

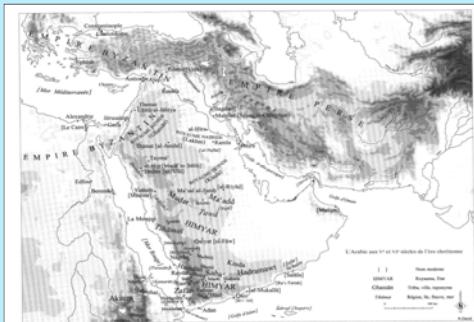
Jews in Arabia

Gary A. Rendsburg
Rutgers University

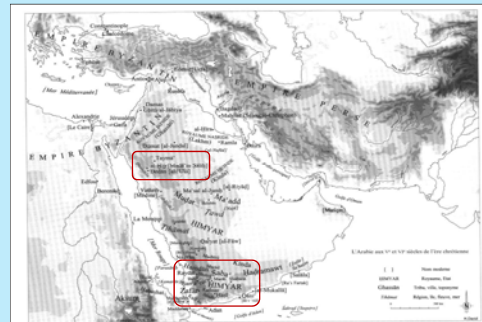
Mandelbaum House
7 April 2019



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



Map of Arabia



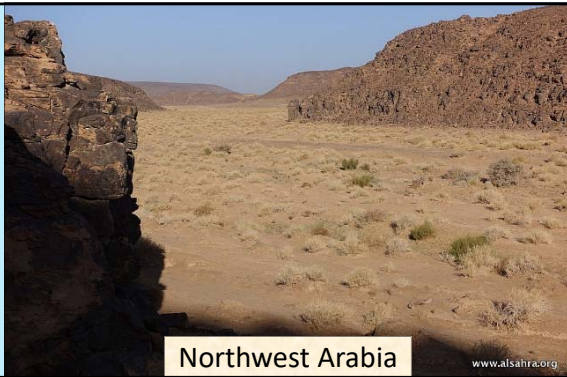
Map of Arabia



Region of Northwest Arabia



Northwest Arabia



Northwest Arabia

Tayma
oasis
(northern
Arabia)

Translation:

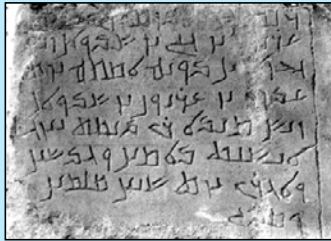
1. This is the memorial of Isaiah,
2. the Councillor, son of Yosef,
3. chief citizen of Tayma' which erected
4. over him Amram and Ashmu
5. his brothers in the month of Iyar
6. year 20 + 20 + 20 + 20 + 10 + 5 + 1 + 1 + 1 of the Province.

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

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

Al-Hijr
=
Mada'in
Şaliḥ
(northern
Arabia)





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

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



Hegra sundial

Manasseh
bar Natan
"peace"

מנשה בר נתן שלם
(in Aramaic)

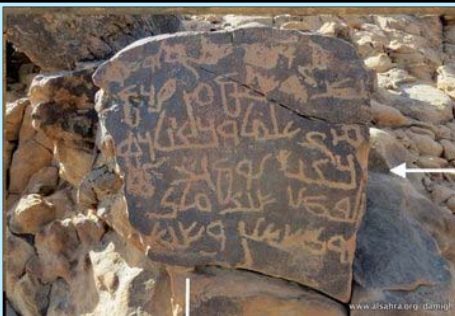
Istanbul Museum



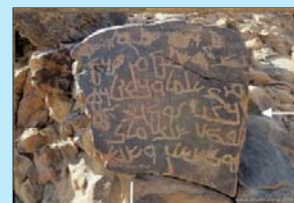
Darb al-Bakra
(NW Arabia)



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 the Feast of Matzot, the year one hundred and ninety and seven."

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



Ahmad Al-Jallad
Ohio State University

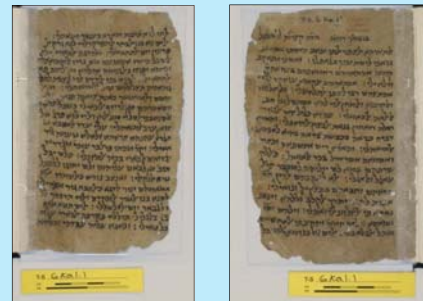


Region of Northwest Arabia

שמואל בן עדיה
as-Samaw'al bin 'Ādiyā'
Samuel ibn Adiya

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

Jewish poet and warrior of Tayma,
built a castle near Tayma,
described by A'shā Maymūn (c. 600)



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

THE ARABIC PORTION OF THE CAIRO
GENIZAH AT CAMBRIDGE.

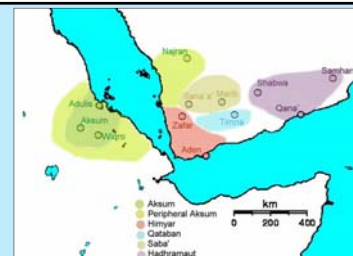
(Ninth Article)

XXIV.

A POEM ATTRIBUTED TO AL-SAMAU'AL.

PAPER, one leaf 15 x 10 cm., recto 19 lines, verso 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 17 (1905),
pp. 431–440



Kingdom of Ḥimyar (in red)
Several kings, including Yūsuf Dhū Nuwās (r. 517–525 C.E.),
converted to Judaism
Kingdom of Aksum (Christian) (in green)



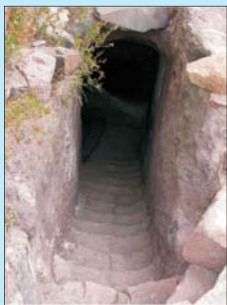
Myrrh



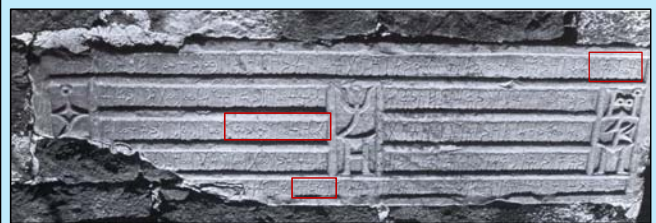
Frankincense

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-ן
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.

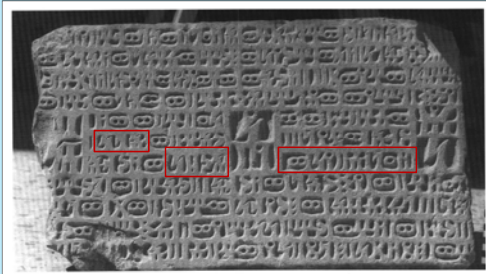




Sabaic inscription mentioning 'their people of Israel'
Zafar (Yemen) – 460 C.E.



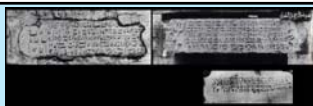
'their people of Israel' – סעב-המו ישראל
Zafar (Yemen) – 460 C.E.



'El lord of heaven and earth'
אל-גן 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'ilān 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, Ḥaśš[ān Yu]ḥa'min, Ma'dīkarib Yuhan'im, Marthad'ilān Yaz³'an and Shuriḥbi'l Ya'fur, kings of Saba', dhu-Raydān, Ḥaḍramawt 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
Ḥaṣi, Yemen (250 km southeast of Ṣan'a)
[no photo available]

- 1 lliṭafa' Arṣāl ibn Ḥaṣbah, Ya'guf, Yq'mwt dhu-Sufār
- 2 and Ashraq dhu-Sht, prince of the two communes Maḡḥa^m et Sufār^m, has gran-
- 3 ted to the Lord of the Sky four plots, next to this rock, descending
- 4 until the fence of the cultivated area, to bury the Jews there, with the guarantee
- 5 that the burial of a Gentile next to them will be avoided, so that they may fulfil their
- 6 obligations towards the Jews. As for the three plots
- 7 and the well which are within the fence, {they are meant} as a concession, to the
- 8 mikrāb Sūri-
- 7 'Īl, and as for the plot which is under Sūri'l, that of the fence, {it is meant} for the
- 8 mikrāb, in order that he may fulfill its obligations
- 8 and provide satisfaction. . . .

South Arabian Jewish Cemetery Dedication Inscription
Ḥaṣi, 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-ʿĀ-
9 mir^(um) a plot of same importance and same value, and to the lineage dhu-ʿĀmir^(um), 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 Šūrīl, 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) Akbaḍī, with the guarantee that he will use the well (which is) at the
place of those who will be used for Šūrīl.

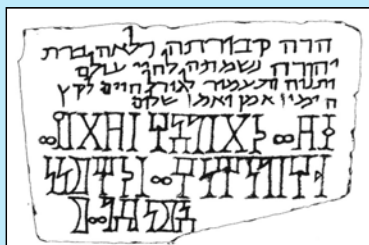
South Arabian Jewish Cemetery Dedication Inscription
Ḥaṣi, Yemen (250 km southeast of Ṣan'a)
[photos of the general excavations]



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

Accueil du site • Membres • Assemblées



ROBIN Christian, Julien

Sommaire

Qualification

Centres

Publications

Notes

Articles en ligne sur Persée

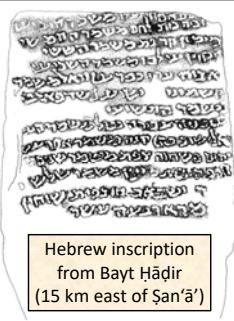
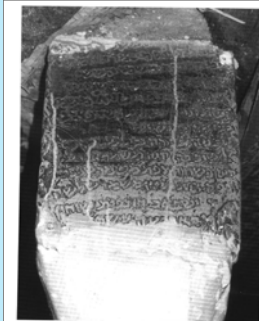
Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, officier de l'Ordre des Palmes académiques

(Charente-Maritime, Haute-Marne, le 12 mai 1943)

Doct. de 18 ans (2005), membre de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, au Institut de

Jean SCHNEIDER

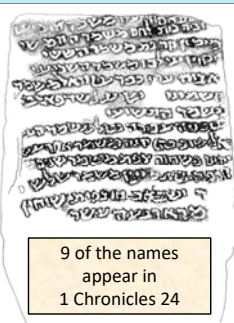
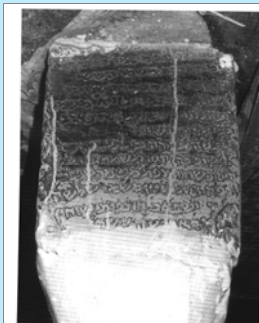
Président pour 2017



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



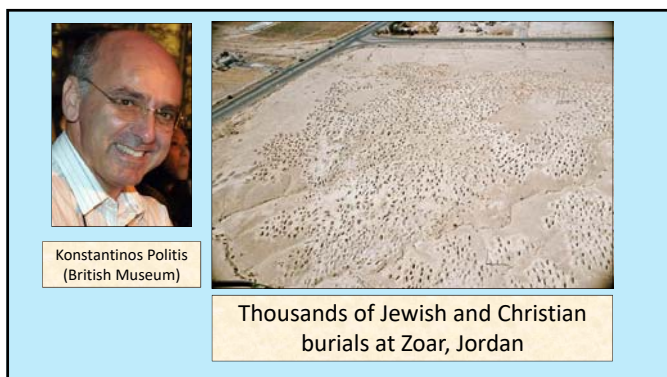
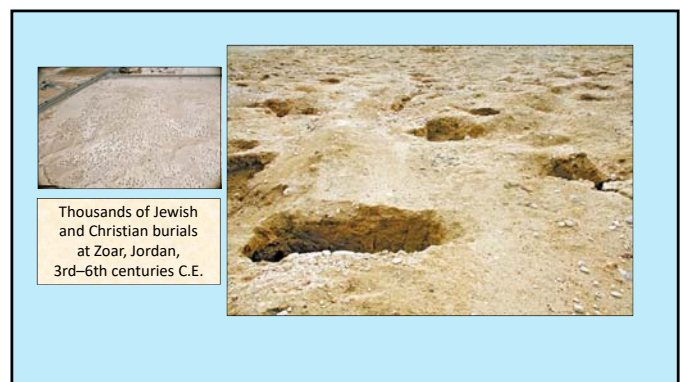
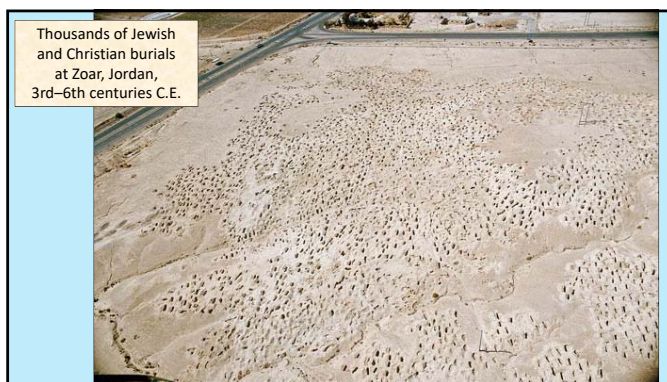
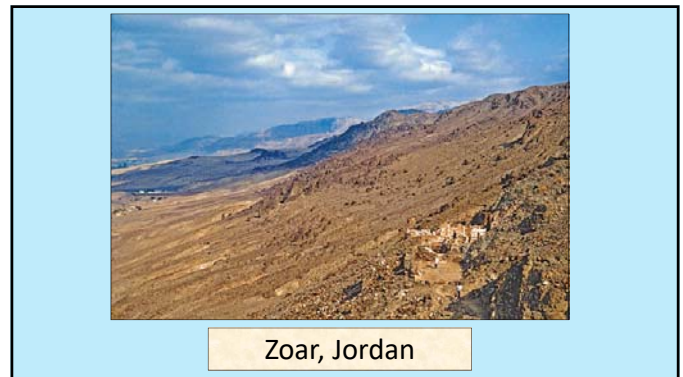
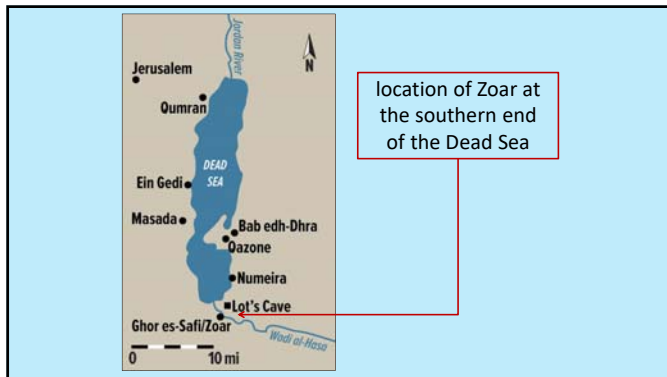
List of the 24
mišmarot

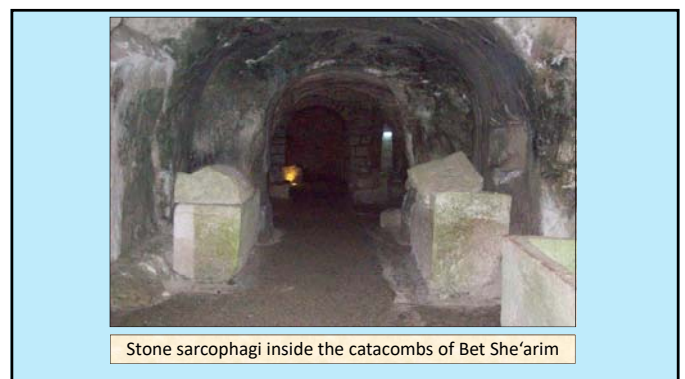
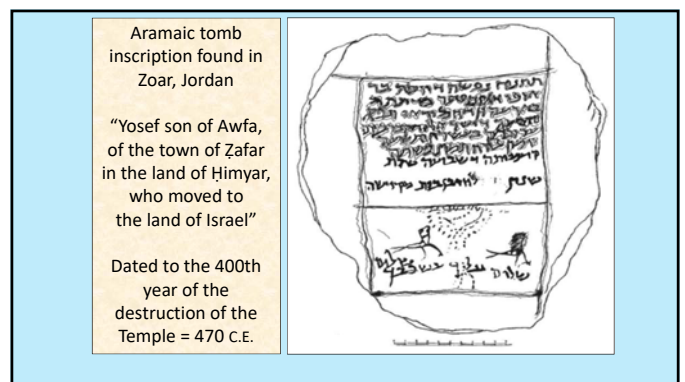
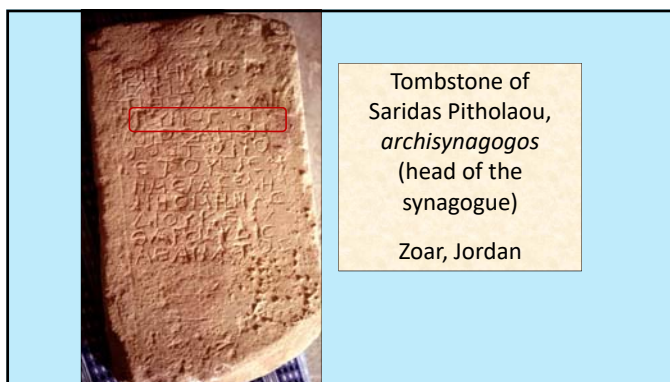


9 of the names
appear in
1 Chronicles 24



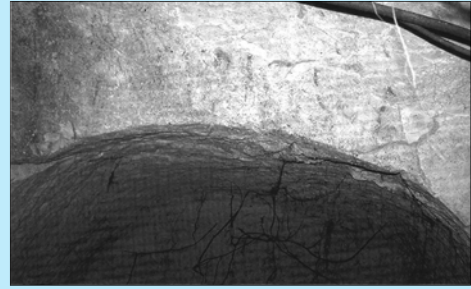
Zoar, Jordan







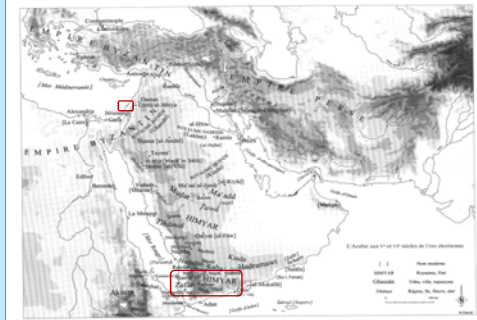
Section of the Ḥimyarites
in the catacombs of Bet She'arim



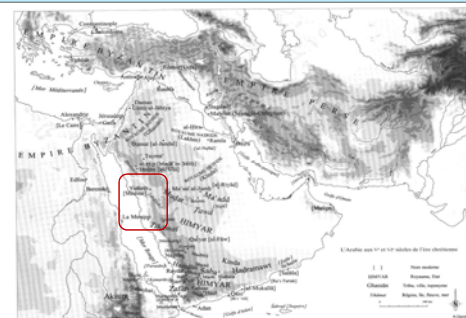
Greek inscription at Bet She'arim
'of the Ḥimyarites'



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



2600 km from Ḥimyar to Bet She'arim



Mecca and Medina in central Arabia



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

Kitāb al-Aḡānī
"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 Qur'an
and other sources

Banū Naḍīr

Banū Qaynuqā'

Banū Qurayẓah



Tübingen Qur'an Manuscript
dated c. 650-675 C.E.

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

Banū Naḍīr (P)

Banū Qaynuqā'

Banū Qurayẓah (P)

al-kāhinān 'the priests'



Tübingen Qur'an Manuscript
dated c. 650-675 C.E.



Mecca and Medina in central Arabia

Jews in Arabia

תודה!

Gary A. Rendsburg
Rutgers University

Mandelbaum House
7 April 2019

