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INSIGHTS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QOS AND YAHWEH DURING DAVID'S REIGN IN THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES

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Abstract: The Edomite deity Qos is largely shrouded in mystery. At best there are theophoric names that tie him to the land of biblical Edom. Most scholars continue to classify Qos as the patron deity of the Edomite Kingdom. Other than this scant information, there is little to no new data. As such theophoric names become the most viable data in exploring Qos's dominion, role, and place within the Southern Transjordan. Specifically focusing on the theophoric names as well as a comparative methodology, Qos can be accurately reconstructed as a storm deity during the tenth century BCE. Because of this, the inhabitants of the Southern Transjordan may have experienced syncretism in the form of Yahweh-Qos relations. It is for this reason that we have the anomaly in Chronicles *kushiyahu*, which reads *Qos is Yahweh*.

Edomite studies have been revived in recent years following the trend of post-modernism which focuses on less represented demographics. The relationship between Edom and Israel has received scholarly attention both in theology and historicity during various epochs in both of their narratives. New archeological evidence suggests that Edom, near Judahite territory, shared many political, cultural, economic, and religious similarities.¹ The Hebrew Bible, our main source of

1. Diana Vikander Edelman, "Edom: A Historical Geography," in *You Shall Not Abhor An Edomite For He Is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 1-12; Itzhaq Beit Arieh, "The Edomites in Cisjordan," in *You Shall Not Abhor An Edomite For He Is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 33-40; John R. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites* (Sheffield Academic Press: Sheffield, 1998), 67-71; Bradley L. Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire: A Social and Political History* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2020), 45-96.

political information on the Edomites during the Iron Age,² expresses a strained relationship with Edom.³ It also spends an extensive amount of time expanding on the relationship between the two societies, tracing them back to the sons of Isaac, Jacob and Esau (Gen 25:30).⁴ John Bartlett proposes that Judah and Edom's familial description is not historically accurate; moreover, Judah and Edom shared an economic relationship that arose during the seventh and eighth centuries.⁵ Others claim that the Jacob and Esau story preserves a more ancient, religious relationship. Understanding that both Yahweh and Qos have southern origins explains how these two deities have such strikingly similar qualities. These scholars postulate that the relationship between Israel and Edom can be seen in their respective deities: Qos and Yahweh; that is that Qos and Yahweh were the same deities at their inception⁶ and that Israel and Edom are called brothers because of their shared religious heritage.

The purpose of this study is to examine biblical evidence concerning Yahweh's southern origins, as well as epigraphic attestations regarding Qos to demonstrate that Qos and Yahweh became synonymous by the early monarchic period, being distinct before that: Yahweh was a metallurgy deity and Qos was a storm deity. The assimilation between the Edomite deity Qos and the Israelite deity Yahweh (both being the same deity) will be shown in the theophoric name of David's ark bearer, found in the book of Chronicles. These theophoric vestiges in the books of Chronicles are the only biblical pericopes that preserve the divine name Qos.

2. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 37.

3. Edom represents a major part of Israel's formative history including narratives that outline their common origin (Jacob and Esau [Gen 25:30, 32:3, 36:1, and 26:8]), later treaties between the two societies' kings (2 Kgs 3:9), and eventually being condemned and slandered in the prophetic literature (Jer 49:7, 17, 20, 22; Ezek 25:12–13; 32; 29; Joel 3:9; Obad 1). Bruce C. Cresson coined the term "damn Edom theology" to describe this later Edomite polemic; Bruce C. Cresson, "The Condemnation of Edom in Postexilic Judaism," in *The Use of the Old Testament in the New and Other Essays: Studies in Honor of William Franklin Stinespring*, ed. James M. Efrid (Durham: Duke University Press, 1972), 125–48.

4. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 84–90.

5. Bartlett is of the opinion that Edom cannot be traced back to Esau and that many of the connections associated with Edom (i.e. Esau being red and the genealogy of Edomite Kings in Gen 36) are literary creations that seek to coherently explain Edomite origins through the egocentrism of the Israelites. Bartlett and his conclusions have been treated in more recent studies regarding the compositional nature of Gen 36, which outlines the genealogy of Esau. Dustin Nash has proposed that Gen 36 was composed in an effort to distinguish Edom and Israel in the Southern Transjordan in the early monarchy, where both their material cultures suggest that there were not many differences between the two societies. Dustin Nash, "Edom, Judah, and Converse Constructions of Israeliteness in Genesis 36," *VT* 68 (2018): 111–128.

6. Martin Rose, "Yahweh in Israel—Qaus in Edom?" *JSOT* 4 (1977): 30; Nissim Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" *JSOT* 33 (2009): 391–392; Justin Kelley, "Toward a new synthesis of the god of Edom and Yahweh" *Antiguo Oriente: Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios de Historia del Antiguo Oriente* vol. 7 (2009): 266.

Though many modern scholars and commentators relegate Chronicles to nothing more than a theological exercise with no claim to historicity, I maintain that though Chronicles was redacted in the post-Babylonian exile, it preserves preexilic monarchic narratives. Therefore, Chronicles is an accurate representation of Qos within the Israelite tradition. I will argue these postexilic texts preserve the idea that Qos and Yahweh's assimilation was apparent by the early monarchical period.

As for terminology, there are various definitions of *Edomite* such as political, cultural, and territorial. For this study, I will use *Edomite* as a cultural demarcation relating to Qos.⁷ It is synonymous with *Southern Transjordan*. Bradley Crowell gives a brief description of Edomite geography and explains why Edom's borders fluctuate more than other polities.⁸ Because of this border fluctuation, it is more appropriate to speak of Edomite influence rather than Edomite political authority or territory. Perhaps Edomite culture even reached the shrine at Horvat Qitmit which, at one point, was under Judahite rule.⁹ For this reason, Qos will be equated with Edomite culture throughout this study.

THE SPLINTERED DIVINE

Before examining the evidence of Qos worship and influence in the Southern Transjordan, it is important to locate the geographic and cultural scope of this study. As Uehlinger emphasizes concerning the development of Yahwism, it would be a mistake to assume that simple evolutionary processes led to a monolithic idealized Yahwism or to identify all people as a national cult.¹⁰ Different traditions and manifestations of Yahweh appear in the Hebrew Bible. In Spencer Allen's

7. J. Andrew Dearman, "Edomite Religion. A Survey and an Examination of Some Recent Contributions," in *You Shall Not Abhor An Edomite For He is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 119–123. Dearman delineates many different stratifications to define *Edomite*. Dearman explains the problems with connecting Edom with Qos and vice versa. He states that the reasoning is circular, "Textual references are evidence for a veneration of Qos that can be called Edomite religion in all three of the senses named above, regardless of earlier forms of Edomite religion or of other cultic practices contemporary with the veneration of Qos. In fact, Qos veneration is a primary indicator of Edomite religion for scholars, even though the equation of Qos and Edom is essentially part of a circular argument (Qos=Edom; Edomite=Qos veneration)." "Edomite Religion," 120–121.

8. Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire*, 48–50.

9. Itzhaq Beit-Arieh, "The Edomite Shrine at Horvat Qitmit in the Judean Negev Preliminary Excavation Report," *Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* 18.1 (1991): 114; James Dixon Douglas and Merrill Chapin Tenny, eds., *The New International Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 291.

10. Christoph Uehlinger, "Beyond 'Image Ban and 'Aniconism,'" in *Figurations and Sensations of the Unseen in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* eds. Brigit Meyer and Terje Stordalen (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2019), 105–106.

seminal work, he refers to this as the *Splintered Divine*.¹¹ That is to say that there are multiple manifestations of Yahweh and one should think in terms of a *poly-Yahwism*.¹² Kuntillet Ajrud demonstrates this exact phenomenon: more than one manifestation of Yahweh existed within the geographical boundaries of Israel, specifically mentioning “Yhwh of Teman”.¹³ The diversity of deities means that the study of Qos and Yahwism must be restricted to the southern/Edomite area. All of this is to say that southern Yahwism (however monolithic or diverse it might be) was in contact with the Edomite culture in its southern territories.

YAHWEH

Much is known about Yahweh considering he is the main deity of worship in the Hebrew Bible. The focus of this section will be the hypothesis that Yahweh originated from Southern Transjordan. Judges 5:4–5, Habakkuk 3:3, and Isaiah 63:1 all suggest that Yahweh is of southern/Edomite origins. Judges 5:4–5 preserves an ancient vestige about the origins of Yahweh יהוה בצאתך משעיר בצעדך משדה אדום (LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, ESV) where Yahweh is said to be from the Seir, which is surrounding the Wadi al Hasa that would become synonymous with Edom.¹⁴ Habakkuk 3:3 also preserves this ancient tradition, יהוה מקדוש מהר־פארן (God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran) in which Yahweh is said to be from Teman, a region in Edomite territory.¹⁵ Robert Miller claims that the poetic variants in the Hebrew Bible (Hab 3:3 and Judg 5:4–5) are ancient in nature and reflect a Yahwistic cult originating in the Edomite region.¹⁶ Though these vestiges do not

11. Spencer Allen, *The Splintered Divine: A Study of Istar Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine multiplicity in the Ancient Near East* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014).

12. Uehlinger, “Beyond ‘Image Ban and ‘Aniconism,” 106.

13. Z. Meshel, Israel Carmi, and Dror Segal. “Proceedings of the 15th International 14C Conference,” eds. G. T. Cook, D. D. Harkness, B. F. Miller and E. M. Scott. *RADIOCARBON* vol. 37 no. 2 (1995): 205–212. Z. Meshel, *Kuntillet Ajrud (Horvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border*, (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012).

14. Crowell briefly reviews the difficulty of locating Seir. Many of the earliest attestations of Seir are found in Egyptian documents from the New Kingdom. Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire*, 97–99.

15. Burton MacDonald, *East of the Jordan: Territories and Sites of the Hebrew Scriptures*, (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2000), 193; See also Roland de Vaux, “Teman ville ou region d’edom?” *RB* vol. 76 no. 3 (1969): 379–385; Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 40.

16. Robert D. Miller, *Yahweh: Origin of a Desert God*, ed. Ismo Dunderberg et al. (Göttingen :Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2020), 104; Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 41–60. Miller summarizes as such: “Indexing the variants, there are six registers:

1. Yahweh came from Seir
2. [god] came from Teman
3. [god] came from Paran
4. [god] came from Sinai

describe any relationship between Yahweh and Qos, they conclude that Yahweh originated in the Southern Transjordan.

To establish that Yahweh and Qos were distinct before the tenth century, it is necessary to describe Yahweh's role theologically. Nissim Amzallag was the first to propose the idea that Yahweh was originally a metallurgy god focusing on Yahweh's neglected link to copper in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁷ That the copper industry reached an all-time high in the Southern Transjordan during the tenth century BCE is a given, though it was constantly exploited even beginning in the Chalcolithic period.¹⁸ Amzallag demonstrates that Yahweh is a metallurgy god by explaining that the first mention of Yahweh as a divine epithet, occurs in reference to Cain's birth (Gen 4:1). Amzallag further states that "Cain is the common name for smelters in ancient Canaanite," and that Tubal-cain is the "father of every smith" (Gen 4:22). Furthermore, Cain is the progenitor of the Kenites, who have been separately identified as Canaanite metallurgists. Lastly, Amzallag mentions that these Kenites came from Bozrah, in Edom proper.¹⁹ The following examples, then, are not surprising: עיני ואראה והנה ארבע מרכבות יצאות מבין שני ההרים וההרים הרי נחשת: ואשב ואשא (And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass, Zech 6:1); Zechariah sees chariots coming out from between mountains of bronze. In Ezekiel 40:3, Ezekiel proclaims he sees a divine being whose appearance is of bronze והנה איש מראהו כמראה נחשת (behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass). Both previous examples are implicit. Ezekiel 22:20 is more explicit in Yahweh's role as a metallurgy deity. He is depicted working with a furnace: ובדיל אל-יתוך כור לפתח-עליו אש להנתיך כן אקבץ: באפי ובהמתי והנחתי והתכתי אתכם קבצת כסף ונחשת וברזל ועופרת (As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, into the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you) as well as Isa 54:16 הן אנכי בראתי חרש נפה באש פהם (Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire) in which Yahweh is described as the creator of metalworkers. Amzallag concludes that such parallels in the text are not popular metaphors but rather they reflect long traditions as well as deep knowledge of metallurgy.²⁰ After establishing that Yahweh is a metallurgy

5. [god] came from Edom

6. [god] came from the desert

17. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 394; Miller, *Yahweh: Origin of a Desert God*, 149–193.

18. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 390; Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire*, 84–90. Esp. 84–85.

19. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 393.

20. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 394.

deity located in Edom, he concludes that Yahweh worship was prominent in Edom and that Qos is a divine epithet for Yahweh.²¹ Nevertheless, this theory presupposes that Yahweh preceded Qos and that Qos entered into the Edomite region later and that Qos adopted Yahweh's attributes, similar to Martin Rose's proposal. Importantly Amzallag establishes that Yahweh's metallurgic qualities can at least be located as far back as the Bronze Age,²² before the monarchic period.

There is, however, biblical evidence that suggests that Yahweh was a storm deity in the oldest sections of the Hebrew Bible. Amzallag does not treat this inconsistency. As such, a definitive conclusion cannot and should not be made without first attempting to reconcile Yahweh's metallurgic reconstruction with biblical evidence. Frank M. Cross critiques the difference in form between poetry and prose to demonstrate that storm elements, which are prose, have been imposed on the poetic text at a later date, a conclusion that Kelley agrees with.²³ In an earlier work, Frank M. Cross and David Freedman conclude that most Yahwistic poetry, at the latest, can be dated to the tenth century, due to orthography, morphology, and archaic forms of pronominal suffixes.²⁴ Frank M. Cross provides a substantial platform on which the antiquity of the poetry of Judg 4:4–5 and Hab 3:3 is preserved while adhering to the most compelling evidence for a metallurgic Yahweh before the tenth century.

Qos

Due to lack of evidence, there is no consensus on how old Qos veneration in Edom is. Recent excavations at the Edomite capital Bursaria and the rise in popularity of specific theophoric names suggest that Qos rose to prominence in the Edomite region during the eighth century.²⁵ Martin Rose claims that Qos is not native to the region of Edom and that Qos entered Edom around the seventh and eighth centuries.²⁶ Subsequently, according to Rose, Yahweh preceded Qos in Edom, concluding that Yahweh and Qos are not of the same origin nor the same tradition. The strength of Rose's arguments comes in the distinction between the two deities. John Bartlett responded to Rose's criticism by claiming that Qos most likely entered the region earlier than Yahweh, stating that Qos is a geographic deity

21. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 392.

22. Amzallag, "Yahweh, the Canaanite God of Metallurgy?" 403.

23. F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion in Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 100–101, 163–166; Kelley, "Toward a new synthesis," 260.

24. F. M. Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975), 27–35.

25. Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire*, 314–319.

26. Rose, "Yahweh in Israel—Qaus in Edom?" 29.

tied to the land rather than to the people.²⁷ Miller lists more than fifty theophoric Edomite King names from the ninth century, arguing that the amount of theophoric names in the ninth century is not conducive to Qos entering the land in the seventh century.²⁸ Miller points out that Qos is not just a deity worshiped in the royal house but rather a deity worshiped across the Edomite population and that the theophoric Qos element is prominent into the eleventh and tenth centuries.²⁹ Israel Knohl concludes that the rise in Qos attestations is due to a rise in literacy rather than a rise in popularity.³⁰ Knohl also provides the most compelling and concrete argument concerning the antiquity of Qos, citing lists in Rameses's II topographical lists where multiple q-s prefixes are attested in Edomite territory.³¹ Based on the occurrence of Qos within clan names, he concludes that Qos worship can be traced to at least the thirteenth century and that it does take place in the southern Edomite territory.³² Knauf, without placing a date, concludes that Qos worship was popular before his eighth century popularity.³³ There is substantial evidence to demonstrate that Qos worship and veneration existed within Edomite territory before the tenth century. Qos is a deity rooted in the land. Though they may originate in the same territory, the jurisdictions of Qos and Yahweh are different.

Again, to establish that Yahweh and Qos were distinct before the tenth century, it is necessary to define Qos's role. The evidence to define Qos and his abilities is scarce, thus, there are various interpretations regarding the nature of this deity. The most straightforward, as well as the oldest assessment, deduces that Qos was

27. John R. Bartlett, "Yahweh and Qaus: A Response to Martin Rose," *JSOT* 4 (1977): 29.

28. "Qausab, Qausakh, Qauselef, Qausbin, Qausbarak (one from Beersheba), Qausgad, Qausdakar (on an otherwise Hebrew seal), Qaushad, Qauswahab, Qaushanan, Qaustalal, Qausi, Qausyad (from Maresha), Qausdalay, Qausyada' (from Nippur), Qausyahab (from Beersheba), Qausyayap, Qausnaqam (from Arad), Qausyata, Qausyatab, Qausyata' (from Beersheba), Qauskahal, Qauslakan (from Beersheba), Qauslentsar, Qausla'az, Qausla'at, Qausmalak (from Kh. Tannur), Qausnahar (from Beersheba), Qausnaqam (from Maqqedah), Qausner, Qausnatan, Qausadar (from Beersheba), Qausaz, Qaus'ayar, Qausany, Qausqom, Qausrim, Qausraya', and Qausro'ey (from Tell el-Farah South and Tell Jemmeh)" Miller, *Origin of A Desert God*, 204–207.

29. Miller, *Origin of a Desert God*, 103–104.

30. Israel Knohl, "Jacob-el in the Land of Esau and the Roots of Biblical Religion," *VT* 67 (2017): 483; See also, D. S. Vanderhooft, "The Edomite Dialect and Script: Review of The Evidence," in *You Shall Not Abhor An Edomite For He Is Your Brother: Edom and Seir in History and Tradition*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995). See also E. A. Knauf, *Edom in Dictionary of Deities and Demons* eds., Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 273–274.

31. Knohl, "Jacob-el in the Land of Esau," 483.

32. Knohl, "Jacob-el in the Land of Esau," 483–484.

33. E. A. Knauf, "Qôs," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* eds. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 674–677.

originally a war god and that *qws* represents *bow*, first suggested by T. C. Vriezen.³⁴ Justin Kelley provides a more in-depth survey of the different views of Qos nevertheless his prevailing theory is that Qos is an Edomite manifestation of the storm deity motif.³⁵ Dearman suggests that Ba'al, Yahweh, and Qos were all representations of the older Near Eastern storm deity, Hadad. Both Kelley and Dearman cite Arabic counterparts and draw on comparative Semitics to prove their point.³⁶ Like the Israelite Yahweh and the Canaanite Baal, Qos was also a storm god (as well as a warrior deity).

Two theories have been presented on the original dominion of Qos: war or storm. T. Fahd explains how most war deities acquired storm-like attributes resulting in syncretistic storm-warrior deities.³⁷ Miller, on the other hand, undermines that Qos was a storm god yet provides no information for another conclusion.³⁸ Miller appears to be unduly skeptical of etymological arguments, nevertheless, I feel it is unproductive to discredit the scarce evidence we do have. The strongest arguments conclude that Qos does participate in the storm/warrior god motif as opposed to Yahweh, a metallurgy deity.

QOS IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

The Deuteronomistic History (the books of Joshua to 2 Kings containing themes specifically from Deuteronomy), its redaction taking place near the sixth century BCE,³⁹ is very amicable towards Edom despite its rejection of foreign cults. The Deuteronomistic History considers all types of foreign deity worship illegal and anathema to the idealized, state-sponsored Yahwistic cult. Specific pericopes such as 1 Sam 2:2 and 2 Sam 7:22 highlight the ideological struggle between establishing Yahweh as the supreme god while also recognizing the reality of other deities. As is well known, the Deuteronomistic History openly condemns recognition of any foreign deity and devotes time and space to slander and degrade them. In other words, the redactor of Samuel-Kings believes that foreign deities are authentic and genuine threats to Yahweh. Ideologically, it demeans the existence of other gods in Israelite culture (i.e. Asherah). Yet, Edom is described as Israel's brother,

34. T. C. Vriezen, "The Edomitic Deity Qaus," *OtSt* 14 (1965): 335–343.

35. Kelley, "Toward a new synthesis," 260.

36. Dearman, "Edomite Religion," 126; Kelley, "Toward a new synthesis," 260.

37. "After the manner of Dhu 'l-Sharā which eclipsed him, Kaws acquired other prerogatives, those of most of the gods of the desert regions, such as the protection of the vegetation by ensuring rain, a prerogative symbolised by the rainbow." T. Fahd, "Ka ws, Ku zah," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, eds. E. Van Donzel, B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat, 11 vols. (Leiden, Brill: 1994) 6:802–804.

38. Miller, *Origin of a Desert God*, 105.

39. F. M. Cross *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion in Israel*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 287.

alluding to the Jacob-Esau narrative.⁴⁰ In fact, Deuteronomy contains a description that contradicts a narrative in Numbers regarding passage through Edomite territory. Numbers 20:14–21 describes that when Moses asked for permission to pass through Edom's land, the Edomite king rejected Moses's proposal. In Deuteronomy 2:1–8, the same story is presented but Edom does grant the Israelites permission to pass through their land.⁴¹ As mentioned above, 2 Kings 3 preserves a narrative in which the King of Edom goes with the Kings of Judah and Israel to broker a treaty. There is much discussion about the dating of these narratives, but it suffices to say that the Deuteronomistic History maintains an exclusive affinity for Edom.⁴² With that said, it is unclear why Qos is never mentioned in the Deuteronomistic History if it is more accepting of Edom.⁴³

The other history of Israelite sovereignty, the book of Chronicles, also lacks explicit references to Qos. Yet the Chronicler's history gives us greater insight into the connection between Qos and Yahweh during the tenth century in the form of theophoric names: Ezra 2:53 *bar-kos* (בַּר־קֹס), Neh 7:55 *barkos* (בַּר־קֹס) and possibly Chr 15:17 *kushiyahu* (קוּשִׁיָּהוּ). Chronicles has long been considered a non-historical, theologically based text with no contribution to factual history.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the book of Chronicles has been neglected as an accurate source of preexilic Israel. Kalimi argues that the Chronicler saw himself, first and foremost, as a historian (according to our modern-day standards).⁴⁵ If such inferences can be assumed, there is no reason to exclude the books of Chronicles as history when it follows the same formulaic pattern as the Deuteronomistic History.⁴⁶ Building off of Kalimi's argument, Rainey states that the Chronicler used the same sources as the Deuteronomistic Historian.⁴⁷ Kalimi rejects the common characterization

40. Deuteronomy 23:7 "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother." KJV

41. See Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 90–92 for a larger discussion; Crowell points out how Deuteronomy uses the kingship term *sons of Esau* rather than the political designation Edomites in Numbers. Crowell, *Edom at the Edge of Empire*, 183–185.

42. According to Bartlett, during the composition of the DH, Judah and Edom had a near brother-like relationship in their politics. For Bartlett, it is this brotherly atmosphere that leads redactors to describe the two societies as brothers; not a legitimate claim of lineage. Edom and the Edomites, 84–86.

43. Perhaps it is an attempt to validate the inclusion of Obed-edom (1 Sam 6:10–11; 1 Chr 13:13–14), a foreigner who cares for the ark of the covenant. Sara Japhet states that in the Chronicle's version, Obed-edom is described as a loyal Levite. Sara Japhet, *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary*, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 281.

44. Isaac Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a Historian?" in *The Chronicler as Historian* eds. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 76.

45. Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a Historian?" 82.

46. Anson F. Rainey, "The Chronicler and His Sources—Historical and Geographical," in *The Chronicler as Historian* eds. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 32–38.

47. Rainey, "The Chronicler and His Sources," 38–43.

of *midrash* (secondary literature commenting on the Hebrew Bible, that is to say not valuable for history), as the theological implications imposed on the text, and concludes that such a term derives from a rejection of priestly, redactional activities.⁴⁸ Taken at face value, the Chronicler should be treated as a serious historian interpreting theology rather than a theologian interpreting history.⁴⁹ Narratives that are omitted in the Deuteronomistic History and preserved in Chronicles reflect traditions that are original to the historical account.⁵⁰ That is to say that the references to Qos in the books of Chronicles should be considered authentic.

The deity Qos is scarcely documented, if not completely absent, in the Hebrew Bible and is restricted to postexilic texts,⁵¹ though the fact that foreign theophoric names do not appear in Judahite lineage is notable and will be treated later. The few instances the deity Qos is mentioned consist of theophoric names: Ezra 2:53 *bar-kos* (בַּרְקוֹס), Neh 7:55 *barkos* (בַּרְקוֹס) and possibly Chr 15:17 *kushiyahu* (קוֹשֵׁיָהוּ).⁵² The references in Ezra and Nehemiah consist of the Aramaic term for *son* plus the theophoric name Qos, resulting in the meaning *son of Qos*. Both are found in genealogical lists recording the exiles who returned from Babylon to Jerusalem. The latter example in Chronicles takes place during David's reign of the United Monarchy while the ark of the covenant is being carried. One of the ark bearers' names is *Kushiyahu* (קוֹשֵׁיָהוּ), whose name has been postulated to mean *Qos is Yahweh*. Vriezen suggests that this person may have converted to Yahwism from the Qos cult and that his name represents a confession of faith similar to *eli-jah*.⁵³ This assumes that because he has a theophoric name, he grew up worshipping Qos. However, names suggest a regional affinity more than individual practice. Vriezen rejects this idea stating that the name would contain two proper names which are extremely unlikely. Daniel Block and John Bartlett, assuming that Vriezen's postulation is correct, suggest that it is a syncretistic element in Qos-Yahweh worship. That is to say that the name *Kushiyahu* represents the merging of two deities.⁵⁴

Whether or not *kos* (קוֹס) accurately describes a Qos theophoric element becomes the essence of the arguments.⁵⁵ The reason for skepticism rests on the

48. Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a Historian?" 75.

49. Kalimi, "Was the Chronicler a Historian?" 82–89.

50. Rainey, "The Chronicler and His Sources," 43.

51. Knauf believes that this omission of Qos is because Qos was a divine epithet rather than a personal name. Knauf, "Qôs," 677; Dearman, "Edomite Religion," 126.

52. Vriezen, "The Edomitic Deity Qaus," 332.

53. Vriezen, "The Edomitic Deity Qaus," 352.

54. Daniel Block, *The Gods of the Nations* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), 42; Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 200–201.

55. Hans Bauer, "Die hebräischen Eigennamen als sprachliche Erkenntnisquelle," *ZAW* 48 (1930): 74; Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, "קוֹשֵׁיָהוּ," *HALOT* 2:1091; Both Bauer and Koehler reject the Qos theophoric element, concluding that the קוֹשֵׁיָהוּ element is of Persian

difference in the spelling of the theophoric element between Ezra 2:53 *bar-kos* (בַּרְקוֹס), Neh 7:55 *barkos* (בַּרְקוֹס) and Chr 15:17 *kushiyahu* (קוּשִׁיָּהוּ). Vriezen does not explain why he assumes *kush* (קוּשׁ) is synonymous with *kos* (קוֹס). Bartlett, more speculative, only suggests that a *Qos* name is a possibility, considering the difference in spelling.⁵⁶ A simple dialectic shift may have occurred, nevertheless, it is necessary to locate this dialectic shift to demonstrate that *kushiyahu* preserves a *Qos* theophoric name. Two of the *Qos* elements in the theophoric names are spelled *kof-vav-samech* (קוֹס) while the dissenter is spelled *kof-vav-shin* (קוּשׁ). It is commonly known that the change in sibilants from a *samech* to *shin* happened often in the biblical text, especially in foreign names.⁵⁷ Basic examples of sibilant shifts include *sin* to *samech* (סַרְיָ and סַרְיָ [Amos 6:10]) and interchanges between *sin* and *shin* (שַׁקָּ and עַשְׁקָ [Gen. 26:20]).⁵⁸ Robert Cargill specifically notes, “We should also make particular note of a case of double *shin-samekh* transposition, where *סַחִישׁ*, ‘grain that grows from itself,’ mentioned in 2 Kgs. 19:29, reverses both of its sibilants as *שַׁחִישׁ* in Isa. 37:30.” He continues to mention how foreign names such as Artaxerxes, specifically in Ezra, have two different spellings.⁵⁹ As *Qos* was a foreign name there is substantial evidence that the change from *samech* to *shin* is not without precedent.⁶⁰ Both *kush* (קוּשׁ) and *kos* (קוֹס) refer to *Qos*. In which case, *Kushiyahu* was meant to render *Qos is Yahweh*. Thus, Bartlett is proven correct in his hypothesis that *Kushiyahu* conceals a *Qos* theophoric name.⁶¹ The connection becomes more polemic against normative Yahwism considering that *Kushiyahu* was David’s ark bearer. David, a clear Yahweh worshiper, has no quarrel nor hesitation allowing a potential non-loyal Levite to bear the seat of his god. Whatever may be said about the polemic nature, *Qos* and Yahweh are not opponents by Davidic times, having been distinct earlier in their history. Much as the connection between ‘El and Yahweh is both natural and expected in early Israelite history,⁶² *Qos* and Yahweh may have merged earlier in Israelite history during the monarchical period.

origin meaning “to grant”. Knauf states very blatantly that “*Kushiyahu*” cannot be connected to *Qos*. Knauf, “*Qôs*,” 674.

56. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 201.

57. Robert R. Cargill, *Melchizedek King of Sodom: How Scribes Invented the Biblical Priest-King* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 23.

58. Cargill, *Melchizedek King of Sodom*, 23.

59. Cargill, *Melchizedek King of Sodom*, 23.

60. “סַכְלוֹת (‘folly’) versus שַׁכְלוֹת (Qoh. 1:17); סַכַּךְ (‘to cover’) versus שַׁכַּךְ (Exod. 33:22) (‘to turn aside, depart’) versus שׁוּר (Hos. 9:12); סַעַר (‘to storm’) versus שַׁעַר (Job 27:21; Dan. 11:40; Ps. 50:3); and several other examples.” Cargill, *Melchizedek King of Sodom*, 23.

61. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 201.

62. Bartlett, *Edom and the Edomites*, 201.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the primary flaws within the discussion of Yahweh and Qos's relationship is the lack of Qos theophoric names in the early chapters of the Hebrew Bible. If a connection between Qos and Yahweh exists before the monarchical period, as Kelley and Amzallag suggest, there should be evidence of both cults' assimilation. If there was a strong religious similarity between Qos and Yahweh, earlier than the monarchical period, Qos theophoric names should be attested in chronologically early biblical texts. For example, Horvat Uza, dated to the sixth century, should have evidence of assimilation between Qos and Yahweh prior to the sixth century.⁶³

As is well documented in the Hebrew Bible, an 'El cult and Yahweh cult eventually become synonymous.⁶⁴ As shown by Israel Knohl, both deities (Yahweh and Qos) existed simultaneously in the Edomite region and claim that 'El was the catalyst for their merging.⁶⁵ Whether or not 'El is the transmission process, Yahweh and Qos were distinct for most of their history until the monarchical period. Whatever the connection between Yahweh and Qos, it is logical to conclude that their assimilation is later than the connection between 'El and Yahweh.

The earliest reconstructions of Yahweh support metallurgic dominion. Qos can be reconstructed as a storm deity even before his rise in popularity in the eighth century BCE. Chronicles, which should be considered history that preserves ancient narratives rather than just a theological exercise with no foundation in historiography, preserves Qos theophoric names within the Israelite tradition that are found in the tenth century. The merging of Qos and Yahweh, as shown by the theophoric name *Kushiyahu*, preserved in the books of Chronicles, must have occurred during the Davidic monarchy if one accepts this etymological interpretation of *Kushiyahu*.

63. Nadav Na'aman, "A New Look at the Epigraphic Finds from Horvat 'Uza," *TA* 39.2 (2012): 97–98; Itzhaq Beit-Arieh and Bruce Cresson, "An Edomite Ostrakon from Horvat 'Uza," *TA*, 12.1 (1985): 96–101.

64. Tzemah L. Yoreh, *The First Book of God*, BZAW 402 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 259–260.

65. Knohl, "Jacob-el," 482.