

*An Examination of Northwest Semitic Divine Names and the Bet-locative*¹

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Four separate inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrūd (ca. 800 B.C.) invoke the divine names Yahweh-of-Teman (HI KAjr 14, 19A, and 20) and Yahweh-of-Samaria (HI KAjr 18), which reopened the debate about Deut 6:4's declaration that "Yahweh is One" and the possibility of distinct, localized Yahwehs in the Israelite pantheon. In the biblical texts, the name Yahweh never appears in a construct chain with a geographic name (e.g., there is no Yahweh-of-Jerusalem), so alternative divine name formulas have been sought as additional evidence for an ancient poly-Yahwism. The most commonly suggested alternative involves a divine name followed by a geographic name in a bet-locative phrase: DN-b-GN. Thus, Yahweh-in-Zion (Ps 99:2) and Yahweh-in-Hebron (2 Sam 15:7) have been proposed as two additional localized Israelite deities. Comparable evidence from Ugaritic, Ammonite, Phoenician, and Punic texts containing the formula DN-b-GN has been offered in the past to support this claim (e.g., Tannit-in-Lebanon, KAI 81:1). This paper examines the relationship between divine names and geographic names as they pertain to potentially localized Yahweh deities and other Northwest Semitic deities. The formula DN-b-GN is carefully examined and rejected as a means of identifying any distinct deity in the various Northwest Semitic pantheons, including those of biblical Israel, for syntactical and other methodological reasons.

KEYWORDS: bet-locative, divine names, Kuntillet 'Ajrūd, poly-Yahwism

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THE *SHEMA* AND KUNTILLET ‘AJRŪD

Prior to the discovery of the inscriptions at Kuntillet ‘Ajrūd (Ḥorvat Teman) in the mid-1970s, no compelling reason existed for considering the divine name Yahweh as the name (or title) of more than one independent deity.² Apart from the concern of William F. Bade in his 1910 article, “Der Monojahwismus des Deuteronomiums,” in which he argued that the *Shema* (Deut 6:4) was a response to the historical fact that the Israelite Yahweh deity had been locally syncretized with the local, independent Baal deities of the Canaanites, scholars focused little interest on the issue.³ For example, in his commentary on Deuteronomy, Gerhard von Rad mentioned that the *Shema* (שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד, literally: “Hear, Israel, Yahweh Our God Yahweh One”) could be interpreted as an attempt to undermine divergent Yahwistic traditions and shrines, but he equally stressed the interpretation that reads the verse as describing Israel’s relationship with Yahweh: Yahweh *alone* (אחד) is Israel’s deity, a reading that Zech 14:9 supports.⁴ Ultimately, for von Rad, the *Shema* was really just one part of a “basic confession” that prepared the reader for the “subsequent sermon(s)” that comprise much

2. Cf. the divine name Baal, which was originally a title meaning “lord,” and the divine name Ištar, which started out as a proper name but was already used as a common noun for “goddess” by the early second millennium B.C. This interchange between these proper and common nouns may be partially responsible for the relative plethora of deities in the West Semitic and Mesopotamian pantheons with these names.

As discussed below, some ancient Near Eastern deities who share a common divine name but have different geographical epithets are actually distinct deities rather than manifestations of a singular deity (e.g., Ištar-of-Nineveh is distinct from Ištar-of-Arbela). For this reason, this article avoids using the word “manifestation” when referring to divine names associated with geographic places, using it only when discussing previous treatments of divine names and geographic epithets. Instead, this article refers to the entities represented by a combination of divine and geographic names by the neutral terms “deity/ies.”

3. William F. Bade, “Der Monojahwismus des Deuteronomiums,” *ZAW* 30 (1910): 81–90. Georg Fohrer briefly mentioned the possibility of regional cults that “might split up and produce several Yahwehs,” and he cited Bade’s article, and like Bade his interest revolves around the eventual centralization of the cult at Jerusalem rather than what multiple Yahwehs would entail or be distinguished (Georg Fohrer, *History of Israelite Religion* [trans. David Green; Nashville: Abingdon, 1972], 297).

4. Gerhard von Rad, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary* (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 63. For fuller discussions on possible meanings of Deut 6:4, see Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation* (JPS Torah Commentary 5; Philadelphia: JPS, 1996), 76 and 440; R. W. L. Moberly, “‘Yahweh is One’: The Translation of the Shema,” in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 41; Leiden: Brill, 1990), 209–15; and Judah Kraut, “Deciphering the Shema: Staircase Parallelism and the Syntax of Deuteronomy 6:4,” *VT* 61 (2011): 582–602.

of the rest of Deuteronomy.⁵ Within the Hebrew Bible, Yahweh had numerous epithets that were attributed to him, including God-of-Israel (e.g., Ps 68:36) and God-of-Heaven (e.g., Ps 136:26), but consensus held that these were only epithets rather than different deities, much less, different Yahweh deities. As far as scholars were concerned, there was only one god known by the name Yahweh because there was no convincing evidence, including Bade's potential interpretation of the *Shema*, to suggest otherwise.

Along with the discovery of the compound at Kuntillet 'Ajrūd in the mid-1970s, evidence was finally uncovered that has lent some credence to one aspect of Bade's poly-Yahwism theory, though it did little to support the Yahweh-Baal syncretism aspect of this claim. Two divine full names expressed by the same grammatical pattern, the construct chain (DN-GN = GN-of-DN), located Yahweh geographically, which could theoretically be suggestive of two distinct localized deities named Yahweh.⁶ Three texts identified a deity known as Yahweh-of-Teman (*HI* KAJr 14, 19A, and 20; ca. 800 B.C.), and a fourth text

5. Von Rad, *Deuteronomy*, 64.

6. For the purposes of this study, a "divine full name" represents the combination of a divine name (e.g., Yahweh, Baal, or Ištar) that functions like a modern, Western first name followed by a geographic name (e.g., Samaria, Aleppo, or Nineveh) that functions like a modern, Western last name. In this way, Yahweh-of-Samaria and Ištar-of-Nineveh represent two divine full names. While this "first, last, and full name analogy" is admittedly imprecise, it should be rhetorically straightforward. For a fuller discussion on the use of divine "first" names with geographic epithets functioning as "last names," see Spencer L. Allen, *The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East* (Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records 5; Berlin: de Gruyter, forthcoming).

The formula DN-of-GN comprises two related divine name constructions. In Akkadian sources, this is usually expressed by the relative particle *ša* as DN-*ša*-GN, literally, "the divine name of the geographic name" or "the divine name, that one of the geographic name." In Northwest Semitic sources, this relationship is usually expressed by use of the construct chain as DN-GN, literally, "divine name (of) geographic name."

Zeev Meshel originally rejected the possibility that שִׁמְרֹן in this text referred to the geographic name Samaria, preferring instead to translate the word as the epithet "(the one who) protect us" because the divine name Yahweh never appears in the Hebrew Bible as part of a construct chain with a geographic name (Zeev Meshel, "Did Yahweh Have a Consort? The New Religious Inscriptions from Sinai," *BAR* 5 [1979]: 31). In 1982, however, John A. Emerton suggested that these divine full names, along with comparable evidence found in other Northwest Semitic texts, were enough evidence to allow for the possibility that the name Yahweh was in construct with the following geographic names (John A. Emerton, "New Light on Israelite Religion: The Implications of the Inscriptions from Kuntillet 'Ajrūd," *ZAW* 94 (1982): 3.

identified a deity known as Yahweh-of-Samaria (*HI KAjr* 18).⁷

These texts only lent credence to the possibility that multiple Yahweh deities coexisted in the minds of ancient Israelites rather than emphatically proved it, however, primarily because scholars remain unconvinced that these full names are indicative of an ancient poly-Yahwism. Indeed, scholars are still debating what such a poly-Yahwism would have actually entailed if it had existed. Benjamin Sommer, for instance, notes that Yahweh-of-Teman and Yahweh-of-Samaria “seem to refer to local manifestations of Yhwh,” but he goes on to note that we cannot be sure that this is a proper conclusion based on the scant evidence.⁸ Sommer would probably deny the independent existence of two Yahweh deities, in much the same way that he denies the existence of multiple distinct Baal deities elsewhere because they “show no individuation of personality, character, or function.”⁹ In short, Sommer recognizes the distinctiveness of the divine full names as different names, but he effectively denies the real independence of the divine entities associated with those names regardless of whether that deity belonged to an otherwise polytheistic world of divine multiplicity.

Likewise, despite his own interest in searching for divine full names (see below), P. Kyle McCarter does not seem to consider Yahweh-of-Teman a wholly separate deity from Yahweh-of-Samaria. Instead, he views them as “semi-independent” deities who were almost but not quite distinct from each other in the mind of ancient Israelites.¹⁰ In essence, the views espoused by Sommer and McCarter reflect a sentiment voiced by Frank Moore Cross prior to the discovery of the texts. For Cross, localized deities were mere aspects or manifestations of the great singular deity known by the name. Specifically, he was discussing the deities El and Ašerah and their “special titles, attributes, (and) hypostases,” which would split apart from the great god and later

7. *HI KAjr* = F. W. Dobbs-Allsopp et al., *Hebrew Inscriptions: Texts from the Biblical Period of the Monarchy with Concordance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 277–98.

8. Benjamin Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 39.

9. *Ibid.*, 25.

10. P. Kyle McCarter, “Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data,” in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (eds. P. D. Miller, P. D. Hanson, and S. D. McBride; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987), 142.

fuse back into that deity's singularity, but surely the same interpretation would have been applied to Yahweh.¹¹

More recently, Jeremy Hutton has reconsidered the divine full names at Kuntillet 'Ajrūd in light of the site's architecture, iconography, and epigraphy, and he tentatively proposes that the so-called bench room was an area officially designated by the northern state of Israel for the worship of a deity known as Yahweh-of-Teman.¹² This official designation suggests to Hutton that "while both manifestations share the name Yahweh . . . they also seem to have led separate lives in the experience of worshippers."¹³ Because a scribe invoked an entity by the name Yahweh-of-Samaria in a shrine that he realized was dedicated to an entity known by the name of Yahweh-of-Teman, this scribe perceived enough of a difference between the two that he seemingly refused to identify them with each other.¹⁴ Following the lead of the scribe responsible for *HI* KAjr 18, Hutton seems prepared to accept the existence of a poly-Yahwism in ancient Israel that not only included multiple semi-independent manifestations of a singular Yahweh deity, as do Sommer and McCarter, but that also included the recognition of distinct "competing" Yahweh deities.¹⁵ It is precisely because he allows

11. Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 49.

12. Jeremy M. Hutton, "Local Manifestations of Yahweh and Worship in the Interstices: A Note on Kuntillet 'Ajrūd," *JANER* 10 (2010): 199, 202.

13. *Ibid.*, 205. He leans toward this conclusion even though two of the three texts invoking Yahweh-of-Teman, namely, *HI* KAjr 19A and 20, were found outside of the shrine dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman and the text invoking Yahweh-of-Samaria (*HI* KAjr 18) was found inside the shrine. The third Yahweh-of-Teman text (*HI* KAjr 14) was the ink-on-plaster inscription found in the bench room and was indicative of the fact the shrine was officially dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman (*ibid.*, 195f.).

14. Whether this distinction between Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman was based on religious, political, or tribal motivations is irrelevant for scholars as they consider the evidence. The fact that the distinction was made should be evidence enough.

15. Hutton, "Local Manifestations," 199. In their search for modern analogues to explain ancient conceptions of the divine, several scholars of ancient cultures have been tempted to discuss treatments of the Madonna in Roman Catholic tradition. This is especially true because of the numerous Marian or madonnine epithets that contain a geographic element, such as Our-Lady-of-Lourdes, Our-Lady-of-Fatima, and Madonna-di-Pompei, along with several hundred others. Giacomo Medica's 1965 survey of Italian madonnas included nearly 400 unique madonnine epithets representing at least that many distinct madonnas, and approximately 30 percent of these titles contained geographic elements: 17 percent were geographic epithets (e.g., Madonna-di-Pompei), 7 percent made reference to landforms (e.g., -del-Monte), and 7 percent made reference to buildings or other manmade structures (e.g., -del-Castello; Giacomo Medica, *I santuari mariani*

for this competitive form of poly-Yahwism that Hutton reconsiders the intended meaning of the Shema, as Bade had done a century earlier, and translates it, “Yahweh our God is one Yahweh.”¹⁶ He then concludes that the author made “deliberate use of an atypical syntactic construction in Deut. 6:4 . . . precisely in order to draw attention to the impropriety, syntactic and theological, of differentiating between local manifestations of Yahweh.”¹⁷ For Hutton, the Shema can be read as a polemic aimed at reminding Israelites that only one Yahweh exists, regardless of where the deity is located according to its divine full names. Restated, Deut 6:4 tells us that the deity known as Yahweh-of-Samaria is nothing more than the deity known as Yahweh-of-Teman worshipped at a different location or by a different group of Israelites, and both are simply the singular Yahweh worshipped throughout Israel.

Even though an inscription referencing Yahweh-of-Samaria was found in a shrine dedicated to Yahweh-of-Teman, as Sommer reminds us, no single Hebrew inscription actually contrasts multiple Yahweh deities, and so Sommer allows for the possibility that Hutton entertains, but he reiterates that it that is only one possible interpretation of the data.¹⁸ Likewise, as I have argued elsewhere, the explicit contrasting of divine names is the most reliable evidence available to us that the two

d'Italia [Torino: Leumann, 1965]; Michael P. Carroll, *Madonnas that Maim: Popular Catholicism in Italy Since the Fifteen Century* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992], 62–63). In many instances, these madonnas have their own sanctuaries, festas, processions, cult places, and visual characteristics that distinguish them from other (competing) madonnas (Ibid., 62; see also Michael P. Carroll, *Veiled Threats: The Logic of Popular Catholicism in Italy* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996], 44–48).

Regarding Hutton’s use of the term “competing” when describing the potential relationship between Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman, this view of madonnine distinctiveness has been revealed through interviews with respondents from the Meszszogiorno region in the 1970s, some of whom described the different Madonnas as “sisters”: “the various figures of the Madonna are connected through the idea of sisters or of friends, which is considered its own real society” (Gino Provitera, “L’edicola votive e le sue funzioni,” in *Questione meridionale, religione, e classi subalterne* [ed. F. Saija; Napoli: Guida, 1978], 343; my translation). Indeed, this notion of kinship among images is so pervasive throughout Italy that madonnine multiplicity has been described as *imparentamento delle madonne*, or “causing the madonnas to become relatives of one another” (Cleto Corrain and Pierluigi Zampinim, *Documenti etnografici e folkloristici nei diocesani italiani* [Bologna: Forni, 1970], 150; Carroll, *Madonnas that Maim*, 66).

16. Hutton, “Local Manifestations,” 206. Hutton’s translation of the verse is not directly dependent upon Bade’s. Rather he cites more recent discussions by Moshe Weinfeld and Tigay (ibid., 179).

17. Ibid.

18. Sommer, *Bodies of God*, 39.

deities were viewed as separate and distinct by ancient scribes.¹⁹ When we lack explicit contrasts, our conclusions are necessarily more tentative, and we are left to search for further evidence. Other scholars have also recognized this methodological limitation, so in the wake of the discovery of the divine full names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman at Kuntillet ‘Ajrūd, they began looking for other potentially localized Yahweh deities.

Because the divine name Yahweh never occurs in a construct chain with a geographic name in the biblical texts as it does at Kuntillet ‘Ajrūd, alternative divine name formulas had to be sought.²⁰ In addition to the standard divine full name formula DN-of-GN, three alternative divine name formulas common to Neo-Assyrian inscriptions were available to modern scholars for consideration. These alternatives include DN-Who-Resides-(in)-GN, title-of-GN, and DN//title-of-GN.²¹ Using Ištar-of-Nineveh as an example, these three formulas are realized as Ištar-Who-Resides-(in)-Nineveh (e.g., ^dIŠ.TAR *a-ši-bat* ^{urru}NINA, State Archives of Assyria [SAA] 6 87 r. 2), Lady-of-Nineveh (e.g., ^dGAŠAN NINA^{ki}, SAA 10 174 o. 6), and Ištar/Lady-of-Nineveh (e.g.,

19. Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, forthcoming; see also Spencer L. Allen, “Aššur and Enlil in Neo-Assyrian Documents,” in *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient Near East Proceedings of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Proceedings of the 54th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Würzburg 20–25 July 2008* (ed. G. Wilhelm; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 397–409.

20. On the one hand, Tryggve Mettinger notes that the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts (יהוה צבאות) comprises two nouns in a construct chain, so it grammatically resembles the standard DN-of-GN pattern, except that Hosts is not a geographic (Tryggve Mettinger, *In Search of God: the Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names*, [trans. F. Cryer; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988], 135; see also Emerton, “New Light,” 8). Mettinger’s interpretation of the full name Yahweh-of-Hosts is only one of several possibilities. Other proposed interpretations include treating the name as two nouns in apposition (i.e., “Yahweh, the Hosts”); as a nominal sentence (i.e., “Yahweh [is] Hosts”); and as a sentence in which Yahweh is interpreted as the verb, namely, “He who creates the [heavenly] hosts/armies” (Matitiahu Tsevat, “Studies in the Book of Samuel,” *HUCA* 36 [1965]: 55; and H. -J. Zobel, “*ṣehā’ōt*,” *TDOT* [2003], 12:219). Cross, on the other hand, rejected the possibility that Yahweh-of-Hosts could be a construct chain and the possibility that “Hosts” could be an adjective or participle because it is plural and does not agree with the singular Yahweh (Cross, *Canaanite Myth*, 70). The fact that Yahweh-of-Hosts is itself a divine full name is made explicit in Isa 47:4 (יהוה צבאות שמו), “Yahweh-of-Hosts is his name”), and Amos 4:13 and 5:27 further suggest that the epithet “God” (אלהי) can interrupt a full name without significantly altering the meaning (יהוה שמו אלהי צבאות, “Yahweh//God-of-Hosts is his name”).

21. These three alternatives are presented and discussed in “An Ištar by Several Other Names” in Allen, “Chapter 5: Ištars of the Neo-Assyrian Pantheon,” in *The Splintered Divine*, forthcoming.

^d15 NIN ^{uru}*ni-na-a*, SAA 2 2 vi 15). The first of these alternatives has no exact correspondence in the Bible, but if we designate “God” (either אֱלֹהִים or אֱלֹהֵי) as the title in these formulas, then representatives of these two remaining alternatives—title-of-GN and DN//title-of-GN—can be found in the biblical texts. These representatives include God-of-Jerusalem (2 Chr 32:19) and Yahweh//God-of-Israel (2 Chr 32:17).²² Despite the fact that Yahweh//God-of-Israel and God-of-Jerusalem parallel their contemporary Neo-Assyrian divine name formulas, I am unaware of scholars who interpret such references as potential names for a localized Yahweh. Instead, they seem to prefer interpreting the word “Israel” in the epithet God-of-Israel as an ethnic or national name rather than a geographic one and dismiss God-of-Jerusalem as a mere epithet for the previously named Yahweh. Finding no satisfactory biblical parallel to the Neo-Assyrian full names, scholars have instead explored the few instances in the Hebrew Bible where the name Yahweh is followed by a geographic name contained in a *bet*-locative phrase.

In the endnotes of his study on lists of gods in Assyrian and Macedonian state treaties, Michael L. Barré considers various alternatives to the standard DN-of-GN formula.²³ In addition to DN-of-GN, he proposes three alternatives for Northwest Semitic divine names: the *bet*-locative DN-in-GN (e.g., Tannit-in-Lebanon; *KAI* 81:1), a variant on the *bet*-locative DN-Who-Resides-in-GN (e.g., Yahweh-Who-Resides-in-Zion; Joel 4:21), and DN//title-of-GN (e.g., Melqart//Lord-of-Tyre; *KAI* 47:1).²⁴ However, as we shall see, in no instance is the DN-in-

22. This attestation of God-of-Jerusalem in 2 Chr 32:19 belongs to a summary of the words spoken by Sennacherib’s men meant to undermine the Jerusalemites’ confidence in their god Yahweh.

23. Michael L. Barré, *The God-List in the Treaty between Hannibal and Philip V of Macedonia: A Study in Light of the Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 186 n.473. Barré also includes DN-from-GN as a variant form of DN-of-GN, so that Ps 135:21 is reinterpreted as blessing Yahweh-from-Zion//Who-Resides-(in)-Jerusalem: יהוה מציון שכן ירושלים. This proposed *min*-locative divine name, like the *bet*-locative divine name examined in this article, should be rejected (Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, forthcoming).

24. Barré also has a variant form of the DN-in-GN formula in which the *bet*-locative is replaced by a locative *he* that has been suffixed to the GN. He provides textual examples representing the same proposed divine name Milk-in-ʿAštart: *mlk b'ʿtrt* (*KTU2* 1.107.42) and *mlk ʿtrth* (*KTU2* 1.100:41; Barré, *God-List*, 186 n.473).

Mark S. Smith provides an updated catalogue of potential divine-full-name formulas that, in addition to the Northwest Semitic, Ugaritic, and Akkadian names listed by Barré, includes Eblaite, Egyptian, and Epigraphic South Arabian divine names and their respective geographic names (“The Problem of the God and His Manifestations: The Case of the Baals at Ugarit, with Implications for Yahweh of Various Locales,” in *Die Stadt im Zwölfprophetenbuch* [eds. Aaron Schart and Jutta Krispenz; BZAW 428; Berlin:

GN formula convincing as a divine full name in Hebrew or in Northwest Semitic texts, nor does it contrast that deity with another full-named deity who shares the same first name.²⁵

PSALM 99:2

Of Barré's proposed alternatives, McCarter is especially attracted to the DN-in-GN option because, he says, "[i]n Biblical Hebrew the expression DN *b*-GN ('DN-in-GN') seems to be equivalent to DN GN at 'Ajrud."²⁶ Using the DN-in-GN formula, McCarter retranslates Psalm 99:2, a verse already noted by Barré, so that the verse praises the deity Yahweh-in-Zion:

יהוה בציון גדול ורם הוא על-כל-העמים

de Gruyter, 2012], 208–18). Smith's list of *bet*-locative possibilities can be found on pp. 214–15.

25. While the modern madonnine analogy is instructive because it demonstrates the plausibility of divine multiplicity regarding an entity generally considered singular by the (Catholic) orthodoxy and modern scholars (see above), using madonnine multiplicity to argue that a particular kind of epithet represented distinct and independent deities in the ancient Near Eastern is problematic. For example, in Medica's survey, 25 percent of the madonnine epithets referred to a particular Madonna's willingness to dispense favors (e.g., *Madonna-delle-Grazie* ["of favors"]), 6 percent referred to plant life (e.g., *Madonna-dell'Olmo* ["of the elm"]), and 8 percent referred to her spiritual perfection or an event experienced by the biblical Mary (e.g., *Addolorata* [a reference to her sorrow at the crucifixion] or *Immacolata* ["the Immaculate Conception"]); Carroll, *Madonnas that Maim*, 63). Such non-geographic epithets indicate distinct entities in Hittite religious traditions (see "Hittite Multiplicity" in "Chapter 2: Comparative Insights," in Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, forthcoming), but these kinds of epithets have not been demonstrated to represent distinct entities in Akkadian and Northwest Semitic religious traditions. This same hesitation should be reserved for madonnine epithets representing distinct madonnas that appear to contain locative elements, especially when those epithets have been translated into English. Italian madonnine epithets with prepositions tend to use the genitive preposition *di* ("of"; var.: *da*, *del*, *delle*, *della*, *dello*), such as *Santa-Maria-del-Bosco*, which is often translated into English as *Santa-Maria-in-Bosco*. Because the madonnine hyper-multiplicity that Medica and Carroll have uncovered in modern Italy greatly exceeds the degree of multiplicity found in Mesopotamia and the Levant, any Italian epithet containing the locative preposition *in* should be offered only hesitantly in a discussion of Semitic divine multiplicity and should not be seriously considered for evidence that the *bet*-locative epithet serves to designate distinct deities in Northwest Semitic languages.

26. McCarter, "Aspects of the Religion," 140.

Yahweh-in-Zion is great! And he is exalted above all other gods!
(Ps 99:2, McCarter's translation)²⁷

The words יהוה בציון גדול have traditionally been interpreted as a nominative sentence, and it makes perfect sense as one: "Yahweh is great in Zion." This is precisely how NJPS, NRSV, and KJV all interpret and translate the phrase (allowing for the traditional English use of "the LORD" as a substitution for the divine name). Of course, several psalms, classical prophets, and historical passages link Yahweh with Mount Zion in Jerusalem, such as Pss 110:2; 128:5; 134:3; 135:21; and Joel 4:17–21. In Ps 99:2, Yahweh is praised as the one in-Zion, but this seems to be a reference to the same deity who is simply called Yahweh in the previous verse. Put another way, specifically in a way that rejects the idea that in-Zion is Yahweh's last name, the (unspecified) Yahweh of verse 1 is the same deity as the Yahweh in verse 2 who has been located in-Zion. Verse 1's unspecified Yahweh is the king before whom the people tremble and who sits on a cherubim throne. In verses 5, 8, and twice in 9, this deity is praised as Yahweh//our-God, and throughout the psalm all the pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and suffixes are masculine singular (the person switches between third and second person in the psalm), indicating that these different references to Yahweh all refer to a single, individual deity. Psalm 99, like numerous other psalms, locates Yahweh in Zion, but it makes no attempt to distinguish its Yahweh of interest from any other Yahweh who might be located outside of Zion.

The syntax of Ps 99:2 also suggests that "Yahweh" and "in-Zion" should be interpreted as two distinct parts of the sentence rather than one. In other passages that contain similar elements—i.e., a divine name/epithet/attribute, a *bet*-locative phrase, and an adjective (specifically גדול)—the *bet*-locative phrase cannot be interpreted as part of the divine name, even when it follows the divine name. In Mal 1:11, in the phrase גדול שמי בגוים ("Great is my name among the nations"), the *bet*-locative phrase does not follow the divine name, which does not actually appear in this clause. Instead, the phrase follows the attribute my-name (שמי), which plays the same function in the verse as a divine name. The deity twice declares in this verse that his name is great: "great (is) my-name among-the-nations." Among-the-nations is where the name is great; it is not an element within the name itself. In Ps 76:2, in the phrase גדול שמו בישראל ("in Israel, great is his name"), the *bet*-locative phrase in-Israel appears before great and his-name, completely separated from the subject of the clause. Similarly, in Esth 9:4, in the phrase גדול

27. McCarter, "Aspects of the Religion," 141.

מֵרֹדְכַי בְּבַיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ (“Mordecai was great in the king’s house”), the person Mordecai is said to be an important figure within the palace administration. He has not been renamed Mordecai-in-the-king’s-house, a man who also happens to be great. Admittedly, Mal 1:11, Ps 76:2, and Esth 9:4 are structurally different from Ps 99:2 because the subject of each clause appears in a different place. In Ps 99:2, the subject and *bet*-locative phrase precede the adjective, but the adjective precedes the subject in the other verses.

Moreover, there are several other verses in which a *bet* functions with non-locative purposes, and these too should be rejected as potential divine full names. For example, the divine name Yahweh is followed by in-Zion in two other verses where the *bet* in the sentence functions as the direct object marker for the verb: בָּחַר יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן (“Yahweh chose Zion,” Ps 132:13) and שָׁכַח יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן (“Yahweh forgot Zion,” Lam 2:6). In both verses, if the phrase in-Zion were interpreted as an element in a Yahweh deity’s full name, the sentences would be grammatically complete, but the meaning of the sentences would be incomplete: “Yahweh-in-Zion chose” and “Yahweh-in-Zion forgot.” Reading Ps 99:2 in light of its own internal contexts and compared to the syntax of similar verses makes accepting the proposed Yahweh-in-Zion as a Yahwistic full name highly problematic. Like all other proposed *bet*-locative full names found in Northwest Semitic texts, “Yahweh in Zion” does not function like a full name. Yahweh’s devotees at the Jerusalem/Zion cult knew a deity named Yahweh, but they did not know this deity by the name Yahweh-in-Zion.

SECOND SAMUEL 15:7

McCarter also suggests the possible divine name Yahweh-in-Hebron, which is invoked by Absalom in 2 Sam 15:7.²⁸ After his four-year house arrest, David’s son asks his father for permission to return to Hebron so that he may fulfill the vow that he had had made to a Yahweh deity:

אֲלֹכָה נָא וְאֶשְׁלֵם אֶת-נִדְרֵי אֲשֶׁר נִדְרַתִּי לַיהוָה בְּחֶבְרוֹן⁸ כִּי-נָדַר נָדַר עַבְדְּךָ
בְּשֹׁבְתִי בְּגִשׁוֹר בְּאֶרֶם לֵאמֹר אִם-יִשְׁכַּח יְהוָה יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעַבְדְּתִי אֶת-יְהוָה

28. Smith also spends a few pages exploring the possibility of a deity known as Yahweh-in-Hebron (Smith, “Problem of the God,” 241–3). This discussion, along with his treatment of the various Baal divine full names at Ugarit, led Peter Machinist to pose to him a significant question about the political and religious natures of the relationship between a deity and the particular places that the deity’s name is associated: “what is it about a given place that gives some of the character to the deity?” (ibid., 243 and n. 207).

Let me go fulfill the vow I made to Yahweh-in-Hebron, for your servant made a vow when I was living in Aram-geshur, as follows: “If Yahweh will bring me back to Jerusalem, I shall serve Yahweh!” (2 Sam 15:7–8, McCarter’s translation).²⁹

McCarter correctly argues that in-Hebron cannot refer to the place where the vow had been made because that took place in Aram-geshur, which is in the opposite direction from Jerusalem than Hebron. Neither can in-Hebron refer to where Absalom wants to go and fulfill his vow because, as McCarter notes, “it is most awkward as a modifier of ‘Let me go.’”³⁰ The *bet*-locative phrase in-Hebron in v. 7 is, indeed, an awkward modifier for “Let me go” because we would expect to-Hebron (ל/אל/הברון) to accompany the verb “go.” However, the verse makes perfect sense if we understand the phrase as modifying “and I will fulfill” (ואשלם): “and I will fulfill my vow . . . in Hebron.” Because McCarter incorrectly associates in-Hebron with the wrong verb, his resulting interpretation is awkward, forcing him into the only option remaining for in-Hebron, namely, one that modifies Yahweh: “Although Yahweh is worshiped in Jerusalem, Absalom has to go to Hebron to fulfill his vow, because it was to the Hebronite Yahweh (*yhwh bhbrwn*) that the vow was made.”³¹ Rather, these verses make more sense when Yahweh is understood as an unspecified, non-localized Yahweh.

Because Absalom’s vow predates the cultic reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah, there were no restrictions preventing where he could legitimately worship Yahweh. Absalom’s decision to worship Yahweh in Hebron, where David had reigned for several years before relocating his capital to Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:5), is likely due to his familial ties to that local cult. McCarter is undoubtedly correct that Absalom’s vow was cult specific in much the same way that the fines imposed in Neo-Assyrian legal transactions were paid to deities who were explicitly connected to a city or temple cult (e.g., SAA 6 87). His treatment of in-Hebron as a geographic last name for the deity Yahweh, however, is not the best or easiest solution. Absalom makes his vow to a Yahweh who is worshiped in Hebron, whom he mentions three times in these two verses as (the

29. McCarter, “Aspects of the Religion,” 141. McCarter does *not* entertain the possibility that Absalom named Yahweh-of-Jerusalem in 2 Sam 15:8, so that the verse might be translated, “If Yahweh-of-Jerusalem will bring me back, I will serve Yahweh.”

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

unspecified) Yahweh, but he did not know this deity by the name Yahweh-in-Hebron.

Even if we momentarily consider the possibility that Absalom did identify (the twice unspecified) Yahweh in 2 Sam 15:8 with the deity that he knew as Yahweh-in-Hebron in v. 7, this identification is still problematic in light of the variously named Ištar and Baal deities in roughly contemporaneous texts. In order to consider whether a local Ištar's or Baal's divine full name represented an independent and distinct deity, we must determine whether the deity's geographic last name serves as an integral aspect of that deity's identity. Ištar-of-Nineveh is considered an independent and distinct goddess from Ištar-of-Arbela and other Ištar goddesses precisely because her geographic last name was indispensable to her identity and because the two names are often contrasted within an individual text.³² Likewise, Ištar-of-Arbela's full name was used even when she was the only goddess with the first name Ištar in a text with several divine names (e.g., SAA 2 9 r. 24; SAA 10 139:9; and SAA 12 97 r. 2), and she was called Ištar-of-Arbela when she was the only goddess mentioned in a prophetic text (e.g., SAA 9 2.3 i 36'-ii 22'). Both Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela retained their last names in texts where no other deities were designated with last names. For example, in Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty (SAA 2 6:16-20 and 26-30), no less than seventeen divine names appear in the witness and adjuration lists. Of these, the final two divine names are Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela. No other divine first names are repeated in this text, and these two goddesses have the only divine names containing a geographic epithet. Reading these lists of divine names literally, Ištar-of-Nineveh was as distinct a divine entity from Ištar-of-Arbela as she was from Aššur or Marduk. Here and in hundreds of other Assyrian period treaties, contracts, letters, and even oracles and hymns, these two goddesses were contrasted with each other through the explicit use of their geographic epithets. In these and other cases, it really seems that the goddesses' geographic last name was at least as important an identifier as the name Ištar itself, if not more.

Similarly, Baal-of-Ugarit can be considered distinct from both Baal-of-Šapun and Baal-of-Aleppo because scribes treated him as though he was distinct from these other Baal deities.³³ Baal-of-Šapun and Baal-

32. For a discussion on the distinctiveness between the goddesses Ištar-of-Nineveh and Ištar-of-Arbela in Neo-Assyrian royal hymns, see Barbara N. Porter, "Ishtar of Nineveh and Her Collaborator, Ishtar of Arbela, in the Reign of Assurbanipal," *Iraq* 66 (2004): 41–44. See also Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, "Chapter 5: Ištar of the Neo-Assyrian Pantheon."

33. See Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, "Chapter 6: Geographic Epithets in the West."

of-Ugarit each received their own offerings in *KTU*² 1.109:32–34, and Baal-of-Ugarit and Baal-of-Aleppo each received their own offerings in an earlier section of the tablet (1.16). By analogy, the fact that the potential divine full name Yahweh-in-Hebron of 2 Sam 15:7 was not treated distinctly from (the unspecified) Yahweh mentioned in v. 8, or any other local Yahweh deity by Absalom, prevents us from declaring this an independent or distinct Yahweh.³⁴ Had Absalom vowed to make a sacrifice to Yahweh-in-Hebron—or even better, to Yahweh-of-Hebron (יהוה חברון)—and to Yahweh-of-Hosts, or a Yahweh-of-Jerusalem or a Yahweh-of-Zion, only then could we begin to argue for potential localized Yahweh deities using 2 Sam 15 as a proof text.

Ultimately, the fact that Absalom would identify the unspecified Yahweh with Yahweh-in-Hebron is not a problem for McCarter because he is really only arguing for the semi-independence of local Yahwehs, “almost as if they were distinct deities.”³⁵ As mentioned above, this is to say that McCarter does not really recognize the localized Yahwehs as distinct and independent deities. His search for localized Yahweh deities is more a search for once autonomous Yahwistic cults prior to the reforms and centralization in Jerusalem of Hezekiah. Although Absalom’s vow in 2 Sam 15:7–8 suggests that Hebron was, in fact, home to a local Yahwistic cult, perhaps even the same cult place where Israel’s elders made their covenant with David before Yahweh (5:3), it does not indicate that there was a independent and distinct Yahweh in Hebron or one known as Yahweh-in-Hebron.

34. Likewise, because only one text attests the existence of Yahweh-of-Samaria and the Hebrew Bible is silent about a Yahweh deity residing in the city of Samaria itself, we cannot confidently conclude that this Yahweh deity’s identity was dependent upon his geography. Yahweh-of-Teman has a stronger connection with the place Teman, as evidenced by explicit references to Teman as Yahweh’s homeland in Hab 3:3, as well as other biblical and extra-biblical evidence placing Yahweh in the general region (see Allen, *The Splintered Divine*, “Chapter 7: How Many Names for Yahweh?” for fuller discussions on Yahweh’s historical relationship with the cities or regions of Samaria and Teman; cf. Herbert Niehr, “The Rise of YHWH in Judahite and Israelite Religion: Methodological and Religio-Historical Aspects,” in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaism* [ed. Diana V. Edelman; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995], 56–57; Detlef Jerick, *Regionaler Kult und lokaler Kult: Studien zur Kult- und Religionsgeschichte Israels und Judas im 9. und 8. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010], 11–12).

35. McCarter, “Aspects of the Religion,” 142.

OTHER PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED *BET-LOCATIVE* DIVINE NAMES

Other potential divine names with the DN-in-GN formula that Barré and McCarter propose include Tannit-in-Lebanon (*KAI* 81:1), Astarte-in-Sidon (*KAI* 14:16), and Dagan-in-Ashdod (1 Sam 5:5).³⁶ The proposed divine full name Tannit-in-Lebanon should be rejected as a divine name for several reasons. Neither *KAI* 81 nor any other text contrasts a Tannit-in-Lebanon goddess with any other Tannit goddess. Also, this Punic text from Carthage only names two deities, and Tannit is the second of the two, so it is impossible to determine whether the *bet-locative* is intended for just Tannit or for both goddesses. “To the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit who *are* in Lebanon: new temples” is just as reasonable a translation of לרבנת לעשתרת ולתנת בלבנן מקדשם חדשם as is “to the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit, who *is* in Lebanon: new temples.” If the text listed a third or fourth deity, then a better sense could be derived from the text to help determine how similar or dissimilar Tannit’s treatment is compared to the others. For instance, had Tannit been the second of four goddesses and the only one associated with a *bet-locative* phrase, this unique aspect would favor the interpretation that Tannit-in-Lebanon was considered a full name by the scribe. Alternatively, if the two divine names had been reversed so that the temples were dedicated “to the ladies, to Tannit in Lebanon and to Astarte: new temples” (לרבנת לתנת בלבנן ולעשתרת מקדשם חדשם), then it would be clear that in-Lebanon only referred to Tannit and not to Astarte. With only two divine names mentioned in *KAI* 81 and with Tannit as the second name, concluding that there was a goddess known as Tannit-in-Lebanon is, at best, tentative and syntactically questionable.

There is no doubt that Astarte had a cultic presence in Sidon, which is indicated by both native Phoenician and biblical evidence. In addition to the fifth-century Sidonian text *KAI* 14:16, which mentions that Ešmunazar and his mother Amotastarte (re)built her temple in Sidon, 1 Kgs 11:5 and 33 (and 2 Kgs 23:13) note that the Sidonians worshiped Astarte and that Solomon also worshiped her as a result of marrying his many foreign wives. Astarte could also have been one of the goddesses

36. Barré, *God-Lists*, 186 n.473; McCarter, “Aspects of the Religion,” 141. In addition to the several potential Ugaritic divine full names that Smith includes in his *bet-locative/locative he* listing, he also offers two Phoenician/Punic texts with *bet-locative* phrases that I have not had the opportunity to examine for this article: Astarte-in-Lapethos (*štrt blpš*; Lapethos 6), and Baal-Ḥamān-in-Althiburus (*bʿl ḥmn bʿlthršʿ* Hr. Medeine N 1:1; Smith, “Problem of the God,” 214–15). An Astarte-in-*GW* (*štrt bgw*) also appears in his list, but this potential divine full name is based upon a reading offered in Krahmalkov’s *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary* (391), which differs from that offered in *KAI* 17:2: *štrt ʿš bgw* (Astarte, who is in *GW*; *ibid.*, 215 n.62).

whom Kirta had in mind when he addressed “Ašerah-of-Tyre and the goddess-of-Šidon” (*ʿatrt . šrm*³⁹ *w ʿilt . šdynm*, *KTU*² 1.14 iv 38-39) in his vow in the Ugaritic Kirta Epic.³⁷ Regardless, the proposed divine full name Astarte-in-Šidon that has been derived from the seventh-century Ammonite text *WSS* 876:2 (Ast<arte> in Šidon, עשתרת <רת> בצדן) and *KAI* 14:16 ([Astar]te in Šidon//Land-of-the-Sea, ימ עשתרת ת בצדן ארצ ים) is still problematic for syntactic reasons.³⁸ As with Tannit’s cultic presence in Lebanon, Astarte’s cultic presence in Šidon is not in doubt, but the idea that the goddess was known as Astarte-in-Šidon is.

The final divine name with a *bet*-locative element that McCarter proposes is Dagan-in-Ashdod. Aside from this proposed attestation in 1 Sam 5:5, (an unspecified) Dagan divine name appears nine other times in verses 1–5, three of which indicate that the deity had a cultic presence in Ashdod. Dagan’s temple (בית־דגון, vv. 2 and 5) is mentioned twice, and Dagan’s priests (כהני־דגון, v. 5) are mentioned once. As with the other proposed full names with *bet*-locative elements, nothing in this passage suggests that these first nine unspecified attestations should be contrasted with the proposed Dagan-in-Ashdod at the end of the passage. Moreover, because the passage serves as an etiology for a local priestly custom in the Dagan temple that is practiced “to this day” (עד היום הזה, v. 5), the placement of in-Ashdod as the final thought in the narrative makes more

37. Near the end of the Kirta Epic and in the Baal Cycle, Astarte is given the epithet Name-of-Baal (*ʿlirt . šm . bʿl*, *KTU*² 1.16 vi 56; *KTU*² 1.2 i 8). This specific epithet reappears several centuries later in the fifth-century Ešmunazar Inscription, Astarte/Name-of-Baal (עשתרת שם בעל, *KAI* 14:18), strengthening the possibility that Kirta’s goddess-of-Šidon is, in fact, Astarte.

38. Regarding *WSS* 876, Nahman Avigad suggested that עשת is an abbreviation for the divine name Astarte (עשתרת), which he also identified as the theophoric element in various Phoenician personal names (Nahman Avigad, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals* [Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities: The Israel Exploration Society: The Institute of Archaeology: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997], 328), whereas Kent Jackson notes that the missing רת- at the end of the goddess’s name is the result of haplography (Kent P. Jackson, *The Ammonite Language of the Iron Age* [HSM 27; Chico: Scholars, 1983], 77). Though Avigad originally identified this as a Phoenician seal because of the vocabulary and the word Šidon (Nahman Avigad, “Two Phoenician Votive Seals,” *IEJ* 16 [1966]: 248), more recently he decided that the seal is actually Ammonite (Avigad, *Corpus*, 328).

According to Larry Herr, the paleography of *WSS* 876 is a great example of late seventh-century Ammonite writing, with “perfect Ammonite forms” for the ע, ה, כ, צ, and ת (Larry G. Herr, *The Scripts of Ancient Northwest Semitic Seals* [HSM 18; Missoula: Scholars, 1978], 71). Moreover, the personal name Abinadab (עבנדב) “is also happy Ammonite.” In contrast to these opinions, M. Weippert identifies עשת as the Hurrian deity Asiti (M. Weippert, “Über den asiatischen Hintergrund der Göttin ‘Asiti,’” *Orientalia* NS 44 [1975]: 13).

sense as a reminder of the story's setting than as the final element in a divine name. First Samuel 5 indicates that this custom is unique to the Dagan cult *in* Ashdod, but it does not contrast this particular Dagan with any other known Dagan deity.

FURTHER EVIDENCE AGAINST *BET-LOCATIVE* DIVINE NAMES

In a late fifth-century Aramaic text from Elephantine in Egypt (*TAD* A4.7), the deity is identified three times as Yahweh//the-God (ll. 6, 24, and 26), one of which is immediately followed by “who (is) in the Elephantine Fortress” (יהו אלהא זי ביב בירתא, l. 6).³⁹ The fact that the clause “who (is) in the Elephantine Fortress” is not an epithet or last name for Yahweh//the-God is demonstrated by the repetition of “in the Elephantine Fortress” on three other occasions in this same text that discuss the building of the temple (ll. 7–8, 13, and 25). On the first two occasions, “which (is) in the Elephantine Fortress” (זי ביב בירתא, ll. 7–8 and 13) follows “the temple/that temple” (אגורא, l. 7; אגורא זכ, l. 13), so it must be interpreted as functioning in an ordinary locative sense, not as part of a divine epithet. On the third occasion, the locative phrase follows the name of the deity and an infinitive with a pronominal suffix: “upon the temple of Yahweh//the-God to (re)build it in the Elephantine Fortress” (על אגורא זי יהו אלהא למבניה ביב בירתא, ll. 24–25). Had the locative phrase been part of the divine name, the infinitive would not have separated it from the divine name. Throughout this text, in-the-Elephantine-Fortress locates the temple and the deity, but it never functions as an element in either the temple name or divine name. The same is true in *TAD* B2.2, B3.4, B3.5, B3.10, and B3.11, where the locative phrases locate the deity in the fortress, but they do not function as a part of the name.⁴⁰

To drive the point further that *bet-locative* phrases do not function as part of divine name formula at Elephantine, one text does include the geographic name the-Elephantine-Fortress within the divine full name of a Yahweh deity. *TAD* B3.12 begins by naming (an unspecified) Yahweh (l. 1) and later mentions Yahweh//the-God twice (ll. 10–11 and 33). In l. 2, however, an elaborate divine name formula is used: Yahweh//the-God-Who-Resides-(in)-the-Elephantine-Fortress (יהו

39. *TAD* A = Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, Volume 1: Letters* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1986).

40. *TAD* B = Bezalel Porten and Ada Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, Volume 2: Contracts* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1989).

אלהא שכנ יב ברתא). Properly, the formula would be written, DN//Title-Who-Resides-(in)-GN, which resembles a conflation of two alternative divine name formulas used in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions: DN//title-of-GN and DN-Who-Resides-(in)-GN. The divine name formula in *TAD* B3.12:2 also nearly matches the elaborate full names and epithets in Joel 4:17, 21 and Isa 8:18; however, there is one notable difference:

Verse:	Hebrew/Aramaic:	Translation:	Divine Name Formula:
Joel 4:17	יהוה אלהיכם שכנ בציון	Yahweh//your-God (Who)-Resides-in-Zion	DN//Title//Who-Resides-in-GN
Joel 4:21	יהוה שכנ בציון	Yahweh//(Who)-Resides-in-Zion	DN//Who-Resides-in-GN
Isa 8:18	יהוה צבאות השכנ בהר ציון	Yahweh-of-Hosts//the-(One-Who)-Resides-in-Mount-Zion.	DN-of-X//Who-Resides-in-GN
<i>TAD</i> B3.12:2	יהו אלהא שכנ יב ברתא	Yahweh//the-God-Who-Resides-(in)-the-Elephantine-Fortress	DN//Title-Who-Resides-(in)-GN.

Specifically, the difference between the divine name formulas in *TAD* B3.12:2 and these biblical counterparts is that B3.12:2 lacks a *bet*-locative. Notably, the text identifies this full divine name formula with the unspecified several times, but it does not contrast the potential geographic last name the-Elephantine-Fortress with another last name. Despite the potential geographic last name and because the scribe often uses the phrase in-the-Elephantine-Fortress to discuss local matters, it seems unlikely that the name Yahweh//the-God-Who-Resides-(in)-the-Elephantine-Fortress was consciously contrasted with another localized Yahweh by the scribe responsible for *TAD* B3.12:2. However, apart from the Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman discovered at Kuntillet ‘Ajrūd, *TAD* B3.12:2 most closely resembles a divine full name indicative of a localized Yahweh.

We can conclude with two potential divine full names involving a *bet*-locative element, which resemble the Dagan situation in 1 Sam 5:5. These are Chemosh-in-Qarḥō (כמש.בקרחה, *KAI* 181:3) and Chemosh-in-

Kerioth (כמש בקרית, l. 13), which both appear in the Mesha Inscription. Near the beginning of the inscription, Mesha claimed that he built a “high place” (במת, l. 3) in Qarḥō for Chemosh (ואעשה הבמת זאת לכמש) (בקרחה, l. 3) because the deity saved him from his enemies. Then, after he defeated and slew the Israelites living in Ataroth (l. 11), Mesha claimed, “I brought the cultic object(?) from there and I dragged it before Chemosh in Kerioth” (אשב משמאת אראל דודה וא[ס] חבה לפני כמש).⁴¹ If *bet*-locative phrases were elements found in divine full names elsewhere in Northwest Semitic texts, then Mesha could be thought of as contrasting these two localized Chemosh deities with (the unspecified) Chemosh, who appears in lines 5, 9, 12, 14, 18, 19, 32, and 33.⁴² Chemosh-in-Qarḥō and Chemosh-in-Kerioth could then be thought of as independent deities and distinct from the unspecified Chemosh, and each of these deities would have had his own cult site.

The preferred alternative is that Mesha venerated (the unspecified) Chemosh at both Qarḥō and Kerioth, which is, of course accepted without question. First, Mesha built Chemosh a high place in Qarḥō, and later he brought offerings to the same deity at the cult site at Kerioth, several miles from Diban, near the Israelite city of Ataroth.⁴³ Next, Mesha slew the Israelites as an “offering/spectacle for Chemosh” (רית כמש, l. 12) and brought the “cultic object” (אראל דודה, l. 12) to Chemosh at Kerioth, at which point Chemosh commanded the king to attack Nebo (l. 14).⁴⁴ Moreover, it makes more sense to interpret in-

41. The meaning of אראל is uncertain. The meaning of דודה (l. 12) is also uncertain, though possibilities along the lines of “noun denoting deity or comparable divine being,” “defeat,” and “champion” have all been offered (*DNWSI*, dwd3 mngs. 1–4). For this reason, the phrase אראל דודה has simply been translated “cultic object(?)” here.

42. John Gibson suggests that Qarḥō was possibly a city quarter within Diban rather than a distinct town (John C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1971], 1:78). J. Andrew Dearman, on the other hand, finds it more likely that Qarḥō was a suburb of Diban with a royal administrative center (J. Dearman, “Historical Reconstruction and the Mesha Inscription,” in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab* [ed. A. Dearman; SBLABS 2; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989], 173). If Qarḥō were a royal administrative center, then it makes sense that the king would build a shrine (במת, “high place,” l. 3) to Chemosh there. In another inscription, Mesha mentions a “temple of Chemosh” (בתי כמש); R. Murphy and O. Carm, “A Fragment of an Early Moabite Inscription from Diban,” *BASOR* 125 [1952]: 22), which Dearman places in Diban as a separate structure from the high place in the adjacent suburb of Qarḥō (Dearman, “Historical Reconstruction,” 229).

43. Dearman, “Historical Reconstructions,” 179.

44. Jackson notes that there is no consensus for the meaning of רית in l. 12 (Kent P. Jackson, “The Language of the Mesha Inscription,” in *Studies in the Mesha Inscription and Moab* [ed. A. Dearman; SBLABS 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989], 111–12).

Kerioth as the place in the story to which Mesha dragged (וא[ס]חבה, ll. 12-13) the offering.⁴⁵ If either of these potential Chemosh deities had lacked the *bet* so that the first name Chemosh belonged to a construct chain with Qarḥō or Kerioth, then arguing for their distinctness from (the unspecified) Chemosh would be more tempting.⁴⁶ However, the switch between (the unspecified) Chemosh and Chemosh-Kerioth and back in lines 11–14 would still be suggestive of the identification of these two deities with each other. Regardless, in each instance, the *bet*-locative makes more sense as a general locative phrase that indicates where these events happened than as a geographic element in a distinct, localized Chemosh deity's full name.

CONCLUSION: THE SYNTAX OF IT ALL

If we consider the syntax of the *bet*-locative phrases in relation to the divine name Chemosh in the Mesha Inscription (*KAI* 181:3 and 13), we find that they appear at the end of their respective verbal clauses. The divine name Chemosh precedes the *bet*-locatives because the divine name is the indirect object of the verb, not because Chemosh is being defined in relation to the place. Given the typical sentence structure Verb/Subject/Direct-Object/Indirect-Object common to Northwest Semitic languages, the structural patterns we find in *KAI* 181:3 and 13 are exactly what we should expect.⁴⁷ This is also true for in-Ṣidon in *WSS* 876:2, the various *bet*-locative phrases in *KAI* 14:15–18, the in-Ashdod in 1 Sam 5:5, and the in-Hebron in 2 Sam 15:7. The *bet*-locative plays the same syntactic role in each of these texts:

וּאֶעֱשׂה בְּמָטָה זֹאת לְכִמְשׁ בְּקֶרְחָה³

45. This is in contrast to McCarter's evaluation of 2 Sam 15:7–8, where he argues that in-Hebron makes sense neither as the place where Absalom made his vow nor as the place where he was requesting to go (McCarter, 140–41).

46. The theoretical Chemosh-Qarḥō: וּאֶעֱשׂה בְּמָטָה זֹאת לְכִמְשׁ בְּקֶרְחָה ("I built this high place for Chemosh-Qarḥō"). The theoretical Chemosh-Kerioth: אֲשַׁבְּמִשְׁמֵ אֶת־אֲרָאֵל־דְּוֹדָה וְאִסְחָבָה לְפָנַי בְּמִשְׁמֵ קֶרְיָתִי ("I brought from there the cult object?, and I dragged it before Chemosh-Kerioth," ll. 11–12).

47. Note also that the six examples of *bet* used in the spatial sense (11.2.5b) in Waltke and O'Connor's *Biblical Hebrew Syntax* have the *bet*-locative phrase at the end (Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990], 196). In general, *bet*-prepositional phrases seem to fit well at the end of their clauses after all the important parts of the clause have already been presented.

I built this high place for Chemosh in-Qarhō (KAI 181:3).

12 אשב.משמ.את.אראל.דודה.וא[ס] חבה.לפני.כמש.בקרית

I brought from there the cultic object(?), and I dragged it before Chemosh in-Kerioth (Il. 12-13).

ש נדר לעשת<רת> בצדנ

That (Abinadab) vowed to Ast<arte> in-Sidon (WSS 876:1–2).

בננ אית בת אלנמ אית [בת עשתר] ת בצדנ ארצ ימ...ואנחנ אש בננ בתמ לאלנ
צדנמ בצדנ ארצ ימ

We built the house of the gods, the [house of Astar]te in-Sidon//Land-by-the-Sea...and we (are the ones) who built houses for the gods of the Sidonians in-Sidon//Land-by-the-Sea (KAI 14:15–18).

עליכן לא־ידרכי כהני דגון וכל־הבאים בית־דגון עלי־מפתן דגון באשדוד

Therefore, none of Dagan's priests or anyone entering Dagan's temple tread upon the threshold of Dagan in-Ashdod (1 Sam 5:5).

Returning to McCarter's take on 2 Sam 15:7, we see that its sentence structure also places the *bet*-locative phrase after the indirect object Yahweh. Repayment is the action, Absalom is the actor, the vow is the direct object, Yahweh is the indirect object, and in-Hebron is the location of the action.

אלכה נא ואשלם את־נדרי אשר נדרתי ליהוה בחברון

Let me go fulfill my vow that I vowed to Yahweh in-Hebron (2 Sam 15:7).

This sentence structure is also used in 1 Sam 1:3 and 2 Kgs 23:23:

ועלה האיש ההוא...להשתחות ולזבח ליהוה צבאות בשלה

That man went up...to prostrate himself and offer sacrifices to Yahweh-of-Hosts in-Shilo (1 Sam 1:3).

נעשה הפסח הזה ליהוה בירושלם

This Passover was made to Yahweh in-Jerusalem (2 Kgs 23:23).

Furthermore, when there is no verb in the sentence, the *bet*-locative phrase still appears at the end of the thought, such as “in-Lebanon” in *KAI* 81:1 and “on-Hawk-Island” in *KAI* 64:1:

לרבת לעשתרת ולתנת בלבנן מקדשם חדשם

To the ladies, to Astarte and to Tannit, (who are/is) in-Lebanon:
new temples (*KAI* 81:1).

לאדנ לבע<>שמם באינצם נצבם וחנוטם שנמ אש נדר בעלחנא

To the/my lord, to Baa<l>-Šamêṁ on-Hawk-Island: (these are)
the stele and the *ḥnwṭ* that Baalḥana vowed . . . (*KAI* 64:1–2).

Bet-locative phrases follow divine names not because they are elements in those divine names; rather, the scribes placed the phrases at the end of their respective clause or phrase in accordance with the customary syntax of Northwest Semitic languages.

Just because a deity was worshiped in or associated with one or more temples in a city, that deity is not necessarily known by that geographic location. Just because Dagan had a cultic presence in Ashdod, Tannit had one in Lebanon, and Yahweh had one in Hebron, we should not expect that these deities had divine full names indicating those cultic presences. Attestations of DN-of-GN full names for non-Baal deities are relatively rare in Northwest Semitic texts and the Hebrew Bible, yet they do exist. The Kuntillet ‘Ajrūd inscriptions that mention the divine full names Yahweh-of-Samaria and Yahweh-of-Teman may indicate such a localized phenomenon occurred in biblical Israel, but none of the DN-in-GN names with *bet*-locative phrases that have been proposed are convincing as actual divine full names for syntactic and other methodological reasons.