The Arab Tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam'
Sources and Historical Trends

Being a thesis submitted to the
University of St. Andrews
for the degree of Ph. D.
by
Ihab Hamdi el-Sakkout
May 1998
Declaration

I hereby declare that the following is a record of research work carried out by me; that the thesis is my own composition and that it has not previously been presented for any other degree.

St. Andrews
May 1998
Ihab H. el-Sakkout

I CERTIFY THAT
- Ihab Hamdi el-Sakkout was admitted as a research student for the degree of Ph. D. in October 1994;
- The Regulations have been fulfilled.

Prof. Hugh N. Kennedy
(Supervisor)

Access to the thesis in the University Library shall be unrestricted.
Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Hugh Kennedy for making it possible for me to stay at St. Andrews to work with him on this thesis. I thank him also for his guidance and advice throughout the period of my research, as well as for his valuable introductions to scholars in the field. Particular thanks go to Dr. Richard Kimber for his continuous support, encouragement, advice and edification, and to Dr. Julia Ashtiany Bray for her valuable suggestions and wit-sharpening discussions.

All that I have learnt about ancient Arabian inscriptions I owe to the generous advice and help offered to me by Mr. Michael MacDonald (Oxford) and Prof. Christian Robin (Aix-en-Provence).

I could not have done without Vera Johanterwage who helped me to decipher Werner Caskel's German - 'Tausend Dank!' I thank Letizia Osti for reading the whole thesis and for providing me with constructive criticism and suggestions. I am grateful also to Jorge Manzano, Dr. Chris Smith and Dr. Bill Bajor for reading various chapters - especially Bill for his helpful comments on using the anthropological material.

A huge personal debt is owed to Catherine and David Cobham and Judy Ahola for helping me to feel at 'home' in St. Andrews. No less is the debt owed to my close friends, especially to my housemates, Diego and Hélène, for - amongst many things - putting up with me; and Sherief and Naru, for - amongst many things - so often putting me up.

I am indebted to Shahab Ahmad for steering me towards Islamic history and for being a permanent source of inspiration, and to his wonderful wife, Dana Sajdi (in particular, for making Shahab a bit more user-friendly).

Lastly, but most specially, I thank my parents without whose undying love, support, advice and encouragement this thesis could not have been completed.
The Arab Tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam':
Sources and Historical Trends

Contents

Abstract x

Introduction 1

Sources for the pre-Islamic period 1

The development of tribalism after Islam 2

Thesis outline 3

Chapter 1 Source Review 5

Introduction 5

The sources 5

(i) Genealogical works 5

(ii) Poetry and adab 10

(iii) Geographies 12

(iv) Encyclopedias and manuals 14

(v) Sira works 14

(vi) Universal histories 15

(vii) Specific histories 17

Source criticism 17

Part I The Arabic pre-Islamic Traditions 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' 19

Chapter 2 The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions 21

Introduction 21

Oral history amongst contemporary bedouin tribes 21

The pre-Islamic heritage 23

The transmitters 25
Contents

The nature of such conflicts 57
Dāḥis and Basūs 58
Heroes 58
Remarks 59

III) The ayyām of the mulūk and tribal confederations 60
Mulūk-mulūk conflicts 61
Single tribal units defeating the mulūk 62
The ayyām of tribal confederations 63
Audiences and transmitters 64
Remarks 65
Conclusions 66
Ayyām types 66

Chapter 4 The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions 68
Introduction 68
Tribal territories 69
A note on nomadic tribalism and territories 69
Tribal distribution in pre-Islamic Arabia 70
Patterns of alliances 76
Conclusions 78

Part II The Arab Tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam':
The Cases of Taghlib and Ghaṭafān 81

Chapter 5 Banū Taghlib 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' 84
The Divisions of Taghlib 85
Taghlibi links with the B. Kalb? 85
Taghlib's subsets 86
(A) Pre-Islamic Taghlib 88
Pre-conquest territories 88
Taghlib north of al-Nafūd 88
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib in central and eastern Najd</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Taghlib’s pre-Islamic distribution</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib in the pre-Islamic source material</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib and Christianity</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical overview</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Taghlib between the Hujrīds and the Mundhirids</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Rabī’ā and al-Yaman - the accounts of Kulayb and Yawm Khazāz</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) ‘Amr b. Kulthūm</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Bakr and Taghlib</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Taghlib and the Arab tribes</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Taghlib in the Jāhiliya</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile of pre-Islamic Taghlib</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Taghlib in Islam</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A note on chronology and dates</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The important lineages of Taghlib in the Islamic period</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prophetic period</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Muslim conquests</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The first civil war</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlibis of al-Jazira</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlibis of Kūfah and Basra</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib in Syria</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second civil war</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Hashshāk</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond the second civil war</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib and the Marwānids</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The war against Qays in al-Jazira</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Akhtal, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile of Taghlib in Islamic times</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taghlib: Continuity and Change</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Contents

### Chapter 6  Banū Ghaṭafān 'from Jāhiliya to Islam'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Divisions of Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Ghaṭafān as a whole</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrilineal links of Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other associations</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Dhubyān</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thaʿlabā</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cÁbs and cAbdallāh b. Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cÁbs</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cAbdallāh b. Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Pre-Islamic Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-conquest territories</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān as a whole</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhubyān</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cÁbs and cAbdallāh b. Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashjāc</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A summary of Ghaṭafānini distribution</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local alliances</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhubyān</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cÁbs</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of local alliances</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān in the pre-Islamic source material</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pre-Islamic ayyām and heroes of Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important heroes</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor ayyām of Ghaṭafān</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān’s ayyām traditions</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profile of pre-Islamic Ghaṭafān</strong></td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical range of the Ghaṭafān tribes</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patterns of regional co-operation</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān and its constituent parts</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(B) Ghaṭafān in Islam</strong></td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A note on chronology and dates</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prophetic period</strong></td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companions</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafānīs in the sīra material</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary of Ghaṭafān in the sīra</strong></td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The wars of the ridda</strong></td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement in the conquests and subsequent migration</strong></td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān as a whole</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashja&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tha‘laba</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Abs</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The first civil war</strong></td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān as a whole</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashja&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Abs</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Sufyānid period</strong></td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tha'laban</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Abs</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The second civil war</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Qays-Yaman and Fazāra-Kalb feuds</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Abs</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān and the Marwānids</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tha'laban</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murra</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fazāra</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Abs</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Ghaṭafān in Marwānid times</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile of Ghaṭafān in Islamic times</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafānī migrations after the conquests</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The noble pre-Islamic lineages</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Ghaṭafānī identity</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān's loss of status</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghaṭafān: Continuity and Change</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part III Arab Tribalism 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' 212

Chapter 7 Genealogies and Tribalism 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' 215

I) Contemporary Arab Tribal Genealogies 215

The function of genealogy amongst modern tribes 215

Shifting genealogies amongst modern tribes 217

The mechanism of genealogical change 217
Genealogical shifting on the higher levels 218

II) Arab Tribal Genealogies in the Pre- and Early Islamic Period 221

Genealogical versatility 221

Natural genealogical development 221

Techniques of genealogical adjustment 222

Types of genealogy 225

Tribal genealogies 225

Individuals' genealogies 227

Macro genealogies 228

Summary 228

III) Tribalism 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' 231

The standardizing of early Arabic genealogies 231

'Arab' identity before Islam 232

Ideas of common descent 232

Was there a North-South divide in pre-Islamic Arabia? 233

The ancestor Add/Udad 234

Joktan and Qahtān 236

The initial impact of Islam 237

Doctrinal influences on Arab genealogies 237

Prophetic organization and Arab tribalism 238

The conquests and migrations 239

Post-conquest administration 239

The split between migrating and non-migrating Arabs 241

Non-migrating Arabs and the higher genealogies 242

Army tribesmen and nomadic tribesmen in the sources 242

Migration and the break-up of tribal groups 243

The new regional loyalties 244

The influence of Umayyad factionalism 245
Contents

The build-up of alliances 245

Creation of new affiliations 247

Summation and concluding remarks 248

Concluding Remarks 251

Appendix 1  Maps of Tribal Arabia 254

Appendix 2  Genealogical Charts 257

Bibliography 270
Abstract

This dissertation aims to formulate a view of Arabian tribalism in the pre-Islamic period and its development in Islamic times.

The first part assesses the historical usability of the literary source material of the Jāhiliya. The focus is on oral historical traditions - the ayyām al-‘arab. These are found to have remained textually fluid until the time of their recording. This fluidity may have affected style and form but did not substantially affect certain historical elements. The more inter-tribal and less local the account was, the more reliable it is likely to be historically. A sample comparison between tribal hostility and tribal distribution showed that the accounts seem to be highly consistent.

The second part of the thesis is concerned firstly with establishing a Jāhili profile for two tribal groups; secondly with tracing the affairs of their descendants into the Umayyad period. The tribal groups of Taghlib and Ghaṭafān were picked for examination. Both were strong cohesive groups in the pre-Islamic period. In Islamic times, Taghlibis lose importance since they opted to remain Christian, thus, Taghlibis are virtually impossible to trace. Ghaṭafānis did join Islam on a far greater scale and are often mentioned in the Islamic period. After the second civil war Ghaṭafānis are only ever mentioned as individuals. Close kin continued to cooperate but cooperation above this level was only conducted within the Qaysi faction.

The third part discusses changes in the tribal system. A review of the functions of modern tribal genealogies illuminates the process by which genealogies can change in order to reflect changing realities. Early Arabic genealogies are clearly seen to be also naturally dynamic and the subject of deliberate change. New links reflected new realities, particularly the political alliances forged under the Umayyads. A belief in a single progenitor led to a move towards creating genealogical links to one ancestor, while the conditions of the conquests led to a regionalization of tribalism. The professionalization of the Marwānid army enabled cross-regional tribal co-operation which resulted in dividing in two the Umayyad army and Arab genealogies.
Introduction

The general objective of this dissertation is to shed more light on the political events of early Islam. In particular, the aim is to see how - if at all - the pre-Islamic past of the Arab tribes affected their political status or alignments in the Muslim period. Emphasis is laid on the tribal nature of early Islamic Arab society. Indeed, the underlying assumption of this thesis is that there is much to be learnt if we look at the period of the rise of Islam not just as a stage in the history of the 'Arabs' but, especially, as a stage in the collective history of the individual Arab tribes, into which the Arab people were organized.

Tribal groups are social entities which are more convenient to scrutinize in our sources than is the whole membership of Arab society. At the same time, as a cross-section of Arab society, their examination retains the potential to offer clues as to the extent and nature of the social, economic and political impact of Islam on the Arabs and vice versa.

Thus, broadly speaking, this is an attempt to formulate a view of Arabian tribalism and tribesmen in the pre-Islamic period, and an exploration of how these may have developed with the coming of Islam and how they interacted with the events of the early Islamic period.

Sources for the pre-Islamic period:

With regard to the pre-Islamic period, it is significant that a comprehensive history of the Arab tribes in the first century before Islam has yet to be written. This being despite the importance of such a project for understanding the nature of the Arab/Islamic conquests and the establishment of the early Muslim state. The reason for this neglect has much to do with the confused nature of the Arabic literary sources of that period.¹

¹ An important step in this general direction is the work of Elias Shoufany, Al-Riddah and the Muslim Conquest of Arabia, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972. However, it stands virtually alone, and while it touches upon the pre-Islamic period, it is of course primarily concerned with the Prophetic period and the "Riddah" wars.
Outside of the literary material, new archaeological excavations are increasing our knowledge of pre-Islamic Arabia, but only very gradually. Inscriptional evidence, mainly South Arabian, has greatly advanced our knowledge and remains a very important historical source. However, there is a serious decline in the production of South Arabian inscriptions in the Himyarite period, from around the start of the 4th c. CE, but especially in the 6th c. CE; the last known inscription is dated to ca. 560 CE. In any case, what inscriptions there are are not usually concerned with events taking place outside of the Yemeni region and the South Arabian sphere of influence. Aside from a few references in Greek and Syriac sources, there is not much else with which to work.

This brings us back to the Arabic literary source material for the pre-Islamic period. Yet, apart from the great contributions of Werner Caskel in this field earlier this century, there seems to have been very little effort, since, spent on investigating the historical potential of the literary material covering the pre-Islamic period. As a result, an important objective here is to explore in some detail the surviving literary source material pertaining to the pre-Islamic period, and assess its historical usability. Indeed, a sizeable portion of this dissertation is devoted to this objective.

The development of tribalism after Islam:

Up-to-date research on the development of the Arabian tribal system from before the conquests into the Islamic period is also sparse and lacking in...
Introduction

detail. Thus, a further objective of this thesis is to explore the development of pre-Islamic tribal identity and affiliations as they passed into Islamic times, with the aim of pinpointing the major factors governing such changes.

The main approach to research the evolution of the tribal system in the Islamic period is to follow the fortunes of tribal lineages from pre-Islamic times into the Umayyad period. This necessitates establishing a pre-Islamic profile for the lineages against which change may be gauged. Furthermore, a detailed examination of changes undergone by the early Arabic genealogical traditions should provide clues as to the nature of such changes.

Thesis outline:

The first part of this thesis will explore the transmission of traditions supposedly emanating from the pre-Islamic period. Particular focus will be given to the oral historical traditions, the *ayyām al-ʿarab*, and arguments will be presented for their ability to recreate a historical picture of the distribution of regional power amongst the Arabian tribes in the pre-Islamic period.

The second part will be concerned with drawing a pre-Islamic historical background for two specific tribal groups, Taghlib and Ghatafān. The examination of these two case studies will enable us to look more carefully at the sources for pre-Islamic tribal history, and at the extent of their usefulness. This will also present an idea of the relative power and status of the two groups in the Jähili period. Having established this starting point, the careers of the members and sub-groups of the two tribal groups will then be traced as

---

4 In fact, Patricia Crone has tackled this issue, to a certain extent, in her "Were the Qays and Yemen of the Umayyad Period Political Parties?", *Der Islam*, Band 71, Heft 1, (1994), pp. 1-57; and in *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980; however, these studies focus very much on the later stages of the development of early Islamic Arabian tribalism and particularly on the political facets of its evolution.


Yet, none of these studies attempt to monitor changes to the tribal system itself with the coming of Islam. Furthermore, the attitude sometimes exhibited towards the sources, in particular by Kister and al-ʿUbaydī, may be regarded by many modern scholars as not critical enough.
they pass from Jāhiliya into the late Marwānid period. This should guide us to areas of continuity and change within the tribal system.

The third and last part of this the dissertation is concerned with discussing patterns of continuity and change in the tribal system over a period from before Islam and the conquests until the Marwānid period. The surviving genealogical traditions articulate the state of the tribal system as it was being recorded, and will thus be the basis of a discussion of tribal identity and affiliation from the Jāhili period into Islamic times.
Chapter 1
Source Review

Introduction:

There is a wealth of literary source material concerning the tribesmen of the Jāhili and early Islamic periods. This material is to be found in all branches of early as well as late Muslim writing. As a result, the sources used in this limited study form only a small part of the corpus of potentially useful material. I have, however, tried to concentrate on those sources offering larger quantities of relevant material.

The following is a brief survey of the most important of the literary sources I have used. While these sources are well known and need little introduction, they have not usually been used to reconstruct tribal history—that is, a history of individual tribes. This review divides the sources into groups which show varying features with regard to the history of Arab tribes and tribesmen of this period.

The sources:

(i) Genealogical works:

The primary function of genealogy was to describe inter- and intra-tribal relations, in order to define the responsibilities and obligations of both individuals and tribal subsets. However, genealogy was also a vessel for the transmission of much historical information. Genealogical works were more than just descriptions of extended kinship. They included much material discussing tribal excellence and the conditions surrounding tribal rivalries, as well as famous lines of poetry. We see this in the earliest extant genealogical work by al-Sadūsī (d. ca. 200/815-16), and in all those which followed.5

The structure of genealogical narrative and the science itself will be looked at in greater depth in the final chapter of this dissertation. For now, it suffices to review some of the main contributors to this field, and their works.

---

Chapter 1: Source Review

Ibn al-Kalbi's *Jamharat al-nasab* and *Nasab ma'add wa-al-yaman al-kabir*:

Hishäm b. Muḥammad al-Kalbî - usually referred to as Ibn al-Kalbi - (d. 204/819 or 206/821) lived in al-Kūfa. He is held to have been the greatest early Arab genealogical compiler and was also an expert on pagan Arabia. Much of his material was taken from his father, Muḥammad b. al-Sā‘īb al-Kalbî - usually referred to as al-Kalbî (d. 146/763-4).⁶ The latter's work is considered to be the first of its kind; before, there had only been genealogies of single tribes and lineages.⁷ Ibn al-Kalbi's two most famous - and partially extant - genealogical works are *Jamharat al-nasab* and *Nasab ma'add wa-al-yaman al-kabir*. These two works were used by Werner Caskel to create a tabulated edition of Ibn al-Kalbi's works. Caskel's work is invaluable to students of Arab tribal history in the Jahili and early Islamic periods.⁸

Ibn al-Kalbi's two monumental works, as merged by Caskel, contain about 35,000 names and attempt to provide a complete description of the genealogical relationships between the most important lineages, as well as a huge number of less significant groups from all the Arab tribes of the late Jahili and early Muslim period.⁹ The importance of Ibn al-Kalbi's works in highlighting the most prominent Arab figures from pre-Islamic times until the time of al-Ma'mūn cannot be emphasized enough. Ibn al-Kalbi provides the reader with short passages describing the importance or role played by each of these prominent figures, who include poets, Jahili heroes and leaders, saḥāba of the Prophet, caliphal officers, Khārījī rebels, etc. Ibn al-Kalbi also describes tribal groups and their sub-groups and often mentions tribal groups who had changed their tribal affiliation.¹⁰

*Ibn Ḥazin's Jamharat ansāb al-ʾarab:*

'Alī b. Ṭhālib b. Ṭhalib b. Ḥazm (d. 456/1064), was a later Andalusi scholar, who wrote a major genealogical work entitled *Jamharat ansāb al-

---

⁹ Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 531.
Chapter 1: Source Review

Much of the information he collected is included in the more detailed works of Ibn al-Kalbi, yet Ibn Ḥazm also included entries on tribesmen not mentioned by him. Many of these were tribesmen who had moved to Spain, prominent figures who lived later than Ibn al-Kalbi's time, as well as various muḥaddithūn. New or different information to that of Ibn al-Kalbi is occasionally encountered, and although these additional comments are not frequent, Ibn Ḥazm's work remains an important complement to that of Ibn al-Kalbi.

Hamdāni's al-Iklil:

The Iklil of al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad b. Yaʿqūb al-Hamdāni (d. 334/945) includes numerous Yemeni traditions not used by the Kūfīn based Ibn al-Kalbi. The work is a book about ancient Yemen and the genealogies of the Yemeni tribes. Of this work, four parts only survive out of a total of ten. Most of what is lost, however, seems not to be related to ansāb. From the titles - which have luckily been preserved - of these six missing volumes it appears that three of them formed a history of ancient Ḥimyar until Islamic times; one was on the virtues of the Qaḥṭānī Arab tribes; one seems to have been a refutation of traditions which al-Hamdāni regards as false; while the last discussed Ḥimyarite lore and language. Of the four volumes which do survive, namely the first, second, eighth and tenth volumes, three are genealogical and one is mainly a description of Yemeni quṣūr.

Volume I of al-Iklil contains the higher levels of the genealogy of Qaḥṭān but concentrates on one of the two Qaḥṭānī branches, that of Ḥimyar b. Saba⁵ (the other being Kahlān b. Saba⁵). Ḥimyar was by this time

---

11 E12, s.v. "Ibn Ḥazm".
12 Examples for these can be found, for instance, amongst the small branch of B. Ḍā‘ūlallah b. Ghāṭafān, such as a Mu‘tazili scholar, Dirār b. ‘Āmir, and an Andalusian notable, al-Ṭufayl b. al-‘Abdūs [Ibn Ḥazm, Jamāhīr wa‘dīūb al-‘arb, ed. A. M. Ḥārīn, Cairo: Dār al-ma‘ārif, 1962; p. 248; compare with Ibn al-Kalbi, Hīṣabī b. Muḥammad, Jamāhīr wa‘dīūb, ed. N. Ḥasan, Beirut: ʿĀlim l-kitāb, 1993, pp. 455-7.]
13 See Ibn Ḥazm, Jamāhīr, p. 250, where amongst the B. Aṣ白斑, is a sūḥābi and his son, a tābi‘ī, who are not mentioned in the Aṣbā‘a section as described by Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamāhīr, pp. 453-5.
14 See for example Ibn Ḥazm, Jamāhīr, p. 250 and Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamāhīr, p. 455, the entries for ‘Uqla b. Ḥalawayh, where the former tells us that ‘Uqla was involved in the Dārīs War between ‘Abd al-Dhulayn, while the latter only says of him that he stayed prisoners at Yawm al-Raqm.
15 E12, s.v. "al-Hamdāni".
17 See Hamdāni, Ikklil, i, editor's introduction, pp. 57-8.
Chapter 1: Source Review

acknowledged to be divided into Qudā‘a and al-Hamaysaç the descendants of the latter are very numerous tribes and included the South Arabian speaking tribes of ancient Hīmyar. This volume briefly describes the Qudā‘i genealogical tree and the relationship of the Qudā‘i tribes with one another. The rest of the volume concentrates on the tribe of Khawlān18, specifically because al-Hamdānī feels that it has been neglected by the non-Yemeni genealogists.19 He also criticizes the works of "the two Kalbis" who, he says, had investigated the lineage of Mālik b. Hīmyar (i.e. Qudā‘a) because they were geographically close to them but neglected the line of Mālik’s brother, al-Hamaysaç, since they did not travel to Yemen.20

Volume II is a genealogy of the other branch of Hīmyar, namely that of the tribes of al-Hamaysaç, while Volume X contains a brief description of the Kahlāni tribal genealogies on the higher levels, but then concentrates on the author’s own tribe; Hamdān.

The genealogies preserved in the Ikhil are more detailed than the same ones found in Ibn al-Kalbi’s Jamhara.21 Ibn al-Kalbi is one of al-Hamdānī’s main sources, and interestingly he often corrects some of the former’s material. Ibn Ḥazm, however, who postdates al-Hamdānī, does not seem to be aware of the latter’s work.22 Al-Hamdānī’s material, unlike the two works mentioned above, contains frequent long non-genealogical passages. These are mainly pre-Islamic ayyūm accounts23 from a Yemeni perspective, and are often biased towards Hamdān, the tribe of the author.

Balādhuri’s Ansāb al-āshraf:

Although the Ansāb al-āshraf of al-Balādhuri (d. ca. 279/892) follows a genealogical structure it is not strictly speaking a work of genealogy.24 Its

18 Khawlān according to al-Hamdānī’s sources was part of Qudā‘a (Hamdānī, Ikhil, i, p. 190), unlike Ibn al-Kalbi and Ibn Ḥazm who place it under Kahlān (Caskel, Ḥumarat, i, table 176 line 15; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamhara, p. 419). Ibn al-Kalbi does however acknowledge the existence of the view linking it to Qudā‘a (Caskel, Ḥumarat, i, 328 14).
19 Hamdānī, Ikhil, i, pp. 196 9. Indeed, Ibn al-Kalbi and even Ibn Ḥazm who is later than al-Hamdānī, mention extremely few Khawlānis, see for example Caskel, Ḥumarat, i, 248; Ibn Ḥazm, Jamhara, p. 418.
20 Hamdānī, Ikhil, i, p. 8. The actual Arabic is "لا غثت وللمهم إلى … يم" but this should not necessarily be taken to mean that the Kalbis actually ever went to Yemen.
21 G2, s.e. "al-Hamdānī”.
22 Nor does the later Ibn al-Nadim mention al-Hamdānī in the Fihrist.
23 The accounts of aggūm al-‘arab, or ‘black days of the Arabs’ will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.
24 For an insightful discussion of this work see Khaliﬁ, T., Arabī Historical Thought in the Classical Period, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp. 58 61. Not all the parts of the Ansāb manuscript have been published, and there exist parallel editions to some parts of it. I list here citations for only the parts of the work which I have used for this dissertation: al-Balādhuri, Ahmad b. Yahyā, Ansāb al-āshraf.
structure builds on a genealogical framework, but it includes an enormous amount of biographical and historical material which would not appear in any regular work of anšāb. The Anšāb al-ashrāf is a huge work - almost as large as al-Ṭabarî’s great work of history, for instance - even though it was never completed. Instead of being limited to a few inserted sentences on important individuals in the manner of regular anšāb works, Baladhuri places a huge amount of biographical and related historical material under each entry. Thus, under the entry for the Prophet we have in fact a whole work of sīra, while for that of ʿAlî we have a volume mainly covering the battle of Șīfīn, and rather similar in content to Naṣr b. Muzāhim’s Waqʿat sīfīn. Similarly, the entries for various of the saḥāba, the Umayyads and the ʿAbbāsids are quite long. This has meant that over three quarters of the manuscript, which covers all of the Muṣṭar tribes, is concerned with Quraysh alone.

Most of the second half of the manuscript is still unpublished. An examination of the manuscript portion covering the B. Ghaṭafūn27, showed that it clearly follows the structure of Ibn al-Kalbi’s anšāb works, though adding a great amount of information from other sources for many individuals.

The Anšāb al-ashrāf is of the utmost importance to students of tribal history in that it has information on the majority of significant tribesmen in the pre- and early Islamic periods. It is unfortunate that it is incomplete, only covering the bulk of the Muṣṭar branch of the ‘northern’ Arab tribes.28

The works of Ibn al-Kalbi, supplemented slightly by that of Ibn Ḫāzm, sit comfortably with other sources of tribal history. The same names as

---


26 For a description of the contents of the Anšāb al-ashrāf manuscripts and of which parts are published see Kennedy, “Review of Anšāb al-ashrāf”. See also Baladhuri, Anšāb, i, pp. 34-33 of the introductory part for a list of headings included in the Anšāb manuscript.
recorded by these genealogists appear in collections of poetry, *ayyām*, encyclopaedias and early history. Balādhuri's monumental work builds on that of Ibn al-Kalbi to provide an invaluable reference work for the most important tribesmen of Muṣar from Jāhili to early ʿAbbāsid times.

Al-Hamdāni provides us with new genealogies and pre-Islamic anecdotes not found in the dominant Iraqi traditions. However, he has a particular bias towards Hamdān, his own tribal group, and to al-Yaman in general, both of which are usually portrayed very favourably compared to the Nizāris.

(ii) Poetry and adab:

A great number of poetry collections, commentaries and other related works of *adab* are extant and contain much Jāhili and early Islamic Arab tribal traditions. Below are some of the most important works of this type which have been used in this study.

**Isfahāni’s Kitāb al-aghānī:**

The single most important source for tribal affairs in the pre- and early Islamic period must be al-Isfahāni’s *Kitāb al-aghānī*. Abū al-Faraj al-Isfahāni (d. 356/967) was an expert on tribal poetry and lore. His interest in the *ayyām* can be seen from what we are told of his *Kitāb ayyām al-ʿarab*, said to have included 1700 *ayyām*, which unfortunately is not extant. Other non-extant works of his included works on Arab genealogies.29

The core of *Kitāb al-aghānī* (the 'Book of Songs') is a collection of the best hundred songs, supposedly selected for the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Wāthiq, with a few additions by al-Isfahāni himself. But apart from the text of the poems and notes on their melodies, the author includes a huge number of anecdotes connected with the poets, singers and subject of the verses. Furthermore as more verses are mentioned in the anecdotes, new anecdotes are

---

30 El2, s.e. "Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahāni".
also given. The result is a gigantic work which “review[s] the whole of Arabic civilization from the ḏjāhiliyya down to the end of the 3rd/9th century”.  

For the Jāhili period, the Aḥānī preserves a great many pre-Islamic ayyām accounts, which is to be expected as no ayyām survive which are not accompanied by at least a few verses. Much information of a political nature is found for the Umayyad period while, in the ʿAbbāsid period, anecdotes tend to be mainly court-based and non-political. At the same time, descriptions of tribal activities never appear in the anecdotes of the ʿAbbāsid period; tribal nisbas, when still in use, no longer appear to have had a practical function.

Naqāʾid jarīr wa-al-farazaq:

Of similar importance to the Aḥānī, though including far less material, is the much earlier Naqāʾid jarīr wa-al-farazaq, attributed by some scholars to the grammarian and ayyām collector Abū ʿUbayda Muʿāmmar b. al-Muthannā al-Taymi (d. 209/824-5) and, by others, to his student Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245/850).

The Naqāʾid is a collection of hijāḍ and fākhr poetry by the two famous Tamimi poets (from different branches of Tamīm), who were vehemently hostile to one another, as well as verses of a few other poets who took sides in their war of words - the most famous of whom was the Christian poet al-Akhtal of Taghlib. There are a great number of verses accusing the other side of defeat in battle or crediting the composer’s group with victory and it is in explanation of these that we are given much information on tribal affairs.

Like the Aḥānī, apart from many Jāhili anecdotes and pre-Islamic ayyām, the Naqāʾid describes tribal affairs taking place in the Umayyad period as well. Again, as with the Aḥānī, this is due to the fact that these events are referred to by the tribal poetry of the Umayyad period.

An important feature of these two outstanding collections of tribal poetry and lore, is that they contain little information from the Prophetic and

---

34 See EI², s.v. “Abū ʿUbaydah”. See also below n. 36.
Chapter 1: Source Review

conquest periods. This indicates that there was a lull in the production of tribal poetry\(^{36}\) between the Jâhili and Umayyad periods, or, at least in the collection of such material. Tribal poetry seems to enjoy a revival in the Umayyad period, partly as a result of the Qays-Yaman conflict and it finally dies out as we enter the ʿAbbāsid period.\(^{37}\)

The much larger ʿAgḥānī contains a far wider range of poets and verses than the ʿNaqāʾid, and yet there is much unique material in the ʿNaqāʾid.

(iii) Geographies:

Some geographical works are greatly concerned with the histories and populations of places. Those that describe Arabian placenames are of obvious importance, especially as many Arabian placenames mentioned are associated with Jâhili anecdotes. Indeed, many Arabian entries in the works of the geographers owe their existence solely to pre-Islamic battles or other important events which allegedly took place in their vicinity.

Yâqūṭ’s ʿMuʿjam al-buldān:

Although a comparatively very late source, the ʿMuʿjam al-buldān of Yâqūṭ al-Ḥamawi (d. 626/1229)\(^{38}\) is a very important source for tribal history, even in the pre-Islamic period. Under the entries for Arabian placenames, this geographic dictionary often mentions the tribal groups in whose territory they lay, especially in the pre-Islamic period, while, for example, in al-Jazira and al-Shām, entries often reflect the demographic situation after the conquests. Many of the names of the Arabian placenames seem to have been taken by

---

36 By ‘tribal poetry’ I mean poetry referring to or describing historical events in which tribal units or tribesmen are mentioned to have participated.

37 Although there are some verses composed about tribal participation in events in the conquests, verses from those periods do not seem to figure in the Umayyad or ʿAbbāsid poetry compilations. Indeed there appears to be very little considered valuable by compilers until after the battle of Marj Rahīṭ (669/1271). See S. K. Jayyusi, “ʿUmayyad Poetry”, pp. 391-2, in The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the ʿAbbāsid Period, ed. A. F. L. Beeston, T. M. Johnstone, R. B. Serjeant and G. R. Smith, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

For a critique of this traditional view, see Montgomery, J. E., The Vagaries of the Qasidah: The Tradition and Practice of Early Arabic Poetry, NP: E. J. W. Gibb Memorial Trust, 1997, pp. 216-9, ff. The author disagrees that there was a break in production. Instead he views the lack of ʿīna‘ poetry for this period to be a result of collectors’ biases. Thus, during the ʿutbah, for instance, the type of verses composed followed the tradition of the “qīfāh” - pre-Islamic battle epigrams - which was looked down upon by later collectors.

Yāqūt from verses ascribed to the pre-Islamic poets, which he relates together with associated anecdotes under their entries. He frequently quotes al-ʿAsmaʾi (d. 213/828) who had written a book on the territories of the tribes. Indeed al-ʿAsmaʾi's non-extant work, Jazirat al-ʿarab, seems to have been his principal source for pre-Islamic Arabian topography and tribal distribution. It is interesting that Yāqūt preserves some versions of ayyām not to be found in the more usual places such as the Aghānī. Presumably, this information he also obtained from al-ʿAsmaʾi, many of whose works did not survive to the present.

This work is very valuable in trying to establish the territories which the various pre-Islamic tribal groups occupied before, as well as after, the conquest migrations. It also contains some versions of pre- and early Islamic ayyām not found elsewhere.

Al-Hamdānī’s Sīfat jazīrat al-ʿarab:

This geographical work of al-Hamdānī, Sīfat jazīrat al-ʿarab, is similar to his Ikhlī in its importance as a source of information on pre-Islamic Arabia from the Yemeni tradition. It is a work he supposedly compiled after the completion of his studies, from information he gathered during his travels in Arabia. Although it contains more details on Yemen proper, it includes sections on the territories of the northern Arabian tribes of his time, as well as detailed descriptions of places which he visited there such as al-Yamāma, the Hijāz, etc. Like the Ikhlī, it includes many historical and miscellaneous anecdotes, interspersed in the main - in this case geographical - narrative, many of which contain valuable tribal information.

Similarly to the works of ansāb, these works of geography contain a great number of unique historical accounts. Yāqūt’s entries on placenames inside the Arabian peninsula make this an especially valuable source.

39 See for instance Yāqūt, Buhūl, s.v. "Bāṭn al-ʿLisu".
41 EI², s.v. "al-ʿAsmaʾi".
43 EI², s.v. "al-Hamdānī".

13
(iv) Encyclopedias and manuals:

There are a variety of different compendiums and manuals of cultural and historical information which were compiled in very different periods, different regions and for different purposes. Some material contained in them is not found in other sources. Unfortunately, the information given is usually extremely concise.

Ibn Qutayba's *Kitāb al-ma′ārif*:

*Kitāb al-ma′ārif* of ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim b. Qutayba (d. 276/889)\(^{44}\), the famous Baghdadi scholar, was the first work of its kind to be composed; a "historical manual with encyclopaedic appendices on very varied subjects".\(^{45}\) It contains much scattered information on the early Arabs, and pinpoints the most prominent tribesmen and tribal events.

Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih's *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*:

The famous *ʿIqd* of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (d. 328/940)\(^{46}\) of al-Andalus is "a book of *adab* ... a sort of encyclopaedia of the knowledge which is useful to [the] well-informed man". It includes a chapter on genealogies and virtues of the ancient Arabs and another on *ayyām al-ʿarab*.\(^{47}\) Much of the information for his *ayyām* is taken from Abū ʿUbayda al-Taymi\(^{48}\), although some is not, and a lot of Abū ʿUbayda's material is not used.

Like *Kitāb al-ma′ārif*, it contains much miscellaneous useful tribal material. The *ayyām* chapter is of special importance because it is the earliest extant *ayyām* collocation, and contains some material not found elsewhere.

(v) Sīra works:

The *ṣīra* material is concerned with the Prophetic period and specifically with events related to the Prophet's life and career. In it, we find information

---


\(^{45}\) El2, s.e. "Ibn Qutayba".


\(^{47}\) El2, s.e. "Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih".

\(^{48}\) The career of the important figure of Abū ʿUbayda will be discussed more fully in Chapter 3, p. 43-4.
on tribal activity - albeit usually on a relatively minor scale - which is not found in other literature. This could be because these events were rarely associated with poetry and so not of interest to grammarians and collectors of adab, as well as being of little significance to historians on the grander scale, such as al-Ṭabari. Importantly, the names of a great many individuals appear in the sīra and do not appear in the more general histories, most with tribal nisbas attached. This enables us in some cases to make inferences about certain tribal units. Caution must be taken, of course, due to the sanctity conferred by association with the Prophet or the tainting with profanity of those who did not believe in his mission. In any case, at least for the tribes around Medina and in the Hijāz, the sīra material is the only source for this period. It is also significant in that it contains the earliest tribal information in the literary sources which can be dated with some accuracy.

The earliest and most widely used work of sīra is Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Hishām’s (d. 218/833) Sīrat rasūl allāh, the recension of the earlier work of Muḥammad b. Ishāq (d. 150/767)49. There seems to be little more tribal information to be found in other compilations of sīra material, such as Kitāb al-maghāzī of Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidi (d. 207/822)50, the first two volumes of Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr of Muḥammad b. Saʿd (d. 230/845)51 or the first volume of Ansāb al-ahl al-ṣuwarī of Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhuri (d. ca. 279/892).52

(vi) Universal histories:

Ṭabari's Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk:

The Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk of Muḥammad b. Jarir al-Ṭabari (d. 310/923) needs no introduction.53 Regarding this work from a tribal perspective, it suffices to say that information is extremely scarce for the Jāhili period and includes almost no ayyūm accounts. The Prophetic period is also rather economic in terms of tribal information. With the death of the

52 See above n. 24 for full citation.
Prophet and the beginning of the *ridda* wars there is, naturally, a marked increase in accounts of tribal activity, albeit that they are rather vague. The period between the conquests until late Umayyad times contains some information using tribal nomenclature, but not a great deal when compared to the more specialized histories, such as Naṣr b. Muzāhīm’s *Waqṭat *ṣiffin* (see below). Large numbers of individuals who are unidentified tribally, especially those not from Kūfah and Basrah, appear increasingly towards the end of the Umayyad era.54 This sometimes makes it difficult to trace tribal lineages very far.

Ibn al-Athir’s *al-Kāmil fī al-ta’rikh*:

Izz al-Dīn b. al-Athīr’s (d. 630/1233) *al-Kāmil fī al-ta’rikh*55 is very similar in its tribal information to Ţabari’s historical work. However, Ibn al-Athīr does provide a chapter on the *ayyām* al-ʿarab, which he tries to sort chronologically. The contents (not the chronological sorting) seem to be roughly based on Abū ʿUbayda’s *Kitāb al-ayyām* as reconstructed by al-Bayātī, although omitting much poetry and some of the shorter *ayyām*.56 Apart from a few *ayyām* mentioned by Ibn al-Athīr and not in the reconstructed work of Abū ʿUbayda, and *vice versa*, Ibn al-Athīr’s collection mainly differs in that it includes a group of pre-Islamic *ayyām* of the ‘Anṣār’.

While these histories contain little direct information on the pre-Islamic Arab tribes and tribesmen, they remain our main sources for the early Islamic period, as mentioned below they thus need to be approached slightly differently. Together with the works of *sīra* they differ from other sources in that they are chronologically sorted and rarely interested in specifically tribal affairs which do not affect their universal historical outlook.

54 See Caskel, *Gününvar*, i, pp. 21-2, for an explanation of this regional bias; also, Donner, “İskur”, p. 12.
56 The second volume of Bayātī’s work (see above n. 35) is a collection from extant sources - though primarily based on the *Naqaṣīd* - of all the accounts attributed to Abū ʿUbayda, in an attempt to reconstruct his lost *Kitāb al-ayyām*. This collection forms one of the important sources of *ayyām* used in this study.
Chapter 1: Source Review

Specific histories:

Nasr b. Muzähim's *Waqʿat siffin*:

Nasr b. Muzähim al-Minqārī (d. 212/827) was an early Shiʿi historian. His *Waqʿat siffin* is an account of the events surrounding the famous 'battle' and ensuing arbitration. This work is chronologically set in history by virtue of being concerned with a specific roughly datable historical event. However, unlike in the general histories, named tribal groups and subsets figure prominently and most of the names of the tribesmen mentioned - however insignificant their role - are accompanied by a tribal *nisba*.

Yet this work sometimes contains confusing and contradictory accounts, many of dubious historicity. It nevertheless remains a very important work for tribal history. From it one may learn not only of the political stances taken in this conflict by the various tribal lineages, but also much of the post-conquest distribution of migrating tribal groups.

Source criticism:

Having briefly introduced the main types of sources used in this study, the attitude adopted in this dissertation towards these sources must be clarified.

The issue of the reliability of the early Muslim literary sources is today on the mind of every modern 'Western' early Islamic historian. Various published attitudes towards the sources exist, ranging from the sceptical, through the non-sceptical source-critical, to those of scholars who in practice seem to disregard the existence of the problem altogether. However source critics provide much advice on what not to do, but little advice on what to do instead: for the time being, researchers must continue to use their own initiative as to how to use their sources.

---

57 Et al., *Naar b. Muzähim*.
59 See C. Robinson, "The Study of Islamic Historiography: A Progress Report", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, July (1997). This is a review of two works on Arab-Islamic historiography both very different in their attitudes towards, and approaches to, examining the sources; the review in itself is a useful summation of the debate on early Islamic historiography as it now stands. The two works reviewed are Khālid's *Historical Thought* (full citation above n. 24); and Nth, A., *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source Critical Study*, 2nd ed. in collaboration with Lawrence Conrad), trans. M. Bonner, The Darwin Press: Princeton, 1994.
60 See the survey and discussion in Humphreys, *Islamic History*, pp. 68-91.
Chapter 1: Source Review

It has not been possible here to adopt a single attitude towards the source material as a result of the many different types of material being used. Within the pre-Islamic material - dominated by the ayyüm traditions - more divisions occur between different types of accounts. As modern scholarship has tended to ignore the pre-Islamic material, I will discuss in detail my attitude towards it in Part I of this dissertation, "The Arabic pre-Islamic Traditions 'from Jähiliya to Islam'".

Regarding the Muslim period, there is a rough division in the material I have used. On one side there are traditions which are chronologically sorted and more concerned with the actions of individual tribesmen seemingly not acting on behalf of any particular tribal group to which they belonged. This latter group, begins to be found in the earliest Islamic chronological accounts, i.e. in works of sira, and dominates the historical literature for the early Islamic period. However, I am primarily interested in historical trends rather than in the historicity of specific events and as such I believe that a quantitative approach to such material should yield reliable results.

On the other side are traditions which, like the pre-Islamic material, are less chronological, more tribal and concerned with the activities of tribal groups. Accounts of this type are to be found particularly in collections of poetry or the biographies of poets. Like the pre-Islamic accounts, this material generally avoids the influences of theological or legal debates. Instead I have to consider effects on the material imposed by political events - dominated by the Qays-Yaman feud⁶¹ - or as a result of a lack of continuity in transmission. Both of these issues will be dealt with in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, "The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions".

---

PART I

The Arabic pre-Islamic Traditions
'from Jāhiliya to Islam'
Overview

The first part of this dissertation is composed of three chapters which cover different aspects of the pre-Islamic traditions. Chapter 2, "The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions", examines the process of transmission of pre-Islamic traditions into the Islamic period, and argues that reports holding information that dealt with tribal territories, alignments, hostility, and political issues such as regional power, were handed down fairly faithfully.

Chapter 3, "Ayyām al-‘Arab: The Historical Tradition of the pre-Islamic Arabs" focuses particularly on the pre-Islamic oral historical prose, the ayyām al-‘阿拉伯, its functions and characteristics. This chapter posits that the ayyām accounts developed from original reports which were composed to reflect contemporary reality. Different types of ayyām accounts have survived which, due to several factors, vary in their historical accuracy.

Finally, Chapter 4, "The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions", attempts to gauge the internal consistency of the pre-Islamic historical material by examining a sample of ayyām accounts in conjunction with geographic information gathered from a wider range of sources.
Chapter 2
The Transmission
of pre-Islamic Traditions

Introduction:

Recent detailed studies on the authoring, transmission and collection of early Arabic traditions have tended to focus on the historical traditions of the earliest Islamic period, particularly on the nature of akhbar material\(^\text{62}\) and especially those of the Conquests.\(^\text{63}\) Of the pre-Islamic tradition, the transmission process of poetry has received a great deal of attention from scholars but the study of the transmission of other parts of knowledge from the Jâhiliya has been generally neglected.\(^\text{64}\) This chapter will examine the interest in, and transmission of, pre-Islamic traditions, especially prose, into the Islamic period.

*Oral history amongst contemporary bedouin tribes:*

Little has been said on how the ayyâm al-ᶜ-arab accounts may have originated and for exactly what purpose. It is hoped that this examination of contemporary Bedouin oral 'historiography' may help to sharpen our views of the functions and origins of ayyâm accounts. In this and the following chapter, I will be making references to the suwâlif (sing. sâlfîh), or modern Bedouin oral narratives, where appropriate.

One study of modern Bedouin historical accounts is of particular interest. It focuses on a specific historical conflict dating from the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was the period which witnessed the rise of the

---


\(^{64}\) For example, *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, completely ignores the ayyâm al-ᶜ-arab traditions. One exception is the recent work produced by Rima Drory, "The Abbasid Construction of the Jahiliyya: Cultural Authority in the Making", *Studia Islamica*, 83 (1996/1). This study will be discussed below.
Chapter 2: The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions

Rashidi dynasty in Hä'il, events around which are described in extant oral narratives.65

According to the author of this study, Saad Sowayan, there are many apparent similarities between these modern oral accounts and those of the ayyâm. "Aside from that of language there is hardly any difference, between [the modern Bedouin] narratives and the narratives of the ayyâm al-°arab which were transmitted by the ancient rawîs and recorded by ancient Arab philologists".66

Throughout the study, one finds examples of similarities of form with the ayyâm traditions and associated material. Sowayan mentions numerous details of the form of the suwälif which also hold true for the ayyâm. Like the ayyâm, the chronological setting of the suwälif is of no importance. Both types of account are sprinkled with long dialogues, and are interspersed with poetic recitations, which are a mark of authentication of the narrative.67 Indeed, Sowayan says of the poetry associated with the narratives that it "bear[s] a striking resemblance to the classical naqa'īd of Jarir and al-Farazdaq. [Each participating] poet gives essentially a catalogue of all the prominent chiefs and heroes of his tribe, all the battles fought and won by it, and all the men who fell in battle from the other tribe."68 Finally, as happened commonly with the ayyâm, in addition to their narration for their own sake, the suwälif would often play an exegetical role for the poem at poetry recitals, with the result that the oral narratives - both modern and ancient - and associated poetry often had an influence on each other's development.69

Sowayan regards the ayyâm and suwälif as manifestations of a single nomadic Arabian oral historiographical phenomenon. Yet while he is not alone in this view70 and despite the numerous similarities between them, it would be rash to directly equate the ancient ayyâm with the modern suwälif, based on similarity of outward form. Indeed, Islamic historians are not generally positively inclined towards the use of modern anthropological material to solve

---

66 Sowayan, Historical Narrative, p. 5.
67 Sowayan, Historical Narrative, p. 24-8.
68 Sowayan, Historical Narrative, p. 11.
historical questions; approaches tend to range from the 'cautious' to outright rejection.\footnote{Caskel, however, does make use of descriptions of modern Bedouin 'oral history' in his detailed study of the ayyām [Caskel, "Ajīmā", p. 9]. Regarding attitudes of more recent Islamic historians to anthropological evidence, it is worthwhile to examine the stances of two prominent historians of early Islam on this issue. Fred Donner, in his introduction to The Early Islamic Conquests, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981, justifies his use of anthropological material. He uses anthropology to "help elucidate economic, social and political structures that flourished" in the pre-Islamic period. His first chapter, on pre-Islamic Arabia, relies heavily on anthropological evidence to describe the socio-economic situation in Arabia on the eve of Islam. While he is aware of the dangers of projecting contemporary lifestyles back to a period of 13 or so centuries ago, he states that "judicious and selective use" of such material is "both defensible and, indeed, necessary", due to the limitations of our sources. In particular, Donner states that relations and institutions mentioned briefly in the sources may be fuller understood by referring to modern studies examining similar relationships and institutions [see Donner, Islamic Conquests, pp. ix-x].}

Nevertheless, just as there is change there is continuity. Since elements of continuity appear to exist between certain elements of these two bodies of evidence, despite their mutual temporal distance, it is worth considering the potential significance of continuity amongst other associated elements. Thus, in this and the following chapters, where it is found that the modern anthropological evidence may offer some help in answering historical questions, such anthropological evidence will be considered, although in a clearly subordinate role to the literary sources.

The pre-Islamic heritage:

The heritage of the pre-Islamic Arabs is considered first and foremost to be their poetry. Yet in addition to poetry this tradition included prose accounts concerning groups and individuals from the time of the Jāhiliya. Predominant within this prose tradition are the famous ayyām al-°arab, the stylized oral historical narratives of the pre-Islamic Arabs.\footnote{Apart from the ayyām accounts, prose attributed to the pre-Islamic era included information of a diverse nature, such as stories explaining the origins of common proverbs, anecdotes surrounding famous pre-Islamic swords and horses, accounts of the ancient Arabian cults and customs, etc. This material appears often in ayyām accounts as sub-}

\footnote{Allart points out that the ayyām proscribe to the pre-Islamic era with little evidence of their existence within the sources. The concept of ayyām is, however, associated with the period of the Jāhiliya and its continuation after the advent of Islam [Allart, "Iลาน and Haudh, the Sacred Enclave in Arabia", in A. R. Badawi, ed., Melanges Tahà Hussein, Cairo, 1962]. In this case, even though the author did not use anthropological evidence indiscriminately, this sort of equation has led to much controversy.}
heritage of significance to this dissertation was less prominent - but nevertheless extremely important - and was composed of the Arab tribal genealogies.

The relationship between all three main components was very close and often overlapped. Recited poetry usually needed an explanatory prose context, the knowledge of the poet's lineage, as well as those of the main characters mentioned. Nor could descriptions of tribal genealogies be complete without mentioning the famous, or infamous, deeds and verses of the ancestors being named. Similarly, the Arabs could hardly relate the events of a famous battle without mentioning the lineages of the important figures and quoting connected verses. Much verse was imbedded in these prose stories; indeed, the accompanying poetry eventually came to be a mark of authentication of the account itself in Islamic times. Poetry associated with the modern oral historical narratives also served as a guarantee against its loss over time, and this may also have been the case with the ancient narratives.

...
The transmitters:

It is worth considering some information regarding the modern Bedouin transmitters, or rāwīs (pl. ruwā), of oral history, as our knowledge of the earliest ruwā is rather meagre. Firstly, there are no recognized specialist narrators of the modern accounts, as usually all adult men can narrate these suwālif even if some are recognized as better at it than others. In other words, many of a tribe's narratives are known to all its tribesmen, although some are more eloquent at delivering them and tend to monopolize this function.  

Secondly, the narration of the sālfīh is not simply a recital, and the same sālfīh told by the same narrator may differ from time to time due to the narrator's memory, as well as to the varied natures of different audiences. Significantly, a narrator may consider it improper to disclose displeasing details about his own tribe to outsiders or he may stress the virtues of a particular lineage mentioned in the account and not others, if, for example, in the presence of an important tribesmen of that lineage.  

Thirdly, a level of historical accuracy is definitely a concern of these narrators. This can be seen in their arguments over the veracity of particular details of their stories, often of purely historical importance. At the same time, this is not to say that these accounts are straightforward accurate historical reports. Modern rāwīs may be professionals who narrate primarily for the purpose of entertaining patrons, which may sometimes compromise historical accuracy. On the other hand tribal rūwis are usually partisan, and act as spokesmen for their tribe. As such, they will only sing their tribes' praises to outsiders and negative information about a tribal unit must come from outside it. Thus, the venue and audience of the narration play a significant factor.

Keeping these details in mind, we will now look at how recent Islamic historians have described the rāwīs of the pre-Islamic traditions.

As mentioned earlier, most studies on cultural transmission from pre-Islamic times have focused on poetry. However, poetry, prose and genealogies

---

78 Sowaysiu, Historical Narrative, p. 20, ff. See also Caskel "Ajām", p. 84.
70 Sowaysiu, Historical Narrative, pp. 20, 21, ff.
80 Sowaysiu, Historical Narrative, pp. 31-2.
81 Sowaysiu, Historical Narrative, p. 20. In this regard see also p. 28, where the author specifies that arguments sometimes arise between narrators over genealogies and names of individuals involved in the account.
82 Sowaysiu, Historical Narrative, p. 31.
were usually intertwined, and thus the process of transmission of poetry in its general outline may be assumed to be similar for prose material as well.

Various authors describe three main types of ruwâ of poetry in pre- and early Islamic times: a) apprentice poets who learned the verses of their masters and transmitted them; b) tribal ruwâ, who may not only have stored verses but also akhbâr and ansâb of their tribe; and from this second group developed c) the general ruwâ, who transmitted not only the verses of their fellow tribesmen but also those of poets from outside of their tribal group. These groups continued to transmit material into the Islamic period. But, following the conquests, the third type, the general râwi, became more common. For the ayyâm accounts, both tribal and general rawîs are sometimes named as the sources of the earliest compilers. Apart from continuing via specialized transmitters, some material would have been widely known throughout a tribal group or amongst different groups, and while more different versions of it tended to be created as a result, the core content remained intact.

The text as a "living" tradition.

Turning to the circumstances of creation and the degree of changeability of the prose texts, it is useful to start again with a glance at the modern parallel. The sâlfîh has no specific moment of inception. While an important event is happening and immediately after it has occurred, people will talk about it. The form is as yet unimportant, as opposed to the content. Later, skilful narrators gather the information on the event, including the attitudes of the informants towards it, and transform them into "poetic versions of what happened". This stylistic embellishment "gives symbolic significance to an event and helps to make it memorable." As literary motifs and exaggerations may continue to be added over time, the oral history may develop into legends involving characters of epic proportions.

Because the suwâlîf - as long as they remain oral - have unfixed texts, and as a result of artistic influences, potential economic interests and tribal

---

85 I have borrowed this term from Drory, see "Abbasid Construction" p. 35, ff.
86 Sowayan, Historical Narrative, pp. 21-2, 27.
loyalties, different versions of the narratives will come into being. Yet these versions tend to differ over the hows and whys of an event as opposed to over what had actually happened. In other words, the modern ruwā of tribal groups narrate somewhat elaborated reports and, perhaps, may withhold parts of others, but they never appear to consciously falsify history.\(^{87}\) Again, these points should be kept in mind when we examine the 'development' of the pre-Islamic traditions.

From the point of coming into circulation, the pre-Islamic prose accounts or poetic verses were also orally transmitted. In addition, the integrity of their form was not considered as sacred as in later isnād-concerned times. This meant that pre-Islamic (as well as early Islamic) traditions that were transmitted to successive generations were often done so loosely, by methods sometimes amounting to paraphrasing. This 'unforced' development continued until the tradition finally stabilized in the late Umayyad and early 'Abbāsid period, upon its extensive recording. True that poetry, for instance, could not be paraphrased as such, yet the metre, topicality, etc., of a poem could easily be maintained even if some words were 'developed'.\(^{88}\) Similarly, parts of some tribal genealogies may have 'developed', yet others would have been too well ingrained in collective consciousness to do so.\(^{89}\)

How much of this 'development' affected the pre-Islamic tradition, only concerns us with regard to the extent that it may have affected its representation of the topics of our interest; namely, those concerned with tribal territories, alignments, rivalries and power. In order to do this, the next sections will outline the course of the pre-Islamic tradition as it passed from the pre-Islamic period into early Islam.

The pre-Umayyad period:

There are indications to suggest that the impact of the Islamic creed itself on the transmission of pre-Islamic tradition during the Prophetic period was not all that considerable. Importantly, the Prophet denounced tribal "ašabīya, upon which the greater part of the tradition rested conceptually.

---

Nevertheless, this does not seem to have led to a shying away from the transmission of a great deal pre-Islamic material.\footnote{See S. K. Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry", in The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, pp. 390-1.}

Firstly, it must be noted that the major Najdi tribes - whose traditions form the bulk of surviving pre-Islamic literary material - were not ruled by Islam during most or all of the Prophetic period. Moreover, even the \textit{ansār} tribes of Medina, who were the most exposed to Islam during the Prophetic period remembered their pre-Islamic traditions. In fact, these traditions included their not-so-honourable take-over of Yathrib from the Jews\footnote{Ibn al-Athir, \textit{Kamil}, i, pp. 656-8.} and of their later vicious civil war\footnote{Ibn al-Athir, \textit{Kamil}, i, pp. 656-84.}. There are even Prophetic \textit{ahādīth} which claim that the Prophet condoned the narration of pre-Islamic poetry and \textit{ayyām}.\footnote{However, this point was debated by the early Muslims (Montgomery, \textit{Qudah}, pp. 214-6).}

It was not Islamic doctrine or Prophetic practice which had visible impact on the pre-Islamic tradition. However, what did, were the Islamic conquests, the tribal migrations to the provinces and \textit{ansār}, the organization of the newly created Muslim armies and the accompanying administrative policies for societal organization.

**Conquests, tribal migration and settlement:**

During the conquests and in the period immediately following them, great numbers of Arab tribes migrated from the Arabian peninsula into the newly conquered territories. They settled close to each other, especially in the new garrison towns. This massive migration and the change of lifestyle it entailed - not only for the nomads - must have caused severe disruption to the transmission process and thus the loss of much tribal lore.\footnote{Jones, \textit{Early Arabic Poetry}, i, p. 23.} These new conditions were also to affect the tribal system itself and its expression in the genealogical links between the tribal groups and units.\footnote{Duru, "\textit{Kutub al-musala}", p. 129.}

But the Conquests and the settlement of tribesmen in garrison towns, also increased interest in tribal feats, and thus in the tribal heritage. Indeed, during the conquests themselves, the sources tell us that tribal poets were used by the Muslim leadership to raise the morale of their troops at the front.\footnote{According to Tabari, for instance, the Caliph ‘Umar sent poets to the Iraqi front as the confrontation with the Sassanians escalated before al-Aridiya (Tabari, \textit{Tarikh}, i, p. 2292).} Moreover, the simple fact that the armies were composed of different tribal
Chapter 2: The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions

groups not only increased rivalry between the groups, but also enhanced and made real tribal solidarity amongst smaller groups which may never have known each other in the pre-Islamic times.\textsuperscript{97}

On another level, the new Islamic administration was concerned with giving out stipends at different rates to different tribal groups, as well as with maintaining the army's tribal military units. In effect, this meant that determination of social status based on genealogy was institutionalized by the state to a certain degree. Importantly, tribal affiliation now acquired very important economic connotations.\textsuperscript{98} As tribal affiliation became an indicator of economic rank in the state's payrolls, not surprisingly, the administration soon became involved in sorting out disputed affiliation claims made by various lineages, \textit{etc.}\textsuperscript{99} Indeed, attempts to change genealogical affiliation in this time are often recorded by later genealogists. At the same time since political and economic organization was based on the tribal system, the administration under 'Umar (d. 23/644) required the collection of extensive genealogical lists. This meant that by the first Islamic century, genealogical relationships were definitely recorded in writing. Indeed, numerous early works of genealogy are mentioned by later sources, it is unfortunate however that almost none survive to the present.\textsuperscript{100} Thus, the \textit{diwan} which 'Umar established gave genealogies, and hence the study of them, a great importance.\textsuperscript{101}

In addition to this, there was also an early beginning to scholarly interest in tribal affairs, mainly linked to Islamic history and primarily within the Islamic period, especially concerned with the question of which tribal groups participated in the \textit{ridda}. But even old poetry, pre-Islamic \textit{ayyām} and genealogies were studied to some extent.\textsuperscript{102} Indeed, the influence of the style of the pre-Islamic \textit{ayyām} stories is visible in the accounts of some of the early

\textsuperscript{98} Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 543.
\textsuperscript{100} Genealogies were still disputed in the 'Abbāsid period, especially because of their financial implications. A clear example of this is to be found in the accounts describing the orders of the 'Abbāsid Caliph al-Mahdi to strike the descendants of 'Abd al-Malik from the \textit{divān} of Quraysh and to return the Al Abi Lakhram to their status of \textit{mawāli} of the Prophet [Tabari, \textit{Tarikh}, iii, pp. 477-92].
\textsuperscript{101} See, \textit{q.v.} "\textit{Nasab}"; see also, Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 541; and Donner, "\textit{Bakr}", p. 13. Hamidat mentions that the Arabs of Yemen had recorded their genealogies, some of which he had seen, but the date of composition of these is unclear [See Duri, \textit{Kutub al-nasab}, p. 129].
\textsuperscript{102} Duri, \textit{Historical Writing}, pp. 21, 41.
Chapter 2: The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions

Islamic events, such as the maghāzi of the Prophet. This points to their strength as a component of the early Islamic literary culture.  

Thus, while tribal migration probably led to some disruption in the transmission of much pre-Islamic tribal material, tribal settlement and its consequence of bringing together so many tribal groups in one place enhanced interest in tribal affairs amongst the tribesmen. This guaranteed the continuance of the role of the tribal ruwāṣ in the garrison towns. The political authorities in the pre-Umayyad period were especially interested in tribal genealogies, boosting the importance of that facet of the pre-Islamic heritage, and presumably to an increase in the number of general ruwāṣ-genealogists. Moreover, the pre-Islamic tradition as a whole was beginning to become of interest to learned men, although, apart from ridda participation, seemingly only at a secondary level.

The Umayyad period:

At least since the time of Muʿawiya (d. 60/680), there seems to have been an increase in interest in tribal lore and, more prominently, tribal genealogies at the Umayyad court. We are told, for instance, that Muʿawiya ordered the compilation of accounts (akhbār) of the ancient 'kings' of the Arabs and the ʿajam (non-Arabs).  

Significantly, the two main narrators of pre-Islamic material at Muʿawiya's court, Daghfal b. Ḥanzala (d. 50/670 or 65/684-5) and ʿAbid/ʿUbayd b. Sharya, were primarily known for being genealogists,  

103 Duri, Historical Writing, pp. 22, 45, 46, 48; C. Cahen, "L'Historiographie Arabe: des Origines au VIIe s. H.", Arabica, 33 (1986), fasc. 2, p. 135; see also Khudri, Historical Thought, p. 150, who mentions three basic themes from which Islamic historical writing developed, one of which is also 'tribal' in nature and was composed mainly of ʿajam and ansāl material. 

Stefan Leder is skeptical of the idea that the form of the ṣaymina traditions was used as a model for early Muslim historical writing. He believes rather that the ṣaymini themselves had been presented in early Muslim forms [Leder, "Literary Use of Khabar", p. 278]. However, this is a weak argument. In this chapter similarities of form have been drawn between modern Bedouin oral historical reports and many of the ṣaymini accounts. Conrad also shares Leder's view with regard to the influence of ṣaymini on fatḥ literature, and while showing some differences between the two genres in terms of function, is mistaken to narrow that of the whole ṣaymin corpus down to solely the elucidation of poetry; or, to believe that all ṣaymini were transmitted only via one source, Abū ʿUbaydah [L. Conrad, art. "Fatḥ", in J. S. Meisami and P. Starkey, eds., Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature, New York: Routledge, 1998]. 


105 ʿAbid (or ʿUbayd, see B12, q.v. "ʿUbayd b. Sharya") was a Yemeni who lived in the time of the Prophet and died in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik (Ibn al-Nadim, Fihrist, Taifhaddud, p. 102 = Dodge p. 194).
further stressing the link between *ansāb* and pre-Islamic *akhbār.* Indeed, most of the transmitters of tribal lore in the Umayyad period were also genealogists. Such were Shihāb b. Madhāir, various members of the family of B. al-Kawwāz (who had a reputation for being expert genealogists\(^{107}\)), Zayd b. al-Kayyis al-Namāri who was "the most learned genealogist of the 7th c."\(^{106}\), Zuhayr b. Maymūn al-Handānī (d. 155 H) who "was knowledgeable in genealogies and the *ayyām* of the [Arabs]," Awāna b. al-Ḥakam (d. 147 H), and other less known early *ruwā* such as al-Bakrī al-NAṣrānī, Lisān al-Ḥumra, Ṣūhār al-ʿAbdī, al-Shārqi b. al-Qāṭāmī and Saʿd al-Qāṣīr.\(^{109}\)

The particular interest of the Umayyads in genealogies continued until the end of their rule, presumably because genealogies played an important role in the politics of the Umayyad state and the various struggles for power in it.\(^{110}\) A late example is that of the Caliph al-Walīd II (he reigned for one year 125-6/743-4) who reportedly ordered a register to be compiled containing the tribal genealogies of all the Arabs.\(^{111}\) This interest also was to cause much modification to the Arab genealogical trees, more significantly on the higher levels.\(^{112}\) These modifications will be discussed further in Part III, "Arab Tribalism from Jahiliya to Islam".

It is important to note that throughout the Umayyad period, support for the collection of the Arab tribal heritage seems mainly to have been from the court of the Umayyad rulers. However, it came not only from the caliphs but also from important court figures such as Ṣabīl bin al-Hamīd al-Kātib (d. 132/750), the secretary to Marwān II. He, for instance, in writing advice to other *kuttāb*, advised them to read about the *ayyām* of the Arabs and of the *ṣajām*.\(^{113}\)

Pre-Islamic tribal lore, continued to be popular amongst the tribal populations of the garrison towns for a variety of reasons, as mentioned

106 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Dodge, notes pp. 971, 1115; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 169; see also Muṣṭafā, Sh., *al-Tarīkh al-ʿarabī wa-al-maʿārikhān*, 4 vols., Beirut: Dar al-Ṭīn li-l-Mahāyil, 1958, i, pp. 103-4, who gives a long list of *ruwā* of tribal lore active both before and during the early Umayyad period; and Yahya, Luṭfī Ṣabīl bin al-Wahāb, *al-ʿArab fi al-ʿaṣār al-ṣaḥīḥa*, Beirut: Dar al-Nashr li-l-ʿArab, 1975, p. 229, n. 34. Khalidi gives an example from Muṣṭafā, which describes Muʿāwiyah as listening to the "history and Ayyam of the Arabs" and the histories of bygone kings. Even though Khalidi concides that this account was probably ascribed to Muʿāwiyah at a later date, nevertheless he maintains that it is credible and indicates the concern of the Umayyads with such material [Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 84].


111 Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 50.


earlier. Amongst these audiences, we are told that it was tribal and general ruwa who were responsible for its continuation.114

Not all transmission was still oral by this stage. Firstly, there were already in circulation written collections of tribal lore, with titles such as Kitáb tamín, etc.115 What is more, verses collected in the Nağâ'id (which were composed ca. 60-70 H) contain references to written collections of poems of pre-Islamic composers. Indeed, Lyall believes that towards the later part of the first century H, most of the surviving poetry, and presumably also associated prose, was already to be found in written form.116

Thus, this period witnessed the perpetuation of the pre-Islamic tradition at different levels. Some ruwa were based at the Umayyad courts, others in the garrison towns. Some, at least, had written down parts of their material. Nevertheless, the tradition was still mostly "living" at this stage.

The late Umayyad and early ʿAbbāsid periods:

The pre-Islamic traditions began to be recorded in the shape in which they have survived to us, in the late Umayyad and early ʿAbbāsid periods.117 The beginning of the second Islamic century witnessed increased interest in the pre-Islamic literary material, along with a general surge in scholarship in all other fields. By the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries, great works of pre-Islamic lore were being compiled. Noticeably, despite the social upheavals and the rise to importance of non-Arab elements in the ʿAbbāsid Caliphate, the importance of the tribal origins of the urban Arabs and of pre-Islamic tribal lore persisted.118

---

114 See Jones, Early Arabic Poetry, i. p. 23.
115 Dari, Historical Writing, p. 139.
117 Araz, Poésie, p. 58.
118 Goldziler, Muslim Studies, i. p. 77. See also Noah Conrad, Historical Tradition, p. 38. Khalibi, however, referring in particular to the works of the two Kalbis, says that "the great narrāt works appeared precisely when the Islamic empire was no longer ruled by an Arab aristocracy. They may be thought of as a kind of epitaph to the Arabs of both the jāhilīya and Islam" [Khalibi, Historical Thought, p. 50]. Khalibi seems to regard that Ibn al-Kalbi's work was an anomaly in that it came at a time when scholars were uninterested in what was, by then, a defunct tribal system. However, by the ʿAbbāsid period there was a great interest in the immediate past, the accounts of which involved individuals who were at least partially defined by the tribal system - that the pre-Islamic past attracted much interest in the ʿAbbāsid period, as is evident by the huge pre-Islamic components of the numerous works of adab. Furthermore,
Those involved in the continuation of this heritage at this stage, were general ruwa' and 'scholars' who were now often independent of caliphal patronage. Varied scholarly interests spearheaded by philologists and spurred on by the Shu'ubiya debate led to the increase of literary importance of the pre-Islamic cultural legacy. This culminated in the extensive collection of pre-Islamic poetry and prose anecdotes.

Nor, as mentioned above, did interest in genealogies abate in the wake of the destruction of the Umayyad political system by the 'Abbāsids. Indeed, Arab genealogy even expanded with the formalizing of genealogical links between tribal group eponyms and their fusion with Biblical genealogies. The second century, thus, also witnessed the activities of the great genealogical compilers, such as Muhammad b. al-Sā‘ib al-Kalbi, and later his son, Ibn al-Kalbi, both of whom were especially concerned with higher level and all-encompassing genealogical links.

This cultural flowering and the process of collection and recording of the pre-Islamic tradition was not a single event, nor can it be said that it started and ended in discrete points in time. However, it could be said to have peaked between the mid-second and through the third Islamic centuries, the period of origin of most of the major compilations.

Sources of the compilers:

Tribal traditions circulating amongst ruwa' in Syria and Iraq - but particularly in Kūfa and Baṣra - were collected, organized and then recorded

---

Ibn al-Kalbi’s work, as Khalidi notices, must have primarily functioned as a tribal reference (Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 52). Given the extensive material of the Jāhilī and early Islamic material which had become available as a result of widespread collection along different themes, such a referential work should hardly be seen as an anomaly; one would perhaps be surprised if such a work had not been compiled at this time. (Note: Khalidi only talks of one of the genealogical works of Ibn al-Kalbi, namely the *Jahārat al-masah*, and seems to ignore the *Kitāb al-masah al-khālī*.

For more information on both of these and other works of *masah*, see Duri, *Kitāb al-masah*.)

The fact that philologists began to take an interest in tribal poetry led to increased interest in the accompanying prose accounts. Thus, for instance, it is not surprising that one of the pupils of Abū ‘Amr b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 154/770), the famous philologist, was Abū ʿUbayd al-Taymi (d. 211/826), who was one of the most important early collectors of the *ayām* (Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 147).


For knowledge of pre-Islamic material had lapsed considerably before its recording, although he does not make clear why, when and to what extent it did so.

Duri, *Historical Writing*, pp. 51, 146.
in different ways depending on the topical focus of the compilers. The sources for the compilers were tribal and general ruwā found in the garrison towns (some of whom would have previously worked for the Umayyad aristocracy), allegedly also tribal ruwā of the nomadic tribes in Arabia, as well as on occasion various written records and, in the case of genealogists, also the administrative registers.¹²¹

To give a more precise example of the nature of the sources of the compilers of this period, it is useful to look at the sources of a prolific compiler such as Ibn al-Kalbī. Ibn al-Kalbī was a collector of tribal lore as well as a genealogist, and his sources may be taken as an example of the range of sources to which other compilers may have had access. We know that Ibn al-Kalbī used much of the material of his father, who may be considered both an early compiler as well as a general rāwī. Ibn al-Kalbī also quotes many direct tribal and general ruwā, at least from al-Kūfā. He is also quoted by al-Ṭabari as saying that he accessed documents kept in the monasteries of Ḥira, which he used for historical reports on the Mundhirid dynasty and their dealings with the Arab tribes.¹²² Furthermore, he cites “specialists who had access to biblical and Palmyrene sources; he was kept informed of archaeological discoveries in the Yemen [and] he seems to have had a secretary ... who provided him with translations from Pahlavi.”¹²³ Thus, we can see that there were a great many different types of sources available to compilers of this period.

However, the collectors of poetry and tribal lore were not always neutral in passing along their material. As opposed to tribal ruwā who, in the main, innocently transmitted a “live” tradition, there is evidence that many general ruwā and compilers deliberately corrupted parts of their material.¹²⁶ Not all transmitters and collectors, however, were necessarily guilty of such conduct. Collectors such as al-Mufaḍḍal al-Dabbī (d. ca. 170/785) and al-ʿAsmaʿī (d. 213/828) generally had good reputations in terms of authentic transmission amongst their contemporaries and later scholars. Others, such as ʿ Hammād al-Rāwiya (d. 156/773) and Khalaf al-ʿĀḥmar (d. 179/796) who were frequently accused of forging or wrongly attributing much poetry, cannot have been

¹²³ Durī, Historical Writing, p. 53; Caskel, “Ajīm”, pp. 82-3.
¹²⁴ Khalīlī, Historical Thought, p. 52.
¹²⁵ Aṣkū, q.v. “al-Kalbī”.
¹²⁶ See Caskel, “Ajīm”, pp. 84-5. With regard to poetry, Tāba Ḥusayn gives five main motivations for its conscious development: political, religious, the Shafʿ īya debate, the effects of story-telling and some miscellaneous reasons related to the ruwā (Ṭaba Ḥusayn, Fi al-ʿadab al-jāhilī, pp. 113-73). Also, verses were modified to fit different situations or simply to refine them, or invented to explain unusual words or to increase a particular poet’s repertoire.
totally innocent of such widespread charges even though some modern scholars have stressed the exaggeration of such accusations.

Yet despite being subjected to much manipulation at this stage of its transmission, one important positive effect of the process of collection and recording was to cause the literary material eventually to stabilize and thus free it from further accretion or manipulation. Thus ended the "living" tradition, as one author puts it.

How much the prose tradition was affected by this fabrication of the collectors, as well as how much it was affected by the tumultuous events of the early Islamic period as a whole, will be discussed below. Before that discussion, it is necessary to look at a recent work on the transmission of pre-Islamic tradition, which is quite critical of its authenticity.

Contemporary scholarship on the transmission process:

Rina Drory is the author of the most recent study to date of the transmission of pre-Islamic literary material (not only poetry) into the Islamic period. While her article, in my view, is lacking in many ways, it is necessary to examine her views, however briefly, in order to place this chapter in the context of virtually non-existent contemporary scholarship on the issue.

The author starts from the view that interest in the pre-Islamic period did not exist to any great extent until the early 'Abbāsid period. She accuses the 'Abbāsid ulamā' of pre-Islamic lore - whom she defines as being predominately non-Arab - of freely and extensively falsifying traditions, as required by the 'Abbāsid caliphs. She presents the new interest in the Jahiliya by the 'Abbāsid caliphs as a need to acquire a sense of Arab identity, which she claims did not exist until then - in cultural terms, at least. She claims that

---

127 See Jones, Early Arabic Poetry, i, pp. 24-5; Drory, "ABBASID CONSTRUCTION", pp. 36-7. Some modern scholars have even labelled different 'schools' as having had different standards in their transmission and collection of poetry. Thus, the Kifān 'school' is supposed to have been more concerned with literal transmission, while the Bayān was more lax and indeed changed verses to fit them into preconceived 'mouths' [Arazi, Poëtir, p. 25]. But see Nath Conrad, Historical Tradition 5-16, which argues against the existence of schools altogether, although focusing on the transmission of early Islamic historical akhbar, rather than poetry or philology.


129 Drory, "ABBASID CONSTRUCTION", pp. 44-8. Although, see Arazi, Poësir, pp. 31-5, who gives evidence of developments, albeit accretion and not manipulation, occurring after recording.

130 For bibliographic details, see above n. 61.

131 For an insightful discussion of the changes in the poetic tradition as it moved from oral transmission to literate recording, see Statweych, Abu Tamamm, part III "Abu Tamannūn and the Arabic Anthology", esp. pp. 246, ff.
thus, these non-Arab intellectuals were responsible for "placing Arabism and Islam on the cultural map of the era".132

I will only briefly point out that there is a great deal of evidence that interest in the pre-Islamic period did exist in Umayyad times, as has been described above and can be seen from the extensive lists in Ibn al-Nadīm’s *Fihrist*, or from the contents of the poetic ‘battles’ between Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, which date back to the early Umayyad period. The fact that the only ‘scholar’ mentioned by her of this group of “non-Arab intellectuals” is al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbi (a freeborn tribesman of the Arab tribe of Ḍabba133) discredits her theory when stressing the importance of the non-Arab element.134 Finally, the fact that later scholars, as she notes - and as the sources tell us - derived their legitimacy from literal isnād-based transmission, surely means that they did generally transmit material from previous ruwā. Indeed the author does state that they "gathered a corpus of knowledge that had been preserved in tribal and local frameworks", which hardly sits well with her statement that the scholars "fabricat[ed] Arab-Islamic learning as called for".135

Apart from these flaws, the author does offer some insights into how the pre-Islamic tradition - prior to its recording - may have been unstable. Indeed, she is mainly referring to poetry, but nevertheless usefully shows the various motivations to its manipulation by transmitters. One main motive was to improve verses, perhaps as literary tastes changed,136 or to attribute new verses to a favourite poet, in order to appeal to the tastes of different audiences.137 Of greater interest to the political historian were motives "to prove claims involving genealogy" and forgeries motivated by "economic and political interests as well as matters of prestige", unfortunately for none of these does the author provide us with details or references.138

133 El, q.m. "al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbi".
136 Drury incorrectly translates the verb *ḥadhāfa* from her sources as 'to revise', thus obfuscating the intention behind the revision according to her sources; Drury, *Albasid Construction*, p. 39 and n. 17.
Chapter 2: The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions

Manipulation of the prose tradition in the Islamic period:

It is indisputable that the pre-Islamic tradition underwent changes and development before its recording. Yet, what is disputable is the way in which the prose material - in particular that of the ayyām - was affected by this change. Particularly, it is important to see if the ayyām were affected by new tribal situations and realignments which took place in the early Islamic period, prior to their recording.

It has been argued by Donner that alignments or oppositions described in ayyām accounts were true in the period in which they came into being, for reasons of credibility amongst the audiences of the ayyām.\(^\text{130}\) However, knowing the ayyām material to be unstable, the accounts may not reflect these original tribal realities, yet those of later periods. Nevertheless, they should, at least, give us clues as to tribal alignments during the period they were last changed.\(^\text{140}\) In this way, one would expect the Qays-Yaman rupture, or the post-conquest tribal dispersal, to have caused considerable damage to the surviving tribal historical tradition. This clearly happened with the genealogical traditions, and these developments to that tradition will be discussed below in Chapter 7. Yet the evidence suggests that such tribal polarities as reflected in the ayyām accounts are not a reflection of post-conquest realities. This means that they must reflect the position of tribes in the pre-Conquest era.

One particular example is of extreme relevance to this point. It is found in the account of the killing of Kulayb b. Rabī‘a, the incident which is said to have triggered the dreadful Başūs War. The account records that the Ma‘add confederation only ever came together in war under three leaders. Once under cĀmir b. al-Zarib of cAdwān of Qays, another time under Rabī‘a b. al-Ḥārith of the B. Jusham b. Bakr of Taghlib; and a last time under his son Kulayb Wā‘il b. Rabī‘a at Yawm Khazāz.\(^\text{141}\)

Yet, Taghlib and cAdwān played only an insignificant role in the Islamic period, relative to other Arab tribes. In fact, Taghlib remained almost ostracized by the other Arabs for remaining Christian. The fact that the above account (and, for Taghlib, many others) describes them as the most influential tribes of the Ma‘add confederation in the pre-Islamic period, has to mean that this was indeed the case at a certain point. Thus, in this case at least, no

\(^{130}\) See for instance Donner "Bakr", p. 15. This point will be taken up below in Chapter 3, "Ayyām al-‘Arab".

\(^{140}\) Donner, "Bakr", p. 15.

\(^{141}\) Ibl al-Askīrī, Khānūl, i, pp. 521-4.
Chapter 2: The Transmission of pre-Islamic Traditions

'updating' of the *ayyām* has taken place in order to make it represent Islamic tribal realities.

There also seems to be no attempt to fabricate tribal material of the Jāhiliya in order to accommodate its projected tribal alignments with those of the Umayyad period. Firstly, there is no parallel with the Qays-Yaman conflict in the *ayyām*. True there are incidents when "Nizar" or "Ma‘add" fought against "Yaman", but in the most important of these, Yawm Khazāz, we find the bitter foe of Umayyad Qays, the B. Taghlib, leading Nizār against Yaman. Thus, the Umayyad Rabī‘a-Yaman alliance of Baṣra is not reflected. Nor can even any significant patterns be discerned if we compared tribal groups grouped together in the conquests or settled together in the garrison towns with their activities in the *ayyām* accounts.

Moreover, Jāhili tribal alignments and enmities as recorded in the *ayyām* accounts, as well as geographical distribution, are highly consistent. The issue of consistency will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4. For the moment, it seems that no significant links between tribal alignments and enmities of the Jāhili period and those of the post-conquest and Umayyad periods can be detected.

Conclusions:

The pre-Islamic tradition, in its three main intertwined components, was perpetuated from pre-Islamic times through various channels, from collective memory to more specialized *ruwa*, and mainly orally. Together these components acted as a public record of tribal history in the pre-Islamic and early Islamic periods. To be sure, only a portion of the tradition was handed down to successive generations and much of it developed as it was transmitted.

Islam itself had but little effect on the tradition, yet, the ensuing conquests and tribal migrations led to the loss and confusion of much of the tradition which was in circulation at the time. After conquests, migration and settlement, transmission continued as before, while multi-tribal *ruwa*, became more common in the garrison towns. Genealogies, in particular, became important after the conquests for a number of economic and political reasons. It was important to the early Islamic state to keep genealogical records of tribal lineages and tribesmen in the military.
The Umayyads continued this interest in genealogies, which reflected the tribal factionalism which dominated the political arena during their rule. Indeed, genealogies in this period were undergoing major developments and changes, particularly on the higher levels. Our sources show that the Umayyad court gave much support to the perpetuators of pre-Islamic Arab literary culture by commissioning early works of genealogies and lore. In the garrison towns pre-Islamic material was used by the tribal and general ruwā to provide entertainment and, when the political situation called for, to arouse the tribal sentiments.

By the beginning of the second Islamic century, the recording process of the early Islamic period was beginning, led by a variety of scholars. For the pre-Islamic tradition, we find that many scholars were, at this point, independent of caliphal patronage. Their sources were tribal and general ruwā, written records and previous compilers. As more compilers appeared, their works increased in size, so that by the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries huge works of pre-Islamic lore had come into being.

Continuous interest in the pre-Islamic tradition means that it could not have been wholly invented in the ‚Abbāsid period, as one recent author has suggested. It was, however, subjected to changes during its journey from Jāhiliya to Islam, with different components undergoing different changes and with each affecting the other.

Finally, it appears that the development undergone by the pre-Islamic prose tradition as it entered the Islamic period, especially the ayyūm, did not change the content of the material - whether originally historical or not - to reflect later tribal realities.

The question of the extent of the original historicity and the consistency of the historical prose material, the ayyūm al-‘arab, will be the focus of the following two chapters. The process - and implications - of the development of Arab genealogical traditions in the early Muslim period will be discussed in Chapter 7.
Chapter 3

Ayyām al-`Arab:
The Historical Tradition of
the pre-Islamic Arabs

Introduction:

The Arab 'battle days', or ayyām al-`arab, are accounts of battles fought between Arabian tribes, mostly in the pre-Islamic period. The lengths of the surviving versions of the ayyām accounts range from short prose passages, sometimes only a paragraph long, to composite accounts which include much poetry and may fill many pages. While many of these accounts describe the events of raids and feuds between tribal groups and the deeds of famous tribal leaders and heroes, some depict large-scale wars involving many tribes, the Arabian tribal states of the Lakhmids, Ghassānids and Kindis, and even campaigns of the South Arabian kingdoms.\textsuperscript{142}

The accounts of the ayyām are a fusion between fiction and history. The events described in some accounts can be seen to be fictional in nature while in others they may appear more historical. Yet appearance counts for little, and the reality behind the events depicted in ayyām accounts is difficult to establish.\textsuperscript{143} Nevertheless, negative blanket statements such as Crone's "the ayyām are simply legendary", or "tribal ... history up to the ascension of Mu`awiya [is] largely beyond disentanglement"\textsuperscript{144} are incorrect and misleading, as we shall see.

The pre-Islamic Arabs related these oral accounts not only of their own battles, but also those of their ancestors.\textsuperscript{145} These Jāhili ayyām did not constitute the only pre-Islamic prose material even if they did form its bulk. The surviving ayyām accounts often included miscellaneous explanatory material, of an origin external to the battle stories. Examples of these are

\textsuperscript{142} For the most detailed account on the literary nature, composition and development of the ayyām accounts one must turn to W. Caskel's "Aijdm al-'Arab" mentioned earlier; see n. 3 above.

\textsuperscript{143} See the discussion in Bayāti, Ayyām al-`arab, i, pp. 71-86. See also Caskel's brief overview, "Aijdm", pp. 6-9.

\textsuperscript{144} Crone, Slaves, p. 9. For the first statement Crone simply makes a general reference to a 99 page long article on the ayyām by W. Caskel, which does not in any case focus on the topic of historicity, and moreover, while wary of the historical content of much of the traditions, by no means claims that they are all simply 'legendary'. For the second, the endnote simply reads: "Who participated in the battle of Siffin is as loaded a question as who participated in that of Badr".

\textsuperscript{145} Duri, Historical Writing, p. 18.
descriptions of genealogical relationships or geographic and demographic information on Arabia.

One can also find akhbār accounts of pre-Islamic Arabia which do not come under the ayyām umbrella, in works such as al-Azraqī’s Akhbār makka, or Ibn al-Kalbi’s Kitāb al-asnām. Nevertheless, the fact that the ayyām accounts dominate the pre-Islamic traditions concerned with tribal matters, as well as their incorporation of a wide range of external explanatory material, makes their study of particular importance.

This chapter concentrates on the accounts of the Jāhili ayyām al-ṣ-ḥab. It will describe the type of material which may be found in the tradition and discuss how such material might be used for historical purposes. This is especially important as the ayyām traditions have been described by several scholars as indeed containing historical information of the Jāhili period, yet the isolation of which is most difficult. Consider for instance Alan Jones, who states that

"our knowledge of sixth century Arabian history is tenuous, being based largely on the readable but basically questionable akhbār material that has come down to us. However, some events are well-attested not only in the akhbār, but also in a range of poems, not all of which are likely to be of dubious origin. But even when one can glean evidence for the authenticity of a poem referring to an event that has an historical basis, grave uncertainty about the actual date is likely to remain. The position does not improve greatly before the rise of Islam." 147

Along similar lines, Duri tells us that the Jāhili material lacked any overall historical view regarding its subject matter. 148 He states that "accounts of the 'Battle-Days' are chronologically confused, and generally reflect partisan tendencies and represent the views of only one side. Moreover, they lack coherence and order, and embody no concept of history. Nevertheless, they do contain certain historical facts." 149 What distinguishes these historical facts is left unspecified. Similarly, Khālidī also also holds the view that only a core

---

147 Jones, Early Arabic Poetry, i, p. 20.
148 Duri, Historical Writing, p. 20.
149 Duri, Historical Writing, p. 19.
of the surviving Jähili poetry is authentic, but leaves us uncertain as to whether it is possible to identify this core or not.\textsuperscript{150}

Modern historians have in general voiced scepticism with regard to the historicity of the \textit{ayyām} material. The pioneer orientalist, Theodore Nöldeke, argued that tales of the "\textit{amāliq}" in the \textit{ayyām} literature, such as the tale of Jadhima al-Abrash and his conflict with al-Zabā\textsuperscript{151}, were devoid of historical information pertaining to ancient Arabian peoples.\textsuperscript{152} A more recent view, exemplified by Fred Donner, finds the \textit{ayyām} material useful for pinpointing tribal territories or assessing the relative power of tribes, yet maintains that the \textit{ayyām} "are only pseudo-historical and cannot be accepted at face value."\textsuperscript{153}

It is important to note that these two writers are referring to two different types of \textit{ayyām}. That the \textit{ayyām} tradition contains different types is one of the arguments of this chapter.\textsuperscript{154} As will be shown below, Donner is fairly correct in his views with regard to propagandist \textit{ayyām} related by single victorious tribal units, yet it will be argued that other \textit{ayyām} are capable of being more accurate in their descriptions of historical conflicts.

Nöldeke's assertions, on the other hand, need to be revised.\textsuperscript{155} As we will see below, epigraphic evidence has supported information found in some of the most ancient \textit{ayyām} accounts. Bowersock, for example, uses epigraphic evidence in conjunction with Roman sources to corroborate much of the Arabic account of Jadhima al-Abrash. Using Arabic accounts in conjunction with physical evidence and Greek and Latin sources, he reconstructs a clear picture of the tensions and power balance in the Middle East just before the destruction of Palmyra by the Romans and their indispensable Tanūkhi allies.\textsuperscript{156} Similarly, Bayāti is able to pinpoint some elements of historical relevance by comparison with external traditions.\textsuperscript{157}

It is important to tackle this question of historicity and to attempt to find out what historical facts may be extracted from the \textit{ayyām} tradition and

\textsuperscript{150} Khalili, \textit{Historical Thought}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{151} For a full account of this story see Bayāti, \textit{Ayyām al-`Arab}, i, pp. 74-7.
\textsuperscript{152} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "\textit{Amāliq}.
\textsuperscript{153} Donner, "Bakr", p. 14, see also pp. 8, 14-6.
\textsuperscript{154} Historians frequently refer to the \textit{ayyām} as a single block, implying that they are homogenous. Thus, for instance, Hill, D. R., \textit{The Termination of Hostilities in the Early Arab Conquests: AD 634-656}, London: Luzac & Co. Ltd., 1971, p. 23; Petersen, "Ali and Marwan", p. 177.
\textsuperscript{155} See I. Kawar [= Shahid], \textit{The Last Days of Salih}, \textit{Arabica}, 5 (1958), pp. 154-8.
\textsuperscript{157} Again regarding the Zenobia account. See Bayāti, \textit{Ayyām al-`Arab}, pp. 78, ff.
how they may be used for historical purposes. First, we must examine the sources which supply the ayyäm material.

The sources of the ayyäm:

The earliest ayyäm compilations were collections of those of single tribal groups, or occasionally those between two particular enemy tribes. To my knowledge none of these are extant, nor are any published extant works solely devoted to ayyäm. However, considerable extracts from some of these early compilations have survived in later works. The earliest named collectors of the ayyäm were active in the Marwānid and early ʿAbbāsid periods and included figures such as Muḥammad b. al-Sāʾib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763), Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ (d. 154/770), Ḥammād al-Rāwiya (d. 155/772 or 156/773), al-Muṣafḍal al-Ḍabbī (d. between 164/781 and 170/786-7) and Yūnus b. Ḥabīb (d. 183/799-800).

The bulk of the material which has reached us is attributed to the successive generation of compilers and collectors, who were mostly students of the group above. However, the sources of these collectors are rarely mentioned in the accounts, as will be discussed below. The most important of these collectors by far was Abū ʿUbayda Muḥammar b. Mūthannā al-Taymī (d. 207/825), and all extant compilations quote him. To a lesser extent, extracts from collections of ayyäm of Hishām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī (d. 204/819 or 206/821) and al-ʿAṣmaʿī (d. 213/828), are also preserved. Very few other compilers of ayyäm are acknowledged by the extant sources.

Abū ʿUbayda may have written two works on the ayyäm, one including some 75 ayyäm, the other much larger and said to have described 1200

---

158 See the titles of Ibn al-Kalbī's collections of tribal ayyäm, in Ibn al-Nadim, Fihrist, Taḥaddud, p. 110 = Dodge, p. 299-10, as well as titles of Abū ʿUbayda's collections of ayyäm, Taḥaddud, p. 60 = Dodge, p. 118.
159 Uncited manuscripts must exist even if they are rare. For instance, Donner's bibliography of his Islamic Conquests includes (p. 441) a work by Muḥammad b. ʿIshaq, Kitāb harātib al-Baṣūs bayyāna lakīn wa-taḥlīb, MS, Tehran University, no. 2134 (fols. 122b-292b). [It is not clear whether this author is the same Ibn ʿIshaq of sīri fame, as the Fihrist does not mention this work under his entry or those of others homonymous to him.]
160 See Oliner, G., Mulāk indhā min bani ʾākil al-murār, Arabic tr. from English (The Kings of Kinda of the Family of ʾĀkil al-Murūr) by ʿA. al-Muṭṭalibī, Baghdād: University of Baghdad, 1973, p. 41. Oliner has written the most detailed general works on Ḵinda, unfortunately, they are greatly outdated. Nevertheless, they provide a good overview of the accounts revolving around pre-Islamic Kinda in the Arabic sources. Apart from this main work on Kinda, the following article is also quite useful: "ʿAl ʿAlī al-Ṣamn of the Family of ʿĀkil al-Murūr", Le Monde Orientale, 25 (1931).
162 Bayāṭī, Ayyām al-ʿarab, i, p. 22; El2, s.v. "Abū ʿUbayda al-Taymī", "al-Kalbī", "al-ʿAṣmaʿī".
Chapter 3: Ayyām al-‘Arab

Not much is known about the non-extant Kitāb al-ayyām of Ibn al-Kalbi, or his other numerous non-extant works on pre-Islamic affairs, which are mentioned in Ibn al-Nadim’s Fihrist. Al-Āṣma’ī did not write a book on the ayyām, although he related many in his numerous works on pre-Islamic topics.

The extant works in which accounts of the ayyām can be found are divided into two main groups, according to their general structure. In one, the ayyām appear scattered throughout the work, because the sorting follows different priorities, such as the Naqā’id jarīr wa-al-farazdaq collected by either Abū ʿUbayda or his student, Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245/860), the Kitāb al-aghānī of al-Iṣfahānī (d. 356/967) or, the geographical work of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), Kitāb muṣjam al-buldān.

In others, they appear in sequence or in specially designated chapters, such as in al-ʿIqd al-farīd of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (d. 328/940), the great history of Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233), al-Kāmil fi al-tārikh or, the Niḥayat al-arab fi tahdhib al-adab of al-Nuwayri (d. 733/1333). None of these ayyām collections include Islamic ayyām.

The main sources used in this chapter are the ayyām collections of Ibn al-Athīr, al-Nuwayri, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, as well as Bayātī’s compilation of ayyām narrated by Abū ʿUbayda, which has been mentioned earlier. Al-Iṣfahānī’s and Yāqūt’s voluminous Aghānī and Muṣjam al-buldān, as well as the Naqā’id have also been used extensively. Because of the organization and great size of the former two, however, it is difficult to ascertain whether all the pre-Islamic ayyām they might contain have been located and examined.

There are a number of unique pre-Islamic and Islamic ayyām scattered in the various works of al-Hamdānī, and not found elsewhere. These generally very brief - accounts describe battles between the various tribes of Yemen (in the geographical sense), whether close to his time or much earlier.
Unfortunately, it is not always easy to determine whether they are pre-Islamic or Islamic ayyām, as their identification as such does not always seem to have been a priority for al-Hamdānī. This Yemeni ayyām tradition is mostly quite distinct from the Iraqi tradition, but it seems only a small portion of it has survived and only in the midst of genealogies, geographic descriptions and as poetry exegesis.

The ayyām in different sources:

It is natural to expect differences in the presentation of ayyām in the non-uniform sources in which they survive. In particular, it is worth noting the following points.

Firstly, while most accounts of the ayyām are repeated in the different sources with seldom any significant differences, for a small number of them, however, different versions exist.

Secondly, many works include a few ayyām not found in any others. This is true for almost every major source.

Thirdly, some ayyām have more than one name and may be referred to in different sources by different names. At the same time, some distinct ayyām may share the same name, whether as a result of confusion by the transmitters or compilers, or for other reasons.

Lastly, occasionally series of connected ayyām will be referred to in some sources as a single yawm, under which name all the connected ayyām will be described, while others will have each such yawm mentioned separately. Consider, for instance, Harb al-Basūs, which is composed of other ayyām, including Yawm al-Dhanā'ib, Yawm Wāridāt and so on. For this conflict, Ibn al-Athīr groups all the lesser ayyām under the main 'yawm' in one narrative, while other collectors, such as ʿAbd al-Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124), refer to each yawm separately.

---

173 Hamdānī, is clearly aware of Iraqi scholarship, in particular the two Kullīs - probably because he and they were primarily interested in genealogies. Hamdānī, on the other hand, seems to be unknown to Iraqi scholars writing later than himself. The Fakhrī, for example, whose author died 50 years after al-Hamdānī, does not mention al-Hamdānī at all.

174 Clearly distinct and unrelated ayyām which, for whatever reason, share the same name, are not what is meant here.

Thus, there are differences in the selection, presentation and organization of ayüm in our surviving collections, which need to be noticed in order to avoid confusion. However, there is a fairly small number of different versions of accounts where events are reported differently.

The nature of the ayüm narratives:

Form and content:

The entry in the Encyclopaedia of Islam (New Edition) for "Ayyäm al-"Arab", by E. Mittwoch, tells us that the events of the ayüm generally follow a pattern typifying Arabian inter-tribal warfare since ancient times. According to the article, a yawm, or series of ayüm, is started by a quarrel between individuals. The quarrel then escalates to include clans and eventually whole tribes might become involved. Peace finally occurs when a neutral third party intervenes and mediates negotiation between the opposing sides. Usually the side with fewer casualties agrees to pay blood money for the discrepancy in the number of those killed.\footnote{\textsuperscript{[176]}}

While a few ayüm do follow this pattern to a certain extent, most do not. More importantly, this view assumes the ayüm accounts to be uniform in terms of both form and content. An important objective of this chapter is to dispute this widespread idea, and suggest criteria which may enable us to distinguish various ayüm types with different characteristics. This will be expanded on below.

Dating:

Accepting that the traditions attributed to the pre-Islamic period are indeed pre-Islamic, the events they portray are almost impossible to date with any accuracy. Regarding poetry, Tarif Khalidi simply places the origins of the "genuine core" of the poetical tradition in the first three centuries preceding Islam.\footnote{\textsuperscript{[177]}} More precisely, it is traditionally believed that most of the authentic surviving pre-Islamic poetry dates from the 6th century CE. The earliest of this main group are the poems of Imru' al-Qays and 'Abid b. al-Abras. Some odes are older than the 6th century; these include those attributed to 'Amr b.
Qami'a and his paternal uncle, al-Muraqqash, while older still, are the verses attributed to al-Muhalhil.\textsuperscript{178}

As for the prose material, the dating is no more precise. One way of hoping to date a given event is if there is a reliable reference to a known historical figure in the account. However, establishing the reliability of a reference is usually very difficult if not impossible. Yet it is still possible to roughly date some of the conflicts. The ayyām of the Ansār, for example, must have taken place in the late 6th and early 7th centuries. We can be sure of this, not only because they sometimes involved contemporaries of the Prophet, but also since this is strongly corroborated by what we are told about Yathrib in this period from other independent literary genres, such as the sīra.\textsuperscript{179}

External datable evidence, such as the South Arabian inscriptions, is also occasionally of help. Thus, for instance, we can establish dates of South Arabian involvement in central Najd, in particular their role in installing their clients, the dynasty of Ḥuṣr Ṭālil al-Murār al-Kindī, mentioned in the ayyām.\textsuperscript{180} The ayyām involving Kinda can similarly be dated to the late 5th and early 6th centuries CE.\textsuperscript{181} From Roman histories we learn that the oldest datable historical event covered by any of the ayyām is as early as the end of the third century CE, namely, the account concerning the fall of Palmyra. As mentioned above, the partial historicity of this account may be confirmed by external evidence.\textsuperscript{182} Other accounts involving various Sassanian and South Arabian kings, or the Tanūkhid migrations\textsuperscript{183} may similarly be dated by recourse to inscriptions and other external sources.

If surviving pre-Islamic genealogies are at all accurate\textsuperscript{184} then we will find that many of the participants in most of the ayyām are between one to three generations preceding contemporaries of the Prophet. Thus, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr, the Dhubyāni leader in the Dāhis war was the father of Ḥiṣn b.

\textsuperscript{178} Lyall, "Aspects", p. 4.
\textsuperscript{179} For example, the first meetings between the Prophet and tribesmen from Yathrib in Mecca mention the Awaṣ-Khuzaʿī feud, which was still raging at that time [Bīh Mšam, Sīra, i, pp. 425, 426].
\textsuperscript{180} In particular I am here referring to the two inscriptions of Māʾṣal al-Jānih, Ry 509 and Ry 510. See C. Robin, "Le Royaume Huṣris, dit 'Royaume de Kinda' entre Hēmyar et Byzance", Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres, April/June 1990, pp. 675-7, 680.
\textsuperscript{181} Olund, Kinda, passim.
\textsuperscript{182} See Bowersock, Roman Arabia, pp. 131-4; Shāhīd, BAFOC, pp. 371-2, ff.
\textsuperscript{183} With regard to Tanūkh, for instance, one inscription describes the 'land of Tanūkh' to be in central Iraq region, and is dated to before 297 CE. This, confirms the Arab traditions which mention the arrival of Tanūkh to Iraq before the fall of Palmyra and before their continued migration along the Euphrates [Potts, D. T., The Arabian Gulf in Antiquity, 2 vols., Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990; ii, p. 224]; Shāhīd, BAFOC, pp. 363, ff.
\textsuperscript{184} Werner Caskel, any authority on the ancient muds and ayyām, was critical of the historicity of much of the ayyām material, yet still used genealogies for relative dating of the original accounts. See for instance Caskel, "Aljīm", p. 70.
Hudhayfa, a contemporary of the Prophet. Qays b. Zuhayr, the leader of Ābs in that war is the grandfather of Musāwir b. Hind, a poet in Umayyad times. Amr b. Sinān of Tamīm was in the delegation sent to the Prophet in Medina; his father's cousin, Qays b. Āsim, features frequently in the ayyām of Tamīm against Bakr. Similarly, Uṯārid b. Ḥājib was the grandson of the great Dārimi leader Zurāra b. Ḫudūs. His father was Ḥājib b. Zurāra who fought against the Lakhmids in Yawm Tīkhfa and led Dārim on Yawm Jabala. Many other such examples abound.

Thus, while some ayyām include historical individuals and tribal names dated to as far back as the 3rd and 4th centuries CE, most include individuals who probably lived only very few generations before Islam, and probably no further back than the early 6th century.

Indeed, as no major upheavals seem to have occurred between the collapse of the Kindi state in central Arabia (ca. 520 CE) and the beginning of the spread of Islam and the conquest movement, any historical material pertaining to tribal territories and political alignments found in the ayyām most probably stem between these two historical watersheds. Yet, the precise dating of events mentioned in the Jāhili material - assuming the historicity of the event in the first place - is an impossible task without corroboration from external evidence. Different questions need to be asked the material. As for dating events, rough or relative dating for only some parts of the material must suffice.

Genealogical terminology:

In the ayyām, as in other early sources, the use of tribal nomenclature is very confusing. No standard terms are used to designate specific parts of a 'tribe'. For instance, baṭn a term frequently used, is probably best translated as
'branch' as it is used at many levels of the genealogy. A man's *gawm* simply means the descendants of any of his ancestors, real or imagined, and thus could refer to any number of people. Although the context helps, sometimes it is difficult to determine exactly the group to which a reference is being made.

Moreover, the actual names of the tribal groups themselves are used confusingly, and quite often large tribal groups are referred to when only a minor subset may be meant. There does, however, appear to be a specific method of handling tribal names, which is usually used in *ayyām* and early Islamic historical accounts. This method is similar to the mathematical 'lowest common denominator' technique, whereby the tribal name used for a group acting together will be the closest common ancestral eponym the narrator knows the tribesmen to share, except when some of the adversaries also share that ancestor. In this case, the process is repeated until, groups are clearly on one side or another.

For example, formal genealogies tell us that Muḍar was composed of the Qays group plus Asad, Kināna, Tamīm and al-Ribāb. If a unit from Asad fought against a unit from Kināna it will be an Asad-Kināna conflict. However, if a unit from Asad together with a unit from Kināna fought against Bakrīs and Taghlibīs, we will be told that this was a Muḍar vs. Rabī‘a conflict.

If, however, unspecified units of Asad fought with B. Dārim of Tamīm against Kināna, then the compilers will describe the conflict as between Asad and Dārim against Kināna.

*The geographical and tribal ranges of the accounts:*

The bulk of the *ayyām* accounts collected in Kūfa and Baṣra in the second Islamic century cover battles fought in, and between tribes of, the regions of Najd, al-Baḥrayn and, to a lesser extent, the Ḥijāz. In particular, Bakr, Taghlib, Tamīm, Ghatafān and ʿĀmir b. Ṣa‘ṣa‘a have the most *ayyām*, while other tribes appear far less often. The north-western Qudā‘a are very rarely mentioned and, similarly South Arabian tribes are seldom mentioned except as the defeated enemy, with the occasional exception of the Madhhiji tribes and allies based in southern Najd. The bulk of the accounts involving

---


192 As opposed to Ḥanūnī’s Yemeni traditions which concern, in the main, feuds between tribes in Yemen and form a small distinct tradition of their own.
Arabian *mulūk*, pertain to the Lakhmids of Hira, which may be related to the fact that the surviving *ayyām* collections were compiled in Iraq. Again, all the important *ayyām* of the Lakhmid and Kindī *mulūk*, Himyarī *tābabī* and the Ghassānids, take place in northern and central Najd and al-Bahrain.\(^{103}\)

**The number of *ayyām* accounts:**

It is difficult to estimate the number of extant *ayyām* accounts. As mentioned above, different compilations contain different *ayyām*, several have duplicate names and some *ayyām* sequences are considered as single *ayyām* by some compilers. In any case because such collections may crop up anywhere in the early literature and not just in neat blocks, this means that until an exhaustive survey is undertaken there will always be the possibility of finding more accounts in non-typical (or so far unpublished) sources.

Nevertheless, a rough estimate, based on a few collections may be attempted. Ibn al-Athīr narrates the events of more or less seventy *ayyām*, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih collected around eighty, and al-Nuwayrī (whose collection is mainly based on that of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih) counts ninety or so. The number of accounts in Bayāṭī’s recent compilation of Abū ʿUbayda’s accounts is in the nineties, as well. There are about a dozen accounts in Ibn al-Athīr and not in the Bayāṭī collection, and roughly the same number in al-Nuwayrī’s collection and not in the former two. This means that in the sources accessed in this study there are slightly more than one hundred and ten extant *ayyām* accounts.\(^{104}\)

**The influence of story-telling on the *ayyām*:**

The *ayyām* were stories told for entertainment as much as for learning about events in the past. Like their modern counterparts, the *suwālīf* described

---

\(^{103}\) While this bias in coverage - if we can call it that - may stem from the fact that these accounts seem to have been collected in Kufa and Basrah, this may explain why the Syrian tribes are given less importance but it does not solve the problem of the Yemeni tribes who were settled in both of these garrison towns. The solution may lie in the composition of tribes which must have remained nomadic yet gathered *around* the garrison towns, rather than settled within them. After the conquests, Iraq west of the Euphrates was mainly inhabited by nomadic tribes from Kufah, Qaysi and Tammalini groups [see Morony, *Iraq*, pp. 229-32], which are the same tribal groups to which are attributed the bulk of the *ayyām*. It may be that the compilers of the *ayyām* stories chose their sources from amongst these groups, rather than from urban tribesmen. If this is the case, there may be some truth in the stories - usually dismissed as fiction by modern scholars - of Iraqi ‘philologists’ going out to the Beduin tribes to record their ‘pure Arab’, if we accept that the tribesmen they visited lay on the doorsteps of Kufa and Basrah and not deep in the heart of Arabia.

\(^{104}\) Maydān, *Anathil*, pp. 517-37, lists 130 or so supposedly pre-Islamic *ayyām* - several are actually Islamic, though he does not give us full accounts of these, merely the names and occasionally a sentence describing the participants.
in the previous chapter, they developed from eye-witness reports to embellished stories. Elements of story-telling devices are imbedded in numerous accounts of the ayyām. The extent to which material in the accounts may have been affected by these story-telling devices and motifs remains important to assess. The story-telling devices vary and yet are usually easily recognisable. Important examples are the long detailed accounts of actions and of conversations of participant individuals; narrative patterns and repetitions leading to climaxes; as well as various topoi.\(^\text{105}\)

**Historiographical functions of ayyām accounts:**

It is necessary to gauge how capable the ayyām tradition is of answering our questions. Can it tell us of the tribal distribution, alignments and power loci of central and northern Arabia, in the century or so preceding Islam?

We are told that the modern Bedouin oral historical accounts “deal with historical events and biographical or social circumstances connected with the immediate, or remote, past”. Indeed, there is a distinction between the historical suwālif, which are related by and to adult men, and between folktales (si. bdīzin) which are distinct and belong to the women and children, and talk of “jiān and marvels”.\(^\text{106}\) This division between historical accounts and folktales, and the stressing of the historiographical function of the former is significant.

\(^{105}\) For examples of these see Caskel, “Ajjum”, pp. 9-34.

Here are several literary topoi employed in the ayyām narratives which I have come across:

1) Captives or jannūsir who are sworn to secrecy by ‘hosts’ and send cryptic warning messages to their kin to warn them of imminent attack by ‘hosts’ tribal group [See Bayātī, Ayyām al-‘arb, i, pp. 88-92].

2) Warring tribes inviting South Arabian kings to settle their disputes and rule over them (usually kindred groups). See, for example, the account of the killing of the Khind ruler Ḥijr [Ibn al-Athir, al-‘Kamil, i, pp. 511-2].

3) War party sees gradually approaching physically to the leader (who presumably cannot see as well as describing individual) who identifies the tribal groups. The last group to be identified are always named as the most powerful group who then proceed to rout the war party. See the example of Yawm al-Natā‘a [Ibn al-Athir, al-‘Kamil, i, p. 640].

4) Captive in a battle tells captor of the hidden identity of an important fellow tribesman of his, also held captive, in exchange for his own freedom. See Yawm Na‘f Qushāwā [Ibn al-Athir, al-‘Kamil, i, p. 591].


Some of these topoi appear quite natural and plausible, but as they are repeated frequently in the sources the events they convey must be treated with special care. As we are mainly concerned with participants in tribal conflict, of particular importance is the third topoi, which requires the participation of at least three tribal groups on one side in order to be possible to narrate.

The ayyām accounts are very realistic, in the sense that they describe no supernatural or magical events. It is unlikely that the ancient Arabs had no concept of magic and the supernatural, and it is to be expected that this should be reflected in their stories, if these only ever served an entertaining function. The fact that these features do not appear in the ayyām suggests that, just like in contemporary Bedouin culture, there were two types of oral narrative: fairy-tales which stayed in the 'domain of women and children', which were not recorded in the early Islamic literary sources; and, the historical narratives which had a public function in the public domain of the tribesmen, the ayyām. In this case, the original and primary function of the ayyām was to record history, regardless of the story-telling elements which were later woven into them.

Even Drory, who criticizes the authenticity of pre-Islamic traditions, still believes that an important function of pre-Islamic poetry - and presumably also related prose - was to record the past. Like poetry, the ayyām acted as a public historical record. The 'public' characteristic imposed constraints on would-be fabricators of the ayyām material. This public nature of the material is noted by Khālidi, who points out that verses extolling the tribes needed only to allude to victories, as it would have been taken for granted that the audiences, including opponents, would already be aware of them.

The public nature of poetry is reflected in the words of a Tānimī poet of the Islamic period, as Tamīm prepare for war against the Azd. He says:

يا بني تميم أطلقوا من لسان

Oh sons of Tamīm, let loose my tongue.

The implication is that the poet can only write eulogies of Tamīm in this battle if Tamīm wins; conversely, if they lose he cannot. He is admitting that he cannot lie; the reason, of course, being that for the tribesmen the poetry (and ayyām) acted as a public historical record.

197 For the concept of the public domain of the tribesmen versus the private one of the women and children see Dresch, P., Tribes, Government, and History in Yemen, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, pp. 53-8. He is here talking of notions of honour, yet this division can easily be seen to extend to other spheres of the tribal life, including that of story-telling.

198 Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 36; see also Humphreys, Islamic History, p. 90.

199 Khālidi, Historical Thought, p. 4.


201 For more on this, see the argument of Yahlīyā, al-'Usār al-qudima, pp. 273-7.
We can say then, that the ayyām recorded real events which befell the pre-Islamic tribesmen. However, we have also seen in the previous chapter that the ayyām were subject to changes and developments, due to different factors. Now, the ayyām content will be examined further, to establish how different types of ayyām may have been affected by modifications of later transmitters.

**Ayyām types:**

As mentioned above, the idea that the ayyām accounts form a homogeneous group of narratives is far from correct. Here, it is proposed to classify the accounts of the ayyām into different groups, according to certain characteristics they show. These divisions can aid us in understanding better the contexts in which different types of ayyām developed, thereby improving our judgement over the quality of historical information they may have to offer. In particular, it is necessary to point out whether certain types of ayyām were less likely to have been changed by subsequent transmitters. Categorisation of ayyām accounts into these types will also provide the non-specialist with a clearer guide to the contents of the ayyām tradition as a whole.

The ayyām material can be divided into three types. The suggested headings for these are: (i) the ancient legends; (ii) the ayyām of single tribal units; and (iii) the ayyām of confederacies and mulūk al-ʿarab. The characteristics and distinguishing marks of each type are described below.

**The number of ayyām accounts in each type:**

To attempt to enumerate the ayyām of each type is an even more difficult operation than estimating the total number of ayyām. Especially so, because several ayyām lie in between types and several others have different versions, sometimes placing each in a different category.

About ninety different ayyām have been examined for this study, in a number of different sources. Just under fifty accounts belong to the type, 'aayyām of single tribal units'; around thirty fit under 'aayyām of multiple groups'; and just under ten form the 'ancient ayyām'. The remainder are mainly accounts which lie in between the first two groups.
Chapter 3: Ayyām al-ʿArab

I expect most of the ayyām I have not examined (twenty to thirty according to my estimate of the total number) to be mainly ayyām of single tribes. In my research I was concentrating on the more widely collected accounts which almost always included all of the historical record group, discrepancies normally being made up of single tribe accounts.

I) Ancient legends:

There are several accounts which depict battles and wars of peoples who had ceased to exist by the late Jāhilī period. Some of these accounts are echoes of historical events from as far back as the 3rd c. CE, which are verified by epigraphic evidence and the Graeco-Roman sources.

Even though some of these accounts are prefixed with yawn - such as Yawm al-Yamāma, by example - strictly speaking these accounts should not be counted amongst the ayyām tradition. Rather, they should be considered as part of another group of ancient Arab accounts, including the accounts of the bursting of the Marib Dam, the stories of al-ʿarab al-bāʾida, the migrations of the Arabian tribes out of TiMma and Yemen, etc.

Indeed, while compilers of the ayyām such as Abū ʿUbayda, Ibn al-Kalbi and al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī collected these accounts202 (presumably, the reason for their designation as ayyām by some modern scholars203) it must be pointed out that these accounts were generally not counted as proper ayyām by our sources, rather as separate pre-Islamic akhbār.

Ibn al-Athīr, for instance, has them scattered where he thinks they fall chronologically and not as part of his ayyām collection. Thus, his accounts of the Tanūkh alliance and their northward migration204, the war of Jadhīma al-Abrash against the Palmyrenes205, the war of Ṭasam and Jadīs206 and the details of the ʿAbsī prophet, Khalīd b. Sinān207, all are placed much earlier than his section on ayyām proper. Nor do such accounts appear in the specific chapters of the ‘Iqd or Majmaʿ al-amthāl.208

202 See for instance, Bayātī, Ayyām al-ʿarab, i, pp. 73-4.
203 For example, Bayātī, Ayyām al-ʿarab, i, pp. 68, fr.
Chapter 3: Ayyām al-‘Arab

Story-telling elements:

In the accounts of this group we have an abundance of story-telling features far greater than in the other two types examined further below. Apart from the extensive detailed conversations and various topoi\textsuperscript{210}, we commonly come across sub-plots explaining the origins of common proverbs (amthāl). This theme is encountered in other types of ayyām accounts, but seems to be a particular favourite in this group. In the account of Jadhima al-Abrah and al-Zabā\textsuperscript{2} alone we have more than a dozen.\textsuperscript{210} The abundance of proverbs said to have been first pronounced by the heroes of these accounts points to their popularity and fame amongst the Arabs.

Story-telling elements in the accounts of this group are so many as to cause deep suspicion of any historical content.\textsuperscript{211} Nevertheless, external evidence in some cases suggests otherwise. In particular, we have corroborating external evidence for the historicity of some events, individuals and groups mentioned in the account of the war of Jadhimah al-Abrah and his nephew Āmīr b. Ṭādiy against al-Zabā\textsuperscript{2} of Palmyra (who may or may not be the famous Zenobia\textsuperscript{212}), as well as in the account of the Tanūkh confederation migrations up the Euphrates and into bādiyat al-Shām.\textsuperscript{213}

External evidence:

The main evidence is that both Jadhimah “king of the Tanūkh” as well as Āmīr b. Ṭādiy are attested in two separate inscriptions dating from the 3rd c. CE in Syria, where the migrating Tanūkh probably reached after the destruction of Palmyra.\textsuperscript{214} Moreover, the military expansion of Palmyra’s queen Zenobia and her subsequent defeat by the Romans is well known. Admittedly her defeat (if we equate al-Zabā\textsuperscript{2} with Zenobia) is attributed to Āmīr b. Ṭādiy in the Arabic legend, but nevertheless this case shows how much and what sort of historical information was preserved until recorded in Islamic times, especially the names of the main characters, and the partial reality of their events.

\textsuperscript{209} For examples of these, see n. 198 above.
\textsuperscript{210} See ibn al-‘Arabī, al-Kamīl, i, pp. 344-50.
\textsuperscript{211} See Blachère, Histories, iii, pp. 787-8.
\textsuperscript{212} One author considers al-Zabā\textsuperscript{2} to be a different Palmyrene ruler, predating the famous Zenobia. See Tringham, J., Christianity Amongst the Arabs in pre-Islamic Times, London: Longman, 1970, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{213} See Tringham, Christianity, pp. 95-6.
\textsuperscript{214} For details of these inscriptions and on the use of this account to reconstruct history of the Arabs in this period see Shahid, BAFNC, pp. 370-4, passim; Bowersock, Roman Arabia, pp. 132-7; Tringham, Christianity, pp. 154-6.
Unfortunately, no corroborating external evidence is to be found in other ayyām of this group. The arguable exception is the possible identification of a certain tribe mentioned by Ptolemy (ca. 150 CE), the Iodysitae, who inhabited a location in north-eastern Arabia, with the Jadis of Yamāma, a party to the conflict described in Yawm al-Yamāma also known as Harb Ṭasam wa-Jadis.215

Remarks:

These ancient accounts were widely dispersed amongst the Arabs216 and formed no part in the rhetoric of tribal ḥasabiya. They were probably preserved in a multi-tribal environment such as that of al-Hira, rather than having been narrated by general ruwā amongst the scattered tribes of Arabia.217

From a historiographical viewpoint, these accounts used on their own are of very little value as historical evidence for the pre-Islamic period. Nevertheless, the fact that some of them have managed to perpetuate accurate historical information from an ancient period is relevant to the discussion of the historicity of the ayyām as a whole.

In this regard, the accounts of Jadhima al-Abrash and of the Tanūkh migrations are the most significant of this group, in that they show what sort of information may survive in the ayyām over a period of several centuries. The inscriptions have proved that the key individuals of this account were indeed historical figures, that they were tribal leaders and that they were associated with the tribes they were said to have been related to in the literary sources. This information survived over a period of five centuries or so until it appears in the compilations of the second and third Islamic centuries. Thus, it is difficult to conceive of other commonly known accounts composed in the century preceding Islam performing less well in this role of a historical

215 Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, i, pp. 351-4. A misreading of Iodysitae for Iodysitae has led to incorrect associations for this tribe. For this and further precarious associations see Potts, Arabian Gulf, ii, pp. 225-6. See also Brlce, W.C., ed., An Historical Atlas of Islam, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981, pp. vi-vii, the entry on Pre-Islamic (Classical) Arabia for a discussion of different versions of Ptolemy’s description of Arabia, many of which the author regards as containing erroneous information; see for instance the reproduction of a 15th c. CE version in Potts, Arabian Gulf, ii, pp. 318-9. The plates Brlce gives on page 14 follow the original and, according to Brlce, are more accurate.

216 For an example of how far verses can travel through oral repetition, see Kupershock, Oral Poetry, p. 6, n. 4, where the author describes how verses were known to tribesmen in Ḥajar in ‘Uman which were composed three generations earlier in central Najr.

217 The idea of there being a Ḥiran audience for these accounts is further bolstered by the high number of proverbs (anfal) in these accounts. See KF 2, s.f. “Muḥamr” where it is suggested that the genre of anfal-origins could have originated in al-Hira. Naturally, it could have equally been a post-Conquest development. See also Blachère, Histoire, iii, pp. 862-3.
memory, at least in terms of the names of key figures, tribal groups and conflicts.

**II) The ayyām of single tribal units:**

This group of *ayyām* is distinguished by the fact that only single tribal units - sometimes with their traditional allies - form the victorious side. While the defeated parties are often also single tribes, this is not always the case. Tribal *fakhr* poetry composed by members of the victorious groups is prominent. The majority of these accounts appear to be accounts of simple raids seemingly involving relatively few tribesmen, while the tribesmen involved tend to be found in genealogical works on levels close to contemporaries of early Muslim figures, implying that these *ayyām* originated from the latest part of the Jāḥilī period.

*The nature of such conflicts:*

As mentioned above, tribal raiding is the main reason for conflict in these accounts. Two examples of raiding *ayyām* are Yawm Aqrūn218 and Yawm Naʿf Qushāwa219. The former *yawm* represents a victory of the group being raided (’Abs) over the attackers (their leader is from Dārim of Tamīm), while the latter account celebrates a successful raid carried out by Shaybān of Bakr over Yarbūc of Tamīm. In other words victory in a raiding account may be achieved by attacker or defender.

There are sometimes other reasons for hostilities to commence. The oppressive gathering of tribute from small tribal units by stronger groups is one reason for conflict, such as in Yawm al-Nafrāwāt.220 Sometimes, war results from tribal migration of one group into hostile territory. In Yawm al-Zuwayrayn, the grazing lands of B. Bakr had dried up and so they moved into Tamīmi territory. This migration caused much fighting between the Bakrī and Tamīmi groups.221 Sometimes series of *ayyām* are encountered, where each

---

yawm prompts the next one; the continuing link in these cases is blood vengeance. 222

**Dāhis and Basūs:**

While ayyām of single tribal units would originally have been particular to certain tribal groups, as the ayyām grew older they would gradually have become more wide-spread and related as entertainment in public gatherings to tribesmen from other tribal groups. 223 Such is the case with two famous ayyām accounts of this type. The Dāhis war, between ‘Abs and Dhubyān; and, the Basūs war, involving the tribesmen of Taghlib and Bakr. Both were said to have lasted forty years 224 and consisted of several episodes. 225

It is important to note that both of these sagas are clearly highly developed stories, thus inviting much scepticism over their historical value. 226 One must be very cautious of their historical or geographic descriptions, such as those found in the mythical wanderings of ‘Abs, or the voyaging of the B. Wā’il before Jassās murdered Kulayb, 227 unless confirmed by other material.

**Heroes:**

Yawm Na‘T Qushāwa, mentioned above, belongs to a group of ayyām between Shaybān and Tamīm. 228 One interesting aspect of this group of ayyām is that certain Shaybānī individuals are prominent in most of them, sometimes as victors but also defeated, sometimes captured and even sometimes killed. 229 Some characters keep reappearing and after a few ayyām become familiar figures. Examples of these are Bistām b. Qays and al-Ḥawfāzān b. Sharīk - both of the Dhuhl b. Shaybān - and their close kin, who play an

---


224 For the significance and use of the number 40 in early Islamic akhbar, see Conrad “Chronology and Literary Topoi”, pp. 23-40.

225 Examples are Yawm al-Dhuma‘īb and Yawm Waridāt [Bāl al-Atlīr, al-Kāmil, i, 532-34].

226 See Caskel, “Ajā‘ib”, p. 75; Gumbat, ii, p. 27; Ḥpl, s.v. “Kulayb b. Ruhān”.

227 These ayyām will be discussed more fully in Chapters Five and Six.

228 These include Yawm al-Ghubīt, Mālā‘īb, al-Zuwayrān, Jadhāl, Safwān, etc.

229 A famous example is Bistām b. Qays. See Yawm al-Ghubīt [Bāl al-Atlīr, al-Kāmil, i, p. 536].

230 Another example is Sharīk b. al-Ḥawfāzān son of the famous al-Ḥawfāzān b. Sharīk in Yawm al-Mukhatṭat, [Bāl ‘Abd Rabbīh, Ḥpl, vi, pp. 56-7] and Bistām b. Qays in Yawm al-Shuqūq, see Bāyā‘ī, Ayyām al-Farāh, ii, pp. 400, ff.
important role in Shaybān's warring against their main enemies from the various Tamīmī tribal groups.

It is natural to suspect that such figures while having historical roots may have been developed by tribal ruwa to construct familiar figures. Regarding the appearance of these Bakī heroes in Tamīmī accounts of their victories over Bakr, it may be the case that these characters were woven into their narratives either in common pre-Islamic meeting places in the tribesmen's locale, such as al-Hira, or, later in Islamic times in the garrison towns. This could have been done by the Tamīmis to further exaggerate their victories, or later by Islamic collectors trying to fuse disparate accounts into a composite whole.231

Remarks:

Originally, ayyām accounts of this type were developed for audiences of the individual victorious tribal units described. However, they were also referred to in poetry or related in public gatherings since the pre-Islamic times. The wars of Dāhīs and Basūs are clearly highly developed stories and stand out amongst this group of ayyām accounts as belonging to far wider audiences than just the tribes involved.

This sort of yawm - regardless of the story-telling elements it may or may not contain - presents serious problems of historicity. The fact that it is obvious that these ayyām were used for tribal propaganda purposes must make us very suspicious of the historicity of their contents and in some cases even of their ever having occurred at all. In particular, it must be taken into account that information regarding the defeated party would often have been exaggerated. It is to be expected that the defeated enemy would have been somehow dressed up to appear more powerful than in reality.

On the positive side, it must also be stressed that precisely because these battles were used by tribal poets as ammunition for the lampooning of their enemies and the boasting of their (alleged) feats, they had to be built around a fundamental core of truth, whether this was a specific event or a general truth. As we see with the vicious bickering of Jarir and Farazdaq of Umayyad times, while tribal boasting was prone to exaggeration, it could not have invented accounts of glorious victories which never took place. It is significant

231 For the latter point see Gaskel, "Aijam", pp. 75-7.
that we have virtually no record of disputes between the *ruwā* of the *ayyām* over the outcomes of the battles of this type, while disputes over other issues are indeed recorded.

In this way, this group of *ayyām* worked in the same way as defamatory poetry. *Hijā* was an affair which was taken extremely seriously, and it hardly needs to be stressed that for verses to have had effect they had to be based on truths, and to be seen to strike an exposed nerve in the group or person being attacked.

Thus, while little can be taken as reflection of historical truth from the events depicted in this range of *ayyām* accounts, we can learn something about typical tribal hostilities in the later 6th century CE, and some demographic details of Arabia in that time. The historical contribution of this group of *ayyām* is best described by Donner's words, mentioned earlier, when speaking of the historical potential of the full corpus of *ayyām* material. Thus, they are useful for pinpointing tribal territories or assessing the relative power of tribes, yet "are only pseudo-historical and cannot be accepted at face value".232

**III) The *ayyām* of the *mulūk* and tribal confederations:**

The *ayyām* accounts of tribal confederations are distinguished by the fact that there are several participant tribal units on either side of each conflict they describe. Most of these involved powerful pre-Islamic Arab "*mulūk*", or 'kings', and their tribal confederations, especially the Ghassānid, Kindi and Lakhmid 'states'. A few *ayyām* of these *mulūk* involved single tribal units as their adversaries, while others involved tribal confederations without significant participation on the part of any *mulūk*. These three groups will be examined separately.

The significance of the *ayyām* accounts involving *mulūk* is that they detail tribal support of the various Arabian ruling houses. As such, they potentially have much to tell us regarding the tribal politics of central and northern Arabia at the rise of Islam.233

---

232 See above, p. 42.
233 The *mulūk* in the *ayyām* traditions always relied on Arab tribesmen to make up their fighting forces.
Chapter 3: Ayyám al-'Arab

Mulūk-mulūk conflicts:

These ayyám accounts describe various battles between the mulūk of the three pre-Islamic Arab ruling houses. As in the case of the ancient account of Jadhima al-Abrash and al-Zabā mentioned earlier, some of the events and the existence of many of the mulūk described in these ayyám are corroborated by epigraphic and non-Arabic literary sources.234

The earliest mulūk accounts are those of the Kindi leader, Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār, the founder of the Hujrid dynasty in central Arabia. However, the accounts for the Hujrid Kindis are extremely confused. Those that mention the Syrian tribal mulūk give very little information on the composition of their tribal support. The least confused and most useful accounts concern the accounts of the later mulūk of al-Hira.

The most important ayyám of this group are Yawm al-Baradān (Kinda vs. Ghassān)245; Yawm al-Kulāb (inter- Kindi feud)246; Yawm Maqtał Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith (mainly Lakhm vs. Kinda)247 - these three accounts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5; Yawm Marj Ḥalīma (Lakhm vs. Ghassān)248; and Yawm Aʿyān Ubāgh (Lakhm vs. Ghassān)249.

These ayyám tell us that tribal support of Kindi dynasty of B. Ākil al-Murār in central Arabia - between the mid-5th and mid-6th c. CE250 - came from all the major central Najdi tribes and those in al-Bahrāyn but particularly so from the tribes of Rabīʿa. Support for the Lakhmids can be seen to have been from al-Bahrāyn when fighting Kinda in Najd, as in seen in the events of Yawm Maqtał Ḥujr, at the start of the reign of the Lakhmid, ʿAmr b. Hind (ruled 554-69 CE251), and from the tribes of the Euphrates region when fighting against the Syrian Ghassānids in the time of al-Mundhir IV (ruled 574-80 CE252). As for the Ghassānids (and despite the fact that they are the victorious party in the two ayyám mentioned above against the Lakhmids)

---

234 See Olinder, Kinlal, passim.
235 Ibn al-Atīr, Kīmīl, i, p. 506.
236 Ibn al-Atīr, Kīmīl, i, p. 549.
237 Bayāt, Ayyām al-ʿarab, ii, p. 433. The introduction to this jumām describes the rise to power of the Kindi house of B. Akīl al-Murār in Najd. The first part involves the rebelling of Asad against the Kindi prince, Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith, and his murder at their hands. The second part involves Intīr al-Qays b. Ḥujr seeking revenge for his father and then being involved in a war with the famous Lakhmid ruler al-Mundhir Maʿal-Samā.
238 See pp. 97-100, below.
239 Ibn al-Atīr, Kīmīl, i, p. 542.
240 Ibn al-Atīr, Kīmīl, i, p. 540.
241 EI2, s.v. "Kinda".
242 EI2, s.v. "Lakhmids".
243 EI2, s.v. "Lakhmids".

61
Chapter 3: Ayyām al-ʿArab

apart from the tribe of "Ghassān" itself their tribal support is only referred to in vague terms such as ʿarab al-shām.244

It is such information that we can gather from these ayyām but little more. The ayyām of the mulūk in particular can be seen to have undergone heavy embellishment at the hands of story-tellers.

Single tribal units defeating the mulūk:

This group deals with victories of single tribal units over two of the Arabian 'states', that of the Lakhmids of Ḥira as well as that of the Ghassānids of al-Shām. Of these, Yawm Ţīkhfa involves the B. Yarbūc against the mulik of al-Ḥira and his allies from other Tamīmi groups245; two ayyām involve the B. Taghlib, once against the Ghassānids described as Ḥarb al-Ḥārith al-Aʿraj wa-Taghlib246, and another time against the Lakhmids, known as Yawm Maqtal ʿAmr b. Hind247; one brief account describes a successful raid by B. ʿĀmir against an encampment of the Lakhmid ruler al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir (ruled 580-602 CE248) at Yawm Safawān249, while another describes a raid by B. ʿĀmir against a caravan of al-Nuʿmān and then their victory over the punitive expedition he sent out at Yawm al-Sullān.250

Scepticism must be expressed of the bulk of the historical content of this material because of the immense propaganda value of any account of a tribal unit defeating armies of the mulūk. However, as these accounts must have spread beyond original tribal audiences to non-related groups, certain elements of reality must have existed for them to be credible. These realities must be embodied in the geopolitical background described in the accounts.251

Thus, we are able to say that Taghlib's presence in Bādiyat al-Shām and in al-Jazīra, in the time of ʿAmr b. Kulthūm and ʿAmr b. Hind must be considered real, even if the murder of ʿAmr b. Hind or the defeat of the Ghassānīd mulik may not be. It must also be true that Tamīmi lineages were closely associated with al-Ḥira at the time of the later Hārān king, al-Nuʿmān, and indeed, as we find in other ayyām as well, they formed in this period an

244 See Ibn al-Ṭahir, Kāmil, i, p. 543.
245 Ibn al-Ṭahir, Kāmil, i, p. 649.
246 Ibn al-Ṭahir, Kāmil, i, p. 539.
247 Ibn al-Ṭahir, Kāmil, i, p. 547.
248 Following Shalīḥ in EJ2, s.v. "Lakhmids".
249 Bayḍāy, Ayyām al-ʿarab, ii, p. 433. There is another battle, between Shayban and Mazīn, which has the same name.
250 Ibn al-Ṭahir, Kāmil, i, p. 638.
251 Donner, "Ilak", pp. 14-5.
important arm of Lakhmid power in eastern Arabia. The accounts involving āĀmir highlight this alliance of Tamīmī groups with Hira and suggest that the Hiran power extended across the Dahnā into Najd from al-Bahrayn in the late 6th c. CE.²⁵²

The ayyām of tribal confederations:

The accounts of this group of ayyām do not describe direct or significant involvement of the mulūk in them. The most famous of these are the ayyām of Shi‘b Jabala, al-Nisār and Khazāz. We will briefly discuss the former two here. The latter will be examined in full in Chapter 5, as it is important for the discussion on Taghib.

Yawm Shi‘b Jabala involved on one side, the B. ‘Abs and their allies, Abdallāh b. Ghaṭafān, with their neighbours, the B. āĀmir b. Sa‘ṣa‘a, against a combined attacking force of Dhubyān (the term Ghaṭafān is also used) with their Asadi allies (together called the aḥālīf) and various groups from Tamīm and al-Ribāb. On the side of the latter there was also alleged to have been a contingent of either Kindī or Hiran troops.²⁵³ The reason for the presence of the Kindī/Hiran troops, we are told, was to take booty, while Dhubyān had a feud with āAbs and Tamīm had a feud with B. āĀmir. At the time, āAbs had moved into āĀmiri territory as a result of the Dāhīs war against the rest of Ghaṭafān.²⁵⁴ āAbs and āĀmir were the victors in this battle.²⁵⁵

Yawm al-Nisār evolved from a dispute between the al-Ribāb group and the dominant Tamīmīs. Fearing an attack by Tamīm, al-Ribāb moved into the territory of the aḥālīf (Ghaṭafān and Asad) and Tayyi‘ and asked for their protection. The account also alleges that al-Ribāb were led by the Lakhmid prince al-Aswad b. al-Mundhir, brother to al-Nu‘mān - the mother of al-Aswad, we are told, was from al-Ribāb. Tamīm countered this move by persuading B. āĀmir to join them in an attack against the aḥālīf and al-Ribāb, however, they were both defeated by the Ribāb alliance.²⁵⁶

As we can see, in both these cases various tribal groups were involved on either side. The reasons for the conflicts in the first case were supposedly to do

²⁵³ Bayātī, Ayyām al-‘Arab, ii, pp. 217-28. See also p. 248 which implies links between a Dāhīs leader and the Sosomānīs.
²⁵⁴ Bayātī, Ayyām al-‘Arab, ii, p. 217.
²⁵⁵ Bayātī, Ayyām al-‘Arab, ii, pp. 214-218.
²⁵⁶ Bayātī, Ayyām al-‘Arab, ii, pp. 527-42.
with personal feuds between the leading families of some of the groups. In the second, they were to do with one tribal group subjecting another to heavy (and humiliating) taxation. In both cases, however, a hint is given of the involvement of mulâk in these conflicts. If this involvement was true, there must have been political interests at stake as well, which may have provided the real motives for the greatness of the scale of conflict.

Indeed, large scale battles, such as Jabala and al-Nisâr, cannot be described simply as tribal squabbles or raiding and must have political implications behind them. Moreover, the account of Yawm Jabala describes the objective of the anti-"Abs/"Amîr alliance as being to wipe out their military potential in a set battle.\textsuperscript{257} Furthermore, we are told that after the battle of Jabala, "Amîr captured the prime camels of the Lakhmid ruler, al-"Ucsmân b. al-Mundhir,\textsuperscript{258} and one of the leaders of the anti-"Absi alliance was the Dârimi chieftain, Laqît b. Zurâra, who elsewhere is associated with the Mundhirids and even with the Sassanian king (kisrâ).\textsuperscript{259}

Thus, it seems that these large scale 'tribal' ayyâm while seemingly unattached from the broader geopolitical context, are in fact an important part of it. These ayyâm tend to support an image of various tribal lineages involved in political and military activities, often commanding large bodies of men who are not always their kinsmen. The traditional view of pre-Islamic Arabian tribal conflict as only ever being between badly armed and trained nomadic tribesmen sits neither well with the ayyâm material nor with the later conquest movement.\textsuperscript{260}

\textbf{Audiences and transmitters:}

The nature of these ayyâm is such that, due to their multi-tribal nature, they were preserved separately in more than one tribal group. This is exactly the case that Abû "Ubayda describes in his account for Yawm al-Nisâr, for instance. Here, he tells us that there were differences in opinion about certain

\textsuperscript{257} See Nâqî'îd, pp. 657-662.
\textsuperscript{258} Nâqî'îd, p. 661.
\textsuperscript{259} Nâqî'îd, p. 663.
\textsuperscript{260} For the increased militarization of Arabia in the Late Jâhilî period, see J. Retiû, "The Road to Yarmuk: The Arabs and the Fall of the Roman Power in the Middle East", in L. Hydén and J. O. Roseqvist, \textit{Aspects of Late Antiqity and Early Byzantium}, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 4, Stockholm, 1983.

While this idea of an increased militarization of the Arabian tribes is convincing in itself, the author presents little evidence, rather he dogmatically puts forward this idea and several other highly delatable points about the build up to the Islamic conquests.
parts of the accounts amongst his sources. On examination of these, we find that his sources include informants from the various participating groups. Informants from al-Ribāb in particular claim that this battle took place after Yawm Jabala, a fact which he disputes using information provided from other sources including Dārimī Tamīmī ruwā.\footnote{See Bayātī, Ayyām al-ʿArab, ii, pp. 527-8.} Also disputed were the tribal affiliations of the commanders, a detail often contested between tribes for obvious reasons.\footnote{For another example of this type of dispute of the ruwā, see Yawm Khojāz, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbīh, ʿIqd, vi, pp. 97-8.} In this case, a ʿDabbi informant gives information different from an Asādi regarding who the leader of Asad was; while a Fazārī is one of Abū ʿUbayda’s informants regarding the leader of the whole army of āhālīf and al-Ribāb.\footnote{Bayātī, Ayyām al-ʿArab, ii, p. 529.} We are lucky in this case that differences existed, prompting Abū ʿUbayda to tell us more of his sources, something he rarely does. It is important to note here also that some of the informants of the battle were Dārimīs, i.e. from the defeated side.

**Remarks:**

Firstly, these accounts do not represent only the points of view of single tribal units and, thus, they are of limited utility for propaganda purposes, and less subject to its potential for severely exaggerating related events.

Secondly, these accounts cannot have been created simply as accounts of tribal boasting. Given the individualistic nature of the tribes, it is difficult to conceive of a such stories being created out of pure imagination, since more than one tribal group share a victory. Indeed, if the sole purpose of ayyām are to boast of tribal prowess, as is the widespread notion of them, then why do the ayyām of victorious mulūk exist at all? There do not seem to be any tribal ruwā sharing ʿaṣabiya with the mulūk, and we are not told of any Kindi, Lakhmid or Ghassānid narrators of ayyām. In other words, their accounts would have been at the mercy of tribal ruwā.

Thirdly, many of the sources for each of these ayyām, were from different tribes. Thus, even though they seem to be contradictory in certain aspects, they provided collectors like Abū ʿUbayda with a check on each other; an advantage his work shows us he used.

Thus, this group of ayyām contains information of real conflicts which occurred in 5th and 6th century CE Arabia. At least with regard to the less
confused post-Kindi material, this information can provide a starting point for investigating the political situation of the major tribes and their power bases and interests at the rise of Islam.

Conclusions:

The ayyām accounts normally started out as simple reports of real events. They then were quickly shaped into stories to be more easily memorized and related to audiences. The ayyām were thus influenced by storytelling devices, and if still remembered after long stretches of time, when the main characters and groups had been forgotten, they sometimes developed further as entertainment, having discarded their historiographical function. Over long periods they strayed far from the original event they once came into being to describe, yet, they were not essentially works of fiction. In the shorter term, the ayyām of the pre-Islamic Arabs acted as a reliable public record of their histories.

The bulk of the ayyām accounts relate battles of northern Najdi tribes and those of al-Bahrayn. They name individuals who mainly lived only very few generations before Islam, no further back than the early 6th century. The earliest reliable information regarding tribal politics stems from the Kindi period of dominance in central Arabia.

Ayyām types:

Three types of ayyām exist, with differing degrees of historicity.

The ancient ayyām, while of little help in informing us of the political history of the Arab tribes in pre-Islamic times on their own, nevertheless, serve to show that certain types of material may be accurately transmitted over great lengths of time; in particular, the names of tribes and individuals and their allies or enemies at the time.

The propagandist ayyām of single tribal units are also of little direct historical value. As the victorious tribal units were usually the only sources of the yawm, they were generally not subjected to external constraints. However, they are a source historical information concerning typical tribal hostilities and tribal distribution in the more recent pre-Islamic period.
The multi-tribal *ayyām* and those of the *mulūk* are of greater historical importance. Their multi-tribal audiences made them relatively immune to propagandist exaggerations and, while the exact events remain untrustworthy unless corroborated by external evidence, the accounts may tell us of real conflicts which show up the main tribal and regional alignments of central Arabia, especially after the fall of the Ḥujrid Kindīs.
Chapter 4
The Consistency of
the pre-Islamic Traditions

Introduction:

In the previous two chapters, I have argued that the pre-Islamic ayyām accounts of central Arabia reflect the surrounding tribal geopolitical history. Furthermore, I have also tried to show that despite their textual instability, the bulk of them could not have significantly corrupted tribal information of historical significance in their passage into Islamic times. I have posited that the earliest material independently capable of providing us with useable historical information dates from the period of the establishment of the dynasty of Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār (later 5th c. CE), while the bulk of it dates from the 6th c. CE.

The following chapter focuses on tribal conflicts as described in the ayyām accounts, as well as geographic material collected by early compilers, such as al-Asma'ī, and preserved in works such as Yāqūt's Muṣjam al-buldān. The main objective here is to test the consistency of the material, by comparing the parties to tribal conflicts with the supposed geographical distribution of the tribes. In other words, the primary aim is to establish whether or not the enemies or allies of tribal groups mentioned in the ayyām accounts inhabited the same - or neighbouring - territories according to geographic sources, as is to be expected.

Thus, the points of focus here are regional tribal distribution, tribal alliances and hostilities and any co-relations between these two. Due to limitations of time and space, these brief comments on tribal territories and political polarities are merely a sampling. The aim is to show the potential of the material for historical uses. Further comprehensive research based on a wider range of sources may provide us with a much more intricate view of the tribal state of Arabia between the period of the rise of the Ḥujrid Kindis and that of Islam.

---

264 I use only the tribal ayyām found in Ibn al-Āthir, Kāmil.
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

Tribal territories:

There is still no satisfactory tribal map of pre-Islamic Arabia, nor one which provides enough of the essential topographic information alongside descriptions of tribal distribution. Tribal distribution is depicted vaguely and when unaccompanied by meaningful topographic information potentially misleading, or not of great use. This is partly because tribal territories are difficult to establish with much precision due to the lack of chronological information in the source material. Nevertheless, the ayyām material stems from one particular century, in a political lull between the historical watersheds of the rise of the Ḥujrid Kindis and the expansion of Islam. This should facilitate attempts to establish Arabian tribal territories, however roughly, especially if aided by topographic knowledge of the land.

The following sections and the maps accompanying this dissertation are intended as an initial step in the direction of bringing together the topography and the tribal distribution of pre-Islamic Arabia.

A note on nomadic tribalism and territories:

Tribal territories were - and remain - an extremely important element in Arabian tribalism, whether nomadic or settled. Even though large parts of the great pre-Islamic central Arabian tribes (who are mentioned most frequently in the ayyām) were mainly nomadic, they still controlled specific territories which were named after them.

The nomadic groups would spend the dry months of the summer near their permanent concentrations of watering holes and fertile lands where their settled kin would remain throughout the year. In the rainy seasons they would move out into the now green steppes to graze. How far they went depended on whether they herded camels or not, and on how much rain had fallen. It is

---

265 See for instance the two maps in Donner, Islamic Conquests, pp. 13, 21; the numerous charts in Ma’ānis, II, Atlas tarikh al-islām, Cairo: al-Zahrā’ī r-Flām u-l’Arabī, 1987, charts 32-35; the tribal map in Smith, "Events in Arabia"; see also map 4 and the 'Tribal Arabia' map in EI², s.v. "Badr".
266 See Dresch, Tribes, pp. 80-2; Tribe conflict over grazing land and watering holes occurred often, as represented in the ayyām. In this regard, it is important to take note of the great number of pre- and early Islamic verses mentioning tribal territories. It is difficult not to see this activity as somehow linked to legitimizing the presence of the poet's group in those areas. It could be useful to explore this as one function of the tribal poets.
267 See below Chapter 6, p. 137. However, the concept of tribal territory for modern nomadic groups is not always a fixed one [see Lancaster, W., The Rivals Bedouin Today, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 121]. It should also be noted that many Arabian tribesmen were not nomadic, and large parts of those tribes typically viewed as nomadic were actually settled. Recent historians have stressed the fact that settled Arabs far outnumbered the nomads throughout history (Donner, Islamic Conquests, p. 11; see also, Cambridge History of Arabic Literature, p. xiv).
important to note that there were permanent bases to return to every summer and that interchange between settled and nomadic parts was regular and easy in both ways, and generally depended on a great number of issues, from the personal to the political. Nomads from different tribal groups would often share the same grazing areas. Wars between groups would often break out either to expand a group's summer watering areas or winter grazing lands.264

Tribal distribution in pre-Islamic Arabia:

Based on demographic information in the ayyām and the geographic sources, the following section describes the locations of the main tribal groups outside of South Arabia. I have attempted to make a sweep of all the territories of central and northern Arabia for the sake of completeness. However, the main interest, here is to establish the territories of the tribes mentioned in the ayyām, thus, I have especially concentrated on the areas of central and eastern Najd, which is where most of these tribes lived.

Southern Najd:

Starting from the important settlement of Najrān to the southwest of Najd, we find the dominant group in that town and the surrounding region to be the B. al-Hārith b. Ka'b [see map 2]. The territory of al-Hārith b. Ka'b was strategically placed between the 'Asir mountains in the west and the practically impenetrable gigantic sand desert of the 'Empty Quarter'.269 It thus dominated the only major land route between Najd and Yemen. The B. al-Hārith formed a very important part of the Madhhij confederation. The name Madhhij is often used in the ayyām accounts to denote any South Arabian army, which emphasizes its close association with the South Arabian kingdoms and the political role it played in the region. Numerous South Arabian inscriptions tell us that the tribes of Madhhij provided the Sabaeans and then Himyarites with auxiliary troops for their central Arabian expeditions.270

North and eastwards, along the trade route to al-Yamāma and al-Bahrayn, lay the settlement of Qaryat al-Fāw, known from Yemeni and local

264 See F. Donner, "The Role of Nomads in the Near East in Late Antiquity (400-600 C.E.") in F. M. Clover and R. S. Humphreys, eds., Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 74-6. See also Lancaster, Revista, p. 9-10.

269 See EP2, s.v. "al-Ruh al-Khālīf".

inscriptions to be an important base of Kinda and their Madhhiji allies for centuries. Qaryat commanded access onto the ridge of al-Ārid (modern Jabal Tuwayq) and the fertile area of al-Aflāj, through which the route passed [see map 2]. To the north, below Jabal Tuwayq, is a small sand desert beyond which began the territory of B. Āmir. It is unclear from the sources exactly which tribes controlled al-Ārid and al-Aflāj, but one branch of Jarm of the southern Qudā'a might have, and even some of the Rabī'an group al-Nāmir b. Qāšīt, normally associated with Iraq. In Islamic times B. Kā'b of Āmir b. Sa'āda were in control of Falaj, the most important settlement of al-Aflāj. Thus, it may be that they were established there in pre-Islamic times as well. To the south of al-Aflāj extended the great 'Empty Quarter' [see map 2].

To the north of Najrān along the eastern slopes of the Asir mountains were the tribes of al-Azd, Khath'am and Bajila. About 250 kms directly to the west of Qaryat, was Bisha in the Asir mountains [see map 2]. Wadi Bisha ran from Bisha to the northeast and was inhabited by Khath'amīs in its higher parts and by various groups of B. Āmir and their Qaysī kinsmen of B. Salūl of Hawāzin further below in its eastern parts. Khath'am was also to be found on the higher ground between the settlements of Bisha and Turaba. Finally, although most of the Madhhiji tribes were based south of Najrān in al-Jawf, many groups of them, such as parts of the important Murād, could also be found in the region to the north of Najrān.

272 El2, s.v. "al-Ārid".
273 Which is even counted as part of al-Yamāma, see Yaqūt, "al-Aflaj". It is probable that al-Ārid was the name of Jabal Tuwayq in pre- and early Islamic times; see "Ārid".
274 See Yaqūt, s.v. "Uzayhir", where they are said to control fertile land "behind" al-Yamāma. Other associations of Jarm with 'al-Yamāma' are found in Yaqūt, s.v. "Ārid", "Birk", "al-Aqiq"
275 Yaqūt, s.v. "Nisāli".
276 Yaqūt, s.v. "Falaj".
277 This is suggested by the El2 entry, s.v. "al-Aflaj".
278 Yaqūt, s.v. "al-Saraw", "al-Khalasa".
279 Yaqūt, s.v. "Bisha".
280 Yaqūt, s.v. "Turaba".
281 For example, Yaqūt, s.v. "Tathlibi". See also Robin, C. and Ueli Brunner, Map of Ancient Yemen, Munich: Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, 1987, square 1F.
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

The lands of 'al-Yamāma':

Al-Yamāma refers to both a stretch of oases lying along the western side of the sand-desert of al-dahna\textsuperscript{282} as well as to a town at the southern end of the oases, which was previously called Jaww. Yāqūt says that the town was renamed Ḥajr by the Bakrī tribe of B. Ḥanīfa when they occupied it from its original inhabitants.\textsuperscript{283} The town of Ḥajr was extremely important in the pre-Islamic era and was on the main trade route between Yemen and al-Bahrayn and Iraq [see map 2]. The Arabic sources even record that South Arabian trading colonies had existed in al-Yamāma in pre-Islamic times.\textsuperscript{284}

To the east of al-Yamāma and running northwest parallel to the coast of the Persian Gulf was the thin sand desert of al-Dahnā\textsuperscript{2}. Along the western side of al-Dahna\textsuperscript{2} were great palm groves and numerous settlements which stretched towards the mouth of the great Wādī al-Rumma, roughly where the medieval al-Nibāj lay [see map 1]. This fertile area was inhabited by a variety of tribes, mainly from B. Ḥaṇzala of Tamīm such as Dārīm\textsuperscript{285} and Yarbū\textsuperscript{c}\textsuperscript{286}, or associated groups such as al-Ribāb,\textsuperscript{287} but also from Rabī\textsuperscript{c}a, such as the Bakrī Ḥanīfa,\textsuperscript{288} Qays b. Ṭha'laba\textsuperscript{289} and Ānaza\textsuperscript{290}.

To the north of the Yamāma region, some Tamīmī groups, especially B. Yarbū\textsuperscript{c} were to be found between the Nafūd desert and that of al-Dahna\textsuperscript{2}.\textsuperscript{291} To the west of this fertile region lay the heart of Najd, which was mainly the territory of the nomadic B. Āmīr b. Ṣa'sa'a.\textsuperscript{292}

Al-Dahna\textsuperscript{2} itself, while a sand desert, was considered fertile in the rainy seasons, and known to be good grazing land during that period. It was said to have been the exclusive domain of various Tamīmī (and related) tribes, such as B. Ḏabba and B. Sa'\textsuperscript{d},\textsuperscript{293} the latter of whom dominated its southern end.\textsuperscript{294} The

\textsuperscript{282} See El\textsuperscript{1}, s.v. "al-Yamāma." For a detailed description of the distribution of Bakrī tribes see Donner, "Bakr," pp. 17, ff.
\textsuperscript{283} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Ḥajr".
\textsuperscript{284} Al-Ṭa'ālībī, II., Al-Adḥīl al-jāhili layna bahjat al-qabā il wa-al-aŋẖa al-μuwarḏanā, Baghdad, 1978, p. 57. A colony in al-Ta'ālībī is also mentioned.
\textsuperscript{285} Yāqūt, s.v. "Sarīr".
\textsuperscript{286} Yāqūt, s.v. "Marakhūr".
\textsuperscript{287} Yāqūt, s.v. "Ashqur," "Usnayy," "Ihrūr," "al-Ḫurfa," "al-Ḥaṇāda".
\textsuperscript{288} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Mudnaramā." See also Yawm al-Ṣafqā, llm al-Ḏahrīr, Kāmil, i, p. 620.
\textsuperscript{289} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Khāraj".
\textsuperscript{290} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Mujāzāa".
\textsuperscript{291} Yāqūt, s.v. "Ḫazn Yarbūr," "al-Mulā." See El\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "Āmīr."
\textsuperscript{292} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Dajlimatān".
\textsuperscript{293} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Dahna."
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

B. Saʿd extended to the southeast of Hajr were the oases of Yabrin lay.\textsuperscript{205} South of Yabrin was the 'Empty Quarter', while to the east lay the route to ʿUmān [see map 2].

Al-Bahrayn:\textsuperscript{206}

North of Yabrin and across the Dahna\textsuperscript{2} from al-Yamāmah lay al-Bahrayn, the coastal land rich in oases. Its main settlement, al-Hajar, lay in the largest oasis of the region, that of al-Aḥsāʾ. Al-Hajar was so important that its name was also a synonym for al-Bahrayn.\textsuperscript{217} Near al-Hajar, was the site of ancient Gerrha, once the only major port in Eastern Arabia outside of ʿUmān.\textsuperscript{208} Al-Bahrayn was home to mainly Bakri but also other Rabīʿan and Tamīmi tribes [see map 1].

B. Dārim were the furthest north of all the Tamīmi groups in al-Bahrayn, whose territories started to the south of Başra.\textsuperscript{209} The B. Saʿd lived in and around al-Hajar.\textsuperscript{300} Another important centre in al-Bahrayn according to Yāqūt, was al-Mushaqqar: "the fort of al-Hajar". It was controlled by the Rabīʿan B. ʿAbd al-Qays, who had allegedly occupied it from Iyād in pre-Islamic times.\textsuperscript{301} Shaybān and ʿIjl of Bakr lay in northern al-Bahrayn, while Yashkur and Ḥanīfa lay in the southern parts.\textsuperscript{302}

The Euphrates:

Further north, Shaybān and ʿIjl extended along the Euphrates where they mixed with Taghlib, Iyād and al-Namir.\textsuperscript{303} The latter two extended up all along the coast of the Gulf and then up along the western bank of the Euphrates towards Palmyra. Taghlib and Iyād were also established across the Euphrates in al-Jazīra.\textsuperscript{304}

\textsuperscript{205} Yāqūt, s.v.v. "Yabrin", "Abrin", "Ḥāmir", "al-Ḫūsh", "al-Qiṣāʾ"; "Masqut".
\textsuperscript{206} By al-Bahrayn I mean not the modern island country but the older designation of the land lying on the eastern Arabian coast between ʿUmān in the south, Iraq in the north and bordered by the sands of al-Dahna in the west.
\textsuperscript{207} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "al-Husā".
\textsuperscript{208} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "al-Ḩusāa", see map 4.
\textsuperscript{209} Yāqūt, s.v.v. "Bayḍāʾ", "Rāmū", "Bayda", "al-Miqarr".
\textsuperscript{300} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Adıyamān".
\textsuperscript{301} Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Mushaqqar".
\textsuperscript{302} Donner, "Bakri", p. 17.
\textsuperscript{303} Donner, "Bakri", p. 17.
\textsuperscript{304} See above Chapter 5, pp. 94-5.
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

Close to the site of al-Kūfa, lay the great Arab settlement of al-Ḥira; seat of the Mundhirid rulers. Al-Ḥira was populated by a mixture of tribesmen from numerous tribes, both southern and northern according to the Arabic tradition, including Tanūkhis, Azdīs and other Quḍāʾīs.\(^{305}\)

Al-Shām:

Further along the upper Euphrates were the Bahrāʾ and Tanūkh.\(^{306}\) Then along the eastern side of the Levantine mountains was the territory of Kalb who extended southwards and dominated the important Wadi al-Sīrāḥan leading from Najd into al-Shām from the large oasis of Dūmat al-Jandal, which was also dominated by them.\(^{307}\) In the early 6th c. CE, Kalbī power sometimes extended into northern Hijāz.\(^{308}\)

The vast steppeland of Bādiyat al-Shām contained numerous groups of camel nomads from all the tribes found along the Euphrates such as Bakr, Taghlīb, Iyād and Bahrāʾ; especially prominent from al-Shām were Tanūkh and Kalb; and from the south, groups from Tayyi'.\(^{309}\)

Other tribes of the Quḍāʾīa confederation lay further to the west in Jordan and southern Palestine as well as in the northern Hijāz. They mixed with the non-Quḍāʾī Syrian tribes of Judhām, Lakhm, Āmila and Ghassān.\(^{310}\)

Northern and central Najd:

Wadi al-Rumma in central Arabia was the territory of the Ghaṭafānī tribes interspersed with Asad and to a lesser extent Tayyiʾ and some Āmirī groups. Tayyiʾ’s main territory, much of it also shared by Asad to their east, lay further north in the oases in the region of modern Hā’il, protected in the north by the great sand desert, al-Nafūd [see map 1].\(^{311}\) Like al-Dahnāʾ, the Nafūd was a favoured pasturage by camel nomads (from Tayyiʾ and Kalb)

\(^{305}\) Qaṭīf, s.v. "al-Ḥira".

\(^{306}\) EI², s.v. "Bahrāʾ.".

\(^{307}\) EI², s.v. "Kalb".

\(^{308}\) We can see this in the traditions of the Kalbī leaders Zuhayr b. Jumāḥ [Iṣṭahāmī, Aghāmī, xxi. 7-2-2-4] and al-Jārīth b. Ḥisn [See M. J. Kister, "On the Wife of the Goldsmith from Fadak and her Progeny: a Study in Jādīd Genealogical Traditions," Le Muséon, 92 (1979)].

\(^{309}\) Donner, Conquests, p. 171.

\(^{310}\) EI², s.v. "Kulāʾīn." See also, EI², s.v. s.e. v. "Āmila", "Judhām", "Lakhm", "Ghassān".

\(^{311}\) Alī, Mafussal, iv. p. 219; EI¹, s.v. "Tayy".
when it rained. However, due to its great size and lack of wells it was an obstacle to any but the pastoralists who used it seasonally.\textsuperscript{312}

Ghatafānī territory ran all the way westwards along the Wādī al-Rumma into the Hijāz. This valley had much rainfall which was collected in hollows or dammed, as well as springs and palm groves. It also acted as the main route across central Arabia, connecting Hijāz and al-Shām with the Yamāma oases and eastern Arabia [see map 1].\textsuperscript{313} The eastern reaches of Ghatafānī territory were dominated by B. āAbs, the centre by B. Dhubyān, with B. Murra and Tha’laba strong in the west, in the Hijazī region just east and north of Yathrib. North and west of the Ghatafān, as well as to the west of Yathrib, lay the Quḍātī tribes of Juhayna, Bāliy, B. al-Qayn and B. ’Udhra.\textsuperscript{314}

South of al-Rumma was generally more desolate country, though interspersed with numerous watering holes and oases.\textsuperscript{315} As in Badiyat al-Shām, most of the tribes in this region were highly mobile camel nomads. Here B. Āmīr were prominent and, with some other Qaysī groups, extended southwards to al-Ārid and Wādī Bīsha. The two Qaysī brother tribes of Ghanīy and Bāhila were mainly found between the region of Himā Dariya and Wādī Bīsha.\textsuperscript{316}

The distribution of the four main parts of Āmīr was roughly as follows: the B. Numayr bordered the al-Yamāma regions in the north and east of Āmīr territory\textsuperscript{317}; to the north, the B. Kīlāb reached Batn al-Jarīb and Himā Dariya\textsuperscript{318}; in the southeast, the B. Khāb extended towards al-Aflāj\textsuperscript{319}, while groups from all parts but especially from the B. Hilāl dominated the southwest, where Āmīr and B. al-Hārith b. Khāb are said to have bordered each other at the bottom of Wādī Bīsha.\textsuperscript{320}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{312} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “al-Nafūl”
\item \textsuperscript{313} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “al-Rumma”, “Nadji’il”.
\item \textsuperscript{314} See above Chapter 6, pp. 137-43.
\item \textsuperscript{315} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “Najd’il”, “Badw” map 4.
\item \textsuperscript{316} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “Bāhila”, “Ghanti b. A’ṣur”.
\item \textsuperscript{317} Yasūf, s.v. “Ajyād”.
\item \textsuperscript{318} Yasūf, s.v. “al-Rumma”.
\item \textsuperscript{319} Yasūf, s.v. “Fahāj”.
\item \textsuperscript{320} Yasūf, s.v. “Rahāb”, “Turaba”. See EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “Āmīr b. Sa’ṣa’n” for a more detailed description.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Hijaz and Western Najd:

To the west of ČĀmiri lands and to the east of Yathrib running south till al-Ṭāʾif, lay the lands of the B. Sulaym. Further south and east were the Hawāzin tribes, including groups from B. ČĀmir b. Saʿṣaʿa, who bordered the Khathʿam and Bajila to their southwest.

Yathrib itself was of course dominated by the tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj. Interestingly, B. Thaʿlabā and B. Zaʿūrā of Ghassān are also mentioned as tribes of pre-Islamic Yathrib. Jewish tribes were widespread and to be found in large numbers in all the major oasis settlements of northwest Arabia, from Yathrib northwards.

Southern Hijaz and Tihāma:

Further to the south and west around Mecca were the B. Kināna who extended a little southwards along the coast parallel to ČAsīr. Between Mecca and al-Ṭāʾif was the tribe of Hudhayl. Thaqīf inhabited al-Ṭāʾif and its environs while to their south lay the territory of the Qaysi tribes of Fahm and ČAdwān. South of them were the ČAsīr tribes of al-Āzd, Khathʿam and Bajila.

Patterns of alliances:

The following is an examination of hostilities and co-operation between tribes. Thus, the accounts of the ayyām between tribal vassals of mulūk and other tribes will be discounted as not typical of tribal activity, or representative of tribal warfare, usually possible only between relatively close neighbours. Nor is inter-tribal feuding, such as that of Tayyi', Thaqīf and the tribes of Yathrib, of immediate interest to this section, as it does not help us in forming a picture of relative tribal distribution.

321 For detailed information concerning the geographic distribution of the B. Sulaym, see Locker, The Banū Sulaym.
322 Yaqūt, s.n. "al-Sarāw".
323 Ḥusayn ibn Ahmad, Aḥṣāʾi, xviii, p. 6403.
324 For the few details we have of their distribution and settlements see 'All, Mafāṣṣal, vi, pp. 516-30.
325 Kalbāš, s.n. "Kinzīma b. Khuzayma".
326 Etṣ, s.n. "Hudhayl".
327 Yaqūt, s.n. "al-Sarāw".
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, this review of the pre-Islamic Battle Days is meant as a sampling of the ayyām material, and is based only on the ayyām collected by Ibn al-Athir, which is representative but not comprehensive. The following takes into account all the ayyām he mentions, except the two types mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

Bakr:

The majority (thirteen in number) of the ayyām of the Bakri tribes are against the Tamīm or their related tribes such as ḩabba and al-Ribāb. A few ayyām, including the famous Basūs feud, are against Ṭaghib. Three others are against three other tribes, Ṭayyi', Kalb and Sulaym. The Bakri groups named in the ayyām are Shaybān (to whom are attributed most of the Bakri ayyām), Dhuḥl b. Tha'lab, Ḥjl, and the al-Lahāzim alliance.

Tamīm and related tribes:

Apart from the thirteen ayyām fought against Shaybān and other Bakri tribes mentioned above, the ayyām accounts report that Tamīmis were also involved in two multi-tribal conflicts and some minor ones. Tamīm and al-Ribāb fought together with allies from Asad and Dhubyān, at Yawm Shi'b Jabala against the B. ṣAbs and B. ṣĀmir. The other conflict involved Tamīm with ṣĀmir against al-Ribāb who were allied to Asad, Ghatafan and Ṭayyi' at the connected ayyām of al-Nisār and al-Jifār. Minor conflicts were against B. ṣĀmir and B. ṣAbs.

---

328 Dhikr Asr Ḍhāli', Ibn al-Athir, Kaṭīl, i, p. 584; 'Yawm Muslūmān', p. 608; 'Ḥarb li-Shuyūn wa-Shaybān', p. 609.
330 'Yawm Shi'b Jabala', Ibn al-Athir, Kaṭīl, i, p. 581.
332 'Yawm Dhi Najāh', Ibn al-Athir, Kaṭīl, i, p. 595; 'Marrūt', p. 631.
Chapter 4: The Consistency of the pre-Islamic Traditions

- Āmir:

The main enemies of Āmir were from Ghaţafān, Asad and their allies. As mentioned above, they fought against and with Tamīm. Only one conflict is reported against the B. al-Ḥārith b. Ka'b and their numerous South Arabian allies. Āmir fought against Quraysh at Yawm al-Fijār (al-Thānī), while at Yawm al-Sullān, Quraysh and Āmir co-operated.

- Asad and Tayyi:

Apart from their co-operation in Yawm al-Jifār and al-Nisār, Asad and Tayyi fought against each other once.

- Quraysh, Kināna:

The remaining two ayyām involve Quraysh. The more famous is that of Yawm al-Fijār al-Thānī which pitted the Meccans and their Kināni allies, as well as Asadis and the Aḥābīsh group, against a Qaysi coalition of tribesmen from Hawāzin, Sulaym, Āmir, Ghaţafān and B. Jadila. The other, Yawm Dhāt Nakif, describes an attempt by the B. Bakr of Kināna to oust the Quraysh from Mecca.

Conclusions:

The main objective of this chapter was to gauge the pre-Islamic ayyām and associated geographic material, in order to clarify whether it was internally consistent or not. This brief and preliminary exploration suggests that it was. For each tribal group with ayyām, their enemies as well as any allies were their close neighbours. This is consistent throughout the tribal ayyām described above, with one exception.

336 'Yawm al-Nisār', al-Jifār and that of Shi'b Jalālah involved both groups. Āmir stood against Ghaţafān tribes alone at Yawm al-Raqūq, Ibn al-Ṭahhir, Kāmil, i, p. 642; 'Salāh', p. 644; 'al-Nabā', p. 646; and against Asad alone at Yawm Dhi 'Ala', Ibn al-Ṭahhir, Kāmil, i, p. 641.
337 'Yawm Fayf al-Rū', Ibn al-Ṭahhir, Kāmil, i, p. 632.
339 The name 'al-Sullān' given by Ibn al-Ṭahhir is rejected by Bayāṭi who gives 'al-Su'llān', Ibn al-Ṭahhir, Kāmil, i, p. 639; Bayāṭi, Ayyām al-'āmil, ii, p. 21, n. 1.
342 'Yawm Dhāt Nakif', Ibn al-Ṭahhir, Kāmil, i, p. 587.
The closest neighbours of the B. Bakr as described by the geographers are the B. Tamim, with whom they shared al-Bahrain and parts of al-Yamama. It is precisely the Tamimi groups with whom they have the most ayyam. The other ayyam are fought against Taghlib, their direct neighbours in northern Bahrain and southern Iraq; against Tayyi, their direct neighbours in northwestern Bahrain and the southeastern Badiya; and Kalb, with whom they had contact in the Badiya. The sole exception is Sulaym who lived far away beyond Tamim, Ghatafan and B. cAmir in the west of Najd.

It is impossible to know for certain whether this Bakri-Sulami battle took place or not. If it did, the problem of distance between the two tribes, could be explained in numerous ways, all speculative. However, as I have mentioned before, the material was unstable, and such incongruities are rather to be expected. The fact that this is the only one such incompatibility is probably the more surprising point.

This consistency between geographic distribution and occurrence of conflict can also be seen with the Tamimi groups and with their other neighbours from Ghatafan, Asad, cAmir and Tayyi. Similarly, the B. cAmir - whose tribes covered a great expanse of central Najd - record ayyam fought on both sides of their territory, whether involving the Tamimi and Ghatafani tribes in the east and north or those of the Hawazin and Meccan tribes in the southwest. Also, the latter groups around Mecca only co-operated and fought against each other.

Certainly, this proposed consistency of the pre-Islamic material regarding these two facets of tribal history needs a more comprehensive examination of the sources before it can be established as fact. Yet what are the implications of consistency for the pre-Islamic material? Firstly, this consistency would act as confirmation that the main function of the ayyam was to record tribal history and not only to create entertaining stories, as I have argued in the Chapter 3. Secondly, this would also argue against the opinion that tribal material was fabricated on a significant scale as it passed into the Islamic period, as I have argued in Chapter 2.

The alternative to these two deductions would be that the consistency itself was fabricated by later transmitters. This is hardly credible, for it would imply a consensus amongst all the transmitters or compilers as to where tribal territories lay and whom they fought. Furthermore, it would mean that these transmitters deemed the consistency of their material to be important in the
first place. That such scrupulous transmitters would be engaged in mass 
fabrication seems a very remote possibility.
PART II

The Arab Tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam':
The Cases of Taghlib and Ghaṭafān
Overview

The next two chapters will examine two different tribal groups as the literary sources portray them in the pre-Islamic period, as well as in the early Muslim period until the rise of the ‘Abbásid dynasty.

The first part of each chapter will start by examining the pre-Islamic situation, in particular, in terms of geographical distribution, relations with neighbours, political cohesion and relative regional power. A wide range of sources - based on those discussed in Chapter 1 - will be used to gather information relevant to the assessment of these issues. The important ayyám material of each tribe will be examined in the light of the first part of this dissertation.

The second part of each chapter will trace these tribes and any subsets and known affiliated tribesmen through the period between the rise of Islam and the late Umayyad period. One particular concern will be to assess the extent of inter-tribal co-operation in the Islamic period, and to determine whether this changes from the pre-Islamic period. The sources for the Islamic period described in Chapter 1 will form the core of the source material used.

On the more general level, the underlying question is that of continuity and change in the tribal system as a whole. How did the tribal system change between the pre-Islamic past and the early Islamic era? This question will be addressed at the end of Part II.

When deciding on which tribes to select for examination, it was resolved to start with a smaller tribal confederation followed by a larger one. The reason for this was purely based on the fact that this was a learning process, and that an exploration of the very varied sources would be best carried out if initially the subject of examination was relatively small. It was also important that neither tribal group was a subject of recent research such as the B. Sulaym or the B. Bakr.³⁴³

³⁴³ For these two cases, see Lecker, Banū Sulaym; and Donner, "Bakr".
Taghlib (Chapter 5) was chosen because, despite its insignificance in the early Islamic period, it had a disproportionately large pre-Islamic cultural heritage. Furthermore, in later 'Abbāsid times it was to produce the powerful Syrian Ḫamdānid dynasty. Thus, exploring its pre- and early Islamic origins, in particular, was thought to hold additional value to other tribes.

Ghaṭafān (Chapter 6) was chosen to be the larger tribal group for several reasons. Like Taghlib, it had a rich pre-Islamic heritage, including some of the most famous ayyām and pre-Islamic heroes and poets. Unlike Taghlib, its main tribal components - especially the B. ṬAbs, B. Fazāra, and B. Murra - all played significant roles in the early Islamic period. Furthermore, it was somewhat removed from Taghlib geographically, as well as being from a different branch of the three main divisions of the Nizārī Arabs, thus allowing us to expand a little further our view of tribal Arabia.
Chapter 5
Taghlib 'from Jähiliya to Islam'

The following chapter will begin with an introduction to the main divisions of Taghlib and their genealogical links with other tribes. The remainder of the chapter will be divided into two Sections; Section A, 'Pre-Islamic Taghlib' and Section B, 'Taghlib in Islam'.

Section A will itself be divided into two parts. Firstly, there will be a discussion of the sources for the geographical distribution of Taghlib and Taghibis in the Jähiliya. Secondly, a review will be made of their ayyām and other pre-Islamic traditions. A summary and synthesis of findings will end this section.

Section B is arranged chronologically, as it attempts to monitor changes in the tribal system in the Islamic period. It starts with the Prophetic period and ends with a description of Taghibis in the Umayyad period after the second Muslim civil war. A summary of the history of Taghlib in the Islamic period will end this section.

Finally, a brief discussion of the impact of Islam and the conquests on Taghlib will end the chapter.
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhiliya to Islam

The Divisions of Taghlib

Taghlib was one of the two most important branches of the Rabī‘a tribal group, the other being its brother-tribe, Bakr. Other major units of Rabī‘a were Ānaza, al-Namir b. Qāsit and Ābd al-Qays (see Appendix 1, chart 1.4).

Though Taghlib is represented as a great tribe in the Jāhili period, it forms only a very small portion of the genealogical entries in genealogical works such as those of Ibn al-Kalbī, when compared with the copiously documented Bakr, its supposed equal in the famous Basūs war.

According to Ibn al-Kalbī, the mother of the children of Taghlib was a Ghassānid. Various Taghlibī subset eponyms were born to Iyādi, Namiri and Bakri, in other words, Rabī‘an mothers. To a certain extent, these links correspond to links of a more practical nature, as will be seen below.

Taghlibī links with the B. Kalb?

There is another Taghlib mentioned in the sources, which appears not as a tribal group but as an eponymic ancestor of Taghlib’s most important and immediate neighbours in the Syrian steppe, the B. Kalb. According to the surviving Quḍā‘ī genealogies, the important Quḍā‘ī groups of Kalb, Tanūkh and al-Qayn all descended from Wabara b. Taghlib b. Ḥulwān b. ‘Imrān b. Alḥāf b. Quḍā‘a. At the same time, Ibn al-Athīr gives the genealogy of Rabī‘a b. al-Ḥārith - father of the heroes Kulayb and al-Muhalhil (see below) - as Rabī‘a b. al-Ḥārith b. Murra b. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr b. Ḥubayb b. Kalb, and not the more common ... Ḥubayb b. ‘Amr b. Ghanm b. Taghlib.

On a different level, Ibn al-Kalbī, qualifies the Quḍā‘ī Taghlib with the extra name of al-Ghalbā‘. But this is a name which in other sources is given to the Taghlib of Rabī‘a. In addition, a brother-tribe of the B. Kalb, is given as

---

344 According to Ibn Khaldūn, for instance, Taghlib was one of the greatest tribes of al-Bahrayn and its most prominent in numbers and prestige; see Kahlah, Muṣ‘im, s.v. “Tha‘lab” (Tha‘lab is corrected to Taghlib in the corrections section, vol. iii, p. 1286).
345 This point will be discussed later in more detail. See below p. 128.
346 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jumhūrī, pp. 564-5. The mother of al-arawā‘ī (a collection of clans, to be mentioned below) is mentioned as a descendant of al-Dīl, who is descended from Qays. It is more likely that originally another Dīl was meant. There are several larger and better known groups of Rabī‘a called al-Dīl.
347 See Caskel, Qumhurit, ii, s.v. “Quḍā‘a”.
348 Ibn al-Athīr, R̄āmīl, i, p. 524.
349 Bahālūrī, Ansāb, vi, p. 236.
al-Namir$^{350}$, the same name used by a different tribal group closely related to and very often associated with the Rabîʿan Taghlib.

Further evidence of this association with Kalb is given by Wellhausen who mentions that Kalb was actually referred to as Taghlib.$^{351}$

The only tribal units which are specifically mentioned, as having attached themselves to Taghlib are a few divisions of the Qudâʿa tribe of Nahd. We are told by Balâdhuri that during the alleged Qudâʿa migration from Tiḥāma - claimed to be the original homeland of most north and central Arabian tribes - most of Nahd went to al-Yaman. However, the B. Āmīr and the B. Āmīr of Nahd are said to have joined Kalb, while the B. Abân joined Taghlib.$^{352}$ These many associations of the neighbours Taghlib and Kalb suggest that they may have been linked at some point in the pre-Islamic past.$^{353}$ Unfortunately, very little evidence survives which may tell us more about this relationship, but this in itself suggests that any links were relatively ancient ones and could not have existed in a period close to Islam.

**Taghlib’s subsets:**

For the main divisions of Taghlib, please refer to Appendix 2, chart 3.1.

Taghlib is portrayed in our sources as a cohesive group and rarely are Taghlibis given the nisba of one of its subset groups. Indeed, its tribal subsets are hardly mentioned at all as corporate units. However, some groups within Taghlib appear to have been more prominent, as is clear from the careers of some of their members.$^{354}$

The most important tribal group of Taghlib in both pre- and early Islamic times were the B. Jusham b. Bakr. Of these, the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham were the clan of the greatest pre-Islamic Taghlibī warriors and poets, Kulayb, al-Muhalhil and Āmīr b. Kūlthūm.$^{355}$

Another important tribal unit was Mālik b. Bakr, the clan of al-Saffāḥ al-Taghlibī. Al-Saffāḥ is supposed to have led Taghlib on some of their most

---

$^{350}$ Cusckel, Ġumhurr, ii, s.v. "Qudâʿa".
$^{352}$ Balâdhuri, Ansâb, i, p. 19.
$^{353}$ The symbolism and versatility of the higher levels of tribal genealogies will be discussed in Chapter 7.
$^{354}$ For Taghlib’s important lineages, see also EI², s.v. “Taghlib b. Wa’il”.

86
important Jähili battles.\footnote{356} Also, from this branch was al-Quṭāmī, a famous poet at the Umayyad court.

Together the two lineages, B. Jusham and B. Mālik, were called al-Rawqayn.\footnote{357}

A group called al-Araqim are often referred to in the sources. These were composed of al-Rawqayn, mentioned above, as well as the B. ʿAmr b. Bakr - the B. ʿAmr were the third most numerous group - and the B. Thaʿlabā b. Bakr. The latter were the clan of Hudhayl b. Hubayra who led Taghlib against the Muslim army of Khālid b. al-Walīd during the conquest period. Also in al-Aragim were the B. al-Ḥārith b. Bakr and the B. Muʿāwiya b. Bakr.\footnote{358} In other words, al-Aragim was composed of the whole of B. Bakr b. Ḥubayb, which forms the great bulk of Taghlib as described in Ibn al-Kalbī's genealogies.\footnote{359}

Thus the most important groups within Taghlib were to be found amongst the descendants of Bakr b. Ḥubayb, and they were referred to as al-Aragim. Most prominent of these were ʿAmr, Thaʿlabā, Mālik and Jusham. The latter two were called al-Rawqayn. Within Jusham, the B. Zuhayr lineage was especially prominent, as was Taym within the Mālik branch. [See chart]
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhiliya to Islam

(A) Pre-Islamic Taghlib

Pre-conquest territories:

It is clear from early Muslim historical traditions that Taghlib had virtually no presence in Najd during the Prophetic and conquest periods and was concentrated further north, mainly around the central and upper Euphrates. However, pre-Islamic traditions associate Taghlib with sites scattered across Arabia.

Taghlib north of al-Nafūd:

Pre-Islamic distribution of Taghlib north of the Nafūd:

The number of accounts in the Arabic sources which refer to Taghlib in northern Arabia are relatively few for the pre-Islamic period. One of the most famous pre-Islamic battles of the Arabs, Yawm al-Kulāb al-Awwal, in which Taghlib played a major part, is said to have taken place somewhere west of the Euphrates between Baṣra and Kūfa. Another account talks of a quarrel between a branch of the Syrian-based Kalb and a branch of Taghlib which seems to have taken place in the Jāhiliya. Two other accounts which state that Taghlib inhabited certain areas of al-Jazīra include information which implies that this was in pre-Islamic times.

Importantly, recent historians have argued that the Syriac sources tell us that Taghlib spread along the Euphrates in the latter half of the 5th c. CE. However, as we shall see below, there is evidence which claims that Taghibis were found on the borders of Iraq even earlier; since the 4th c. CE. If this is true, the later date could instead be that of their movement across the Euphrates into al-Jazīra, or even - as these are ecclesiastical sources - of their converting to Christianity.

360 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Kulāb", but see also "Judul", where it is claimed that the area was much further inside Najd.
361 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Khālah".
362 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Sharthār", "Dayr Luhayy".
Taghlib and the Sassanians:

Early Muslim historians included traditions relating the affairs of the ancient Sassanian kings, which must have originated from Sassanian historical writing, although elements from Arab tradition may have been added. Two of these accounts mention Taghlib and have significance for their pre-Islamic distribution.

According to Ṭabari, Shāpūr II (309-379 CE) attacked the Arab tribes inside Arabia in retaliation for Arab raids against Sassanian lands. He launched several punitive raids deep inside the peninsula, including into the land of Bakr and Taghlib which lay on the "Byzantine borders". After this, he resettled many Arab groups within the empire. One group resettled in al-Bahrayn was from Taghlib. Later, Shāpūr is supposed to have made peace with the Arabs and settled some of them, including Taghlibis, in western Iranian towns and regions such as Kirmān, Tawwāj and al-Ahwāz.

This first account tells us that Taghlib lived in the region of the upper and middle Euphrates in the 4th c. CE, and that it was the Sassanians who forced many of them to resettle in different areas under their control. Significantly, Taghlib were already established in the Euphrates region at this time, and it is from there that some of them were moved into the al-Bahrayn region.

The second account, related by al-Balādhurī tells us that Iyād used to raid the Sassanians until Khusraw I Anushirvan (531-579 CE) pursued them from the borders of Iraq. They entered the land of Taghlib, but they were maltreated by the Taghlibis. As a result, many left the region. Some settled in al-Ḥira, while others went to al-Shām where they came under the protection of the Ghassānids.

This account finds Taghlib along the Euphrates and in Bādiyat al-Shām, now in the 6th c. CE. The account tells us that the main rival of Taghlib in the Euphrates region, the tribe of Iyād, was weakened by the Sassanians. Indeed, we do find Taghlib to be the dominant Arab tribe in the central and higher Euphrates region in the conquest period. It should also be noted that the Arab

---

365 Ṭabari, Taʿrīkh, i, pp. 836-8; Cambridge History of Iran, p. 136.  
366 Ṭabari, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 839.  
367 Ṭabari, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 845. See also, Ibn al-Athir, Kāmil, i, pp. 392-4.  
368 Balādhurī, Aṣāḥī, i, p. 27.
tradition tells us that Anūshirvān began his reign by supporting the Mundhirids, who managed to evict al-Ḥārith al-Kindī from al-Ḥira. Significantly, we are also told that the Mundhirids, in turn, were supported by Taghlibīs.

Olinder states that Bakr and Taghlib were in the process of migrating northwards, at the beginning of the 6th c., leaving the areas of al-Yamāma and Najd to settle in Iraq. He thus implies that Rabī‘a had not inhabited the region west of the Euphrates before the 6th c. This cannot be true in the light of preceding evidence. Moreover, as mentioned above, there is also early Jāhili evidence pointing to connections between Taghlib and Kalb which inhabited Syria, Badiyat al-Shām and the upper Euphrate region.

It is thus clear that the Taghlib was present in the Euphrates region from at least the 5th c., and perhaps even as early as the 4th c. CE.

**Early Islamic distribution of Taghlib north of Nafūd:**

Taghlibi presence along the Euphrates and in al-Jazira in the early Islamic period is well established. The following are simply a few examples of the great amount of material detailing Taghlibi distribution in that area.

In particular, numerous locations are connected to battle-sites from the conquest period, in which Taghlibīs were defeated by the Muslim armies. Thus, Kabāth and al-Musayyakh were Taghlibi settlements in al-Jazira which were raided by the Muslims. Al-Ḥaṣīd, lying along the central Euphrates, was the site of a battle in which Sassanian troops, together with their allies from "Taghlib and Rabī‘a" were defeated by the Muslims. Al-Bishr and al-Thaniy, sites of more victories of Khalid over Taghlib, lay along the upper Euphrates in the vicinity of Ruṣāfa.

Similarly, several locations were sites of battles between Qays and Taghlib during the second civil war. Hazza on the Khābūr, between Niṣībin and Ra‘s ‘Ayn, al-Sawājir near Manbij, al-Ḥashshāk near the river

---

370 Olinder, Kindī, p. 114.
371 See El2, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wā’il".
372 Yaḥṣūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Kabāth", "Musayyakh".
373 Yaḥṣūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Ḥaṣīd".
374 Yaḥṣūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Bishr", "‘Uraj", "Thaniy".
375 Yaḥṣūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Hāzza".
376 Yaḥṣūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Sawājir".
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhilīya to Islam

Tharthar and Bishr, mentioned above, which lay further along the Euphrates near al-Ruṣāfa.

Taghlib in central and eastern Najd:

According to Yāqūt, Ibn al-Kalbi wrote a book on the ancient Arab migrations. Quoting from this book, Yāqūt says that Rabī'a entered the outskirts of Najd, Hijāz, outlying parts of Tihāma and the territories which lay beyond it. They settled at al-Dhanā'īb, Wāridāt, al-Aḥāṣṣ, Shubayth, Baṭn al-Jarīb, al-Taghlimān and what lay in between and around these places. These localities mentioned in the story of Rabī'a's migration are, in fact, taken from verses connected with the legend of Kulayb's murder, as we will see below.

Sites associated with the legend of the murder of Kulayb:

Yāqūt continues his entry for al-Aḥāṣṣ with the tale of the events which led to the murder of Kulayb b. Rabī'a, the legendary leader of Taghlib, by Jassās, his Bakri brother-in-law. The murder is supposed to have triggered the terrible Basūs war between Bakr and Taghlib. According to the tale, the tribal group which included both Kulayb and Jassās, reached Shubayth, moved on to al-Aḥāṣṣ, then Baṭn al-Jarīb and finally arrived at al-Dhanā'īb where Kulayb is said to have been killed. As we see, all but al-Taghlimān and Wāridāt of the locations named by Ibn al-Kalbi as territories of Rabī'a are mentioned in the story of Kulayb's murder.

Most of the remainder of Yāqūt's entry discusses where the places mentioned by Ibn al-Kalbi actually lay. Al-Aḥāṣṣ and Shubayth are always mentioned together as a pair. Yāqūt is sceptical about a report placing them in Najd (but unidentified any further) and favours another which states that there were two localities near Halab with these names. But then Yāqūt mentions that the Najdi al-Aḥāṣṣ and Shubayth were Rabī'an, implying that there were two sets of places with these names, the Najdi pair being the one

---

377 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Tharthar".
378 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Bishr".
379 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Bishr".
380 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Aḥāṣṣ".
connected to Rabī‘a. However, he argues against this later, leaving us in quite a confused state regarding these two localities. 381

Shubayth (connected with al-Aḥāsṣ, above), we are told, was a mountian near Ḥalab. At the same time, there is a line of poetry which describes that Shubayth and al-Aḥāsṣ lay in the country of Dhūbyān in northern Najd. 382 There is also a Dārat Shubayth which is found in Bāṭn al-Jarib. Al-Jarib was a large wādi which connected with Wādi al-Rumma in Najd. 383 Wādi al-Rumma ran from a point northeast of Medina and opened up as it reached al-Dahnā’ close to al-Nibāj, which lies at the northern tip of the Yamāma region’s oases [see map 1]. 384

In the entry for al-Aḥāsṣ, Yāqūt mentions al-Dhanā’īb, where Kulayb was supposed to have been killed and buried385. He says that it lay somewhere to the west of the Euphrates, near to al-Qādisiyya. 386 However, in the entry for al-Dhanā’īb itself, we find three different accounts which state that it lay in the vicinity of Ǧariya [see map 1]. Another report states that it lay in Yemen in the land of Zabīd and that it is there where Kulayb was buried387, but as mentioned below, the celebrated Yemeni scholar of genealogy and geography, al-Hamdāni, denied any links between the legends around Kulayb and the Yemeni Tihāma.

According to a verse of poetry, al-Taghlimān lay next to Rim. 388 Although there is no entry for Rim in Yāqūt, a Bāṭn Rim lay in the vicinity of Medina. 389

Wāridāt lay near Samīrā‘, which still exists under that name today. Samīrā‘ lies due west of the medieval site of al-Nibāj [see map 1] in what used to be the territory of Asad. 390

To sum up, we can see that some of the sites connected with Kulayb seem to be unidentified or there is a high degree of confusion over where to place

381 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Aḥāṣṣ”.
382 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Shubayth”.
383 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Jarib”.
384 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “al-Rumma”.
385 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “al-Dhanā’īb”. See however “al-Nir” where, according to an informer from Tuyyī, Kulayb was buried at al-Nir, near Dariya.
386 See Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Walajja”; there are three Walajas: one in eastern Iraq, the other in al-Maghrib and the one to the west of the Euphrates - if any of these, this last one must be the one referred to in connection with Al-Dhanā’īb.
387 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Al-Dhamā’il”, see also “Fahajja”.
388 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Taghlimān”.
389 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Rī‘ūn”.
390 Yāqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Wāridāt”, “Samīrā‘”.

92
them. However, there seems to be a large body of opinion that many of these sites lay in central Najd, roughly somewhere between Medina and al-Nibaj.

It must be taken into account that the legend of the murder of Kulayb and the Basūs war is highly fictitious, as mentioned earlier, and should be approached with great scepticism. Any information that it conveys must be confirmed by other material. In this case, as already pointed out, the information seems quite confused. Furthermore it offers a description of Taghlib’s geographic distribution which contradicts all other information. Thus, it is best to put aside these geographic descriptions based on the Kulayb legends and turn to other evidence of the distribution of Taghlib in Najd.

Sites associated with fighting between Bakr and Taghlib:

The numerous pre-Islamic ayyām between Bakr and Taghlib allow us to pinpoint regions in which these two tribal groups mixed, or their territories bordered on one another.

Qidda was the scene of Yawm al-Taḥāluq, an important battle between Taghlib and Bakr during the Basūs war. It lay three days north of al-Yamāma.

Al-Suwayqa is said to have been the site of a battle between Bakr and Taghlib which lay in the territory of the B. Kilāb of the B. Āmir.

Al-Ṣi`āb was either a wasteland (jabal) between al-Baḥrayn and al-Yamāma or a sandy desert between Baṣra and al-Yamāma. Here, there was a battle between Taghlib and Bakr, in which the great Shaybāni warrior, al-Hārith b. Hammām b. Murra was killed.

Futayma was another battleground between Taghlib and Shaybān.

This place lay in al-Baḥrayn.

Clearly, all of the above sites lie around al-Yamāma and al-Baḥrayn.

392 Many battles between the two groups, especially those involving Shaybān, were unconnected with the Basūs war. The ayyām mentioned here are not included as part of the Basūs war tale and should be treated as a separate group from those of the Basūs war.
393 Yaḥūt, Muṣjam, s.v. "Qidda"; Hāmidani, Sifat, 276. Kilāb territory lay along the western side of al-Yamāma and to the south of Wādī al-Rumma, see chapter 4, p. 75.
394 Yaḥūt, Muṣjam, s.v. "Suwayqa".
395 Yaḥūt, Muṣjam, s.v. "al-Ṣi`āb".
396 This is the only reference to B. Dubay'a outside genealogical lines I have seen. They are simply described as B. Dubay'a b. Rabī'a b. Nizīr.
397 Yaḥūt, Muṣjam, s.v. "Futayma".
Other Taghlibi ayyām:

Other ayyām of Taghlib give us more information on their supposed geographic distribution. These accounts are associated with Taghlibīs in northern Najd and in the region of al-Yamāma.

- NORTHERN NAJD:

Khazaż was the site of a major pre-Islamic battle in which the legendary Kulayb b. Rabīʿa was supposed to have played an important role. According to some, this place was near Hīmā Dariya and Tikhfa. Yawm Khazaż is another highly fictitious yawm, like all the material connected with Kulayb b. Rabīʿa. There are numerous contradictory versions of this yawm in particular, and much internal confusion, as will be seen when it is discussed further below. Thus, in this case also, the geographic information cannot be accepted as capable of describing Taghlibī distribution.

Let us turn to other evidence of Taghlib in Najd, even though there is very little of it. Firstly, there is a verse ascribed to 'Amr b. Kulthūm which commemorates a battle at Dhū Urāta against Tamīm. Dhū Urāta lay to the north of modern al-Burayda. In other words on the border between al-Bahrāyn and central Najd.

Secondly, there are references to Taghlibīs fighting near Ḥaẓn Yarbū, which lay in the vicinity of Fayd [see map 1]. Also, Jadīd was the area where Kulāb was to be found. This was the site of the great pre-Islamic battle of that name, in which Taghlib played a prominent role. While some versions place Kulāb in al-Bahrāyn, according to one version it lay near Ḥaẓn Yarbū. Hudhayl b. Hubayra, a contemporary to the conquest period, is also supposed to have raided the B. Riyāḥ of Yarbū at Irāb, which also lay in Ḥaẓn Yarbū.

The above shows no evidence for the existence of Taghlibī settlements in northern Najd in pre-Islamic times. There is evidence for Taghlibīs inhabiting

---

308 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Khazaż". There is a Yemeni view which places it in Tihmāt al-Yamān; but it has already been mentioned above that al-Hamdānī disregards this view.
309 See above, pp. 103-104.
401 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, "Ariṣa".
402 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, "Fayd".
403 Yaqūt, Mu'jam, "Irāb".
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jahiliya to Islam

al-Bahrayn, and for their frequent raiding into central Najd, especially around the vicinity of Ḥazn Yarbūś.

- AL-YAMĀMA:

Al-Harīm is the name given to many different and widespread locations. One of these allegedly lay in the land of B. Taghlib, near to a place called Dhū Bahdā (ذُو بَهْدَة). Yaḥūt has an entry for Dhū Bahdā (ذُو بَهْدَة) which is in al-Yamāma. Al-Juzayra is mentioned as being a palm grove in al-Yamāma belonging to the B. Taghlib. This information is not connected to ayyām accounts. It points to some small scale settlement of Taghlibi groups in the Yamāma region. There seems to be no reason to doubt its reliability.

Summary of Taghlib's pre-Islamic distribution:

In Islamic times, it can be clearly stated that Taghlib were only found in significant numbers north of the Naflūd desert, in Bādiyat al-Shām, along the west bank of the Euphrates, in al-Jazīra and, to a lesser extent, in al-Bahrayn. Moving further south into central Najd we also seem to be moving further back in time: all the accounts of significant Taghlibī activity in central Najd stem from the pre-Islamic period.

In pre-Islamic times, it seems that Taghlib were established in the central Euprates region since at least the 5th c. CE, if not earlier. Taghlib was also present in the parts of northern al-Bahrayn and some parts of the al-Yamāma region. From here, they raided into central Najd. M. Lecker's recent article on Taghlib states that Taghlib lived in Najd until the Basūs war, when they moved north. It is important to clarify that Taghlib were never settled in central Najd, only in al-Yamāma and al-Bahrayn. Furthermore, they were settled along the Euphrates from very ancient times.

The geographic evidence paints a picture of Taghlib as a very strong tribal confederation, the members of which extended from the central Euphrates all the way into al-Bahrayn and al-Yamāma. Later, by the rise of

---

404 Yaḥūt, Muğārim, "Bahdā", "al-Harīm al-Tāhirī".
405 Yaḥūt, Muğārim, "Juzayra".
406 Elṣ, s.v. "Taghlibh. Wā'īl".

95
Islam, not only Taghlib's dominance but its very presence south of the Nafūd seems to have disappeared.

Taghlib in the pre-Islamic source material:

Taghlib and Christianity:

Although predominantly Christian by the rise of Islam, pre-Islamic Taghlib was also associated with pagan cults. Thus, for instance, one tradition describes a deity called Uwāl which was worshipped by both Bakr and Taghlib.\(^{407}\) Another tradition holds that Taghlib, Bakr and Iyād had a common shrine in the territory of Iyād, below sawwād al-kūjā, called Dhū al-Ka‘abāt, because of its cubic shape.\(^{408}\) But though it is not clear exactly when Taghlib gave up their pagan cults, most Taghlibis were Christian before Islamic times. Those who lived along and across the Euphrates began to convert to Christianity in the second half of the 5th c. CE.\(^{409}\) As we shall see, of all the Christian Arab tribes, Taghlib in particular held strongly onto its Christian faith even after the Islamic conquests.

Historical overview:

As mentioned above, Taghlib is portrayed in the sources as having great honour in the pre-Islamic period.\(^{410}\) Indeed, the sources record that Mā'add only ever united three times. Once under ʿĀmir b. al-Zarib of ʿAdwān of Jadīla of Qays and this was when Madhīḥ was first formed and marched against "Tihāma"; another time under Rabīʿa b. al-Ḥārith of the B. Jusham b. Bakr of Taghlib at the battle of al-Sullān between the people of al-Yamāma and al-Yaman; and a last time under Kulayb b. Rabīʿa (son of the previous) on the day of Khazāz when al-Yaman was defeated by Mā'add.\(^{411}\)

The supposed high socio-political status of the two legendary figures of Kulayb and his brother Muhalhil is reflected in their claimed marriage alliances with other ruling Arab houses. We are told, for instance, that Ḥujr b.

\(^{407}\) Yaqūt, Muḳāna, "Uwāl".

\(^{408}\) Ibn Ḥishām, Sīrat, i, p. 88.

\(^{409}\) For a more detailed discussion of the conversion of the Arab tribes to Christianity see Tringham Christianity, passim., but in particular see pp. 173, ff.

\(^{410}\) Even the Taghlibi horses were supposed to be of the finest steeds in Arabia. Nayyāʿid, pp. 475, 748.

\(^{411}\) Ibn al-Atür, Kāmil, i, p. 323.
al-Ḥārith, of the Kindi ruling dynasty in Najd, was married to the sister of Kulayb and al-Muhalhil. Moreover, she bore him Imru’ al-Qays, the famous pre-Islamic poet and author of the most famous of the seven mu’tallaqāt, considered - in later times at least - to be the most prestigious pre-Islamic odes of the Arabs.\(^{412}\)

\(^{\text{412}}\) Al-Hārith, of the Kindi ruling dynasty in Najd, was married to the sister of Kulayb and al-Muhalhil. Moreover, she bore him Imru’ al-Qays, the famous pre-Islamic poet and author of the most famous of the seven mu’tallaqāt, considered - in later times at least - to be the most prestigious pre-Islamic odes of the Arabs.

\(^{\text{413}}\) Amr b. Kulthūm, the contemporary of the Mundhirid ruler, Amr b. Hind (ruled 554-69 CE), was one of the most illustrious pre-Islamic heroes of Taghlib. As well as an active warrior and tribal leader, he was a famed poet and to him is attributed one of the seven mu’tallaqāt. In this mu’tallaqa he describes the domination of Taghlib over eastern Najd and even over Quḍā’a.\(^{413}\) His prestige also stems from that he was supposed to have been the son of a daughter of the other famous Taglibī warrior-poet, al-Muhalhil.\(^{414}\)

Despite all this past grandeur, as we move into the later 6th c. CE, Taghlib appear to lose their prestige and powerful position. We have no accounts of significant Taglibī ayyām or individuals after Amr b. Kulthūm.

Let us now examine the historical traditions of Taghlib in some detail. First, I shall examine the position of Taghlib in the ayyām accounts describing the rise and fall of the Kindi Ḥujrid dynasty, as well as their conflict with the Mundhirids of al-Ḥira. Second, I will examine the ayyām accounts involving Kulayb b. Rabī‘a and his alleged conflicts with “al-Yaman”. Third, I will examine the stories connected with Amr b. Kulthūm, the famous Taghlibī leader who was powerful after the end of the Ḥujrid period, in the mid-6th c. CE. Fourth and fifth, I will review the accounts of their ayyām involving Bakr and other tribes respectively.

In this way, I hope to draw a picture of the extent of influence and military power of the Taghlibī tribal group, from the Kindi period until the late Jāhili period.

\(i\) Taghlib between the Ḥujrids and the Mundhirids:

As Taghlib appears to play an important role in northern Najd during the Kindi period (roughly dated from the mid-5th until a little before the mid-6th

---

\(^{412}\) Naqi‘ī, p. 905; Ḳaḥlīn, Agāh, ix, p. 3197.


\(^{414}\) Elīyī, s.v. “Amr b. Kulthūm”.

97
c. CE).\textsuperscript{415} It is important to try and make some sense of the confusing accounts in the literary sources revolving around the main political power in central Arabia at this time, the Hujrid Kindi\d s.

To avoid confusion, the series of Hujrid rulers are as follows: Hujr Ākil al-Murār; \textsuperscript{4}Amr al-Maqṣūr; al-Ḥārith b. \textsuperscript{6}Amr. The latter’s sons are traditionally held to have divided the ‘Kindi kingdom’ amongst themselves, they are, Hujr (the father of Imru\textsuperscript{7} al-Qays), Sharahbil, Salama and Maḍikarib.

\textbf{Yawm al-Baradān:}

In the \textit{ayyām} traditions, we first learn of Taghlib supporting Kinda in the account of Yawm al-Baradān. This ancient account relates the events of a battle which allegedly took place between Hujr Ākil al-Murār, the founder of the Hujrid dynasty, and Ziyād b. al-Habi\d la, the leader of the 5th c. CE pro-Byzantine Syrian confederation led by Salih.\textsuperscript{416}

There are various versions of this \textit{yawm}, many confusing elements, and some unbelievable implications. What is constant amongst the conflicting accounts is that the backbone of the support of Hujr was composed of Bakrī and Taghlibī tribesmen.

Yet, an important element of this account is that Hujr was raiding in al-Bahrāyn, away from his base either in Najd or al-Hira, at the head of a force of Kindi\d s, Bakrīs and Taghlibīs. One problem with taking this information at face value, is that it implies that either Hujr ruled from al-Hira in Iraq, or that Bakr and Taghlib were based in central Najd. Both are unacceptable; we have seen above that Taghlib had no presence in central Najd\textsuperscript{417}, and it is widely accepted that it was the grandson of Hujr, al-Ḥārith b. \textsuperscript{6}Amr, who temporarily controlled al-Hira (ca. 525-8 CE)\textsuperscript{418}, never Hujr himself. Consequently, we must deduce that the events as described are too corrupted to reconstruct.

Thus, all that this tale can tell us of Taghlib’s political loyalties is that either they (and Bakr) were commonly associated with whoever ruled in al-

\textsuperscript{415} EI\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. “Kinda”.
\textsuperscript{417} Nor did Bakr. See Donner, “Bakr”, pp. 17, ff.
Hīra, whether Kindi or Mundhirid, or that they were sometimes associated with the Ḥujrids.

The Killing of Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith:

Another account tells us that Asad rebelled against Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith, the son of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr and father of the famous poet Imruʿ al-Qays, who is said to have ruled over the northwestern Arabian tribes of "Ghatafān, Asad and Kināna". Ḥujr was defeated and murdered by Asad. However, his son, Imruʿ al-Qays, managed to temporarily muster tribesmen still loyal to the Ḥujrids in order to attack Asad. Significantly, these troops were from Bakr and Taghlib.

According to most ayyām sources, al-Mundhir III Māʿ al-Samāʿ (ruled 503-54 CE) then attacked al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr in al-Ḥīra. Against him he sent Taghlib, Bahrāʾ and al-Nāmir, all of which were based in the Euphrates region. However, al-Ḥārith managed to escape to Kalbi territory. Later, presumably after Yawm al-Kulib (see below), the Mundhirids, aided by Taghlib, captured and executed many of the house of al-Ḥārith al-Kindi. In this massacre, Taghlib are credited with killing Maʿdikarib b. al-Ḥārith. It is at this point allegedly that the remainder of the Ḥujrids then withdrew to Ḥadramawt.

Yawm al-Kulāb al-Awwal:

After the death of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr, his sons, Sharahbil and Salama, are alleged to have fought a war between themselves. During his rule, al-Ḥārith had appointed his sons over distinct confederations of Arab tribes within Kinda’s kingdom. Thus, Yawm al-Kulāb was fought between Sharahbil, who ruled over Bakr, al-Ribāb and Ḥanţala of Tanīm; and Salama, who ruled over

---

419 Olinder, *Kinda*, pp. 92-3, 129, believes that this Ḥujr, is the Oqares who was captured by the Romans in 497 CE as mentioned by Theophanes.
420 Ibn al-Athir, *Kitāb*, i, p. 515; See also p. 549.
421 *LXX*, s.v. “Laknūsids”.
422 Ibn al-Athir, *Kitāb*, i, pp. 494-5. For the date of Khusraw’s accession, see Cambridge History of Iran, p. 152. One version, has ʿAmr b. Hind, the son of al-Mundhir, as the commander of Bakr and Taghlib against the Kindis, Ibn al-Athir, *Kitāb*, i, p. 549.
423 *Nāṣirʾid*, p. 887.
Taghlib, al-Namir, and the B. Sa‘d of Tamim.\textsuperscript{425} The battle is dated by Olinder to a few years after 530 CE.\textsuperscript{426}

Most versions describe the conflict as turning into a conflict between Bakr and Taghlib by mentioning that al-Namir, al-Ribāb and the Tamīmis on both sides retreated, leaving the traditional enemies, Bakr and Taghlib, to fight against each other.\textsuperscript{427} The leader of Taghlib was the famous warrior, al-Saffāh al-Taghlibi.\textsuperscript{428} One version of the battle describes him as killing Sharahbil and leading Taghlib to victory.\textsuperscript{429} In any case, Salama and his Taghlibi followers won the battle and Sharahbil was killed.

We are then told that Taghlib abandoned Salama soon after al-Kulāb and allied themselves with the Mundhirids.\textsuperscript{430}

The accounts of the rise and fall of the Kindi house are part of the type described ‘as the ayyām of the mulūk and tribal confederations’ in Chapter 3. In particular, they fall under the mulūk-mulūk ayyām, a group greatly corrupted by story-telling embellishments.

The Kindi accounts in particular, however, show much developments by narrators, as many of their accounts contain extensive topoi and other story-telling elements. Their confusion and resistance to reconciliation is evident.\textsuperscript{431}

In any case, regarding Taghlib and its relations with the Hujrid dynasty, one can only say for certain that they were involved in the events connected with them. This is clear from the number of different ayyām accounts and various verses of Jāhili poetry which mention Taghlib either fighting for or against the ruling Kindi lineage. Also, the information pointing to the importance of Taghlib and the Rabī‘a tribal group in the affairs of northeastern Arabia - an important battleground of Mundhirids and the Hujjrids - must be a reflection of historical reality.

\textsuperscript{425} According to Nnqī‘id, p. 452, with them were other Tamīmi tribesmen from B. Dārīm b. Mālik and B. Raba‘a b. Mālik, whose mother was supposed to be from al-Namir b. Waqara b. Taghlib of Qa‘ba‘a and was also the mother of B. Jusham b. Bakr of Taghlib.

\textsuperscript{426} Olinder, Kindi, p. 150.

\textsuperscript{427} Išfahānī, Ṭahārī, xii, p. 4377; see also, Nnqī‘id, pp. 453; 454-8, 887, 1074-7. Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Kulāb", gives an abridged version.

\textsuperscript{428} Nnqī‘id, p. 454.

\textsuperscript{429} Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Kulāb", the level of detail of the aftermath of the battle, corroborates that Taghlib played a leading role in the defeat of Sharahbil and the Bakrīs, as described in the account of quarreling and even raiding between two Taghlibi clans over the spoils won from the battle, see Nnqī‘id, p. 456.

\textsuperscript{430} Ham al-Adhir, Kindi, i, p. 549.

\textsuperscript{431} See Olinder, Kindi, passim., who tries to reconcile these accounts, not altogether convincingly.
The impression we get from all of these confusing ayyām accounts is that from the foundation of the Kindī kingdom (mid 5th c. CE) until the death of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr ca. 530 CE and maybe later - Taghlibīs were an important element in the tribal confederation supporting the Ḥujrids. As the period of Kindī dominance came to an end, Taghlibīs appear to fight against them for the Mundhirids. Much later, at Yawm al-Rahraḥān al-Nuʿmān III b. al-Mundhir (ruled ca. 580-602 CE) sent a Taghlibī, Ibn al-Khims, in command of an army to attack the B. Dārīm. The father of this Taghlibī was a soothsayer at the Mundhirid court. This points to the continuation of Taghlibīs in the service of the Mundhirids at least until the end of the 6th c. CE.

Other accounts of Taghlibī conflict with Kindī may be found in Yawm Khazāz, to be described below. In this Yawm, "Rabiʿa" led by the famous leader Kulayb of Taghlib are said to have fought against "Yaman", almost certainly during the Kindī period of rule (see below "Rabiʿa and al-Yaman").

(ii) Rabiʿa and al-Yaman - the accounts of Kulayb and Yawm Khazāz:

There exist various accounts which depict a strong confederation of the Rabiʿa tribal group. Sometimes Rabiʿa is described as in conflict with "al-Yaman", and once there is mention of an alliance contracted between them, in the Jähiliya. The accounts revolve around a few battles between Rabiʿa and al-Yaman, the most important of which was Yawm Khazāz. Below is a discussion of the different versions of the Rabiʿa-Yaman conflict.

Al-Hamdānī’s account:

Al-Hamdānī tells us that a certain Hamdānī malik, Zayd b. Marīb from B. al-Sabī of Ḥāshid, who had wrested power from the Ḥimyārī malik Dhū Qayfān, ruled over various Arab tribes. These are given as Madhhij, Jarm, Nahd, Khawlan (all tribes of southern Najd) and those of the B. Rabīʿa who inhabited parts of al-Yamāma.
Chapter 5: Banû Taghlib from Jâhiliya to Islam

The account continues by saying that Taghlib had been ruled by a *malik* of al-Yaman who had died, prompting their leaders to come to Zayd b. Marib to ask him to appoint another leader over them. However, the appointed replacement was killed by a Taghlibi following a quarrel between the two. This murder led Zayd b. Marib to march against Taghlib. In the meantime Rabi'a gathered its tribesmen and those of its neighbours from Mu'ād. The leader of Rabi'a, so we are told, was Rabi'a b. al-Ḥārith, the father of the famous figures of Kulayb and al-Muhalhil. Zayd defeated the "Ma`addî" army at Yawn Jurad, and took many prisoners. To retrieve their prisoners "Ma`add" had to ask for the intercession of the Kindî *malik*, al-Ḥārith.439

Hamdâni also mentions another leader from Shibām of Ḥāshid, Abû Duwayla, who ruled over the B. Rabi'a. This *malik* was also allegedly killed and similarly avenged by his son.440 It is interesting that the tribal division names of Taghlib mentioned in the Shibāmî verses celebrating their victory are ones which are found far higher in the genealogical tree of Taghlib than those normally encountered in other traditions.441 If the verses are authentic, this points to the antiquity of the battle.

In his *Sifat jazirat al-arab*, Hamdâni mentions a war between Madhhij and Rabi'a as well as a version of Yawn Khazāz which was fought by Madhhij and Quḍā'a (the southern Najdi tribe of Nahd is the only group of Quḍā'a mentioned specifically) against Rabi'a. His version of Yawn Khazāz has Madhhij and Quḍā'a as the victors and he quotes verses of Khawlānî and Tā'î poets as proof that the outcome was a victory of al-Yaman over B. Wā'il (i.e. Bakr and Taghlib).442

However, all the other sources, in their many different versions have the northern Arabs as the victors in Yawn Khazāz as will be shown below.

North Arabian traditions:

Apart from al-Hamānî, various other traditions survive regarding the battle of Khazāz. These reach us via al-Dinawarî, al-Asmâ'î, al-Kilâbî and Abû Ubayda. Most of these versions are linked to a preceding battle, Yawn al-

439 Elsewhere Jurād is the site of al-Kulāb. This may be the same battle being referred to but through a different tradition.
441 For instance, B. 'Amr b. Ghumm or Aws; Hamdâni, *Ikhil*, x, p. 94.
Sullān (interestingly, according to Ibn al-Athīr, this was a battle between al-Yaman and "ahl al-yamāma"), or to Yawm al-Sullān plus another unnamed battle which also preceded Khazāz. All the versions describe Kulayb b. Rabī‘a as the leader of Rabī‘a at Yawm Khazāz and sometimes at al-Sullān as well.

Khazāz is given great importance in the later compilations, and is to be found in virtually all of them. The Āmīrī narrator, Abū Ziyād al-Kilābī, considered Yawm Khazāz to be such a great victory by the "Arabs" over al-Yaman that it marked the turning point from which hitherto unchallenged Yamanī power in Arabia was finally ended. Various sets of protagonists are given in the different versions. According to al-Kilābī, the backdrop to Yawm Khazāz is the conflict which followed the death of the Kindī leader al-Ḥārith b. Āmīr. Thus the battle was fought between Salmān b. al-Ḥārith and al-Yaman against B. Āmīr and Rabī‘a.

Abū ʻUbayda relates that the battle was primarily between Rabī‘a and "ahl al-tihāma" on one side, and a malik of Yaman, Madhhij and its Yamanī allies on the other.

According to al-ʻAṣma‘ī this battle was between al-Mundhir III Māz al-Samā‘ with Taghlib and Qudā‘a, against the B. ʻAkil al-Murūr and Bakr. The latter were defeated and Taghlib played a prominent role.

Other accounts:

Al-Dinawārī provides us with the only account which provides a continuous narrative of events between Rabi‘a and al-Yaman from before al-Sullān till after Khazāz. Unlike those of the early North Arabian narrators, Dinawārī’s account includes more details of events in the South Arabian camp, normally neglected by the North Arabian collectors. Dinawārī repeats the theme of the North Arabs requesting the South Arabian mulāk to appoint a ruler over them as a result of their own feuding. In this version the Ḥīmyārī

---

443 Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, i, p. 524.
445 On the other hand, it is surprising that this battle is not referred to in al-ʻAṣma‘ī at all.
446 Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Khazāz".
447 It could be that here, al-Tihām is a misreading of al-Yamama, which would make for more geographic sense. But all the sources for this version have al-Tihām.
448 Bayātī, Ayyūb al-ʻarab, ii, pp. 20-31; Ibn al-Athīr, Kāmil, i, p. 520.
450 Unfortunately, he mentions none of his sources.
malik, Ṣuhbān b. Dhī Kharib⁴⁵¹, agreed to their request and appointed over "Maʿadd" al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr al-Kindī and his sons. When after the latter's death some Muḍarī tribes rebelled against the sons of al-Ḥārith, Ṣuhbān sent an army against them. Realizing the danger of their situation B. Muḍar sent to B. Rabīʿa to support them. The leader of B. Rabīʿa, Kulayb b. Rabīʿa, led the combined Maʿaddi force to victory over the Southern Arabians first at al-Sullān, then again at Khazāz where Ṣuhbān fell in another attempt to subdue Maʿadd.⁴⁵²

Still more information is provided by Yāqūt, who quotes al-Askarī as describing Yawm al-Sullān to be a battle between Maʿadd and Madhhij, "when Kalb were still Maʿaddi", implying here that Kalb fought against 'al-Yaman'. He also quotes an unnamed source who described it as a victory for Rabīʿa over Madhhij.⁴⁵³

Shaykhū introduces yet further material in his entry for Kulayb b. Rabīʿa, including details of the involvement of the famous Kalbī chief, Zuhayr b. Janāb, on the side of 'al-Yaman' in an unsuccessful attempt to crush the rebellion of Rabīʿa against the mulūk of al-Yaman, to whom he owed allegiance.⁴⁵⁴

The importance of Rabīʿa:

The events surrounding this conflict between 'Rabīʿa' or 'Maʿadd' and 'al-Yaman' are obviously confused and contradictory. This great variation between the different versions is not a common feature of the ayyām accounts. Indeed amongst the most widespread ayyām, these accounts are unique in having so many irreconcilable versions. These discrepancies may have developed in the shadow of Umayyad factionalism, as there is an underlying theme of Maʿadd vs. al-Yaman. However, in that case the extreme prominence of Rabīʿa at the head of the Maʿaddis is somewhat incomprehensible. Indeed, since Rabīʿa was normally the ally of al-Yaman against Qays, in al-Jazīra and Baṣra/Khurāsān, the fabrication of such a pre-Islamic conflict between them could hardly have been instigated by political considerations.

⁴⁵¹ See Caskel, Ǧamḥiyyat, s.v. "Ṣuhbān b. Dhī Ḥurayrāt".
⁴⁵² Dinawari, Akhbar, p. 54-5.
⁴⁵³ Yaqūt, Maʿjam, s.v., "al-Sullān".
Yet what really concerns us is the high status which Rabī‘a and, in particular, Taghlib are accorded in central Arabia in the period of hegemony of the Ḥimyarites and their Kindi vassals (5th to early 6th c. CE) and the Aksumite-Yemenis (early to mid-6th c. CE) in Arabia.

Another indication of the perceived importance of Rabī‘a can be found in the fact that different sources mention the existence of a pre-Islamic alliance (hilf) between Rabī‘a and the mulūk of al-Yaman. Al-Hamdāni mentions it in passing⁴⁵⁵, while al-Dīnawārī gives us the alleged contents when describing calls for its renewal in the Umayyad period.⁴⁵⁶ However, it must be pointed out that the latter could be merely a reflection of the Umayyad period Rabī‘a-Yaman alliance formed in Basra and Khurasān in the Islamic period.

Nevertheless, it appears that at least part of Taghlib, backed by the Rabī‘a confederation, constituted a powerful force in al-Bahrayn and northern Najd, sometime before, and during, the breakup of the Kindi state. As far as the Arabic sources can be trusted, it looks as if tribal politics became quite unstable after the death of al-Ḥārith al-Kindi and the revival of the Mundhirid dynasty and their southward expansion. The widely differing versions of the battle of Khazāz may be partly a reflection of the political confusion of that period, rather than solely of later corruption of the contents.

(iii) ʿAmr b. Kulthūm:

Another important group of pre-Islamic Taghlibi accounts revolves around the figure of ʿAmr b. Kulthūm, hero and poet of Taghlib. He was supposed to have been a contemporary of the Mundhirid ruler, ʿAmr b. Hind (ruled 554-69 CE), whom he is alleged to have murdered. From these accounts we may be able to learn something of Taghlib's relations with the Mundhirid and Ghassānid powers in the mid 6th c. CE.

ʿAmr b. Kulthūm and the Mundhirids:

The most important stories about ʿAmr b. Kulthūm also involved the Mundhirid king, ʿAmr b. Hind. It is reported that ʿAmr b. Hind had kept hostages from Taghlib and Bakr to keep the peace between them, at the end of

⁴⁵⁵ Ḥamādānī, Ikṭīl, x, p. 112.
⁴⁵⁶ Dīnawārī, Akhbar, pp. 352-3.
the Basūs war. However, the account tells us that some Bakris seem to have been involved, at least indirectly, in the death of a group from Taghlib. Thus, the leaders from both tribes gathered together in al-Hira to settle their dispute at the court of ʿAmr b. Hind.

The story is that al-Ḥārith b. Hilliza argued the Bakrī case against the Taghlībi ʿAmr b. Kulthūm. The legend is that al-Ḥārith and ʿAmr entered a munāfara (poetic battle). The ode allegedly composed by al-Ḥārith b. Hilliza on the occasion forms part of the special pre-Islamic poetry collection known as the muʾallaqāt. Indeed, al-Ḥārith allegedly spoke with such eloquence that so moved ʿAmr b. Hind that he ruled in favour of Bakr. This is also given as one of the reasons for ʿAmr b. Hind’s later bias towards Bakr and against Taghlib.

Some time after this event, another account tells us that ʿAmr b. Hind met with ʿAmr b. Kulthūm in an encampment set up by the King of al-Ḥira outside the city. As a result of an insult directed to ʿAmr b. Kulthūm by his host, he killed the Mundhirid king, looted his encampment and fled with his men to al-Jazīra. It is widely accepted that ʿAmr b. Hind died in 569 CE.

Elsewhere, verses of ʿAmr b. Kulthūm blame ʿAmr b. Hind for attempting to impose a deputy ("qayl") to rule over the B. Taghlib. These verses hint that the reason of Ibn Hind’s killing may have been more than just a personal grievance. Another possible cause for grievance was an incident in which Taghlib refused to join ʿAmr b. Hind on a raid against the Ghassānids. This provoked the Mundhirid ruler to attack Taghlib in retaliation for this expression of disloyalty.

ʿAmr and the Ghassānids:

Not much material exists which can tell us of Taghlib’s relations with the Ghassānids. This is a little surprising, as the Ghassānid-led tribal confederation bordered on Taghlibī territory.
We are only told in two accounts, that after the Basüs war, Bakr and Taghlib united under al-Mundhir III Mak al-Samā', the king of al-Ḥira. Al-Mundhir's son, ʿAmr b. Ḥind, led them against the B. Ākil al-Murār and defeated them. But then, Taghlib rose against al-Mundhir and as a result of fighting against him, they moved into "al-shām" and pledged their allegiance to the Ghassānids. From there, they continued their war with Bakr. However, a dispute arose between al-Ḥārith al-Aʾraj of Ghassān and ʿAmr b. Kulthūm the leader of Taghlib. A battle between them ensued from which Taghlib allegedly emerged victorious.464

The ayyām described in connection with ʿAmr b. Kulthūm lie amongst the type described earlier under the rubric of 'the ayyām of the Mulūk and of tribal confederations'. In particular they belong mainly to the sub-group of ayyām designated as 'single tribal units defeating the mulūk'. I have already mentioned in my description of this group of ayyām that they are of little historical value. Thus, whether ʿAmr b. Kulthūm actually fought against the Mundhirids and Ghassānids is impossible to tell. Yet, while the historicity of the events described in connection with ʿAmr b. Kulthūm may easily be called into question, there are also some significant points to be considered.

Importantly, we should notice that the major events in which ʿAmr was allegedly involved lay along the Euphrates and in the vicinity of al-Jazīra, which is described as his home in the episode of the murder of ʿAmr b. Ḥind. In the wars fought during the Kindi period and in the Basüs war (see below), Taghlibis were active in al-Bahrayn and in northeastern Najd. In these accounts, Taghlib never appear to be in al-Bahrayn. There is a definite decrease of significant presence of Taghlibis away from the Euphrates region by the time of ʿAmr b. Kulthūm.

---

464 Ibn al-ʿAthir, Kanīl, i, p. 329. There is a slightly different version in Isfahani, Aghani, xi, pp. 3843-5, but the editor [see p. 3843, n. 7] must be right in stating that this is an incomplete and incorrect version as opposed to that of Ibn al-ʿAthir.
(iv) Bakr and Taghlib:

The Basüs war:

As mentioned earlier, information conveyed by the account of the Basüs war should be treated with great care. The Basüs war was a favourite story in the Umayyad period. We can see this from the many references to it by Umayyad poets. One example is an incident in which the murder of Kulayb is used by Jarir to defame al-Akhtal of Taghlib.

Whether the Basüs war actually occurred in the way described by our sources or not, should not deflect us from the fact that occasionally Bakr and Taghlib engaged in serious warfare, and that this yawm, or series of ayyäm, most probably did have a historical origin.

Two points stand out, however. Firstly, that most of the events described seem to take place in the region of al-Bahrayn. Secondly, that the conflict, if accepted as historical, must be placed during the Kindi period, due to the involvement of Kulayb b. Rabì‘a and his brother, al-Muhalhil.

Bakr and Taghlib beyond the Basüs war:

Apart from the Basüs war, accounts abound outside of the Basüs tradition which describe Bakri-Taghlibi conflict. Some of these appear to be descriptions of minor raids, but often they are large scale events involving mulûk, such as Aḥsan’s version of Yawm Khazāz, or the prelude to the account of the war of ‘Amr b. Kulthūm with al-Ḥārith al-A‘rāj. These two apart, all the other accounts are of the type of ‘ayyäm of the single tribes. As defined earlier, it is safe to obtain a record of tribal hostility from them, and to assume that they occurred in the later Jahili period. The actual events they portray, however, should not be used as historical evidence.

In particular, one finds several traditions in which there is conflict between the B. Shaybān and Taghlib. One account mentions a Taghlibi defeat of the B. Shaybān. This battle seems to be quite old, since from Caskel’s tables, a tribesman named al-Zabbān whose sons are killed in the battle, is

465 See above, pp. 58-9. See also Caskel, Gamharat, ii, pp. 27-8, who believes that the events, but not the heroes, of the Basüs war are fictitious.
466 Aḥsan, Aḥsanī, viii, p. 2764.
467 Nasrî, p. 887. See also ‘Ali, Mafussal, iii, p. 355.
468 Ibn al-‘Athir, Kāmil, i, p. 539.
469 Nasrî, p. 526.
470 Caskel, Gamharat, i, 152.
placed four generations away from al-Ḥārith b. Waʿila, who was involved in the battle of Dhū Qār\textsuperscript{471} - this would be roughly the supposed generation of al-Muhalhil and Kulayb.

A Shaybānī tradition remembers a Yawm al-Furāt, where Shaybān attacked and defeated Taghlib at the Euphrates.\textsuperscript{472} Also, Yawm Bāriq, where Bakr attacked Taghlib and Tamīm.\textsuperscript{473} In these accounts it is explicitly mentioned that these battles took place along the Euphrates.

Thus, we can say that Taghlibī-Bakr mutual raiding and feuding was common in the lower Euphrates region in the late Jāhili period.

**Co-operation between Bakr and Taghlib:**

Despite this image of traditional enmity between the two brother-tribes, there is also much evidence for Taghlibī-Bakr co-operation. One account tells us that the B. Riyāḥ of the B. Yarbū\textsuperscript{c} had raided the B. Bakr and taken prisoners. At the same time Hudhayl b. Hubayra of Taghlib (later to be involved with the fighting against Khalīd b. al-Walīd) had raided the B. Riyāḥ at Yawm Irāb. Hudhayl met with the B. Riyāḥ and negotiated the release of prisoners on both sides.\textsuperscript{474} Another interesting account of co-operation between Bakr and Taghlib is seen in an account describing al-Ḥawfazān b. Sharīk of the B. Shaybān and Hudhayl b. Hubayra joining their forces to attack the B. Saʿd of Tamīm.\textsuperscript{475}

As is typical in this type of ayyām: the 'ayyām of single tribes', we find that the participants are from a period very close to Islamic times, according to their genealogies. Yet it is significant that the common enemy of Bakr and Taghlib in these accounts is Tamīm.

These accounts depict Bakr and Taghlibī allies acting together against their mutual enemies from the Tamīm group, which is quite plausible. However, an alternative conclusion should not be ruled out, mainly that the rivalry in Islamic times between the Rabiʿa and Tamīm in Baṣra, may have produced these images of solidarity between Bakr and Taghlib against Tamīm.

\textsuperscript{471} Ca. 593 CE, see Fuʾād, \textit{GDataSource}, s.v. "al-Ḥariṭ b. Waʿila".
\textsuperscript{472} Ibn al-ʿĀthir, \textit{Kamīl}, i, p. 647.
\textsuperscript{473} Ibn al-ʿĀthir, \textit{Kamīl}, i, p. 648. From the text it appears that they were on the move and they reached Bakri territory near the "sandāl".
\textsuperscript{474} \textit{Naqāṣid}, pp. 474, 882.
\textsuperscript{475} \textit{Naqāṣid}, p. 880.
Bakr and Taghlib in the conquest period:

Finally, while this section is a survey of Taghlib in the pre-Islamic period, using a cut-off point between the pre-Islamic and the Islamic period is not always helpful. In this case, monitoring continuity in Bakr-Taghlibi relations is facilitated by examining material from the conquest period, which, in any case, is found in only two akhbars.

In the later phases of the conquests along the Upper Euphrates, although Bakris often fought with the Muslims against the Taghlibis, there is some evidence of affinity between the two groups as well as the continuing rivalry. We are told that one Taghlibi group called the B. Dhū al-Ruwayl;ala were raided by the Muslims and many captives were taken. However, Rabicans in the Muslim camp traded the captives for part of their share of the booty and set them free. As an explanation for this action, the narrator tells us that this was because Rabi'a did not take captives in pre-Islamic times.

On the other hand we are also told that Bakri leaders of a Muslim troop forced a cornered band of Taghlibis to drown, in revenge for a group of Bakris who were burnt to death by these Taghlibis in the Jähiliya.

On the whole, we can see that Taghlibi-Bakri rivalry dominated the pre-Islamic traditions of these two groups. Co-operation and solidarity do indeed appear but apparently only at the end of the Jähili period, perhaps as a result of a perceived mutual threat from Tamimi groups. This solidarity is apparent during the conquests and even later as we will see below, but it was balanced with continuing rivalry.

(v) Taghlib and the Arab tribes:

There is relatively little mention of Taghlib’s relations with Arab tribes other than Bakr. Only two other groups are significant, Tamim and Quḍā’a. These accounts are again of the type of ‘ayyām of single tribal groups’.

477 Ilū al-Adhir, Kāmil, ii, p. 447.
478 Tabari, Ta’rikh, i, p. 2298.
Against Tamīm, Taghlib fought Yawm Irāb (also known as Yawm al-Arāqīm⁴⁷⁰), which was a raid by the Taghlibi group, the B. Tha‘labā b. Mālik, against the B. Riyāh of the B. Yarbā⁴ (although the intended target was the B. Sa‘d) led by Hudhayl b. Hubayra. According to the common ayyām account, the Taghlibīs were successful,⁴⁸⁰ however, verses of Jarir imply otherwise.⁴⁸¹

Another Hudhayl (unidentified) of Taghlib attacked Tamīmīs of the B. Āmīr b. Tamīm at Yawm Safār but he was killed there. According to Ya‘qūt, Safār lay in the vicinity of Dhū Qār. His version of the battle has Bakr fighting Tamīm instead of Taghlib but seems vague in comparison to the more precise account in the Aghānī.⁴⁸²

The Bakrī poet al-Ḥārith b. Ḥillīza mentions a Tamīmī raid against a Taghlibī group in the region of al-Baḥrayn.⁴⁸³

Apart from Tamīm, Taghlib also fought with the tribes of Qudā‘a. We find this for instance in verses mentioning an unsuccessful raid by Ḥazīma b. Tāriq of B. Jusham b. Bakr against Bāliy of Qudā‘a⁴⁸⁴, while al-Ḥārith b. Ḥillīza mentioned a Qudā‘ī raid on Taghlib.⁴⁸⁵

Geographically, this links Taghlib with both northern al-Baḥrayn and the Bādiyat al-Shām in the late Jāhili period. This also distances them somewhat from central Najd. Importantly, the main enemies in al-Baḥrayn are Tamīmī groups, mentioned earlier as enemies of Bakr as well, and adding some weight to the idea of pre-Islamic co-operation between Taghlib and Bakr as being based on mutual hostility to Tamīm.

**Overview of Taghlib in the Jāhiliya:**

The above accounts can be seen to be confusing, occasionally contradictory and usually resistant to chronological ordering. However, it is useful to try to outline a rough and condensed sketch of the history of Taghlib in the Jāhiliya based on the above examination of ayyām and other Jāhili accounts.

---

⁴⁷⁰ Naqā‘īd, p. 761.
⁴⁸⁰ Naqā‘īd, pp. 473, 703, 883, 1048.
⁴⁸¹ Naqā‘īd, p. 761.
⁴⁴ Isfahānī, Aghānī, xxvi, p. 8656; Ya‘qūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Safār”.
⁴⁸³ Isfahānī, Aghānī, xi, p. 3822.
⁴⁸⁵ Isfahānī, Aghānī, xi, pp. 3831-2.
In the 5th c. CE, we find the powerful Rabî‘a confederation, dominated by Taghlibi clans, to be a strong force in al-Bahrain and perhaps in parts of al-Yamāma’s oases, as well as in the region further north between the Nafūd and the Persian Gulf. At the same time Taghlibis were also established along the Euphrates, in Bādiyat al-Shām, and perhaps had been since more ancient times. It is in the later part of the 5th c. CE that Taghlibi groups move into al-Jazīra and began to adopt Christianity.

The oldest ayyām events which involved Taghlib date from the mid-5th c. CE with the rise to power of the Ḥujrid Kindīs. While the Taghlibi groups in al-Bahrain were an important source of military strength to the newly established Kindi state in central Arabia, they later represented a strong threat to them as allies of the Mundhirids. It is towards the end of the Kindi period, in the early 6th c. CE, that the Rabî‘an confederation must have been strong enough to be involved in conflict against “al-Yaman”, whether directly or through their Kindi allies.

As the Kindi state collapsed, its former allies appear to have deserted it. The Mundhirids in the north, supported by the Sassanian empire had become stronger and were exerting pressure on the Kindi state. Taghlib, perhaps due to feuding with Bakr, attached itself to the Mundhirids.486

What the ayyām accounts are most consistent about, in the case of Taghlib, is that they were especially active, and indeed dominant in al-Bahrain and neighbouring lands during the later Kindi period. However, after the Kindi period, by the mid-6th c. CE, this dominance ended and they are only mentioned in the region of the Euphrates and al-Jazīra.

Although the accounts of ‘Amr b. Kulthūm show Taghlibis in defiance of Ḥiran rule, this cannot have been a true reflection of the normal state of affairs. A little over a decade after the killing of ‘Amr b. Hind (ca. 569 CE), Taghlibis are mentioned again fighting for al-Nu‘mān III. Yet this loyalty to al-Ḥira can only have been a practical necessity for Taghlib. We know for certain that, after the Sassanians destroyed the Mundhirid state, Taghlib’s ties with the Sassanian empire remained very strong, as will be seen below at Dhū Qār and during the conquests.

486 Presumably, different parts of Taghlib co-operated with either side depending on practicalities and demographic realities.
Profile of pre-Islamic Taghlib:

Taghlibi pre-Islamic ayyām:

The pre-Islamic ayyām of Taghlib follow different types as described in the preceding chapter. However, the most celebrated Taghlibi ayyām accounts, those of the Basūs war and the legends of Kulayb and ʿAmr b. Kulthūm, are highly developed stories. These ayyām seem to have been very widespread amongst the Arab tribes, at least in the Islamic period and probably before. Moreover, the pre-Islamic grandeur of Taghlib seems to have been widely acknowledged down to Muslim times. Taghlib remained a dominant force along the Euphrates and in al-Jazīra until the war against Qays started during the second Muslim civil war. Thus, it is difficult to understand why they are given so little space in the genealogical literature. This question will be considered after we examine Taghlibi activity in the Islamic period.

Taghlib and pre-Islamic Arabia:

As seen above, Taghlib seems to have been a powerful force in al-Bahrayn until some point in the 6th c. CE, after the fall of the Ḥujrid dynasty. Before this, Taghlib dominated Rabiʿa and with them entered into conflict or alliance with the forces involved in attempting to control the fertile regions of Eastern Arabia, in al-Yamāma and al-Bahrayn. By the mid-6th c. however, Taghlib’s domination of the Rabiʿa confederation seems to have been lost. After this, they remained powerful in Iraq and allied to the Sassanians until the Islamic conquests.

Taghlib’s limited relations with Qudāʿa seem to indicate that no serious disruptions occurred with their neighbours in Bādiyat al-Shām, while the occasional conflict with Tanīmi groups until the Islamic period, may indicate a continuing focus of Taghlibi interest in the region of al-Bahrayn and the lower Euphrates. Small Taghlibi groups were still settled as far south as al-Yamāma at the rise of Islam.

Economic activity:

Taghlib were divided into settled and nomadic groups. At least in Islamic times there seems to be little evidence that Taghlib were major camel herders
except in Bādiyat al-Shām\(^{487}\). This means that their migration cycles did not force them to cover great distances, and necessarily brought them back to the same summer watering areas.

Based on modern anthropological observations\(^{488}\), we can conclude that the goat-herding Taghlibis along the Euphrates would have summered along this river and the Khābūr in al-Jazīra, wintering in the Bādiyat al-Shām and the arid lands of al-Jazīra, though not too far from their summer pasturage. Groups in al-Bāhrayn are difficult to identify in terms of their economic activities. Those settled in al-Yamāma and in the oases of al-Bahrayn presumably engaged at least partly in farming and partly in goat-herding. The fact that Taghlib were famous horse-breeders must point to the fact that they were in control of permanent water reserves, presumably those along the Euphrates and especially in al-Jazīra.

**Tribal unity:**

The sources depict Taghlib as one unit. Rarely are Taghlibis referred to by any other *nisba* than Taghlibi. However, as Taghlib did not play a prominent role in the early Muslim state, ignorance of Taghlib and its divisions by *ruwā* may have caused this lacking, rather than it being a reflection of the unity of Taghlib.

However, a few groups do stand out. These are the B. Zuhayr of the Jusham b. Bakr branch, the lineage to whom belong Kulayb b. Rabīʿa and ʿAmr b. Kultūm; the B. Tāym of the Mālik b. Bakr, to whom belonged the famous warrior al-Saffāḥ al-Taghlibi; and in the late Jihāli and early Muslim period, the B. Thaʿalaba b. Bakr, from whom descended al-Hudhayl b. Hubayra, the most prominent leader of Taghlibis who fought against Khalid's Muslim armies.\(^{489}\)

Taghlib of course enjoyed close relations with Bakr, despite persistent rivalries and the matrilineal links between them described in the sources reflect this. Taghlib also had matrilineal links with two other groups, with whom they seem to form a confederation against the Muslim armies during the conquest period, these were Iyād and al-Namīr.

---

\(^{487}\) See Morony, *Irahy*, p. 218.

\(^{488}\) See Donner, "Nomads", pp. 74–46.

\(^{489}\) Although see EI² s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʾil", where it is pointed out that the pre-Islamic Hudhayl b. Hubayra was often confused with the Islamic figure Hudhayl b. 'Amarīn, the latter being the Hudhayl who led Taghlib against the Muslims.
Control of settlements:

No well-known settlements are ever mentioned in the pre-Islamic sources as being subservient to Taghlib, even during the celebration of the feats of Kulayb and 'Amr b. Kulthūm. However, it is clear that Taghlib were located, either around the oases of al-Bahrāyn and the Yamāna region or along the Euphrates river and must have dominated or mixed with some of the settled populations of these regions.
(B) Taghlib in Islam

A note on chronology and dates:

In the following, I use only Hijri dates and not those of the Christian calendar. This is done primarily to avoid cluttering the text.

Regarding the accuracy of early Muslim historical chronology, it must be pointed out that accounts in the sources are often dateless, and many of the dates provided are contradicted by others in different accounts. Especially for the sīra material, dates are quite untrustworthy. However, I have still used these dates, in the hope that even if they are inaccurate they give an idea of relative chronology. They are not, however, meant to accurately define time periods for the events they accompany. After the initial conquests chronology is generally accepted to be safer.490

The important lineages of Taghlīb in the Islamic period:

As in the pre-Islamic period, Taghlībi clans or tribal subsets are almost never referred to either directly or through tribal nisbas of the tribesmen. Thus, one must infer the levels of activity of Taghlīb’s subsets from those of the tribesmen who have their genealogies recorded in the genealogical works. Unfortunately, as mentioned before, the problem is compounded by the sparse genealogical material on Taghlībis, and thus many tribesmen who are mentioned in the sources cannot be linked to any particular tribal subset.

The lineages of Taghlīb whose tribesmen are prominent in the sources for the Islamic period are B. Taym of the Mālik b. Bakr, the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr and to a lesser extent the B. Tha’laba b. Bakr.

The Prophetic period:

In the Prophetic period, two important events are recorded for Taghlīb. The first is Taghlīb’s involvement in the famous battle of Dhū Qār, in which a group of Bakrī tribesmen defeated a Sassanian led military force. In this

battle, Taghlib fought alongside the Sassanians, as did the other Mesopotamian and Euphrates tribes of Bahrà and al-Namir. The Aräqim group of Taghlib are specifically mentioned in the battle, however, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, al-Aràqim are a very large group in the genealogical sources who are virtually equivalent to the whole of Taghlib - thus, this does not tell us much. Nevertheless, we are told that al-Nu'màn b. Zur'a of the B. Tayin of the Mālik b. Bakr branch headed his tribesmen as well as the contingent from al-Namir.

The second important event concerning Taghlib occurred immediately after the death of the Prophet and before Abû Bakr had sent out the armies of Medina to subdue Arabia. Ṭabārī tells us that in 11 H, whilst Tamīm was in confusion after the death of the Prophet over how to react to Medina, suddenly the 'false prophetess' Sajāh appeared in their territory. Sajáh was a Tamīmī of the B. Yarbū, but had claimed prophethood in the north amongst her matrilineal kinsmen of Taghlib and had gathered a following from amongst Rabī'a. Thus, she arrived in northern Najd with an army of Taghibīs, Namirīs, Iyādis and Shaybānīs and negotiated a treaty with some Tamīmī groups. However, Sajāh's army fought and defeated a group from al-Ribāb.

As they marched westwards towards Medina - their target, according to the sources - their advance was checked by a large coalition from the various groups of B. ʿAmr branch of Tamīm. Some of the leaders of Sajāh's army were captured and they had to make a treaty not to pass through the territory of the B. Hujaym. They then marched southwards towards al-Yamāma instead. There, they persuaded the 'prophet' of B. Ḥanīfa, Musaylāma, to pay them tribute. Sajāh and her army then returned to al-Jazīra with half of the tribute from al-Yamāma, leaving behind some of her commanders to return later with the remainder. However, later in the year, Khālid b. al-Walid arrived in the area at the head of a large Muslim army. His arrival prompted the remaining group of Sajāh to retreat to the north.

---

491 Nāqiʿ, p. 615.
492 Ṭabārī, Muʿjam, s.v. "Dhu Qār"; Ḫūṣ al-ʿAthir, Kāmil, i, p. 489.
493 Ṭabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 1911-2.
494 Ṭabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 1913.
495 Ṭabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 1915.
496 Ṭabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 1919-20.
In that same year, the small Muslim contingent in al-Bahrayn under the command of al-‘Alā’ b. al-Ḥaḍramī expressed to Medina fear of a possible attack by a group of Shaybān, Taghlib and al-Namir. The band’s leader is mentioned as the Shaybānī al-Nu‘mān b. ʿAmr al-Mafrūq. Al-Mafrūq is not mentioned amongst the list of the supporters of Sajāh, thus it is unclear whether this group was connected to Sajāh’s army or was a different confederation from the same tribes from which she drew her support.

The Muslim conquests:

The first of Taghlib’s confrontations with the main Muslim armies came in Iraq. Khālid b. al-Walīd’s raids into Sassanian territory naturally brought him into conflict with the Arab tribesmen loyal to the Sassanians, from Taghlib, al-Namir, Bahrāʾ and Iyād. According to the Muslim sources, men from these tribes fought against the Muslims from 12 H to 16 H, when they finally joined the Muslims.

The first combat took place at ‘Ayn al-Tamr [see map 1], where Taghlib, Iyād and al-Namir were defeated as they attempted to defend it against Khālid b. al-Walīd in the year 12 H. Following this, Rabi‘a b. Bujayrī, of the ʿUtba lineage of the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr, led a contingent of tribesmen to support the Sassanians in retaliation for the defeat at ʿAyn al-Tamr. They were, however, defeated again. Rabi‘a’s daughter, was captured and later became an ʿumm walad of ʿAli b. Abī Ṭalīb. The daughter of another Taghlibi leader, Hudhayl b. Hubayrā, of the B. Tha‘laba b. Bakr, was also captured, indicating the severity of the defeat.

After subduing the central Euphrates region, Khālid marched northwards along the west bank of the river. It is interesting to learn that Byzantine

---

498 Interestingly, this group is referred to collectively as one ‘nakl’ (lineage).
499 Tabari, Tārikh, i, p. 2973.
500 Tabari, Tārikh, i, p. 2972-3; Bu al-Atīr, Kāmil, ii, pp. 394-5.
501 According to Cassed, Gānhārat, i, 164 25 he is Ḥabīb b. Bujayrī.
503 Tabari, Tārikh, i, pp. 2072-3, 3472. It is interesting to note Khālid’s reported particular hostility towards Taghlib, see Tabari, Tārikh, i, p. 2973; Bu al-Atīr, Kāmil, ii, pp. 396-9. According to Mada‘īnī, Khālid b. al-Walīd is said to have defeated Taghlib and Ṭab‘a b. Bujayrī in the year 13 H, not 12 H, Tabari, Tārikh, i, pp. 1956-7. Another version supports this year, stating that Khālid is supposed to have defeated several enemy Arab groupings on his way to join the Muslim armies in al-Shām, including one under the leadership of Ṭab‘a b. Bujayrī, see Tabari, Tārikh, i, p. 2109.
504 There is confusion as to whether this occurred before or after his expedition to Dimmū al-Jandal. See Denner, Islamic Conquests, p. 186.
forces north of the Euphrates called upon aid from the Sassanians and Arab tribesmen including Taghlibis to counter the threat from Khālid's army. However, this combined force was dispersed by Khālid.\footnote{505}

In the years 13 H and 14 H, after the departure of Khālid to the Syrian front, we find the Muslims based at al-Anbār raiding the Taghlibi and Namiri tribes, primarily to replenish their supplies. The raids extended northwards, all the way up to Siffin\footnote{506}. It is around this time, that the Muslims suffered a heavy defeat at the battle of the Bridge at the hands of the Sassanian army.\footnote{507}

After their defeat at battle of the Bridge the Muslims were victorious at the battle of Buwayb.\footnote{508} Here we are told, for the first time, that Christian Taghlibis and Namiris fought alongside the Muslims.\footnote{509} Indeed a Taghlibi Christian "ghulām" is named as the killer of the commander of the Sassanian army.\footnote{510}

By 16 H it is clear that Taghlibis were siding with the Muslims against the Byzantines in al-Jazira, and thus, helping them to occupy the remaining cities holding out against them in that province.\footnote{511} At Takrit, the tribesmen from Taghlib, Iyād and al-Namir who were part of the town's garrison, surrendered to the Muslims, accepted Islam and joined the Muslim force.\footnote{512}

Yet most of Taghlib remained Christian\footnote{513}, and this posed a problem for the Muslim leadership. A deputation from one Taghlibi group\footnote{514} met with ʿUmar and secured their freedom to remain Christian. The Taghlibis agreed on paying a jīzāya at a lower rate, equivalent to the Muslim sadaqa, on the condition that they did not bring their children up as Christians.\footnote{515} Some Taghlibis, together with their Namiri and Iyādī allies joined the Muslim force at al-Madā'in and were later assigned quarters in al-Kūfa when it was built.\footnote{516}

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item\footnote{505}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 2074.
\item\footnote{506}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 2206-8, 2213, also p. 2244; Ibn al-Athir, Kamil, ii, p. 458.
\item\footnote{507}Donner, Islamic Conquests, p. 192.
\item\footnote{508}However, see Donner's discussion of the battle, where he concludes that the historicity of it is doubtful, Donner, Islamic Conquests, pp. 198-9.
\item\footnote{509}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 2190.
\item\footnote{510}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 2192-3; Ibn al-Athir, Kamil, ii, p. 443.
\item\footnote{511}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 2384.
\item\footnote{512}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 2415; Ibn al-Athir, Kamil, ii, p. 523-4.
\item\footnote{513}EI², s.v. "Taghlibi b. Wāhil".
\item\footnote{514}It is unclear whether they were negotiating on behalf of all Taghlibis, or just one particular group. However, from a statement in this account regarding "these Taghlibis" moving to al-Madīin, it appears that this particular deputation negotiated for one particular group.
\item\footnote{515}The legal significance of this anecdote obviously casts doubts over its authenticity, nevertheless, it is significant that the Muslim Taghlibis moved to Kūfa, while Christians are said to have remained in al-Jazira.
\item\footnote{516}Tabari, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 2482, 2490, 2495, 2500-11; Ibn al-Athir, Kamil, ii, p. 527.
\end{itemize}
Elsewhere we are told that Taghlibi Muslims and Christians joined a Kūfān expedition against the unsubdued parts of al-Jazīra.\footnote{Tabari, Ta’rikh, i, pp. 2567-8; Ibn al-Atṭār, Kāmil, ii, p. 543. It is unclear why their return was important to ʿUmar.}

Apart from this, there is very little information on Taghlib until the first civil war. Perhaps the account of Yawm Ḥabis is an exception. In this yawm, which took place in the Islamic period, Taghlibīs were raided by a group of Bahrā’, but they successfully drove the attackers off. The account of this raid mentions that both of these tribes were still Christian. Apparently this incident took place in the Islamic period, but exactly when is unknown.\footnote{Iṣfahānī, Ashābī, xii, pp. 4301, 4304.}

As will be seen below, after the period of the conquests Taghlibīs no longer appear in any accounts to be based west of the Euphrates (except inside the Iraqi garrison towns). Thus, it seems that one direct effect of the conquests on Taghlibī distribution was to cause them to cross the Euphrates and stay permanently in al-Jazīra.\footnote{See Morony, Iraq, p. 232.}

The first civil war:

Lecker believes the Taghlib to have been pro-Umayyad in the first civil war.\footnote{Eṣṭ, x, 3; M. H. & S., “Taghlib b. Waʿil”.} However, as we shall see, political loyalty seemed more to have depended on regional distribution. In al-Jazīra, now the ‘homeland’ of Taghlib, it seems that they tried to remain neutral.

Taghlibīs of al-Jazīra:

After the Battle of the Camel, on his way to Siffin, ʿAlī entered al-Jazīra where he was met by tribal leaders from Taghlib and al-ʾNamir. “ʿAlī, so we are told, was pleased to find that many of them had become Muslims, and he confirmed the agreement for those of them who were still Christian to remain so long as they did not bring their sons up as Christians.”\footnote{Naqr b. Muzāḥim, Siffin, p. 146. It is worth remembering that an ʿummāl of ʿAlī’s (al-ʾSahabā’) was from the B. Zuhayr b. Aṣḥam of Taghlib; see Caskel, Gムsbat, ii, s.v. “al-ʾSahabā’iʿat, ʿAlī.”} However, none of these Taghlibīs from al-Jazīra seem to have joined ʿAlī’s army in connection with this meeting.
One particular incident seems to shed light on the general attitude of the Taghlibis of al-Jazira to the conflict. It seems that a group of Taghlibis had moved from territory controlled by 'Ali, into that held by Mu'awiya, and also - at least nominally - given Mu'awiya their allegiance. But when Mu'awiya sent a troop to kidnap some 'Aliid supporters in al-Jazira, they returned to Mu'awiya with some men from Taghlib. The Taghlibi band mentioned earlier, asked for their release but was refused. So they decided to abandon Mu'awiya's cause and move back. However, en route they attacked and killed a deputy of 'Ali's and were saved from his retaliation only by the intercession of 'Ali's Rabi'ân party.\footnote{Ibn al-Athir, Kömil, iii, p. 390.}

**Taghlibis of Kûfa and Baṣra:**

Taghlibis are rarely mentioned in the events of the conflict between 'Ali and Mu'awiya. The small number of Taghlibis who fought for 'Ali, did so under the flag of the Bakri dominated Rabi'a at Siffin.\footnote{Thus it appears from most sources. However, manuscripts describing the banners of the tribes which fought at Siffin, describe a specific banner (traya) of the B. Taghibi - who fought on 'Ali's side - held by a Taghlibi (unknown in other sources) [M. Hinds, *The Banners and Battle cries of the Arabs at Siffin* (A.D. 657)], *al-Abhath*, 24 (1971), pp. 120, 121].} Thus, it is worthwhile examining the participation of Rabi'a as a group at Siffin. As for the Battle of the Camel, we are told that a small number of Taghlibis from Kûfa were amongst the Kifan army which set out with 'Ali against Talha and al-Zubayr in al-Baṣra.\footnote{Tabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 3174; Ibn al-Athir, Kömil, iii, p. 252.}

Immediately after the Battle of the Camel, the Baṣrans - who from 'Ali's message to Ibn 'Abbâs appear to be mainly Rabi'âns - were unwilling to join 'Ali.\footnote{Nâṣr b. Muzâhîm, *Siffin*, p. 105.} However, they eventually did arrive in Kûfa to join 'Ali before his army set out to Syria.\footnote{Nâṣr b. Muzâhîm, *Siffin*, p. 27.}

At Siffin, the Rabi'ân contingent is described as the largest group in 'Ali's army, as opposed to the two other groups of Muḍar and al-Yaman separately.\footnote{Nâṣr b. Muzâhîm, *Siffin*, p. 484.} Interestingly, from an early point, there were tensions between the Rabi'a and the *ahl al-Yaman* in 'Ali's army over the issue of leadership,\footnote{Nâṣr b. Muzâhîm, *Siffin*, p. 137.} as well as hints at friction between the Rabi'a and Muḍar.\footnote{See for instance in the words of Sa'īd b. Qays al-Hamdânî to the Yamamah, Nâṣr b. Muzâhîm, *Siffin*, p. 138.}
In the fighting at Ṣiffin, Rabi‘ans held some high posts in ʿAli’s army. However, neither these posts nor the leadership of the various Rabi‘an divisions seem to have been entrusted to Taghlibis. However, Kurdūs b. Hāni’ al-Bakri (apparently referring to a group called the B. Bakr b. Jusham of Taghlib) is mentioned as the son of the leader of Taghlib.

Taghlib in Syria:

On Mu‘awiya’s side, at Ṣiffin, no Taghlibis, or indeed, Rabī‘ans appear as a single unit. Some Taghlibī individuals do have privileged positions with Mu‘awiya such as the poet, Ka‘b b. Ju‘ayl of the ‘Auf line of Mālik b. Bakr.

There is some indirect evidence that some Taghlibīs might have showed real support for the cause of Mu‘awiya against ʿAli. After the death of ʿAli, Mu‘awiya expelled from Kūfah many of those who had been followers of ʿAli and replaced them with some of his own supporters. It seems that some of these were extended families, or tribal units, and at least one was Taghlibī (incidentally this was the group with which Sajāḥ, now a Muslim, was residing).

The Sufyānid period:

There are very few references to Taghlibīs in this period. On the military side, a Taghlibī is credited with the killing of a leader of the Khawārij in the time of Mu‘awiya. While in Syria, the famous Taghlibī poet, al-Akhtal, of the Fadawkas branch of Malik b. Jusham, frequented the court of Yazid and wrote verses of praise on his death.

---

531 Probably a confused with Jusham b. Bakr. This man is not mentioned in genealogical works.
532 Naṣr b. Muẓāhīb, Ṣiffin, pp. 484, 485, 487.
534 Naṣr b. Muẓāhīb, Ṣiffin, pp. 56-67, passim; see Cusack, Ghudub al-ʿUmmayyidīn, ii, s.c. "Ka‘b b. ʿUṯmān al-ʿAbbāsi".
535 Taḥāri, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 1920.
536 Baladhuri, Anṣab, iv, p. 139.
537 Baladhuri, Anṣab, iv, p. 61.
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhiliya to Islam

The second civil war:

Initially, Taghlib seem to have generally held away from actively backing either Ibn al-Zubayr or the Marwānids. Later, a most vicious war between themselves and the Qaysi settlers in al-Jazīra broke out, prompting Taghlib to side - superficially at least - with the Marwānids, as the Qaysis had opted for al-Zubayr.\textsuperscript{538} But even then it seems that this conflict was not directly connected to the civil war raging around them.\textsuperscript{539}

The Qays-Taghlib conflict started after the defeat of Zubayrid Qays by Marwān Kalb and their allies, at Marj ṭāḥīt. A leader of Qays, Zufar b. al-Ḥārith of the B. ʿĀmir, fortified himself in Qargisiyya\textsuperscript{3} on the Euphrates and began raiding Kalb bedouin in Bādiyat al-Shām from there. Kalb also raided the Qaysis in retaliation. One of the Qaysi commanders was ʿUmayr b. al-Ḥubāb from the B. Sulaym.

In the beginning there is evidence that Taghlibis from the Euphrates and areas in al-Jazīra were joining these Qaysi raids, although there is no evidence that this was politically motivated. Baladhuri mentions that ʿUmayr, in particular, raided Kalb with men from Taghlib.\textsuperscript{540} Indeed, Kalb, after having suffered a particularly bad defeat, retreated from the eastern part of Bādiyat al-Shām and regrouped around Tudmur (Palmyra). They then attempted to attack Taghlib in retaliation for their support of Qays.\textsuperscript{541}

However, it appears that ʿUmayr and his Qaysis treated the Taghlibi tribesmen, including their leaders, with contempt, perhaps because they were still Christian. Another probable source of tension must have been that the Qaysis were the recent conquerers of a region which had been partly dominated by Taghlib.\textsuperscript{542} As a result of this tension, a minor clash between the two groups occurred which then escalated into a large battle in which Taghlib was defeated.\textsuperscript{543}

More battles and raids followed throughout al-Jazīra, with Taghlib calling upon aid from their allies from al-Namir and Shaybān. Qays are said to

\textsuperscript{538} See Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, p. 314, where Taghlib is specifically termed Marwānī. However, it seems that perhaps some Taghlibis opposed the Umayyads (Rutter, G., \textit{Die Umayyaden und der Zweite Bürgerkrieg (680-92)}, Weisbaden: Steiner, 1982, p. 190).

\textsuperscript{539} For a clear account of the Qays-Taghlib conflict based on the harmonization of numerous sources, see Dixon, \textit{Umayyad Caliphate}, pp. 98-104. See also, Rutter, \textit{Umayyaden}, pp. 193-207; Wellhausen, \textit{The Arab Kingdom}, pp. 203-5.

\textsuperscript{540} Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 308, 313; Ibn al-ʿAtlīr, ʿĀmil, iv, p. 389.

\textsuperscript{541} Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 309, 313.

\textsuperscript{542} Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, p. 314; Ibn al-ʿAtlīr, ʿĀmil, iv, p. 389.

\textsuperscript{543} Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 315, 17; Ibn al-ʿAtlīr, ʿĀmil, iv, pp. 310, ff.
have been the more successful side until the battle of al-Hashshāk. This was the most serious battle that had taken place until then.

Al-Hashshāk:

Just before this battle, Taghlib had apparently decided to call upon all of its allies in response to the vicious Qaysi onslaught against them. Bakr b. Wāṣl sent Shaybānis from al-Jazīra and others from Iraq. The account mentions that Taghlib called for help from even their "muhājrūn" in Adharbayjān, who sent them 2000 men under the command of Shu‘ayb b. Mulayl (or Mukayl). Shu‘ayb was from the Ṣubāḥ branch of Mālik b. Bakr.

Shu‘ayb's contingent was defeated, but the main Taghlibi force went on to destroy the Qaysis, at al-Hashshāk near Takrit. There, the Qaysi commander ‘Umayr b. al-Ḥubāb was killed and Qays were badly defeated. Many Qaysis fell from the tribes of Ghaniy and Sulaym, and the B. Āmīr were forced to flee the field.

One account of the battle of al-Hashshāk includes important information on the tribal composition of al-Jazīra, in this period: Taghlib, we are told, were nomadic in al-Jazīra with only a small representation in al-Kūfa. Qays, Quḍā'a (mainly Kalb and Bahrā ') and groups of Muğār had dominated the settled territories, however, Quḍā'a had left before the war against Taghlib.

At al-Hashshāk, we are given also some details of tribal organization within the B. Taghlib. Here we are told that the B. Mālik b. Bakr dominated the leadership of Taghlib. It is they who sent out the call for help against the Qaysis. Ḥanẓala b. Ḥawbar of the B. Tāyim of the B. Mālik b. Bakr led Taghlib. Another leader of Taghlib against Qays in this period was ‘Abd Yasū Q b. Ḥarb - clearly a Christian - who was supposedly descended from Murra b.

---

544 Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 318-23; Ibn al-Athir, Kannāl, iv, pp. 311-5.
545 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 4371; Caskel, Gamharat, ii, s.v. "Su‘ayl b. Muhāl" and Su‘ayl b. Mulayl. Shu‘ayb, according to Caskel, was a Khārjī. Accounts, different from that of the Aghānī, include Shu‘ayb b. Mulayl but not as a Khārjī from Adharbayjān. In any case, he was killed at the head of a band from Taghlib, which is what we learn from the poetry accompanying the account, Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 315-6; Ibn al-Athir, Kannāl, iv, p. 310.
546 Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, p. 4371. In 90 H, according to Caskel, Gamharat, ii, s.v. "Umayr b. al-Ḥubāb".
547 The killer of ‘Umayr was from the Ka‘b b. Zuhayr lineage of the great Jasham b. Bakr branch. See Ibn al-Kalbi, Jasham, p. 567.
548 Baladhuri, Ansāb, v, pp. 32146.
549 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 4371.
550 Also, Ḥanẓala b. Qays b. Ḥawbar, see Caskel, Gamharat, ii, s.v. "Ḥanẓala b. Quṣai".

---

124
Kulthūm, the brother of the famous ‘Amr, and thus of the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr.\textsuperscript{551}

However, this defeat of Qays was temporary and was followed by a vicious Qaysi revenge.\textsuperscript{552} The most prominent Qaysi leader in al-Jazīra, Zufar b. al-Ḥārith of the B. ‘Āmir,\textsuperscript{553}, was initially against escalating the war with Taghlib. After al-Hashṣāk, however, he agreed to support the Qaysi call for blood-vengeance. Thus, the Qaysis attacked and massacred the B. Fadawkas and the B. Ka‘b b. Zuhayr (both of the B. Jusham b. Bakr). We are told that when Taghlib (and their allies from "al-Yaman"	extsuperscript{554}) learned of this, they attempted to escape across the Tigris but were caught and slaughtered. The Qaysī army marched north and at a place a little south of Mawsil met another Taghlibi-Yamani group and defeated it utterly.\textsuperscript{555}

Many other battles connected to the Qays-Taghlib feuding are mentioned in the sources, such as Yawni Lubayy, where Taghlib were defeated by Qays,\textsuperscript{556} or Yawm Sinjār, also known as Yawn al-Ārāqim, where they were victorious.\textsuperscript{557}

Beyond the second civil war:

Taghlib and the Marwānids:

As with most other tribes in this period, we find Taghlibīs in high positions throughout the Islamic empire. We even find Taghlibī notables based in places as far away as Cordoba,\textsuperscript{558} and one of the B. Taym lineage of Mālik b. Bakr was a governor of al-Sind.\textsuperscript{559} Also, with regard to loyalty to the Marwānid dynasty, we find the typical tribal position where tribesmen would be either for or against the rulers. Thus, we find some Taghlibīs supporting the

\textsuperscript{551} Ibn al-Kalbī, \textit{Jannāha}, p. 567.


\textsuperscript{553} Zufar seems to have been the most important leader of ‘Qays’ in Jazīra.

\textsuperscript{554} Perhaps these were Qudhā‘ī affiliated allies of Taghlib, remnants of Kulb and Bahra’.

\textsuperscript{555} Isfahānī, \textit{Aghānī}, xii, pp. 4364-5.

\textsuperscript{556} \textit{Najīḍ} ila, p. 1098.

\textsuperscript{557} \textit{Najīḍ} ila, pp. 373, 400. But see p. 508 where Yawm Sinjār is counted as a victory for Qays.


\textsuperscript{559} Ibn al-Kalbī, \textit{Jannāha}, p. 571; the descendants of this Sind governor, Hisham b. ‘Amr, continued to hold prominent military posts under the ‘Abdāšīs; see Cron, \textit{Slaves}, pp. 167-8.
Marwânids and sometimes occupying privileged positions in the military or at the courts of the rulers, while others were actively involved in opposition to their rule. For instance, one Kūfān Taghlibi was in command of the left wing one of the armies of al-Ḥajjāj sent against the Shaybāni Khariji Shabib b. Yazīd.\textsuperscript{560} While in Shabib’s army itself there was a Taghlibi attributed with killing the commander of the Marwânid army.\textsuperscript{561} Unfortunately, the lineages of neither man were recorded. During the third civil war, a Taghlibi of the Sa`d lineage of B. Jusham b. Bakr, is mentioned in the ranks of the army sent by Marwân II b. Muḥammad against rebels in the Ḥijāz. He is even referred to as "sāhib Marwān".\textsuperscript{562}

The war against Qays in al-Jazīra:

The fighting between Qays and Taghlib slackened after the defeat of the Zubayrids. However, later in the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik, the conflict broke out again very viciously.\textsuperscript{563} According to the sources, the reason for this was that the Taghlibī poet, al-Akhtal, had insulted Qays in verses of his in public. He thus allegedly provoked Yawm al-Bishr, a Syrian watering area of Taghlib, west of the Euphrates. In this raid the Qaysi general, al-Jahḥāf, led a band of Sulāmī Qaysīs against a large group of Taghlibīs with whom al-Akhtal was staying, whom they massacred. One of al-Akhtal’s sons was killed and he himself narrowly escaped death. Taghlib attempted to pursue al-Jahḥāf but were defeated again and he succeeded in escaping into Byzantine territory, more out of fear of the wrath of ʿAbd al-Malik, than that of Taghlib. Eventually ʿAbd al-Malik pardoned him and he was allowed to return on condition of paying the blood money for those killed.\textsuperscript{564}

The feud between Qays and Taghlib must have continued after this, although the sources are quiet about it. We are told that a peace was eventually negotiated through the mediation of Khālid al-Qasri, who governed Iraq and the east for the Caliph Hishām.\textsuperscript{565}

\textsuperscript{560} Tabari, Tāʾrīkh, ii, pp. 950, 952.
\textsuperscript{561} Tabari, Tāʾrīkh, ii, p. 953.
\textsuperscript{562} Azīlī, Tāʾrīkh al-marāšid, pp. 112-3.
\textsuperscript{563} It is surprising that Croce tells us that the allegiance of Rab’a was fixed in Jazira, as pre-Qaysi. See Croce, States, p. 233, n. 311.
\textsuperscript{564} Abūhâni, Aghānī, xi, pp. 4365-70; Bābakîhārî, Ansâb, v, pp. 319-22; 328-31; Naqî ʿid, pp. 401-2, 598, 899.
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhiliya to Islam

The net result of this conflict was that Taghlib, who suffered the worst of the overall fighting, were pushed further to the north and east away from the Euphrates. Meanwhile Qays took over their lands in the western parts of al-Jazira. But while Taghlib and other Rabî‘an tribes lost territory to Qays, they were able to acquire new lands east of the Tigris.566

Al-Akḥṭal, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq:

During the reign of ‘Abd al-Malik there erupted a fierce war of words between the two great poets from Tamīm, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq. A third major Umayyad poet, the Christian Taghlibi al-Akḥṭal, became involved on the side of al-Farazdaq against Jarīr. As a result Jarīr attacked Taghlib, while al-Akḥṭal and al-Farazdaq eulogized them.567 It is due to this battle of poets that much information on Taghlib has been preserved for us, especially on Taghlib’s activities in the pre-Islamic period and its war against Qays in al-Jazira.

Looking at the entry on al-Akḥṭal in Kitāb al-aghāni, where one would hope to learn much of Taghlib during this period, we find that most of the entry on al-Akḥṭal has little relevance to Taghlib as a group. The narrative is mainly made up of separate anecdotes which involve mundane incidents in which al-Akḥṭal is somehow involved. While there are a few scattered references to al-Akḥṭal’s Christianity, it is difficult to assess the extent of Christianity amongst the bulk of Taghlib except from information given in one account. This account mentions the lack of mosques (masājid) in Taghlib’s territory.568 Jarīr often insulted Taghlib for remaining Christian.569 He calls the Taghlibis ‘pig mouths’, which is presumably a reference to their eating pork,570 while al-Akḥṭal is referred to by Jarīr as “dhū al-ṣalīb”571 or “ibn al-naṣrānīya”.572

567 Nagi’id, p. 820-30.
569 Nagi’id, pp. 566, 936.
570 Nagi’id, p. 597.
571 Nagi’id, p. 801.
572 Nagi’id, p. 1040.

127
Chapter 5: Banū Taghlib from Jāhiliya to Islam

Taghlib and Bakr:

In contrast to co-operation between Bakr and Taghlib against the Qaysīs in al-Jazīra, mentioned above, we nevertheless find a few scattered incidents describing continuing rivalry between the two groups in the Islamic period. References to this rivalry appear in some of al-Akhtal’s verses and those of his Bakrī opponents. Though their poetry mentions only battles which took place in the Jāhiliya. 573 We also know that, Jarir defended and eulogized Bakr while attacking Taghlib. 574 There is even a reference to fighting between Taghlib and Shaybān contemporary to al-Aʿshā al-Taghlibi, who lived during the Umayyad period. 575

On the whole, such hostility is insignificant compared to co-operation and solidarity between the two groups under the Rabiʿan umbrella. In particular, we are told of a reconciliation between Taghlib and Bakr occurring in Islamic times, as a result of the efforts of the Taghlibi leader, Hammām b. al-Mutarrif, of the B. Mālik b. Jusham. 576

Profile of Taghlib in Islamic times:

Taghlib and the conquests:

After the Islamic conquests, most of Taghlib seem to have remained Christian despite other Christian tribes around them who - outwardly at least - converted to the new religion. The consequences of this for Taghlib were great. Indeed, part of the problems which sparked off the vicious Qays-Taghlib feud in al-Jazīra was the Christianity of Taghlib. Refusing to accept the new religion led to the marginalization of Taghlib, who once were one of the most powerful tribes as can be seen from their ayyām legacy. For it must be as a result of their remaining Christian that they seem to be all but excluded from positions of power in the early Islamic period. 577 That they still formed a strong presence in the region can be seen three centuries later when the Ḥamdānīd Taghlibi dynasty was founded in northern Syria and Mesopotamia.

---

573 *Nagīʿāl*, pp. 400-1. See also Bahadur, *Anāh*, v, p. 171.
574 *Nagīʿāl*, p. 897.
577 See also *Et*, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil".
Most of the Taghibis who converted and joined the Muslims during the conquests were settled in Kūfa. A typical case is that of the Taghibi leader Ḥutba b. Wagh of the B. Sa’d b. Jusham. He held Takrit against the Muslims for the Sassanians, but then surrendered, joined the Muslims and settled in Kūfa. In comparison, few Taghibis seem to have gone to Baṣra. The conquests also resulted in Taghib moving out of the central Euphrates region, and the war with Qays forced them out of the western and southern parts of al-Jazīra. Yet a beneficial effect of the Muslim expansion, was to open up lands in the northern parts of al-Jazīra and across the Tigris for Taghibi exploitation.

Lineages:

With Taghib it is difficult to see changes in the fortunes of particular lineages from before to after Islam. As mentioned before, most of the Taghibī figures of the Islamic period cannot be linked to a lineage and the pre-Islamic divisions are in any case very few.

The descendants of the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr, the great clan of Kulayb and Āmī b. Kulthūm in pre-Islamic times, still held local power amongst Taghibis during the conquests and in the war against Qays in Umayyad times.

Similarly, the B. Taym of Mālik b. Bakr, from whom the great pre-Islamic warrior al-Safāḥ stemmed, were prominent amongst Taghib in al-Jazīra, in the early Islamic period and during the war against Qays. One tribesman of this group was said to have been a Khārjī. However, his particular lineage, the B. Subāh were unknown in pre-Islamic times.

Lastly, we also have a Taghibi leader in early Islamic times who was from the B. Tha‘laba b. Bakr, unknown in pre-Islamic times until the late Jāhili period.

It is clear that all of these leaders exercised power only locally, mainly in al-Jazīra, and were not high ranking officers in Syria or Iraq. We find only poets from B. Zuhayr and B. Mālik b. Bakr present at the Umayyad court.

578 Cusack, Gamhatat, ii, s.v. “Uthba b. Wagh”.
580 Morony, Iraq, p. 232.
There seems to be continuation of power amongst the Taym branch of B. Malik b. Bakr, as well as in the large group of B. Zuhayr of Jusham b. Bakr. However, it is possible that ancient heroes may have been assigned genealogies linking them to these groups who were prominent in Islamic times. The sparse genealogical material of Taghlib limits us from exploring these links further.

Note on Taghlib's small size in the genealogies:

As pointed out earlier, Taghlib was a powerful pre-Islamic tribe which was often engaged in war on an equal footing with tribes known for their military strength and large numbers. But as Caskel points out, Taghlibis account for just three pages of genealogical tables as opposed to thirty pages for the Bakr b. Wâ'il, who were supposedly their equals in the Basûs war. Moreover, it is strange that there are far more Jâhilî accounts than Islamic concerning the Taghlibi tribesmen.

In this regard, it should be noted that a large number of the Taghlibis mentioned in the historical sources who had taken part in fighting against the Muslims, or later, against the Qaysis, do not appear in the genealogies. Also, as Caskel points out, and is clear from the evidence given above, Taghlibis occupied very few positions of importance in the newly created Muslim empire. Caskel, simply explains this as due to Taghlib remaining Christian. It should be pointed out that in this period this decision by Taghlib was of high political significance, i.e. the fact that Taghlibis remained Christian meant that they did not want to actively be involved with the new political system. Thus, most Christian Taghlibis contemporary to Islam did not move to the amsâr and did not get included in the diwan registers, an important source of the Arab genealogists. There is however another factor which should be discussed.

From anthropology we learn that the practice of shifting genealogies is not just common amongst tribal societies but constitutes therein an essential socio-economic mechanism. In the Jâhilî and early Muslim tribal tradition, there are numerous references of tribal groups, disconnecting from their original tribal community and attaching themselves to other groups. Now, while in the cases that are reported, these breakaway tribes are still included

---

581 Caskel, Gamhat, ii, pp. 27-8.
582 See Denner, "Bakr", p. 12.
583 See below Chapter 7.
by the genealogists in their supposed biological or original group, it does not follow that all such breakaway cases were recorded.

In the case of Taghlib, some tribesmen did become Muslim and migrate to Kūfa. These small groups must have attached themselves politically to their distant relatives from Rabī‘a, the Bakris and we have shown examples of cooperation between Bakris and Taghlibis in the early Muslim period. In time, many of these groups probably shifted their genealogies to reflect descent from the larger group to whom they had attached themselves. This would have been especially important, to distinguish themselves from their Christian fellow tribesmen.

Evidence of this exists in the occasional confusion of Taghlibis for Bakris in our sources. One example is Furāt b. Ḥayyān who is a Taghlibi according to Ibn al-Athir,\textsuperscript{594} while Ibn al-Kalbi has him as a Ṣaḥābī of the B. ‘Ijl, from the line of Rabī‘a.\textsuperscript{595} Furthermore, Taghlib seems to be mistaken for Bakr in the account of Yawm Safār as described by Yaqtūt.\textsuperscript{596}

\textsuperscript{594} Ibn al-Athir, Kāmil, ii, p. 446.
\textsuperscript{595} Caskel, Ġamhat, ii, s.v. "Furāt b. Ḥayyān". The fact that there exists a line within ‘Ijl named Rabī‘a, could mean that that whole branch was attached to B. ‘Ijl from Taghlib.
\textsuperscript{596} Yaqtūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Ṣafūr".
Taghlib: Continuity and Change

While there is a significant amount of material concerning Taghlib in the pre-Islamic period, it must be pointed out that it mainly concerns only a handful of legendary characters, especially Kulayb, al-Muhalhil and 'Amr b. Kulthum. Such material is useful to form some general ideas of Taghlib in the Jähiliya. However, it is difficult to use it for a more detailed examination of the various tribal lineages which made up the Taghlib tribal group, and it is with these lineages that patterns of continuity into the Islamic period should be explored. Neither can one discount possibilities of late retrospective editing in the genealogical descriptions of characters mentioned in the old ayyām accounts, aimed at enhancing the prestige of lineages established in the late Jähili or early Islamic periods.

Nevertheless, based solely on this limited variety of pre-Islamic accounts, and on a meagre number of Islamic period accounts we can discern continuity in leadership between the units of individuals mentioned in the old ayyām accounts and those active in late Jähiliya and early Islam. In particular leadership in Taghlib continues amongst the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr and amongst the B. Taym of Mālik b. Bakr (incidentally, the Ḥamdānid dynasty claimed descent from the B. Mālik b. Bakr\(^{587}\)).

However, regarding the regional role played by Taghlib as a whole, there is very important discontinuity. In the pre-Islamic period Taghlib had played a fundamental part in the power conflicts of northeastern Arabia. And even though Taghlib, at the start of the 7th c. CE, seemed weaker than at that of the 6th, it still managed to carry out a daring attack into eastern Arabia and to threaten al-Yamāna, as well as to cause the invading Muslim armies much trouble for several years, along the Euphrates. However, in later Islamic times, this power rapidly vanished. The decision of Taghlib's leadership to remain Christian and not play more than a local role in the new political order, led to its marginalization. The vicious war against militarized Qaysi migrants led to defeat and loss of territory and prestige. Until the rise of the Ḥamdānid dynasty in the 4th c. H, Taghlib could only boast of being descended from mighty protagonists of ancient ayyām.

\(^{587}\) E2, s.e. "Hamdānids", where they are descended from 'Abd b. Uṣūm, and see Caskel, Ġumhat, i, 185/19, for this ancestor's link to Mālik b. Bakr.
Chapter 6
Ghaṭafān 'from Jāhiliya to Islam'

Unlike Taghlib, the name Ghaṭafān is used very rarely in the literary sources to denote a corporate group. Usually, it is used as the collective name of several independent tribes. This has caused the organization of this chapter to be somewhat dissimilar from the previous one. I have kept the general chronological structure, but I have included sections on Ghaṭafān as a whole - usually when the specific component being mentioned was unknown - as well as on its constituent tribes individually.

As before, the chapter will begin with an introduction to the main divisions of Ghaṭafān and their genealogical links with other tribes. The remainder of the chapter will then be divided into two Sections; Section A, 'Pre-Islamic Ghaṭafān' and Section B, 'Ghaṭafān in Islam'.

Section A will itself be divided into two. Firstly, there will be a discussion of the geographical distribution of Ghaṭafān and Ghaṭafānis in the Jāhiliya. Secondly, a review will be made of their ayyām and other pre-Islamic traditions. A summary and synthesis of findings will end this section.

Section B is arranged chronologically, as it attempts to monitor changes in the tribal system in the Islamic period. It starts with the Prophetic period and ends with a description of Ghaṭafānis in the Umayyad period after the second Muslim civil war. A summary of the history of Ghaṭafān's subsets in the Islamic period will end this section.

Finally, a brief discussion of the impact of Islam and the conquests on Ghaṭafān will end the chapter.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

The Divisions of Ghaṭafān

As there are many different sub-groups of Ghaṭafān, I have included detailed genealogical charts of Ghaṭafān's subsets (see Appendix 2, charts 4.1-4.5).

a) Ghaṭafān as a whole:

In our sources, Ghaṭafān is counted genealogically amongst the Qays 'Aylān branch of Mudar (see Appendix 2, chart 1.3). In pre-Islamic times, their lands lay in the northern parts of central Najd, to the north of all the other Qaysi tribes, as well as in the central Hijāz, mainly to the north of Medina.504

The three main divisions of Ghaṭafān were, Ashja', 'Abs and Dhubyān.509 Dhubyān in turn divided into the B. Murra, B. Tha'labā and B. Fazāra.500 The largest group of these was the B. Fazāra, of whom the members of the B. Badr lineage were most prominent.501 One of the most important lineages of 'Abs was that of the B. Rawāḥa.502

'Abdallāh b. Ghaṭafān was another group from Ghaṭafān but had relatively little importance in the sources. Very few ashrāf from B. 'Abdallāh were recorded by later compilers. They were usually closely associated with the B. 'Abs.

Matrilineal links of Ghaṭafān:

The 'mother' of 'Ghaṭafān' is recorded as Tukma lit. Murr, the 'sister' of Tamīm'. Their 'step-brother' through the 'mother' were the B. Sulaym, while B. A'sur503 were a full 'brother'-tribe.504 Ibn Hishām refers to a branch of the closely related tribe of Ghanīy, the B. 'Amr b. Buhtha, as originally being from

500 I will refer to pre-Islamic Medina thus, rather than as Yathrib, to avoid confusion, as it will be mentioned frequently in both periods.
501 Kahlāla, Mu'jam, s.v. 'Ghaṭafān'.
502 Kahlāla, Mu'jam, s.v. 'Dhubyān'.
503 Kahlāla, Mu'jam, s.v. 'Fazāra'. See also, Caskel, Ghunarat, i, 130/18.
504 See Caskel, Ghunarat, i, 132/16.
505 From whom stem the more famed B. Bāhila and B. Ghanīy.
506 Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamharat, p. 413; Ibn Qutayba, Ma'inif, p. 80.
Ghaṭafān, while the 'mother' of two major branches of the Qaysi tribe of B. Bāhila, the B. Qutayba and B. Wā'il was considered to be a Fazāri. Presumably these links served the purpose of expressing certain relations between the various groups mentioned, mainly between the B. Aṣṣur and Ghaṭafān, particularly between the groups of Fazāra and Bāhila. The link between Sulaym and Ghaṭafān and that between both of them and the B. Tamīm (their 'maternal uncle') must also be an expression of a close relationship at some point. Whether these relations were established in the Umayyad period or earlier is difficult to tell. Indeed, the little evidence from surviving Jāhili and Muslim traditions does not speak of much co-operation between any of these groups. This need not necessarily mean that the surviving Ghaṭafāni traditions are misleading. In fact, it could be that the accounts of these genealogical links are simply more ancient than the remainder of the Ghaṭafāni traditions.

Other associations:

There are traces of much tribal realignment and swapping of genealogies amongst the Ghaṭafāni groups. For instance, we find groups from B. 'Abdallāh b. Ghaṭafān such as B. Mālik b. Ama of Rayth and the B. Hāriba b. Dhubyān, who both joined the B. Tha'ilaba b. Sa'd of Dhubyān; and the B. Māzin b. Rayth who joined the B. Shamkh branch of Fazāra. 'Abd b. Dhubyān were a small but prestigious lineage who joined the B. Murra b. Awf. The B. Duhmān b. Awf were also joined to B. Murra.

In Caskel's tabulated edition of Ibn al-Kalbi's genealogical works, the famous Syrian tribe of Judhām surprisingly only occupies one table on one page. The bulk of this genealogy is made up of a section of Judhām named Ghaṭafān. Ibn Qutayba says that there is opinion that this group were in fact originally from Qays 'Aylān and had later joined Judhām. As mentioned earlier with Taghlib and Kalb, we can also see here traces of some form of association between Ghaṭafāni groups and their neighbours, Judhām, in the pre-Islamic past.

595 Ibn Hishām, Sirr, ii, p. 196.
596 Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ārif, p. 81.
598 Ibn al-Kalbi, Jundhara, pp. 415, 424.
599 Ibn Qutayba, Ma‘ārif, p. 102. Caskel, Jundhara, i, 245.

135
b) Dhubyān:

Thā'laba:

The two main groups in Thā'laba were the B. Rizām and the B. Bajāla. from the latter was the important lineage of Jihāsh.\(^{[54]}\)

One account in Ibn al-Kalbi's *Jamhara* states that the B. Ḥāriba b. Dhubyān left Ḥaṭafān to join Thā'laba b. Sa'īd and remained amongst them.\(^{[60]}\) The importance of this, is to show that the B. Thā'laba were either separate from Ḥaṭafān at one stage, or, more probably, were important enough to be considered separate.

Murra:

B. Murra of Dhubyān allegedly held the *sharaf* and su'dud (i.e. siyāda, leadership) within Ḥaṭafān.\(^{[62]}\) It is interesting that they seem to have cooperated closely (as we will see below) with the B. Badr of Fazāra,\(^{[63]}\) who held equally high honour and prestige in Ḥaṭafān.

The main divisions of Murra were Ghayz, Mālik, Sahm and Sirma.\(^{[64]}\) The B. Ghayz were divided into Nushba and Yarbūc and were the strongest single group within Murra.\(^{[65]}\) The lineage of B. Nushba seem to have been the most powerful in the pre-Islamic period. Al-Ḥārith b. ‘Awf of B. Nushba b. Ghayz, a leader of B. Murra, was instrumental in settling the famous Dāhis war.\(^{[66]}\) Another notable of the Nushba b. Ghayz, Sinān b. Abī Ḥāritha, was a famous Murri leader. He had close relations with the Lakhmid rulers of al-Ḥira,\(^{[67]}\) and the very high status of this man is reflected in him being called "sayyid ḥaṭafān".\(^{[68]}\) His son, Harīm b. Sinān, is counted in the *Iqd* as one of the three most generous men of the Jähili period,\(^{[69]}\) and his brother Khārija b. Sinān was another acknowledged leader of Murra.\(^{[70]}\)

---


\(^{[62]}\) Ibn Qutayba, *Ma‘ārif*, p. 84.

\(^{[63]}\) For instance, Sinān b. Abī Ḥāritha, an important notable of the Nushba line of B. Murra, was connected by marriage to Zabbān b. Sayyār a famous noble head in the B. al-‘Usharā’ of Fazāra. See Ibn Qutayba, *Ma‘ārif*, p. 112.


\(^{[68]}\) Ibn ‘Abd Rabī‘i‘, *Iqd*, i, p. 245.


\(^{[70]}\) Cuskel, *Qanharat*, ii, s.v. "Hāriqa b. Sinān".

136
Chapter 6: Banū Ḥaṭṭāfān from Jähiliya to Islam

The B. Mālik b. Murra were also prominent in the Jähiliya. Ghālib b. ʿAwf of the B. Mālik was an important Ḥaṭṭāfānī leader credited with the decision to end Ḥaṭṭāfān’s pact with B. Asad.611

Fazāra:

Fazāra was divided into the B. ʿAdiy b. Fazāra and the B. Manwala. The latter were composed of B. Shamkh, B. Māzin b. Fazāra and B. Ẓālim b. Fazāra.612

B. Badr, of the Thadlaba branch of B. ʿAdiy, held extremely high status.613 They are named as “bayt qays” by Ibn Qutayba,614 while a report in the Aghānī places them as the next in sharaf amongst the Arabs after B. Ḥāshim of Quraysh.615 In fact, according to Ibn Qutayba, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr was known as “rabb maʿadd”.616 His son, Ḥīṣn b. Ḥudhayfa, was a leader of Asad and Ḥaṭṭāfān617 and referred to in the ʿIqd as “aʿazz al-ʿarab”.618

Within the Shamkh branch of Fazāra, the B. Laʿy619 was a lineage which included very prominent members from pre-Islamic times into early Islam. Traditions extol the pride and strength of the close descendants of Laʿy.620 Many generations later, close to, and during the rise of Islām, the B. Laʿy included notables, such as Mālik b. Ḥimār, Samura b. Jundab and ʿUmayla b. Kalada.621

---

611 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jundhara, p. 422.
612 Caskał, Günahat, ii, s.v. “Manila”.
614 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 83.
615 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xxi, pp. 7461-2.
616 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 83.
617 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 302.
618 Ibn ʿAbd Rabḥah, ʿIṣb, iii, p. 286.
619 Ibn al-Kalbī has Laʿy b. Shamkh as well as Laʿy b. ʿUsaym b. Shamkh, whereas Ḥalālhirī is right into collapsing them into one group, the Laʿy b. ʿUsaym. (Ibn al-Kalbī, Jundhara, pp. 437, 438; Ḥalālhirī, Ṭawāb, MSRobot, fol. 381).
c) "Abs and "Abdallāh b. Ghatafān:

"Abs divided mainly into Rawāḥa and Ghālib. The B. Rawāḥa were the most prominent group of "Abs in their pre-Islamic ayyām, and, in the Muslim period, members from this group played an important role, as will be seen.622

The two most significant parts of Ghālib were Makhzūm and "Awdh.623 The B. Makhzūm of "Abs boasted a large number of heroes and poets both in the Jāhiliya, such as "Antara b. Shaddād, and in Islam, such as Simāk b. al-Ḥazzāz.624 The B. Nāshib b. Hidm, of the "Awdh branch, had many important members, from the Jāhiliya such as "Urwa b. al-Ward or Anas al-Fawāris, to Islamic times, such as Qurra b. Sharik. The descendants of Qurra were ashrāf in al-Shām.625

"Abdallāh b. Ghatafān:

The B. "Abdallāh b. Ghatafān were originally called "Abd al-"Uzza before Islam.626 In pre-Islamic times at least, part of them were incorporated into B. "Abs.627 B. Jawshan of "Abdallāh b. Ghatafān were jirān (dependant confederates) of B. Śūrma of the Murra.628

623 See Caskel, Gmustar, i, p. 132.
626 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jāmīhara, p. 414.
627 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 82.
628 Isḥāqī, Aḥbāni, xiv, p. 4879.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

(A) Pre-Islamic Ghaṭafān

Pre-conquest territories:

Ghaṭafān as a whole:

The term "bilād ghaṭafān" is used often in the sources but like most tribal territories is left undefined. Within bilād ghaṭafān we encounter terms such as "ard fazāra", "bilād bani ḍabs", etc.

To the north of Medina, Ghaṭafān extended to the areas between Taymā' and Wādī al-Qurā.629 There, the main neighbours of Ghaṭafān included B. ‘Udhra,630 Bāliy and Juhayna. Auwl was the name of a settlement of Ghaṭafān between Khaybar and the two mountains of Tayyi’,631 making Tayyi’ their neighbours in the north-east.

Ghaṭafān territory extended in the east towards al-Nibā‘ [see map 1].632 To their east lay the B. Asad633, who shared the great Wādī al-Rumma [see map 1] with them, and to the south-east lived the B. Āmir.634

Southwards in Najd, we know that Ghaṭafān sometimes extended to the vicinity of Fayd635 in central Najd [see map 1]. Various Qaysi tribes would have been their neighbours there, mainly other Āmirī groups but with Sulaym in the west.

Ghaṭafān were established in the vicinity of Medina and had close ties with it. They controlled many palm groves and even some oasis farming settlements, most important of which was that of Batn Nakhl [see map 1]. Apart from being an agricultural centre, it was a source of gypsum for Medina - presumably for building purposes - in the time of ‘Uthmān,636 perhaps it served as a source of gypsum even earlier.

---

629 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "Harrat al-Nār".
630 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "Hajir" (last paragraph).
631 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "Auwl".
632 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "Dalā".
633 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "al-Dāhā‘a", "al-Sa‘iliya".
634 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "Hars", "al-Rumma".
635 Yāṣūḥ, Muḥammad, s.v. "al-Quramatin": the scene of a battle with B. Āmir.
636 Tabari, Taʾriḥ, i, p. 2833.
Dhubyän:

In some places in eastern Ghaṭafānī territory, Dhubyän neighboured B. Kilāb of B. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa', (see also Fazāra, below). Other neighbours of Dhubyän were Tayyi', along one of the northern wādis which joined up with Wādi al-Rumma.

Also in the east and further south of Wādi al-Rumma, B. Saʿd b. Dhubyän (traditionally mainly composed of Thaʿlabā and Mura) owned territory near ʿDariya.

Abraq al-Rabadha was Dhubyānī territory, according to Yaqūt, at the time of the ridda wars. The Islamic town of al-Rabadha [see map 1] lay to the east of Medina, on the route of the ʿAbbāsid Darb Zubaydah, roughly half way between Medina and ʿDariya. Al-Rabadhah was rich in grazing lands and rainfall throughout the year. It lay near several oases, in a region which would become an important mining centre in Islamic times.

Thaʿlabā:

Thaʿlabā controlled a spring near Bātn Nakhl which lay in the vicinity of Medina, on the eastern side. They also owned territory between Nakhl and Khaybar [see map 1]. Various localities near al-Rabadha, to the east of Medina, are also mentioned as controlled by B. Thaʿlabā before the ridda wars. They also controlled a settlement near Medina, in Qalḥā, the location at which ʿAbs and Dhubyān allegedly made peace at the end of the Dāḥis war. Thaʿlabā are also said to have had a settlement near al-Raḥraḥān, which probably lay near the eastern end of Wādi al-Rumma.

---

637 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Baṭil".
638 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "al-Thaḥlabah".
639 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "al-Khurābā".
640 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Abraq Ṣābiʿah", "Ṣābiʿah".
641 Al-Rabādī, S., Al-Rabbālah, Riyadh: King Saud University, 1986, pp. 1, 14, passim.
642 Isfahānī, Aḥmad, xviii, p. 6496; Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Baṭn Nakhl".
643 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Baṭīya".
644 Tabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, pp. 1878-9; Yaqūt, Muʾjam s.v. "Khabira", "Qaṣṣa".
645 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Qalḥā".
646 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "al-Sūrād".
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafān from Jāhiliyya to Islam

Murra:

The Banū Murra are often associated with Medina and must have lived mainly in its vicinity. The stories of the famous Murra șu‘lāmīt and warrior-poet ʻUrwa b. al-Ward are mainly set in places around Medina.647

Further to the north, Murris lived between Fadak and Khaybar and, as a result of living in this relatively fertile area, were popularly famous for consuming great quantities of dates.648 The vicinity of Fadak is mentioned as Ghatafānī territory in the ʻIqd’s description of the events leading up to the main battle of al-Fījār.649 Other springs are mentioned as belonging to B. Murra and B. Fazāra between Fadak and Khaybar.650

In the north, B. Sirma held a spring in the highlands overlooking the route between Taymāṭ [see map 1] and Fayd.651 Also to the north of Medina, Harrat Laylā was a fertile settlement (despite the name) between Wādi al-Qurā and Medina which belonged to the B. Murra.652 B. ʻUdhra were the main neighbours of B. Murra in Wādi al-Qurā [see map 1].653

East of Medina, the famous settlement of Nakhl is named as a settlement of the B. Murra.654 Also, eastwards, Murris were established in the western end of Wādi al-Rumma, near al-Naqra,655 and they owned territory west of al-Ḥājir [see map 1].656 Al-Raqm, was a spring of B. Murra’s where a battle between ʻAmir and Ghatafān took place.657 This must have lain either in Wādi al-Rumma or slightly further south in the vicinity of Dariya [see map 1].658

---

647 *i.e.* an exiled tribesman, usually living by raiding; see El², s.v. "Su‘luk".
648 See Ifahmī, Aghānmī, iii, pp. 919, ff.; Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Ruwāḥ al-ʻAjahl".
651 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Yadīl".
652 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Yumm".
653 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Harrat Laylā".
654 See Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Udaym", "Ukhayy", "Burqat Sādir". From the verses attributed to al-Nāḥiyya al-Dhabyānī in Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Qurā", it seems that B. Ḥum of B. ʻUdhra were the dominant group in Wādi al-Qurā.
655 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Nakhl".
656 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "al-Fīrās".
657 Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Qamwānīn".
659 Ibn Hishām, Sira, i, p. 103. But see Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Nakhl", where one account links Nakhl to B. Ṭhululā and not B. Murra.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Fazāra:

Fazāri territory stretched as far north-east as the lands of Tayyi', and north as far as Kalbi territory. They also had Asad as their neighbours in the east, as well as the B. Ḍabāb of B. Āmir.

Fazāri settlements were found close to Medina, to its east. Arwā was a spring of Fazāra near Wādi al-Aqiq. Another Fazāri settlement, al-Ḥisā, lay between al-Rabadha and Nakhl, while B. Badr and B. Māzin of Fazāra claimed land in the vicinity of Batn Nakhl.

Fazāris were to be found in the Wādi al-Rumma, mainly in the western part. Al-Abānān, two hills to the north-east of Medina said to be on either side of the Wādi al-Rumma, were mainly inhabited by Fazāra but also by 'Abs, according to one account. Another settlement in this area, al-Sharabba, is associated with Fazāra. This place, according to Yāqūt, lay a little north and east of Medina in the vicinity of Wādi al-Rumma. Al-Luqāṭa was in Fazāri territory, lying near al-Ḥājir, slightly to the west of Wādi al-Rumma. It was one of the locations of the events of the Dāhis war. Many other locations linked to Fazāra lay in this area.

Nomadic Fazāris ventured far south of Wādi al-Rumma. Fazāris are specifically mentioned as neighbouring the B. al-Adbat and B. Abī Bakr of the B. Kilāb group of Āmir in the rich wādi of Batn al-Liwā, to the west of Ḥimā Dariya. They also neighboured the B. Muḥāribib somewhere between al-Rabadha and Dariya.

---

660 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Abāhiyy", "(Uwārib)", "al-Ghūṭa".
661 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Uhayyit", "Najd".
662 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Kharza".
663 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Dārāst Juljul".
664 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Arwā".
665 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Ḥisā".
666 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Tahunān".
667 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Alau", "Alānūn"; Caskel, Guharat, ii, s.v. "Wālība b. al-Ḥārīq".
668 At this place, Khārijī b. Ḫisṣu, a leader of Fazāra at the time of the Prophet, intercepted and sent back the Prophet's envoy; see Tabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 1470.
669 Yāqūt, Mu'jam s.v. "al-Sharabba".
670 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Luqāṭa".
671 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Batn al-Liwā", "Uraykn".
672 This must be the Quṣṭ group of that name, not the more famous one associated with the B. Tumīn.
673 Yāqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Ḫurīd".
There was Fazārī presence also to the north of Medina. We are told that they shared springs with the B. Murra between Fadak and Khaybar,\(^{674}\) while two other settlements near Khaybar are described as Fazārī.\(^{675}\)

\(^{c}\)Abs and \(^{c}\)Abdallāh b. Ghaṭafān:

\(^{c}\)Abs:

\(^{c}\)Absī territory included parts of Wādī al-Rumma, in and around which they were mainly settled.\(^{676}\) Their territory extended all the way to the lower (eastern) parts of Wādī al-Rumma, where the wādī began to open up and meet the sands of al-Dahnā.\(^{677}\) One account mentions them holding territory as far east as beyond al-Nibāj.\(^{678}\) Indeed, one of their ayyām, al-Jurf, was fought against B. Yarbū\(^{c}\) of Tamīm, near al-Yamāma.\(^{679}\) We also know that, \(^{c}\)Abs were the neighbours of B. Dābāb and B. Abū Bakr of the B. Kilāb of \(^{c}\)Āmir,\(^{680}\) who occupied eastern parts of Wādī al-Rumma as well as some of the region south of it.

Asad, with whom \(^{c}\)Abs are very often associated geographically,\(^{681}\) were amongst their neighbours mainly in al-Rumma but also elsewhere further north. We find, for instance, a jabal (or a hīṣn) belonging to B. \(^{c}\)Abs, which one account places on the borders of Asadi territory. This would make it to the south of Fayd and west of al-Nibāj.\(^{682}\)

West of Wādī al-Rumma, we know that \(^{c}\)Abs controlled two springs between al-Ḥājir and al-Naṣra.\(^{683}\) We are also told of links between \(^{c}\)Absis and Medina (see below), but this does not necessitate settlement in the vicinity.

Finally, we are told that \(^{c}\)Abs shared springs with Ashja\(^{c}\),\(^{684}\) although the precise location is unknown.

---

\(^{674}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Yāḏīr".

\(^{675}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Yaḥūnasīyīth".

\(^{676}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Ayn", "al-Khāymārīn", "al-Ǧanāʿīsīra", "Qaḥān" etc.

\(^{677}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Qāsīmīn".

\(^{678}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Ushāyra".

\(^{679}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Jurfīl".

\(^{680}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Jubah".

\(^{681}\) For instance, Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Thāḏiq", "Thawāyriyī", "al-Jawwārān".

\(^{682}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Uṭāhāl". See also the entries for "Qaww" and "Nājīyūn", mentioned as lying on either side of it on the road from al-Ṭaisa, which confirm its location as stated.

\(^{683}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Qawwārīn", "Māwārīn".

\(^{684}\) Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Khirbatayn".
Abdallâh b. Ghatafân:

Some settlements of B. Abdallâh were found to the west of Wâdî al-Rumma. For example, one of their wâdis was located near al-Rabadha. Another was slightly west of al-Ḥajîr.

Many other sites associated with B. Abdallâh are more difficult to locate, except that they were in the vicinity of Wâdî al-Rumma. Dhû al-ʿUshyra was a wâdî belonging to B. Abdallâh, which flowed into Wâdî al-Rumma and had many palms and springs. Mubhîl al-Ajrad, close to Dhû al-ʿUshyra, was also a wâdî of the B. Abdallâh. Bir B. Burayma, near Maʿdîn al-Ḥir, which was near Mubhîl, above, was a spring belonging to Abdallâh b. Ghatafân, as were other localities around Mubhîl.

Ashjâ’:

Generally, Ashjâ’i territory was close to Medina. We know that Ashjâ’ and Juhayna were neighbours in the area between Khaybar and Medina, and one incident in the sîra finds an Ashjâ’i as far north as Ayla. Ashjâ’i territory was also found near al-Rabadha, to the east of Medina.

On the other hand we have accounts which claim that they also inhabited areas near al-Rahrahân. This must have lain far in the eastern parts of Ghatafânî territory, as it was the site of a battle between groups from Tamîm and ʿĀmir. What is more we know that some of their territory was shared with Abs, who generally inhabited the eastern parts of Ghatafânî territory.

---

685 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Huṣn” in conjunction with “al-ʿAqra” and “Mawsân”.
686 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “al-Nashmâsh”.
687 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “al-ʿUshyra”.
688 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Mubhîl”.
689 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Bir Banû Burayma”, “Maʿdîn al-Ḥir”.
690 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “al-Watîdî”.
691 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Ashmâdlûn” for more evidence that these two tribal groups were neighbours, see Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Iṣâm”. Ashjâ’ and Juhayna are mentioned together as being two allies of the Medinan al-Khazraj, who, at the latter’s request, joined them in at least one battle in their feud with al-Aws [Ibn al-ʿArabî, Kāmil, i, p. 680].
693 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Khubīrâ”.
694 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “al-Thâmilâwâ”.
695 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “al-Râahrain”. The locating of Rahrahân near Ḥukây is impossible. While ʿĀmirîs could have been found this far south, Tamîmis would never have.
696 Yaqût, Muʾjam, s.v. “Khubayt”.

144
A summary of Ghaṭafānī distribution:

We now have a general idea of the extent of Ghaṭafān’s territory and within it, of the distribution of its constituent tribes. ʿAbs dominated the eastern parts of Wādi al-Rumma and intermingled with Asadi and ʿAmirī groups in that area, and with them were found the B. ʿAbdallāh b. Ghaṭafān. Fazāra were widespread and strong in the western parts of Wādi al-Rumma, as well as in areas south and west of it towards Medina. The territory of Thaʿlabā b. Saʿīd lay mainly to the east and north-east of Medina, and the powerful B. Murra were also to be found to the east of Medina, especially in Bāṭn Nakhl, although that settlement lay in Thaʿlabī territory. However, the B. Murra were especially strong to the north of Medina near Wādi al-Qurā, Khaybar and Taymā?i. Ashja?i territory is more difficult to locate, but probably lay mainly in the vicinity of Medina, as we will see from their frequent association with that town in the Prophetic period.

Local alliances:

Ghaṭafān:

Ghaṭafān, Asad and Tayyi?:

There are a great number of references which mention Ghaṭafān and their neighbours, Asad, co-operating with each other. Ṭayyi? is associated with Ghaṭafān to a lesser extent, but only when Asad is also involved, with whom they were principally associated.

For instance, according to the accounts connected to the period of Kindi domination in central Arabia, al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr appointed his sons to rule over the Arab tribes. His son Ḥujr - the father of the famous poet Ḳimr b. Quraysh - was appointed over both Ghaṭafān and Asad together.697 In another account, we are told that Ghaṭafān and Asad were jointly raided by the B. ʿAmir and B. Jusham b. Muṣawwiya of Hawāzin.698 Another tells us that the famous Ghaṭafānī poet, al-Nābiṣa al-Dhubyānī pleaded for the release of Asadi prisoners held by the Ghassānid king al-Ḥārith al-ʿAraj, after the battle of Yawm Ḥalima.699 Other examples are frequent in the sources.

---

697 Ḳifahānī, Aghānī, ix, p. 3201.
698 Ḳifahānī, Aghānī, x, p. 3479.
699 Ḳifahānī, Aghānī, x, p. 3479.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Ghaṭafān, Asad and Tayyi' are said to have formed an alliance and were collectively called *al-aḥālif*.\(^700\) There was already an alliance between Asad and Tayyi' allegedly forged sometime after the killing of Ḥudhayfa b. Badr in the war of Dāḥis. Thus, the name *al-aḥālif* was given to them alone originally. But then Dhubyān\(^701\), at the instigation of Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa of B. Badr of Fazāra, joined this alliance, and so Asad fought with them at Yawm Jabala.\(^702\)

The alliance with Tayyi' seems not to have lasted very long, for Ṭabari states that Asad and Ghaṭafān had broken their alliance with Tayyi' and invaded their territory before Islam.\(^703\)

These accounts describe military co-operation between Ghaṭafānis, especially the B. Fazāra, and their neighbours the B. Asad who lived amongst them in Wāḍi al-Rumma. Nevertheless, raiding still occurred between Asadi and Ghaṭafānī groups, just as it did between Ghaṭafānī groups.\(^704\)

Ghaṭafān and Medina:

Ghaṭafān was the largest tribal group in the vicinity of Medina. The close relationship with Medina can be seen in many examples. One example tells us that one of the feuds between the Aws and the Khazraj began as a result of the murder of the Ghaṭafānī ally of one of the Khazrajī notables.\(^705\) In the Prophetic period, Jewish notables from the tribes of al-Nadir and B. Wāḍī were supposed to have undertaken the co-ordination of the joint Quraysh-Ghaṭafān attack against the Muslims in Medina.\(^706\)

We also find the famous poet of al-Aws, Qays b. al-Khaṭīm, asking first for aid from Ḥudhayfa b. Badr against his Khazrajī enemies while they were in Ḍu‘a‘a.\(^707\) The fact that Ḥudhayfa refused and that Qays then sought help from his Ḍu‘ayrī friend, Khidāsh b. Zuhayr, does not diminish the significance of the original request.

\(^700\) Also referred to as *ḥuṣayfīyīn*, see Isfahānī, *Aḥānī*, ix, p. 3479.

\(^701\) The text says Ghaṭafān, not Dhubyān. But, here and elsewhere, Ghaṭafān is used when Dhubyān (and probably their allies) are meant.

\(^702\) See Isfahānī, *Aḥānī*, xi, p. 3018, where Asad and Dhubyān are referred to as *ḥaṣfīyīn*, at *Yawm Jabala*.

\(^703\) Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1881.

\(^704\) For example see Isfahānī, *Aḥānī*, xi, p. 3771.


\(^707\) Isfahānī, *Aḥānī*, iii, p. 848.
Other relevant accounts state that after his father was killed by the B. Āmir, the Ābsi chief, Qays b. Zuhayr, went to Medina to purchase arms for the impending fight against the Āmiris.\textsuperscript{708}

The importance of the relationship between Medina and Ghatafan is even more apparent in the Prophetic period, for which the sources provide more information. In particular we are told of allies of Medinan individuals and groups. Amongst these we find many Ghatafanis. For instance, in one anecdote, a Ābsi ālīf of B. Dinār of the Khazraj fought at Badr with the Prophet.\textsuperscript{709} Another states that Uqba (b. Wahb) b. Kalada, from Ābdallāh b. Ghatafān, was a ālīf of B. Sālim b. Ghanm of al-Khazraj. He lived in Medina, became a Muslim and was regarded as an Ansāri companion. He was at the Pledge of al-Āqaba, Badr, Uhud and the capture of Mecca.\textsuperscript{710} One tribesman from the group of B. Ābdallāh, of the lineage of Jusham b. Āwff, was a ālīf of a group of the Khazraj and thus was present at the Pledge of al-Āqaba.\textsuperscript{711}

Ashja\textsuperscript{c} were allied to the Khazraj, and were supported by them at Yawm Bu'āth.\textsuperscript{712} Also, we are told that two brothers from Duḥmān of B. Ashja\textsuperscript{c} were ālīfs of B. Ībāyād b. Ādiyy of B. Sālima of al-Khazraj. They became companions, fought at Badr and were counted as Ansār.\textsuperscript{713}

Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān, was one of the more famous companions of the Prophet. He was a Ābsi who was settled in Medina, allied to the B. Ābd al-Ashhal of al-Aws.\textsuperscript{714} In Islamic times, Hudhayfa was counted amongst (عنداء في) the Ābd al-Ashhal clan, not amongst the B. Ābs.\textsuperscript{715}

Medina served as an important urban centre for all branches of the Ghatafan and it is important to note that all the alliances with Medinans mentioned above were conducted with Ansārī tribesmen and not Muhājjirūn.

\textsuperscript{708} Isfahāni, Aḵbārān, xv, p. 5534-2. See also Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes", pp. 37-8.
\textsuperscript{709} Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, i, pp. 706, 714.
\textsuperscript{710} Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, i, pp. 665, 693; see also, Caskel, Ginbarat s.v. "Uqba b. Kalada".
\textsuperscript{711} Ibn al-Kullāb, Jamhūrān, p. 446.
\textsuperscript{712} Kutbānī, Ma'jam, s.v. "Ashja".
\textsuperscript{713} Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, i, p. 697. These are named Ābdallāh and Khārija b. Ḫummayyīr. However, another Ashjaī named Mūkhsāshbīn or Makhshūbī b. Ḫummayyīr, a ālīf of B. Sālima of al-Khazraj is branded as a muḥājīf; Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, ii, p. 524.
\textsuperscript{714} Ibn Hishām, Sirāt, i, p. 506.
\textsuperscript{715} Ibn al-Kullāb, Jamhūrān, p. 447.
Dhubyān:

Alliances of B. Tha`laba of Dhubyān:

According to some accounts, the B. Tha`laba of Dhubyān and B. Tha`laba of the cAdiy group of Fazāra, together with a B. Tha`laba of Dabba are together referred to as the Tha`älīb. In one particular yāwum, all three groups are mentioned as having camped with the B. Mālik b. Ḥanṣala of Tamīm. The accounts try to generate a picture of some sort of alliance between these groups.

However, the whole notion of the Tha`ālib confederation, does not fit with so many other details in the tradition regarding geographical distribution and genealogical affiliation. Furthermore, as the Tha`älīb only ever appear as a defeated group in a minor yāwum, we may disregard what must be an obvious exaggeration of the defeated enemy, and refute such an association.

On the other hand, B. Tha`laba b. Sa`d are associated with the Qaysi tribe of B. Muḥārib b. Khaṣāfa. We know that the B. Muhe rib lived to the east of Medina, which was where the B. Tha`laba was based.

Alliances of Murra:

The sources record many links of the B. Murra with their neighbours. We know, for example, that B. Murra had matrilineal links with B. Muzayna of Muḍar. Although very little is known about their relationship with Muzayna, these links are to be expected as B. Muzayna inhabited the same area as B. Murra, in the vicinity of Medina and Wādí al-Qurā.

Furthermore, the 'mother' of the group of Sirma, Khusayla and Sahm b. Murra of Dhubyān was from the Qudā`i tribe of Bāliyy. The genealogy of B. Murra as described by Ibn al-Kalbi tells also of links between the B. Yarbū' b. Ghayz and the Qudā`i tribe of Bāliyy.

The account of a feud between B. Sirma and B. Sahui of Murra tells us that the B. Sirma were allied to the Qudā`i group of B. Salāmān of Sa`d Hudhaym, a group associated with the famous B. cUdhra and that they had a Jewish jār

---

716 As sometimes also the B. Tha`laba b. Yarbū'.
717 Nisqūtā, p. 75. See also Ibn `Abd Rabbih, 'Hid, vi, p. 55.
718 Isfahānī, Aqāhā, iii, p. 1114-9.
719 Isfahānī, Aqāhā, x, p. 3755.
720 See Kalbī, Mu`jam, s.v. "Muzayna".
721 Isfahānī, Aqāhā, xiv, p. 4878.
722 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jannah, p. 416; see the B. Khuṣayla and the B. Yarbū' b. Ghayz.
(protected neighbour) from Taymā’. On their part, B. Sahm were allied to B. Ḥumays of Juhayna and had a Jewish jār from Wādī al-Qurā.\(^\text{724}\)

Finally, at least in the Marwānid period, B. Sahm of B. Murra were allied to the Juhani group of B. Ḥumays.\(^\text{724}\)

\(^\text{6}\)Abs:

\(^\text{6}\)Abs had various connections with other tribal groups. Firstly, several accounts tell us that the B. ʿAbdallah b. Ḥatafān were allies of B. ʿAbs.\(^\text{725}\) Apart from the B. ʿAbdallah, who were a Ḥatafāni group, the sources talk of connections with B. Asad, B. ʿĀmir and even the Mundhirids of al-Ḥira.

Links between the B. Jadhīma and Asad are alluded to in the form of a story whereby the real father of Jadhīma is supposed to have been from Asad. It is only because his mother married a ʿAbsi when she was already pregnant with him that he became ʿAbsi.\(^\text{726}\)

There are several links in the sources between ʿAbs and the B. ʿĀmir b. ʿΑσαμa. For instance, at the famous Yawm Jabala, the B. ʿAbs were allied with the B. ʿĀmir;\(^\text{727}\) the B. Ḥudhayfa or B. Khuzayma (these are probably scribal errors for B. Jadhīma) of ʿAbs are associated in the Aḥānī with part of the ʿĀmir clan of Kaʿb b. Rabīʿa;\(^\text{728}\) and the killing of the famous ʿAbsi warrior poet, ʿAntara b. Shaddād, was allegedly avenged by ʿĀmir b. al-Ṭufayl of the Jaʿfar b. Kilāb branch of the B. ʿĀmir.\(^\text{729}\)

There are several links between ʿAbs and the Mundhirid rulers of al-Ḥira. One rather dubious link connects the lineage of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma of the Rawāḥa branch by marriage to the Lakhmid mulūk, supposedly through al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir.\(^\text{730}\) Other accounts tell us that al-Rabiʿ b. Ziyād of B. Ghālib of ʿAbs was for a time a favourite at the court of al-Nuʿmān and could even manage to influence the mulūk against his enemies from the B. Jaʿfar b.

\(^\text{721}\) Ḥafṣah, Aḥānī, xiv, pp. 487-89; Caskel, Ḫumara, ii, s.v. “Ṣuḥayl b. Saʿd Ḫudhayfa”.

\(^\text{724}\) Ḥafṣah, Aḥānī, ii, p. 734.

\(^\text{725}\) Nqūṭ, i. 99.

\(^\text{726}\) Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamāhara, p. 441. In fact, the form of this story is a common topic found in genealogical literature, and used to resolve conflicting versions of a genealogy. I discuss this such topic in the following chapter. See, Chapter 7 below, pp. 191-2.

\(^\text{727}\) Ibn Hibāyn, Sira, i, p. 290.

\(^\text{728}\) Ḥafṣah, Aḥānī, v. p. 1635 and n. 2.

\(^\text{729}\) Balāḏurī, Ansāb, MsRBa, fol. 366.

\(^\text{730}\) Ḥafṣah, Aḥānī, xi, p. 3861.
Kilāb of B. Āmir.\textsuperscript{731} The B. Rawāḥa, according to the details of Yawn Dhū Qār, granted asylum to al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir after he was deposed by the Sassanians.\textsuperscript{732} They also offered their support to him against the Sassanians, who had allegedly killed Marwān b. Zinbā', an important member of the Jadīma lineage.\textsuperscript{733}

As mentioned earlier, ʿAbs inhabited the Wādī al-Rumma down to where it met with the northern sands of al-Dahnā'. Across al-Dahnā' lay al-Bahrayn. Al-Bahrayn was in the 6th century subject to the rule of al-Ḥira. Thus, together with the B. Āmir, ʿAbs formed the most important tribal groups on the western side of al-Dahnā'. It is natural therefore that there would have been links between al-Ḥira and the ʿAbsi and Āmirī notables. While the historicity of the events presented in the above accounts may be questioned, they do serve to record this relationship.

We are also told that the mother of the great ʿAbsi leader and hero of the Dāhis war, Qays b. Zuhayr was from the B. Sulaym,\textsuperscript{734} suggesting links with that tribe as well. Yet, in pre-Islamic times, the B. Sulaym inhabited the southern Hijāz, far away from ʿAbsi territory. Thus, it could be that such an association was created at a different time, probably after the conquests, and perhaps in Kūfa where members of both tribes were to be found.

Summary of local alliances:

The consistency of the pre-Islamic accounts in terms of tribal distribution and interaction, discussed earlier in Chapter 4, is further confirmed here, with the tribal groups of Ghatafān. ʿAbs and Fazāra were allied with Asad with whom they shared Wādī al-Rumma. To the east of Medina, Thaʾlabā b. Saʿd were allied with their neighbours, the B. Muḥārib. To the north of Medina, B. Murra's clans held many alliances with the many groups inhabiting northern Hijāz, while ʿAbs had important links with their neighbours, B. Āmir and the Lakhmīd state in al-Bahrayn. Apart from supposed links with Sulaym mentioned above, all of these associations make perfect sense when compared to the distribution of the tribes involved.

\textsuperscript{731} Isfahānī, Aghānī, xvi, pp. 5721-2; xviii, pp. 6474-5.
\textsuperscript{732} Ibn ʿAbī Rabbāh, Ḥayl, vi, p. 110, Yaqqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. "Dhū Qār".
\textsuperscript{733} Isfahānī, Aghānī, ii, p. 513; Tahtān, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 1028.
\textsuperscript{734} Naqd, p. 98.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Ghatafān in the pre-Islamic Source Material:

Religion:

Like other tribes, Ghatafān are associated with pre-Islamic cults in works such as Ibn al-Kalbi's Kitāb al-aṣnām. We are told that al-Uqaysir was an idol which was found and worshipped in north-western Arabia by Qudā'a, Lakhm, Judhām, āAMILA and Ghatafān.735 Another idol, al-Ḥalāl, is said to have been an idol of the B. Fazāra.736

Unlike other tribes, Ghatafān is supposed to have produced the only other and first prophet of the B. Ismā'il;737 they are supposed to have built their own pilgrimage place,738, and they were responsible for introducing the cult of Aphrodite (al-ʿUzza) into Arabia.739 The sources tell us that B. Murra, in particular, and the settlement of Baḥn Nakhl, played a significant religious role in pre-Islamic Arabia. However, discussing these aspects of Ghatafān's history is not fruitful without corroboration from external evidence, as such accounts record specific events unconnected with discernable general trends.

The pre-Islamic ayyām and heroes of Ghatafān:

Zuhayr b. Jadhīma al-ʿAbsī and Qays:

According to one ayyām account, Zuhayr b. Jadhīma of B. Rawāha of ʿAbs used to collect tithes from Hawāzin (a major part of Qays) at a time when they were weak and B. ʿĀmir - who were counted amongst Hawāzin - were still few in number and were only "goat herders". But when the B. ʿĀmir increased in number, and as a result of Zuhayr's cruel treatment of Hawāzin, they decided to

735 Ibn al-Kalbi, Asāṣm, pp. 380; Yaḥūt, Muṣṣīmt, s.v. "al-Uqaysir".
736 Yaḥūt, Muṣṣīmt, s.v. "Ḥalāl".
737 al-Ḥašīqī, Anb b. Bayr, al-Ḥayyām, ed. ‘A. Ḥārim, 6 vols., Cairo: Muṣṭaṣfā al-Bābī al-Ḥalābi, 1938-45, iv, p. 476, cited in Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamhūra, p. 443, n. 2. The earlier Arab prophet, Sallāḥ, who is mentioned in the Qurān, was not considered of B. Ismā’īl as his tribe of Thumād belonged to the separate group of 'extinct Arabs' or al-ʿarab al-ḥabība'id.
739 Yaḥūt, Muṣṣīmt, s.v. "Bassā", "Bass".
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

kill Zuhayr. The B. Kilāb branch of āmīr ambushed and killed him, ending his rule over them and the rest of Hawāzin.740

As a result, the B. Kilāb of āmīr became prominent within Qays for a long time. Indeed, we later find Khālid b. Ja‘far, the leader of B. Kilāb, as a regular and esteemed visitor to the court of the Mundhirid rulers in al-Ḥira. However, it is there, while under the protection of the Mundhirids, that he was murdered by al-Ḥārith b. Zālim of B. Murra, partly in revenge for Zuhayr.741 But aside from ābs, and to their anger, Ghaṭafān refused to protect him out of fear of the Mundhirids. So al-Ḥārith was forced to become a refugee.742 The affair was followed by a raid by B. āmīr against Dārim of Tamīm - the famous battle of al-Rahrahān - because they had given al-Ḥārith protection.743

The accounts of Zuhayr b. Jadhima and Khālid b. Ja‘far are recounted in a narrative style containing numerous story-telling elements. Moreover, some of its components should fall with the ayyām described as those of single tribes, while others fit with those of tribal confederations. As mentioned earlier, Caskel has described how unrelated ayyām accounts were often fused together to make collective wholes. The events around the death of Zuhayr b. Jadhima and the rise to prominence of the B. Ja‘far b. Kilāb are a good example of this. Yet, while their historicity should be treated with much scepticism, a few salient points of the account are significant.

Firstly, the account serves the purpose of explaining the rise to prominence of the B. Ja‘far b. Kilāb, who were definitely one of the most influential groups of B. āmīr at the rise of Islam.

Secondly, throughout the ayyām collections and in accounts of the Muslim period, the B. āmīr occupy an important position, and to them are attributed military prowess and a strong presence in Najd and later in the Muslim armies. By comparison, āb figure rarely, apart from in the legendary Dāhis war against their brother tribe, the Dhubyān. The fact that the account of Zuhayr b. Jadhima tells us that things were otherwise in the past shows that this account does not reflect later reality and, hence, may well have historical origins.

740 Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, pp. 3868-79; See also Naqṣ ibl, pp. 384-5. In the story of Yawm Mun‘īj, the events of which precede the killing of Z. b. Jadhima, a man from Ghawāy murdered Z.'s son, Shu‘. The details of this story describe how the murderer, although forced to leave his tribe, escapes and boasts of his unavenged killing of "Shu‘ā al-Mulāk" [Ibn ‘Abd Rabbīl, Ḥaṣa, vi, pp. 4-6] āmīr pressure on Ghaṭafān is said to have started earlier by Khālid b. Ja‘far, the leader of the B. Kilāb; see Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, pp. 3860-1.

741 This took place at the Lakhmid court in al-Ḥira in the time of al-Nuṣrām b. al-Mundhir [Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, pp. 3860-4; Ibn ‘Abd Rabbīl, Ḥaṣa, i, pp. 279-86].

742 Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, p. 3864-5.

743 Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, p. 3864-7; Naqṣ ibl, pp. 226, 1060.
Moreover, the idea that ʿAbs collected tithes from different tribes and that they were not the only ones to do so,\(^{744}\) should raise questions regarding the function and organization of these tribal 'protection rackets' and the effects that they must have had on the Arabian tribes of the 6th c. CE.

**Harb Dāhis wa-al-Ghabrā**:

This was a very famous saga of a war between ʿAbs and Dhubyān, supposedly lasting for 40 years.\(^{745}\) At the time of its irruption, the leader of ʿAbs was Qays b. Zuhayr of B. Rawāha, the son of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma mentioned above. The leader of Dhubyān was the Fazāri Ḥudhayfa b. Badr of the B. Thaʿlaba of the ʿAdiy branch, known as rabb maʿadd.\(^{746}\) Apparently, due to a quarrel over the result of a horse race between some horses of the two leaders, war broke out.\(^{747}\) Initial raids led to a full scale blood feud between the two groups.\(^{748}\)

Although Caskel believes that only Fazāra were really involved out of the whole Dhubyān group,\(^{749}\) an initial battle seems to have involved Fazāris, Murris and Thaʿlabis pitted together against B. ʿAbs. Apparently this was a ʿAbsi victory, for we are told that men fell only from B. Bajāla of Thaʿlaba, as well as from B. Yarbū ʿAb. Ghayz of Murra and from B. Badr.\(^{750}\)

Apart from this initial battle it seems that the B. Badr had not enjoyed the full support of the Dhubyān tribesmen. However, things were to change following the killing of Ḥudhayfa at Yawm al-Hubāʿa,\(^{751}\) for we are told that, as a result, all parts of Dhubyān gathered together against the B. ʿAbs. Indeed, this caused the 'exodus' of ʿAbs from their territory.\(^{752}\)

The sources give elaborated versions of the route taken by the migrating ʿAbsis which describe them as travelling up and down most of northern and

---

\(^{744}\) Many other cases of tithe collecting by certain lineages are recorded in the *ayyām*. In this particular case, we are told that Zuhayr had usurped his privilege of tithe collection from a man of the B. Usayyid of ʿAmr b. Tumam [Isfahānī, Aghānī, xi, p. 3969].

\(^{745}\) *Nṣāʾid*, p. 108.

\(^{746}\) Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 3006.

\(^{747}\) Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, pp. 566-7; *Nṣāʾid*, pp. 85-8; Isfahānī, Aghānī, xviii, pp. 6482-6. Dāhis and al-Ghabrā were the names of two of the horses involved.

\(^{748}\) *Nṣāʾid*, pp. 88-94; Isfahānī, Aghānī, xviii, pp. 6486-97.


\(^{750}\) *Nṣāʾid*, p. 93; Isfahānī, Aghānī, xvi, p. 6407.

\(^{751}\) See also, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbīh, *Iṣl*, vii, p. 92, where it is implied that Qays b. Zuhayr killed innocents at al-Hubāʿa as well.

\(^{752}\) See *Nṣāʾid*, p. 420.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

central Najd. All of this is very implausible. The significant part of the story is that ĔAbs ended in the territory of B. ĔĀmir, their south-eastern neighbours.

We know from other conflicts that warring groups inhabiting the same territory tend to regroup at opposite ends of the shared territory. In this case, it seems more plausible to accept the account of ĔAbsi migration as an elaboration of a possible migration of ĔAbsis from regions of Wādi al-Rumma shared by the more powerful Dhubyān. Such a movement away from Dhubyān in the west would have logically necessitated co-operation and perhaps a request of protection from their neighbours in the east of Wādi al-Rumma, the B. ĔĀmir.

The ĔĀmiri group with whom the ĔAbsis allegedly settled, the B. Shakal of Ka'b b. Rabī'a, were chosen as alliance partners allegedly because one of their maternal ancestors was from the B. ĔAbs. However, it is very possible that this link was invented after the alliance.

Finally, a reconciliation was sought between ĔAbs and Dhubyān. The reconciliation process itself is interesting, as it mentions various notables from all parts of Ghaṭafān, giving us a more detailed picture of the influential lineages of the time.

This conflict between ĔAbs and Fazāra was well remembered and used by later poets, such as al-Ḥuṭay'y'a (living in the late Jāhili and early Islamic periods), when rivalry (in this case between al-Ḥuṭay'y'a and B. Badr) required it. That Yawm Dāḥis is highly elaborated should make us doubt the historicity of the details of the conflict. However, this should not subtract from the usefulness of the given names of the tribesmen involved, a marker of the importance of various lineages of the period.

---

753 See Nagū'id, pp. 1071-2; Ibn al-Kalbi, Jundara, p. 456; and Bahādūrī, Ansāb, MSRobot, fol. 386. An alternative version has B. ĔAbs heading directly to al-Yunayma to the B. Haniya, with whom they had matrilineal links. The 'mother' of B. Rawāja was supposed to have been the granddaughter of Haniya himself [Nagū'id, p. 420]. After they left the B. Haniya they headed towards Hajar (al-Bahrayn), which was inhabited by B. Sa'd and ruled by al-Jawn of Kinda. They stayed there until they learned of a planned raid against them by B. Sa'd and al-Jawn's men, when they fled. The Hajaris followed them but were held off by ĔAbs [Nagū'id, pp. 429-1].

754 As we have seen already with the Kalbi migration from the Emirate regions following attacks on them by Qays and Taghlib during the second civil war. See above Chapter 5, p. 122.

755 Nagū'id, pp. 98-9. See also Nagū'id, pp. 6546, where previous ĔAbs hostility with B. Ĕāmir’s leading house, the B. Kilh, is buried but not without objections.

756 Yaqūt, Muṣjam, s.v. “Qarābin”.

757 Yawm Dāḥis has been classified as part of the ‘ayyām of single tribes’, although of a class more developed as stories than other ayām of that group. See above Chapter 3, pp. 58-9.
Yawm Shīb Jabala:

After B. "Abs had migrated into the territory of B. ā'Amir during the Dāhis war, Dhubyān gathered many allies and attacked them and the B. ā'Amir at the famous battle of Yawm Jabala. Their allies came from Asad, Ṭayyi and Tamīm (mainly from the largest B. Hanzala branch). Also mentioned as being on the side of Dhubyān were "al-jawnān", supposedly two remnants of the Kindī ruling house, who had matrilineal links with B. Badr of Fāżāra, and tribesmen of al-Ribāb.

B. ā'Amir and "Abs were joined by allies of B. ā'Amir. From Qays Āylān came tribesmen from Ghaniy, Bāḥila, Sa'd b. Bakr of Hawāzin and a small group from Sulaym. Also, we are told that a large proportion of ā'Amir's Qahtānī neighbours, the B. Bajila, fought with B. ā'Amir. The B. "Abs and B. ā'Amir won a decisive victory at this battle.

This battle falls under the rubric of 'aYYām of tribal confederations' and is thus important for examinations of tribal politics in the late 6th c. CE. The fact that the behaviour of the tribal groups involved does not correspond at all with post-conquest alliances further enhances the view that the aYYām accounts reflect an older tribal reality, as mentioned earlier. It is worth taking a closer look at these groupings.

Regarding the appearance in the account of B. "Abs on the side of ā'Amir, this is clearly directly a result of the events of the Dāhis war (whether real or fictitious) and should not be taken as an indication of a longer term co-operation. This is also clear from the details of the hostile "Absi-%Amiri relations in the accounts of the Dāhis war.

---

754 Some reports state that some of these groups, or subdivisions of them, left before the fight. For instance, see, Nayū'īd, pp. 674-5, where men from both B. Murra of Dhubyān and from Ṭayyi are reported to have moved away from Jabala before the start of the battle. See Ibn ʿAbd Rabḥī, Tadbīr, vi, p. 10, which states that all of Ghūṭāfūn (i.e. minus "Abs) were present except for the B. Badr. Jabala lay approximately half-way, and a little north of a direct line, between al-Yamān and Medina.

755 See Nayū'īd, pp. 405, 455-6. The jawān had with them men from B. Khūla as well as what are described as garrison troops (tawṣīf) from al-Hira. Ibn ʿAbd Rabḥī, Tadbīr, vi, p. 10, has al-jawān al-Kalbi, malik of Ḥijr.

756 Isfahānī, Agāhīnī, xi, p. 3911.


758 Apparently, there was war amongst the Bajila between the B. Qasr and the other clans and the latter group joined the B. ā'Amir; Nayū'īd, pp. 654-66; Isfahānī, Agāhīnī, xi, p. 3924.

759 For a detailed description of the battle, including related poetry, see Nayū'īd, pp. 654-678. The battle of Jabala is, according to some, supposed to have taken place on the year the Prophet was born, ca. 570 CE, the same year as Abrahā'ī's supposed attempted invasion of Mecca [See Nayū'īd, p. 230; although see also p. 675 and Isfahānī, Agāhīnī, xi, p. 3945, where we have the figure of 57 years before Islam (Isfahānī has wrongly 50), a figure given to 'prove' that ā'Amir b. al-Ṭufayl was born in the year of Yawm Jabala. See also, Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 966].

All of these dates are problematic. For the issue of confirming dates for the pre- and early Islamic period, see Conrad, "Chronology and Literary Topoi", pp. 257-39.

760 See above, Chapter 3, pp. 63-5.
However, there are three poles which are discerned as separate, and who fought in this battle. The first, is the Ghatafānī group - on this occasion minus āAbs - with their allies from Asad and Tayyī; these composed a regional grouping based along the Wādi al-Rumma and the northern areas of central Najd. The second is composed of the B. Āmir, who bordered the Wādi al-Rumma in the north and the Yamāmā region on its east, with its allies from western and southern central Najd, mainly neighbours from Qays, but also non-Qaysī - indeed Yamānī - tribes. The last group, in this battle fighting with the Ghatafānī alliance, is composed of the B. Ḥanzala Tamīmīs and their allies from al-Ribāb, all of whom are mainly based in the Yamāmā region764 and were regularly associated with al-Ḥira in the 6th c. CE.765

Yawm al-Nisār:766

Abī `Ubayda argues extensively that this battle was after Yawm Jabala, contrary to a version told by the B. al-Ribāb.767 According to him, Tamīm and al-Ribāb had begun a feud. As a result, al-Ribāb had allied itself with Asad, which was part of the ahālīf alliance, composed of Asad, Tayyī and Ghatafān.768 This large alliance was led by Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa of B. Badr according to some. Abī `Ubayda doubts this, however, stating as a reason that Ḥiṣn was not of royal blood while the leader of al-Ribāb was al-Aswād b. al-Mundhir, appointed as malik of al-Ribāb by his brother, al-Nuʿmān, the king of al-Ḥira769. To counter this, Tamīm allied itself with B. Āmir but they were both defeated at al-Nisār.770

It is unclear which of the Tamīmī branches were involved, as different accounts mention groups from all of the three main branches, Ḥanzala, Saʿd and Āmr b. Tamīm.771 For Ghatafān, or in particular Dhubyān, the significance of this yawm lies in the importance of the ahālīf alliance to which its main lineages belonged. It also stresses the role which regional coalitions seem to have played in pre-Islamic conflicts, in this case with reference to the groups who lived in the area between Wādi al-Rumma, al-Yamāmā and northern central Najd. We notice that they are the same groups who fought at Yawm Jabala, although here, the

---

764 See above Chapter 4, p. 72.
765 See Kister, "Al-Ḥira", pp. 149, ff.
766 Conflicting versions of this battle exist, one of which does not mention Asad or Ghatafān as being involved at all. See Bayāṭī, ii, pp. 527-542, for a good overview of the different versions, also, Yaqūṭ, Muʾjam, s.v. "al-Nisār".
767 Yaqūṭ, pp. 238-9.
768 Yaqūṭ, p. 240; see also, Ibn Ṭabīb, "Iqlīm, vi, p. 90.
769 Yaqūṭ, p. 240.
770 Yaqūṭ, pp. 240-1.
771 See Bayāṭī, Ayyām al-ʿarab, ii, pp. 527-42.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Tamīm-Ribāb group was divided between the Ghaṭafān alliance and the Āmirī one.

Yawn al-Fijār:

This famous conflict is traditionally described as a conflict between Qays or Hawāzin against Kināna. The version in the ‘Iqd has some extra details, which make it seem, at least initially, that Ghaṭafān was involved, because of its kinship with the B. Āmir.772 Ghaṭafān, however, are not mentioned as being involved in any of the subsequent fighting.

These details serve to convey a feeling of Qaysi unity against the B. Kināna. This sense of unity between Ghaṭafān and the rest of Qays does not seem to exist elsewhere in the Jāhili traditions of Ghaṭafān, and not much should be read into such suggestions. It is probable that this account is a result of closer ties between Ghaṭafānīs and other Qays in the Umayyad period.

Yawn al-Liwā and Yawm al-Salā’:

These two ayyām are related amongst the accounts concerning Durayd b. al-Šimma, the famous Jāhili leader of the B. Jusham of Hawāzin. They mention Ghaṭafān as an enemy of Hawāzin only imprecisely. Thus, if such a confrontation ever took place, it is unclear which group of Ghaṭafān was involved, for it is very unlikely that they all were as the accounts imply.773

Important heroes:

Al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī and the Ghassānids:

The events in the career of al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī of the lineage of Yarbū s b. Ghayz of the B. Murra are believed to have taken place in the period between 570 and 600 C.E.774 Al-Nābigha is supposed to have been a companion of the Lakhmid ruler al-Nu’mān b. al-Mundhir.775 Supposedly, he continued in favour with that ruler until a certain incident forced him to flee the court of al-Nu’mān and seek asylum with the Ghassānids.776 Al-Nābigha was, thus, also closely

774 EI2, s.v. "al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī".
775 Ibn Qutayba, Muṣārīf, p. 649.
776 Ḥasan, Aḥṣā‘, xi, pp. 3797-800.
associated with the courts of the Ghassânid kings. His relationship with the Ghassânid court was famous from his verses and many anecdotes.

The special position which al-Näbigha held with the Ghassânids did not stop the Ghassânids from attacking his people. We are told that a Ghassânid malik, al-Nu'mân b. al-Ḥārith al-Asghar, contemporary to al-Näbigha, had designated a fertile valley as his property (ḥamā-hu). This place, called Uqr, seems to have been associated with B. Murra and B. Fazāra and must have lain north of Medina, in the vicinity of Wādī al-Qurā. B. Dhubyān, however, ignored this restriction and continued to use it. This led to a damaging raid against them sent by al-Nu'mān and led by a Ghassânid ally from Kalb.

Note that the events related in the anecdotes of the Murrī Nābigha fall entirely to the north of Medina, which is compatible with Murra’s geographic distribution.

The deeds of cAntara:

The stories of the modern day popular sīra of cAntara b. Shaddād are based on ancient accounts of a pre-Islamic hero-figure, who is prominent in our early ayyām collections as well as the biographical literature of the pre-Islamic poets. Of course the modern sīra contains a huge amount of material from later periods.

In the early material, we find the exploits of cAntara, of the B. Makhzūm of the Ghālib branch of cAbs, mainly occurring in conflicts with the northern neighbours of cAbs, the Tayyi. Indeed the famous incident in which cAntara, the son of a slave-woman, is recognized as legitimate by his father, was during a battle with Tayyi. cAntara also gained fame for his valour in fighting against the B. Tamīm, especially the B. Sa‘d branch as well as in the war of Dāḥis against Dhubyān. As to his death, according to a Tayyi tradition, he was eventually killed by one of their heroes. This Tayyi tradition alleges that there were many raids between Fazāra and Ghatafän on one side and Tayyi on the other.

---

778 Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Uqr”.
780 Isfahānī, Aghānī, viii, p. 2387; Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “al-Furāq”.
781 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xviii, p. 6529. Also, Bahādūrī, Ansāb, MSRakat, fol. 388.
782 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xvi, pp. 6570-8. Of course this tradition has the balance by far in favour of Tayyi. However it is curious that no Ghatafānī traditions appear which involve Tayyi.
Again, here, we find all of the tribes which āntara had fought against to be the immediate neighbours of āAbs.

**The deeds of āUrwa b. al-Ward:**

āUrwa was a famous poet and šuʿāʾlūk of the immediate pre-Islamic period, from the lineage of the Nashib b. Hidm branch of Ghālib of āAbs.\(^{783}\) He was highly regarded in the Umayyad court as a perfect example of muruwwa.\(^{784}\) We are told that he used to gather tribesmen from different tribal groups\(^{785}\) and raid with them. He is supposed to have raided Muzayna, the powerful clan of B. Hilāl of āĀmir and other Quṣāṭ groups including the B. al-Qayn and its subset of B. Kināna.\(^{786}\)

These tribal groups were widely distributed throughout Najd. It is reassuring to note that, as should be expected, the reported foes of a šuʿāʾlūk, tribally unattached and highly mobile, such as āUrwa, were different from the immediate neighbours of his tribal group.\(^{787}\)

**Minor ayyām of Ghatafān:**

Below is an examination of the less important ayyām of Ghatafānī tribes. All of these are classified as the type of 'ayyām of single tribes'.

**Ghatafān:**

There are some indications of co-operation between the Ghatafānī clans in these lesser raids and battles, particularly between Fazāra and Murra. Accounts which deal with the Fazārī leader, āUyayna b. Hisn of the B. Badr, often associate him with B. Murra. Other accounts credit al-Ḥuṣayn b. al-Ḥumām of B. Sahm of Murra with a successful large-scale raid at the head of a group from B. āAdīy (presumably of Fazāra) against B. āUqayl of B. Kaʿb of āĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa.\(^{788}\)

\(^{783}\) For his temporal proximity to Islam, see for instance Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 192.


\(^{785}\) Balādliwī, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 390, mentions that his followers were the weakest of his 'own people', whom he led on raids simply because there was a famine.


\(^{787}\) For an example of the high mobility of the šuʿāʾlūk, see the verses by āUrwa b. al-Ward in Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, p. 137.

The ayyām of B. cAbs are the most numerous of the Ghaṭafānī groups. Importantly, apart from two they are fought against Tamīmī and Tamīmī-related groups. One exception is against the B. Shaybān of al-Bahrayn, the other is against the B. cĀmīr, inhabiting the land south and south east of Wādī al-Rumma. This further stresses the geographical location of cAbs as extending to the eastern part of Wādī al-Rumma.

The fights against Tamīm involved all lineages:

- Yawm A'yār involved the Nashib b. Hidm lineage of the Ghālib branch against B. Dabba. 789
- Yawm al-Šarā'im & Yawm al-Jurf involved the notable Marwān b. Zinbā of B. Rawāha and his sons against the Tamīmī B. Yarbū. These appear to be Tamīmī accounts. The accounts mention that other tribesmen from the branch of Ghālib were also involved, implying that this was a victory over all branches of cAbs. However, as this is claimed by the victorious Tamīmīs, this information is doubtful. 790
- Yawm Aqrūn is a Tamīmī narrative revolving around the exploits of the cUdus lineage, even though it depicts a defeat of the Dārīm branch of Tamīmī at the hands of an unspecified group from cAbs. 791
- Yawm al-Su'bān, according to one version, pitted cAbs with B. cĀmīr against Tamīm, into whose territory they had encroached, in seek of better pasturage. The Tamīmīs, however, manage to repel them. 792

The final two ayyām of cAbs, do not involve a Tamīmī group, but the B. Shaybān of al-Bahrayn and the B. cĀmīr.

Yawm Zarūd, in one of its two versions, is described as a Shaybānī raid against cAbs. The details of this account revolve around the Shaybānī leader, al-Ḥawfazān b. Sharīk, thus, marking this account as non-cAbsī. 793

---

790 Naqī'ī'd, pp. 248, 336-340. Al-Jurf was near near al-Yamāma, see Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "al-Jurf".
792 Naqī'ī'd, p. 386. One tradition merges this story with Yawm al-Nisār, with no mention whatsoever of any Ghaṭafānī groups; see Naqī'ī'd, pp. 1064-7.
793 Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 'Iqd, vi, p. 90. Elsewhere in the 'Iqd as well as in Yaqūt, Mu'jam, it is a Tughilīb-Yarbū' conflict; see Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 'Iqd, vi, p. 49; Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Zarūd".
Chapter 6: Banû Ghatafan from Jâhiliya to Islam

Yawm al-Nata'a was an attack against cAbs by the B. cÄmir, seeking revenge for their defeat by Fazāra and Murra, at Yawm al-Raqm (see below). cAbs, who were led by the notable al-Rabi' b. Ziyād of the Nāshib b. Hidm lineage of Ghālib, and defeated the cÄmirīs.\(^{704}\)

Murra:

There are two main ayyām of this type (those of single units) for the B. Murra. The first involved two different parts of Murra fighting against each other in their lands north of Medina, and tells us much of their allies from Qudā'a and the Jewish tribes settled there. The second (actually composed of two ayyām) seems to have taken place to the east of Medina where Murra are also attested.

Yawm al-Ḥaraqa was fought by two lineages of B. Murra, the B. Sahm led by al-Huṣayn b. al-Ḥumām, and B. Sirma. The fight escalated as a result of a feud between their jirān from B. Qudā'a. The rest of Dhubyān allegedly sided with B. Sirma, as did the a branch of the Qaysī allies of Tha'labā, the B. Muḥārib. Even two Sahmī clans deserted al-Ḥuṣayn; the ʿAdwān and the ʿAhd b. Amr.\(^{705}\) Only the B. ʿHumays of Juhayna - the group which stood at the centre of the dispute - stood by B. Sahm and aided them to a great victory despite the greater numbers of their foes.\(^{706}\) Other details tell us that their was hostility between the Nushba branch of B. Murra and Qudā'a.\(^{707}\)

Yawm Ḥawza 1 and 2 were two raids by a group of Sulaym against the Murri B. Sirma, led by the notable Hāshim b. Ḥarmala. Fighting on the side of the Murris in the first raid was Mālik b. Ḥimār, a famous Fazāri leader of the B. La'ay of the Shamkh lineage, who had earlier fought in Shī'ab Jabala.\(^{708}\)

Tha'labā:

Tha'labā has ayyām against Tamīmī groups as well as B. cÄmir.

\(^{705}\) The B. ʿAhd b. Amr are unidentified.
\(^{706}\) Isfahānī, Aghābī, xii, pp. 4878-84.
\(^{707}\) Ibn ʿAbd Rādūh, Ḥd., iii, p. 323.
\(^{708}\) He was killed in Yawm Hawza 1; see Ibn ʿAbd Rādūh, Ḥd., vi, pp. 26-30. Hāshim is frequently remembered in the Umayyad period for a militaristic verse of poetry which is ascribed to him. See for instance, Tābarī, Tarīkh, ii, p. 418.
Chapter 6: Banū Ḥaḍafūn from Jāhiliya to Islam

Yawm al-Kufāfa tells of a chance battle in which allegedly Tamīmīs from Sa’d, al-Ribāb and ‘Amr were defeated by Tha‘labah of Dhubyān. Yawm al-Liwa’ describes a raid by the Tamīmī B. Yarbūb against the B. Tha‘labah.

The account of Yawm Shawāḥit claims that various clans of B. ‘Āmir, led by the B. Numayr, were defeated by B. Tha‘labah and their allies from B. Muḥārib of Qays.

Fazāra:

In all of their preserved ‘single tribe ayyām’, Fazāra are only led by the lineage of Ḥudhayfa b. Badr, one of the main protagonists of the Dāhis war.

The first such yauwūm depicts the killing of Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa at Yawm al-Ḥājir. We are told in this account that Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa when travelling alone was killed at al-Ḥājir by Kurz b. ‘Ugayl of B. ‘Ugayl b. Sa’cāb. All the other ayyām involve the son of Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa, the notorious ‘Umayna b. Ḥiṣn, who as we shall see was also a contemporary of the Prophet and played an important role in the tribal politics of the Ḥijāz in the Prophetic period and later in the ridda wars.

- ‘Umayna b. Ḥiṣn, with his brother Khārīja, raided the B. Taym with men from B. Fazāra and from B. Murra at Jız’ Zīlāl.

- ‘Umayna is supposed to have defeated Taym and their allies again at Yawm Ḥuqayl. B. Murra is also mentioned as participating in this victory over Taym.

- Another example of co-operation between Fazāra and Murra in the time of ‘Umayna is shown in Yawm al-Raqm. We are told that ‘Umayna led Fazāra and Yazid b. Sinān, or al-Ḥārith b. ‘Awf, both of the Nushba lineage, led B. Murra and defeated the B. ‘Āmir. Ashja’īs of the B. Duḥmān are also mentioned as fighting with Fazāra and Murra.

---

799 Ishfāhānī, Aghānī, iii, p. 1120.
800 A different yauu’ū with this name exists and has been mentioned above, see p. 156.
801 Naqqāʿīd, p. 777; Yaqtī, Muqām, s.v. “al-Liwa’”.
802 Ishfāhānī, Aghānī, iii, pp. 1118-9.
804 Naqqāʿīd, pp. 783, 1087-8.
805 Naqqāʿīd, p. 1087.
Ibn Qutayba describes one account by the name of Yawm al-Fijār which bears no resemblance to the better known tale of that conflict between Qays and Kināna. The battle is still described as being between Qays and Kināna. The event is simply related as an attack by `Uyayna b. Hisn against `Ukāz (presumably, hence the name of the yāum); it is unclear exactly why or when `Uyayna did this.807

As we can see, some of these ayyām describe `Uyayna as the leader - or in some cases sharing the leadership over - both Fazāris as well as Murrīs. The enemies of Dhubyān in these ayyām are the eastern and southern neighbours of Taym and B. Āmīr.

Ashja:

There are no ayyām of Ashja. According to one version of Yawm al-Raqm, Ashja is from B. Duhran fought with the B. Fazāra against B. Āmīr. However, nowhere else do Ashja appear in the ayyām traditions. This points to the relative insignificance of Ashja in the pre-Islamic period.

Ghaṭafān’s ayyām traditions:

The various ayyām traditions provide us with some clues for the pre-Islamic history of Ghaṭafān. The more ancient accounts involving Zuhayr b. Jadhima point to a period where Ābs were allegedly powerful at least amongst Ghaṭafān, if not, as the account suggests, in all of central Najd. The accounts further imply that the loss of this position was marked by a conflict with the B. Āmīr, especially the B. Kilāb branch, who were to become amongst the most powerful groups in the area at the rise of Islam. While the historicity of the details of these accounts is doubtful, the clear implication is that Ābs and Āmīr were neighbours and rivals in central Najd from an early period, despite temporary alliances for short-term interests, such as that described in Yawm Jabala.

Yawm Jabala and Yawm al-Nisār serve to point to the main tribal groups in central Najd and the involvement of Tamīmī groups in the affairs of the Qaysi tribes of central Najd. Yawm al-Nisār also marks the rising prominence of the lineage of B. Badr of Fazāra within Ghaṭafān. Hisn b. Hudhayfa was a leader in

807 Ibn Qutayba, Ma’ārif, p. 604.
the *ahālif* alliance, immediately before Islam, and his descendants would continue this leading role into the Muslim period, as we shall see.

The tales of the heroes of Ghaṭafān and the smaller scale *ayyām* are consistent in that they confirm what we know of the geographical distribution of Ghaṭafān's groups. ʿAbs and ʿAntara fought with Tamīmīs, Tayyī, ʿĀmir and Shayban in the east of Najd. The *ayyām* of B. Murra and the stories of al-Nābigha lie in their territories to the north and to the east of Medina. Also, consistently, the *ayyām* of Thaʿlaba and especially Fazāra involved tribes from central and eastern Najd, and point to the dispersal of these two groups over a wider area than Murra and even ʿAbs. On the other hand, ʿUrwa b. al-Ward, although a ʿAbsī, was a *sulṭān* and it should not be surprising that he is found fighting tribes of the Ḥijāz north of Medina, mainly in the territory of the B. Murra, as well as in other regions further away from Ghaṭafānī territory.

The *ayyām* accounts also describe co-operation between different Ghaṭafānī groups. In particular, we see Fazāra, under the leadership of ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn, to be often in co-operation with the prestigious B. Murra - especially the Nushba lineage - in its many military operations against ʿĀmirī and Tamīmī groups to the east and south of Wādī al-Rumma.

**Profile of pre-Islamic Ghaṭafān:**

**Geographical range of the Ghaṭafān tribes:**

Ghaṭafānī tribes were spread across northern Najd, from the northern Ḥijāz and along the great Wādī al-Rumma. In the east of Wādī al-Rumma, ʿAbs was the main Ghaṭafānī group. Fazāra were widely spread out, but strong in the western parts of Wādī al-Rumma, as well as around Medina. Thaʿlaba b. Saʿd also lay near Medina, as did Ashjaʿ and the B. Murra. B. Murra were also found in numbers to the north of Medina, in the vicinity of Wādī al-Qurā, Khaybar and Taymā.

Many parts of Ghaṭafān were nomadic. For the nomads, the Nafūd was a barrier for much of the year, and Ghaṭafān do not seem to have spread far to the north, although groups from Fazāra and Murra may have travelled up its western side. More importantly, Fazāris, Murrīs and ʿAbsīs seasonally migrated into central Najd. ʿAbsī groups may also have moved a little into Bahrayn. However, most groups would return to northern Ḥijāz and Wādī al-Rumma in the dry seasons, where they had their main water sources.
All Ghatafānī groups seem to have included sections which were involved in camel herding, even if they also controlled palm groves and fertile oases, such as that of Baṭn Nakhl. Fazāra, in particular, were the group most associated with camel herding. Indeed, as late as Umayyad times, Fazarīs were still so associated with camel nomadism that they were even jokingly accused of camel bestiality.

Patterns of regional co-operation:

Regional co-operation seems to be as important as co-operation within the Ghatafānī tribal group. Thus, the B. Thaʿlaba have as close allies their neighbours near Medina, the B. Muḥārib of Qays, while Dhubyān forged alliances with their neighbours north of Wādī al-Rumma, the B. Asad and Ṭayyi'.

Ghatafān and its constituent parts:

The sources present Ghatafān as capable of being a corporate entity. Of course, this does not exclude the same sources from presenting its subsets as corporate entities as well, as it does with Dhubyān and ṬAbs; or, even from subsets of its subsets from doing the same, as with B. Fazāra, Thaʿlaba and Murra.

Importantly though, one has to take into consideration the fact that using a term such as Ghatafān, never necessarily meant referring to every single Ghatafānī tribesman. Thus, in Ghazwat al-Khandaq we are told that Ghatafān joined Quraysh in an attack against the Muslims in Medina. Later, we find that the Ghatafānīs are described as Fazara, Murra and Ashja'. That is two out of the three main sections of Dhubyān, plus Ashja', and notably without ṬAbs. Even then we should not expect that these named groups referred to all of Fazāra, Murra or Ashja'.

In any case, the point here is that certain tribal groups under the Ghatafānī eponymic umbrella, did co-operate with each other on occasion. The two Ghatafānī groups found co-operating most often were Murra and Fazāra. Immediately before Islam Fazāra and Murra were strong and dominated northern Najd. Their leadership resisted Islam bitterly. As we will see below, this occasional co-operation would not re-occur after the conquests.

---

808 See Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, Ḥaqī, ii, p. 300 and n. 1.
809 For this, see above Chapter 3, p. 49.
Co-operation with tribes outside the Ghaṭafān tribal umbrella did occur, though more rarely. Particularly, there was much co-operation between Dhubyān and Asad and sometimes with Ṣayyi'. Ābs is also supposed to have temporarily allied itself with B. Kilāb of ŠĀmīr. Many lineages also had links with Medinans. Note that all of these groups lived on the borders of Ghaṭafānī territory.

The tribes with whom Ghaṭafān seem to have been most hostile were also their neighbours. In particular, the various Ghaṭafānī groups were most hostile to their southern neighbours from B. ŠĀmīr, those to the east from Tamīm and to the north from Ṣayyi'. Apart from this, there are several anecdotes of Murris feuding with other tribes from northern Ḥijāz, where many Murri sections were based.

As for relations - good or poor - with the Ghassānids or the Lakhmids, some anecdotes describe interaction between the B. Murra and the Ghassānids while others talk of links between the Ābsīs and the Mundhirid rulers of al-Ḥira. Note again the geographical proximity of Murra to the limit of Ghassānīd influence in Wādī al-Qurā and northern Ḥijāz and Ābsī proximity to the Lakhmid presence in al-Bahrāyn.
(B) Ghatafān in Islam

As before, patterns of tribal continuity will be the particular focus for interpreting the material of the Islamic period. The sources provide far more information on the much larger Ghatafānī tribal group in the Islamic period than they do for Taghlib. Thus, it will be easier to monitor their careers in this period.

A note on chronology and dates:

As with Taghlib, I will use only Hijrī dates and not those of the Christian calendar. This is done primarily to avoid cluttering the text. Again it must be pointed out that accounts in the sources are often dateless, and many of the dates provided are contradicted by others in different accounts. Especially for the sīra material, dates are quite untrustworthy. However, I have still used these dates, in the hope that even if they are inaccurate they give an idea of relative chronology. They are therefore not meant to define time periods accurately for the events they accompany. After the initial conquests chronology is generally accepted to be safer.⁸¹⁰

Prophetic period:

Companions:

Three Ghatafānis are mentioned in the sīra as close companions of the Prophet and related accounts from this period.

One of the Prophet's famous companions was a 'Absī called Ḥudhayfa of the B. al-Yamān, known as Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān. Various versions exist as to how Ḥudhayfa, and sometimes his father, had settled in Medina. They all agree however that he (and his father) allied with B. 'Abd al-Ashhal of al-Aws. In one version, Ḥudhayfa distinctly chose to ally with the Medinan Anṣār rather than the Meccan Muhājirūn.⁸¹¹ His father was killed at Uḥud. He himself fought at Uḥud and al-Khandaq.⁸¹²

---

⁸¹¹ Ibn Qutayba, Muʿārif, p. 265; Ibn Hishām, Sīra, pp. 87-8.
⁸¹² Ibn Hishām, Sīra, ii, pp. 87, 122; Tabari, Tarīkh, i, p. 1422.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Nucayin b. Mas`ūd, from the B. Khilāwa of Ashja`, was another companion of the Prophet and is supposedly instrumental in having managed to sow discord between the aḥzāb of Ghazwat al-Khandaq, thereby dispersing them.\(^{813}\) He also seems to have been a resident of Medina before he became a Muslim.\(^{814}\)

Samara b. Jundab of B. La'ay of Shamkh of Fazāra, was also a ṣaḥābi. He fought with the Muslims at Uḥud as a young man.\(^{815}\) His daughter was married to al-Mukhtar al-Thaqafi the Kūfī "Shi'ī" rebel.\(^{816}\)

Other Ghaṭafānīs were also companions, although not always prominent enough to be mentioned in the sīra. Thus, Kathir b. Ziyād, who was also a ṣaḥābi from the B. Riyāḥ of the Shamkh branch of Fazāra.\(^{817}\)

**Ghaṭafānīs in the sīra material:**

Even though, as mentioned above, the dates set for the sīra events by early Muslim historians are extremely unreliable, nevertheless that chronological structure will be used below, in order to be easier to handle, as well as to give a rough idea of relative chronology.

The details of famous events such as Ghazwat al-Khandaq or the conquest of Mecca, etc. will not be described, as it is assumed they are well known.\(^{818}\) In all of the below, we will concentrate only on bringing out points of relevance to the Ghaṭafānī tribesmen.

**Year 2 H:**

Ṭabarī mentions a raid (called Qarqarat al-Kudr) led by the Prophet against Ghaṭafān and Sulaym shortly after the battle of Badr in late Ramadān or early Shawwāl of 2 H. Apparently this was a result of hearing news that the two tribes were "gathering". One account states that this was followed by a sariya, sent out from Medina by the Prophet, again to attack Ghaṭafān and Sulaym.\(^{819}\) Ghaṭafān here must refer to Dhubyānī groups, who lived within reach of Medina, and bordered the B. Sulaym.

---

813 See Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, i, pp. 1480-2.
814 Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, i, p. 1479.
815 Ibn Qutayba, Ma'ārif, p. 305; Ibn Hishām, Sīra, ii, p. 66; Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, i, pp. 1391-2.
816 Ibn Qutayba, Ma'ārif, p. 401.
818 Please refer to Wadd, Muhammad at Medina, for more detailed descriptions of any of these events.
819 Ṭabarī, Ta'rikh, i, pp. 1363-4; Yaqūt, Mu'jam, s.v. "Ṣaḥāb".
Year 3 H:

A few months later, the Prophet set out to raid in Ghatafan territory. This expedition was called Ghazwat Dhi Ammar. According to Tabari, this took place in the second month, Safar, of year 3 H.\(^{820}\)

Year 4 H:

According to Ibn Ishäq, in Jumāda I of year 4 H, i.e. soon after the expulsion of the B. al-Nadir from Medina (and immediately after the accounts of that incident in Ibn Hishäm’s *Sīra*), the Prophet set out to raid B. Muḥārib and B. Tha‘laba of Ghatafan at Baṭn Nakhl.\(^{821}\) This *ghazwa* was called Dhät al-Riqā‘.\(^{822}\) The raid was a stalemate as a large number of “Ghatafān” turned out to meet the Muslims and both sides decided not to fight.\(^{822}\) This incident may somehow have been connected with the expulsion of B. al-Nadir, as Ibn Ishāq tells us later that the B. ‘Amr b. Jihāsh of the Bajāla branch of B. Tha‘laba were allied with B. al-Nadir.\(^{823}\)

Year 5 H:

‘Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn was a leader of B. Badr of Fazāra (“and Ghatafan”) at the time of the Prophet. Without accepting Islam he and his people were granted safety and pasture for three months in the vicinity of Medina, in the year 5 H. This did not stop him from raiding the Muslims later.\(^{824}\)

- GHAZWAT AL-KHANDAQ:

According to Ibn Ishāq a group of Jews from the expelled B. al-Nadir and from B. Wā‘il\(^{825}\) were behind the idea to bring Quraysh, “Ghatafān” and B. Qurayza together against the Muslims.\(^{826}\)

---

821 This corroborates information from the Jāhili material which states that Muḥārib and Tha‘laba were allied. See above, pp. 149.
825 These are probably the ‘Awsi clan of the anti-Muslim, Sa‘īb b. al-Aslāh b. Jušā‘man b. Wā‘il [see Caskel, *Gumhurat*, i, 184/28; ii, s.v. ‘Sa‘īb b. ‘Amir (al-Aslāh)’], which was hostile to the Muslims in Medina. Perhaps as a result they are here referred to as Jews.
"Ghaṭafān" was composed of three groups: Fazāra was led by `Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn; Murra was led by al-Ḥārith b. Āwf; and a group of Ashja° was led by Misʿar b. Rukhayla, of the B. Qunfudh b. Khilāwa.827

Al-Ḥārith b. Āwf, a leader of B. Murra, was one of the leaders of the Meccan led alliance of Ḥijāzi tribes at Ghazwat al-Khandaq, before he became a Muslim.828

It is with `Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn and al-Ḥārith b. Āwf that the Prophet is alleged to have discussed the idea of paying a third of the date produce of Medina in exchange for their withdrawal from the Meccan alliance.829

Year 6 H:
- GHAZWAT DHĪ QARAD:

In fact this was not a ghazwa in the sense of a Muslim offensive, rather the opposite. In Jumāda II of the year 6 H, `Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn led a raid against Muslim territory north of Medina, at al-Ghāba, and carried off some camels belonging to the Prophet. Apparently a son of `Uyayna was killed by the Muslim posse.830

- ZAYD B. HĀRITHA’S ATTACK ON WĀDĪ AL-QURĀ:

Zayd attacked B. Fazāra in Wādī al-Qurā and was defeated by them. B. Badr are specifically mentioned as having taken part in the fighting against Zayd’s army. But Zayd returned with another army and this time was victorious. Mas‘ada b. Ḥakama (a great grandson of the famous Fazāri leader, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr) was killed, while a Fazāri noblewoman, Umm Qirfa, the niece of the famous Ḥudhayfa, was captured. Curiously, she was put to death, according to Ibn Ishāq, in a very cruel manner (نُفِّلَتْ مِنْ أَثْناَيْ عِينٍ). All we seem to be told about her was that she was regarded as being a very proud and noble woman who was an

826 Ibn Hishām, Sira, i, p. 562; ii, 214-5; Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1464.
827 Ibn Hishām, Sira, ii, p. 215; according to Yaḥṣūb, Muʿjam, s.v. “Naqma”, Ghaṭafān was accompanied by some small groups from Najdh. 828 Ibn al-Kalbi, Junbaha, p. 454, has the leader of Ashja as the father of Misaʿar, Rukhayla b. Aʿšāh.
829 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, pp. 315-6.
830 Ibn Hishām, Sira, ii, p. 223.
831 Ibn Hishām, Sira, ii, pp. 261-5; Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1501; see also Yaḥṣūb, Muʿjam, s.v. “al-Ḥayl”, “Quraid”, “Ghāba”. Another undated account mentions `Uyayna as having led a raid against ‘Amir b. Jafar b. Khālid, and their Muslim ‘neighbours’ wājib al-tarāf who are unidentified except that one of their members was a man from the Sulami clan of B. Re’f [see Naqīʿ al, pp. 301-2].
enemy of the Prophet and roused her people against him. 'Abdallāh b. Mas'ada b. Ḥakama and a daughter of this Umm Qirfa were also captured but were sent to Medina.\footnote{Thurayy, Sirr, ii, p. 617; Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, i, pp. 1577-9, 1901; and Ibn 'Abd Rabhī, 'Iqlīd, iii, p. 10; Ya‘qūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Zafūr".} As we shall see below, 'Abdallāh and his brother 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mas'ada moved to Syria after the conquests and held prominent positions under Mu‘awiya.\footnote{Chrow, Slaves, pp. 98-9.}

Year 7 H:

- THE ATTACK AGAINST KHAYBAR:

This raid occurred sometime in Muḥarram of year 7 H.\footnote{Ibn Hishām, Sirr, ii, p. 617; Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, i, pp. 1577-9, 1901; and Ibn ‘Abd Rabhī,‘Iqlīd, iii, p. 10; Ya‘qūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Zafūr".} "Ghatafān" (or, in some cases Fazāra)\footnote{Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, i, p. 1575.} are mentioned as having been supporters of the Jews of Khaybar (muẓāhirīn lahum) against the Muslims. However, they failed to come to their aid when the Muslims attacked Khaybar because they feared they themselves would be attacked.\footnote{Ya‘qūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Jabāl".}

At some point (it is unclear whether this occurred before or after the Prophet’s main attack against Khaybar), a certain Jew was attempting to gather the "Ghatafānīs of Khaybar" to attack the Muslims in Medina.\footnote{Ibn Hishām, ii, p. 330; Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, i, pp. 1575-6; Ya‘qūb, Mu‘jam, s.v. "Rujū".}

- OTHER RAIDS:

B. Murra were attacked at Fadak in Sha‘bān and again at al-Mayfa‘a in the territory of B. Murra in Ramadān.\footnote{Ibn Hishām, ii, p. 618; ‘I‘lām al-Jārīn, s.v. "Rujū".} Another report speaks of a ghazwa led by Usāma b. Zayd, in which the B. ‘Abd, who were attached to B. Murra (see above), were attacked.\footnote{Ibn Hishām, ii, p. 618; Tabari, Ta‘rīkh, i, pp. 1575-6.}

Year 8 H:

In the year 8 H, ‘Uyyayn b. Ḥiṣn’s people (presumably Fazāra) were raided in Shawwāl. Apparently this was because news of preparation on their part to
raid Medina had reached the Muslims. This seems to be the last time `Uyayna and his followers fought against the Prophet.

- THE ATTACK ON MECCA:

Later in this year, Ṭabarī tells us that `Uyayna b. Ḥisn and his followers joined the Muslims on their way to Mecca, in the year 8 H, at a place called al-ʿArj, which, according to Yāqūt, was in the vicinity of al-Ṭāʾīf.

B. Ashja also formed a tribal contingent in the Prophet's army which marched against Mecca and Hawāzin at Ḥunayn.

- AL-ṬĀʾĪF AND HUNAYN:

`Uyayna was also with the Muslim army at the siege of Ṭāʾīf. The account however expressly points out that he is there for self gain rather than from a religious motive. He was also one of the mu'allafa qulūbuhum, receiving as much as the highest recipients, such as Abū Sufyān. `Uyayna and a Tamīmī tribal leader, al-Aqrā b. Ḥabīs, stand out in Ibn Ishaq's list of those who received the highest payment of 100 camels each, as being the only two notables not from the area. The remainder of these top recipients are predominately Qurashi with three leaders from the recently defeated Thaqif and Hawāzin.

Both `Uyayna and al-Aqrā were present on the Muslim side at Ḥunayn. It is notable that the Sulāmī leader, Abbās b. Mirdās, was also present with the Muslims but received less than `Uyayna and al-Aqrā. We are told that he was greatly angered by this, and complained specifically to the Prophet that `Uyayna and al-Aqrā had received more than him.

---

839 Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1593.
840 Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1630. Yaqūt, Muʾjam, s.v. ʿal-ʿArj.
841 Ibn Qutayba, Maʿārif, p. 315.
842 Ibn Hisālī, Sīra, ii, pp. 486, 489-90.
845 Ibn Hisālī provides an alternative list, which includes in addition Amīrīs and Kinānīs, i.e. men also from the region around al-Ṭāʾīf; ii, pp. 494-5.
846 Ibn Hisālī, Sīra, ii, pp. 493-4; Ṭabarī, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1580; Ibn ʿAbd Ṭabīb, Ḥṣp, i, p. 233.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāḥiliya to Islam

Year 9 H:

A deputation from B. Fazāra arrived in Medina, but led not by ʿUyayna b. Ḫisn but by his brother Khārija b. Ḫisn. Interestingly, ʿUyayna is indeed mentioned as visiting Medina but with the Tamīmi deputation, accompanying al-Aqrāʾ b. Ḥābis, who is frequently associated with him in the sīra accounts.

Year 10 H:

B. ʿAbs sent their deputation to the Prophet in 10 H.

ʿUyayna’s status at the end of the Prophetic period:

Towards the end of the Prophet’s lifetime, ʿUyayna was commissioned by the Prophet to raid the B. al-ʿAnbar of Tamīm, which he did successfully. This shows that ʿUyayna was trusted enough by the Prophet to lead attacks in his name.

The status of ʿUyayna within the Muslim camp seems to have increased further as we see from a curious incident involving the murder of an Ashjaʿī Muslim by another Muslim. ʿUyayna as leader of “Ghaṭafān” (presumably here meaning Ghaṭafānī Muslims), sought the man’s blood revenge. A different report on this incident already regards ʿUyayna as a leader of “Qays”.

ʿUyayna was considered in later periods by some Muslim writers as a fool. However, this is probably propaganda for his stubborn early anti-Muslim stances, and later participation in the ridda wars.

Summary of Ghaṭafān in the sīra:

The term Ghaṭafān in the sīra accounts is used for Ghaṭafānīs of any group in the vicinity of Medina. Thus, the raids in the years 2 and 3 H, are almost certainly referring to Dhubyānī tribesmen, who lived in that region.

---

847 Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1720.
848 Ibn Hisnān, Sīra, ii, pp. 560-1; Isfahānī, Aghānī, iv, p. 1360; Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, pp. 1710-1.
849 Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1740.
850 Ibn Hisnān, Sīra, ii, p. 621; Tabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1762.
851 Ibn Hisnān, Sīra, ii, pp. 627-8.
`Abs:

`Abs are hardly mentioned at all in the sīra until their (alleged) late deputation to the Prophet in the year 10 H. This is consistent with what we have learnt of them from the Jāhili material, in that they lived in eastern Najd and were involved more in affairs in Bahrayn and Yamāma than in Medina and Ḥijāz. The fact that a famous ṣahībī was a `Absi has no bearing on `Abs as a group in the Prophetic period. Indeed, it is significant that his lineage is totally unknown in the pre-Islamic traditions and is the only one of his lineage to have acquired fame.

Tha‘labab:

Tha‘labab is associated with the B. Muḥārib in the sīra just as it is in the Jāhili material. Apart from the Muslim attempted raid against them in Baṭn Nakhl in the year 4 H, they are hardly mentioned. Significantly they are conspicuous in their absence from the Ghaṭafānī army of Ghazwat al-Khandaq which attacked Medina in 5 H. Perhaps the raid of 4 H, resulted in a non-aggression pact between Tha‘labāb and the Muslims. It is especially interesting that the attempted raid of 4 H was the only time the Muslims threatened the wealthy Baṭn Nakhl, which lay so close to Medina.

Murra:

B. Murra are not mentioned specifically in the sīra material until Ghazwat al-Khandaq, in which they participated. Their leader during the siege of Medina was the famed al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf of the Nushba lineage. After Ghazwat al-Khandaq, they are only mentioned one more time when they were raided by the Muslims twice in the year 7 H. The raid against Khaybar involved "Ghaṭafān". It is very likely that the Ghaṭafānīs involved were from the B. Murra, the predominant Ghaṭafānī group in the area. Also, we see that in the ayyām accounts and in Ghazwat al-Khandaq, leaders from the Nushba lineage cooperated with ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn. It is possible that they were involved in his raids against the Muslims without being specifically mentioned.

In any case, Murri activity led by B. Nushba against the Muslims seems to be restricted to the period between Ghazwat al-Khandaq, in the year 5 H, and the northern raids of the Prophet in the year 7 H. B. Murra do not appear again in the sources until the ridda.
Fazära:

`Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn of the B. Badr is very prominent in the sīra material, from his early involvement in fighting against the Muslims in Medina until he finally joined the Muslims in their attack against Mecca and his appeasement as one of the mu'allafa qulūbuhum.

`Uyayna's kinsmen of the line of his uncle, Mālik b. Ḥudhayfa, were also hostile to the Muslims. They were the target of a vicious raid by Zayd b. Ḥāritha, in 6 H. In the account of this raid we are told that Umm Qirfa was actively involved in stirring the Ghaṭafānīs against the Muslims, until she was executed after this raid.

Thus, it is clear that different parts of the noble B. Badr line of Fazära were hostile to the Muslims who were establishing themselves in Medina and its vicinity, and fought against them as long as they could.

From the point at which `Uyayna joined the Muslims in 8 H, he seems to have been a prominent member of the Muslim tribal allies. Indeed, we are told that he was commissioned to lead a raid against a Tamīmī group, and that he became the leader of the Muslim Qaysī groups. This latter point is of specific interest, in that it sheds some light on the reorganization of tribal groups and leadership as tribal groups gradually moved under the banner of Islam. More will be said of this later in Chapter 7.

Ashja`

Very little information on Ashja` appears in the sīra, although they were present at Ghazwat al-Khandaq and later appeared on the Muslim side in the attack against Mecca. The incident relating `Uayna b. Ḥiṣn taking it upon himself to call for the blood revenge of an Ashja`i Muslim, may point to a negligible presence of Ashja`i tribal leaders in the Muslim camp even at the end of the Prophetic period, as well as to the prestige of the B. Badr throughout Ghaṭafān in this time.

Companions of the Prophet:

There were three important companions of the Prophet from Ghaṭafān. We know that two of them inhabited Medina before Islam. These were Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān of a branch of "Abs unknown in the pre-Islamic material and Nu`aym
b. Mas'ud of the Qunfudh b. Khilawa lineage of Ashja. We are not told whether the last, Samura b. Jundab of the B. La'y of Shamkh of Fazara, was also a resident of Medina or not, before Islam.

Regarding the links of these companions with their original tribes, these seem to have been severed, although Nu'am b. Mas'ud is said to have played a role in persuading the Ghatafani members of the Meccan alliance to disengage from the siege of Medina. Significantly, Nu'am was from, the same lineage, the B. Qunfudh of Khilawa, as that of the leader of the Ashja'i component of the Ghatafani force. However, the accounts stress his undivided loyalty to the Muslim cause, and indeed show him to have deceived his fellow tribesmen.

While these companions themselves had clearly disengaged from their tribal affiliations, it will be interesting to pursue their careers into the Muslim period, as well as those of their descendants, when mentioned in the sources. This will be primarily to ascertain whether tribal loyalties remained secondary to Muslim loyalties amongst later generations, or whether they reverted to pre-Islamic tribal loyalties.

The wars of the ridda:

According to Tabari, most of Ghatafän apostatized after the death of the Prophet except for the bulk of Ashja and certain groups from the other branches. As the most important enemy tribal group in the vicinity of Medina, Ghatafän was the first to be attacked by the armies of Abū Bakr, who demanded from their leaders absolute loyalty to the Muslim state.

There are a number of accounts describing the first conflict between the 'apostate' Ghatafän and the Muslim armies, which are confusing and sometimes contradictory. One account states that the first Muslim attack was in the vicinity of Medina and was directed against Khārija b. Ḥiṣn of B. Badr, the "leader of Fazāra", and Manzūr b. Zabbān of the Fazzri B. al-'Usharā who led "Ghatafān". Another account has 'Abs and Dhubyān involved in the first fighting with the Muslims.

853 Tabari, Tārīkh, i, p. 1871.
854 See Shafān, Riddah, pp. 112, ff, passim.
855 Tabari, Tārīkh, i, p. 1870. See also, Caskel, Gambarit, ii, s.v., "Manzūr b. Zabbān".
856 Tabari, Tārīkh, i, p. 1872.
Yet another more detailed version of the first conflict has "Ghatafan", "Asad" and "Tayyi" all gathered to support the false prophet, Tulayha. The Ghatafanis were divided into two groups; Fazāra with their neighbours from Ghatafan based near Medina, and B. Tha'labâ b. Sa'd, Murra and 'Abs near al-Rabadha. The leader of B. Murra was a certain 'Awwf b. fulân b. Sinān, while the person who led Tha'labâ and 'Abs was al-Hārith b. fulân of B. Sabī.

After attempts at negotiation, Medina was raided by the "rebels" (in some accounts the raiding group is identified as Dhubyān and 'Abs). This prompted a swift retaliatory strike against the "rebel" camp by Abū Bakr, which ended in a crushing defeat for the enemies of Medina. The result of this was that "Abs and Dhubyān" and their associates killed all the Muslims amongst them, which in turn led Abū Bakr to kill at least as many of their non-Muslim tribesmen.

The next expedition from Medina attacked and defeated the Ghatafāni forces at al-Rabadha (where they captured the poet, al-Ḥuṭay'a). This led "Abs and Dhubyān" to retreat to Buzākha whence Tulayha had moved, in the meantime, with his Asadi forces. One account speaks of a Muslim from B. Rizām b. Māzin of Tha'labâ, who led Khālid's army into Ghatafan territory during the ridda. Probably this was at al-Rabadha.

A report by Ibn al-Kalbi, as preserved by Ṭabarî, mentions that Khālid set out to attack Tulayha and 'Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn at Buzākha. One report has 'Uyayna at the head of 700 Fazāris fighting with Tulayha against Khālid. Apparently 'Uyayna, worried about the status of Ghatafan under the Prophet's leadership, decided to renew the pre-Islamic Ghatafan-Asad alliance immediately following his death. 'Uyayna was captured by Khālid at Buzākha and sent to Medina. He himself does not appear again in the sources in a political context, although his son does.

---

857 Another name for Medina is given, that of 'Tha (¢-e-).  
858 Probably Sinān b. Abī Ḥarīthah of the Mushhah group.  
859 Or Sa'ab? Possibly a descendant of Sa'ab b. Amr of the Dāhilis tribe; see Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, p. 1873.  
860 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, p. 1875-7; see Yaqūt, Mu'amal, s.v. "Abraaq al-Rabadhâ".  
861 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, pp. 1876-80, Nuṣayrī, p. 715.  
862 Ibn al-Kalbi, Jumhūra, p. 424.  
863 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, p. 1887.  
864 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, pp. 1890-1.  
865 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, p. 1893. The pre-Islamic links of the B. Baqir with the B. Asad are highlighted by the brief reactivating of their pre-Islamic alliance against the Muslims.  
866 Ṭabarî, Tu'rîkh, i, p. 1896. There is an interesting reference (i, p. 1901) to a difference in treatment between 'Uyayna and another 'rebek' leader for their different behaviour. What this treatment was or what behaviour is referred to is not made clear.  
867 See Ibn 'Abāl Rabbāh, 'Iqd, ii, p. 198, where he appears with 'Umar in an anecdote attacking arrogance, which 'Uyayna there personifies.  

177
Surrender terms meant that Ghaṭafān had to hand over to Khālid those who had killed or burnt Muslims. This they did, and those they handed over were dealt with cruelly. ⁸⁶⁸

Finally, it seems that only a small part of Ghaṭafān continued to fight on after Buzākha. Scattered groups gathered at Zafar (on the Medina-Baṣra road ⁸⁶⁹) and were led by Umm Ziml the daughter of Mālik b. Ḥudhayfa b. Badr and Umm Qirfa, whom Zayd b. Ḥāritha had cruelly put to death in the time of the Prophet. ⁸⁷⁰ Umm Ziml had been captured in Zayd’s raid but was later taken back by ČĀʿīsha. She managed to collect together a large band of tribesmen from Ghaṭafān, Hawāzin, Sulaym, Asad and Tāyyi’. However, her army was destroyed by Khālid and she herself was killed. ⁸⁷¹

Summary:

Thus, we can see that Ghaṭafānis were the first enemy the Muslims faced after the death of the Prophet, as they were their closest tribal neighbours. It is also clear that many Ghaṭafānis remained loyal to Medina. The fact that they appear as very weak, compared to the ‘rebel’ forces means that these Muslims remained so as individuals or in relatively small groups.

It is interesting that ʿUyayna b. Hisn chose to join the rebels, although he appeared to have held a strong position in the Prophet’s lifetime. Whatever the reasons, this shows that still at this point, tribal ties were stronger to some ‘Muslims’ than the new Islamic ones.

Ashjaʿis are specifically mentioned as not having rebelled. Thaʿlabī territory in al-Rabadha was attacked although Thaʿlabá itself is not mentioned. ČAbsis and Dhubyānis, in general, are supposed to have fought against the Muslims in the ridda, but particular emphasis is laid on the leading role of Fazāris and, in particular, the B. Badr.

---

⁸⁶⁸ Ṭabari, Taʾrikh, i, p. 1900.
⁸⁶⁹ Yaḥyā, Muʿjam, s.v. “Zafar”. See also this somewhat different account, which ascribes the role of Umm Ziml, as described here, to her mother Umm Qirfa.
⁸⁷⁰ See above pp. 170-1.
⁸⁷¹ Ṭabari, Taʾrikh, i, pp. 1901-2.
Involvement in the conquests and subsequent migration:

Ghaṭafānī tribal groups were involved in the various campaigns of the conquests. The sources for the conquests do not always mention the constituent tribes forming the contingents of Muslim armies on campaign, but when Ghaṭafānīs are mentioned they appear on most fronts.872

Nor did they only play a military role. For instance, we are told that leaders and poets were sent to the Iraqi front before al-Qādisiya to enhance the morale of the fighters. Two of the four poets sent by ʿUmar, according to Ṭabari, were al-Shammākh of the B. Bajāla of the Dhubyānī Thaʿlabā and al-Ḥuṭayṭa of the ʿAbsī B. Makhzūm.873 Al-Shammākh was also significant later in campaigns in Iran (e.g. witnessing treaties).874 Al-Ḥuṭayṭa kept a high profile as a poet in the governors’ courts of Baṣra and Medina.875

Below is a summary of Ghaṭafānī involvement in the campaigns of the conquests.

Ghaṭafānī as a whole:

A few times the blanket term “Ghaṭafānī” is used in the sources for this historical phase. The earliest is in the year 14 H, according to Ṭabari. Soon after the death of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar sent reinforcements to the Iraqi front including 2000 men who had gathered “from Ghaṭafānī and other [groups] of Qays”.871 This force was made up from different groups of Qays and probably also of different groups of Ghaṭafānī, as well, hence the use of the general term, here.

Another mention occurs in a passage dealing with the organization of Kūfah. This was when the αcshār were being remoulded into asbāc (in 17 H). “Ghaṭafānī” had not been included in the original tribal plan of Kūfah. According to the new distribution, it was grouped in one subc with Asad, Muḥārib, al-Namir, Dubayc and Taghib.877 This implies that Ghaṭafānīs did not have a very prominent

---

872 Except ill rcl. luzira. I rilso funud very few (Thsrt. rrfinris ill Azili's Tu'rikh al-Mawṣil.
873 Ṭabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 2292.
874 Ṭabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 2967. He also composed verses whilst on campaign, such as that found in Yaqūt, Muṣjam, s.v. “Mūqūn”.
875 Ṭabari, Ta'rikh, i, pp. 2711-2; Ibn 'Abal Rabīḥ, 'Iqd, i, p. 238.
876 Ṭabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 2221.
877 Ṭabari, Ta'rikh, i, p. 2905; but see Ibn 'Abal Rabīḥ, 'Iqd, iv, p. 245, where they are grouped with Tānim, Asad and Hawāzin.
position in Kūfa. This is further confirmed at Waqṣat al-Jamal, where we find the Kūfans "Ghaṭafān" being led by a notable of Bāhila and not from Ghaṭafān. 87

Ashjaʾ:

Very few references to Ashjaʾ involvement in the conquests exist. We are told that Nuṣaym b. Masʿūd, a famous saḥābi (mentioned above), commanded military units on the eastern front. 879 But as mentioned earlier, companions should be treated somewhat separately from the other tribesmen.

In Iraq, there is a reference to an Ashjaʾi in the army of Khalid when he first attacked al-Ḥira. 880 While in Syria, we are told that Āwf b. Mālik, one of the leaders of Ashjaʾ, settled in Ḥims. 881 One Ashjaʾi ḥalif of the Anṣār was present al-Yarmūk. 882 Further west, we know that some small numbers from various tribes including Ashjaʾis were present with Āmr b. al-ʿĀṣ during the invasion of Egypt, and that Ashjaʾis had settled in al-Fustāt. 883

Thaʿlabā:

With Thaʿlabā as well, there are very few specific references to their involvement in the conquests. All we know of them is that the poet al-Shammākh of B. Ḍajāla, fought on the Iraqi front in the year 14 H according to Ṭabari. 884

Ibn al-Kalbi tells us that the B. Rizām group were settled in al-Shām. One of them, Harim b. Ḥalhala, used to fight at sea. 885 The other main branch of B. Thaʿlabā, the B. Ḍajāla, received a plot in their own name in Kūfa. 886 This implies that the migrating Thaʿlabīs may have been divided between Bajālīs in the east and Rizāmīs in the west.

---

878 Ṭabari, Ṭarīkh, i, p. 3179.
879 See, for instance Ṭabari, Ṭarīkh, i, pp. 2544-7.
880 Ṭabari, Ṭarīkh, i, p. 2956.
881 Ibn Ṭabayyān, Muʿārif, p. 315.
882 Donner, Islamic Conquests, p. 367; n. 61.
883 Yāqūt, Muʿjam, s.v. "al-Raʿya".
884 Ṭabari, Ṭarīkh, i, p. 2252.
885 Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamārah, p. 424.
886 Ṭabari, Ṭarīkh, i, p. 2490.
Murra:

Again, there is very little mention of the B. Murra in the conquests. However, the elders of B. Murra are used by Tabari as a source for the capture of Balkh, implying that group's involvement in Khurāsān.\(^{887}\) As Khurāsān was linked to al-Baṣra, this may imply early Murri settlement in that garrison town and then perhaps later in Marw.\(^{888}\)

On the other hand it is clear that many Murrīs continued to inhabit the relatively fertile region of Wādī al-Qurā where they held much property. We can see that they are still in this region from the accounts of the Murri poet, Ibn Mayyāda (B. Yarbū\(^{6}\)) and Shabib b. al-Barṣā\(^{3}\) (B. Nushba) in the Aghānī.\(^{889}\) Another anecdote in the Aghānī, describes a battle, in the Umayyad period, between the B. Sahm of Murra and the B. Jawshan of B. ṣAbdallāh b. Ghaṭafān.\(^{890}\)

Fazāra:

Fazāra are also little mentioned in the conquests as a group, while individuals are slightly more common. Interestingly, those mentioned in the main battles (and whose lineages are known) are mainly from a single branch of the Fazārī B. Shamkh; the B. Riyāḥ.

The saḥābī, Samura b. Jundab (of B. Laḍy of Shamkh), was active on the Iraqi front in the early conquests.\(^{891}\) Another saḥābī who fought in the conquests was Kathir b. Ziyād fought at al-Qādisiya. He was from the B. Riyāḥ of Shamkh.\(^{892}\) The notable, al-Musayyab b. Najaba, also of B. Riyāḥ fought in Khālid’s army in Iraq. He is named as one of the qurrā\(^{2}\) and as having also fought at al-Qādisiya and later with ṣA-li (see below). His brother Marthad also fought with Khālid in Iraq and then in Syria, where he was killed in the siege of

---

\(^{887}\) Tabari, Tarikh, i, p. 2004.

\(^{888}\) Preliminary research on the tribal settlement of Basra has yielded very little evidence of Ghaṭafānī migration to that town. See Binner, "Tribal Settlement in Basra."


\(^{890}\) Isfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 4432. For Jawshan’s affiliation with B. ṣAbdallāh, see Kahlāz, Mu’jam, s.v. "Jawshan."

\(^{891}\) Binner, Islamic Conquests, p. 423; n. 23.

\(^{892}\) Ibn al-Kalbi, Jami’ara, p. 438.
Damascus.\textsuperscript{893} Another Fazārī (unknown lineage) was an officer at al-Qādisiya,\textsuperscript{894} while an ally (ḥalīf) of Fazāra was present at al-Yarmūk.\textsuperscript{895}

Regarding where Fazāra settled after the conquests, the only group mentioned specifically as moving are the B. Ghurāb of the Žālim branch of Fazāra. They are recorded as having moved to al-Shām, some settled in Damascus while others were nomadic in the Bādiyat al-Shām.\textsuperscript{896} It seems that some of this group attached themselves to Madhhij, some of whom had also moved into al-Shām, and altered their genealogies accordingly.\textsuperscript{897} We are also told that some Fazārī leaders were given plots near the centre of al-Kūfā.\textsuperscript{898}

As late as in the Marwānid period, the B. Fazāra were the owners of the spring of al-Hajm,\textsuperscript{899} which is supposed to have been dug by the legendary tribe of Ād.\textsuperscript{900} Ād were supposed to have lived in the same area as Thamūd, i.e. northern Hijāz. This reference to Fazāris continuing to inhabit northern Hijāz in the Muslim period does not stand alone. Fazāra are mentioned specifically as neighbours of the B. Murra in the region of northern Hijāz, after the conquests,\textsuperscript{901} and as neighbouring the B. al-Qayn of Quḍā’a in an incident taking place in the Umayyad period.\textsuperscript{902}

\textit{Abs:}

Parts of \textit{Abs} still remained in Najd after the conquests, and it seems that some groups moved westwards into the vicinity of Wādi al-Qūrā and Taymā’.\textsuperscript{903} Nevertheless, \textit{Absis} are more prominent than other Ghatafānīs in the conquest literature. They appear mainly in the east, fighting in Iraq and Iran and there are relatively few references to \textit{Absis} at the Syrian front.

One account tells of a man from the B. l-Iidm b. l-Awdh of the Ghālib branch fighting with Khālid b. al-Walid in Syria.\textsuperscript{904} But the fact that he fought under

\textsuperscript{894} Donner, Islamic Conquests, p. 402, n. 198.
\textsuperscript{895} Donner, Islamic Conquests, p. 367, n. 61.
\textsuperscript{896} Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhūra, p. 439.
\textsuperscript{897} Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhūra, p. 440.
\textsuperscript{898} Morony, Iraq, p. 249.
\textsuperscript{899} Jafshāni, Aghāni, ii, pp. 753-4.
\textsuperscript{900} Yaqūt, Mu‘jam, s.v. “al-Hajm”.
\textsuperscript{901} Jafshāni, Aghāni, ii, p. 731.
\textsuperscript{902} Jafshāni, Aghāni, ii, p. 658; also see vii, p. 2448.
\textsuperscript{903} Jafshāni, Aghāni, x, pp. 3782-3.
\textsuperscript{904} Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhūra, p. 451.
the command of Khālid, could simply mean he was part of Khālid’s Iraqi army, only temporarily active in Syria. We are also told that the B. Qumayr b. Māzin were later an ahl bayt in Damascus, and that Khālid b. Barz, a descendant of the B. Yarbū b. Māzin, was governor of Damascus for al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik. Apart from this, we know also that ʿAbs were present with ʿAmr during the invasion of Egypt (albeit in modest numbers), and that they settled in Bilbīs in eastern Egypt, as well as in al-Fustāṭ. Not a lot more than this is known about ʿAbs in the west.

In the east ʿAbsis are far more prominent. During the conquests, the famous ʿṣāḥābī, Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān, was appointed by ʿUmar as governor of Kūfah. He had a very prominent role in the leadership of the eastern front during the conquests from the beginning and was leading expeditions as late as 20 years later (32 H).

ʿAbsis, more than other Ghatafānīs, were prominent at al-Qādisiyya. Each of two distinct first-hand accounts of events at the battle of Qādisiyya, found in al-Ṭabarī, are taken from "a man from ʿAbs". There are several references to ʿAbsis fighting at Qādisiyya, at Jalūlā, Nihāwand and after. One of these men was from the B. Makhzūm. Another who was killed at al-Qādisiyya was from the B. Khalaf b. Rawāḥa, the lineages of all the others mentioned are unfortunately unknown.

When Kūfah was built, most of the tribesmen in al-Madāʾin moved to the new garrison town. Of a small group which remained to garrison it, the bulk was composed of ʿAbsis. However, there were also many ʿAbsis in Kūfah. Immediately before the battle of Nihāwand, ʿAbsis and Asadīs were involved in a short mutiny in Kūfah, caused by their dislike of ʿUmar’s governor, Saʿd b. Abi...
Waqqäs. 

After Nihāwand (in 22 H) we find a cAbsí of B. Makhzûm from the Ghâlib branch, in charge of one of the outposts facing Daylam at Dastaba.

**Summary:**

Fazâra and B. Murra, in particular, are prominent in continuing to inhabit the fertile areas north of Medina. Some Fazârí bedouin are supposed to have moved further north into Bādiyat al-Shâm while some cAbsí nomads remained in Najd.

The first mention of Ghatafän in the conquests is immediately after the accession of `Umar and involved different Ghatafäní groups. Even earlier, we know from the ridda accounts that Ashja'ís were fighting with Khälid's army and continued to do so at least in the early stages of the campaign in Iraq, and presumably later as well. Of course, sahábís were involved in the fighting from an early period but always in the east.

Every main Ghatafäní group was split between groups who settled in the east and others who settled in the west. While all the groups are more frequently associated with the east than in Syria, this is especially true of cAbs and Murra. Unfortunately, not enough information on the tribal units is available in most cases to discern more clearly the patterns of migration. In the case of Tha'labâ, it could be that of its two main branches, the B. Bajâla were settled in Kūfa, while B. Rizām went to Syria. For other groups only individuals or minor units are mentioned.

cAbsís were the most prominent group in the east. They appear fighting in Iraq, Iran and Khurâsân. Fazâris from the B. Riyâḥ of Shamkh fought from an early period in Iraq and were often associated with cAli.

Ghatafâní presence in Kūfa was not as considerable as other tribes, especially immediately after it was established. Later, there must have been a sizeable migration of Ghatafânís to Kūfa. However, apart from cAbs as a whole and some lineages of the Fazârí B. Badr, Ghatafânís had a low profile in that garrison town, as will be seen later.

---

917 Tαbůrî, Ta'rîkh, i, pp. 283f.
918 Tαbůrî, Ta'rîkh, i, p. 265a. There is some confusion with the name of this person, as will be seen below. Here Simâk b. `Ubayd must have been confused for his grandfather Simâk b. Ḥazzâz.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jahiliya to Islam

The first civil war:

Ghaṭafān as a whole:

Ghaṭafān as a group appear several times in this period of upheaval. At Waqṣat al-Jamal, we find the Kūfān "Ghaṭafān" fighting amongst ʿAli’s troops.919 Later at ʿĪṣafin there seem to be groups on both sides of the conflict. In the tribal line-up at ʿĪṣafin, Naṣr b. Muzāḥim mentions Ghaṭafān on Muʿ āwiyya’s side, grouped in one unit with with Hawāzin and Sulaym.920 According to this description, Ghaṭafān cannot have been very numerous relative to other tribal groups.921 On ʿAli’s side, we find one contingent named "ghaṭafān al-ṣirāq".922

Ashja’:

All the references to Ashja’is have them fighting against the Umayyads. The B. Ashja’ are said specifically to have supported the opponents of ʿUthmān at Yawm al-Dār.923

Most references to Ashja’i individuals associate them with the Khārijis. Indeed, one of the Khārijī assassins of ʿAli was an Ashja’i.924 Farwa b. Nawfal of Ashja’925 was a Khārijī leader who decided not to fight against ʿAli at the battle of al-Nahr.926 After the death of ʿAli, he attacked the Syrians in Iraq at the head of a Khārijī army. However, the Kūfāns, now allied to Muʿ āwiyya, persuaded Farwa to affiliate himself with the Ashja’i Kūfān contingent and then attacked and defeated the remaining Khārijīs.927 This is the earliest account placing Ashja’is in Kūfa and stating that they fought for ʿAli.

Murra:

Very little mention of B. Murra is made at all. At ʿĪṣafin, the foot-soldiers of ahl dimashq were commanded by the famous Muslim b. ʿUqba al-Murri, of the

---

919 Ṭabarī, Tārikh i, p. 3179. According to Muraqqa, Iraq, p. 244, the Kūfān based parts of ʿAbs and Dhuwayyān fought for ʿAli at the battle of the Camel.
920 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, Sīfīn, p. 228.
921 See also Hindī, "Banners and Battle Cries", pp. 113-5, 116-27, where, significantly, the list of the banners and battle cries of a long list of tribes does not include Ghaṭafān or any of its subsets - on either side.
923 Bn al-Kalbī, Ḥanūbar, p. 458; Ibn Qutayba, Muʿ ārif, p. 82. It is unclear whether these were Egyptian, Kūfān or Najībi tribesmen.
924 Ṭabarī, Tārikh i, p. 3453-9.
925 See Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, Ṣīdā, iii, p. 302.
926 Ṭabarī, Tārikh ii, p. 3380.
927 Ṭabarī, Tārikh ii, p. 10.
Mālik lineage. Muslim was a close supporter of Muʿāwiya and is associated with him in miscellaneous anecdotes.

Fazāra:

Very little mention of Fazāra is made, but there were Fazārī individuals on either side.

Two incidents involved Fazāris of unknown lineages, one in Iraq and the other in Syria. One tells that when ʿAli ordered the Kūfīs to follow him to Siffin, a Fazārī tribesman accused him of ordering them to kill their brethren in al-Shām as he had done in al-Baṣra. The man was then beaten to death by ʿAli’s followers. The other tells us that one of ʿAli’s spies in al-Shām was a Fazārī.

More importantly, al-Musayyab b. Najaba of Riyāḥ of Shamk of Fazāra, was a member of the qurrah and fought at al-Qādisiya and later with ʿAli. He was one of ʿAli’s commanders at Waqʿat al-Jamal. ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada of B. Badr led an army to collect the šadaqa from the Ḥijāz for Muʿāwiya. However, an army sent by Ali and led by Musayyab b. Najaba defeated his forces but let ʿAbdallāh escape on grounds of kinship. Another supporter of ʿAli, ʿIfāq b. al-Musayh, was also from the B. Riyāḥ. He commanded the shurtat al-khamīs (شرطة الخمس) for ʿAli.

ʿAbs:

As with the conquests, ʿAbsis are the group of Ghaṭafān mentioned most frequently in connection with the events of the first civil war. Most ʿAbsis

---

928 Tābāri, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 3293; Naṣr b. Muzāhīm, Siffin, pp. 206, 213.
929 See for instance: Tābāri, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 197.
930 See for instance, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbāh, Tājīl, i, pp. 250-1.
931 Naṣr b. Muzāhīm, Siffin, p. 94.
932 Tābāri, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 3111.
933 Istahlīlī, Aghānī, xvi, p. 5732.
934 Tābāri, Taʿrīkh, i, p. 3155.
935 Tābāri, Taʿrīkh, i, pp. 3444-7. A more zealous Shiʿi Fazārī accompanying Musayyab criticized this as an act of treachery against ʿAli. This was during the period after Siffin and before the murder of Ali.
936 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jāmīḥāt, p. 338. “Khamīs” is a rarely used term but simply means ‘army’, see Lane, E., An Arabic-English Lexicon, 8 vols., London: Williams and Norgate, 1863-83, s.v. “Khamīs”. It is unclear how, if at all, shurtat al-khamīs were different from other shurtā units. However, they might have been some of the participants in a certain Waqʿat al-Khamīs, said to have been a fierce battle which took place just before the main battle of Siffin; Naṣr b. Muzāhīm, Siffin, pp. 362-4. See also the Glossarium of Brill’s edition of Tābāri, Taʿrīkh’s Amalṭes, s.v. “حرس” and “خمس”, which describes them as an elite unit. Ibn al-Nadīm clearly designates them as a specifically ʿAlid group; Ibn al-Nadīm, Fihrist, p. 249. (I am grateful to Letizia Osi for this last reference.)
mentioned were anti-Umayyad. Like Ashja, many of the B. Abs are mentioned as Kharijis.

Firstly, the famous sahabi, Hudhayfa b. al-Yaman, fought and died on 'Ali's side at Siffin. As stated before this is to be expected of most of the sahaba, and should not count as typical representatives of the tribe.

Unfortunately, the lineages of many Absis are often not mentioned by our sources. Thus, we know, for instance, that one Abs was prevented from joining the Kharijis by 'Ali himself, and that he was one of Tabari's sources for accounts of Khariji activities. On Mu'awiya's side, his messenger to 'Ali in Medina, after the murder of Uthman, was a Abs, though again no lineage is mentioned.

Even the lineage of one of the Absi Kufan leaders in the time of 'Ali is not mentioned. We are simply told his name, Abdallah b. al-Mu'tamm, and that he was amongst those did not support 'Ali at Waqat al-Jamal. According to Naṣr b. Muzahim, he had an important following in Kufa at that time. Later, Ibn al-Mu'tamm, at the head of a large group of Ghatafanis, is also supposed to have been one of two Kufan leaders who tried to dissuade 'Ali from marching against Mu'awiya. However, each of those opposed to the campaign against al-Sham was accused as a traitor working for Mu'awiya by members of their own tribes. In Ibn al-Mu'tamm's case two other Absis (of unknown lineage) denounced him. Ibn al-Mu'tamm is then supposed to have defected to Mu'awiya's side, with a handful of his followers.

The remainder of Absis who were involved in these events were either from the B. Rawaha of the Mäzin branch, or of the clans of Makhzum and Bijäd of the Malik b. Ghälib branch of Abs, as we shall see next.

B. Rawaha:

The B. Hidhyam b. Jadhima are the group most associated with the Kharijis. We are told that some Absis from Kufa were amongst those implicated in the murder of Uthman. Two of the leaders of these men group were Kufan.

---

937 Tabari, Tarikh, i, pp. 3317-8.
938 Tabari, Tarikh, i, p. 3267. However, he managed to do so later; Tabari, Tarikh, ii, p. 18.
939 Tabari, Tarikh, ii, p. 39.
940 Tabari, Tarikh, i, pp. 3020-1.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

“Absūs, one from the B. Ḥidyyam b. Rawāha.943 At al-Nahr, Shurayḥ b. Awnā of B. Ḥidyyam led the left wing of the Khārījī army where he was killed.944 Even later members of the B. Ḥidyyam may have had Khārījī leanings. One of Tabari’s later sources of accounts of the Khārījīs was Ubayy b. ʿUmāra al-ʿAbsī of the Ḥidyyam lineage.945

The lineage of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma included staunch supporters of ʿAli946 such as Aswād b. Ḥābib, a descendant of Qays b. Zuhayr, the ʿAbsī hero of the Dāhīs war. He was one of the leaders of the Ghatafānis at Siffin.947

Another leader of ʿAli’s Gḥatafānis at Siffin was al-ʿAbbās b. Sharīk from the B. Khalaf b. Rawāḥa, as was another of his kinsmen. Al-ʿAbbās fought with ʿAli at al-Jamal, at Siffin and al-Nahr.948 Finally, from the B. Ḥānẓala b. Rawāḥa was yet another leader of Gḥatafān at Siffin.949

B. Mālik b. Ghālib:

This group boasted some ʿAlids. Simāk b. al-Hazzāz950 of B. Makhzūm, governed al-Madāʾin for ʿAli. Later, under the ʿAbbāsids, his son was to support Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbdallāh during his ʿAlid revolt.951 Qabīṣa b. ʿDubayʿa of the B. Bihād was also a supporter of ʿAli.952

Summary:

Gḥatafān appears on both sides of the conflict at Siffin, but seems in the main to have been mainly anti-Umayyad, especially ʿAbs. Presumably this reflects the settlement patterns of ʿAbs, which moved mainly to Iraq.

Indeed there were ʿAbsis fighting for Muʿāwiya, but these were few and generally held low positions. In general, ʿAbs and Ashjāʿ were prominent in their anti-Umayyad positions. These were divided between Shiʿa and Khārījīs. In particular, Ashjāʿ, in general, and the B. Ḥidyyam of the ʿAbsī B. Rawāḥa were

943 Tabari, Tuʾrikh, ii, pp. 3163. Cassel, Šumhrat, ii, s.v. “Sūrūḥ b. Awnā”.
944 Tabari, Tuʾrikh, i, pp. 3369-3.
946 the Zuhayrī was linked with the Khārījīs. He was a source for Ubayy b. ʿUmāra [pseud.], who related many accounts of the Khārījīs. He was a nephew of Qays b. Zuhayr, see Tabari, Tuʾrikh, ii, p. 17.
950 On ʿAbīd b. Simāk, according to Bahādūrī, Ansābī, MSKUB, fol. 348.
951 ibn al-Kalbī, Jamhūrā, p. 448.
952 Tabari, Tuʾrikh, i, p. 3381.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafān from Jāhiliyya to Islam

associated with the Khārijīs. The Rawāhi lineage of B. Zuhayr produced important supporters of 'Ali, as did the B. Khalaf, and the Ghālibi clans of Makhzūm and Bijād.

Murra and Fazāra, are rarely mentioned in these events. Prominent amongst them were three individuals. Muslim b. Uqba al-Murri of the B. Mālik and Abdallāh b. Mas'ada of the B. Badr of Fazāra supported Mu‘āwiya, while al-Musayyab b. Najaba and Ifāq b. al-Musayh, both of the Shamkhi B. Riyāh of Fazāra, fought for ‘Ali. It is interesting that B. Badr, are not mentioned as leaders of Ghaṭafān in Kūfa at this time, a position they held under the Sufyānid and later. It seems that this position was still held by the ‘Absi B. Rawāha. Probably, some of the B. Badr were only later settled in Kūfa by Mu‘āwiya, as part of his plan to increase his support there after the death of ‘Ali.953

The Sufyānid period:

Ashja‘:

Little information on Ashja‘ is to be found in this period. Although an unclearly transcribed sentence in Tabari954 in the account of events following the battle of al-Harra, describes a conversation between Muslim b. Uqba al-Murri and Ma‘qil b. Sinān al-Ashja‘i, in which Ghaṭafān and Ashja‘ are mentioned in connection with supporting the Medinan revolt against Yazid.955

Ma‘qil b. Sinān of B. Fityān of Ashja‘, was considered a companion of the Prophet although he moved to Medina only after the death of ‘Umar. At the battle of al-Harra he was a commander of the "muhājirun" of the Medinan defenders.957 He was executed on the orders of Muslim b. Uqba after the battle.958 On the Sufyānid side, one of the lieutenants of Muslim b. Uqba in his campaign in Hijāz was an Ashja‘i.959

---

953 For this see Tabari, i, p. 1920.
954 Tabari, ii, p. 429.
955 For this see Rotter, Umayyaden, p. 48 and n. 292.
956 Rotter explains that these were not muhājirun of Quraysh but tribal migrants to Medina [Rotter, Umayyaden, p. 48, n. 292].
957 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamāhir, p. 453; Tabari, Ta’rīkh, ii, p. 413; Cusack, Gumbati s.v. "Ma‘qil b. Sinān".
958 Tabari, Ta’rīkh, ii, pp. 419-20.
959 Tabari, Ta’rīkh, ii, pp. 416, 424.
Murra:

The most famous Murri in this period was Muslim b. `Uqba of the B. Malik. He was chosen by Yazid to rescue the Umayyads in Medina in 63 H. He is said to have left his estates in `Awrân to the B. Murra, his tribe. Another Murri, the son of al-`Hasayn b. al-`Humam, the Jähili leader of B. Sahm, was received with honour at Mu`awiya's court.

Tla`laba:

A few Tha`labis start to reappear in the sources from which they had disappeared during the first civil war. Muhammad b. Jabala was a member of the minor Ghatafa`ni branch of B. Malik b. Ama, which had been incorporated into B. Tha`laba. He is named as one of the ashrâf of ahl al-shâm.

A Tha`labi poet (of Jihâsh of Bajâla) and his kin are mentioned as based in al-Kufr in the time of Mu`awiya and also in that of `Abd al-Malik. The poet himself is said to have fought with the Muslims against the "daylam".

Fazara:

B. Shamkh:

Samura b. Jundab of the B. La’y is one of the few sahâba mentioned also as being later a companion of Mu`awiya. He was settled in Basra, where he commanded the shurta, before being appointed governor of Basra under the Iraqi governorship of Ziyâd b. Abih. This was after the death of the then governor of Kufr, al-Mughira b. Shu’ba in 50 H. Samura proved his loyalty to the establishment by combating the Khârîji threat, apparently killing a very large number of them during his governorship of Basra. Samura remained governor of Basra for another six months after Ziyâd’s death in 53 H. At least one account talks of Samura as an unjust ruler.

---

960 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, p. 407; Nâyîj, p. 689; Ibn Qutayba, Mu’awirîf, pp. 298, 351; Aghâmi, i, p. 14; xi, p. 145.
961 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, p. 425.
962 Isfahâni, Aghâmi, xiv, p. 4878.
964 Isfahâni, Aghâmi, xiii, pp. 4676-82.
966 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, p. 87; Câskel, Ümbarat, ii, s.v. "Samura b. Jundab b. Hîlîb"; Isfahâni, Aghâmi, xviii, p. 6419; Grom, Sources, p. 227, n. 237; See also, Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, p. 39, for connection of Sahâba like Samura with Ziyâd.
967 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, pp. 90-1.
968 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, pp. 162-3.
was married to al-Mukhtar b. Abi 'Ubayd al-Thaqafi, the leader of the pro-"Ali revolt in Kufa during the second civil war."\(^963\)

Al-Musayyab b. Najaba, of B. Riyah of Shamkh, mentioned above as one of the *qurra* and supporter of "Ali, was also one of the leaders in Kufa who sent to al-Hasayn that they were ready to support him against Yazid.\(^970\)

**B. Badr:**

Kharija b. Hisn, brother of the infamous 'Uyayna b. Hisn\(^971\), an anti-Muslim leader in the *ridda*, was a tribal leader in Kufa in the Sufyanid era. Indeed, he is called in the sources: "sayyid ahl al-Kufa". In pre-Islamic times, his father, Hisn b. Hudhayfa, was the leader of "Ghatafan and Asa‘di" while his grandfather was the famous chieftain Hudhayfa b. Badr, known as "rabb mac‘adid".\(^972\) We have mentioned above, his raid against Medina during the Prophet’s lifetime\(^973\), that he led the Fazari deputation to the Prophet to profess Islam\(^974\), and how he was a leader of Ghatafan against the Muslims, during the *ridda*\(^975\).

His son, Asma\(^973\) b. Kharija, of the B. Badr, appears after Siffin as a member of the pro-Sufyanid leadership in Kufa. He was hated by the Shi’a, as he had aided 'Ubaydallah b. Ziyad (the killer of al-Hasayn) in tracking down and killing other important Shi’i activists in Kufa. He had to flee Kufa when it was temporarily taken by al-Mukhtar.\(^976\)

'Abdallah b. Mas‘ada, the descendant of Malik b. Hudhayfa b. Badr and a companion of Mu‘awiyah was based in Syria.\(^977\) He is mentioned as an envoy of Mu‘awiyah to the Byzantines.\(^978\) He is also one of a group sent by Yazid to Mecca to attempt to persuade Ibn al-Zubayr to recognize him as caliph.\(^979\) He is

---

963 Tabari, *Tarikh*, ii, pp. 679, 739, 743. At what stage of the two men’s careers this marriage took place is not known, yet it must have been before the break-out of the second civil war as Sanura was unquestionably a loyal Umayyad. The marriage, with its connotations for al-Mukhtar of links to the Umayyad establishment, sits comfortably amongst accusations of him being an adventurer seeking power, rather than a true supporter of the ‘Ali cause.


971 For ‘Uyayna, see above, pp. 163, 169-75, 177-8.


973 See above, p. 163.

974 See above, p. 173.

975 See above, p. 176.


977 See for instance, Tabari, *Tarikh*, ii, p. 211.


mentioned as second-in-command on a winter raid into Byzantine territory in the year 52 H,\(^{980}\) and Ibn al-Kalbi claims he headed many \(\text{ṣawā'i}f\) for Mu‘āwiya.\(^{981}\)

Other Fazārī groups:

Manzūr b. Zab̲bān of B. al-‘Usharā’ of the Māzin b. Fazāra was a leader of Fazāra during the ridda, mentioned above. A daughter of Ibn Zabbān was married to ‘Abdallāh b. al-Zubayr and was a favourite of his.\(^{982}\) According to the ‘Iqd, she was not happy and her father asked for, and received, a divorce. Also in the ‘Iqd we are told that a sister of hers was married to al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr.\(^{983}\) Another sister of hers, Khawla bt. Zabbān, was married first to Muḥammad b. Ṭaḥa and then after Waqqat al-Jamal to al-Ḥasan b. ‘Ali.\(^{984}\) Whether any of these marriages actually took place is not the issue. Rather, these stories are conveying the perceived high status Manzūr held with the post-conquest Hijāzī aristocracy; significant in the light of his involvement in the ridda.

Another Fazārī, ‘Abd al-Rahmān b. Mas‘ūd, of the Ḥarām lineage of B. ‘Adiy commanded a ṣa‘īf during the reign of the caliph Mu‘āwiya. His son, Ḥassān, was a governor of Baṣra.\(^{985}\)

‘Abs:

B. Zuhayr b. Jadhima:

One ‘Absi rāwī was a descendant of Mālik b. Zuhayr.\(^{986}\) We are told that he was a young companion of Muṭarrif b. al-Mughīra, al-Ḥajjāj’s governor of al-Madā’in in 77 H. Thus, he was privy to his meetings and discussions with Shabīb’s Khārijīs.\(^{987}\) He is a frequently used source of Abū Mikhnaf in Ṭabarī and is also used by Naṣr b. Muzāḥim for accounts involving ‘Ali in Kūfah before and during Siffin.\(^{988}\)

---

\(^{980}\) Ṭabarī, Ṭa‘rīkh, ii, p. 157.
\(^{981}\) Ibn al-Kalbi, Jami‘āt, p. 431.
\(^{983}\) Ibn ‘Abd Rabbi‘l, ‘Iqd, vii, p. 131.
\(^{984}\) Ibn Ḥadīth, Mu‘ārif, p. 112; Isfahānī, Aqḥāmī, xi, p. 4301.
\(^{985}\) Ibn al-Kalbi, Jami‘āt, p. 430; Crone, Slaves, p. 143.
\(^{986}\) See Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, Siffin, pp. 95, 250.
\(^{987}\) Ṭabarī, Ṭa‘rīkh, iii, p. 985.
\(^{988}\) Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, Siffin, pp. 95, 250.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafūn from Jāhiliya to Islam

B. Makhžūm:

In the year 43 H, more than 2 years after the death of Āli, Simāk b. Ībāyīd909 of the B. Makhžūm of Ghālib, was the governor of al-Madā'in and involved in fighting the Khārijīs.910 As mentioned earlier, his grandfather was a Ālid as was one of his grandfather's sons.

B. Bijād:

Opposing the Umayyad dynasty, was Qabīsa b. Dubayyā of the B. Bijād of Ghālib, a supporter of the Shi‘ī agitator Ḥujr b. Ādīy.911 He was arrested by Ziyād b. Ābih’s shūrta and imprisoned after the capture of Ḥujr in 51 H. His kinsman from Bijād, the famous traditioner Ribī b. Ḥirāsh, was one of the Ābsis who stood by Qabīsa until they were assured that he would not be killed or his possessions touched.912 It was a false promise; he was sent to Muṣāwiya where he was executed with Ḥujr and five others of his supporters.913

Summary:

Though little information on Ashja‘, Murra or Tha‘labā is available in the sources for the civil war, Murris and Tha‘labīs were prominent in Syria and, hence, pro-Umayyad, in the Sufyānid period.

Also, few Ābsis are mentioned. But those who are, were all Iraqis. One member of the B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma of Ābs is mentioned as working for al-Ḥajjāj’s governor of al-Madā’in. The Makhžūmī and the Bijādī who are mentioned were both pro-Ālid.

Fazāris featured in the sources much more during this period. They were prominent in Syria and usually pro-Umayyad. Of Fazāra, the two Shamkhi notables mentioned were both Kūfīs. One was a Ālid supporter from the B. Riyāḥ and the other, even though he was a saḥābī, was an Umayyad supporter from the B. La‘y.

B. Badr, based in Syria, were loyal to the Umayyads. The sudden appearance of the ex-ridda leader, Khārija b. Ḥisn, in a powerful position in

---

909 Grandson of Āli’s supporter, Simāk b. al-Ḥazzāz, mentioned above.
910 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, pp. 581 ff.
911 Isfahānī, Aḥbār, xviii, p. 64/11-4.
912 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 128. Caskel, Ğumharat, ii, s.v. “Ribī b. Ḥirāsh”.
913 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, pp. 128-143.
Kūfa, away from other members of the B. Badr, suggests that he moved there after the death of ʿAli. The establishment of his line as leaders of Ghatafān there, must have been at the cost of the ʿAbsi B. Zuhayr b. Jadhimā who led Ghatafān under ʿAli. Other Fazārī ridda leaders, such as Manzūr b. Zabbān of the B. al-ʿUsharā', remained in favour with the prominent muhājirī families of Medina; a fact which must mean he lived in that town.

The second civil war:
The Qays-Yaman and Fazāra-Kalb feuds.\textsuperscript{904}

Ghatafān is rarely mentioned as being involved in the early stages of the Qays-Yaman conflict. After the battle of Marj Rāḥīt, Yamānī verses were composed to commemorate their victory which mention the names of the defeated Qaysī contingents. In them the Ghatafānī Dhubyān are mentioned by one poet,\textsuperscript{905}, while ʿAbs and B. Badr are mentioned by another.\textsuperscript{906}

However, Gernot Rotter points out that the B. Badr mentioned in these verses were not the B. Badr of Fazāra but the B. Badr b. Rabīʿa of the ʿĀmirī group of Numayr.\textsuperscript{907} Furthermore, while we know that Fazāris and some Murris did move into southern Syria, very few Ghatafānis migrated into Syro-Jazīra, and those that did seem to have been mainly from Fazāra. It is very unlikely that ʿAbsis migrated into Jazīra in any numbers. As the Qaysīs at Marj Rāḥīt were composed of northern Syrian and Jazīran tribes\textsuperscript{908}, it is thus highly unlikely that ʿAbs was involved at all. The only evidence which suggests that they were is the single verse mentioned above. However, as ʿAbs are commonly associated with B. Fazāra, of whom the B. Badr are the most important part, it is highly possible that the poet confused the Numayrī B. Badr with the Fazārī one - perhaps not deliberately - and added the associated ʿAbs to the list of defeated enemies to inflate his tribe's victory. Thus, there seems to be no hard evidence for significant Ghatafāni participation in Marj Rāḥīt.

Later, however, a feud erupted between the Syrian based Fazāra and the B. Kalb, the roots of which were linked to the Qays-Yaman feud, triggered by Marj

\textsuperscript{904} See Dixon, \textit{Umayyad caliphate}, pp. 95-8.
\textsuperscript{905} Isfahānī, \textit{Aghānī}, xxi, p. 7479; Tabari, \textit{Taʾrikh}, ii, p. 485.
\textsuperscript{906} Isfahānī, \textit{Aghānī}, xxi, p. 7481.\textsuperscript{907} Rotter, \textit{Umayyaden}, p. 151; see also Caskel, \textit{Ghurarat}, ii, s.v. "Badr b. Rabīʿa".
\textsuperscript{908} Rotter, \textit{Umayyaden}, p. 151.
Rāḥiṭ. The accounts of this feud tell us that, during the war, the Fazārī ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada (see above) had recommended that ʿAbd al-Malik support the Qaysī tribes of Jazīra against the Kalbīs. The Kalbī leader Ḥumayd b. al-Ḥurayth learnt of this and, in response, led Kalbīs to massacre a group of Syrian Fazārī bedouin. After the defeat of the Zubayrids, ʿAbd al-Malik paid the Fazārī leadership a large sum of blood money which he deducted from the pay of Qudācā.999

However, two Fazzāri notables and Qaysī leaders, Saʿid b. ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn (from B. Badr, son of the notorious contemporary of the Prophet) and Ḥalḥala b. Qays (of the B. al-“Usharā”) used the money to buy weapons with which they equipped a Qaysī force and massacred a group of Kalbī bedouin. ʿAbd al-Malik arrested them and had them killed.1000 Apart from Saʿid b. ʿUyayna, two other men from B. Badr allegedly fought in this conflict, namely, his uncle Hassān b. Ḥiṣn and great uncle, Sharīk b. Ḥudhayfa.1001

In this time, Ḥiṣn b. Jundab, a notable of the B. Ḥarām lineage of the B. Saʿd b. ʿAdiy, was known as "sayyid ahl al-bādiya". He is specifically mentioned as refusing to get involved in the Fazārī-Kalb feud.1002 Presumably he was the officially recognized leader of the Fazzāri nomads of the bādiya. His official capacity might also explain why he refused to get involved in the Fazārī-Kalb feud.

Fazārī:

Shamkh:

Al-Musayyab b. Najaba of Riyāḥ, is named as one of the five Shiʿī leaders of Kūfah in the period after the death of Yazīd and before the rise of al-Mukhtār.1003 His group followed the saḥābī, Sulaymān b. Surad, who commanded the loyalty of the majority of Shiʿis of Kūfah.1004 Al-Musayyab was second in command at the battle of Ayn al-Warda, 65 H, when the followers of Sulaymān were defeated by Ibn Ziyād’s army. Both Sulaymān and al-Musayyab and a large number of their followers fell in that battle.1005

999 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xxi, pp. 748-8.
1000 Isfahānī, Aghānī, xxi, pp. 7489-91; see also, Yaqūt, Muʿjam, s.r. “Bamāt Qayn”.
1001 Ibn al-Kalbī, Ḥanābala, p. 435.
1002 Ibn al-Kalbī, Ḥanābala, p. 430.
1003 Tabarī, Taʾrikh, ii, pp. 497-8.
1004 Tabarī, Taʾrikh, ii, pp. 505-9.

195
A nephew of al-Musayyab, al-Hakam b. Marwân b. Najaba was also killed at `Ayn al-Warda. Kardam b. Marthad b. Najaba another nephew of al-Musayyab, was made governor of al-Madâ'in by Muṣ'ab b. al-Zubayr, and fought against the Khârijîs.

B. Badr:

Two accounts from the second civil war tell us that the leader of B. Badr in Kûfa sided with the Zubayrids, while a general in Syria remained loyal to the Umayyads.

Asmâ’ b. Khârija and other ashrāf were in the qaṣr with Ibn Muṭi’, the Zubayrid governor, when al-Mukhtar besieged it. Then, after Muṣ'ab retook Kûfa, he and the other Kûfan ashrāf returned to prominence once more on the Zubayrid side in 68 H.

'Abdallâh b. Mas'ada of B. Badr, mentioned above as an envoy of Muṣ'awiya, was eminent at the court of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwân during the civil war.

Årds:

Alid supporters:

Sa’d b. Ḥudhayfa the son of the famous Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamân, was a prominent Shi‘i in al-Madâ’in in the year 65 H. He was in touch with, and sympathetic to, the movement of Sulaymân b. Ṣurad. He led reinforcements from al-Madâ’in to Ibn Ṣurad’s army but was too late to save Ibn Ṣurad from defeat at `Ayn al-Warda. Having arrived at the scene of the defeat too late, he promptly marched back to al-Madâ’in.
Chapter 6: Banû Ghaṣṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

After this most of the followers of Ibn Ṣurad, including Sa′d b. Ḥudhayfa, turned to al-Mukhtār for leadership (66 H). Thus, Sa′d b. Ḥudhayfa, was appointed governor of Hulwan for al-Mukhtār.

Khuzayma b. Naṣr, a notable of the B. Ḥidhyam of ḍAbs, was amongst the officers of Ibrāḥīm b. al-Ashtar's force fighting for al-Mukhtār. Also amongst the supporters of al-Mukhtār was Fā′id b. Bukayr, of the minor lineage, B. Rawḥ of the Mazin division.

Establishment:

Ḥassān b. Fā′id, of an unknown lineage of ḍAbs, was an important Kūfan notable, although not specifically described as a sharīf. He was present with Ibn Ziyād as the tragedy of al-Ḥusayn was unfolding. He was later amongst the officers of Ibn Muṭi, the agent of Ibn al-Zubayr in Kūfa, fighting against al-Mukhtār's revolt. He was captured by the troops of the pro-Mukhtārid ḍAbsi, Khuzayma b. Naṣr (mentioned above), but Khuzayma allowed him to escape on grounds of kinship. He was then recaptured but again Khuzayma spared his life and set him free. Ḥassān was later involved in the rebellion of the ashrāf against al-Mukhtār and died in the fighting.

Summary:

As we have seen, it seems that Ghaṣṭafān was only involved in the Qays-Yaman feuding in a minor way, presumably as the fighting mainly involved Qays of Jazīra, who were mainly from ḍĀmir and Sulaym. In the incident of the Fazāra-Kalb feud, Ghaṣṭafān in Syria, represented by the Fazāri B. Badr, identified with the Jazīran Qays in the time of ḍAbd al-Malik, while remaining supporters of the Umayyads.

Fazāra in Kūfa, were divided during the civil war between those who joined al-Mukhtār and those who worked with the caliphal establishment, whether, Umayyad or Zubayrid. The Shamkhi B. Riyāḥ kept their ḍAlid traditions, but

---

1014 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 559.
1015 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 655.
1016 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 625.
1017 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jambūrī, p. 446.
1018 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 311.
1019 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, p. 625.
1020 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, pp. 625-6.
1021 Tabari, Taʿrīkh, ii, pp. 672, 677.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghatafan from Jam,...

Battled with the Zubayrids against al-Mukhtār, while the B. Badr nobility fought with the majority of Kūfī ashraf against the revolt of al-Mukhtār. As we will see below, they later regained their position in Kūfī with the Umayyads after the war.

Other Ghatafānīs are rarely mentioned in the war. ‘Absis from different groups with ‘Alid leanings fought with al-Mukhtār. Prominent amongst these was Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān’s son, one of the tābiʿīn, and Khuzayma b. Naṣr of the B. Hidhyam lineage who, during the first civil war, had a strong association with the Khārijis. Hassan b. Fā’id seems to have taken the same stance taken by the B. Badr of Kūfī and other privileged groups, presumably to try and keep the status quo of the Kūfī notables whether in the name of the Umayyads or in the name of the Zubayrids.

Ghatafan and the Marwānids:

Tha‘labī:

‘Abdallāh b. al-Ḥajjāj of the Bajāla Tha‘labīs is the only prominent Tha‘labī in this period. He was an Umayyad officer who joined the attempted coup of ‘Amr b. Sa‘īd b. al-‘Āṣ against ‘Abd al-Malik during the civil war. On the former’s defeat he escaped to the Zubayrid faction and, then, upon their defeat he finally managed to obtain a pardon from ‘Abd al-Malik. Ibn al-Ḥajjāj was obviously not representative of his tribal group and his actions are clearly personally motivated.

Murra:

B. Nushba:

Khuraym b. ‘Amr, a descendant of Sinān b. Abi Ḥarītha, the Jahili leader of B. Murra, is mentioned at the court of Mu‘awiya (41-60/661-80). Much later, he was allegedly also present at the court of Caliph Sulaymān (96-99/715-17) and seems to have been connected with the important al-Qa‘qā’s Khulayd

---

1022 Isḥāq, Aghām, xiii, pp. 4578, if. See Cokel, Gumbart, ii, s.v. “‘Amr b. Sa‘id (A. Ummayy)’.
1024 See above p. 134.
Chaptcr 6: Banu Ghatasfin from Jähiliya to Islam

of 'Abs.1026 His son, 'Umara, was a trusted officer of al-Junayd in Khurasan.1027 Al-Junayd lost favour immediately before his death in 116 H and this disfavour tainted also 'Umara, who was imprisoned and tortured by al-Junayd’s successor.1028 'Umara’s son according to Ibn al-Kalbi,1029 or, more likely, his grandson, according to Tabari, was Abü al-Haydhám, the leader of the Nizâris in the feuding between Yaman and Nizâr during Harûn al-Rashid’s reign in 176 H.1030

Al-Junayd b. 'Abd al-Rahmân1031 was also a descendant of Sinân b. Abî Ḥarîtha and a nephew of Khuraym b. 'Amr.1032 He was governor of Sind during the reign of the pro-Qaysi Yazîd II, until 105 H, the year of Hishâm’s ascension to the Caliphate.1033 In 111 H, he was granted by Hishâm the position of governor of Khurasân, until his death in 116 H.1034 He commanded the Muslim army in the famous battle of al-Shi‘b against the Turco-Soghdian rebellion.1035

B. Yarbû:

'Aqil b. 'Ullafa was of the Yarbû branch of B. Murra. His maternal ancestry went back to the Jähili hero al-Ḥarîth b. 'Awf of the important B. Nushba and to Ḥîṣn b. Ḥudhayfa b. Badr of Fazâra. He was, thus, considered of extremely noble blood in the Umayyad period even though he remained a bedouin.1036 Yazîd b. 'Abd al-Malik is said to have married one of his daughters while two others were married to Marwânids.1037 The sources provide some humorous anecdotes involving 'Aqil and various Caliphs, where the ignorance and the extreme pride of the bedouin are displayed.1038

1026 Câskel, Ğumhatât, ii, s.v. 'Harrîn b. 'Amar al-‘Nâ‘în'; Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1300, 1312.
1027 See for instance, Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1529, 1532-3, 1561.
1028 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1553.
1029 Câskel, Ğumhatât, i, 127.
1030 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1563; iii, pp. 624-5; Câskel, Ğumhatât, ii, s.v. ‘Amîr b. 'Umara’.
1031 Câskel, Ğumhatât, ii, s.v. ‘al- Głównîd b. ‘Abdarrahman’.
1032 Câskel, Ğumhatât, i, 127.
1033 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1567.
1034 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1527, 1564; Câskel, Ğumhatât, ii, s.v. ‘al-.surname b. ‘Abdarrahman’. See also El², s.v. ‘al-Djumayd b. ‘Abî Allah’.
1035 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1527-59.
1036 Islâmî, Aghâtîn, xii, p. 4129; see also, Ibn ‘Abî Qâlibî, ‘Ipl, ii, pp. 63-5; iii, p. 363.
1037 Islâmî, Aghâtîn, xii, p. 4429-30, 4439.
1038 For instance, Yaquût, Ma'âlim, s.v. ‘Harsha’.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafūn from Qura... 

The poet ibn Mayyāda was also linked to the Murri lands of northern ḥijāz. It seems, thus, that at least some lineages of B. Yarbūḥ had not migrated after the conquests.

B. ʾAbd:

Al-ʾAbbās b. Saʿd (or Saʿīd), of the B. ʾAbd, was the commander of the shuraṭ of Yūṣuf b. ʿUmar in Kūfa in the later Umayyad period. As mentioned earlier, B. ʾAbd had joined the B. Murra b. ʿAwf and for a while were counted amongst them.

B. Mālik:

ʿUthmān b. Ḥayyān al-Murri (of B. Mālik) was made governor of Medina between 93 and 96 H, in the last years of the reign of al-Walid b. ʾAbd al-Malik (86-96 H). He was one of al-Ḥajjāj’s men and persecuted Iraqi dissidents (ahl al-Zanāʿ) in the region of Medina. When al-Walid died in 96H, ʿUthmān was removed by al-Walid’s successor, the anti-Qaysī Caliph, Sulaymān b. ʾAbd al-Malik (96-99 H). One anecdote mentions him later as present at the court of Caliph Hishām b. ʾAbd al-Malik (105-25 H).

His son, Riyāḥ b. ʿUthmān, was also governor of Medina for the ʾAbbāsid Caliph al-Manṣūr, a sign of continuing influence of Murra in the Medina area. He was a loyal ʾAbbāsid, in charge of tracking down and rooting out the ʾAlid political leaders, and was eventually killed by a supporter of Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiya in 145 H.

103 See above, n. 306.
104 See al-Kalbī, Jawabat, pp. 415, 421. See also Crone, Slaves, pp. 149-50.
106 See ibn ʿAbd Rabbāḥ, Ḥadīth, i, p. 255.
107 Tahārī, Taʾrikh, ii, pp. 1256-61.
108 Tahārī, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1291; ibn ʿAbd Rabbāḥ, Ḥadīth, i, pp. 255-6. For a broader picture of Suḥaym’s political Kennedy, Prophet and Caliphs, p. 165.
109 Tahārī, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1737.
110 See al-Kalbī, Jawabat, p. 422; Tahārī, Taʾrikh, iii, pp. 143, 162, ff.
111 See Tahārī, Taʾrikh, iii, pp. 176-81, 189-92, 195-9. Ghurafānūn in Medina in general are described as loyal to or at least hostile to the ʾAbd; see Isfahānī, Aṣbaḥi, ii, p. 755.
112 Tahārī, Taʾrikh, iii, pp. 421-2.
Other groups of Murra:

A Murri, al-Walid b. Bulayd, was of the ashrāf and was in command of the shurta of Mawsil before being promoted as its governor by the Caliph Hishām. Of other unidentified Murris who worked for B. Hubayra, one was a governor of Kūfa under 'Umar b. Hubayra, another was a companion of Yazid b. 'Umar b. Hubayra, and either one or two others commanded the shurta for them.

B. Murra are mentioned in Khurāsān as being close to the governor al-Junayd b. 'Abd al-Rahmān (see above). One was sent by al-Junayd as a messenger to the Caliph.

Fazāra:

Most Fazāris outside of Iraq mentioned hitherto seem to have been established in Damascusa or at any rate near the Caliph. In this period, we find many more Fazāris associated with al-Jazīra. Some were insignificant soldiers on duty on the Byzantine border, while others held important positions.

B. Badr:

The most important member of the B. Badr in this period was Asmā’ b. Khārija b. Ḥisn, who became one of the most prominent Qaysi leaders in Kūfa during the time of al-Ḥajjāj. His daughter Hind is said to have married ‘Ubaydallāh b. Ziyād, then Bishr b. Marwān and then al-Ḥajjāj (i.e. three Umayyad governors of Kūfa). He is counted in the ‘Iqd as one of the three most generous men of that town. Two of his sons, however, are reported to have been jailed by al-Ḥajjāj; ‘Umayna b. Asmā’, for unknown reasons, and Mālik b. Asmā’, twice, one of them at least for embezzlement during his governorship of Isfahān. Asmā’ was a typical Kūfani sharif. He is named as

---

1050 For instance, Fazāris mentioned in ‘Abd al-Malik’s time [Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xi, p. 4633].
1051 See, for instance, Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 3791, where a Sultan asks for his aid in al-Kūfa.
1052 For instance, Fazāris mentioned in ‘Abd al-Malik’s time [Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xiii, p. 456].
1053 See, for instance, Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 4360, where a Sultan asks for his aid in al-Kūfa.
1054 See, for instance, Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xii, pp. 3528-39; xxiii, p. 3607-08; see also Tabari, Taʾrīkh, ii, p. 713.
1055 Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xiii, p. 217.
1056 Iṣfahānī, Aghānī, xii, p. 217. Unless ‘Umayna here also refers to Malik.
one of the men who denounced Kūfān killers of 'Uthmān to al-Ḥajjāj. However, an account in Ṭabari describing the much earlier hunt for 'Alīids in Kūfā by 'Ubaydallāh b. Ziyād, shows us that Aṣmā', while a loyal Umayyad, identified with the Kūfān ashrāf and not with the ahl al-shām.

In Syria, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Masʿāda, an important leader of the Syrian B. Badr under Muʿāwiya (see above), seems also to have kept his status at least into the early Marwānid period. He was given command of a sābīfū on the Byzantine front in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik. A descendant of his brother (see ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿāda above) was a governor of Egypt under Marwān II, immediately before the ʿAbbāsid uprising.

B. Hubayra:

In the late Umayyad period the family of ʿUmar b. Hubayra of the Sukaynī lineage of the B. Saʿd b. ʿAdiy, were very powerful and wealthy in al-shām.

ʿUmar b. Hubayra, of B. Saʿd of the ʿAdiy branch of Fazāra, first appears in Ṭabari as a high ranking officer in an army sent out by al-Ḥajjāj to fight Shabib, the famous Khārijī leader, in 77 H. Later in that year, he is mentioned again holding high rank in an army composed of units from different regions and as specifically belonging to the ahl al-shām contingent. In the year 97 H, he commanded a sea-raid into Byzantine territory. In 98 H he was an officer in Māsmālā b. ʿAbd al-Malik’s army which raided deep into Byzantine territory.

In 100 H, he was appointed by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as governor of al-Jazīra. In 102 H, he led a large scale raid into Byzantine Armenia. Later, in the same year, he was promoted to the governorship of Iraq and Khurāsān. His followers flattered him by calling him sayyid qays. In the reign of ʿUmar’s successor, the pro-Qaysi Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (101-5/720-4), ʿUmar b.

1060 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, i, pp. 3655-6.
1061 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, pp. 270-3.
1062 Bu al-Kallāh, Jamāhīr, p. 433.
1063 See Crone, Slaves, p. 191.
1065 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, p. 974.
1066 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, pp. 286-7.
1067 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, p. 1306.
1068 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, pp. 1415-6.
1069 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, p. 1319.
1070 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, p. 1474; Azhī, Taʾriḥ al-mansūrī, p. 16.
1072 Ṭabari, Taʾriḥ, ii, p. 1455.
1073 See Kennedy, Prophet and Caliphatism, pp. 106, 107.
Hubayra was appointed as governor of both Basra and Kufa. 1074 He was eventually removed from office by Yazid’s brother and successor, Hisham, on his accession, 1075 as were many other Qaysis.

Two decades later, the Hubayra lineage returned to prominence with the pro-Qaysi and final Umayyad caliph, Marwan b. Mu‘ammad. The son of ‘Umar b. Hubayra, Yazid, governed Kufa and Basra for him, while Yazid’s son, al-Muthanna, was in turn appointed as governor of al-Yamama. 1076 Yazid is also mentioned as having previously been governor of Qinnasrin. 1077 He was killed by the ‘Abbásids. 1078 Another son of Yazid’s, ‘Abd al-Wahid, led the defenders of al-Ahwāz against the ‘Abbásid armies in 132 H. 1079

Shamkh:

Hāshim b. Ṣafwān b. Marthad b. Najabā (Marthad and his more famous brother Musayyab are both mentioned above) of B. Riyāh from Shamkh was governor of Fars for ‘Umar b. Hubayra. 1080 An important change from the hitherto consistently pro-‘Alid stance of this lineage.

Other groups of Fazāra:

‘Adiy b. ‘Arta of B. Khizāma of an unknown lineage of the ‘Adiy branch, was of the ahl al-shām. 1081 He is mentioned as one of Mu‘āwiya’s commanders after the civil war. 1082 ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz appointed him as governor of Basra. 1083 ‘Adiy was an enemy of Yazid b. al-Muhallab and was imprisoned by him when the latter rebelled against Yazid b. ‘Abd al-Malik and captured Basra, in 101 H. 1084 He and a son of his were later executed by the son of al-Yazid b. al-Muhallab. 1085

---

1074 Bu Qutayba, Mu‘ārif, pp. 404, 408.
1075 Bu Qutayba, Mu‘ārif, p. 365; Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1467.
1076 Bu Qutayba, Mu‘ārif, p. 391; Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1876, 1913.
1077 Ṣu‘ud al, p. 380.
1078 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, iii, p. 21.
1079 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, iii, p. 21.
1080 Baladhuri, Ansāb, MṣB, fol. 381.
1081 Bu ‘Abd Rabbādh, ‘Iṣbah, i, p. 82.
1083 Bu Qutayba, Mu‘ārif, pp. 362-3; Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1346; Yaqut, Mu‘jam, s.v. “Nahr ‘Adiy b. ‘Arta”.
1084 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, pp. 1478, 111; Ṣu‘ud al, p. 368.
1085 Tabari, Ta‘rikh, ii, p. 1469; Asch, Ta‘rikh al-mu‘āsid, p. 12.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

`Abs:

B. Hidhyam b. Jadhīma:

Khuzayma b. Naṣr of the B. Ḥidhyam (mentioned above fighting with the Shi'i Küfans in the civil war) was one of the leaders of the qurrā' in `Abd al-Rahmān b. Mikhnaf's Küfīn force, fighting the Khārijis on behalf of al-Ḥajjāj. Presumably, this co-operation with the Umayyads was forced upon him after the Umayyad victory in the second civil war.

His son Naṣr, however, showed the traditional stance of this lineage during the revolt of Zayd b. `Āli. Zayd, we are told, would stay with different people when he came to Kūfa, one of whom was Naṣr b. Khuzayma in the B. `Abs quarter of Kūfa. During the revolt, Naṣr fought, was killed and crucified with Zayd.

One poet, Abū al-Shaghb of B. Ḥidhyam, criticized the Marwānids whose Fazārī governor, Yazid b. 'Umar b. Hubayra had killed al-Walid b. al-Qa'qā' (of the B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma) - Yazid, pointedly, is referred to as al-Qaysī, rather than al-Fazārī or al-Ghaṭafānī.

B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma:

Of the lineage of al-Ḥārīth b. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma, al-Qa'qā' b. Khulayd became the most prominent of the B. Zuhayr in the Marwānīd period. His father and uncle were pro-Umayyad ashrāf in al-Shām. Indeed, `Abd al-Malik was married to his daughter, who was the mother of the Caliphs al-Walid I and Sulaymān.

We first hear of al-Qa'qā' in a prominent position when he was the secretary of al-Walid b. `Abd al-Malik (his grandson). His son, al-Walid, was an officer in the Syrian army. In 111 H, al-Junayd (see above) appointed al-Walid b. al-Qa'qā' to Herat. Later, al-Walid was appointed by Hishām over

1080 Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 876.
1081 Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 1087.
1082 Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 876.
1083 Naqī'ī, p. 384.
1084 Ibn al-Kullāb, diwan, p. 442; Baballaur, Ansāb, MSBakht, fol. 386. The latter reads al-'Akhwas for Ibn al-Kullāb's al-Qa'qā'. See Isḥaqq, Aṣḥāb, iii, p. 1199 where the Caliph Sulayman defends one of his 'Abi al-Khattāb from ridicule by the poet al-Ḥārīth b. Khalid b. Makhzum; see also Naqī'ī, p. 384. Nevertheless, while al-Walid as caliph was pro-Qaysī to a certain degree, Sulayman was a supporter of al-Yaman, see Kennedy, Prophet and Caliphat, pp. 101-5.
1085 Casteel, diwan, ii, s.v. "al-Qa'qā' b. Hulail"; Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 857; see also, Crowe, Slaves, pp. 105-6.
1086 At least he is mentioned as raiding in al-Rauḍa in 110 H. See Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 1524.
1087 Tabari, Ta'rīkh, ii, p. 1524.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Qinnasrin and his brother ʿAbd al-Malik b. al-Qaʿqāʾ was appointed over Ḥims.1054

During his governorship, al-Walid b. al-Qaʿqāʾ had ʿUmar b. Hubayra flogged. Thus, Yazid b. ʿUmar, who later gained favour with Yazid II, had the B. al-Qaʿqāʾ tortured and put to death.1055 This may have prompted the B. al-Qaʿqāʾ to assist the Caliph Hishām in his failed attempt to have one of his sons replace al-Walid b. Yazid as the official heir to the Caliphate.1056

Later, in the early ʿAbbāsid period, one of the B. al-Qaʿqāʾ held a military position. Another is mentioned later as hosting Ibrāhīm, the brother of Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiya, immediately before his rebellion in 145 H. This was in their lands in Syria.1057

B. Nāṣib b. Hidm:

Qurra b. Sharik was governor of Egypt for al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik from the year 90 H. He remained governor until his death, 5 or 7 years later. His brother was governor of Qinnasrin at about the same time.1056

Summary of Ghaṭafān in Marwānid times:

The main role in this period was played by Fazāris and ʿAbsis, while Murrīs played a more modest part. B. Yarbūṣ of Murra were mainly based in their traditional pre-Islamic lands near Wādi al-Qurā, as were some of the B. Nushba. Murrīs are also mentioned in Khurāsān, confirming their earlier involvement there. Others of B. Nushba had moved to al-shām, where they produced important officers for the Umayyads. The sources do not mention any Murrīs amongst anti-Umayyad groups.

Within Fazāra, the early Marwānid period is dominated by the Iraqi B. Badr, led by Asmāʾ b. Khārija. They surpassed by far their brethren in Syria in prestige. While remaining loyal Umayyads, they clearly seem to have adopted a Kūfīan identity. The B. Hubayra, though, were the most powerful lineage of Fazāra in later Marwānid times, rising to high rank through a very successful

1054 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1783
1055 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1784 For a slightly different version, see Crone, Slaves, pp. 105-6.
1056 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1742
1057 Tabari, Taʾrikh, iii, p. 281. See also Crone, Slaves, p. 106.
1058 Tabari, Taʾrikh, ii, p. 1201, 1205; Yaḥyūn, Muṣḥuf, s.v. "al- Futūḥ" under the section headed "Jāmiʿ" Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ; Crone, Slaves, p. 125, 126.
army career, at a time of increasing Qays-Yaman factionalization. `Umar b. Hubayra was a staunch Qaysi, as was his infamous son, Yazid.

The effects of the Qays-Yaman polarization of the Umayyad military can also be seen elsewhere. `Adiy b. Arţā was another military man of Fazāra caught up in the politics of Qays and Yaman. Also, for the first time in this period we find a Shamkhi of B. Riyāḥ serving the Umayyads under `Umar b. Hubayra. It may be that the traditional `Alid position of the Riyāḥis did not survive the Qays-Yaman polarization.

The B. ʿAbs appear to be playing a smaller part in this period. The B. Zuhayr, prominent in Kūfa before the first civil war, are invisible there after the second. The only lineage to become prominent under the Umayyads, was one which had established itself in Syria. Interestingly, this group seem not to have been pro-Qaysi in their politics and were loyal followers of Hishām, who remained for the most part of his reign above factional rivalry. When and how this lineage moved to Syria is unfortunately unknown.

One group to remain unchanged in their politics is the B. Hidhyam. Traditionally, ʿAlid (see above) they are indeed forced to accept the authority of al-Ḥajjāj after the Marwānid victory. However, their ʿAlid loyalties (or anti-Umayyad interests) are seen again during the revolt of Zayd b. ʿAlī.

Profile of Ghatafān in Islamic times:

Ghatafānī migrations after the conquests:

After the ridda, many Ghatafānī groups joined in the conquests and moved to the newly conquered territories. Many Murris and Fazāris either stayed in their hereditary lands or went to Syria. A few Fazāris went to Kūfa, while Murris also are known to have migrated to Khurāsān. Many Ashjaʿis also stayed in Najd, while some went to Egypt, Syria and Kūfa, although not in significant numbers. It seems that the group to migrate in largest numbers were the B. ʿAbs. Some ʿAbsis went to Syria, others went to Egypt or stayed in Najd, but the majority seem to have moved to Kūfa, Iraq, Iran and Khurāsān.

Some of the important Ghatafānī lineages of pre-Islamic times were prominent in urban Syria and Iraq after the conquests. It seems that the nomadic

---

1099 See Kennedy, Prophet and Caliphs, pp. 108, ff.
groups who migrated to Syria carried on with few problems, perhaps as there was no forced settlement. The nomadic groups who settled in Kūfa, however, must have been under severe pressures to conform to a very different lifestyle. It is significant that the B. ʿAbs, who were the main Ghaṭafānī nomadic group to settle in Iraq, boasted relatively high numbers of Khārijī supporters, as did most other major nomadic groups in Iraq, such as the B. Tamīm or Shaybān.

The noble pre-Islamic lineages:

The elite groups of B. Badr from Fazāra, B. Zuhayr from ʿAbs and B. Nushba of Murra all had high status in the pre-Islamic accounts. This prestige continued into the Islamic period. Even though Nushba remained mainly in northern Hijāz and thus lost all political significance, it did not lose social status. B. Badr settled in Syria and maintained its prestige there, while the B. Zuhayr migrated to Kūfa and were the most noble Ghaṭafānī group there. During the Civil war, each of these two groups adopted the political stance of their region. The B. Zuhayr who supported the defeated ʿAlī were thus eclipsed by the B. Badr who moved into Kūfa, presumably as part of Muʿāwiya's policy to increase his support there. Later, the B. Badr in Kūfa remained prestigious but as with other Kūfān notables lost their political power under the Marwānids.

Meanwhile, one group of the B. Zuhayr, the B. al-Qaʿqāʾ, appeared in Syria after the second civil war, and quickly rose to prominence amongst the supporters of the Umayyad dynasty. In the ʿAbbāsid period they still had social prestige, although little power. Similar to the B. al-Qaʿqāʾ, were the Hubayra lineage of B. Sukayn of Fazāra, of a lineage distant from the B. Badr.

We can detect a few patterns of behaviour amongst the various Ghaṭafānī lineages in the Muslim period. The groups associated with the Muslims in Medina from an early stage and who had little or no pre-Islamic prestige, or sharaf, tended to be anti-Umayyad. Examples of these were Ashjaʾ in general, the B. al-Yamān and B. Ḥidhyam b. Jadhīma of ʿAbs and the B. Riyāḥ of Shamkh of Fazāra. Mainly these groups migrated to Iraq. All these groups included ʿAlid supporters, as well as many Khārijīs and followers of al-Mukhtār.

A rare example of early Muslims with pre-Islamic sharaf is Samura b. Jundab of the B. Laʾy, whom we see was a strong supporter of Muʿāwiya.

Yet the groups with pre-Islamic sharaf were not unified in their political stances. An important division was a regionally imposed one. Those who migrated to Syria supported the Umayyads, those who went to Iraq were
generally anti-Umayyad during the civil wars, but also anti-Khariji and usually fought against al-Mukhtar’s popular revolt in Kufa. Many co-operated with the Umayyads when conditions were stable, such as the Qays lineage of the Absi B. Zuhayr b. Jadhima, or the B. Makhzûm of the Ghâlib branch. Compare these with the lineage of al-Hârith of B. Zuhayr who migrated to Syria and only ever appear as pro-Umayyad.

These patterns can be seen to follow those of the different interest groups of the early Muslim period described by Martin Hinds.¹¹⁰ What is important to stress, here, is the fact of the independence of small kinship units of single lineages, and the apparent disappearance of the tribal solidarity of pre-Islamic times altogether.

Loss of Ghaṭafānī identity:

In the Muslim period there was no affiliation to a group beyond the lineage (at least on a functional level). In the later Marwânid period there begins to be loyalty to the broader group of Qays. No noticable co-operation between Ghaṭafānī lineages has been found, although these lineages did co-operate with other Qaysī groups. This change in identity is reflected in the lines of a Absi poet, who refers to the Fazāri governor, Yazid b. Umar b. Hubayra as al-Qaysi, rather than al-Fazāri or al-Ghaṭafānī.¹¹¹ I will discuss this issue further in the following chapter.

Ghaṭafān’s loss of status:

In the broadest terms, Ghaṭafānīs seem to have decreased in prestige and power from pre-Islamic times. The pre-Islamic material, paints a much more dominant and powerful picture of Ghaṭafān than the Islamic sources. This must be partly due to the gradual loss of tribal identity as a result of urban based Islamization. However, it should be noted that within the Qays Aylân group, Ghaṭafān lose importance especially when compared with Sulaym and Bâhila, who were far less prominent in pre-Islamic times. This is also true when compared to tribes from other confederations, such as their weaker pre-Islamic neighbours and allies, the B. Asad, who gain much importance in Islamic times. This could stem from the fact that Ghaṭafān was a larger group and thus was far

¹¹¹ Naqī’id, p. 390.
less cohesive than smaller groups. However, the more cohesive sub-groups of Ghaṭafān also suffered a similar fate, and the one tribe of Ghaṭafān which seemed to remain strong in fighting numbers and express a fair degree of solidarity to the end of the Umayyad period was ‘Abs; a mainly Kūfan-based tribe more associated with opposition to the Umayyads and thus, in retrospect, bound to lose in status.
Chapter 6: Banū Ghaṭafān from Jāhiliya to Islam

Ghaṭafān: Continuity and Change

The fates of lineages within B. Taghlib in Islamic times are obscured from us to a great degree in the literary sources. In particular, one cannot make a definite statement about changes within Taghlib’s tribal system. However, with Ghaṭafān, the behaviour of different lineages is more apparent. Regarding continuity and change from pre-Islamic into Islamic times we can make the following general comments.

The relatively high degree of co-operation between lineages within the Ghaṭafān group in pre-Islamic times compared to those with lineages from outside indicates that one function of the 'tribe' of Ghaṭafān in pre-Islamic times was to act as a conceptual framework to facilitate military alliances between the lineages of its membership. This did not exclude alliances with lineages outside the group. Rather, it made those within it immediately approachable. This system of a 'potential' tribal confederation was found amongst other groups, such as the B. Āmir to the south and the B. Tamīm in the east.

Such potential confederations were necessary to try to combat instability brought about by the expansion of permanently maintained groups such as the Kindis, Ghassānids, Mundhirids and Muslims, or indeed other short term confederations. The focal points of such potential confederations were specific lineages with sharaf, who had the resources to maintain their confederations as cohesive forces for temporary durations.

The coming of Islam weakened this system by enforcing inter-tribal stability. In this way, loyalty to the pre-Islamic tribal groups gradually became secondary to new interests and ideologies. As we see amongst the Ghaṭafānī groups, small single lineages remained as the corporate groups of Arab society but they had no need, at least initially, to resort to tribal confederations of the old sort. To be sure tribal loyalty within a region remained strong but was affected greatly by the local circumstances. In other words, the pre-Islamic tribal co-operation group was no longer the primary focus of loyalty in the Islamic period. In a sense, traditional āṣabiya was being made subservient to provincial...
economic and political interests. Such new conditions meant that regional forces came to the fore at the expense of the pre-Islamic tribal groups above the family or close lineage level.

This new foundation of competition between the tribesmen was eventually to lead to the polarization of the Arab military between the "Nizār" and "al-Yaman". The process of this transformation left many marks on the recorded genealogies of the tribesmen who were involved in these events. This transformation will be the focus of the next part of this thesis, based largely on an examination of genealogical writing.
PART III

Arab Tribalism 'from Jähiliya to Islam'
Overview

The historical component of the pre-Islamic cultural heritage has already been discussed in Part I. Here, we will examine the genealogical part of that heritage and how it may have developed as it entered the Islamic period, in the light of the changes undergone by the tribal groups examined in Part II. As genealogical development was a reflection of the development of tribal society and, indeed, political and factional identity, this will lead us to comment on social and political transformations taking place in the early Islamic period.

Various new conditions - brought about by the expansion of Islam - affected the tribal system. It appears that the change came in two stages, separated by the period of the early conquests. The first was the disengagement of tribal lineages from their 6th c. CE framework of tribal alliances, which began during the late Prophetic period, and the second was the gradual reversion of lineages to dependence on such tribal alliance systems. As a result of the post-conquest shifts in interests and influence of lineages, the new alliances, while not unconnected to pre-Islamic tribal past, took on a form quite distinct from them.

Tribal genealogies inherited from pre-Islamic times, were standardized in the early Islamic period having undergone severe changes, due to political, religious and demographic factors. A closer look at the early Muslim genealogies will reveal the many marks of this manipulation and may help us to understand better the social and political upheavals of the early Islamic period. It is important first to gain an understanding of the function and nature of genealogies. A very important aid in understanding the versatility and symbolic nature of tribal ancestors and genealogical links is to be found, once more, in anthropological works of modern Arab tribes.

The following chapter, Chapter 7, has three parts. The first examines the dynamic features of tribal genealogies amongst modern Arabian tribesmen. This will be followed by a discussion of evidence of changes undergone by Jähili and early Islamic genealogies. The last part will discuss the effect of Islam on the pre-Islamic Arabian tribal system as expressed in the genealogical system.
Indeed, Hugh Kennedy's article, "From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arabic Genealogy", has already explored the avenue of genealogical development in early Islam in the light of observations of modern tribal genealogies. Thus, here, I will be concentrating in a little more detail on evidence for the dynamic nature of pre- and early Islamic genealogies. Also, an important part of this discussion will be concerned with the details of the process of, and motivations behind, the creation and adjustment of genealogical links during and after the conquests, and their reflection of social and political attitudes of different lineages.

\[1102\] Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy".
Chapter 7
Genealogies and Tribalism
'from Jähiliya to Islam'

I) Contemporary Arab Tribal Genealogies

Despite the tribal view which claims that genealogies reflect true biological relations, we learn from anthropology that at certain levels, genealogies reflect the social, political or economic realities of different tribal lineages. Naturally, these realities are liable to change over time but, rather than remaining outdated, tribal genealogies are capable of changing in order to reflect new tribal realities.

Examining the descriptions of the various ways in which this change occurs enables us to inspect with more clarity similar transformations taking place in the early Islamic period. This is not to say that anthropological interpretations may be directly mapped onto historical tribalism, rather, that such interpretations may provide us with guidelines for using early Islamic genealogical material.

The function of genealogy amongst modern tribes:

It is now accepted that socio-political imbalances and changing socio-economic circumstances result in some rewriting of tribal genealogies on the higher levels. For instance, in about the mid-18th century, the north Arabian tribe of Rwala conquered the territory they now control in northern Arabia. When they did so, they entered a new region with a different ecology and a different tribal population and, for the first time, found that they had settled states for neighbours. The genealogies of the Rwala have been preserved from the period before this migration, and it can clearly be seen that their resettlement in these new territories - and the resultant imbalances brought by
the new conditions - resulted in changes in the upper levels of the Rwala's genealogy. \textsuperscript{1103}

Anthropologists differ somewhat as to the precise nature of motivating factors of genealogical change as well as of their relative importance. Some stress the political aspect of tribal genealogies: "among various traditional peoples all over the world, genealogies frequently have political dimensions. But unlike all other parts of the world, genealogies in the Near East, and especially those in the tribal Near East, tend to have a solely political dimension." \textsuperscript{1104}

Others tell us that tribal genealogies have important non-political functions as well. Often these are related to tribal mediation and patronage. In particular, tribesmen who interact frequently with different groups, whether influential tribal leaders or traders, need to know the accepted genealogical relationships between eponymic ancestors, since they reflect certain important tribal relationships. \textsuperscript{1105}

Another important practical function of genealogies is to identify territorial rights, and regulate tribal access to pasture. \textsuperscript{1106} One study shows that sometimes tribal groups may be referred to by a female ancestor at a certain level of their genealogy. The female ancestor defines rights to territory and is distinct from the relationship expressed by a male ancestor. The author of this study believes that "a female eponym at the apex of a tribal genealogy indicates that while tribesmen claim rights to pasture in an area of subsistence, they have not established a corporate organization and leadership over the whole area." \textsuperscript{1107} Amongst this group of bedouin, ancestors in the lower levels of tribal genealogies (i.e. those linking cohesive tribal units to higher eponyms) refer to corporate groups, while those on higher levels mostly stand for territorial divisions. \textsuperscript{1108}

It can be seen that a variety of practical circumstances influence changes made to tribal genealogies. The question is how exactly does change

\textsuperscript{1103} E. Marx, "The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence: Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East", \textit{American Anthropologist}, 79/2 June (1977), p. 348.
\textsuperscript{1105} Preisch, \textit{Tribe}, p. 312.
\textsuperscript{1106} Marx, "Unit of Subsistence", p. 351. In serious droughts, this right of access given to kindred may be withdrawn, and in times of war the kindred tribal groups are not obliged to support each other.
\textsuperscript{1107} Marx, "Unit of Subsistence", p. 354.
\textsuperscript{1108} Marx, "Unit of Subsistence", p. 359.
occur to a tribal genealogy without undermining its credibility in terms of claiming to reflect reality?

**Shifting genealogies amongst modern tribes:**

Following from the above, we can say that, theoretically, the Arab tribesmen hold genealogies to be fixed and binding, whereas in reality, genealogical realignment is quite common. A typical occurrence resulting in a need for such realignment is when individuals or small groups migrate into different tribal territory and associate with the host tribe. The specific term for these migrants in the ancient Arabic tradition as well as in modern tribal Yemen is *naqā'il* (transfers).\(^{110}\) In general, changing tribal allegiance occurs as a result of a lack of tribal support to the seceding section or tribesman.\(^{111}\) Shifting the genealogy of a tribal subset may occur also in order to maintain the conceptual link between close patrilineal blood relationships and long term close co-operation. Thus, two co-operating groups, who are connected genealogically only remotely, often become genealogically 'closer'.\(^{111}\) Conversely, groups may become genealogically more 'distant' from each other when they become physically separated for lengths of time or when one of them becomes 'closer' to a hitherto un-related group.\(^{112}\)

**The mechanism of genealogical change:**

In his work with the Rwala tribe of north Arabia, Lancaster has examined the process of genealogical realignment in some detail. According to him, the patrilineal genealogies within the broader tribal group are known (to some) and unchangeable, at least in theory. However, there is a 'genealogical gap' between the eponyms of corporate lineages - called by Lancaster 'minimal sections' - and those of the tribal sections to which these groups belong.\(^{113}\) The various minimal sections which make up the tribal section are simply seen as equal units within the larger group. There is no genealogical description

\(^{110}\) Dresch, *Tribes*, pp. 78, ff.

\(^{111}\) Dresch, *Tribes*, p. 332.

\(^{111}\) Lancaster, *Rwala*, pp. 24-35.


\(^{113}\) Lancaster, *Rwala*, p. 26. According to Lancaster, the minimal section is a corporate group, and to outsiders, at least, is responsible for the actions of anyone of its members.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jāhiliyya to Islam

linking them to the tribal section's eponymic ancestor. One important function of this genealogical gap is to enable the splitting or coalescing of minimal sections, when necessary.\textsuperscript{1114} Obviously, the adjustment of genealogies is difficult if the lineage is a famous one with a widely known attachment to a certain tribal section. But amongst less important lineages realignment may usually be accomplished quite smoothly, over a period of time.\textsuperscript{1115}

Lancaster does not show if this genealogical gap is also used to re-attach minimal sections to other tribal sections. However, this seems to be the case in tribal Yemen. Amongst the tribes of highland Yemen, Paul Dresch notices a similar genealogical gap between the ancestors of the village subset, the bayt (equivalent to Lancaster's minimal section), and the eponym of the whole village (equivalent to Lancaster's tribal section). In some villages there were certain bayt known to be naqā'il. This means that migrating families had joined the host village by simply slipping in under the genealogical gap.\textsuperscript{1116} Prior to this, the migrants would usually have had marital relations with the host village or would have been connected by other personal ties.\textsuperscript{1117}

Genealogical shifting on the higher levels:

The above describes genealogical adjustment amongst modern tribesmen at a particular level; namely, between tribal subset/village eponym and minimal section/bayt eponym. The following is an example of genealogical shifting at a much higher level, amongst Yemeni tribes, where we know many tribal names have continued in use for centuries. Below, two 4th/10th c. territorial descriptions of Yemeni tribal groups and their constituent subsets are compared to the same group-names existing today.

The earliest detailed description of the Yemeni tribes and their tribal geography is given to us by al-Hamdāni (d. 334/945). Dresch compares the descriptions in al-Hamdāni's works to his own observations, and those of other modern anthropologists of tribal Yemen, in an effort to examine features of

\textsuperscript{1114} Lancaster, Rva:n, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{1115} Lancaster, Rva:n, pp. 24-35.
\textsuperscript{1116} Dresch, Tribes, pp. 277-8.
\textsuperscript{1117} Dresch, Tribes, p. 290. Musil, however, gives an interesting example which illustrates that genealogies might not always shift with no objections. He quotes a tribesman as referring to another tribesman who has gradually become attached to the group: "His ancestor was not, at a remote period, our relation on the father's side; how he could now be our paternal cousin?" [Musil, A., The Manners and Customs of the Rvaha Bedouin: a Topographical Itinerary, New York: American Geographical Society, 1928, p. 46]. However, this is only to be expected and does not alter the importance of the mechanism itself.

218
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jāhiliya to Islam

change in the tribal system. It appears that certain tribal territories seem not to have changed at all over the 1000 year period. For instance, the two present day major parts of Sufyān - Ruhm and Šubārah - are also mentioned by al-Hamdāni. While some of Sufyān’s sections of al-Hamdāni’s day no longer exist, and internal territorial divisions have changed, the territory of Sufyān as a whole is the same as it was in al-Hamdāni’s time. In this case, it is the subsets of the B. Sufyān which have 'updated' their genealogies, not the geographical tribal marker of Sufyān.

In al-Hamdāni’s time, another tribe, Wāda’ah, occupied the area today occupied by the B. Šuraym, while the B. Šuraym mentioned by al-Hamdāni formed only a subset of Wāda’ah. Today, it is Wāda’ah which is a subset of the B. Šuraym. Most of the other sections of al-Hamdāni’s Wāda’ah now have the same names and occupy the same territories; the main difference being that they are all now part of B. Šuraym on a par with the modern Wāda’ah. All in all, al-Hamdāni’s Wāda’ah seems simply to have exchanged places with its then subset, the B. Šuraym.

Dresch describes the necessary steps for such a process as thus: firstly, the B. Šuraym must have been separated definitionally from Wāda’ah. Then, the other sections would have left Wāda’ah and joined B. Šuraym as subsets of it. Finally, these subsets would later have been followed by what had remained of Wāda’ah under that name. Importantly, none of the subsets would have physically moved.

Although as mentioned above, important lineages cannot usually change their own famous genealogies within their tribal group, it is members of these lineages who, as tribal representatives, are usually responsible for changes on the higher levels. This must occur either directly through political or strategic agreements made with outsiders by tribal group representatives, or indirectly, as a result of tribal action (migration, war, etc.) which are also directed by the famous lineages.

1114 Dresch, Tribes, pp. 322-3.
1119 In this case, it seems logical to assume that two parts of Wāda’ah became rivals. Perhaps it was this rivalry which prompted the other parts of al-Hamdāni’s Wāda’ah to join the B. Šuraym. The rivals of B. Šuraym, perhaps al-Hamdāni’s “Ablf”, which have disappeared in modern times, but occupied the land that present-day Wāda’ah now occupy [see maps in Dresch, Tribes, p. 327] then became known as Wāda’ah to distinguish their older from the newly formed one based on B. Šuraym.
1120 Dresch, Tribes, p. 328.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jāhiliya to Islam

It would seem that genealogies (both patrilineal and matrilineal) reflect, in a complex manner, a number of the most essential realities of a tribe. These are formed by remoulding previous relationships - socio-economic, political, demographic or even biological. The higher up the level of the genealogy, the more the eponyms reflect a reality of societal magnitude and importance rather than the biological truth. Conversely, not only is the part of genealogy close to a tribesman too recent and well remembered to remould away from biological reality, but it is a definition of his most essential social, political and economic kinship group. In between these two genealogical levels, there is sometimes a gap. This genealogical gap usually distinguishes between true biological relationships and those which have been remoulded to reflect a continuing, or past, relationship of societal importance. The function of this gap is to manage the higher parts of the genealogies within minimal sections and keep them in tune with current practical realities.

An important point is that tribal genealogies define various obligations and rights of tribesmen on the individual and group levels. Occasionally, these obligations and rights change, or need to be changed. Thus, genealogical adjustment serves to reflect tribal realities and practical necessity onto the most important tribal reference framework, that of the genealogy. Details of how systematic genealogical change may have been on the higher genealogical levels are not entirely clear. On the intermediate level, however, we find a subtle system of genealogical change based on a 'genealogical gap' amongst groups as different as the north Arabian bedouin and settled Yemeni highlanders.

Ancient parallels with these particular modern tribal features are given by Fred Donner in his study on the pre-Islamic Bakr tribes. It is hoped that this brief overview of functions and versatilities of modern Arab tribalism will be useful as a conceptual context in which to examine the ancient tribal system and associated genealogies.

1121 Donner, "Bakr", see esp. section ii, pp. 8-16.
II) Arab Tribal Genealogies
in the Pre- and Early Islamic Period

As with modern tribes, the upper echelons of tribal genealogies compiled in the early Islamic period are not a reflection of biological links, they are reflections of other tribal relationships. Thus, political alliances, territorial divisions and other information from this period may be reflected in the genealogies. Because of this, genealogies may allow us to learn something about the history of these tribes at the rise of Islam.

Before this can be attempted, we must look more closely at the historical importance and structural nature of the anṣāb (i.e. genealogical) material in this period. The importance of the anṣāb and the history of the development of the Arabic genealogical tradition, as part of the pre-Islamic tradition as a whole, has been briefly described in Chapter 2. In this section, we will examine the structure of surviving genealogical compilations in an attempt to discern different types of genealogical material which the sources of the great genealogical collectors, such as Ibn al-Kalbi, may have used.

First, we will look at evidence of genealogical adjustments of pre-Islamic Arabs as preserved in the literary tradition, to determine just how versatile the ancient genealogies may have been.

Genealogical versatility:

In our sources for the pre- and early Islamic Arab tribes we find many reports of tribal groups adjusting their genealogies, or at least their tribal affiliation. We also find some indications of how tribal names were exchanged for others over time, leading to the development of tribal genealogies.

Natural genealogical development:

It must be pointed out that changes in tribal genealogies did not only occur as a result of conscious tribal actions. Today, even under normal stable circumstances, a corporate tribal group will usually grow until it eventually

---

1122 See Donner, "Rākr", p. 9.
splits up into smaller corporate units for practical reasons. Eventually, the name of the original tribal group - having become defunct in corporate terms - would then either be relegated to the genealogies of the new tribal units or else forgotten completely. In other words, there is regular vertical change in tribal genealogical trees. Amongst the Arab tribes this happens continuously, or at least at regular intervals. The level at which this type of name swapping occurs is usually at, or close to, the genealogical 'gap' or buffer present between the lineage or bayt eponym and that of the tribal subset.

This was also the case with the pre- and early Islamic Arab tribes. The theme of closely related groups or 'brother'-tribes becoming more distant from each other is quite common, and reflects the process of tribal expansion and division. The pre-Islamic traditions reflect an abhorrence of this division and describe numerous attempts to halt such tribal schisms from occurring, even by foreign tribesmen acting as mediators. The feuding between the two main lineages of Thaqif is an example of this. The leader of the Ahlaf branch of Thaqif was refused support from his ally, Uhayha b. al-Jallah, the Awsi leader in pre-Islamic Medina, so as not to accentuate the division within Thaqif. Similar to this was the fear of division within the B. Ja'far b. Kilab of Āmir b. Sa'sa'a expressed in the account of the famous munāfara (verbal battle of wit) between the two Ja'fari heroes, Āmir b. al-Ṭufayl and Alqama b. Ullatha. The munāfara had threatened to break out into violence, but the parties were finally reconciled by an impartial arbitrator. There are many other cases such as these in the sources.

Importantly, these accounts describe groups, said to have previously acted as corporate units, at the point of losing this unity for the first time. It is important to take this process of regular development into consideration when examining pre- and early Muslim tribal history.

Techniques of genealogical adjustment:

In addition to a 'natural' development of tribal genealogies, as described above, conscious genealogical adjustment for practical benefits or attachment of individuals to groups when genealogical knowledge was lost, is also quite commonly reflected in the genealogical literature.

1124 Ibn al-Athir, Kamili, i, p. 680.
1125 Ibn al-Athir, Kamili, i, p. 598.
'Pruning' and 'grafting':

The anthropological works have described the system of genealogical readjustments at the specific level of the smallest tribal units. In the early Islamic period, it seems that a similar technique was used by genealogists, but on all the genealogical levels. This method simply involved 'pruning' an individual or a tribal unit (as well as part of the accompanying genealogy) from one genealogical branch of the tribal tree and 'grafting' it onto another.

The early Arabic literature, especially ansab material, contains many cases of smaller tribal units who left their original tribal group and joined another. Obviously, the fact that these groups are recorded to have changed their tribal affiliation means that this re-alignment was noticed and remembered. Presumably such shifting could take time to be forgotten, as it must sometimes do in modern times.

Importantly, this genealogical instability did not only involve little-known groups or individuals but even some well-known figures. Thus, for instance, was Samura b. Jundab of Fazara, who was a famous šahābī and later an Umayyad governor. Despite his prominent position in the Muslim ruling elite, his genealogy is preserved differently in Balādhuri's Ansāb al-ashrāf than in Ibn al-Kalbi's Jamharat al-nasab. Ibn al-Kalbi has him as a descendant of the B. La'y of Shamkh of Fazāra, while Balādhuri has him of the B. al-'Usharā of Māzin of Fazāra.

This is a common example of how groups were either confused due to name similarities, or else deliberately mixed using similarities in existing genealogies. The point with Samura is that both genealogies agree until they reach a certain ancestor, 'Amr b. Jābir. The name sequence, 'Amr b. Jābir, appears in both the genealogy of the B. La'y as well as that of the B. al-'Usharā, as an ancestor of other groups and individuals.

Thus, it seems that the known genealogy for Samura stopped at the level of 'Amr b. Jābir. Only later was it appended to one or the other groups.

---

1127 See the case of the B. Bender, given in Lancaster, Risāla, pp. 33-4.
1128 See Ibn al-Kalbi, Jamharat, p. 439; Balādhuri, Ansāb, MS Habit, fol. 304.
1129 Balādhuri does in fact include one extra name in his version - not an extra ancestor - but this is immaterial for this argument.
1130 In fact, 'Amr b. Jābir is supposed to have been the name of the person, from whom descended the B. al-'Usharā'. See Caskel, Jamharat, i, 130/18 and 131/18.
In other words the intermediate genealogy linking him to Fazāra was either unknown, in dispute, or simply confused. All of these options point to the weakness of individuals’ genealogies beyond a certain level, and show how individuals (and also groups), may have been 'pruned' from one tribal unit and grafted onto another. Importantly, this 'pruning-grafting' was used not only for individuals but for the genealogies of the ancestors of great tribal groups such as Madhhij and Tamim. This particular example is discussed further below.

Similar name association:

Another way of associating different tribal units occurred when they had similar names. Thus, there is the pre-Islamic tradition of the Thaʻalīb which states that three groups with the same name of B. Thaʻalaba were affiliated at some point in the past. In Islamic times, this theme is also used. We find it in the plan of tribal distribution for Kūfa, where only one of the two main branches of the Ghatafānī B. Thaʻalaba b. Saʻd, the B. Bajāla b. Māzin, are mentioned as receiving a plot of land. This, they allegedly shared with the B. Bajāla of Sūlāym. Other examples exist, but it remains unclear why such associations were made at all. If the Kūfan example were true, then perhaps the reason to join together such groups was a purely administrative one, and similarity of names was as good a reason as any other to link unrelated groups. More plausibly, such similarities of tribal names may have simply been attractive material for later writers more interested in literary patterns than in historical accuracy.

Matrilineal links:

A typical topos found accompanying the genealogy of a tribal group describes the mother of a tribal eponym remarrying whilst pregnant with this eponymic ancestor. Thus, the tribal eponym is born into a different tribal group. This topos is sometimes used to explain differences over tribal lineages, which resulted from contested tribal realignment, often in the Umayyad period. Other times, this topos must have acted as an explanation of

1131 See above Chapter 6, pp. 145-6.
1132 Tabari, Ta’rikh, i, p. 2490. The Sulami group were, according to Ibn al-Kahlī, called the B. Bajla. Interestingly, Bajla is described as the mother of the sons of Malik b. Thaʻlabar [See Caskel, Qumranat, i, 125; ii, s.v. "Bagla"].
associations (whether social, political or geographic) between patrilineally unrelated groups.  

**Types of genealogy:**

It can be said that there are three levels of genealogies preserved in the surviving early Arabic genealogical tradition. All of these levels are used in conjunction with each other in extant genealogical compilations.

The middle level is composed of the descriptions of genealogical links starting from the eponyms of tribal groups which are assumed to be corporate in the sources - such as Ghaṭafān, Taghlib, Āmir, Tamīn, etc. - down to the eponyms of their smallest tribal sections. These, I will refer to as tribal genealogies.

Below the smallest tribal section eponyms, there are usually found sets of genealogies of individuals starting from the individual upwards, referred to here as individuals' genealogies.

The highest level is similar in narrative style to the middle group and is merged with it in one genealogical narrative. However, it is conceptually different, in that it links the eponyms of supposedly corporate tribal groups to the two symbolic 'fathers' of the Arabs, 'Adnān and Qaḥṭān (see Appendix 1, charts 1.1 and 2.1), and indeed sometimes includes the links between these two eponyms and Biblical genealogies. The genealogies at this level are referred to as macro genealogies.

**Tribal genealogies:**

Within a tribal group, the basic descriptive format is top-down, starting with the tribal ancestor and working down recursively through his 'sons' to the level of the eponyms of the smallest tribal units and no further. Often the

---

1133 Such a *topos* is used to stress 'Aasi links with Asad, by claiming that Jadhumah b. Rawahah's biological father was Asad, see Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jumhūr*, p. 441, as mentioned earlier, in Chapter 6. The *topos* is also used to explain the 'confusion' over Qaḥṭān's descent [see Baladhuri, *Awaṣa*, i, p. 15].

1134 The term 'macro genealogies' is taken from Kennedy, *Arabic Genealogies*, pp. 541, ff.

1135 For ancestors with *hujrah* (honorifics), it is quite common to parse the genealogical 'narrative' and explain the 'historical' situation which led to the use of this *hujrah*. See for instance the immediate descendants of the Āmiri subset eponym, Ḫūfar b. Khābī [Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jumhūr*, p. 344]. This has the effect of 'historicizing' these figures, some of whom may have been mentioned in collections of Jahili lore outside of the genealogical literature. However, this is not
name of the 'mother' of any important link and 'her' patrilineal genealogy is also mentioned, to show links to other tribal groups. This layer of genealogies spans the several group identities of practical significance which any tribesman may have. Sometimes information on a tribal group is given, such as the location of their territory or any genealogical re-alignments.\textsuperscript{1136}

These genealogies are presented in the format of Biblical genealogies. The following partial genealogy exemplifies the typical format. It is extracted from Ibn al-Kalbi's \textit{Jamhūra} and describes the tribal group of Zayd Manāt of Tamīm.

\begin{quote}
"Wulad Zayd Mentor b. Tamīm b. Muṣrā begot Saʿd and Mālik and 'Awf (who is [known as] Mukassir) - and they [form part of] B. Ḥimān b. ... b. 'Abd Manāt - and Thaʿlabā ... and Mubashshir and Jānh ([who all] died out) - the mother [of all of these] was al-Mufdā bt. ... b. Asad - and Imrūʿ al-Qays ([who form part of] B. 'Awf b. Saʿd) and 'Āmir (and they are few and [form part of] B. Mujāshi b. Darim - the mother [of the latter group] was Riqāš b. Kabīr b. Ghālīb from Jarm of Quḍāʾa.\textsuperscript{1138}

After this, the narrative moves on to describe the extensive list of descendants of B. Mālik b. Zayd Manāt (who include the famous Tamīmī line of B. Darim) followed by B. Saʿd (whose descendants include the famous B. Muqāʿāsīs lineage), then B. 'Āmir and finally B. Imrūʿ al-Qays (both of whom are numerically insignificant). The same narrative method of describing the lineages as in the above example is maintained.

\textsuperscript{1136} For a more detailed description of the need for different levels of tribal identity in a nomadic society, see Cuskell, \textit{Gumharat}, i, pp. 23-4.


\textsuperscript{1138} The sons of Zayd Manāt are in bold.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jähiliya to Islam

We notice that the groups which are said to have died out (Tha‘labā, Mubashshir and Janḥ) are not described any further, but nor are the B. ʿAwf who did not. Presumably the latter were unknown to the source or were considered to be a insignificant group.

When the smallest tribal sections at the bottom of these genealogies are reached and if any important individuals are known to belong to these smallest units, then the narrative changes in form to describe each individual, as will be described in the next section.

Finally, when all the parts of Zayd Manāt have been described, including the individuals, the description of the next branch of Tamīm is described in the same way.

Individuals’ genealogies:

When the genealogical narrative has reached the smallest tribal units we find a change in the method of presentation. Instead of continuing in a top-down fashion, as described above for the tribal genealogies, individuals are mentioned with a full genealogy in the form of fulān b. fulān b. etc., (i.e. bottom-up). This genealogy usually connects with the eponym of the smallest tribal section, where the tribal genealogy had stopped. For instance, following Ibn al-Kalbī, the descendants of the patronymic, Fazzāra of Ghaṭafān, are named, branch by branch (recursively), stopping at various tribal subset eponyms. If we look at what comes after one of these smallest tribal sections, such as the tribal group eponym of Sukayn, we find:


1140 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamāhira, p. 429. has the contradictory "Muʿāwiya" instead of "Muʿayya". The correct name is also found in Bahāshari, Ansāh, MSRabat, fol. 371.
1140 Ibn al-Kalbī, Jamāhira, p. 429.
Yazid b. 'Umar is the notorious Marwānid governor, while according to Baladhuri Jamīl was "one of their notables".\textsuperscript{1141} This format is typical throughout the work for individuals. Even ancient poets or heroes such as the famed al-Muhālhil or Kulayb of Taghlib, who are relatively high up in the genealogies, are preceded by the formulaic \textit{wa min bani fulūn} rather than being placed in the higher tribal genealogy.\textsuperscript{1142}

The individuals listed may be early Islamic figures, as Yazid b. Hubayra above, or pre-Islamic figures. The genealogies are usually interspersed with some brief biographical comments, especially with the more prominent tribesmen. However, the biographical information on tribesmen can usually be found in other sources, usually in more detail, depending on the importance of the individual.

\textit{Macro genealogies:}

We now come to the third and highest level of the early Arab genealogies; that which connected all the Arab tribes together. The basic structure follows that of the 'tribal genealogies' described above and indeed, unlike the separate genealogies of individuals, is merged into it. Typically these genealogies start from the two 'fathers' of the Arabs, 'Adnān or Qaḥṭān and then move down until they reach the eponyms of supposedly corporate tribal groups.

One distinguishing feature of this type of genealogies is that, for many of them, more than one version will be found in the early sources. This mainly stems from the fact that they were the object of much moulding and rewriting in the early Muslim period. This genealogical level has special significance in that it is at the heart of the question of Arab identity in the early Muslim period. The post-conquest development of this level of the Arab genealogies and the nature of tribal identity in the early Muslim period will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

\textit{Summary:}

The pre- and early Islamic genealogies were not fixed. There was a 'natural' development of genealogies occurring continually, at least at a certain

\textsuperscript{1141} Baladhuri, \textit{Ansāb}, MSBalut, fol. 371.
\textsuperscript{1142} Ibn al-Kalbi, \textit{Jawharān}, p. 508.
genealogical level. In addition, there were often deliberate changes made to the genealogies of tribal units, for practical needs, whether in the more prominent patrilineal links, or in the least prominent but equally important matrilineal ones. Other associations, such as those based on similarity of names, also occurred, though less frequently and for less clear reasons.

Three levels of genealogies are encountered in the earliest surviving Arabic genealogical works. The first group describe the links between the subsets of supposed politically corporate pre-Islamic groups, and these I have termed tribal genealogies. Working downwards from the tribal group eponym (usually a politically united group in the Jähili traditions), ancestors were named spanning all known genealogical links until the smallest recorded tribal subsets. This type of genealogies, formed the core of Arab genealogical science. It is these links which would have been the main focus of attention of tribal genealogists since time immemorial. Naturally, these links, especially at the lower levels, would have been somewhat fluid, and regularly updated.

Beneath these, was another set of genealogies, all independent and concerned with single individuals. They worked upwards from the individuals, and normally stopped once they reach the first tribal subset eponym. In genealogical works these were generally placed in sequence after the mention of the smallest tribal subset to which they belong. Such genealogies are also very common in Jähili material describing individuals, as well as in early Muslim material, such as sīra works and collections of tribal lore. Individuals listed within a genealogical work would have been the figures most famous or best known to the genealogist at the time he was reciting or recording a tribal genealogy. The genealogies of individuals were never included in the genealogical narrative above. This is obvious, as an individual would normally be forgotten as time passed. Occasionally the descendants of an individual would take up his name as their eponym. In this case, the individual would then be placed amongst the tribal links within the tribal genealogies.

Higher than the tribal genealogies, are the macro genealogies. These are distinct in that they connect tribal groups at a level higher than apparently corporate groups of the pre-Islamic period. These levels of genealogies were of

---

1143 It is this type of genealogy that Kennedy refers to, as being "used, elaborated or invented" by various authors to explain the identities of people mentioned in poetry, ommim accounts, etc. [Kennedy "Arabic genealogy", p. 540].

1144 Within some famous lineages, it can be seen that some were. Thus, the famous Ḥudhayfah b. Ḥadhr, for instance, who is mentioned in the Jähili traditions. However, his sons are then clearly structurally disassociated from him and follow the pattern of individuals' genealogies.
little importance to the tribesmen before Islam. Some vague and simple connections to far away ancestors did exist, but the complex genealogies which are found in the earliest extant works of Arab genealogy only came with Islam: Islam brought with it a need to define a more elaborate structure at this level as a result of political and religious developments.
III) Tribalism 'from Jähiliya to Islam'

As they did with the pre-Islamic traditions, the Muslim conquests and consequent tribal migrations transformed the tribal system for those tribesmen who had participated, as well as for their descendants. Initially, the conquests did not affect the tribal identity and system of loyalty, rather, it created new conditions in which the same system operated. Yet over time, there was a rise in the importance of regional identities and religious or political ideologies, which occurred at the expense of the tribal identity. This is clear from the way historical accounts themselves change, as they portray events from before the conquest period until the 'Abbasid period. As we pass through time, the accounts mention tribal group names less frequently until eventually they die out, except as Umayyad factional labels or in rare references to the tribesmen who kept the old way of life in the Arabian interior. This is true also with the tribal identifications and nīsbaq of individuals, which are always mentioned in the Jähili and sīra material, but afterwards decrease until they are rarely used in the later Umayyad and 'Abbāsid periods.

This transformation was a gradual process, occurring over a period in which a great many events of crucial importance took place. This section examines evidence for macro genealogies of pre-Islamic times, and explores the changes made to them with the coming of Islam.

The standardizing of early Arabic genealogies:

A certain description of the macro genealogical structure became accepted and standardized amongst the genealogists, at least from the beginning of the second Muslim century onwards. This structure had certain tribes descending from Qahtān and the others from 'Adnān, or his descendant Nizār b. Mā'add.

To be sure, there is disagreement in our sources regarding the placement of several tribal groups and lineages. Scattered in the sources are numerous genealogies for tribal units or individuals which differ from those standardized by the major genealogists. Often they claim that certain tribal groups really belonged to Mā'add and not to Yaman. Thus, for example, we find for Quḍā'a the alternative genealogy of Quḍā'a b. Mā'add, which is a common counter-version to this group's claimed affiliation to the Ḥimyar...
branch of Qaḥṭān. Another important genealogy is one claiming that Yamanī Kinda were in fact Maʿaddi, thus, we have Kinda b. Junāda b. Maʿadd.\(^{1145}\)

Despite this evidence of varied genealogical opinion, the binary division of the Arabic genealogy was itself not disputed, nor was the relative relationship of most major tribal groupings within the two genealogies. Even some modern historians have involved themselves in arguments over whether various tribes were Qaḥṭānī ('Southern'/Yamanī) or ʿAdnānī ('Northern'/Maʿaddi/Nizārī) before Islam.\(^{1146}\) That all tribal groups must have been affiliated to either group in pre-Islamic times pre-supposes that these two divisions existed then, and, moreover, that tribal genealogies always extended back to them. These two assumptions need to be examined further.

'Arab' identity before Islam:

Ideas of common descent:

The different Arab tribes did have notions of kinship between themselves before Islam. Discussing the society of the pre-Islamic Arabs, Goldziher states that "at the centre of [their] social consciousness stood the knowledge of the common descent of certain groups."\(^{1147}\) Khalidi also believes that the Arab tribes were conscious of a common origin, even though many of the genealogies they gave for their tribal eponyms were incompatible.\(^{1148}\)

While Khalidi may be right that all the Arab tribes thought that they exclusively ultimately descended from a single ancestor, he offers no proof for his statement. Furthermore, such a statement requires first a definition of who exactly constituted an Arab tribe; were the settled non-Arabic speaking Ḥimyar considered 'Arab' in pre-Islamic times? Goldziher is right to stress that some groups of tribes were indeed supposed to have been of common descent, expressed in the form of genealogies going back to a common ancestor. On the other hand, it is mistaken to think that a common unifying genealogy for all the Arab tribes was in existence in pre-Islamic times. Even when united by Islam, the tribes did not develop a single unifying genealogy.

---

\(^{1145}\) Iṣfahānī, Aḡhānī, xiii, p. 4381. See Kahlūn, Muṣṭaṣma, s.v. "Junāda", where Junāda b. Maʿadd are a tribal group associated with Ḥumār Dhu Kinda. See also Kister, "Gaskel's Gharaybat an-manṣab", pp. 56-8.

\(^{1146}\) For a discussion of the arguments amongst the early genealogists on this matter, see Jawwād ʿAlī, Muṣṭaṣma, iv, pp. 419, ff; Crone holds the view that Qaḥṭān was originally from Maʿadd (Crone, Slaves, pp. 34, ff).

\(^{1147}\) Goldziher, Muslim Studies, i, p. 45; see also, pp. 164-5.

\(^{1148}\) Khalidi, Historical Thought, p. 5.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jähiliya to Islam

Amongst modern Arabian tribes kinship links above the level of the tribal group eponym are imprecisely defined and only reach up to within a tribal confederation's highest genealogical boundaries. There are indications that this was also the case in pre- and early Islamic times. Below, we shall explore this position, and suggest some pre-Islamic macro genealogical links older than those standardized in Muslim times.

Was there a North-South divide in pre-Islamic Arabia?

There exist very few ayyām which involve tribes of supposed 'Southern' descent fighting against tribes of supposed 'Northern' descent. Even tribal group names of a lesser order, such as, Rabī'a, Quḍā'a, Qays, etc., are only infrequently pitted against each other.

Inscriptional evidence tells us that tribal group names such as Ma‘add and Nizār, Madhbij and Muḍar did exist before Islam, but this does not necessarily mean that they constituted the same tribes before as after Islam (or the conquests). Indeed, Nizār and Ma‘add - the former of whom is considered the son of the latter in Arabic genealogies - are mentioned together in South Arabian inscriptions clearly referring to two distinct tribal entities. Nor is it true that, over this period, the same expression of tribal solidarity was generated by appealing to the same divisional ancestor. In the period from Jähiliya to Islam, incorporated tribal units would have died out, come into being, or simply shifted allegiances.

Yet while it is clear that the separation between the 'Northern' and 'Southern' Arabs was not older than Islam, there was a potential for separation along these lines given favourable conditions. In fact, the division in 'Northern'/'Southern' terms probably has its roots in the linguistic division between the South Arabians speaking South Semitic languages and their northern Arabic-speaking neighbours. Christian Robin, in describing relations between the South Arabian non-Arabic speaking kingdoms in Yemen and their Arabic-speaking and generally nomadic neighbours, points out that there was a conceptual difference between the two groups, at least in the minds of the

---

1149 See Kennedy "Arabic Genealogies", pp. 532-3.
1151 Caskel, Ġamhatat, i, p. 21.
South Arabians. Thus, despite the fact that the Arabic-speaking allies of the Ḥimyarites would be associated with them genealogically in Islamic times, the underlying division can be seen to have existed originally between the Ḥimyarites and these allies. What is more is that this was originally a linguistic and, perhaps, even an ethnic divide.

The ancestor Add Udad:

In standardized genealogies several tribal groups are said to have descended through two eponymic ancestors; Add and Udad. In some sources these genealogies stop at these eponyms, and do not go beyond them. Ibn Ishāq tells us that these two eponyms were sometimes regarded as synonymous, and indeed this must have been the case. The occurrence in the higher genealogies of Murr b. Add, Murra b. Udad and ʿAdnān b. Add or ʿAdnān b. Udad, even if in different places of the same genealogy, points to this.

There are indications to suggest that certain tribes regarded Add/Udad as their highest ancestor. Indeed, Baladhuri tells us that the 'Arabs' knew their genealogies only back to Udad, who he says, was the father of ʿAdnān. Numerous links beyond ʿAdnān b. Udad/Add were created in Islamic times and were clearly designed only to link up with Biblical genealogies, as will be mentioned below.

For the 6th c. CE tribes, the association with Udad/Add is especially significant for the larger groups such as Tamīm, standardized as Tamīm b. Murr b. Add (and then up to Muḍar - see Appendix 1, chart 1.2), and for the Qaḥṭānī group descended from Udad including a group descended from Murra b. Udad (and then up to Kahlān of Qaḥṭān - see Appendix 1, chart 2.2) in the standardized genealogies. It seems likely that all of these tribes may originally have had no further genealogy beyond a link to Add or Udad, just as Baladhuri claims.

The list of these tribes is impressive, especially as it includes so-called ʿAdnānī tribes as well as Qaḥṭānī ones. Of the ʿAdnānī groups, the most

---

1152 See Robin, "Pénétration", esp. p. 81, where he describes the 5th c. Ḥimyarite state as bi-national.
1153 Robin, "Pénétration", p. 82.
1154 See Isfahānī, Aḥānī, xiii, p. 4791.
1155 Ibn Hishām, Sīra, i, p. 2; see also n. 4.
1156 Baladhuri, Anṣāb, i, p. 12.
1157 Baladhuri, Anṣāb, i, p. 12.
famous were the B. Tamím of Murr b. Add, and their 'related' groups of Ḍabba, Muzayna and al-Riḥāb from Add, though not through Murr.\footnote{See Gaskel, Ḳādhimayn, i, p. 59. Moreover, verses of al-Akhīlī, could imply that Nizār was only composed Rabī‘a and Qays, as he refers to them as the two sons of Nizār [Khâdūhuri, Aṣālah, v, p. 315 and some other place as well]. It is also clear that Khūdíf (the group which ties the Tamím group to Asd and Khinam) are never referred to as a group (except one account which records their 'creation' in the pre-Islamic period. This example of what were only ancestral links becoming political units as a result of alliances can be seen in one account, where Khūdíf was 'Khūdífīdīf' (‘ذًنْفَتْ”) for the first time. See Bayūti, Ṭawāṣh al-ṣanūb, ii, p. 529.}

From the Kahlān branch of Qaḥṭān the list is more impressive. It includes Madhīḥij, Tayyīb and al-Ash‘ar, who were all direct 'sons' of Udad. Moreover, the descendants of Murra b. Udad included the 'Lakhm, Judhām and Āmila' trio\footnote{See Hasson, i, “Juhdam”, pp. 26, ff, for this close association.} of al-Shām, along with Kinda as their 'nephew' on the one hand, and - according to a disputed version - another branch composed of Khawlān and al-Ma‘āfīr on the other.\footnote{See Gaskel, Ḳādhimayn, i, 176.} If we accept one view that does not consider the non-Arabic speaking Khawlān and al-Ma‘āfīr to be descended from Udad\footnote{See Humdūn, Ḳhil, i, 180-9, ff.}, then the sons of Udad formed all of the non-Quḍā‘ī lowland Arabic-speaking Qaḥṭānī affiliated tribesmen.\footnote{For details as to which Yemeni tribes were Arabic speaking in the pre-Islamic period, see Robin, "Pénétration", passim.}

The other important Qaḥṭānī tribes excluded from this group were the Yemeni non-Arabic speaking groups of Ḥamdān, Ḥālaḥ, Khath‘am, Bajila, Himyar and Háḍramawt; the Quḍā‘a confederation of Syria; and the confederation of al-Azd (itself supposed to have been a late joiner to Qaḥṭān\footnote{Ibid, ii, p. 529.}), with its 'Umānī and 'Asīrī branches, and its later affiliated groups of 'Akk, Khuzā‘a, the Anṣār and Ghassān.

In other words, in the pre-Conquest period, the bulk of the Arabic-speaking tribes of southern Najd and lowland northern Yemen, who were affiliated with South Arabia, as well as the extensive Tamím groups and their affiliated neighbours in the Yamāma region, were probably not connected to any of the intermediate tribal confederations effective in the Umayyad period such as Kahlān, Himyar, Muḍar or Nizār or even 'Adnān and Qaḥṭān. Instead they may have regarded their progenitor to be an ancestor called Add or Udad, sometimes associated with a 'son' called Murr or Murra. However, that is not to say that this name denoted a tribal confederation, rather, it may have represented a legendary or cultic personage.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jāhiliya to Islam

Joktan and Qahtān:

*Genesis* X tells us that Joktan (son of Eber son of Shelah son of Arphaxad son of Shem) "was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmoth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan. They lived in the eastern hill-country, from Mesha all the way to Sephar."1164 This clearly is an ancient genealogy connecting the lands/peoples of Ḥadramawt and Saba'1165 to Joktan. The "eastern hill-country" may even be the land of Ḥadramawt, if we equate Sephar to Ṣufār, which lies to its east.1166

Whether or not this Biblical genealogy stems in any way from an even more ancient South Arabian one is difficult to say. However, if not, then it is possible that the belief in the genealogical affiliation of certain tribes in Yemen to the Biblical Joktan became common after the conversion of the Ḥimyarite rulers to Judaism (ca. 380 CE).1167

In any case, whether the Hebrew version of the genealogy of the South Arabs stemmed from the latter's genealogical view of themselves, or was adopted by them at a later stage, what is clear is that the association of Qaḥṭān to Joktan was a later development, probably stemming from Islamic times. For it must be noted that Qaḥṭān was the name of a pre-Islamic tribe, found in southern Najd, and connected to the Kindi presence in Qaryat al-Ṭaw. We know this from two South Arabian inscriptions dating from the first and third centuries CE, as well as from their mention by Ptolemy in the second century.1168 After this, the tribe disappears and it does not later resurface with most other South Arabian tribes in the early Arabic literary sources.

The name Qaḥṭān is from the South Arabian root QHT, while Joktan is from the very different Hebrew root QTN. Thus, the association of the two must have been based simply on phonetic similarity.1169 Though some genealogists disassociated Qaḥṭān from Joktan and made him a son of Ḥūd b.

---

1165 There are other links in the Old Testament linking Sabaʾ to the Biblical lineage. Firstly, *Genesis*, XXV, and *1 Chronicles*, 1. have Jokshan son of Abraham (by Keturah) as the father of Sheba and Dedan. It is also stated that Cush son of Him was the father of Sheba and Raamah, the latter also being the parent of Sheba and Dedan (*Genesis*, X; *1 Chronicles*, 1).
1166 See EI2, "Budwe (80) Hedain Nomadism in Arabia".
1167 From about 380 CE the Ḥimyarī dynasty and many other great highland lineages converted to Judaism (*Robin*, "Tribus d’Arabie", p. 4).
1169 EI2, s.v. "Qaḥṭān". As mentioned above (p. 223), such naive phonetic associations were common.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jahiliya to Islam

Abdalläh b. al-Khulūd b. Ād b. Úṣ (Uz) b. Iram (Aram) b. Sām (Shem),

this must have occurred after the original link with Joktan was made, when a Qaḥṭān based on Joktan had already become a commonly accepted eponym of many Yemeni tribes.

Thus, while the eponym Joktan may have been used in South Arabia by some tribes, at the latest by the 4th and 5th c. CE, the association of this eponym with the tribal eponym, Qaḥṭān, must have occurred at a later stage.

The evidence reviewed in the above section suggests that the pre-Islamic Arabians did not always claim descent from eponymic ancestors commonly used in early Muslim literary sources to denote tribal confederations. Instead, they probably had numerous 'higher' ancestors which were either dropped out of the early Muslim macro genealogies, or absorbed into them. Two important eponyms were a Joktan - found in the Biblical tradition - for the Judaized South Arabians, and Add/Udad for at least some of the Arabic-speaking tribes in southern and central Najd. In later Muslim times, Joktan was to be Arabized and linked to one group of tribes - whose core was the South Arabian non-Arabic speaking tribes - while Add/Udad would be digested by a new Adnānī genealogy, and indeed used in different parts of it.

The initial impact of Islam:

Doctrinal influences on Arab genealogies:

Influenced by the Biblical stories in the Qur’ān and by their interaction with Christian and Jewish subjects, Muslims attempted to slot the Arab tribal genealogies into the Biblical genealogical tradition. This resulted in the invention of macro genealogical connections which could link all the Arabs together by claiming common descent from either the Biblical Ishmael (via his alleged descendant Adnān b. Add/Udad) or Joktan (who was equated to Qaḥṭān, as mentioned earlier).

1170 Ball, ibid, i, p. 4.
1171 It is unclear what the source was for the genealogical link between Arabic Adnān and Biblical Ishmael. In the Old Testament Ishmael’s descendants are not named beyond his sons, and the Muslim traditions preserve many conflicting genealogies to bridge the gap between Ishmael and Adnān b. Add Udad. See for instance, Baladhuri, Ansāb, i, p. 12; compared with Ibn Hisham, Sīra, i, p. 2, see also n. 2; and EI2, s.v., "Isma'il".
1172 Goldzahier, Muslim Studies, i, pp. 96-7, 105, ff.
But the adoption of Biblical genealogies, while emphasizing the unity of the Arab tribes as being ultimately the descendants of one ancestor, did little to affect the internal genealogical divisions of the Arab tribal family tree.

Prophetic organization and Arab tribalism:

In practical terms, Islam brought about a transformation of the system of tribal loyalty by defining a new ultimate point of loyalty common to all Arab tribesmen.¹¹⁷³ This is not to say that traditional tribalism was done away with. For tribal groups joining Islam *en masse* this only meant that an extra dimension was added to their tribal system: it became forbidden to attack other Muslim tribesmen, even though they were not close kin. Things were slightly different for those individuals who left their tribes to join Islam, especially if these tribes were anti-Muslim. But even for them, their traditional tribal ties were only temporarily suspended until their tribes finally succumbed to Medina during the *ridda*. In any case, one of the more important ramifications of the spread of Islam on the tribesmen was that disputes always had to be taken to an arbitrator; either the Prophet himself or someone appointed by him.

One important example of the effect of this is found in the *sira* material. 'Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn was one of the *al-mu'allafa qulūbuhi* who, after initial hostility towards the Muslims, had joined them at the conquest of Mecca. He was a leader of the B. Fazāra, one of the most powerful tribes of the Dhubyān group of Ghaṭāfān. He quickly became a prominent member of the Muslim tribal allies and was present with the Muslims at al-Ṭā'īf and Hunayn.¹¹⁷⁴ Indeed, we are told that he was even commissioned by the Prophet to lead a raid against a hostile Tamīnī group¹¹⁷⁵ and that he became the leader of the Muslim Ghaṭāfānī tribesmen.¹¹⁷⁶

This latter point is of specific interest, in that it illuminates the process of reorganization of Arab tribal groups and leadership as they gradually moved under the banner of Islam. The specific account which tells us that 'Uyayna had become the leader of 'Ghaṭāfān', describes the murder of a tribesman from Ashja' - affiliated to Ghaṭāfān - by a man from B. Layth of

¹¹⁷³ For a general discussion of this point, see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, 'Chapter Two: The Arab Tribes and Islam', pp. 45-47, but particularly, pp. 54-7.
Chapter 7: The Arab Genealogies from Jähiliya to Islam

Kināna. Significantly, it is ‘Uyayna b. Ḫiṣn of Fazāra, in his capacity as the leader of Ghaṭafān (i.e. Ghaṭafānī Muslims), who called upon the Prophet to have the murderer executed. Equally significantly, it is the important Tamīm, al-Aqrā’ b. Ḥābis, who defended the Laythī, on the grounds of kinship of Tamīm and Kināna through the Khindif line. Presumably, no equally important Ashja’ī or Kinānī was available at the time to uphold either claim.

It seems that Islam, even still in the Prophetic period, by placing together in single units tribesmen who had even a vague and theoretical relationship with each other (perhaps originally created for pasturage rights, or representing the memory of ancient affiliation), created conditions in which these relationships started to have a more immediate practical significance.

The conquests and migrations:

The conquests required the mustering of settled and nomadic tribal groups for war against the great Byzantine and the Sassanian armies. Before the conquests, these tribal groups were composed of many different units spread out over large areas with little regular contact with one another. The organization of the conquest armies gave a corporate existence to many parts of tribal groups, which had hitherto been only linked to each other by virtue of sharing pasturage or territory, etc. At the same time, the migrations caused the dispersal and weakening of previously politically cohesive units, and especially larger groups that were 'potentially' corporate. Thus, migration resulted in a reshuffling of many groups. These two opposite forces, the one uniting and the other divisive, played a major role in defining new tribal alliances in the newly conquered territories.

Post-conquest administration:

Other pressures were brought to bear on the Arab tribal system, in the wake of the conquests and migrations of the Muslim Arabs as a result of an

1177 At one point the narrative states that "Qays" called for vengeance for the dead man [Ibn Hisnun, Sirā, ii, p. 624].
1178 We are told that the incident took place at Humayn [Ibn Hisnun, Sirā, ii, pp. 627-8].
1179 Following Shoufany, I include the the nihda wars as part of the conquest phase of early Islamic history. See Shoufany, Richa, p. 107, ff.
1180 Ciskel, Ṣumḥrat, i, p. 27.
administrative need for extensive organization of the military system. The establishment of the diwān and tribal settlement had an important impact on the army's tribesmen.

The diwān entailed the recording of the names of those on active service and their tribal groups, in order for them to receive their stipends. Tribal settlement required distribution of plots of land which were given to tribal groups 'potentially' corporate at the time of the conquests. Both measures served to fix the names of tribal groups, as they continued to be used for practical administrative purposes even when any corporate meaning the name might have carried had long disappeared.\textsuperscript{1182}

The frozen genealogies had an important effect on the development of factionalism, as distant ancestors became the only officially recognized ones. Thus, as a result of tribal dispersal and with increasing numbers of tribesmen opting for civilian lives, it became common that only distantly related individuals served together under these fixed tribal labels.

Some tribesmen were even placed in units to which they had no genealogical relationship, purely for administrative reasons.\textsuperscript{1183} Such is the case of one tribesman in Khurāsān, who was a member of the famous Rawāhā branch of “Abs. Nevertheless, for official purposes he was regarded as a member of the Azd contingent in Khurāsān.\textsuperscript{1184}

All of these factors facilitated the escalation of tribal polarization to the highest levels during and in the wake of the second civil war. This process took place at the same time as an increasing number of Arabs in the diwān dropped out of it and started to lead civilian lives. Thus, as we will also see below, the Muslim military was becoming a professional army rather than a gigantic militia, yet it retained the original tribal nomenclature for its units. These points have already been made by Crone\textsuperscript{1185}, whose thesis about the emergence of Umayyad factionalism will be closely followed below.

\textsuperscript{1182} For the creation of the diwān and its effect on tribal groups, see Gaskel, Ṣumhārat, i, pp. 27-31; see also Kister, “Gaskel’s Ṣumhārat un-nawāsah”, pp. 50-1, 54, ff.
\textsuperscript{1183} Many individuals and small groups who were affiliated to larger ones did not like this, and there are numerous requests to the Caliph to return them to their group of origin [Alhamid, “Arab und Muhajirin”, 65 (1987), p. 25].
\textsuperscript{1184} Tabari, Ta'rikh, ii, p. 478.
\textsuperscript{1185} Crone, Slaves, pp. 37-40, ff.
The ashrāf and the state:

In addition to the freezing of tribal genealogies, the early Caliphate's use of 'official' ashrāf to act as mediators between it and the tribesmen also helped shape the nature of political loyalty, at least before the second civil war. The fact that stipends were channelled through the ashrāf to the tribesmen in one direction, meant that political loyalty of most of the militarized tribesmen was also channelled back out through them. This resulted in the monopolizing of tribal power by certain lineages. In other words, the ashrāf could wield substantial power independent of the Caliph, and consequently had to be wooed. It is only after the second civil war, that the ashrāf began to lose such power, and were subsequently dismissed and appointed as tribal representatives with far greater ease, by 'Abd al-Malik and his successors.\textsuperscript{1186}

Importantly, the ashrāf served to focus tribal loyalty within specific - and not across - regions. This factor added to the strength of emerging regional identities. Yet inevitable rivalry between groups represented by the ashrāf for resources and power within each province was to ensue from this system.\textsuperscript{1187} As a result, the provinces became the scene of tribal polarization and tribal blocs emerged within them which counter-balanced each other, especially in the all-important provinces of Syria, Kūfa, Baṣra and Khurāsān.

The split between migrating and non-migrating Arabs:

Another result of the conquests was that tribal groups were split between those who migrated to, and settled in, the provinces and underwent a major social transformation,\textsuperscript{1188} and those remaining in Arabia, who maintained their original way of life. The latter group continued to develop as tribes do 'naturally' in ways such as described above.\textsuperscript{1189} Thus, in later centuries we are told of 'new' tribes appearing in Arabia which feuded or attacked the state or moved into the fertile crescent or Egypt and beyond. Those tribes which did migrate at the time of the conquests developed differently, as we will see below. Importantly, they also continued to use tribal

\textsuperscript{1186}  Athamim, "A'rib and Muhājirūn", pp. 24-5; Crone, Slaves, pp. 30-3; see also Ep\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "Muṭawwila I".
\textsuperscript{1187}  Crone, Slaves, pp. 30-3; Ep\textsuperscript{2}, s.v. "Muṭawwila I".
\textsuperscript{1188}  It should be noted that several nomadic groups migrated into new areas, such as the Syrian steppes, but did not change their way of life.
\textsuperscript{1189}  See the section above entitled "Natural genealogical development", pp. 220-1.
names that were in use during the conquest period until these eventually gave way to mainly regional ones in the ‘Abbāsid period.

The importance of this split in Arab tribal society is connected with Crone’s view that the Ma‘add versus Yaman conflict involved only the settled tribesmen within the Umayyad army. Before examining this further, we will examine a little further this split between the tribesmen who migrated and settled in the newly conquered territories and those who did not.

Non-migrating tribes and the higher genealogies:

Amongst those continuing the pre-conquest way of life, such as Arabian bedouin, higher level genealogies could be seen to have little significance. Consider an alternative genealogy for the B. Murra of Ghaṭafān as recorded by Yāqūt, describing them as the owners of a territory in Arabia. Instead of the more common genealogy found in the Jamhara, which gives Murra b. ‘Awf b. Sa‘d b. Dhubyān b. Baghiḍ b. Rayth b. Ghaṭafān, this tradition simply refers to the B. Murra b. Wabara b. Ghaṭafān. It is difficult not to see the name ‘Wabara’ as being merely a description of this group’s nomadism. Perhaps, this term merely denoted the bedouin of Murra.

The distinction between tribal groups involved in the politics of the Umayyad age and those left behind in Arabia is important to note. For the polarization and factionalism of the Arab ‘tribes’, which will be discussed later, was fundamentally a phenomenon brought about by the establishment of the Umayyad regular army, which held on to its tribal nomenclature, and not to the Arabs who remained in Arabia and carried on living under a true tribal system, even if the latter were occasionally caught up in it.

Army tribesmen and nomadic tribesmen in the sources:

Incidents in the second Muslim civil war show that there was already a terminological distinction between men of the settled army, the ḥādira, and bedouin tribesmen, the bādiya, although there appear to have still been strong

1100 Crone, “Qays and Yemen”, p. 42.
1101 See the examples in Kennedy, of this same feeling amongst modern tribes [Kennedy, “Arabic Genealogies”, pp. 533-7].
1102 Gaskel, Jamhurat, i, 92.
1103 Yaqūt, s.v. “Mawdū‘”.
1104 Ahl al-‘wabar was, and remains, a term designating nomads.
kinship links between the two groups. Thus for instance, we are told of a Qaysi member of the ḥādira who was blamed by a Yamani for attacking innocent bādiya, when the conflict was one between ḥādira. Also, that when some bādiya were attacked, it was ḥādira who avenged them. This suggests that by the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, one generation after the conquests, there was a definite difference in identity between the militarized and settled tribesmen serving in the Umayyad army and their bedouin kin. Yet this difference had still not quite broken the ties of kinship between the settled and nomadic parts of tribal units and, indeed, would not do so until ʿAbbāsid times.

Migration and the break-up of tribal groups:

Despite the dispersal of many tribal groups over different areas, pre-conquest tribal affiliation remained in place across these divisions, although it generally only played a background role, and did not affect regional or ideological positions. Numerous examples tell of this.

At Ṣiffin, we are told of numerous cases where tribesmen refused to fight against their kinsmen on the opposing side. Shortly after Ṣiffin, the Fazārī ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada (of B. Badr) was sent by Muʿāwiya at the head an army to collect the ṣadaqa from the Ḥijāz. However, an army sent by ʿAlī which was led by another Fazārī, al-Musayyab b. Najaba (of B. Shamkh), defeated his forces. Importantly, he let ʿAbdallāh escape on grounds of kinship.

A similar incident involved a ʿAbsī Kūfan notable (of the B. Māzin) who was an officer for the agent of Ibn al-Zubayr in Kūfa, fighting against al-Mukhtār’s revolt. We are told that he was captured by Mukhtārid troops under the leadership ʿAbsī Khuzayma b. Naṣr (of B. Ḥlidhyam), but that Khuzayma allowed him to escape on grounds of kinship. In fact, Khuzayma

---

1195 ʿIṣfahānī, Aḥkām, xx, p. 7486. This incident has already been discussed above in Chapter 6, p. 1934.
1196 It may also be that this difference underlay other ideological differences between the Khurājī tribesmen and their opponents. Conducting research into the detailed tribal origins of Khurājī supporters may shed a little more light on the causes of Khurājī disaffection.
1197 See Jalābīr, The Bedouins, pp. 483-5.
1198 See also Cone, “Qays and Yemen”, pp. 42-3.
1199 ʿṬabārī, Taʾrīkh, i, p. 3496-7. A more zealous Shīʿī Fazārī accompanying Musayyab criticized this as an act of treachery against ʿAlī. This was during the period after Ṣiffin and before the murder of ʿAlī.
1200 ʿṬabārī, Taʾrīkh, ii, p. 625.
saved his life again when the unlucky Mazni was recaptured, and again set him free.  

It can be seen that cross-regional tribal links (as established before the conquests) continued to be acknowledged in the Umayyad period - although somewhat passively - at least until the end of the second civil war. Importantly, they did not affect regional or ideological positions of the tribesmen.

The new regional loyalties:

While pre-conquest tribal loyalties continued to be of some significance in the Umayyad period they were gradually replaced in importance and priority by ties of a new sort.

"Within the space of a hundred years or less, a radical transformation had come over the political, social and economic structure of Arab tribes. Not only had many of them left their ancestral Arabian homelands for ever, but the vast majority had to relocate and to readapt to very different social, geographical and cultural environments. This process was no doubt smoother in areas relatively nearer to Arabia, but in many other areas the encounter with foreignness must have been fascinating as well as traumatic. Within the ranks of the conquerors the new regional ties were becoming as powerful as the earlier tribal ones. All this meant that the conquerors underwent a total change in their way of life within the span of one or two generations..."  

Khalidi here highlights the important feature which came to distinguish the tribes who migrated from those who stayed behind; that of regionality. The dynamism of eponyms of the Arabian nomads continued to be a reflection of harmony between geographic distribution and political cohesion, whereas the static nature of the eponyms of the migrants resulted in the increasing subordination - but not elimination - of tribal cohesion to a regional identity.

The strength of the regional identity was based on the financially decentralized nature of the Islamic state. The source of the livelihoods of the

1201 Tabari, Ta’rikh, ii, pp. 625-6.
1202 Khalidi, Historical Thought, p. 62.
men was the provincial revenue via the provincial bayt al-mal (treasury),
e the provincial diwan decided which tribesmen deserved a share of the
vince's revenue. This financial power of the provinces over the tribesmen
as the focus of much of the early Muslims' conflicts, and determined tribal
alties within the province.

A good example of the effect of regional politics on the unity of tribal
groups is found in the case of Khuza'a. Khuza'a was, like many other tribes,
aimed by both Qays and Yaman. However, unlike most other tribal groups,
Khuza'a in different regions allied with different camps. Thus, according to
Goldziher, the Khuza'a of Khurasan became Ma'addis, while those of Iraq
were Yamanis. However, this certainly did not mean that Khurasaní
Khuzawai would have been hostile to Iraqi Khuzawai.

The influence of Umayyad factionalism:

The early Islamic period witnessed the regionalization of tribalism, with
tribal solidarity expressed mainly against rival tribal groups and alliances
within the same province or region. This occurred in all the most important
Muslim provinces, and usually resulted in a stand-off within each province
between two major tribal alliances. After the second civil war, tribal groups
from different regions began to co-operate across regions. This co-operation
usually took the form of favouritism in military or administrative
appointments. The empire-wide tribal polarization which resulted from such
co-operation was facilitated by the Umayyad army becoming a voluntary force.

The build-up of alliances:

It is during the second civil war that the two confederations of ' Northerners' and the 'Southerners' are first mentioned. According to Cric
this polarization of the Arab tribes seems to have started amongst the mili
units in Syria. There were three main groups of tribes in greater Syrij
local tribes mainly grouped under the eponym of Qud'ai a were spread o

---

1203 H. Kennedy, "The Financing of the Military in the Early Islamic State", in A. Cameron, ed., *The B*
1205 Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, p. 82.
1206 Houtling, p. 54.
Yemenis or B. Qaḥṭān (composed of tribes from South Arabia, mainly Ḥimyar and Ḥamḍān) were dominant in Ḥims; and, the central Arabian Qaysi tribes were mainly settled in Qinnasrin and Jazira.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", pp. 44-5.}

Out of these groups, Qudā’a were closely allied with the Sufyānid rulers.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", p. 44.} During the second civil war, the Qaḥṭān group who had incorporated the local Palestinian tribes of Judhām, Ṣūfīn, and Lakhm, joined the Qaysis to fight against Marwān I and his Quclā`i allies (plus Kinda), but were defeated by them at Marj Rāḥit.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", p. 46.} After this, Qaḥṭān and Quḍā’ā formed an alliance, in which Quḍā’ā claimed descent from Ḥimyar, and collectively they became known as Qaḥṭān.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", pp. 44-8.}

In Basra and Khurasān similar developments occurred, although different tribal groups were involved. The main groups there were Tamīm, with a few Qaysī allies, in confrontation with the Bakri dominated Rabi’ā group, allied to the Azd ‘Umnā. Because Azdis in Syria and Kūfa had originated in Yemen, the ‘Umānī Azdis became identified as Yemenis too. The Tamīm-Qays group became known as Muḍar, and thus we have the Muḍar vs. Yaman emerging as a blanket term to cover all the factionalism of these different regions.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", p. 49; Hawting, First Dynasty, pp. 54-5.}

Increasingly, appointed governors tended to appoint officers only from their own confederation at the exclusion of others.\footnote{It is significant that in Marwānid muḥāzī the qualities of the tribe are less stressed, and those of the individual are highlighted.} This escalation of polarization, once under way, remained more or less unchecked until the Abbāsid revolution.\footnote{Crowe, "Quays and Yemen", pp. 50-57.}

It is important to realize that this tribal factionalism and process of opting for one side or another was occurring across the empire from Spain to Iran. Thus, we find later geographers such as al-Haḍānī in Yemen speaking of the tribesmen that had become Qaḥṭānīs in Ṣan‘ā’ (منذ تحتن بها) and the others who had become Nizārīs (منذ تنزز بها).\footnote{Haḍānī, Shiffat, p. 237.}
Creation of new affiliations:

Yet it is important to note that polarization of the tribal groups did not simply change existing tribal affiliations but more importantly created new ones. Crone describes the manoeuvres of various tribalized military groups of the Umayyad period to recruit non-aligned groups to one side or the other by manipulating their genealogies. Importantly she stresses that certain groups which later claimed to have descended from the Yemeni eponym of Qahtân were in fact Maʿaddis. While that is what some of the confused sources seem to be saying, there are problems with this theory.

Particularly, Crone focuses on the tribal group of Qudäʿa, whom she is convinced was Maʿaddi. Her argument for this seems is based on two main pieces of evidence. The first comes from a report concerning a dispute between Judhämis as to which of the Syrian factions of that time they should join; the Qudäʿa or the Yemeni migrants. Genealogically, this was expressed in terms of whether they should join Asad of Maʿadd or Qahtân, the former term apparently referring to Qudäʿa. The second is based on reports in the sources which simply state that Qudäʿa was Maʿaddi.

However, against the latter argument there stand equally numerous reports claiming that Qudäʿa was Yamani, or quotes of notables and poets condemning attempts to make them Maʿaddi.\(1215\) The first point is also debatable. Primarily so because the relevant account which Crone uses specifically mentions that this was an attempt to change the already existing affiliation of Judhäm with Qahtân to that with Asad, and that when Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ - who attempted this change - was confronted by a rebuttal, he immediately withdrew his claim. In fact, his acceptance of the invalidity of this argument is the purpose of this account.\(1216\) What is more is that this incident was claimed to have happened in the presence of the then Caliph, Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya\(1217\), and nowhere in the account is there a connection with

---

\(1215\) See for instance the numerous reports preserved by al-Hamdānī, al-Ikhīl, x, pp. 137-180.

\(1216\) See Crone, Slaves, p. 34, and the account to which she refers in Ishāhīn, Aqāhīn, ix, pp. 3434; Bahāūlūn, Anṣāb, i, pp. 36, ff.

\(1217\) Hassan, who also discusses this incident, stops at disputing the fact that Judhäm was linked to Yemen in pre-Islamic times, without claiming that they were descended from or linked to Maʿaddi, [Hassan, "Judhäm", p. 38]. Another article by I. Hassan, "Le Chef Judhâmite Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ", Studia Islamica, 77 (1983), see pp. 114-5, expresses skepticism over the sources for Crone’s hypothesis that Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ wished to change tribal affiliation in order to join Kalb (These prove textual proof which would not have been interesting and suggestive without). Cependant, il faut l’avancer humblement, le sentiment en doute pour toute autre hypothèse quelle qu’elle soit", p. 134. Despite this, in the same article, Hassan chooses to follow Crone’s view, thus accepting that Qudäʿa were Maʿaddi at this stage.

\(1217\) Hassan cites traditions who say the Caliph was Muʿāwiya, see Hassan, "Judhäm", pp. 30-1.
the Qudā'ī leadership, supposedly the reason for this attempted affiliation to Asad. Moreover, it would seem from the account that the attempt to claim Asadi descent by Rawh was more a way to ingratiate himself with Yazid, which may also explain the fact why Asad in particular was chosen as the connection, rather than taking a more direct route to Ma'add.\textsuperscript{1218}

Significantly, the apparent ease of invented affiliations of tribal units to Asad, Qaḥṭān, Qays, Rabi‘a, etc., leads us to conclude that there were no solidly accepted or acknowledged genealogies at this level in existence at that time. To be sure, notions of descent from an ancestor called Ma'add existed amongst some tribesmen. However, whether being Ma'addi meant leading a nomadic lifestyle, speaking a certain dialect of Arabic, belonging to a particular political confederation, or something else altogether, will remain a matter of conjecture unless inscriptive evidence is found which resolves the issue.

What is evident is that most of the links at the macro tribal level were being created for the first time, in the early Umayyad period. The bipolar genealogical divide between Ma'add and Yemen was not yet in place in order for it to be changed; it was still in the process of being created.

The co-operation of cross-regional tribal groups resulted in a single major division within the Umayyad military. As a result of their new genealogical connections, genealogical compilations primarily expressed only one division amongst the Arab tribes, rather than the several previous underlying tribal-regional divisions.

\textbf{Summation and concluding remarks:}

Finally, a comment must be made on the trends of loyalty of the Arab tribesmen in the early Muslim period. As we have seen above, there was a shift in the political loyalty of the Arab tribesmen from loyalty defined by pre-conquest tribal divisions to provincial-based tribal loyalties. In the Marwānid period, a new system of loyalty came into being, particularly amongst the members of the Umayyad military establishment, whose members seem to

\textsuperscript{1218} Asad is of course a brother tribe of Kinana from which Quraysh, the tribe of Yazid, and numerous Syrian based notables, were affiliated. This view is also shared by the editor of Humām’s Ḥild, al-Akwā‘ - see vol. x, p. 161, n. 1. Incidentally, Rawh’s claim in Humām’s account, which states that Rawh wished to be affiliated with Ma’add directly rather than through Asad, was based on him neither belonging to the Syriims or the Yemenis, which rules out a motive of wishing to associate with the Syrian Qudā‘. The exact translation is ambiguous, referring to “Reeds [basab] of al-shat‘a” and “ghaf of al-yaman”’; ghaf is a fruit tree native to Yemen; Lane, Lexicon, s.v. “Ghaf”. 248
have practically discarded notions of affiliation to any tribal division below that of the 'super-tribes'. Traditionally the view has been that there were only two rival super-tribes, Maʾadd and al-Yaman, throughout the Caliphate, but the reality is more complex.

In the pre-Marwānid period there do not appear to be any convincing arguments that there were only two distinct groups, Maʾadd and al-Yaman, in existence. In pre-Islamic times, there were macro genealogies linking diverse tribes which began to be redefined in the early Islamic period. In particular, traces of two 'forgotten' ancestors may be discerned. One ancestor, called Add/Udad, may have existed for some of the central and southern Najdi Arabic-speaking tribes and their allies, and the Judaized non-Arabic speaking Himyarites may have regarded the Biblical figure of Joktan as the progenitor of some of the Yemeni tribes. Other tribal ancestors such as Maʾadd or Nizār also existed but tribal units did not generally need to define relationships on this genelogical level, as is the case amongst bedouin groups today.

The spread of Islam changed this situation. There was a religiously inspired movement aiming to link all the Arabs to a single ancestor through Biblical lineages which may have helped strengthen an Arab national identity. Yet, Islamic doctrine itself had a negligible effect on the macro Arabic genealogies.

The first important influences on tribalism and genealogies came as a result of the conquests, migrations and settlement. As a result of the inter-tribal peace during the conquests, the need for tribal alliances dissolved, and the idea that there were 'related' lineages which could be approached immediately for support in case of external threats became dim, weakening traditional loyalty. But by no means did tribal loyalty disappear, it simply lost its position as the sole significant focus of the loyalty of the tribesmen.

At the same time, the migrating tribesmen underwent a social transformation in the process of their settlement. The beginnings of a cultural distance between settled tribesmen and their nomadic kin can be seen already in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik. At the same time, settled tribesmen, began to leave active service and lead civilian lives, and eventually the army shifted to a voluntary professional army.

Some genealogical realignment occurred during the settlement period, mainly to do with individual or group practical needs, not necessarily having a political significance. The settled tribesmen were the core of the army and thus
were recorded in the diwān according to their tribal units which existed or had just formed during settlement. As more and more settled tribesmen stopped their active service and led purely civilian lives, separation of the military from civil society increased. This helped to freeze tribal names which corresponded to active lineages in the conquest period and the once active role of tribal groups diminished. Tribal loyalty continued, but was under pressure from other strong points of identity. These were mainly regional but occasionally also ideological. Such changes further weakened traditional tribalism and the role it played in channelling tribal loyalty.

Escalated and prolonged tribal polarization on a large scale during the second civil war created tribal instability and renewed the need for tribal protection based on the co-operation between tribal groups. However, this need was reborn in a new and extremely different setting from that of pre-Islamic times. Tribal groups were widely dispersed and mixed with groups from 'foreign' tribes in region-based administrative units. Furthermore, the newly conquered provinces, where the tribesmen were now based, made available resources much greater than the Arab tribesmen ever had access to before. These resources were channelled through the hands of small privileged families and lineages. Each province had a different set of privileged lineages with different options and pools of support. With escalation of conflict cross-regional alliances were made between prominent lineages of tribal factions from different regions. This co-operation between groups across regional boundaries eventually led to the demise of tribal structures between the smallest kinship groups and the 'super-tribes'.

No longer was there an active Fazāra, let alone a Dhubyān, even within a single region. Instead, we have descriptions of networks of comrades and allies from diverse tribal backgrounds - within the genealogical boundaries of single super-tribes - united around a few individuals and their immediate kin. Such were the Fazāri 'Umar b. Hubayra, his sons and grandsons who functioned as the leaders of a network composed of other Qaysi affiliates, the most significant of whom were not Fazāri kinsmen.

After the civil war this polarization continued to escalate. This was primarily because there were no longer any intermediate levels between small lineage and super-tribe. These levels required multiple layers of loyalty which had previously helped temper escalation of violence and long-term polarization.
Concluding Remarks

The concern of the first part of this thesis was to determine whether the pre-Islamic material could answer correctly questions pertaining to the rise and fall of power amongst tribal lineages, especially in terms of tribal distribution, alignments and political power in central and northern Arabia in the century or so preceding Islam. Particular focus was placed on the the historicity and content of pre-Islamic ʿayyām al-ʿarab traditions.

It was contended that while the pre-Islamic historical prose - the ʿayyām accounts - remained textually fluid until the time of their recording, they were nevertheless transmissions of original reports. Furthermore, this fluidity was such that while it may have affected style and form it did not substantially affect certain historical elements.

An examination of the ʿayyām accounts argued that the original function of the accounts was to report genuine historical events. True, depending on the nature of the event, usually a battle, the account could be more or less historical. Generally, the more inter-tribal and less local the event was, the more accurate it was historically, at least in terms of tribal distribution, alignments and political power.

A sample synthesis between tribal hostility and tribal distribution as found in one of the major extant ʿayyām collections showed that the accounts were highly consistent in geopolitical terms. While this consistency needs to be tested further, its establishment would further strengthen arguments defending the pre-Islamic material from accusations of forgery and lack of historicity.

The second part of the thesis was concerned firstly with establishing a pre-Islamic profile for two tribal groups; secondly with tracing these tribal groups, their sub-tribal elements and individual tribesmen as they appeared in the historical sources for the early Islamic period, from the life of the Prophet until the end of the Umayyad period.

The tribal groups of Taghlib and Ghatafan were picked for examination. Taghlib were a strong group in pre-Islamic times who had lost much power by Islamic times. Furthermore they had practically evacuated territories in eastern Arabia which were under their control in the pre-Islamic period. The notion that Taghlibis were based in central Najd as some of the sources claim is false.
Ghatafān were a much larger tribal group composed of several large subsets. They dominated the northern half of central Najd and had strong relations with pre-Islamic Medina. Some Ghatafānī groups showed much tribal solidarity, and the pre-Islamic accounts show that they hardly ever fought amongst each other but against non-Ghatafānī tribal groups.

Almost all the leading pre-Islamic lineages in both groups remained influential in the early Islamic period.

In Islamic times, we find Taghlib very much in the background simply as most of Taghlib opted not to join the new order of Islam and continued outside of this order as Christians. Muslim Taghibis are encountered in the sources but they are relatively very few. The most significant event which involved Taghlib in the Muslim period was their vicious feuding with the Qaysi migrants into al-Jazīra, in the second civil war and later. Taghlibi lineages are also unnoticed by the historical sources and it is impossible to trace the affairs of any of the lineages of Taghlib in any great detail. The decision of the Taghibi leadership to remain Christian and outside of the Muslim state preserved their tribal integrity into later periods. Thus, they reemerge in 'Abbasid times as a powerful group in northern Syria under the leadership of the Ḥamdānī Taghibi lineage.

Ghatafānis, however, did join Islam on a far greater scale. As a result, various lineages from this group stand out in the sources. Ghatafānī tribal subsets are mentioned by name in the Islamic period but only during the early conquests and period of settlement in the new garrison towns, as well as in the first Muslim civil war. As late as the second civil war, Fazāris were still cohesive enough in Syria so that settled militarized groups would avenge groups still nomadic. Yet after this, Ghatafānis are only ever mentioned as individuals, and never as representing their tribal group. Close kin continued to cooperate and form micro-dynasties within the Umayyad system. However, cooperation above this level was conducted within a much wider tribal range, limited only by being within the Qaysi faction.

The final part of this thesis was an exploration of the early Arab tribal system and genealogies and their development in the early Islamic period. This was done in three sections.

The first section reviewed the functions and characteristics of tribal genealogies as described by the anthropologists of modern Arabian tribes. Of particular importance was the symbolic nature of tribal genealogies on the higher levels, as well as some of the economic and political realities they
expressed. The process by which genealogies could change in order to reflect changing economic or political conditions was also examined.

The second section explored the genealogies given in the early sources. This showed that, as with modern tribal genealogies, pre- and early Islamic genealogies were naturally dynamic and often the subject of deliberate change. The format of the classical genealogical works consisted of three basic layers. The medium layer consisted of a list of a tribe's subsections and their genealogical relationship with each other. Below this, under most of the smallest tribal units to be named were lists of the names and genealogies of the most famous individuals of the tribal unit. These lists of individuals included heroes and anti-heroes from the ayyām accounts, famous poets from pre- and early Islamic times, Muslim notables, pious men, rebels and generals. The third and highest group of genealogies were those connecting tribes to each other in a super-tribal structure. Many of these links were created as a result of the politics of the Umayyad period and primarily reflected a political stance in the Yaman versus Nizār factionalism. While the links themselves were Islamic, some of the genealogical components of many of the links may have pre-dated Islam.

The third section explored the conditions around the creation of the links on the macro level of tribal genealogies in Islamic times. There is evidence that there were pre-Islamic macro genealogies, although not on the elaborate scale preserved in the Islamic genealogical works. The religious belief in a single ancestor for humanity led to a move towards creating genealogical links to one ancestor, while the new conditions imposed by the conquests and regional settlement led to symbolic divisions within the macro genealogical structure.

Despite the weakening of traditional tribalism during and after the conquests, the smallest lineages remained the ultimate focus of tribal loyalty. However, intermediate tribal sub-divisions lost importance. Escalation of rivalry between militarized tribesmen in the Umayyad period brought about tribal co-operation of groups within the provinces. But the new conditions meant that wider tribal networks were established. Thus, loyalty was once again redirected to tribal groups, although to ones symbolised by higher eponymic labels. Cooperation between regional tribal blocs resulted in the division of the Umayyad military into two main factions and the Arabic genealogies into two lines.
Appendix 1
Maps of Tribal Arabia

The following two maps of Arabia attempt to describe roughly the significant topographic features, as well as tribal distribution in the pre-Islamic period. Tribal distribution has been printed on separate transparent sheets to avoid obscuring the topographic details.

Map 1 describes northern Arabia, while Map 2 describes its southern half. Many of the locations and topographic features in the maps are based on Cornu, G., *Atlas du Monde Arabo-Islamique à l'Époque Classique: IXe-Xe Siècles*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985, although some modern general maps of the Arabian peninsula were also used to clarify some topographic details. Tribal distribution and some of the localities are primarily based on my own research.

On the transparencies some tribal eponyms appear larger than others, this was done in order to emphasize the relative dominance of certain groups in particular areas, as it comes across in the sources. Thus, a tribal name in larger type than its neighbours indicates that tribal group's relatively greater prominence in the area.
Appendix 2
Genealogical Charts

The following charts describe the genealogical relationships between the main tribal groups discussed in this thesis. They are based on Caskel’s tabulated edition of Ibn al-Kalbi’s *Jamharat al-Nasab*.

The first set (1.1-1.4) is composed of the tribes of ‘Adnān b. Udad, or the ‘northern’ Arabs. The second set (2.1-2.2) describes the main tribal groups of the ‘southern’ group of Qaḥṭān. The third (3.1) shows the subdivisions of Taghlib. Finally the fourth set (4.1-4.5) describes the important subsets of the Ghaṭafānī tribal group.
1.1 The genealogy of 'Adnān

Udad

'Adnān

(Ma'add)

'Ask

(Nizār)

Iyād

(Muḍar)

(Rabi'ā)

(see chart 1.4)

Khindif

(Qays 'Aylān)

(see chart 1.2) (see chart 1.3)

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
1.2 The genealogy of Khindif

(Muḍar)

Khindif

Ṭābikha

Udd

Murr

Ḍabba  Tamīm  al-Ribāb

Mudrika

Khuzayma  Hudhayl

Asad  Kināna

Quraysh

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
1.3 The genealogy of Qays

(Qays Aylān)

Sad

Qasafa

(Jadîla)

Adwān Fahm Ikrima Muḥārib Ghaṭafān (see chart 4.1)

(Aṣūr)

Bāhila Ghaniy

Manṣūr

Māzin (Hawāzin) Sulaym

Sa'd Mu'āwiya Thaqīf

Naṣr Jusham cĀmir b. Saṣa

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
1.4 The genealogy of Rabī'ā

(Rabī'ā)

Dubay'ā

Asad

'Anaza

Jadīla

'Amīra

'Abd al-Qays

Hinb

al-Namir

(Wā'īl)

Taghlib

Bakr

'Anz

(see chart 3.1)

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
2.1 The genealogy of Qaḥṭān

Qaḥṭān

Hīmyar

(al-Hamaysa)

Kahlān

(Quḍā‘a)

Mālik

(a)Arīb

(see chart 2.2)

al-Ghawth

al-Khiyār

(Anmār)

al-Azd

Alhān

Hamdān

Khath‘am

Bajila

Ghassān

Akk

Khuzā‘a

(al-Anṣār)

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
2.2 The genealogy of ārīb of Kahlān

Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.
3.1 The genealogy of Taghlib

Taghlib

Bakr b. Ḥubayb (al-ʿAraqīm)

Mālik

ʿAmr

Jusham

Sād

Mūʾāwiya

Zuhayr

Thaʿlabā
4.1 The genealogy of Ghaṭafān

Ghaṭafān

Rayth

Ashja

Baghīḍ

Māzin

\(^c\) Abd al-\(^c\) Uzza/\(^c\) Abdallāh

\(^c\) Abs

Dhubyān

Anmār

(see chart 4.2)

Fazāra

Sa\(^c\)d

(see chart 4.3)

Murra

Tha\(^c\)labā

(see chart 4.4)  (see chart 4.5)
4.2 The genealogy of 'Abs

- al-Yamān
  - Mazin
    - Rawāh, Rawāhā, Yarbūs, Qumayr
      - Uqfān, ‘Umayr, Jadīma, Khalaf
        - Ziba, Hidhīmān, Zuhayr
4.3 The genealogy of Fazāra

Fazāra

- Māzin
  - Tha'labā
    - Badr
  - Êdī
  - Sa'd
    - Baghīḍ
    - Ḥarām
  - Shamkh
  - Žālim
  - Layy
  - Riyāḥ
4.4 The genealogy of Murra

Murra b. Ḥārūn

- Mālik
- Sahm
- Ghayž
- Khuṣayla
- Șirma

- Yarbū  
- Nushba
4.5 The genealogy of Tha'labā

Tha'labā b. Sa'd

- Uwāl
  - Bajāla
  - Rizām

- Ājab

- Mazīn
Bibliography


---

Bibliography


___

"Were the Qays and Yemen of the Umayyad Period Political Parties?", *Der Islam*, Band 71, Heft 1, (1994), pp. 1-57.


___


___


___


___


___


al-Hamdānī, al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad, al-Iklil min akhbār al-yaman wa ansāb himyar,
I, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿArī al-Akwaʿ, Cairo, 1963;


Kitāb al-asnām, ed. Ahmad Zaki, Cairo, 1924.


"From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arabic Genealogy", Arabica, 44 (1997), pp. 531-44.


Bibliography


Serjeant, R. B., "Haram and Hawtah, the Sacred Enclave in Arabia", in A. R. Badawi, ed.,
Bibliography

Melanges Taha Husain, Cairo, 1962, pp. 41-58.


