

= GDRT =

GDRT (also GDR , vocalized by historians as Gadarat) was a King of the Kingdom of Aksum (c . 200) , known for being the first king to involve Axum in the affairs of what is now Yemen . He is known primarily from inscriptions in South Arabia that mention him and his son BYGT (also vocalized as " Beyga " or " Beygat ") . GDRT is thought to be the same person as GDR , the name inscribed on a bronze wand or sceptre that was found in an area near Atsbi and Dar 'a / Addi @-@ Galamo in northern Ethiopia .

GDRT has been equated with the anonymous king of the Monumentum Adulitanum , which would date his reign c . 200 ? c . 230 . However , the two rulers are usually thought to be distinct . However the French scholar Christian Robin , studying the inscriptions at al @-@ Mis`al in Yemen , has shown that GDRT , and his successor `DBH , lived in the earlier half of the 3rd century .

= = Aksumite inscription = =

The inscriptions of GDR represent the oldest surviving royal inscriptions in the Ge 'ez alphabet . The oldest of these was found at Addi @-@ Galamo in the regions of Atsbi and Dar 'a in eastern Tigray Region in northern Ethiopia . The area is rich in pre @-@ Aksumite artifacts , and inscriptions of a pre @-@ Aksumite kingdom called D?mt have been found in the region . The inscription mentioning GDR is the only evidence of his existence from the western side of the Red Sea :

gdr / ng?y / ?ksm / tb?l / mzlt / l?rg / wllmq

The Addi Galamo inscription was written on a sceptre or " boomerang @-@ like object " ; the linguist A.J. Drewes therefore interprets mzlt as meaning a sceptre or royal emblem . The inscription 's meaning is uncertain , but if mzlt is taken to mean a sceptre , and ?rg and lmq are taken to be place names (or sanctuaries) , then , according to Alexander Sima , the text could mean " GDR , king of Aksum gave (this) sceptre into the possession of (the sanctuaries) ?RG and LMQ . " The South Arabian expert W.F. Albert Jamme , however , translates the inscription as " GDR king of Aksum occupied the passages of `RG and LMQ " , or " Gedara , King of Axum is humbled before the [gods] Arg and Almouqah , " (i.e. Almaqah or Ilmuqah) , assuming that the ? in Ilmuqah was assimilated .

= = South Arabian involvement = =

GDRT is first mentioned in South Arabian inscriptions as an ally of `Alhan Nahfan , king of Saba , in an inscription at Ma?ram Bilq?s , at Ma 'rib in Yemen , the temple of the moon god Almaqah / Ilmuqah . According to Stuart Munro @-@ Hay , the inscription reads

they agreed together that their war and their peace should be in unison , against anyone that might rise up against them , and that in safety and in security there should be allied together Salhen and Zararan and `Alhan and Gadarat .

Alexander Sima translates the text slightly differently , specifying that it was GDRT who " sent a diplomatic mission to [`Ahlan] in order to form an alliance . " Both interpret " Zararan " or " Zrrn " as the name of the palace in Aksum at the time , parallel to " Sahlen , " the palace of Saba in Marib . This Sahlen @-@ Saba parallel , along with the Dhu @-@ Raydan @-@ ?imyar parallel , was often used by Aksumite kings in their inscriptions enumerating the territories under their control . A ?imyarite inscription confirms the Sabaean text , mentioning that Aksum , Saba ' , ?a?ramawt , and Qatab?n were all allied against ?imyar . `Alhan Nafhan 's son Sha`ir Awtar or Sha`irum Awtar later abandoned the alliance with GDRT after he became king of Saba ' . However , during the first part of Sha`ir Awtar 's reign , the two powers seem to have joined in an alliance once again , this time against ?a?ramawt . Saba 's invasion of ?a?ramawt with Aksumite help culminated in the latter 's defeat and the occupation of its capital , Shabwah , in 225 . Sha`ir Awtar 's attack represented a major shift in policy as , before the attack , the king of ?a?ramawt , Il`azz Yalut , was married to his sister ; he had even helped suppress a revolt against Il`azz Yalut .

Although Saba ' was previously allied with Aksum against ?imyar , both ?imyarite and Sabaean

troops were used in the attack against Ḥaṣṣamawt . Immediately following the conquest of Hadramaut , Ḥaṣṣir Awtar allied with Ḥimyar against his former ally GDRT . A second Sabaeen inscription from the sanctuary ' Awam in Marib during the reign of Ḥaṣṣir Awtar 's successor , Luḥa'atht Yarhum , describes events in the latter part of his predecessor 's reign . The inscription tells of a diplomatic mission sent by Ḥaṣṣir Awtar to GDRT , the results of which are unknown ; however , the text later goes on to describe a war between Saba ' and Aksum in the southern highlands of Yemen , implying that the negotiations were futile . Aksum lost a battle as a result of the Saba ' -Ḥimyar alliance , allowing the South Arabian forces to expel GDRT 's son BYGT and his forces from the Ḥimyarite capital Zafar , which had previously been held by Aksum after the Aksum @-@ Ḥaṣṣamawt @-@ Qatabʿn @-@ Saba ' alliance . Despite this loss , Aksum still held territory in South Arabia , as evidenced by inscriptions of Luḥa'atht Yarhum (r. c . 230) , which detail at least one known clash with Ḥbʿt troops in Yemen after GDRT 's reign . Peace may have been established after GDRT 's death , but war and Aksumite involvement was renewed under his successors such as ḌBH and GRMT , and the whole 3rd century was to be dominated by Ethio @-@ Yemeni conflicts .

= = Legacy = =

GDRT was most likely the first Aksumite king to be involved in South Arabian affairs , as well as the first known king to be mentioned in South Arabian inscriptions . His reign resulted in the control of much of western Yemen , such as the Tihʿmah , Najrʿ , Maʿafir , ʿafʿr (until c . 230) , and parts of Hashid territory around Hamir in the northern highlands . Furthermore , GDRT 's military alliances and his conquests in Yemen and Saudi Arabia , the required formidable fleet for such feats , and the extension of Aksumite influence throughout Yemen and southern Saudi Arabia all reflect a new zenith in Aksumite power . His involvement would mark the beginning of centuries of Aksumite involvement in South Arabia , culminating with the full @-@ scale invasion of Yemen by King Kaleb in 520 (or 525) , resulting in the establishment of an Aksumite province covering all of South Arabia .

GDRT 's name may be preserved in Ethiopian tradition through the traditional king lists , as what seem to be variants of his name crop up in three of them . Gʿdur is listed as the third king in list C , Zegduru (ze meaning ' of ' in Ge 'ez) appears as the sixth in list E , and Zegdur appears as the third in list B , after the legendary Menelik I. Zegdur also is mentioned in at least one hagiography and short chronicle . The king lists were composed centuries after the fall of the Aksumite kingdom , however , and generally do not agree with archaeological records except when concerning famous kings .