

---

# Jordan

---

## Petra

1. The inscription is located in Wādī Mūsā, near to the Sīq of Petra, in front of the Obelisk Tomb.<sup>1</sup> It is a text, approximately 3,50 metres in length, deeply carved in a sandstone that is perpendicular to the stream, 5 m above the ground and placed at the opening of the cave room BS23;<sup>2</sup> it is written in large letters, which were perhaps originally ochre in colour (Milik 1976, 143). Unfortunately, the text has been mostly ruined. The text consists of five lines, the first three in Nabataean, the other two in Greek. (Plate I, no. 1)

**Dimensions** length 3.50 m

**Dating** 1st CE (40-70 CE?)

**Bibliography** Milik 1976, 143-52; *SEG* 27 no. 1012; Milik 1980, 12, fig. 9; Zayadine 1984, 64-5; Zayadine 1986, 221-2; Healey 1993, 243-4; *IGLS* 21,4 no. 54; *Quellen*, 222-4; *Atlas*, MP5

---

1 The town, in ancient times known as Gaia, is located in the Ma'ān Governorate in southern Jordan. It is called Wādī Mūsā probably because according to tradition the prophet Moses passed through the valley and struck water from the rock for his followers (Num 20,10-11). The Nabataeans built channels that carried water from this spring to the city of Petra.

2 *Atlas*, MP5, 164.

Text<sup>3</sup> and translation

- 1) *mqb[r'] (dn)h b(n)[h 'bdmnkw br] (')kys br*
- 2) *šly [br] (')t(y)h[w---lnpšh] (w)['] (h)rh w'hr*
- 3) *hm l'[l]m 'l(m)[yn šnt---] l(m)nkwb h'y(w)h'y*
- 4) Αβδομα[νχ]ος [Αχ]αίου [επ]οιησ[ε]
- 5) [μ]νημειο[ν εαυτω και υι]οι[ς]

- 1) (Thi)s burial-monume[nt] bui(l)[t 'Aḥdomankō son of] ('A)ḡayos son of
- 2) Šollē [son of] ('A)ta(y)h[ō---for himself] (and) his [d](escen)dants and their descendants
- 3) for [e]ver and ev(e)[r in the year--] of (M)ankō<sup>4</sup> during his lifetim(e)
- 4) Abdoman[nch]os son of [Ach]aios [m]ad[e]
- 5) this [f]uneral monumen[t for himself and for his ch]ildre[n]

## Commentary

Line 1. The term *mqb[r']* is attested in inscriptions from Sī', in Ḥauran (*RES* no. 805; *PPAES* IVA no. 2), although it is rarely used in comparison to *mqbrt'* or *qbr'* (Milik 1976, 144; *DNWSI*, 678). The masculine form of the noun means 'burial, tomb'.<sup>5</sup>

The noun *mqbr'* possibly identifies a place, a setting, *strictu sensu*, suitable for the burial, i.e. a grave instead of a complex of tombs; in addition, the expression, with the demonstrative *dnh* 'this',<sup>6</sup> could prove that the monument was located not far from the place in which it was engraved.<sup>7</sup>

After the verb *bnh* 'to build, to construct, to erect' there should be the name of the author, but only the Greek text reports it, that is 'bdmnkw = Αβδομανχος as suggested by Milik,<sup>8</sup> rather than a possible 'bd'mnw = Αβδομανος,<sup>9</sup> with the latter being too short for our in-

<sup>3</sup> From hereon the Greek text will be presented without *spiriti* and accents.

<sup>4</sup> He is Malco. See commentary.

<sup>5</sup> The plural form *mqbryn* is present in *CIS* II no. 350.

<sup>6</sup> This regards a common custom in Nabataean epigraphy; the demonstrative placed before the subject assumes the sense of subject pronoun of a nominal clause, while put after it becomes a demonstrative adjective (Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 58). Such a construction, with a postponed demonstrative, is also attested in two inscriptions from Umm al-Jimāl. Cf. *RES* no. 2064; *PPAES* IVA no. 42.

<sup>7</sup> *Atlas*, MP5, 164.

<sup>8</sup> Milik 1976, 145.

<sup>9</sup> The name also appears in the bilingual painting, no. 6, from the sacred place of Rām.

scription.<sup>10</sup> This personal name is made up of *'bd* 'servant, slave' and *mnkw* (= *mlkw*) 'Malichos' (the name of a Nabataean king) and it occurs other 16 times in the Nabataean onomastics.<sup>11</sup> It is worth bearing in mind that the form *mnkw* (= *mlkw*) reflects the phonetic transition *l > n*, a typical Nabataean feature observed in many names.<sup>12</sup> The epitaph might have been carved during the reign of Malichus II (39/40-69/70 CE), even though among the Nabataeans the deification of kings was only witnessed by Obodas I (96-85 BCE).<sup>13</sup> King or *pseudo* god names as *'bdmnkw*, *'bdhrtt* or *'bdrb'l* would be bestowed upon sons of the king; as a consequence, if we assume that the inscription was drawn up during the reign of Malichus I, it would mean that the Greek linguistic influence occurred in Nabataea starting from the middle of the 1st century BCE<sup>14</sup>

At the end of the line *'kys* = Gr. *Ἀχαιοὺς* appears. This name is recorded 4 times.<sup>15</sup> It is a Greek name having the shape *Αχις*, *Αχιος*<sup>16</sup> and *Ἀχαιός*.<sup>17</sup>

Line 2. At the beginning there is the name of the author's grandfather, *šly*. The root should come from Arabic *salā* 'to neglect, to forget', also 'to console, to comfort'.<sup>18</sup>

This name is widely used in Nabataean<sup>19</sup> although it is not reported in the Greek part of the inscription. In Greek it has the form *Συλλαιος*,<sup>20</sup> in the bilingual inscriptions from Miletus (no. 49) and Delos (no. 50). The father's name of *šly* is *'tyhw*.<sup>21</sup> If the reading is correct we are dealing with a rare name in Nabataean onomastics; it may be an adjective of *pe'il* form (productive in Arabic) from Arabic *'utiha* 'to become stupid', 'idiot, dumb' > *'atih*. It is an epithet that indicates "a man addicted to annoying another and mimicking his speech"<sup>22</sup> or

**10** Milik 1976, 144-5.

**11** Milik 1976, 144-5.

**12** Cantineau 1930-32, 1: 45.

**13** Cf. Nehmé 2012, 181-224.

**14** *Atlas*, MP5, 164.

**15** Milik 1976, 146.

**16** Negev 1991, 81. In *Quellen*, 222-3 we read *Ἀκις*, a name also found in Egypt (*SB* I no. 3311).

**17** Wuthnow 1930, 30. *Ἀχαιοὺς* is more frequent (Pape 1911, 184).

**18** Lane, 1417.

**19** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 150; al-Khraysheh 1986, 174; Negev 1991, no. 1137. The name is also present in Hatraean *šly* (Beyer 1998, H 20).

**20** Wuthnow 1930, 113. Another form is *Σολλου* (Wuthnow 1930, 170).

**21** Negev (1991, no. 949) suggests that it is a diminutive form < *'thw*.

**22** Lane, 1951.

better “intrigant, qui rapporte les paroles des autres dans le but de nuire” as Kazimirski (1860, 169) points out. On the contrary, Milik (1976, 147)<sup>23</sup> vocalizes and reads *’utēh* (< *fu’ayl* in which there is the diphthong *ay > ē*).

At the end of the line we read *’hrh* ‘his descendants’, ‘qui est après, postérité’<sup>24</sup> with the singular masculine pronoun *-h*. Probably it is of Lihyan origin or a loanword (cf. *CIS* II no. 197), even though in Lihyan the substantive is employed along with words bearing a more detached meaning.<sup>25</sup> In Nabataean this meaning, expressed by the root *’hr* ‘to come after, to follow, to be late’, is more general. After that, there is *w’hr* and at the beginning of line 4 we encounter the plural masculine suffixed pronoun *-hm* meaning ‘their descendants’. In Nabataean epigraphy it is rather unusual to break graphically a syntagma into two parts.<sup>26</sup>

Line 3. After the suffixed pronoun we read the expression *l’lm llmyn*, literally ‘for the eternity of the centuries’, therefore ‘for ever and ever’, ‘in *saecula saeculorum*’. In the middle of the line the reading is difficult. We may reconstruct a possible *šnt* ‘year’ that generally goes with the name of a king in order to date the carving of the inscription. Indeed, at the end of the line we find the name *lmnkw*, referring to the Nabataean king Malichus I or II, while the absence of the title: *mlk’ mlk nbtw* ‘the king of the Nabataean’s kings’ is unusual, because it commonly follows the sovereign’s name.<sup>27</sup>

At the end of the line the phrase *bhywhy* comes into view meaning ‘during the course of his life’. After the substantive *hyw* there is the masculine singular possessive pronoun *-hy*. In Nabataean, as in Biblical Aramaic, Egyptian Aramaic and Syriac, the singular masculine suffixed pronouns *-h* and *-hy* (in Nab. *-w* and *-hw* are also used) differ in use; *-hy* is generally employed before nouns ending in *-w* or *-y*.<sup>28</sup> The origin of the two suffixes is difficult to establish.<sup>29</sup>

Line 4. The letters are in part ruined, but the reading does not seem to be difficult to reconstruct. The name Αβδομανχος and the patronymic Αχαιο appear, ‘Abdomanchos (son of) Achaio’. At the end of the line we see the sequence *-οιης-* that we interpret as [επ]οιησ[ε] ‘he built’.

**23** *Contra Quellen*, 222-3 and *Nehmé (Atlas, MP5, 164)*.

**24** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 60.

**25** Milik 1976, 147.

**26** Milik 1976, 147.

**27** In the matter of Malichus, his title is also absent in another inscription, in *CIS* II no. 222, in which we read: *bšnt 17 lmnkw* ‘in the year 17 of Malichus’, quite akin to the reconstruction of the sentence contained in our epigraph.

**28** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 54-5.

**29** See Brockelman 1908, 312 for an explanation.

Line 5. The articles τό and τοῖς, of the nouns μνημεῖον and υἰός, are omitted by the stone-cutter (due to the insufficient space?<sup>30</sup>). As regards the former, the term comes from the verb μιμνήσκω ‘to remind, to put in mind’<sup>31</sup> < μνήμη (Dor. μνάμα) ‘memory, souvenir’, but above all ‘grave, burial’,<sup>32</sup> just as μνημεῖον (Ion. μνημήιον) indicating the ‘memorial’, the ‘grave’.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, the substantive would be a diminutive observed in burial memorials in order to highlight the importance of μνήμα and certain derivatives in the funeral lexicon.<sup>34</sup> According to Healey (1993, 243), the term should be reconstructed as μνημόσσυον ‘remembrance, memorial’ also referring to a commemorative funeral memorial, that is less important than a grave.

2. The inscription is carved on a white marble and was found in a robbed tomb. The epigraph, which is an incised graffito, consists of two lines. In the first line, in which two Nabataean words appear, there seems to be a fracture in the stone, while the second line is not damaged.<sup>35</sup> (Plate I, no. 2)

Dating unknown

Bibliography Bowersock 2015, 123-4

### Text and translation

- 1) [h]grw slyt’
- 2) Αγαρη

- 1) [H]aḡarō slyt’
- 2) Agare

---

**30** As Milik suggests (1976, 147).

**31** *LSJ*, 1135.

**32** *LSJ*, 1139. Cf. Euripides, *Phoenissae* 1585: ὥς ὥρα τάφου μνήμην τίθεσθαι ‘it is time we thought of their burial’.

**33** Cf. Plato, *Res publica*, 414a: τάφων τε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων μνημείων μέγιστα γέρα ‘the supreme honours of burial-rites and other memorials’.

**34** Chantraine 1968, 703.

**35** Bowersock (2015, 123) asserts that: “the stone looks abraded, and [...] there was a second word of Greek to match the second word of Nabataean”.

## Commentary

The graffito reports a woman's name, *hgrw*, which is well-known in Nabataean onomastics and considered as equivalent to the Greek Ἀγαρη.<sup>36</sup> This Greek form is also well-documented.<sup>37</sup>

The second Nabataean word, *slyt'*, is problematic because the first two letters present difficulties in reading; if they were *šl-* the word might represent another form of the name *šly*.<sup>38</sup> John Healey proposes reading *tlyt'* 'the girl',<sup>39</sup> however his hypothesis is rejected by Bowersock who asserts that there is no reason: "why a female name would need to be qualified in this way".<sup>40</sup> As regards its etymology probably *slyt'* derives from the Arabic root *slw* 'to neglect, to forget', also 'to console, to comfort'. *Hgrw* may be described as a consolation or a comfort. But this is only a suggestion since, unfortunately, we do not have a parallel Greek word after the mention of Ἀγαρη. Therefore, it seems to be possible that whoever carved the graffito preferred to record in Greek only the name of the woman without writing anything else.

**3.** This stone was found among the ruins of Petra. The stele is damaged on the left part, while the right side seems to be well-preserved. The six-line text, is less legible on the left side and we can only reconstruct a few lines. It is mainly in Greek except for the last two lines where some illegible signs in Nabataean script appear. (Plate II, no. 3)

**Dimensions** height 41 cm, length 12.5 cm (inscribed surface 33.5 cm × 12.5 cm)

**Dating** unknown

**Bibliography** *IGLS* 21,4 no. 28

## Text and translation

- 1) [---](ε)πηκοω Δου-
- 2) [-σαρι ---]ς Ολφιος
- 3) [---]ων[.ε]κ των
- 4) [---]τω
- 5)-6) difficult reading. Only Nabataean signs.

**36** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 84; al-Khraysheh 1986, 61-2; Negev 1991, no. 293; Healey 1993, H 13, 14, 30. Cf. also Pape (1911, 8) who records Ἀγαρη and Wuthnow 1930, 11. In Palmyrene we find *hgr* (*PAT*, 433 = Stark 1971, 14 and 84). See also *ICPAN*, 608.

**37** Through three inscriptions from Arabia (in *IGLS* 13,1 no. 9315, *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 157, *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 158) and two from Hauran (in *PPAES* IIIA 3 no. 519; 5 no. 755).

**38** Negev 1991, no. 769.

**39** In a personal message in replying to Bowersock's questions about this Nabataean word.

**40** Bowersock 2015, 124.

- 1) [---]listener Du-
- 2) [-sares---]s Olfios
- 3) [---] of
- 4) [---].

### Commentary

Line 1. The text is illegible at the beginning of the line; Sartre (*IGLS* 21,4 no. 28) reconstructs θεῶ ἅγιω ‘to the Holy God’. After this expression there is a sequence of letters, [---](ε)πηκωω, that is simply interpreted as ἐπηκόω < ἐπήκοος ‘listener, hearer’ referring to the god who listens to the prayers and grants them. Although the reading is uncertain, at the end of the line we see the letters δου- that probably form the first part of the God’s name Δουσαρι – *Dusares*.

Line 2. It is almost illegible up to the end where the name Ολφιος comes into view. We do not know if it refers to the author of the inscription; either way, the name probably derives from the Arabic root *hlf*. In Nabataean the name *hlpw*<sup>41</sup> is found and it is compared with Arabic *halaf*<sup>42</sup> and Greek Αλαφος<sup>43</sup> as Cantineau points out (1930-32, 2: 96). The general meaning is that of ‘successor’, also ‘enfants’.<sup>44</sup>

The Greek restitution of the name highlights a probable syncope on the penultimate non-stressed vowel: *halp* < \**halap*. In addition, the Greek transcription would exhibit a final etymological \*-ī represented by ι before the suffix -ος.<sup>45</sup>

Lines 3-4. At the end of line 3 there is the plural genitive article τῶν, while in line 4 we reconstruct a supposed ἰδίων ‘of own’.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>41</sup> In Hauran (cf. *PPAES* IVA no. 19; *RES* no. 2048), in Hegra (modern Mada’in Saleh or al-Hiḡr) and Hejaz (*CIS* II nos. 206, 209; *JSNab* nos. 53, 297); Cf. also al-Khaysheh 1986, 84. As regards Palmyrene, see *PAT*, 434 = Stark 1971, 22-3 and 88.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *ICPAN*, 198 *hlf* > *hlif* ‘ally, sworn friend’.

<sup>43</sup> This appellative is frequent in Syria, Phoenicia (*IGLS* 5 no. 2250) and Hauran (*PPAES* IIIA 2 nos. 90 and 185).

<sup>44</sup> Kazimirski 1860, 1: 620; Negev 1991, no. 452. It is also possible that the root is related to *hlypw* (al-Khaysheh 1986, 62), name found in Sinai (*CIS* II no. 2973), that Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 86) renders into Arabic as *hillawf* ‘hirsute’, *hallawf* ‘sanglier’. In the Negev, during the Byzantine period, the name Αλφίου-Αλφειος is recorded (Negev 1982, 40, no. 39:2) as it is in the Nessana papyri (Kraemer 1958, 67, PC21) and in those from Egypt dating back to the 6th-7th century CE (Preisigke 1967, col. 21).

<sup>45</sup> See other names of Arabic origin like Αδιος = Nab. ‘dy registered at Umm al-Jimāl (*PPAES* IIIA no. 366) and Μονιος = Nab. *mḡny* found in Hauran (Wadd. no. 2153).

<sup>46</sup> *IGLS* 21,4 no. 28.

4. This inscription was found in the area of the monumental building of el-Deir and it was engraved inside the monument no. 465 on the south wall, to the right of the entrance, 1.30 metres above the ground and 1.90 metres away from the back wall. The epigraph is unrefined, presenting several complications in reading due to the fact that the wall is blackened by soot. The inscription is made up of five lines (if we also include the last two lines of the inscription)<sup>47</sup> in which the Nabataean section is not placed in line 3, as Brünnow e Domaszewski (1904, no. 437) graphically reproduced, but to the right of the Greek sequence of line 2.

The shape of the *aleph* suggests that the Nabataean script here used goes back to a late stage of writing so we can date the inscription to the 1st century CE.

**Dimensions** height of letters A, H, M 10.5 cm; letter O 3.5 cm

**Dating** 1st-2nd CE (?)

**Bibliography** Brünnow, Domaszewski 1904, 335, no. 465 b; *CIS* II no. 437; *IGLS* 21,4 no. 35

#### Text and translation

1) το προσκυνημα

2) ΑΜΙΨΜΙ[---] dkyr [...] (l)n' bṭb[---]

3) ομου

4) [τ]ο (π)[ρο]σκυνημα

5) šlm

1) the veneration

2) - let be remembered [...] (l)n' in good[---]

3) -

4) (t)he (v)[en]eration

5) peace

#### Commentary

Line 1. The term το προσκύνημα < προσκυνέω 'to make obeisance to the gods or their images'<sup>48</sup> reveals the cultic character of the epigraph and probably constitutes a rare case of a *proskynema* found out of Egypt.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> According to Sartre (*IGLS* 21,4 no. 35) they belong to another text whose further parts have disappeared or perhaps were never engraved at all.

<sup>48</sup> *LSJ*, 1518.

<sup>49</sup> The practice of προσκύνημα was born in Egypt towards the 2nd century BCE in a hellenized environment characterized by a religious syncretism where both Greek and



Line 2. We read AMIΨMI, but the sequence of letters cannot be interpreted. On its right side there is the Nabataean text: *dkyr* [...] *n' bṭb* in which the first element, *dkyr*, denotes the remembrance of someone (it is a common formula in the commemorative Nabataean epigraphy), although we cannot read the name of the remembered person. After a space, consisting of 3 letters, we glimpse a *l* preceding the *n* in order to obtain [...] *n'*, probably the final part of the name of who is remembered. At the end there is the expression of greetings *bṭb* 'in good'.

Line 3. Sartre (*IGLS* 21,4 no. 35) reads -ομου, omitted (or badly read?) by Domaszewski who connected it to the previous sequence AMIΨMI.

Lines 4-5. The phrase τὸ προσκύνημα occurs again, while in the last line we read in Nabataean *šlm* 'peace'.

**5.** The inscription was found at Little Petra, also known as Siq al-Bārid, and it was engraved on a rock near a temple that could have been an ancient shrine.<sup>50</sup>

**Dating** unknown

**Bibliography** *CIS* II no. 480; Lagrange 1898, 180, no. 70

### Text and translation

- 1) *šlm hbwls*
- 2) Αβολος

- 1) Peace! Habōlos
- 2) Abolos

### Commentary

The name *hbwls* seems to be of Greek rather than Nabataean origin<sup>51</sup> considering the -s ending that recalls the suffix of the nominative case -ος. Furthermore, Αβολος is attested in an inscription from Asia Minor,<sup>52</sup> with two other forms, Ἀβόλλας and Ἄβόλλα, being attested only by Pape.<sup>53</sup>

---

Egyptian divinities were associated. For a detailed study, cf. Geraci 1971.

**50** Lagrange 1898, 179.

**51** al-Khaysheh 1986, 61.

**52** In Phrygia. Inscription no. 333, 92 in Haspels 1971.

**53** Pape 1911, 3. In the volumes of the *LGPN* and in the database of the *Searchable Greek Inscriptions* of The Packard Humanities Institute the two names are not present.

## Jabal Kharazah Ratamah

6. The two inscriptions were found at Jabal Kharazah Ratamah, in the Wādī Ṭalājah, at a dozen of kilometres east of al-Qwayrah between Petra and Aqaba. The only fragment in Greek script is engraved on a cistern-facing rock; it carries the name of the owner, while a short distance from it there are the two Nabataean inscriptions.

In the area, in the clefts on the western side, five Nabataean dams have been discovered. Among the installations the southernmost is the best. The short Greek part reports only a name, Ηλεος, carved in carefully cut lettering and related to the owner of the cistern.

The two Nabataean texts are hammered and not cut into the rock. The first of the two lines, is situated 4.50 metres in front of the dam and 3.50 metres above the riverbed; the second line, badly weathered, is placed below the first one.<sup>54</sup>

**Dimensions** 1st Nabataean inscription 80 cm × 16 cm, height of letters 6 cm; 2nd inscription length 105 cm, height of letters 8 cm

**Dating** 1st CE (32 CE)

**Bibliography** Kirkbride, Harding 1947, 19; Milik 1958, 249-51, no. 8; *IGLS* 21,4 no. 136; Farès-Drapeau, Zayadine 2001, 205-16; *Quellen*, 283-4

### Text and translation

#### Inscription A

Ηλεος

- 1) lšb' br 'lh 'tyd šnt 'rb'yn wḥdh
- 2) lhrtt mlk nbṭw rḥm 'mh yq'

#### Inscription B

- 1) dkyr twds br 'lh šlm

#### Inscription A

Eleos

- 1) To Šab'a son of 'Eleh, (this dam) was set up in the year 41
- 2) of Aretas, king of Nabataeans, who loves his people. Yiqā

#### Inscription B

- 1) Let be remembered Theudas, son of 'Eleh. Peace.

<sup>54</sup> Milik 1958, 250.

## Commentary

## Inscription A

Line 1. The name of the addressee of the manufact, *šb'*, appears denoting the 'lion'.<sup>55</sup> This term is present in Arabic *sab'* meaning 'wild beast, lion',<sup>56</sup> even though in North-West Semitic languages this root primarily means 'to be satiated', also 'seven'.<sup>57</sup>

The second name that comes into view is *'lh* = Gr. Ηλεος,<sup>58</sup> the father of *šb'*; the Greek form furnishes the presumable Nabataean vocalization /'ēleh/, a variation of the same transcription that identifies /'ilah/ 'god'.<sup>59</sup>

Successively, we find the verb *'tyd* 'to be set up, to be arranged, to be prepared', the passive participle of *pe'il*,<sup>60</sup> that is also attested in Arabic *'atuda* (= Heb. *'td*) 'to be ready, to be prepared' representing a secondary formation from *'adda* 'to count, to enumerate', hence the form *i'tadda* 'to consider, to believe, to evaluate' (> *ista'adda*), 'he considered, prepared himself'.<sup>61</sup>

Line 2. We encounter the name *hrtt* 'Aretas', Aretas IV Philopatris according to his epithet *mlk nbṭw rḥm 'mh* 'king of Nabataeans who loves his people'; in addition, the mention of the year of the reign of Aretas *'rb'yn wḥdh* '41' suggests that the epigraph was carved in 32 CE.

**55** It is also found in the Nabataean onomastics from Sinai in the form of *šb'w* (CIS II no. 891) and in Greek transcription, Σαβας, in Hauran (Wadd. nos. 1990, 2101). It is also registered as a compound name *šb'l'lh*y (CIS II no. 370; RES no. 1472) like Arabic *sab'u llāhi* and Hebrew *ari'el* (cf. Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 148). Cf. al-Khaysheh 1986, 170.

**56** Negev 1991, 1099. Cf. also ICPAN, 309.

**57** See DNWSI, 1101-2. It appears in the Bible as a personal name *šibə'ā* (1Sam 20,1 and 1Chr 5,13). In Arabic this semantic passage from 'seven' to 'lion' is explained, according to tradition, by the fact that the root has assumed the meaning of 'place in which mankind shall be congregated on the day of resurrection'; this is related to the story of a shepherd who, while among his flock, saw a wolf that took a sheep, and ran after the wolf, rescuing his sheep. Whereupon the wolf said to the shepherd: *man lahā yawma l-sab'i?* 'Who will be for it (namely a sheep or a goat as defender) on the day of resurrection?' As Lane explains: "who shall be for it on the occasion of trials, when it shall be left to itself, without pastor, a spoil to the animals of prey" (Lane, 1296); as a result the animal of pray: "has a fang and tearing claw or canine tooth with which it attacks and seizes its prey as does the lion" (Farid 2006, 378). In the Koran we find the sentence *wa-mā 'akala l-sabu'u* 'what an animal of pray has eaten' (V, 4).

**58** Another form is Ηλειας (Wuthnow 1930, 51). The other attested Greek shapes, Αλειος, Αλεου (in Wadd. nos. 2005, 2520), diverge compared with our inscription. Cf. also Pape 1911, 53.

**59** *'lh* is recorded as a personal name in PPAES IVA nos. 13, 14; RES nos. 2043, 2044. Its meaning comes from Arabic *'alaha* 'to worship' (Negev 1991, no. 88). In *Quellen*, 283 it is read *Alih*. In Palmyrene *'lh* is considered as a hypocoristic name (PAT, 430 = Stark 1971, 4 and 68).

**60** Cantineau 1930-32, 1: 75. See also DNWSI, 897.

**61** Klein 1987, 490; Lane, 1969-70.

At the end of the line there is *yq'*, probably the name of the author. According to Milik (1958, 251) it is a hypocoristic name from the root *yqh*- (with the variant *wqh*), very frequent in the north and south Arabian onomastics of the 1st millennium BCE. Although the root is less used in Hebrew, *yqh* 'to protect, to obey'<sup>62</sup> > proper name *Jāqeh* (Prov 30,1) < *yiqəhāh* 'obedience' (Gen 49,10; Prov 30,17), Akk. *utaqu* 'to obey',<sup>63</sup> it is productive in Arabic in which the verb *waqā* 'to preserve' (*waqiya* 'to be obedient') is used, as the sentence *waqāhu llahu l-suū* 'God preserved him from evil'<sup>64</sup> demonstrates. The name could be translated as 'pious'.

### Inscription B

In the last short one-line inscription there is *twds*, the name of the other son of 'Eleh, that derives from Greek Θευδᾶς (Θουδᾶς).<sup>65</sup> The fact that a Nabataean bears a Greek name would represent the proof of the spread of Hellenization, at least superficially, into the Nabataean military centres during the reign of Aretas IV.

### Hismā-Wādī Ram

7. It is a painting on a plaster that covered the inner wall of the sanctuary of the goddess Allat situated in Wādī Ram. Wādī Ram, also known as The Valley of the Moon, is a valley cut into the sandstone and granite rock in southern Jordan 60 km to the east of Aqaba. There are about 30,000 inscriptions in the form of rock paintings and graffiti realized first by the Thamud and then by the Nabataeans who installed in Wādī Ram in the 4th century BCE. They lived peacefully along with the Thamud worshipping the same deities, including Dūšarā. Besides paintings and graffiti, the Nabataeans also built temples. The Greek text is located on the left part of the inscription, while the Nabataean is on the right side.

<sup>62</sup> *DGes*, 487; *KAHAL*, 224 'vorsichtig', 'Gehorsam'.

<sup>63</sup> *KAHAL*, 263.

<sup>64</sup> Lane, 3059.

<sup>65</sup> See *LGN I*, s.v., "Θουδᾶς" is only encountered in Crete (*IC II*, 46) and Delos (*IG XI 2 no. 203 A:65*). It is a name recorded in the Near East as the New Testament shows, mentioning a certain Israelite Theudas (Acts 5,36), the leader of a revolt who was subsequently killed; also Josephus (*AJ* 20.5.1) cites the figure of an instigator (Gr. γόης 'imposter, swindler, charlatan') who led the masses against the Ancient Roman *eques* and the procurator of Iudaea Province, Cuspius Fadus, but afterward he was captured and decapitated. The Acts speak about an event that happened before 37 CE, while according to Josephus it took place at the end of the mandate of Fadus, between 45-46 CE.

Dating 2nd CE (?)

Bibliography Savignac, Horsfield 1935, 263-4, no. 1 and p. 265, fig. 19; *SEG* 8 no. 348; Milik 1976, 145, no. 5; *IGLS* 21,4 no. 141; *Quellen*, 289-91

### Text and translation<sup>66</sup>

- 1) Μνησθη Ουαβαλας ο κα[ι]
- 2) Αβδομαν[ο]ς Αβδομανου
- 3) του Αιαλο[υ Φ]αινησιος α(ρχ)[ιτεκτων]
- 4) [dkrt 'l]t[w w]hb'lhy dy mtqr' 'bd'mnw br 'bd'mnw
- 5) [br] 'ylw [br] 'bd'bd br qynw py ny bny'

- 1) Let be remembered Ouaballas called als[o]
- 2) Abdoman[o]s (son of) Abdomanos
- 3) (son of) Aialo[s from F]aino a(rc)[hitect]
- 4) [remember ']Allat[ W]ahb'allahā nicknamed 'Aḥd'omanō son of 'Aḥd'omanō
- 5) [son of] 'Ayalō [son of] 'Aḥd'oḥodaṭ son of Qaynō from Faino. The builder.

### Commentary

The author of the painting, 'bd'mnw,<sup>67</sup> is known in a *proskynema* found near the sanctuary, in which he is mentioned along with the names of other builders who made the sanctuary.<sup>68</sup> According to Milik (1976, 145) he is the same architect who engraved his name in a Thamudene graffito found in the same region in the form of 'bd'mn;<sup>69</sup> moreover, this name would be the only proof in the Thamudic epigraphy.<sup>70</sup>

As regards the onomastics, the real name of the author of the painting is Ουαβαλας,<sup>71</sup> in line 1, while the nickname, pronounced ó κα[ι] (= Nab. *mtqr'*, sing. masc. part. of *etpe'el* 'named, nicknamed' < *qr'*), is the above-mentioned 'bd'mnw. The Greek transcription of Ουαβαλας recalls the Nabataean name in line 4, *whb'lhy*, that is a

<sup>66</sup> The transcription is that of Milik 1976, 145, no. 5.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Negev 1991, no. 817.

<sup>68</sup> The inscription was discovered by R. Savignac (1933, 418, no. 9). Cf. also the inscription no. 8.

<sup>69</sup> Harding, Littmann 1952, no. 57 A.

<sup>70</sup> *IGLS* 21,4, 177.

<sup>71</sup> This name, transcribed in Greek in this way, is found at Umm al-Jimāl (cf. *IGLS* 21,5.1 nos. 423, 424 and *PPAES* IIIA, 3 no. 476). Other forms are: Ουαβαλλας, Ουαβαλλος, Ουαβελου, Ουαβηλος (Wuthnow 1930, 91).

theophoric composed of *whb* ‘gift, present’ and the name of the deity.<sup>72</sup>

The name Αβδομανος,<sup>73</sup> which corresponds to *‘bd’mnw*, is made up of *‘bd* ‘servant, slave’ and the root *‘mnw*, and it was recorded in Sinai, meaning ‘rester dans (un lieu)?’;<sup>74</sup> Ar. *‘amana* ‘to remain, to stay in a place’.<sup>75</sup> The Greek shape of the name probably shows the assimilation of the Aramaic nominative mark -o (= \*u) into the second element of the name -ομανος; this fact identifies the shape of Αβδομανος as a result of a contemporary transcription compared with the most archaic Αβδοομανου recorded at Dībān,<sup>76</sup> in which the second -o is the nominative mark: \*/aḥdo-‘oman/. The name *‘bd’mnw* is well documented in Hauran.<sup>77</sup>

The grandfather of Ουαβαλας is a certain Αιαλος who appears in line 3 in the Greek section of the inscription. The equivalent in Nabataean is *‘ylw* mentioned in the last line.<sup>78</sup> The root is of semitic origin having a correspondence to the Hebrew *‘ilay*, a personal name of one of David’s heroes who gave him strong support in his kingdom.<sup>79</sup> It means ‘the higher’ < *‘l*, Ar. *‘ālin* < *‘aliya* ‘to be high’. Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 129) connected the Nabataean root to the Arabic *ḡayyāl* or *‘ayyāl*.<sup>80</sup> The former indicates a wide, ample space,<sup>81</sup> while in the Koranic context it describes the following: “such as one judges to be of little extent, through it is for extending”;<sup>82</sup> the latter takes on the meaning of: “that inclines from side to side in gait and is proud, haughty or self-conceited, therein”.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Negev 1991, nos. 337, 338; al-Khraysheh 1986, 67.

<sup>73</sup> It is used in Greek as Αβδομανος (Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 126; Wuthnow 1930, 8 and 154); it still survived in the Negev during the Late Roman Period, as a Greek inscription found in the northern part of the acropolis of the city of Avdat/Oboda shows (Negev 1982, 17, no. 3).

<sup>74</sup> Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 132; ICPAN, 441: *‘mn* ‘to remain’.

<sup>75</sup> The hypothesis of Littmann (PPAES IVA, 79) according to which the second element *‘mnw* is identified with the Egyptian god Amun is hard to support.

<sup>76</sup> IGLS 21,2 no. 183 and Dalman, 2: no. 98.

<sup>77</sup> PPAES IVA, no. 79; RES no. 2100.

<sup>78</sup> This name is encountered at Hegra and in Hauran. Cf. JSNab no. 344.

<sup>79</sup> 1Chr 11,29; Cf. DGes, 954 and KAHAL, 402.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. also Negev 1991, no. 882. al-Khraysheh (1986, 139) thinks it is *Ḡaiyāl* ‘killer’, ‘Menchelmörder’. In addition, see ICPAN, 451.

<sup>81</sup> The form *ḡayyāla* referred to a woman obtains the meaning of ‘she is tall’.

<sup>82</sup> Lane, 2319.

<sup>83</sup> Lane, 2213.

The Nabataean text provides the most information about Αιαλος, the son of 'bd'bdt, the latter omitted in the Greek part.<sup>84</sup> 'bd'bdt, in turn, was the son of qynw, as we can read in the last line of the Nabataean inscription. According to Milik (1976, 145) and Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 142), the root relates to Arabic qayn (pl. quyūn) meaning 'forgeron, mineur, fondeur' < qāna 'to forge, to adorn'.<sup>85</sup>

At the end of the two texts we read the ethnic Φαινίσιος, Nabataean pyṅy, that indicates the ancient town of Faina in Hauran, corresponding to the modern village of al-Mismiyyah,<sup>86</sup> considered the μητροκωμία (lit. 'mother village' < -κώμη<sup>87</sup>) of the ancient Trachonitis,<sup>88</sup> today called al-Lajāh (lit. 'the refuge'), a region to the south of Syria and to the east of the Jordan river.

The ethnonym is recorded in several texts.<sup>89</sup> The site, well-documented in ancient topographies,<sup>90</sup> was probably a strategic place to stop over and successively to conquer Kanatha or Bosra.<sup>91</sup>

In the region of Ḥismā, where it is unlikely that the Greeks lived, the usage of Greek as a written language, apart from the other Semitic languages and Latin of Roman soldiers, was of considerable importance; this is because it was very widely known and the sanctuary of Iram was much visited.<sup>92</sup>

It is difficult to date precisely the inscription on the basis of the steps in the building of the temple, and it would be impossible to identify when the plaster was applied and then painted.<sup>93</sup> Instead, in Milik's view (1976, 145), we may date the inscription to the mid-

**84** For the recordings see Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 126. Cf. also al-Khraysheh 1986, 131 and Negev 1991, no. 815.

**85** Proto-Afro-Asiatic \*kVɣVn- 'forge' (HSED no. 1629). Negev (1991, no. 1025) translates "qain, smith, artisan", in relation to Greek Καινος found on papyri (Wuthnow 1930, 61 and 164). The root qynw seems to have also the meaning of a female name, as some inscriptions from al-Hijr prove (CIS II nos. 205, 207), that al-Khraysheh (1986, 160) vocalizes as Qainā and translates as 'Sklavin, Sāngerin'. The meaning of 'slave' may be noticed in the epigraphs from al-Hiḡr and Sinai (cf. CIS II nos. 324, 550, 551, 1239, 1699 *et passim*). The name is also recorded in pre-Islamic Arabic, see ICPAN, 492.

**86** At almost 50 km south of Damascus.

**87** LSJ, 1130.

**88** It is mentioned in Luke 3,1.

**89** In IGR III no. 1119 in a letter of the governor of Syria to the inhabitants of the town: Φαινησιόις μητροκωμία τοῦ Τράχωνος. Cf. also IGR III nos. 1120, 1123; PPAES IIIA no. 800. In the West it is found in Italy, in Rome and Aquileia, and in Salona, in modern day Croatia. Cf. Feissel 1982, 337-8.

**90** In Ierocle (Synecdemus 723.1) there is Φαίνα; Dia-Fenis (Not. Dign. [occ.] [or.] 37.23).

**91** Sartre 1999, 197-8.

**92** Quellen, 290.

**93** Quellen, 290-1.

dle of the 2nd century CE, since the main painting of the temple reports the date: year 147 of the month of August.<sup>94</sup> The shape of the Nabataean script seems to be late.<sup>95</sup>

8. It is a piece of *grès*, intact on the left, but broken in the remaining part. The curved surface presents an oblique incision in which we read, on the top, one line in Nabataean and below two lines in Greek. M. Sartre (*IGLS* 21,4 no. 148) read only the Greek text through a photograph. Unfortunately, the Nabataean line is not reported. (Plate II, no. 2)

**Dating** unknown

**Bibliography** *IGLS* 21,4 no. 148

### Text and translation

1) *Nabataean text*

2) Μνησθη οι οικο-

3) -δομοι και ΟΠ

1) -

2) Let be remebered the build-

3) -er and OP

### Commentary

The stone comes from the hallway of the temple of the goddess 'Allat and it is related to the Nabataean *proskynema*, as it is reported by R. Savignac (1933, 418, no. 9), in which the builders of the temple are mentioned: *dkrt 'lt bny' pr'' | wtymw whdnw w'bd'mnw btb* 'that 'Allat may remember the builders Far'ā | Taymō, Ḥaḍanō and 'Aḥd'omanō, in good'.

As regards the Greek section of the inscription, we find the mention of the architects, οἱ οἰκοδόμοι, after the letters ΚΑΙΟΠ that may form the beginning of a proper name or be the indication of another category of artisans: καὶ οἱ τ[---], which may be ταμίαι or τέκτονες.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Savignac, Horsfield 1935, 265.

<sup>95</sup> *IGLS* 21,4 nos. 141, 178.

<sup>96</sup> *IGLS* 21,4, 181.



## Wādī Ġuwayr (al-Šawbak)

9. The inscription was found in the Wādī Ġuwayr, one of the numerous streams flowing from the plains of Edom to the Wādī ‘Arabah, south of the Dead Sea basin. The Wādī Ġuwayr is located north of the city of al-Šawbak. Unfortunately, we have no precise data and details about the location and the usage of the inscriptions (collected in *IGLS* 21,4 nos. 120-7) found in the Wādī Ġuwayr, neither we do not know if there was a sanctuary in the area. Nonetheless, the contents of the inscriptions make us think that it was a sacred site.<sup>97</sup>

**Dating** unknown

**Bibliography** *CIS* II no. 489; Brünnow, Domszewski 1904, I no. 120e; *IGLS* 21,4 no. 120

### Text and translation

- 1) ΚΑΤΤΑΒΟΣ
- 2) *gdṭb*

- 1) Kattabos
- 2) Gaḏṭab

### Commentary

This inscription reports a theophoric name made up of the terms *gd* and *ṭb* meaning ‘the (god) Gad is good’, well-known in the Nabataean epigraphy and, more generally, in the Aramaic.<sup>98</sup> The root *gd’* becomes the name of a deity to be identified with ἡ Τύχη – ‘The Fate’ of the Greek divine context. It is found, in the shape of *gdṭb*, not only in Petra, but also in Hegra.<sup>99</sup>

The worship of Gad, who became the god of Fate (Lat. *Eutyclus*<sup>100</sup> < Gr. Εὐτύχης), was widespread in Hauran.<sup>101</sup> In fact, several sanctuaries, called Τύχεια or Τύχαια, were built<sup>102</sup> becoming *Bayt Gadā*. The Syriac poet Jacob of Serugh (451-521 CE) in his *Homiliae* (Syr. *mem-*

<sup>97</sup> *IGLS* 21,4, 154.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. al-Khraysheh 1986, 52-3 and Negev 1991, no. 213.

<sup>99</sup> *CIS* II no. 236; *RES* no. 1167.

<sup>100</sup> It is recorded in the Nabataean-Latin bilingual inscription in Rome, in *CIS* II no. 159.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Mordtmann 1877, 99.

<sup>102</sup> See *CIG* nos. 4554, 4555, 4556.

rē) writes about *Bayt Gadā* located on the mountaintop and transformed into monasteries during the Christian period.<sup>103</sup>

The Biblical Hebrew name *Gād* is present in the Ancient Testament (Isa 65, 11) with *Məni* as beneficiaries of food offerings. The Hebrew verb *gādad*, Arabic *ǧadda*, means ‘to cut, to divide’ and herein probably lies the origin of the idea of the ‘fate’, defining the destiny of human beings.<sup>104</sup> From the Hebrew verb *gād*, Ar. *ǧadda* and Syr. *gaddā* ‘to be lucky, rich’, we have the expression *bə-gād* (Gen 30,11) ‘Thankfully!’ (it was translated in the LXX ἐν τύχῃ, and in the Vulgata *Feliciter*).<sup>105</sup>

As regards Κατταβος, it is a quite rare masculine name in the Greek epigraphy<sup>106</sup> and the only reference is to be found in a Latin-Greek bilingual epigraph from Cyrenaica.<sup>107</sup>

## Ġūr al-Šāfi

**10.** This inscription was found at al-Naq’ cemetery of Ġūr al-Šāfi, ancient Zoar,<sup>108</sup> located to the south-east of the Dead Sea, in Jordan. It is an epitaph carved in a rectangular tombstone of whitish sandstone. The letters are painted in red colour and the entire inscription consists of four lines.

The Greek text presents a calligraphic oval script with symmetrical letters except for the tiny *omicron* at the end of the first line. In addition, the author of the inscription uses small dots as word-dividers. The Nabataean section is engraved in an elegant elongated script tending to the *scriptio continua*.

**103** Clermont-Ganneau 1898b, 81.

**104** Gesenius 1846, 157.

**105** In the Palmyrene epigraphy *Gad* is rendered into Τύχῃ (cf. *VIS* nos. 3, 95; *PAT*, 433, 352 = Stark 1971, 13, 81). In Punic it is noticed in the inscription of Nora, Sardinia (4th-3rd c. BCE): *lrbt ltnt pn b’l wgd* ‘Alla Signora, a Tanit, volto di Baal, Fortuna’ (Amadasi Guzzo 1990, 73, no. 3) and in the inscription of Ibiza (2nd c. BCE): *lrbt ltnt ’drt whgd* ‘To the Lady, to the powerful Tanit and the Gad’ (*KAI* no. 72); see also Krahmalkov 2000, 136-7. The root *gdy* is generally attested in Aramaic and ‘*mgd* in South Arabic. For a close examination of the meaning that it assumes and for its presence in the Semitic languages, cf. *DNWSI*, 212-3. In the Hatraean epigraphy it is recorded in the form of *g(n)d*’ (Beyer 1998, 147). Moreover, it survives as *eterogram* in Middle Persian (or Pahlavi) as *GDE*, read *xwarrah* ‘lucky’ (MacKenzie 1986, 96) and as a loanword in Ge’ez *gadd* ‘lucky’ (Leslau 1991, 180).

**106** Cf. Pape 1911, 637. In the Wādī Haggag, Sinai, the name is written as Γαδος (Negv 1977, no. 184).

**107** *CIG* III, 5175. In Latin it is transcribed *L. Vibio L. [F.] Cattabo*. See *SEG* 9 no. 247 with *gamma* (Gattabos).

**108** It is mentioned in the Ancient Testament as *Zo’ar* (Gen 14,8, previously called *Bel-la*), and it was part of the late Roman province of *Palaestina Tertia*.

As regards al-Naq' cemetery, it was probably predominantly of Jewish ritual. Indeed, there are tombstones written in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek, as well as a Hebrew-Greek bilingual,<sup>109</sup> which belonged to Jewish, Christian and pagan people. The inscriptions of deceased Jewish people are dated according to the cyclical agricultural calendar of seven years bearing Jewish symbols; meanwhile the Christian inscriptions are dated starting from the Lord's Day and have crosses as symbols.<sup>110</sup>

The Greek part is shorter than the Nabataean, which contains more information about the deceased woman and her date of death. (Plate III, no. 1)

**Dimensions** height 23 cm; length 40 cm; thickness 13 cm

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE (?)

**Bibliography** *IPT* Ib no. 50; Petrantoni 2016, 131-6

### Text and translation<sup>111</sup>

- 1) Ισμεηλη Αβδαρετου Ζωιλος
- 2) Αλεβου συνβιω ευνοιας χαριν
- 3) *d' nps' dy 'bd zyls br 'lbw l'sm'yn*
- 4) *'ntth ḥbybt brt' 'bšlm byrh sywn*

- 1) For his wife Ismeele (daughter of) Abdaretas, Zoilos
- 2) (son of) Alebos, out of affection
- 3) This (is) the tomb which Zoilos, son of 'Aleḥō, made for 'Išma'īn
- 4) his beloved wife, daughter of 'Abušalem, in the month of Sīwan

### Commentary

In line 1 there is the name of a woman, Ισμεηλη; its Nabataean transcription, *'šm'yn*, is intriguing. The Greek masculine form, Ισμαηλος, is attested in two epitaphs from Jericho,<sup>112</sup> while the name Εσμαηλος is found in a funerary inscription from Busān, in Hauran, dating to

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Cotton, Price 2001, 277-83.

<sup>110</sup> Ilan 2012, 30. It is also true that some inscriptions are dated on the basis of the era of *Provincia Arabia*, whereas other inscriptions in Greek have no date.

<sup>111</sup> In the *editio princeps* the authors only report a translation of the Nabataean text without its transcription, which I myself provide below (see the bibliography).

<sup>112</sup> Hachlili 1979, 34-5; *IPT* Ib 4b-c no. 10 and comment on pp. 48-9; Rahmani 1994, 243-4; *SEG* 31 nos. 1407.6. See also Pape 1911, 573.

the middle of the 4th century CE (341/2).<sup>113</sup> *ʿšmʿyn* is probably new in the Nabataean onomastics, since it is not encountered elsewhere in Nabataean, Palmyrene, Hatraean or in pre-Islamic Arabic.<sup>114</sup>

The patronymic Αβδαρετος represents the Greek transcription of the Nabataean *ʿbdhrtt*. In the funerary epigraphy from Gūr al-Šāfī, it appears in the variant of Αβδοάρθα<sup>115</sup> (the genitive of Αβδοάρθας), Nabataean *ʿbdhrtt*, but here the Nabataean name does not correspond to the Greek. Instead, in fact we find *ʿbšlm*. Presumably Αβδαρετος was called *ʿAbdaretas* in the Greek speaking environment of Zoar, while among Nabataean speakers he was known as *ʿAbušalem* which is a name given to him after the birth of his first son who was called *Šalem* (< *šlm* ‘peace’). In fact, he is traditionally cited as the father of a firstborn son according to the Arabic practice, still in use today: *ʿb* ‘father’ + son’s name.<sup>116</sup> The name *ʿbšlm* is recorded at Hegra as well.<sup>117</sup>

At the end of line 1 we read the author’s name Ζωίλος, usually used in Greek,<sup>118</sup> deriving from the word ζωή ‘life’,<sup>119</sup> and transcribed as *zyls* in Nabataean, line 3. The first mention of this name in Palestine during the Hellenistic period is found in the Greek-Aramaic votive bilingual inscription of the 3rd-2nd century BCE from Tell Dan<sup>120</sup> and in an amphora from Rhodes.<sup>121</sup>

The patronymic of *Zoilos* is Αλεβος, a Semitic name that corresponds to Nabataean *ʿlbw*, in line 3.<sup>122</sup> The root probably comes from Arabic *ǧālib* ‘winner’ < *ǧalaba* ‘to win, to subdue, to conquer’<sup>123</sup> and is present in the Aramaic *ʿlb* as well (Syr. *ʿaleb* ‘to exceed, to surpass, to cause wrong, to oppress’<sup>124</sup>). Negev’s assumption (1991, no. 886 as first hypothesis) of an Arabic origin *ʿalib* ‘to become thick or coarse,

<sup>113</sup> Wadd. no. 2247.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Cantineau 1930-32; al-Khraysheh 1986; Negev 1991; *NABLEX*. For Palmyrene and Hatraean cf. *PAT*; Stark 1971; Beyer 1998. For pre-Islamic Arabic see *ICPAN*.

<sup>115</sup> *IPT* Ia nos. 21 and 79.

<sup>116</sup> *IPT* Ib, 127.

<sup>117</sup> *JSNab* no. 313. Cf. also Negev 1991, no. 29.

<sup>118</sup> It is above all employed in Greece. Cf. *LGPN* I, II, IIIA, IIIB, IV, VA, VB.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. Pape 1911, 448.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. *SEG* 26 no. 1684 with references and Arbeitman 1994.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. *SEG* 8 no. 237.

<sup>122</sup> It is used as a personal name in *CIS* II no. 363; Dalman, 2: nos. 4, 11, 14; *RES* nos. 1383, 1389, 1392.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 130.

<sup>124</sup> Sokoloff 2009, 1099-100. The root is also found in Old Aramaic (*DNWSI*, 850). In Hebrew the verb *ʿalab* ‘to be strong’ is employed in *hiphʿil* form, *heʿālīb*, that means ‘to put to shame, insulted, umiliated’ (Gesenius 1846, 630).

rude',<sup>125</sup> 'hard, tough' is unconvincing. The Greek form  $\text{Αλεβος}$ <sup>126</sup> is exclusively recorded in Hauran in funerary<sup>127</sup> and monumental<sup>128</sup> inscriptions.

In the last line of the Greek section in the substantive  $\text{συνβίω} < \text{σύμβιος}$  'wife, spouse, partner' the  $\nu$ , preceding  $\beta$ , is not assimilated. This section ends with  $\text{εὐνοίας χάριν}$  that, in the same way as  $\text{ἔνεκεν}$ , is a common expression used in honorific inscriptions in order to indicate the respectful attitude of the honoured person towards the community showing the honour; in the funerary context this phrase reflects the feelings of affection towards the deceased.<sup>129</sup>

As regards the Nabataean part of the epitaph, in the first line we read the term  $\text{npš'}$ <sup>130</sup> followed by the author of the object.

In the last line there is the substantive 'ntth (<\* 'nth) 'wife', followed by the singular masculine suffix pronoun -h 'of him' = 'his'.<sup>131</sup> Here the assimilation of  $n$  to the following  $t$  should be expected in order to obtain 'tt- (cf. *CIS* II nos. 158, 161, 194), but 'ntt- is also attested somewhere along with 'tt-.<sup>132</sup>

The affection of the husband *Zoilos* to his dead wife is manifested by the adjective  $\text{hbybt}$  'be loved', the singular feminine passive participle of  $\text{pe'il}$  form from  $\text{hbb}$  'to love'.

The final expression  $\text{byrh sywn}$  'in the month of Sīwan', the 9th month of the Hebrew calendar, should reveal the date of the engraving of the epitaph or the month when *Ismeelé* died.

<sup>125</sup> Lane, 2126.

<sup>126</sup> Along with  $\text{Αλαβ}$ ,  $\text{Αλεβου}$ ,  $\text{Αλβος}$  (Cf. Wuthnow 1930, 16 and 157). The latter is present at Tocra in Cyrenaica (*LGPN* I), at Ephesus (*LGPN* VA) and at Pinara, in Lycia (*LGPN* VB).

<sup>127</sup> Wadd. no. 2053a; *SEG* 7 nos. 1144, 1156.

<sup>128</sup> *SEG* 46 no. 2073.

<sup>129</sup> *IPT* Ib, 126. Regarding references to the expression in Hauran see *SEG* 7 nos. 1072, 1086.

<sup>130</sup> It is a noun frequently used in funerary Nabataean inscriptions (Cf. for instance *CIS* II nos. 159, 169, 195, 191, 194, 352, 353, 465 *et alia*) and it may have several meanings. In some inscriptions it is translated as 'tomb' or 'gravestone', while in other cases it refers to 'soul, life, person and body' (for the employment, the meaning and the occurrences of the name cf. *DNWSI*, 744-9). In Nabataean other terms are employed to indicate the tomb within a stylistic and architectural context and, compared to other regions, the term  $\text{npš'}$  has the same meaning both at Hegra and Petra, and in Hauran and in Sinai (Abdelaziz-Rababeh, 2008, 182). Other words meaning 'tomb' are, for instance,  $\text{mqbr'}$ ,  $\text{qbr'}$ ,  $\text{kpr'}$  (respectively in *CIS* II nos. 350, 184 and 197 to quote only three examples), while 'm' (*CIS* II no. 173) represents the 'sarcophagus', a 'little case', an 'ossuary',  $\text{gwh'}$  (*CIS* II no. 211) a 'burial niche',  $\text{šryh'}$  (*CIS* II no. 213) a 'niche inside of a tomb', and  $\text{wgr'}$  (*CIS* II no. 205) a 'cavern in a mountain'.

<sup>131</sup> For the occurrences of the possessive suffix see Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 65.

<sup>132</sup> Cantineau 1930-32, 1: 44-5; *PPAES* IVA no. 82; *RES* no. 2103.

## Madaba

**11.** The epigraph was found at Madaba,<sup>133</sup> a town located 30 kilometres south-west of Amman in Jordan. The inscription is an epitaph and is engraved on a square stone whose surface is rather ruined; nevertheless, the first editors had no difficulty in deciphering the text. (Plate III, no. 2)

**Dimensions** height 53 cm; length 43 cm; inscribed surface 51 cm × 39 cm; average height of the letters 3 cm

**Dating** 2nd CE (108-109 CE)

**Bibliography** Milik 1958, 243-6, no. 6; Milik 1980, 44-5; *SEG* 20 no. 494; *IGLS* 21,2 no. 118; *Quellen*, 212-3

### Text and translation

- 1) *d' mqbṛt' wnpš' dy 'l'*
- 2) *mnḥ dy 'bd 'bgr dy mtqr'*
- 3) *'yšywn br mn't dy mn*
- 4) *'l 'mrt lšlḥn brh*
- 5) *bšnt tlt lhprk bšr'*
- 6) Σελαμαν χρηστε και
- 7) αλυπε χαιρε Αβγαρ ο και Εισιων
- 8) Μονοαθου υιος υιω τειμιω το μνημα
- 9) εποιησεν ετους τριτου επαρχειας

- 1) This is the tomb and the monument which is on top
- 2) of him which made 'Abgar who is (also) named
- 3) 'Eγšīōn, son of Mono'at, of the
- 4) tribe of 'Amirat, for Šelaman his son
- 5) in the year three of the eparch of Bosra
- 6) Selaman, good and
- 7) without pain, hi! Abgar (also) named Ision,
- 8) son of Monoath, for (his) well-loved son, the monument
- 9) he made, in the third year of the eparchy

---

**133** The Moabite city of *Mēdēbā* mentioned in the Bible (Num 21,30; Josh 13,9) was one of the settlements divided by the twelve tribes of Israel during the Exodus. Its name also appears in the Mesha's stele (*CNSI*, 1-2) that was built around 850 BCE by the will of the Moabite king Mesha to commemorate his victory over the Israelites. It was conquered by Alexander the Great and ruled by the Seleucid dynasty. During the Seleucid reign, the town fell under the rule of the Ammonites, Israelites and finally it was part of the Nabataean realm. In 106 CE it was annexed by the Romans and flourished, even though it was not of primary importance.

## Commentary

Line 1. The incipit is similar to that of the inscription on the tomb of *Itaybel*, a witch of Madaba, and her sons, which was built in 37 CE.<sup>134</sup> The author clearly distinguishes *mqr̄t'* (the feminine form of *mqr̄r'* in no. 1) from *npš'*. If the first term<sup>135</sup> identifies a 'sepulchre', a 'tomb', the second refers to the 'tomb built in the sun', usually a pyramid-shaped tomb covered by a cube; in fact, as we may read in the inscription, it lies on the top of the deceased: *dy 'l'mnh* 'which is on top of him'.

Line 2. Here the name of the author appears. It is a certain '*bgr*', corresponding to ΑΒΓΑΡ of the Greek text in line 7. It deals with a rare name among the Nabataeans inasmuch it is recorded in the northern Aramaic onomastics.<sup>136</sup> This name derives from *\*bgrt* (Ar. *buğrah*) 'navel'.<sup>137</sup> According to Milik (1980, 46), Abgar had the function of the guide of the Nabataean herd of horses and camels.

Line 3. We read the name of the author of the epigraph, 'yšywn, transliterated in Greek as Εἰσίων. As Milik points out (1958, 245), it is a name originating from the root 'yšw which is frequently used among the ancient Arabs (cf. Ar. 'iīās and Saf. 'yš 'desperation, scepticism' < 'aiśa)<sup>138</sup> and usually transcribed in Greek as Ἰάσος (*RES* no. 463).<sup>139</sup> Here, the name Εἰσίων simply reflects the Nabataean form of the name.

The patronymic *mn't* = Μονοαθου, line 8, probably vocalized as *\*/mono'at/*,<sup>140</sup> derives from the Arabic *man'ah* 'power, strenght' < *mana'a* 'to ban, to prohibit, to forbid',<sup>141</sup> Heb. *māna'*, Ge. and Am. *mānānā*

**134** *CIS* II no. 196; *RES* no. 674.

**135** It is found in *CIS* II nos. 181, 196, 2033; *PPAES* IVA no. 106; *RES* no. 1090; in construct state *mqr̄t'* in *DM*, II no. 18; *RES* 481. It is also present in Palmyrene (Cf. *DN-WSI*, 678).

**136** Cf. al-Khaysheh 1986, 24. Pre-Islamic Arabic '*bjr*' (*ICPAN*, 9). Abgar was the name of several kings of the Osroene kingdom of Edessa, in Mesopotamia. There is a possibility that it referred to a title as August or Caesar did, rather than a personal name. (Cf. Ball 2001, 90). It is frequently encountered in Palmyrene (*PAT*, 429 = Stark 1971, 1 and 63).

**137** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 70; Negev 1991, no. 5. The name '*bgr*' was found in the graffiti from Sinai (*CIS* II no. 698), while the form '*bgrw*' in *CIS* II no. 750; in Greek ΑΒΓΑΡΟΣ (Wadd. nos. 1984, 2046; *PPAES* IIIA, 2 no. 112; Pape 1911, 2; Wuthnow 1930, 7) and in Latin *Abgarus* (*CIS* II no. 159).

**138** *ICPAN*, 88: 'ys, *Iyās*, 'yst, 'ysn.

**139** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 61. The name Ἰάσος is found in Attica (*LGPN* II) and in Magna Graecia (*LGPN* IIIA), in ancient Venusia (modern day Venosa in the province of Potenza), Italy.

**140** *Quellen*, 213. Al-Khaysheh (1986, 109) reads *Māni'a*. Cf. also Negev 1991, no. 660.

**141** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 116. See also *ICPAN*, 568-9.

‘to reject, cast aside’. The primary syllable is *nʿ* which has a negative force,<sup>142</sup> but Syr. *manaʿ* ‘to bring, lead’, ‘to arrive, come, attain’.<sup>143</sup> The Greek transcription<sup>144</sup> gives us a rough Aramaic vocalization of the name in which we may notice an /o/ before α, the vowel of /ʿ/, and the usage of θ for the final /t/ indicating the actual pronunciation of /-aṭ/.

Line 4. The name of the tribe (‘l ‘family, tribe’ = Ar. *ʿāl*), to whom the deceased’s father belonged, is *ʿmrt*.<sup>145</sup> It is vocalized by Milik (1958, 245) as *ʿamirat* through the Greek Αμιραθου (Wuthnow 1930, 19), and it is the feminine present participle (cf. Ar. *ʿumayrah* ‘sub-division of a tribe’ < *ʿamīr* ‘a place inhabited, peopled’).<sup>146</sup> The root comes from the Arabic ‘to build, to live’ (cf. Syr. *ʿmar* with the same meaning) and it is used as a personal name both in Nabataean and in Safaitic;<sup>147</sup> it is also the name of a Safaitic tribe from the northern Transjordan desert.<sup>148</sup> In one of the Nabataean graffiti found in the area of Burqu<sup>149</sup> the author describes himself as *dy mn ʿl mlt*;<sup>150</sup> as Milik argues (1980, 43), *mlt* is a phonetic variation of *ʿmrt*. The Greek part of the inscription does not contain the tribe’s name.

The deceased son’s name is *šlmn* = Gr. Σελαμιν (line 6)<sup>151</sup> < *šlm* ‘peace’. Its variations *šlmn* or *šlmn* (cf. Ar. *salamān*)<sup>152</sup> are well-documented in Petra<sup>153</sup> and in Hegra<sup>154</sup> as well as in the Palmyrene<sup>155</sup> and Hatraean<sup>156</sup> onomastics.

**142** Gesenius 1846, 487 = *DGes*, 699; *KAHAL*, 306. In *JBA*, *PTA*, *Gal.*, *Sam.* *mnʿ* bears the meaning of ‘to hold back, stop doing, withhold’ (Jastrow 1903, 801; *DNWSI*, 661; *DJPA*, 318b; *DJBA*, 687b; *Tal*, *Sam*, 478).

**143** Payne Smith 1903, 282; Sokoloff 2009, 784.

**144** With variations Μοναθος (Wadd. no. 2499) and Μονοαθου (*PPAES* IIIA, 7 no. 800). Cf. Wuthnow 1930, 78.

**145** Cf. Negev 1991, no. 919 and al-Khraysheh 1986, 145.

**146** Al-Khraysheh (1986, 143) noted the existence of the name *ʿmyrt* meaning ‘head-gear’, ‘Kopfschmuck’, the diminutive form of *ʿmrt*.

**147** Negev 1991, no. 53. See also *ICPAN*, 436.

**148** Milik 1958, 245 with references at note 5.

**149** Macdonald 1993, 359.

**150** Milik 1980, 42-3, texts nos. 1-2d.

**151** Pape (1911, 1361) reports the form Σελαμιν attested in Galilee. Further forms are: Σελαμ, Σελαμιανους, Σελεμα, Σελημ, Σελημα, Σελομανης and Σελυμαιω (Wuthnow 1930, 107 and 171).

**152** Pre-Islamic Arabic *slmn*, *Salmān* (*ICPAN*, 326).

**153** *CIS* II no. 426.

**154** *CIS* II nos. 294, 302; *JSNab* no. 172.

**155** *PAT*, 440 = Stark 1971, 51-2 and 114.

**156** Beyer 1998, 166.



Line 5. After the mention of the year when the text was carved, i.e. *bšnt tlt* 'in the third year', an unusual title appears: *hprk* 'eparch',<sup>157</sup> instead of *hprky* 'eparchy' as written in the Greek part; in fact, in the last line we read ἐπαρχεία. In the Nabataean epigraphy the term *hprky*<sup>158</sup> is quite common; it is a Greek loanword < \*ὑπαρχία = ὑπαρχεία 'province, district'.<sup>159</sup> In Nabataean this term is used to mark the territory, in this case that of Bosra, belonging to the *Provincia Arabia*.<sup>160</sup> The year 3 of the eparchy of Bosra corresponds to 108/109 CE, the later date of the era of the City.<sup>161</sup>

Lines 6-7. The Greek section of the inscription starts by mentioning the deceased's name Σελαμαν followed by χρηστέ 'good' that is usually used in the inscriptions along with χαίρειν, as in our case: ἄλυπε 'without pain' and χαῖρε 'hi!'.

Lines 8-9. We find the adjective τεμίω < τίμιος 'well-loved, honoured' referred to the dead son and in line 8 the substantive τὸ μνήμα 'burial monument, gravestone, memory'.

**12.** The inscription is carved on a basalt within a *tabula biansata* that is broken into two parts. The fragment on the left side appears to be worn out and some letters are no longer legible. The epigraph is entirely written in Greek and, according to the first editors, only at the end are we able to distinguish any signs in the Nabataean script.

**Dimensions** height 32 cm; length 55 cm; average height of the letters 3 cm

**Dating** 3rd CE (157 CE?)

**Bibliography** Germer-Durand 1895, 590; Clermont-Ganneau 1898a, 12-14;  
*RES* no. 2021

## Text and translation

- 1) Αβδαλλας Ανα[.]ου το ταφειμα
- 2) τουτο ε[πονη]σεν [εξ ουσ]των ιδιων θε-
- 3) [--]εκατερω
- 4) θεν εκτισεν αμα και [ιε]ρον τερμα
- 5) [...]ετους [--]μη κατα
- 6) στα(σ)εως [.....]Αντωνειν-
- 7) [-ου]Καισαρος ετους ιθ[---] *mnbrk'*

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Cook 1898, 43.

<sup>158</sup> See CNSI nos. 231 and 260; *YTDJD* I nos. 297, 323, 326; II, 97, 109, 111. Generally, for Aramaic see Cook 1898, 44.

<sup>159</sup> The *h* = ε represents ἐπαρχ- / ὑπαρχ- (Wasserstein 1993, 206).

<sup>160</sup> Monferrer-Sala 2013, 106.

<sup>161</sup> Milik 1958, 246.

- 1) Abdallas (son of) Ana[.] this tomb
- 2) m[ad]e [at hi]s own expense
- 3) [---]of the two (side)
- 4) he built at the same time the [sa]cred boundary
- 5) [...].the year [---]340 the foun-
- 6) -da(t)ion (of the city ?) [.....]of Antonin-
- 7) [-o]the Emperor the year 19[---] *mnbrk'* (?)

## Commentary

The author's name is identified, in the *editio princeps*,<sup>162</sup> as Αβδαλλα and his patronymic corresponds to a supposed Σανα. However, it would seem more plausible to accept the hypothesis proposed by Clermont-Ganneau (1898a, 12) who simply reads Αβδαλλας Ανα[μ]ου as 'Abdallas son of Anamos'.

As regards the author's name, it is a theophoric (= Nab. 'bd'lhγ) attested in Greek and in Nabataean epigraphy,<sup>163</sup> as well as his patronymic Αναμος (= Nab. 'nmw).<sup>164</sup> The latter seems to originate from the Arabic *ġānim* 'qui fait du butin qui réussit sans effort',<sup>165</sup> in Saf. 'nm and Palm. 'nmw 'successful, noble'<sup>166</sup> (< Ar. 'to loot, to pillage', 'to rob').

In line 6, after καταστάσεως, according to the epigraphic usage, we should read the noun τῆς πόλεως, in place of the name of the city, that fills the blanks before Ἀνωθενί[ου].<sup>167</sup>

Lines 6-7 provide two important historical references in order to date the inscription; in fact, there is the name of Antoninus (probably the Roman Emperor Antoninus Pius<sup>168</sup>) and the year of his reign, that is XIX corresponding to 157 CE, probably the year in which the inscription was composed. In line 5 we find two further dates, but the first is only visible in the horizontal line above the letters, while

<sup>162</sup> Germer-Durand 1895, 90.

<sup>163</sup> For Nabataean see Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 126; for the Greek form Αβδαλλας cf. PPAES IIIA no. 144 (it is attested in Hauran), Negev 1991, no. 793 and Wuthnow 1930, 7 and 153 in which the form Αβδαλας is recorded. Whereas Αβδαλλα is present in Sinaï in the Wādī Haggag (see Negev 1977, no. 42).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 133-4. In Greek we find forms like Αναμος (Negev 1991, no. 924), Ανεμος (Wadd. no. 2053; Wuthnow 1930, 22), Ανναμος, Ανμος, Ωνεμος (Wuthnow 1930, 23, 121, 159).

<sup>165</sup> Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 134.

<sup>166</sup> PAT, 438 = Stark 1971, 45 and 106.

<sup>167</sup> Clermont-Ganneau 1898a, 13. It is probable that the Σ at the end of the *lacuna*, linked to the Α, truly represents the genitive ending of πόλεως.

<sup>168</sup> Antoninus Pius was Emperor from 138 to 161 CE.

the second, which is 340, coming after  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma$ , indicates the year of the building of the city.

At the end of the last line Germer-Durand recognized some Nabataean characters identifying them as a consonantal sequence such as *mnrk'*. For Clermont-Ganneau (1898a, 13) it may be the name of the city of Madaba either in the Biblical form of *mydb'* (= Heb. *mêdēbā*<sup>169</sup>) or, according to the original Moabitic diction, *mhd b'* which occurs in the stele of Mesha.<sup>170</sup>

## Zīzah (Zuwaiza), East of Madaba

**13.** This epigraph was found during the excavations about 250 metres south-east of Qala'at Zīzah probably near the ruins of an ancient church.<sup>171</sup>

In the inscription, which is engraved on a limestone, the bilingual texts are written on two parallel columns. The stone presents an oblique incision on the base that belonged to another stone. The stone was most likely worked to be embedded in the floor.<sup>172</sup> The two texts are separated by a little central space of about 8 cm. The Nabataean inscription is shorter and more damaged than the Greek and only 12 lines can now be read, though the whole text must have been longer.

**Dimensions** length 70 cm; height of the bigger side on the right 36 cm; height of the smaller side 23 cm; thickness 15 cm

**Dating** beginning of the 2nd c. CE (?)

**Bibliography** *RES* no. 1284; Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 587-92; *JSNAB* nos. 392 and 21, tab. 71; *IGLS* 21,2 no. 154; *Quellen*, 213-5

### Text and translation<sup>173</sup>

- 1) [---]
- 2) [---]y bnh
- 3) dms br hll

**169** Cf. Num 21,30; Josh 13,9.

**170** *CNSI* no. 1.

**171** The ancient town of Zīzah is located on the mountain of Darb al-Ḥağ, east of Madaba. When the stone was extracted the reporters (Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 588) saw no buildings and no trace of a wall that might restore the image of the church. They only found at the bottom of a hole and on the edge a set of columns whose forms and dimensions resembled those of the Roman milestones.

**172** Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 588.

**173** The transcription here presented follows that of *Quellen*, 214.

- 4) *br dms 'mny*
- 5) *dy mr byt'[t--]*
- 6) [Δημ]ας Ελλην[ος]
- 7) [Παν]αμου μηνος [ω]-
- 8) κοδομησεν [το]
- 9) ιερον του Διο[ς τ]-
- 10) ου εν Βεελφε[γωρ]
- 11) και τον ναον [α]-
- 12) [φιερω]σεν σ[---]

- 1) [---]
- 2) [---] who made
- 3) Demas son of Hillel
- 4) son of Demas from 'Amman
- 5) who (is) the Lord of the house
- 6) [Dem]as (son of) Ellen[os]
- 7) in the month of [Pan]amos [bu]-
- 8) -ilt [the]
- 9) sanctuary of Zeu[s]
- 10) who is in Beelfe[gor]
- 11) and the temple
- 12) [sacr]ed [---]

## Commentary

The beginning of the epigraph may be completed by the expression: 'This is the temple of Baal of (Mount) Pegor'<sup>174</sup> in order to recall the lines 10-11 of the Greek section.

In line 3 the author's name, *dms*, is of Greek origin and it helps us to reconstruct the name [Δημ]ας occurring in line 6. Macdonald (1999, 274) suggests a cross reference to Safaitic *dms*, *dmsy*, proposed by Winnett (1973, 54).<sup>175</sup> If this hypothesis is right, Safaitic *dms* may represent the Greek name Δημᾶς-Δαμᾶς as Nabataean *dms* and forms with *nisbah* may reproduce the hypocoristic of Δαμάσιππος.<sup>176</sup> This

<sup>174</sup> Such a reconstruction is found in *Quellen*, 214: "Dies ist der Tempel des Baal vom (Berg) Pegor".

<sup>175</sup> Pre-Islamic Arabic *dms* < *damīs* or also *dms* 'to hasten' (*ICPAN*, 243). He wonders whether in north Arabia a tribe named Damaṣi truly existed. The assumption of Macdonald replaces that of Negev (1991, no. 278), who believes that the forms *dms/dmsy* are identical and there is a link with Arabic *damīs* 'hidden, concealed'. Cf. also Wuthnow 1930, 43. In Nabataean this name is present in *JSNab* no. 392 (cf. Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 83 as well). It is also recorded in Palmyrene (*PAT*, 433 = Stark 1971, 43 and 135) in which the form Δαμας appears.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Milik, Starcky 1970, 142. This kind of hypocoristic is found at al-Ḥiḡr in the shape of *dmsps* (cf. al-Khraysheh 1986, 60) Greek Δαμάσιππος (Pape 1911, 267).

name has Greek origins and its meaning refers to the form Δημέας that Pape (1911, 288) identifies with ‘Volkman’ or ‘Dörfler’, a clear connection with the people (< Gr. δῆμος).<sup>177</sup>

The father’s name is *hll* (= Gr. Ἑλληνο[ος] in line 6).<sup>178</sup> If the reading is right, it represents the Biblical name *hillēl* (Jugd 12,13), the father of Abdon the Pirathonite,<sup>179</sup> whose root *hll* means ‘to be clear, bright’,<sup>180</sup> also ‘to praise, to glory, to celebrate’ in *pi’el* form.

Line 4. The ethnic ‘*mny* is omitted in the Greek part. It deals with an adjective referred to ‘Amman, Ammanite’, the place of birth of the author’s grandfather. In the Nabataean section, Amman is presumably used to indicate the name of the god Ba’al that should appear in line 1, according to the reconstruction.<sup>181</sup>

Line 5. The reading is uncertain, but we find the title, probably bestowed on *Demas*, *mr byt*, that means ‘Lord of the Temple’.<sup>182</sup> If the reading is right,<sup>183</sup> successively we may read a probable ‘*tr*, as this is the ‘Lord of the Temple of the place’.<sup>184</sup>

Line 6. The Greek part of the inscription begins by quoting the author’s name and his father’s name. The reading Δημέας is prompted by the Nabataean text since here we may only trace the middle

**177** *dym*s is a loanword in Nabataean assuming the meaning of ‘people’, as well as in Pal., Sam. and Syr. (DNWSI, 253).

**178** Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 589. Cf. also Negev 1991, no. 303 and Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 86.

**179** In Biblical Hebrew ‘*Abədōn*, in Greek Ἀβδών, he was the twelfth Judge of Israel.

**180** Gesenius (1846, 226) interprets: “used of a clear, sharp tone or sound” and reports that in Ethiopia the women, during the public rejoicing, have the habit of reproducing the sound *ellel-lel-ellel-lel*. Cf. *MDGes*, 278-9 and *KAHAL*, 129-30 ‘rühmen, Gott preisen’. Indeed in Ge’ez we find *tahalala* ‘jubilate, utter cries of joy’. The Hebrew root is connected with Arabic *hallala* (< *halla* ‘to appear, to begin’, also ‘to pour down [the rain], to peal’, therefore ‘to make noise’) that means ‘to praise God, to shout for joy, to rejoice’ (also Akk. *alālu*, *elēlu* ‘to sing a joyful song, boast, exult, celebrate’. Cf. *AHW* I, 34 and 197; *CAD* I, 331 and ff.; *CAD* IV, 80 and ff. and Klein 1987, 152). In the Aramaic of Qumran, CPA, Sam., Man. *hll*, Syr. *hallel* has the same meaning of ‘to pray’ (Jastrow 1903, 353; Sokoloff 2009, 344; Tal, *Sam*, 210).

**181** *Quellen*, 214.

**182** This expression is used in the shape of *mr’ byt’* in *RES* nos. 1088, 1111; *CIS* II nos. 235a, 235b; *JSNab* no. 58; *Quellen*, 269-72 with commentary. It is transcribed as *mr’ byt’* in *JSNab* no. 59, *RES* no. 1284; while *mr byt* in *JSNab* no. 392. Nöldeke (1909, 184-5) argued that, with reference to the inscription in *RES* no. 1088, *mr’ byt’* was to be identified with *rabb al-bayt* which is recorded in the Koran (CVI, 3). In the Nabataean epigraphy the connection of the title *mr byt* to the deity of al-‘Uzzā comes from an inscription from the Wādī Rām (Savignac 1933, 413-5, no. 4), which is engraved on the left of a niche along the road from Jabal al-Kubṭā to Petra (Dalman, 2: no. 46, fig. 42) and in an inscription from Hegra (Nehmé 2005-06, 189-94, no. 12, fig. 134).

**183** In fact, in *mr* all the base of the Nabataean *m* was lost and we may only reconstruct the substantive.

**184** *Quellen*, 214.

line of the A and of the M. On the contrary, Ἐλληνος is more legible.

Line 7. At the beginning we read -AMOY<sup>185</sup> and, on the basis of the following μηνός, we may reconstruct the name of the Greek month [Πάν]ημος.

Lines 9-10. Here we may see the Greek equivalent of the dedication to Zeus (= Διός), the god who 'is' in Belfagor, as expressed in line 10: οὐ ἐν Βεελαφε[γῶρ]. He is a middle eastern deity worshipped by the Moabites; in Hebrew *ba'al-pé'ôr* 'The Lord of mount Peor'.<sup>186</sup> With the arrival of Greek culture in the Moab region, *Ba'al* would become God/Zeus worshipped in other places in the same way.<sup>187</sup>

## Jerash

**14.** This epigraph is engraved on a red dolomitic limestone (in Arabic *Mizzi aḥmar*),<sup>188</sup> found in May 1931 in the ancient town of Jerash,<sup>189</sup> 48 kilometres north of the capital Amman.

The left part of the inscription is ruined by a vertical incision that partially splits the stone into two parts. So, it is hard to read the fragment because the beginning and the end of the stone were lost.

The first who studied this inscription was Father Luis-Hugues Vincent (1872-1960), from École Biblique et Archéologique Française of Jerusalem in collaboration with his colleague Father A.J. Savignac (1871-1962). Father Vincent gave his contribution to the analysis of the Nabataean text as Kraeling reports (1938, 371). (Plate IV, no. 1)

**185** On the contrary, the first editors read -[NE]MOY. Cf. Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 589.

**186** The Bible narrates the event in which the Israelites yoked themselves to the Ba'al of Peor triggering the Lord's anger against them (Num 25,3).

**187** Jaussen, Savignac 1909, 589.

**188** It is common in and around Jerusalem where it has been used in buildings since ancient times. In particular, it was used for *ablāq*-style multi-colored masonry.

**189** The town is located along the banks of the Wādī Ġaraš river, an affluent of the Zarqā' river. The first settlement of some importance is that of the Greeks after the conquest of Alexander the Great, presumably around 331 BCE. However, Jerash only became really important after the Roman conquest in 63 BCE and it was annexed to the Roman province of Syria; in addition, it joined the Decapolis league of cities. During the following two centuries, Jerash conducted business with the Nabataeans and, thanks to the gains of trade and the wealth obtained through agriculture, it became rich and flourishing. Jerash achieved the peak of prosperity in the 3rd century, but the Persian invasion in 614 CE and that of the Arabs in 636 led to its rapid decline. Moreover, in 749 CE a major earthquake destroyed much of Jerash and its surroundings and its population decreased.

**Dimensions** height 39 cm; length 22.5 cm; height of Greek letters about 1 cm;  
height of Nabataean letters 1-2 cm

**Dating** 1st CE (80-81 CE)

**Bibliography** Kraeling 1938, 371-3; Bowersock 1973, 139, no. 54; Amadasi  
Guzzo, Equini Schneider 1997, 55; *Quellen*, 202-3

### Text and translation

- 1) [---]της
- 2) [---]νος
- 3) [---]αυ πο
- 4) [---]δινετο
- 5) [---]εις δυσμα-
- 6) [-ς ---]δ εις νοτ-
- 7) [-ον ---]ιων μερω-
- 8) [ν-- τ]αις επαλξεσι
- 9) [---]μωσ
- 10) *dnh šlm'*[---]
- 11) *dy (nkr/dw/py')* [---]
- 12) *hrtt (?) mlk nbṭw* [---]
- 13) [---]
- 14) [---]
- 15) *[...] 'l ḥyy mr'n' rb'l mlk'* [---]
- 16) *šryn wḥd bsywn šnt 'šr wḥd[h]*

Lines 1-2-3-4 are hard to read

- 5) [---]towards the West
- 6) [---]towards the South
- 7) [---]of the parts (?)
- 8) [--- t]o the shelters
- 9) [---]
- 10) this is the statue (of?) [---]
- 11) that[---]
- 12) Aretas king of the Nabataeans [---]

Lines 13-14 are hard to read

- 15) *[...]* for the life of our Lord Rab'el, the King [---]
- 16) 21 of Siwan of the year 11

### Commentary

In the Greek section, the first four lines carry only some final letters; in lines 5 and 6 we read εις δυσμάς, referring to a direction towards the west, and in the following line εις νότον, in this case indicating a direction towards the south.

The reading of line 7 is rather difficult. On the basis of the facsimile, which was presented by Father Vincent, Kraeling thought the text could be reconstructed as τῶν μερῶν. Subsequently, in a further revision, *Quellen* reads ...ΙΩΝΜΕΙΩΝ<sup>190</sup> not providing a translation.

In line 8 we probably read ταῖς ἐπάλλξεσι which is a possible reference to the protective walls (< ἡ ἐπαλλξις 'means of defence, parapet, shelter'<sup>191</sup>) of the city.

The Nabataean section is quite damaged. At the beginning of line 10 we may only see the sentence *dnh šlm* 'this is the statue', its addressee remaining unknown owing to the deterioration of the stone.

In line 11 the text is illegible as we can observe through the photograph. Initially, Father Vincent tried to reconstruct a segment beginning with the relative pronoun *dy* (it might also be a *nota genitivi*), some gaps (presumably four) due to the corruption of the stone, and the letters *nk* followed by some signs that may be interpreted as *r*, *d*, *w*, *p* and *y*'. The possible combinations on the basis of which a new sentence might be read from this are innumerable.

In line 12 the name *hrtt* 'Aretas' occurs, which is probably a reference to the king Aretas IV.<sup>192</sup>

In line 15 the name *rb'l* appears, probably referring to the last king of the Nabataeans Rabbel II (70-106 CE). The presence of the latter would corroborate Milik's reading of line 16. Indeed, he reconstructs the sentence 'šryn wḥd bsywn snt 'šr wḥd[h] '21 of Siwan of the year 11' of Rabbel II's reign that corresponds to June 81 CE; presumably this indicates the date of the erection of the stele.

The fact that Jerash is the subject of a new state-building plan, after the erection of Zeus's temple in 69 CE,<sup>193</sup> may confirm what has already been mentioned above. The *terminus ante quem* of the urban renovation project is established by an inscription, found in the northwest walls of Jerash, in which we read the name of the Syrian governor Lucius Ceionius Commodus who served as consul from 78 until 81 CE.<sup>194</sup> Between 69 and 80 CE the urban renovation project was completed and huge defensive walls were erected.<sup>195</sup> If the reading ἐπάλλξεσι (line 8) is right, the two directions 'west' and 'south' (lines 5-6) may refer to the boundaries of a plot of land that is ad-

<sup>190</sup> *Quellen*, 202.

<sup>191</sup> *LSJ*, 606.

<sup>192</sup> According to the palaeography of the text, the predecessors Aretas I and Aretas II (169-96 BCE) are earlier, while Aretas IV (9 BC-40 CE) would be more appropriate for our inscription.

<sup>193</sup> Kraeling 1938, 375-6, no. 5.

<sup>194</sup> Kraeling 1938, 397-8, no. 50. Commodus was the first of the *gens Ceionia* to become a consul.

<sup>195</sup> Bowersock 1973, 138-9.



jacent to the walls of the city.<sup>196</sup> There might be a coincidence between the year of Rabbel II's reign and the building of the walls of the city and therefore we can date this inscription to the period between 80 and 81 CE.

## Umm al-Jimāl

**15.** The two inscriptions are written in an altar that was found on the ground of the courtyard of the so-called 'House no. VI' in the eastern part of Umm al-Jimāl, a village about 17 kilometres away from Mafraq in northern Jordan.<sup>197</sup> The column represents a gift to the local deity Dūšarā-A'ara.

As regards the Nabataean text, the shape of the letters could date the engraving of the altar to the 1st or the 2nd century CE, as the editors point out. (Plate IV, nos. 2-3)

**Dimensions** height 140 cm; height of head and base 22 cm and 37.5 cm; height of Nabataean letters 6-13 cm; height of Greek letters 6-10 cm

**Dating** 1st-2nd CE (147 CE?)

**Bibliography** *VIS* no. 120; Levy 1869, 436; *RES* no. 1096; *PPAES* IIIA no. 238; *PPAES* IVA no. 38; *CIS* II no. 190; Clermont-Ganneau 1906a, 215; Meyer 1906, 344; Littmann 1909, 383-6; *JSNab* no. 39; Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 23; Sourdel 1952, 60; *IGLS* 13,1 no. 9031; *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 98

## Text and translation

1) <i>mšgd'</i>	1) Μασε-
2) <i>dy 'bd</i>	2) χος Α-
3) <i>mškw</i>	3) ουειδ-
4) <i>br 'wy-</i>	4) ανου
5) <i>-d' ldw-</i>	5) Δουοσ-
6) <i>-šr'</i>	6) αρει Α-
	7) αρρα

1) The cult-stone	1) Mese-
2) which made	2) kos (son of) A-
3) Mašekō	3) ueid-
4) son of 'Awī-	4) -anos

<sup>196</sup> Kraeling 1938, 373.

<sup>197</sup> Umm al-Jimāl rose in the 1st century CE as a rural suburb of the ancient Nabataean capital of Bosra. The Nabataeans are considered to be the first to build permanent homesteads in the area creating a settlement in which there was mainly a farming community and a trading outpost dependent on Bosra. Cf. De Vries 1998.

5) -dā, for Dū-	5) (for) Dus-
6) - šarā	6) -are A-
	7) -arra

## Commentary

The Nabataean noun *mšgd'* or *mšgd'*, absent in the Greek section, pinpoints the object dedicated to a deity that is a stone idol-altar.<sup>198</sup> The name is presumably a loanword or an interference from Arabic into Nabataean<sup>199</sup> < Ar. *sağada* 'to bend until you touch the ground by your forehead in act of worship'.<sup>200</sup>

In line 3 of the Nabataean text we find the name *mškw* or *mškw* corresponding to Greek Μασεχος in lines 1-2. It is a common name that occurs in the Nabataean and Greek inscriptions from Central Syria and Mount Sinai.<sup>201</sup>

The Greek Μασεχος is also found in the form of Μασαχος.<sup>202</sup> It is the abbreviation of a theophoric name, *mšk'l*.<sup>203</sup> This compound form is recorded in Safaitic *msk-l* and occurs as Μασαχηλω in a Greek inscription from Si' as well,<sup>204</sup> its meaning is '(god) has taken possession'<sup>205</sup> and it is a birth name that represents the cultural uniformity of the Syrian regions of Hauran and Ḥarra.<sup>206</sup>

In lines 4-5 the name 'wyd', corresponding to Greek Αουειδανου,<sup>207</sup> appears. The insertion of the *v* as a suffix is vague and probably

**198** This noun, which is formed by the prefix *m-* indicating the place, is used in Official Aramaic meaning 'place of adoration', 'object serving as a permanent sign of adoration of the god to whom it is dedicated', as a monument or an altar dedicated to a god in order to recognise the gratitude for a favour or to obtain one. Cf. *DNWSI*, 663.

**199** Colombo 1994, 73.

**200** Lane, 1308. In Com. *sgd* 'to bow down, to prostrate' (*DNWSI*, 775).

**201** al-Khraysheh 1986, 115 and Negev 1991, no. 701. Also, *msk* (*ICPAN*, 545). It exists in Palmyrene (*PAT*, 437 = Stark 1971, 37 and 97).

**202** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 118. A certain Eros son of Masekos - Ηρος Μασεχου (*IGLS* 21,5.1 nos. 291, 303) is attested, the name Μασεχος is mentioned in *IGLS* 21,5.1 nos. 348, 349, 350, 351, 352. The form Μασαχος in *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 347, the feminine Μασαχη in *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 346.

**203** This name is present in the bilingual text in no. 28, in *PPAES* IVA no. 101 and in *RES* no. 2117.

**204** Jaussen, Vincent 1901, 572. Cf. also *ESE* I, 337 no. 6.

**205** Sartre 1985, 216.

**206** De Vries 2009, 179.

**207** At Umm al-Jimāl there is an epitaph dedicated to a son of Α]ουιδανου (*IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 512).

Αουειδανος is simply an extended form of the name Αουειδος,<sup>208</sup> used in Arabic as *ʿAwīḏ*.<sup>209</sup> Therefore, *ʿAwīḏā* should be the diminutive form of a Sinaitic name, more precisely *ʿwdw* = Αυδος, hence the corresponding Arabic root *ʿwḏ*.<sup>210</sup> The Arabic verb *ʿwḏa* means ‘to take refuge, to take cover’.<sup>211</sup>

The last two lines 5-6 show the name *dwšrʿ*, equivalent to Greek Δουσαρει. This is the main deity of the Nabataean pantheon, worshipped above all at Petra, Madaʿin Saleh, and Bosra. The name *Dūšarā* deserves a brief analysis: does it concern the deity’s name or is it simply a god’s epithet? From a strictly linguistic point of view, the appellative, in Arabic *ḏū l-šarā*, means ‘who (the owner, the Lord) of al-Šarā’ referring to the mountain range located near Petra,<sup>212</sup> it is a ‘sacred’ mountain range that, during the *Jāhiliyya*, was considered *ḥaram* ‘prohibited’ or *ḥima* ‘protected’; the latter is interpreted as a place protecting animals, plants and fugitives.<sup>213</sup> Actually, the substantive *šarā* also has the meaning of ‘road, tract of land, mountain’<sup>214</sup> and sometimes it is employed in the context of ‘sacred land’.

As a result of the Nabataean cultural expansion, the cult of *Dūšarā* spread along the Mediterranean Sea and therefore Greek and Latin authors mention this deity in the form of Δουσάρης and *Dusares*.<sup>215</sup> Following the Roman conquest, *Dūšarā* continued to represent the main deity of the capital Bosra.

Starting from the middle of the 3rd century, four-year-games in honour of *Dūšarā* were established at Bosra, as can be seen from imperial medals bearing the legend *ACTIA DUSARIA*, along with the representation of a hand press.<sup>216</sup>

A temple dedicated to *Dusares* was found in Italy, at Pozzuoli, since the ancient Puteoli traded with the Near East; the Nabataean pres-

**208** It is present at Umm al-Jimāl in *IGLS* 21,5.1 nos. 203, 204, 206, 243. In the shape of Αουιδη, in *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 205, *PPAES* IIIA no. 288. In addition, a certain Μασεχος, son of Αουειδου, always appears at Umm al-Jimāl in *PPAES* IIIA no. 271.

**209** *PPAES* IIIA no. 138.

**210** Blau 1862, 380. In pre-Islamic Arabic *ʿwd* ‘return’ (*ICPAN*, 447). The forms *ʿwyd* and *ʿwydw* (Beyer 1998, 164) are recorded in Hatraean as well as in Palmyrene (*PAT*, 438 = Stark 1971, 44 and 104-5).

**211** Cf. Al-Khraysheh (1986, 136) who renders *ʿUwaidū* with ‘Zuflucht Suchender’ and Negev 1991, nos. 853, 854.

**212** Peterson 2006, 23-4. Cf. also Wenning 2016.

**213** Gawlikowski 1990, 2663.

**214** Lane, 1545.

**215** This Nabataean deity is quoted in the 9th century by the Arabic historian Hišam Ibn al-Kalbī in his *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*: “The Banū al-Hārith ibn-Yashkur ibn-Mubashshir of the ʿAzd had an idol called *Dū Sharā*” (1952, 33); cf. also Healey 2001, 87.

**216** *VIS* no. 120. Cf. also Stockton 1971, 52.

ence is attested starting from the middle of the 1st century BCE.<sup>217</sup>

In the last line of the Greek text there is the name Ααρρα, not present in the Nabataean part of the inscription. We are dealing with a socio-religious name of considerable importance that identifies the deity ‘r’ worshipped at Bosra and associated with Dūšarā, as we can see in two inscriptions found at Bosra and Imtān.<sup>218</sup> The inscription coming from Imtān and dating to 93 CE describes Dūšarā, who is assimilated to the local deity Ā’arā. It is worth bearing in mind that Dūšarā always had a significant influence on the Nabataean royal house as is shown, for instance, in a legend depicted on a silver coin of king Obodas III, dated to 16 CE.<sup>219</sup> The transfer of the cult of Dūšarā and contextually the shift of the capital from Petra to Bosra under king Rabbel II (71-106 CE) are further proofs that corroborate the previous assumption.<sup>220</sup> As a matter of fact, the king established closer relations between Bosra and Dūšarā assimilating the latter to the local deity Ā’arā.<sup>221</sup> In addition, Rabbel II yearned to make Dūšarā the Nabataean national god, his own god and that of his city.<sup>222</sup>

The present inscription provides the first Greek transcription of the whole name of Dūšarā with the addition of ‘r’ = Ααρρα. As regards its etymology various editors have proposed different theories about its meaning.<sup>223</sup>

Littman’s thesis (*PPAES* IVA, 35) seems to be particularly reasonable; he asserted that Ā’arā derives from Arabic *jarā* meaning ‘good,

<sup>217</sup> Museo archeologico dei Campi Flegrei 2008, 60-3. Cf. Lacerenza 1988-89 and *CIS* II no. 157.

<sup>218</sup> Cf. those inscriptions in Savignac, Abel 1905, 592 and *ESE* I, 330.

<sup>219</sup> Healey 2001, 154.

<sup>220</sup> Teixidor 1977, 85.

<sup>221</sup> Dijkstra 1995, 312.

<sup>222</sup> In the inscription from Imtān we read, lines 5-11: “Dūšarā and Ā’arā God of our Lord who is at Bosra. In the year 23 of Rabēl the king, the king of the Nabataeans”. Cf. *editio princeps* in *VAS*, 169 no. 36.

<sup>223</sup> Particularly, Dussaud and Macler (*VAS*, 169-70) proposed associating ‘r’ with Hebrew *ēšer* ‘treasure’ (the transition /ʿ/ > /s/ is common between Aramaic and Hebrew. Cf. Aram. ‘r’ > Heb. *ereš* ‘earth’), who was the biblical son of Se’ir, in Gen 36,21-30. This latter was a personification of the mountainous region that extends from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea, a territory inhabited by the Nabataeans. In contrast, Lidzbarski (*ESE* I, 330) initially interpreted the term as the equivalent of Latin *abundantia*, that is *ops*, but without philological explanations. At a later stage, he abandoned his first hypothesis proposing to relate Ā’arā to Hebrew *’ršw* = Ar. *ruḏān*, rather than Safaitic *ršw* (*ESE* II, 93). Clermont-Ganneau (1898c, 374) speculated that Ā’arā was the specific name of a god and in particular the form *O’ro* corresponds to the first element of the ancient Arabic deity *Opοραλτ* mentioned by Herodotus (*Historiae* 3.8).

beautiful'<sup>224</sup> 'beau, joli, bon',<sup>225</sup> from which, in turn, the name of a stone idol *al-ġariyyu* derives, under which Dūšarā was worshipped at Petra.<sup>226</sup> In fact, as recorded in the Byzantine encyclopedia Suda, Dūšarā (with the title of Θεός Ἄρης) was worshipped in the shape of a rectangular, rough black stone onto which the blood of the sacrificed animals was poured.<sup>227</sup>

The Greek form would be Ἄρης<sup>228</sup> probably identified with Ares, the God of war. This theory may well be supported if the hypothesis, according to which the deity's name derives from the Arabic *af'al* form *ġry* > *aġrā* 'dyeing' or 'anointing',<sup>229</sup> is true. In fact, *al-ġariyyu* < *ġry*, as stated above, is the name of a stone idol, worshipped by the pagan Arabs and stained or better dyed by the blood of the sacrificed animals; one of its derivatives, *ġariā*, identifies 'a certain red dye'.<sup>230</sup> This is the reason why the connection with the Greek God Ares, the god of war who 'stains himself by blood', would be appropriate both phonologically and culturally.<sup>231</sup>

**16.** The two inscriptions were found separately. The stone on which the Nabataean text occurs was situated in the wall of a house near the central church of Umm al-Jimāl, whereas the Greek part was uncovered in a courtyard not too far from the same church. Although the epigraphs are inscribed on two different stones, they bear the same content. (Plate V, no. 1)

**Dimensions** height of the Nabataean epigraph 28.5 cm, length 62 cm, thickness 17 cm; height of the Greek epigraph 37 cm, l. 57 cm, height of letters 4-4,5 cm (Φ 8 cm)

**Dating** 3rd CE

**Bibliography** *VIS* no. 122; *CIS* II no. 192;<sup>232</sup> *RES* no. 1097; Littmann 1909, 386-90; *PPAES* IIIA no. 238<sup>3</sup>; *PPAES* IVA no. 41; Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 25, no. 13; Sartre 1979, 253-8; *SEG* 29 no. 1604; Robert, Robert 1980, 478-9, 560; De Vries 1998, 33; Mascitelli 2006b, 231-7; *IGLS* 21,5 no. 499; Macdonald et al. 2015, 28-30

<sup>224</sup> Lane, 2254.

<sup>225</sup> Kazimirski 1860, 462.

<sup>226</sup> *PPAES* IIIA, no. 138; *PPAES* IVA, no. 35.

<sup>227</sup> Stockton 1971, 51-2; al-Shorman 2012, 43. In Suda (p. 192): Θεοσάρης τουτέστι Θεός Ἄρης ἐν Πέτρα.

<sup>228</sup> Sourdél 1952, 60.

<sup>229</sup> Teixidor 1977, 85-6.

<sup>230</sup> Lane, 2254.

<sup>231</sup> Wenning 2001, 84-5.

<sup>232</sup> In the *Corpus* the reading is uncertain and some letters are doubtful.

## Text and translation

1) <i>dnh nṣw phrw</i>	1) Η στηλη αυτη Φε-
2) <i>br šly rbw gdymt</i>	2) -ρου Σολλεου
3) <i>mlk tnwh</i>	3) τροφευς Γαδι-
	4) -μαθου βασιλευς
	5) Θανουηνων

1) This is the memorial of Fehrō	1) This (is) the memorial of Fe-
2) son of Šollē, tutor g Gadīmat	2) - ros, (son of) Solleos
3) king of Tanūḥ	3) tutor of Gadi-
	4) - mathos king of
	5) Thanuenos

## Commentary

The Nabataean script seems to be at a transitional stage towards the Arabic script. Indeed we may notice a tendency towards ligature,<sup>233</sup> although the *š* in line 1 is not attached to the preceding *p* and the *y* in *gdymt*, in line 2, is not linked to the following *m*.<sup>234</sup> Moreover, we may observe that the *g* has already assumed a similar form encountered in the Kufic script.<sup>235</sup> Littmann (*PPAES* IVA, 38) suggested that the writer was an Arab who knew Nabataean as an archaic literary language since he used the final *-w* in common names, as we may see in *nṣw* for *nṣ*, line 1, and *rbw* for *rb*.

The tomb is dedicated to a certain *phrw*<sup>236</sup> = Gr. Φερου; his father's name is *šly*, well-documented in other inscriptions.<sup>237</sup> In this case the Greek transliteration Σολλεος does not correspond to the well-known Συλλαιος, who was the minister of the Nabataean king Obodas III, also recurring in the inscription from Miletus (no. 49). It might be a solecism, even if it is recorded elsewhere.<sup>238</sup>

**233** Littmann 1909, 387. This inscription, along with that of Mar'al-Qays of al-Namāra (Louvre Museum, AO 4083; *RES* no. 483) dating to 328 CE, represents an important document of pre-Islamic history.

**234** The tendency to separate the letters is probably due to the *usus* of the monumental inscriptions.

**235** *PPAES* IVA, 38.

**236** Cf. al-Khraysheh 1986, 151-2 for references; Negev 1991, no. 956, probably from Arabic *fīhr* (*ICPAN*, 473). Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 136) translated it as 'pilon en pierre'. In Arabic it is a personal and tribal name, in fact *fīhr* is remembered as the direct descendant of 'Isma'īl and as another name of the Qurayṣ tribe.

**237** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 150; Negev 1991, no. 1137; al-Khraysheh 1986, 174-5.

**238** In an inscription from Be'er Ševa' (Abel 1903, 428, no. 6), while the form Σολλεος in Wadd. no. 1989, *PPAES* IIIA nos. 158 (= Wadd. no. 2003), 212 = Ar. *Sulaiḥ*. Cf. Wuth-

The most important character is Gaḏīmat, the king of the Tanūḥ (*gdymt*<sup>239</sup> *mlk tnwḥ* = Gr. Γαδιμαθου<sup>240</sup> βασιλεύς Θανουηνων). He was a sovereign, documented in the Islamic historiography, who reigned between the Euphrates and Syria as chief of the Tanūḥ tribe<sup>241</sup> in the second half of the 3rd century CE (around 275 CE).<sup>242</sup> As a consequence the stele should be dated to the end of the century.<sup>243</sup>

In the Greek text we read τροφεύς, a term wrongly inflected in the nominative along with βασιλεύς, whereas a genitive is to be expected; this refers to a title granted to Fehrō. In the Nabataean section τροφεύς is rendered as *rb*, translated by Littmann (1909, 387) as ‘Erziehers’, rather than ‘tutor’ (PPAES IVA, 38), giving it the significance of ‘educator’, ‘rabbi’, or better ‘mentor’. Although the first meaning of τροφεύς is ‘one who brings up, foster-father’,<sup>244</sup> we do not exclude that it indicates the role of ‘educator, instructor, teacher’. Sartre (1979, 253-8) thought that it was a late title conferred on members of the court of the Hellenistic kings, such as that of Seleucides or Ptolemaics. To his mind, we are dealing with a parental title of Seleucid influence; as Strabo also wrote (15.4.21), in the Nabataean kingdom there was a king who called ἀδελφός ‘brother’ his administrator – ἐπίτροπος. In the bilingual inscription of Miletus, the minister presents himself as a ἀδελφός βασιλέως, as reported in the Aramaic version ‘*ḥ malk*’ and not *rb*.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, the τροφεύς, instead of σύντροφος ‘foster-brother’, is to be interpreted as ‘père nourricier’ (= θρεπτήρ), ‘putative-father’, as Sartre pointed out.<sup>246</sup> Jeanne and Louis Robert rejected Sartre’s hypothesis<sup>247</sup> without adding a plausible explanation of the term. So, it would appear to be a title linked to a specific task within the royal court, such as that of the tutor.

now 1930, 111 and 163.

**239** al-Khraysheh 1986, 53-4; Negev 1991, nos. 216, 217; Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 77 = Ar. *ḡaḏīmah*. It means ‘cut off, amputated’ < *ḡaḏama* ‘to cut off’ (Lane, 398), Syr. *gdam* and Man. *gdm*; Akk. *gadāmu* ‘to cut off hair’ < Pro. Afro-As. \**gad-* ‘cut, split’ (Sokoloff 2009, 206; CAD V, 8; AHw I, 273; HSED no. 868). Cf. also Ge’ez *gadāmit* ‘that which cuts, scissors’ (Leslau 1991, 182-3).

**240** Wuthnow 1930, 38 and 133.

**241** In the Arabic historiography he is mentioned by al-Ṭabarī, *Kitāb aḥbār al-rusūl wa al-mulūk*, 2: 744-61; Perlmann 1987, 128-43. According to the tradition, Jaḏīmat al-Abraš was one of the first kings of al-Ḥīrah, an enemy of queen Zenobia (Zabbā’) of Palmyre by whom he was killed (cf. al-Mas’ūdī, *Murūj al-dahab wa ma’ādin al-jawhar*, 222 and ff.; Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-ma’ārif*, 216 and ff.).

**242** Mascitelli 2006b, 235.

**243** Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 25.

**244** LSJ, 1827.

**245** Cf. no. 49.

**246** Mascitelli 2006b, 232.

**247** Robert, Robert 1980, 479.

Finally, the Greek translation of the Aramaic term *npš* with *στήλη* should be considered. It is worth remembering that the old Nabataean city of Umm al-Jimāl was rebuilt by Christians, as Littmann asserted (*PPAES* IVA, 40), who looted the ancient tombs in order to erect stone buildings; once the *stelae* were extracted from the ground, they were used as shelves or steps of staircases. With reference to the Greek inscription it would be difficult to establish whether it is a stone employed as a stela or a lintel. The Nabataean word *npš* could refer to both a *stela* and a tomb, meaning that we are dealing with a rare case in which *στήλη* identifies a burial, a tomb.

## Umm al- Qutṭayn

**17.** The epigraph was found at Umm al-Qutṭayn,<sup>248</sup> about 12 km east of Ṣabḥa on the north border with Syria. The inscription is engraved on a basalt, to be more precise on a grayish slab<sup>249</sup>, broken on the right side where the text is almost illegible. The bottom of the stone is not entirely inscribed.

**Dimensions** height 123 cm, length 33 cm, thickness 14 cm; height of letters 9-10 cm

**Dating** last period of Roman Empire (4th-beginning of the 5th c. CE?)

**Bibliography** MacAdam, Graf 1989, 191, no. 3; *SEG* 39 no. 1610; *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 724

### Text and translation

1) [---t] br m[---]

2) εαθ[---]

3) ηετ[---]

4) λ

1) [---] son of [---]

2) -

3) ag[e ---]

4) 30

---

**248** It is an important site in the Hauran. Its ruins show a settlement dating to a period between the Bronze Age and the times of the Ottoman Empire, although its most prosperous period was during the Byzantine era. For a brief history of the village cf. *IGLS* 21,5 no. 319 with a comprehensive bibliography.

**249** MacAdam, Graf 1989, 191.



## Commentary

The legible part of the text consists of four lines. In line 1 there are letters in the Nabataean script representing two names: the first is illegible, except for the final *-t*, and the second contains an initial *m*-. The only recognizable term is *br*.

In line 2 the Greek letters are clear, but unfortunately the remaining part of the inscription does not permit us to identify the name of the deceased. A distinct sequence of characters, such as  $-\epsilon\alpha\theta-$  and  $E\alpha\theta-$  can be observed.

In line 4 we may reconstruct the age of the deceased:  $\eta \epsilon\tau(\tilde{\omega}\nu) \lambda$ , '30 years old'.

After a further analysis of the photograph of the stone, provided by MacAdam, Bader believes that the inscription is totally written in Greek and the rebuttable Nabataean signs are barely more than the initials of the deceased's name:<sup>250</sup> O followed after a space by M, in order to render the feminine name  $O\mu\epsilon\alpha\theta\eta$ , attested in the region of Umm al-Quṭṭayn.<sup>251</sup>

According to the facsimile in the *editio princeps* the inscription would not seem to be bilingual, but after a careful analysis we may distinguish a *t*, at the beginning of line 1, followed by signs that resemble *br*, and at the end of the line a round drawing that looks like a final *m*.

In a space into which three or more characters may fit, the presence of a single O followed by a M (after a space)<sup>252</sup> seems to be improbable.

The palaeography would date the inscription to the end of the 4th century or to the beginning of the 5th c. CE.<sup>253</sup>

---

**250** *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 330.

**251** In *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 669, the inscription was not found and we may only resort to the drawing; in *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 717 a masculine form  $O\mu\epsilon\theta\omicron\upsilon$  occurs with a doubtful  $\mu$ ; in *IGLS* 21,5.1 no. 725 the name is not totally legible, in fact we can only make out  $o\mu\epsilon-$  (in line 1) and  $\theta\epsilon\gamma[v]$  (in line 2) that leave open the possibilities of interpretations.

**252** Bader (*IGLS* 21,5.1: 330) points out that: "Ce qui a été pris pour du nabatéen se lit d'abord comme un O puis, après un espace, un M".

**253** *SEG* 39 no. 1610.

