

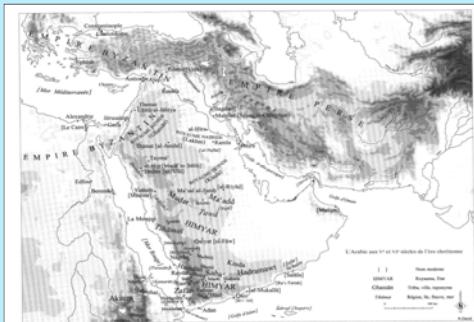
Jews in Arabia

Prof. Gary A Rendsburg
Rutgers University

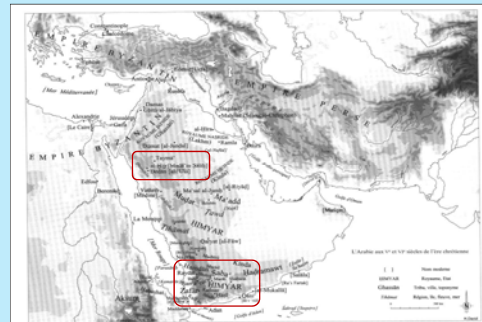
We've Been There:
Jewish Communities
from Around the World
January 13, 2019




The Jewish Revolts
66 – 73 C.E. – The Great Revolt
132 – 135 C.E. – Bar-Kokhba Revolt



Map of Arabia



Map of Arabia

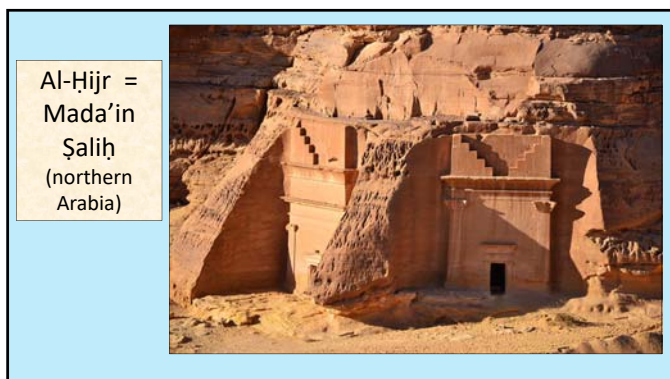
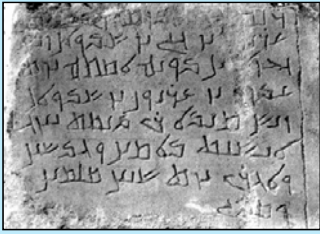



Translation:

1. This is the memorial of Isaiah,
2. the Councillor, son of Yosef,
3. chief citizen of Tayma' which erected
4. over him Amram and Ashmu
5. his brothers in the month of Iyar
6. year 20 + 20 + 20 + 20 + 10 + 5 + 1 + 1 + 1 of the Province.

Year 98 (+105) = 203 C.E.

Aramaic Inscription in Nabatean Script
Tayma, Northern Arabia, 203 C.E.

1. This is --- which ---
2. 'Ady[on] son of Ḥoni son of Samuel chief citizen
3. of Hagra' for [lit. over] Mawyah his wife, daughter of
4. 'Amru son of 'Ady[on] son of Samuel
5. chief citizen of Tayma, who died in the month of
6. 'Ab in the year two hundred and fifty-
7. one at the age of thirty-
8. eight.

Aramaic inscription in Nabatean script
Ḥagra (= al-Hijr) – 251 (+105) = 356 C.E.



Hegra sundial

Manasseh
bar Natan
"peace"

מנשה בר נתן שלם
(in Aramaic)

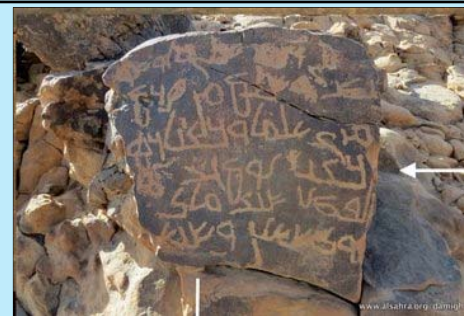
Istanbul Museum



Darb al-Bakra
(NW Arabia)



Darb al-Bakra
(NW Arabia)



Jewish Nabatean-Aramaic-Arabic inscription



בלי דכיר שלי בר אושו בטב ושלם
מן קדם מרי עלמא
וכתבא דנה כתב יום חג אל-פטיר
שנת מאת ותשעין ושבע

"Yea, may Šolay son of 'Awšo be remembered well and be secure before the Lord of the World. And this writing he wrote on the day of Passover, the year one hundred and ninety and seven."

Jewish Nabatean-Aramaic-Arabic inscription (197 + 105 = 302 C.E.)



Region of Northwest Arabia

as-Samaw'al bin 'Ādiyā'

שמואל בן עדיה

Samuel ibn Adiya

(1st half of the 6th century C.E.)

Jewish poet and warrior of Tayma

built a castle near Tayma – al-Ablaq

castle is described by A'shā Maymūn

as-Samaw'al bin 'Ādiyā'

שמואל בן עדיה

Samuel ibn Adiya

(1st half of the 6th century C.E.)

Jewish poet and warrior of Tayma

built a castle near Tayma – al-Ablaq

castle is described by A'shā Maymūn



qasida poem of Samuel – presumably Samuel ibn 'Ādiya
Cairo Geniza collection – Cambridge

THE ARABIC PORTION OF THE CAIRO
GENIZAH AT CAMBRIDGE.

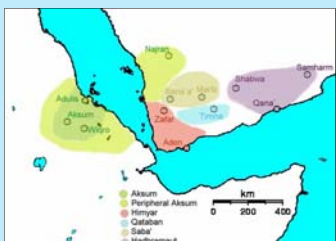
(Ninth Article)

XXIV.

A POEM ATTRIBUTED TO AL-SAMAU'AL.

PAPER, one leaf 12 x 10 cm., verso 19 lines, recto 21 lines.
The fragment to be discussed in the following pages is headed *Qasida* by *Al-Samau'al*. A title like this cannot fail to excite the keenest interest of students of ancient Arabic literature, assuming that the fragment can be proved to contain an authentic poem by the Jewish poet of Tayma. However uncritical it would be to treat it as such *prima facie*, it would be equally hasty to reject it without careful examination. It will, therefore, be best to set forth at once the evidence against the authenticity, and then collect the proofs in favour of the same.

Hartwig Hirschfeld, *Jewish Quarterly Review*
O.S. 17 (1905): 431-440



Kingdom of Himyar (in red)

Several kings, including Yūsuf Dhū Nuwās (r. 517-525 C.E.),
converted to Judaism

Kingdom of Aksum (Christian) (in green)



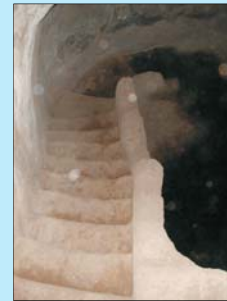
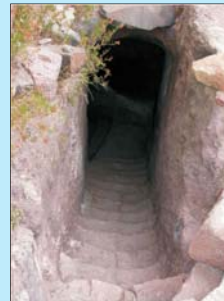
Myrrh



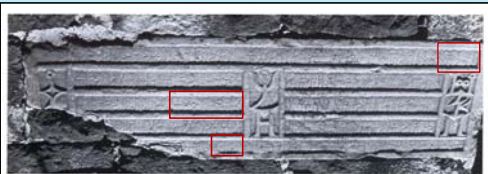
Frankincense

The two leading products and exports from
southern Arabia in ancient times

Excavations
at Zafar,
Yemen
(2008)



Rock-cut chambers, Zafar, Yemen



Sabaic inscription mentioning a man named 'Judah',
'his people of Israel' and 'the synagogue'

יהודא – סעב-הו ישראל – מכרב
Zafar (Yemen) – c. 400 C.E.



מרא חין ו-מותן מרא שמי-ן ו-ארד-ין
lord of life and death, lord of heaven and earth
Zafar (Yemen) – c. 400 C.E.

Hebrew graffito at the
center of the inscription:

כתב יהודה
זכור לטוב
אמן שלום אמן

"Judah wrote this,
may he be
remembered for good,
amen, shalom, amen"

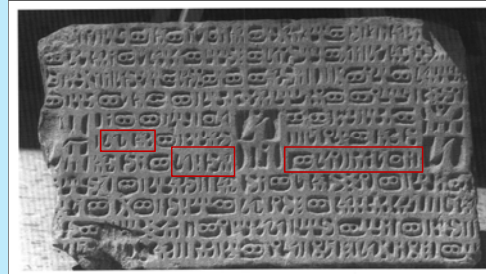
Zafar (Yemen), c. 400 C.E.



Sabaic inscription mentioning 'their people of Israel'
Zafar (Yemen) – 460 C.E.



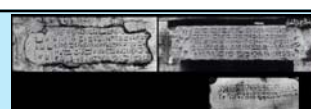
‘their people of Israel’ – סעב-המו ישראל
Zafar (Yemen) – 460 C.E.



‘El lord of heaven and earth’
אל-ן בעל שמי-ן ו-ארד-ן
Zafar (Yemen) – 460 C.E.



South Arabian Synagogue Dedication Inscription
Rayda, Yemen (70 km north of Ṣan‘a)
August 433
Ry 534 + MAFY/Rayda 1



South Arabian Synagogue
Dedication Inscription
August 433 / Rayda, Yemen

¹ Marthad’lān Yarīm ibn Hamdān, Su’rān, Aśwaf and Agra’ . . . have built and completed this synagogue (*mikrāb*) Barīk for ʾĪl, ² lord of the Sky and the Earth, for the salvation of their lords Abīkarib As’ad, Ḥaśś[ān Yu]jha’mīn, Ma’dīkarib Yuhan’īm, Marthad’lān Yaz³’an and Shuriḥbi’lī Ya’fur, kings of Saba’, dhu-Raydān, Ḥaḡramawt and [Yamn]at, and so that God, Lord of the Sky and the Earth, may grant them ⁴ fear of his name and the salvation of their selves, of their companions and of their subj[ects,] in times of war and peace. In the month ⁵ of dhu-khirāfān {August}, of {the year} five hundred and forty-three {=433 C.E.}. Shalom, shalom, synagogue (*mikrāb*) Barīk.

South Arabian Jewish Cemetery Dedication Inscription
Ḥaṣī, Yemen (250 km southeast of Ṣan‘a)
[no photo available]

- 1 līyafa’ Arśal ibn Ḥaṣbah, Ya’guf, Yq’mwṭ dhu-Sufār
- 2 and Ashraq dhu-Ṣht, prince of the two communes Maḡhā^m et Sufār^m, has granted to the Lord of the Sky four plots, next to this rock, descending
- 3 until the fence of the cultivated area, to bury the Jews there, with the guarantee
- 4 that the burial of a Gentile next to them will be avoided, so that they may fulfil their obligations towards the Jews. As for the three plots
- 5 and the well which are within the fence, {they are meant} as a concession, to the mikrāb Šūrī-
- 6 ʾĪl, and as for the plot which is under ŠūrīʾĪl, that of the fence, {it is meant} for the mikrāb, in order that he may fulfill its obligations
- 8 and provide satisfaction. . . .

South Arabian Jewish Cemetery Dedication Inscription
Ḥaṣī, Yemen (250 km southeast of Ṣan‘a)
[no photo available]

- 8 In compensation, they {the Jews} have given, chosen and yielded to the lineage dhu-ʾĀ-
- 9 mir^(m) a plot of same importance and same value, and to the lineage dhu-ʾĀmir^m, they have conceded
- 10 a well and land which produces summer harvests and autumn harvests, {having} the importance and value of this
- 11 well and of {this} land. With the guarantee, the prohibition and the threat of the Lord of the Sky
- 12 and of the Earth, one shall avoid burying a Gentile on these plots, between Him
- 13 and against those who do not give to the mikrāb its land and to the Jews their plots.
- 14 Concerning the incumbent of ŠūrīʾĪl, his subsistence has been provided for, as well as {that} of all who will serve the mikrāb, with a well made of masonry
- 15 downhill from the {wādī} Akbadī, with the guarantee that he will use the well {which is} at the place of those who will be used for ŠūrīʾĪl.

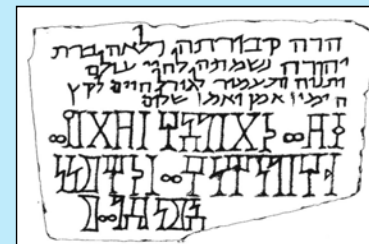
South Arabian Jewish Cemetery Dedication Inscription
Ḥaṣi, Yemen (250 km southeast of Ṣan'a)
[photos of the general excavations]



Aramaic seal:
Yiṣḥaq bar
Ḥanina
(Zafar, Yemen)

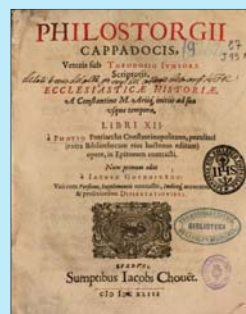


Aramaic seal:
Yiṣḥaq bar
Ḥanina
(Zafar, Yemen)



Bilingual Aramaic/Hebrew-Sabaic tomb inscription
Tomb of Leah the daughter of Judah
Southern Arabia – 5th century C.E.
(exact provenance unknown / private collection)

Philostorgius
(368 – 439),
Ecclesiastical History,
reports that the
Christian missionary
Theophilus found
many Jews living
in Yemen c. 350



Tomb of Isaac, 5th century C.E.
Ḥimyar – Southern Arabia – Yemen
(Sabaic inscription)

Christian Robin

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (C.N.R.S. – Paris)

"Le judaïsme de Ḥimyar,"
Arabia 1 (2003), pp. 97-172.

"Ḥimyar et Israël," *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 148:2 (2004), pp. 831-908.



Académie
des Inscriptions
et Belles-Lettres

Arrière du site • Membres • Adhésions



ROBIN Christian, Julien

Sommaire
Description
Centre
Présentation publications
Notes
Articles en ligne sur l'histoire

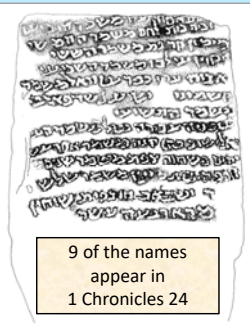
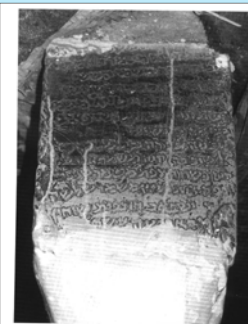
Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, officier de l'ordre des Palmes académiques
(Chevalier, Madeleine-Maria, le 12 mai 1943)
Né, le 10 mars 1909, membre de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, au fief de Jean SCHNEIDER
Président pour 2017



Hebrew inscription
from Bayt Hāqir
(15 km east of Ṣan'ā')



List of the 24
mišmarot



9 of the names
appear in
1 Chronicles 24



Zoar, Jordan



location of Zoar at
the southern end
of the Dead Sea



Zoar, Jordan

Thousands of Jewish and Christian burials at Zoar, Jordan, 3rd-6th centuries C.E.



Thousands of Jewish and Christian burials at Zoar, Jordan, 3rd-6th centuries C.E.



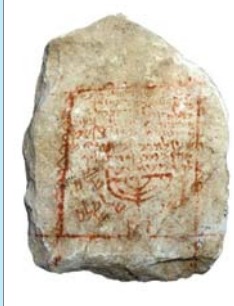
Konstantinos Politis (British Museum)



Thousands of Jewish and Christian burials at Zoar, Jordan

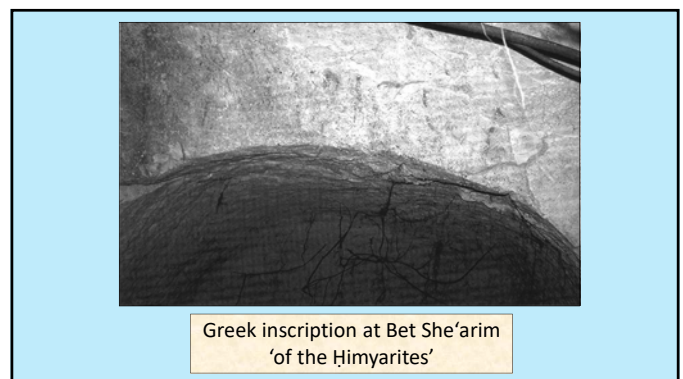
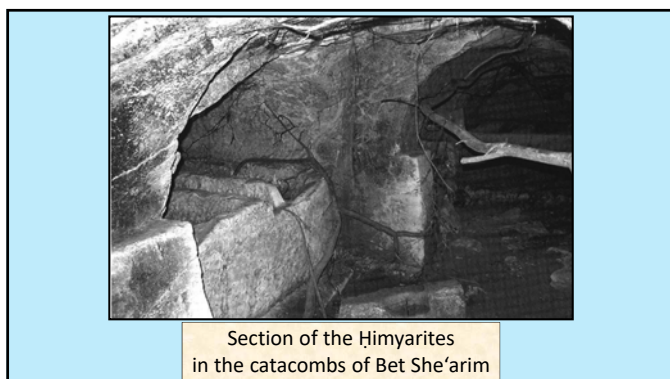
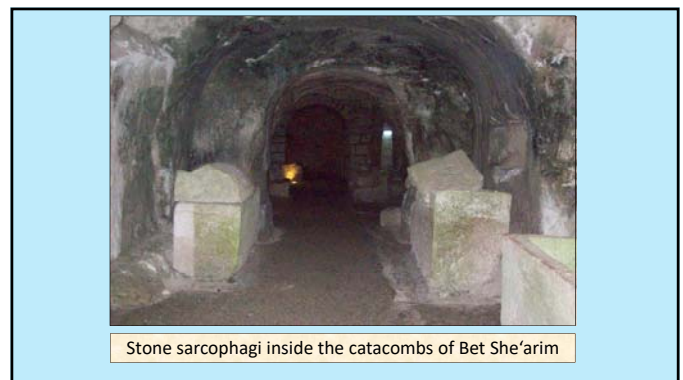
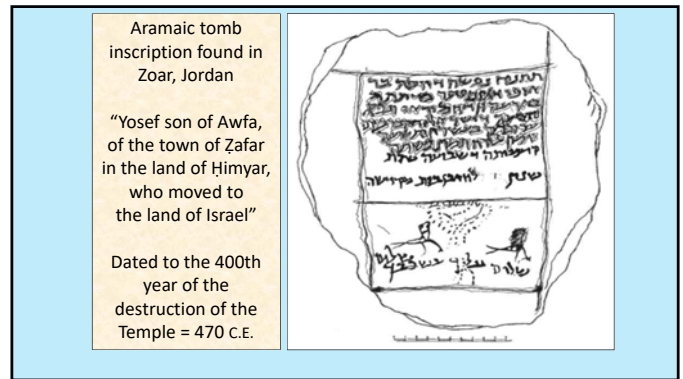


Sample burials at Zoar, Jordan



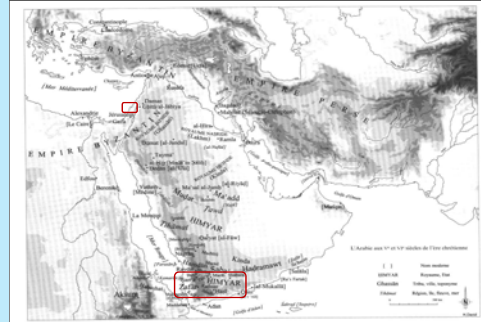
Jewish tombstones from Zoar



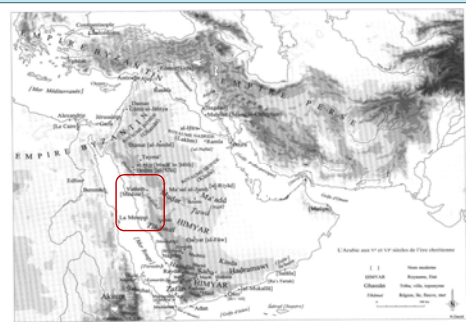




Greek inscription at Bet She'arim
'of the Himyarites'
OMHPITON



2600 km from Himyar to Bet She'arim



Mecca and Medina in central Arabia



Abu al-Faraj
al-Iṣfahānī
(897–967 C.E.)

Kitāb al-Aġānī
“Book of Songs”

Mentions that Jews
arrived in the Ḥijaz in
the wake of the
Roman-Jewish wars.

Jewish tribes in or near Medina
7th century C.E.,
mentioned in the Qurʾan
and other sources

Banū Naḍīr

Banū Qaynuqāʾ

Banū Qurayẓah



Tübingen Qurʾan Manuscript
dated c. 650-675 C.E.

Jewish tribes in or near Medina
7th century C.E.

Banū Naḍīr (P)

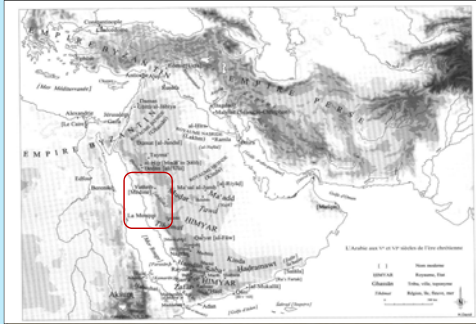
Banū Qaynuqāʾ

Banū Qurayẓah (P)

al-kāhinān ‘the priests’



Tübingen Qurʾan Manuscript
dated c. 650-675 C.E.



Mecca and Medina in central Arabia

Jews in Arabia

Prof. Gary A Rendsburg
Rutgers University

תודה!

