

I. A Comparison between a rendering of the Tetragrammaton in the period before the Councils of Nicaea and Laodicea and some names used in magical formularies

Clemens Alexandrinus in his “Stromata”¹⁷³ relates that on the front-plate of the High Priest the name Ἰαoue was written.¹⁷⁴

This is an important indication of the possible pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton in the cultic atmosphere of the Temple – which pronunciation is uncertain. (Though Clemens does not state that Ἰαoue was the cultic pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton, this may safely be assumed on the basis of his vocalized rendering of this word.) This is the more important since this indication of the pronunciation dates from the period before the Councils of Nicaea (325) and Laodicea (348–380) which made the breach between Christians and Jews definite. In the time of Clemens regular contact between Jews and Christians was still possible and Jewish traditions regarding the pronunciation¹⁷⁵ may not have been unfamiliar to Christian circles.

W. W. von Baudissin writes in this connection:¹⁷⁶

“An der ganzen Reihe von Bezeugungen verschiedener Wieder-
gaben des jüdischen Gottesnamens beachte man, dass – worauf
“soviel ich sehe, noch nicht aufmerksam gemacht worden ist –
“die Zeugnisse aus dem ersten Jahrhundert v. Chr.¹⁷⁷ und auch
“noch – so wenigstens das Zeugnis bei Clemens – aus dem zweiten
“Jahrhundert n. Chr.¹⁷⁸ sich ihrer wahrscheinlicher Herkunft nach
“wesentlich unterscheiden von denen aus dem vierten Jahr-
“hundert.”¹⁷⁹

Support for the view that the name Ἰαoue contains an indication of the pronunciation of the Divine Name in Hebrew may be found in five names occurring in magical papyri in the “Rijksmuseum voor Oudheden” in Leyden, and in the “London British Museum”, which have been published, among others, by A. Deissmann¹⁸⁰ and K. Preisendanz.¹⁸¹

The most frequent of these five magical names is Ἰαωουηε¹⁸², which

occurs as many as three times. It corresponds with the twice-occurring 'Ιαωουεη¹⁸³ and the names: 'Ιαωουε¹⁸⁴, 'Ιαωουη¹⁸⁵ and 'Ιαωουεα¹⁸⁶, which in the papyri are all written without a hiatus.¹⁸⁷

The form 'Ιαωουηε, which occurs most frequently, deserves special attention. This form, used in a magical context, may, like the corresponding variants, be considered to be an enriched form of the cultic name 'Ιαουε handed down to us by Clemens. This “enrichment”, by means of inserting nearly all the Greek vowels, was made possible by the relation between ου and ω on the one hand, and ε and η on the other.¹⁸⁸

Whether or not the names in these magical formularies are in themselves reliable indications of the original pronunciation¹⁸⁹, at any rate they confirm the name mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus.^{189a}

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Which conclusions may be derived from the names mentioned by Clemens and by the magical papyri with regard to the pronunciation of the Tetragrammaton?

This problem has been discussed by B. Alfrink in *Old Testament Studies V* (1948).¹⁹⁰ On the basis of a comparison with the rendering of Hebrew proper names in the Septuagint and the transcription of other Hebrew words in Origenes' *Hexapla*¹⁹¹, which he consulted inter alia through an article by A. Sperber¹⁹² which will be more fully discussed below, he arrives at the conclusion that a form like 'Ιαωουηε must be explained in the following manner¹⁹³:

The first part of this name ('Ιαω) corresponds with the first two letters of the Tetragrammaton (יה). This rendering was intentionally chosen in order thus to express the frequently used Name 'Ιαω. In addition the two vowels α and ω were both needed so as to make use of as many Greek vowels in the name as possible.

The ου stands for the י (the third letter of the Tetragrammaton) as it is usual in the Septuagint and in the *Hexapla*. This view is supported by a reference to Sperber's article (p. 129) and to the ου in 'Ιαουε.¹⁹⁴