Elephantine in Context

Edited by
REINHARD G. KRATZ
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Forschungen
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Studies on the History, Religion and Literature of the Judeans in Persian Period Egypt

Edited by

Reinhard G. Kratz and Bernd U. Schipper

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

The Persian period has long been considered a "dark era" in Israel's history. For this reason, research has mainly focused on the depiction of the era illustrated by the Bible and has perceived the form of Judaism described in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah as typical for the Persian period. Hence, a spectacular discovery of archaeological relics and epigraphic sources was hardly noticed: The military colony from the Persian period located at the island of Elephantine in the Nile, on the border between Egypt and present-day Sudan. Although these had been known for more than one hundred years, Old Testament research had only noticed them selectively and superficially, if at all. This historical desideratum was remedied by a research project titled "Elephantine in Context," which was conducted between 2015 and 2019 by Bernd U. Schipper (Berlin) and Reinhard G. Kratz (Göttingen) in cooperation with Bob Becking (Utrecht) and funded by the German Research Association (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG). Further members of the team were Dr. Giulia Grassi (Göttingen) and Dr. des. Ann-Kristin Wigand (Berlin).

The basic approach of the project was to consciously break with a research tradition focusing on the Judeans (Jews) mentioned in the epigraphic evidence from Elephantine and instead investigate the military colony in a broader historical context. This approach is justified by the fact that there were not only Aramaic but also Demotic and Egyptian-hieratic papyri found at Elephantine. Therefore, from the very beginning, the project closely correlated the analysis of the Aramaic with the Egyptian papyri, which are kept in the Berliner Papyrussammlung (Berlin collection of papyri) – a project initiated in 2014 by Verena Lepper, trustee of the collection of papyri of the Egyptian Museum of the National Museums Berlin and funded by a Starting Grant of the European Research Council (ERC).

During three annual workshops (2016–2018) and a panel at the "International Meeting" of the Society of Biblical Literature in Berlin (2017) the intermediate results of the project and possible further research topics were discussed with national and international experts. These workshops resulted in the present volume. Due to the nature of the topic, most contributors specialize in the field of Egyptology, but Semitic and Jewish studies are also represented. The book examines the three main subjects of our research project: society and administration (1), religion (2), and literature (3). The case studies presented in this volume affirm the approach of the project. The island of Elephantine hosted a multicultural society with several interactions between the Egyptians and the other in-

habitants, whether Judeans (Jews), Phoenicians, Carians, Medes, Persians, or other ethnic groups. This interaction was not only caused by conditions on the island itself with a living quarter where the different ethnicities lived side by side but also by the fact that Elephantine was an important administrative center for the Persian authorities. The Persians were interested in a bilingual multicultural elite which could serve in the administration of Egypt.

In the first section of this volume on *Society and Administration* in context, *Giulia Grassi* deals with the question of defining and identifying ethnicity in the multicultural environment of Elephantine. In particular she investigates "the apparently most obvious indicator of ethnicity, ethnonyms, with a particular focus on the *nisbe* 'Aramean'." She also discusses personal names, as far as they are related with ethnonyms. "The analysis of the relationship between names and ethnonyms should show how anthroponyms may be used as indicator of ethnicity."

Holger Gzella investigates the scribal culture of the Persian Administration both in letters and in non-documentary, literary texts such as the Bisutun inscription and the "Words of Ahiqar" (for the latter see also section 3, especially the contributions of J. D. Moore, J.-F. Quack and R. G. Kratz). In the letters he observes "largely fixed templates with a clear structure, standardized salutation and politeness formulae (depending on the hierarchical relationship between the sender and the addressee), and a shared set of expressions for the most common pragmatic purposes." The literary documents reveal "the intellectual basis of the scribal habits" and "the underpinning education of the ideal of the loyal clerk." The paper also hints to the reception of the scribal habits and ideals in biblical literature: "When the institutions of Palace and Temple lost their function as the dominant markers of identification in an increasingly cosmopolitan environment, the inherited type of the loyal and competent government official fed into the new ideal of the learned scribe as the carrier of theology and religious practice. Ezra and Daniel in particular became suitable role models for successfully finding one's way in both the secular and the sacred sphere."

The third contribution to this section from *Alexander Schütze* deals with legal traditions. The aim of his paper is "to reevaluate how Aramaic and Demotic legal documents from Persian Period Egypt are related to each other in terms of the legal clauses employed." Schütze analyzes two types of legal formulations, the transfer and receipt clauses in sale documents and judicial oaths in legal disputes. In both cases he detects an analogy or rather an adoption of Demotic legal tradition in the Aramean documents and concludes: "Thus, Aramaic scribes not only included Demotic legal clauses in their legal documents but took over a particular document type because the validity of these documents strongly depended with their accordance to Egyptian law. This legal context of Persian Period Egypt should be taken into account more seriously when discussing the formulary of Aramaic legal documents from Elephantine." The same holds true for

the religious context which is the focus of section 2 (see especially the contribution of A. von Lieven and B. Schipper).

Finally, *Sylvie Honigman* offers an insight in the aftermath of the military colony at Elephantine and investigates the similar evidence of Edfu and Thebes in the Hellenistic and Roman eras. While the relationship between these two colonies is still unclear, Honigman assumes "that a single colony arrived in Egypt under the second Persian domination and was settled in Edfu" and "following the outbreak of the Great Revolt of the Thebaid in ca. 207/6 BCE, either part or the entire colony was resettled in Thebes." Aramaic sources and Jewish personal names in Greek and Demotic documents tell the history of an Aramaic-speaking Judean colony which was "apparently organized in the same way as the military colonies of foreigners in Syene, Elephantine" with their own judges, scribes, and priests, serving the kings, building temples, and paying taxes. Together, the two colonies in Edfu and Thebes "cast new light on the history of these Aramaic-speaking populations and their descendants in Upper Egypt under Ptolemaic and Roman rule."

The second section of this volume places *religion* at Elephantine in context. *Alexandra von Lieven* provides an overview of the Egyptian religion on the Island in the Persian period. Since authentic sources from this time are missing, her reconstruction relies on slightly earlier sources from the 26th Dynasty and later sources from Hellenistic and Roman times, presupposing a continuity of the religious phenomena. Her paper concentrates on the main gods in the Pantheon, deified human beings, animal cult, and – for the "intellectual aspects" – the remains of the local temple library in Papyri from Hellenistic Elephantine.

Collin Cornell and *Brent A. Strawn* raise the provoking question as to whether the religion of the Judeans of Elephantine is a "Pidgin." With this labeling, the paper intends to find a way around the alternative explanations discussed in scholarship that the Judean religion at Elephantine is either a "fossil remnant of not yet reformed Judaism in a distant land" (J. Wellhausen) or a phenomenon of syncretism with an adopted "pagan worship" as a result of contact with the Aramean neighbors at Elephantine (B. Porten). To make the case, the paper discusses three issues: "the polytheistic greeting formula encountered in the letters"; "the divine triad found in the donation list"; and "the equation of Yhw with 'the God of Heaven' in Jedaniah's letter to Bagohi." The paper comes to the conclusion "that understanding Elephantine Judean religion as a kind of pidginized language provides a better and more accurate interpretation than either of the two primary options offered heretofore."

The following two contributions turn to the famous event of the destruction and rebuilding of the Judean temple of Yaho at Elephantine attested in several documents. *Bob Becking*, after discussing and disputing some of the explanations of the event in terms of a religious conflict, proposes a fresh approach using the cultural-anthropologist Clifford Geertz's concept – originally developed for the

interpretation of human behavior – of a "thick description" looking for 'clues' in the texts. Following his "thick description" of the events, Becking concludes that "the demolition of the Yehudite temple was not an isolated event, but part of the Egyptian attack on vital and symbolic elements of the Persian rule."

In contrast, *Bernd U. Schipper*, who also contextualizes the event in the wider historical and political situation of the Judean colony in Egypt under Persian administration, proposes a new religious explanation of the destruction of the temple of Yaho. According to Schipper, the burnt offering of cattle, sheep, or goats could have been understood as a challenge to the official sacrifice at the temple of Khnum. The sacrifice of a goat, for example, could have been interpreted as the destruction of Apophis, the enemy of the gods, which was the privilege of the temple of Khnum. In short, the burnt offering in the Yaho temple meant interference with the autonomy and rights of the official cult of Elephantine, namely that of the god Khnum. As a consequence, the cultic practice – with the abandonment of burnt-offerings at the rebuilt temple – could be seen as an attempt to create clear boundaries between the main temple of Khnum and the lower sanctuary of the god Yaho.

The third section of this volume is devoted to the *literature* found in or attached to the context of Elephantine. Three articles deal with the "Words of Ahiqar." *James D. Moore* presents and discusses some new readings on a papyrus of the Berlin collection (P. 13446) and puts them in context of new developments in Ahiqar research. *Joachim Friedrich Quack* provides an overview of the Demotic fragments in relation to the story and proverbs of Ahiqar based on his new edition of the relevant material which is simultaneously published elsewhere. *Reinhard G. Kratz* addresses the question of whether the two literary pieces found in Elephantine – the composition headed *The words of one named Aḥiqar* and the Aramaic version of the Bisitun inscription of Darius the Great – "are significant examples of the literature known to the Jewish (or, rather, Judean) colony and, if they were, how they fit into the historical and cultural context of the colony."

The subsequent two articles are focused on Papyrus Amherst 63 and its potential relation to the Arameans and Judeans on Elephantine. In the first contribution, *Tawny L. Holm* provides a thorough analysis of the anthology of Aramaic texts in Demotic script, relying on her own forthcoming edition of the papyrus, to appear in the SBL-WAW series. The article discusses several issues such as the people behind the papyrus, contents and purpose as well as the relations to Elephantine regarding deities, festivals, sacrifice and temples, and literature. The overall impression is that the papyrus – dated to the 4th century BCE – "represents a mixed community of Arameans in Egypt with perceived connections to Syria, Mesopotamia, Samaria, Judah, and possibly western Iran." Very similar to the evidence found in Elephantine, the texts "seem to reveal a unified diversity" based on a "religious or cultural landscape of nostalgia," which "included

a remembrance of lost lands, cities, and cult centers (among these the still unexplained geographical name 'Rash') alongside appeals to multiple deities from across the Near East for renewal and rejuvenation."

A different interpretation of the evidence is provided by *Karel van der Toorn*, who gives an insight into his edition and historical evaluation of Papyrus Amherst 63 recently published in the series AOAT (2018). Focusing on the "Israelite section" of the papyrus, van der Toorn presents his hypothesis that both the Judean Arameans at Elephantine and the people originally behind the papyrus were Samarians who lived for about a century in the environment of Palmyra. There they became Arameans and adopted the language and several Aramean deities associated with Bethel before they – together with Syrians and Babylonians from Palmyra – migrated to Egypt. "In Egypt, they eventually became part of the Judean diaspora – and in the end embraced a Jewish identity."

The editors are glad to finally present the fruits of the project "Elephantine in Context" and the several workshops to the academic public, in the hope that this volume will stimulate further research. We would like to thank all contributors for their important studies covered in this volume and the academic exchange with them as well as with others who participated in the workshops (in alphabetical order): Erhardt Graefe (Münster), Sebastian Hoedt (Berlin), Friedhelm Hoffmann (Munich), Jan Moje (Berlin), Kim Ryholt (Copenhagen), Günter Vittmann (Würzburg). Furthermore, we wish to thank Verena Lepper for the cooperation with the Papyrussammlung des Ägyptischen Museums der Staatlichen Museen Berlin and our staff Moritz Prechtel (Göttingen), Berenike Brandes, Yannik Ehmer (both in Berlin) for their help with the preparation of the manuscript. Our special thanks go to Julius Albrecht, Carmen Bluhm, Antonia Eckhardt, Dr. Stefanie Rudolf (Berlin), and Sarah Kilian (Göttingen) for the preparation of the indices and the correction of the proofs.

Göttingen and Berlin, January 2021
Reinhard G. Kratz and Bernd U. Schipper

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1 Society and Administration

"Do We Know the Arameans?" (SAA 17, 176)

The Use of Ethnonyms in the Aramaic Documents from Egypt*

Giulia Francesca Grassi

Introduction

The Aramaic documents from Egypt are extremely important for the evaluation of the presence of foreigners in Persian Egypt and of their interactions. Aramaic was used as a written language by a considerable part of the Semitic-speaking immigrant community. In addition, Aramaic was chosen as the administrative language in the Achaemenid Empire; as a consequence, Aramaic texts are among the main sources for evidence of the Persian presence and administration in Egypt and for the attestation of other groups of foreigners.

Indicators of ethnicity are always hard to interpret, and to detect the different groups can be really challenging, since none of the main criteria (ethnonyms, anthroponyms, and religious terminology/theonyms) can be considered entirely safe.

As regards anthroponyms, I have heard and read several times the remark that personal names cannot be used to build hypotheses of ethnicity; in these cases, the anthroponymy of Contemporary Europe is usually taken as an example.[1] This remark is misleading. Caution is certainly warranted, but the parallel with Contemporary Europe is hardly tenable: the "freedom" and the cultural and semantic opacity which characterize onomastics in Contemporary Europe have very few parallels in world history.[2] If we consider studies of anthroponymy in Europe from Ancient Greece to World War II, or in contemporary societies outside the Western World, we may conclude that name-giving is far from meaningless, both semantically and culturally. Following Lévi Strauss's study of

* I would like to thank Dr. Bronson Brown-de Vost and Dr. James Moore for their thoughtful comments and for proofreading the manuscript.

[1] E. g. "the onomasticon is a very fragile ground upon which to build hypotheses of ethnicity. A comparison with the onomasticon in most modern European countries calls for caution" (Retsö, Arabs, 381).

[2] Cf. Cardona, Introduzione, 133; Caprini, Nomi, 49. For the development of name giving in Europe, and the drastic changes occurred in the Twentieth century see *e. g.* Mitterauer, Antenati.

the phenomenon,[3] it is clear that names are important taxonomical organizers, which situate an individual within a group and/or a family. Anthroponyms almost always convey a socio-cultural meaning, and name-giving is often a practice by which a society accepts a new member.[4] Of course, one isolated name cannot be enough for determining the ethnicity of its bearer. However, if the name can be compared with other evidence (language, religion, ethic labels etc.), and moreover is part of a well-established onomastic system, there is no reason to treat it with excessive scepticism. The use of different personal names in different regions or the relationship between anthroponymy and religion, or between anthroponymy and ethnos, must be investigated carefully, in order to avoid both excessive confidence and excessive circumspection. We should also stress that religious terminology and ethnonyms, as precise as they seem to be, are sometimes as misleading as anthroponymy.

In this article, I deal with the apparently most obvious indicator of ethnicity, ethnonyms, with a particular focus on the *nisbe* "Aramean." To a lesser extent I take into consideration personal names, as far as they are related with ethnonyms: the analysis of the relationship between names and ethnonyms should show how anthroponyms may be used as indicator of ethnicity – that is, if the anthroponyms associated with an ethnic label are mostly coherent with that label, (e. g. do people called "Persians" tendentially bear Iranian names, or not?).

1. The Corpus[5]

I have counted 1,105 non-literary Aramaic texts (or fragments of texts) from Egypt dated to the first millennium BCE. "Non-literary" means that famous texts such as ʾAḥiqar and the translation of Behistun are not included in the corpus. The majority of the texts is dated to the Acheamenid era; more than a half of the documents originate from Elephantine (631; 57 %), while at least 295 (27 %) were found in the region of Memphis/Saqqara (mainly from Saqqara). The remaining 179 texts (16 %) come from different sites, or they are of unknown origin. Of 1,105 texts, only 70 contain ethnonyms, and 10 more may possibly contain them, for a grand total of 80 texts out of 1,105 (7 %). The number of different ethnonyms ranges between 20 and 26, since the attestation of 5 of them is doubtful (see Appendix), and one is used as anthroponym (D21.3) rather than as ethnic label.

[3] Levi-Strauss, Pensée.

[4] Cf. Cardona, Ideologie, 6, with further literature.

[5] The following abbreviations for the text are used here (the following number is always the number of the text): A: TAD 1; B TAD 2; C: TAD 3; D: TAD 4; S: Segal, Texts; CG: Lozachmeur, Collection; R: Röllig, Krugaufschriften.

The majority of the ethnonyms in these documents takes the usual Aramaic ending for gentilic/nisbe, *-y/-y'* (āy), but there are also a couple of occurrences of the ending *-kn*, likely of Iranian origin.[6] In Semitic studies *Nisbe* is an affirmative which occurs primarily in the formation of gentilics/ethnic names (NSB, "ascription," "attribution").

Ethnic labels are not always used in the texts in similar ways. In some cases, they may be used for objects, e. g., Sidonian wine (C3.7) or Persian sandals (B3.8). But even if they are used to designate people, nuances or implications can be significantly different.

Some ethnonyms occur frequently in letters, whereas other ethnonyms are recorded almost exclusively in administrative documents. For example, "Egyptian" and "Cilician" are typical of the first group, "Aramean" and "Caspian" of the second group. "Judean" is situated in the middle, occurring both in letters and contracts. In the first case, ethnonyms are rarely mentioned together with anthroponyms, which are to the contrary frequent in the administrative texts.

"Egyptian" (*mṣry*) is a very common ethnic label; however, as already mentioned, it does not occur in the contracts. Of course, the label "Egyptian" in Egypt it is not distinctive, and it is quite obvious that it is not used in the contracts because it is not as effective ethnic label as, for example, "Choresmian" or "Caspian" in order to define/distinguish someone. Indeed, when people of likely Egyptian origin are mentioned in the contracts, they are never designated by an ethnonym, but rather by their job or professional title.[7]

In the Aramaic texts, "Egyptian" is never a self-definition, unsurprisingly since Egyptians wrote in Egyptian, and the term is not used in order to identify someone by his/her origin. The *nisbe* "Egyptian" never occurs with a proper name.[8] "Egyptians" are always mentioned as a community, and they are often seen in a negative way, especially by the Judeans, and even the satrap Arsames refers to them as rebels (A4.5).

Some other ethnics are not attested in the corpus with proper names: "Arab" (B8.1; C3.28), "Bythinian" (S31 uncertain), "Carian" (A6.2; S26), "Persian" (B3.8), "Sukkien" (D7.24 uncertain), "Susian" (D3.8 doubtful). In contrast to the

[6] Cp. Folmer, Language, 213–217. *-kn* is found only in the forms *swnknn* (A4.10), *swnkn* (B5.2), *swnky'* (C3.14), "Syenians"/"Syenian," and *sykn* (B8.6), "Saite." The ethnic label *krtk*, "Cretan," has been interpreted as *krt* + Persian suffix *-k* (Folmer, Language, 215), or as transcription of Greek Κρητικός (Segal, Texts, 20).

[7] It has been rightly stressed that not everyone bearing an Egyptian name should be considered a "true" Egyptian (Vittmann, Aramaeans, 243–244). However, in the case of the contracts mentioning the job of the bearer of an Egyptian name, I think that an ethnonym would have been preferred, if the man was not a "true" Egyptian.

[8] The only exception could be the *twdrs* (?)/Θεόδωρος in B8.4, if the ethnic label "Egyptian" refers to him; however, this text is dated to the 3rd century BCE, and in the Ptolemaic age the use of the labels "Egyptian" and "Greek" was determined by the preferred language (Goudriaan, Ethnicity).

most common ethnic labels "Egyptian", "Judean," and "Aramean," these terms are very rare in the corpus.

The term *yhwdy* has often been taken into consideration, because its translation and exact meaning are problematic, at least to a certain extent. The term has been translated in English as "Jew," "Jehudite," or "Judean." I prefer the term "Judean" for two reasons. First, it has been convincingly demonstrated that the term *yhwdy*, "Judean," maintained a geographical connotation – i. e. it designates the inhabitants of the region of Judaea, or people originating from that region – until at least 100 BCE.[9] Second, the geographical characterization of "Judean" seems to be fully maintained in Elephantine documents. It seems indeed clear from the documents themselves that the "Judeans" (*yhwdy'*) from Elephantine did use this label for designating people related to Judaea. In fact, the nisbe *yhwdy'* and the toponym *yhwd* are used interchangeably in two drafts of the famous letter directed to the Persian governor in Judaea (*ḥry yhwdy'*, "nobles of the Judeans" in A4.7, 19; *ḥry yhwd*, "nobles of Judaea" in A4.8, 18). Since the writer of that letter also uses the Nisbe *yhwdy'* as a general designation for the other members of his social group in Elephantine, it seems quite logical to assume that these "Judeans" living in Elephantine considered themselves to be of Judean origin. On the contrary, people from Samaria, who also are mentioned in the draft, are not called "Judeans." Thus, the original geographical characterization of "Judean" seems to be fully maintained in Elephantine documents.

Differently from "Aram" (see below), the toponym Judaea indicates a specific Near-Eastern region. Moreover, the group of people called *yhwdy'* shows a quite strong self-consciousness: in fact, this ethnonym is used both in the contracts and in the letters; in the letters, they call themselves *yhwdy'*, and they clearly perceive themselves as a group.

As regards anthroponymy, the proper names borne by persons who are explicitly called "Judean" are either Yahwistic and/or use a possible Hebrew/Canaanite etymology (i. e. there is no case in which the name is more likely to be Aramaic),[10] and the same can be said for their patronymics and even for their papponymics (with one exception: see below). Explicitly called "Judean" are *mḥsyh br ydnyh* (B2.2, B2.3, B2.4); *qwnyh br ṣdq* (B2.2); [*yz*]*nyh br 'wryh* (B2.2);

[9] Cohen, Beginnings; see also Mason, Jews. "Jew" would thus be anachronistic in the Persian age. As regards "Jehudite," it seems rather artificial: a modern creation in order to avoid the anachronistic "Jew" and the geographically characterized "Judean" (For the term "Jehudite," see Becking, Identity).

[10] There are few cases in the Aramaic documents from Egypt in which a Yahwistic name may contain an Aramaic element: a typical example is the name *zbdyh*, since the element *zbd* is most common in the Aramaic anthroponymy. Another case is possibly *ydnyh*, if from *ʾḏn*, but if from *dyn*, "judge," it is ambiguous: albeit widespread in Aramaic, the element *dyn* is not unknown in the Canaanean anthroponymy. See Silverman, Values, 141.143–144. In any case, Yahwistic names in Elephantine (the great majority of Yahwistic names come from Elephantine) are constantly associated only with the Judean community, whatever their second element is.

mnḥm and *ʿnnyh* sons of *mšlm br šlmm* (B2.9); *ydnyh* and *mḥsyh* sons of *ʾsḥwr br ṣḥʾ* by *mbṭḥyh brt mḥsyh* (B2.9); *mšlm br zkwr* (B3.1, B3.6); *ʿnny br ḥgy br mšlm* (B3.13); *mky br gmryh*; *ydnyh br mkyh*; *ʿnnyh br hwšʿyh*; [...] *br šlmm* (CG X11). Other possible occurrences of the ethnic label are associated with *ydnyh* in D2.12 and *mpṭḥyh brt gmryh* and her sister *ʾswry brt gmryh* in B5.5, but these restorations are doubtful (see Appendix).

Of these names, *mḥsyh*, *ydnyh*, [*yz*]*nyh, ʾwryh, ʿnnyh*, *mbṭḥyh, gmryh, mkyh, hwšʿyh* are overtly Yahwistic, and *ʿnny* and *mky*, according to their distribution, are likely to be short forms of two of them.

The names *mnḥm*, *mšlm, šlmm, zkwr,* and *ḥgy* are not exclusively Hebrew, but they are used in Judean and Israelite communities, and they do not contain any pagan theonym. The name *zkwr* is linguistically not Aramaic, but rather a Canaanite form, and in an Aramean context it is attested only as the name of the king of Hama in the 9th century BCE.[11] In the Aramaic documents from Egypt, the name is attested among other Hebrew/Yahwistic names, and never with Pagan/purely Aramaic names; its only other occurrence in Imperial Aramaic is on one ostracon from Idumea, where his father bears a Yahwistic name, *yhwkl.*[12] As regards *mšlm*, it is never attested as proper name in Aramean contexts; it is known not only from the Bible, but also in the Hebrew inscriptions.[13] The name *mnḥm* is also Canaanite, being attested in Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Hebrew;[14] its attestation in Aramaic are mostly related to Canaanean contexts, such as the ostracon from Nimrud[15] and an ostracon from Beer Sheba.[16] *šlmm* in Old and Imperial Aramaic is recorded only at Elephantine, and it does not occur in Hebrew or Phoenician. It has been interpreted either as a short form of *šlmyh* or as defective spelling of *šlwmm* (*šālôm* + ending *-ām*).[17] In both cases, the name would be once again related to the Judean community, because of the theophoric element *yhw* in the first interpretation, or because of its phonological form in the latter. Finally, *ḥgy* is well known in Hebrew anthroponymy, and in Egypt is attested mainly among the Judeans, but there are likely exceptions; moreover,

[11] The origin of this king is disputed. Because of the vocalisation of his name, a Phoenician origin has also been suggested.

[12] ARI I, 283.

[13] Renz, Inschriften, 75; Avigad/Sass, Corpus, 535. The names *mšlm* and *mšlmw*, attested in Palmyrene and Nabatean, are likely Arabic: *mslm* is known in North- and South-Arabian inscriptions (Stark, Names, 97; Cantineau, Nabatéen, 118; Harding, Index, 545).

[14] Gröndahl, Personennamen, 165; Benz, Names, 359–360; Renz, Inschriften, 74; Avigad/Sass, Corpus, 514.

[15] ARI II, 116.

[16] ARI I, 531–532; Maraqten, Personennamen, 87–88. It occurs also on three seals which can be either Aramaic or Ammonite (Avigad/Sass, Corpus, 514), as well as on an Aramaic tablet; in all these cases, the name is recorded without patronym.

[17] The first explanation is supported by Silvermann (Silverman, Values, 182); the second by Kornfeld (Kornfeld, Onomastica, 73) and Zadok (Zadok, Anthroponomy, 107).

the name is attested in Aramaic also outside Egypt,[18] as well as in Phoenician,[19] Palmyrene, Nabatean, and North- and South-Arabian.[20]

The only names which are not Yahwistic nor generically West-Semitic are *'swry* and *'šḥwr br ṣḥ'*, which are Egyptian. Isweri/*'swry* is a female name, and female Egyptian names are sometimes attested among families with a Hebrew/Yahwistic onomasticon. This is likely due to the fact that female anthroponyms in patrilinear societies are usually less important, and thus less bound to family traditions and often much less predictable.[21] On the contrary, Egyptian male names are rare in the whole corpus among families with a Hebrew/Yahwistic onomasticon. The case of *'šḥwr br ṣḥ'* is a clear demonstration of the importance attributed to anthroponymy by the members of the Judean community. In B2.6, *'šḥwr br ṣḥ'*, who is "builder/architect of the king" (*'rdkl zy mlk*) asks *mḥsyh* for his daughter *mpṭyh* in marriage, and their children are given Yahwistic names: *ydnyh* and *mḥsyh*, who bear the names respectively of the maternal great-grandfather and grandfather. Moreover, if in B2.9 the name of their father is still *'šḥwr br ṣḥ'*, in B2.10 and B2.11 it is *ntn*: entering Judean community, *'šḥwr* took a Semitic name, *ntn*. Maybe *'šḥwr* left his Egyptian name, or maybe he took also a Semitic name, and maintained the Egyptian one for other contexts. Both changing one's name when entering important stages of life (adulthood, marriage etc.), and polynomy are widely attested in anthroponymy.[22] It is indeed possible that the rarity of double names is due to the fact that sometimes different names were used in different contexts, but not all these names are registered in the documents. Even if they are, we cannot usually be certain that the person is the same one recorded with another name in another document: we are able to reconstruct the case of *'šḥwr/ntn* by chance, and it is almost unique in the corpus as a double name, the only exception being probably [*b*]*rznrw br 'rtbrzn hw ptw* in D2.12, a Bactrian who bears an Iranian name (*brnzrw*) with an Iranian patronym (*'rtbrzn*), and an Egyptian alias (*ptw*).[23]

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[18] ARI I, 297–298. Outside Egypt, the name is known in Idumea, in an ostracon from Beer Sheba, in the ostracon from Nimrud, and also on a clay tablet probably from Tell Sheikh Hamad, among non-Hebrew and non-Yahwistic names, his patronym being *šlmn'd*, Salmānuna'id, containing the pagan theonym S/Šalmān (Lemaire, Tablettes, text 13). Note also that none of the Ḥaggay in the Murašu archive has a Yahwistic genealogy (Zadok, Jews, 24). In the texts of Āl-Yaḥūdu, the name is attested in Yahwistic genealogies (Pearce/Wunsch, Documents, 52–53.271): one is son of Mataniā; one is son of Natan-Yāma; even the son of Aḫīqam has a brother bearing a Yahwistic name, Nīr-Yāma (Text 27).

[19] The only occurrence of *ḥgy* is in Cyprus, and the inscription has been considered Jewish (IJO III, Cyp6). However, *ḥgy* is the only legible name, and it is difficult to demonstrate the origin of its bearer.

[20] Stark, Names, 20.87; Cantineau, Nabatéen, 93–94 (*ḥgw*); Harding, Index, 178 (*ḥǧy*). See also Grassi, Onomastics, 125–126.

[21] See e. g. Caprini, Nomi, 59; Mitterauer, Antenati, 111.

[22] See Caprini, Nomi, 75–77, with further bibliography.

[23] This is the only document that explicitly mentions an alias.

Generally speaking, it may be observed that proper names usually "agree" with the ethnic labels attested in these documents. As we have seen, male Judeans bear Yahwistic/Hebrew names. Similarly, people coming from Persia and Central Asia usually bear Iranian names, as is the case for the above-mentioned Bactrian [*b*]*rznrw br ʾrtbrzn,*[24] for a Chorasmian *drgmn br ḥršyn*[25] (B2.2; B2.3), for a Hyrcanian *sḥh*[26] (B8.3), for a Median *ʾtrprn br nysy*[27] (B3.6), and for several Caspians. In the five texts mentioning Caspians (B2.7; B3.4; B3.5; B3.12; C3.8), five Iranian names occur (*drgy*, *bgzšt/bgzwšt*, *bzw*, *štbr/štybr*, *msdy*).[28] One additional name is Anatolian (*brbry*), another possibly mixed Iranian/Semitic (*ʾtrly*),[29] and seven of unknown etymology (*wzybl/wzyblw*, *ḥyḥ*, *ʾwbyl*, *plyn*, *ynbwly*, *ḥmtsn*, and a feminine name to be read *ʾwbl*, *ʾbl*, or *ybl*).

As far as Anatolians are concerned, the only inscription mentioning a Pisidian (D22.25) contain three Anatolian names: "Blessed be the commander *trkmnh* the Pisidian and *trbmy* his *plwt* and *ʾbrmwš* (?) who came to Panah" (*bryk rbh trkmnh pšdyʾ wtrbmy plwth wʾbrmwš zy ʾtw pnh*).[30] Also the Cilician slaves of Arsames (A6.7) bear mainly Anatolian names: *prymʾ*, *ʾmwn*, *tʿndy, sdsbnz, srmnz, pytrʿnz, ʾsmrwp, mwsrm*, perhaps *kʾ*,[31] only *srk* and *bgprn* are Iranian.[32]

The name of the "Sidonian" *ʿzrbʿl* (D3.40) is actually a very frequent Phoenician anthroponym.[33]

The name of the "Cretan" (*krtk*) *tbrḥš* (B8.3) is Greek Θίβραχος (to the best of my knowledge attested only once in Sparta[34]), whereas his daughter bears an Egyptian name, *tḥmpt*.

The "Ionians" (singular *ywny* or rarely *ywnyʾ*), i. e. "Greeks," who are captains or owners of the ships mentioned in the custom account (ʾAḥiqar palimpsest, C3.7) also bear mostly Greek names, all attested in the *Lexicon of Greek Per-*

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[24] Tavernier, Iranica, 151.294.

[25] Tavernier, Iranica, 168.363.

[26] Tavernier, Iranica, 311.

[27] Tavernier, Iranica, 62.124.

[28] Tavernier, Iranica, 144.149.168.318. As far as *msdy* is concerned, Tavernier reports *mzdy* (Tavernier, Iranica, 244), but no *msdy*; see however Porten, Names, 169.

[29] Tavernier, Iranica, 472.

[30] See Goetze, Cilicians, 55. Zilberg (Zilberg, Dragomans) proposes to consider *trkmn* not a personal names, but rather the word "dragoman," "interpreter," attested in Semitic and possibly of Hittite origin; his translation is thus "Blessed be the commander, *his* Pisidian *interpreter* and Trbmy ... [and] ʾbrmwš? Who came to Panah." The suggestion is plausible, but the omission of the name in the blessing formula would be anomalous. Another graffito (D22.27) mentions the same persons, with the further specification "the Pisidian of *ʾwgnn,*" probably a toponym.

[31] See Goetze, Cilicians, 55–57.

[32] Tavernier, Iranica, 134.309. The name *srk* has been read also *srn*, and considered Anatolian (Goetze, Cilicians, 56); however, *srk* is a more plausible reading.

[33] Benz, Names, 167–170.375–376.

[34] Θίβραχος was a Spartan polemarch who fell in the battle of Piraeus and was buried in Kerameikos (Xen. Hell. II, 4, 33), where his tomb was actually found (see Richer, Aspects, 68).

sonal Names (the number of occurrences is given after each name, according to the online edition of the LGPN): *ʾrgls*/ʾΕργίλος (4), *glprs*/Γλάφυρος (7), *ywkls*/ʾΙοκλῆς (2), *mks*/Μίκκος (30), *msks*/Μόσχος (269), *pns*/Φάνης (9) or Φανῆς (39), *prtwkls*/Πρωτοκλῆς (8), *šwmn*/Σωμένης (16) or Σύμενος (2), *šmnds*/Σιμωνίδης (44), *tmkts*/Τιμοκήδης (4).

The only exceptions are *prystn* and *spytk*, both Iranian,[35] and *prytkm*, the origin of which is unknown, but possibly Iranian as well, since it is the patronym of *prystn*. Several other anthroponyms are unfortunately no longer legible in this text.

We may conclude that names usually provide information about the ethnic or geographical origin of their bearers. There are exceptions, of course, but they are relatively rare.

The most exceptions to this may be found with the nisbe *ʾrmy*, "Aramean."

"Aramean" is attested 33 times, but we have only one Aramaic name, *bryḵl*[36] (B8.4; with Egyptian patronymic, *snbnt,*[37] and a brother perhaps bearing an Egyptian name, *šmw),*[38] and one Aramaic patronymic, *nnyšwry* (in this second case, the name of the son is lost and it could have been Aramaic; B4.7).[39] In four cases, the name is Egyptian (with Egyptian patronym, if present): *pḫnwm br bsʾ* (B3.13),[40] *šmw br snbnt* (B8.4); *ptyḥr* (S77);[41] *tḥp/by* (CG258).[42] In a couple of cases, the name of the person called "Aramean" is lost, but the patronymic is Iranian (B8.6; D2.4).[43] In 21 cases, the name is Yahwistic/Hebrew, or at least is part of the names used mostly by the Judean community:[44] *ʾwryh* (B3.9), *ydnyh* (B2.10; B2.11), *mbṭḥyh* (B2.8), *mḥsyh* (B2.1; B2.6; B2.7; B2.11; B7.1), *mlkyh*

[35] Tavernier, Iranica, 181.314.

[36] The name is otherwise not recorded in Old and Imperial Aramaic, but see the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian transcriptions: Zadok, Semites, 109; Pearce/Wunsch, Documents, 265 (never in Yahwistic genealogies).

[37] Muchiki, Names, 99.

[38] Kornfeld, Onomastica, 94. The interpretation is not sure: see Muchiki, Names, 42 (*šmw* in two Punic inscriptions from Chartage, see also Benz, Names, 419–420), 143–144. *šmw* in Egypt occurs usually among Egyptian names, and Egyptian are also other anthroponyms on an ostracon from Idumea; two more occurrences among the Idumean ostraca are doubtful (ARI I, 796).

[39] I could find no parallel for this name, although the structure divine name + *šūrî*, "DN is my wall" is common among West Semites in Babylonia (Zadok, Semites, 99); see also Maraqten, Personennamen, 118.185 for Old Aramaic.

[40] Kornfeld, Onomastica, 79.87.

[41] Vittmann, Entsprechungen, 220–221.

[42] Kornfeld, Onomastica, 95.

[43] *šyn* is possibly Iranian (Tavernier, Iranica, 43; *Āçina-); *hwbr* is Iranian (Tavernier, Iranica, 203; *Hu-bara-, "cherishing").

[44] Not only the name of the "Aramean," but also the name of his father and grandfather, if known, are Hebrew/Yahwistic. The only exception is the name *bss*, the name of the great-grandfather of the "Aramean" in a rare four generations genealogy: *ʾnny br ḫgy br mšlm br bss*. *bss* can be interpreted as Egyptian (Grelot, Documents, 468) or as Babylonian (Zadok, Anthroponomy, 104); both interpretations are mentioned by Kornfeld (Kornfeld, Onomastica, 44).

Ancient Sources

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

New Testament

Apokrypha

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Arabic

Aramaic

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