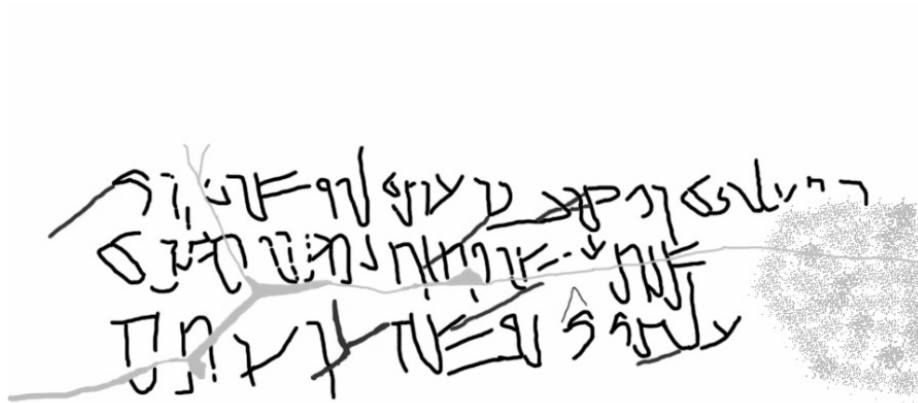


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Cover image: Tracing of Nabataean inscription dated to Malichus II by S. Al-Salameen (published in this issue).

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Foreword

The second issue of Arabian Epigraphic Notes opens with an important edition of South Arabian texts by R. Rijziger from the Kanit Museum in Yemen. Complete with high-resolution photographs, the article preserves these important texts for future reference and study. The next article contains an edition of an important and unique Thamudic inscription, discovered by G.M.H. King during the Badia Rescue Surveys and re-discovered and photographed by Michael Macdonald in the OCIANA Badia survey of 2015. P. Stokes undertakes a close philological study of the text and raises important questions about the classification of the Ancient North Arabian scripts. A. al-Manaser co-authors two articles in this issue, the first with S. Abbadi on new Safaitic inscriptions from Jordan. These texts motivate the authors to bring the enigmatic epitaph *trḥ* under further scrutiny. The second contribution was written with A. Al-Jallad and edits three new bilingual Safaitic-Greek inscriptions, among which is the first to contain an actual translation of prose rather than simply personal names. These articles lead to the essential contribution of F. Kootstra, ‘The Language of the Taymanitic Inscriptions & its Classification’. This is the first comprehensive study of the texts carved in the Ancient North Arabian alphabet of the north Arabian oasis of Tayma. The article is packed with important philological and linguistic insights and will no doubt stand as important reference for years to come. H. Dirbas contributes an article demonstrating the importance of the epigraphy in answering questions of Arabic philology. By utilizing epigraphic evidence, from the Arabian sphere and beyond, he tackles the question of the existence of a lion-god in Arabia based on the personal name ‘*abd al-ʿasad*’, proving in fact that the evidence for such is scarce and other explanations for this name are more likely. Z. Al-Salameen contributes the first edition of a Nabataean inscription to our journal, studying an unpublished inscription dated to the reign of Malichus II. The issue concludes with an invaluable note by H. Hayajneh on Dadanitic graffiti from the environs of Tayma, published originally by Eskoubi in 1999. The key insight here is the fact that the Dadanitic texts from this region seem to exhibit a dialectal variant not attested on the oasis of Dadan. This issue puts on display the rich epigraphic landscape of Arabia, bringing together Arabian, Aramaic, and Greek epigraphy from both ends of the Peninsula, and will no doubt provide an important foundation for future studies on the history and language of the region.

AHMAD AL-JALLAD

Leiden, December 20, 2016.

The Kāniṭ Museum collection (Yemen)

Sarah Rijziger (Independent Scholar)

Abstract

The Kāniṭ Museum is the newest, smallest, and least-known of all Yemeni museums. In this paper, the Sabaean inscriptions that are displayed here are published so as to preserve them for future reference and to add to the so far limited knowledge of Kāniṭ in general.

Keywords: Yemen, Kāniṭ, Ancient South Arabian, Sabaic

1 Introduction

The Museum of Kāniṭ, opened in 2010, consists of one large hall in which are displayed the artefacts so far discovered in Kharāb ʿĀd and its environments. There are some incense burners, two ancient saws, a couple of tiny bronze camels, stone-carved ibex heads, funerary stones, jars, columns, and 24 inscriptions—the latter being the subject of this publication.

Kāniṭ (ancient name: Ukāniṭ) is situated on the outskirts of Arḥab in the governorate of ʿAmrān, district of Khārīf, of Bilād al-Ṣayd in Khamīs al-Qāyifi.¹ From Sana'a it is approximately 60 kilometers to the north. By 10 kilometers to the south-west lies Nāʿiṭ. Several fertile valleys make it an agricultural settlement. Kāniṭ lies 2320 meters above sea-level.

Although nearby Nāʿiṭ has been visited by a number of scholars (among whom E. Glaser, Christian J. Robin and Petr A. Grjaznevič),² only Robin has visited Kāniṭ. Shortly before the building of the museum, a short excavation was carried out by ʿĀd Institution for Culture, Tourism, and Social Development.³ No further studies have so far been conducted.

Kāniṭ belonged to the so-called Samʿī federation, which probably was an independent kingdom between at least the 7th and 4th centuries BC – the period of which we have epigraphic evidence of the presence of a King of Samʿī (see Arbach & Schiettecatte 2012: 56). After this, Samʿī must have lost its independence and subsequently came under the rule of the Sabaean Kingdom. Apart from the small Robin-Kāniṭ 12, the script of which tends already towards Late Sabaic, none of the inscriptions from Kāniṭ date from after the 3rd century AD. Unless future discoveries prove otherwise, we may for now conclude that with the end of the kingdom of Saba, Kāniṭ also lost its importance.

¹For a description of the ancient site and its previous research history, see Robin (1976: 178-179) and Robin (1982: II: 43-44).

²Cf. the references given by Robin (1976: 168 note 1). Glaser's visit is described in Glaser (1884: 211-212).

³The organisation was founded in 2007. Their short excavation in Kāniṭ was their first and has so far been their only one. Unfortunately, no academic report has been published. They did help establish the museum, though.



Figure 1: The “temple” site of Kharāb ʿĀd. It seems that many stones have been taken away since Robin’s visit, which may be the reason that SR 1-Kāniṭ 1 became visible.

The ancient site (cf. Figs. 1–4), now called Kharāb ʿĀd, was built on a slightly raised rocky outcrop of Jabal Kāniṭ. One can still see heaps of debris where buildings must have stood, as well as the foundations of several structures and a number of cisterns. The city of Ukāniṭ had a rectangular shape of approximately 750 by 500 m, was walled all around, and probably had three gates (ʿĀd Institution).⁴ Ruins of round buildings resembling watchtowers are still visible, and it seems that a road leading to the western side of the city was paved.



Figure 2: Underground water basin at Kharāb ʿĀd.

The main temple must have been Ḥḏʿtn since many of the inscriptions make mention of Taʿlab Riyāmim lord of Ḥḏʿtn. The majority of these texts may be dated to between the first century BC and the first century AD (e.g. CIH 347, CIH 349, Robin-Kāniṭ 7, Robin-Kāniṭ 8; two exceptions are Robin-Kāniṭ 1, which seems to be considerably older, and Robin-Kāniṭ 17, which may be dated to the 3rd century AD). The exact location of this temple is so far unknown.

⁴Information by the institution’s local representative in personal communication.

The same applies to the location of a building (perhaps a temple?) called Rbḥm (see Kāniṭ Museum 4 for a comment on this).



Figure 3: Wall of the temple of Ḥḏṭm.

Ād Institution has identified, on the south-east side of the city within the city walls, the building of a temple with the name Ḥḏṭm. This name had so far been attested in only two inscriptions.⁵ The first (Ry 505 = Ja 2140) reads in line 4: *w-rtḏw mqr-h[m]w b'l ḥḏṭm w-ṭtr s²r(q)[n...]* “They entrusted their tomb to the Lord of Ḥḏṭm and ‘Athtar Shāriqān”,⁶ while the second, from the Wadi al-Jawf (YM 2402), is a dedication of a woman addressed to an *’lh-hw b'l ḥḏṭm* “her(!) god, the lord of Ḥḏṭm”.⁷

Three bronze inscriptions were found on the temple site, of which I was kindly shown hand-written copies.⁸ They all mention *b'l ḥḏṭm*, which makes it likely that here stood indeed a temple with this name.

⁵These two inscriptions do not seem to be related with Kāniṭ, though. Banū Gdym may be vassals of Banū Ṣḥymm (cf. CIH 889; although DASI (<http://dasi.humnet.unipi.it/index.php?id=37&prjId=1&corId=0&colId=0&navId=792404408&recId=114&mark=00114%2C003%2C005>, accessed February 29, 2016.) states that Gdym is here a personal male name, it could be that the *w* before Gdym comes from the word *bnw*, since line 2 is much shorter than line 1; unfortunately, no photo is available to check this proposition). Anyway, the finding places of Gr 75 and YM 2402 make it likely that there is no relation with the *b'l ḥḏṭm* of Kāniṭ.

⁶This inscription, first published by G. Ryckmans (1953: 274-275) and later again by Jamme (1970: 121), has recently been joined with another fragment (Gr 75) by Bron (2002-2007: 120-121). While this latter fragment has been found in Shibām al-Girās, the origin of the first is uncertain.

⁷For the text, see Shu'lān (2005).

⁸I was, however, not allowed to photograph them. The bronze plaques themselves are kept in a safe and are not displayed in the museum. Two of the inscriptions make mention of a certain Ddkrb.



Figure 4: Mason mark on the wall of the temple of Ḥdṭm.

The building measures 25 m from north to south and 28 m from east to west (ʿĀd Institution), with the entrance on the western side. Two to five rows of stones, with a length of 1,8–2,5 m each and belonging to the outer wall of the temple, are still visible. The stones have broad margins at the top and bottom but seldom on the sides. They are roughly pecked in the middle. The middle stands out. Although some are worked to the same level as the margins, these may recently have been taken from somewhere else (a nearby building?) and placed on top of the remains of the outside wall. The stones that are surely still in their original place are not worked to the level of the margins. Mason marks (*t* and *r*) are found on many of the building stones. These pecked stones seem to date from around the fourth to the second centuries BC (cf. van Beek 1958). The shape of the mason marks, on the other hand, seems to date from period C2 in Stein (2013), i.e., around the turning point of the Christian era. Inside, thin walls are visible which separate the space into small rooms, as well as the bottom part of some stairs.

Al-Hamdāni mentions a palace (*qaṣr*) called Sinḥār in Ukānīt (al-Iklīl 8 + 10)⁹ – the old name of Kānīt that is also used in inscriptions and was obviously still in use in his time. In al-Iklīl 10 there is also mention of *Qaṣr Ysh̄m* and *Qaṣr Shy*.¹⁰ Neither of these names have so far been found in any of the inscriptions. Several columns on the site of Kharāb ʿĀd, mentioned by Robin (1976: 179) and thought to be the remains of a temple, could also be the ruins of a palace.

A great number of wells and cisterns can be found. One of these cisterns, also seen by Robin, is cut out of the underground rock and covered with big stone slabs (cf. Fig. 2).

⁹Al-Hamdāni, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad (2008: VIII: 125 note no. 8 and X: 104)

¹⁰Al-Hamdāni, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad (2008: X: 99 note no. 4 and 31 note no. 3, respectively).



Figure 5: Entrance to the Kāniṭ Mu-seum.



Figure 6: Saws displayed in the museum.



Figure 7: Incense burner displayed in the museum.



Figure 8: Row of carved ibex heads displayed in the museum.

Several points make the publication of the Kāniṭ Museum collection worthwhile. First, there is the security situation. Yemen has been involved in a regional war since March 2015, with devastating effects. Daily airstrikes target literally everything; in May 2015, the Dhamār Museum, which contained 12.500 artefacts, of which over a hundred inscriptions, was completely destroyed in an air strike. Barāqish, the Mārib Dam, Ṣirwāḥ, and many other historical sites have been badly damaged. It is, therefore, essential to preserve as much tangible knowledge as possible before it is too late. The collection itself presents some interesting points, which can be summarized as follows:

- It adds important information to the text corpus from the site as published by Robin (1982 II). Not only has the corpus of Sabaic texts from Kāniṭ been increased by 16 new inscriptions, but also can the reading of some of the older texts be improved by the help of new and better photographs.
- It widens the historical horizon of ancient Ukāniṭ considerably. While practically all previously published inscriptions date from approximately the 1st century BC – 3rd century AD, the new corpus contains a considerably older inscription (Kāniṭ Museum 11), supporting an occupation of

the site as early as the 6th – 5th century BC. Another text (Kānīṭ Museum 10) goes back to about the 3rd century BC.

- It provides important information on the topography of the ancient city of Ukānīṭ, such as the first evidence for a sanctuary of the local deity Shams (Kānīṭ Museum 5) and for a representative building named Rbḥm (Kānīṭ Museum 4).
- Several new words and names occur in the texts.

Finally, it may be noted that small regional museums (like the one in Kānīṭ, but also in Zafār, Baynūn, etc.) play an important role in preserving and displaying local heritage. They face, however, severe financial difficulties. In Kānīṭ, this is clear from the absence of any information for the visitor.

When Robin visited the site in August/September 1975, he found and published 27 inscriptions (Robin 1982 II: 43–72), mostly fragmentary, some of which are now in the museum: Robin-Kānīṭ 6, Robin-Kānīṭ 12, one part of Robin-Kānīṭ 13 + 14, Robin-Kānīṭ 16, Robin-Kānīṭ 22, and Robin-Kānīṭ 23, in addition to Robin-Kānīṭ 10 and Robin-Kānīṭ 11. These last two inscriptions were not completely visible in the pictures that Robin was able to take and I have published them again with some additions under the sigla Kānīṭ Museum 1 and Kānīṭ Museum 2, respectively. On my visits to Kānīṭ in early 2015, I also found a short graffiti-like inscription in-situ, which is published under the siglum SR 1-Kānīṭ 1.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. P. Stein, without whose support I would not have been able to publish this paper. His proofreading and numerous suggestions have certainly given the paper a more thorough character.

2 Short Catalogue of the already published texts by Robin (1982 II) that are currently displayed in the Kāniṭ Museum.

2.1 Robin-Kāniṭ 6

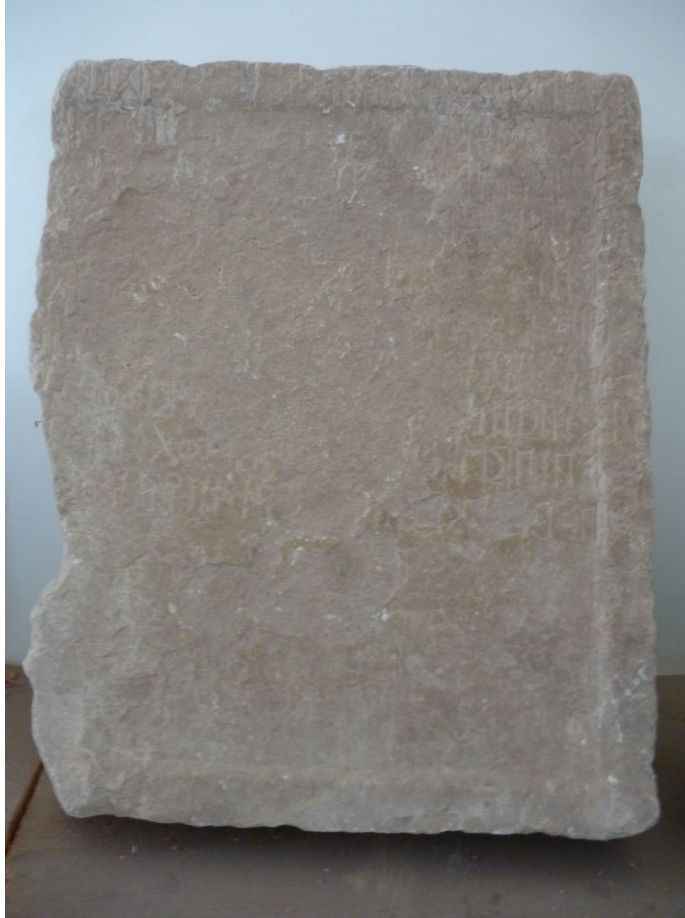


Figure 9

Seemingly a juridical text, but the stone is heavily eroded. Although Robin does not find it logical to restore the end of line 2 to $[r]lb / b[l / ḥd'] | tn$ (without the epithet *rymm*), this still seems to be the correct restoration. I see in my photo the traces of $b'l /$ (after $[r]lb$) with a possible $ḥ$ after the dividing stroke.

Robin found the inscription in a goat shed in the village. I was told the women used the stone to mash tomatoes and spices.

2.2 Robin-Kāniṭ 12



Figure 10

A graffiti-like inscription consisting of the names of one or two persons. The incision of the letters, of strange shape, is very irregular. The particular shape of the letter *b*, with an inscribed hook, reminds of the Late Sabaic stage in palaeography. The *w* and *m*, on the other hand, do not. Consequently, I do not see strong evidence to date this inscription to after the 3rd century AD – a period of which we do not have local epigraphic evidence yet. According to Robin it is a funerary stone.

2.3 Robin-Kāniṭ 13 + 14



Figure 11

Only the short fragment of the two, consisting of one word, has been moved to the museum.

2.4 Robin-Kāniṭ 16



Figure 12

Fragment.

2.5 Robin-Kāniṭ 22



Figure 13

Fragment.

2.6 Robin-Kāniṭ 23

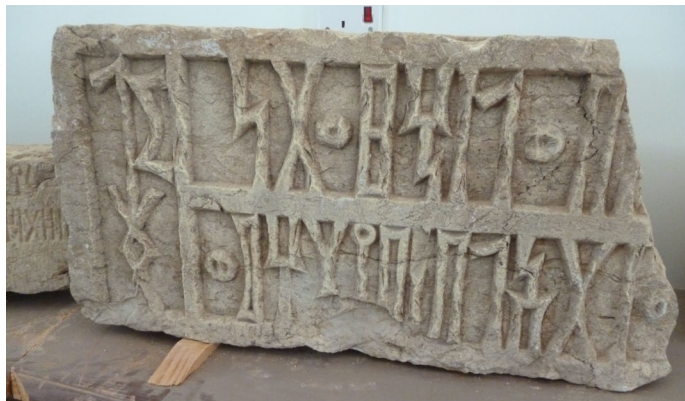


Figure 14

Fragment of a building text in relief, with a monogram on the left (Robin did not publish a photograph of this inscription).

2.7 Kāniṭ Museum 1 = Robin-Kāniṭ 10

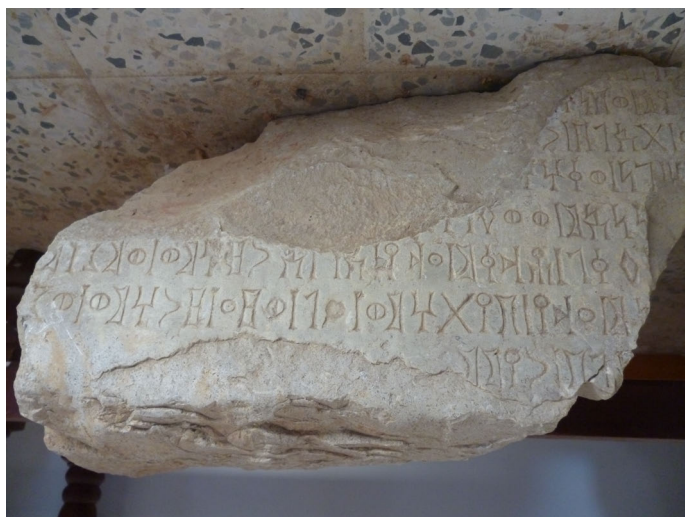


Figure 15

Dedicatory inscription. The new photo gives us a more complete transcription of lines 6 and 7 (additional text in bold). On the other hand, the stone suffered damage at the beginning of lines 5–8 after being seen and photographed by Robin. The text from Robin's photograph which has now disappeared is rendered in italics.

2.7.1 Transcription

1. (rymm /) [...]
2. rym / wbn(h) [...hqny]
3. w / t^llb / r[ymmm...]
4. n / ḥgn / wqhh[mw / ... / 'dk]
5. rwm / hn'm / ww(y)[... / 'tm]
6. r / w^fql / ṣdqm / 'dy / kl / 'rd^hmw / wms²ym [thmw / ...]
7. w / hn'm / 'dy / bythmw / wl / wd^c / ḏr^hmw / ws² [n^hmw / ... h]
8. mw / bt^llb / rymm

2.7.2 Comments

The translation stays the same except for the following additions:

Line 6: ... good (fruits) and crops in all their cultivated land and (their) valleys

Line 7: ... healthy ... in their clan (?) and that he may humiliate their foe and their enemy.....

2.8 Kāniṭ Museum 2 = Robin-Kāniṭ 11



Figure 16

Dedicatory inscription. In the new photo, a few additional letters are legible at the beginning of the lines, which sheds a new light on line 2 in particular. The additional letters are printed in bold.

2.8.1 Transcription

1. [...] **md** / w(**b**²)r(g²) / w[...]krb / bnw / yrm [...]
2. [...] **frs**¹**n** (**h**)n / **wrk**(**b**)hmy / ḥ(g)n / wqhhmw / t^llb / [...]
3. [...] **m** / **wbry** / 'ḏnm / wmqymtm / wmngt [/ ṣdqm ...]
4. [...] **m**] s²ymthmw / bs²ym(hm)w / t^llb / r(y)[mm]

2.8.2 Translation

1. [...] and Brg and [...]krb, sons of Yrm [... have dedicated ...]
2. [...] the two [horses] and their riders as Ta'lab had ordered them [...]
3. [...] and soundness of faculties and strength and [good] luck [...]
4. [...] their fields. By their tutelary deity Ta'lab Riyāmim.

2.8.3 Comments

Line 1: $w(b^?)r(g^?)$: The reading of *brg* is not sure. The *b* could also be read as a *d* (unlikely), and the *g* could very well be a *d*. This would give us the form *brd* – which is unknown as a personal name. The name *Brg* seems, however, most likely.

Krb is probably the last part of the name $Ns^{23}krb$. After the *w* there is space for three letters and the traces that can still be seen seem to form ns^{23} .

3 New Inscriptions

3.1 Kāniṭ Museum 3

The inscription, consisting of two lines, is complete and very well preserved. Letters are incised. Date: 2nd–1st century BC

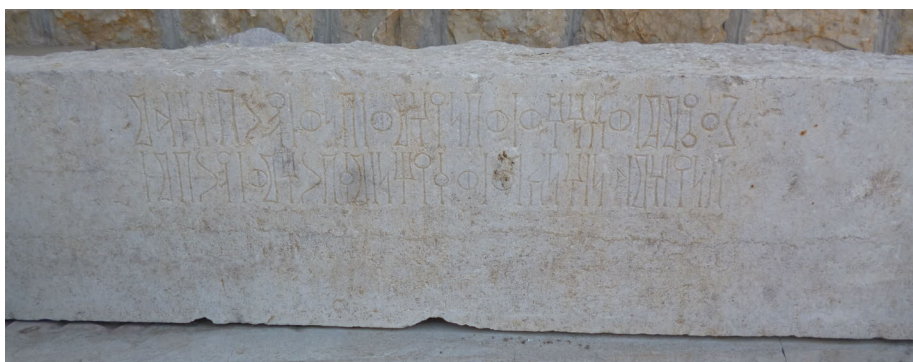


Figure 17

3.1.1 Transcription

1. $s^{2c}tmm / w^3hhw / wbnyhmw / bnw / zrb / ^3dm$
2. $bny / hmdn / hnklw / wqyhñ / mqbrhmw / zrbm /$

3.1.2 Translation

1. $S^{2c}tmm$ and his brother and their descendants, of Banū Zrb, clients of
2. Banū Hmdn , have finished off and completed satisfactorily their burial place Zrbm

3.1.3 Comments

Line 1: The name S²ṭmm is attested in Qatbanic, mostly following the word *bn* (e.g., RES 3566, VL 32, and YBC 2425). In Sabaic, a personal name S²ṭmm is attested in some graffiti from the Khawlān (see Al-Salami 2011: 73 and 118). Banī Zrb has not been attested as a clan/tribesname in Sabaic yet, and nothing is known about it. For a place name Zrbm, cf. Robin (1982 I: 52).

3.1.4 Note

I was told that this stone had been found near the new dam, a little distance outside the village.

3.2 Kāniṭ Museum 4

The right part of the inscription, consisting of two lines, is broken off so that only the last word of each line is left. To the left is the figure of a bull. Text in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD



Figure 18

3.2.1 Transcription

1. [...] / s²msm
2. [...] w / rbḥm

3.2.2 Translation

1. [...] S²msm
2. [...] Rbḥm

3.2.3 Comments

Line2: This is the first attestation of the name Rbḥm in Kāniṭ. In several inscriptions, Rbḥm occurs as the name of a grave (e.g., CIH 286 probably from Sirwaḥ-Arḥab, the ancient Mdr̥m, CIH 20 from Shibām al-Ghiras, and Nāmi 51 from Nā'it).

3.2.4 Notes

Residents of Kāniṭ said that the inscription was found during construction works on the new dam, a little distance outside the village. Although ʿĀd Institution suggests that Rbḥm was a temple, this cannot be taken as a fact. Since Kāniṭ Museum 3 was found in the same area, it is likely to have been a burial place. If, however, we assume that Rbḥm was a temple, and that the stone was still in its original place when found, this temple would have been situated outside the city walls. Another possibility is that Rbḥm was here the name of a private house or palace, if we restore the text to: *[[...]s²msm (2) [...bythm]w / rbḥm* (cf., as a parallel, the restored text of Robin-Kanit 23, which only misses the name of the house at the end).

3.3 Kāniṭ Museum 5

Part of a building inscription, broken at the right and left sides. The right side is damaged. Text in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD

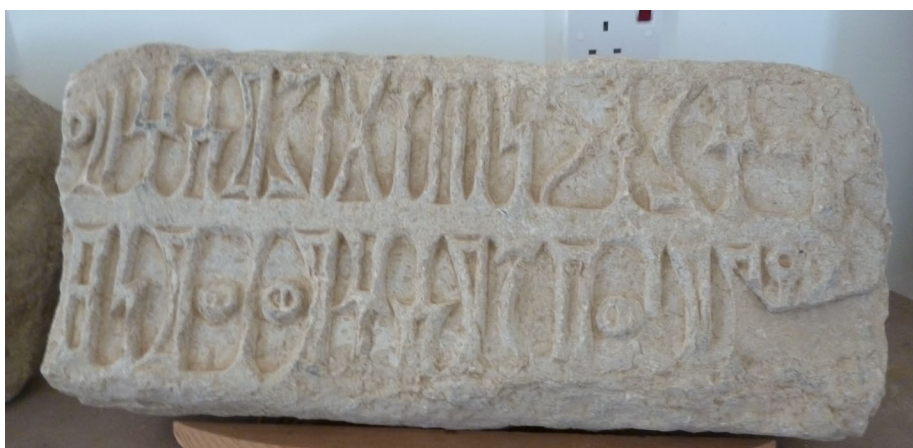


Figure 19

3.3.1 Transcription

1. [...br](?) / (w)hs²qrn / byt / s²mshmw [...]
2. [...t³lb / r]ymm / wbs²mshmw / wmnḏ[ḥhmw...]

3.3.2 Translation

1. [...] (built) and completed the temple of their patron god [...]
2. [...] (Ta³lab R)iyām and by their patron god and their tutelary deity [...]

3.4 Kāniṭ Museum 6

Part of a building inscription broken off at the right and left sides. Text in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD

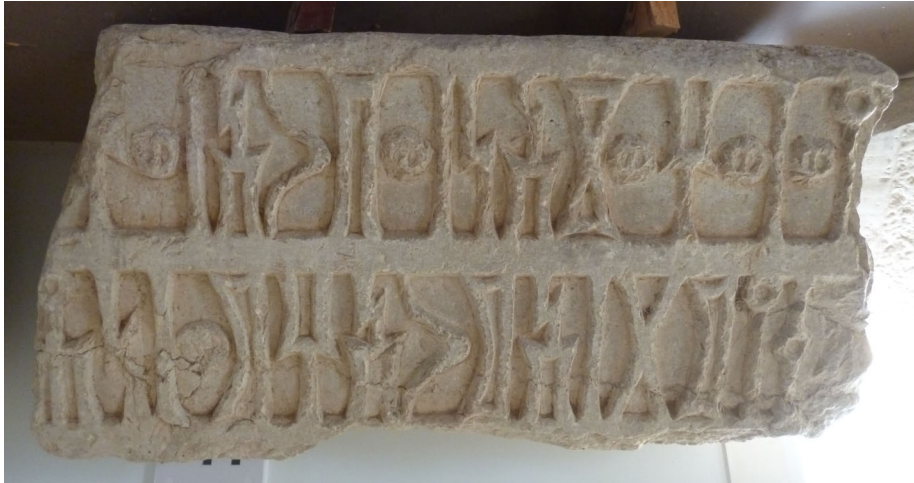


Figure 20

3.4.1 Transcription

1. [...bn]yw / whwz'n / wbr' / w[...]
2. [...bm]qymt / 'mr'hmw / nṣ[...]

3.4.2 Translation

1. [...they] built and enlarged and erected and [...]
2. [...] by the power of their lords Nṣ[...]

3.4.3 Comments

Line 2: Could it be that these lords are *Nṣrm Yh'mn* and *Ṣdq Yh'tl* (*bny Hmdn*) as in RES 4994 and (partly) RES 4995, which come from Nā'iṭ? In Robin-Kāniṭ 7, we encounter the same names (of the dedicators) as in RES 4994. This means that there certainly was a connection between Kāniṭ and the subjects of these lords, and possibly between Kāniṭ and the lords themselves as well. The palaeography of Robin-Kāniṭ 7 and Kāniṭ Museum 6 is similar.

3.5 Kāniṭ Museum 7

The right and left sides of the stone are broken off. Text in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD



Figure 21

3.5.1 Transcription

1. [...] (rf) / bmqm / s²ymhmw / t'lb / ry[mm...]
2. [...h]grn / 'knṭ (/) w(ʔ)dm / f'rn / wrtd[w...]

3.5.2 Translation

1. [...] by the power of their patron god Ta'lab Riyā[mim ...]
2. [...] the city of 'knṭ (Kāniṭ) and the clients of F'rn; and [they] entrusted [...]

3.5.3 Comments

Line 2: F'rn is also mentioned in Robin-Kāniṭ 3, but without context. In Gl 1217 = Gr 194, F'rn is a personal name, according to Solá Solé (1964: 18-19).

3.6 Kāniṭ Museum 8

Fragment. The stone is broken from the right and left sides and slightly at the bottom. Most of the letters are damaged or eroded. Text in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD

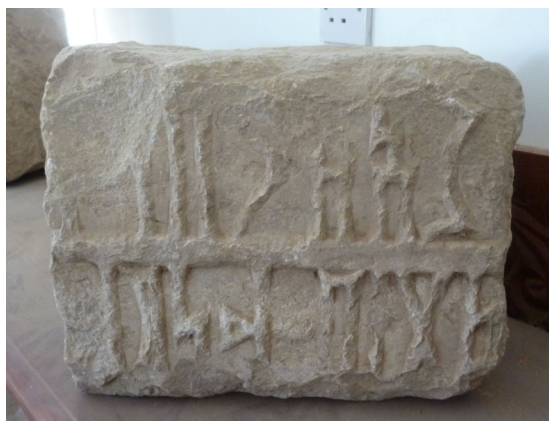


Figure 22

3.6.1 Transcription

1. [...n]s²(k)rb / [...]
2. [...] dt / b^cdnm / [...]

3.7 Kāniṭ Museum 9

Dedicatory inscription. The left side of the stone is broken off. Text is incised.

Date: 1st century BC–1st century AD

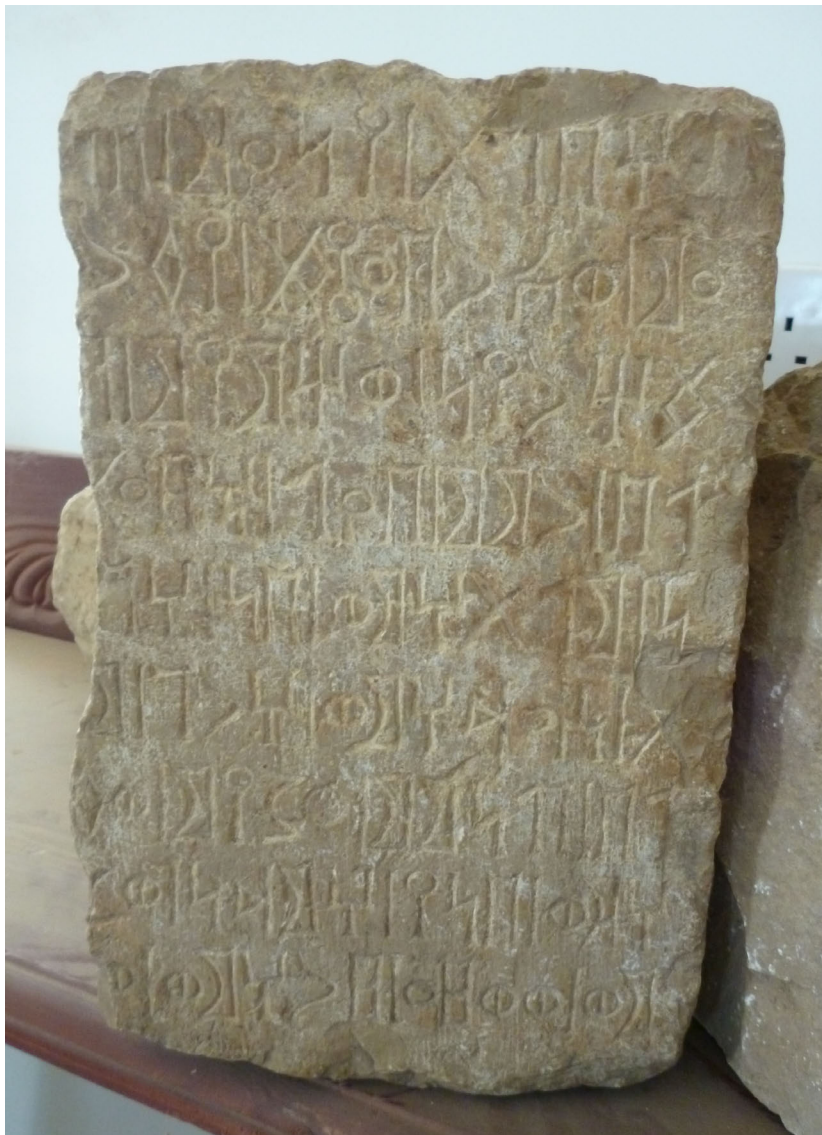


Figure 23

3.7.1 Transcription

1. [.]h(bl)t / yn^ʿm / bn [...]
2. ^ʿm / wkrb^ʿtt / yfr^ʿ / ...]
3. s³hryn / whmym / b[... / t^ʿ]
4. lb / r <y> mm / b^ʿl / ḥd^ʿ(t)[n / ... b]
5. n / mlthmw / bn / hg[rn / ... / bḏ]
6. t / s¹d^hmw / hrg / m[... / t^ʿ]
7. lb / ḡnmm / ws²ym / wf [yhmw...]
8. hmw / bny / hmdn / ws²[^ʿbhmw / ...]
9. hmw / wwḏ^ʿ / ḏrhmw / w[s²n^ʿhmw / ...]

According to the parallel CIH 349 (cf. the note, below), the text may be restored as follows:

1. [w]h(bl)t / yn^ʿm / bn [...]
2. ^ʿm / wkrb^ʿtt / yfr^ʿ / bn / ... / wbnyh(m)w(?)]
3. s³hryn / whmym / b[n(?) / ... / hqnyw / s²ymhmw / t^ʿ]
4. lb / r <y> mm / b^ʿl / ḥd^ʿ(t)[n / ḏhgrn / ^ʿknṭ / ḏn / ṣlmn / b]
5. n / mlthmw / bn / hg[rn / ... / bḏ]
6. t / s¹d^hmw / hrg / m[hrgt / ṣdqm / wldt / yz^ʿn / t^ʿ]
7. lb / ḡnmm / ws²ym / wf [yhmw / ws^ʿd^hmw / rdy / ^ʿmr^ʿ]
8. hmw / bny / hmdn / ws²[^ʿbhmw / ḥs²dm / ...]
9. hmw / wwḏ^ʿ / ḏrhmw / w[s²n^ʿhmw / bt^ʿlb / rymm]

3.7.2 Translation

1. [W]hblt Yn^ʿm, son of [...]
2. ^ʿm, and Krb^ʿtt Yfr^ʿ, son of ..., and his/their sons(?)]
3. S³hryn and Ḥmym [... have dedicated to their patron god]
4. Ta^ʿlab Riyāmim, master of Ḥd^ʿt[n of the city of Ukāniṭ, this statue]
5. from their war booty from the city [of ..., because he]
6. has granted them to kill [in great numbers, and that Ta^ʿlab may continue]
7. (to give) booty and assure [safety to them and to grant them the favor of their lords,]
8. the Banū Hamdān, and [their tribe Ḥāshidum ...]
9. and (that he may) humiliate their foe and [their enemy. By Ta^ʿlab Riyāmim.]

3.7.3 Comments

Line 1: The reading of hblt is not sure. If correct, it may be restored to Whblt. Yn^ʿm is a well-attested name in Sabaic.

Line 2: Krb^ʿtt is a well-attested name in Sabaic.

Line 3: This is the first attestation of the name S³hryn. For the personal name Ḥmym, which is for example attested in Gl 1636 and in Ḥaḍramitic in RES 4181, cf. Tairan (1992: 103-104).

Line 5: For restoration of the last word, cf. e.g., Fa 75/3, Ja 632/3, Ja 634/4, and CIH 349/4.

3.7.4 Note

The text is restored after CIH 349 (also from Kāniṭ), of which both the wording and palaeography is very similar, although the dedicators are different.

3.8 Kāniṭ Museum 10

The stone is broken from the right and left sides, and possibly the top. Text is incised.

Date: 3rd century BC

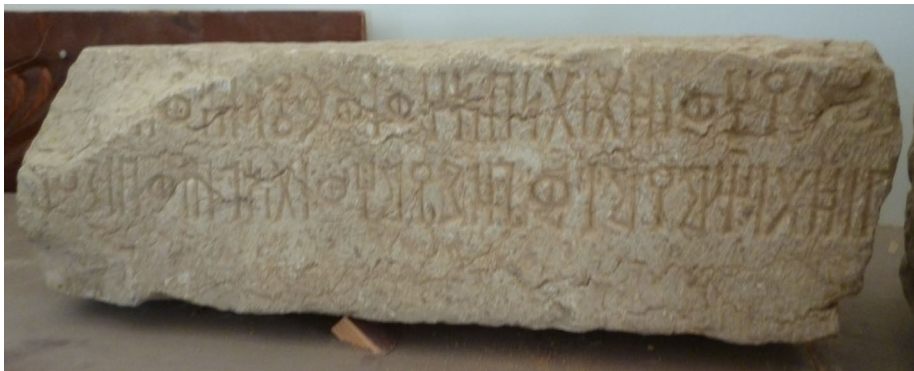


Figure 24

3.8.1 Transcription

1. [...hw]fyhw / dt / tnb'hw / wrtd / 'w [...]
2. [...w]b / dt / ḥmym / wb / s²ymhw / t'lb / wb / s²(b)[...]

3.8.2 Translation

1. [...] he has fulfilled him what he had promised him and he has entrusted [...]
2. [...and] by dt Ḥmym and by his tutelary deity Ta'lab and by [his / their(?) tribe ...]

3.9 Kāniṭ Museum 11

Dedicatory inscription. The stone is heavily damaged at the top and on the left side, and slightly on the right. Text is incised.

Date: 6th–5th century BC



Figure 25

3.9.1 Transcription

1. [...]qm[...]
2. y^{tt} / [.../ nw(?)]
3. s²m / tbt(n) [...] w[hqny / n]
4. (w)s²m / nfshw / w(w)[ldhw]
5. wqnyhw / wb /? [...t]
6. ¹lb / wnws²m / wb [...]
7. s³kkm / wmdrhwh / [...]

3.9.2 Translation

1. [...]
2. y^ʿtt [...]
3. Nws²m(?) the sanctuary and [has dedicated to]
4. Nws²m his self and [his children]
5. and his possessions and [...]
6. Ta³lab and Nws²m and [...]
7. S³kkm and his/its *mḍr*.

3.9.3 Comments

Line 2: The name is probably either Lhy^ʿtt or Hhy^ʿtt. Because in lines 3–4, it seems that the missing text is *w[hqny N]ws²m*, another verb must already have occurred in line 2 (and therefore the conjunction *w*-).

Line 5: After *wqnyhw* follows *wb*. However, when starting the names of gods in an invocation, the first name is preceded by *b* only. So maybe this *wb* is the start of another noun (*wb_ _ hw*). On the other hand, it may be the scribe's mistake and what is meant is a *b* followed by the name of the first god of the list.

Line 7: *S³kk* occurs once in a Minaic inscription (as-Sawdā' 91), see Arbach, Audouin, & Robin (2004: 37). There, it may be part of the epithet of the god S¹m'. If this could be the case for the word S³kkm in this inscription as well is unclear; the name could fit in the damaged space before it. But was this god venerated in Kāniṭ? There are some inscriptions from Rayda with the mention of S¹m' (RES 3144 for example) but all the other instances are from the Jawf. Or could S³kkm be the name of a tribe? Some time after my visit to Kāniṭ, I was shown a picture of a broken inscription from an unidentified place in Arḥab. The inscription mentioned *bythmw / ḍs³kk* at the end of a line. The beginning of the next line was missing, but an *m* could be expected. In our inscription, there may have been a *ḍ* before *s³kkm* on the line before it as well. Then we may initially conclude that *s³kkm* was the name of a place or possibly tribe somewhere in Arḥab.

The word *mḍrhw* is attested here for the first time (as far as I can see). It seems to come from the root *ḍrr*. However, this implies a negative meaning (war, enemy, mischief). Here, the word refers back to *s³kkm* and whatever comes before it, so it is either something that belongs to a tribe/place or to a god. Maybe what is meant is *mḍr* "territory/ground" (Beeston et al. 1982: 83).

3.10 Kāniṭ Museum 12

Fragment of a (funerary?) stone with the carving of a vase on the right. Letters in relief.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD



Figure 26

3.10.1 Transcription

1. `gyl [...]`

3.11 Kāniṭ Museum 13

Fragment. Letters are incised.

Date: 2nd–3rd century AD

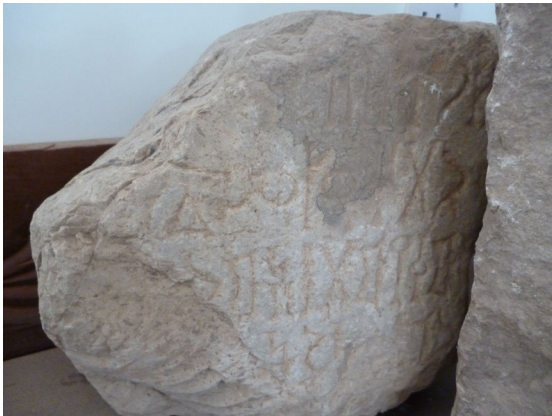


Figure 27

3.11.1 Transcription

1. [...]d_rh / b(n) [...]
2. [...] (w?)rthw / w(s²/w?)z [...]
3. [...b]mqymt / 'mr[h(m)w...]
4. [...]r(... /) s² [...]]

3.11.2 Translation

1. [...]drh , son of [...]
2. [...] and [...]
3. [...] (by) the power of (his / their) lords [...]
4. [...]

3.12 Kāniṭ Museum 14

Fragment. The stone is heavily eroded/damaged on the left. Under the three lines there are the traces of a fourth line, perhaps originating from a former inscription, after which the stone was re-used. The letters on this line are smaller and stand closer together than those in the preceding lines. This may, however, also be explained as lack of space for the remaining text. Letters are incised.

Date: 1st century BC–1st century AD



Figure 28

3.12.1 Transcription

1. [...]hw [...]
2. [...] bnyw [...]
3. [...]ddn / w [...]
4. [...] (g)nbh(my) [...]

3.12.2 Translation

1. [...]
2. [...] they built [...]
3. [...] Ddn and [...]
4. [...]

3.13 Kāniṭ Museum 15

Funerary stone with the image of a human figure and a bull (?) to his left.

Date: 1st–2nd century AD



Figure 29

3.13.1 Transcription

1. rbbm

3.13.2 Comments

The personal name Rbbm (cf. e.g. Hayajneh 1998: 146) is also mentioned in Gr 15 and other Sabaic inscriptions.

3.14 Kāniṭ Museum 16

The stone is broken and heavily eroded. Letters are incised.

Date: 1st–2nd century AD

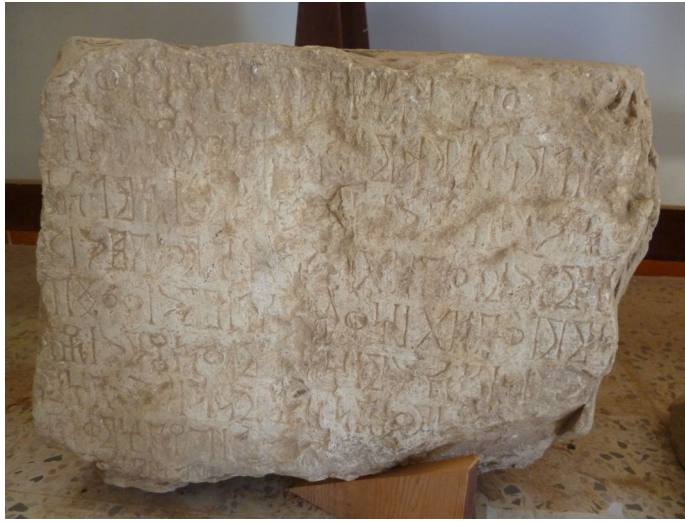


Figure 30

3.14.1 Transcription

1. [...]w[...] (n) / hqn(yw?) / hq[n]yw[...]
2. [...]šlmn / ḥmdm [/ bdt] / hwfy(hm)w / b[...]
3. [...]w [/ d]r(m) / b(°)br / °[mr°hmw] / °mlk / [...]
4. [...] ḥmyrm / wbdm / [hw](f)yhmw / bdr / s²[...]
5. [...]mm / wbdm / hwf[y /] kl / dmr / w°s³b(t) [...]
6. [... °wldm] / °(d)krm / h[n°]m / w°tmr / s(d)[qm / ...]
7. [... / °mr°]hmw / bn(y) / [h]mdn / ws²°bhmw [/ ḥs²dm / ...]
8. [... / w](l) / (g)ybhmw / b[n...]
9. [...] (ml³ / ..)[...]

3.14.2 Translation

1. [...] ... have dedicated [...]
2. [...] a statue out of praise because he has granted them (or: he has saved them) [...]
3. [...] a war against [their lords], the kings [of ...]
4. [...] Ḥmyrm (Ḥimyar) and because he has granted them safety in the war [...]
5. [...] and because he has protected all dmr and pastureland [...]
6. [...] pleasing male [offspring] and healthy fruits [...]
7. [... their lords], the Banū Hamdān, and their tribe [Ḥāshidum ...]
8. [...] and that he may protect them against [...]
9. [...]

3.14.3 Comments

Line 2: *ṣlmn* could be part of the plural form *ṣlmn*, and so it would become 'statues'.

Line 5: The meaning of *ḏmr* in this context is unclear. Since *ṣ³bt* means “pastureland”, *ḏmr* may have a similar meaning, like “grassland” or the like (?). The common meaning of the noun, however, is some kind of financial contract (cf. Beeston et al. 1982: 41).

Line 7: Although the *h* looks more like a *ʿ*, it is expected to read *hmdn*. For restauration of the passage, cf. e.g. CIH 349/7.

Line 8: The *g* of *gybhmw* is fairly big. However, the size of this letter corresponds to other broad letters such as *r* in this inscription.

3.15 Kānīṭ Museum 17



Figure 31

This stone contains three separate texts quite close together, broken at the top (upper left) and right below line 3 of Text C. Since the letters are rather irregularly incised within and outside a couple of frames of lines, this may perhaps be a stone on which a student-mason practiced his skills. On the other hand, it resembles the messy Robin-Kānīṭ 1 and could therefore be some kind of personal graffiti.

3.15.1 Transcription

At the top, inside a frame (text A):

1. [...]
2. bn / b[...]
3. s¹(..w?) / t'lḃ
4. / r(y)mm / [...]

Beneath it, outside a frame (text B):

1. [...]h(d) / t

At the bottom, inside a frame (text C):

1. n(s²)'(k)rb
2. 'k[.]s³ / b
3. n / 'n'm /

On the right, between the second and third texts, there are two more lines visible with text between them, of which only a t at the end is clear.

3.15.2 Comments

All the texts consist of proper nouns.

Text C: 'n'm as a male personal name occurs for instance in Gr 15. As a clan name, it would be the first attestation.

3.16 Kāniṭ Museum 18



Figure 32

Stone incense-burner, somewhat square in shape, with a dedicatory inscription incised on at least two sides of the upper part, and all around on the lower part. At least one side contains a picture of a crescent and disc, of which the lower part is visible, with some decoration below it. It was not possible to photograph all sides of this item so that no complete interpretation can be given. The transcription shows only what is visible on the extant photograph (Fig. 32).

Date: approx. 3rd–2nd century BC

3.16.1 Transcription

1. [...]ḥ / ḥqny
2. [...]dy / byt
3. [...] (d?) [...].nh(.) [...]

3.17 SR 1-Kāniṭ 1

The inscription is incised in a pillar that lies among the ruins of Kharāb ʿĀd (see Fig. 1 for the approximate finding place).



Figure 33

3.17.1 Transcription

1. S¹ḥym /
2. bn / ydm /

3.17.2 Translation

1. S¹ḥym
2. son of Ydm

3.17.3 Comments

The *m* and *d* are dextrograde. This may indicate that this inscription is so-called graffiti. Both names are attested although the name S¹hym is usually written as S¹hymm. This name represents first of all an important Sabaic clan, while instances for a personal name are rare (see, for example, Ja 616 + 622/2). Ydm is also mentioned in Robin-Kāniṭ 3 and 5 (see Fig. 34 for Robin-Kāniṭ 3).



Figure 34

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Sigla

CIH	See CIH in bibliography.
Fa 75	Fakhry (1952: 108f., fig. 56); Ryckmans (1952: 49f.)
Gl 1217	= Gr 194, Solá Solé (1964: 18f., pl. 5,2); Bauer & Lundin (1998: 61, foto 175a–b)
Gl 1636	Höfner (1973: 52f., pl. 10,2)
Ja	Jamme (1962)
Ja 2140	= Ry 505, Jamme (1970: 121)
Gr 15	Grjaznevič (1978: 22–24, fig. 15)
Gr 75	Bauer & Lundin (1998: 16, foto 81a–b)
Gr 194	= Gl 1217
Nāmī 51	Nāmī (1943: 66f.)
RES	See RES in bibliography.
Ry 505	= Ja 2140; Ryckmans (1953: 274–275)
VL 32	Bron (1992: 29–31)
YBC 2425	Renfroie (1990: 156f.)
YM 2402	Shuʿlān (2005)
Robin-Kānīṭ	Robin (1982)

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A new and unique Thamudic Inscription from northeast Jordan

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Abstract

This article is an edition of an inscription in a variety of Thamudic that contains several glyph shapes that have not been found together in the same inscription, and are typical of inscriptions from central and southern Arabia. Interesting glyph shapes include the glyph shapes for ʾ, w, and g. A personal name formed on a morphologically H-Causative verb, familiar from the South Arabian, as well as Dadanitic inscriptions, is attested in this inscription. The formula found in the inscription is paralleled most closely by those typical of Thamudic C inscriptions. Finally, the article discusses the implications of the combination of these features, typically associated with different scripts and geographic distribution, for the field of ANA epigraphy.

Keywords: Ancient North Arabian; Thamudic

1 Introduction

The inscription under discussion was originally discovered by Geraldine King between Tell al-ʿAbid and Qaʿ Umm al-ʿUwāḡil in northeastern Jordan during the Basalt Desert Rescue Survey in 1989.¹ While short, the inscription is noteworthy for several reasons. First, whereas most of the inscriptions found in this region are composed in the Safaitic script, this inscription is written in a version of the North Arabian script that, while attesting glyph shapes found elsewhere in Thamudic inscriptions, does not fall into one of the established categories (see the script chart in Macdonald 2000: 34). Second, several of the glyph forms, as well as a personal name, are more typical of “Southern” Thamudic inscriptions, occurring rarely if at all in inscriptions this far north.

2 Transcription and Translation

wlt ng

ʾbtlw/wdd/ʿmt bnt yhbkr

ʿbtlw loves ʿmt daughter of Yhkbr...O Lt, deliver!’

¹The Safaitic inscriptions below the drawing are KRS 2606-2608.



Figure 1: Inscription from between Tell al-‘Abid and Qā‘ Umm al-‘Uwāḡīl, Jordan (Copyright Google Maps)



Figure 2: Photograph by M.C.A. Macdonald



Figure 3: Tracing by A. Al-Jallad

The first portion of text is written together using word dividers, whereas the second portion is written above and to the left and is no word dividers are present. It is difficult to determine whether the inscription represents one inscription or two. Indeed, such inscriptions raise interesting questions about the applicability of notions of textual unity when carved on rock. In any event, the *waw* glyph is identical in both, the hand and patina appear to be the same, and a fairly natural interpretation of the two together is forthcoming (see below), so I have read the two portions together.

3 Script

Three glyph shapes in this inscription deserve special comment.

ʾ - This glyph is very similar to the corresponding glyph in the ASA script, but in this text the arm branches out to the right and then back to the left like half of a diamond. This shape is foreign to Safaitic and Hismaic. Similar shapes are attested in what Macdonald (2000) has called “Dispersed North Arabian.” Virtually identical glyphs are attested in several Thamudic inscriptions from Ḥail (Winnett & Reed 1973: nos.14-15, 80), as well as in a few “Southern” Thamudic texts from Wadi Khushayba, near Najrān in Saudi Arabia (KhShB 234). It is also possible that the glyph represents *s*¹, but as this shape for ʾ is attested elsewhere, and the name *s*¹*btw*² is as of yet unknown, a reading of ʾ is virtually assured.

w - The shape of this glyph is also noteworthy. The *w* in this text is written as a circle with a + intersecting it. A rectangular form with a + or x intersecting is attested in Thamudic B (Macdonald 2000); an exact parallel is found in a few inscriptions from Ḥail (Winnett & Reed 1973: nos. 43, 156; for a square variant, see *ibid*: nos. 43, 88).

g/t - This glyph is used to represent /t/ in the majority of the ANA scripts, but represents /g/ in Hismaic, as well as in Thamudic C (Al-Jallad 2016). It is of course possible to read the glyph as a /t/, which would produce the reading

²The name could be interpreted as an S-Causative from the root *ʾbt*l, but the absence of any evidence for S-Causatives in the languages represented in the North Arabian scripts, as well as the attested shape of the ʾ in southern Thamudic inscriptions, makes the ʾ reading all but certain.

w lt nt. As the inscription ends with this glyph at the edge of the rock, and it is possible that the rock was broken here, this reading cannot be ruled out. However, there is no apparent damage to the rock, and reading the glyph as a /g/ produces a very sensible reading for which we have some parallels in other ANA inscriptions, as a D-stem imperative from the root √ngy, ‘to be saved, delivered’ (see discussion below).

The final /r/ of the name *yhkbr* faces toward the beginning of the inscription, which is the norm in Thamudic B inscriptions (see e.g., Winnett & Reed 1970: 207, no. 3).

Finally, the lower inscription is divided logically by means of vertical word dividers. As indicated in the transcription above, they occur between *’btlw* and *wdd*, and between *wdd* and *’mt bnt yhkbr*. The size and shape of the word dividers in this inscription resemble those found in ASA inscriptions, as well as the Dadanitic monumental inscriptions, but are much larger and longer than those typically found in the other ANA inscriptions, which are typically smaller marks resembling apostrophes (for further examples, mostly from Tayma’, but occasionally in scattered ‘Thamudic’ inscriptions in Arabia, see e.g., Winnett & Reed 1970: 222, no. 2).

4 Grammatical Features and Orthography

This inscription contains several interesting points of grammar that merit brief consideration. First, the name *’btlw* could reflect an elative form from the root √btl, probably “most heroic.” The final *w* could be interpreted as “wawation,” the suffixing of /ū/, usually to personal names and words for relatives (see Al-Jallad forthcoming, for discussion of this feature in context of early Arabic). In Nabataean, this feature is quite commonly attached to personal names (e.g., *mnkw*).³ It is impossible to accurately determine the distribution of this morpheme in the languages attested in the north Arabian scripts given that most did not make use of *matres lectionis*.⁴ The one exception to the non-representation of monophthongs is Dadanitic, where /ū/ and /ā/ are often represented word finally (/ū/ by *w*, and /ā/ by *h* - Macdonald 2004: 495; Sima 1999). Thus the representation of /ū/ with a *mater lectionis* here is intriguing. The representation of long vowels is common in middle and late Sabaic, as well as other ASA script traditions (Stein 2011: 1049). There was a Minaean trading colony at Dadan, and some Minaic inscriptions have been discovered there (Rossi 2014). The phenomenon at Dadan could potentially be connected to the Minaic scribal tradition. If the reading *’btlw* is correct, then such a practice in this inscription strongly suggests some kind of connection with a script tradition that utilized *matres lectionis*, at least word finally, although the exact source of influence is impossible to determine.

We may also interpret the final *w* glyph on personal names as a calque of the name from another script, the most likely candidate being Nabataean Aramaic.

³Interestingly, *wawation* does not typically occur on elative forms in Nabataean, cf. the *’ašlah* inscription from Petra, *’šlh* instead of *’šlhw*; see however the same name with *wawation* in an inscription from Sinai in the Nabataean script, *’šlhw* (Healey 2009: 55; also Al-Khaysheh 1986: 42). I thank Ahmad Al-Jallad for bringing this point to my attention.

⁴South Arabian names normally take *mimation* and thus do not show any evidence of this feature (Stein 2011, but cf. the deity name *’lmqhw* as a possible example of /ū/ on a deity name).

Possible examples can be found in Safaitic *mrw* (KRS 127) or *qymw*,⁵ as well as Hismaic *krw* (HIn428) inscriptions. Calquing implies knowledge of multiple scripts among at least some of the authors of the ANA inscriptions. This is in fact already quite well established by a number of bilingual inscriptions, which are written in a variety of ANA script, as well as another language, frequently Greek, but also Palmyrene and Nabataean Aramaic (Macdonald 2009 II: 347; Hayajneh 2009).

Another possibility⁶ is that *ʔbtlw* reflects a compound name made up *ʔb* ‘father’, and the root $\sqrt{tlw}$ (cf. Arabic *ṭalwun* ‘gazelle’; Lane:1876),⁷ similar in form and meaning to *ʔabū Zabi*. It is also possible to read the second element of the compound as *hlw* (cf. Arabic *ḥulwun*, “(of a man) one who is excited to briskness, liveliness, or sprightliness,” Lane: 634), since the glyph read here as *t* represents *h* in a number of ANA inscriptions (most notably Safaitic, as well as Thamudic C and D). Compound names with the element *ʔb* are known well attested in ANA inscriptions (Harding 1971: 7-18).

The second word of the inscription, *wdd*, admits of several interpretations. It is possible that the form represents a G-stem verb, perhaps /wadida/ ‘he loved’ (cf. Arabic /wadda/ with the same meaning). This root is commonly found in Thamudic C, where some examples of PN *wdd* PN are attested, although it is not the usual formula (Tsafrir 1996: 143). Tsafrir follows Littmann in translating *wdd* as ‘to greet’; Winnett interprets it as a noun ‘love’ (vocalized /widād/ – Winnett 1937: 25). The root is attested in relatively clear contexts with the meaning ‘love’ in the Hismaic inscriptions (KJA 23.105) If the interpretation of a G-stem verb in this inscription is correct, it would imply that geminate verbs in the G-stem had not undergone metathesis, i.e. $C_1aC_2vC_3 > C_1vC_2C_3(v)$ when $C_2 = C_3$ in the language underlying this inscription. It is also possible to understand the verb here as a D-stem, /waddad(a)/. If the interpretation of *wdd* as a verb is correct, then the word order of the inscription is SVO, a word order found in Hismaic, Dadanitic and Taymanitic, but rarely ever in Safaitic (Al-Jallad 2015: 171ff.; Sima 1999). Given our limited understanding of the ‘Thamudic’ inscriptions, we must remain agnostic as regards word order.

It is also possible to interpret *wdd* as a substantive passive participle /wādid/ ‘beloved,’ in which case the text would be understood as *ʔbtlw*, beloved of ‘mt bnt yhkbr.’ The passive participle is found throughout the corpus of ANA inscriptions, and reading a participle here would produce an unremarkable syntax vis-à-vis the other ANA inscriptions. However, it would be quite unusual in the context of ANA and ASA inscriptions for a man to claim to be the beloved of a woman; rather, we would expect a man to declare that he loves a certain woman.⁸

Finally, we may interpret *wdd* as an active participle /wādid/. Depending on the aspectual significance of the participle in this variety, it could either be understood as ‘lover of ‘mt’ or ‘the one who has loved ‘mt.’ If this form represents an active participle then it would suggest that the /i/ vowel was not syncopated as has happened in some Arabic dialects (such as in Hawrani Arabic; see Behnstedt 1997: 384-385) and potentially attested in an unpublished

⁵From unpublished inscription discovered by members of the OCIANA Badia project, May 2015. The inscription will appear in the author’s upcoming Leiden University dissertation.

⁶I thank Jérôme Norris for this suggestion.

⁷Possibly attested in HIn 389

⁸I thank Michael C. A. Macdonald for this important point.

Safaitic inscription - *nq't b-wd d-hbl h-s'fr* 'may whosoever would efface this inscription be thrown out (of his grave) by one who loves (him)'.⁹

The second portion of text, which either represents a continuation of the same inscription or another by the same person (or perhaps an inscription by a different person in the same script), contains a brief petition to the goddess *lt* for deliverance, 'O *Lāt*, deliver!' The petition is introduced by the conjunction *w*. It is likely that the construction is an unmarked vocative phrase, 'O *Lāt*...'.¹⁰ The command *ng* is probably to be read as a D-stem imperative from the root $\sqrt{\text{ngy}}$, 'to deliver'.¹¹ If this interpretation is correct, and if the /w/ in *'btlw* is a *mater*, the absence of /y/ here could imply a short vowel, *naggi*. This root is found in Safaitic inscriptions, both with the meaning 'to be delivered, saved,' and 'to announce' (Macdonald 2014: 155-156). The closest parallels in the Safaitic corpus with this root are found in WH135, *lqny f h lt qbl 'hl s'lm f nngy*, which Al-Jallad translates 'By Qny so, O Lt, let there be reunion with (my) family that we/I may be saved' (Al-Jallad 2015: 284); also WH153, *l s'mt bn cbd bn gt bn s'rk bn s'krm w ngy m-hwlt f h lt s'lm l-d s'r w 'wr l-d y'wr h-s'frt*, 'By S'mt son of 'bd son of Gt son of S'rk son of S'krm and he escaped from the Hwlt so, O Lt, may he who would leave (this inscription) untouched have security but may he who would efface this writing go blind' (ibid: 284). Both *ngw* and *ngy* are attested in Sabaic, but only with the meaning 'to announce' (Stein 2012: 83).¹²

It is also possible to read the final glyph as a /t/, and the root $\sqrt{\text{ntt}}$ is attested in the Arabic lexica with the meaning 'to exude (oil or liquid substance),' as well as, 'to spread, disperse (what was talked about)' (Lane: 2823). The root $\sqrt{\text{ntw}}$ is also listed in several lexicons with the same meaning (Steingass 1884: 1101; Hava: 741). If we read the glyph as a /t/ instead of a /g/, then it is probably best to interpret the final portion as 'O *Lāt*, reveal/make known!'

5 Discussion

The co-occurrence of a number of interesting epigraphic, orthographic, and onomastic features in this inscription merits discussion. First, the name *yhkbr*

⁹It is possible, of course that the author here simply neglected to write the second *d* by mistake.

¹⁰An example from Safaitic provides a structural parallel to the present inscription: C1341 *w rdw 'wr m 'wr-h* 'and Rdw, blind whosoever would efface it.' Al-Jallad (2015: 176) cites this inscription as an example of an unmarked vocative, which precedes the request, which is often morphologically an imperative (as here). Similar constructions are found in the Qur'an, e.g. 10:88, *wa-qāla mūsā rabbanā 'innaka 'atayta fir'awna wa-mala'ahu zinatan wa-'amwālan* 'and Moses said: Our Lord, indeed you have given Pharaoh and his establishment splendor and wealth.' I thank Ahmad Al-Jallad for this reference.

¹¹As argued recently in Macdonald (2014), there were probably two roots, *ngy* 'to be delivered' and *ngw* 'to announce' (the latter attested in Sabaic and Minaic – see Beeston et al. 1982: 93). Al-Jallad (2015: 331) has suggested that these roots were merged in Safaitic, leading to the ambiguity with which Macdonald (2014: 155-156) discusses. This verb meaning 'to be delivered' is attested in Arabic as *ngw*. If the arguments advanced by Macdonald and Al-Jallad are correct, that would suggest that root confusion led to Arabic *ngw* 'to be delivered' (though see below).

¹²Biella (1982: 292), following Beeston and Ryckmans, suggests that the nominal form *mngwn* be understood as 'satisfactory outcomes' or 'good fortune,' connected with religious practices to ensure protection from the evil eye. If true, the root $\sqrt{\text{ngw}}$ could have, in some varieties, had the meaning of 'to be saved, delivered,' in which case perhaps both roots merged to $\sqrt{\text{ngw}}$, the opposite of Al-Jallad's suggestion for the Safaitic development. Indeed, if the root represents a loan, this could explain why Arabic has $\sqrt{\text{ngw}}$ instead of $\sqrt{\text{ngy}}$.

alongside a basically south Arabian *alif* glyph could suggest some connection with southern Arabia and the script and writing traditions in use in the south. The name *yhkbr* presumably is morphologically a H-Stem imperfect from the root $\sqrt{\text{kbr}}$. In most of the languages represented in the north Arabian scripts, the C-stem shifted from /h/ to /ʔ/, whereas in Sabaic the C-stem is still /h/.¹³ Additionally, the H-stem causative is attested fairly frequently in the onomastica of south Arabian, e.g., *S²mr Yhr^cs²*.

Second, the formula used here deviates from attested formulae in other Thamudic inscriptions. Ahmad Al-Jallad has recently advanced persuasive argumentation for connecting the transmission of *how* to write (i.e., knowledge of, and ability to use the script) with *what* to write about and how to write about it (Al-Jallad 2015: 2-10). He notes, for example, that the authors of inscriptions in the Safaitic script, with a few exceptions, wrote about certain topics using oft-repeated vocabulary and formulae, while the graffiti attested in the Hismaic script are by and large expressions of love using formulae and vocabulary rarely attested in the Safaitic inscriptions (Al-Jallad 2015: 6).

Most inscriptions in the various scripts labeled Thamudic are quite brief and enigmatic, and convincing interpretations of the precise meaning of the formulae used have so far been elusive. As noted above, a direct parallel to the formula attested in this inscription (PN + *wdd* + PN) is found in Thamudic C. Whether the precise meaning of *wdd* is ‘love’ (following Winnett) which I have adopted, or ‘greeting’ (following Littmann and Tsafrir), the parallel structure is clear. Unlike Thamudic C, however, this inscription contains a prayer (Divine Name + Impv) more reminiscent of those attested in Safaitic (see Al-Jallad 2015: 208ff. for examples). Thus a formula attested mostly in Thamudic C and a prayer most similar to those in Safaitic meet in an inscription that is neither.

Finally, the value /g/ for usual ANA /t/ is attested in the Hismaic inscriptions (King 1990: 19ff.; Macdonald 2000), and Thamudic C (Macdonald 2000: 34; Al-Jallad 2016). If the interpretation *ng* as a D-stem imperative from the root $\sqrt{\text{ngw}}$ is correct, then this inscription furnishes evidence that such a realization may have been more widespread among the various scripts labelled ‘Thamudic.’

It is important to remember that ‘Thamudic’ as a script category is only a catch-all into which those scripts for which we lack sufficient attestation are placed. It is so far only negatively defined; that is, it stands in for the variety of ANA scripts that are not those for which we have ample attestation and convincing decipherment, such as Safaitic, Hismaic, Taymanitic, etc. The inscription under discussion is not written in the Safaitic or Hismaic script, nor is it in one of the scripts of the oases of north Arabia. We are thus forced to label it with the catch-all ‘Thamudic.’ The fact that this current inscription combines a number of elements not previously attested within the same inscription is thus natural and should serve as a reminder that current subdivisions of Thamudic (i.e., Thamudic B, C, D) are still only tentative and in need of further revision, modification or even replacement in light of new discoveries.

Though the variation in glyph shapes attested in this inscription is natural

¹³Fokelien Kootstra informs me (personal communication) that personal names in Dadanitic based on h-causative stems do occur (e.g., JSLih 125 *yhdkr*) though relatively infrequently. Thus we must be cautious of automatically assigning h-causatives as PNs with a South Arabian origin. However, the fact remains that this inscription is not written in the Dadanitic script, and, as discussed above, several glyphs are indicative of forms common in southern contexts.

given the lack of specificity inherent in the catch-all ‘Thamudic’ classification, the question of whether we can detect a connection with other script traditions remains. The *alif* glyph closely resembles the ASA glyph, and is attested in ‘Southern’ Thamudic as well as some Thamudic B inscriptions. Also, the PN *yhkbr* could suggest a connection with southern Arabia. Further, it is unlikely that the ANA scripts originally made use of *matres lectionis* to represent long vowels, thus, if the reading of the first name as *’bīlw* is the correct reading, the use of the *w* glyph as a *mater lectionis* to represent /ū/ would connect the tradition standing behind this inscription with southern Arabia, or possibly Dadan.

The *w* glyphs resemble forms from ‘Thamudic’ texts found in central and southern Arabia. This shape, however, is not attested in the ASA script tradition, and could represent mixing of several south Arabian features (’ glyph, PN *yhkbr*, and the form of the word dividers) with two others attested (so far) in farther northwest, in NW Saudi Arabia and southern Jordan (*t* glyph representing /g/, /w/ glyph shape). We should note, however, that the combination of features attested in this script, while possibly representing a mixture of earlier traditions, cannot be considered a mixed script (for a general discussion, see Macdonald 1980: 188). Rather, what we have in this inscription is a heretofore unique combination of features that must remain unclassified (except for the somewhat unfortunate ‘Thamudic’ label) for now.

Aside from issues of script and orthography, the goddess *Lt*, a north Arabian goddess not found in the South Arabian pantheon, suggests a northern religious milieu for the author of this inscription. Perhaps the most intriguing thing about this inscription is its provenance, in the Syrian Desert among nomadic groups much farther north than where one might expect to find a script with these features. The presence of an inscription in a script that presents a unique combination of glyphs and formulae, but whose glyphs and orthography show clear connections with southern Arabia and central Arabia, illustrates that these scripts and writing traditions were transmitted and transported quite a distance from their likely origins.

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Sigla

Hava	Hava (1899)
HIn	Harding (1971)
JSLih	Dadanitic inscriptions in Jaussen & Savignac (1909-1922)
KhShB	Thamudic Inscriptions from Wādī Khushayba in Kawatoko et al. (2005)
KJA	Inscriptions from Wādī Judayyid Site A in King (1990: 172-252)
KRS	Safaitic inscriptions recorded by G.M.H. King on the Basalt Desert Rescue Survey; published online in the OCIANA database.
Lane	Lane (1863-1893)

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Remarks on the etymon *trh* in the Safaitic inscriptions

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Abstract

This paper discusses four new Safaitic inscriptions from Jordan. Two of the funerary inscriptions shed light on the enigmatic grieving term *trh*, which could have both a passive meaning “perished” (lit. grieved for) and an active meaning “grieving intensely”.

Keywords: Ancient North Arabian, Safaitic, Funerary Inscriptions

1 Introduction

The stones under study in this article were discovered in Wādī Al-Ḥašād, near Wādī Sārah, by Dr. Sabri al-Abbadi. Wādī Al-Ḥašād is situated about 45km north-east of the village of as-Safawi (see fig. 1). There are two areas in the northeastern Badia of Jordan that are named Al-Ḥašād. In the dialect of the local Bedouins, Al-Ḥašād refers to any area where small, black stones are found. Many researchers have surveyed in Wādī Sārah and Wādī Al-Ḥašād (Ḥarāḥṣah 2010: 73; Abbadi 2013: 119).

The first stone bears three inscriptions, the last of which is funerary and, by number of glyphs, is one of the longest Safaitic inscriptions known to date, consisting of eight lines of closely written text. The second stone contains only one text, which is also funerary in nature.

2 The Inscriptions

2.1 Stone 1

The lengthier text is in the middle of the stone with the two shorter inscriptions “framing” it above and below. The top inscription is covered in scratches, yet despite the damage the reading is certain. In the bottom inscription, the name *s^lrr* (the fourth name in the genealogy) is interesting because, although the reading is sure, the same name is known from other inscriptions on the same stone as *s^lr*. It also seems that the following word, which at first glance may resemble *kwd* with the *k* below the line, should be read as *bn wd* with the *b* and *n* written too close together. Macdonald (p.c.) suggests that the author forgot to include *bn* and then inserted it below the line.

- Inscr. 1:** *l wd bn tm bn wd bn s¹r bn wd bn s¹r ḡ- ʾl ms¹kt*
 ‘By Wd son of Tm son of Wd son of S¹r son of Wd son of S¹r of the lineage of Ms¹kt’
- Inscr. 2:** *l s¹r bn tm bn wd bn s¹rr < <bn> > wd bn s¹r ḡ- ʾl ms¹kt*
 ‘By S¹r son of Tm son of Wd son of S¹rr son of Wd son of S¹r of the lineage of Ms¹kt’
- Inscr. 3:** *l ʿm bn tm bn wd bn s¹r bn wd bn s¹r bn ʿbds²ms¹ ḡ- ʾl ms¹kt w wgm ḡ- ʾb -h trḡ w ḡ- dd -h trḡ w ḡ- mt -h w ḡ- tʿmr trḡt w ḡ- wd bn dd- h w ḡ- ys¹lm s¹by w ḡ- tm s¹by w ḡ- mḡlm w ḡ- tmlh w ḡ- t[]m rḡm mny w ḡ- ys¹lm rḡm mny w ḡ- s¹r qtl w ḡ- s¹r qtl w ḡ- tm w ḡ- ʾs²mt w ḡ- ḡl w ḡ- ḡlt -h w ḡ- ḡl -h w ḡ- ḡts¹[]t w ḡ- ṣ^cd qtl w ḡ- s¹hm {w} {ʿ}l tm s¹by w ḡ- s¹ryt w ḡ- zbdn qtl w ḡ- s¹r qtl w ḡ- {f}s¹ln w ḡ- mḡlm*
 ‘By ʿm son of Tm son of Wd son of S¹r son of Wd son of S¹r son of ʿbds²ms¹ of the lineage of Ms¹kt and he grieved for his father who had perished and for his paternal uncle who was dead and for his grandmother and for Tʿmr who was dead and for Wd son of his paternal uncle and for Ys¹lm who was captured and for Tm who was captured and for Mḡlm and for Tmlh and for {Tm} struck down by Fate and for Ys¹lm struck down by Fate and for S¹r who had been killed and for S¹r who had been killed and for Tm and for ʾs²mt and for ḡl and for his maternal aunt and for his maternal uncle and for {ḡts¹t} and for ṣ^cd who had been killed and for S¹hm {and} {for} Tm who was captured and for S¹ryt and for Zbdn who had been killed and for S¹r who had been killed and for Fs¹ln and for Mḡlm’

2.1.1 Further Commentary on Inscription 3

Michael Macdonald (p.c.) has kindly commented on the text of this inscription. He notes that *tʿmr* is clearly a woman here (as in C 893) because *trḡt* is feminine, which is interesting because the same name is also found as a man’s name in C 1900, and in KRS 602 and 815 (where it may be the same person). Concerning the word *t[]m*, he points out that after the *t* the author wrote a letter which he then erased before continuing with the *m*. In the word *ḡts¹[]t*, the author appears to have carved a *l* between the *s¹* and the *t* and then scratched over it, and in *{w} {ʿ}l tm* part of the *w* and the whole of the *ʿ* have been obscured by damage to the surface. The first letter of *{f}s¹ln* is obscured by damage to the surface and it is difficult to identify it; indeed, it may be two letters. He suggests that it could be a *f* turned at 90° to its normal stance (which is quite common) followed by a clear *s¹* and then *ln* carved very close together.

2.2 Stone 2

Inscr. 4: *l s²hl bn tm bn s²hl w wgm l- 'qrb w trh -h l- 'bd w b's¹ m zl*
 'By S²hl son of Tm son of S²hl and he grieved for 'qrb and he
 was sorrowful forever, for those who remain despair.'

3 Remarks on the etymon *trh*

The content of inscription 3 suggests that it was written in the aftermath of an attack on the writer's family or tribe by another group. It is evident that some of his family members were killed, while others were taken prisoner; some are simply described as having died, without being specifically killed, a nuance which is open to interpretation. The latter sense seems to be conveyed by the common epitaph *trh*, and the feminine *trht*.¹ The precise meaning of this word is hard to pin down, and has been discussed by many scholars (e.g. Al-Jallad 2015: 114, 348, who translates it neutrally as "perished"). The present inscription raises the possibility that the verb in fact has multiple meanings: though the form is usually the passive participle when used as an epitaph, it is possibly attested as an active verb in inscription 4, which would be understood, as in Classical Arabic, as the II-form which means "it made him sorrowful", therefore suggesting that he actively grieved for a long time. However, it is equally possible that the phrase *w trh -h l- 'bd* in inscription 4 should be taken as a nominal sentence, where *trh* simply means something like 'sorrow' or 'sadness', and the entire phrase is to be translated as 'and his sorrow is everlasting'.²

A major theme of the Safaitic inscriptions is the expression of grieving or mourning for the dead, and several verbs are used in the compositional formula used for this genre of inscription. We find it useful here to gather all such verbs, with their conventional translations, in a table for comparison.

¹On the meaning of the root *trh* and its derivations in Classical Arabic see Lane 302.

²We thank Ahmad Al-Jallad for this suggestion.

REMARKS ON THE ETYMON ṬRH

	Translation	Siglum
<i>wgm</i>	he grieved	HCH 5
<i>wlh</i>	he mourned deeply	HCH 71
	he despaired	SIJ 118
	he was distraught	C 25
	he grieved passionately	WH 164
<i>wg^c</i>	he mourned	JaS 30
	he grieved in pain	SIJ 119
<i>wny</i>	he became depressed	KRS 17
<i>ndm</i>	he was devastated by grief	KRS 2300
<i>ng^c</i>	he grieved in pain	C 763
	he suffered	WH 239
	he was sad	KRS 142
<i>bky</i>	he wept	ANSWS 59
<i>'tm</i>	he was sad	WH 376
<i>'ll</i>	cry, complain	LP 1300
<i>b's¹</i>	to be miserable	C 2544
	to make miserable	C 4010
<i>ṭql</i>	he became weighed down [with grief]	KRS 1435
<i>ḥwb</i>	he wept with grief	WH 73
<i>ḥyb</i>	he lamented greatly	WH 116
<i>dm^c</i>	he shed tears	CSNS 895
<i>s¹qm</i>	he was sick [with grief]	KRS 776
<i>'bs¹</i>	he frowned	NST 2
<i>qsf</i>	he was miserable	HaNSB 217
<i>'s1f</i>	regret, sadly, be sad, feel sorry for	LP 718, WH 2017
<i>'g^c</i>	to cause pain	KRS 3074
<i>'nf</i>	cry, be angry	C 1475
<i>'nn</i>	howl, cry aloud (?) Complain	WH 345
<i>dwy</i>	He was miserable, be depressed, being sick	KRS 15

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Figures



Figure 1: Map of Jordan showing the location of Wādī al-Hašād (Source: Google Earth)



Figure 2: The stone which bears the inscriptions 1–3



Figure 3: Digitally enhanced image of the inscriptions 1–3

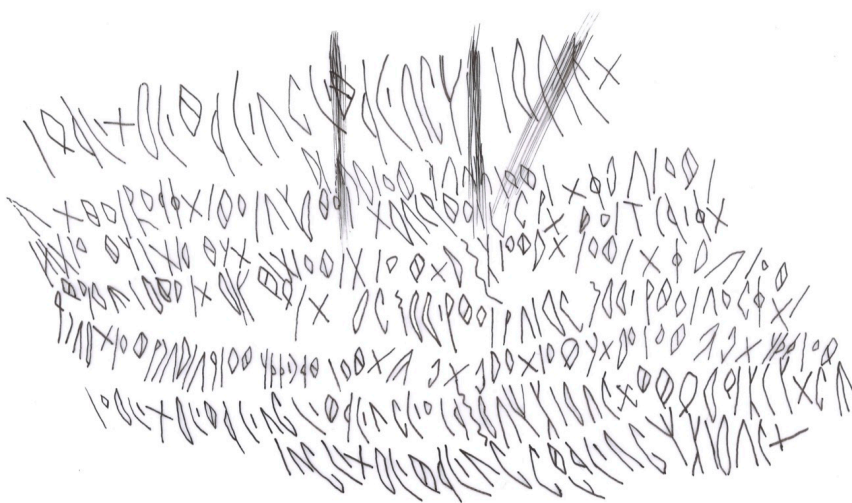


Figure 4: Tracing of the inscriptions 1–3.



Figure 5: The stone which bears inscription 4

Sigla

ANSWS	Abbadi 2006.
C	Ryckmans 1950-1951.
CSNS	Clark 1979 [1983]
HaNSB	Ḥarāḥṣah 2010.
HCH	Harding 1953.
KRS	“King Rescue Survey”. Inscriptions recorded by Geraldine King on the Basalt Rescue Desert Survey in north-eastern Jordan in 1989.
NST	Harding 1951.
JaS	Unpublished inscriptions recorded by the SESP 1995 at Jabal Says (to appear on OCIANA)
Lane	Lane 1863-1893
LP	Littmann 1943.
SIJ	Safaitic Inscriptions in Winnett 1957.
WH	Safaitic Inscriptions in Winnett & Harding 1978.

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New Epigraphica from Jordan II: three Safaitic-Greek partial bilingual inscriptions^{*}

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Abstract

This paper publishes three new Safaitic-Greek bilingual inscriptions. One of them is the first to contain a translation of the Old Arabic prose into Greek. In addition to their decipherment and translation, the paper offers a few grammatical observations on the Arabic and Greek and remarks on the growing evidence for Arabic-Greek bilingualism in the Harrah.

Keywords: Safaitic; Greek inscriptions; Literacy; Bilingual inscriptions; Graeco-Arabica

1 Introduction

This paper deciphers and comments on three new Safaitic-Greek partial bilinguals. These inscriptions add to the small corpus of such texts¹ and stand as important witnesses to Greek-Old Arabic bilingualism in the Syro-Jordanian Desert. In addition to this, they add to our fragmentary knowledge of the phonology of Old Arabic, as the phonetic realizations of the vowels and consonants can be deduced from the Greek spellings. The inscriptions are carved on three stones. Stones 1 and 2 were discovered during a 2004 survey in Wadi al-Ḥašād (see Fig. 4) lead by Ali al-Manaser and Sabri Abbadi to collect material for al-Manaser's PhD dissertation. The texts were not included in al-Manaser's dissertation, but were kindly made available to Ahmad Al-Jallad to study in 2016. The third stone was discovered by the OCIANA Badia Survey of 2015 at Tell al-ʿAbed in northeastern Jordan, and was kindly made available to be published in the present study by M.C.A. Macdonald.

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¹See Al-Jallad (2015: 293–294) for a list of examples.

2 Stone 1

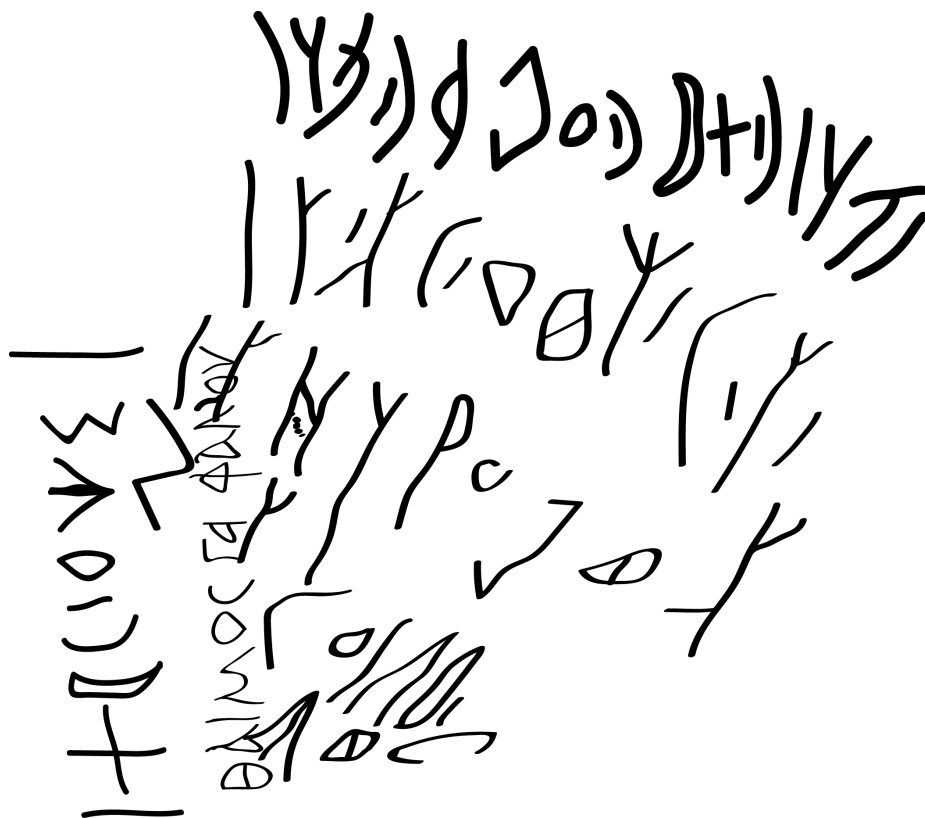


Figure 1: Stone 1, tracing by A. Al-Jallad

This stone bears three Safaitic texts and a Greek inscription. 1Saf.a and 1Grk comprise the bilingual text, while the other two Safaitic texts are independent compositions.

1Saf.a: *l tm bn ghfl*
'By Taym son of Gaḥfal'

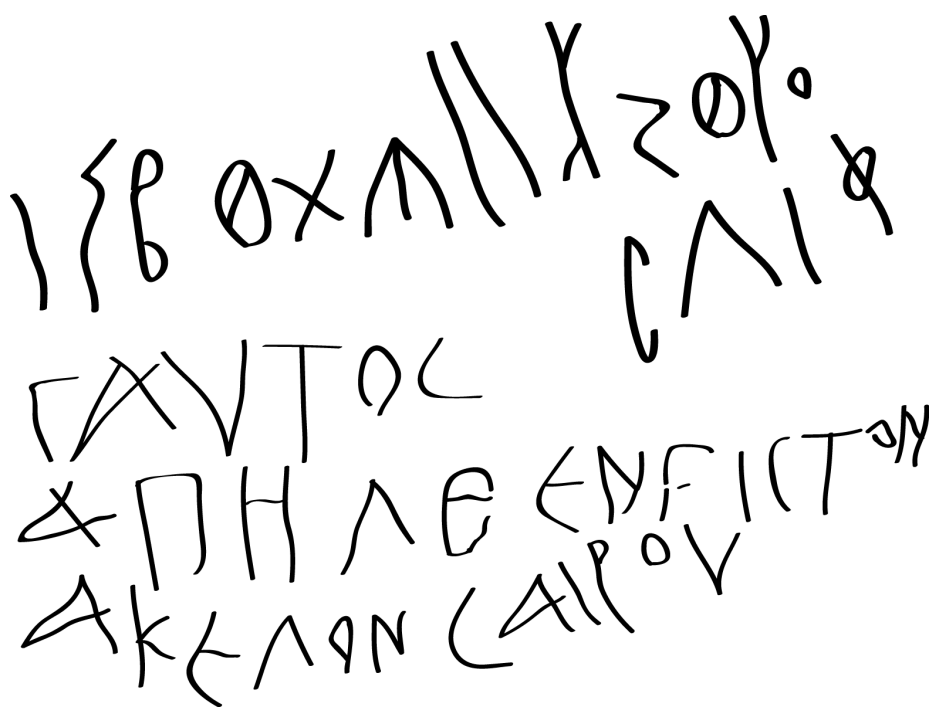
1Grk: *Θαιμος Γαφαλου*
'Taimos son of Gafalos'

Commentary The name *tm bn ghfl* appears only in one other Safaitic inscription, as the father of the author:

KWQ 83: *l qd[[y]] bn tm bn ghfl w r'y hrt f h rdw s'lm*
'By [Qdy] son of Tm son of Ghfl and he pastured the Ḥarrah so, O Rdw, may he be secure'

1Saf.b: *l khl bn tm bn 'rd bn khl*
 'By Khl son of Tm son of 'rd son of Khl'

3 Stone 2



²While it has been assumed that the digraph $\alpha\iota$ had come to be pronounced as [e] in the Koiné, we cannot be sure that this was the case in the Greek of the Near East. Moreover, as I have argued elsewhere, the fact that this digraph is not used to represent the plain [e] vowel in transcriptions suggests that it was an attempt by scribes to approximate a diphthong in Old Arabic (see Al-Jallad forthcoming: §4.2.4). As we shall see below, the fact that the diphthong **aw* was represented consistently with $\alpha\omega$ would further suggest that the diphthongs did not collapse.

The second stone bears an atypical, non-formulaic Safaitic inscription, accompanied by a unique Greek text. The exact meaning of the Safaitic is unclear, and the Greek, unlike all of the other known bilingual texts, is not simply a rendition of the names but rather an attempt to translate the Old Arabic into Greek language. The possible limitations of the writer's Greek, however, complicate this, and raise more questions about the meaning of both texts than provide answers. Let us begin with the Safaitic.

2Saf: *l ḡt w thll 'fwh 'ql s'r*
 'By Ḡawṭ and he departed (this place) into the foremost part of
 the protected area of Sayr.'

The text opens in the typical manner with the *lam auctoris* and a common personal name, *ḡt*, the vocalization of which is /ḡawṭ/, based on the Greek portion. Every term in the narrative that follows is a *hapax legomenon*. The verb is *thll*, which would appear to be a t-stem (probably the tD or tG) of the common verb *hll*. The latter generally means "to camp" in the Safaitic inscriptions (Al-Jallad 2015: 322).³ The tD-stem in Classical Arabic, *taḥallala*, covers the semantic range of being broken down, e.g. "it passed away by becoming dissolved"; "it became reduced by analysis to it". The meaning of going away or exiting is attested, however, in "it (a disease) went away by degrees" or "he became *ḥalāl*, meaning he finished his prayer" (Lane 621–622). The Gt is not attested in Classical Arabic. Looking at the Greek portion of this inscription, the corresponding verb is ἀπῆλθεν "he went away", suggesting in fact that the Safaitic *thll* corresponds closest in meaning to the reduplicated stem of Classical Arabic, *taḥalḥala* 'an *makānihi* 'he removed from his place' ... 'and went away' (Lane 621a).

The crux of the entire text is the meaning of the word 'ql. If we take *thll* as leaving a place, then 'fwh 'ql s'r must be understood as some sort of toponym or description of a location. In this context, 'fwh does carry the meaning of "the foremost part" of an area if we connect it to Classical Arabic 'afwāḥ (Lane 2465c),⁴ namely, the part that one enters into an area through vs. the 'arḡul, which is the point of departure from an area. While Classical Arabic uses the preposition *fī* before this term, this preposition is rather rare in Safaitic; location and goal of travel are usually indicated by the accusative. Finally, if we take literally the equation of 'fwh with the term εἰς "into" in the Greek section, then it may be the case that the former should be taken as a preposition, the plural of the rare *f* */pī/, Classical Arabic *fī* (Al-Jallad 2015: 150).⁵ Plural biforms of prepositions of nominal origin are attested, e.g. Levantine Arabic *bayn* and *baynāt* or Hebrew *bēn* and *bēnôt*, but these usually occur with plural pronominal suffixes (Waltke & O'Conner 1990: 199).

The term 'ql has not yet appeared in the inscriptions with a clear toponymic signification. The word is attested, as far as I know, only twice, and on both occasions there are difficulties in connecting the term with the present attestation. The first is in JaS 52, where the author states *hyt l- 'qlt* 'he journeyed

³Also with the same meaning in Sabaic (Beeston et al. 1982: 67). Note that the author has carved the *t* as an *X* rather than a cross, which is its typical shape in Safaitic.

⁴*daḥalū fī 'afwāhi l-baladi wa ḥaraḡū min 'arḡulihi* (Lane 2465c)

⁵'afwāḥ is of course one of the plurals of the word "mouth", *fam*, which itself is the source of the preposition *fī*.

quickly to ‘qlt’. The second, Is.H 744, states: *l’ws¹d bn yt^c h- ‘ql{l}*. If ‘ql is correctly read, then the syntax would indicate that it is an area or an installation (Al-Jallad 2015: 201–202). Thus, both contexts prefer the interpretation of ‘ql(t) as a toponym, although its exact meaning cannot be determined through the texts themselves. In search of toponyms in the Classical Arabic lexica, one finds the term *ma‘qilun* “a place to which one betakes himself for refuge, protection, preservation, covert, or lodging”; also *ma‘āqilu l-’arḍi* “fortresses of the land” (Lane 2116a–b) or *‘āqūl/‘aqūl* (Lane 2115c–2116a) “a place of bending”, and to “a land in which one will not find the right way, because of its many winding places”. The root gives rise to some suitable terms in Gəʿəz as well, e.g. ‘*aq*l ‘lake, pool’; *mə‘qāl* ‘pool, pond, cistern, reservoir’ (Leslau 1987: 67b).

Nevertheless, the Safaitic term ‘ql – vocalized as /‘āqel/ or /‘aqel/ based on the Greek portion – does not match perfectly any of the relevant etyma in Classical Arabic or Gəʿəz. Therefore, there is no *a priori* reason that the term carries an identical meaning to the aforementioned terms. The basic sense of the root ‘ql refers to “binding”, which gives rise to meanings having to do with protection or fortification. It is possible that /‘āqel/ is an equivalent of *ḥmy* */ḥemay/, “a protected area of pasturage” (Al-Jallad 2015: 322) or some other area that is placed under tribal protection. I would therefore suggest the loose translation of ‘ql as “protected area”, either of pasturage or to a place of water such as a lake or pool. The fact that this was such a culturally specific term may have prevented the author from finding a suitable translation in Greek, and so he resorted to simply transcribing the word.⁶ Like ‘ql, the term *s¹r* is simply transliterated in the Greek, and so it is likely a proper name, referring to the group who owned or managed this protected area. Curiously, the *r* is carved facing the beginning of the boustrophedon line. While this is common in Thamudic B, it is rare in Safaitic. According to this sequence of interpretation, we may suggest the following translation: ‘By Ġawṭ and he departed (this place) into the foremost part of the protected area of Sayr.’

2Grk: Γαυτος ἀπῆλθεν [ε]ἰς τὸν Ἀκελὸν Σαῖρου
‘Gawtos departed into the Akel of Sayr’

Let us begin with the personal name. Greek Γαυτος corresponds to the Safaitic *ḡt*, confirming two important issues in the phonetics behind transcriptions and Safaitic orthography. First, it is clear – beyond any doubt – that Safaitic preserved the diphthongs in pronunciation word internally but did not indicate them in writing. While the diphthong **ay* has appeared in other bilingual texts, always represented with αἰ, one could always doubt the realization of this sequence in the Greek of this period, and suggest that it in fact stood for /ē/ in transcription. However, Greek αῦ, as I have argued before, never came to represent /ō/, and so its usage here can only signify that the diphthong **aw* obtained and was realized as [au]. Safaitic orthography therefore treated diphthongs as long vowels [ai] and [au] rather than a sequence of a short vowel and a consonantal glide [ay] and [aw], as other Semitic scripts seem to have.

⁶It is certainly tempting to see here a connection with Proto-Semitic **ḥaqlu*, Arabic and Aramaic *ḥaq(e)l*, ‘a field’. The word is transcribed in the Acts 1:18–19 as Akel, in the place name Ἀκελδαμάχ in the Greek New Testament. However, even if we consider the term a loan, it is difficult to explain the rendering of Aramaic *ḥ* with Safaitic ‘. I thank Benjamin Suchard for bringing this verse to my attention.

Second, it has been hypothesized in the past that the use of Tau to represent etymological *ṭ was an indication that the latter had merged with the stop [t] (Sartre 1985: 192–193). The Safaitic spelling, however, indicates that the interdental obtained, suggesting that Tau was used to approximate ṭ [θ], probably on the basis that both were not aspirated.

The verb following is ἀπῆλθεν, the 3rd singular aorist indicative, meaning “he went away, departed from”. This, as I have suggested above, must correspond to Safaitic *thll*. The rest of the inscription reveals an awareness of Greek grammar beyond the usual Hellenization of personal names. On the photograph available to me, the last part of the second line reads most easily as γιστον. This would not seem to render anything meaningful. The final τόν is probably the definite article, and so that leaves us with γις. It is possible, although not immediately recognizable on the photograph, that γις actually renders εἰς “into”, which would correspond very nicely with *ʾfwh*, “the point of entry into a place”. Given the equivalence between the two, it would seem, if the resemblance between the Epsilon and Gamma is not the result of a flaw on the photograph, that the author simply erred. The following two nouns are Hellenized transcriptions of the Old Arabic: τόν ἀκελον, the accusative Hellenized form of *ʿql*, and Σαιρου, the genitive of Safaitic *sʿr*. This indicates that *ʿql* and *sʿr* in the Safaitic form a genitive construction, and the spelling out of both in Greek supports the idea that they are either proper nouns or too culturally specific to translate.

4 Stone 3

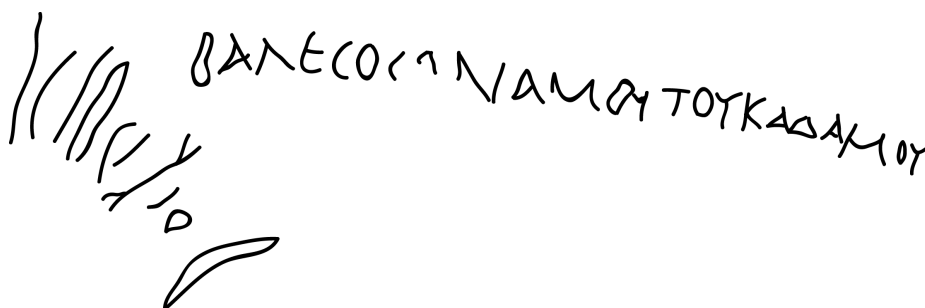


Figure 3: Stone 3, tracing by A. Al-Jallad

This one consists of only names, but unlike the other known bilingual texts, the Greek portion is longer than the Safaitic.

3Saf: *l bls¹ bn ʾnʿm*
 ‘By Bls¹ son of ʾnʿm.’

3Grk: Βαλεσος Αναμου τοῦ Καδαμου
 ‘Balesos son of Anamos son of Kadamos.’

The extra component in the Greek seems to refer to the author's grandfather, as in the bilingual inscription WH 1860 + Greek 2:

l whblh bn ʒn'l bn whblh
 Ουαβαλλας Ταννηλου τοῦ [] Ουαβαλλου

If this interpretation is correct, then the same man composed two other inscriptions, WH 27 and SIJ 159, where in both he gives the name of his grandfather as *qdm*.

5 Concluding remarks

All of the newly discovered bilinguals further confirm the phonological reconstruction of Safaitic as described in (Al-Jallad 2015: 39–47). The Greek of 2Grk suggests that bilingual authors had various commands of the language. This writer's Greek is not as developed as the author of A2 (Al-Jallad & al Manaser 2015), but appears to be more capable than the author of A1 (*ibid.*), if the interpretation that the prose component of that inscription was composed in Arabic because the author had exhausted his knowledge of Greek is correct. It may be significant that Grk1 and Grk2 are incised in a much thinner manner than their Safaitic counterparts, suggesting perhaps that their authors were used to writing Greek with a pen. This, combined with the fact that all three inscriptions are composed in the book hand, may suggest that these authors acquired Greek through a more deliberate form of education, rather than casually picking it up from examples of Greek epigraphy that abound in the vicinity of the settled areas.

Finally, 3Saf-3Grk encourages caution when it comes to using the inscriptional evidence at face value for deducing things like the extent of cultural contact between the settle peoples and nomads.⁷ Were it not for its chance discovery, there would be nothing in the two other texts composed by the same man to suggest that he knew some Greek or that he would have had contact with the settled world. If the composition of Safaitic inscriptions belonged to a tradition of rock art, which also included visual carvings as well, then the rarity of Greek epigraphy in the desert would not necessarily reflect an absence of knowledge of the language or script, but rather the fact that Greek did have a position in the rock art tradition of the nomads. Of course, this is not to say that every man in the desert knew Greek, but that the example of 3Saf-3Grk simply shows that one cannot say for sure who did based on the kinds of texts they produced.

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⁷For an excellent treatment of the evidence for contact between the nomads and neighboring settled peoples, see Macdonald 2009 II; 2014.

Figures



Figure 4: Location of Wadi al-Hashad and Tell al-ʿAbed, map by Ali al-Manaser, source: Google Earth



Figure 5: Stone 1, photo by Ali al-Manaser



Figure 6: Stone 1, photo by Ali al-Manaser

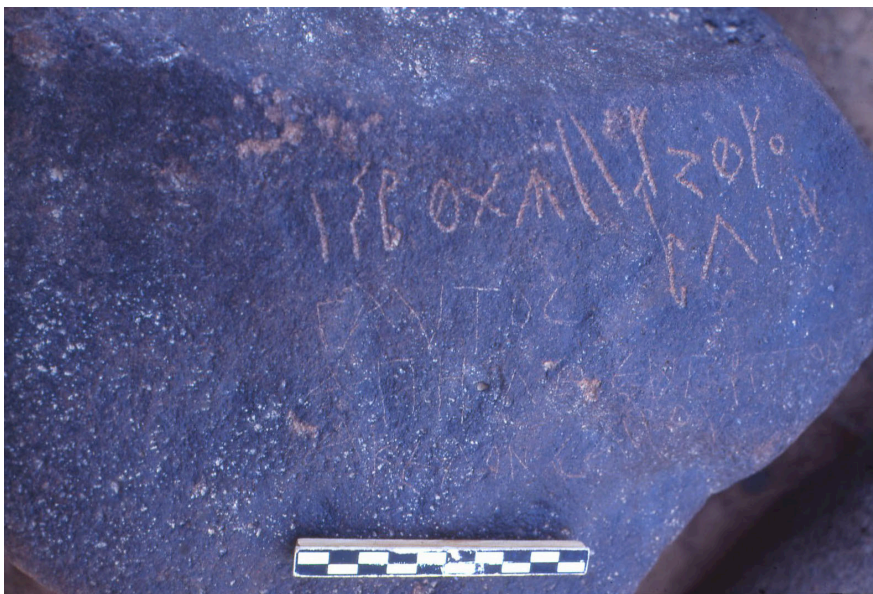


Figure 7: Stone 2, photo by Ali al-Manaser



Figure 8: Stone 3, photo by Michael Macdonald



Figure 9: Stone 3, photo by Michael Macdonald

Sigla

Is.H	Unpublished inscriptions recorded by the SESP 1995 survey at Site no. 40, the hill south of the well at al-ʿĪsāwī. (to appear on OCIANA).
JaS	Unpublished inscriptions recorded by the SESP 1995 at Jabal Says (to appear on OCIANA).
KWQ	Unpublished Safaitic inscriptions from Wadi Qattafi recorded by G.M.H. King.
SIJ	Safaitic Inscriptions in Winnett 1957.
WH	Safaitic Inscriptions in Winnett & Harding 1978.

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The Language of the Taymanitic Inscriptions & its Classification

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Abstract

This work comprises a linguistic survey of the Ancient North Arabian (ANA) epigraphic material from Taymāʾ, conventionally known as Taymanitic (Macdonald 2000: 28-9). A grammatical sketch, based on the linguistic features in the Taymanitic corpus is presented, followed by a discussion of the linguistic features of Taymanitic that are relevant to its linguistic classification. After that, follows a compilation of all previously published inscriptions with grammatical content. Finally, an appendix with a glossary follows.

Keywords: Ancient North Arabian, Taymanitic, Classification

1 Introduction

Taymanitic¹ is the name given to an Ancient North Arabian (ANA) script employed in and around the northwestern Arabian oasis of Taymāʾ.² ANA is an umbrella term for all of the non-Ancient South Arabian manifestations of the South Semitic alphabet. It has been hypothesized that these form one group, descending parallel to Ancient South Arabian from a putative proto-South Semitic script. Nevertheless, a paleographic connection between all of the ANA scripts has yet to be demonstrated (Al-Jallad 2015: 10).

When the Taymanitic inscriptions were first discovered they were called Thamudic, together with several other, now separately distinguished, script types.³ In the 1930s Winnett (1937) divided the Thamudic inscriptions into

*I owe thanks to Jérôme Norris, Dr. Marijn van Putten, and Prof. dr. Hani Hayajneh for their extensive comments and corrections on an earlier version of this paper. I thank Dr. Ahmad Al-Jallad for his thorough comments and corrections on this paper and for advising the Master's Thesis upon which this is based. I owe a special thanks to Michael Macdonald for not only commenting on and correcting an earlier version of this paper, but for also kindly giving me access to his photographs and his personal database of the inscriptions of the Tayma survey prior to their publication for my MA thesis. Without his generosity, this project would have been impossible. I reference his notes and translations from the database with (db). All errors are my own.

¹Michael Macdonald has kindly given me access to his photographs and his personal database of the inscriptions of the Tayma survey prior to their publication for my MA thesis, of which this is a reworked version. I would like to thank him very much for his generosity. Whenever translations or notes put forward in the database are used, these will be referenced as (db).

²The oasis was an important stopping point for the caravans travelling along the frankincense route. See Hausleiter (2010: 219-261) for a more detailed discussion of the ancient history of Taymāʾ.

³In this period, the term Thamudic encompassed Hismaic as well. The collection of Thamudic inscriptions started in the mid-19th century, when several travelers and scholars made copies of

5 subgroups based on script and content: Thamudic A, B, C, D and E. Since the features distinguishing Thamudic A consistently occur in the inscriptions found in the Taymāʾ region, Winnett coined the name Taymanite for this script type (Winnett & Reed 1970: 90 and Winnett 1980: 133). The name Taymanitic was later established by Macdonald in an effort to systemize the wide array of names that had been created by different scholars for the various corpora of ANA inscriptions⁴ (Macdonald 2000: 33).

Even though it is impossible to determine when Taymanitic first started to be written, there are some historical references in the Taymanitic inscriptions that provide us with a clear time frame for at least part of the corpus. A few inscriptions found around Taymāʾ mention *nbnd mlk bbl* (Esk 169 and Esk 177) “Nabonidus king of Babylon” or *mlk bbl* (Esk 025⁵) “king of Babylon”,⁶ placing the writing of these inscriptions sometime in the middle of the first millennium BCE, when Nabonidus occupied Taymāʾ for ten years of his rule (552-543 BC) (Beaulieu 1989: 150).⁷

The corpus of ANA inscriptions has generally been considered a relatively homogeneous group of linguistic varieties (e.g. Macdonald 2000: 31). This is primarily based on the scripts used, and not on linguistic features.⁸ Even though some scholars have emphasized the difference between Arabic and ANA (e.g. Müller 1982, Macdonald 2008: 179), ANA as a whole is often considered to be either very closely related to, or even the direct predecessor of Arabic (e.g. Knauf 2010; Lipiński 1997; Müller 1982⁹). Until recently, the main linguistic feature used to distinguish ANA from Arabic was the definite article, which was identified as *h(n)-* for ANA as opposed to *ʾl-* for Arabic varieties.

some of the Thamudic inscriptions they found on the Arabian Peninsula (e.g. Wellsted 1838; Wallin 1850). Also larger collections of Ancient North Arabian inscriptions and graffiti found in the same area started to be published around that time (Doughty 1884; Huber 1884 and Huber 1891, Euting 1914; Jaussen & Savignac 1909-1922).

⁴Macdonald proposes to use *-ic* for languages and scripts, *-ite* for peoples and cultures; consistent with the way in which these morphemes are generally used in the English language (Macdonald 2000: 33).

⁵Esk 169 is certainly written in Taymanitic script, although the *f* in line three has a Safaitic shape. Esk 025 contains two non-Taymanitic letter shapes, but seems to have been written in the Taymanitic script otherwise. The *ʾ* in the personal name has a Safaitic shape, while the *t* in *ntrt* looks like two # signs glued together, closely resembling the *t* sign proposed for “dispersed ONA” or in fact Taymanitic *d* (Macdonald 2000: 34). For Esk 177 it is hard to determine exactly in which script it was written partly due to the angle at which the photograph was taken (Macdonald in comments, db).

⁶Several inscriptions mentioning Nabonidus in other scripts have also been found at the oasis: one fragmentary cuneiform inscription on stone with the name of Nabonidus was found during the Saudi-German excavations of Taymāʾ (Hausleiter 2010: 253, no. 101) and an Imperial Aramaic graffito the author of which said that he had accompanied Nabonidus king of Babylon has been found at al-Muqayil south of Taymāʾ (I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for pointing this out to me).

⁷The reason for Nabonidus’ presence at Taymāʾ has been a matter of debate; among the suggested reasons have been economic considerations, sickness, and political/religious tensions. The fact that he stayed at Taymāʾ during this period, however, has been accepted as an historical fact. Therefore, at least part of the Taymanitic corpus can safely be dated to the second half of the 6th century BCE. For more detailed discussions of the topic see e.g. Beaulieu 1989; D’Agostino 1994: 97-108 and Lambert 1972.

⁸This is largely due to the relative paucity of the material; since the short, formulaic inscriptions make it hard to get a clear grasp of the full grammar of any of these varieties.

⁹Müller does recognize that the use of Arabic for the interpretation of ANA texts might be one of the reasons the two look so alike (Müller 1982: 18).

Since the definite article is not a shared morphological innovation¹⁰ for Arabic or for ANA,¹¹ this cannot be used as a feature to determine their linguistic affiliation.¹²

If we take an approach which focusses on morphological innovations to determine linguistic relationship (e.g. Hetzron 1976; Huehnergard & Rubin 2011) it can be established that Hismaic and Safaitic form a dialect continuum with Old Arabic (Al-Jallad 2015: 12). Based on our current knowledge it is impossible to establish what the affiliation of Dadanitic and the languages expressed in the Thamudic scripts would be. Even though several striking features of the Dadanitic grammar are known (e.g. both ' - and *h*- causatives are attested, and it uses independent 3rd person pronouns as anaphora (Al-Jallad, forthcoming)) our knowledge is too fragmented to be able to classify it at the moment.¹³ This study will set out to establish the linguistic affiliation of the language of the Taymanitic inscriptions in relation to the Old Arabic dialect continuum and its surrounding Semitic languages.

When looking at possible cultural ties between ANA corpora, Taymanitic seems to have had its own script tradition. First of all, the content of the Taymanitic inscriptions is very different from, for example, Safaitic. This is partly due to the obvious fact that the Taymanitic inscriptions were written by a sedentary community, so there are no inscriptions mentioning nomadic activities such as pasturing like in Safaitic. However, other, more general topics, such as grieving or longing for a loved one, or funerary texts which are also common themes in Safaitic (Al-Jallad 2015: 22) are similarly unattested. Moreover, even when compared to inscriptions from other sedentary communities such as Dedan, Taymanitic remains clearly distinguishable. There are for example, no attestations of texts relating a specific religious ceremony called the *ʔll* ceremony for *dḡbt* which features in many of the Dadanitic inscriptions (Sima 1999: 90-95); the only deity that is mentioned in the Taymanitic inscriptions is *ʕalm*;¹⁴ there is no mention of *dḡbt*, *rḏw/y* or *lt* who appear often in other ANA corpora. Instead, Taymanitic mainly seems to discuss military activities: a few writers list their military ranks (e.g. Esk 031) and one of the common formulae is *nʕr l-ʕlm* 'he gave aid on behalf of *ʕlm* (the main deity of the oasis)' seems to refer to military service (for a complete discussion see 4.6 for *nʕr l-ʕlm* inscriptions). Other inscriptions are purely religious in nature and are also dedicated to *ʕlm* (e.g. HE 24).

Even though the formula used in the Taymanitic inscriptions generally follow the basic structure also used in other ANA varieties: 'introductory particle - genealogy – statement'; there seems to be little overlap with other corpora oth-

¹⁰Cf. Hetzron 1976; Huehnergard & Rubin 2011

¹¹The usage and relevance of the definite article for the classification of ANA is extensively discussed in Al-Jallad (2014: 5-6 and 2015: 11-12).

¹²When examining the evidence, it becomes clear that the situation is more complex than this: while Al-Jallad classifies the language varieties found in the Safaitic inscriptions as forms of *Old Arabic* (Al-Jallad 2015: 11), a variety of different forms of the article is attested in the Safaitic inscriptions. The most frequently attested form of the article is *h*-, but *hm*- and *ʔ(l)*- articles have also been attested (Al-Jallad 2015: 11). This illustrates how the form of the article cannot be used to indicate how closely related any linguistic variety is to Arabic or any another Semitic language.

¹³In recent years, two extensive monographs have been published on Dadanitic: Sima's MA thesis, which was published in 1999 and Farès-Drappeau's (2005) study. However, Sima's work does not cover the complete corpus and Farès-Drappeau's study does not offer a reliable comparative approach.

¹⁴There is one exception to this: *ʔlht* '[the] goddess' is mentioned in TM.T.020

erwise: there are no attestations of curse formula for example (e.g. in Safaitic KRS 1551 (part): ...*h lh rwh w mhltn l-d y'wr h-s¹ fr* '... O Lh, grant relief and dearth of pasture to him who would scratch out this inscription').¹⁵ The fact that different scripts come with different composition formulae suggests that they were produced within independent writing traditions and cultural contexts. Therefore, the Taymanitic inscriptions will be considered as an independent corpus both culturally and linguistically and it will only be compared to other ANA corpora when relevant, since the semantics and grammar of other corpora can often not be used as a starting point for interpreting the Taymanitic inscriptions.

This paper will focus on the language represented in the Taymanitic inscriptions. It presents a grammatical sketch, based on the linguistic features in the Taymanitic corpus, followed by a discussion of the linguistic features of Taymanitic that are relevant to its linguistic classification. Two Appendices follow: a compilation of all previously published inscriptions with grammatical content, including a discussion of any new interpretations; and a glossary.

2 Grammatical sketch

In order to establish the relationship between Taymanitic and the other ANA varieties or Arabic, a better understanding of the Taymanitic grammar itself is required. Below, a grammatical sketch of Taymanitic will be offered, discussing the linguistic features that are most significant to answering the question 'what kind of Semitic language do the Taymanitic inscriptions express?' This means that some of the features it has in common with most Semitic languages, or for which we simply do not have evidence in the epigraphic material from Taymā', will not be discussed specifically.

2.1 Orthography

2.1.1 Vowels and Diphthongs

Taymanitic is a consonantal script. Diphthongs were occasionally represented graphically, e.g. *'tw-t* /'atawt(u)/ 'I came' (Esk 169).

There are however, several examples of diphthongs going unrepresented, e.g. Taymā' written as *tm'* (Kim CIMG 0759 Tay. (unpublished)) and possibly: *tmnyt* */taymāniyyat/ 'Taymanite' (Liv. Tay1) (but cf. Macdonald 1992: 31). In the same inscription as in which the form *tm'* is attested however, we also find the form *b'ly* which was probably pronounced /ba'alay/ 'owners of' (Kim CIMG 0759 Tay.). This differentiation in spelling of diphthongs could be due to uncertainty on the part of the writers as to the interpretation of these sounds.¹⁶ In the examples cited above it could also represent a difference in the orthographic representation of internal as opposed to word final diphthongs similar to that in Safaitic (Al-Jallad 2015: 38), the spelling of *'twt*, however seems to contradict this. When comparing the spelling of *tm'* /taymā'/ to that of *'twt*

¹⁵Translation following Al-Jallad (2015: 260).

¹⁶Most Dutch speakers would for example consider diphthongs *ee* [ej] and *oo* [ow] as single vowels. If some speakers treated diphthongs similarly as long vowels in the language represented by Taymanitic, these would have gone unrepresented in the orthography.

/ʔatáwtu/ one might suggest that only stressed diphthongs are represented orthographically. The presence of the -y in *bʔly* (Kim CIMG 0759 Tay.) however, demonstrates that this is not the case, since *bʔly* is in construct position and therefore unstressed. At the moment there are too few certain attestations of diphthongs to distinguish a pattern in their distribution with any certainty.

2.1.2 Word Dividers

Word dividers are used in many of the Taymanitic inscriptions,¹⁷ but their usage seems to have been inconsistent. In some inscriptions they are used to separate every word, while in others the placement of word boundaries seems more phrase or stress-based; and finally there are inscriptions that do not use any word dividers at all. Two of the inscriptions that use word dividers to separate every word seem to have been more formal inscriptions, engraved deeply into a smooth and possibly prepared, surface.

TA 09302:

ḥ{s³}y / fʔl / ḥmd / l-ḥdh / b-ym / blbd

‘Ḥs³y attained glory by guarding the border in the battle of *blbd*’

TA 09303:

----{l}y / fʔl / r[ʔ]s¹ / ḥm{d}

‘...(?) attained foremost glory’

There are also inscriptions that seem pegged or pounded on rocks in the desert that separate every word of an inscription.

Esk 026:

l bʔm / b n{ʔ}dr / fʔl / nk

‘by *Bʔm* son of *Nʔdr* engaged in battle’

Other inscriptions that use word dividers seem to use them to separate phrases or stress units, like construct phrases, from each other. This would explain, for example, why *b* ‘son of’ is never separated from the following personal name in genealogies.

Esk 023:

yfʔ / b b{s²}mt / {f}ʔ {n}k

‘Yfʔ son of *Bs²mt* engaged in battle’

Esk 064:

šmdʕ / b s²mt / ʔl trḏlt

‘Šmdʕ son of *S²mt* of the tribe of *Trḏlt*’

¹⁷Other ANA scripts that use word dividers are Dadanitic, Dumaitic (of which only three inscriptions are attested) (Macdonald 2008: 186) and occasionally Thamudic D (Ahmad Al-Jallad, pc.). Of these, only monumental Dadanitic uses them consistently (Macdonald 2008: 176).

Esk 013:

< *l* > *l b'rl / rḏw ṣlm*¹⁸
 'by *B'rl*, may *Ṣalm* be pleased'

Esk 083 (part):

ʾl / b-zy ṣlm
 'Strength is with those of *Ṣalm*'

WTay 3:

nṣr / b'gl / hlk / znk rfty / h- rkb
 'nṣr son of 'gl died, that is *Rfty* the riding camel'

HE 41:

lm {y}'zrl / b lrm / mn s'm' / l- ṣlm l twy
 'by *Y'zrl* son of *Lrm*, whoever obeys *Ṣalm* will not perish'

Some authors seem to have used word dividers mainly to separate their name from the rest of the inscription.

WTay 2:

lm / hb'l b 'gl / mn s'm' l- ṣlm l tw[y]
 'by *Hb'l* son of 'gl, whoever obeys *Ṣalm* will not perish'

There are two inscriptions in which a clear construct chain is separated by a word divider.

WTay 11 :

fḥk b ḥgg nṣr l- {ṣ}lm // b-ḏr / nbyt
 'Fḥk son of *Hgg* kept watch on behalf of *Ṣalm* in the war of *Nbyt*'

Esk 169 (line 1):

'n / mrdn / {ḥ}lm / nbnd / mlk / bbl
 'I am *Mrdn*, servant of Nabonidus king of Babel'

A similar break within a probable construct chain can be found in the following inscriptions.

Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished) (part):

's' b'ly / tm'
 'The chief of the inhabitants of Taymā'

Al-Anṣāry 35:

lm wdd / b lḥm / ḥll/ b-zy s'n' / 'm ṣlm
 'by *Wdd* son of *Lḥm* he acted as a soldier against those of enmity of/against the people of *Ṣalm*'

¹⁸For the analysis of *rḏw* as a verbal form see section 2.4.2.

Finally, the majority (about 250 out of the 375) of Taymanitic inscriptions does not employ word dividers at all; these also include more elaborate inscriptions containing verbal phrases.

Esk 059:

bmrt ḥl b {ʿ}ft

‘Bmrt was a soldier at *ʿft*¹⁹’

WTay 20:

bhs²rkt nṣr b- ḡr ddn yr{ḥ} l- ṣlm

‘*Bhs²rkt* kept watch during the war of Dadan for a month on behalf of *ṣalm*’

2.2 Phonology

2.2.1 Consonant system overview

Scholars have argued that Taymanitic employed at least 26 different letter shapes, which means it probably had at least 26 distinct phonemes. PS **ḏ* and **z* have merged and are represented as *z*; Taymanitic does not distinguish a phoneme **ḏ*, which seems to have merged with **ṣ*. There are several features in the inscriptions that could point to a merger of **ṣ*³ and **ṭ*. As there are no bilingual inscriptions, loan-names and the interpretation of the inscriptions are key to our understanding of Taymanitic phonology. Below, only the phonemes of which the pronunciation is open to debate will be discussed.

¹⁹For a discussion of the verb *ḥl(l)* see 2.5.1.

PS	Transcription	Taymanitic glyph
*ʔ	ʔ	𐎧𐎡
*ɸ	ɸ	◊ ○
*b	b	𐎧 𐎡
*d	d	𐎧𐎡𐎡
*ɸ'	ɸ'	𐎧𐎡
*p	f	◊◊σ 𐎡𐎡
*g	g	𐎧𐎡
*y	g	𐎧𐎡
*h	h	√ 𐎡
*h	h	𐎡 √ √
*x	h	𐎡
*k	k	𐎧𐎡
*l	l	) 11
*m	m	𐎧𐎡
*n	n	𐎡 𐎡
*k'	q	𐎡 𐎡 𐎡
*r	r	𐎡 𐎡 𐎡
*s	s ¹	𐎡
*ɸ	s ²	𐎡 { 𐎡
*ts	s ³	* 𐎡 * 𐎡 𐎡 𐎡
*ts'	𐎡	𐎡 𐎡 𐎡 𐎡 𐎡
*t	t	× +
*t'	𐎡	𐎡
*w	w	⊕ ⊖
*y	y	𐎡
*dz	z	𐎡

Table 1: script table²⁰

²⁰The script table is based on (Macdonald 2000: 34).

2.2.2 *p

The reflex of *p is traditionally transcribed as *f*. However, this is a transcription based on a sound change in Arabic. There is no reason to assume that Taymanitic had undergone the same sound change. Following convention however, this phoneme will be transcribed as *f*.

2.2.3 The interdental fricatives

In Taymanitic the interdental fricatives seem to have systematically merged with their sibilant (or affricate) counterparts.

$$\begin{array}{ll} *d, *z & > z \\ *t, *s^3 & > s^3 \\ *t^{21}, *s & > s \end{array}$$

After a discussion of the evidence pointing to a merger of these phonemes, several misspellings and loanwords or renderings of foreign words into Taymanitic script will be discussed to gain some insight into their possible phonetic realization. As the evidence is fragmentary and open to several interpretations the exact realization of the sibilants will remain uncertain however.

d and z The interdental fricative *d* [ð] merged with *z*.²² They share the same sign, which is used to represent *z* in Hismaic, several varieties of Thamudic and Dadanitic as well; we find forms like the distal demonstrative *znk* < **dnk* (WTay 3); and the personal name *z'b* < **d'b* (e.g. WTay 1.2) and *z'bt* < **d'bt* (e.g. Esk 018) in Taymanitic for example.

t and s³ = PS * [ts] The existence of a 27th letter, a separate sign for *s³*, is generally included in the Taymanitic script tables (e.g. Winnett & Reed 1970: 205) but it is often mentioned with some cautionary notes (e.g. Macdonald 1991: 25). Scholars have identified six glyphs, all occurring in personal names that could qualify as a separate letter signifying the independent reflex of *s³*. This glyph has a circular center as opposed to the star-like shape which was interpreted as *t*. The etymology of most of these names is problematic, but they seem point to a merging of the two phonemes. Knauf (2011) already proposed that *t* and *s³* had merged in Taymanitic, and that *t* was either realized as [tθ] (which would suggest a merger of *t* and *s³* to *t*), or [ts] (which would suggest a merger of *t* and *s³* to *s³*) (Knauf 2011).²³

Based on the etymologies of the personal names; variation in attested letter shapes that have been interpreted as *t* and *s³*; several lexical items; and the

²¹This glyph is generally transcribed as *z*, the transcription *t* is used here to show its etymological relation to the interdental and sibilant series.

²²This merger in Taymanitic has already been widely recognized. See for example, Winnett & Reed (1970: 94) and (Macdonald 2008: 191).

²³In the same paragraph he argues that the *s³* and *t* merged in a similar fashion in Dadanitic. Based on the spelling of roots with etymological *s³* in Dadanitic however, it is clear that in Dadanitic *s³* merged with *s¹*, as it did in the other well understood ANA varieties (Safaitic and Hismaic) and Arabic as well (Compare for example Dadanitic *s¹fr* (e.g. AH 123; AH 220) 'inscription' to Heb. *sēper* both from **s³pr*).

general structure of the Taymanitic phoneme inventory, it will be argued that $\underline{t}$ and s^3 seem to have merged to s^3 in Taymanitic.

$\text{'bds}^3\text{r}$	(HU 501)
$s^3\text{r}\text{ṣ}$	(WTay 4)
$s^3\text{g}^{\text{'}}\text{dhd}$	on the Vienna seal (RES 2688)
$\text{bys}^3\text{ḥls}^3\text{24}$	(Esk 123)
ys^3m	(TM.T. 035)
$\text{ṣms}^3\text{mk}$	(TM.T. 001B)

Table 2: The attested personal names previously read with s^3 and their sigla

Macdonald considers $\text{'bds}^3\text{r}$ (HU 501) to reflect $^*\text{'abd Osiris}$ (Macdonald 1991: 17). He compares the name to other Osiris names in Phoenician inscriptions ($\text{'bd}^2\text{sr}$) and the theophoric element Osiris in Aramaic on the Louvre Stela in (Macdonald 1991: 17). Macdonald mentions that “the phoneme represented by s^3 in South Semitic alphabets is cognate to Aramaic /s/” (ibid.) but since the name Osiris was an Egyptian goddess, the etymological correspondence is of less relevance than their pronunciation at the time the name was borrowed. Since s^1 seems to have represented [s] in Taymanitic, which is based on a more certain borrowing (see paragraph 1.2.2.1 s^1 or $^*\text{s}$), it seems unlikely that Osiris would end up being represented with an s^3 instead. Another issue is the loss of the glottal stop at the beginning of the theophoric element. This would only be possible if the name entered Taymanitic from another language which dropped the glottal stops in this position.²⁵ The name $\text{'bds}^3\text{r}$ (HU 501) may better be interpreted as a transcription of the name $\text{'abd } \underline{d}\dot{u}\text{ṣaray}$ instead; a theophoric name based on the Nabataean deity $\underline{d}\dot{u}\text{ṣaray}$.²⁶ The assimilation of the $^*\underline{d}$ to the preceding $^*\text{d}$ in this name is also attested in Safaitic (e.g. Mu 836) and Greek (e.g. IGLS XIII 9266) in Taymanitic, the name was probably taken from a language in which this happened as well since Taymanitic d and z ($< ^*\underline{d}$) would probably not assimilate in the same way; we know that in $\underline{d}\dot{u}\text{ ṣaray}$ the lateral was preserved, because Safaitic used its lateral s^2 , rather than its plain sibilant s^1 to transcribe it (Macdonald 2000: 48). If the interpretation of the verb bḥs^2 (Kim CIMG0759 Tay (unpublished)) is correct, Taymanitic did not preserve a lateral pronunciation of s^2 (see 2.2.4). Transcribing a lateral with a $\underline{t}$ is not unlikely however as the two are phonetically very similar (Ball et al. 2001: 5).²⁷ This approximation may have a precedent in two cuneiform abecedaries in the hlḥm order discovered at

²⁴Based on a very uncertain reading, unfortunately there is only a copy available of this inscription by Jaussen and Savignac, the photograph of the inscription in Eskoubi (1999) only shows the first three letters of the inscription. The copy by Jaussen and Savignac, shows the third letter, traditionally transcribed as $\underline{t}$, as a star-shaped sign $\star$ while the last letter, transcribed as s^3 looks like a circle with four lines coming out of it Q .

²⁵There are many examples of personal names that entered Taymanitic without a glottal stop, e.g. Esk 290: $s^1\text{mrl}$ (cf. 2.2.5)

²⁶If we are indeed dealing with a theophoric name mentioning $\underline{d}\dot{u}\text{ṣaray}$ this would either be a very early mention of the deity, or an indication that Taymanitic was written well after the sixth century BCE.

²⁷Other approximations that were recorded were fricatives, including velar fricatives; and combinations of a (velar) fricative with a lateral (Ball et al. 2001: 4).

Ras-Šamra (RS 88.2215)²⁸ and Bēt Šemeš (KTU 5.24),²⁹ where the glyph for *t* occupies the position of the lateral *s*² [4] which may indicate a similar phonetic confusion between the two (Al-Jallad & al Manaser 2015: 9-10).

Another name Macdonald discusses in his 1991 article is *s*³*r*š, which he compares to Aramaic *sr*šn, generally assumed to come from **(w)sir šawn* ‘Osiris is protection’ (Macdonald 1991: 19). In this case it is more problematic to argue for the loss of the glottal stop as it is difficult to imagine why an initial vowel would *not* be represented as such in Taymanitic. Moreover, one would have to explain why the final *n* disappeared and we are still confronted with [s] being represented with *s*³ rather than with *s*¹. As *tr*š and *sr*š do not yield any plausible roots for a personal name it may be compared to CAr. *šuršūr* ‘cricket or roach’, after dissimilation of the first consonant, since the non-emphatic equivalent of *š* would have been *s*³. This of course leaves us again with a final consonant to get rid of, and a name that is not very common.³⁰

After the discussion of the Osiris names Macdonald briefly discusses the name *s*³*g*³*dhd* (on the Vienna seal, RES 2688), but he concludes that there are so many uncertainties surrounding the interpretation of the text in which it occurs that it is unwise to base any conclusions on this name (Macdonald 1991: 21). The final three names can be interpreted with a little more certainty. Even though the reading of second part of the name *bys*³{*h*}{*l*}{*s*³} (Esk 123) is unsure, based on the first half of the name it seems to represent a theophoric name with the deity *y*_t³¹. In this case *s*³ would represent **t*. It is difficult to be certain what the origin of the name *ys*³*m* is. It may be compared to CAr. *wasim*, ‘to be beautiful’ from **√ws*³*m* (compare Akk. *(w)asāmu(m)* ‘to be suitable’ or Ugaritic *ysm* ‘pleasant’ (Cohen 1976: 569)), with **w-* > *y-* which seems to have been active in Taymanitic (cf. paragraph **w-* > *y-* under sound changes).

In one of the inscriptions currently in the Tayma museum, the theophoric name *šms*³*mk* appears (TM.T. 001B). Macdonald (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming) interprets the name as ‘Šalm supports’ and connects *s*³*mk* to Hebrew *sāmak*. In this case the Taymanitic form reflects the etymological *s*³. So, if the interpretations put forward are correct, the glyph under discussion represents etymological **s*³ in some personal names (*ys*³*m*, *šms*³*mk*) but **t* in others (*bds*³*r*,³² *bys*³{*h*}{*l*}{*s*³}).

Even though the letter shapes seem clearly distinguishable in the ANA script charts (e.g. as published in Macdonald 2008: 187) their shapes seem to have merged in (at least some of) the actual inscriptions. The visual confusion between the two signs may be an indication that the two phonemes had merged or that there was some confusion as to the distinction of the two.

<i>s</i> ³	<i>t</i> as in the script charts	<i>t</i> as attested in several inscriptions
𐤓𐤕	𐤓𐤕	𐤓 ³³ 𐤕 ³⁴

Table 3: contrasting the attested letter-forms with the reported forms.

²⁸Cf. Bordreuil & Pardee 1995; Hayajneh & Tropper 1997; Sass 2005.

²⁹For the most recent discussions of these inscriptions see Bordreuil & Pardee 1995; Hayajneh & Tropper 1997; Sass 2005.

³⁰Harding (1971: 371) reports one attestation in Sabaic.

³¹compare for example *y*_t³; *y*_t³*mr*; *y*_t³*kbr* (Harding 1971: 658-9).

³²*t* here as an approximation of the foreign lateral.



Figure 1: tracing of s^3 in Wtay 004



Figure 2: tracing of s^3 in HU 501³⁵



Figure 3: tracing of $ṭ$ in JSTham 508³⁶



Figure 4: Tracing of $ṭ$ in Esk 020.1

The merger of s^3 and $ṭ$ is found in other Arabian languages as well, e.g. Ḥadramitic and the Amīritic dialect of Sabaic; in Ḥadramitic interdentals and affricates/sibilants seem to have merged, suggesting the sound change $[θ] > [ts]$ or $[s]$. In Amīritic s^3 and s^1 merged to s after which $*ṭ$ was written with the s^3 glyph; this either indicates a sound change $ṭ > [ts]$ or a reassignment of the s^3 sign to $ṭ$ while it kept its phonetic value. The fact that in a newly discovered Thamudic B abecedary in the South Semitic *hlhm* order the glyph for $ṭ$ was written in the place of s^3 may indicate that the latter explanation is what happened in Amīritic, especially since the abecedary was probably written after recitation of the values of the letters rather than being a transcription of the written form of the other alphabet (Al-Jallad & al Manaser 2015: 11-2).

There are no unambiguous attestations of etymological $ṭ$ in lexical items. The sign for $s^3/ṭ$ appears in two other inscriptions, Esk 272 and TA 09302. In Esk 272, $'s^3r$ (written with the sign $*$) (Esk 272) could possibly be read as $*s^3r$, 'captivity' (Esk 272), although $*tr$ 'place or trace' is also possible, while s^3g 'to be accessible', which is attested in the same inscription with a similar sign (Esk 272) should probably be read with a $*s^3$ ($\sqrt{s^3wg}$).

Another example of the rayed disk letter shape is the word hs^3y in TA 09302. The inscription is very clear and deeply inscribed on a prepared surface, giving it a much more formal appearance than most other Taymanitic inscriptions.

TA 09302:

$hs^3y / f'l / hmd / lhdh / b ym / blbd$

' Hs^3y attained glory by guarding the border during the battle of $blbd$ '

Macdonald (forthcoming) has tentatively suggested the translation 'honored be the deed of Hmd (done) by him alone in the day of the son of Lbd ', interpreting hmd as a tribal name and hs^3y as 'to show much honor' from the Arabic root $\sqrt{hfy}$. Based on an irregular sound change $f > ṭ$.³⁷ This substitu-

³³Esk 272, Esk 020.1, JSTham 508

³⁴Esk 272

³⁵For the complete tracing of the photograph of the inscription see Macdonald (1991: 13).

³⁶The trace was made based on a photograph taken during the Tayma survey; Michael Macdonald has kindly granted me permission to use these photographs.

³⁷There are examples of such substitutions, Macdonald gives Classical Arabic *dafa'iyy* and ANA *dṭ* 'season of the later rains' (Macdonald forthcoming).

tion would require **p* to have become *f* in Taymanitic, but so far it is unclear whether this sound change has taken place. If the new interpretation offered above is correct (TA 09302), *ḥs³y* should probably be interpreted as a personal name. Unfortunately it is unclear what the etymology of *ḥs³y* would be as a personal name.

Finally there is a structural argument for the merger of *t̥* and *s³* since *z* and the voiced fricative interdental *ḏ* have clearly merged in Taymanitic, it would naturally follow that the loss of the interdentals would have affected the voiceless series as well.

t̥ = PS * [θ'] and *ṣ* = PS * [ts'] As demonstrated in the previous discussion the voiced and unvoiced interdental fricatives in Taymanitic seem to have merged with their sibilant (or affricate) counterparts. It therefore stands to reason that the same process would have affected the emphatic series as well, resulting in a phonological system very similar to Canaanite.

The only lexical items in which *ṣ* appears in the Taymanitic corpus are *ṣlm*, the main deity of the oasis (e.g. Esk 013; JSTham 352; WTay 1.2) and the verb *nṣr* (e.g. WTay 9.1; WTay 11; WTay 14). Otherwise it only occurs in personal names (e.g. *ṣby* (e.g. Esk 012), *ṣḥm* (Esk 024) and *ṣwq* (JSTham 541)).

The verb *nṣr* occurs in the formula *nṣr l-ṣlm b-ḏr Ddn*³⁸ (WTay 20; HE 32; WTay 33.1; WTay 11) which has generally been translated as 'he gave assistance to Ṣalm in the war against Dadan' (Winnett & Reed 1970: 99) and taken to be related to for example CAr. *našara* 'to aid or assist' (Lane: 2802c) or Sabaic *nṣr* 'to provide support' (Beeston et al. 1982: 100).³⁹

If we consider the merging of *z* (**t̥*) and *ṣ* however, *nṣr* could represent **nṣr* 'to watch, to guard' (cf. CAr. *nažara* 'to look at' (Lane: 2810c); Old Aramaic *nṣr* 'watch, protect'; Off. Aramaic, Nab. *nṣr* 'to watch, to protect' (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 754-5); Heb. *nṣr* (HALOT: 718)). We find reflexes of this verb in several other ANA corpora (e.g. Safaitic (e.g. C49; BHT 228) and Dadanitic (e.g. AH 312; JSLih 007; JaL 158)).

There is one Taymanitic inscription in which the form *nṣrt* 'I kept watch' is attested.

Esk 025:

{ } n ʾ { n / r } d s¹ / s¹ { s¹ } n / m l k / b b l / n { t } r t
'I am ʾn d s¹ official of the king of Babylon, I kept watch'⁴⁰

This could be taken as an argument against reading *nṣr* as 'to guard'. Hayajneh (2001: 89) interpreted *nṣrt* as an Aramaicized form, but also noted that the absence of a glyph for *z* in Taymanitic might point to the fact that both *t̥* and *z* were represented by the same glyph in Taymanitic orthography.⁴¹ Given

³⁸Variations with *b-ḏr Ms* or *b-ḏr Nbyt* are also attested: WTay 16 and WTay 11; WTay 13; WTay 15 respectively.

³⁹If *Ṣalm* was indeed the deification of Nabonidus at the oasis (Winnett & Reed 1970: 92-3), this could be compared to ASA inscriptions in which chieftains recorded that they aided their lords in wars as suggested by Beeston in Winnett & Reed (1970: 99). However, Dalley (1986: 86) argued convincingly against this interpretation.

⁴⁰Hayajneh (2001: 89) reads the word following the personal name as *s¹dn*, which he translates as 'overseer, guardian'.

⁴¹Müller and Said propose a reading *n s³rt*, which they connect to Sabaic *m n s³rt* 'vanguard'

the fact that the author of this inscription identifies himself as being close to the king of Babylon, influence from Aramaic would not be surprising. In addition to that, the unusual formula used in this inscription is very similar to another inscription in which the author also identifies himself as affiliated with the court of Nabonidus (Esk 169). A merger of ʒ and ʔ in Taymanitic seems unlikely however, since no Semitic languages merge the plain interdentals to the sibilant, while merging the emphatic one to the stop.

Esk 169 (line 1 and 2):

$\text{ʔn} / \text{mrdn} / \{\text{h}\}\text{lm} / \text{nbnd} / \text{mlk} / \text{bbl} // \text{ʔtw} / \text{m}^{\text{c}} / \text{rbs}^{\text{1}}\text{rs}^{\text{1}} / \text{kyt}$

‘I am *Mrdn* servant of Nabonidus king of Babylon, I came with chief *Kyt*’

Since Aramaic and Neo-Babylonian were most likely the main languages that were in use at the court of Nabonidus, it is likely that *ntr* is a loan from Aramaic in which *t (the origin of CAr. ʒ) and t merged to t . The form *ntr* possibly came to indicate a specific kind of guard or guarding in this neo-Babylonian setting as opposed to guarding in general for which the local *nšr* was still in use.

the phonetic realization of ʃ and s^3 Below, alternative spellings of *nšr* and $\text{s}^{\text{1}}\text{m}^{\text{c}}$ will be discussed in light of their relevance to our understanding of the pronunciation of ʃ . A hypothesis about the realization of ʃ will also impact our assumptions about the values of the other sibilants; therefore the realization of s^3 and ʃ will be discussed together. Since the examples are open to several explanations it remains unclear what the exact phonetic realization of ʃ and s^3 was.

There is one instance in which ʃ seems to be confused with s^3 (WTay 17). This may indicate that ʃ still represented an affricate $[\text{ts}^{\text{h}}]$ or $[\text{ts}^{\text{v}}]$ in Taymanitic.

WTay 17:

$\text{ʔl} \text{b} \text{ʔs}^{\text{1}}\text{gt} \text{ns}^{\text{3}}\text{r} \text{b-} \text{ḏr} \text{---k---}$

‘*ʔl* son of $\text{ʔs}^{\text{1}}\text{gt}$ kept watch during the war ---?---’

The verb *ns³r* was translated ‘he fell in battle...’ by Winnett, from the root *ntr (Winnett & Reed 1970: 102). Based on the frequency of the formula *nšr b-ḏr* it seems more likely however, that this is a misspelling of some sort. The confusion of s^3 for ʃ could indicate that the reflex of s^3 was in some way similar to that of ʃ .

If ʃ was indeed still realized as an affricate, it may suggest that s^3 still represented an affricate as well, in which case only the feature of emphasis would have been misinterpreted in the inscription.⁴² As we will discuss below however there is some evidence that seems to rule out an affricated realization of ʃ and s^3 .

It should be noted however, that only a copy is available for this inscription. Winnett indicates in his commentary that he might have miscopied the

(Müller & Al-Said 2001: 113). Given the clear reference to the king of Babylon in the inscription however, assuming Aramaic influence seems preferable.

⁴²This could also be interpreted to indicate that ʃ was still realized as an affricate $[\text{ts}^{\text{h}}]$ or $[\text{ts}^{\text{v}}]$ in Taymanitic, which was confused with the fricative $[\theta]$. The merger of s^3 and t to an interdental t seems unlikely however, as the voiced counterpart merged with the sibilant, $\text{d} > \text{z}$.

inscription (Winnett & Reed 1970: 102). Adding one line at the bottom of the letter could make it into a ṣ ($\text{𐤔} > \text{𐤕}$). He might have doubted his copy because he was expecting to find a ṣ instead of a s^3 .

In another inscription, ṣ seems to have been confused with s^1 . In this inscription the form ṣm^c appears (Facey unpublished 00856). It is unclear what the verb ṣm^c means in this inscription. In *Lane*, ṣm^c is recorded to mean ‘to be small, compact, slender’. It is also used to mean courageous ‘because the courageous is described as compact in heart’ (*Lane*: 1728). Another option is that the author confused s^1 and ṣ . This may be preferable, as it would turn this unique and difficult to interpret inscription into one of the regular Taymanitic formulae. A confusion between s^1 and ṣ could indicate a de-affrication of emphatic ṣ , as the author would only need to misinterpret one phonological feature (pharyngialization or glottalization, depending on how the emphatics were realized) to get from s^1 to ṣ . Reading ṣ as s^1 would give us the very common verb in the Taymanitic corpus s^1m^c ‘he listened’.

It is difficult to combine the attestation of the confusion between s^3 and ṣ (WTay 17) and that of ṣ and s^1 (Facey unpublished 00856, 00806); while the first could point to an affricated realization of ṣ , the confusion of ṣ and s^1 seems to point to the loss of affrication in the realization of ṣ . Moreover, assuming that the sibilants and fricatives had been de-affricated would point to a realization of [s] for ṣ and s^3 . This would seem to indicate that s^3 and s^1 had merged, which begs the question why they were still distinguished in the orthography, especially since there is no evidence for any confusion between s^1 and s^3 in Taymanitic. Therefore, if affrication was not the distinguishing feature, it seems they differed in some other way (for example dental as opposed to alveolar sibilants). If ṣ and s^3 were indeed no longer affricates, the form ns^3r should probably be considered a writing, or copying error. It is not entirely clear what the spelling of the personal name bds^3r tells us about the realization of s^3 . It seems to indicate that s^2 was no longer realized as a lateral fricative, but borrowing a lateral fricative with [s] does not seem the most obvious choice either. Possibly the name was adopted into the Taymanitic onomasticon before ṣ and s^3 merged. Based on the data available at the moment it is impossible to determine the exact values for the complete sibilant and fricative series.

2.2.4 Realization of the plain sibilants

$\text{s}^1 = \text{PS} * [\text{s}]$ The pronunciation of s^1 was probably close to a plain sibilant [s]. In the inscription Esk 169, s^1 occurs in the word rbs^1rs^1 .⁴³ This is identified as a compound of *rab ša rāši* by Hayajneh (2001) and Müller & Al-Said (2001) which was borrowed from Neo-Assyrian into Aramaic as *srs* (Hayajneh 2001: 83).⁴⁴ Aramaic likely formed the source of the form in the Taymanitic text (Hayajneh 2001: 83). This indicates that s^1 was the closest equivalent to the plain sibilant [s] available to the writer of this inscription.⁴⁵

⁴³Regardless of whether this word is an actual borrowing into Taymanitic or not, the fact that the author of the text rendered a foreign word in the Taymanitic script can tell us something about the realization of the glyphs.

⁴⁴In borrowings into Aramaic, the Neo-Assyrian glyph *š* would be written with *simkat*, indicating that it was pronounced as [s].

⁴⁵There is one personal name which looks like a phrasal name, which could shed more light on the realization of s^1 : $\text{bḥs}^1\text{l}^1\text{mnt}$ (HU 413). Unfortunately the etymology of the name is currently unclear.

$s^2 = \text{PS}^* [\text{ʃ}]$ The interpretation of the phonetic realization of s^2 is dependent on the interpretation of the etymology of the verb bhs^2 (Kim CIMG0759 Tay (unpublished)). Since bhs^2 does not seem to be a productive root in Semitic, the Taymanitic form probably comes from the root $*\sqrt{bht}$ ‘to search’. This verb is attested as $bhs̄$ in Aramaic (Cohen 1976: 57).⁴⁶ If this were a native Taymanitic verb one would expect it to appear with s^3 (cf. 2.2.3, pg. 75) but not with s^2 . The s^2 can be explained if one assumes that bhs^2 is a borrowing from Aramaic or Canaanite, and s^2 was the closest equivalent to Aramaic š , pointing to a possible realization of s^2 as a palato-alveolar fricative in Taymanitic.⁴⁷

2.2.5 Glottal stop

Outside of the onomasticon, the glottal stop was preserved in all positions in Taymanitic. In some $\text{ʔ}\bar{\text{El}}$ -based theophoric names, the glottal stop has been elided e.g. Esk 290: s^1mrl . This seems to suggest that at least the theophoric part of the name was drawn from a language in which the initial glottal stop was dropped, like Akkadian *ilum* for example. There are several names attested in which the ʔ in the name of the deity ʔl is gone, but it is preserved in the first part of the name: b^1rl (Esk 013), y^1ws^1l (e.g. Esk 076), y^1rs^2l (e.g. Esk 068 + 069) indicating that the loss of the glottal stop was probably conditioned in the source language. There are also theophoric names with $\text{ʔ}\bar{\text{El}}$ as a compound attested that do preserve the ʔ for example: kfr^1l (e.g. Esk 001; JSTham 521), yd^1l (Esk 079 and Esk 237) and wdd^1l (Esk 087).

Since the theophoric $\text{ʔ}\bar{\text{El}}$ names without the glottal stop must be considered loans, they may be helpful in determining the phonetic values of, for example, the sibilants in these names. So far 5 different ‘non-native’ theophoric names with $\text{ʔ}\bar{\text{El}}$ containing a sibilant have been attested in Taymanitic.

y^1ws^1l ⁴⁸	(Esk 076; Esk 081; Esk 178)
ys^1m^1l	(Esk 183)
s^1mrl	(Esk 290)
y^1rs^2l	(Esk 068 + 069; Esk 072; JSTham 431; JSTham 530)
$nšbl$	(JSTham 411)

An accurate understanding of the phonology of these names in their source language is required before they can contribute to our reconstruction of Taymanitic phonology. Unfortunately it is difficult to determine which language this was, given the small set of forms available to us. Since both the ʔ and the ʕ are still represented in the first part of the names (e.g. y^1ws^1l and ys^1m^1l), they could not have come from Akkadian names. The name y^1rs^2l probably comes from a C-stem of the root $*wrt$ ‘to inherit’ (compare CAR. *warīta* ‘he inherited’ (Lane: 2934a) or Hebr. *yrš* (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 471)). This could not have been the source of a form such as ys^1m^1l however, which one would expect

⁴⁶Since Aramaic merged its interdental with its stops, the expected reflect of $*bht$ would be $*bht$, therefore the form $bhs̄$ in Aramaic is likely a loan from Hebrew or another Canaanite language.

⁴⁷If the personal name bds^3r indeed represents *ʿabdušaray* it seems that the lateral $[\text{ʃ}]$ in Nabataean *dūšaray* was borrowed into Taymanitic with s^3 , in which case a lateral pronunciation of s^2 in Taymanitic can probably be ruled out (cf. t and $s^3 = \text{PS}^* [\text{ʃ}]$ above).

⁴⁸The name Y^1ws^1l , with the glottal stop in the $\text{ʔ}\bar{\text{El}}$ element, occurs in Minaic in and several times in Sabaic as a personal name (e.g. as-Sawdā’ 37 = M 293A = RES 3306A; YM 18344).

to have been borrowed with the same sibilant as $yʾrs^2l$, given the merging of $*s^1$ and $*t$ to š in Hebrew, in addition to that, Hebrew does not have a ʾ-causative.

Another option could be to consider a language in which the t obtained as the source of $yʾrs^2l$: $*yʾrtl$. Since t seems to have merged with s^3 in Taymanitic, s^2 may have been perceived as the closest equivalent to an interdental t . It has to be kept in mind however, that we do not have written evidence of all linguistic varieties that were spoken in the area, and these names might have come from a language unknown to us. It is also a possibility of course that not all names containing an ʾĒl element and lacking the glottal stop in the theophoric part, come from the same source.

2.2.6 Sound changes

N-assimilation One of the characteristic features of Taymanitic is the writing of the word ‘son’ as *b* instead of more common *bn*. This orthographic feature seems to be an example of n-assimilation, a conditioned phonological sound change common in other ANA corpora and NWS. However, there is one clear example in which this does not happen: *ntnt* /natantu/ ‘I gave’ (JSTham 352) in which the /n/ is clearly directly followed by the stop /t/.⁴⁹

If this inscription is representative of the language of the rest of the corpus, this seems to indicate that /n/ does not assimilate to a following consonant in all environments, but only in proclitic position in which it is per definition unstressed. This hypothesis could also explain the difference between *m* ‘from’ and *mn* ‘who’; since *m* never occurs without an object it may have been treated as a proclitic similar to the prepositions *b-* and *l-*.

WTay 9.2:

m- s¹mw
‘from *S¹mw*’

TA 02669.1:

m-lmq
‘from *Lmq*’

Mn ‘who’, is not proclitic and is always written with the *n*.

WTay 2; WTay 1.2; HE 31:

mn s¹m^c l-šlm
‘whoever obeys *šalm*’

While the examples are limited it seems safe to suggest that /n/ assimilates to any directly following consonant when it is the coda of an unstressed syllable.

⁴⁹If Winnett’s reading of *šlm* ʾnkd (JSTham 546) as ‘(Oh) *šalm* (grant) offspring’ (unpublished, Study I: 6) is correct, this form would be another example of an unassimilated /n/ in stressed position.

L-assimilation The assimilation of *l* in theophoric names with the element *šlm* suggests a similar pattern of assimilation to that of *n*: when it is used in proclitic position the *l* assimilates to the following *m*. For example in the names: *šmn'm* (Esk 058), *šmntn* (Esk 004), *šmr'* (Esk 050). There are other names with a *šlm* element in which the *l* does not assimilate, but there *šlm* is the second part of the name e.g.: *'mršlm* (TM.T. 024) and *lšlm* (WTay 30). All other occurrences of *šlm* refer to the deity, in which case it is usually a prepositional object and has its own stress: *b šlm ntnt* 'by Šalm I gave' (JSTham 352; BIT p.336), *nšr l-šlm* 'he kept watch on behalf of Šalm' (WTay 32).⁵⁰ Winnett (1937: 23) already suggested that the element *šm-* in the Taymanitic personal names came from the theophoric name *Šalm*, but he does not connect the assimilation of the *l* in these names to the assimilation of *l* and *n* in the rest of the inscriptions.

The assimilation of the *l* in *Šalm* additionally indicates that CvCC nouns probably did not undergo epenthesis, as the *l* of *šlm* could only have assimilated if the consonant cluster remained.

***w- > y-** Taymanitic seems to have undergone the Northwest Semitic sound change **w- > y-*. There are several lexical items in the Taymanitic inscriptions with initial *y-* which come from forms with an initial *w-* originally: *yrh* 'month' (WTay 20); *yd'* 'he knew' (Kim CIMG 0759. Tay, unpublished) and the verb *yr* 'he guarded' (compare CAR. *warwara* 'to guard, to watch and modern Arabic *wry* 'to show, to let s.o. see' (Kurpershoek 2005: 349) (Esk 052)).

Words with initial *w-* are attested in the corpus, but they are all personal names, e.g.: *'l wn'* 'the tribe of *Wn'* (Esk 272), *wdd* (e.g. JSTham 552), and *wtr* (Esk 233). Since personal names are often borrowed along with their phonology (cf. 2.2.5), or reflect archaic pronunciations, this cannot be used as proof against a sound change **w- > y-*.

Reduction of final triphthongs In Taymanitic final triphthongs had probably not collapsed completely. There is one attestation of a final weak verb in *-w* which preserves its final weak root consonant in the suffixing conjugation: *rđw* 'may he please' (Esk 013). Since Taymanitic did not make use of matres lectiones, this form suggests a pronunciation /rađiwa/. The form *rđw* additionally shows that the sequence *-iwa* did not shift to *-iya* as it did in Arabic. Since vowels are not represented in Taymanitic, the final triphthong could have collapsed to a diphthong in Taymanitic. There are no clear attestations of other triphthong sequences in Taymanitic.

***-at > -ah** Two possible feminine *nisbah* forms ending in *-t* seem to indicate that Taymanitic did not undergo the sound change of final *-at* to *-ah* (cf. section 2.3.3 for the gentilic suffix (pg. 88 and the morpheme *-t* (pg. 87). It should be noted however, that both these forms occur in genealogies.⁵¹ Therefore they

⁵⁰ CvCC nouns probably did not undergo epenthesis, because the *l* of *šlm* could only have assimilated if the cluster remained. However, it cannot be ruled out that epenthesis emerged following the assimilation rule (*šalm > šamm*). *šamm* would not be affected anymore in this case, as the *l*-assimilation rule was no longer active, and *šamm* was realized with a geminate.

⁵¹ The beginning of WTay 37 is broken, therefore it is not entirely sure that *h-mšryt* is part of a genealogy, however since it has the same form as *hdryt* (HE 17; 40) and is also preceded by the

may not have been perceived as actual *nisbah* forms, but simply as personal names, possibly representing an archaic form.

WTay 37:

h-mšr-y-t

‘the Egyptian woman⁵²’

HE 17 and HE 40:

h-ḥḍr-y-t

‘the settled woman/the woman from *Ḥḍr*’

2.3 Nominal Morphology

2.3.1 Number

Plural There are no attestations of an unbound plural suffix in Taymanitic. There is one possible attestation of a bound plural suffix *-y*, which will be discussed in more detail below in the paragraph 2.3.2. There is one possible attestation of a broken plural, but it can be explained equally in many other ways (on which see section 2.4.4):

WTay 22:

----*lm b-ḍrr ddn*

‘...*lm* in the **wars** of Dadan/ by **waging war** against Dadan’

The phrase *b-ḍr ddn* (e.g. WTay 20, and WTay 33.1) ‘in the war of Dadan’ occurs in four other inscriptions (Wtay 20; WTay 21; WTay 33.1 and WTay 33.2), so this single occurrence might be better explained as a writing error. Moreover, the present form could still reflect an external plural in the construct state /ḍararē Dadān/ ‘the wars of Dadan’ (compare for example Heb. *malkē* ‘kings of’ (Gzella 2011: 440)) (cf. section 2.3.2). This reading would additionally suggest a process of /a/ insertion, typical in the plural formation of CvCC nouns in NWS (e.g. Hebrew *keleb* < **kalb* ‘dog’; pl. *kəlābîm* < **kalab-îma* (Huehnergard 1995: 2129)), to explain the fact that both *r*’s are represented. Another possibility is to interpret it as an infinitive or participle denoting a simultaneous action. Given the formulaic nature of most of the inscriptions mentioning *ḍr Ddn*, the most likely scenario seems to be that it is a dittography.

2.3.2 State

Definite article A prefixed definite article *h-* marks definiteness in substantives.

letters *bh-* it seems to be a similar type of inscription.

⁵²Slaves were often named after the place they came from, in PPII (17.66) we find, for example a female slave called ΑΛ-μασια (from *al-mašīyya*). If the author of this inscription was indeed the son of a slave this could explain why he identifies himself by his mother rather than his father, as he would have no right to inheritance (Macdonald, pc) and his status would be determined by that of his mother (Koenen 2013: 114).

Philby 279 ay:

kfr'l b t'n h-rm h-ḡlm

‘Kfr'l son of T'n, the lancer, **the junior**’

Esk 031:

h-ḡ{b}' / {h/ḡ}{r}{'}{y}

‘**the soldier**, the chief’

It is used substantivize verbal forms.

WTay 3:

Znk rfty h-rkb

‘that is Rfty **the riding camel**’

If the following examples are indeed *nisbah* forms referring to the mothers of the authors of the texts, they illustrate the use of the article to substantivize adjectives. It could be the case however; that the *h-* has become a part of the personal name and its usage here does not reflect the grammatical usage of the article.

WTay 37:

---bdwd b h-mšryt

‘{PN} son of **the Egyptian woman**’

HE 17:

Ns²w b h-ḡdryt

‘Ns²w son of **the sedentary woman/the woman from ḡdr**’

HE 40:

ḡkrn b ns²w b h-ḡdryt

‘ḡkrn son of Ns²w son of **the sedentary woman/the woman from ḡdr**’

Construct chains In Taymanitic construct chains consisting of as many as three nouns have been attested. There are no attestations of analytical genitive constructions.

Al-Anṣāry 35 [part]

ḡll / b-zy s²n' / 'm ṣlm
 be.a.soldier.SC.3MS WD against-REL.MP enmity.CNST WD people.CNST Ṣalm
 ‘he was a soldier against those of enmity of/against the people of Ṣalm’

Esk 169 [line 1] ⁵³

²n / mrdn / {ḡ}lm / nbnd / mlk / bbl
 IPRO.1CS WD Mrdn WD servant.CNST WD Nbnd WD king.CNST WD Babel
 ‘I am Mrdn, servant of Nabonidus king of Babel’

There is one attestation of a construct chain that suggests that in Taymanitic bound masculine plural nouns could be marked by a suffix *-y*, like in Aramaic and Hebrew (Gzella 2011: 440) or like Sabaic masculine nouns in the oblique case with a plural suffix (Stein 2003: 82).

Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished):

ʾ[s¹] // b^qly tmʾ

‘chief of the of landowners/residents of Taymā’

There is damage above the first letter of the second line which makes it impossible to tell for sure whether there were any lines coming out on top of it, causing the uncertainty in reading a ʾ, *b* or *s*¹. Reading ʾly as a broken plural form of the root √lw ‘the nobles’ (suggested by Macdonald in comments, db) is tempting; however, this is an Arabic form in which **-iwa* > *-iya*. Since *rḏw* does not become *rḏy* in Taymanitic the expected reflex of ʾlw would not be ʾly. Therefore *b^qly* ‘the inhabitants or landowners’, forms a more likely reading. A similar phrase with the construction ‘*b^qly* + place name’ occurs in the Aramaic part of the trilingual Lycian, Greek, Aramaic inscription found at Xanthos (dated 358 B.C.) (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 183-4). There it can be translated as ‘landowners’ (Teixidor 1978: 182). The same formula occurs half a century earlier (408 B.C.) in a petition to the governor of Judaea (Cowley 1923: No.30²²) in which the phrase *b^qly yb* can be translated similarly, as ‘the inhabitants of Yeb’ (Ibid. 114).⁵⁴

As was already mentioned in the section on the assimilation of *l* and *n*, it seems that all bound forms were marked by a change in stress pattern. It is unclear what impact this might have had on possible vowel reduction.

2.3.3 Nominal derivation

Morpheme -t It is not certain whether the following forms represent feminine personal names or feminine *nisbah* forms. Either way, they are clearly derived from *nisbah* forms with a feminine *-t* (see the section on the gentilic suffix below, pg. 88).

WTay 37:

h-mṣr-y-t

‘the Egyptian woman’

HE17 and HE40:

h-ḥḏr-y-t

‘the settled woman/the woman from Ḥḏr’

⁵³See also Hayajneh (2001) for a discussion on this inscription.

⁵⁴The form *b^qly*, followed by a toponym also occurs in Sabaic inscriptions but *b^qly* is always a dual form in these (e.g. C 155; 457; Ja 559). I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for pointing out the difference in number between the forms.

Aside from the feminine marker *-t*, the suffix can also be found on masculine names. This means that the gender of the bearer of a particular name can only be determined by features such as the patronyms (*b* ‘son’ or *bt* ‘daughter’) and verbal agreement. Taymanitic masculine names with *-t* endings include:

JSTham 426:

mṣrt b
‘*Mṣrt* son of’

IMA 2:

z’bt b
‘*Z’bt* son of’

TM.T. 042:

ḥnkt b
‘*Ḥnkt* son of’

WTay 33.1:

mntt nṣr
‘*Mntt* kept watch’

Gentilic suffix -y The use of the gentilic suffix *-y* is attested in two personal names probably indicating the mother of the author of the text. The women who are mentioned seem to have been named after the place from which they came. Since there are only three examples of such names in the corpus, these forms might have been personal names, not directly referencing a place of origin anymore.

WTay 037:

---*bdbwd b h-mṣr-y-t* /ha-miṣriyyat/
‘{PN} son of the Egyptian woman’

HE 17; 40:

PN b h-ḥdr-y-t
‘son of the settled woman/from *ḥdr*’

qattāl pattern In Esk 031 the noun *r’y* ‘leader/shepherd’ seems to reflect the agentive *qattāl* pattern, /ra“āy/.

Esk 031:

’s¹ b dmḡ / l ’ṣ{r/n} / ḥd{b}’ / {h/h}{r}{’}{y}
‘*s¹* son of *Dmḡ* to/for *’ṣr* the soldier **the chief**’

The presence of the *-y* on *h-r’y* indicates that it cannot have been the nominal form *rā’i* ‘leader’ since Taymanitic orthography does not represent final vowels.

Hypocoristic names All examples of diminutive forms in Taymanitic are only attested in personal names, this makes it uncertain what the active linguistic devices to construct diminutives were in Taymanitic.

Suffix -n The suffix -n is commonly attested on personal names and could have functioned as a diminutive.⁵⁵

<i>rttn</i> (Esk 049)	< * <i>rtt</i>
<i>s¹lmn</i> (e.g. Esk 271)	< * <i>s¹lm</i>
<i>ḡnmn</i> (Esk 017.2)	< * <i>ḡnm</i>
<i>s²btn</i> (Esk 006 and Esk 067)	< * <i>s²bt</i>
<i>r²s¹n</i> (e.g. Esk 081)	< * <i>r²s¹</i>
<i>s³rbn</i> (e.g. Esk 166.1)	< * <i>s³rb</i> or * <i>trb</i>

Suffix -y There is one attestation of a suffix -y on the name of an animal: *rfty* (WTay 3).

This name is not attested elsewhere, but *rft* is (Harding 1971). The form *rfty* is probably a hypocoristic name. Compare for example other personal names with a hypocoristic -y: Phoen. *klby*, *šlmy* (Benz 1972: 235) Ug. *pdry*, *rḥmy*, *ʿarsy*⁵⁶ (Troppen 2000: 283).

There may be one example of the diminutive *fuʿayl* pattern.

Esk 049:

kfr²l / *b²rs²* / *bny* ḥsy / *b rb{.}* // *b rttn*
 ‘*kfr²l* son of *rs²* little son of(?) *Hsy* son of *rb*. son of *Rttn*’

The form *bny* might be a diminutive, but this reading is very uncertain. It looks like part of the genealogy, however, there are no names attested with the root *ḥsy* (Harding 1971). Even if such names were attested we would still be looking at an aberrant form *bn* for son in Taymanitic in the middle of a genealogy in which the usual *b* forms are also used. Its position in the middle of the genealogy also seems to rule out a possible reading as a tribal name, *banī*, or a verb /*banaya*/ ‘to build’. Therefore the most plausible interpretation of *bny* seems to be a diminutive form of *b* ‘son’, which could have been used to indicate ‘little’ or ‘youngest’ son. This interpretation also faces some issues; even though formerly unattested names are encountered every now and again, a diminutive form of ‘son’ to indicate ‘youngest son of’ would be unique in the widely attested phraseology of genealogies, to my knowledge.

⁵⁵Enclitic -n’s are also commonly found on personal names in the Aramaic inscriptions from the Taymā’ area. For the use of -n as a diminutive in other Semitic languages see Brockelmann (1908-1913: 394). Hayajneh (1998: 21) mentions several other possible functions of -n on personal names: the creation of concrete nouns out of abstract ones; the markaton of singulatives as opposed to collective; and ascribing the quality of an adjective to a specific individual, following Goetze (1946: 130).

⁵⁶Even though Tropper considers it likely that these are hypocoristic feminine names, he discusses the -y suffix as a feminine marker (Tropper 2000: 282-283).

2.4 Verbs

2.4.1 Form of the Suffix Conjugation

The Taymanitic corpus is relatively small and the inscriptions are generally short, therefore no full verbal paradigm is attested in the inscriptions. Most inscriptions are written in the third person masculine singular. There are four attestations of the first person singular with a suffix *-t* (Esk 169; JSTham 352); Esk 052 and JSTham 403.

Esk 052⁵⁷

lm hkd / b s³r³bn / b lb / b 'rt{m}' /
 LmA Hkd WD son.CST S³r³bn WD son.CST Lb WD son.CST 'rt{m}' WD
{y}rrt
 guard.SC-1CS

'by *hkd* son of *S³r³bn* son of *lb* son of 'fy', I guarded.'

Esk 169 [part]

'n / mrdn / {h}lm / nbnd / mlk /
 IPRO.1CS WD Mrdn WD servant.CNST WD Nabonidus WD king.CNST WD
bbl // 'tw-t / m' / rbs¹rs¹ / Kyt
 Babel LB come-SC.1CS WD with WD rbs¹rs¹ WD Kyt

'I am *Mrdn* servant of Nabonidus king of Babylon, I **came** with chief *Kyt*'

JSTham 352

b-šlm ntn-t
 by-šlm give-SC.1CS

'on behalf/by means of *šlm*, I **have made an offering**'

II w/y In R²-weak verbs, the middle triphthong is not represented. Therefore it seems that it collapsed to a long vowel: *s³g* 'he opened' (Esk 272) from the root $\sqrt{s^3w\dot{g}}$; *hl* (e.g. Esk 055) from the root $\sqrt{hwl}$ (cf. section 2.5.1, pg. 94).

There is one attestation of a first person singular form of the G-stem form of *hl*.

JSTham 403:

Mr{l}{s} // hlt
 'Mr¹l^s, I **was a soldier**'

III w/y In R³-weak verbs, the final glide is preserved in the G-stem (cf. paragraph 2.2.6 on final triphthongs): *rđw* 'he was pleased' (Esk 013).

⁵⁷For a discussion of the verb *yrr* 'to guard, to watch' see paragraph *w- > y- under Sound changes.

$R^2 = R^3$ It is unclear whether forms like *ḍrr* (HE 39) and *yrr-t* (Esk 052) reflect the G-stem or the D-stem of these verbs, making it impossible to tell whether Taymanitic treated its verbs from geminate roots as regular verbs from strong roots, or whether the final syllable was metathesized to create forms like for example in CAR. ($C^1vC^2C^2v$).

2.4.2 Function of the Suffix Conjugation

There are a few instances in Taymanitic in which the perfective is used with an optative mood (For the ending *-w* in *rḍw* see section 2.2.6).

Esk 013:

*rḍw ṣlm*⁵⁸

‘May Ṣalm be pleased’

2.4.3 Prefix conjugation

There is only one attestation of a verb in the prefix conjugation.

JSTham 549:

f ys²hd

‘so that it/he will bear witness (?)’

The form *ys²hd* occurs in a very short inscription, consisting of only a personal name and the phrase *f ys²hd* (the third line of JSTham 545 + 546 + 549), providing no context to help determine the function or exact TAM features of the verb.

All other attestations of forms that could formally be interpreted as prefix-conjugated verbs are personal names. Examples include *yfr^c* (e.g. JSTham 426) *y^rnl* (Esk 014) and *ykfrl* (e.g. Esk 044.2).

2.4.4 Infinitive

There seem to be only three possible attestations of an infinitive in Taymanitic, one of which is attested in an uncertain context.

Form Most of the attested forms of the infinitive are not distinguishable from the third masculine singular perfective form in the consonantal script of Taymanitic. In these cases, the infinitive has to be deduced from its syntactic context.

It seems that the infinitive could be used to denote a simultaneous action, but the reading of the following text is open to several other interpretations (cf. section 2.3.1).

⁵⁸*Rḍw* might also be interpreted as a nominal form (I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for pointing this out); this seems less likely however, given the general structure of the Taymanitic inscriptions, and the lack of a preposition or vocative particle in the inscription.

WTay 22

----*lm b-ḏrr* *ddn*
 in-war.INF *Ddn*
 ‘...*lm* in the wars of Dadan/by waging war against Dadan’

Cognate infinitive construction In the following example the cognate infinitive is used for assertion.

WTay 32

b---- *nṣr* *l-ṣ[l]* < // > {*m*} *nṣr* *hzb*
b---- keep.watch.SC.3MS for-*Ṣalm* <LB> keep.watch.INF strong.ADJ
 ‘*b...* kept watch vigilantly on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

While it may be tempting to interpret *ḥr ḥrt* in TA 02669.2 as a cognate infinitive construction as well, the interpretation of such a construction is problematic.

TA 02669.1 + 02669.2

{----} *ḥmd* / ḥ{ḥ}r ḥ{ḥ} //rt {ḥ}{l}{l} /
 --- glory.INF WD end.CST posterity. <LB> be.a.soldier.SC.3MS? WD
b-ḥm *m-lmq*
 against-CPRO.3MP from-*lmq*
 ‘{----}glory until the end of posterity {having performed his duties as a soldier} against them from *Lmq*(?)’

The interpretation of *ḥr ḥrt* as a cognate infinitive construction would render an interpretation of the verb ‘to retreat, go back’ with an etymological object ‘he retreated quickly’, but writing about defeat does not seem to fit an inscription beginning with the word ‘glory’. Instead it may be read as ‘the end of posterity’ indicating that all of the descendants of the person being praised will share in his glory. Compare *ḥr* for example to Arabic *‘āḥir* ‘the last’ (Lane: 32a) and *ḥrt* to Dadanitic *ḥrt* ‘offspring’ (e.g. U6) or Nab. *ḥr* ‘posterity’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 38).

***f*l + infinitive** In the following examples the infinitive is indicated by the use of the verb *f*l.

Esk 023, 026

*f*l *nk*
 do.SC.3MS smite.INF
 ‘he engaged in battle (lit. did (the) **smiting**)’

TA 09302

$h\{s^3\}y$ / f^l / hmd / $l-hd-h$ /
 PN WD do.SC.3MS WD glory.INF WD for-guard.INF-CPRO.3MS WD
 $b-ym$ / $blbd$
 in-battle.CST WD $blbd(?)$

‘ Hs^3y attained **glory** by guarding the border during the battle of $blbd$ ’

Comparing the phrase $f^l hmd$ to $f^l nk$ ‘he engaged in battle’ in Esk 023 and Esk 026, it would seem that $f^l hmd$ belongs to a similar light verb construction ‘he did X’. The second element hmd is an infinitive or verbal noun of the common root, hmd ‘praise’ or ‘glory’ (e.g. Sab. hmd ‘praise, thankfulness, glory’ (Beeston et al. 1982: 68) or CAr. $hamd$ ‘praise, eulogy, commendation’ (Lane 639b)). I would then suggest the translation ‘he attained glory’ (lit. he made glory).

TA 09303⁵⁹

---- $\{l\}y$ / f^l / $r[?]s^1$ / $hm\{d\}$
 ... WD do.SC.3MS WD first.CNST WD glory.INF
 ‘... attained foremost glory’

twy The form *twy* occurs five times in the Taymanitic corpus as part of the phrase $mn s^1m^c l-šlm l twy$ ‘whoever obeys *šalm* will not perish’ (WTay 1.2; WTay 2; HE 24; HE 31; HE 41). Knauf (2011) already proposed the translation ‘whoever listens/is obedient to *šalm* will not perish’, but does not offer further discussion on its grammatical structure.

Since the second root-consonant of middle weak verbs was not represented in the Taymanitic G-stem of the suffix conjugation (see paragraph on II *w/y* verbs in section 2.4.1, pg. 90), *twy* probably represents a nominal form; possibly /*tiwāy*/. Compare for the construction *lā* + infinitive for example CAr. “*lā tawā ‘alā māli ‘amriyyin muslimin*” ‘there shall be no perishing of the property of a man that is a Muslim’ (Lane: 323c).

2.5 Verb stems

2.5.1 D-stem of geminate roots

The only verbs in which a D-stem could be visible are verbs with a weak second consonant and in geminate verbs (cf. 2.4.1, pg. 91).

HE 39⁶⁰

$\{ \}z$ ***ḍrr*** *ddn*
 $\{ \}z$ war.SC.3MS *Ddn*
 ‘ $\{ \}z$ **went to war** (against) Dadan’

There are two other forms which could be interpreted as D-stem verbs; the form *ḥdd* (WTay 12) and the widely attested form *ḥll* (16 times, e.g. Eskoubi 2007: no. 234; Esk 289; Esk 167).

⁵⁹For a complete discussion of the inscription see section 4.1.

⁶⁰Cf. section 2.3.1 for other possible interpretations of this form.

ḥdd The form *ḥdd* appears once in the corpus as a verbal form (but see note on inscription TA 09302 in section 2.8.1, pg. 99). It should probably be read as a D-stem of the verb in the suffixing conjugation /ḥaddada/.

WTay 12

$y^{\text{zrl}} b$ $h\{g\}\{g\}$ **ḥdd** $l\text{-}šlm$
 Y^{zrl} son.CNST *Hgg* be.a.border.guard.SC.3MS for-*Šalm*
 ‘ Y^{zrl} son of *Hgg* was a border guard for *Šalm*’

Winnett offers the interpretation ‘ Y^{zrl} son of *Hgg* is keen for *Šalm*’ (Winnett & Reed 1970: 100). The Translation ‘keen’ can be found in the Arabic lexicon (compare also Heb. *ḥdd* ‘sharp’ and Akk. *edēdu* ‘to be sharp, pointed’ (HALOT: 291)). Given the military character of the rest of the corpus, I would suggest a translation ‘to act as border guard/patrol’, based on the meaning ‘boundary or edge’ of *ḥdd* (e.g. in Arabic, *Lane*: 524-526) seems more fitting. If this interpretation is correct this inscription would be similar to the *nšr l-Šlm* ‘he kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*’ inscriptions.

II-weak roots - ḥll Generally *ḥll* is translated with its Arabic cognate *ḥalla* ‘to take up abode or settle somewhere’ (*Lane*: 620) or ‘to camp’ probably from its primary meaning ‘to untie’ (cf. *Lane*) based on the idea of unpacking your animals before settling for the night (e.g. Eskoubi 1999: 115). While it may be argued that *ḥll* should be taken as a reference to an army setting up camp, this meaning generally does not seem to fit the sedentary environments of either Taymā’ or Dadan.

Even if we bleach the meaning of *ḥll* ‘to camp’ to ‘to stay’ the translation seems problematic. The inscriptions do not work as the typical ‘X was here’ type of graffiti, since we do not find these inscriptions at Dadan. People seem to have written them when they were close to Taymā’ *after ḥll-ing* at Dadan.

It seems that a different root should be considered for the interpretation of *ḥll*. I would suggest that the term derives from the root $\sqrt{hwl}$, cognate to Hebrew *ḥayl* ‘armed forces, strength’ (HALOT: 311) (cf. CAR. *ḥawl* ‘strenth’ (*Lane*: 675c), and Off. Aramaic and Palm. ‘force; armed force, army’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 369); Eth. *ḥayala* ‘to strengthen’ (HALOT: 311) from $\sqrt{hyl}$). The verb *ḥll* could then be interpreted as a denominal verb in the D-stem ‘to serve in the army, to be a soldier’. This meaning works well in the different environments in which it is attested and it would place this phrase into the same tradition as the inscriptions mentioning military ranks (e.g. Esk 031), and military duties like *nšr* ‘to guard’ (e.g. HE 32) and *ḥdd* ‘to guard the border’ (Wtay 12).⁶¹

Considering the use of Aramaic among the ruling elite of Taymā’, *ḥll* might be considered a loan formation from Aramaic, along with other military terms such as *nšr* (Esk 025) and the rendering of the military term *rbs’rs*¹ in the Taymanitic script (Esk 169). This would explain why the root appears in Taymanitic as *hyl* instead of $\sqrt{hyl}$. If this interpretation is correct, Taymanitic seems to have formed the D-stem forms of its II-weak roots by reduplicating its final consonant, instead of the middle weak one, similar to Hebrew. Compare for example Heb. *qōmēm* ‘he raised up’ (from $\sqrt{qwm}$) (Joüon & Muraoka 2009: 198) to

⁶¹ For a complete discussion of the interpretation of the *ḥll* forms see section 4.7.

CAr. *qawwama-hu* ‘he made it straight’ (from $\sqrt{qwm}$) (Lane: 2995b). The reduplication in the D-stem formation could have been a native feature if only the noun *ḥwl* ‘army’ was borrowed, which then formed the base for a denominal verb formation following native morphological processes.

The semantic difference between the G-stem form of this verb (*ḥl*) and the D-stem (*ḥll*) remains unclear. Both *ḥl* and *ḥll* forms appear in identical contexts.

Esk 055:

lm rḥml / b bs¹rt / ḥl / b ddn

‘by *Rḥml* son of *Bs¹rt* **he was a soldier** at/against *Dadan*’

Esk 104:

lm ṣ²{w/t} [sign] b d b lḥd // ḥll b-ddn

‘by ṣ²{w/t} [sign] b d son of *Lḥd* **he was a soldier** at/against *Dadan*’

The D-stem could possibly have an intensive meaning ‘to be a soldier for a longer period of time/repeatedly’ or there could be no semantic difference between them at all (compare CAr. *balaha* and *ballaha* ‘to be weary, tired’ or *jadala* and *jaddala* ‘to throw out, topple’ (Corriente 2004: 40-41 after Kazimirski 1860)).

2.6 Adverbs

The most common adverbial forms in Taymanitic are nouns used as temporal adverbs: *s¹nt* ‘year’ and *yrḥ* ‘month’. One adverbial phrase is attested.

2.6.1 Temporal adverbs

WTay 20⁶²

bḥs²rkt nṣr b-ḍr ddn yr{ḥ} l-ṣlm
Bḥs²rkt keep.watch.SC.3MS in-war.CNST Ddn month.ADV for-*Ṣalm*

‘*Bḥs²rkt* kept watch during the war of *Dadan* **for a month** on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

HE 32⁶³

S³q / b ḥw / nṣr / s¹nt / l-ṣlm
S³q WD son.CNST ḥw WD keep.watch.SC.3MS WD year.ADV WD for-*Ṣalm*

‘*S³q* son of ḥw kept watch **for a year** on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

⁶²For the interpretation of the verb *nṣr* as ‘to guard’ see paragraph 2.2.3.

⁶³Since battles would likely not have lasted a whole month or even a year, these inscriptions might indicate that there was some sort of military service in Taymā’ for which one could serve set periods of time. On the other hand, all *nṣr* inscriptions are found either at an ancient watch tower called Bani Maṭṭar ‘Atiyah, or at a place called Jabal Ghunaym, which would also have made a good look out place. This could mean that the periods of time mentioned in the inscriptions refer to the time someone would be stationed at one of these watch posts (I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for pointing this out to me).

2.6.2 Adverbial phrases

The only attested adverbial phrase in Taymanitic is a cognate object construction. This is a very common construction in, for example, Arabic: *iqṭatalū qatalan šadīdan* ‘they fought with one another a hard fight’ (Wright & Caspari 1859: Part III, 56 par. 26B rem.a.).

WTay 32

b----^c *nṣr* *l-ṣ[l]{m}* *nṣr* *hzb*
b----^c keep.watch.SC.3MS for-*Ṣalm* keep.watch.INF strong.ADJ
 ‘b...^c he kept watch vigilantly on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

2.6.3 Negation

The negative adverb *l*, probably /lā/, is attested in the following common expression.

HE 24⁶⁴

w *mn* *s¹m^c* *l-ṣlm* *l* *twy*
 CONJ REL.INDF listen.SC.3MS to-*Ṣalm* NEG perish.INF
 ‘and whoever obeys *Ṣalm* **will not** perish’

2.7 Pronouns

2.7.1 Personal pronouns

Independent personal pronouns The only attested independent personal pronoun is the first person singular: *ʾn*.

Esk 169 (line 1):

ʾn / *mrdn* / *{h}lm* / *nbnd* / *mlk* / *bbl*
 ‘I am *Mrdn*, servant of Nabonidus king of Babel’

Esk 025:

{ʾ}n *ʾ{n/r}ds¹* / *s¹{s¹}n* / *mlk* / *bbl* / *n{t}rt*
 ‘I am *ʾnds¹* official of(?) the king of Babylon, I kept watch’

Enclitic personal pronouns An only slightly wider range of enclitic forms of the personal pronouns are attested.

Singular: *{ʾ}s³r-h* ‘his captivity’ (Esk 272)
 Plural: *b-hm* ‘with **them**(?)’ (TA 02669.1)

⁶⁴Translation after Knauf (2011). For a discussion of the phrase *l twy* see section 2.4.4, pg. 93.

2.7.2 Demonstrative/Relative pronouns

Demonstrative A distal form of the demonstrative *znk* is attested in the following inscription:

WTay 3

nšr / *b* *ʿgl* / *hlk* / *znk* *rfty* /
nšr WD son.CNST *ʿgl* WD go.SC.3MS WD DEM.SG.DIST *rfty* WD
h-rkb
 DEF.ART-riding.camel
 ‘*Nšr* son of *ʿgl* died, **that** is *Rfty* the riding camel’

If the phrase *znkrfty* would be parsed as *zn krfty* this would be the only attestation of a *zn* demonstrative. Instead, based on the name following it, this should probably be read as a distal form *znk* ‘that’ rather than ‘this’. Compare other demonstratives with a *-k* element: Biblical Aramaic (*dēk*), Geʿez (*zeku*) (Hasselbach 2007: 1). Moreover, the name *krfty* would be very difficult to parse, whereas the name *rft* is an attested name in Taymanitic and Qatabanic (Harding 1971), probably from the word *rif* ‘countryside’ (CAr.). The final *-y* could be a diminutive (see section 2.3.3, pg. 89).

Relative Taymanitic had a *z*-based relative pronoun. The relative seems to decline for number; there is no evidence for a feminine relative. Relative pronouns are mostly attested in combination with the locative preposition *b*- ‘here; in these, with these’ or in combination with the verb *hll* ‘against these’.

The plural form *zy* is attested in the following inscriptions:

Esk 083 [part]

ʿl / *b-zy* *šlm*
 strength WD with-REL.PL.CNST *šalm*
 ‘Strength is with **those** of *šalm*’

Esk 058

lm šmdʿ / *b* *šmnʿm* / *b* *s³rbn* /
 LA *šmdʿ* WD son.CNST *šmnʿm* WD son.CNST *S³rbn* WD
hll *b-zy* *h³yr* {*l*}-*ddn*
 be.a.soldier.SC.3M.SG against-REL.PL.CNST good in-Dadan
 ‘by *šmdʿ* son of *šmnʿm* son of *S³rbn* he acted as a soldier against **those** who aided Dadan’

Al-Anšāry 35

lm wdd / *b* *lhm* / *hll* /
 LA *wdd* WD son.CNST *Lhm* WD be.a.soldier.SC.3MS WD
b-z{y} *s²nʿ* / *ʿm* *šlm*
 against-REL.PL.CNST enmity.CNST WD people .CNST *šalm*
 ‘by *wdd* son of *Lhm* he acted as a soldier against **those** of enmity of/against the people of *šalm*’

Indefinite relative The indefinite relative *mn* is attested in the formula *mn s¹m^c l-ṣlm l twy* ‘**whoever** obeys Ṣalm, will not perish’ (e.g. W Tay 1.2) in which it functions as the subject of the sentence.

2.8.1 *b-*

Locative or indicating opposition

ħll *b-ddn*
be.a.soldier.SC.3MS in-Dadan
'He was a soldier **at/against** Dadan'

lm wdd / b lhm / hll /
 LA Wdd WD son.CNST Lhm WD be.a.soldier.SC.3MS WD
b-z{y} s²n' / 'm šlm
 against-REL.PL.CNST enmity.CNST WD people.CNST šalm
 'by Wdd son of Lhm he acted as a soldier **against** those of enmity
 of/against the people of Salm'

⁶⁵Depending on the interpretation of the preposition the inscriptions may even be interpreted as Taymanitic men signing up for the Dadanitic army, although that seems unlikely.

Comitative Close to the locative function, when used referring to people *b-* may have a comitative meaning. The interpretation of the last part of the phrase is very unsure however.

TA 02669.1 [part]

$\{h\}\{l\}\{l\}$ / *b-hm* *m-lmq*
 be.a.soldier.SC.3MS WD with-CPRO.3MP(?) from-*Lmq*(?)
 ‘he was as a soldier **with** them(?) from *Lmq*(?)’

Temporal The reading of the following two examples is unsure in places, but they both seem to use *b-* followed by a noun to indicate ‘at a time’.

TA 09302

$h\{s^3\}y$ / *fʔ* / *hmd* / *l-hd-h* /
 $\dot{H}s^3y$ WD make.SC.3MS WD glory WD by-border.guard-CPRO.3MS WD
b-ym / *blbd*
 in-battle WD *blbd*(?)
 ‘ $\dot{H}s^3y$ attained glory by guarding the border **during** the battle of *blbd*’

TM.T. 041

hll *b-sʔnt* // ...
 be.a.soldier.SC.3MS in-year LB ...
 ‘he was a soldier **in** (the) year...(?)’

Benefactive or instrumental In the following inscription the exact meaning of *b-* remains open to interpretation. It could be used as a benefactive, to express doing something for, or on behalf of someone else, or possibly as an instrumental to indicate that the deity made the offering possible.

JSTham 352

b-šlm ntn-t
 for-Šalm give-.SC.1CS
 ‘**by** Šalm I have made an offering’

2.8.2 m-

The preposition *m-*, which is probably an assimilated form of the preposition **mn* ‘from’, is only attested twice and both times in an unsure context.

TA 02669.1 [part]

$\{h\}\{l\}\{l\}$ / *b-hm* *m-lmq*
 be.a.soldier.SC.3MS WD with-CPRO.3MP(?) from-*Lmq*(?)
 ‘he was a soldier with them(?) **from** *Lmq*(?)’

WTay 9.2 [part]

---*m m-sʔmw*
 ...*m* from-*Sʔmw*(?)
 ‘... **from** *Sʔmw* ((tribal) name)(?)’

2.8.3 *l-*

The preposition *l-* is used both as a benefactive when used with the verb *nšr* ‘to guard’ and it can be used to introduce a dative. It is also attested introducing a dative in combination with the transitive verb *s¹m^c* ‘to listen’. In TA 09302 *l-* is used with an instrumental meaning.

Benefactive

HE 25

nšr *l-šlm*
 keep.watch.SC.3MS for-*šalm*
 ‘he kept watch **on behalf of** *šalm*’

Dative

WTay 2

mn *s¹m^c* *l-šlm*
 REL.INDF listen.SC.3MS to-*šalm*
 ‘Whoever obeys *šalm*’

Instrumental

TA 09302

ḥ{s³}y / *f^cl* / *ḥmd* / *l-ḥd-h* /
Ḥs³y WD make.SC.3MS WD glory WD by-border.guard-CPRO.3MS WD
b-ym / *blbd*
 in-battle WD *blbd*(?)
 ‘*Ḥs³y* attained glory **by** guarding the border during the battle of *blbd*’

2.8.4 *k-*

The preposition *k-* seems to have been used as an instrumental. It is only attested once, in the following inscription, where it is used to indicate ‘by means of surrounding (it)’

Esk 272 [part]:

n^cml / *b lbd* // *hrg* / *ddn {/}* *l wn^c* // *s³ḡ {b}-h k-dwrt*
 ‘*N^cml* son of *Lbd* the destroyer of Dadan⁶⁶ of the lineage of *Wn^c*; he took the town **by** surrounding (it)’

⁶⁶The translation of this phrase ‘destroyer of Dedan’ was proposed by Macdonald (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming: appendix 1).

2.8.5 *m*^c

This preposition is only attested once in the following inscription with a comitative meaning.

Esk 169 (line 2)

'*tw-t* *m*^c *rbs¹rs¹* *kyt*
 come-.SC.1CS with chief *kyt*
 'I came **with** chief *Kyt*'

Note that the Taymanitic preposition *m*^c resembles CAr. *ma'a* 'with' and not the more commonly found form '*m*' (e.g. Sab. '*m*'; Heb. '*im*'; Aramaic '*im*'; Syr. '*am*' (Brockelmann 1908-1913: vol. I, 498) Ug. '*m*' (Pardee 2008: 27)). It is unclear how these forms relate to each other exactly.⁶⁷

2.8.6 *l(m) auctoris*

Many of the Taymanitic inscriptions begin with an introductory particle *l-* or *lm-*, also called the *lam auctoris* (LA or LmA respectively in glosses). Almost all Safaitic inscriptions and some Hismaic inscriptions also begin with this particle (Macdonald 2008: 209-2010). The *lm-* variant is unique to Taymanitic (Winnett 1980: 135-136).

The introductory particle has been connected to the preposition *l-*, which can also indicate authorship 'by' in Arabic (Macdonald 2008: 209). It has been suggested that the characteristic *m* of the Taymanitic variant might be connected to Hebrew *lāmō* (< */li-mā/(?)) which occurs in the book of Job, a text often connected to Northern Arabia because of its many linguistic oddities (Guillaume 1963 and Hoffman 1996). The *m* is probably an enclitic *-m* also found in other Semitic languages (e.g. Wright & Caspari 1859: vol. I paragraph 70 Rem F, paragraph 84 Rem a; Gianto 2011: 37).

There is some uncertainty about the meaning of this particle *l(m)-*. It is generally interpreted as a *lam auctoris* to indicate authorship, and translated as 'by' (e.g. Macdonald 2008: 209; Winnett & Reed 1970: 96). However, there are contexts in which a translation 'by' does not work; inscriptions that are part of burial cairns (e.g. WH 329, 938, 1936, 3420) and tomb inscriptions (e.g. the tomb inscriptions at Dayr al-Kahf, Macdonald 2006) are also introduced by a particle *l-* (Macdonald 2006: 294-295). In these cases it is unlikely that the name on the inscription was also its author, as this type of texts is more likely to commemorate the deceased for whom the grave was built than its builder (Eksell 2002: 115). In these cases a translation 'for' seems more appropriate. Based on examples from bilingual Safaitic-Greek inscriptions and a longer narrative Safaitic inscription, Al-Jallad (2015) demonstrates how the introductory particle can be used for different purposes; sometimes with a clear commemorative function, yet other times simply as a reference to the author of the inscription (Al-Jallad 2015: 5-6). Given the range of meanings in different contexts Macdonald (2006: 294-5) proposed to leave the particle untranslated in the cases where it is mainly introducing the subject of the inscription.

⁶⁷It has been proposed that the '*m*' forms come from '*am(m)*' 'people' or '*amma*' 'to be common' Lipiński 1997: 465-466) or possibly Akkadian /'imm/ '*gemeinschaft*' (Troppner 2000: 263) and that the Arabic preposition is a metathesized form (Lipiński 1997: 465-466).

Currently there are six known Taymanitic burial inscriptions (TM.T 016; 019; 025; 028; 037 and 042) all of which begin with *l-*,⁶⁸ while inscriptions that do not mention the name or subject of the inscription consistently occur without an introductory particle. On top of that, one inscription with an introductory particle has been attested, which was probably written by the person giving his name at the beginning. It is an inscription with a verb in the first person singular which starts with *lm* (Esk 052). Therefore it would seem that in Taymanitic indication of authorship seems to have been the main function of the *lam auctoris*. On the other hand, all types of inscriptions that do start with a personal name also occur without *lam auctoris*. This seems to indicate that it can also be left untranslated (as suggested by Macdonald 2006: 295). For the sake of completion however, I would propose to translate the introductory particles that are expressed in the inscriptions as ‘by’, except in cases where the author clearly could not have been the person mentioned in the inscription, as would be the case for the burial inscriptions mentioned above.

The particles *l-* and *lm-* seem to exist in free variation in Taymanitic. Both introductory particles (*l-* and *lm-*) and the lack of an introductory particle do not seem to be restricted to specific contexts. As an exception to this, there are two types of inscriptions which systematically occur without an introductory particle: those that do not mention a personal name; and the *nsr l-šlm* inscriptions, regardless of whether a name is given or not and in what position in the inscription the name is mentioned.

2.9 Conjunctions

2.9.1 w-

The conjunction *w-* ‘and’ can be used to introduce verbal clauses after the statement of the author’s name.

TM.T. 012

----{b/s¹/k} ‘d b tyr / w-šm^c
 ...s¹d son tyr WD CONJ-listen(?).SC.3MS
 ‘... s¹d son of *Tyr*, **and** he listened’

2.9.2 f-

Conjunction *f-* signifies a resultative relation, similar to its usage in, for example, CAr (*Lane*: 2321b).

Kim CIMG 0759, line 3

w bhs² / f yd^c / {’}ns¹
 and examine.SC.3MS WD and know.SC.3MS WD Mankind
 ‘... and he examined **and (so)** he knew mankind’

⁶⁸I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for pointing out these important inscriptions to me.

2.10 Syntax

2.10.1 Nominal sentences

Equational sentences can be expressed by a verbless clause, as in most Semitic languages.

Esk 169 (line 1):

ʾn / mrdn / {h}lm / nbnd / mlk / bbl

‘I am *Mrdn*, servant of Nabonidus king of Babel’

WTay 3 (part):

znk rfty /h- rkb

‘that is *Rfty* the riding camel’

Nominal sentences can also be used to express existential clauses.

Esk 083 (part):

ʾl / b-zy šlm

‘Strength is with those of *Šalm*’

2.10.2 Verbal sentences

Basic word-order Most Taymanitic inscriptions have an SVO word order.

HE 39

{ʾ}z drr ddn {w}

ʾz war.SC.3MS Ddn CONJ(?)

‘*z* went to war (against) Dadan and(?)’

This seems to be the result of the structure of the inscriptions, which usually begin by stating authorship. There is one inscription in which the subject of the verb is mentioned separately from the author, in which VS order is used, hinting that this was probably the unmarked word order in Taymanitic.

Esk 013⁶⁹

<l> l bʾrl rḏw šlm

<l> LA Bʾrl please.SC.3MS Šalm

‘By *Bʾrl*, may *Šalm* be pleased’

Topicalization Aside from the topicalization of the subject when it is equal to the author, there is one common formula in which the subject is consistently fronted.

⁶⁹Translation as proposed by Macdonald (db).

WTay 2

lm / hb'l b 'gl / mn s'm' l- şlm
 LA WD Hb'l son.CNST 'gl WD REL.INDF listen.SC.3MS to-Şalm NEG
l tw[y]
 perish.INF
 'by *Hb'l* son of 'gl, **whoever** obeys *Şalm* will not perish'

Generally Taymanitic is relatively free in its word order and it seems that any constituent can be fronted. Compare the following two inscriptions, each with a prepositional phrase.

WTay 12

y'zrl b h{g}{g} hdd l-şlm
Y'zrl son.CNST Hgg be.a.border.guard.SC.3MS for-Şalm
 'y'zrl son of Hgg was a border guard **for Şalm**'

JSTham 352

b-şlm ntn-t
 for-Şalm give-.SC.1CS
 'on behalf of *Şalm* I gave'

There are other examples in which different parts of the more regular formula are mixed up. The following example might actually represent the spoken word order more closely.

Esk 013⁷⁰

<l> l b'rl rđw şlm
 <l> LA B'rl please.SC.3MS Şalm
 'By B'rl may Şalm be pleased'

The following inscription is another example in which even parts of a formula are interrupted by the name of the author.

WTay 15

nşr l-şlm 'rm b fs'h b- dr nbyt
 keep.watch.SC.3MS for-Şalm 'rm son.CNST Fs'h in-war.CNST Nbyt
 'he kept watch on behalf of *Şalm*, '**rm son of *Fs'h***, in the war of Nabaioth'

3 Taymanitic in its Semitic context

3.1 Discussion

In the following, Taymanitic will be defined based on a set of linguistic features specific to the language of the Taymanitic inscriptions. Taymanitic's relevant linguistic features will then be placed in a wider Semitic context and an attempt will be made to determine the relation between Taymanitic and its surrounding

⁷⁰Translation as proposed by Macdonald (db).

languages. Special attention will be given to the relation between Taymanitic and other ANA varieties in order to review some of the general assumptions concerning the linguistic make-up of ANA.

3.1.1 Taymanitic innovations

Merging of the fricatives There are a few phonological traits which distinguish Taymanitic from other linguistic varieties written in ANA scripts. Most descriptions of Taymanitic mention that it uses all three PS non-emphatic sibilants (Macdonald 1991: 16-17; Winnett & Reed 1970: 96). These are generally transcribed as s^1 for PS $*[s]$, s^2 for PS $*[ʃ]$ and s^3 for PS $*[ʃs]$. Instead, the dental fricative series seems to have merged with their sibilant counterparts, giving Taymanitic a system in which s^3 represents both $*t$ and $*s^3$.

$\underline{d}; z$	$> z$
$\underline{t}; s^3$	$> s^3$
$\underline{z} (*\underline{t}); \underline{s}$	$> \underline{s}$

Regardless of the phonetic value of s^3 and $\underline{t}$, their merger sets the phonemic inventory of Taymanitic apart from both NWS and Arabic; Arabic merged s^1 and s^3 , Ugaritic s^1 and s^2 , and Aramaic s^2 and s^3 (Gzella 2011: 433). The same applies to the merger of $\underline{t}$ and $\underline{s}$; Arabic kept both apart, Ugaritic merged the emphatic counterparts of $*s^2$ ($*\underline{s}$) and $*s^3$ ($*\underline{t}$) to $\underline{s}$, whereas Hebrew merged the entire emphatic series ($*\underline{s}$, $*\underline{t}$ and $*\underline{t}$) to $\underline{s}$.

Conditioned assimilation of l and n to following consonants Another feature that characterizes Taymanitic is the conditioned assimilation of l and n to following consonants in unstressed position (see paragraph 2.2.6 on N-assimilation (pg. 83) and L-assimilation (pg. 84). This sound change gives Taymanitic its characteristic *b* form (instead of *bn*) for ‘son’, for example. One of the minor features of NWS is a general assimilation of *n* to any following consonant (e.g. Gzella 2011: 432).

3.1.2 Taymanitic and Northwest Semitic

Aside from the features discussed above, which are specifically Taymanitic, there are three linguistic features that could connect Taymanitic to NWS. The first is the sound change of word-initial $*w-$ $> y-$, with the exclusion of the conjunction /wa-/ ‘and’ (Gzella 2011: 432). This sound change is attested in three lexical items: *Yrh* (WTay 20) ‘month’ $< *wrh$; the verb *yd*^c (Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished)) ‘he knew’ $< *wd$ ^c and *yrr* (Esk 053) ‘he guarded’ $< *wry$.

One form might even point towards a shared morphological innovation between NWS and Taymanitic. The phrase $\{s^1\} \{b\}^q ly tm$ (Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished)) ‘chief of the residents of Taymā’ seems to contain a construct plural similar to that in Canaanite and Aramaic which replaced their bound masculine plural ending $-\bar{i}$ with $-ay$ ($> -\bar{e}$ in Hebrew and Aramaic) as in Hebrew *malkē* ‘kings of’ (Gzella 2011: 440). The phrase ‘*b*^qly + place name’ is also found in two Aramaic inscriptions (Cowley 1923: No. 30²² and Teixidor

1978: 182). The fact that a similar phrase occurs elsewhere and that it may have had a legal function to do with ownership rights,⁷¹ could indicate that this is a loan-phrase in Taymanitic, as the language used for official purposes at the oasis, at least during Nabonidus' stay, seems to have been Aramaic (Macdonald 2010: 11). Finally, *b^qly* could also reflect a plural ending *-āy* and simply reflect a Taymanitic plural suffix. This may be compared to Sabaic, where the masculine plural suffix on oblique forms is *-y* (Stein 2003: 82), giving us a construction which looks orthographically the same.

Lastly, if my interpretation of *hll* is correct, then Taymanitic forms the D-stems of II-w/y roots by reduplicating the third consonant of the root as can be seen in the form *hll* 'to be or act as a soldier' from the root $\sqrt{hwl}$ (e.g. Esk 104). This strategy is similar to that used in Hebrew (Joüon & Muraoka 2009: 198).

These three isoglosses are the only features which could be used to establish a genetic affiliation between Taymanitic and any of its surrounding languages. As there are no further distinguishable features to be found in Taymanitic that would establish such a connection more closely, a discussion of some features that could disprove a close affiliation between Taymanitic and NWS is in order.

One of the NWS innovations is its system of plural formation in which nouns with the form CVCC (*qīl*, *qatl*, *qutl*) get an *a* inserted between the two last consonants and a plural suffix, leaving them essentially doubly marked (Huehnergard 1995: 2129). The innovation of this system of plural marking also entailed the loss of broken plurals (Huehnergard 1995: 2129). As the Taymanitic script is purely consonantal, it is impossible to see whether it had the same type of doubly marked plural formation as NWS, but among the few plural nouns that are found in the corpus, there are no clear examples of any broken plurals. The form *ḡrr*, which is attested in WTay 22 and He39, could be interpreted as a broken plural /ḡrūr/ 'wars' in WTay 22. However, it occurs in one of the standard Taymanitic formulae which in all other cases reads: *b-ḡr ddn* (e.g. WTay 20 and WTay 21) 'in the war of Dadan'. Because of the formulaic nature of the texts, the form *ḡrr* is likely a writing error. Even if *ḡrr* was written deliberately there are many explanations other than a broken plural to account for its form. As we do not know the word's vocalization, it might have been an infinitive 'while/by warring Dadan', or even another construct plural, with /a/ insertion, as diphthongs do not seem to have been written consistently: /bi-dararay Dadān/ 'in the wars of Dadan' (see section 2.1.1).

Another obstacle to connecting Taymanitic to NWS that has been suggested is the lack of general *n*-assimilation to following consonants, which is sometimes mentioned as one of the shared features of NWS (e.g. Gzella 2011: 432). However, since the core-NWS languages were in close geographic contact, it is impossible to say if *n*-assimilation was in fact a feature of Proto-NWS, or simply an areal feature that spread after the diversification of the branch. If Taymanitic was a variety of NWS, then it could have separated rather early and may not have been affected by the spread of this feature.

⁷¹Land ownership and the status as resident of a city often came with certain rights and privileges in ancient Mesopotamian cities (Oppenheim 1969: 15)

3.1.3 Taymanitic in relation to Old Arabic⁷²

As all of ANA has traditionally been closely associated with Arabic, the features Taymanitic shares with NWS are quite unexpected. Moreover, there are several Arabic innovations that Taymanitic clearly did not undergo. It did not undergo the final *-at* > *-ah* shift which Arabic did, in its unbound forms. In addition to this, Taymanitic seems to have preserved the *-iwa* ending in its stative verbs and did not change them into *-iya* as happened in Arabic (cf. *rdw* ‘may he please’ e.g. Esk 13). Other Arabic isoglosses are difficult to evaluate, as there is no context in the Taymanitic inscriptions for most of them.⁷³

3.2 Conclusion

To sum up, Taymanitic underwent two very typical phonological innovations, the merger of the dental fricatives with their sibilant counterparts and a stress-based assimilation of *l* and *n* to following consonants. These indicate that the language expressed in the Taymanitic script can be regarded as an independent language variety. Three linguistic features attested in Taymanitic could point to an affiliation with NWS; one of which (the sound change **w-* > *y-*) forms the primary argument for the classification of Amorite as part of the NWS branch. Even though none of these features are conclusive, there is no evidence which rules out a NWS affiliation. Moreover, there are several (Proto-)Arabic innovations that Taymanitic did not undergo, which seems to rule out a close affiliation with Arabic and the other two better understood ANA varieties, Hismaic and Safaitic. Also, Taymanitic has some features that rule out considering it a form of proto-Arabic despite its early attestation, such as its merging of the sibilant and interdental series; the changing of initial *w-* to *y-* and several other innovations that Arabic did not undergo.

It has to be kept in mind that a linguistic comparison is complicated by the fact that not all defining features of either Arabic or NWS can be found in Taymanitic, and that the NWS features found in Taymanitic could also be explained as contact induced changes (if we were to interpret the sound-change **w-* > *y-* as an areal feature, and the one clear example of a construct plural with *-y* as a loan phrase), so all these data should be evaluated with caution. Even though the data are not conclusive, it is clear that Taymanitic script expressed a distinct linguistic variety that is not Arabic and not closely related to Hismaic or Safaitic, while it can tentatively be suggested that it was more closely related to NWS.

⁷²Hismaic and Safaitic are considered to be forms of Old Arabic here, following Al-Jallad (2015: 11) see the discussion of internal ANA relations in section 1. Introduction (note 7).

⁷³For an overview of Arabic isoglosses see: Huehnergard (forthcoming) and Al-Jallad (2015: 12).

4 Inscriptions

4.1 Monumental Inscriptions

TA 09302:

$\dot{h}\{s^3\}y / f^l / \dot{h}md / l-\dot{h}d-h / b-ym / blbd$

‘ $\dot{H}s^3y$ attained glory by guarding the border in the battle of *blbd*’

This inscription should probably be read in relation to two other inscriptions, TA 09303 and TA 02669.1 + 02669.2. TA 09303 was found in the same wall of a building as TA 09302 in which they were probably used secondarily as building material (Macdonald forthcoming); all three inscriptions were deeply inscribed on what seem to be smooth prepared surfaces, which is quite rare for Taymanitic inscriptions. Given their strong similarity in style it may not be a coincidence that all three contain the word *hmd* which occurs only in two other inscriptions as a personal name in the corpus, and that in two of the three inscriptions *hmd* seems to be part of the phrase *f^l hmd* which seems to mean ‘to attain praise/glory’.

For a discussion of the phrase *f^l hmd* see the paragraph on *f^l* + infinitive 2.4.4, pg. 92.

The form *hd* is interpreted here as a nominal form from the root *hdd*, which we find in WTay 12 as a verb ‘to act as a border guard’ (compare CAR. *hadd* ‘limit or boundary of a land or territory’ (Lane: 525b)). The suffixed pronoun specifies that the author of the inscription attained glory through his actions as a border guard (lit. his guarding of the border). The preposition *l-* should be interpreted as an instrumental here. For the discussion of the verb *hdd* see section 2.5.1, pg. 94.

Given the content of the rest of the inscription, and the general military character of the Taymanitic inscriptions, I would suggest to interpret *ym* as ‘battle’ here (see also Macdonald forthcoming). Compare for example CAR. *yawm* ‘battle’ or ‘*ayyāmu l-‘arabi* ‘conflicts of the Arabs’ (Lane: 3064c).

TA 09303:

----{*l*}y / *f^l* / *r[ʔ]s¹* / *hm{d}*

‘...(?) attained foremost glory’

The form *r[ʔ]s¹* is interpreted here as standing in construct with the infinitive *hmd*, indicating that the author or dedicant of the inscription achieved ‘first or foremost glory’. Compare e.g. the usage of *ra’s* in CAR. as ‘the principal or most essential part of something’ or *ra’su s-sanati* ‘the beginning or first day of the year’ (Lane: 995c).

The lack of the *ʔ* in the inscription is likely a writing error, as the glottal stop is generally represented in the orthography. If this inscription is compared to the similar phrase *f^l hmd* in TA 09302, an interpretation of *r[ʔ]s¹* in construct with *hmd*, qualifying the kind of praise or glory seems to work very well. If the glottal stop was really dropped in this position it might indicate that there was a conditioned environment in which this happened in Taymanitic. Based on the available evidence at the moment it is not clear what this conditioning environment would be.

TA 02669.1 + 02669.2

{----} *hmd* / ' {*h*}*r* ' {*h*}//*rt* {*h*} {*l*} {*l*} /
 --- glory.INF WD end.CST posterity. <LB> Be.a.soldier.SC.3MS? WD
b-hm *m-lmq*
 against-CPRO.3MP(?) from-lmq
 '{----} glory until the end of posterity {having performed his duties as
 a soldier} against them from *Lmq*(?)'

Macdonald (forthcoming) reads the first line and the first two letters of the second line as a separate inscription from the rest of line 2, based on the difference in carving technique. The middle line of the *h* is deeply incised like all the letters before it however, the two small lines coming out of the middle are not as deeply carved, similar to the rest of the following glyphs. This seems to suggest that the shallow lines were the draft of the inscription, which was simply not finished for some reason. The fact that the *h* contains both techniques seems to support this idea.

Following the unfinished *h* two vertical lines are clearly visible, each with a hook on its top. The first vertical line might have a zigzag at its bottom, but this might be damage. Since the glyph following the word divider is a *b*, a reading *hll b*... seems appropriate, as this is one of the well known formulae used in the Taymanitic inscriptions.

For a discussion of the phrase '*hr hrt*' and a possible alternative interpretation see the paragraph on cognate infinitive constructions in section 2.4.4, pg. 92.

The translation of the final phrase is very unsure. For the interpretation of *hll* see section 2.5.1, pg. 94.

4.2 *fl nk* inscriptions**Esk 026:**

Lb{/s¹}m / b n{/'}dr / fl / nk
 'Lb{/s¹}m son of N{/'}dr engaged in battle'

The left leg of the ' in the second personal name in Esk 026 *n'dr* is curved and sticks out above the horizontal stroke of the letter, rendering its interpretation somewhat unsure.

The inscriptions with the phrase *fl nk* have previously been translated as 'he had intercourse' (Eskoubi 1999: 72 and 75). A seemingly similar phrase is attested in the Hismaic inscriptions (transcription and translation following King 1990).

KJA 24:

L-ḡtlh w rb s¹qm s²rr b-ḡlmt f nkh s¹rr
 'by *ḡtlh*; and a young girl feels sickness of happiness and he had sex with her happily'

KJA 6:*Nk rhs¹ 'zz w nyk**'Rhs¹ had sex with 'zz (or a loved one) and made love repeatedly'*

In these inscriptions, however, the woman involved is often explicitly mentioned as well, whereas they are completely missing in the Taymanitic context. In addition to this, there are several formulae in Hismaic expressing emotions and loving people, e.g. *wdd* 'to love' (e.g. KJC 120) and inscriptions mentioning *s¹qm* 'sickness' (e.g. KJC 45; KJC 79) and *s¹rr* 'happiness' (e.g. KJA 46), while there are no such Taymanitic inscriptions. Given the general content of the Taymanitic inscriptions, which mainly include military context, the original meaning of the root $\sqrt{nk}$ 'to hit; to smite' may fit better. Compare for example the Aramaic usage of the root: 'blow, hit' (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 730).

Esk 023:*yf^c / b b{s²}mt / {f}l {n}k**'Yf^c son of Bs²mt engaged in battle'***4.3 Military ranks****Esk 031:***'s¹ b dmg / l 's{r/n} / h-d{b}' / {h/h}{r}{'}{y}**'s¹ son of Dmg to/for 'sr the soldier the chief'*

The forms *hd{b}'* and *{h/h}{r}{'}{y}* should probably be interpreted as nouns with a definite article *h-* in apposition to the personal name, similar to the use of nicknames. In that case I would propose to read them as 'the soldier, the chief'. A similar construction is found in another inscription (Philby 279 ay) in which the personal name is followed by the words *h-rm h-ġlm* 'the lancer, the youth/junior. *db'* is attested in NWS with the meaning 'army' (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 955). The Akkadian equivalent *šābu* could be used to indicate a group of people in general, workers, or soldiers (CAD, vol.16, 46).

The root $\sqrt{r'y}$ means 'to pasture' in Arabic (Lane: 1103); it is also used with the meaning shepherd in Hebrew (Clines 1993) and in Amorite names (Knudsen 1991: 870, the name *i-la-ra-ḥi-a* < *ila-rā'yā* 'Ēl is my shepherd'). In Akkadian, $\sqrt{r'y}$ could be used to refer not just to shepherding cattle, but it could also be metaphorically extended to mean guiding or leading people (CAD, vol.14, 309). In combination with the word *šābu* it could be used to refer to a 'foreman of the team, shepherd of the team', *re-' šā-bi* (CAD, vol.16, 46b). In this light it seems most likely that the author of the text gave his military class (*h-db'* 'the soldier'), which may have referred to a specific type of soldier, and his rank (*h-r'y* 'the chief').⁷⁴

Philby 279 ay:*kfr'l b t'n h-rm h-ġlm**'Kfr'l son of T'n, the lancer, the junior'*

⁷⁴For a complete discussion of the form of $\sqrt{r'y}$ see the paragraph 2.3.3, pg. 88.

Similar to Esk 031, the personal name is followed by what seems to be military ranks. *Rm* probably comes from the root $\sqrt{rmy}$ ‘to throw’. In light of the interpretation of the previous inscription (Esk 031) this may be interpreted as a form $/r\bar{a}m\bar{i}/$ ‘the thrower’ which could by extension mean ‘the lancer’. Such a title would fit well with the genre of military terms and ranks in parallel to ‘the soldier’ *h-qb* in Esk 031.

If the following identification marker *h-glm* is also part of his military rank the basic meaning of *glm* ‘the youth’ may have been used to indicate a junior position in his unit. It is unclear how this *glm* would relate to the *glm mlk bbl* in Esk 169.

Esk 001:

kfr[’]l / b ṣ[’]n / h-rg/ h-glm

‘*Kfr[’]l* son of *ṣ[’]d*, the *rg*, the junior’

The inscription seems to follow the same formula as the previous two (Esk 031 and Philby 279 ay) ‘PN son of PN the X, the Y’ indicating the military function and rank of the inscriber. While the photograph clearly reads *hrg* after the personal name, it is unclear what kind of unit this would refer to.

4.4 ṣ¹ inscriptions

Esk 044.2:

Ykfrl // ṣ¹ ṣ¹ ṣ¹ tw

‘*Ykfrl* chief of *ṣ¹ tw*⁷⁵’

Esk 263:

[sign] l <. > ms¹{s²/h}l / ṣ¹ bhbs¹ [sign]

‘[sign] . *Ms¹hl* chief of *Bhbs¹* [sign]’

Esk 147:

l ṣmrṣ[’] / ṣ¹ / s¹mw

‘by *ṣmrṣ[’]* chief of *S¹mw*’

4.5 ḏr inscriptions

WTay 33.2:

b- {ḏ}r ddn

‘in the war of Dadan’

The phrase *ḏr Ddn* ‘the war of Dadan’ is generally interpreted as referring to a (military) conflict between the oases. The only historical source we have that is supposed to mention this event is an Akkadian inscription (Royal chronicle BM 34167+, col v: 20) in which the words ‘the king of Dadan’ can be found.

⁷⁵For the interpretation of $\dot{s}^1$ as ‘chief, leader’ see Macdonald (1992: 31).

However the context of these words is damaged (Macdonald 1997: 336, note 12), so we do not know exactly what happened to the king of Dadan. The reason it is assumed that there was a conflict is that the general content of the inscription relates military activities (Macdonald 1997: 336, note 12). Winnett rightly points out that an oasis and trading station such as Taymā' would have been dependent on peace in the area to allow traders to pass safely, making it unlikely that the inhabitants would go on military campaigns in the region "unless the circumstances were very unusual" (Winnett & Reed 1970: 90-1). He concludes that the coming of Nabonidus from Babylon might have provided such an unusual situation, as Nabonidus would have tried to establish himself in the region by going on military campaigns (Winnett & Reed 1970: 90-1). Eph'al adds to this that the 'wars' mentioned in the inscriptions might simply refer to competition between the two oases, as they were situated on competing routes of the frankincense trading route (Eph'al 1982: 184). It should also be kept in mind that the basic meaning of *ḏr*, in Arabic, is not war, but more generally 'affliction, necessity, want' (Lane: 1775-1777).

WTay 13:

y'zrl b ḥgg ---- b ḏr nbyt

'Y'zrl son of Ḥgg ... in the war of Nabaioth'

The *nbyt* can probably be identified with the Nabayoth (Winnett & Reed 1970: 99), who are mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as Nabayati (^{KUR}*Na-ba-a-ti*⁷⁶) (Eph'al 1982: 183). The Old Testament similarly mentions a people called the *Nəbāyōt* (Nebaioth⁷⁷). Winnett and Reed propose that the *nbyt* mentioned here and in WTay 13 and WTay 15 are the same people. The *nbyt* mentioned here cannot be equated with the Nabataeans (*nbt(w)* CAr. *nabaṭ*, 'anbāt') (Winnett & Reed 1970: 99 and (Eph'al 1982: 222)) for one would have to explain both the loss of the *y* and the change from *t* > *t*.⁷⁸

WTay 22:

----lm b-ḏrr ddn

'...lm in the wars of Dadan/by waging war against Dadan'

See section 2.3.1 for a discussion of the possible interpretation of *ḏrr* as a plural form rendering the first proposed translation, and section 2.4.4, pg. 91 for a discussion of the alternative interpretation.

HE 39:

{'}z ḏrr ddn

'{'}z served in the war of Dadan"

See section 2.5.1 for a discussion of the verb *ḏrr*.

⁷⁶In the annals of Ashurbanipal (Oppenheim 1969: 298-300).

⁷⁷Gen 25:11 (= chron. 1:29), 28:9, 36:3; Isa. 60:7.

⁷⁸For more on the possible location of the Nabaioth in ancient times see Winnett & Reed (1970: 100).

WTay 21:

----{y}{ʔ} b- // *ḡr dd[n]*
 ‘... in the war of Dadan’

WTay 23.1:

ḡr ddn
 ‘the war of Dadan’

4.6 *nṣr l-ṣlm* inscriptions**HE 17:**

{n}s²w b h-ḡdryt nṣr l- ṣlm
 ‘Ns²w son of the sedentary woman/the woman from *Hḡr* kept watch for *Ṣalm*’

For a complete discussion of interpretation of the verb *nṣr* see section 2.2.3, pg. 79.

Esk 025:

{ʔ}n ʔ{n/r}ds¹ / s¹{s¹}n / mlk / bbl / n{t}rt
 ‘I am ʔnds¹ official of(?) the king of Babylon, I kept watch’

The word *s¹s¹n* can probably be compared to Akk. *šušānu* which means ‘horse trainer or groom’ but more likely in the meaning of ‘title of deputies of the king or of other officials’ (CAD), possibly referring to a cavalierist. Compare also CAr. *Sāʾis* ‘groom who has the care and management of a horse’ (Lane: 1466). The term likely followed a similar path as *rbs¹rs¹* (Esk 017) which was probably borrowed from Neo-Assyrian into Aramaic and into Taymanitic from there (see section 2.2.4, pg. 81 for the complete discussion of *rbs¹rs¹*).

For a discussion of the interpretation of *nṣr* as the equivalent of *nṣr* ‘to keep watch’ see section 2.2.3, pg. 79.

WTay 17:

ʔl b ʔs¹gt ns³r b-ḡr ----k----
 ‘ʔl son of ʔs¹gt kept watch during the war ---?---’

HE 40:

ḡkrn b ns²w b h-ḡdryt nṣr l-ṣlm
 ‘Ḥkrn son of Ns²w son of the sedentary woman/the woman from *Hḡr* kept watch for *Ṣalm*’

WTay 32:

b----ṣ nṣr l- ṣ[l] // {m} nṣr hzb
 ‘b...ṣ kept watch vigilantly on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

For the discussion of the syntax of the inscription see section 2.6.2. The adverb *hzb* can be compared to CAR. *hayzab* ‘strong, fiery’ (Cohen & Cantineau 1999; Lane: 2893).

The *n* and the *r* of each line are facing in the same direction, which might suggest that the text of both lines is running in the same direction as well.⁷⁹ This could have been a decision made on aesthetic grounds however, as the *nṣr* forms are written right above each other. Since *nṣr* is part of the common formulae of the Taymanitic inscriptions, while reading the top line from right to left would yield a phrase that is more difficult to interpret, the reading proposed above seems preferable.

WTay 20:

bhs²rkt nṣr b-ḏr ddn yr{ḥ} l-ṣlm

‘*Bhs²rkt* kept watch during the war of Dadan for a month on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

HE 34:

bhs²rkt nṣr l- ṣlm

‘*Bhs²rkt* kept watch on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

HE32:

S³l b ṭw nṣr s¹nt /l- ṣlm

‘*S³l* son of *ṭw* kept watch for a year on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

WTay 11:

fḥk b ḥgg nṣr l- {ṣ}lm // b-ḏr / nbyt

‘*Fḥk* son of *Ḥgg* kept watch on behalf of *Ṣalm* in the war of *Nbyt*’

HE 25:

nṣr l-ṣlm

‘he kept watch on behalf of *Ṣalm*’

WTay 15:

nṣr l-ṣlm ṛm b fs¹ḥ b- ḏr nbyt

‘he kept watch on behalf of *Ṣalm*, *ṛm* son of *Fs¹ḥ*, in the war of *Nabaioth*’

WTay 33.1:

mntt nṣr b- ḏ[r] // ddn

‘*Mntt* kept watch in the war of Dadan’

WTay 16:

sr nṣr b- ḏ[r] // ms¹{ṣ}

‘*Sr* kept watch in the war of *Massā*’

⁷⁹I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for pointing this out to me.

Winnett identifies the *ms*¹⁾ mentioned here with the *Massā* mentioned in Gen. 25:14, he connects it to a town *Mas'a* mentioned in an inscription of Tiglath-pileser III as URU *Ma-as-'a-a-a* (Winnett & Reed 1970: 101).⁸⁰

WTay 9.1:

fhk b hgg nšr l- šlm
'*Fhk* son of *Hgg* kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*'

WTay 14:

šmrf b hgg nšr {l-}š{l}m
'*Šmrf* son of *Hgg* kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*'

WTay 35:

hkdl b mk'l nšr // l- šlm
'*Hkdl* son of *Mk'l* kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*'

WTay 42:

{.}hm nš // r l- šlm //
'*hm* kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*'

HE 21:

šmkfr / b 'gl {/} nšr // l- šlm
'*Šmkfr* son of '*gl* kept watch on behalf of *Šalm*'

4.7 *hl(l)* inscriptions

JSTham 403:

Mr{'}l{š} // hl-t
'*Mr'lš*, I was a soldier'

For a complete discussion of the form of the verb see the paragraph on II-weak roots - *hll* under section 2.5.1, pg. 94. For the inflection of the verb *hl(l)* see the paragraph on inflection of II *w/y* roots under 2.4.1, 90.

The verb *hll* occurs in several variations of a similar phrase. The most common phrase containing *hll* mentions *ddn*, the oasis Dadan (e.g. JSTham 513; Esk 167). Other places are mentioned sporadically, all such variations occur only once. Other forms that are mentioned in the same position as Dadan are: '*ft* (JSTham 511); *m* (possibly an unfinished inscription) (JSTham 343); '*dd* (TS_13_Al-Mushayrifah Tay 1) and '*t{m}{m}* (TS_13_Al-Mushayrifah Tay 2).

Even though the above mentioned phrases could work with an interpretation of *hll* as 'to stay', or even 'to be encamped', if one wants to pull the meaning closer to that of the inscriptions mentioning *hdd* 'to act as a border

⁸⁰For an extensive survey of the Biblical and Akkadian sources mentioning the *Massā* see Eph'al (1982).

guard' and *nṣr* to guard', the following examples have a much clearer sense when interpreting *ḥll* as 'to be a soldier'.

Al-Anṣāry 35:

lm wdd / b ḥm / ḥll / // b-z{y} s²n' / 'm ṣlm

'By *Wdd* son of *Lḥm* he was a soldier against those of enmity of/against the people of *Ṣalm*'

For a discussion of *zy* as a plural relative pronoun see the paragraph on relative pronouns in section 2.7.2, pg. 97.

The *y* of *b-z{y}* is carefully hammered over, obliterating the circle at the top, but preserving the outline of the letter, leaving it still recognizable. This could indicate that the author was not sure on how to write what he wanted to express. This could be due to the ambivalent nature of diphthongs, if we assume a vocalized form /zay/ for the plural relative.

B-zy s²n' seems to form a headless relative clause similar to, for example, the name of the deity *dū-šara* (lit. that/he of the Šarā mountain range). If this interpretation is correct, the phrase can be interpreted as '(he served as a soldier) against those of enmity (of/against *Ṣalm*)'. This phrase in turn, seems to stand in construct with the following phrase '*m Ṣlm* 'the people of *Ṣalm*' (compare CAR. '*amm* 'a company of men, or of a tribe, a numerous company'; Off. Aramaic '*mm* 'world population, mankind' (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 865)).

JSTham 517 + 512:

lm ṣmd' / b ṣmn'm / b s³rbn / ḥll b-z // y ḥyr {l}-ddn

'by *Ṣmd'* son of *Ṣmn'm* son of *Ṭrbn* he acted as a soldier against those who aided Dadan'

This inscription is very similar in structure to Al-Anṣāry 35. In this inscription the *y* was not hammered over. The phrase *b-zy ḥyr* should be read as a headless relative clause; with *b-* indicating opposition together with the verb *ḥll* 'to serve as a soldier against' (see section 2.5.1, pg. 94) and *zy* as a plural relative pronoun. If this interpretation is correct the phrase could be interpreted as 'he served as a soldier against those who aided Dadan' lit. 'those of goodness to Dadan'. This interpretation has the benefit of fitting the content of the other inscriptions mentioning the war at Dadan (e.g. WTay 33.2) and being a soldier at/against Dadan (e.g. Esk 055).

There is some uncertainty concerning the reading of the *l* before *ddn*: in between the *l-* and *Ddn* in the final line, the top of the *l* and the *d* are connected to each other and seem to form a ligature together. In writing the name of his grandfather *s³rbn*, in the first line, the author connected the *b* and the *n* in a sort of ligature as well.

Esk 059:

bmrt ḥl b-{'}ft

'*Bmrt* was a soldier at *ft*'

Esk 055:

lm rḥml / b bs¹rt / ḥl / b-ddn

‘by *Rḥml* son of *Bs¹rt* he was a soldier at/against *Dadan*’

Esk 104:

lm ṣ²{w/t} [sign] b d b ḥd // ḥll b-ddn

‘by ṣ²{w/t} [sign] b d son of *Lḥd* he was a soldier at/against *Dadan*’

Even though it is a little curious that the author chose to write a sign in between the *b*- and his father’s name, his father was probably called *bd*. This name is attested abundantly in Safaitic (Harding 1971).

WTay 9.2:

w-ḥr b nml b m ----m m s¹mw

‘and *Ḥr* son of *Nml* son of *m*... from *S¹mw* ((tribal) name)(?)’

Esk 020:

Lm fl{t} ḥl{l} b-{n}dr {b/ʿ}{h/s²}r h-ḥwl

‘by *Flt* he was a soldier at/against *Ndr* in the last part of the year (?)’

The *n* in *{n}dr* seems damaged, but given how narrow the letter is and the angle that is clearly visible on the left side of the glyph it should probably be interpreted as *n*. Based on the context of the inscription *Ndr* should probably be interpreted as a toponym or a tribal name. The penultimate word as *ḥr* appears to stand in construct with the *h-ḥwl* ‘the year, or cycle’ (cf. Esk 272). The root *ṣ²hr* (CAR. *ṣ²hur*) means ‘the back, latter part’ or ‘the last part’ (Lane: 31b). This could render ‘the last part of the year’ (Hayajneh 2011: 765). As seen in the *nṣr b-dr* inscriptions it is common in Taymanitic to add a temporal clause without a preposition (HE 32 and WTay 20).

JSTham 343:

ḥll bm

‘he was a soldier *bm*’

In most inscriptions the verb *ḥll* is followed by the preposition *b*-, the only exception to this is JSTham 403 and possibly the inscription at hand. The inscription seems to be complete so *m* is probably not the remnant of a damaged place-name; unless the author did not finish the inscription. Since most inscriptions include at least a personal name, it could be that the author of this text chose to diverge from the standard formula and wrote his name after the statement, similar to the author of the Esk 289.

Esk 289:

ḥll b-ddn lm yws¹l

‘he was a soldier at/against *Dadan* by *Yws¹l*’

Esk 185:

lm s¹mh / b qny / hl----

‘by *S¹mh* son of *Qny* he was a soldier...’

Esk 167:

hll b-ddn

‘he was a soldier at/against *Dadan*’

Esk 054:

lm y^zn hl b ddn

‘by *Y^zn* he was a soldier at/against *Dadan*’

Esk 055 :

lm rhml / b bs¹rt / hl / b ddn

‘by *Rhml* son of *Bs¹rt*, he was a soldier at/against *Dadan*’

4.8 *l twy* inscriptions

HE 41:

lm {y}^zrl / b lrm / mn s¹m^c / l- šlm l twy

‘by *Y^zrl* son of *Lrm*, whoever obeys *Šalm* will not perish⁸¹,’

For the discussion of the form of *twy* see section 2.4.4, pg. 93.

WTay 2:

lm / hb¹l b ‘gl / mn s¹m^c l- šlm l tw[y]

‘by *Hb¹l* son of ‘*gl*, whoever obeys *Šalm* will not perish’

HE 24:

w mn s¹m^c l-šlm l twy

‘and whoever obeys *Šalm* will not perish’

WTay 1.2:

lm z¹b mn s¹m^c l- šlm l twy

‘by *Z¹b*, whoever obeys *Šalm* will not perish’

HE 31:

b¹rl b klb // mn s¹m^c l šlm l twy

‘*B¹rl* son of *Klb* whoever obeys *Šalm* will not perish’

⁸¹This translation was first proposed by Knauf (2011).

4.9 Assorted inscriptions containing verbal sentences

TM.T. 020:

----*kfrl b zbd // [n]šb [b-]yd-h ʾlht*

‘... *Kfrl* son of *Zbd* set up a stele with his (own) hand [representing the] goddess⁸²’

Even though there is a chip at the beginning of the second line, the edge of the *n* seems to be visible.

The *y* following *nšb* in the second line is written up side down, with its leg coming out the top of the circle instead of the bottom. While this is unusual for Taymanitic, there is one other example, similarly carved onto what seems to be a prepared surface (TM.T 013 *s¹m{s³}/ʾ b ḥry [wasm]*). The *y* in *znk rfty* (WTay 3) can also be interpreted as ‘up side down’ but since the inscription coils around the rock, this might have more to do with the position of the inscriber in relation to what he was writing, making it difficult to determine what would be ‘right side up’. On top of this, the proportion of the letter seems a little odd – a little short with a big circle and the circular base is very much in the middle of the line instead of to the bottom – but these are probably stylistic choices of the author of the inscription.

The translation proposed here largely follows that proposed by Macdonald (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming) and interprets the verb as a third person masculine singular in the suffix conjugation, with the author of the text as its subject. The verb *nšb* seems to have been a transitive verb, taking the deity for/of which the stele was being set up as its direct object (compare Wadi al-Zaydāniyyah Tay 020). In order to understand the function of *yd-h* one may need to amend an instrumental proposition *b-* ‘by or with his hand’.⁸³ If it really needs to be amended I would consider it a writing error. The preceding *b* of *nšb* may seem to suggest a word boundary spelling, in which the preposition assimilated to the previous word, but there is no evidence for this practice in any ANA corpus outside of Safaitic.⁸⁴ Another option might be that the instrumental was marked by case, but since prepositions are used for this in the other Taymanitic inscriptions, this seems unlikely as well.

WAMT 59:

s¹q^c / s¹l šl // m f {w}ʿl b mkʿl

‘*S¹q^c* asked *Šalm* and *W^cl* son of *Mkʿl* (too)’

s¹q^c is attested as a personal name in two other inscriptions (HE 36 and WTay 36). Although no other inscriptions with this form are attested, *f* should probably be interpreted as a conjunction and *w^cl b mkʿl* as a personal name, meaning that they petitioned *Šlm* together.

⁸²The translation follows Macdonald (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming).

⁸³I would like to thank Michael Macdonald for this suggestion (pc.).

⁸⁴Al-Jallad, pc.

JSTham 545 + 546 + 549 :

lm s¹o s¹ / b ns²{/}t // šlm / 'nkd // {f} ys²hd

'by S¹o s¹ son of ns²t, may Šalm provide offspring (so) that it/he (posterity?) will bear witness(?)'

Winnett connects 'nkd with Hebrew *nkd* 'progeny, posterity, grandson' (Winnett, unpublished, Study I: 6), in which case 'nkd can be interpreted as a C-stem verb with an optative meaning 'may he make/provide offspring'.

Hayajneh (2009b) proposes to connect 'nkd with CAr. *nakad* 'misfortune, to bring evil upon someone' and *nakida* 'to give sparingly, to be hard' and to translate *šlm 'nkd* as 'Šalm did evil' (*šlm tat unheil*) (Hayajneh 2009b: 80). Given the content of the other Taymanitic inscriptions, in which Šalm seems to function as the main deity of the oasis, it seems unlikely that someone would express their grief with him in such a public way.

Hayajneh (2009b: 76) reads the second part of Esk 083 (= JSTham 548) 'l b-zy *šlm* as part of this inscription,⁸⁵ but the second part of the line seems to have been carved by a different author (see commentary on Esk 083 (part) in section 4.10).

The form *ys²hd* looks like a prefix conjugation of the root *s²hd* 'to witness' (compare CAr. *šahada* 'to bear witness'; Sab. *s²hd* (Beeston et al. 1982: 132); *šhd* 'to give testimony' Imp. Aramaic and Palm. (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1112). It is not entirely clear what this would mean in this inscription.

Esk 013:

<l> l b'rl / rđw šlm

'by B'rl, may Šalm be pleased'

For the meaning of *rđw* as 'may he be pleased' compare other ANA corpora e.g. Hismaic (Tdr 9 (King 1990)); Heb. *ršy* and Off. Aramaic *r'y* (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1082); CAr. *rađiya* 'to be pleased, content' (Lane: 1099b). See the paragraph on the reduction of final triphthongs in section 2.2.6, pg. 84 and section 2.4.2, for more on the form and function of *rđw*. For the meaning of *rđw* as 'may he be pleased' compare other ANA corpora e.g. Hismaic (Tdr 9 (King 1990)); Heb. *ršy* and Off. Aramaic *r'y* (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1082); CAr. *rađiya* 'to be pleased, content' (Lane: 1099b). See the paragraph on the reduction of final triphthongs in section 2.2.6, pg. 84 and section 2.4.2, for more on the form and function of *rđw*.

WTay 3:

nšr / b'gl / hlk / znk rfty / h- rkb

'Nšr son of 'gl died, that is Rfty the riding camel'

Even though *hlk* seems to be used more neutrally as 'to go' in Esk 272 (see 2.2.3, pg. 75) using the specific meaning 'to die' (cf. *hlk* 'to die' in CAr. for example) seems to fit this inscription better, as it would be difficult to understand

⁸⁵ Hayajneh proposes either 'so may god witness this Šalm' (und daraufhin möge Gott in diesem *šlm* Zeuge sein) or 'so may god 'il (as judge) be a witness (in the matter of) Šalm' (und daraufhin möge Gott 'il (im Sinne von Richter) in der (angelegenheit) des *šlm* Zeuge sein) Hayajneh (2009b: 83) for the combined lines: *f-ys²hd 'l b-zy šlm*.

why someone would leave without his camel. If *hlk* is indeed to be interpreted as ‘to die’ here, the camel may have been left as a burial offering, known as *baliyyah* (CAr.) or *bly* in Safaitic (Al-Jallad 2014: 222). The inscription is found on top of a rubble hill, which the camel would not have been able to reach. This might explain the distal demonstrative even if the camel was left as an offering.

There is also a drawing of a camel next to the inscription. In most cases inscriptions referring to drawings on the same rock use the basic form of the demonstrative for this. The usage of a distal demonstrative for this is not unique however (e.g. in Safaitic WH 516).

Esk 272:

nʿml / b lbd // hrg / ddn {/} ʿl wnʿ // s³g {b}-h k-dwrt / {f} hl // k / b{ʿ}s³r-h / hwl[-h]

‘Nʿml son of Lbd the destroyer of Dadan of the lineage of Wnʿ; he took the town by surrounding it, and (so) and [its] army was destroyed during its capture/ it remained in his captivity for a year’

The translation of the phrase *hr̥g ddn* as ‘destroyer of Dadan’ was first proposed by Macdonald (forthcoming: appendix 1).

The form *s³g* in line 3 should probably be interpreted as a third person singular verb in the suffixing conjugation. Taymanitic *s³g* from the root **√s³wg* is comparable to Arabic *sāga* which can signify ease of entrance, thus *suḡ fī l-ʿarḍi mā waḡadta masāḡan* ‘Enter thou into the land while thou findest a place of entrance’ (Lane: 1468b). In this inscription, the verb is transitive with the preposition *b-* introducing the direct object (compare e.g. *ḡzy b-X* (e.g. C2732) or *ḡzz b-X* (C 4452) ‘he raided X’ in Saf.). The difference in transitivity between the CAr. form and the Taymanitic form is probably due to the underlying stem-vowel; while the intransitive form probably came from a form **s³ayiga*, the form underlying the transitive form was likely **s³ayaḡa*. Due to the collapse of the triphthong in middle-weak verbs in both languages the formal distinction between the two was lost. The subject of the verb in this inscription would be the author of the inscription. The suffixed pronoun *-h* refers back to the city of Dadan, which was already mentioned in line 2.

The preposition *k-* would be used as an instrumental ‘by means of’. The form *dwrt* could be taken as a noun meaning ‘surrounding’ indicating that they took the city by means of surrounding (it), from the root *√dwr* ‘to turn, to revolve, to circle’ in CAr. (Lane: 930a) or ‘cycle’ in Heb. (HALOT 2028).

If the city of Dadan remains the subject of the verb *hlk* ‘to go’ (cf. Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 280-3), the following word *ʿs³r* could be interpreted as a nominal form ‘captivity’ from the root **√ʿs³r* meaning ‘to take captive, be bound’ (CAr. Lane: 57-58; Sab. Beeston et al. 1982: 8) or ‘prisoner’ (e.g. KAI 181^{25f}). The suffixed pronoun *-h* would in this case refer to the author in whose captivity the city was. For the verb *hlk* to fit into this interpretation it would have had to have undergone some kind of grammaticalization in this context, to go from meaning ‘to go’ to indicate being in a prolonged state of something ‘to go on’ or ‘to continue’ to end up in this context with the meaning ‘to remain’. The final word *hwl* ‘year’ can be interpreted as a temporal adverb, indicating for how long he had control over Dadan (compare CAr. *hawl* ‘year’ (Lane: 675c)).

Another option would be to interpret *hwl* as the subject of the verb *hlk*. In this case *hwl* is interpreted as ‘army’ and taken to have a meaning comparable to that in CAr. *ḥawl* ‘strength’ (Lane: 675c) and Off. Aramaic and Palm ‘force; armed force, army’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 369). In this case *hwl* would be connected to the verbs *hl* and *hll* in Taymanitic. Interpreting *hlk hwl[-h]* as ‘its army was destroyed’ would require the restoration of a suffixed pronoun *-h* however, at the end of the inscription, referring back to Dadan and making the army definite. The interpretation of *b-s³r-h* remains the same in both interpretations.

Esk 169:

ʾn / mrdn / {h}lm / nbnd / mlk / bbl // ʾtw / m^c / rbs¹rs¹ / kyt // {.}{'}nm /
b- {f}l / tlw / b{d}t / l^cq
‘I am Mrdn servant of Nabonidus king of Babylon, I came with chief
kyt.????⁸⁶’

The inscription starts with a first person singular personal pronoun ʾn ‘I’. Thus far, there is only one other Taymanitic inscription known which starts like this (Esk 025). Such an introduction to an inscription is relatively rare in ANA in general (Müller & Al-Said 2001: 106). However, this is also attested in Safaitic (WH 1403b), Hismaic (KJC 646) and Thamudic C (e.g. Esk 2007 no. 095) and D (JSTham 637) (Hayajneh 2001: 82).⁸⁷ The fact that the author used this different introductory particle and does not follow any of the known Taymanitic formulae, together with his association with Nabonidus could be an indication that he was not from Taymāʾ.

Müller & Al-Said (2001), and Eskoubi (1999) propose to translate *hlm* as ‘friend’.⁸⁸ According to Müller & Al-Said (2001: 107) this meaning is attested in Arabic (*Lisān*: s.v.) and Ḥadramitic. In CAr. the semantics of the word are restricted to ‘friend of women’ however, and the attestation in Ḥadramitic seems to be a personal name on a pendant, which is not helpful for our understanding of the lexical item in Taymanitic. Hayajneh proposes to translate *hlm* as *glm* ‘youth, servant’ based on the usage of the glyph *h* to represent foreign *g* in Akkadian (Hayajneh 2001: 82-83). While this confusion does not seem to occur in any other Taymanitic inscription, it is not unlikely that this is also the origin of the CAr. meaning of the word *hlm* as ‘friend of women’, if we connect this to *glm* ‘youth’ or ‘boy slave’ with a possible semantic shift to eunuch. Therefore I will follow Hayajneh’s translation of this word.

The verb ʾtw / ʾatawt(u) / means ‘to come’ (Lane: 14) and is probably a first person singular suffixing form. The final weak root letter *w* is written out, in addition to forming evidence for the orthographic representation of diphthongs in certain environments, this also shows us that the verb was still ʾtw and not ʾty

⁸⁶Reading of the final line is doubtful cf. Hayajneh (2001: 82-86) and Müller & Al-Said (2001: 106-109).

⁸⁷For a comparison to this practice in Babylonian and Syriac inscriptions see Müller & Al-Said (2001: 106).

⁸⁸As additional evidence for the translation of ‘friend’ for *hlm* Müller & Al-Said (2001: 107) mention an Old Sabaic title ‘Friend of X’ with the name of a king using the word *mwd*. This was in a different cultural context however, and as the author of this text presents himself as a friend of a Babylonian king, one would expect him to rather use a calque of a Babylonian title, than a Sabaic one.

as attested in Thamudic (Euting 306 = Hub 267), in late Sabaic and in Arabic (Müller & Al-Said 2001: 108).

For a discussion of the form *rbs¹rs¹* see section 2.2.4, pg. 81.

Esk 052:

lm hkdl / b trbn / b lb / b 'rt{m}' / {y}rrt
 'by *hkdl* son of *trbn* son of *lb* son of 'rt{m}', I guarded'

For the interpretation of *yrr* as 'to guard' see section 2.2.6, pg. 84.

JSTham 352:

b-šlm ntn-t
 'By *šalm*, I have made an offering'

Winnett (unpublished: Study I, 6) translated this inscription as 'Oh *šalm*, thou hast given'. It seems to have been quite rare however to refer to a person, mentioned within the inscription in the second person however. Most often *šalm* would be the subject of the inscription. On top of that, the preposition *b-* has not been attested elsewhere in the Taymanitic corpus with a vocative meaning. In Safaitic a number of vocative particles are attested: *h-*; *'y*; *hy*; *'yh*; *y* (Al-Jallad 2015: 158-9) CAR. uses a vocative *wā* (Fischer 2001: 96), but *b-* does not seem to have been used as such. There are other inscriptions that start with the preposition *b-* followed by a Theonym, but these are mostly interpreted as instrumental or benefactive: e.g. *b-rḏw 'z bn Bhmt* (Esk 098) '(may) 'z son of *Bhmt* be (entrusted) by *Rḏw*' or *b-Nhy h-s'rr* (Eskoubi 2007: 178) 'By (the power of) *Nhy* is the happiness' (Hayajneh 2011: 770).

WTay 12:

y'zrl b ḥ{g}{g} ḥdd l-šlm
 'Y'zrl son of *Ḥgg* was a border guard for *šalm*'

For a discussion on the interpretation of *ḥdd* as 'to guard the border' and the form of the verb see section 2.5.1, pg. 94.

4.10 Assorted inscriptions containing nominal sentences

Esk 083 (part):

'l / b-zy šlm
 'Strength is with those of *šalm*'

Eskoubi (1999) reads this as part of Esk 083, Hayajneh (2009b) proposes to link all of Esk 083 to JSTham 545 and 546 to form one long inscription. Even though the technique of the beginning of Esk 083 is close to that of JSTham 545 and 546 and could be read together, JSTham 548 was inscribed using a very different technique from the other lines, and should therefore probably be considered a separate inscription (Macdonald, commentary db).

In order for the inscription to form a complete sentence *ʾl* should be read as a noun or a verb here. Translating *ʾl* as ‘strength, might’ like Hebrew *ʾel* (HALOT: 48) fits very well with the role *Ṣalm* had, as main deity of the oasis.⁸⁹

For more on the plural relative *zy* see the paragraph on relative pronouns in section 2.7.2, pg. 97.

WTay 37:

---bdbwd // b h-mṣryt Wasm [?]
‘---(PN?) son of/with the Egyptian woman Wasm’

See section 2.3.3, pg. 88: *h-mṣryt* may have been a personal name.

Esk 049:

kfrʾl / b ʾrs² / bny hṣy / b rb{.} // b rttn
‘kfrʾl son of ʾrs² youngest son of(?) Hṣy son of Rb. son of Rttn’

See the section 2.3.3, pg. 89 for a discussion on *bny* as a diminutive form.

WTay 9.2:

w ḥrḏn mlk m ---m m s¹mw
‘and Ḥrḏn king/PN(?) m ---m from S¹mw(?)’

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⁸⁹This translation was first suggested to me by Adam Strich (pc.)

Appendix: Glossary

ⲟ

- ⲕⲣ** *noun.* end, last part. *sig:* Esk 020.
 CAR. *ⲕⲣ* ‘the back, latter part, last part’ (*Lane:* 31b) or *ⲕⲣ* ‘the last’ (*Lane:* 32a). See also Hayajneh (2011: 765) for the translation ‘last part of the year’ for *ⲕⲣ* *h-ḥwl*.
- ⲕⲣⲧ** *noun.* posterity, offspring. *sig:* TA 02669.2 = DAI Tayma I.3.
 Compare Dadanitic *ⲕⲣⲧ* ‘offspring’ (e.g. U6 Sima, 1999: 7) or Nab. *ⲕⲣ* ‘posterity’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 38).
- ⲕ** *noun.* strength. *sig:* Esk 083 (part).
 Heb. *ⲕ* ‘might, strength’ (HALOT: 48)
- ⲕ** *noun.* family, lineage. *sig:* Esk 083 (part); Esk 272; DAI Tayma II.3; JSTham 426; Esk 111; Esk 128; JSTham 521.
 CAR. *ⲕ* ‘family’ (*Lane:* 121a); Saf. *ⲕ* ‘family’ (e.g. AbaNS 1128; C 88; HaNSB 307 cf. Al-Jallad 2015)
- ⲕⲥ** *noun.* mankind. *sig:* Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished); TM.T.024.
 CAR. *ⲕⲥ* ‘men, mankind’ (*Lane:* 113); Aramaic *ⲕⲥ* (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 85).
- ⲕⲥ** *noun.* chief. *sig:* Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished); TS 13 Al-Khabu al-Sharqi Tay unp 1; TM.T.011; Esk. 044.2; Esk. 263; TM.T.023; Esk. 147.
 Heb. *ⲕⲥ*; Sab. *ⲕⲥ*. This translation was first suggested by Macdonald (1992: 31) see his article for an elaborate discussion (cf. Hayajneh 2009a: 78-80 for an alternative interpretation).
- ⲕⲥⲣ** *infinitive or noun.* (to be) captive; or trace, place. *etymological root:* *ⲕⲥⲣ* or *ⲕⲥⲣ*. *sig:* Esk 272.
 CAR. *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘to take captive, be bound’ (*Lane:* 57-58); Sab. *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘to take captive, be bound’ (Beeston et al. 1982: 8); Ug. *ⲕⲥⲣ*; Can. *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘to capture’; Aramaic *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘to capture’ (Cohen & Cantineau 1999: 28). OR Off. Aramaic *ⲕⲥⲣ*, Pun. *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘place; trace’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 125-127); Sab. *ⲕⲥⲣ* ‘on (b-) the track of someone’ (Beeston et al. 1982: 9).
- ⲕⲧⲱ** *verb.* to come. *sig:* Esk 169.
 CAR. *ⲕⲧⲱ* the root *ⲕⲧⲱ* (marked as a dialectal variation of *ⲕⲧⲱ*) (*Lane:* 14b) and *ⲕⲧⲱ* (*Lane:* 15c) are both attested; Tham. *ⲕⲧⲱ* (Eut 306 = Hub 167); Also *ⲕⲧⲱ* in late Sabaic (Müller & Al-Said 2001: 108).

ⲕ

- ⲕⲧ** *toponym.* ⲕⲧ. *sig:* Esk. 059.
 The reading of the first letter of the toponym is uncertain

- ‘m** *noun.* people. *etymological root:* *‘**mm**. *sig:* Al-Anṣāry 35.
 CAR. ‘*amm* ‘a company of men, or of a tribe, a numerous company’; Off. Aramaic ‘*mm* ‘world population, mankind’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 865).
- B**
- b** *noun.* son. *etymological root:* ***bn**. *sig:* e.g. TA. 09302; WTay 37; Esk 052.
 CAR. ʾ**ibn**; Heb. *bin*; Aramaic *bar*.
- bʿl** *noun.* (land) owner. *sig:* Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished).
 In this inscription *bʿl* occurs in a specific construction *bʿly Tm* ‘landowners of Taymā’. The construction ‘*bʿly* + place name’ occurs in the Aramaic part of the trilingual Lycian, Greek, Aramaic inscription found at Xanthos (dated 358 B.C.) (Teixidor 1978: 182) and in a petition to the governor of Judaea (Cowley 1923: No.30²²) in which it can be translated as ‘landowners’ or ‘inhabitants’. The phrase *bʿly* + toponym also occurs in Sabaic (e.g. C 155; 457; Ja 559).
- bḥs²** *verb.* to examine? *sig:* Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished).
 probably a borrowing from Aramaic *bḥš* ‘to examine’ (cf. 2.2.4, pg. 82) compare CAR. *baḥaṭa* ‘to search for, or after something’ (Lane: 155bc)
- bny** *noun.* little son? *etymological root:* ***bn**. *sig:* Esk 049. See: **b**.
- D**
- ddn** *toponym.* name of the ancient oasis of Dadan - modern-day ʾal-ʿUlāʾ, near Tayma. *sig:* Esk 017.1; WTay 20; HE 39; WTay 22; WTay 21; WTay 23.1; WTay 33.1; WTay 33.2; Esk 104; Esk 289; Esk. 054; TM.T.024; Esk. 055.
- dwr** *noun.* surrounding *etymological root:* ***dwr**. *sig:* Esk 272.
 CAR. √*dwr* ‘to turn, to revolve, to cycle’ (Lane: 930a); Heb. √*dwr* ‘cycle’ (Koehler et al. 1995-2000: 2028).
- Ḍ**
- ḍbʾ** *noun.* soldier. *sig:* Esk 031.
 Heb. *šāwāʾ* ‘to go forth to battle, to wage war’ (HALOT: 994), *šbʾ* ‘army’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 955); In Akkadian *šābu* could be used to indicate a group of people in general, workers, or soldiers (CAD, vol.16, 46).
- ḍr** *noun.* war, affliction. *etymological root:* ***ḍrr**. *sig:* WTay 20; WTay 21; WTay 23.1; WTay 33.1; WTay 33.2; WTay 11; WTay 13; WTay 15; WTay 16; WTay 17.
 CAR. *ḍarrah* ‘necessity, need; hardness, distressfulness, or afflictiveness of a state or condition’ (Lane: 1776b) *Variant:* **ḍrr**? (WTay 22).

ḏrr *verb.* Go to war. *sig:* HE 39.
D-stem See: **ḏr**.

F

fʿl *verb.* do. *sig:* Esk 023; Esk 026; TA. 09303; TA 09302.
CAr. *faʿala* ‘to do’

Ġ

ġlm *noun.* junior, youth. *sig:* Philby 279 ay; Esk 001.
CAr. *ġulām* ‘a young boy, youth, boy, or male child’ (*Lane*: 2286b)

H

hlk *verb.* die, go. *sig:* WTay 3; Esk 272.
CAr. *halaka* ‘to die’ Arabic is the only language in which *halaka* came to mean solely ‘to die’ a euphemism based on its original meaning ‘to go’. Compare e.g. Nabataean, Phoenician, Palmyrene where both meanings ‘to go (away)’ and ‘to die’ are attested (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 282).

hrg *participle.* destroyer. *sig:* Esk 272.
Uncertain interpretation CAr. *haraga* ‘to kill’ (*Lisān*: s.v.); Sabaic *hrg* ‘to kill’; Old Aramaic *hrg* ‘to kill’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 293). Reading proposed by Macdonald (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming).

hzb *adverb.* strongly, zealously. *sig:* WTay 32.
CAr. *hayzab* ‘strong, fiery’ (Cohen & Cantineau 1999; *Lane*: 2893).

Ḥ

ḥlm *noun.* servant *sig:* Esk 169.
CAr. *ḥilm* ‘friend of women’ (*Lisān*: s.v.); probably connected to **ġlm* ‘youth, servant’ (see Hayajneh 2001: 82-83). For an alternative interpretation of *ḥlm* see Müller & Al-Said (2001: 107)

ḥyr *noun.* good. *sig:* Esk. 058.
CAr. *ḥayr* ‘good’

Ḥ

ḥdd *verb, D-stem.* act as border guard. *sig:* WTay 12.
CAr. *ḥadd* ‘a limit or boundary of a land or territory’ (*Lane*: 525b, c)

- ḥdryt** *noun.* the settled woman, the woman from *ḥḍr*. *sig:* HE 17; HE 40.
 Could be a personal name instead of a proper noun. Feminine *nisbah* form. CAR. *ḥaḍariy* ‘urban, settled’ is the opposite of *badawīy* ‘nomad, desert dweller’ (*Lisān*: s.v.); Heb. *ḥṣr* ‘enclosed area or pasture, village’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 400). Note that *ḥṣr* occurs in Teixidor (1962) he read it as *ḥṣry* ‘settlers’ but changed this in 1963, when he read *ḥṣdy* (line 2) as ‘the harvesters’ after the root *ḥṣd* ‘to harvest’, but there is nothing in the text to suggest that this should be read as harvesters rather than as settlers (<√*ḥṣr*). His argument is based on the fact that the inscription was found in a very fertile area, but this would encourage settling as well. Therefore the original interpretation seems preferable. *Ḥḍr* is also used as name for towns, so it could refer to a woman from a specific town called *Ḥḍr*. There are two places in Yemen that are called al-Ḥaḍra’, one in Jawf area and the other in Ibb. There is also one in Egypt in the Alexandria region (Ḥaḍrah) (*geonames.org*, accessed on 13-4-2014).
- ḥl** *verb, G-stem.* to be a soldier. *etymological root:* ***ḥwl**. *sig:* TA 02669.1 = DAI Tayma I.3.
 CAR. *ḥawl* ‘strength’; Off. Aramaic and Palm. ‘force; armed force, army’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 369) See: **ḥll**.
- ḥll** *verb, D-stem.* to be a soldier. *etymological root:* ***ḥwl**. *sig:* Esk 104; Esk 020; Al-Anṣāry 35; JSTham 403; JSTham 343; Esk 289; Esk 185; Esk 167; Esk. 059; Esk. 054; Philby 279 ap; TM.T.024; TM.T.041; Esk. 055.
 CAR. *ḥawl* ‘strength’ e.g. *lā ḥawla wa-lā quwwata ʾillā bi-llāhi l-ʿalliyi l-ʿazīmi* ‘there is no strength or power but in (or by means of) God, the High, the Great’ (*Lane*: 675c); Off. Aramaic and Palm. ‘force; armed force, army’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 369). See: **ḥl**.
- ḥwl** *noun.* year. *sig:* Esk 272; Esk 020.
 CAR. *ḥawl* ‘year’ (*Lane*: 675c)
- L**
- lmq** *toponym(?)*. *lmq. sig:* TA 02669.1.
 uncertain interpretation
- M**
- mlk** *noun.* king. *sig:* WTay 9.2; Esk 169.
 CAR. *Mālik*; Heb. *Malk*.
- ms¹⁾** *proper name.* Massā’. *sig:* WTay 16.
 Winnett identifies the *ms¹⁾* mentioned here with the Massā’ mentioned in Gen. 25:14, he connects it to a town Mas’a mentioned in an inscription of Tiglath-pileser III as ^{URU}*Ma-as-ʾa-a-a* (Winnett & Reed 1970: 101) (For an extensive survey of the Biblical and Akkadian sources mentioning the Massā’ see Eph’al 1982).
- mṣr** *toponym.* Egypt. See: **mṣryt**.

mšryt *feminine adjective, nisbah*. Egyptian (woman). *sig*: WTay 37.

Could be a personal name. See: **Mšr**.

N

nbyt *proper name*. Nebaioth. *sig*: WTay 11; WTay 13; WTay 15.

This form cannot be a reference to the Nabataeans (*nbṭ(w)* CAr. *nabaṭ*, *ʿanbāṭ*) for one would have to explain both the loss of the *y* and the change *ṭ* > *t*. (For more on the possible location of the Nebaioth in ancient times see Winnett & Reed 1970: 100).

ndr *toponym*. Or tribal name {N}dr. *sig*: Esk 020.

nk *verb*. smite. *etymological root*: ***nky**. *sig*: Esk 023 ; Esk 026.

in NWS Semitic commonly ‘to hit’, or ‘to smite’ e.g. Old Aramaic *nky* ‘to strike, to hit’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 730).

nšb *verb*. set up a stele. *sig*: TM.T 020.

Off. Aramaic *nšb*; Nab. *nšb*; Palm. *nšb* ‘to erect, to raise’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 749)

nšr *infinitive*. watch; guard. *etymological root*: ***nṭr**. *sig*: WTay 32.

CAr. *naṣara* ‘to look at’ (*Lane*: 2810c); Old Aramaic *nšr* ‘watch, protect’; Off. Aramaic, Nab. *nṭr* ‘to watch, to protect’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 754-755). See: **nṭr**; **nšr**.

nšr *verb*. guard, watch. *etymological root*: ***nṭr**. *sig*: WTay 20; HE 32; WTay 33.1; WTay 11; WTay 15; WTay 16; WTay 9.1; WTay 14; WTay 32; WTay 35; WTay 42; HE 17; HE 40; HE 21; HE 25; HE 34.

CAr. *naṣara* ‘to look at’ (*Lane*: 2810c); Old Aramaic *nšr* ‘watch, protect’; Off. Aramaic, Nab. *nṭr* ‘to watch, to protect’ (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 754-755). See: **nṭr**; **nšr**. Variant: **nṭr** (WTay 17).

Given the formulaic nature of the inscriptions it seems that the author was intending to write *nšr*. The *ṭ* could be a misreading of a *š*, especially since only a copy is available of this inscription (see Winnett & Reed 1970: 102). If we should indeed read a *ṭ*, the confusion of *ṭ* and *š* could indicate that *š* was still realized as an affricate [tʃ] in Taymanitic, which was confused with the fricative [θ]; or that the reflex of *ṭ* had the same pronunciation as that of *š*.

ntn *verb*. give. *sig*: JSTham 352; Philby 279 ap.

Heb. *ntn* ‘to give’

R

r’y *noun*. chief. *sig*: Esk 031.

CAr. *ri'y* 'pasture' (Lane: 1109b); the root can also be used with the meaning shepherd in Hebrew (Clines 1993) and in Amorite names (Knudsen 1991: 870, the name *i-la-ra-ḥi-a* < *ila-rā'īya* 'el is my shepherd'). In Akkadian, *r'y* could be used to refer not just to shepherding cattle, but also metaphorically extended to mean guiding or leading people (CAD, vol.14, 309). In combination with the word *šābu* it could be used to refer to a 'foreman of the team, shepherd of the team' (CAD, vol.16, 46) (*re-' šā-bi* (Lu II, iii, 11'f)).

rbs¹rs¹ *noun*. chief. *sig*: Esk 169.

originally a compound noun from Akkadian *rab ša rāši* which referred to a high administrative and military official in Assyrian and Babylonian. This title was borrowed from Neo Assyrian into Aramaic with a simkat as srs. It is also attested in Biblical Hebrew as *rab sārīs* (Hayajneh 2001: 83).

rdw *verb*. to please, to be pleased. *sig*: Esk 013.

In other ANA corpora e.g. Hismaic (Tdr 9 (King 1990)); Heb. *ršy* and Off. Aramaic *r'y* (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1082); CAr. *raḏiya* 'to be pleased, content' (Lane: 1099b)

rkb *noun*. riding camel. *sig*: WTay 3.

CAr. *rukūb* can refer to any animal that one rides, but in particular to a she-camel (Lane: 1144a).

rm *noun*. lancer. *etymological root*: ***rmy**. *sig*: Philby 279 ay.

CAr. *ramā* 'to throw'

r[ʔ]s¹ *noun*. chief. *etymological root*: ***r's¹**. *sig*: TA 09303.

An alif should probably be amended in the inscription: *r[ʔ]s¹*. CAr. *ra's* 'head' and *ra'īs* 'head, chief, commander' (Lane: 996a)

S¹

s¹l *verb*. ask. *sig*: WAMT 59; TM.T.039; TM.T.027.

s¹m^c *verb*. listen. *sig*: WTay 2; WTay 1.2; HE 41; HE 31; HE 24.

s¹nt *noun*. year. *sig*: HE 32; TM.T.041.

S²

s²bt *noun*. Saturday? *sig*: Philby 279 ap.
uncertain context

s²n^ʔ *noun*. enmity. *sig*: Al-Anṣāry 35.
Hayajneh (2011: 765) first suggested this interpretation.

S³

s³ġ (b-) *verb*. to open (it). *etymological root*: ***s³wġ**. *sig*: Esk 272.

Compare CAr. *sāġa* ‘to be easy, accessible, lawful’ (*Lane*: 1468b). The Taymanitic form is probably derived from a transitive base **sawaġa*, as opposed to the intransitive Arabic form from **sayiġa*.

Ş

şlm *proper name*. Şalm, the main deity of Taymāʾ. *sig*: Esk 083 (part); JSTham 352; Esk 013; WTay 20; HE 32; WTay 11; WTay 15; WTay 9.1; WTay 14; WTay 35; WTay 42; HE 17; HE 40; HE 21; HE 25; HE 34; Al-Anṣāry 35; Philby 279 ap; WTay 2; WTay 1.2; HE 41; HE 31; HE 24; WAMT 59; TM.T.039.

T

tmʾ *toponym*. Taymāʾ. *sig*: Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished).

twy *noun*. perishing. *sig*: WTay 2; WTay 1.2; HE 41; HE 31; HE 24.
CAr.: compare the phrase *lā tawā ʿalā māli ʿamriyyin muslimin* ‘there shall be no perishing of the property of a man that is a Muslim’ in a tradition (Mgh.) (*Lane*: 323c). This translation was first proposed by Knauf (2011).

Y

ydʿ *verb*. know. *etymological root*: **wdʿ*. *sig*: Kim CIMG 0759. Tay (unpublished).
CAr. *wadaʿa* ‘to know’; Heb. *yādaʿ* ‘to know’

yrḥ *noun*. month. *etymological root*: **wrḥ*. *sig*: WTay 20.
Heb. *yereaḥ* (HALOT: 437-8); Sab. *wrḥ* ‘month’ (Beeston et al. 1982: 162).

yrr *verb*. guard. *etymological root*: **wrr*. *sig*: Esk 052.
CAr. *Warwara* ‘to watch, to stand guard’ (*Lisān*: s.v.); Mod. Ar. *waraya* ‘to show, to let s.o. see’ (Kurpershoek 2005: 349).

Sigla

AH	Taymanitic inscriptions in Abū al-Ḥasan (2002).
Al-Anṣāry	Taymanitic inscriptions in Al-Anṣāry & Abū al-Ḥasan (1423/2002).
BHT	Van den Branden (1960).
BIT	Inscriptions in Van den Branden (1950).
BM 34167	Royal Chronical, published by Lambert (1968/1969).
C	Ryckmans (1950-1951).
CAD	Roth et al. (1956-2010).
EALL	Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics (electroning edition).
Esk	Eskoubi (1999).
Euting	Euting (1914).
Facey	Inscriptions discovered in and around Tayma before 1985 and photographed by William Facey during the construction of the Tayma Museum.
HALOT	Koehler et al. (1995-2000).
HCH	Harding (1953).
HE	Inscriptions published in Parr, Harding, & Dayton (1970).
HU	Inscriptions copied by C. Huber and re-numbered in Van den Branden (1950).
Hub	Huber (1891).
IGLS	Sartre (1982).
IMA	Institut du Monde Arabe. An exhibition held there in which two unpublished Taymanitic inscriptions were exhibited.
Ja	Jamme (1962)
JaL	Dadanitic (formerly Liḥyanite) inscriptions published by Jamme.
JSTham	Thamudic inscriptions in Jaussen & Savignac (1909-1922).
JSLih	Dadanitic (former Liḥyanite) inscriptions in Jaussen & Savignac (1909-1922).
KAI	Donner & Röllig (1996)
Kim CIMG	Photographs taken in and around Taymā' by Dr Kim. The photos were subsequently sent to M.C.A. Macdonald.
KJC	The Hismaic inscriptions from site C in King (1990).
KTU	Dietrich et al. (1976).
<i>Lane</i>	Lane (1863-1893).
Liv.	Inscriptions from Tayma published by Alasdair Livingstone in Livingstone et al. (1983)
Mu	Inscriptions recorded on the SESP surveys 1996–2003 (to appear on OCIANA).
Philby	Philby (1957).
RES	See RES in bibliography.

TA		The registration numbers of the inscriptions discovered during the Saudi-German excavations at Tayma (Macdonald forthcoming).
TM.T	+	The number of the inscription in the Catalogue of the Inscriptions in the Tayma Museum (Macdonald & Al-Najem forthcoming).
TS		Inscriptions in Jamme (1967).
U		Inscriptions from al-Uḡayb in Sima (1999)
WAMT		Taymanitic, Hismaic, and "Thamudic" inscriptions in Winnett (1971)
WH		Winnett & Harding (1978).
WTay		Taymanitic inscriptions in Winnett & Reed (1970).
ZeWa		Zeinaddin, F. (2002). Unpublished inscriptions on fax to M.C.A. Macdonald.

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‘Abd al-Asad and the Question of a Lion-God in the pre-Islamic Tradition: An Onomastic Study

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Abstract

This article investigates the pre-Islamic name ‘Abd al-Asad and the alleged lion-god in the Arabic tradition through the onomastic evidence of two ancient Semitic languages (Eblaite and Amorite) as well as the ancient epigraphic languages of Arabia. The study suggests that the name has no association with the god Yagūt under the form of a lion. Alternatively, it reflects either an ‘archaic’ astral cult related to Leo or a traditional name-giving practice known especially in the northern parts of the Arabian Peninsula. According to this practice, the individual, whether being a child or an adult, could have been named ‘Abd-of-X after the person who took care of him (i.e. a patron) or the tribe he belonged to.

Keywords: animal names, onomastics, ancestor cult, namegiving

1 Introduction

The personal name ‘Abd al-Asad, lit. “Servant of the Lion”,¹ was connected to a lion cult by Smith (1907: 224). It is worth quoting the relevant passage in full:

According to Zamakhsharī on Sur. 71 23, the Arabs worshipped their god Yaghūth under the form of a lion; and the existence of a lion-god is independently proved by the name ‘Abd al-Asad among the Coraish. That the Coraish worshipped Yaghuth we know from the names ‘Abd Yaghūth and ‘Obaid Yaghūth.

Nöldeke (1913: 662) is more cautious about this hypothesis:

In the case of the Lion-god, whose existence is proved only by the mention of a man named ‘Abd al-Asad, ‘servant of the Lion’, belonging to the tribe of Quraish, such a supposition would be especially hazardous, since *asad* is a comparatively modern word for ‘lion’, not the old word common to the various Semitic languages.

¹Two pre-Islamic individuals bore this name: ‘Abd al-Asad b. Hilāl and ‘Abd al-Asad b. ‘Āmir (Caskel 1966 2: 122), but more information is available on the former in the narrative sources.

Since this discussion, nothing has been written on the name ‘Abd al-Asad and the alleged lion-god. In my approach of this topic, I will first examine the element **’aš/ś(a)d-* in the ancient Semitic languages and then discuss Classical Arabic theophoric names containing ‘*Abd*’ as the first element in light of the Ancient Arabian onomasticon and the classical narrative sources.

2 The question of **’aš/ś(a)d-*

This element appears as an appellative and as a divine name in two Eblaite names: Ašda-Il “Il is A.” and Ḥinna-’ašda “Have mercy, A.”, where it is translated as “lion” in view of Arabic *asad-* (Pagan 1998: 324; Krebern timer 1988: 76). The element is much more common, however, in the Amorite onomasticon (Gelb 1982: 52, sub ’AŠD), e.g. Ašda-aḥi “My brother is A.”, Ašdum-abī “My father is A.”, Ašdu-rābi or rāpi “A is great” or “healer”, and so on. Both Gelb (1982: 13) and Millet Albà (2000: 480f) adopt the same meaning, “lion”. Other scholars, on the other hand, suggest “warrior” (Huffmon 1965: 169; Durand 1991: 82 fn. 4; Streck 2000: §5.7) in view of Old Sabaic *’s¹d* “men, soldiers, warriors” (Beeston et al. 1982: 7). As for the Ancient Arabian onomasticon, *’s¹d* occurs as a theophoric element only in Old Sabaic² and as a one-word name in the other languages/scripts.³ In addition, the element is attested as a deity’s name in a Nabataean inscription from Dēr el-Mešqūq *’šdw ’lhy ’lh m’ynw* “Aš(a)dū is (my) god, the god of Ma’inū” (mentioned by Cantineau 1932: 68a). The particular association between the deity and *m’ynw* here seems to point to a Minaean community in the Nabataean realm and consequently to a South Arabian cult regarding the same divine element found in Old Sabaic. This inscription thus cannot be taken as proof of a lion-god.

The earliest occurrence of *’s¹d* as a name of the animal is in the Safaitic inscriptions, where it is attested some twenty times in the OCIANA corpus. For example:

- By Fltt son of Tm son of Fltt son of {Bhs²} son of ’dnt and he camped on the edge of an area of sand, then the lion injured him, so, O Lt, let there be security (Al-Jallad 2015: 266).
- By S¹l is the lion (*’s¹d*); a rock drawing of a lion accompanies this inscription (Ababneh 2005 inscr. #121).

²*’s¹d’mn* “The (divine) warrior has given trust” (i.e. to the name-giver), *’s¹dqkr* “The (divine) warrior has mentioned” (i.e. the name), *’s¹dkrb* “The (divine) warrior has recognized” (Tairan 1992: 61–64).

³Nabataean *’šdw* (Negev 1991: 165); Palmyrene *’šd*, *’šdw* (Stark 1971: 73); Safaitic *’s¹d*, *’s¹d*, *’s¹dw*, *’s¹dy*, *’s¹dn*; *’s¹d* in Dadanitic and Thamudic (Harding 1971: 7, 43); *’s¹dt* as a masculine name in Thamudic, Minaic, Qatabanic, and as a feminine name in Sabaic (Shatnawi 2002: 646; Schaffer 1981: 296).



Figure 1: Tracing of inscription #121 by M. Ababneh

In view of this analysis, it seems likely that the sense “warrior” is secondary and that Arabic preserved the original meaning. The sense “warrior” could have emerged from a legend in which a king, an eponymous ancestor, or the like was associated with the lion. Over time, probably, the epithet replaced the concrete term and became a theophoric element with a particular reference to a class of ‘divine’ warriors. This proposition can be supported by the fact that other animal names in Semitic languages are used as designations of leaders, nobles, and warriors.⁴ One could also assume that the Eblaite and Amorite names belong to an astral myth, in which Leo, as a deity, plays a heroic role. This might be reflected by two Amorite names formed with *maṭar*- “rain” (Aśdī-maṭar) and $\sqrt{y-p}$ - “to irradiate” (Aśdī-ēpuḥ < *yapu*). The rain and irradiation are two characteristics of *naw’ al-asad* “Leo” in Arabic (Ibn Qutayba 1988: 53f). As a constellation name, *h’s¹d/’s¹d* is early recorded in Safaitic inscriptions (Al-Jallad 2014: 227a).

Given this information, is the element *al-Asad* in the pre-Islamic name ‘Abd al-Asad used as a divine epithet? Does it indicate Leo? Or does it belong to a different naming tradition? I will try to answer these questions in the following two sections.

3 Al-Asad: a divine epithet?

The hypothesis that this element denotes Yağūt (see the introduction) or an anonymous god seems less likely for two reasons:

First, classical Arab scholars who dealt with onomastica from an etymological point of view, such as Ibn Durayd (1991: 401), or wrote on the religion of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic times, such as Ibn al-Kalbī (1995: 10, 57), are silent on the association between Yağūt and the lion. In addition, a certain ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Asad was a companion of the Prophet (Ibn al-Aṭīr 1996 4: 170; 3: 506), and the latter is reported to have changed many names that do not agree with the Islamic instructions, especially the ones referring to idols (Kister 1975), but there is no Hadith concerning the name of ‘Abd al-Asad or the cult of Yağūt in the form of a lion, even though the idol is mentioned in the Qur’an (71: 23).

Second, as far as we know from the classical narrative sources, animal names do not occur as divine names/epithets in Arabic. In this context, one should be careful in dealing with the deity Nasr (Qur’an 71: 23), for it occurs

⁴For some examples in Ugaritic and Hebrew, see Miller (1970). As for Arabic, in the Najdi dialect, for instance, the term *tays/tēs* “he-goat” is an honorific title for elite persons (Hess 1912: 13).

as early as the Hatrene and Ancient South Arabian inscriptions.⁵

4 ‘Abd al-Asad and names of the ‘Abd-X type

An examination of the onomastic evidence in Caskel (1966 2: 103-134) suggests that the pre-Islamic names of the ‘Abd-X type “Servant of X” are formed with the following elements:

1. a name of a deity: Allāh, Manāt (f), Dū-Šarā, al-‘Uzzā (f), Manāf, al-Dār, Ġadd, al-Qays, and so on;
2. divine beings: al-Ġān and al-Ġinn;⁶
3. a name of a sanctuary: al-Ka‘ba, al-Bayt, and al-Dār;
4. a kinship term: ‘Abd ‘ammih “Servant of his paternal uncle” or “ancestor” and ‘Abd ahlih “Servant of his family/clan” (the latter might figuratively denote a deity, Littmann 1948–1949: 52);
5. a name of a celestial body: ‘Abd Šams “Sun” (also Safaitic *bdšms*, Harding 1971: 399), ‘Abd al-Ṭurayyā “Pleiades”, and, possibly, ‘Abd Ṭābir, provided that it is related to Safaitic *tbr* “Sagittarius” (Al-Jallad 2014: 227);
6. personal names: ‘Adī, ‘Amr, ‘Āmir, al-Aswad, ‘Awf, al-Aws, al-Ašhal, Bakr, al-Ḥārīt, Ka‘b, ‘Umayya, al-Nu‘mān, Ġaḍīma, Ġarīš, Ġaṭafān, Hind, Yazīd, etc.

In view of the three names in group 5, it is possible that ‘Abd al-Asad refers to Leo and consequently indicates an ‘archaic’ astral cult.⁷ If our interpretation of the element *as(a)d-* in the Eblaite and Amorite names is correct, i.e. Leo, the pre-Islamic name could represent a continuation of this tradition.

Alternatively, one can also approach the name through group no. 6, which deserves a thorough discussion. It has been assumed that some names in this group, like al-Ḥārīt, al-Ašhal, etc. were originally names of archaic idols, but they later subsequently became names with the widest circulation (Kister 1975: 7). However, Ibn al-Kalbī himself (1995: 30) is not certain whether names like ‘Abd Yālīl/Ġanm/Kulāl are based on idols or not, since there is no information on them in the older reports. In order to understand the names in group 6 and subsequently ‘Abd al-Asad, I will first consult the ancient Arabian evidence.

As is known, some names of the ‘Abd-X type are *basileophoric*, i.e. the divine element is replaced by that of a Nabataean monarch, e.g. *bdhrtt/bdhrtt* “Servant of Aretas”, *bd’bdt* and its parallel *tym’bdt/tm’bdt*, meaning “Servant

⁵Nasr is used as a theophoric element in Sabaic, e.g. *rbns¹rm* “N. is the god/great” and Qatabanic, e.g. *šfms¹r* (f) “N. has looked down at me/us” (Sholan 1999: 148f). It is more observed, however, in the Hatrene onomasticon in the Aramaic form *Nešrā: brnšr* “Son of N.”, *bdnšr* “Servant of N.”, *nšryhb* “N. has given”, *nšr’qb* “N. has protected”, *nšrltb* “May N. do well”, *nšmtn* “N. has given” (Beyer 1998: 149, sub *nešrā*).

⁶These seem to be related to Dura Ἀβιγγιναῖος, likely transcription of *bdgny* “Servant of Ginnai”, and its semantic parallel Βαγγινναός *brgny* “Son of Ginnai” (Aramaic), where Gny/Ginnai is a deity known from Palmyra (Grassi 2012: 117, 161–162).

⁷For more information on astral cult, see Montgomery (2006: 91ff).

of Obodas”, *ʿbdmlkw/ʿbdmk* “Servant of Malichos”, *ʿbdhldw* “Servant of (the queen) Ḥuldū”, *ʿbds²qlt* “Servant of (the queen) Šaqīlat”, and *ʿbdrbʿl* “Servant of Rabbēl” (Milik 1976: 145-146; King 1990: 76; Al-Jallad 2015: 59). This type of *basileophoric* names reflects an ancient Near Eastern onomastic tradition (without the element *ʿabd-*)⁸ and seems to have survived in the pre-Islamic *ʿAbd al-Nuʿmān*, *ʿAbd Ǧaḍīma*, and *ʿAbd al-Aswad*,⁹ which are mostly based on names of Lakhmid rulers.¹⁰ Yet, there are some Nabataean names which are formed neither with a monarch’s name nor with a divinity’s, i.e. *ʿbdmnnw*, *ʿbdʿd-nwn*, *ʿbdʿmnw*, *ʿbdʿmrw*. For Milik (1959–1960: 150) these are based on names of tribal eponyms. This hypothesis seems probable, especially that two of them, *ʿmnw* and *ʿmrw*, are attested as tribal names in Safaitic inscriptions in the forms *ʿmn* and *ʿmrt* (Al-Jallad 2015: Index of Tribes). This type of *ʿAbd + tribe name* might also apply to the pre-Islamic *ʿAbd Ǧaṭafān* and *ʿAbd al-Aws*, whose second elements are found as both tribal and individual names (Caskel 1966 2: 123–124).

The last Ancient North Arabian group of the *ʿAbd-X* type is unclear, like Hismaic *ʿbdgns¹*, *ʿbdqn*, and *ʿbdhwr*, with the possibility that the latter refers to either a star (the third star [ε] of the tail of Ursa Major, next to the body) or the toponym *ḥwrw* and *ḥwrwy* (King 1990: 77). If the latter hypothesis is correct, the toponym can be interpreted as an originally tribal name or a ‘cultic’ place.

I would also hypothesize that some of the unidentified Ancient North Arabian and pre-Islamic names of the *ʿAbd-X* type (group no. 6) reflect a kind of ancestor cult in the broad sense, including the ones based on eponyms and tribal names. This hypothesis is based on the fact that the Semitic onomastic traditions represent a kind of continuity. In modern Shiite names, for example, the element *ʿabd-* is added to one of the Shiite Imams’ names: *ʿAbd ʿAlī/al-Ḥasan/al-Ḥusayn/al-ʿAbbās/al-Aʿimma* (i.e. imams), and even *ʿAbd al-Zahrāʾ* (i.e. the nickname of Fāṭima, the Prophet’s daughter) (Al-Sāmīrrāʾī 1983: 266). These imams in the Shiite creed are simply ancestors with an exalted position. Such a naming tradition would seem to have roots in an older Arabic tradition in particular and finds parallels in other Semitic cultures as well. For example, Old Babylonian names compounded with names of mortals or masters: *Amat-Bēltani* “Slave-girl of Bēltani”, *Awīl-ilim-eribam* “Awīl-ilim restituted to me”, and *Ea-tukulti-qarrād*, “Ea-tukulti is a hero”. Bēltani, Awīl-ilim, and Ea-tukulti are normal names but here they appear as if they had a divine status (Stol 1991: 203). Despite the specific linguistic features of the modern Shiite names compared to the Old Babylonian ones, from a semantic point of view, they are both based on the same principle. Given this, the Ancient North Arabian and pre-Islamic names of the *ʿAbd-X* type should not be seen as an ‘exceptional’ case. The question of names and ancestor cult, however, still needs an in-depth approach in view of the archeological and textual evidence (which is outside the scope of this article).

Still, we have the pre-Islamic name *ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib*, lit. “Servant of the demanding one” (i.e. the grandfather of the Prophet), which appears to have no association with a monarch, social group, or ancestor cult. In order to

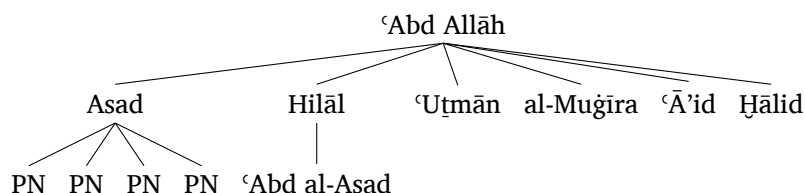
⁸The practice of using the name of the king as a theophoric element goes back to ancient Mesopotamia (Edzard 1998: 109).

⁹According to (Fahd 1968: 46–47), there was a god and a mountain (between al-Hijaz and Najd) known as al-Aswad, meaning “the greatest, chief” and also “black” (Lane 1863-1893: 1463b).

¹⁰On these rulers, see ʿAlī (2001: 210).

understand this name, I will highlight two classical reports concerning it and see if they offer us a clue to decode our ‘Abd al-Asad as well as some of the unidentified names of the ‘Abd-X type in their Ancient Arabian context. The first report mentions that the birth-name of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib was Šayba “Gray-haired” and that he spent his early infancy with his mother among her tribe. After some years his paternal uncle, al-Muṭṭalib¹¹ came to take him back to Mecca. When the people of Mecca saw the boy sitting behind him on the camel, they thought he was his servant and therefore called him ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib “Servant of al-Muṭṭalib” (Ibn Hišām 1995: 184–185). This report also indicates a kind of affiliation through manumission (*walā*) if we apply it to names which are based on tribal names. In other words, if a person was affiliated to a tribe (i.e. became a *mawlā*), he would be consequently identified as its ‘servant’. The other report mentions that ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib was named so because he was fatherless and brought up by his paternal uncle. Arabs in the pre-Islamic times used to name the fatherless boy ‘Abd-PN after the man who took care of him (Al-Ḥalabī 1875: 4–5). Conceptually, both reports indicate a kind of patronage and protection towards the named individual, regardless of their historical veracity.

Considering ‘Abd al-Asad in view of this information, we can trace a branch of his family tree (Caskel 1966 1: 22) and see which hypothesis applies to his case:



As we can see in the chart, ‘Abd al-Asad appears to have been the only son of Hilāl, whereas his uncle Asad (or al-Asad) had four. Most probably, Hilāl died early and his son, like ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, was brought up by his uncle and consequently bore his name.

Summing up, the literal approach of compound personal names is quite hazardous and can easily lead to fanciful conclusions. The pre-Islamic name ‘Abd Bakr (Caskel 1966 2: 123) would evoke a camel cult if we treat the element *bakr* literally as “young camel” and not as a personal or tribal name. Similarly, the element *‘awf* in ‘Abd ‘Awf (group 6 above) would indicate a bird cult¹² if interpreted as a divine name.

5 Conclusion

An investigation of the onomastic evidence of two ancient Semitic languages (Eblaite and Amorite), the Ancient Arabian inscriptions, and the classical narrative sources suggests that the element *al-Asad* in the pre-Islamic name ‘Abd al-Asad should not be interpreted as a divine name/epithet (i.e. Yaḡūt or an

¹¹The name is attested 7 times in Caskel (1966 2: 439). We also have another name from the same root: Ṭālib (2 times, *ibid*, 556) and its diminutive Ṭulayb (3 times, *ibid*, 559).

¹²On the etymology of *‘awp- “bird” in Semitic languages, see Militarev & Kogan (2005, no. 48).

anonymous god). Rather, the name could reflect either an 'archaic' astral cult related to Leo or, more probably, an ancient name-giving practice. According to this practice, recorded also in the Ancient North Arabian onomasticon, the child was not only named 'Abd-X in reference to a deity, ruler, or sanctuary, but also after (1) the person who took care of him, (2) his original tribe or the tribe with which he became affiliated (as a freed slave or refugee), or (3) a 'divinized' eponymous ancestor, with a high probability of ancestor cult.

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A New Dedicatory Nabataean Inscription Dated to AD 53

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Abstract

This paper presents a new Nabataean inscription dedicated to the Nabataean chief god Dushara and dated to the thirteenth year of the reign of the Nabataean king Malichus II (AD 40–70). It mentions the dedication of 'ly', a cultic feature rarely attested in Nabataean.

Keywords: Nabataean inscriptions, cultic practice, Dushara

1 Introduction

The photograph of the text that is discussed here was sent to me for identification by a person who claimed that he saw it in Petra. Despite repeated attempts to visit the site where the text was seen, it has not been possible to find it. The author was able to study the text depending merely on the available photographs.

The inscription is of the dedicatory type. Dedicatory inscriptions are attested on Nabataean architectural remains including temples, altars and other cultic features and they record dedications made by individuals and corporate groups to deities and rulers. A considerable number of dedications were made to Dushara (Healey 2001: 86, 105; Zayadine 2003: 59) who is normally linked with the royal family (Dijkstra 1995: 313). Dedications offered to this god were referred to in several Nabataean texts found in the Negev (Negev 1963: 113–117), Arabia (Savignac & Starcky 1957), the Hauran (Healey 2001: 98), Petra (CIS II, 443), Miletus (Cantineau 1930–1932: 46), and even as far away as Italy (CIS II, 158) and southern Arabia (Nebes 2006). Nabataean marble bases for statues have been found also in Pozzuoli in addition to many Latin inscribed fragments that mention DVSARI SACRVM, meaning “sacred to Dushara”, dated probably to the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD (Schmid 2004: 420–421).

Several Nabataean temples were built for the worshipping of Dushara and these include the temple of Qasr al-Bint (Zayadine 1986: 243, 245). An important example of the Petraean dedications made to this god is found in the Turkmāniyyeh tomb inscription from Petra which refers to dedications of properties to Dushara. The text states:

... and all the rest of the property which is in these places are sacred
and dedicated to Dushara, the god of our lord, and his sacred throne

and all the gods, (as) in the documents of consecration according to their contents. (Healey 1993: 238)

The stone was incised with straight lines, probably by the engraver. These incisions indicate that the engraver made mistakes that he corrected by re-wrote some letters again (see figure 1), indicating that the engraver may not have prepared fully for his work.

2 The text

The text consists of three lines engraved on a broken piece of well-cut and smoothed sandstone (20 cm by 5 cm). The letters are irregular in size but with identical spacing. They can be clearly read except on the right-hand side which has been defaced and the beginning of the second and third lines which are missing. The form of the letters resemble texts that have been dated to the reign of Malichus II and Rabbel II.

Figure 1: Photograph of the inscription



Figure 2: Drawing of the inscription (drawn by Z. al-Salameen). Grey indicates breaks in the stone and blue shows the scratches that represent writing mistakes made by the writer.



2.1 Transliteration

The text reads as follows:

d[nh] 'ly' dy qrb br't' ldwšr' dy
.....šnt 'šr wlt lmlkw mlk'
...l hyy npšh wbrth

2.2 Translation

Th[is is] the high place / platform which br't' dedicated to Dushara who...
 ...the year 13 of (the rule of) Malichus the king
 ...for his own life and his daughter

2.3 Commentary

d[nh]: “this” (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 333ff). The second and parts of the third letters are not clearly visible but our reconstruction of this word, which is common in Nabataean, is almost certain.

'ly': Nehmé has already published a Nabataean text with *'ly'*. This is an inscription from Mšayfra in Hauran dedicated to Baalshamin and dated to the reign of Rabbel II (Nehmé 2010: n. 3). The text mentions *šrkw 'ly'* which has been translated as “le participant/associé de la hauteur (du haut lieu ?)”. The exact meaning of this word in this text does not correspond to the meaning of *'ly'* which is attested in the text that is being dealt with here.

The word appears in Aramaic with the meaning “height, that which is situated on high” (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 843). Words derived from the root ʔ are attested in Nabataean inscriptions and they are found in texts referring to cultic dedications that represent “high features”. The word ʔyt “the high” is attested in a Nabataean inscription from Hauran (CIS II, 164). It may be compared with the word ʔwt “the altars” that is attested in a text engraved on an altar found in Hauran and mentions a dedication made to the god Baalshamin (Healey 2009: 207).

dy: the well-known relative pronoun meaning “which, that”.

qrb: This is the standard verb used in Nabataean to dedicate objects to gods and goddesses, “to offer, dedicate”. It occurs frequently in Nabataean Aramaic, Hebrew, Palmyrene and Hatraean (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1029).

brʔt: This is the name of the dedicator. The name appears in the form of brʔtw, in Nabataean texts found in Sinai (Negev 1991: 17), but has not previously appeared in Nabataean in its current form. This compound name consists of br “son of” and ʔt which is derived from the Arabic root ʔt that means “to importune, tease” (Harding 1971: 404). The name is attested in Palmyrene (Stark 1971: 12) and North Arabian inscriptions (Harding 1971: 120).

ldwšr: “to/for Dushara”. Dushara was the major Nabataean deity. His name, which means “the one of the Shara mountains”, is mentioned frequently in Nabataean and North Arabian inscriptions, and was given several epithets in the Nabataean inscriptions, including “Lord of the House (i.e. temple)”, “Lord of heaven and earth”, “God of our Lord (the king)” and “the one who separates night from day” (Zayadine 2003: 59).

šnt šr wlt: “year thirteen” of the rule of Malichus II (AD 40–70), which corresponds to AD 53.

lmlkw mlk: “to Malichus the king”. There were two Nabataean kings who are known to have borne this name: Malichus I (59–30 BC) and Malichus II (AD 40–70). The forms of the letters indicate that it should be dated to the Malichus II who ascended the throne in AD 40. He was the son of Aretas IV (9 BC–AD 40) as mentioned in Nabataean inscriptions.

Our understanding of the Nabataean history during Malichus II’s reign is not clear and the only historical reference that mentions Malichus II is Josephus. He talks about the Jewish war against the Romans that took place in AD 67 and mentions that Malichus sent 1000 cavalry and 5000 infantry to support the Romans (*War* III, 68).

ʔ hyy: “for the life of”. This formula is common in Nabataean, Palmyrene, Edessan and Hatraean dedicatory inscriptions of the first three centuries AD (Healey 2001: 178–180; 2009: 53). Healey concluded that the inscriptions that include this formula are mostly expressions of political loyalty (2001: 178). Dijkstra says that the employment of ʔ hyy “suggests that whoever reads the text is invited to pay his respect to the Nabataean royal family. In arguing such an attitude on this part of the reader, the dedicator shows his allegiance to his legitimate overlords” (1995: 65). Anderson (2005: 124) considers that this phrase “which seems to be an honorific akin to the Greek euergetic terms τιμῆς χάριν and τιμῆς ἕνεκεν, commemorates the dedicator’s allegiance to the honored”.

There are few ʔ hyy Nabataean inscriptions with beneficiaries other than royalty and those include an inscription that contains the formula ʔ hyyh npšh “for the life of himself” (Milik 1958: 247). One dedicatory text from Taymāʾ

alludes to a dedication to Manāt ʿl hyy “for the life of his soul and the soul of his offspring in eternity” (Dijkstra 1995: 74).

npš-h: “self”, with 3rd masculine singular pronoun.

w brt-h: “and his daughter”, with 3rd masculine singular pronoun.

3 Nabataean dedications: Discussion

There are only two historical sources that provide us with limited information on Nabataean offerings and dedications. The first is Strabo who said that the Nabataeans worshipped the sun and they used to burn frankincense in their cultic rituals (Strabo XVI.4.26). This has been confirmed by the discovery of incense burners the remains of burnt frankincense (Hammond 1996: 132–133; Farajat & Nawafleh 2005: 381).

The second historical source that alludes to similar practices is the Byzantine lexicon the Suda, which refers to pouring out the blood of sacrificial animals as a libation (online at <http://www.stoa.org/sol>). The offering of sacrificial animals while practicing certain cults has been confirmed archaeologically and Nabataean discoveries in Sinai have confirmed that some animals were sacrificed within the temple complex (Struder 2007: 267). In addition, the relief found near al-Deir, which represents two camels being led to a betyl by worshippers, indicates this practice (Dalman 1908: 276). The discovery of terracotta figurines representing animals may be linked with sacrificial activities (El-Khoury 2002).

Our main source of information on Nabataean offerings and dedications is epigraphy. The Winged Lion inscription mentions that payments made to the temple as offerings, and these normally consisted of silver or gold, or currency either bronze or silver (Hammond et al. 1986).

Many Nabataean inscriptions provide us with a series of religious constructions and cultic dedications made or financed by ordinary citizens such as: *šlm*’ and *šlmt*’ “statue” (Cantineau 1930–1932: 6; Littmann 1914: 103), *ps[ylw]* “sculpture”? (Littmann 1914: 18), *msgd*’ “cult-stone, a cult-niche with a betyl, altar” (Littmann 1914: 24; Healey 2001: 78), *hmn*’ “fire-altar” or “temple” (Littmann 1914: 27; Healey 2001: 78), *bnyn*’ “building” (Littmann 1914: 28), *byt*’, *byrt*’ and *mhrmt*’ “temple” (CIS II, 182; Littmann 1914: 100; Savignac & Starcky 1957), *rb’t*’ and *rb’n*’ “cella, rectangular sanctuary” (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1058), *qsr* “cella, camp” (Healey 2001: 78), *rkt*’ “pillar or portico” (Healey 2001: 78), *mwtb*’ “part of an altar” (Healey 2001: 79), *mšb*’ “image in bas-relief” (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 675), *mgmr dhn*’ and *wkpt kyš*’ “the oil-burner (or oil-burning lamp?) and the summer vessel (?)” (Al-Salameen & Falahat 2014), *mnr* and *mnrt*’ “lamp” (Al-Salameen 2014, Al-Salameen & Shdaifat 2014).

Names of dedications derived from the roots ʿl and ʿlh are attested in Nabataean. These include *lwt*’ “the altars” and *lyt*’ “the high” that are attested in Nabataean dedications found in Hauran (Healey 2009: 207; CIS II, 164). The feature that is mentioned in our current text is *ly*’ which seems to be a form of altars to which this stone fragment was seemingly fixed. This word is parallel to the Canaanite and Hebrew *bāmā* which was used to mean raised platform or high place (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 167; Gesenius 1844: 119). This word occurs many times in the Hebrew Bible and was used to describe a raised

construction, which is similar, in terms of its linguistic meaning to *ly* “high, rising ground or platform” that occurs in our current inscription.

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Sigla

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Dadanitic Graffiti from Taymā' Region Revisited^{*}

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Abstract

This article re-examines three graffiti published in Eskoubi (1999) and argues that they are examples of the Dadanitic script being used away from the area of al-ʿUlā.

Keywords: Ancient North Arabian, Dadanitic

This contribution is devoted to four Dadanitic graffiti from the Region of Taymā' – North-West Arabia and will provide a new philological treatment of them. They were published by M. Kh. Eskoubi in his work entitled *Dirāsa Taḥlīliya Muqārīna li-Nuqūš min Miṭṭaqat (Ramm) Ġanūb Ġarb Taymā'*, which appeared in al-Riyāḍ in 1999. It is worth mentioning here that the Taymā' region witnessed a diversity of written epigraphical types that can be called Ancient North Arabian.¹

Eskoubi 74

Figure 1: Photo by M. Eskoubi



^{*}This contribution was composed during my two-month stay as a visiting scholar at the Leiden Center for the Study of Ancient Arabia (Leiden University) in Summer 2016. I am deeply thankful to Dr. Ahmad Al-Jallad, Dr. María del Carmen Hidalgo-Chacón Díez, and Dr. Marijn van Putten for valuable comments on an early version of this article.

¹See Macdonald (2000; 2004) and Hayajneh (2011).

Figure 2: Tracing by H. Hayajneh



1. *Mzn z*
2. *t«/»qt*

“*Mzn*, who incised / wrote (the inscription)”

The personal name *Mzn* occurs often in Safaitic (Harding 1971: 543). A misplaced dot as a word divider «/» is recognizable in the second line after the letter *t*, separating it from the rest of the word, *qt*. Given that the word *tqt* is well known and attested elsewhere (for examples, see Farès-Drappeau 2005: 264), this is likely a writing mistake. The sign for *z* at the end of the first line can be considered as a variant of the relative pronoun “who”, cf. Arabic *ḏū*, which precedes here the verbal form, *tqt*. In the inscriptions from oasis of al-‘Ulā, this relative pronoun is written with the *ḏ* sign. Although some scholars derive the verb from the root *qṭṭ*,² no verbal form *qt* or *qṭṭ* is attested in Dadanitic. Macdonald (2004: 512–513) considers a possible derivation from *nqt* or *wqt* and interprets it as a *t*-infix stem (*ftʿl*).

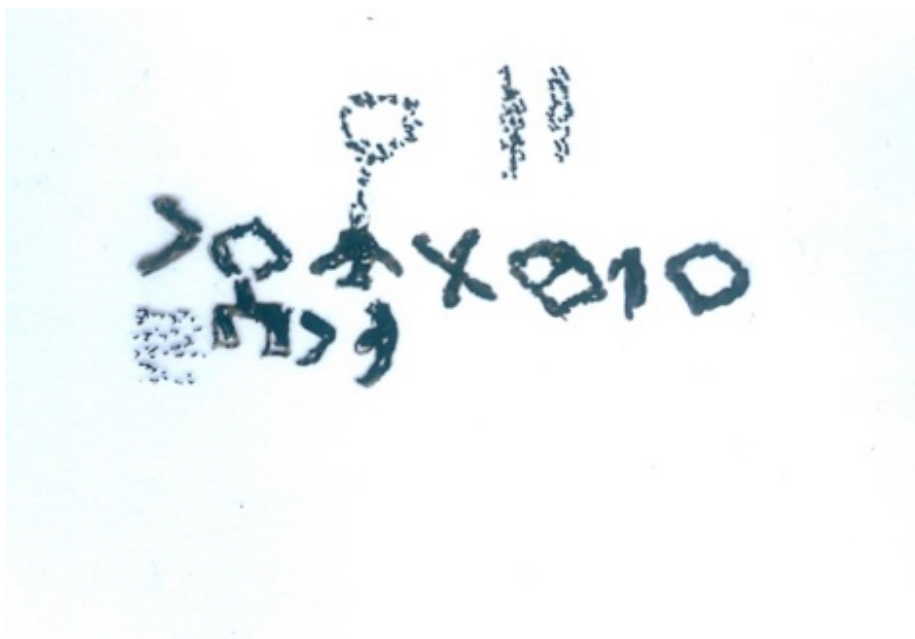
²See Sima (1999) for discussion.

Eskoubi 115

Figure 3: Photo by M. Eskoubi



Figure 4: Tracing by H. Hayajneh



1. *lwt hfr*

2. *h-rs*¹

“*lwt* engraved this/the [. (?)]”

For onomastic derivatives and parallels related to the personal name *lwt*, see under the names *lwm* and *lwn* in Hayajneh (1998: 195f). The verbal form *hfr* “to dig, engrave, carve, dig” is known in Safaitic (Clark 1979 [1983]: 23;

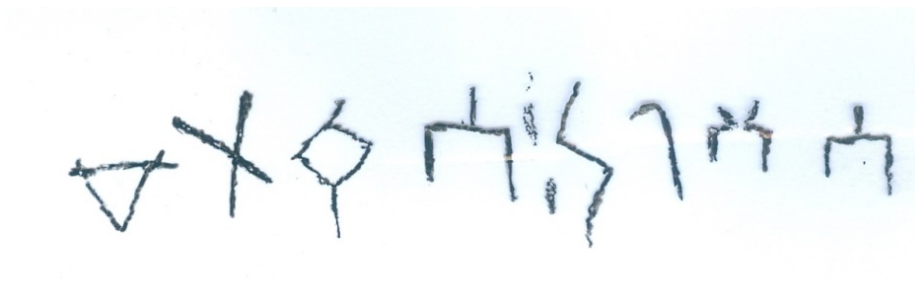
and semantic field is disputed, however its conventional unanimous meaning is “offer, sacrifice”, “perform *zll*-ceremony” (Farès-Drappeau 2005: 264–265), or, as Sima (1999) constantly translates, “(er) hat gedeckt den unterirdischen Wasserleitungskanal”. In contrast to the Dadanitic inscriptions from Dadan, the verbal form in the present graffiti is *zll* (1st or 2nd stems) not in the typical Dadanitic causative stem. It is not easy to decide whether the bearer of the name *Šlmyhb* belongs culturally and linguistically to the Dadanitic realm or not, to explain his usage of the of *zll* instead of *ʾhzll*.

Eskoubi 253

Figure 7: Photo by M. Eskoubi



Figure 8: Tracing by H. Hayajneh



1. $S^1\text{ʾ}ln / s^1yt\ z$

“ $S^1\text{ʾ}ln$ placed this (inscription)”

Eskoubi reads $(ʾ)s^1\text{ʾ}lns^1qt$. For the etymology and parallels of the PN $S^1\text{ʾ}ln$, see the name $s^1\text{ʾ}lm$ in Al-Said (1995: 117). The word-divider is lightly incised on the rock and seen close to the *n* glyph. The reading of the following three letters is certain, especially the *y*. A small diagonal short stroke is seen on the right side of the rhombus, however a reading such as *q* or *t* is not eligible; for a *q*, the stroke is expected to be longer and straight and for a *t*, another stroke on the left side is expected. In addition, Semitic has no root clusters that begin with *s* and *t*. As for the last sign, which appears as an inverted triangle with protrusions at the points of interchange of the upper two acute angles, it is best identified as a *z*. It is unlikely that this figure represents a drawing, e.g. of the

head of the deity *Šlm*. Following these epigraphical remarks, I would take the cluster *s¹yt* as a form of suffix conjugation from the root *s¹-y-t*, cf. Ugaritic *št* 'to place, set, set up' (Del Olmo Lete & Sanmartín 2003: 848), Phoenician *št* 'to place, to put, to establish' (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1130), Hebrew *šyt* 'to set, stand, place' (Koehler & Baumgartner 1967–1990: 1375ff). In a similar semantic contextual usage, i.e. "placing an inscription, name" we encounter this verb "to place, to put, ...", cf. Phoenician *w hspr z št phl's hspr* "and this inscription P. the scribe has set down" and *w'm 'bl tšt šm 'tk* "and if you don't put my name beside your own" (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 1130f); see Koehler & Baumgartner (1967–1990), pages 1375ff. for more Semitic derivatives, especially in the Old Testament, e.g. *šāt* "to set, stand, place". The final *z* should be identified as a demonstrative pronoun.⁴

Concluding remark

While the shape for *z* in the first inscription (Eskoubi 74), which we dealt with above, has a regular "H" form, it has the evolved triangular form "∇" in Eskoubi 253.⁵ This would mean that we are dealing with two shapes of the grapheme *z* used in the same region. This is applicable to the letter *ḏ* as well but from other texts in Dadan proper. No paleographic or chronological order on the basis of these undated graffiti can be drawn. We may assume that with these letters, as Macdonald (2010: 13f) observed for the glyphs of *s¹* and *ḏ*, the informal shapes must have evolved in parallel with the use of the formal ones, since we regularly find them used side by side in the same Dadanitic inscriptions. It is strange, but it appears that the stonemasons of the official inscriptions and those who employed them, considered the informal shapes to be valid alternatives to the formal ones, even within the same text.⁶ This could be applicable for the forms in this collection, i.e. both shapes were used in graffiti in an unofficial context.

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⁴See Macdonald (2004: 518) for the demonstrative adjectives in Dadanitic and Taymanitic.

⁵The letters *ʿ*, *g* and *s¹* are encountered in a triangular form in Dadanitic.

⁶See Macdonald (2010: 14) and Farès-Drappeau (2005: 109ff) for the development of the letter shapes in Dadanitic.

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 JSLiḥ Dadanitic inscriptions, in Jaussen & Savignac (1909–1922).

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