

# JEWES AND JEWISH NAMES IN THE BOSPORAN KINGDOM

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It is generally accepted that Jews came to the Bosporan kingdom in the 1st century A.D. It is from this time that their presence is testified by the inscriptions – manumissions, mentioning the Jewish community (συναγωγὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων) and the Jewish prayer house (προσευχὴ)<sup>1</sup>. But some scholars have expressed the opinion that this date needs correction. For instance, M.I. Rostovtzeff considered that it was through the initiative of Mithridates that Jews appeared in this area<sup>2</sup>. Though he did not produce arguments in support of his proposition, he was obviously thinking of the change in the ethnic composition of the Bosporan kingdom at the time of Mithridates Eupator. At this period a great number of immigrants from Thrace and Asia Minor first appear in the Bosporan kingdom. So it would be reasonable to conclude that some Jews also came to the Bosporus at that time. B. Nadel also wrote that he was absolutely sure that the date had to be changed for an earlier one, but he found difficulties in fixing upon the correct one.<sup>3</sup>

The epigraphical evidence for a Jewish presence in this region covers the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. This period was very

1 CIRB 70, 71, 72 (= CIJ I<sup>2</sup>, N 683, 683a, 683b), cf. CIRB 985 (= CIJ I<sup>2</sup> N 691) with the unconvincing restoration Ἰαπόλ[λωνι].

2 M. Rostovtzeff, *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia* (Oxford, 1922) 150.

3 B.I. Nadel, *Bosporskiye manumissii* (Diss. Leningrad, 1947), 146f.

important for religious life in the Bosporan kingdom.

Greeks appeared in the territory of the Cimmerian Bosphorus at the beginning of the VI<sup>th</sup> century B.C. They brought with them from their homeland a ready-made religious system. Their contacts with the local population and the fact that representatives of the local inhabitants took part in the life of Greek *poleis*, had some sort of influence on the Bosporan religion. However, from the extant religious monuments and inscriptions it is clear that among the Greek-speaking population the cults of Greek origin or oriental cults long ago adopted by Greeks (such as that of Cybele for instance) were widespread. In other words the Bosporan cults can be regarded as a part of traditional pagan Greek religion. This situation continued till the beginning of the I<sup>st</sup> century A.D. which means that important changes in the religious life of the Mediterranean, characteristic of the Hellenistic period, did not have much effect on the Bosporan kingdom. The reasons for this were the great distance between the state and the main centres of the Mediterranean, and its complete isolation from the global military and political events of the IV<sup>th</sup> – III<sup>rd</sup> cent. B.C. There was also a considerable reduction in foreign contacts and in the traditional Greco-barbarian symbiosis. There were no great waves of immigrants although there were still continual small migrations.<sup>4</sup> To sum up, the ethno-cultural situation inside the state was stable till the I<sup>st</sup> century B.C.

The real changes in the religious situation of the Bosporan kingdom took place only in the I<sup>st</sup> century A.D. These changes were stimulated by the changes in the demographical and political situation in the state. After the Mithridatic wars, the Bosporan kingdom became involved in the political life of the Mediterranean world and became a vassal state of Rome. The number of immigrants from Asia Minor and Thrace grew rapidly, Sarmatians infiltrated the state and thus the whole ethno-

4 S.R. Tokhtas'yev "Trakische Personennamen am Kimmerischen Bosphoros", Studies in honor of Prof. G. Mihailov (Sofia, in print).

cultural situation was destabilized. The population of the kingdom became better acquainted with the cultural and religious traditions of the newcomers. It is not by chance that at this period a large number of private societies (*thiasoi*), which were widespread in the Mediterranean from the Hellenistic period, appeared in the Bosphorus. In the conditions of ethno-cultural destabilization in the Bosphorus it was particularly easy for new religious ideas to be introduced. At the same time as the cult of the Roman emperors, which, of course, had an openly political character, a new cult gained popularity and soon became the most widespread of all the Bosporan cults. It was the cult of the Most High God (θεὸς Ὑψίστος). The analysis of the sources shows that the cult of the Most High God appeared in the Bosporan kingdom under strong Jewish influence, and that the local adherents were a kind of God-fearers organised in their own associations.<sup>5</sup> Thus the Bosporan population adopted (in accordance with the general tendency of the period<sup>6</sup>) the most developed and consistent form of monotheism.

Taking into consideration the importance of the Jewish impact on the religious situation in the Bosporan kingdom, it would be quite natural to suppose that the Jewish population there was rather large. But the fragmentary character of our sources stands in the way of a decisive

5 For connections of the cult of the Most High God with Judaism see, for instance, E. Schürer, "Die Juden im Bosporanischen Reiche und die Genossenschaften der σεβόμενοι θεὸν Ὑψίστου ebendasselbst", *SAW*, XII–XIII (1897), 220–225; F. Cumont, "Ὑψίστος", *RE IX*, 444–450; E.R. Goodenough, "The Bosphorus Inscriptions to the Most High God", *JQR* 47 (1957), 221–245; B. Nadel, *op. cit.*, *Idem*, *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 4 (1948), 203–206; *Idem*, *Archiv Orientalní* 28, 1 (1960), 55–66; *Idem*, *Listy Filologické* 89, 1 (1966), 13–24; I. A. Levinskaya, *Kul't Theos Hypsistos kak istochnik po etnokul'turnoj istorii Bospora v I–IV vv. n.e.* Diss. (Leningrad, 1988); *Idem*, *Avtoreferat dissertatsii* (Leningrad, 1988).

6 M.P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, Bd. II (München, 1961), 572.

judgement. In this situation the analysis of onomastic material can provide us with some additional information. Of course the fact that Jews used to have Roman and Greek names makes it impossible to estimate even the approximate figure of their presence in the Bosphoran kingdom. However, the number of Jewish names can help us in understanding some geographical and chronological tendencies.

It is well known that Greek transcriptions of non-Greek names do not allow us to make a trustworthy identification of their ethnolinguistical provenance. Sometimes interpretations turn out to be sheer misunderstandings. For instance, V.I. Abaev in his historico-etymological dictionary of the Ossetian language explained the personal name Ἰατραγόρας as deriving from the Iranian root \*atr-, which means "fire" and Ossetian agur, which means "to search for".<sup>7</sup> Formally, this etymology is acceptable. The problem is that Ἰατραγόρας is a well known Greek name.

In order to avoid such frustrating mistakes it is essential to take as the basis of our analysis the following principles which conform to our material: 1. The supposed Jewish name must have a complete or partial equivalent in the Jewish tradition. 2. The Greek form of the supposed Jewish name must, in its main features, coincide with the Greek form of the Jewish name as testified by sources (epigraphical, papyri, LXX, etc.). 3. The whole context of the inscription, containing the supposed Jewish name, must be taken into consideration. For instance, if we find the supposed Jewish name in the inscriptions of *thiasoi* of the Most High God, we consider this to be an additional argument in favour of Jewish provenance of the name.

We shall start discussing the onomastic material from the names whose Jewish origin is beyond any doubt.

1. Ἰαζαρίων, Tanais, 244 A.D. N 1287, 23; 220 A.D. N1278, 20

7 V.I. Abaev, *Istoriko-etimologičeskij slovar' osetinskogo jazyka* (Moskva-Leningrad, 1958), s.v. *art.*



(<sup>ρ</sup>Αζα[ρίων] ?)<sup>8</sup> in the inscriptions of the *thiasoi* of the Most High God; cf. Biblical <sup>ϳ</sup>azaryā(hū), <sup>ρ</sup>Αζαριας LXX, one of the most popular of Jewish personal names;<sup>9</sup> formed with Greek suffix -ων<sup>10</sup>; identified as Jewish by Schürer.<sup>11</sup> Iranian etymology was suggested by V.F. Miller (to Avestan hazañra-);, his idea was supported by M. Fasmer, V.I. Abaev and L. Zgusta;<sup>12</sup> Zgusta regards it as *hypokoristikon* to Iranian personal names of Middle Persian *Hazaravūxt* type. But as far as we know the personal names with \**hazār-* at the beginning exist only in Middle and Modern Persian,<sup>13</sup> they seem to be unknown in Ossetian, because otherwise Abaev would have given corresponding examples. F. Justi also does not mention the

- 8 Here and below the numbers of the inscriptions are given according to CIRB.
- 9 M. Ohana, M. Heltzer, *The Extra-Biblical Tradition of Hebrew Personal Names* (Haifa, 1978), 62 (in Hebrew); W. Kornfeld, *Onomastica aramaica aus Ägypten* (Wien, 1978), 66; H. Wuthnow, *Die semitischen Menschennamen in griechischen Inschriften und Papyrus des Vorderen Orients* (Leipzig, 1930), 13.
- 10 On this form see: D. Foraboschi, *Onomasticon alterum papyrologicum* (Milano-Varese, 1971), 20: PapOslo III 113, belongs to a Christian. V. Tcherikover seems to consider that the element – *yahu* hides itself under -ων: *The Jews in Egypt in the Hellenistic-Roman Age in the Light of the Papyri* (Jerusalem, 1963), 199 (in Hebrew). It is possible that here and elsewhere Greek and semitic suffixes can coincide; for example: <sup>ϳ</sup>Azārī-ōn, cf. Noth, 38.
- 11 E. Schürer, *op. cit.* (see n. 5), 218.
- 12 V.F. Miller, "Epigraficheskie sledy iranstva na yuge Rossii", *Zhurnal Ministerstva narodnogo prosvesheniya, Otd. klass. filologii* (1886, Otyabr'), 245; M. Vasmer, *Untersuchungen über die ältesten Wohnsitze der Slaven*, I (Leipzig, 1923), 30; V.I. Abaev, *Osetinsky yazyk i fol'klor*, I (Moskva-Leningrad, 1949), 168; Zgusta, *Pers*, §44.
- 13 F. Justi, *Iranisches Namenbuch* (Marburg, 1985), 127f.; the date of fixation of the name Χαζαρος (CPJ I N 36, 4, 240 B.C.: Justi, *ibid.*) makes the Iranian etymology rather doubtful.

hypocoristic forms. On balance it would seem that the Jewish etymology is more firmly based than the Iranian in all respects.

2. Σαμβατίων, Gorgippia, the second half of the II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D, N 1142, 15; Tanais, 236 A.D. N 1250, 13; in the inscriptions of the associations of the Most High God from near Krasnodar<sup>14</sup> (N 1231, B 12) and from Tanais (N 1278, 16, 24, 29 – three different people!); 1279, 15; 1280, 28; 1282, 19). In N 1278, 20 we probably also have Azarion (see above). According to Yajlenko, who compared the names in N 1231 with the names in 1242, the latter can also be a list of adherents of the Most High God.<sup>15</sup> The same name (or *hypokoristikon* Σαμβίων) is written in abbreviated form on amphorae of the first half of the III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. from Tanais: ΣΑΜΒ (?) and (from another house) ΣΑΜ (?).<sup>16</sup> Σαμ[βίων] or Σαμ[βατίων] is preserved in the list of names of the III<sup>rd</sup> century from Cape Zyuk, the Azov shore of the Kerch Peninsula (N 898).

The ethno-cultural nature of the name Σαμβατίων has been much discussed.<sup>17</sup> In the long run Σαμβατίων doubtless derives from western Semitic or even exclusively<sup>18</sup> Hebrew Šabb<sup>a</sup>ṭay (also

14 According to Yajlenko, the stone most probably comes from Gorgippia: "Materialy po bosporskoj epigrafike", Nadpisi i yazyki drevnej Maloj Azii, Kipra i antichnogo Severnogo Prichernomor'ya (Moskva, 1987), 135, N209.

15 V. Yajlenko, op. cit., 129, N 189, 135f., N209.

16 D.B. Shelov, "Lichnye imena na amforach iz Tanaisa", Numizmatika i epigrafica, XII (1978), 48f; Id. "Dipinti na amforach iz tanaisskich kompleksov", ibid. XV (1989), 103, 108.

17 For discussion see: E. Schürer, The History of the Jewish people in the age of Jesus Christ (revised English version) III, 1 (1986), 625, n. 183.

18 Cf. J. Teixidor, Bull. ép. sémit. (1971) N 37; J. T. Milik, Dédicaces faites par des dieux (Palmyra, Hatra, Tyr) et des thiasés sémitiques à l'époque romaine (Paris, 1972), 67; M.D. Coogan, West Semitic Personal names in the Murašû Documents (Missoula, 1976), 84, 124

\*Šabb<sup>a</sup>tī<sup>19</sup>), formed according to the same pattern as ᾠΑζαρίων (cf. above n. 10) and identical with Σαμβάτιος, Σαββαταῖος etc. The wide diffusion of this name (in different forms) in the Mediterranean<sup>20</sup> is connected with the spread of Jewish communities<sup>21</sup> and pagan reverence for the Sabbath.<sup>22</sup> L. Zgusta considered that this name "ist zwar zweifellos jüdischen Ursprungs, hat sich aber auch in andere Kreise verbreitet",<sup>23</sup> but on balance it seems that the name was still disseminated among Sabbath-observers (cf. n. 29).

19 J.T. Milik, *op. cit.*, 67.

20 In Egypt and the Near East the name is known from the Achaemenid age; W. Kornfeld, *op. cit.* (see n. 9), 72; M.D. Coogan, *ibid.*; CPJ III, 189–191; G. Delling, "Biblisch-jüdische Namen in hellenistisch-römischen Ägypten", *Bull. de la Soc. d'archéol. Copte*, XXII, 1974–1975 (1976), 22–27; E. Schürer, *op. cit.* (see n. 17), 625, n. 185.; Zgusta, *Pers.* § 740.

21 In the late Roman period it was also popular among Christians, see, for instance: J. Kajanto, *Onomastic Studies in the Early Christian Inscriptions of Rome and Karthago* (Helsinki, 1963), 106f. It can be explained partly by tradition and partly by the fact that Sabbath-observance was practised by some Christian groups: M. Simon, *Verus Israel* (Oxford, 1986), 310f., 323; V. Tcherikover, CPJ III, 52.

22 V. Tcherikover, "The Sambathions", *Scripta Hierosolymitana*, I (1954), 94; CPJ I, 95; III, 53; G. Delling, *op. cit.*, 23.

23 Zgusta, *Pers.* § 740. The popularity of this name is witnessed by the fact that later it returns to Jews in Hellenising form: *smbty[wn]*, inscription of 384 A.D. from Byblos, CIJ II, 859; cf. Milik, *op. cit.*, 67f; *smpty*: C. Sirat et al., *La Ketuba de Cologne. Un contrat de mariage juif à Antinoopolis* (Opladen, 1986), about 417 A.D. (*non vidimus*, cf. N.R.M. de Lange, JSJ, 19/1 (1988), 128).

Among the Bosphoran names we frequently<sup>24</sup> meet a form of hypocoristic  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\alpha\tau\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ <sup>25</sup>, namely  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  ( $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ ,  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\iota\omega\nu$ ).<sup>26</sup> This name as well as the *hypokoristikon*  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  which was popular in Egypt has only very distant phonetic associations with "Sabbath"<sup>27</sup> and can not be evidence for the religious interests of its bearers or their parents. Comparing the names  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\alpha\theta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  and  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ , Tcherikover came to the conclusion that while the former gradually lost its power, the letter became more and more frequent and

24 CIRB Index, 896; V. Yajlenko, op. cit., 120–123 (N 179), 141f. (N 219, 4).

25 See Zgusta. Pers. § 740, who adds also  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\epsilon\iota\nu$ , N 407 (so Zgusta), cf., however,  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\iota\varsigma$ , fem., Zgusta, KPN § 1341–1, Phrygia. W. Schulze ("Samstag", *Kleine Schriften* (Göttingen, 1966<sup>2</sup>), 289, n. 10) and after him G. Klaffenbach (*Die Grabstelen der einstigen Sammlung Roma in Zakynthos* (Berlin, 1964), 15 N 25) erroneously ascribe the name  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  to the tribes living along the North Coast of the Black Sea; it is registered from the II<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. in the Mediterranean (Klaffenbach, *ibid.*; J. and L. Robert, *Bull. ép.* (1953) N 205) and also as a Jewish personal name (Josephus, *Ant.* XV. 47). According to O. Masson (who in his turn refers to A. Caquot and M. Szyner ("Quelques noms sémitiques en transcription grecque", *Hommages à A. Dupont-Sommer* (Paris, 1971), 71) the assertion that  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  and  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  are hypocoristic forms of  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\alpha\tau\alpha\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  "ne nous semble pas recevable, car elle ne rend pas compte de la disparition du *t* radical". But similar *hypokoristika* are well known in the Jewish *onomastikon* (see M. Noth, *Die Israelitischen Personennamen*, 38). The father of a certain  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\acute{\alpha}\theta\iota\omega\nu$  was called  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\alpha\acute{\iota}\omicron\varsigma$  (CPJ I, 47, 7, mentioned by O. Masson), which means that both names have the same root. The Hebrew  $\check{\text{S}}\bar{o}b\bar{a}y$ , with which Caquot (*ibid.*) compares  $\Sigma\alpha\beta\beta\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  is not to the point.

26 These forms are witnessed even earlier than  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\alpha\tau\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$  (for instance, N 316, 416, Panticapaeum) in the I<sup>st</sup> century B.C.E.–I<sup>st</sup> century A.D. They could either have been acquired from another part of the Mediterranean or taken directly from the local  $\Sigma\alpha\mu\beta\alpha\tau\acute{\iota}\omega\nu$ .

27 V. Tcherikover, *The Sambathions*, 98, n. 39; CPJ III, 55.



obtained the rank of a regular Egyptian name.<sup>28</sup> Prosopographical analysis of the Bosporan bearers of the name Σαμβίων seems to allow us to maintain that the fate of it was similar to that of Σαμβᾶς in Egypt: both became ordinary names, deprived of any specific ethnic or religious character. It is worthwhile to stress the fact, that nearly all Sambations were members of *thiasoi* of the Most High God.<sup>29</sup>

3. Ωνιας, Hermonassa (?), the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., N. 1076 = (CIJ I N 691, Proleg, 69f.); there are parallels and full correspondence, particularly in papyri from Egypt. It was identified as Jewish by V.V. Shkorpil,<sup>30</sup> who compared it with the name Ωνειας in an inscription from Rome, which was defined as Jewish by B. de

28 M. Nagel doubted Tcherikover's interpretation "Un Samaritain dans l'Arsinoïte au II<sup>e</sup> siècle après J.C. (à propos du nom Sambas). Chr. d'Égypte, 49 N98 (1974), 356–365. He came to the conclusion that the fate of both names was the same: "ils coexistent, puis ils déclinent à peu près à la même époque". His objections are based on the statistical analysis of the frequency of the name Σαμβᾶς in the papyri from 130 A.D. to 230 A.D., which shows a certain reduction in the numbers of the bearers of this name from the year 180 to the year 230. Only by the end of the V<sup>th</sup> century did the name Sambas again become popular, but as Nagel stresses 'dans un autre contexte onomastique' The fact that Nagel does not mention the total quantity of documents surviving from each decade and the number of names in each document detracts from the value of his statistical analysis. The absence of dated papyri between 221 and 487 (p 362, n. 1) makes his conclusions unreliable.

29 Cf. V. Tcherikover (CPJ III, 53): "The Sambathions of Tanais were influenced by Judaism, and their name, derived from Sabbath, demonstrates obviously their veneration for the Sabbath"; cf. also: E. Schürer, op. cit. (see n. 7), 625, n. 183.

30 V.V. Shkorpil, Izvestiya Archeologicheskoi Komissii, 27 (1908), 48f. N6.

Montfaucon.<sup>31</sup> Cf. *ḥnyh, ḥwny, Aramaic papyri from Egypt, Biblical Ḥōnyō, Ḥōnī*, Talmudic *ḥwny ḥwnyn*.<sup>32</sup> Cf. also N 14 below.

4. Σαφατας, Gorgippia, II<sup>nd</sup>–III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., N. 1179, 34: Biblical Šāpāt, Σαφατ LXX,<sup>33</sup> Σαφατης Josephus. Arbitrary addition of the suffix -ας or -ος to the consonantal Auslaut of a Semitic name is not uncommon.<sup>34</sup> According to Yajlenko (see above, n. 15) N 1179 (list of names) could belong to the adherents of the Most High God.

5. Σεμων, Panticapaeum, the end of the II<sup>nd</sup>–III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., N 724; a menorah on the stone makes it completely clear<sup>35</sup> that we have there the widespread Greek form of the popular Jewish name Šim<sup>c</sup>ōn.<sup>36</sup>

6. Ιουδα, dipinto of the first half of the III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. on the amphora from Tanais.<sup>37</sup>

7. [᾿Ισα]άκιος, Greek-Hebrew quasi-bilingual epitaph from Panticapaeum, III<sup>rd</sup>–IV<sup>th</sup> cent. A.D., N 736.

31 B. de Montfaucon, *Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, V, 1 (Paris, 1719), 69: "iudaicum videtur esse nomen"; CIG III 6406 = L. Moretti, *Inscriptiones graecae urbis Romae*, III (Roma, 1979), N1268; see also H. Solin, *Juden und Syrer im westlichen Teil der römischen Welt*, ANRW II, 29, 2 (1983), 647.

32 Kornfeld, *op. cit.* (see n. 9), 50.

33 Identified by S. Segert, see Zgusta, *Pers.* § 756.

34 For instance: ᾿Αφέρας, Λούδας, Σισέννας, Χουθᾶς, ᾿Ωδηδάς (*Schalit, NWB s.vv.*) and others; cf. ᾿Ιωσάφατος and Ἰηοῦσάπατ (*Schalit, NWB s.v.*).

35 V. Shkorpil, *Zapiski odesskogo obshchestva istorii i drevnostej*, XXI (1989), 210; Zgusta, *Pers.* § 757.

36 F. Vattioni, "I semiti nell' epigrafia cirenaica", *SCO*, XXXII, (1987), 541.

37 D.B. Shelov, *Lichnye imena*, 48f.; cf. *idem*, *Tanais i Nizhny Don v pervye veka nashej ery* (Moskva, 1972), 160; *idem*, *Dipinti*, 114; it is difficult to determine whether this is in the genitive case (cf. F. Blass., A. Debrunner, F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen, 1984)<sup>16</sup> § 35a) or the nominative (cf. F. Vattioni, *op. cit.*, 534).

8. Σαμοήλ, N 743, with a menorah on the stone; Σαμουή[λ]ου, N 777, also with a menorah, both tombstones from the IVth century Panticapaeum.<sup>38</sup>

Now we shall turn to those names whose Jewish origin can be disputed, for instance, some of them may be etymologically Aramaic – which does not in fact prevent us from identifying their bearers as Jews or Jewish sympathizers.<sup>39</sup>

9. Εμμει, vocative, feminine, Panticapaeum, the first half of the I<sup>st</sup> century B.C. N 122 (epitaph). From Segert's point of view (Zgusta Pers. § 755), this name is Semitic: "cf. Hebrew names with <sup>ʿ</sup>*amī*-" (more correct is <sup>ʿ</sup>*ammī*-: <sup>ʿ</sup>*Ammihūd* etc<sup>40</sup>); but as far as we know, with the exception of Εμιουδ LXX, Greeks always rendered personal names with <sup>ʿ</sup>*amm* by A<sup>41</sup>, though in general the variation α: ε is rather typical.<sup>42</sup> But on the whole this fact does not make Segert's interpretation more reliable. The comparison can also be made with Hebrew \* <sup>ʿ</sup>*Immī* (?) or Syriac \* <sup>ʿ</sup>*Em(m)ī* (Lat. *Emae*)<sup>43</sup> or Αμμει,

38 N 777 was found on the site of the ancient Jewish cemetery, cf. CIRB, comm. ad loc.

39 Personal names of Aramaic origin were widespread among Jews from a very early period: Noth, IPN, 63; M.H. Silverman, "Aramaean Name Types in the Elephantine Documents", JAOS, LXXXIX (1969), 691–709; idem, "Hebrew Name Types in the Elephantine Documents", Orientalia, XXXIX (1970), 485.

40 Noth, op. cit. (see n. 9), 253.

41 See, for instance, Murtonen, op. cit., 304f.; Αμμια, Αμμιας; Lidzbarski, Ephemeris II, 195f.; CIJ I N 296, 297, 537.

42 Εδναας, LXX; <sup>ʿ</sup>*Edna'ā*, Josephus; < <sup>ʿ</sup>*adnā*; E. Brønno, Studien über hebräische Morphologie und Vokalismus auf Grundlage der Mercatischen Fragmente der 2. Kol. der Hexapla des Origenes (Leipzig, 1943), 269, 296f.

43 Th. Nöldeke, Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft (Strassburg, 1904), 93, 95; for Aramaic personal names with <sup>ʿ</sup>*emm*: Εμμαβου, Αβ-

Αμμια (from Asia Minor), etc.<sup>44</sup>

10. Γαδας, Panticapaeum (?), the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. N 372; a tombstone; the name has no patronymic (freedman?). Vasmer and Zgusta made a hypothetical comparison of this name with Iranian appellatives and personal names without gaining any convincing identifications.<sup>45</sup> This name has good formal correspondences in Semitic languages, though it is too short for reliable interpretations. The following variants can be suggested:

1) This is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew or Aramaic *hypokoristikon* of one of the composita made with *gād*, *Gād*<sup>46</sup> ΤΥΧΗ Τύχη, i.e. \*Gaddā.<sup>47</sup> The transition dd > d may have taken place

εμμης etc. see: Milik, op. cit., 66, 324–327, 331. Hebrew i>e: Εθθι, LXX, "Εθις, Josephus: < <sup>2</sup>Ittay; Brønno, op. cit., 262ff.

44 Zgusta, KPN §57 (especially §57–17, n. 128; §57–19; 57–23, 24; for α:ε cf. § 333–4.

45 M. Vasmer, op. cit., 36; Zgusta, Pers. § 91 (his comparison with Old Persian Γαδατας cannot possibly be correct, cf. M. Mayrhofer, *Onomastica Persepolitana* (Wien, 1973), 282.

46 Of the Biblical type *Gaddi<sup>3</sup>el*, see Noth, op. cit., 240; Ohana, Heltzer, op. cit. (see n. 9), 38f; Silverman, *Aramaean Name Types*, 698; A. Caquot, "Sur l'onomastique religieuse de Palmyre", *Syria*, 39/2 (1962), 242; J. K. Stark, *Personal Names in Palmyrene Inscriptions* (Oxford, 1971), 13, 81; F. Vattioni, *Inscrizioni di Hatra* (Napoli, 1981), N 13, 2; 229b, 2; J. Cantineau, *Le nabatéen*, 2 (Paris, 1932), 76f. For conservation of such pagan names among Jews, see: G. Kerber, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Bedeutung der hebräischen Eigennamen des Alten Testaments* (Freiburg i. Br., 1897), 67.

47 Gd<sup>3</sup>, as a Jewish name see: J. Levy, *Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim* (Berlin-Wien, 1924), 299, s.v. *gād* cf. Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris II*, 9; Ohana, Heltzer, op. cit., 39, 180, cf. also p. 38 s.v. gd<sup>3</sup> (?); in Aramaic (Palmyra, Hatra) see Caquot, op. cit., 252; Vattioni, *Inscrizioni*, N 240, 1; 246, 1; Aramaic (?) Γαδου (see Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris II*, 337), if the nominative was Γαδας, cf. below; *Ulp. Gaddas* (Römische Inschriften

already in the Hebrew (Aramaic) original, with compensatory lengthening of *a* in the first syllable (\**Gādā*).<sup>48</sup> But as usual, we must take into consideration the possibility that a foreign name was simply rendered inaccurately, especially if we remember the tendency towards the simplification of doubled sounds, which was characteristic of the *koine*.<sup>49</sup>

Ungarns, (Budapest, 1976), Lief. 2 N 356) was probably a Syrian.

- 48 Cf. Biblical *Gādā* and *Gādi* (from *Gādī<sup>2</sup>ēl* and similar, Noth op. cit., 126f.), gentilic name *Gādā*, descendants of *Gād*, son of Jacob; Brøno, op. cit., 378., 399; E.A. Speiser, The Pronunciation of Hebrew based chiefly on the Transliterations in the Hexapla:, JQR, 23/3 (1933), 259–265; C. Siegfried, "Die Aussprache des Hebräischen bei Hieronymos", ZAW (1884), 73; V. Christian, Untersuchungen zur Laut- und Formenlehre des Hebräischen (Wien, 1953), 28–31.
- 49 This is the explanation of changes from Βαργαδδας to Βαργαδας (SEG VII 460 a, c, Dura-Europos) < Aramaic \**Bar-gaddā*; cf. Schwyzer, op. cit., 230f.; A Thumb, Die griechische Sprache im Zeitalter des Hellenismus (Strassburg, 1901), 23f. Cf. also the Greek rendering of Semitic personal names in papyri: Σαβαθις etc. (CPJ III, 189), in inscriptions: Ανι[να?, Ανηλος, parallel with Αννηλος (Lidzbarski, Ephemeris I, 336, 337), by Josephus: Ἀγίθη, Ἔθις (Εθθι, LXX), Μαθας (Ματθαν, LXX) Φαβις, -ης etc. (Schalit, NWB s vv.) It is difficult to decide which explanation is better for the following *Kurznamen* of personal names with \**gadd*: Aramaic (Nabatean) Γαδους (IGLS XIII 1. 9281: < \**Gad(d)ū/ō*, cf. Lidzbarski, Ephemeris II, 85; idem, Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigrafik (Weimar, 1989), 248; *gdw*: Cantineau, op. cit. II, 76, s.v. *gd<sup>2</sup>*) or Γαδδος (Lidzbarski, Ephemeris I, 336; < \**Gaddō*?); Γαδανα(ς), IGLS I, 230, 5; < \**Gad(d)on(a)* (cf. Lidzbarski, Ephemeris II, 18f.); Γαδανα (masculine, IGLS IV 1881; < \**Gad(d)an(a)*, cf. *Gdn<sup>2</sup>*: Thesaurus Syriacus, ed. R. Payne Smith, I (Oxford, 1879), 658, IGLS I, ad 230, 5); Γαδαιος (?) = ειος (?) (IGLS III, 1. 453, 454; < \**Gad(d)ay*, cf. Jastrow, op. cit., 210, s.v. Gadday; Lidzbarski, Ephemeris II, 16 *GĎ<sup>2</sup>* y) or Γαδδαιος (Hebr.?): CPJ I, 37, 1; Ohana, Helzer, op. cit., 39



2) This is a rendering of \**Gad(d)ān* (cf. n. 41); Semitic names in *-ān* when Graecised quite often received the ending *-ας*.<sup>50</sup>

3) The name is formed according to the "Menschennamen aus Heroennamen" type: *-ας* was added arbitrarily to the name of the prophet *Gad* Josephus Ant. VII 13. 2 etc.<sup>51</sup> cf. Γάδας, *Gād*)<sup>52</sup> However, besides the name of the prophet, *Gād* as a personal name seems to be unknown. The only exception is probably Γαδου (genitive, Christian inscription from the Negeb), the interpretation of which is problematic.<sup>53</sup>

4) The name is taken from the root *gdh* (*qatal* outline), "hoedus, catulus": Aramaic *gdh* (\**gadē*),<sup>54</sup> *gadyā* Syriac *gdy*; Hebrew *gādī*, feminine *gadiyyā*; the most widespread form is *Gadyā*, *Gadyā*;<sup>55</sup> if we take into consideration Aramaic \**gadē* Hebrew *gādī*, we can assume the corresponding forms of a personal name.<sup>56</sup> But in this case Γαδης, Γαδι – and similar would be more natural, so this etymology

50 Blass, Debrunner, Rehkopf, op. cit. § 53. 3 c; Josephus: Βαλάδας, Ίουκτας, Καινᾶς, Μάθας, Νάθας.

51 So B. Nadel, *Listy Filologické*, 91/3 (1968), 271, who also ascribes N 11 (Γαδεις) here.

52 The name of the tribe of *Gād* in Josephus (Γαδ, LXX); see also above n.

53 Arabic *Ġadd?*; nomnative Γαδης < \**Gadē*; \**Gad(d)ō/ū* (cf. n. 49); cf. Lidzbarski. *Ephemeris* II, 337: "*Gād* or *Ġadd*"; cf. *ibid.*, 351.

54 J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire* (Rome, 1967), 85 (comm.); cf. Christian, op. cit., 130.

55 Nöldeke, op. cit., 82f.; Lidzbarski, *Handbuch*, 248f.; *idem*, *Ephemeris* I, 142, II, 12, n. 1, 79, 122f, 333; Ohana, Heltzer, op. cit., 39; Vattioni, *Inscriptioni*, N71; 230, 2; Cantineau, op. cit. II, I, 76f.; Jastrow, op. cit., 211; Schalit, *NWB*, 30 (Γαδιας); CPJ I, 510, 535 (Γαδιας), Solin, op. cit., 677, 729, 730, 742, *Année ép.* (1985), N74 (*Gadia*).

56 Some Greek and Latin documents (see bibliography in n. 66) supply forms in *-ē*, *-ī*; *-α/-a*, *ας*, *ος*, quite often join the arbitrary Semitic stem, cf. above, n. 32.

suits N 11 better.

11. Γάδεις, masc., Gorgippia, 59 A.D., N 1124, 4, in the form of patronymic Γαδειος. For -εις < Hebr. – ī cf. Ἡλείς Ληουείς, Σιμούεις, Φαβείς (Schalit, NWB s. vv.), Palmyra Σαβεις, šby<sup>57</sup> etc. We do not know any example of -εις < ē, but in view of itacism (-ης: -ις: – εις) such an interpretation is not impossible. Rendering of *šawa mobile* in the first syllable by α is quite normal.<sup>58</sup> The name can represent either Hebrew *Gaddī*<sup>59</sup> or Hebrew or Aramaic \**Gad(d)ē*.<sup>60</sup> Γαδεις in the form of patronymic (Γαδει) is also witnessed in Olbia in the dedication to Ἀχιλλεύς Ποντάρχης.<sup>61</sup> This fact does not contradict the interpretation of the name as Semitic: 1) the name belongs not to the dedicator but to his father, 2) the Jewish presence in Olbia is testified by the erection in the city of a Jewish prayer house (προσευχή).<sup>62</sup>

12. Βοχορου, Gorgippia, II<sup>nd</sup> cent. A.D., N77, 1136, probably also in two other inscriptions from Gorgippia of the same time.<sup>63</sup> The name was identified with a Semitic name from the root *bkr* by Segert, who correctly added that the name is not necessarily Jewish, referring to the

57 Stark, op. cit., 50.

58 Cf. Γαδίας (above, n. 55), Δαδάνης, Δαλάλη (LXX Dalila), Ζαχαρίας (Schalit, NWB, s vv.); Σαλωμών (Blass, Debrunner, Rehkopf, op. cit., § 53, n. 3; Wuthnow, op. cit., 103, 111; Brønno, op. cit., 320ff.

59 Cf. LXX Γαδδι, Γαδδει, Γαδδης (Schalit, NWB, 66) LXX Γαδδι.

60 Latin rendering (Aramaic): Gaddes, Gadde (a simple transcription!): The Excavations of Dura-Europos. Final Report, I (New Haven, 1959), N 98 I 8, 100 XXXIV etc.

61 Nadpisi Ol'vii (Leningrad, 1968), 81, N 88, 5.

62 IPE I<sup>2</sup> 176, see R. L. Erlich, DAN-B N6 (1928), 124–127, A. Kocevalov, "Beiträge zu den euxeinischen Inschriften", Würzburger Jahrbücher, 3 (1948), 163–174.

63 N 1130; I. T. Kruglikova, Vestnik drevnej istorii N 2 (1967), 193 N8; Kalashnik, op. cit., 150.

Syriac  $\text{Bo}\chi\text{o}\rho\text{o}\varsigma$ .<sup>64</sup>

13.  $\text{I}\alpha\varsigma$ , masculine, Gorgippia, II<sup>nd</sup>–III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., N 1140, 3; 1179, 57; 25 (also  $\Sigma\alpha\phi\alpha\tau\alpha\varsigma$ , see N4); 1180 (the inscriptions of *thiasoi*?). A strange interpretation was given by L. Zgusta (Pers. § 1030), who considered this name to be Greek. This puzzled him, though the only reason was his own interpretation! "Was uns an dem Namen überraschen muss, ist der Umstand, dass eine feminine Form für einen Mannsnamen gebraucht wird".<sup>65</sup> With the exception of the Bosporan kingdom, the name is known only in the Near East and Egypt, but it is too short for trustworthy etymology and even ethno-linguistic attribution (Arabic or Northern Semitic?).<sup>66</sup> The following forms are undeniably Jewish:  $\text{E}\iota\alpha\varsigma$  (due to itacism<sup>67</sup>),  $\text{hyy}^{\text{c}}$  (\**Hiyyā*);<sup>68</sup>  $\text{I}\alpha\varsigma$ , LXX (Masoretic  $Y\bar{a}h\bar{o}^{\text{c}}\bar{a}\bar{s}$ )<sup>69</sup> <  $Y\bar{o}^{\text{c}}\bar{a}\bar{s}$  is probably possible to compare our  $\text{I}\alpha\varsigma$  with  $\text{E}\iota\alpha\varsigma$  from Phrygia, Bithynia and

64 Zgusta, Pers. § 754. Bibl. –Masor. Bākār, LXX  $\text{Bo}\chi\text{o}\rho$ ;  $\text{Bikr}\bar{i}$ , LXX  $\text{Bo}\chi\text{o}\rho(\epsilon)\iota$ , Josephus  $\text{Bo}\chi\text{o}\rho\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ ; Lidzbarski, Ephemeric III, 30; Noth, IPN, 239; Murtonen, op. cit., 227. Aramaic (Palmyrene, Syriac, Nabatean) bkrw: Nöldeke, op. cit., 82; Stark, op. cit., 9; Canteneau, op. cit., II, 71; Teixidor, Bull. ép. sém. (1970), N 92.

65  $^{\text{c}}\text{I}\acute{\alpha}\nu$  and  $^{\text{c}}\text{I}\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$  as personal names: F. Bechtel, Die historischen Personennamen des Griechischen (Halle a.d.S., 1977), 539, 545.

66 Wuthnow, op. cit., 151; E. Littmann in F. Preisigke, Namenbuch (Heidelberg, 1922), 509, 522. Indisputably Arabic (\**Ilyās*): Excavations at Nessana, 3 Non-Literary Papyri, ed. by C.J. Kraemer (Princeton, 1958) N98. 8 (?), 18, 39; cf. 352.

67 Or graphical substitution for -iyy group?

68 Greek-Hebrew bilingual inscription: Lidzbarski, Ephemeric I, 189, 350, interpretation of T. Nöldeke (differently – Ephemeric II, 8); cf. *hyh*: Kornfeld, op. cit., 50; Late Hebrew *hyyh*: Hölscher, op. cit., 154; Murtonen, op. cit., 249.

69 IV Reg. 14. 8 (A); Hatch, Redpath, op. cit., 75; cf.  $^{\text{c}}\text{I}\alpha\sigma\text{-o}\varsigma$  Schalit, NWB, 57:  $Y\bar{o}$   $\bar{a}\bar{s}$ .

Cilicia,<sup>70</sup> though as far as we know there are no examples of this name from Asia Minor (perhaps with the exception of *Ια* (feminine<sup>71</sup>) in itacised form.<sup>72</sup>

14. *Βοθυλις*, the son of *Ωνιας* (see above N3); there seems to be no other example of this name. Taking into consideration the Jewish patronymic, semitic etymology is rather tempting, but there are no suitable Jewish names besides the Biblical<sup>73</sup> *Betū<sup>3</sup> ēl*, LXX *Βαθου(η)λ*,<sup>74</sup> Josephus *Βαθούηλος*, the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother (Gen. 22, 22–23). Formally such a comparison is quite possible: for the šəwa mobile > ο (like α) cf. *Σολομών*, *Σόδομα* (LXX, Josephus); for -ουη- > -ου- cf. *Ἰουῦλος* and *Ἰουῆλος* < *Yō<sup>3</sup>ēl*;<sup>75</sup> variations between -ου- and -υ- are very common in the Roman period;<sup>76</sup> above all there is the Graecised productive model with the hypocoristic suffix -υλ(λ)ος.<sup>77</sup>

15. *Γομαρια*, feminine, Panticapaeum, 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., N 292 (tombstone), cf. in the masculine) Biblical *gəmarya*, LXX *Γαμαρια*,

70 Zgusta, KPN, § 319–2, cf. EIA,; 319–1; P. Lombardi, "Inscritioni greche extra-urbane del Museo Nazionale Romano", *Tituli*, 2 (1980), 184f, N 3 (*Εια*, *Eia*, *Heius*).

71 As a less common variant for *Εια* (see n. 70), Zgusta, KPN § 447–1 and his remarks to § 319–4.

72 This spelling seems to be supported by the diphthong in the original form. cf. Old Phrygian *Eies* from Gordion: Cl. Brixhe, M. Lejeune, *Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes*, I (Paris, 1984), 102, N G–108.

73 Aramaic provenance (?), see Noth, IPN, 89; cf. W.W. Baudussin "El Bet-El", *Vom Alten Testament*, 3.

74 Cf. Murtonen, *op. cit.*, 232f.

75 Schalit, NWB, s. vv. Similar contraction see: *ibid.*, s. vv. *Μαθουσαλας* I.2, *Ἰαλος*, *Ἰασος* (cf. above N 13).

76 Thumb, *op. cit.*, 193f.

77 Schwyzer, *op. cit.*, 485; F. Dornseiff, B. Hansen, *Rückläufiges Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* (Berlin, 1957), 256, 192.

*gmryh* from Egypt.<sup>78</sup>

16. Μαρία, Panticapaeum, IV<sup>th</sup> century A.D., N 759 (tombstone). The name derives from the Biblical *Miryām*; Greek and Latin texts rendered this Jewish name using Μαριάμ as Μαρία.<sup>79</sup> The editors of CIRB did not exclude the possibility of a Christian provenance for this tombstone; there are no Christian symbols on the stone to support this contention.

Among dipinti on amphorae of the III<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. from Tanais there are a number of abbreviated personal names, which could be Jewish:

17. ZAX,<sup>80</sup> cf. Biblical Z~karyā(hū), Ζαχαρίας LXX, etc.

18. ZA, ZAΔO, from the same house as Ιουδα (N6).<sup>81</sup> The name can be compared with Biblical *Sādōq* and other names with the same root: e.g. Ζαδο(κος). The usual rendering of s in Greek and Latin is σ, s,<sup>82</sup> but Z is also possible: cf. Βελζεδέκ < b<sup>c</sup>lsdq (Josephus).<sup>83</sup> *Omikron* instead of *omega* is quite usual in the Roman period.

The Jewish presence in Panticapaeum and Gorgippia is attested by inscriptions, whereas for Tanais it is not directly witnessed either by inscriptions, or archaeologically. It is worth mentioning that the main features of the distribution of Jewish names in the Bosporan kingdom coincide with the spread of the dedications to the Most High God. So

78 Kornfeld, op. cit. (see n. 9), 46.

79 See, for instance, Blass, Debrunner, Rehkopf, op. cit., § 53, n. 12; Μαρία as a Jewish name: CPJ III, 184; CIJ I 1, 137, 374 etc. (cf. Solin, op. cit., 678); Vattioni, I semiti, 538, Josephus B.J. VI, 201; about Maria from the gens Maria see: New Doc. 1979 (1987), 230, N 115.

80 Shelov, Dipinti, 110.

81 Shelov, Lichnye imena, 52; idem, Dipinti, 115, 120, 123.

82 Hatch, Redpath, op. cit., 131ff., (in particular Σαδώκ, Σαδδώκ, Σαδ(δ)ούκ, Σαδοθχ); Murtonen, op. cit., 315–319; Schalit, NWB, 140, 143.

83 Also: Ζόαρα (LXX Ζηγωρ), Ζοφωνίας: Schalit, NWB, 50; Blass, Debrunner, Rehkopf, op. cit. § 39, n. 8.



taking into consideration the outstanding position of this cult in Tanais,<sup>84</sup> the concentration of Jewish names here is not surprising. It is impossible to say whether all bearers of Jewish names in Tanais were Jews or God-fearers. On balance it is quite tempting to consider Sambations (or their sons) to be God-fearers, and Ιουδα to be a Jew. But, of course, this can not be proved.

The wide diffusion of monotheistic ideas in the Bosporan kingdom in the first centuries A.D. is very important for the reconstruction of the cultural and historical process of the first millenium A.D. both in the Bosphorus and elsewhere (the Crimea, the Northern Caucasus, the Don region and the Lower Volga region). A long monotheistic tradition could could the rapid spread of Christianity in this region. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the destroyed levels of the Bosporan towns, which had been dated to the end of the IVth century, should be dated to a later period, and that consequently there was demographic and cultural continuity at least during the migration period.<sup>85</sup> If this hypothesis is correct, then the question of the role played by the Bosphorus area in the diffusion of Judaism among the Khazars becomes very topical.

84 85% of all the dedications to the gods found in Tanais were made to the Most High God, while if we take into consideration private dedications only, the figure is even more impressive – 100%. The number of members of *thiasoi* in Tanais shows that nearly all the male population of the city in the III<sup>rd</sup> century were adherents of the Most High God.

85 E. Ya. Nikolaeva, *Bospor posle gunnskogo nashestivya*, Avtoreferat dissertatsii (Moskva, 1984); A.V. Sazanov, Yu. F. Ivashchenko, "K voprosu o datirovkakh pozdneantichnykh sloev gorodov Bospora", *Sovetskaya arkhologiya*, N1 (1989), 84–102.