

Map 76 Sinai

Compiled by D.F. Graf, 1996

Introduction

For the most part, the map covers vast expanses of desert, especially in the Sinai peninsula of Egypt, and in southern Jordan/northwestern Saudi Arabia (the Hisma desert). Most of the settlements marked are clustered at the top right of the map, south of Petra (Map 71 A5), on the plateau of southern Jordan. They are known primarily from recent intense archaeological activity, and their ancient names remain unattested.

The impression given by the map that the empty expanses are devoid of settlements and population is misleading. There are in fact scattered signs of small settlements and an extensive desert population in antiquity, especially where the advanced hydrological technology employed by the Nabataeans and their successors made life possible in otherwise adverse conditions. Proof is offered by the remains of cisterns, reservoirs, aqueducts and other catchment devices in the region (Stone 1982, 25-62; Graf 1983), not all of them marked on the map. These traces of a substantial pastoral population are matched by the thousands of graffiti incised in the sandstone mountains and on boulders that litter the desert floor of the Hisma desert (Harding 1952; Graf 1980; Jobling 1982; Livingstone 1985; King 1990; al-Theeb 1993) and Sinai peninsula (Stone 1992). Most of these graffiti are in pre-Islamic Arabic script called "Thamudic" that emanates from the late Hellenistic to early Roman period; but others are in Nabataean Aramaic, and a few in Greek and Latin. The largest concentration of Nabataean texts is in southern Sinai, where almost half the entire corpus of more than 4,000 exists. The Greek and Latin texts are few, concentrated at Auara, Aramaia, and in southern Sinai. The presence of these rock inscriptions and graffiti amply illustrates the literary testimony of Agatharchides (90), who already in the Hellenistic period assigns a substantial pastoral community and many villages to the littoral of the Aelaniticus Sinus.

The Roman road system for the region has been largely clarified, especially the Via Nova Traiana between Petra (Map 71 A5) and Aila (Graf 1995), and the Wadi Arabah road between Aila and Ad Dianam (Avner 1996). Some problems remain, however. In particular, TabPeut indicates a route which connected Clysma at the head of the Suez Gulf (Heroopoliticus Sinus) across the Sinai peninsula to Aila. These two port cities were obviously important for the eastern trade, and the focus of multiple caravan routes inland. So a route connecting them is plausible, and the distance given (170 m.p., approximately 158 miles) seems about right. Even so, the attempt to identify the road stations mentioned by TabPeut at Medeia (Marah?) and Pharan with the small stations of Nakhl and el-Thamad of the later Hajj route (Sachsse 1928) is not convincing. Archaeological investigation of these stations indicates that they are purely medieval (and thus omitted from the map), constructed in the Ayyubid-Mamluk period for the pilgrim route between Cairo and Mecca (Rothenberg 1970, 13; Tamari 1982). In consequence, it is tempting to regard the route as a late addition to TabPeut, instead representing the Christian pilgrimage route to St. Catherine's monastery (Tou Batou), which passed through Pharan in southern Sinai (Mayerson 1981). There are still difficulties, however, with this view. In general, only a few of the many staging-posts mentioned in the travel accounts by Christian pilgrims have been identified; the rest remain a matter of conjecture.

The nature of the settlement and canal at Clysma are undetermined. The Roman settlement of Aila is now being uncovered by excavation. There is reason to think of "a southward advance in the shoreline over the millennia" here (Parker 1997, 41; cf. Schur 1986, 393). Other changes in the Red Sea coastline are more difficult to define, however (cf. Greenwood 1997, 19).

Directory

All place names are in Egypt unless otherwise noted

Abbreviations

CosmasInd	Cosmas Indicopleustes, in W. Wolska-Conus (ed.), <i>Topographie Chrétienne</i> , 3 vols., Paris, 1968-73
EAO	Egyptian Antiquities Organization, reports by M. Abdalla Ali, chief inspector, Southern Sinai (unpublished), 1995
JADIS	G. Palumbo (ed.), <i>Jordan antiquities database and information system</i> , Amman, 1994
TIR Iudaea	Tabula Imperii Romani, <i>Iudaea-Palaestina</i> , Jerusalem, 1994

Names

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
G1	<i>Abu el-Lisan</i>	HRL	JOR	Bisheh 1993, 121, 126
G1	<i>Abu el-Nusur</i> Ad Dianam? = (B)Ossia	HRL	JOR	Bisheh 1993, 121; Waheeb 1996, 345
F2	<i>Aelana/</i> Aila	HRL	Aqaba JOR	Hakkert, <i>Lex. Aila</i>
	§ Haila	R		
	§ Ailana	R		
	§ Berenike	H		
	§ Elath	ACH		
F5	<i>Aelaniticus Sinus</i>			Strabo 16.2.30, 4.4; Pliny, <i>NH</i> 5.65; RE Ailana
	Aila = Aelana			
G1	<i>Ain el-Jamam</i>	HRL	JOR	Bisheh 1993, 121-23; Waheeb 1996, 344-45
G2	<i>Ain el-Qattar</i>	HR	JOR	Kirkbride 1947, 15
G2	<i>Ain Hejfeh</i>	HR	JOR	Kirkbride 1947, 23
E4	<i>Ain Hudera</i>	HRL		Rothenberg 1970, 28
D4	<i>Ain Nagila</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 117
G2	<i>Ain Shellaly</i>	HR	JOR	Savignac 1932
F3	<i>Ankale</i>	HR	Haql SAU	Ptol. 6.7.27
G3	<i>Arabia Eudaemon</i> § <i>Arabia Felix</i>	HR	SAU	Pliny, <i>NH</i> 6.138; Ptol. 6.7.27
F2	<i>Arabia Petraia</i>	R		Ptol. 5.16.1
G2	<i>Aramaua</i>	HRL	Wadi Ramm JOR	Ptol. 6.7.27; Savignac 1932; Graf 1979, 125; 1983, 655
B3	<i>Arandara</i> § <i>Surandala</i> § <i>Elim</i>	RL	Gharandal	TIR Iudaea 66 Wilkinson 1977, 88
E4	<i>el-Arba'in</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 66
G1	<i>Arieldela</i>	RL	Gharandal JOR	NotDig Or. 34.44
G2	<i>Auara</i>	HRL	Humayma JOR	Ptol. 5.16.4; Graf 1992; OEANE Humeima
F5	<i>Batmizomaneis</i>	H	SAU	Agatharchides 90
F2	<i>Biq'at 'Uvdah</i>	HR		TIR Iudaea 89
D5	<i>Bir Abu Swera</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 89
G2	(B)Ossia/ Ad Dianam?	RL	Yotvata ISR	TIR Iudaea 57
F4	<i>Bythemanoi</i>	H	SAU	Agatharchides 89
B2	<i>Clysmā</i>			See Map 74
D5	<i>ed-Deir</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 70-72
E4	<i>ed-Deir</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 109
D5	<i>Deir Antush</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 64; TIR Iudaea 109
D5	<i>Deir Rumhan</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 65
D5	<i>Deir Umm Arad</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 66

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
D5	<i>Deir Umm Butme</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 62, 74 (n. 31)
E4	<i>Farsh el-Qasr</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 42-47
D5	<i>Farsh Habash</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 66
G1	<i>Fera'Dor</i>	HR	JOR	Hart 1985, 269
D5	<i>el-Fra'iyeh</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 73
G1	<i>Fuweileh el-Gharbiyeh</i>	HR	JOR	Graf 1979, 125; Bisheh 1993, 126
D5	Garindaneis	HR		Agatharchides 88; Strabo 16.4.18
E4	<i>Geth Rabbi</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 135
F1	Gypsaria?	HRL	Kuntillet Jirafi ISR	TIR Iudaea 137
G2	<i>Harabet el-Abeyd</i>		JOR	Kirkbride 1947, 21
B3	Heroopoliticus Sinus			Pliny, <i>NH</i> 5.65
D4	Horeb Mons, Mon.	L	Jebel Sufuffeh	TIR Iudaea 147
F3	Iotabe? Ins.		Jazirat Fir'awn	Procop., <i>Bell.</i> 1.19.3-4; Mayerson 1992; TIR Iudaea 154
G2	<i>Jebel Abu Judeidah</i>	HR	JOR	Kirkbride 1947, 17
H2	<i>Jebel Batra</i>	AHR	JOR	Musil 1926, 45-48; Graf 1980
D4	<i>Jebel Moneijah</i>	R		Negev 1977a
D4	<i>Jebel Serbal</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 157
F2	<i>Kheleifeh</i>	AH		Pratico 1993
F2	<i>Kheleifeh</i>	AH	JOR	Pratico 1993
D5	<i>el-Khirbet</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 70
G1	<i>Khirbet Dor</i>	RL	JOR	Graf 1995, 250-51
G1	<i>Khirbet ein Mudilija</i>	HR	JOR	Hart 1985, 269
G1	<i>Khirbet el-Baridiyeh</i>	H?R	JOR	Glueck 1934, 68-69
G1	<i>Khirbet el-Hiyad</i>	L	JOR	Bisheh 1993, 122-23; Waheeb 1996, 339-40
G2	<i>Khirbet el-Kithara</i>	RL	JOR	Graf 1995, 261
H1	<i>Khirbet el-Mureighah</i>	AHR	JOR	JADIS 2094001
H2	<i>Khirbet el-Nasara</i>	HRL	JOR	JADIS 2092002
H2	<i>Khirbet el-Qirana</i>	HRL	JOR	Parker 1986, 102-104
G1	<i>Khirbet el-Taiyineh</i>	AHR	JOR	Glueck 1934, 68
H2	<i>Khirbet el-Thalajeh</i>	HRL	JOR	JADIS 2092001; Graf 1980
G1	<i>Khirbet Hamdan</i>	HR	JOR	Glueck 1934, 71
G2	<i>Khirbet Naqb el-Shtar</i>	HR	JOR	Hart 1985, 269
G1	<i>Khirbet Qurein</i>	AHR	JOR	Hart 1985, 269
G1	<i>Khirbet Rassif</i>	HR	JOR	Hart 1985, 271
G1	<i>Khirbet Sherfan</i>	HR		Glueck 1934, 71
G1	<i>Khirbet Umm Ras</i>	HR	JOR	Hart 1985, 271
B1	<i>Koubri</i>	C		Tuplin 1991, 243
G5	Madiama	AHR	el-Bad / Mugha'ir Sh'ayb SAU	Ptol. 6.7.27; Bosworth 1984
F4	Madiane/ Midian	AHRL	SAU	Philby 1957; Shahid 1984, 324-27; Knauf 1988
F5	Makna	HRL	Maqna SAU	Ptol. 6.7.27; Parr 1972, 35
B3	Marah § Medeia?	L	Abu Mereir	CosmasInd 5.199 ItMiller 820; Mayerson 1981
D5	Maranites	HR		Agatharchides 88; Strabo 16.4.18
D5	<i>el-Ma'yen</i>	L		Finkelstein 1985, 73
B2	Melana Ore Midian = Madiane	HR		Ptol. 5.16.2
C3	Mounychiatis	HR		Ptol. 5.16.3
C3	Nabataei	HR		Agatharchides 88; DiodSic 3.43.4; Pliny, <i>NH</i> 5.65
D3	<i>Naqb Jedid</i>	HR		TIR Iudaea 193
B1	Nekou Diorux			See Map 74
F4	<i>Nuweiba</i>	R		EAO; Rothenberg 1970, 28

Grid	Name	Period	Modern Name / Location	Reference
	Ossia = (B)Ossia			
D4	Pharan	RL	Feiran	Ptol. 5.16.1; ItMiller 820
C4	Pharanitai	HR		Ptol. 5.16.3
B2	Phoinikon	L	Ain Musa	CosmasInd 5.199
	§ Poseideion?	H		Agatharchides 87
D5	Phoinikon Chora	H		Agatharchides 86
G2	'Praesidio'	RL	Khirbet al-Khalde JOR	NotDig Or. 34.41; ItMiller 820
G2	<i>Qasr el-Qorbah</i>	RL	JOR	Graf 1995, 258
G2	<i>Qasr Timnah</i>	HR	ISR	Glueck 1934, 9 (Map Ic, no. 10)
B4	*Qubba	L	Deir Bula / S. Paul's Monastery	Jerome, <i>Vita Pauli</i> 12, 16; Wilkinson 1977, 88
G2	<i>Quweira</i>	RL	JOR	Graf 1995, 258
D5	Raithenoi	HR		Ptol. 5.16.3
B3	<i>Ras Abu el Daraq</i>	L		S.E. Sidebotham
D4	Rephidim	L	Jebel Tahuna	Euseb., <i>Onom.</i> 142.22-25; TIR Iudaea 214
D5	Rhathou	HR	Tor	Ptol. 5.16.3; TIR Iudaea 214
G3	<i>Risqah</i>	AC	JOR	Kirkbride 1969
G2	<i>Rujm Hadid</i>	R	JOR	Glueck 1937, 7-8
B1	Sarakene	R		Ptol. 5.16.3
C3	<i>Serabit el-Khadim</i>	AHR		LexAgypt 5, 866-68; Wimmer 1990, 1066
D4	<i>Sigillyah</i>	L		TIR Iudaea 231
C3	Sinai		EGY	Valbelle 1998
G1	<i>Suweimirah</i>	RL	JOR	Graf 1995, 251
D4	Syna M.			TIR Iudaea 232-33 Sina
G2	<i>Taba Sabkha</i>	R	JOR	Smith 1994, 478
F4	<i>Tayyib al-Ism</i>	AR	SAU	Ingraham 1981, 74-75
F4	<i>Tell el-Mashraba</i>	R		EAO
D5	<i>Tell el-Raya</i>	RL		EAO
D4	<i>Tell Mahrada</i>	L		Hershkovitz 1988
G2	<i>Teraif Merar</i>	HR	JOR	Kirkbride 1947, 9-10
G5	Thamydenoi		SAU	See Map 83
D4	Tholas	L	Deir Tlah	TIR Iudaea 249
F2	<i>Timnah</i>	AR	ISR	TIR Iudaea 250; Wimmer 1990, 1069
E4	Tou Batou	L	S. Catherine's monastery	ODB Catherine, Monastery of Saint
B1	Traianos Potamos			See Map 74
G2	<i>Umm el-Quseir</i>	HR	JOR	Graf 1983, 655
	Viae			See Roads
E4	<i>Wadi Haggag</i>	L		Negev 1977; TIR Iudaea 257
C4	<i>Wadi Mukkatab</i>	HRL		Rothenberg 1970, 26
G2	<i>Wadi Mulgham</i>	RL	JOR	Smith 1994, 475
C3	<i>Wadi Nasb</i>	HRL		Rothenberg 1970, 25
G1	<i>Wadi Nukhaya</i>	R	JOR	Smith 1994, 481
G2	<i>Wadi Qelkha</i>			Kirkbride 1947, 22
F3	<i>Wadi Tuweiba</i>	R		Rothenberg 1970, 22-23
C3	<i>Wadi Umm Zerdal</i>	RL		Rothenberg 1970, 25
G2	<i>Wujh el-Qattar</i>	HR		Kirkbride 1947, 15

Aqueduct

Grid	Location	Period	Reference
G2	Auara	HRL	Oleson 1992

Roads

Grid	Name / Itinerary	Period	Reference
B5	Via Hadriana		See Map 78
G2	Via Nova Traiana		See Map 71
	Aelana → (B)Ossia → Gypsaria? → NW	RL	ItMiller 834; Avner 1996
	Clysmā → Pharan → Aelana	RL	Mayerson 1981; Graf 1998, 110-11

Unlocated Toponyms

Name	Period	Probable Location	Reference
(Ge)Rasa	RL	road station north of Ad Dianam	TIR Iudaea 133
Gubba	RL?		TIR Iudaea 137
Moahile	L		TIR Iudaea 188

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