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Examining the Judean Scribal Tendencies in the Psalms of Papyrus Amherst 63, with Col. XII, 11¬—19 as a Test Case

Author

Ward, Stephen Elliott

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Examining the Judean Scribal Tendencies in the Psalms of Papyrus Amherst 63, with Col. XII, 11–19 as a Test Case

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

by

Stephen Elliott Ward

2023

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Examining the Judean Scribal Tendencies in the Psalms of Papyrus Amherst 63, with Col. XII, 11–19 as a Test Case

by

Stephen Elliott Ward

Doctor of Philosophy in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2023

Professor William M. Schniedewind, Chair

Papyrus Amherst 63, also known as the "Mystery Papyrus," has been a difficult manuscript to study. This document is written in Demotic script and Aramaic language. This creates a quandary among scholars. The difficulty is that the script (Demotic) and the language (Aramaic) are incongruent. This difficulty has hampered the study of this manuscript. This text is understudied and there are also only a handful of scholars who have thoroughly worked on this text. At this point, there are only two published editions of this text. This dissertation explores the Judean scribalism of this unique document through sociolinguistics. While there are various West Asian cultures present, this dissertation focuses on the Judean presence. Papyrus Amherst 63 col. xii lines 11–19 lay at the crux of this study and serve as the test case displaying the Judean scribal tendencies. This text has parallels with Psalm 20 of the Hebrew Bible, which makes this document important for understanding the West Asian community present in Egypt

and its development. This dissertation provides a unique look into the West Asian community and the influences that are present in and outside of Egypt. This dissertation aims to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript and will also explore the literary devices that are present that demonstrate Judean scribalism.

The dissertation of Stephen Elliott Ward is approved.

Solange Ashby

Catherine E. Bonesho

Kathlyn M. Cooney

Gary A. Rendsburg

William M. Schniedewind, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2023

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List of Abbreviations

BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, 21 vols., edited by Martha T. Roth, et al.. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2011.
CAL	*The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*, edited by Stephen A. Kaufman, et al., https://cal.huc.edu.
CAT	*Die Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und andered Orten*, edited by Manfred Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquin Sanmartín. Translated as *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places.* 3rd ed. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013.
CD	Cairo Damascus Document
CDD	*The Chicago Demotic Dictionary*, edited by Janet H. Johnson. Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2001.
DB	Behistun Inscription of King Darius
DULAT	*A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition edited by* Gregorio del Olmo Lete, Joaquín Sanmartín and W.G.E. Watson*:* Third Revised Edition. Brill, 2015.
HALOT	*Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, edited by Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, Johann Jakob Stamm, Benedikt Hartmann, Ze'ev Ben-Hayyim, Eduard Yechezkel Kutscher, and Philippe Reymond. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishing, 2001.
HS	*Hebrew Studies*
JANES	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
MLA	*Modern Language Association*
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

Acknowledgments

There are so many individuals who deserve to be acknowledged in the creation of this work. The creation of a dissertation is without a doubt a group effort. Without these individuals, this work would not be completed. These individuals occupy various spaces in the journey but are still incredibly important.

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Thanks to my family. There were so many people in my family who stood behind me. Although many were not directly related to this work, their impact still had a fundamental impact on my life and ultimately this work. Thanks to "Mama," no one could have a more loving and caring grandmother. I am thankful for her believing in me when I did not know what to believe about anything. Thanks to my siblings Felecia, Donald, and Fatima. You have taught me countless lessons along the way, and I will never forget them. Each of you possessed something that I always envied, and it drove me to be better because you all were better in your ways. Thanks to my Aunts and Uncle (Nancy, Joan, BeBe, Asa, Diane, Darlene). They say it takes a village to raise a child. Never has it been more accurate than with our tribe. Thanks to my many cousins, some here and some have passed on, but all have had a huge effect. Thanks to my "Auntie" Sheila Chiles. You may not be blood, but you are far better. Thank you for always supporting me and my family. Thank you to my other in-laws ("Pau Pau" Green, Granna Green,

Lamar Dorsey, Nia Dorsey, Kyla Chiles) who make a point to speak life and kindness into my life.

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Thanks to my committee (Catherine Bonesho, Kara Cooney, Solange Ashby, and Gary Rendsburg) for your insight. Dr. Bonesho is a tremendous scholar and reader who improved this work on many levels. Dr. Cooney has been an incredible reader, mentor, and teacher. I learn from our every interaction and her boldness is inspiring. Dr. Ashby inspires me on so many levels. I enjoy discussing Egyptology and the reality scholars of color in this field face. Lastly to

Dr. Rendsburg, I am awestruck simply by reading his books. It is a true pleasure to have him on my committee. He is a world-renowned scholar and is incredibly down-to-earth and humble. His insights exercise my mind and improve my argumentation. Everyone on my committee sought to tirelessly help at every phase of this project.

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I would like to acknowledge The Morgan Library and Museum. I would like to acknowledge Roger Wieck, Kaitlyn Krieg, and Maria Fredericks. They helped facilitate a visit to The Morgan Library and Museum to examine Papyrus Amherst 63 and provided high-resolution images of the papyrus. Images present in this dissertation of the Papyrus are presented with expressed permission from The Morgan Library and Museum and their licensing department.

Lastly but most importantly, I must acknowledge my wife and children. Without them, none of this would be possible. Thank you for the tireless support in good and bad times. I thank Sheá for her love, which I will never deserve. Thank you to Adonijah, Moses, and Ezrah. My dear children, I hope this is part of a legacy that they can be proud to be a part of.

VITA

EDUCATION:

University of California, Los Angeles — Completed Fall 2018

M.A. in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures — Advisor: William Schniedewind

Major: Hebrew Bible/NW Semitics

Minor: Imperial Aramaic

The Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, California — Completed Sept 2016

Master of Theology in Old Testament

The Master's Seminary, Sun Valley, California — Graduated May 2011

Master of Divinity

Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama — Graduated May 2009

B.S. in Business Administration

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Saint James School Montgomery, AL — August 2023–Present

High School History Teacher

University of California, Los Angeles

Teaching Fellow — Sept 2017–Sept 2023

Troy University Troy, AL — Jan 2022–May 2022

Adjunct Professor

Auburn University at Montgomery — Jan 2022–May 2023

Adjunct Professor

RESEARCH LANGUAGES

- Ancient
  Hebrew, Aramaic (Old, Official, Imperial, Targumic), Egyptian Language and Scripts (Old, Middle, Late and Demotic), Ugaritic, Canaanite Dialects (Moabite, Samalian, Phoenician, Edomite), Greek (*Koine)*, Akkadian
- Modern
  Hebrew, French, German

PUBLICATIONS

Ward, Stephen E. "Papyrus Amherst 63." Database of Religious History. University of British Columbia. (2022). https://religiondatabase.org/browse/1330/#/

Ward, Stephen E. "Solomon's Temple." Database of Religious History. University of British Columbia. (2023). (Forthcoming)

INVITED LECTURES OR PRESENTATIONS:

Ward, Stephen E. "Apotropaic and Naming Magic" Invited Lecture in Egyptian Religion, UCLA, Spring Quarter 2018.

Ward, Stephen E. "Deciphering Foreign Worship: Looking at the Psalms of Papyrus Amherst 63 and What They Tell Us About Worship in a Small Community." Invited Presentation Troy University, October 13, 2021.

Ward, Stephen E. "The Intersection of Egypt and the Hebrew Bible." Invited Lecture for Pathway to the PhD, UCLA, July 17, 2022.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Papyrus Amherst 63 is a curious text that requires intense reflection to unlock its secrets. And as Zora Neal Hurston writes, "Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein."[1] Hurston clearly illustrated the drive and passion behind research and left us with the rationale to endure in the process. This curiosity concerning Papyrus Amherst 63 (henceforth P. Am. 63) has often been stymied by the inherent difficulties of the text. This is a document that has been steeped in mystery and has puzzled scholars. To overcome the complexity of language and script, it certainly requires purposeful poking and prying. This dissertation aims to do exactly that — to poke a pry at unexamined questions. Questions that are of utmost importance involve scribalism. The scribal practices of this text have not received much attention because there has been limited scholarship concerning this text. To date, there are only two published editions, even though this text was discovered over a century ago. That is largely because of the difficulty of the text falling into an intersection of Egyptology, Biblical, and West Asian studies. The mix of Egyptology and biblical studies has often been an unrequited relationship. It is often seen as a relationship that is necessary but lacks professionals with

[1] Zora Neale Hurston and Maya Angelou, *Dust Tracks on a Road: A Memoir* (New York London Toronto Sydney: Amistad, 2006), 143.

expertise in both areas.[2] This is evident in studies of the Egyptian influences on the Bible, which is immeasurably important when examining a manuscript like P.Am. 63. This dissertation will address and bridge the gap between Egyptology and the study of the Hebrew Bible through examination of Demotic, Demotic scribalism, and West Asian scribal culture, providing a background of scribal culture for P.Am. 63. This dissertation aims to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript. This dissertation will dissect col. XII, 11-19 to showcase the scribal techniques and cultural backgrounds that permeated the society that produced it. My research will provide new interpretations, transliterations, and translations of col. XII, 11–19 of P. Am. 63, while providing commentary on the text of P. Am. 63 and the other proposed translations. While P.Am. 63 has been understudied, this dissertation is necessary because there is a lack of scholars with specialties in both Egyptology and West Asian Studies who have interacted and commented on this perplexing text. This aim of this dissertation is to expose the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript. I will examine the context of the scribal conventions behind the papyrus and even a section of text displaying how these conventions are utilized. Before examining these areas, it is necessary to set the stage concerning this dissertation. This chapter will bridge the gap and serve as an introduction to this present study by discussing the history and background of the

[2] Some resources that look into this relationship but also express the lack of dedicated interaction between the disciplines, James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition*, Revised Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Exodus* (New York: HarperOne, 2017).

document and the history of scholarship. After understanding these foundational matters, the theory and methodology, terminology, and transcription philosophy will complete this introduction to the topic of this dissertation.

Overview and History of the Document

P.Am. 63, also known as the "Mystery Papyrus," has been an enigma for quite some time. It is a large text, with a total of 23 columns. This papyrus' provenance is ancient Egypt. The papyrus was purchased by Lord Amherst at the end of the 19th century.[3] It was discovered in Thebes and that along with other evidence such as script suggests it was written in Egypt. When considering Egypt as the place where it was written, it is not surprising that the script is Demotic. Demotic represents the penultimate phase of the Egyptian language and script, being in regular use for legal, economic texts, literature as well and correspondence. Considering the various cultures that resided in Egypt, it is also not surprising that texts in the Aramaic language were produced.[4] The most surprising thing about this papyrus is that it is written in Demotic script while the language is Aramaic. However, the language in P.Am. 63 was not officially identified until 1944 by Raymond Lee Bowman.[5] Even when the language and the script had been

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[3] Tawny L Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover: An Aramaic Sacred Marriage Text from Egypt," *JNES* 76.1 (2017): 2.

[4] Eric M. Meyers, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 410.

[5] Raymond A. Bowman, "An Aramaic Religious Text in Demotic Script," *JNES* 3 (1944): 219–31. Karel van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63* (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2018), 3, notes that

identified, the decipherment continued to elude scholars because of the nonconformity between language and script. This is the primary reason that sustained translation work was not conducted on the document until the 1980s, almost a century after its discovery. Just as it took almost half a century to understand the language, it would take almost a century to produce a translation. The literature concerning P. Am. 63 is sparse, but we will discuss the scholarship below. Because of issues with the complexity of language and script much of the innovative work on this papyrus has been conducted in pairs—a Semitist and a Demotist—as seen in the two teams of scholars the aforementioned Vleeming and Wesselius from the Netherlands and Steiner and Nims in the United States.[6]

Language and Script of the Document

As mentioned, one reason for the difficulty is the specialization of scholarship within traditional academia. Often, scholars who study Aramaic and the Hebrew Bible specialize in other Semitic languages. Rarely, however, do they specialize in Egyptian and particularly not in multiple phases of the Egyptian language. By the same token, Egyptologists rarely specialize in

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the first "unofficial" identification of the language came in 1932 through personal correspondence between *Noël Aimé-Giron* and Herbert Thompson.

[6] Tawny Holm, "Nanay(a) among the Arameans: New Light from Papyrus Amherst 63," in *New Perspectives on Aramaic Epigraphy in Mesopotamia, Qumran, Egypt and Idumea: Proceedings of the Joint RIAB Minerva Center and the Jeselsohn Epigraphic Center of Jewish History*, ed. A. Maeir et al, vol. ORA of *Research on Israel and Aram in Biblical Times* 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 93.

multiple Semitic languages, if any. Some Egyptologists may have Akkadian as a secondary language if they know a Semitic language at all. This lack of intersectionality is evident in the study of P.Am. 63. The uncommon combination of Demotic script and Aramaic language is one of the main reasons why this papyrus has been inaccessible in a scholarly edition.[7] Günter Vittmann agrees from the Egyptological perspective commenting that "apart from questions that are connected with the writing system there is hardly anything on which the Egyptologist could give a competent statement."[8] This once again stems from the actual language being Aramaic.

Aramaic is an important language in the context of the ancient Near East particularly in Achaemenid Imperialism. Aramaic became the lingua franca because of the influence and domination of empires such as Assyria, Babylon, and the Achaemenid Empire. Aramaic is an ancient language and there are a few inscriptions dating to the 9th century.[9] It was the lingua franca of the West in the Neo-Assyrian period.[10] The Aramaic of p. Am. 63is Imperial or Official

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[7] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 5.

[8] Günter Vittmann, "Arameans in Egypt," in *Wandering Aramaeans - Aramaeans Outside Syria*, eds. Angelika Berlejung, Aren M. Maeir, and Andreas Schüle, Textual and Archaeological Perspectives (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017), 262.

[9] E. Lipinski, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics*, vol. II of *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 57 (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 1994), 79–117.

[10] William M. Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe: How Scribes Learned to Write the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 10.

Aramaic.[11] However, Old Aramaic words and spellings occur in the manuscript, with *mṣwr*[12] and *'rq*[13] respectively as examples. Also, P. Am. 63 sometimes uses the letters *shin* and *samek* interchangeably. This has a precedent at Elephantine where *śb* and *sb* have the same meaning.[14] Outside of that the language is consistent in following the contemporary features and styles of Aramaic, yet even in the variances it still matches some of the contemporary models of Aramaic.[15] The reason for this document being written in the Aramaic language is certainly a reflection of the audience that appears to utilize this document. All the cultures whether Aramean, Syrian, or Judean would have utilized the language of Aramaic. As mentioned, it was

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[11] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*, 25.

[12] Steiner and Nims, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2-6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 265.

[13] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*, 25.

[14] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*, 27.

[15] Bowman, "An Aramaic Religious Text in Demotic Script," 227–28; Porten, "Papyrus Amherst 63: Ruminations," 118, have theorized that the document is the result of a person dictating the contents to a Demotic scribe who then transcribed it into Aramaic. This accounts for some of the aspects of the language that do not comply with the general features of Imperial Aramaic.

the lingua franca of the day. [16] The greater difficulty is seeking to understand why this Aramaic speaking community would choose to write their language in an Egyptian script.[17] This is a question explored in the second chapter. While the Aramaic language is generally straightforward much of the issue comes with the decipherment of the Aramaic from the Demotic script.

Aramaic language and Demotic script were not designed to seamlessly work together. The lack of continuity created difficulty with the rendering of Aramaic into the Demotic script. Demotic is a difficult script to decipher, even when all the signs are written. There are "normal" and unblemished demotic texts that are difficult for Demotists to read. One difficult aspect of the Demotic script is the usage of the same sign for multiple phonetic values. In Demotic, the representation for the values *ʾ*, *ḥ*, and *s* can be the same sign, and there is also much confusion between *q*, *k,* and *g*.[18] In addition, certain sounds rarely have a clear distinction such as the sounds *d, t, ṭ; z,* and *s*; and in many cases *l* and *r*. Demotic proves that many sounds were being

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[16] William M. Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe: How Scribes Learned to Write the Bible*, 10.

[17] Holger Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic: From the Beginnings to the Advent of Islam* (Boston: Brill, 2015), 159, 162, notes that during the Persian period, Aramaic was both a written and spoken language.

[18] Janet H. Johnson, *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshongy: An Introductory Grammar of Demotic*, 3rd ed., Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 45 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2000), 4.

phased out in writing as they became less common in the spoken language. This is most apparent in the Demotic *d*. While being more definitive in earlier phases of the language, the *d* begins to disappear in Demotic. Interestingly, the Demotic alphabetic sign for *d* is a combination of an *n* and *t*, which is often present in foreign words.[19] Another difficult aspect of reading Demotic is its preponderance of group writings, making single signs rather illegible without a full context. In short, Demotic is a difficult language phase to decipher even when the language represented by that script is Egyptian. Thus, it is far more difficult to render and decipher script when representing a different, in our case, northwest Semitic, text.[20] This incongruity highlights the issue of assuming written language represents spoken language. This is true when using an Egyptian script to write Semitic languages. Some of the sounds that are present in Aramaic and other Semitic languages are not historically represented in the Egyptian language and thus difficult to mimic in script.

Provenance

There are further questions concerning this papyrus that go beyond the language and the script. P. Am. 63 is unprovenanced, without any proven and documented archaeological context.[21] It is said to have been found in a jar near Thebes.[22] While the text was written in Egypt, it is not clear exactly where in Egypt it was written. The location of origin could have

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[19] Johnson, *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy: An Introductory Grammar of Demotic*, 4.

[20] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 4.

[21] Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 3.

[22] Porten, "Papyrus Amherst 63: Ruminations," 92.

been Aswan. The rationale behind this argument is based upon the spelling of the word Elephantine.[23] It is normally spelled as *yb* throughout Egypt, however, in this text, Elephantine is "used once on the papyrus as a multi-consonantal sign" and "is spelled with an *aleph*... an unusual spelling found only in a few Demotic texts from Aswan."[24] Other options for locations are Thebes and Memphis.[25] However, the original location must remain largely inconclusive. But the spelling of Elephantine makes the area of Aswan the most likely location.

The date of the text's creation is also a difficult problem, given the lack of archaeological context. However, based on paleographic analysis, it appears that it is best to set this document

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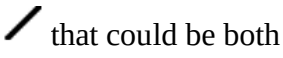
[23] Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 3.

[24]Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 3.

[25] Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 3; C.J. Martin, "Memphite Paleography: Some Observations on Texts from the Ptolemaic Period," in *Aspects of Demotic Orthography: Acts of an International Colloquium Held in Trier*, ed. Sven P Vleeming (Leuven, 2010), 41–62. P.Am. 63 represents an amalgam of cultures. This text represents an extremely diverse community of Aramaic-speaking people in Egypt. Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 28, notes, this diverse group of Arameans lived in unity. This text gives a picture of this diverse community coming together to keep their various traditions alive. van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 20, suggests that a group that is involved in this collective are West Asians that sought refuge in Palmyra and that the basis of this text was written in Palmyra and then rewritten into Demotic when the diasporic community arrived in Egypt.

in the fourth century BCE.[26] The paleographic analysis looks primarily at the development of the sign representing the letter *l*/*r*. In early and for much of middle Demotic, the sign for *l* and *r* remains the same. In Egyptian, there is no sound for the letter *l*. In texts that seek to represent Semitic languages, the *r* is used to represent the *l* sound. A text that is a prime example and provides clarity for this usage of the *r* and *l* from before the New Kingdom into the Late Period. This is also seen in the Mereneptah Stele, also known as the Israel Stele, which characterizes the speech of conquered West Asian peoples, and the text dates to around 1207 BCE. In line 26, the text attributes language and in particular a Semitic word to the conquered people, *šꜣrmʿ* (). In Semitic languages, the same form would be *šlm'*, related to Aramaic *šlm* (שלם) or Hebrew *šlwm* (שלום), the word for peace. The Egyptian language is unable to do an exact replication, therefore it seeks to express it as closely as possible. This designation of *r* for *l* becomes standard for rendering foreign words. It even occurs in the next line of the Mereneptah Stela writing out Israel as *Israr* (). By the time of Demotic the sign  designated both *r* and *l*. During the Ptolemaic period after around 250 BCE, a line was added to the previous sign creating a differentiation between the two letters. P.Am. 63 does not distinguish between the two letters. Rather they designate *l* by the sign  that could be both *r* and *l*. This suggests that the date of this document would not fall into the later Ptolemaic or

[26] Karl-Theodor Zauzich, *Hieroglyphen mit Geheimnis: Neue Erkenntnisse zur Entstehung unseres Alphabets* (Darmstadt: wbg Philipp von Zabern, 2015), 15; Günter Vittmann, "Arameans in Egypt," 262.

Roman periods. During these later periods of Demotic  is utilized to specifically designate *l*.[27] feature helps designate a general understanding that P.Am. 63 belongs to an earlier stage of the Demotic script. These earlier periods are designated as the Early and Middle Demotic phases of the script and language. These are the forms of Demotic that most closely resemble the Demotic script found in P. Am. 63.

While there is no certainty concerning the provenance of the document, there are clues that help with a general designation of the text. First, the usage of *ỉyb*ʾ suggests that it is written around the area of Aswan and Elephantine. Second, the paleographic data suggests that the provenance of the document is between 400 and 250 BCE. It is implausible to date a text using the same sign for both l and r to the late third century or later. This places P. Amherst most comfortably between the beginnings of Demotic until 250 BCE. Additionally, the usage as a religious text and the style of the scribe would place it after the initial or Old Demotic phase.[28] There are indeed contrasting opinions concerning this, but it falls within this period. However, I assert the manuscript of P.Am. 63 was likely written in the areas of Aswan between in the 4th

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[27] Tawny Holm, "Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia," in *Elephantine in Context: Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt*, vol. 155 of *Forschungen Zum Alten Testament* 155 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 327 n. 19.

[28] The Demotic phases will receive attention in the next chapter.

century BCE.[29] Once again, this is speculative but appears to be a plausible suggestion considering the evidence.

The Community and Religious Complexion of P.Am. 63

The community represented in the document is more discernable than the exact provenance but still is open to some discussion and disagreement. It is generally understood that Aramean, Syrian, and Samarian/Judean cultures are behind this document.[30] Van der Toorn has

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[29] Concerning the date advocates of the fourth century include Tawny Holm, "Nanay(a) among the Arameans: New Light from Papyrus Amherst 63," 93; Zauzich, *Hieroglyphen mit Geheimnis*, 15; Vittmann, "Arameans in Egypt," 262 suggests that it is the second half of the fourth century. Steiner and Nims, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2-6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 261, originally suggested a second century date. However, a different suggestion was proposed by Steiner later. Richard C. Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," in *The Context of Scripture*, ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger (Leiden ; New York: Brill Academic Pub, 1997), 310, suggested the compromise of it being a third century text of a scribe trained in the fourth century. All things considered, scholars, particularly demotists, have dated this manuscript to the fourth century. A reason why a later date is improbable is the *l*/*r* differentiation which is not utilized in all of Egyptian history except for later dates after the middle of the third century.

[30] Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 2; Richard C. Steiner and Charles F. Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: Text, Translation, and Notes" (2017), https://www.academia.edu/44014332/Richard_C_Steiner_and_Charles_F_Nims_The_Aramaic_

suggested that the diasporic Samarian community came to live in Palmyra. He posits that although the evidence for the city of Palmyra is known only during the Hellenistic and Roman periods that the city existed earlier and had an influence on the cultures of this document.[31] His suggestion is based on his interpretation of certain sections of the document and seeing a civilization of Palmyra that provided refuge for the cultures of this document.[32] In the "Palmyrene" section, col. xvi, he suggests that the description of a "fortress of palms," and the description of a golden deity (assumed to be the Golden Haddad) demonstrates a description of Palmyra. While his edition is a huge contribution to the field, this interpretation is tenuous. I do not agree with the assessment and believe that it is driven more by his research in other areas. Alternatively, at certain points in history these groups could have fled directly to Egypt, I think this is particularly true for the Samarian and Judean populations.[33] Therefore, it is best not to follow van der Toorn's Palmyrene interpretation. When looking at the groups mentioned in P. Am. 63 there is great diversity among the deities and religious ideologies represented.

Text_in_Demotic_Script_Text_Translation_and_Notes_Repository_yu_edu_and_Academia_edu _2017_92_pages; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*; Porten, "Papyrus Amherst 63: Ruminations"; Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*.

[31] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 20.

[32] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 11, 21.

[33] Cyrus H. Gordon, "The Origin of the Jews in Elephantine," *JNES* 14 (1955): 56–58.

The section examined (col. xii 11–19) is traced to the people groups that would emerge from the united monarchy of Israel, but the northern kingdom of the divided monarchy. In general, there is a variety of Levantine cultures that would live in Egypt, but the people of Israelite origin are of particular interest because of the section of P.Am. 63 on which we are focusing. This Levantine group is a diasporic people that survived the expulsion from both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. The people of northern Israel (the Samarians) would have been deported to Assyria and cast out of their homes in 722 BCE. This group is often identified with P. Am 63 because of the references to Samaria and the exile to Assyria.[34] This section is additionally associated with the people of Israel because of the usage of a text or *Vorlage* that would become Psalm 20. These associations have established the understanding of the people being associated with the Northern Kingdom, and particularly Samaria. Yet, when examining the corpus at Elephantine there seems to be an emphasis on two identities, Aramean, and Judean (see below concerning this term). Most likely these Samarians were incorporated into the Judean identity and became Judeans within this context.[35] In the process of consolidating Samarians and Judeans into one collective identity, van der Toorn suggests three phases. The first phase was the utilization of the term *yhwdy* to characterize the

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[34] Karel van der Toorn, "Arameans and Israelites in Papyrus Amherst 63," in *Research on Israel and Aram*, ed. Angelika Berlejung and Aren M. Maeir, Orientalische Religionen in Der Antike 34 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 336, 341.

[35] Karel van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews: Behind the Story of Elephantine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019), 116.

collective community of both Samarians and Judeans on ostraca written between 500–475 BCE. The second phase is when the Persian authorities recognized the *yhwdy* as an autonomous ethnic group able to govern themselves by their laws and customs (ca. 420). The third and final phase was the utilization of Judean identity in lieu of the destruction of the Yaho Temple in Elephantine, to gain support from Judean and Samarian leaders (ca. 407).[36] The consolidation of identity is not a new phenomenon among Israelite people. Richard Elliott Friedman suggests that it was the Israelites that incorporated the Levitical identity of being Exodus people into their own origins. Thus, consolidating the Levites and the Israelites into one collective people with a collective identity and story.[37] This dissertation will utilize the Judean association. While the terms Samarian and Judean are not usually interchangeable, the text of P.Am. 63 gives a rationalization for this choice. In col. xvii line 3, the text states, "I am from Judah ([*y*]*hwd*)." It further describes his brother being a Samarian and his sister as a resident of Jerusalem, designating that the "Judean" population is of mixed descent including sojourners from the north and south. This also exemplifies the reality of the overarching "Israelite" group finding commonality and connection among those with a shared culture. Additionally, I think the direct identification with Judah in this line gives credence to a consolidation of identity. Coupled with evidence from Elephantine, it is likely that this group would have a degree of identification as Judeans. We will use this designation to streamline the discussions and focus on the primary

[36] van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews*, 116.

[37] Friedman, *The Exodus*, 72–81.

purpose of this dissertation, which is to identify the Judean scribal culture that is utilized in this document.

The document of P.Am. 63 is religiously eclectic. As mentioned, the document displays various sources from West Asian cultures demonstrating the intersectionality among the cultures. This dissertation hones in on the Judean/Samarian section. This section also displays the eclectic religious and cultural attributes. Column xii lines 11–19 uses the names of several deities and divine epithets present in the Levant and ancient Near East such as Ba'al, Adonai, Nanay, Mar, Marah, Bethel, and Nabu.[38] In the context of the Judean psalms and P. Am. 63 as a whole, this seems to be the result of both religious diversity and syncretism. Ancient Israelite religion demonstrated henotheism and even polytheism. While YHWH was the primary deity, other deities were believed to exist. In addition, YHWH is often syncretized with deities such as Ba'al and El. Such syncretism seems to be evident in P. Am. 63. This syncretistic practice is an extension of the ancient Israelite religion. Additionally, this syncretism could be a result of Egyptian and other ancient Near Eastern cultural influences. In Egypt, multivalent logic creates an ideology that protects the denizens from religious cognitive dissonance. Multivalent logic, also called the multiplicity of truths, enables seemingly incongruent facts to be congruent. The exploration of multivalent logic can further clarify its usage among the inhabitants of Egypt.

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[38] Tawny Holm, "In Praise of Gods & Goddesses in Aramean Egypt: Papyrus Amherst 63," in *Hymnen Und Aretalogien im Antiken Mittelmeerraum: Von Inana Bis Isis*, ed. Joachim Hengstl et al. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2021), 304.

The concept of multivalent logic is difficult for modern interpreters. However, it was a daily part of ancient life. Multivalent logic demonstrates the reasoning that would be the foundation of an eclectic document like P. Am. 63. It paints a worldview where concepts that appear to be contradictory can coexist. This is a base principle of Egyptian understanding. The concept of multi-valent logic has not always been accepted. This is largely due to Western concepts of cognitive dissonance being read into the literature of these ancient peoples. A modern person can easily see contradiction as something incoherent. One's understanding must be smooth and cohesive. However, this is not something that was part of Egyptian thinking nor the thinking of other ancient societies. This was not because they lacked "the discipline, the cogency of reasoning, which we associate with thinking."[39] It is important not to view ancient peoples as inferior to modern peoples. The lack of understanding of the multivalent logic of ancient Egypt led to many Egyptologists viewing the various traditions of creation as competing and unable to coexist with one another. [40] Competition is not alienated from the discussion of texts and culture in ancient Egypt, but we must understand it in a more nuanced way rather than the way.

Examples of multivalent logic are replete in Egyptian culture. For instance, in Deir el-

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[39] Henri Frankfort et al., *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay of Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East* (University of Chicago Press, 1946), 3.

[40] James P. Allen, "The World of Ancient Egyptian Thought," in *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: The Adventure of the Human Intellect* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2016), 79.

Medina Ptah is often worshiped by the artisans that are on site. Also, in Middle Kingdom Thebes there is possible evidence for the worship of Ptah. Earl Ertman suggests that in the 12th Dynasty, the earliest three-dimensional representation of Ptah was discovered in Thebes.[41] The artist that resided in Thebes did not hide and secretly worship Ptah but rather worshiped him openly as the craftsman god and patron god of artisans, even though at that time Amun-Re was often considered to be head among the gods.[42]

While examples of multivalent logic in Egypt are abundant, another example is the High Priest of Amun, named Ptahmose. There are a few priests with the name Ptahmose and generally, they are priests of Ptah in Memphis. But this is not the case with this first Ptahmose. What makes this significant is that Ptahmose means the son of Ptah. But this son of Ptah serves as a high priest to the god Amun. While this could have been the name, he was born with he by no means is bound to that name. There are other examples of Egyptians in power changing their name for purposes. The most famous may be that of Akhenaten. His name was originally Amenhotep IV, which means Amun is satisfied. However, when he started his Aten-centric religious movement, he chose to change his name to reflect that. With that in mind, it is perfectly plausible for Ptahmose to change his name to reflect his new position. However, because of the multivalent understanding in Egypt, he was able to possess this name without any consequences for his

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[41] Earl L. Ertman, "The Earliest Known Three-Dimensional Representation of God Ptah," *JNES* 31.2 (1972): 86.

[42] James P. Allen, "Memphite Theology," in *Context of Scripture*, ed. William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger (Leiden; Boston: Brill Academic Publication, 2003), 22.

position. This is a point of emphasis because in many ways it causes scholars to reevaluate the way they understand and interpret Egyptian literature as well as literature like p. Am 63.

This multivalent logic can explain the lack of clear monotheistic thought but more so the melding of so many religious perspectives. It also explains the lack of cognitive dissonance concerning the practice of religious ideologies without conflict. For the Judean community, this cohesiveness displays at the very least a level of multivalent thinking. It also clarifies the continued syncretism and usage of non-Judean deities in that section. The audience is accustomed to multiple deities and understands their place among the larger community. This could also include the assimilation of other deities into the primary deity. The Aramaic Elephantine papyri also display the multi-ethnic religious community. In a letter from Peu to Mibtahiah the Egyptian goddess Sati is mentioned as a goddess to swear by (B2.8:6). There are also other gods mentioned in the corpus, this demonstrates an inclusive mentality and a multivalent perspective that facilitated the integration of the West Asian community of hundreds of years. This dissertation approaches the understanding of syncretism and religious ideology from this perspective. Having pondered these foundational questions of background, the next step is the exploration of the history of how scholars have interacted with this document.

History of Scholarship

While there is not a great deal of literature written about this manuscript, there are a few scholars who have focused on col XII 11–19 of P.Am. 63, particularly Richard C. Steiner, Charles Nims, S.P. Vleeming, J.W. Wesselius, Karel van der Toorn, and Tawny Holm. During the mid-1980s the academic world received the first influx of literature written about P.Am. 63, mostly focused on Col XII, 11–19. These articles identified a striking resemblance between col. XII, 11–19, and Psalm 20. A few articles had been published before the translation and analysis

volumes by S.P. Vleeming and J.W. Wesselius. Their work, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63,* had several sections inside that dealt with various issues in the papyrus. Much of the focus still revolved around the original set of lines from their first article, "An Aramaic Hymn from the Fourth Century B.C." It set out to tackle questions of the papyrus' potential relationship to the Bible as well as linguistic questions. This dissertation adds to the discussion of this papyrus and the Bible's relationship. *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63* provided insight into the papyrus' relationship to the Bible. This resource made an initial foray into the problem of the divine name. This problem concerns the deity who is mentioned in this section (col. XII, 11–19). It appears to be YHWH, but YHWH is not explicitly mentioned. Instead, an appellation that is unknown is placed in apposition to the epithet Adonai. This epithet also seems to best be identified with YHWH because of the position that it occupies in Psalm 20. Although there are other divine names in the section they are known, therefore this unknown appellation receives the most attention. While exploring the various interpretations at the time (that have generally gone unchanged up to this point), they conclude that there is insufficient data to be dogmatic. They conclude that the document was produced by "pagan" Arameans and that it thus contains some Israelite religious principles.[43] I will tackle the issue of the divine name in this dissertation and propose a conclusion contrary to the findings in this work. I will utilize newer understandings of the Demotic characters used to write out the divine name in P.Am. 63 col XII 11–19. This

[43] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*, 9–10.

resource is very much a cornerstone in the unfinished construction of the scholarship concerning this papyrus.

The scholarship of Nims and Steiner occupies a similar status in the study of P.Am. 63 as S.P. Vleeming and J.W. Wesselius, being one of the foundational explorations of the document. While the American and Dutch scholars differ on various points of view such as but not limited to the divine name, suggesting the presence of Horus in the document. They also differ in overall composition suggesting s different structure from other scholars, supposing that, it is impossible to make a legitimate incursion into this topic without both schools of thought. The article, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2-6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," by Nims and Steiner tackles the same section and makes the same comparisons as the Vleeming/Wesselius article, but we see a different conclusion.[44] In this article, Nims and Steiner focused on the origin of col. XII, 11– 9. They also spend a great deal of attention on aspects of the column that represent a "paganization" of Psalm 20. They espouse that Psalm 20 is the original and that P.Am. 63 represents a version that was paganized and syncretized with the "pagan" religion of Egypt. This interpretation rests on the identification of the deity Horus within the psalm. This places Nims/Steiner at odds with Vleeming/Wesselius. This dissertation will challenge the interpretation that Horus is represented in the text and look at other translation decisions in col. XII, 11–19. The duo published a few more articles before Nims passed, and Steiner would go on to publish other articles based on their collaboration. Steiner did not change most of his

[44] These areas of differences are addressed in Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*.

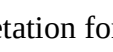
positions, particularly concerning the divine name. His interpretations will receive attention in dissertation chapter 3, which will propose a new translation and transliteration.

Another major work under scrutiny here is *Papyrus Amherst 63* by Karel van der Toorn. It is comprehensive and provides transliterations, translations, translator's notes, and commentary on the entire papyrus. Van der Toorn provides a sign list and plates, which makes it the most comprehensive resource to date. This work comes on the heels of years of research and several articles. One of his articles that is particularly important is "Celebrating the New Year with the Israelites: Three Extrabiblical Psalms from P.Am. 63," in which he identifies col. XII, 11–19 as the first of three psalms that represent the New Year Festival. In this article, he argues for the priority of P.Am. 63 contra to Steiner and Nims' preference for Psalm 20's priority. He believes that Psalm 20 is a Judean reorientation of the original Samarian psalm found in P.Am. 63. While this dissertation will interact with that idea, I will largely reject van der Toorn's translation choices that inform his various views about this section and the papyrus generally.

Tawny Holm has emerged as an important scholar concerning P. Am. 63. She has written various articles that explore other areas of the papyrus with fewer biblical connections. Holm has examined the relationship of P. Am. 63 with Babylonian religion with her work on the representation of the goddess Nanay.[45] Additionally, Holm has examined the Aramean culture. She is also working on the publication of an edition of this document. The edition is expected to be published next year. This is important because it will likely propose different interpretations

[45] Holm, "Nanay and Her Lover," 2.

from the previously mentioned scholars. When this edition is published it will become another resource that will shape scholarship on this topic.

One of the most prominent issues in col. xii 11–19 is the deity mentioned at the center of the section. Regarding the name of the deity in this section, the most important article has been put forth by Zauzich.[46] He set the standard interpretation for the word *ʾḥr* () being read as YHW. This has become the consensus interpretation with only a few dissenters.[47] However, it should be rightly noted that there is still difficulty concerning this interpretation, and it is not correct beyond any doubt. A conclusion about this name still "eludes us."[48] Zauzich suggested that the *aleph* in demotic has the fluidity to be read as a *yod*. He also suggests that the *ḥr* sign can be read as an *h*.[49] This issue is one that certainly needs more attention, as Rösel has done. Rösel looks at the previous scholarship in his article, "Israels Psalmen in Ägypten? Papyrus Amherst

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[46] Karl-Theodor Zauzich, "Der Gott Des Aramaisch-Demotischen Papyrus Amherst 63," *Göttinger Miszellen* 85 (1985): 89–90.

[47] Scholars that take a different interpretation include Steiner and Nims, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2-6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script"; Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script"; K.A.D. Smelik, "The Origin of Psalm 20," *JSOT* 31 (1985): 75–81; Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script"; Martin Rösel, "Israels Psalmen in Ägypten? Papyrus Amherst 63 Und Die Psalmen XX Und LXXV," *VT* 50.1 (2000): 81–99.

[48] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63: Essays on the Aramaic Texts in Aramaic/Demotic Papyrus Amherst 63*, 42.

[49] Zauzich, "Der Gott Des Aramaisch-Demotischen Papyrus Amherst 63," 89–90.

63 und Die Psalmen XX und LXXV," where he describes and analyses many of the issues at hand but ultimately concludes that even if this group of signs does not explicitly represent the name YHWH, that YHWH is without question the God being mentioned in the text, preferring to read this sign group as Yah.[50] This is a central issue that will determine the central character of the section in P.Am. 63, and a great deal of attention will be given to it in this dissertation.

Theory and Methodology

This dissertation will utilize various methods to examine P.Am. 63 col. XII, 11–19, but sociolinguistics will prove to be the core methodological approach of my research. With regard to the use of sociolinguistics in the study of the Hebrew Bible, Frank Polak states, "the method of sociolinguistics enable us to view the large-scale variation in Biblical Hebrew in light of the interaction between language and society, and thus to relate linguistic phenomena to a certain socio-cultural and socio-political context."[51] In the same way, this dissertation will use sociolinguistics to examine the societal circumstances of an Aramaic document written in Egyptian script located in Egypt, thereby exhuming some of the mysteries still buried within the text. Polak goes on to say, "One of the important aspects of sociolinguistics analysis is the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation between oral and written language."[52] This is particularly

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[50] Rösel, "Israels Psalmen in Ägypten?" 93.

[51] Frank Polak, "Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew," *Hebrew Studies* 47 (2006): 115.

[52] Polak, "Sociolinguistics," 115.

important in this circumstance because we see the representation of one language in writing, which is conveyed with a script that was not designed for the spoken components of language.

The culture and society in which the writer of P.Am. 63 lived was Egyptian, while the writer was not limited to Egyptian language or culture. The writer of P.Am. 63 likely existed within a community that represented another society within the larger Egyptian society. That smaller society had an Aramean context in Egypt, with a diasporic Judean society within it. Just as the ancient Egyptian society of the 4th century BCE was diverse representing Egyptian, West Asian, and Achaemenid cultures, the methodology of sociolinguistics allows for an analysis that draws out that diversity and analyses the scribal tendencies of the Judean scribes based upon that hybrid and multifaceted understanding.

When using sociolinguistics this dissertation will focus on three aspects of the discipline. These areas are attribution, iconicity, and branding. These ideas will help in understanding the tools being utilized in the context from which the document arose. This context is both a geographic and cultural. The document was written in the context of Egypt. These aspects (attribution, iconicity, and branding) of sociolinguistics provide a framework to analyze how this context would lend to the cultural influence of the document. The cultural influence arises from the West Asian communities represented. This dissertation will examine the Judean context of scribalism. Attribution, iconicity, and branding, which all identify linguistic features and measure the way in which that feature was developed or implemented because of the larger culture is the framework of this study. Utilizing these tools will enable the interpreter to place the text in the cultural context and determine the features represented in the document. Each term has individual importance, but an introduction to each will establish the trajectory moving forward.

The conception of attribution is "a process whereby one group of people make an association between a linguistic feature or language-related practice and another group of people supposedly use that feature or engage in that practice."[53] This allows us to examine two groups of people and the linguistic feature that connects them. This linguistic feature could be a script or a language. In the context of this study, both are germane. The presence of attribution does not define the motives or rationale. However, it does present a frame to further delve into the appropriation and analyze the contextual features that would insist on the attribution. Attribution is important to this study because the very nature of this document rests in the practice of using another group's linguistic features, in this case script. This dissertation will analyze this in Chapter 2. The heart of this analysis features the usage of a script not related or designed for a northwest Semitic language. Attribution helps to place this linguistic borrowing in perspective as well as the rationale of using the Demotic script. As do the other features such as iconicity. The second aspect of sociolinguistics is iconicity.

Iconicity (sometimes referred to as Iconisation) involves the transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features and the social images with which they are linked. These linguistic features that index social groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature of

[53] Mark Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," *Written Language & Literacy* 18.2 (2015): 209.

essence.[54] Iconicity places the linguistic feature as an essential part of the culture of the group. Whether language or script, these linguistic features are important parts of various cultures. Iconicity much like attribution places a spotlight on the linguistic features utilized in the document. Branding is the last of the aspects being applied.

Branding is often defined as the strategic promotion of the branded product or concept, its distinctiveness or 'unique selling point.[55] It is often seen in the use of orthographic features for advertising purposes. The emblematic choice of fonts, scripts, and symbols can imprint a product in the mind of the user. Thus, in many ways becoming recognizable. The brand can be established by the users themselves or by an outgroup. Branding like the other feature would involve the attribution of a linguistic feature, to be applied to sociolinguistic studies. Thus, this aspect is defined by a linguistic feature being appropriated by a group and using it to associate themselves with a larger brand or create a brand for themselves. Script is a key way that cultures differentiate themselves from other cultures. Considering this, the examination of the script as a sociolinguistic marker becomes pertinent. Within the scribal context, the script helps us understand more about the culture that utilized the writing system.

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[54] Judith I. Irvine and Susan Gal, "Language Ideology and Linguistic differentiation," in P. V. Kroskrity, ed., *Regimes of language: Ideologies, polities, and identities* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2000), 37.

[55] Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," 213.

Terminology

One aspect of this study that can be fraught with confusion is the terminology used. This is difficult because of the cultural makeup of the papyrus, which is eclectic. One of the groups has been identified with the Samarians. In Egypt, it is clear that there is a group associated with Judah. However, at some point, these groups merged[56] and were probably the group behind the "Samarian" section of P.Am. 63. I will generally refer to this section as the Judean section and connect this culture with Judean culture. Therefore, I will utilize the term Judean.

The problem concerning the usage of "Judean" and "Jewish" lies at the foot of linguistic evidence and how we interpret it socially. As mentioned, the term that is associated with these people coming from Judah is *yhwdy,* for example, found in Nehemiah 13, which paints the connection with the Language of Judah. In Esther the term is still used of a diasporic people outside of Judah. But still maintaining a common ancestry and connection to Judah. Additionally, both the Aramaic portions of Ezrah and Daniel. In both these cases it speaks of a person with connections to the land even while living outside the land and speaking a language other than Judean.[57] In Second Temple scholarship, there is a debate as to whether and when yhwdy and related terms are best translated as "Judean" or "Jewish." Steve Mason, for example,

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[56] Karel van der Toorn, *Becoming Diaspora Jews: Behind the Story of Elephantine*, 116.This was previously mentioned concerning the communities that are involved in the creation of this document.

[57] William M. Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew: Its Origins Through the Rabbinic Period* (Yale University Press, 2013), 5.

prefers to render *yhwdy* as "Judean" throughout the second temple period because he understands the term as predominantly an ethnic marker,[58] while others, like Shaye J.D. Cohen see a transition in the terms use from "Judean" to "Jewish" in the second century BCE.[59]

Considering these difficulties, this dissertation will have clear parameters for the usage of terms. Anything that relates to the period of the united monarchy of Israel will be termed Israelite. The identification of the scribal milieu and later cultural phenomenon that relates to the periods between the divided kingdom of Israel into the Common Era will be termed Judean. This is the most utilized term throughout this dissertation. Any evidence that directly relates to the identity of the diasporic community of the northern kingdom will be termed Samarian. Compiled texts and literature after 100 CE will be termed Jewish.

Transliteration Philosophy

There is no standard approach for rendering P. Am. 63. Some have decided to render using transliteration of Demotic and translation, while others have utilized Aramaic normalization. Below I include a transliteration of the Demotic script, which I then normalize utilizing the Aramaic square script. When I say "normalization," I mean rendering the consonants of the text in the Aramaic square script. A transliteration method used by many Demotists is utilized for this dissertation. For transliteration and Egyptian words, the Egyptian

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[58] Steve Mason, "Jews, Judaeans, Judaizing, Judaism: Problems of Categorization in Ancient History," *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 38 (2007): 463, 471, 480.

[59] Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1999), 70.

transliteration system will be utilized. Therefore, one feature that will stand out from many transliterations is that the letter *aleph* will appear in the ʾ form rather than *'*, or ʔ, which are utilized in past transliterations of this text.

In addition to using the transliteration system common among Egyptologists, this dissertation will usually utilize Latin letters to represent Aramaic and Hebrew. The usage of Aramaic square script will happen on occasion but will be in addition to the Latin letters. This is primarily when the Aramaic script helps visually. These transliterations will not contain vowels representing any consensus pronunciation. All letters that are present in the Hebrew or Aramaic will be represented by their Latin counterpart. Additionally, I will render *aleph* as *'*, and *ayin* will be represented by *ʿ*. The phonetic variance of *begadkaphat* (בגדכפת) letters will not be differentiated nor will vowels be represented except in the case of *matres lectiones,* which would have consonants representing the vowels.

Conclusion

P.Am. 63 has been a neglected treasure trove of information about the West Asian community in ancient Egypt. As a document that has been in the Amherst collection for over one hundred years, it has stumped scholars time and time again. It took half a century for scholars to grasp the use of the Aramaic language in the papyrus, and even after another half-century, there is still so much still to be understood. P. Am 63 is a resource that leaves breadcrumbs for insight and revelation about a Judean community living in Egypt. The text also tells us about Arameans, not to mention hints about the ancient Egyptian context. This is evident in the composition of P. Am. 63. The very idea of inclusivity in this hybridized world gives insight into the religious standards of this eclectic community.

This study serves those in biblical studies by showing the usage of a psalm in the community context of diaspora. This is distinguished as diaspora context in P. Am. 63, since the text discusses the P. Am. 63 community being from communities outside of Egypt. While some of these matters have been discussed in previous scholarship, I believe that there is another layer to uncover and many misunderstandings in need of clarification. The analysis of P. Am. 63 further undergirds the presence of the Judean community among the other Arameans. Understanding this complex community outside of the Judean monolith is necessary and examining the sociolinguistic traits of scribalism affords greater insight into the document. By using standards of Judean scribalism, we can decipher reasons for using various devices and the Demotic script. We can also have greater clarity on a correct translation. Lastly, this dissertation will identify cultural and religious imagery, providing a more in-depth understanding of the audience and scribes of P.Am. 63. Considering this dissertation aims to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript, it is important to understand the various scribal cultures that could influence the writing of P. Am. 63.

Chapter 2: Scribalism in Egyptian, and Levantine Hebrew and Aramaic Literature

Introduction

Ralph Ellison mused in his historic work Shadow and Act, "The act of writing requires a constant plunging back into the shadow of the past where time hovers ghostlike."[60] We see this played out in the ancient world as scribes plunge into the shadow of the past and draw from what has happened. Egyptian scribes would consult papyri that were already ancient in Egyptian antiquity. In the same way, West Asian scribes would utilize ancient works in their compositions. Concerning West Asians, this practice was common among Judeans who appropriate practices from other ancient Near Eastern cultures (i.e., Babylonian, and Egyptian) and earlier Levantine literature (i.e., earlier Israelite or Canaanite texts). This sets the stage for scribal culture. Scribal culture is a practice that develops concerning writing. This could entail devices used to write, content created or borrowed, or even methods of writing. The conception of writing is what makes scribal culture important, allowing cultures to innovate. Looking at all scribal cultures, it all starts with a writing system. While the origination of a writing system differs from culture to culture, the writing system is always the foundation. When considering the scribes of P. Am. 63, the question of the scribal culture is fascinating. Yet, this is a question that has not received a great deal of attention. Much like other areas of examination in this dissertation, scribalism is an area that is slowed by the inherent difficulty of the text and the lack of information surrounding the provenance. This dissertation examines the scribal void in order

[60] Ralph Ellison, *Shadow and Act*, reissue edition (New York: Vintage, 1995), xix.

to progress scholarship on the work that has already been completed on P. Am. 63. In this chapter, the examination will surround the development of a scribal culture that is present in the ancestor cultures of P. Am. 63 and the scribal culture of the creation and reception of the document. Therefore, this chapter will fulfill the aim of this dissertation to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript. This will require an examination of the development of Judean scribalism found in the Hebrew Bible, the culture of scribalism developed in Egypt and the Levant. The intersection of the two will lay the groundwork for the scribal practices present in P. Am. 63. In particular the scribalism demonstrated in the "Judean" section of P. Am. 63.

Scribal Connection between Egypt and Israel

The connection between Israel and Egypt is undeniable. Being able to trace the association shows the relationship that is forged over time. This also sets the foundation for this study on the scribalism of P. Am. 63, which has links with both scribal cultures. This connection is further seen in the biblical narrative by the number of times that Egypt is mentioned. Egypt is mentioned over 500 times. The connection is far deeper than these references. It goes down to the very fabric of the act of scribalism and writing. The bedrock of Egyptian influence in early Israelite scribalism continues into later literature and ultimately into P. Am. 63. This early influence is most prominent in the alphabetic system that was adopted by the Israelites to write their literature and in the terminology and tools utilized by the Israelites. The various connections of Israel and Egypt serve to trace the scribal lineage that ultimately forms the scribal culture of P. Am. 63.

Alphabet

The Aramaic alphabet was borrowed and adapted from the Phoenicians. This alphabet that would serve as a backdrop of the language, Aramaic, used in P. Am. 63, which ultimately finds its beginning in Egypt. And the Phoenician alphabet itself derives from Proto-Sinaitic, which represents the earliest evidence of alphabetic writing. Proto-Sinaitic was born out of Egyptian hieroglyphs.[61] Phoenician writing, and Paleo-Hebrew, are descendants of this script. The history of the alphabet has received much attention but there is not a consensus on questions of who nor why? The theories for the creators of the alphabet include Syro-Levantine workmen,[62] Hyksos slaves,[63] Hyksos elites,[64] elite yet illiterate Canaanite miners in the Sinai,[65]

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[61] Gordon James Hamilton, *The Origins of the West Semitic Alphabet in Egyptian Scripts* (Washington D.C: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 2006), 5–14.

[62] W. M. Flinders Petrie and C. T. Currelly, *Researches in Sinai* (New York: Dutton, 1906), 131.

[63] William Foxwell Albright, *The Proto-Sinaitic Inscriptions and Their Decipherment* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), 12.

[64] André Lemaire, "The Spread of Alphabetic Scripts (c. 1700—500 BCE)," *Diogenes* 55.2 (2008): 45–58.

[65] Orly Goldwasser, "How the Alphabet Was Born from Hieroglyphs," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 36.2 (2010): 40–53.

Amorites from Byblos,[66] Amorites more broadly,[67] elite Canaanites in the Egyptian administration,[68] West Asians living in the Delta,[69] and lastly, Egyptian administrators creating a more mundane script for administrative purposes.[70] Nadia Ben-Marzouk has added to this conversation suggesting that the script developed among West Asians as an aspect of inclusive othering.[71] While the ultimate reason and people behind the alphabet will remain a subject of debate, it is clear that this invention becomes fundamental for the Israelites and other West Asian populations. We will look at a couple of examples of early alphabets. The primary reason

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[66] Anson F. Rainey, "The Origins of the West Semitic Alphabet in Egyptian Scripts by Gordon J. Hamilton," *BASOR* 354 (2009): 83.

[67] Aaron A. Burke, *The Amorites and the Bronze Age Near East: The Making of a Regional Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 262 n.9.

[68] Christopher A. Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010).

[69] Hamilton, *The Origins of the West Semitic Alphabet in Egyptian Scripts*, 317–18; Aren Max Wilson-Wright, "Sinai 357: A Northwest Semitic Votive Inscription to Teššob," *JAOS* 136.2 (2016): 262.

[70] Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew*, 34–35.

[71] Nadia Ben-Marzouk, "Othering the Alphabet: Rewriting the Social Context of a New Writing System in the Egyptian Expedition Community," in *Ancient Egyptian Society*, ed. Danielle Candelora, Nadia Ben-Marzouk, and Kathlyn M. Cooney (New York: Routledge, 2023), 282.

is to see the appropriation of an Egyptian script that is then transformed into something different. The two instances of early alphabetic writing relevant to our study are found in Serabit el-Khadem and Theban Tomb 99. These instances provide evidence of the relationship between West Asian and Egyptian scribalism. This demonstrates the connectivity of the Levant and Egypt which provides a foundation for the practices of P. Am. 63.

Serabit el-Khadem

At Serabit el-Khadem an inscription was discovered that shows the earliest appropriation of Egyptian script for a Semitic language. There is a message inscribed on a sphinx, which is not fully understood. A portion can be translated that reads, "Gift to the Lady" (*m'tlb'lt*).[72] Ben-Marzouk suggests that the script was appropriated "in opposition to the Egyptian culture," in particular "the writing system, in order to signal its role in capturing non-Egyptian languages using Egyptian hieroglyphs, and the expedition script reflects the complex situated and blended identity of its inventors."[73] Dating to the 18th century BCE this artifact depicts one of the earliest representations of an alphabetic script. The antiquity of this artifact speaks to the longevity of the relationship between West Asian scribalism and Egypt.

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[72] This can be translated as "Gift of the Lady" or "Beloved of the Lady." See Aren M. Wilson-Wright, "'Beloved of the Lady Are Those Who . . .': A Recurring Memorial Formula in the Sinaitic Inscriptions," *BASOR* 384 (2020): 133–58.

[73] Ben-Marzouk, "Othering the Alphabet: Rewriting the Social Context of a New Writing System in the Egyptian Expedition Community," 297.

Figure 1. Proto- Sinaitic inscription at Serabit el-Khadim (The British Museum EA41748)

Theban Tomb 99 (TT 99)

The discovery of Theban Tomb 99 shines a light on the various ways early people utilized Egyptian scripts to convey different languages. The ostracon found at TT99 preserves writing in ink, a phrase, and a pictographic glyph (Figure 2). This ostracon shows that the hieratic characters were used to represent what would be a phonetic letter. This ostracon preserves Semitic words or phrases and connects them with a pictograph. It dates to the 15th century/ 18th Dynasty and was found in the tomb belonging to Senneferi.[74] Senneferi was a treasurer who worked under Tutmose III.[75] This discovery displays the usage of the *ḥalḥam* abecedary. It is the first discovery of this alphabetic order, which is attested in both Ugarit and

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[74] Ben Haring, "Halaḥam on an Ostracon of the Early New Kingdom?," *JNES* 74.2 (2015): 189–96.

[75] Ben Haring, "Ancient Egypt and the Earliest Known Stages of Alphabetic Writing," in *Understanding Relations Between Scripts II*, ed. Philip J. Boyes and Philippa M. Steele, Early Alphabets (Oxbow Books, 2020), 62.

Beth Shemesh. [76] Much like the previous example, this continues to solidify the evidence for Egyptian influence in West Asian scribalism, which demonstrates Egypt's part in the scribal culture of West Asia. Additionally, it displays the usage of foreign scripts to represent language. While there are difficulties with the text, I suggest it still clearly demonstrates the intersection of Egyptian and West Asian scribalism.[77] This approach is utilized in P. Am. 63 and is not an innovation but rather an aspect of scribal culture first utilized centuries before the creation of P. Am. 63.

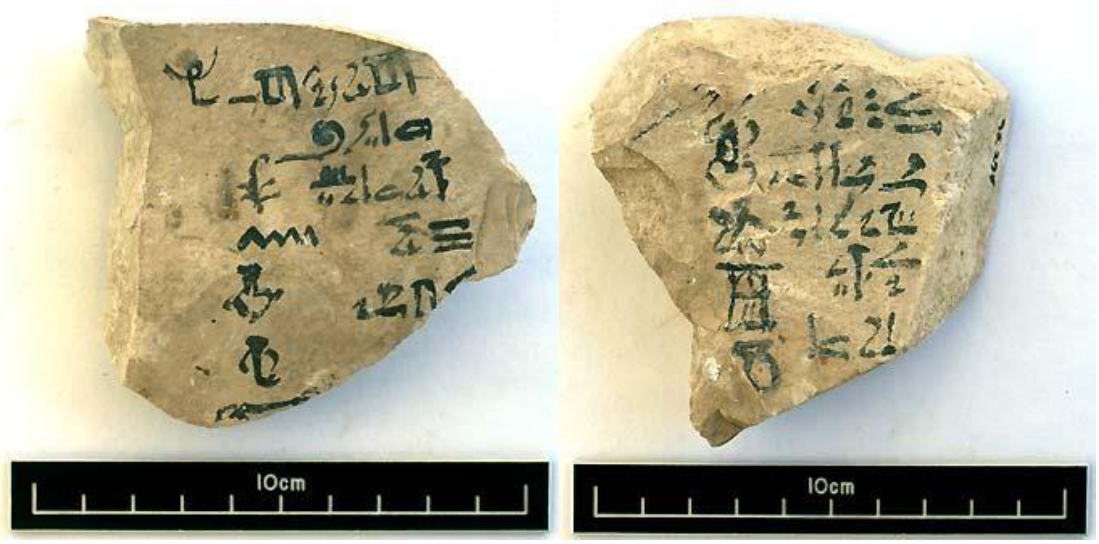

Figure 2. Ostracon no. 99.95.0297 from TT 99 obverse and reverse (photo from B. Haring 2015)

[76] Haring, "Halaḥam on an Ostracon of the Early New Kingdom?," 189.

[77] Thomas Schneider, "A Double Abecedary? Halaḥam and ʾAbgad on the TT99 Ostracon," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 379 (2018): 103–12.

Scribal Terminology, Tools, and Numerals

The establishment of the foundational interaction between the Levant and Egypt continues into the usage of terminology, tools, and numerals. The archaeological evidence of early Israelite writing possesses a clear parallel with Egyptian scribal practices. There is a usage of various colors, particularly black and red.[78] There is usage of hieratic numerals and many of the crucial scribal words in the Hebrew Bible are Egyptian loanwords. These include words such as ink (*dyw/ry.t*) and papyrus (*gmʾ/qmȝ*).[79] This overlap of terminology and tools signifies a deep-seated scribal influence that is palatable in ancient Hebrew texts.

Ink

The first of the scribal terminologies for discussion is ink. This is one loanword that is difficult to determine. Part of the difficulty relates to the transition between languages. Hebrew *dyw* (דיו) is likely connected to Egyptian *ry.t*. The term *ry.t* is used in the Middle Kingdom and means color or tint.[80] This word contextually deals with the color or tint of writing and is used for ink. The difficulty in the etymology is that an Egyptian *r* is not typically rendered as a Semitic *d*. Usually, there is a correlation between the two *r* phonemes. However, Hoch notes that there is a sporadic usage of the *r* or Semitic *d* and that Greek transcriptions of Hebrew names

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[78] Philip Zhakevich, *Scribal Tools in Ancient Israel: A Study of Biblical Hebrew Terms for Writing Materials and Implements* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Eisenbrauns, 2020), 166.

[79] Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew*, 36.

[80] *Wörterbuch* 2, 399

occasionally render *r* with *delta*.[81] An additional possibility comes from Lambdin, who suggests that a misspelling is a way to correlate the two words.[82] The scribal error of switching the *dalet* and *resh* is well-known in textual criticism. Considering this word for ink is a *hapax legomenon* that only occurs in Jer 36:18, it is possible that the scribes responsible for transmitting this text confused the two letters. The confusion of similar letters, such as the *resh* and *dalet* of the Aramaic square script, is a common scribal error found in ancient copies such as biblical manuscripts. There could be confusion about the spelling because the term for ink is from the Egyptian New Kingdom term and arrives in a Hebrew book dating to the Egyptian Late Period. The time between the New Kingdom and the Late Period provides enough of a gap to create disparities in the transmission. Because of the lack of evidence, it is hard to know whether the actual spelling and vocalization of *ry.t* made it into the Hebrew language. However, we are left with the *dyw*, which I suggest are the remaining, vestiges of the Egyptian original. The usage of this term continues into Aramaic. It is found in Jewish Babylonian, Galilean, early Targumic Aramaic, Mandaic, and Syriac.[83]

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[81] James E. Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom, and Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 430.

[82] Thomas O. Lambdin, "Egyptian Loan Words in the Old Testament," *JAOS* 73.3 (1953): 149.

[83] CAL, s.v. דיו. It is found 11 times in the Mishna which undergirds the continued usage in later Aramaic dialects, https://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il/Pages/PMain.aspx?koderekh=6963&page=1.

Papyrus

Papyrus is an essential part of scribalism that has its origin in ancient Egypt.[84] While there are many terms for reed and marsh, the Hebrew term *gm'* (גמע) is the term that is specifically used for the manufacturable papyrus material utilized in a variety of means but also by scribes.[85]

The connection between this term for papyrus and its Egyptian etymology has complications just like the previous term. The term *gm'* comes from the Egyptian *qmȝ*. The primary difficulty with this connection is the Egyptian *q* being realized as Semitic *g*. While there are clear differentiations between *q*, *g*, and *k* in early phases of the Egyptian language in later phases these phonemes become more muddled. Starting in Late Egyptian (c. 1350-700) *q* was realized in a variety of ways and among them was *g*. [86] Hoch similarly notes the opposition of the Egyptian *k*, *g*, and *q*.[87] In the Demotic phase of the language, there was much confusion among *k*,

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[84] Zhakevich, *Scribal Tools in Ancient Israel*, 8.

[85] Zhakevich, *Scribal Tools in Ancient Israel*, 8.

[86] James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Language: An Historical Study* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 46–53.

[87] Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom, and Third Intermediate Period*, 428.

g, and *q*.[88] This term for papyrus as stated means a manufacturable form of the plant. In the Bible, *gm'* is utilized to convey a plant that can be used in various forms.

Much like *dyw*, *gm'* continues into later communities. This term for papyrus is utilized in various Aramaic dialects but is also present in dialects that reflect a biblical tradition such as the Elephantine Judean community, Jewish Babylonian, Galilean, Samaritan Palestinian, Palestinian Targumic, early Targumic, and Late Jewish Literary Aramaic.[89] The Egyptian counterpart is also used in later communities and continues into Coptic appearing as *kam* (ⲔⲀⲘ).[90] In addition to the above scribal terminology, there is also a usage of hieratic numerals.

Numerals

Regarding Egyptian Hieratic numerals, the acquisition and utilization of a foreign numeric system that is standardly used demonstrates training across a region in a standardized format. Therefore, the usage of the foreign numeric system is evidence of formal standardized scribal training.[91] While this is true, it also demonstrates the Egyptian influence of the scribal system. The usage of hieratic numerals is attested throughout the Iron Age. This evidence ranges from the ninth to the sixth centuries BCE. Arad, Lachish, and Kadesh-Barnea are a few of the locations where these numerals are known from inscriptions. The fact that these numerals were

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[88] Janet H. Johnson, *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy: An Introductory Grammar of Demotic*, 4.

[89] CAL, s.v. דיו

[90] CDD Q (04.1) page 33.

[91] Rollston, *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel*, 129–30.

not used at only one location demonstrates that these were a part of the ancient Israelite scribalism. This again displays the influence that Egypt had on Israelite scribalism and all the scribal traditions that would evolve in the areas of Israel and Judah. Moving from the scribal foundation the next step is looking at aspects of the various scribal traditions.

Aramaic Scribalism

Scribalism of Aramaic speaking groups is an eclectic but crucial part of this study, being the choice language of P. Am. 63. Aramaic was utilized by various cultures to convey their messages and is an essential aspect of understanding this document. Initially, we see Aramaic used in the Aramean scribal culture as utilized by Aramean kings. This usage is seen in inscriptions like Tel Fekheriye, Tel Dan, and Zakkur. The Aramean kings detailed their exploits in the ninth century. The Arameans were the only culture to have a language that dominated the world but did not have an empire. Aramaic has a multicultural history. After the usage by the Arameans, it is incorporated into usage by the Assyrians and the Achaemenids. This is all before it becomes an integral part of the Judean scribal system. The usage of Aramaic is better defined by the culture which is using it for scribal purposes rather than the language itself. In particular, the Judean scribalism connected with Aramaic is the focus of our study. This will include Aramaic scribalism at Elephantine and Qumran, which would fall into the categories of Imperial and Early Jewish Literary Aramaic.

Imperial Aramaic is the Aramaic that was utilized by the Persian Empire. It was utilized in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Its influence certainly moved beyond this period, but this is the era that is generally characterized as Imperial Aramaic. However, the Persian chancellery

united them all in a strongly informed writing tradition.[92] This writing tradition was utilized in Mesopotamia, the Levant, and Egypt. The widespread nature of Imperial Aramaic makes it an important component of the understanding of Aramaic Scribalism. Among the variety of Aramaic dialects prior to the Achaemenid period, it was the Babylonian dialect that became the cornerstone of this chancellery.[93] It displays a propensity for nasalization and the extensive inclusion of *n*, even in words that do not etymologically contain an *n*.[94] The presences of nasalization where it is not expected demonstrates a graphic device that highlights consonantal length.[95] Considering this atypical feature of Aramaic, which is characteristic of Imperial Aramaic, it draws attention to a primary feature of this dialect, its hegemony. Imperial Aramaic remains surprisingly consistent in its orthography and even its peculiarities. Resulting from the assertion of power from the Achaemenid chancellery.[96] Imperial Aramaic is found in Elephantine and influences the texts of Qumran, and even biblical texts like Ezra or Daniel. Elephantine in particular and Qumran and the Hebrew Bible to a lesser degree are examples of Imperial Aramaic orthography and other features to the regional differences to create unique

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[92] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 103.

[93] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 163.

[94] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 163.

[95] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 171.

[96] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 171–73.

variances.[97] While Imperial Aramaic characterizes Elephantine, another category more specific to Qumran and Biblical Aramaic is classified as Early Jewish Literary Aramaic.[98]

Early Jewish Literary Aramaic is another category that would classify the scribalism of the Aramaic texts of the Hebrew Bible and Qumran. It is also known as Hasmonaean Literary Aramaic. This dialect is influenced by Imperial Aramaic. In fact, it possesses many of the conservative Achaemenid features of spelling and grammar alongside localized features.[99] Early Jewish Literary Aramaic connotes the literary characteristics which include several Jewish characteristics but also suggests a dating that is at the beginning of dialects such as Jewish Palestinian and Jewish Babylonian Aramaic.[100] This classification creates a category that is firmly fixed in the Jewish culture which would be directly connected with the Judean culture we have and will explore throughout this dissertation.

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[97] Russell Hobson, "Localized Scribal Systems at Elephantine and Qumran," *JANES* 33.1 (2018): 77–81.

[98] Daniel Michiela, "The Aramaic Language of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Why It Matters and What Lies Ahead," *Ancient Jew Review,* 10 April 2017, https://www.ancientjewreview.com/read/2017/3/22/the-aramaic-language-of-the-dead-sea-scrolls-why-it-matters-and-what-lies-ahead.

[99] Gzella, *A Cultural History of Aramaic*, 232–33.

[100] Michiela, "The Aramaic Language of the Dead Sea Scrolls."

Aramaic Scribalism at Elephantine

The Aramaic documents of Elephantine are important to this study of scribalism in P. Am. 63. While the location of P. Am. 63 is not verified as being Elephantine, understanding scribalism in this area is important because it exemplifies a West Asian community living in Egypt. While it might not be the same group, there are similar demographics between P. Am. 63 and the Elephantine Aramaic corpus. In fact, there could be scribal practices that are transferred to the document of P. Am. 63 because the Elephantine corpus was created prior to P. Am. 63. As has been seen previously aspects of scribalism can become ingrained into a culture. Therefore, it is certainly plausible that the West Asian community living in Egypt would have the vestiges of a scribal system adopted by a similar community.

In Elephantine, the corpus exhibits a variety of texts, which includes receipts, legal documents, a few literary texts, and various letters of correspondence. The textual corpus of Elephantine fits into the cosmopolitan picture of the Persian period given by Sheikh Fadl[101] and

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[101] "Inscriptions Araméennes Dans Une Tombe Égyptienne, Près de Sheikh-Fadl," *Syria* 4.3 (1923): 259–60; E. Christiana Köhler, "The University of Vienna Middle Egypt Project at El-Sheikh Fadl - Umm Raqaba: An Introductory Report of the 2014 and 2015 Field Seasons," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 103.2 (2017): 229–40; E. Christiana Köhler et al., "Preliminary Report on the Investigation of a Late Period Tomb with Aramaic Inscription at El-Sheikh Fadl/Egypt," *Ägypten Und Levante / Egypt and the Levant* 28 (2018): 55–84.

P. Am. 63, which concern Mesopotamian or Egyptian Kings.[102] The scribal system in Elephantine is arguably one of the best examples of localized scribal practices in the Second Temple Period.[103] This is because there is a large corpus of texts that circulate within a generally small community. Therefore, the scribal practices were largely confined to this community. This does not mean that it became a scribal system alien to that of other West Asian communities but rather it developed aspects that are more observable throughout the corpus.

The scribal culture could be based in hereditary relationships. This possibility is because of the names of two scribes, Nathan bar Ananiah (TAD B2 3; B2 4; B2 6; B2 7; B3 3; B6 4), and Mauziah bar Nathan (TAD A4 3; A4 10; B2 9; B2 10; B3 5; B3 8; B6 4; B7 1; D3 17). These names provide the scant evidence of hereditary scribal community. But it does suggest that there is a connection between scribes, which is familial. The people present in these hereditary scribal relationships were most likely professional scribes. The homeowners of Elephantine sought out these scribes to ensure that the deeds of their homes were properly registered. This further suggests that a scribal community was present. Rather, that there is a type of tradition that was taught among the scribes whether related or not.

Another option concerning the scholastic setting of the scribal training in Elephantine is the Temple of YHW. The lack of religious documents gives pause about the Elephantine scribal school being present in the Temple of Yaho. However, the presence of the Behistun Inscription

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[102] Seth L. Sanders, *From Adapa to Enoch: Scribal Culture and Religious Vision in Judea and Babylon* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 186.

[103] Hobson, "Localized Scribal Systems at Elephantine and Qumran," 86.

of King Darius (DB) text could point to a temple setting. The copies of the DB were utilized to undergird the imperial mythology of the Achaemenid Empire. While the DB inscription demonstrates monumentality because of its place on a mountainside, this text was commissioned and written in other forms. Having a text like the DB present in Elephantine would serve as part of a curriculum of disparate imperial doctrines and textual sources that might be studied in dialogue with each other.[104] When considering the Achaemenid Empire, it was common to allow the various vassal states to freely worship their own gods. Yet, there was still something that would undergird a loyalty to the Empire. The incorporation of such texts into the scribal curriculum would serve this function. Particularly if the scribal center was located in the temple context. The incorporation of Achaemenid ideology is not unknown among Judeans. It is present in Ezra-Nehemiah.[105] In this book, various Achaemenid ideologies are utilized. Throughout the book the Achaemenids are depicted as a kind and generous benefactor, showing how the Empire points them towards the law and their God.[106] In Nehemiah 9, the tone seems more negative, and the nation is being oppressed by the Achaemenids. This characterization seems to follow the same rationale from DB. Those who rebel and disobey are harshly treated (TAD C2 3:30-35).

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[104] Mark Leuchter, "The Aramaic Transition and the Redaction of the Pentateuch," *JBL* 136.2 (2017): 257.

[105] Leuchter, "The Aramaic Transition and the Redaction of the Pentateuch," 257.

[106] David Janzen, "Yahwistic Appropriation of Achaemenid Ideology and the Function of Nehemiah 9 in Ezra-Nehemiah," *JBL* 136.4 (2017): 839–40.

This would dissuade the Judeans from rebelling. [107] Much like Ezrah-Nehemiah with its DB influence found itself in religious contexts, the DB in Elephantine would have also been intended for that context to emphasize fealty in the most ideological of realms in an ancient society, the temple. Religious communities elsewhere also utilize Aramaic scribalism to convey important messages. Qumran serves as another example that illuminates the scribal ingenuity among Judean scribal communities.

Aramaic Scribalism at Qumran

Scribalism among the scribes of Qumran is typical of Judean scribal practices that shed light on the overall Judean scribal training. It first connects because the people involved are Judean. Hobson provides clarity in his study by examining the similarities between the Aramaic of Elephantine and Qumran.[108] The baseline of comparison starts with the orthographic and phonological features of Imperial Aramaic. This compels us not to analyze Qumran as an extensively developed localized scribal system but rather as part of a wider corpus of Levantine texts from the Second Temple period.[109] Even considering this the Qumran text could fall into the category of early Jewish Literary Aramaic[110] that situates itself in the larger Judean culture.

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[107] Janzen, "Yahwistic Appropriation of Achaemenid Ideology and the Function of Nehemiah 9 in Ezra-Nehemiah," 856.

[108] Hobson, "Localized Scribal Systems at Elephantine and Qumran." 99.

[109] Hobson, "Localized Scribal Systems at Elephantine and Qumran," 99.

[110] Machiela, "The Aramaic Language of the Dead Sea Scrolls." It is important to note that the text of P. Am. 63 does not fall into the category of Jewish Literary Aramaic, however,

One feature I suggest a tendency diasporic texts, which are used by diasporic communities to identify themselves as diaspora people and those who are in a land not seen as their home.[111] The Book of Tobit is a diaspora tale that depicts the tension between life in the homeland and those who lived in exile, which is represented in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. The Book of Tobit possesses the aspects of the diaspora tale because of its setting in a foreign context and the allusions to Ahiqar. At Qumran, there are copies of both Hebrew and Aramaic fragments.[112] Another example of this Early Jewish Literary Aramaic is the book of Daniel. This book also has diasporic features, situating its narrative around diasporic peoples in a foreign land. This is a primary feature of diaspora tales and is also a common feature of the examples discussed previously. It is not uncommon for texts to find themselves in the larger cultural milieu that is represented by the authors. In this case, the cultural milieu is Judean. I believe that P. Am 63 has portions, such as the "Psalms," which fall into this milieu. This is demonstrated in the comparisons between P. Am. 63 and Aramaic literature.

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because of the association with Qumran it is important to mention how its cultural implications could also have an impact on understanding P. Am. 63.

[111] This is not to discount other tendencies of Aramaic texts such as scientific, prediluvian, and pseudepigrapha. However, this tendency towards diaspora speaks to many communities that write Aramaic literature.

[112] Beate Ego, "The Book of Tobit and the Diaspora," in *The Book of Tobit: Text, Tradition, Theology* (Brill, 2005), 41–42.

Papyrus Amherst and Aramaic Literature

The similarities between Elephantine and Qumran Aramaic are largely in the areas of orthography and phonology. The usage of texts created as diaspora tales are another important similarity. These tales set during the diaspora are sometimes referred to as diaspora novellas. This is seen in the Ahiqar text, which was probably a universally used school text among Aramaic scribes.[113] In Elephantine, the oldest example of Ahiqar is found dating back to the fifth century BCE. Ahiqar can often be characterized in various categories and one of them is diaspora novella.[114] The concept of a novella is an "entertaining prose narrative fiction, in written form as opposed to oral...which attains enough length to allow for the development of plot and subplot, description, dialogue, characterization, and the examination of thoughts and motives."[115] Placing this in a diasporic context appeals to the community that shares aspects of exile with the protagonists of the tale. Tales like Ahiqar often fall into multiple novella categories such as court

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[113] Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe,* 133.

[114] Seth Bledsoe, "Wisdom In Distress: A Literary And Socio-Historical Approach To The Aramaic Book Of Ahiqar" (Florida State University, Dissertation, 2015), 67; Amy-Jill Levine, "Diaspora as Metaphor: Bodies and Boundaries in the Book of Tobit," in *Diaspora Jews and Judaism: Essays in Honor of, and in Dialogue with, A. Thomas Kraabel,* ed. J.A. Overman and R.S. Maclenan, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 41 (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1992), 105, suggests that diaspora is a functional aspect of Ahiqar.

[115] Lawerence M. Wills, "The Jewish and Hellenistic Novel," in *The Biblical World,* ed. Katherine J. Dell, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2021), 189.

tales. It is possible that this tradition continued to be read and taught by Judeans (be it in Palestine or the Egyptian diaspora) who did not yet feel bound by the biblical commitment to the one true God and his law.[116] In addition to the variety, this diasporic literature signifies a scribal culture that connects all three of these scribal traditions.

The West Asian community of P. Am. 63 was eclectic but still found themselves out of their original home. This diasporic context is evident in various places, but one example is found in col. xvii line 3, which states, "I am from Judah ([*y*]*hwd*)." The text then designates the scribe's/author's brother being a Samarian and his sister as a resident of Jerusalem. This line considers at least a portion of the audience to be original residents of the Levant. Moreover, P. Am. 63 situates this collection of Levantines to be displaced and away from their original homes of Judah, Jerusalem, and Samaria. Aramaic scribalism can utilize Ahiqar and other diasporic literature to highlight their position in the societies where they currently live. I suggest that P. Am. 63 can be categorized as a diasporic text alongside Ahiqar[117] because it depicts the receiving

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[116] Reinhard G. Kratz, "Aḥiqar and Bisitun: The Literature of the Judeans at Elephantine," in *Elephantine Revisited*, ed. Margaretha Folmer, New Insights into the Judean Community and Its Neighbors (Penn State University Press, 2022), 80.

[117] Joseph John Cross, "The Poetics of Plot in the Egyptian and Judean Novella," 23. Also see Reinhard G. Kratz, "Aḥiqar and Bisitun: The Literature of the Judeans at Elephantine," in *Elephantine Revisited*, ed. Margaretha Folmer, New Insights into the Judean Community and Its Neighbors (Penn State University Press, 2022), 69.

community (particularly the Judean ones) as people from other communities who find themselves displaced.

P. Am. 63 also share the backdrop of scribal production. I suggest scribal manufacturing of P. Am. 63 in a temple context or by religious groups. The content verifies a religious designation of the text. In Elephantine, I suggest a temple setting of scribal training although the content of many of the texts are not religious. Some of the economic transactions deal with payments to the temple. Additionally, some of the scribes are or are associated with the khn or priests that would be a part of the Temple of Yahu.[118] In Qumran, the texts were developed from the Qumran religious sect. While the texts of P. Am. 63 are eclectic, the texts are also largely religious. Gods are invoked, praised, and described in the text of P. Am. 63. The content of P. Am. 63 signifies a similar production backdrop to the previous Aramaic texts. While P. Am. 63 has a connection to Aramaic scribalism because of the language in which it was written, it also has a connection to Hebrew scribal practices. This is demonstrated by some of the content and the identification with the Judean and Samarian communities. Because of this connection the scribal practices of the ancient Hebrew traditions also provide vital information about the overall scribal culture of P. Am. 63.

Scribalism in the Ancient Hebrew Tradition

Literature of the Hebrew language, which includes both inscriptional and biblical traditions, displays a clear scribal tradition. While there is much to be said about the intricacies

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[118] Andre Lemaire, "Aramaic Literacy and School in Elephantine," *MAARAV* 21.1–2 (2014): 297–98, 305.

of the scribal nuances, this section will survey some of the evidence displaying the existence of a scribal tradition and how it relates to P. Am. 63. Areas that display the Hebrew scribal traditions include Kuntillet Ajrud, the Ketef Hinnom amulets, the Hebrew Bible, and the appropriation of scripts. Ultimately these set the foundation for Judean scribalism. These examples relate to P. Am. 63 because the Judean foundation is present in the document.

Kuntillet Ajrud

The site of Kuntillet Ajrud is a site that is located on a hill overlooking Wadi Quraiya about 30 miles south of Kadesh Barnea. This site has received much treatment because it displays scribalism and scribal education in ancient Israel. Artifacts of particular import are the two pithoi that seem to display scribal exercises. The importance of this site to this particular study is not in the nuances of the scribes that give us more information about scribal education but in the reality of scribal education that it solidifies. One reality is the Egyptian influence. This is present in the usage of both red and black ink. This feature is unusual in Israel and the Levant but common among Egyptian texts.[119] In addition, Kuntillet Ajrud displays abecedaries. This feature connects Kuntillet Ajrud with the scribal culture displayed previously with the creation of the alphabet. Kuntillet Ajrud continues the usage of the alphabet and various scribal exercises connected with learning this tool. Kuntillet Ajrud serves as a prime example of scribal education among Hebrew-speaking communities in the Levant.

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[119] Schniedewind, *The Finger of the Scribe*, 28–29.

Ketef Hinnom

Ketef Hinnom is another documented example of scribalism. In this case, we see the usage of magical incantations for protection. In the Ketef Hinnom amulets, the Aaronic blessing from Numbers 6 (as well as Deuteronomy 7:9) is utilized. These inscriptions demonstrate that scribes utilized these words for a magical purpose. The scribal recitation of these words is apotropaic and creates a tradition that is also utilized in Psalm 12.[120] Scribes continue the tradition of placing this phrase on objects as apotropaic magic. This tradition is evident in the Aramaic translation of Numbers 6:24-26 found in Pseudo-Jonathan. The targums often convey an understanding of the text that is infused in the traditions of various communities. In this targum, the "guarding" is associated with apotropaic guarding from demons.[121] The targum calls for YHWH's protection from "Lilith demons (**לילי**), Mazia demons (**מזייעי**), noonday demons (בני טיהררי), morning demons (בני צפרירי), imps (מזיקי), and shadow demons (טלני)." The apotropaic understanding seems to have transcended and become a lasting interpretation of this text at least to the point of the translation of this targum. This displays how earlier texts can create patterns that are repeated in later texts. This tradition expresses the usefulness of utilizing

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[120] Jeremy Smoak, "May Yhwh Bless You and Keep You from Evil: The Rhetorical Argument of Ketef Hinnom Amulet I and the Form of the Prayers for Deliverance in the Psalms," *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion* 12.2 (2012): 207.

[121] Jeremy D. Smoak, *The Priestly Blessing in Inscription and Scripture: The Early History of Numbers 6:24-26* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2.

biblical prayers and phrases to call upon YHWH to act on their behalf. The example of Ketef Hinnom occupies the position of scribal tradition in both the inscriptional and biblical traditions.

Scribalism in the Hebrew Bible

Scribalism is replete in the Hebrew Bible. It is displayed in every genre of text. Whether acrostics in the psalms or usage of tropes and imagery in narrative texts. This section surveys the presence of scribalism in the Hebrew Bible but also identifies two areas that are similar to P. Am. 63. The two areas of importance are the usage of other biblical texts and diaspora stories. One displays the usage of sacred texts that become important to a community while the other displays the personalization of a corpus for a community that experiences diasporic trauma.

Usage of other Biblical Texts

When dealing with the reuse of certain texts by biblical authors, two approaches become important in classifying that usage. Those classifications are inner-biblical allusion and intertextuality. I will spend some time defining all these terms to demonstrate the difference. The concept of intertextuality "focuses on manifold linkages among texts or on connections between a text and commonplace phrases from the cultural systems in which the text exists."[122] Intertextuality is diachronic. Intertextuality requires textual links but not an understanding of which text is first. An allusion, however, is a "textual snippet reminiscent of a phrase in an

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[122] Benjamin D. Sommer, "Allusion and Intertextuality in the Hebrew Bible: A Response to Lyle Eslinger," *VT* 46 (1996): 486. Jeffery M. Leonard, "Inner-Biblical Allusions: Psalm 78 as a Test Case," *JBL* 127 (2008): 242.

earlier author's writing but smoothly incorporated into the new context of the imitating author's work."[123]

The authors of the Hebrew Bible use examples of allusion, intertextuality, and other literary forms of reference biblical texts composed by different authors. The choice to use certain biblical texts and not others reflect textual attraction. Certain texts are chosen because they have high value in society, which could be political or religious. The Hebrew Bible is built by scribes as a religious document that encompasses political power. This undergirds the reason for a scribe to utilize established texts. That reason is "the fact that exegesis, allusion, and interpretation in antiquity were drawn especially to texts that were theologically or politically charged."[124] The more prominent or influential a text was, the more textually attractive it would be to later scribes. This is evident in political texts like 2 Samuel 7, which depicts the Davidic Covenant,[125] while religious texts like the Aaronic Blessing also convey this textual attraction. Additionally, poetry can display this as seen in Psalm 78's usage of Pentateuchal sources. The more textually attractive the more evidence for certain literature among those who receive the text. While some texts are textually charged other texts take on a genre that represents the people in their situations, which is the case with diaspora texts.

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[123] Gregory Machecek, "Allusion," *MLA* 122.2 (2007): 525.

[124] William Schniedewind, "Innerbiblical Exegesis," *Dictionary of The Old Testament: Historical Books*, 504.

[125] William Schniedewind, "Innerbiblical Exegesis," 504.

Diasporic Texts (Diaspora Novellas) of the Hebrew Bible

We have seen the diasporic texts that are in schools of Aramaic scribalism, but they are equally present in Hebrew Literature. Diasporic texts are an important part of the Hebrew Bible and a sign of scribalism. These texts are utilized as a foundation of hope for cultures that are in the diaspora and become a cultural identifier. These stories set during the diaspora are sometimes referred to as diaspora novellas. Some biblical texts reflecting this diasporic genre are Daniel 1–6, Jonah, and Esther.[126] The genre of diaspora texts, like Ahiqar mentioned previously, represented as well as interpreted the diasporic life of Judeans.[127] Further, diaspora texts "develop a particular theological emphasis addressed to the emerging Jewish communities of the Persian and Hellenistic diaspora."[128] This theological emphasis makes it a significant indicator of scribal culture. Another indication is the choice of script. The appropriation of the Aramaic script is the next important aspect of scribalism in the Hebrew Bible.

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[126] Joseph John Cross, "The Poetics of Plot in the Egyptian and Judean Novella" (The University of Chicago, 2022), 23, notes that "Esther and Daniel 1 – 6 are also classified under the genre of court tales, codifying in folkloric terms the oft-noted shared motif of a (frequently foreign) courtier finding success against all odds in the court of a king."

[127] Joseph John Cross, "The Poetics of Plot in the Egyptian and Judean Novella," 23, Arndt Meinhold, "Die Gattung der Josephsgeschichte und des Estherbuches: Diaspora-novelle I," *Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 87 (1975): 320.

[128] W. Lee Humphreys, "A Life-Style for Diaspora: A Study of the Tales of Esther and Daniel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 92, no. 2 (1973): 211,

Appropriation of Aramaic Script

Script is an important part of Hebrew scribalism and is clear in the transition from the paleo-Hebrew script to the Aramaic square script. The utilization of the Paleo-Hebrew script is evident in inscriptional and some post-biblical texts (i.e. Qumran), however, as a whole it will not receive attention here because there is a shift in the usage and priority of script over time. After the beginning of the Second Temple period, there is a movement toward the usage of the Aramaic square script rather than the paleo-Hebrew script. This movement was almost immediate.[129] Scribes in regional chanceries adjusted extremely rapidly to master the technology, this includes morphology and ductus of new scripts in whatever language dominated the administrative and commercial spheres of the region.[130] The dominant script was Aramaic because of its usage by the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Achaemenid Empires, which utilized it in the areas of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Levant. The continual use of the paleo-Hebrew script in the 4th century BCE is a revival but not characteristic and does not usurp Aramaic as the primary script. During the Babylonian period, Aramaic replaces Hebrew.[131] While Hebrew

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[129] Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew*, 131.

[130]David S. Vanderhooft, "El-Mĕdînâ Ûmĕdînâ Kiktābāh: Scribes and Scripts in Yehud and in Achaemenid Transeuphratene.," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 535. Vanderhooft, "El-Mĕdînâ Ûmĕdînâ Kiktābāh: Scribes and Scripts in Yehud and in Achaemenid Transeuphratene.," 535.

[131] Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew*, 132.

language and script would have a place among a narrow circle, it is largely replaced, and Aramaic becomes dominant.[132] Before moving to Egyptian scribalism it is pertinent to observe how P. Am. 63 relates to Hebrew Literature.

P. Amherst 63 and Ancient Hebrew Literature

P. Am. 63 has connections to Hebrew literature even though it is an eclectic document. The connection to Hebrew literature in an Aramaic document is evident through communities such as Elephantine. While the Elephantine community uses Aramaic language, they designated themselves as being Judean (TAD A3 8:12; A4 1:1; A 4 3:12; A4 7:19; etc.…). By this designation, they also associate themselves with both the place and ideological texts of Judah and called upon the deity of Judah (*yhw*). Additionally, those associated with Judah fall into the long line of Hebrew scribalism regardless of the language that is used. Papyrus Amherst 63 itself creates an association with Judean identity. The section previously mentioned in col. xvii line 3, speaks about labeling oneself as "from Judah ([*y*]*hwd*)" and further characterizing his "brother" being a Samarian and his "sister" as a resident of Jerusalem. There is a consciousness in this text about a segment of the population being a part of the Judean and Samarian lineage. The most blatant evidence of that overarching scribal culture is the appearance of the parallel to Psalm 20. In part, it causes this study to look closely at Hebrew parallels because the sample text is so closely related to the biblical psalm. Much like with Ketef Hinnom the usage of biblical literature displays an aspect of Hebrew scribalism that is present in both the inscriptional and biblical

[132] Joseph Naveh, "Hebrew Texts in Aramaic Script in the Persian Period?," *BASOR* 203 (1971): 32.

traditions. Much like Ketef Hinnom and the Hebrew Bible, the usage of biblical allusions and quotations becomes an important scribal component. In the Hebrew Bible, biblical authors quoting other biblical authors and allusions are common. P. Am. 63 utilizes this method with the adoption of literature (most likely the *Vorlage* to Psalm 20) that relates to the temple practices of ancient Israel. P. Am. 63 also makes a similar movement that is evidenced by Hebrew literature transitioning to the Aramaic square script. The adoption of the script is multilayered and will receive attention below. Having considered the various connections between P. Am. 63 and Hebrew, it is important to now look at Aramaic scribalism. Both Hebrew and Aramaic literature provide interesting insights for P. Am. 63, but another area that will provide necessary insights is scribalism in Egypt.

Scribalism in Egypt

Writing in ancient Egypt was extremely important. The profession of a scribe was an ancient profession that goes back to the Pyramid texts and became a vital role in the development of the complex state at the beginning of the Old Kingdom.[133] It was a major part of the culture even though much of the population was non-literate. This was a commonality in the ANE. This demonstrates even more the necessity of a scribal curriculum among scribes. Whether early or late in Egyptian history, there was a scribal tradition that was institutionalized in the temple scriptorium and maintained through formal training in an apprenticeship setting.[134] There was

[133] Ronald J. Williams, "Scribal Training in Ancient Egypt," *JAOS* 92.2 (1972): 214.

[134] Jacco Dieleman, "Scribal Practices In The Production Of Magic Handbooks In Egypt," *CIMT* (2011): 90.

not a training system that guaranteed uniformity in the appearance of the script. Regarding the script and the individual hand, there could be incredible differences based on geography, genre, and phase.[135] The Egyptian language had various phases. It is separated into Old, Middle, and Late Egyptian, Demotic, and Coptic. The scripts utilized to record these language phases are Hieroglyphic, Hieratic, Demotic, and Coptic. With these various phases, there can be evidence of archaizing in certain texts. In addition, the current vernacular or phase could manifest in a text using a more classical phase (i.e. Late Egyptian grammar and vocabulary in Middle Egyptian texts). There could be a great deal said about Egyptian scribalism, as a whole. For the sake of this study, the focus will be on Demotic scribalism. The aim is to display clarity on the scribal culture that directly influenced the document of P. Am. 63.

Demotic scribalism is split into three stages. It is divided into Early, Middle, and Late Demotic. Early Demotic covers the Saite and Persian periods (c. 650–332); Middle Demotic characterizes the texts of the Ptolemaic period (c. 332–30 BCE) and Late Demotic is the phase of the

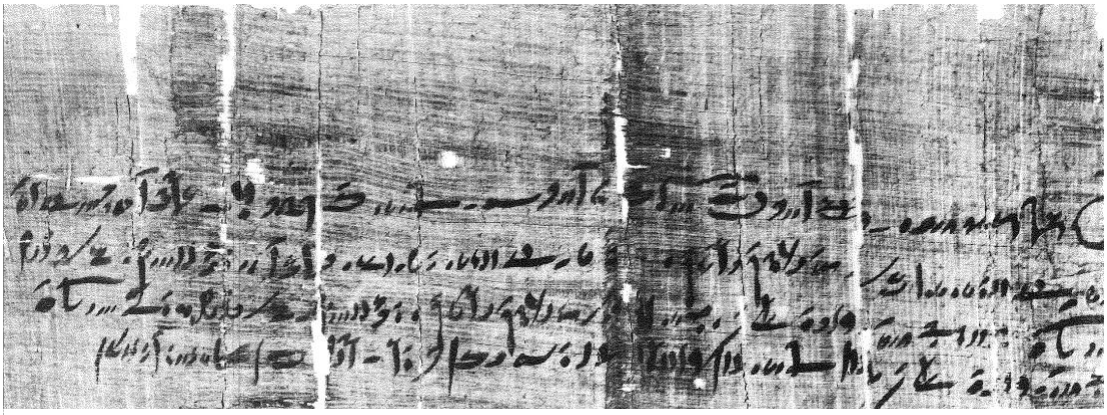

Figure 3 Hawara Papyri

[135] Mark Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, vol. 28 of *Paptologica Bruxellensia* (Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1997), 37.

Roman period (c. 30 BCE–250 CE).[136] Late Demotic was last written on papyrus during the reign of Phillipus Arabs (244–249), however, it continued to appear as graffiti with the last example being dated to December 11, 452 CE.[137] The dating of the script is largely based on paleography and the format of the legal texts.[138] Demotic appears c. 650 BCE when it is first used under Psammetichus I during the Saite Dynasty.[139]

In the Early Demotic phase, it is utilized as an administrative and legal script. This became the official standard under Amasis (570–526 BCE) and leads to the disappearance of Hieratic in this capacity. This phase ends around 400 BCE and is described as a bold script with separately formed signs, or with ligatures of which the Hieroglyphic origin is generally clear,

Figure 4 Elephantine Papyri

[136] Joe G. Manning and Raymond Westbrook, "Demotic Law," in *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 820.

[137] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 25.

[138] Manning and Westbrook, "Demotic Law," 820.

[139] Janet H Johnson, *The Demotic Verbal System*, The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago in Ancient Oriental Civilization 38 (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2004), 1.

thus displaying a closer relationship with Hieratic.[140] By the end of the Saite Dynasty Demotic is used for both legal and everyday matters.[141]

Middle Demotic is sometimes called Ptolemaic Demotic because it dates to the Ptolemaic period. Demotic has a more fluid usage in this phase. It is used for literary texts and there is a rich amount of documentary texts of all kinds. It appears from the present evidence that using Demotic for literary texts was predominately an invention of Egyptian priests during the Ptolemaic period.[142] It would give way to Greek, although Demotic documents would still be produced, they would be limited to the temple, thus confining Demotic education. The Demotic of this phase is written smaller and has a considerable stylization of both separate signs and ligatures with the Hieroglyphic or Hieratic relationship of the sign barely recognizable.[143]

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[140] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 23.

[141] Johnson, *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy: An Introductorut Grammar of Demotic*, 1.

[142] Jacqueline E. Jay, "Orality and Literacy in the Demotic Tales," in *Orality and Literacy in the Demotic Tales* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 56.

[143] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 23–25.

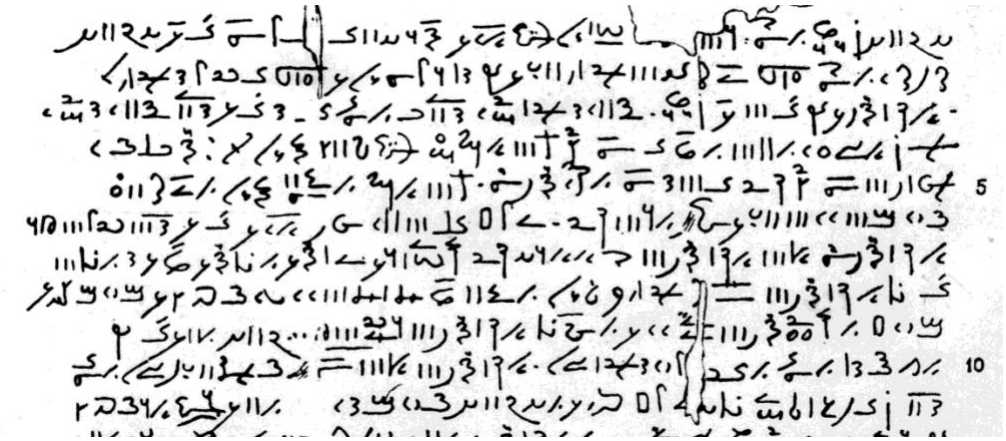

Figure 5 Mythus In the Search of Man

The final phase is the late phase of Demotic also known as Roman Demotic. As previously stated, the last Demotic graffiti we find is from the mid-fifth century CE. This final inscription is found at the temple of Philae.[144] Philae is a temple at the southern border of ancient Egypt where Isis was worshiped by many, including Nubians.[145] It was the last temple to Isis that was operating largely due to this geographical isolation. In the kingdom of Meroe, the Demotic script is adopted as the basis from which cursive the Meroitic script is developed.[146] During the Roman period, Demotic becomes less used in public life but still is used for a generous number of texts. Depauw calls this the "culmination of Demotic literary production."[147] The reason is because of the quantity of texts and the various genres produced but also because of the high

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[144] Johnson, *Thus Wrote 'Onchsheshonqy: An Introductorut Grammar of Demotic*, 1.

[145] Solange Ashby, "Calling Out to Isis: The Enduring Nubian Presence at Philae" (University of Chicago, Dissertation, 2016), 1.

[146] Claude Rilly, "Meroitic Writing," *UEE* 1.1 (2022): 4.

[147] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 25.

quality of the texts. Demotic would not begin to phase out of usage until it disappears from the administrative sphere. There is a gradual shift from Demotic to Coptic as newly converted Christians would reject the religious concepts embedded in the scripts. In addition, the Demotic script phases out completely when it is no longer used at Philae. This most likely coincided with the cessation of the Isis cult at Philae.[148] These Demotic scribal habits should shed light on the document and the ways that the Egyptian culture influenced the document of P. Am. 63.

Demotic Scribal Habits

As mentioned, there are differences in the various phases of Demotic. However, there are common features that are palpable because of the very nature of scribal learning housed at the temple scriptorium. One clear example is the high level with which the texts are written. Even among the poor scribes, there is a level of excellence because the actual documents are generally well written with the only exceptions being scribal exercises.[149] Some other aspects of commonality among scribes include the script. Not the way it looks or certain conventions, but the way the script was utilized for writing foreign words, names, or sounds. Lastly, the religious component will receive discussion. This can demonstrate additional rationale for the appropriation of such a script. This section will explore these three areas and display aspects of

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[148] Martin Stadler, "On the Demise of Egyptian Writing: Working with a Problematic Source Basis," in *The Disappearance of Writing Systems: Perspectives on Literacy and Communication*, ed. John Baines, John Bennet, and Stephen Houston (London: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2008), 153.

[149] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 27.

the Demotic script that need further attention when considering both this document but also the reasons for appropriation.

Script

The script of Demotic has a long history of usage. It was used for almost a thousand years and served as a script for the Egyptians, and, by way of appropriation, the alphabetic signs would be used to develop a cursive Meroitic script. In addition, it served the West Asian cultures that authored P. Am. 63. As mentioned previously, Demotic is the fourth phase of the Egyptian language and the third script utilized by the Egyptians. Demotic script developed in Lower Egypt contemporaneously with Abnormal Hieratic. Abnormal Hieratic was a more cursive form of Hieratic. While both Abnormal Hieratic and Demotic developed from Hieratic, more sources in Upper Egypt demonstrate the evolution of Abnormal Hieratic. Regardless of the details concerning the origins of Demotic it begins to eclipse Abnormal Hieratic in the 6th century BCE and becomes the primary script under Amasis.[150]

As stated, the script evolves and changes in the various iterations over time. It not only has temporal evolutions, but almost dialectical differences based on location and scribal school. Some scribes had more cursive writing while some scribes in Lower Egypt preferred a more uncial style which was reminiscent of early Demotic. The present evidence does display paleographic differences between Lower and Upper Egypt, but more scholarship is necessary in

[150] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 22–23.

this area.[151] Even with all this variety in the script, the overall scribal culture was displayed in the script. This is most evident in the alphabetic Demotic.

Alphabetic Demotic is a reference to the usage of the uniliteral signs of Demotic in writing out certain words or phrases. Alphabetic Demotic is an integral part of the Demotic script. However, it still uses determinatives and group signs. These group signs replace the biliteral and triliteral signs of the Hieroglyphic writing system.[152] One observation of later phases of Demotic when compared to earlier phases is that there is a higher usage of these alphabetic signs. However, when writing names and foreign words there is an even high usage of these signs. Alphabetic Demotic is an artificial script, called group writing, that had been invented to render foreign words and personal names. We see in some texts, which would include P. Am. 63, that to some extent foreign words can be spelled out according to their pronunciation.[153] The alphabetic usage appears to tend toward the uncial writing of the signs. The process of utilizing the alphabetic Demotic is demonstrated in some Ptolemaic magical texts, such as p. London-Leiden 28, where an author moves from a Greek text into a Demotic transcription. This magical text sees the usage of both Alphabetic Demotic and Old Coptic script to convey these magical incantations, and it is apt for it because the scripts can convey the sounds associated with the

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[151] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 26–27.

[152] Quack, "Difficult Hieroglyphs and Unreadable Demotic?", 245

[153] Jacco Dieleman, *Priests, Tongues, and Rites: The London-Leiden Magical Manuscripts and Translation in Egyptian Ritual, 100-300 CE* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005), 71.

secret names.[154] Much like in this circumstance Alphabetic Demotic is utilized in conveying a variety of elements that may be difficult such as names and foreign words. Therefore, the Alphabetic Demotic becomes a major feature of P. Am. 63 to convey the non-Egyptian language of Aramaic. The overall dexterity of the script suited Demotic to convey a variety of genres. Whether alphabetic or multi-consonantal, Demotic is used across genre. Two genres that are particularly germane to our overall study are legal and religious texts.

Legal

Administrative and legal texts were among the first texts where Demotic was primarily used in an official capacity. This was a part of the early Demotic phase and was instituted before the Persian and Greek conquests of Egypt. It was under Amasis (ca. 570–526) that Demotic achieved this official capacity. Early on, Demotic script would show a level of authenticity and prestige for legal documents. Demotic would be most prevalent among private legal documents rather than the status of the administration of the government.[155] This did not mean that the number of Demotic documents decreased, rather it was diverse and numerous during the Ptolemaic period.[156] By the Roman period, there were very few Demotic legal documents, and Greek became the *lingua franca* of Egypt.[157] Depending on the period of the document the use of

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[154] Dieleman, *Priests, Tongues, and Rites*, 56.

[155] Manning and Westbrook, "Demotic Law," 820–21.

[156] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 24.

[157] Manning and Westbrook, "Demotic Law," 821.

Demotic could indicate a status of being official, an indication of a personal Egyptian document, or a document denoting an aspect of daily life, whether religious or otherwise.

Religious

The religious importance of Demotic would occur after it was no longer an official administrative script. When Demotic no longer had the status of official script, it would in turn gain a higher status as a script in general.[158] During the Ptolemaic period, it was used for a greater variety of literary purposes.[159] The first religious texts in Demotic come at the end of the Ptolemaic period.[160] Before this, Hieratic was still utilized to convey religious texts. Even with Demotic becoming the script of religious texts there is an instance of a Hieratic hand being utilized in Louvre 02. This is a second-century CE text that eloquently establishes the existence of the Book of Thoth in Hieratic.[161]

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[158] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 24.

[159] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 24.

[160] Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies*, 117.

[161] Richard Jasnow and Karl-Theodor Zauzich, *Conversations in the House of Life: A New Translation of the Ancient Egyptian Book of Thoth* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 72. Concerning the relationship between Hieratic and Demotic also see Vos, Apis embalming, 10-13 and Paul John Frandsen and Kim Ryholt, eds., *A Miscellany of Demotic Texts and Studies*, UK ed. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), 119–20, on the possible hieratic *Vorlage* of *Onchsheshonqy.*

P. Amherst 63 and Demotic Literature

The linguistic (Aramaic) nature of P. Am. 63 makes its relationship to other Demotic literature more difficult. Why would this community compose a composition in Aramaic but use the Demotic script? From observance of some key features and elements of Demotic literature, there are a few possible answers. Unfortunately, these answers are conjectural because of the lack of evidence. P. Am. 63 has a place within the larger ethos of Demotic literature. The examination of the legal and religious importance will help place P. Am. 63 in the milieu of Demotic literature.

In the context of Egypt from the Late Period until the Ptolemaic period, Demotic served as an official script. With P. Am. 63 it appears that this is a primary reason for the usage of the script. It would have the appearance of official Demotic documentation. It should be noted that P. Am. 63 is not a legal document. However, it also would not have been read by native Egyptians. Therefore, it would have the appearance of official correspondence but likely would not have been explored further by those outside the community. In addition, the dating of the text likely makes this the primary reason. This text dates between 400 and 250 BCE.[162] Most likely it is earlier rather than later in this range. This would place it before the Ptolemaic period, which

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[162] Tawny Holm, "Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia," in *Elephantine in Context: Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt*, vol. 155 of *Forschungen Zum Alten Testament* 155 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 327 n. 19.

saw an explosion in the diversity of Demotic literature. When looking at the orthography of the document it is well done and neat. The appearance is well laid out similar to the Hawara papyri.

P. Am. 63 could be categorized as a religious text. It does not serve an administrative purpose and does not convey everyday business such as receipts. Additionally, there are gods and religious liturgy in this document. Therefore, a religious classification would fit among the various types of literature written in Demotic. As mentioned, Egyptian religious literature was becoming more abundantly found in Demotic during the Ptolemaic period that started around 305 BCE. With this in consideration, the usage of Demotic would indicate that this was a certified religious text. The provenance of this text would be a deciding factor as to whether this text was utilizing the Demotic script to appropriate Egyptian religious authority or designate itself as an official legal or religious document. Considering P. Am. 63 uses the letter *r* to designate both the *r* and *l*, it is likely no later than 250 BCE, [163] which would mean it would be early Ptolemaic at the latest. The differentiation of the *r* and the *l* is one paleographic means of dating Demotic texts. However, I believe it is best dated in the fourth century. If this is the case, then it could represent one of the early designations of religious documents being written in Demotic instead of Hieratic in Egypt. However, since this designation is for traditional Egyptian documents, an answer must be provided for the Judean usage. I posit that sociolinguistics and scribal culture provide an answer.

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[163] Holm, "Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia," 327 n. 19.

Sociolinguistics and Scribal Culture

Sociolinguistics plays a huge part in our understanding of the textual evidence left to us by the ancients. While it is impactful in the study of literature and what it seeks to convey to its original audience, it also gives insight into the scribes and scribal culture that produced these texts. Frank Polak states, "One of the important aspects of sociolinguistics analysis is the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation between oral and written language."[164] This conception is particularly important in a text like P. Am. 63. There is a disunity between the text and script, and sociolinguistics can provide insight into this cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation. There are three aspects of sociolinguistics that I believe are particularly impactful. Those aspects are attribution, iconicity, and branding. Since these were discussed in the previous chapter, we will briefly define these terms considering their importance to this study and how they create an impact. The first aspect of sociolinguistics is attribution.

Attribution, Iconicity, and Branding

The conception of attribution is "a process whereby one group of people make an association between a linguistic feature or language-related practice and another group of people supposedly use that feature or engage in that practice."[165] This allows us to examine two groups of people and the linguistic feature that connects them. This linguistic feature could be a script or

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[164] Frank Polak, "Sociolinguistics: A Key to the Typology and the Social Background of Biblical Hebrew," *Hebrew Studies* 47 (2006): 115.

[165] Mark Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," *Written Language & Literacy* 18.2 (2015): 209.

a language. For example, Haiti was given orthographic means to reproduce their language, Haitian Creole, with certain graphemes such as w, y, and k. However, because of this attribution or association of certain graphemes by some Haitians with "Americans" or "Anglo-Saxons," they declined to use these graphemes.[166] In this case the attribution discourages the use of a linguistic feature but in other cases it could lead to the adoption of a feature. Thus, attribution primarily deals with the association of a characteristic with a people. In the context of this study, both the association and adoption are germane. In P. Am. 63 the attribution leads a party to appropriate a defining characteristic. The presence of attribution does not define the motives or rationale. However, it does present a frame to further delve into the appropriation and analyze the contextual features that would insist on the attribution.

The second aspect of sociolinguistics is iconicity. Iconicity (sometimes referred to as iconisation) involves the transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features and the social images with which they are linked. These linguistic features that index social groups or activities appear to be iconic representations of them as if a linguistic feature somehow depicted or displayed a social group's inherent nature or essence.[167] Iconicity places the linguistic feature as an essential part of the culture of the group. An example is the usage of Latin by the Umbrian and Oscan people of Italy. Even though the Roman empire was contracting they held to the

[166] Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," 209.

[167] Irvine and Gal, "Language Ideology and Linguistic differentiation," 37.

usage of Latin because it was representative of or iconic of the great Italian empire of Rome.[168] Whether language or script, these linguistic features are important parts of various cultures.

Branding is the last of the aspects being applied. Branding is often defined as the strategic promotion of the branded product or concept, its distinctiveness, or its unique selling point.[169] For a business, this deals with the creation of an identity that is fundamentally associated with that company. It is often seen in the use of orthographic features for advertising purposes. The emblematic choice of fonts, scripts, and symbols can imprint a product in the mind of the user. Thus, in many ways becoming iconic. The brand can be established by the users themselves or by an outgroup. The concept of branding is often primarily associated with areas of business, but it is also applicable to culture. Branding like the other features would involve the adoption of a particular linguistic feature then applying it. Thus, this aspect is defined by a linguistic feature being appropriated by a group and using it to associate themselves with a larger brand or create a brand for themselves. Script is a key way that cultures differentiate themselves from other cultures. Considering this, the examination of the script as a sociolinguistic marker becomes pertinent. Within the scribal context, the script helps us understand more about the culture that utilized the writing system.

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[168] Alexander Murray, "Politics and Language in Early Renaissance Italy," *Revue de l'histoire Des Religions* 231.2 (2014): 258–59.

[169] Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," 213.

Sociolinguistics and Script Choice in Scribalism

Scripts are important to scribalism for obvious reasons. The most obvious is that to write you need a script of some sort. However, this obvious reason does not provide the depth that is present beneath the choice of utilizing a script. The exploration of writing using sociolinguistics seeks to explore some of these determining factors behind script choice. This dissertation finds value in answering this question in the West Asian context. Since we have discussed the value and approach to the Demotic script in the Egyptian context, exploration of the Judean usage of the Demotic script remains.

When examining the script choice through sociolinguistics there are several points of connection. Concerning attribution, this scribal community chooses the Demotic script as a linguistic feature they can utilize. Concerning the aspects of Demotic discussed previously, the usage of Demotic often conveyed that a document was certified or legitimate. Appropriating these scripts could allow for the scribes behind P. Am. 63 to designate this word as legitimate. This also goes along with the concepts of branding and iconicity. The usage of the scripts establishes the text as legitimate rather than foreign. The Demotic script conveyed this legitimacy for both legal and religious literature depending on the period.

Zauzich suggests in *Hieroglyphen mit Geheimnis: Neue Erkenntnisse zur Entstehung unseres Alphabets* that anyone who was using the Aramaic script, which was associated with the Persians, in this late period of Persia and early Greek period would be considered a friend of the Persians, and people would be reticent to teach the Aramaic script of the Persians. Despite this reticence, the descendants of Arameans and Judeans would want to convey their texts, and

Demotic would be the appropriate script for this period.[170] This is reinforced by the principles of iconicity and branding. The community is seeking to retain their culture but adopt the iconic script of Egypt and brand themselves as "Egyptians" and friends of Egypt.

Ultimately, there are a few reasons for the usage of this script that sociolinguistics helps to identify. It is not clear, however, that there is a single reason for the use of the Demotic script. The reason for the uniqueness of this document cannot be answered at this point. With no other examples of its kind, we are left to speculation. It certainly is plausible that multiple reasons are behind the usage of this script. The choices offered by sociolinguistics do suggest how the context and overall scribal culture played a role in choices such as script. Therefore, it demonstrates the various purposes that the script choice played in this diasporic community.

Conclusion

In conclusion, scribalism is a component of the cultures of both West Asian and Egyptian societies. It manifests itself in the way societies write and how they write. Scribalism among West Asian societies is attached to Egypt. This is particularly true about Levantine societies present in Israel and Judah. This relationship is as old as the alphabet. West Asians appropriated portions of the Hieroglyphic script to render their language. Since then, there have been aspects of scribal terminology and terms that continue to connect these areas. Scribal culture affords a great deal to learn about the various cultures that are attached to P. Am. 63. The scribal culture of the Hebrew tradition, some Aramaic traditions, and Egypt illumine the context and the culture that could be behind P. Am. 63 and specifically behind col. xi lines 11-19. These three scribal

[170] Zauzich, *Hieroglyphen mit Geheimnis*, 15–16.

cultures have characteristics that provide insights into the scribal culture of P. Am. 63. In addition, sociolinguistics gives a theoretical context to the data. It demonstrates that language and social context can provide insight into ancient texts. P. Am. 63 is a document born out of its context, unfortunately, the data is slim concerning its provenance. Yet with the information that is available, clear insights are available utilizing sociolinguistics.

Chapter 3: Translation, Transcription and Commentary on Col. XII, 11–19

Introduction

The curiosity concerning P. Am. 63 has often been stymied by the inherent difficulties of the text. To overcome the complexity of language and script it certainly requires purposeful poking and prying. [171] Col. XII, 11-19 provides a unique opportunity for research and particularly with its connection to the Hebrew Bible and Judean religion in Egypt. The background and cultural overlap of any literature is paramount when identifying scribal techniques within that text. Equally important is the actual texts of that literature. In this chapter, P. Am. 63 col. XII, 11-19 will serve as the sample text. This short passage, col. XII, 11-19, is the most thoroughly examined portion of the P. Am. 63. This is primarily because of its relationship to the Hebrew Bible, more specifically to Psalm 20. However, there is still much to uncover within this portion of the text. At this point, much attention is focused on deciphering and making sense of this section or uncovering its relationship to Psalm 20. It is the objective of this dissertation to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript. In order to fulfill that objective this chapter will examine this section of P. A. 63 as an individual text, as well as its relationship to other texts. Another reason to further examine this section of P. Am. 63 is the combination of Demotic script with Aramaic language. Few scholars have done the necessary work to understand both Demotic (as well as Egyptian scribal culture)

[171] Zora Neal Hurston, *Dust Tracks on the Road*, 143.

and Aramaic which leaves a void for further exploration. I refer to this larger section as the Judean section. This is primarily because of what seems to be a consolidation in identity by West Asian people living in Egypt who certainly are made up of Samarians and Judeans. This chapter will provide that exploration by discussing any nuances and scribal techniques present in this section of P. Am. 63. To uncover scribal techniques a thorough examination of the text is necessary. In the process of examination, new interpretations of certain words and constructions are suggested. This chapter will provide that examination employing a transliteration, translation, translation notes, and commentary.

The examination of this section is in debt to all those that preceded it. However, this examination adopts various approaches and interpretations that differs from previous examinations. In the translation notes, syntactical and lexical features will be explained. This will include parsing of some verbs and some syntactical rationale for translation choices. The commentary set forth in this chapter further elaborates upon the translation notes when necessary. The literary features of this text are uncovered in this chapter. While the next chapter will look at those literary devices as a whole and specifically understand how it relates to scribalism.

Transliteration of Demotic, Normalization into Aramaic, and Translation[172]

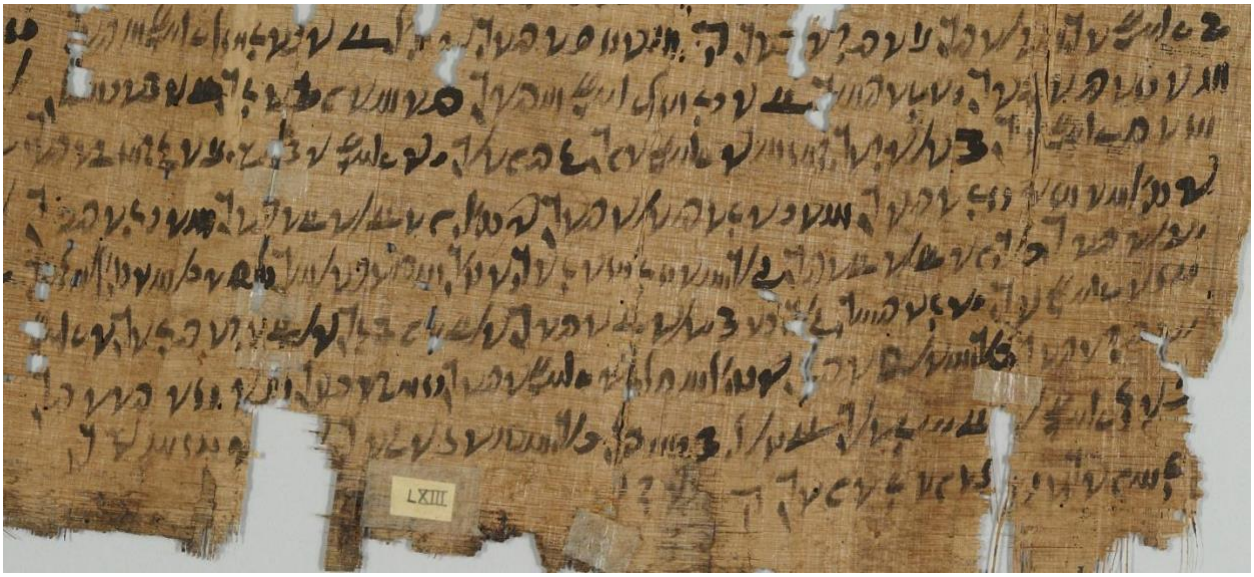

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Figure 6 P. Am. 63 Column xii lines 11 – 19 Photographic Credit: The Morgan Library and Museum, New York

Demotic Transliteration[173]	Aramaic Normalization	English Translation

[172] Moving from right to left the text under examination is between the red markers. The lines are also numbered on the right. Starting in line 11b and concluding in line 19.

[173] The reader should note that the transliteration has an abundance of alephs. It is clear some of the alephs are *matres lectiones*, representing vowels. The Aramaic normalization does not render every aleph but excludes those I believe to be vowels. The decision which differentiates some of these are based upon the vocabulary of certain words or certain orthographic spellings seen with certain verbal forms. Also, the representation of double *alephs* will indicate when one of the *alephs* should be a vowel. The | represents the word divider present in the text. I have also divided the words rather than allowing the letters to run together.

(11b) yʒʿnʒnʒ [ʒḥr] bʒmʒṣwrynʒ|	יעננא [אחר] במצורינא	May [Aḥor] answer us in our troubles/ among the Egyptians[174]
(12) yʒʿʒnʒnʒ| ʒdʒny| bʒmṣwrynʒ	יעננא אדני במצורינא	May Adonai answer us in our troubles/ among the Egyptians
hʒyʒ qšʒt| bʒšʒmy[n]	היא קשת בשמי[ן]	A bow is in the heaven[s]
(13) sʒhrʒ| šʒlʒḥʒ| ṣyʒrʒk| mn kʒl|	סהרא שלחא צירך מן כל	The Moon sends your royal
ʒʒrʒš[w]	ארשו	emissary from all of Rash
wʒmn ṣpʒnʒ| (14) ʒḥrw yʒsʒʿdʒnʒ|	ומן צפנא אחר יסעדנא	And from Zaphon, may Aḥor help us
yʒmʒtʒnʒ ʒlʒnʒ| ʒḥrw kʒblʒbʒnʒ|	ימתן אלנא אחר כבלבנא	May Aḥor give to us according to our hearts
yʒmʒtʒnʒ| (15) ʒʒlʒnʒ mr	ימתנא אלנא מר כבלבן כל	May Mar give to us the entire
kʒblʒbʒn|kl|yʒʿṣʒtʒ|	יעצתא	plan according to our hearts
ʒḥr| yhʒmʒly|	אחר יהמלי	Aḥor, may he fulfil
yhʒmʒly ʒḥr	יהמלי אחר	May Aḥor fulfil
<ʒ>l yḥʒ(16)sʒrʒ| ʒʒdʒny| k[l|]	<א>ל יחסר אדני כ[ל]	May Adonai <no>t shorten a[ny]
mʒšʒʒl <l>ʒbʒnʒ|	משאל <ל>בנא	request of our <h>eart
ʒl bʒqšt|	אל בקשת	Some by the bow
ʒl bʒḥʒntʒ|	אל בחנתא	Some by the spear

[174] Because of the nature of this pun, I have provided both the translation and the polysemy that I suggest is pregnant within this term.

ʾr [17] *ʾ ʾnḥʾnʾ*| *mry ʾlhnʾn ʾḥr*	ארא אנחנא מרי אלהנ אחר	Behold us, O Mar our God, Aḥor
yhw tʾrʾnʾ| *ʿymʾnʾ*	יהו תרנא עימנא	May our bull be with us
yʾʿʿnʾnʾʾn<ʾ> [18] *mḫr l[y] bytʾl*|	יעננן<א> מחר ל[י] ביתל	May Bethel answer us tomorrow for my advantage
bʿl šmyn mr ybʾrʾkʾ| *l[ʾḥ]ʾsyʾ*|	בעל שמין מר יברכא	May Ba'al Shamayin Mar, bless
[19]*dykʾ*|	לחסידיכא	your devoted ones
b[ʾ]rʾkʾtʾkʾ|	ברכתך	I bless you
sp lʾd|	סף לאד	End

Translation Notes

Line 11 *yʾʿnʾnʾ* is a Pe'al prefix-conjugation (PC) 3ms. This prefixed form conveys the modal sense and is translated as "May Aḥor answer." This is better understood to be the jussive. In Egyptian Aramaic the jussive form can be indistinguishable from the indicative.[175] *ʾḥr* is rendered as the exact transliteration of the term. The interpretation of this word has been discussed extensively. Zauzich and later scholars read the Aramaic form YHW, based on the Demotic *ʾḥr*. However, this reading should be questioned. Alternatives will receive attention in the commentary section. While *ʾḥr* is not well understood, it is acknowledged that it

[175] Takamitsu Muraoka and Bezalel Porten, *A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic*, Second Revised Edition., vol. 32 of *Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 198–201.

represents the God of Israel, YHWH. The context clarifies this understanding, specifically because it parallels the common title of YHWH, Adonai. While the term ’don is common as a word for Lord, it is particularly used in Judean contexts. As will be discussed in the next chapter, *’dny* in particular is used in Judean contexts to express the identity of YHWH without explicitly saying the name. The suggestion is that *ʒḥr* is a rendering of YHW, which is the name used by the Elephantine community. The problem with this suggestion is that the Demotic cannot be rendered as YHW. The rendering of *ʒḥr* as YHW was first suggested by Zauzich because he theorized that the *aleph* represented a *yod* that the *ḥr* sign represented the *he* (ה) and that the final sign which could be a *w* representing the *vav* (ו) of YHW or Yaho.[176] The rendering of *ʒḥr* as YHW has become the majority view. [177] However, the Demotic does not allow for this

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[176] Karl-Theodor Zauzich, “Der Gott Des Aramaisch-Demotischen Papyrus Amherst 63,” *Gottinger Miszellen* 85 (1985): 89–90.

[177] Karl-Theodor Zauzich, “Der Gott Des Aramaisch-Demotischen Papyrus Amherst 63,” 89–90.Tawny Holm, “Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia,” in *Elephantine in Context: Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt*, vol. 155 of *Forschungen Zum Alten Testament* 155 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 323–52; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*; Ziony Zevit, “The Common Origin of the Aramaicized Prayer to Horus and of Psalm 20,” *Journal of the American Oriental*

interpretation. Zauzich's interpretation was based upon Erichsen, supposing that the *ḥr* sign could simply represent an *h* in demotic. Erichsen does not suggest this possibility for this sign. The sign that Zauzich notes is the preposition *ḥr*, which is written as  .[178] The possibility of this sign simply representing an *h* does not occur until the time of the Roman period and even then, it is a rarity.[179] The actual sign that is written is the Horus *ḥr*. This is depicted in Erichsen as  .[180] The difference is evident by the diagonal line that is above the sign. This would be the accurate correlation to the sign  , which is present in the P. Am. 63 text.[181] This distinguishing line is written in numerous representations of the Horus sign yet is

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Society 110.2 (1990): 213–28; Menahem Kister, "Psalm 20 and Papyrus Amherst 63: A Window to the Dynamic Nature of Poetic Texts," *VT* 3 (2020): 457.

[178] Wolja Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar* (Copenhagen, 1954), 322.

[179] Joachim Friedrich Quack, "The Interaction of Egyptian and Aramaic Literature," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 392.

[180] Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, 316.

[181] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 42, has a list of all the occurrences of this name in P. Am. 63.

not written in any representations of the *ḥr* preposition present in Erichsen.[182] Concerning the *aleph,* it can represent a *y* or *yod* only when accompanied by a *y*. This is *matres lectiones*, where a consonant helps signify the presence of a vowel. In this case a *y* is written with the *aleph* to signify that the *aleph* represents a *y* or *yod*.[183] I suggest that Zauzich was incorrect on both the accounts of the *aleph* and the *ḥr* sign.[184] Therefore, the supposition that the Demotic rendering of *ꜣḥr* is the actual writing of YHW is also incorrect.

mꜣṣwrynꜣ is more nuanced and pregnant with meaning than previously understood. *mꜣṣwrynꜣ* has previously been determined to represent sorrows, straits or troubles

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[182] Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, 316–22.

[183] Quack, "The Interaction of Egyptian and Aramaic Literature," 392.

[184] Erichsen, *Demotisches Glossar*, 316–22; Quack, "Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period," 392., n 54 states, "While an original Egyptian ꜥ could develop into a y, the demotic writing system always handles these cases phonetically, i.e., it actually has *y*, while a demotic writing with the one consonantal sign ꜥ never stands for a phonetic y. The preposition *ḥr* as a writing for the consonant *h* would be most surprising in a text from the fourth century B.C.E. Erichson (1954: 322), to whom Zauzich refers for the use of *ḥr* for *h*, is based on a misunderstanding; what we have there is a specific paleographic form of *h* attested in some Fayyumic manuscripts from the Roman period (and even there it is quite different from the form of *ḥr).*"

which is derived from the root of *ṣrh* or *ṣrr*, which is found in Psalm 20. [185] van der Toorn suggested the translation of troubles based on *mṣwr* which is found in the Hebrew Bible but not in Aramaic until Targum Lamentations Yemenite Text 1:3.[186] In the Yemenite Text it is rendered as *mṣr* not *mṣwr*. Therefore, the understanding of this term rests primarily on the term found in the Hebrew Bible. Something that should be considered is that *mṣwr,* with this exact spelling, can sound just like the word for "Egypt" in the Hebrew Bible, but this exact form does not occur in Aramaic much like this exact form for "troubles" does not occur in Aramaic.[187] Considering the Hebrew Bible informs the interpretation of "troubles," it should also inform the interpretation of *mṣwr* as being a case of polysemy. The spelling *mṣwr* for Egypt is found in 2 Kings 19:24, Is 19:6; 37:25

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[185] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 52; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 166; Richard C Steiner, "Papyrus Amherst 63: A New Source for the Language, Literature, Religion and History of the Aramaeans," *Studia Aramaica: New Sources and New Approaches = Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement. v.4 (1995)*: 43.

[186]van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 166; Christian M. M. Brady, "Targum Lamentations Reading of the Book of Lamentations" (University of Oxford, Dissertation, 1999), 51. Christian M. M. Brady, *The Rabbinic Targum of Lamentations: Vindicating God* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2003), 155.

[187] *HALOT*, 623.

and Micah 7:12. The *nun* ending of *mʾṣwryn* in col. xii line 11 follows the normal spelling of Egypt (*mṣryn*), in Aramaic. The spelling *mʾṣwryn* is like the spelling of Egypt later in the papyrus, in col xx, line 4, which is *mʾṣryn* as opposed to *mʾṣwryn*. Having different spellings is not an issue for various reasons.[188] First, spelling can differ for words throughout the papyrus. A clear example of this is the term *sg(y)*. It is spelled both with a *samekh* and with a *sin* in this manuscript. [189] Second, a scribe can slightly change the spelling to accomplish a word play that encompasses similar words with closely related spellings. Therefore, this is not an unintentional misspelling but rather an intentional play on words. So, while it is not the exact morphological representation it still seeks to demonstrate polysemy. Therefore, the suggestion is a wordplay with the possible translation of both "sorrows" and "among the Egyptians." "Sorrows" being at the forefront but "the Egyptians" an allusion and part of the pregnant meaning.

Line 12 *yʿnnʾ* occurs once again as a *Peʿal* PC 3ms. Adonai is used here in parallel to the name Aḥor. *hyʾ* occurs in the *Peʿal* perfect 3ms. It is originally from *hwy* or *hwh*,

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[188] James Barr, *The Variable Spellings of the Hebrew Bible*. (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[189] See Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 27.

but the writing with the *yod* appears to be a Hebraism rather than the expected Aramaic form with a *w*.[190]

Line 13 *ṣḥrʾ* literally means "moon." It does not appear that it is referring to the moon deity (*ṣḥr*) instead it is translated as moon. *šlḥʾ* is *Peʿal* suffix conjugation (SC) 3ms.[191] *ṣyr* means "royal emissary," and this is the sense in the Qumran corpus.[192] Zaphon often reflects the holy mountain of the Canaanites and the area to the north literally meaning "North" in Ps 48:3.[193] Additionally in Ps 48: Zaphon and Zion are parallel to one another.

Line 14 *ysʿdnʾ* is another *Peʿal* PC 3ms translated as help, aid, or support.[194] This term is also found in Ezra 5:2. This term is present in Old Aramaic and the Dead Sea Scrolls.[195] *ymtn* is the *Peʿal* PC 3ms of *ntn*. This is a parallel to Psalm 20:5 where the whole phrase is similar. Something dissimilar is the usage of *ʾlʾnʾ* in the

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[190] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 166.

[191] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 53.

[192] Edward M. Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 200.

[193] It is worth noting that Gary Rendsburg follows Morgenstern in identifying Psalm 48 as originating in the north, see *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (SBLMS 43; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 59.

[194] *HALOT*, 1939. CAL, s.v.סעד.

[195] Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*, 167.

phrase. This appears to be the usage of the preposition *ʾl* with the 1cp suffix. This is an odd construction in Aramaic. Most translations deal with *ʾl* as a preposition.[196] Vleeming and Wesselius render it as the *lamed* preposition.[197] The demotic clearly shows that it is spelled as *ʾlʾnʾ*. This is because the manuscript represents a consonant when it has two consecutive alephs. The first representing the consonant and the second representing the vowel sound. In this case, the previous word is best represented as *ymtn* not as *ymtnʾ*. It also occurs both here and in line 15. An alternative interpretation could see this term as the noun *ʾl*, which means "god." It would then read as "May our God Aḥor give according to our hearts." I take it as the preposition having a precedent in Deuteronomy 1:25. While it is in Hebrew it does give a precedent especially if this is a Hebraism.

Line 15 This text in P. Am 63 utilizes a variety of synonyms and Mar is one of those. Column xii, lines 11-19 utilizes both Adonai Ba'al and Mar, which can all mean "Lord." It is best to retain the Aramaic in order to convey the difference in terms that appears to be intentional on the part of the scribe. Adonai is the typical Hebrew title found in the Hebrew Bible while Mar is more typical of Aramaic. *yʿṣt* means "plan" from the Hebrew verb *yʿṣ*. This term does not occur in Aramaic

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[196] G.T.M. Prinsloo, "Psalm 20 and Its Aramaic Parallel: A Reappraisal," *Journal for Semitics* 9.1/2 (1997): 52; Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 44; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 165.

[197] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 50.

but like in the Elephantine corpus there are some Hebraisms that hint at the Hebraic lineage of a portion of the audience. This term occurs in the same position as the noun *ʿṣh* in Psalm 20:5. *yhʾmʾly* is the *Haphel* PC 3ms of *mly*.

Lines 15b–16 *yḥsr* is a *Pa'el* PC 3ms. This comes from the term *ḥṣr,* which means "to lack or shorten." Follows the negation *ʾl* in the previous line, it conveys the point that Adonai did not shorten or diminish the request of the scribe here. Translators render *ʾl* as "some."[198] *ʾl* translated as "some" or "these" does occur in Old Aramaic at Zenjirli (KAI 214:29).[199] While this is not a negation the scribe seems to suggest that some trust in this, but it does not suggest that this community trusts in weapons. This would resonate even more with a diasporic community that suffered by means of both bow and spear. *ʾr* could be transliterated as *ʾr* or *ʾrʾ*. The latter would use the final *aleph* as a vowel marker perhaps referring to *ʿrE*.[200] Either way this word comes from *ʾrw*, meaning "behold," "because," "so." The term *ʿrw* is utilized in Daniel 7:21 with the meaning, "behold." This particle serves as the exact Aramaic equivalent to *hnh*.[201] Mar is rendered to differentiate it from the various words that all mean "lord." I

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[198] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63,* 165–66; Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 45.

[199] *HALOT,* 1814.

[200] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63,* 167.

[201] *HALOT,* 1824.

render *mry* as a by-form of the *mr* much like *ʿdny*. This term is also rendered as a vocative. The phrase *mry ʾlhnʾn* does not occupy the initial slot and appears to function as a form of address. Mar occurs for the second time in the context of divine names. *Elahin* is utilized to identify Mar as divine.

Line 17a Aḥor is in apposition to the vocative phrase *mry ʾlhnʾn*. This creates a shared identity of Aḥor with Mar. Once again Aḥor replaces the divine name of YHWH. The scribe then uses the *jussive* of *hwh,* or *hwy.* Steiner posits that this is the divine name YHW.[202] It seems best to serve as a medial waw and final *yod* verb. I agree with van der Toorn on the position that this verb should not be read as an alphabetic reading of the divine name.[203] While this verb often takes the performative *lamed* in the PC to avoid the close association with the divine name, it is possible for the verb to take this form and texts from Qumran occasionally use other forms such as *yhw'* (יהוא).[204] This form also seems to fit the context best. However, Aḥor is consistently used in reference to Israel's God and the divine titles all seem to reference one deity. The inclusion of YHW seems misplaced in this context. This line also calls Aḥor a bull, *trnʾ*. It has been suggested that this phrase is suggestive of sacrifice and occurs in the context of

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[202] Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 45.

[203] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 167–68.

[204] William B. Stevenson, *Grammar of Palestinian Jewish Aramaic* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000), 51.

Canaanite religion at Ugarit;[205] however, it often occurs as an appellative for various gods.

Line 17b–18 Line 17 ends with the *Pe'al* PC 3ms from *ʿny*. This verbal phrase continues into the next line with the request, "Bethel answer us." It once again has the modal sense or would be a jussive. After *mḫr* there is a *lamed*. I agree with van der Toorn, that it should be rendered *ly*; however, he reads this as a *dativus ethicus*,[206] which shows emphasis. [207] It appears that the *lamed* expresses a dative commodi[208] or dative of advantage.[209] The *ly* does not agree with the 1 cp of the verb *yʿnnn*. The agreeing of the pronominal suffixes is necessary for a *dativus ethicus*. The agreeing of pronominal suffixes creates a self-*contained* feature detached from the rest of the clauses reflexively emphasizing the suffix of the noun thus creating emphasis.[210] The lack of agreement precludes *ly* from being a

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[205] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 168.

[206] T. Muraoka, "On the So-Called Dativus Ethicus in Hebrew," *Journal of Theological Studies* 29.2 (1978): 495–98, has a discussion on this syntactical designation.

[207] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 168; Contra Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 59; Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 46.

[208] Muraoka and Porten, A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic, 274.

[209] Muraoka and Porten, A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic, 274.

[210] Muraoka, "On the So-Called Dativus Ethicus in Hebrew," 496–97.

dativus ethicus. However, a dative of advantage is not required to agree with the number of the verb.[211] Therefore, *ly* determines an advantage to the object, in this case the 1cs suffix. The text then transitions to the characters involved. This line displays the names of two Canaanite deities. Bethel and Ba'al Shamayim. Characterizations of Ba'al are often ascribed to YHWH. In addition, the thunder god is referenced as Ba'al Shamayin, Ba'al of Heaven, or the Lord of Heaven. This is the third term for "Lord" utilized in this text. Each time a term for "Lord" is utilized it is representing the deity YHWH. The term Bethel appears to be another deity incorporated into this psalm, making this a culturally and religiously eclectic psalm. However, this could in fact be another appellation of YHWH much like the other names of deities. This could be seen because Bethel and Aḥor are asked to respond to the psalmist in a parallelism.[212]

Line 18b–19 The last word of line 18 is cut off and finishes in line 19. It is *ḥsydyk*ʾ from the Aramaic *ḥsd*. This term also occurs in Hebrew and in several places in the Hebrew Bible. This word is preceded by the *lamed*. This *lamed* determines it as the object of the blessing. The final verb of this psalm is *brk*. It is a *Pa'el* SC 1cs with a 2ms pronominal suffix. The author extols the god whom he trusts. The

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[211] Muraoka and Porten, A Grammar of Egyptian Aramaic, 274.

[212] Tawny Holm, "Bethel and Yahō: A Tale of Two Gods in Egypt," *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 23.1 (2023): 38.

term *sp* indicates the end utilizes the demotic sign *sp*, which means "remainder" or "rest."

Commentary

This psalm is theorized to be a new year/new moon psalm.[213] This is highly likely, particularly because of the usage of Sahar in line 13. While this is a Judean section of P. Am 63, this text is extremely eclectic and is a clear representation of the community or communities, because of the inclusion of other semitic deities found among the Arameans, Mesopotamians, and Canaanites. This new year text calls upon the deity of the Judeans, YHWH. Even though the name YHWH is not used nor is it explicit throughout the text, YHWH is the primary deity in mind. This conclusion is based on the Judean scribal influence seen in the text. In addition, it is evident that this title *ʾḥr* is a reference to YHWH because the title Adonai is parallel to *ʾḥr*. While Adon (*ʿdn*) is used in Canaanite settings,[214] it begins to occur in Judean literature as an appellation that will replace YHWH. This mentality appears to be present in this text. This is a case of synonymous parallelism and the terms Aḥor and Adonai are viewed as synonyms. This parallelism confirms the proposed identity of Aḥor. YHWH is not the only deity in this text. As mentioned, this is an eclectic text that represents the community. The inclusion of another deity

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[213] Karel van der Toorn, "Celebrating the New Year with the Israelites: Three Extrabiblical Psalms from Papyrus Amherst 63," *JBL* 136.3 (2017): 633–49.

[214] Jacob Hoftijzer et. al., *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (Leiden: Brill Academic Pub, 1997), 16.

further proves a diverse community. References to Bethel displays this diversity, as well as the inclusion of the terms Mar, Ba'al, and Adonai, which all mean "lord." Even with these terms, YHWH is the primary deity. His name is not utilized; rather, Aḥor is used in its place. This term Aḥor appears to be used instead of saying the divine name YHWH or Yaho. The reason for this substitution appears to resonate in ancient Near Eastern naming practices that were prevalent in Egypt and as a result the Levant. The concept of naming magic and the power of one's name will receive greater attention in the next chapter. The question here concerns the meaning of the term *ʒḥr*. In the translation notes, the question of whether *ʒḥr* is an alternate spelling of YHW has been addressed. In fact, the Demotic does not support such a claim. It was first suggested by Zauzich and has become the majority position among scholars with Steiner, Nims and Quack as the dissenting views.[215] Some have suggested that Vleeming and Wesselius agreed with Zauzich,

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[215] Those that are affirmative of this being YHW are Zauzich, "Der Gott Des Aramaisch-Demotischen Papyrus Amherst 63"; Rösel, "Israels Psalmen in Ägypten?"; Holm, "Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia"; van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*. Those that are in disagreement are Joachim Friedrich Quack, "The Interaction of Egyptian and Aramaic Literature," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 375–401; Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 42, states that this term is an Egyptogram of the tetragrammaton. He suggests that the initial *aleph* represents the reading of Aramaic and Hebrew

but they were not totally accepting nor dismissive but asserting that context does indicate this deity is YHWH.[216] Bezalel Porten has added his voice to the discussion favoring *ʾḥr* meaning YHW. However, he concludes, "It will take future papyrologists to come up with a final verdict."[217] The term *ʾḥr* does occur in Aramaic and Hebrew. In both these languages the basic meanings are, "behind," "last," "after," "end," "another," and "to delay" and are all associated with the same verbal root.[218] However, none of these glosses has been used as a title for YHWH throughout the history of ancient Israel or by later Jewish communities.[219] This does not mean it

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'adny. He still maintains that the sign is the Horus Demotic sign but that there is a non-literal intent.

[216] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 42., states "orthographically speaking this suggestion is not entirely satisfactory…It seems hardly likely, and we must conclude this article with the statement that the reading of this name still eludes us, even if we agree with Zauzich that it probably is the name of the God of Israel, probably in the form Yaho -- but merely on the basis of the general context in the papyrus.

[217] Porten, "Papyrus Amherst 63: Ruminations," 123.

[218] Cook, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*, 6–7; *HALOT*, 34–35.

[219] In Esther 4:14 some Rabbis have suggested that מקום אחר is a veiled reference to YHWH. Carey A. Moore, *Esther*, First Edition. (New York: Anchor Bible, 1971), 50; Frederick Bush, *Ruth-Esther*, vol. 9 of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1996), 396, suggest that the term מקום is the intended referent and if that is the case than it cannot be a reference to YHWH. This would entail another YHWH. However, if the entire phrase מקום אחר is

does not refer to YHWH here, but rather it could be a localized term for YHWH and was not used outside of Egypt. This term could identify YHWH as, "the other one." This could be a reference to being the other god worshiped in this combined temple complex. This could have become an eponym for YHWH after years of the presence of YHWH's temple in Egypt. YHWH's temple complex in Egypt was in Elephantine. While it is not clear that P. Am. 63 derives from this area. It could have originated in upper Egypt in this general area. In the papyrus Elephantine is spelled in a way that occurs around Aswan. The spelling of Elephantine as *ybꜣ* is specifically found in a few Demotic texts located in Aswan.[220] If it took on this spelling it could be because the audience was familiar or from this area. This would give further credence to the presence of YHWH's temple being in the mind of the author and readers. Another possibility would be, "the one who is behind." This may be a general reference to the position of the temple of Yaho. However, it should be notes that the temple of Yaho was not positioned behind but rather next to the Khnum temple complex. In fact, it was positioned on "Khnum's Way" or the "King's Road," so it and its worship may have been very visible even though it was small

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the referent than this could be a possibility and it would be another example of אחר being a reference to YHWH. CAL, s.v. אחר, demonstrates that אחר is a term that is utilized in various dialects of Aramaic. Although, outside of the possibility of מקום אחר there are no direct references to YHWH, it is a word which is known and productive in Aramaic across all dialects.

[220] Holm, "Papyrus Amherst 63 and the Arameans of Egypt: A Landscape of Cultural Nostalgia," 327.

(Figure 7).[221] It seems best to see this title as a reference to "another" or "the other." This would position YHWH as the other god being worshiped in a small temple complex beside the gods Khnum, Satet, and Anukis, in Elephantine.[222]

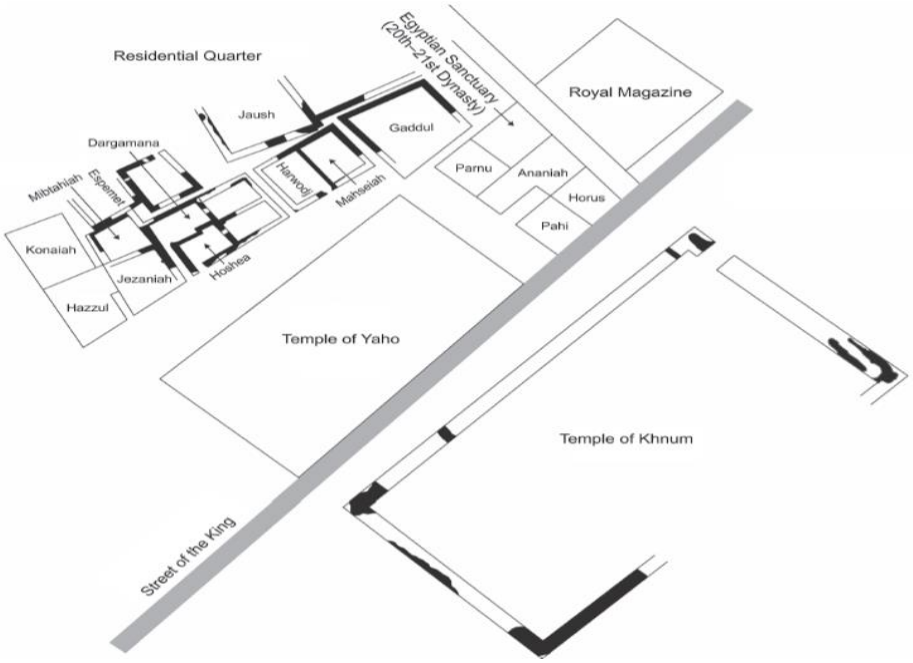

Figure 7 Plan of the residential area to the north-west of the temple of Khnum (Maria Bruske)

Any Judean community living in Egypt would have had interactions and lived among the native Egyptians. In the context of Elephantine, this is obvious. In Elephantine, we have

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[221] Bernd U. Schipper, "The Judeans/Arameans of Elephantine and Their Religion – An Egyptological Perspective," in *Elephantine in Context: Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt*, vol. 155 of *Forschungen Zum Alten Testament* 155 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2022), 215.

[222] The beliefs of this text and Elephantine may not be a one-to-one correlation, but Elephantine is the most extensive corpus of Judeans in Egypt. Therefore, the information serves to help understand this papyrus better.

documentation of intermarriage among the Judeans and the Egyptians.[223] A few examples from the Elephantine corpus are Esereshut, an Egyptian, who married Hosea (A4 4:5), Petekhnum who married into a Judean family and fathered a son named Hosea (B2 2:17), along with Ananiah who gave his wife Tamut a portion of his house (B3. 5). Furthermore, Judeans in Elephantine lived and worshiped among the Egyptians as is shown in the temple. So, for this text to call upon Aḥor to answer this people among the Egyptians, it is a valid reality. The temple was among or in the midst of the Egyptians, as were their homes. The dwelling in Egypt could have created mixed feelings among some Judeans. Some could have become content living in Egypt while others may have found it contentious. This contention in the Book of Jeremiah is situated with Jeremiah being in Egypt and speaking against the exilic Judean community that resided there. In Jer. 42:19 the text states, "YHWH said to you O remnant of Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt, you certainly know that I have warned you today.'" This serves as a starting point for the next few chapters that deal directly with Egypt and the Judean exiles living there. The sentiment to not want to or have aversions towards living in Egypt could have remained among some Judeans at the time this papyrus was written. At the very least there was a contention directly against Khnum among some Judeans. It is clear that in the late 5th century a Judean named Mauziah had negative sentiments toward Khnum.[224] Mauziah writes, "It is known to you that Khnum is against us from when Hananiah was in Egypt until now" (A4 3:7). This mentality may lay behind this text since there was conflict between the priests of Khnum and the priests of YHWH

[223] Porten, *Elephantine Papyri in English*, 85.

[224] Porten, *Elephantine Papyri in English*, 130–131.

that led to the destruction of the temple of Yaho in Elephantine in 410 BCE. While, the Judeans were among the Egyptians, whether in Elephantine or elsewhere in Egypt, the cordiality of the relationship was not completely known.

The next line looks at the bow that was placed in the sky. Although Psalm 20 contains no reference to a bow, elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible it is seen as a sign of the covenant (e.g., Gen. 9:13). In the context of Genesis, the bow was a sign of a covenant that would represent YHWH not using a flood to bring destruction. The usage of the bow could be an interesting polemic. Egypt relied upon the flood of the Nile River; however, this may suggest a calling for the flood stopping sign of a covenant to be placed in the sky on behalf of the Judeans in Egypt. This polemic could be a result of emerging, present, or past conflict surrounding Yahwistic worship. This once again could have developed from the same contention which led to the destruction of the Temple of Yaho. After the mention of the bow, the moon is mentioned. The parallelism between the bow and the moon suggests that the bow is representative of the new moon.[225] The identification of the bow with the new moon would make since considering it does not rain very much in Egypt[226] and a rainbow would not be a present reality, but the new moon was seen on a consistent basis. Considering the bow being correlated with the new moon, van der Toor suggests that the reference to the bow is a battle cry adapted for this psalm.[227] If this is true that

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[225] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 166.

[226] J. Donald Hughes, "Sustainable Agriculture in Ancient Egypt," *Agricultural History* 66.2 (1992): 13.

[227] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 166.

would further the idea of the presence of a polemic. The adaptation of the bow from Genesis would display a usage of a biblical tropes for the purpose of this Judean community. The primary issue would be that in Genesis we see this sign because of rain and flood. However, rain was not the cause of the inundation in Egypt. In order to maintain the polemic, it would require the adaptation of the sign from the rainbow into the new moon. We have discussed previously the reason for a translation of moon instead of Sahar. The context of the New Moon festival gives clarity concerning the addition of this line. Another consideration in this line is that the moon is called to send out emissaries or messengers.

The origin point of the messengers is Rash. Rash is an unidentified place that appears throughout the papyrus. Although, it has not been identified, there are various theories about where Rash is located, which range from north of Elam to various sites in the Levant or Syria.[228] According to Nims and Steiner, the Rash found in P. Am 63 is the "land of Rashi," found in the annals of Sargon II, which could be a collection of about 21 cities that are listed.[229] However, Vleeming and Wesselius suggest that the location should be identified as Ra's en-Naqoura.[230] It

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[228] Tawny Holm, "Nanay(a) among the Arameans: New Light from Papyrus Amherst 63," in *New Perspectives on Aramaic Epigraphy in Mesopotamia, Qumran, Egypt and Idumea: Proceedings of the Join RIAB Minerva Center and the Jeselsohn Epigraphic Center of Jewish History*, ed. A. Maeir et. al., vol. ORA of Research on Israel and Aram in Biblical Times 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 94.

[229] Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 38.

[230] Vleeming and Wesselius, *Studies in Papyrus Amherst 63*, 46.

appears that the location does need to be away from wherever the northern mountain of Zaphon is located. The reason is that while the emissaries are coming from Rash, Aḥor is coming from Zaphon. The mention of Zaphon is an indicator of the northern roots of this text. Rather than utilizing the Judean location of worship, Zion, the Canaanite Zaphon is utilized. Zaphon has many references, and it is designated as the divine mountain much like Zion (Ps 48). *CAT* 1.3 III:29 makes it clear that this is the divine mountain stating, "in the middle of my mountain, divine (lit. El) Zaphon." Zaphon occurs more than fifty times in the Ugaritic texts. This Canaanite culture was known to influence the Northern Kingdom. In the same way, this seems to be the clear Samarian influence on this text shining through. This is not the only Canaanite reference in the text.

The next section requests *ʾḫr* to give and fulfill the desires of his followers. The request is that ʾḫr gives according to the desires of the heart. We see this line in parallel with the same request from Mar. It seems that the author decides to use this Aramean divine title. The meaning of Mar is identical to Adonai. In fact, it is an Aramaic rendering that occurs in the Targums. Mar replaces Adonai when the Targums are written. This phrase is one of the lines that parallels Psalm 20. Following this parallel P. Am 63 diverges once again. It next includes a chiasm that translates, "Aḥor, may he fulfill, May Aḥor fulfill." However, it is structured, "Aḥor fulfill, fulfill Aḥor." The author uses this construction to place an emphasis on Aḥor and his ability to fulfill. After this emphasis, the author utilizes a negation that serves as an antithetic parallelism. The preceding phrase emphasizes the positive quality of what Aḥor can accomplish. The next section asks Aḥor to refrain from the negative capabilities that could befall the audience of this text. With this shift, the author also shifts back to the divine name Adonai. The idea is that there should be no opposition to the fulfillment of their desires. The possible obstacles are then

mentioned. Some would seek the weapons but not those in the audience. The obstacles are the bow and the spear. But the bow is a sign from Aḥor, but the request of this bow is not utilized against the people of Aḥor. While Psalm 20 denotes the poor alternatives to YHWH worship, this psalm asks for the Judeans to be shielded and protected from all oppositions that Aḥor could break out against them.

Mar is then invoked and asked that Mar, the Lord, would behold them. After invoking the Mar, a declaration is made concerning the God of this community. The primary God is Aḥor, who is then identified with a bull. This designation originates in the pantheon of Canaan. The god El is designated as a bull in the Ba'al Cycle and other places. In the Ba'al Cycle it specifically states, "Speak to the Bull, his Father, El (*CAT* 1.2 I:33)." This is one of a preponderance of examples. This is one of the main titles for El. There are about 51 references to El as the bull in the Ugaritic corpus.[231] This is a characterization that has been present in Israel for centuries. In Exodus 32, the people are said to make a golden image in the shape of a bovine, specifically a calf. There is disagreement about the depiction of YHWH as a bull. Albright once suggested that a "direct representation of Yahweh as bull-god" would be "not only otherwise unparalleled in biblical tradition but is contrary to all that we know of Syro-Palestinian iconography in the second and early first millennia B.C."[232] However, with new iconographic

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[231] I searched through and counted the references of El with the bull.

[232] William Foxwell Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process*, 2nd edition. (Doubleday Anchor Book, 1957), 229. Another view concerning

data this discussion is once again open.[233] P. Am 63 also serves as additional evidence in the identification of YHWH with the bull. Since Exodus 32 has already been mentioned, it is important to also examine the Jeroboam traditions. Along with the golden calf traditions, Jeroboam's bull images make a point to assert that this is "the god(s) who brought the people out of Egypt."[234] There is further evidence in the HB of the conflation of El and YHWH. In fact, the title of Bull is attributed to YHWH in Gen 49:24. In this verse we see the name "Bull of Jacob." This phrase is often translated as "Mighty one of Jacob," but Bull of Jacob is a viable translation for this and similar phrases that utilize the term *ʾbyr*.[235] Therefore, the usage of bull in this phrase falls into a larger culture of deities associated with bulls and other bovine. While the Levantine conception of the bull is surely displayed here, it is important not to overlook the divine bull motif that is also present in Egypt. While there are no discernable Egyptian loanwords in this text, the influence appears to be more nuanced. The bull motif signifies one of the nuanced influences. The divine bull is a motif that is common in the Egyptian literature and art. The

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the bull interpretation of YHWH is Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 317.

[233] Theodore J. Lewis, *The Origin and Character of God: Ancient Israelite Religion through the Lens of Divinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 319.

[234] Lewis, *The Origin and Character of God*, 318.

[235] *HALOT*, 6. The Phrase occurs in Isa. 49:26; 60:16; Psa. 132:2,5. In Isa 1:24 Jacob is replaced with Israel. Jeremy Smoak and William Schniedewind, "Religion at Kuntillet ʿAjrud," *Religions* 10.3 (2019): 211.

clearly divine imagery is seen as early as the Narmer Palette. On this cosmetic palate Narmer is depicted with the tail of the Apis bull. In addition, the palette is replete with images of bulls and the depiction of divine bulls associated with Hathor. Although, this is an early representation it is only one of many examples. There are examples of this divine bovine motif that more closely parallel our text. The first example is the reference to the "Bull of the Sky." This "Bull of the Sky" is associated to Horus in the New Kingdom and is retained in the memory of the people until Ptolemaic times, where it is shortened to "Horus the Bull."[236] Seth is also associated with a bull.[237] This is intriguing because Seth is often syncretized with Ba'al in later periods and like YHWH is a storm god. This syncretism of gods and bulls goes well beyond the pair of Horus and Seth, in the context of Egypt. The Apis bull is syncretized with Atum, Horus, Ra, and Ptah. [238] This sheds light on our text because these associations occur before, during and after the possible

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[236] G. A. Wainwright, "The Bull Standards of Egypt," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 19.1/2 (1933): 45.

[237] Wainwright, "The Bull Standards of Egypt," 45

[238]Nenad Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis': The Solar Aspects of the Divine Apis Bull and the Royal Ideology of the Late Period (664–332 BCE)," in *The Rise and Development of the Solar Cult and Architecture in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Massimiliano Nuzzolo and Jaromír Krejčí (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2020), 235–51. The usage of this motif fits into the scribal tendencies and will receive further attention in the next chapter.

provenance of this text. In fact, many of the references are found in the Persian period.[239] This along with the Levantine evidence shows the usage of divine bull motifs in direct association with a deity. Therefore, it is evident that this statement about Aḥor a bull comes from both the Levantine and Egyptian context.

The text then moves beyond having various names for the Judean God. It shows the eclectic nature of the papyrus. The author calls upon other names to also work on their behalf. The deity names chosen in concert with Aḥor are Bethel and Ba'al Shamayin. First, Bethel is called upon to answer the author's request. This is parallel to the request of Aḥor. The author requests this to his own advantage. This is not to insinuate that it is a selfish request. Every reader would appropriate that same request when this text was read. The name Bethel is most familiar because of the city, Bethel. Bethel means "House of God/El." It is a city that is 17 km north of Jerusalem, which was formerly Luz.[240] Bethel occurs twice as the name of a deity in

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[239] Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis," 235–51. Also see Nenad Marković and Mina Ilić, "Between Tradition and Transformation: The Apis Cult under Cambyses II and Darius I (c. 526–486 BC)," in *Tradition and Transformation in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Andrea Kahlbacher and Elisa Priglinger, 1st ed., Proceedings of the Fifth International Congress for Young Egyptologists 15 - 19 September, 2015, Vienna (Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2018), 87–104.

[240] *HALOT*, 125.

Aramaic papyri.[241] In the Aramaic papyri found in Elephantine, Bethel is used in theophoric names. One clear example is the name *bt'lzbd* (Bethelzabad), which occurs four times in the Aramaic documents from Elephantine (B3 9:11; D 18 7:0; D19 2:1; D19 3:2). Considering the names and the presence of the deity in other Aramaic Papyri, it is understandable that Bethel would also make an appearance in this papyrus. The eclectic community could be a reason for this name's inclusion, but it could also represent syncretism among the Judean people in Egypt. It is possible that Bethel was worshiped by Judean people in Egypt,[242] and I suggest over time was syncretized with Aḥor/YHWH. After Bethel we see that Ba'al Shamayim (lit. the Lord of Heaven), is asked to bless Mar (Lord). Ba'al is a Canaanite deity that is often correlated with YHWH. They are both storm gods that ride on the clouds (*CAT* 1.2 IV:8; Psa. 68:5). The cults of Ba'al and YHWH are in opposition against one another in the Hebrew Bible (1 Kings 18). However, in this text, the two deities complement one another coming to the aid of the psalmist. The invocation of the names of Bethel and Ba'al both are for the advantage of the psalmist and his audience. The term "devoted ones" is a substantive that originated from the Aramaic term *hsd*. It is also present in the Hebrew Bible and is used throughout the Psalms to describe YHWH's covenantal love or faithfulness toward his people (Jer 3:12; Ps 145:17; Dt 33:8).[243]

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[241] *HALOT*, 126; A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C*. (Oxford.: Clarendon Press, 1923).

[242] Holm, "Bethel and Yahō," 32.

[243] *HALOT*, 337.

This term reflects a joint obligation or loyalty when applied to human activity.[244] In addition to being in the Hebrew Bible, this term also occurs in Aramaic. The substantival form of this verb present in this text also occurs in the Hebrew Bible. It occurs in seven different psalms, occurring in Psalms 97, 116, 132, 141, 145, 148, 149.[245] In all these instances these are individuals who are pious and faithful to the covenantal relationship with YHWH. Here, much like in the psalms of the Hebrew Bible, these *hsdym* are the ones who remain loyal to YHWH/ Aḥor or have identified with the covenant of YHWH/Aḥor.

This psalm ends with a blessing. This is not uncommon in psalmody. A similar concept of blessing YHWH is in Psalm 145 where the psalmist both extols and blesses the name of YHWH. The PC 1cp is used in verses one and two and seems to mirror the sentiment we find in this line of P. Am. 63. This blessing is a result of the many petitions made throughout this psalm. It appears that the assumption is that these will be answered and that because of this loyalty that Aḥor/YHWH has for his loyal ones that they can bless him. The structure of this psalm starts with a petition and ends with exaltation.

Conclusion

P. Am. 63 col. xii lines 11–19 provide insight into an eclectic Judean community in Egypt. This text demonstrates how much we can still learn about this community. This translation and commentary are only one of a handful of in-depth interactions with this text that

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[244] *HALOT*, 337.

[245] *HALOT*, 337.

have been published. This chapter looked at the various nuances of the word choice and syntax to unveil the possible context that produced this text. The nuances of the divine name showed the syntactical expertise of the psalmist seeking to conform an ancient text with the circumstances that face the diasporic community. The text demonstrates tensions that were present for some Judeans as they lived in Egypt. This text also illuminated a community that was eclectic concerning their West Asian deities. Ba'al, Bethel, and YHWH all are called upon in different capacities to help this Judean community. The next chapter will examine the various scribal choices and techniques now that the text has been examined. The discoveries and nuances found cannot receive further attention without the backdrop of Judean scribal practices.

Chapter 4: Judean Scribal Conventions

Introduction

Jesmyn Ward, professor of Creative Writing at Tulane, once mused that "there is power in words, power in asserting our existence, our experience, our lives, through words. That sharing our stories confirms our humanity. That it creates community, both within our own community and beyond it."[246] This sentiment should not be lost on us when examining ancient societies. The ancients placed immense power in both words and writing. These societies that

[246] Jesmyn Ward, *The Fire This Time: A New Generation Speaks about Race*, (New York: Scribner, 2017), 10.

created writing generated a means to produce so much more. The ancients themselves used the power of writing to craft ideological frameworks, which societies afterward would perpetuate and continue to use this medium to create new ideologies. The very discipline of scribalism allows societies to create and recreate. Because this dissertation aims to uncover the Judean scribal tendencies that lay beneath the difficulties of this manuscript. This chapter will describe the scribal culture that is present in P. Am. 63 xii 11–19.

Scribalism and scribal techniques allow us to understand many aspects of a culture. It can show innovations within a community, but it also allows us to see how previous innovations and thoughts are perpetuated through later cultures and societies. Judean scribalism is demonstrated as an important mechanism in P. Am. 63 col., xii lines 11–19. This is evident by examining the Judean scribe's usage of ancient Near Eastern imagery and language as well as the literary devices that are utilized to convey a unique message. This chapter will first provide the evidence for each convention as a scribal tool used either in the Bible or in post-biblical literature. The conventions that are present in P. Am. 63 will then receive attention and further examination.

Ancient Near Eastern Imagery

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, we see the usage of ancient Near Eastern (specifically Levantine, Egyptian, and Mesopotamian) images, religious ideals, and language. In many cases, this is because of the socio-linguistic classification known as branding. Branding is "the strategic promotion of the branded product or concept, its distinctiveness or 'unique selling point."[247]

[247] Sebba, "Iconisation, Attribution and Branding in Orthography," 213–18.

Oftentimes, the selling point is an ideological tone or message that the scribes want to convey. This is a clear usage, not only in the Hebrew Bible but also present here in P. Am. 63. Just as the Bible uses certain properties of ancient Near Eastern literature, we see this usage continued into P. Am. 63. This similarity between the Hebrew Bible and P. Am. 63 is a result of Judean scribal training that rests at the foundation of both the Hebrew Bible and P. Am. 63, a Semitic papyrus. The images and language of Levantine cultures are common cultures used in the Hebrew Bible and P. Am 63. The cultures that inhabit the Levant include the Canaanites, (which I will broadly include Phoenicians and the people of Ugarit, which are linguistically Canaanite but culturally distinct in some ways[248]), Moabites, and Aramean people groups. These are areas in the milieu that Israel developed.

Canaanite Literature

When looking at the imagery of the Bible, the literature from Ugarit and other Levantine cultures demonstrates some of the most prevalent themes and imagery. The Canaanite imagery present in P. Am. 63 will be examined after placing it within its biblical context. This will demonstrate the Judean nature concerning its usage. Considering this, many ideas from Canaanite cultures find themselves replicated in the Hebrew Bible and later Judean literature that use the Hebrew Bible. The context of the Bible and P. Am. 63 are essential for understanding the contents and the intents of the scribes. Two predominant terms in the Canaanite context are Ba'al

[248] See, for example, Anson F. Rainey, "A Canaanite at Ugarit," *Israel Exploration Journal* 13 (1963): 43–45. And also Rainey, "Who is a Canaanite? A review of the textual evidence," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 304 (1996): 1–15.

and Zaphon. These are terms that appear in P. Am. 63, which requires us to further understand the purpose and rationale behind their usage.

Ba'al

P. Am 63 uses the term Ba'al, and its background is located in Canaan. Ba'al is a Phoenician god with power over storms.[249] He becomes especially important because of his association with fertility.[250] Ba'al is part of a triumvirate alongside Yam and Mot, similar to the Greek gods Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades.[251] The voice of Ba'al is thunder that shakes the earth and causes his enemies to flee.[252] He is an important part of the Canaanite pantheon, and Ba'al also becomes an important figure in the biblical narrative. Ba'al has a lasting legacy in the Levant and Levantine cultures. Ba'al serves as the main protagonist of the Ba'al Cycle but also

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[249] Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 68.

[250] David G. Burke, "Ba'al," *Oxford Companion to the Bible,* 70.

[251] Mitchell Dahood, "Canaanite Religion," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 267. Pierre de Miroschedji, "At the Origin of Canaanite Cult and Religion: The Early Bronze Age Fertility Ritual in Palestine," *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* 30 (2011): 74–103.

[252] Dahood, "Canaanite Religion, 267. de Miroschedji, "At the Origin of Canaanite Cult and Religion: The Early Bronze Age Fertility Ritual in Palestine," 76–78; Todd M. Ferry and Gregory Harms, "Canaan–Palestine: Ancient History," in *The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction,* 4th ed. (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 3–22.

appears often in the biblical corpus. Considering the Canaanite influence on Israel it is necessary to mention Ba'al.

In the Hebrew Bible the term *b'l* appears over 200 times in various forms. It appears as a divine name but also as a part of theophoric names. It is also the common noun meaning "lord." In addition to the explicit references to Ba'al, there are many instances of the attribution of characteristics of Ba'al to YHWH. Considering the appearance of Ba'al in the biblical narrative and archaeology of the Levant, it is evident that Ba'al has been imprinted in the Hebrew Bible and Judean culture. Ba'al also is an appellative used in the Hebrew Bible for YHWH (Hosea 2:16). To tackle the usage of Ba'al in ancient Judean literature, an examination of Ba'al in comparison to YHWH, his presence in Israelite worship, and his presence in P. Am. 63 is important for this study.

Ba'al and YHWH

Since Ba'al is a dominant figure in the Levant, he participates in various ancient Near Eastern tropes. These tropes are then often borrowed and utilized in the literature of the Hebrew Bible. In some cases, there is a conscious borrowing utilizing the Canaanite imagery to further strengthen the supremacy of YHWH or to tie his abilities and position to the Canaanite Ba'al. One of the most prevalent tropes are ones that associate YHWH with control of the sky much like the storm god. Throughout the biblical corpus, YHWH is tied to the sky and the control of storms. For instance, YHWH is constructed as a thunder deity in Psalm 29. Some have

considered this an example of a Hebrew appropriation of a Canaanite hymn to Ba'al.[253] Regardless of whether this psalm had a Canaanite origin, it reflects key attributes that correlate with Ba'al. Psalm 29:3b states that "the God of glory thunders." This idea of thundering is often attributed to Ba'al. In addition, in the context of the Psalm the term *ql* "voice/sound" is used seven times in these eleven verses. The use of *ql* could also correlate to thunder. This becomes increasingly evident when reading considering climatology along the Lebanese coast.[254] YHWH is also characterized as a chariot rider. Both YHWH and Ba'al are characterized as riders (*rkb*). Ba'al rides on the clouds (*CAT* 1.2 IV) and YHWH is a rider in the same fashion (Ps. 68:5). There is confusion about the term *b'rbwt.* Based upon the Ugaritic parallel it can be translated as, "Rider on the cloud." However, if it is based upon the *'rb* then it could be desert. It seems best to take it as "rider on the clouds" based upon the Ugaritic cognate *'rp*. Imagery such as these examples continue throughout the Hebrew Bible, thus adapting the ancient Near Eastern and Ba'al-specific imagery to YHWH. The usage of Ba'al as an appellation finds its way into theophoric names such as Bealiah (1 Chr 12:6), which means "YHWH is Ba'al." Bealiah is an example of the usage of Ba'al as "master," and using it as an appellation for YHWH, addressing YHWH as "master/lord."[255] It is used about YHWH being lord in Hosea 2:16. Stating that the

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[253] H.L Ginsberg, "A Phoenician Hymn in the Psalter," in *Atti Del XIX Congresso Internazionale Delgi Orientalisti* (Rome, 1935), 472–76.

[254] Schniedewind, "Psalm 29, The Voice of God, and Thunderstorms in the Eastern Mediterranean," 367.

[255] Marc Brettler, "Ba'al (Person)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 1:549.

people will no longer call YHWH "my Ba'al." The term Ba'al, whether a deity or an appellation, is utilized by the authors of the Hebrew Bible and becomes an aspect of the branding that creates the cultural scribalism of the Bible.

Ba'al and Israelite Worship

While some characteristics of Ba'al are attributed to YHWH, the Hebrew Bible describes Ba'al worship as being present in the nation of Israel as well. Ba'al is depicted as being a rival deity to YHWH. The Hebrew Bible often speaks of the "Ba'als" that are being worshiped instead of YHWH. However, it is not clear if this is speaking of local manifestations of Ba'al or Canaanite deities in general.[256] Either way, the Hebrew Bible states that Israel worshipped the Ba'als during the period of the Judges (Judges 2:11, 13; 3:7; 10:6). This worship persists and takes center stage during the divided monarchy. In the Elijah narrative, Ba'al worship is depicted as the primary worship of the Northern Kingdom. Elijah then has an encounter where he kills 450 prophets of Ba'al (1 Kings 18). Ultimately the strict monotheism that eventually arises out of the Hebrew Bible makes a point to characterize Ba'al as being in opposition to YHWH worship. However, it is inextricably linked to life and worship in the context of the Northern Kingdom. This strong tradition present in the Northern Kingdom creates an avenue for the scribes of P. Am. 63 to incorporate Ba'al into the text.

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[256] John Day, "Ba'al (Deity)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 1:547.

Zaphon

Zaphon is another term derived from Canaanite literature. In Hebrew, this term means "north."[257] Therefore it is representative of the mountain to the north. It is suggested that this location was applied to the mountain before it was applied to the location. The term in Ugaritic is associated with *ṣpn* and referred to the hiddenness of the cloud-covered mountain before displacing *sam'alu* as the term for "north" in Northwest Semitic.[258] Mt. Zaphon is located at Jebel al-ʾAqraʿ, in Syria north of Ras Shamra.[259] Zaphon is the domain of the gods and is designated for the kingship of Ba'al and Ba'al worship.[260] Zaphon is like Mt. Zion and Psalm 48:3 identifies the two as synonymous stating it is in the "extreme parts of the North (*ṣpwn*)." In addition to Psalm 48, Zaphon appears throughout the Bible as a location. Between the Ugaritic legacy and the biblical references, this area became imprinted in the wider Judean culture and finds its way into P. Am. 63.

Ba'al and Zaphon in P. Am. 63

P. Am. 63 contains references to both Ba'al and Zaphon. Zaphon is referred to as a locale. It is alluded to in this section that Zaphon is the residence of Aḥor. This is the realization

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[257] *HALOT*, 1046

[258] *DULAT*, 787-88; Hector Avalos, "Mount Zaphon (Place)," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 6:1040.

[259] Marguerite Yon, *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2006), fig. 2.

[260] Avalos, "Mount Zaphon (Place)," 6:1041.

of the identification of Zion with Zaphon. Aḥor is called upon to help from his residence in Zaphon. This term is parallel with Rash. Rash is the place that the emissaries come from while Aḥor himself comes from Zaphon. This imagery resonates with the Samarian identity present among the Judeans who wrote this document. Ba'al is mentioned as Ba'al Shamayin. This appears to be an alternative reference to YHWH as the Lord of Heaven. As mentioned, the name Ba'al also serves to mean lord. Therefore, P. Am. 63 utilizes this familiar term to give another appellation to YHWH while avoiding the divine name. In P. Am. 63, YHWH receives various appellations to convey various aspects of his power. In this case, the appellation designated that he is the Lord of the Heavens. As mentioned, the usage of the word Ba'al meaning Lord or Master is utilized in the Bible, as seen in Bealiah. Much like what is seen in the Hebrew Bible these ancient Near Eastern images are integrated in a Judean psalm for the exaltation of Aḥor/YHWH. The ancient Near Eastern imagery does not stop with the Canaanite context. Various other motifs from the ancient Near East are also present in P. Am. 63.

Bulls, Calves, Apis, etc.…. Bovine Imagery and the Context of Scribalism in P. Am. 63

The usage of bull imagery is a mainstay of the ancient Near East. It is present in the Levant, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. Considering the popularity of this imagery it would make sense that it would find its way into biblical imagery. With the usage of this imagery in biblical contexts it has made its way into later texts. That notion is confirmed by its usage in this papyrus. In the previous chapter, we touched on the usage of bull imagery present in line 17 requesting, "May our bull be with us." As mentioned earlier, the prevalence of bovine worship is not

universally accepted among biblical scholars.[261] However, there is increasing evidence, and P. Am. 63 is one of the more recent entries into that conversation. However, it is best to first examine the usage of the bovine deity in the Bible, Levant, and Egypt before examining the scribal usage in P. Am. 63.

The Bible is Full of Bull(s)

As stated previously there has been skepticism concerning the presence of bull imagery in the Bible. As previously noted, Albright suggested that a direct representation of Yahweh as a bull god is contrary to all that we know in the realm of archaeology.[262] I suggest that there is more of a precedent and the aim is to identify this inclination in the scribal predispositions of the Hebrew Bible. Within the context of the Bible two major traditions give us information about the presence of divine bulls in the Bible.[263] The first and most famous is the golden calf narrative in the Book of Exodus. The second is the Jeroboam tradition, which is presented in 1 Kgs 12:27-28. The Aaronic calf is the most notable of bovine references in the Bible and becomes an important component in the telling of the story of Israel. This is not only true among the original recipients of the text but also among the various cultures that received the Hebrew Bible as a part of their canon of Scripture. This section of the Hebrew Bible is oft seen as the pinnacle of

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[261] Jack Sasson, "Bovine Symbolism in the Exodus Narrative," *VT* 18 (1968): 387.

[262] Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches,* 317.

[263] Amihai Mazar, "The 'Bull Site': An Iron Age I Open Cult Place," *BASOR* 247 (1982): 27–42. Mazar speaks about a site that was found in the territory of Manasseh during the Iron Age. This site displays bull imagery in the cultic place.

Israelite idolatry and disobedience. This conception is also placed upon the depiction in 1 Kings 12. In this section, the aim is to fundamentally understand these depictions of "calf cultus." While these two scenes are the most renowned some other allusions and depictions will also receive attention. Understanding this calf cultus in the Hebrew Bible gives insight into how this could relate to bull imagery in other cultures and how it all is appropriated and infused into the text of P. Am. 63.

Exodus 32

Exodus 32 depicts calf imagery. Exodus 32 is a scene that is replicated in various fashions. While the presence of the calves is often seen as an idol or competing god, this is more likely a representation of YHWH. This is a depiction of Aaron creating a tradition that will follow long after his death. In this context, the calf was meant to attract YHWH back after a long period of absence as a representation of YHWH.[264] The composition of this text has received much attention, however, what is most important for this dissertation is that this text was most likely an addition that serves as a polemic for the Jeroboam tradition[265] (discussed below). The Deuteronomic interest is evident by the repetition of the account in Deuteronomy but also the Jeroboam calf tradition mentioned in Deuteronomistic History. While this text may have been a later addition and composed about and as a polemic for the Jeroboam tradition, this also may show that the calf tradition predated Jeroboam's religious creation. Noth suggests, "We might

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[264]Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 358.

[265] Cogan, *I Kings*, 358.

then assume that Jeroboam introduced no innovations, but that there had already been 'golden calves' at cultic places in Israel before his time."[266] This Aaronic tradition was not something fabricated but rather a tradition that was actively being used in the context of Israel, which the Pentateuchal scribes had to address particularly because of Jeroboam's actions. The need to address such a topic does signify that this was a pressing issue. Whether because of Jeroboam or a persistent calf cult in Israel the authors and redactors found this scene as an important event in the etiological history of Israel. In being part of the Israelite etiology, the depictions of the images continue in the Israelite culture. One of the major issues with this interpretation is the thought that the calves represent other gods and are an idolatrous presupposition of the Northern Kingdom. However, all available evidence would suggest that the Northern Kingdom worshipped YHWH in the same way as Judah.[267] The Jeroboam tradition is important evidence in the overall bovine motif found in the Hebrew Bible.

1 Kings 12

The creation of calves in 1 Kings 12 is an oft-cited example of bull imagery being used in the context of ancient Israel. Jeroboam, the king of the Northern Kingdom, institutes this at Bethel and Dan. Dan is located in the North, while Bethel (formerly Luz) is about ten miles north of Jerusalem. According to the Hebrew Bible, the rationale behind the creation of the calves was a political move to maintain the power and autonomy of the Northern Kingdom. While the connection between YHWH and the calves is unmistakable, the nature of the connection is

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[266] Martin Noth, *Exodus* (Louisville: Westminster Press, 1962), 246.

[267] William H. C. Propp, *Exodus 19-40*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 577.

debated.[268] As stated previously some scholars view a direct representation of YHWH using bull imagery as problematic and outside of the religious practices of Israel.[269] Yet the association of bulls and deities is clear in many other cultures that directly influence Israel. The golden calf image was a source of worship for the Northern Israelites. In this narrative, Jeroboam states concerning these bovine images, "Behold your god(s) that brought you up out of the land of Egypt." However, these calves have been "misrepresented as idols."[270] Rather than seeing it as a rival deity to YHWH, it is associated with YHWH. Some scholars have suggested that the calves would function as pedestals,[271] which YHWH rode upon, however, this seems to be only a portion of the representation. The calf imagery represents both the pedestals and a "theriomorphic cult image."[272] Na'aman suggests, "The calves were considered both statues and

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[268] William H. C. Propp, "Golden Calf," *Oxford Companion to the Bible*, 257.

[269] William Foxwell Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity: Monotheism and the Historical Process*, 229.

[270] Gray, *1 & 2 Kings. A Commentary*, 289.

[271] Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches*, 317.

[272] Herbert Niehr, "In Search of YHWH's Cult Statue in the First Temple," *The Image and the Book* (1997): 82; Menahem Haran, *Temples and Temple-Service in Ancient Israel: An Inquiry into Biblical Cult Phenomena and the Historical Setting of the Priestly School* (Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1985), 29; Karel van der Toorn, "Israelite Figurines: A View from the Texts," in *Israelite Figurines: A View from the Texts* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 49.

pedestals of YHWH, the theriomorphic divine images were part of the official cult in Israel."[273] Regarding this position, Lewis suggests that this gives credence to the statement that, "Hosea's description of Jeroboam's bull of Samaria should be taken at face value as designating a bull image of Yahweh."[274] Either way, it is important to see this as a representative of YHWH. The choice of the calf shows the acceptance of the Aaronic tradition handed down from Exodus 32 that appears to have circulated in Northern circles.[275] In the mind of the Israelites, this image and tradition received a positive representation. Considering that those in the north were not able to worship in Jerusalem, the Aaronic tradition uses the image to attract YHWH to a new resting place, away from Jerusalem.[276] The identification of YHWH with the bovine would originate with the neighbors of Israel, for Jeroboam. While the Aaronite tradition displays the etiological roots of Jeroboam's acts, the neighboring cultures give added clarity about this rationale. Northern Israel in particular was heavily influenced by the Canaanite religions surrounding them. Therefore, the adoption of the bovine imagery would make sense considering El is often associated with the bull. In the context of the Hebrew Bible, YHWH is associated with both El

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[273] Nadav Na'aman, *Ancient Israel's History and Historiography. The First Temple Period* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 332.

[274] Lewis, *The Origin and Character of God,* 321.

[275] Cogan, *I Kings*, 358. Further this is not to suggest that the tern *ʿgl* cannot denote a young bull but that the term displays a textual connection with the Aaronic tradition when another term could have been similarly used.

[276] Cogan, *I Kings*, 358.

and Ba'al.[277] Therefore, YHWH often takes on titles and imagery associated with both. So, YHWH was associated with the bovine. Calf/bull is an acceptance of Canaanite imagery. With that as a consideration, it is pertinent to examine Hosea's discussion of bull/calf imagery in the Northern Kingdom.

Hosea[278]

The prophet Hosea deals with the bovine imagery that was present in Samaria. As seen in 1 Kings 12, the bovine imagery appears as a practice in Northern Israel. Hosea undergirds this reality and condemns the practices of Northern Israel. While 1 Kings focused on the calf cult constructed by Jeroboam at Shechem, Hosea focuses on the apparent descendants of that cult. Hosea focuses his attention on the calf cult located in Samaria. Three texts in the context of Hosea make mention of the bovine cult. Those texts are Hos 8:5-7; 10: 5-8 and 13:2. The mentioning of this text further highlights that these cult practices were extensive and common in the context of Israel.

Hosea 8 depicts the abhorrence that the author has for the practice found in the northern Kingdom. It is depicted as being an idolatrous practice and contrary to proper Yahwistic

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[277] Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 44, 147.

[278] I am indebted to Elizabeth Vandyke, who thoroughly analyzes the calf cultus in the context of her doctoral dissertation. For a more expansive look at the usage of calf imagery in Hosea see Elizabeth VanDyke, "The Calf of Samaria: The Politics of Cultic Images in Eighth Century Israel" (University of California Los Angeles, Dissertation, 2023).

tradition. Hosea 8 like many of the proceeding chapters is written as a prophetic utterance directly from YHWH through Hosea. Therefore, YHWH speaks directly to the practices of Israel. In verse four, the improper appointment of kings and princes is discussed. The author writes, "They reigned but not through me, they appointed princes that I did not know." This unauthorized appointment is mentioned alongside the construction or fashioning of idols. The fashioning of these idols is underscored as being "for the sake of your destruction." In verse five, the author continues his condemnation of the bovine cultic practice. However, it is not simply condemned, but the anger of YHWH burns against Israel for this practice. The author makes it clear that YHWH "rejects" this practice. While YHWH loathes this religious practice, this text also provides clarity for the rationale of the calves. The author suggests by way of negation that Northern Israelites saw this calf as *'Elohim*. The construction clearly states that "it is not *'lhym*." I suggest that the usage of the plural *'Elohim* but the singular *hw'* conveys that it was a representation of YHWH who is often referred to as *'Elohim*. Therefore, the author is conveying that the practice of utilizing the calf as a representation of YHWH is incorrect and abominable to YHWH himself. Judgment is pronounced on the calf itself. Much like Dagan is mutilated in 1 Samuel 5 the Samarian calf will be destroyed —literally "to be fragments."[279]

The tenth chapter of Hosea has another reference to the calf cult. It continues the trend of speaking of the bovine imagery in a negative light. In this particular context, it spends more time looking at the disposition of the people. Israel is described with pejorative language that suggests they have abandoned Yahwistic worship. YHWH will break down the altars of Israel and exile

[279] *HALOT*, 1382.

the calf images from the nation. However, their disposition is unchanged. In fact, in verse three Israel is described as "without a king" but also without fear of YHWH. What is apparent is that Hosea seeks to display the calf cult as characteristic of Samaria. Hosea claims that the love for this calf is so deeply rooted that the people "mourn" the loss of the calf of Beth-Aven. Such a characterization or reaction exemplifies the influence that bovine imagery had in the context of Israel.

Another Levantine community tied to the composition of this P. Am 63 text were the Samarians. This is particularly important since these three examples are tied to Samaria and the religious practices of Northern Israel. The reality that the Judean population residing in Egypt and particularly Elephantine possessed an amalgam of northern and southern ideology further defines what would be Judean in this context as well as which tropes or devices are utilized in the scribing of a document like P. Amherst 63. While these images are abundant in the Northern Kingdom, they are not isolated only to the North. As we shall see in the next section, aspects of bull imagery also are present in the Judahite context, as well as elsewhere in the Levant, Mesopotamia, and Egypt.

Other Biblical texts, Levantine, and Mesopotamian Bull imagery

Within the context of the Levant and Mesopotamia, there are many examples of bull imagery. They exist in both Israelite and non-Israelite contexts. Bull imagery is common in the areas of Canaan and Mesopotamia that influenced ancient Israel. This section will first give attention to another biblical text that suggests bull imagery from Genesis. This would also include evidence that is outside of the biblical corpus but still present in parts of Israel. In this case, evidence from Samaria will receive attention. Following these pieces of evidence, the bull imagery of Ugarit and Mesopotamia will be examined.

Another biblical text that does not receive enough attention is Genesis 49. The author of this text gives descriptions that would characterize the various tribes but also the God of Jacob. The text of particular interest to this study is Gen 49:24, which was mentioned previously. In this verse, we see the name *'byr y 'qb*, "Bull of Jacob." This phrase is often translated as "Mighty one of Jacob," but "Bull of Jacob" is a viable translation for this and similar phrases that utilize the term *'byr*. This term occurs in Psalm 22:13 and means stallion. The gloss as "stallion" is derived from an Egyptian cognate.[280] This word is connected to Egyptian *ibr*, which means "horse" and is clarified by horse determinative.[281] However, it also means bull and is defined as such in Judges 5:22. The term bull is often derived from parallelism or context. Not only does this happen in Judges 5:22, but this is similarly evident in Isaiah 34:7, where the term *'byr* is part of a bovine group. While being an Egyptian cognate the term has the fluidity to depict various types of four-legged beasts from the stallion to the bull. The usage of this term further emphasizes the tradition of bull imagery in the context of the Hebrew Bible.

In the archaeological record, there are depictions of bulls that connote a religious affiliation; however, an important artifact was also found around Samaria. This a Samarian ostracon that lists many Northern Israelite names. The name that is most important to our study is Egelyaw (*Samaria Ostraca* no. 41:1). These ostraca were found around Samaria, and they

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[280] Hoch, *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period*, 18.

[281] Adolf Erman and Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache.* Reprint (De Gruyter, 2021), 1.63.

depict the Samarian culture. Among the ostraca are a variety of names and they display the markedly Northern spelling. The name Egelyaw is part of that spelling tradition, which means "Yaw/YHWH is my Bull." The term *'gl* is the first part of this name and the same term used for the calf images we have examined previously. The personal name with *'gl* is known only from the north, and not from the south; while this could be due to the accident of discovery, for now, the evidence is telling. Although names do not always tell us about the religious affiliations of the person who bears the name, they do tell us a great deal about the person's parents but most importantly about the cultural ideology that is common during this time. This name gives us insight into the usage of bull imagery to represent YHWH but also to create a theophoric name that is designed to honor YHWH. This also describes a religious ideology that was prevalent enough to garner a name. This along with the other evidence continues to depict the presence of bovine cults in the areas of Northern Israel. Moving from the area of the Levant to Mesopotamia, bovine imagery continues to be a part of religious expression.

Mesopotamia is another area that utilizes bull imagery. Just as we have seen in the context of the Levant, both bull and calf imagery are present. Both the calf and bull imagery are attributed to the Mesopotamian storm god. Along with storm gods in Mesopotamia, moon gods are also identified with calves. The identification is sometimes the "calf of Anu" or the "calf of Enlil."[282] While this identification is utilized for the younger storm gods, it is not utilized for the

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[282] Daniel E. Fleming, "If El Is a Bull, Who Is a Calf? Reflections on Religion in Second-Millennium Syria-Palestine," *Eretz-Israel: Archaeological, Historical and Geographical Studies* 26 (1999):24.

more senior deities such as Anu or Enlil. Instead, we find that Enlil is identified with the adult black and white bull in Ebla. The epithets that are present for gods are also present for kings. The epithet is used for kings Hammurabi and Yaḫdun-Lim of Mari.[283] While these are only a few examples, such applications are quite prevalent and are utilized for some of the most prominent deities and figures in Mesopotamia. The prevalence of bull imagery in the ancient Near East does not stop in Mesopotamia but is also identifiable in Egypt.

Egyptian Bull Imagery

Considering the milieu of P. Am. 63, it is important to consider the Egyptian context. As mentioned previously, there are implicit references to Egypt that are not often considered. There appears to be an implicit reference that deserves greater attention. In analyzing the bull imagery, it is necessary to remember that bovine and specifically bull imagery is frequent in the context of Egypt. An example is the Narmer palette, which uses the Hathor/Bat bovine imagery and the bull tail worn by the king that is associated with the Apis bull. The Apis Bull and the Bull of Heaven have a long-standing history in Egypt. The bull (*kꜣ*) of Heaven is associated with gods as well. This imagery is frequent and is represented as early as the Pyramid Texts after that it became obscure, but subsequently, it reappears in the New Kingdom and continues into the Roman period.[284] The Bull of Heaven uses phraseology also seen in P. Am. 63. This expression is seen in New Kingdom texts when Horus is given the title of Bull of Heaven. While in the New

[283] Fleming, "If El Is a Bull, Who Is a Calf? Reflections on Religion in Second-Millennium Syria-Palestine," 23.

[284] Wainwright, "The Bull Standards of Egypt," 44–45.

Kingdom the planet Saturn is known as Horus is the Bull of Heaven, [285] similarly Aḥor is a bull in P. Am. 63. Bulls are an enduring representation of the divine. Considering the prominence of the Apis Bull and the relationship of it to this study, further analysis of the Apis Bull is important.

Some of the earliest representations of the Apis Bull go back to the 18th Dynasty (c. 1550–1300) in ancient Memphis alongside the creator god Ptah.[286] The usage of the bull was extremely wide-ranging. It is seen carrying the body of the deceased during the time of Sheshonq I (945–924 BCE) and attested until the Roman period.[287] There is a great deal of evidence for the Apis being utilized and syncretized with other gods during the Late Period (664–332 BCE). This is of particular interest to this study because the Late Period is when the biblical corpus is composed. This evidence continues into the Persian and Hellenistic periods (525–30 BCE). This is another important phase for this study because the writing of P. Am. 63 likely dates to these periods. The literature that would possibly parallel P. Am. 63 is germane to the utilization of the bull in P. Am. 63. The Apis bull is identified in approximately 11 texts from the Late and Persian periods that identify Apis with Atum, Horus, or both.[288] Additionally, there are eighteen representations of Apis-Atum with two horns on his head from the late to the Ptolemaic

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[285] Wainwright, "The Bull Standards of Egypt," 44–45.

[286] Marković and Ilić, "Between Tradition and Transformation," 87.

[287] Marković and Ilić, "Between Tradition and Transformation," 87.

[288] Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis,'" 238–39.

period.[289] This alone suggests the importance of the Apis bull during this period. Apart from the syncretized versions of the Apis bull, there are also 33 other attestations of the Apis bull from the seventh to first centuries BCE.[290] Among all these attestations, there is a Demotic text, called the Demotic Chronicle, from the third century BCE that elaborates on the assimilation of the Apis with the gods. This text is a Late Period treatise on the nature of kingship and invokes the complexity of the Apis Bull's relationship to divinity and divine kingship.[291] Concerning the Apis Bull, this text states, "Apis, Apis, Apis! That is to say: Ptah, Ra, Horus, son of Isis, are the lords of the office of the ruler. You have forgotten them while you strive after the gaining of rulership…. His fortune lies with these three signs! That is to say: Apis is the three gods who were named above. Apis is Ptah, Apis is Ra, Apis is Horus, son of Isis" (col. 5. 12-13).[292] This illustrates the tendency to combine the Apis with the preeminent gods of Egypt. This could signify an additional reason the author of P. Am. 63 willing makes the connection of Aḥor with the bull.

P. Am. 63 Bull Imagery

While we have examined many examples of bovine imagery in the Bible and in the ancient Near East, P Am. 63 stands as another example of the proclivity of ancient peoples to use this imagery. P. Am. 63 is utilized as core evidence depicting the Samarian/Northern Israelite

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[289]Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis,'" 241–42.

[290] Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis,'" 242–43.

[291] Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis,'" 236.

[292] Marković, "'Apis Is Ptah, Apis Is Ra, Apis Is Horus, Son of Isis,'" 236.

bull cult. Mark Smith describes it as adding "a significant witness to the cult at Bethel."[293] The other examples presented above have established that this bovine theophoric conception is not alien. Whether in Israel, Mesopotamia, or Egypt this type of imagery is common. This makes it clearer when approaching P. Am. 63 that the text is a product of Judean ideology, which in turn is influenced by ancient Near Eastern thought. All of this has been fused in the multi-cultural community on Elephantine. We see a Judean conception of using bovine imagery to express YHWH as powerful. Aḥor is the bull, and he is capable of fulfilling the desires of the community represented in P. Am. 63. Along with bull imagery another important designation that arises from the ancient Near East, specifically Egypt, is naming magic.

What is in a Name: Names and Naming

"What is in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."[294] This is a question famously posed by William Shakespeare that continues to resonate in our current society. Personal names are often overlooked or thought to be meaningless in our society. Shakespeare makes the point that a name is simply a convention of identification but does not speak nor define the character or destiny of the person possessing the name. This

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[293] Mark S. Smith, "Counting Calves at Bethel," in *Up to the Gates of Ekron: Essays on the Archaeology and History of the Eastern Mediterranean in Honor of Seymour Gitin*, ed. S. White Crawford et al. (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 2007), 384.

[294] William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet: Third Series*, ed. René Weis et al., 3rd ed. (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2012), 189.

commentary on the name largely reigns in Western culture. Yet, names were viewed completely differently in the societies of the biblical text. Names were incredibly important in the ancient world. Names were considered a designation of ethnic, religious, or even societal affiliation. More importantly, names were part of a person's very being. In P. Am. 63 there are divine names that cause us to examine the purpose behind a name. Conventions that display the importance of the name are common in the areas of Egypt and Israel. Because of the usage of naming conventions in these two areas, these conventions likely found their way into P. Am. 63. This section will consist of various naming conventions found in Egypt, then conventions present in the Hebrew Bible and other post-biblical literature and conclude with the conventions present in P. Am. 63.

The Significance of the Personal Name in Ancient Egypt

In Egyptian religion, there is a priority placed upon a personal name. Other than the body, which can be both spiritual and physical, the human is made up of four parts: the ka (), the ba (), the shadow (), and the name (). The name is a part of your being and a decider of your fate, much like what will be seen in the Hebrew Bible. The name was one of the constituent elements of personhood.[295] It was such a veritable part of a person's being "that to deface or destroy the name, and thus prevent it's being spoken or seen, helped to destroy the existence of

[295] Francoise Dunand and Christiane Zivie-Coche, *Gods and Men in Egypt: 3000 BCE to 395 CE,* trans. David Lorton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 130.

the person named."[296] The majority of the personal names were meaningful utterances and, in many cases, these utterances relate to the gods.[297] "To suppress a name" or to "mutilate it " was not an attack on one part but an attack on "the entirety of a person and to endanger his wholeness. "[298] There are four examples of this significance that illuminates the material. The first is the myth known as, The Legend of Isis and the Name of Re. The second is displayed when examining demons in Egyptian religion. The execration texts are a third example and mutilated hieroglyphs comprise the fourth and final example.

In "The Legend of Isis and the Name of Re," the power of the name of a divine person is exhibited. In the story, as preserved in P. Turin 1993, Isis afflicts Re with poison with a clear motive to ascertain his true name. Isis blackmails Re into revealing his name because this poison was only curable by her magic. When Isis tells Re that she must know his name to heal him, he gives her several names. These names do not satisfy Isis because they are not his secret name. As the poison burns with greater intensity, Re finally concedes to Isis' request. Subsequently, Re commands the gods and all of creation to give them privacy. Re does this because he does not want anyone or anything to know his secret name. Ritner notes, "Divinities were often said to

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[296] Richard H. Wilkinson, "Symbols," in *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion*, ed. Donald B. Redford (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 341.

[297] John R. Baines, "Society, Morality, and Religious Practice," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 176.

[298] Dunand and Zivie-Coche, *Gods and Men in Egypt*, 130.

have secret names guarded from devotees and other deities alike."[299] In "The Legend of Isis and the Name of Re," Re retorts to Isis, "I have hidden it in my body from my children to prevent the power of a male or female magician from coming into existence against me."[300] Therefore, Re gives a clear rationale for why it is detrimental to reveal his secret name. In some forms of the text, Isis causes Re to give his eyes to Horus.[301] In addition to this text that describes the power of the secret name, demons are also controlled by the utterance or knowledge of their names.

Demons in Egyptian religion are another interesting case concerning names. While demons are not gods, there is no obvious term to set apart a god from a demon.[302] They have some aspect of deity but generally do not fall into the category of gods. Demons like gods fall into the categories of benevolent and malevolent. They also are more readily identifiable. Rita Lucarelli notes, "The scribal habit to often write the names of inimical beings in red ink and to add the evil or slain enemy determinative to their name shows that Egyptians recognized 'malevolent demon' as an ontological category."[303] Malevolent demons are known to harass

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[299] Robert K. Ritner, "The Legend of Isis and the Name of Re," in *Context of Scripture*, ed. William W. Hallo (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:33.

[300] Robert K. Ritner, "The Legend of Isis and the Name of Re," 1:34.

[301] J.F. Borghouts, trans., *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 51–55.

[302] Lucarelli, "Demons (Benevolent and Malevolent)," *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 2.

[303] Lucarelli, "Demons (Benevolent and Malevolent)," *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 2

people in the afterlife. This was a key reason to know the name of a demon. Concerning demonic guardians, they can be benevolent towards those who know their secret names. Knowing their names also enables someone to overcome any aggression they may possess.[304] The purpose of knowing the name in the context of ancient Egypt goes beyond the control of an individual. It can also deal with the destruction or nullification of entities or city-states, which is displayed in the execration texts.

The execration texts are documents that list various places, groups, and individuals that Egypt viewed as hostile.[305] This is emphasized in the texts by the utilization of the "bound prisoner" determinative ().[306] These texts also show a clear relationship with the Levant in the Middle Kingdom.[307] In some texts, the subject is written in red. The practice of writing in red

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[304] Lucarelli, "Demons (Benevolent and Malevolent)," *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 4-5.

[305] Paul Nicholson, *The Princeton Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 108.

[306] Robert K. Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice* (Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1993), 137.

[307] Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1992), 87. Here Redford refers to the area as Asia, however, that nomenclature is a bit archaic and is now referred to as either the Middle East or Near East and many of the areas that are of particular interest in this context are in fact in the Levant or Palestine.

is sometimes used by Egyptian scribes to refer to “demonic figures” such as Seth, Apophis, etc.…[308] One of the distinguishing characteristics of these execration texts is that the figures that are written upon are broken. This is a process that would render the subject impotent or razed. One example of this is seen through the breaking of grave goods, which constituted "killing" the objects to assimilate them to their deceased owner.[309] Another example is the breaking of images and depictions rendering them magically useless like a second death.[310] What bound the subject to fate was not the material, there were various materials used from figurines to clay pots.[311] The subject was bound or destroyed by the damage being done to the name.

The final example deals with mutilated hieroglyphs and images. There are various ways that these are rendered. Hieroglyphs are mutilated in certain circumstances because of fear that animals will become alive in the afterlife. Hieroglyphic symbols of dangerous creatures are drawn in a way that the animal will immediately die upon vivification. In the same way, the writing of the name would bring about vivification. An example of mutilated hieroglyphs would be  . The knife is placed in the head of the serpent so that upon vivification it would be immediately killed. In other cases, rather than mutilating the hieroglyph words are shortened to

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[308] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 147.

[309] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 148

[310] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 148.

[311] Nicholson, *The Princeton Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, 109.

avoid the usage of ravenous animals.[312] Other aspects of hieroglyphic mutilation are the mutilation of names and images. As stated earlier, to mutilate a person's name or image would render them useless like a second death.[313] This ability to affect the fate and afterlife of a person shows the significance of the name. To have your name protected is to be protected. However, a known name exposes a person to various means of harm.

Personal Names in the Hebrew Bible

When considering the significance of personal names in the biblical narrative, three individuals will receive examination: Abraham, Israel, and Nabal. While these three individuals are not the only cases, they are three of the most pronounced. These characters show the importance of the name in determining one's present and future. With these characters, the significance of the name is demonstrated concerning what a person is or what a person will become. In addition, the first two are a couple of the most prominent figures in the entire Hebrew Bible.

Abraham demonstrates two facets of the importance of personal names. The first concerns an intended destiny and the second is the changing of one's destiny. Abraham is first introduced as Abram. This is a name that means, "exalted father" from the combination of the term *'b* (father) with the verb *rwm*, which means exalted.[314] This is a good ancient Near Eastern

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[312] Pierre Lacau, *Suppressions et modifications de signes dans les textes funéraires* (J. C. Hinrichs, 1914), 37–39. This resource deals with many aspects of mutilated hieroglyphs.

[313] Ritner, *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, 148.

[314] *HALOT*, 1202.

name because the intent is to set a destiny of being an exalted father. In the ancient Near East, family, and patrilineage are extremely important. In Genesis 17, God makes a covenant with Abram. He proclaims that he will be the father of nations and his progeny will outnumber the stars of heaven. Along with the sign of circumcision, God changes Abram's name to Abraham. This would be representative of what God would do in his life. He was now the "father of multitudes." Abraham would live up to his name based upon the promise that God made to him and confirmed through a name change. Ultimately Abraham lives up to both of his names.

Jacob serves as another example through the circumstances of receiving a new name. The name Jacob comes from the term *ʿqb*, which means "one who deceives; one who grabs the heel; one who betrays; or one who hinders."[315] While there would have been a more positive connotation the author utilizes the polysemous meaning of this term because, throughout the life of Jacob, all these meanings are exemplified. He was depicted as a heel grabber at his birth, grabbing the heel of his twin brother Esau. He deceived his brother Esau and procured his birthright. He deceived his father and received the blessing intended for Esau. He also deceived his uncle Laban. These various incidents were examples of betrayal against those whom he deceived (i.e., Isaac, Esau, and Laban). Genesis 32 gives the narrative of how that all changed. He wrestled with God and was diligent enough in his wrestling to receive the blessing. After this match ended, he was no longer known as Jacob, but rather Israel. He then became "one who strives against God" (Gen 32:28) The theophoric name Israel arrives from the verb *śrh*. This term

[315] *HALOT*, 872.

is textually explained as meaning "to fight." It also connotes "to rule" or "prove oneself."[316] By this, the etiology of the origins of the nation of Israel is solidified. This scene like the previous example shows that a person's victories, flaws, and future are tied to their name.

The last example of a name determining one's destiny is Nabal. Nabal is first introduced in 1 Samuel 25, as the husband of Abigail. He was a successful farmer with a great deal of resources. David came across his men and sent a message to Nabal asking for hospitality. Nabal refuses to show hospitality. On top of that he disregards any allegiance or knowledge of David. David is offended and responds with force. However, Abigail points out the reason for his folly. In verse 25 she states, "Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and foolishness is with him." Here Abigail uses the idea that a person is what his or her name implies to explain his folly. Much like *ʿqb*, the term *nbl* is used negatively in this context to convey negative meanings such as "foolish; futile; worthless; or even "godless" in Hebrew.[317] This text conveys that Nabal had no choice but would inevitably become or act as an *nbl*. While the actual name possesses power, there is also a power in writing names as seen in the execration texts.

Writing Personal Names in the Bible

A text that gives great insight into the naming magic present in the Bible is Exodus 30:11-16. Often the primary perspective of this passage is the various means of taxation seen in Israel. This text indeed shows a poll tax. While censuses are valuable administrative undertakings the connection with military service and warfare made censuses fraught with

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[316] *HALOT*, 442.

[317] *HALOT*, 663.

trepidation.[318] The poll tax and military service are not the only aspects of Israelite society present. Much like the various passages displaying the importance of the name, this passage displays an importance that is attached to the previously mentioned execration texts. This section does not imply that a census must occur. However, it gives the requirements for a census. While we see that this is placed upon those who are twenty years and older, the text does not mandate that the census is dealing only with military registration. The military interpretation is developed from a comparison to a Mari census text.[319] The military element is further undergirded except for the Levites in Numbers 1:47.

The word *kpr* is translated as "ransom" or "atonement." *kpr* in this section and throughout the Bible is a ransom that is designed to avoid a pending punishment.[320] There is difficulty with the meaning of *kpr* in the Hebrew Bible. It is often associated with the term *ṭhr* with the idea of cleansing. Yet it is often also identified with *mḥy*, which deals with "wiping away, and "erasure." The latter would deal with purification through dirtying and the smearing of blood. While there is

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[318] Nahum M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1991), 195.

[319] Moshe Weinfeld, "The Census in Mari, in Israel and in Ancient Rome," in *Storia e Tradizioni Di Israele: Scritti in Onore Di J. Alberto Soggin*, ed. Daniele Garrone and Felice Israel (Paideia Editrice Brescia, 1991), 293–98. Jack Sasson, "Comparative Bible Research and the Mari Archives. Comments and Reflections," *Claroscuro. Revista Del Centro de Estudios Sobre Diversidad Cultural* 18.2 (2019): 12, 15, 21.

[320] *HALOT*, 663, 495.

no blood associated with this context, the idea of wiping away is still in view. Hebrew *kpr* is related to Akkadian *kuppuru,* which means "to cultically purify."[321] The purpose of the *kpr* is to avert God's wrath. Simply put it refers to purification and reconciliation to God.[322] Without atonement, the punishment of YHWH is placed upon the people. This offering is "paid to escape death or another harm."[323] Atonement becomes an integral part of averting punishment and preserving the people. In Exodus, the need for atonement relating to censuses is prescribed.

The census in view here in Exodus probably relates to the census in 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21.[324] In 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, the atonement money is not in view, but the atrocity of sin is present. That atrocity brings about the punishment in view. The punishment in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles correlates with the punishment mentioned in Exodus 30. Exodus 30:12 specifically mentions that the atonement would avert a plague. In 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, the people are afflicted by a plague from YHWH. All this is tied to the enormous weight of writing

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[321] CAD, 8: 178B; Lang, "כפר," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament,* ed. Heinz-Josef Fabry, G. Johannes Botterweck, and Helmer Ringgren, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 7:290.

[322]Propp, *Exodus 19-40,* 476.

[323] Carol Meyers, *Exodus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 251.

[324] Propp, *Exodus 19-40,* 536. Although he does mention the relationship between the David census and Ex 30:11-16 he does not come to the same conclusions about the importance of the personal name that is in view in Ex 30.

down a person's name. This passage depicts the cosmic 'books' of life and death.[325] This further demonstrates the writing imagery that connects to Exodus.

In Numbers 1:47, the Levites are exempted from a census that was conducted at the start of the book. The Levites are exempted from this census so they can make sacrifices on behalf of those who were registered and were appointed to be over the Tabernacle. To maintain their purity and protect them for YHWH's service their names needed to be protected. The text notes that they will camp around the Tabernacle so that the wrath of YHWH will not come upon the people. Numbers 18 reaffirms this sentiment speaking of the service of the Levites to keep the wrath of YHWH from upon the people. Even here we see the job is mitigating the wrath of God upon the people of Israel. This position makes sense for the Levities since they are also in charge of the sacrifices and the atonement made for Israel. Thus, they could serve in this and other capacities on behalf of those being registered. The reason for the list and census requiring an atonement is the power associated with names. This gives insight into the significance of

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[325] John I. Durham, *Exodus*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger et al., vol. 3 of *Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 402. Durham also asserts that this understanding was weakened and that this was retained from earlier concepts for the "atonement-money." I however believe that previous assertion is true and seems to go with the conception of the name thrust forth in this passage, other passages and ancient Near Eastern conceptions. Shalom Paul, "Heavenly Tablets and the Book of Life," *JANES* 5 (1973): 345–54. discusses the connections of the books of life in Judean literature (i.e. Hebrew Bible, DSS, Targums, Pseudepigrapha) and Mesopotamian literature.

personal names and lays a foundation for practices seen later in the Hebrew Bible and Judaism.

Protecting the Name of YHWH in the Hebrew Bible and Post-Biblical Literature

Having seen the importance of the human name it is important to see the name of YHWH garnering greater attention in the biblical text. In the book of Exodus, it is suggested that the name YHWH is revealed to the Israelite people at the time of Moses (Ex. 3:6; 6:3). It is a distinction that signifies the special relationship that YHWH has with his covenant people. Unlike Re there is not a terrible fear of having His name known.[326] Even though the name of YHWH is freely given to the people there are still parameters placed on the usage of the name. Another important text to consider is from the Decalogue. In the Decalogue, there is a command not to take YHWH's name in vain. The term in vain (*lšw'*) can have a range of meanings but usually conveys "ineffectively, falsely" or "for naught."[327] While it is currently manifested in the avoidance of speaking the divine name of YHWH, in ancient times it was more akin to the trepidation present in the execration texts. When comparing the Decalogue to ancient Near Eastern monuments it makes the importance of the name clear. In the ancient Near East, the

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[326] Gary A. Rendsburg, "Moses the Magician," in *Israel's Exodus in Transdisciplinary Perspective: Text, Archaeology, Culture, and Geoscience*, ed. Thomas E. Levy, Thomas Schneider, and William H.C. Propp, Quantitative Methods in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2015), 244.

[327] *HALOT*, 1425–27.See Carmen Joy Imes, *Bearing Yhwh's Name at Sinai: A Reexamination of the Name Command of the Decalogue* (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2018), 100–105., for a discussion of the term translated "in vain."

destruction of a name on a monument was a fate worse than death. It ensured one's inability to enter the afterlife or to be recalled by those who would come after. Also, an ancient Near Eastern monument could not function with the agent's name not preserved. [328]

Around the time of Amos and first Isaiah there is a migration from Adonai as an additional name or title toward using it as a substitute for the divine name. While this is an occurrence in some of the earliest written literature like Amos, it also continues in some of the latest literature found in the Hebrew Bible. In the book of Chronicles, the Chronicler often replaces occurrences of the divine name YHWH from sources in Samuel and Kings with the more generic *Elohim*.[329] The practice of utilizing substitutes is a tradition seen in other early Judean literature as well. From the middle of the Second Temple period until today it is common among Jewish communities to replace the divine name, often with the appellative Adonai or "Ha-Shem."[330]

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[328]Timothy Scott Hogue, "The Eternal Monument of the Divine King: Monumentality, Reembodiment, and Social Formation in the Decalogue" (UCLA, Dissertation, 2019), 232.

[329] William M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 32.

[330]Yoel Elitzur, "שמות האל ותאריכי כתיבת ספרי המקרא," in *בעיני אלוהים ואדם • האדם המאמין ומחקר המקרא*, ed. Tova Ganzel, Yehudah Brandes, and Chayuta Deutsch (Academic Studies Press, 2019), 406.

Name substitution is seen in Mishnah Sukkah 4.5. *'ny whw'* (אני והוא) is used as a surrogate for the tetragrammaton in this text.[331] It is particularly clear because of the usage of *'ny whw'* in the blessing formula. This substitution literally means, "I and he," however, there is discussion on the exact meaning of this substitute, the important feature of this text for the study of P. Am. 63 is that it constitutes the practice of protecting the divine name by substituting it with a different term.[332] Much like P. Am. 63's usage of Aḥor, the term used in Mishnah Sukkah, *'ny whw'*, is not fully understood. This demonstrates the usage of terms to replace the name YHWH. This shows that there could be different names used to replace the divine name. Over time certain substitute titles become commonplace, however, this was a development not an early codified practice.

Judean texts from the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, and afterward also display the practice of substituting another term for the divine name. The first example in this study of the practice of name substitution is seen in Leviticus 24:11, rather than using the divine name, *hšm* "The Name" is used as a substitute. In this text, we find the earliest usage of this name substitution. It describes the circumstances of the blasphemy woman's son and the consequence of blasphemy in the Israelite theocracy. This is a national expectation in order to not pollute the land with the

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[331] Joseph M. Baumgarten, "A New Qumran Substitute for the Divine Name and Mishnah Sukkah 4.5," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 83.1/2 (1992): 1.

[332] Baumgarten, "A New Qumran Substitute for the Divine Name and Mishnah Sukkah 4.5," 2.

blasphemous usage of the name of YHWH.[333] The same pattern is evident in the second example, the Cairo Damascus Document (CD). The necessity of protecting the name in the context of covenantal vows is explained in CD 15. It is stated that a person should not "swear by *aleph* or *lamed*", referencing *Elohim* nor "*aleph* or *daleth*" as a reference to Adonai (CD 15:1). It continues and discourages the usage of the Law of Moses for an oath. The reason stated is that the Law of Moses has "the name fully written out," and if a person swears by the Name "he sins and defiles the Name" (CD 15:2-3).The appearance of this in CD signified that it is a codified practice by the 10th century CE.[334] The conception of this practice is seen much earlier in the Qumran Damascus Document portions such as 4Q270. In 4Q270 f2i:11 the person who profanes The Name (*hšm*) is listed alongside the medium and person who practices divination. Although the text is fragmentary and does not explicitly state that profaning the name is a sin, it is inferred by its association. This fragment is dated to the Herodian period, which demonstrates that this practice was present earlier than the 10th century CE. Considering this is evident in various

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[333] Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 23-27* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 231–32. asserts "It must be kept in mind that H is obsessed with the problem of the *ger* both legally and theologically. Since H has expanded P's holiness horizon from the sanctuary to the promised land, it must ipso facto be concerned with the ger because, as a resident of the land, he can pollute it. Thus, the *ger* must heed all the prohibitions incumbent on the Israelite.

[334] Shlomo Zuckier, "Is CD a Reliable Witness to Qumran's Damascus Document? The Case of iii 14-17," *Revue de Qumrân* 29.2, 110 (2017): 165–66.

Judean groups another group to consider that was influenced by Judean scribalism is the New Testament authors, specifically the author of Revelation.

The Magical Usage of Names in the New Testament

The Book of Revelation draws upon Judean conceptions to make similar assertions concerning the importance of the name and the potential threat of iconoclasm. The book of Revelation was probably penned around 90 C.E. by John.[335] This book draws upon the genre of apocalypticism. This sort of literature is common in the Apocrypha and among the communities of Qumran. The contents of this book are often attributed to Judeans associated with John the Baptist, who is often associated with the covenanters at Qumran.[336] There were various similarities between Qumran and the early Christian communities. They include but are not limited to similar views concerning marriage, sexual purity, money, and even the negative opinion of the Roman government.[337] There was enough similarity that Vergil Polydore, an early

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[335]Elaine Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation*, reprint (Penguin Books, 2013), 47. The exact identity of this writer, John, has long been debated. Regardless of the identity of the author, the important identification is that the author is Judean. This corroborates that he was most likely influenced by Judean scribalism in the process of composing this book.

[336] J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday & Co., 1975), 3.

[337] Pagels, Revelations, 51–52.

Christian humanist, thought that the Essene sect was Christian.[338] Even though there are multiple interpretations, the author was most likely of Judean background.[339] This demonstrates that this book is Judean in its approach and scribal characteristics and continues various trends of Judean scribalism. The naming theology that we see in Egypt, which influences the biblical texts, is also found here in the book of Revelation. The pattern concerning the name is much like the literature examined previously, displaying an emphasis on the protection of the name. This text also continues the portrayal of the worst fate for a being is the destruction or erasure of someone's name. There are a few passages that display the overall conception of the name that is present in the book of Revelation. It is beneficial to see the thrust and connection to the previous examples of naming magic.

Revelation 2:17 is one of the first texts in this book that espouses the concept of naming magic. This text states in 2:17b, "To the one who conquers I will give them the hidden manna and I will give them a white stone, and upon that stone, a new name is being written that no one knows except for the one who receives it." Here is a parallel to the Myth of Isis and Ra. This recipient is given a stone on it is carved their new name. This name is a secret name. It is not the name that others know and thus can control, but it is something that is only given to a select few. The stone that is used is not the typical *lithos* but rather *psefos*. The term *psefos* has the idea of a

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[338]Polydore Vergil, *De Rerum Inventoribus Libri Octo* (Basel, Switzerland: Froben, 1521), 105.

[339] Craig R. Koester, *Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Translation (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 68.

small pebble that can be used in voting or a pebble that is part of an amulet. In the former, the white pebble would signify one who is acquitted.[340] In the latter case, it would be an amulet that would bear the new name given to those who conquer. The latter is most likely the sense in this context. One theory is that this is Christ's name.[341] This name is written on a stone and kept safe for the protection of the recipient of the name.

Revelation 3:5 looks at both the potential negative and positive aspects of naming magic. In this particular case, the one who conquers is spared the negative aspects that are present later in the book and receives the ultimate positive aspects. It states that Jesus "will never erase his name from the book of life." But rather that he will "confess his name before my Father and before his angels." The Greek term *exsaleifo* depicts the concept of erasure but can also mean "to destroy or obliterate."[342] Having one's name in the scroll of life assures divine preservation, but to have one's name blotted out connotes death.[343] This once again aligns itself with our naming magic present in the Hebrew Bible and Egypt, displaying iconoclasm. The person that conquers is spared the fate of being erased from existence and in turn receives the benefit of heavenly

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[340]Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd Edition*, ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1098.

[341] Koester, *Revelation*, 290.

[342] Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 3rd Edition*, 344.

[343] Koester, *Revelation*, 315.

beings knowing their name. This depicts an exalted status. The opposite and disastrous negative of naming magic is also seen in the context of this book.

Revelation 19 depicts an exalted Jesus returning to judge the earth. He is described in warlike language such as having eyes described as a flame of fire, a robe dipped in blood, and diadems upon his head. During this chaotic scene, the naming magic is also mentioned. This reference to an unknown name is thought to be an interpolation because it appears to contradict the names and titles ascribed to this representation of Jesus (i.e., the Word of God, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords).[344] This is not the case. Therefore, this is not moving from concealment to disclosure.[345] When looking at the usage of a name, with respect to the naming magic found in Egypt and the Hebrew Bible, the names mentioned, and the secret name can coexist. As with Re, he had many names and titles but none of them were his secret name. He conceals his name as an added defense measure. Again, much like Re, Jesus has a secret name that no one knows, so no one can take control or destroy him through naming magic. Just as Re concealed his secret name from all parties, Jesus' name is hidden to prevent it from being used wrongfully, and it is only known by him. The importance of the name is reinforced in this text. The need to protect the name also correlates with the command not to take the name of YHWH in vain, displaying a common vein of thought concerning the position of the name in the ontology of beings.

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[344] Ford, *Revelation*, 313.

[345] Koester, *Revelation*, 755.

Revelation 20:15 is another passage that reflects on naming magic for a non-deity. This elaborates on the results of having one's name destroyed from the Book of Life. This book would have the names inscribed, much like the monumental texts addressed earlier.[346] In this verse, the person whose name is obliterated is thrown in the lake of fire. This adds a first-century context to the ancient Egyptian context. Previously, details concerning the destruction of the name were not fleshed out for those in the afterlife. Here it is fully fleshed out as a fate that goes beyond non-existence. This depicts an eternal existence of torture and punishment in the lake of fire or the second death (Rev 21:8). In the context of the Book of Revelation, this is the place of everlasting torment and judgment that is even designed to hold the ultimate New Testament antagonist, Satan. Those who have their names obliterated are sent to the same destination as Satan. This gives punctuation to the fate that is worse than death or simply non-existence. This places clear importance on doing whatever is necessary to protect one's name from erasure and the looming fate that is attached to such an action. While all these occurrences deal with earthly figures there is still another example that deals with a more exalted figure. The same conception of the name found in these Judean and Egyptian texts concerning the name is also present in P. Am. 63 col vii lines 11–19.

Naming Magic in P. Am. 63

The conception of naming magic is behind the usage of the title Aḥor as a substitute for YHWH in the P. Am. 63 text. The primary emphasis is placed on not writing in vain or risking the desecration of the name YHWH. The prevalence of the concept of naming magic in both

[346] Ford, *Revelation*, 359.

Egypt and the Bible sheds light on the rationale behind the Judean practice of protecting the name that began being used in the 8th century and become a cornerstone of Judean religious practices. P. Am 63 provides a look into a stage of the development of this practice. In addition, it is evident from Mishnah Sukkah that in an attempt to protect the name of YHWH terms would be used that we do not fully understand. Exactly like Mishnah Sukkoth used *'ny whw'* to represent YHWH, P. Am. 63 utilizes Aḥor to represent the God YHWH. Just as P. Am 63 adds to the understanding of bull ideology in the context of Israel, P. Am. 63 also adds to the prevalence of the practice of naming magic.

Literary Devices

When discussing the topic of "Judean" literary devices, it is important to clarify that these are not literary devices that are unique to early Judean literature. However, it is commonly used in literature that can be termed as "Judean." In many ways, Judean scribalism comes into Judean scribal culture by first having its usage in the Hebrew Bible. Texts of the Hebrew Bible before the Second Temple period, convey many of these literary devices. The copying of these texts during and after the Second Temple period cemented their practice in literature and made it a part of the scribal culture. As scribal training continues then these scribal techniques are perpetuated. Often these devices are present in the ancient Near East yet certain devices become more common than others in biblical and post-biblical literature. When examining literary devices, the emphasis is placed on various types of wordplay. These types include polysemy, alliteration, and inclusio/chiasms. These are types of wordplay that have precedence in Judean literature of biblical and post-biblical periods. Additionally, the literary devices of alliteration and the inclusion structure are present in P. Am. 63 vii, lines 11–19. These literary devices are also present in a variety of Judean literature.

Wordplay/Polysemy, Double Entendre, Janus parallelism

In the biblical corpus, wordplay is a common literary device. It could occur more than we realize. The nuance of the biblical authors is often lost on modern readers. While many examples of wordplay are currently understood over time many more can still be discovered. This is evident in the conception of Janus Parallelism by Cyrus Gordon. This wordplay was first suggested in a 1978 article.[347] Since then other articles and publications have found other instances of this type of wordplay.[348] This signifies that with greater study and understanding of texts, wordplay becomes clearer. This same understanding should be applied to this papyrus and ancient texts in general. With further consideration, there are instances of wordplay present in this Aramaic psalm that were not previously considered. As more articles and editions of this papyrus are published, more instances of wordplay will most likely come to light. The presence of wordplay as a literary device is common. We will clarify its place in biblical and Judean scribalism because of this common presence and then further elucidate the usage in this psalm.

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[347]Cyrus H. Gordon, "New Directions," *The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 15.1/2 (1978): 59–60.

[348] Scott B. Noegel, *Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job*, (Sheffield, England: 1996), 50–52; Duane Christensen, "Janus Parallelism in Genesis 6:3," *Hebrew Studies* 27.1 (1986): 20–24; Gary Rendsburg, "Janus Parallelism in Gen 49:26," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99.2 (1980): 291–93; Michael Carasik, "Janus Parallelism in Job 1:20," *Vetus Testamentum* 66.1 (2016): 149–54; David Toshio Tsumura, "Janus Parallelism in Nah 1:8," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102.1 (1983): 109–11, to name a few.

The concept of wordplay is common throughout literature from all countries, periods, and cultures. The concept of word-play deals "with a single word carrying two connotations simultaneously."[349] This would encompass the conceptions of Janus parallelism, polysemy, double meaning, and *double entendre*.[350] When considering wordplay, the term is polysemous, meaning that speaks to the audience on multiple levels. This is an aspect of artistry that is present in various genres. It also became a staple of Judean religious literature from the Bible to the Targums.

Wordplay in the Bible

Many examples of polysemy are found in the Book of Job. The text of Job is not easily dated. Some suggest an earlier date while others suggest a late date.[351] Pope has suggested a date of the 7th BCE century pending more conclusive evidence,[352] while Joosten suggested that this is a transitory compilation with features of both Standard Biblical Hebrew and Late Biblical

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[349]Gary Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2019), 358.

[350]Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 359.

[351] Shmuel Vargon, "The Date of Composition of the Book of Job in the Context of S. D. Luzzatto's Attitude to Biblical Criticism," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 91.3/4 (2001): 377–94; Avi Hurvitz, "The Date of the Prose-Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *The Harvard Theological Review* 67.1 (1974): 17–34.

[352] Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, revised edition (New York: Doubleday, 1965), xxxvii.

Hebrew.[353] Whether the text is situated in the classification of Standard Biblical Hebrew or Late Biblical Hebrew, the presence of this literary device tells us about Judean scribalism. In either case, the usage of wordplay displays that wordplay was utilized in Israelite and Judean circles for an extended period. The extended usage of wordplay strengthens the continuity of this literary device across Judean literature. A specific text examined is Job 7:6. In this text, a double meaning is implied with the term *tqwh*. The general meaning of the term *tqwh* is hope or expectation.[354] The alternative, although more rarely used, meaning of cord fits well in this context as well. It correlated as a parallel with the term *'rg*, which means "loom."[355] Both meanings provide insight into what is going on in the context. The meaning of hope is connected to the days passing. With them going by it would be important for any person to have hope to ground them. Sadly, in this verse that is not the case. Similarly, the concept of thread attaches to the weaver's shuttle. The polysemous meaning undergirds the concept of hopelessness but deepens it with a practical example. The same hopelessness is associated with the end of a weaver shuttle's day without thread. It is hopeless because the day is gone, and the only thing

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[353] Jan Joosten, "Linguistic Clues as to the Date of the Book of Job: A Mediating Position," in *Interested Readers: Essays on the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David J. A. Clines*, ed. James K. Aitken, Jeremy M. S. Clines, and Christl M. Maier (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 347–57.

[354] Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 359. *HALOT*, 1781.

[355] *HALOT*, 84.

accomplished was the usage of thread. It is plausible that both meanings are in fact in the mind of the author.

Wordplay is not simply restricted to non-proper nouns and verbs. It is also utilized for names. An example of this wordplay on names is Judges 5:12. In this verse the usage of the word *dbr*, "to speak," is a clear wordplay on the name of the main protagonist of the story Deborah (*dbwrh*). The choice of the word *dbr* is an intentional one, demonstrating the literary acuity of the author. The author chose to utilize the less used *dbr* over the more common *šyr* or *zmr*, regarding singing, to create the wordplay.[356] Another reason for the choice of this verse is because this chapter is also poetic. While wordplay is utilized in various genres it is used in poetic text much like the text in P. Am. 63. Another important facet of this text in Judges is its antiquity. This is one of the more ancient texts in the Hebrew Bible, displaying characteristics of Archaic Biblical Hebrew.[357] The antiquity of the text further solidifies that wordplay was an ancient practice that became an inherent part of scribalism. While wordplay is prevalent in the context of the Hebrew Bible, it is not limited to this source. Wordplay also emerges in other sources such as Targum Onqelos.

Wordplay in Targum Onqelos

Although Targum Onkelos dates well after P. Am. 63, it is helpful for understanding the methods of our papyrus as a document that falls into a larger Judean scribal culture and uses those literary mechanisms. If authors much later continue to use these mechanisms it further

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[356] Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 398–99.

[357]Schniedewind, *A Social History of Hebrew*, 70–71.

substantiates the usage in P. Am. 63. This section of dissertation displays the culture of the late antique which is developed by the earlier Judean culture. These scribal patterns are foundational enough to make an imprint of cultures that span both distance and time. Targum Onqelos clearly displays this foundational influence on targumic literature. While this is still an area receiving examination, there are a few examples that display a targumic wordplay. One example of wordplay is found in Targum Onqelos' treatment of Gen 31:49.[358] In the original Hebrew, there is a wordplay based on the *ṣph*, which means "to see." The Hebrew parallels the place name of Mizpah with the act of YHWH seeing or watching between Jacob and Laban. The Targumist is keenly aware of the wordplay but adds a layer of his own. The Targumist utilizes the term *sky* in their translation of Gen 31:49 to create another wordplay. The term *sky* much like *ṣph* means "to look."[359] However, the term that was chosen by the Targumist to substitute Mizpah is "Watch post" (*skwth*). The translator was aware of the original wordplay and replicated it in Aramaic rather than treating the term Mizpah as a proper name and rendering it as such. Another common type of wordplay utilized in the Targums is alliteration. In Targum Onqelos' translation of Ex 8:7, the Targumist translated it to convey a new alliteration by using the term *'dy* meaning "to go," which creates an alliteration with the term *'wrd'n* meaning "frog." It should be noted that

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[358] Isaac Gottlieb, "Targumic Wordplay," in *Ve-'Ed Ya'aleh (Gen 2:6)*, ed. Peter Machinist et. al., Volume 2: *Essays in Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Edward L. Greenstein* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2021), 1013–14.

[359] Edward Cook, *A Glossary of Targum Onkelos: According to Alexander Sperber's Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 194.

the original term *swr* has many translational options, yet the translator specifically chose *'dy* strengthening the case for identifying this as an original alliteration.[360] This demonstrates that these aspects of scribalism are ingrained in the translation work of Judean literature. Targum Onqelos and the Bible display two chronological bookends with P. Am. 63 resting in the middle. With these literary techniques present in both the Bible and in Targum Onqelos, it is apparent that this is a regular part of the scribal culture that would be also utilized in creating the text of P. Am. 63.

Literary Devices in P. Am 63

P. Am. 63 utilizes many devices that are present in the Hebrew Bible and other early Judean Literature. The presence of these various signs of scribalism undergirds the reality that scribalism is a part of this culture. P. Am. 63 aligns closely with the literary devices of biblical and post-biblical texts. To express the continuity the various literary devices are examined to display the continuity in our sample text of col. xii 11–19.

Egypt and Sorrows

P. Am 63 vii line 11–19 also reflects polysemy. The term that has typically been translated as sorrows serves as a polysemous statement. This statement draws upon the *Vorlage* that is at the foundation of both this text and Psalm 20. In addition, this text demonstrates the *Sitz im Leben* of the community that is present in Egypt. This led to the polysemous meaning of the term *mṣr*. It has consonantal components present in both the terms "sorrow" and Egypt. The

[360] Gottlieb, "Targumic Wordplay," 1015–16.

authors represent a diasporic community that has nestled itself in the context of Egypt but still holds on to Judean culture. As stated previously, taking the *Vorlage,* which predates both this text and Psalm 20, and applying it to the circumstances that this community experiences demonstrates scribal innovation.

The multivalent use of *mṣr* displays scribal training that is present in other Judean literature, most expansively in the Hebrew Bible. Much like the previous examples displayed, the author of this text is aware of the depth of meaning in the term *mṣr*. *mṣr* is designated as "sorrows," or "straits," in most translations. The understanding of this term is rooted in the Hebrew Bible. When commenting on this term *HALOT* and other biblical resources are utilized, in addition to occurrences in the Hebrew Bible. In the Hebrew Bible, the term *mṣr* has a wide-ranging lexical depth. This lexical depth could be the reason to choose this term rather than using a more common Aramaic term to translate *ṣrh*. In addition to "sorrow/distress," this term could have a range of meanings such as "need" and even "concubine." While "need" could add a layer to this text the meaning "concubine" hardly fits into this context. While derived from the term *ṣrh*, we do not have evidence for *ṣrh* occurring in the form of *mṣr*. This is the form that is chosen by the author of this section of P. Am. 63. Rather than being dependent on the lexical range of *ṣrh*, the author opted for the term/form that suited his circumstances and style. *mṣr* has a wider semantic range and connects with a wider variety of terms. These terms include *ṣrh, ṣwr, and mṣrym*. Choosing *mṣr* is intriguing for an Aramaic text because it does not occur in Aramaic. However, it perfectly conforms to the motivation of an author located in Egypt. The homograph

mṣr could mean "distress" or "fortified city."[361] An illuminating gloss considering the *Sitz im Leben* is the gloss "Egypt." This gloss is applied in Mi 7:12, 2 Kgs 19:24, Isa 37:25, and 19:6. All these passages utilize the alternate spelling of "Egypt," which parallels the spelling of the term for "sorrows." This usage sets up a double meaning that designated not only the emotional milieu but also the physical environs of the audience. As stated in the previous chapter, the form suggests a gentilic and the chosen translation is "Egyptians." This heartily speaks to the background of the audience. This also creates an emotional depth to the text of a group in a "sorrowful" situation among the "Egyptians" for which they beseech their deity. Associating this with a date successive to the destruction of the temple of Yahu in Elephantine seems more probable with this understanding. P. Am. 63 reflects an anthology of Semitic texts, and our section appropriates an Israelite poem that speaks to the distress of the audience. Yet, it also is oriented to speak to aspects affecting that distress, specifically being in an environment with some level of discord. The utilization of polysemy by the author accentuates the scribal culture that is developed in Israel, as displayed in the Bible, but also that extends after the composition of the biblical text. While this is the first literary device explained it is not the only one. In addition to polysemy, alliteration is also utilized in this section of P. Am. 63.

Alliteration

The second literary device apparent in the section of P. Am. 63 is alliteration. This literary device is not simply present in this papyrus but is common among literature from every culture. It is present in both poetic and narrative texts. It became so important in English

[361] *HALOT*, 627

literature that was a requirement of the writing style for a period.[362] Alliteration is often the most recognizable literary device. It is generally understood to be the "commencing of two or more words in close connection, with the same letter, or rather the same sound."[363] Alliteration refers to consonants, not vowels, while the repetition of vowel sounds is assonance.[364]

ʾl ʾl ʾl ʾrʾ

In lines 15 and 16 of P. Am. 63, the word *ʾl* is used three times. This is a case of both alliteration and repetition that are present in this papyrus. We have a case of homonyms in this case. The word *ʾl* serves as a negation in line 15 and as a particle in line 16. They are all successive lines displaying the graphic repetition of a homograph and the alliteration of the initial sound. In addition, another particle (*ʾrʾ*) is used beginning with the *aleph* consonant reflecting the alliteration. This creates a series of terms that all begin with the *aleph*. Following the term *ʾrʾ* the 1 cp pronoun (*ʿnknu*). This displays the fifth *aleph* initial word in a succession of four lines. This alliteration sequence most likely influenced the scribe's choice of words.[365] In a poetic text, alliteration works as a cohesion, binding together components of a line, strophe,

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[362] Rendsburg, *How the Bible Is Written*, 72–73.

[363] *Oxford English Dictionary ONLINE*, "Alliteration, n."

[364] Wilfred G.E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, ed. David J.A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 26 (England: JSOT Press, 1986), 225.

[365] Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 226.

stanza, or poem.[366] In this instance, the alliteration binds lines 15 and 16 together. It bridges the gap from one explicit Aḥor statement (Aḥor will fulfill) to the line containing the next explicit Aḥor statement (Aḥor is our God). This is further substantiated since this section also serves as an inclusio.

Inclusio/Chiasm

The inclusio is a common device that is found in the psalms of the Bible but also many poetic compositions in the ancient Near East. The inclusio is the "cyclical composition by which the author returns to the point where he began."[367] The device is also called "bracketing" or "envelope figure" and "a series of parallel lines running to any length are enclosed between an identical (or equivalent) opening and close."[368] This structure also forms a chiasm. It parallels the inclusion of having an envelope structure. This section has a chiastic structure of A B||B A. The chiasmus is a series (a, b, c…) and its inversion (…c, b, a).[369] There are various types of Chiastic structures such as mirrors, complete and chiastic monocoloa, and tricola. The function of

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[366] Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 227.

[367] Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I 1-50,* Reprint Edition. (New Haven London: Yale University Press, 1995), 5.

[368] William Fiddian Moulton, *The Bible as Literature* (Generic, 1895), 53. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 282–83.

[369] Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 201.

chiasms functions to break up the monotony of parallelism as well as being either structural or expressive in function.[370]

Isaiah 22:22

In Isaiah 22:22 we see an example of mirror Chiasm. I am placing focused attention on this verse because it represents both a chiasm and inclusio like the one found in P. Am 63. Isaiah 22:22 represents a poetic masterpiece authored by Isaiah of Jerusalem, being a part of First Isaiah.[371] This verse has an exact mirroring of the same words enveloped. The text reads,

wpth w'yn sgr	וּפָתַח וְאֵין סֹגֵר	He will open and it will not close
wsgr w'yn pth	וְסָגַר וְאֵין פֹּתֵחַ	And he will close and it will not open

The word that is placed in the middle is *sgr*, "to close." This seems to emphasize the actions that YHWH controls, in particular the closing and the opening. While this type of inclusio/Chiasm is rare the usage of such a device by such an influential biblical author ingrains it into the scribal conventions for those who follow. This same device is utilized in P. Am. 63.

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[370] Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques*, 205.

[371] Scholars have generally agreed that first Isaiah is composed of Isaiah 1 –39. A portion of this is authored by Isaiah of Jerusalem in the 8th century, while other parts such as 31 –39 that parallel 2 Kings18 –20, are later additions. See John J. Collins, *A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018), 215.

ʾḥr| yhʾmʾly| yhʾmʾly ʾḥr

In P. Am. 63 xii line 15, we find the repetition of the same words in different ordering, thus utilizing this device. It is important to remember that here the inclusio takes on a chiastic structure, exactly like Isa 22:22. The verbal action is placed at the center. The construction *ʾḥr| yhʾmʾly| yhʾmʾly ʾḥr* magnifies the duplicate term at the center of the inclusio/chiasm. In this case, the ability of Aḥor to fulfill is the point of emphasis. In addition, there is a central point that is accentuated by the repetition of the term *yhʾmʾly*, which means "may he fulfill." The pattern of this structure can easily disappear in translation. This is evident in some of the translations currently produced.[372] This phrase while somewhat simple is important. It is sandwiched between two terms for Lord (Mar and Adonai). Both terms for Lord seem to refer to Aḥor, yet this structure is emphasizing the ability of Aḥor to fulfill the requests following the petition to Mar and preceding the petition to Adonai. This literary device places subtle emphasis on these terms to accentuate the ability and importance of Aḥor in the context of the psalm. This inclusio is the first element in a larger inclusio.

The next inclusio is found in lines 15 –17. In this case, Aḥor begins and concludes the inclusio. By beginning with the divine name Aḥor and ending with it, this inclusio is binding the divine names together. This is further substantiated by the ending of the inclusio stating that "Aḥor is our god." I suggest this statement is placed at the end to give clarity concerning the

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[372] van der Toorn, *Papyrus Amherst 63*, 165, opts to translate the terms identically. While Steiner and Nims, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," 44, , differentiate the two translating this construction as "the LORD should fulfill. May the LORD fulfill."

identity of the divine names Adonai and Mar. While these can be used as divine appellatives, they can both also mean "lord." All these terms should be understood as being tied together as references to Aḥor. The inclusio/chiasm represents the final literary device examined in this section. It is a part of the larger scribal culture that produced this text and other literary works such as the Hebrew Bible.

Conclusion

Scribal conventions are essential to every culture that has developed a scribal culture. The scribal conventions give us a clue to that larger culture. In the case of P. Am. 63 col. xii 11–19 the culture and conventions reflect a larger Judean culture. This scribal culture is identifiable and rests at the foundation of all these works. This chapter was able to identify various aspects of this scribal culture that are also present in P. Am 63 col xii 11–19. The first predominant aspect of Judean scribal culture reflects ancient Near Eastern tropes that were dominant in the conception of the Hebrew Bible. Judean scribal culture appropriated various ancient Near Eastern tropes and infused them with their cultural connotation. This appropriation becomes a part of the culture and brings the ancient Near East to Judean culture in a distinctive way. These tropes that would become ingrained in the larger culture are evident in documents like P. Am. 63 but also later Judean and post-biblical literature. The ancient Near Eastern imagery and tropes that are used include Canaanite imagery like Ba'al and Zaphon but also include Bull Imagery. These motifs are not simply present in the Hebrew Bible and Judean literature, rather they are pervasive. This chapter analyzed various examples found in the ancient Near East. An additional ancient Near Eastern trope examined was naming magic. Alongside the ancient Near Eastern imagery scribalism also utilizes various literary devices to identify itself. This chapter examined literary devices such as wordplay, alliteration, and inclusio/chiasm. These various devices are common

features in Judean literature. The scribes of P. Am. 63 incorporated these devices in this psalm. Once again, the identifiable aspects of Judean scribal culture using literary devices are discoverable in this section of P. Am. 63. Thus, the conclusion is that this section of P. Am 63 stands out as a product of the predominant Judean scribal culture.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As we draw a close to this study of the Judean scribal tendencies located in the text of P. Am. 63, I am reminded of an incisive statement by Langston Hughes. Hughes the accomplished literary icon of the Harlem Renaissance stated, "I learnt that the only way to get a thing done is to start to do it, then keep on doing it, and finally you'll finish it, even if in the beginning you think you can't do it at all."[373] This perfectly characterizes P. Am. 63 and the process of gaining understanding, which was fraught with difficulty. It is exactly why it was known as the mystery papyrus. A document that had been in the Amherst collection for over one hundred years, it stumped scholars time and time again. It took half a century for scholars to grasp the use of the Aramaic language in the papyrus, and even after another half-century, there is still much mystery. P. Am 63 is a resource that leaves a trail of insight and revelation about a Judean community living in Egypt. The text also tells us about Arameans in the ancient Egyptian context. This is evident in the composition of P. Am. 63. The very idea of inclusivity in this hybridized world gives insight into the religious standards of this eclectic community. Regardless of the difficulty and the time that it has taken to arrive at this point, there is greater understanding today than there was one hundred years ago. In fact, one hundred years from now there will be even greater understanding. While scholarship on this document may never finish or be exhausted it will continue and grow. This dissertation is a cog in the larger machine of

[373] Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea*, 2nd ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 31.

scholarship that will ignite and help sustain the process of growing a greater understanding of P. Am. 63.

P.Am. 63 is truly a treasure trove of information about the West Asian community in ancient Egypt. This dissertation exhumed interpretations that allow the world to behold the treasures. This study serves those in biblical studies by showing the usage of a psalm in the community context of diaspora. P. Am. 63 distinguishes itself as a diaspora context since the text discusses the communities of P. Am. 63's origination from outside of Egypt. While some of these matters have been discussed in previous scholarship, this dissertation added another layer and clarified misunderstandings. This analysis of P. Am. 63 further cements the presence of the Judean community among the other Arameans. Understanding the complexity of the community outside of the Judean monolith gave way to the examination of the sociolinguistic traits of scribalism in the document. By using standards of Judean scribalism, we deciphered reasons for using various devices and the Demotic script. We also gained greater clarity on a translation. This dissertation identified original cultural and religious imagery, providing a more in-depth understanding of the audience and scribes of P.Am. 63. For example, aspects of Egyptian culture were identified in the imagery of the test case. Additionally, the backdrop of Mesopotamian and Levantine deities was explored. This multireligious document demonstrated the merging of various cultures in both the scribal technique and the ideology displayed.

The second chapter examined scribalism as a component of the cultures of both West Asian and Egyptian societies. Scribalism manifested itself in the way societies wrote and how they wrote. Scribalism among West Asian societies associated with Egypt in P. Am. 63, which was demonstrated in this dissertation. This was particularly true concerning Levantine societies present in Israel and Judah. The relationship between the Levant and Egypt is as old as the

alphabet. West Asians, specifically Israel, and Judah for purposes of this study, appropriated portions of the Hieroglyphic script to render their language. Since then, there have been loans from aspects of scribal terminology that continue to connect these areas. Scribal culture provides insights about the various cultures that are attached to P. Am. 63. The scribal culture of the Hebrew tradition, some Aramaic traditions, and Egypt illumine the context and the culture that could be behind P. Am. 63 and specifically behind col. xi lines 11-19. These three scribal cultures have characteristics that provide insights into the scribal culture of P. Am. 63. In addition, sociolinguistics gave a theoretical context to the data. It demonstrated that language and social context can provide insight into ancient texts. P. Am. 63 is a document born out of its context, unfortunately, the data is slim concerning its provenance. Yet with the information that is available, clearer insights are available utilizing sociolinguistics. For instance, this dissertation used iconicity, attribution, and branding to display sociolinguistic insights. An example of these insights are reasons for the usage of script. There are a few reasons for the usage of this script that sociolinguistics helps to identify. Sociolinguistics offers insight to the context and overall scribal culture that determine the script, demonstrating the various purposes that the script choice played in this diasporic community.

Chapter Three examined the sample text of P. Am. 63 col. xii lines 11–19, which contains parallels to Psalm 20. This text provided insight into a diverse Judean community in Egypt. This text demonstrates how much we can still learn about this community. This translation and commentary are only one of a handful of in-depth interactions with this text that have been published. This chapter looked at the various nuances of word choice and syntax to unveil the possible context that produced this text. The nuances of the divine name showed the syntactical expertise of the psalmist seeking to conform an ancient text with the circumstances

that faced the diasporic community. The text demonstrated tensions that were present for some Judeans as they lived in Egypt. This text also illuminated a community that was diverse concerning their Levantine deities. Ba'al, Bethel, and YHWH all are called upon in different capacities to help this Judean community.

Chapter Four delved into the scribal conventions used in P. Am. 63. Scribal conventions are essential to every culture that has developed a scribal culture. The scribal conventions give us a clue to that larger culture. In the case of P. Am. 63 col. xii 11–19, the culture and conventions reflect a larger Judean culture. This chapter identified various aspects of this scribal culture that are also present in P. Am 63 col xii 11–19. For example, the first predominant aspect of Judean scribal culture reflects ancient Near Eastern tropes that were dominant in the conception of the HB. Judean scribal culture appropriated various ancient Near Eastern tropes and infused them with their cultural connotation. For example, this appropriation becomes a part of the culture and brings the ancient Near East to Judean culture in a distinctive way. These tropes that would become ingrained in the larger culture are evident in documents like P. Am. 63 but also later Judean and post-biblical literature. The ancient Near Eastern imagery and tropes used include Canaanite imagery like Ba'al and Zaphon but also bull imagery. These motifs are not simply present in the HB and Judean literature, they are pervasive. This chapter surveyed P. Am. 63 with various examples found in the ancient Near East. For example, an ancient Near Eastern trope examined was naming magic. This is also a trope that becomes a foundational part of Judean scribalism and is incorporated into Judean religion even to this day. Alongside the ancient Near Eastern imagery, scribalism utilizes various literary devices to identify itself. This chapter examined literary devices such as wordplay, alliteration, and inclusio/chiasm. These various devices are common features in Judean literature. The scribes of P. Am. 63 incorporated

these devices in this psalm. Once again, the identifiable aspects of Judean scribal culture using literary devices are discoverable in this section of P. Am. 63. Thus, the conclusion is that this section of P. Am 63 stands out as a product of the predominant Judean scribal culture.

Finally, this dissertation explored the document of P Am. 63 from a new perspective. It explored this ancient text using sociolinguistics to shed light on some of the questions left behind by the scribes. This dissertation sought to also place the document in a Judean context to shed light on the overall scribal culture that is behind the production of a document such as P. Am. 63. This theory was specifically applied to a small section, col. xii lines 11–19. This provided a sample text to explore the possibilities using the sociolinguistic approaches. Unfortunately, questions remain in this document. However, a new framework has been applied to further explore the intricate underpinnings of culture and religion hidden away in the text of P. Am. 63.

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