

## CHAPTER 8

### YAHWEH UNMASKED

**M**any efforts have been made at a philological derivation of the term “Yahweh,” and like most errors in Jewish studies, the problems that these efforts have found have come from the effort to derive the term from Hebrew, when it is, in fact, a foreign word borrowed and integrated by the Hebrews into the pagan form of their religion.<sup>207</sup> Despite the pained efforts of “scholars” to show that Yahweh is not, in fact, the Anatolian / Mediterranean deity Jove, and the efforts of Jewish Talmudists to claim that YHWH is an “unpronounceable tetragram,”<sup>208</sup> Yahweh-Jehovah’s name is a Semitization of “Jove.” Further, “Jove” is a name not native to the Latin tongue, but to the Etruscan, and likely also to the tongue of the Minoan civilisation of the Great Mother that dominated the Eastern Mediterranean during the second millennium before Christ.<sup>209</sup>

#### LINGUISTICS AND THE CRITICS

Critics of the Jove-Jehovah equation are quick to point out that the vocalization of the four Hebrew letters that compose the name of God in the Old Testament, YHWH, as “Jehovah,” is a late innovation by a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish monk.

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<sup>207</sup>Which flourished before the final Ezraite rescission of the Old Testament in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Really, Hebrew polytheism ended in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. with the Babylonian captivity.

<sup>208</sup>Jews seem to be the masters of combatting solid argument with bizarre claims. Gfhlj is an unpronounceable tetragram because it is meaningless. YHWH, especially in a language of implied vowels, is a pronounceable word.

<sup>209</sup>Discussed in full in Chapter 10.

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Yawah in Ancient Hebrew

That can be accepted by both sides of the argument. For what these critics fail to mention is that the idea that the name of God YHWH is an “unpronounceable tetragram” is also a very late one. It pretends to originate in the commitment of the doctrines of Pharisaic Judaism to writing in the third through fifth centuries A.D., about sixteen hundred to one thousand years after the Old Testament’s books were written.

Further, critics of the Jove-Jehovah equation are fond of the claim that the Latin Iovis, which is the stem Iov-,<sup>210</sup> is the same as the Proto-Indo-European root \*diw-, which we find in Sanskrit words like Dyaus, a name for the sky father, the Greek Zeus, the Germanic \*Tia- and Tyr, and the Latin \*Iu- of Jupiter. But Iov- is not Iu-. The transformation that occurs from \*diw- to \*Iu- is three fold: the “d” is dropped, the I remains, and the “w” becomes “u”. The “-us” ending of dyaus is a declension, and it is retained in the Greek Zeus and in the similar Greek Dios, or “god.” Given that Dyaus and Dios are declined normatively in the second declension, the fact that Iovis, in Latin, belongs to the broad category of third declension nouns is the first<sup>211</sup> contraindication of the equivalence of the terms.

Supporters of an Indo-European origin for \*Iov- state that \*Iov- is a Latinization of \*Iou-, and if \*Iou- was \*Iu-, we could accept that. However, \*Iou- is not \*Iu-, either. To make that leap, one has to add the “-o-,” and to do that, one has to suggest a mediation of the term \*Iu- through Greek, where –ou- is a diphthong.<sup>212</sup> However, Classic Greek does not drop the “d” – it either retains it or transforms it to “Z.”<sup>213</sup> And, without a Greek mediation, one has three vowel sounds in the stem \*Iou-, rather than the two vowel sounds

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<sup>210</sup>In the third declension with the –is.

<sup>211</sup>Though minor.

<sup>212</sup>This is precisely what the Iov- = Iu- theory supposes.

<sup>213</sup>Latin doesn’t really drop the “d” either. It converts it to “dj-,” which Greek converts to “z” and Latin to “i” or “j”.

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of the stem \*Iu-. Further, we know that the “-u-” was vocalized and not part of a diphthong, because Latin transforms it into the semi-vowel “v.” We could accept roots like \*Iow-, give or take a d, possibly transformed into a “th” or t, give or take an “i” transformed to “y,” give or take the w transformed into a v or a u, but not \*diw-. \*diw- has two vowels or semi-vowels and \*Iow- has three. One would have to have something like \*Diow- to meet that requirement. Another way this is answered is to take the “u/o” of the “-us/os” declension and say that it is part of the stem – thus \*diw- is \*diwu-. While this is often done, it is also completely incorrect.<sup>214</sup> Following this logic, there has been created a hypothetical proto-Germanic form \*Tiawaz, which is also unknown, though the Anglo-Saxon form Tiw, which conforms to our expectations, is attested to as a name of Odin.

Further, Classical historians support a derivation of the name YHWH from a two vowel and one semi-vowel stem. Diodorus Siculus, for instance, explicitly gives the name of the Hebrew God as Iao.<sup>215</sup>

Sometimes confused with all of this is discussion of the Greek proper name Iapetus, which is of completely different origin than Iupiter or Iovis – Iapetus is the Greek variant of the figure known in the Hebrew Bible as Japheth.<sup>216</sup>

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE CRITICS

But, even if the argument that the stem \*Iov- may be the same as the stem \*Iu- was tenable, the archaeological evidence would argue against it, because Iove is not an Indo-European proper noun – it is a Latin borrowing from the Etruscan. The king of the gods and storm god, in the Latin language, is commonly known by two proper names – Jupiter and Jove. The reason he is known by two names is because these deities were originally two separate

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<sup>214</sup>Because you can't just take a vowel off the declension and add it to the stem.

<sup>215</sup>Diodorus Siculus, *Histories*, 1.94.2.

<sup>216</sup>See Chapter 4.

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figures – Jupiter was the Indo-European sky father,<sup>217</sup> and Jove was the prime consort of the Great Mother Iuno in the Cretan-Anatolian faith. While the details of the Cretan-Anatolian faith are controversial, their Jove was likely a very different figure from the sky father and storm god of the Indo-European ancestors of Rome.<sup>218</sup>

We know Jove is of Etruscan origin because we find the name “Jove” in Etruscan inscriptions as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century, contemporary with the founding of Rome,<sup>219</sup> as *Veiove*.<sup>220</sup> The Etruscans were the inhabitants of the Italian peninsula before the Romans.<sup>221</sup> Central to their form of worship was the goddess Iuno, whom the Romans adopted as a name of the Greek figure Hera.<sup>222</sup> Etruscan kings, according to the legendary histories of Rome, ruled at times the early monarchy of the Roman state; the archaeological evidence is that Rome was essentially a vassal of Etruria until at least the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C., and perhaps as late as the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Rome borrowed much of its religion and some of its art, language and culture from the Etruscans. Before the Roman-Etruscan encounter, the chief god of the people who would become Rome

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<sup>217</sup>The Indo-European figures in Roman religion are of two types: Those brought by the Romans from the Germanic homeland, and those adopted by the Romans from Greece. The original Roman religion focused on male figures later identified as Mars and Heracles; even Jupiter, who was one of the three Capitoline gods, appears to have appeared somewhat later than the entrance of the Roman people into the Italian peninsula.

<sup>218</sup>See Chapter 9.

<sup>219</sup>Rome was founded, according to Marcus Terentius Varro, in 753 B.C.

<sup>220</sup>*Ve-* being a qualifying suffix meaning “young.” *Iove* also appears in Etruscan inscriptions at Tina or Tinia. It is unclear whether these two epithets refer to one being or two or aspects of the same being, as too little is known of Etruscan religion.

<sup>221</sup>Technically, they inhabited the northern and later central areas of the peninsula. The structure of Etruscan society is somewhat in debate – some argue it was a single kingdom; the consensus is that it was a confederation of nominally independent city states. Later, the Etruscians vassalized many of the non-Etruscan city states, such as Rome. The degree of independence these vassals enjoyed is also debated. The Etruscans grew by first sending merchant colonies into other settlements, and the money power of those settlements eventually came to dominate the political process.

<sup>222</sup>Incorrectly. See Chapter 9.



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was Mars, a god of both war and agriculture that seems to have performed a function similar to the Germanic Thor or the Hittite Tarku-Teshub.<sup>223</sup> After the Roman-Etruscan encounter, a number of figures, including Jove, became integrated into the Roman state – and this may not be surprising, since the chief masculine deity of the religion of the Great Mother is believed to have wielded a double-headed axe similar to the hammer that characterizes both Thor and Tarku-Teshub.<sup>224</sup>

Given that the archaeological evidence that the Etruscans worshipped Iove is correct,<sup>225</sup> and that the worship of Iove-Iupiter supplanted that of Mars during the absorption of Etruscan religion and language by Rome, then the name Iovis in Latin is a Latin borrowing from the Etruscan and not a derivation from the Indo-European \*Dya-. Thus, the linguistic argument that the origin of Iovis is known and unrelated to YHWH fails.

### HOW INDO-EUROPEAN PROPER NAMES ARE ADOPTED BY SEMITIC LANGUAGES

To show Jove and YHWH are related, one only has to look at the way that the Hittite language adopted Semitic – specifically Akkadian – forms, to see that the transformation of Iove to YHWH is a natural one. To understand this, some history and analysis of the nature of language may be appropriate.

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<sup>223</sup>Namely he appears to have been a god of the storm and of fertility. The defining trait of the Hittite storm god is the double axe, which has been equated with the hammer. There is some evidence this also relates to the hero with the club; cf. Saxo Grammaticus' use of the club in his depictions of Magni, son of Thor.

<sup>224</sup>The semi-mythical histories of Rome, such as Polybius, Livy and Dionysius of Halicarnassus are generally explicit in stating some of the debts the Roman Republic owes to the Etruscans, both in terms of language and religion. These are not considered comprehensive.

<sup>225</sup>Very likely as the consort of the Great Mother. That Zeus syncretized and absorbed similar cults surrounding Dionysius is known, not only from his aspect as Zeus the Serpent, discussed in Joseph Campbell's *Occidental Mythology*, but from the involvement of Zeus in myths such as that of Dionysius and Semele, and the story of Zeus being raised by Rhea.

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The early languages of the Middle and Near East,<sup>226</sup> were composed of hieroglyphic ideograms.<sup>227</sup> People drew pictures to represent things that could be seen. Things that could not be seen were represented by a picture or series of pictures of things that were homophonic.<sup>228</sup> This would be like drawing a picture of a “bee” to represent the verb “be”; “to be” is an abstraction but it is pronounced the same as “bee,” which is concrete, and thus the one could be used to represent another. To determine whether one was referring to the abstract or the concrete, a series of determinatives were developed – pictograms that appear at the end of the word to determine what variant of the word is being used.

Eventually, this ideographic language become syllabic in nature – the ideograms came to represent one or more (generally up to three) syllables, each syllable generally consisting of a consonant-vowel combination. Thus, in Middle Egyptian, which is a language of about seven hundred individual glyphs, one finds mono-, bi-, and tri- literal characters, which represent one, two or three syllables, and in which only the consonants and vowel sounds are written.<sup>229</sup> Thus one can have a single hieroglyph that represents mn, which is pronounced “men,” or ms, pronounced “mes,” but one would need three hieroglyphs, or a different trilateral hieroglyph, to create m’n, or “man”<sup>230</sup> (with the ‘a’ pronounced “ah”). In contrast to Egypt, where hieroglyphic characters were preserved to a late date along with the hieratic characters, which were simplifications of the hieroglyphs for quicker writing, the Semitic tongues developed cuneiform, which eventually supplanted Sumerian hieroglyphs

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<sup>226</sup>Sumerian and Egyptian in particular, though early Hittite and Minoan Linear A also have a unique set of hieroglyphs.

<sup>227</sup>An ideogram is a character that represents an entire word. A “literal” represents a combination of syllables. Alphabetic symbol represent individual sounds.

<sup>228</sup>These homophones are the source of numerous puns in the Egyptian language, such as the claim that Atum sneezed and spat the world into being.

<sup>229</sup>In Middle Egyptian there is a presumption of the vowel sound short “e” when no vowel is indicated. Other vowels are written explicitly.

<sup>230</sup>Not to say that “man” is a word in Middle Egyptian.

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as the primary form of written communication.<sup>231</sup> Akkadian was the main written Semitic cuneiform language for many centuries, and it consists of about three hundred characters. But the trend in the Semitic languages was to reduce the number of characters and sounds, so that Assyrian, used a thousand years after the beginning of the dominance of Akkadian, consists of about seventy characters, each consisting of a consonant-vowel pair in one syllable.<sup>232</sup> This culminates in the late form of Hebrew that is used in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. rescission of the Old Testament, which is semi-alphabetic and consists of 23 sounds and 27 characters.<sup>233</sup> Thus, YHWH is not an “unpronounceable tetragram.”<sup>234</sup>

Further, the fact that Yahweh was pronounced is known from later writings of the name in Greek and Latin, where it appears with the appropriate vowels.<sup>235</sup>

The fact that Near and Middle Eastern languages were written in predetermined sets of consonants and vowels posed a challenge to Indo-European peoples who attempted to adopt Middle Eastern writing forms.<sup>236</sup> We

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<sup>231</sup>Cuneiform is written with a reed pen that has a triangular head and a linear stem. Three basic cuneiform symbols are used – one with the head up, one with the head facing left, and one of just the triangular head without the stem. These symbols are combined – sometimes with thirty or more in a single letter – to make the individual glyphs.

<sup>232</sup>The Hebrew language is similar. Vowels are not written, except in the more modern notation, which include vowel marks, similar to those used in Arabic.

<sup>233</sup>The final rescission of the Bible by the Ezraite priests was 397 B.C. Some argue revisions continued into the mid-part of that century, about contemporary with the rise of the Sadducees.

<sup>234</sup>It is a characteristic of the Jews that, when confronted with an argument they do not like, they make an irrational argument, asserting some bizarre interpretation, unsupported by evidence – often accusing those who disagree of either anti-Semitism or ignorance. Beginning with the scholarly supposition that everything originating in Jewish scholarship is incorrect, these views should be summarily discarded. Here, evidence is presented, as this view also appeals to Christians.

<sup>235</sup>See the chicken-head serpent-illustration from a medallion dating to the Maccabee uprising.

<sup>236</sup>Because Indo-European languages involved sounds and combinations of sounds different than those available in the various sets of Semitic glyphs. This problem is compounded when multiple sounds are involved – even assuming that the set of sounds in both languages are the same, a 23 sound language would require 12,167 symbols to express all possible three-syllable



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know what letters a given bi- or tri-literal hieroglyph – or cuneiform character – represents because we often find the same word written phonetically in other documents, through the use of mono-literals.<sup>237</sup> Thus, some inscriptions write the character for “mn,” and others write the characters for “m” and “n”, in the same spot in a given proper noun – and thus we know that the character for “mn” represents the sounds of the “m” and “n” characters together. When the Hittites attempted to write the names of their kings and cities in Akkadian characters, they often used characters that included extraneous vowels. Thus a Hittite word like Apizis may be written as Appiizziish in cuneiform, using the characters for “Ap-pi-iz-zi-is(h).”<sup>238</sup> Similar issues arise when we discover the Greek term “Asia” as the kingdom of Azzawa or Arzawa in Western Anatolia, and the Achaioi as the A(k)hhiyawa. Detailed arguments arise over the presence of extra vowels which are not, as in the case of \*Iu- and \*Iou-, the result of a different origins of the words, but a reflection of the limitations of the Indo-European language being written in the extended alphabet of a tongue not designed to produce its sounds.<sup>239</sup> Thus, if one were to take the word “Iove,” presuming that the word is not Indo-European, and that the form “Iove” found in the Etruscan language is the original from which the Latin borrowed, and attempt to render it in Hebrew in a manner similar to the manner that Hittite is rendered in Akkadian, one would have the word YHWH – and that is precisely what one does have.

This linguistic argument begs many questions – cultural and religious

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combinations.

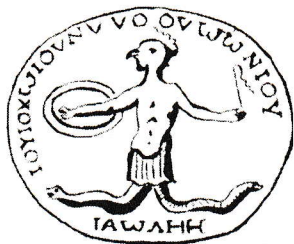
<sup>237</sup>Monoliterals are often used alphabetically in Egyptian, and appear to anticipate the alphabet.

<sup>238</sup>Whether s and s(h) can be used interchangeably is a question we approach in that of Merib-baal and Ishboeth, where Hebrews argue Isboeth is Ishbosheth, bosheth being “shame”. In the Egyptian language, for instance, these are distinct sounds. However, transliteration from Indo-European languages, like Neshite (what is commonly called Hittite), into Semitic languages likely uses these sounds more liberally. There are other arguments for an equivalent of Baal and Seth. See n. 83 and 252 as well.

<sup>239</sup>It should be noted that the Etruscan language is written in an early form of the Greek alphabet, which is why its words are known to us (but not their meanings).



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Yahweh

questions that can be answered through a survey of the region at the time of the development of the Yahwehist faith. These answers run contrary to the established Jewish and Judaeo-Christian interpretations of the Old Testament – but those interpretations are often derived from the scholarship of the Dark and Middle Ages, when little was known about the peoples and places described except what was told in a late source like Josephus, or what the founders of the various Protestant sects could invent.<sup>240</sup> That schools of divinity still teach the founding doctrines of their faith, which include interpretations of the Bible rooted in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and which are based upon factual misunderstandings that have long since been cleared up by archaeology and linguistics, is testimony to the ability of error to persist when it is cloaked in the guise of religious doctrine.

### THE FOUR CULTURES OF THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

Four primary cultures come together in the eastern Mediterranean prior to the creation of the Hebrew faith and the civilizations of Greece and Rome.<sup>241</sup> There is the Egyptian-Sumerian<sup>242</sup> culture, the Semitic culture, the Anatolian

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<sup>240</sup>Protestant scholars often based their interpretations on Rabbinical scholarship, in part because their researches and political-religious movements were often funded by Jews. These Rabbinical interpretations, however, are universally awful, and most of modern “Judaeo-Christian” Bible is of incredibly poor quality. Because secular researchers often disregard or are hostile to the Bible, and because of the continuing influence of Jews in the modern world who place these interpretations at the root of their religious identity, these interpretations have not received the analysis that they have received in other fields.

<sup>241</sup>Greece here meaning Mycenaean and later Doric civilization, which becomes dominant in the Peloponnesos and surrounding area in the 16<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, then after the 12<sup>th</sup>. Roman civilization originates in Germany, though it mythically originated in Troy, and takes its historical form around the 8<sup>th</sup> century, though it may trace its roots to the 13<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. Hebrew civilization as a settled kingdom does not begin until perhaps the 13<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> century, though it is known in the Near East as early as the 18<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>242</sup>On the linkage of Egypt and Sumeria, see chapter 3.

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culture,<sup>243</sup> and the Indo-European culture. Each of these culture groupings has numerous forms – Semites can be divided into Babylonian, Akkadian, Aramaic, Assyrian, Hebrew and others in various locations and at various stages of their development;<sup>244</sup> the Indo-European cultures range from the Hittite, the Mitanni and the Indo-Iranian to the Greek and Roman;<sup>245</sup> and so on.<sup>246</sup> But each group of cultures has linguistic, historical and cultural ties that allow them to be grouped.

Of these cultures, the one least known to the modern world is the Anatolian,<sup>247</sup> which we could term the civilization of the “Great Mother.” It is known that, before the Hittites conquered Asia Minor, and before the Mycenaeans – the Greeks – conquered the Peloponnesos, there was a civilization based in Crete and extending into the southern part of Asia Minor that worshipped a goddess who is commonly referred to as the “Great Mother.” The Hittites absorbed this cult in the early to mid-second millennium B.C. as the worship of Kumbaba, later Kumbala, whom the Greeks and Romans called Cybele, and this is the earliest name by which the Great Mother is known.

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<sup>243</sup>Elsewhere, I refer to this as Minoan or Cretan. What to call this is a subject of some debate – it is the culture that dominated Southern and Western Anatolia, Crete, and the surrounding areas, prior to one of the Indo-European invasions. Some argue that this culture is identical to the Luwian culture grouping – the first wave of Indo-Europeans in Anatolia – but there are issues with this that I discuss elsewhere.

<sup>244</sup>Babylonian is nearly identical to Akkadian; both refer to cultures of central Mesopotamia, found at Babylon and Akkad, respectively. Assyrian culture is known to date from c. 3000 B.C., and is the culture of Ashur, in northern Mesopotamia. Aramaic is the culture of Aram – modern Syria. Hebrew culture is the culture of the Apiru, discussed elsewhere in this book – such as Chapter 4, among others.

<sup>245</sup>As discussed in Chapter 3 and elsewhere, the Hittites followed the Luwian and Palaian cultures into Anatolia. The Mittani are a Hurrian people; the Hurrians having invaded across the Caucasus to the east of Anatolia, and having governed the Hittites in the intermediate period between the Old Kingdom and Empire. The Indo-Iranian peoples are the peoples who invaded modern India and Iran directly from the Central Asian-Aryan homeland.

<sup>246</sup>The Egyptian and Sumerian cycle includes the civilizations of the Indus and Eastern Africa; the cultures that participated in Anatolian culture and the degree of participation is a subject of debate.

<sup>247</sup>Again, possibly Cretan or Minoan.

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Cybele

The Etruscans practiced a variant of the Great Mother religion which it is believed they learned from Carthage. The “Great Mother” is believed to have been a fierce goddess who governed over wild<sup>248</sup> beasts, such as lions, and her rites are generally considered to have been quite bloody and to have involved human sacrifice, torture and mutilation.

It has been theorized that the “Great Mother” of the eastern Mediterranean is related to the goddess Kali of India.<sup>249</sup> However, the aspects in which the “Great Mother” appears in her eastern Mediterranean forms of worship correspond to the forms taken by the goddess Kali – Black Kali, the death goddess; Jagadgauri, the goddess of fertility; Lakshmi or Sri, the love goddess; and Durga, the goddess of war. The culture that produced is Kali is believed to have spread during the second millennium B.C. as far as northwestern Iran and northern Mesopotamia, and, if so,<sup>250</sup> then it is certainly possible that the late conception of the goddesses Ishtar and Isis as having different aspects, as discussed and described below – relates to the four fold manifestation of Kali that originated among the Dravidian people and was integrated to and expounded upon by the Aryan bearers of the Vedas.<sup>251</sup> One particular piece of evidence that the worship of Kali may have reached as far as Greece in the first millennium B.C. is the statue of “Black Demeter” at Phigalia that is recorded by Pausanias.

But regardless of the larger origins of the Great Mother, her civilization at some point syncretized – merged through analogy and equation, for lack of

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<sup>248</sup>This is discussed in greater detail in several other chapters, including 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9.

<sup>249</sup>Discussed particularly in Chapter 9.

<sup>250</sup>There are serious linguistic arguments about the relationship of languages such as Urartu to the Dravidian tongues that have not been resolved, and I do not want to endorse the “out of India” hypothesis that has been embraced by some white activists – apparently not realizing that it is essentially, as a friend from India has remarked, an ideology of the “black power movement of India.”

<sup>251</sup>Though this is speculative. See the fuller discussion in Chapter 9.



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better words – with the worship of fertility goddesses in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Among the deities with which the Great Mother was syncretized was Ishtar – Sumerian Inanna and Hebrew Asherah – whose worship is referenced at several points throughout the Bible.<sup>252</sup>

### SETH – TYPHON – BAAL

With this very basic understanding of the ancient Near Eastern world, we can begin our specific study of the development of the Hebrew religion, which was a relative late comer to the region. A brief history of the Hebrews and their trials and travails in the ancient Near and Middle East is given in Chapter 4.<sup>253</sup>

The god Seth had been the god of the northern Egyptian Semites since at least the end of the fourth millennium B.C. – his worship is one of the oldest forms of worship known. In the form of his worship which was known during the middle of the Egyptian New Kingdom – the time when the Hebrews were in Egypt – he was seen as a wilderness god and god of chaos, and syncretized with the serpent Apep, a monster that lived under the earth and attempted to swallow the sun each morning as it rose.<sup>254</sup> In essence, Seth was an evil and demonic figure in New Kingdom Egypt,<sup>255</sup> always trying to subvert the proper order of the world, and it is this worship of Seth that the Hebrews made central to their religion when they left captivity in Egypt to conquer the tribes of Canaan. Seth appears in the Old Testament as a child of Adam and Eve and as

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<sup>252</sup>Raisin cakes, Asherah poles – her worship is not discussed explicitly except as something the Yahwehists opposed, but it is clearly there until the destruction of the Jewish and Israelite kingdoms.

<sup>253</sup>As well as in my book, *The Centuries of Revolution*.

<sup>254</sup>It should be noted that, in some Old Kingdom depictions, Seth was the ally of Re in fighting Apep. This is a complex subject, but this elevated role was largely abandoned by the New Kingdom, though it was revived under the Ramessides, possibly because Seth was also the god of red-haired people, and many of the Ramesside pharaohs were red-heads.

<sup>255</sup>Particularly the Eighteenth Dynasty.



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the ancestor of the Hebrew ruling lineage.<sup>256</sup>



Seth

Seth was syncretized with two figures the Hebrews encountered among the Greeks and among the Semites of Phoenicia and Syria. The first was the serpent-monster Typhon, who battled against the Indo-European sky father Zeus and attempted to overthrow him, and who was trapped underneath Mount Etna in Sicily, spitting fire and shaking the earth, until the end of time.<sup>257</sup> The second was the Semitic deity known as “Baal,” one of the two “lords,” with “Adon,” worshipped in Syria and

Phoenicia.<sup>258</sup>

“Baal” is a title meaning “lord of the place”, and it is believed it can be applied to several deities, though linguistic arguments about “Baal” and “Adon,” at least in Phoenician usage, indicate that it was the title of a specific figure in at least the Phoenician form of worship.<sup>259</sup> Baal Haamon – the chief deity of Carthage – is the deity the Hebrews knew as Molech, for instance,

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<sup>256</sup>There is a Christian Identity argument regarding a “dual seedline” that makes Seth the child of the serpent and Eve. Despite the attraction, I cannot endorse this line of thinking because it appears to be based on a misreading of the Hebrew. The translation error asserted by the Christian Identity scholars does not have any basis I can find in the Hebrew text. Given the history of Christian Identity and British Israelism in imposing non-standard interpretations on Near Eastern languages – such as LA Waddell’s idiosyncratic reading of Sumerian, Sanskrit and others – such errors are not unexpected.

<sup>257</sup>Typhon appears in several guises, as the child of different earth goddesses, in different sources, and is likely identical to several other mythical serpents found in Classical myth. His development is an essay in itself; this is a summary of the common syncretism distilled from these accounts.

<sup>258</sup>Petrie has a long, digressive discussion of this in his book on Akhenaton.

<sup>259</sup>In the Semitic myths of central Mesopotamia prior to 1500 B.C, the title definitely applied to Bel-Marduk, and there is every indication the worship of this “Baal” continued to change of epochs from B.C to A.D. There is debate about whether all these “Baals” are the same “Baal”; I tend to believe that they are, with the normal changes that occur in a religion over thousands of years of practice.

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indicating that they reserved the term “Baal” for a specific divine figure in their pantheon.<sup>260</sup> In the lineage of King Saul, one finds indication of the worship of Seth as Baal in names such as Meribbaal, a Middle Egyptian word meaning “beloved heart of Baal,” which is also rendered as Ishboeth, “seth” occupying the same position as “baal” in that conjunction.<sup>261</sup>

Along with the religion of Seth, the Old Testament tells of several other religious forms adopted by the ancient Hebrews. The first is the religion of the Golden Calf, which the Hebrews are said to have also learned from Egypt, and to have continued to practice well into the early and mid part of the first millennium B.C. This religion is the worship of the Egyptian goddess Isis in her specific form of Isis-Hathor, Hathor being a cow goddess who is wedded to Horus, a god who, during his 4,500 plus years of existence also took on many aspects and forms. The second religion is the worship of Asherah – Asherah being the goddess Ishtar, and the goddess most likely syncretized by the Hebrews with the Great Mother of the Mediterranean.<sup>262</sup>

### THE CONSORT OF THE GREAT MOTHER

The center of the religion of the Great Mother appears to have been largely exterminated by the Mycenaean during the mid-second century B.C., when they conquered Crete.<sup>263</sup> But it remained in the form of the worship of Cybele and of Iuno, of the Baal and demon worship that existed at Carthage, and possibly in the worship of Aphrodite. Other Classical figures, such as Rhea

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<sup>260</sup>Different from Baal Haamon; however, the syncretism of Baal and Amun in Carthage definitely seems related to Baal as a part of the religion of the “Great Mother”.

<sup>261</sup>It has been argued that the name is “Ishbosheth” – “Man of Shame” – the shame, or bosheth, being Baal. This is related to a verse in Jeremiah. I disagree with this interpretation, because it is based upon a reading of Meribbaal as a Hebrew, rather than Egyptian, name. Efforts to relate this figure to Mutbaal, a historic king in Aram, have irreconcilable issues with dates – the relevant part of the Old Testament likely refers to a separate figure of 300 years after the Aramaic-Syriac king. See n. 82 and 236 as well.

<sup>262</sup>Both of these are discussed in detail in Chapter 9.

<sup>263</sup>Debated, almost certainly 16<sup>th</sup> century B.C., perhaps 15<sup>th</sup>.

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and many of the aspects of Dionysius, also derive directly from the Great Mother culture. But by the time the Hebrews would have encountered the Great Mother religion, they would have known her worship through her syncretization among the Semitic peoples with Ishtar-Asherah. Thus, the Hebrews, in adopting the religion of the Golden Calf Isis-Hathor, would have had one aspect of the Great Mother – the love and fertility aspect – to contrast with the Asherah aspect, which would have conformed more to the model of Ishtar, equated with Isis-Sakhmet, the Great Mother as a warrior queen, though also with fertility aspects.<sup>264</sup> Both, even in the early Hebrew religion, would have been heavily blended versions of different conceptions of the mother goddess.

There is every indication that YHWH originally entered the Hebrew faith as a consort of Asherah; Joseph Campbell discusses this possibility extensively in his *Masks of God*, and Campbell is an admitted expert on the matriarchal faiths of the Near and Middle East.<sup>265</sup> Only with the return from the Babylonian captivity did YHWH assume primacy among the Hebrew people.<sup>266</sup> Prior to that, while a certain portion of the ruling caste of Judaea appears to have claimed YHWH as their chief deity,<sup>267</sup> the people of Judaea did not give YHWH their divine allegiance.<sup>268</sup> And, the conflict between the YHWH-ist priesthood and the priesthood of the Baals is equally well documented in Biblical sources.<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>264</sup>Some argue that Ishtar-Asherah was understood in the same manner as Isis-Hathor; i.e., both were fertility goddesses.

<sup>265</sup>Though his grasp of the patriarchal faiths of the Aryans and his understanding of the interplay between them is less assured; Campbell associates Yahweh with the Sumerian serpent Nin-gazida.

<sup>266</sup>The vast majority of the Jews do not appear to have desired to return from Babylon, and became absorbed into the Mesopotamian Semites; only the Yahwehist fanatics were motivated enough to return to ruined Jerusalem and rebuild it.

<sup>267</sup>Though this may be in part a revisionist history made by the Ezraite priesthood.

<sup>268</sup>Much of the story of Kings – and the history of the Hebrews after Solomon in general – is that of disobedience to YHWH. At no point does the Bible indicate that the Hebrews worshipped YHWH in general.

<sup>269</sup>The religion of Baal seems to have been generally suppressed by the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.



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Roman sources, such as Valerius Maximus,<sup>270</sup> states explicitly that the Hebrews worshipped Jove Sabazius – Sabazius being a late corruption of Zeus of Cybele, and the explicit name of the Great Mother's consort.<sup>271</sup>

YHWH himself likely came to the Hebrew people as a composite of the Indo-European storm father and of the consort of the Great Mother, which is how he was known to the Romans when they formed Jupiter-Iovis. His actual worship shows aspects of both faiths – as YHWH is, on the one hand, a storm god represented by the lightning and the cloud, but, on another hand, is a figure associated with serpents and the sea. During his adoption by the Hebrew people, YHWH also took on aspects of Seth-Baal, transforming himself into a god of the wilderness, of outsiders, and of the chaotic forces that oppose nature.<sup>272</sup> While this absorption of YHWH and his antithesis, the good and the bad god-kings, into a single figure may seem difficult to understand, such a synthesis of Near Eastern and Semitic storm gods had been ongoing since probably the second millennium B.C., when Tarku, the West Hittite storm god that the Greeks knew as Teucer, and Baal, the Semitic storm god that the Greeks knew as Belus, were said to have traveled together throughout the Aegean and east Mediterranean.<sup>273</sup>

### IMPLICATIONS

The fact that YHWH is a composite of the pagan deities of the peoples that came together in the eastern Mediterranean is, for many, an uncomfortable

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<sup>270</sup>Known only through epitome.

<sup>271</sup>Jewish scholars deny this identification, calling it an erroneous corruption of YHWH Sabaos, which they claim means "Yahweh, Lord of Hosts."

<sup>272</sup>Its really unclear if this syncretism originated with the Hebrews, or was adopted by them from an existing syncretism established by the Semites in Egypt. The syncretism of Seth and the serpent Apep, as mentioned, dates to the Hyksos period, and seems to have originated in the Asiatic peoples who overran Egypt.

<sup>273</sup>To have conquered Cyprus and/or Crete, in different version of their myth, such as that given in Servius' *Commentaries on Virgil*.



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prospect. It is just as equally undeniable, and its implications upon the mythical identity structure of the Jews and certain Christian peoples is clear.

First, the Jewish faith is founded upon the myth that the Jews are a unique people, chosen by god, the first practitioners of monotheism,<sup>274</sup> who have no normative historical existence, but who have always been and always will be. This myth is *prima facie* false and impossible, but it is an irrational religious view that guides the lives of many people, both Jewish and gentile. That the Jews derived their faith from the pagan faiths that preceded them, and that they existed as people before they existed as “a people”, is something that the Jews do not wish to accept, because it also implies that there may come a time when they exist merely as people, and not as “a people,” again.<sup>275</sup> For many, to say that the Jews are just people, and no different from any other, except insofar as they have chosen to differentiate themselves, is to insult the Jewish people and to be “anti-Semitic.”

Second, the Christian faith, particularly the Judaized Christianity of the extreme American neo-conservative movement, similarly rejects any link to paganism, though the Christian faith is perhaps more pagan in its daily and common practice than modern Pharisaic Judaism.<sup>276</sup> As Frazer demonstrated long ago in his *Golden Bough*, the New Testament Christian faith, in its practice, is based upon a series of festivals and rites borrowed from the worship of figures as diverse as Mithras and Ostara, even before one considers the pagan rites of

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<sup>274</sup>The claim of the Jews and Christians to monotheism has always been bizarre. A good Muslim, for instance, would quickly point out that the Catholic Church, in the Trinity, has discovered three gods – and, in the mother of God, a goddess. (The Muslim religion split from Christianity in part on this issue). Judaism is a religion of the superiority of YHWH over other gods; it does not deny those other gods' existence. Thus “thou shalt have no god before me,” not “there is no other god.”

<sup>275</sup>Note that the differentiated nature of the Jewish soul may be a permanent barrier to their co-existence with others, just as the white and Negro souls are fundamentally different and incompatible.

<sup>276</sup>Which is largely the product of the irrational and non-textual fantasies that comprise the “oral tradition” captured in the Talmuds and related books of fables and law. The degree to which these traditions are authentically pagan, as opposed to the products of the individual imaginations of charismatic Rebbes, is unclear.

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the Jews which underpin its Old Testament doctrine. The reason, though, that many modern forms of Christianity are so challenged by the pagan nature of Judaism is that much of modern Judaeo-Christianity is not Christianity at all – it is not adherence to the doctrines of Christ as presented in the New Testament – but a modified version of Pharisaic Judaism intended to bring its adherents into servitude to the Jews in conformance with the Noahide laws, which the Talmuds teach reduce all non-Jews to the status of animals, and thus slaves under the mastership of the Jewish race. The political reason for this subversion of Christianity – the subjection of Christianity to the power of doctrines that are communist and Zionist in orientation – is the subject of another essay.<sup>277</sup> But the demonstration that the Jews are not a Chosen People, but merely another people who exist in time and history, poses no threat to the follower of Christ's teachings, which begin with the release Christ grants man from the covenant of the Old Testament. That the god who fathered Christ is a pagan figure also has little relevance to Christ's ethical doctrine, or his promise of salvation – teachings which came from the son and not the father.<sup>278</sup>

For those who are not bound by the Jewish and Judaeo-Christian faiths, an understanding of the historical and mythical context of the Bible furthers the understanding of human history. Thus, for those who are already outside the Judaeo-Christian paradigm, the revelation that the Jewish god YHWH is the well-known pagan deity Iovis should create no dissonance.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>277</sup>Covered, in part, in my book *The Centuries of Revolution*.

<sup>278</sup>Though the Catholic Church and many other religious institutions would disagree.

<sup>279</sup>Further below, in Chapter 12, I argue for a partial identification with the goat-God who forms the basis of the Christian Satan, as well.