Religion in Northern Hejaz

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Entry tags: Aramaic Religions, Arabian Religions, Syro-Palestinian Religion, Religious Group

This entry focuses on the religions in the northern Hejaz and neighboring regions during the Late Bronze and Iron Ages and later (ca. 1500-300 BCE), the first time when there is firm archaeological and epigraphic evidence of local cultic practices. During this period the northern Hejaz shared strong economic and cultural links with the southern Negev and southern Transjordan, and the whole area can be considered a large "cultural province." The region is predominantely characterized by aridity and desert landscapes. As such, human habitation was traditionally based on nomadic pastoralism, while permanent settlements were restricted to the local oases, such as Qurayyah, Tayma and Dedan. The limited evidence of the local religions is restricted to archaeological and epigraphic data found in those oasis settlements and at the "Midianite" shrine at Timna Valley; rock inscriptions found in the desert; and the information provided by written sources external to the region, including Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian inscriptions and (problematic) biblical references. The local religions can be identified as polytheistic, although data is conspicuously absent regarding the existence of a pantheon of gods and about religious beliefs or sacred scriptures. The evidence of local deities is patchy and biased towards the epigraphic inscriptions of hegemonic oasis towns and external imperial powers. The earliest cultic practices are attested at the small Late Bronze shrine of Hathor at Timna Valley (14th-12th cent. BCE), where the cultic assemblage was interpreted as "Midianite" because of its cultural connections with the region of Midian in north-western Arabia. Biblical scholarship has seen in the biblical tradition of Moses' stay at Midian evidence of the Midianite worship of Yahweh, but the dating and interpretation of these texts are contested. At Tayma, a rectangular temple functioned during the early Iron Age (ca. 12th-10th cent. BCE), but it is not until king Nabonidus' stay at Tayma (553-543 BCE), when there is evidence of the worship of deities, particularly Babylonian Marduk and Zarpanitu. Local epigraphic inscriptions attest the introduction of the worship of Aramaean deities Salm, Asima and Sangila during the 5th cent. BCE, before and during the Lihyanite rule at Tayma. Several late Iron Age temples were excavated at Dedan, places where the local Dedanites worshipped gods such as Gadd and 'Ara'il; during the later Lihyanite period, deities included Dhu-Gabat, Ba'al-šamin, Han-'Uzzai and 'Aglibun.

Date Range: 1500 BCE - 300 BCE

Region: Northern Hejaz

Region tags: Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia

The Northern Hejaz and its neighboring regions

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite   ✓ Religious Specialists   ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

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General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

— Field doesn't know

— Yes

Notes: The "Midianite" religion was in close cultural contact with the Egyptian and Canaanite cults at the shrines of Timna (Rothenberg 1988; Avner 2014; Amzallag 2018; Miller II 2021; and the several papers in Tebes and Frevel 2021). Egyptian items found in the Area O temple at Tayma show some level of interaction with the Egyptian cult during the early Iron Age (Hausleiter 2013; although Miller II 2021 consider them as "exotica"). There is evidence of the worship of Babylonian deities at Tayma during the Neo-Babylonian period (Hausleiter 2013). Aramaic deities were worshipped at Tayma, although it is not known the date nor the process by which they arrived there (Maraqten 1996; Niehr 2014). The Lihyanite "pantheon" at Dedan included Edomite Qos, Syrian Ba'al-šamin and Minaean Wadd (Hausleiter 2014).

> Is the cultural contact competitive:
>
> — Field doesn't know

> Is the cultural contact accommodating/pluralistic:
>
> — Yes

> Is the cultural contact neutral:
>
> — Field doesn't know

> Is there violent conflict (within sample region):
>
> — Yes
>
> Notes: Epigraphic sources found in the oasis towns and desert rock inscriptions attest military conflicts between local cities and tribes.

> Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):
>
> — Yes
>
> Notes: New Kingdom Egyptians, Neo-Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians routinely engaged in military confrontations with the local tribes and towns. It was only Neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus who was able to establish a permanent presence in the northern Hejaz, establishing his court at Tayma in 553-543 BCE.

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:
— Field doesn't know

Does the religion have official political support
— Yes

Notes: Egyptian cult at Tayma was supported by the pharaonic state (attested by a rock inscription of goddess Hathor with Ramses III) (Rothenberg 1988). King Nabonidus supported the worship of Babylonian gods at Tayma (Hausleiter 2013). Aramaic deities at Tayma were supported by the local kings and the Lihyanite dynasty (Maraqten 1996). The Lihyanite dynasty of Dedan supported their own gods (Hausleiter 2014).

⤷ Are the priests paid by polity:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:
— Yes

Notes: At Tayma (local kings, Neo-Babylonian and Lihyanite periods) and Dedan (local kings and Lihyanite period).

⤷ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Polity provides preferential economic treatment (e.g. tax, exemption)
— Field doesn't know

Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:
— Field doesn't know

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

— Field doesn't know

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

— Field doesn't know

Nature of religious group [please select one]:

— Field doesn't know

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: Epigraphic finds from Tayma show the presence of priests associated with the cult of Aramaic deities (Maraqten 1996; MAP online resource).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

— Yes

Notes: There is a few temple inscriptions at Tayma refering to Babylonian deities (Hausleiter 2013) and commemorating the introduction of Aramaic gods (Maraqten 1996; MAP online resource), although they do not constitute authoritative or sacred texts. Taymanitic and Dadanitic graffiti inscribed on rock ocassionally refer to local deities (see OCIANA online resources).

⤷ Are they written:

— Yes

⤷ Are they oral:

— Yes

Notes: It is likely that religious traditions transmitted orally were common among the local pastoral groups, to judge from ancient and modern Near Eastern societies of similar socio-economic background. At least one Taymanitic rock inscription refer to the existence of "sages" (Robin and Al-Ghabbân 2017).

> ↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:
>
> — Field doesn't know

— Field doesn't know

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

— Yes

Notes: At Tayma, a temple was excavated at the Qrayyah section of town (Area O), dated to the early Iron Age. Two more temples are know from later phases, the so-called Qasr al-Hamra, occupied during the Babylonian period or later, and one excavated at Qrayyah (Area E), founded in the Lihyanite period and used until the late Roman period (Hausleiter 2013; Lora 2017). At Dedan, several temples were excavated at the parts of town known as al-Khuraybah, Ikma and Tell al-Kathib, dating to the late Iron Age or later (Farès-Drappeau 2005; Al-Said et al. 2018).

> ↳ In the average settlement, what percentage of area is taken up by all religious monuments:
>
> — Field doesn't know

> ↳ Size of largest single religious monument, square meters:
>
> — Square meters: 1000
>
> Notes: This is the size of Tayma's Area O temple (according to Miller II 2021). The approximate size of Tayma's Qasr al-Hamra temple was 840 square meters.

> ↳ Height of largest single religious monument, meters:
>
> — Field doesn't know

> ↳ Size of average monument, square meters:
>
> — Height, square meters: 500
>
> Notes: Temple E-b1 at Tayma had a size of more-than 500 square meters (Lora 2017).

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

— Yes

> ↳ Tombs:
>
> — Yes
>
> Notes: At Qurayyah, Tayma and Dedan (Hausleiter and Zur 2016; Luciani, Binder and Alsaud 2018).

↳ Cemeteries:

— Yes

Notes: At Tayma and Dedan (Hausleiter and Zur 2016).

↳ Temples:

— Yes

Notes: At Tayma and Dedan.

↳ Altars:

— Yes

Notes: At the Qasr al-Hamra temple (Tayma).

↳ Devotional markers:

— Yes

Notes: Standing stones at Timna; inscribed stelae, cube and pedestal at Tayma. Inscriptions from Tayma record the donation of a mytb (throne or cultic pedestal) (Niehr 2014).

↳ Mass gathering point [plazas, courtyard, square. Places permanently demarcated using visible objects or structures]:

— Yes

Notes: Tayma's Area O building has been identified as a sort of chapterhouse with open plaza (Miller II 2021).

↳ Other type of religious monumental architecture:

— Yes [specify]: Non-monumental religious structures found at Timna include a rock-cut shrine with perimeter wall (Hathor shrine); an open-air shrine, and a high-place (both at Timna Site 2) (Rothenberg 1972).

Is iconography present:

— Yes

↳ Where is iconography present [select all that apply]:

— Only religious public space

↳ Are there distinct features in the religious group's iconography:

— Yes

↳ Eyes (stylized or not):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural beings (zoomorphic):

— Yes

Notes: Serpent iconography is present at the Timna Hathor shrine and at Tayma; bull iconography is present at Tayma; ostrich iconography is present in the Qurayyah ("Midianite") pottery and the rock art; figurines of cat or lion-headed goddess (Egyptian Bastet / Sakhmet) are present at Tayma. The meaning of this iconography, and whether it is cultic or not, is debated (see Hausleiter 2013; Tebes 2014; 2017).

↳ Supernatural beings (geomorphic):

— No

↳ Supernatural beings (anthropomorphic):

— Yes

Notes: Anthropomorphic figures are present in the Qurayyah ("Midianite") pottery, although its association with deities or priests is debated (Tebes 2014; 2017).

↳ Supernatural beings (abstract symbol):

— No

Notes: A representation of a spade and a stylus, interpreted as symbols of Babylonian gods Marduk and Nabu, has been found on rock art close to Tayma (Hausleiter 2013).

↳ Portrayals of afterlife:

— Field doesn't know

↳ Aspects of doctrine (e.g. cross, trinity, Mithraic symbols):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Humans:

— Yes

Notes: Anthropomorphic images in the Qurayyah ("Midianite") pottery and in the rock art have been interpreted as priests, shamans or tribal leaders (Tebes 2014; 2017).

↳ Other features of iconography:

— Yes

Notes: The cult at the Hathor shrine of Timna has been described as aniconic, evidenced by the presence of uninscribed standing stones (Avner 2014). Astral iconograpy is present in a stele from Tayma attributed to Nabonidus, interpreted as symbols of Babylonian moon-god Sîn (lunar disk and crescent), sun-god Šamaš (sun

disc) and goddess Ištar (the star of Venus) (Hausleiter 2013).

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

— Yes

Notes: Timna Site 25 presents a rock panel with the depiction of the practice of sacred hunting of animals (Tebes 2017).

Are pilgrimages present:

— Yes

Notes: Votive objects found at the Hathor shrine of Timna indicate it was visited by people from distant regions, particularly the northern Hejaz (Rothenberg 1988). The Dadanitic inscriptions describe the practice of pilgrimage with the verb hggw (see the OCIANA online resource).

⤷ How strict is pilgrimage:
— Field doesn't know

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

— Yes

Notes: The inscription in an Aramaic stele from Tayma refers to the dedication of a temple by the governor Psgw Sahru (or Psgw šhdw) to the gods for his own "life and soul (npš)" (Cross 2013; Niehr 2014).

⤷ Spirit-mind is conceived of as having qualitatively different powers or properties than other body parts:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ Other spirit-body relationship:
— Field doesn't know

Belief in afterlife:

— Yes

Notes: Belief in afterlife can be assumed from the Aramaic stele of Tayma of Psgw Sahru (Cross 2013; Niehr 2014).

⮡ Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:
— Field doesn't know

Reincarnation in this world:
— Field doesn't know

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:
— No

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:
— No

Are grave goods present:
— Yes

⮡ Personal effects:
— Yes

⮡ Valuable items:
— Yes

⮡ Significant wealth (e.g. gold, jade, intensely worked objects):
— Yes

Notes: At Tayma (Hausleiter and Zur 2016).

⮡ Some wealth (some valuable or useful objects interred):
— Yes

Notes: At Tayma (Hausleiter and Zur 2016).

⮡ Other valuable/precious items interred:
— Field doesn't know

⮡ Other grave goods:

— Field doesn't know

Are formal burials present:

— Yes

    ↳ As cenotaphs:

    — No

    ↳ In cemetery:

    — Yes

    Notes: At Tayma and Dedan.

    ↳ Family tomb-crypt:

    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Domestic (individuals interred beneath house, or in areas used for normal domestic activities):

    — No

    ↳ Other formal burial type:

    — Yes [specify]: Tumulus (cairns)

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

— Yes

Notes: The cult of Egyptian goddess Hathor is attested at the rock-cut shrine of Timna (Rothenberg 1988). The deities worshipped during the "Midianite" phase are unknown; some have suggested the cult of Yahweh was present (Amzallag 2018), but the evidence is not conclusive. Babylonian deities are attested for the period of Nabonidus' stay at Tayma, including Marduk, Zarpanitu, and Nabu. Epigraphic sources from Tayma show the worship of Aramaean deities Salm, Asima and Sangila (Maraqten 1996; Hausleiter 2013; Niehr 2014). At Dedan, during the Dedanite period the local sources show the worship of gods Gadd and 'Ara'il; during the Lihyanite period, it is attested the worship of Dhu-Gabat, Ba'al-šamin, Han-'Uzzai and 'Aglibun (Farès-Drappeau 2005).

    ↳ A supreme high god is present:

    — Yes

    Notes: Salm occupied the highest position at Tayma; the main Lihyanite god at Dedan was Dhu-Gabat (Niehr 2014; Hausleiter 2014), but their relationship with "lesser" deities is less known.

→ The supreme high god is anthropomorphic:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god is a sky deity:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god is chthonic (of the underworld):
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god is fused with the monarch (king=high god):
— Field doesn't know

→ The monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god is a kin relation to elites:
— No

→ The supreme high god has another type of loyalty-connection to elites:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god is unquestionably good:
— Field doesn't know

→ Other feature(s) of supreme high god:
— Yes [specify]: At Tayma, Salm has been variously identified as a sun-god, the moon-god, the morning star, and deified Nabonidus (Niehr 2014).

→ The supreme high god has knowledge of this world:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god has deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
— Field doesn't know

→ The supreme high god has indirect causal efficacy in the world:
— Field doesn't know

> The supreme high god exhibits positive emotion:
> — Field doesn't know

> The supreme high god exhibits negative emotion:
> — Field doesn't know

> The supreme high god possesses hunger:
> — Field doesn't know

> Is it permissible to worship supernatural beings other than the high god:
> — Yes

> The supreme high god possesses/exhibits some other feature:
> — Field doesn't know

> The supreme high god communicates with the living:
> — Field doesn't know

Previously human spirits are present:
— Field doesn't know

Non-human supernatural beings are present:
— Yes
  Notes: Zoomorphic, anthropomorphic and astral deities.

> These supernatural beings can be seen:
> — Yes

> These supernatural beings can be physically felt:
> — Field doesn't know

> Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge of this world:
> — Yes

>> Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to particular domain of human affairs:
>> — Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge restricted to (a) specific area(s) within the sample region:

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted within the sample region:

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have knowledge unrestricted outside of sample region:

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere normally visible (in public):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see you everywhere (in the dark, at home):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings can see inside heart/mind (hidden motives):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings knows your basic character (personal essence):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings know what will happen to you, what you will do (future sight):

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural begins have other knowledge of this world:

— Field doesn't know

↳ Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

— Field doesn't know

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

— Field doesn't know

    ↳ These supernatural beings exhibit positive emotion:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ These supernatural beings exhibit negative emotion:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ These supernatural beings possess hunger:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature:
    — Field doesn't know

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:
— Yes

    ↳ Organized by kinship based on a family model:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Organized hierarchically:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Power of beings is domain specific:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Other organization for pantheon:
    — Field doesn't know

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

— No

  Notes: The evidence is restricted to two Aramaic inscriptions from Tayma (Niehr 2014).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

— Yes

Notes: The evidence is restricted to Aramaic inscriptions from Tayma (Niehr 2014).

    ↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

    — Yes

    Notes: The Aramaic inscription in the "Tayma Stone" warns that if any man harms the monument, then the gods of Tayma will "remove him and his seed and his posterity from Tayma" (Niehr 2014).

        ↳ Done only by high god:

        — No

        ↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

        — Yes

        ↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

        — Yes

        ↳ Done by other entities or through other means [specify]

        — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

    — Yes

        ↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

        — Yes

        ↳ Done to enforce group norms:

        — Field doesn't know

        ↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:

        — Field doesn't know

        ↳ Done randomly:

        — No

→ Other [specify]
— Field doesn't know

→ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:
— Yes

→ Supernatural punishments in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:
— Field doesn't know

→ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:
— No

→ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure:
— Yes

→ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form:
— No

→ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm:
— No

→ Other [specify]
— Field doesn't know

→ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:
— No

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:
— Yes

Notes: In the inscription of Psgw Sahru from Tayma, he makes an offering so that the gods of Tayma take care of the "life of the soul of Psgw Sahru and his seed" (Cross 2013; Niehr 2014).

→ Is the cause/purpose of supernatural rewards known:
— Yes

→ Done only by high god:

— No

    ↳ Done by many supernatural beings:
    — Yes

    ↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:
    — Yes

    ↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:
    — Yes

    ↳ Done to enforce group norms:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Done randomly:
    — Field doesn't know

↳ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in the afterlife:
— Yes

    ↳ Supernatural rewards in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:
    — Yes

    ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of mild sensory pleasure:
    — No

    ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory pleasure:
    — Field doesn't know

    ↳ Reward in the afterlife consists of eternal happiness:
    — Field doesn't know

> → Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as a superior life form:
>> — Field doesn't know

> → Reward in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in a superior realm:
>> — Field doesn't know

> → Other [specify]
>> — Field doesn't know

→ Supernatural rewards are bestowed out in this lifetime:
> — No

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:
— Field doesn't know

Is an eschatology present:
— Field doesn't know

Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:
— Field doesn't know

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:
— Field doesn't know

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):
— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require constraints on sexual activity (partial sexual abstinence):
— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require castration:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require fasting:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require permanent scarring or painful bodily alterations:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require painful physical positions or transitory painful wounds:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:

"Adults" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:

"Children" here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of property/valuable items:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require physical risk taking:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require accepting ethical precepts:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require marginalization by out-group members:

— Field doesn't know

Does membership in this religious group require participation in small-scale rituals (private, household):

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Small-scale copper metallurgy was carried out at the Hathor shrine at Timna and at the Site 2 high-place (Rothenberg 1972; 1988; Amzallag 2018).

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:

I.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."

— Yes

Notes: Ritual hunting of animals at Timna (Tebes 2017).

⤷ On average, for large-scale rituals how many participants gather in one location:
— Field doesn't know

⤷ What is the average interval of time between performances (in hours):

Performances here refers to large-scale rituals.

— Field doesn't know

⤷ Are there orthodoxy checks:

Orthodoxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are interpreted in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper interpretation, etc.

— Field doesn't know

⤷ Are there orthopraxy checks:

Orthopraxy checks are mechanisms used to ensure that rituals are performed in a standardized way, e.g. through the supervisory prominence of a professionalized priesthood or other system of governance, appeal to texts detailing the proper procedure, etc.

— Field doesn't know

> Does participation entail synchronic practices:
> — Field doesn't know

> Is there use of intoxicants:
> — Field doesn't know

Are extra-ritual in-group markers present:

E.g. special changes to appearance such as circumcision, tattoos, scarification, etc.

— Field doesn't know

Does the group employ fictive kinship terminology:

— Yes

Notes: Inscriptional evidence from similar neighboring societies (southern Levant, south-eastern Arabia) suggests the use of fictive kinship terminology.

> Fictive kinship terminology universal:
> — Field doesn't know

> Fictive kinship terminology widespread:
> — Field doesn't know

> Fictive kinship terminology employed but uncommon:
> — Field doesn't know

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

— Other [specify in comments]

Notes: Most Hejazi semi-pastoral groups were likely organized along tribal lines. Oasis towns can be characterized as "chiefdoms" or "city-states", but they could also belong to tribal confederencies, such as those that fought against the Neo-Assyrians. Between 553-543 BCE the northern Hejaz was conquered and incorporated within the Neo-Babylonian empire. During the 5th-1st cent. BCE the northern Hejaz was ruled by the Lihyanite dynasty, controlling Dedan and Tayma.

Welfare

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized famine relief:

— Field doesn't know

Is famine relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized poverty relief:

— Field doesn't know

Is poverty relief available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm:

— Field doesn't know

Is institutionalized care for the elderly and infirm available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

— Field doesn't know

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

— Field doesn't know

Bureaucracy

Do the group's adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:

— Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:

— Field doesn't know

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

— Field doesn't know

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

— Field doesn't know

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

— Field doesn't know

Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Taxation

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

— Field doesn't know

Are taxes levied on the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

— Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

— Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized judicial system provided by an an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

— Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents subject to institutionalized punishment enforced by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Does the religious group in question have a formal legal code:

— Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents subject to a formal legal code provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Warfare

Does religious group in question possess an institutionalized military:

— Field doesn't know

Do the group's adherents participate in an institutionalized military provided by institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Are the group's adherents protected by or subject to an institutionalized military provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

— No

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Is a non-religion-specific written language used by the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

— Field doesn't know

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Field doesn't know

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

— Yes

Notes: The Aramaic inscription of the "Tayma Stone" records a grant from the temples of Salm of Mhrm and Sengala and Asima to establish the cult of Salm of Hgm: "16 palms and from the property of the king 5 palms, making 21 palms in all, year by year" (Niehr 2014).

↳ Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:
— Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
— Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Is food provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— Yes

↳ Please characterize the forms/levels of food production [choose all that apply]:
— Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
— Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)