

***Šēm* and Transcendence: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Biblical Theonyms, from Contextual Monolatry to Trinitarian Revelation**

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Abstract: *This transdisciplinary investigation analyzes the ontological density and evolutionary dynamics of theonymy within the Old Testament, conceptualizing the divine name (šēm) not as an arbitrary linguistic convention, but as the supreme theophanic locus for the disclosure of Transcendence. By articulating Semitic philology, the diachronic deconstruction inherent to the historical-critical method, and a rigorous intertextual hermeneutique, this study confronts the Masoretic text with the epigraphic sources discovered at Ugarit. It retraces the textual and historical transition from an inclusive monolatry, deeply anchored in the Ancient Near Eastern milieu, toward the prophetic affirmation of an absolute and exclusive monotheism forged during the systemic crisis of the Babylonian Exile. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates the profound theological continuity uniting both Testaments, wherein the dogmatic reformatio of the Christian Trinitarian synthesis and the Christological "I am" (egō eimi) formulae fulfill and expand the Hebrew nominal revelation of Yahweh and Elohim rather than causing a metaphysical rupture. Beyond its contribution to classical academic erudition, this work possesses a vital contemporary epistemological and ethical significance. By extracting the existential substance of the divine names, it formulates a rigorous theological and sociological critique of identity-driven deviations, reductionist ideologies, and fanatical dogmatism. The introduction of Trinitarian monotheism as a relational archetype of unity in diversity offers an innovative theoretical pathway for intra- and inter-religious dialogue. Ultimately, this framework replaces coercive doctrinal uniformity with a profound spiritual invitation to honor absolute transcendence while acknowledging the structural finitude of human reason when standing before the divinely revealed Mystery.*

Keywords: Theonyms; Monotheism; Exegesis; Philology; Transcendence

I. Introduction

The systematic exploration of theonymy within the Old Testament constitutes one of the most intellectually fertile and hermeneutically intricate intersections of modern biblical exegesis and the comparative history of Ancient Near Eastern religions. Far from operating as mere arbitrary linguistic tokens or superficial conventional labels, the divine titles preserved in the scriptural architecture carry a profound ontological density. Within the framework of ancient Semitic thought, the name (šēm) is not an exterior nominal attachment but is instead perceived as intrinsically bound to the very essence, authority, and active presence of the deity (Siby & Kaparang, 2022). Moving beyond a simplistic static inventory, the present research offers an exhaustive, transdisciplinary analysis of the dynamic structural shifts underlying Hebrew nominal revelation. It accomplishes this objective by systematically articulating the rigorous philological dissection of Northwest Semitic languages alongside the diachronic

deconstruction provided by the historical-critical method. To adequately grasp the theological identity of the God of Israel, one must reconstruct His textual and historical emergence over against the highly complex, contiguous polytheistic pantheons of the Syro-Palestinian littoral. This relational emergence is primarily expressed through the highly contrasted semantic fields of Elohim—the supreme embodiment of cosmic, universal transcendence—and Yahweh, the sacred core of the unutterable Tetragrammaton, which communicates an un-enclosable, dynamically active historical immanence (Römer, 2014). Tracing this historical trajectory through a careful diachronic lens brings into sharp relief a profound evolutionary transformation. It charts the tortuous pathway leading from an initial macro-cultural environment of inclusive monolatry or henotheism to the radical, uncompromising prophetic declaration of an absolute, exclusive monotheism. This structural transition was dramatically accelerated and catalyzed by the existential and collective trauma of the Babylonian Exile (Albertz, 1994). Extending beyond the strict literary and geographical boundaries of the ancient Hebrew socio-religious landscape, this investigation demonstrates the structural continuity and deep theological intensification that characterize the transition from the Old to the New Testament. The dogmatic reformatio subsequently introduced by the solemn Christological "I am" (egō eimi) declarations within the Johannine corpus, alongside the subsequent metaphysical conceptualization of the Trinitarian synthesis, must not be misconstrued as a rupture or a radical departure from the ancestral monotheistic matrix. Rather, these early Christian developments represent the ultimate historical fulfillment and the explicit theological unpacking of the foundational nominal revelation initiated at the Sinaitic mountain (Bauckham, 2008). To execute this demonstration, the methodology employed deliberately rejects traditional, siloed disciplinary boundaries. Instead, it fosters a systemic interaction between a robust intertextual hermeneutic and a comparative analysis of the Masoretic textual transmission alongside exogamous epigraphic data excavated from the ancient archives of Ugarit, as verified in the foundational text of the file "THE GOD WHO REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH HIS NAME.docx" (Smith, 2001). The broader significance of such a methodological undertaking far exceeds the boundaries of isolated antiquarian curiosity or detached academic erudition. By critically diagnosing the semantic plasticity and thematic depth of these ancient names, this study extracts their rich existential substance to construct a rigorous sociological and theological critique of contemporary dogmatic deviations, ethno-religious instrumentalization, and fanatical ideological reductionism. By presenting Trinitarian monotheism as a relational archetype of unity-in-diversity, this research offers a highly innovative theoretical framework for inter-religious and cross-cultural communication (Panikkar, 1978). It seeks to replace the violent impulses of coercive doctrinal uniformitarianism with an ethical and spiritual recognition of human epistemological finitude when standing before the unsearchable mystery of the Transcendent.

II. Research Methods

2.1 The Masoretic textual substratum and the Septuagint version

The primary and fundamental material subjected to this transdisciplinary investigation is rooted at the very core of the consonant and vocalized Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. This canonical corpus serves as both a quantitative and qualitative matrix for examining the occurrences and textual environments of the major divine designations. This raw scriptural dataset notably includes approximately 6,800 occurrences of the sacred Tetragrammaton Yahweh, 2,570 mentions of the generic name Elohim, as well as the specific syntactic and linguistic structures inherent to Eloah and Adonai.

To this foundational Hebrew source, the Greek translation of the Septuagint (LXX) is integrated as an indispensable comparative benchmark. Such a documentary duality proves highly fruitful for tracing theological and semantic variations during critical phases of textual transmission. It highlights, in particular, the hermeneutical and conceptual tension observed between the dynamic, voluntaristic formulation of the Hebrew theophany in Exodus 3:14 ('ehyeh 'āšer 'ehyeh) and its ontological reinterpretation by the Alexandrian translators (egō eimi ho Ōn).

a. The circum-biblical epigraphic and literary evidence

In order to contextualize the crystallization and evolution of these theonyms within the shifting social, political, and religious fabric of the Ancient Near East, this research expands its empirical horizon by incorporating exogenous data from archaeological and epigraphic discoveries in the Syro-Palestinian region. This circum-biblical material features prominently the mythological, poetic, and ritual literature of Ugarit, brought to light by the textual remains of Ras Shamra. These archives offer the raw sociological background required to comprehend the archetypal figure of El and his seventy sons. These external primary documents supply a static comparative framework to assess whether the original semantic values of the biblical titles mark a radical rupture or a structural continuity with their broader Semitic environment.

b. The lexicographical and critical documentary apparatus

Capturing subtle philological nuances and elucidating the diachronic evolution of these concepts relies upon an extensive collection of secondary literary sources and specialized critical apparatuses. This reference infrastructure comprises standard dictionaries of biblical Hebrew and Aramaic, comprehensive encyclopedias of doctrinal theology, and a specialized corpus of historical monographs stemming from both classical and contemporary biblical research.

These scholarly writings—among which the major works of von Rad (1957) and Jacob (1955) stand as indispensable authoritative guideposts—serve as analytical instruments to dissect verbal roots and decode the complex syntax of compound theonyms such as Yahweh Tsevaot, Yahweh Yireh, or El Shaddai. As preserved in the reference document "THE GOD WHO REVEALS HIMSELF THROUGH HIS NAME.docx", these combined toolsets establish the formal boundaries of our text-critical and historical analysis.

2.3 Methods

a. Semantic, philological, and descriptive linguistic analysis

The descriptive investigation of the titles of the Most High begins with a rigorous and systematic linguistic examination located at the intersection of Hebrew philology and structural semantics. This methodology deliberately departs from any reductive framework that treats theonyms as arbitrary lexical labels or superficial conventional tags. Instead, it approaches them as intrinsic vectors of essence, authority, and presence within the framework of ancient Semitic thought—a cultural milieu where the name fundamentally dictates the ontology and historical destiny of an entity.

The practical procedure involves a minute morphological deconstruction of each designation to determine its etymological origin and semantic evolution. By scrutinizing specialized grammatical and syntactic features—including the use of verbal stems in the qal imperfective or the causative hiphil, alongside the deployment of the plural of majesty or intensity—this method tracks with precision the shift of profane linguistic signs into highly dense dogmatic and theological expressions within the sacred text.

b. Targeted and diachronic historical-critical approach

In accordance with the criteria of modern textual criticism, a targeted diachronic historical-critical method is deployed as a primary analytical instrument of contemporary biblical exegesis to reconstruct scriptural passages within their original historical, cultural, and literary environments of emergence. Within this research, and consciously avoiding a purely mechanical or exhaustive reconstruction of the entire global redactional history of the canon, this framework is selectively applied to strategic pericopes that contain pivotal theonymic revelations. The objective is to bring to light the specific socio-religious dynamics within which the various designations of God germinated, evolved, and were confessed by successive Israelite traditions.

Consequently, this historical hermeneutic enables the contextualization of these names within precise corporate memories and shifting political landscapes. It contrasts the bold anthropomorphic proximity of archaic traditions with the broad universalism of the post-exilic priestly strata, which arose in response to the deep cultural shock of the Babylonian deportation. Ultimately, this approach proves indispensable for decoding how the political mutations of Israelite history reshaped its formal formulation of the divinity, tracing the religious trajectory that led from an inclusive monolatry to the prophetic affirmation of a rigorous, exclusive monotheism.

c. Theological and intertextual hermeneutical approach

Finally, this study implements a method of conceptual integration focused primarily on the rich intertextual architecture of the Old Testament. This theological approach aims to extract the comprehensive doctrinal, spiritual, and ethical substance of the divine titles by examining how the literary sedimentation of these designations charts a progressive, pedagogical revelation of the divine nature. Operating on the principle of textual continuity, this systemic hermeneutic explores how each name functions as a vital mediation of divine self-disclosure, manifesting the purposeful action of the Creator within human history. By raising foundational existential questions—Who is He? How does He reveal Himself? How can humanity worship Him worthily, and what does He expect from His covenant people?—this integrated approach articulates apparent theological tensions within the text. Notably, it bridges the gaps between immanent omnipresence (Yahweh), majestic transcendence (Elohim or El Elyon), and intimate paternal proximity (Ab). It supplies a unified reading grid for interpreting the radical ritual and ethical demands of the Covenant, while structuring the essential conceptual foundations required for a rigorous theological understanding of the New Testament.

III. Result and Discussion

3.1 Biblical and linguistic foundations of divine names

Within the conceptual horizon of ancient Semitic thought, the name (*šēm*) far exceeds the mundane function of a mere linguistic label or an arbitrary conventional identifier. Instead, it operates as a faithful mirror of the intrinsic identity, core nature, and ultimate destiny of its bearer. Contemporary research consistently substantiates this perspective: Siby and Kaparang (2022) demonstrate that the name directly indicates the ontological structure of the person, while Michaeli (1950) discerns in it the formal expression of the very essence of being.

Extending this descriptive logic, Jacob (1955) asserts that an individual devoid of a name is effectively stripped of spiritual significance and social existence, as the name functions as the receptacle of a *dynamis*—an active, operational force that exerts a real efficacy upon the one who bears it.

This anthropological equivalence explains why, within the text of the Old Testament, birth-names are intimately articulated around the existential experiences of the parents or the trajectory of their relationship with the Sacred, as typified by the figures of Samuel and Ishmael. Furthermore, it elucidates the profound theophanic scope of nominal mutations within the patriarchal narratives. The transitions from Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17:5) and from Jacob to Israel (Genesis 32:28) do not stem from administrative contingency, but formalize a structural transfiguration of being and the solemn inauguration of a new covenant status. This dynamic exhibits a dual institutional dimension:

- An act of anthropological authority: The prerogative to assign a name consecrates a structural relationship of subordination and governance. In the creation narrative of Genesis 2, God's delegation of the task of naming the living creatures to humanity validates the conferral of a stewardship mandate over the cosmos.
- A relational election: Conversely, the direct imposition of a name by divine authority becomes the vertical seal of a sovereign choice and a perpetual Covenant (Genesis 17).

Transposed to the divine sphere, this conception infuses theonyms with an overarching theological density. Each title becomes a specific modality of self-revelation and salvific action, completely excluding honorary nominalism in order to manifest the active Presence, absolute sovereignty, and ethical fidelity of the Creator. The scriptural tradition thus sacralizes the Divine Name, viewing it as the definitive expression of absolute transcendence and the ultimate engine of Israel's history. As de Pury (1957) notes, the historical destiny of Israel unfolds within the arena of the honor of God's Name. Prophetic judgment punishes the profanation of the Name among the nations, whereas the act of salvation is interpreted as God's necessity to preserve the reputation of His own covenantal reliability. Confrontistic of this power—perceived by the Israelites as simultaneously terrifying and salvific—philological knowledge and liturgical invocation of the Name were indispensable to enter into communion with the Deity, while strictly respecting the primary prohibition of the Decalogue (Exodus 20:7) against its vain or magical utterance.

a. The principal names of God in the Old Testament Yahweh

Although prominent currents of text criticism associate the centralized and official consolidation of its usage with late deuteronomistic doctrinal reforms, such as those during the reign of King Josiah, the sacred Tetragrammaton *Yahweh* stands as the proper name *par excellence* of the God of Israel. Its 6,800 occurrences within the Masoretic text bear witness, as von Rad (1957) emphasizes, to its absolute centrality within the Hebrew confessional architecture.

Regarding the history of traditions, Day (2000) observes a striking documentary divergence: while the Yahwist source (J) postulates the invocation of the Name from the very dawn of

humanity, the Elohist (E) and Priestly (P) traditions explicitly tie its inaugural manifestation to the vocation of Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:13–15). In questioning the divinity regarding His identity in verse 13, Moses does not obey an abstract theoretical curiosity; rather, he seeks a definitive linguistic discriminant capable of isolating this God within the crowded polytheistic landscape of Egypt and the broader Ancient Near East. A proper name serves primarily, as Römer (2017) indicates, to distinguish specific individualities.

In guise of an initial response (Exodus 3:14), the divinity does not provide a technical nomenclature, but instead enunciates a doctrinal definition of His being. This exhibits what de

Pury (1957) identifies as a deliberate refusal of nominal confinement, designed to preserve absolute divine sovereignty. This strategy of theophanic secrecy echoes other crucial structural junctures in the Old Testament canon (Genesis 32:30; Judges 13:18). The famous formula of verse 14 presents a major textual divergence between the native Hebrew tradition and its

subsequent Hellenistic reception within the Septuagint

Analytical dimension	Hebrew version (אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה – אֵלֹהִים)	Greek version (egō eimi ho Ōn)
Grammatical structure	Verb conjugated in the <i>qal</i> imperfective (1st pers. sing.) + relative pronoun + verb in the <i>qal</i> imperfective (1st pers. sing.).	Emphatic personal pronoun + verb in the present indicative (1st pers. sing.) + definite article + active present participle.
Possible translations	"I will be who I will be" / "I am who I am" (the Hebrew imperfective capturing the simultaneity of the present and the projection of the future).	"I am the Being" / "I am He who exists" / "I am the One who is" (the present participle emphasizing eternal permanence).
Literary exegesis	A highly complex <i>idem per idem</i> idiomatic turn, suggesting a profound reluctance to be circumscribed. It recalls the use of the same verbal root in Exodus 3:12 ("I will be with you"), affirming Himself as an active, historical presence.	Marked use of the pronoun <i>egō</i> , which is structurally rare in standard Hebrew. This prefigures the absolute formulas of theophanic revelation, mirroring the later Johannine structures of the New Testament.

Despite these distinct philological trajectories, both textual variants converge, according to Cole (1973), to affirm an existence that is by no means a detached, abstract philosophical essence, but rather a dynamic, unclassifiable presence.

In verse 15, the second divine response shifts into the explicit disclosure of the proper name: *Yahweh*, which is immediately bound to the historical memory of the patriarchs ("the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"). This literary insertion roots the Name in the continuity of prior historical pacts and validates the thesis of Maillot (1987), according to which the God of Sinai is not a deity emerging from a historical vacuum, but the trustworthy guarantor of ancestral promises.

On the plane of scientific etymology, academic hypotheses diverge significantly:

- The vast majority of philologists link the Tetragrammaton to the trilateral root *H-Y-H* (היה), evoking absolute existence, permanence, and the radical fidelity of God.
- Jacob (1955) evokes the hypothesis of a primitive cultic interjection, *Yah*, associated with the third-person pronoun, although the inverse trajectory is highly probable, with *Yah* frequently analyzing as a poetic apocope of *Yahweh*.

- Von Rad (1957) questions whether its original vocalization belonged to the simple active form (*qal*) or the causative (*hiphil*), linking the term to the ancient Aramaic root *H-W-H* (הוה), meaning "to be" or "to become," whose participle expresses durativity. Meanwhile, Reymond (2002) and Gaubert (1965) interpret it as the transcription of the third-person expression "He is," operating as an assertive marker of objective existence over against the néantized idols of the Ancient Near East.

- Linguistic parallels with the Arabic root *H-W-Y* suggest semantic values associated with blowing, the creative wind, or cosmic mastery over natural elements (Dictionnaire de la Bible, 1996). Conversely, Saout (1977) defends the causative vocalization (*hiphil*) "He causes to exist," thereby establishing the divinity as the primary source of all ontology.

Within the theological matrices of the Yahwist tradition, this name fully assumes divine anthropomorphism and anthropopathism, depicting a God who is intimately close, capable of deep emotion, and vulnerable to covenant relationships. This theological plasticity unfolds through an expansive network of major compound titles:

- *Yahweh Elobim*: A juxtaposed literary structure that operates a complete doctrinal fusion between the God of national election (*Yahweh*) and the God of cosmic creation (*Elobim*), effectively unifying the historical narrative of Israel with the overarching destiny of the nations.

- *Yahweh Yireh*: Forged upon the verbal root *R-A-H* (ראה), meaning "to see" or "to provide," this title arises directly from the sacrificial experience upon Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:14). The Hebrew textual structure articulates a dual modality: in the *qal* imperfective (*Yahweh yir'eh*), "Yahweh will provide," demonstrating active providence; and in the *niphal* imperfective (*Yahweh yerā'eh*), "on the mountain of Yahweh, He will be seen" (or "He will appear"), thereby anchoring the name in the theology of glorious manifestation.

- *Yahweh Tsevaot*: Occurring 279 times according to Jacob (1955), this formula associates the Tetragrammaton with the plural noun *šəbā'ōt* (שְׁבָאוֹת), designating hosts, armies, or celestial bodies. While von Rad (1957) connects it with stellar and cosmic cohorts, the name historically consecrates the divine warrior marching at the vanguard of Israel's liberation (Exodus 14:14). This specific titlature presents a notable grammatical anomaly: since the proper noun *Yahweh* cannot structurally exist in the construct state, its tight association with *Tsevaot* is analyzed by the historical-critical school either as an apposition of qualification or as an abstract intensive plural acting as a standalone, autonomous proper name.

El (– אל)

The theonym *El* constitutes one of the most archaic designative strata of the divine within the entire Semitic cultural area. As Jacob (1955) maintains, it represents the generic appellation for "god" shared by virtually all peoples of Semitic languages, with the notable exception of the

Ethiopian linguistic traditions. This radical is deployed across a vast network of regional morphological variants, such as *Ilu* in Akkadian, *Alaha* in Aramaic, *Ilāh* in pre-Islamic Arabic, *Allah* within Islam, or the plural forms *Elim* and *Ilani*. Within the economy of the Hebrew Bible, *El* operates according to a dual modality: it emerges either autonomously as a divine proper name, or as the foundational stem of compound theonyms. Its usage proves particularly dense within poetic corpora. The rigorous preservation of this form in the singular functions as a doctrinal sentinel, formalizing the monotheism of Israel by objectifying the absolutely unique character of the divinity.

On the plane of philological investigation, scientific research hesitates among several etymological trajectories:

- Primacy or anteriority: Jacob (1955) links the term to the verbal radical *A-W-L* (אול), whose semantic acceptance refers to the act of "being in front" or "being first".
- Ontological vigor: A second hypothesis associates *El* with the root *A-L-H* (אלה), which expresses the concept of strength, painting the divinity as a Supreme Being, a pole of

absolute trust, and a bulwark against cosmic or existential perils. This reading saturates the name with concepts of power, preeminence, and authority, harmonizing with the scriptural usage that establishes it as a vector of sovereignty.

- **Directional convergence:** The term happens to be the exact homonym of the preposition *'el* (ל), which formalizes direction, attribution, or movement ("to," "toward," "for"). By metaphorical extension, *El* designates the One who indicates the path, the Guide to follow in order to achieve fulfillment, and the Center toward which existence must align.

- **Insurmountable constraint:** Relayed by Jacob (1955), Procksch suggests an anchoring in the root *A-L-L* (לל), meaning "to bind," which would orient the name toward the idea of a subordination or a sacred constraint from which no creature could escape.

The history of Ancient Near Eastern religions reveals that the name *El* occupied an architectonic position within the pantheon of Canaan. The mythological tablets exhumed at Ras Shamra (Ugarit) depict him as the patriarch and supreme ruler of the gods. Römer (2017) recalls that *El* engenders seventy sons therein and structures the cosmos by placing each nation under the jurisdiction of one of his descendants; within this primitive configuration,

Yahweh initially appears as the tutelary deity devolved solely to the people of Israel. This terminological and historical contiguity engenders inevitable hermeneutical complexities when deciphering specific biblical pericopes.

Nevertheless, the faith of Israel would appropriate this vocable, subjecting it to a profound doctrinal recasting. In order to detach the God of Israel from surrounding pagan deities, the biblical text regularly flanks the name *El* with epithets or qualifying adjectives. These complex constructions allow for the specification of precise divine attributes, embodying themselves principally in three major titulatures: *El Shaddai*, *El Elyon*, and *El Roi*.

- ***El Shaddai*:** This name emerges inauguratively in Genesis 17:1, at the heart of the Abrahamic cycle. A rigorous translation of the Hebrew syntagme yields: "...*Yahweh* appeared to Abram and He said to him: 'I am *El Shaddai*'". The literary articulation here is crucial: the sacred author underscores that the original speaker is *Yahweh*, who attributes *El Shaddai* to Himself as a qualification or a manifestation of His being. The two designations fuse into one and the same spiritual entity, even if historical criticism, represented by Römer (2017), detects therein the trace of an archaic divine name originally honored in the confines of Arabia. On the plane of the history of traditions, Day (2000) attributes the systematization of this formula to the circles of the Priestly source (P), who associate it closely with the cardinal moments of the conclusion of the Covenant. Philologically, *Shaddai* (שדאי) is related to the verbal radical *šadad* (שדד), which means "to do violence" or "to devastate" (Reymond, 2002), translating an invincible brute force that justifies the classical rendering of the Septuagint: "Almighty". Theologically, in the wake of Genesis 17:1, the name certifies the fidelity and omnipotence of God, who is capable of bending natural determinism to fulfill His promises: while Abraham and Sarah have crossed the biological barriers of old age, *El Shaddai* reveals Himself as the God who overcomes the impossible, granting fecundity, blessing, and biological protection.

- ***El Elyon*:** Commonly translated as "God Most High," this title appears notably during the theophanic encounter with Melchizedek in Genesis 14:18. The term *'elyôn* (עליון) designates in a literal sense that which is "exalted," "elevated," or "superior," qualifying, for instance, an upper room in profane architecture (Reymond, 2002). This title becomes the keyword for absolute transcendence. It proclaims the universal sovereignty of a God seated far above all earthly hierarchies, cosmic powers, and imperial pretensions. This designation possessed a major polemical and apologetic function against neighboring polytheisms attached to topographical or local deities. Von Rad (1957) emphasizes, moreover, that this transcendent entity was already the object of a cult in the pre-Davidic city of Jerusalem (Jebus) prior to its integration into the theology of Israel.

- *El Roi*: In Genesis 16:13, it is Hagar, the fleeing Egyptian slave, who forges this title by exclaiming: "You are *El Roi*," that is to say, the "God who sees me". On the linguistic plane, *Roi* (רֹאִי) shares a close semantic twinship with the term *Yireh* (יִרְאֶה) of *Yahweh Yireh*, both deriving from the verb *rā'ah* (רָאָה), "to see". Nonetheless, a sharp literary and theological polarization separates the two accounts: *El Roi* is enunciated in favor of Hagar and Ishmael (the patriarchal lineage linked to Islam), whereas *Yahweh Yireh* deploys around Abraham and Isaac (the patriarchal lineage linked to Judaism). Although the Old Testament validates both expressions within the cycle of Abraham, this structural symmetry invites reflection on a deliberate intent to distinguish the destinies of the two lineages, even if, as Day (2000) reminds us, *Yahweh* regularly absorbs and recapitulates the prerogatives of *El* despite textual discontinuities. The pericope of Hagar stages a God who shatters His transcendence to involve Himself in the distress of a marginalized, enslaved, and suffering woman. The theological scope of *El Roi* resides in this profound psychological anthropomorphism: God is not a remote entity; His compassionate gaze penetrates human suffering, breaking through discriminations of status or race to reach the weak.

b. Elohim (אֱלֹהִים –)

As Westphal (1935) underscores, *Elohim* functions as a generic noun, much like the English word "god," and is applicable to any manifestation of the sacred or of power, whether authentic or illusory. Within the narrative fabric of the Old Testament, it displays an astonishing semantic plasticity. It is employed to designate the spirits of the deceased (*'ōbōt*), as seen during the evocation of Samuel by the necromancer of En-Dor (1 Samuel 28:13), sacred or prophetic intermediaries (Exodus 4:16), monarchs invested with sacral authority (Psalm 45:7), and, at the summit of its theological weight, the unique God of Israel. The *Petit dictionnaire de la Bible* (1996) evaluates the number of its occurrences within the Masoretic text at approximately 2,570.

The morphological and semantic analysis of *Elohim* brings to light two primary philological currents:

- The hypothesis of the plural of majesty or excellence: Although *Elohim* is grammatically constructed with the plural masculine inflection (*-im*), it betrays no underlying polytheism within the structured faith of Israel. Lemardelé (2019), aligning with the earlier conclusions of Odelain and Ségineau (1978), specifies that the direct plural of *El* should properly be *Elim*; consequently, *Elohim* is more accurately analyzed as the morphological plural of the singular form *Eloah*. For Salles (1993), this plural translates a function of majesty, materializing the absolute fullness of glory and omnipotence. Bergier (1838) discerns in it a "functional power" and an intrinsic grandeur, wherein the divinity concentrates within Himself the capacity to assume a multitude of cosmic roles. Dossou (2002) corroborates this perspective by affirming that *Elohim* absorbs and recapitulates the specific prerogatives of all local or pagan *El* figures, establishing the God of the Bible as the absolute and transcendent sovereign. Unmistakable syntactic proof of this rigorous monotheism is found in the fact that when the name *Elohim* designates the God of Israel, the verb of which it is the subject is invariably conjugated in the singular form.
- The hypothesis of a sacral and contractual character: Conversely, Bergier (1838) suggests that the name derives from the root *A-L-H* (אֱלֵה), directly evoking the idea of a sacred power, an inviolable transcendence, and an absolute fidelity to contractual commitments, namely the Covenant.

The term *Elohim* resounds from the very threshold of Revelation in Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning, God [*Elohim*] created the heavens and the earth". He is immediately cast as the sovereign Architect of the cosmos, desacralizing with a single theological gesture the natural elements that surrounding empires worshiped as deities, such as the sun, the moon, marine monsters, and astral powers. He orders a harmonious world, rescued from primordial chaos.

However, Steinmann (1962) advances the critical hypothesis that the narrative of Genesis 1 constitutes a prose transposition of an ancient liturgical hymn in verse originating from the archives of Solomon's Temple, where the Tetragrammaton *Yahweh*, originally present, was secondarily replaced by the title *Elohim*. This textual substitution aimed to establish an absolute doctrinal equation: *Elohim* is none other than *Yahweh*. The priestly code, drafted within the structural context of the Babylonian Exile, required the use of a name universally intelligible to the nations in order to confer a truly cosmic scope upon the monotheistic message.

In sharp contrast to the mythological theogonies and cosmogonies of the Ancient Near East, which were characterized by internal conflicts and a fragmentation of cosmic jurisdictions among multiple gods, the Hebrew Bible portrays a unique God whose spoken word suffices to create and govern the Whole. This theological option unfolds along three major thematic axes:

- The universalism of salvation: The usage of the name *Elohim* is structurally embedded within the perspective of a universal salvation. The Creator God is not the exclusive property of a single clan or ethnicity; His plan of redemption encompasses the entirety of the nations. Römer (2017) explicates this dynamic by postulating that all peoples of the earth who lift their homage toward a Creator God (an *Elohim*) are actually honoring, without knowing it, the very Divinity who disclosed Himself historically to Israel under the name of *Yahweh*.
- The polytheistic tensions of the text: Because the vocables *El* and *Elohim* belong to the common linguistic stock of the Semitic world, certain biblical pericopes preserve complex linguistic structures that reflect ancient religious conceptions. This is apparent in Psalm 82:1, the literal translation of which offers a striking circularity: "*Elohim* stands in the assembly of *El*; He judges in the midst of the *Elohim*". Here, the three occurrences do not identify the same theological object: the syntax evokes the traditional imagery of a divine council or a pantheon presided over by a supreme Chief, bearing witness to the literary sedimentations that the monotheism of Israel had to integrate and transcend.
- The historical dialectic of origins: Day (2000) estimates that at the origin of regional religious history, *Yahweh* and *El* personified distinct divine powers whose theological fusion was achieved over centuries of cultic reforms. Moreover, relying on the analysis of the mythological texts from Ras Shamra, John Gray (as cited by von Rad, 1957) points to the existence of a deity named *Yn*—analyzed as a probable diminutive of *Yahweh*—who was configured in that archaic milieu as one of the subordinate sons of the supreme god *El*.

c. *Eloah* (– אֱלֹהִים)

The divine name *Eloah* exhibits a significantly more restricted frequency within the scriptural architecture, appearing only sixty times across the entire expanse of the Old Testament canon.

It is deployed alternately to designate the unique God of Israel or to qualify foreign, exogenous deities. Reymond (2002) underscores the relatively rare and late character of this specific linguistic morphology, the distribution of which is concentrated primarily within the book of Job and certain select pieces of archaic or highly stylized biblical poetry. Although historical grammar frequently interprets this form as the etymological singular of the pluralized name *Elohim*, its insertion into the sacred text responds to precise theological and rhetorical intentions. Within the wisdom and sapiential corpora, *Eloah* operates as the definitive linguistic vector for the mysterious, unsearchable grandeur of God, deliberately carving an insurmountable ontological abyss between the condition of the Creator and that of the creature.

The book of Job systematically appropriates this particular titlature to articulate its vertiginous theological reflection regarding the enigma of innocent suffering, the systemic collapse of retributive justice models, and the structural limitations of human rationality. To invoke the Deity under the name of *Eloah* is to intentionally summon the figure of the

radically transcendent God, whose decrees, pathways, and historical choices escape, by definition, the simplistic interpretative grids and moral justifications of humanity. The title functions to exalt an inscrutable divine Wisdom that operates far beyond human comprehension.

d. Adonai (אֲדֹנָי –)

The title *Adonai* occupies a distinct and highly strategic position within Jewish piety, liturgical practice, and textual transmission. On the morphological plane, the term is constructed upon the baseline singular noun *Adon* ("master" or "lord"), inflected in the plural and combined with the pronominal suffix of the first person singular ("my"). As Jacob (1955) indicates, the utilization of the plural form responds to the exact same linguistic and honorific logic observed in *Elohim*: it represents an intensive plural or a plural of majesty.

Beginning in the Second Temple era, face-to-face with the absolute sacralization of the Tetragrammaton *Yahweh*—which had become entirely unutterable—*Adonai* was established as its official liturgical substitute. Out of an intense fear of profaning the holiness of the proper

Divine Name, synagogal readers strictly applied the text-critical rule of *qere-ketiv*: they systematically read and pronounced *Adonai* (*qere*) where the consonantal Masoretic text preserved the four sacred letters of the Tetragrammaton (*ketiv*).

The root noun *Adon* originally belonged to the lexical domain of profane, socio-political sovereignty. According to Vigouroux (1895), the underlying verbal root *A-D-N* (אֲדָן) expresses the concrete actions of dominating, governing, ruling, or exercising legitimate authority. The semantic field gravitates exclusively around executive power, leadership, and hierarchical direction. Michaeli (1950) confirms that this term, which initially designated any figure of superiority or command within human relational structures, underwent a profound process of theological politicization after the Babylonian Exile, evolving into a proper title exclusively reserved for the Divinity. This structural evolution greatly facilitated the subsequent theological hellenization of Diaspora Judaism, as the term found its exact conceptual equivalent in the Greek substantive *Kyrios*, which assumed the identical function of a divine proper name within both the Septuagint and the New Testament.

According to the analytical breakdowns provided by Reymond (2002), the base term *Adon* structures three distinct levels of relational dynamics:

- The socio-political relationship: The sharply asymmetrical relationship existing between a lord and his servant or subject, requiring an attitude of deep deference, honor, and strict obedience.
- The domestic and clan relationship: The bond of patriarchal and household subordination, wherein the head of the family or the husband was occasionally qualified as "lord" by his immediate kin (Genesis 31:35; 1 Kings 1:17).
- The formula of courtesy: A structural marker of civility and protocol addressed to any hierarchical superior or authority figure.

At the summits of biblical theology, the majestic lordship of *Adonai* completely evacuates any notion of arbitrary or tyrannical despotism. To be sure, the name robustly asserts the supreme authority of God over historical destinies and the global cosmic order, placing the human being in a posture of radical fidelity and structural subordination. However, this lordship is exercised and modulated strictly within the juridical and affective framework of the Covenant. In spite of His absolute transcendence, the Sovereign Lord consents to enter into dialogue, to incline His ear to human supplications, and to bind Himself to humanity, unifying within a single theological figure the rigorous authority of the Master and the intimate proximity of the Father.

Finally, the cultural and religious history of the Levant demonstrates that the term *Adon* frequently functioned as a direct semantic equivalent to the northwest Semitic noun *Baal* ("master," "owner," or "possessor"). This vocabulary, shared across profane and religious

spheres, was also utilized to designate the great Canaanite storm and fertility deity, *Baal*, toward whom Israel frequently turned during its cyclical crises of syncretism and apostasy. Strikingly, the onomastic memory of Israel has preserved ancient theophoric proper names built directly upon this *Baal* radical—such as Ishbaal, Meribaal, Jerubbaal, or *Baalyah* (1 Chronicles 12:6)—structures that are completely homologous to the classical theophoric names constructed upon *Yahweh* or *El*, such as Jeremiah, Daniel, or Ezekiel.

Ab (אב)

The term *Ab* does not structurally operate as a divine proper noun comparable to *Yahweh* or *Elohim*, but rather falls within the grammatical category of common nouns designating the figure of the "father". Nevertheless, its metaphorical investiture within the overarching narrative of the Old Testament confers upon it a major theological function. Applied to the divinity, the paternal image becomes the primary repository for concepts of immediate proximity, vigilant protection, and providential love. God is depicted as the One who meticulously cares for His creature, guides humanity along the complex pathways of history, disciplines for historical edification, and envelops the believer in His baseline benevolence. Within the Old Testament canonical architecture, divine fatherhood remains structurally intertwined with the theology of the election of Israel: God asserts Himself as the historical Father who generated, adopted, and took responsibility for His corporate people, accompanying them step by step through successive crises of their national itinerary. This relational paradigm reaches its definitive doctrinal and mystical expansion within the economy of the New Testament, when Jesus of Nazareth instructs his disciples to address the Most High under the intimate title of Father, or *Abba*. The term *Ab* thus unveils a deeply affective dimension indexed upon sacrificial love and filial trust. The Christian prayer of the *Pater Noster* stands as the most accomplished historical attestation of this proximate reality.

In guise of a synthesis, and as formulated by Michaeli (1950), a strict semantic line of demarcation must be observed within the biblical text: major expressions such as *El*, *Elohim*, *Eloah*, *Elyon*, *Shaddai*, and *Yahweh* are never applied to human beings. The theology of Israel systematically refuses to alienate these titles for the benefit of humanity, because the attributes of sovereign elevation, invincible strength, and glorious eternity that they communicate belong properly and exclusively to divine Transcendence.

e. The attributes of God contained within His names Nature and foundation of nominal attributes

The thorough analysis of the primary theonyms of the Old Testament highlights the fact that each appellation objectifies and formalizes a specific facet of the intrinsic identity of the divinity. Far from operating as the mere byproduct of late dogmatic constructions or abstract philosophical descriptions, these names are rigorously anchored in precise historical contingencies and existential circumstances. This scriptural contextualization demonstrates that the knowledge of the Transcendent does not stem from an autonomous speculative approach or an intellectual projection of the human mind; rather, it proceeds from a sovereign self-revelation of God, which inserts itself dialectically at the very core of lived experience and the spiritual trajectory of the elect.

The omnipresent God

The proper name *par excellence*, *Yahweh*, operates as the definitive vector of the uninterrupted and permanent presence of God alongside His covenant people. The theophanic formula disclosed to Moses upon Mount Horeb consecrates simultaneously the ontological essence and the historical omnipresence of the divinity: He affirms Himself as the One who is perpetually there. He is the living and immortal God, establishing a radical rupture over against manufactured idols fashioned by human industry, which reduce themselves to an ontological néant.

In his analyses, Jacob (1955) identifies the fullness of life as the major ontological discriminant separating and isolating *Yahweh* from the contiguous deities of the Ancient Near East. This living God is structurally removed from death; furthermore, He establishes Himself as the primary Source of all ontology, capable of triumphing over non-being and death, assuring His people of a proximity that extends across a dual dimension:

- A temporal presence: This formalizes divine eternity and the immutability of His existence. God escorts and highlights the historical narrative of Israel from the initial Covenant sealed with Abraham and the patriarchs, deploying this fidelity toward future generations. While human generations succeed and sediment themselves, God remains identical to Himself across the ages, conferring an unshakeable relational density upon His being. Such a conception stands in stark opposition to late deism, which, as Syarifuddin (2021) recalls, confines God to the status of a primary cause responsible for the appearance of the cosmos while denying Him any right or voluntaristic interest in intervening within the history of the created world.
- A spatial presence: This attests to the absolute immensity and grandeur of a Being whom no cosmic border nor any sanctuary built by human hands can confine or sequester. According to Mora (1981), God operates immanently at the core of the totality of historical events; consequently, nothing can escape His vigilance or His overarching jurisdiction. He imposes Himself as the unavoidable Actor of the historical framework, possessing the absolute prerogative to manifest Himself in any place and at any given instant.

The omnipotent God

The appellation *Elohim* provides direct scriptural proof of divine omnipotence, qualifying a God capable of bringing any undertaking to full fruition. In His capacity as Architect and Creator, He lays the foundations of the Whole and assumes entire responsibility for His work, which He wraps in His blessing to sustain it in a state of peace (*shalom*) and systemic harmony.

Compound theonymic variations, such as *El Shaddai*, as well as the dynamics of providence attached to the root of vision, also manifest this attribute: God reveals Himself there not only as the unpredictable Sovereign, but as the Author of wonders and miracles that defy human understanding.

His hegemony is exercised by right over the universality of the real, encompassing the structures of the visible world as well as invisible realities. However, the theology of the Old Testament refuses to interpret this omnipotence as the exercise of brute force or arbitrary power; it finds its climax and ultimate justification in the historical implementation and fulfillment of God's salvific purpose.

The transcendent God

Divine transcendence is the corollary of the holiness (*qodesh*) and absolute sovereignty of God.

Erected as *El Elyon*, He is magnified and elevated far above any sectorial reality, carving a distinction of nature and a radical ontological abyss between His person and the rest of existence. To state that God is holy amounts to proclaiming His absolute alterity vis-à-vis creation. Escaping the coordinates of created space-time, He cannot be reduced to any conceptual modeling or anthropomorphic representation. His holiness introduces an ethical rupture vis-à-vis an humanity marked by impurity and sin; nevertheless, this transcendence by no means equates to a deistic isolation or a haughty inaccessibility, since God sovereignly consents to enter into communion with Israel. It is always the divine pole that assumes the historical initiative of the first step, for no creature could force access to the knowledge of God if He did not index Himself within the space of Revelation.

The Savior God

A constellation of theonymic appellations bears direct witness to the redemptive activity of God at the heart of history. The structures of *Yahweh Yireh*, *El Roi*, and *Yahweh Tsebaoth* illustrate, according to their own literary geniuses, the manner in which the Divine bursts forth

to rescue anyone turning toward His lordship. Each compound name is systematically articulated around a situation of major distress where the human being experiences their finitude and vulnerability. Faced with these existential aporias, God self-discloses as the universal Liberator: He provides for the material and spiritual necessities of His servants, becomes the bulwark of the oppressed, snatches His people from enemy coalitions, and validates the fidelity of His promises.

There exists, therefore, an intimate correlation between the Divine Name and the historical act of redemption. As Maillot (1987) formulates it, salvation proceeds from a sudden and unexpected irruption of the Divine into the destiny of His people. Revelation attests that He shows Himself by His own will, a point underscored by de Pury (1957), inaugurating a gratuitous movement of redemption removed from any form of external constraint. It is this gesture of deliverance that stirs human gratitude in return, prompting humanity to forge designations that celebrate His attributes, His deep nature, and His identity. Moreover, as Gerhard von Rad (1957) affirms, the very name of *Yahweh* constitutes the hard core and fundamental content of the revelation of salvation.

The God of love

Divine fatherhood, carried by the common term *Ab*, casts a stark light on the elective love of God for His people. The Scriptures depict Him under the traits of an attentive Father, viscerally compassionate and of an all-weather fidelity, standing alongside humans and prompt to operate their rescue. This relational grammar implements highly significant anthropomorphic and anthropopathic structures: God is described as experiencing affective movements analogous to those of humans, oscillating between joy, pity, holy anger, or covenant jealousy. The audacity of the biblical text goes so far as to evoke a divine repentance, a process through which, according to de Pury (1957), God transmutes and converts His fury into a surplus of love.

This love cannot be analyzed as a retribution for human merits or ethical performances; it is rooted exclusively in His free initiative and in His unshakeable adherence to the clauses of the Covenant pact. This visceral fidelity innervates the prophetic and historical accounts where mercy deploys itself despite the chronic treasons of Israel, objectifying a love structurally more powerful than sin, which keeps open the breach of reconciliation.

Divine love thus erects itself as the architectonic principle and ultimate foundation of the totality of the manifestations of the Sacred. Whether dealing with His cosmic power, His fearsome holiness, His political sovereignty, or His salvific deployments, the entirety of these attributes find their internal coherence and fullness of meaning only when they are read in the light of His unconditional love for humanity.

3.2 Discussion

a. Divine names and the trajectory of hebraic monotheism

The philological and theological investigation of theonyms within the Old Testament leads consubstantially to the analysis of the origins and nature of biblical monotheism. Far from appearing as a monolithic and timeless doctrinal given, the multiple appellations of the divinity reflect the historical sedimentations and conceptual mutations that punctuated the religious experience of Israel, a point emphasized by Römer (2014). The contemporary history of religions and critical exegesis agree that the faith of the Old Testament articulated itself within an originally polytheistic and Semitic ecosystem, undergoing a slow theological maturation before culminating in the radical affirmation of divine uniqueness, as demonstrated by Albertz (1994) and Smith (2001). The nominal variations of the divinity thus establish themselves as first-order semiotic markers and historical indicators for retracing the stages of this conceptual dynamic.

The philosophical axiom postulated by certain authors, according to which "God is one and unique, it is the peoples who call Him by different names" (Newton & Haqq, 1995), raises

important epistemological and phenomenological interrogations. If one adopts a universalist phenomenological perspective, the convergence of nominal structures, the plasticity of divine attributes, and the recurrence of theophanic functions could suggest the existence of an underlying and absolute monotheistic intuition shared by the whole of humanity. The comparative history of religions has frequently highlighted phenomena of *translatio numinis*, such as the classical assimilation of the Greek Zeus to the Roman Jupiter, or the fusion of the attributes of deities from distinct pantheons. In this light, some researchers advance the hypothesis of a trans-religious identity, going so far as to superimpose the figure of *Yahweh* onto that of *Allah*, the God of the Islamic tradition emerging from the lineage of Abraham. Römer (2017) underscores in this regard that complex religious and philosophical systems often root themselves in an original intuition of the unity of the divine, which can operationalize itself in the form of either an exclusive or an inclusive monotheism.

b. The dynamics of inclusive monotheism: from monolatry to cultic exclusivity

The concept of inclusive monotheism—frequently qualified as monolatry or henotheism by historico-critical research—postulates the absolute supremacy of a major deity without explicitly denying the existence or ontological efficiency of other powers within the pantheon.

In this configuration, third-party gods are relegated to the rank of subaltern, minor, or demonized entities face-to-face with the sovereignty of the principal God, with the accent placed preferentially on the imperative of fidelity to the tutelary divinity, as noted by Assmann (1997). The inaugural formulation of the Decalogue, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3), inscribes itself precisely at the heart of this hermeneutical tension. Exegetical analysis reveals that this injunction does not formulate a theoretical negation of the existence of other pantheons, but decrees an absolute ethical and cultic prohibition against according them adoration, thereby founding the exclusivity of the relationship between *Yahweh* and Israel, a view supported by Crüsemann (1996).

Römer (2017) analyzes this pericope as the typical expression of a historical monolatry inserted within the cultural horizon of the Ancient Near East, where each geopolitical ensemble attributed territorial or cosmic competencies to specific deities. While Israel shared a common linguistic and conceptual substrat with surrounding cultures, it progressively distanced itself by developing a singular theology centered on the person of *Yahweh*. The morphological proximities observed between the Semitic radicals *El*, *Elohim*, or *Allah* cannot, therefore, mask deep doctrinal and structural divergences, as noted by MacDonald (2012).

What specifies the God of the Bible in an irreducible manner face-to-face with Canaanite or Mesopotamian deities resides in the mode of His manifestation: He does not identify Himself with cosmic cycles, agricultural fertility, or the forces of nature, as argued by Lemardelé (2019); rather, He reveals Himself dynamically through His historical acts and His sovereign irruption into human destiny, as expressed by Maillot (1987). Comparative history shows that even within the highly elaborate polytheistic systems of Mesopotamia or ancient Egypt, attempts at monotheistic or monolatrous centralization were driven by royal power. Examples include the reforms of Amenophis IV (Aten) between 1353 and 1337 BC, Nebuchadnezzar I (Marduk) between 1125 and 1104 BC, Sennacherib (Assur) in 689 BC, or Nabonidus (Sin) between 556 and 539 BC, as documented by Ahlström (1993). These historical experiences bear witness to the recurrence of the ideal of divine unity, although the ontological exclusion of other gods was not yet formally theorized there. Inclusive monotheism is thus analyzed as a major transitional stage toward the emergence of absolute monotheism.

c. Exclusive monotheism and the christian trinitarian synthesis

Exclusive or absolute monotheism operates a qualitative leap by proclaiming the radical ontological uniqueness of the divinity, relegating other gods to the status of vain idols and nonexistent illusions, a transition examined by Lang (2002). This conceptualization finds its most accomplished expression and its most rigorous theoretical formulation within the corpus

of Second Isaiah (Isaiah 40–55). Drafted within the traumatic context of the Babylonian Exile, these texts respond to a major theological challenge: confronted with the visual and political power of Babylonian deities, the biblical authors affirm the universal cosmic hegemony of *Yahweh* as the sole Creator and absolute Master of human history, as attested by the formula of Isaiah 45:5: "I am *Yahweh*, and there is no other; besides me there is no God" (Blenkinsopp, 2002).

This same axiomatic certainty structures the cardinal profession of faith of Judaism, the *Shema Yisrael* (Deuteronomy 6:4):

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

The verse, which translates literally as "Hear, O Israel! *Yahweh* (is) our God, *Yahweh* (is) one," seals the absolute unity and uniqueness of the divinity. It institutes a unique and exclusive relational model between *Yahweh* and His people, notwithstanding the use of the plural of majesty *Elohim*, as demonstrated by Bauckham (2008).

Christian theology appropriates this rigorous monotheistic heritage while operating a major dogmatic reconfiguration through the doctrine of trinitarian monotheism, as analyzed by Torrance (1996). This formulation teaches the existence of a unique God in three distinct persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—united in a perfect consubstantiality and indissociably associated from the act of creation throughout the entire economy of salvation.

The revelation of the New Testament does not abolish the theonyms of the Old Testament but deepens their metaphysical scope, finding its definitive christological accomplishment in the person of Jesus Christ, a perspective developed by Moltmann (1980).

The solemn "I am" statements (*egō eimi*) uttered by Jesus in the Fourth Gospel are analyzed as a direct echo of the revelation of the Tetragrammaton in Exodus 3:14, manifesting the immanence of the divinity within human history. Similarly, the Johannine Apocalypse amplifies this formula through the titlature "He who is, who was, and who is to come" (Revelation 1:4), confirming the eternity and permanence of the divine Being. The very name of Jesus (*Yēshua*) recapitulates this theology of action, meaning literally "*Yahweh* saves," thereby materializing the incarnation of redemptive power at the heart of historical temporality.

d. Theological, ethical, and spiritual applications

The interdisciplinary study of theonyms transcends academic stakes to invest the fields of ethical *praxis* and contemporary spiritual experience. It recalls, in the first place, that the knowledge of the Transcendent cannot be reduced to a catalogue of abstract doctrines, but rests fundamentally on the sovereign and relational initiative of a God who reveals Himself progressively through His word and His acts, establishing an authentic communion with humanity, as formulated by Buber (1970). Each divine name refers back to a concrete existential sedimentation: creation, covenant, providence, deliverance, or forgiveness. This nominal revelation demands in return an ethical response and a moral transformation on the part of the believer. Recognizing God as Creator, Lord, or Father implies conforming one's existence to the imperatives of justice, fidelity, and responsibility, an implication highlighted by Heschel (1962). In this regard, the analysis of Martin-Achard (1959) concerning the narrative of Jonah proves particularly illuminating: the prophet's mission is not to convert the Ninevites to a religious system or to act as a theorist of monotheism, but to call humanity to an authentic *metanoia* before the holy God. The recognition of the Name requires living in the fear of God, understood as a sacred respect that excludes any ideological instrumentalization.

Römer (2017) underscores the historical paradox according to which monotheism has sometimes generated drifts of intolerance, fanaticism, or exclusive violence. However, the theology of divine names teaches that the deep nature of God is Love, orienting faith toward fraternity and universal communion. The archetype of this dynamic remains trinitarian monotheism, which offers the model of a perfect unity lived within the diversity of persons, as

noted by Zizioulas (1985). This divine eternity and fidelity engage the believer to insert themselves into an active eschatological hope under the guidance of the Spirit, by adopting a just and dignified conduct.

On the plane of ecclesial and liturgical *praxis*, the centrality of the Word and the respectful invocation of divine names must structure the worship space through prayer, blessings, and praise. The certainty of a God personally involved alongside His elect invalidates any recourse to occult intermediaries or syncretic substitutes, reaffirming the possibility of direct access to the throne of grace. Finally, this study invites the promotion of an interreligious dialogue marked by mutual respect: though traditions legitimately diverge in their dogmatic formulations, they bear witness to a common quest for ultimate Meaning, a point emphasized by Panikkar (1978).

The scientific and theological horizon is not to impose a forced religious uniformization, but to confess the absolute transcendence, holiness, and sovereignty of a divine Force that governs the cosmos according to His will, inviting the human being to recognize the limits inherent to pure rationality. As Syarifuddin (2021) concludes, God remains the primary foundation of everything that exists and the regulator of the universe, demanding from researchers an intellectual posture that associates methodological rigor, exegetical honesty, and a constant openness to intercultural dialogue.

IV. Conclusion

At the close of this transdisciplinary investigation, the semantic, philological, and historico-critical analysis of Old Testament theonyms allows for the emergence of a unified, dynamic, and deeply embodied vision of divine revelation. The results obtained forcefully demonstrate that the name (*šēm*), far from being reduced to a simple linguistic artifact or a conventional designation, constitutes the mirror of divine ontology and the theophanic locus par excellence where Transcendence self-discloses to humanity. From the sacred Tetragrammaton Yahweh, the affirmation of an active and unclassifiable presence, to the cosmic sovereignty of Elohim, each appellation crystallizes a facet of God's intrinsic identity and landmarks the evolution of Israelite religious thought. The textual and historical trajectory thus delineated highlights the transition from an inclusive and contextual monolatry—shared with the Semitic environment of the ancient Near East—to the prophetic affirmation of an exclusive and absolute monotheism, forged in the crucible of the Exile. Finally, the theological articulation between the two Testaments reveals a remarkable continuity: the dogmatic reformatio brought about by the Christian Trinitarian synthesis and the christological "I am" (*egō eimi*) statements cannot be read as a rupture, but stand out as the metaphysical deepening and historical fulfillment of the Hebrew nominal revelation.

The eminently innovative character of this research lies primarily in its tri-articulated methodology, which brings into interaction the descriptive rigor of Semitic philology, the diachronic deconstruction of the historico-critical approach, and the systemic modeling of intertextual hermeneutics. By rejecting disciplinary compartmentalization, this approach allowed for the confrontation of the Masoretic text with exogenous epigraphic sources from Ugarit, thereby offering a renewed understanding of the phenomena of assimilation and doctrinal rupture. Furthermore, the conceptual originality of this work stems from its dual epistemological and ethical scope. By transcending mere academic erudition, the present study extracts the existential substance of the theonyms to formulate a contemporary sociological and theological critique of identity-based drifts. The introduction of Trinitarian monotheism as an archetype of unity in diversity proposes a major theoretical advance for intercultural dialogue. It replaces exclusive doctrinal uniformization with a spiritual and rational invitation

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