"A critical study of the Pilgrim road between Kufa and Mecca (Darb Zubaydah) with the aid of fieldwork"

by

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Volume II: Photographic plates, illustrations and maps

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Notes on Illustrations:

This volume is intended to contain illustrations of monuments and other items found mainly by the present writer along the Kufa-Mecca road (Darb Zubaydah), and which are discussed in Volume I of this thesis. The photographs (colour and monochrome) included here were taken by the present writer during the period of fieldwork in May and June of 1973. Conditions were not always ideal; during this period constant travelling through different regions offered various obstacles, and at times bad weather conditions were involved; in addition the writer's knowledge in photographic technique is not that of a professional. The plates in this volume represent various subjects, e.g. water tanks, wells, remains of ancient foundations (khāns; fortresses etc.), the track of the road (where road paving or clearing is visible), way-marks (a'ūlām), Kufic inscriptions, and small finds (pottery and glass fragments etc.). Furthermore two important 'Abbasid mile-stones which are in the possession of the Department of Antiquities in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia are also included.

Maps compiled by the writer, under the supervision of Professor W. Brice of Manchester University, explaining the pilgrim road and its monuments are also included. In addition a number of plans (drawn at my request by
Mr. Salah al-Hilwah of the Department of Antiquities, in Riyadh) have been selected to represent sites, mostly related to water tanks, which show outstanding features. The intention is to present in as useful and representative manner as possible, a sufficient body of authentic material to illustrate the features that remain along the pilgrim road. Many plans and drawings of certain sites have been excluded since these latter are covered with sand, and thus show no clear or characteristic features. Description and identification of such sites has therefore been restricted to the text of the thesis. Nevertheless those plans, here excluded, in addition to other supplementary documentations about the pilgrim road, will be available for consultation at the Department of Antiquities in Riyadh, or in the Department of History and Archaeology, Riyadh University, Saudi Arabia.
Contents.

1. List of Maps

Map 1 : Early pilgrim routes in Arabia.
Map 2 : The Kufa-Mecca route according to Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Batţutā.
Map 3 : Darb Zubaydah (in 4 sections) showing the author's route and monuments along the road.
Map 4 : The route of Darb Zubaydah : classical and modern names.

2. List of sites

Site no. 1 : Birkat al-'Aqabah.
Site no. 4 : Birkat al-'Amya.
Site no. 5 : al-Haytham (al-Qā').
Site no. 6 : Birkat ath-Thulaymah.
Site no. 7 : Birkat al-Jumaymah.
Site no. 7a : Section of Birkat al-Jumaymah.
Site no. 10 : ash-Shībīyyāt.
Site no. 13 : Birkat ath-Thā'labīyyah.
Site no. 14 : 'Birkat al-Bid'.
Site no. 18 : Fayd.
Site no. 25 : Birkat Uraynībah (al-Mudhayribāt).
Site no. 26 : Birkat at-Tūzi (al-Jaffālīyyah).
Site no. 31 : Ḍlāy' ash-Shaqq (al-Kurā').
Site no. 35 : Birkat al-Mislah.
Site no. 37 : Birkat al-'Aqīq (al-Birkah).
Site no. 38 : Birkat al-Kharūbah.
3. List of plates (colour and black and white).

Plate I
1. A small birkah at al-'Aqabah.
2. A circular well at al-'Aqabah.

Plate II
1. A sub-divided tank at al-'Aqabah.
2. Details of buttresses in the same tank.

Plate III
1. and 2. The dam of al-'Aqabah.

Plate IV
2. Birkat al-'Amya : main steps.

Plate V
1. al-Haytham (al-Qā'), the birkah western wall.
2. Channel opening of the birkah.

Plate VI
1. Ancient remains at al-Haytham.
2. Birkat al-Jumaymah.

Plate VII
2. A well at Zubālah.

Plate VIII
1. Zubālah : remains of an ancient cistern.
2. Details of stairways of the same cistern.

Plate IX
1. and 2. the remains of ancient fort at Zubālah.

Plate X
1. Bedouins with their camels at Zubālah.
2. A way-mark ('alam) to the south of Zubālah.

Plate XI
1. ash-Shīḥīyyāt : section of the rectangular cistern.
2. Remains of ancient fort or palace at ash-Shīḥīyyāt.

Plate XII
1. A large circular tank at ash-Shīḥīyyāt.
2. Close-up at the inlet of the birkah.
Plate XIII 1. ash-Shīṭīyyāt : one of its ancient wells.
2. The track of Darb Zubaydah as seen between asḥ-Shīṭīyyāt and Birkat Ḫamad.

Plate XIV 1. A natural rain pool near Līnah east of Darb Zubaydah.
2. A section of Darb Zubaydah where it was paved in an-Nafūd desert.

Plate XV 1. and 2. Birkat ath-Tha'labīyyah.

Plate XVI 1. al-Bid' : general view of the birkah.
2. Inlet of Birkat al-Bid'.

Plate XVII 1. and 2. The well of al-Bid'.

Plate XVIII 1. al-Khaḍra' : an important water source.
2. An ancient well at al-Wusayṭ.

Plate XIX 1. A small trough (ḥawḍ) at al-Wusayṭ.
2. The ancient well of Zarūd.

Plate XX 1. and 2. Birkat al-Ḫuwayd.

Plate XXI 1. Fayd : remains of the famous fortress.
2. Fayd : the modern village.

Plate XXII 1. An ancient well at Fayd
2. A mill-stone from the ancient settlement at Fayd.

Plate XXIII 1. The cleared track of Darb Zubaydah south of Fayd.
2. Birkat Uraynibah between Fayd and Samīrah.

Plate XXIV 1. Main features of Birkat Uraynibah.
Plate XXV 1. and 2. newly discovered monuments at Samīrah.

Plate XXVI 1. and 2. Early Kufic inscription from Ǧlay' an-Nīṣ, 48 km. south of Samīrah.

Plate XXVII 1. Remains of ancient foundations at Mahd adh-Dhahab.

2. The round reservoir at Ǧlay' ash-Shaqq.

Plate XXVIII 1. A rectangular pond at Ǧlay' ash-Shaqq.

2. Remains of an ancient palace or fortress.

Plate XXIX 1. Section of the fortress at Ǧlay' ash-Shaqq.

2. General view of al-Mislah.

Plate XXX 1. Details of a buttress at al-Mislah.

2. An ancient well at al-Mislah.

Plate XXXI 1. As-Suwārqīyyah: the old and modern village.

2. Early Kufic inscription from as-Suwārqīyyah.

Plate XXXII 1. and 2. Undated Kufic inscription from as-Suwārqīyyah.

Plate XXXIII 1. and 2. The track of Darb Zubaydah near Sufaynah.

Plate XXXIV 1. and 2. newly discovered Kufic inscriptions at Ḥādhah.

Plate XXXV 1. The track of Darb Zubaydah near the station of Ḥādhah.

2. Birkat al-’Aqīq (al-Birkhah) under restoration.

Plate XXXVI 1. Section of Birkat al-’Aqīq: the damaged part during cleaning.

Plate XXXVIII 1. An 'Abbasid mile-stone indicating the distance in the mileage system.
2. An 'Abbasid mile-stone indicating the distance in the postal stage system.

List of plates on pottery and glass:
Plate XL 1-3 sherds of glazed pottery from al-Qārū (al-Haytham).
Plate XLI 1. shoulder fragments with different designs from al-Qārū (al-Haytham).
2. and 3. fragments of unglazed pottery from the same place.
Plate XLII 1. and 2. various fragments of glazed pottery from Zubālah.
3. Fayd : fragments of green earthenware.
Plate XLIII 1. Fayd : Fragments with green glaze, Riyadh University collection.
2. Various type of pottery fragments from al-Bid′.
3. A complete vase from al-Bid′.
Plate XLIV 1. Newly discovered sherds of glazed pottery from Samārah.
2. Glass fragments from al-Qārū (al-Haytham).
3. Glass fragments from Fayd.

Plate XLV

1. Fayd: glass fragments collected by the writer.

2. and 3. glass fragments from Fayd in the Riyadh University collection.
1. Small birkah at al-'Aqabah, looking towards its western wall with corner steps.

2. Circular well at al-'Aqabah built with roughly cut-stone; part of it cut in solid rock.

2. Details of internal buttresses within the enclosure wall.
1. Dam of al-'Aqabah across ravine at Sha'ib al-Baţn.

2. Close-up of the dam as seen from the south. It has suffered slight damage.
1. Birkat al-'Amya, built partly from cut-stone and partly cut in solid rock. Stepped channel in south western corner.

2. Main entrance of the birkah. Steps descending to bottom of tank.

2. View of mouth of channel at the north east corner, original plastering visible.

2. Birkat al-Jumaymah: the channel, originally stepped, is at the south-west corner.
1. Western side of Birkat al-Jumaymah.

2. A well at Zubarah, still containing fresh water.
1. Remains of ancient cistern at Zubailah.

2. Western side of the birkah showing stairs descending in opposite directions.
1. Ancient fort or palace at Zubālah seen from the north.

2. Another view of the fort seen from the east.
1. Bedouins often assemble at Zubalāh, in search of water from its wells.

2. Way mark (‘alam) 4 km. south of Zubalāh indicating direction of pilgrim road.
1. Birkat ash-ShIyyāt, western side, the inlet and part of flight of steps.

2. Remains of ancient fortress at ash-ShIyyāt.
1. Large circular cistern at ash-Shīḩīyyāt choked with sand.

2. Close-up of the inlet with original plastering on interior of birkah.
1. Ancient well at ash-Shiqiqiyāt, filled with debris.

2. Track of Darb Zubaydah between ash-Shiqiqiyāt and Birkat Hamad.
1. Large rain pool near LInah east of Darb Zubaydah. The water here normally lasts for several weeks.

2. In most of ad-Dahnā' desert the pilgrim road was paved with stones laid on the sand.
1. Birkat ath-Thalabiyah showing main tank and inlet in background.

2. Birkat ath-Thalabiyah from the west viewing main steps and buttresses in interior.
1. Birkat al-Bid', showing inlet and settling tank on left and main reservoir on right.

2. Details of inlet, with sloping channel, which was formerly covered with a layer of lime.
1. Well of al-Bid'. It has been repaired and contains fresh water.

2. Lower section of well showing neat lining of roughly cut stone, with small opening just above water level.
1. al-Khadrā', west of al-Bid': a former pilgrim station, and still an important water source.

2. Ancient well at al-Wusayf once connected with the water trough to its north.
1. Small trough (ḥawḍ) at al-Wusayṭ.

2. An ancient well at Zarūd, once a prominent station on the pilgrim road.
1. Birkat al-Huwayd, a square tank ca. 47 km north of Fayd.

2. al-Huwayd: south wall. Present height ca. 2 metres.
1. The remains of the famous Fortress of Fayd (now Qaṣr Khraṣh).

2. Inside the village of Fayd the ancient wells are still discernible.
1. This ancient well at Fayd still contains a good supply of fresh water.

2. A granite mill-stone found in the ancient settlement of Fayd.
1. 2 km south of Fayd the road had to be cleared and widened for ca. 18 metres.

1. Main features of Birkat Uraynibah: Channel and double stairs.

2. Close-up of the interior of Birkat Uraynibah showing thick covering of plaster.
1. Ancient building revealed by extensive flooding 5 km. south of SamTrah.

2. Ancient arch damaged by local people.
1. Early Kufic text from the mountain of Dlay' an-Nīş, 48 km. south of SamTrah.

2. Rock with inscription, showing veins of quartz.
1. Remains of ancient foundations at Mahd adh-Dhahab.

2. Round reservoir at Dlay' ash-Shaqq showing main features.
1. Rectangular pond at Dlay' ash-Shaqq with corner steps and internal buttresses.

2. Remains of ancient fortress at the station of Dlay' ash-Shaqq.
1. Fortress at Play' ash-Shaqq. This was apparently a gate.

2. View of Birkat al-Mislah with settling tank and part of main cistern.
1. Close-up of buttress on the exterior of the western wall of Birkat al-Mislah.

2. Ancient well at al-Mislah, well preserved but choked with soil.
1. Ancient and modern in the village of as-Suwārqiyyah, a stronghold of the Banū Sulaym.

2. Early Kufic inscription from as-Suwārqiyyah.
1. Undated Kufic inscription from as-Suwarqiyah with the name of 'Abdullah b. Muhammad a descendant of az-Zubayr.

2. Another undated Kufic text from as-Suwarqiyah.
1. The pilgrim road, Ṣufaynah-Jhadah route traversing eastern edge of Harrat Rahat.

2. The road in very rough areas was sometimes divided into two lanes by immovable boulders.
1. Recently discovered Kufic inscription from Madhah.

2. Another inscription from Madhah with the name Muhammad b. Ya'qub b. Ishak.
1. Pilgrim road near the station of Ḥadhah, with cleared track.

2. Birkat al-‘Aqtq (al-Birkah), a four-sided stepped cistern.
1. In cleaning the birkah a bulldozer was used, causing considerable damage.

2. Birkat al-Kharîbah: the settling tank seen from the south.
1. Birkat al-Kharībah: the main tank after clearing it showed a depth of 5.84 m. and diameter of ca. 54 m.

2. Guard-house built between the settling tank and main cistern with two sluice-ways underneath.
1. 'Abbasid mile-stone marking 2/3 of the Kufa-Mecca road. Distance in miles.

2. 'Abbasid mile-stone indicating distance from al-Kufa on the post route.
1. Areal photograph of Darb Zubaydah north of Madhah.

2. The road here is clearly visible as a fairly straight line in the plain of Sahl Rakhah.
1. Pottery fragments of the splashed ware type.

2. Rim fragments painted with green and turquoise green glaze.

3. Handles of lamps and jars painted in green glaze.
1. Shoulder-fragments with different decorative motives.

2. Unglazed pottery, some with incised and relief decoration.

3. Sherds from unglazed pilgrim bottle with floral and geometric design.
1. Some sherds of the splashed ware type no. 1 painted in lustre.

2. Green earthenware fragments with cable ribbon design and incised zigzag lines under the glaze.

3. Fragments bearing various designs. Note the dotted lines.
1. Sherds no. 3 are from storage jars of typical Mesopotamian type.

2. Sherds from al-Bid' no.1 painted in lustre. No.2 is painted dark blue.

3. A complete vase with turquoise green glaze.
1. Newly discovered sherds from SamTreah with green-blue glaze.

2. Rim and neck fragments of small glass bottles.

3. Fragments of glass, including bracelets.
1. Fragments of bracelets including nos. 8 and 10; they appear to be wasters from bottles.

2. Bases of glass bottles from Fayd Riyadh University collection.

3. Among these fragments is no.10, which appears to be a waster.
Map II

DARB ZUBAYDAH
at the time of
IBN JUBAYR (579/1184)
and
IBN BATTUTA (726/1326)

Note that the road from Madin an-Naqirah to Mecca via Madin Banu Sulaym is not included.
Water Basin

Dug well with water

Small Bight
(walls in ruinous condition)

Dug well with water

Dug well with water

Sanded up to 0.5 m

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA
DARB ZUBAYDAH

SML 1:1000