

Rājil: The Cairn of The Mermaids

The Site and its Surroundings

In the course of a survey of the area of Qā' al-Muqalla (the lowland), which is ca. 40km east of al-Azraq, Leslie Quintero and Phil Wilke re-located a site along part of a valley called Wādī al-Rājil (Wilke 1999); the site was first identified by A.V.G. Betts (1982). During the rainy season water drains into this valley and forms lakes in a flat-bottomed area called Qā' (basin). The Cairn of the Mermaids is along the sandy shores of one of these dry lakes sites (FIG. 1).

Toward the east of the wadi there are several cairns at the tops of the hills as well as large round and rectangular structures with round and curved corners possibly corrals, can be seen on the shoulder of the hill and closer to the wadi. Opposite our site and to the west of the watercourse is bare land, covered with gravel; but if water were available, it could be used for agriculture.

Over the millennia, groups of rocks in this area were attractive to the nomads of the desert and they arranged the stones into circles and into groups called a cairn, which is simply a pile of stones in a

cone shape (FIG. 2). In Jordan, there are thousands of such cairns in a variety of sizes, most commonly about 5m in diameter and 2m in height. Some have around them more than a hundred stones with inscribed texts and figures. Several long boulder walls and corral-like structures representing possible game traps can also be seen in the vicinity of some of these installations. The function of these cairns is not yet established. Some investigators have seen them as a sort of desert lighthouse, as rallying points or as camping sites or as burials sites.

The overall objective of the Cairn of the Mermaids Project is to completely document one such site (among ca. 12 other sites in the area); this includes documenting all the inscribed stones¹ and the layout. I conducted excavations in 2005 with the assistance of Jerome C. Rose and Philip Wilke. The Department of Antiquities representative was Salem Diab. The excavations were an effort to determine whether the site was used for burials, but no burials were found. However, Dr. Wilke's survey revealed activities in the vicinity of the site going back to PPNB and up to the Byzantine era.



1. View of Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



2. View of a cairn in the Rājil (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

¹ Every stone with text, drawing, or other mark was numbered, RCM-1, 2, 3, etc.

On the 77 stones analyzed, there are drawings that include wild animals such as ostrich, oryx, deer, onager, cat and ibex. These reflect the environment of their time. Domesticated animals include camel, horse, dog, donkey and goat. The rock art includes also men, women, hunting scenes and caravan scenes. On those 77 stones there are also 125 different inscribed texts, all in Safaitic, which belongs to the north Arabian branch of South Semitic script. The language is an old Arabic colloquial type that was used by the tribes of the eastern Jordan desert. The largest of our texts has 84 letters, a very long text for Safaitic. Some 37 of the stones have figures. What appear to be tribal marks and the seven dots or stars are included in most of the drawings and texts. Some of the texts have a line encircling the work, others have the sun symbol.

In general, the stones reflect messages left by members of the tribes for persons who were apparently related. So far, the name list includes no less than 206 different persons, 85 of them belonging to one family consisting of 13 generations (FIG. 3). The largest group is related to BS', who is not the eldest of the family, rather the fifth from the top. A second grouping can be compiled from three texts with nine different names from the tribe of 'MN and there is a third list from one text with 14 generations that belong to the tribe of R'S. The three groups may be contemporaneous with each other. It is suggested here that the groups moved to the area during the 10th to the 13th generation, because most of the persons who wrote the texts or to whom the texts are addressed, or those "who caused sorrow" (died), belong to the last three generations. The largest list of personal names belongs to the 12th generation with 23 personal names. By the 13th generation, the list shrinks to 9 when one would expect it to grow.

In the following text, a selection of the stones is presented, showing the diversity of subjects in the

assemblage. That catalogue is followed by a list of the personal names and a lexicon.

A Selection of Stones

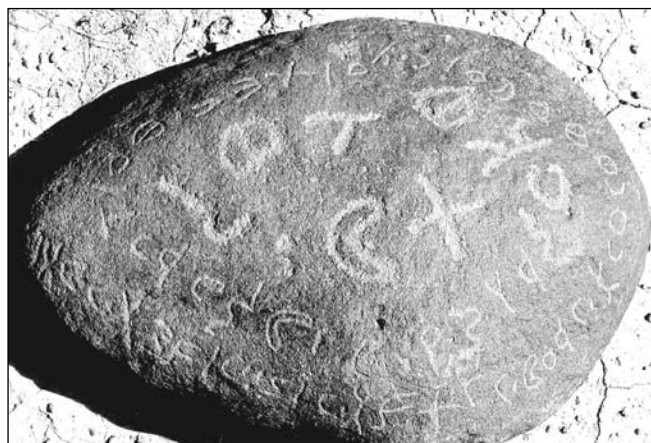
- RCM-1 (FIG. 4): *l'bn bn 'fkl bn nfl bn 'ktr bn m'd bn 'bjr w wjm 'l bnh (w) 'l thsn w 'l zbd bn shmln bn ghny f h dshr 'ws w ghnm.*

For 'Aban son of 'Afkl son of 'ktar son of Mi'ad son of 'Abjar, and I grieve (silently with anger) for his son (and) for Tahasun and for Zubayd son of Shamlan son of Ghany. O Dushara grant compensation and easy prey.

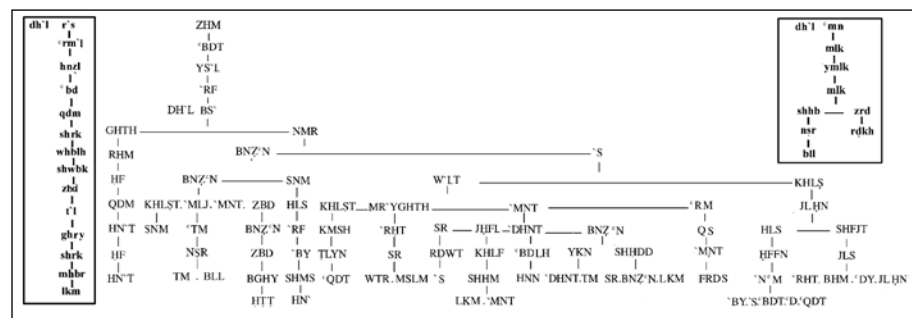
- RCM-2 (FIG. 5) has two texts and two figures of naked women with hair standing out from their heads; they are either holding hands or holding an object between them. Their arms are held out from the body and are flexed at the elbow forming a V shape. This is the most common stance in the drawings of nude women.

- RCM-2a: *l tm bn (n)sr bn 'tm bn 'mlj bn bnz'n bn bnz'n bn nmr bn bs' w shty w bny 'l s.*

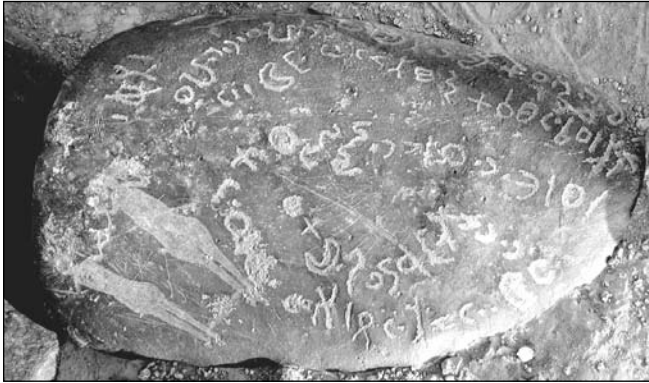
For Taym son of Naṣr son of 'Utum son of 'Amlaj son of Binza'in son of Binza'in son of Nimr son of Basa' and I stayed the winter (in this place) and I built on the 'awas.



4. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 1 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



3. Family trees.



5. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 2 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- RCM-2b: *l jlhn bn jls bn shf't bn (jlhn) bn khls bn's bn nmr bn bs'f dshr ghnmt.*

For Jalhan son of Julas son of Shafi'at son of Jalhan son of Kholes son of 'Awas son of Nimr son of Basa' O Dushara grant easy prey.

- RCM-3 (FIG. 6): *l bll bn nṣr bn shhb bn mlk bn mlk bn ymlk bn mlk dh'l'mn.*

For Bilal son of Naṣr son of Shahab son of Malek son of Malak son of Yamluk son of Malak from the tribe of 'Amun.

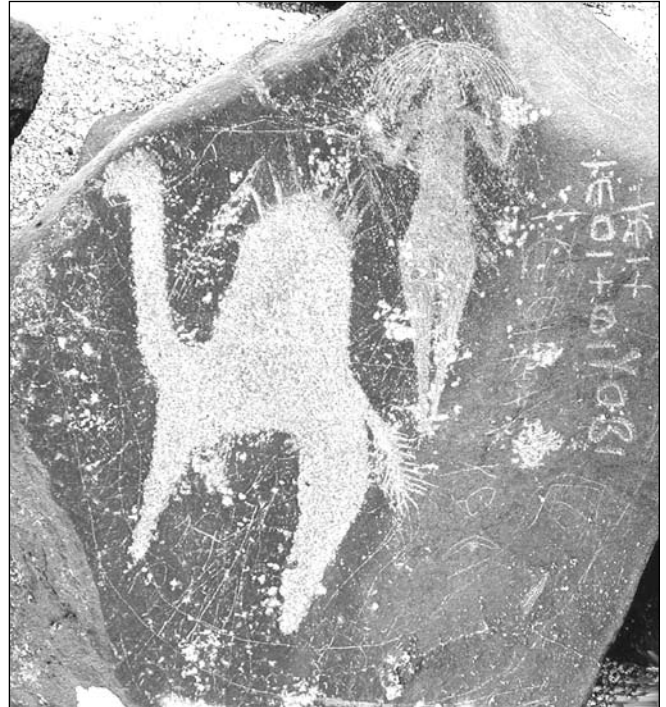
- RCM-4 (FIG. 7): *l ḥjlt w lh jml.*

For Ḥajlat and for him a camel.

The writer initially misspelled Ḥjlt and started again with the correct spelling. The same text is repeated with a fine line. There is a play here from the drawing of a naked lady and a camel. The Arabs use the metonymy by surname, so the woman is called gazelle, wild cow, cow, cat and many other names. See (ath-Tha'ālibi s.v. faslun



6. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 3 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



7. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 4 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

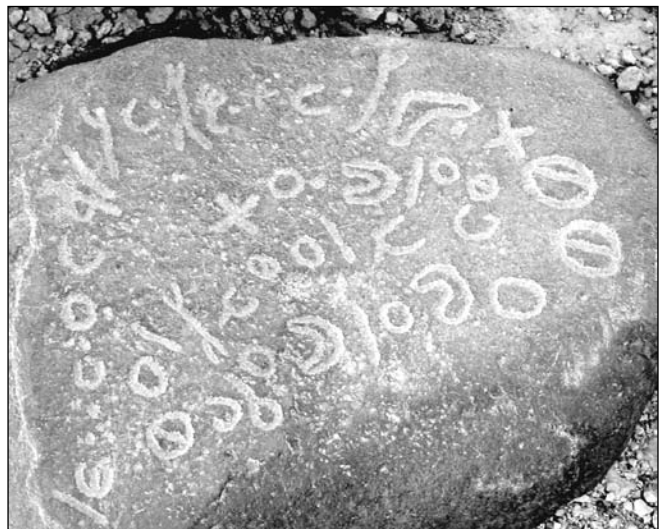
fī kinayāt al-mar'at).

- RCM-5 (FIG. 8): *l ḥnn bn 'bdllh bn 'dhnt bn 'mnt w wjm 'l m'yr w 'l 's w 'l sr w 'l mn't.*

For Ḥunna bn 'Abdullah bn 'Udhaynat bn 'Aminat and I grieve for Mi'yar and for 'Awas and for Sur and for Min'at.

- RCM-8: Dedicated to the same person (Watar) as RCM: 39d. He is the brother of Muslem mentioned in RCM 9 (*infra*).

l wtr bn sr bn 'rḥt bn mr'yghth bn w'lt w wjm 'l



8. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 5 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

'bh w 'l 'khh w 'l 'khh.

For Watar (or Watru) son of Sur son of 'Ariḥat son of Mar'yaghuth son of Wa'ilat and I grieve for his father and for his brother and for his brother.

- RCM-9 (FIG. 9): Dedicated to the same person as RCM: 19e (Muslem), the brother of Watar (or Watru) of RCM8.

l mslm bn sr bn 'rḥt bn mr'yghth bn w'lt bn 's bn nmr bn bs'.

For Muslem son of Sur son of 'Ariḥat son of Mar'yaghuth son of Wa'ilat son of 'Awas son of Nimr son of Basa'.

- RCM-14 (FIG. 10): *l 'rḥt bn jls bn shf't bn jlḥn w nṣr w lh frs w bny 'l 's.*

For 'Ariḥat son of Julas son of Shafi'at son of Jalḥan and Naṣer and for him a horse and I built on the 'awas.

- RCM-17 (FIG. 11): This stone has three figures and the seven dots and seven lines; the sun; and four texts (only one of which is presented here).

RCM-17-a. *l rb(' w) lh ghnmt bn ḥkm.*

For Rabi' and for him (these) spoils (or booty) son of Ḥakam.

- RCM 19 (FIG. 12): A stone with multiple inscriptions as well as figures.

RCM-19-a: *l mṭrn w ḥḍr fh dshr 'bl ldh rjl w bny 'l 's.*

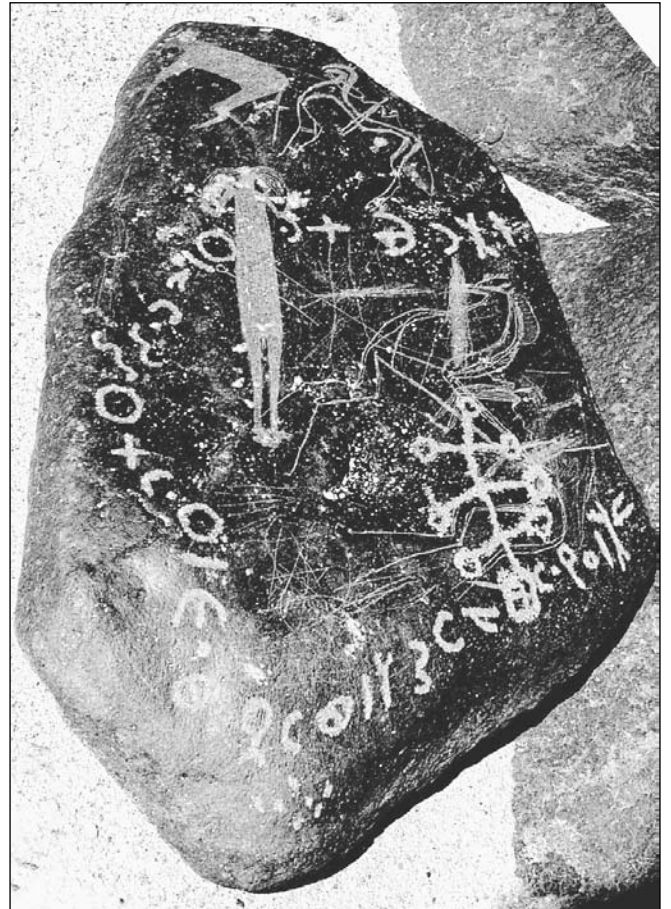
For Maṭirun I attend (or I come?) and then this is Dushara (I swear to Dushara to sacrifice) camels for such a man and I built on the 'awas.

- RCM-19-b: *l 'rḥt bn jls bn shf't bn jlḥn bn khlṣ bn w'lt w wjm 'l sr.*

For 'Ariḥat son of Julas son of Shafi'at son of



9. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 9 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



10. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 14 (Photo by Nancy Coinman).

Jalhan son of Khaliṣ and I grieve for Sur.

- RCM-19-c: *l'dm bn mḥl bn s'dlh fh lt w dshr ghnmt.*

For 'Adam son of Muḥil son of Sa'da'llah and then this is 'Allat and Dushara grant easy prey.

- RCM-19-d: *l lkm bn shḥdd bn bnzjn bn 'mnt bn w'lt bn 's w wjm 'l m'yr w 'l 's w 'l rḍwt w 'l sr dh'l bs' w bny 'nfs w str.*

For Lakam son of Shuḥḍud son of Binza'in son of 'Aminat son of Wa'ilat son of 'Awas and I grieve for Mi'yar and for 'Awas and for Raḍwat and for Sur from the Basa' tribe and I built gravestones and I concealed them (with stones).

- RCM-19-e: *l mslm bn sr bn 'rḥt bn mr'yghth w wjm 'l 'mh w 'l 'bh w 'l 'khh w 'l 's.*

For Muslem bin Sur bin 'Ariḥat bin Mar'yaghuth and I grieve for his mother and his father and his brother and for 'Awas.

- RCM-25 (FIG. 13) has three texts in different styles. The Raḍakh mentioned is from a different tribe; he is the son of Zubayd the nephew of Shahab bin Malek (see RCM-3).



11. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 17 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- RCM-25a: *l rḏkh bn zbd bn mlk bn mlk bn ymlk
bn mlk dh'l 'mn w shty w hdshr slm w ghnmt.*
For Raḏakh son of Zubayd son of Malek son of
Malak son of Yamluk son of Malek from the tribe
of 'Amun and I stayed the winter (in this place) O
Dushara salam and grant easy prey.
- RCM-26 (FIG. 14): All the names belong to the



13. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 25 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



14. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 26 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- tribe of Basa'. See the family tree, FIG. 3.
- *l jlḥn bn jls bn shf't bn jlḥn bn khlš bn 's bn nmr
w wjm 'l sr w 'l shr w 'l mr'yghth w 'l 's w 'l qs w*



12. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 19 (Photo by Nancy Coinman).



'l mn't w 'l m'yr dh'l bs'.

For Jalḥan son of Julas son of Shafi'at son of Jalḥan son of Khaliṣ son of 'Awas son of Nimr and I grieve for Sur and for Shawr and for Mar'yaghuth and for 'Awas and for Qays and for Mani'at and for Mi'yar from the tribe of Basa'.

- RCM-32 (FIG. 15) has figures of two women and a small figure. Near the figures are three names, two of which have been completed obliterated; the third can be restored and identified from the family tree as 'rf, the son of hls.

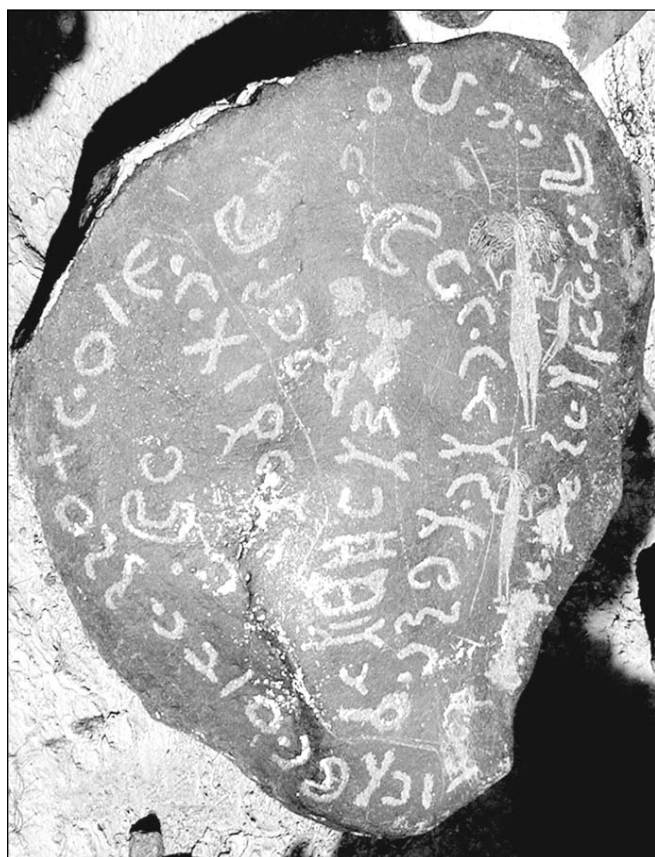
- RCM 32a: ...?[bn] 'rf bn hls bn snm bn bnz'n bn nmr bn bs' bn 'rf bn ys'l w ḍb' fdshr ghnmt.

... son of 'Uraf son of Halas son of Sanam son of Binza'n son of Nimr son of Basa' son of 'Uraf son of Yas'al stay hiding, and may Dushara grant easy prey.

- RCM-32b: *l rhm bn jls bn shf't bn jlḥn bn khlṣ bn 's bn nmr.*

For Ruhm son of Julas son Shafi'at son of Jalḥan son Khaliṣ son of 'Awas son of Nimr.

- RCM-33 (FIG. 16) has two clear figures, a horse-man and a camel, as well as two texts.
- RCM-33a: *lbll bn nṣr w lh nqt.*



15. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 32 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).



16. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 33 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- For Balal son of Naṣr, and for him (I present) a she camel.

- RCM-33b: Lh is missplaced as if it were added later.

- *l 'tk bn 'bjr w (lh) frs.*

For 'Atek son of 'Abjar and (for him) a horse.

- RCM-37 (FIG. 17). The drawing depicts five camels with a man standing in the middle carrying a sword. The camels appear as if they are carrying large loads and may represent a caravan.

- RCM-37a: *l hn' bn shms bn 'by bn 'rf w wjm 'l 'shy 'h w shty fh dshr w lt slm w gnmnt w bny 'l 's.* For Hani' son of Shams son of 'Ubay son of 'Uraf I grieve for his partisans and I passed the winter



17. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 37 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

(in this place). O Dushara and 'Allat grant peace and easy prey and I build on the 'awas.

- RCM-37b: *l mslm w lh 'bl*.

For Muslem and for him camels.

- RCM-37 c: *l ghbl bn ntn bn shrd w wjm 'l 'bh w 'l khlh w 'l khlh w 'l mlk w 'l khlst w bny 'l 's*.

For Ghaleb son of Natan son of Sharyd I grieve for his father and his uncle and his uncle (both from the mother's side) and for Malek and for Khaliṣat and I built on the 'awas [as a wish for compensation].

- RCM-37d: *l bnz'n bn shḥdd bn bnz'n bn 'mnt bn w'lt bn 's bn nmr bn bs' bn 'rf bn ys'l w r'y w bny 'l 's*.

For Binza'in son of Shuḥdud son of Binza'in son of 'Aminat son of Wa'ilat son of 'Awas son of Nimr son of Basa' son of 'Uraf son of Yas'al I graze and I build on the 'awas

- RCM-39 (FIG. 18): This includes four texts or messages; three of these are addressed to three brothers of 'Ad. The texts are arranged nicely one after the other and separated from the fourth by a dividing line. One graphic was created by hammering the damaged part of the first two texts, but because the persons mentioned belonged to a large family it was easy to reconstruct the texts.

- RCM-39a: *l 's bn 'n'm bn ḥffn (w n)dm 'l 'shy'h*.

For 'Awas son of 'In'um son of Ḥaffan and I regret (I feel sorrow for) his followers.

- RCM-39b: *l 'bdt bn 'n'm bn ḥffn bn hls w wjm 'l mn't*.

For 'Abaydat son of 'In'um son of Ḥaffan son of



18. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 39 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

Halas and I grieve for Mani'at.

- RCM-39c: *l 'b(dt) (bn) ('n)'m bn ḥffn bn hls bn jlḥn bn khlṣ bn 's w wjm 'l 's w 'l m'yr w 'l sr*.

For 'Ubaydat son of 'In'um son of Ḥaffan son of Halas son of Jalḥan son of Khalis son of 'Awas and I grieve for 'Was and for Mi'yar and for Sur.

- RCM-39d: Dedicated to the same person as RCM: 8.

- *l wtr bn sr bn 'r't bn mr'yghth w wjm 'l 'bh w 'l 'khh w 'l 'khh w 'l 'mh dh'l bs'*.

For Watar son of Sur son of 'Ariḥat son of Mar'yaghuth and I grieve for his father and his brother and his brother and his mother from the tribe Basa'.

- RCM-55 (FIG. 19) is a rare and interesting petroglyph, depicting a group of thirteen dancers in a semicircular formation. There are two bands separated by a space; the upper part consists of five men with swords at their waists, raising their arms in a U-shape and with their hair standing on end. The lower part has eight (possibly female) figures that do not carry swords, and have rounded heads, but their hands are raised up in the same manner as the men. The scene on this stone shows technical ability and a careful rendering of the subject matter. This scene viewed in the context of other representations in this place may indicate that this rujm was used for purposes other than a burial ground. Dancing in a circle is a very ancient tradition in the Middle East and elsewhere. The best reading of the fine text at the lower left end is in rhymed prose, perhaps used as a proverb.



19. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 55 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- *hlt w lmt*
- *Hallat wa lamat.*

The new moon appeared and (they) gathered, or (there was) jubilation and (they) gathered; or it rained (poured down) and (they) gathered. See the lexicon below: Hlt it can be used as hallat al-ḥarbu, the war is to begin. Before a tribal war, the Arabs use to stand opposite each other and raise their hands upward while enumerating their accomplishments and the glory of their fathers (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hll; m' l).

- RCM-70 (FIG. 20): This text is accompanied by a figure of a woman raising her hands in a U-shape and wearing a dress that is open at the front, thus fitting the description of the “dir’ al-mufarraj al-maqadim wa al-ma’akhīr”, open in front and back. This is the garment that the Quraysh before Islam used to force pilgrims (Ḥujjāj) to rent during the ṭawāf; if they did not rent the garment, they had to circumambulate nude. This dress is called dr’ or bdn, the same name of the person the text is meant for (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. dr’; bdn; Ibn Hishām, V.1: 64, hadyṭh al-ḥums). Three forms of the seven stars (the seven planets) are placed in a dotted V shape under the figure; in seven straight



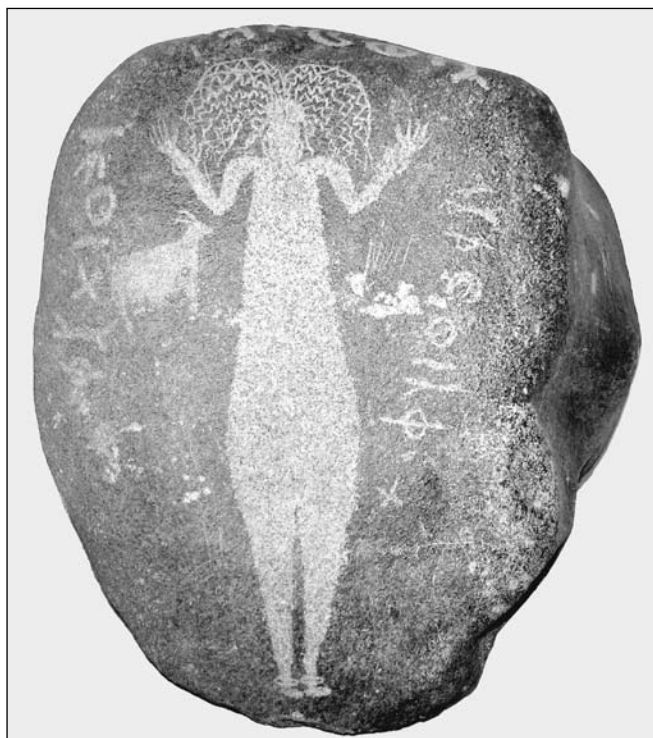
20. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 70 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

lines above, and dotted below the text.

- *Lbdn bn ’hm bn ’shyb*

For Badan son of ’Ayham son of ’Ashyab.

- RCM-77 (FIG. 21): The centerpiece is the nude woman standing with a wild cow or a goat on her left; around her are three small texts. The rendering of the ca. 30cm high figure is skillful work on a small stone. The standing figure is raising her arms in a V-shape while her fluffy long hair is parted in the center and falls down inside the Vs of her arms. She wears a necklace and two long earrings. Her wrists and ankles are adorned with bracelets. There are texts on either side of the drawings.



21. Rājil: Cairn of the Mermaids No. 77 (Photo by Pierre M. Bikai).

- RCM-77a: *l'dm w lh qnt*.
For 'Adam and for him a wild cow.
- See lexicon. This text is repeated at the top of the stone.
- RCM-77b: *lhjlt hqnt*.
For Ḥajlat (for him) this wild cow.

Personal Names

- 'BJR 'Abjar: Abjaru and Bujayrun are personal names from Arabic bajaru, the swollen belly button, or al-'Abjaru is a person with a large abdomen; obese. Bajarun is pre-Islamic idol for the Azad and Ṭay' tribes. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bjr; Harding 1971:17; Winnett and Harding 1978: 548; Clark 1980: 443; al-Khraysheh 2002: 25).
- 'BN 'Aban: 'Abanun is a personal name, 'Aban-an are the two mountains, one white, the second black; 'abana, to denounce, and 'abbana, to commemorate a deceased person (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'bn; aṭ-Ṭabarī 1991: vol. 2: 546; Ibn Ḥazm, 107; Harding 1971: 16; Winnett and Harding 1978: 548; Clark 1980: 443).
- 'BY 'Ubayy, or 'Abiyy: the disdainful or proud, from 'aba', to refuse, decline or reject. "Rajulun 'abiyyun" (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'by, 'Ubay bin Khalaf al-Jamaḥi, 'Ubay bin Qays al-Nakha'y, and 'Ubay bin Ka'b al-Katib; aṭ-Ṭabarī 1991: vol. 1: 468; vol. 3: 93; vol.1: 221).
- 'DM 'Adam: derived from 'adym; 'adamati al-'arḍi is the skin, surface, tanned skin, the surface of the earth. 'Adam also means the brown person, the white camel and gazelle. 'Adam is the father of all mankind, and made by God from dirt, 'adym. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'dm; Harding 1971: 32; Winnett and Harding 1978: 550; Clark 1980: 444; al-Khraysheh 2002: 81).
- 'DHNT 'Udhaynat: from 'Adhina to inform, to know, or to be aware. 'Udhaynatu is a personal name and the name of one of the Yamanite kings. Banu 'Udhunin is a tribe from Hawazin; 'adhan aṣ-ṣalat is the call to prayer (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'dhn; aṭ-Ṭabarī 1991: vol. 4: 106 as bn Kulayb; al-Aṣfahānī, vol. 12: 221; Harding 1971: 34; Winnett and Harding 1978: 550; Clark 1980: 444; al-Khraysheh 2002: 27).
- 'RHT 'Ariḥat: this is possibly a previously untested name from rawaḥa, raḥa, and 'aryaḥy, is the man who find pleasure in serving and helping. 'Araḥa al-rajulu 'istaraha wa raji'at 'ilayhi nafsahu ba'da al-'I'ya', is the one who recovers after being sick, and 'araḥa al-rajulu means the man died. 'Aryaḥu is a tribe from Yemen and the name of a town 'Ariyḥa' (Jericho). (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. rwh).
- 'RSH or 'RF 'Irash or 'Arsh: means indemnity, fine, penalty, blood money; 'uraf: Al-urfatu is the border, edge, boundary, or a mark; 'Urafy is the pure good milk. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'rsh; 'rf; Harding 1971: 37, and Winnett and Harding 1978: 550, as 'rsh; Ibn Ḥazm: 387 as 'Irash).
- 'S 'Awas: means to substitute, compensate, to give in exchange, etc. A terminology the Arabs that is still used today in condolences, includes "mu'asat" or "al-'awaḍ bi-salamatikum". Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. 'ws) says:
... al-'awasu: al-'aṭiyyatu. 'ustu al-qawma 'a'usuhum 'awasan 'idha 'a 'ṭaytuhum, wa kadhalika 'idha 'awwaḍtahum min shay'... al-'awas al-dhi'b wa bihi summiya al-rajul. The wolf is called 'awas and from it derives the personal name. 'Awas is a tribe from Yemen and its derivation from 'asa ya'usu 'awasan; the noun is 'al-'iyas, compensation; 'Awas son of Qaylat is the brother of al-Khazraj, and from them are the 'Anṣar (followers of the prophet). ... 'Awas-'Allat is one of them also ... later he changed his name to 'Awas-'Allah when he converted to Islam.
- The name is similar in meaning to the modern name 'Aṭiyat, 'Aṭa', 'Aṭa 'allah, 'Awaḍ, and 'Awaḍallah. The meaning of the name can be the wolf or the wolf cub, but when it is connected to 'l or 'allh it means gift or substitute. (Harding 1971: 40; Winnett and Harding 1978: 551, as 's; Clark 1980: 444; al-Khraysheh 2002: 32).
- 'SHYB 'Ashyab from shaba to become white-haired; to grow old. Shayban are two tribes from Bakr, Shayban bn Tha'labat and Shayban bn Dhuhl; Shaybatu bnu 'Uthman bn Ṭalḥat bn 'Abd Ad-dar's sons hold the key of the Ka'bat. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shyb; Ibn Ḥazm, 198, 'Ashyab bn 'Abd Munat bn 'Adad; Harding 1971: 50; Winnett and Harding 1978: 552; Clark 1980: 445; al-Khraysheh 2002: 58).
- 'FKL 'Afkal: is a personal name, al-'Afwah al-'Awdy because he has a tremor. Al-Afkal is the father of a tribe called al-'Afakil. 'Afkal is a name of a place. 'Afkal means to tremble, shiver, shake. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. fkl; Harding 1971: 59; Winnett and Harding 1978: 553; CL; 445; Ibn Ḥazm as al-'afkal = 'umar bn al-Ja'yid, and al-'Afkal= Mu'awiyat bn 'awf).

- 'KTR 'Aktar: al- katru means the dome, the hump of the camel. 'Aktar could mean the humped man. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ktr; Harding, 1971: 61; Winnett and Harding 1978: 554 as 'ktb).
- 'MIJ or 'ML': Al-mal'u means to go on the ground, to walk fast, or the extended land. Mayla'un is a name of a female dog (Ibn Mandhūr, s. v. ml'). 'Amlaj: 'al-malju is to suckle, 'rajulun maljan' is the man who drinks milk from the she camel and the ewe. 'Amlaju is the brown-skinned man, also 'amlaj yellow skin, not black and not white (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. mlj).
- 'MNT 'Aminat: From 'amuna to be faithful or trustworthy. Rajulu 'amanatun is the man who believes everything. (Ibn Mandhūr, v.s. 'mn). 'Aminat bint Wahab was the name of the Prophet's mother (Harding 1971: 77, as 'mnt).
- 'N'M 'An'um: a name from the verb na'ima, to live in comfort and luxury (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. n'm). 'In'am is a name still used today for a man or a woman. 'In'am can be an act of kindness, a favor, or a gift. This name is common in the Arab world and it appears in different forms such as Na'im, Mun'im, Nu'man, N'um etc. 'In'am is a name given for the herd of camel, sheep and cattle. Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. n'm) enumerates a number of personal names, valleys and mountains and tribes: "Na'imun wa Nu'aymun wa Mun'am wa 'An'umu wa Nu'miyyun wa Nu'manu wa Nu'aymanu, all names" (see also Harding 1971: 80; Winnett and Harding 1978: 555; Clark 1980: 445).
- 'HM 'Ayham is the bold man, the courageous man whom no one can push away and who dose not speak or scold; the dumb person. Jabalatu bnu al-'Ayham is the last king of the Ghassanids. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. yhm; Harding 1971: 82; Winnett and Harding 1978: 556; Clark 1980: 446; al-Khraysheh 2002: 83).
- 'WS 'Uways: which is different from 'S in RCM-2a. 'Uways is a diminutive of 'awas the wolf; "al-'awasu can also mean al-'aṭiyyatu 'ustu al-qawma 'a'usuhum 'awasan 'idha 'a 'ṭaytuhum, wa kadhalika 'idha 'awwaḍtahum min shay' '. 'Awas means substitute, to give in exchange, replace, etc. See 's, (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'ws; Harding 1971: 84; Winnett and Harding 1978: 556, as 'ws; 'ws'l, 'wst; Clark 1980: 446, as 'ws'l; 'wst; al-Khraysheh 2002: 64).
- BDN: Badan means the mountain goat or body; badana is a dress for women; also to be fat; al-badnatu is a she camel or cow, which used to be sacrificed at Mekka after they were fattened. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bdn; Harding 1971: 98; Winnett and Harding 1978: 558; Clark 1980: 447; Ibn Ḥazm, 307, Badan bn Bakr bn Wa'il, and 132, Badinat bint Ghaylan ath-Thaqafy; al-Khraysheh 2002: 95).
- BS' Basa'; from basi'a to be intimate, friendly or kind. Basa'a means to become accustomed. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bs'; Harding 1971: 105; Winnett and Harding 1978: 558; Clark 1980: 447).
- BGHY Baghyy: From baghiya, to wrong, treat unjustly, or from bagha' meaning to seek or desire, or the bud of a flower. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bgh'); Bagha' facilitated the killing of al-Mutawakkil (al-Aṣḥānī vol. 9, 363); Bagha' al-Saghyr and Bagha' al-kabyr (aṭ-Ṭabari 1991: vol. 5, Bagha', passim; see also Harding 1971: as bght; Winnett and Harding 1978: as bght and bghyt; Clark 1980: as bghyd).
- BLL Bilal: from balal, moist or damp; bilal can also be water; Bilal is a name of a man; Bilal is the announcer of the hour of prayer of the Prophet. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bll; Harding 1971: 117; Winnett and Harding 1978: 560; Clark 1980: 447; al-Khraysheh 2002: 54).
- BNZ'N² Binza'in: means son of Ẓa'in, the one who walks; ẓa'inun is the name for anyone traveling from one place to an other. Ẓa'inatu bin Murrin is the brother of Tamim of the Tamim tribe. Othman bin Maẓ'unin is the friend of the Prophet. (Ibn Mandhūr s.v. z'n; Harding 1971: 392; Winnett and Harding 1978: 590; and Clark 1980: 457, as z'n and z'n'l).
- THSN is a taf'yl from taḥsyn, meaning beautification or embellishment; it derives from ḥasan, to be handsome, good, etc. Ḥassan is a name of a person. 'Iḥsan 'Abd-al-Quddus is a well known Egyptian writer. 'Iḥsan and Taḥsun are from charity or performance of good deeds. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ḥsn). Taḥsin is a name still in use today.
- TM Taym: 'At-taymu means to be enslaved by love, and from it comes the name Taym-Allah, known in several tribes: Baker,'An-namir, and Taymun in Quraysh, and bin Murrat and bin Ghalib, etc. Names include: Taym 'Allat in Dabbat,

² An asterisk denotes a name or word that may be previously unattested.

- 'Al-Khazraj, and Taym son of 'Abd-Manat. Tayma' is a name of a town. (Ibn Mandhūr s.v. tym; Harding 1971: 136; Winnett and Harding 1978: 562; Clark 1980: 448; al-Khaysheh 2002).
- JLHN Jalhan: the bald one; in Arabic it can mean a stage of baldness. Baldness in Arabic starts with a person being anza', then 'ajlah when it gets halfway, becomes 'ajla' and then after that a man is called 'ajlah, the plural being julhan, or it can be an adjectival form, Jalhan, from jaliha. The word can also mean to declare publicly, to be loud, etc. Jallahun, Julahu and Julayhat are names. Julahu is the name of Abu 'Uhayhat bin Julah al-Khazrajy. Julyh is a personal name, and Banu Julayhat is an Arab tribe. Jalha' is a town near al-Basrat. (Ibn Mandhūr, s. v. jlh; Harding 1971: 164; Clark 1980: 449).
 - JLS Julas: Jalasa means to sit; al-jalsu is the mountain or can describe the body of a large person or a camel. Julasan wa Jallasan are names that mean the rose and marjoram (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. jls; at-Ṭabarī vol. 2, 59, as al-Julas bn Ṭalhat; Ibn Ḥazm 127 and 337, as al-Julas bn Suwayd; Harding 1971: 165; Winnett and Harding 1978: 566; Clark 1980: 449).
 - HJLT Hajlat: from hajal, partridge; also a young camel is called hajal; al-hajlu and al-hijlu is an anklet; also it can mean white. Hajalat means a dome, which they used to build for a bride. Taḥjul is a name for a horse, and Hujayla' is a place. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hjl; al-Aṣḥānī vol. 5, 37, as Hajl al-Bahily; at-Ṭabarī vol. 2, 460 Hajal al-'ajaly; Harding 1971: 178 and Winnett and Harding 1978: 567 as hjl).
 - HF Hafin: barefooted; haffa means to surround or border on and hafy means welcoming or greeting. See HFfn.
 - HFFN Haffan: a similar form as 'affan from 'af-fana, to perfume with incense; the name of the father of the Khalifat was 'Othman Bin 'Affan. Haffan means to receive with honors, kindly, and hospitably. The haffan is also an ostrich chick and can also be the name for a young camel. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hff; Harding 1971: 194-95 as hf, hff and hfn; Winnett and Harding 1978: 569 as hf).
 - HNN: Hunna, a proper name that is well known. The Hunna tribe is mentioned by al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani, ca. AD 550 (Encyclopedia of Islam, s.v. al- Nabighat). Banu Hunna bin Rabi'a bin Haram bin Dinnā are from a tribe called 'Udhlat bin Sa'd Huzaym and are descended from the Quḍa'a tribe (al-Bakri al-Andalusi: 43-44). The word hnn could also be derived from the verb ḥanna (to long or yearn). ḥunayn is a well-known classical Arabic name, e.g., ḥunayn bin Ishaq, a physician of the Caliph al-Mutawakkil who was born in al-Ḥyrit (AD 809-73). (Harding 1971: 207; Winnett and Harding 1978: 570; Clark 1980: 241).
 - KHLŞ Khalış or Khalışa, to escape or to be safe. Khalışa is to get to or end. Al-Khalışu is white. Dhu al-Khalāṣat was a house for Khath'am tribe called the ka'bat of al-Yamama; it had inside of it the idol of al-Khalāṣat. Khalışatu can also be the name of a woman. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. khlş; Harding 1971: 226; Winnett and Harding 1978: 572; Clark 1980: 452).
 - RB' Rabi' or Raby': a very common personal name meaning the spring. The Arabs used Raby'an, Rubay'an, and Mirba'an, and many tribes' fathers were named Raby'at (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. rb'; Harding 1971: 266; Winnett and Harding 1978: 576; Clark 1980: 453).
 - RDKH or RD': Raḍakha means to break or smash, to give a present or a gift; ruḍukh means submission. Raḍakh as a name is not attested. RD': Riḍa' and Ruḍa' is a possible reading; see rdwt (al-Aṣḥānī vol. 10, 63-64, see 'Aly bin Musa ar-Riḍa' ca, AD 861; Ibn Ḥazm, 401, Ruḍa' bn 'Umar bn al Ghawth).
 - RDWT Raḍwat: a very common name with many derivations, Raḍwan, Riḍa', Murtaḍa'. Raḍwat is from the verb raḍiya, to be satisfied or to consent or agree, to approve, etc. Raḍwa' is a mountain in Madinat and from it derives the name Raḍwa' (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. rdy; Harding 1971: 280; Winnett and Harding 1978: 577).
 - RHM Ruhm: from rihma or riham it means to drizzle. Banu Ruhm is a tribe. Ruhmun is a woman's name. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. rhm; Ibn Ḥazm, 567 lists several Ruhms, i.e., p. 417 as Ruhm bn Murrat bn 'Adad; Harding 1971: 124, as bhm bahim; Winnett and Harding 1978: 341 read as buhaim; Clark 1980: 448 as bhm).
 - ZBD Zubayd: from zabada to churn or foam; it can also mean essence or extract. Zubaydat is the nickname of the mother of al-'Amin Muhammad bin Harun. Zubaydu is one of the Yemenite tribes. Zubayd is a branch of the tribe of Mazhij. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. zbd; al-Aṣḥānī vol. 4, 320, Abū Zubayd at-Ṭā'iy is the poet of Harmalat bin al-

- Mundhir; Harding 1971: 294; Winnett and Harding 1978: 579; al-Khaysheh 2002: 96).
- SR Sary or Sur: As-sura' is a small arrow; sary means rich or noble. The only name in al-Lisan is Abu Sayyarat al-'Adawany meaning syyarat or caravan. Sawwarun, musawirun, and miswarun are from surun, the top of the head or the top of a city wall (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. sr', srr, swr, and syr; Ibn Ḥazm, 145, as-Sarat bnt Hisham bn al-Maghyrat; aṭ-Ṭabarī vol.3, 226, as-Sary bn Waqaṣ al-Ḥarithy; Harding 1971: 314; Winnett and Harding 1978: 581; Clark 1980: 454; al-Khaysheh 2002: 34).
 - S'DLH Sa'd-allah: a composite theophoric proper name, composed of s'd and lh (sa'd-'allah). The verb sa'ida means to be happy or lucky; hence Sa'd'allah means blissful is Allah. S'd'l is attested in all related dialects (Harding 1971: 319; Winnett and Harding 1978: 582; Clark 1980: 454; al-Khaysheh 2002: 46).
 - SNM Sanym: from sanymun which is said about an honored man; sanam is the hump (of the camel); sanamat is summit, height, or peak; Sanam is a mountain in Baṣra' (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. snm; Harding 1971: 332; Winnett and Harding 1978: 583; Clark 1980: 455).
 - SHHDD Shuhdud: shuhdudun is a name for the lion with a bad temper. An Arabian woman attempting to ride a mule said about the mule's bad temper: "la 'alahu ḥayuṣun 'aw qamuṣun 'aw shuhdudun" (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shhd; Harding 1971: 341; Winnett and Harding 1978: 585).
 - SHR Shawr: ash-shawru and ash-shayyru mean very pretty, handsome, or well dressed. The derivation is from shawwara, to signal or point out. Al-Qa'Qā', bin Shawr is a man from Bani 'Umar bin Shayban bin Dhuhal bin Tha'labat. Saturday used to be called Shiyar by the Arabs before Islam (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shwr; shy; Harding 1971: 344; Winnett and Harding 1978: 585; Clark 1980: 455).
 - SHRD Sharyd: from sharada, to run away or flee; sharid is fugitive, displaced, expelled, etc. Banu ash-Shsharyd is a branch of a tribe; from them came Sakher, the brother of al-Khansa', a famous poetess; and Banu ash-Shsharyd is a tribe from Sulaym; Shraydat is a Jordanian tribe. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shrd; Harding 1971: 346; Clark 1980: 455; al-Khaysheh 2002: 69 as shrdt).
 - SHRK Shurayk: Sharyk is a name of a man, from sharika, to share or to be a partner, or shirak, a net or trap. Shirkun and Sharkun are places names, and Banu Shurayk is tribe branch. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shrk; al-Aṣḥānī vol 17: 152, as Sharyk bn Shaddad al-Ḥaḍramy; Ibn Ḥazm 406, Sharyk bn 'Amru bn 'Abd Yaghuth; Harding 1971: 347; Winnett and Harding 1978: 585; Clark 1980: 455).
 - SHF'T: Shafi'un and Shafy'un are two names; the Banu Shafi'in are a tribe from Bani Ṭaleb bin Abd Munaf and from the Imam al-Shafi'y. Shafi'at means mediator or advocate. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. Shf'; aṭ-Ṭabarī vol.5, 625, as Shafy' (al-Khadem); al-Aṣḥānī vol. 7, 190).
 - SHMS Shams: the sun, shamasa, but also to be headstrong or restive (of a horse), and it is one of the names for wine; al-shamsu is a type of ornament. Shamsun, Shumsun, Shumaysun, Shamy-sun, and Shammassun are names. Ash-Shamus is the horse of Shabib bin Jarad; Shams is a town in Yemen. Banu ash-Shamusi a tribe, and Shamsun is an old Idol; 'Abdu Shamsin is a Quraysh tribe and it has been said that the tribe was named after the sun. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shms; al-Aṣḥānī vol.18, 193, Shams al Wazzanyn; Harding 1971: 358; Winnett and Harding 1978: 587).
 - 'BDT 'Abadat, 'Abidat, 'Abed, 'Ubadat, and 'Ubaydat: proper names. 'Abadatu or 'abidatu means to remain or linger, but it can also be a title for a strong camel. 'Ubadatu, 'Ubaydatu, 'Abidun, 'Ubaydun, etc. are all names derived from 'abada, to serve, worship, or to enslave. 'Abadat bin 'Alqamat and 'Abdat bin aṭ-Ṭayyeb, the poet, are historic names (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'bd; Harding 1971: 298; Winnett and Harding 1978: 592; al-Khaysheh 2002: 66).
 - 'BDLH 'Abdullah: a composite proper theophoric name composed of 'bd and lh ('abdu-'allah) the verb 'abada means to worship, to serve, and the name 'abd is slave, servant; 'Abdu-'Allah is the servant of God. For the various derivations of 'bd, Ibn Mandhūr lists a large number of names and tribes (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'bd's: 400; Winnett and Harding 1978: Clark 1980: 457).
 - 'TK 'Atek: from 'ataka, to attack; 'atik means clear or pure (for wine); and 'atikat describes women wearing fragrance. 'Atikun is the father of a Yemenite tribe and 'Atik is an Arab group (Ibn Mandhūr, v.s. 'tk; aṭ-Ṭabarī, vol. 2, 24 lists several 'atikat, among them are 'Atikat bnt 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib; Harding 1971: 405; Ibn Ḥazm, 367, as al-'Atyk bn al-'Azad; Harding 1971: 403; Win-

- nett and Harding 1978: 593; Clark 1980: 457).
- 'TM 'Utum: from 'atama means to cease, give up, or to be slow; 'atimun is to be late, and 'al-'atamatu is the first third of the night. 'Al-'utum is the she camel who doesn't give milk until evening. 'Utumin could be the name of a man or a horse (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'tm; Harding 1971: 405).
 - 'MN 'Uman: from the verb 'amana to reside, to go to (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'mn).
 - GHLB Ghaleb: from the verb ghalaba, to subdue or conquer; Ghalibun, Ghallabun, and Ghulaybun are proper names. Taghlibu is the father of a tribe (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ghlib; Ibn Ḥazm, 222, Ghaleb bn Hindhalat; Harding 1971: 457; Winnett and Harding 1978: 599; Clark 1980: 460).
 - GHNY: Al-ghaniyyu is one of the names of God; it means also rich. Ghaniyyun is a branch of the tribe of Ghatafan. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ghn'; Harding 1971: 459; Winnett and Harding 1978: 600).
 - QS Qays: a very common name meaning the strong one; from it is derived the name of 'Umru' al-Qays. Qays 'Aylan is the father of Maḍar branch (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. qys; Harding 1971: 481, as qs, the good herdsman; Winnett and Harding 1978: 603, 460).
 - LKM Lukam: from the verb lakama, to strike with the fist, "khuffun milkam wa mulakkam wa lakkam salbun shadyd yaksiru al-hijarat" a strong shoe that can break a stone. Luqman is a name; Lukam is a mountain in Syria. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. lkm).
 - MHL: Muḥil: the verb maḥala, maḥila or maḥula is to be barren and also to plot intrigue, etc. "Ra-julun maḥl" is a man with nothing good about him. Al-maḥalu is a stone jewel (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. mhl). Al-muḥyl is the one who is barren, but it also means a sad person. Muḥawwal, from ḥawal, ḥyla is to undergo a change. Ḥawal is a place name. Banu Ḥawalat is a branch of bnu Muḥawwalat; they are the sons of 'Abdu'allah bin Ghatafan, whose name originally was 'Abd-'al-'uzzat, but the Prophet changed his name so they were called Banu Muḥawwalat (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ḥwl; aṭ-Ṭabarī vol. 3, 36, al-Muḥil bin Khalifat aṭ-Ṭa'i; aṭ-Ṭabarī vol. 3, 66, al-Muḥil aṭ-Ṭafawy).
 - MR'YGHTH Mar'-Yaghuth: al-ghawth is to help or to go to the aid of. Ghawthun, Ghiyathun, and Mughiyth are proper names; al-Ghawthu is a branch of Ṭay' trib, and also a branch of al-Azad tribe. Yaghuth is an idol who belongs to Mizhaj (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ghwth). Mr' or al-Mar'u is the name for man, as in 'Mr'i al-Qays. The meaning of 'Mr'i al-Qays is a strong man. Mar'-Yaghuth is a very rare name and it could be translated as the man of God Yaghuth. 'Abd-Yaghuth is a composite proper theophoric name composed of 'Abd and Yaghuth and is similar to 'Abdu-'Allah. 'Abd-Yaghuth bn Ṣāla'at was a poet, and a knight who died 40 years before the Hijra, ca. 584AD (al-Aṣfahānī vol. 16, 354; Ibn Ḥazm, 417, as 'Abd-Yaghuth bn al-Ḥareth; Ibn Ḥazm, 128, as bn Wahab).
 - MTRN Maṭran: from maṭar, it means rain, or as a verb, maṭara, to pour out or to run swiftly. Maṭarun (maṭar) is a personal name. Maṭar is a name still in use today. Maṭṭarun is a name of a place, and Maṭari a place between "ad-Dahna'i wa as-Samani" (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. mtr; Ibn Ḥazm, 319, as Maṭyr bn al-Qa'qā'; Harding 1971: 526, as mṭrn; Clark 1980: mṭr).
 - M'D Ma'add: al-ma'du means bulky or huge; Ma'add bin 'Adnan is one of the Arab tribes. Ma'dyyun and Ma'danun are two names; Ma'd-yakriba is a composite name (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. m'd; Ibn Ḥazm, 427, Ma'd Yakrib; Harding 1971: 552; Winnett and Harding 1978: 611).
 - M'YR Mi'yar: name of a man who had a fertile valley. 'Ayrūn is a name of a mountain in Mekka. 'Ibnatu Mi'yar is a shrewd person (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'yr; Ibn Ḥazm, 162, Mi'yar bn Luzan bn Ṣa'D; Harding 1971: 558).
 - MLK Malek and Malak: personal names still used today. Ibn Mandhūr lists several other names such as Mulayk, Mulaykat, Malek, Muwaylik, Mumalak, and Milkan. Milk is a derivation of malaka, to take possession or take over. Malik is a king, and malak is an angel. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. mlk; Harding 1971: 564; Winnett and Harding 1978: 613; Clark 1980: 463; al-Khaysheh 2002: 54).
 - MN'T Mani'at: derived from mana'a, to stop or prevent. The noun mana'at means power, force, or invincibility. The name Manna' is still in use today. Mana'un, wa Mani'un, wa Munay'un, wa 'Amna'u, are names; Mana'i is a hill on Tay' mountain, and al-Mana'atu is a town (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. mn'; Harding 1971: 569; Winnett and Harding 1978: 614; Clark 1980: 464).
 - NTN Natan: possibly from natin, maladorous or rotten. Alternately, it is possibly from Aramaic or Hebrew meaning gift, nata' in Arabic from the

- Yemenite means to give (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ntn, nt'; Harding 1971: 581, as ntn and ntnb'l; Winnett and Harding 1978: 464, 614; al-Khaysheh 2002: 46).
- NŞR Naşr: means to help or defend. Naşsar is an idol, and Naşara', Naşra' and Naşirat are names of villages in Syria. Naşr, Nuşayr, Naşer, and Maşur are names. Banu Naşr are from two mothers and Naşr bin Qu'ayni is the father of Banu Asad tribe (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. nsr; Harding 1971: 590; Winnett and Harding 1978: 615; Clark 1980: 464).
 - NFL Nawfal or Nafyl: spoils, booty, or a present; personal names such as Nawfal and Nufayl (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. nfl; Ibn Ḥazm, 268, Nafyl bn rabi'at; Ibn Ḥazm, 150, Nafyl bn 'abd al-'Uzy; Ibn Ḥazm, 76, Nawfal bn 'abd Shams; Harding 1971: 579; Winnett and Harding 1978: 616; Clark 1980: 464).
 - NMR Nimrun, Numayr or Numayru: a name from 'al-numratu which means spotted; it is derived from the name for the tiger and leopard (nim-run). Namira is said about a furious man. Namara means to climb or ascend. Numayr bin 'Amer is the father of a tribe from Qays; Namirun and Numayrun are two tribes, and Nimrun is a name of a man (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. nmr; Harding 1971: 599; Winnett and Harding 1978: 617; Clark 1980: 464).
 - HLS Halas: is a derivation from al-hals and al-hulasu, a very thin person. Al-Mahlus is a person who eats a lot but the food does not leave any effect on his body. Halasat is a family name known in Jordan (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hls; Harding 1971: 621; Winnett and Harding 1978: 620).
 - HN': see Hn't.
 - HN'T Huna'at: from the verb hana'a, to be beneficial or to do good, etc. Huna'at is a name, the brother of Mu'awiyat bin 'Amru bin Malek. Muhanna'u and Hani'u are men's names (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hn'; Ibn Ḥazm, 422, Hani' bn Habyb, 324, Hani' bn Mas'ud; Harding 1971: 625, as hn' and hn't; Winnett and Harding 1978: 620; Clark 1980: 465; al-Khaysheh 2002: 23; 30).
 - W'LT Wa'il, Wayel: the original form of Wa'il; the hamzat in it is called 'the imported hamzat after the consonant alef' (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. al-hamzat). Wa'il is derived from the verb wa'ala, to seek refuge or safety. Wa'il is a personal name, as in Wa'il bn Qasit bn Hind (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. w'l; Ibn Ḥazm, 271, Wa'ilat bn Şa'sa'at; Ibn Ḥazm 178, Wa'ilat bn 'Amrw bn Shayban; Harding 1971: 632, as w'l and w'lt; Winnett and Harding 1978: 621; Clark 1980: 466, as w'l).
 - WTR watru and wtru: uneven, odd, singly and Adam was called wtru meaning he was alone. Al-Watr is one of God's names; al-wtru or al-watru means to revenge the blood of, or the avenger himself. Watar means the string of a bow; watyru is the flower, the name for the horse's forelock, and it also is a place name (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. wtr; Harding 1971: 633; Winnett and Harding 1978: 621; Clark 1980: 466).
 - YMLK yamluk: See MLK (Harding 1971: 684; Winnett and Harding 1978: 626; as ymlk).
- Other than names of persons, some gods are named including DSHR and LT.

Lexicon

- 'BL 'ibl: is a plural for camel for which there is no singular. Passim.
- 'BH 'ab: his father, the h is huwa, the pronoun (al-Khaysheh 2002: 32).
- 'KHH 'akhyh: his brother, from 'akh brother with the possessive "his" (al-Khaysheh 2002: 101).
- 'S: See 'S and 'WS in the name list above.
- 'STR: from the verb satara, to cover, veil, or hide. However, "al-'ida'u: ma 'adaytu 'ala al-mayti hyna tadfinuhu min labinin 'aw hijaratin 'aw khashabin 'aw ma ashbah, ... al-'ida' wa al-'ida'u hajarun raqyqun yustaru bihi as-sha" (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'd'). In this case the verb satara here could mean the use of a stone over a tomb (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. str; Harding 1971: 310; Winnett and Harding 1978: 108-9).
- 'SHY 'H: this is usually part of a name such as Shay'u-Allah; from shay'at, a tree that gives a good scent. However, in this text it means partisans, particularly as it is attached to a personal pronoun, i.e., his partisans (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. shy'; Harding 1971: 364; Winnett and Harding 1978: 181; Clark 1980: 374).
- 'NFS 'anfus: this is possibly the plural of nfs, the soul or spirit or individual; nafas is breath and in these texts, it could mean "to sigh deeply, groan, moan" but it is not likely. Winnett (1978: 82, no. 244) states that nfst in Safaitic occurs with "the plural form 'nfs" and "this is contracted to 'fs." He goes on to say that Littman's translation of nfst: ... by tomb, stating that nfs has this meaning in SAR

and Lih. This is incorrect. In these dialects it has the same meaning as in Nab. and Palm., namely “funerary monument” [CIS, Para V] correctly renders *Ṣaf nfst* by “cipus” (a pillar at a grave)

...

- 'WS (see also 'S as name) 'awas: “al-'awasu: al-'aṭiyyatu. 'ustu al-qawma 'a'usuhum 'awasan 'idha 'a'taytuhum, wa kadhalika 'idha 'awwaḍtahum min shay' ... al-'awas al-dhi'b wa bihi summiya al-raju ...” 'Awas means to substitute or to give in exchange (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. 'ws). This terminology is still used today in condolences, mu'asat; condolences are given by saying 'awaḍ bi-salamatikum. 'Awas is also a tribe from Yemen, and its derivation is from 'asa y'usu 'awasan; the noun is 'al-'iyas, compensation (Ibn Mandhūr s.v. 'ws; 'ys; Harding 1971: 84).
- BDN badan: mountain goat or body. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bdn; Harding 1971: 98; Clark 1980: 447)
- BKRT bakrat or bikrat: the young camel; and bkr is the first born or virgin (Passim).
- BNH bnihi or 'Ibnihi: his son. Possibly it was pronounced bneh, his son. It can also be banyhi, his sons; the h is the third person masculine singular.
- BNY: the verb bana' with the 'alif al-maqsou-rat, shortened 'alif, means to build or construct. Wbny should be read wa'abny and I built, first person singular. It precedes 'l 's in most of these texts (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bn'; Harding 1971: 122; Winnett and Harding 1978: 200; Clark 1980: 202; al-Khaysheh 2002: 72).
- BWTH batha: yabwithu is to remove, squander or scatter (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. bwth).
- JML jamal: camel.
- ḤḌR ḥaḍara: is to be present or to participate; in the first person singular, it can mean to bring or to supply (Harding 1971: 191; Winnett and Harding: 50; Clark 1980: 295; al-Khaysheh 2002: 27).
- KHLH khaluhu; means his uncle, khal being the uncle from the mother's side.
- KHLH khillah: from al-khalil, bosom friend, lover, sweetheart. Khullat, friend, is used for masculine and feminine in the singular and plural. Khillah is his friends (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. khll; Harding 1971: 228; Winnett and Harding 1978: 572).
- DH'L: means from the tribe of. The derivation is from dh, belong to; dhawu or dhawuhu means his relatives; the 'al is from wa'ala, to take refuge, 'ilatu fulan, those who belong to his tribe. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. w'l and dhw).
- RJL rajul: man, a great man, a leader (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. rjl; Harding 1971: 271; al-Khaysheh 2002: 94).
- R'Y ra'y, ra'a': this is usually translated as to graze or to tend a flock of animals, but in some cases this does not make sense. There are other meanings from ra'ya as in “fulan yura'y 'amra fulanin 'ay yanzuru 'ila ma yasiru 'ilayhi 'amruhu” (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. r'y), similar to English ‘looking forward; or remain yours’ (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. r'y; Harding 1971: 282; Winnett and Harding 1978: 39; Clark 1980: 463; al-Khaysheh 2002: 17).
- SLM salam or silam: (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. slm) states that salam is guiltless, innocence; salamat is well-being; it was used for the dead by saying 'alaykum 'as-salam. It is a derivation from as-salim wa as-silam which is the stone. See remarks infra. We find the word slm in many of the texts (Winnett and Harding 1978: 635; Clark 1980: 472; al-Khaysheh 2002: 37).
- SHTY: should be read as 'ashty (I stayed the winter). In Safaitic it is the same as in Thamudic, i.e., the Hamzat is ignored because of the dialect; the ya' indicates the first person singular; see Bikai and Khaysheh 2002: 215-24. The verb is from shita' winter; tashatta 'al-makan is to stay the winter in a place. The Arabs saying 'tashatayna 'aṣ-ṣumman' meaning to graze a flock in winter. It could be a derivation from shatta to disperse or scatter. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. sht' and shtt; Harding 1971: 340; Winnett and Harding 1978: 231; Clark 1980: 246; al-Khaysheh as shtw 2002: 89).
- ḌB' daba'a: in the context of hunting, it means to be hidden, be concealed, 'to stick to the ground'. It can also mean to seek refuge (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ḍb'). For the phrase wḍb' lhjrt, Winnett (1978: 54) translated “ḍaba'a ila” as “to fly to for refuge”; he understand lhjrt to be an unknown town and, but he could not find a proper meaning for mahjir” he follows Littmann's translation from South Arabic and Hebrew as “to wage war”. Ibn Mandhūr states that mhjr is an area nearby but beyond the tribal settlement “as if someone is in the midst of his people when they are at peace, but when a crime happens (killing) he leaves to hide” (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hjr) This may explain the erased names in our RCM-32.
- 'L 'ala': a preposition; in our case it carries the meaning or on, above, or over.
- GHNMT ghanimat: easy prey, spoils, or profit; in

- most cases here it means (may God) grant easy prey. This terminology still in use today in the saying “‘Allah yirzuq” (Winnett and Harding 1978: 53; Clark 1980: 179).
- GHNM Ghanam: the plural of shat, a herd of sheep, goats, or small cattle. Ghanima as a verb means to gain, see ghanimat.
 - F fa: is a conjunction meaning then, but then, and so, etc.
 - FRS Faras: is a horse or mare (Passim).
 - QNT: Qanat is a wild cow, used metonymically as surname of a female. Also it can be translated as a goat (al- qina’), and this is clear from the drawing of the goat standing on the left side of the female figure (RCM-77; fig. 21). Someone who was awarded a hundred goats was given al-qina’; ...of sheep ...is al-ghina’; ...of camels ...is al-muna’ (Ibn Mandhūr s.v. qn’; Harding 1971:489).
 - L li (’ila): for; all of our texts start with the “I” which is commonly translated as “from” (min), but in our texts it should be translated as “to” or “for”. See comments below.
 - LMT Lamma: to gather, collect or assemble; lummat is friendliness or cordiality in gathering. The final t is the third person singular feminine suffix (Harding 1971: 320).
 - LH lahu: means for him; the l means to or for, a preposition while h is huwa, he, the personal pronoun.
 - MN man: is a relative pronoun meaning whoever, he who, those who; or as a preposition, min from (Winnett and Harding 1978: 647; Clark 1980: 475; King 1990: 685).
 - NDM nadima: a verb meaning to repent or regret. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. ndm; Harding 1971: 584; Winnett and Harding 1978: 181; Clark 1980: 404).
 - NŞR’ Naşr: to help, aid, or defend, but it can also mean victory. Naşşar is an idol (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. nşr; Harding 1971: 590).
 - H ha: is an emphatic form, used for intensifying apposition, used here for hadha, his as a prefix (dem. pro.). It is also used as huwa, he or it (third pers. m. sing.).
 - HLT halla: to appear or show (of the new moon). In the Middle East, when the new moon begins, people gaze at it and recite ‘hillak wmisthillak yj’alak ‘alayna shahr mbarak’. They regard the new moon as a good omen, so they say may it be a blessed month. Halla also means to shout with joy or rejoice, but it can also mean to fall heavily or pour down (of rain) (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. hll). Hal-

- lat can also be found in ‘hallat al-ḥarb”, war is out to begin. Before a tribal war, Arabs used to stand opposite each other with their hands raise upward and bragging, enumerating the accomplishment and the glory of their fathers. (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. m’l). The t is for she third per. f. sing.
- W wa: a connector, and.
 - WJM wajama: a verb meaning to be silent with anger, to grieve, or to be sad. It should be red ’ujimu (I grieve) because the hamza was not used in this colloquial dialect. There are other possible translations; see remarks infra.
 - YBWTH: See BWTH.

Remarks

The diversity of subjects and the variety of drawings scattered around the circular building indicate that the stones are messages left by members of the tribes for related persons. They express joy, sadness, memos, wishes, and gifts; they reflect their daily life, their religious beliefs, and their ceremonies.

The majority of the texts and drawings are clear and neatly executed. From examination of these texts, one can observe there was a respect for all texts and drawings, no one infringed on the work of others. They shared the available space on the stone. They never crossed out another’s work. However, some texts indicate attempts by beginners. As Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. why) says: “Al-Ḥirṭh al-’A’war reports that ‘Alqama told him, I learned how to read in two years; al-Ḥarīth answered, it is easy to read, but writing (al- waḥyu sing. al-waḥyyu pl.) is more difficult”.

From this collection, some tentative observations can be made:

The “I” is commonly translated as from, but for the following reasons and particularly in our texts, it should be translated as for (’ila) or to. In Arabic, (min) is used for from. See texts RCM-1, 4, 5, and 8 (lh-l’bh- l’khh, etc). It is clear that the texts are addressed to someone else. Those who translate l (lam) as from should reconsider. The Arabs call these texts, which we are dealing with here, waḥy. In explaining the meaning of waḥy, Ibn Mandhūr states “al-waḥy is the signal or inspiration ..., and everything you cast to the others.” He recites a verse from Labyd, a pre-Islamic poet, about al-waḥy (writing) on the stones (silam) as the only thing one could see after a flood at Mina’ and at Rijam.

‘Afāt ar-riyaḥu maḥallaha famuqamuha bi-Minan ta’abada ghawlahā farijamuha.

famadafi‘u ar-rayani ‘uriya rasmuha khalaqan kama damina al-wuhiyya silamuha (Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. why; rjm).

What is the purpose of this type of complex? We will ask whether such installations used for circumambulation. All the engraved stones were found scattered inside and around two attached structures, one a complete circle, and the second being a semi-circle with an opening toward the west. Near the circular building, there is a small cairn, ca. 1.30m in height, with no marks or texts on its stones. The circular structure, where most of the petroglyphs are scattered, must have had a function. Perhaps the texts, the drawings, and the structure of the site, as well as the historical background tell us something about the use of the site. Historically one can find Arabs used to do the ‘awāf (circumambulation) around a cairn in pre-Islamic periods. It is known that a ‘awāf was sometimes performed around a ‘Dawwar’. Ibn Mandhūr states (s.v. dwr):

Dawwar is an idol the Arabs used to erect and they built a place around it for their circumambulation; the name of that place is also Dawwar; and it is mentioned by ‘Imri’ al-Qays in his poem:

A herd of young calves presented themselves as if

They were virgins of the Dawwar in their long-tailed dresses.

Ibn Mandhūr goes on to explain: “by calves [‘Imri’ al-Qays] means female cows and he describes their walk with their long tails as looking like virgins circumambulating around the idol in long-tailed dresses’.

Yāqūt says: Before the arrival of Islam, a pilgrimage to Makka (Ḥajj) was a common practice for Arabs.

‘The Arabs glorified Makka, where they used to do the pilgrimage (Ḥajj) or the ‘Amra to the House [at Makka]; they circumambulate and when one desires to leave, he would take a stone from the Ḥaram, carve it like an idol of the house, behave with affection [toward the idol] during his travels, and will direct their prayers to it; and he will circumambulate around it, annoint it, and pray to it in the same way as they do to the idol of the House. Later, they used to take a stone from the Ḥaram, worship it, and this was the origin of stone-worship by the Arabs in their homes; they are filled with ardent passion for the idols of the Ḥaram’ (Yāqūt,

s.v. Makkat).

One finds a similar example in the Bible: “Rising early in the morning, Jacob took the stone he had used for his pillow, and set it up as a monument, pouring oil over the top of it. He named the place Bethel [house of God]” (Genesis 28: 18-19; see also 35:14-15).

One of our stones, RCM-55 (FIG. 19), may show a circumambulation, indicating a practice of that sort at our site. It is possible that this ritual celebrated the new moon, since the text can be read as *halet wa lamet* “the new moon appears and they gather”. A second stone (RCM-70, FIG. 20) portrays a woman in a long dress, as if she is wearing the *dr’*, a dress open at both the front and back. It has been said about tribe of Quraysh at Makka, that:

‘They impose on all the Arabs when they enter the Ḥaram that they should take off their travel clothes, and replace them with ‘aram wear, which they can get as a gift or buy or otherwise they circumambulate around the House nude. They impose on Arab women the same rules. However, women used to circumambulate with a dress open at the front and back, a *dr’*” (Yāqūt, s.v. Makka: 309-10; also mentioned by Ibn Hisham, vol. 1: 186-88; aṭ-Ṭabarī, vol. 2, 215; aḥ-Jāhidh, vol. 2: 149-51, Rasa’il, kitab al-qīyan).

According to Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. ṭwf) “In the Óadith, a woman used to circumambulate the Ka’bah nude, asking, who will lend me a *dr’* to cover myself?” With the arrival of Islam this practice was forbidden. At our site, women are portrayed nude, but it may be that these images have no relation to the practice of circumambulation. Apparently, the nudity portrayed at our site was socially acceptable, as one has to imagine that if it were not, the drawings would be obliterated (RCM-2, 4, 14, 17, 32, and 77).

A drawing of a girl or a woman with a camel may contain a play on words (RCM-4, FIG. 7). The Arabs used to give pet names to women such as cow, cat, deer, gazelle etc; (See *ath-Tha’aliby*, “*faṣḥun fī kinayat al-mar’at*” a chapter about sur-naming women).

Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. rjm) states that cairns are stones put together as markers or erected on ancient burials “The Arabs before Islam used to circumambulate around a cairn, in imitation of the House, al-Ka’ba. In a poem, Ibn al-‘Ambari describes a pious man pouring blood over a cairn”. This is similar

to the midhbaḥ, the altar, around which people circumambulate in many religions, including Judaism and Christianity. Indeed, there is a similarity between Jewish tradition and the Arab tribes before Islam in relation to stones. In Genesis 31:45-48 it says:

“Then Jacob took a stone and set it up as a monument. Jacob said to his kinsmen, ‘Collect some stones’, and gathering some stones they made a cairn. They had a meal there, on the cairn, and Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha while Jacob called it Galeed. Laban said ‘May this cairn be a witness between us today’. That is why he named it Galeed, and also Mizpah, because he said ‘Let Yahweh act as watchman between us when we are no longer in sight of each other’.”

There are other relevant passages including one with direction on building stone altars, the other from Leviticus, proscribing such stones: “If you make me an altar of stone, do not build it of dressed stones; for if you use a tool on it, you profane it” (Ex. 20: 25) “You must make no idols; you must set up neither carved image nor standing stone, set up no sculptured stone in your land, to prostrate yourselves in front of it” (Lev. 26:1-2). Even now, some Jews put a stone when visiting a tomb, so one can see a pile of stones like a mini-cairn over a burial. A few Muslims carry a stone from a sacred area and place it in the direction of their prayer; and we call the headstone of the tomb ash-Shahed (witness), one of God’s titles.

The Arab tribes have the ritual of aj-jimar, which originally was:

“merely to have been ‘a simple gesture of coming together, done by means of a ballot ‘the internal uniting of all the factions of the tribe. ‘the secondary sense, expressed in djamra, pl. djimar, a ‘pile of pebbles’, allows the gesture of union, which renews the tribe periodically or occasionally, to be represented as being like the throwing of a pebble on a precise spot, near to a sacred site or in the midst of an encampment, done by all the members of the tribe or by the heads of the clans composing it, and thus symbolizing the indissoluble unity of the tribe “ (E.I, s.v. RADJM, and see Ibn Mandhūr, s.v. jmr)”.

Some of the most common words used in the assemblage are slm, wbnay ‘l ‘s, and wajm. Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. slm) states that:

... salam is guiltless or innocence; salamat is well-being; and salam was not used before Islam

as a salute because it was used for the dead by saying ‘alaykum ‘as-salam. You don’t expect an answer from the dead. As the Qura’n says “wa’idha khaṭabahum al-jahiluna qalu salaman”, which means to be free from guilt and suspicion as there is no good or evil between us. The Arabs used to salute by ‘an‘em ṣabaḥan, and ‘abayta al-la‘nat, and the meaning of salam in this case is: there is no war between us. As-salim wa as-silam is the stone. Istalama al-ḥajari is to kiss or touch the stone by hand. Ibn as-Sakit said, istalama al-hajar is from silam the stone like iktahala from kuḥl. Al-Qutaybi said you must understand what I have said about istilam al-ḥajar being a verbal form of as-salam, the salute and istilamahu is to be touched by hand for examination to accept the salute, as a blessing. The Yemenites call the black rukn al-ka‘ba al-muḥayya.

From the Ḥadyth 10993: “The Prophet said the black stone is the right hand of God that he [uses to] shake [hands] with his servants” (Ibn ‘Asākir, vol 32: 281). A Moslem ends his prayer with “Al-lahumma ‘anta as-Salam wa minka as-Salam wa ilayka ya‘udu as-Salam fa ‘adkhilny Janata Daraka Dar as-Salam”.

Another common word is WJM or wajama, a verb, meaning to be silent with anger, to grieve, or to be sad. In our case, the word should be read ‘ujimu (I grieve) because the hamza was not used in this colloquial dialect. However, Ibn Mandhūr (s.v. wjm) stated:

‘Bn Shumayl said al-wajamu is a pile of stones on top of each other built on hills, ... they are the product of the era of the ‘Ad; the pile is round at the base and pointed at the top ... al Jawhari said ... they are marks, buildings, and guides in the desert ...

It is clear that al-wajamu fits the description of a cairn. ‘Ujimu or wjm can be translated as “I put a stone on the tomb” (‘Abbady 1997: 79; ar-Rousan 1992 : 72). The verb wajama is a verbal form of al-wajmu like zara‘a and zar‘. ‘Ujimu should mean “I put a stone on the wajm (the cairn)”.

As we mentioned above, a cairn built of these hard stones, al-silam, and when we have in our texts the repetition of the terminology “slm and w bny ‘l ‘s”, - BNY is the verb bana’ meaning to build, and ‘S means to substitute (al-‘awaḍ), this is terminology Arabs still use today in expressions of condolences such as “mu‘asat, al-‘awaḍ bi salamat-kum”. Arabs still forgive the dead before the burial from all their obligations so that the person will rest

in peace. In conclusion, our tribes may have put stones on the cairn as a mark; they were asking to be free from guilt and suspicion by putting a stone on the 's. Similar to aj-jimar which designates, among other things, the rite of coming together of the tribe in solidarity against any enemies; and it can also be a form of condolence.

In conclusion, it seems that the Cairn of the Mermaids is one of the camps (Maḍāreb) of Banu Basa', a rallying point on Mount Mukalla for that tribe and its related branches. The site may have been used for religious practices, festivities, and as a "bulletin board" for messages.

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