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ESARHADDON'S EXPEDITION FROM PALESTINE TO EGYPT IN 671 BCE:
A TREK THROUGH NEGEV AND SINAI

Hartmut Kühne has contributed much to our steadily increasing knowledge of the historical geography of the Ancient Near East; this is especially so for the Ḫabur region which he literally “put on the map”. I would like to use the present occasion to present him with an investigation into yet another corner of the world, the Sinai and Negev, in an attempt to make sense of the puzzling itinerary of Esarhaddon's march from Palestine to Egypt in 671 BCE, resulting in the Assyrian conquest of Egypt. Who will ever know for sure, but some of the army personnel stationed at Dūr-Katlimmu/Magdālu (Tell Sheikh Hamad), the site which Hartmut Kühne has brought back from oblivion, may well have been part of the troops that eventually reached the other Magdālu located on the Isthmus of Suez.

A fragmentarily preserved text from Nineveh with a year-by-year account of Esarhaddon's military operations contains the fullest available description of his tenth campaign, the expedition to Egypt in 671 BCE. The account is inscribed on a beautifully written clay tablet of which unfortunately only a small part survives, about a fourth of the complete text (b = 13.5 cm, l = 18.3 cm). It is rather more poetic than the average campaign report found in Assyrian royal inscriptions, including Esarhaddon's. It is also less concerned with following the actual sequence of events and instead of mapping out the route of the army from A to B to C, the account sometimes anticipates later episodes and also jumps from location to location without mention of the path taken. I would like to thank the Trustees of the British Museum for the opportunity to study the original in October 2006, on which the following new edition is based.

K 3082+K 3086+Sm 2027

(Lines 1'-5' concern the campaign against Šubria.)

- 6' *ina* 10-e KASKAL₂-ia AN.ŠÁR [...]
7' *ú-šá-*^r*aš*¹-*bi-ta pa-nu-u-a a-na* ^rKUR.Má-ka'n [ù KUR.Me-luḫ-ḫa *ú-šá-áš-kin*]
8' ^r*šá*¹ *ina pi-i* UN.MEŠ KUR.Ku-u-si ù KUR.Mu-šur ^r*t*¹-[*nam-bu-u ...*]
9' *ad-ke-*^r*e*¹-*ma* ERÍN.ḪI.A.MEŠ AN.ŠÁR *gap-šá-a-ti šá qé-r*[*eb ...*]
10' *ina* ITU.^rBARAG¹ ITU *reš-tu-u ul-tú* URU-ia *Aš-šur at-tu-muš*
 ÍD.IDIGNA ÍD.UD.KIB.NUN.KI *ina* ^r*mi-li-ši-na e-te-bir*¹
11' KUR.MEŠ *mar-šu-ú-ti ri-ma-niš áš-tú-di-iḫ*
12' *ina me-ti-iq* KASKAL₂-ia UGU ¹*Ba-*^r*a-lu* MAN KUR.Šur-[*r*]ⁱ *šá a-na* ¹*Tar-qu-u*
 MAN KUR.Ku-si-i *ib-ri-šú it-tak-lu*
13' GIŠ.ŠUDUN AN.ŠÁR EN-ia *is-lu-u* ^r*e*¹-*tap-pa-lu me-ri-iḫ-tu*
14' URU.ḪAL.ŠU.MEŠ UGU-šú *ú-rak-kis-ma a-ka-lu* ù *mu-*^r*ú*¹ *ba-laṭ* ZI-ti-šú-un *ak-la*
15' *ul-tú* KUR.Mu-šur KARAŠ *ad-ke-e-ma a-na* KUR.Me-luḫ-ḫa *uš-te-še-ra ḫar-ra-nu*
16' 30 DANNA *qaq-qar ul-tú* URU.Ap-qu *šá pa-ṭi* KUR.Sa-me-r[*i-na*]¹ *a-di* URU.Ra-pi-ḫi
17' *a-na i-te-e na-ḫal* KUR.Mu-šur *a-šar* ÍD *la i-šú-u ina eb-*[*i*]¹ *ḫar-ḫar-ri kal-kal-tú*
18' A.MEŠ TÚL *ina di-lu-ú-ti* ERÍN.ḪI.A *ú-šá-áš-qí*

1 Reading confirmed by collation.

rev.

- 1 *ki-i qí-bit* AN.ŠÁR EN-ia ina GEŠTUG.₇.MEŠ-ia ib-ši-ma [*uš-ta-a-bi-la k*]a-bat-ti
 2 ANŠE.gam-mal-li šá LUGAL.MEŠ KUR.A-ri-bi ka-li-šú-un a[*d-ke-e-ma*
 KUŠ.na-a-di KUŠ.ḫi-in-ti² e-m]id-su-nu-ti
 3 ²0 DANNA qaq-qar ma-lak 15 U₄.ME ina ši-pik b[*a-ši KALAG.MEŠ a-šar*
 šu-ma-a-me³] ar-di
 4 4 DANNA qaq-qar ina NA₄.gab-e mu-ša [...] al-lik
 5 4 DANNA qaq-qar ma-lak 2 U₄.ME MUŠ 2 SAG.DU.MEŠ x[x⁴ ... ša li-pit-su-u]^rn¹⁵
 mu-tú-ma
 6 ad-da-iš-ma e-ti₇-iq 4 DANNA qaq-qar ma-lak [2 U₄.ME MU]Š⁶.MEŠ SIG₇.MEŠ
 7 šá šu-ub-bu-bu a-gáp-pi 4 DANNA qaq-qar ma-lak 2 U₄.[ME ... x]x⁷ li ti
 8 16¹ DANNA qaq-qar ma-lak 8 U₄.ME ar-di [...]x¹ ma-a-diš⁸
 9 ^dAMAR.UTU EN GAL-ú re-šu-ti il-lik [...]
 10 ú-bal-liṭ ZI-ti ERÍN.ḪI.A-ia 20 U₄.ME 7 [...]
 11 ša mi-šir ^rKUR.Mu-šur áš-t' a-kan⁹ nu-bat-t[i ...]
 12 ul-tú URU.Ma-ag-[*da-l*]^r i a-d'i ^rURU'.[...]

(The remains of the following seven lines concern the march to the city of Išḫupru¹⁰ from where the Assyrian army continued to Memphis.)

“⁶ In my tenth campaign, the god Aššur caused to take [...]; ⁷ [he set] my desire on the countries Makan [and Meluḫḫa] ⁸ which in the people’s vernacular are called Kush and Egypt. [...] ⁹ I mobilised and the abundant troops of Aššur, that amidst [...], [...]. ¹⁰ In Nisannu, the first month, I departed from my city Aššur. I traversed the rivers Tigris and Euphrates during their period of flood. ¹¹ Like a wild bull I crossed steep mountains. ¹²⁻¹⁴ In the course of my campaign, I erected entrenchments against Ba’alu king of Tyre, who had trusted in Tarqû (i.e. Taharqo) king of Kush as his ally, shed the yoke of my lord Aššur and reacted (to me) in insolence, and I cut (them, i.e. the inhabitants of Tyre) off from bread and water, their livelihood. ¹⁵ From Egypt I mobilised my encampment and set out to Meluḫḫa. ¹⁶⁻¹⁸ (For a distance of) thirty ‘miles’ of land, from Apqu which is situated in the border region of Samerīna to Rapiḫu on the bank of the Brook of Egypt where there is no river, I let the troops drink buckets of water drawn from wells with ropes and chains. ^{rev. 1} According to the command of

- 2 Restored after Borger 1956: 113: § 78 obv. 10 (with improved reading KU[Š.n]a-a-di KUŠ.ḫi-in-ti given in Borger 1957/58: 118).
 3 The restoration follows the parallel text of Esarhaddon’s stela from Zenjirli: Borger 1956: 98: § 65 rev. 36.
 4 The broken sign begins with a Winkelhaken and a vertical wedge; these remains do not allow the restoration of the sign KA, as tentatively suggested by Borger 1956: 112.
 5 Restoration according to parallels in ritual texts, see CAD M/2 318 s.v. *mūtu* d.
 6 Reading confirmed by collation.
 7 The remains of the sign indeed look like GAD, as read by Borger 1956: 112, but may also be interpreted as the final wedges of a sign such as RI. I am unable to suggest a convincing reading and interpretation of the passage, also because it is unclear how many signs are to be restored in the gap.
 8 Reading confirmed by collation. Of the first sign after the gap, only a vertical wedge survives.
 9 Reading (see also CAD N/2 308 s.v. *nubattu* A 1.a.) confirmed by collation.
 10 This Assyrian rendering of an Egyptian toponym has not yet been successfully identified and located, see Verreth 1999: 237 for the evidence and a summary of the discussion.

my lord Aššur, an idea came to my mind and I conceived (the following): ² I mobilised the camels of all the kings of Arabia and loaded them with [water skins and water containers].³ Twenty 'miles' of land, a journey of 15 days, I marched through [mighty sand] dunes. ⁴ Four 'miles' of land I travelled over alum, *mušû* stones [*and other stones*]; ⁵⁻⁷ four 'miles' of land, a journey of two days, I stepped repeatedly on two-headed snakes [... whose *touch*] is deadly, but continued; four 'miles' of land, a journey of [two days] – yellow snakes spreading wings (but continued); four 'miles' of land, a journey of two days, [...]: ⁸ (in sum) 16 'miles' of land, a journey of eight days, I marched. [...] very much. ⁹ The great lord Marduk came to my rescue [...]. ¹⁰ He revived my troops. Twenty days seven [...] ¹¹ of the border of Egypt, I set up a night camp [...]. ¹² From the city of Magdālu to the city of [...]"

What do we learn from this text about the expedition of 671 BCE? Esarhaddon departed from the city of Aššur in the first month, i.e. in late March/early April, at the time of the spring flood and therefore had to cross Tigris and Euphrates at their highest water levels. This is the first mention of water in the account of the campaign, which is very clearly the guiding theme of the text, leading from central Assyria in spring where water is plentiful through the waterless desert to the Nile. Elsewhere in Esarhaddon's inscription corpus, the events prior to the invasion of Egypt are only summarised briefly, but again with an emphasis on the water situation: "Contently and safely, I have walked over distant roads, steep mountains and mighty sand dunes, where there is thirst."¹¹

According to our account, the first military encounter of the Assyrian army was with its disloyal vassal state Tyre, having allied itself with Taharqo, king of Kush and ruler of Egypt. The centre of ancient Tyre was situated on an island close to the mainland, on which it depended for supplies, including drinking water – this is the second time that the precious liquid's importance is highlighted; the Assyrians cut off this lifeline by fortifying the shore and, although this is not explicitly mentioned in our source, succeeded in forcing Tyre into submission. The following passage is surely outside of chronological order, relating how – in a much later stage of the campaign – the Assyrian army left Egypt for Meluḥḥa, i.e. Kush; this reflects the strong connection the Assyrians see between Tyre and Kush: The siege of Tyre as well as the invasion of Egypt are only episodes in the war against Taharqo of Kush. The text then returns to the events in Palestine and describes how the troops were supplied with well water during the march from Apqu (bibl. and mod. Aphek) to Rapiḥu (bibl. Raphia, mod. Rafah¹²) on the Brook of Egypt; that the Brook of Egypt (mod. Naḥal Besor¹³) is, despite its name, not a water-carrying river is duly pointed out, again in line with the text's ongoing interest in the subject of drinking water. The text next describes Esarhaddon's plan to secure water provisions for the march to Egypt with the help of camels summoned from his Arabian vassals. Although the text gives a rather detailed itinerary for the trek through the desert, listing distances and days, no place names are mentioned, but instead the regions traversed are characterised by highly evocative observations about the landscape, including an allusion to "yellow snakes spreading wings",

11 Borger 1956: 98: § 65 rev. 35-36.

12 "Tell Refah" in the map given as Fig. 2 below.

13 For the identification see Na'aman 1979: 73-74 who convincingly argues against the identification with Wadi el-ʿArish.

the Winged Snakes of Arabia famously reported also in Herodotus' *Histories* (II 75-76; III 107-109).¹⁴ Toponyms are only given again after the border of Egypt – inhabited country with known place names – had been reached.

Does the text still allow us to trace the route taken by the Assyrians from Palestine to Egypt? Most commentators assume automatically that the Assyrian army took the route following the Mediterranean coastline, as the prominent mention of Rapiḫu (bibl. Raphia, mod. Rafah) would suggest at first. There is indeed no doubt that the route linking the Gaza-Rafah region with the Isthmus of Suez – usually, although anachronistically, referred to as *via maris* – was in use at that time.¹⁵ Yet the *via maris* does not fit the itinerary given by Esarhaddon, and it is consequently seen, by some, as an ultimately untrustworthy account: “The distance of 625 km¹⁶ is more than three times the 200 km needed to get from Rafah to el-Qantara at the northern edge of the eastern Delta. To cover the whole distance, one would almost have to imagine a route from Rafah via Eilat to the most southern point of the Sinai peninsula and then via the coast of the Red Sea to Suez”, writes Herbert Verreth, only to conclude: “Obviously the distances – perhaps the whole account? – are not to be trusted.”¹⁷

Yet when judging the plausibility of Esarhaddon's itinerary from Rapiḫu to Magdālu we have to bear in mind that his invasion of Egypt was successful: That the Assyrian troops indeed arrived at Egypt's border and proceeded to subdue the country is fact.¹⁸ While the journey is described as arduous in our account (“The great lord Marduk came to my rescue ... he revived my troops”), the Assyrian army is said to have finally reached its destination Egypt by way of the town of Magdālu; although its exact location is contested there is universal agreement that this place, known as Migdol in the Bible (Exod. 14:2; Jer. 44:1, 46:4; Ezek. 29:10, 30:6) and as Magdolos in Herodotus (*Histories* II 159), is situated in the region of the Isthmus of Suez.¹⁹ From Magdālu, the Assyrian army advanced to the Nile and wrestled control over Egypt from the Kushite troops stationed there, driving them and their king Taharqo out of Egypt to Kush. As Esarhaddon proclaims proudly in one of his victory monuments, “I eradicated the root of Kush from Egypt.”²⁰

14 For a discussion see Rollinger 2004, Rollinger/Lang 2004, Braun 2004, Radner 2007.

15 Oren 1984: 33 (with previous literature). For details of the two branches of the route around the Bardawil marches see Figueras 2000: 7-15.

16 Verreth's number of 625 km is too high, as collation has shown that the text mention 20, not 30 'miles' in rev. 3. Assuming that 1 *bēru* = 10,8 km (Edzard 1976-80: 218) and that all numbers given need to be added up, we get 51 *bēru* = 550 km. I, however, would prefer to interpret the four times four *bēru* as the equivalent of the 16^l (not 15) *bēru* in rev. 8, arriving at a sum of 20+(4+4+4+4)=36 *bēru* = 390 km.

17 Verreth 1999: 236. According to the verdict of Tadmor 1999: 59, the passage is “a mixture of a military itinerary ... and imaginary heroic clichés.” But note that Liverani 1999-2001: 73-76, 82-84 judges the geographical information gathered during this campaign to be reliable and argues that it was used for what he terms the „Assyrian mensuration of the world“, the so-called Sargon Geography.

18 The most detailed treatment of the Egyptian leg of the campaign of 671 BCE remains Spalinger 1974.

19 Oren 1984: 30-35 suggests Tell Kadua near Tell el-Farama (rejected e.g. by Verreth 1999: 237); note that Figueras 2000: 202 argues that the place name was used consecutively for various sites in the region. The most recent discussion of this toponym type, which is frequent especially in the Levant and may well preserve the location of Bronze and Iron Age watchtowers, is Burke 2007.

20 Borger 1956: 99: § 65 rev. 45-46.

In order to evaluate Esarhaddon's march to Egypt it is important to consider the geopolitical context of the campaign of 671 BCE. Two years before, in 673 BCE, Egyptian troops under the control of Taharqo of Kush had intervened against Assyrian interests in Ashkelon.²¹ After confirming Kushite sovereignty over Egypt, taking the office and title of pharaoh and creating temporary stability in the politically fragmented Delta region,²² Taharqo meant to re-establish Egyptian control of the Levant, now claimed by Assyria. With Taharqo's expansion plans made obvious, Assyria had to act quickly and decisively if it wanted to keep its provinces along the Eastern Mediterranean whose traditional links with Egypt were strong. In order to eliminate the growing Kushite influence in the Levant, an invasion of Egypt was a political necessity and certainly not undertaken without careful preparation.²³ Simply to advance along the route tracking the Mediterranean coast, the *via maris*, would have openly advertised the Assyrian intention to attack Egypt and allowed the defending forces to prepare, which for strategic reasons alone could be expected to be successful in fending off the attempted invasion. The news of the Assyrian advances would have reached the Delta by ship long before the advent of the army: The kingdom of Tyre which controlled the sea passage had proven a supremely unreliable ally in all affairs linked with Egypt, choosing it over Assyria whenever chance allowed it and also, as we have seen, in the period leading up to Esarhaddon's invasion of Egypt.²⁴ For this reason alone, a surprise attack from a route other than the *via maris* would have offered a far greater chance of success.

How did the Assyrian army get to Egypt? The last place name mentioned in our account before the Egyptian border is Rapiḥu, which could suggest that the army simply advanced along the *via maris* to the Isthmus of Suez; this is silently assumed by most modern commentators and the far too long distance (550 km or 390 km, depending on the interpretation of the numbers) given for this journey of about 200 km is, in conjunction with the seemingly fantastic references to winged and two-headed snakes, at the root of the classification of the account as inherently unreliable. However, in antiquity, Rapiḥu's key position in the international traffic network was not only defined by its location on the coastal route to Egypt, but equally by its importance for the Frankincense Route²⁵ or Spice Route, as it is also called: The Gaza-Rafah region was traditionally the terminus for the caravans bringing incense and spices from the Arabian Peninsula to the Mediterranean coast.²⁶ We have explicit textual evidence for the existence of the trade connection from 720 BCE onwards, when in the aftermath of a battle between Assyrian and Egyptian troops (as allies of the king of Gaza) at Rapiḥu, the victorious Sargon II of Assyria received the tribute of Arabian rulers, namely Samsī queen of the (Northern) Arabs and Itamar ruler of Saba'.²⁷ This demonstrates the functioning of the desert

21 Spalinger 1974: 301-302.

22 For the rule of the Kushite kings over Egypt as the pharaohs of the 25th Dynasty see Morkot 2000 and Morkot 2001: 244-251.

23 Note the five surviving oracle queries concerning the planned campaign against Taharqo: SAA 4 84-88.

24 Radner 2004: 159-161.

25 On the Frankincense Route and the frankincense trade see Groom 1981.

26 Meshel/Tsafir 1974: 103; Cohen 1982.

27 Fuchs 1994: 197-198, 344; Prunk. 25-27. Also Fuchs 1994: 90, 315; Ann. 53-56; 110, 320; Ann. 123-125.

highway linking Arabia and Yemen with the Mediterranean coast,²⁸ and fittingly the tribute received by Sargon includes “seed of ebony and all kinds of spices”.²⁹

If we place the mention of Rapiḫu in the context of its close link to the desert highway, then we can easily connect Esarhaddon’s “yellow snakes spreading wings” with the fossil finds at Makhtesh Ramon,³⁰ which is situated on the Frankincense Route just where the track leads from the Negev Highlands down into the desert zone. Despite of its apparent remoteness, Makhtesh Ramon was part of the ancient traffic network and an important stage on the way from the Levantine coast to the Arabian Peninsula.³¹ This is owed to its geographic position but also to the spring of ʿEin Saharonim (also known as Shaʿar Ramon, Qasr el-ʿEin or Qasr el-Mahle), the only reliable natural water source of the region.³² Geographically, Makhtesh Ramon would serve well as a meeting point for the Assyrian army coming from the Mediterranean and the Arabian allies advancing from the desert; the crater offers both shelter for the troops and, crucially, spring water supply. Situated in the border zone between steppe and desert, Makhtesh Ramon is also ideally located for the necessary change of means of transport: Instead of their usual horses, mules, donkeys as well as carts and chariots, the Assyrian army used camels to cross over to Egypt. As already Israel Ephʿal stressed,³³ it is obvious, although not explicitly mentioned in our text, that when Esarhaddon summoned the camels of the “kings of Arabia” the Assyrians also engaged Arab guides and troops who had the specialized knowledge necessary to undertake the journey, just as later armies taking the route through the desert did.³⁴

While it is clear that the Assyrian army was transformed into a camel caravan, it is not stated in the available sources where this actually happened. To assume that it took place at Rapiḫu is unreasonable from a strategic point of view, as the crucial surprise element of the attack on Egypt would have been lost; the advantage of going through the desert vanished as soon as Assyria’s enemies gained knowledge about the plan. To meet the camel troops at the fringe of the desert is not only logistically sensible but also disguises the intention to march against Egypt: The apparent goal of the Assyrian army leaving Rapiḫu on the Frankincense

28 On the trade with South Arabia see Liverani 1992. For the importance of the Negev in the international trade network in the 8th and 7th century BCE see Bienkowski/van der Steen 2001: 36-38 (with previous literature).

29 Fuchs 1994: 110: Ann. 124: NUMUN GIŠ.ESI ŠIM.ḪI.A *ka-la-ma*.

30 Radner 2007.

31 For the so-called “Petra-Gaza Road” see Cohen 1982.

32 Meshel/Tsafirir 1974: 118, Pl. XVIII.D (photo); Meshel/Tsafirir 1975: 12-14 (discussion of road station built in 1st century BCE).

33 Ephʿal 1984: 140-141.

34 The Turkish campaign to the Suez Canal in January 1915 could only be conducted with the help of camels and their Arab handlers, whose support was secured by the accompanying religious leaders who had been taken hostage by the Turkish army (Kreß von Kressenstein 1938: 88). This campaign provides valuable information about the food rations needed for men and animals: While the soldiers, who receive 600 g bread and a handful of either dates, raisins or olives per day, and the horses, with a daily ration of five kilos of barley, are sufficiently fed and remain in good health throughout and after the campaign, the ration of three kilos of barley which the camels receive per day proves too little in the long run, and although the animals survive the trek many die afterwards (Kreß von Kressenstein 1938: 86-87).

Route would seem to be the Arabs,³⁵ rather than Egypt. However, the Negev is very well connected to the Isthmus of Suez with a network of ancient routes (fig. 1-2) and by taking a westward path through the Sinai, Esarhaddon's army had the big advantage of being beyond their enemies' range of perception. When the Turkish army, on their way to the Suez Canal, used the same strategy in 1915 they took the route from Beer-Sheva to Ismailia via Ibni and Bir Gifgafa in order to catch the Allied defences unprepared; after being spotted by a French reconnaissance airplane, however, the advantage of a surprise attack was lost, as was the battle.³⁶

Whether the Assyrian army used the Turkish route of 1915 or another is impossible to establish in the absence of toponyms in the fragmentarily preserved itinerary; yet the distance of about 390 km³⁷ is easily accommodated by any route that first led from Rafah in south-eastern direction through the Negev highlands, from there via Makhtesh Ramon into the Negev desert and then in westward direction across the Negev and the Sinai to the Isthmus of Suez. The account of the 671 campaign first mentions a trek of 20 'miles' and 15 days through the sand desert – the Sinai – and only then describes the journey of 16 'miles' and eight days through the region which should be identified with the Negev highlands, including the fossil site of Makhtesh Ramon. This sequence should, however, not be used as an argument against the proposed course of the campaign. As we have discussed above, the account does not strictly follow the actual sequence of events but chronicles the journey in an emphatic way that tries its best to invoke the highlights and difficulties of the expedition, especially by stressing the precarious availability of drinking water. In this context, it is fitting to mention the trek through the sand dunes "where there is thirst" directly after the reference to the camels which were recruited to carry the water supplies. The rocky, forbidding landscape of the Negev steppe is conjured up with images of land covered in stones and snakes; if we accept Stephanie West's recent suggestion to equate the two-headed snakes with the sand-boa (*eryx*; indigenous in the region), whose tail, which is thick, blunt and very short, can be easily taken to be a second head³⁸ and if we identify the winged snakes with the Cretaceous fossils from Makhtesh Ramon, as I have suggested elsewhere,³⁹ these are accurate and characteristic observations of the region, rather than scary fairy tale elements.

In conclusion, through a careful reading of the seemingly puzzling account of Esarhaddon's tenth campaign we can approximate the route taken by the Assyrian army from Palestine to Egypt and infer that a course through the Sinai desert rather than along the Mediterranean coast was chosen; the successful invasion of Egypt in 671 BCE is the result of a surprise attack launched from the desert – Esarhaddon's army succeeded with the same strategy that was also, but in vain, employed by the Turkish troops in 1915.

35 The Assyrian army intervened repeatedly in internal Arabian affairs, attempting to exercise indirect control by backing pro-Assyrian leaders; for a survey of the fragile relationship between Assyria and the Arab tribes during the reign of Esarhaddon see Retsö 2003: 158-161.

36 Kreß von Kressenstein 1938.

37 For this distance, rather than 550 km, see my calculations in fn. 16.

38 West 2006: 290. Note that two-headed snakes are also mentioned in the lexical list ҒAR-*ra* = *hubullu* and in the omen compendium *Šumma ālu*; see CAD § 149 s.v. *šēru* B 1.e.

39 Radner 2007.

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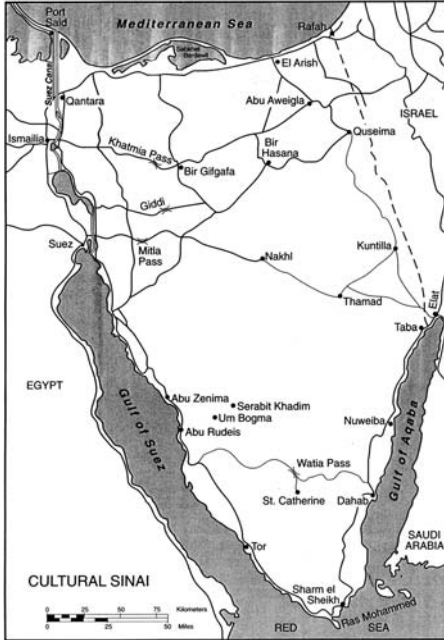


Fig. 1: Routes through Sinai
Source: Greenwood 1997: X



Fig. 2: Routes through Sinai
Source: Krefl von Kressenstein 1938: map 2