

## Four New Safaitic Inscriptions from Mafrag

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**Abstract.** This study sheds light on four safaitic inscriptions from a lava region in the north-eastern Jordanian desert. The quality of the inscriptions varies: three are beautifully inscribed and their letters are greatly extended (e.g.: 1, 2, 3). The fourth one is poorly written in very thin letters. This paper tries to give a background for the names and the words examined in these texts. These reveal new Safaitic personal names, a word: 'yt, ,fyf, a new structures: genitive case

### Inscription no. 1.

lifyf

For ,fyf.

This inscription is found adjacent to the following three on a small basalt stone.

,fyf:

Structure: one-word name, fu<ail.

Meaning: smooth.

Parallel: Arabic tribal name Banu ,utayf (Ibn Durayd 1991: 301).

### Comments:

The general interpretation assumes that the infix -y- of the name is an alternative spelling of the Arabic ,utayf. As far as we know, the name in this form is new in Safaitic inscriptions. It is a diminutive form ,utayf from the root iff "smooth body" of the well known Safaitic personal name ,ff (Clark 1979, No. 1188: 440, HIN. 193). In any case, this form with infix -y- is observed in ,a ramatic inscriptions from al-<Uqlah ,fyfm (Ja 1006/ 2 in Jamme 1963). It is attested as a female personal name in Old South Arabian inscriptions (,ft), whereas al-Said explained it as "erleichterung" (al-Said 1995: 211).

### Inscription no. 2.

l1\* bn 1\*

For 1\* son of 1\*.

1\*:

Structure: one- word name, f>gil "r gli\*", or fi<l "ril\*".

Meaning: rescue, client, pure.

Parallel: attested most in Semitic inscriptions (HIN. 226, Macdonald et al 1996: 458, 461, Maani 1999: 108; TIJ. 58a, 520; Hayajneh 1998: 130; CT 14 in Thompson 1944; CIS 1449; Lidzbarski 1902: 275; CIS 542; Fowler 1988: 191; Lawton 1984: 337).

### Comments:

The interpretation depends on the word inflection. One account may vocalize this personal name by adapting the form of il\* the singular of ula\*" <intimate friend" (Tag. hl\*), as an alternative vocalization by posting f>gil gli\* form "the white thing, or every pure and bright color" (Tag. hl\*). It is attested in Thamudic in the invocation term "salvation" (TIJ 502). This change of meaning affects our proposed vocalization to the extent that "pure and bright color" will be for gli\* ,or "client" for il\* .

### Inscription no. 3.

lgsm bn qdm

For Gsm son of Qdm.

Gsm:

Structure: one- word name, verbal adjective, fa<ل, Gaṣm.

Meaning: became great, large.

Parallel: Gsmt, Gsmw, ???????.

**Comments:**

It is a simple masculine personal name, it can be classified as a verbal adjective, derived from fi<l form; the adjective is similar or assimilated to the participle, called in Arabic ?????? ??????????. This kind of adjective expresses a quality inherent and permanent in a person (see GAR I, No. 231-232: 133-136).

This personal name has been derived from a form cognate with Arabic structure fa<ل. This derivation is to be slightly preferred, because the concept of the name bearer is known as verbal adjective.

In Arabic, Gsm means "became great, large", gism "a peson, body", gaṣm "huge body" (Tag. gsm, Lane, part 2: 424, 425). Also it is mentioned in ,a ramite as an adjective or a noun as is the case in Arabic "wgsmhy / gn> / qlt" (RES 2687 / 3), and as a verb meaning "perform construction" ". . . / bn mlkkrb / mlky / ì rmt / qtdm / wgsm / gn[> / my]f<t" (RES 3869 / 2), "wsìds3 / wgsm / b>mntsmn / b>rh / >مبت" (CT 4 / 5-7 in Thompson 1944).

It is known in Safaitic (HIN.: 455). In modern books on Arabic personal names there is evidence for name G<sub>3</sub>sim ?????? which is pronounced as G<sub>3</sub>ṣm ?????? (SAA. vol. 3: 1390). It can be guessed that f>gil form G<sub>3</sub>sim is not old since it is another pronunciation of Q<sub>3</sub>sim (MAA. Vol. 2: 1363). Gaṣm/ <Abd Gaṣm is mentioned as an Islamic personal name1 (Ahmad 1999: 89-90). Traditional Arabic books before Lisan did not mention G<sub>3</sub>sim ?????? as a personal name. On the other hand, al-Lisan and al-Fair z >Ab<sub>3</sub>di (who is a century later than Lisan) mentioned bnw G<sub>3</sub>sim as an old family name (al-Muif: gsm), and so did

Tag which was four centuries later.

It is worth pointing that Arabic Dictionaries mentioned the verbal adjective derived from the first form of the verb, fa<ل ?????? , but did not mention the nomina agentis form f>gil ?????? as a derivation of gasama. It is likely to read Gsm as Gaṣm, since there is not enough evidence indicating G<sub>3</sub>sim as a widely spread old personal name. It is possible that f>gil ?????? form is known at the time of al-Lisan and after. Similarities are found in Minaean Gsm<l (Glaser 1018 in Ghul, Ghaza), Liyanite Gsmt (al-Ansary 1966, No. 6: 91), Nabataean Gsmw, Greek ??????? (Negev 1991, No. 259: 20). Perhaps the West-Semitic ra-si-ma-> carried a possible similarity to Arabic gasama and Safaitic Gsm and >Gsm (Zadok 1977: 232).

Qdm:

Structure: one-word name, f>gil, Q<sub>3</sub>dim or fu<al Qudam.

Meaning: who comes before, step forward , first; good deed.

Parallel: Q<sub>3</sub>dim or Qudam.

**Comments:**

Qdm "come before", and qadamu ?????? in qadamu \*idqin ?????? ?????? "good deed or high position/ rank", and cu-ar-Rima said:

????? ??????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ????????????? ????????????? ??????????

In a footnote in al-Iklil, al-Hamdani quoted the poem verse of Farwa bn Musaik (al-Iklil 10: 86, footnote 7):

??? ?????? ??????? ??????? ?????? ?????? ??????????

Qidman means "go forward toward the enemy" (see Tag. Qdm), and the same meaning is rendered in Safaitic (Hazim 1986: 102-103, see



Fig. 1: A rock boulder with Four Safaitic Inscriptions, northeast of Mafraq, Jordan.

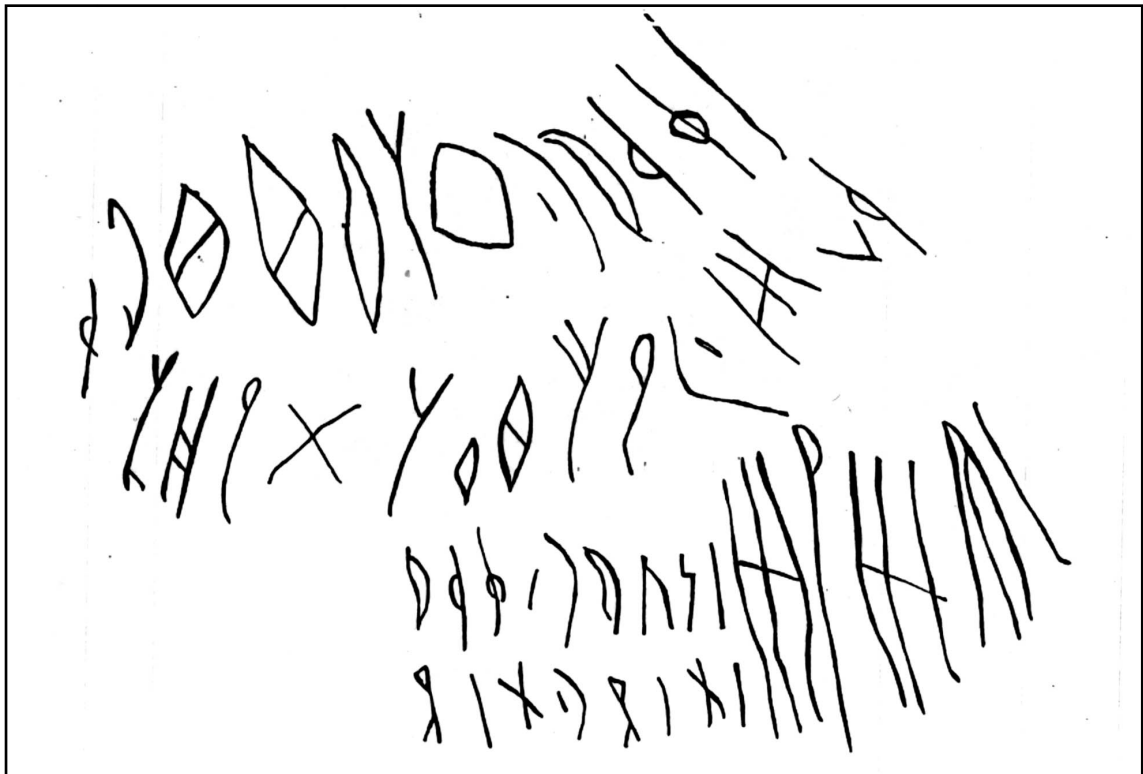


Fig. 2: A tracing of the inscriptions in Fig. 1.

also his discussion); for more cognate meanings in other Semitics see the South Arabic meaning in: SD: 103; Ricks 1989: 142, Arbach 1993: 70; in Nabataen: al-Theeb 2000a: 226.

al-Hamd ٭ni (al-Iklil 2: 69; the reading is from \*ifat: 125, ft. 3) quotes some verses which mention the Yemenite tribal name Qudam ?????, which is a justified form of Yaqdum:

??????? ?????? ??? ??????  
 ???????? ?????? ???????? ??? ????  
 ??????

**Inscription no. 4.**

lqdm bn ghm wwrđ > yt h<w\*y bn frđ  
 "For Qdm son of Ghm, and he goes down to stagnating water of <Aw\*ite, pursued man stayed (there).

Ghm:

Structure: one-word name, fi<l,"Gihm", or fa<l "Gahm".

Meaning: the lion.

Parallel: Gihm ,Gahm.

**Comments:**

It means "he became frowned", gahmun ????? and gahimun ????? "a coarse, or harsh and repulsive, and ugly face." In addition, al-gahmu ????? means "the lion" (Lane 1865, part 2: 478). al-Hamdani read it as Gihm ??? (al-Iklil 10: 101). It is a well-known personal name in Safaitic (HIN: 170), and as theoporic personal name ghml "mürrisch" (Hazim 1986: 25). It is attested in Arabic Gahm????, Guhaim ?????, Gaiham???? and Gahm???? from gahama "have harsh and repulsive features" (Ibn Durayd 1991: 86, 139, 211).

wwrđ:

w:

It is said that wa- is an ancient morphem and its use as a conjunction is an innovation. That could be traced back to Eblaite as an indicator prefixed to verbs (Gordon 1987: 21). It is an inseparable conjunction which connects words, verbs or clauses, and it means "and". It has the same sense in Arabic (see LP= Littman 1943: 310). In this inscription, as is known to Arab grammarians, it implies a fresh start particle. It has the value of implying a sequence or unsequence in relation to the preceding expression or the following one.

wrd:

It is third masculine singular perfect of the common Semitic verb with variant yrd in North-West Semitic for. "drew near, reach, go down, attend, came to or arrived at/ namely a water or a place, whether he entered into or did not" (Lane 1968, part 8: 2935; SD 162.; Leslau 1987: 617; LP 406., 426, 532; Clark 1979: No. 762, P. 347; <Al lu 1997: No. 48, p. 40; DISO 469; BDB: 432-434; LS 309; Koehler 401; Gelb 22; Gordon 1967: 414). Although the Qur`nic text insures the meaning of entering the place for watering "????? ?????? ????? ??????" (The Holy Qur'an 28: 23), in another text it seems to mean "pass over", "reach without entering". "????? ?????? ????? ??????" (The Holy Qur'an 19:71). The Juhil poet strengthens and supports the meaning of entering the place; <Amru bin Kul m said in his Mu<allaqa: (az-Z zany 1990: 142, 144)

??????? ?????????? ??????????  
 ???????? ?????????? ?????????????? ???  
 ??????  
 ?????????? ??? ?????????? ??????  
 ?????????? ?????????? ?????????? Also



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**ملخص:** تلقي هذه الدراسة الضوء، على أربعة نقوش صفوية، اكتشفت في صحراء شمال شرقي الأردن. أما خصائص هذه النقوش فمختلفة: إذ النقوش الثلاثة الأولى (١، ٢، ٣) كتبت بخط جميل وبحروف عريضة جدا؛ أما النقش الرابع فكتب بخط رديء وبحروف صغيرة جدا. يحاول هذا البحث أن يعرض خلفية مرجعية، للأسماء والكلمات الواردة في النصوص؛ وهي نصوص تكشف عن أسماء أعلام صفوية جديدة، وكلمة جديدة، وبنية نحوية جديدة هي بنية الإضافة.

#### Notes :

- (1) See LP342 which reveals that 'wd who had hmy "sanctuary" is semi-nomadic, and LP 361 spoke of a person who passed by the tombs of 'l 'wd which reveal that this tribe had tombs and the person is semi-nomadic. On this point see Maani 1998: 85.
- (2) Maani 1997: 6; al-Theeb 2000 b/ 1421 No. 59: 60; Ph. 14 in vdB. 501, Ph 271 i, 1, in vdB Tham. II: 32; Ph 363 v, in vdB Tham. II: 80; Ph. 319 I, in vdB Tham. II: 80; RES 4763/ 2; Abdallah 1975: 79; Hayajneh 1998: 97; Ja 962/ 1 in Jamme 1963; RES 3700/ 9, see also Arbach 1993: 33 and al- Ansary 1966, Nos 1-3: 116; al-Ansary 1966, No. 1: 118; 1 Stark 1971: 104, 105; Abbadi 1983: 148; Maraqtan 1988: 95, 196; Cantineau II, 1930: 128, Negev 1991, No 851: 49; al-Iklil 10: 143).

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