Egypt

Mt. Sinai

31. The inscription was found between Wādī Haggag and Jabal Mūsā and bears simple names among which, in the Greek part, we read that of the addressee, also mentioned in the Nabataean section along with his father. The same combination of names is attested in another inscription from Sinai.¹ (Plate VIII, no. 1)

Dating  2nd-3rd CE²
Bibliography  SEG 31 no. 1422; Negev 1981, 69

Text and translation

1) Ζεος
2) zyd br p[syw]

1) Zeos
2) Zē(d)ō son of Foṣayō

¹ CIS II no. 2278 we read: šlm, zyd br fsyw. bṭb ‘Peace. Zaydū son of Foṣayū. In good’.
² The approximately 3,000 graffiti from Sinai mostly date from the 2nd and the 3rd century CE (Garbini 2006, 218).
Commentary

The Greek Zeoς (which must not be confused with Zeυς) represents the phonetic transliteration of the Semitic name zy(d)w, here presumably written in scriptio defectiva like in the Greek form without δ.

The same name, in its original shape, appears in another bilingual from Sinai (cf. no. 42); it is Zayd, a widespread name in the Arabic speaking-world, which derives from the root zāda ‘to increase, to grow’.3 It is transliterated in Greek using other variants,4 but in Nabataean there is the assimilation /ay/ > /ē/ reading Zē(ḏ)ō = Zeoς.

The father’s name p/fṣyw comes from Arabic faṣṣā ‘to deliver from’5 (Syr. paṣī and Heb. pāṣā ‘to deliver from, to rescue, to save’);6 the theophoric form, fs’l 7 ‘God has saved’ corresponding to Greek Φασαηλος (Joseph. AJ 14.7.3),8 is also used.


Dating 2nd-3rd CE 

Bibliography Euting 1891, 150; CIS II no. 2258

Text and translation

1) šlm bry’ br klbw bṭb  
2) μνησθη Αυρηλιος  
3) Βοραιος Χαλβου

1) Peace! Borayā[ō] son of Kalbō, in god  
2) Let be remembered Aurelios  
3) Boraios (son of) Chalbos

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4 Zeδος, Zaδος, Zoδος (Wuthnow 1930, 49 and 138).

5 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 137; al-Khraysheh (1986, 153) reads Fuṣaiyu, while Negev (1991 no. 971) Fāṣiya. The name is also found in Palmyrene ps’ and pḥy (PAT, 439 = Stark 1971, 47 and 109).

6 Sokoloff 2009, 1219; Jastrow 1903, 1204; DNWSI, 930; DGeis, 1068-9; KAHAL, 454. It may be an Akkadian influence, from puṣṣū (Kaufman 1974, 84) which means ‘to whiten, to clean’, hence puṣṣu ‘white spot, fleck, mark’ (CAD XII, 539; AHw II, 883). It is probable that the original Akkadian took on the meaning of ‘to save’ (< ‘to deliver from a spot, to clean’?) in Aramaic, thus serving to translate the name as ‘Saviour’. In Hatraean psī has the same meaning, ‘retten’ (Beyer 1998, 182).

7 CIS II, 354; al-Khraysheh 1986, 152-3. In Palmyrene ps’l is employed and translated by Stark (1971, 47 and 109) as “God has opened (the womb)”.

8 Cf. also Pape 1911, 1604. Other versions are Φοσεηλη (IGLS 21,5 nos. 493, 495), Φοσεηλη (IGLS 21,5 no. 704) and Φοσεηλη (IGLS 21,5 nos. 146, 495, 496, 497).
Commentary

The name *bry*’ is mainly used in the Sinaitic inscription, deriving from Arabic *baraad*’ ‘free, blameless’, also *barī*’ ‘innocent’ < Ar. *bariā*’ ‘to be innocent’. According to Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 74), it also expresses the concept of ‘born during the first night of the month’ (cf. Ar. *bar*’ ‘divine creation’). The Greek transliteration, Βοραιος, allows us to read the Nabataean name as */burayō/, that reflects the Arabic diminutive form *buray’ūn*, assuming that the diphthong αι preserves the sound /ai/ and not /e/.

The father’s name *klbw* is linked to Arabic *kalb* ‘dog’ (Com. *klb*, Heb. *keleb*, Akk. *kalbum*) and is often employed as a personal name. The Greek form Χαλβου precisely reflects the shape of *klbw*.

In the Greek section of the graffito the completed name appears, with the addition of Αὐρήλιος (< Roman nomen Aurelius) well-documented in the Greek onomastics.

33. From Wādī ‘Aǧalah (Wādī Fayrān)

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE

**Bibliography** Euting 1891, 258; CIS II no. 1753; RIGP no. 2969 (Nabataean), no. 2970 (Greek)

**Text and translation**

1) šlm ‘wdw br ‘myw
2) Αὐδος Αμ-
3) -μοιυ

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10 Negev 1991, nos. 194, 199. In pre-Islamic Arabic *bry* ‘fatigued’ (ICPAN, 103).
11 The root is reflected in *bara*’ ‘to create’ (linking to *barā*’ ‘to form, fashion by cutting’. Lane, 197).
12 Other forms are Βουρεος (no. 39; CIS II no. 1195; Wuthnow 1930, 37) and Βορειος (Wuthnow 1930, 132).
13 al-Khraysheh 1986, 49.
15 DNWSI, 509; proto-Afro-Asiatic *kVwVl- / *kVyVl- ‘dog, wolf’ in which Sem. *kalb- ‘dog’ may be a consequence of *kal- with the suffix indicating dangerous animals *-b- (Cf. HSED no. 1521).
16 Other forms are Χαλβας, Χαλβης, Χελβες (Wuthnow 1930, 119 and 146).
17 Pape 1911, 117; IGLS 21,5 no. 5; LGPN I, II, IV, VA, VB.
1) Peace! 'Awḏō son of 'Ammayō
2) Audos (son of) Am-
3) -moios

Commentary

The etymology of the name ‘wdw has fully been discussed in the bilingual from Umm al-Jimāl (no. 15), in which the form ‘wyd’ along with the equivalent elongated Greek form Αουειδανος are recorded. The two names, ‘wdw = Gr. Αυδος, are also found in another bilingual from Sinai (cf. no. 38).18

The term ‘myw,19 written in Greek as Αμμοιοι20 did not initially appear to have an equivalent in Arabic;21 conversely, according to al-Khraysheh (1986, 143), the name may be a sort of Arabic diminutive form, ‘Umaiyyu, from ‘ā’mā ‘blind’. Closer examination of the Greek transcription provides us with a particular clue; in fact, taking into consideration the diphthong οι = /i/, the name seems to correspond to Arabic ‘āmmī ‘common, working-class man’, also ‘ordinary man’. Another assumption lies in the fact that the name in Aramaic, ‘mm, takes on the meaning of ‘gentile, non-Jew, Christian’22 (cf. also Syr. ‘ammayā ‘gentile, pagan’ < ‘my ‘to blind’23), and is probably more appropriate in a place like Mount Sinai through which many Christians passed between the 2nd and the 3rd century.

18 Greek Αυδος is attested in IGLS 21,5 no. 241; PPAES IIIA no. 445. Αυδος is also the name of a river in Mauritania (Pape 1911, 175). Other forms are Αουειδανος, Αουειδανοι (Negev 1991, no. 851), Αουειδανος (IGLS 21,5 no. 202), Αουειδανος (IGLS 21,5 nos. 206, 712) and Αουειδανος (AGLI, 134, 179; IGLS 21,5 nos. 99, 132, 203, 204, 324, 434, 482, 604). Cf. Wuthnow 1930, 29 and 124 as well.

19 It is found in RES no. 489.

20 Other forms are Αμμαιος (CIS II no. 1197 and no. 40), Αμεοις (Euting 1891, 342).

21 Cantineau (1930-32, 2; 132) wrote: “pas d’équivalent sûr en arabe”, suggesting Aramaic origin from ‘mm ‘meeting, community’. Cf. also Negev 1991, no. 903.

22 In Gal., PTA, CPA, Sam., JBA (Jastrow 1903, 1089; DJPA, 411a; DJBA, 869b; Tal, Sam, 644a).

23 Payne Smith 1903, 417; Sokoloff 2009, 1110 and 1112.
Corpus of Nabataean Aramaic-Greek Inscriptions, 103-120

34. From Wādī Muġārah (Plate VIII, no. 2)

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE

**Bibliography** CIS II no. 671; RIGP no. 1430

**Text and translation**

1) šlm ‘lktryw
2) br hny’w bṭb
3) το προσκυνημα-
4) -μα Γ...

1) Peace ‘Alkatrayō
2) son of Honēāō, in good
3) the venera[tio]-
4) n G...

**Commentary**

The graffito contains the name ‘lktryw, which is rare in the Nabataean onomastics; it is presumably a theophoric with the Arabic definite article ‘l-. *Ktryw* is probably the name of the deity *Katrā*, a pre-Islamic idol that was worshipped by the tribes of Ṭasm and Ḥadīs, meaning that the addressee of the epigraph bears a divine name.

The father’s name *hny’w* corresponds to Greek Ονεος and it is the Arabic diminutive hunay’ < hānī’ ‘servant’, ‘happy, cheerful’.

The Greek part is less legible and we may only distinguish the term το προσκυνημα followed by various letters.

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24 ICPAN, 495.

25 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 108-9; Negev 1991, no. 586. The two names refer to mythological clans of Ancient Arabia who settled in the Yamāma region (in the eastern part of Nağd). The Ṭasm and the Ḥadīs belong to the so-called ‘Disappeared Arabs’ (Ar. al-’Arab al-bāʾidah), a label with which genealogists indicate the groups of people who began to speak Arabic first, after the confusion of the languages provoked by the destruction of the Tower of Babel (Fahd 1968, 109; Heinriches 2000, 359-60).

26 According to al-Khraysheh (1986, 36), the name specifies something that is on top, a jag, a hump, ‘der Hochgestellte, Höcker’.

27 It is attested in Euting 1891, 229.

28 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 87; al-Khraysheh 1986, 63; Negev 1991, no. 311. The basic root is *haniā’* ‘to cheer up’, ‘to feel pleasure’ < CPA, JBA, Gal., Man., Syr. hny ‘to be pleasing, benefit, profit’, ‘to aid someone’ (Jastrow 1903, 359; DJPA, 166b; DJBA, 386a; Tal, Sam, 211a; DNWSI, 289). In Palmyrene hn’y (PAT, 433 = Stark 1971, 15 and 84) and in Hatraean hny (Beyer 1998, 12-13, 52, 158 and 174) with the same meaning.

29 For the practice of the *proskynema* in Egyptian setting, see Geraci 1971.
35. From Wādī Mukattab

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE  
**Bibliography** *CIS* II no. 985; *RIGP* no. 2177

**Text and translation**

1) αλλσος  
2) ρυοτε  
3) μου  
4) μ šlm ‘šrw t ‘mm  

1) you leapt As-  
2) -ru with(?) a-  
3) -mum-  
4) -m peace ‘Ašrō with (?) ‘Amum

**Commentary**

This graffito presents some problem of interpretation. In line 1 the Greek letters αλλσος do not provide a solution regarding a possible reading and they do not correspond to the beginning of the Nabataean line in which šlm is written, so we could interpret them as ἄλσος (2nd sg. pers. of the third Aorist Indicative < ἅλλομαι) ‘you leapt’. This obviously has no connection with the meaning that the term šlm assumes in the funerary inscriptions. Furthermore, it seems more improbable to read ἄλσος as ‘grove, sacred grove’, but either as also ‘any hallowed precinct’. The presence of the two λ may be due to a scribal error.  

Following the Nabataean text, after šlm we see the name ‘šrw(t) with a doubtful final -t that is unrelated to the *corpus* of the word. If the reading is right, in Greek we have an assimilation between the o of ἄλσος and the α of (α)σρυ representing the phonetic transliteration of the Arabic name ‘Āsrā (a female name used in the Arabic-speaking world) = m. ‘Īsrā’ < sarā ‘to travel by night’. The t may repre-

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30 Cf. *LSJ*, 70 and 73; Homer, *Il.* 16,754. We also have ἄλτο encountered in line 755.  
31 Cf. Lat. *salio* ‘to salt, to salt down, to leap, to jump’ to which the etymology of the Greek root is linked (Beekes 2010, 72).  
32 *LSJ*, 73.  
33 In another graffito from Sinai (in Euting 1891, 328) we read the name αλσορεος, with one λ that is probably the Arabic article ‘al-.  
34 Lane, 1355. In pre-Islamic Arabic the form ‘srw < srw ‘to be generous, manly’ is used. In Com. the root šry means ‘to loosen, untie’ (cf. Jastrow 1903, 1629-30), also ‘to
sent the Semitic particle ‘t (cf. Heb. ‘ēt or Akk. itti) ‘with, alongside’\textsuperscript{35} written in \textit{scriptio defectiva}, but employed in \textit{plena} in the Greek \textit{ōt} (loanword?).

The last name ‘\textit{mm} = \varepsilon\mu\omega\nu\mu\iota\omicron\upsilon\mu} comes from a well-attested root, discussed at no. 33.

\textbf{36. From Wādī Mukattab}

\textbf{Dating} 2nd-3rd CE

\textbf{Bibliography} Levy 1860, 451-2, no. 34; \textit{CIS} II no. 973; \textit{RIGP} no. 2139

\textbf{Text and translation}

1) Šlm.
2) Šlm bry’w br mg[dyw]
3) (B)ouřeoς

1) Peace!
2) Peace, Borayāō son of Mug[đēō]
3) (B)ouřeos

\textbf{Commentary}

The first name \textit{bry’w} is found in other two bilinguals (nos. 32 and 39). As regards the second name, although the line is damaged, after \textit{br} two letters, \textit{mg-}, and probably [\textit{-dyw}] appear and allow us to reconstruct the name \textit{mgdyw}. It is an Arabic root < \textit{maġdī} o \textit{maġīd} ‘glorious, famous, worthy’.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{35} In Qumran, Gal., PTA, Man. ‘\textit{t} assumes the meaning of ‘sign, mark’, in Com. that of ‘miracle’, as we may find, for instance, in BA ‘ātayyā‘ (Dan 3,32), in Syr. ātā means ‘sign, mark, miracle, example’, also ‘monument’ (\textit{DJP}A, 78b; \textit{DJBA}, 175b; Jastrow 1903, 132; Cook, \textit{Qumran}, 26; Sokoloff 2009, 109).

\textsuperscript{36} Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 111-2; \textit{ICPAN}, 528; al-Kraysheh 1986, 104; Negev 1991, no. 608. The name is also attested in other inscriptions from Sinai (\textit{CIS} II nos. 2377, 2388, 2443), while another \textit{m’gydw} is present in a Nabataean inscription found at al-Ruwāfah (\textit{Quellen}, 300). The root is already known in Aramaic (\textit{mgd}) indicating ‘precious goods’ (Jastrow 1903, 249), Syr. magdā ‘some sort of fruit’ (Payne Smith 1903, 249; Sokoloff 2009, 707), Heb. \textit{meged} ‘gute Frucht’, ‘Ertrag an Früchten’ (\textit{DGes}, 625 and \textit{KAHAL}, 277). In addition, in Palmyrene and Samaritan Aramaic \textit{mgd} assumes the meaning of ‘gift’ (\textit{DNWSI}, 592; \textit{PAT}, 377; Tal, \textit{Sam}, 450).
In Greek we see the forms Μουγδος37 and Μαγδος38. The Greek section of the graffito includes the name Ουρεος which may probably be reconstructed as Βουρεος (see below no. 39; CIS II no. 1195).

37. From Wādī Mukattab. On the top of the inscription the figure of a man with his arms in the air, presumably in prayer, appears; the figure is apparently bare-foot and his sandals are presumably engraved between his legs. This image recalls the order given by the Lord to Moses (Exod 3,5) and Joshua (Gen 5,15), that is to take off their sandals for they were standing on the Holy Land.

Dating 2nd-3rd CE

Bibliography CIG no. 4668a; CIS II no. 1044; Euting 1891, 596; Levy 1860, 469-72, no. 47; Chabot 1901, 442-50; ESE I, 339-40; Clermont-Ganneau 1903, 59-66; RIGP nos. 2213 (Nabataean), 2209 (Greek)

Text and translation

1) mdkyr 'wšw br hršw ṭryw bṭb
2) μνησθη Αυσος Ερσου
3) καλ(ε)ται Ο(?)υμαρου
4) εν αγαθοι[ς]

1) Let be remembered 'Āwšō son of Ḥeršō (which is called) Ṭarīō in good
2) Let be remembered Ausos (son of) Ersos
3) which is called (he who is the son of?) Umaros
4) in goood]

Commentary

Line 1. There is the mention of the name 'wšw, well-known in the Nabataean epigraphy,39 which comes from Arabic 'aws ‘gift’ < 'ādaśa

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37 DM, 76; Wuthnow 1930, 79.
38 Wuthnow 1930, 68 and 147.
39 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 57-8; al-Khraysheh 1986, 29; Negev 1991, no. 52. Cf. pre-Islamic Arabic 'ws, 'ws'; 'wst < 's, 'āssa ‘to build, found’ or 'aws 'gift' (ICPAN, 40 and 84) = OfA, CPA, LJLA 'ws'; Qumran S (Jastrow 1903, 35; Cook, Qumran, 25; DNWSI, 47) and BA w’ūsayyā‘ (Ezra 4,12) ‘foundation’.

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to give, to offer'.

In Greek, the form corresponds to Ἀὐσος. The second name, ḥršw, is of Arabic origin too and according to Cantineau (1930-32, 2: 100) is linked to ḥirš ‘wood, forest’, although this connection is not very convincing. In the Palmyrene epigraphy, though, the presence of ḥrš, ḥršw ‘mute, dumb’, as well as ḥršw in Hatraean, suggests that this name simply means ‘mute, dumb’, probably deriving from Arabic ʿāḫraš (cf. Heb. ḥērēš). Greek Ἐρσοῦ (in CIS II no. 972) is recorded in other forms.

The last name was read differently by the first editors, but on the basis of a close analysis of the text we may read ṭryw, a nickname of Arabic origin from ṭariyy ‘fresh’ < ṭariā or ṭaruwa ‘to be fresh (like meat)’, also ‘to be new, tasty, soft, tender’.

In line 2 the Greek text begins, and we subsequently reach the ambiguous part of the graffito since after καλεῖται almost all the editors interpreted the element ΟΥΜΑΡΟΥ as the name Οὔμαρος = ‘Omar (Nab. ’mrw?). The writer probably carved the name declining it in the genitive, Οὐμαρου, maybe a nickname, and it is unclear

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40 In Palmyrene the form ḳwšy is attested (PAT, 429 = Stark 1971, 3 and 66); the root may also indicate the ‘wolf’ (Chabot 1901, 445, no. 1). The form ḳwšw is recorded in Quellen, 144, 171, 348, 361.

41 Wuthnow 1930, 30 and 124; AGLI, 59, 62, 152; IGLS 21,5 nos. 152, 378, 432, 467, 522 (?), 572, 661, 666; The name Ἀὐσος is also present in an inscription of the Late Roman period dating back to the 3rd c. CE from the acropolis of Avdat in which Ausos was the grandfather of Amenos, one of the builders of the Nabataean temple (Negev 1981, 13-14, no. 1e). Another form of the name is Ἀουσος (Wadd. nos. 2205, 2511).


43 PAT, 435 = Stark 1971, 23 and 90.

44 Beyer 1998, 159.

45 Ἐρσος, Ὀρσος, Ἐρασος, Ἐρας (Wuthnow 1930, 46, 47, 89, 143).

46 After the initial ṭ the second letter may be read b or n, so ṭbyw or ṭnyw (Chabot 1901, 445-6), the latter may identify a job, that is Ar. ṭaniyy ‘merchant of dates’, or a non liquet about its meaning (Clermont-Ganneau 1903, 61-2).

47 It is the first assumption proposed by Euting (1891, 596) and re-suggested by Stone (RIGP no. 2213). On the contrary Lidzbarski (ESÉ I, 339) read ṭbyw.


49 In the Koran (16,14; 35,12) it is an epithet referred to meat or fish; in Hebrew ṭārī ‘fresh’ is employed in connection with the ‘wound’ (Isa 1,6) and the jaw of a donkey (Jdg 15,15), so ṭārī has the original meaning of ‘plucking off’ (Gesenius 1846, 324 = DGes, 428; KAHAL, 199). In Gal. and in LJLA ṭry, ṭryt’ indicates a kind of salty fish sold at the market (Jastrow 1903, 554); presumably Greek borrowed from Aramaic the word θρίσσα (Att. θρίττα) ‘twait shad’ (Alosa fallax).

50 The Greek section was read differently in CIG no. 4668a: Μνησθῇ Αὔλος Ἐρσοῦ Καλλιταιοῦ Μάρου ἐν βάδε ἐ( Ἐρας) ὁ[ν].

51 Clermont-Ganneau 1903, 62 and no. 1.
whether it is referred to Αυδος or Ερσου. According to the formulaic usage, after καλείται the employment of ὁ καί ο ή τοῦ καί is expected. If the person mentioned in the inscription bears a second name, this would be put next to the first name, as is typical in the Greek-Palmyrene and Nabataean epigraphy. It seems that the author conformed Ουμαρου to the genitive in accordance with Ερσου making a mistake. We may suggest not reading Ουμαρου, but: ὁ (καί) Υμαρου ‘he who is the son of Umaros’.

38. From Wādī Mukattab.

Dating 2nd-3rd CE  
Bibliography CIS II no. 1194; RIGP nos. 2367 (Nabataean), 2371 (Greek)

Text and translation

1) šlm ‘wdw br ‘lmb  
2) qrw ‘qry bṭb  
3) μνησθη  
4) Αυδος Αλμο-  
5) - βακκερου

1) Peace. ‘Awḏō son of ‘Almoba-  
2) - qqrō ‘Aqarī, in good  
3) Let be remembered  
4) Audos (son of) Almo-  
5) - bakkers

Commentary

The addressee’s name is ‘wdw = Gr. Αυδος, whose etymology is widely discussed in nos. 15 and 33.  
The father’s name, ‘lmbqrw, corresponding to Gr. Αλμοβακκερου, shows the definite article ‘l- before the personal name mbqrw < Com. bqr ‘regarder avec soin, examiner’. The participle active emphatic

52 Clermont-Ganneau 1903, 63. It is common to use the formula: A called A son of B, or A son of B called B and never A son of B called A. In Nabataean, as well as in Palmyrene, next to the common Greek expression ὁ καί, ἐπικαλούμενος etc., we find dy mtqr’ ‘which is called’ (cf. VfS no. 123a) with orthographic variations as in Nabataean of Sinai mtqr (see CIS II no. 1254 = Euting 1891, 567).

53 In the bilingual no. 22 Υφφαλος is used without the diphthong ου.

54 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 61 and 73-4.
“mqbr’” means ‘one who examines the victims (i.e. a certain priest).’
Possibly the meaning of the name is ‘examiner’ – ‘al-Mobaqqerō.’
The name is common in the area of Mount Sinai.

In the Nabataean section a second name, ‘qry’, appears referring to the previous one, which is absent in the Greek part; it is found in another Sinaitic inscription (CIS II no. 1010) and it refers to a demonym.

39. From Wādī Mukattab.

Dating 2nd-3rd CE
Bibliography CIS II no. 1195; RIGP no. 2372 (Greek)

Text and translation

1) μνησθῇ
2) Βουρεος
3) Σαδαλλου
4) dkýr bry’w
5) br š’d’lhy

1) Let be remembered
2) Bureos
3) (son of) Sadallos
4) Let be remembered Burēāō
5) son of Ša’dallahā

Commentary

For the name bry’w = Gr. Βουρεος compare the commentaries at nos. 32 and 36. As regards the father’s name, š’d’lhy = Gr. Σαδαλλου, it is a theophoric in which the first element š’d means ‘être heureux,

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55 DNWSI, 187, s.v. “bqr.”
56 al-Khraysheh 1986, 36.
57 There are occurrences in a graffito from the Wādī Haggag (Negev 1977, no. 221) and from other regions of Sinai too (see CIS II nos. 1222, 1489, 2214, 2383, 3196).
58 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 134.
59 Other forms are Σαδδηλος, Σαδε(ι)λος, Σαδαλας (Wuthnow 1930, 101 and 173), Σαδαλλας, Σαδε(ι)λος, Σαδελος (IGLS 21,5 nos. 699, 454, 572).
propice', Ar. sa'd 'delight, luck', then Sa'dallahi 'luck of God', in addition it indicates the name of a tribe.

40. From Wādī Mukattab.

Dating 2nd-3rd CE

Bibliography CIS II no. 1197; RIGP nos. 2374 (Nabataean), 2401 (Greek)

Text and translation

1) dkyr hrf[y]šw
2) br ’myw bṭb
3) μνησ Αρισος
4) -θη Αμμαιος

1) let be remembered Ḥar[i]šō
2) son of ‘Ammayō, in good.
3) let be remember- Arisos
4) -ed (of the) Ammaios

Commentary

As regards the two names hrf[y]šw = Gr. Αρισος and ’myw = Gr. Αμμαιος, see respectively our inscriptions nos. 37 and 33. In the Greek section, μνησθη is divided into two parts; the final -θη continues in the following line. As far as Αμμαιος is concerned, we should expect Αμμαιου in the genitive case rather than in the nominative case; it is probably due to a scribal error. Ḥarīšō, son of ‘Ammayō, should be the priest of T’, the goddess who appears in other inscriptions from Sinai.


41. Wādī Mukattath. (Plate VIII, no. 3)

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE

**Bibliography** CIS II no. 1032; RIGP no. 220

**Text and translation**

1) dkyr 'yydw br 'wšw bṭb
2) ['wšw br 'yyd[w]
3) Αυσος

1) let be remembered ‘Oēḏō son of ‘Āwšō, in good
2) ['Āwšō son of ‘Oēḏ[ō]
3) Ausos

**Commentary**

The inscription gives the name 'yydw, possibly the diminutive form of the most frequent and documented 'yd> (< Ar. ‘āy’ḏ ‘qui cherche un refuge’),[64] for a more detailed analysis see the inscription no. 15. The form Οαεδος (Wadd. no. 2472) is registered in Greek. As regards 'wšw = Αυσος, see comments in the inscription no. 37.

42. From Wādī ‘Aǧalah. This is not a real bilingual inscription since the probable Nabataean section was proposed by Euting.

**Dating** 2nd-3rd CE

**Bibliography** Euting 1891, 253; RIGP no. 3562

**Text and translation**

1) Μνησθή
2) Χαλίως Ζε-
3) -δου

1) k/ḥlyy
2) zydyy

1) Let be remembered
2) Chalios (son of) Ze-
3) -dos

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64 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 129. In pre-Islamic Arabic 'ydd ‘aid, feast?’ (ICPAN, 450).
1) K/Ḥalī
2) Zēḏī

Commentary

The name Χάλιος seems to be of Greek origin since the toponym Χάλιος (f. Χάλια), indicating the city of Boeotia, is mentioned by Stephanus of Byzantium. In this case it is an Aramaic name, that is hły 'sweet', 'to be sweet', used in Egyptian-Aramaic, Syria, Christian-Aramaic, Palestinian-Jewish, Mandaean and Samaritan. Therefore, it is probably an adjective 'one who is sweet, one who has a good heart' (cf. Ar. ḥalwā or ḥulū).

As regards the father’s name, Ζεδου = Nab. Zydyy, see the explanation in the inscription no. 31. In the Nabatean section the two names appear with a final -y rather than with the usual -w; we can formulate two hypotheses: according to the first one, the final -y could be the adjectival suffix (as in Arabic); according to the second one, it could be the genitive case marked by the author.

43. From Wādi ‘Aḡalah. (Plate IX, no. 1)

Dating 2nd-3rd CE
Bibliography CIS II no. 1719; RIGP nos. 2925 (Nabataean), 2952 (Greek)

Text and translation

1) Aνεος
2) šlm hn’w

1) Aneos
2) Peace! Han’eēō

Commentary

The epigraphy gives a name, hn’w, already mentioned in the Sinaitic bilingual from Wādi Muḡārah (no. 34). The Greek form, Aνεος, is a variation of Oνεος which is preserved in this inscription.

67 Cf. Jastrow 1903, 467; Payne Smith 1903, 143; Sokoloff 2009, 455; Tal, Sam, 271; DNWSI, 374.
68 Another occurrence of this name, though in the genitive case, is recorded in AGLI, 14.
Bīr Umm Ḍalfah

44. This graffito was found at Bīr Umm Ḍalfah, a station located north-west of Safāǧa, along the road that went to Myos Hormos, an ancient seaport built on the Red Sea by the Ptolemies in the 3rd century CE. The epigraph seems to have been engraved by two different people who wrote down their names. (Plate IX, no. 2)

**Dating** unknown

**Bibliography** Littmann, Meredith 1953, 8, no. 13

**Text and translation**

1) šmrḥw
2) Γαρα(μ)ου

1) Šimraḥō
2) Gara(m)os

**Commentary**

We notice that the initial š of šmrḥw is written in an unusual way. The letter has a quadrangular form and its vertical left edge is longer than the right; in fact, it looks like the Hebrew q; above the initial š there is a cross, probably symbolising the religious faith of the deceased. The name, mainly recorded in Sinai, is linked to the Arabic šimrāḥ ‘rameau de palmier ou de vigne chargé de fruits’.\(^{69}\) The root, also used in Arabic as šumrūḥ, may identify a stem of the branch ‘of a palm tree originally related to a raceme of dates’.\(^{70}\)

In the Greek section we notice the letter M of Γαρα(μ)ου cut in two parts; at the end of the line a symbol of obscure meaning appears. The name is the Greek form of Γαραμός, Γαρμός\(^{71}\) = Nabataean grmw and also occurs in no. 28 (see this inscription for the philological analysis).

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\(^{69}\) Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 152; al-Khraysheh 1986, 178-9; Negev 1991, no. 1158. The same is found in Litmann 1953, 13, no. 33 and in Litmann, Meredith 1954, 216, nos. 56 and 57.

\(^{70}\) Lane 1863, 1596. Pre-Islamic Arabic šmrḥ shumrukh ‘stalk of the palm?’ (ICPAN, 357).

\(^{71}\) Wuthnow 1930, 39; Wadd. no. 2513.
"ʿĀbū Kū"

45. The graffito was found at ‘Ābū Kū’, literally ‘father of the corner’
(also ‘curve of the street’), a raised wādī, next to a hairpin bend,
slightly west of the Roman station/well (Hydreuma) al-Muwayh; this
station is located between Koptos (modern day Qift) and Leukos Li-
men (modern day al-Quṣayr al-Qadīm).72 (Plate IX, no. 3)

Dating about 1st-3rd CE
Bibliography Littmann, Meredith 1954, 217-8, no. 59

Text and translation

1) šlm ‘bn ‘lqyny br
2) ‘myw bṭb
3) Εβνάλκαιν-
4) -ος Ομα-
5) -ι(ο)u

1) peace. ʿĒbn al-Qaynī son of
2) ‘Omayō. In good.
3) Ebn Alkain-
4) -os Oma-
5) -i(o)u

Commentary

The Nabataean name ‘bn ‘lqyny = Gr. Εβν Αλκαινος has been dis-
cussed in no. 7, the inscription that comes from the sanctuary of the
goddess Allat in Wādī Ram. We notice the usage of Arabic ‘bn and
the article ‘l-. The name is mainly recorded in Sinai.73

The father’s name, ‘myw = Gr. Ομαι(ου), is also recorded in two
other bilingual inscriptions from Sinai (nos. 33 and 40); we refer to
these for philological explanations.

The Nabataean text is not particularly difficult to read and to in-
terpret apart from the last three letters of ‘lqyny, line 1, since the fi-
nal y seems a t.

73 Cantineau 1930-32, 2: 143. The presence of Qaynō and ʿĒbn al-Qaynī in the Nabatae-
an onomastics may refer to the Qeniti, the tribe of Yethro (father in-law of Moses) who set-
tled in Sinai and Negev and probably worshipped the god Yahweh (Zayadine 1990, 160).
As regards the Greek section, we notice a discordant writing. The N of ΕΒΝ shows a horizontal line, probably due to a mistake by the author, and the M of ΟΜΑΙΟΥ is not entirely visible.

In line 4, at the end of the sequence, there is a sign that could seem Greek -ιω. It could form the name ΟΜΑΙΟΥ, but it is more probable that it is a symbol of the author (his signature?) and the signs in line 5 represent the suffix -ιΟΥ of ΟΜΑΙΟΥ.

As concerns the dating of this epigraph, we have to consider that the graffito from Abū Kū’ was drawn up in a period of time probably ranging from Augustus to Maximinus Thrax (1st-3rd century CE)\(^7\).\(^4\)

**Wādī Ġiḍāmī**

46. The inscription was found in the Wādī Ġiḍāmī on the way to Safāḡā on the Red Sea. (Plate X, no. 1)

**Dating** unknown
**Bibliography** Littmann, Meredith 1954, 222-3, no. 71

**Text and translation**

1) Ουααβλας
2) br ryšw br
3) 'wšw šlm

1) Wahballāh
2) son of Rayšō son of
3) 'Āwšō. Peace

**Commentary**

Curiously enough, the author of the graffito transcribed his name into Greek and his ancestors’ names into Nabataean. Probably, the first is a mistake; in fact, we may expect Ουβαλλας or Ουβαλλας (see no. 7) instead of Ουααβλας. In this case the author used A to render Nabataean H.

\(^7\) Fournet 1995, 175.
The father’s name ryšw is the equivalent of the Arabic raʾīs ‘boss, leader’,\(^7\) while the ancestor ‘wšw is well-attested in the Nabataean epigraphy.

\(^7\) Rāʾīs is recorded as the name of an Arabic tribe in Egypt (Littmann, Meredith 1954, 222), but Negev (1991, no. 1071) interprets it as the Arabic rašš ‘to sprinkle’.