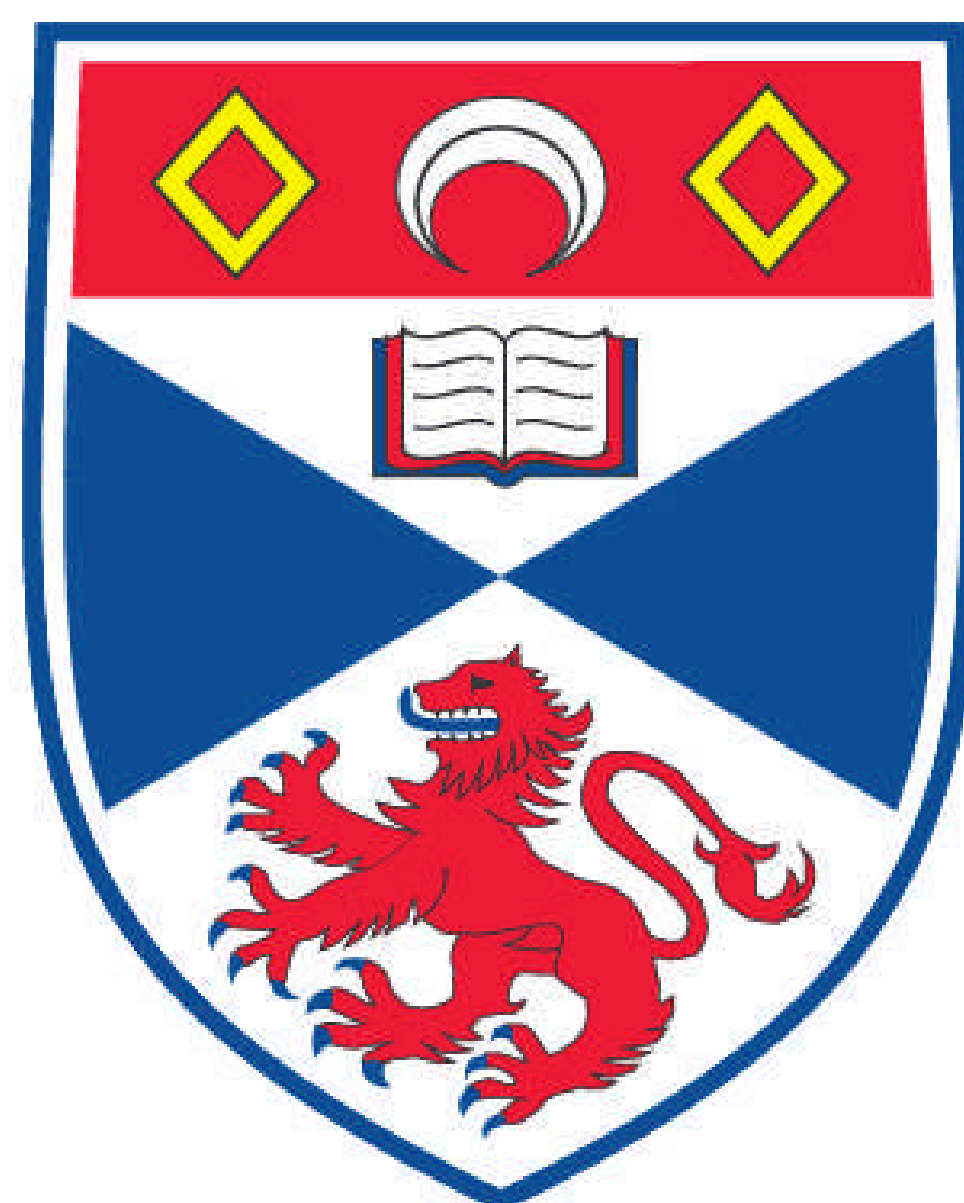


**THE ARAB TRIBES FROM JĀHILĪYA TO ISLĀM : SOURCES AND  
HISTORICAL TRENDS**

**Ihab Hamdi El-Sakkout**

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD  
at the  
University of St. Andrews**



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# **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.

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## 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 Ghatafān were picked for examination. Both were strong cohesive groups in the pre-Islamic period. In Islamic times, Taghlibīs lose importance since they opted to remain Christian, thus, Taghlibīs are virtually impossible to trace. Ghatafānīs did join Islam on a far greater scale and are often mentioned in the Islamic period. After the second civil war Ghatafānīs are only ever mentioned as individuals. Close kin continued to cooperate but cooperation above this level was only conducted within the Qaysī 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.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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 "Ridda" 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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

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Apart from this there are unfortunately only a few broad sketches of 'Arabia on the Eve of Islam' which usually figure as introductions to general works on Islamic History, as well as a number of brief articles. Thus, for instance, the introductory chapter in Lapidus, I., *A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; I. Shahīd, "Pre-Islamic Arabia", in *The Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1A, *The Central Islamic Lands from pre-Islamic Times to the first World War*, ed. P. M. Holt, A. K. S. Lambton, B. Lewis, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970; S. Smith, "Events in Arabia in the 6th Century A.D.", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 16 (1954). Also, Irfan Shahīd has produced extensive works on the theme of 'Byzantium and the Arabs' in pre-Islamic times [see Bibliography for a list of most of these]. Other similar examples exist, however, none of these works primarily or comprehensively examine the power of the Arabian tribes or their political resources and options.

<sup>2</sup> C. Robin, "L'épigraphie de l'Arabie avant l'Islam: intérêt et limites", in *L'Arabie antique de Karib'il à Mahomet: Nouvelles données sur l'histoire des Arabes grâce aux inscriptions*, ed. C. Robin, Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Édisud, 1991, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> For the *ayyām al-ʿArab* traditions see, W. Caskel, "Aijām al-ʿArab", *Islamica*, iii, Supplement (1930), pp. 1-99; and for *ansāb* traditions and the Arab tribes, see the commentaries preceding the main text of each volume of his *Āmharat an-Nasab, das genealogische Werk des Hišām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī*, 2 vols., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966. For a brief commentary on the use of both *ayyām* and *ansāb* to recreate tribal history see also F. Donner, "The Bakr b. Wāʿil Tribes and Politics in Northeastern Arabia on the Eve of Islam", *Studia Islamica*, 51 (1980), pp. 8-16.



detail.<sup>4</sup> 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 Jāhili period. Having established this starting point, the careers of the members and sub-groups of the two tribal groups will then be traced as

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<sup>4</sup> 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 facet of its evolution.

There are several studies of individual tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam', following the lead of M. J. Kister who coined that term (which I have borrowed for part of the title of this dissertation). See the collected articles of Kister in the two volumes, *Society and Religion from Jāhiliyya to Islam*, UK: Variorum, 1990, and *Studies in Jāhiliyya and Early Islam*, UK: Variorum, 1980. Other examples include, E. Laudau-Tasserou "Asad from Jāhiliyya to Islām", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 6 (1985); Lecker, M. *The Banū Sulaym, a Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*. Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989; and, "Kinda on the Eve of Islam and during the *Ridda*", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, third series, vol. 4 (Nov. 1994); as well as, Hasson, I., "Judhām entre la Jāhiliyya et l'Islam", *Studia Islamica*, 81 (1995/1). Research on tribes 'from Jāhiliya to Islam' has also appeared in recent Arabic scholarship. Thus, for instance, ʿA. al-ʿUbaydi, "*Qabilat tamim al-ʿarabiya bayna al-jāhiliya wa-al-islām*", *Hawliyat kuliyat al-ʿādāb bi-jāmiʿat al-kuwayt*, 37/7 (1986).

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-ʿUbaydi, 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.<sup>5</sup>

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.

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<sup>5</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Nasab"; H. N. Kennedy, "From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arabic Genealogy", *Arabica*, 44 (1997), p. 540.

Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamharat al-nasab* and *Nasab ma'add wa-al-yaman al-kabīr*:

Hishām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī - usually referred to as Ibn al-Kalbī - (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'ib al-Kalbī - usually referred to as al-Kalbī (d. 146/763-4).<sup>6</sup> The latter's work is considered to be the first of its kind; before, there had only been genealogies of single tribes and lineages.<sup>7</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī's two most famous - and partially extant - genealogical works are *Jamharat al-nasab* and *Nasab ma'add wa-al-yaman al-kabīr*. These two works were used by Werner Caskel to create a tabulated edition of Ibn al-Kalbī's works. Caskel's work is invaluable to students of Arab tribal history in the Jāhili and early Islamic periods.<sup>8</sup>

Ibn al-Kalbī'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 Jāhili and early Muslim period.<sup>9</sup> The importance of Ibn al-Kalbī'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-Kalbī provides the reader with short passages describing the importance or role played by each of these prominent figures, who include poets, Jāhili heroes and leaders, *ṣaḥāba* of the Prophet, caliphal officers, Khārijī rebels, *etc.* Ibn al-Kalbī also describes tribal groups and their sub-groups and often mentions tribal groups who had changed their tribal affiliation.<sup>10</sup>

Ibn Ḥazm's *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿarab*:

ʿAlī b. Aḥmad b. Saʿīd b. Ḥazm (d. 456/1064), was a later Andalusī scholar, who wrote a major genealogical work entitled *Jamharat ansāb al-*

<sup>6</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ibn al-Kalbī"; Ibn al-Nadīm, Muḥammad b. Ishāq, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. R. Tajaddud, 2nd revised ed., Teheran, 1973, pp. 107-11 = *The Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Muslim Culture*, ed. & tr. B. Dodge, 2 vols., New York: Columbia University Press, 1970, p. 205-13.

<sup>7</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup> For a description of Caskel's work see Humphreys, R. S., *Islamic History: a Framework for Inquiry*, (revised ed.), Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 115; see also M. J. Kister (in collaboration with M. Plessner), "Notes on Caskel's *Ġamharat al-nasab*", *Oriens*, 25-26 (1976), especially pp. 61-8.

<sup>9</sup> Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 531.

<sup>10</sup> See Dūrī, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, "Kutub al-ansāb wa ta'rikh al-jazīra al-ʿarabiya" in *Dirāsāt tārikh al-jazīra al-ʿarabiya*. Book I: *Maṣādir tārikh al-jazīra al-ʿarabiya*, Riyadh: Riyadh University, 1979, part I, pp. 131-3.



ʿarab.<sup>11</sup> Much of the information he collected is included in the more detailed works of Ibn al-Kalbī, 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-Kalbī's time,<sup>12</sup> as well as various *muḥaddithūn*.<sup>13</sup> New or different information to that of Ibn al-Kalbī is occasionally encountered,<sup>14</sup> and although these additional comments are not frequent, Ibn Ḥazm's work remains an important complement to that of Ibn al-Kalbī.

### Hamdānī's *al-Iklīl*:

The *Iklīl* of al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Yaʿqūb al-Hamdānī (d. 334/945)<sup>15</sup> includes numerous Yemeni traditions not used by the Kūfan based Ibn al-Kalbī. 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-Hamdānī 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,<sup>16</sup> three are genealogical and one is mainly a description of Yemeni *quṣūr*.<sup>17</sup>

Volume I of *al-Iklīl* contains the higher levels of the genealogy of Qaḥṭān but concentrates on one of the two Qaḥṭānī branches, that of Ḥimyar b. Saba<sup>2</sup> (the other being Kahlān b. Saba<sup>2</sup>). Ḥimyar was by this time

<sup>11</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ibn Ḥazm".

<sup>12</sup> Examples for these can be found, for instance, amongst the small branch of B. ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān, such as a Muʿtazilī scholar, Dirār b. ʿAmr, and an Andalusian notable, al-Ṭufayl b. al-ʿAlbās [Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-ʿarab*, ed. ʿA. M. Hārūn, Cairo: Dār al-maʿārif, 1962; p. 249; compare with Ibn al-Kalbī, Hishām b. Muḥammad, *Jamharat al-nasab*, ed. N. Ḥasan, Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1993, pp. 455-7.]

<sup>13</sup> See Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamhara*, p. 250, where amongst the B. Ashjaʿ, is a *ṣaḥābī* and his son, a *tābiʿī*, who are not mentioned in the Ashjaʿ section as described by Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 453-5.

<sup>14</sup> See for example Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamhara*, p. 250 and Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 455, the entries for ʿUqba b. Ḥulays, where the former tells us that ʿUqba was involved in the Dāhīs War between ʿAbs and Dhubyān, while the latter only says of him that he slayed prisoners at Yawm al-Ruqm.

<sup>15</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Hamdānī".

<sup>16</sup> Al-Hamdānī, al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad, *al-Iklīl min akhbār al-yaman wa ansāb ḥimyar*, vol. i, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Akwaʿ, Cairo, 1963; vol. ii, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Akwaʿ, 3rd revised edition, Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Madīna, 1986; vol. viii, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Akwaʿ, Damascus: Maṭbaʿat al-Kātib al-ʿArabī, 1979; vol. x, ed. Muḥib al-Dīn al-Khaṭīb, Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Salafiya, 1368 AH (1948/9).

<sup>17</sup> See Hamdānī, *Iklīl*, i, editor's introduction, pp. 57-8.



acknowledged to be divided into Quḍā'a and al-Hamaysa<sup>c</sup> - the descendants of the latter are very numerous tribes and included the South Arabian speaking tribes of ancient Ḥimyar. This volume briefly describes the Quḍā'i genealogical tree and the relationship of the Quḍā'i tribes with one another. The rest of the volume concentrates on the tribe of Khawlān<sup>18</sup>, specifically because al-Hamdānī feels that it has been neglected by the non-Yemeni genealogists.<sup>19</sup> He also criticizes the works of "the two Kalbīs" who, he says, had investigated the lineage of Mālik b. Ḥimyar (*i.e.* Quḍā'a) because they were geographically close to them but neglected the line of Mālik's brother, al-Hamaysa<sup>c</sup>, since they did not travel to Yemen.<sup>20</sup>

Volume II is a genealogy of the other branch of Ḥimyar, namely that of the tribes of al-Hamaysa<sup>c</sup>, while Volume X contains a brief description of the Kahlānī tribal genealogies on the higher levels, but then concentrates on the author's own tribe; Hamdān.

The genealogies preserved in the *Iklīl* are more detailed than the same ones found in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamhara*.<sup>21</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī 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.<sup>22</sup> Al-Hamdānī's material, unlike the two works mentioned above, contains frequent long non-genealogical passages. These are mainly pre-Islamic *ayyām* accounts<sup>23</sup> from a Yemeni perspective, and are often biased towards Hamdān, the tribe of the author.

### Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-ashrāf*:

Although the *Ansāb al-ashrāf* of al-Balādhurī (d. *ca.* 279/892) follows a genealogical structure is not strictly speaking a work of genealogy.<sup>24</sup> Its

<sup>18</sup> Khawlān according to al-Hamdānī's sources was part of Quḍā'a (Hamdānī, *Iklīl*, i, p. 198), unlike Ibn al-Kalbī and Ibn Ḥazm who place it under Kahlān (Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, table 176-line 15; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamhara*, p. 418). Ibn al-Kalbī does however acknowledge the existence of the view linking it to Quḍā'a (Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 328-14).

<sup>19</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklīl*, i, pp. 198-9. Indeed, Ibn al-Kalbī and even Ibn Ḥazm who is later than al-Hamdānī, mention extremely few Khawlānīs, see for example Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 248; Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamhara*, p. 418.

<sup>20</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklīl*, i, p. 8. The actual Arabic is "لما نلت رحلتهم إلى ... Ḥimyar" but this should not necessarily be taken to mean that the Kalbīs actually ever went to Yemen.

<sup>21</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "al-Hamdānī".

<sup>22</sup> Nor does the later Ibn al-Nadīm mention al-Hamdānī in the *Fihrist*.

<sup>23</sup> The accounts of *ayyām al-ʿArab*, or 'battle days of the Arabs' will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>24</sup> For an insightful discussion of this work see Khalidī, T., *Arabic 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-Balādhurī, Ahmad b. Yahyā, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*,

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 *ansāb*. The *Ansāb al-ashrāf* is a huge work - almost as large as al-Ṭabarī's great work of history, for instance - even though it was never completed.<sup>25</sup> Instead of being limited to a few inserted sentences on important individuals in the manner of regular *ansāb* works, Balādhurī 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 ʿAlī we have a volume mainly covering the battle of Ṣiffīn, and rather similar in content to Naṣr b. Muzāḥim's *Waqʿat ṣiffīn*.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, the entries for various of the *ṣaḥāba*, the Umayyads and the ʿAbbāsids are quite long. This has meant that over three quarters of the manuscript, which covers all of the Muḍarī 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. Ghatafān<sup>27</sup>, showed that it clearly follows the structure of Ibn al-Kalbī's *ansāb* works, though adding a great amount of information from other sources for many individuals.

The *Ansāb 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 Muḍar branch of the 'northern' Arab tribes.<sup>28</sup>

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

vol. i, ed. M. Ḥamīdallāh, Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1959;

vol. iia, ed. M. B. al-Maḥmūdī, Beirut, 1974;

vol. iva, ed. M. Schloessinger and M. J. Kister, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1971;

vol. ivb, ed. M. Schloessinger, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1938;

vol. v, ed. S. D. F. Goitein, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1936;

vol. vii, ed. K. ʿAthāmīna, Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1993;

MS Rabat, Royal Library, group 2, no. 2518, fols. 349-394.

<sup>25</sup> H. Kennedy and I. el-Sakkout, "Review of *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. vii, by Aḥmad b. Yahyā b. Jabir al-Balādhurī, edited and annotated by Khalīl Athāmīna", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, third series, 5 (1995), p. 410.

<sup>26</sup> Compare Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, iia, with Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Waqʿat ṣiffīn* (see below n. 58 for full citation). See also S. Leder, "The Literary Use of the *Khabar*: A Basic Form of Historical Writing", in Averil Cameron and L. I. Conrad, eds., *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, I: Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992), pp. 300-4.

<sup>27</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MS Rabat, fols. 349-394.

<sup>28</sup> For a description of the contents of the *Ansāb al-ashrāf* manuscripts and of which parts are published see Kennedy, "Review of *Ansāb al-ashrāf*". See also Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, i, pp. 34-53 of the introductory part for a list of headings included in the *Ansāb* manuscript.



recorded by these genealogists appear in collections of poetry, *ayyām*, encyclopaedias and early history. Balādhurī's monumental work builds on that of Ibn al-Kalbī to provide an invaluable reference work for the most important tribesmen of Muḍar from Jāhilī to early ʿAbbāsīd times.

Al-Hamdānī 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 Nizārīs.

### (ii) Poetry and adab:

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

#### Iṣfahānī's *Kitāb al-aghānī*:

The single most important source for tribal affairs in the pre- and early Islamic period must be al-Iṣfahānī's *Kitāb al-aghānī*.<sup>29</sup> Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī (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.<sup>30</sup>

The core of *Kitāb al-aghānī* (the 'Book of Songs') is a collection of the best hundred songs, supposedly selected for the ʿAbbāsīd Caliph al-Wāthiq, with a few additions by al-Iṣfahānī 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

<sup>29</sup> al-Iṣfahānī, Abū al-Faraj ʿAlī b. Ḥusayn, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, ed. I. al-Abyārī, 31 vols., Cairo: Dar al-Shaʿb, 1969-79.

<sup>30</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Abū 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī".

also given. The result is a gigantic work which "review[s] the whole of Arabic civilization from the *ḍjāhiliyya* down to the end of the 3rd/9th century".<sup>31</sup>

For the Jāhili period, the *Aghānī* 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 ʿAbbāsīd 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 ʿAbbāsīd period; tribal *nisbas*, when still in use, no longer appear to have had a practical function.<sup>32</sup>

### *Naqāʿid jarīr wa-al-farazdaq:*

Of similar importance to the *Aghānī*, though including far less material, is the much earlier *Naqāʿid jarīr wa-al-farazdaq*<sup>33</sup>, attributed by some scholars to the grammarian and *ayyām* collector Abū ʿUbayda Muʿammar b. al-Muthannā al-Taymī (d. 209/824-5)<sup>34</sup> and, by others, to his student Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245/860)<sup>35</sup>.

The *Naqāʿid* is a collection of *hijāʿ* and *fakhr* poetry by the two famous Tamīmī 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-Akḥṭal 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 *Aghānī*, apart from many Jāhili anecdotes and pre-Islamic *ayyām*, the *Naqāʿid* describes tribal affairs taking place in the Umayyad period as well. Again, as with the *Aghānī*, 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

<sup>31</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Abū ʿl-Faradj al-Iṣbahānī"; see also H. Kilpatrick, "Abū al-Faraj's Profiles of Poets: a 4th/10th Century Essay at the History and the Sociology of Arabic Literature", *Arabica*, 44 (1997), pp. 94-6.

<sup>32</sup> See Kilpatrick, "Abū al-Faraj", p. 101.

<sup>33</sup> *Naqāʿid jarīr wa-al-farazdaq*, ed. A. A. Bevan, 3 vols., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1905.

<sup>34</sup> See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Abū ʿUbayda". See also below n. 56.

<sup>35</sup> See al-Bayātī, ʿĀdil Jāsīm, *Kitāb ayyām al-ʿarab qabla al-islām*, 2 vols., Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1987, ii, pp. 22-4.



conquest periods. This indicates that there was a lull in the production of tribal poetry<sup>36</sup> between the Jāhili 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 ʿAbbāsīd period.<sup>37</sup>

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

### (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 Jāhili 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.

### Yāqūt's *Muʿjam al-buldān*:

Although a comparatively very late source, the *Muʿjam al-buldān* of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229)<sup>38</sup> 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-Jazīra 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

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<sup>36</sup> By 'tribal poetry' I mean poetry referring to or describing historical events in which tribal units or tribesmen are mentioned to have participated.

<sup>37</sup> Although there are some verses composed about tribal participation in events in the conquests, verses from these periods do not seem to figure in the Umayyad or ʿAbbāsīd poetry compilations. Indeed there appears to be very little considered valuable by compilers until after the battle of Marj Rāhīṭ (65-684). See S. K. Jayyusi, "Umayyad Poetry", pp. 391-2, in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad 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 'fine' poetry for this period to be a result of collectors' biases. Thus, during the *fitūh*, for instance, the type of verses composed followed the tradition of the "*qitʿah*" - pre-Islamic battle epigrams - which was looked down upon by later collectors.

<sup>38</sup> Yāqūt b. ʿAbdallāh al-Ḥamawī, Abu ʿAbdallāh, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, 6 vols., reprint of original edition (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1866-73), Tehran, 1965.

Yāqūt from verses ascribed to the pre-Islamic poets, which he relates together with associated anecdotes under their entries. He frequently quotes al-Aṣmaʿī (d. 213/828)<sup>39</sup> who had written a book on the territories of the tribes. Indeed al-Aṣmaʿī's non-extant work, *Jazīrat al-ʿarab*,<sup>40</sup> 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-Aṣmaʿī, many of whose works did not survive to the present.<sup>41</sup>

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 *Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab*:

This geographical work of al-Hamdānī, *Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab*<sup>42</sup>, is similar to his *Iklīl* 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.<sup>43</sup> 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 *Iklīl*, 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.

<sup>39</sup> See for instance Yāqūt, *Buldān*, s.v. "Baṭn al-Liwa".

<sup>40</sup> See Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tajaddud, pp. 60-1 = Dodge, pp. 119-21.

<sup>41</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Aṣmaʿī".

<sup>42</sup> Al-Hamdānī, al-Ḥasan b. Ahmad, *Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab*, ed. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Akwaʿ, 3rd revised edition 1983, reprinted Baghdād: Āfāq ʿArabiya, 1989.

<sup>43</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Hamdānī".



*(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-maʿārif*:

*Kitāb al-maʿārif* of ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim b. Qutayba (d. 276/889)<sup>44</sup>, the famous Baghdadi scholar, was the first work of its kind to be composed; a "historical manual with encyclopaedic appendices on very varied subjects".<sup>45</sup> 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)<sup>46</sup> 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*.<sup>47</sup> Much of the information for his *ayyām* is taken from Abū ʿUbayda al-Taymī<sup>48</sup>, although some is not, and a lot of Abū ʿUbayda's material is not used.

Like *Kitāb al-maʿārif*, 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 *sīra* material is concerned with the Prophetic period and specifically with events related to the Prophet's life and career. In it, we find information

<sup>44</sup> Ibn Qutayba, ʿAbdallāh b. Muslim, *Kitāb al-maʿārif*, ed. Th. ʿUkāsha, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1960.

<sup>45</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ibn Qutayba".

<sup>46</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, Ahmad b. Muḥammad, *Kitāb al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, ed. M. M. Qamīḥa & ʿA. al-Tarḥīnī, 9 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1983.

<sup>47</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih".

<sup>48</sup> 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-Ṭabarī. 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)<sup>49</sup>. 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-Wāqidī (d. 207/822)<sup>50</sup>, the first two volumes of *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr* of Muḥammad b. Saʿd (d. 230/845)<sup>51</sup> or the first volume of *Ansāb al-ashrāf* of Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī (d. ca. 279/892).<sup>52</sup>

#### (vi) Universal histories:

##### Ṭabarī's *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*:

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

<sup>49</sup> Ibn Hishām, ʿAbd al-Malik, *Sīrat rasūl allāh*, ed. M. al-Saqqā, I. al-Abyāri, and ʿA. Shalabī, 4 vols., Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1937.

<sup>50</sup> Al-Wāqidī, Muḥammad b. ʿUmar, *Kitāb al-maghāzī*, ed. Marsden Jones, 3 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn Saʿd, Muḥammad, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. E. Sachau *et al.*, 9 vols., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1904-40.

<sup>52</sup> See above n. 24 for full citation.

<sup>53</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*, 15 vols., ed. M. J. De Goeje *et al.*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1879-1901.

Prophet and the beginning of the *riḍḍa* 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. Muẓāḥim's *Waqʿat ṣiffīn* (see below). Large numbers of individuals who are unidentified tribally, especially those not from Kūfa and Baṣra, appear increasingly towards the end of the Umayyad era.<sup>54</sup> This sometimes makes it difficult to trace tribal lineages very far.

Ibn al-Athīr's *al-Kāmil fī al-taʿrīkh*:

ʿIzz al-Dīn b. al-Athīr's (d. 630/1233) *al-Kāmil fī al-taʿrīkh*<sup>55</sup> is very similar in its tribal information to Ṭabarī'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*.<sup>56</sup> 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.

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<sup>54</sup> See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, pp. 21-2, for an explanation of this regional bias; also, Donner, "Bakr", p. 12.

<sup>55</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, *al-Kāmil fī al-taʿrīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, 13 vols., reprint of original edition (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1851-76), Beirut: Dār Bayrūt, 1982.

<sup>56</sup> The second volume of Bayātī's work (see above n. 35) is a collection from extant sources - though primarily based on the *Naqāʿid* - 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.



*(vii) Specific histories:*Nasr b. Muzāḥim's *Waq'at siffīn*:

Nasr b. Muzāḥim al-Minqarī (d. 212/827) was an early Shī'ī historian.<sup>57</sup> His *Waq'at siffīn*<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup> 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.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Nasr b. Muzāḥim".

<sup>58</sup> Nasr b. Muzāḥim al-Minqarī, *Waq'at Siffīn*, ed. 'A. M. Hārūn, 3rd. revised edition, Beirut: Dār al-Jil, 1981.

<sup>59</sup> 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 Khalidī's *Historical Thought* (full citation above n. 24); and Noth, 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.

<sup>60</sup> See the survey and discussion in Humphreys, *Islamic History*, pp. 69-91.



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 *ayyām* traditions<sup>61</sup> - 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 Jāhiliya 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 *sīra*, 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 feud<sup>61</sup> - 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".

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<sup>61</sup> It is assumed that it is now accepted that such a conflict did not historically exist in pre-Islamic times. See Hawting, G. R., *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750*, London: Croom Helm, 1986, p. 36; Dixon, 'A. 'A., *The Umayyad Caliphate 65-86/684-705, A Political Study*, London: Luzac & Company, 1971, p. 83.

## 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-ʿArab*: The Historical Tradition of the pre-Islamic Arabs" focuses particularly on the pre-Islamic oral historical prose, the *ayyām al-ʿarab*, 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 *akhbār* material<sup>62</sup> and especially those of the Conquests.<sup>63</sup> 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 Jāhiliyya has been generally neglected.<sup>64</sup> 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 *ayyām al-ʿarab* 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 *ayyām* accounts. In this and the following chapter, I will be making references to the *suwālif* (sing. *sālfih*), 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

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<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, S. Leder, "Authorship and Transmission in Unauthored Literature: the *akhbār* attributed to al-Haytham b. ʿAdī", *Oriens*, 31 (1988); and "Literary Use of *Khabar*"; Petersen, E. L., *ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya in Early Arabic Tradition: Studies on the Genesis and Growth of Islamic Historical Writing until the end of the Ninth Century*, Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1964.

<sup>63</sup> Thus, L. I. Conrad, "The Conquest of Arwād: a Source-Critical Study in the Historiography of the Early Medieval Middle East", in Averil Cameron and L. I. Conrad, eds., *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East, I: Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1992); Noth/Conrad, *Historical Tradition*; and the introduction to Kaegi, W., *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

<sup>64</sup> For example, *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, completely ignores the *ayyām al-ʿarab* traditions. One exception is the recent work produced by Rina Drory, "The Abbasid Construction of the Jāhiliyya: Cultural Authority in the Making", *Studia Islamica*, 83 (1996/1). This study will be discussed below.

Rashīdī dynasty in Hāʾil, events around which are described in extant oral narratives.<sup>65</sup>

According to the author of this study, Saad Sawayan, there are many apparent similarities between these modern oral accounts and those of the *ayyām*. "Aside from that of language there is hardly any difference, between [the modern Bedouin] narratives and the narratives of the *ayyām al-ʿarab* which were transmitted by the ancient *rawīs* and recorded by ancient Arab philologists".<sup>66</sup>

Throughout the study, one finds examples of similarities of form with the *ayyām* traditions and associated material. Sawayan mentions numerous details of the form of the *suwālif* which also hold true for the *ayyām*. Like the *ayyām*, the chronological setting of the *suwālif* 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.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, Sawayan says of the poetry associated with the narratives that it "bear[s] a striking resemblance to the classical *naqāʾid* of Jarīr 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."<sup>68</sup> Finally, as happened commonly with the *ayyām*, in addition to their narration for their own sake, the *suwālif* 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.<sup>69</sup>

Sawayan regards the *ayyām* and *suwālif* as manifestations of a single nomadic Arabian oral historiographical phenomenon. Yet while he is not alone in this view<sup>70</sup> and despite the numerous similarities between them, it would be rash to directly equate the ancient *ayyām* with the modern *suwālif*, based on similarity of outward form. Indeed, Islamic historians are not generally positively inclined towards the use of modern anthropological material to solve

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<sup>65</sup> Sawayan, S., *The Arabian Historical Narrative*, Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 24-8.

<sup>68</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, pp. 25-6; Blachère, R., *Histoire de Littérature Arabe*, 3 vols., Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1952-66, iii, p. 802. See also Jabbar, J. S., *The Bedouins and the Desert: Aspects of Nomadic Life in the Arab East*, trans. by L. I. Conrad, New York: State University of New York, 1995, pp. 408-18.

<sup>70</sup> See, for instance, Kurpershoek, P. M., *Oral Poetry and Narratives from Central Arabia: II The Story of a desert Knight*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995, pp. 22-3.



historical questions; approaches tend to range from the 'cautious' to outright rejection.<sup>71</sup>

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-ʿarab*, the stylized oral historical narratives of the pre-Islamic Arabs.<sup>72</sup> The last component of this

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<sup>71</sup> Caskel, however, does make use of descriptions of modern Bedouin 'oral history' in his detailed study of the *ayyām* [Caskel, "Aijām", 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 on 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].

On the other hand, Michael Lecker expresses skepticism over the use of anthropology for historical interpretation. He refers specifically to Donner, with whose approach to such material he disagrees. In his view, social, economic and political aspects of ancient Arabia can only be understood from the ancient sources *alone*. Anthropology may help with the technical aspects - such as how much a camel can carry, *etc.*, but not more [Lecker, M., *The Banū Sulaym, a Contribution to the Study of Early Islam*, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989, p. XII]. It is unfortunate he does not carry his argument further into a detailed analysis of those of Donner's findings based on anthropological evidence.

Anthropology has been used more specifically to re-evaluate very specific incidents mentioned in the literary sources. In this vein is the thesis of Serjeant which equates the Prophet and his successors to the contemporary Yemeni religious arbitrator, the *wali*, and his successors, the *mansabs* [See R. B. Serjeant, "Ḥaram and Ḥawṭah, the Sacred Enclave in Arabia", in A. R. Badawi, ed., *Melanges Taha Husain*, Cairo, 1962]. In this case, even though the author did not use anthropological evidence indiscriminately, this sort of equation has led to much controversy.

<sup>72</sup> 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-



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.<sup>73</sup> Recited poetry usually needed an explanatory prose context, the knowledge of the poet's lineage, as well as those of the main characters mentioned.<sup>74</sup> Nor could descriptions of tribal genealogies be complete without mentioning the famous, or infamous, deeds and verses of the ancestors being named.<sup>75</sup> 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.<sup>76</sup> Poetry associated with the modern oral historical narratives also served as a guarantee against its loss over time,<sup>77</sup> and this may also have been the case with the ancient narratives.

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plots or background information. Yet much of this information survived even outside of the collections of poetry and pre-Islamic traditions. The scattered memories of the world of the pre-Islamic Arabians can be encountered in almost any early Islamic literary genre.

<sup>73</sup> For example, the bulk of the odes in the *Mufaḍḍaliyyāt* collection is composed of *ayyām* poetry [Arazi, A., *La Réalité et la Fiction dans la Poésie Arabe Ancienne*, Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1989, p. 27]. The sources have also many examples where poets are also genealogists. See for instance, Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 386, where the 'Absī poet Abū al-Shaghāb is also described as being "*ʿālim bi-nasab qays*".

See also Blachère, *Histoire*, iii, pp. 802-3, who describes the intertwining and dynamic relationships between *ayyām* narratives, poetry and proverbs; Jones, A., *Early Arabic Poetry*, Vol. 1, *Marāthī and Ṣuʿlūk Poems*, Reading: Ithaca Press, 1992, p. 22; C. Lyall, "Some Aspects of Ancient Arabic Poetry, as Illustrated by a little-known Anthology", in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. VIII, London: Oxford University Press, 1918, p. 13.

<sup>74</sup> Many tribal *fakhr* or *hijāʿ* verses - which accompany pre-Islamic *ayyām* - were composed in the Islamic period. The best example of these verses are found in the *naqāʾid* of Jarīr and al-Farazdaq, whose verses along with many other poets appear in the recorded *ayyām* narratives. Such verses normally appear at the end of an account with other verses allegedly composed immediately after the *yawm* by pre-Islamic figures connected to the event in some manner. Almost every account (apart from certain summarised versions) will contain these concluding postscript verses. Other verses attributed to participants in the *yawm* may be found scattered throughout the account. Some of these form part of the sequence of the story, while for others the *yawm* acted as an explanatory context for verses composed during it and which later become famous [for an example see "Yawm al-Fayfā", Bayāṭi, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 315]. For this idea, see Blachère, *Histoire*, iii, p. 802. Bayāṭi, however, rejects Blachère's notion that *ayyām* only ever acted as an exegetical aid for poetry [Bayāṭi, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, pp. 31-32].

<sup>75</sup> This in part was to determine their status as much as to define them in tribal terms. It is important to note that the status of the individuals was largely dependent on the status of the lineage to which they were affiliated.

<sup>76</sup> Duri, A., *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs*, ed. and trans. by L. I. Conrad, Princeton, 1983, p. 18.

<sup>77</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 25.

*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.<sup>78</sup>

Secondly, the narration of the *sālfih* is not simply a recital, and the same *sālfih* 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.<sup>79</sup> 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.<sup>80</sup>

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.<sup>81</sup> 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 *rāwīs* 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.<sup>82</sup> 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 *rawīs* 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

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<sup>78</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 20, ff. See also Caskel "Aijām", p. 84.

<sup>79</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, pp. 20, 21, ff.

<sup>80</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, pp. 31-2.

<sup>81</sup> Sawayan, *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.

<sup>82</sup> Sawayan, *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 *ruwā* of poetry in pre- and early Islamic times: a) apprentice poets who learned the verses of their masters and transmitted them; b) tribal *ruwā*, who may not only have stored verses but also *akhbār* and *ansāb* of their tribe; and from this second group developed c) the general *ruwā*, 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 *rāwī*, became more common. For the *ayyām* accounts, both tribal and general *rawīs* are sometimes named as the sources of the earliest compilers.<sup>83</sup> 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.<sup>84</sup>

*The text as a "living" tradition.*<sup>85</sup>

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 *sālfih* 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.<sup>86</sup>

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

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<sup>83</sup> Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, pp. 21-3; Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, pp. 5-6, 7; Caskeel, "Aijām", pp. 82-3; al-Asad, Nāṣir al-Dīn, *Muṣādir al-shi'r al-jāhili wa-qimatuḥā al-tārikhiya*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1956, pp. 222-54; of special interest is the list of transmitter types contained in 'Abd al-Rahmān, 'A., *al-Shi'r wa-ayyām al-'arab fi al-'aṣr al-jāhili*, Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1984, pp. 180-2. See also G. Schoeler, "Writing and Publishing: On the Use and function of Writing in the First Centuries of Islam", *Arabica*, 44 (1997), pp. 426, ff.

<sup>84</sup> Lyall, "Aspects", pp. 8-9. For modern parallels, see Kurpershoek, *Oral Poetry*, p. 10-12, ff..

<sup>85</sup> I have borrowed this term from Drory, see "Abbasid Construction" p. 35, ff.

<sup>86</sup> Sawayan, *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.<sup>87</sup> 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 ʿAbbāsīd 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'.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, parts of some tribal genealogies may have 'developed', yet others would have been too well ingrained in collective consciousness to do so.<sup>89</sup>

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 ʿ*aṣabīya*, upon which the greater part of the tradition rested conceptually.

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<sup>87</sup> Sowayan, *Historical Narrative*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>88</sup> See for instance, Schoeler, "Writing and Publishing", p. 427.

<sup>89</sup> Donner, "Bakr", pp. 10-11.

Nevertheless, this does not seem to have led to a shying away from the transmission of a great deal pre-Islamic material.<sup>90</sup>

Firstly, it must be noted that the major Najdī 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 *anṣār* 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<sup>91</sup> and of their later vicious civil war<sup>92</sup>. There are even Prophetic *aḥādīth* which claim that the Prophet condoned the narration of pre-Islamic poetry and *ayyām*.<sup>93</sup>

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 *anṣār*, 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.<sup>94</sup> These new conditions were also to affect the tribal system itself and its expression in the genealogical links between the tribal groups and units.<sup>95</sup>

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.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, the simple fact that the armies were composed of different tribal

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<sup>90</sup> See S. K. Jayyūsi, "Umayyad Poetry", in *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, pp. 390-1.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 656-8.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 658-84.

<sup>93</sup> However, this point was debated by the early Muslims [Montgomery, *Qasidah*, pp. 215-6].

<sup>94</sup> Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, p. 23.

<sup>95</sup> Duri, "*Kutub al-ansāb*", p. 129.

<sup>96</sup> According to Ṭabarī, for instance, the Caliph 'Umar sent poets to the Iraqi front as the confrontation with the Sassanians escalated before al-Qādisiyya [Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2292].

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.<sup>97</sup>

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.<sup>98</sup> 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, *etc.*<sup>99</sup> 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.<sup>100</sup> Thus, the *dūwān* which 'Umar established gave genealogies, and hence the study of them, a great importance.<sup>101</sup>

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 *riḍḍa*. But even old poetry, pre-Islamic *ayyām* and genealogies were studied to some extent.<sup>102</sup> Indeed, the influence of the style of the pre-Islamic *ayyām* stories is visible in the accounts of some of the early

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<sup>97</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, pp. 41-2. Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 543.

<sup>98</sup> Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 543.

<sup>99</sup> See Goldziher, I., *Muslim Studies*, 2 vols., ed. S. M. Stern, tr. from German (*Muhammedanische Studien*) by C. R. Barber & S. M. Stern, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1967, i, pp. 167-8.

Genealogies were still disputed in the 'Abbasid period, especially because of their financial implications. A clear example of this is to be found in the accounts describing the orders of the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Mahdi to strike the descendants of Ziyād b. Abihī from the *diwān* of Quraysh and to return the Āl Abi Bakr to their status of *mawālī* of the Prophet [Tabarī, *Ta'rikh*, iii, pp. 477-82].

<sup>100</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *q.v.* "Nasab"; see also, Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy", p. 541; and Donner, "Bakr", p. 13. Hamdāni 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, "*Kutub al-ansāb*", p. 129].

<sup>101</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, pp. 21, 41.

<sup>102</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, pp. 43-4, ff.



Islamic events, such as the *maghāzī* of the Prophet. This points to their strength as a component of the early Islamic literary culture.<sup>103</sup>

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 *ruwā* 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 *ruwā*-genealogists. Moreover, the pre-Islamic tradition as a whole was beginning to become of interest to learned men, although, apart from *ridḍa* participation, seemingly only at a secondary level.

### The Umayyad period:

At least since the time of Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>āwīya (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 Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>āwīya ordered the compilation of accounts (*akhbār*) of the ancient 'kings' of the Arabs and the <sup>ʿ</sup>*ajam* (non-Arabs).<sup>104</sup>

Significantly, the two main narrators of pre-Islamic material at Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>āwīya's court, Daḡfal b. Ḥanzala (d. 50/670 or 65/684-5) and <sup>ʿ</sup>Abīd/<sup>ʿ</sup>Ubayd b. Sharya<sup>105</sup>, were primarily known for being genealogists,

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<sup>103</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, pp. 22, 45, 46, 48; C. Cahen, "L'Historiographie Arabe: des Origines au VII<sup>e</sup> s. II.", *Arabica*, 33 (1986), fasc. 2, p. 136; see also Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 30, who mentions three basic themes from which Islamic historical writing developed, one of which is also 'tribal' in nature and was composed mainly of *ayyām* and *ansāb* material.

Stefan Leder is skeptical of the idea that the form of the *ayyām* traditions was used as a model for early Muslim historical writing. He believes rather that the *ayyām* could themselves have 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 *ayyām* accounts. Conrad also shares Leder's view with regard to the influence of *ayyām* on *futūḥ* literature, and while showing some differences between the two *genres* in terms of function, is mistaken to narrow that of the whole *ayyām* corpus down to solely the elucidation of poetry; or, to believe that all *ayyām* were transmitted only *via* one source, Abū 'Ubayda [L. Conrad, art. "Futūḥ", in J. S. Meisami and P. Starkey, eds., *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, New York: Routledge, 1998].

<sup>104</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tajaddud, p. 102 = Dodge p. 194.

<sup>105</sup> <sup>ʿ</sup>Abīd (or <sup>ʿ</sup>Ubayd, see EI<sup>2</sup>, *q.v.* "Ubayd b. Sharya") was a Yemeni who lived in the time of the Prophet and died in the time of <sup>ʿ</sup>Abd al-Malik (Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tajaddud, p. 102 = Dodge p. 194).

further stressing the link between *ansāb* and pre-Islamic *akḥbār*.<sup>106</sup> Indeed, most of the transmitters of tribal lore in the Umayyad period were also genealogists. Such were Shihāb b. Madh<sup>ʿ</sup>ūr, various members of the family of B. al-Kawwā<sup>ʿ</sup> (who had a reputation for being expert genealogists<sup>107</sup>), Zayd b. al-Kayyis al-Namarī who was "the most learned genealogist of the 7th c."<sup>108</sup>, Zuhayr b. Maymūn al-Hamdānī (d. 155 H) who "was knowledgeable in genealogies and the *ayyām* of the [Arabs]", ʿAwāna b. al-Ḥakam (d. 147 H), and other less known early *ruwā* such as al-Bakrī al-Naṣrānī, Lisān al-Ḥumra, Ṣuḥār al-ʿAbdī, al-Sharqī b. al-Qaṭāmī and Sa<sup>ʿ</sup>d al-Qaṣīr.<sup>109</sup>

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.<sup>110</sup> 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.<sup>111</sup> This interest also was to cause much modification to the Arab genealogical trees, more significantly on the higher levels.<sup>112</sup> These modifications will be discussed further in Part III, "Arab Tribalism 'from Jāhiliya 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 ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd 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 ʿ*ajam*.<sup>113</sup>

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

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<sup>106</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Dodge, notes pp. 977, 1115; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 169; see also Muṣṭafā, Sh., *al-Tārīkh al-ʿArabī wa-al-muʿarrikhūn*, 4 vols., Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li-ʿl-Mulaym, 1978-, i, pp. 103-4, who gives a long list of *ruwā* of tribal lore active both before and during the early Umayyad period; and Yahyā, Luṭfī ʿAbd al-Wahāb, *al-ʿArab fī al-ʿuṣūr al-qadīma*, Beirut: Dar al-Nahḍa al-ʿArabiya, 1979, p. 229, n. 34. Khalidi gives an example from Masʿūdī, which describes Muʿāwiya as listening to the "history and Ayyam of the Arabs" and the histories of bygone kings. Even though Khalidi concedes that this account was probably ascribed to Muʿāwiya 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].

<sup>107</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 168.

<sup>108</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 170; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Dodge, note p. 1132.

<sup>109</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tadjaddud, pp. 101-3 = Dodge pp. 193-8; Muṣṭafā, *al-Tārīkh al-ʿArabī*, i, p. 103.

<sup>110</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, pp. 169-70, 172; Duri, "Kutub al-ansāb", p. 129.

<sup>111</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 50.

<sup>112</sup> See Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, pp. 185-9.

<sup>113</sup> Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, pp. 90-1. See also Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 42.

earlier. Amongst these audiences, we are told that it was tribal and general *ruwā* who were responsible for its continuation.<sup>114</sup>

Not all transmission was still oral by this stage. Firstly, there were already in circulation written collections of tribal lore, with titles such as *Kitāb tamīm, etc.*<sup>115</sup> What is more, verses collected in the *Naqā'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.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, this period witnessed the perpetuation of the pre-Islamic tradition at different levels. Some *ruwā* 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 'Abbāsīd 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 'Abbāsīd periods.<sup>117</sup> 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 'Abbāsīd Caliphate, the importance of the tribal origins of the urban Arabs and of pre-Islamic tribal lore persisted.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> See Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, p. 23.

<sup>115</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 139.

<sup>116</sup> Lyall, C., *Translations of Ancient Arabian Poetry: chiefly pre-Islamic*, London: Williams and Norgate Ltd., 1930, p. xxxv. (In a previous paper ["Aspects", p. 10], Lyall places the beginning of recording in the mid-first century H); See also Stetkevych, S. P., *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the 'Abbāsīd Age*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991, p. 242; Mustafā, *al-Tārīkh al-'Arabī*, i, p. 104.

<sup>117</sup> Arazī, *Poésie*, p. 38.

<sup>118</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 77. See also Noth Conrad, *Historical Tradition*, p. 38. Khalidī, however, referring in particular to the works of the two Kulbīs, says that "the great *nasab* 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 *jāhiliya* and Islam" [Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 50]. Khalidī seems to regard that Ibn al-Kulbī'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 'Abbāsīd 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 'Abbāsīd 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 *ruwā* and 'scholars' who were now often independent of caliphal patronage. Varied scholarly interests spearheaded by philologists<sup>119</sup> and spurred on by the Shu'ūbiya debate<sup>120</sup> 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.<sup>121</sup>

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 Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī, and later his son, Ibn al-Kalbī, both of whom were especially concerned with higher level and all-encompassing genealogical links.<sup>122</sup>

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 *ruwā* in Syria and Iraq - but particularly in Kūfa and Baṣra - were collected, organized and then recorded

Ibn al-Kalbī's work, as Khalidī notices, must have primarily functioned as a tribal reference [Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 52]. Given the extensive material of the Jāhili 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: Khalidī only talks of one of the genealogical works of Ibn al-Kalbī, namely the *Jamharat al-nasab*, and seems to ignore the *Kitāb al-nasab al-kabīr*. For more information on both of these and other works of *ansāb*, see Duri, "Kitāb al-ansāb".)

<sup>119</sup> The fact that philologists began to take an interest in tribal poetry led to an increased interest in the accompanying prose accounts. Thus, for instance, it is not surprising that one of the pupils of Abū 'Amr b. al-'Alā' (d. 154/770), the famous philologist, was Abū 'Ubayda al-Taymī (d. 211/826), who was one of the most important early collectors of the *ayyām* [Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 147].

<sup>120</sup> For the influence of the Shu'ūbiya debate, see Goldzihler, *Muslim Studies*, i, pp. 137-63; Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 103; see also Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 50. The antagonism between the Arabs and the Persians is one of the reasons Ṭāha Ḥusayn gives as a motivation for forging Jāhili poetry by both sides; Ḥusayn, Ṭāha, *Fī al-adab al-jāhili*, Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1927, pp. 160-8.

<sup>121</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 19; see also Lyall, *Ancient*, p. xxxix. Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, pp. 86-8, implies that 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.

<sup>122</sup> 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.<sup>123</sup>

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-Kūfa. He is also quoted by al-Ṭabarī as saying that he accessed documents kept in the monasteries of Ḥīra, which he used for historical reports on the Mundhirid dynasty and their dealings with the Arab tribes.<sup>124</sup> 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."<sup>125</sup> 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.<sup>126</sup> Not all transmitters and collectors, however, were necessarily guilty of such conduct. Collectors such as al-Mufaḍḍal al-Ḍabbī (d. ca. 170/785) and al-Aṣmaʿī (d. 213/828) generally had good reputations in terms of authentic transmission amongst their contemporaries and later scholars. Others, such as Ḥammād al-Rāwīya (d. 156/773) and Khalaf al-Aḥmar (d. 179/796) who were frequently accused of forging or wrongly attributing much poetry, cannot have been

<sup>123</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 53; Caskel, "Ajjām", pp. 82-3.

<sup>124</sup> Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 52.

<sup>125</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, q.v. "al-Kalbī".

<sup>126</sup> See Caskel, "Ajjām", pp. 84-5. With regard to poetry, Ṭāha Ḥusayn gives five main motivations for its conscious development: political, religious, the Shuʿūbiya debate, the effects of story-telling and some miscellaneous reasons related to the *ruwā* [Ṭāha Ḥusayn, *Fi al-adab al-jāhili*, 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<sup>127</sup> even though some modern scholars have stressed the exaggeration of such accusations.<sup>128</sup>

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.<sup>129</sup>

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.<sup>130</sup> 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.<sup>131</sup>

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 Jāhiliya 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

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<sup>127</sup> 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 Kūfan 'school' is supposed to have been more concerned with literal transmission, while the Basran was more lax and indeed changed verses to fit them into preconceived 'moulds' [Arazi, *Poésie*, p. 25]. But see Noth Conrad, *Historical Tradition*, 5-16, which argues against the existence of schools altogether, although focusing on the transmission of early Islamic historical *akḥbar*, rather than poetry or philology.

<sup>128</sup> See the arguments of Yahyā, *al-'Uṣūr al-qadīma*, pp. 277-8.

<sup>129</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", pp. 44-8. Although, see Arazi, *Poésie*, pp. 31-5, who gives evidence of developments, albeit accretion and not manipulation, occurring after recording.

<sup>130</sup> For bibliographic details, see above n. 64.

<sup>131</sup> For an insightful discussion of the changes in the *poetical* tradition as it moved from oral transmission to literate recording, see Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām*, part III "Abū Tammām and the Arabic Anthology", esp. pp. 246, ff.



thus, these non-Arab intellectuals were responsible for "plac[ing] Arabism and Islam on the cultural map of the era".<sup>132</sup>

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-Ḍabbī (a freeborn tribesman of the Arab tribe of Ḍabba<sup>133</sup>) discredits her theory when stressing the importance of the non-Arab element.<sup>134</sup> 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".<sup>135</sup>

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,<sup>136</sup> or to attribute new verses to a favourite poet, in order to appeal to the tastes of different audiences.<sup>137</sup> 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.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", pp. 42-3.

<sup>133</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *q.v.* "al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbī".

<sup>134</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", pp. 46-7.

<sup>135</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 43.

<sup>136</sup> Drory incorrectly translates the verb *aṣlahā* from her sources as 'to revise', thus obfuscating the intention behind the revision according to her sources; Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 39 and n. 17.

<sup>137</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 40.

<sup>138</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 39.

### 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*.<sup>139</sup> 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.<sup>140</sup> 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. Rabīʿa, the incident which is said to have triggered the dreadful Basūs War. The account records that the Maʿadd confederation only ever came together in war under three leaders. Once under ʿĀmir b. al-Zarib of ʿAdwān of Qays, another time under Rabīʿa b. al-Hārith of the B. Jusham b. Bakr of Taghlib; and a last time under his son Kulayb Wāʿil b. Rabīʿa at Yawm Khazāz.<sup>141</sup>

Yet, Taghlib and ʿAdwān 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 Maʿadd 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

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<sup>139</sup> See for instance Donner "Bakr", p. 15. This point will be taken up below in Chapter 3, "Ayyām al-ʿArab".

<sup>140</sup> Donner, "Bakr", p. 15.

<sup>141</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 523-4.

'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 "Nizār" 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 *ruwā*, 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 *ruwā*, 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 ʿAbbāsid 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 *ayyām*, 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 *ayyām al-ʿarab*, 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-ʿArab:*

## The Historical Tradition of the pre-Islamic Arabs

#### Introduction:

The Arab 'battle days', or *ayyām al-ʿarab*, 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 Kindīs, and even campaigns of the South Arabian kingdoms.<sup>142</sup>

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.<sup>143</sup> Nevertheless, negative blanket statements such as Crone's "the *ayyām* are simply legendary", or "tribal ... history up to the ascension of Muʿāwiya [is] largely beyond disentanglement"<sup>144</sup> 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.<sup>145</sup> 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

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<sup>142</sup> For the most detailed account on the literary nature, composition and development of the *ayyām* accounts one must turn to W. Caskel's "*Aijām al-ʿArab*" mentioned earlier; see n. 3 above.

<sup>143</sup> See the discussion in Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿarab*, i, pp. 71-86. See also Caskel's brief overview, "*Aijām*", pp. 6-9.

<sup>144</sup> 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 Šiffin is as loaded a question as who participated in that of Badr".

<sup>145</sup> 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 *Akḥbār makka*, or Ibn al-Kalbī's *Kitāb al-aṣnām*.<sup>146</sup> 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-ʿarab*. 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 *akḥbār* material that has come down to us. However, some events are well-attested not only in the *akḥbār*, 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."<sup>147</sup>

Along similar lines, Duri tells us that the Jāhili material lacked any overall historical view regarding its subject matter.<sup>148</sup> 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."<sup>149</sup> What distinguishes these historical facts is left unspecified. Similarly, Khālidī also holds the view that only a core

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<sup>146</sup> Al-Azraqī, Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh, *Akḥbār makka*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1858; Ibn al-Kalbī, Hishām b. Muḥammad, *Kitāb al-aṣnām*, ed. Aḥmad Zaki, Cairo, 1924.

<sup>147</sup> Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, p. 20.

<sup>148</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 20.

<sup>149</sup> Duri, *Historical Writing*, p. 19.



of the surviving Jāhili poetry is authentic, but leaves us uncertain as to whether it is possible to identify this core or not.<sup>150</sup>

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

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

Nöldeke's assertions, on the other hand, need to be revised.<sup>155</sup> As we will see below, epigraphic evidence has supported information found in some of the most ancient *ayyām* accounts. Bowersock, for example, uses epigraphic evidence in conjunction with Roman sources to corroborate much of the Arabic account of Jadhīma 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 Tanūkhī allies.<sup>156</sup> Similarly, Bayātī is able to pinpoint some elements of historical relevance by comparison with external traditions.<sup>157</sup>

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

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<sup>150</sup> Khalidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 2.

<sup>151</sup> For a full account of this story see Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, pp. 74-7.

<sup>152</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "ʿAmālīq".

<sup>153</sup> Donner, "Bakr", p. 14, see also pp. 8, 14-6.

<sup>154</sup> Historians frequently refer to the *ayyām* as a single block, implying that they are homogenous. Thus, for instance, Hill, D. R., *The Termination of Hostilities in the Early Arab Conquests: AD 634-656*, London: Luzac & Co. Ltd., 1971, p. 23; Petersen, *ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya*, p. 177.

<sup>155</sup> See I. Kawar [= Shalīd], "The Last Days of Salīl", *Arabica*, 5 (1958), pp. 153-8.

<sup>156</sup> Bowersock, G. W., *Roman Arabia*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983, pp. 132-7; see also Shalīd, I., *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century*, Washington DC: Dunbarton Oaks, 1984, p. 373.

<sup>157</sup> Again regarding the Zenobia account. See Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, pp. 78, ff.

how they may be used for historical purposes. First, we must examine the sources which supply the *ayyām* material.

### The sources of the *ayyām*:

The earliest *ayyām* compilations were collections of those of single tribal groups, or occasionally those between two particular enemy tribes.<sup>158</sup> To my knowledge none of these are extant, nor are any published extant works solely devoted to *ayyām*.<sup>159</sup> However, considerable extracts from some of these early compilations have survived in later works.<sup>160</sup> The earliest named collectors of the *ayyām* were active in the Marwānid and early ʿAbbāsīd periods and included figures such as Muḥammad b. al-Sāʿib al-Kalbī (d. 146/763), Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ (d. 154/770), Ḥammād al-Rāwīya (d. 155/772 or 156/773), al-Mufaḍḍal al-Dabbī (d. between 164/781 and 170/786-7) and Yūnus b. Ḥabīb (d. 183/799-800).<sup>161</sup>

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 Muʿammar b. Muthannā al-Taymī (d. 207/825), and all extant compilations quote him. To a lesser extent, extracts from collections of *ayyām* of Hishām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī (d. 204/819 or 206/821) and al-Aṣmaʿī (d. 213/828),<sup>162</sup> are also preserved. Very few other compilers of *ayyām* are acknowledged by the extant sources.

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

<sup>158</sup> See the titles of Ibn al-Kalbī's collections of tribal *ayyām*, in Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tajaddud, p. 110 = Dodge, p. 209-10, as well as titles of Abū ʿUbayda's collections of *ayyām*, Tajaddud, p. 60 = Dodge, p. 118.

<sup>159</sup> Unedited 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. Ishāq, *Kitāb ḥurrāb al-Basūs bayna Bakr wa-taghlīb*, MS, Tehrān University, no. 2134 (fols. 122b-202b). [It is not clear whether this author is the same Ibn Ishāq of *sīra* fame, as the *Fihrist* does not mention this work under his entry or those of others homonymous to him.]

<sup>160</sup> See Olinder, G., *Mulūk kindā min banī ākil al-murār*, Arabic tr. from English (*The Kings of Kinda of the Family of Ākil al-Murār*) by ʿA. al-Muṭṭalibī, Baghdād: University of Baghdād, 1973, p. 41. Olinder has written the most detailed general works on Kinda, 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; "Āl al-Ġaam of the Family of Ākil al-Murār", *Le Monde Orientale*, 25 (1931).

<sup>161</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, p. 22; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Abū ʿAmr b. al-ʿAlāʾ", "Ḥammād al-Rāwīya", "al-Mufaḍḍal al-Dabbī", "al-Kalbī". For Yūnus b. Ḥabīb, see Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, Tajaddud, pp. 47-8 = Dodge, pp. 92-3.

<sup>162</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, p. 22; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Abū ʿUbayda al-Taymī", "al-Kalbī", "al-Aṣmaʿī".



*ayyām*.<sup>163</sup> Not much is known about the non-extant *Kitāb al-ayyām* of Ibn al-Kalbī, or his other numerous non-extant works on pre-Islamic affairs, which are mentioned in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*.<sup>164</sup> Al-Aṣmaʿī did not write a book on the *ayyām*, although he related many in his numerous works on pre-Islamic topics.<sup>165</sup>

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 *Naqāʾid jarīr wa-al-farazdaq*<sup>166</sup> collected by either Abū ʿUbayda or his student, Muḥammad b. Ḥabīb (d. 245/860), the *Kitāb al-aghānī*<sup>167</sup> of al-Iṣfahānī (d. 356/967) or, the geographical work of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), *Kitāb muʿjam al-buldān*<sup>168</sup>.

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)<sup>169</sup>, the great history of Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233), *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*<sup>170</sup> or, the *Nihāyat al-arab fī tahdhīb al-adab* of al-Nuwayrī (d. 733/1333)<sup>171</sup>. None of these *ayyām* collections include Islamic *ayyām*.

The main sources used in this chapter are the *ayyām* collections of Ibn al-Athīr, al-Nuwayrī, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, as well as Bayātī's compilation of *ayyām* narrated by Abū ʿUbayda, which has been mentioned earlier.<sup>172</sup> Al-Iṣfahānī's and Yāqūt's voluminous *Aghānī* and *Muʿjam al-buldān*, as well as the *Naqāʾid* 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-Ḥamdānī, 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.

<sup>163</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ayyām al-ʿArab"; see also al-Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, pp. 17-18.

<sup>164</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 109-10 = Dodge, p. 209-10; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Kalbī". The latter article does not mention any non-extant works of Ibn al-Kalbī.

<sup>165</sup> Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, pp. 60-1 = Dodge, pp. 119-21; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Aṣmaʿī".

<sup>166</sup> See n. 33 above for full bibliographic details.

<sup>167</sup> See n. 29 above for full bibliographic details.

<sup>168</sup> See n. 38 above for full bibliographic details.

<sup>169</sup> See n. 46 above for full bibliographic details.

<sup>170</sup> See n. 55 above for full bibliographic details.

<sup>171</sup> Al-Nuwayrī, Ahmad b. ʿAbd al-Wahāb, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*, 25 vols. in progress, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1923-. The volume containing the *ayyām* collection is number 15.

<sup>172</sup> See n. 35 and n. 56 above.



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,<sup>173</sup> 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.<sup>174</sup>

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, Ḥarb al-Basūs, which is composed of other *ayyām*, including *Yawm al-Dhanāʾib*, *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 Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maydānī (d. 518/1124), refer to each *yawm* separately.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Hamdānī, is clearly aware of Iraqi scholarship, in particular the two Kalbīs - 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 *Fihrist*, for example, whose author died 50 years after al-Hamdānī, does not mention al-Hamdānī at all.

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

<sup>175</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 532; al-Maydānī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad, *Majmaʿ al-anthāl*, ed. N. Ḥ. Zarzūr, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiya, 1988, pp. 529, 534, 535. On al-Maydānī, see EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Maydānī".

Thus, there are differences in the selection, presentation and organization of *ayyām* 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 *ayyām* narratives:

#### *Form and content:*

The entry in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition) for "Ayyām al-ʿArab", by E. Mittwoch, tells us that the events of the *ayyām* generally follow a pattern typifying Arabian inter-tribal warfare since ancient times. According to the article, a *yawm*, or series of *ayyām*, 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.<sup>176</sup>

While a few *ayyām* do follow this pattern to a certain extent, most do not. More importantly, this view assumes the *ayyām* 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 *ayyām* 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.<sup>177</sup> 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 Imruʿ al-Qays and ʿAbīd b. al-Abraṣ. Some odes are older than the 6th century; these include those attributed to ʿAmr b.

<sup>176</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ayyām al-ʿArab".

<sup>177</sup> Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 2.



Qamīʿa and his paternal uncle, al-Muraqqash, while older still, are the verses attributed to al-Muhalhil.<sup>178</sup>

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 Anṣār, 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*.<sup>179</sup>

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 Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār al-Kindī, mentioned in the *ayyām*.<sup>180</sup> The *ayyām* involving Kinda can similarly be dated to the late 5th and early 6th centuries CE.<sup>181</sup> 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.<sup>182</sup> Other accounts involving various Sassanian and South Arabian kings, or the Tanūkhid migrations<sup>183</sup> may similarly be dated by recourse to inscriptions and other external sources.

If surviving pre-Islamic genealogies are at all accurate<sup>184</sup> 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 Dhubyānī leader in the Dāhis war was the father of Ḥiṣn b.

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<sup>178</sup> Lyall, "Aspects", p. 4.

<sup>179</sup> For example, the first meetings between the Prophet and tribesmen from Yathrib in Mecca mention the Aws-Khazraj feud, which was still raging at that time [Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, pp. 427, 428].

<sup>180</sup> In particular I am here referring to the two inscriptions of Maʿsal al-Hunh, Ry 509 and Ry 510. See C. Robin, "Le Royaume Ḥujride, dit 'Royaume de Kinda' entre Ḥimyar et Byzance", *Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres*, April/June 1996, pp. 675-7, 686.

<sup>181</sup> Olinder, *Kinda*, *passim*.

<sup>182</sup> See Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, pp. 133-4; Shahid, *BAFOC*, pp. 371-2, ff.

<sup>183</sup> 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. 223]; Shahid, *BAFOC*, pp. 369, ff.

<sup>184</sup> Werner Caskel, an authority on the ancient *ansāb* 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, "*Ajām*", p. 76.



Ḥudhayfa, a contemporary of the Prophet.<sup>185</sup> Qays b. Zuhayr, the leader of ʿAbs in that war is the grandfather of Musāwir b. Hind, a poet in Umayyad times.<sup>186</sup> ʿAmr b. Sinān of Tamīm was in the delegation sent to the Prophet in Medina; his father's cousin, Qays b. ʿĀṣim, features frequently in the *ayyām* of Tamīm against Bakr.<sup>187</sup> Similarly, ʿUṭārid b. Ḥājib was the grandson of the great Dārimī leader Zurāra b. ʿUdus. His father was Ḥājib b. Zurāra who fought against the Lakhmids in Yawm Ṭikhfa and led Dārim on Yawm Jabala.<sup>188</sup> Many other such examples abound.<sup>189</sup>

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 Kindī 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.<sup>190</sup>

### *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

<sup>185</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 130/19, 20.

<sup>186</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 132/19, 21.

<sup>187</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 76/20, 21.

<sup>188</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 60/18, 19, 20.

<sup>189</sup> Interestingly, the vertical generational depth from ʿAdnan (as marked by Caskel in his tables) is quite consistent between members of Muḍar but is not synchronized with Rabiʿa. Thus, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr, Qays b. Zuhayr, Ḥājib b. Zurāra are on level 19, other Muḍarī contemporaries of theirs such as Qays b. ʿĀṣim and ʿĀmir b. al-Ṭufayl [Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 93] are close on level 20 [the Prophet is on level 22]. However, contemporaries of these from Rabiʿa, such as al-Ḥawfuzān b. Sharik [Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 146] and Bistām b. Qays [Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 144] are on levels 26 and 28 respectively.

<sup>190</sup> For a general discussion of problems of chronology in the early source material see L. Conrad, "Abraham and Muḥammad: Some Observations Apropos of Chronology and Literary *Topoi* in the Early Arabic Historical Tradition", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 50 (1987).

'branch' as it is used at many levels of the genealogy. A man's *quwm* 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.<sup>191</sup> 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.* Rabīʿa 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.<sup>192</sup> In particular, Bakr, Taghlib, Tamīm, Ghaṭafān and ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿsaʿa have the most *ayyām*, while other tribes appear far less often. The north-western Quḍāʿa are very rarely mentioned and, similarly South Arabian tribes are seldom mentioned except as the defeated enemy, with the occasional exception of the Madhḥijī tribes and allies based in southern Najd. The bulk of the accounts involving

<sup>191</sup> See the discussion on tribal nomenclature in Watt, M., *Muhammad at Medina*, Oxford: Oxford University press, 1956, pp. 78-9; also, Donner, "Bakr", p. 6-7, 37; Landau-Passeron, "Asad", pp. 1-5.

<sup>192</sup> As opposed to Hamdānī'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 Ḥīra, 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*, Ḥimyarī *tabābiʿa* and the Ghassānids, take place in northern and central Najd and al-Baḥrayn.<sup>193</sup>

*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 Bayātī'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 Bayātī 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.<sup>194</sup>

*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 *suwālif* described

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<sup>193</sup> 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 Kūfa and Baṣra, 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 Rabiʿan, Qaysi and Tamīmī 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 Bedouin tribes to record their 'pure Arabic', if we accept that the tribesmen they visited lay on the doorsteps of Kūfa and Baṣra and not deep in the heart of Arabia.

<sup>194</sup> Maydānī, *Anthāl*, 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*.<sup>195</sup>

### 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 (*sibāḥīn*) which are distinct and belong to the women and children, and talk of "jinn and marvels".<sup>196</sup> This division between historical accounts and folktales, and the stressing of the historiographical function of the former is significant.

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<sup>195</sup> For examples of these see Caskeel, "Ajjām", pp. 9-34.

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

- 1) Captives or *juwār* who are sworn to secrecy by 'hosts' send cryptic warning messages to their kin to warn them of imminent attack by 'hosts' tribal group [See Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, 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 Kindi ruler ʿUjūr [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 511-2].
- 3) War party sees gradually approaching enemy, group by group. Each is briefly described 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-Nataʿa [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 646].
- 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 Naʿf Qushāwa [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 596].
- 5) Tribal hero drinks neat wine until death [see Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 506. The list includes Zubayr b. Janāb, ʿAmr b. Kulthūm and ʿAmīr b. Mālik, s.c. Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, ii, "ʿAmīr b. Mālik (al-Aḥmad)"].

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 *topos*, which requires the participation of at least three tribal groups on one side in order to be possible to narrate.

<sup>196</sup> Sawayan, *Historical Narrative*, p. 19.

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*.<sup>197</sup> 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 of 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.<sup>198</sup> 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 Khālidī, 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.<sup>199</sup>

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

يا بني تميم اطلقوا من لساني .

Oh sons of Tamīm, let loose my tongue.<sup>200</sup>

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.<sup>201</sup>

<sup>197</sup> 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.

<sup>198</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", p. 36; see also Humphreys, *Islamic History*, p. 90.

<sup>199</sup> Khālidī, *Historical Thought*, p. 4.

<sup>200</sup> Drory, "Abbasid Construction", pp. 36-7.

<sup>201</sup> For more on this, see the argument of Yahyā, *al-'Uṣūr al-qadīma*, 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, 'ayyām of single tribal units'; around thirty fit under 'ayyām of multiple groups'; and just under ten form the 'ancient *ayyām*'. The remainder are mainly accounts which lie in between the first two groups.

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 Jāhili 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 *yawm* - 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-bāʿida*, the migrations of the Arabian tribes out of Tihāma and Yemen, etc.

Indeed, while compilers of the *ayyām* such as Abū ʿUbayda, Ibn al-Kalbī and al-Mufaddal al-Ḍabbī collected these accounts<sup>202</sup> (presumably, the reason for their designation as *ayyām* by some modern scholars<sup>203</sup>) 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 migration<sup>204</sup>, the war of Jadhīma al-Abrash against the Palmyrenes<sup>205</sup>, the war of Ṭasam and Jadīs<sup>206</sup> and the details of the ʿAbsī prophet, Khalid b. Sinān<sup>207</sup>, all are placed much earlier than his section on *ayyām* proper. Nor do such accounts appear in the specific chapters of the *ʿIqd* or *Majmaʿ al-amthāl*.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> See for instance, Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, pp. 73-4.

<sup>203</sup> For example, Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, i, pp. 68, ff.

<sup>204</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 340-2.

<sup>205</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 342-51.

<sup>206</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 351-4.

<sup>207</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 376.

<sup>208</sup> Ibn ʿAbd rabīh, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 3-117; Maydānī, *Amthāl*, pp. 517-45.



*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*<sup>209</sup>, 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 Jadhīma al-Abrash and al-Zabāʿ alone we have more than a dozen.<sup>210</sup> 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.<sup>211</sup> 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 Jadhīma al-Abrash and his nephew ʿAmr b. ʿAdīy against al-Zabāʿ of Palmyra (who may or may not be the famous Zenobia<sup>212</sup>), as well as in the account of the Tanūkh confederation migrations up the Euphrates and into *bādiyat al-shām*.<sup>213</sup>

*External evidence:*

The main evidence is that both Jadhīma "king of the Tanūkh" as well as ʿAmr b. ʿAdīy 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.<sup>214</sup> 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-Zabāʿ with Zenobia) is attributed to ʿAmr b. ʿAdīy 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.

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<sup>209</sup> For examples of these, see n. 198 above.

<sup>210</sup> See ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 344-50.

<sup>211</sup> See Blachère, *Histoire*, iii, pp. 787-8.

<sup>212</sup> One author considers al-Zabāʿ to be a different Palmyrene ruler, predating the famous Zenobia. See Trimmingham, J., *Christianity Amongst the Arabs in pre-Islamic Times*, London: Longman, 1979, p. 155.

<sup>213</sup> See Trimmingham, *Christianity*, pp. 93-6.

<sup>214</sup> For details of these inscriptions and on the use of this account to reconstruct history of the Arabs in this period see Shahīd, *BAFOC*, pp. 370-4, *passim*; Bowersock, *Roman Arabia*, pp. 132-7; Trimmingham, *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 Jadīs of Yamāma, a party to the conflict described in *Yawm al-Yamāma* also known as *Ḥarb Ṭasam wa-Jadīs*.<sup>215</sup>

*Remarks:*

These ancient accounts were widely dispersed amongst the Arabs<sup>216</sup> and formed no part in the rhetoric of tribal *ʿaṣabīya*. They were probably preserved in a multi-tribal environment such as that of al-Ḥīra, rather than having been narrated by general *ruwā* amongst the scattered tribes of Arabia.<sup>217</sup>

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 Jadhīma 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

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<sup>215</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 351-4. A misreading of Iodysitae for Iolysitae has led to incorrect associations for this tribe. For this and further precarious associations see Potts, *Arabian Gulf*, ii, pp. 225-6. See also Brice, 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 Brice gives on page 14 follow the original and, according to Brice, are more accurate.

<sup>216</sup> For an example of how far verses can travel through oral repetition, see Kurpershoek, *Oral Poetry*, p. 6, n. 4, where the author describes how verses were known to tribesmen in Zafār in 'Umān which were composed three generations earlier in central Najd.

<sup>217</sup> The idea of there being a Ḥīrān audience for these accounts is further bolstered by the high number of proverbs (*amthāl*) in these accounts. See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Mathal", where it is suggested that the genre of *amthāl*-origins could have originated in al-Ḥīra. Naturally, it could have equally been a post-Conquest development. See also Blachère, *Histoire*, iii, pp. 802-3.



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 Jāhili 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 Aqrūn<sup>218</sup> and Yawm Naʿf Qushāwa<sup>219</sup>. The former *yawm* represents a victory of the group being raided (ʿAbs) 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 Yarbūʿ 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.<sup>220</sup> 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 Tamīmī territory. This migration caused much fighting between the Bakrī and Tamīmī groups.<sup>221</sup> Sometimes series of *ayyām* are encountered, where each

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<sup>218</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 345-6.

<sup>219</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 354-61.

<sup>220</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 5.

<sup>221</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 604.

*yawm* prompts the next one; the continuing link in these cases is blood vengeance.<sup>222</sup>

### *Dāḥis 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.<sup>223</sup> Such is the case with two famous *ayyām* accounts of this type. The Dāḥis war, between ʿAbs and Dhubyān; and, the Basūs war, involving the tribesmen of Taghlib and Bakr. Both were said to have lasted forty years<sup>224</sup> and consisted of several episodes.<sup>225</sup>

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

### *Heroes:*

Yawm Naʿf Qushāwa, mentioned above, belongs to a group of *ayyām* between Shaybān and Tamīm.<sup>228</sup> 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<sup>229</sup> and even sometimes killed.<sup>230</sup> Some characters keep reappearing and after a few *ayyām* become familiar figures. Examples of these are Bisṭām b. Qays and al-Ḥawfazān b. Sharīk - both of the Dhuhl b. Shaybān - and their close kin, who play an

<sup>222</sup> See Ibn al-Athīr who amalgamates many connected *ayyām* revolving around the murder of the ʿAbsī leader, Zuhayr b. Jadhīma, into one account. [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, pp. 556, ff.]. These *ayyām* exist separately in *ʿIqd*, for instance, as Yawm Manʿij, al-Nafrāwat, Baṭu ʿAqil, al-Raḥrahān, (Shiʿb Jabala) and Maqtal al-Ḥārith b. Zālim [Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, pp. 4-17].

<sup>223</sup> Caskel, *ʿAjjām*, pp. 84, ff.

<sup>224</sup> For the significance and use of the number 40 in early Islamic *akḥbar*, see Conrad "Chronology and Literary Topoi", pp. 232-40.

<sup>225</sup> Examples are Yawm al-Dhanāʿib and Yawm Waridāt. [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, 532-3].

<sup>226</sup> See Caskel, *ʿAjjām*, p. 75; *ʿAmharat*, ii, p. 27; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Kulayb b. Rubʿa".

<sup>227</sup> These *ayyām* will be discussed more fully in Chapters Five and Six.

<sup>228</sup> These include Yawm al-Ghabīṭ, Mabāʿid, al-Zuwayrayn, Jadūd, Safwān, etc.

<sup>229</sup> A famous example is Bisṭām b. Qays. See Yawm al-Ghabīṭ [Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil*, i, p. 598].

<sup>230</sup> An example is Sharīk b. al-Ḥawfazān son of the famous al-Ḥawfazān b. Sharīk in Yawm al-Mukhattaṭ, [Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 56-7] and Bisṭām b. Qays in Yawm al-Shaḥīqa, see Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, 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 *ruwā* to construct familiar figures. Regarding the appearance of these Bakrī 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-Ḥīra, or, later in Islamic times in the garrison towns. This could have been done by the Tamīmīs to further exaggerate their victories, or later by Islamic collectors trying to fuse disparate accounts into a composite whole.<sup>231</sup>

*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 Dāḥis 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 Jarīr 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

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<sup>231</sup> For the latter point see Gaskel, "Ajjam", 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*<sup>232</sup> 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".<sup>232</sup>

### **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, Kindī 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.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See above, p. 42.

<sup>233</sup> The *mulūk* in the *ayyām* traditions always relied on Arab tribesmen to make up their fighting forces.



*Mulūk-mulūk conflicts:*

These *ayyām* accounts describe various battles between the *mulūk* of the three pre-Islamic Arab ruling houses. As in the case of the ancient account of Jadhīma al-Abrash and al-Zabā<sup>235</sup> mentioned earlier, some of the events and the existence of many of the *mulūk* described in these *ayyām* are corroborated by epigraphic and non-Arabic literary sources.<sup>234</sup>

The earliest *mulūk* accounts are those of the Kindī leader, Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār, the founder of the Ḥujrid dynasty in central Arabia. However, the accounts for the Ḥujrid Kindīs 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-Ḥīra.

The most important *ayyām* of this group are Yawm al-Baradān (Kinda *vs.* Ghassān)<sup>235</sup>; Yawm al-Kulāb (inter- Kindī feud)<sup>236</sup>; Yawm Maqtal Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith (mainly Lakhm *vs.* Kinda)<sup>237</sup> - these three accounts will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5<sup>238</sup>; Yawm Marj Ḥalīma (Lakhm *vs.* Ghassān)<sup>239</sup>; and Yawm ʿAyn Ubāgh (Lakhm *vs.* Ghassān)<sup>240</sup>.

These *ayyām* tell us that tribal support of Kindī dynasty of B. Ākil al-Murār in central Arabia - between the mid-5th and mid-6th c. CE<sup>241</sup> - came from all the major central Najdī tribes and those in al-Baḥrayn but particularly so from the tribes of Rabīʿa. Support for the Lakhmids can be seen to have been from al-Baḥrayn when fighting Kinda in Najd, as in seen in the events of Yawm Maqtal Ḥujr, at the start of the reign of the Lakhmid, ʿAmr b. Hind (ruled 554-69 CE<sup>242</sup>), and from the tribes of the Euphrates region when fighting against the Syrian Ghassānids in the time of al-Mundhir IV (ruled 574-80 CE<sup>243</sup>). As for the Ghassānids (and despite the fact that they are the victorious party in the two *ayyām* mentioned above against the Lakhmids)

<sup>234</sup> See Olinder, *Kinda, passim*.

<sup>235</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 506.

<sup>236</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 549.

<sup>237</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 433. The introduction to this *yawm* describes the rise to power of the Kindī house of B. Ākil al-Murār in Najd. The first part involves the rebelling of Asad against the Kindī prince, Ḥujr b. al-Ḥārith, and his murder at their hands. The second part involves Imruʿ al-Qays b. Ḥujr seeking revenge for his father and then being involved in a war with the famous Lakhmid ruler al-Mundhir Maʿ al-Samīʿ.

<sup>238</sup> See pp. 97-100, below.

<sup>239</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 542.

<sup>240</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 540.

<sup>241</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Kinda".

<sup>242</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Lakhmids".

<sup>243</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Lakhmids".

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

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 Ḥīra as well as that of the Ghassānids of al-Shām. Of these, Yawm Ṭikhfa involves the B. Yarbūʿ against the *malik* of al-Ḥīra and his allies from other Tamīmī groups<sup>245</sup>; two *ayyām* involve the B. Taghlib, once against the Ghassānids described as Ḥarb al-Ḥārith al-ʿraj wa-Taghlib<sup>246</sup>, and another time against the Lakhmids, known as Yawm Maqtal ʿAmr b. Hind<sup>247</sup>; 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 CE<sup>248</sup>) at Yawm Safawān<sup>249</sup>, 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.<sup>250</sup>

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.<sup>251</sup>

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 Ghassānid *malik* may not be. It must also be true that Tamīmī lineages were closely associated with al-Ḥīra at the time of the later Ḥīran king, al-Nuʿmān, and indeed, as we find in other *ayyām* as well, they formed in this period an

<sup>244</sup> See Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 543.

<sup>245</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 649.

<sup>246</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 539.

<sup>247</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 547.

<sup>248</sup> Following Shahid in EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Lakhmids".

<sup>249</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿarab*, ii, p. 433. There is another battle, between Shayban and Māzin, which has the same name.

<sup>250</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 639.

<sup>251</sup> Donner, "Bakr", pp. 14-5.



important arm of Lakhmid power in eastern Arabia. The accounts involving ʿĀmir highlight this alliance of Tamīmī groups with Ḥīra and suggest that the Ḥīran power extended across the Dahnā<sup>252</sup> into Najd from al-Baḥrayn in the late 6th c. CE.

*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 Shiʿb 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 Taghlib.

Yawm Shiʿb Jabala involved on one side, the B. ʿAbs and their allies, ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān, with their neighbours, the B. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa, against a combined attacking force of Dhubyān (the term Ghatafān is also used) with their Asadī 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 Ḥīran troops.<sup>253</sup> The reason for the presence of the Kindī/Ḥīran troops, we are told, was to take booty, while Dhubyān had a feud with ʿAbs and Tamīm had a feud with B. ʿĀmir. At the time, ʿAbs had moved into ʿĀmirī territory as a result of the Dāḥis war against the rest of Ghatafān.<sup>254</sup> ʿAbs and ʿĀmir were the victors in this battle.<sup>255</sup>

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* (Ghatafān and Asad) and Ṭayyiʿ 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-Nuʿmān - the mother of al-Aswad, we are told, was from al-Ribāb. Tamīm countered this move by persuading B. ʿĀmir to join them in an attack against the *aḥālīf* and al-Ribāb, however, they were both defeated by the Ribāb alliance.<sup>256</sup>

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

<sup>252</sup> See M. J. Kister, "Al-Ḥīra. Some Notes on its Relations with Arabia", *Arabica*, 15 (1968), p. 149, ff.

<sup>253</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 237-8. See also p. 248 which implies links between a Dārimī leader and the Sassānians.

<sup>254</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 237.

<sup>255</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 234-268.

<sup>256</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, 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 *mulūk* 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-Nisār, 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-ʿAbs/ʿĀmir alliance as being to wipe out their military potential in a set battle.<sup>257</sup> Furthermore, we are told that after the battle of Jabala, ʿĀmir captured the prime camels of the Lakhmid ruler, al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir,<sup>258</sup> and one of the leaders of the anti-ʿAbsī alliance was the Dārimī chieftain, Laqīṭ b. Zurāra, who elsewhere is associated with the Mundhirids and even with the Sassanian king (*kisrā*).<sup>259</sup>

Thus, it seems that these large scale 'tribal' *ayyām* while seemingly unattached from the broader geopolitical context, are in fact an important part of it. These *ayyām* 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 *ayyām* material nor with the later conquest movement.<sup>260</sup>

#### *Audiences and transmitters:*

The nature of these *ayyām* 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 Abū ʿUbayda describes in his account for Yawm al-Nisār, for instance. Here, he tells us that there were differences in opinion about certain

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<sup>257</sup> See *Naqāʿid*, pp. 657-662.

<sup>258</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 661.

<sup>259</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 663.

<sup>260</sup> For the increased militarization of Arabia in the late Jāhili period, see J. Retsö, "The Road to Yarmuk: The Arabs and the Fall of the Roman Power in the Middle East", in L. Rydén and J. O. Rosenqvist, *Aspects of Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium*, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, vol. 4, Stockholm, 1993.

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 debatable 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*.<sup>261</sup> Also disputed were the tribal affiliations of the commanders, a detail often contested between tribes for obvious reasons.<sup>262</sup> In this case, a Ḍabbī informant gives information different from an Asadī 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 *aḥālīf* and al-Ribāb.<sup>263</sup> 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 ʿ*aṣabīya* with the *mulūk*, and we are not told of any Kindī, 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

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<sup>261</sup> See Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 527-8.

<sup>262</sup> For another example of this type of dispute of the *ruwā*, see Yawm Khuzāz, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 97-8.

<sup>263</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 529.

confused post-Kindī 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 Najdī tribes and those of al-Baḥrayn. 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 Kindī 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-Aṣmaʿī, and preserved in works such as Yāqūt's *Muʿjam 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.<sup>264</sup> 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 Kindīs and that of Islam.

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<sup>264</sup> I use only the tribal *ayyām* found in Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*.



### 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.<sup>265</sup> 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 the historical watersheds of the rise of the Ḥujrid Kindīs 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.<sup>266</sup> 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.<sup>267</sup>

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

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<sup>265</sup> See for instance the two maps in Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, pp. 13, 21; the numerous charts in Mu'nis, II, *Atlas tārikh al-islām*, Cairo: al-Zahrā' li'l-Flām al-'Arabī, 1987, charts 32-35, ff.; the tribal map in Smith, "Events in Arabia"; see also map 4 and the 'Tribal Arabia' map in EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Badw".

<sup>266</sup> See Dresch, *Tribes*, pp. 80-2, ff. Tribal 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.

<sup>267</sup> 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 Ruwala 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 Arabians 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.<sup>268</sup>

*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-Ḥārith b. Ka<sup>c</sup>b [see map 2]. The territory of al-Ḥārith b. Ka<sup>c</sup>b was strategically placed between the <sup>c</sup>Asīr mountains in the west and the practically impenetrable gigantic sand desert of the 'Empty Quarter'.<sup>269</sup> It thus dominated the only major land route between Najd and Yemen. The B. al-Ḥārith formed a very important part of the Madhḥij confederation. The name Madhḥij 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 Madhḥij provided the Sabaeans and then Ḥimyarites with auxiliary troops for their central Arabian expeditions.<sup>270</sup>

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

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<sup>268</sup> See F. Donner, "The Role of Nomads in the Near East in Late Antiquity (400-800 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, *Rwala*, p. 9-10.

<sup>269</sup> See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Rub<sup>c</sup> al-Khālī".

<sup>270</sup> C. Robin, "La Pénétration des Arabes nomades au Yémen", in *L'Arabie antique de Karib'il à Mahomet: Nouvelles données sur l'histoire des Arabes grâce aux inscriptions*, ed. C. Robin, Aix-en-Provence: Éditions Édisud, 1991, pp. 79-81.



inscriptions to be an important base of Kinda and their Madhḥijī allies for centuries.<sup>271</sup> Qaryat commanded access onto the ridge of al-<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ (modern Jabal Ṭuwayq)<sup>272</sup> and the fertile area of al-Aflāj<sup>273</sup>, through which the route passed [see map 2]. To the north, below Jabal Ṭuwayq, is a small sand desert beyond which began the territory of B. <sup>ʿ</sup>Āmir. It is unclear from the sources exactly which tribes controlled al-<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ and al-Aflāj, but one branch of Jarm of the southern Qudā<sup>ʿ</sup>a might have,<sup>274</sup> and even some of the Rabī<sup>ʿ</sup>an group al-Namir b. Qāsiṭ, normally associated with Iraq.<sup>275</sup> In Islamic times B. Ka<sup>ʿ</sup>b of <sup>ʿ</sup>Āmir b. Ṣa<sup>ʿ</sup>ṣa<sup>ʿ</sup>a were in control of Falj, the most important settlement of al-Aflāj.<sup>276</sup> Thus, it may be that they were established there in pre-Islamic times as well.<sup>277</sup> 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 <sup>ʿ</sup>Asīr mountains were the tribes of al-Azd, Khath<sup>ʿ</sup>am and Bajīla.<sup>278</sup> About 250 kms directly to the west of Qaryat, was Bīsha in the <sup>ʿ</sup>Asīr mountains [see map 2]. Wadī Bīsha ran from Bīsha to the northeast and was inhabited by Khath<sup>ʿ</sup>amīs in its higher parts and by various groups of B. <sup>ʿ</sup>Āmir and their Qaysī kinsmen of B. Salūl of Hawāzin further below in its eastern parts.<sup>279</sup> Khath<sup>ʿ</sup>am was also to be found on the higher ground between the settlements of Bīsha and Turaba.<sup>280</sup> Finally, although most of the Madhḥijī 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.<sup>281</sup>

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271 Robin, "Pénétration", p. 75. For a detailed study of the settlement of Qaryat see al-Ansary, A. R., *Qaryat al-Fau: A Portrait of Pre-Islamic Civilization in Saudi Arabia*, Riyadh: University of Riyadh, 1982.

272 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ".

273 Which is even counted as part of al-Yamāma, see Yāqūt, "al-Aflāj". It is probable that al-<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ was the name of Jabal Ṭuwayq in pre- and early Islamic times; see "<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ".

274 See Yāqūt, s.v. "Uzayhir", where they are said to control fertile land "behind" al-Yamāma. Other associations of Jarm with 'al-Yamāma' are found in Yāqūt, s.v.v. "<sup>ʿ</sup>Āriḍ", "Birk", "al-<sup>ʿ</sup>Aqīq".

275 Yāqūt, s.v. "Nisāh".

276 Yāqūt, s.v. "Falj".

277 This is suggested by the EI<sup>2</sup> entry, s.v. "al-Aflāj".

278 Yāqūt, s.v.v. "al-Sarāw", "al-Khulasa".

279 Yāqūt, s.v. "Bīsha".

280 Yāqūt, s.v. "Turaba".

281 For example, Yāqūt, s.v. "Tatlīlīth". See also Robin, G. and Ueli Brunner, *Map of Ancient Yemen*, Munich: Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, 1997, square 1F.

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-dahnā*<sup>282</sup> 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.<sup>283</sup> The town of Ḥajr was extremely important in the pre-Islamic era and was on the main trade route between Yemen and al-Baḥrayn and Iraq [see map 2]. The Arabic sources even record that South Arabian trading colonies had existed in al-Yamāma in pre-Islamic times.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>285</sup>. Along the western side of al-Dahna<sup>286</sup> were great palm groves and numerous settlements which stretched towards the mouth of the great Wadī 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. Ḥanzāla of Tamīm such as Dārim<sup>287</sup> and Yarbū<sup>c288</sup>, or associated groups such as al-Ribāb,<sup>289</sup> but also from Rabī<sup>c</sup>a, such as the Bakrī Ḥanīfa,<sup>288</sup> Qays b. Tha<sup>c</sup>laba<sup>289</sup> and <sup>c</sup>Anaza<sup>290</sup>.

To the north of the Yamāma region, some Tamīmī groups, especially B. Yarbū<sup>c</sup> were to be found between the Nafūd desert and that of al-Dahnā<sup>285</sup>.<sup>291</sup> To the west of this fertile region lay the heart of Najd, which was mainly the territory of the nomadic B. <sup>c</sup>Āmir b. Ṣa<sup>c</sup>ṣa<sup>c</sup>a.<sup>292</sup>

Al-Dahnā<sup>285</sup> 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. Ḍabba and B. Sa<sup>c</sup>d,<sup>293</sup> the latter of whom dominated its southern end.<sup>294</sup> The

<sup>282</sup> See EI<sup>1</sup>, s.v. "al-Yamāma". For a detailed description of the distribution of Bakri tribes see Donner, "Bakr", pp. 17, ff.

<sup>283</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Ḥajr".

<sup>284</sup> Al-Ṭa<sup>c</sup>ān, H., *Al-Adab al-jāhili bayna lahjāt al-qabā'il wa-al-luḡha al-muwahḥada*, Baghdad, 1978, p. 57. A colony in al-Ṭā'if is also mentioned.

<sup>285</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "Sarīr".

<sup>286</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "Marakh".

<sup>287</sup> Yāqūt, s.v.v. "Ashqar", "Ushayy", "Burqa", "al-Jurfa", "al-Ḥamāda".

<sup>288</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Muḥarraqa". See also 'Yawm al-Ṣafqa', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 620.

<sup>289</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Kharj".

<sup>290</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Majāza".

<sup>291</sup> Yāqūt, s.v.v. "Ḥazu Yarbū'", "al-Malā".

<sup>292</sup> See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "<sup>c</sup>Āmir".

<sup>293</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Dajniyatān".

<sup>294</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Dahnā".



B. Sa<sup>c</sup>d extended to the southeast of Ḥajr were the oases of Yabrīn lay.<sup>295</sup> South of Yabrīn was the 'Empty Quarter', while to the east lay the route to <sup>c</sup>Umān [see map 2].

#### Al-Bahrayn:<sup>296</sup>

North of Yabrīn and across the Dahnā<sup>3</sup> from al-Yamāma lay al-Baḥrayn, the coastal land rich in oases. Its main settlement, al-Hajar, lay in the largest oasis of the region, that of al-Aḥsā<sup>3</sup>. Al-Hajar was so important that its name was also a synonym for al-Baḥrayn.<sup>297</sup> Near al-Hajar, was the site of ancient Gerrha, once the only major port in Eastern Arabia outside of <sup>c</sup>Umān.<sup>298</sup> Al-Baḥrayn was home to mainly Bakrī but also other Rabī<sup>c</sup>an and Tamīmī tribes [see map 1].

B. Dārim were the furthest north of all the Tamīmī groups in al-Baḥrayn, whose territories started to the south of Baṣra.<sup>299</sup> The B. Sa<sup>c</sup>d lived in and around al-Hajar.<sup>300</sup> Another important centre in al-Baḥrayn according to Yāqūt, was al-Mushaqqar: "the fort of al-Hajar". It was controlled by the Rabī<sup>c</sup>an B. <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Qays, who had allegedly occupied it from Iyād in pre-Islamic times.<sup>301</sup> Shaybān and <sup>c</sup>Ijl of Bakr lay in northern al-Baḥrayn, while Yashkur and Ḥanīfa lay in the southern parts.<sup>302</sup>

#### The Euphrates:

Further north, Shaybān and <sup>c</sup>Ijl extended along the Euphrates where they mixed with Taghlib, Iyād and al-Namir.<sup>303</sup> 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.<sup>304</sup>

<sup>295</sup> Yāqūt, *s.v.* "Yabrīn", "Abrīn", "Ḥāmīr", "al-Ḥūsh", "al-Qā<sup>c</sup>a", "Masqūt".

<sup>296</sup> By al-Baḥrayn I mean not the modern island country but the older designation of the land lying on the eastern Arabian coast between <sup>c</sup>Umān in the south, Iraq in the north and bordered by the sands of al-Dahnā<sup>3</sup> in the west.

<sup>297</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "al-Ḥasā".

<sup>298</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Badw", see map 4.

<sup>299</sup> Yāqūt, *s.v.* "Baysān", "Rāma", "Bayḍa", "al-Miqarr".

<sup>300</sup> Yāqūt, *s.v.* "al-Ashyamān".

<sup>301</sup> Yāqūt, *s.v.* "al-Mushaqqar".

<sup>302</sup> Donner, "Bakr", p. 17.

<sup>303</sup> Donner, "Bakr", p. 17.

<sup>304</sup> See above Chapter 5, pp. 94-5.

Close to the site of al-Kūfa, lay the great Arab settlement of al-Ḥīra; seat of the Mundhirid rulers. Al-Ḥīra was populated by a mixture of tribesmen from numerous tribes, both southern and northern according to the Arabic tradition, including Tanūkhīs, Azdīs and other Quḍāʿīs.<sup>305</sup>

### Al-Shām:

Further along the upper Euphrates were the Bahrāʾ and Tanūkh.<sup>306</sup> Then along the eastern side of the Levantine mountains was the territory of Kalb who extended southwards and dominated the important Wadī al-Sirḥan leading from Najd into al-Shām from the large oasis of Dūmat al-Jandal, which was also dominated by them.<sup>307</sup> In the early 6th c. CE, Kalbī power sometimes extended into northern Ḥijāz.<sup>308</sup>

The vast steppeland of Bādīyat al-Shām contained numerous groups of camel nomads from all the tribes found along the Euphrates such as Bakr, Taghlib, Iyād and Bahrāʾ; especially prominent from al-Shām were Tanūkh and Kalb; and from the south, groups from Ṭayyiʾ.<sup>309</sup>

Other tribes of the Quḍāʿa confederation lay further to the west in Jordan and southern Palestine as well as in the northern Ḥijāz. They mixed with the non-Quḍāʿī Syrian tribes of Judhām, Lakhm, ʿĀmila and Ghassān.<sup>310</sup>

### Northern and central Najd:

Wadī al-Rumma in central Arabia was the territory of the Ghatafānī tribes interspersed with Asad and to a lesser extent Ṭayyiʾ and some ʿĀmirī groups. Ṭayyiʾs main territory, much of it also shared by Asad to their east, lay further north in the oases in the region of modern Ḥāʾil, protected in the north by the great sand desert, al-Nafūd [see map 1].<sup>311</sup> Like al-Dahnāʾ, the Nafūd was a favoured pasturage by camel nomads (from Ṭayyiʾ and Kalb)

<sup>305</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Ḥīra".

<sup>306</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Bahrāʾ".

<sup>307</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Kalb".

<sup>308</sup> We can see this in the traditions of the Kalbi leaders Zuhayr b. Janāb [Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, 7242-4] and al-Ḥārith b. Ḥiṣn [See M. J. Kister, "On the Wife of the Goldsmith from Fadak and her Progeny: a Study in Jāhili Genealogical Traditions", *Le Muséon*, 92 (1979).].

<sup>309</sup> Donner, *Conquests*, p. 171.

<sup>310</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Quḍāʿa". See also, EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v.v. "ʿĀmila", "Judhām", "Lakhm", "Ghassān".

<sup>311</sup> ʿAlī, *Mufaṣṣal*, iv, p. 219; EI<sup>1</sup>, s.v. "Ṭayy".



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.<sup>312</sup>

Ghaṭafānī territory ran all the way westwards along the Wādī al-Rumma into the Ḥijāz. 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 Ḥijāz and al-Shām with the Yamāma oases and eastern Arabia [see map 1].<sup>313</sup> The eastern reaches of Ghaṭafānī territory were dominated by B. °Abs, the centre by B. Dhubyān, with B. Murra and Tha°laba strong in the west, in the Ḥijazī region just east and north of Yathrib. North and west of the Ghaṭafān, as well as to the west of Yathrib, lay the Qudā°ī tribes of Juhayna, Balīy, B. al-Qayn and B. °Udhra.<sup>314</sup>

South of al-Rumma was generally more desolate country, though interspersed with numerous watering holes and oases.<sup>315</sup> As in Bādīyat al-Shām, most of the tribes in this region were highly mobile camel nomads. Here B. °Āmir were prominent and, with some other Qaysī groups, extended southwards to al-°Āriḍ and Wādī Bīsha. The two Qaysī brother tribes of Ghaniy and Bāhila were mainly found between the region of Ḥimā Dariya and Wādī Bīsha.<sup>316</sup>

The distribution of the four main parts of °Āmir was roughly as follows: the B. Numayr bordered the al-Yamāma regions in the north and east of °Āmirī territory<sup>317</sup>; to the north, the B. Kilāb reached Baṭn al-Jarīb and Ḥimā Dariya<sup>318</sup>; in the southeast, the B. Ka°b extended towards al-Aflāj<sup>319</sup>; while groups from all parts but especially from the B. Hilāl dominated the southwest, where °Āmir and B. al-Ḥārith b. Ka°b are said to have bordered each other at the bottom of Wādī Bīsha.<sup>320</sup>

312 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Nafūd"

313 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v.v. "al-Rumma", "Nadjd".

314 See above Chapter 6, pp. 137-43.

315 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v.v. "Nadjd", "Badw" map 4.

316 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v.v. "Bāhila", "Ghani b. A°sur".

317 Yāqūt, s.v. "Ajjūd".

318 Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Rumma".

319 Yāqūt, s.v. "Falj".

320 Yāqūt, s.v.v. "Rubāb", "Turaba". See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "°Āmir b. Ṣa°ṣa°a" for a more detailed description.

### Hijāz and Western Najd:

To the west of ʿĀmirī lands and to the east of Yathrib running south till al-Ṭāʿif, lay the lands of the B. Sulaym.<sup>321</sup> Further south and east were the Hawāzin tribes, including groups from B. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿsaʿa, who bordered the Khathʿam and Bajīla to their southwest.<sup>322</sup>

Yathrib itself was of course dominated by the tribes of al-Aws and al-Khazraj. Interestingly, B. Thaʿlaba and B. Zaʿūrāʾ of Ghassān are also mentioned as tribes of pre-Islamic Yathrib.<sup>323</sup> Jewish tribes were widespread and to be found in large numbers in all the major oasis settlements of northwest Arabia, from Yathrib northwards.<sup>324</sup>

### Southern Hijāz and Tihāma:

Further to the south and west around Mecca were the B. Kināna who extended a little southwards along the coast parallel to ʿAsīr.<sup>325</sup> Between Mecca and al-Ṭāʿif was the tribe of Hudhayl.<sup>326</sup> Thaḳīf inhabited al-Ṭāʿif and its environs while to their south lay the territory of the Qaysī tribes of Fahm and ʿAdwān. South of them were the ʿAsīr tribes of al-Azd, Khathʿam and Bajīla.<sup>327</sup>

### **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 Ṭayyiʿ, Thaḳīf 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.

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<sup>321</sup> For detailed information concerning the geographic distribution of the B. Sulaym, see Lecker, *The Banū Sulaym*.

<sup>322</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Sarāw".

<sup>323</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, p. 6403.

<sup>324</sup> For the few details we have of their distribution and settlements see ʿAlī, *Mufaṣṣal*, vi, pp. 518-30.

<sup>325</sup> Kalḥālā, s.v. "Kināna b. Kluzayma".

<sup>326</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Hudhayl".

<sup>327</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "al-Sarāw".



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-Athīr, 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 Bakrī tribes are against the Tamīm or their related tribes such as Ḍabba and al-Ribāb.<sup>328</sup> A few *ayyām*, including the famous Basūs feud, are against Taghlib.<sup>329</sup> Three others are against three other tribes, Ṭayyi', Kalb and Sulaym.<sup>330</sup> The Bakrī groups named in the *ayyām* are Shaybān (to whom are attributed most of the Bakrī *ayyām*), Dhuhl b. Tha'labā, 'Ijl, and the al-Lahāzim alliance.<sup>331</sup>

- Tamīm and related tribes:

Apart from the thirteen *ayyām* fought against Shaybān and other Bakrī tribes mentioned above, the *ayyām* accounts report that Tamīmīs 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'ḅ Jabala against the B. 'Abs and B. 'Āmir.<sup>332</sup> The other conflict involved Tamīm with 'Āmir against al-Ribāb who were allied to Asad, Ghatafān and Ṭayyi' at the connected *ayyām* of al-Nisār and al-Jifār.<sup>333</sup> Minor conflicts were against B. 'Āmir<sup>334</sup> and B. 'Abs<sup>335</sup>.

<sup>328</sup> See 'Yawm al-Zawayrayn', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 604; 'al-Shayyāṭayn', p. 654; 'Jadūd', p. 610; 'Mahā'id', p. 602; 'Na'f Qushāwa', p. 596; 'al-Ghabīṭ', p. 598; 'U'shāsh', p. 612; 'Dhī Ṭulūḅ', p. 637; 'Yawm li-Shaybān 'alā banī Tamīm', p. 600; 'al-Shaqīqa', p. 613; 'al-Nibāj', p. 650; 'al-Waqīṭ', p. 628; 'Falj', p. 652.

<sup>329</sup> 'Dhīkr Maqṭal Kulayb', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 523; 'Yawm al-Furāt', p. 647; 'Bāriq', p. 648.

<sup>330</sup> 'Dhīkr Asr Ḥātīm', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 606; 'Yawm Muṣḥulān', p. 608; 'Harb li-Sulaym wa-Shaybān', p. 609.

<sup>331</sup> For the composition of the latter see Kalḥāla, 'Unwar Ridā, *Mu'jam qabā'il al-'Arab al-qadīma wa al-ḥadītha*, 5 vols., Damascus: 1949, Beirut: 1975, s.v. "al-Lahāzim".

<sup>332</sup> 'Yawm Shi'ḅ Jabala', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 583.

<sup>333</sup> 'Yawm al-Nisār', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 617; 'al-Jifār', p. 619.

<sup>334</sup> 'Yawm Dhī Najab', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 595; 'Marrūt', p. 631.

<sup>335</sup> 'Yawm Aqrūn', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 638; 'A'yār', p. 645.

- ʿĀmir:

The main enemies of ʿĀmir were from Ghatafān, Asad and their allies.<sup>336</sup> As mentioned above, they fought against and with Tamīm. Only one conflict is reported against the B. al-Hārith b. Kaʿb and their numerous South Arabian allies.<sup>337</sup> ʿĀmir fought against Quraysh at Yawm al-Fijār (al-Thānī);<sup>338</sup> while at Yawm al-Sullān, Quraysh and ʿĀmir co-operated.<sup>339</sup>

- Asad and Tayyiʿ:

Apart from their co-operation in Yawm al-Jifār and al-Nisār, Asad and Tayyiʿ fought against each other once.<sup>340</sup>

- 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 Kinānī allies, as well as Asadīs and the Aḥābīsh group, against a Qaysī coalition of tribesmen from Hawāzin, Sulaym, ʿĀmir, Ghatafān and B. Jadīla.<sup>341</sup> The other, Yawm Dhāt Nakīf, describes an attempt by the B. Bakr of Kināna to oust the Quraysh from Mecca.<sup>342</sup>

**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.

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<sup>336</sup> 'Yawm al-Nisār', 'al-Jifār' and that of 'Shiʿb Jabalu' involved both groups. ʿĀmir stood against Ghatafānī tribes alone at 'Yawm al-Raḡn', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 642; 'Sāhūq', p. 644; 'al-Nabā', p. 646; and against Asad alone at 'Yawm Dhi ʿAlaq', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 641.

<sup>337</sup> 'Yawm Fayf al-Riḥ', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 632.

<sup>338</sup> 'Dhikr al-Fijār (al-Thānī)', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 589.

<sup>339</sup> The name 'al-Sullān' given by Ibn al-Athīr is rejected by Bayātī who gives 'al-Suʿbān', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 639; Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 29, n. 1.

<sup>340</sup> 'Yawm Zahr al-Dahnā', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 626.

<sup>341</sup> 'Dhikr al-Fijār (al-Thānī)', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 589.

<sup>342</sup> 'Yawm Dhāt Nakīf', Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 587.



The closest neighbours of the B. Bakr as described by the geographers are the B. Tamīm, with whom they shared al-Baḥrayn and parts of al-Yamāma. It is precisely the Tamīmī groups with whom they have the most *ayyām*. The other *ayyām* are fought against Taghlib, their direct neighbours in northern Baḥrayn and southern Iraq; against Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup>, their direct neighbours in northwestern Baḥrayn and the southeastern Bādīya; and Kalb, with whom they had contact in the Bādīya. The sole exception is Sulaym who lived far away beyond Tamīm, Ghaṭafān and B. ʿĀmir in the west of Najd.

It is impossible to know for certain whether this Bakrī-Sulamī 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 Tamīmī groups and with their other neighbours from Ghaṭafān, Asad, ʿĀmir and Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, the B. ʿĀmir - whose tribes covered a great expanse of central Najd - record *ayyām* fought on both sides of their territory, whether involving the Tamīmī and Ghaṭafānī tribes in the east and north or those of the Hawāzin 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 *ayyām* 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 Ghatafān

## 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 ʿAbbāsid 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 *ayyām* 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.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>343</sup> 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 ʿAbbāsīd times it was to produce the powerful Syrian Ḥamdānīd 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. ʿAbs, 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 Jāhiliya 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 Taghlibīs 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 Taghlibīs 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.



### The Divisions of Taghlib

Taghlib was one of the two most important branches of the Rabī<sup>c</sup>a tribal group, the other being its brother-tribe, Bakr. Other major units of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a were <sup>c</sup>Anaza, al-Namir b. Qāsit and <sup>c</sup>Abd al-Qays (see Appendix 1, chart 1.4).

Though Taghlib is represented as a great tribe in the Jāhilī period<sup>344</sup>, 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.<sup>345</sup>

According to Ibn al-Kalbī, the mother of the children of 'Taghlib' was a Ghassānid. Various Taghlibī subset eponyms were born to Iyādī, Namirī and Bakrī, in other words, Rabī<sup>c</sup>an mothers.<sup>346</sup> 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<sup>c</sup>ī genealogies, the important Quḍā<sup>c</sup>ī groups of Kalb, Tanūkh and al-Qayn all descended from Wabara b. *Taghlib* b. Ḥulwān b. <sup>c</sup>Imrān b. Alḥāf b. Quḍā<sup>c</sup>a.<sup>347</sup> At the same time, Ibn al-Athīr gives the genealogy of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a b. al-Ḥārith - father of the heroes Kulayb and al-Muhalhil (see below) - as Rabī<sup>c</sup>a b. al-Ḥārith b. Murra b. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr b. Ḥubayb b. *Kalb*, and not the more common ... Ḥubayb b. <sup>c</sup>Amr b. Ghanm b. Taghlib.<sup>348</sup>

On a different level, Ibn al-Kalbī, qualifies the Quḍā<sup>c</sup>ī Taghlib with the extra name of al-Ghalbā<sup>?</sup>. But this is a name which in other sources is given to the Taghlib of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a.<sup>349</sup> In addition, a brother-tribe of the B. Kalb, is given as

<sup>344</sup> According to Ibn Khaldūn, for instance, Taghlib was one of the greatest tribes of al-Baḥrayn and its most prominent in numbers and prestige; see Kaḥḥāla, *Mu<sup>c</sup>jam*, s.v. "Ṭha<sup>c</sup>lab" (Ṭha<sup>c</sup>lab is corrected to Taghlib in the corrections section, vol. iii, p. 1286).

<sup>345</sup> This point will be discussed later in more detail. See below p. 128.

<sup>346</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 564-5. The mother of *al-arāqim* (a collection of clans, to be mentioned below) is mentioned as a descendant of al-Dil, who is descended from Qays. It is more likely that originally another Dil was meant. There are several larger and better known groups of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a called al-Dil.

<sup>347</sup> See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Quḍā<sup>c</sup>a".

<sup>348</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 524.

<sup>349</sup> Balādīnūrī, *Ansāb*, vi, p. 236.

al-Namir<sup>350</sup>, the same name used by a different tribal group closely related to and very often associated with the Rabīʿan Taghlib.

Further evidence of this association with Kalb is given by Wellhausen who mentions that Kalb was actually referred to as Taghlib.<sup>351</sup>

The only tribal units which are specifically mentioned, as having attached themselves to Taghlib are a few divisions of the Quḍāʿī tribe of Nahd. We are told by Balādhurī that during the alleged Quḍāʿa migration from Tihāma - claimed to be the original homeland of most north and central Arabian tribes - most of Nahd went to al-Yaman. However, the B. ʿĀmir and the B. ʿAmr of Nahd are said to have joined Kalb, while the B. Abān joined Taghlib<sup>352</sup>. These many associations of the neighbours Taghlib and Kalb suggest that they may have been linked at some point in the pre-Islamic past.<sup>353</sup> 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 Taghlibīs 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.<sup>354</sup>

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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm<sup>355</sup>.

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

<sup>350</sup> Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Quḍāʿa".

<sup>351</sup> Wellhausen, J., *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, trans. by M. G. Weir, reprint of original edition (1927), Beirut: Khayats, 1963, p. 181, note 1.

<sup>352</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, i, p. 19.

<sup>353</sup> The symbolism and versatility of the higher levels of tribal genealogies will be discussed in Chapter 7.

<sup>354</sup> For Taghlib's important lineages, see also EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wā'il".

<sup>355</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v.v. "Kulayb b. Rabīʿa", "Imru' l-Qays", "ʿAmr b. Kulthūm".



important Jāhili battles.<sup>356</sup> 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.<sup>357</sup>

A group called al-Arāqim 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. Thaʿlaba 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-Arāqim were the B. al-Ḥārith b. Bakr and the B. Muʿāwiya b. Bakr.<sup>358</sup> In other words, al-Arāqim 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.<sup>359</sup>

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-Arāqim. Most prominent of these were ʿAmr, Thaʿlaba, 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]

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<sup>356</sup> Although, see Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 567, who has Buʿaj b. ʿUtba of the B. Jusham b. Bakr, as a commander instead of al-Saffāh at Yawm Khazāz.

<sup>357</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 566-8; *Naqāʿid*, p. 266.

<sup>358</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 266, 373.

<sup>359</sup> See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 163.

### (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.<sup>360</sup> 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.<sup>361</sup> Two other accounts which state that Taghlib inhabited certain areas of al-Jazīra include information which implies that this was in pre-Islamic times.<sup>362</sup>

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.<sup>363</sup> However, as we shall see below, there is evidence which claims that Taghlibīs 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.

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<sup>360</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Kulāb", but see also "Jadūd", where it is claimed that the area was much further inside Najd.

<sup>361</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Khāla".

<sup>362</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Tharthār", "Dayr Lubayy".

<sup>363</sup> Trimmingsham, *Christianity*, pp. 173-4; Morony, M., *Iraq after the Muslim Conquest*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 217, 221.



### 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 Ṭabarī, Shāpūr II (309-379 CE)<sup>364</sup> attacked the Arab tribes inside Arabia in retaliation for Arab raids against Sassanian lands<sup>365</sup>. 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-Baḥrayn was from Taghlib<sup>366</sup>. Later, Shāpūr is supposed to have made peace with the Arabs and settled some of them, including Taghlibīs, in western Iranian towns and regions such as Kirmān, Tawwāj and al-Ahwāz.<sup>367</sup>

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-Baḥrayn 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 Taghlibīs. As a result, many left the region. Some settled in al-Ḥīra, while others went to al-Shām where they came under the protection of the Ghassānids.<sup>368</sup>

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

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<sup>364</sup> See *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. III, 2 parts, *The Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian Periods*, ed. E. Yarshater, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 178, for the dates of Sassanian monarchs.

<sup>365</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 836-9; *Cambridge History of Iran*, p. 136.

<sup>366</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 839.

<sup>367</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 845. See also, Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 392-4.

<sup>368</sup> Balādhurī, *Ausāb*, 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-Ḥīra. Significantly, we are also told that the Mundhirids, in turn, were supported by Taghlibīs.<sup>369</sup>

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.<sup>370</sup> He thus implies that Rabīʿa 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:

Taghlibī presence along the Euphrates and in al-Jazīra in the early Islamic period is well established.<sup>371</sup> The following are simply a few examples of the great amount of material detailing Taghlibī 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 Taghlibī settlements in al-Jazīra which were raided by the Muslims.<sup>372</sup> Al-Ḥaṣīd, lying along the central Euphrates, was the site of a battle in which Sassanian troops, together with their allies from "Taghlib and Rabīʿa" were defeated by the Muslims.<sup>373</sup> Al-Bishr and al-Thaniy, sites of more victories of Khālid over Taghlib, lay along the upper Euphrates in the vicinity of Ruṣāfa.<sup>374</sup>

Similarly, several locations were sites of battles between Qays and Taghlib during the second civil war. Ḥazza on the Khābūr, between Niṣībīn and Raʿs ʿAyn<sup>375</sup>, al-Sawājir near Manbij<sup>376</sup>, al-Ḥashshāk near the river

<sup>369</sup> See Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ix, pp. 79-80.

<sup>370</sup> Olinder, *Kinda*, p. 114.

<sup>371</sup> See EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil".

<sup>372</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Kabāth", "Musayyakh".

<sup>373</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥaṣīd".

<sup>374</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Bishr", "Urḍ", "Thaniy".

<sup>375</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥazza".

<sup>376</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Sawājir".



Tharthar<sup>377</sup> and Bishr, mentioned above, which lay further along the Euphrates near al-Ruṣāfa.<sup>378</sup>

*Taghlib in central and eastern Najd:*

According to Yāqūt, Ibn al-Kalbī wrote a book on the ancient Arab migrations. Quoting from this book, Yāqūt says that Rabīʿa entered the outskirts of Najd, Hijāz, outlying parts of Tihāma and the territories which lay beyond it. They settled at al-Dhanāʿib, Wāridāt, al-Aḥaṣṣ, Shubayth, Baṭn al-Jarīb, al-Taghlimān and what lay in between and around these places.<sup>379</sup> These localities mentioned in the story of Rabīʿa'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-Aḥaṣṣ with the tale of the events which led to the murder of Kulayb b. Rabīʿa, the legendary leader of Taghlib, by Jassās, his Bakrī 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-Aḥaṣṣ, then Baṭn al-Jarīb and finally arrived at al-Dhanāʿib where Kulayb is said to have been killed.<sup>380</sup> As we see, all but al-Taghlimān and Wāridāt of the locations named by Ibn al-Kalbī as territories of Rabīʿa are mentioned in the story of Kulāb's murder.

Most of the remainder of Yāqūt's entry discusses where the places mentioned by Ibn al-Kalbī actually lay. Al-Aḥaṣṣ 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 Ḥalab with these names. But then Yāqūt mentions that the Najdī al-Aḥaṣṣ and Shubayth were Rabīʿan, implying that there were two sets of places with these names, the Najdī pair being the one

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<sup>377</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥaṣṣhāk".

<sup>378</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Bishr".

<sup>379</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Aḥaṣṣ".

<sup>380</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Aḥaṣṣ".

connected to Rabīʿa. However, he argues against this later, leaving us in quite a confused state regarding these two localities.<sup>381</sup>

Shubayth (connected with al-Aḥaṣṣ, above), we are told, was a mountain near Ḥalab. At the same time, there is a line of poetry which describes that Shubayth and al-Aḥaṣṣ lay in the country of Dhūbyān in northern Najd.<sup>382</sup> There is also a Dārat Shubayth which is found in Baṭn al-Jarīb. Al-Jarīb was a large *wādī* which connected with Wādī al-Rumma in Najd.<sup>383</sup> Wādī al-Rumma ran from a point northeast of Medina and opened up as it reached al-Dahnāʿ close to al-Nibāj, which lies at the northern tip of the Yamāma region's oases [see map 1].<sup>384</sup>

In the entry for al-Aḥaṣṣ, Yāqūt mentions al-Dhanāʿib, where Kulayb was supposed to have been killed and buried<sup>385</sup>. He says that it lay somewhere to the west of the Euphrates, near to al-Qādisiyya.<sup>386</sup> However, in the entry for al-Dhanāʿib itself, we find three different accounts which state that it lay in the vicinity of Ḍariyya [see map 1]. Another report states that it lay in Yemen in the land of Zabīd and that it is there where Kulayb was buried<sup>387</sup>, but as mentioned below, the celebrated Yemeni scholar of genealogy and geography, al-Hamdānī, denied any links between the legends around Kulayb and the Yemeni Tihāma.

According to a verse of poetry, al-Taghlimān lay next to Rīm.<sup>388</sup> Although there is no entry for Rīm in Yāqūt, a Baṭn Rīm lay in the vicinity of Medina.<sup>389</sup>

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

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

<sup>381</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Aḥaṣṣ".

<sup>382</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Shubayth".

<sup>383</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Jarīb".

<sup>384</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Rumma".

<sup>385</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Aḥaṣṣ". See however "al-Nir" where, according to an informer from Ṭayyiʿ, Kulayb was buried at al-Nir, near Ḍariyya.

<sup>386</sup> See Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Walaja"; 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-Dhanāʿib.

<sup>387</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Al-Dhanāʿib", see also "Falaja".

<sup>388</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Taghlimān".

<sup>389</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Rīm".

<sup>390</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Waridāt", "Samīrāʿ".



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-Nibāj.

It must be taken into account that the legend of the murder of Kulayb and the Basūs war is highly fictitious, as mentioned earlier<sup>391</sup>, 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:<sup>392</sup>

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.<sup>393</sup>

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. ʿĀmir.<sup>394</sup>

Al-Ṣiʿāb 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 Shaybānī warrior, al-Ḥārith b. Hammām b. Murra was killed.<sup>395</sup>

Fuṭayma was another battleground between Taghlib and Shaybān,<sup>396</sup> This place lay in al-Baḥrayn.<sup>397</sup>

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

<sup>391</sup> See below Chapter 3, pp. 58-9.

<sup>392</sup> Many battles between the two groups, especially those involving Shayban, 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.

<sup>393</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Qidda"; Haudani, *Ṣifat*, 276. Kilabī territory lay along the western side of al-Yamāma and to the south of Wādī al-Rumma, see Chapter 4, p. 75.

<sup>394</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Suwayqa".

<sup>395</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Ṣiʿāb".

<sup>396</sup> This is the only reference to B. Dubayʿa outside genealogical lines I have seen. They are simply described as B. Dubayʿa b. Rabīʿa b. Nizār.

<sup>397</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Fuṭayma".

Other Taghlibī 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:

Khazāz was the site of a major pre-Islamic battle in which the legendary Kulayb b. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a was supposed to have played an important role. According to some, this place was near Himā Ḍarīya and Ṭikhfa<sup>398</sup>. Yawm Khazāz is another highly fictitious *yawm*, like all the material connected with Kulayb b. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a. There are numerous contradictory versions of this *yawm* in particular, and much internal confusion, as will be seen when it is discussed further below.<sup>399</sup> 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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm which commemorates a battle at Dhū Urāṭa against Tamīm. Dhū Urāṭa lay to the north of modern al-Burayda.<sup>400</sup> In other words on the border between al-Baḥrayn and central Najd.

Secondly, there are references to Taghlibīs fighting near Ḥazn Yarbū<sup>c</sup>, which lay in the vicinity of Fayd [see map 1].<sup>401</sup> Also, Jadūd 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-Baḥrayn, according to one version it lay near Ḥazn Yarbū<sup>c</sup>.<sup>402</sup> Hudhayl b. Hubayra, a contemporary to the conquest period, is also supposed to have raided the B. Riyāḥ of Yarbū<sup>c</sup> at Irāb, which also lay in Ḥazn Yarbū<sup>c</sup>.<sup>403</sup>

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

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<sup>398</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Khazāz". There is a Yemeni view which places it in Ṭilāmāt al-Yaman; but it has already been mentioned above that al-Ḥamdānī disregards this view.

<sup>399</sup> See above, pp. 100-104.

<sup>400</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Arāṭa".

<sup>401</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Fayd".

<sup>402</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Ḥazu Yarbū<sup>c</sup>".

<sup>403</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Irāb".



al-Baḥrayn, and for their frequent raiding into central Najd, especially around the vicinity of Ḥazn Yarbū<sup>c</sup>.

- AL-YAMĀMA:

Al-Harim 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 (ذو بهدا). Yāqūt has an entry for Dhū Bahdā (ذو بهدي) which is in al-Yamāma.<sup>404</sup> Also, al-Juzayra is mentioned as being a palm grove in al-Yamāma belonging to the B. Taghlib<sup>405</sup>.

This information is not connected to *ayyām* accounts. It points to some small scale settlement of Taghlibī 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 Nafūd desert, in Bādiyat al-Shām, along the west bank of the Euphrates, in al-Jazīra and, to a lesser extent, in al-Baḥrayn. 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 Euphrates region since at least the 5th c. CE, if not earlier. Taghlib was also present in the parts of northern al-Baḥrayn 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.<sup>406</sup> It is important to clarify that Taghlib were never settled in central Najd, only in al-Yamāma and al-Baḥrayn. 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-Baḥrayn and al-Yamāma. Later, by the rise of

<sup>404</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Bahdā", "al-Ḥarim al-Ṭahiri".

<sup>405</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, "Juzayra".

<sup>406</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil".

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.<sup>407</sup> Another tradition holds that Taghlib, Bakr and Iyād had a common shrine in the territory of Iyād, below *sawād al-kūfa*, called Dhū al-Ka<sup>c</sup>abāt, because of its cubic shape.<sup>408</sup> But though it is not clear exactly when Taghlib gave up their pagan cults, most Taghlibīs 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.<sup>409</sup> 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.<sup>410</sup> Indeed, the sources record that Ma<sup>c</sup>add only ever united three times. Once under <sup>c</sup>Āmir b. al-Zarib of <sup>c</sup>Adwān of Jadīla of Qays and this was when Madhḥij was first formed and marched against "Tihāma"; another time under Rabī<sup>c</sup>a 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. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a (son of the previous) on the day of Khazāz when al-Yaman was defeated by Ma<sup>c</sup>add.<sup>411</sup>

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

<sup>407</sup> Yāqūt, *Mu<sup>c</sup>jam*, "Uwāl".

<sup>408</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, i, p. 88.

<sup>409</sup> 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.

<sup>410</sup> Even the Taghlibī horses were supposed to be of the finest steeds in Arabia. *Naqā'id*, pp. 475, 748.

<sup>411</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 523.



al-Ḥārith, of the Kindī 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'allaqāt*, considered - in later times at least - to be the most prestigious pre-Islamic odes of the Arabs.<sup>412</sup>

ʿAmr b. Kulthūm, the contemporary of the Mundhirid ruler, ʿAmr 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'allaqāt*. In this *mu'allaqa* he describes the domination of Taghlib over eastern Najd and even over Quḍāʿa.<sup>413</sup> His prestige also stems from that he was supposed to have been the son of a daughter of the other famous Taghlibī warrior-poet, al-Muhalhil.<sup>414</sup>

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 Taghlibī *ayyām* or individuals after ʿAmr 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 Kindī Ḥujrid dynasty, as well as their conflict with the Mundhirids of al-Ḥira. Second, I will examine the *ayyām* accounts involving Kulayb b. Rabīʿa and his alleged conflicts with "al-Yaman". Third, I will examine the stories connected with ʿAmr 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 Kindī 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 Kindī period (roughly dated from the mid-5th until a little before the mid-6th

<sup>412</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 905; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ix, p. 3197.

<sup>413</sup> al-Zawzānī, al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad, *Sharḥ al-mu'allaqāt al-sabʿ*, Beirut: Dār Ṣādir and Dār Bayrūt, 1963, p. 124.

<sup>414</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "ʿAmr b. Kulthūm".

c. CE).<sup>415</sup>, 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 Ḥujrid Kindīs.

To avoid confusion, the series of Ḥujrid rulers are as follows: Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār; ʿAmr al-Maqṣūr; al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr. The latter's sons are traditionally held to have divided the 'Kindī kingdom' amongst themselves, they are, Ḥujr (the father of Imruʿ al-Qays), Sharaḥbīl, Salama and Maʿdīkarib.

### Yawm al-Baradān:

In the *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 Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār, the founder of the Ḥujrid dynasty, and Ziyād b. al-Habūla, the leader of the 5th c. CE pro-Byzantine Syrian confederation led by Salīh.<sup>416</sup>

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

Yet, an important element of this account is that Ḥujr was raiding in al-Baḥrayn, away from his base either in Najd or al-Ḥīra, at the head of a force of Kindīs, Bakrīs and Taghlibīs. One problem with taking this information at face value, is that it implies that either Ḥujr ruled from al-Ḥīra 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<sup>417</sup>, and it is widely accepted that it was the grandson of Ḥujr, al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr, who temporarily controlled al-Ḥīra (*ca.* 525-8 CE)<sup>418</sup>, never Ḥujr 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-

<sup>415</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Kinda".

<sup>416</sup> This Syrian Qudā'i-affiliated tribe preceded Ghassān as protectors of the Byzantine frontier in the 5th c. CE; see EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Salīh"; Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century*, Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1989, 233, ff. *passim*. For 'Yawm al-Baradān', see Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 506-9; Bayātī, *Ayyām al-'Arab*, ii, pp. 35, ff.

<sup>417</sup> Nor did Bakr. See Donner, "Bakr", pp. 17, ff.

<sup>418</sup> See Potts, *Arabian Gulf*, ii, pp. 248-50; EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Kinda"; Trimmīngham, *Christianity*, pp. 271-2. Olinder, *Kinda*, pp. 114, 127-9.



Ḥīra, whether Kindī or Mundhirid, or that they were sometimes associated with the Ḥujrids.

### The Killing of Hujr 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 "Ghaṭafān, Asad and Kināna".<sup>419</sup> 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.<sup>420</sup>

According to most *ayyām* sources, al-Mundhir III Māʾ al-Samāʾ (ruled 503-54 CE<sup>421</sup>) then attacked al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr in al-Ḥīra. Against him he sent Taghlib, Bahrāʾ and al-Namir, all of which were based in the Euphrates region. However, al-Ḥārith managed to escape to Kalbī territory. Later, presumably after Yawm al-Kulāb (see below), the Mundhirids, aided by Taghlib, captured and executed many of the house of al-Ḥārith al-Kindī.<sup>422</sup> In this massacre, Taghlib are credited with killing Maʿdīkarib b. al-Ḥārith.<sup>423</sup> It is at this point allegedly that the remainder of the Ḥujrids then withdrew to Ḥaḍramawt.<sup>424</sup>

### Yawm al-Kulāb al-Awwal:

After the death of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr, his sons, Sharaḥbīl 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 Sharaḥbīl, who ruled over Bakr, al-Ribāb and Ḥanzāla of Tamīm; and Salama, who ruled over

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<sup>419</sup> Olinder, *Kinda*, pp. 92-3, 129, believes that this Ḥujr, is the Ogaros who was captured by the Romans in 497 CE as mentioned by Theophanes.

<sup>420</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 515; See also p. 549.

<sup>421</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Lakhmids".

<sup>422</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 434-5. For the date of Khusrāw's ascension, 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-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 539.

<sup>423</sup> *Naqāʾid*, p. 887.

<sup>424</sup> Olinder, *Kinda*, p. 150.

Taghlib, al-Namir, and the B. Sa'ad of Tamīm.<sup>425</sup> The battle is dated by Olinder to a few years after 530 CE.<sup>426</sup>

Most versions describe the conflict as turning into a conflict between Bakr and Taghlib by mentioning that al-Namir, al-Ribāb and the Tamīmīs on both sides retreated, leaving the traditional enemies, Bakr and Taghlib, to fight against each other.<sup>427</sup> The leader of Taghlib was the famous warrior, al-Saffāḥ al-Taghlibī.<sup>428</sup> One version of the battle describes him as killing Sharaḥbīl and leading Taghlib to victory.<sup>429</sup> In any case, Salama and his Taghlibī followers won the battle and Sharaḥbīl was killed.

We are then told that Taghlib abandoned Salama soon after al-Kulāb and allied themselves with the Mundhirids.<sup>430</sup>

The accounts of the rise and fall of the Kindī 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 Kindī 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.<sup>431</sup>

In any case, regarding Taghlib and its relations with the Ḥujrid 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 Kindī 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 Ḥujrids - must be a reflection of historical reality.

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<sup>425</sup> According to *Naqā'id*, p. 452, with them were other Tamīmī tribesmen from B. Dārīn b. Mālik and B. Rabī'a b. Malik, whose mother was supposed to be from al-Namir b. Wabara b. Taghlib of Qudā'a and was also the mother of B. Jusham b. Bakr of Taghlib.

<sup>426</sup> Olinder, *Kinda*, p. 150.

<sup>427</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4377; see also, *Naqā'id*, pp. 453; 454-8, 887, 1074-7. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, s.v. "Kulāb", gives an abridged version.

<sup>428</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 454.

<sup>429</sup> Yāqūt, *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 Sharaḥbīl and the Bakris, as described in the account of quarreling and even raiding between two Taghlibī clans over the spoils won from the battle, see *Naqā'id*, p. 456.

<sup>430</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 549.

<sup>431</sup> See Olinder, *Kinda*, *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<sup>432</sup> - 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-Raḥraḥān al-Nuʿmān III b. al-Mundhir (ruled *ca.* 580-602 CE)<sup>433</sup> sent a Taghlibī, Ibn al-Khims, in command of an army to attack the B. Dārim.<sup>434</sup> The father of this Taghlibī was a soothsayer at the Mundhirid court.<sup>435</sup> 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 Kinda may be found in Yawm Khazāz, to be described below. In this Yawm, "Rabīʿa" 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 "Rabīʿa and al-Yaman").

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

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

Al-Hamdānī's account:

Al-Hamdānī tells us that a certain Hamdānī *malik*, Zayd b. Marib from B. al-Sabīʿ of Ḥāshid, who had wrested power from the Ḥimyarī *malik* Dhū Qayfān,<sup>436</sup> ruled over various Arab tribes. These are given as Madhhij, Jarm, Nahd, Khawlān (all tribes of southern Najd) and those of the B. Rabīʿa who inhabited parts of al-Yamāma.<sup>437</sup>

<sup>432</sup> Shahid, *BAFIC*, p. 551.

<sup>433</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Nuʿmān (III) b. al-Mundhir".

<sup>434</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 556.

<sup>435</sup> Another version has the Ghassānid, not Mundhirid, court [Iṣfahānī, *Aghāni*, xi, 3904]; there is a slightly different version in *Naqāʿid*, p. 103.

<sup>436</sup> See also Caskel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "ʿAlqama b. Šarāḥil Dū Qayfān".

<sup>437</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklil*, x, pp. 41-2.

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 Taghlibī following a quarrel between the two. This murder led Zayd b. Marib to march against Taghlib. In the meantime Rabīʿa gathered its tribesmen and those of its neighbours from Muḍar. The leader of Rabīʿa, so we are told, was Rabīʿa b. al-Ḥārith, the father of the famous figures of Kulayb and al-Muhalhil. Zayd defeated the "Maʿaddī" army at Yawm Jurād<sup>438</sup>, and took many prisoners. To retrieve their prisoners "Maʿadd" had to ask for the intercession of the Kindī *malik*, al-Ḥārith.<sup>439</sup>

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

In his *Ṣifat jazīrat al-ʿarab*, Hamdānī mentions a war between Madhḥij and Rabīʿa as well as a version of Yawm Khazāz which was fought by Madhḥij and Quḍāʿa (the southern Najdī tribe of Nahd is the only group of Quḍāʿa mentioned specifically) against Rabīʿa. His version of Yawm Khazāz has Madhḥij and Quḍāʿa as the victors and he quotes verses of Khawlānī and Ṭāʿī poets as proof that the outcome was a victory of al-Yaman over B. Wāʿil (*i.e.* Bakr and Taghlib).<sup>442</sup>

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

#### North Arabian traditions:

Apart from al-Hamdānī, various other traditions survive regarding the battle of Khazāz. These reach us *via* al-Dīnawarī, al-Aṣmaʿī, al-Kilābī and Abū ʿUbayda. Most of these versions are linked to a preceding battle, Yawm al-

<sup>438</sup> Elsewhere Jurād is the site of al-Kulāb. This may be the same battle being referred to but through a different tradition.

<sup>439</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklil*, x, pp. 42-3.

<sup>440</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklil*, x, p. 92-5.

<sup>441</sup> For instance, B. ʿAur b. Ghannū or Aws; Hamdānī, *Iklil*, x, p. 94.

<sup>442</sup> Hamdānī, *Ṣifat*, p. 287.



Sullān (interestingly, according to Ibn al-Athīr, this was a battle between al-Yaman and "ahl al-yamāma"<sup>443</sup>), or to Yawm al-Sullān plus another unnamed battle which also preceded Khazāz. All the versions describe Kulayb b. Rabīʿa as the leader of Rabīʿa at Yawm Khazāz and sometimes at al-Sullān as well.<sup>444</sup>

Khazāz is given great importance in the later compilations, and is to be found in virtually all of them.<sup>445</sup> The ʿĀmirī 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. ʿAmr. Thus the battle was fought between Salama b. al-Ḥārith and al-Yaman against B. ʿĀmir and Rabīʿa.<sup>446</sup>

Abū ʿUbayda relates that the battle was primarily between Rabīʿa and "ahl al-tihāma"<sup>447</sup> on one side, and a *malik* of Yaman, Madhhij and its Yamanī allies on the other.<sup>448</sup>

According to al-Aṣmaʿī this battle was between al-Mundhir III Māʾ al-Samāʾ with Taghlib and Quḍāʿa, against the B. Ākil al-Murār and Bakr. The latter were defeated and Taghlib played a prominent role.<sup>449</sup>

### Other accounts:

Al-Dīnawarī provides us with the only account which provides a continuous narrative of events between Rabīʿa and al-Yaman from before al-Sullān till after Khazāz.<sup>450</sup> Unlike those of the early North Arabian narrators, Dīnawarī's account includes more details of events in the South Arabian camp, normally neglected by the North Arabian collectors. Dīnawarī repeats the theme of the North Arabians requesting the South Arabian *mulūk* to appoint a ruler over them as a result of their own feuding. In this version the Ḥimyarī

<sup>443</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 524.

<sup>444</sup> Such as al-Dīnawarī, Aḥmad b. Dāʿūd, *al-Akḥbar al-tiwāl*, ed. V. Guirgass and I. Kratchkovsky, 2 vols., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1888-1912, p. 55.

<sup>445</sup> On the other hand, it is surprising that this battle is not referred to in *Kitāb al-Aghānī* at all.

<sup>446</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Khazāz".

<sup>447</sup> It could be that here, al-Tihāma is a misreading of al-Yamama, which would make far more geographic sense. But all the sources for this version have al-Tihāma.

<sup>448</sup> Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 29-34; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 520.

<sup>449</sup> *Naqāʾid*, p. 887. See also ʿAlī, J., *al-Mufaṣṣal fi tarīkh al-ʿArab qabla al-islām*, 10 vols., Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm, 1972, iii, p. 355.

<sup>450</sup> Unfortunately, he mentions none of his sources.

*malik*, Ṣuhbān b. Dhī Kharib<sup>451</sup>, agreed to their request and appointed over "Ma<sup>c</sup>add" 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. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a to support them. The leader of B. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a, Kulayb b. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a, led the combined Ma<sup>c</sup>addī force to victory over the Southern Arabians first at al-Sullān, then again at Khazāz where Ṣuhbān fell in another attempt to subdue Ma<sup>c</sup>add.<sup>452</sup>

Still more information is provided by Yāqūt, who quotes al-ʿAskarī as describing Yawm al-Sullān to be a battle between Ma<sup>c</sup>add and Madhhij, "when Kalb were still Ma<sup>c</sup>addī", implying here that Kalb fought against 'al-Yaman'. He also quotes an unnamed source who described it as a victory for Rabī<sup>c</sup>a over Madhhij.<sup>453</sup>

Shaykhū introduces yet further material in his entry for Kulayb b. Rabī<sup>c</sup>a, 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 Rabī<sup>c</sup>a against the *mulūk* of al-Yaman, to whom he owed allegiance.<sup>454</sup>

### The importance of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a:

The events surrounding this conflict between 'Rabī<sup>c</sup>a' or 'Ma<sup>c</sup>add' 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 Ma<sup>c</sup>add *vs.* al-Yaman. However, in that case the extreme prominence of Rabī<sup>c</sup>a at the head of the Ma<sup>c</sup>addīs is somewhat incomprehensible. Indeed, since Rabī<sup>c</sup>a 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, *Ġamharat*, s.v. "Ṣuhbān b. Dhī Ḥuray".

452 Dinawarī, *Akhbār*, p. 54-5.

453 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v., "al-Sullān".

454 Shaykhū, L., *Shuʿarāʾ al-naṣranīya qabla al-islām*, Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1967, pp. 151, ff., 205, ff.



Yet what really concerns us is the high status which Rabīʿa and, in particular, Taghlib are accorded in central Arabia in the period of hegemony of the Ḥimyarites and their Kindī 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 Rabīʿa can be found in the fact that different sources mention the existence of a pre-Islamic alliance (*ḥilf*) between Rabīʿa and the *mulūk* of al-Yaman. Al-Hamdānī mentions it in passing<sup>455</sup>, while al-Dīnawarī gives us the alleged contents when describing calls for its renewal in the Umayyad period.<sup>456</sup> However, it must be pointed out that the latter could be merely a reflection of the Umayyad period Rabīʿa-Yaman alliance formed in Baṣra and Khurasān in the Islamic period.

Nevertheless, it appears that at least part of Taghlib, backed by the Rabīʿa confederation, constituted a powerful force in al-Baḥrayn and northern Najd, sometime before, and during, the breakup of the Kindī 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-Kindī 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 Taghlibī 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

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<sup>455</sup> Hamdānī, *Iklīl*, x, p. 112.

<sup>456</sup> Dīnawarī, *Akhhār*, pp. 352-3.

the Basūs war<sup>457</sup>. However, the account tells us that some Bakrīs 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-Ḥīra to settle their dispute at the court of ʿAmr b. Hind.<sup>458</sup>

The story is that al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza argued the Bakrī case against the Taghlibī ʿAmr b. Kulthūm. The legend is that al-Ḥārith and ʿAmr entered a *munāfara* (poetic battle). The ode allegedly composed by al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza on the occasion forms part of the special pre-Islamic poetry collection known as the *muʿallaqāt*. 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.<sup>459</sup>

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-Ḥīra 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.<sup>460</sup> It is widely accepted that ʿAmr b. Hind died in 569 CE.<sup>461</sup>

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.<sup>462</sup> 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.<sup>463</sup>

### 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.

<sup>457</sup> One account attributes this to ʿAmr's father, al-Mundhir III (*muʿ al-samiʿ*), [see Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3830].

<sup>458</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3830-1.

<sup>459</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3829, 3835.

<sup>460</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 885-6; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3840; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 547, has the Taghlibīs flee to al-Ḥīra, which is obviously a scribal error for al-Jazīra.

<sup>461</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Lakhmids"; Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, i, p. 24; Triumphant, *Christianity*, p. 198.

<sup>462</sup> Zawzānī, *Sharḥ al-Muʿallaqāt*, p. 126.

<sup>463</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3833.



We are only told in two accounts, that after the Basūs war, Bakr and Taghlib united under al-Mundhir III Mā' al-Samā', the king of al-Hīra. Al-Mundhir's son, 'Amr b. Hind, 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-Hārith al-A'raj of Ghassān and 'Amr b. Kulthūm the leader of Taghlib. A battle between them ensued from which Taghlib allegedly emerged victorious.<sup>464</sup>

The *ayyām* described in connection with 'Amr 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 'Amr b. Kulthūm actually fought against the Mundhirids and Ghassānids is impossible to tell. Yet, while the historicity of the events described in connection with 'Amr 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 'Amr 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 'Amr b. Hind. In the wars fought during the Kindī period and in the Basūs war (see below), Taghlibīs were active in al-Baḥrayn and in northeastern Najd. In these accounts, Taghlib never appear to be in al-Baḥrayn. There is a definite decrease of significant presence of Taghlibīs away from the Euphrates region by the time of 'Amr b. Kulthūm.

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<sup>464</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 539. There is a slightly different version in Iṣfahānī, *Aghāni*, 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-Athīr.

*(iv) Bakr and Taghlib:*The Basūs war:

As mentioned earlier, information conveyed by the account of the Basūs war should be treated with great care.<sup>465</sup> The Basūs 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 Jarīr to defame al-Akḥṭal of Taghlib.<sup>466</sup>

Whether the Basūs 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 *ayyām*, 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-Baḥrayn. Secondly, that the conflict, if accepted as historical, must be placed during the Kindī period, due to the involvement of Kulayb b. Rabīʿa and his brother, al-Muhalhil.

Bakr and Taghlib beyond the Basūs war:

Apart from the Basūs war, accounts abound outside of the Basūs tradition which describe Bakrī-Taghlibī conflict. Some of these appear to be descriptions of minor raids, but often they are large scale events involving *mulūk*, such as Aṣmaʿī's version of Yawm Khazāz,<sup>467</sup> or the prelude to the account of the war of ʿAmr b. Kulthūm with al-Ḥārith al-Aʿraj.<sup>468</sup> These two apart, all the other accounts are of the type of '*ayyām* 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 Jāhili 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 Taghlibī defeat of the B. Shaybān<sup>469</sup>. This battle seems to be quite old, since from Caskel's tables<sup>470</sup>, a tribesman named al-Zabbān whose sons are killed in the battle, is

<sup>465</sup> See above, pp. 58-9. See also Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, pp. 27-8, who believes that the events, but not the heroes, of the Basūs war are fictitious.

<sup>466</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, viii, p. 2764.

<sup>467</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 887. See also ʿAlī, *Mufaṣṣal*, iii, p. 355.

<sup>468</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 539.

<sup>469</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 526.

<sup>470</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 152.



placed four generations away from al-Ḥārith b. Waʿla, who was involved in the battle of Dhū Qār<sup>471</sup> - 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.<sup>472</sup> Also, Yawm Bāriq, where Bakr attacked Taghlib and Tamīm.<sup>473</sup> In these accounts it is explicitly mentioned that these battles took place along the Euphrates.

Thus, we can say that Taghlibī-Bakrī 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-Bakrī co-operation. One account tells us that the B. Riyāḥ of the B. Yarbūʿ 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 Khālid 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.<sup>474</sup> 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.<sup>475</sup>

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 Bakrī 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 Rabīʿa and Tamīm in Baṣra, may have produced these images of solidarity between Bakr and Taghlib against Tamīm.

<sup>471</sup> Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, s.v. "al-Ḥārith b. Waʿla".

<sup>472</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 647.

<sup>473</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 648. From the text it appears that they were on the move and they reached Bakrī territory near the "sawād".

<sup>474</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 474, 882.

<sup>475</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 883.

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 Bakrī-Taghlibī relations is facilitated by examining material from the conquest period, which, in any case, is found in only two *akhbār*.

In the later phases of the conquests along the Upper Euphrates, although Bakrīs often fought with the Muslims against the Taghlibīs, there is some evidence of affinity between the two groups as well as the continuing rivalry. We are told that one Taghlibī group called the B. Dhū al-Ruwayḥala<sup>476</sup> were raided by the Muslims and many captives were taken. However, Rabīʿans 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 Rabīʿa did not take captives in pre-Islamic times.<sup>477</sup>

On the other hand we are also told that Bakrī leaders of a Muslim troop forced a cornered band of Taghlibīs to drown, in revenge for a group of Bakrīs who were burnt to death by these Taghlibīs in the Jāhiliya.<sup>478</sup>

On the whole, we can see that Taghlibī-Bakrī 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 Jāhili period, perhaps as a result of a perceived mutual threat from Tamīmī 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, Tamīm and Quḍāʿa. These accounts are again of the type of 'ayyām of single tribal groups'.

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<sup>476</sup> Unidentified in Caskeel's *Ġamharat*, Kalḥālū's *Muʿjam* or in al-Qalqashandī, Ahmad b. ʿAlī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī maʿrifat ansāb al-ʿarab*, ed. I. al-Abyārī, revised ed., Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Muṣri, 1980.

<sup>477</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 447.

<sup>478</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2208.



Against Tamīm, Taghlib fought Yawm Irāb (also known as Yawm al-Arāqim<sup>479</sup>), which was a raid by the Taghlibī group, the B. Thaʿlaba b. Mālik, against the B. Riyāḥ of the B. Yarbūʿ (although the intended target was the B. Saʿd) led by Hudhayl b. Hubayra. According to the common *ayyām* account, the Taghlibīs were successful,<sup>480</sup> however, verses of Jarīr imply otherwise.<sup>481</sup>

Another Hudhayl (unidentified) of Taghlib attacked Tamīmīs of the B. ʿAmr b. Tamīm at Yawm Safār but he was killed there. According to Yāqūt, 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*.<sup>482</sup>

The Bakrī poet al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza mentions a Tamīmī raid against a Taghlibī group in the region of al-Baḥrayn.<sup>483</sup>

Apart from Tamīm, Taghlib also fought with the tribes of Quḍāʿa. We find this for instance in verses mentioning an unsuccessful raid by Ḥazīma b. Ṭāriq of B. Jusham b. Bakr against Balīy of Quḍāʿa<sup>484</sup>, while al-Ḥārith b. Ḥilliza mentioned a Quḍāʿī raid on Taghlib.<sup>485</sup>

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.

<sup>479</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 761.

<sup>480</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 473, 703, 883, 1088.

<sup>481</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 761.

<sup>482</sup> *Iṣḥānī, Aghānī*, xxvi, p. 8958; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Safār".

<sup>483</sup> *Iṣḥānī, Aghānī*, xi, p. 3832.

<sup>484</sup> al-Mufaḍḍal al-Dabbī b. Muḥammad, *al-Mufaḍḍaliyāt*, ed. A. M. Shākir, ʿA. Ḥarīm, Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1976, pp. 31-2.

<sup>485</sup> *Iṣḥānī, Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3831-2.

In the 5th c. CE, we find the powerful Rabīʿa confederation, dominated by Taghlibī clans, to be a strong force in al-Baḥrayn 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 Taghlibīs 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 Taghlibī 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 Taghlibī groups in al-Baḥrayn were an important source of military strength to the newly established Kindī state in central Arabia, they later represented a strong threat to them as allies of the Mundhirids. It is towards the end of the Kindī period, in the early 6th c. CE, that the Rabīʿan confederation must have been strong enough to be involved in conflict against "al-Yaman", whether directly or through their Kindī allies.

As the Kindī 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 Kindī state. Taghlib, perhaps due to feuding with Bakr, attached itself to the Mundhirids.<sup>486</sup>

What the *ayyām* accounts are most consistent about, in the case of Taghlib, is that they were especially active, and indeed dominant in al-Baḥrayn and neighbouring lands during the later Kindī period. However, after the Kindī 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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm show Taghlibīs in defiance of Ḥīran rule, this cannot have been a true reflection of the normal state of affairs. A little over a decade after the killing of ʿAmr b. Hind (*ca.* 569 CE), Taghlibīs are mentioned again fighting for al-Nuʿmān III. Yet this loyalty to al-Ḥīra 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.

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<sup>486</sup> Presumably, different parts of Taghlib co-operated with either side depending on practicalities and demographic realities.



## Profile of pre-Islamic Taghlib:

### Taghlibī pre-Islamic *ayyām*:

The pre-Islamic *ayyām* of Taghlib follow different types as described in the preceding chapter. However, the most celebrated Taghlibī *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 Taghlibī activity in the Islamic period.

### Taghlib and pre-Islamic Arabia:

As seen above, Taghlib seems to have been a powerful force in al-Baḥrayn until some point in the 6th c. CE, after the fall of the Ḥujrid dynasty. Before this, Taghlib dominated Rabīʿa 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-Baḥrayn. By the mid-6th c. however, Taghlib's domination of the Rabīʿa 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 Tamīmī groups until the Islamic period, may indicate a continuing focus of Taghlibī interest in the region of al-Baḥrayn and the lower Euphrates. Small Taghlibī 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<sup>487</sup>. 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<sup>488</sup>, we can conclude that the goat-herding Taghlibīs 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-Baḥrayn are difficult to identify in terms of their economic activities. Those settled in al-Yamāma and in the oases of al-Baḥrayn 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 Taghlibīs referred to by any other *nisba* than Taghlibī. 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. Kulthūm; the B. Taym of the Mālik b. Bakr, to whom belonged the famous warrior al-Saffāḥ al-Taghlibī; and in the late Jāhili and early Muslim period, the B. Thaʿalaba b. Bakr, from whom descended al-Hudhayl b. Hubayra, the most prominent leader of Taghlibīs who fought against Khalid's Muslim armies.<sup>489</sup>

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-Namir.

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<sup>487</sup> See Morony, *Iraq*, p. 218.

<sup>488</sup> See Donner, "Nomads", pp. 74-6.

<sup>489</sup> Although see EI<sup>2</sup> s.v. "Taghlib b. Wā'il", where it is pointed out that the pre-Islamic Hudhayl b. Hubayra was often confused with the Islamic figure Hudhayl b. ʿInrām, 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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm. However, it is clear that Taghlib were located, either around the oases of al-Baḥrayn and the Yamāma 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 Hijrī 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.<sup>490</sup>

### *The important lineages of Taghlib in the Islamic period:*

As in the pre-Islamic period, Taghlibī 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 Taghlib'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 Taghlibīs, and thus many tribesmen who are mentioned in the sources cannot be linked to any particular tribal subset.

The lineages of Taghlib 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 Taghlib. The first is Taghlib's involvement in the famous battle of Dhū Qār, in which a group of Bakrī tribesmen defeated a Sassanian led military force. In this

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<sup>490</sup> See Conrad, "Chronology and Literary Topoi", pp. 225, ff.



battle, Taghlib fought alongside the Sassanians, as did the other Mesopotamian and Euphrates tribes of Bahrā<sup>2</sup> and al-Namir. The Arāqim group of Taghlib are specifically mentioned in the battle,<sup>491</sup> however, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, al-Arāqim 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<sup>c</sup>mān b. Zur<sup>c</sup>a of the B. Taym of the Mālik b. Bakr branch headed his tribesmen as well as the contingent from al-Namir.<sup>492</sup>

The second important event concerning Taghlib occurred immediately after the death of the Prophet and before Abū Bakr had sent out the armies of Medina to subdue Arabia. Ṭabarī 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' Sajāḥ appeared in their territory. Sajāḥ was a Tamīmī of the B. Yarbū<sup>c</sup>, but had claimed prophethood in the north amongst her matrilineal kinsmen of Taghlib and had gathered a following from amongst Rabī<sup>c</sup>a. Thus, she arrived in northern Najd with an army of Taghlibīs, Namirīs, Iyādīs and Shaybānīs and negotiated a treaty with some Tamīmī groups.<sup>493</sup> However, Sajāḥ's army fought and defeated a group from al-Ribāb.<sup>494</sup>

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. <sup>c</sup>Amr branch of Tamīm. Some of the leaders of Sajāḥ's army were captured and they had to make a treaty not to pass through the territory of the B. Hujaym.<sup>495</sup> They then marched southwards towards al-Yamāma instead. There, they persuaded the 'prophet' of B. Ḥanīfa, Musaylama, to pay them tribute.<sup>496</sup> Sajāḥ 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-Walīd arrived in the area at the head of a large Muslim army. His arrival prompted the remaining group of Sajāḥ to retreat to the north.<sup>497</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 615.

<sup>492</sup> Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, s.v. "Dhū Qār"; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 489.

<sup>493</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 1911-2.

<sup>494</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1913.

<sup>495</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1915.

<sup>496</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 1919-20.

<sup>497</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1920; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, pp. 353-7.

In that same year, the small Muslim contingent in al-Baḥrayn 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.<sup>498</sup> The band's leader is mentioned as the Shaybānī al-Nu‘mān b. ‘Amr al-Mafrūq.<sup>499</sup> Al-Mafrūq is not mentioned amongst the list of the supporters of Sajāḥ, thus it is unclear whether this group was connected to Sajāḥ'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, Bahrā’ 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.<sup>500</sup> Following this, Rabī‘a b. Bujayr<sup>501</sup>, of the ‘Utba lineage of the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr, led a contingent of tribesmen to support the Sassanians in retaliation for the defeat at ‘Ayn al-Tamr.<sup>502</sup> They were, however, defeated again. Rabī‘a's daughter, was captured and later became an *umm walad* of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. The daughter of another Taghlibī leader, Hudhayl b. Hubayra, of the B. Tha‘laba b. Bakr, was also captured,<sup>503</sup> indicating the severity of the defeat.

After subduing the central Euphrates region, Khālid marched northwards along the west bank of the river.<sup>504</sup> It is interesting to learn that Byzantine

<sup>498</sup> Interestingly, this group is referred to collectively as one "*rahf*" (lineage).

<sup>499</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1973.

<sup>500</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 2062-3; Ibn al-Athir, *Kāmil*, ii, pp. 394-5.

<sup>501</sup> According to Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 164-25 he is Ḥabīb b. Bujayr.

<sup>502</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2068.

<sup>503</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 2072-3, 3472. It is interesting to note Khālid's reported particular hostility towards Taghlib, see Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2073; Ibn al-Athir, *Kāmil*, ii, pp. 398-9. According to Madā'ini, Khālid b. al-Walīd is said to have defeated Taghlib and Rabī‘a b. Bujayr in the year 13 H, not 12 H, Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 1976-7. 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 Rabī‘a b. Bujayr, see Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2109.

<sup>504</sup> There is confusion as to whether this occurred before or after his expedition to Dūmat al-Jandal. See, Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 186.



forces north of the Euphrates called upon aid from the Sassanians and Arab tribesmen including Taghlibīs to counter the threat from Khālid's army. However, this combined force was dispersed by Khālid.<sup>505</sup>

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 Taghlibī and Namirī tribes, primarily to replenish their supplies. The raids extended northwards, all the way up to Ṣiffīn<sup>506</sup>. 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.<sup>507</sup>

After their defeat at battle of the Bridge the Muslims were victorious at the battle of Buwayb.<sup>508</sup> Here we are told, for the first time, that Christian Taghlibīs and Namirīs fought alongside the Muslims.<sup>509</sup> Indeed a Taghlibī Christian "*ghulām*" is named as the killer of the commander of the Sassanian army.<sup>510</sup>

By 16 H it is clear that Taghlibīs were siding with the Muslims against the Byzantines in al-Jazīra, and thus, helping them to occupy the remaining cities holding out against them in that province.<sup>511</sup> At Takrīt, 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.<sup>512</sup>

Yet most of Taghlib remained Christian<sup>513</sup>, and this posed a problem for the Muslim leadership. A deputation from one Taghlibī group<sup>514</sup> met with ʿUmar and secured their freedom to remain Christian. The Taghlibīs agreed on paying a *jizya* at a lower rate, equivalent to the Muslim *ṣadaqa*, on the condition that they did not bring their children up as Christians.<sup>515</sup> Some Taghlibīs, together with their Namirī and Iyādī allies joined the Muslim force at al-Madāʿin and were later assigned quarters in al-Kūfa when it was built.<sup>516</sup>

<sup>505</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2074.

<sup>506</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2206-8, 2245, also p. 2244; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 458.

<sup>507</sup> Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 192.

<sup>508</sup> However, see Donner's discussion of the battle, where he concludes that the historicity of it is doubtful, Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, pp. 198-9.

<sup>509</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2190.

<sup>510</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2192-3; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 443.

<sup>511</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2394.

<sup>512</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2475; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, pp. 523-4.

<sup>513</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil".

<sup>514</sup> It is unclear whether they were negotiating on behalf of all Taghlibīs, or just one particular group. However, from a statement in this account regarding "these Taghlibīs" moving to al-Madāʿin, it appears that this particular deputation negotiated for one particular group.

<sup>515</sup> The legal significance of this anecdote obviously casts doubts over its authenticity, nevertheless, it is significant that the Muslim Taghlibīs moved to Kūfa, while Christians are said to have remained in al-Jazīra.

<sup>516</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2482, 2490, 2495, 2509-11; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 527.

Elsewhere we are told that Taghlibī Muslims and Christians joined a Kūfan expedition against the unsubdued parts of al-Jazīra.<sup>517</sup>

Apart from this, there is very little information on Taghlib until the first civil war. Perhaps the account of Yawm Ḥābis is an exception. In this *yawm*, which took place in the Islamic period, Taghlibīs were raided by a group of Bahrā<sup>2</sup>, 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.<sup>518</sup>

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.<sup>519</sup>

### The first civil war:

Lecker believes the Taghlib to have been pro-Umayyad in the first civil war.<sup>520</sup> 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 Ṣiffīn, ‘Alī entered al-Jazīra where he was met by tribal leaders from Taghlib and al-Namir. ‘Alī, 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.<sup>521</sup> However, none of these Taghlibīs from al-Jazīra seem to have joined ‘Alī’s army in connection with this meeting.

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<sup>517</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta’rikh*, i, pp. 2507-8; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 533. It is unclear why their return was important to ‘Umar. If it was for fear of them raiding into Muslim territory, his threat to the Byzantines then makes no sense.

<sup>518</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, pp. 4301, 4304.

<sup>519</sup> See Morony, *Iraq*, p. 232.

<sup>520</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wā’il".

<sup>521</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 146. It is worth remembering that an *umm walad* of ‘Alī’s (al-Ṣalbā’) was from the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham of Taghlib; see Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "al-Ṣalbā’ bt. Ḥalab".



One particular incident seems to shed light on the general attitude of the Taghlibīs of al-Jazīra to the conflict. It seems that a group of Taghlibīs had moved from territory controlled by ʿAlī, into that held by Muʿāwiya, and also - at least nominally - given Muʿāwiya their allegiance. But when Muʿāwiya sent a troop to kidnap some ʿAlid supporters in al-Jazīra, they returned to Muʿāwiya with some men from Taghlib. The Taghlibī band mentioned earlier, asked for their release but was refused. So they decided to abandon Muʿāwiya's cause and move back. However, *en route* they attacked and killed a deputy of ʿAlī's and were saved from his retaliation only by the intercession of ʿAlī's Rabīʿan party.<sup>522</sup>

### *Taghlibīs of Kūfa and Baṣra:*

Taghlibīs are rarely mentioned in the events of the conflict between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya. The small number of Taghlibīs who fought for ʿAlī, did so under the flag of the Bakrī dominated Rabīʿa at Ṣiffīn.<sup>523</sup> Thus, it is worthwhile examining the participation of Rabīʿa as a group at Ṣiffīn. As for the Battle of the Camel, we are told that a small number of Taghlibīs from Kūfa were amongst the Kūfan army which set out with ʿAlī against Talḥa and al-Zubayr in al-Baṣra.<sup>524</sup>

Immediately after the Battle of the Camel, the Baṣrans - who from ʿAlī's message to Ibn ʿAbbās appear to be mainly Rabīʿans - were unwilling to join ʿAlī.<sup>525</sup> However, they eventually did arrive in Kūfa to join ʿAlī before his army set out to Syria.<sup>526</sup>

At Ṣiffīn, the Rabīʿan contingent is described as the largest group in ʿAlī's army, as opposed to the two other groups of Muḍar and al-Yaman separately.<sup>527</sup> Interestingly, from an early point, there were tensions between the Rabīʿa and the *ahl al-Yaman* in ʿAlī's army over the issue of leadership,<sup>528</sup> as well as hints at friction between the Rabīʿa and Muḍar.<sup>529</sup>

<sup>522</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iii, p. 380.

<sup>523</sup> Thus it appears from most sources. However, manuscripts describing the banners of the tribes which fought at Ṣiffīn, describe a specific banner (*raya*) of the B. Taghlib - who fought on ʿAlī's side - held by a Taghlibī (unknown in other sources) [M. Hinds, "The Banners and Battle Cries of the Arabs at Ṣiffīn (A.D. 657)", *al-Abḥāth*, 24 (1971), pp. 120, 129].

<sup>524</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, i, p. 3174; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iii, p. 232.

<sup>525</sup> Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 105.

<sup>526</sup> Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 27.

<sup>527</sup> Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 484.

<sup>528</sup> Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 137.

<sup>529</sup> See for instance in the words of Saʿīd b. Qays al-Hamdānī to the Yamanīs, Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 138.

In the fighting at Ṣiffīn, Rabīʿans held some high posts in ʿAlī's army. However, neither these posts nor the leadership of the various Rabīʿan divisions seem to have been entrusted to Taghlibīs.<sup>530</sup> However, Kurdūs b. Hāni<sup>3</sup> al-Bakrī (apparently referring to a group called the B. Bakr b. Jusham of Taghlib<sup>531</sup>) is mentioned as the son of the leader of Taghlib.<sup>532</sup>

#### *Taghlib in Syria:*

On Muʿāwiya's side, at Ṣiffīn, no Taghlibīs, or indeed, Rabīʿans appear as a single unit.<sup>533</sup> Some Taghlibī individuals do have privileged positions with Muʿāwiya such as the poet, Kaʿb b. Juʿayl of the ʿAuf line of Mālik b. Bakr.<sup>534</sup>

There is some indirect evidence that some Taghlibīs might have showed real support for the cause of Muʿāwiya against ʿAlī. After the death of ʿAlī, Muʿāwiya expelled from Kūfa many of those who had been followers of ʿAlī 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 Sajāh, now a Muslim, was residing).<sup>535</sup>

#### **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 Muʿāwiya.<sup>536</sup> While in Syria, the famous Taghlibī poet, al-Akḥṭal, of the Fadawkas branch of Mālik b. Jusham, frequented the court of Yazīd and wrote verses of praise on his death.<sup>537</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 205-6.

<sup>531</sup> Probably confused with Jusham b. Bakr. This man is not mentioned in genealogical works.

<sup>532</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 484, 486, 487.

<sup>533</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 206-7, 227.

<sup>534</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 56, 208, *passim*; see Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Kaʿb b. Ġuʿāil".

<sup>535</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1920.

<sup>536</sup> Balādhuri, *Ausāb*, ivb, p. 139.

<sup>537</sup> Balādhuri, *Ausāb*, ivb, p. 61.



### 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 Qaysī settlers in al-Jazīra broke out, prompting Taghlib to side - superficially at least - with the Marwānids, as the Qaysīs had opted for al-Zubayr.<sup>538</sup> But even then it seems that this conflict was not directly connected to the civil war raging around them.<sup>539</sup>

The Qays-Taghlib conflict started after the defeat of Zubayrid Qays by Marwānid Kalb and their allies, at Marj Rāhiṭ. A leader of Qays, Zufar b. al-Ḥārith of the B. ‘Āmir, fortified himself in Qarqisiyā’ on the Euphrates and began raiding Kalbī bedouin in Bādiyat al-Shām from there. Kalb also raided the Qaysīs in retaliation. One of the Qaysī commanders was ‘Umayr b. al-Ḥubāb from the B. Sulaym.

In the beginning there is evidence that Taghlibīs from the Euphrates and areas in al-Jazīra were joining these Qaysī raids, although there is no evidence that this was politically motivated. Balādhurī mentions that ‘Umayr, in particular, raided Kalb with men from Taghlib.<sup>540</sup> 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.<sup>541</sup>

However, it appears that ‘Umayr and his Qaysīs treated the Taghlibī tribesmen, including their leaders, with contempt, perhaps because they were still Christian. Another probable source of tension must have been that the Qaysīs were the recent conquerors of a region which had been partly dominated by Taghlib.<sup>542</sup> 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.<sup>543</sup>

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

<sup>538</sup> See Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, v, p. 314, where Taghlib is specifically termed Marwanid. However, it seems that perhaps some Taghlibīs opposed the Umayyads [Rotter, G., *Die Umayyaden und der Zweite Bürgerkrieg (680-92)*, Weisbaden: Steiner, 1982, p. 190].

<sup>539</sup> For a clear account of the Qays-Taghlib conflict based on the harmonization of numerous sources, see Dixon, *Umayyad Caliphate*, pp. 98-104. See also, Rotter, *Umayyaden*, pp. 193-207; Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom*, pp. 203-5.

<sup>540</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 308, 313; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iv, p. 309.

<sup>541</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 309, 313.

<sup>542</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, v, p. 314; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iv, p. 309.

<sup>543</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 315, ff; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iv, pp. 310, ff.

have been the more successful side until the battle of al-Ḥashshāk<sup>544</sup>. This was the most serious battle that had taken place until then.

### *Al-Ḥashshāk:*

Just before this battle, Taghlib had apparently decided to call upon all of its allies in response to the vicious Qaysī onslaught against them. Bakr b. Wāʾil sent Shaybānīs from al-Jazīra and others from Iraq. The account mentions that Taghlib called for help from even their "*muhājirūn*" in Ādharbayjān, who sent them 2000 men under the command of Shuʿayb b. Mulayl (or Mukayl). Shuʿayb was from the Ṣubāḥ branch of Mālik b. Bakr.<sup>545</sup>

Shuʿayb's contingent was defeated, but the main Taghlibī force went on to destroy the Qaysīs, at al-Ḥashshāk near Takrīt.<sup>546</sup> There, the Qaysī commander ʿUmayr b. al-Ḥubāb was killed and Qays were badly defeated.<sup>547</sup> Many Qaysīs fell from the tribes of Ghanīy and Sulaym, and the B. ʿĀmir were forced to flee the field.<sup>548</sup>

One account of the battle of al-Ḥashshāk, 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, Quḍāʿa (mainly Kalb and Bahrāʿ) and groups of Muḍar had dominated the settled territories, however, Quḍāʿa had left before the war against Taghlib.<sup>549</sup>

At al-Ḥashshāk, 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 Qaysīs. Hanzala b. Hawbar<sup>550</sup> of the B. Taym of the B. Mālik b. Bakr led Taghlib. Another leader of Taghlib against Qays in this period was ʿAbd Yasūʿ b. Ḥarb - clearly a Christian - who was supposedly descended from Murra b.

<sup>544</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 318-23; Ibn al-Athir, *Kāmil*, iv, pp. 311-5.

<sup>545</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4371; Caskel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Šuʿayb b. Mulayl" and "Šuʿayb b. Mulayl". Shuʿayb, according to Caskel, was a Khārījī. Accounts, different from that of the *Aghānī*, include Shuʿayb b. Mulayl but not as a Khārījī from Ādharbayjān. 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, Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 316-7; Ibn al-Athir, *Kāmil*, iv, p. 310.

<sup>546</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4373. In 90 H, according to Caskel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "ʿUmayr b. al-Ḥubāb".

<sup>547</sup> The killer of ʿUmayr was from the Kaʿb b. Zuhayr lineage of the great Jusham b. Bakr branch. See Ibn al-Kalbi, *Jamhara*, p. 567.

<sup>548</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 323-6.

<sup>549</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4371.

<sup>550</sup> Also, Hanzala b. Qays b. Hawbar, see Caskel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Hanzala b. Qays".



Kulthūm, the brother of the famous ‘Amr, and thus of the B. Zuhayr b. Jusham b. Bakr.<sup>551</sup>

However, this defeat of Qays was temporary and was followed by a vicious Qaysī revenge.<sup>552</sup> The most prominent Qaysī leader in al-Jazīra, Zūfar b. al-Ḥārith of the B. ‘Āmir<sup>553</sup>, was initially against escalating the war with Taghlib. After al-Ḥashshāk, however, he agreed to support the Qaysī call for blood-vengence. Thus, the Qaysīs 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”<sup>554</sup>) 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 Mawṣil met another Taghlibī-‘Yamanī’ group and defeated it utterly.<sup>555</sup>

Many other battles connected to the Qays-Taghlib feuding are mentioned in the sources, such as Yawm Lubayy, where Taghlib were defeated by Qays,<sup>556</sup> or Yawm Sinjār, also known as Yawm al-Arāqim, where they were victorious.<sup>557</sup>

## 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,<sup>558</sup> and one of the B. Taym lineage of Mālīk b. Bakr was a governor of al-Sind.<sup>559</sup> 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

<sup>551</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 567.

<sup>552</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 326-8; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, iv, pp. 315-9.

<sup>553</sup> Zūfar seems to have been the most important leader of ‘Qays’ in Jazīra.

<sup>554</sup> Perhaps these were Qudā‘ī affiliated allies of Taghlib, remnants of Kalb and Bahra’.

<sup>555</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, pp. 4364-5.

<sup>556</sup> *Naqā’id*, p. 1038.

<sup>557</sup> *Naqā’id*, pp. 373, 400. But see p. 508 where Yawm Sinjār is counted as a victory for Qays.

<sup>558</sup> Abū Ḍayf, M.A. *al-Qabā’il al-‘arabiya fi al-andalus ḥattā suqū al-dawla al-umawiya*, Casablanca: Les Éditions Maghrebines, 1983, See p. 447.

<sup>559</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 571; the descendants of this Sindi governor, Hisham b. ‘Amr, continued to hold prominent military posts under the ‘Abbāsids; see Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 167-8.

Marwānids 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 Kūfan Taghlibī was in command of the left wing one of the armies of al-Ḥajjāj sent against the Shaybānī Khārijī Shabīb b. Yazīd.<sup>560</sup> While in Shabīb's army itself there was a Taghlibī attributed with killing the commander of the Marwānid army.<sup>561</sup> Unfortunately, the lineages of neither man were recorded. During the third civil war, a Taghlibī of the Saʿd lineage of B. Jusham b. Bakr, is mentioned in the ranks of the army sent by Marwān II b. Muḥammad against rebels in the Ḥijāz. He is even referred to as "ṣāhib Marwān".<sup>562</sup>

#### *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.<sup>563</sup> According to the sources, the reason for this was that the Taghlibī poet, al-Akḥṭal, 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 Qaysī general, al-Jaḥḥāf, led a band of Sulamī Qaysīs against a large group of Taghlibīs with whom al-Akḥṭal was staying, whom they massacred. One of al-Akḥṭal's sons was killed and he himself narrowly escaped death. Taghlib attempted to pursue al-Jaḥḥāf 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.<sup>564</sup>

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-Qasrī, who governed Iraq and the east for the Caliph Hisham.<sup>565</sup>

<sup>560</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 950, 952.

<sup>561</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 953.

<sup>562</sup> Azdī, *Taʾrikh al-muwṣil*, pp. 112-3.

<sup>563</sup> It is surprising that Crone tells us that the allegiance of Rabiʿa was fixed in Jazīra, as pro-Qaysi. See Crone, *Slaves*, p. 233, n. 311.

<sup>564</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, pp. 4366-70; Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, v, pp. 319-22; 328-31; *Naqāʿid*, pp. 401-2, 508, 899.

<sup>565</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, vi, p. 236. For Khālid al-Qasrī, see Kennedy, H. N., *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, London: Longman, 1986, pp. 108, ff.



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-Jazīra. But while Taghlib and other Rabīʿan tribes lost territory to Qays, they were able to acquire new lands east of the Tigris.<sup>566</sup>

*Al-Akḥṭal, Jarīr and al-Farazdaq:*

During the reign of ʿAbd 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 Taghlibī 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.<sup>567</sup> 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-Jazīra.

Looking at the entry on al-Akḥṭal in *Kitāb al-aghānī*, 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.<sup>568</sup> Jarīr often insulted Taghlib for remaining Christian.<sup>569</sup> He calls the Taghlibīs 'pig mouths', which is presumably a reference to their eating pork<sup>570</sup>, while al-Akḥṭal is referred to by Jarīr as "*dhū al-ṣalīb*"<sup>571</sup> or "*ibn al-naṣrānīya*".<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> Morony, *Iraq*, pp. 231-2.

<sup>567</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 879-80.

<sup>568</sup> *Iṣṭahānī, Aghānī*, viii, pp. 3062-3.

<sup>569</sup> *Naqā'id*, pp. 506, 936.

<sup>570</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 507.

<sup>571</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 801.

<sup>572</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 1048.

*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-Akḥṭal's verses and those of his Bakrī opponents. Though their poetry mentions only battles which took place in the Jāhiliya.<sup>573</sup> We also know that, Jarīr defended and eulogized Bakr while attacking Taghlib.<sup>574</sup> There is even a reference to fighting between Taghlib and Shaybān contemporary to al-Aʿshā al-Taghlibī, who lived during the Umayyad period.<sup>575</sup>

On the whole, such hostility is insignificant compared to co-operation and solidarity between the two groups under the Rabīʿan 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 Taghlibī leader, Hammām b. al-Muṭarrif, of the B. Mālik b. Jusham.<sup>576</sup>

**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.<sup>577</sup> That they still formed a strong presence in the region can be seen three centuries later when the Ḥamdānid Taghlibī dynasty was founded in northern Syria and Mesopotamia.

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<sup>573</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 460-1. See also Balādhuri, *Ansab*, v, p. 171.

<sup>574</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 897.

<sup>575</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 4069.

<sup>576</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil"; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 568.

<sup>577</sup> See also EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Taghlib b. Wāʿil".



Most of the Taghlibīs who converted and joined the Muslims during the conquests were settled in Kūfa. A typical case is that of the Taghlibī leader ʿUtba b. Waḡl of the B. Saʿd b. Jusham. He held Takrīt against the Muslims for the Sassanians, but then surrendered, joined the Muslims and settled in Kūfa.<sup>578</sup> In comparison, few Taghlibīs seem to have gone to Baṣra.<sup>579</sup> The conquests also resulted in Taghlib 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 Taghlibī exploitation.<sup>580</sup>

### Lineages:

With Taghlib it is difficult to see changes in the fortunes of particular lineages from before to after Islam. As mentioned before, most of the Taghlibī 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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm in pre-Islamic times, still held local power amongst Taghlibīs 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 Taghlib 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 Khārijī. However, his particular lineage, the B. Ṣubāḥ were unknown in pre-Islamic times.

Lastly, we also have a Taghlibī leader in early Islamic times who was from the B. Thaʿlaba 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.

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<sup>578</sup> Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "ʿUtba b. Waḡl".

<sup>579</sup> See F. Donner, "Tribal Settlement in Basra During the First Century A.H.", in T. Khalidi, ed., *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1984), pp. 97-120.

<sup>580</sup> Morony, *Iraq*, p. 232.

There seems to be continuation of power amongst the Taym branch of B. Mālik 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, Taghlibīs account for just three pages of genealogical tables as opposed to thirty pages for the Bakr b. Wā'il, who were supposedly their equals in the Basūs war.<sup>581</sup> Moreover, it is strange that there are far more Jāhili accounts than Islamic concerning the Taghlibī tribesmen.

In this regard, it should be noted that a large number of the Taghlibīs mentioned in the historical sources who had taken part in fighting against the Muslims, or later, against the Qaysīs, do not appear in the genealogies. Also, as Caskel points out, and is clear from the evidence given above, Taghlibīs 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 Taghlibīs remained Christian meant that they did not want to actively be involved with the new political system. Thus, most Christian Taghlibīs contemporary to Islam did not move to the *amṣār* and did not get included in the *dīwān* registers, an important source of the Arab genealogists.<sup>582</sup> 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.<sup>583</sup> In the Jāhili 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

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<sup>581</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, pp. 27-8.

<sup>582</sup> See Donner, "Bakr", p. 12.

<sup>583</sup> 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 Rabīʿa, the Bakrīs and we have shown examples of cooperation between Bakrīs and Taghlibīs 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 Taghlibīs for Bakrīs in our sources. One example is Furāt b. Ḥayyān who is a Taghlibī according to Ibn al-Athīr,<sup>584</sup> while Ibn al-Kalbī has him as a Ṣaḥābī of the B. ʿIjl, from the line of Rabīʿa.<sup>585</sup> Furthermore, Taghlib seems to be mistaken for Bakr in the account of Yawm Safār as described by Yāqūt.<sup>586</sup>

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<sup>584</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ii, p. 446.

<sup>585</sup> Caskeel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Furāt b. Ḥayyān". The fact that there exists a line within ʿIjl named Rabīʿa, could mean that that whole branch was attached to B. ʿIjl from Taghlib.

<sup>586</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Safār".

### 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 ʿAmr b. Kulthūm. Such material is useful to form some general ideas of Taghlib in the Jāhiliya. 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 Jāhili 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 Jāhiliya 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<sup>587</sup>).

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-Yamāma, 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 Qaysī 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*.

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<sup>587</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Ḥamdānids", where they are descended from ʿAdi b. Usāma, and see Gaskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 165/19, 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 Ghaṭafānīs 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 Ghaṭafānīs 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.

### The Divisions of Ghatafān

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

#### a) Ghatafān as a whole:

In our sources, Ghatafān is counted genealogically amongst the Qays ʿAylān branch of Muḍar (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 Qaysī tribes, as well as in the central Hijāz, mainly to the north of Medina<sup>588</sup>.

The three main divisions of Ghatafān were, Ashjaʿ, ʿAbs and Dhubyān.<sup>589</sup> Dhubyān in turn divided into the B. Murra, B. Thaʿlaba and B. Fazāra.<sup>590</sup> The largest group of these was the B. Fazāra, of whom the members of the B. Badr lineage were most prominent.<sup>591</sup> One of the most important lineages of ʿAbs was that of the B. Rawāḥa.<sup>592</sup>

ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān was another group from Ghatafān but had relatively little importance in the sources. Very few *ashrāf* from B. ʿAbdallāh were recorded by later compilers. They were usually closely associated with the B. ʿAbs.

#### *Matrilineal links of Ghatafān:*

The 'mother' of 'Ghatafān' is recorded as Tukma bt. Murr, the 'sister' of 'Tamīm'. Their 'step-brother' through the 'mother' were the B. Sulaym, while B. Aʿṣur<sup>593</sup> were a full 'brother'-tribe.<sup>594</sup> Ibn Hishām refers to a branch of the closely related tribe of Ghanīy, the B. ʿAmr b. Buhtha, as originally being from

<sup>588</sup> I will refer to pre-Islamic Medina thus, rather than as Yathrib, to avoid confusion, as it will be mentioned frequently in both periods.

<sup>589</sup> Kalḥāla, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ghatafān".

<sup>590</sup> Kalḥāla, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Dhubyān".

<sup>591</sup> Kalḥāla, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Fazāra". See also, Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 130/18.

<sup>592</sup> See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 132/16.

<sup>593</sup> From whom stem the more famed B. Bāhila and B. Ghanīy.

<sup>594</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 413; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 80.



Ghatafān,<sup>595</sup> while the 'mother' of two major branches of the Qaysī tribe of B. Bāhila, the B. Qutayba and B. Wā'il was considered to be a Fazārī.<sup>596</sup>

Presumably these links served the purpose of expressing certain relations between the various groups mentioned, mainly between the B. A<sup>c</sup>sur and Ghatafān, particularly between the groups of Fazāra and Bāhila. The link between Sulaym and Ghatafān 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 Ghatafānī traditions are misleading. In fact, it could be that the accounts of these genealogical links are simply more ancient than the remainder of the Ghatafānī traditions.

#### *Other associations:*

There are traces of much tribal realignment and swapping of genealogies amongst the Ghatafānī groups. For instance, we find groups from B. <sup>c</sup>Abdallāh b. Ghatafān such as B. Mālik b. Ama of Rayth and the B. Hāriba b. Dhubyān, who both joined the B. Tha<sup>c</sup>laba b. Sa<sup>c</sup>d of Dhubyān; and the B. Māzin b. Rayth who joined the B. Shamkh branch of Fazāra.<sup>597</sup>

<sup>c</sup>Abd b. Dhubyān were a small but prestigious lineage who joined the B. Murra b. <sup>c</sup>Awf. The B. Duhmān b. <sup>c</sup>Awf were also joined to B. Murra.<sup>598</sup>

In Caskel's tabulated edition of Ibn al-Kalbī'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 Ghatafān. Ibn Qutayba says that there is opinion that this group were in fact originally from Qays <sup>c</sup>Aylān and had later joined Judhām.<sup>599</sup> As mentioned earlier with Taghlib and Kalb, we can also see here traces of some form of association between Ghatafānī groups and their neighbours, Judhām, in the pre-Islamic past.

<sup>595</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 196.

<sup>596</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 81.

<sup>597</sup> See Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 414-5.

<sup>598</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 415, 424.

<sup>599</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 102. Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 245.

## b) Dhubyān:

*Tha'labā:*

The two main groups in Tha'labā were the B. Rizām and the B. Bajāla. from the latter was the important lineage of Jihāsh.<sup>600</sup>

One account in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamhara* states that the B. Hāriba b. Dhubyān left Ghatafān to join Tha'labā b. Sa'd and remained amongst them.<sup>601</sup> The importance of this, is to show that the B. Tha'labā were either separate from Ghatafān 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 Ghatafān.<sup>602</sup> It is interesting that they seem to have co-operated closely (as we will see below) with the B. Badr of Fazāra,<sup>603</sup> who held equally high honour and prestige in Ghatafān.

The main divisions of Murra were Ghayz, Mālik, Sahm and Širma.<sup>604</sup> The B. Ghayz were divided into Nushba and Yarbū' and were the strongest single group within Murra.<sup>605</sup> 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.<sup>606</sup> 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-Ḥīra,<sup>607</sup> and the very high status of this man is reflected in him being called "*sayyid ghatafān*".<sup>608</sup> His son, Harim b. Sinān, is counted in the *'Iqd* as one of the three most generous men of the Jāhili period,<sup>609</sup> and his brother Khārija b. Sinān was another acknowledged leader of Murra.<sup>610</sup>

<sup>600</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 424-8.

<sup>601</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 414-5.

<sup>602</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 84.

<sup>603</sup> 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 bedouin of the B. al-'Usharū' of Fazāra. See Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 112.

<sup>604</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 416.

<sup>605</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 416.

<sup>606</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 315.

<sup>607</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3894.

<sup>608</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbīh, *'Iqd*, i, p. 245.

<sup>609</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbīh, *'Iqd*, i, p. 241.

<sup>610</sup> Caskei, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Hārīga b. Sinān".



The B. Mālik b. Murra were also prominent in the Jāhiliya. Ghālib b. ʿAwf of the B. Mālik was an important Ghatafānī leader credited with the decision to end Ghatafān's pact with B. Asad.<sup>611</sup>

*Fazāra:*

Fazāra was divided into the B. ʿAdīy b. Fazāra and the B. Manwala. The latter were composed of B. Shamkh, B. Māzin b. Fazāra and B. Zālim b. Fazāra.<sup>612</sup>

B. Badr, of the Thaʿlaba branch of B. ʿAdīy, held extremely high status.<sup>613</sup> They are named as "*bayt qays*" by Ibn Qutayba,<sup>614</sup> while a report in the *Aghānī* places them as the next in *sharaf* amongst the Arabs after B. Hāshim of Quraysh.<sup>615</sup> In fact, according to Ibn Qutayba, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr was known as "*rabb maʿadd*".<sup>616</sup> His son, Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa, was a leader of Asad and Ghatafān<sup>617</sup> and referred to in the *ʿIqd* as "*aʿazz al-ʿarab*".<sup>618</sup>

Within the Shamkh branch of Fazāra, the B. Laʿy<sup>619</sup> 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.<sup>620</sup> 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.<sup>621</sup>

<sup>611</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 422.

<sup>612</sup> Caskel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Manūla".

<sup>613</sup> See M. J. Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes of Arabia: Some Notes on their Relations", in M. Sharon, ed., *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of David Ayalon* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1986), pp. 38, ff.

<sup>614</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 83.

<sup>615</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, pp. 7461-2.

<sup>616</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 83.

<sup>617</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 302.

<sup>618</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, iii, p. 286.

<sup>619</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī has Laʿy b. Shaunkh as well as Laʿy b. ʿUṣaym b. Shaunkh, whereas Balādhuri is right into collapsing them into one group, the Laʿy b. ʿUṣaym. (Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 437, 438; Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 381).

<sup>620</sup> Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes", pp. 34-7.

<sup>621</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 439.

## c) °Abs and °Abdallāh b. Ghatafān:

## °Abs:

°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.<sup>622</sup>

The two most significant parts of Ghālib were Makhzūm and °Awdh.<sup>623</sup> 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.<sup>624</sup> 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. Sharīk. The descendants of Qurra were *ashrāf* in al-Shām.<sup>625</sup>

## °Abdallāh b. Ghatafān:

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

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<sup>622</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 441-6.

<sup>623</sup> See Caskeel, *Ḥamharat*, i, p. 132.

<sup>624</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 448-9.

<sup>625</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 451-2.

<sup>626</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 414.

<sup>627</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 82.

<sup>628</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiv, p. 4879.



(A) Pre-Islamic Ghatafān**Pre-conquest territories:***Ghatafān as a whole:*

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

To the north of Medina, Ghatafān extended to the areas between Taymāʿ and Wādī al-Qurā.<sup>629</sup> There, the main neighbours of Ghatafān included B. ʿUdhra,<sup>630</sup> Baliy and Juhayna. Awl was the name of a settlement of Ghatafān between Khaybar and the two mountains of Ṭayyiʿ,<sup>631</sup> making Ṭayyiʿ their neighbours in the north-east.

Ghatafānī territory extended in the east towards al-Nibāj [see map 1].<sup>632</sup> To their east lay the B. Asad<sup>633</sup>, who shared the great Wādī al-Rumma [see map 1] with them, and to the south-east lived the B. ʿĀmir.<sup>634</sup>

Southwards in Najd, we know that Ghatafān sometimes extended to the vicinity of Fayd<sup>635</sup> in central Najd [see map 1]. Various Qaysī tribes would have been their neighbours there, mainly other ʿĀmirī groups but with Sulaym in the west.

Ghatafān 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 Baṭn 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 ʿUthmān,<sup>636</sup> perhaps it served as a source of gypsum even earlier.

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629 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥarrat al-Nār".

630 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥajr" (last paragraph).

631 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Awl".

632 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḍabur".

633 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "al-Dalmā", "al-Saʿdiya".

634 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Ḥars", "al-Rumma".

635 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Qurnatān": the scene of a battle with B. ʿĀmir.

636 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2833.

*Dhubyān:*

In some places in eastern Ghatafānī territory, Dhubyān neighboured B. Kilāb of B. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa,<sup>637</sup> (see also Fazāra, below). Other neighbours of Dhubyān were Ṭayyiʿ, along one of the northern *wādīs* which joined up with Wādī al-Rumma.<sup>638</sup>

Also in the east and further south of Wādī al-Rumma, B. Saʿd b. Dhubyān (traditionally mainly composed of Thaʿlaba and Murra) owned territory near Darīya.<sup>639</sup>

Abraq al-Rabadha was Dhubyānī territory, according to Yāqūt, at the time of the *rida* wars. The Islamic town of al-Rabadha [see map 1] lay to the east of Medina, on the route of the ʿAbbāsīd Ḍarb Zubaydah, roughly half way between Medina and Darīya.<sup>640</sup> 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.<sup>641</sup>

Thaʿlaba:

Thaʿlaba controlled a spring near Baṭn Nakhl which lay in the vicinity of Medina, on the eastern side.<sup>642</sup> They also owned territory between Nakhl and Khaybar [see map 1].<sup>643</sup> Various localities near al-Rabadha, to the east of Medina, are also mentioned as controlled by B. Thaʿlaba before the *rida* wars.<sup>644</sup> They also controlled a settlement near Medina, in Qalhā, the location at which ʿAbs and Dhubyān allegedly made peace at the end of the Dāhis war.<sup>645</sup> Thaʿlaba are also said to have had a settlement near al-Rahrahān, which probably lay near the eastern end of Wādī al-Rumma.<sup>646</sup>

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637 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Baṭil".

638 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Thalbi".

639 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Khurba".

640 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Abraq Rabadha", "Rabadha".

641 Al-Rāshid, S., *Al-Rabadha*, Riyadh: King Saud University, 1986, pp. 1, 14, *passim*.

642 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, p. 6496; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Baṭn Nakhl".

643 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Dhayāla".

644 Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1878-9; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam* s.v.v. "Khabira", "Qassa".

645 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Qalhā".

646 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Ṣurād".



Murra:

The B. Murra are often associated with Medina and must have lived mainly in its vicinity. The stories of the famous Murri *ṣuʿlūk*<sup>647</sup> and warrior-poet ʿUrwa b. al-Ward are mainly set in places around Medina.<sup>648</sup>

Further to the north, Murrīs 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.<sup>649</sup> The vicinity of Fadak is mentioned as Ghatafānī territory in the ʿIqd's description of the events leading up to the main battle of al-Fijār.<sup>650</sup> Other springs are mentioned as belonging to B. Murra and B. Fazāra between Fadak and Khaybar.<sup>651</sup>

In the north, B. Ṣirma held a spring in the highlands overlooking the route between Taymā<sup>2</sup> [see map 1] and Fayd.<sup>652</sup> Also to the north of Medina, Ḥarrat Laylā was a fertile settlement (despite the name) between Wādī al-Qurā and Medina which belonged to the B. Murra.<sup>653</sup> B. ʿUdhra were the main neighbours of B. Murra in Wādī al-Qurā [see map 1].<sup>654</sup>

East of Medina, the famous settlement of Nakhl is named as a settlement of the B. Murra.<sup>655</sup> Also, eastwards, Murrīs were established in the western end of Wādī al-Rumma, near al-Naqla,<sup>656</sup> and they owned territory west of al-Ḥājir [see map 1].<sup>657</sup> Al-Raqm, was a spring of B. Murra's where a battle between ʿĀmir and Ghatafān took place.<sup>658</sup> This must have lain either in Wādī al-Rumma or slightly further south in the vicinity of Dariya [see map 1].<sup>659</sup>

647 *I.e.* an exiled tribesman, usually living by raiding; see EI<sup>2</sup>, *s.v.* "Ṣuʿlūk".

648 See Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, pp. 919, ff.; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Rawdat al-Ajdād".

649 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, p. 684. See also Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, pp. 127, ff.

650 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, p. 104.

651 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Yadī".

652 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Yumū".

653 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Ḥarrat Laylā".

654 See Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.v.* "Udaym", "Ukhayy", "Burqat Sādir". From the verses attributed to al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī in Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Qurā", it seems that B. Ḥum of B. ʿUdhra were the dominant group in Wādī al-Qurā.

655 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Nakhl".

656 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "al-Firs".

657 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Qanawān".

658 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, p. 26.

659 Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, i, p. 103. But see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, *s.v.* "Nakhl", where one account links Nakhl to B. Thaʿlaba and not B. Murra.

Fazāra:

Fazārī territory stretched as far north-east as the lands of Ṭayyi<sup>3</sup>,<sup>660</sup> and north as far as Kalbī territory.<sup>661</sup> They also had Asad as their neighbours in the east,<sup>662</sup> as well as the B. Ḍabāb of B. ʿĀmir.<sup>663</sup>

Fazārī settlements were found close to Medina, to its east. Arwā was a spring of Fazāra near Wādī al-ʿAqīq.<sup>664</sup> Another Fazārī settlement, al-Ḥisā<sup>3</sup>, lay between al-Rabadha and Nakhl,<sup>665</sup> while B. Badr and B. Māzin of Fazāra claimed land in the vicinity of Baṭn Nakhl.<sup>666</sup>

Fazārīs were to be found in the Wādī 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 Wādī al-Rumma, were mainly inhabited by Fazāra but also by ʿAbs, according to one account.<sup>667</sup> Another settlement in this area, al-Sharabba, is associated with Fazāra.<sup>668</sup> This place, according to Yāqūt, lay a little north and east of Medina in the vicinity of Wādī al-Rumma.<sup>669</sup> Al-Luqāṭa was in Fazārī territory, lying near al-Ḥājir, slightly to the west of Wādī al-Rumma. It was one of the locations of the events of the Dāḥis war.<sup>670</sup> Many other locations linked to Fazāra lay in this area.

Nomadic Fazārīs ventured far south of Wādī al-Rumma. Fazārīs are specifically mentioned as neighbouring the B. al-Aḍbaṭ and B. Abī Bakr of the B. Kilāb group of ʿĀmir in the rich *wādī* of Baṭn al-Liwā, to the west of Ḥimā Ḍariya.<sup>671</sup> They also neighboured the B. Muḥārib<sup>672</sup> somewhere between al-Rabadha and Ḍariya.<sup>673</sup>

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<sup>660</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Adabiy", "ʿUwārid", "al-Ghūṭa".

<sup>661</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Udayyūt", "Najd".

<sup>662</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Kharza".

<sup>663</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Dārat Juljul".

<sup>664</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Arwā".

<sup>665</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Ḥisā".

<sup>666</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Dhawra".

<sup>667</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Abān", "Abānān"; Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Wālība b. al-Ḥārīt".

<sup>668</sup> At this place, Khārīja b. Ḥiṣu, a leader of Fazāra at the time of the Prophet, intercepted and sent back the Prophet's envoy; see Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1870.

<sup>669</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam* s.v. "al-Sharabba".

<sup>670</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Luqāṭa".

<sup>671</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Baṭn al-Liwā", "Urayka".

<sup>672</sup> This must be the Qaysi group of that name, not the more famous one associated with the B. Tamim.

<sup>673</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Gharid".



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,<sup>674</sup> while two other settlements near Khaybar are described as Fazārī.<sup>675</sup>

*°Abs and °Abdallāh b. Ghatafān:*

°Abs:

°Absī territory included parts of Wādī al-Rumma, in and around which they were mainly settled.<sup>676</sup> 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.<sup>677</sup> One account mentions them holding territory as far east as beyond al-Nibāj.<sup>678</sup> Indeed, one of their *ayyām*, al-Jurf, was fought against B. Yarbū° of Tamīm, near al-Yamāma.<sup>679</sup> We also know that, °Abs were the neighbours of B. Ḍabāb and B. Abū Bakr of the B. Kilāb of °Āmir,<sup>680</sup> who occupied eastern parts of Wādī al-Rumma as well as some of the region south of it.

Asad, with whom °Abs are very often associated geographically,<sup>681</sup> were amongst their neighbours mainly in al-Rumma but also elsewhere further north. We find, for instance, a *jabal* (or a *ḥiṣn*) belonging to B. °Abs, which one account places on the borders of Asadī territory. This would make it to the south of Fayd and west of al-Nibāj.<sup>682</sup>

West of Wādī al-Rumma, we know that °Abs controlled two springs between al-Ḥājir and al-Naqra.<sup>683</sup> We are also told of links between °Absī and Medina (see below), but this does not necessitate settlement in the vicinity.

Finally, we are told that °Abs shared springs with Ashja°,<sup>684</sup> although the precise location is unknown.

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674 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "Yadī".

675 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "Bughayth".

676 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v.v. "al-Aym", "al-Khayma", "al-Ghubāra", "Qaṭan" etc..

677 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "al-Qaṣīm".

678 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "al-°Ushayra".

679 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "al-Jurf".

680 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "al-Jubb".

681 For instance, Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "Thādiq", "Jurayyir", "al-Jawwā".

682 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "Uthāl". See also the entries for "Qaww" and "Nājiya", mentioned as lying on either side of it on the road from al-Baṣra, which confirm its location as stated.

683 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v.v. "Qarawrā"; "Māwān".

684 Yāqūt, *Mu°jam*, s.v. "Klubayt".

ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān:

Some settlements of B. ʿAbdallāh were found to the west of Wādī al-Rumma. For example, one of their *wādīs* was located near al-Rabadha.<sup>685</sup> Another was slightly west of al-Hājir.<sup>686</sup>

Many other sites associated with B. ʿAbdallāh are more difficult to locate, except that they were in the vicinity of Wādī al-Rumma. Dhū al-ʿUshayra was a *wādī* belonging to B. ʿAbdallāh, which flowed into Wādī al-Rumma and had many palms and springs.<sup>687</sup> Mubhil al-Ajrad, close to Dhū al-ʿUshayra, was also a *wādī* of the B. ʿAbdallāh.<sup>688</sup> Bīr B. Burayma, near Maʿdin al-Bīr, which was near Mubhil, above, was a spring belonging to ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān,<sup>689</sup> as were other localities around Mubhil.<sup>690</sup>

*Ashjaʿ:*

Generally, Ashjaʿ territory was close to Medina. We know that Ashjaʿ and Juhayna were neighbours in the area between Khaybar and Medina,<sup>691</sup> and one incident in the *sīra* finds an Ashjaʿ as far north as Ayla.<sup>692</sup> Ashjaʿ territory was also found near al-Rabadha, to the east of Medina.<sup>693</sup>

On the other hand we have accounts which claim that they also inhabited areas near al-Raḥraḥān.<sup>694</sup> This must have lain far in the eastern parts of Ghatafānī territory, as it was the site of a battle between groups from Tamīm and ʿĀmir.<sup>695</sup> What is more we know that some of their territory was shared with ʿAbs,<sup>696</sup> who generally inhabited the eastern parts of Ghatafānī territory.

685 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥurūḍ" in conjunction with "al-Naqra" and "Māwān".

686 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Nashuāsh".

687 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-ʿUshayra".

688 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Mubhil".

689 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Bīr Banī Burayma", "Maʿdin al-Bīr".

690 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Watidāt".

691 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ashmadhān"; for more evidence that these two tribal groups were neighbours, see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Idam". Ashjaʿ 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-ʿAthar, *Kāmil*, i, p. 680].

692 Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 627-8.

693 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Khabira".

694 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Thāniliya".

695 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Raḥraḥān". The locating of Raḥraḥān near ʿUkāz is impossible. While ʿĀmiris could have been found this far south, Tamīmis would never have.

696 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Khubayt".



*A summary of Ghatafānī distribution:*

We now have a general idea of the extent of Ghatafān's territory and within it, of the distribution of its constituent tribes. ʿAbs dominated the eastern parts of Wādī al-Rumma and intermingled with Asadī and ʿĀmirī groups in that area, and with them were found the B. ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān. Fazāra were widespread and strong in the western parts of Wādī al-Rumma, as well as in areas south and west of it towards Medina. The territory of Thaʿlabā b. Saʿd 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 Baṭn Nakhl, although that settlement lay in Thaʿlabī territory. However, the B. Murra were especially strong to the north of Medina near Wādī al-Qurā, Khaybar and Taymāʿ. Ashjaʿī 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:***Ghatafān:*Ghatafān, Asad and Tayyiʿ:

There are a great number of references which mention Ghatafān and their neighbours, Asad, co-operating with each other. Ṭayyiʿ is associated with Ghatafān 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 Kindī 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 Imruʿ al-Qays - was appointed over both Ghatafān and Asad together.<sup>697</sup> In another account, we are told that Ghatafān and Asad were jointly raided by the B. ʿĀmir and B. Jusham b. Muʿāwiya of Hawāzin.<sup>698</sup> Another tells us that the famous Ghatafānī poet, al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī pleaded for the release of Asadī prisoners held by the Ghassānid king al-Ḥārith al-Aʿraj, after the battle of Yawm Ḥalīma.<sup>699</sup> Other examples are frequent in the sources.

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<sup>697</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, ix, p. 3201.

<sup>698</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, x, p. 3479.

<sup>699</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 642.

Ghatafān, Asad and Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup> are said to have formed an alliance and were collectively called *al-ahālīf*.<sup>700</sup> There was already an alliance between Asad and Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup> allegedly forged sometime after the killing of Ḥudhayfa b. Badr in the war of Dāḥis. Thus, the name *al-ahālīf* was given to them alone originally. But then Dhubyān<sup>701</sup>, at the instigation of Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa of B. Badr of Fazāra, joined this alliance, and so Asad fought with them at Yawm Jabala.<sup>702</sup>

The alliance with Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup> seems not to have lasted very long, for Ṭabarī states that Asad and Ghatafān had broken their alliance with Ṭayyi<sup>2</sup> and invaded their territory before Islam.<sup>703</sup>

These accounts describe military co-operation between Ghatafānīs, especially the B. Fazāra, and their neighbours the B. Asad who lived amongst them in Wādī al-Rumma. Nevertheless, raiding still occurred between Asadī and Ghatafānī groups, just as it did between Ghatafānī groups.<sup>704</sup>

### Ghatafān and Medina:

Ghatafān 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 Ghatafānī ally of one of the Khazrajī notables.<sup>705</sup> In the Prophetic period, Jewish notables from the tribes of al-Nadīr and B. Wā'il were supposed to have undertaken the co-ordination of the joint Quraysh-Ghatafān attack against the Muslims in Medina.<sup>706</sup>

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 ʿArafa.<sup>707</sup> The fact that Ḥudhayfa refused and that Qays then sought help from his ʿĀmirī friend, Khidāsh b. Zuhayr, does not diminish the significance of the original request.

<sup>700</sup> Also referred to as *ḥulayfiyūn*, see Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ix, p. 3479.

<sup>701</sup> The text says Ghatafān, not Dhubyān. But, here and elsewhere, Ghatafān is used when Dhubyān (and probably their allies) are meant.

<sup>702</sup> See Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3919, where Asad and Dhubyān are referred to as *ḥulifūn* at Yawm Jabala.

<sup>703</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1893.

<sup>704</sup> For example see Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, x, p. 3771.

<sup>705</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, pp. 864-5.

<sup>706</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira* i, pp. 561-2.

<sup>707</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, p. 848.



Other relevant accounts state that after his father was killed by the B. ʿĀmir, the ʿAbsī chief, Qays b. Zuhayr, went to Medina to purchase arms for the impending fight against the ʿĀmirīs.<sup>708</sup>

The importance of the relationship between Medina and Ghatafān 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 Ghatafānīs. For instance, in one anecdote, a ʿAbsī *ḥalīf* of B. Dīnār of the Khazraj fought at Badr with the Prophet.<sup>709</sup> Another states that ʿUqba (b. Wahb) b. Kalada, from ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān, was a *ḥalīf* of B. Sālim b. Ghanm of al-Khazraj. He lived in Medina, became a Muslim and was regarded as an Anṣārī companion. He was at the Pledge of al-ʿAqaba, Badr, Uḥud and the capture of Mecca.<sup>710</sup> One tribesman from the group of B. ʿAbdallāh, of the lineage of Jusham b. ʿAwf, was a *ḥalīf* of a group of the Khazraj and thus was present at the Pledge of al-ʿAqaba.<sup>711</sup>

Ashja<sup>c</sup> were allied to the Khazraj, and were supported by them at Yawm Buʿāth.<sup>712</sup> Also, we are told that two brothers from Duhmān of B. Ashja<sup>c</sup> were *ḥalīfs* of B. ʿUbayd b. ʿAdīy of B. Sālīma of al-Khazraj. They became companions, fought at Badr and were counted as Anṣār.<sup>713</sup>

Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān, was one of the more famous companions of the Prophet. He was a ʿAbsī who was settled in Medina, allied to the B. ʿAbd al-Ashhal of al-Aws.<sup>714</sup> In Islamic times, Hudhayfa was counted amongst (عداده في) the ʿAbd al-Ashhal clan, not amongst the B. ʿAbs.<sup>715</sup>

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

<sup>708</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xv, p. 5331-2. See also Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes", pp. 37-8.

<sup>709</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, pp. 706, 714.

<sup>710</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, pp. 465, 693; see also, Caskel, *Ġamharat s.v.* "Uqba b. Kalada".

<sup>711</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 456.

<sup>712</sup> Kalḥālā, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ashja<sup>c</sup>".

<sup>713</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, p. 697. These are named ʿAbdallāh and Khārīja b. Ḥumayyir. However, another Ashja<sup>c</sup> named Mukhashshūn or Makhshūy b. Ḥumayyir, a *ḥalīf* of B. Sālīma of al-Khazraj is branded as a *munāfiq*; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 524.

<sup>714</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, p. 506.

<sup>715</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 447.

*Dhubyān:*Alliances of B. Tha‘laba of Dhubyān:

According to some accounts, the B. Tha‘laba b. Sa‘d of Dhubyān and B. Tha‘laba of the ‘Adīy group of Fazāra, together with a B. Tha‘laba of Dabba are together referred to as the Tha‘ālib.<sup>716</sup> In one particular *yawm*, all three groups are mentioned as having camped with the B. Mālik b. Ḥanzala of Tamīm.<sup>717</sup> 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‘ālib only ever appear as a defeated group in a minor *yawm*, 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 Qaysī tribe of B. Muḥārib b. Khaṣafa.<sup>718</sup> We know that the B. Muḥārib 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.<sup>719</sup> 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 Wādī al-Qurā.<sup>720</sup>

Furthermore, the 'mother' of the group of Ṣirma, Khuṣayla and Sahn b. Murra of Dhubyān was from the Quḍā‘ī tribe of Balīy.<sup>721</sup> The genealogy of B. Murra as described by Ibn al-Kalbī tells also of links between the B. Yarbū‘ b. Ghayz and the Quḍā‘ī tribe of Balīy.<sup>722</sup>

The account of a feud between B. Ṣirma and B. Sahn of Murra tells us that the B. Ṣirma were allied to the Quḍā‘ī group of B. Salāmān of Sa‘d Hudhaym, a group associated with the famous B. ‘Udhra and that they had a Jewish *jār*

<sup>716</sup> Ans sometimes also the B. Tha‘laba b. Yarbū‘.

<sup>717</sup> *Naqā’id*, p. 75. See also Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *‘Iqd*, vi, p. 55.

<sup>718</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, p. 1118-9.

<sup>719</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, x, p. 3755.

<sup>720</sup> See Kahlhāla, *Mu‘jam*, s.v. "Muzayna".

<sup>721</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiv, p. 4878.

<sup>722</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, 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. Humays of Juhayna and had a Jewish *jār* from Wādī al-Qurā.<sup>723</sup>

Finally, at least in the Marwānid period, B. Sahm of B. Murra were allied to the Juhānī group of B. Humays.<sup>724</sup>

°Abs:

°Abs had various connections with other tribal groups. Firstly, several accounts tell us that the B. °Abdallāh b. Ghatafān were allies of B. °Abs.<sup>725</sup> Apart from the B. °Abdallah, who were a Ghatafānī group, the sources talk of connections with B. Asad, B. °Āmir and even the Mundhirids of al-Ḥīra.

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 °Absī when she was already pregnant with him that he became °Absī.<sup>726</sup>

There are several links in the sources between °Abs and the B. °Āmir b. Ṣa°ṣa°a. For instance, at the famous Yawm Jabala, the B. °Abs were allied with the B. °Āmir;<sup>727</sup> the B. Ḥudhayfa or B. Khuzayma (these are probably scribal errors for B. Jadhīma) of °Abs are associated in the *Aghānī* with part of the °Āmirī clan of Ka°b b. Rabī°a;<sup>728</sup> and the killing of the famous °Absī warrior poet, °Antara b. Shaddād, was allegedly avenged by °Āmir b. al-Ṭufayl of the Ja°far b. Kilāb branch of the B. °Āmir.<sup>729</sup>

There are several links between °Abs and the Mundhirid rulers of al-Ḥīra. One rather dubious link connects the lineage of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma of the Rawāḥa branch by marriage to the Lakhmid *mulūk*, supposedly through al-Nu°mān b. al-Mundhir.<sup>730</sup> Other accounts tell us that al-Rabī° b. Ziyād of B. Ghālib of °Abs was for a time a favourite at the court of al-Nu°mān and could even manage to influence the *malik* against his enemies from the B. Ja°far b.

<sup>723</sup> Ḥafṣah, *Aghānī*, xiv, pp. 4878-9; Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Ṣalāman b. Sa°d Ḥudaym".

<sup>724</sup> Ḥafṣah, *Aghānī*, ii, p. 734.

<sup>725</sup> *Nuqā'id*, p. 99.

<sup>726</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 441. In fact, the form of this story is a common *topos* found in genealogical literature, and used to resolve conflicting versions of a genealogy. I discuss this such *topoi* in the following chapter. See, Chapter 7 below, pp. 191-2.

<sup>727</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, i, p. 200.

<sup>728</sup> Ḥafṣah, *Aghānī*, v, p. 1665 and n. 2.

<sup>729</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fols. 388.

<sup>730</sup> Ḥafṣah, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3861.

Kilāb of B. ʿĀmir.<sup>731</sup> The B. Rawāḥa, according to the details of Yawm Dhū Qār, granted asylum to al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir after he was deposed by the Sassanians.<sup>732</sup> They also offered their support to him against the Sassanians, who had allegedly killed Marwān b. Zinbāʿ, an important member of the Jadhīma lineage.<sup>733</sup>

As mentioned earlier, ʿAbs inhabited the Wādī al-Rumma down to where it met with the northern sands of al-Dahnāʿ. Across al-Dahnāʿ lay al-Baḥrayn. Al-Baḥrayn was in the 6th century subject to the rule of al-Ḥīra. Thus, together with the B. ʿĀmir, ʿAbs formed the most important tribal groups on the western side of al-Dahnāʿ. It is natural therefore that there would have been links between al-Ḥīra and the ʿAbsī and ʿĀmirī 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 ʿAbsī leader and hero of the Dāḥis war, Qays b. Zuhayr was from the B. Sulaym,<sup>734</sup> suggesting links with that tribe as well. Yet, in pre-Islamic times, the B. Sulaym inhabited the southern Ḥijāz, far away from ʿAbsī 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, Thaʿlaba 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 Ḥijāz, while ʿAbs had important links with their neighbours, B. ʿĀmir and the Lakhmid state in al-Baḥrayn. Apart from supposed links with Sulaym mentioned above, all of these associations make perfect sense when compared to the distribution of the tribes involved.

<sup>731</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvi, pp. 5721-2; xviii, pp. 6474-5.

<sup>732</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, p. 110, Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Dhū Qār".

<sup>733</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, p. 543; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1028.

<sup>734</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 98.



**Ghatafān in the pre-Islamic Source Material:***Religion:*

Like other tribes, Ghatafān are associated with pre-Islamic cults in works such as Ibn al-Kalbī's *Kitāb al-aṣnām*. We are told that al-Uqaysir was an idol which was found and worshipped in north-western Arabia by Quḍā'a, Lakhm, Judhām, ʿĀmila and Ghatafān.<sup>735</sup> Another idol, al-Ḥalāl, is said to have been an idol of the B. Fazāra.<sup>736</sup>

Unlike other tribes, Ghatafān is supposed to have produced the only other and first prophet of the B. Ismāʿīl<sup>737</sup>; they are supposed to have built their own pilgrimage place<sup>738</sup>; and they were responsible for introducing the cult of Aphrodite (al-ʿUzza) into Arabia.<sup>739</sup> The sources tell us that B. Murra, in particular, and the settlement of Baṭn 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. Rawāḥa 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

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<sup>735</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Aṣnām*, pp. 38-9; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Uqaysir".

<sup>736</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Ḥalāl".

<sup>737</sup> al-Jāhīz, ʿAmr b. Bahār, *al-Ḥayawān*, ed. ʿA. Hārūn, 6 vols., Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1938-45, iv, p. 476, cited in Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 443, n. 2. The earlier Arab prophet, Ṣūlīḥ, who is mentioned in the Qurān, was not considered of B. Ismāʿīl as his tribe of Thamūd belonged to the separate group of 'extinct Arabs' or *al-ʿArab al-bāʿida*.

For the 'prophet' Khālīd b. Sinān see also Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 449; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Khālīd b. Sinān"; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 376; Gaskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Hālīd b. Sinān". He supposedly lived one or two generations before the Prophet Muḥammad. See Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalānī, Aḥmad b. ʿAlī, *al-Isāba fī tamyiz al-sahāba*, ed. I. al-Fayyūmī, 4 vols., Cairo, 1910, i, p. 19, cited in Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 444, n. 3.

<sup>738</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "Bussā", "Buss".

<sup>739</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-ʿUzzā"; see I. ʿAbbās, "Two Hitherto Unpublished Texts on Pre-Islamic religion", in *La Signification du Bas Moyen Age dans l'Histoire et la Culture du Monde Musulman, Actes du 8me Congrès de l'Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants*, Aix-en-Provence, 1976, *passim*; Kister, "Mecca and the Tribes", see pp. 42, ff.

kill Zuhayr. The B. Kilāb branch of ʿĀmir ambushed and killed him, ending his rule over them and the rest of Hawāzin.<sup>740</sup>

As a result, the B. Kilāb of ʿĀmir became prominent within Qays for a long time. Indeed, we later find Khālid b. Jaʿfar, 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.<sup>741</sup> But aside from ʿAbs, and to their anger, Ghatafān refused to protect him out of fear of the Mundhirids. So al-Ḥārith was forced to become a refugee.<sup>742</sup> The affair was followed by a raid by B. ʿĀmir against Dārim of Tamīm - the famous battle of al-Rahrahān - because they had given al-Ḥārith protection.<sup>743</sup>

The accounts of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma and Khālid b. Jaʿfar 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. Jadhīma and the rise to prominence of the B. Jaʿfar 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. Jaʿfar b. Kilāb, who were definitely one of the most influential groups of B. ʿĀmir at the rise of Islam.

Secondly, throughout the *ayyām* collections and in accounts of the Muslim period, the B. ʿĀmir 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, ʿAbs figure rarely, apart from in the legendary Dāḥis war against their brother tribe, the Dhubyān. The fact that the account of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma 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.

<sup>740</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3868-79; See also *Naqāʿid*, pp. 384-5. In the story of Yawm Muʿij, the events of which precede the killing of Z. b. Jadhīma, a man from Ghaniy murdered Z.'s son, Shaʿs. The details of this story describe how the murderer, although forced to leave his tribe, escapes and boasts of his unavenged killing of "Shās al-Mulūk" (Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 4-6). ʿĀmiri pressure on Ghatafān is said to have started earlier by Khālid b. Jaʿfar, the leader of the B. Kilāb; see Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3880-1.

<sup>741</sup> This took place at the Lakhmid court in al-Ḥira in the time of al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir (Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3880-4; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, i, pp. 279-86).

<sup>742</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3884-5.

<sup>743</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3884-7; *Naqāʿid*, pp. 226, 1060.



Moreover, the idea that ʿAbs collected tithes from different tribes and that they were not the only ones to do so,<sup>744</sup> 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-Ghabrāʿ:

This was a very famous saga of a war between ʿAbs and Dhubyān, supposedly lasting for 40 years<sup>745</sup>. At the time of its irruption, the leader of ʿAbs was Qays b. Zuhayr of B. Rawāḥa, the son of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma mentioned above. The leader of Dhubyān was the Fazārī Ḥudhayfa b. Badr of the B. Thaʿlaba of the ʿAdīy branch, known as *rabb maʿadd*.<sup>746</sup> Apparently, due to a quarrel over the result of a horse race between some horses of the two leaders, war broke out.<sup>747</sup> Initial raids led to a full scale blood feud between the two groups.<sup>748</sup>

Although Caskel believes that only Fazāra were really involved out of the whole Dhubyān group,<sup>749</sup> an initial battle seems to have involved Fazārīs, Murrīs and Thaʿlabīs pitted together against B. ʿAbs. Apparently this was a ʿAbsī victory, for we are told that men fell only from B. Bajāla of Thaʿlaba, as well as from B. Yarbūʿ b. Ghayz of Murra and from B. Badr.<sup>750</sup>

Apart from this initial battle it seems that the B. Badr had not enjoyed the full support of the Dhubyānī tribesmen. However, things were to change following the killing of Ḥudhayfa at Yawm al-Hubāʿa,<sup>751</sup> 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.<sup>752</sup>

The sources give elaborated versions of the route taken by the migrating ʿAbsīs which describe them as travelling up and down most of northern and

<sup>744</sup> 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 ʿAur b. Tamīm [Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3868].

<sup>745</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 108.

<sup>746</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 606.

<sup>747</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, pp. 606-7; *Naqāʿid*, pp. 85-8; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, pp. 6482-6. Dāhis and al-Ghabrāʿ were the names of two of the horses involved.

<sup>748</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 88-94; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, pp. 6486-97.

<sup>749</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, p. 20.

<sup>750</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 93; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvi, p. 6497.

<sup>751</sup> See also, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbāh, *ʿIqd*, vii, p. 92, where it is implied that Qays b. Zuhayr killed innocents at al-Hubāʿa as well.

<sup>752</sup> See *Naqāʿid*, p. 420.

central Najd.<sup>753</sup> All of this is very implausible. The significant part of the story is that ʿAbs ended in the territory of B. ʿĀmir, 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.<sup>754</sup> In this case, it seems more plausible to accept the account of ʿAbsī migration as an elaboration of a possible migration of ʿAbsīs from regions of Wādī 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 Wādī al-Rumma, the B. ʿĀmir.

The ʿĀmirī group with whom the ʿAbsīs allegedly settled, the B. Shakal of Kaʿb b. Rabīʿa, were chosen as alliance partners allegedly because one of their maternal ancestors was from the B. ʿAbs.<sup>755</sup> However, it is very possible that this link was invented after the alliance.

Finally, a reconciliation was sought between ʿAbs and Dhubyān. The reconciliation process itself is interesting, as it mentions various notables from all parts of Ghatafān, giving us a more detailed picture of the influential lineages of the time.

This conflict between ʿAbs and Fazāra was well remembered and used by later poets, such as al-Ḥuṭayʿa (living in the late Jāhili and early Islamic periods), when rivalry (in this case between al-Ḥuṭayʿa and B. Badr) required it.<sup>756</sup> That Yawm Dāḥis is highly elaborated should make us doubt the historicity of the details of the conflict.<sup>757</sup> 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.

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<sup>753</sup> See *Naqāʿid*, pp. 1071-2; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 456; and Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 386. An alternative version has B. ʿAbs heading directly to al-Yamāma to the B. Ḥanifa, with whom they had matrilineal links. The 'mother' of B. Rawāḥa was supposed to have been the granddaughter of Ḥanifa himself [*Naqāʿid*, p. 420]. After they left the B. Ḥanifa they headed towards Hajar (in al-Baḥrayn), which was inhabited by B. Saʿd and ruled by al-Jawn of Kinda. They stayed there until they learned of a planned raid against them by B. Saʿd and al-Jawn's men, when they fled. The Hajarīs followed them but were held off by ʿAbs [*Naqāʿid*, pp. 420-1].

<sup>754</sup> As we have seen already with the Kalbī migration from the Euphrates region following attacks on them by Qays and Taghlib during the second civil war. See above Chapter 5, p. 122.

<sup>755</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 98-9. See also *Naqāʿid*, pp. 654-6, where previous ʿAbsī hostility with B. ʿĀmir's leading house, the B. Kilāb, is buried but not without objections.

<sup>756</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Qarābīn".

<sup>757</sup> Yawm Dāḥis has been classified as part of the 'ayyām of single tribes', although of a class more developed as stories than other *ayyām* of that group. See above Chapter 3, pp. 58-9.



Yawm Shiʿb Jabala:

After B. ʿAbs had migrated into the territory of B. ʿĀmir during the Dāḥis war, Dhubyān gathered many allies and attacked them and the B. ʿĀmir at the famous battle of Yawm Jabala. Their allies came from Asad, Ṭayyiʿ and Tamīm (mainly from the largest B. Ḥanzala branch).<sup>758</sup> 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 Fazāra<sup>759</sup>, and tribesmen of al-Ribāb.<sup>760</sup>

B. ʿĀmir and ʿAbs were joined by allies of B. ʿĀmir. From Qays ʿAylān came tribesmen from Ghanīy, Bāhila, Saʿd b. Bakr of Hawāzin and a small group from Sulaym. Also, we are told that a large proportion of ʿĀmir's Qaḥṭānī neighbours, the B. Bajīla, fought with B. ʿĀmir.<sup>761</sup> The B. ʿAbs and B. ʿĀmir won a decisive victory at this battle.<sup>762</sup>

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.<sup>763</sup> 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. ʿAbs on the side of ʿĀmir, this is clearly directly a result of the events of the Dāḥis 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 ʿAbsī-ʿĀmirī relations in the accounts of the Dāḥis war.

<sup>758</sup> Some reports state that some of these groups, or subdivisions of them, left before the fight. For instance, see, *Naqāʿid*, pp. 674-5, where men from both B. Murra of Dhubyān and from Ṭayyiʿ are reported to have moved away from Jabala before the start of the battle. See Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 10, which states that all of Ghaṭafān (i.e. minus ʿAbs) were present except for the B. Badr. Jabala lay approximately half way, and a little north of a direct line, between al-Yamāma and Medina.

<sup>759</sup> See *Naqāʿid*, pp. 407, 656-7. The *jawnān* had with them men from B. Kinda as well as what are described as garrison troops (*waḍāʿiʿ*) from al-Ḥira. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 10; has al-Jawn al-Kalbī, *malik* of Hajar.

<sup>760</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3919.

<sup>761</sup> Apparently, there was war amongst the Bajila between the B. Qasr and the other clans and the latter group joined the B. ʿĀmir; *Naqāʿid*, pp. 659-60; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3924.

<sup>762</sup> For a detailed description of the battle, including related poetry, see *Naqāʿid*, 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's supposed attempted invasion of Mecca [See *Naqāʿid*, p. 230; although see also p. 676 and Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3946, where we have the figure of 57 years before Islam (Iṣfahānī has wrongly 59), a figure given to 'prove' that ʿĀmir b. al-Tufayl was born in the year of Yawm Jabala. See also, Ṭabarī, *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. 225-30.

<sup>763</sup> 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 ʿAbs - with their allies from Asad and Ṭayyiʿ; these composed a regional grouping based along the Wādī al-Rumma and the northern areas of central Najd. The second is composed of the B. ʿĀmir, who bordered the Wādī al-Rumma in the north and the Yamāma region on its east, with its allies from western and southern central Najd, mainly neighbours from Qays, but also non-Qaysī - indeed Yamanī - 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 Yamāma region<sup>764</sup> and were regularly associated with al-Ḥira in the 6th c. CE.<sup>765</sup>

### Yawm al-Nisār:<sup>766</sup>

Abū ʿUbayda argues extensively that this battle was after Yawm Jabala, contrary to a version told by the B. al-Ribāb.<sup>767</sup> 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, Ṭayyiʿ and Ghatafān.<sup>768</sup> This large alliance was led by Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa of B. Badr according to some. Abū ʿUbayda doubts this, however, stating as a reason that Ḥiṣn was not of royal blood while the leader of al-Ribāb was al-Aswad b. al-Mundhir, appointed as *malik* of al-Ribāb by his brother, al-Nuʿmān, the king of al-Ḥira<sup>769</sup>. To counter this, Tamīm allied itself with B. ʿĀmir but they were both defeated at al-Nisār.<sup>770</sup>

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 ʿAmr b. Tamīm.<sup>771</sup> 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 Wādī al-Rumma, al-Yamāma and northern central Najd. We notice that they are the same groups who fought at Yawm Jabala, although here, the

<sup>764</sup> See above Chapter 4, p. 72.

<sup>765</sup> See Kister, "Al-Ḥira", pp. 149, ff.

<sup>766</sup> Conflicting versions of this battle exist, one of which does not mention Asad or Ghatafān as being involved at all. See Bayātī, ii, pp. 527-542, for a good overview of the different versions, also, Yūqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Nisār".

<sup>767</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 238-9.

<sup>768</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 239; see also, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 99.

<sup>769</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 240.

<sup>770</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 240-1.

<sup>771</sup> See Bayātī, *Ayyām al-ʿArab*, ii, pp. 527-42.



Tamīm-Ribāb group was divided between the Ghatafān alliance and the ʿĀmirī one.

#### Yawm al-Fijār:

This famous conflict is traditionally described as a conflict between Qays or Hawāzin against Kināna. The version in the *ʿIqd* has some extra details, which make it seem, at least initially, that Ghatafān was involved, because of its kinship with the B. ʿĀmir.<sup>772</sup> Ghatafān, however, are not mentioned as being involved in any of the subsequent fighting.

These details serve to convey a feeling of Qaysī unity against the B. Kināna. This sense of unity between Ghatafān and the rest of Qays does not seem to exist elsewhere in the Jāhili traditions of Ghatafān, and not much should be read into such suggestions. It is probable that this account is a result of closer ties between Ghatafānīs and other Qays in the Umayyad period.

#### Yawm al-Liwā and Yawm al-Ṣalʿā:

These two *ayyām* are related amongst the accounts concerning Durayd b. al-Ṣimma, the famous Jāhili leader of the B. Jusham of Hawāzin. They mention Ghatafān as an enemy of Hawāzin only imprecisely. Thus, if such a confrontation ever took place, it is unclear which group of Ghatafān was involved, for it is very unlikely that they all were as the accounts imply.<sup>773</sup>

#### *Important heroes:*

#### Al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī and the Ghassānids:

The events in the career of al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī of the lineage of Yarbūʿ b. Ghayz of the B. Murra are believed to have taken place in the period between 570 and 600 C.E.<sup>774</sup> Al-Nābigha is supposed to have been a companion of the Lakhmid ruler al-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir.<sup>775</sup> Supposedly, he continued in favour with that ruler until a certain incident forced him to flee the court of al-Nuʿmān and seek asylum with the Ghassānids.<sup>776</sup> Al-Nābigha was, thus, also closely

<sup>772</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 103-5.

<sup>773</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, x, pp. 3469-71, 3475-6, 3479-80; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 32, 37.

<sup>774</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Nābigha al-Dhubyānī".

<sup>775</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 649.

<sup>776</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, pp. 3797-800.

associated with the courts of the Ghassānid kings.<sup>777</sup> His relationship with the Ghassānid court was famous from his verses and many anecdotes.

The special position which al-Nābigha held with the Ghassānids did not stop the Ghassānids from attacking his people. We are told that a Ghassānid *malik*, al-Nuʿmān b. al-Ḥārith al-Aṣghar, contemporary to al-Nābigha, had designated a fertile valley as his property (*ḥamā-lu*). This place, called Uqur, 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-Nuʿmān and led by a Ghassānid ally from Kalb.<sup>778</sup>

Note that the events related in the anecdotes of the Murri Nābigha fall entirely to the north of Medina, which is compatible with Murra's geographic distribution.

#### The deeds of ʿAntara:

The stories of the modern day popular *sīra* of ʿAntara 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 ʿAntara, of the B. Makhzūm of the Ghālib branch of ʿAbs, mainly occurring in conflicts with the northern neighbours of ʿAbs, the Ṭayyiʿ. Indeed the famous incident in which ʿAntara, the son of a slave-woman, is recognized as legitimate by his father, was during a battle with Ṭayyiʿ.<sup>779</sup> ʿAntara also gained fame for his valour in fighting against the B. Tamīm, especially the B. Saʿd branch<sup>780</sup> as well as in the war of Dāhis against Dhubyān. As to his death, according to a Ṭayyiʿ tradition, he was eventually killed by one of their heroes.<sup>781</sup> This Ṭayyiʿ tradition alleges that there were many raids between Fazāra and Ghatafān on one side and Ṭayyiʿ on the other.<sup>782</sup>

<sup>777</sup> See for instance, Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xv, pp. 5460-3, 5476-8.

<sup>778</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Uqur".

<sup>779</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, viii, pp. 2985-6.

<sup>780</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, viii, p. 2987; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Farūq".

<sup>781</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, p. 6559. Also, Balādhuri, *Aṣṣab*, MSRabat, fol. 388.

<sup>782</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvi, pp. 6570-8. Of course this tradition has the balance by far in favour of Ṭayyiʿ. However it is curious that no Ghatafānī traditions appear which involve Ṭayyiʿ.



Again, here, we find all of the tribes which ʿAntara had fought against to be the immediate neighbours of ʿAbs.

#### The deeds of ʿUrwa b. al-Ward:

ʿUrwa was a famous poet and *ṣuʿlūk* of the immediate pre-Islamic period, from the lineage of the Nāshib b. Hidm branch of Ghālib of ʿAbs.<sup>783</sup> He was highly regarded in the Umayyad court as a perfect example of *murūwwa*.<sup>784</sup> We are told that he used to gather tribesmen from different tribal groups<sup>785</sup> and raid with them. He is supposed to have raided Muzayna, the powerful clan of B. Hilāl of ʿĀmir and other Qudāʿī groups including the B. al-Qayn and its subset of B. Kināna.<sup>786</sup>

These tribal groups were widely distributed throughout Najd. It is reassuring to note that, as should be expected, the reported foes of a *ṣuʿlūk*, tribally unattached and highly mobile, such as ʿUrwa, were different from the immediate neighbours of his tribal group.<sup>787</sup>

#### *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, ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn 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. ʿAdīy (presumably of Fazāra) against B. ʿUqayl of B. Kaʿb of ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿsaʿa.<sup>788</sup>

<sup>783</sup> For his temporal proximity to Islam, see for instance Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 192.

<sup>784</sup> See Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, pp. 919-20.

<sup>785</sup> Balādhuri, *Awsāb*, 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.

<sup>786</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, pp. 921, 926-7, 928; Yūqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Yastaʿūr"; Balādhuri, *Awsāb*, MSRabat, fol. 390.

<sup>787</sup> For an example of the high mobility of the *ṣuʿlūk*, see the verses by ʿUrwa b. al-Ward in Jones, *Early Arabic Poetry*, i, p. 137.

<sup>788</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiv, p. 4890.

ʿAbs:

The *ayyām* of B. ʿAbs are the most numerous of the Ghatafānī groups. Importantly, apart from two they are fought against Tamīmī and Tamīmī-related groups. One exception is against the B. Shaybān of al-Baḥrayn, the other is against the B. ʿĀmir, inhabiting the land south and south east of Wādī al-Rumma. This further stresses the geographical location of ʿAbs as extending to the eastern part of Wādī al-Rumma.

The fights against Tamīm involved all lineages:

- Yawm Aʿyār involved the Nāshib b. Hidm lineage of the Ghālib branch against B. Dabba.<sup>789</sup>
- Yawm al-Ṣarāʾim & Yawm al-Jurf involved the notable Marwān b. Zinbāʿ of B. Rawāḥa and his sons against the Tamīmī B. Yarbūʿ. 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 ʿAbs. However, as this is claimed by the victorious Tamīmīs, this information is doubtful.<sup>790</sup>
- Yawm Aqrun is a Tamīmī narrative revolving around the exploits of the ʿUdus lineage, even though it depicts a defeat of the Dārim branch of Tamīmī at the hands of an unspecified group from ʿAbs.<sup>791</sup>
- Yawm al-Suʿbān, according to one version, pitted ʿAbs with B. ʿĀmir against Tamīm, into whose territory they had encroached, in seek of better pasturage. The Tamīmīs, however, manage to repel them.<sup>792</sup>

The final two *ayyām* of ʿAbs, do not involve a Tamīmī group, but the B. Shaybān of al-Baḥrayn and the B. ʿĀmir.

Yawm Zarūd, in one of its two versions, is described as a Shaybānī raid against ʿAbs. The details of this account revolve around the Shaybānī leader, al-Ḥawfazān b. Sharīk, thus, marking this account as non-ʿAbsī.<sup>793</sup>

<sup>789</sup> *Naqāʾid*, pp. 193-4.

<sup>790</sup> *Naqāʾid*, pp. 248, 336-340. Al-Jurf was near near al-Yamāma, see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-shurf".

<sup>791</sup> *Naqāʾid*, pp. 679-80; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, pp. 41-2.

<sup>792</sup> *Naqāʾid*, p. 386. One tradition merges this story with Yawm al-Nisār, with no mention whatsoever of any Ghatafānī groups; see *Naqāʾid*, pp. 1064-7.

<sup>793</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, p. 90. Elsewhere in the *Iqd* as well as in Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, it is a Taghlib-Yarbūʿ conflict; see Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, vi, p. 49; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Zarūd".



Yawm al-Nataʿa was an attack against ʿAbs by the B. ʿĀmir, seeking revenge for their defeat by Fazāra and Murra, at Yawm al-Raqm (see below). ʿAbs, who were led by the notable al-Rabīʿ b. Ziyād of the Nāshib b. Hidm lineage of Ghālib, and defeated the ʿĀmirīs.<sup>794</sup>

### 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 Quḍāʿa 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-Ḥuṣayn b. al-Ḥumām, and B. Ṣirma. The fight escalated as a result of a feud between their *jirān* from B. Quḍāʿa. The rest of Dhubyān allegedly sided with B. Ṣirma, as did the a branch of the Qaysī allies of Thaʿlaba, the B. Muḥārib. Even two Sahmī clans deserted al-Ḥuṣayn; the ʿAdwān and the ʿAbdʿAmr.<sup>795</sup> Only the B. Ḥumays 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.<sup>796</sup> Other details tell us that there was hostility between the Nushba branch of B. Murra and Quḍāʿa.<sup>797</sup>

Yawm Ḥawza 1 and 2 were two raids by a group of Sulaym against the Murri B. Ṣirma, led by the notable Hāshim b. Ḥarmala. Fighting on the side of the Murrīs in the first raid was Mālik b. Ḥimār, a famous Fazārī leader of the B. Laʿy of the Shamkh lineage, who had earlier fought in Shiʿab Jabala.<sup>798</sup>

### Thaʿlaba:

Thaʿlaba has *ayyām* against Tamīmī groups as well as B. ʿĀmir.

<sup>794</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 26.

<sup>795</sup> The B. ʿAbd ʿAmr are unidentifiable.

<sup>796</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, pp. 4878-84.

<sup>797</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd* mentions that Sinān was once captured by a man of al-Qayn. Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, iii, p. 323.

<sup>798</sup> He was killed in Yawm Ḥawza 1; see Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, pp. 28-30. Hāshim is frequently remembered in the Umayyad period for a militaristic verse of poetry which is ascribed to him. See for instance, Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 418.

Yawm al-Kufāfa tells of a chance battle in which allegedly Tamīmīs from Saʿd, al-Ribāb and ʿAmr were defeated by Thaʿlaba of Dhubyān.<sup>799</sup> Yawm al-Liwā<sup>800</sup> describes a raid by the Tamīmī B. Yarbūʿ against the B. Thaʿlaba.<sup>801</sup>

The account of Yawm Shawāhiṭ claims that various clans of B. ʿĀmir, led by the B. Numayr, were defeated by B. Thaʿlaba and their allies from B. Muḥārib of Qays.<sup>802</sup>

### 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 *yawm* 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. ʿĀmir, a man from the B. ʿUqayl of B. ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿsaʿa.<sup>803</sup>

All the other *ayyām* involve the son of Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa, the notorious ʿUyayna 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 *rida* wars.

- ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn, with his brother Khārija, raided the B. Taym with men from B. Fazāra and from B. Murra at Jizʿ Zilāl.<sup>804</sup>

- ʿUyayna 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.<sup>805</sup>

- Another example of co-operation between Fazāra and Murra in the time of ʿUyayna is shown in Yawm al-Raḡm. We are told that ʿUyayna led Fazāra and Yazīd b. Sinān, or al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf, both of the Nushba lineage, led B. Murra and defeated the B. ʿĀmir. Ashjaʿīs of the B. Duhmān are also mentioned as fighting with Fazāra and Murra.<sup>806</sup>

<sup>799</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, p. 1120.

<sup>800</sup> A different *yawm* with this name exists and has been mentioned above, see p. 156.

<sup>801</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 777; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Liwā".

<sup>802</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, pp. 1118-9.

<sup>803</sup> Caskeel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Kurz b. ʿĀmir"; Balūdhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 378.

<sup>804</sup> *Naqāʿid*, pp. 760, 1067-8.

<sup>805</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 1067.

<sup>806</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, pp. 642-3; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vi, p. 26.



- 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 ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn against ʿUkāz (presumably, hence the name of the *yawm*); it is unclear exactly why or when ʿUyayna did this.<sup>807</sup>

As we can see, some of these *ayyām* describe ʿUyayna as the leader - or in some cases sharing the leadership over - both Fazārīs as well as Murrīs. The enemies of Dhubyān in these *ayyām* are the eastern and southern neighbours of Taym and B. ʿĀmir.

### Ashjaʿ:

There are no *ayyām* of Ashjaʿ. According to one version of Yawm al-Raḡm, Ashjaʿīs from B. Duhmān fought with the B. Fazāra against B. ʿĀmir. However, nowhere else do Ashjaʿ appear in the *ayyām* traditions. This points to the relative insignificance of Ashjaʿ in the pre-Islamic period.

### *Ghatafān's ayyām traditions:*

The various *ayyām* traditions provide us with some clues for the pre-Islamic history of Ghatafān. The more ancient accounts involving Zuhayr b. Jadhīma point to a period where ʿAbsīs were allegedly powerful at least amongst Ghatafān, 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. ʿĀmir, 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 ʿAbs and ʿĀmir 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 Qaysī tribes of central Najd. Yawm al-Nisār also marks the rising prominence of the lineage of B. Badr of Fazāra within Ghatafān. Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa was a leader in

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<sup>807</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 604.

the *ahālīf* 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 Ghatafān and the smaller scale *ayyām* are consistent in that they confirm what we know of the geographical distribution of Ghatafān's groups. ʿAbs and ʿAntara fought with Tamīmīs, Ṭayyiʿ, 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 *ṣuʿlūk* and it should not be surprising that he is found fighting tribes of the Ḥijāz north of Medīna, mainly in the territory of the B. Murra, as well as in other regions further away from Ghatafānī territory.

The *ayyām* accounts also describe co-operation between different Ghatafānī 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 Ghatafān:

#### *Geographical range of the Ghatafān tribes:*

Ghatafānī 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 Ghatafānī 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 Taymāʿ.

Many parts of Ghatafān were nomadic. For the nomads, the Nafūd was a barrier for much of the year, and Ghatafān 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, Fazārīs, Murrīs and ʿAbsīs seasonally migrated into central Najd. ʿAbsī groups may also have moved a little into Baḥrayn. 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, Fazārīs were still so associated with camel nomadism that they were even jokingly accused of camel bestiality.<sup>808</sup>

*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 Ṭayyiʿ.

*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 ʿAbs; 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 Ashjaʿ. That is two out of the three main sections of Dhubyān, plus Ashjaʿ, and notably without ʿAbs. Even then we should not expect that these named groups referred to all of Fazāra, Murra or Ashjaʿ.<sup>809</sup>

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.

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<sup>808</sup> See Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, ii, p. 300 and n. 1.

<sup>809</sup> For this, see above Chapter 3, p. 49.

Co-operation with tribes outside the Ghatafān tribal umbrella did occur, though more rarely. Particularly, there was much co-operation between Dhubyān and Asad and sometimes with Ṭayyi'. ʿAbs is also supposed to have temporarily allied itself with B. Kilāb of ʿĀmir. Many lineages also had links with Medinans. Note that all of these groups lived on the borders of Ghatafānī territory.

The tribes with whom Ghatafān seem to have been most hostile were also their neighbours. In particular, the various Ghatafānī groups were most hostile to their southern neighbours from B. ʿĀmir, those to the east from Tamīm and to the north from Ṭayyi'. Apart from this, there are several anecdotes of Murrīs feuding with other tribes from northern Hijāz, 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 ʿAbsīs and the Mundhirid rulers of al-Hīra. Note again the geographical proximity of Murra to the limit of Ghassānid influence in Wādī al-Qurā and northern Hijāz and ʿAbsī proximity to the Lakhmid presence in al-Baḥrayn.



**(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.<sup>810</sup>

**Prophetic period:***Companions:*

Three Ghatafānīs 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.<sup>811</sup> His father was killed at Uḥud. He himself fought at Uḥud and al-Khandaq.<sup>812</sup>

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<sup>810</sup> See Conrad, "Chronology and Literary Topoi", pp. 225, ff.

<sup>811</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, p. 263; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, pp. 87-8.

<sup>812</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 87, 122; Tabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1422.

Nuʿaym b. Masʿūd, from the B. Khilāwa of Ashjaʿ, 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.<sup>813</sup> He also seems to have been a resident of Medina before he became a Muslim.<sup>814</sup>

Samura b. Jundab of B. Laʿy of Shamkh of Fazāra, was also a *ṣaḥābī*. He fought with the Muslims at Uhud as a young man.<sup>815</sup> His daughter was married to al-Mukhtār al-Thaqafī the Kūfan "Shīʿī" rebel.<sup>816</sup>

Other Ghatafānīs were also companions, although not always prominent enough to be mentioned in the *sīra*. Thus, Kathīr b. Ziyād, who was also a *ṣaḥābī* from the B. Riyāḥ of the Shamkh branch of Fazāra.<sup>817</sup>

#### *Ghatafānīs 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.<sup>818</sup> In all of the below, we will concentrate only on bringing out points of relevance to the Ghatafānī tribesmen.

#### Year 2 H:

Ṭabarī mentions a raid (called Qarqarat al-Kudr) led by the Prophet against Ghatafān and Sulaym shortly after the battle of Badr in late Ramaḍān 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 *sarīya*, sent out from Medina by the Prophet, again to attack Ghatafān and Sulaym.<sup>819</sup> Ghatafān here must refer to Dhubyānī groups, who lived within reach of Medina, and bordered the B. Sulaym.

<sup>813</sup> See Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1480-2.

<sup>814</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1459.

<sup>815</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 305; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 66, Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1391-2.

<sup>816</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 401.

<sup>817</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 438.

<sup>818</sup> Please refer to Watt, *Muḥammad at Medina*, for more detailed descriptions of any of these events.

<sup>819</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1363-4; Yaqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Salāh".



### Year 3 H:

A few months later, the Prophet set out to raid in Ghatafānī territory. This expedition was called Ghazwat Dhī Ammar. According to Ṭabari, this took place in the second month, Ṣafar, of year 3 H.<sup>820</sup>

### Year 4 H:

According to Ibn Ishāq, in Jumāda I of year 4 H, *i.e.* soon after the expulsion of the B. al-Naḍir from Medina (and immediately after the accounts of that incident in Ibn Hishām's *Sīra*), the Prophet set out to raid B. Muḥārib and B. Tha'labā of Ghatafān at Baṭn Nakhl.<sup>821</sup> This *ghaziwa* was called Dhāt al-Riqā'. The raid was a stalemate as a large number of "Ghatafān" turned out to meet the Muslims and both sides decided not to fight.<sup>822</sup> This incident may somehow have been connected with the expulsion of B. al-Naḍir, as Ibn Ishāq tells us later that the B. 'Amr b. Jihāsh of the Bajāla branch of B. Tha'labā were allied with B. al-Naḍir.<sup>823</sup>

### Year 5 H:

'Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn was a leader of B. Badr of Fazāra ("and Ghatafān") 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.<sup>824</sup>

### - GHAZWAT AL-KHANDAQ:

According to Ibn Ishāq a group of Jews from the expelled B. al-Naḍir and from B. Wā'il<sup>825</sup> were behind the idea to bring Quraysh, "Ghatafān" and B. Qurayza together against the Muslims.<sup>826</sup>

<sup>820</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 46, 608; Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1367.

<sup>821</sup> This corroborates information from the Jāhili material which states that Muḥārib and Tha'labā were allied. See above, pp. 149.

<sup>822</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 203-5.

<sup>823</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 206.

<sup>824</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1463; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'ārif*, pp. 303-4. See Ghazwat Dhī Qarad below.

<sup>825</sup> These are probably the Awsī clan of the anti-muslim, Ṣayfi b. al-Aslat b. Jusham b. Wā'il [see Caskeel, *Āmharat*, i, 184/28; ii, s.v. "Ṣayfi b. 'Āmir (al-Aslat)"], which was hostile to the muslims in Medina. Perhaps as a result they are here referred to as Jews.

"Ghatafān" was composed of three groups: Fazāra was led by ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn; Murra was led by al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf; and a group of Ashjaʿ was led by Misʿar b. Rukhayla, of the B. Qunfudh b. Khilāwa.<sup>827</sup>

Al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf, a leader of B. Murra, was one of the leaders of the Meccan led alliance of Hijāzī tribes at Ghazwat al-Khandaq, before he became a Muslim.<sup>828</sup>

It is with ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn and al-Ḥārith b. ʿAwf 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.<sup>829</sup>

### 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, ʿUyayna 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 ʿUyayna was killed by the Muslim posse.<sup>830</sup>

#### - ZAYD B. ḤĀRITHA'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. Masʿada b. Ḥakama (a great grandson of the famous Fazārī leader, Ḥudhayfa b. Badr) was killed, while a Fazārī 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 (قتلها قتلاً عنيفاً). All we seem to be told about her was that she was regarded as being a very proud and noble woman who was an

<sup>826</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, i, p. 562; ii, 214-5; Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1464.

<sup>827</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 215; according to Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Naqmā", Ghatafān was accompanied by some small groups from Najd - "أقبلت نضتان يوم الخندق ومن تبعها من أهل نجد". Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 454, has the leader of Ashjaʿ as the father of Misʿar, Rukhayla b. ʿĀʿidh.

<sup>828</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, pp. 315-6.

<sup>829</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 223.

<sup>830</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, pp. 281-5; Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1501-; see also Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v.v. "al-Ḥayl", "Qarad", "Ghāba". Another undated account mentions ʿUyayna as having led a raid against ʿĀmiris of the B. Jaʿfar b. Kilāb line, and their Muslim 'neighbours' *mujāwirūn* who are unidentified except that one of their members was a man from the Sulamī clan of B. Riʿl [see *Naqmāʿid*, pp. 301-2].



enemy of the Prophet and roused her people against him. ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada b. Ḥakama and a daughter of this Umm Qirfa were also captured but were sent to Medina.<sup>831</sup> As we shall see below, ʿAbdallāh and his brother ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Masʿada moved to Syria after the conquests and held prominent positions under Muʿāwiya.<sup>832</sup>

### Year 7 H:

#### - THE ATTACK AGAINST KHAYBAR:

This raid occurred sometime in Muḥarram of year 7 H.<sup>833</sup> "Ghatafān" (or, in some cases Fazāra)<sup>834</sup> are mentioned as having been supporters of the Jews of Khaybar (*muzāhirūna 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.<sup>835</sup>

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.<sup>836</sup>

#### - OTHER RAIDS:

B. Murra were attacked at Fadak in Shaʿbān and again at al-Mayfaʿa in the territory of B. Murra in Ramaḍān.<sup>837</sup> Another report speaks of a *ghazwa* led by Usāma b. Zayd, in which the B. ʿAbd, who were attached to B. Murra (see above), were attacked.<sup>838</sup>

### Year 8 H:

In the year 8 H, ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn's people (presumably Fazāra) were raided in Shawwāl. Apparently this was because news of preparation on their part to

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<sup>831</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 617; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1557-9, 1901; and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, iii, p. 10; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Zafar".

<sup>832</sup> Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 98-9.

<sup>833</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1575.

<sup>834</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Janfā".

<sup>835</sup> Ibn Hishām, ii, p. 330; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1575-6; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Rajī".

<sup>836</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 618; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1759.

<sup>837</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1592.

<sup>838</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 424.

raid Medina had reached the Muslims.<sup>839</sup> This seems to be the last time ʿUyayna and his followers fought against the Prophet.

- THE ATTACK ON MECCA:

Later in this year, Ṭabarī tells us that ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn 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-Ṭāʿif.<sup>840</sup>

B. Ashjaʿ also formed a tribal contingent in the Prophet's army which marched against Mecca and Hawāzin at Ḥunayn.<sup>841</sup>

- AL-ṬĀʿIF AND HUNAYN:

ʿUyayna was also with the Muslim army at the siege of Ṭāʿif. The account however expressly points out that he is there for self gain rather than from a religious motive.<sup>842</sup> He was also one of the *muʿallafa qulūbuhum*, receiving as much as the highest recipients, such as Abū Sufyān.<sup>843</sup> ʿUyayna and a Tamīmī tribal leader, al-Aqraʿ b. Ḥābis,<sup>844</sup> stand out in Ibn Ishāq's list<sup>845</sup> 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 Qurashī with three leaders from the recently defeated Thaḳīf and Hawāzin.

Both ʿUyayna and al-Aqraʿ were present on the Muslim side at Ḥunayn. It is notable that the Sulamī leader, ʿAbbās b. Mirdās, was also present with the Muslims but received less than ʿUyayna and al-Aqraʿ. We are told that he was greatly angered by this, and complained specifically to the Prophet that ʿUyayna and al-Aqraʿ had received more than him.<sup>846</sup>

<sup>839</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, i, p. 1593.

<sup>840</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, i, p. 1630. Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-ʿArj".

<sup>841</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 315.

<sup>842</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 485, 489-90.

<sup>843</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 493; Iṣṣahānī, *Aghānī*, xiv, p. 5177; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 342.

<sup>844</sup> Of Mujāshīʿ: Dāriim: Mālik: Ḥanzala: Tamīm [Caskel], *ʿUmharat*, ii, s.v. "al-Aqraʿ b. Ḥābis".

<sup>845</sup> Ibn Hishām provides an alternative list, which includes in addition ʿĀmiris and Kinānis, i.e. men also from the region around al-Ṭāʿif; ii, pp. 494-5.

<sup>846</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 493-4; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, i, p. 1680; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, i, p. 233.



Year 9 H:

A deputation from B. Fazāra arrived in Medina, but led not by ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn but by his brother Khārija b. Ḥiṣn.<sup>847</sup> Interestingly, ʿUyayna is indeed mentioned as visiting Medina but with the Tamīmī deputation, accompanying al-Aqrāʿ b. Ḥābis, who is frequently associated with him in the *sīra* accounts.<sup>848</sup>

Year 10 H:

B. ʿAbs sent their deputation to the Prophet in 10 H.<sup>849</sup>

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.<sup>850</sup> 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 "Ghatafān" (presumably here meaning Ghatafānī Muslims), sought the man's blood revenge. A different report on this incident already regards ʿUyayna as a leader of "Qays".<sup>851</sup>

ʿUyayna was considered in later periods by some Muslim writers as a fool.<sup>852</sup> However, this is probably propaganda for his stubborn early anti-Muslim stances, and later participation in the *rida* wars.

*Summary of Ghatafān in the sīra:*

The term Ghatafān in the *sīra* accounts is used for Ghatafānīs 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.

<sup>847</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1720.

<sup>848</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 560-1; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iv, p. 1360; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1710-1.

<sup>849</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1740.

<sup>850</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 621; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1762.

<sup>851</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 627-8.

<sup>852</sup> See for instance, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, vii, p. 174.

ʿAbs:

ʿAbs 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 Jāhilī material, in that they lived in eastern Najd and were involved more in affairs in Baḥrayn and Yamāma than in Medina and Ḥijāz. The fact that a famous *ṣaḥābī* was a ʿAbsī has no bearing on ʿAbs 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.

Thaʿlaba:

Thaʿlaba is associated with the B. Muḥārib in the *sīra* just as it is in the Jāhilī 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 Ghatafānī army of Ghazwat al-Khandaq which attacked Medina in 5 H. Perhaps the raid of 4 H, resulted in a non-aggression pact between Thaʿlaba 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 "Ghatafān". It is very likely that the Ghatafānīs involved were from the B. Murra, the predominant Ghatafānī 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 *rida*.



Fazāra:

‘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 Ghatafānīs against the Muslims, until she was executed after this raid.

Thus, it is clear that different parts of the noble B. Badr line of Fazāra 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 ‘Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn taking it upon himself to call for the blood revenge of an Ashja‘ī Muslim, may point to a negligible presence of Ashja‘ī 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 Ghatafān in this time.

Companions of the Prophet:

There were three important companions of the Prophet from Ghatafān. 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'ūd of the Qunfudh b. Khilāwa lineage of Ashja'. We are not told whether the last, Samura b. Jundab of the B. La'y of Shamkh of Fazāra, 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'aym b. Mas'ūd is said to have played a role in persuading the Ghatafānī members of the Meccan alliance to disengage from the siege of Medina. Significantly, Nu'aym was from, the same lineage, the B. Qunfudh of Khilāwa, as that of the leader of the Ashja'ī component of the Ghatafānī 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 *rida*:

According to Ṭabarī, most of Ghatafān apostatized after the death of the Prophet except for the bulk of Ashja' and certain groups from the other branches.<sup>853</sup> As the most important enemy tribal group in the vicinity of Medina, Ghatafān was the first to be attacked by the armies of Abū Bakr, who demanded from their leaders absolute loyalty to the Muslim state.<sup>854</sup>

There are a number of accounts describing the first conflict between the 'apostate' Ghatafān 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 Fazārī B. al-'Usharā' who led "Ghatafān".<sup>855</sup> Another account has 'Abs and Dhubyān involved in the first fighting with the Muslims.<sup>856</sup>

<sup>853</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1871.

<sup>854</sup> See Shoufany, *Riddah*, pp. 112, ff, *passim*.

<sup>855</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1870. See also, Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v., "Manzūr b. Zabbān".

<sup>856</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1872.



Yet another more detailed version of the first conflict has "Ghatafān", "Asad" and "Ṭayyiṣ" all gathered to support the false prophet, Ṭulayḥa. The Ghatafānīs were divided into two groups; Fazāra with their neighbours from Ghatafān based near Medina<sup>857</sup>, and B. Tha<sup>l</sup>aba b. Sa<sup>d</sup>, Murra and <sup>ʿ</sup>Abs near al-Rabadha. The leader of B. Murra was a certain <sup>ʿ</sup>Awf b. *fulān* b. Sinān<sup>858</sup>, while the person who led Tha<sup>l</sup>aba and <sup>ʿ</sup>Abs was al-Ḥārith b. *fulān* of B. Sabī<sup>ʿ</sup>.<sup>859</sup>

After attempts at negotiation, Medina was raided by the "rebels" (in some accounts the raiding group is identified as Dhubyān and <sup>ʿ</sup>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 "<sup>ʿ</sup>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.<sup>860</sup>

The next expedition from Medina attacked and defeated the Ghatafānī forces at al-Rabadha (where they captured the poet, al-Ḥuṭay<sup>ʿ</sup>a). This led "<sup>ʿ</sup>Abs and Dhubyān" to retreat to Buzākha whence Ṭulayḥa had moved, in the meantime, with his Asadī forces.<sup>861</sup> One account speaks of a Muslim from B. Rizām b. Māzin of Tha<sup>l</sup>aba, who led Khālid's army into Ghatafānī territory during the *rida*.<sup>862</sup> Probably this was at al-Rabadha.

A report by Ibn al-Kalbī, as preserved by Ṭabarī, mentions that Khālid set out to attack Ṭulayḥa and <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn at Buzākha.<sup>863</sup> One report has <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna at the head of 700 Fazārīs fighting with Ṭulayḥa against Khālid.<sup>864</sup> Apparently <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna, worried about the status of Ghatafān under the Prophet's leadership, decided to renew the pre-Islamic Ghatafān-Asad alliance immediately following his death.<sup>865</sup> <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna was captured by Khālid at Buzākha and sent to Medina.<sup>866</sup> He himself does not appear again in the sources in a political context,<sup>867</sup> although his son does.

<sup>857</sup> Another name for Medina is given, that of Ṭiba (طيبة).

<sup>858</sup> Probably Sinān b. Abī Ḥāritha of the Nushba group.

<sup>859</sup> Or Subay<sup>ʿ</sup>? Possibly a descendant of Subay<sup>ʿ</sup> b. <sup>ʿ</sup>Amr of the Dāhīs war; see Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1873.

<sup>860</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1875-7; see Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, s.v. "Abraq al-Rabadha".

<sup>861</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 1878-80. *Naqā'id*, p. 715.

<sup>862</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 424.

<sup>863</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1887.

<sup>864</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 1890-1.

<sup>865</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1893. The pre-Islamic links of the B. Badr with the B. Asad are highlighted by the brief re-activating of their pre-Islamic alliance against the Muslims.

<sup>866</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 1896. There is an interesting reference (i, p. 1901) to difference in treatment between <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna and another 'rebel' leader for their different behaviour. What this treatment was or what behaviour is referred to is not made clear.

<sup>867</sup> See Ibn <sup>ʿ</sup>Abd Rabbih, *Iqd*, ii, p. 198, where he appears with <sup>ʿ</sup>Umar in an anecdote attacking arrogance, which <sup>ʿ</sup>Uyayna there personifies.

Surrender terms meant that Ghatafān 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.<sup>868</sup>

Finally, it seems that only a small part of Ghatafān continued to fight on after Buzākha. Scattered groups gathered at Zafar (on the Medina-Basra road<sup>869</sup>) and were led by Umm Ziml the daughter of Mālik b. Hudhayfa b. Badr and Umm Qirfa, whom Zayd b. Hāritha had cruelly put to death in the time of the Prophet.<sup>870</sup> Umm Ziml had been captured in Zayd's raid but was later taken back by ʿĀʿisha. She managed to collect together a large band of tribesmen from Ghatafān, Hawāzin, Sulaym, Asad and Ṭayyiʿ. However, her army was destroyed by Khālid and she herself was killed.<sup>871</sup>

### Summary:

Thus, we can see that Ghatafānīs 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 Ghatafānīs 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. Ḥiṣn 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.

Ashjaʿīs are specifically mentioned as not having rebelled. Thaʿlabī territory in al-Rabadha was attacked although Thaʿlaba itself is not mentioned. ʿAbsīs and Dhubyānīs, in general, are supposed to have fought against the Muslims in the *rida*, but particular emphasis is laid on the leading role of Fazārīs and, in particular, the B. Badr.

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<sup>868</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 1900.

<sup>869</sup> Yāqūt, *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.

<sup>870</sup> See above pp. 170-1.

<sup>871</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 1901-2.



**Involvement in the conquests and subsequent migration:**

Ghatafānī 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 Ghatafānīs are mentioned they appear on most fronts.<sup>872</sup>

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-Qādisiyya to enhance the morale of the fighters. Two of the four poets sent by ʿUmar, according to Ṭabarī, were al-Shammākh of the B. Bajāla of the Dhubyānī Thaʿlaba and al-Ḥuṭayʿa of the ʿAbsī B. Makhzūm.<sup>873</sup> Al-Shammākh was also significant later in campaigns in Iran (e.g. witnessing treaties).<sup>874</sup> Al-Ḥuṭayʿa kept a high profile as a poet in the governors' courts of Baṣra and Medina.<sup>875</sup>

Below is a summary of Ghatafānī involvement in the campaigns of the conquests.

*Ghatafān as a whole:*

A few times the blanket term "Ghatafān" is used in the sources for this historical phase. The earliest is in the year 14 H, according to Ṭabarī. Soon after the death of Abū Bakr, ʿUmar sent reinforcements to the Iraqi front including 2000 men who had gathered "from Ghatafān and other [groups] of Qays".<sup>876</sup> This force was made up from different groups of Qays and probably also of different groups of Ghatafān, as well, hence the use of the general term, here.

Another mention occurs in a passage dealing with the organization of Kūfa. This was when the *aʿshār* were being remoulded into *asbāʿ* (in 17 H). "Ghatafān" had not been included in the original tribal plan of Kūfa. According to the new distribution, it was grouped in one *subʿ* with Asad, Muḥārib, al-Namir, Dubayʿa and Taghlib.<sup>877</sup> This implies that Ghatafānīs did not have a very prominent

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<sup>872</sup> Except in al-Jazīra. I also found very few Ghatafānīs in Azdī's *Taʾrikh al-Mawṣil*.

<sup>873</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2292.

<sup>874</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2667. He also composed verses whilst on campaign, such as that found in Yūqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Mūqān".

<sup>875</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2711-2; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, i, p. 238.

<sup>876</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2221.

<sup>877</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2495; but see Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, iv, p. 245, where they are grouped with Tamīm, Asad and Hawāzin.

position in Kūfa. This is further confirmed at Waq'at al-Jamal, where we find the Kūfan "Ghatafān" being led by a notable of Bāhila and not from Ghatafān.<sup>878</sup>

#### Ashja<sup>c</sup>:

Very few references to Ashja<sup>c</sup>'i involvement in the conquests exist. We are told that Nu<sup>c</sup>aym b. Mas<sup>c</sup>ūd, a famous *ṣaḥābī* (mentioned above), commanded military units on the eastern front,<sup>879</sup> But as mentioned earlier, companions should be treated somewhat separately from the other tribesmen.

In Iraq, there is a reference to an Ashja<sup>c</sup>'i in the army of Khālid when he first attacked al-Ḥira.<sup>880</sup> While in Syria, we are told that <sup>c</sup>Awf b. Mālik, one of the leaders of Ashja<sup>c</sup>, settled in Ḥimṣ.<sup>881</sup> One Ashja<sup>c</sup>'i *ḥalīf* of the Anṣār was present at al-Yarmūk.<sup>882</sup> Further west, we know that some small numbers from various tribes including Ashja<sup>c</sup>'is were present with <sup>c</sup>Amr b. al-<sup>c</sup>Āṣ during the invasion of Egypt, and that Ashja<sup>c</sup>'is had settled in al-Fuṣṭāṭ.<sup>883</sup>

#### Tha<sup>c</sup>laba:

With Tha<sup>c</sup>laba 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. Bajāla, fought on the Iraqi front in the year 14 H according to Ṭabari.<sup>884</sup>

Ibn al-Kalbī tells us that the B. Rizām group were settled in al-Shām. One of them, Harim b. Ḥalḥala, used to fight at sea.<sup>885</sup> The other main branch of B. Tha<sup>c</sup>laba, the B. Bajāla, received a plot in their own name in Kūfa.<sup>886</sup> This implies that the migrating Tha<sup>c</sup>labis may have been divided between Bajālīs in the east and Rizāmīs in the west.

<sup>878</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3179.

<sup>879</sup> See, for instance Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 2534-7.

<sup>880</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2058.

<sup>881</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'arif*, p. 315.

<sup>882</sup> Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 367; n. 69.

<sup>883</sup> Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, s.v. "al-Rāya".

<sup>884</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 2232.

<sup>885</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 424.

<sup>886</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, 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 Ṭabarī as a source for the capture of Balkh, implying that group's involvement in Khurāsān.<sup>887</sup> As Khurāsān was linked to al-Baṣra, this may imply early Murri settlement in that garrison town and then perhaps later in Marw.<sup>888</sup>

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<sup>c</sup>) and Shabīb b. al-Barsā<sup>ḡ</sup> (B. Nushba) in the *Aghānī*.<sup>889</sup> Another anecdote in the *Aghānī*, describes a battle, in the Umayyad period, between the B. Sahm of Murra and the B. Jawshan of B. ʿAbdallāh b. Ghatafān.<sup>890</sup>

*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 *ṣahābī*, Samura b. Jundab (of B. La<sup>ḡ</sup>y of Shamkh), was active on the Iraqi front in the early conquests.<sup>891</sup> Another *ṣahābī* who fought in the conquests was Kathīr b. Ziyād fought at al-Qādisiyya. He was from the B. Riyāḥ of Shamkh.<sup>892</sup> 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*<sup>ḡ</sup> and as having also fought at al-Qādisiyya and later with ʿAlī (see below). His brother Marthad also fought with Khālid in Iraq and then in Syria, where he was killed in the siege of

<sup>887</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2904.

<sup>888</sup> Preliminary research on the tribal settlement of Baṣra has yielded very little evidence of Ghatafāni migration to the town. See Donner, "Tribal Settlement in Baṣra".

<sup>889</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, in Fudak see p. 707, in Hijāz see p. 719, neighbouring B. Juhayma of Qudāʿn, who inhabit northern Hijāz, see pp. 732-4. For Shabīb fighting Ṭayyī, see Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 4444. Another account finds the Murra fighting against the northern Hijāzi group of B. Ḥum b. ʿUdriḥ (see Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvii, p. 7475).

<sup>890</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4432. For Jawshan's affiliation with B. ʿAbdallāh, see Kalhūnī, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Jawshan".

<sup>891</sup> Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 424, n. 23.

<sup>892</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 438.

Damascus.<sup>893</sup> Another Fazārī (unknown lineage) was an officer at al-Qādisiyya,<sup>894</sup> while an ally (*ḥalīf*) of Fazāra was present at al-Yarmūk.<sup>895</sup>

Regarding where Fazāra settled after the conquests, the only group mentioned specifically as moving are the B. Ghurāb of the Zālim 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.<sup>896</sup> It seems that some of this group attached themselves to Madhḥij, some of whom had also moved into al-Shām, and altered their genealogies accordingly.<sup>897</sup> We are also told that some Fazārī leaders were given plots near the centre of al-Kūfa.<sup>898</sup>

As late as in the Marwānid period, the B. Fazāra were the owners of the spring of al-Hajm,<sup>899</sup> which is supposed to have been dug by the legendary tribe of ʿĀd.<sup>900</sup> ʿĀd were supposed to have lived in the same area as Thamūd, *i.e.* northern Ḥijāz. This reference to Fazārīs continuing to inhabit northern Ḥijāz in the Muslim period does not stand alone. Fazāra are mentioned specifically as neighbours of the B. Murra in the region of northern Ḥijāz, after the conquests,<sup>901</sup> and as neighbouring the B. al-Qayn of Quḍāʿa in an incident taking place in the Umayyad period.<sup>902</sup>

#### ʿAbs:

Parts of ʿAbs still remained in Najd after the conquests, and it seems that some groups moved westwards into the vicinity of Wādī al-Qūrā and Taymāʿ.<sup>903</sup> Nevertheless, ʿAbsīs 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 ʿAbsīs at the Syrian front.

One account tells of a man from the B. Hidm b. ʿAwdh of the Ghālib branch fighting with Khālīd b. al-Walīd in Syria.<sup>904</sup> But the fact that he fought under

<sup>893</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 437; Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "al-Mutsaiyab b. Naḡaba"; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 435; Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvi, p. 5732.

<sup>894</sup> Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 402, n. 98.

<sup>895</sup> Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 367, n. 61.

<sup>896</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 439.

<sup>897</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 440.

<sup>898</sup> Morony, *Iraq*, p. 240.

<sup>899</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, pp. 753-4.

<sup>900</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Hajm".

<sup>901</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, p. 731.

<sup>902</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ii, p. 658; also see vii, p. 2448.

<sup>903</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, x, pp. 3782-3.

<sup>904</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, 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,<sup>905</sup> and that Khālid b. Barz, a descendant of the B. Yarbū<sup>c</sup> b. Māzin, was governor of Damascus for al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik.<sup>906</sup> Apart from this, we know also that ʿAbs were present with ʿAmr during the invasion of Egypt (albeit in modest numbers),<sup>907</sup> and that they settled in Bilbīs in eastern Egypt,<sup>908</sup> as well as in al-Fuṣṭāṭ.<sup>909</sup> Not a lot more than this is known about ʿAbs in the west.

In the east ʿAbsīs are far more prominent. During the conquests, the famous *ṣaḥābī*, Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, was appointed by ʿUmar as governor of Kūfa.<sup>910</sup> 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).<sup>911</sup>

ʿAbsīs, 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".<sup>912</sup> There are several references to ʿAbsīs fighting at Qādisiyya, at Jalūlā<sup>?</sup>, Nihāwand and after.<sup>913</sup> 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.<sup>914</sup>

When Kūfa was built, most of the tribesmen in al-Madā<sup>?</sup>in moved to the new garrison town. Of a small group which remained to garrison it, the bulk was composed of ʿAbsīs.<sup>915</sup> However, there were also many ʿAbsīs in Kūfa.<sup>916</sup> Immediately before the battle of Nihāwand, ʿAbsīs and Asadīs were involved in a short mutiny in Kūfa, caused by their dislike of ʿUmar's governor, Sa<sup>c</sup>d b. Abī

<sup>905</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 441.

<sup>906</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 441.

<sup>907</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Rāya".

<sup>908</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Bilbīs".

<sup>909</sup> Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "al-Rāya".

<sup>910</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2238.

<sup>911</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2893-4; see also Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Adharbayjān"; see also Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 423, n. 24 for his early participation in Iraq, and p. 429, n. 5 for his activities in the campaign of Nihāwand. Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān seems to have held a special position with the Muslim aristocracy of the pre-Sufyānid period. A good example of this occurs in the year 30 H. Ṭabarī tells us that Ḥudhayfa raided into Khurāsān with a very large number of the sons of prominent *ṣaḥāba* and their contemporaries, including al-Ḥasan, al-Ḥusayn, ʿAbdallāh b. al-ʿAbbās, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀg, ʿAbdallāh b. ʿUmar and ʿAbdallāh b. al-Zubayr [Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2836].

<sup>912</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2343, 2344.

<sup>913</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2464, 2631. Donner, *Islamic Conquests*, p. 429; n. 6, p. 430, n. 7, 8.

<sup>914</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 445; Gaskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Simāk b. ʿUbayd".

<sup>915</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2487.

<sup>916</sup> Morony, *Iraq*, p. 240.

Waqqās.<sup>917</sup> After Nihāwand (in 22 H) we find a ʿAbsī of B. Makhzūm from the Ghālib branch, in charge of one of the outposts facing Daylam at Dastaba.<sup>918</sup>

*Summary:*

Fazāra and B. Murra, in particular, are prominent in continuing to inhabit the fertile areas north of Medina. Some Fazārī bedouin are supposed to have moved further north into Bādīyat al-Shām while some ʿAbsī nomads remained in Najd.

The first mention of Ghatafān in the conquests is immediately after the accession of ʿUmar and involved different Ghatafānī groups. Even earlier, we know from the *rida* accounts that Ashjaʿīs were fighting with Khālid'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, *ṣahābīs* were involved in the fighting from an early period but always in the east.

Every main Ghatafānī 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 ʿAbs 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 Thaʿlaba, it could be that of its two main branches, the B. Bajāla were settled in Kūfa, while B. Rizām went to Syria. For other groups only individuals or minor units are mentioned.

ʿAbsīs were the most prominent group in the east. They appear fighting in Iraq, Iran and Khurāsān. Fazārīs from the B. Riyāḥ of Shamkh fought from an early period in Iraq and were often associated with ʿAlī.

Ghatafānī 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 Ghatafānīs to Kūfa. However, apart from ʿAbs as a whole and some lineages of the Fazārī B. Badr, Ghatafānīs had a low profile in that garrison town, as will be seen later.

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<sup>917</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 2606-8.

<sup>918</sup> Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 3650. There is some confusion with the name of this person, as will be seen below. Here Simāk b. ʿUbayd must have been confused for his grandfather Simāk b. Ḥazzāz.



**The first civil war:***Ghatafān as a whole:*

Ghatafān as a group appear several times in this period of upheaval. At Waq'at al-Jamal, we find the Kūfan "Ghatafān" fighting amongst 'Alī's troops.<sup>919</sup> Later at Ṣiffīn there seem to be groups on both sides of the conflict. In the tribal line-up at Ṣiffīn, Naṣr b. Muzāḥim mentions Ghatafān on Mu'awiya's side, grouped in one unit with with Hawāzin and Sulaym.<sup>920</sup> According to this description, Ghatafānīs cannot have been very numerous relative to other tribal groups.<sup>921</sup> On 'Alī's side, we find one contingent named "*ghatafān al-ʿirāq*".<sup>922</sup>

*Ashjaʿ:*

All the references to Ashjaʿīs have them fighting against the Umayyads. The B. Ashjaʿ are said specifically to have supported the opponents of 'Uthmān at Yawm al-Dār.<sup>923</sup>

Most references to Ashjaʿī individuals associate them with the Khārijīs. Indeed, one of the Khārijī assassins of 'Alī was an Ashjaʿī.<sup>924</sup> Farwa b. Nawfal of Ashjaʿ<sup>925</sup> was a Khārijī leader who decided not to fight against 'Alī at the battle of al-Nahr.<sup>926</sup> After the death of 'Alī, he attacked the Syrians in Iraq at the head of a Khārijī army. However, the Kūfans, now allied to Mu'āwiya, persuaded Farwa to affiliate himself with the Ashjaʿī Kūfan contingent and then attacked and defeated the remaining Khārijīs.<sup>927</sup> This is the earliest account placing Ashjaʿīs in Kūfa and stating that they fought for 'Alī.

*Murra:*

Very little mention of B. Murra is made at all. At Ṣiffīn, the foot-soldiers of *ahl dimashq* were commanded by the famous Muslim b. 'Uqba al-Murri, of the

<sup>919</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3179. According to Morony, *Iraq*, p. 244, the Kūfan based parts of 'Abs and Dhūbyān fought for 'Alī at the battle of the Camel.

<sup>920</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 228.

<sup>921</sup> See also Hinds, "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 Ghatafān - or any of its subsets - on either side.

<sup>922</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>923</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 453; Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'arif*, p. 82. It is unclear whether these were Egyptian, Kūfan or Najdi tribesmen.

<sup>924</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 3458-9.

<sup>925</sup> See Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Iqd*, iii, p. 302.

<sup>926</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3380.

<sup>927</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 10.

Mālik lineage.<sup>928</sup> Muslim was a close supporter of Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>āwīya<sup>929</sup> and is associated with him in miscellaneous anecdotes.<sup>930</sup>

#### Fazāra:

Very little mention of Fazāra is made, but there were Fazārī individuals on either side.

Two incidents involved Fazārīs of unknown lineages, one in Iraq and the other in Syria. One tells that when <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī ordered the Kūfans to follow him to Ṣiffīn, 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 <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī's followers.<sup>931</sup> The other tells us that one of <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī's spies in al-Shām was a Fazārī.<sup>932</sup>

More importantly, al-Musayyab b. Najaba of Riyāḥ of Shamkh of Fazāra, was a member of the *qurrā*<sup>2</sup> and fought at al-Qādisiyya and later with <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī.<sup>933</sup> He was one of <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī's commanders at Waq<sup>ʿ</sup>at al-Jamal.<sup>934</sup> <sup>ʿ</sup>Abdallāh b. Mas<sup>ʿ</sup>ada of B. Badr led an army to collect the *ṣadaqa* from the Hijāz for Mu<sup>ʿ</sup>āwīya. However, an army sent by Alī and led by Musayyab b. Najaba defeated his forces but let <sup>ʿ</sup>Abdallāh escape on grounds of kinship.<sup>935</sup> Another supporter of <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī, <sup>ʿ</sup>Ifāq b. al-Musayḥ, was also from the B. Riyāḥ. He commanded the *shurṭat al-khamīs* (شرطة الخميس) for <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī.<sup>936</sup>

#### <sup>ʿ</sup>Abs:

As with the conquests, <sup>ʿ</sup>Absīs are the group of Ghatafān mentioned most frequently in connection with the events of the first civil war. Most <sup>ʿ</sup>Absīs

<sup>928</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3283; Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 206, 213.

<sup>929</sup> See for instance Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 197.

<sup>930</sup> See for instance, Ibn <sup>ʿ</sup>Abd Rabbīl, *ʿIqd*, i, pp. 250-1.

<sup>931</sup> Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 94.

<sup>932</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3411.

<sup>933</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xvi, p. 5732.

<sup>934</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3155.

<sup>935</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 3446-7. A more zealous Shī'i Fazārī accompanying Musayyab criticized this as an act of treachery against <sup>ʿ</sup>Alī. This was during the period after Ṣiffīn and before the murder of Alī.

<sup>936</sup> Ibn al-Kalbi, *Jamhura*, p. 438. 'Khamīs' is a rarely used term but simply means 'army', see Lane, E., *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 8 vols., London: Williams and Norgate, 1863-93, s.v. "Khamīs". It is unclear how, if at all, *shurṭat al-khamīs* were different from other *shurṭa* units. However, they might have been some of the participants in a certain Waq<sup>ʿ</sup>at al-Khamīs, said to have been a fierce battle which took place just before the main battle of Ṣiffīn; Naṣr b. Muẓāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 362-4. See also the *Glossarium* of Brill's edition of Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh's Annales*, s.v., "شرطة" and "خميس", which describes them as an elite unit. Ibn al-Nadīm clearly designates them as a specifically <sup>ʿ</sup>Alid group; Ibn al-Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 249. (I am grateful to Letizia Osti for this last reference.)



mentioned were anti-Umayyad. Like Ashja<sup>c</sup>, many of the B. <sup>c</sup>Abs are mentioned as Khārijīs.

Firstly, the famous *ṣaḥābī*, Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, fought and died on <sup>c</sup>Alī's side at Ṣiffīn.<sup>937</sup> As stated before this is to be expected of most of the *ṣaḥāba*, and should not count as typical representatives of the tribe.

Unfortunately, the lineages of many <sup>c</sup>Absīs are often not mentioned by our sources. Thus, we know, for instance, that one <sup>c</sup>Absī was prevented from joining the Khārijīs by <sup>c</sup>Alī himself,<sup>938</sup> and that he was one of Ṭabari's sources for accounts of Khārijī activities.<sup>939</sup> On Mu<sup>c</sup>āwiya's side, his messenger to <sup>c</sup>Alī in Medina, after the murder of <sup>c</sup>Uthmān, was a <sup>c</sup>Absī, though again no lineage is mentioned.<sup>940</sup>

Even the lineage of one of the <sup>c</sup>Absī Kūfan leaders in the time of <sup>c</sup>Alī is not mentioned. We are simply told his name, <sup>c</sup>Abdallāh b. al-Mu<sup>c</sup>tamm, and that he was amongst those did not support <sup>c</sup>Alī at Waq<sup>c</sup>at al-Jamal. According to Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, he had an important following in Kūfa at that time.<sup>941</sup> Later, Ibn al-Mu<sup>c</sup>tamm, at the head of a large group of Ghatafānīs, is also supposed to have been one of two Kūfan leaders who tried to dissuade <sup>c</sup>Alī from marching against Mu<sup>c</sup>āwiya. However, each of those opposed to the campaign against al-Shām was accused as a traitor working for Mu<sup>c</sup>āwiya by members of their own tribes. In Ibn al-Mu<sup>c</sup>tamm's case two other <sup>c</sup>Absīs (of unknown lineage) denounced him. Ibn al-Mu<sup>c</sup>tamm is then supposed to have defected to Mu<sup>c</sup>āwiya's side, with a handful of his followers.<sup>942</sup>

The remainder of <sup>c</sup>Absīs who were involved in these events were either from the B. Rawāḥa of the Māzin branch, or of the clans of Makhzūm and Bijād of the Mālik b. Ghālib branch of <sup>c</sup>Abs, as we shall see next.

### B. Rawāḥa:

The B. Hidhyam b. Jadhīma are the group most associated with the Khārijīs. We are told that some <sup>c</sup>Absīs from Kūfa were amongst those implicated in the murder of <sup>c</sup>Uthmān. Two of the leaders of these men group were Kūfan

937 Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 3317-8.

938 Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, p. 3367. However, he managed to do so later; Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 18.

939 Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 39.

940 Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 3090-1.

941 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, p. 8. Caskel, *Ġamharat* makes no mention of him.

942 Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 95-7.

ʿAbsīs, one from the B. Ḥidhyam b. Rawāḥa.<sup>943</sup> At al-Nahr, Shurayḥ b. Awfā of B. Ḥidhyam led the left wing of the Khārijī army where he was killed.<sup>944</sup> Even later members of the B. Ḥidhyam may have had Khārijī leanings. One of Ṭabarī's later sources of accounts of the Khārijīs was Ubayy b. ʿUmāra al-ʿAbsī of the Ḥidhyam lineage.<sup>945</sup>

The lineage of Zuhayr b. Jadhīma included staunch supporters of ʿAlī<sup>946</sup> such as Aswad b. Ḥabīb, a descendant of Qays b. Zuhayr, the ʿAbsī hero of the Dāḥis war. He was one of the leaders of the Ghatafānis at Ṣiffīn.<sup>947</sup>

Another leader of ʿAlī's Ghatafānis at Ṣiffīn was al-ʿAbbās b. Sharīk from the B. Khalaf b. Rawāḥa, as was another of his kinsmen. Al-ʿAbbās fought with ʿAlī at al-Jamal, at Ṣiffīn and al-Nahr.<sup>948</sup> Finally, from the B. Ḥanzala b. Rawāḥa was yet another leader of Ghatafān at Ṣiffīn.<sup>949</sup>

### B. Mālik b. Ghālib:

This group boasted some ʿAlids. Simāk b. al-Hazzāz<sup>950</sup> of B. Makhzūm, governed al-Madāʾin for ʿAlī. Later, under the ʿAbbāsids, his son was to support Ibrahīm b. ʿAbdallāh during his ʿAlid revolt.<sup>951</sup> Qabīṣa b. Ḍubayʿa of the B. Bijād was also a supporter of ʿAlī.<sup>952</sup>

### *Summary:*

Ghatafān appears on both sides of the conflict at Ṣiffīn, 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 ʿAbsīs fighting for Muʿāwīya, but these were few and generally held low positions. In general, ʿAbs and Ashjaʿ were prominent in their anti-Umayyad positions. These were divided between Shīʿa and Khārijīs. In particular, Ashjaʿ, in general, and the B. Ḥidhyam of the ʿAbsī B. Rawāḥa were

<sup>943</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 3163. Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Šurayḥ b. Awfā".

<sup>944</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 3380-3.

<sup>945</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Ubayy b. ʿUmāra". See for instance, Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 17, 20.

<sup>946</sup> One Zuhayrī was linked with the Khārijīs. He was a source for Ubayy b. ʿUmāra [see above], who related many accounts of the Khāwārij. He was a nephew of Qays b. Zuhayr, see Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 17.

<sup>947</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 442; Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>948</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 445; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 3381; Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>949</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>950</sup> Or ʿAbīd b. Simāk, according to Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 388.

<sup>951</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 448.

<sup>952</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 3381.



associated with the Khārijīs. The Rawāhī lineage of B. Zuhayr produced important supporters of ʿAlī, as did the B. Khalaf, and the Ghālibī clans of Makhzūm and Bijād.

Murra and Fazāra, are rarely mentioned in these events. Prominent amongst them were three individuals. Muslim b. ʿUqba al-Murri of the B. Mālik and ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada of the B. Badr of Fazāra supported Muʿāwīya, while al-Musayyab b. Najaba and ʿIfāq b. al-Musayḥ, both of the Shamkhī B. Riyāḥ of Fazāra, fought for ʿAlī. It is interesting that B. Badr, are not mentioned as leaders of Ghatafān in Kūfa at this time, a position they held under the Sufyānids and later. It seems that this position was still held by the ʿAbsī B. Rawāḥa. Probably, some of the B. Badr were only later settled in Kūfa by Muʿāwīya, as part of his plan to increase his support there after the death of ʿAlī.<sup>953</sup>

### The Sufyānid period:

#### *Ashjaʿ:*

Little information on Ashjaʿ is to be found in this period. Although an unclearly transcribed sentence in Ṭabari<sup>954</sup> in the account of events following the battle of al-Ḥarra, describes a conversation between Muslim b. ʿUqba al-Murri and Maʿqil b. Sinān al-Ashjaʿī, in which Ghatafān and Ashjaʿ are mentioned in connection with supporting the Medinan revolt against Yazīd.<sup>955</sup>

Maʿqil b. Sinān of B. Fityān of Ashjaʿ, was considered a companion of the Prophet although he moved to Medina only after the death of ʿUmar. At the battle of al-Ḥarra he was a commander of the "*muhājira*"<sup>956</sup> of the Medinan defenders.<sup>957</sup> He was executed on the orders of Muslim b. ʿUqba after the battle.<sup>958</sup> On the Sufyānid side, one of the lieutenants of Muslim b. ʿUqba in his campaign in Ḥijāz was an Ashjaʿī.<sup>959</sup>

<sup>953</sup> For this see Ṭabari, i, p. 1920.

<sup>954</sup> Ṭabari, ii, p. 420.

<sup>955</sup> For this see Rotter, *Umayyaden*, p. 48 and n. 292.

<sup>956</sup> Rotter explains that these were not *muhājirūn* of Quraysh but tribal migrants to Medina [Rotter, *Umayyaden*, p. 48, n. 292].

<sup>957</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 453; Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 413; Gaskel, *Ġamharat* s.v. "Maʿqil b. Sinān".

<sup>958</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 419-20.

<sup>959</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 416, 424.

*Murra:*

The most famous Murri in this period was Muslim b. ʿUqba of the B. Mālik. He was chosen by Yazīd to rescue the Umayyads in Medina in 63 H.<sup>960</sup> He is said to have left his estates in Ḥawrān to the B. Murra, his tribe.<sup>961</sup> Another Murri, the son of al-Ḥuṣayn b. al-Ḥumām, the Jāhili leader of B. Sahm, was received with honour at Muʿāwiya's court.<sup>962</sup>

*Thaʿlaba:*

A few Thaʿlabīs start to reappear in the sources from which they had disappeared during the first civil war. Muḥammad b. Jabala was a member of the minor Ghatafānī branch of B. Mālik b. Ama, which had been incorporated into B. Thaʿlaba. He is named as one of the *ashrāf* of *ahl al-shām*.<sup>963</sup>

A Thaʿlabī poet (of Jihāsh of Bajāla) and his kin are mentioned as based in al-Kūfa in the time of Muʿāwiya and also in that of ʿAbd al-Malik. The poet himself is said to have fought with the Muslims against the "daylam".<sup>964</sup>

*Fazāra:*B. Shamkh:

Samura b. Jundab of the B. Laʿy is one of the few *ṣaḥāba* mentioned also as being later a companion of Muʿāwiya.<sup>965</sup> He was settled in Baṣra, where he commanded the *shurṭa*, before being appointed governor of Baṣra under the Iraqi governorship of Ziyād b. Abīh. This was after the death of the then governor of Kūfa, al-Mughīra b. Shuʿba in 50 H.<sup>966</sup> Samura proved his loyalty to the establishment by combating the Khārijī threat, apparently killing a very large number of them during his governorship of Baṣra.<sup>967</sup> Samura remained governor of Baṣra for another six months after Ziyād's death in 53 H. At least one account talks of Samura as an unjust ruler.<sup>968</sup> It is surprising that a daughter of Samura

<sup>960</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 407; *Nuḡāʾid*, p. 699; Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, pp. 298, 351; Aghāni, i, p. 14; xi, p. 145.

<sup>961</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 425.

<sup>962</sup> Iṣfahāni, *Aghāni*, xiv, p. 4878.

<sup>963</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 414.

<sup>964</sup> Iṣfahāni, *Aghāni*, xiii, pp. 4676-82.

<sup>965</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Iqd*, iii, p. 361.

<sup>966</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 87; Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Samura b. Ġundab b. Hilāl"; Iṣfahāni, *Aghāni*, xviii, p. 6419; Crouse, *Slaves*, p. 227, n. 235. See also, Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 79, for connection of Ṣaḥābis like Samura with Ziyād.

<sup>967</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 90-1.

<sup>968</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 162-3.



was married to al-Mukhtār b. Abī ʿUbayd al-Thaqafī, the leader of the pro-ʿAlid revolt in Kūfa during the second civil war.<sup>969</sup>

Al-Musayyab b. Najaba, of B. Riyāh of Shamkh, mentioned above as one of the *qurrāʾ*<sup>2</sup> and supporter of ʿAlī, was also one of the leaders in Kūfa who sent to al-Ḥusayn that they were ready to support him against Yazīd.<sup>970</sup>

### B. Badr:

Khārija b. Ḥiṣn, brother of the infamous ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn<sup>971</sup>, an anti-Muslim leader in the *ridda*, was a tribal leader in Kūfa in the Sufyānid era. Indeed, he is called in the sources: "*sayyid ahl al-Kūfa*". In pre-Islamic times, his father, Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa, was the leader of "Ghatafān and Asad" while his grandfather was the famous chieftain Ḥudhayfa b. Badr, known as "*rabb maʿadd*".<sup>972</sup> We have mentioned above, his raid against Medina during the Prophet's lifetime<sup>973</sup>, that he led the Fazārī deputation to the Prophet to profess Islam<sup>974</sup>, and how he was a leader of Ghatafān against the Muslims, during the *ridda*<sup>975</sup>.

His son, Asmāʾ b. Khārija, of the B. Badr, appears after Ṣiffīn as a member of the pro-Sufyānid leadership in Kūfa. He was hated by the Shīʿa, as he had aided ʿUbaydallāh b. Ziyād (the killer of al-Ḥusayn) in tracking down and killing other important Shīʿī activists in Kūfa. He had to flee Kūfa when it was temporarily taken by al-Mukhtār.<sup>976</sup>

ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada, the descendant of Mālik b. Ḥudhayfa b. Badr and a companion of Muʿāwiya was based in Syria.<sup>977</sup> He is mentioned as an envoy of Muʿāwiya to the Byzantines.<sup>978</sup> He is also one of a group sent by Yazīd to Mecca to attempt to persuade Ibn al-Zubayr to recognize him as caliph.<sup>979</sup> He is

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<sup>969</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, 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 breakout of the second civil war as Samura was unquestionably a loyal Umayyad. The marriage, with its connotations for al-Mukhtār of links to the Umayyad establishment, sits comfortably amongst accusations of him being an adventurer seeking power, rather than a true supporter of the ʿAlid cause.

<sup>970</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 233.

<sup>971</sup> For ʿUyayna, see above, pp. 163, 169-75, 177-8.

<sup>972</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, pp. 302, 592.

<sup>973</sup> See above, p. 163.

<sup>974</sup> See above, p. 173.

<sup>975</sup> See above, p. 176.

<sup>976</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiv, pp. 5098, 5100.

<sup>977</sup> See for instance, Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 211.

<sup>978</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xv, p. 5473.

<sup>979</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, i, p. 21.

mentioned as second-in-command on a winter raid into Byzantine territory in the year 52 H,<sup>980</sup> and Ibn al-Kalbī claims he headed many *ṣawāʿif* for Muʿāwiya.<sup>981</sup>

#### Other Fazārī groups:

Manzūr b. Zabbān of B. al-ʿUsharāʾ of the Māzin b. Fazāra was a leader of Fazāra during the *rida*, mentioned above. A daughter of Ibn Zabbān was married to ʿAbdallāh b. al-Zubayr and was a favourite of his.<sup>982</sup> According to the ʿ*Iqd*, she was not happy and her father asked for, and received, a divorce. Also in the ʿ*Iqd* we are told that a sister of hers was married to al-Mundhir b. al-Zubayr.<sup>983</sup> Another sister of hers, Khawla bt. Zabbān, was married first to Muḥammad b. Ṭalḥa and then after Waqʿat al-Jamal to al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī.<sup>984</sup> 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 Ḥijāzī aristocracy; significant in the light of his involvement in the *rida*.

Another Fazārī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Masʿūd, of the Ḥarām lineage of B. ʿAdiy commanded a *ṣāʿifa* during the reign of the caliph Muʿāwiya. His son, Ḥassān, was a governor of Baṣra.<sup>985</sup>

#### ʿAbs:

#### B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma:

One ʿAbsī *rāwī* was a descendant of Mālik b. Zuhayr.<sup>986</sup> We are told that he was a young companion of Muṭarrif b. al-Mughīra, al-Ḥajjāj's governor of al-Madāʿin in 77 H. Thus, he was privy to his meetings and discussions with Shabīb's Khārijīs.<sup>987</sup> He is a frequently used source of Abū Mikhnaf in Ṭabarī and is also used by Naṣr b. Muzāḥim for accounts involving ʿAlī in Kūfa before and during *Ṣiffīn*.<sup>988</sup>

<sup>980</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 157.

<sup>981</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 433.

<sup>982</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, iii, p. 1207; *Naqāʿid*, p. 805; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, ʿ*Iqd*, vii, p. 135.

<sup>983</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, ʿ*Iqd*, vii, p. 131.

<sup>984</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, p. 112; Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4361.

<sup>985</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 430; Crone, *Slaves*, p. 143.

<sup>986</sup> See Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 95, 259.

<sup>987</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 985.

<sup>988</sup> Naṣr b. Muzāḥim, *Ṣiffīn*, pp. 95, 259.



B. Makhzūm:

In the year 43 H, more than 2 years after the death of ʿAlī, Simāk b. ʿUbayd<sup>989</sup> of the B. Makhzūm of Ghālib, was the governor of al-Madāʿin and involved in fighting the Khārijīs.<sup>990</sup> As mentioned earlier, his grandfather was a ʿAlid as was one of his grandfather's sons.

B. Bijād:

Opposing the Umayyad dynasty, was Qabiṣa b. Ḍubayʿa of the B. Bijād of Ghālib, a supporter of the Shīʿī agitator Ḥujr b. ʿAdīy.<sup>991</sup> He was arrested by Ziyād b. Abīh's *shurṭa* and imprisoned after the capture of Ḥujr in 51 H. His kinsman from Bijād, the famous traditioner Ribʿī b. Ḥirāsh, was one of the ʿAbsīs who stood by Qabiṣa until they were assured that he would not be killed or his possessions touched.<sup>992</sup> It was a false promise; he was sent to Muʿāwiya where he was executed with Ḥujr and five others of his supporters.<sup>993</sup>

Summary:

Though little information on Ashjaʿ, Murra or Thaʿlaba is available in the sources for the civil war, Murrīs and Thaʿlabīs were prominent in Syria and, hence, pro-Umayyad, in the Sufyānid period.

Also, few ʿAbsīs are mentioned. But those who are, were all Iraqis. One member of the B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma of ʿAbs is mentioned as working for al-Ḥajjāj's governor of al-Madāʿin. The Makhzūmī and the Bijādī who are mentioned were both pro-ʿAlid.

Fazārīs featured in the sources much more during this period. They were prominent in Syria and usually pro-Umayyad. Of Fazāra, the two Shamkhī notables mentioned were both Kūfans. One was a ʿAlid supporter from the B. Riyāḥ and the other, even though he was a *ṣaḥābī*, was an Umayyad supporter from the B. Laʿy.

B. Badr, based in Syria, were loyal to the Umayyads. The sudden appearance of the *ex-rida* leader, Khārija b. Ḥiṣn, in a powerful position in

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<sup>989</sup> Grandson of ʿAlī's supporter, Simāk b. al-Ḥazzūz, mentioned above.

<sup>990</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 39, ff.

<sup>991</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, p. 6433-4.

<sup>992</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 128. Caskeel, *ʿAmharat*, ii, s.v. "Ribʿī b. Ḥirāsh".

<sup>993</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 128-143.

Kūfa, away from other members of the B. Badr, suggests that he moved there after the death of ʿAlī. The establishment of his line as leaders of Ghatafān there, must have been at the cost of the ʿAbsī B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma who led Ghatafān under ʿAlī. Other Fazārī *rida* leaders, such as Manzūr b. Zabbān of the B. al-ʿUsharāʾ, 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.*<sup>994</sup>

Ghatafān is rarely mentioned as being involved in the early stages of the Qays-Yaman conflict. After the battle of Marj Rāhiṭ, Yamanī 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<sup>995</sup>, while ʿAbs and B. Badr are mentioned by another.<sup>996</sup>

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.<sup>997</sup> Furthermore, while we know that Fazārīs and some Murrīs did move into southern Syria, very few Ghatafānīs migrated into Syro-Jazīra, and those that did seem to have been mainly from Fazāra. It is very unlikely that ʿAbsīs migrated into Jazīra in any numbers. As the Qaysīs at Marj Rāhiṭ were composed of northern Syrian and Jazīran tribes<sup>998</sup>, 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 Ghatafānī participation in Marj Rāhiṭ.

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

<sup>994</sup> See Dixon, *Umayyad caliphate*, pp. 95-8.

<sup>995</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, p. 7479; Tabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 485.

<sup>996</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, p. 7481.

<sup>997</sup> Rotter, *Umayyaden*, p. 151; see also Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Badr b. Rabīʿa".

<sup>998</sup> Rotter, *Umayyaden*, p. 151.



Rāhiṭ. 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 Qudāʿa.<sup>999</sup>

However, two Fazārī notables and Qaysī leaders, Saʿīd b. ʿUyayna b. Ḥiṣn (from B. Badr, son of the notorious contemporary of the Prophet) and Ḥalḥala b. Qays (of the B. al-ʿUsharāʾ) 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.<sup>1000</sup> Apart from Saʿīd b. ʿUyayna, two other men from B. Badr allegedly fought in this conflict, namely, his uncle Ḥassān b. Ḥiṣn and great uncle, Sharīk b. Ḥudhayfa.<sup>1001</sup>

In this time, Ḥiṣn b. Jundab, a notable of the B. Ḥarām lineage of the B. Saʿd b. ʿAdīy, was known as "*sayyid ahl al-bādiya*". He is specifically mentioned as refusing to get involved in the Fazāra-Kalb feud.<sup>1002</sup> Presumably he was the officially recognized leader of the Fazārī nomads of the *bādiya*. His official capacity might also explain why he refused to get involved in the Fazāra-Kalb feud.

*Fazāra:*

Shamkh:

Al-Musayyab b. Najaba of Riyāḥ, is named as one of the five Shīʿī leaders of Kūfa in the period after the death of Yazīd and before the rise of al-Mukhtār.<sup>1003</sup> His group followed the *ṣaḥābī*, Sulaymān b. Ṣurad, who commanded the loyalty of the majority of Shīʿīs of Kūfa.<sup>1004</sup> Al-Musayyab was second in command at the battle of ʿAyn 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.<sup>1005</sup>

<sup>999</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, pp. 7486-8.

<sup>1000</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, pp. 7489-91; see also, Yāqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Banāt Qayn".

<sup>1001</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 435.

<sup>1002</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 430.

<sup>1003</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 497-8.

<sup>1004</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 505, 509.

<sup>1005</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 555-561; Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 438.

A nephew of al-Musayyab, al-Ḥakam b. Marwān b. Najaba was also killed at °Ayn al-Warda.<sup>1006</sup> Kardam b. Marthad b. Najaba another nephew of al-Musayyab, was made governor of al-Madāʿin by Muṣʿab b. al-Zubayr, and fought against the Khārijīs.<sup>1007</sup>

### B. Badr:

Two accounts from the second civil war tell us that the leader of B. Badr in Kūfa sided with the Zubayrids, while a general in Syria remained loyal to the Umayyads.

Asmāʾ b. Khārija and other *ashrāf* were in the *qaṣr* with Ibn Muṭīʿ, the Zubayrid governor, when al-Mukhtār besieged it.<sup>1008</sup> Then, after Muṣʿab retook Kūfa, he and the other Kūfan *ashrāf* returned to prominence once more on the Zubayrid side in 68 H.<sup>1009</sup>

°Abdallāh b. Masʿada of B. Badr, mentioned above as an envoy of Muʿāwiya, was eminent at the court of °Abd al-Malik b. Marwān during the civil war.<sup>1010</sup>

### °Abs:

### °Alid supporters:

Saʿd b. Ḥudhayfa the son of the famous Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān, was a prominent Shīʿī in al-Madāʿin in the year 65 H. He was in touch with, and sympathetic to, the movement of Sulaymān b. Ṣurad.<sup>1011</sup> He led reinforcements from al-Madāʿin to Ibn Ṣurad's army but was too late to save Ibn Ṣurad from defeat at °Ayn al-Warda.<sup>1012</sup> Having arrived at the scene of the defeat too late, he promptly marched back to al-Madāʿin.<sup>1013</sup>

<sup>1006</sup> Ibn al-Kallāb, *Jamhara*, p. 438.

<sup>1007</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Kardam b. Martad"; Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 755.

<sup>1008</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 631.

<sup>1009</sup> See Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 761, campaigning against the Azāriqa.

<sup>1010</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, p. 7486; Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 793.

<sup>1011</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, pp. 502-5.

<sup>1012</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, pp. 561-2; Ibn al-Kallāb, *Jamhara*, p. 447.

<sup>1013</sup> Ṭabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 568.



After this most of the followers of Ibn Ṣurad, including Saʿd b. Hudhayfa, turned to al-Mukhtār for leadership (66 H),<sup>1014</sup> thus, Saʿd b. Hudhayfa, was appointed governor of Ḥulwan for al-Mukhtār.<sup>1015</sup>

Khuzayma b. Naṣr a notable of the B. Ḥidhyam of ʿAbs, was amongst the officers of Ibrāhīm b. al-Ashtar's force fighting for al-Mukhtār.<sup>1016</sup> Also amongst the supporters of al-Mukhtār was Fāʿid b. Bukayr, of the minor lineage, B. Rawḥ of the Māzin division.<sup>1017</sup>

### Establishment:

Ḥassān b. Fāʿid, of an unknown lineage of ʿAbs, 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.<sup>1018</sup> He was later amongst the officers of Ibn Muṭīʿ, the agent of Ibn al-Zubayr in Kūfa, fighting against al-Mukhtār's revolt.<sup>1019</sup> He was captured by the troops of the pro-Mukhtārid ʿAbsī, 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.<sup>1020</sup> Ḥassān was later involved in the rebellion of the *ashrāf* against al-Mukhtār and died in the fighting.<sup>1021</sup>

### *Summary:*

As we have seen, it seems that Ghatafān 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 ʿĀmir and Sulaym. In the incident of the Fazāra-Kalb feud, Ghatafān in Syria, represented by the Fazārī B. Badr, identified with the Jazīran Qays in the time of ʿAbd 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 Shamkhī B. Riyāḥ kept their ʿAlid traditions, but

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<sup>1014</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 599.

<sup>1015</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 635.

<sup>1016</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 625.

<sup>1017</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 446.

<sup>1018</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 311.

<sup>1019</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 625.

<sup>1020</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 625-6.

<sup>1021</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 652, 657.

ght with the Zubayrids against al-Mukhtār, while the B. Badr nobility fought with the majority of Kūfan *ashrāf* against the revolt of al-Mukhtār. As we will see below, they later regained their position in Kūfa with the Umayyads after the war.

Other Ghatafānīs are rarely mentioned in the war. ʿAbsīs from different groups with ʿAlid leanings fought with al-Mukhtār. Prominent amongst these was Hudhayfa b. al-Yamān's son, one of the *tābiʿūn*, and Khuzayma b. Naṣr of the B. Hidhyan lineage who, during the first civil war, had a strong association with the Khārijīs. Ḥassān b. Fāʿid seems to have taken the same stance taken by the B. Badr of Kūfa and other privileged groups, presumably to try and keep the *status quo* of the Kūfan notables whether in the name of the Umayyads or in the name of the Zubayrids.

### Ghatafān and the Marwānids:

#### *Thaʿlabā:*

ʿAbdallāh b. al-Ḥajjāj of the Bajāla Thaʿlabīs is the only prominent Thaʿlabī in this period. He was an Umayyad officer who joined the attempted coup of ʿAmr b. Saʿīd b. al-ʿĀṣ against ʿAbd al-Malik during the civil war.<sup>1022</sup> On the former's defeat he escaped to the Zubayrid faction and, then, upon their defeat he finally managed to obtain a pardon from ʿAbd al-Malik.<sup>1023</sup> Ibn al-Ḥajjāj was obviously not representative of his tribal group and his actions are clearly personally motivated.

#### *Murra:*

#### B. Nushba:

Khuraym b. ʿAmr, a descendant of Sinān b. Abī Ḥāritha, the Jāhilī leader of B. Murra<sup>1024</sup>, is mentioned at the court of Muʿāwiya (41-60/661-80).<sup>1025</sup> 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-Qaʿqāʿ b. Khulayd

<sup>1022</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiii, pp. 4670, ff. See Cusker, *ʿAmīnat*, ii, s.v. "ʿAmr b. Saʿīd (A. Umayyad)".

<sup>1023</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiii, pp. 4670-1.

<sup>1024</sup> See above p. 135.

<sup>1025</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIṣṣā*, i, p. 52. Crome doubts this early prominence of Khuraym. See Crome, *Slaves*, p. 98.



of ʿAbs.<sup>1026</sup> His son, ʿUmāra, was a trusted officer of al-Junayd in Khurāsān.<sup>1027</sup> Al-Junayd lost favour immediately before his death in 116 H and this disfavour tainted also ʿUmāra, who was imprisoned and tortured by al-Junayd's successor.<sup>1028</sup> ʿUmara's son according to Ibn al-Kalbī,<sup>1029</sup> or, more likely, his grandson, according to Ṭabarī, was Abū al-Haydhām, the leader of the Nizārīs in the feuding between Yaman and Nizār during Harūn al-Rashīd's reign in 176 H.<sup>1030</sup>

Al-Junayd b. ʿAbd al-Rahmān<sup>1031</sup> was also a descendant of Sinān b. Abī Hāritha and a nephew of Khuraym b. ʿAmr.<sup>1032</sup> He was governor of Sind during the reign of the pro-Qaysī Yazīd II, until 105 H, the year of Hishām's ascension to the Caliphate.<sup>1033</sup> In 111 H, he was granted by Hishām the position of governor of Khurāsān, until his death in 116 H.<sup>1034</sup> He commanded the Muslim army in the famous battle of al-Shiʿb against the Turco-Soghdian rebellion.<sup>1035</sup>

### B. Yarbūʿ:

ʿAqīl b. ʿUllafa was of the Yarbūʿ branch of B. Murra. His maternal ancestry went back to the Jāhili hero al-Hārith b. ʿAwf of the important B. Nushba and to Ḥiṣn b. Ḥudhayfa b. Badr of Fazāra. He was, thus, considered of extremely noble blood in the Umayyad period even though he remained a bedouin.<sup>1036</sup> Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik is said to have married one of his daughters while two others were married to Marwānids.<sup>1037</sup> The sources provide some humorous anecdotes involving ʿAqīl and various Caliphs, where the ignorance and the extreme pride of the bedouin are displayed.<sup>1038</sup>

<sup>1026</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "Huraym b. ʿAmr al-Nāʿim"; Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1300, 1312.

<sup>1027</sup> See for instance, Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1529, 1532-3, 1563.

<sup>1028</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1565.

<sup>1029</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 127.

<sup>1030</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1565; iii, pp. 624-5; Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "ʿAmīr b. ʿUmara".

<sup>1031</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "al-Ġumaid b. ʿAbdarrahmān".

<sup>1032</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 127.

<sup>1033</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1467.

<sup>1034</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1527, 1564; Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. "al-Ġumaid b. ʿAbdarrahmān". See also EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "al-Djūmayd b. ʿAbd Allāh".

<sup>1035</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1527-59.

<sup>1036</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghāni*, xii, p. 4420; see also, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, ii, pp. 63-5; iii, p. 363.

<sup>1037</sup> Isfahānī, *Aghāni*, xii, pp. 4429-30, 4439.

<sup>1038</sup> For instance, Yaqūt, *Muʿjam*, s.v. "Harshā".

The poet Ibn Mayyāda was also linked to the Murri lands of northern Hijāz.<sup>1039</sup> It seems, thus, that at least some lineages of B. Yarbūʿ had not migrated after the conquests.

### B. ʿAbd:

Al-ʿAbbās b. Saʿd (or Saʿīd), of the B. ʿAbd, was the commander of the *shuraʿ* of Yūsuf b. ʿUmar in Kūfa in the later Umayyad period. As mentioned earlier, B. ʿAbd had joined the B. Murra b. ʿAwf and for a while were counted amongst them.<sup>1040</sup>

### B. Mālik:

ʿUthmān b. Hayyān al-Murri (of B. Mālik) was made governor of Medina between 93 and 96 H, in the last years of the reign of al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (86-96 H).<sup>1041</sup> He was one of al-Hajjāj's men and persecuted Iraqi dissidents (*ahl al-Zanā*<sup>1042</sup>) in the region of Medina.<sup>1043</sup> When al-Walīd died in 96H, ʿUthmān was removed by al-Walīd's successor, the anti-Qaysi Caliph, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik (96-99 H),<sup>1044</sup> One anecdote mentions him later as present at the court of Caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (105-25 H).<sup>1045</sup>

His son, Riyāḥ b. ʿUthmān, was also governor of Medina for the ʿAbbāsīd Caliph al-Manṣūr,<sup>1046</sup> a sign of continuing influence of Murra in the Medina area. He was a loyal ʿAbbāsīd, in charge of tracking down and rooting out the ʿAlid political leaders,<sup>1047</sup> and was eventually killed by a supporter of Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakiya in 145 H.<sup>1048</sup>

<sup>1039</sup> See above, n. 306.

<sup>1040</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhūr*, pp. 415, 421. See also Crowe, *Slaves*, pp. 149-50.

<sup>1041</sup> Balādhurī, *Anṣab*, MSBabat, fol. 363; Cusker, *ʿAmḥarāt*, ii, s.v. "Uthmān b. Hayyān"; Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1254, 1

Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿārif*, 622; Isfahānī, *Aghāni*, x, p. 3786; xii, p. 4421.

<sup>1042</sup> See Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIṣṣ*, i, p. 255.

<sup>1043</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1258-61.

<sup>1044</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1281; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIṣṣ*, i, pp. 255-6. For a broader picture of Subaymān's policy Kennedy, *Prophet and Caliphates*, p. 105.

<sup>1045</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1737.

<sup>1046</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhūr*, p. 422; Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, iii, pp. 143, 162, ff.

<sup>1047</sup> See Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, iii, pp. 178-81, 189-92, 195-8. Ghatafānis in Medina in general are described as loyal to or at least hostile to the ʿAlids; see Isfahānī, *Aghāni*, ii, p. 755.

<sup>1048</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, iii, pp. 421-2.



Other groups of Murra:

A Murri, al-Walīd b. Bulayd, was of the *ashrāf* and was in command of the *shurṭa* of Mawṣil before being promoted as its governor by the Caliph Hishām.<sup>1049</sup> Of other unidentified Murrīs who worked for B. Hubayra, one was a governor of Kūfa under ʿUmar b. Hubayra, another was a companion of Yazīd b. ʿUmar b. Hubayra,<sup>1050</sup> and either one or two others commanded the *shurṭa* for them.<sup>1051</sup>

B. Murra are mentioned in Khurāsān as being close to the governor al-Junayd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (see above).<sup>1052</sup> One was sent by al-Junayd as a messenger to the Caliph.<sup>1053</sup>

Fazāra:

Most Fazārīs outside of Iraq mentioned hitherto seem to have been established in Damascus or at any rate near the Caliph. In this period, we find many more Fazārīs associated with al-Jazīra. Some were insignificant soldiers on duty on the Byzantine border,<sup>1054</sup> while others held important positions.

B. Badr:

The most important member of the B. Badr in this period was Asmāʾ b. Khārija b. Ḥiṣn, who became one of the most prominent Qaysī leaders in Kūfa during the time of al-Ḥajjāj.<sup>1055</sup> His daughter Hind is said to have married ʿUbaydallāh b. Ziyād, then Bishr b. Marwān and then al-Ḥajjāj (*i.e.* three Umayyad governors of Kūfa!).<sup>1056</sup> He is counted in the *ʿIqd* as one of the three most generous men of that town.<sup>1057</sup> Two of his sons, however, are reported to have been jailed by al-Ḥajjāj; ʿUyayna b. Asmāʾ, for unknown reasons<sup>1058</sup>, and Mālik b. Asmāʾ, twice, one of them at least for embezzlement during his governorship of Iṣfahān.<sup>1059</sup> Asmāʾ was a typical Kūfan *sharīf*. He is named as

1049 Or al-Walīd b. Bukayr, the manuscript is unclear [Baladhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 364].

1050 Baladhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 364. For the former of these, Ṣaqr b. ʿAbdallāh, see Crone, *Slaves*, p. 145; for the latter, ʿĀmir b. Dubāra, see pp. 164-5.

1051 Crone, *Slaves*, p. 145-6.

1052 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xi, p. 3791. See also Ḥabīb b. Murra al-Murri, in Crone, *Slaves*, p. 167.

1053 Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1544.

1054 For instance, Fazārīs mentioned in ʿAbd al-Malik's time [Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiii, p. 4633].

1055 See, for instance, Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xii, p. 4369, where a Sulami asks for his aid in al-Kūfa.

1056 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, p. 6528; xxiii, p. 8070-3; see also Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 713.

1057 Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, i, p. 217.

1058 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, p. 7491. Unless ʿUyayna here also refers to Mālik.

1059 Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xviii, pp. 6528-30; see also, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, iv, p. 128, where his imprisonment in Kūfa is mentioned.

one of the men who denounced Kūfan killers of ʿUthmān to al-Ḥajjāj.<sup>1060</sup> However, an account in Ṭabarī describing the much earlier hunt for ʿAlids in Kūfa by ʿUbaydallāh b. Ziyād, shows us that Asmāʾ, while a loyal Umayyad, identified with the Kūfan *ashrāf* and not with the *ahl al-shām*.<sup>1061</sup>

In Syria, ʿAbd al-Rahmān b. Masʿada, 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 *ṣāʾifa* on the Byzantine front in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik.<sup>1062</sup> A descendant of his brother (see ʿAbdallāh b. Masʿada above) was a governor of Egypt under Marwān II, immediately before the ʿAbbāsīd uprising.<sup>1063</sup>

### B. Hubayra:

In the late Umayyad period the family of ʿUmar b. Hubayra of the Sukaynī lineage of the B. Saʿd b. ʿAdīy, were very powerful and wealthy in *al-shām*.<sup>1064</sup>

ʿUmar b. Hubayra, of B. Saʿd of the ʿAdīy branch of Fazāra, first appears in Ṭabarī as a high ranking officer in an army sent out by al-Ḥajjāj to fight Shabīb, the famous Khārijī leader, in 77 H.<sup>1065</sup> 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.<sup>1066</sup> In the year 97 H, he commanded a sea-raid into Byzantine territory.<sup>1067</sup> In 98 H he was an officer in Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik's army which raided deep into Byzantine territory.<sup>1068</sup>

In 100 H, he was appointed by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as governor of al-Jazīra.<sup>1069</sup> In 102 H, he led a large scale raid into Byzantine Armenia.<sup>1070</sup> Later, in the same year, he was promoted to the governorship of Iraq and Khurāsān.<sup>1071</sup> His followers flattered him by calling him *sayyid qays*.<sup>1072</sup> In the reign of ʿUmar's successor, the pro-Qaysī<sup>1073</sup> Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (101-5/720-4), ʿUmar b.

<sup>1060</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, i, pp. 3035-6.

<sup>1061</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 250-3.

<sup>1062</sup> Ibn al-Kalbi, *Jamhara*, p. 433.

<sup>1063</sup> See Crone, *Slaves*, p. 99.

<sup>1064</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿarif*, p. 409. See Crone, *Slaves*, p. 107.

<sup>1065</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 973.

<sup>1066</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 996-7.

<sup>1067</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1306.

<sup>1068</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1315-6.

<sup>1069</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1349.

<sup>1070</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1434; Azdi, *Taʾrikh al-manṣil*, p. 16.

<sup>1071</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1435-6; Azdi, *Taʾrikh al-manṣil*, p. 16-7.

<sup>1072</sup> Ṭabarī, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1455.

<sup>1073</sup> See Kennedy, *Prophet and Caliphates*, pp. 106, 107.



Hubayra was appointed as governor of both Baṣra and Kūfa.<sup>1074</sup> He was eventually removed from office by Yazīd's brother and successor, Hishām, on his accession,<sup>1075</sup> as were many other Qaysīs.

Two decades later, the Hubayra lineage returned to prominence with the pro-Qaysī and final Umayyad caliph, Marwān b. Muḥammad. The son of ʿUmar b. Hubayra, Yazīd, governed Kūfa and Baṣra for him, while Yazīd's son, al-Muthannā, was in turn appointed as governor of al-Yamāma.<sup>1076</sup> Yazīd is also mentioned as having previously been governor of Qinnasrīn.<sup>1077</sup> He was killed by the ʿAbbāsids.<sup>1078</sup> Another son of Yazīd's, ʿAbd al-Wāḥid, led the defenders of al-Ahwāz against the ʿAbbāsīd armies in 132 H.<sup>1079</sup>

### Shamkh:

Hāshim b. Ṣafwān b. Marthad b. Najaba (Marthad and his more famous brother Musayyab are both mentioned above) of B. Riyāḥ from Shamkh was governor of Fars for ʿUmar b. Hubayra.<sup>1080</sup> An important change from the hitherto consistently pro-ʿAlid stance of this lineage.

### Other groups of Fazāra:

ʿAdīy b. Artā of B. Khizāma of an unknown lineage of the ʿAdīy branch, was of the *ahl al-shām*.<sup>1081</sup> He is mentioned as one of Muʿāwiya's commanders after the civil war.<sup>1082</sup> ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz appointed him as governor of Baṣra.<sup>1083</sup> ʿAdīy was an enemy of Yazīd b. al-Muhallab and was imprisoned by him when the latter rebelled against Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik and captured Baṣra, in 101 H.<sup>1084</sup> He and a son of his were later executed by the son of al-Yazīd b. al-Muhallab.<sup>1085</sup>

<sup>1074</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿarif*, pp. 364, 408

<sup>1075</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿarif*, p. 365; Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1467.

<sup>1076</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿarif*, p. 409; Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1876, 1913.

<sup>1077</sup> *Naqāʿid*, p. 380.

<sup>1078</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, iii, p. 23.

<sup>1079</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, iii, p. 21.

<sup>1080</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 381.

<sup>1081</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, i, p. 82.

<sup>1082</sup> Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *ʿIqd*, i, p. 315.

<sup>1083</sup> Ibn Qutayba, *Maʿarif*, pp. 362-3; Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1346; Yāqūt, *Maʿjam*, s.v. "Nahr ʿAdiy b. Artā".

<sup>1084</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, pp. 1379, ff; *Naqāʿid*, p. 368.

<sup>1085</sup> Tabari, *Taʾrikh*, ii, p. 1409; Azdi, *Taʾrikh al-mawṣil*, p. 12.

‘Abs:

B. Hidhyam b. Jadhīma:

Khuzayma b. Naṣr of the B. Ḥidhyam (mentioned above fighting with the Shī‘ī Kūfans in the civil war) was one of the leaders of the *qurrā*<sup>1086</sup> in ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mikhnaf’s Kūfan force, fighting the Khārijīs on behalf of al-Ḥajjāj.<sup>1086</sup> 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. ‘Alī. 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.<sup>1087</sup> During the revolt, Naṣr fought, was killed and crucified with Zayd.<sup>1088</sup>

One poet, Abū al-Shaghb of B. Ḥidhyam, criticized the Marwānids whose Fazārī governor, Yazīd b. ‘Umar b. Hubayra had killed al-Walīd b. al-Qa‘qā‘ (of the B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma) - Yazīd, pointedly, is referred to as al-Qaysī, rather than al-Fazārī or al-Ghatafānī.<sup>1089</sup>

B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma:

Of the lineage of al-Ḥārith b. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma, al-Qa‘qā‘ b. Khulayd became the most prominent of the B. Zuhayr in the Marwānid 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-Walīd I and Sulaymān.<sup>1090</sup>

We first hear of al-Qa‘qā‘ in a prominent position when he was the secretary of al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik (his grandson).<sup>1091</sup> His son, al-Walīd, was an officer in the Syrian army.<sup>1092</sup> In 111 H, al-Junayd (see above) appointed al-Walīd b. al-Qa‘qā‘ to Herat.<sup>1093</sup> Later, al-Walīd was appointed by Hishām over

<sup>1086</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 876.

<sup>1087</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1087.

<sup>1088</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 876.

<sup>1089</sup> *Naqā’id*, p. 380.

<sup>1090</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 442; Baladhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 386. The latter reads al-‘Abbās for Ibn al-Kalbī’s al-Qa‘qā‘. See Isfahānī, *Aghāni*, iii, p. 1189 where the Caliph Sulaymān defends one of his ‘Absī *akhwāl* from ridicule by the poet al-Ḥārith b. Khālid al-Makhzumī; see also *Naqā’id*, p. 384. Nevertheless, while al-Walīd as caliph was pro-Qaysī to a certain degree, Sulaymān was a supporter of al-Yaman, see Kennedy, *Prophet and Caliphates*, pp. 103-5.

<sup>1091</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, ii, s.v. ‘al-Qa‘qā‘ b. Hulaid’; Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 837; see also Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>1092</sup> At least he is mentioned as raiding in *and al-ram* in 119 H. See Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1593.

<sup>1093</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1529.



Qinnasrīn and his brother ‘Abd al-Malik b. al-Qa‘qā‘ was appointed over Hims.<sup>1094</sup>

During his governorship, al-Walīd b. al-Qa‘qā‘ had ‘Umar b. Hubayra flogged. Thus, Yazīd b. ‘Umar, who later gained favour with Yazīd II, had the B. al-Qa‘qā‘ tortured and put to death.<sup>1095</sup> This may have prompted the B. al-Qa‘qā‘ to assist the Caliph Hishām in his failed attempt to have one of his sons replace al-Walīd b. Yazīd as the official heir to the Caliphate.<sup>1096</sup>

Later, in the early ‘Abbāsīd period, one of the B. al-Qa‘qā‘ held a military position. Another is mentioned later as hosting Ibrāhīm, the brother of Muḥammad al-Nafs al-Zakīya, immediately before his rebellion in 145 H. This was in their lands in Syria.<sup>1097</sup>

### B. Nāshib b. Hidm:

Qurra b. Sharik was governor of Egypt for al-Walīd b. ‘Abd al-Malik from the year 90 H. He remained governor until his death, 5 or 7 years later. His brother was governor of Qinnasrīn at about the same time.<sup>1098</sup>

### *Summary of Ghatafān in Marwānīd times:*

The main role in this period was played by Fazārīs and ‘Absīs, while Murrīs played a more modest part. B. Yarbū‘ of Murra were mainly based in their traditional pre-Islamic lands near Wādī 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 Marwānīd period is dominated by the Iraqi B. Badr, led by Asmā’ b. Khārīja. They surpassed by far their brethren in Syria in prestige. While remaining loyal Umayyads, they clearly seem to have adopted a Kūfan identity. The B. Hubayra, though, were the most powerful lineage of Fazāra in later Marwānīd times, rising to high rank through a very successful

<sup>1094</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1783.

<sup>1095</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1783. For a slightly different version, see Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>1096</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1742.

<sup>1097</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, iii, p. 283. See also Crone, *Slaves*, p. 106.

<sup>1098</sup> Tabari, *Ta’rikh*, ii, p. 1201, 1305; Yāqut, *Mu’jam*, s.v. “al-Fustāt” under the section headed “Jāmi‘ ‘Amr b. al-‘Aṣ”; Crone, *Slaves*, p. 125, 126.

army career, at a time of increasing Qays-Yaman factionalization. ‘Umar b. Hubayra was a staunch Qaysī, as was his infamous son, Yazīd.

The effects of the Qays-Yaman polarization of the Umayyad military can also be seen elsewhere. ‘Adīy b. Arṭā 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 Shamkhī of B. Riyāḥ serving the Umayyads under ‘Umar b. Hubayra. It may be that the traditional ‘Alid position of the Riyāḥīs did not survive the Qays-Yaman polarization.

The B. ‘Abs 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-Qaysī in their politics and were loyal followers of Hishām, who remained for the most part of his reign above factional rivalry.<sup>1099</sup> When and how this lineage moved to Syria is unfortunately unknown.

One group to remain unchanged in their politics is the B. Ḥidhyam. Traditionally, ‘Alid (see above) they are indeed forced to accept the authority of al-Ḥajjāj after the Marwānid victory. However, their ‘Alid loyalties (or anti-Umayyad interests) are seen again during the revolt of Zayd b. ‘Alī.

### Profile of Ghatafān in Islamic times:

#### *Ghatafānī migrations after the conquests:*

After the *rida*, many Ghatafānī groups joined in the conquests and moved to the newly conquered territories. Many Murrīs and Fazārīs either stayed in their hereditary lands or went to Syria. A few Fazārīs went to Kūfa, while Murrīs also are known to have migrated to Khurāsān. Many Ashja‘īs 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. ‘Abs. Some ‘Absīs 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

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<sup>1099</sup> See Kennedy, *Prophet and Caliphates*, 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 Ghatafānī 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 Ghatafānī 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 Muʿāwīya's policy to increase his support there. Later, the B. Badr in Kūfa remained prestigious but as with other Kūfan notables lost their political power under the Marwānids.

Meanwhile, one group of the B. Zuhayr, the B. al-Qaʿqāʿ, appeared in Syria after the second civil war, and quickly rose to prominence amongst the supporters of the Umayyad dynasty. In the ʿAbbāsīd period they still had social prestige, although little power. Similar to the B. al-Qaʿqāʿ, 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 Ghatafānī 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 Ashjaʿ in general, the B. al-Yamān and B. Hidhyam 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. Laʿy, whom we see was a strong supporter of Muʿāwīya.

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-Kharijī and usually fought against al-Mukhtār's popular revolt in Kūfa. Many co-operated with the Umayyads when conditions were stable, such as the Qays lineage of the ʿAbsī B. Zuhayr b. Jadhīma, or the B. Makhzūm of the Ghālib branch. Compare these with the lineage of al-Hārith 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.<sup>1100</sup> 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 Ghatafānī identity:*

In the Muslim period there was no affiliation to a group beyond the lineage (at least on a functional level). In the later Marwānid period there begins to be loyalty to the broader group of Qays. No noticeable co-operation between Ghatafānī 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 ʿAbsī poet, who refers to the Fazārī governor, Yazīd b. ʿUmar b. Hubayra as al-Qaysī, rather than al-Fazārī or al-Ghatafānī.<sup>1101</sup> I will discuss this issue further in the following chapter.

#### *Ghatafān's loss of status:*

In the broadest terms, Ghatafānīs 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 Ghatafān 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 ʿAylān group, Ghatafān lose importance especially when compared with Sulaym and Bāhila, 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 Ghatafān was a larger group and thus was far

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<sup>1100</sup> See Hinds, M., "Kufan Political Alignments and their Background in the Mid-Seventh Century AD", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2 (1971).

<sup>1101</sup> *Naqā'id*, p. 380.



less cohesive than smaller groups. However, the more cohesive sub-groups of Ghatafān also suffered a similar fate, and the one tribe of Ghatafān which seemed to remain strong in fighting numbers and express a fair degree of solidarity to the end of the Umayyad period was ʿAbs; a mainly Kūfan-based tribe more associated with opposition to the Umayyads and thus, in retrospect, bound to lose in status.

### Ghatafān: 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 Ghatafān, 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 Ghatafān group in pre-Islamic times compared to those with lineages from outside indicates that one function of the 'tribe' of Ghatafān 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. ʿĀmir 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 Kindīs, 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 Ghatafānī 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 ʿaṣabīya 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 Jāhiliya 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 Jāhili 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.<sup>1102</sup> 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.

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<sup>1102</sup> Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogy".



## **Chapter 7**

### **Genealogies and Tribalism**

#### **'from Jāhiliya 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.<sup>1103</sup>

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."<sup>1104</sup>

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.<sup>1105</sup>

Another important practical function of genealogies is to identify territorial rights, and regulate tribal access to pasture.<sup>1106</sup> 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."<sup>1107</sup> 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.<sup>1108</sup>

It can be seen that a variety of practical circumstances influence changes made to tribal genealogies. The question is how exactly does change

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1103 E. Marx, "The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence: Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East", *American Anthropologist*, 79/2 June (1977), p. 348.

1104 Meeker, M. E., *Literature and Violence in North Arabia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 185-6.

1105 Dresch, *Tribes*, p. 312.

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.

1107 Marx, "Unit of Subsistence", p. 354.

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 is in modern tribal Yemen is *naqā'il* (transfers).<sup>1109</sup> In general, changing tribal allegiance occurs as a result of a lack of tribal support to the seceding section or tribesman.<sup>1110</sup> 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'.<sup>1111</sup> 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.<sup>1112</sup>

### *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.<sup>1113</sup> 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

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<sup>1109</sup> Dresch, *Tribes*, pp. 78, ff.

<sup>1110</sup> Dresch, *Tribes*, p. 332.

<sup>1111</sup> Lancaster, *Rwala*, pp. 24-35.

<sup>1112</sup> Cole, D., *Nomads of the Nomads: The Al Murrāh Bedouin of the Empty Quarter*, Illinois: AHM, 1975, pp. 88-90; Lancaster, *Rwala*, pp. 151-162.

<sup>1113</sup> 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.

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.<sup>1114</sup> 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.<sup>1115</sup>

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 *buyūt* known to be *naqā'il*. This means that migrating families had joined the host village by simply slipping in under the genealogical gap.<sup>1116</sup> Prior to this, the migrants would usually have had marital relations with the host village or would have been connected by other personal ties.<sup>1117</sup>

*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-Hamdānī (d. 334/945). Dresch compares the descriptions in al-Hamdānī's works to his own observations, and those of other modern anthropologists of tribal Yemen, in an effort to examine features of

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<sup>1114</sup> Lancaster, *Rwala*, p. 25.

<sup>1115</sup> Lancaster, *Rwala*, pp. 24-35.

<sup>1116</sup> Dresch, *Tribes*, pp. 277-8.

<sup>1117</sup> 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 Rwala 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.



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 Ṣubārah - are also mentioned by al-Hamdānī. While some of Sufyān's sections of al-Hamdānī'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-Hamdānī's time.<sup>1118</sup> 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-Hamdānī's time, another tribe, Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah, occupied the area today occupied by the B. Ṣuraym, while the B. Ṣuraym mentioned by al-Hamdānī formed only a subset of Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah. Today, it is Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah which is a subset of the B. Ṣuraym. Most of the other sections of al-Hamdānī's Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah now have the same names and occupy the same territories; the main difference being that they are all now part of B. Ṣuraym on a par with the modern Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah. All in all, al-Hamdānī's Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah seems simply to have exchanged places with its then subset, the B. Ṣuraym.

Dresch describes the necessary steps for such a process as thus: firstly, the B. Ṣuraym must have been separated definitionally from Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah. Then, the other sections would have left Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah and joined B. Ṣuraym as subsets of it.<sup>1119</sup> Finally, these subsets would later have been followed by what had remained of Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah under that name. Importantly, none of the subsets would have physically moved.<sup>1120</sup>

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.

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<sup>1118</sup> Dresch, *Tribes*, pp. 322-3.

<sup>1119</sup> In this case, it seems logical to assume that two parts of Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah became rivals. Perhaps it was this rivalry which prompted the other parts of al-Hamdānī's Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah to join the B. Ṣuraym. The rivals of B. Ṣuraym, perhaps al-Hamdānī's "ʿAbd?", which have disappeared in modern times, but occupied the land that present-day Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah now occupy [see maps in Dresch, *Tribes*, p. 327] then became known as Wāda<sup>ʿ</sup>ah to distinguish their older from the newly formed one based on B. Ṣuraym.

<sup>1120</sup> Dresch, *Tribes*, p. 328.

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 Bakrī tribes.<sup>1121</sup> 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.

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<sup>1121</sup> 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.<sup>1122</sup> 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 *ansāb* (i.e. genealogical) material in this period. The importance of the *ansāb* 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-Kalbī, 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

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<sup>1122</sup> See Donner, "Bakr", 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.<sup>1123</sup> 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 Thaqīf is an example of this. The leader of the Aḥlāf branch of Thaqīf was refused support from his ally, Uḥayḥa b. al-Jallāh, the Awsī leader in pre-Islamic Medina, so as not to accentuate the division within Thaqīf.<sup>1124</sup> Similar to this was the fear of division within the B. Jaʿfar b. Kilāb of ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿsaʿa expressed in the account of the famous *munāfara* (verbal battle of wit) between the two Jaʿfarī heroes, ʿĀmir b. al-Ṭufayl and ʿAlqama b. ʿUllatha. The *munāfara* had threatened to break out into violence, but the parties were finally reconciled by an impartial arbitrator.<sup>1125</sup> 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.

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<sup>1123</sup> See Donner, "Bakr", pp. 9, ff.

<sup>1124</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, i, p. 686.

<sup>1125</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, 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 *ansāb* material, contains many cases of smaller tribal units who left their original tribal group and joined another.<sup>1126</sup> 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.<sup>1127</sup>

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 Fazāra, who was a famous *ṣahābī* and later an Umayyad governor. Despite his prominent position in the Muslim ruling elite, his genealogy is preserved differently in Balādhurī's *Ansāb al-ashrāf* than in Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamharat al-nasab*. Ibn al-Kalbī has him as a descendant of the B. Laʿy of Shankh of Fazāra, while Balādhurī has him of the B. al-ʿUsharāʾ of Māzin of Fazāra.<sup>1128</sup>

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, ʿAmr b. Jābir.<sup>1129</sup> The name sequence, ʿAmr b. Jābir, appears in both the genealogy of the B. Laʿy as well as that of the B. al-ʿUsharāʾ, as an ancestor of other groups and individuals.<sup>1130</sup>

Thus, it seems that the known genealogy for Samura stopped at the level of ʿAmr b. Jābir. Only later was it appended to one or the other groups.

1126 See for instance Kister, "Caskel's *Ġamharat al-nasab*", pp. 54-9.

1127 See the case of the B. Bender, given in Lancaster, *Ruula*, pp. 33-4.

1128 See Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 439; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 384.

1129 Balādhurī does in fact include one extra name in his version - not an extra ancestor - but this is immaterial for this argument.

1130 In fact, ʿAmr b. Jābir is supposed to have been the name of the person, from whom descended the B. al-ʿUsharāʾ. See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, 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 Madhḥij and Tamīm. 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 Thaʿālib which states that three groups with the same name of B. Thaʿlaba were affiliated at some point in the past.<sup>1131</sup> 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 Ghaṭafānī B. Thaʿlaba b. Saʿd, the B. Bajāla b. Māzin, are mentioned as receiving a plot of land. This, they allegedly shared with the B. Bajāla of Sulaym.<sup>1132</sup>

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

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<sup>1131</sup> See above Chapter 6, pp. 145-6.

<sup>1132</sup> Ṭabari, *Taʾrikh*, i, p. 2490. The Sulami group were, according to Ibn al-Kalbi, called the B. Bajla. Interestingly, Bajla is described as the mother of the sons of Mālik b. Thaʿlaba [See Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, i, 125; ii, s.v. "Baġla"].



associations (whether social, political or geographic) between patrilineally unrelated groups.<sup>1133</sup>

### 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 Ghatafān, Taghlib, ʿĀmir, Tamīm, *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, ʿAdnān 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*.<sup>1134</sup>

### 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.<sup>1135</sup> Often the

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<sup>1133</sup> Such a *topos* is used to stress ʿAbsī links with Asad, by claiming that Judhama b. Rawāḥa's biological father was Asad, see Ibn al-Kalbi, *Jamhara*, p. 441, as mentioned earlier, in Chapter 6. The *topos* is also used to explain the 'confusion' over Qudā'a's descent [see Balādhuri, *Ansab*, i, p. 15].

<sup>1134</sup> The term 'macro genealogies' is taken from Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogies", pp. 541, ff.

<sup>1135</sup> For ancestors with *laqabs* (honorifics), it is quite common to pause the genealogical 'narrative' and explain the 'historical' situation which led to the use of this *laqab*. See for instance the immediate descendants of the ʿĀmiri subset eponym, Jaʿfar b. Kilāb [Ibn al-Kalbi, *Jamhara*, p. 314]. This has the effect of 'historicizing' these figures, some of whom may have been mentioned in collections of Jāhili 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.<sup>1136</sup>

These genealogies are presented in the format of Biblical genealogies. The following partial genealogy exemplifies the typical format. It is extracted from Ibn al-Kalbī's *Jamhara* and describes the tribal group of Zayd Manāt of Tamīm.

"ولد زيد مناة بن تميم بن مرّ سعداً ومالكاً وعوفاً وهو مكسّر وهم في بني حنّان بن عبد العزى بن كعب بن سعد بن عبد مناة وثعلبة بن زيد مناة ومبشراً وجنحاً درجوا وأمهم المفضاة بنت ثعلبة بن دودان بن أسد وامرء القيس بن زيد مناة وهم مع بني عوف بن سعد وعامراً وهم قليل مع بني مجاشع بن دارم وأمهم رقاش بنت كبير بن غالب من جرم قضاة." <sup>1137</sup>

And Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm b. Murr begot **Sa'd** and **Mālik** and **ʿAwf** (who is [known as] Mukassir) - and they [form part of] B. Ḥimmān b. ... b. ʿAbd Manāt - and **Tha'laba** ... and **Mubashshir** and **Janḥ** ([who all] died out) - the mother [of all of these] was al-Mufdā bt. ... b. Asad - and **Imru' al-Qays** ([who form part of] B. ʿAwf b. Sa'd) and **ʿĀmir** (and they are few and [form part of] B. Mujāshī' b. Dārim - the mother [of the latter group] was Riqāsh bt. Kabīr b. Ghālib from Jarm of Quḍā'a. <sup>1138</sup>

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. Dārim) followed by B. Sa'd (whose descendants include the famous B. Muqā'is lineage), then B. ʿĀmir and finally B. Imru' al-Qays (both of whom are numerically insignificant). The same narrative method of describing the lineages as in the above example is maintained.

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common for most Jāhili poets and other characters of the *ayyām*, who are normally mentioned following the pattern of other individuals.

<sup>1136</sup> For a more detailed description of the need for different levels of tribal identity in a nomadic society, see Gaskel, *Jamharat*, i, pp. 23-4.

<sup>1137</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, pp. 192-3.

<sup>1138</sup> The sons of Zayd Manāt are in bold.



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. 'Awf who did not. Presumably the latter were unknown to the source or were considered to be an 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, Fazāra of Ghatafān, 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:

"فمن بنى سكين يزيد بن عمر بن هبيرة بن معية بن سكين ومنهم جميل بن حمران بن الأشيم بن عبد الله بن معية<sup>1139</sup> بن سكين<sup>1140</sup>."

From the B. Sukayn [were] Yazīd b. 'Umar b. Hubayra b. Mu'ayya b. Sukayn, and ... Jamīl b. Humrān b. al-Ashyam b. 'Abdallāh b. Mu'ayya b. Sukayn.

<sup>1139</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 429, has the contradictory "Mu'āwiya" instead of "Mu'ayya". The correct name is also found in Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, MSRabat, fol. 371.

<sup>1140</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 429.

Yazīd b. ʿUmar is the notorious Marwānid governor, while according to Balādhurī Jamīl was "one of their notables".<sup>1141</sup> This format is typical throughout the work for individuals. Even ancient poets or heroes such as the famed al-Muhalhil or Kulayb of Taghlib, who are relatively high up in the genealogies, are preceded by the formulaic *wa min banī fulān* rather than being placed in the higher tribal genealogy.<sup>1142</sup>

The individuals listed may be early Islamic figures, as Yazīd 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.

### *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, ʿAdnān 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.

### **Summary:**

The pre- and early Islamic genealogies were not fixed. There was a 'natural' development of genealogies occurring continually, at least at a certain

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<sup>1141</sup> Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MS Rabat, fol. 371.

<sup>1142</sup> Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, p. 568.



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 Jāhili 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 Jāhili material describing individuals, as well as in early Muslim material, such as *sīra* works and collections of tribal lore.<sup>1143</sup> 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.<sup>1144</sup> 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

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<sup>1143</sup> 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, *ayyām* accounts, etc. [Kennedy "Arabic genealogy", p. 540].

<sup>1144</sup> Within some famous lineages, it can be seen that some were. Thus, the famous Hudhayfa b. Badr, for instance, who is mentioned in the Jāhili 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 Jāhiliya 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 ʿAbbāsīd 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 *nisbas* of individuals, which are always mentioned in the Jāhili and *sīra* material, but afterwards decrease until they are rarely used in the later Umayyad and ʿAbbāsīd 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 Qaḥṭān and the others from ʿAdnān, or his descendant Nizār b. Maʿadd.

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 Maʿadd and not to Yaman. Thus, for example, we find for Qudāʿa the alternative genealogy of Qudāʿa b. Maʿadd, 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 Yamani Kinda were in fact Ma'addī, thus, we have Kinda b. Junāda b. Ma'add.<sup>1145</sup>

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'/Yamani) or 'Adnānī ('Northern'/Ma'addī/Nizārī) before Islam.<sup>1146</sup> 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."<sup>1147</sup> 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.<sup>1148</sup>

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 'Himyar' 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.

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<sup>1145</sup> Iṣḥāqī, *Aghāni*, xiii, p. 4591. See Kahlūla, *Mu'jam*, s.v. "Junāda", where Junāda b. Ma'add are a tribal group associated with Ghaur Dhī Kinda. See also Kister, "Gaskel's *Ġamharat an-nasab*", pp. 56-8.

<sup>1146</sup> For a discussion of the arguments amongst the early genealogists on this matter, see Juwād 'Alī, *Mufaṣṣal*, iv, pp. 419, ff; Crone holds the view that Qudā'a was originally from Ma'add [Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 34, ff].

<sup>1147</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, p. 45; see also, pp. 164-5.

<sup>1148</sup> Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 5.



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.<sup>1149</sup> 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, Rabīʿa, Qudāʿa, Qays, etc., are only infrequently pitted against each other.

Inscriptional evidence tells us that tribal group names such as Maʿadd and Nizār, Madhḥij 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 Maʿadd - 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.<sup>1150</sup> 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 Jāhiliya 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.<sup>1151</sup> 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

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<sup>1149</sup> See Kennedy "Arabic Genealogies", pp. 532-3.

<sup>1150</sup> See Shahid, I, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, vol. I, 2 parts, Washington DC: Dunbarton Oaks, 1995, part 2, pp. 161-2; C. Robin, "Les Tribus d'Arabie aux Époques Romaine et Byzantine dans les Inscriptions Sabéennes et Himyarites", forthcoming, (pp. 4, 5, ff.).

<sup>1151</sup> Caskeel, *Ġamharat*, i, p. 21.

South Arabians.<sup>1152</sup> Thus, despite the fact that the Arabic-speaking allies of the Ḥimyarites would be associated with them genealogically in Islamic times,<sup>1153</sup> 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.<sup>1154</sup> Ibn Ishāq tells us that these two eponyms were sometimes regarded as synonymous,<sup>1155</sup> 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, Balādhurī tells us that the 'Arabs' knew their genealogies *only* back to Udad, who he says, was the father of ʿAdnān.<sup>1156</sup> 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 Balādhurī claims.<sup>1157</sup>

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

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<sup>1152</sup> See Robin, "Pénétration", esp. p. 81, where he describes the 5th c. Ḥimyarite state as bi-national.

<sup>1153</sup> Robin, "Pénétration", p. 82.

<sup>1154</sup> See Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, xiii, p. 4591.

<sup>1155</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, i, p. 2; see also n. 4.

<sup>1156</sup> Balādhurī, *Ausāb*, i, p. 12.

<sup>1157</sup> Balādhurī, *Ausāb*, i, p. 12.



famous were the B. Tamīm of Murr b. Add, and their 'related' groups of Ḍabba, Muzayna and al-Ribāb from Add, though not through Murr.<sup>1158</sup>

From the Kahlān branch of Qaḥṭān the list is more impressive. It includes Madhḥij, Ṭayyi<sup>3</sup> and al-Ash<sup>c</sup>ar, who were all direct 'sons' of Udad. Moreover, the descendants of Murra b. Udad included the 'Lakhm, Judhām and <sup>c</sup>Āmila' trio<sup>1159</sup> 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<sup>c</sup>āfir on the other.<sup>1160</sup> If we accept one view that does not consider the non-Arabic speaking Khawlān and al-Ma<sup>c</sup>āfir to be descended from Udad<sup>1161</sup>, then the sons of Udad formed all of the non-Qudā<sup>c</sup>ī lowland Arabic-speaking Qaḥṭānī affiliated tribesmen.<sup>1162</sup>

The other important Qaḥṭānī tribes excluded from this group were the Yemeni non-Arabic speaking groups of Hamdān, Alhān, Khath<sup>c</sup>am, Bajīla, Ḥimyar and Ḥaḍramawt; the Qudā<sup>c</sup>a confederation of Syria; and the confederation of al-Azd (itself supposed to have been a late joiner to Qaḥṭān<sup>1163</sup>), with its <sup>c</sup>Umānī and <sup>c</sup>Asīrī branches, and its later affiliated groups of <sup>c</sup>Akk, Khuzā<sup>c</sup>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 Tamīm 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, Ḥimyar, Muḍar or Nizār or even <sup>c</sup>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.

1158 See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, p. 59. Moreover, verses of al-Akḥṭal, could imply that Nizār was only composed Rabi<sup>c</sup>a and Qays, as he refers to them as the two sons of Nizār [Balādhuiri, *Ansāb*, v, p. 315 and some other place as well]. It is also clear that Khindif (the group which ties the Tamīm group to Asud and Kinana) 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 Khindif was 'Khindified' ("كخندفت") for the first time. See Bayāti, *Ayyam al-ʿArab*, ii, p. 529.

1159 See Hasson, I, "Judham", pp. 26, ff. for this close association.

1160 See Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 176.

1161 See Haudāni, *Ikhlil*, i, 180-9, ff.

1162 For details as to which Yemeni tribes were Arabic speaking in the pre-Islamic period, see Robin, "Pénétration", *passim*.

1163 EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Rabi<sup>c</sup>a".

*Joktan and Qaḥṭān:*

*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."<sup>1164</sup> This clearly is an ancient genealogy connecting the lands/peoples of Ḥaḍramawt and Saba<sup>2</sup><sup>1165</sup> to Joktan. The "eastern hill-country" may even be the land of Ḥaḍramawt, if we equate Sephar to Zūfār, which lies to its east.<sup>1166</sup>

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).<sup>1167</sup>

In any case, whether the Hebrew version of the genealogy of the South Arabians 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 Kindī presence in Qaryat al-Fāw. 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.<sup>1168</sup> 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 QḤṬ, while Joktan is from the very different Hebrew root QṬN. Thus, the association of the two must have been based simply on phonetic similarity.<sup>1169</sup> Though some genealogists disassociated Qaḥṭān from Joktan and made him a son of Hūd b.

<sup>1164</sup> See also *1 Chronicles*, I. The English edition used here is: *The Revised English Bible*, Oxford: Oxford University Press and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

<sup>1165</sup> There are other links in the Old Testament linking Saba<sup>2</sup> to the Biblical lineage. Firstly, *Genesis*, XXV, and *1 Chronicles*, I, have Jokshan son of Abraham (by Keturah) as the father of Sheba and Dedan. It is also stated that Cush son of Ham was the father of Seba and Raamah, the latter also being the parent of Sheba and Dedan [*Genesis*, X; *1 Chronicles*, I].

<sup>1166</sup> See EI<sup>2</sup>, "Badw: (ii) Bedouin Nomadism in Arabia".

<sup>1167</sup> From about 380 CE the Ḥimyarī dynasty and many other great highland lineages converted to Judaism [Robin, "Tribus d'Arabie", p. 4].

<sup>1168</sup> Robin, "Tribus d'Arabie", p. 17.

<sup>1169</sup> EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Qaḥṭān". As mentioned above (p. 223), such naive phonetic associations were common.



ʿAbdallāh b. al-Khulūd b. ʿĀd b. ʿŪṣ (Uz) b. Iram (Aram) b. Sām (Shem),<sup>1170</sup> 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 ʿAdnānī 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 Qurʾān 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 ʿAdnān b. Add/Udad<sup>1171</sup>) or Joktan (who was equated to Qaḥṭān, as mentioned earlier).<sup>1172</sup>

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<sup>1170</sup> Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, i, p. 4.

<sup>1171</sup> It is unclear what the source was for the genealogical link between Arabic ʿAdnān 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 ʿAdnān b. Add/Udad. See for instance, Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, i, p. 12; compared with Ibn Hisham, *Sīra*, i, p. 2, see also n. 2; and EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v., "Ismāʿīl".

<sup>1172</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, pp. 96-7, 165, 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.<sup>1173</sup> 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 *ridḍa*. 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 *sīra* material. ‘Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn was one of the *al-muʿallafa qulūbuhum* 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 Ghatafān. He quickly became a prominent member of the Muslim tribal allies and was present with the Muslims at al-Ṭāʿif and Ḥunayn.<sup>1174</sup> Indeed, we are told that he was even commissioned by the Prophet to lead a raid against a hostile Tamīmī group<sup>1175</sup> and that he became the leader of the Muslim Ghatafānī tribesmen.<sup>1176</sup>

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 ‘Ghatafān’, describes the murder of a tribesman from Ashja’ - affiliated to Ghatafān - by a man from B. Layth of

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<sup>1173</sup> For a general discussion of this point, see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, i, ‘Chapter Two: The Arab Tribes and Islam’, pp. 45-97, but particularly, pp. 54-7.

<sup>1174</sup> See above, Chapter 6, p. 171. Also, Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, pp. 485, 489-90, 494-6.

<sup>1175</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 621.

<sup>1176</sup> Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, p. 627.



Kināna. Significantly, it is ‘Uyayna b. Ḥiṣn of Fazāra, in his capacity as the leader of Ghatafān (*i.e.* Ghatafānī Muslims),<sup>1177</sup> who called upon the Prophet to have the murderer executed. Equally significantly, it is the important Tamīmī, al-Aqra‘ 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.<sup>1178</sup>

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<sup>1179</sup> 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.*<sup>1180</sup> At the same time, the migrations caused the dispersal and weakening of previously politically cohesive units, and especially larger groups that were 'potentially' corporate.<sup>1181</sup> 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

<sup>1177</sup> At one point the narrative states that ‘Qays’ called for vengeance for the dead man [Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, p. 628].

<sup>1178</sup> We are told that the incident took place at Ḥumayn [Ibn Hishām, *Sira*, ii, pp. 627-8].

<sup>1179</sup> Following Shoufany, I include the *riḍā* wars as part of the conquest phase of early Islamic history. See Shoufany, *Riḍā*, p. 107, ff.

<sup>1180</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, p. 25.

<sup>1181</sup> K. Athamina, ‘A‘rāb and Muhājirīn in the Environment of the Anṣār’, *Studia Islamica*, 66 (1987), pp. 24-5. See above, Chapter 6, p. 209, for the idea of potential confederations.

administrative need for extensive organization of the military system. The establishment of the *dīwān* and tribal settlement had an important impact on the army's tribesmen.

The *dīwān* 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.<sup>1182</sup>

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.<sup>1183</sup> Such is the case of one tribesman in Khurasān, who was a member of the famous Rawāḥa branch of 'Abs. Nevertheless, for official purposes he was regarded as a member of the Azd contingent in Khurāsān (أحد بني رواحة من بني عيس وعداده في الأزدي).<sup>1184</sup>

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 *dīwān* 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<sup>1185</sup>, whose thesis about the emergence of Umayyad factionalism will be closely followed below.

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<sup>1182</sup> For the creation of the *ducan* and its effect on tribal groups, see Caskeel, *Ġandharat*, i, pp. 27-31; see also Kister, "Caskeel's *Ġandharat an-nasab*", pp. 50-1, 54, ff.

<sup>1183</sup> 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 [Athanasia, "Arab and Muhājirūn", 66 (1987), p. 25].

<sup>1184</sup> Tabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 1478.

<sup>1185</sup> 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.<sup>1186</sup>

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.<sup>1187</sup> 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,<sup>1188</sup> 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.<sup>1189</sup> 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

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<sup>1186</sup> Athamina, "Arab and Muhājirūn", pp. 24-5; Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 30-3; see also EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Mu'awiya I".

<sup>1187</sup> Crone, *Slaves*, pp. 30-3; EI<sup>2</sup>, s.v. "Mu'awiya I".

<sup>1188</sup> 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.

<sup>1189</sup> 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 ʿAbbāsīd period.

The importance of this split in Arab tribal society is connected with Crone's view that the Maʿadd versus Yaman conflict involved only the settled tribesmen within the Umayyad army.<sup>1190</sup> 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.<sup>1191</sup> Consider an alternative genealogy for the B. Murra of Ghatafān 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. ʿAwf b. Saʿd b. Dhubyān b. Baghīd b. Rayth b. Ghatafān,<sup>1192</sup> this tradition simply refers to the B. Murra b. Wabara b. Ghatafān.<sup>1193</sup> It is difficult not to see the name 'Wabara' as being merely a description of this group's nomadism.<sup>1194</sup> 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 *ḥāḍira*, and bedouin tribesmen, the *bādiya*, although there appear to have still been strong

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<sup>1190</sup> Crone, "Qays and Yemen", p. 42.

<sup>1191</sup> See the examples in Kennedy, of this same feeling amongst modern tribes [Kennedy, "Arabic Genealogies", pp. 533-7].

<sup>1192</sup> Caskel, *Ġamharat*, i, 92.

<sup>1193</sup> Yāqūt, s.v. "Mawdūʿ".

<sup>1194</sup> *Ahl al-wabar* was, and remains, a term designating nomads.



kinship links between the two groups. Thus for instance, we are told of a Qaysī 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.<sup>1195</sup> 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.<sup>1196</sup> 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 ʿAbbāsīd times.<sup>1197</sup>

#### *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.<sup>1198</sup>

At Ṣiffīn, we are told of numerous cases where tribesmen refused to fight against their kinsmen on the opposing side. Shortly after Ṣiffīn, 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.<sup>1199</sup>

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.<sup>1200</sup> We are told that he was captured by Mukhtārid troops under the leadership ʿAbsī Khuzayma b. Naṣr (of B. Ḥidhyam), but that Khuzayma allowed him to escape on grounds of kinship. In fact, Khuzayma

<sup>1195</sup> Iṣfahānī, *Aghānī*, xxi, p. 7486. This incident has already been discussed above in Chapter 6, p. 193-4.

<sup>1196</sup> It may also be that this difference underlay other ideological differences between the Khārījī tribesmen and their opponents. Conducting research into the detailed tribal origins of Khārījī supporters may shed a little more light on the causes of Khārījī disaffection.

<sup>1197</sup> See Jabbur, *The Bedouins*, pp. 483-5.

<sup>1198</sup> See also Crone, "Qays and Yemen", pp. 42-3.

<sup>1199</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, i, pp. 3446-7. A more zealous Shi'ī Fazārī accompanying Musayyab criticized this as an act of treachery against ʿAlī. This was during the period after Ṣiffīn and before the murder of Ali.

<sup>1200</sup> Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, ii, p. 625.

saved his life again when the unlucky Maznī was recaptured, and again set him free.<sup>1201</sup>

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..."<sup>1202</sup>

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

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<sup>1201</sup> Tabari, *Ta'rikh*, ii, pp. 625-6.

<sup>1202</sup> Khalidi, *Historical Thought*, p. 62.



men was the provincial revenue via the provincial *bayt al-māl* (treasury), and the provincial *dīwān* decided which tribesmen deserved a share of the province's revenue.<sup>1203</sup> This financial power of the provinces over the tribesmen was the focus of much of the early Muslims' conflicts, and determined tribal loyalties within the province.

A good example of the effect of regional politics on the unity of tribal groups is found in the case of Khuzā'a. Khuzā'a was, like many other tribes, claimed by both Qays and Yaman. However, unlike most other tribal groups, Khuzā'is in different regions allied with different camps. Thus, according to Goldziher, the Khuzā'is of Khurāsān became Ma'addīs,<sup>1204</sup> while those of Iraq were Yamanīs.<sup>1205</sup> However, this certainly did not mean that Khurasānī Khuzā'is would have been hostile to Iraqi Khuzā'is.

### 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 the 'Northerners' and the 'Southerners' are first mentioned.<sup>1206</sup> According to Croissant this polarization of the Arab tribes seems to have started amongst the military units in Syria. There were three main groups of tribes in greater Syria: local tribes mainly grouped under the eponym of Qudā'a were spread over

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<sup>1203</sup> H. Kennedy, "The Financing of the Military in the Early Islamic State", in A. Cameron, ed., *The Byzantine Empire, 284-680 AD*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 375, ff.

<sup>1204</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, p. 80.

<sup>1205</sup> Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, p. 82.

<sup>1206</sup> Hawting, p. 54.



Yemenis or B. Qaḥṭān (composed of tribes from South Arabia, mainly Ḥimyar and Hamdān) were dominant in Ḥims; and, the central Arabian Qaysī tribes were mainly settled in Qinnasrīn and Jazīra.<sup>1207</sup>

Out of these groups, Quḍā'a were closely allied with the Sufyānid rulers.<sup>1208</sup> During the second civil war, the Qaḥṭān group who had incorporated the local Palestinian tribes of Judhām, 'Ānīla and Lakhm, joined the Qaysīs to fight against Marwān I and his Quḍā'ī allies (plus Kinda), but were defeated by them at Marj Rāhiṭ.<sup>1209</sup> After this, Qaḥṭān and Quḍā'a formed an alliance, in which Quḍā'a claimed descent from Ḥimyar, and collectively they became known as Qaḥṭān.<sup>1210</sup>

In Baṣra 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 Bakrī dominated Rabī'a group, allied to the Azd 'Umān. Because Azdīs in Syria and Kūfa had originated in Yemen, the 'Umānī Azdīs 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.<sup>1211</sup>

Increasingly, appointed governors tended to appoint officers only from their own confederation at the exclusion of others.<sup>1212</sup> This escalation of polarization, once under way, remained more or less unchecked until the 'Abbāsīd revolution.<sup>1213</sup>

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-Hamdānī in Yemen speaking of the tribesmen that had become Qaḥṭānīs in Ṣan'a (من نَحَطَن بِهَا) and the others who had become Nizārīs (من تَنَزَّر بِهَا).<sup>1214</sup>

1207 Crone, "Qays and Yemen", pp. 44-5.

1208 Crone, "Qays and Yemen", p. 44.

1209 Crone, "Qays and Yemen", p. 46.

1210 Crone, "Qays and Yemen", pp. 44-8.

1211 Crone, "Qays and Yemen", p. 49; Hawting, *First Dynasty*, pp. 54-5.

1212 It is significant that in Marwānid *nadhī* the qualities of the tribe are less stressed, and those of the individual are highlighted.

1213 Crone, "Qays and Yemen" pp. 50-57.

1214 Hamdānī, *Siffat*, 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 Qaḥṭān were in fact Maʿaddīs. 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 Quḍāʿa, whom she is convinced was Maʿaddī. Her argument for this seems is based on two main pieces of evidence. The first comes from a report concerning a dispute between Judhāmīs as to which of the Syrian factions of that time they should join; the Quḍāʿa or the Yemeni migrants. Genealogically, this was expressed in terms of whether they should join Asad of Maʿadd or Qaḥṭān, the former term apparently referring to Quḍāʿa. The second is based on reports in the sources which simply state that Quḍāʿa was Maʿaddī.

However, against the latter argument there stand equally numerous reports claiming that Quḍāʿa was Yamanī, or quotes of notables and poets condemning attempts to make them Maʿaddī.<sup>1215</sup> 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 Judhām with Qaḥṭān 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.<sup>1216</sup> What is more is that this incident was claimed to have happened in the presence of the then Caliph, Yazīd b. Muʿāwīya<sup>1217</sup>, and nowhere in the account is there a connection with

<sup>1215</sup> See for instance the numerous reports preserved by al-Ḥamdānī, *al-Ikhlīl*, x, pp. 137-180.

<sup>1216</sup> See Crone, *Slaves*, p. 34, and the account to which she refers in Isfahānī, *Aghānī*, ix, pp. 3434; Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, i, pp. 36, ff.

Hasson, who also discusses this incident, stops at disputing the fact that Judhām was linked to Yemen in pre-Islamic times, without claiming that they were descended from or linked to Muʿadd, [Hasson, "Judhām", p. 38]. Another article by I. Hasson, "Le Chef Judhāmīte Rawḥ b. Zinbāʿ", *Studia Islamica*, 77 (1993), 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 ("Les preuves textuelles qui auraient pu étayer cette hypothèse très intéressante et suggestive manquent. Cependant, il faut l'avouer honnêtement, le soutien textuel manque aussi pour toute autre hypothèse quelle qu'elle soit", p. 114). Despite this, in the same article, Hasson chooses to follow Crone's view, thus accepting that Quḍāʿa were Maʿaddī at this stage.

<sup>1217</sup> Hasson cites traditions who say the Caliph was Muʿāwīya, see Hasson, "Judhām", 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 Asadī descent by Rawḥ was more a way to ingratiate himself with Yazīd, 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.<sup>1218</sup>

Significantly, the apparent ease of invented affiliations of tribal units to Asad, Qaḥṭān, Qays, Rabī'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'addī 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 inscriptional 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.

### 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

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<sup>1218</sup> Asad is of course a brother tribe of Kināna from which Quraysh, the tribe of Yazīd, and numerous Syrian based notables, were affiliated. This view is also shared by the editor of Hamdānī's *Iktūf al-Akwa'* - see vol. x, p. 161, n. 1. Incidentally, Rawḥ's claim in Hamdānī's account, which states that Rawḥ wished to be affiliated with Ma'add directly rather than through Asad, was based on him neither belonging to the Syrians or the Yemenis, which rules out a motive of wishing to associate with the Syrian Qudā'a. The exact translation is ambiguous, referring to "Reeds [*qasab*] of *al-shām*" and "*ghāf* of *al-yaman*": *ghāf* is a fruit tree native to Yemen; Lane, *Lexicon*, s.v. "Ghāf".



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, Ma<sup>ʿ</sup>add 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, Ma<sup>ʿ</sup>add 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 Najdī Arabic-speaking tribes and their allies, and the Judaized non-Arabic speaking Ḥimyarites may have regarded the Biblical figure of Joktan as the progenitor of some of the Yemeni tribes. Other tribal ancestors such as Ma<sup>ʿ</sup>add or Nizār also existed but tribal units did not generally need to define relationships on this genealogical 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 *dīwān* 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 Fazārī 'Umar b. Hubayra, his sons and grandsons who functioned as the leaders of a network composed of other Qaysī affiliates, the most significant of whom were not Fazārī 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 *ayyām al-ʿarab* traditions.

It was contended that while the pre-Islamic historical prose - the *ayyām* 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 *ayyām* 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 *ayyām* 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 Ghatafān 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 Taghlibīs 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 Taghlibīs 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 Qaysī migrants into al-Jazīra, in the second civil war and later. Taghlibī 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 deal. The decision of the Taghlibī leadership to remain Christian and outside of the Muslim state preserved their tribal integrity into later periods. Thus, they reemerge in ʿAbbāsīd times as a powerful group in northern Syria under the leadership of the Ḥamdānid Taghlibī lineage.

Ghatafānīs, 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, Fazārīs were still cohesive enough in Syria so that settled militarized groups would avenge groups still nomadic. Yet after this, Ghatafānīs 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 Qaysī 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: IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> 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.



Bahra'

Tanukh

Iyad

Kalb

al-Namir

Taghlib  
al-Namir

Kalb

Ghassan

Lakhm

Judham  
'Amila

Kalb

Shayban  
'Ijl

Quda'a

Shayban

Quda'a

Darim  
Yarbu', Yashkur

Tayyi'

'Abd  
Asad Yarbu' Dabba al-Qays

'Udhra  
al-Qayn

Darim

Bali

al-Ribab B. Sa'd

Fazara

B. Numayr 'Anaza

Juhayna

Murra

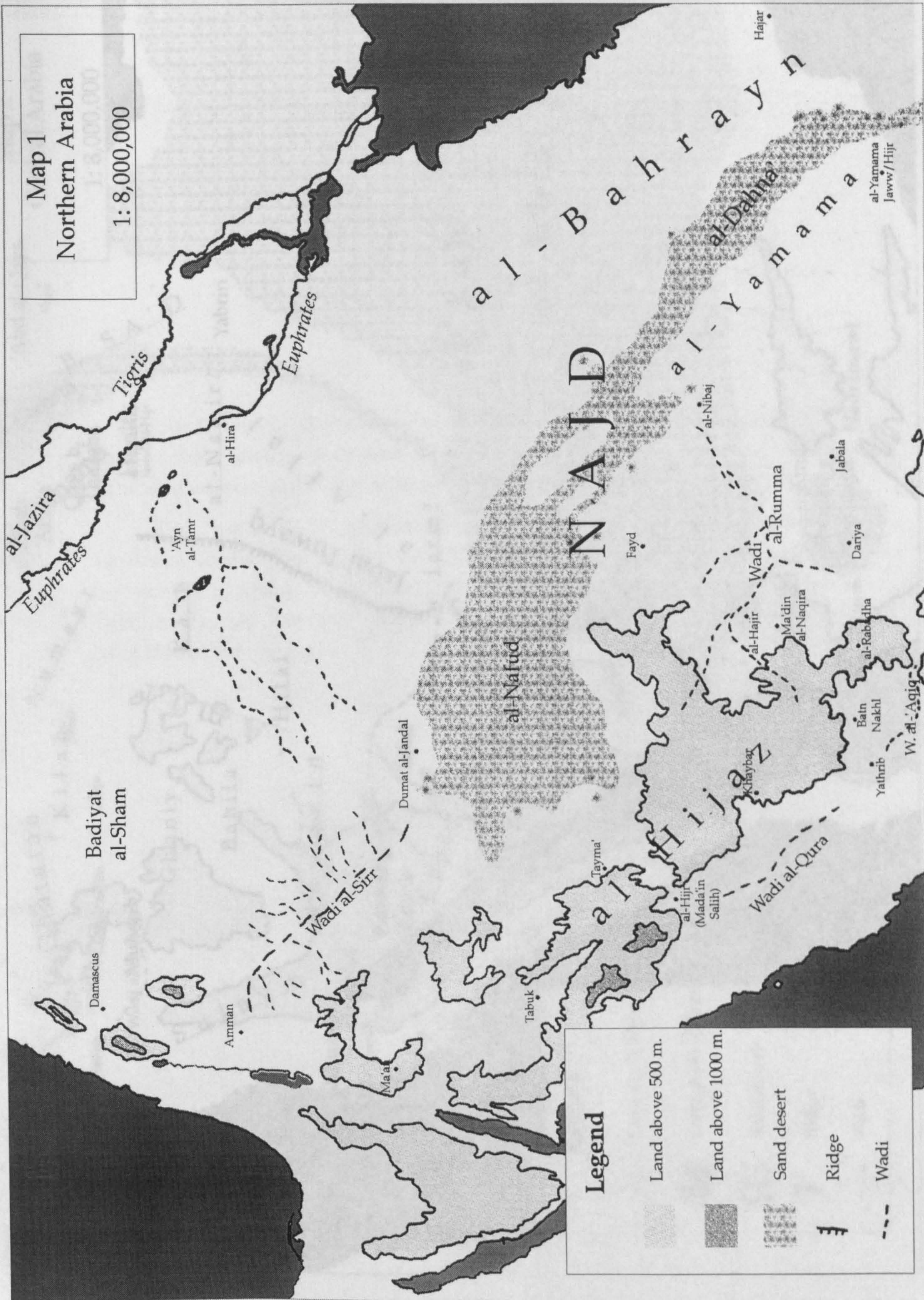
Qays b. Tha'laba

Tha'laba  
Muharib 'Amir

Hanifa



Map 1  
Northern Arabia  
1: 8,000,000

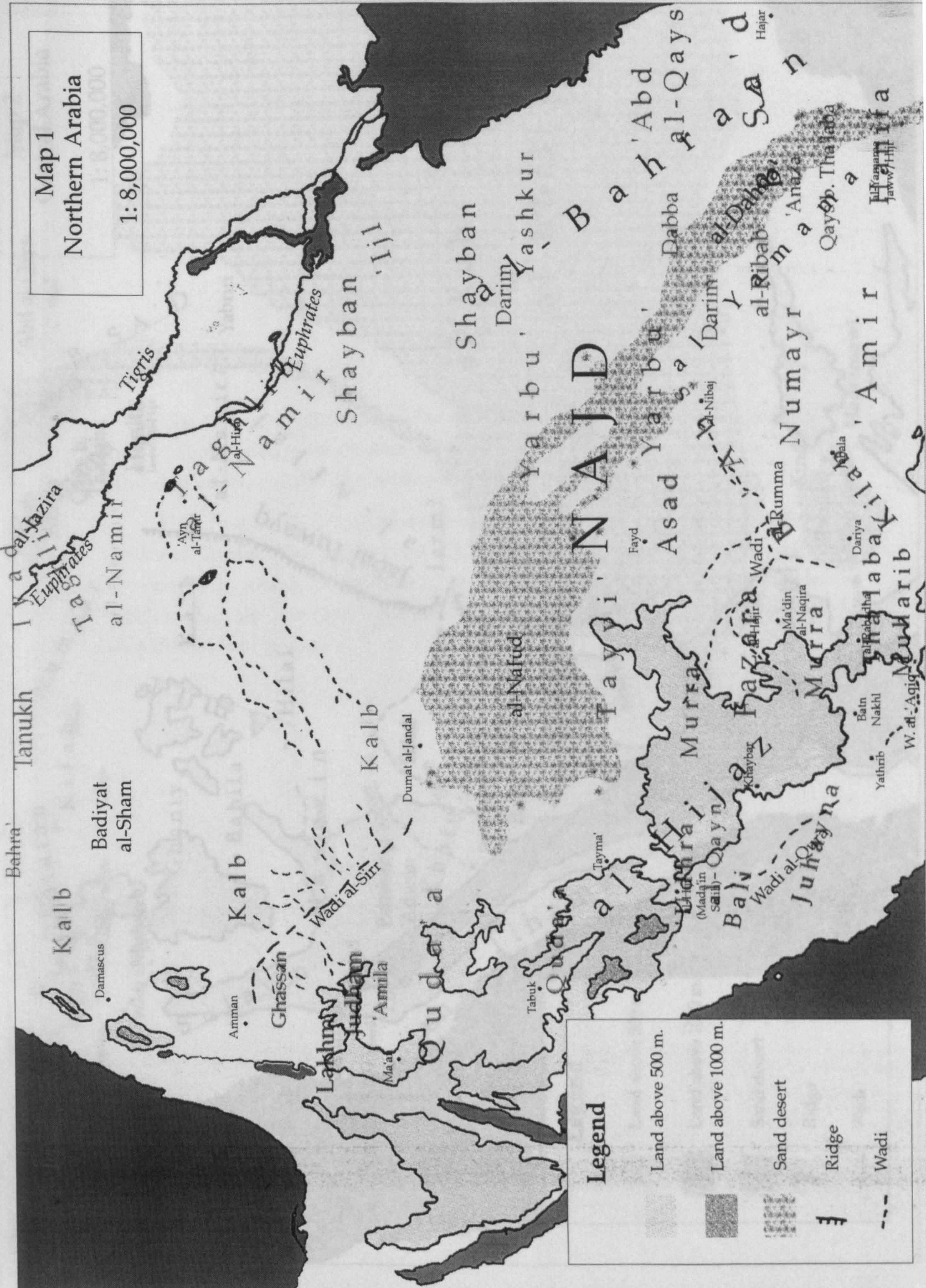


**Legend**

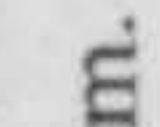
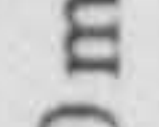

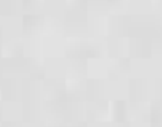

- Land above 500 m.
- Land above 1000 m.
- Sand desert
- Ridge
- Wadi



Map 1  
Northern Arabia  
1: 8,000,000



**Legend**

-  Land above 500 m.
-  Land above 1000 m.
-  Sand desert
-  Ridge
-  Wadi



Bali

Juhayna

Murra Ghatafan

Ki'l lab

Nu'mayr

al-Ribab

'Anaza

Qays b. Tha'laba

Muharib

Hanifa

Ghaniy

Sulaym

Ka'b

Bahila

al-Namir?

Hilal

Hawazin

Khuzai'a Hudhayl

Thaqif

Fahm & 'Adwan

Salul

Kinda

Khath'am

Jarm?

Kinda

Bajila

al-Azd

Madhhij

Murad

al-Harith b. Ka'b

Madhhij

Kinda

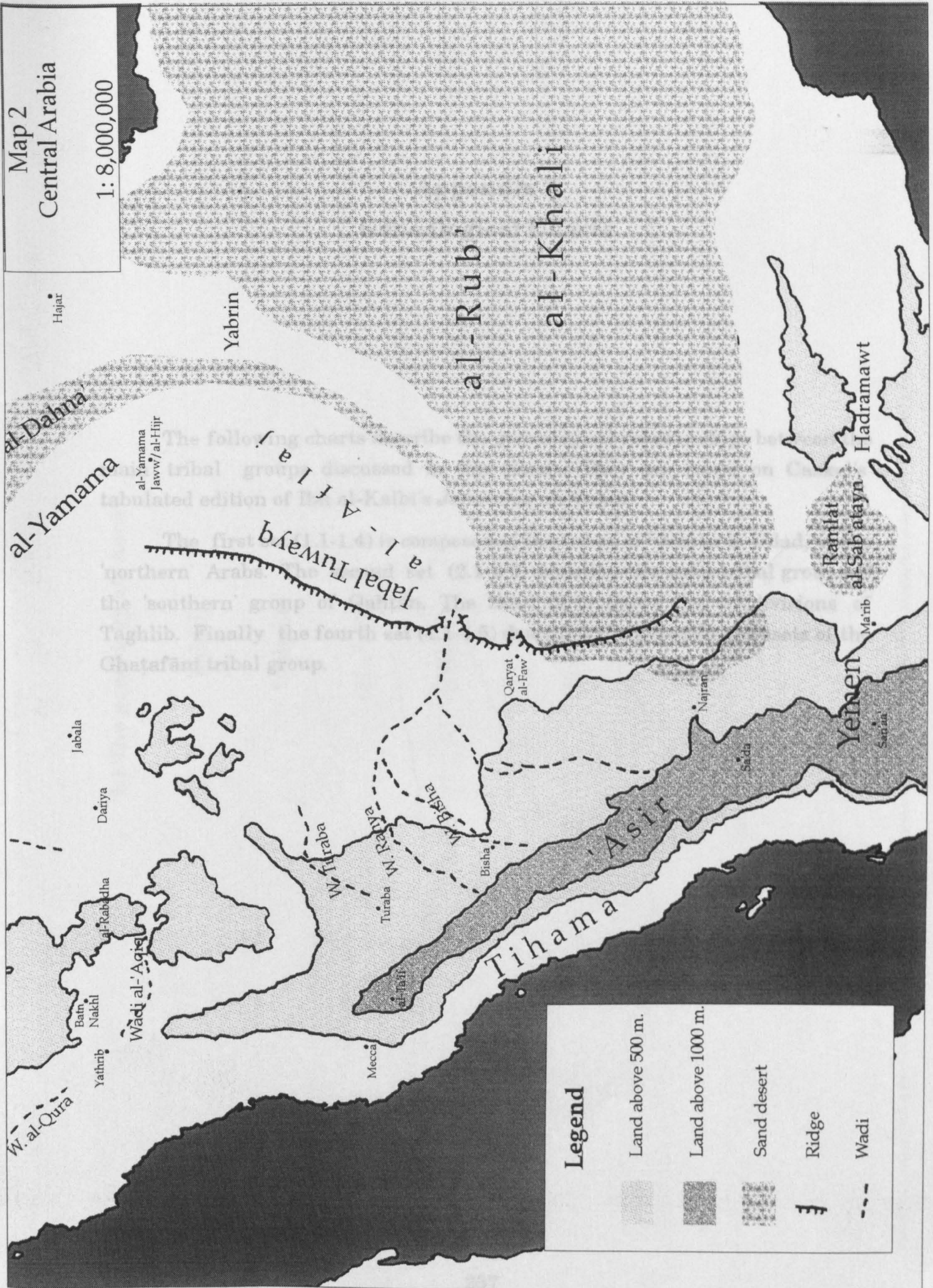
'Abd al-Qays

B.S.A.D








Map 2  
Central Arabia

1: 8,000,000



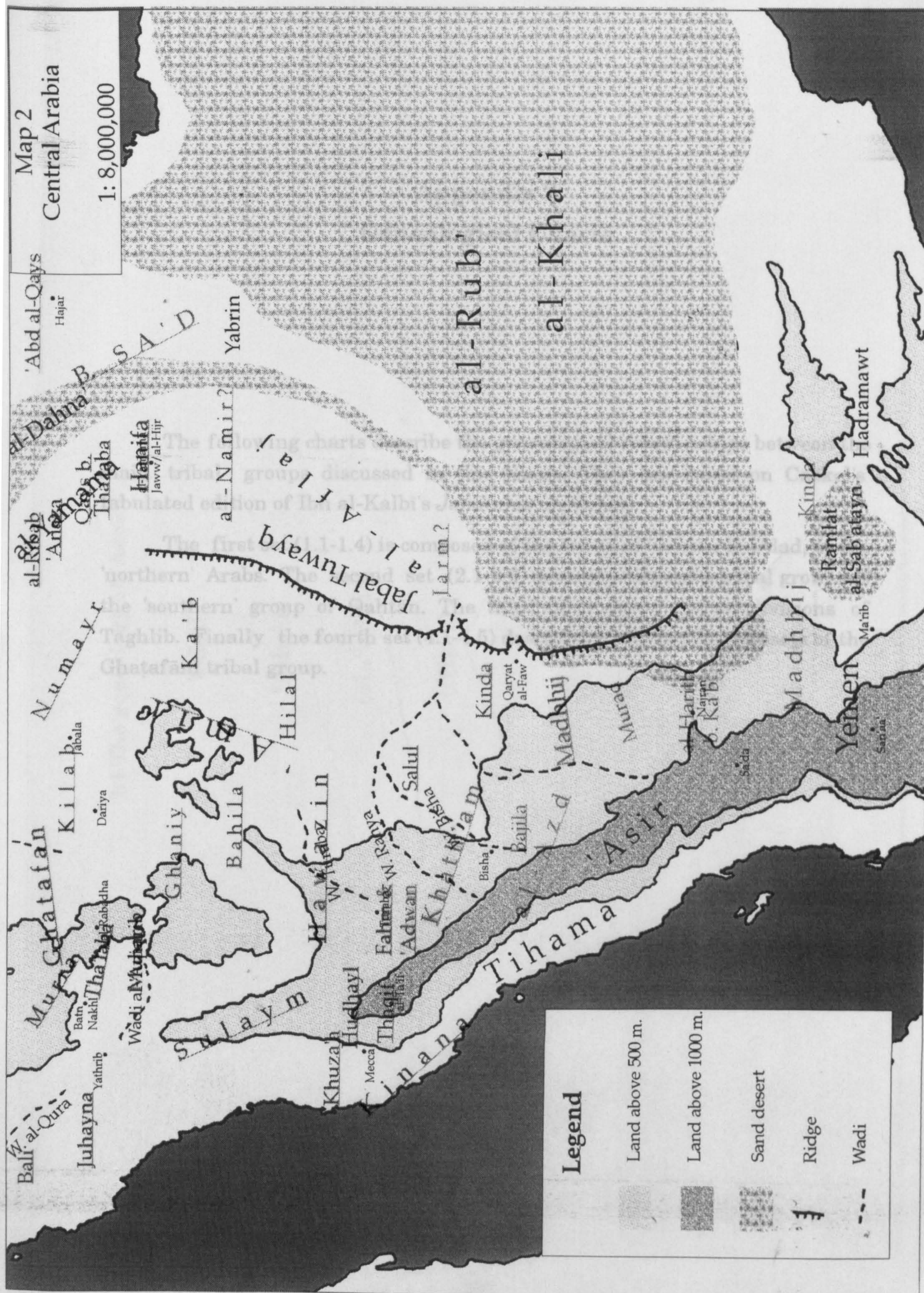
**Legend**

-  Land above 500 m.
-  Land above 1000 m.
-  Sand desert
-  Ridge
-  Wadi



Map 2  
Central Arabia

1: 8,000,000





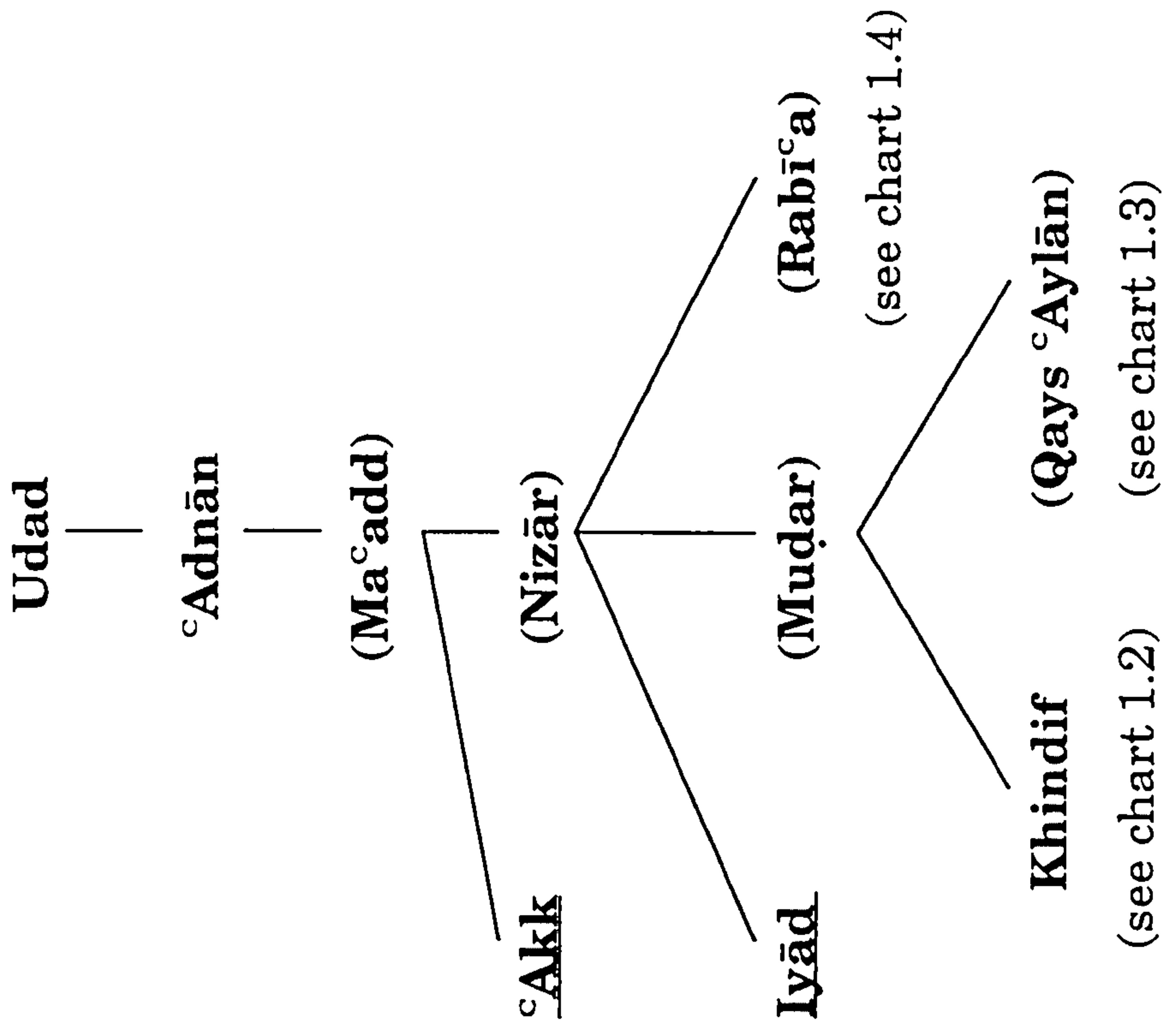
## Appendix 2

### 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-Kalbī's *Jamharat al-Nasab*.

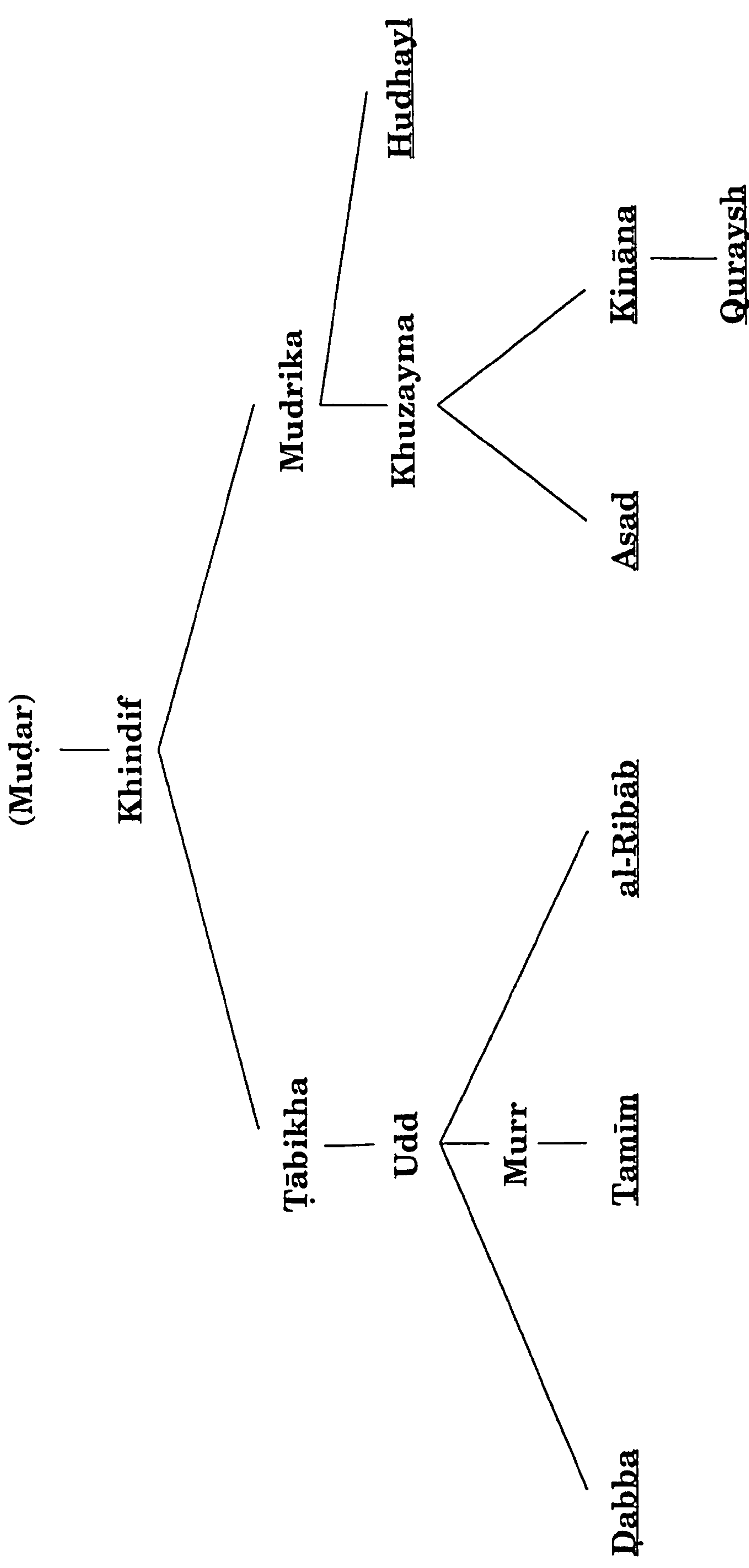
The first set (1.1-1.4) is composed of the tribes of ʿAdnān b. Udad, or the 'northern' Arabs. The second set (2.1-2.2) describes the main tribal groups of the 'southern' group of Qaḥṭān. The third (3.1) shows the subdivisions of Taghlib. Finally the fourth set (4.1-4.5) describes the important subsets of the Ghaṭafānī tribal group.

## 1.1 The genealogy of ʿAdnān



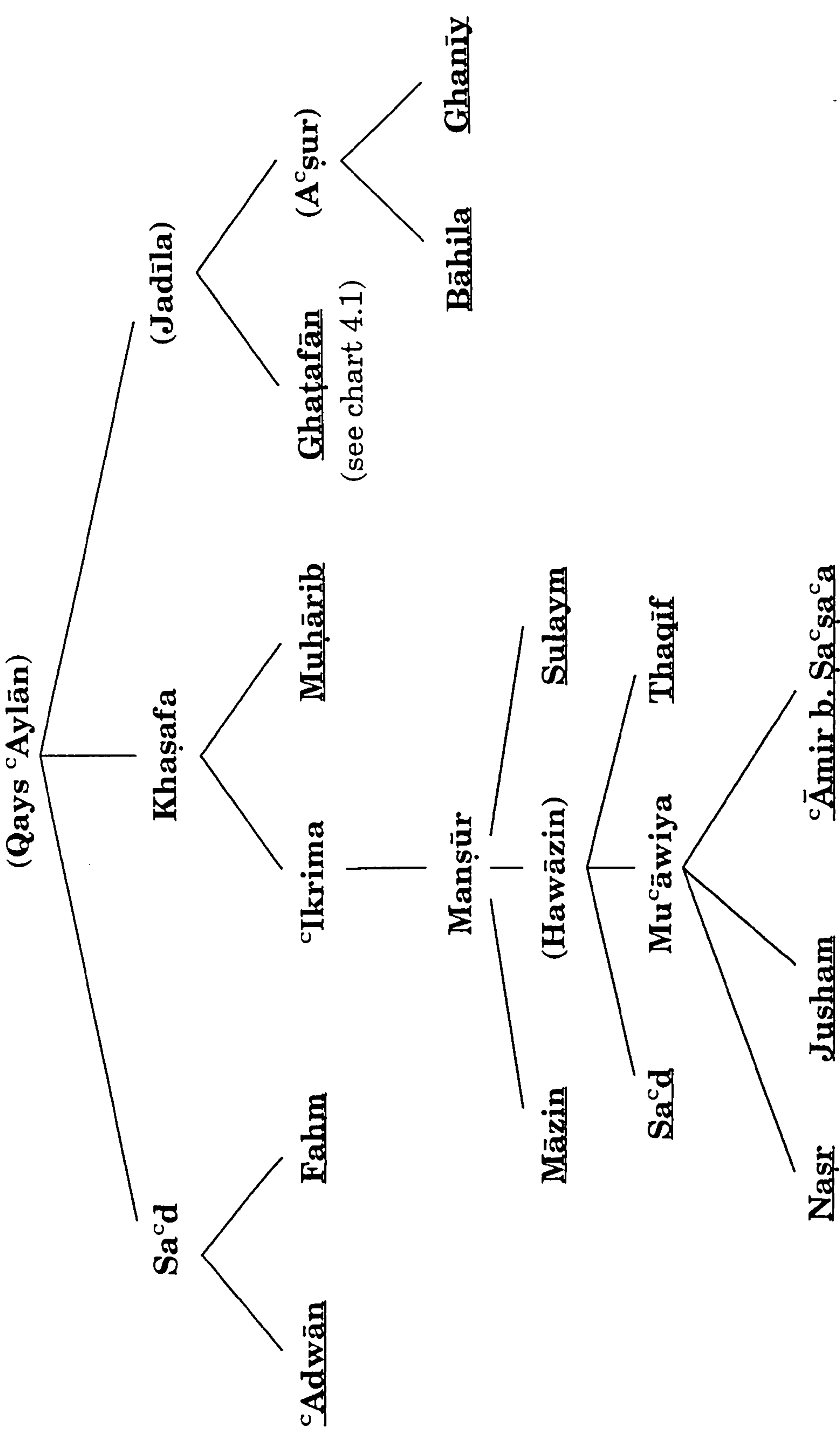


## 1.2 The genealogy of Khindif



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

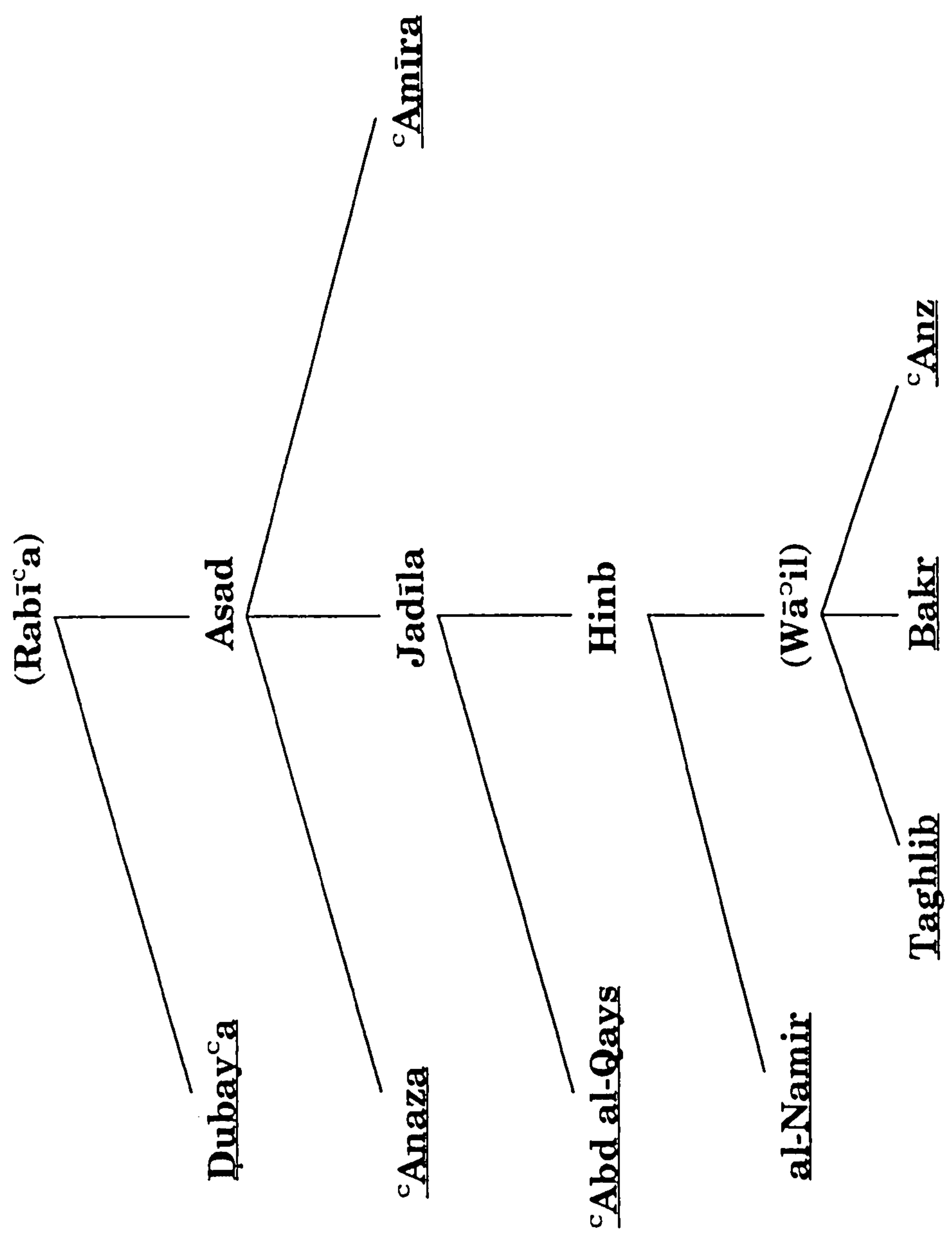


Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.

□



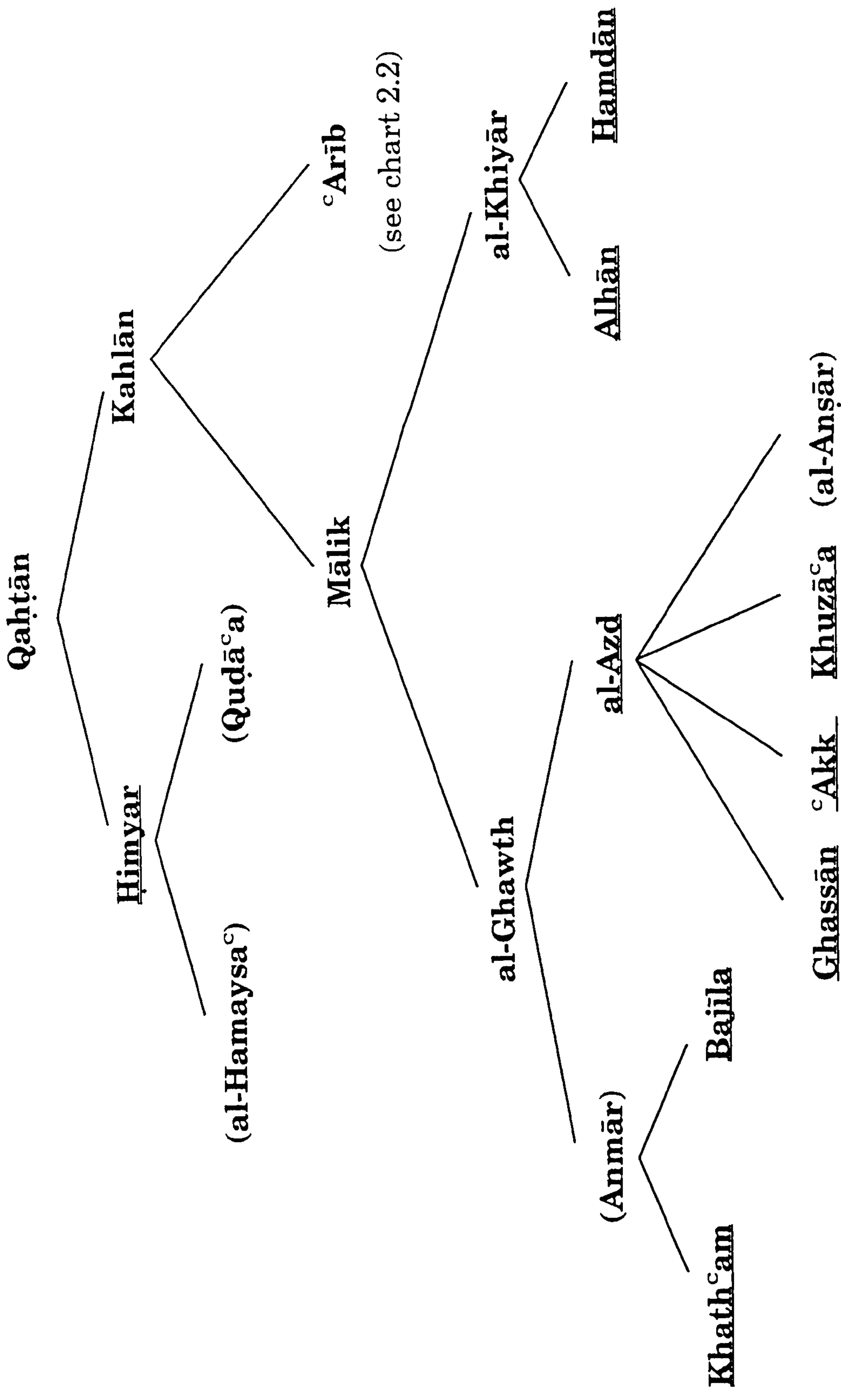
1.4 The genealogy of Rabīʿa



(see chart 3.1)

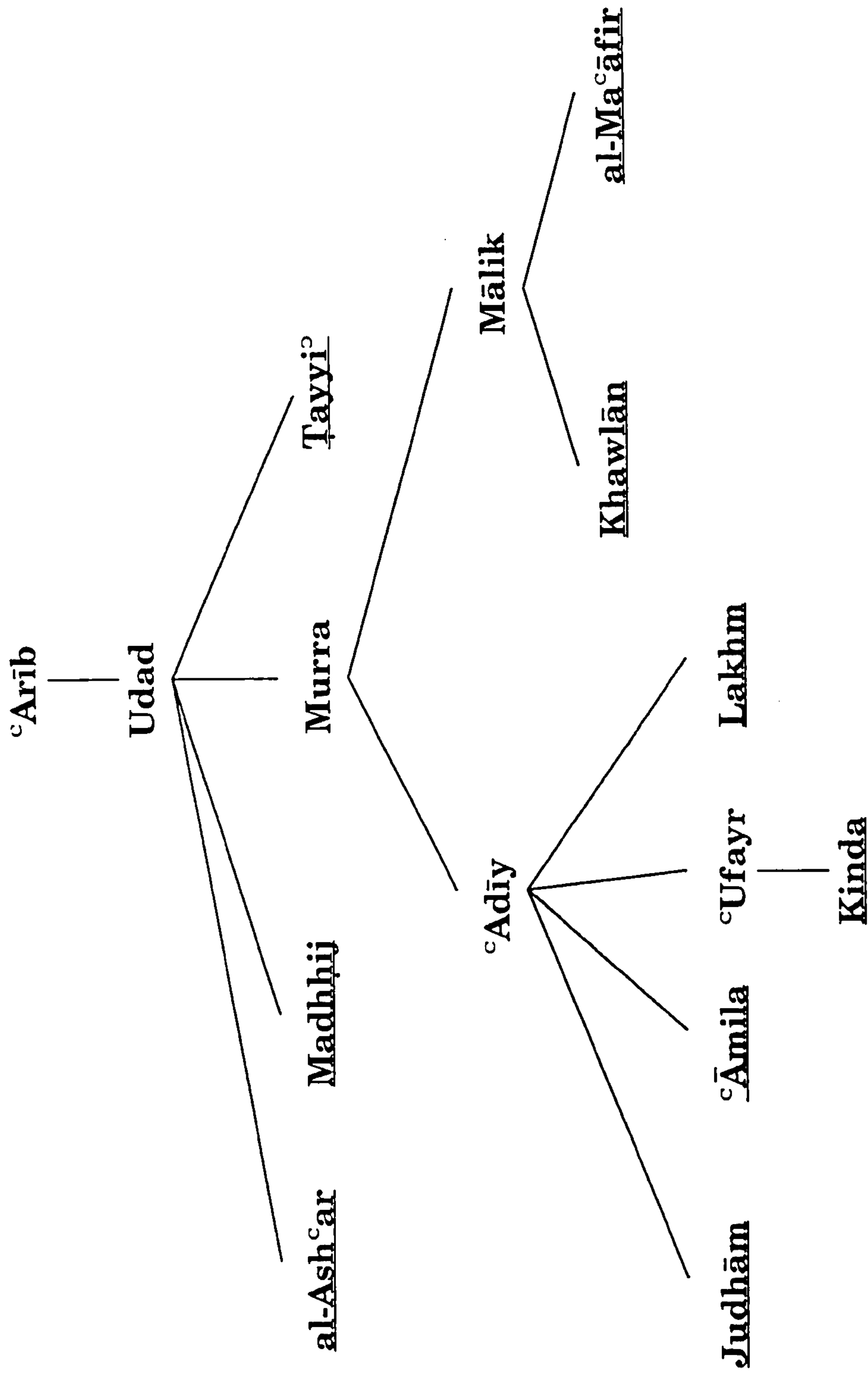
Underlined eponyms appear as corporate groups in pre-conquest material. Names between brackets were tribal group names used in the sources.

## 2.1 The genealogy of Qaḥṭān

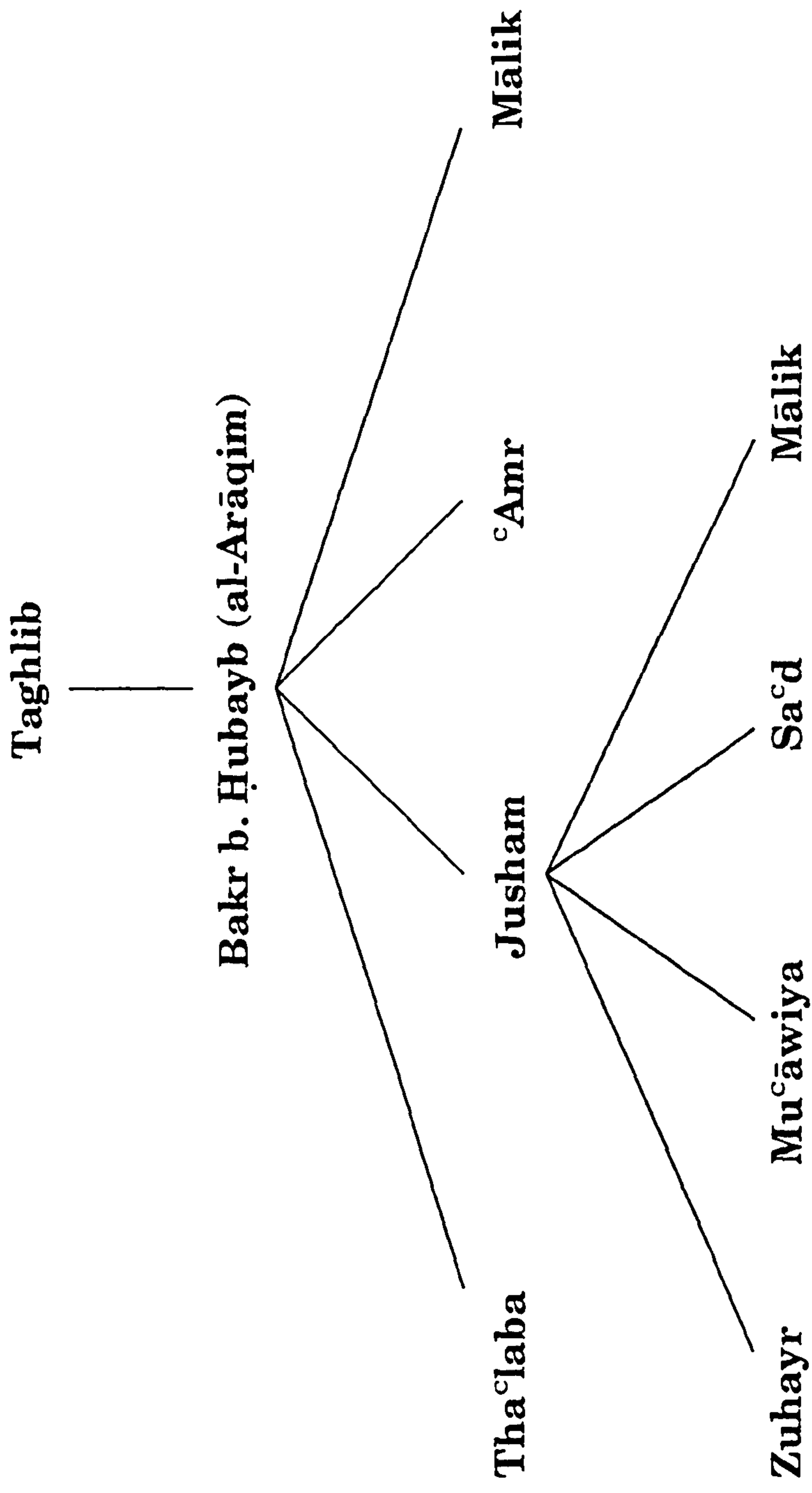




## 2.2 The genealogy of ʿArīb of Kahlān

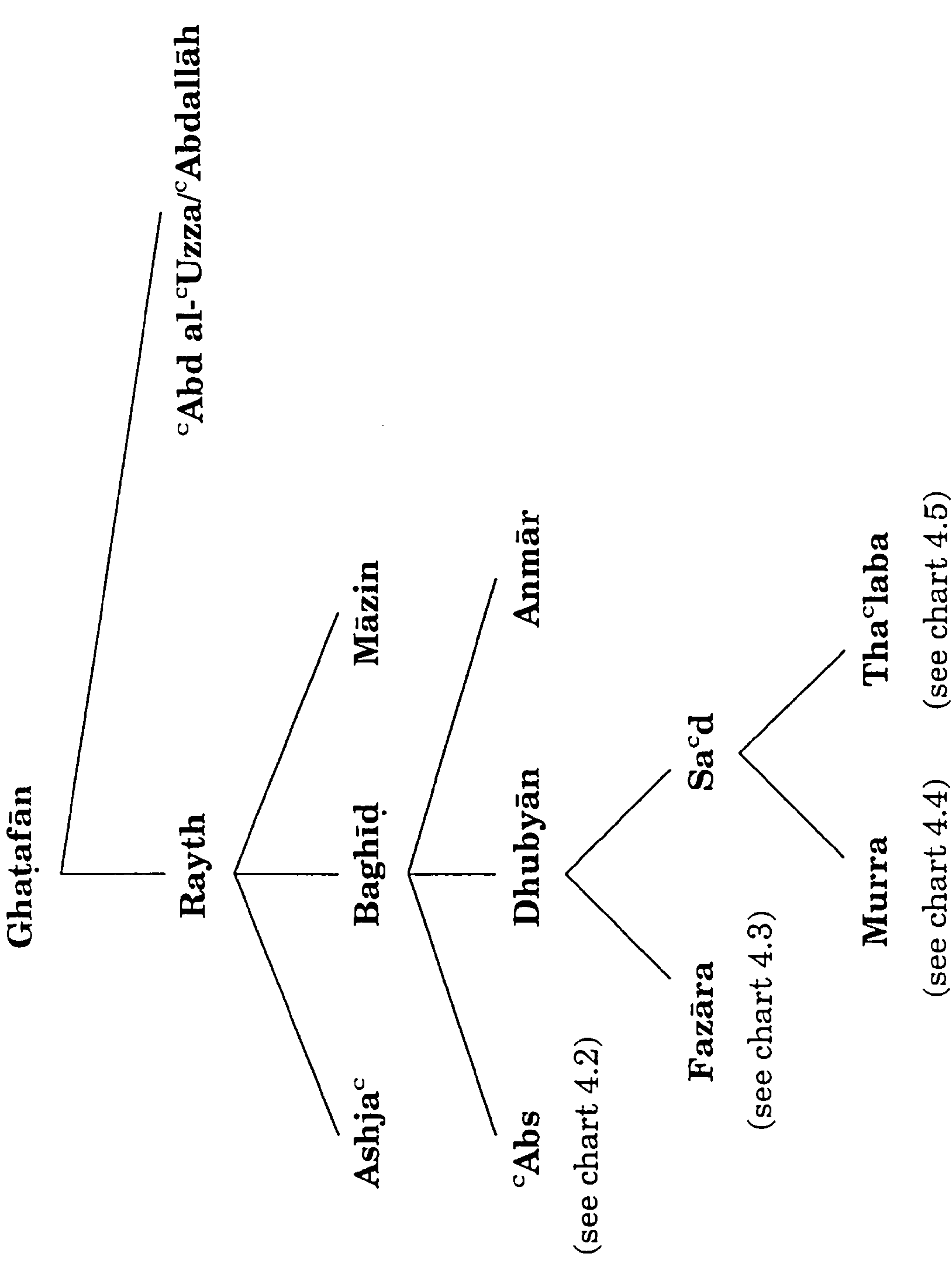


### 3.1 The genealogy of Taghlib

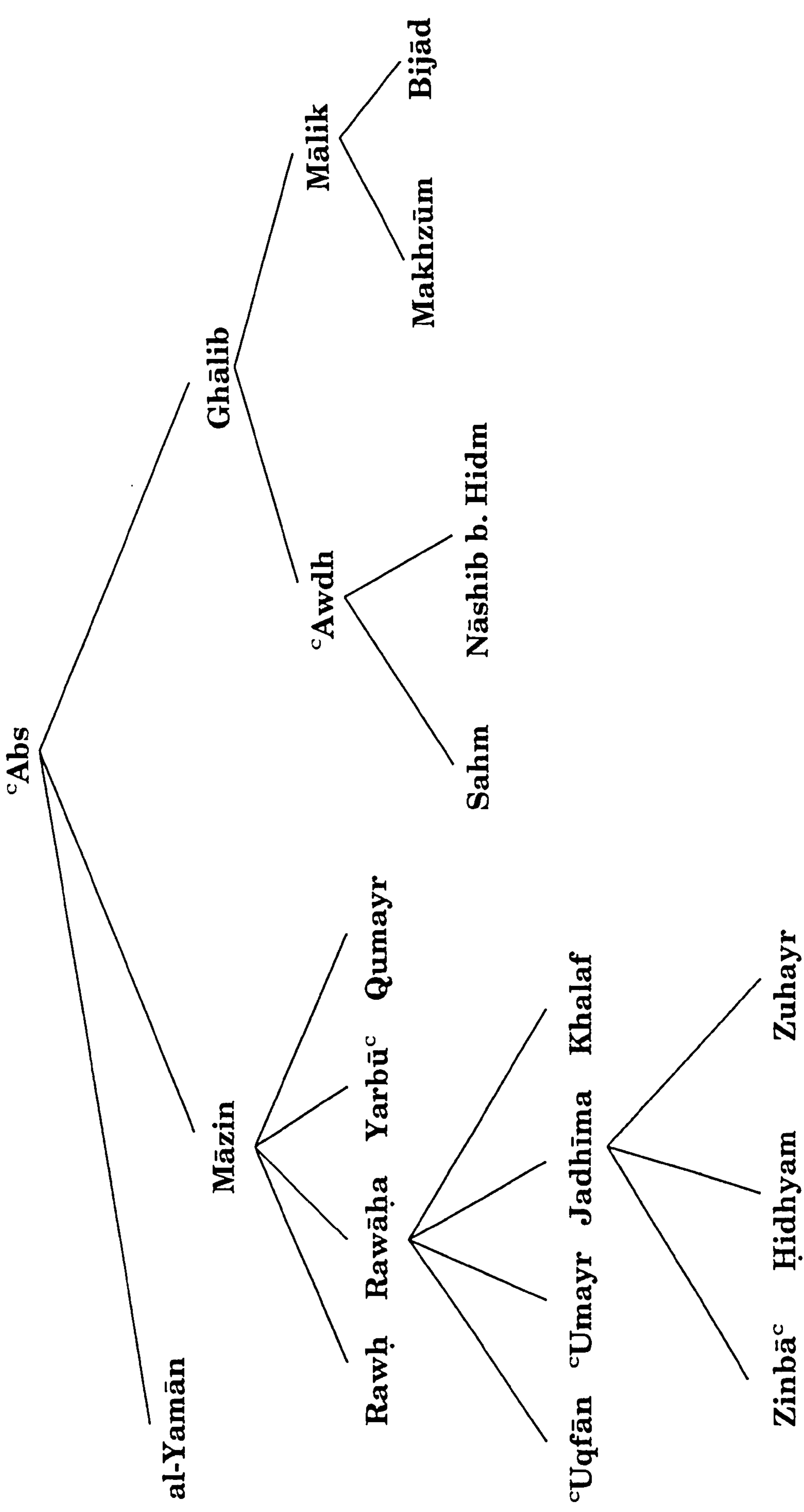




#### 4.1 The genealogy of Ghatafān

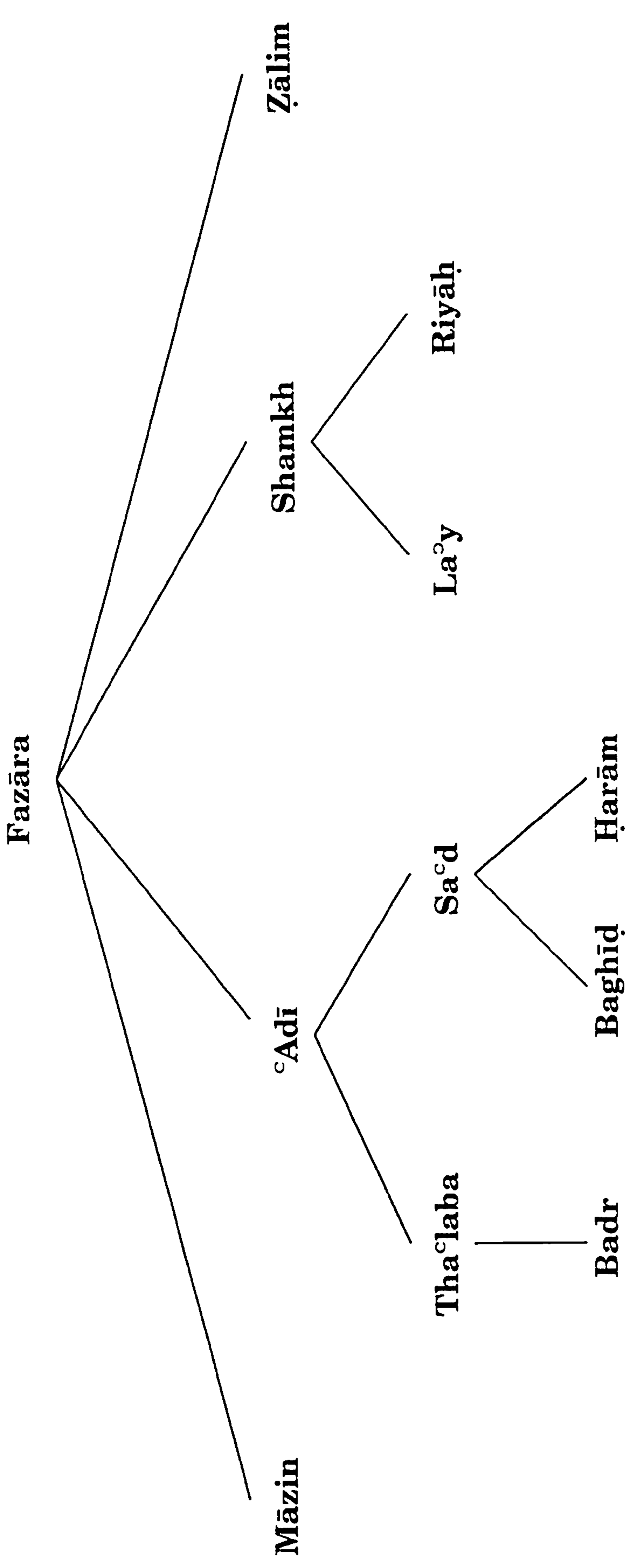


4.2 The genealogy of ʿAbs

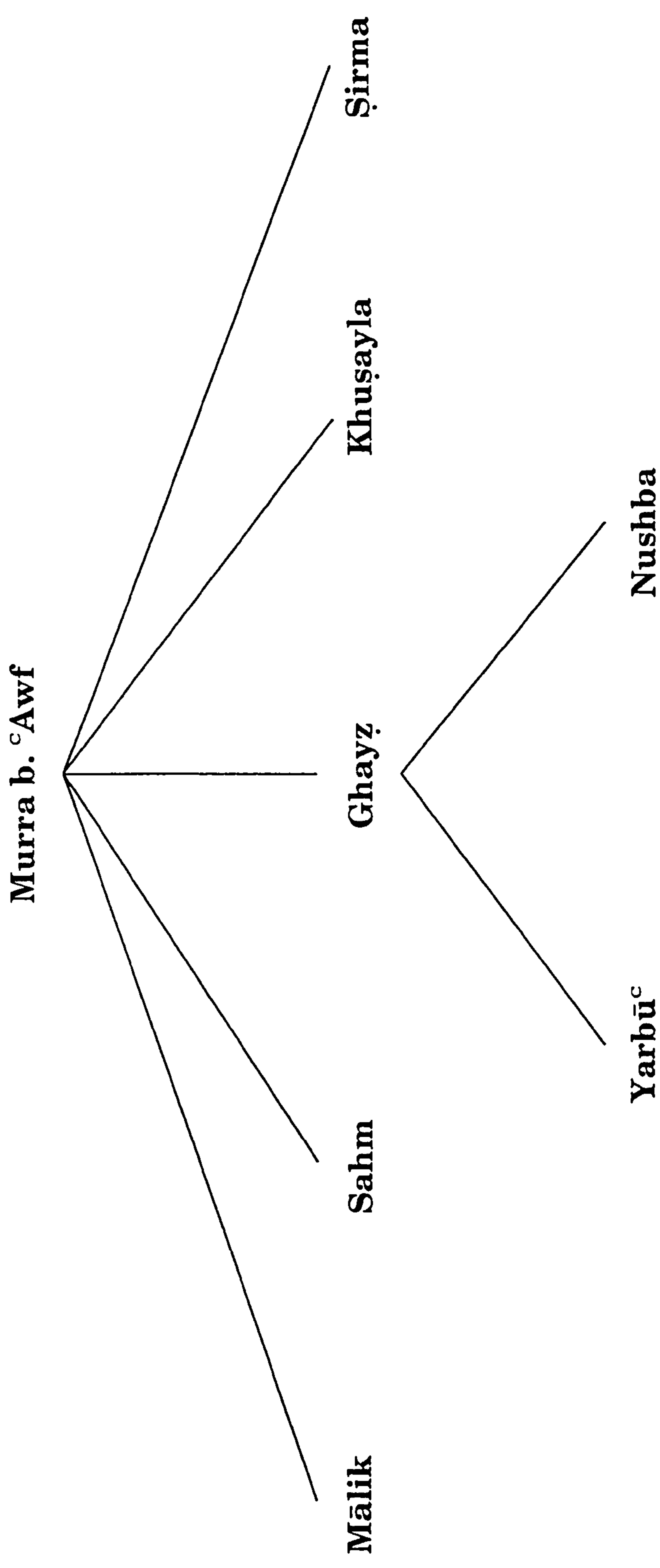




### 4.3 The genealogy of Fazāra

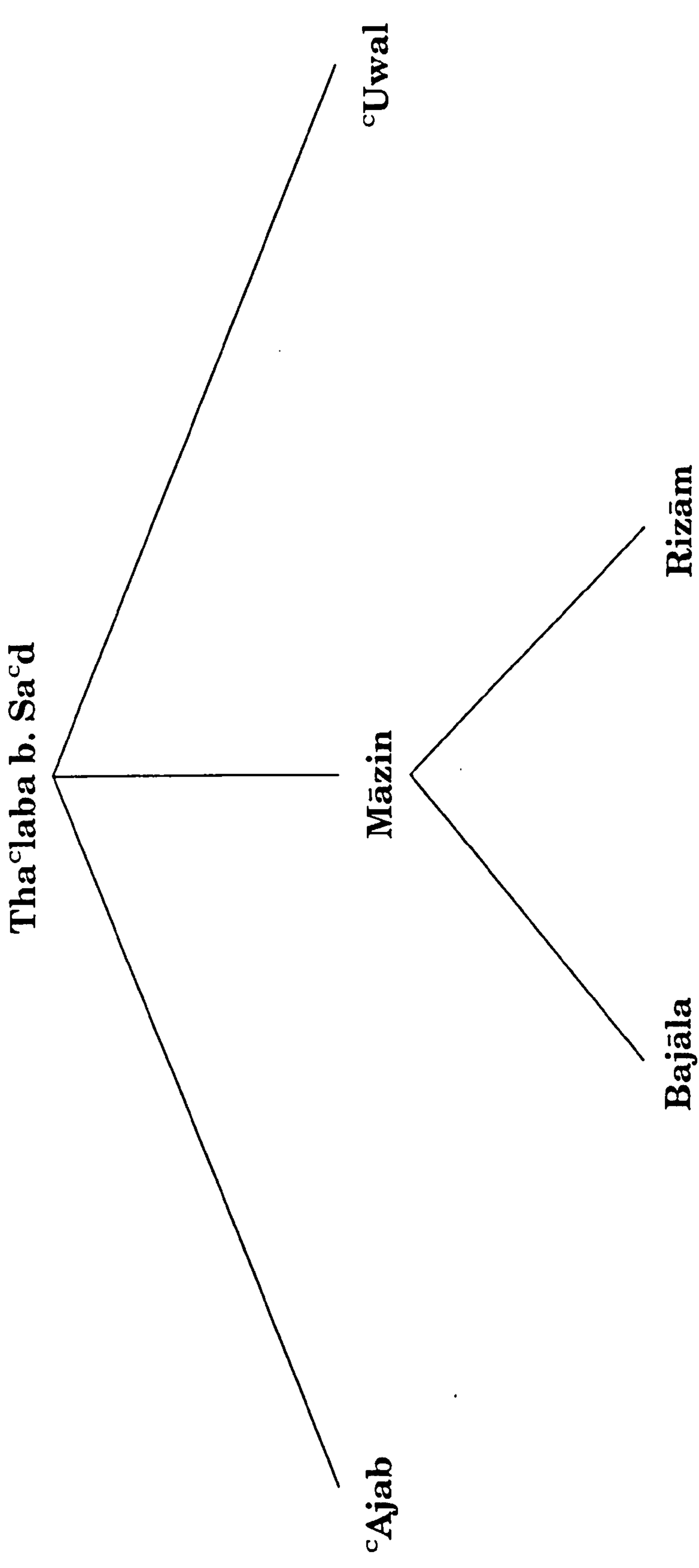


#### 4.4 The genealogy of Murra





#### 4.5 The genealogy of Tha'labā



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