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Biblical Hebrew Personal Names in Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and 1–2 Samuel: A Comparative Study

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INTRODUCTION

The present article is intended to be a continuation of my previous article “Personal Names of the Pentateuch in the Northwest Semitic Context: A Comparative Study.”¹ In that article I compared personal names in the Pentateuch with Amorite, Ugaritic, and Amarna Canaanite data,² as well as with extrabiblical Hebrew names from the first half of the first millennium BCE,³ personal names in the Book of Jeremiah, and Phoenician anthroponyms.⁴ I showed that the personal names of the

¹ Pauli Rahkonen, “Personal Names of the Pentateuch in the Northwest Semitic Context: A Comparative Study,” *SJOT* 33/1 (2019): 111–135.

² For more detailed studies of these anthroponymes, see Michael Streck, *Das Amurritische Onomastikon der altbabylonischen Zeit, Band I*, AOAT (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000); Frauke Gröndahl, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (Roma: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967); and Richard Hess, *Amarna Personal Names* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1993).

³ The latter gathered by, in particular, Shmuel Ahituv, *הכתב והמכתב: אסופת כתובות מארץ־ישראל וממלכות עבר הירדן מימי בית־ראשון* (Jerusalem: Mosad Byaliq, 2005); and Nahman Avigad, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1997).

⁴ For these, see esp. Frank Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions*, *Studia Pohl* 8 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1972).

Pentateuch differed almost totally from the extrabiblical anthroponyms originating from the first half of the first millennium BCE. The difference could be seen especially in the theophoric elements, the hypocoristic suffixes, and in some of the names' popular stems. Instead, the names in the Pentateuch resembled the Amorite, Ugaritic, and Amarna Canaanite anthroponyms to a relatively high degree.

If following the internal chronology of the Hebrew Bible, the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and 1–2 Samuel are to be placed in what could be called a “transitional period,” that is, after the events described in the Pentateuch, but before the period of the monarchies of Judah and Israel. However, the actual age of these texts cannot reliably be assessed by investigating biblical language only, simply because these texts have been edited, and as a consequence, the language of the biblical narratives has been modernized. What is needed is a closer look at the onomasticon of the Bible, since they would, most probably, have been preserved in a way that would be very close to the original ones.⁵ So put, they could provide an indication of the age of the texts.

In all societies, motifs and models used in the act of naming are quite typical for each period. This is clearly visible in, for example, English personal names. Looking at Anglo-Saxon personal names, although quite fitting in their own time, a majority of them are no longer in use (see, e.g., Æthelstan, meaning “noble stone”; Godwine, meaning “God’s friend”; or Wulfsige, meaning “victory of wolf”). The following Norman conquest in 1066 then had as an effect that many Norman names were adopted into the English onomasticon (see, e.g., Arnold, “eagle-ruler”; Fulk, “folk,” or Theobald, “bold people”). Although popular in the Middle Ages, they too are no longer in use. Instead, it is even later names, especially those related to Christianity (see, e.g., John, George, Paul, or James), that have now become the most popular ones.

⁵ It is evident that in many names, the onomastic short vowels disappeared. So, for example, **Abi-malilku* > *'Abimalek*.

To be added to these observations is that within every linguistic group, the onomastic typology is in constant alteration and modification. This means that the way names are constructed is changing. Consider, for example, the fact that the ancient Germanic habit of using the element **rīkia*⁶ (Swedish: *-rik*, German: *-rich*) is no longer common, although visible in a few individual names as, for example, in the popular English name *Eric* (Swedish: *Erik* < **Ein|rīk(r)*).

Consequently, if turning our attention to the Northwest Semitic material, corresponding developments should be able to be detected. For example, anthroponymic types should be expected to be altered. Admittedly, such changes can often be rather slow, but there are indications that they were sometimes sudden, like in the appearance of the theophoric element *-yāhûl Yēhō-* in the Hebrew naming system, which will be seen to partially displace the earlier *-’ēl’ El(i)-* to become the most popular theophoric element in the first half of the first millennium BCE.⁷

RESEARCH QUESTION

In light of these preliminary observations, the present study compares the personal names found in the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth and 1–2 Samuel (books described above as belonging to a “transitional period,” hence designated as “transitional books”) with the names of the Pentateuch (“Mosaic” names) and extrabiblical Northwest Semitic data (from Mari, Ugarit, and the Amarna Tablets), on one hand, and extrabiblical names found in the area of ancient Judah and Israel dated to the first half of the first millennium (below referred to as “Monarchic material”) on the other.⁸ The purpose is to provide an approximate date for the

⁶ Elof Helquist, *Svensk etymologisk ordbok* (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1922), s. v. “rik.”

⁷ For this, see, e.g., Mitka Golub, *Distribution of Personal Names in the Land of Israel and Transjordanian During the Iron II Period*, *JAOS* 134/4 (2014): 621–642; cf. Stig Norin, *Personennamen und Religion im alten Israel: Untersucht mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Namen auf El und Ba’al* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013); see also Figure 1 below.

personal names of the “transitional” books, and it will be shown that the names found in these books do indeed represent a kind of transition stage by having features from “both sides.” Observe that I am not here speaking of the age of the *books* in question, although the analysis below could provide an interesting avenue of research into this question, since the biblical narratives and their onomasticons are at least to some degree related to each other. But before turning to the analysis proper, I will comment briefly on various methods used to date the biblical language as to show the validity of using onomastics.

Linguistic Analysis

A well known method used by scholars to estimate the age of different parts of the Hebrew Bible is linguistic analysis. However, as pointed out by Ian Young and Robert Rezetko in their comprehensive presentation and evaluation of scholarly approaches, there are many problems with this approach.⁹ One of the most fundamental ones is that the best available source for biblical Hebrew is the Masoretic text, and since most scholars date the (proto-)Masoretic versions of the biblical books to somewhere between 550–100 BCE,¹⁰ it provides a relatively late material, thus not necessarily overlapping with the original biblical language. On one hand, many of the portions of the Hebrew Bible—even entire books—are thought to be written in a language that could be classified as pre-exilic (that is, before 586 BCE) and these books were not necessarily entirely overlapping with the Masoretic consonantal form. Some archaic elements could be found as well, for example in the Song of Deborah in Judg 5, or in Gen 15.¹¹ On the other hand, there are fea-

⁸ For this period, see Aḥituv, הכתב והמכתב; idem. *Echoes from the Past: Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period* (Jerusalem: Carta Jerusalem, 2008).

⁹ Ian Young and Robert Rezetko, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts*, vol. 1 (New York: Routledge, 2014).

¹⁰ See, e.g., Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Essays*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 321.

tures of biblical Hebrew that seem to be relatively late. However, several factors make the using of such features as a basis for dating of the biblical language problematic: there has been editorial work; the language has possibly been modernized; different sources have been combined; and a transition from oral traditions into literary form can also be observed. In addition, our knowledge of daily language and different dialects is too vague.¹² Consequently, features that are understood to be late may have appeared earlier as features of dialects, although they are not preserved as such in the Hebrew Bible.

To illustrate these problems, an extreme example would be the problematic poetic language of the book of Job. Numerous *hapax legomena* are found, as well as several (seeming?) Aramaisms. But since it is obvious that the language is not Standard Biblical Hebrew, but a Transjordanian(?) dialect,¹³ do the aramaisms originate as loanwords from Aramaic, or did they belong to the Hebrew dialect? These and similar questions make linguistic analysis insufficient for dating biblical language, and consequently biblical books.

Archaeology

Turning to archaeology, it is clear that archaeological and historical sources can confirm or render implausible the depictions of historical events in ancient narratives. As an example, several archaeological literary finds—such as the Stela of Mesha, the Siloam Inscription, Tel Dan text, and the Assyrian Annals—appear to have views that overlap with

¹¹ See, e.g., Young and Rezetko, *Dating*, 298–299; David A. Robertson, *Linguistic Evidence in Dating Early Hebrew Poetry* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1972), 149; Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2015), 11.

¹² Young and Rezetko, *Dating*, 165–182, with referred literature.

¹³ For an argument that the language of Job parallels the language of the Book of Balaam, see Gary Rendsburg, “Dialect of Deir ‘Alla Inscription,” *BO* 50 (1993), 309–329. This text, originally written on a wall plaster, is dated to the eighth century BCE (so, e.g., Aḥituv, *Echoes*, 434).

the way events in the monarchic period of Judah and Israel are retold in 1–2 Kings or 1–2 Chronicles.¹⁴ This would indicate that these historical books are based on earlier, written sources. This is also what we find on several occasions in these books, for example when it is written “as it is even today” (עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה), or when literary sources are explicitly mentioned, such as the chronicles of Nathan and Gad respectively in 1 Chr 29:29, or the midrash of the prophet Iddo in 2 Chr 13:22. Nonetheless, it is still difficult to date biblical language on archaeological grounds.

Textual Criticism

Last, I argue that textual criticism is not a good tool for dating the biblical language, simply because the earliest found manuscripts are too late. More specifically, they can be dated to approximately 250 BCE.¹⁵ Highlighting this problem is that passages found in the biblical books have been found much earlier. For example, a silver scroll was found in Ketef Hinnom that contained the so called “Priestly blessing.” Since it was dated to the seventh(!) century BCE, one would have to conclude that some part of the Pentateuch was known at this time.¹⁶ In any case, it seems quite plausible that biblical written texts would have existed earlier than the one on the silver scroll, and, consequently, much earlier than the earliest known manuscripts.

Onomastics

As for onomastics, we can prove scientifically at least an approximate dating of the personal names, since the biblical names can be compared

¹⁴ So Aḥituv, *Echoes*; cf. Anson Rainey and Steven Notley, *The Sacred Bridge* (Jerusalem: Carta, 2006), 225–249.

¹⁵ For an overview, see Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 315.

¹⁶ See Aḥituv, *Echoes*, 49; cf. Gabriel Barkay, “The Riches of Ketef Hinnom: Jerusalem Tomb Yields Biblical Text Four Centuries Older than Dead Sea Scrolls,” *BAR* 35 (2009): 22–28.

to extrabiblical ones, which have been dated archaeologically. As seen in the introduction, every era has its typical onomasticon—popular only during certain specific periods—and as for the period of time when the Hebrew Bible was formed, this can be investigated thanks to the fact that much comparative material is available: 1) an extensive collection of Northwest Semitic names based on, among others, the archives in Mari, Ugarit and Tell el-Amarna (in all, there are thousands of names originating from the second millennium); and 2) a large collection of extrabiblical Jewish anthroponyms from the monarchic periods.¹⁷ Although what can be dated scientifically is, at best, only the names, and not the text or the language of the Bible, it would nevertheless be possible to use such a dating of names to discuss the date of (possible) oral—or in some cases textual—traditions that would have featured the onomasticons. What is in focus, then, would be the so-called “core narratives.”

Applied to the focus of this article—the possibility of providing an approximate date for the personal names of the “transitional” books—the following can be suggested: since it is not probable that “storytellers” of “core narratives” were able to accurately make up names that would have been popular in the time of the setting of the story, while no longer in use in their own time, and since there would be no real personal names if there were no narratives connected with persons and their names, the approximate date for the personal names can in fact tell us something about the original period of the biblical “core narratives.”

METHODS

In this study, the anthroponyms are categorized into the following periods: Mosaic, transitional biblical, and monarchic extrabiblical. The following aspects have been considered, observations relevant for all research into toponyms and anthroponyms:

¹⁷ For these sources, see, e.g., אֲחִיטוּב, *הַכְּתָב וְהַמְּכַתֵּב*; idem. *Echoes*.

- 1) *Lexical Elements*: When looking at names, different lexical elements can be observed as popular in relation to their linguistic group. More specifically, regarding Semitic anthroponyms, these elements can be verbs or nouns related to theophoric elements, names of animals, professions, etc.
- 2) *Phonetics*: Such features may be very decisive when distinguishing names in closely related languages or dialects from one another.
- 3) *The Structure of Names*: In several languages, certain onomastic affixes are important in classifying names. In Northwest Semitic languages, the most popular are *-ān > Hebrew -ōn, and *-īya > Hebrew -ī. Different theophoric elements are important as well.
- 4) *Semantic Typology*: In all linguistic groups, names have their own semantic motifs. Sometimes, however, a name may have an outward form of a known word that does not fit the semantic motif of the name itself. If so, it is reasonable to doubt the real meaning of the word behind the name. This goes especially for popular names, since its motif would then be usual. A good example is the name *ʾIyyôb* (Job). Traditionally, it has been derived from the root אִיב "enemy."¹⁸ However, the construction אִי-אֲב *Ay-âb(u) is much more plausible (cf., e.g., *a-ia-ab* from the Amarna tablets, the Ugaritic *ayab*, or the Amorite *a-ia-a?-bu?*) thus pointing to the meaning "where is father."¹⁹ If this is the case, an earlier Canaanite long *â* would have changed into an *ô*. Such an explanation may also situate the narrative in an ancient Northwest Semitic context.
- 5) *Comparative Linguistics*: In researching onomasticons of extinct languages, comparative linguistics become most important. This is the case in studying names of several disappeared Northwest Semitic languages, such as Amorite, Ugaritic names, etc.
- 6) *The Predominance of Onomastic Types*: The popularity of various onomastic types vary in relation to time periods. For example, the Jewish anthroponyms of the Pentateuch are totally different from those of the monarchic period. To consider this aspect is important in the attempt to date the names.
- 7) *The Problem of Adaptation*: If Northwest Semitic names are found in Egyptian or Greek sources, it is important to know the rules of adapta-

¹⁸ Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *HALOT* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 39.

¹⁹ Hess, *Amarna*, 23–25.

tion—that is, how the Egyptian or Greek languages substituted phonemes that may have been alien to their own language.

Apart from these seven aspects, the current article is based on comparative statistics. The procedure has been the following: First, I have collected and classified certain types of anthroponyms based on their theophoric and hypocoristic elements, etc. This stage can be called the “research of models,” and the types are presented in Figures 1 and 2. Second, I compare Semitic roots that are used in forming names, roots such as **dwd* > *Dāvid*, **šlm* > *Šelomō*, and **p̄zq* > *Ḥizqī|yāhū*. This stage can be called the “research of motifs.” Taking both structural and lexical elements together in this way, much information regarding the change in naming fashions will be gathered.

EARLIER STUDIES

The topic of change in models and motifs for naming has been the subject of some recent scholarly work.²⁰ Both Mítka Golub and Stig Norin have, for example, studied theophoric elements utilizing extrabiblical material.²¹ Interestingly, their results are rather similar. According to Golub, the percentage of Yahwistic anthroponyms out of all theophoric elements in the extrabiblical material is 51 percent during the tenth to eighth centuries BCE, while it is 67 percent during the seventh to sixth centuries.²² Correspondingly, Norin, who focused on the extrabiblical elements *YHWH*, *ʾĒl*, and *Baʿal*, found that the percentage of Yahwistic elements was 75.4 percent.²³ In a helpful summary of the names in 1–2

²⁰ I have already mentioned my own work above, in the introduction, and will thus not repeat these findings here.

²¹ Golub, “Distribution”; Norin, *Personennamen*.

²² Golub, “Distribution,” 630.

²³ Norin, *Personennamen*, 77.

Samuel, 1–2 Kings, Ezra, Nehemia, and 1–2 Chronicles, Norin further highlights an increasing difference between *YHWH*-elements and *ʿĒl*-elements from the Books of 1–2 Samuel to the Books of 1–2 Kings.²⁴

Apart from these studies, the work of Jeanene Fowler also deserves to be mentioned.²⁵ She has conducted a very comprehensive investigation into both structural and lexical elements, and compared Hebrew names to Ugaritic, Phoenician, Amorite, Aramaic, Akkadian, and Palmyrene onomasticon. In her study, the names are very thoroughly classified according to their theophoric elements and grammatical forms. However, her categorization of the names into “pre-Monarchial,” “the United Monarchy,” “the Divided Monarchy,” “Exilic,” and “post-Exilic” periods is not very successful, since she runs the risk of presupposing a date without having conducted a real scholarly discussion of the dating of the names.

Nonetheless, Fowler poses a highly relevant question: what are the differences between the features of the anthroponyms in 1–2 Chronicles and the rest of the books of the Hebrew Bible?²⁶ As an answer, she argues that the compound names with forms of *YHWH* that are used in 1–2 Chronicles to describe the pre-monarchic period differ markedly from the way the same compound names are found in the rest of the Hebrew Bible. She also notes that 58 of 62 names are mentioned in Chronicles only, although she states that the reason for this is unclear.

Last, as mentioned above, I have studied the personal names of the Pentateuch and suggested that in light of the extrabiblical material from Mari, Ugarite, and the Amarna tablets, the anthroponyms of the Pentateuch must originate from the second millennium BCE.²⁷

²⁴ Norin, *Personennamen*, 173.

²⁵ Jeanene Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew: A Comparative Study* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1988).

²⁶ Fowler, *Names*, 32–33.

²⁷ Rahkonen, “Names.”

A COMPARISON OF THEOPHORIC AND HYPOCORISTIC ELEMENTS IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

In Figure 1 below, I present an overview of theophoric and hypocoristic elements in the Hebrew Bible. Accounted for is a selection of five of the most common theophoric elements and four of the most common hypocoristic elements. These are, then, compared to each other, and the results will be discussed below. More specifically, the theophoric elements are *Yhwh* > *Yĕho-*, *Yô-*, *-yāhû*, *-yaw*,²⁸ *'El* > *'El(i)-*, *-'ēl*, *'Āb* > *'Āb(i)-*, *-'āb*, *'Amm* > *'Amm(i)-*, *-'am*, and *'Āḥ* > *'Āḥ(i)-*, while the hypocoristic suffixal elements are *-î* < *-*īya*, *-ôn* < *-*ān(u)*, *-ai* < *-*āya*, and *-ā'*.

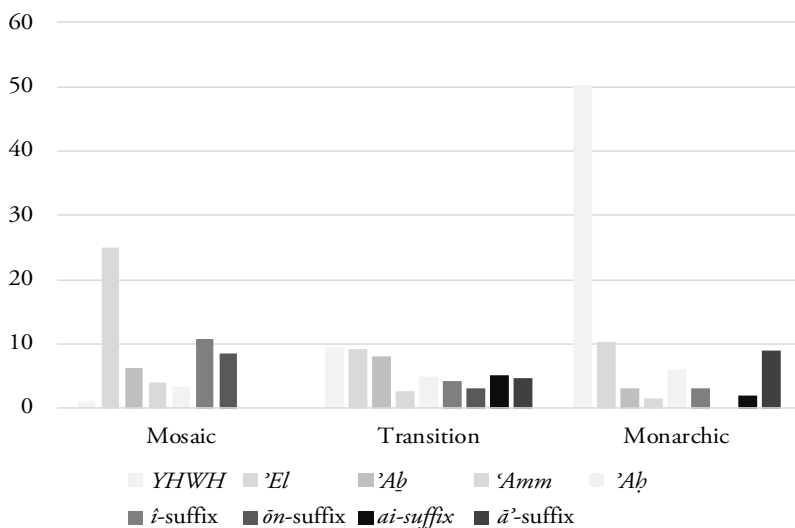


Figure 1: *The Comparison of Naming Models in Different Biblical Books*

²⁸ The theophoric *-yaw* occurs only in extrabiblical material originating from the area of the northern Israelite kingdom. It is possible that the sound *h* in “YHWH” was so weak in the spoken northern language that it was dropped in writing.

Mosaic Pentateuch

Figure 1 makes clear that there have been obvious changes in the use of the studied elements. In the Mosaic Pentateuch, 'El is the most frequent theophoric element occurring in the personal names: it features in 25.3 percent of all the names. The second most popular element is, then, 'āb, featured in only 6.2 percent of the names, and then follows 'am(m) (4.1%) and 'āḥ (3.4%). The predominance of 'El becomes especially clear in relation to the fact that in the Mosaic Pentateuch, only two Yahwistic names are found, *Yōkəḇəḏ* and *Yəḥōšua'*, and both of them have been questioned.²⁹ Last, it can be observed that the elements -ai and -ā' are not found at all in the Mosaic Pentateuch.

Transitional Books

In the transitional books, a clear increase in the popularity of Yahwistic anthroponyms can be observed: they now constitute 9.5 percent of all the names. The previously noted dominance of the theophoric element 'El(i)/-'ēl is now erased, and it now in second place with 9.2 percent, just behind the Yahwistic one. In these books, the elements -ai and -ā' begin to appear.

Monarchic Period³⁰

In the last category, the extrabiblical, monarchic names, the trends observed in the transitional books have continued, so that the percentage of the Yahwistic theophoric elements is now 50.3 percent, while the popularity of 'El(i)/-'ēl remains around 10.2 percent. This indicates a stability in the use of the 'El(i)/-'ēl component, while the Yahwistic element has increased radically. The anthroponyms composed using divine relatives have reached the following percentages in the transition period: 8% for 'Aḇ(i)/-'āḇ; 5% for 'Aḥ(i)/-'āḥ; and 2.7% for 'Amm(i)/-'am. The

²⁹ Norin, *Personennamen*; Fowler, *Names*.

³⁰ The extrabiblical names are picked up from אֱחִיטוּב והמכתב.

corresponding monarchic figures are: 3.0% (*'Ab*); 6.0% (*'Ab*); and 1.5% (*'Amm*) respectively. It is worth noting that the *'Amm(i)*-element almost disappeared in the monarchic record, and of the six attested occurrences, five feature the final component *-am*.

A final observation is that the hypocoristic suffix *-ōn*, which was very popular in the Pentateuch, disappears completely in the monarchic period. In the transition period, it occurs mainly in the Book of Judges.

TRANSITIONAL BOOKS

It was observed above that the hypocoristic suffixes changed. *-ā'* and *-ai* were not found at all in the Mosaic register, while they appeared in the transitional books and the extrabiblical record of Aḥituv. But what does the internal distribution in the transitional books look like? Figure 2 gathers this data.

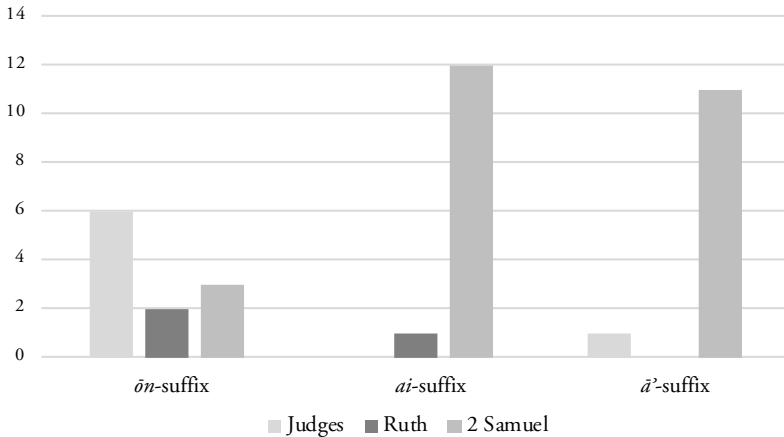


Figure 2: *The Frequency of the Hypocoristic Elements -ōn, -ai, and -ā' Within the Transitional Books*

The trend is evident. The popularity of *-ōn* is diminishing in this material, only to disappear totally in the monarchic onomasticon (cf. Figure 1). The element *-ai* appears first in Ruth (1x) and then becomes popular

in 2 Samuel (12x). The element *-ā'* is found once in the Book of Judges, does not exist in Ruth, and then becomes popular in 2 Samuel (11x). Both *-ai* and *-ā'* were seen to be popular in the monarchic register.

As for Yahwistic anthroponyms (see Table 1), the following are found in Judges: *Mikayāhu*, *Yēhonātān*, and *Yō'āš*. All other occurrences (21x) are in 1–2 Samuel, and its increasing presence (7x in 1 Samuel and 14x in 2 Samuel) confirms the trend observed in Figure 1, that the amount of the Yahwistic elements within the Hebrew onomasticon increases towards the monarchic period.

	Joshua	Judges	Ruth	1 Samuel	2 Samuel
<i>Yēho-</i>	-	1	-	2	5
<i>Yō-</i>	-	1	-	2	2
<i>-yāb(ū)</i>	-	1	-	3	7
Total	-	3	-	7	14

Table 1: The Distribution of the Yahwistic Element Within the Transitional Books

LEXICAL COMPARISON

Moving to lexical comparison, I have, in the table that follows (Table 2), gathered lexical connections between extrabiblical anthroponyms, the personal names of the Book of Jeremiah, and the transitional books.³¹ The main reason for selecting names expressly from the book of Jeremiah is that the number of names in it is high. In addition, the book of Jeremiah can be dated approximately to the period of the exile. In the table, the first column presents the extrabiblical monarchic data from which I have selected names that have parallels either in names from the Book of Jeremiah (column 2), or in names from the transitional books (column 3), or both.

³¹ In the table, an asterisk (*) means that the root is a shared element in all the sources. The vocalizations of the proper names in the monarchic columns follow the presentation in Ahituv, *Echoes*, Appendix 2.

MONARCHIC		JEREMIAH		"TRANSITIONAL"	
Hebrew	Vocalization	Hebrew	Reference	Hebrew	Reference
אביהו	[#] <i>Aviyahu</i>			אֲבִיָּהוּ	1 Sam 8:2
אבער	[#] <i>Avēzer</i>			אֲבִיעֶזֶר	Judg 8:31; 2 Sam 23:27
אבנן	[#] <i>Avnan</i>			אֲבָנָן	Judg 12:8
אזנו	[#] <i>Aznanu</i>			אֲזַנָּה	2 Sam 3:4
אזיה-אזיהו [#]	[#] <i>Aziah-Aziahu</i>	אֲזִיָּהוּ	Jer 26:20	אֲזִיָּהוּ	2 Sam 11:3
אזב	[#] <i>Azab</i>	אֲזָבָה	Jer 29:22		
אזיהו	[#] <i>Aziahu</i>			אֲזִיָּהוּ	1 Sam 14:3
אזיקם	[#] <i>Aziquam</i>			אֲזִיָּהוּ	2 Sam 6:3
אזמלך	[#] <i>Azmelek</i>	אֲזִיקָם	Jer 26:24	אֲזִיָּהוּ	1 Sam 21:1; 26:6; 2 Sam 8:17
אכיש	<i>Akîš</i>			אֲכִישׁ	1 Sam 21:10
אלתן	<i>Elhātān</i>	אֲלִנְתָן	Jer 26:22	אֲלִנְתָן	1 Sam 7:1
אלער	<i>El'azar, #El'ezar</i>				
אלשע	[#] <i>Alšamā</i>	אֲלִישַׁע	Jer 36:12		
אמרו-אמרו	[#] <i>Amaru-Amaru</i>	אֲמָר	Jer 20:1		
אשיו	[#] <i>Ošiyahu</i>	אֲשִׁיָּהוּ	Jer 1:2		
בנוה	<i>Bnuyahu</i>				
ברך	<i>Baruk</i>	בָּרַךְ	Jer 32:12	בָּרַךְ	2 Sam 8:18; 23:30
ברק	<i>Baraq</i>			בָּרַךְ	Judg 4:6
גדו	<i>Gadyaw</i>			גָּד	1 Sam 22:5
גדלו	<i>G'dalyahu</i>	גְּדַלְיָהוּ-גְּדַלְיָהוּ	Jer 35:4; 38:1; 39:14		
גמרו	<i>Gmaruyahu</i>	גְּמַרְיָהוּ	Jer 29:3; 36:10		
גרא	<i>Gera</i>			גֵּרָא	Judg 3:15; 2 Sam 16:5
דוד	<i>Dawid</i>			דָּוִד	Ruth 4:17
דלו	<i>D'layahu</i>	דָּלְיָהוּ	Jer 36:12		
דשעו	<i>Hōšayahu</i>	הוֹשַׁעַה	Jer 42:1		
הגי	<i>Haggay, Hagg</i>				
הלך	<i>Heles</i>	הִלְכָהוּ	Jer 1:1; 29:3	הִלְכָהוּ	2 Sam 3:4
הלך	<i>Hēleq</i>	הִלְקָהוּ	Jer 1:1; 29:3	הִלְקָהוּ	2 Sam 23:26
תונאל, תון	<i>Hānān, #Hānā'd</i>	הָנָן	Jer 35:4	הָנָן	2 Sam 10:1

MONARCHIC		JEREMIAH		"TRANSITIONAL"	
Hebrew	Vocalization	Hebrew	Reference	Hebrew	Reference
תגברו	<i>Hṭnāyāhū</i>	הגברו יִגְבְּרוּ	Jer 28:1; 36:12; 37:13 Jer 40:8		
יאר	<i>Yā'ār</i>	יָאֵר		יָאֵר	Judg 10:3
ירואב	<i>Y'ho'āb</i>	יְהוֹאָב		יְהוֹאָב	1 Sam 26:6
ירודיע	<i>Y'hojādā'</i>	יְהוֹדָע	Jer 29:26	יְהוֹדָע	2 Sam 8:18
ירושע	<i>Y'hošū'a</i>	יְהוֹשֻׁעַ		יְהוֹשֻׁעַ	1 Sam 6:14
ייתן*	<i>Yōnāṭān</i>	יִתֵּן-יְהוֹנָתָן	Jer 37:20; 40:8	יְהוֹנָתָן	Judg 18:30; 1 Sam 13:2; 2 Sam 15:27; 23:32
ירמיה	<i>Yirm'yaḥū</i>	יְרֵמְיָהוּ	Jer 1:1; 35:3		
כגורו	<i>Kōngāhū</i>	יְכַנְּרוּ-כְּגִירָה	Jer 22:24		
מחטתו	<i>Mahṣāḥū</i>	מַחֲסֵהוּ	Jer 32:12		
מכירו*	<i>Mikāyāhū</i>	מִיכָיָהוּ	Jer 36:11	מִיכָה	2 Sam 9:12
מלכיהו	<i>Malkiyāhū</i>	מַלְכִיָּהוּ	Jer 21:1	מִיכָיָהוּ-מִיכָה	Judg 17:1-5
מון	<i>Manān</i>	מָנוֹן	Jer 38:6		
נעמאל	<i>N'am'el</i>	נַעֲמָאֵל	Jer 38:1	נַעֲמָאֵל	Ruth 1:2
נרא	<i>Nērā'</i>	נֶרְאָה		נֶרְאָה	1 Sam 14:50
נריו	<i>Nēr'yāhū</i>	נֶרְיָהוּ			
נתן	<i>Nāṭān</i>	נָתַן	Jer 32:12	נָתַן	2 Sam 5:14; 7:4; 23:36
נתנהו	<i>N'ṭānāhū</i>	נָתְנוּהוּ	Jer 36:14; 40:8		
עבדא, עבדו, עבדו*	<i>'Aḇd'el, 'Oḇdāyāhū, 'Oḇd'yāw</i>	עֲבָדָאֵל עֲבָדוּ-מִיכָיָהוּ	Jer 36:26 Jer 38:7	עֲבָד עֲבָד עֲבָד-אֲדָמָה	Judg 9:28 Ruth 4:17 2 Sam 6:10
עז	<i>'Uzā'</i>	עֲזָרָה		עֲזָרָה	2 Sam 6:3
עזר	<i>Azār, 'Ezer</i>	עֲזָרָה	Jer 28:1		
עוראל	<i>'Azar'el, 'zar'el</i>	עֲזַרְאֵל	Jer 36:26		
עוריו	<i>'azāyāhū</i>	עֲזַרְיָהוּ	Jer 43:2		
עכבר	<i>'Akḥōr</i>	עֲכָבֹר	Jer 26:22		
עליאל	<i>'Elī'el</i>			עֵלִי	1 Sam 1:3
עמנדב	<i>'Amnāndāb</i>			עֲמַנְדָּב	2 Sam 9:4
				עֲמַנְדָּב	2 Sam 13:37

The lexical comparisons made in Table 2 can now be analyzed in two directions:

- 1) First, the extrabiblical material can be compared with data from the Book of Jeremiah and the transitional material to calculate how many percent of the names in the Book of Jeremiah and transitional books respectively overlap with the names in the monarchic data. The result is that the lexical similarity with the extrabiblical material is higher in the Book of Jeremiah (51.2%). For the transitional register, it is only 16.4 percent.
- 2) Second, the material from the Book of Jeremiah and the transitional material can be compared with the extrabiblical material, so that the percentage of the extrabiblical monarchic names found in the books of Jeremiah and in the transitional books can be calculated. The results are that among the personal names of the Book of Jeremiah, 72 percent have lexical analogies with the extrabiblical material. Regarding the transitional books, this figure is much lower, only 22.9 percent.

An outstanding feature is that the data of the Book of Jeremiah and the transitional books agree with one another only in 10 cases out of 72 possible. Taken together with the two points of analysis above, it indicates that the transitional material is earlier than Jeremiah's anthroponyms. Moreover, the extrabiblical names collected from the first half of the first millennium BCE fit only partially (approximately 1/5 of the total data) with the material of the transitional books, which means that the names of the transitional books most probably originate from an even earlier period.

CONCLUSIONS

The onomastic data shows that the personal names in what I have called the transitional books of the Hebrew Bible (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, and 1–2 Samuel) can be placed chronologically between the anthroponyms found in the Mosaic Pentateuch on one side, and the extrabiblical monarchic names on the other. The conclusion is strengthened by the fact that the result is similar in both the structural (focusing on theophoric and hypocoristic elements) and the lexical analysis: Some

older Mosaic elements, such as the theophoric *'El(i)-l-'el*, *'Amm(i)-*, and *-am*, are preserved in the transitional books, but the latter two (the ones based on \sqrt{mm}) almost disappeared in the monarchic extrabiblical material. In a reverse development, the Yahwistic theophoric elements *Yēho-*, *Yô-*, *-yāhû*, and *-yāw* did not become widely used until 1–2 Samuel. As for hypocoristic elements, *-ōn* was seen too occur in the transitional books (primarily in Judges), while it disappeared completely in the monarchic extrabiblical material. The hypocoristic elements *-ai* and *-ā'* became popular in 1–2 Samuel, while absent in the Mosaic texts.

The use of theophoric elements in Mari, Ugarite, and Amarna records dated to the Middle and Late Bronze Age corresponds to some extent with what is found in the books of the Pentateuch (as I have argued elsewhere),³² Joshua (see Figure 1 and Table 1), Ruth (see Figure 1 and Table 1), and Judges. The most conspicuous feature is the overwhelming frequency of the element *'El-l-'el*, if compared with the other theophoric elements, including YHWH. This corresponds to the Amorite onomasticon as well, where *'Ilū* (*-'El*) is the most common theophoric element.³³ Outstanding is also the scarcity of names using the element *Ba'all Hadad*, that is, in contrast to the onomasticon of the Ugaritic and Amarna records.

When comparing the hypocoristic elements in the other Northwest Semitic material with those of the books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth (see Figure 2), a high similarity can be observed, especially concerning the most popular elements *-ān(u)/-ōn*, and *-iyal-ī*.³⁴

The conclusion of the lexical analysis is clear. The comparison between different sources reveals an outstanding disagreement between the transitional books and the book of Jeremiah. The only roots of words which are common in all sources are אור “light,” ידע “know,” נתן “give,” מכ “who is like,” עבד “servant,” עשה “do,” צדק “righteous,” שלם “well-

³² See Rahkonen, “Names,” 121–122.

³³ So Rahkonen, “Names,” 119.

³⁴ Cf. Rahkonen, “Names,” 119–120.

being, peace,” שמע “hear, listen,” and שפט “judge, rule.” Conversely, it was seen that the similarity between the monarchic extrabiblical personal names and those in the Book of Jeremiah was high. The monarchic extrabiblical material is thus much closer to that of Jeremiah than to the roots of words in the transitional books (see Table 2).

In line with the argument made above, the most reasonable scenario is that the authors of the books under consideration did *not* themselves make up the personal names of the onomasticon. For them to have been able to do so, they would have had to be specialists of ancient Bronze Age and Early Iron Age onomastics.

A final conclusion is that the personal names in the transitional books most apparently do not originate from the same era as the monarchic names. Their features instead hint at an earlier period. However, they also show a different distribution of theophoric and hypocoristic elements when compared to the anthroponyms in the Pentateuch. In addition, some new elements which are not typical in the Pentateuch—such as the affix $-āʾ$ —begin to occur in the books of 1–2 Samuel (see Figure 2). We can hence suggest that the names in the transitional books are later than those in the Pentateuch, but earlier than the monarchic material. As stated in the introduction, the names in these books do indeed represent a kind of transition stage by having features from both sides.