

THE AYL TO RAS AN-NAQAB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY,
SOUTHERN JORDAN (2005–2007)

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The Ayl to Ras an-Naqab Archaeological Survey,
Southern Jordan (2005–2007)

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By

BURTON MACDONALD, LARRY G. HERR,
D. SCOTT QUAINANCE, GEOFFREY A. CLARK,
AND MICHAEL C. A. MACDONALD

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DVD Design: D. Scott Quaintance; photos by D. Scott Quaintance
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Abbreviations and Symbols

ARNAS	The Ayl to Ras an-Naqab Archaeological Survey
B	Bronze
bods	body sherds
Byz	Byzantine
C	Safaitic inscriptions, in <i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum. Pars V. Inscriptiones Saracenicis Continens, Tomus 1. Inscriptiones Safaiticae</i> . Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1950–1951.
Chal	Chalcolithic
CIH	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum. Pars IV. Inscriptiones Himyariticas et Sabaeas continens</i> . Paris: Reipublicae Typographeo, 1889–1932.
Class	Classical
E	Early/East
ED	European Datum 1950
EPI	Epipaleolithic
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GPS	Global Positioning System
Hell	Hellenistic
Isl	Islamic
KJC	Hismaic inscriptions in King 1990.
L	Late/Lower/Looking
LGM	Last Glacial Maximum
M	Middle
MIS	Marine Isotope Stage
N	North
Mod	Modern
Nab	Nabataean
NL	Neolithic
NRA	Natural Resources Authority
Per	Persian
PL	Paleolithic
poss	possible
prob	probable/probably
Rom	Roman
RS(s)	Random Square(s)
S	South
SGNAS	Southern Ghors and Northeast 'Araba Archaeological Survey
TBAS	Tafila-Busayra Archaeological Survey
U	Upper

UD	Un-diagnostic
W	West
WGS	World Geodetic System 1984
WH	Safaitic inscriptions in Winnett & Harding 1978.
WHS	Wadi al-Hasa Archaeological Survey
WHI	Thamudic inscriptions in Winnett & Reed 1973.
/	either/or
#	number
-	through

Archaeological Periods and Dates

Lower Paleolithic Period	(ca. 1.4 mya–250,000 BC)
Middle Paleolithic Period	(ca. 250,000–40,000 BC)
Upper Paleolithic Period	(ca. 40,000–20,000 BC)
Epipaleolithic Period	(ca. 20,000–8500 BC)
Neolithic Period	(ca. 8500–4500 BC)
Chalcolithic Period	(ca. 4500–3300 BC)
Early Bronze Period	(ca. 3300–1950 BC)
Middle Bronze Period	(ca. 1950–1550 BC)
Late Bronze Period	(ca. 1550–1200 BC)
Iron I Period	(1200–1000 BC)
Iron II Period	(1000–539 BC)
Persian Period	(539–332 BC)
Hellenistic Period	(332–63 BC)
Roman (and Nabataean) Periods	(63 BC–AD 324)
Early Roman	(63 BC–AD 135)
Late Roman	(AD 135–324)
Byzantine Period	(AD 324–640)
Early Islamic Period	(AD 640–1099)
Middle Islamic Period	(AD 1099–1517)
Late Islamic Period	(AD 1517–1917)
Modern Period	(AD 1917–Present)

Chapter 6

Inscriptions, Rock Drawings and *wusūm* from the Ayl to Ras an-Naqab Archaeological Survey

by Michael C. A. Macdonald

This report on the inscriptions, rock art, and *wusūm* (tribal marks) found on “The Ayl to Ras an-Naqab Archaeological Survey” (AR-NAS) is based on the photographs kindly sent to me by Professor Burton MacDonald. I have not been able to examine the originals, and occasionally this has meant that I have had to mark as uncertain or unreadable letters which might well be legible on the stone itself.¹

In this report, I often use differences in patina to distinguish one carving from another on the same rock face, but I deliberately do not associate this with relative differences in date. The factors which govern the rate of the re-patination of marks cut into rock in desert conditions are complex and depend not only on the degree of exposure to the elements but on the depth, breadth, and nature of the “damage” to the surface. Thus, for instance, a broad, hammered line will generally patinate more slowly than a thinly, but possibly more deeply incised, line cut on the same face at the same time. We know this from cases where a single inscription has been carved in different techniques.

I have made tracings only of the inscriptions, not of the drawings and other marks, except as these impinge on the texts. These tracings are not facsimiles, i.e., they are not intended as simple records of what is on the stone — that is the function of the photographs. Their purpose is to illustrate and explain the readings when used in conjunction with the photographs, something which is particularly necessary when, as here, the inscriptions are mixed with, and often damaged by, other marks on the stone. I have shown these other marks in dotted lines on the tracings in order to distinguish them from the letters.

Random Square 19 (associated with Site 327)

Two Hismaic inscriptions (fig. 6.1):

- a. The text runs from left to right and then turns at right angles.

l ‘yḏn b̄n ---- ‘n(b/s’)h

By ‘yḏn (son of) ----



Fig. 6.1 RS 19 Site 327. Photograph and tracings of the inscriptions.



Fig. 6.2 RS 23 Site 328.

Fig. 6.3 Site 23.

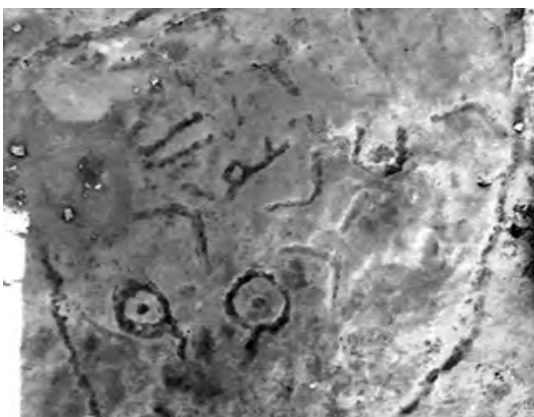


Fig. 6.4 Site 44. Photograph and tracing.

The mark before the initial *l* is probably not a letter. The letters immediately following the *bn* have been hammered over and without them the meaning of the last four letters is obscure. The name *ʿyḏn* is new, but *ʿyḏ* is well-attested in Hismaic and Safaitic.

b. The text runs from right to left.

l wqṣ^oṣ^on

By (Wqṣ²n)

The *s*², if that is what it is, has been joined to the preceding and the following letters by ligatures. This is a playful practice also found in some Safaitic graffiti (see Macdonald 1989) and perhaps at Sites 380–33 and 389 below. The name is unattested, though *wqṣ²* is known in Hismaic and Safaitic.

There is a *wasm* below text b.

Random Square 23 (associated with Site 328)

Wusūm (fig. 6.2).

Site 23

A rock with a Hismaic inscription and a *wasm*.

The inscription is in the center of the face and reads from right to left (fig. 6.3):

l ʿzl

By ʿzl

The name has not been found before, though both *zl* and *zll* are known from Safaitic.

To the right of the inscription there is a *wasm* consisting of two chevrons, one above the other, with a short horizontal line above the upper one.

There are traces of carvings with a darker patina above the inscription and *wasm*. Above the inscription there is a shape like an “E,” and, to the right of this, a short diagonal line that curves to the left at its base, above and to the left of the upper chevron. These may be another *wasm* or part of a Greek inscription, the rest of which is clipped by the left edge of the picture.

Site 44

A curious drawing of a face consisting of eyebrows, eyes with pupils, cheekbones (?), a nose, and a mouth (fig. 6.4).

Above the face there are a number of Ancient North Arabian letters that could possibly be read:

l rdḥ^o bn bṭr

By (Rdh) son of Bṭr

though other readings are possible. Despite the fork at the top of the third letter, I have taken it as a Hismaic *d*, and I have assumed that the central prong of the following sign extended to the left but has been obscured by the patch of damage on the rock at this point. The name *rdḥ* has been found twice in Safaitic (C 5204 and an unpublished text), but the name *bṭr* is new.

The drawing and the letters are enclosed within a roughly drawn border.

Site 94

From top to bottom (fig. 6.5):

(a) a single vertical line with below it and to the right two horizontal lines;

(b) below (a) a hammered drawing of an ibex facing upwards with to the right of it two vertical lines;

(c) below (b) two long horizontal lines and below them three diagonal lines joined at one end.

Site 303

Two Hismaic inscriptions (fig. 6.6):

a. The inscription is carved *boustrophedon*, starting from right to left in the lower line and then curving back on itself from left to right in the upper one. Most of the letters are clear on one or other of the excellent photographs taken by the expedition.



Fig. 6.5 Site 94.

*l 'bdmny bn 's'lh bn s²kmlh bn z'krt bn
mr bn whblh bn w'l*

By 'bdmny son of 's'lh son of S²kmlh son of Z'krt son of Mr son of (Whblh) son of W'l.

The first and third names have not been found before, but in both cases the reading is clear. The first would mean “servant/worshipper of the Fates” (Arabic *manāyā*), and the third would presumably mean “Lh has recompensed” or “Recompense/benefaction of Lh” (cf. Arabic *šakama*, “he recompensed (him);” *šukm*, “a recompense, a benefaction”). The other names are known in Hismaic and/or Safaitic. This would appear to be the first example of the name *z'krt* outside Safaitic.

b. This text is carved in a single line from right to left below the first line of (a). It is difficult to make out the end on the available photographs.

l 'bd'lh bn w's' bn 's' ----

By ('bd'lh) son of (W's') son of 's'....

The first two names are known from Safaitic, as is the third, if it is complete.



Fig. 6.6 Site 303. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.7 Site 324.

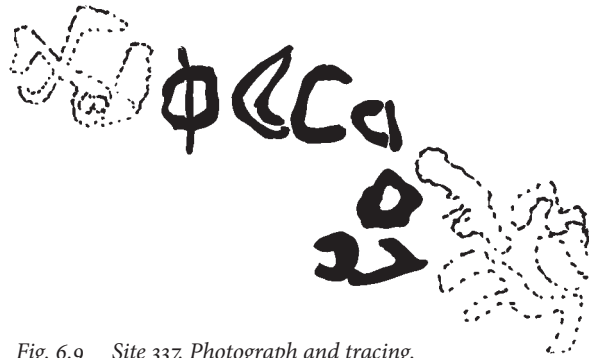


Fig. 6.9 Site 337. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.8 Site 331. Photograph and tracing.

Site 324

Wusūm (?) (fig. 6.7).

Site 331

A Hismaic text running from left to right (fig. 6.8).

ys'lm

Ys'lm

The name is attested in Hismaic.

Site 337

A Hismaic text running from left-to-right and then downwards (fig. 6.9).

--- *qmr* ^o*bn* ^o*s'r*

---(Qmr) (son of) ('s'r)

There is a swastika and an area of damage before the *q* which may obscure the *lām auctoris*. Although the first name is clear, the reading of the rest is uncertain. I have taken the fourth surviving letter as a *bn* in which the *n* (here a line rather than a dot, as occasionally in Hismaic) has been joined to the *b*. The first name is well-attested in Safaitic, though this would be its first appearance in Hismaic. The second name, if the reading is correct, would be unattested.

Site 339

A stone with a curious rock drawing, which appears to have been embellished at various times (fig. 6.10).



Fig. 6.10 Site 339.



Fig. 6.11 Site 343 – from E. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.12 Site 343 – from NW.



Fig. 6.13 Site 347.

Site 343 — from E

Ancient North Arabian letters with an unidentifiable drawing (?) above (fig. 6.11).

Upper line: *t* [drawing?] *y*

Lower line: *b*^o*y*^o*r*^o*w*^o*s*^o *l*^o*(l/h)* *w*^(r)*t**k*

I can offer no satisfactory interpretation of this.

Site 343 — from NW

A rock-face with three drawings (fig. 6.12). At the top, a human figure with outstretched arms and splayed palms, an elongated body, the lower part of which is in outline, and splayed legs. The second is either a stick-figure human walking with arm outstretched, or, more likely, a stick-figure animal with a long tail at right angles to the human. The third is an ostrich.

Site 347

A collection of *wusūm* (fig. 6.13).

Site 350-1

A *wasm* with, above it, a scratched modern Arabic inscription (fig. 6.14).

Site 350-2

An unidentifiable drawing (fig. 6.15).

Site 350-3

Some rock drawings and/or inscriptions so badly damaged that they are unidentifiable, and some *wusūm* with a lighter patina (fig. 6.16).

Site 350-4

A drawing of a camel plus *wusūm* and other unidentifiable shapes (fig. 6.17).



Fig. 6.14 Site 350-1.



Fig. 6.15 Site 350-2.

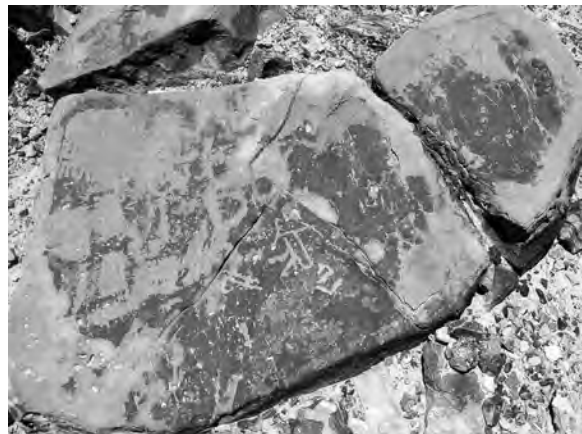


Fig. 6.16 Site 350-3.



Fig. 6.17 Site 350-4.



Fig. 6.18 Site 350-5.



Fig. 6.19 Site 350-6.

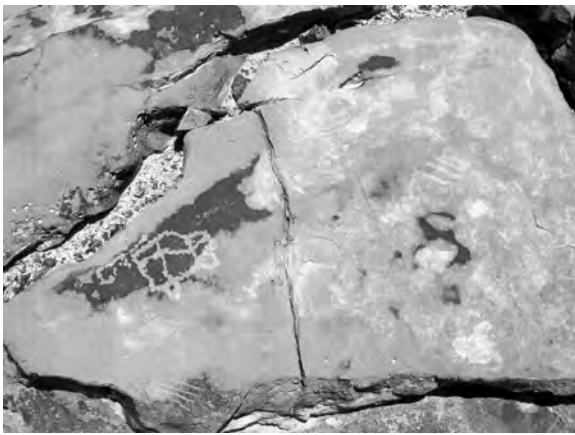


Fig. 6.20 Site 350-7.

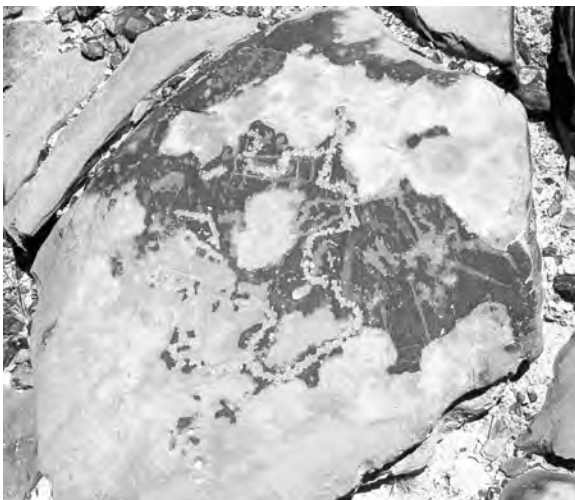


Fig. 6.21 Site 350-8.

Site 350-5

A badly damaged rock face on which some drawings and *wusūm* are still visible (fig. 6.18). The most heavily patinated group consists, from top to bottom, of a crude drawing of an ass (?) with long upright ears and a schematic rendering of a rider; a stick-figure animal with short backward pointing horns or ears, immediately below the ass; what is possibly a hound with forward-pointing ears; a lively representation of a horseman; and some unidentifiable stick-figure animals. In a slightly lighter patina near the bottom of the picture are another stick-figure animal and some unidentifiable shapes. In the lightest patina are a cross, some *wusūm*, a stick-figure animal, and some unidentifiable marks.

Site 350-6

A rock face with some modern Arabic graffiti and *wusūm* (fig. 6.19).

Site 350-7

A rock face with a drawing of an automobile (fig. 6.20).

Site 350-8

A badly damaged rock face with unidentifiable carvings with varying degrees of patination (fig. 6.21).



Fig. 6.22 Site 350-9.

Site 350-9

A badly damaged rock face. All that is now visible is what may be a stick-figure ibex and an unidentifiable collection of lines beside it, plus two *wusūm* and some superficial scratched lines with a light patina (fig. 6.22).

Site 350-10

A rock face with a complex, maze-like drawing, two unidentifiable marks, and two Hismaic inscriptions (fig. 6.23).

- a. To the left of the drawing, near the base of the face, running from left to right in neatly chiseled letters.

ġdt bn nšrlh---
 (Ġdt) son of (Nšrlh)---

I have taken the dot some way to the left of the *ġ* as extraneous to the text. The second letter is almost certainly a *ḏ*, even though the inner circle is incomplete. The first name is known only from a doubtful context in Safaitic (C 3394). The second is attested in Hismaic and Safaitic though mainly in unpublished texts.

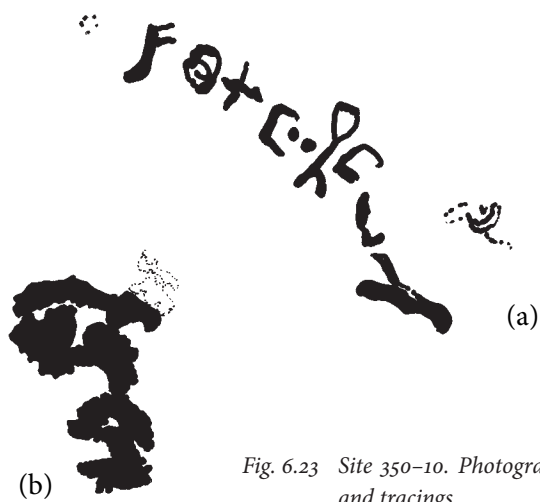


Fig. 6.23 Site 350-10. Photograph and tracings.



Fig. 6.24 Site 353-1.



Fig. 6.25 Site 353-2.

- b. Running vertically to the right of the drawing, in very crudely hammered letters. **Site 353–2**

l ḡrsʾ

By (Grsʾ)

The name is known from Safaitic.

Site 353–1

A rock with a *wasm* and unidentifiable carvings (fig. 6.24).

A rock with three drawings (fig. 6.25). (a) A crudely hammered drawing of a man possibly in the act of shooting with a rifle. This interpretation is based on comparisons with much better and clearer drawings from southern Jordan which have similar shapes. (b) A camel. (c) An unidentifiable stick-figure animal. Between the man and the camel there is a line that crosses the latter's legs.

Site 355

A rock with three Hismaic inscriptions, as well as rock drawings and *wusūm* (fig. 6.26).

Fig. 6.26 Site 355. Photograph and tracings.

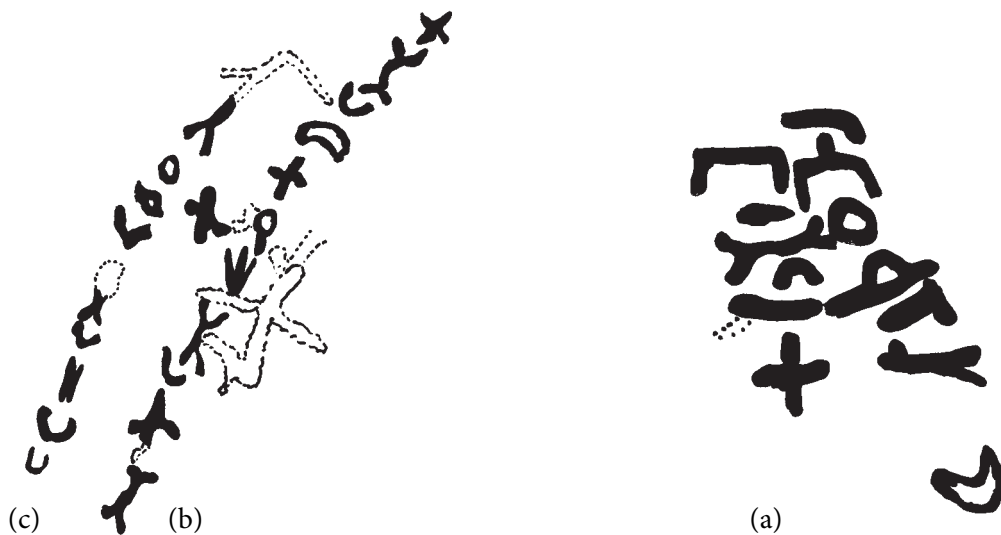




Fig. 6.27 Site 356-1. Photograph of site, tracing, and detail of inscription.



Fig. 6.28 Site 356-2.

- a. A two-line Hismaic inscription written vertically, starting with the right-hand line:

l s' dlh
bn 'rs²t
 By S¹ dlh
 son of 'rs²t

Both names are attested in Hismaic and Safaitic. There is a stray stroke near one end of the penultimate sign (*s²*), and an isolated *m* facing the opposite way to the inscription below line 1.

- b. Near the left edge of the face, two lines of Hismaic, reading from bottom to top. The right one reads:

'tr'hytm(b/r)'t

I am unable to interpret this.

Between (b) and (c) is a single *h* that does not seem to belong to either text.

- c. The second line of Hismaic, to the left of (b), reading from bottom to top.

rb hrš b q' h---

(Q'h---) feels great hunger and cold

The word *hrš* occurs in a formula introduced by *rb* in one other inscription, KJC 45. The *rb/rbt* formulae have been analysed by King (1990: 107–8), who suggests that *rb* + noun + *b* + N means “N feels much...,” thus here “N feels much hunger and cold” (cf. Arabic *haraš*). Unfortunately, the first letter of the name is damaged, though what can be seen looks like a *q* or a *d*, and a modern *wasm* has obliterated anything that followed the *h*. No name beginning *q'h* or *d'h* is known.

Rock drawings:

The rock drawing with the darkest patina is a hammered representation of a camel immediately below inscription (a). The tail is curled up, which is the conventional way of indicating a female camel in Arabian rock art (see Searight 1983: 575). To the right of inscription (a) is a drawing of a camel with its tail down (the conventional way of indicating a

male) and below it a stick-figure man with raised arms. These have the same patina as inscription (a). To the left of (a) is a stick-figure animal that might be a camel carrying a litter with a person inside, though this is highly speculative. It has a much lighter patina than the inscription.

Wusūm and other marks:

To the right of inscription (b) there is a rough rectangular outline and a cross below it with a patina similar to that of inscription (b). Between the outline and the inscription, and crossing both, is a cross with a much lighter patina. Above inscription (a) is an X with roughly the same patina as the inscription. There are a number of *wusūm* and other marks with a very light patina scattered across the face.

Site 356–1

On the rock on the left, drawings of three stick-figure ibex and one unidentifiable shape (fig. 6.27).

On the rock on the right, at the top, an unidentifiable shape with light patina, then, with darker patina, an outline drawing of an ibex facing right with exaggeratedly long horns and a tail curling up. Below this is a more or less horizontal line crossing the hind-legs of the ibex, and then a two-line Nabataean inscription (fig. 6.27, below).

(n'/l)m---h
(q/š)(n'/l)t

There are too many uncertainties in the reading to allow an interpretation. The final *h* at the end of line 1 and the *t* at the end of line 2 are the only letters of which the reading is secure, though note that the *t* has a lighter patina than the rest of the “text.” The *m* in line 1, if such it is, has a late form comparable to those in ARNA Nab 17 (see the photograph in Macdonald 2009 and Nehmé 2010: 50–52).

Site 356–2

A rock face with stick-figure drawings of an ibex, a camel, three hounds, one of which has been converted into an ibex by the addition of horns in a lighter patina, a snake (?), some unidentifiable shapes, and a *wasm* in a very light patina (fig. 6.28).



Fig. 6.29 Site 356-3.



Fig. 6.30 Site 356-4.



Fig. 6.31 Site 356-5.



Fig. 6.32 Site 356-6.



Fig. 6.33 Site 356-7.



Fig. 6.34 Site 356-8.



Fig. 6.35 Site 359.

Site 356-3

A rock with, on the right, a modern Arabic inscription with a light patina and, to the left of this, a text, in a slightly darker patina, one letter of which is damaged (fig. 6.29). This may be in very crudely written Arabic in which only the final letter has its diacritical dot.

At the end of the slab are what are probably the two eyes and the (damaged) nose of a so-called “eye-idol” or “silent visage,” which were used as funeral stelae and sometimes as symbols of deities among the Nabataeans and elsewhere in ancient Arabia. There is a faint possibility that they represent Hismaic letters db^o , though this involves the assumption that the middle letter is a damaged b at 90° to the direction of the text, something which is relatively rare in Hismaic (see for instance the script-table in King 1990: 719).

Above the second half of the Arabic inscription are some unidentifiable shapes joined by a long line, possibly a *wasm*.

On two nearby rocks are shapes which may represent a seven-pointed star. Dots and lines in multiples of seven are common beside Safaitic inscriptions but much rarer in southern Jordan. On another rock there is an unidentifiable shape.

Site 356-4

A rock with at least two stick-figure drawings of ibex (the head of a possible third has been destroyed), possibly a human seated with legs splayed, and several unidentifiable shapes and possible *wusūm* (fig. 6.30).

Site 356-5

A rock covered with *wusūm* and unidentifiable shapes (fig. 6.31).

Site 356-6

A rock bearing drawings of three stick-figure ibex and a stick-figure hound (?) with very light patina (fig. 6.32).

Site 356-7

A rock with a drawing of a cameleer seated on a *shadād* (North Arabian) saddle, with a single rein to the camel's neck and waving something in his other hand (possibly a rifle). Above, a standing human figure, naked or in trousers. Both drawings have a light patina (fig. 6.33).

Site 356-8

A rock face with four drawings of a light patina (fig. 6.34). Top left, a camel with tail up, thus probably a female (see Searight 1983: 575). Below the camel is an unidentifiable drawing, and below that a very crude drawing of a horseman (?). To the right, a drawing of a cameleer (?) (note the rider's legs are not visible, as indeed they would not be on a camel seen in silhouette, cf. the horseman where they extend below the horse's body) with a single



Fig. 6.36 Site 362-1.

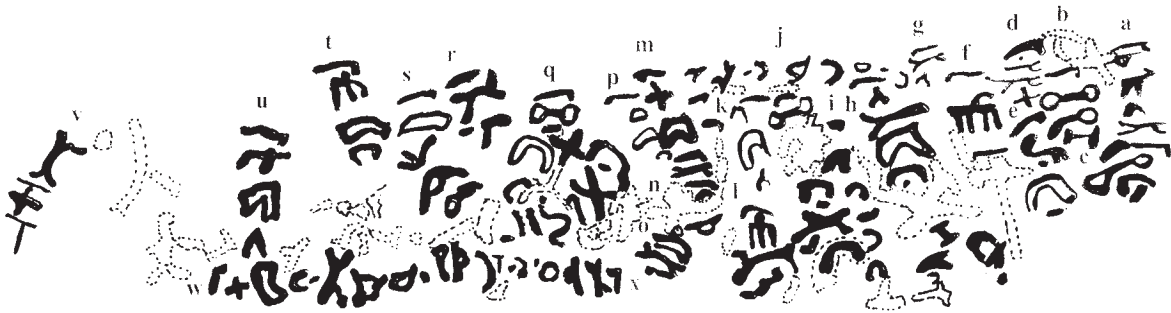


Fig. 6.37 Site 362-1. Uppermost face, tracing.

rein to the back of the animal's head and waving a rifle (?).

Site 359

Wusūm (fig. 6.35).

Site 362-1

Four rock faces covered in Himaic inscriptions, with some later *wusūm* superimposed on them (fig. 6.36).

Uppermost face: working from right to left.

Most of the inscriptions are carved vertically, top to bottom (figs. 6.36 and 6.37).

a. *lygr'l*

By Ygr'l

The name is new and presumably means “god will succour” (cf. Arabic *gāra*). Between the beginnings of text (a) and text (b), there is a cross and another sign.

- b. $l\ gyz$
By Gyz

The name is well-attested in Safaitic, but this is the first time it has been found in Hismaic.

- c. Between the end of (a) and the end of (b).

$l\ grs^2$
By (Grs²)

The name is attested in Hismaic.

- d. To the left of the sign above the beginning of (b).

$l\ nh't$
By Nh't

Not previously attested, possibly related to the Arabic root NHY “to be intelligent, prudent”.

- e. Immediately below (d).

$l\ ḡnmn$
By Ḡnmn

Not previously attested,² though $ḡnm$ and $ḡnmt$ are well-known in Hismaic and other Ancient North Arabian dialects.

- f. Carved vertically immediately to the left of the beginning of (e).

$l\ dl---$

The rest of the inscription has been destroyed by a large *wasm* of a lighter patina.

- g. This text begins to the left of the beginning of (f) and slightly above it. The first three letters are written vertically and then the text turns to the left and runs horizontally along the edge of the face with the last two letters written vertically.

$l\ 's' bn\ 'bd bn\ 's'll$
By 's' son of 'bd son of 's'll

All the names are attested, though the last has been found only once before in Hismaic.

- h. Carved vertically parallel with and immediately to the left of (f).

$l\ s'hm bn\ ----z----$
By S'hm son of ----

The beginning of the second name has been obliterated by a superimposed sign of light patina, and it is not clear whether, after the *z*, the text continues diagonally to the right ($b'h'n'$) or to the left ($h'r'$). The name *S'hm* is well-attested. There are two counterposed shapes at the bottom of this inscription and (i) that may be *wusūm*.

- i. Very crudely hammered, running downwards parallel with (h) but starting level with its third letter, and with the last two letters running horizontally to the right, to avoid the end of (h), and crossing the end of (j).

$n'r' bn' bl'$
(Nr son of Bl)

The crudeness of the letters and the damage caused by later signs makes it very difficult to achieve a secure reading.

- j. Carved vertically to the left of (h).

$l\ g('h/s')---- bn\ 'mr$
By (G----) son of ('mr)

There is an extraneous horizontal line of light patina similar to that of the *wusūm* immediately above the initial *l*. Hammering of shapes with a similar light patina has all but destroyed the second letter and there is a small patch over part of the ' of the second name. 'mr is a well-known name in Safaitic and has been found in Hismaic.

- k. Carved vertically immediately to the left of (j).

$l\ rms'$
By (Rms')

The name is well-attested in Hismaic. There is an extraneous horizontal line of light patina similar to that of the *wusūm* above the initial *l*.

- l*. Carved vertically, immediately below (k).

l ḥ'ḥ'

By (Ḥ'l)

The name, if the reading is correct, has been found once before, in Safaitic (C 3378).

- m*. Carved vertically to the left of (l) from which it is separated by the last three letters of (g).

l tm

By Tm

The initial letter has a lighter patina than the rest and may have been reworked as part of the more or less horizontal series of short lines with this patina running below and then to the left of text (g). The name is well-known in all ANA dialects

- n*. Carved vertically immediately below (m). A large crudely-hammered cross has obscured the third letter of this text.

l 'wd

By ('wd)

The name is known in Safaitic.

- o*. Carved vertically and then diagonally starting to the left of the fourth letter of (n).

----^o*m'l*

If there was a *lām auctoris* it has been completely destroyed by the later cross, as has most of the letter before the *m*. However, sufficient traces remain to make ' a possible reading.

- p*. Carved vertically immediately to the left of (m).

l 'mr

By 'mr

A well-known name.

- q*. Carved vertically to the left of (p).

l gs²m bn ----

By (Gs²m) (son of) ----

The *n* is either obscured by the left "foot" of the *wasm* in a lighter patina which is apparently associated with text (r), or is the mark at the top end of the *f* of that text. The three small strokes to the left of this *f* may be the end of text (q), but if so it is difficult to interpret them.

- r*. The text is hammered in large letters. It begins diagonally between (q) and (t), crosses (q) and then turns and runs diagonally in the opposite direction between (p) and (q). The letters have a lighter patina than most of the other texts on this face. A *wasm* cut in the same technique and with the same shade of patina lies just below the point at which the text turns, between its second line and text (q).

l 's²rt

bn ḥlf

By ('s²rt)

son of Ḥlf

The reading of the first name is uncertain. Both names are attested. The first in Safaitic and the second in both Hismaic and Safaitic.

- s*. Carved vertically immediately to the left of the beginning of (r).

l mḡdy

By Mḡdy

A name not found before. It may be a nickname associating the bearer with the early morning (cf. the Arabic root Ḡ-D-W).

- t*. Carved vertically to the left of (s) starting higher up the face.



Fig. 6.38 Site 362-1. Second slab from the top, tracing.

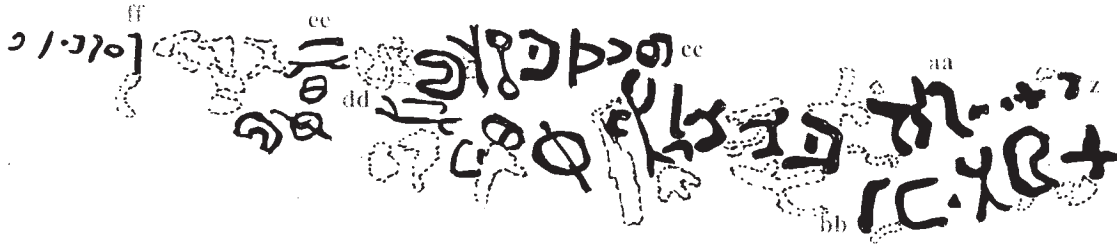


Fig. 6.39 Site 362-1. Third slab from the top, tracing.

l ḥmr

By Ḥmr

The name is known from Safaitic.

- u.* Carved vertically to the left of (t). To its left is an empty space with two crudely hammered shapes, possibly *wusūm*.

l kms¹

By Kms¹

The name has been found twice before in Hismaic.

- v.* Carved vertically on the extreme left edge of the face, it is partially destroyed. What remains appears to read:

ḥtz

No such name is attested.

- w.* Carved horizontally from left to right along the bottom of the face, starting just below the end of (u). The last four letters are of a lighter patina than the first five.

l tm bn ḏ'n

By Tm son of (ḏ'n)

The *d*, if such it is, has been very clumsily carved. Both names are known. The second recurs in text (x).

- x.* Carved from right to left along the bottom edge of the face to meet the end of (w). The last three letters are large, more crudely carved, and of a lighter patina than the first eight.

l ḏ'n bn zbdy^o

By ḏ'n son of (Zbdy)

This is the first occurrence of *zbdy* in Hismaic, though it is attested in Safaitic.

On the second slab from the top:

- y.* Carved from right to left, starting near the right-hand end of the face and partially destroyed by a chip in the middle and possibly by overhammered signs at the end (figs. 6.36 and 6.38).

l b'l bn^o w----t---

The name *b'l* is known from Safaitic.

On the third slab from the top (figs. 6.36 and 6.39):

- z.* Carved from right to left.

l inn

By (Tnn)

The name is attested in Hismaic.



Fig. 6.40 Site 362-1. Lowest slab, tracing.



Fig. 6.41 Site 362-2. Photograph and tracing.

aa. Carved right-to-left immediately after (z).

$l \overset{\circ}{f}l \text{----} bn \overset{\circ}{k}k \overset{\circ}{b}$

By (Fl----) son of (Kkb)

All the letters apart from the initial *l* and the *bn* are doubtful. The final *b* curves down diagonally below the final *l* of (dd).

bb. Carved from left to right below (z) and (aa).

$l \overset{\circ}{b}n \overset{\circ}{m}t$

By (Bn'mt)

There appears to be a *k* before the initial *l* and an extraneous line between the *l* and the *b*. The name is attested in Hismaic, see the discussion under (hh), below.

cc. Carved from right to left in the center of the top of the face.

$l \overset{\circ}{b}d bn \overset{\circ}{g}hm$

By 'bd son of Ghm

The first name is well-attested in all Ancient North Arabian dialects, and *ghm* is well-known in Safaitic.

dd. The first name is carved vertically and the text then continues from left-to-right.

$l \text{'----} bn \overset{\circ}{w}qr \overset{\circ}{l}$

By ---- son of Wqr'l

The *w* is carved above the line in order to avoid an extraneous mark, and the *r* is carved high up near the upper fork of the ' in order to avoid a thick line at this point on the face. *Wqr'l* is known in Safaitic.

ee. To the left of (dd). The text runs vertically turning to the left at the end.

$l \overset{\circ}{w}qm$

By 'wqm

The name has not been found before.

ff. Carved right to left at the extreme left end of the face.

$l \overset{\circ}{l} bn \overset{\circ}{s}^2b$

By 'l son of S²b

Both names are known in Hismaic.

On the lowest slab (figs. 6.36 and 6.40):

gg. Carved from left to right (?) near the top of the face, in the Thamudic B script.

$l \overset{\circ}{r}b \overset{\circ}{m} \overset{\circ}{m}z \overset{\circ}{s}^1 \overset{\circ}{r}t \overset{\circ}{r}n \overset{\circ}{n}$

I can make nothing of this.

hh. Carved from left to right in the Hismaic script, but damaged in parts by the superposition of later signs.

$l \overset{\circ}{b}nmrh \text{----} \overset{\circ}{b}n \overset{\circ}{n} \overset{\circ}{s} \text{----}$

By Bnmrh ---- (Bn' ----)

The first name, for which the reading is secure, is not attested but would appear to be one of the class of names formed on the pattern *b-N-h* which are relatively common in Safaitic, but much rarer in Hismaic, though cf. *b-n'm-h* (see King 1990: 482). These are almost always formed on an existing name, and this is no exception, the name *nmr* being well-attested in Hismaic and Safaitic. Something appears to have been lost under the crude sign between the two names, and it would be reasonable to suppose it to be the *bn* "son of." If the reading of the first part of second name is correct, it would therefore be of the pattern *bn-N* which is common in Hismaic as well as in Safaitic, thus *bn-'mt* (see [bb] above), *bn-brh*, *bn-trb*, *bn-hrb*, etc. The later signs hammered over parts of this name and, particularly at the end, make the reading very uncertain.

Site 362-2 (fig. 6.41)

a. Carved in neat letters from right to left and then turning upwards, presumably to avoid text (b).

$l \overset{\circ}{g}tlh \overset{\circ}{b}n \overset{\circ}{s}^1lm \overset{\circ}{b}n \overset{\circ}{m}n$

By (Ġtlh) son of S¹lm son of 'mn



Fig. 6.42 Site 362-3.

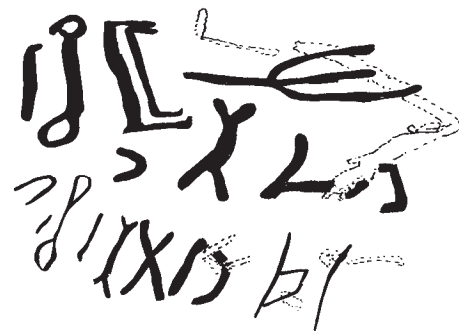


Fig. 6.43 Site 369. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.44 Site 373 - from NE.
Photograph and tracing.

The second letter appears to have been badly formed, but since it is damaged by overhammering it is difficult to be sure. All three names are attested in Hismaic.

- b. Three lines carved from left to right within a cartouche.

l z' n
bn mlk
bn rb

By Z' n
son of Mlk
son of Rb

All three names are attested in Hismaic.

Site 362–3

Three stick-figure ibexes, of which the middle one seems originally to have been drawn as a hound attacking the ibex on the right, its horns having been added later (fig. 6.42).

Site 369

A lump of cream-coloured stone bearing one Hismaic inscription (fig. 6.43).

It starts on the top, in large chiseled letters partly obscured by modern damage. The text runs from left to right and then turns and runs from right to left and finally turns again left to right but now in smaller and more narrowly chiseled letters.

l gmḥ
bn^o s' b
bn^o gs² 'ḥ ----dl

By Gmḥ
(son of) (S' b)
(son of) (Gs²), brother of (----dl) (?)

The name *gmḥ* is attested in Safaitic, *s' b* in Hismaic and Safaitic. *Gs²* has possibly been found once in Thamudic B (WHI 34),³ though in a doubtful context. The third line is difficult to interpret from the photograph. The lack of contrast between the letters and the surrounding areas of stone — a common feature of texts on this type of lime-

stone — means that some lines do not show up in certain lights and it is not always clear whether all those that *are* visible on any particular photograph are genuine parts of the letters. In these cases several photographs taken from different angles and in different lights are helpful. However, only one photograph of this text is available, and the reading is therefore offered very tentatively, more particularly since line 3 would present a formula unique in the Hismaic inscriptions.

Site 373—from NE

Five rocks with *wusūm* and rock drawings. The two rocks at the top of the photograph appear to bear various *wusūm*, as does that on the left in the foreground. The rock on the right in the foreground appears to bear a net-like design, and that in the center has two Hismaic inscriptions (fig. 6.44).

- a. Carved from right to left, at the top.

s' rbn

A name found in Safaitic.

- b. Carved below in large letters, the last of which (*l*) reaches into the upper register. The marks on either side of the base of the *l* have a slightly different patina to the letters of the inscription and probably do not belong to it.

l 'ḥwl

The name has been found three times in Safaitic (C 1719, and in two unpublished texts from Khirbat Umbashi, southern Syria).

Site 373—from SE

A rock face with one Hismaic inscription, two modern Arabic inscriptions, rock drawings and *wusūm* (fig. 6.45). Starting at the top and working from right to left:

- a. First row. A *wasm* consisting of four parallel strokes, an unidentifiable shape, a stick-figure oryx and a modern Arabic inscription within a cartouche.



Fig. 6.45 Site 373 – from SE. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.46 Site 377.



Fig. 6.47 Site 378-C.



Fig. 6.48 Site 378-E.

- b. Second row. A neatly carved Hismaic inscription.

$\dot{g}<l>ll\ bn\ fn$

(Ġll) son of Fn

It would seem that the first name is a mistake for $\dot{g}ll$. Both $\dot{g}ll$ and fn are attested in Safaitic.

- c. Various *wusūm* and a modern Arabic inscription.

Site 377 (fig. 6.46)

Two drawings of camels. The one on the right has an enormous hump and a meandering dotted line below it. The hump of the one in the center is represented by two parallel curved lines that are rather faint on the photograph, and it has a collection of dots below its front legs and in front of it. There are other marks on the rock that I cannot identify and on its left end there is a modern Arabic inscription reading 'Abdallah Muḥammad, written at right angles to the drawings.

Site 378-C

Wusūm spread over a number of rocks (fig. 6.47).

Site 378-E

From right to left (fig. 6.48):

- a. A rock face with a drawing of a truck with an exaggeratedly large ostrich feather on the front, and a horseman, plus, below, what may be a helicopter (?). All with light patina.
- b. On the rock face below (a), an unidentifiable net-like pattern.
- c. On a rock face in the upper center of the picture, a ladder-like drawing and the possible remains of an inscription destroyed by overhammering.
- d. On the left of the picture, a rock with a modern Arabic inscription and the unidentifiable remains of a much more heavily patinated inscription beneath it.

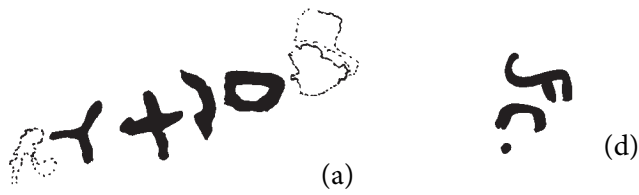


Fig. 6.49 Site 378-E.1. Photograph and tracings of inscriptions (a) and (d)



Fig. 6.50 Site 378-W.



Fig. 6.51 Site 378-W.1.

- e. On a rock in the bottom left-hand corner of the picture *wusūm* and an unidentifiable shape. This rock is also shown in the bottom right hand corner of fig. 6.49.

Site 378–E.1

From right to left (fig. 6.49):

The rock in the bottom right hand corner is number (e) in Site 378–E.

- a. A *wasm* and Hismaic letters.

°:lts°l----

I can make nothing of this.

- b. A drawing of a female camel and another unidentifiable horned (?) animal.
- c. A modern Arabic inscription dated 1990.
- d. A Hismaic inscription with a very dark patina carved vertically at the top of the rock.

ḡbn

Ḡbn

A name known from Safaitic.

- e. On the same rock, an unidentifiable drawing with the same patina as (f), on which has been superimposed a drawing of a horseman with a light patina.
- f. At the bottom of the same face, a stick-figure ibex.

Site 378–W

Unidentifiable shapes, plus, to the left of the picture, two outline feet with, in a much lighter patina, a heart, the date 1996–8, in European numbers but with the 6 upside down, and a modern Arabic inscription, reading *Halīl Muḥammad* (fig. 6.50).

Site 378–W.1

Wusūm (fig. 6.51).

Site 380–1

From right-to-left (fig. 6.52):

- a. Hismaic inscription running from left to right and then upwards.

l ngm bn ḡgg

By Ngm son of Ḥgg

Both names are known in Hismaic.

- b. To the left of (a) and lower down the face, two *wusūm*.

- c. In the bottom left-hand corner of the photograph a partly damaged Hismaic inscription.

l 'n'l bn rḡb [bn] m'l

By 'n'l son of (Rb) [son of] M'l

All the names are known. The damage to the face has obscured the middle of the text. At first sight, the sign(s) immediately after the first *bn* look like a *m*, but on closer examination it can be seen that they are in fact two separate letters, *r* and *b*. Since **rbm* 'l would be an unlikely name, I have restored a *bn* in the patch of damage before the *m*.

Site 380–2

A *wasm* consisting of a chevron chiseled on the lower part of the face. There is a directly hammered horizontal line immediately above it and another to the right of it. The latter crosses the first letter of what is probably a Hismaic inscription in which the letters have been so placed that they touch each other (cf. RS 19 [b] and Site 389). If it is an inscription, the letters have been placed end to end reading upwards:

ṡ²zb or ṡ²zr

(S²zb) or (S²zr)

Both names are known in Safaitic, and cf. the name ṡ²z(b/r)n at Site 384. There is a small chip near the lower arm of the *b/r* in the present inscription, but this cannot be a *n*.



Fig. 6.52 Site 380-1. Photograph and tracings



Fig. 6.53 Site 380-2. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.54 Site 380-3. Photograph and tracing.

Site 380-3

An unfinished (?) Hismaic inscription (fig. 6.54).

$l\ lmh^{\circ} bn^{\circ}$

By (Lmh) son of

A name *lmh* is found in Safaitic, in C 2661 and possibly WH 2615.

Site 380-4

Hismaic inscriptions and unidentifiable shapes (fig. 6.55). From right to left and top to bottom:

a. A Hismaic inscription carved vertically.

$l\ fdg$

By Fdg

A well-attested name in Hismaic, Safaitic and Dadanitic.

b. To the left of (a) carved vertically.

$l\ hrg$

By Hrg

Although the first two letters are affected by a chip in the rock, the reading is clear. The name is well-attested in Hismaic and Safaitic.

c. Immediately below (b), carved vertically.

$l\ hn^{\circ}$

By Hn

A very well-attested name in Hismaic and Safaitic.

Below (c) there is another text carved horizontally, but it is so badly damaged as to be illegible. Below this are two *wusūm*.

d. To the left of (a) and higher up. A Hismaic text carved vertically.

$l\ (h^{\circ})n^{\circ}---\ lzd$

There is a patch of damage after the third letter which may cover a *bn*. Though they are undamaged, the reading of the next two letters is uncertain. *Lzd* is unattested.

e. A Hismaic inscription written vertically below (d).

$l\ b(n^{\circ}/s^{\circ})mdk^{\circ}$

By (Bs²mdk) [or Bnmdk]

The *l* is partially damaged as is the *d*, but both are clear. The name is unattested and is, to me, inexplicable regardless of whether the second letter is a *s*² or a *n*. It is just possible that the letter read as a *k* is a crude drawing of a camel (?) grazing, cf. the drawing beside the beginning of text (j). In this case, *bn-md* would be a possible name.

f. A Hismaic inscription carved vertically immediately below (e).

$l\ 'mr^{\circ}l$

By 'mr'l

The *m* and the *r* are partially damaged by a later mark, but are still readable. The name is well-attested in Hismaic.

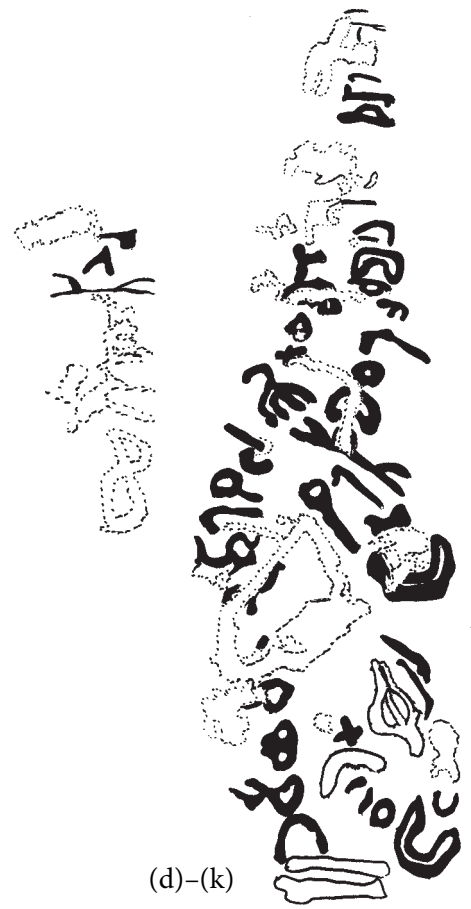


Fig. 6.55 Site 380-4. Photograph and tracings.



Fig. 6.56 Site 384. Photograph and tracing.

- g. A Hismaic inscription immediately below (f). **Site 384**
It is apparently carved diagonally upwards.
- $m\overset{\circ}{r}y$
(Mry)
- The name is well-attested in Safaitic.
- What is probably a Hismaic inscription carved left-to-right (fig. 6.56).
- $s^2z(b/r)n$
S²zbn or S²zrn
- h. A Hismaic inscription carved in a circle below (g).
- $l\text{----}t\overset{\circ}{b}n\ n\ m(r/b)\text{----}$
- Text (i) has been hammered over parts of this text. **Site 387**
- Neither name is attested, but both s^2zb and s^2zr are known in Safaitic (cf. Site 380–2). A shape like an inverted “T” has been carved over part of the z .
- i. Hismaic letters with a very light patina heavily hammered over parts of texts (h) and (j).
- qbl
- This word, which is usually interpreted as meaning “acceptance” (of the supplicant by a deity), occurs quite frequently in Safaitic but only rarely in Hismaic. It is also possible that the signs are simply one or more *wusūm*.
- A Hismaic inscription carved from left to right (fig. 6.57).
- $l\ 'bd$
By ‘bd
- A very well-attested name, see Site 362–1 (cc). **Site 388**
- j. A Hismaic inscription carved vertically immediately to the left of (e). Some letters are damaged, others completely destroyed by signs with a very light patina hammered across them. This has made it impossible to interpret the second half of the text. There appears to be a tiny crude drawing of a camel just above and to the left of the beginning of the text, and what looks like a neat erasure of a letter before the s' .
- $s'\overset{\circ}{m}\ \overset{\circ}{t}\ \overset{\circ}{d}s^2ry\ l\ f.\overset{\circ}{b}[n]\text{----}(y/s/g)\ w\ \overset{\circ}{s}(b/r)\text{----}$
- May $\overset{\circ}{D}s^2ry$ listen to
- A well-carved Hismaic inscription running from left to right (fig. 6.58). The rock appears to have been broken and any letters which may have followed the l have been lost. The most natural reading would be:
- $rqm\ fl\text{----}$
- The letters are all clear. Note that the apparent dot between the r and the q is a hole in the rock, not a n . **Site 389**
- Possibly a very crudely hammered Hismaic inscription in which the letters have been linked (fig. 6.59) (cf. Random Square 19 [b] and site 380–2, above). It could be read:
- $q\overset{\circ}{l}s'$
- The reading is far from secure and would require the assumption that the left side-stroke of the last letter is a mistake. The name is known from Safaitic. However, the figure could also represent one or two *wusūm*.
- k. To the left of (j), the first three letters of a Hismaic inscription, the rest of which has been destroyed by later marks with a light patina. There is also a *wasm* with a dark patina on the same face, at the far left of the picture.
- $l\ s'\text{----}$



Fig. 6.57 Site 387. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.58 Site 388. Photograph and tracing.



Fig. 6.59 Site 389. Photograph and tracing.

NOTES

- 1 I have used the following editorial sigla:
 ° marks letters of which the reading is doubtful;
 [] enclose letters which are restored;
 < > enclose letters which are presumed to be errors in the original;
 () in the transliterations enclose different possible readings of the same sign;
 () in the translations enclose names or words containing one or more doubtful letters;
 ---- mark one or more letters which are destroyed or completely illegible.
- 2 Since Hismaic inscriptions are written entirely without vowels, diphthongs or doubled letters, I have not invented vocalizations for the names in the translations.
- 2 Note that in Harding 1971: 459, the reference to ĠNMN in CIH 340/2 is an error. The name is actually Ġ[NM]M.
- 3 The reference in Harding 1971: 161, under this name to WH 1649 is an error for WH 1469, where however the editors restore *gs²[n]*.