

# The Theophoric Elements "yw" and "yh<sup>w</sup>" in Proper Names in Eighth-Century Hebrew Inscriptions and the Proper Names at Kuntillet 'Ajrud

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Cross and Freedman note that 'in Judahite, by and large, the fuller form [of the theophoric element] *yh<sup>w</sup>* was preserved [in proper names], while in the North, the *he* had already been lost, *yw*'. They add that 'some mixing of the forms would have been inevitable'.<sup>1</sup> Although it is generally agreed that this position is correct, Ginsberg claims that 'the spelling with final *-yw* is evidently a criterion of age, not of locality',<sup>2</sup> and Avigad and Sass say that 'rather than being strictly geographical (Israel), this [spelling] may also have had a chronological dimension (eighth century)'.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of this article is, first, to assemble and evaluate the evidence for these two spellings in the eighth century BC, and, secondly, to consider its relevance for determining whether the men whose names are recorded at Kuntillet 'Ajrud came from Israel or Judah.

## I

In the eighth century BC the spelling *yw* is found in texts which come from the kingdom of Israel. There are a number of examples in the Samaria Ostraca (e.g., Davies 1991, 39 [§§3.001.1–2, 8; 3.002.2]; 49 [§3.052.2] = Renz 1995, 89–90 [§§Sam(8):1.1.1–2, 8; 1.2.2]; 103 [§Sam(8):1.52.2]), and there are others on fragments of pottery vessels from Samaria (with *yw* at the beginning of the name, Davies 1991, 63 [§3.302.1] = Renz 1995, 139 [§Sam(8):4.1]) and Hazor (Davies 1991, 103 [§24.008.1] = Renz 1995, 125 [§Haz(8):3.1]), and on jar handle impressions made by the same seal from Tel Dan and et-Tell (Bethsaida) (Avigad and Sass 1997, 246 [§669.1–2] = Röllig 2003, 204 [§7.7.1–2] = Davies 1991, 243 [§100.882.1, though it is now known that the last two letters of the name should be on a second line, cf. the photograph in Avigad and Sass 1997, 246], 2004, 68 [§101.141.1–2]). By contrast, the spelling *yh<sup>w</sup>* is used in the eighth-century ostraca from Judah which have been published, together with ostraca which may be slightly later than this. I do not understand Zadok's statement that the spelling *-yh<sup>w</sup>* 'is not recorded before the 7th century B.C.'.<sup>4</sup> These ostraca come from Tell Arad (e.g., Davies 1991, 25 [§2.040.1–2, 3] = Renz 1995, 146–7 [§Arad(8):40.1–2, 3]; with *yh<sup>w</sup>* at the beginning of the name, Davies 1991, 27 [§2.049.(col.2)] = Renz 1995, 155 [§Arad(8):49.B.9]), Jerusalem (Davies 1991, 70 [§4.201.1, 2], cf. Renz 1995, 198

<sup>1</sup> Cross and Freedman 1952, 51 and n. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Ginsberg 1938, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 504, cf. 25 and n. 109 below.

<sup>4</sup> Zadok 1988, 183.

[§Jer(8):30.1, 2]), Ramat Rahel (Davies 1991, 110 [§31.001.1, 2] = Renz 1995, 288 [§RRah(7):1.1, 2]), and Tell 'Ira (Davies 1991, 87 [§13.001.1, 4] = Renz 1995, 252 [§Gar(7):1.1, 4]). This spelling is also found in other texts from Judah which are from the eighth century BC or perhaps slightly later. These consist of tomb inscriptions, for example, Khirbet el-Qom Tomb Inscription 3 (Davies 1991, 106 [§25.003.1, 2, 4] = Renz 1995, 207–211 [§Kom(8):3.1, 2, 4]); names on pots from Beersheba (Davies 1991, 75 [§5.006.1, 2] = Renz 1995, 236 [§Seb(8):5.b, a]), Jerusalem (Davies 1991, 67 [§4.110.1] = Renz 1995, 269 [§Jer(7):14.1]), and, probably, Khirbet el-Qom (Davies 1991, 106–7 [§§26.001.1, 26.006.1] = Renz 1995, 213 [§Kom(8):6.1], 217 [§Kom(8):12.1]); a seal from Tell Arad (Davies 1991, 148–9 [§100.212.1–2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 91 [§132.1–2] = Röllig 2003, 194 [§4.18.1, but the final *wāw* of the name should begin line 2, cf. the photograph in Avigad and Sass 1997, 91]); jar handle impressions, for example, four instances from Tell en-Naşbeh, Beth Shemesh, and Lachish made by the same seal (Barkay and Vaughn 1996b, 30 [§§15–17], 44–6; Röllig 2003, 128–9 [§1.35.1–2, A, B, E, F]; Davies 1991, 228 [§100.769.1–2]; 2004, 68 [§101.139.1–2], 91 [§101.286.1–2]; Avigad and Sass 1997, 244 [§665.1–2, A, B]); and, if *yhw* is the beginning of a man's name here, in an inscription written on a stalactite in a cave near En-Gedi (Davies 1991, 91–2 [§20.002.4] = Renz 1995, 175 [§EGed(8):2.4], cf. 174). As far as I am aware, with the exception of Tell Qasile, the northernmost of the sites at which this spelling is attested is Tell en-Naşbeh. A name in another text from there (Davies 1991, 109 [§30.002.1] = Renz 1995, 221 [§Nasb(8):1.1]) has been read as either *[nt]nyw* or *[...]nyhw*,<sup>5</sup> but, as Renz observes, either spelling might be expected on the border between north and south.<sup>6</sup> In a further text from Tell en-Naşbeh (Davies 1991, 109 [§30.005.1], cf. 2004, 234 = Renz 1995, 225 [§Nasb(8):6.1]) Nadelman<sup>7</sup> reads *[...]yhw*, but Renz, who follows McCown,<sup>8</sup> claims that this is unlikely to be right.<sup>9</sup> Tell Qasile is the only place in the north where a text has been found in which the spelling is *yhw* (Davies 1991, 86 [§11.001.3] = Renz 1995, 229 [§Qas(8):1.3]). This inscription is a surface find discovered before the site was excavated,<sup>10</sup> and Avigad and Sass<sup>11</sup> consider that, since a seal found there under identical circumstances is a forgery, the authenticity of this text may need to be investigated. To the best of my knowledge, this has not been done. It would not, however, be surprising if there had been a Judaeian presence at this port, whether or not it was under Judaeian control when this text was written at the end of the eighth century BC.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> McCown 1947, 167–8, cf. Renz 1995, 221 nn. a, 1.

<sup>6</sup> Renz 1995, 221 n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Nadelman 1990, 40 (§U4).

<sup>8</sup> McCown 1947, 169 and n. 57.

<sup>9</sup> Renz 1995, 225 n. a.

<sup>10</sup> Maisler 1950–51, 208.

<sup>11</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 457–8.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Lemaire 1977, 253, 255; Renz 1995, 227–8.

At Kuntillet 'Ajrud there are nine, or possibly ten, theophorous names which contain the Divine Name Yahweh. In each case it is spelt *yw*: '*bdyw* or '*dyw* (Davies 1991, 80 [§8.011.1], cf. 2004, 232 = Renz 1995, 56 [§KAgr(9):3.1]), '*sm'yw* (Davies 1991, 80 [§8.012.1] = Renz 1995, 57 [§KAgr(9):4.1]), '*hlyw* (Davies 1991, 80 [§8.013.1] = Renz 1995, 57 [§KAgr(9):5.1]), '*mryw* (Davies 1991, 81 [§8.021.1] = Renz 1995, 62 [§KAgr(9):9.1]), '*sknyw*, '*smryw*, '*zyw* (Davies 2004, 11 [§8.026.1, 3, 4]), '*lyw* (Davies 2004, 11 [§8.027.1]); with *yw* at the beginning of the word, *yw'sh* (Davies 1991, 81 [§8.017.1] = Renz 1995, 61 [§KAgr(9):8.1]); and, if the restoration is correct, which is by no means certain,<sup>13</sup> '*šy'w* (Davies 1991, 81 [§8.017.1], cf. 2004, 233). Because the spelling *yhw* is not found at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, while there are at least nine instances of the spelling *yw*, it is often said that this is evidence for the presence there of men from the northern kingdom of Israel.<sup>14</sup> Zevit,<sup>15</sup> however, rightly notes 'that the element [-*yw* in proper names] may be adjudged uncommon but known in the south', and he therefore argues that such names need not indicate that Kuntillet 'Ajrud 'was frequented primarily [by] and under the control of Israelians'.

## II

It will be convenient for purposes of reference to number the seals listed in the following paragraph and in three paragraphs below.

Zevit<sup>16</sup> refers to five names, which are on three seals and a jar handle impression which have been dated to the eighth century BC:

- (i) *ytm* (Avigad and Sass 1997, 392 [§1054.1]);
- (ii) *mqnyw* (Davies 1991, 155 [§100.272.1, 3] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 59 [§27.A.1, B.1] = Röllig 2003, 293 [§13.77.A.1, B.1]);
- (iii) *šbnyw* and '*zyw* (Davies 1991, 129 [§100.067.1, 2, 3] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 50 [§3.A.1, B.1, 2] = Röllig 2003, 384 [§21.17.A.1, B.1, 2]); and a further example of *šbnyw*, on a jar handle impression (Davies 1991, 231–2 [§100.787.2], cf. 2004, 239, together with Avigad and Sass 1997, 253 [§688.2]; Röllig 2003, 313 [§14.31.2]).

Zevit<sup>17</sup> reads *ytm* on seal (i) as \**yōtām*, 'Jotham'. He is following Glueck,<sup>18</sup> who thinks that the seal belongs to Period III at Tell el-Kheleifeh, which he assigns to the eighth century BC, and that it is probable that the name on the seal is that of King Jotham of Judah (c. 742–735 BC), a conclusion described by Albright as 'almost certain'.<sup>19</sup> Pratico<sup>20</sup> has, however, shown that Glueck's attempt to outline the occupa-

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Hadley 1987, 182–3; 2000, 121; Renz 1995, 61 (§KAgr(9):8.1).

<sup>14</sup> E.g., Rainey 1983, 631; Meshel 1993, 1464.

<sup>15</sup> Zevit 2001, 381, 378, 398.

<sup>16</sup> Zevit 2001, 381.

<sup>17</sup> Zevit 1980, 14, 15.

<sup>18</sup> Glueck 1940, 12–15.

<sup>19</sup> Albright in Glueck 1940, 15 n. 9.

<sup>20</sup> Pratico 1985.

tional history of the site is unconvincing, that in particular a Period III cannot be isolated and dated, and that a detailed, alternative account of the site's history cannot be given on the basis of the information which is available. Moreover, Herr<sup>21</sup> states that, on palaeographical grounds, it is 'most likely' that the seal should be placed in the seventh century BC and that it is 'almost certainly not' from the reign of Jotham. In addition, the seal 'is probably Edomite',<sup>22</sup> or, if not, Moabite.<sup>23</sup> In view of these considerations the suggestion that *ytm* should be read *yātōm*, 'orphan',<sup>24</sup> should be accepted. Zevit's belief that this name begins with the theophoric element *yō* and that it constitutes evidence for usage 'in some Judahite dialects' in the eighth century BC<sup>25</sup> is not well-founded.

It is also disputed whether *šbnyw̄* or *šbnyh̄* should be read on the jar handle impression. Avigad and Sass comment that 'the last letter is truncated beyond recognition',<sup>26</sup> but Vaughn defends the reading *šbnyw̄*.<sup>27</sup> Röllig, who refers to Vaughn's article elsewhere (for example, in the previous entry) but does not include it in his bibliography here, reads a damaged *hē* as the final letter, but notes that this is not certain.<sup>28</sup> It would perhaps be unwise to lay too much weight on this instance.

The remaining two seals will be discussed below, together with the following material adduced by other scholars which it has been thought comes from eighth-century Judah.

Cross<sup>29</sup> lists nine names, which are on five seals and a set of jar handle impressions. Three names are on the two seals which are still to be discussed. The others are:

(iv) *'byw* and *'zyw* (Davies 1991, 129 [§100.065.1, 2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 51 [§4.1, 2] = Röllig 2003, 119 [§1.9.1, 2]);

(v) *'šyw* and *ywqm*, his father (Davies 1991, 124 [§100.038.1, 2], cf. 2004, 235 = Avigad and Sass 1997, 142 [§316.1, 2] = Röllig 2003, 353 [§16.72.1, 2]);

(vi) *'zryw* (Davies 1991, 149 [§100.228.1–2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 140 [§310.1–2] = Röllig 2003, 343 [§16.45.1–2]);

and *ywkn* on jar handle impressions from Tell Beit Mirsim (two examples), Beth Shemesh, and Ramat Raḥel made by the same seal (Davies 1991, 183 [§100.486.2], 134 [§100.108.2], 156 [§100.277.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 243–4 [§663.2] = Röllig 2003, 144 [§1.81.2]).

<sup>21</sup> Herr 1978, 163 (§2).

<sup>22</sup> Naveh and Shaked 1971, 381 n. 3; Avigad and Sass 1997, 392, 548, 550.

<sup>23</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 392.

<sup>24</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 392, 507, cf. Naveh and Shaked 1971, 381 n. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Zevit 2001, 381.

<sup>26</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 253.

<sup>27</sup> Vaughn 1999a, 53.

<sup>28</sup> Röllig 2003, 313.

<sup>29</sup> Cross 1983, 57 = Cross 2003, 108.

Cross<sup>30</sup> also cites four names on three seals and a further set of jar handle impressions which he says are ‘apparently from Judah’:

(vii) *yw'r* (Davies 1991, 152 [§100.249.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 108 [§188.1] = Röllig 2003, 245 [§10.48.1]);

(viii) *yw'sh* (Davies 1991, 142 [§100.171.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 109 [§192.1] = Röllig 2003, 247 [§10.54.1]);

(ix) *yw'mn* (Davies 1991, 142 [§100.172.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 107 [§187.1] = Röllig 2003, 244 [§10.47.1]);

and *ywbnh* on jar handle impressions from Jerusalem (which, however, is read as *ybnh* by Vaughn 1999b, 204 [§69]) and Ramat Rahel made by the same seal, to which should now be added either three, four or five examples from Lachish and an example from Gibeon (Avigad and Sass 1997, 249 [§678.2], who record four examples from Lachish = Röllig 2003, 286 [§13.57.2], cf. Davies 1991, 171, 172 [§§100.392.2, 100.404.2], cf. 2004, 237; 1991, 145 [§§100.197.2, 100.191.2], cf. 2004, 236; 1991, 232 [§100.788.2], cf. 2004, 240, and cf. Barkay and Vaughn 1996a, who identify four examples from Lachish [68 (§§10–13)], but classify §678C in Avigad and Sass differently [71 (§65)] and add another example whose reading they were unable to verify [66, 68 (§13) = Davies 1991, 182 (§100.478), cf. 2004, 238]; and, for three further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 204 [§§60, 62, 68]).

Avigad and Sass,<sup>31</sup> Röllig<sup>32</sup> and Vaughn<sup>33</sup> hold that this man's name is spelt *ybnh* in a set of jar handle impressions made by another seal (Avigad and Sass 1997, 248–9 [§676.2], and, with one more example, Davies 1991, 178 [§100.457.2], but read *ybnh* for *[y]wbnh*, and cf. 2004, 238; 2004, 68–9 [§101.142.2], 33 [§100.921.2] = Röllig 2003, 285 [§13.55.2], and, for three further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 205 [§§72, 74–5]). One of these impressions comes from Tell el-Judeideh, a second is said to have been found in debris from excavations at Jerusalem,<sup>34</sup> and the remaining five are unprovenanced. Although Avigad and Sass<sup>35</sup> vocalize this name *Yibnē* and think it is ‘probably a hypocoristic of \**yhwbybnh*’, Aharoni<sup>36</sup> and Röllig<sup>37</sup> suppose that *ybnh*, *ywbnh* and *yhwbnh* (on which see below) are parallel forms, all of which begin with the Divine Name Yahweh spelt in different ways. Avigad and Sass<sup>38</sup> believe that, if this interpretation is correct, *ybnh* should be read \**Ya(h)-banā*, with a ‘hitherto unheard-of abbreviation’ of the Divine Name, but Deutsch and Heltzer<sup>39</sup> read *Yobanāh*.

<sup>30</sup> Cross 1983, 57 n. 19 = Cross 2003, 108 n. 20.

<sup>31</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249, 488.

<sup>32</sup> Röllig 2003, 285.

<sup>33</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 204.

<sup>34</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 248 (§676B).

<sup>35</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 248, 488, but cf. 502.

<sup>36</sup> Aharoni 1962, 18.

<sup>37</sup> Röllig 2003, 285, 245 (at §10.49).

<sup>38</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 488.

<sup>39</sup> Deutsch and Heltzer 1994, 35.

Zadok,<sup>40</sup> Avigad and Sass,<sup>41</sup> Lemaire and Sass,<sup>42</sup> and Deutsch and Lemaire<sup>43</sup> between them mention names on five more seals:

- (x) *qmyw* (Davies 1991, 120 [§100.013.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 149 [§343.1] = Röllig 2003, 375 [§19.3.1]);
- (xi) *zkryw*, a father (Davies 1991, 141 [§100.167.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 157 [§371.2] = Röllig 2003, 399 [§21.61.2]);
- (xii) *'lyw* (Davies 1991, 238 [§100.854.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 141 [§313.1] = Röllig 2003, 348 [§16.58.1]);
- (xiii) *'hyw* (Davies 1991, 164 [§100.339.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 69 [§56.1] = Röllig 2003, 133 [§1.47.1]);
- (xiv) *yw'zr*, a father (Davies 2004, 104 [§101.364.3] = Röllig 2003, 221 [§8.48.3]).

To these should be added:

- (xv) *yw'l* (Davies 1991, 241 [§100.869.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 107 [§186.1] = Röllig 2003, 244 [§10.46.1]).

But, though Cross<sup>44</sup> assigns seal (viii) to 'probably ... the late 8th century B.C.E.', it is placed in the early seventh century BC both by Herr<sup>45</sup> (who does not, however, rule out the late eighth century BC) and by Davies,<sup>46</sup> while Avigad and Sass<sup>47</sup> and Röllig<sup>48</sup> refer it to the seventh century BC generally. It is not safe to regard this seal as evidence for usage in the eighth century BC. Thus *yw'šh* on seal (viii) and *ytm* on seal (i), which was discussed above, should be excluded from consideration. This leaves sixteen names on thirteen seals and two names, each on a number of jar handles, together with another name, the spelling of which is disputed, on a further jar handle.

Garbini<sup>49</sup> claims that seal (vi) is a forgery, but Avigad and Sass<sup>50</sup> think his 'arguments ... extremely unconvincing' and also, if I have understood correctly, implicitly reject his view<sup>51</sup> that seal (xi) is of doubtful authenticity. Seals (xiii) and (xv) are, however, included by Naveh in a list of seals and bullae whose authenticity has been suspected but which he says (in a preface dated April 1995) have not 'thus far' been shown to be 'recent fabrications'. He adds that 'Avigad was confident that they are genuine'.<sup>52</sup> The finding of seals in a controlled excavation is in general a guarantee that they have not been forged, but none of the thirteen seals was discovered in this

<sup>40</sup> Zadok 1988, 184.

<sup>41</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 25 n. 17.

<sup>42</sup> Lemaire and Sass 1996, 29 and n. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 24 (§18).

<sup>44</sup> Cross 1983, 57 n. 19 = Cross 2003, 108 n. 20.

<sup>45</sup> Herr 1978, 127 (§103).

<sup>46</sup> Davies 1991, 142.

<sup>47</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 109.

<sup>48</sup> Röllig 2003, 247.

<sup>49</sup> Garbini 1982, 170 n. 20 and 175.

<sup>50</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 27 n. 26, cf. Sass 1993, 217 n. 57.

<sup>51</sup> Garbini 1982, 170–1, 175.

<sup>52</sup> Naveh 1997, 12.

way. The information they provide may not be ignored, but it should be handled with caution.

A further uncertainty is whether all these seals come from Judah. Very little is known about their provenance. Ginsberg states that the vendor of seal (x) said that it 'was found on Mt. Zion, Jerusalem',<sup>53</sup> Cross<sup>54</sup> claims that, 'according to a reliable report ..., [seal (ii)] was found in a tomb in the vicinity of Jerusalem', and Lemaire and Sass<sup>55</sup> believe that seal (xiii) is 'apparemment judéen'. Seal (xv) was bought in Jerusalem,<sup>56</sup> but, since *yw*'l's father is *yhwkl*,<sup>57</sup> the spelling of the theophoric element in this name shows that *yw*'l came from Judah. Seal (vii) is 'allegedly from [the] Hebron district',<sup>58</sup> though Keel and Uehlinger<sup>59</sup> say it may have been engraved in the kingdom of Israel, presumably because of its iconography. But seal (iii), which was published in 1863,<sup>60</sup> could not have been discovered in excavations at Samaria,<sup>61</sup> since these were first undertaken in 1908.<sup>62</sup> As was noted above, Cross supposes that two of the thirteen seals, one of which is seal (vii), are only 'apparently from Judah'. In addition, Deutsch and Lemaire<sup>63</sup> classify seal (xiv) as either Israelite or Judaeen. Although Zadok<sup>64</sup> states that seal (vi), if this is what he is referring to, 'is from Jerusalem', Deutsch and Lemaire<sup>65</sup> record that it was purchased there. Zadok<sup>66</sup> thinks that the 'Judahite provenience [of seal (v)] is doubtful', and Lemaire<sup>67</sup> holds that the distinctive shape of the letter *qôph* in it may suggest that it was engraved at Samaria or Shechem. Further, Röllig<sup>68</sup> claims that the similar *qôph* in seal (x) is an indication that this seal comes from the kingdom of Israel. Yet, as Avigad and Sass<sup>69</sup> point out, 'the picture may be more complex'. It is true that *qôph* is written in this way on a seal<sup>70</sup> which is dated to the eighth or seventh century BC both by Avigad and Sass and by Röllig and which Avigad and Sass<sup>71</sup> say is 'alleg-

<sup>53</sup> Ginsberg 1938, 25.

<sup>54</sup> Cross 1983, 55 = Cross 2003, 107.

<sup>55</sup> Lemaire and Sass 1996, 29.

<sup>56</sup> Avigad 1979, 119.

<sup>57</sup> Davies 1991, 241 (§100.869.2) = Avigad and Sass 1997, 107 (§186.2) = Röllig 2003, 244 (§10.46.2).

<sup>58</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 108.

<sup>59</sup> Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 290.

<sup>60</sup> Longpérier, 1863.

<sup>61</sup> Pace Parayre 1993, 35.

<sup>62</sup> Avigad 1978, 1035.

<sup>63</sup> Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 24.

<sup>64</sup> Zadok 1988, 184.

<sup>65</sup> Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 17.

<sup>66</sup> Zadok 1988, 184.

<sup>67</sup> Lemaire 1993, 7.

<sup>68</sup> Röllig 2003, 375.

<sup>69</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 109, 149, 400.

<sup>70</sup> Davies 1991, 131 (§100.083.1) = Avigad and Sass 1997, 109 (§193.1) = Röllig 2003, 247–8 (§10.56.1).

<sup>71</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 109.

edly from Shechem' and is 'probably Hebrew', but which Herr<sup>72</sup> regards as Aramaic. This form also occurs, however, in the ninth century BC in the Mesha inscription<sup>73</sup> and in the seventh century BC on a seal<sup>74</sup> which 'may be' Philistine<sup>75</sup> but which Bordreuil<sup>76</sup> classifies as Phoenician. Even so, the shape of the letter can be used as part of a cumulative argument. On the basis of the iconography, Garbini,<sup>77</sup> who also takes account of the spelling *yw*, believes that seals (iii), (iv), (v), and (x), Keel and Uehlinger<sup>78</sup> that seal (x), and Uehlinger<sup>79</sup> that seals (iv) and (v), come from the northern kingdom of Israel, while Parayre<sup>80</sup> maintains that seals (iii) and (x) should be associated with the workshops of Samaria or Shechem. Sass<sup>81</sup> observes that this approach depends on the assumption that 'Phoenician inspiration ... equals North Israelite origin', and he notes that this is not securely established. But, whatever uncertainties there may be, their iconography provides a second reason for suspecting that seals (v) and (x) may come from Israel and not Judah.

There is a consensus that the 'zyw' of seals (iii) and (iv) is King Uzziah of Judah,<sup>82</sup> and Lemaire<sup>83</sup> thinks that these seals may have been engraved while their owners were in Samaria in King Uzziah's service. This is because, like Keel and Uehlinger,<sup>84</sup> he takes the spelling *yw*, which occurs in two names on each seal, as a possible indication of northern provenance. Both Lemaire<sup>85</sup> and Röllig<sup>86</sup> rely on this, together with the iconography and, in the case of Röllig, also the palaeography, to trace seal (xii) to the northern kingdom. Because of the similarities between seal (vi) and seal (xii),<sup>87</sup> the former may well also have come from the north, and this is how Deutsch and Lemaire<sup>88</sup> classify it, though Sass<sup>89</sup> regards a northern origin for both seals as no more than possible. Röllig<sup>90</sup> also supposes that the spelling *yw*, together with the shape of the letter *qôph*, which was discussed above, shows that seal (x) was engraved in the kingdom of Israel, but, unlike the scholars who have already been mentioned, he does not refer to its iconography. The spelling *yw* can legitimately be used as supporting evidence when there are other reasons for associating a seal with

<sup>72</sup> Herr 1978, 34 (§63).

<sup>73</sup> Dussaud 1912, Plate before p. 1 lines 21, 24 (*quater*).

<sup>74</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 399–400 (§1066.4).

<sup>75</sup> Naveh 1985, 9, 18, 21.

<sup>76</sup> Bordreuil 1992, 164–5.

<sup>77</sup> Garbini 1982, 169–70, 174.

<sup>78</sup> Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 294.

<sup>79</sup> Uehlinger 1993, 277, cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 282–3.

<sup>80</sup> Parayre 1990, 274, 288, cf. 273, 281 n. 29, 287, 298, 299, and 1993, 35.

<sup>81</sup> Sass 1993, 239, 199–200.

<sup>82</sup> But cf. Garbini 1982, 173.

<sup>83</sup> Lemaire 1984, 133 and 141 n. 20.

<sup>84</sup> Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 300, 310.

<sup>85</sup> Lemaire 1995, 228 (§112).

<sup>86</sup> Röllig 2003, 348.

<sup>87</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 141.

<sup>88</sup> Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 17 (§11).

<sup>89</sup> Sass 1993, 217, cf. 199.

<sup>90</sup> Röllig 2003, 375.

the northern kingdom, but clearly for present purposes no weight can be laid on it apart from this.

Lemaire<sup>91</sup> observes that either the purchaser or the vendor of a seal could be ‘un étranger de passage ou en résidence provisoire dans un autre pays’, and in such cases he thinks it probable that ‘la paléographie de la légende correspond plutôt à la tradition scribale du graveur qu’à celle de l’acheteur’. If this is so, it could explain how the palaeography of seal (x), which is said to have been found in Jerusalem, could suggest that it came from Israel and not Judah. Comparable considerations could also apply to the iconography, in which case seal (vii), which, as was noted above, is ‘allegedly from [the] Hebron district’, could have been engraved in the north, or alternatively could have been the work of a craftsman who came from there, as could seals (iii) and (iv), which belonged to officials in the service of a king of Judah. Due weight must be given to the claim that both the palaeography and the iconography of seals (v), (x) and (xii), together with the iconography of seals (iii), (iv) and (vii), indicate that they are not Judaeen. This may also be true of seal (vi), because it is similar to seal (xii). Account must, however, also be taken of Lemaire’s observation noted at the beginning of this paragraph, as well as of Sass’s contention that arguments based on iconography are not conclusive, and Avigad and Sass’s demonstration that the shape of the letter *qôph* on two seals does not necessarily mean that they were made in Israel. It is hard to be sure where these seals were engraved. As far as the other six seals are concerned, the name *yhwkl* links seal (xv) to Judah and Cross<sup>92</sup> says he has ‘reason to believe’ the report that seal (ii) was found ‘in a tomb in the vicinity of Jerusalem’, but all that is known about seals (ix), (xi), (xiii) and (xiv) is that they were bought in Jerusalem or London.<sup>93</sup> Lemaire and Sass<sup>94</sup> do not explain why they think that seal (xiii) is ‘apparemment judéen’, nor do Deutsch and Lemaire<sup>95</sup> justify their opinion that seal (xiv) may be either Israelite or Judaeen. While it would be wrong to conclude that the seals can be disregarded as evidence for practice in Judah, they provide a less solid basis for establishing this than is sometimes supposed.

There is a consensus that seal (ii), which has the best claim to supply reliable information about usage in Judah, should be dated to the first half of the eighth century BC.<sup>96</sup> Seal (iii) is the only other of the thirteen under consideration to be placed definitely in that period,<sup>97</sup> and, since it names King Uzziah of Judah, it must be later than the start of his reign, which began, perhaps, c. 783 BC. It is generally agreed that seals (iv), (v), (vi), (vii), (x), (xii), (xiv) and (xv) are from the eighth century BC,

<sup>91</sup> Lemaire 1993, 7.

<sup>92</sup> Cross 1983, 55 = Cross 2003, 107.

<sup>93</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 107, 157, 69; Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 24.

<sup>94</sup> Lemaire and Sass 1996, 29.

<sup>95</sup> Deutsch and Lemaire 2000, 24.

<sup>96</sup> Cross 1983, 56, 59–60 = Cross 2003, 108, 110–111; Davies 1991, 155; Avigad and Sass 1997, 25, 59; Röllig 2003, 293.

<sup>97</sup> Herr 1978, 84 (§4); Davies 1991, 129; Röllig 2003, 384; but cf. Bordreuil 1986, 46 and Sass 1993, 239 n. 109.

though Avigad<sup>98</sup> dates seal (xv) to ‘around the 8th century BCE’. Seal (xiii), which is assigned to the end of that century by Röllig,<sup>99</sup> is put in the eighth to the sixth centuries BC by Davies.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, seal (ix) is assigned to, perhaps, the first half of the seventh century BC by Herr<sup>101</sup> and Davies<sup>102</sup> and to the eighth–seventh centuries BC by Avigad and Sass<sup>103</sup> and Röllig,<sup>104</sup> while, as has been noted above, seal (viii) is thought by several scholars to belong to the seventh century BC. In addition, seal (xi) is dated to *c.* 700 BC ‘or slightly later’ by Herr,<sup>105</sup> to *c.* 700 BC by Davies,<sup>106</sup> and to the eighth–seventh centuries BC by Röllig,<sup>107</sup> though, since *zkrꜝw* is the name of the father of its owner, the seal might be evidence for a spelling which was current some years before it was made. Cross<sup>108</sup> says that seals (viii) and (ix) are ‘apparently from Judah’ and that they should ‘probably’ be placed in the late eighth century BC. Like Avigad,<sup>109</sup> he believes that the spelling *ꜝw* was not used in Judah after the eighth century BC.<sup>110</sup> Milik,<sup>111</sup> however, maintains that these two seals show that this spelling is attested as a theophoric element at the beginning of some names in Judah in the seventh – sixth centuries BC. If Cross’s dating is a little too early, Milik’s is somewhat too late. Although information is sparse, these seals suggest that the spelling *ꜝw* may well have survived in Judah after the eighth century BC.

### III

For present purposes the jar handle impressions mentioned above are more significant. The four impressions which include the name *ꜝwkn* all come from controlled excavations, as do the impressions which definitely contain the name *ꜝwbnh*, with the exception of, perhaps, the three further examples listed by Vaughn. The two examples which are disputed, however, were both unstratified finds at Lachish.<sup>112</sup> It is unnecessary to consider here the impressions which have the spelling *ꜝbnh*, both because no consensus has been reached about the vocalization of this name, and because in any case this extra material would not affect the argument of this part of the article. Cross<sup>113</sup> describes the examples of *ꜝwbnh* from Ramat Rahel and Jerusalem,

<sup>98</sup> Avigad 1979, 125.

<sup>99</sup> Röllig 2003, 133.

<sup>100</sup> Davies 1991, 164.

<sup>101</sup> Herr 1978, 126 (§101).

<sup>102</sup> Davies 1991, 142.

<sup>103</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 107.

<sup>104</sup> Röllig 2003, 244.

<sup>105</sup> Herr 1978, 140 (§138).

<sup>106</sup> Davies 1991, 141.

<sup>107</sup> Röllig 2003, 399.

<sup>108</sup> Cross 1983, 57 n. 19 = Cross 2003, 108 n. 20.

<sup>109</sup> Avigad 1986, 116 = Avigad and Sass 1997, 42, and cf. n. 3 above.

<sup>110</sup> Cross 1983, 57, 58 = Cross 2003, 108, 109.

<sup>111</sup> Milik 1961, 100.

<sup>112</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249 (§678C) and Barkay and Vaughn 1996a, 66, 68 (§13).

<sup>113</sup> Cross 1983, 57 n. 19 = Cross 2003, 108 n. 20.

which were the only ones he knew, as 'apparently from Judah', but it is surely certain that they are from there. The northernmost of the sites where these impressions were found is Gibeon. Röllig dates the impressions which contain *ywkn* to the end of the eighth century BC, and those which include *ywbnh* to the end of the seventh century BC, but he also inconsistently assigns this second set of impressions to the reign of Hezekiah, a hundred years earlier.<sup>114</sup> Ussishkin,<sup>115</sup> however, argues persuasively that the two impressions from Tell Beit Mirsim which mention *ywkn* belong to storage jars which also had handles on which were royal stamps. His conclusions are confirmed by Mommsen, Perlman and Yellin,<sup>116</sup> who established that 118 of the 120 *lmlk* handles which they tested by neutron activation analysis were 'made from clays which are indistinguishable'. They also tested 'samples of material connected with *lmlk* jars', including nine handles with official seals, among which was one of the examples from Tell Beit Mirsim discussed by Ussishkin and the jar handle with the same text from Ramat Rahel. These handles, together with other items, all 'had compositions which were indistinguishable from the 118 *lmlk* jars'. Moreover, there were official seal impressions on three of these jars. A further jar handle of unknown provenance has both royal and official stamps,<sup>117</sup> and the impressions which mention *ywkn* and *ywbnh* are all 'stamped on ridged *lmlk* jar handles'.<sup>118</sup> There is a consensus that Ussishkin,<sup>119</sup> who relies on archaeological evidence which shows that 'royal storage jars of all types ... were used profusely in Level III [at Lachish] prior to its destruction in 701 B.C.E.', is right to place the *lmlk* jars, and hence these official seal impressions, in the late eighth century BC. This dating of the official seal impressions is confirmed by the discovery of a number of examples 'in sealed loci of Level III'. Ussishkin adds that 'it is impossible to determine' on the basis of the archaeological evidence whether some of the jars 'were produced prior to [Hezekiah's] accession to the throne [c. 715 BC], but continued to be used during his reign', and he leaves open the question whether others were made early in the seventh century BC. Vaughn,<sup>120</sup> however, gives reasons for holding 'that these jars did not originate before the reign of Hezekiah' and that they 'were not manufactured after [his] reign'. He also claims that, 'although there is always a possibility of a limited secondary use of a jar produced in the late 8th century during the first decade or so of the 7th, there is no evidence that these jars were extensively used past the reign of Hezekiah'. Vaughn has demonstrated that the distribution of the *lmlk* jars to various sites should not be associated exclusively with preparations to resist the Assyrian campaign of 701 BC against Judah, but that it was also 'a reflection of some sort of normal royal trade'.<sup>121</sup> It would follow that not all the official seal impressions should be dated c. 701 BC.

<sup>114</sup> Röllig 2003, 144, 286, 245.

<sup>115</sup> Ussishkin 1976, 6–11.

<sup>116</sup> Mommsen, Perlman and Yellin 1984, 92, 94, 100, 106, 113, 97, 99.

<sup>117</sup> Deutsch and Heltzer 1994, 31, 33–4.

<sup>118</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 242.

<sup>119</sup> Ussishkin 1976; 1977, 56–7.

<sup>120</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 109–10, 94, 106, and 72, 85–7, 93–109; also Vaughn 1999a, 61 n. 3.

<sup>121</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 136–157.

Perhaps they should be put *c.* 710–701 BC, in which case the fathers of the owners of the seals by which the impressions were made may have lived *c.* 740–730 BC. Thus, since *ywbnh* is the name of the father of the owner of one of these seals, the spelling *yw* as the first element in a name may well have been found in Judah *c.* 740–730 BC, and, since *ywkn* must have been alive *c.* 710–701 BC if his steward was active then, it is also attested there at the end of the century. The jar handle impression mentioned by Zevit came from a controlled excavation in Jerusalem<sup>122</sup> and belongs to the late eighth century BC,<sup>123</sup> though Röllig<sup>124</sup> prefers more generally the second half of that century. Thus, if *šbnyw* is the correct reading, since this too is the name of the father of the owner of one of these seals, there would also be an example of a name from Judah which has *yw* as its final element and which may well have been current *c.* 740–730 BC. Avigad<sup>125</sup> incautiously comments that this text ‘supports the view’ that such names are attested in Judah in the ninth century BC, but there is no evidence from any source which indicates that the usage is as early as this. Mommsen, Perlman and Yellin<sup>126</sup> say that the ‘chemical analysis of 118 *lmlk* handles ... showed a degree of homogeneity of composition which is normally associated with pottery made at a single place’, and that ‘it can be said without serious doubt that [this place] lies in the Shephelah’, though, in the present state of our knowledge, greater precision is unattainable. They think that ‘the evidence on the provenience of [these] jars gives credence to the idea that there was a single pottery-making centre ... which was assigned the task of making all these containers’. Because the jars have royal stamps, any such place is likely to have been under government control, and it is of interest that the official seal impressions, like the royal stamps, were made where the jars were manufactured. It is not necessary to review all the hypotheses which have been advanced about the identity of the owners of the official seals. There is widespread agreement that, because the vessels could not have been the property of private individuals, these seals belonged to royal officials.<sup>127</sup> The impressions which mention *ywkn*, the full text of which is *l’lyqm n’r ywkn*, ‘belonging to Elyaqim steward of Yokin’, do not necessarily constitute a difficulty for this theory. Albright<sup>128</sup> believes that *ywkn* was King Jehoiachin of Judah and that the seal belonged to the steward who administered Jehoiachin’s ‘personal or crown property’ after he had gone into exile in 597 BC, but, as was noted above, Ussishkin has demonstrated that these impressions were made a century earlier than this. We do not know who *ywkn* was, but, if he was either an official of high rank or a wealthy or important man who, by way of business, was responsible for some work

<sup>122</sup> Avigad 1983, 44.

<sup>123</sup> Davies 1991, 231; Vaughn 1999a, 50 (§XXIIe), 53.

<sup>124</sup> Röllig 2003, 313.

<sup>125</sup> Avigad 1983, 44.

<sup>126</sup> Mommsen, Perlman and Yellin 1984, 112, 113, cf. 106, 110.

<sup>127</sup> So, e.g., Deutsch and Heltzer 1994, 31; Barkay and Vaughn 1996a, 61 n. 1; Vaughn 1999b, 110–135.

<sup>128</sup> Albright 1932, 81, 84, 102–3.

at the pottery under licence from the crown, he could well have needed a subordinate to act on his behalf.

By comparing the jar handle impressions which have so far been discovered in which the spelling *yhw* is used in theophorous names, the probable relative frequency of the two spellings in Judah can be estimated, both among the royal officials who affixed their seals to *mlk* jars in the late eighth century BC, and perhaps also at the beginning of the seventh century BC, and among their fathers. It can be shown that some of the impressions were made by the same seal, but it is impossible to tell whether other impressions were made by different seals belonging to the same man or by seals belonging to different men who happened to have identical names and patronymics. As a working hypothesis, it will be assumed that such seals belonged to the same man, though the existence of impressions made by different seals will be recorded. Unprovenanced examples will be included, but, unless otherwise stated, at least one example of each impression has been found in a controlled excavation. The following list is as complete as I have been able to make it, but within some entries there are likely to be inconsistencies because it is not always easy to be sure when two scholars are referring to the same example:

- (i) *šbnyhw*, unprovenanced (Davies 1991, 231 [§100.784.1], cf. 2004, 239 = Avigad and Sass 1997, 243 [§662.1] = Röllig 2003, 384 [§21.15.1]);
- (ii) *'hzyhw* (Avigad and Sass 1997, 244–5 [§665.1–2]; with two more examples, Röllig 2003, 128–9 [§1.35.1–2] = Davies 1991, 228 [§100.769.1–2], cf. 2004, 239; 2004, 68 [§§101.139.1–2, 101.140.1–2], 91 [§101.286.1–2], 103 [§101.360.1–2]);
- (iii) *yrmyhw*, a father (Davies 1991, 173 [§100.411.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 246 [§670.2] = Röllig 2003, 226 [§8.61.2]);
- (iv) *y'hwyl* and *yhwyl* (three sets of impressions made by different seals), regarded by Avigad and Sass, by Röllig and by Vaughn (1999b, 202–3) as the same person (for the first set of impressions, Avigad and Sass 1997, 247 [§672.1] = Röllig 2003, 238 [§10.27. A + B.1]; with one more example, Davies 1991, 146 [§100.199.1], cf. 2004, 236; 2004, 94 [§101.308.1], and, for two further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 203 [§§47–8]; for the second set of impressions, Davies 2004, 38 [§100.951.1], 94 [§101.306.1], cf. Röllig 2003, 238 [§10.27. C.1]; for the third set of impressions, Davies 1991, 145 [§100.198.1], 171 [§100.396.1] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 247 [§673.1] = Röllig 2003, 238 [§10.28.1, with one more example]);
- (v) *ypy[hw]*, a father (Davies 1991, 181–2 [§100.477.2], cf. 2004, 238 = Röllig 2003, 267 [§11.11.2], cf. Avigad and Sass 1997, 248 [§675.2], and, for a further example, Vaughn 1999b, 203 [§55]);
- (vi) *yhwbnh* (see below for a defence of this reading), a father (Avigad and Sass 1997, 249 [§677.2] = Röllig 2003, 285–6 [§13.56.2], cf. Davies 1991, 183 [§100.488.2], 229 [§100.771.2], and, for two further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 203 [§§58–9]);
- (vii) *hšlyhw* (two sets of impressions and a single impression made by different seals), a father (for the first set of impressions, Davies 1991, 144

- [§100.186.2], 246 [§100.900.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 250–1 [§681.2] = Rölliig 2003, 306 [§14.11.2]; for the second set of impressions, in which the last two letters are damaged, Davies 1991, 181 [§100.474.2]; 2004, 79 [§101.205.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 251 [§682.2] = Rölliig 2003, 306 [§14.12.2]; for a further impression described as ‘reading uncertain’ by Avigad and Sass, Davies 2004, 69 [§101.143.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 251 [§683.2]; and cf. also Davies 2004, 37 [§100.948.2], 38 [§100.955.2] and Vaughn 1999b, 206 [§§98–100];
- (viii) *špnyhw* (one set of impressions and a further impression made by a different seal), a father (for the first set of impressions, Davies 1991, 182 [§§100.481.2, 100.482.1], cf. 2004, 238; 2004, 39 [§100.961.2]; with one more example, Avigad and Sass 1997, 253–4 [§689.2] = Rölliig 2003, 327 [§15.13.2]; for one further example, Davies 2004, 45 [§100.995.2], and, for another example, Vaughn 1999b, 210 [§146]; for the further impression, Davies 2004, 46–7 [§101.003.2] = Rölliig 2003, 326–7 [§15.12.2], cf. Avigad and Sass 1997, 254);
- (ix) *ʿzryhw* (two sets of impressions, the second of which is imperfectly preserved), a father (for the first set of impressions, Avigad and Sass 1997, 257 [§698.1–2] = Davies 1991, 157 [§100.289.1–2], cf. 2004, 237; 2004, 93–4 [§§101.299.1–2, 101.303.1–2] = Rölliig 2003, 372 [§18.15.1–2], and, for two further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 211 [§§166–7]; for the second set of impressions, Davies 1991, 144 [§100.188.1–2], cf. 2004, 236; 2004, 69 [§101.145.2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 257 [§699.1–2] = Rölliig 2003, 372–3 [§18.16.2], and, for one and perhaps two further examples, Vaughn 1999b, 212 [§§172, 174]);
- (x) *yhwkl*, a father (Davies 1991, 177 [§§100.452.2, 100.453.2], cf. 2004, 238; with one more example, Avigad and Sass 1997, 258 [§700.2] = Rölliig 2003, 377 [§20.6.2]); a further set of impressions labelled by Vaughn (1999b, 199 [§§11–14]) *lbnʿy / yhwkl* should have been labelled *lʿlyqm / nʿr ywkn*;
- (xi) *šbnyhw* and [ʿ] *zryhw*, his father (Davies 1991, 154 [§100.270.1, 2], 178 [§100.455.1, 2] = Avigad and Sass 1997, 259–60 [§703.1, 2] = Rölliig 2003, 384 [§21.16.1, 2]);
- (xii) *ʿmdyḥ[w]*, unprovenanced, a father (Davies 2004, 32 [§100.919.2] = Rölliig 2003, 137 [§1.58.2]);
- (xiii) *yhwqm*, unprovenanced, a father (Vaughn 1999b, 216 [§237]).

In this list there are the names of, probably, fourteen men, ten of whom are the fathers of the owners of the seals by which the impressions were made, and who may therefore be assumed to have lived c. 740–730 BC. These impressions were all stamped on *lmlk* jar handles.<sup>129</sup> It was noted above that this was done by officials who worked at the site in the Shephelah where the jars were manufactured. All of the impressions discussed here whose provenance is known are from Judah, and the places furthest north where any have been found are Tell en-Naşbeh (no. ii, one

<sup>129</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 242; Rölliig 2003, 137 (at §1.58); Vaughn 1999b, 183, 216.

example) and Gibeon (no. vii, one example, and no. ix, one example). If it is legitimate to suppose that this is how these royal officials and their fathers wished their names to be spelt, and disregarding the view that *yhwbnh* and *ywbnh* are the same person, ten names which may well have been current *c.* 740–730 BC include the theophorous element *yhw*, in three instances at the beginning of the name and in seven at the end, as against two names which include the theophorous element *yw*, once at the beginning of the name and once at the end. The names of four of the men who lived at the end of the eighth century BC include the theophorous element *yhw*, once at the beginning of the name and three times at the end, as against the name of one man which begins with the theophorous element *yw*. A total population of seventeen examples is too small to do more than provide a general idea of what may have been the case, and the accidents of discovery could easily mislead. It is, however, of interest, on the basis of such information as we have, that these names had halved in number between *c.* 740–730 BC and the end of the century, from twelve examples to five, or from ten to four if the names on impressions (i), (xii) and (xiii), for which there is no provenanced example, are excluded. Moreover, depending on which data are counted, the proportion of names in which the spelling is *yw* increased either from 17% *c.* 740–730 BC to 20% at the end of the century, or, if the names on impressions for which there is no provenanced example are excluded, from 20% to 25%. If, however, the names of the fathers are not treated separately from those of their sons, the proportion of names in which the spelling is *yw* is just under 18%, or just over 21% if the names on impressions for which there is no provenanced example are excluded. Thus, apart from a figure based on only four examples (25%), all these proportions are close to 20%.

Both Avigad and Sass<sup>130</sup> and Röllig<sup>131</sup> think that *yhwbnh* (no. vi) is the same person as *ywbnh*, and, as was noted above, they believe that his name is also found spelt *ybnh*. Avigad and Sass comment on the reading *yhwbnh*, ‘the seal cutter seems to have first prepared a seal reading *mnhm ybnh* ... Then, presumably at the insistence of the owner, he added the missing *he* and *waw* of the patronymic in the small vacant spaces’.<sup>132</sup> On the seal the *wāw* is placed at the beginning of the word,<sup>133</sup> giving a reading *wyhbnh*, and Davies analyses this as the conjunction *wāw* + the proper name *yhbnh*.<sup>134</sup> But the *hē* is much smaller than the other letters and appears to have been fitted with difficulty into the limited space between the *yōd* and the *bēth*. As a result, there would have been no room to engrave a *wāw* there as well. Moreover, if the initial *wāw* is a conjunction, Menaḥem would not be the son of Yāhbanā, but the seal would belong to both of them jointly. Davies lists no other example of the two names on a seal being joined by the conjunction *wāw*,<sup>135</sup> and so there is no known parallel for shared ownership of a seal. In addition, Avigad and Sass say that, ‘unlike its

<sup>130</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249 (at §676), 488.

<sup>131</sup> Röllig 2003, 285 (at §13.55).

<sup>132</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249 (at §677).

<sup>133</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249, Illustrations 677 (A) and (B).

<sup>134</sup> Davies 1991, 342, 364.

<sup>135</sup> Davies 1991, 341–2; 2004, 155.

counterparts *yhw* and *yw*, *yh* is not found', at least with this spelling, 'at the beginning of names',<sup>136</sup> though, in the year in which this statement appeared, Deutsch and Heltzer<sup>137</sup> published a bulla from the seventh century BC on which is the name *yh'r*, 'Yahweh is light'. As far as I am aware, however, this is the only parallel to *yhbnh* which can at present be cited. In view of these factors, it is preferable to assume that the engraver inserted the *wāw* at the beginning of the line because there was nowhere else to put it, and to read *yhwbnh* with Avigad and Sass and Röllig. If, then, Menaḥem wanted his father's name to be spelt like this on this occasion, he appears to have had another seal in which the theophoric element was spelt *yw*. It would have been possible to insert a *hē* between the *yôd* and the *wāw* on this seal.<sup>138</sup> But the name of Menaḥem's father is also spelt *ybnh*, and, as was noted above, this too may include the Divine Name Yahweh. Thus not only are the spellings *yhw* and *yw* both attested on the seals of royal officials, but Menaḥem's three seals may suggest a measure of unconcern at least as between the usages discussed in this article, and perhaps more widely than this.

#### IV

Five further texts must be considered.

The most significant of these are on a papyrus from a cave in the Wadi Murabba'ât (Mur 17 = papMurPalimp<sup>b</sup>).<sup>139</sup> It is a palimpsest, and, if the original text written on it is the record of a prophecy,<sup>140</sup> in line 1 *yhw*, which is preceded by a lacuna, is the Divine Name. Renz, however, argues cogently that the text is a letter and that *yhw* is the theophorous element of its author's name, the first part of which has been obliterated.<sup>141</sup> The text written on top of this includes a list of names, and line 4 mentions *šm'yhw*, whose father is *yw'zr*. Cross thinks it 'extremely likely' that the first name in line 3, which Milik transcribes *ʾyḏh*,<sup>142</sup> should be read as 'a name ending in *-yhw*',<sup>143</sup> though Davies,<sup>144</sup> Gibson<sup>145</sup> and Renz<sup>146</sup> follow Milik here. The use of the form *yhw* either once or, perhaps, twice, securely links the list of names to Judah, and it is probable that this is also true of the original text on the papyrus. Although Stern holds that the list is 'much later' than the original text,<sup>147</sup> most scholars assign

<sup>136</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 502.

<sup>137</sup> Deutsch and Heltzer 1997, 32 (§90), cf. Davies 2004, 72 (§101.165.1) = Röllig 2003, 425 (§50.1.1).

<sup>138</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 249, Illustration 678 (E).

<sup>139</sup> Milik 1961, 96–7; Benoît, Milik and de Vaux 1961b, Plate XXVIII, cf. Davies 1991, 111–2 (§§33.001–2) = Renz 1995, 284–7 (§§Mur[7]:1, 2).

<sup>140</sup> So, e.g., Jaroš 1982, 74 (at §51).

<sup>141</sup> Renz 1995, 284 n. 1.

<sup>142</sup> Milik 1961, 97.

<sup>143</sup> Cross 1962, 40 n. 20 = Cross 2003, 120 n. 19.

<sup>144</sup> Davies 1991, 112.

<sup>145</sup> Gibson 1971, 32.

<sup>146</sup> Renz 1995, 286.

<sup>147</sup> Stern 2001, 170.

both of them to the same date. It is generally agreed that Milik's date of *c.* 750 BC<sup>148</sup> is too high, and the texts are placed in the seventh century BC by Davies,<sup>149</sup> in the first half of the seventh century BC by Renz<sup>150</sup> and, initially, by Cross,<sup>151</sup> who subsequently preferred *c.* 700 BC,<sup>152</sup> and *c.* 650 BC by Gibson<sup>153</sup> and Smelik.<sup>154</sup> Milik<sup>155</sup> regards the list as a record of taxes in kind which have been paid. Other possibilities are noted by Renz,<sup>156</sup> but in any case it is reasonable to assume that the four men whose contributions are listed are farmers, as, presumably, was *šm yhw*'s father *yw 'zr* before him. Thus a farmer who may be supposed to have lived at some point between 720 BC and 670 BC favoured the spelling *yw* instead of *yhw*. This is a further indication that this spelling may have survived into the early part of the seventh century BC. Moreover, it is of interest that two generations of the same family spelt this theophoric element differently. The discovery of a large number of bullae shows that many papyrus documents existed in Judah in the period before the Exile, but this is the only one which has so far been found. It is impossible to tell whether *yw 'zr* was one of a number of farmers who adopted the spelling *yw*, or whether he was an exception.

Inscription 89 from Arad<sup>157</sup> is only partially preserved. It reads *lyw*, which is followed by a tiny portion of another letter. Aharoni<sup>158</sup> and Renz<sup>159</sup> agree that this should be analysed as the preposition *lamed* + the first two letters of a proper name which began with the theophoric element *yw* and whose third letter cannot be deciphered. Puech,<sup>160</sup> however, believes that the word 'se lit au mieux *lyw* [*lyhw*], plus difficilement *lyws[pp]*', and, if either of these proposals is correct, the theophoric element *yw* would no longer be present. Renz thinks this text may perhaps be as early as the beginning of the eighth century BC,<sup>161</sup> but Davies prefers a date in the second half of that century.<sup>162</sup>

The names engraved on two bronze bowls from Nimrud cannot, however, be relied on as evidence for usage in Judah. The name on one of the bowls is *'hyw*,<sup>163</sup> but the name on the other bowl, which is badly preserved, can be read as either *mīkyw* or *šmīkyw*, though Renz notes that the last letter might well be a *hē*, in which case the

<sup>148</sup> Milik 1961, 95.

<sup>149</sup> Davies 1991, 111.

<sup>150</sup> Renz 1995, 283, 285.

<sup>151</sup> Cross 1962, 34, 37, 42 = Cross 2003, 116, 118, 121.

<sup>152</sup> Cross 1975, 8 n. 24; 1983, 57 n. 19 = Cross 2003, 108 n. 20; 2003, 75 n. 39.

<sup>153</sup> Gibson 1971, 31.

<sup>154</sup> Smelik 1991, 164.

<sup>155</sup> Milik 1961, 97.

<sup>156</sup> Renz 1995, 285.

<sup>157</sup> Davies 1991, 35 (§2.089.1) = Renz 1995, 157 (§Arad[8]:89.1).

<sup>158</sup> Aharoni 1981, 105.

<sup>159</sup> Renz 1995, 157 and n. 2.

<sup>160</sup> Puech 1988, 201 n. 51.

<sup>161</sup> Renz 1995, 157.

<sup>162</sup> Davies 1991, 35.

<sup>163</sup> Davies 2004, 13 (§34.004.1) = Renz 1995, 78 (§Nim[8]:4.1).

theophorous element *yhw* could be restored.<sup>164</sup> Not only is the reading on this second bowl uncertain, but Renz also comments that ‘die Schrift ist am wahrscheinlichsten aram., jedenfalls nicht hebr.’<sup>165</sup> If the name on the bowl is indeed Yahwistic, the script in which it is engraved may suggest that the bowl is from the northern kingdom of Israel. It would follow that *-yw* should be read rather than *-yhw*, because this latter form is otherwise attested only in Judah. The room in which these bowls were discovered contained at one time over 150 bronze vessels,<sup>166</sup> and Yadin<sup>167</sup> observes that the decoration of some of these includes ‘the four-winged “beetle” symbol’<sup>168</sup> which is also found in Judah on some of the *lmlk* jars. He argues that these bowls, like those on which were ‘names like *’hyw*’, were ‘carried away as booty’ from Judah by, perhaps, Tiglath-pileser III or Sennacherib. But neither of the bowls in question has this decoration,<sup>169</sup> and the large hoard of which they were part contains items which are unlikely to have originated in Judah. Barnett, for example, conjectures on stylistic grounds that one of the other bowls came from Hamath, two have Aramaic inscriptions which include the word *spr*, and there are also ‘North Syrian or Phoenician sceptre-heads’.<sup>170</sup> There seems to be no obvious reason why the two bowls under discussion should be associated with items which may have come from Judah rather than with other items which did not. Thus Yadin has not succeeded in demonstrating that these bowls are likely to have come from Judah and not Israel.

## V

Cross and Freedman’s claim that ‘some mixing of the forms [*yw* and *yhw*] would have been inevitable’<sup>171</sup> must be qualified. As has been noted above, the form *yhw* is attested only in Judah, with the exception of a text from Tell Qasile. Although it has been asked whether this text is a forgery, until this has been shown to be probable its authenticity should be accepted. Since, however, Tell Qasile was a port, and Judeans may well have gone there, this text does not necessarily reflect a northern usage. But the spelling *yw*, which, apart from the text from Tell Qasile, is alone found in texts from the kingdom of Israel in the eighth century BC, is also present in some texts from Judah. It is not easy to determine how widespread this was. The provenance of ten of the thirteen seals which can be adduced as evidence is unknown, and reasons have been given for doubting whether seven of these seals, including two of the three which are said to have been discovered in Judah, were engraved there. Moreover, the authenticity of two of the thirteen seals, one of which contains a name with the theophoric element *yhw*, has been suspected. It is impossi-

<sup>164</sup> Renz 1995, 78–9 and n. a (§[?]) aram. Nim[8]:5.1), cf. Davies 2004, 13 (§34.005.1).

<sup>165</sup> Renz 1995, 78.

<sup>166</sup> Layard 1853a, 190–1.

<sup>167</sup> Yadin 1967.

<sup>168</sup> Layard 1853b, Plates 58 B, E, 59 A, to which may be added Plates 57B and 58 A.

<sup>169</sup> Barnett 1967, 3\*–4\*, 7\* and Plate III.

<sup>170</sup> Barnett 1967, 3\*, 7\*, 4\*.

<sup>171</sup> Cross and Freedman 1952, 51 n. 32.

ble to be sure how many of the seals supply reliable information about practice in Judah, though some or all of them may do so. Data provided by jar handle impressions are, however, more valuable. These indicate that some 20% of the royal officials who spelt the theophoric element in their names *yw* or *yhw* and who affixed their seals to *lmlk* jars at the end of the eighth century BC, together with their fathers, favoured the spelling *yw*. Unfortunately only seventeen names which employ either spelling are known from the impressions, and the papyrus from the Wadi Murabba'at tells us no more than the preferences of, at most, two or three farmers and the author of a letter, so an exact picture of the extent of the two usages in these circles in Judah cannot be obtained. Cross<sup>172</sup> holds 'that in the Judaeian court dialect of the 8th century, the pronunciation *yaw*, characteristic of the Israelite court in the North was affected'. He refers in this connection to 'seals of royal officials before the time of Hezekiah', that is, presumably, seals (iii) and (iv), which were owned by ministers of King Uzziah of Judah, whose name is spelt 'zyw' on them. He does not discuss whether the iconography of these seals indicates that they were engraved in the northern kingdom of Israel, but, if this was so, it would confirm that there was influence on the Judaeian court from the north. It is perhaps unlikely that all the officials who worked at the royal potteries should be seen as members of the court. Vaughn,<sup>173</sup> however, observes that impressions (i) and (viii) were made by seals on which was the 'emblem of a four-winged uraeus', which is a sign that they were the property of important people, while in impression (i) *šbnyhw* is described as *bn hmlk* and so may well have been 'a literal son – or at least a relative – of the king'. Since it was *ywkn*'s *n'r* who worked at the potteries, *ywkn* himself may have been of higher rank than most of these officials, though it would be going beyond the evidence to assume with Vaughn<sup>174</sup> 'that the title *n'r* [here] refers to a functionary in the royal court'. Too little is known for there to be certainty about the precise social status either of all these officials or of the farmers named on the one surviving papyrus, but it may be conjectured that some of them were men who had standing but who did not belong to the highest levels of society.

If Renz is right to place Inscription 89 from Arad at the beginning of the eighth century BC, and if the spelling *yw* is present in it, this would be the earliest known text from Judah in which it is found. There is no basis for Avigad's opinion that it occurs there in the ninth century BC.<sup>175</sup> It is attested, however, in the first half of the eighth century BC on seals (ii) and (iii), the names of fathers of royal officials on jar handle impressions suggest that it was current c. 740–730 BC, and the names of the officials themselves show it was used c. 710–701 BC. Since it was in use at the very end of the eighth century it would not be surprising if this had continued into at least the early part of the seventh century, and, if seals (viii) and (ix) come from Judah, they may well indicate that this was so. The Wadi Murabba'at papyrus provides similar evidence. Thus the spelling *yw* appears to have survived in Judah for around a cen-

<sup>172</sup> Cross 1983, 58, cf. 57 = Cross 2003, 109, cf. 108.

<sup>173</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 126–8.

<sup>174</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 134–5.

<sup>175</sup> Avigad 1983, 44.

ture, which points to it having been preferred both by a significant minority of the class to which, perhaps, some of the officials who worked at the royal potteries and some farmers belonged, and also by some men of higher rank.

Although both father and son spell the theophorous element in their names in the same way on seal (v), using the spelling *yw*, and in jar handle impression (xi), using the spelling *yhw*, in the Wadi Murabba'ât papyrus *yw'zr* and his son *šm'yhw* use different spellings. Moreover, as was noted above, a certain Menaḥem seems to have had three seals on which his father's name was spelt in three different ways. If, as is likely, one of these spellings, *yhwbnh*, is a correction, Menaḥem presumably had definite views about what he wanted when this seal was engraved, whatever may be the explanation for the other two spellings. Röllig comments that it follows that 'orthographische Varianten eines Namens nicht als Datierungskriterium geeignet sind',<sup>176</sup> and Ginsberg's claim to the contrary<sup>177</sup> must be rejected. Like the use of both *yw* and *yhw* by royal officials who worked together at the potteries, the information provided by the Wadi Murabba'ât papyrus and by Menaḥem's seal impressions indicates that both spellings continued side by side in Judah, at least in certain groups. If seals (iii) and (iv) were engraved in the kingdom of Israel, it is entirely possible that they would have been brought to Judah by the ministers of King Uzziah who owned them. But whether the spelling *yw* entered Judah in some such way or was an independent development which cannot now be traced in detail, it became part of the southern Hebrew dialect for a century or so as an alternative to *yhw*, which the majority preferred.

## VI

Zadok maintains that the occurrence of *yw*- at Kuntillet 'Ajrud 'is not necessarily due to north-Israelite physical presence or even influence', since this form is attested in the Wadi Murabba'ât papyrus 'at least a generation after the Samaritan exile'.<sup>178</sup> He also draws attention, as was noted above, to the spelling *-yw* in texts from eighth-century Judah.<sup>179</sup> Since Carbon-14 dating of samples of organic material indicates that Kuntillet 'Ajrud was occupied during the period 801–770 BC,<sup>180</sup> since it is impossible to tell when the spelling *yw* was first used in Judah, and since the accidents of discovery may be responsible for the concentration of many of the examples which we have towards the end of the eighth century, the supposition that the spelling *yw* was part of the southern Hebrew dialect at the beginning of the eighth century BC, and so could have been the form used quite naturally by Judaeans at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, cannot in principle be excluded. But this spelling had unquestionably become part of that dialect by the end of the century, and the Wadi Murabba'ât papyrus,

<sup>176</sup> Röllig 2003, 285.

<sup>177</sup> See n. 2 above.

<sup>178</sup> Zadok 1988, 182.

<sup>179</sup> Zadok 1988, 184.

<sup>180</sup> Carmi and Segal 1996.

whatever its precise date, could have been written under very different circumstances from the much earlier texts at Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Moreover, whether, as Finkelstein and Silberman believe,<sup>181</sup> the population of Judah doubled at the end of the eighth century BC with the arrival of large numbers of refugees from the northern kingdom of Israel after the Assyrian conquest, or, as Vaughn<sup>182</sup> maintains, there were fewer refugees than this, *yw 'zr* in the text from the Wadi Murabba'ât could for all we know have been a northerner. The attestation of the spelling *yw* in Judah some years 'after the Samarian exile' is not a sufficient reason for holding that its occurrence at Kuntillet 'Ajrud need not be due to the presence there of men from the north.

Some names at Kuntillet 'Ajrud have been thought to belong to Judaeans. Zevit<sup>183</sup> observes, following Weinfeld,<sup>184</sup> that '*dnh*, the name of '*šdyw*'s father,<sup>185</sup> is found in 2 Chron. 17.14 as the name of an officer of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, who reigned c. 873–849 BC. He claims that this information is historically reliable. Although Meshel<sup>186</sup> tentatively suggests that these two texts may refer to the same person, such an identification is improbable. Since the Carbon-14 dating reported above shows that Kuntillet 'Ajrud was not occupied until c. 801 BC, some fifty years later than Meshel supposes, '*dnh* is unlikely to have been the father of someone who lived fifty years or more after the death of Jehoshaphat. Zevit<sup>187</sup> also notes that the name *msry*, found in another text at Kuntillet 'Ajrud<sup>188</sup> but not in the Old Testament, is known from two bullae made by the same seal<sup>189</sup> and an ostrakon<sup>190</sup> which are 'all from Judah'. He apparently claims implicitly that this man from Kuntillet 'Ajrud was a Judaeon. The ostrakon is said to have come from 'the area of the Judean hills',<sup>191</sup> and, since the fathers of these two men are called respectively *šbnyhw* and *šknyhw*, the spelling of the theophoric element in their names links them to Judah. *Msr[y]* should perhaps also be read on a bulla of uncertain provenance which may, however, have been discovered near Tell Beit Mirsim.<sup>192</sup> It is not found in any other inscription.<sup>193</sup> Moreover, Hadley<sup>194</sup> points out that *yhl[l'l]*, which she restores in a further text from Kuntillet 'Ajrud,<sup>195</sup> is the name of a Judaeon in 1 Chron. 4.16 and the name of a Levite who presumably lived in the south in 2 Chron. 29.12, though she regards

<sup>181</sup> Finkelstein and Silberman 2006, 265–9.

<sup>182</sup> Vaughn 1999b, 24, 26, 64–5, 68–70.

<sup>183</sup> Zevit 2001, 380 n. 59.

<sup>184</sup> Weinfeld 1984, 121.

<sup>185</sup> Davies 1991, 80 (§8.011.1) = Renz 1995, 56 (§KAgr[9]:3.1).

<sup>186</sup> Meshel 1978, 54.

<sup>187</sup> Zevit 2001, 398.

<sup>188</sup> Davies 2004, 11 (§8.026.5).

<sup>189</sup> Davies 2004, 84 (§101.242.1) = Röllig 2003, 291 (§13.71.1).

<sup>190</sup> Davies 2004, 24–5 (§99.006.10).

<sup>191</sup> Deutsch and Heltzer 1995, 81 n. \*.

<sup>192</sup> Avigad and Sass 1997, 213 (§556.1) = Röllig 2003, 291 (§13.72.1), cf. Avigad 1986, 13 and 77 (§108.1) = Davies 1991, 203 (§100.608.1).

<sup>193</sup> Davies 1991, 433; 2004, 193.

<sup>194</sup> Hadley 1987, 182, 184; 2000, 121–2.

<sup>195</sup> Davies 1991, 81 (§8.017.1) = Renz 1995, 61 and n. a (§KAgr[9]:8.1).

this as late evidence. But both Keel and Uehlinger<sup>196</sup> and Zevit<sup>197</sup> doubt whether Hadley's restoration is correct, and, though Zevit thinks *yhl*['l], an abbreviated form of this name, would be more satisfactory, this does not meet Keel and Uehlinger's objection that the top of any *lāmed* in the lacuna should have been visible. Neither *yhl*['l]/*yhl*['l] nor *'dnh* is known from any other inscription,<sup>198</sup> and *yhl*['l]/*yhl*['l] is not found elsewhere in the Old Testament. *'dnh* is attested as a variant to *'dnh* at 1 Chron. 12.21<sup>199</sup> and to *'dn*' at Ezra 10.30,<sup>200</sup> while at Neh. 12.15 the name is spelt *'dn*'. If *'dnh* should be read at 1 Chron. 12.21,<sup>201</sup> it would be a name said to have been given to a member of the tribe of Manasseh in the time of David. The historical value of material in the Books of Chronicles cannot be discussed here. But information about men who were called *yhl*['l]/*yhl*['l], *msry* or *'dnh* is in any case sparse, and there seems to be no obvious reason why these names should have been restricted to Judah,<sup>202</sup> even if the reading *'dnh* at 1 Chron. 12.21 is rejected. In addition, the restoration of *yhl*['l] or *yhl*['l] is at best uncertain.

I have noted elsewhere<sup>203</sup> that 'Cross ... states that [the spelling *yw*] appears [in Judah] during the eighth century BCE "in a small group of seals"',<sup>204</sup> and, since none of the names from Kuntillet 'Ajrud is on a seal, I used these facts to support my view that the men named there came from the northern kingdom of Israel. In doing this I overlooked the evidence of the Wadi Murabba'ât papyrus, in the light of which my argument on this specific point is invalid. But it remains true that the absence at Kuntillet 'Ajrud of the spelling *yhw*, which is characteristic of the southern Hebrew dialect, and the presence of as many as nine, or possibly ten, examples of the spelling *yw*, suggest strongly that these men were from the kingdom of Israel. Although this spelling is found in Judah, there is no other concentration there of such a large number of instances of it, and both among the officials at the royal potteries and on the papyrus which names some farmers, both spellings are employed. While in principle any of the men named at Kuntillet 'Ajrud could have been Judaeans, it is much more probable, when the overall pattern of usage is taken into account, that they all came from Israel. Neither Zadok nor Zevit explains satisfactorily either why this is unlikely to have been the case, or why it is more likely that these men came from Judah. Zevit lays far too much weight on the small amount of evidence which indicates that the spelling *yw* was found in Judah, and neglects the wider picture, which provides no convincing parallel to the data from Kuntillet 'Ajrud.

Thus the spelling *yw*, which was used in the kingdom of Israel, appeared alongside the spelling *yhw* in Judah for perhaps a little more than a hundred years in and after the eighth century BC, became part of the southern Hebrew dialect in this period, and

<sup>196</sup> Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 255 n. 194.

<sup>197</sup> Zevit 2001, 390 and n. 81.

<sup>198</sup> Davies 1991, 369–70, 456; 2004, 166, 204.

<sup>199</sup> Kennicott 1780, 664 at v. 20.

<sup>200</sup> Baer 1882, 39, 110.

<sup>201</sup> So Rudolph 1955, 106 n. to v. 21.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Keel and Uehlinger 1992, 280 n. 252.

<sup>203</sup> Mastin 2004, 330.

<sup>204</sup> Cross 1983, 57 = Cross 2003, 108.

was preferred by a small minority as an alternative to *yhw*. But the concentration of theophoric names compounded with *yw* at Kuntillet 'Ajrud is unlike anything attested elsewhere in Judah, and is evidence for the physical presence there of men from the kingdom of Israel.

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## Abstract

Inscriptions from the eighth century BC show that in proper names the theophoric element *yhw* was used only in Judah, with the exception of one text from Tell Qasile, but that the spelling *yw* was used both in the northern kingdom of Israel and in a few texts from Judah. It has been claimed that these include fourteen seals, but two of these are not from eighth-century Judah. None of the remaining twelve seals, together with a further example which should be added, were discovered in a controlled excavation, very little is known about their provenance, and it has been maintained that seven of them were engraved in the northern kingdom of Israel. The information which the seals provide should be handled with caution. Nevertheless, the dates given to some of them, together with the evidence of the Wadi Murabba'ât

papyrus, suggest that the spelling *yw* survived in Judah into the seventh century BC. Jar handle impressions made by seals of royal officials demonstrate that it was current in Judah both at the end of the eighth century BC and perhaps also *c.* 740–730 BC, though the officials and their fathers favoured the spelling *yhw*. Both spellings are present in the impressions of two seals which appear to have belonged to a certain Menahem and in the Wadi Murabba'at papyrus, and so they are found side by side in Judah among farmers as well as royal officials. Thus the spelling *yw* became part of the southern Hebrew dialect for a century or so as an alternative to *yhw*, which the majority preferred.

At Kuntillet 'Ajrud there are nine, or possibly ten, examples of the spelling *yw* in proper names, but none of the spelling *yhw*. This is unlike the situation elsewhere in Judah. Moreover, there are no other names from Kuntillet 'Ajrud which are clearly Judaean. It is therefore probable that these are the names of men who were from the northern kingdom of Israel.

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