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Epigraphic evidence for the cult of the god Sīn at Raybūn and Shabwa

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Among the sites excavated at Raybūn (Western Ḥaḍramawt) by the Soviet Yemeni Complex (i.e. multi-disciplinary) Expedition (SOYCE) between 1983–1991, the temple called Mayfa‘ān dedicated to the god Sīn¹ proved to be the richest in epigraphic materials. Over 1100 inscriptions were found there, i.e. 40% of the total of more than 2700 South Arabian texts discovered by the SOYCE. They are very different from the epigraphic documents found in the two temples of the goddess Dhāt Ḥimyam at Raybūn (Raḥbān and Kafas/Na‘mān),² in their outward appearance, vocabulary, drafting formulae, content, etc. In the so-called 'recent' period (the mid-third to first centuries BC), the texts offered at Mayfa‘ān were mainly carved on stelae, while the overwhelming majority of the dedications made at the sanctuaries of Dhāt Ḥimyam, especially in Raḥbān, were inscribed on rectangular slabs.³ Besides this formal distinction, both groups of epigraphic material are notable for their lexical peculiarities. The analysis of the vocabulary of the texts from the temples of Mayfa‘ān and Raḥbān demonstrates that of approximately 70 words attested exclusively in Raybūn only seven occur in the inscriptions from both temples (Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: section III).

A.G. Lundin undertook a preliminary examination of the stereotypical formulae and standard expressions characteristic of the texts of Mayfa‘ān (Lundin 1989: 144–145; Lundin 1997: 21–24). This examination is continued and

supplemented in the present article which shows that a number of parallels exist between the epigraphic documentation of Mayfa‘ān and the inscribed bronze plaques from the temple Alīm at Shabwa, where S^1YN/D^2LM , the principal hypostasis of the national deity of Ḥaḍramawt, was worshipped. Although the number of these plaques is extremely small,⁴ their contents are rich in previously unknown terms used in the sanctuary of Sīn at Raybūn.

Each of the texts on stelae from Mayfa‘ān dating from the 'recent' period can be divided into three principal parts:

1. the dedication of ms^3nd-hn and other objects;
2. the reason for this dedication, often consisting of formulae with the verbs mrd , $ʿs^1m$, and various other expressions; in general, this section is less standardized than the other two parts;
3. the final part usually introduced by the formula $tq^2/b^2dn/S^1YN$ and sometimes ending with the formula of reconciliation ($w-r^2b-s^1(-s^3, -s^1m)/S^1YN/r^2b-s^1/d-yn^c m$).

In the first part, the stereotypical expression $s^1qny(-t, -w)/S^1YN/D^2MYF^c-N/ms^3nd-hn$ '(he, she, they) dedicated to Sīn dhū Mayfa‘ān the inscription', is followed in most cases by a relative clause in which either s^2ft 'to promise' or ks^3 'to order' is used as the predicate:⁵

... $d-s^2ft-h-s^1/Y[HM]^2L/S^1YN$... '...which Ya[humma]ʿil promised to Him, i.e. to Sīn ...' - Rb XIV/87 105/3–4 published in Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: Appendice;

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...*d-s²ft-s¹* [MHFS²H-m]... '...which [Muhafshih^{um}] promised to Him...' - Rb XIV/87 no. 109/5–6;
 ...*d-s²ft-s¹/h-bn-h-s¹ww*... '...which he promised to Him for the sake of his two sons' - Rb XIV/90 no. 60 = SOYCE 2377/2–3;
 ...*d-s²[ft]t/S¹YN*... '...which she promised to Sin...' - Rb XIV/87 no. 37 = SOYCE 1952/2–3;
 ...*d-ks^{3>}(/h-s¹*... '...which He ordered him...' - Rb XIV/87 no. 104/3 published in Frantsouzoff 1999: 37–42, pl. 2; Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, a: Appendice;
 ...*d-ks^{3>}/h-GBN-m*... 'which He ordered Gabn^{um}...' - Rb XIV/87 no. 113/2–3.

Although the verbs *s²ft* and *kt²* (another spelling of *ks^{3>}*) are attested in the inscriptions on bronze from Shabwa (RF-Alīm 1/5–6: *s¹qnyt/s²ft/DHB-m/mr²-s¹/S¹YN*; RES 2693/4: *kmw/[p/h-s¹*), the general structure of the first part of these texts is highly unusual.

The expression of satisfaction rendered by the verb *rdw(t)*, typical of the dedications of a *bht* 'votive phallus' in the temples of Dhāt Ḥimyam, is very rare among the texts of Mayfaʿān:

...*s¹qny/S¹YN D-MYF^c-N/ms³nd/rdw^tlhn-s¹/S¹YN*...
 '(he) dedicated to Sin dhū Mayfaʿān the inscription with which Sin was satisfied for his sake...' - Rb XIV/88 no. 78/1–3.

The formula with *tḥtn/S¹YN/D-²LM* 'by the authority of Sin dhū Alīm', which sometimes follows the relative clause with the verb *ks^{3>}*, is of great importance for the reconstruction of religious relations between Raybūn and Shabwa. At first sight it seems to reflect the hierarchy of deities, or rather of their hypostases, in the pantheon of ancient Ḥadramawt (Frantsouzoff 1995: 18; Frantsouzoff 1998a: 62) and therefore of the priests of Mayfaʿān and Alīm on earth. But the beginning of the 'recent' period at Raybūn was marked by an orthographic reform which touched even divine onomastics. No traces of such a reform are found in the epigraphic material from Shabwa. In all probability it was undertaken by the local priesthood which was interested in emphasizing its independence (cf. Frantsouzoff 2001: 46, 50). If so, it is unlikely that its representatives would tolerate any allusion to their subordination to the temple Alīm in the capital. Perhaps the authors of the stelae containing the expression *tḥtn/ S¹YN/D-²LM* lived in Raybūn, but

were originally from Shabwa and continued to worship the god Sin known as dhū Alīm.

Besides *ms³nd-hn*, two other votive objects are mentioned in several dedications to Mayfaʿān: *šlm* 'statue' and *s³mr-m* 'crops'.⁶ A detailed analysis of the expression *w-qš²-s¹/b-dbh(-m)/ s³ny-m* 'and he offered it [i.e. the inscription] as another sacrifice', was given in Frantsouzoff 1998b: 146. It should be noted that in Arabic the cardinal numeral *ṭānⁱⁿ* 'second' can, in some contexts, mean 'other' or 'next'. In Shabwa/Chantier V, 1975/4 and RF-Alīm 1/4–5 there is a remote parallel to this formula viz.: *w-qš²-t/b-dbh-m/s¹fḥ-m* which can be interpreted with hesitation 'and he offered it [i.e. *s¹qnyt* – (f.)] as a lavish (?) sacrifice'.

The dedication was sometimes occasioned by the desire for recovery from some illness. In Rb XIV/87 no. 104/7–8, no. 105/4–5 the dedicant, Shaʿarwadd son of Yaḥummaʿil promised to perform certain ritual obligations *ḍ/ymrd/mrd/mrd*... 'until he recovered⁷ from the disease he had caught...'. In both cases the names of these diseases or rather of their symptoms are mentioned: *rbb-hn* 'rash', *ṛf-hn* 'nose-bleed'. However, it was not necessary to be specific. Thus Rb XIV/87 no. 113/7 states that '(Sin) delivered Gabn^{um} from one of the diseases he had caught' (*m^c/GBN-m/bn/bn/[m]rd/mrd*...)⁸. In order to obtain their wishes the dedicants tried to gain the favour of the deity. The result of this action is expressed by the formula *w-ṛs¹m²dn/S¹YN* 'and he earned the goodwill of Sin' attested many times in the texts of Mayfaʿān (Rb XIV/87 no. 104/9–10, no. 105/5–6, no. 113/7–8; Rb XIV/90 no. 60 = SOYCE 2377/5). In RF-Alīm 1/6 the words in this formula are transposed, *w-ḍn/S¹YN/ṛs¹m*. The same transposition occurs in the fragmentary inscription on bronze, Shabwa V/85/22, l.1, where the erroneous reading *d-^cs¹m* is to be corrected to *ṛs¹m*. This abnormal order of words, which resembles the *ibtidāʿ* in Arabic, was probably peculiar to this formula in the epigraphic documentation of Alīm. The transposition of the direct object to before the predicate is attested at Mayfaʿān too. For instance, Rb XIV/87 no. 113/8–9 mentions the god Sīn, 'who rendered help to Gabn^{um} [to recover] from the disease he had caught' (*[d-]m^ct/s¹m^c GBN-m/bn/mrd/[mrd]*).

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The formula with the verb $\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{l}^{\text{m}}$ is closely connected with words deriving from the root WN ($\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{c}^{\text{n}}$ 'to help, to deliver' and $\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{r}^{\text{n}}$ 'to seek help') both in the inscriptions of Alīm and of Mayfaʿān, where some parallel contexts are found:

...w- $\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{n}}/\text{S}^{\text{l}}\text{YN}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{l}^{\text{m}}/\text{b}-\text{d}^{\text{t}}/\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{c}^{\text{n}}/\text{w}-\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{p}}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{b}^{\text{d}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}/\text{DHB}-\text{m}...$ '... and the goodwill of Sīn he earned, since He helped and supported his servant Dhahab^{um} ...' - RF-Alīm 1/6–7;

...w- $\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{l}^{\text{m}}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{n}}/\text{S}^{\text{l}}\text{YN}/\text{b}-\text{d}^{\text{t}}/\text{s}^{\text{l}}[\text{c}^{\text{n}}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{l}^{\text{m}}]/\text{QHL}-\text{m}...$ '(he) earned the goodwill of Sīn, since He h[elped] Aqhal^{um}...' - Rb XIV/90 no. 60 = SOYCE 2377/5–6;

... $\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{qny}^{\text{t}}/\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{f}^{\text{t}}/\text{DHB}-\text{m}/\text{m}^{\text{r}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}/\text{S}^{\text{l}}\text{YN}/\text{h}-\text{d}^{\text{t}}/\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{r}^{\text{n}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}/\text{w}-\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{n}}/\text{S}^{\text{l}}\text{YN}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{l}^{\text{m}}...$ '...the dedication which Dhahab^{um} promised to his lord Sīn as he sought help from Him and the goodwill of Sīn he earned...' - RF-Alīm 1/6;

...[w]- $\text{r}^{\text{s}}=\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{m}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{n}}/\text{S}^{\text{l}}\text{YN}/\text{h}-\text{d}^{\text{t}}-\text{y}^{\text{s}}/\text{r}^{\text{n}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}...$ '...[and] he earned the goodwill of Sīn in order to seek help from Him...' - Rb XIV/87 no. 105/5–7.

The closing formula with the verb t^{d} is in principle rather standard. As a rule the dedicant submits to the will of Sīn four attributes of his (or her) own personality enumerated in the following order: soul (nfs^{l}), will ($\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{d}^{\text{n}}$), offspring (wld) and property (qny). However, some of them can be omitted or transposed. In certain cases this formula was adorned with colourful additions, as in Rb XIV/87 no. 107/2–3, no. 108/12–13 (see Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, a: Appendice), where besides these four stereotypical objects $\text{s}^{\text{b}}\text{h}^{\text{t}}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{y}^{\text{n}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{w}^{\text{w}}$ 'brightness of his two eyes' and $\text{lb}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}$ 'his heart' are attested.⁹ In RES 2693/7 there is a close parallel to this expression. Its author mentions in a similar context $\text{s}^{\text{b}}\text{h}^{\text{t}}/\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{y}^{\text{n}}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}\text{w}^{\text{w}}/\text{w}-\text{d}^{\text{kr}}-\text{lb}-\text{s}^{\text{l}}$ 'brightness of his two eyes and the memory of his heart'. A brief analysis of the formula with $\text{r}^{\text{s}}\text{b}$, which has no parallel in the inscriptions on bronze from Shabwa, has already been presented (Frantouzoff 1995: 22–23).

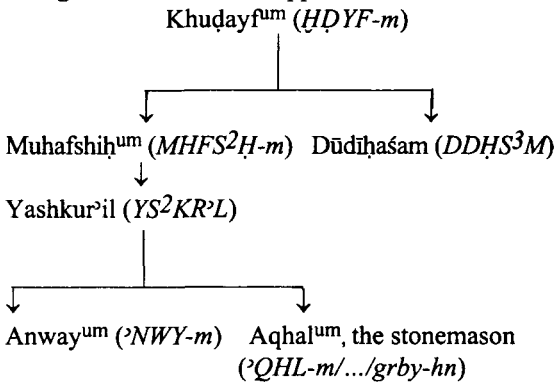
Similarities in the drafting formulae between the texts on limestone stelae from the temple Mayfaʿān at Raybūn and on bronze plates from the temple Alīm at Shabwa show that the relations between the capital of ancient Ḥaḍramawt and its peripheral areas were very complicated. On the one hand, there was a strong tendency towards autonomy, if not

independence, in Raybūn, as represented by the orthographic reform of the third century BC and probably personified in its priesthood. On the other hand, the unity of culture, especially in the field of religion, is very noticeable. The worshippers of the so-called 'national' god of Ḥaḍramawt composed their dedications to him in Alīm and in Mayfaʿān frequently using the same expressions. Though palaeographically the four texts on bronze from Shabwa mentioned above (including the fragmentary one Shabwa V/85/22) fall within a close range and date approximately from the first to second centuries AD,¹⁰ there are no serious reasons to consider them as specimens of a period later than the stelae of Mayfaʿān. Perhaps after the destruction of Raybūn on the eve of the first millennium AD several peculiarities of the ritual performed there survived in Shabwa. Thus the uniformity of the cult of Sīn as well as of the Hadramitic epigraphic language rallied the population of this region into one ethnic, cultural and religious community.

Appendix

The stelae dedicated to Sīn by three successive generations of his worshippers

Among the inscriptions discovered by the SOYCE at the site of Raybūn XIV are the three fragmentary stelae mentioned in the present article which appear to have been offered to the temple Mayfaʿān by members of one family: the brothers Muhafshih^{um} and Dūdiḥaṣam, Yashkur'il son of this Muhafshih^{um}, and Aqhal^{um} son of Yashkur'il. From these texts it is possible to produce a genealogy of four generations of worshippers of Sīn:



The reconstruction of such a long genealogical tree, especially for commoners, rather than for the

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nobility, is a rarity in South Arabian Studies. Its analysis demonstrates, for instance, that the profession of stonemason (*grby-hn*), one of whose main functions was the inscribing of texts on stone (cf. Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *b*), was not hereditary.

These three stelae are published here for the first time.¹¹

Rb XIV/87 no. 109

Description

This fragment of a stela broken at the bottom consists of nine pieces (Fig. 1). It is decorated with a crescent and disk. Unfortunately no information on its size has been found in the archives of the SOYCE. The script of this text is rather irregular: the *h* in line 2 and the *n* at the beginning of line 4 are carved back-to-front. Nevertheless the shapes of the other characters permit us to date it with certainty to the 'recent' period (the mid-third to first centuries BC).

Text

1. MHFS²H-m/w-DD
2. HS³M/bnw/HDY
3. <F>#-m/s¹qnyw/S¹Y
4. N</><D>.-<M>YF^c-N/m
5. [s³nd-hn]</>d-s²ft-s¹
6. [MHFS²H-m]..t.
7.[/MHF?]S²<H>-
8. [m?/...../w-^cs¹]m²dn
9. [S¹YN/...../]<D\B-?>MY
- [10.] [F^c-N?].....

Translation

1. Muhafshih^{um} and Dūdī-
2. ḥaṣām, sons of Khuday-
3. f^{um}, dedicated to Sīn
4. dhū Mayfaʿān the in-
5. [scription] which [Muhafshih^{um}] promised to Him.
6.
7.[Muhaf]shih-
8. [um] [and he ear]ned the goodwill
9. of Sīn May-
- [10.] [faʿān ?]

Commentary

Lines 1–3: MHFS²H-m, DDHS³M, HDYF-m: this is the first occurrence of these names in pre-Islamic Arabia. However, in the inscriptions of Mayfaʿān another male personal name derived from the root FS²H is also attested (HFS²H in Rb XIV/87 no. 61/8). From the palaeographical point of view, it is not impossible that Dūdīḥaṣām, son of Khudayf^{um}, was the author of another text, since this composite name has been restored in four fragments of a stela (Rb XIV/89 no. 230, 232, 233, 236 = SOYCE 2145, 2147, 2148, 2151). The element HS³M has been found as the simple name HS³M-m, in Rb XIV/88 no. 77 a–c = SOYCE 1541/1 and in a Sabaic text (Harding 1971: 188).

Lines 8–9: [w-^cs¹]m²dn [S¹YN]: this restoration is founded on the numerous parallel contexts cited above.

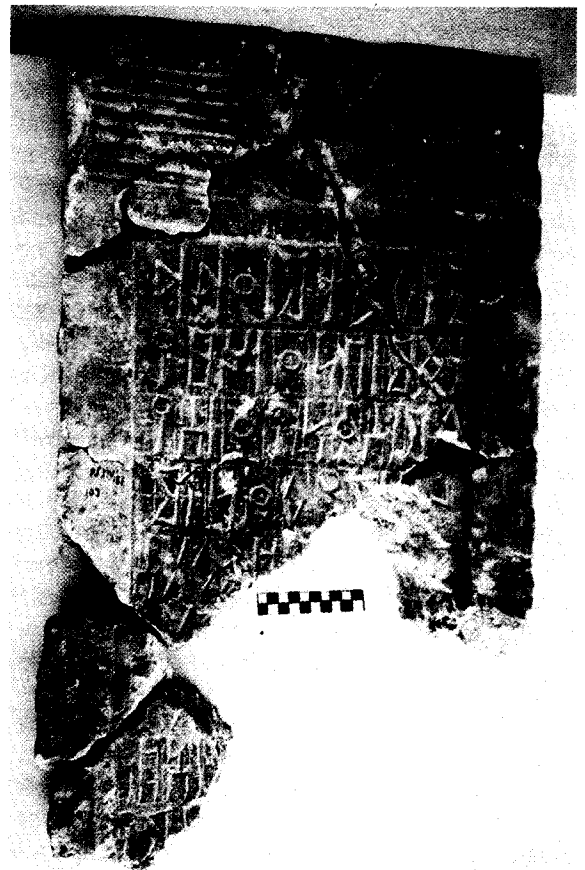


FIGURE 1. Rb XIV/87 no. 109.

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FIGURE 2a. Rb XIV/87 nos 110–111.

Rb XIV/87 no. 110–111

Description

This incomplete stele composed of 12 pieces is seriously damaged, especially on the right and left sides (Figs 2 a–b). On its top a crescent and some elements of a rather complicated ornament are visible. No exact data on its size are available. The palaeographical features of this text are typical of the 'recent' period.

Text

1. [YS²KR²] <L>/b[n/]#<M>HFS²H<-m>
2. <s¹><q><n><y></><S¹>#<Y><N></><D-><M><Y>[F^c-N/ms³]
3. nd-hn/[w-]qš²-s¹/b-d[bh-m/s³]
4. <n>y-m/[w-]#<š>lm/w-s³mr-<m>[/d-s²f]
5. t/S¹YN/t(?).#my(?)rb.....
6. k-ykn-h-s¹/w#ld-<m></>[w-rs¹m]
7. ²dn/S¹Y<N></><h>-<d>-#<y>s¹r^cn-s¹/w-t



FIGURE 2b. Rb XIV/87 nos 110–111 (after repair).

8. <d>²/Y<S²>#KR²L/b-²dn/S¹Y
9. [N]</><n>#[f]s¹-s¹/w-²dn-s¹/w-qny-
10. s¹/w-bn-<s¹>#[w]w²NWY-m/w-²
11. QHL-m/w-r²#b-s¹m/S¹YN/D-M
12. YF^c-N/r²b-s¹/#<d>-yn^cm

Translation

1. [Yashkur²i], so[n] of Muhafshih^{um},
2. dedicated to Sīn dhū May[fa^cān the in-]
3. scripture, [and] offered it as [ano]ther sa[crifice],
4. [and] a statue and crops [which he promi-]
5. sed to Sīn
6. so that he should have children [lit. children should be for him]. [And he earned]
7. the goodwill of Sīn in order to seek help from Him. And Yashkur²i pla-
8. ced under the will of Si[n]
9. his s[o]ul and his will and his possessions
10. and h[i]s two sons Anway^{um} and

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11. Aqhal^{um} and Sīn dhū Mayfaʿān was reconciled with them
12. by his reconciliation which may be favourable.

Commentary

Line 1: [YS²KR²] <L>: this name which is already attested in Minaic (Harding 1971: 672) and probably also in Hadramitic (RES 2687/1),¹² can be restored here thanks to its occurrence in line 8.

Lines 3–4: [w-]q^s-s¹/b-d[*bh*-m/s³] <n>y-m/[w-] <š>lm/w-s³mr-<m>: the formula with q^s as well as the dedication of a statue and crops has been considered in the main text of this paper.

Lines 6–7: [w-*ʔ*s¹m] ʔdn/S¹Y<N></><h>-<ḡ>-<y>s¹ʔn-s¹: the many examples cited in the present article demonstrate the close relationship between the expression with ʔs¹m and the use of the verbs s¹ʔn or s¹ʔn.

Lines 7–12: the final formula is here employed in a rather unusual form, since instead of the mention of *wld*-m 'children' in general, the dedicant's actual sons are mentioned by name. The proper noun ʔNWY-m (as well as its variety ʔNWY-N) is already attested in Sabaic inscriptions (Harding 1971: 81). This is the first occurrence of ʔQHL-m in the Arabian onomasticon.

Rb XIV/90 no. 60 = SOYCE 2377

Description

This rectangular stele (40 x 83 cm) was found in the yard to the north of the main building, near the stairs. It is broken along the bottom and is decorated on the top with the image of a crescent and disk (Fig. 3). A small fragment, containing the end of the last line, is missing on the photograph. The inscribed face of the stele was coated with red paint. The width of the margins varies between 20 cm (at the top) to 5 cm (at the bottom) and 4.5 cm (on both sides). The characters are narrow and their shapes are typical of the 'recent' palaeographic period.

Text

1. ʔQHL-m/bn/YS²KR²L/grby-hn/s¹q
2. ny/S¹YN/D-MYF^c-N/ms³nd-hn/d-s²f
3. t-s¹/h-bn-h-s¹ww/k-y^mrdwn/mrwh
4. w-hyf/hy^ʔLR²B/w-q^s-s¹/b-d*bh*
5. s³ny-m/w-ʔs¹m/ʔdn/S¹YN/b-d*t*/s¹

6. [ʔn/] <ʔ><Q><H>L-m/w-tḡ^ʔ/QHL-m/b-ʔ*d*
7. [n/S¹YN/D-MYF^c-N/n] <f><s¹>-s¹/w-ʔdn-s¹/w-
8. [qny-s¹/w-bn-h-s¹ww/dhy/] <y><n><d><c>w

Translation

1. Aqhal^{um}, son of Yashkur^ʔil, the stonemason, dedi-
2. cated to Sīn dhū Mayfaʿān the inscription, which he pro-
3. mised to him for the sake of his two sons in order that they may be delivered from meteorism [or chest disease?]
4. and misfortune thanks to (?) Ilraʿab, and he offered it as another sacrifice
5. and earned the goodwill of Sīn, since He

FIGURE 3. Rb XIV/90 no. 60 = SOYCE 2377.



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6. h[elped] Aqhal^{um}. And Aqhal^{um} placed under the
7. wi[l] of Sīn dhū Mayfa‘ān] his [s]oul and his will and
8. [his possessions and his two sons which may be honoured.

Commentary

Lines 3–4: *k-ymrdwn/mrwḥ w-hyf/hy^lLR²B*: the expression *k-ymrdwn/mrwḥ* has been analysed in Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: section II:6. As to *mrwḥ*, it should be noted that after the Hadramitic verb *mrd* the names of diseases are usually used. This term is to be compared in Arabic with *murīḥ* 'flatueux, qui cause des flatuosités, venteux' and *miryāḥ* 'venteux, où il fait de grands vents', 'qui a une maladie de poitrine' (Dozy 1881: 568), 'that occasions much flatulence in the belly' (Lane 1863–1893: 1183) and as a result two possible interpretations may be proposed for it: 'meteorism' or 'chest disease'.

Since *hyf* is considered to be the second direct object governed by *ymrdwn*, the meaning 'calamity, misfortune' attested for *hayf* in Yemeni dialects (Landberg 1920–1942: 2897; Piamenta 1990–1991: 515) seems suitable for this Hadramitic term too. The translation of *hy* remains dubious and is based only on the general sense of the context. It is remarkable that in Hadramitic there are some prepositions which have no parallels in other South Arabian and even Semitic languages, like *ʔhy* 'against' (?) or 'beside' (?) in RES 2640/2 (cf. Beeston 1962: § 49:1; Beeston 1984: § H 33:3). However, the derivation of *hy* from *ʔhy* is excluded.

No information about the person named Ilraʔab has been found in the inscriptions of Raybūn. This personal name occurs in two graffiti from the rocks of Ġawlat al-Rumād (DjR 2: A 9, 10).

Lines 5–6: *w-ṯs^lm^lḥ^ldn/S^lYN/b-dt/s^l[^ln]/<>><Q><H>L-m*: the restoration of *s^l[^ln]* is based on a similar context in RF-ALīm 1/6–7: *w-ṯ^ldn/S^lYN/ṯs^lm/b-dt/s^l[^ln]/...*

Line 8: *[qny-s^l/w-bn-h-s^lww/dhy]/<y><n><d><<>w*: this lacuna has been filled by analogy with Rb XIV/87 no. 110–111/9–10. The form *dhy* already attested in the Hadramitic text CIAS 47.82/06, line 3 seems to be a relative pronoun in the masculine dual (Beeston 1984: § H 25:1). The interpretation of

ynd^lw is proposed on the basis of the meaning of the verb *nada^l* 'to be honoured', 'to have the honour' in Yemeni Arabic (Piamenta 1990–1991: 482).

Notes

- ¹ The precise reading of this divine name remains unknown. On some plausible transcriptions of it see: Frantsouzoff 1997: 123, n. 2.
- ² The texts from these temples have been examined by the author of the present paper in: Frantsouzoff 1995, Frantsouzoff 1997, Frantsouzoff 1998a.
- ³ Exceptions are very rare, see for instance the stele Rb I/88 no. 133 from Raḥbān. It should be noted that the carving of stelae in Mayfa‘ān goes back to the previous, 'ancient', period (the eighth to third centuries BC). Some inscriptions of this type (e.g. Rb XIV/87 no. 94, 95), the largest of which has recently been published (Rb XIV/89 no. 221 = SOYCE 2075 in: Frantsouzoff 1998b: 132–143), are dated, on palaeographical grounds, to the second phase of this period (the sixth to fifth centuries BC). Perhaps the introduction of stelae into the epigraphic tradition of Raybūn took place at the very outset of its history under Sabaeen influence.
- ⁴ Apart from small fragments, only three inscriptions on bronze from Shabwa are known to us: RES 2693, Shabwa/Chantier V, 1975 and RF-ALīm 1.
- ⁵ It should be emphasized that *s²fi* governs a direct object, but between this verb and the attached pronoun the so-called 'parasitic' *h* can be used, while after *ks³* the preposition *h-* is always employed (Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: section II:2).
- ⁶ Some contexts in which *šlm/w-s³mr-m* occur have been examined in connection with the lack of mimation at the end of *šlm*, in Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: section II:7. See also Rb XIV/87 no. 110–111/4 edited in the appendix to the present paper.
- ⁷ The interpretation of this verb was given in Frantsouzoff 1999: 39; Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, *a*: Appendice [commentary to Rb XIV/87 no. 104/7].
- ⁸ The preposition *bn* is used here twice. The first *bn* is governed by the verb *m^l* and signifies

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'from', while the second has a partitive meaning 'one of'.

- ⁹ The 'feminine' version of this expression occurs in Rb XIV/87 no. 86/2: ...w-šbht/yn-s³yw/w-lb-s³... In his preliminary analysis of Rb XIV/87 no. 108/11–14 A.G. Lundin put after *lb-s^l* the term *s²kr-s^l* translated as 'his senses' (Lundin 1989: 145). But a thorough examination of the whole context and comparison with some parallel passages prove that *s²kr* here should be interpreted as a verb 'to recompense' and be included in the formula with *r^b* (cf. Frantsouzoff, forthcoming, a: section IV).
- ¹⁰ According to the dating proposed for RF-Alīm 1 in Robin & Frantsouzoff 1999 :156.
- ¹¹ The black and white photograph of Rb XIV/87 no. 109 was published by A. G. Lundin with no translation or commentary (Lundin 1989: fig. 2). A colour photograph of the first three lines of Rb XIV/90 no. 60 appeared in Arbach 1997: 40. The interpretation proposed by A. Avanzini for a fragment extracted from them (Avanzini 1996: 169) cannot be accepted.
- ¹² The reading Yashhur'il (*Ys²[h]r^l*) proposed for the name of this *mukarrib* of Ḥaḍramawt (Robin 1994: 104) is debatable.

Sigla

CIAS 47.82/06	<i>Corpus des inscriptions et antiquités sud-arabes. i/1.</i> Louvain, 1977: 159–163.
DjR 2: A 9, 10	in Piotrovskij 1996: 176–177, 187: fig. 32.
Rb	Inscriptions from Raybūn discovered and to be published by the Soviet Yemeni Complex Expedition.
RES	<i>Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique.</i> Paris, 1900–1968.
RF-Alīm 1	in Robin & Frantsouzoff 1999.
Shabwa/Chantier V, 1975	in Pirenne 1990: 76, pl. 58 a.
Shabwa V/85/22	in Pirenne 1990: 79, pl. 61 a.
SOYCE + no.	Registration numbers of objects discovered by the Soviet Yemeni Expedition

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