יהוה *yhwh* **Yahweh**[1]

1. (a) The OT divine name occurs predominantly in the OT—and always in the pre-exilic extrabibl. examples (9th-cent. Mesha inscription, *KAI* no. 181.18, "And I took from there the [vessels?] of Yahweh, dragging them before Chemosh" [*ANET* 320b]; late 7th-cent. ostraca from Tell Arad; just before 587 BCE in the Lachish Letters II:2, 5; III:3, 9; IV:1; V:1, 8; VI:1, 12; IX:1 [*KAI* nos. 192–97; *ANET* 322] in wish formulae and assertions)—in the full form of the tetragrammaton *yhwh*, less often in independent or bound shortened forms like *yhw* (the normal form in the 5th-cent. Elephantine Papyri; cf. Cowley 290 and *BMAP* 306a; isolated in Cowley no. 13.14, and on an ostracon [A. Dupont-Sommer, *Semit* 2 (1949): 31, 34, ll. 3, 7] *yhh*; *BMAP* no. 1.2: *yh*), and *yāh/yâ* (Exod 15:2 as well as in later parts of Isa and in later Psa; Exod 17:2 and Psa 68:5, 19 are textually difficult; cf. Noth, *Exod*, OTL, 138f.; Kraus, *Psa*, CC, 2:46f.; on Song Sol 8:6, see Gerleman, BK 18, 217). In theophoric Yahweh names *yᵉhô-/yô-* (dissimilated *yē-*) or *-yāhû/-yâ* occur (*IP* 103–7; on the Samaria ostraca and on seals also *-yw* = *-yaw*, cf. *KAI* 2:183). Judging from the sources and on grounds of philological probability, one must give priority to the full form (*IP* 101f.; G. Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion* [1972], 75f.; R. de Vaux, FS Davies 49–51).

On the basis of philological considerations and Gk. transcriptions in the church fathers, scholars have concluded that the original pronunciation of the tetragrammaton was *yahweh* (O. Eissfeldt, *RGG* 3:515f. with bibliog.; Fohrer, op. cit. 75 with bibliog.; contra W. Vischer, "Eher Jahwo als Jahwe," *TZ* 16 [1960]: 259–67). The Qere perpetuum of the Masoretic tradition יְהֹוָה (falsely read as *yᵉhōwâ* in the Middle Ages) or יְהֹוָה results from a combination of the consonants *yhwh* with the vowel signs of the post-exilic substitutes for the divine name, *ᵃdōnāy* "the Lord" (→ *ᵓādôn*) or, if *yhwh* accompanies *ᵃdōnāy, ᵉlōhîm* "God" (GB 290f.; KBL 368; Zorell 298f.; the later spelling יְהוָה in *BH*³ and *BHS* is based upon a reading of the Aram. *šᵉmā* "the name"; cf. Meyer 1:81; contra P. Katz, *TZ* 4 [1948]: 467–69).

(b) No certain etymology of the divine name can be offered. Surveys of the abundant attempts at derivation and interpretation can be found in the available lexicons, with extensive bibliog. in Fohrer, op. cit. 76f., and de Vaux, op. cit. 56–63.

Independent of the resolution of the etymological issue, one must consider whether and to what extent Yahwism was conscious of a particular meaning for the name, whether the original, which would probably point to the pre-Israelite sphere, or a secondarily motivated Israelite meaning. Concerning the original nature of Yahweh, inferences based upon the meaning of the word can be made only with great reservation.

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[1]Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 522.

Only the famous passage Exod 3:14 (→ *hyh* 4c) uses a meaning of the name "Yahweh" in a relatively complicated theological interpretation; even if it were to approach the correct etymology, it may have been definitive for only a particular circle in Israel (cf. von Rad, *Theol*. 1:180f.; W. H. Schmidt, *Atl. Glaube und seine Umwelt* [1968], 57–61; de Vaux, op. cit. 63–75).

L. Köhler's interpretation of the name as a nom. form ("Jod als hebr. Nominalpräfix," *WO* 1/5 [1950]: 404f.) is contradicted by the explanation of the name as an impf. form of the verb, which is more likely for Sem. proper names. In association with particular religiohistorical conceptions, earlier derivations from Arab. roots resulted in interpretations such as "the blowing one," "the lightning hurler," "the one raging in the storm," "the one raining," etc. (cf. Köhler, *Theol*., 42f.; KBL 368f.). More appropriate than Arab. for the Sinai region in the second half of the 2d millennium would be an early form of a NWSem. verb with the meaning "to be, become, show oneself, act," etc., like Hebr. → *hyh* and Aram. *hwh*. Since a causative hi. of this verb, which would render an etymology "the one creating, the one keeping in existence," does not seem to be attested, only the qal "he is, he shows himself to be active" can be practically considered (the vocalic prefix does not argue against this since later Hebr./Aram. *yi-* derives from *ya-;* cf. Meyer 2:99). The etymology of the name Yahweh widely held today thus approaches the interpretation of Exod 3:14 rather closely (cf. W. von Soden, *WO* 3/3 [1966]: 177–87; Schmidt, op. cit. 59–61; Fohrer, op. cit. 77; S. Herrmann, *Israel in Egypt* [1973], 51–54); the proper understanding of the meaning of → *hyh*, which one must distance from the static understanding (cf. LXX in Exod 3:14 *ho ōn*) in favor of a dynamic activity, is decisive.

2. How often does the name Yahweh occur in the OT? The information in BDB 217 is most accurate: 6,823x, accepted by L. Köhler, *Atl. Wortforschung* (1930), 3 (id., *Theol*., 41: "More than 6,700 times"; KBL 368a: "about 6823x," although the figures concerning the individual books [adapted from P. Vetter, *TQ* 85 (1903): 12–47] are altogether too low, since they deal only with free-standing *yhwh*, not *ᵃdōnāy-yhwh*, etc.; G. Quell, *TDNT* 3:1067, is also remarkable: 5,321x). A precise comparison and listing of passages in Mandl. (91–96, 982f., 1416–33, 1534a, 1541f. with numerous redundancies) and Lis. (1612–19) results in the figure of 6,828 occurrences (Mandl. omits Isa 60:20 [1424a] and Hab 2:17 [1426a or 1542a]; in Psa 68:27 many MSS have *ᵃdōnāy*, but *BHS* has *yhwh*). Lis. omits Judg 7:2; 1 Sam 20:22; 2 Sam 15:21; Mal 3:23 (*yôm yhwh*) and indications of doubled occurrences in 2 Sam 5:19; Exod 20:3 and of tripled occurrences in Jer 7:4.

The lists of passages in Vetter (op. cit. 15–47) contain numerous, apparently inadvertent omissions, duplicate citations, and incorrect totals, esp. for 1 Sam–Ezek, Psa, and Chron; in Gen–Judg and the Minor Prophets, Lev 8:9; Deut 2:37; Josh 6:24; 13:8; Amos 5:15, 27; Mic 4:5; Zeph 1:17; Hag 1:13; Zech 8:14 are to be added, one occurrence in Exod 23:17 is to be omitted, and Mal 1:12 should be omitted entirely. The figures for the individual books are:

Gen	165
Exod	398
Lev	311
Num	396
Deut	550
TORAH	1,820
Josh	224
Judg	175
1 Sam	320
2 Sam	153
1 Kgs	257
2 Kgs	277
(Isa 1–39	241)
(Isa 40–55	126)
(Isa 56–66	83)
Isa	450
Jer	726
Ezek	434
Hos	46
Joel	33
Amos	81
Obad	7
Jonah	26
Mic	40
Nah	13
Hab	13
Zeph	34
Hag	35

Zech	133
Mal	46
PROPHETS	3,523
Psa	695
Job	32
Prov	87
Ruth	18
Song Sol	—
Eccl	—
Lam	32
Esth	—
Dan	8
Ezra	37
Neh	17
1 Chron	175
2 Chron	384
KETUBIM	1,485
OT TOTAL	6,828

The short form *yāh* is listed 50x by Lis. (Exod 15:2; 17:16; Isa 12:2; 26:4; 38:11bis; Song Sol 8:6 *šalhebetyâ* and 43x in Psa, 27x with → *hll* pi., 24x *halᵉlû(-)yāh* "hallelujah," in one or two words with or without *maqqeph*).

3. The question of the origin of the name of Moses' God is closely entwined with the problem of the historical inception of Yahwism, which will not be treated here (cf. the OT theologies and the histories of Israelite religion). OT traditions (apart from Gen 4, 26 J; cf. F. Horst, "Die Notiz vom Anfang des Jahwekultes in Gen 4,26," FS Delekat 68–74) associate the name Yahweh with Sinai and with Moses in Midianite territory; this association lends substantial significance to the Midianite or Kenite hypothesis, according to which Israelite tribes adopted Yahwism in some form from the Midianites or Kenites (W. Vischer, *Jahwe, der Gott Kains* [1929]; K.-H. Bernhardt, *Gott und Bild* [1956], 116ff.; A. H. J. Gunneweg, "Mose in Midian," *ZTK* 61 [1964]: 1–9; K. Heyde,

Kain, der erste Jahwe-Verehrer [1965]; M. Weippert, *Settlement of the Israelite Tribes in Palestine* [1971], 105f.; W. H. Schmidt, op. cit. 61–68). Although this hypothesis admittedly cannot be proved with certainty, it can lay claim to a degree of probability.

No unambiguous demonstration of the use of the name Yahweh outside Israel and prior to Moses has yet been identified (cf. de Vaux, op. cit. 52–56). The significance of a description in Eg. sources of some bedouin in the region of the Sinai peninsula, "Shasu of/from Yahweh," may not yet be evaluated with certainty (S. Herrmann, "Der atl. Gottesname," *EvT* 26 [1966]: 281–93; id., *Israel in Egypt* [1973], 25: "It is unfortunately still insufficiently clear whether this name 'Yahweh' apparently attested in Egyptian can really have anything to do with the Yahweh of the Old Testament. But it will none the less be permissible to talk, however cautiously, about an interesting name-formation which could also have been constitutive for the genesis of the divine name Yahweh"; cf. Weippert, op. cit. 106n.14).

Apart from these Egyptian texts, the name Yahweh cannot yet be identified in any passage independent of Israelite Yahwism (cf., however, the older works of G. R. Driver, *ZAW* 46 [1928]: 7–25; A. Murtonen, *Appearance of the Name YHWH outside Israel* [1951]). Old Bab. names with the element *yā'u(m)*, which has long been recognized as an independent possessive "my," should be excluded; the element *yawi-/yahúwi-* in names from Mari (18th cent. BCE), some of which betray WSem. origins, may belong to the same root as the divine name Yahweh, yet *ya-ahú-wi-AN*, for example, does not mean "Yahweh is god" but probably "god is" (W. von Soden, *WO* 3/3 [1966]: 177–87; with reservations, Huffmon 70–73). The Ug. god *yw*, son of the god El, should not be identified with Yahweh either (J. Gray, *JNES* 12 [1953]: 278–85; id., *Legacy* 180–84; H. Gese, M. Höfner, and K. Rudolph, *Die Religionen Altsyriens, Altarabiens und der Mandäer* [1970], 55f.).

4. The scope of this dictionary permits only a few suggestions concerning both the history of the usage of the name Yahweh and the significance of the divine name for Israel's faith. It is the task of the OT theologies to explicate how the name (→ *šēm*) functioned in divine self-revelation (→ *ʾánî*) and in the personal relationship between God and his people (cf. e.g., von Rad, *Theol.* 1:179–87; a survey of the topic with bibliog. in H. D. Preuss, *Jahweglaube und Zukunftserwartung* [1968], 14–28; more popular or theological presentations in e.g., H. W. Wolff, *Wegweisung* [1965], 59–71; F. Mildenberger, *Gottes Tat im Wort* [1964], 137–40).

The prayer address in the vocative stands apart from the other textual usages of the divine name. The address occurs approximately 380x, often repeated within a prayer or a psalm, most frequently in the corresponding genre of the Psalter (about 210x), otherwise irregularly distributed according to the occurrence of prayers and the usage of the name Yahweh in the individual books on the whole; it does not appear, e.g., in the laws and in the wisdom literature, nor for the most part in prophecy (Gen 15:2, 8; 24:12, 42; 32:10; 49:18; Exod 5:22; 15:6[bis], 11, 16f.; 32:11; Num 10:35f.; 14:14[bis]; Deut 3:24; 9:26; 21:8; 26:10; 33:7, 11; Josh 7:7; Judg 5:4, 31; 6:22; 16:28; 21:3; 1 Sam 1:11; 3:9; 23:10f.; 2 Sam 7:18, 19[bis], 20, 22, 24f., 27–29; 15:31; 22:29, 50; 24:10; 1 Kgs 3:7; 8:23, 25, 28, 53; 17:20f.; 18:36, 37[bis]; 19:4; 2 Kgs 6:17, 20; 19:15, 16[bis], 17, 19[bis]; 20:3; Isa 12:1; 26:8, 11–13, 15–17; 33:2; 37:16, 17[bis], 18, 20[bis]; 38:3, 20; 63:16f.; 64:7f., 11;

Jer 1:6; 4:10; 5:3; 10:23f.; 11:5; 12:1, 3; 14:7, 9, 13, 20, 22; 15:15f.; 16:19; 17:13f.; 18:19, 23; 20:7; 32:17, 25; 51:62; Ezek 4:14; 9:8; 11:13; 21:5; Hos 9:14; Joel 1:19; 2:17; 4:11; Amos 7:2, 5; Jonah 1:14[bis]; 2:7; 4:2f.; Hab 1:2, 12[bis]; 3:2[bis], 8; Zech 1:12; Psa 3:2, 4, 8, etc.; Lam 1:9, 11, 20; 2:20; 3:55, 59, 61, 64; 5:1, 19, 21; Dan. 9:8; Ezra 9:15; Neh 1:5; 9:6f.; 1 Chron 17:16f., 19f., 22f., 26f.; 21:17; 29:10, 11bis, 16, 18; 2 Chron 1:9; 6:14, 16f., 19, 41 [bis], 42; 14:10 [3x]; 20:6; → *ʾªhāh*).

The usage of the name Yahweh in formulaic or particularly remarkable statements (in about 1/3 of the occurrences *yhwh* appears as the second element of a cs. relationship; → *ʾap*, → *bᵉrît*, → *dābār*, etc.) is discussed in other articles in this dictionary and cannot be explicated in detail here (→ *ʾmr*, → *brʾ*, → *brk*, etc.). The same is true of divine designations, originally appellative in nature, which compete with *yhwh* (→ *ʾādôn*, → *ʾēl* [*ʿelyôn*], → *ʾᵉlōhîm, ṣᵉbāʾôt* [→ *ṣābāʾ*], → *šadday*) and Yahweh's numerous epithets, from the ancient *zeh sînay* "the one of Sinai(?)" (Judg 5:5; Psa 68:9; bibliog. in W. Richter, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* [1966²], 69n.35) to the "God of heaven" favored in the late period (→ *šāmayim*) and the suggestive circumlocution "from another quarter" (→ *ʾḥr* 3) in Esth 4:14 (→ *ʾāb*, → *baʿal*, → *melek*, etc.).

On the usage of the divine name in theophoric PNs (from Joshua onward with the greatest frequency in the monarchic era, overshadowed somewhat in the 7th cent. by the resurgence of names containing *ʾēl*), see *IP* 101–14.

5. In post-exilic Judaism, the divine name *yhwh* receded even more for various reasons and in varying degrees in different circles, until it totally disappeared in early Judaism or was replaced by *ʾªdōnāy* and *kyrios* (→ *ʾādôn* IV/5). The name's original function of elevating its bearer from the presupposed world of polytheistic powers (cf. e.g., Mic 4:5, "For all peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we, we walk in the name of Yahweh, our God, always and forever") became obsolete with the development of monotheistic faith. But the name's associated function of describing the personal otherness of the God who interacts with people (e.g., John 17:6, "I have revealed your name to people"; cf. v 26) did not become obsolete; rather, it was manifest by other linguistic means in Judaism and in early Christianity.

E. Jenni

היה *hyh* to be[2]

S 1961; BDB 224a; *HALOT* 1:243a; *TDOT* 3:369–81; *TWOT* 491; *NIDOTTE* 2118

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[2]Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 359.

1. Aram. *hwh* (KBL 1068f. and suppl. 200; *DISO* 63f.) corresponds to the verb *hyh* "to become, be" in the OT (rarely *hwh* as an Aramaism; cf. Wagner no. 72) and in the Siloam Inscription (*KAI* no. 189).

Akk. *ewû* "to become" (*AHw* 266f.; cf. P. Fronzaroli, *AANLR* 8/19 [1964]: 164, however, with regard to the initial sound of the root) and the Amor. PNs derived from the root **hwy* (Huffmon 72f., 159f.) must also be taken into consideration; comparison with the Hebr. *hwh* II "to fall" (only in Job 37:6) and Arab. *hawā* "to fall" contributes little.

Semantic counterparts to *hyh* "to be" are formed in Akk. with *bašû*, in Ug., Phoen.-Pun., Arab., and Eth. with verbs of the root → *kûn*.

The ni. "to take place" occurs in addition to the qal; Hebr. has no other derivatives of the root; cf., however, → *yhwh*.

*2. With 3,540 occurrences of the qal (excl. Hos 13:14 *ʾehî*, → *ʾayyēh* 4; Lis. omits Gen 42:36; 1 Kgs 22:33; 2 Kgs 1:17) and 21 occurrences of the ni., *hyh* is the second most frequent verb in the OT. Hebr. *hwh* "to be, become" appears 5x (Gen 27:29; Isa 16:4; Eccl 2:22; 11:3; Neh 6:6), Bibl. Aram. *hwh* 71x (plus read with MSS *hᵃwāh* instead of *hûʾ* in Dan. 6:11).

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(c) Exod 3:14a uses *hyh* abs., without prep. or predicate noun, as Yahweh's 1st-per. speech in a formula: *ʾehyeh ʾᵃšer ʾehyeh* (ZB, GNB mg. "I will be who I will be"; see Noth, *Exod*, OTL, 45).

(1) The passage is problematic in four ways:
(2)
(a) A literary-critical problem: vv 14f. give a dual answer to v 13 "what is your name?" Is the original answer contained in v 14 where the tetragrammaton appears in its usual form? In this case v 14a would be a theological amplification seeking to clarify the sense of the tetragrammaton, and v 14b would be a redactional transition (so B. D. Eerdmans, *Atl. Studien* 3 [1910], 12–14; Noth, *Exod*, OTL, 43f.). But v 14 could also be regarded as original; its more difficult content would have then led to an expansion in v 15 in more traditional forms (so G. J. Thierry, *OTS* 5 [1948]: 37).
(b) An etymological problem: The formula very probably contains an allusion to the tetragrammaton. Is it a philologically tenable eytmology or a merely theological paronomasia? What is the original meaning of the tetragrammaton?
(c) A historical problem: When did the name Yahweh come into use? Are E and P correct when they attribute the first usage in Israel to Moses? What are the origins of the name? With respect to these two groups of questions, cf. the article → *yhwh*.

(d) An exegetical problem: Do the two *ʾehyeh* s in v 14a have the same significance? There is no decisive reason to contest this point (E. Schild, *VT* 4 [1954]: 296–302, wants to differentiate the notion of identity in the first verb from the notion of existence in the second: "I am he who is").

The repetition of the verb is not tautological but emphatic (cf. Exod 33:19). Moreover, is the syntax of *ᵃšer* correct? Yes, for if the subj. of the clause introduced by *ᵃšer*, in the form of a pron., is already the subj. or attribute of the main clause, the verb remains in the same person (GKC §138d; Schild, op. cit. 298; cf. Exod 20:2; 1 Kgs 8:22f.; 1 Chron 21:17).

(2) The formula is understood in three different ways:

(a) As a statement concerning God's being: cf. LXX *egō eimi ho ēn* "I am the one who is"; Luther: "I alone have being, whoever clings to other things errs" (*Weimarer Ausgabe* 16:49); Schild, op. cit. 301: "It is a positive answer in which God defines himself as the One who is, who exists, who is real." Cf. too O. Eissfeldt, *FF* 39 (1965): 298–300 = *KS* [1968], 4:193–98. Other usages of *hyh*, however, call this interpretation into question and show that the sense of the passage exceeds the simple statement of God's being (aseity).

(b) As an attempt to avoid revealing the name: so Köhler, *Theol.* 242n.38: "God does not reveal to Moses the secret of His nature (= His name). Moses will see who God is from His works. … *Deus absconditus* in the strictest sense"; cf. Gen 32:30; Judg 13:18. The context (a positive answer parallel to v 12, repetition of the expression in v 14b) requires a word that gives a positive answer to v 13 without violating God's secret.

(c) As a statement concerning the activity of God. The majority of exegetes (with slight nuances of opinion) understand the passage as a proclamation of the ever-new activity of God in history; thus Eichrodt 1:190: "I am really and truly present, ready to help and to act, as I have always been" (cf. among others, Th. C. Vriezen, FS Bertholet 498–512; id., *Theol.* 179f.; von Rad, *Theol.* 1:180f.; Noth, *Exod*, OTL, 44f.). The active and dynamic meaning of *hyh* speaks for an interpretation along these lines.

(3) Three elements of the formula are esp. noteworthy: (a) It does not go beyond 1st-per. forms, not merely for syntactical reasons. God remains a sovereign "I" and cannot become an "it" at the disposal of human curiosity. (b) The verb is in the impf., the tense of action open to new acts. God offers himself to be known as a result of his historical deeds for his people. (c) The usage of *hyh* here stands in the lineage of the three chief theological usages in the miracle reports, the prophets, and the covenant formula: it treats the ever-renewed activity with which Yahweh intervenes in history in order to prove himself to be the true Lord.

Apart from Exod 3:14, this abs. use of *hyh* occurs only in Hos 1:9, "I (am) *lōʾ-ʾehyeh* (I am not present) for you," i.e., I decline to continue playing the role that I assumed in response to Moses in Exod 3:14. Several authors have suggested a textual correction along the lines of the covenant formula ("I am not your God"). Nevertheless, the lectio difficilior is preferable (cf. Wolff, *Hos*, Herm, 9).

Moreover, the absence of an echo of Exod 3:14 is not remarkable. Even in its context, the formula stands to the side; the weight lies on the commission of Moses in v 15. In order to describe Yahweh's faithful assistance, the texts prefer the frequent expression *hyh ʿim* over the abs. *hyh:* "I am with you" (Exod 3:12; cf. Josh 1:5; Judg 2:18; 1 Sam 18:12), where the prep. does not complement the verb but underscores its active and purpose-oriented significance.

5. In its modifications of the formula of Exod 3:14, early Judaism primarily emphasizes God's eternity; so Tg. Ps.-J. Exod 3:14b, "It is I, who was and will be"; similarly, Midr. Exod 3:14. The formula is also interpreted, however, in terms of God's creative activity in accordance with Psa 33:9; thus Tg. Ps.-J. 3:14a, "He who spoke and

the world came into being, who spoke and the universe existed," or in the sense of Deutero-Isaiah's polemic against the impotence of the idols (Isa 43:10f.; 44:6), thus Tg. Ps.-J. Deut 32:39, "I am he who is and was, and I am he who will be, and there is no other god beside me." Even when eternity is emphasized, the concept of existence inherent in the verb *hyh* retains an active character.

YAHWEH יהוה [3]

I.   Yahweh is the name of the official god of Israel, both in the northern kingdom and in Judah. Since the Achaemenid period, religious scruples led to the custom of not pronoucing the name of Yahweh; in the liturgy as well as in everyday life, such expressions as 'the →Lord' (*ʾădōnāy*, lit. 'my Lord', LXX κύριος) or 'the →Name' were substituted for it. As a matter of consequence, the correct pronunciation of the tetragrammaton was gradually lost: the Masoretic form 'Jehovah' is in reality a combination of the consonants of the tetragrammaton with the vocals of *ʾădōnāy*, the *ḥaṭēf pataḥ* of *ʾădōnāy* becoming a mere *shewa* because of the yodh of *yhwh* (ALFRINK 1948). The transcription 'Yahweh' is a scholarly convention, based on such Greek transcriptions as Ιαουε/ Ιαουαι (Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5, 6, 34, 5), Ιαβε/ Ιαβαι (Epiphanius of Salamis, *Adv. Haer.* 1, 3, 40, 5 and Theodoretus of Cyrrhus, *Quaest. in Ex. XV*; *Haer. fab. comp.* 5, 3).
The form Yahweh (*yhwh*) has been established as primitive; abbreviations such as Yah, Yahû, Yô, and Yehô are secondary (CROSS 1973:61). The abbreviated (or hypocoristic) forms of the name betray regional predilections: thus *Yw* ('Yau' in Neo-Assyrian sources) is especially found in a North-Israelite context; *Yh*, on the other hand, is predominantly Judaean (cf. WEIPPERT 1980:247–248). The alleged attestation of *Yw* as an onomastic element on an arrowhead dated to the 11th cent. BCE on the basis of its script (F. M. CROSS, An Inscribed Arrowhead of the Eleventh Century BCE in the Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem, *ErIsr* 23 [2992] 21*-26*, esp. n. 3), still maintained by J. C. DE MOOR (*The Rise of Yahwism* [2nd ed.; Leuven 1997] 165–166), is uncertain on epigraphical grounds (P. BORDREUIL, Flèches pheniciennes inscrites, *RB* 99 [1992] 208; A. LEMAIRE, Epigraphic palestinienne: nouveaux documents II - décennie 1985–1995, *Henoch* 17 [1996] 211). The form *Yhw* is said to be originally Judaean (WEIPPERT 1980: 247), but its occurrence in the northern wayfarer's station of Kuntillet ʿAjrud shows that it was not unknown among Northern Israelites either. In the frequently attested Nabataean personal name ʿbdʾhyw (variant ʿbdʾhy), the element ʾhyw (ʾhy) has been interpreted as a spelling of the divine name Yahweh (M. LIDZBARSKI, *ESE* 3 [1915] 270 n. 1); it is not certain whether it is a theonym or an anthroponym, though, and a

[3]K. van der Toorn et al., *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible DDD* (2nd extensively rev. ed.; Leiden; Boston; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 910.

connection with the tetragrammaton is unproven (KNAUF 1984). It is unclear whether an allegedly northern Syrian deity Ιευώ (Porphyry, *Adv. Christ.* fr. 41, apud Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* I, 9, 21; cf. Ιαώ in Theodoretus, *Graec. aff. cur.* II 44–45 and Macrobius, *Sat.* I 18–20) is related to the god Yahweh. In the Mishna, the divine name is usually written

ʾʾin combination with *šĕwāʾ* and *qāmeṣ* (WALKER 1951).

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Before 1200 BCE, the name Yahweh is not found in any Semitic text. The stir caused by PETTINATO (e.g. Ebla and the Bible, *BA* 43 [1980] 203–216, esp. 203–205) who claimed to have found the shortened form of the name Yahweh ('Ya') as a divine element in theophoric names from Ebla (ca. 2400–2250 BCE) is unfounded. As the final element of personal **[Page 911]** names, *-ya* is often a hypocoristic ending, not a theonym (A. ARCHI, The Epigraphic Evidence from Ebla and the Old Testament, *Bib* 60 (1979) 556–566, esp. 556–560). MÜLLER argues that the sign NI, read *yà* by Pettinato, is conventionally short for NI-NI = *ì-lí*, 'my (personal) god'; it stands for *ilī* or *ilu* (MÜLLER 1980:83; 1981:306–307). This solution also explains the occurrence of the speculated element **ya* at the beginning of personal names; thus ᵈ*yà-ra-mu* should be read either as DINGIR-lí-ra-mu or as ᵈ*ilix-ra-mu*, both readings yielding the name Iliramu, 'My god is exalted'. In no list of gods or offerings is the mysterious god *Ya ever mentioned; his cult at Ebla is a chimera.

Yahweh was not known at Ugarit either; the singular name *Yw* (vocalisation unknown) in a damaged passage of the Baal Cycle (*KTU* 1.1 iv:14) cannot convincingly be interpreted as an abbreviation for 'Yahweh' (*pace*, e.g., DE MOOR 1990:113–118). Also after 1200 BCE, Yahweh is seldom mentioned in non-Israelite texts. The assertion that "Yahweh was worshipped as a major god" in North Syria in the eighth century BCE (S. DALLEY, Yahweh in Hamath in the 8th century BC, *VT* 40 [1990] 21–32, quotation p 29), cannot be maintained. The claim is based on the names Azriyau and Yaubiʾdi, attested as indigenous rulers from north Syrian states in the 8th cent. BCE. The explanation of these names offered by Dalley is highly dubious; more satisfactory interpretations are possible (VAN DER TOORN 1992:88–90).

The earliest West Semitic text mentioning Yahweh—excepting the biblical evidence—is the Victory Stela written by Mesha, the Moabite king from the 9th century BCE. The Moabite ruler recalls his military successes against Israel in the time of Ahab: "And →Chemosh said to me, 'Go, take Nebo from Israel!' So I went by night and I engaged in fight against her from the break of dawn until noon. And I took her and I killed her entire population: seven thousand men, boys, women, girls, and maid servants, for I devoted her to destruction (*hḥrmth*) for Ashtar-Chemosh. And I took from there the ʾ*[rʾ]ly* of Yahweh and I dragged them before Chemosh" (*KAI* 181:14–18). Evidently, Yahweh is not presented here as a Moabite deity. He is presented as the official god of the Israelites, worshipped throughout Samaria, as far as its outer borders since Nebo

(נבה in the Mesha Stela, נבו in the Bible), situated in North-Western Moab, was a border town.

The absence of references to a Syrian or Palestinian cult of Yahweh outside Israel suggests that the god does not belong to the traditional circle of West Semitic deities. The origins of his veneration must be sought for elsewhere. A number of texts suggest that Yahweh was worshipped in southern Edom and Midian before his cult spread to Palestine. There are two Egyptian texts that mention Yahweh. In these texts from the 14th and 13th centuries BCE, Yahweh is neither connected with the Israelites, nor is his cult located in Palestine. The texts speak about "Yahu in the land of the Shosu-beduins" (*tʒ šʒśw jhwʒ;* R. GIVEON, *Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens* [Leiden 1971] no. 6a [pp. 26–28] and no. 16a [pp. 74–77]; note WEIPPERT 1974:427, 430 for the corrected reading). The one text is from the reign of Amenophis III (first part of the 14th cent. BCE; cf. HERMANN 1967) and the other from the reign of Ramses II (13th cent. BCE; cf. H. W. FAIRMAN, Preliminary Report on the Excavations at ʿAmārah West, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, 1938–9, *JEA* 25 [1939] 139–144, esp. 141). In the Ramses II list, the name occurs in a context which also mentions Seir (assuming that *sʿrr* stands for Seir). It may be tentatively concluded that this "Yahu in the land of the Shosu-beduins" is to be situated in the area of Edom and Midian (WEIPPERT 1974: 271; AXELSSON 1987:60; *pace* WEINFELD 1987:304).

In these Egyptian texts *Yhw* is used as a toponym (KNAUF 1988:46–47). Yet a relationship with the deity by the same name is a reasonable assumption (*pace* M. WEIPPERT, "Heiliger Krieg" in Israel und Assyrien, *ZAW* 84 [1972] 460–493, esp. 491 n. **[Page 912]** 144); whether the god took his name from the region or vice versa remains undecided (note that R. GIVEON, "The Cities of Our God" (II Sam 10:12), *JBL* 83 [1964] 415–416, suggests that the name is short for *Beth-Yahweh, which would compare with the alternance between →Baal-meon and Beth-Baal-meon). By the 14th century BCE, before the cult of Yahweh had reached Israel, groups of Edomite and Midianite nomads worshipped Yahweh as their god. These data converge with a northern tradition, found in a number of ancient theophany texts, according to which Yahweh came from →Edom and Seir (Judg 5:4; note the correction in Ps 68:8[7]). According to the Blessing of Moses Yahweh came from Sinai, "dawned from" Seir, and "shone forth" from Mount Paran (Deut 33:2). Elsewhere he is said to have come from Teman and Mount Paran (Hab 3:3). The references to "Yahweh of Teman" in the Kuntillet ʿAjrud inscriptions are extra-biblical confirmation of the topographical connection (M. WEINFELD, Kuntillet ʿAjrud Inscriptions and Their Significance, *SEL* 1 [1984] 121–130, esp. 125, 126). All of these places—Seir, Mt Paran, Teman, and Sinai—are in or near Edom.

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III. Explanations of the name Yahweh must assume that, except for the vocalisation, the traditional form is the correct one. The hypothesis which says that there were originally two divine names, viz. Yāhū and Yahweh, the former being the older one

(MAYER 1958:34), is now generally abandoned in light of the epigraphic evidence (CROSS 1973:61; *pace* KLAWEK 1990:12). The significance of the name Yahweh has been the subject of a staggering amount of publications (for an impression see MAYER 1958). This "monumental witness to the industry and ingenuity of biblical scholars" (CROSS 1973:60) is hardly in proportion to the limited importance of the issue. Even if the meaning of the name could be established beyond reasonable doubt, it would contribute little to the understanding of the nature of the god. The caution against overestimating etymologies, voiced most eloquently by James Barr, holds good for divine names as well. From a perspective of the history of religion, it is much more important to know the characteristics which worshippers associated with their god, than the original meaning of the latter's name. Having said that, however, the question of the etymology of Yahweh cannot be simply dismissed. The following observations are in order.

In spite of isolated attempts to take *yhwh* as a pronominal form, meaning 'Yea He!' (from **ya huwa*, S. MOWINCKEL, *HUCA* 32 [1958] 121–133) or 'My One' (cf. Akk *ya'u*, H. CAZELLES, Der persönliche Gott Abrahams, *Der Weg zum Menschen*, *FS A. Deissler* [ed. R. Mosis & L. Ruppert; Freiburg 1989] 59–60), it is widely agreed that the name represents a verbal form. With the preformative *yod*, *yhwh* is a finite verbal form to be analysed as a 3rd masc. sing. imperfect. Analogous finite verbal forms used as theonyms are attested for the religion of pre-Islamic Arabs. Examples include the gods →*Ya'ūq* ('he protects', *WbMyth* I 479) and *Yaġūṯ* ('he helps', *WbMyth* I 478). Much earlier are the Akkadian and Amorite instances of verbal forms used as divine names: ᵈIkšudum ('He has reached', ARM 13 no. 111:6) and Ešuḫ ('He has been victorious', H. B. HUFFMON, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* [Baltimore 1965] 215) are just two examples (CROSS 1973: 67). Morphologically, then, the name Yahweh is not without parallels.

The interpretation of the theonym as a finite verb is already found in Exod 3:14. In reply to Moses' question of what he is to say to the Israelites when they ask him which god sent him, God says: "I AM WHO I AM", and he adds: "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you'". The explanation here offered is a sophisticated play based on association: the root HWH is understood as a by-form of HYH, 'to be' and the prefix of the third person is understood as a secondary objectivation of a first person: *yhwh* is thus interpreted as *'hyh*, 'I am'. Since the significance of such a name is elusive, the reconstructed name is itself the subject of a further interpretation in the phrase *'ehyeh 'ăšer 'ehyeh*, 'I am who I am'. Its meaning is debated. Should one understand it as a promise ('I will certainly be there') or as an allusion to the incomparability of Yahweh ('I am who I am', i.e. without peer)? Even in the revelation of his name, Yahweh does not surrender himself: **[Page 914]** He cannot be captured by means of either an image or a name. The Greek translation ὁ ὤν (LXX) has philosophical overtones: it is at the basis of a profound speculation on the eternity and immutability of God—both of them ideas originally unconnected with the name Yahweh.

Since the Israelite explanation is evidently a piece of theology rather than a reliable etymology, it cannot be accepted as the last word on the matter. Comparative material from Akkadian sources has been used to make a case for the thesis that **yahweh* is in fact

an abbreviated sentence name. Among Amorite personal names, there are a number in which a finite form of the root HWY ('to be, to manifest oneself') is coupled with a theonym. Examples are Yaḫwi-ilum, Yaḫwi-Adad (ARM 23, 86:7), and Ya(ḫ)wium (= Iaḫwi-ilum, e.g. ARM 23, 448:13). These Amorite names are the semantic equivalent of the Akkadian name Ibašši-ilum ('God has manifested himself'). The objection that these are all anthroponyms, whereas Yahweh is a theonym, is not decisive. Cuneiform texts also recognize a number of gods whose names are in fact a finite verbal form with a deity as subject: ᵈIkrub-Il ('El has blessed') and ᵈIšmêlum (= *Išme-ilum, 'God has heard') can be quoted in illustration. STOL has made a strong case for regarding these names as those of deified ancestors (M. STOL, Old Babylonian Personal Names, *SEL* 8 [1991] 191–212, esp. 203–205).

Some scholars believe that Yahweh, too, is the abbreviated name of a deified ancestor. Thus DE MOOR construes the original name of the deity as *Yahweh-El, 'May El be present (as helper)' (1990:237–239). In support of this speculated form he adduces the name Jacob (*Yaʿăqōb*), which is short for *Yᶜqb-ᵓl*, 'May El follow him closely' (cf. Yaḫqub-el, H. HUFFMON, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* [Baltimore 1965] 203–204; S. AḥITUV, *Canaanite Toponyms in Ancient Egyptian Documents* [Jerusalem 1984] 200), and such names as Yaḫwi-Ilu in Mari texts. DE MOOR draws the conclusion that originally Yahweh was "probably the divine ancestor of one of the proto-Israelite tribes" (1990:244). Yet though theoretically possible, it is difficult to believe that the major Israelite deity, venerated in a cult that was imported into Palestine, was originally a deified ancestor. Though such gods are known, they are never found in a leading position in the pantheon. Their worship tends to remain local, as an ancestor is of necessity the ancestor of a restricted group.

There are admittedly ancient Near Eastern deities with a composite name who never were ancestors. Examples include *rkbᵓl* (traditionally vocalized as →Rakib-el) from Samᵓal (*KAI* 24:16), and Malakbel, ʿ*Aglibol*, and Yarhibol from Palmyra. Morphologically, however, these names do not compare with a speculated *yahweh-DN, since the first component of the name is a substantive. The names just mentioned are best interpreted as 'Charioteer of El' (cf. *TSSI* II 70), 'Messenger of Bel', 'Calf of Bol', and 'Lord of the Source' (cf. J. HOFTIJZER, *Religio aramaica* [Leiden 1968] 32–38; for the interpretation of the name Yarhibol, cf. Akk *yarḫu*, 'water hole, pond', CAD I/J 325), respectively. In addition to the morphological difference with a hypothetical *yahweh-DN, Rakib-el and his likes are names of subordinate deities; there is no example of such gods heading the pantheon.

Related to the thesis that *yahweh* is an abbreviated theonym is the suggestion that it is an abbreviation of a liturgical formula. The solution proposed by CROSS is an example. He speculates that the longer form of 'Yahweh' is extant in the title →Yahweh Zabaoth. The *ṣĕbāᵓôt* (transcribed as Zabaoth in many English Bible translations) are the →host of heaven, i.e. the council of the gods. The name Yahweh Zabaoth is itself short for *Ḏu yahwī ṣabaᵓōt*, 'He who creates the (heavenly) armies', according to CROSS (1973:70).

Since in his view this is in fact a title of El, the full name might be reconstructed as *Il-ḏu-yahwī-ṣabaʾôt. The analysis of Cross goes back to his teacher W. F. Albright (W. F. ALBRIGHT, review of B. N. Wambacq, *L'épithète divine Jahvé Sebaʾôt*, JBL 67 (1948) 377–381). D. N. FREEDMAN quotes from Albright's notes for an unpublished *History of the Religion of* **[Page 915]** *Israel* listing a number of reconstructed cult names such as *ʾēl yahweh yiśrāʾēl*, 'El-creates-Israel' (on the basis of Gen 33:20) and *ʾēl yahweh rûḥôt*, 'El-creates-the-winds' (FREEDMAN *et al.* 1977–82:547). Instead of a reconstructed form *yahweh-ʾel*, then, Albright reckons with a form *ʾEl-yahweh*—which could be complemented by various objects. DIJKSTRA, too, argues that the original form is El Yahweh, 'El who reveals himself'—a form still reflected in such texts as Ps 118:27 (M. DIJKSTRA, Yahweh-El or El-Yahweh?, *"Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin...": collected communications to the XIVth congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament* [BEATAJ 28; ed. M. Augustin & K.-D. Schunk; Frankfurt am Main etc. 1996] 43–52).

Leaving aside for the moment the problem implied in the identification of Yahweh with El, the interpretation of Yahweh as an abbreviated sentence name (and possibly a liturgical formula) is not without difficulties. Since the idea that a human ancestor could rise to the position of national god flies in the face of the comparative evidence, a presumed El-Yahweh or Yahweh-El must of necessity be a divine name followed or preceded by a verbal form characterizing the deity. By implication, then, the proper name of the god has been replaced in the Israelite tradition by a verb denoting one of his characteristic activities. Such a process is unparalleled in ancient Near Eastern religions—unless one considers such Arab deities as Yâūq and Yaǵūṯ, epithets of another deity, which would suggest a South Semitic rather than a West Semitic background for Yahweh. Isolated verbal forms such as proper names, however, are not uncommon in the Semitic world, as witnessed by e.g. the name *Yagrušu of Baal's weapon. Solving the enigma of the tetragrammaton by positing another divine name is really a last option. A solution which explains the name in the form it has come down to us is to be preferred.

A problem hitherto unmentioned is the identification of the root lying at the basis of the form *yhwh*, and that of its meaning. Though some have suggested a link with the root ḥWY, resulting in the translation 'the Destroyer' (e.g. H. GRESSMANN, *Mose und seine Zeit* [Göttingen 1913] 37), it is generally held that the name should be connected with the Semitic root HWY. Also scholars who do not regard the tetragrammaton as an abbreviated theonym usually follow the Israelite interpretation insofar they interpret Yahweh as a form of the verb 'to be'; opinions diverge as to whether the form is basic or causative, i.e. a Qal or a Hiphʾil. The one school interprets 'He is', i.e. 'He manifests himself as present', whereas the other argues in favour of a causative meaning: 'He causes to be, calls into existence'. The first interpretation has an exponent in VON SODEN. Adducing comparative material from Akkadian sources, he urges that the verb should be taken in its stronger sense 'to prove oneself, to manifest oneself, to reveal oneself' (VON SODEN 1966). A representative of the second school is ALBRIGHT. He takes *yahweh* as a causative imperfect of the verb HWY, 'to be'. Yahweh, then, is a god who 'causes to be'

or 'brings into being'. In this form, the verb is normally transitive (W. F. ALBRIGHT, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* [London 1968] 147–149).

A major difficulty with the explanations of the name Yahweh on the basis of HWY interpreted as 'to be', however, is the fact that they explain the name of a South Semitic deity (originating from Edom, or even further south) with the help of a West-Semitic etymology (KNAUF 1984a:469). The form of the name has the closest analogues in the pre-Islamic Arab pantheon; it is natural, therefore, to look first at the possibility of an explanation on the basis of the Arabic etymology. The relevant root HWY has three meanings in Arabic: 1. to desire, be passionate; 2. to fall; 3. to blow. All three have been called upon for a satisfactory explanation of the name Yahweh. The derivation of the name Yahweh from the meaning 'to love, to be passionate', which resulted in the translation of Yahweh as 'the Passionate' (GOITEIN 1956) has made no impact on OT scholarship. Hardly more successful was the **[Page 916]** suggestion that Yahweh is 'the Speaker', also based on the link of the name with the root HWY (cf. Akk *awû, atmû;* BOWMAN 1944:4–5).

A greater degree of plausibility attaches to those interpretations of the name Yahweh which identify him as a storm god. Thus the name has been connected with the meaning 'to fall' (also attested in Syriac), in which case the verbal form is seen as a causative ('He who causes to fall', scil. rain, lightning, or the enemies by means of his lightning, see BDB 218a). Another suggestion is to link the name with the meaning 'to blow', said of the wind (cf. Syr *hawwē*, 'wind'). This leads to the translation "er fährt durch die Lüfte, er weht" (J. WELLHAUSEN, *Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte* [3rd ed.; Berlin 1897] 25 note 1; KNAUF 1984a:469; 1988:43–48). Especially the latter possibility merits serious consideration. In view of the south-eastern origins of the cult of Yahweh, an Arabic etymology has a certain likelihood. Also, his presumed character as a storm god contributes to explain why Yahweh could assume various of Baal's mythological exploits.

….

YAHWEH (DEITY) [4]

[Heb K *yhwh* (יהוה)]. The name of God in the OT. When it stands alone, and with prefixed prepositions or the conjunction *wa-,* "and," the name is always written with the four Hebrew letters *yod, he, waw, he,* and is for that reason called the Tetragrammaton. In this form the name appears more than 6000 times in the OT. (Variation in the Masoretic mss makes it difficult to establish the number of occurrences exactly.) Shorter forms of the divine name occur in personal names. At the beginning of names the form is *yĕhô-* or the contracted form *yô-;* at the end of names, *-yāhû* or *-yāh.*

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[4]David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 6:1012.

A. Pronunciation

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. See MASORETIC TEXT. The Tetragrammaton was not pronounced at all, the word *ădonāy,* "my Lord," being pronounced in its place; *elōhîm,* "God," was substituted in cases of the combination *ădonāy 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 (*TDOT* 5: 501–02).

The form "Jehovah" results from reading the consonants of the Tetragrammaton with the vowels of the surrogate word *Adonai.* The dissemination of this form is usually traced to Petrus Galatinus, confessor to Pope Leo X, who in 1518 A.D. transliterated the four Hebrew letters with the Latin letters *jhvh* together with the vowels of Adonai, producing the artificial form "Jehovah." (This confused usage may, however, have begun as early as 1100 A.D.; note *KB,* 369). While the hybrid form Jehovah has met much resistance, and is universally regarded as an ungrammatical aberration, it nonetheless passed from Latin into English and other European languages and has been hallowed by usage in hymns and the ASV; it is used only a few times in KJV and not at all in RSV.

The generally acknowledged vocalization "Yahweh" is a reconstruction that draws on several lines of evidence. The longer of the two reduced suffixing forms of the divine name, *yāh* and *yāhû,* indicates that the name probably had the phonetic shape /yahw-/ with a final vowel. The vowel is supplied on the basis of the observation that the name derives from a verbal root *hwy,* which would require the final vowel /ē/; this inference is confirmed by the element *yahwī* occurring in names in the Amorite language (see *TDOT* 5: 512; the relevance of the Amorite names is challenged by Knauf 1984: 467). In the Aramaic letters from Elephantine in Egypt (ca. 400 B.C.; *ANET,* 491–92), the divine name occurs in the spelling *yhw,* probably with the vocalization /yahû/ (*TDOT* 5: 505). Instances of the divine name written in Greek letters, such as *Iao* (equivalent to "Yaho"), *Iabe* (known to the Samaritans, Theodoret [4th century A.D.], and Epiphanius), *Iaoue, Iaouai* (Clement of Alexandria [3d century]), and *Iae* also favor the form "Yahweh" (*NWDB,* 453).

B. Meaning

The meaning of the name is unknown. Arguments favoring particular meanings have been for the most part grammatical. The name has long been thought to be a form of the verb *hāwāy,* an older form of the Hebrew verb *hāyāh,* "to be." The reconstructed form *yahwēh* is parsed as either a third-person Qal imperfect of this verb or as the corresponding form of the causative stem. 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 (*ROTT*, 181–82). 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" (*HDB*, 335). However, the name could be a unique or singular use of the causative stem.

C. Origin

The date and origin of the name has been debated. Its earliest appearances are in the Song of Deborah (Judges 5; which has been dated to the 11th century B.C.), on the Mesha Stele (9th century; *ANET*, 320), in an ostracon from Kuntillet ʿAjrud (8th century; Freedman 1987: 246), and in the Arad and Lachish Letters (6th century; *ANET*, 569, 322).

To move outside of the Levant, we find Egyptian name lists which include a Syrian site, *Ya-h-wa* (No. 97), which is identical to Yahweh. A Rameses II (1304–1237 B.C.) list is found in a Nubian temple in ʿAmarah West with six names (Nos. 93–98) following the designation "Bedouin area." Nos. 96–98 have been found at Soleb in Nubia on an Amon temple of Amenhotep III (1417–1379). No. 93, *Sa-ʿra-r,* has been identified with Seir (Edom) and related to the biblical references (Deut 33:2) which associate Yahweh with Seir and Paran. This could be taken as evidence the name was known in Edom or Midianite territory ca. 1400 B.C. (*EncRel* 7: 483–84).

However, Astour (*IDBSup,* 971) notes that the writing "S-r-r" is incorrect as opposed to the spelling in other Egyptian inscriptions. Furthermore, three of the sites, including *Yi-ha,* on Rameses III's temple in Medinet Habu, are in a Syrian context suggesting that *Ya-h-wa/Yi-ha* was also in Syria. Thus the name is not associated with Edom or Midianites but does seem to appear as early as 1400 B.C. in Syria.

From a later time, the 8th century B.C., two Aramean princes have names with the element "Yau." This has been taken to mean that some Arameans may have worshiped Yahweh (Rankin 1950: 95). This could relate to the earlier connection of the Patriarchs with the Arameans, e.g., Jacob's sojourn with Laban, the eponymous ancestor of the Arameans (Genesis 29–31). The divine name is not found in any cuneiform texts.

The formative *-yw* in some personal names from Ugarit (ca. 14th century B.C.) is not a divine element and has no connection with the name Yahweh. Considerable controversy arose over the alleged occurrence of a theophoric element *-ya* in personal names from Ebla. The cuneiform sign NI, read as /ya/ by Pettinato (1980) and others (Dahood 1981: 276–77), is now read *IL*$_x$ "god" when used in personal names. See EBLA TEXTS.

…. [end of excerpts]