

Musnad, and Zabûr Texts in Ancient Yemen

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The Classical Arabian sources, such as (*kitāb Al-Iklil*, viii), mentioned that Ḥimyar had two types of pre-Islamic texts. One type was (Masānid), written in (Musnad script). The other type was (Zubur), and was written in (Zabûr script). Those sources did not mention the differences between the two types of texts. A first reply of such queries appeared in modern period, after the deciphering of more than thousands of monumental inscriptions and a number of texts written on wood.

Through comparing the script, writing-materials, language, and contents of the two types of inscriptions, this study aimed to answer the question: Why did the ancient Yemeni use two types of texts?

It was realized that Musnad texts were documentary inscriptions, which were engraved on dressed stones and rocks or moulded in bronze tablets. They were written in monumental script. The monumental inscriptions were written in high places, so that every one could see them easily, and to keep them safe from corruptors. They were put on the walls of cities, public and agricultural constructions, in and on temples. The aim of such types of inscriptions was either for making announcements, or for the sake of eternalizing the deceased. Announcements, such as fulfilling votive obligations for deity, confessing to committing a sin, declaring laws and legislations, cultivated fields' ownership and so forth. They eternalized their victories in battles against their enemies, the huge constructions they made, and the rebuilding of Ma'areb Dam.