

# THE MUDAYNA SITES OF THE ARNON TRIBUTARIES: “MIDIAN ALONGSIDE MOAB”?

CHAIM BEN DAVID

*bendavidhm@gmail.com*

*Kinneret College on the Sea of Galilee*

*Kinneret, Israel*

**Summary: The Mudayna sites of the Arnon Tributaries: “Midian alongside Moab”?**

Regarding the biblical toponym “Midian,” Eusebius’ *Onomasticon* notes the following “... there is another city of the same name near the Arnon and Areapolis which is pointed out as deserted.” The Rabbinical *Midrash Tanhuma* while dealing with the question of Moses not participating in the war against Midian notes the same “...this is not Midian where Moses lived, it is beside Moab and is deserted till now.” It is obvious that they share the same source about a place or an area named Midian to be found in Moab near the Biblical Arnon river that is not inhabited in the late Roman period. This paper will suggest that these sources may refer to the phenomenon of archeological sites in Moab bearing the unique name Mudayna, appearing only in Moab. All are fortified sites, most of them have an Iron Age phase and all of them are not inhabited in the late Roman period.

**Keywords:** Iron Age Moab – Midian – Mudayna – Arnon

**Resumen: Los sitios Mudayna de los tributarios del Arnón: “Madián al lado de Moab”?**

Sobre el topónimo bíblico “Madián”, el *Onomasticón* de Eusebio señala lo siguiente: “...hay otra ciudad del mismo nombre cerca del Arnón y Areópolis que se dice está desierta”. El *Midrash Tanhuma* rabínico, al trata la cuestión de que Moisés no participó en la guerra contra Madián, dice lo mismo: “...este no es el Madián donde vivió Moisés, está al lado de Moab y hasta ahora está desierto”. Es obvio que ambos textos comparten la misma fuente sobre un lugar o área llamada Madián que se encuentra

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en Moab, cerca del río Arnón bíblico que no está habitado en la época tardorromana. Este artículo sugiere que estas fuentes pueden referirse al fenómeno de los sitios arqueológicos de Moab que llevan el nombre único de Mudayna, y que aparecen sólo en Moab. Todos son sitios fortificados, la mayoría de ellos tienen una fase de la Edad del Hierro y no fueron habitados en la época tardorromana.

**Palabras clave:** Moab en la Edad de Hierro – Madián – Mudayna – Arnón

In the first half of the twentieth century six archaeological sites were discovered in surveys in biblical Moab east of the Dead Sea. All of them bore the name “Mudayna” or “Medeinhah.” The first to describe them was apparently the Czech scholar Alois Musil, and Nelson Glueck surveyed some of them. Because almost none of them had an additional identifying name along with the component “Medeinhah,” “Mudayna” or “Khirbet Medeinhah/Mudayna,” scholars confused the names with each other.

J. Maxwell Miller, who studied and surveyed Moab, published a brief article entitled “Six Khirbet el-Medeinehs in the Region East of the Dead Sea.”<sup>1</sup> In it, he numbered the sites and edited the bibliography associated with them. Scholars tended to interpret the name “Medeinhah” as deriving from the Arabic root *medina*, which means “city,” without focusing on the special toponymic-topographical nature of the name. It became associated with ruins most of which (five out of six) feature natural topographical defenses. A common prefix of this type is not known in the Land of Israel, nor does it appear in the list of names in the British Survey of Western Palestine<sup>2</sup> or in neighboring regions of Transjordan, Ammon or Edom.<sup>3</sup>

The sites of Mudayna/Medeineh will be described in this article from north to south, presenting new insights and research postdating Miller’s article.

<sup>1</sup> Miller 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Stewardson 1888.

<sup>3</sup> That is, the form “Mudayna” or “Medeinhah,” known from Moab. A number of names with the root *mdn* are mentioned in this list, Meidin, Medinet, Medan. Prof. Moshe Sharon informed me (pers. comm.) that the form “Medeinhah” is not known in the immediate Mediterranean region but does exist in North Africa.



**Fig. 1.** Map of the Mudayna sites and Mamariyah.

## THE MUDAYNA SITES

### *Medeinet Themed – Coordinates UTM 7760/4986*

This tell-like site is located on the southern bank of Wadi Themed, the upper tributary of the northern Mujib (Biblical Arnon) wadi bed, which in Arabic is called el-Wale or Hidan. It is located about 3 km east of the road connecting Madaba and Umm Rassas.

Musil<sup>4</sup> was the first scholar to describe the site, which he called Khirbet al-Mdejjene, while Glueck<sup>5</sup> called it Khirbet al-Medeiyineh. Aharoni<sup>6</sup> proposed that the site was the biblical city of Jahzah, a theory supported by Dearman<sup>7</sup> and later by other scholars.<sup>8</sup>

Since 1996, a number of seasons of excavation have taken place at the site, directed by Michèle Daviau.<sup>9</sup> A fortified settlement from the Iron Age was unearthed with a casemate wall and a six-chambered gate similar to the gates at Megiddo, Hazor, Lachish and Gezer. In 1999 a small shrine was discovered there—the first Moabite shrine ever found up to that time. One of the limestone altars in the shrine bore the inscription *mqtr š š lšm /lysf bt wt*. The excavators considered this a Moabite inscription and deciphered it as: “The incense altar that Elishama‘ made for YSP, the daughter of ‘WT.” Rainey<sup>10</sup> suggested a different suffix, proposing that the dedication was not to a person, but to a cult structure—the “house of *wt*.” Rainey also proposed that the inscription was not Moabite, but rather Israelite or Phoenician, and may have been brought to the site during the reign of Omri or Ahab<sup>11</sup> over Moab. Israel Finkelstein and Oded Lipschits<sup>12</sup> suggested that the elevated podium surrounded by a casemate wall and a moat found in the site is typical Omride architecture.

According to the excavators the site was destroyed between the seventh and sixth centuries BCE. After a long gap, a small settlement was established there during the Nabatean and Roman periods.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Musil 1907: 298–300.

<sup>5</sup> Glueck 1933–1934: 13–15, 22–25, 27.

<sup>6</sup> Aharoni 1967: 437.

<sup>7</sup> Dearman 1989: 57.

<sup>8</sup> See Finkelstein and Lipschits 2010: 30–35.

<sup>9</sup> Daviau 2006; Daviau and Dion 2002a; 2002b; Daviau and Steiner 2000; Daviau *et al.* 2008; 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Rainey 2002.

<sup>11</sup> This is according to Routledge, who dated the pottery assemblage found with the altar to the late seventh or early sixth centuries BCE, much later than the reigns of Omri and Ahab (Routledge 2003).

<sup>12</sup> Finkelstein and Lipschits 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Daviau, Mulder-Hymans and Foley 2000.

*Medeinet Sālīyeh, UTM 7805/4802*

This site is located on a high mountaintop surrounded by tributaries of the Upper Mujib—Wadi Sālīyeh in the north and Wadi Saʿīdeh in the south. The summit, located above the confluence of the two wadis is connected by a narrow saddle to the plateau on the east.

The special topography of the site, the cistern openings that can be seen from a distance and the geological intrusion south of the site immediately recall the fortresses of the Judean Desert and Machaerus. Indeed, the nature and history of the site at the end of the Second Temple period are interesting in their own right.<sup>14</sup> This site, too, was first mentioned by Musil,<sup>15</sup> who gave it the same name as the previous site, Khirbet al-Mdejje, and Glueck did the same, calling it Khirbet al-Medeiyineh.<sup>16</sup> According to Musil<sup>17</sup> and Abel<sup>18</sup> this was the site of the biblical “city that is in the valley.”

Glueck mentions sherds and other finds at this site from the Hellenistic and Nabatean periods only. The Korean scholars Ji and Lee<sup>19</sup> who re-surveyed the site, reported 497 sherds with no further details or pottery tables. They noted sherds from the Iron Age I and II, from the Persian-Hellenistic, Nabatean and Byzantine periods. Based on the findings, they concluded that there had been a settlement here in the Iron Age, the Hellenistic and Roman periods and possibly also the Persian and the Byzantine periods. On our visit to the site<sup>20</sup> we noticed sherds from the Iron Age, Hellenistic and Early Roman periods, with no continuation in later periods.

<sup>14</sup> On the possibility of this as a site from the Late Hellenistic and Early Roman period, see Sagiv 2004: 156–157; on the finding of a ritual bath see Kloner 2001–2002: 470.

<sup>15</sup> Musil 1907: 247, 328–330.

<sup>16</sup> Glueck 1933–1934: 36.

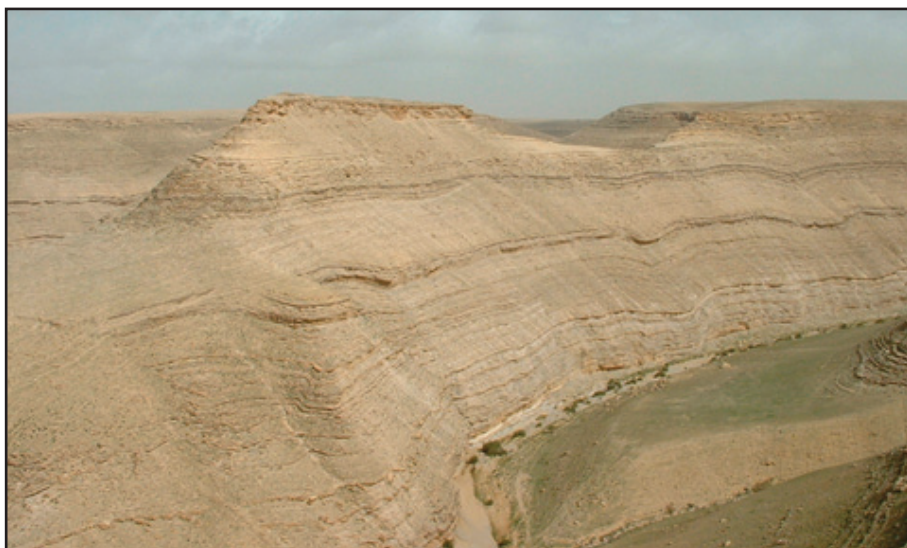
<sup>17</sup> Musil 1907: 332, n. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Abel 1938: 351. Many suggestions have been made for “the city that is in the valley.” See Ben-Gad Hacohen 2000: 21–23; for two more proposals identifying “the city that is in the valley” at Medeineh on the banks of the Mūjib and at Khirbet Maʿmariyah, see below.

<sup>19</sup> Ji and Lee 1998: 556–588.

<sup>20</sup> We visited in early February 2005, together with Avraham Izdarechet, Tali Gini, Itai Haviv, Zeʿev Meshel, Roi Porat, Gilad Peli and Eli Raz.



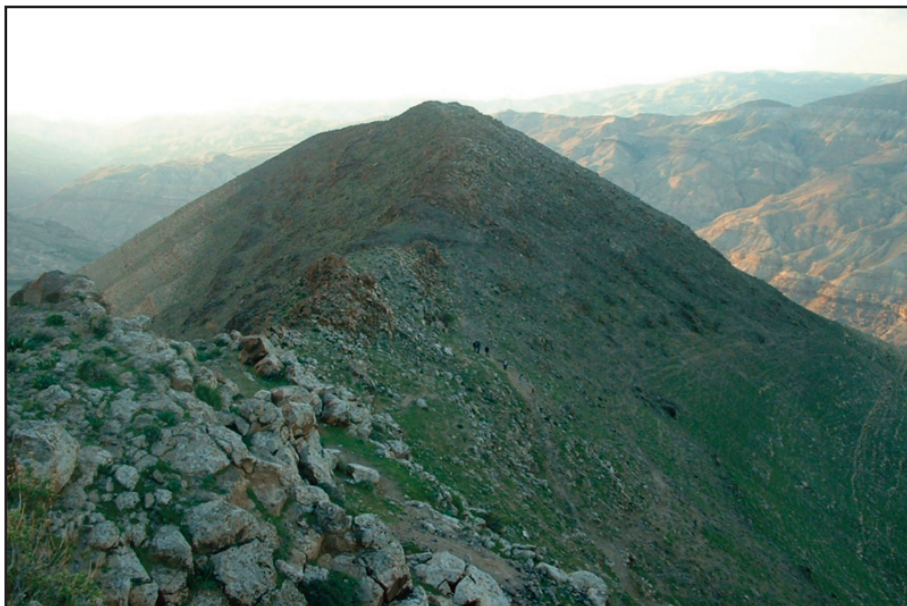


**Figs. 2–3.** Medeinet Sālīyeh, view from the south (photos by Gilead Peli).

### ***Medeineh on the Southern Bank of Wadi Mūjib, UTM 7600/4805***

This site is located on a narrow, steep-sided basalt spur, above the southern bank of Wadi Mujib, c. 4 km west of the “King’s Highway.” It is connected by a saddle to the basalt plateau on the southeast; topographical maps note the site’s unusual and pronounced shape. Remains can be seen there of a perimeter wall and a number of large structures. A dwelling was preserved to considerable height on the eastern side, near the saddle. These remains are dated to the Mamluk period.

This site was also called Hirbet al-Mdejjene by Musil.<sup>21</sup> Worschech, who surveyed the area northwest of Kerak, discovered sherds at the site dating to the Middle Bronze Age, the Iron Age I–II, and the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods and the Middle Ages.<sup>22</sup> According to Worschech,<sup>23</sup> who identified it as “the city that is in the valley,” the fortified site was founded in the Iron Age I.



<sup>21</sup> Musil 1907: 137.

<sup>22</sup> Worschech *et al.* 1986: 286–287, site no. 88.

<sup>23</sup> Worschech 1986: 290.



Figs. 4–5. Medeinet Mūjib (photos by Gilead Peli).

***Medeinet el-Mu‘arradjeh 702 asl, UTM 7726/4691***

This site is located on a lofty limestone spur above the west bank of Wadi en-Nukheilāh—the southern tributary of Wadi Mujib. The description by Musil,<sup>24</sup> who mentions Hirbet el-Mdejje near the bed of the Nukheilāh, is unclear: Was he referring to Medeinet el-Mu‘arradjeh or to Medeinet ‘Alia on the bank of the Nukheilāh c. 4.5 km south of Mu‘arradjeh? In 1976 and 1982, Olavarri excavated at the site,<sup>25</sup> identifying a casemate wall surrounding it. According to Olavarri, the site was founded in the Iron Age I (apparently in the eleventh century BCE) and was abandoned during the tenth century BCE.

<sup>24</sup> Musil 1907: 34.

<sup>25</sup> Olavarri 1983. For an analysis of the findings of this excavation, see also Routledge 2004: 99–100, 103–108.

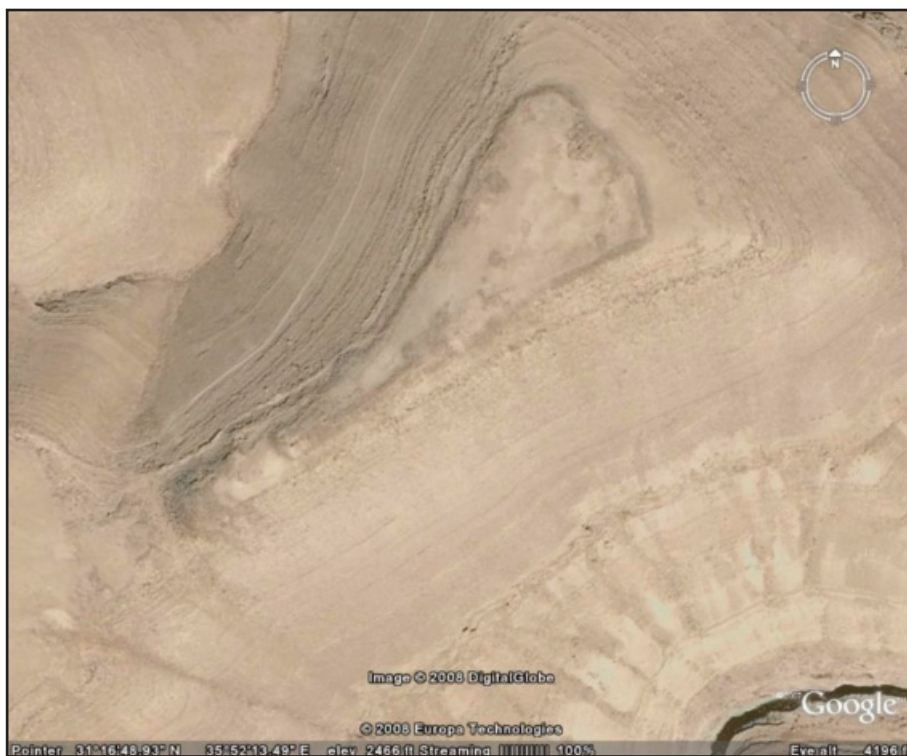




**Figs. 6–7.** Medeinet el-Mu‘arradjeh (photos by Gilead Peli).

*Medeinet ‘Alia UTM 7735/4644*

This site is located on a steep-sided limestone spur c. 250 m above the west bank of the Nukheilah and above the point where Wadi el-Makhras joins it. The site was mentioned for the first time by Glueck,<sup>26</sup> identified as Biblical Ar Moab by Van Zyl<sup>27</sup> and excavated by Bruce Routledge.<sup>28</sup> It was surrounded by a casemate wall and protected by a short moat and a massive tower. These elements were found on the



**Fig. 8.** Medeinet ‘Alia, Google Map image.

<sup>26</sup> Glueck 1933–1934: 52–53, 98.

<sup>27</sup> Van Zyl 1960: 73

<sup>28</sup> Routledge 2000; 2004: 98–108; Routledge and Porter 2007.

western side of the spur, which was cut off at that point from the ridge by means of a saddle. The site is generally in an excellent state of preservation, with some structures standing as high as 1.5 m. There was also extensive use of huge slabs of stone that are typical of the local rock. The structures (according to the excavator, there were between 35 and 45 of these) were built abutting the wall, with no remains of construction seen in the center. Based on the homogeneous nature and short-lived time span of the pottery, the excavator concluded that the site was single-stratum, and existed between 1050 and 1000 BCE. It was subsequently abandoned and never resettled.

***Medeiyineh on the Bank of Wadi el-Hesā, UTM 7656/4282***

This site is located on a limestone spur above and south of Wadi el-Hesā and east of the village 'Ina. It was mentioned as el-Medeiyineh for the first time by Glueck,<sup>29</sup> who called it “the fortress of Moab” and identified it as the biblical Ije-abarim.<sup>30</sup> Glueck found very few ancient sherds and noted that the fortified site was rebuilt in the Middle Ages. At the site, surrounded by a wall, several structures survived from the Middle Ages to considerable height. MacDonald<sup>31</sup> who visited here and collected sherds from the Late Roman, Byzantine, Early Islamic–Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (most of the findings), disagreed with the previous identifications—the fortress of Moab and Ije-abarim—due to the lack of Iron Age findings.

<sup>29</sup> Glueck 1935: 104–106, 181.

<sup>30</sup> Glueck 1937–1939: 68, n. 224.

<sup>31</sup> Macdonald 2000. On a visit to the site in early February 2005 (above, n. 5), it was our impression that most of the sherds were from the Middle Ages; we saw no sherds whatsoever from the Iron Age.



**Fig. 9.** Medeinet Hesā (photo by Gilead Peli).

## MAIN FEATURES OF THE MUDAYANA SITES

**Table 1** summarizes the following conclusions:

1. All the sites except for Themed feature clear natural fortifications.
2. Four are situated on the steep banks of tributaries of the Arnon.
3. Three were founded in the Iron Age I, and two of those (‘Alia and Mu‘arradjeh) existed only in that period.
4. Medeinet Sālīyeh is apparently the only site that was fortified in the Early Roman period.
5. During the Late Roman period most of the “Medeineh” sites lay abandoned.

Site	Fortress topography	Casemate wall	Cisterns	IA I	IA II	Nabat.	Early	Late Rom.	Byz. Rom.	Med.
Themed		#			#	#	#			
Sāliyeh	#	?	#		#	#	#			
Mūjib	#	#		#	#		#	#	#	#
Mu'arradjeh	#	#		#						
'Alia	#	#		#						
Hesā	#								#	#

**Table 1.** Sites and main dates of settlement.

Until the last decade scholars had not attempted to take a comprehensive view of the Medeineh sites in Moab, either in terms of toponym<sup>32</sup> or archaeologically. Glueck, who identified four of them, did not discuss them as a group. MacDonald, as noted, rejected Glueck's theory identifying Medeinat Wadi Hesā as a Moabite fortress and part of Moab's southern fortifications. Miller's brief article merely describes the sites and the confusion among scholars with regard to their order and identity.

In his book on Moab in the Iron Age, Routledge<sup>33</sup> deals with three of the sites discussed here ('Alia, Medeineh and Mūjib), which existed in the Iron Age I. His discussion focused on these and other sites from this period. Despite their special location and their fortifications, Routledge called them "typical Iron Age villages."<sup>34</sup> He compared them to settlements from the same period like Izbet Sartah or Beersheba, whose topographical situation is very different.

Visiting the above sites<sup>35</sup> I was able to see a clearly discern planned fortification system, and thus I prefer the way other scholars

<sup>32</sup> Two studies of the toponyms of the Kerak plateau dealt with the names of the settlements and not of those of the ruins. Possibly due to this, they did not note the uniqueness of the Medeineh sites (Knauf 1991: 281–290; Al-Ma'ani 1994).

<sup>33</sup> Routledge 2004: 93–108.

<sup>34</sup> Routledge 2004: 94.

<sup>35</sup> On two trips, we visited some of the Medeineh sites one after the other. In June 2000, we visited Medeinat Themed, Sāliyeh, Mu'arradjeh and 'Alia. Also participating in this visit were David Ben-Gad Hacohen, Ze'ev Meshel, Gilad Peli, Yoram Tsafrir, Amos Kloner and Eli Raz.



defined the Medeineh sites. Miller considered Medeinet ‘Alia<sup>36</sup> first and foremost a fortified settlement; in his summary he reiterated that ‘Alia and Mu‘arradjeh may perhaps have had a military character. The strategic location, he argued, enabled them to defend the Kerak plateau from the east, and its location is not suitable for agriculture. Zayadine, among the most senior and veteran of Jordanian scholars, wrote that Mu‘arradjeh, a strategic settlement on the eastern boundary of the desert, protected the agricultural zone from invasion by nomadic tribes. In this context, he noted the refusal of the king of Edom to allow passage by the “Hebrew tribes,” which came from the Sinai desert (Exod. 20:14–20).

In 2000, Friedbert Ninow discovered a new fortified site, on a high ridge overlooking the confluence of Wadi Ashqafia (which descends from Balu‘a) and the main Wadi Mujib bed.<sup>37</sup> The site is called Khirbat al-Ma‘mariyah, and at first glance<sup>38</sup> it resembles the Medeineh sites of ‘Alia and Mu‘arradjeh, which are located 5 and 10 km to the south. But unlike the two latter sites, Khirbat al-Ma‘mariyah is in a slope and not a level spur, and the height difference between its western and eastern sides is as much as 80 m. Ninow proposed identifying it as “the city that is in the valley.”<sup>39</sup>

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In February 2005, we visited (see above, n. 5) Medeinet Sālīyeh, ‘Alia, Mu‘arradjeh, Mūjib and Hesā.

<sup>36</sup> Miller 1991: 74, site 143.

<sup>37</sup> Ninow 2002a; 2002b: 153, site 9.

<sup>38</sup> I visited the site with Avi Shmida in October 2004.

<sup>39</sup> Ninow 2002a; 2002b: 153, site 9.





**Figs. 10–12.** Khirbet Ma'mariyah (photos by Gilead Peli).

The publications of the first excavation seasons note that the fortified site from the Iron Age I is single stratum, and that the casemate wall was 5 m wide and the outer wall was 1.2 m wide. In the western part of the site, on a moderate slope, the city fortress was found, measuring 12 x 24 m. In his discussion, Ninow noted that Medeinet 'Alia, Medeinet Mu'arradjeh and al-Ma'mariyah, all of which are single-stratum sites from the same period, are a chain of fortified sites in the northern and eastern parts of the eastern Moabite plateau.<sup>40</sup> If we add to these “Medeinet on the bank of the Mūjib,” a network is created, based on the tributaries of the southern Arnon, which protected the Kerak

<sup>40</sup> Ninow 2004a; 2004b; 2006.

plateau on the north and the east. Balu‘a is also nearby<sup>41</sup>—a key site in the Iron Age on the Kerak plateau and apparently the main city of central Moab south of the Arnon. Fortified sites from the Iron Age I north of Wadi Mujib must also not be ignored, such as el-Lehun<sup>42</sup> and Aroer.<sup>43</sup>

Lately, Finkelstein and Lipschits<sup>44</sup> proposed that an early Moabite territorial entity emerged south of Wadi Mūjib in the late Iron Age I—the late eleventh and tenth centuries BCE. They refer to the sites Medeinet ‘Alia, Medeinet Mu‘arradjeh, Medeinet Mūjib and al-Ma‘mariyah as a chain of fortresses that protected Balu‘a, the hub of this Moabite policy. This suggestion was rejected by Benjamin Porter<sup>45</sup> and Juan Manuel Tebes<sup>46</sup> and in my view the historical interpretation of the Iron Age I sites on both sides of the Mūjib requires further research.

We should now return to the question of the toponymic source of the names of the “Medeineh/Mudayna.” Is their source indeed from the Arab name meaning “small city” (and ruin), from recent centuries?

#### THE NAME MIDIAN IN MOAB IN THE ROMAN AND BYZANTINE PERIODS

Midian in the geographical context of Moab appears in two ancient sources. In the *Onomasticon*, under Midian (“Madiam”),<sup>47</sup> Eusebius writes:

*City of one of the sons of Abraham and Cetura. Located beyond Arabia to the south in the desert of the Saracens, to the east of the Red Sea... There is a second city named thus near Arnon and Areopolis, the ruins of which are pointed out. In Jerome's trans-*

<sup>41</sup> Worschech 1997; Worschech and Ninow 1999.

<sup>42</sup> Homes-Fredricq 1992.

<sup>43</sup> Olavarri 1992.

<sup>44</sup> Finkelstein and Lipschits 2011.

<sup>45</sup> Porter 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Tebes 2014.

<sup>47</sup> Melamed 1950: no. 540; Klosterman 1904:104/13.

*lation renders the final words as: “whose ruins can be seen to this day.*

The rabbinic *Midrash Tanhuma*,<sup>48</sup> Parashot Matot (3) asks why Moses did not take part in the battle against the Midianites:

*The holy One said to Moses: Take vengeance by yourself yet he sent others. Because he had been raised in Midian, he said: It is not right for me to oppress those who have done well by me. The proverb said: Do not cast a stone into the cistern from which you have drunk water. And there are others who say that this was not the same Midian that Moses grew up in, because this was on the side of Moab and it is destroyed till now.*

In Klein’s 1917 article about the geography of the Land of Israel in Mishnaic times, he discusses “Midian in Moab.” In this article, he was apparently the first to note that the two ancient sources were referring to the same place.<sup>49</sup> Melamed, in the preface to his Hebrew translation of the *Onomasticon*<sup>50</sup> notes that part of the entry for “Midian” was based on an early midrash. With regard to the part about Midian in Moab, Melamed wrote: “even the end of the entry on another Midian, in ruins and near the Arnon, can be compared to what is stated in the midrash...”

Can there be a possible connection between “the ruined Midian near Moab,” and the names Mudayna/Medeinah in that same area? In the Roman and Byzantine periods most of the sites were ruined, and some scholars have raised the possibility that the other Midian mentioned in the *Onomasticon* was connected to one of the Medeinah sites.

<sup>48</sup> With regard to this source see Bergman 2003.

<sup>49</sup> Klein 1917: 145–146.

<sup>50</sup> Melamed 1933, 258–259: he does not mention Klein’s reference to the subject.



Musil<sup>51</sup> and following him, Klein,<sup>52</sup> proposed Medeinet Sālīyeh as the other Midian in the *Onomasticon*. According to Timm, Medeinet Mūjib and Medeinet el-Mu‘arradjeh should be taken into consideration as that Midian.<sup>53</sup> Schmitt suggested Medeinet ‘Alia or Sālīyeh<sup>54</sup> and Chapmann, in the new edition of the *Onomasticon*, suggested Medeinet el-Mu‘arradjeh or ‘Alia.<sup>55</sup>

It is therefore possible that the name Mudayna/Medeinah for sites in Moab is none other than Midian of the *Onomasticon*,<sup>56</sup> one or more ruined sites that were known in the Roman and Byzantine periods. At some point, apparently in recent generations, the name was transferred to sites with similar topography in the Moabite sphere. It is also possible that this changeover from Midian to Mudayna/Medeinah had to do with the meaning of the word “Medeinah” in Arabic—a small city (medina) or fortress.

## BIBLICAL MIDIAN AND MOAB

The name “Midian” appears some 60 times in the Bible. The history and geography of biblical Midian is complex. The name is unknown in extra-biblical sources, either Egyptian or Assyrian, and in discussing the relationship between the Ishmaelites and the Midianites<sup>57</sup> scholarship has focused on mention of the Ishmaelites in the story of the sale of Joseph and the essence of the Midianite entity.<sup>58</sup> Many scholars<sup>59</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Musil 1907: 333, n. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Klein 1917: 146.

<sup>53</sup> Timm 1989: 182, n. 11.

<sup>54</sup> Schmitt 1995: 237.

<sup>55</sup> Chapmann 2003: 143.

<sup>56</sup> Geographical names with the root *mdn* are found elsewhere in Moab. There are also such names (see n. 1 above) west of the Jordan. Such names include Middin, southwest of Kerak (coordinates 7605/4463); Tell el-Middin (coordinates 7485/4479), Medeinet e-Ras (coordinates 7485/4384); and Mudayyin, northwest of Kerak. Mudayyin is mentioned in the survey by Worschech *et al.* 1985: 14, 23–26, sites 5, 26–32. Payne (1983: 167) suggested that the Khirbet Maydan in the Galilee could be also connected to Biblical Midian. I thank the anonymous reviewer drawing my attention to this reference.

<sup>57</sup> Abramsky 1984; Knauf 1983.

<sup>58</sup> Eissfeldt 1968; Dumbrell 1975; Knauf 1988.

<sup>59</sup> Musil 1926: 278–286; Liver 1963; Mendenhall 1992.

noted two geographical regions for Midian in the Bible. The first, connected to the biblical story of Moses, is situated south of the Mountains of Edom. This location is based among other things on the description of Flavius Josephus,<sup>60</sup> who, in describing Moses' flight to Midian, mentions a city by that name on the Red Sea coast. Another source is the abovementioned entry in the *Onomasticon*, rendered "Madiam." The second identification, from elsewhere in the Bible (the story of Balaam and of the war of Gideon), indicates that Midian was one of the desert tribes east of the Jordan.

The biblical story of Balak, King of Moab and his fear of the Israelites relates that "Moab said unto the elders of Midian: 'Now will this multitude lick up all that is round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field'" (Num. 22: 4). And the delegation of the king of Moab to Balaam is described thus: "the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian..." (Num. 22:7). When the Israelites consorted with the women of Moab, the name "Cozbi, the daughter of the prince of Midian, their sister, who was slain on the day of the plague in the matter of Peor" (Num. 25:18).

In the war against Midian (Numbers 31:8), Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba, are identified as "the five kings of Midian," and in the parallel description in Joshua where they are called the "chiefs of Midian" and "the princes of Sihon, that dwell in the land" (Josh. 13:21). To the matter of the relations between Midian and Moab may also be added the unclear reference in Genesis to "Hadad the son of Bedad, who smote Midian in the field of Moab..." (Gen. 36:35). From all of the above it appears that a Midianite entity existed within or near biblical Moab.<sup>61</sup> The absence of the Qurayya Painted ware,<sup>62</sup> once

<sup>60</sup> Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 2, 257.

<sup>61</sup> The Midrash also deals with the connection between Moab and Midian, for example *Sifri*, Matot 33, regarding the peace made between the Moabites and the Midianites. *Targum Yonatan*, the Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch, renders the verse: "And Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time" (Num. 22:4) as follows: "Balak the son of Zippor *the Midianite* was king of Moab," indicating that there was a kind of rotation agreement in the royal appointment, that is, once a Moabite and once a Midianite.

<sup>62</sup> For the history of research related to the Qurayya painted ware see Tebes 2007; 2015; Singer-Avitz 2014; Intilia 2016.

called “Midianite Pottery” from the Mudayna sites indicates that this Midianite entity in the Moabite area was not connected to Hejaz area.

In my opinion it is possible that this ancient reality was the source of the name Midian in Moab of the Roman period. The name was apparently preserved in some of the Mudayna/Medeinah sites in Moab, some of which were established in the Iron Age I, perhaps already at the time of a Midianite entity in that region.

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