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4 908: 229-230.
6 1976: 24; 1986: 102-04 with Fig. 47 (here Fig. 2).
7 1935: 62.
8 So MacDonald 2000: 48, and note 141.
9 Starcky 1966: col. 979.
10 Healy 1993: H3, 1.9 where Abdo, Obodat and Ruma identify themselves as "masons" (psly).
11 See Jean-Hoftijzer 1965, s.v. p. 38.
12 Cf. RES I, 294, 5.
15 Graf 1992: 70.
16 Ibid. 71.
17 Al-Ansari, 1982: 24-25 and 104-105.
18 Graf 1992: 70ff.
21 Al-Dheeb 1995: 31,1; 51, 12; for the Judham clan, see Kahhaleh, I, 1997: 147, after Kalbi and Tabari.
22 Lindner 2003: 228 and Fig. 57.
25 Herling 2002: 41. The site was is well-known: In World War I the British warships bombarded 'Aqaba from the sea, whereas the Turks moved their defenses to Unm Nusaylah (Madi, Moua 1988: 40). The circular structures were built by the Turks to hide their canons and machine guns. Unfortunately this site is threatened by the urban development of 'Aqaba and the presence of a quarry south of the site (Herling, loc. cit.).
26 Cantineau II 1932: 16, 11.
28 Geog.16, 423.
29 Pirenne 1961.
30 1983: 151.
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In addition of the unjustified allegation that Syllaes deceived the Roman general, Strabo reports: "This came to pass because Obodas, the king, did not care much about public affairs and particularly military affairs... and because he put everything in the power of Syllaes". It is true that Syllaes was ambitious and probably poisoned Obodas and other dignitaries in Petra to have free access to the Nabataean throne. In any case he was certainly not willing to let the Romans put their hand on the lucrative trade of frankincense and myrrh, in which he probably had personal interests. But it is improbable that he indicated the wrong road to expose himself and his 1000 men to the danger of death by thirst and hunger. It is more likely that the Romans had no knowledge of the country they were going to cross and that they depended on the legendary accounts of Greek geographers and historiographers. They reported that Arabia Felix (Yemen) was exhaling delicious smells from the aromatic trees. To justify the high prices of frankincense and myrrh they claimed that, the trees were protected by flying snakes "and the only way to get rid of them is by smoking them out with storax" (another aromatic plant, ʾabhar in Arabic).

A Safaitic inscription from northeastern Jordan at Wadi Al-Hashad, near As-Safawi on the Syrian-Jordanian borders is dated: \[\text{mnt } \text{ty sly mrm wbrs h snt fth bdlsmn gwr wstm wdbbl ll hbl}
\] "the year Sly came from the Roman Province of Arabia". Abbadi assumed that this inscription refers to Syllaes who traveled to Rome at least twice between 12 and 9 BC. The name Sly is common in Nabataean and in the North Arabian inscriptions. In the Miletus inscription, which was dedicated by Syllaes on his way to Rome in Greek and Nabataean, the Nabataean epitropos qualified himself as 'h mllk', brother of the king. This was the official title of the Nabataean prime minister. It would be abnormal for minister Syllaes not to mention his official title. On the other hand, mrm in the Safaitic inscriptions does not refer to Rome but rather to the Roman Province of Arabia. The inscription of Al-Hashad is a funeral commemoration of several persons who died, probably in fighting and were grieved by Taim bn msk bn qil bn brd bn hmt, and he grieved for gyc, qil, and ml in the year that sly came from the Roman Province (of Arabia) and he was weak that year. So O Baʾlšamen grant succour and security and acceptance to him who is in love. Sly was probably a relative of Taim who went to the nearby Province of Arabia for business or was captured by the Romans. Taim appears to be in trouble (he was weak hrs, probably sick) and asked Baʾal Shamen, the Syrian god to deliver him. There is no hint in this inscription to the social rank of Sly/ Syllaes.

Notes

1 The stone with inscription was bought from Mr. Ali Salim Uwaydah At-Taʾmari by the Numismatic Museum of the National Bank in Amman (Al-Abdi) in 2004. I am grateful to Dr. Nayeef Gossous, Director of the Numismatic Museum, for allowing me to publish the inscription.
Seleucid King Antioch XII and was buried in ‘Obodat. Paleographic arguments are also in favour of a later dating of this dedication: the closed aleph in byt instead of the three branched of the earlier period, the square ha in bnslth in line 3, although the same letter in bnwh is in three branches like in the classical type. Finally the folded leg of the ta is similar to the same letter in the inscription of Salkhad, dated to 56 AD. It should be noted that the term bayt in this inscription designates the temple and the verb bnh has the meaning “to build, to found”. ‘Obodat II must be excluded for he reigned for a short time, probably for one year in 61 BC. In our case ‘Obodat III is the only candidate. The 7th year of his reign is equivalent to 23 BC, three years after the campaign of Aelius Gallus into Arabia by order of Augustus in 26 BC.

In conclusion the new Nabataean inscription from South Jordan contains information about a Nabataean temple, which, was built in the Ras An-Naqab area in 23 BC. ‘Obodat is not followed by his royal title mlk as it is the case in the Miletus inscription. However the mention of the 7th reigning year is in favour of identifying him as the king.

Excursus

Expedition of Aelius Gallus into Arabia

The failure of Aelius Gallus expedition was attributed by Strabo to the minister Syllaeus who was designated as the guide of the Roman troops and who was in command of the 1000 Nabataeans soldiers in support of Gallus. According to Strabo who was a friend of the Roman general “Syllaeus acted treacherously in all things and pointed out neither a safe voyage along the coast, nor a safe journey by land, misguiding him (Gallus) through places that had no roads…” However it appears that Gallus made a mistake, first by building long vessels to cross the Red Sea and lost many of them on account of the coral reefs, which are difficult to negotiate if the sailors are inexperienced. When the road followed by the Roman army is considered there seems no treachery on the part of Syllaeus, for this was the regular access to Yemen through Negran (Nejran), Asca, Nashaq and Athrula, probably ysl or modern Baraqish in the Jawf of Yemen. A bilingual Greek-Latin inscription was found in a cemetery in this city and “dated to the end of the third or the beginning of the fourth century AD”. Bowersock is inclined to attribute this inscription to a later presence of Greek and Latin speakers in ysl. Strabo states that Aelius Gallus conquered the city of Athroula/Baraqish and “placed a garrison in it”. However it would be surprising that this short inscription, probably a tombstone for a cavalryman would be the only evidence for the military garrison which probably left traces of occupation as late as the third-fourth century AD.
interest is the assertion made by Arab geographers that the Ḥismah in southern Bilād Ash-Shām was the territory of the Beni Judham, a clan who extended from Tabuk to Udrurh in South Jordan. Judham were the first tribe to be established in the Eastern Delta of the Nile and in Alexandria, they even spread to Tiberias. The gods they venerated were Al-Uqaysir in Masharif Ash-Sham (the borders of Syria, that is, provincia Arabia) and Al-Mushtāri who is identified with Ḥwr or Jupiter by Al-Kalbi. The Nabataean graffiti of Humaymah and a Thamudic inscription from Wadi Ramm with ‘bd Ḥwr give support to the well-established cult of Ḥwr in the Ḥismah desert. The same personal name with the theophoric ‘bd Ḥwr is attested in the Ḥismah of Saudi Arabia. Surprisingly the Ammarin bedouins of Bayda who live in the housing compound between Siq Al-Bārid and Debedbeh venerate Sheikh ‘Ahwar at Jebel Saffahah and built for him a shrine with a mosque on the highest point of the mountain. This is indeed the best evidence for the continuity of the ancient cults in South Jordan.

Hismah together with the Ghassanid confederation. Shahid lists Dayr Hismah, Dayr Damdam in the Hismah and Al-Qunfudh in the area of Ayla-Aqaba.

When the Muslim army attacked the Byzantines in 8 H (629 AD) at Mu’tah in South Jordan, the Judham sided with the Christian army and supported Emperor Heraclius in 14 H (634/35 AD), when he attacked Antioch. Later they converted to Islam after Farwah bin ‘Umayr Al-Judhami, a leader of Ma’an who accepted Islam, possibly as early as 614 AD and hosted the Muslim troops for two nights when they arrived in Southern Jordan. The Byzantines seized him and killed him at ‘Afrah near Tafīleh.

L. 3: Nasala can be identified with good probability with Umm Nusaylah, an ancient tell which dominates the eastern entrance of Ayla/Aqaba. It preserves the remains of more than fifty buildings, mostly of circular shape with Nabataean remains.

L. 4: ‘Obodat is most probably a Nabataean king because of the dating by his reigning years. Three Nabataean kings bear the same name: ‘Obodat I (93-85 BC) is to be excluded because he was honored by the title of ‘Ilh, god, (after his death in the Naqab), after he defeated the
"royal palace" (line 23), and simply dwelling" (line 25). The best parallel for byt in the meaning “temple” is the Thamudic E/Hismaic dedication of Allat temple in Wadi Ramm/Iram: wbny bty d ‘l’d: ... and he built the temple (bt for byt) of Allat of the clan Al-‘Ad. The dedicant was not a simple mason “who participated in the building of structures”9. If the author of the inscription was a mason or worker, he would rather indicate his profession as was the practice in Wadi Ramm/Iram, in four cases: bny’ masons, syd’ plasterers, ‘mny’ workers9. The same examples appear at Madā‘in Saleh/Hegra10, L. 2: In the name of the dedicant hw[r], there are faint traces of the ra’ (Figs. 3-4). In both inscriptions of Allat temple and this dedication, the persons who ordered the dedications are the founders of the temple. The meaning of bny “to built, to found” (a temple) is well attested in the North Semitic languages11. The meaning: “to found” is confirmed by the inscription of King Bod ‘Astart, king of the Sidonians “who built this temple (hbt z bin) for his god Eshmun, the holy lord”12. It is evident that the king founded the temple and was not the mason who constructed it!

The personal name hwr is well-attested in the Nabataean realm13. In the theophoric names ‘bd ‘l hwr, whb‘l hwr and tm ‘l hwr in Wadi Judayid14, east/southeast of Humaymah/Auara, the names suggest a cultic interpretation for hwr15. The Thamudic personal name ‘bd hwr refers to the planet Jupiter, “the third star that is next to the body of the three in the tail of Ursa major”16. The god Horus in the Egyptian pantheon, hr or hwr in the Semitic languages could be at the origin of the theophoric Semitic names. However component names with the Egyptian god are not common in Northwest Arabia, although a statuette of this god was found at Qaryat Al-Fau deep in Central Arabia17.

The theophoric personal name ‘bd ‘l hwr is attested at the dam of Auara in a Nabataean graffito. Graf18 assumed that the name Auara, Haurra is derived by the Greeks from, the Arabic term hwr white or hawwara to whiten, make white. This assumption is reasonable. However since the name Auara is the feminine Arabic adjective hawa‘a, white, it is not necessarily a reference to the god hwr, a masculine name. The adjective is derived most probably from the whitish hills around Humaymah/Auara. On the other hand, Graf assumed that the god hwr is to be identified with the Nabataean god Du-Shara or Qos (Graf 1992: 75).

This interpretation is less probable, because the god hwr, Jupiter is equivalent of the planet Al-Mushtari
Fig. 1