskunde vol.XI Leipzig 1911 p. 171.

⁸⁸ ORIGÈNE - Selecta in Psalmos 2.2

in: *Patrologia Graeca* XII (Brepols), pp.1103-1104.

⁸⁹ F. CRAWFORD BURKITT - Fragments of the Books of Kings According to the Translation of Aquila 1898 Cambridge pp. 3-8.

⁹⁰ ORIGÈNE - Origenis Hexaplorum tomus II (Psalm 26:1; 27:4,7; 28:1; Jes. 1,2)

1964 Ed. Georg Olms verlagsbuchhandlung Hildesheim pp. 124,-127,431.

⁹¹ E. Nestle - Jacob von Edessa über den Schem hammephorasch und andere Gottesnamen. in: Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft XXXII (Leipzig 1878), pp. 465-508,735.

⁹² G. MERCATI - Codex Rescriptus Bybliotheae Ambrosiane O39

Psalterii Hexapli Reliquiae. Pars prima (Rome 1958), pp. 11,97,101.

⁹³ B.M. METZGER - Manuscripts of the Greek Bible

New York 1991, Ed. Oxford University Press, p. 35, 94-95,108-109.



As seen in this codex⁹⁴ of the 6th century, the word (ΚΥ) (Kurios) took the place of the divine name. However, each time, the copyist indicated the presence of the Tetragram (written ΙΙΙΙ) in the margin, furthermore, as a marginal note in Ezekiel 1:2 and 11:1 the name Iaô (Ιαω) appeared. Several hexaplar manuscripts were written in this way⁹⁵. The procedure of the *nomina sacra* (ΚΥ instead of KYRIOΣ) was systematically used in all Christian manuscripts after 135 CE. Isidore of Sevilla for example (560-636), knew God's ten names (El, Eloim, Eloë, Sabaoth, Elion, Eie, Adonai, Ia, Tetragram, Saddai) owing to Jerome's letter number 25, but he thought that the unspeakable Tetragram resulted from the double name IaIa. The erudite Photius explained around 870 CE, in his letter N°162 to Amphiloc, that the Tetragram was written with four evanescent letters called in Hebrew *iôth, alph, ouauth, eth*, and that this name was pronounced Aïa by the Jews but Iabe (Ιαβε) by the Samaritans. These quotations are exceptional, because the greater majority tended towards the ineffability of God's name. Albinus Flaccus Alcuini (735-804), a famous translator of the Bible into Latin, specified that although God's name was written *Jod, He, Van, Heth*, it was read Domini ("Lord" in Latin), because this name was ineffable.

As seen, Christian biblical scholars had very little knowledge of the Hebrew Bible, even among the most prominent. In order to better understand the Hebrew language, Christian scholars began an exchange with Hebrew scholars although not without disagreement⁹⁶. Additionally, a small number of Jews had converted to Catholicism and they greatly improved the knowledge of Hebrew and above all of divine Names. For example, Petrus Alfunsus (1062-1110?), called Moses Sephardi before his baptism (1106), was probably the first one to connect the 'ineffable' trinity with the 'ineffable' Tetragram. Thus, he clarified the meaning of several names like: Eloha (god), Elohai (my gods/ my God), Elohi (my god), Elohim (gods/ God), Adon (lord), Adoni (my lord), Adonai (my lords/ my Lord), but he said that the Tetragram was secret, written with only three letters (י, ה, ו) and four figures (יהוה, יה, הו, וה) or three geometrical figures in one⁹⁷. Petrus Blesensis (1135-1204), a Christian writer, completed these remarks. He said, in his short treatise against the Jews⁹⁸, and to prove the trinity, that the name of God was made up of four figures: 'Io, he, vaf, he' God's name, 'Io, he', another name of God (Iah) and two altered names of God: 'he, vaf' (Hu) and 'vaf, he' (??). The Name thus began to reappear in the Christian world.



⁹⁴ I. COZZA-LUZI -Prophetarum codex Graecus Vaticanus 2125 Rome 1890, Biblioteca Vaticana pp. 205,509,588.

⁹⁵ Codices: Q, 86, 88, 234^{ms}, 264.

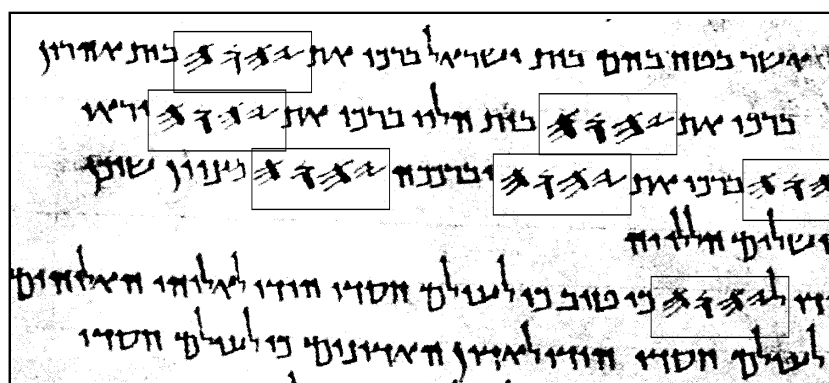
⁹⁶ G. DAHAN - Les intellectuels chrétiens et les Juifs au Moyen Age in: Patrimoines Judaïsme (Paris 1990 Ed. Cerf).

⁹⁷ PETRUS ALFUNSUS - Dialogi Petri Alphonsi ex judæo christiani in: *Patrologia Latina* CLVII (J.P. Migne 1854), pp. 607-612.

⁹⁸ PETRI BLESENSIS - Contra perfidiam Judæorum in: *Patrologia Latina* CCVII (J.P. Migne 1855), p. 833.

Regarding the pronunciation of God's name the Talmud clearly states that before the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE the high priest and the priests of Jerusalem pronounced the Tetragram (YHWH). The name YHWH was considered as the Name proper and was known in the earliest rabbinical works simply as “the Name” (*ha-Shem*); also as *Shem ha-Meyuhad* “the Extraordinary Name” (Sifre, Num. 143); as *Shem ha-Meforash* “the Distinguished Name” (Yoma VI:2); as *Shem ben Arba’ Otiyyot* “the Tetragrammaton” or “the Quadrilateral Name” (Qid. 71a) and as: *Yod He Waw He*. The pronunciation of the written Name was used by the priests in the Temple when blessing the people (Nb 6:22-27); outside the Temple they used the title “Adonai” (Sotah VII:6; 38a). The high priest mentioned the Name on Yom Kippur 10 times (Tosef. Yoma, II; 39b). R. Johanan said the sages delivered to their disciples the key to the Name once in every Sabbatical year. The Jewish sages quoted: *This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations* (Ex 3:15), but because of the growing number of heretics (the Jewish Christians), Rabbi Abba Saul prohibited, around 130 CE, to pronounce the Distinguished Name. To support this change the Talmud explains that the word *le-‘olam* “forever” is written defectively, being without the *waw* for the vowel ô, which permits the reading *le-‘allem* “to conceal”.

Did the rabbis succeed concealing God's name fully? Given that several apostles knew personally the high priest, like John and Paul, and on the other hand a great crowd of priests became Christians (Ac 6:7), they had to know God's name, including its pronunciation. When the ban on the name has been formulated by the rabbis around 130 CE, the Christians of Jewish origin, called “Nazarenes” (Ac 24:5) or “Nozrim” in Hebrew, have not been concerned, similarly the Sadducees (whom many of them were priests) who were not obeying the Talmud. However, these two Jewish groups quickly disappeared after the Bar Khokhba revolt (135 CE). The Jewish Christians were quickly seen as heretics because of their Judaizing practices (Ac 15:1) and the Sadducees who worked at the temple had to resume secular activities. In the 6th century CE, the main remnant of Jewish Christians became Ebionites and most Sadducees who did not recognize the oral law (Talmud), but only the Law (Torah), became Karaite Jews “Readers [of the Law only]”. All of these Jews, however, have one thing in common: a great reverence for the divine name as evidenced this copy⁹⁹ of the book of Psalms (c. 30-50 CE) in which all Tetragrams (framed) were written in ancient Hebrew.



When Hebrew was still spoken (before 200 CE), how did Judeo-Christians (Christians of Jewish origin), former Sadducees, dissident Rabbis or Jewish Gnostics read these Tetragrams? Unfortunately we only know them through their adversaries, well, after 150 CE, Gentile Christians were writing God's name in Greek KS, pronounced Kurios (“Lord”), and the Rabbis (most of them were former Pharisees) were writing God's name

⁹⁹ Les manuscrits de la Mer morte
in: *Les dossiers d'archéologie* n°189 (janvier 1994), p. 46.

in Hebrew H' in their daily life, an abbreviation of Hashem ("The Name", written Shema in Aramaic), but YHWH in the Torah, pronounced Adonay ("My Lord") in the synagogues of Palestine. In addition, not only is the little evidence we have is biased¹⁰⁰ but is also late and therefore has presumably been revised by scribes. Regarding:

- ❖ Judeo-Christians. The Babylonian Talmud repeats the account about Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (Hullin 2:24) and adds additional material. It tells that (c. 110-120 CE) Jacob of Kfar Sechania, a Nazarene, quoted Deuteronomy 23:18: *You shall not bring the fee of a whore or the price of a dog into the house of the Lord your God in fulfilment of any vow*. Jacob says that he was taught this by Yeshu (Jesus), then asked Eliezer whether it was permissible to use a whore's money to build a toilet for the high priest. When Rabbi Eliezer did not reply, Jacob quoted Micah 1:7: *For they were amassed from whores' fees and they shall become whores' fees again*. This was the teaching that had pleased Rabbi Eliezer who was accused of heresy (Abodah Zarah 16b-17a). Aristo of Pella tried (in vain) to answer some Jewish objections in his book "A Disputation of Jason and Papiscus" (c. 135 CE). For example, to the objection that the divinity of Jesus contradicts the unity of God and is a blasphemy, he replied that Christians believe likewise in only one God. The Old Testament itself makes a distinction with the appearance of the three men at Mamre (Gn 18:22,33) one of whom was confessedly God, yet distinct from the Creator¹⁰¹. Symmachus the Ebionite (some Ebionites were also called Symmachians), according to Eusebius and Jerome he translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek (c. 165 CE) in which he systematically wrote God's name in ancient Hebrew (YHWH).
- ❖ Former Sadducees and dissident Rabbis. Almost nothing is known of the Sadducees and dissident Rabbis in the Talmud, except Rabbi Hanina ben Teradion (c. 132-135 CE): *Why hast thou (Hanina) occupied thyself with the Torah? He replied: Thus the Lord my God commanded me. At once they sentenced him to be burnt, his wife to be slain, and his daughter to be consigned to a brothel. The punishment of being burnt came upon him because he pronounced the Name in its full spelling* (Abodah Zarah 17b-18a), that is Ê-ch-û-â (Y-H-W-H).
- ❖ Jewish Gnostics. The name Iaô (YHW) played a great role in Jewish esoterism (c. 80 CE): *Go, Jaœl, and by means of my ineffable Name raise me yonder man (...) I am called Jaœl by Him who moves that which exists with me on the 7th expanse upon the firmament, a power in virtue of the ineffable Name that is dwelling in me* (The Apocalypse of Abraham X:3-7). According to Jewish mysticism (c. 150 CE): *Choose three (letters) and place them in His great Name: YHW. With them seal the six extremities. Face upward and seal it with YHW* (Sefer Yetzirah I:15). The name Ieôa (YHWH) is sometimes mentioned¹⁰² in the *Gospel of the Egyptians* (c. 150 CE): *O glorious name, really truly, o existing aeon, Ieœouœa, his unrevealable name is inscribed on the tablet (...) he whose name is an invisible symbol. A hidden, invisible mystery came forth Ieœuœa*.
- ❖ Philo of Byblos, a Greek historian knowing Hebrew: (c. 100-120 CE): *Sanchuniathon of Beirut, who received the records from Hierombal the priest of the god Ieüô; he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses, as is shown by the successions of the kings of Phoenicia* (Phoenician History IV).

These testimonies are concordant¹⁰³, they show that all those Jews recognized that the Tetragram was God's name, but rabbinical Jews were reading the name *Hashem* "The-Name" and pronounced it: *Adonay* "My Lord" in their prayers (because after 70 CE there was no Temple), however non-rabbinic Jews were reading the name *Yahû* "Yah-himself"

¹⁰⁰ S.C. MIMOUNI - Les établissements nazoréens, ébionites et elkasaites d'après les hérésiologues de la Grande Église in: *Annali di Storia dell'Esegesi* 31:2 (2014) pp. 25-39.

¹⁰¹ P. SCHAFF - Literary Contest of Christianity with Judaism and Heathenism in: *History of the Church* Vol II Chap III, 1997 Oak Harbor WA Logos Research Systems.

¹⁰² B. ALFRINK - La prononciation 'Jehova' du tétragramme in: *Oudtestamentische Studien*, Volume 5 (1948) pp. 43-62.

¹⁰³ They show that God's name has been pronounced, mainly by priests, either Yahû (rarely) or Yehowah inside the Temple.

and pronounced it *Y^howâ* (Ieôa in Greek) in their prayers and was probably changed in the Gnostic writings because of symbolism reasons. Eusebius explains (c. 315 CE), that: *And any one going over the remaining letters of the alphabet, would find that they have been named among the Hebrews each with some cause and reason. For they say also that the combination of the 7 vowels contains the enunciation of one forbidden name, which the Hebrews indicate by 4 letters (YHWH) and apply to the supreme power of God, having received the tradition from father to son that this is something unutterable and forbidden to the multitude. And one of the wise Greeks having learned this, I know not whence, hinted it obscurely in verse, saying as follows: 7 vowels (Ieêouôa) tell My Name —the Mighty God, the everlasting Father of mankind* (Preparation for the Gospel XI:6,36-37). The transcription Ieüô, instead of Ieôa, given by Philo of Byblos could be due to normal phonological change: û (ou) >> ô (oo) >> o, like the name Nabû in Numbers 32:3 (written Nabû at Ebla) became Nabau in the Septuagint, then Nebô in the Masoretic text.

The testimony from Philo of Byblos is rejected by some scholars, including the vocalization of the god Ieüô, because it contains a chronological mistake regarding the famous Assyrian queen: Semiramis (*Sammu-ramât*) who reigned (811-807 BCE) about four centuries after the Trojan war (1185 BCE), not “nearly to the times of Moses (c. 1468 BCE according to Demetrius, a Greek chronograph who lived in the 3rd century BCE)”. This error does it mean to dismiss the rest of the testimony of Philo, quoted by Eusebius: *Now the historian of this subject is Sanchuniathon, an author of great antiquity, and older, as they say, than the Trojan times, one whom they testify to have been approved for the accuracy and truth of his Phoenician History. Philo of Byblos, not the Hebrew, translated his whole work from the Phoenician language into the Greek, and published it. The author in our own day of the compilation against us mentions these things in the 4th book of his treatise Against the Christians, where he bears the following testimony to Sanchuniathon, word for word [from Porphyry]: Of the affairs of the Jews the truest history, because the most in accordance with their places and names, is that of Sanchuniathon of Beirut, who received the records from Hierombal the priest of the god Ieüô (Ieüω); he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses, as is shown by the successions of the kings of Phoenicia. And Sanchuniathon, who made a complete collection of ancient history from the records in the various cities and from the registers in the temples, and wrote in the Phoenician language with a love of truth, lived in the reign of Semiramis, the queen of the Assyrians, who is recorded to have lived before the Trojan war or in those very times. And the works of Sanchuniathon were translated into the Greek tongue by Philo of Byblos. So wrote the author before mentioned, bearing witness at once to the truthfulness and antiquity of the so-called theologian* (Preparation for the Gospel I:9:21). The book of Sanchuniathon (*Phoenician History*), which was written in Phoenician, was translated into Greek by Philo of Byblos (70-160?) likely around 100-120. Philo was a Greek polygraph, scholar and grammarian original Phoenician, who lived in Byblos. It is noteworthy that archaeological discoveries at Ugarit have amply confirmed his Phoenician cosmogony¹⁰⁴. In addition, Porphyry (234-305), who was a Greek philosopher, opponent of the authenticity of the Bible, had quoted Sanchuniathon as being a trustworthy historian. Indeed, several details in his report prove he was extremely accurate and reliable. First, Sanchuniathon is a genuine Phoenician name which means “[the god] Sanchun gave”. Second, he claimed to have received his information from *Hierombal the priest of the god Ieüô; he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses*. Given that Philo of Byblos was not Jewish he could not make any connection with the Ierobaal in the Septuagint, a judge of Israel who worshipped YHWH (Jg 7:1-2). Moreover,

¹⁰⁴ R. GOULET -Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques V
Paris 2012, Ed. C.N.R.S. Editions, pp. 392-399.

the famous historian Josephus (37-100) never mentions this character in his books, but only Gedeon (the new name of Jerubbaal). *Hierombal the priest of the god Ieüô* was actually: *Ierubaal the judge of the god YHWH*. The error in writing, m instead of w, is due to their similar pronunciation in the past¹⁰⁵. Two details of the story are authentic because Philo could not know that at the time ruled Jerubbaal (1299-1259 BCE) the nation of Israel was the only nation to have no king but a Judge (a kind of priest), second, El-Amarna letters showed that there were powerful kings of Beirut at that time¹⁰⁶ (who were vassals of Egypt), like Yapah-Hadda (c. 1370-1345) or Ammunira (c. 1345-1320). Consequently, the god Ieüô was the god of Gedeon, written YHWH in Phoenician/ Hebrew.

The Phoenician vocalization Y^huwoh (Ieüô) of the Tetragram (YHWH) is quite similar to the Hebrew vocalization Y^ehowah (Ieôa) suggested by Josephus. It's noteworthy that the Phoenician language¹⁰⁷ spoken by the kings of Tyre and Byblos had to be similar to Hebrew at the time of Solomon (1K 5:1-18). Some scholars argue that the vocalization of Phoenician is not better known than the vocalization of Hebrew in Sanchuniathon's time. This objection (of bad faith in my opinion)¹⁰⁸ is not absolutely true because we know Phoenician was close to Hebrew¹⁰⁹ and above all we have an Egyptian testimony of the vocalization of God's name at the time of Amenhotep III (1383-1345).

According to the Bible, the Pharaoh who opposed Moses knew God's name and was able to pronounce it: *After this, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him: This is what YHWH, God of Israel, says "Let my people go, so that they can hold a feast in my honour in the desert". Who is YHWH, Pharaoh replied, for me to obey what he says and let Israel go? I know nothing of YHWH, and I will not let Israel go* (Ex 5:1-2). According to the Bible of Abbot Crampon (official Bible of Catholicism in 1904), Pharaoh would have said: *Who is Jehovah* (...) *I know nothing of Jehovah*, however, according to the revision of 1923, he would have rather said: *Who is Yahweh* (...) *I know nothing of Yahweh*. According to Jerusalem Bible (official Bible of Catholicism since 1955) he would have finally said Yahve! There is something lost in translation, but the Pharaoh did not have to consult some skilled Hebraists for knowing how to pronounce YHWH (fortunately for him) because he spoke only Egyptian like the Pharaoh Amenhotep III who had engraved the Tetragram in a shield¹¹⁰ on a pylon of a temple. The inscription (right), which contains the Tetragram, is easy to decipher¹¹¹. Indeed, just take an elementary grammar of Egyptian¹¹² to transcribe this sentence into



¹⁰⁵ Amel-Markuk for Awel-Marduk (2Ki 25:27), Abiyam for Abiyaw (1Ki 14:31), Dariamush or Dariawush (Zk 1:1), etc.

¹⁰⁶ During the period c. 1370-1345 BCE, the king of Tyre was Abi- Milku, the king of Pella: Mut-Baali, the king of Ushtanu (Lebanon) was Sisera (Sisaruwa). In fact Sanchuniathon lived during the reign of Shalmaneser I (1271-1242), the king of Assyria, not Semiramis.

¹⁰⁷ After the attack on Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar, Phoenician became Punic and after the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE, Punic became neo-Punic which will be talked about at least until 500 CE, because Augustine of Hippo (354-430) wrote his books in neo-Punic.

¹⁰⁸ For example, the name of Jesus is never challenged whereas we know that in Hebrew it is pronounced Yeshûa'. In addition the ancient Phoenician god called Kûthar (14th century BCE) was vocalized Kousôr (Κουσôr) by Philon of Byblos.

¹⁰⁹ R.D. WOODARD – The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the World's Ancient Languages
Cambridge 2004, Ed. The Cambridge University Press, pp. 370-371.

¹¹⁰ J. LECLANT - Les fouilles de Soleb

in: Annuaire du Collège de France 1980-1981 pp. 474-475.

¹¹¹ J. LECLANT - Le "Tétragramme" à l'époque d'Aménophis III

in: Near Eastern Studies. Wiesbaden (1991 Ed. Otto Harrassowitz) pp.215-219.

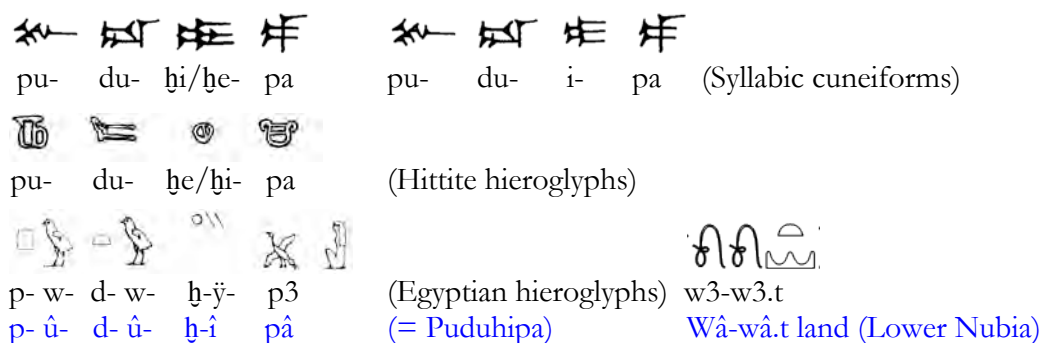
M.C. ASTOUR - Yahweh in Egyptian Topographic Lists

Bamberg 1979 in: Festschrift Elmar Edel pp.17-32.

¹¹² Even Wikipedia gives accurate information in that matter (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_language).

hieroglyphs by: *t3 š3-sw-w y-h-w3-w*, which is vocalized in the conventional system (3 = a, w = û, ȳ = î) as: *ta shasû-w yehûa-w* (the final w is a plural) and which can be translated as: *land (ta) of the Bedouin-s (shasû-w) of Yehoua- those (yehûa-w)*, because û is pronounced ou.

The conventional system of vocalization is well known to all Egyptian makers of engraved pendants in hieroglyphics, generally with the name of the owner. Then simply ask one of these small manufacturers how he reads the inscription of the shield, usually the issue immediately following the reading is: *but who is this Yehoua?* This demonstrates the lack of difficulty to read this Tetragram in hieroglyphics. However Egyptologists argue that this reading is speculative because we do not know the vowels of Egyptian words. This observation is quite accurate but does not include proper names because foreign proper names make no sense in Egyptian, they should be written in phonetic through an alphabet provided for this purpose. For example, Queen Hittite Puduhepa (1297-1215 BCE) was cited on numerous documents in different scripts¹¹³:



Even if one ignores these ancient writings, careful observation of all these inscriptions enables to verify that the name of the queen in Egyptian hieroglyphs is written with an alphabet using vowels: w = û, ȳ = î and 3 = â. So according to these equivalences, which confirm the conventional reading, the Egyptian Tetragram Y-h-w3 should be read Yehua (Yehoua). If this Tetragram was pronounced Yahweh, Egyptians would have spelled it phonetically Y-3-h-w-h (Yâhûeh) and not Y-h-w3 (Yehûâ)¹¹⁴.

Not only conventional pronunciation “Yehua” is replaced by Yahweh to be in agreement with the Hebrew scholars who are themselves dependent on theologians, but this name corresponding to the Hebrew God is likened to a place name where would have lived a small group of Bedouin (Shasu). This is ludicrous for at least two reasons: first, the name Yehûâ is in a group of four names whose the three others are well-known Semitic gods, secondly, Shasu’s name refers to both the country and the people of Palestine. For example, a list of toponyms enumerates: Pella-foreign land (*p-h-r h3st*), *Shasu-foreign land* (*š3-sw-w h3st*), Qatna (*qd-d-ȳ-n-3*), Gezer (*q-3-d-3-r*). Egyptian texts and their topographical lists confirm the existence of a vast area inhabited by the Shasu¹¹⁵ or Israelites¹¹⁶.

In the temple of Amun (at Soleb) a column, to the north of an Eastern portal (thus pointing towards Canaan), contains a short list of four names¹¹⁷ (opposite figure). This abnormally short list is composed of at least three unknown names out of four (from left to right):



¹¹³ G. GERTOUX – The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH Which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah New York 2002 Ed. University Press of America pp. 251-264.

¹¹⁴ For example **Yahmai** (1Ch 7:2) is written: **Y-3-h3-3-m3-3** (**Ya-ha-ma**). **Sweneh** (Ezk 30:6) or **Suene** (LXX) is written s-w-nw.

¹¹⁵ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

¹¹⁶ A. RAINEY – Shasu or Habiru : Who Were the Early Israelites ? in: *Biblical Archaeological Society* n°34 (2008) pp. 51-55.

¹¹⁷ M. SCHIFF GIORGINI – Soleb V Le temple bas-reliefs et inscriptions 1998 Ed. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale pl. 221.

The translation of that list according to the conventional reading is as follows, if the names are those of gods (1) or of place names¹¹⁸ (2):

Transcription	Translation (1)	Translation (2)
<i>t3 š3-sw-w s3 m-'ti-i</i>	<i>Land of Shasu after Maat</i>	<i>Land of Shasu: Samata</i>
<i>t3 š3-sw-w y-b-w3 w</i>	<i>Land of Shasu those of Yebua</i>	<i>Land of Shasu: Yabwe</i>
<i>t3 š3-sw t-w-r-jj b-l</i>	<i>Land of Shasu showing respect to Bel</i>	<i>Land of Shasu: Turbil/r</i>
<i>b3-i-ti b '[n-t]</i>	<i>Bait [house of] A[nat]</i>	<i>Beth A[nat]</i>

The translation (2), which supposes place names, is illogical¹¹⁹ for two reasons: Anat (Hebrew and Phoenician עַנַּת, 'Anāt; Ugaritic 'nt) was a major northwest Semitic goddess, not a place name, and the three other “place names”: *Samata*, *Yabwe* and *Turbil/r* are absolutely unknown in the El-Amarna letters. There are two explanations: either Egyptian scribes or Egyptologists erred (in my opinion it is ***). In contrast, Maat (meaning “truth/harmony” in Egyptian) was a major goddess of Byblos, Yehowah was the Israelite God, Bel was the Babylonian Baal (meaning “Lord” in Canaan) and Anat was a major Syrian god. So, the Egyptians distinguished among different kinds of Canaanite nomads by the chief god they worshiped. In Ramses II's lists, the *Shasu* “Bedouin” in Canaan are distinguished from one another. For example, at the Battle of Kadesh, a text reads (pap. Anastasi): *Came two Shasu from the tribes of Shasu (...) He takes what is left and joined the (ranks of) wretched. He mingles with the tribes of Shasu land and disguises himself as those Asiatics (aamu) (I, 23,7-8). We ended allowing to tribes of Shasu from Seir (Edom) to pass the fortress (VI, 54-56).*

It is noteworthy that from Ahmose (c. 1530 CE) there is a complete disappearance (into nowhere!) of any reference to the Hyksos and Palestine (“Lower Retenu”) became suddenly the “land of Kharru¹²⁰ (Hurrians)” for Egyptians. Shortly after, from Thutmose I (c. 1490 BCE) and up to Ramses III (c. 1160 BCE), appear (from nowhere!) in Palestine an important new Asiatic people, called Shasu¹²¹, who are extensively described in the Egyptian iconographic documents¹²². “Shasu land” in the Egyptian inscriptions was not a small area of unknown nomads because in the following list of six place names on a chariot of Thutmose IV (1392-1383), “Shasu land” was considered potentially as a powerful enemy by the Egyptians like Naharin land (Western Mesopotamia) or Shinar:

1) <i>N-h-r-jj-n</i> Naharin land	2) <i>S3-n-g-r</i> Shinar's	3) <i>T-w-n-p</i> Tunip country	4) <i>š3-sw</i> Shasu land	5) <i>Q-d-š</i> Qadesh land	6) <i>Ti-h3-jj-s3</i> Takhsi country.

In the tomb of Anen (TT120), brother-in-law of the king Amenhotep III (1383-1345), “Shasu” is pictured as one of the nine traditional enemies of Egypt (from right to

¹¹⁸ ALLEN, SPENCER L., “The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East” (2011). Publicly accessible Penn Dissertations (Paper 309), pp. 350-354.

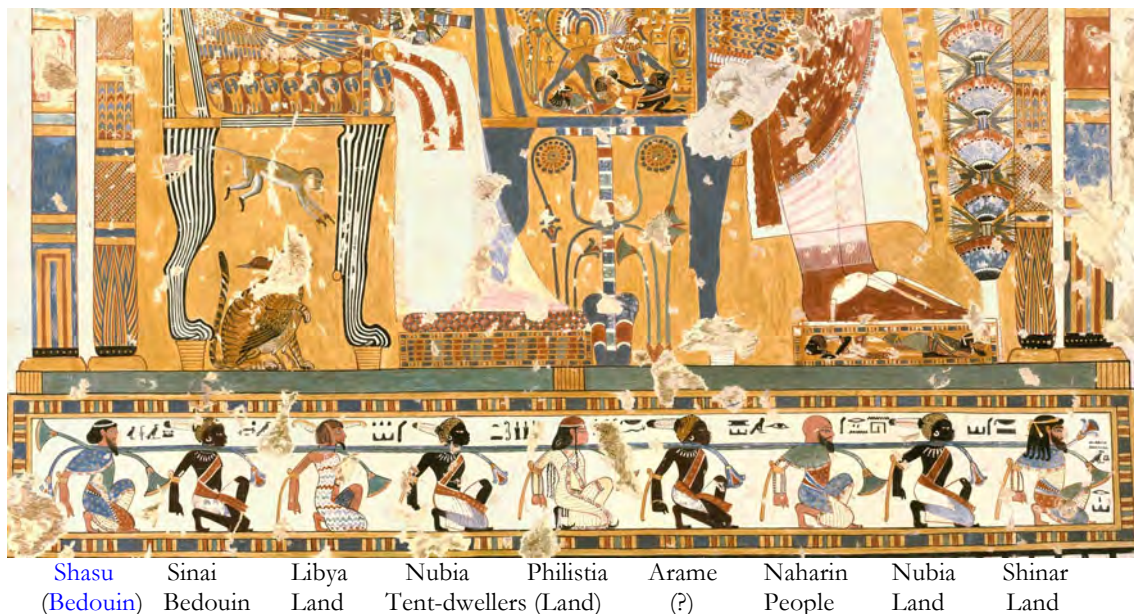
¹¹⁹ C. ALING, C. BILLINGTON -The Name Yahweh in Egyptian Hieroglyphic Text, in Autumn 2009 issue of Artifax.

¹²⁰ J.-C. GOYON – De l'Afrique à l'Orient
Paris 2005 Ed. E.J. ellipses pp. 57-61.

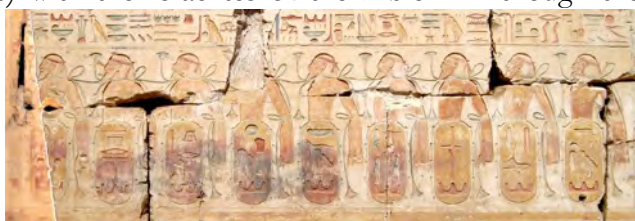
¹²¹ Shasu refer to Bedouin (“wandering” in Egyptian), called Habiru (“emigrants” in Akkadian) by Canaanites. This identification is confirmed by the Egyptian priest Manetho himself. He explains the word as Hyksos from *hyk-sos* “King Shepherd”, which is relatively accurate, because the Egyptian word *heq* means “ruler/chief” and the word *sos* actually means “shepherd”. Sahidic translation (late Egyptian) of Genesis 47:6: *if you know any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle*, used for example the word *sos* to describe these “rulers of cattle”. The Hyksos word actually comes from the Egyptian *heqaw ha'sw.t* “Rulers of foreign lands”, but Manetho connected it to the Shasu appeared later and thus translated it as “Rulers of shepherds” *heqaw sosw* (in Egyptian *š3s* means “travelling”). Studies on Shasu tend to rehabilitate this so-called popular etymology (M.G. HASEL - *Domination and Resistance. Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant*, Leiden 1998, Ed. Brill, pp. 217-239). In fact, the Egyptians understood the word *shasu* as a common noun designating semi-sedentary shepherds staying mainly in the south of Palestine. They used the phrase “Lands of Shasu”, which shows that they originally included this phrase as a geographical designation. The fact that they wrote the word sometimes *shas* (*š3s*) “wandering” instead of the usual *shasu* (*š3sw*) also shows that they originally included the word as a synonym for “transhumant”.

¹²² R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 248-250.

left: 1) *S-n-g-3-r* Shinar land; 2) *Kš* Kush land (Nubia); 3) *N-h-r-j-n* Naharin people; 4) *'r-m* Arame; 5) *K-f-[ti-w]* Keftiu (Philistia); 6) *'Iwnti-Sty* Tent-dwellers of Nubia; 7) *Tḥmw* Tehenu land (Libya); 8) *[Mn]tyw nw Stt* Bedouin of Sinai; 9) *Š3-sw* Shasu (Bedouin of Retenu):



According to the Bible, Moses commanded the Israelites, after they arrived in Palestine to have the edges of their clothing frayed and to wear tassels at the four corners of these garments (Nb 15:38-40; Dt 22:12). This coincidence in clothing reinforces the identification of Shasu (former Hyksos) with the Israelites of the Bible¹²³. Although the Shasu are often mentioned during Ramses II's reign they no longer appear in the conventional list of the nine hereditary enemies of Egypt¹²⁴ as can be seen on the temple at Abydos (opposite figure)¹²⁵.



Epilogue: most Egyptologists and Hebrew scholars have something in common, they (almost) all claim that God's name (Yehowah) was not known to the ancient times and therefore its true pronunciation is unknown to us, saying that Jehovah is a barbarism. This absurdity is easy to refute, indeed, how is it possible that Mesha, a Moabite king (900-870 BCE), knew the name of the God of Israel, I^hHUA (on line 18 of his stele), vocalized exactly as the one written by Amenhotep III (Y^ehua), five centuries earlier?

If the name of God was hardly used in the 2nd century CE it had not completely disappeared. In addition, the Yahû substitute (Iaô in Greek) was much more widespread than the “Name read according to its letters”: Yehowah (Ieôa in Greek). A historical review of the period from 100 to 1200 CE enables us to understand what happened, who preserved God's name and why it went into “hibernation” for about one millenium.

¹²³ W.G. DEVER - Aux origines d'Israël. Quand la Bible dit vrai
Paris 2003 Éd. Bayard p. 167

A. F. RAINEY - Israel in Merneptah's Inscription and Reliefs
in: *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001) pp. 57-75

D.B. REDFORD - The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition
in: *Orientalia* 39 (1970) pp. 1-51.

¹²⁴ Keftiu “those of Crete” was a colony from Crete (Dt 2:23, Jr 47:4, Am 9:7), but it disappeared after the destruction of the palace of Knossos around. 1370 BCE and became “Philistia land” afterward. Salmanazar I destroyed Mitanni in 1264 BCE.

¹²⁵ From left to right: 1) *Tḥmw* Tehenu (Libya); 2) *N-h-r-j-n* Naharin (Mitanni); 3) *S-n-g-r* Shinar; 4) *H-t* Hatti; 5) *K-f-ti-w* Keftiu (Philistia); 6) *I-s-y* Asy (Cyprus?); 7) *Š3t* Shat (Sinai?); 8) *I-s-mw* Assur; 9) *Pd-t-j šw-w* Bowmen of Shu[tu] (Moab? instead of Shasu).

GOD'S NAME THROUGH THE DARK AGES (100-1200 CE)

- After 100 CE, most Christians are Gentile Christians living in Greece (Rv 1:4) who, from 150 CE, made a strong connection between the Lord god (Jesus) and the god Lord. The two lords were completely merged after 300 CE (beginning of the Trinity). For these Christians (Roman Catholics), God's name was KS ("Lord") or IHS ("Jesus").

P0xy656 [Goettingen #905] Genesis 14-27
Bodleian Library, Oxford, England
Plate 2, fragment (c) verso

papyrus codex
dated about 200 ce
(paleographic)



- After 50 CE, Judeo-Christians who spoke mainly Aramaic are called "Nazarenes" in Greek (Ac 24:5) or "Nozrim" in Hebrew. They soon split into numerous small sects (Ebionites, Elcesaites, Hermits, etc.) whose main teaching about God was his uniqueness. Because they spoke Aramaic, they have not substantially spread outside Palestine except in the south of Babylonia. With the arrival of Islam some Jewish Christians were converted and introduced into Muslim religion the concept of a unique god with 99 beautiful names (one hundredth name being the supreme name).
- After 90 CE, the majority of Jews are affiliated to the Jewish Council (the rabbinate) founded at Yabne by Johanan ben Zakai, whose main objective was to keep the synagogue worship and preserve the oral teaching (from the Pharisees). When Hebrew is no longer spoken after 200 CE, this oral teaching (Mishnah) will be in writing (Talmud of Jerusalem). Some Jewish mystics began to teach that God has many names beside the great name YHW (Sefer Yetzirah I:15). In time, Kabbalists ("Those who have received [the knowledge]") will look at each of the 72 triads and consider them as one of the 72 Names of God, others will teach that God's name is the Torah itself. When Arabic began replacing Aramaic, the Babylonian rabbis decided to fix the Talmud (c. 500 CE), which became the reference (Babylonian Talmud).

- After 135 CE, a minority of Jews (Sadducees, Essenians, etc.) continued to copy the Bible without being affiliated to any religious organizations. We do not know what happened to the Sadducees and Essenes after the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135), but the groups of Jewish scribe-scholars who worked to copy the Torah between the 6th and 10th centuries CE, are called the Masoretes ("Tradition Keepers"). The ben Asher family of Masoretes was largely responsible for the preservation and production of the Masoretic Text, although an alternate Masoretic text of the ben Naphtali Masoretes, which differs slightly from the ben Asher text, existed. The halakhic authority Maimonides (1138-1204) endorsed the ben Asher as superior, although the Egyptian Jewish scholar, Saadya Gaon al-Fayyumi (882-942), had preferred the ben Naphtali system. The ben Asher family and the majority of the Masoretes have been Karaites¹²⁶. As a result the Karaites¹²⁷ were the successors of the Sopherim (Sadducean scribes).

The transmission of the biblical text and God's name (YHWH) was made through the Masoretes (Karaites). When I was beginning to study the Bible (c. 1980) I naively took the best Hebrew grammar of my time in order to understand how to read God's name in Hebrew (since I have become myself a Hebrew scholar I am much less naive with this kind of popularizing book): *The uncorrected word in the text is the Kethibh (כְּתִיב, 'it is written'). The corrected reading in the margin or footnote is the Qere (קֶרֶי, 'to be read').* NOTE: *In the unpointed scrolls read in the Synagogues, the Kethibh (i.e. the uncorrected form) is similarly retained in the text, but no Qere (corrected form) is given in the margin or footnote. The reader is expected to be familiar with the text and to know when a word is to be corrected, i.e. to read the Qere instead of the (written) Kethibh (...). Another type of deliberate change in reading due, in this case, to reverence, is the Divine name יְהוָה or יְהוֹוֶה (Yahweh or Yabweb). The Divine name was considered too sacred to be pronounced; so the consonants of this word were written in the text (Kethibh), but the word read (Qere) was יְיָ (meaning 'Lord'). The consonants of the (Kethibh) יְהוָה were given the vowels of the (Qere) יְיָ namely ׁ ׂ ׃ producing the impossible form יְהוֹוֶה (Y^ehōwā). Since, however, the Divine name occurs so often in the Bible, the printed editions do not put the reading required (Qere) in the margin or footnote; the reader is expected to substitute the Qere for Kethibh, without having his attention drawn to it every time it occurs. For this reason it has been called Qere Perpetuum, i.e. permanent Qere¹²⁸.* The scientific explanation is repeated *ad nauseum* by all Hebrew scholars worthy of the name. However, if one makes the effort to check this sweeping statement ("the reader is expected to be familiar") it is easy to see that this is a concentrate of nonsense. First, the printed editions do not put the reading required (Qere) in the margin or footnote, the *qere perpetuum* (Latin words always impress more), it is for the simple reason: the *qere perpetuum* does not exist! The only information from the Masoretes about this important topic appears in their note on Genesis 18:3, which refers to the Great Masora listing the 134 places where the Sopherim (precursors of Masoretes) had noted that the Tetragram was replaced by Adonay, the traditional substitute. It is therefore not a permanent Qere since it only covered 134 reading corrections, in addition, when the divine name was associated with the word Adonay, it was read Elohim instead of Adonay, proving

¹²⁶ Karaite Judaism "Readers [of the Hebrew Scriptures]" is a Jewish movement characterized by the recognition of the Tanakh alone as its supreme legal authority in Jewish religious law and theology. It is distinct from mainstream Rabbinic Judaism, which considers the Oral Torah, as codified in the Talmud and subsequent works to be authoritative interpretations of the Torah. Karaites maintain that all of the divine commandments handed down to Moses by God were recorded in the written Torah without additional Oral Law or explanation. As a result, Karaite Jews do not accept as binding the written collections of the oral tradition in the Midrash or Talmud.

¹²⁷ According to Rabbi Abraham ben David, in his *Sefer HaQabbalah*, the Karaite movement crystallized in Baghdad in the Gaonic period (c. 600-1050 CE), under the Abbasid Caliphate in what is present-day Iraq. The Geonim played a prominent and decisive role in the transmission and teaching of Torah and Jewish law. Anan Ben David (c. 715-795) is considered to be a major founder of the Karaite movement. Karaites were already living in Egypt in the first half of the 7th century, the evidence consisting of a legal document that the Karaite community in Egypt had in its possession until the end of the 19th century, which was said to be stamped by the palm of 'Amr ibn al-'As, the first Islamic governor of Egypt, in which he ordered the leaders of the Rabbanite community not to interfere in the way of life of the Karaites nor with the way they celebrate their holidays. This document was reported to be dated 20 AH (641 CE).

¹²⁸ J. WEINGREEN -A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew Oxford 1959, Ed. Oxford University Press, pp. 22-23.

again that this *qere* was not permanent but only traditional. If we look more closely at the explanations in this *qere perpetuum*, we enter into wonderland. First, we read: *The consonants of the (Kethibh) יהוה were given the vowels of the (Qere) יהוה namely ה ו א ך, which is obviously false since the word יהוה is punctuated by ה ו א ך, not ה ו א ך. To reassure the reader, a footnote adds: The composite shewa which was under the guttural ך in the word יהוה becomes a simple shewa under the ה of the Kethibh יהוה. It's absolutely illogical. Indeed, this scholarly explanation is triply absurd as already noted in 1844 an eminent Hebrew scholar of the Vatican¹²⁹. First, it is already untrue in the case of YĕHoWiH (יהוה) read 'èLoHîM (אלהים) because, as can be seen in many codex (cf. Codex of Petrograd dated 916 CE), the vowel è (*batef ségol*) of the *qere* was not modified into e (*shewa*) in order to give YeHoWiH (יהוה). Second, when the Masoretes indicate a *qere*, different of *ketib*, that is precisely not to confuse the two words (so it would be absurd to read the vowels of the *qere* with the consonants of the *ketib*, unless to be completely ignorant). Third, before the 12th century, the divine name YHWH was not vocalized e, o, â (*shewa, holem, qamats*) but only e, â, as can easily be seen in the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Hebrew text for modern Bibles) which excludes grammatical reasons because it becomes impossible to explain the disappearance of the vowel o in this way, unless re-invoking a magical process. A final comment on this magical explanation of permanent *qere*, the author states: *producing the impossible form יהוה (Yĕhōwâ)* and adds in a footnote to page: *The English Jehovah!* to mock naïve ones who know nothing in Hebrew. Naïve ones have not to worry, all theophoric names (biblical names beginning with the divine name) are always vocalized, without exception, according to the so-called impossible form יהוה (Yĕhō-) and none begins with *Yah^aw-* (or only with *Yab-*) the supposedly authentic form of the divine name. Naïve ones are perhaps not those one believed¹³⁰.*

The invention of *qere perpetuum* raises several questions: why highly competent Hebraists propagate patently false explanation about God's name? For example, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* reads (Yahweh): *The pronunciation of yhwh as Yahweh is a scholarly guess. Hebrew biblical mss were principally consonantal in spelling until well into the current era. The pronunciation of words was transmitted in a separate oral tradition. The Tetragrammaton was not pronounced at all, the word ʾădonāy, "my Lord," being pronounced in its place; ʾelōhîm, "God," was substituted in cases of the combination ʾădonāy yhwh (305 times; e.g., Gen 15:2). (This sort of reading in MT is called a qere perpetuum.) Though the consonants remained, the original pronunciation was eventually lost. When the Jewish scholars (called Masoretes) added vowel signs to biblical mss some time before the 10th century A.D., the Tetragrammaton was punctuated with the vowels of the word "Adonai" or "Elohim" to indicate that the reader should read "Lord" or "God" instead of accidentally pronouncing the sacred name. The form "Jehovah" results from reading the consonants of the Tetragrammaton with the vowels of the surrogate word Adonai. Why do the Jews refuse to read God's name as it is written and used to read instead Adonay "My Lord" (a plural of majesty)? Why God's name is it usually punctuated e, â (*shewa, qamats*) by the Masoretes, making its reading impossible since the 4 consonants (YHWH) of God's name must have at least 3 vowels (long or short) in order to be read, like the words ʾaDoNâY and ʾèLoHîM which have 4 consonants and 3 vowels?*

What happened between 100 and 1200 CE regarding copies of the Hebrew Bible? We have seen that until 150 CE the Sopherim knew the surrogate Yahû "Yah himself" (Iaô in Greek) of God's name as well as its pronunciation, Yĕhowah (Ieôa/Iôa in Greek). In contrast after 150 CE, rabbis have systematically used the Hebrew substitute: *Hashem* (השם) "The Name" in place of the Tetragram in their documents. This substitute is commonly used in its Aramaic form, *Shema* (שמע), in the Talmud and in the Masoretic comments

¹²⁹ P.L.B. DRACH – De l'harmonie entre l'Église et la synagogue Gent (Belgium) 1978. Ed. Socii Sancti Michaelis pp.480-481.

¹³⁰ If the name was Jahweh, why there is absolutely no theophoric name with Jau- or Ja- in the Septuagint, but always with Jô- ?

because the Aramaic language had replaced Hebrew after 135 CE. Since Hebrew will gradually ceased to be spoken, the text of the Bible will start to be vocalized from 500 CE, nevertheless, the Tetragram is never vocalized before 900 CE, because none has the vowel points of Adonay and a few copies have only an "a" beneath the last H of the Tetragram. This period is not well known because from 90 to 250 CE, the rabbis have gradually replaced the priestly copies corrected at the temple by Sadducees scribes by their own copies written for their synagogues (now corrected by Pharisaic rabbis). It is noteworthy that, because Aramaic itself had gradually ceased to be spoken, Nestorian Syrians began to punctuate their texts in order to fix the pronunciation of vowels around 400 CE¹³¹. After the first conquests of Muhammad and the expansion of Islam, Arabic had replaced Aramaic (c. 650 CE). As a result, when the Masoretes started to vocalize the Hebrew Bible, they were speaking Arabic as well as Aramaic, but not Hebrew. Contrary to what is written everywhere the Masoretes have never vocalized the Tetragram with the vowels of Adonay. The Hebrew Bible was initially vocalized with the Palestinian punctuation (c. 500-700), then Babylonian (c. 700-900) and finally Tiberian after 900 CE (most codices):

Date	Bible	Codex	<i>ketib</i> with the vowels of its <i>qere</i>		Latin vocalization
900?<		Geniza ¹³² **	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YeHWiH	
c. 900		Berlin ¹³³	יהוה YHWâH	יהוה YHWH	
916		Petrograd ¹³⁴ **	יהוה YHWH	יהוה YèHoWiH	
930		Aleppo ¹³⁵	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YèHoWiH	
950		Or.4445 ¹³⁶	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YeHWiH	
953		T-S A 39.11 ¹³⁷ **	יהוה YaHoWâH	יהוה YèHoWiH	
1008	BHS	Leningrad B19a ¹³⁸	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YeHWiH	
c. 1100		Urbinati ebr. 2 ¹³⁹	יהוה YHWâH	יהוה YHWiH	
1105		Reuchlinianus ¹⁴⁰	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YèHWiH	(Iheuhe/ Ieue)
1278	BHK	Raymond Martin ¹⁴¹	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YèHoWiH	(Yohoua)
1286		Paris Hébreu 1	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YèHoWiH	(Yohouah)
c. 1300		Palatini ¹⁴² (Sperber)	יהוה YHWâH	יהוה YèHoWiH	(Ihouah)

** (Babylonian punctuation)

The review of some codices copied and punctuated between 900 and 1300 CE (above) shows that the so-called “permanent *qere*” is a fable because there are almost as many *qeres* as there are codices. It is also noted that the Christians¹⁴³ of that time who have vocalized the Tetragram in Latin were not influenced by the *qere e, â* (or *e, o, â*) appearing in their codices. We also note that within the same codex even the *qeres* of some words may be different from a codex to another¹⁴⁴ and there is no standardization of the *qeres* used for the Tetragram. For example, in the B19a codex, which is considered by experts as one of

¹³¹ J.F. HEALEY - Les débuts de l'alphabet. Vers l'alphabet arabe in: La naissance des écritures Paris 1994 Éd. Seuil p. 312.

¹³² I. YEIVIN (Jerusalem 1973, Ed. Makor Publishing Ltd).

¹³³ I. YEIVIN (Jerusalem 1972, Ed. Makor Publishing Ltd).

¹³⁴ H.L. STACK - Codex Babylonian of Petrograd (New York 1971 Ed. Ktav Publishing House).

¹³⁵ M.H. Goshen Gottstein (Jerusalem 1976, Ed. Magnes Press).

¹³⁶ http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Or_4445

¹³⁷ C. SIRAT - Codices litteris exarati (...) 1020 Tome I (Turnout 1997 Éd. Brepols) pp. 80-85.

¹³⁸ D.S. LOEWINGER (Jerusalem 1971, Ed. Makor Publishing).

¹³⁹ E. LEVINE (Jerusalem 1980, Ed. Makor Publishing Ltd).

¹⁴⁰ A. SPERBER (Copenhagen 1956, Ed. Ejnar Munksgaard).

¹⁴¹ R. MARTINI - Pvgio Christianorvm Paris 1300? Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève ms.1405 fol. 162b.

¹⁴² A. SPERBER (Copenhagen 1959, Ed. Ejnar Munksgaard).

¹⁴³ Ieue (Joachim of Flora 1130-1202; Pope Innocent III 1160-1216); Yohoua (Raymond Martini 1220-1284); Yohouah (Porchetus de Salvaticis ?-1315); Yehabe (Alfonso de Valladolid 1270-1340).

¹⁴⁴ E. MARTÍN-CONTRERAS -The Phenomenon Qere We La' Ketib in the Main Biblical Codices: New Data in: *Vetus Testamentum* 61 (2011), pp. 1-11.

the best copies of the Hebrew text of the Bible, there are 7 different *qeres* for the Tetragram. The most frequent variant being YeHoWâH (52) instead of YeHWâH and YeHoWiH (32) instead of YeHWiH.

BHS	<i>ketib</i> with the vowels of its <i>qere</i>			Number of variants	
usual	יהוה YeHWâH	יהוה YeHWiH			
Gn 3:14	יהוה YeHoWâH	יהוה YèHWiH	Gn 15:2, 8	52	1
Ps 144:15	יהוה YaHWâH	יהוה YeHoWiH	1K 2:26	1	32
		יהוה YèHoWiH	Jg 16:28		1

The situation is quite similar in the other codices. The most common variant is YeHoWâH, instead of the usual YeHWâH. The frequent presence of the cantillation sign (*rebia*) which merges with the vowel *o* (*bolem*) facilitated these variants. From the 12th to 15th century YeHWâH form (see the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*) has evolved progressively into YeHoWâH (see the *Biblia Hebraica Kitzel*) will become the standard form in Jewish Bibles.

Period	event	<i>ketib</i>	substitute	<i>qere</i>
+600+900	After the vocalization of the text	YHWH	ŠeMâ'	<i>Adonay</i>
+900+1300	Period of standardization	YHWH	YeHWâH	<i>Adonay</i>
+1300+1500	Period of stabilization	YHWH	YeHoWâH	<i>Adonay</i>

The current *qere* of God's name (YHWH), as found in the Hebrew Bibles, is a hybrid form consisting of the vowels *e*, *â* coming from the Aramaic substitute ŠeMâ' "The Name" (HaŠêM in Hebrew) and the vowel *o* of the traditional *qere* 'aDoNâY "My Lord". Why did the Masoretes not put the vowel points of the usual *qere* "Adonay" beneath God's name ("YaHoWâH"), what should have been the more logical choice? To answer this question we must know that the Masoretes (c. 600-1000) transmitted a tradition received from the Sopherim (c. 300 BCE to 70 CE) who, surprisingly, have transmitted two genuine traditions: a writing tradition (*ketib*) and a reading tradition (*qere*). The primary reason for the reading tradition, which is poorly known, is not to correct the writing tradition but generally to avoid desecration of the holy text. The origin of this ancient reading tradition comes actually from a misunderstanding of a verse in the Book of Hosea: *To court, take your mother to court! For she is no longer my wife nor am I her husband. She must either remove her whoring ways from her face and her adulteries from between her breasts (...) I mean to make her pay for the feast-days on which she burnt incense to the Baals, when she tricked herself out in her earrings and necklaces to chase after her lovers, and forget me! —declares YHWH (...) When that day comes —declares YHWH—you will call me, 'My husband', no more will you call me, 'My Baal'. I shall banish the names of the Baals from her lips and their name will be mentioned no more* (Ho 2:4,15-19). As a result the God of Israel was legitimately called Baal "Lord/ Master" before this time (c. 750 BCE), but his cult was linked to the Canaanite Baals because the "Lord (*baal*)" had been represented by statues, which was idolatry: *So the Israelites did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah and served the Baals. Thus they abandoned Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and they bowed down to them and offended Jehovah. They abandoned Jehovah and served Baal and the Ashtaroth* (Jg 2: 11-13). The Ashtaroth were actually statues of the "Queen of Heaven" (Jr 44:17-19), the Babylonian goddess Ishtar¹⁴⁵. The words "Lords (*baalim*)" and "Ladies/ Goddesses (*ashtaroth*)" are in the plural as they target the statues of the gods (or goddesses). So, when God asked to stop using the Baal title "Lord / Master" to designate him, some scribes applied this commandment to a few proper names containing the term *baal* replacing it

¹⁴⁵ The Babylonian word Ishtar "star", which is a translation of the Sumerian NIN.AN.A(K) (Innana) "Lady of heaven," gave the Persian word Esther ("star"), the Greek *astron* "star" and the Latin *aster*. Ishtar was the star Venus, named the Lady of heaven because it was the brightest. Human or animal representations were used for worship was idolatry according to the 10 Commandments (Ex 20: 3-5).

with another. In fact the exhortation not to mention the name of other gods was concerning only their invocation in worship and not their pronunciation (Ex 23:13; Jos 23:7), since the Bible itself mentions the names of several false gods: *Solomon became a follower of Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and of Milkom, the Ammonite abomination (...) Then it was that Solomon built a high place for Kemosh¹⁴⁶, the abomination of Moab, on the mountain to the east of Jerusalem, and to Milkom, the abomination of the Ammonites (...) for he has forsaken me to worship Astarte the goddess of the Sidonians, Kemosh the god of Moab, Milkom the god of the Ammonites* (1K 11:5,7,33). The Israelites had to therefore only destroy the names of idols (Dt 12:3), because the purpose of the prophets of the Lord “Baal” was to make forget the name of the Lord of Israel: *They are doing their best, by means of the dreams that they keep telling each other, to make my people forget my name, just as their ancestors forgot my name in favour of Baal* (Jr 23:27; Ps 44:20). The process of replacing some “bad names” by a substitute was carried out by some zealous scribes but was not systematic as we can see in the following examples:

Name	Septuagint	Masoretic text	Substitute	Reference
Baal-yada	El-iade	Beel-yada	<i>Be'el</i>	1Ch 14:7
Baal-yah	Baal-ia	Beal-yah	<i>(qere)</i>	1Ch 12:5
Ish- Baal	As- bel	Ash- bel	<i>Be'el</i>	1Ch 8:1
Ish- Baal	Asa-bal	Esh-baal	-	1Ch 8:33
Ish- Baal	Je- bosthe	Ish- boshet	<i>boshet</i>	2Sa 2:8
Jerub- Baal	Jero-baal	Jerub-baal	-	Jg 6:32
Jerub- Baal	Jero-baal	Jerub- beshet	<i>(qere)</i>	2Sa 11:21
Mephi- Baal	Mephi- bosthe	Mephi- boshet	<i>boshet</i>	2Sa 4:4
Baal- zebul	Baal fly	Baal- zebul	<i>zebul</i>	2Ki 1:16 (Mt 10:25)
Baal- zebul	Baal fly	(Beel -zebul)	<i>Be'el</i>	(Mk 3:22)
Abed- Nabu	Abde- Nagô	Abed- Negô	<i>Nagû</i>	Dn 2:49

Generally the word *baal* "lord" was replaced by *boshèt* "shame" or *beel* "blah blah", but as this process alters the biblical text, what was strictly forbidden (Dt 4:2; 24:32), it has been replaced (from the 3rd century BCE) by the method of *qere/ ketib* of pronouncing (not substituting) another name instead of what was written.

Name	Septuagint	Masoretic text	Qere	meaning	Reference
Jerub- Baal	Jero-baal	Jerub- beshet	bošet	<i>shame</i>	2Sa 11:21
Tapheth	Tapheth	Topheth	bošet	<i>shame</i>	2K 23:10
Molok / Kaiwan	Molok / Raiphan (<i>Kaiwan</i>)	Molek / Kiywun	bošet	<i>shame</i>	Am 5 :26
Ishtart	Astarte	Ashtoret	ha-bošet	<i>the shame</i>	2K 23:13

The Masoretes kept this old tradition (observed in Palestine but not outside) by indicating next to the written word the vowels of the word to be read. For example, the god Molok (Ac 7:43) was written MLK in the Hebraic Bible, so the Masoretes punctuated this word with the vowels *o*, *e* of the word BoŠÈT to indicate that MLK should be read *boshèt*, or ‘shame’. Thus, one obtains, in the text, the hybrid form MoLèK (1K 11:7) which the Septuagint vocalized Molok. Many modern Bibles, however produced by translators who did not know of this complex system¹⁴⁷, transcribe it simply Molèk, actually mixing the vowels *o*, *e* of the word to be read *boshèt* with the consonants MLK of the written word. Thus, to be unaware that this system had been conceived at first to protect the exclusivity of the Name, really is ‘a shame’.

¹⁴⁶ Kemosh was vocalized Kamish (ka-mi-iš) at Ebla, Kamûsh (ka-am-muš) in Assyria and presumably Kamosh in Palestine (cf. LXX).

¹⁴⁷ The Babylonian god Kaiwanou is written KYWN in the Hebrew text and is vocalized with the vowels of the word ŠiQuŠ "abomination", which gave the hybrid form KiYWuN instead of KaYWaN. The Kaiwan god is the name given to Saturn (deified star), this god was called Raiphan by the Greeks and is spelled Remphan in the Gospels (Acts 7:43).

To summarize the process of *qere/ ketib* over time:

Period	event	<i>ketib</i>	substitute	<i>qere</i>
-1000-500		B'L	-	Ba'al
-500-300	<i>After the Babylonian exile</i>	B'L	BŠT	Boshet
-300+150	<i>After translation of the LXX</i>	B'L	-	Boshet/ (Be'el)

For example, the word *boshèt* “shame” was first a substitute (written word in place of *ketib*) of *baal* “lord”, as in Ishbosheth instead of Ishbaal, before being a *qere* (word read in place of *ketib*). Similarly, Adonay was initially a substitute for YHWH before being a *qere*. Sometimes, Elohim was also a substitute for YHWH (compare Psalms 14 and 53).

Period	event	<i>ketib</i>	substitute	<i>qere</i>
-1000-500	<i>Israelites in Palestine</i>	YHWH	-	Y ^e bowá
-500-300	<i>After the Babylonian exile</i>	YHWH	YHW	'Adonay/ 'Elohim
-300+150	<i>After the translation of the LXX</i>	YHWH	'DNY	'Adonay/ ('Elohim)
+150+600	<i>After the ban of pronouncing YHWH</i>	YHWH	H[ŠM]	'Adonay
+600+900	<i>Palestinian then Babylonian punctuation</i>	YHWH	Shemâ'	'Adonay

Thus, the reading tradition preserved by the Masoretes comes from Sopherim who themselves had kept a tradition going back to around 300 BCE (highlighted in green). The Masoretes, were they aware of the genuine pronunciation of the Tetragram?

Yefet ben Eli (c. 920-1010) was perhaps the foremost Karaite commentator on the Bible, during the "Golden Age of Karaism". He was a native of Basra (in present-day Iraq). Later in his life, he moved to Jerusalem, between 950 and 980, where he died. The Karaites distinguished him by the epithet *maskil ha-Golah* (teacher of the Exile). His commentaries were written in Arabic, and covered the entire Tanakh (Old Testament). They were accompanied by a very literal translation of the Hebrew text, which often violated the rules of Arabic grammar. In his books the Tetragram יהוה is represented most often in the large Hebrew text as *اذون-اي* (אדני). In other citations of the Hebrew text the Tetragram is most often represented by *י* or *י*. Furthermore Yefet ben Eli distinguishes between *אללה/יהוה* and *אלה/אלהים*. Accordingly the translation of *אללה* is always The Lord and *אלה* is God¹⁴⁸. In some exceptional cases he also vocalized the Tetragram “Yahuwa”, like in his Arabic translation of the book of Psalms¹⁴⁹ (Ps 83:18, below, and also Ps 92:8,9).

167	PSALMUS OCTOGESIMUS QUARTUS.
flant in perpetuum, et erubescant et pereant.	وَيَسْرُدُوا وَيَهْلِكُوا :
18. Et noverint nomen tuum esse Jahovah, et te solum et summum super omnem terram existere.	۱۸ وَيَعْرِفُوا ۱۹ أَن أَنْتَ آسَمُكَ يَهُوَهَ وَحَدُكَ عَالٍ عَلَى كُلِّ الْأَرْضِ ۲۰ :
Est ipsamet vox hebraea quod noluit vertere interpretes noster.	السود ۲۱ — يَجْبُوا ۲۲ — راس ۲۳ — بانصيك ۲۴ — اعداك ۲۵
— حزب ۲۶ — يكونون ۲۷ — يتشاوروا ۲۸ — — سخي ۲۹ — امراهم ۳۰ — اجلاهم ۳۱ — استيصلهم ۳۲ — دراع ۳۳ — عهد يقطعوا ۳۴	
Hunc reddidi versum juxta sensum in commentario ex- positum, ideoque in meâ versione nomen Dei ineffabile יהוה intactum servavi.	۳۵ — ويعرفون ۳۶ — ويعرفون ۳۷ —

¹⁴⁸ I. SASSON - Methods and Approach in Yefet Ben 'Ali Al-Basri's Translation and Commentary on the Book of Proverbs PhD in Bible and Ancient Semitic Languages, Ed. The Jewish Theological Seminary (2010), pp. 39,344.

¹⁴⁹ J.J.L. BARGÈS - Libri psalmorum David Regis et prophetarum. Versio à R. Yaphet ben Heli Paris 1861, Ed. Institutii Imperialis Gallicani Bibliopolam, pp. 167,184.

It cannot be a mistake, because the text concerns precisely God's name: *Let them know that you alone bear the name of Yahwa, Most High over all the earth* (Ps 83:18). Furthermore one of the leading Karaite scholars of that time, Jacob al-Qirqisani, a native of Upper Mesopotamia, or the general vicinity of Baghdad, wrote in his book¹⁵⁰ entitled *Kitab al-Anwar* (in 937 CE): *Some of the Karaites of Khorasan ignore "ketib and qere" and read only what is written. Some of them do in the case of the Name which is written Yod He (YHWH) and maintain that he who read reads it as Aleph Daleth (Adonay) is an unbeliever.* Qirqisani also mentioned the ancient tradition of rendering the Tetragram as *al-rabb* (the Lord) or *'allah* (the God)¹⁵¹. So, why Yefet ben Eli did he use Yahuwa rather than Yehuwa, given the name Jesus, for example, can be better transcribed Yesua into Arabic (يسوع) rather than the current Yasu. In fact he used the ancient Hebrew substitute Yahû "Yah-himself", which is pronounced correctly Yahuwa in Arabic. For example, a manuscript (a charm of protection dated c. 940 CE) containing a text of 50 lines, reads¹⁵²:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم [ح]م

1) In the name of God the merciful, the compassionate. In the name of God

أستلك باسمائك الكثيرة الكبيرة

9 الرضية [ح]رضية العزيزة الممتنعة

10 التامة [ح]كاملة الطاهرة التي لا يتبني

11 ان يسأ [به] احد غيرك يا الله أستلك باسم

12 لك التي لا [] ولا تزول التي لا يردّها شيء من

13 دونك المثوبة التي بها يتمّ عهدك التي تجيب

14 من دعاك يا الله يا الله يا الله أستلك تكلمة

8) I pray thee by thy names, numerous, large,

9) desirable, satisfactory, powerful, unapproachable,

10) perfect, complete, pure, [with whom] we should

11) name nobody else but you. O God, I pray thee by thy

12) names that do not [pass? and] do not cease to which only you respond

13) [with] the reward, by which your patronage is completed, to which you respond

14) to that one who invokes thee. O God, O God, O God, I pray thee

27 وكسر وتصابيب وباسمائك العالية الطاهرة

28 المطهرة الممدوحة الرقيقة الجليلة الكريمة

29 الجميلة ياه ياه ياه هو هو هو يا الله

27) [...] and a cross. And by thy names, the illustrious ones, the pure ones

28) the purified ones, the praised ones, the sublime ones, the great ones, the noble ones

29) the beautiful ones: *Yâh, Yâh, Yâh, Huma, Huma, Huma*, O God

50 وبخاتم سليمان بن داود

50) and through the seal of Solomon son of David

¹⁵⁰ B. CHIESA, W. LOCKWOOD – Ya'qub al-Qirqisani on Jewish Sects and Christianity in: *Judentum und Umwelt* 10 (Frankfurt 1984), p. 155.

¹⁵¹ M. POLYAQ – The Karaite Tradition of Arabic Bible Translation: Leiden 1997, Ed. Brill, p. 70.

¹⁵² M. POLYAQ – Les grottes de Murabba'ât Oxford 1961, Ed. Clarendon Press, pp. 283-290.

Huwa is the personal pronoun of the 3rd person, singular, masculine, HE, i.e. God, or He is. It occurs in the Qur'an in this sense, e.g. Surah III:1 لا اله الا الله *Allahu la ilaha illa Huwa*, "God there is no god but HE". The word is often used by Sufi mystics in this form: لا هو الا هو يا هو يا هو *ya hu, ya hu, ya man la ya'lamu ma hu illa hu*, "O He (*who is*), O He (*who is*), O He *whom no one knows what He Himself is but Himself*." Some commentators have supposed the word Hu to stand for the exalted name of God, the *Ismu 'l-a'zam* ("the supreme name") which Muslim doctors say is only known to God.

Mansur al-Hallaj (858-922), a Persian mystic, revolutionary writer and teacher of Sufism, wrote (in Arabic): *Here are the words of which sense seemed ambiguous. Know that temples hold by His Yâhuwah and that bodies are being moved by His Yâsîn. Now Huwa and Sîn are two roads which end into the knowledge of the original point*¹⁵³. Yâ-Sîn is a reference to the Sura 36 and Yâ-Huwah wrote Y'HHW in Arabic, makes reference to the Hebrew Tetragram (YHWH) but the name Yâhuwah was understood Yâ Huwa "Oh-He" in Arabic. Mansur al-Hallaj was rejected as madman by his teacher, al-Junayd, and died crucified in Bagdad as a heretic. However the Yâhuwah vocalization have influenced several imams, such as Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi (1149-1209), a Persian Sunni Muslim theologian who, knowing the 99 beautiful names of God, explained that the supreme Name (*ism-al-a'zam*) of God was Yâ Huwa not Allâh¹⁵⁴. It is noteworthy the name Yahuwah is still found in a few Arabic Bibles¹⁵⁵.

As a result, some Karaites have indeed pronounced God's name but they used its Hebrew substitute Yahû "Yah-himself", which was pronounced Yahuwa in Arabic and understood in this language as "Oh Him". Amazingly, Jews of that time were not interested anymore in the pronunciation of God's name, but only about the symbolic meaning or esoteric understanding of its letters. For example, Abraham ibn Ezra (1092-1167) wrote a book entitled the *Book of the Name (Sefer ha-Shem)* in which he establishes links between digital and also zodiacal values from the letters of the Tetragram. Moreover Philosophy, Gnosticism and mystical even astrological beliefs became increasingly influential at that time mainly due to the *Sefer Yetzirah* ("Book of Forming") which speculated on the letters of the divine names. In order to contend with such influences Maimonides (1138-1204) a Jewish scholar and famous Talmudist, put forward a whole new definition of Judaism. His reasoning centred on the Name of God, the Tetragram, which was explained in his book entitled *The Guide of the Perplexed* (Book I, ch. 64), written in 1190. There he exposed the following powerful reasoning: the God of the philosophers did not require worship only polite acknowledgement of his existence, since it would be impossible to establish relations with a nameless God (Elohim). Then he proved that the Tetragram YHWH is the personal name of God, that is to say the name distinctly read (*Shem ha-mephorash*), which is different from all the other names such as: Adonay, Shadday, Elohim (which are only divine titles having an etymology), because the Tetragram has no etymology.

However, Maimonides knew well the problem of the pronunciation, since Jewish tradition stated that it had been lost. On the other hand, he also knew that some Jews believed in the almost magical influence of the letters or the precise pronunciation of divine names, but he warned his readers against such practices as being pure invention or foolishness. The remarkable aspect of his argumentation lies in the fact that he managed to avoid controversy on such a sensitive subject. He asserted that in fact it was only true

¹⁵³ L. MASSIGNON – Akhbar al-Hallâj

Paris 1975, Éd. Vrin p. 113 (French translation), p. 26 (Arabic text).

¹⁵⁴ IBN 'ATA' ALLÂH - Traité sur le nom ALLÂH (translated into French by Maurice Glotton)

Paris 1981, Ed. Les Deux Océans, pp. 146-147.

¹⁵⁵ FARES CHIDIAQ & WILLIAM WATTS -The Holy Bible

London, 1857 (Yahuwah in Ex 6:3, 6, 8, etc.)

THE DOMINICAN FATHERS -The Dominican Bible

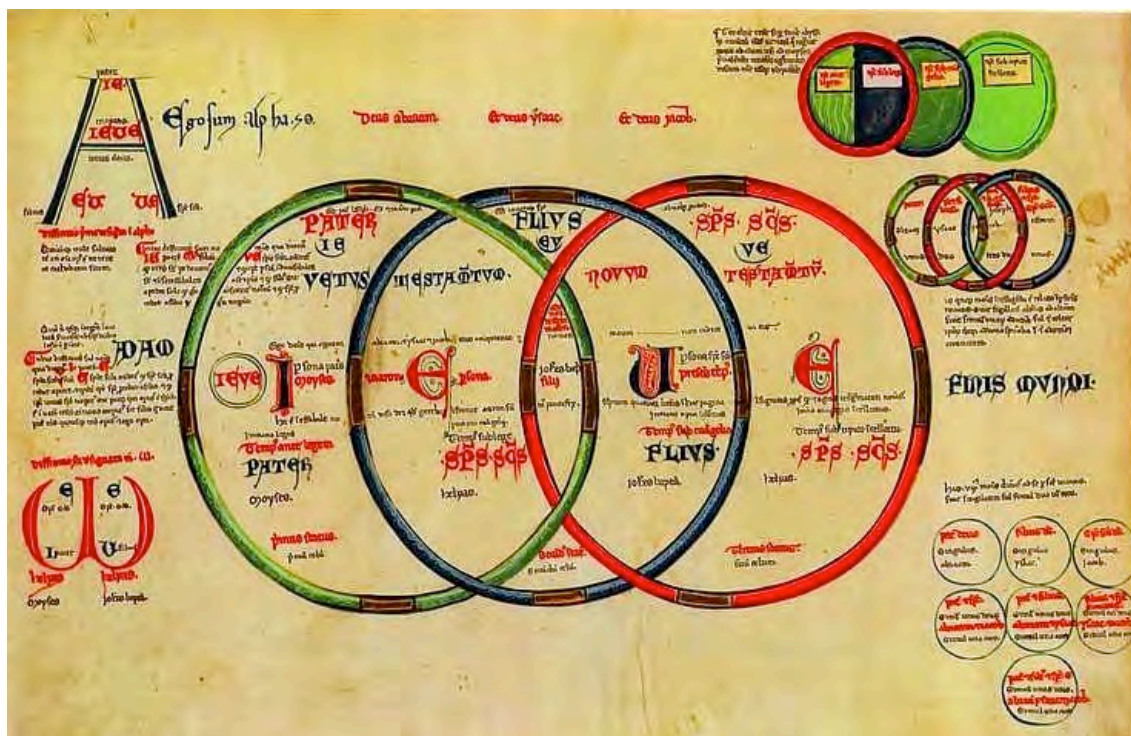
Iraq, 1875 (Yahuwah in footnote of Ex 3:14 but Yahwah in footnote of Ex 6:3).

worship which had been lost, and not the authentic pronunciation of the Tetragram, since this was still possible according to its letters. To support this basic idea (true worship is more important than correct pronunciation), he quoted *Sotah 38a* to prove that the name is the essence of God and that is the reason it should not be misused, then he quoted the text of Zechariah 14:9 to prove the oneness of this name, also *Sifre Numbers 6:23-27* to show that the priests were obliged to bless by this name only. Then, to prove that the pronunciation of the Name did not pose any problem in the past, and that it had no magical aspect, he quoted *Kiddushin 71a*, which said that this name was passed on by certain rabbis to their sons. Also, according to *Yoma 39b*, this pronunciation was widely used before the priesthood of Simon the Just, which proved the insignificance of a magical concept, because at this time, the Name was used for its spiritual not supernatural aspect. Maimonides insisted on the fact that what was necessary to find was the spirituality connected to this Name, and not the exact pronunciation. In order to demonstrate this important idea of understanding the sense and not the sound conveyed by this name, he quoted a relevant example. Exodus 6:3 indicates that before Moses the Name was not known. Naturally this refers to the exact meaning of the Name, and not its pronunciation, because it would be unreasonable to believe that a correct pronunciation would have suddenly been able to incite the Israelites to action, unless the pronunciation had magical power, a supposition disproved by subsequent events. To conclude his demonstration, Maimonides quoted Exodus 3:14 to show that the expression *ehyeh asher ehyeh*, which can be translated as: *I shall be who I shall be*, was above all a spiritual teaching. Because the Tetragram had no linguistic etymology, this link with the verb “to be (*hayah*)” expressed above all a religious etymology, that is a teaching about God, who can be defined as: *the Being who is the being or the necessary being*. It is interesting to note that Judah Halevi (1075-1141), another Jewish scholar, put forward almost the same arguments in his book *The Kuzari* (*Sefer ha-Kurazî*) published in 1140. He wrote that the main difference between the God of Abraham and the God of Aristotle was the Tetragram (Kuzari IV:16). He proved also that this name was the personal name of God (IV:1) and that it meant according to the Bible: *He will be with you*. To show once again that it was the meaning of this name which was important and not the pronunciation, he quoted Exodus 5:2 where Pharaoh asked to know the Name: not the pronunciation which he used, but the authority of this Name (IV:15). He pointed out that the letters of the Tetragram have the remarkable property of being “*mother of reading*”, that is the vowels associated with other consonants, much as the spirit is associated with the body and makes it live: *Although its meaning is hidden, the letters of which it is composed speak. For it is the letters alef, hē, nāw and yōd which cause all consonants to be sounded, as no letter can be pronounced as long as it is not supported by one of these four, viz: ā by alef, and hē, ū by nāw, and ī by yōd. They form, so to speak, the spirit in the bodies of the consonants. The name Oh is like the Tetragrammaton (Ex III:14). As to EH’YEH, it can be derived from the latter name, or from the root hāyāh (“to be”), and its tendency is to prevent the human mind from pondering over an incomprehensible but real entity* (The Kuzari IV:3).

GOD’S NAME, ITS REBIRTH INSIDE CHRISTENDOM (1200-1600 CE)

Judah Halevi and Maimonides gave convergent information which marked a turning point in the history of the Name. However, the expression “*pronounced according to its letters*” which Maimonides used is strictly exact only in Hebrew (vowel letters as pointed out by Judah Halevi, thus Y-H-W-H can be read I-H-U-A). Joachim of Flora gave a Greek transliteration I-E-U-E of Y-H-W-H (i.e. Y = I, H = E, W = U), in his *Expositio in Apocalypsim* (finished in 1195). He also used the expression: *Adonay IEUE tetragramaton*

nomen in another book entitled *Liber Figurarum* (c. 1202). As seen in the illustration¹⁵⁶ (below), Joachim of Flora also gave the three other names: IE, EV, VE, which he associated with the Father (IE), the Son (EV) and the Holy Spirit (VE)!



The vocalization of the Tetragram (IEUE) associated with the name of Jesus (EU) would soon be improved by Pope Innocent III in one of his sermons¹⁵⁷ written around 1200. Indeed, he noticed that the Hebrew letters of the Tetragram Ioth, Eth, Vau (that is Y, H, W) were used as vowels, and that the name IESUS had exactly the same vowels I, E and U as the divine name. Like Joachim of Flora, he broke up the divine name IEUE into IE-EU-UE, which led him to suppose that the name IE-SUS contained God's name IE. He also drew a parallel between the name written IEVE, pronounced Adonai, and the name written IHS but pronounced IESUS.

However, the explanations of Maimonides concerning God's name "read as it is written" have really been understood only when Christian scholars began to take an interest in Hebrew which occurred when a few Jews had converted to Catholicism. These Jews, like Petrus Alfonsi (1062-1110), greatly improved the knowledge of Hebrew and above all of divine Names. With this new knowledge of Hebrew texts, the Dominicans (a powerful missionary order) decided on a confrontation with the Jewish Authorities. The Disputation of Barcelona (1263) was a formal ordered medieval debate between representatives of Christianity and Judaism regarding whether or not Jesus was the Messiah¹⁵⁸. Since the Dominicans claimed the victory, Nahmanides felt compelled to publish the controversy. From this publication Christians selected certain passages which he construed as blasphemies against Christianity and denounced to his general Raymond de Penyafort. King James ordered to a committee the removal of passages deemed offensive from the Talmud. It consisted of Bishop of Barcelona Arnolfo de Guerbo, Raymond de Penyafort,

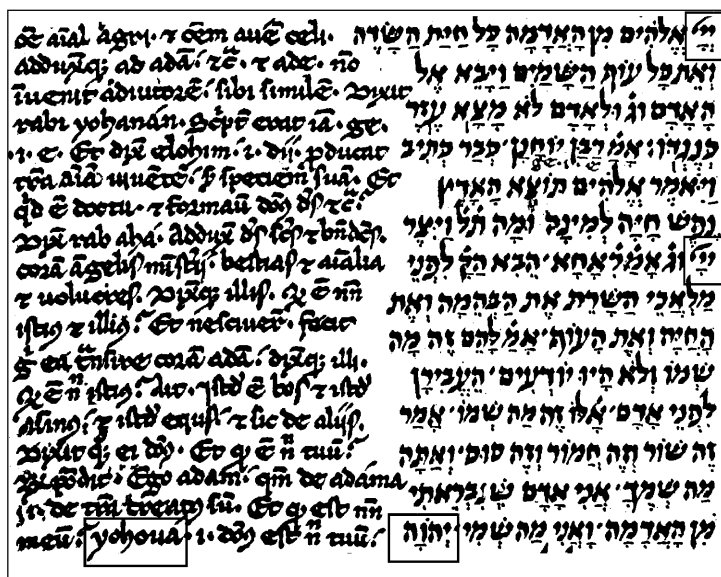
¹⁵⁶ GIOACCHINO DA FIORE -Expositio in Apocalypsim, Concordia Veteris et Novi Testamenti (c. 1200-1220) Library of the Seminary of Reggio Emilia, fols. 222-235.

¹⁵⁷ INNOCENTII III papae - Sermones de sanctis. Sermo IV, in circumcissione domini in: *Patrologia Latina* CCXVII (J.P. Migne Paris 1855), pp. 465-470.

¹⁵⁸ It was held at the royal palace of King James I of Aragon in the presence of the King, his court, and many prominent ecclesiastical dignitaries and knights, between Dominican Friar Pablo Christiani, a convert from Judaism to Christianity, and Rabbi Nahmanides (Ramban), a leading medieval Jewish scholar.

and the Dominicans Arnolfo de Legarra, Pedro de Janua and Ramón Martí (1220-1284). In 1250 Ramón Martí, a Catalan Dominican friar and theologian, was one of eight friars appointed to make a study of oriental languages with the purpose of carrying on a mission to Jews and Moors. To help Christian theologians to debate better with the rabbis, he began writing from 1269 (until his death in 1284) a study book of biblical texts in Hebrew: called *Pugio Fidei* ("Dagger of Faith"). It is noteworthy that around 1270 appeared the first works dealing with Hebrew language like those of Roger Bacon (*Greek and Hebrew Grammar*) and Williams of Mare (*Biblical Glossary of the Hebrew and Greek Vocabulary*).

Ramón Martí used the spelling Yohoua¹⁵⁹ for God's name in his *Pugio Fidei* (III:II). It is clear that this scholar who knew the Hebrew form Y^eHoWâH, also abbreviated Y^eYâY (framed), did not transcribe it Yehouah in Latin as might be expected, but Yohoua. Martini explained at length the reasons for his choice. He quoted the Talmudic references from Rabbi Moseh Ben Maymon in his *Guide of the Perplexed*, especially those of chapters 60-64 of part I, which concern the Name. Thus, the Tetragram, the only name of God (*elohim*) according to Zechariah 14:9, was written in Hebrew Iod He Vau He, and pronounced *adonai*. This name was indicated by the word *shembamephoras*, which means "the Name distinctly read" or "the Name read according to its letters". Martini noticed that Abba Saul (a rabbi of 2nd century) had forbidden the pronunciation of this name according to its letters. This knowledge led Martini to



deduce that the Name Y-h-w-h had to be pronounced I-h-û-â that is Ihoua. However, because all theophoric names beginning with *Yehô-* in Hebrew had been transcribed *Jo-* in Latin, like Johannes (John), Martí chose to write Yo-houa instead of I-houa in order to harmonize this name with all theophoric names like Yohonan (Johannes), Yohoyaqim (Joiaqim), etc. At that time the scholar transcription Y, instead of I, was frequent (Elohyim for Elohim, Helye for Eli, Ysayas for Isaias, etc.) and the use of the letter H was erratic, for example, Iesus was written either Hiesu, or Jhesu and Iehsu. Martí did not claim that Yohoua was the exact pronunciation, but insisted on the necessity of using it, quoting Isaiah 52:6: *For that reason my people will know my name*. The *Pugio Fidei* impressed very much a few Christian scholars knowing Hebrew.

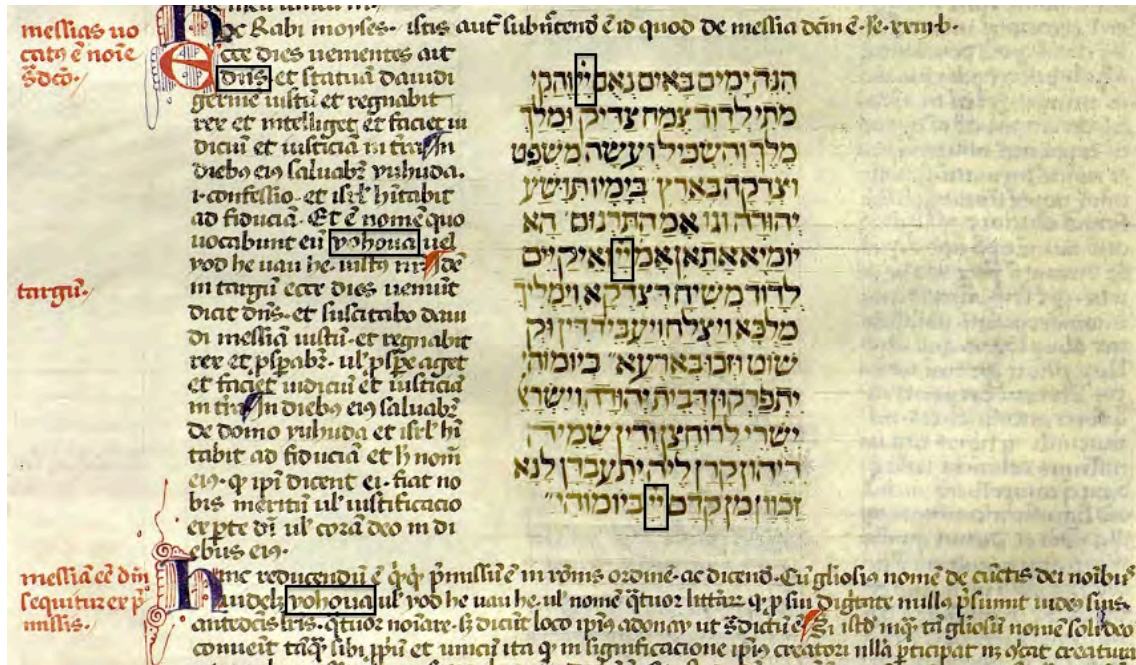
Most of the academics who followed would not be interested themselves on the question of the pronunciation. For example, Arnaldus of Villa Nova, a former student of Ramón Martí, would indeed be most interested in God's name, shown by his work entitled *Allocutio super Tetragrammaton*¹⁶⁰ (1292), but his considerations of the pronunciation of the Name are more of cabalistic nature. He mixed the vocalism and symbolism of the letters, in order to make links between the name 'Jesus' and the Tetragram. Although he mentioned the equivalences of the consonants Y and V with their respective vowels I and U, he did

¹⁵⁹ R. MARTINI - *Pugio Christianorum*

Paris (c. 1300), Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève ms.1405 fol. CLXIIv.

¹⁶⁰ J. CARRERAS ARTAU - *La Allocutio super Tetragrammaton de Arnolfo de Vilanova*. in: *Sefarad* 9 (Madrid-Barcelona 1949), pp. 75-105.

not come to any conclusion on the pronunciation of the Tetragram but instead he linked its resemblance written IHVH, with the name of Jesus, written either IHS, or IHESVS. He then speculated on the place of these letters I, H, V within these names and on their respective symbolism in proving the Trinity. In contrast a Christian copyist made a lengthy commentary¹⁶¹ (c. 1300) of the part dedicated to the name of four letters Yohoua (framed) which is spelled yod he uau he in Hebrew.



Another Christian scholar, Porchetus de Salvaticis, completed a book¹⁶²: *Porchetus' Victory Against the Ungodly Hebrews* (1303), in which he has regularly used the spelling Yohouah (Ihouah in later versions). Like Martini, he quoted Maimonides to justify his assertions on the Name. He repeated that the Tetragram, written *yod he uau he*, was the only name of God. He quoted verses of Jeremiah's book (Jr 23:5-6; 33:15-16) to point out that the Messiah had received God's name in his name, because, according to these verses, the name of the Messiah must mean: *Yhwh is our righteousness*. He insisted on the fact that one had to mention God's name to be blessed (Ps 20:1,7; 79:6,9; Mi 5:4), and that this name could not have disappeared, because: *only the very name of the wicked ones will rot* (Pr 10:7). Concerning pronunciation, he showed the absurdity of agreeing on one hand to pronounce the shortened name Yah in the expression *Alleluia* "Praise Yah" and of refusing on the other hand to pronounce Yhwh, since Yah and Yhwh are considered, each separately, to be God's name (Ps 68:4; 83:18); Thus why allow the pronunciation of one and not the other?

<p>te. dedi te eloim: phaoim. Et sic ista: sicut dictum est. ps. lex x. g. Ego dixi kelohym uos. Et est uocano regem messiam nomine suo. Et qd est nomen ei? yohouah. ul' yod he uau he. nomen ei. sicut dictum est. exo. xv. a. dominus uir pugne. yod he uau he. nomen isrl. Quod est ualde qd sup i traditio. in peregrinacione. habetur qd dno uir pugne. exo. xv. a. est deus isrl et benedictus. equus sup equum ruleu. Et in traditio pmissa. in glosa psalmorum quaz</p>	<p>messias testis est uocant. habetur qd uocant est uocano messiam nomine suo. qd est yohouah. ul' yod he uau he. Et qd dominus uir pugne est messias. Exo. xv. a. nomen est. yod he uau he. a. pp certissimum est messiam et dno. Nemo enim pcepit eum. iste gloriissimo nomine ap. pposito soli sibi ut ia postest est. Cum itaqz pfatus equus sit deus isrl et benedictus ut pmissum est. Et dno yhe xpo sicut fias. uir simul et deus. ut pmissum est. uocant corpus suu.</p>
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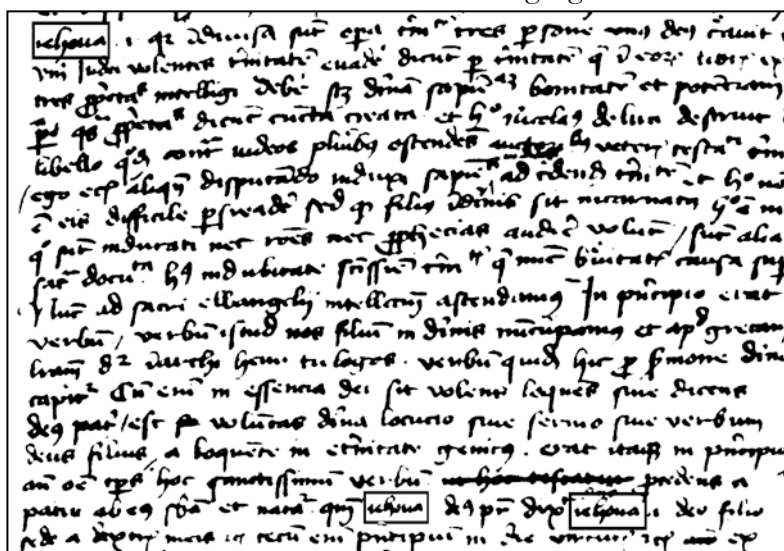
¹⁶¹ R. MARTI - Incipit phemium pugionem christianorum ad impiorum perfidiam jugulandam et maxime judeorum Coimbra (c. 1300), Biblioteca Geral Digital Universidade de Coimbra, ms.720 fol. CLXXXIIv, CLXXXIII.

¹⁶² PORCHETO DE SALVAIGNIS - Victoria Porcheti aduersus impios Hebraeos Dijon (1380) Bibliothèque municipale de Dijon ms 231 fol. 169.

These relevant remarks were reserved for the very small circle of the Christian and Jewish scholars in their debates. However, most of the population was in deep ignorance on this subject, and, to make matters worse, some erudite theologians taught their flocks that it was absurd to name God. For example, the famous theologian Thomas Gallus, abbot of Verceil, asserted in many of his works on God's name, such as *Explanatio de divinis nominibus* (1242), that it was impossible for man to name God.

The *Pugio* is quoted in the Codex Majoricanus (1381), in which both Yohoua and Yehoua occur¹⁶³. A famous Talmudist, Pablo de Sancta Maria of Burgos, converted to Catholicism in 1390, copied the Bible of Nicholas of Lyra adding his own comments¹⁶⁴ to those already existing, including one concerning the pronunciation of the Name. After comments on Exodus 3:14, he indicated that the Tetragram was spelt Y.h.b.h (in Spanish b is pronounced as v), and that this name was very close to the name of Jesus (Y.h.v.), because these two names both had 4 letters, the first letter and the third one being the same (y and v). He pointed out that the consonants y and v could serve as vowels (for i and u), and that the Hebraic gutturals, that is the h final and the *ayn*, were unknown in the Latin language, which increased the resemblance between these two names (Ihua and Isuâ). However, he did not vocalize either of these names in the Hebraic language.

Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa¹⁶⁵, an erudite theologian, was fascinated by this subject on which he commented repeatedly in his sermons. For example he dedicated his first sermon (on John 1:1) to explaining the links between God's name and the name of Jesus. For example, in this sermon entitled *In Principio Erat Verbum*, written around 1428, he explained, based



on Maimonides' works, the various names of God and the meaning of the Tetragram, which he vocalized Iehoua¹⁶⁶ (framed names). In this sermon¹⁶⁷, he began to develop the idea that Jesus was the "speakable" element (the Word) of the "unspeakable/ ineffable" God. He explained in another sermon¹⁶⁸, written around 1440, that the name of Jesus "savior" is pronounced Ihesua in Hebrew, and this name "Savior" is also the Word of God. He indicated that the unspeakable name is Ihehoua in Hebrew. In two other sermons¹⁶⁹, written in 1441, he pursued the connection between the unspeakable Greek Tetragram, spelt Iot, He, Vau, He, and the "speakable" name of Ihesus which he often wrote Ihus. Then in a sermon¹⁷⁰ written in 1445, he explained in detail the grammatical

¹⁶³ G.F. MOORE - Notes on the Name יהוה in: *The American Journal of Theology* Vol. 12:1 (Jan., 1908), p. 36.

In his printing of the *Pugio* (1651), Joseph de Voisin explains (p. 745) what were the Codices he used.

¹⁶⁴ PAULUS DE SANCTA MARIA - Additiones ad Postillam Nicolai de Lyra. Vol.I Bruxelles (1429), Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier, ms. 240 fol. 36-38.

¹⁶⁵ In 1459 he became vicar general in the Papal States.

¹⁶⁶ NIKOLAUS DE CUSA - Codex Cusanus 220 (fol. 56,57) Berkastel-Kues (Germany) 1430 Bibliothek des Cusanus Stites.

¹⁶⁷ NICOLAI DE CUSA - Opera omnia. Sermo I In principio erat verbum Hamburg 1970 Ed. Felix Meiner. Academia Heidelbergensis Tom.XVI:1, pp. 1-19.

¹⁶⁸ NICOLAI DE CUSA - Opera omnia. Sermo XX Nomen eius Jesus (1977) Tom.XVI:3, pp. 301-317.

¹⁶⁹ NICOLAI DE CUSA - Opera omnia. Sermo XXIII, XXIV Domine, in lumine vultus tui (1984) Tom.XVI:4, pp. 358-433.

¹⁷⁰ NICOLAI DE CUSA - Opera omnia. Sermo XLVIII Dies sanctificatus (1991) Tom.XVII:2, pp. 200-212.

reasons permitting a link between these two names. God's name is the Greek Tetragram which is spelt in Hebrew Ioth, He, Vau, He (YHWH); these four letters serve as vowels, corresponding to I, E, O, A in Greek, because in this language there is no specific vowel for the sound OU (the letter U in Greek is pronounced as the French Û). So, in Greek, the transcription Ieoua would be more exact than Ieôa and would better reflect the OU sound of the Hebrew name Ieoua, becoming in Latin Iehova or Ihehova, because the letter H is inaudible and the vowel U also serves as a consonant (V). He noted finally that the Hebraic form IESŪA of the name "Jesus" is distinguished from the divine name only by a holy letter Š which is interpreted as the "elocation" or the Word of God, also the salvation of God. He would continue this parallel, between God's name (Ieoua) and the name of Jesus (Iesoua) in yet another sermon¹⁷¹. However towards the end of his life he wrote several important works: *De Possess* (1460), *Non Aliud* (1462), to explain the purely symbolic character of God's name which had all names and so none in particular. Contrary to his books, his sermons were not widely diffused (some of his sermons have only been published in 1514 by the Hebraist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples¹⁷²).

Cultivated readers nevertheless began to take advantage of this important information. For example, Denis the Carthusian, who was a close friend of Nicholas of Cusa, was also a fervent reader of Rabbi Paulus (Paul of Burgos). Denis wrote (c. 1455) a commentary on the book of Exodus *Enarrationes in Exodum*, in which he explained that from Rabbi Paulus he knew God's name, vocalized Iehouah (framed) in the printed edition of 1534¹⁷³, but *tetragrammaton* (name replaced?) in a manuscript copy dated c. 1500¹⁷⁴.

dicitur, nomē meū Adonay non indicaui eis, videlicet, dando eis miracula facere, sicut tibi.
¶ In sup. R. Paulus affirmat conueniēter dici posse, quod nomē **Iehouah** non fuit patribus ante
Gene 17 Moyſen reuelatum, atq; ad id quod contra hoc obiicit L. yra, vtpote in Genesi scriptum esse
 nomē tetragrammaton, vbi habemus: Ego dñs qui eduxi te &c. Respondet, argumētum istud
 esse inualidum. Nam illa sunt verba Moyſi deſcribētis, ea quæ tranſierunt inter deū & Abrahā
 qui Moyſes deum cognouit ſub hoc nomine **τετραγματον**, ideo eum ſic nominauit. Hæc
R. Paulus R. Paulus: Qui circa hunc paſſum multa ſcribit, contra L. yram, quæ quicunq; intelligēs ſatis fa-
 ciliter ppendere valet, non eſſe idonee introducta, ſed prolixitate vitans ptranſeo. Veruntamē
 circa id quod aſſerit L. yra, deum manifeſtaſſe Moyſi hoc nomē **Iehouah** dum dixit ad eum:
 Ego ſum qui ſum, & quòd patriarchis præcedētibus Moyſen, non indicaui hoc nomē ſecun-
 dum ſignificatum, ſed ſecundum vocē, non videtur poſſe ſaluari. Non eñ videt Abrahā & ei
Zuc 10 conſimiles viri contēplatiui, ſublimiter illuminati ignoraffe, quòd deus ſit ipſum purum, incom-
 mutabile, infinitum, ac neceſſarium eſſe, in ſe pure conſiſtēs, & quòd eſſe, ſic ſumptum ſit propri-
 um nomē dei, præſertim, cum & naturalis ratio dicet hoc, & quidam puri philoſophi hoc no-
Job 1115 uerunt, ſanctus quoq; lob id nouiſſe videtur, dicēdo ad dominum: Quis poteſt facere mūdum
Job 23 de immundo, nōne tu q ſolus es? Et rurfus: Deus ſolus ē. Oib; ergo pſatis, videtur litera iſta
 ſic exponēda: Nomē meū Adonay, hoc ē, vniuerſale dominiū meum & oīpotētiā meā, ſeu no-
 mē meum **Iehouah** quod nude & pure deſignat diuinā eſſentiam, nō indicaui Abrahā & Iſaac
 & Iacob tam copioſe & euidenter, vt tibi. Vel, non indicaui eor; alicui nomē iſtud **Iehouah** ſi-
 tū me verum eſt, quod Rabbi Paulus inſinuat, dicēs, quòd Moyſi primo ſit reuelatum hoc nomē.
 Dicit etiam R. Paulus nomē iſtud **Iehouah** nunquā pronuntiatur ab Hebræis, prout in litera
 iacet ac ſcribitur, ſed vbiq; loco eius pronuntiant hoc nomē Adonay. Nec nomē illud tetragrā-
 maton tranſferibile eſt, ideo tranſlatoreſ tam Chalda; i quā Latini, & etiam Arabici loco il-
 lius tranſtulerunt dñm, quod eſt tranſlatio nominis huius Adonay, non autē proprie nominis
R. Paulus huius tetragrammaton, ideo dicit Rabbi Paulus quod nomē iſtud **Iehouah** tantū ſignificat, atq;
 impoſitum eſt ex inſtitutione diuina non humana, aliā, nomē hoc leu eius ſignificatio inno-

¹⁷¹ NICOLAI DE CUSA - Opera omnia. Sermo LXXI

Hamburg, Ed. Felix Meiner. Academia Litterarum Heidelbergensis, Tom. XVII:4.

¹⁷² JACQUES LEFÈVRE D'ÉTAPLES - Nicolas de Cusa Excitionvm

Paris 1514 Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal Fol.B.1298(2) fol. XII,XIV,LII,LIV.

¹⁷³ DIONYSIUS CARTUSIANUS - Enarrationes piae ac eruditae: In quinque Mosaicae legis libros
 Quentel, 1534, fol. CLVI.

¹⁷⁴ DIONYSIUS CARTUSIANUS - Commentarius in Pentateuchum

c. 1500 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. Ser. n. 12806 fol. 259r-v.

As explained by Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, Jesus' name (YHŠW') and God's name (YHWH) in Hebrew were close, but the Greek and Latin transcriptions of these two names were different. The name Iehoſua' (YHŠW') had been transcribed Iesus (Jesus) in the Greek Septuagint but Iosue (Joshua) in the Latin Vulgate. As a result, the name Jesus was Iosue in the Old Testament (the Vulgate was the official Bible of Catholicism) but Hiesu, Iehsu or Ihesu in the New Testament. Because of these fluctuations in the spelling of Jesus' name, Marsilio Ficino indicated in his *Book of the Christian Religion*¹⁷⁵, published (c. 1474), that God's name was Hiehoughi and that this name expressed all the tenses of the verb "to be". Johannes Wessel Gansfort, the spiritual father of Martin Luther, preferred (c. 1476) the form Iohauah in his treatises¹⁷⁶.

cet solus recte pñciare sciebat nomē illud dei propriū: qđ
est apud uos prā ceteris uenerādū. & quia quatuor solū li-
teris cōstat: & illis quidem uocalibus difficillime omnium
pronunciatur. sonat autem ferme in hunc modum.
† Hiehoughi. i. fuit: est: erit. Atq; hæc maior hebreorū pars
opināt. Si ita ē: cū nihil apud uos hoc noīe sanctius habeat

spīritū sanctū edoctus Moyses, deū per eīentiam, ita iah &
iohauah noīauit, quasi cetera omnia entia non sint, adeo ut
ultimū dei nomen etiā in patria, magis eheieh azer, qđ iah
& iohauah, quia quātūcūq; uel per se existentē, uel uenientē
uel uidentē uel cognoscentē uel sapientem cognoscunt, &
beate cognoscūt semper, quo cognoscibilis nō cognoscatur
omnibus beatis, etiā beatorū primus, ut supra. i. pre. ca. xi.
E hoc est eheih azer eheih, nomen, quo ipse se nominat sa-
pientibus, & quo sapientes deum cognoscentes aheieh azer
aheieh, hinc iah & iohauah, hinc iah, hinc iah, hinc iadath,
hinc chakma sonnet ababa, Sed ipm eheieh azer eieieh, san-
ctum & terribile nomen, beatorū humilitatem fouens, quod
semper beate super capita eorū intonat Ero qui ero. Et ipse

Johannes Reuchlin, one of the founders of Hebraic and Greek studies in Europe, published his *De Verbo Mirifico* (1494) mainly to defend the IEUE transcription (liber III Cap. XII-XIX). He supposed that the final letter of Jesus' name had to be E because in the Vulgate the name Iesu was sometimes spelt IESUE¹⁷⁷. He emphasized that this Greek transcription had the advantage of reintroducing the 4 vowels of God's name, however, the Latin transcription being IHVH he specified in order to harmonize these two transcriptions that the Greek letter E was the equivalent of the Latin H. So the Greek form IESUE would give the Latin form IHSVH. One of the most brilliant scholars of this time, the Italian humanist Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, friend and former student of Marsilio Ficino, studied the etymology of God's name in his *Disputianum Adversus Astrologos* (1496). Due to his vast knowledge he made brilliant links, which however proved to be rather daring. To prove the superiority of the Bible he tried to demonstrate that heathen religions were in fact plagiarisms of biblical religion. He asserted for example that the Roman god Jupiter was in fact an idolatrous imitation of the God of the Hebrews, and that even the etymology of this name Jupiter "IOVE-pater" (Jove-father) was a fraudulent copy of it (Liber V, VI). These explanations scholarly have impressed very much. For example, a friend of Pico della Mirandola, Agostino Giustiniani, a Catholic bishop, linguist and geographer, used it in his *Psalterium*¹⁷⁸ (1516). The name IOVA appears in Psalm L (below).

דְּקִשׁוֹר לְאֶסֶף	L. Psalmus Asaph.	XLIX. Psalmus Asaph.	דָּם. יְהוֹשֻׁעַ תָּפֹס אֶת־
יְהוֹשֻׁעַ תָּפֹס אֶת־	Deus, deus, DEVS	A. DEVS deorum dominus	עֵינֵי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ תָּפֹס
חֲסִיוֹן אֱלֹהִים	nemorum, & preparavi iustis		dara est lex &c. Sed
בְּגִיּוֹן אֱלֹהִים	in horto deliciarum animalia munda		nangd poruit alter eo
וְהוֹרֵן דְּרֹרֵי דְּבִלְ-עִמָּא	& bouē siluestrē qui pascitur quotidie		rū ELOHIM. i. se
אֱלֹהִים			felo & alter ē IOVA
			s. se solo, separacimq;

¹⁷⁵ MARSILII FICINI FLORENTINI - Liber de Christiana Religione. Caput XXX
Florence (1474) British Museum Library C.9.b.4. fol. 83b.

¹⁷⁶ JOANNES WESSEL GANSFORTIUS - Tractatus () Wesseli. De Oratione. Pars III
Zwolle 1521 British Library 477.a.41(3) lib III, cap XI-XII fol XXXIX.

¹⁷⁷ Ezr 3:2 and 1S 6:14, Iesue is also found in 1Ch 7:27 (LXX).

¹⁷⁸ Besides the Hebrew text, the Septuagint translation, the Chaldee paraphrase, and an Arabic version, it contains the Vulgate translation, a new Latin translation by the editor, a Latin translation of the Chaldee paraphrase, and a collection of scholia.

כָּלִי	מֶלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים	פֶּלֶךְ אֱלֹהִים חֲקִיף	in corde tuo ero fortis	in misericordia tua, quidem est ipsum nomen Dei tetragrammaton .י. ה. ו. ה. Ioua.
אֲדָא חֲזִיק		דִּיכְמָד אֲחִינֵךְ בְּעֵלְמָא	sicut tu, arguam te in hoc mundo,	Et uocabit totam terrā ut cognoscere eos
וְאִימֵנָה		דִּיחֲסִידֵי גֵי הַיָּם	& ordinabo gehennam	

CAPUT VII.

Ad Moſen paſtorem Angelus. Rubus ardens. Hoſ inter colloquium. Paſtoris ſummiſſio. Ei pro Hebrais mandata à Deo.

1. *Angelus dicitur ſimiliter apparere.*
C Vin enim Moſes paſceret pecus Iethronis ſoceris ſui, ſacerdotis Madianite, eoq; pecore poſt ſaltum ducto, veniſſet in diuinum montem Horebum,
2. apparuit ei Ioſue angelus in flamma ignis de medio rubo: quem rubum igne ardere Moſes, neque tamen conſumi videns,
3. tentabat accedere, & tantum oſtentum videre, quā nam ratione non exureretur rubus.
4. Sed ubi vidit Ioſua eum ad ſpectandum accedere, clamauit ad eum Deus de medio rubo: Moſes, Moſes, Quid eſt? inquit ille.
5. Ne huc appropinqua, inquit: detrahe tibi calceos de pedibus: nam locus in quo tu ſitas, ſacra terra eſt.
6. Ego ſum Deus tui patris (inquit) Deus Abrahami, Deus Iſaci, Deus Iacob. Hic cum Moſes faciem ſuam abſcondiſſet, Deum aſpicere reformidans,
7. Ioſua ſic loquitur: Cūm viderem calamitatem populi mei qui eſt in Ægypto, querelamq; audire, qui expriment exactores, & eius labores cognoſcere,
8. deſcendi ad eum eripiendum Ægyptijs, & deducendum ex ea terra in terram bonam & amplam, in terram lacte & melle afluentem: in locū Chananeorum, Hetæeorum, Amoræorum, Pherezæorum, Heuzorum, & Iebuſæorum.
9. Quare hac Iſraelitarum imploratione accepta, perſpectaque violentia qua ab Ægyptijs virguntur,
10. ſtatui te ad Phaſionem mittere, qui Iſraelitis meos ex Ægypto educas.
11. At Moſes: Nam quis ego ſum, inquit, Deum alloquens, vt Phaſionem adeam, utq; Iſraelitas ex Ægypto educam?
12. Et ille: At adero ego tibi: atque hoc erit ſigni, à me te eſſe miſſum, quod poſteaquam populum ex Ægypto eduxeris, Deum hoc ipſo in monte coletis.

13. Hic Moſes: Eſto, inquit Deo, venero ad Iſraelitas, dixero me ab eorum Deo patrio ad eos mitti: quærent, quod ſit eius nomen: hic ego, quid illis reſpondeam?

14. Cui Deus: Ero qui ero, inquit. Dices Iſraelitis, Ero mittit me ad vos.

15. Sic dices Iſraelitis, inquit porro Moſi Deus, te à Ioſua Deo patrum iſorum, Deo Abrahami, Deo Iſaac, Deo Iacobi ad eos mitti. Hoc meum nomen ſempiternum, hoc mei in omnem æternitatem monimentum eſt.

16. Immodò, conuocatisq; Iſraelitarum ſenatoribus, dicito, Ioſuam Deum eorum patrum apparuiſſe tibi, Deum Abrahami, Iſaac, & Iacobi: & demonſtrauiſſe, ſefe de eis, & eorum conditione, quam in Ægypto perpetiantur,

17. velle cognoscere, eosq; ex Ægyptijs miſerijs educere in terram Chananeorum, Hetæeorum, Amoræorum, Pherezæorum, Heuzorum, & Iebuſæorum, terram lacte melleq; circumfluentem.

18. Poſtequam hoc illis perſulaſeris, conuenietis regem Ægypti, tu vnā cum ſenatoribus Iſraelitis, & ab eo petitis nomine Dei Hebreorum, in quem incidit, vt vos ſinat tridni iter per deſerta progredi, & Ioſue Deo veſtro ſacrificare.

19. Scio ego non permiffuram Ægypti regem vt abeat, niſi vi coactum.

20. Itaque vim adhibebo, Ægyptiosq; tot inter eos editis portentis perciturum, vt tandē vos dimittat.

21. Ac ne dum diſcedetis, inanes diſcedatis, ponam populū iſtum in gratiam cum Ægyptijs,

22. vt mulieres à ſuis vicinis & contubernaliſibus mulieribus exōrent vaſa aurea & argentea, atque veſtem que vos liberis veſtris imponetis, Ægyptumq; compilandis.

A N N O T A T I O.

Chriſtus. Qui hic Moſi apparuit, idem Angelus, aut nuncius, & Ioſua & Deus vocatur in hoc capite, & Iudic. 2. Idem Gen. decimoſexto, ubi Abrahamo apparuit, Ioſua dicitur. Idem Hagarem in deſerto errantem, & vt angelus, & vt Deus alloquitur, cap. 21. tex. 17. Idem cūm Balaamo in aſina equitanti occurrit, Angelus vocatur: & tamē dicit, Balaami iter eſt contra ſe inſtitutum: id quod Dei, non angeli loquentis eſt. Eundem Iacobus Gen. 32. & Deum vocat, & angelum. Ac ne ſingula prelixins perſequar, plena ſunt exemplorum litera: quare hæc res nobis paulo alius repetenda eſt. Principiū, qui hic Moſem alloquitur, non videtur eſſe princeps ille, & Chriſti pater Deus: neq; enim nuncius dici poſſet, cum neminem habeat à quo mittatur, neq; item angelus: nam Ioſua non diceretur, cūm hoc fit proprium Dei nomen, cuius è maiore auctoritate imperet, quam angelum conueniat. Quis ergo eſt? ſi poſſetis, quem Paulus 1. Corinth. 10. dicit à Iudeis fuiſſe tentatum, ideoq; eos à ſerpentibus extinctos: videlicet Chriſtus, per quem Deus Mundum & fecit & regit: quem Sybilla verſibus illis, quos in primis caput Geneſ. poſuit, Filium Dei vocat. Is eſt, qui Iſraelitas ex Ægypto eduxit, cum quo Moſes & Elias in monte Taburo loquebantur, qui hoc loco Dei nuncius vocatur, quod à patre miſſus eſt: quoniam patris ipſius præſentiam mortales non ſervant. Idem Ioſua dicitur ab Iſraelitis, quod eſſe ſignificat, quoniā ſemper fuit, ſemper erit, ſicut in Apocalypſi dicitur: & ſuper omnia, & ſub omnia, & ante omnia, &

The meaning of Jesus' name is "salvation" in Matthew 1:21, Chateillon explained in his comment about that verse that the name can be understood only from Hebrew and he also gave the reasons why he chose Ioua rather than Iehoua.

De nomine autem Iesu, idem sentio quod Andreas Osiander (sic tamen, ut affirmare nolim) videlicet ductum esse à nomine Ioua, interposita litera sin. Qua de re ne mihi plura scribenda sint, vide Osiandri Annotationes in Harmoniam Evangelicam. Sed cur in hoc nomine interponatur litera sin, cum multum diu, cōsiderarem, neq. cur hæc litera hic interposita foret viderem, quippe cum non sit seruilis, hoc est, eius literarum generis, quæ solent in deductis aliunde verbis ad primigenia adhiberi: capi cogitare, verbum hoc compositum esse oportere: tandemq. Dei beneficio comperisse videor, quemadmodum Iesus & Deus & homo est, ita nomen eius ex Dei & hominis nomine esse conflatum. Id autem didici ex Exod. cap. 15. vbi dicitur יְהוֹשֻׁעַ מִלְחָמָה Ioua istch milehamah: hoc est, Ioua vir belli: vbi vir bellicosus dici videtur, quoniam de Christo sermo est, qui vir futurus erat. Est igitur Iesus nomen compositum ex יְהוֹשֻׁעַ & אִישׁ, interposita litera ו ex nomine אִישׁ: reliquis autem duabus relictis, quippe quæ seruiles sint, & addi adimiq. sæpe soleant: ut sit יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, Iesus, idem quod Ioua vir, siue homo (nam hominem etiam significat אִישׁ) ut intelligamus, Iesum esse non Iouam (nam hoc de eius patre dicitur) sed Iouam hominem: hoc est, corporatum Iouam, hominemq. factum: id quod videntur Exod. 3. illa verba prædicere, Ego qui ero. Item, Ero misit me ad vos: quasi hoc diceret: Quidam, qui est ille quidem, sed nondum est quod erit: est enim Deus, sed futurus est etiam homo. Atque hoc est quod indicaretur videtur idem Iesus nondum homo factus, Iacobo, Gen. 32. cum nomen suum exquirere vetat, quippe quod sit mirabile. Hoc enim de admirabilitate in Græco & Latino scriptum extat, non sine causa, quamuis in Hebræo desideretur. Sed idem etiam in Hebræo est, Iud. 13. Quid enim admirabilis est, quàm eundem & Iouam & hominem esse? Quod autem in hoc nomine, quæ pars hominem significat, ea in medio verbo ponitur, cum id in alijs compositis fieri non soleat, in eo videtur arcana res latere. Significatur enim, ex Ioua factum hominem, & rursus ex homine factum Iouam: quemadmodum vides nomen יְהוֹשֻׁעַ à Ioue nomine incipere, & in idem desinere, interposito viri nomine. Et quoniam est hoc Iesu nomen Seruatoris nostri proprium, neque cum ullo mortalium commune, nos eos qui Græcè Iesus vocantur, malimus Iosuas appellare. Nec enim יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, sed יְהוֹשֻׁעַ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ dicuntur.

He explained that the name Jesus was IHVSV^c (יהושוע) in Hebrew, not IHVSH (יהושה) and this name was Jesus in the Septuagint but Josue in the Vulgate (Joshua). As these two names are similar in Hebrew, he deduced that since Jesus' name in Hebrew (Ieho-sua) was transcribed Io-sue (YHSW^c) in the Vulgate it was necessary to transcribe the Tetragram in the same way as Io-ua (YHWH), in order to keep the similarity. With the same analysis, the Hebraist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455-1537), disagreed with the Hebrew form IHSVH for the name of Jesus. In his biblical commentary of the book of Psalms, *Quintuple Psalms* (1509), he explains that thanks to the remarks of Reuchlin, it was easy to pronounce the Tetragram IHVH as it is written (Y = I, H = HE, W = U), that is I-HE-U-HE, which gives the Latin form Ihevhe (below). However he observed a major disagreement because according to Hebrew the name of Jesus was IHSVA or IHESVA instead of IHESV but never IHSVH (IHESVHE).

Christi dñi. bibebat enī (inquit) de spiritali cōsequēte eos petra. petra autē erat Christ⁹. est enī & petra nostra & saluator noster. sed & pater/ filius petra & saluator est. petra quidē ex psalmi 30 ver-
{ I
H
S
V
H
 lu quarto. sed & saluator. dic (ingt) aīc mee salus tua ego sū. Verū & Iesus hic cōmune nomē est & scribūt p aln hebrei i fine. pprīū autē saluatoris & dei nostri nomē tetragrāmaton cōtinet: sū mē-
 dia littera hincinde triadē cōnectente. tūc enī velligiū sue veritati/ suoz; exēplari infertū/ id est qd
 ad imaginē & similitudinē dei fuerat in principio creatū a diuino verbo assūptū: & tūc ineffabile
 effabile factū est. v. in annotationib⁹ psalmi 71 dictū est. pprīū sic rēpntat IHSVH. cōmune sic
 IHSVA & interdū merathesi litterarū IHVSA. ¶ Scdo versu. pōcupem⁹ facē eius in cōfessioe:
 ex hebræo/ pōcupem⁹ vultū ei⁹ in gtrū actioe. quasi id vclit ppheta/ antīcpem⁹ aduentū ei⁹ in

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Erūt nomē eius in eternū: vltra solē perseverabit nomen eius: quod etiā & si de benedictō nomine
 IHESV intelligatur: nichil absōnū. Nā deifero autore Paulo est nomē quod est super omne nomē.
 & de quo ad Romanos: IHESVS Christus fieri & hodie ipse & in secula. qd & toti versui quadrat.
 & de quo Petrus in Actis. nō est in aliquo alio salus. nec enī aliud est nomē sub celo datū homini-
 bus: in quo oporteat nos saluos fieri. quod & sequēti versui haud inaccomodabile videtur/ vbi dicit.
 & benedicentur in ipso oēs tribus terre: omnes gentes magnificabunt eū. Cū in sermonibus/ scri-
 sit hoc admirabile & benedictū nomē: totū in se claudere cum media sin/ id est f littera magnum dei
 ineffabile nomen tetragrāmaton/ quatuor litteris ioth/ he/ vau/ he conflātū. quod his litteris nostris
 quoquo pacto representare possumus I HE V HE. iunctim sic IHEVHE. iunge igitur sin id est
 f in medio: fiet IHESVHE nomē benedictū regis nostri & saluatoris omnīū. & deo incarnato/ ineffa-
 bile factum est effabile. Illud idē scripsit Mirandula. & de eodē librū edidit elegantissimū/ & sine cō-

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When he published some sermons of Nicholas of Cusa (1514), Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples used the form Iehoua instead of Ioua. At that time (in 1516), Galatino wrote his chief work *De Arcanis Catholice Veritatis*, at the request of the pope, the emperor, and other dignitaries, at which time the famous controversy on the authority of the Jewish writings was assuming a very high profile. Resolved to combat the Jews on their own ground, he turned the Cabbala against them, and sought to convince them that their own books

yielded proof of the truth of the Christian religion, hence their opposition to it should be branded as obstinacy. He gave his work the form of a dialogue. He had borrowed largely from the *Pugio Fidei* of Martini, remodelling, however, the material and supplementing it with copious quotations from the Zohar and the *Iggeret ha-sodot* of the Jewish convert Pablo de Heredia. Galatino dedicated a good part of his work¹⁷⁹ (Liber II Caput X) for explaining how to pronounce God's name correctly.

propter dixerunt magistri in persona Dei: Nomen meum est unicum mihi. Hæc omnia prædicta Rabbi Moses ben Maimon. CAP NIO. Dic obsecro, hoc nomen quatuor literarum, ut scriptum est, siue ut literæ ipsæ sonant, quomodo proferatur. GALATINVS. Quidam ex nostris aiunt, hoc nomen in nostris literis sonare Ioua. A quo dicunt forte apud antiquos nomen Iouis irreplisse: Sed maxime profecto errant, huiusmodi gentilitatis blasphemiam tam sancto nomini inferentes. Non enim hæc quatuor literæ יהוה si ut punctatæ sunt, legantur, Ioua reddunt: sed (ut ipse optime nosti) Iehoua efficiunt: quamuis Iudæi illud pronunciare ut scriptum est, non audeant: sed loco eius, אדוני Adonai, quod idem est quod Dominus, proferant. Qui autem illud in nostris literis Ioua sonare contendunt, id ex eo potissimum probare conantur, quod Hebræorum Grammatici dicunt, cum sceua aliqua literarum gutturi sequitur, plerumque & sceua ipsum & gutturi literam simul per syncopam auferri. Nam exempli gratia, יהודה Iehuda, nonnunquam יודה Iuda & scribitur & pronunciat, & יהושע Iehosua, & יוסף Iosua, & יהויכין Iehoiachin, & יואחין Ioiachin, & תהלים tehilim, & תלם tilim. Et reliqua multa id genus. Quod similiter quoque in hoc nomine Dei magno fieri uolunt. Qua ex re illud Ioua apud nos sonare inferunt, cum in eo sceua litera he literam gutturi præcedat. Quod si uerum esset, ipsum nomen non יהוה sed יהוה sine sceua & he litera scriberetur. Et sic non tetragrammaton, siue quatuor literarum esset, sed trium duntaxat. Quod nec cogitari quidem licet. Nefas enim est, eo in nomine quicquam uel addi, uel minui. Sed sic omnino debet & scribi & pronuciari (si tamen pronuciandum est) sicut Deus ipse Moses illud scribi debere mandauit, Quocirca Grammaticorum Hebræorum regula quam inducunt, in eo locum nullum habet, quamuis & in reliquis nusquam, uel rarissime in sacris uiginti quatuor libris seruata reperiatur, sed in alijs fortasse tantum codicibus, & præcipue apud Talmudistas. Ipsum igitur nomen Dei tetragrammaton cum sceua & he litera quæ lenem habet aspirationem, & scribi & pronuciari, necesse est. Quare caueant, qui illud apud nos Ioua sonare affirmant. Non enim Ioua, nec Ieoua, sed Iehoua cum leni aspiratione, sicut scribitur, pronuciandum est. CAP NIO. Quomodo Hebræi nomen hoc interpretantur? GALATINVS. Illud alij quidem ex ipsis generans interpretantur: alij uero qui essentiat, siue qui dat omnibus esse: alij autem unus & omnia, siue omnia uniter ut causa, siue unus omnia eminenter continens. CAP NIO. Curnomen hoc Iudæi pronuciare non audent? GALATINVS. Propter ea quæ habentur in libro חידושין chiddushin, id est sanctificationum, in capite עשרה Hassara iohasin, id est decem nobiles, super illud Exod. tertio capite, Hoc est nomen meum in æternum. Ibi enim legitur, quod dixit quidam senior, non esse scriptum, לעולם leolam, id est in æternum, sed לעלם lealam, id est ut caletur. Rabbi autem Abina obiecit, dicens: Scriptum est, Hoc est nomen meum. Et iterum scriptum est ibidem, Hoc est memoriale meum, dixit Deus sanctus & benedictus. Non legor sicut scribor. Scribor enim cum iod he uau he, uidelicet יהוה. Quod est nomen tetragrammaton. Et legor cum aleph daleth nun iod. Quæ literæ אדוני Adonai efficiunt, quod idem est quod Dominus. Quare præceperunt magistri, loco eius Adonai debere legi. Hæc ibi. Quocirca ut legitur in libro Sanhedrin in capite, Helec. Dixit Abba Saul, Qui pronuciat ipsum nomen quatuor literarum, ut scilicet literæ eius sonant, non habebit partem in seculo uenturo.

First, he quoted profusely from the book of Maimonides *The Guide of the Perplexed*, as a reminder that the Tetragram is the proper name of God and that it can be pronounced according to its letters. However, he demonstrated that the pronunciation Ioua was inaccurate. He explained for example that the proper name Iuda, written יודה (YWDH), was an abbreviation of the name Iehuda written יהודה (YHWDH). All Hebrew proper

¹⁷⁹ P. GALATINUS - Opus toti christiane reipublice maxime utile, de arcanis catholice ueritatis Lyon 1518 Bibliothèque La Part Dieu. 100766, pp. XLI-LVIII.

names beginning in YHW- [יהו] are moreover always vocalized Ieho-, like Iehosua (יהושוע) instead of Iosua. Consequently, if the Tetragram was really pronounced Ioua it would have been written in Hebrew יוה (YWH), which was never the case. So, because the Tetragram is written יהוה (YHWH), one should hear the letter H with its *shewa* (◌ֵ) inside the Name. He concluded that, because God's name is pronounced according to its letters, the best transcription was the form Iehoua, because the name Joshua is pronounced Iehosua in Hebrew, which indeed is very close to Iehoua with a "s". Similarly the name Juda is pronounced Iehouda in Hebrew, which is again very close to Iehoua with a "d".

Name (according to):		Joshua	Judah	Jehu	YHWH
Septuagint	250 BCE	Iesus	Ioudas	Ieou	(Adonay)
Septuagint (Aquila)	150 CE	Iesua	Iouda	Ieou	(Kurios)
Vulgate	400 CE	Iosue	Iudas	Iehu	Dominus
Hebrew		Yhwšw'	Yhwdh	Yhw'	Yhwh
Vowel letters		Ihōšūa'	Ihūdā	Ihū'	Ihūā
Masoretic text	900 CE	Y'hōšūa'	Y'hūdā	Yehū'	Y'howā
Galatino	1500 CE	Iehosua	Iehouda	Iehou	Iehoua

Given that his demonstration was simple and logical, Galatino succeeded to unlock completely the uncertainty about the pronunciation of God's name. This explanation marked a milestone step in establishing the divine name as Iehoua, and thus convinced some translators to use it in their translations of the Bible, at least in certain verses. For example, Sebastian Münster, the best German scholar in Hebrew of this time, used the name Iehova in his Chaldean grammar¹⁸⁰ published in 1526 (he also used Iehosvae instead of Josue) and that same year Martin Luther wrote in a sermon¹⁸¹ on Jeremiah 23:1-8: *This name Iehouah, Lord, belongs exclusively to the true God.*

EX PSALTERIO CHALDAICO.
 חוּס עַלֵי יְיָ אֱרוֹם עֲרֹמֶךָ אֲזַלִּי בְּלִי יוֹמָא : אַחֲרֵי נִפְשָׁא
 יַעֲבֹרְךָ Sic legas: Hus alai I E H O V A ærum koda
 mach æzalle kal ioma : æhade naphſcha deabdach.
 Interpretatio eius: Miserere super me domine quor

sy Got von seinen wercken nennet/aber diser na
 me Iehouah/ H E X X /bedeut allein Got wie er
 ist in seinem Göttliche wesen. Dyſe vnderſcheid
 im Ebreiſchen werde nicht allein Got zu geſchri
 ben ſonder werden auch zu andern leutē geſagt
 aber diſer name Iehouah/ H e r z /gehört alleine
 dem waren Got zu.

William Tyndale, with his burning desire to make the Bible known to the people made a new translation. The Name first appeared in an English Bible in 1530, when he published a translation of the first five books of the Bible. He included the name of God, usually spelled Iehouah, in several verses¹⁸², and he wrote in a note in this edition: *Iehovah is God's name (...) Moreover as oft as thou seiſt LORD in great letters (except there be any error in the printing) it is in Hebrew Iehovah.* It is interesting to note that most English translations of this time mentioned the name of God, very often in Exodus 6:3, except for the Coverdale translation (1535). Matthew's Bible (1537) explained about Exodus 6:3: *Iehouah is the name of God, and none creature has been named like it, it means: this one who is himself and who depends of no thing.* Thomas Cajetan, an Italian philosopher, theologian, cardinal and the Master of the Order of Preachers, also stands as exegete. He compensated his ignorance of Hebrew by consulting rabbis and through his familiarity with the Greek text. From 1523 to 1532 he published several volumes a literal translation and commentary on the Bible¹⁸³. His emphasis on the search for the literal meaning of the text places him at the origins of the modern Catholic exegetical tradition. Thanks to his knowledge of Hebrew he improved the

¹⁸⁰ S. MUNSTERUM - Chaldaica grammatica
 Basileae 1527, p. 16.

¹⁸¹ M. LUTHER - Ain Epiftel aufz dem Prophete Jeremia
 Wittenberg 1527 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München Exeg. 659.

¹⁸² Gn 15:2; Ex 6:3 15:3 17:16 23:17 33:19 34:23; Dt 3:24.

¹⁸³ Including a large part of the Old Testament and almost all of the New Testament (with the exception of the Apocalypse of John).

Latin translation of the Bible, for example: *The Book of Iosue* became *The Book of Iehosua* and in his comments on the books of Moses¹⁸⁴ (1531) he used the name Iehouah frequently.

Michael Servetus, a Spanish theologian, physician, and Renaissance humanist¹⁸⁵, was renowned for his scholarly study of the Bible in its original languages. In July 1531, he published *De Trinitatis Erroribus* ("On the Errors of the Trinity"), in which he explained that the name Iehouah (framed) is close to the name of Jesus (Iesua), which means "salvation" (Iesua) in Hebrew. On the other hand he noticed that the only Hebrew verbal form in Hebrew close to *yhw* was the imperfect *piel* of the verb "to be", vocalized *yehanne*¹⁸⁶ and meaning "He will make to be", as explained Paulus de Heredia, a Christian cabalist, in his book called *Epistle of Secrets*¹⁸⁷ (1488). Münster used the name Iehova¹⁸⁸ in Exodus 6:3 when he published his own translation of the Bible (1534), despite that he thought this name came from Iouis (Jupiter).

Following the example of early translators, Pierre Robert Olivétan, preferred to use the form Iehouah in his Bible translation into French (1535), while recognizing that the Tetragram could also be pronounced Ioua (according to the Vulgate).

Bible (translator)	Date	Language	God's name (sometimes)
Tyndale	1530	English	Lorde (Iehouah)
Cajetan	1531	Latin	Dominus (Iehouah)
Münster	1534	Latin	Dominus (Iehova)
Olivétan	1535	French	Eternel (Iehouah)
Matthew	1537	English	Lorde (Iehouah)
Brucioli	1541	Italian	Signore (Ieova)
Vatable	1545	Latin	Dominus (Iehoua)
Bucer	1547	Latin	Iehouah/ Iehoua
Castellion	1551	Latin	Ioua
Castellion	1555	French	Ioua
Vatable (R. Estienne)	1557	Latin	Iehouah
Calvin ¹⁸⁹	1563	Latin	Iehoua
Reina	1569	Spanish	Iehoua
Tremellius	1579	Latin	Iehouah
Valera	1602	Spanish	Jehová

¹⁸⁴ T. DE VIO CAJETAN - In quinque libros Mosis iuxta sensum lit. commentarii Rome, 1531. Ed. Antonium Bladum.

¹⁸⁵ He was the first European to correctly describe the function of pulmonary circulation, as discussed in *Christianismi Restitutio* (1533). He was a polymath versed in many sciences: mathematics, astronomy and meteorology, geography, human anatomy, medicine and pharmacology, as well as jurisprudence, translation, poetry and the scholarly study of the Bible in its original languages. He is renowned in the history of several of these fields, particularly medicine and theology. He participated in the Protestant Reformation, and later developed a nontrinitarian Christology.

¹⁸⁶ This Hebrew verbal form *yehavéh* "He will make to be/ He will constitute/ He will generate" is not found in the Bible.

¹⁸⁷ PAULUS DE HEREDIA - Epistola Neumia filii Haccanae de Secretis Roma 1488 Bibliothèque Nationale Française (Res D-67975) fol. 1-5.

¹⁸⁸ S. MUNSTERI - En tibi lector Hebraica Latina

Basileae 1534 pp. 56v,57.

¹⁸⁹ J. CALVIN - Mosis libri V, cum Johannis Calvini commentariis. Genève 1563, Ed. Henri II Estienne

lus et salutare. Christus et Euangelium, hoc salutare Christum esse interpretatur. LXX. et 3. Acto- neli. Eadem ratione angelus, nomen Iesu, salutare interpretatus est. De eodem, iuxta dictum Habacuc dixit Maria, Exultabit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo. Habacuc enim dixerat, in Elohim saluari meo. Et licet Iehouah dicatur salutare, quia per Christum saluat, tamen nunquam coniunguntur, nunquam legitur Iehouah salutare. Sed quod est etiam notabile post nos Iehouah, addit solet de Iehouah id est, de

hic est Elohim, Christus saluator. Similiter patre demonstrato, iste est Iehouah, et letabimur in Iesuato, id est, in Iesu eius, in salutare eius Christo: est enim nomen eius Iehouah, quod etiam ponitur Psal. 9. 12. 13. 19. 20. 105. et alijs pluribus locis. potest Iehouah, id est, essentie fons, essentiarum generator, esse facies essentians, essendi causa. Cabalisticis sua secreta relinquo: et plane dico, quod Iod Scheua tum nobis indicat) est futurum piel, quod est significacionis actiue, a radice Iod Scheua seu potius Iod Scheua

Loquutus est deus ad Moysen, & ait ad eum: ego dominus. Ego apparui Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob in deo omnipotente, & in nomine meo Iehova non sum cognitus illis. Erex quoque pactum meum cum eis, ut darem illis

וְיַדְבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאָרָא אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אֶל-יִצְחָק וְאֶל-יַעֲקֹב בְּאֵל שַׁדַּי וּשְׁמִי יְהוָה לֹא נִגְדָּה לָהֶם וְגַם הִקְמֹתִי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתָּם לֵתֶת לָהֶם אֶת-אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֶת-אֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם

Strongly influenced by the remarks of Johannes Reuchlin and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the grammarians of this time believed that Iehoua was an improvement on the name Jupiter, a deformation of Ioua-pater meaning “Father Ioua”. Angelo Canini clarified however, in his grammar¹⁹⁰, written in 1554, that he preferred Iehoua to Ioua, because Iehoua more closely resembled names Ieshoua and Iehouda. Consequently after 1555, all translators adopted the form Iehoua, coming from Galatino, which became after 1600, the well-known name “Jehovah”. However, suspicion towards the vocalization Iehoua had appeared when it finally linguistically won. The debate over the use of Iehoua or Ioua had been a quarrel restricted to Hebrew scholars. However, when the conclusions of their debate began reaching readers of the Bible, it became much more theological and controversial. The real reasons behind this quarrel against God's name was not linguistic but theological because the majority of Bible translators at that time, as well as qualified Hebraists, were either Waldensian supporters like Olivétan, Vatable, R. Estienne or worse (for Catholic theologians), anti-Trinitarians like Servetus and Castellion.

The first antagonist was Archbishop Gilbert Genebrard, who, in his book written in 1568 to defend the Trinity, dedicated several pages to the name in an effort to refute S. Casteillon, P. Galatin, S. Pagnin, and others who had used Iehoua. For example, he argued that the name Iehoua resulted from a change of the heathen name Ioue (Jupiter) into Ioua then Iehoua; he specified that the verbal form *yhw* “He is” should be read Iehue, not Iehoua. First of all, he rejected Chateillon’s Ioua using Saint Augustine’s explanation, via Varro, that the Jews had worshiped Ioue (Jupiter!), and therefore the use of Ioua was a return to paganism. In the foreword to his commentary on Psalms he went so far as to state that the name Ioua was barbarian, fictitious and irreligious. Concerning the writings of Clement of Alexandria (Iaou), Jerome (Iaho) and Theodoret (Iabe), he considered these as mere variations of Ioue, and that these testimonies appeared unreliable because, at the time they were written, the Jews had not pronounced the Name for several centuries. Lastly, he claimed that P. Galatin (as well as S. Pagnin), who had used the form “Iehoua”, had not accounted for the theological meaning “He is” when searching for the right pronunciation. Indeed, since the translation of the Septuagint (“He who is” in Exodus 3:14) it was known that the definition of the divine Name was essentially “He is”. Genebrard tried to confirm this definition due to his knowledge of the Hebrew language. So, since in Exodus 3:14 God calls himself “I am”, in Hebrew “Ehie” (*’eh^eyélh*), one should say, when speaking about God, “He is”, that is in Hebrew Iihie (*yih^eyélh*). Grammatically, the form “Iihie” was likely derived from a more archaic form “Tehue” (*yih^ewélh*), suggested in 1550 by Luigi Lippomano. Genebrard then pointed out that Abbot Joachim of Flora used this more exact form (Ieue) in his book on the Apocalypse. Genebrard’s explanation, although unable to convince, impressed many because of its intellectual approach, and, during the century that followed Bible commentators often noted this form Iehue (or Iiheue) when using the more accepted Iehoua. However, in spite of the masterly presentation, it remained theoretic because of lack of early proof. Genebrard's major contribution was to introduce the theological meaning of the Name into the search for its pronunciation, a process that provoked a profusion of new pronunciations due to the ever increasing knowledge of the Hebrew language and its history. Translator Benito Arias Montano explained in one of his books (1572), that the divine name was never read Iehovih or Iehovah by the Masoretes and he agreed with Genebrard that the old pronunciation was probably Iehveh. Being afraid to favour a name of heathen origin, since he too thought Iehoua resulted from a transformation of Iouis into Ioua, then Iehoua, he replaced this name in his Latin

¹⁹⁰ ANGELO CANINI- De nomine Iesv et Iova

in: Institutiones lingua Syriacæ (Lyon 1554) Collège de la Sainte Trinité de la Compagnie de Jésus.

translation of Psalms (1574) with IA (surer form). Cardinal Robert Bellarmine asserted moreover (1578) that the form Iehoua was erroneous, because it had the vowels e,o,a, of the *qere* Adonay (a,o,a becoming e,o,a for grammatical reasons!). Although all these accusations were actually a stacking of guesswork based on an uncertain knowledge, they will be quickly “improved” by Protestant theologians from 1600 on. This time around, the real reasons behind the quarrel against God's name was once again theological because the majority of Catholic scholars of that time had finally accepted the form Iehouah and this choice displeased Protestant scholars who felt more competent than Catholic scholars.

GOD'S NAME, ITS COLLAPSE INSIDE CHRISTENDOM (1600-2000 CE)

Attacks against the pronunciation “Iehoua” focused mainly on three points: 1) this vocalization could not be true because it had resulted from a misreading, the vowel-points of Adonai having been mixed with the consonants of the Tetragram; 2) the vocalization Iehueh of the verbal form “He is/ He will be”, matching to the religious explanation given in Exodus 3:14, was different to Iehoua and 3) the verbal form Iehueh could come from an archaic Iahueh because the oldest testimonies of the pronunciation of God's name were Iaô/Iaho or Iave, according to ancient historians. For example, Johannes van den Driesche, a Flemish Protestant divine, distinguished specially as an Orientalist, published in 1603 a long article dedicated to the pronunciation of God's name (*Tetragrammaton sive de nomine dei proprio*) in order to discredit the vocalization Iehoua. His main arguments were that the Masoretic punctuation of the Tetragram could not be used as a basis for pronouncing God's name because it was a *qere*; so the form Iehovih, resulting from the *qere* Elohim, would be nonsense. He thus concluded that Iehovah was also a barbarism. He repeated the same arguments as Genebrard against Ioua, and then reminded his audience that according to the best grammarians of his time the expression “He is” should be pronounced Iehev¹⁹¹ meaning “He will be” (like in Ecclesiastes 11:3). He then theorized, using a few examples that the form Iehev resulted from an archaic Iahave or Iahveh, and in conclusion noted that this form Iahave was very similar to the Samaritan pronunciation Iave given by Theodoret. Although all these arguments are backed by great scholarship, they remained yet a stacking of guesswork based on an uncertain knowledge. However this very complicated explanation intended to justify the form Iahveh has disconcerted some translators who had used the “simplistic” Iehoua.

Louis Cappel, a French Protestant churchman and Hebrew scholar, dedicated almost one hundred pages to the pronunciation of the Name in one of his articles¹⁹² published in 1650. As well as resuming many of Drusius' arguments, he explained a few new ideas. For example, he argued that the first syllable was certainly Iah-, because many names had lost their initial vowel, for example Nabû in the Septuagint had become Nebô in the Masoretic text, consequently Yahûh could have become Yehôh¹⁹³, in addition he noted that most ancient witnesses (hence the most reliable) have usually mentioned Iaô, and for this last reason he preferred Iahuoh to Iahave or Iahue. Cappel's work has deeply impressed Protestant circles. For example, Jean Le Clerc, a Swiss Protestant theologian and biblical scholar, who was famous for promoting exegesis, or critical interpretation of the Bible, quoted Cappel in his *Ars Critica* published in 1696, to explain why he preferred Jahvoh to Jehovah¹⁹⁴. However, after further examination of this complex issue, Le Clerc changed his mind and preferred Jahveh to Jahvoh. What is surprising in his argument is

¹⁹¹ West Aramaic peal imperfect, which is now vocalized *yihwêh*.

¹⁹² IOANNIS CAPPELLI - *Critica Sacra*
Paris 1650, pp. 666-739.

¹⁹³ This hypothesis is absurd because if Yahûh was the ancient vocalization of God's name it would have been Iaou in the Septuagint.

¹⁹⁴ *Ars Critica* (Part II, Section I, Chapter XIII).

that it is purely philosophical and takes no account of linguistic laws. He explained first that, according to the testimony of Jerome (Iaho), the vocalization of the Tetragram could be Jahavoh, Jahvoh or Jahwoh¹⁹⁵ but according to Theodotet (Iave), the vocalization of the Tetragram could be Javeh or Jahweh. To choose between these two possibilities he appealed to philosophy. According to the text of Exodus 3:14 the meaning of the Tetragram (YHWH) comes from the verb “to be” in Hebrew (HYH) or Aramaic (HWH). According to the Septuagint, God’s name means “He who is” while according to the Vulgate it means “He is” whereas to Hebrew it means “He will be”. To solve the problem, Leclerc offered a new definition of God's name, because God is the Creator of everything “He makes to be” everything. In Hebrew there are only two possible ways to express this idea: 1) the factitive form *yehavêh* (piel) “He makes to be” or the causative form *yahanêh* (hiphil) “He causes to be”. The causative form whose meaning is close to the factitive form had the great advantage of starting with Yah-, which corresponded to the testimonies of the past and particularly to that of Theodoret (Iaoue). The god Yahweh who causes to be/ become, the rival of Jehovah who will [prove to] be, was born at this moment¹⁹⁶.

<p>metaphora sumta ab iis, quibus à validiore vis infertur, & in sequentibus frequens.</p> <p>2. <i>Sum Jehova</i>] Hoc est, vocor Jehova, nec frustra. Vide sequentia.</p> <p>3. <i>Quasi Deus omnipotens</i>] באל beel schaddai, in Deo omnipotente. De hac voce, vide dicta ad Gen. XVII, 1. Hoc est, ostendi me omnia posse, variis beneficiis quæ in eos contuli.</p> <p><i>Nomine meo Jehova illis non innotui</i>] Non repetemus quæ de nomine Jehova scripsimus ad Cap. III, 17. Hoc loco confirmatur quod diximus ad Cap. III, 17. Deum nunc demum, non prius, ab Hebræis nomine hoc adpellari se voluisse; neque clarius dici hoc potuit, quàm hic exprimitur. שמי schmi est pro בשמי bishmi, in nomine meo, nec quidquam est Ellipsi præpositionis ב frequentius. LXX. tamen Intt. & Vulg. phrasin inverterunt ὀνόμα μὴ κύρωσιν ἐν ἰσχυρισμῶν αὐτοῖς, <i>nomen meum Adonai non indicavi eis</i>.</p> <p>Verùm non hoc tantùm vult Deus, duas syllabas vocis יהוה, quasi nomen suum, à prioribus Patriarchis non auditas; sed quod nomine illo significatur nondum eos conspexisse, ut jam monuimus ad superiora verba. Quemadmodum apud Scriptores Sacros <i>vocari</i> interdum idem est ac <i>esse</i>: ita hic ei <i>indicari nomen</i> negatur, cui subjecta nomini potestas re ipsâ nondum aperitur. De eo sensu vocis <i>vocari</i>, vide Esai. IX, vers. 6. ubi <i>vocabitur admirandus</i>, perinde est ac <i>erit</i>, & LVI, 7. ubi <i>domus mea vocabitur domus orationis</i>, idem significat ac <i>erit</i>, ut ipsâ re liquet & Luc. XIX, 46. Ad etiam Intt. ad Matth. I, 23. Pariter in posterum <i>Dei nomen</i> futurum dicitur <i>Jehova</i>, pro eo quod est, Deus est quod eo nomine exprimitur præliturus. Hinc apud Prophetas frequenter legas, <i>nomen ejus est Jehova</i>, אררי &, est id quod eo nomine significatur. Exemplainferius adferam. Videndum ergo est quæ sit vis vocis יהוה, circa quam cum aliorum conjectu-</p>	<p>ras rejecerimus ad Cap. III, 15. nostra est apertenda.</p> <p>Dubium non est quin vox ab יהוה <i>suit</i> derivetur, quo factum ut suspicaretur Deum vocabulum יהוה sibi sumsisse, non quoddam naturâ sit, adeoque æternitate gaudeat, sed quoddam efficiat ut res sint, quasi esset futurum Hiphil יהוה aut Pihel יהוה <i>faciet ut sit</i>: quæ sola significatio & huic loco & pluribus aliis convenit, ut paullo diligentius ostendemus, quoniam res est nova, & à nemine adhuc, quem norim, excogitata. Uno verbo Græcè non ineleganter dixeris ὑποστασίου ἐξιστάτης ἐκτελεστής, quæ voce <i>Clemens Alexandrinus</i> aliique Patres uti sunt, ut significetur ἐς τὴν ἵσταν πάσαν ἐργάζεσθαι. Vult ergo Deus se Abrahamo, Isaac & Jacobo ea specimina potentiae suæ ostendisse, ut non possent dubitare quin, ad omnia quæ polliceretur olim præstanda, esset יהוה schaddai, hoc est, satis potens; sed tamen maximorum illorum promissorum eventum ab iis non fuisse conspectum, qui jam (יהוה) <i>ut esset facturus erat</i>, eumque ob oculos Israëlitis positurus. Hinc Deus hic orationem orditur his verbis יהוה אני <i>ego Jehova</i>, hoc est, is sum qui re præliturus sum quod olim promisi. Idem repetit vers. 6, & 8. postquam promissa illa commemoravit. Similiter vers. 29. <i>Ego Jehova</i>, ait Deus Mosi, ut sciret quamprimum implenda esse vetera promissa, nec dubitaret ejus apud Pharaonem esse interpretem. Capite verò VII, 5. <i>Tum scient Egyptii me esse Jehovam, cum in Ægyptum manum meam exseruero</i> &c. hoc est, eum esse qui facit ut sit quidquid vult. Sic & vers. 17. <i>Hoc me Jehovam esse cognosces, ecce ego aquas fluvii virgâ quæ in manu mea est percutiam, atque in sanguinem convertentur</i>; Deum esse, nimirum, qui effectum dat quod videtur. Iterum Cap. VIII, 22. <i>Distingua ego die Gosenitidem, ubi est populus meus, ut me Jehovam in media tua terra esse intelligas</i>; hoc est, ne putes Deum me esse ἱερωτάου, qui in Ægypto nihil</p>
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What is amazing is that all academics have been hypnotized by this demonstration, which served and still serves to justify the Yahweh shape, whereas it is absolutely nonsense. Indeed, even the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, which supports this causative form, to prove the

¹⁹⁵ He considered that the vocalization given by Philo of Byblos (Ieuo) was a distortion of Iahuoh.

¹⁹⁶ JOANNIS CLERICI - Mosis prophetae Libri quatuor; Exodus, Leviticus, Numeri, et Deuteronomium Amsterdam 1710, pp. 18-32.

vocalization Yahweh, must admit it does not exist: *The reconstructed form yahwēh is the corresponding form of the causative stem (of the Hebrew verb hāyāh, “to be”). This analysis is encouraged by theological notions of God as one who is, or who exists, or who causes existence. Thus the explanation of Yahweh in Exod 3:14, “I am who I am,” is a folk etymology based on this verb. The analysis of the name as a causative falters on the grammatical point observed by Barr that “the causative of this verb does not occur in Hebrew elsewhere*¹⁹⁷. In a scholarly Bible (L. Pirot, A. Clamer 1956 p. 83) it is written that the causative form cannot be taken into account for two main reasons. Firstly, the causative form of the verb “to be” is not known in Hebrew, furthermore to express a causative sense, the piel form was used. Secondly, this philosophical notion did not come from Hebrew but from Greek philosophy and the more natural meaning is: *I shall [prove to] be (with you)* according to Exodus 3:12. Lastly, André Caquot, a renowned professor¹⁹⁸, explained that Iaoe/Yahweh of Clement of Alexandria as “the being and having to be”, is a theological choice rather than philological¹⁹⁹.

What's really amazing, is that the decisive argument for choosing Yahweh is easy to refute. Just check in a Hebrew grammar for beginners to notice that factitive and causative forms of the verb “to be” does not exist²⁰⁰ and must be reconstituted. Unbelievable! Bible readers were blinded by scholarly explanations of theologians who have never understood that biblical etymologies are not “folk etymologies (for simpletons)” but “prophetic etymologies” based on wordplays (for believers)”, here is the key. The very first question that Moses asked God when he was appointed as mediator was: *Suppose the sons of Israel do say to me ‘How is his name*²⁰¹*?’ what shall I say to them?* The question of course was neither about pronunciation because Moses knew it, as proves the name of his mother: Jochebed “Jeho[vah] is Glory”, nor about grammatical meaning of the Name because Moses knew Hebrew language very well, but the question, as evidenced by God's answer, was about its biblical and prophetic meaning. The name of God “Yehowah” means nothing in Hebrew but its religious etymology “He will [prove to] be” in Exodus is *yih’yēh* (Kal / paal) or *yih’nēh* (peal) in Aramaic²⁰², a verbal form found in Ecclesiastes 11:3 and obviously, because there is not theological explanation in this verse “the tree will [prove to] be there”, all translators are able to translate it easily into “it will [prove to] be”. The common assumption to make match the grammatical etymology with the biblical etymology is contrary to common sense,

¹⁹⁷ D.N. FREEDMAN - The Anchor Bible Dictionary vol. 6
New York 1992 Ed. Doubleday p. 1011.

¹⁹⁸ ANDRÉ CAQUOT is a French Orientalist, specialist in the history and Semitic civilizations. Professor of Hebrew and Aramaic at the Collège de France, he was elected in 1986 president of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-lettres. He was appointed director of studies of compared Semitic religions to the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and lectured on the history of religions at the Protestant Faculty of Theology of the University of Strasbourg. President of the Asiatic Society and the Society of Jewish Studies, André Caquot was also General Secretary of the French Society for the History of Religions.

¹⁹⁹ A. CAQUOT - Les énigmes d'un hémistiche biblique
in: Dieu et l'Être (Paris 1978) Ed. Études Augustiniennes C.N.R.S. p. 24 note 23.

²⁰⁰ A. VANLIER HUNTER - Biblical Hebrew Workbook: An Inductive Study for Beginners
Lanham 1988, Ed. University Press of America, pp. 140-141.

²⁰¹ An inaccurate translation of Exodus 3:13 leads to a faulty understanding of this verse. In numerous Bibles one can read the question: *What is his name?* as in Judges 13:17, when Manoah wanted to know the name, that is the pronunciation of the name, of the angel who came to meet him; on the other hand the Israelites asked Moses: *How is his name?* that is: *what does his name/fame mean?*. One can verify that in Hebrew the interrogation ‘what, how’ is *mā* (מָה) and ‘who’ is *mī* (מִי). Thus, there is a big difference between asking to know a name because one is in ignorance of it, as in Ezra 5:4, and asking the meaning of a name which one already knows, as in Genesis 32:27 where the angel asks Jacob to remind him of the meaning ‘He will supplant’ of his name, which meaning was already known to him (Gn 27:36), in order to give him a new one ‘He will contend’ (Gn 32:28). Thus, when Moses asked God: *How is his name?* God, in fact, gave the explanation: *I shall [prove to] be what I shall [prove to] be (ehyeh asher ehyeh)*. Even here, regrettably, numerous translators are influenced by Greek philosophy on the being as existing, developed by Plato in some of his works, including Parmenides. For example, the Septuagint was going translating this passage by: *I am the being*’ (*egō eimi o ōn*), that is: *I am He who is*; while Aquila’s translation, more faithful to Hebrew, translates this sentence by: *I shall be: I shall be (esomai esomai)*. As indicated by a study on the translation of this sentence, the difficulty results from translators who want to explain this translation by means of their personal beliefs very often influenced by Greek philosophy; otherwise there is no difficulty (B. ALBREKTSON -On the Syntax of אֲשֶׁר אֵלֶּיךָ אֲדִיבָה in Exodus 3:14 in: Words and Meanings (Cambridge 1968) Ed. Cambridge University Press pp. 15-28). For example, one finds the word *ehyeh* just before (Ex 3:12) and just after (Ex 4:12,15) and here translators have no problem translating it by: *I shall [prove to] be with you*.

²⁰² B. DAVIDSON – The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon
USA 1990, Ed. Hendrickson Publishers, P. 51 note 4e, p. 300.

indeed why it would have been necessary to explain a name if everyone (who spoke Hebrew at that time) was able to understand it. It is also clear that if we compare the grammatical etymology with its biblical explanation, there is no equivalence but only a link based on vocal similarities²⁰³ (actually wordplays).

Hebrew name	Meaning of the name	Religious etymology	Hebrew vocalization	Reference
Abraham	Father (of Raham?)	Father of a crowd	Abhamon	Gn 17:5
Babel	Gate of God	Being confused	Balûl	Gn 11:9
Barnabeh	Son of high place	Son of consolation	Barnaḥam	Ac 4:36
Hawah (Eve)	-	To live	Ḥay	Gn 3:20
Lewi	(being) joined	He will be joined	Yilawi	Gn 29:34
Mošeh	Drawing out	Being drawn out	Mašûy	Ex 2:10
Noah	Rest	He will comfort	Y ^e noḥam	Gn 5:29
Qayin	-	Being acquired	Qanuy	Gn 4:1
Re'ûben	See, a son	He has look upon	Ra'ah	Gn 29:32
Šamû'el	Being heard of God	Being asked to God	Ša'ûl'el	1Sa 1:20
Šeth	Tumult	He has appointed	Šath	Gn 4:25
Ya'aqob	He will hold the heel	He will hold the heel	Ya'aqob	Gn 25:26
Y ^e howah	-	He will [prove to] be	Yih ^e wêh	Ex 3:14
Y ^e hûdah	He will be lauded	He will laud	Y ^e hôdêh	Gn 29:35
Y ^e rûšalem	Foundation completed	Foundation of peace	Y ^e rûšalom	Hb 7:2
Yešûa'	Y-Salvation	He will save	Yôšia'	Mt 1:21
Yiṣḥaq	He will laugh	He laughed	Šahaq	Gn 17:17
Yisra'el	He will contend, God	He contended, God	Sara'el	Gn 32:28
Yôseph	-	He will add	Yôsiph	Gn 30:24
Yôseph	-	He will collect	Yê'soph	Gn 30:23
Zebûlûn	Lofty abode	He will inhabit	Yizb ^e leni	Gn 30:20

Unfortunately, given that most people, including scholars, have blind faith in theologians, they have been unable to see they have been deceived. There is no equality between God's name (*Y^ehowah*), which means nothing in Hebrew like Abraham's name, and its biblical definition "He wil [prove to] be (*yih^yyêh* or *yih^enêh*)". Although the three main arguments taken separately do not stand up to analysis, they give the illusion of being strong in the same way as three completely drunk men come to walk by standing clinging to each other. Leclerc's erudite work, published in 1710, has perfectly managed to shake the confidence of Bible translators in the name of Jehova. After that date there will be several reactions (from 1700 to 1800): the first was to continue using God's name, stating in a footnote that the authentic pronunciation in Hebrew was Jahweh. A second reaction (from 1800 to 1850) was to come back to Maimonides' definition about God's name, which is "pronounced as it is written". For example, Johann Babor, Doctor of Theology and historian, professor of hermeneutics of the Old and New Testament and Director of theological studies at the University of Olomouc, used the name Ihoua (Luke 4:18 below) in his translation of the New Testament²⁰⁴ (1805).

ten Jſaias, und als er es aufröſte, ſey. Jeſus aber ſprach zu ihnen, 23 18 ſiel er auf folgende Stelle: ich werde vom Geiſte deſ Jhova an- getrieben, der mich erföhren hat),	ſey. Jeſus aber ſprach zu ihnen, 23 ihr könnt mir freylich daſ Sprich- wort vorhalten: Arzt! hilf dir ſelbſt! verrichte auch in deinem Va-
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²⁰³ H. MARKS - Biblical Naming and Poetic Etymology
 in: *Journal of Biblical Literature* 114/1. (1995, The Society of Biblical Literature), pp. 21-42.
 J. BARR - Etymology and the Old Testament

in: *Oudtestamentische Studien* XIX. Leiden (1974, Brill), pp. 1-28

²⁰⁴ J. BABOR - Uebersetzung des Neuen Testaments mit erklärenden Anmerkungen
 Wien 1805, Ed. J.V. Degen, pp. 147,152,168

Antoine Fabre d'Olivet, a French author, poet and composer whose Biblical and philosophical hermeneutics influenced many occultists. His best known work is on the research of the Hebrew language and the history of the human race entitled: *The Hebraic Tongue Restored: And the True Meaning of the Hebrew Words Re-Established and Proved by their Radical Analysis*, in which he explains there is no need of vowel-points to understand Hebrew, because this language can be vocalized through vowel letters. He applied this method, of reading the words according to their letters, in his translation of the Book of Genesis (1823) in which he systematically used IHÔAH (Gn 8:20-21, right)

וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקַּח מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכָּל הָעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ :	20. Et-il-édifia, <i>Noah</i> , un-lieu de-sacrifice à [IHÔAH] et-il-prit de-tout-quadrupède de-la-pureté, et-de-tout-volatile de-la-pureté; et-il-éleva une-élévation (il fit exhaler une exhalaison) de-ce-lieu-de-sacrifice.
וַיִּרְחַץ יְהוָה אֶת־רִיחָהּ הַנִּיחָה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־לִבִּי לֹא־אֶסַף לְקַלֵּל עוֹד אֶת־	21. Et-il-respira, [IHÔAH] cet-esprit-odorant de-douceur; et-il-dit, [IHÔAH] devers-le-cœur-sien,

Jean du Verdier, a colleague of David Paul Drach who was a Catholic convert from Judaism, and librarian of the College of Propaganda in Rome, used the form IEÖE in his Hebrew grammar²⁰⁵ (1843) in which he explains that Hebrew language can be read according to its letters (Y, H, W, ‘ and ’). Augustin Crampon who studied theology and biblical exegesis under the direction of the Orientalist Arthur Le Hir, then carried out himself this teaching and translated into French all the canonical books from the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. He systematically used the name Jova (framed) in his Latin translation²⁰⁶ (1856), in accordance with the God-bearing names of the Vulgate. The solution of the returning to a pronunciation of God's name “according to its letters” was not deemed satisfactory by Bible translators (like Crampon) who believed that the form Yahweh was authentic. Levi Herzfeld, a German rabbi and historian, was the first scholar who chose to replace systematically Jehovah by Jahweh in his translation of the biblical text²⁰⁷ (1855). This choice was decisive for most Bible translators because after that date a growing number of Bibles replaced the name Jehovah by Jahweh (or a variant).

Effatum [Jovæ] ad Dominum meum :
« Sede ad dexteram meam, usque dum posuero hostes tuos scabellum pedibus tuis. »
2. Baculum potentiae tuæ emittet (protendet) [Jovæ] ex Sione : impera in medio hostium tuorum.
3. Populus tuus spontaneæ oblationes die militiæ tuæ in ornatu sancto, ex utero auroræ tibi ros juventutis tuæ.
4. Juravit [Jovæ] nec pœnitebit eum : « Tu es sacerdos in perpetuum, secundum rationem Melchisedeci. »
5. O [Jovæ] Dominus (Messias) ad dexteram tuam adest,

Bible	Date	Language	God's name (sometimes)
J. Babor	1805	German	Herrn (Ihoua)
A. Fabre d'Olivet	1823	French	Ihôah
E.F.K. Rosenmüller	1827	Latin	Jova
J. Du Verdier	1843	French	Ieoe
A. Crampon	1856	Latin	Jova
L. Herzfeld	1855	German	Jahweh
Emphasised	1878	English	Yahweh
Leides Vertaling	1899	Dutch	Jahwe

²⁰⁵ J. DU VERDIER - Nova methodus hebraica punctis masoreticis expurgata Paris 1847, Éd. J.P. Migne, pp. 883-890.

²⁰⁶ A. CRAMPON - Supplementum ad commentaria in scripturam sacram R.P. Cornelii a Lapide Paris 1856, Ed. Ludovicus Vives Bibliopola.

²⁰⁷ L. HERZFELD - Geschichte des volkes Israel von der zerstörung des ersten tempels bis zur einsetzung des Makkabäers Schim, Vol 2 Rodhausen 1855, Ed G. Westermann.

A. Crampon	1904	French	Jéhovah (= Yahvéh)
An American Translation	1923	English	LORD (Yahweh)
A. Crampon revised	1923	French	Yahweh
Pontificio Instituto Biblico	1923	Italian	Signore, Jahve
Petrus-Canisiusvertaling	1929	Dutch	Jahweh
Nàcar-Colunga	1944	Spanish	Yavé
Jérusalem	1948	French	Yahvé
Jerusalem	1955	English	Yahweh
Vatican	2008	all	Lord

As one can see the work of Herzfeld published in 1855 had a great impact because after that date more and more translators have chosen to replace Jehovah by Yahweh or LORD. When the Bible for French Jews of Samuel Cahen was reprinted in 1856 the name Iehovah was systematically replaced by “Eternel”. In 1906, the prestigious *Jewish Encyclopedia* validated blindly all the erroneous conjectures of Jean Le Clerc. When the Emphasised Bible (1872) for American Protestants of Joseph Bryant Rotherham has been revised in 1878, the translator extensively explained in his preface the reasons which led him to replace Jehovah by Yahweh²⁰⁸: *(God’s name is) erroneously written and pronounced Jehovah, which is merely a combination of the sacred Tetragrammaton and the vowels in the Hebrew word for Lord, substituted by the Jews for JHVH, because they shrank from pronouncing The Name, owing to an old misconception of the two passages, Ex. xx. 7 and Lev. xxiv. 16 ... To give the name JHVH the vowels of the word for Lord (Heb. Adonai) and pronounce it Jehovah, is about as hybrid a combination as it would be to spell the name Germany with the vowels in the name Portugal —viz., Gormuna. The monstrous combination Jehovah is not older than about 1520 A.D. —Professor Paul Haupt, General Editor of “The Polychrome Bible,” in the Book of Psalms, pp. 163,164 (...) The form “Yahweh” is here adopted as practically the best. The only competing form would be “Yehweh,” differing, it will be observed, only in a single vowel —“e” for “a” in the first syllable. But even this difference vanishes on examination. It is true that “Yehweh” is intended to suggest the derivation of the noun from the simple (Kal) conjugation of the verb, and that some scholars take “Yahweh” as indicating a formation from the causative (Hiphil) conjugation (...) The true pronunciation seems to have been Yahwè (or Iahway, the initial I = y, as in Iachimo). The final e should be pronounced like the French ê, or the English e in there, and the first h sounded as an aspirate (...) Yahweh is almost always regarded as the third person, singular, masculine, imperfect tense, from the root hawah, an old form of the root hayah. The one meaning of hawah is “become.” So that the force of Yahweh thus derived, as a verb, would be “He will become”. Impressive amount of twaddle relying on a prestigious Professor²⁰⁹. As everybody can see, the vowels of Adonai are a,o,a, which are not the vowels e,a of the Tetragrammaton (coming from the Aramaic word *Shema* “The Name”) and they have never been used to vocalized God's name²¹⁰. The second statement is downright absurd: how is it possible to have in the same time a Kal form “He will become” Yehweh and a Hiphil form “He causes to become” Yahwèh. If you accept that Yahwèh = Yehweh, I dare say that Big Brother is watching you and is saying to you 2+2=5.*

The reaction of the Catholic Church dealing with Yahweh has been more complex. The *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*²¹¹ despite the numerous improvements

²⁰⁸ J. BRYANT ROTHERHAM -The Emphasised Bible A New Translation Cincinnati 1916, Ed. The Standard Publishing Company, pp. 22-29.

²⁰⁹ Paul Haupt was a Semitic scholar, one of the pioneers of Assyriology in the United States. In 1880 he became privatdocent in the University of Göttingen and from 1883 to 1889 was assistant professor of Assyriology. In 1883 he became professor of Semitic languages at Johns Hopkins University, but until 1889 continued to lecture in the summer at Göttingen. In addition to numerous smaller articles, he projected and edited the Polychrome Bible, a critical edition of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and a new English translation with notes. A unique feature of this edition is the use of different colours to distinguish the various sources and component parts in the Old Testament books —each one of which is entrusted to a specialist in biblical studies.

²¹⁰ For example, Pope Innocent III explained in one of his sermons (c. 1200) that IESU's name has the same vowels of IEUE, the name of God (punctuated e,a in Hebrew).

²¹¹ The *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* was founded by Pope Gregory XV in 1622 to arrange missionary work on behalf of the various religious institutions, and in 1627 Pope Urban VIII established within it a training college for missionaries.

of biblical texts made by Protestant scholars, always supported the Vulgate until 1904 (a Latin Bible which does not contain God's name) as well as the vocalization *Jehovah*! For example, Paul Drach, a rabbi converted to Catholicism who later belonged to the *Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith*, explained in his work *Harmony Between the Church and the Synagogue* published in 1842, why it was logical that the pronunciation *Yehova*, which was in agreement with the beginning of all theophoric names, was the authentic pronunciation, contrary to the form *Yahve* of Samaritan origin. He disproved the foolish criticisms against the form *Yehova*, like the charge of erroneous reading attributed to Galatino, quoting Raymond Martini and Porchetus de Salvaticis to reject this assertion. Then he demonstrated the unreasonableness of the transmutation of the vowels a,o,a of the word *Adonay* into e,o,a, since this hypothetical grammatical rule (one contrary to the nature of the *qere/ kethib*) was already demolished in the word *Elohim* which keeps its three vowels è,o,i without the need to change them to e,o,i²¹². With great humour, he mocked those who wanted to pronounce the Tetragram by “Lord” or “Yahve” calling them the Adonites or Yahwehites, because according to their logic they would have to pronounce *John, Jonathan, Joshua, Jesus, Jehu, Eliehoenai* (1Ch 26:3), etc. as *Adonan, Adonathan, Adonsbua, Adonsus, Adonbu, Eladonenai*, etc., for those who like *Adonai* “My Lord” (or *Yahn, Yanathan, Yashua, Yasus, Yabu, Elyahvenai*, for those who like *Yahve, Yehobanan, Yehonathan, Yehoshua, Yeshua, Yebu, Elyehoenaï*, for those who support *Yehova*). As a result, when the Bible of Abbot Crampon became the official Bible of Catholicism, the title *Dominus* (“Lord”) has been systematically replaced by *Jéhovah*, however, when this name appears for the first time in the text of Genesis 2:4 a footnote explains: *Its real pronunciation was Yabvéh; the form Jéhovah comes from the Masoretes, who attributed to this word the vowels of Adonai, another name for God, which means Lord*. When the Bible was revised in 1923, the main revision has been to replace *Jéhovah* by *Yahweh*. This new choice created a cacophony in God’s name: *Jehovah, Yahweh, Jahweh, Jahveh, Jahve, Jave*, etc. In 2001 the Vatican's Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments (the agency in charge of liturgical matters) put forth an “Instruction” known as *Liturgiam Authenticam* which included the following directive: *In accordance with immemorial tradition ... the name of almighty God expressed by the Hebrew tetragrammaton (YHWH) and rendered in Latin by the word Dominus, is to be rendered into any given vernacular by a word equivalent in meaning*. In 2008 this rule was then reinforced by a “Letter to the Bishops Conferences on The Name of God”: *In the light of what has been expounded, the following directives are to be observed: 1. In liturgical celebrations, in songs and prayers the name of God in the form of the tetragrammaton YHWH is neither to be used nor pronounced. 2. For the translation of the biblical text in modern languages, destined for the liturgical usage of the church, what is already prescribed by No. 41 of the instruction Liturgiam Authenticam is to be followed; that is, the divine tetragrammaton is to be rendered by the equivalent of Adonai/Kyrios: Lord, Signore, Seigneur, Herr, Señor, etc. 3. In translating in the liturgical context, texts in which are present, one after the other, either the Hebrew term Adonai or the tetragrammaton YHWH, Adonai is to be translated Lord and the form God is to be used for the tetragrammaton YHWH, similar to what happens in the Greek translation of the Septuagint and in the Latin translation of the Vulgate*.

For a sincere Catholic the present situation must be very uncomfortable, because he can read in his official Bible (Jerusalem Bible): *They are doing their best, by means of the dreams that they keep telling each other, to make my people forget my name, just as their ancestors forgot my name in favour of Baal ("Lord"). Let the prophet who has had a dream tell it for a dream! And let him who receives a word from me, deliver my word accurately! What have straw and wheat in common? Yahweh demands* (Jr 23:27-28). Paradoxically his own Bible is now under the ban, because it uses the

²¹² P.L.B. DRACH - De l'harmonie entre l'église et la synagogue
1978 Belgium, Ed. Socii Sancti Michaelis, pp. 370,473-498.

forbidden name Yahweh, and if he obeys his Church he disobeys God who condemns the prophets of the Lord (Baal). On the other hand it was written in his former Bible (Crampon 1904): *Then those who feared Jehovah talked to one another about this, and Jehovah took note and listened; and a book of remembrance was written in his presence recording those who feared him and kept his name in mind. On the day when I act, says Jehovah of armies, they will be my most prized possession, and I shall spare them in the way a man spares the son who serves him* (Mt 3:16-17).

GOD'S NAME, SO WHAT

The conclusion of the matter, everything having been heard, as said the wise king Solomon at the end of his book, there is only one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose name is written YHWH in Hebrew, more than 6000 times in the Old Testament. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus said: *Let your name (YHWH) be sanctified* (Mt 6:9), not *Let my name be sanctified* as well as: *I shall proclaim your name to my brothers, praise you in full assembly* (Heb 2:12). Apostle John (Yehohanan in Hebrew) wrote: *After this I heard what seemed to be the great sound of a huge crowd in heaven, singing, 'Alleluia! Salvation and glory and power to our God (...)' And again they sang, 'Alleluia! The smoke of her will rise for ever and ever. Then the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures threw themselves down and worshipped God seated on his throne, and they cried, 'Amen, Alleluia'* (Rv 19:1-4). He knew Hebrew and was able to understand that "Amen, Alleluia" meant "Truly, Praise Yah". Yah is a shortened form or a diminutive of the divine name, which is a pet name not an abbreviation, in the same manner that Beth or Betty are shortened forms or a diminutives of Elizabeth and Eliza or Liz are abbreviations. In the Bible, names are never translated. Replacing a name by a title (Lord, God, Almighty) or a symbol (Heaven) is a crime. When somebody was entering a concentration camp, the first act made by Nazi officers was to replace names by figures in order to deny the existence of these anonymous victims. The only character in the whole Bible who knows God and refuses to pronounce his name is Satan, even when he discusses with Jesus (Mt 4:1-10). Those who state that the pronunciation of God's name has been lost are illogical because most Egyptian gods were able to preserve their names (Râ, Amun, Thoth, Isis, Horus, Aten, etc.) but the Almighty God would not have been able to protect his own. The way to know its pronunciation does rely on scholars but on hundreds of theophoric names which all begin with YHW- are always vocalized "Y^hô-" in Hebrew, without exception²¹³. Similarly, given that all Hebrew names which end with -WH are always vocalized "-wah", without exception, it is easy to conclude that in Hebrew the name YHWH had to be vocalized Y^howah (Jehovah in English). Those who prefer the pronunciation Jahweh should say: Jasus, Jahn, Janathan, etc., instead of Jesus, John, Jonathan, etc., in order to be in harmony with their choice. Those who refuse to pronounce God's name, in order to follow "*the venerable tradition from the Septuagint*", which replaced God's name with *Kurios* "Lord", should say IHS or IS instead of Jesus (IESOUS), because this sacred name is never written in full in the New Testament before 400 CE. Finally, it is not necessary to know Hebrew to get the meaning of God's name since even Moses did not know it and consequently asked God, but the definition of the name is clearly expressed by God Himself in Exodus 3:14 "I shall [prove to] be" or "I shall [come to] be". Despite it is written: *You must not add to the word that I am commanding you, neither must you take away from it, so as to keep the commandments of Jehovah your God that I am commanding you* (Dt 4:2), many translators have added a few words to the definition of God's name in Exodus 3:14 in order "to improve it". However, like the tree mentioned by King Solomon at the end of his book, the name of Y^howah, "it will [prove to] be (*yih^eweh*)" there (Ec 11:3), for ever.

²¹³ Even when the diminutive YHW is inside a theophoric name like Elyehôenai (1Ch 26:3, Ezr 8:4) it is still vocalized yehô. If God's name had been Yahveh, Elyehôenai would have been Elyahvenai.