IOTNIAN (Romans 16:7) and the Hebrew Name Yêhunnî

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IOTNIAN άσπάσασθε Ἄνδρόνικον καὶ ΙΟΤΝΙΑΝ τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συν­
αχμαλώτους μου, οίτινές εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις.

Greet Andronicus and Junia/s, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles. (Rom 16:7)

There has been considerable exegetical discussion over the last thirty years about whether IOTNIAN in this verse (to be preferred over the ΙΟΤΛΙΑΝ of some manuscripts) should be interpreted as a male or a female name. A broad consensus in favor of the latter interpretation seems to have emerged.¹ The scholarly dis-

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cussion and its widely shared outcome have recently even inspired an American journalist to write a full-length popular book on the "lost apostle" Junia.²

When we compare the evidence adduced in favor of Ιουνίαν as a masculine name with that brought forward in support of Ιουνίαν as a feminine name, there is really no contest. The latter clearly wins the day. However, before we conclude that the Latin name Junia is the only serious candidate for a reasonable interpretation of IOTNIAN in Rom 16:7, we need to consider another possibility, namely, that it reflects a Semitic, specifically a Hebrew, personal name. After all, it would not be surprising if a person whom Paul numbers among his kinfolk (συγγενείς) should turn out to have a specifically Jewish name, comparable to the Μαρία of the previous verse.³

This is an option that is usually not considered by commentators.⁴ An exception is John Thorley, but he raises the possibility of a Semitic original only to dismiss it. He writes, "The noun (whether IOTNIAN or IOYAIAN) is definitely not of Semitic or Greek origin. This initial vowel combination is very uncommon in Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic/Syriac and no obvious roots for the name exist in these languages."⁵ This statement overlooks the fact that a frequent name in the NT is spelled Ιούδας, representing the Hebrew name יְהוּדָא, and that the LXX includes more than a score of other proper names beginning with 'Ιου-.⁶ In the Greek transliteration of Hebrew names, the guttural letters of the Hebrew alphabet (ח, כ, ט, ו) are generally not represented. The Greek alphabet did not have equivalents for these letters, and in any case the Hebrew spoken in late Second Temple times often dropped the phonemes they represented.⁷ It is therefore not at all unusual for the initial letters 'Ιου- to represent the beginning of a Hebrew name in which the second consonant is a guttural.

Furthermore, there are many Hebrew names that are hellenized as first declen-

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³ On Μαρία as the hellenized form of לְבִנָה, see BDF §53 (3).
⁴ I leave aside Bauckham's rather different suggestion that Junia is the Latin name adopted by Joanna (Luke 8:3 and 24:10) as the "sound-equivalent" of her Hebrew name, while Andronicus is the Greek name adopted by her husband Chuza (Gospel Women, 181–86).
⁵ Thorley, "Junia," 20.
sion masculine nouns following the paradigm of Νικίας or Λυσίας, which have a genitive in -ίου, and an accusative in -ίαν. In the NT, some fifteen personal names belong to this inflectional type, occurring a total of ninety-six times. By analogy with these names, IOYNIAI could well be the accusative of a masculine name, as illustrated by Matt 1:8–11, where four such masculine names occur in the accusative in quick succession: Όζίαν, Έζεκίαν, Ίωσίαν, and Ίεχονίαν. In fact, prior to the twentieth-century vogue of printing IOYNIAI as Ιουνίαν, this was the common way of interpreting it. It is likely that this widespread interpretation of the name at least partially accounts for the fact that all accented manuscripts of Rom 16:7 have the reading Ιουνίαν (with acute accent). It would be a mistake to conclude from this that the scribes of these manuscripts all interpreted IOYNIAI as a feminine name. It is with good reason that the most recent printings of UBS4 have omitted the misleading annotation “Ιουνίαν (masculine) . . . Ιουνίαν (feminine) . . . ,” as though the latter form could not be masculine.

The high incidence in the NT of first declension masculine names, especially those ending in -ίας, is rooted in a linguistic precedent set by the LXX translators. As H. St. J. Thackeray explains in his discussion of proper names in the LXX:

A large number of Hebrew masculine proper names end with the Divine name Yahweh in a more or less abbreviated form, usually י- (also נ-). These are in the majority of cases Hellenized by the adoption of the old termination -ίας.

Although in the NT personal names of this declensional type generally have a genitive in -άς, those with a nominative in -ίας regularly have a genitive in -ίου (BDF §55.1a).

The fifteen are Άνανίας, Βαραχίας, Έζεκίας, Ζαχαρίας, Ήλίας, Ήσαίας, Ίερεμίας, Ίωσίας, Λυσανίας, Λυσίας, Μαθθίας, Ματταθίας, Όζίας, and Ουρίας.


Pace Belleville, who repeatedly refers to “the feminine acute accent” (“Re-examination,” 238–39).

The accuracy of this statement can be easily confirmed by a glance at Hatch and Redpath's compilation of proper names in the LXX, which contains some 170 different examples of names declined like Νικίας. The frequency of these names can be illustrated by LXX Zeph 1:1: Λόγος κυρίου, ος ἐγένηθη πρὸς Σοφονίαν τὸν Χουσι ύλον Γοδολίου τοῦ Αμαρίου τοῦ Εξεκίου ἐν ἡμέρας Ἰωσίου ύλον Αμων βασιλέως Ιουδα. Of the eight proper nouns in this verse, five belong to the declensional type of Νικίας, namely, Σοφονίας, Γοδολίας, Αμαρίας, Εξεκίας, and Ἰωσίας, and the eighth illustrates the point about Greek proper nouns in the LXX beginning with Ιου-. As Thackeray points out, names in the LXX declined like Νικίας regularly reflect Hebrew names that end in -yah, -yahū, or -i. In fact, some reflect all three. Thus Ἄνανιας is used to represent not only ḫānanyāhū but also its shorter variants ḫānanyāh and ḫānāmī. Similarly, Ζαχαρίας and Ὄουρίας in the LXX each render Hebrew names with all three endings. Besides names like these (all three of which occur in the NT as well), we also have an example such as Νεμεσσίας, where the Hebrew name in question, נמש, also ends in -i, but where there is no record of a fuller theophoric name corresponding to it.

It is not unreasonable, therefore, to suggest that IOYNIAN in Rom 16:7 represents the first declension masculine name Ἰούνιας, and that this in turn is the hellenized form of a Hebrew name. The Hebrew name required would have to end in -yah(ū) or -i and have a guttural as second consonant. I propose that a plausible candidate for such a name is יִי יָע (to be vocalized yēhūnî), probably a shortened form of יִי יָע יָע (yēhūnîyāh(ū)), "may Yahweh be gracious." To assess the merits of this proposal, we need to take a look at the way Hebrew theophoric names are normally constructed.

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15 Hatch-Redpath, "Greek Proper Names," passim. There are twenty-nine examples under the letter alpha alone. (Following Hatch and Redpath, I have treated names like Ἀβδείας and Ἀβδίας as orthographic variants of the same name.)
16 The text cited (including the omission of breathings on the personal names) is that of Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum Autoritate Societatis Litterarum Gottingensis editum, vol. 13, Duodecim prophetae (ed. Joseph Ziegler; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943), 275.
17 Hatch-Redpath, "Greek Proper Names," 17.
20 For names ending in (י)י- I have used the transliteration -yah(ū) (with single y), following the usage of Jeanane D. Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names in Ancient Hebrew (JSOTSup 49; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 51, and passim.
It is well known that such names, following a pattern that was widespread in the ancient Near East, usually consisted of a divine name and a verbal form. The divine name (e.g., ba‘al or ‘el) sometimes came first, as in ‘el-nätän, but could also come second, as in nētān ‘el, both forms meaning “El has given.” In Israel the most common theophoric element was a shortened form of the tetragrammaton: yēhō- or yō- in initial position, and -yāhū or -yāh in final position. The verbal form was usually in the perfect, as in the two examples given, but the imperfect (or jussive) was also used, especially in initial position (e.g., yēhezqēl, “Ezekiel,” meaning “May El strengthen”).

As these examples illustrate, the regular rules of Hebrew phonology come into play when names are formed. When the two-word sentence nātan ‘el becomes a one-word proper noun, the vocalization of the verbal element changes, because the stress moves to the theophoric element, which now constitutes (or includes) the final syllable of the new phonetic unit. Thus, the first vowel of nātan is reduced to a shewa: nētan ‘el. Another phonetic feature of such sentence names is that an /i/ (which Noth calls a Bindevokal) is frequently inserted between the nominal and verbal elements of the name, as in sidq-i-yāhū and yahāz-i-‘el.

A verb that was especially common in Hebrew names was hānan, “to be gracious.” We find it in a whole series of biblical and extrabiblical Hebrew names: not only hānanyāh (ii), and its short form hānānī, but also hānām ‘el (with dissimilation), yēhōhānān, yōḥānān, ‘elhānān, and even b’lhn. The same verbal root also occurs frequently in the names attested in other Northwest Semitic languages. For example, a Moabite name consists of the simple verbal form yhn, and a common Phoenician one is yhnbc‘l, “may Baal be gracious.” Given the many permutations of Hebrew names incorporating forms of this verb, one might expect that a

21 See Martin Noth, Die israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der gemeinsemitischen Namengebung (1928; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966), 20; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 84, 89.
22 Noth, Personennamen, 101–8; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 32–38.
23 Noth, Personennamen, 27–28; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 89, 98–100. “May strengthen” (etc.) is only one of a number of possible translations of the prefix conjugation in names. As Fowler points out (p. 89), it does not necessarily express a wish (pace Noth, Personennamen, 195, who designates virtually all such names as Wunschnamen).
24 Noth, Personennamen, 33–36; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 134–35.
25 Noth, Personennamen, 187; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 82, 345.
26 Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 182, 191, 214, 266, 290.
27 See Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanites, 1997), 378 (no. 1024). Avigad vocalizes the name (the last letter of which is uncertain) as yahun. On names consisting of a simple verb in the imperfect, see Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 168.
Hebrew name corresponding to the Phoenician $\text{yhnbl}$, specifically $\text{yhnwy}(w)$ or its short form $\text{yhn}$, would also be part of the Jewish onomasticon.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the abbreviated Hebrew name $\text{yhnw}$, meaning "May he be gracious," has come to light in the epigraphic discoveries of the twentieth century. Two undisputed examples have been found. (1) In 1904 Robert Macalister found the name $\text{yhnw}$ inscribed on an ossuary near Gezer. Although he dated it broadly to Hellenistic times, subsequent scholars have lowered this date to the Herodian era, or even between 70 and 135 C.E. When it was first published, the philologist Stanley A. Cook explained the newly attested name as follows: "$\text{yhnw}$, probably from $\text{yhnw}$, 'may Yah be gracious.'" (2) A second occurrence of the name $\text{yhnw}$ was found in 1953 inscribed on another ossuary in the "Dominus Flevit" necropolis on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. Both the excavator (Bellarmino Bagatti) and the epigrapher (Józef T. Milik) dated it to the period after 70 C.E., perhaps as late as 135. It is of interest to note that Bagatti argued that the chamber in which this ossuary was found might well be the burial place of a number of early Jewish Christians, and that the inscription of the ossuary next to it in this chamber could be read "Simon bar Yonah" (cf. Matt 16:17). Although both these claims proved to be controversial, they do highlight the fact that this

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29 On abbreviated Hebrew names beginning with an imperfect verbal form, see Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names*, 160, 166, 168.


31 William G. Dever, "Gezer," *ABD* 2:1003; similarly Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names*, 377 (no. 9). Note that Ilan dates all ossuaries to before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (p. 52, §7.6.1).


33 See the note by the editor on p. 342 of Macalister, "Ninth Report." Stanley A. Cook (later Regius Professor of Hebrew at Cambridge) was the editor of the *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* from 1902 to 1932.


35 Bagatti, *Gli Scavi*, 44, 179; Milik, "Le iscrizioni," 105. The post-70 date applies to the complex of burial chambers (vani) numbered 65–80. The ossuary bearing the name $\text{yhnw}$ was one of fourteen found in no. 79. Ilan disagrees with this dating, opting instead for "Pre-70 CE" (*Lexicon of Jewish Names*, 377, no. 10); see n. 31 above.


37 Bellarmino Bagatti, "Scoperta di un cimitero giudeo-cristiano al 'Dominus Flevit,'" *SBFLA* 3 (1953): 149–84, here 162. Milik also considers this reading possible but is uncertain about some of the letters of "Yonah" ("Le iscrizioni," 83).

ossuary inscription, like the one found near Gezer, brings us very close to the time and milieu of the apostle Paul.

In the epigraphical literature of the twentieth century there is also a third attestation of the name, but this has recently been cast into doubt. According to epigrapher David Diringer, a jar handle that was excavated at Lachish in the 1930s, which could be dated to around 700 B.C.E., was stamped with a seal impression containing the name \( \text{yhn} \) (with some uncertainty about the second letter).\(^{39}\) However, according to Nahman Avigad, the inscription in question is one of a series of seven extant impressions of the same seal, and the name in question should actually be read as \( \text{ywbnh} \).\(^{40}\)

Whether the Lachish jar handle is included or not, these finds establish quite securely that the name \( \text{yhn} \) was an actual Hebrew name that is attested in ancient Israel in the first century C.E., if not earlier. Although the ending -\( y \) in a name does not guarantee that the theophoric element of the fuller form is \(-\text{yah}(\dot{u})\),\(^{41}\) the latter is much more likely than any other divine name.\(^{42}\) It is therefore probably safe to assume, with Cook, Gustaf Dalman, Otto Eissfeldt, and Ran Zadok, that \( \text{yhn} \) is a short form of \( \text{yhn} \).\(^{43}\)

But how should the short form \( \text{yhn} \) be vocalized? With respect to the final \( yod \), it most likely represents -\( i \) (so Macalister, Jean-Baptiste Frey, Milik, and Rachel Hachlili\(^{44}\)), since this is by far the most common ending of shortened names in Hebrew.\(^{45}\) As for the phonetic value of the \( waw \), this will depend on the vocaliza-


\(^{40}\) Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 249 (no. 678D). I am grateful to Alan Millard for alerting me to this revised reading.


\(^{42}\) It occurs more than twice as often as its nearest competitor (\( \text{ël} \)); see Fowler, *Theophoric Personal Names*, 32.

\(^{43}\) Cook in Macalister, "Ninth Report," 342 (editorial note); Gustaf Dalman as cited in Klein, *Corpus Inscriptionum*, 53; Otto Eissfeldt, "Onias," *RE* 18:1, 474–75; Ran Zadok, "Das nachbiblische jüdische Onomastikon," in *Trumah 1: Hochschule für jüdische Studien Heidelberg* (ed. Moshe Elat et al.; Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1987), 247, 309. Fowler adopts a more cautious formulation: "The name \( \text{yhn} \) [of the disputed Lachish jar handle] may also be a sf. [short form] from the root \( \text{hm} \) 'to show favour, be gracious' and a theophoric element" (*Theophoric Personal Names*, 167). Although \( \text{yhn} \) is the most likely longer form of \( \text{yhn} \), the argument of this essay works equally well if its longer form is assumed to be \( \text{yhn} \) (for example) rather than \( \text{yhn} \).


\(^{45}\) Noth, *Personennamen*, 38; and Ran Zadok, *The Pre-Hellenistic Anthroponymy and Protopography* (OLA 28; Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 156–57. In the MT the final \( yod \) of short forms of
tion of the longer theophoric form from which יְהֹונִי is presumably derived. Eissfeldt vocalizes this longer form as נָני or יְהֹוָניָה, but this is clearly a mistake. As Zadok has pointed out, the verbal element of יְהֹaway fits the pattern of an imperfect of the יָקַע type. This means that it follows the paradigm of a geminate verb with /u/ as its original stem vowel. In this paradigm the /u/ of the stem is retained in forms of the imperfect that have a stress-bearing afformative. In those forms the general rule is that the closed and unstressed stem syllable *qull, characterized by both the doubling of the second root consonant and the short vowel /u/, is preserved unchanged in Hebrew. Although this rule allows of some exceptions in the Tiberian tradition of Masoretic vocalization, where this /u/ sometimes becomes /o/, it is quite strictly observed in the Babylonian tradition. Forms of geminate verbs in the imperfect qal that illustrate this rule include יָהֹ֣נִי (Gen 27:22), יָהֹ֣נִי (Job 40:22), and יָהֹ֣נִי (Gen 37:7). In the case of the verb יָהֹ֣נִי, the rule accounts for such forms as יָהֹ֣נִי (Num 6:25), יָהֹ֣נִי (Isa 27:11), and יָהֹ֣נִי (Job 33:24). Eissfeldt's mistaken vocalization יְהֹוָניָה also fails to take into account another phonetic rule that applies to the imperfect forms of verbs like יָהֹ֣נִי: when the stress-bearing afformative after the stem syllable *qull begins with a consonant, the characteristic “separating vowel” of geminate verbs is inserted between the stem syllable and the afformative in question. This is illustrated in the last four of the biblical texts just cited.

All of this means that, according to the regular phonetic patterns of Hebrew,
the name *yhwnyh would be pronounced yēhunnïyāh, in which the theophoric element -yah is the stress-bearing afformative, and the /i/ is the Bindevokal of theophoric names, which here functions simultaneously as the separating vowel of geminate verbs.\textsuperscript{52} It follows from this that yhwny, as the shortened form of the full theophoric name (but still with a stress-bearing afformative) would have been pronounced yēhunnì.\textsuperscript{53}

This conclusion is supported also by the use of the vowel letter waw in yhwny. The short vowel /u/ is frequently represented by waw, even in the MT.\textsuperscript{54} In fact, biblical examples of this spelling include cases where the /u/ represented by waw is precisely what we are discussing—the preserved original stem vowel in the imperfect of a geminate verb (see יֹודֵעֲנֵה in Ps 49:6, and יָעָסַד in Isa 28:28\textsuperscript{55}). On the other hand, the short vowel /i/—the qames hätuf to which the /u/ in this position is sometimes changed in the Tiberian vocalization—is very rarely represented by waw.\textsuperscript{56} In short, the conventions of ancient Hebrew orthography also favor the conclusion that the waw in yhwny represents /u/, not /i/.

There is a further point that supports the pronunciation of *yhwnyh as yēhunnïyāh. The verbs of the Aaronic blessing of Num 6:24-26, which the priest pronounced over the people twice daily in the temple, and weekly in synagogues, were often used in the construction of Hebrew names.\textsuperscript{57} The ancient blessing contained as the second of its three components the sentence “may Yahweh make his face to shine over you, and be gracious to you,” in which the last clause renders the Hebrew וּהָעֲנֵה (wîhunnekkà). This familiar benediction finds echoes in other parts of the Hebrew Bible, and in the sectarian literature of Qumran it becomes a kind of stock phrase, always spelled plene as yhwnkh, and presumably pronounced yēhunnekkàh.\textsuperscript{58} The postulated name *yēhunnïyāh, by replacing the pronominal

\textsuperscript{52} Since to my knowledge there are no other attested examples in the MT (or elsewhere) of theophoric names beginning with the imperfect of a geminate verb, the coincidence of Bindevokal and separating vowel in this case is an inference based on analogy.

\textsuperscript{53} Pace Sandra L. Gogel, who vocalizes the disputed yhny of the Lachish jar handle as “Yahani,” apparently unaware of the later attestations of the name spelled plene (A Grammar of Epigraphic Hebrew [SBLRBS 23; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998], 489).

\textsuperscript{54} Muraoka states that this spelling occurs “rather frequently” in the MT when followed by gemination (Joouen-Muraoka, 48 [§7b]). He refers to Francis I. Andersen and A. Dean Forbes, Spelling in the Hebrew Bible: Dahood Memorial Lecture (BibOr 41; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986), 95-98, which lists fifty-one examples in the MT.

\textsuperscript{55} On the latter spelling, see HALOT, s.v. פָּנִים.

\textsuperscript{56} Joouen-Muraoka, 48 (§7b, n. 4). Since the name יָעְנֵה (spelled plene) is found only in ossuary inscriptions, it is significant that these inscriptions elsewhere appear never to have a waw representing qames hätuf. For example, the name גָּלַי, “Goliath,” is spelled without waw in the inscriptions of the ossuaries numbered 783, 799, and 801 in Rahmani, Jewish Ossuaries.

\textsuperscript{57} Klaus Seybold, Der aaronitische Segen: Studien zu Numeri 6, 22-27 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1977), 12, 34.

\textsuperscript{58} See Bilhah Nitzan, Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry (STDJ 12; Leiden: Brill, 1994),
suffix -kā of this blessing formula with the divine name -yāḥ, in effect supplies the understood divine subject: “May Yahweh be gracious.” Such a name would constitute an overt allusion to the priestly blessing, and would hardly have adopted a vocalization of the stem syllable different from that of the sacred liturgical formula.

In this connection it is also important to point out that yēhunnī is not to be confused with the Hebrew original of the common Jewish Greek name 'Oνίας. The latter is first found in Sir 50:1, where the corresponding name in the Hebrew text is yōḥānān.59 This correlation of Greek 'Oνίας and Hebrew yōḥānān is found also in Josephus, 2 Maccabees, and Strabo, while in other contexts 'Oνίας regularly reflects one or another of the numerous variations of yōḥānān that were current among the Jews (e.g., hwnyw, nhwnywn, h(w)nyh, h(w)ny, hny).60 The attempt to derive one of these variations, namely, hwny (= 'Oνίας), from the similar-looking yhwny (so Dalman, Eissfeldt, and Zadok61) fails to recognize that yhwny is a shortened form of a theophoric name like *yhwnyh (imperfect verb plus divine name), not of yw unh (divine name plus perfect verb), and that its stem vowel (given the usual inflection of geminate verbs like hānan and the plene spelling of yhwny) is /u/, not /o/. But quite apart from this, the postulated elision of the verbal prefix y- in names, such that yhwny could become hwny, is virtually without precedent.62 I suspect that it is this assumed connection of yhwny with 'Oνίας that has led scholars ever since Macalister to vocalize yhw yn as yēhōnī rather than yēhunnī.63

The longer form *yhwnyh is not found in the MT or rabbinic sources, nor has it been found in inscriptions. However, whether we take our point of departure in the attested short form yhwny (yēhunnī) or the hypothetical full form *yhwnyh (yēhunnīyāḥ) from which it is probably derived, both names are plausible candidates for a Hebrew name that would have been represented in Greek as 'Ιουνίας,


60 Ilan, Lexicon of Jewish Names, 377–79.

61 Dalman in Klein, Corpus Inscriptionum, 53; Eissfeldt, "Onias," 484; Zadok, "Das nachbiblische jüdische Onomastikon," 247, 309.

62 See Noth, Personennamen, 27 n. 1; and Fowler, Theophoric Personal Names, 153. Zadok speaks of this proposed derivation as a "special case" (Sonderfall) ("Das nachbiblische jüdische Onomastikon," 309). He now agrees that 'Oνίας does not reflect yhwny (personal communication). Ilan's view, that yhwny is "the name ΙΩΝΙΑΣ with a theophoric prefix" (Lexicon of Jewish Names, 378 n. 25), is equally unpersuasive. She offers no parallel for such an expansion of an abbreviated name by a theophoric prefix.

-ου. As we have seen, the first declension masculine paradigm represents a common way of adapting Hebrew names in -yēḥ(û) or -i to the Greek language, and the representation of yēḥu- by 'Ιου- also has many parallels. As with 'Ιούδας and its cognates, the guttural letter (with its preceding shewa) simply disappears from the Greek spelling, just as -ēh- disappears in 'Ιεζεκιελ, the standard Greek transliteration of yēhezqēl, ‘Ezekiel.' As for the representation of the doubled consonant in yēhunnî by the single consonant in 'Ιουνίας, this too follows a familiar pattern.64

The foregoing has argued that it is not unreasonable, from a philological point of view, to interpret ΙΟΥΝΙΑΝ in Rom 16:7 as the Greek form of a Hebrew name. The argument is simple and can be summarized in three steps. (1) A Hebrew name yhwny, meaning “may he be gracious,” is attested in Paul's own day. (2) This name would most likely have been pronounced yēhunnî. (3) In biblical Greek, the name yēhunnî would have been hellenized as the first declension masculine noun 'Ιουνίας.

It might be objected against this interpretation that the Greek name 'Ιουνίας is not found elsewhere. However, further reflection shows that this objection carries little weight. Since the original Hebrew name yēhunnî is attested in only two or three places—all of them outside the Hebrew Bible—it is to be expected that its Greek form 'Ιουνίας will be found rarely, if at all. In fact, a survey of Hebrew and Aramaic names in the Greek Bible reveals that many of these are hapax legomena. This is true not only of indeclinable forms like 'Ρησά (Luke 3:27) and 'Ελμαδάμ (Luke 3:28) but also of names that have been adapted to regular Greek declensions, like Χουζας (Luke 8:3) and Κλωπάς (John 19:25). More specifically, the same pattern is observed in names declined like Νικίας. An examination of the approximately 170 examples of such names in the LXX (see n. 15 above) reveals that dozens of them are absolute hapax legomena in ancient Greek. A few representative examples, drawn from names beginning with the first six letters of the Greek alphabet, are the following: Άβαδίας (1 Esdr 8:35), Βορολίας (1 Esdr 5:8), Γαμαρίας (Jer 36 [29]:3), Δαλίας (Jer 43 [36]:12), Έσελίας (4 Kgdms 22:3), and Ζαμαρίας (1 Chr 7:8).65 These names occur only once in the LXX and, to my knowledge, are not attested elsewhere in antiquity.66 It appears that it is very com-

64 See BDF §40; Ilan, *Lexicon of Jewish Names*, 22 (§2.3.4).
65 The LXX names are here given as they are found in *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (ed. Alfred Rahlfs; Editio minor; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979).
mon in biblical Greek to find hellenized forms of Hebrew names—especially those belonging to the same declension as 'Ιουνίας—that are attested nowhere apart from their single biblical occurrence. Consequently, the fact that there are no attestations of the name 'Ιουνίας apart from Rom 16:7 is hardly surprising.

Finally, although the Hebrew name yēhunnī is attested only for men, both it and the assumed longer form *yēhunnīyah(ū) could in principle be women's names as well, since Hebrew sentence names are used indiscriminately for both genders. However, the case is different for Greek names like Νικίας. To the best of my knowledge, they are used exclusively of men, in both secular and biblical Greek. If the IOYNIAN of Rom 16:7 belongs to this declensional type, then it is almost certainly a man's name.70

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67 Except, of course, in religious literature referring to these scriptural passages.
68 See Noth, Personennamen, 62.
69 Ilan lists a Greek woman's name Λυσίας (Lexicon of Jewish Names, 322), but this appears to be based on a confusion between the masculine name Λυσίας (genitive Λυσίου) and the feminine name Λυσίας (genitive Λυσίαδος). See Benseler, Dr. W. Pape's Wörterbuch, 2:829. In any case, the name in question is found only in a Coptic text, where it is actually spelled "Lysia." See also Richard Bauckham, Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 8, 42.
70 This conclusion still leaves open the question whether it is more likely that the IOYNIAN of Rom 16:7 reflects a Hebrew masculine name or a Latin feminine one. The answer to that question depends largely on how one assesses the likelihood that Paul would have considered a woman to be "prominent among the apostles" (see Metzger, Textual Commentary, 475). To some, probability will still favor the quasi consensus of recent scholarship that IOYNIAN in Rom 16:7 refers to a woman. To others, the epigraphic and philological evidence for the existence of a Hebrew name Yēhunnī/Yουνίας will tip the scales in favor of a male apostle. In my own opinion, a plausible (but not a decisive) case can be made for either position.