MECCAN TRADE AND ISLAM
Problems of origin and structure

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LAJOS LIGETI

RÓBERT SIMON

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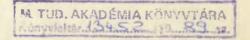
Translated by FEODORA SÓS

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PREFACE

Subject, aim, and scientific antecedents

1. Study of the economic and social history of late antiquity started roughly thirty years ago. It should suffice to point out the randomly disclosed nature of the ownership conditions, stratification, state structure, and production conditions in early Byzantine society and in Sassanid Iran, as well as the many unsolved problems of pre-Islamic society. While knowledge of pre-Islamic society is a precondition for understanding the beginnings of North Arabian history, study of the Byzantine and Sassanid empires, apart from discerning their own historical evolution, is also indispensable for analyzing the society of the newly emerging Arab society.

The study of trade, more accurately, of long-distance trade through state channels is an important element in the comparative economico- and socio-historical investigation of this age. Long-distance trade played an important role in the foreign policy of the two great powers, Iran and Byzantium. On the other hand, this trade, through the production of luxury and prestige goods, the vicinity of the trade routes, mediation and transport, and through some other factors affected quite a large number of primitive, archaic societies situated between the two great powers. These two powers, mostly in the interest of organizing and securing long-distance trade, strove to enter into alliance with them. In the course of this process a great variety of (ideological, military, etc.) links came into being between them and the extremely heterogeneous "third camp", the analysis of which is of fundamental importance for the study of these societies.

The Quraysh tribe—which at the time of Muḥammad's appearance controlled transit trade across the Arabian peninsula—joined this long-distance trade by taking advantage of the possibilities offered by a, in this area rare, "world-historical" moment.

So far, research has not succeeded in finding a satisfactory answer to the problem of the genesis of long-distance Meccan trade operating on the basis of traditional tribal society. The historical importance of the solution of these problems lies in the basic role played by Meccan trade in the genesis of Islam and in the beginnings of North Arabian historical movement. The subject of this work is the study of these two closely related questions within the scope of the above mentioned complex problem.

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In the solution of the first question there arises the following thematic–methodological consideration, which has been neglected by earlier research. Study of the development of trade is inseparable from the study of the late ancient and early medieval "history of the world", for Meccan intermediary trade had been part of the famous East–West trade circuit and therefore Mecca's trade was closely bound to the struggle for power of the neighbouring great empires and their allies of buffer states (Abyssinia, Yemen, the Ghassānids and Lakhmids). Study of the development of economic activity is for this very reason unimaginable without an analysis of the 6th-century history of the powers on the frontiers and in the immediate vicinity of the Arabian peninsula. Mecca could gradually join transit trade in this area only by ousting its rivals. This is the only possible method of studying the development of Meccan trade which can account for and prove (in contrast to theories built solely on Arabic sources, but not taking into consideration the contemporary "history of the world" and thereby unable to find an acceptable scientific explanation) that the development of Meccan trade and the sudden change in North Arabian history were not *ex nihilo* events, but were in a close causal relationship with the history of the neighbouring powers.

In analyzing Meccan trade, we shall compare it with the activities of "local markets" *(aswāq)* operating on the Arabian peninsula and try to define the concrete differences between the isolated small-scale markets of tribal society and the commercial city of Mecca also existing on tribal basis, but serving the state controlled foreign trade of the surrounding great powers. This will involve the typology of local markets operating on the Arabian peninsula at the time of Meccan trade. When studying the qualitatively distinguished Meccan trade, we shall examine the internal organization, the externally determined features of trade, and the relationship between trade and traditional tribal society.

2. Relatively little could be utilized from the results of earlier research in the solution of our task. The value of the answers to the first question was determined by the fact that investigators relied on North Arabic sources, and only recently has the need for a scientific investigation of external conditions been expressed by non-Arabists. The majority of the investigators have either unquestioningly adopted the legendary and chronologically unreliable reports of the Arabic sources or, by accepting the aetiological story interpreting *sūra* 106 of the Koran of certain Arabic sources, dated the organization of Meccan trade and the urbanization of Mecca at the beginning of the 6th century.

With respect to the study of the second question the following objective and theoretical errors and deficiencies should be pointed out:

The first error is the usual orientalist interpretation of Meccan trade. Taking into consideration the role of Meccan trade in the genesis of Islam, and that after the conquests and prior to European infiltration only commercial fortune and its twin, wealth accumulated through usury (unmasked by Muḥammadan prohibition), these antediluvial forms of capital, had existed in developing Arab society, it is essential to interpret correctly these forms of capital.

The second error is that research failed to distinguish long-distance trade from

the trade of local markets. The *sui generis* secret of Mecca as a trading city can be solved only by raising and answering this question. Namely, the problem is that Mecca existed on primitive, traditionally tribal foundations, but its life was ensured by the mediation of trade between archaic societies with highly developed state structures. The solution of the problem which arises from this state of affairs may have two false alternatives: to explain Mecca's character either by its presence within traditional tribalism or by its serving the state-controlled foreign trade of more highly developed society, that is, by Mecca's existence elsewhere. Again the correct interpretation cannot be unequivocal as both factors, neither being quantifiably definable, played a role. This problem is investigated in the third part of the book.

The third erroneously investigated problem-complex leads already to the strictly economical and organizational aspects of Meccan trade and of Mecca as a city. Research so far *(a)* either was superficial or it entirely neglected to study the organizational forms of the Quraysh on the one hand, and trade contacts between Byzantium and Iran on the other, that is, from where to where did the Quraysh send its caravans and how it contacted with the receivers of the goods; *(b)* evaluated without satisfactory evidence the role and volume of Meccan trade.

Method of research

It inevitably follows from the nature of the task that analysis had to be based on historical, geographical, literary, hagiographic, and legal sources, as well as on contemporary epigraphic material.

By completely breaking with the earlier method of investigation relying entirely on Arabic sources, in the elaboration of the first problem, I used in a complementary manner the Arabic and non-Arabic (South Arabic, Byzantine, Syrian, Abyssinian) sources, while in the analysis of the second problem, I tried to interpret appropriately the hitherto neglected Arab historical traditions.

The character of the two problems demanded that the historical-philological aspect determine the analysis of the first problem, while in the investigation of the second, philologically confirmed theoretical summarization played the major role.

It followed from the nature of the sources that with respect to the first question, methodologically only an indirect elaboration was possible and thus the established relative chronology could also be confirmed only indirectly. With respect to the prehistory of Mecca, Arabic sources furnish artistically detailed, intricately elaborated, but unacceptable reports, whereas non-Arabic sources of the 6th century fail to mention Mecca separately. Since we know that Mecca could and did gradually join East–West trade only after the successive elimination of its immediate rivals (Himyarite Yemen; the tribal alliance of Kinda; Yemen conquered by the Abyssinians; the Ghassānids and Lakhmids), methodologically there remained only one way open: to investigate the trade activities of the rivals in time and space, as well as the economic and political influence of these rivals in Central

and North Arabia, and the time when this influence had come to an end. This process covering several decades can be traced mainly with the help of non-Arabic sources. But the internal realization of this rare historical moment, the lengthy process of the organization of Meccan trade, can be reconstructed with more or less accuracy from North Arabic sources.

In the investigation of the second problem, it is of basic importance to distinguish the various modes and types of contacts manifest in the exchange of goods among the communities. In the process of differentiation and definition it was necessary to investigate the participants of the contact, their relation to one another, the possible predominance of one party, the mode of contact, and whether or not these contacts can be described in economic terms. In the course of this investigation, a sharp distinction had to be made between the forms of contact, at best capable of barter trade too, which serve defence, on the one hand, and the supplementation of food and the long-distance trade of Mecca which can be described in economic terms, on the other. When elaborating this second problem, a number of so far not used geographical, historical, literary, and ethnographic material had to be investigated.

Some points considered worthy
of further research

1. It has been proved that the beginning of North Arabian history may be considered and studied as an organic part of the contemporary "history of the world". This means that in the investigation of pre-Islamic society too, increasing attention has to be paid to the manifold contacts with the neighbouring societies.

2. It has also been proved that Meccan trade was determined by external conditions and some fundamental conclusions have been drawn concerning the trade policy of the neighbouring great powers and their allies and vassals on the Arabian peninsula in the 6th century. Reference was made to the analysis of the trade activities of Himyarite Yemen, the tribal alliance of Kinda and the Lakhmids, and to the resultant negative conclusions with respect to the independent trade and other policy of North Arabia. Concrete analyses include results of the investigation of the inscription Ry 506.

3. The internal organization of Meccan trade has been presented in a new light. It has been proved that Mecca can be thought of only as a trading city (or more accurately, as a city of tradesmen), that is to say, it did not exist as a city before starting independent trade. Internal realization of external historical possibilities with the help of the institution of *hums* (amphictyony) and the new types of economic agreements (*īlāfs*) have been studied. The traditional *īlāf* story has been revised. The internal evidences of the organization of long-distance trade in the service of the great powers have been collected, systematized, and analyzed for the first time.

4. On the basis of paragraphs 2 and 3, a relative chronology of Meccan trade from the 6th to the beginning of the 7th century has been compiled.

A structural distinction has been made between the trade of Mecca and that of the local markets on the Arabian peninsula. This is the first complex attempt to typologize the latter and to distinguish contacts between *(a)* the nomads and the great powers; *(b)* the nomads and the oasis dwellers; *(c)* nomads and nomads. The nature of these contacts can be described by a "forced reciprocity" determined by the nomads.

A new analysis of the participants, goods, supposed volume and mode of intermediation in Meccan trade is presented. It is used as a starting point for characterizing Meccan trade as a long-distance trade in luxury goods mediated between foreign producers and consumers, and this on the basis and within the framework of a traditional tribal society, where not even a most primitive state structure existed to warrant and protect its safe functioning. In other words, we are dealing here with a trade built not on production, but on the role of the middleman between alien communities, a trade qualitatively different from the turnover of the local markets of its own society which at best exchanged use-values. On the boundaries of its own original tribalism and of alien archaic empires, Mecca, as a politically neutral "port of trade" type of trading city, joined the state-controlled foreign trade of prestige and luxury goods on demand by the neighbouring powers.

5. Meccan intermediary trade is compared with the conserved tribal structure. The capitalistic theory is rejected, and it is noted that this trade means the development and operation of "purely monetary wealth" from which its "transformation into capital" does not in the least follow, since the possibilities of monetary wealth are fundamentally determined by the structure, development or stagnation of the given mode of production. To prove this, in Chapter 3 I analyze the exchange conditions within Mecca and attempt to prove that quite obviously they came into being according to the norms of tribal society.
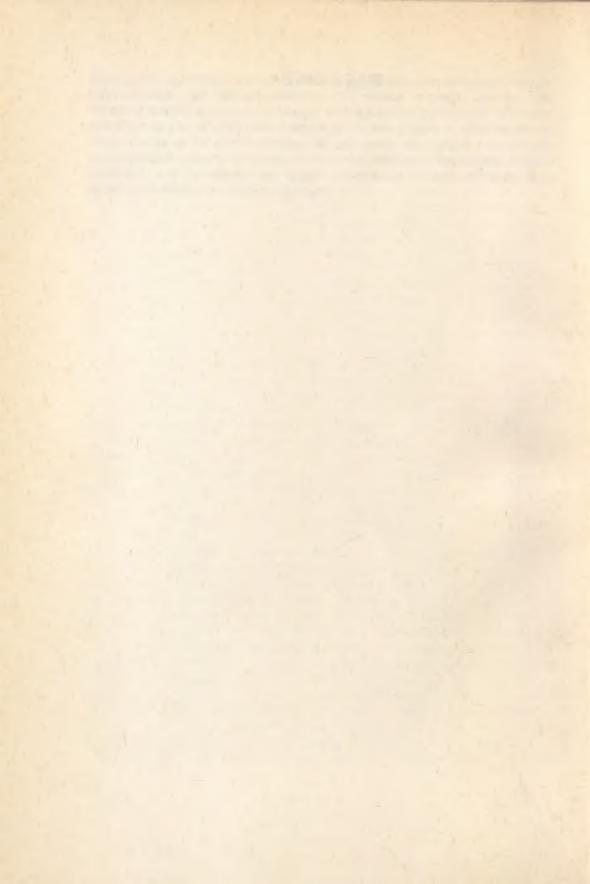
6. Finally, as an extension of coherent research, three appendices are included, all of them dealing with important experiments of Muḥammadan Islam: *(a)* with exchange operations in Mecca on the eve of Islam as depicted in some Koran passages; *(b)* with *mu'ākhāh*, the earliest organizational form of the developing Muslim community, the *umma*, a form based no longer on tribal but not yet on local organization; *(c)* with the problems of ownership after the conquests started by Muḥammad. Attempted solutions to both problems only serve to emphasize the open-ended nature of Muḥammadan Islam and its existence as pure potential in-so-far as it has already transcended tribalism and has yet to assume the characteristics of a definite new social formation. This was unequivocally the result of the hostile impact of monetary wealth on fundamental tribal community. The success of conquests, started out of necessity, were determined by this fruitful openness, but with regard to the three basic elements of the developing empire, Muḥammadan Islam (beside the ancient eastern heritage of Sassanid Iran, and the Byzantine element combining the ancient eastern trends with Hellenistic and the late antique trends), became just as determining as it was determined.

7. Without being able to draw far-reaching conclusions about the development of social forms from the material presented in this book, the phase of Muḥammadan

Islam can be considered an experimental step on the way from tribalism towards a state structure, and the antagonists in this process (nomadic tribalism and monetary wealth) as proved convincingly by Ibn Khaldūn's philosophy of history, will play major roles in the state structure of the later empire. In other words, the circumstances of its genesis explain the apparently paradoxical "secret" (the intertwining of nomadic conquests and monetary wealth) of the classical Arabian statehood, and the external, not organic relations of this state structure to its agricultural element acquired by conquest.

PART ONE

FORERUNNERS AND RIVALS OF MECCA IN ORIENTAL TRADE

(External conditions of Meccan trade)

Introduction

Research has so far been unable to solve the problem of the origin, conditions, and chronology of Meccan trade. Meccan trade on the eve of the appearance of Islam seems at first a natural activity. It becomes a problem only when the question of origin is raised, or when we try to determine the nature and effect of trade based on tribal society, that is, the relationship between Meccan trade and Islam. For a long time Meccan trade posed no problem because it was not studied in its true context and because the above questions were never asked. In other words, the problem became a truism without being solved, mainly because Orientalism in its formative period was merely the hobby of missionaries, tradesmen, and university teachers, and became a science only late, at the end of the last century. At first, more or less out of necessity, its subject was restricted to the study of Islam, and its method was *ab ovo* determined by—at that time dominant—positivism. Middle Eastern colonization by the industrialized Western powers (mainly by Britain and France) and the consequent need for a more thorough acquaintance with the past and present of the Arab countries were indispensable for the development of this discipline. Because of the artificial sustenance of Europe's "sick man", the Turkish Empire (it is well-known that the Arab countries, with the exception of Morocco, were conquered by the Turkish Empire at the beginning of the 16th century), the Western powers penetrated this area relatively late. In other words, the scientific study of Arab countries started at the time when its liberal free-competition period of capitalism had ended, and the aspirations at totality and historical dynamism, which characterized social sciences in the first half of the last century, were about to disappear. When, in the last decades of the 19th century scholarly Islam-research (mainly through the work of the Hungarian Goldziher and the Dutch Snouck-Hurgronje) from the outset became a positivist discipline focussing on isolated details,[1] the few significant achievements (e.g. of Goldziher, Snouck-Hurgronje, Wellhausen, and Becker) may have rightly been considered exceptions to the rule. This restriction which has prevented historical approach to determine the various phenomena in relation to the whole, is closely related to the fact that because of the conditions of its genesis, Islamic studies have not formed an integral part of the study of the general history of religion, of history and of the philosophy of history.

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Just to illustrate this state of affairs, the Orientalist Congress in Cambridge in 1954 included for the first time on its agenda the relationship between Orientalism and history. A succinct description of the situation was given by B. Lewis, professor of the History of the Near and Middle East at the University of London: "It has been remarked that the history of Arabs has been written in Europe chiefly by historians who knew no Arabic, or by Arabists who knew no history."[2] In his excellent theoretical paper presented to the Congress, Cahen took stock of the situation and pointed out the tasks ahead. He stated that there exists a real demarcation line between eastern and western historical research, caused by and resulting in the unbelievable backwardness of Islamic studies, due mainly to the lack of research concerning the history of socio-economic development in the Middle East.[3] This is particularly true where the study of pre-Islamic conditions on the Arabian peninsula is concerned. This is rather surprising, especially when we consider the boom in the publication of South Arabic inscriptions in recent decades and our current knowledge of the role of the two great powers and of the buffer states, that is, of contemporary "world history".[4] The study of the socio-economic conditions of early Islam would not only be of fundamental importance for the exploration of its nature, but also indispensable for the analysis of the developing Arab Empire and of the various phases of the Caliphate.

The failure of Marxist Islam-research was determined by the vulgar Marxist (Stalinist) historical approach.[5] With the exception of a brief period, Marx and Engels did not pay close attention to Arab history and to the Islam, but in some of their letters written in 1853 and in a long note in Engels's "On the history of early Christianity", they repeatedly referred to the development of Arab history which clearly shows that they considered it a typically Asiatic form of development. It has to be stressed that up to quite recently research has made no use of their points of view. Engels, who at that time was studying eastern languages, dealt in two letters written to Marx with the problem of the rise of Islam in relation to the transit trade in the peninsula (see letters dated May 6 and June 6, 1853,[6] to which Marx replied in a broader context in two letters, June 2 and 14, 1853).[7] In his note in "On the history of early Christianity", Engels to some degree modified and interpreted one of his earlier statements of 1853.[8]

First of all, Engels's two observations in his letters to Marx, based on erroneous or insufficient information, need to be put into their correct perspective, though characteristically neither he nor Marx had used these information in any of their published works, so they may be considered simply as notes on their readings.

1. One observation concerns the supposed ancient Arab monotheism: "Was den Religionsschwindel angeht, so scheint aus den alten Inschriften im Süden, in denen die altnational-arabische Tradition des Monotheismus (wie bei den amerikanischen Indianern) noch vorherrscht, und von der die hebräische nur ein *kleiner Teil* ist, hervorzugehn, dass Mohammeds religiöse Revolution, wie *jede* religiöse Bewegung, *formell eine Reaktion* war, vorgebliche Rükkehr zum Alten, Einfachen."[9]

2. This observation is closely linked to the emphatically cautious assumption, referring also to Marx, that perhaps between 200 and 600 A.D., but quite certainly at the time of Muḥammad, South Arabian trade had deteriorated and a conflict had arisen between the Bedouins and the town dwelling "fellahs". "Die zur Römerzeit noch blühenden Städte des südlichen Arabiens waren im siebten Jahrhundert wahre Wüsten von Ruinen; die benachbarten Beduinen hatten in 500 Jahren rein mythische, fabelhafte Traditionen über ihren Ursprung sich angeeignet (s. den Koran und den arabischen Geschichtsschreiber Novairi), und das Alphabet, in dem die dortigen Inschriften geschrieben, war fast total unbekannt, obwohl *kein andres da war*, so dass de facto das *Schreiben* in Vergessenheit geraten. Drgl. Sachen setzen neben einem durch etwaige allgemeine Handelsverhältnisse veranlassten supersed-ing auch noch eine ganz direkte gewaltsame Zerstörung voraus, wie sie nur durch die äthiopische Invasion zu erklären ist. Die Vertreibung der Abessinier geschah um 40 Jahre vor Muhammed und war offenbar der erste Akt des erwachenden arabischen Nationalgefühls, das ausserdem durch persische Invasionen von Norden her, die fast bis nach Mekka dragen, gestachelt war. Ich werde die Geschichte Muhammeds selbst erst dieser Tage vornehmen; bis jetzt scheint sie mir aber den Charakter einer beduinischen Reaktion gegen die ansässigen, aber verkommenden Fellahs der Städte zu tragen, die damals auch religiös sehr zerfallen waren und mit einem verkommenen Naturkultus ein verkommenes Judentum und Christentum vermischten."[10]

This hypothesis of Engels was based on incomplete or erroneous data, but as later we shall deal with these questions in greater detail, it should suffice to indicate here that, among other things, it was the decline and consequent elimination of Yemenite trade which made it possible for Mecca to rise to the status of a trade centre. Thus, the genesis of Islam was not a Bedouin reaction, but rather the reaction of trade activity against traditional tribal society. As far as ancient Arab monotheism is concerned, the term "an alleged return" has to be emphasized, as expressed in the "Abraham-religion" *(millat Ibrāhīm)*, in one of the most important parts of the process of separation and growing independence of Muḥammadian Islam.[11] It is an alleged return, but not to the true bases—since to assume such bases in tribal society is in itself a historically unprovable theoretical contradiction. It must be emphasized that, by assuming ancient national Arab monotheism, Engels had expressed the accepted and undebated contemporary concept, which was scientifically disproved for the first time by Goldziher (published in Hungarian in 1881 and in German in 1888).[12]

Far more important than the errors rooted in the backwardness of contemporary investigations, are the historical philosophical thoughts of Marx and Engels formulated as a result of Engels's observations concerning Islam. Marx defined the real problems in his reply to Engels's first letter: "In bezug auf die Hebräer und Araber war dein Brief mir sehr interessant. Es lassen sich übrigens *(1) allgemeines* Verhältnis nachweisen bei allen orientalischen stämmen, zwischen settlement des einen Teils derselben und der Fortdauer im Nomadisieren bei dem andern, seit die Geschichte geschicht.*(2)* Zur Zeit Mohammeds hatte sie der Handelsweg von

Europa nach Asien bedeutend modifiziert, und die Städte Arabiens, die am Handel nach Indien etc. grossen Anteil nahmen, befanden sich kommerziell im Verfall, was jedenfalls mit Anstoss gab. *(3)* Was die Religion angeht, so wird sich die Frage in die allgemeine und darum leich beantworbare auflösen: Warum *erscheint* die Geschichte des Orients als eine Geschichte der Religionen?"[13] Hence, in one of his later works, Engels gives a more precise and basically still valid answer to the above mentioned fundamental question in relation to Islam, and at the same time places into proper perspective the concept of constant religious return to the old and to the simple. In his work, "On the history of early Christianity", Engels writes about a peculiar feature of the movements of medieval peasants and urban plebeians, namely, that although their professed aim was to return to the degenerate early Christian conditions, in actual fact they represented concrete secular interests and, what is essential, they wanted to introduce social changes. In this relation Engels drew an interesting comparison between these movements and the religious uprisings of the Muslim world: "Einen eigentümlichen Gegensatz hierzu bilden die religiösen Aufstände der muhammedanischen Welt, namentlich in Afrika. Der Islam ist eine auf Orientalen, speziell Araber zugeschnittene Religion, also einerseits auf handel- und gewerbetreibende Städter, andrerseits auf noma-disierende Beduinen. Darin liegt aber der Keim einer periodisch wiederkehrenden Kollision. Die Städter werden reich, üppig, lax in Beobachtung des "Gesetzes". Die Beduinen, arm und aus Armut sittenstreng, schauen mit Neid und Gier auf diese Reichtümer und Genüsse. Dann tun sie sich zusammen unter einem Propheten, einem Mahdi, die Abgefallnen zu züchtigen, die Actung vor dem Zeremonialgesetz und dem wahren Glauben wiederherzustellen und zum Lohn die Schätze der Abtrünnigen einzuheimsen. Nach hundert Jahren stehn sie natürlich genau da, wo jene Abtrünnigen standen; eine neue Glaubensreinigung ist nötig, ein neuer Mahdi steht auf, das Spiel geht von vorne an. So ist's geschehn von den Eroberungszügen der afrikanischen Almoraviden und Almohaden nach Spanien bis zum letzten Mahdi von Chartum, der den Engländern so erfolgreich trozte. So oder ähnlich verhielt es mit den Aufständen in Persien und andern mohammedanischen Ländern. Es sind alles religiös verkleidete Bewegungen, entspringend aus ökono-mischen Ursachen; aber, auch wenn siegreich, lassen sie die alten ökonomischen Bedingungen unangerührt fortbestehen. Es bleibt also alles beim alten, und die Kollision wird periodisch. In den Volkserhebungen des christlichen Westen dagegen dient die religiöse Verkleidung nur als Fahne und Maske für Angriffe auf eine veraltende ökonomische Ordnung; diese wird schliesslich gestürzt, eine neue kommt auf, die Welt kommt vorwärts."[14]

This statement, published in 1894–1895 sums up (with the exception of the last sentence of course) in a surprisingly accurate way the central idea of Ibn Khaldūn's (1332–1406) philosophy of history: the basic contrast between Bedouins and townsfolk engaged mainly in trade, the unceasing warfare generated by this contrast, the ideologically predetermined nature of this animosity that apparently left the economic foundations intact and differed qualitatively from the religion-tinted medieval movements in Western Europe.

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The scientifically untrue but noteworthy formulation of the problems by Marx and Engels were not utilized by Marxist oriented researchers whose work was characterized by incorrect answers to fallaciously formulated questions.[15] In the second half of the 1920s a number of Soviet Arabists, under the influence of Pokrovskiy's (1868–1932) concept, devoted great attention to the trade activities of Mecca and to these they ascribed the rise of Islam. The basic errors of Pokrovskiy's concept were the identification of trade activity and mercantile capital with capitalism, that is, with industrial capital, and the study of ancient and medieval trade as an introductory stage of capitalism. In their works written at the end of the 1920s Klimovich, Dityakin and Bolotnikov tried to work out a mercantile capitalistic theory of the rise of Islam on the basis of Pokrovskiy's erroneous concept.[16] The erroneous formulation of the problem (considering "mercantile capitalism" as capitalism and, all things concerned, Islam as a capitalistic ideology) could not provide a true solution. In addition to the fact that they made no attempt to explain the development of Meccan trade, they were unable to answer questions concerning the characteristic features of long distance transit trade in a traditional tribal society, and to name the factors which, due to the interaction between trade activity and tribal society, determine the character of Islam and of the development of the Arab Empire. We must, however, stress that the theory of so-called "mercantile capitalism" nevertheless represents a much closer approach to the problem than later theories, because it recognizes and admits the existence and fundamental role of Meccan trade. On ideological and administrative grounds, Stalin, Zhdanov, and Kirov expunged Pokrovskiy's theory in 1934, and from this date Soviet Orientalists have avoided the study of Meccan trade and concentrated instead on craftsmanship and slavery in Mecca. The centre of attention was shifted from Mecca to Medina, that is, to Hijāz. The dogmatic concept of feudalism was extended to Arab development.[17] Two different theories of feudalism were put forward: according to one,[18] feudalism developed directly from primitive society as early as in the 6th century, with Islam as its product. According to the other theory elaborated by S. P. Tolstov,[19] at the time of the disintegration of Arab tribal society the germs of the antique slave-holding mode of production had appeared mainly in Mecca and Medina, which, however, could not develop and—after the conquests— gave way to feudalism.[20] These theories precluded an approach to the real problem, namely, the beginnings and the role of Meccan trade, thus also preventing an acceptable explanation of the genesis of Islam.

In the strictly speaking Orientalist literature there is not even an essay or monograph on the subject of the complex socio-history of the development of Meccan trade, through the contributions of Lammens, Watt, Wolf, Afghānī, and mainly Kister are indeed very useful. The majority of researchers either tacitly accept the legendary information of Arabic sources useless from the point of view of accurate dating or, taking sources linked to the *sūra* 106 and its interpretation in the *īlāf*-story at their face value, put the organization of Meccan trade and the evolution of Mecca into a trade centre at the beginning of the 6th century.[21]

The problem of Meccan trade can be summed up briefly as follows: what is the

relationship between trade activity and Islam, and through it, the evolution of the Arab Empire?

In the analysis of the problem two basic questions have to be investigated. One is the development of Meccan trade activity and clarification of its chronology, the other is the determination of the nature of this trade, and the study of the effect of economic activity on traditional tribal society (on the trading Quraysh directly, and indirectly, through Islam, on the Bedouin tribes pursuing nomadic economic activity).

The study of these two problems is important for more than one reason. First of all, it helps to reconstruct the ascertainable beginnings of North Arabian history, since the history of Mecca and the development of Meccan trade are among the basic problems of 6th-century Arab history.

The second reason—which at the same time determines the methodological elaboration of the problem—is that Meccan trade forms an inseparable part of late antique and medieval "world history" inasmuch as intermediary trade is part of the famous East–West trade. Consequently, after having joined this intermediary trade, the development of Mecca was determined by the power struggle of the two great empires, Byzantium and Iran. For this very reason the study of the evolution of this trade activity cannot be conceived without the analysis of the 6th-century history of the powers within or in the immediate vicinity of the Arabian peninsula (Byzantium and Iran and their buffer-states, the Ghassānids and Lakhmids, as well as Abyssinia and Yemen). Thorough research has shown that the East–West trade played a very important role in the hostilities between the great powers, and both used any means to keep trade under their direct or indirect control. Therefore, the only way Mecca was able to join transit trade more and more effectively was by the displacement of its rivals. Thus, the process of the development of trade can and should be understood within the framework of contemporary "world history". There is enough convincing evidence to prove that in contrast to theories built solely on Arabic sources, which do not take into account contemporary historical facts and accept the sudden appearance of Meccan trade, the rise of Meccan trade and the beginning of North Arabian history were not bolts from the blue, but were in close causal relationship with the history of the neighbouring powers, i.e., the history of Mecca was part of contemporary "world history".

The third, and from the point of view of application most important reason lies in what may be considered a causal relationship which exists in our opinion, between the genesis of Islam and Meccan trade activity. This relationship summarizes the importance of the problem and at the same time indicates the aspects determining the study of the problem.

The fact that the problem can and must be resolved within the framework of "world history" and the nature of the sources determine both the content and method of our work.

Several excellent reviews have been published on the applicability of Arabic sources to the rise of Islam.[22] The extremely critical attitude of European Arabists with respect to this question is even more appropriate regarding the treatment of

pre-Islamic history. The most important Arabic sources from the aspect of our subject are: pre-Islamic poetry, the scarce references in the Koran, the Sīra, and later historical and geographical works. (The ḥadīth collections and Maghāzī, as material par excellence related to Muḥammad and his companions contain only indirect references.)[23] It is particularly valid for pre-Islamic poetry what is generally true for later written historical works, namely, that they have a unique and exclusive importance as far as treatment of the various (economic, social, cultural) aspects of pre-Islamic Arab society are concerned, but they are of no help in the study of relations between Arab and foreign powers and even less in the establishment of the chronological order in this period of history. We know that the calendar starting with the year of the hijra (622) was introduced by Caliph ʿUmar[24] and before this there was no systematic or accurate chronology. For the Bedouin tribes pursuing nomadic economic activities the year was of no particular importance, the rhythm of their life was determined by the alternation of day and night and the seasons. Whenever, in the poems relating the histories of the tribes, the date of some episode had to be more closely defined, it was related to a famine or to some famous event.[25]

Trading Mecca, however, needed more accurate dating. Yet it appears from the sources that in Mecca there was no systematic and permanent chronology in use—loans and other business transactions were dated from an important event.[26]

There is no accurate dating in the Koran either. Borrowed from the Bible, it speaks about a "thousand years", meaning an indefinite long time.[27] Even after the hijra they continued to count the months and not the years, and only six years after the hijra did the Sīra begin to use years.[28]

All this means that before and during the appearance of Islam there was no stable and reliable means of dating, consequently, for the solution of the problem of chronology the Arabic sources provide merely indirect and supplementary information.

The unreliability of Arabic sources and the lack of trustworthy chronological references have lent, from the point of view of our subject, great importance to non-Arabic sources. Use of these sources has become an absolute necessity in view of the fact—as stressed above in the analysis of the nature of our subject—that the development of Meccan trade is inseparable from the history of the neighbouring powers, hence the problem can and must be solved with a parallel study of the history of the rival powers, and all researchers of 6th-century Arab history ought to keep this in mind.[29]

Utilization of the sources has been determined by the content and method this work, namely, that our subject is not merely an Arab problem and can be resolved only within the framework of contemporary "world history". Thus, the changes in the East–West trade and in its routes and carriers, the growing importance of Mecca, parallel with the elimination of its rivals, and the chronological order of the entire process can be traced better in non-Arabic (Byzantine, Syrian, and South Arabic) sources. Arabic sources, in addition to being indirect internal evidence, are the exclusive means by which the social economic changes which have taken place parallel to the beginnings and dominance of trade, the gradual stratification of clans

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and, within the clans, of their members, can be studied (see, for example, the hostilities between Aḥlāf and Muṭaiyabūn, Hilf al-Fuḍūl, etc.).

In this way the Arabic and non-Arabic (South Arabic, Syrian, Byzantine) sources supplement one another.

It follows from the nature of the sources that only indirect methodological analysis of the subject is possible and only indirect evidence is available for the establishment of a relative chronology. While Arabic sources provide artistically detailed, elaborate information about the early history of Mecca, non-Arabic sources of the 6th century do not even mention Mecca. Since we know that Mecca joined the East–West trade only gradually after the successive elimination of its immediate rivals (Yemen, Kinda, Abyssinia—which had conquered Yemen—the Ghassānids and the Lakhmids), methodologically there is only one way open to us: we must examine the trade activities of the rivals in space and time, as well as their economic and political influence in Central and North Arabia and the time when, parallel to trade activities, this influence ceased. In this way we shall obtain the time limit before which there was definitely no independent Meccan trade, we can also establish the period of transition when, with the weakening of the rivals, Mecca had the opportunity to gradually join in trade, as well as the time limit after which—due to the elimination of its rivals—Mecca had seized control over transit trade on the Arabian peninsula and trade had become the basic economic activity of the city. Because of the nature of the Arabic sources, this question can be approached only by using indirect evidence and only in this way can the beginnings of Meccan trade be more or less reliably determined.

Our next task is the examination of the nature of Meccan trade, which will involve the comparison of Meccan trade with the functioning of local markets on the Arabian peninsula and a tentative determination of concrete differences between the small turnovers of the isolated markets of tribal society and Mecca as a trading centre which too existed on the basis of this society, but owed it to serving the state controlled foreign trade of the neighbouring great powers. Furthermore, we shall try to rank the most important markets on the Arabian peninsula at the time of Meccan trade. Examination of the nature of Meccan trade will include an analysis of the internal organization of this trade, of the external forces which had determined it, and the relationship between trade and traditional tribal society.

Arabia and oriental trade in the 6th century

The roots of trade between the Mediterranean world and China, India, Yemen, and the Eastern coast of Africa go back antiquity when the main receiving market was, since the time of Augustus, Rome and later Rome's heir, Byzantium. In the first two centuries A.D. the Romans tried to take an active part in trade and their merchant navy was busy on the Red Sea and on the Indian Ocean.[30] With the decline of the Roman Empire, after the Antonines, the Romans gradually lost direct control over trade which, after a short-lived attempt of Diocletianus, passed into

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the hands of various middlemen. Iran, Byzantium's main rival and itself one of the consumers—though not even comparable with Byzantium—by virtue of its geographic and political position could control a decisive part of the transit trade. There were, in addition, several minor states (Abyssinia, Yemen, the Ghassānids and Lakhmids) participating in this transit trade which were unable to survive as independent traders between the two great powers, consequently, the direction and extent of their participation in transit trade depended upon their relations with the two great powers. Except for the rather unimportant war of 421 which broke out because Persian Christians took refuge in Byzantium, the 5th century was a relatively peaceful period in Iranian–Byzantine relations. Iran's war with the Khiyōns (Chionites), who had occupied the territories of the Kūshāns, had started at the time of Shāhpuhr II already (309–379) and after 467 continued with their successors, the Hephtalites.[31] These wars determined Iran's history in the 5th and in the first part of the 6th century. (We know that at the time of Khusraw Anōsharwān, around 557, Iran was able to strike a decisive blow against this Khiyōns by forming an alliance with the Turcs.) Byzantium, which made good use of Iran as a protective shield against barbarian attacks, tried to keep up good relations with it, and we know that Pērōz (459–484) was ransomed by Emperor Zenon from the captivity of the Hephtalites.[32] The struggle between the two great powers was at that time relatively peaceful and trade between them was undisturbed.

Of course, mediation by the Persians raised quite considerably the price of luxury goods. Byzantium, whose demand for spices, incense, precious stones, ivory, and mainly for silk was constantly increasing, had tried to find a way to bypass Iran even before the 6th century. Since direct control of trade and mercantile transactions seemed more and more hopeless (successful attempts to gain control were made only in the area of the Red Sea, primarily on the Island of Iotabē, already under Leon and later under Anastasius), Byzantium began to adopt the policy of winning the minor middlemen and making them economic, political, or ideological allies. It was essentially this policy which characterized the 6th century, and was one of the reasons for the increasing importance of the Arabian peninsula. Iran, of course, retaliated the attempts of Byzantium with a similar policy, and a struggle to win the "third world" started on several levels (economic–political–ideological) between the two great powers.[33] The policy of acquiring allies became a constant feature of the age only later, when—from 502 onwards—the incessant warfare between Iran and Byzantium started and lasted, with brief interruptions, till the eve of the Arabian conquest, determining the policy of the two great powers. The Arabian peninsula began to play a both militarily and economically prominent role. Because of its geographic position between the Byzantine Empire and Iran it had a great strategic importance either as a military springboard or as a base providing possible allies. (See later in this respect Justinian's embassies to South Arabia and Kinda; Abraha's North Arabian campaign, and the fight for Yemen, etc.). The outstanding economic importance of the Arabian peninsula was due to the fact that geographically it was a transit territory of East–West trade and could not be

bypassed, as it was situated between the producers (partly the Far East and mainly Abyssinia and Yemen) and the consumer (Byzantium). Its role in transit trade suddenly increased as a result of the endless Byzantine–Persian squirmishes, and so Byzantium had to look for new routes and new allies. Byzantium made several attempts to bypass Iran, of these we shall briefly mention only a few: One such attempt aimed to oust the Persians from the sea partly by relying on the Byzantine fleet (by ensuring the Red Sea) and partly on the Abyssinians and their active inclusion into trade. These attempts were frustrated by the Persians who had permanent emporiums in China, India, and Ceylon. The manoeuvre of the Byzantines to transact silk-trade directly with the Turcs through the Caucasus met with a similar fiasco. The third attempt proved to be the most reasonable, namely, the extension of the overland trade-route, the so-called "incense-route" *(via odorifera)* which started from Yemen and passed through West Arabia, which till the beginning of the 6th century had been under the control of the Himyarites. The conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians served, among others, this Byzantine plan. As a result, for the first time in its history, West Arabia gained a prominent role. This new situation in "world history" offered West Arabia the possibility of participating in trade on a large scale. The special importance of the overland route through West Arabia was enhanced by the fact that the inhabitants of this area had no close contact with the sea; only in the era of the Omayyads were shipping and maritime trade developed. The lack of shipping was one of the factors determining the directions of the first conquests. Though there are a number of references to shipping in the Koran[34] and in the Sīra, these merely stress the dangers of travelling by sea, without any indication whether the Quraysh or some other North Arabian tribe had in fact practiced seamanship. The direct, natural cause of this was the danger involved in sailing on the Red Sea (there were reefs, the coastline was rocky, surrounded by deserts, etc.). In addition, Arabia had no wood, no iron, no rivers, no good harbours.[35] The attempt of the great powers to monopolize maritime trade was another of the external causes of the lack of Arabian seamanship. The Greek writers of the 6th century (Cosmas Indicopleustes, Procopius, etc.) list the Persians, the Abyssinians, and the Greeks among the sailors of the period, but make no mention of the Arabs (meaning primarily the Himyarites).[36] The elimination of the Himyarites from maritime trade was the direct consequence of Yemen's loss of political and economic independence. Thus, we find that in the twenties of the 6th century only the Persians, the Byzantines, and the Abyssinians were fighting for the monopoly of seaborne trade. As a result of these hostilities, the importance of the overland route through North Arabia increased which, with the elimination of Yemen, opened considerable possibilities for West Arabia. In the trade with the Far East, Iran enjoyed indisputable primacy not only on land but also on the sea.[37] From the turn of the 6th century, Byzantium increased its efforts to balance Persian predominance and to transact independent trade with the Far East with its own fleet and with the help of its allies, the Abyssinians. We shall deal later in detail with these attempts of Byzantium, but what interests us here with respect to the role of West Arabia in East–West trade is that by the beginning of the 6th century the

importance of Yemen and West Arabia had increased for Byzantium. With the conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians Byzantium has really ensured for itself this area crucially important for many reasons: it is an essential point of junction towards Abyssinia and "India", and it is also one of the producers of incense and the starting point of the incense-route. At the same time, this event meant for West Arabia the elimination of its main and perhaps most dangerous rival, one with the greatest traditions, apparatus, and connections. The situation which arose in the first quarter of the century, namely, the hostility between Byzantium and Iran and the attempts of the first to bypass the second, were thus indispensable conditions for the increased role of West Arabia and for the development of its independent mercantile activities. This new situation had, however, the consequence that together with and following Yemen the fight for the acquisition and control of trade passing through this area had started a fight which was waged by the two great powers again primarily through their allies. Of course, in the case of both great powers, beside trade, military and strategic interests were also conducive.

From the analysis of extent, mainly Byzantine sources, it seems more or less certain that in the thirties of the 6th century there was a strong Byzantine predominance in and north of Yemen. This is indicated, for example, by Justinian sending around 529 an embassy with Julian as its leader and with the participation of Nonnosus to the Abyssinian emperor Ellesthaios (Ella Aṣbeḥa), to the Himyarite governor of the Abyssinians, Esimiphaios (Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ) who had received this office in 526[38] and to the Kindite leader of the Maʿdd tribes, Kaisos (Qays), with the aim to form a strong Abyssinian–Himyarite–Arab coalition against the Persians.[39] This coalition was not realized, but Abraha's famous 547 campaign on the territory of North Arabia was also one of the outcomes of the exchange of embassies, and Justinian's attempts clearly showed the limits of Byzantine influence.

This situation is reflected somewhere in ad-Dīnawarī where in all probability it refers to the events of 528,[40] the year when Ḥārith b. Jabala (in Dīnawarī: Khālid) attacked and plundered an-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir: "And Kisrā (i.e. Khusraw Anōsharwān) wrote (in a letter) to the emperor that he shall order Khālid (i.e. al-Ḥārith) to compensate al-Mundhir and those of his companions whom he had killed and (shall order) that the goods he had taken shall be returned, but the Emperor paid no attention to his letter. Kisrā prepared for war against him and started till he penetrated the territory of the (Arabian) peninsula which at that time was in the hands of Byzantium."[41]

It can be assumed that Byzantium, with the help of Yemen ruled by Abyssinia, and the Ghassānids exerted its influence in the western part of the Arabian peninsula and on transit trade. Byzantium, of course, transacted this trade not directly but through its allies and vassals. From the beginning of the 6th century— concurrently with the hostilities between Byzantium and Iran—the role of the buffer-states had increased tremendously. The activities of Kinda and the Ghassānids and Lakhmids can and should be studied not only as a function of the history of Byzantium and Iran; in the rather short period of their importance the buffer-states represented a very significant part of 6th-century Arab history and

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many problems—including that of the genesis of Meccan trade—cannot be resolved without the study of their roles and activities. In order to understand the buffer-states we must know that they were artificial political formations, that they were the creations not of internal socio-economic development but of exogenous political interests.[42] Their primary military role left their tribal society intact, while their politico-ideological alignment made it rather difficult for them to exert any noteworthy influence on the socio-economic development of the peninsula. This explains that, when the exogenous pressure by the great powers had ceased, these artificial political formations disappeared almost without resistance.

On the other hand, when the various hostilities between the great powers made the establishment and activities of the buffer-states indispensable, these latter played an extremely important role in the life of the Arabian peninsula. As organized, combat-ready units, together with the surrendered or allied tribes, they played highly significant military, ideological, and mercantile roles which served not only the interests of their masters, but also their own.

Kinda, which had under its control several tribes and a fairly large territory, fulfilled up to the end of the 520s manifold functions primarily in the interest of Himyarite Yemen, and also controlled the caravan routes from Yemen to Iran (through Bahrayn into Iran) and to Byzantium (through Syria).

After the downfall of Himyarite Yemen, Kinda collapsed under the violent attack of the Lakhmid Mundhir III, supported by Khusraw Anōsharwān, at the end of the twenties, and from the beginning of the thirties of the 6th century the two buffer-states between Byzantium and Iran, the Ghassānids and Lakhmids, gained prominence and, in a constant struggle for power, built their own spheres of interest on the Arabian peninsula.

The fight for the territories of the disintegrated Kinda had already started before the Persian–Byzantine peace treaty of 545. In the forties of the century solid bridgehead-stations were built on the peninsula mainly by the Lakhmids who, supported by Iran, had a considerable share in the East–West trade.[43] In the development of Meccan trade, after the elimination of Yemen and Kinda, it was primarily Hīra which gained significance, partly because it acquired the greater part of the territories previously controlled by Kinda and thus had a considerable influence in North Arabia, and partly because it was an important centre of transit trade. Furthermore, it seems probable that in the middle of the 6th century Hīra controlled not only the trade routes from Yemen to Bahrayn (Hajar, al-Mushaqqar)[44] and to Iraq (Hīra), but had under its influence a major part of West Arabia and of the incense-route. The data at our disposal suggest that in the two or three decades following the elimination of Himyarite Yemen and of Kinda, next to the Abyssinians Hīra was the most important participant and middleman of transit trade in the Arabian peninsula. The possibilities which were opened to West Arabia by the attempts of Byzantium to eliminate Iran and also by the defeat of Yemen could not be fully exploited for several decades because of the predominance of the Abyssinians and Hīra.

We know that the majority of goods transported by sea from China, India, and

Ceylon arrived into the Persian Gulf.[45] The first main station was Ubulla from where the ships could either sail up the Tigris to Madā'in or continue up the Euphrates to Ḥīra. Whether in the yearly markets[46] or with their own caravans[47] the Lakhmids could take an active part in transit trade. Arabic sources, too, emphasize this side of Ḥīra's activities.[48]

By the middle of the 6th century a considerable part of the tribes on the peninsula were the vassals or allies of Ḥīra.[49] The Lakhmids were called "malik al-'arab".[50]

The increased military and mercantile role of the Lakhmids (and to a lesser degree of the Ghassānids) is shown most clearly in the paragraphs of the 561 peace treaty between Byzantium and Persia which concern to the buffer-states.[51] The two great powers had started already at this time to disapprove of the aspirations of the buffer-states and tried to check these in both the military field and trade. After having forbidden in the second paragraph of the treaty the launching of independent attacks,[52] the conditions for the trade activities of the two buffer-states are disclosed in the fifth paragraph (which from our point of view is the most important part of the treaty):[53] "(In the fifth place) it has been ordered that Saracen (Arab) or other barbarian traders shall be forbidden to enter the two kingdoms by some unknown or less well-known road, but only by the roads leading to Nisibis or to Dārā[54] and they must not travel to some other territory without higher permission. If, however, they dared to contravene this decree, or—as has been mentioned above—dared to get around the customs, and if the commanders at the frontiers were to capture them together with the goods they had been carrying— whether Assyrian (Persian) or Roman goods—they must be punished according to the law."[55]

This paragraph of the peace treaty suggests that the Lakhmids and the Ghassānids were active middlemen and by looking after their own profits, interfered with the interests of the two great powers. From the aspect of the development of Meccan trade it is mainly Ḥīra which is of interest to us, since we know that the Lakhmids had taken control over a major part of Kinda. The Ry 506 South Arabian inscription[55] from the year 547 testifies beyond doubt to the supremacy of Ḥīra over the Ma'dd tribes.

We know that the settlement of the Ma'dd tribes was near Mecca, that is, in the vicinity of the incense-route,[56] which means that around the middle of the 6th century Ḥīra was in control of this area.

This situation had fundamentally changed by the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies of the century. The two great powers took a firm stand against the two buffer-states and the sources suggest that the influence of the buffer-states on the tribes of the Arabian peninsula had greatly diminished and was about to vanish. We know that under Justinian II (565–578) hostilities of almost fatal outcome erupted between Byzantium and the Ghassānids,[57] and that under Tiberius (578–582) the buffer-state of the Ghassānids had practically ceased to exist with the capture and exile of Mundhir b. Ḥārith b. Jabala and his son Nu'mān.[58] The buffer-state of the Lakhmids underwent a similar though slower decline. The sources reveal that around 570 the influence of the Persians and the Lakhmids on

the tribes of Central and West Arabia had almost completely ceased or was about to cease, though Iran tried to use Banū Ḥanīfa living in Yamāma as a sort of buffer-state.[59]

One of our most important information about the disappearance of Persian, i.e., Lakhmid influence on the Arabian peninsula is that around 570 when Khusraw Anōsharwān was preparing for the conquest of Yemen (occupied at that time by the Abyssinians), he could not send his troups by land, but had to approach Yemen by sea.[60] This indicates that the territory between Iran and Yemen was no longer under Persian, i.e., Lakhmid control. Only after victory was won did Wahriz (Wahrēc), the Persian commander, dare to send the loot by land route to Iran, and it was typical of the changed conditions that the Tamīm tribe, earlier under Kinda and later under Lakhmid supremacy, attacked the caravan and ransacked it.[61] It was also typical that when Anōsharwān wanted to start a military expedition against Tamīm, he was advised to abandon this plan as an obviously difficult and exhausting one and to use instead ruse to punish Tamīm.[62]

All this suggests that around 570 the influence of the Persians and the Lakhmids in North Arabia was about to vanish. This process culminated in the famous battle of Dhū Qār[63] which proves in a striking manner the independence of North Arabia and that Persian influence had become a thing of the past.

Noteworthy from the point of view of the development of Meccan trade is the fact that by about 570 North Arabia had freed itself of all influences and the various rivals (Abyssinians, Lakhmids, Ghassānids) had weakened or had fallen. At last the possibilities created for North Arabia and for the incense-route by the incessant warfare between Byzantium and Iran and by the attempts of Byzantium to possess an independent trade, were utilized by the inhabitants of the area for their own benefit, and Mecca was able to seize control of the trade passing through Arabia and trade became the dominant economic activity. The new situation in the 570s meant, of course, nothing more than the decline or fall of exogenous rivals and thus the acquisition and development of independence became merely an internal problem. However, compared to the elimination of the external rulers and profiteers of trade, the acquisition of an internal monopoly was a far less significant problem for Mecca and the Quraysh tribe. Ṭāʾif and its allies, the Hawāzin tribes with Lakhmid interests were the main internal rivals and although they were unable to pursue independent trade transactions and could not control transit trade in Arabia, they were greatly interested in the trading activities (as escorts, guides, etc.) of the earlier middlemen (primarily of the Lakhmids). It was, therefore in their interest to maintain the status quo. When the power of the earlier middlemen was no longer stable or was finally abolished, Mecca easily finished with its internal rivals (see mainly Ḥarb al-Fijār). The victory of Mecca, which from 570 became more and more independent and transacted increasingly greater trade, and the monopolizing of the entire transit trade in Arabia, was completed by the beginning of the 590s and with this the process of the beginning of Meccan trade came to a close.

Consequently, it follows from the "world historical" circumstances of the

problem and from the nature of the sources that our task is to take a look at the process of the beginnings of Meccan trade first from the outside. In other words, we have to investigate the powers which for some time had participated in or directly dominated transit trade in Arabia and whose participation made the evolution and independence of trading operations in Mecca impossible and vice versa; only after the fall of its rivals can we speak about Meccan trade. Methodologically, only afterwards can we study the internal process of the rise of this trade, those phenomena which are to be found only in Arabic sources and which characterize the various phases of the beginnings of trading in the socio-economic structure of Mecca.

We must, therefore, first take a closer look at the activities of the exogenous rulers (Byzantium, Iran, Yemen, Kinda, the Lakhmids and the Ghassānids) of the transit trade in Arabia.

Byzantium and Iran in oriental trade

At the top of the list of powers which in some form or other had taken part in the trade outside North Arabia and in the East, are the two great powers, Byzantium and Iran, though in an earlier period, from the point of view of the beginnings of Meccan trade, Himyarite Yemen too played a considerable role. The two great powers—Iran as one of the great middlemen and to a lesser degree itself a consumer, and the other, Byzantium, the greater consumer—determined the character, size, and direction of the entire trade and, last but not least, the chances of the smaller middlemen situated between them. The role of the two great powers in trade must be investigated *(a)* as that of direct participants and *(b)* later as the driving force behind the operations of smaller middlemen, that is, as that of indirect participants. The basic point of our investigation is, of course, the effects that the changes in the relations of the two great powers and the shift of forces within their camps had on the rise of Meccan trade.

At the time when Himyarite Yemen had a firm hold over the incense-route and exerted a certain control over a part of the Red Sea, and there was relative peace between Byzantium and Iran, besides the trade through Yemen, Eastern trade was characterized by direct exchange between the two great powers; in other words, the overwhelming majority of far eastern merchandise reached Byzantium through Iran. Although at the end of the 5th century Byzantium made some attempts to avoid Persian mediation and thereby high taxes[64] (see the occupation of the Island of Iotabé etc.), these attemps had no significant effect on the given situation, and West Arabia had no chance of participation in transit trade. The role of Arab tribes living along the trading routes under the control of exogenous powers was limited to that of traditional caravan guides and bodyguards which merely provided an income supplement for nomadic economy; and these conditions did not make it possible for Mecca to be a permanent settlement.

At the beginning of the 6th century an important change took place in the relations of the great powers and in oriental trade transactions. The permanent

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hostilities between the two powers greatly encumbered their trade relations and consequently, the main consumer, Byzantium, had to look for other possibilities.

The hostilities, lasting for 126 years (from 502 to 628), started between Kawād I and Anastasius.[65] Until 504 war was fought only on the Persian–Byzantine limes, but later battles devastated valuable territories (Syria and Iraq) of the two empires.

In the 527–531 war (the peace treaty was signed in 532) the Ghassānids and Lakhmids appeared for the first time as buffer-states between the two powers[66] and their roles became in time more and more manifold. The new Byzantine–Persian war which broke out in 540 and lasted till 545, started with the quarrel between the two buffer-states[67] about the extremely important trade and strategic route—the Strata Diocletiana—south of Palmyra. Justinian, who was busy with his own quite erroneous and anachronistic project of recapturing the West Roman Empire, concluded in 546, 551, and 557 peace treaties which were advantageous to the Persians. The famous peace treaty of 561—as Ṭabarī too had reported[68]—included a paragraph on the yearly payment of taxes to the Persians (and the regular payment of taxes to the Lakhmids too).

Hostilities continued with the 572–591[69] and 602–629 wars (the second is better known in Arabic sources).[70] The periods between the wars were no more than partial cease-fires during which the two buffer-states continued to carry out various armed attacks.

The deterioration of relations between the two powers urged Byzantium to find a way to get hold of eastern merchandise by bypassing Iran. The merchandise from the Far East (not to speak about those from South Arabia) reached Byzantium through various middlemen either by land or by sea. Under normal conditions the Persians controlled both routes and it was very difficult to bypass them. One of the main transport possibilities through Central Asia was the silk-route, via which—among others—Chinese silk, one of the most important eastern goods, was transported. The route led through the oases of Central Asia till the first years A.D. along the "desert salt lake" Lop Nor and the state of Lou Lan from where it proceeded on a new northern route through the Oasis of Turfān, the Tarim basin, and Sogdiana.[71] The most important direct or indirect receiver and middleman of the merchandise was Iran, which could be bypassed on the silk-route towards Byzantium only across the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus. Iran was the terminal of the silk-route and at the same time a permanent and most powerful middleman, but between China (as Chinese merchants were rather reluctant to cross the Turkestan border)[72] and Iran various middlemen (Sogds, Hephtalites, and later Turcs) alternated. The other possible route of transport was the sea-route, across the Indian Ocean and the Mare Erythreum[73] either to the Persian Gulf and from there on up the Euphrates or Tigris to Ḥīra or Madāʾin, or towards South Arabia and from there along the incense-route or across the Red Sea to Byzantium. Since the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean were ruled by Iranians, the Byzantine had to try to exploit the second possibility. These trade routes joined the famous incense-route which, beside the merchandise from the Far East, also those from South Arabia (primarily incense which Byzantium needed in increasing quantities from the 4th

century onwards) and from Abyssinia were transported to Syria and, on the way back, manufactured Syrian goods were transported to the partners.[74] The incense-route was also an important starting point both towards Syria and Abyssinia (from Mukhā to Adulis)[75] and because of the risk of sailing on the Red Sea, and particularly after Abyssinia had become its ally, this road was of great importance to Byzantium. At the beginning of the 6th century none of the trade routes was under the control of Byzantium, the silk-route and the route across the Indian Ocean and Mare Erythreum were controlled mainly by the Persians and the incense-route by Himyarite Yemen. Thus, when the Persian–Byzantine hostilities had started, Byzantium had to look for new routes and new allies.

The most important endeavours of Byzantium have already been mentioned. Let us now scrutinize them more thoroughly, because directly or indirectly they were related to the rise of Meccan trade.

One of Byzantium's goals was to bypass the traditional silk-route, that is, to put an end to mediation by Iran and to bring the merchandise (primarily silk) directly from the Far East. This induced the Byzantines to get in touch with the Turcs and to try the building of a route through the Caucasus. Menander Protector kept for us the records of the embassy of the Turcs in 568, in the fourth year of Justinian II's reign, and of the later embassy of Zemarchus to the Turcs.[76] After a brief period (569–579) during which Byzantium endeavoured to transact trade on the silk-route directly with the Turcs,[77] it failed.[78]

Another of Byzantium's endeavours was the domestic production of silk, the second most important merchandise which was the monopoly and closely guarded secret of the Chinese, in order to escape the heavy taxes levied by the middlemen. In 550 under Justinian, who did the most for the commercial independence of Byzantium, it was able to acquire some silkworms.[79] Around 568, under Justinian II, there were already silk-weaving *ergasia* in Syria[80] but these were unable to satisfy Byzantine demands.

Another project of Byzantium was the organization of a sea route to India, China, and Ceylon, in order to establish an independent maritime trade, in the interest of which it fought on several (political, economic, and ideological) levels.[81] It also took some steps to build the waterway, but soon recognized that the task cannot be solved without allies and middlemen. Consequently, Byzantium tried to foster its relations with Abyssinia and Yemen, and, as proved by Justinian's embassies, with Kinda. To organize maritime trade, Byzantium attempted to secure positions first of all on the Red Sea, but this presupposed an agreement with Abyssinia and Yemen. During the 6th century it did everything to promote trade in two of its ports on the Red Sea, Clysma (Qulzum) and Aila (the present ʿAqaba) and was in fact fairly successful.

Aetheria, Mother Superior of Gallia Narbonensis, between 533 and 540 made a pilgrimage to the Sinai Peninsula[82] and her report was preserved by Petrus Diaconus, librarian of Monte Casino, around 1137. The nun wrote about the activities she observed in Clysma, one-quarter of a mile to the North of what we call today Suez: "This port sends ships to India and receives the ships coming from

there, for nowhere else on Roman territory is there harbour for ships (from) India, only here. The ships are numerous and big, which makes the port famous among the tradesmen from India. The manager himself, who is called logothetés, that is, the man who has been ordered by the Roman (Byzantine) Emperor to go yearly as his ambassador to India, resides here and his ships too are anchored in this harbour."[83]

Antonius Placentinus who went on a pilgrimage around 570, observed a similarly busy trade in Clysma and Aila.[84] Byzantium was, of course, unable to control the entire Red Sea, and besides its own ships those of foreign traders too visited the seaport. In the interest of a control over the foreign ships and to levy duty, Byzantium made great efforts to acquire the small island of Iotabé (called today Tīrān) at the mouth of the Bay of ʿAqaba *(sinus Aelaniticus)*, which was one of the points of junction of maritime trade with East Africa, Yemen, and India.[85] The island, on which Jews had been living for a long time past,[86] was occupied by Amorkésos (Imruʾl-Qays), leader of one of the Kinda tribes, who had been earlier in the service of the Persians.[87] He expelled the Byzantine collectors of duty and levied his own taxes on the merchant ships. The Emperor Leon confirmed him in his position and the island was recaptured only at the end of the 5th century, in 497, during the reign of Anastasius[88] when Byzantium made the first steps towards independent trade.

The Greek traders who settled on the island[89] had two tasks: *(a)* to continue maritime traffic with India, and quite certainly with South Arabia and Abyssinia, and *(b)* to collect the duty imposed by the Emperor which brought no small profit and had a certain role in the income of the empire.[90]

The sources suggest that in the period under investigation the maritime trade of Byzantium reached, in general, no further than Abyssinia and South Arabia (which the contemporary Byzantine–Syrian and presumably Persian authors called, typically enough, India). From the 4th century onwards Byzantium was unable to compete in the Persian Gulf and on the Indian Ocean with the firmly established Persian prevalence. Mediation of merchandise from the Far East and South Arabia increased the significance of Yemen and the incense-route, and in the case of East African goods the importance of Abyssinia. South Arabia and the incense-route meant not only places where some of the Far Eastern merchandise and the goods coming from South Arabia could be collected, but also the best approach to Abyssinia instead of or besides the risky waterway over the Red Sea and through South Arabia. Overland traffic into Abyssinia from Egypt was almost impossible because of the non-stop invasion of Nobadai and primarily of Blemyes.[91] Malalas described the situation quite accurately: "The Roman traders arrived through the land of the Himyarites into Axum and into the inner empires of India."[92]

Consequently, during the 6th century the importance of the incense-route grew in the eyes of Byzantium. The increased role of Yemen and the incense-route is proved most convincingly by Byzantium's economic, political, and ideological involvement in the two Abyssinian–Himyarite wars which aimed to defeat Dhū Nuwās who was committed to Iran and the Lakhmids.

To illustrate the links between Byzantium and Yemen and the incense-route as

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well as Abyssinia, let us refer to a passage in Theophanes in which he quotes almost word for word the letter of a contemporary, Simeon of Bēth-Arshām (Shem°ōn de Bēth Arshām):[93] "The Byzantine traders arrived to the Axumites and to the innermost parts of the habitants of India (Arabs) and Ethiops through the Himyarites. Damianus, the king of the Himyarites, killed the traders arriving to the frontiers of the Himyarites, according to custom, and took everything they had saying: 'The Byzantines mishandled the Jews living on their territories and killed them' and thus put an end to the Axumite Inner Indian (Arabian) trade. And the king of the Axumites, Adad, was enraged and told the Himyarites: 'You have offended my kingdom and Inner India (Yemen) and prevented Byzantine traders to reach me.' Great animosity arose and war broke out between them. And when he started to fight with them, Adad, the king of the Axumites pledged: 'If I defeat the Himyarites I will turn Christian, as I am fighting for the Christians.' With the participation of God (fighting) with all his strength, he was victorious and captured Damianus, their king, alive and took their country and their kingdom. Thanking God, Adad, the king of the Axumites, sent men to the Emperor Justinian that he may receive a bishop and a clergy, so that he shall have teachers and become a Christian."[94] Without going more deeply into details, unimportant from the point of view of our subject (namely, the problem of the names of Adad and Damianus, the merging of the two Abyssinian–Yemenite wars, and Byzantium's active role in them), the above text clearly shows the relations of Byzantium to Abyssinia and Yemen, on the one hand, and—what is almost equally important for us—the significance of South Arabia and the incense-route in Far and Middle Eastern trade at the beginning of the 6th century, on the other. It appears *expressis verbis* from the text that South Arabia was a point of junction between East Africa (Abyssinia) and the direct road to Byzantium.

The political attitude and trade activities of Abyssinia, as has appeared from the aforesaid, were important factors in Byzantium's seafaring experiments. For Byzantium the role of Abyssinia was not merely that of a middleman in the purchase of East African goods, but had a major part in the trade warfare against Iran for the same merchandise. Both Egypt, by holding at bay the southern nomadic Nobadai and Blemyes, and Abyssinia, highly important from the point of view of the policy and trade of the Middle East, were bound by close religious, political and economic ties to Byzantium in the first half of the 6th century. The 5th century historian, Theodoretus of Cyrus, considered Abyssinia almost a vassal of Byzantium.[95] Using the well-tried ideological weapon, Christianity, Byzantium established after some attempts in the 4th century, close links with Abyssinia around the middle of the 5th or at the beginning of the 6th century.[96] We have seen the role Abyssinia played in its own interest, but primarily in the interest of Byzantium against Dhū Nuwās (Damianus whose full Arabic name was Yūsuf As'ar Yathkh'ar) of Persian commitment. It is known from the sources that Byzantium started and organized the war when Justinian called first through the mediation of the Alexandrian patriarch, Timotheus, and later directly upon Ella-Aṣbeḥa (Adad, Kaleb, Elesboas, Ellésthaios), the Abyssinian king, to begin the

war,[97] and that even the ships needed for the transportation of the Abyssinian troops were lent by Byzantium.[98] Next, Byzantium tried to involve Abyssinia in the trade with India. When in 529 Justinian sent Julian and Nonnosus to Esimiphaios and Kaisos, as well as to Ellesthaios with the suggestion of a broad anti-Iranian coalition, the following came to light: "When Ellesthaios ruled over the Ethiopians and Esimiphaios over the Homerites, Emperor Justinian sent Julian as his ambassador to ask both to become allies of the Byzantines because of their common faith in a war against the Persians in such a way that Abyssinians, having bought the raw silk *(metaxa)* from the habitants of India and sold it to the Byzantines, might too become lords of great wealth, while the profit of the Byzantines will not be more so that they will no longer be compelled to share their possessions with the enemy. (*Metaxa* is something from which robes such as worn by the ancient Hellens are made, they called it *medike,* but its name now is *serike.*) The Homerites, on the other hand, shall appoint the fleeing Kaisos phylarkhos above the Maddenoi (Ma'dd) and the Maddenoi Saracens shall attack the territory of the Persians with a great army. (This Kaisos came from the clan of phylarkhoi and was outstandingly successful in war but after having killed some relations of Esimiphaios fled to a place uninhabited by man.) Both kings accepted the request and undertook the duty of its implementation (of the plan), after which they let the ambassadors go, but none of them fulfilled his promise. Because it was impossible for the Abyssinians to buy *metaxa* directly from the habitants of India, as the Persian merchants usually bought all the merchandise, being always in the ports in which the ships of the habitants of India landed for the first time, since they lived in the neighbouring territory. And to the Homerites too it seemed a difficult thing to start off towards people from whom they were separated by a very time-consuming road through the desert and who were far better warriors than they were."[99]

The following also came to light in connection with Julian's above embassy:[100] "Having read the letter through the interpreter and having understood it, he declared that he is making preparations for a war against Kawād, king of the Persians, and after having destroyed the land (of the Persians) next to his, *he will no longer trade with them,* but (will go) through the territory of the Homerite Indians (i.e. Arabs) (which) it had subjected and through the Nile to Egypt and will trade in Alexandria."[101]

It is clear from the text that not only was Abyssinia earlier compelled to cooperate with Iran, but also—and this is an important chronological datum concerning the seafaring attempts of Byzantium—around 530 the planned Byzantine–Abyssinian naval war had been a total failure.

The sources prove unequivocally the superiority of Persian navigation on the sea, and of the maritime trade of Iran with the Far Eastern countries. Its famous seaport Ubulla is mentioned in Arabic sources almost as *topos,* "the seaport" in Far Eastern–Persian trade.[102]

We learn further from the sources that at that time the Tigris and the Euphrates were navigable; on the Euphrates ships could sail up as far as Hīra[103] and on the Tigris, up to al-Madā'in.[104]

Trade was transacted mainly by Persian ships; nothing is known about Chinese or Indian ships, and if there were any, they played only a minor role in intermediate trade.[105] Iranian superiority in the Persian Gulf and on the Indian Ocean frustrated the maritime ambitions of Byzantium and since attempts to divert the silk-route failed too, Byzantium had only very limited possibilities.

The analysis of Byzantium's attempts shows that by the twenties of the 6th century two interrelated possibilities were still open: the route on the Red Sea, or more accurately, the sea route from Aila to Aden, and the overland incense-route through West Arabia.[106] It was indispensable to have at least Abyssinia and Yemen as allies for the utilization of these two routes, and this was achieved by the Abyssinian–Byzantine alliance and the Abyssinian conquest of Yemen. Thus, during the 6th century the problems related to the Arabian peninsula, and primarily to Yemen and the incense-route, were important parts of Byzantium's foreign policy. The significance of the problem was already recognized by Anastasius (491–518) who pursued a very clever foreign policy and bound Arab tribes, first of all those living in Syria and Palestine, with many links to the Empire. Justinian, on the other hand, made non-stop efforts to ensure the sea route from Aila to Aden, and since he devoted the bulk of the empire's economic and military resources to the recovery of the former West Roman Empire, he tried to control these territories indirectly, through allies (Abyssinia) and various vassals and buffer-states (Arab phylarkhias, among which from 529 onward the buffer-state of the Ghassānids occupied a prominent position).

It seems probable from the sources that at some time Byzantine influence on the incense-route reached Ḥijāzian Dēdan (called now al-ʿUla) in the north and al-Ḥijr (today Madaʾin Ṣāliḥ), and about 800 km south of Buṣrā. Recently discovered Greek inscriptions speak about Byzantine troups in these areas,[107] moreover, under Justinian's rule a powerful tribal chief, called Abū Karib, extended Byzantine influence to Phoinikon and declared himself the vassal of Byzantium for which Justinian rewarded him with the rank of phylarkhos of the Palestinian Arabs.[108]

The number of embassies to the Arabian peninsula indicate the rise in the military and political, and primarily in the mercantile importance of South and West Arabia. To ensure these territories, Byzantium sent several embassies primarily to Yemen and to the chiefs of Kinda in the first three decades of the 6th century.[109] Emperor Anastasius sent the grandfather of Nonnosus, Euphrasius, to al-Ḥārith-b.ʿAmr[110] in 502. Around 528 he sent Nonnosus's father, Abramos,[111] in 529 Nonnosus himself[112] and not much later, but before the battle of Callinicum (April 531) again Abramos went to Kaisos[113] who was at that time the chief of the moribund Kinda[114] which around 530 was nearing its end.[115]

In the control of the northern part of the caravan road through West Arabia, in the part near Syria, the Ghassānids had an important role, their sovereignty extending over Provincia Arabia (i.e. to the territory between Ḥawrān and Balqāʾ) and the phylarkhos of Provincia Phoenicia ad Libanumra (i.e. the territories of Damascus, Emesa, Palmyra and Heliopolis)[116] and Aila[117] and Dūmat al-Jandal

were also under their influence, so that they controlled the important stations of the incense-route (Aila, Bostra, Petra, and Damascus).

The paragraph on trade which, in the 561 Persian–Byzantine peace treaty, refers to the buffer-states[119] and has been considered by us earlier, provides ample proof of the extensive trade activities of the Ghassānids, made possible by the increased role of the land route through West Arabia.

The power of the Ghassānids is known to had already been weakening during the reign of Justinian II (565–578), and under Tiberius (579–582) this buffer-state was practically annihilated. Although the trade activities of the Ghassānids, who had no influence over Tihāma and Ḥijāz, did not obstruct the rise of Mecca as had earlier Ḥimyarite Yemen and later the Lakhmids, their elimination increased considerably the sphere of action of Meccan trade which in the meantime had become stronger and independent, so that Mecca could lead—as reported by Arabic sources—its caravans undisturbed to Aila, ('Aqaba), Ghazza, and Boṣtra.

Soon, Iran too recognized the increased trade and military importance of the Arabian peninsula in the 6th century, as well as the manifold roles assigned by Byzantium to this area in the fight for independent trade and in the constant contest for the acquisition of allies, and tried to counteract the manoeuvres of its adversary.

While during the forty-three years of Kawād's reign (488–531) Iran was burdened with external (Hephtalite pressure) and internal (the Mazdak's movement) difficulties, Byzantium could assert itself on the Arabian peninsula as a result of the occupation of Yemen by its ally, of the creation and strengthening of the Ghassānids and of their friendly relations with Kinda. Under Khusraw Anōshar-wān (531–579) Iran started a major counter-attack on all lines (defeat of the Hephtalites, crushing of the Mazdak's movement) and through the Lakhmids balanced and by the end of the forties greatly surpassed Byzantine successes on the Arabian peninsula.[120] Through the Lakhmids, Iran's influence extended to Yamāma, Ḥijāz and even to Tihāma from the end of the forties to that of the sixties.[121]

From the end of the 560s the influence of the Lakhmids in Central Arabia gradually ceased, as has been mentioned earlier in relation to the lesson of the Yemenite expedition of the Persians. An extremely interesting report in the Arabic sources disclosed this fact even more clearly. When referring to the discussion of Ḥarb al-Fijār, the sources mention[122] that the Lakhmids had sent a caravan to 'Ukāẓ every year, but had been compelled to use the help of the Hawāzin tribe, a clan of Qays 'Aylān. This shows that at this time Lakhmid (Persian) influence had already been a thing of the past.

We know that around 575 the Persians were still considering Banū Ḥanīfa who lived in Yamāma and "crowned" Hawdha b. 'Alī al-Ḥanafī.[123] When Hawdha was left without support as the Lakhmids lost strength, his sole action in the interest of the Persian king was, according to Arabic sources, the punishment of the Tamīm tribe which plundered Persian caravans coming by the overland route from Yemen, and they did that, in a characteristic enough way, not on the territory of Tamīm, but at al-Mushaqqar in Baḥrayn.[124]

In the last two decades of the 6th century, despite the occupation of Yemen, Persian influence had completely ceased in North Arabia. Under Ohrmazd IV (578–590) the country's attention centred on internal troubles and external attacks (Turcs, Khazars, Byzantines),[125] while the first years of the reign of Khusraw Parvēz (590–628) coincided with the war against Bahrām Chōbīn.[126] The Iranians were able to win this war only with the help of the Byzantine emperor, Mauritius (582–602), for which they had to pay a great price, almost the whole of Armenia.[127] When at the beginning of the 7th century Iran started to regain its strength, the buffer-state of the Lakhmids had practically ceased to exist and Persian influence in North Arabia finally disappeared (see the lessons of the battle of Dhū Qār).

These are the basic outlines of the roles of Byzantium and Iran in Eastern trade from the point of view of the rise of Mecca as a trading centre. We have seen that the role of the caravan route through West Arabia was fundamentally determined by the relations between the two great powers and the increased importance of this trade route was a consequence of the chronic warfare between them, and of Byzantine aspirations for an independent trade policy. Until 525 this trade route was controlled by Ḥimyarite Yemen. The decades following Yemen's loss of economic and political independence were characterized by Byzantine attempts to gain a certain influence and control over trade in this territory, primarily through middlemen and allies. From the 540s, for two decades Iran on its part, with the help of the Lakhmids, tried and indeed succeeded to balance Byzantine influence. By the seventies of the century the allies and vassals of the two great powers had gradually lost political and economic control over an important part of the Arabian peninsula and parallel to this process Meccan trade was able to develop and become independent.

In the next paragraphs we shall analyze the middlemen who, either independently (like Ḥimyarite Yemen) or in the interest of one the great powers, took part in transit trade and who, for a short period of time, had a certain control over it, excluding thereby the possibility of Mecca's large-scale participation.

Yemen and oriental trade in the 6th century

Three factors determined the role and importance of Yemen in oriental trade:[128]
1. its function as a middleman in part of the Far Eastern and East African trade of Byzantium and Iran;
2. the transport of its own commodities (primarily of incense and myrrh); and
3. inseparable from the above two, the importance of the incense-route.

The incense-route started from Shabwa (Sabatha), the Ḥaḍramawt centre of incense trade, and through Ma'rib reached Najrān (where it branched off through Yamāma to Ḥīra) and then, turning towards the north, along the Red Sea, through Tā'if, Mecca, Medina, al-'Ula, al-Ḥijr, and Ma'ān (to mention only the most important stations) it led to Petra, where the road bifurcated: one leading to Ghazza and the other to Buṣrā and Damascus.[129]

From the old headquarters in Tamnā in Qaṭabān to Ghazza, there were about sixty-five to seventy-five stations along the incense-route.[130] From early antiquity Yemen had tried to ensure the incense-route by establishing along it colonies entrusted with a multitude of functions.[131] To safeguard this route it had to control Tihāma and Hijāz, and to achieve this the Ḥimyarites made great efforts at the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th century. It seems probable from the sources that up to the time of the Abyssinian conquest the incense-route—or at least a long section of it—was under the control of Yemen and that the overwhelming majority of the trade passing through the incense route was transacted by Yemenite tradesmen. According to South Arabic sources, in the 5th century the Ḥimyarites kept a strong hold not only over South Arabia, but also over a significant part of Central Arabia.[132]

The South Arabic inscription Ry 610[133] concerning the war of 516 between the Lakhmid King Mundhir III who had attacked the South Arabian tribes and the Himyarite Maʿdikarib Yaʿfur defending these tribes, is an excellent description of the relationship between Yemen and South Arabia:

Maʿdikarib Yaʿfur, king of Sabaʾ and Dhū-Raydān and of
Haḍ (1)
ramwt and Yamanat and of their Arabs in the mountains and
on the plain (2)
ordered that this inscription be engraved and set up in Maʾṣil
Jumḥān (3)
about (what happened) during the campaign on the plain of
Kataʾ when (4)
they were called by the Arabs under their supremacy[134] and
war was waged against them by Mudhdhi- (5)
rum. And they led a campaign with their tribes Sabaʾ and
Ḥimyar and Raḥaba- (6)
tān and Ḥaḍramawt and Yahann (?) and with their Arabs,
Kiddat and Madh (7)
hij and with the Banū Thaʿlaba. And Mudhdhir made peace
with the payment of tax[135] (8)
in the month of Dhū Qayẓān, in 631.[136] (9)

One of the general information imparted by this inscription is the lively communication between Central Arabia and the surrounding powers (Yemen, Lakhmids). In fact, it suggests that Central Arabia and part of North Arabia was at that time, in all probability, under Yemenite supremacy. The inscription emphasizes in two lines the commitment *(ʿrbhmw)* of the Arab tribes to Yemen, namely, that when Mundhir attacked them they obviously turned to Yemen for help and Yemen, as it was its duty and in its interest, protected them.

Though inaccurately and wrapped in a shroud of mystery, Arabic sources too mention the control of Yemen over part of Central and North Arabia in the 5th and

at the beginning of the 6th century, suggesting that Yemen's influence extended in all probability to Tihāma and to part of Hijāz, thus also to Mecca.[137] al-Azraqī, for example, tells us that all three Tubba's have attacked the Ka'ba. The first two attacks took place at the time of Khuzā'a,[138] the third[139]—so tradition informs us—at the time of the Quraysh.

The bond between the Tubba's—vividly alive in Arab historical tradition[140]—and Mecca (and Medina) was probably based on the fact that Mecca, a caravan station with sanctuary on the incense route, was under Himyarite control. This is related to the tradition that the three Tubba's were the first to cover the Ka'ba with cloth.[141]

Hamza al-Isfahānī speaks even more directly about the relationship between Yemen and Hijāz: "next ruled Tubba' b. Hassān b. Tubba' b. Kulī-Karib b. Tubba' b. al-Aqran, and he is Tubba' al-Asghar, the last Tubba'. And he made his sister's son, al-Hārith b. 'Amr b. Hujr al-Kindī ruler of the Ma'dd and sent him to them; he is the master of the two rabbis and the lord of Mecca and Medina, and he is the one who has covered the Ka'ba, and then gone to Yemen with the two rabbis and converted to Jewish faith."[142]

As we shall see later, in the last quarter of the 5th and the first quarter of the 6th century Yemen controlled, mainly indirectly through Kinda, the territories which were of importance to it.

There are also Arabic data about the activities of Yemenite tradesmen and about a certain Yemenite control of the incense-route in this period. Mas'ūdī, when relating the story of Hijjat al-Ghadr, proves indirectly that in the second half of the 5th century Yemenites transacted trade on the usual land route, and that at the time Mecca was only a site of pilgrimage and there was yet no question about Meccan trade activities: "And they dated from the Hijjat al-Ghadr that had happened about 150 years before the Islam. The cause (of the event) was that Aws and Hasba, the two sons of Aznam b. 'Ubayd b. Tha'laba b. Yarbu' ... b. Zayd Manāt b. Tamīm started with part of their people as pilgrims and met at the idols of the shrine people from Yemen who had with them clothe (veil) for the Ka'ba and goods for the guards (of the Ka'ba), all this was brought by one of their kings. And they killed them and took away the things they carried and entered Mecca. And since (this) happened in the days of Minā, the news spread among the people, they attacked them (i.e. those who had attacked the Yemenites) and some of the people took their part and the people plundered one another and the pilgrimage was called Hijjat al-Ghadr (the pilgrimage of treachery)."[143]

Though it cannot be used for concrete dating, in an extremely important passage the *sura Saba'* provides proof of fundamental significance about the control of Yemen over the incense-route.[144] "And we placed between it (i.e. Yemen) and the villages (i.e. in Syria)—which we had blessed—villages (stations) visible (to one another, i.e., closely situated) and arranged in them the road[145] (and said): 'travel on them in safety day and night'—and they said: 'Oh our Lord, place the (stations) of our travel farther (from one another)'[146] and treated themselves atrociously and we made them into a parable and tore them into pieces (i.e. scattered them

in all directions). Indeed, there is a signal in this for all who are patient and grateful."

We know that relatively little space is devoted to Yemen in the Koran[147] and even then Yemen is mentioned only in passing as a mythical tradition (as the story of Bilqīs, that is, of the biblical Queen of Saba). For this very reason, the liveliness and concreteness of the passage dealing with Yemenite trade activities and with the control of the incense-route by Yemen is rather surprising and can only be explained by supposing that this part refers to the near past and is based on still vividly alive tradition. Horowitz was right when he suggested that here Saba means in fact the era of the Tubbaꜥs,[148] as confirmed, among others, by the immediately preceding description of the bursting of the dam at Maʾrib.[149] Consequently, this passage in the Koran can be considered as a supplementary and convincing evidence in support of other non-Arabic sources about the trade of Ḥimyarite Yemen on the incense-route in the last quarter of the 5th and the first quarter of the 6th century. Kinda, which at that time controlled part of Central and North Arabia and was bound by many ties to Yemen, played an extremely important role in ensuring Yemenite trade.

Kinda and Yemen

Nöldeke already had pointed out that the "kingdom" of Kinda was created by Yemen primarily with the aim to ensure for its own benefit the trade route through West Arabia to Syria and from there to Iraq.[150] Research has since shown the likelihood of Kinda's subordination to Yemen, just as the Lakhmids were subordinated to Iran and the Ghassānids to Byzantium. Kinda, which was a federation of a number of North Arabian tribes, exercised a more or less tight control over a significant part of North Arabia for about half a century.[151] Although its manifold and often apparently controversial relations with Byzantium and the Lakhmids still raise a number of problems,[152] it seems certain that the beginnings of the federation, the major part of its activities and its role can only be explained by its dependence upon Yemen and by the services it rendered to this state.

Arabic sources are unanimous in that Kinda was created by Yemen[153] and several sources claim that there were marriage bonds between the Tubbaꜥs and Kinda.[154] The real founder of Kinda, the famous Ḥujr b. ꜥAmr Ākil al-Murār, who, according to certain sources, was a vassal of ꜥAmr b. Hassān Tubbaꜥ, ruled probably around the third quarter of the 5th century[155] and controlled Najd and Yamāma, that is, the whole of Central Arabia.[156] Abūʾ l-Fidāʾ reports on hostilities between Kinda and the Lakhmids during his reign, but for the time these were only for North Arabian territories and were won by Kinda.[157] Under Ḥujr b. ꜥAmr's son, ꜥAmr al-Maqsūr who died in the last decade of the 5th century,[158] there was a temporary halt in the expansion of the Kindite federation, moreover, mythical tradition claims that under the leadership of the legendary Kulayb Wāʾil the Rabīꜥa tribe became independent.[159] Kinda flourished under the third Kindite, al-Ḥārith b.

'Amr (the grandfather of the famous poet, Imru'l-Qais) when it ruled over the whole of Central and a part of East Arabia and controlled for some time the greater part of the Lakhmid territory as well. Arabic sources deal surprisingly often and in detail with al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr, which is an indication of the power, manifold activities, and the already concrete, undeformed historical role of Kinda at the beginning of the 6th century. The fact that Kinda's territories reached the outskirts of Mecca is one of the reasons for the repeated occurrence of the tribal federation in North Arabic tradition. The number of variants of the power and extent of the Kindite federation appearing in the sources[160] is worth our attention for it will help us to form a clear picture of its influence. The most detailed description can be found in *Kitāb al-aghānī*,[161] according to which, al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr divided the tribes under his supremacy among his sons as follows: Hujr obtained the Asad and Ghatafān tribes; Shuraḥīl (or Shuraḥbil), the Bakr, Banū Ḥanẓala, and ar-Ribāb tribes; Maʿdikarib, the Taghlib, an-Namir, Saʿd b. Zayd Manāt, and Banū Ruqaiya tribes; Abdallah, the ʿAbd al-Qays tribes, and finally Salama, the Qays tribes.[162] Looking at the geographical position of the tribes, we see that Kinda's power extended, in addition to Najd and Yamāma, to great part of Ḥijāz and even to a part of Baḥrayn (see the location of the ʿAbd al-Qays tribes).[163]

According to an extremely important paragraph of Azraqī,[164] Kinda's influence reached even the surroundings of Mecca, thus Tihāma too. In the second half of the 5th century Kinda performed one of the most important public functions of Mecca—at that time almost exclusively a site of pilgrimage—namely, the *nasāʾa*, i.e., the intercalation of the months and the determination of the time of pilgrimage which was closely linked to the *treuga Dei* in service of transit trade.[165]

It follows directly from the expansion of Kinda's power that Yemen controlled these territories through its vassal up to the downfall of the tribal federation starting with the death of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr in 528.[166] It was Yemen which transacted trade without disturbance both on the famous incense-route through West Arabia towards Syria, and through Yamāma to Iraq. With respect to our subject this means that in that period (in the last quarter of the 5th and the first quarter of the 6th century) Mecca, primarily a site of pilgrimage, where a great number of pilgrims met once a year, was probably only a transit station of Yemenite trade.

In this context Kinda's highly problematic relations first of all with Byzantium, but also with the Lakhmids, i.e., with Iran, must also be mentioned. These relations cast a certain light on Kinda's power and authority and confirm our supposition concerning Yemen's dominant role on the Arabian peninsula, primarily over transit trade on the incense-route. Kinda, for the first time, came into contact with Byzantium when it started to make incursions into Byzantine territory. The two sons of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr, Ogaros (Hujr) in 497[167] and Badikharimos (Maʿdikarib) in 501 successfully raided Syria and Palestine.[168] These raids indicate more clearly than anything else that Kindite influence extended to the sphere of power of Byzantium. Anastasius recognized Kinda's role and tried to establish good relations with the federation of tribes as manifested by the peace treaty of 502.[169] Although these conditions of the treaty are not mentioned in the sources,

Byzantium had probably formed a coalition with Kinda, as indicated, among others, by Byzantine sources which from then on refer to al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr as a phylarkhos.[170] On the other hand, according to Joshua Stylites,[171] in 503 the Arabs of the Romans, called the Thaʿlabites, marched against Ḥīra de Naʿmān and plundered the caravans of the Lakhmid king, Naʿmān b. al-Aswad III. The Thaʿlabites were Kinda's people, for at that time the main branch of Bakr b. Wāʾil, the Banū Thaʿlaba living in the Syrian desert, was under the supremacy of Kinda. Byzantium was in more than one respect interested in an alliance with Kinda, since in this way it was able to protect itself against the repetition of the former dangerous and devastating raids. Byzantium did everything in its power to gain allies against Iran and its buffer-state, Ḥīra. The hostilities between Kinda and the Lakhmids suggest that in this respect Byzantium succeeded in aligning Kinda on its side. Last but not least, the undisturbed passage of Byzantine traders through the West Arabian incense-route was an indispensable condition of Byzantium's East African and Yemenite trade, and for this reason an alliance with Kinda—which exercised a direct control over the major part of this area—was of fundamental importance. We know that the immediate cause of the Abyssinian–Yemenite war which broke out during the reign of Dhū Nuwās, was that the latter ordered the killing of Byzantine traders staying in Yemen and thus put an end to Byzantine trade.[172] This is enough to prove the existence of such a trade before Dhū Nuwās, the more so as the predecessor of Dhū Nuwās, Maʿdikarib (who died probably in 517) pursued, as suggested by the inscription Ry 510,[173] a pro-Byzantine policy and was probably a Christian.[174] The Byzantine embassies sent to Kinda (which has been mentioned earlier in another context) also testify to the bonds between Byzantium and Kinda. Friendly relations started already during Anastasius's reign at the time of the 502 peace treaty,[175] when Yemen—as mentioned above—pursued a pro-Byzantine policy. Moreover, some Abyssinian influence accompanied by the spreading of Christianity can also be presumed.[176] Kinda's relations to Byzantium were basically determined by the interrelation of Yemen and Byzantium on the one hand, and by the relation between Yemen and Iran and her buffer-state, Ḥīra, on the other. On the other hand, Yemen's attitude to the two great powers was dependent upon the fact that, making use of the two trade routes (through West Arabia and on the incense-route to Syria; and through Yamāma and Baḥrayn to Ḥīra), it traded with both powers, which accounts for the formation of two groups with conflicting interests in Yemen.[177] The relations of Yemen with the two great powers were determined by the conflict of interests, that is, by the victory of one or the other group. Religious policy, directly expressing political and economic interests, that is, the ups and downs of Christianity and Judaism, was also determined by the actual situation. A brief anti-Persian period was in agreement with the pro-Byzantine policy of the one and a half decades preceding Dhū Nuwās's reign, when, according to Joshua Stylites (who has been mentioned above), al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr (between 503 and 506?) probably exploiting the contemporary Byzantine–Persian war, occupied for a short time part of the Lakhmid territory.[178] A certain spreading of Christianity and the strengthening of the Yemenite Christian community, primarily

of the important trading centre Najrān, concurred with the political and economic interests of this period.[179]

The situation changed when Dhū Nuwās came into power. Because of his extremely strong anti-Byzantine and, correspondingly, anti-Christian and pro-Judean policy, the connections between Byzantium and Yemen were broken off, and it seems probable that certain changes took place also in the relations of Byzantium with Kinda. This is supported by the fact that the Lakhmid King Mundhir III gained in strength and was able to invade Byzantine territory without interference by Kinda. The embassy of Nonnusus's father, Abramos, to Mundhir III in 524 to ransom two captured Byzantine strategoi, Timostratus and Ioannes, reflects this situation.[180] A further evidence of changed Byzantine–Kindite relations is furnished by Byzantium's second embassy soon after 528, after the defeat of Dhū Nuwās and the Abyssinian conquest of Yemen, to renew the peace treaty of 502, that is, the old alliance.[181] Justinian obviously chose this moment not arbitrarily, for at that time the Lakhmid King Mundhir III's counterattack on Kinda with the help of Anōsharwān had put an end to the rule of al-Hārith b. ʿAmr. In other words, the interests of Byzantium, Abyssinia, Yemen, and the Kindite federation coincided in the fight against the common enemy, Iran. This is shown by Nonnosus's embassy to Kaisos around 529,[182] whom Justinian tried to persuade to join a wide anti-Persian coalition including the Abyssinian king and the governor of Yemen. Around 530 Byzantium did not yet drop the obviously moribund Kinda, as proved by Abramos's second embassy to Qays, who, with a multitude of his followers, marched into Byzantium and obtained from the emperor the Palestinian phylarchia.[183] The last act in Kindite–Byzantine relations was the visit of the semi-legendary Kindite poet, Imru' l-Qays, son of Hujr b. al-Hārith b. ʿAmr, in Byzantium to ask for the latter's help. The story of this enterprise, which ended in fiasco, contains a certain amount of historical truth.[184] At that time—around 535—Byzantium was clearly aware of the disintegration of the Kindite federation and the end of its role in the life of the peninsula.

An analysis of the Kindite–Lakhmid relations will also contribute to a more correct assessment of the Arab balance of power in the first quarter of the 6th century, though such an analysis raises more than one problem, particularly with respect to the initial stage of this relationship. We know that at the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th century the leaders of the two buffer-states twice entered a double marriage contract. First, the Lakhmid al-Aswad b. al-Mundhir (474–493) married Umm al-Malik, the daughter of ʿAmr b. Hujr who was the brother of the great Kindite al-Hārith b. ʿAmr.[185] Second, the Lakhmid king Mundhir III married the famous Hind, al-Hārith b. ʿAmr's daughter,[186] who later became the mother of the Lakhmid ʿAmr b. Hind (554–569) equally well-known from Arabic sources. These marriages suggest rather close relations, but the nature of the early bonds can only be guessed, particularly if we recall the report of Joshua Stylites about the attack in 503, and the fact that between 503 and 506 Kinda had occupied part of the Lakhmid territory. We might accept as a probability Lundin's explanation, namely, that there was a strong Kindite influence in Hīra at the turn

of the 5th century, and that at first there was a kind of subordination between Mundhir III and al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr. Later, when around 503 Mundhir III was strong enough, he attacked Kinda and after a quarter of a century of hostilities of varying outcome he finally defeated the tribal federation.[187] There is no report about hostilities between the buffer-states for quite a time after the Byzantine–Persian war of 506. According to the earlier analyzed inscription Ry 510, there was a violent squirmish between the Yemenite king, the pro-Byzantine Maʿdikarib Yaʿfur, and Mundhir III in 516 in which (as clearly pointed out in the 7th line of the inscription) Kinda also took part. No details are known about the antecedents of the campaign and about the balance of forces, but it seems plausible that although defeated, the Lakhmid king Mundhir III was still strong enough to attack Syria in 518.[188] This excludes the possibility of a second successful Kindite attack on Ḥīra (mentioned by Arabic sources) having taken place a few years before or after the squirmish of 516.[189] The firm rule of Mundhir III in Ḥīra in this period is clearly indicated by the earlier mentioned Byzantine embassy to the Lakhmids to ransom two Byzantine strategoi. We know that between 517 and 525 Dhū Nuwās's pro-Persian policy determined the policy of Kinda, so that in these years there could not have been any hostile feelings between the latter and Ḥīra. The relations between Kinda and Ḥīra became strained when Yemen was occupied by the Abyssinians and Kinda renewed its Byzantine contacts, and when in Iran the Mazdakite movement weakened the country and Kinda refused to help Ḥīra.[190] According to Arabic sources, the defeat (and expulsion) of Mundhir III and the temporary victory of al-Ḥārith b. ʿAmr are connected with the Mazdakite movement: "And the kingship of the mentioned al-Ḥārith strengthened and he (i.e. al-Ḥārith) agreed with Qubād b. Fīrūz in heresy and (in that) he embraced Mazdak's doctrine. And Qubād banished al-Mundhir b. Māʾ as-Samāʾ al-Lakhmī from the kingdom of Ḥīra and made in his place the mentioned al-Ḥārith king and al-Ḥārith's power became great."[191]

According to Ibnuʾ l-Athīr, al-Ḥārith even obtained a part of Sawād.[192] Without going into the details of al-Ḥārith's problematic rule in Ḥīra,[193] from our point of view it is sufficient to note that in a certain period Kinda had direct control over the surroundings of Ḥīra,[194] and that in the first quarter of the 6th century, Kinda, as Yemen's buffer-state, was beyond all doubt the greatest power in Central and North Arabia. With the help of the Kindite federation Yemen was able to exercise control over trade passing through the Arabian peninsula towards both Syria and Iran. Concerning our subject this carries the important information that a great part of the incense-route and of the trade on it was in the hands of the Yemenites and that at this time Mecca was only an insignificant transit station of Yemenite trade with the primary function of a shrine attracting crowds of pilgrims once a year.

In order to be able to investigate Yemen's manifold economic (trading) and political role in the first quarter of the 6th century, it is indispensable to analyze the events related to Dhū Nuwās, for which analysis the sources available are by far the largest and the most authentic, further enriched recently by Shahid's discovery and

publication of a hitherto unknown letter (marked "G") of the contemporary bishop Shemʿōn dʾ Bēth Arshām. We have already mentioned in another respect that when he came into power, Dhū Nuwās broke relations with Byzantium and terminated Byzantine trade to Yemen and through Yemen to Abyssinia.[195] Byzantium's and Abyssinia's sensitive reaction, the armed intervention—of which, as we know, Byzantium was an initiator and, with its ships, to some degree, an active participant[196]—had already shown the important trading, geographical, and political role of Yemen on the Arabian peninsula and in contemporary "international" politics.[197] The struggle between the two great powers was waged also in the field of ideology, and alignment with one or the other party meant also a corresponding religious commitment. Pro-Persian and anti-Byzantine policy demanded that Dhū Nuwās convert to the Jewish religion, which was occasionally supported by the Persians, and at the same time persecute Christianity. According to Arabic tradition, Dhū Nuwās went straight to Medina to embrace the Jewish faith. The pro-Persian and anti-Byzantine feelings of the Jews of Medina also appear in Arabic historical tradition: "And on his way he stopped in Yathrib (called later Medina) and he liked the Jewish religion and converted to the Jewish faith. The Jews of Yathrib, however, persuaded him to attack Najrān and to try (torture) the Christians there (who) had received Christianity from a man who had come to them from Āl Jafna (i.e. from the Ghassānids), from the kings of Syria".[198]

The report—clearly showing the interest groups—is in all probability a later tendentious description of the situation. As far as the first part of the report is concerned, tradition confuses Dhū Nuwās with his fourth forbear, Ḥassān b. Tubbān Asʿad Abī-Karib who is claimed to have started a campaign against Yathrib (Medina) and later converted to Judaism,[199] while reliable (South Arabic, Ethiopian, Syrian, and Byzantine) sources fail to mention that Dhū Nuwās had ever left South Arabia. With respect to the second part of the report, we know that the first historically noted Ghassānid ruler, al-Ḥārith ibn Jabala appeared on the scene not earlier than 529.[200] He was a distinguished protector of the Monophysites, and personally of Jacobus Baradaeus.[201] His religious zeal might have formed the basis of the tradition which attributed to the Ghassānids the conversion of Najrān to Monophysite Christianity. There is no doubt at all about the conversion of Dhū Nuwās to Judaism as it is also mentioned by contemporary Syrian sources.[202] Of course, Dhū Nuwās might have embraced the Jewish faith in Yemen too, where it was widely practiced particularly since the end of the 4th century.[203] The activity of Dhū Nuwās, the two Abyssinian campaigns, with the siege of Najrān and the merciless persecution of Christianity in-between, are striking manifestations of the economic, political, and ideological animosity between the two great powers and their allies.[204] From the aspect of our subject one of the most important of Dhū Nuwās's activities is the attack on Najrān, in the background of which we find the directions of Yemenite trade and the commitments of Yemen, as well as the sharp conflict between the groups representing different interests, or, generally speaking, the decisive role that trade played at that time in the life of Yemen. The Abyssinian campaigns and the siege of Najrān were in fact rooted in trade interests. As clearly

proved by the earlier cited passage in Shem'ōn d' Bēth Arshām / Malalas / Theophanes, the first Abyssinian attack took place after Dhū Nuwās had terminated Byzantine trade directed to Yemen and through Yemen into Abyssinia. If we add the cessation of transit trade in goods from India and China through Yemen, we see clearly the blow which Dhū Nuwās's policy had meant for Byzantium and Abyssinia. Immediately after the hostile action of Dhū Nuwās against the Byzantine traders, the Abyssinians attacked Yemen probably between 517 and 519.[205] At first, Dhū Nuwās was defeated, but later he counterattacked and recaptured the capital, Zafār, with its Abyssinian garrison. Next, he attacked pro-Byzantine and pro-Abyssinian territories and after defeating them he turned against the economically, politically, and ideologically openly pro-Byzantine and rich commercial city of Najrān.[206]

Najrān and Yemen

Description of the incense-route has clearly shown the importance of Najrān as a trading centre. Because of its geographic position it was not only an important station on the incense-route from Ḥaḍramawt to Syria, but it was also in Najrān that the route branched off towards Iraq.[207] Thus, two spheres of interest clashed in the city due to trading activity with both of the two powers. At the beginning of the 6th century, however, Najrān was, we may say, the centre of pro-Byzantine Yemenite policy whose entire trade on the incense-route was directed towards Syria. Politically, it supported Byzantium, and as the most open demonstration of its alignment it converted to Christianity (as has already been mentioned). We have seen that Hamza and Ibn Qutayba[208] attributed the conversion to Christianity of the people of Najrān to Ghassānid propaganda. Even if we do not accept this suggestion, we must consider it a fact that Christianity in its Monophysite form came to Najrān from Syria[209] and that the city was already an episcopal see under Anastasius. Trade directed to Syria and the conversion to Monophysite Christianity meant, of course, strong bonds with Byzantium. We can read in the "Book of the Himyarites" and in the letter "G" of Shem'ōn d' Bēth Arshām that several church officials from Byzantium[210] and from the similarly Monophysite Abyssinia resided in Najrān.[211] According to an interesting passage in a letter of Mār Ya'qūbh of Serūgh (died in 521) to the people of Najrān, good oil, excellent balsam and marvellous spices arrived from Najrān into Syria, and we learn that the latter was in constant touch with Najrān.[212] Several sources refer to the richness of Najrān, one of the most important centres of Yemenite trade.[213] For example, the extremely rich and distinguished Ruhm/Ruhayma,[214] the daughter of Azma' lent twelve thousand dinars to Ma'dikarib Ya'fur, the predecessor of Dhū Nuwās, when he was in need of money and later made a gift of this sum.[215] Although later, at the time of the Persian conquest and in the 'Abbāside era, Najrān remained a fairly important station of the trade towards Iraq,[216] its golden age was over after Dhū Nuwās's campaign. From the point of view of our subject, an analysis of the situation of

Najrān at the beginning of the 6th century was necessary, because the city was one of the most important centres and an active participant of the trade through West Arabia.[217]

Yemen after the Abyssinian conquest

We have a clear picture of Dhū Nuwās's activity in Najrān thanks first of all to two letters ("S" and "G") of Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth Arshām, further, to the *Ketābā dʿ Himyarāyē* edited by Moberg,[218] and the *Martyrium Arethae* (the Arabic version of which was also found and reported by Shahid who compared it with the Ethiopian and Greek versions and evaluated it in the *Martyrs of Najrān,* pp. 181–231). There is no doubt that Dhū Nuwās aimed at the commercial, political, and religious destruction of Najrān and thereby of the pro-Byzantium Yemenite group whose centre was in Najrān.[219] We know that part of the Yemenite *qayl*s headed by Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ sided with the Abyssinians, and an Abyssinian army of fifteen thousand soldiers crossed the sea on Byzantine ships and defeated Dhū Nuwās in a sea-fight in the middle of the year 525.[220] In this way Yemen lost its political and economic independence for a long time. For us the importance of this defeat is that the Abyssinian conquest in 525 caused a rapid decline of Yemenite trade, and thus the elimination of the strongest and greatest middleman of transit trade on the Arabian peninsula, whose activity hindered the independence and growth of any other transit station on the incense-route. This was the first decisive step towards the development of an independent Meccan trade.

After the Abyssinian conquest, the Abyssinian governor, the leader of the pro-Byzantine *qayl*s, Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ occupied the throne.[221] In this period, in agreement with Byzantine and Abyssinian interests, the bond between Yemen and Byzantium strengthened. We know that the Byzantine embassy, which had visited Yemen under the leadership of Julian around 529,[222] had, as mentioned above, two objectives.

As far as Yemen was concerned, during the rule of Abraha fundamental changes took place in South Arabia:[223] the country became both economically and politically independent of Abyssinia.[224] Although later, because of the hostile attitude of pro-Persian Yemenite *qayl*s, a revolution broke out under the leadership of Yazīd ibn Kabshat in 541, Yemen again recognized Abyssinia's supremacy, but its dependence upon Abyssinia was only nominal.[225] The very serious danger that a solid coalition between a strong, Byzantium-supported Abyssinia and Yemen would have meant for North Arabia and, last but not least, for the Persians was removed by the elimination of the internally conflict-ridden, greatly weakened Yemen. Around 540 the power of Abyssinia, harassed by the neighbouring nomadic Nobadai tribes, was also on a decline. Silko, the king of the Nobadai who converted to Christianity soon after 540, called himself, in an inscription from just before 540, king of the Nobadai and of the Abyssinians.[226] This might explain the Negus' consent to Abraha's independence.[227] Thus, the declining and increasingly

isolated Himyarite Yemen could no longer be a serious ally of Byzantium. The weakening and the growing isolation of Yemen is also shown in the gradual loss of its earlier influence on a considerable part of North Arabia. This process, whose rate was basically determined by the shift in the international balance of powers, took place during the rule of Abraha.[228] We know that Justinian, once he became emperor, concentrated all his efforts on recapturing the West Roman Empire, and therefore was unable to exploit even Abyssinia's conquest of Yemen. From the 630s he was not only in no position to participate directly in Yemenite–Abyssinian affairs, but as time went on, even the indirect bonds became looser. At the same time, the reign of Khusraw Anōsharwān meant for Iran a temporary economic, political, and military boom which, through the mediation of the Lakhmids, made its effect felt on the entire Arabian peninsula. As a result, the Lakhmids gradually took over the control of a great part of the territories which till the end of the 620s Kinda and, through it, Himyarite Yemen had dominated. These changes after 530 are clearly shown by the relations to the Maʿdd tribes which populated the major part of Central Arabia. The passage in Procopius (which has been given in detail earlier) dealing with the 529 embassy of Justinian, indicates that the Maʿdd tribes were at that time subject to Yemen, for the Emperor asked Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ to reinstate in his chieftainship of Maʿdd Kaisos who had fled because of him.[229]

The inscription Ry 506 about the 547 expedition of Abraha tells us that at this time the Maʿdd tribes were under the supremacy of the Lakhmids and that their chief was ʿAmr, the son of the Lakhmid king, Mundhir.[230] Abraha, of course, tried to prevent North Arabia's growing independence, as well as Lakhmid control over this area. One of the means by which he attempted to achieve this was the creation of a buffer-state, a method which on many occasions had proved useful. According to the sources, Abraha had tried twice in vain to create a Kindite type buffer-state in the desert. For example, he made Zuhayr b. Janāb, the chief of the Kalb tribe, head of Taghlib and Bakr.[231] It is worth noting that, according to Ibn al-Kalbī's report, Zuhayr had visited the Ghassānids.[232] After this attempt, made obviously in the 530s and probably not much before the 547 expedition, Abraha appointed Muḥammad b. Khuzāʿī, the chief of the Sulaym tribe, to be of head of the Muḍar tribes living around Ḥijāz and Najd.[233] When the affected tribes learned this, a member of the Hudhayl tribe, which too belonged to the Mudhar tribe, killed Muḥammad b. Khuzāʿī.[234] The failure of these attempts is a clear indication of the fact that the tribes previously under the supremacy of Kinda, had become independent and free of Yemenite control. This change can be best noticed in the most authentic source, the inscription Ry 506 which describes Abraha's expedition of 547. This source, that is, the expedition it reports, is of particular importance for our subject, and shall therefore be discussed in some detail.

Abraha's second possibility of regaining control over the North Arabian tribes gradually escaping the influence of Yemen, was a direct intervention by armed force.[235] The basic problem of identifying and interpreting the famous inscription of Murayghān is the relationship between the subject of the inscription and the passage on Abraha's expedition in Procopius, who writes the following about the

failure of the 529 embassy: "Finally, Abramos, having firmly strengthened his power, although he had promised repeatedly to the Emperor Justinian to raid Persian territory, started only *once* on this expedition and turned back immediately".[236] That is, Procopius knows only about a single expedition, the date of which he fails to give. We know, however, that Procopius had written his *Bellum Persicum* between 545 and 554 (or 545 and 550?),[237] so the expedition he mentions had to take place before 554 (or 550), therefore we have to take it for granted that the 547 expedition described in the Murayghān inscription is the same as the one mentioned by Procopius. This directly leads to the question of how the South Arabian inscription, the 547 expedition in Procopius, and the famous "War of the Elephant" of the North Arabic–Meccan, that is, Hudhaylite tradition are related. Before going into the details of this problem, let us have a closer look at the inscription Ry 506:[238]

> "By the power of the Merciful and his Messiah. The king,
> Abraha Zybmn, king of Saba' and Dhū Raydān and
> Ḥaḍramawt   (1)
> "and of Yamanat and of the Arabs of the plateau and of the
> coast wrote this inscription when they attacked   (2)
> "Maʿdd in the spring squirmish in the month Dhū Thabtān
> when the entire Banū ʿĀmir revolted   (3)
> "and then the king sent 'bgbr with Kiddat and Bshr ibn Ḥsn
>   (4)
> "with Saʿd. They encountered (the enemy) and fought at the
> head of the army, against Banū ʿĀmir and against Kiddat and
> ... Murad and Saʿd in a valley   (5)
> "on the road to Trbn and killed and captured prisoners[239] and
> their loot was ample. And the king fought in Halibān and was
> defeated   (6)
> "*kzl*(?)[240] Maʿdd and gave hostages. And then ʿAmr ibn
> Mundhir negotiated with him (i.e. with Abraha)   (7)
> "and gave hostages (as guarantee). And appointed him (i.e.
> Mundhir: ʿAmr) governor[241] over Maʿdd. And they returned
> from Hali-   (8)
> "bān by the power of the Merciful... in the month of... in
> six-hundred and   (9)
> "sixty-two."[242]   (10)

The solution of the many problems raised by this extremely important inscription depends mainly upon its contested date. The discrepancies are due partly to the uncertainties concerning the beginning of the Ḥimyarite era and partly to the deviations of dating in certain Arabic sources. Following the results of J. Ryckman's research,[243] the majority of the researchers have accepted the year 115 B.C. (or more accurately, the autumn solar eclipse of the year 114) as the beginning

of Himyarite chronology, thus the date of the Murayghān inscription should be 547 as dated by G. and J. Ryckmans. Smith does not accept the year 115 as the beginning of the Himyandite era, he is in favour of the year 111 and according to him, the expedition took place in 544 at the latest, and most certainly no later than that.[244] Since Smith has studied Abraha's expedition within the framework of the Byzantine–Persian war, he argues that as peace was concluded in 545 Abraha could not have attacked Persian territories later, and he interprets the inscription in agreement with this argument. He claims that Abraha fought primarily for Byzantine interests and his expedition was successful, and lines 7 and 8 mean that Maʿdd came again under the supremacy of Abraha[245] and ʿAmr b. Mundhir was forced to accept Abraha as governor. Smith, of course, does not establish a relationship between this expedition and the "War of the Elephant" and, without even mentioning the many chronological difficulties, accepts with respect to the latter the traditional date of 570, that is, supposes that Abraha had led two expeditions with a 26-year interval.

Caskel sets the beginning of the Himyarite era at 118–117 B.C. and Abraha's expedition within the period of the 540–545 Iranian–Byzantine war. To solve the discrepancies in the inscription, he separates the events after line 7 (wbʿdnhw . . .) from the earlier ones and concludes that, in agreement with the real balance of power, Mundhir had appointed his son governor over Maʿdd.[246]

Rodinson is of a similar opinion. He too claims that as regards the historical situation and the assumed beginning of the Himyarite era between 122 and 118 B.C., the expedition had taken place between 540 and 544.[247]

According to Beeston, the event in the inscription[248] had occurred in 552, which is supported by a noteworthy dating of az-Zuhrī: "And az-Zubayr told us and said: And ʿUmar b. ʿAlī al-Muʾammil told us (who) referred to Zakarīya b. ʿAlī ʿĪsā (who) referred to (az-Zuhrī) b. Shihāb that before the chronology of Allah's Prophet—may Allah bless and keep him—Quraysh dated from the time of the Elephant. Forty years were counted between the Elephant and Harb el Fijār. Six years were counted between Fijār and the death of Hishām b. al-Mughīra. And five years were counted between the death of Hishām and the building of the Kaʿba. And fifteen years were counted between the building of the Kaʿba and the year when Allah's Prophet went to Medina, of this, five years before it was revealed to him (i.e. he had a revelation). From then on they counted with the Prophet's chronology."[249]

Although az-Zuhrī's report is an extremely important additional information concerning the identification of the "War of the Elephant" and Abraha's expedition in the inscription of Murayghān, it cannot be used for accurate dating. The dating of Harb al-Fijār is also unreliable,[250] and although the report of an old, fairly trustworthy traditionalist, Abū Ubayda,[251] about Harb al-Fijār agrees with that of az-Zuhrī's, other, similarly old and eminent traditionalists date the "War of the Elephant" differently. For example, Baghawī in his *tafsīr* written as a commentary of *sūra* 105, quotes two famous traditionalists, one of whom, Muhammad al-Kalbī, must be considered in view of the non-Arabic sources, the bearer of the most decisive and most noteworthy Arab tradition: "And they differed in the date of the

Year of the Elephant. And said Muqātil: it was forty years before the birth of the Prophet—may Allah bless and keep him. And said Muḥammad al-Kalbī: it was twenty-three years (before the birth of the Prophet). And most people (agree) that it was in the year of the birth of Allah's prophet—may Allah bless and keep him."[252]

Beeston is inclined to give 552 as the date of the inscription, because he claims that the Ḥimyarite era started in 111 or 110 B.C.,[253] while Kister seems to have been convinced by az-Zuhrī. Not only does the date of 111 or 110 as the beginning of the Ḥimyarite era raise a number of difficulties, but as we have seen above, Muḥammad al-Kalbī's tradition weighs at least as much or more than az-Zuhrī's report. The date 552 for Abraha's expedition leaves the political situation out of consideration, for at that time the Lakhmid king, Mundhir, was stronger than around 547, and Abraha could hardly have achieved the victory suggested by the inscription. It is far more likely that the date was 547 which, besides following the far more reliable and accepted Ḥimyarite chronology starting in 115 B.C., also fits the historical situation. Specifically, the Lakhmid king, Mundhir, was defeated in 546 by Ḥārith b. Jabala, which shows that the hostilities between them continued even after the peace treaty of 545.[254] It seems probable that Abraha started his expedition in agreement with the Ghassānids[255] and reckoned with the weakness of Ḥīra. However, the shift in the balance of power in favour of the Lakhmids shows, even in this situation, that the Lakhmids had already become established in Central Arabia and continued to keep the Maʿdd under control. One of the decisive proofs conveyed by the inscription is the considerable loss of Yemenite power over the North Arabian tribes, and in our opinion the primary goal of the expedition was to regain this lost influence.

The other—for us no less important—problem of the inscription Ry 506 is its relation to the "War of the Elephant". Before the discovery of this inscription (not counting Halévy's verbal communication)[256] Conti Rossini was the only one to question the authenticity of the "War of the Elephant".[257] As far back as 1879 Nöldeke convincingly defended the Arabic tradition,[258] but after him the problem shifted to the interpretation of the mytical reports on Meccan tradition[259] which, serving the grandeur and antiquity of the city, claimed that Abraha's expedition was directed against Mecca and aimed to conquer the city as the religious and commercial rival of Abyssinian Yemen.[260] This presentation of Meccan tradition has been accepted up to recently,[261] although there are some controversial views on the subject.[262] As we have seen, the interpretation of the "War of the Elephant" is closely related to the evaluation of the character, size, and role of Mecca in the trade of the peninsula before 570. Briefly, if we accept the Meccan tradition, namely, that Abraha left Yemen to conquer Mecca which had become much too powerful, we accept that Mecca was at the time of Abraha's expedition (between 547 and 570 according to Arabic tradition, disregarding Muqātil's information) a powerful trading centre already, which was in the way of Abyssinian Yemen. On the other hand, if we agree that Abraha's expedition in the Murayghān inscription and in Procopius, as well as the "War of the Elephant" of Arabic tradition are one and the same event, and Abraha's goal was certainly not Mecca; and if we also acquiesce

that in Abraha's expedition the war in Ḥijāz, Najd (and Tihāma) was fought not between Mecca and Abyssinian Yemen, but between the latter and the Lakhmids, that is, their vassal tribes, then we have to admit that at the time of this war Mecca could have been nothing but an insignificant settlement, primarily a site of pilgrimage, and, as we shall see later, only a transit station of Yemenite (perhaps Byzantine) and Iranian trade, that is to say, at the time of Abraha's expedition there was as yet no independent Meccan trade.

With respect to this question, the interpreters of inscription Ry 506 naturally did not agree, because they approached the question from many angles among which the *historical* study of the development of Mecca was the least important.[263]

There are two arguments in strong support of the fact that the "War of the Elephant" in Arabic tradition and Abraha's expedition mentioned by Procopius and by the Murayghān inscription are one and the same: *(1)* the chronological order of Abraha and his two successors, Yaksūm and Masrūq, make it impossible for Abraha to have led his army in 570, as claimed by North Arabic tradition;[264] *(2)* Arabic tradition too mentions only one expedition which, according to the authentic South Arabic inscription, had taken place in 547.[265] Clarification of the chronology is important in order to enable us to determine the time limit when Abyssinian Yemen no longer controlled West Arabia, but the Lakhmids, who followed in Kinda's footsteps, still exercised a certain control over this territory. What is essential, however, is that according to Arabic sources, Yemenite merchants still traded on the incense-route in this period, but Meccan trade—which gained strength and independence after 570—soon finished with the competition of Yemen crushed by the Persian conquest. Certain social consequences of this can be observed in the creation of the famous Ḥilf al-Fuḍūl.

Abraha's expedition shows clearly Yemen's loss of influence in North Arabia around the middle of the 6th century. The following decades increased the political economic decline and isolation of Yemen. This process culminated in the Persian conquest and, as mentioned already, Khusraw Anōsharwān no longer needed Yemen, consequently, the conquest of the latter by the Persians had no real importance in North Arabian history.

The analysis of Yemen's history in the 6th century in relation to North Arabia can be summed up as follows: up to 525 (i.e. the conquest of Yemen by Abyssinia) helped by the Kindite federation, Yemen was the undoubted ruler of the incense-route, it had a lion's share in the trade towards the Mediterranean and none of the West Arabian stations on the incense-route was capable of gaining strength or independence. In this period Mecca was like any other transit station on the incense-route. The elimination of Yemen was West Arabia's possibility—although not immediately exploitable—to obtain a greater part of the transit trade. The decades following the Abyssinian conquest were characterized first by a struggle between the Abyssinians and the Lakhmids for the former Kindite territories and for influence over North Arabia, and later, from the forties of the 6th century (in some areas immediately after the collapse of Kinda) till the end of the sixties by Lakhmid preponderance.

Ghassānids and Lakhmids in oriental trade

Instead of analyzing the history and manifold functions of the two buffer-states, let us consider only how their participation in intermediary trade influenced or delayed the political and economic development of West Arabia and how far it was a case of direct political or economic control of the affected territories.

Various data confirm the short-lived political and economic control of West Arabia by the Lakhmids, but there is no evidence of direct influence by the Ghassānids on this territory. The Ghassānids' lack of influence can be explained, among others, with the fact that their territory was only one,[266] though in certain periods the most powerful, of the Bedouin phylarchias of Byzantium.[267] As we know, Justinian had appointed, at the same time as al-Hārīth b. Jabala, Abū Karib the phylarchos of the Palestinian Arabs;[268] and an important passage in Malalas[269] lists in detail the eastern *phylarchoi* and *duces,* including al-Hārīth b. Jabala, whom Justinian had sent to avenge the Kindite al-Hārīth b. ʿAmr. We know that after 530 Justinian appointed the Kindite Qays the *phylarchos of Palestine*.[270] Besides the peremptory report of Johannes of Ephesus,[271] this difference in the power of the Lakhmids and the Ghassānids precludes the correctness of Procopius's statement that Justinian had invested al-Hārīth b. Jabala with royal dignity.[272]

At the same time, after 530, the Ghassānids evidently had an impressive power,[273] as confirmed, among others, by the fact that quite often the Ghassānids came out as winners of one or another of the numerous skirmishes between the two buffer-states.[274] In all probability, they played a significant role in the overland trade of Byzantium, primarily towards Iraq, although, unfortunately, very little is known about it. Our most important source is Menander Protector's already mentioned passage which proves beyond all doubt that around 561 the extent of the trading activity of the two buffer-states was that it interfered with the interests of the two great powers. However, almost nothing is known about the role of the Ghassānids in the trade on the incense-route, except that for some time certain important stations along it (Petra, Bostra, Damascus) were under their control suggesting that in some form or other—at least in the final phases—they also took part in this trade. While Lammens attributes a fairly great importance to the trading activities of the Ghassānids,[275] according to Paret, their power even over the Syrian section of the route was rather questionable.[276] We, on our part, conclude from the lack of reference to the trading activities of the Ghassānids in non-Arabic and Arabic sources that it had been of no great importance as far as trade to and from Yemen through the peninsula was concerned. For us it is more important and realistic that after the 561 peace treaty Byzantium became more and more distrustful, and frictions between the great power and the buffer-state multiplied leading to the loss of power of the latter. We know from Michel le Syrien that already Justinian II (565 to 578) was annoyed by al-Mundhir b. al-Hārīth and wished to finish with him.[277] The enmity between Byzantium and the Ghassānid buffer-state broke out under Tiberius (578 to 582) and first al-Mundhir and later his

son, an-Nuʿmān, were captured and banished.[278] According to Michel le Syrien, "The kingdom of the Ṭayāyē (i.e. of the Ghassānids) was distributed among fifteen princes. Their majority joined the Persians and the empire of the Christian Ṭayāyē ended and ceased because of the breach of faith of the Byzantines."[279] After the events of 581 to 583 neither the Byzantine nor the Syrian sources mention the Ghassānids, and the buffer-state as such had ceased to exist, although its fate was only sealed by the attack of the Persians in 613–614.[280] This means that even though the Ghassānids might have played a certain, not yet accurately outlined role in the trade on the incense-route, after 580 (showing a decline since 561) they no longer figured among the middlemen, i.e., beneficiaries of trade, a fact which for the gaining strength of Mecca was perhaps not fundamental, but, no doubt, still important.

The sources suggest that from the thirties to the sixties of the century the Lakhmids played a more important role in the life of the peninsula and there are valuable data available for a reconstruction of this role. After certain rather untraceable beginnings,[281] which include the outstanding period of Imru'l-Qays (288–328),[282] who ruled over a large part of the Arabian peninsula, from the thirties of the 6th century the Lakhmids were an important factor in the life of this territory. In connection with the defeat of the Kindite federation by the Persian-supported Lakhmids, it has already been mentioned that in the struggle for the heritage of Kinda the Lakhmids were the winners[283] and, according to the sources, in the forties of the century a considerable part of North Arabia was under their rule. According to our earlier analyzed, most reliable source which lends itself best to the establishment of the chronological order, namely, in inscription Ry 506, this rule was clearly detectable in the forties of the century. This is supported by numerous Arabic sources, though it is fairly difficult to use them for accurate dating. One of our most important data is Ṭabarī's report[284] of the cause of the Persian–Byzantine war, namely, the dispute over the Strata Diocletiana, well known from Procopius: "And hostility broke out between an Arab, whom Justinian had made king over the Arabs of Syria, his name was Khālid b. Jabala,[285] and a Lakhmid, whom Kisrā made king over the territories between ʿUmān, Baḥrayn and Yemen up to Ṭā'if and other parts of Hijāz and over the Arabs (living) there, his name was al-Mundhir an-Nuʿmān."

Even if this report cannot be accepted in its entirety, the inscription Ry 506 leaves no doubt about the authenticity of Ṭabarī's report. Although little is known about the nature of this rule, it is certain that one of its most important functions was to ensure Persian (and Lakhmid) trade.

The Arabic sources actually confirm Persian (Lakhmid) rule over Yathrib and Tihāma. The famous report found in Ibn Khurdādhbih,[286] is also available slightly more accurately and in greater detail in Yāqūt:[287] "In pagan times there was at the head of Medina and Tihāma a governor from the *marzubān* of Zāra[288] who collected taxes. And the Qurayẓa and the an-Nadhīr, the Jews: they were kings till they were removed from there (i.e. Medina) by Aws and Khazraj from among the Anṣār, as we have mentioned it in connection with Ma'rib. And earlier Anṣār had

paid the taxes to the Jews. And that is why one of them said:

> 'we pay tax after Kisrā's tax
> And after the tax of Qurayẓa and of an-Nadhīr'."

We have no reason to doubt this extremely concrete report showing complete agreement with earlier ones, and since we know that Aws and Khazraj succeeded the Jewish tribes after the middle of the 6th century,[289] the situation described by the source occurred during the above mentioned period when the Lakhmids were gaining strength.

According to two extremely interesting contemporary sources—which to the best of my knowledge have not been used so far—Lakhmid control over the ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa tribe, a group of the Hawāzin tribes, living around Ṭāʾif, can also demonstrated. The *hijāʾ* of a poet from Najrān, Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Madān[290] against ʿĀmir b. Ṭufayl, chief of the Banū ʿĀmir goes as follows:[291]

> "Oh men of Ṭāriq al-Aḥzān
> And men of ʿĀmir b. Ṭufayl, the sleepyheads!
> His people's tax belonged to Muḥarriq
> For some time and then to an-Nuʿmān.[292]
> The knights of Hawāzin aligned
> Their *fakhr* against me and I came with the
> (Banū) 'd-Daiyān."

The answer of ʿĀmir b. Ṭufayl was a recognition of Lakhmid supremacy:[293]

"They boasted on my account (i.e. they reproved me) because of the present (given to) Muḥarriq and (because of) the tax carried to an-Nuʿmān. What have you got to do with Ibn Muḥarriq and his tribe? And with the Lakhmid's tax paid by (Qays) ʿAylān?"

A similarly important report on the era of Mundhir IV with reference to Mecca can be found in the story passed on by the two al-Kalbīs in *Kitāb al-aghānī*,[294] according to which, Mundhir, by introducing effective measures, achieved peace between the Bakr and Taghlib tribes and sent the nobles of these tribes as hostages to Mecca. This last act shows clearly the still existing Lakhmid influence in this area. Unfortunately, there are no unambiguous data on the extent and nature of this influence, but it is certain that it gradually declined after the reign of ʿAmr b. Mundhir (554 to 568)[295] and completely ceased during the reign of Nuʿmān b. Mundhir III (592 to 502). This is unambiguously expressed in the sources when characterizing his rule: "And he is the *ʿāmil* of Kisrā over Ḥīra and the surrounding Iraqi territories."[296] In other words, no mention is made of the Arab territories over which, according to Ṭabarī, Mundhir III still reigned. The Ḥarb al-Fijār which broke out at the beginning of Nuʿmān III's reign sanctioned politically a status quo and destroyed even the remnants of the transit trade of the Lakhmids, transacted with the help and participation of the Hawāzin tribes through the Arabian

peninsula. The annihilation of the Lakhmids around 602 was the consequence of their gradual decline[297] and that they could no longer meet the requirements of the manifold functions expected of them on the Arabian peninsula and was not due to the fact, as suggested by Nöldeke, that they appeared too strong and independent in the eyes of the Persians.[298] It is important for us to know that the political influence of the Lakhmids was accompanied by commercial supremacy and, vice versa, the loss of political influence brought with it the cessation of Lakhmid trade. We have already mentioned that Ḥīra was also a trading centre,[299] and the evidence of this, also appearing in non-Arabic sources, is the Strata Diocletiana which triggered the Persian–Byzantine war of 540.[300]

Chapter 2

ḤUMS AND *ĪLĀF*

(Internal
conditions of the development of Meccan trade as reflected in
Arabic sources)

The peculiar "world historical" situation, the shift in the centres and carriers of middleman trade, caused by the permanent hostilities between the two great powers, and the gradual decline and elimination of the buffer-states together constituted the particular external condition which there and then created new possibilities for Meccan trade. This aspect of the problem can be approached best, besides Arabic sources, with the help of South Arabic, Byzantine, and Syrian sources. The other aspect of the beginnings of this trade is the internal realization of the possibilities offered by the peculiar external conditions. With respect to the chronological order in Meccan tradition this internal process is reflected in a tendentious way, often with suspicious accuracy, which fact in itself calls for caution. When elaborating the "pre-history" of Mecca, this tradition often uses the common method of reducing a lengthy process into an aetiological myth, the creation and interpretation of the beginnings, so that in the myth one individual at a given time performs a deed, or the myth usurps for Mecca an event in which it might have had only a minor role. The events of Meccan tradition ("foundation of the city" by Quṣaiy, the *īlāf* story, the struggle between Aḥlāf and Mutaiyabūn, Abraha's expedition, Ḥilf al-Fuḍūl, Ḥarb al-Fijār, etc.) reflect real processes and events from which the real episodes have to be extracted. When using and interpreting Arabic data we have to bear in mind that these data reflect in agreement with Arabic tradition the internal aspect of the process, the external aspect of which is the supposition of a concrete "world history". The significant stations of this internal aspect can be traced in the *ḥums* and *īlāf* stories of Meccan tradition which in their preserved form are in all probability myths explaining the beginnings, and which in their distorted form reflect a real process that occurred over a longer period of time. Next, we shall consider this internal reflection and try to demonstrate that although Arabic reports on the beginnings of Meccan trade do not help us to establish an absolutely reliable chronological order, nevertheless, the traditional chronologies can be refuted with the help of independent or contradicting Arabic sources and in this way a new relative date can be established before which and after which Meccan trade could not have come into being.

The genesis of Mecca as a permanent settlement was inseparably linked to the beginnings of Meccan trade. We might say that the development and strengthening of trade was the sine qua non condition for the establishment of a permanent settlement, for the site of the sanctuary to become a city. The poor natural resources of Mecca made it unsuitable for agricultural cultivation and animal husbandry, which also meant that prior to the development of intermediary trade we cannot speak of the "foundation of a city". The sources unambiguously confirm the adverse natural conditions of Mecca,[1] that is, the particular natural condition which later—in contrast to Ṭā'if and Medina with favourable natural conditions—stimulated and accelerated the development of trade into the predominant economic activity. This internal particularity (i.e. unfavourable natural conditions) could exert its influence only in correlation with the external particularity. In fact, the most important sources, which relate the "foundation of the city" to the semi-mythical figure of Quṣaiy, do not mention a permanent settlement before him. This is clearly set down in the famous passage in al-Bakrī: "He said: and Fihr's children lived around Mecca till Quṣaiy b. Kilāb settled them in the *Haram* and there was no one yet in Mecca *(wa kānat Makkatu laysa bi-hā ahad^un)*. Said Hishām: said al-Kalbī: 'The people used to make a pilgrimage (there) and then scattered and Mecca was left empty, there is no one in it' *(kān an-nās yahujjūna thummā yatafarraqūna fa-tabqā Makkatu khāliyatan laysa ahad^un)*."[2] A less well-known report of an-Nuwayrī referring to the *Kitāb al-Maghāzī* of ad-Dimashqī provides additional information to al-Bakrī's data.[3] Prior to the development of trade, there was on the territory of Mecca only a site of pilgrimage and a market, and Mecca was probably only one of the insignificant transit stations on the incense-route between Yemen and Syria which, till the Abyssinian conquest of Yemen was controlled, together with the other transit stations of Hijāz, by the Ḥimyarites who transacted trade on it.

Regarding the beginnings of Mecca, in the Arabic sources two main traditions can be traced determining the views of the researchers studying this problem. One of the traditions is rooted in the elaboration of the Abraham religion and this tradition—as we know—relates the origin of Mecca to Abraham, i.e., to Ismā'īl, in other words, sets it into prehistoric obscurity.[4] The other, more historical tradition suggests a link between the "foundation of the city" with Quṣaiy who made the Quraysh settle down.[5] Some of the researchers following the first version suppose that Mecca as a city had existed already before Quṣaiy,[6] while others accept Quṣaiy as the "founder of the city".[7] As the causal relationship between trade as the predominant economic activity and Mecca as a city becomes conspicuous from a considerable number of the sources, certain researchers, who take the "foundation of the city" seriously, suppose a link between Quṣaiy and the organization of trade,[8] though none of the sources mentions that Quṣaiy was engaged in trade.[9] The objective cause of this is revealed by the different datings of Quṣaiy's activity, as at the time mentioned in the sources, Mecca could not yet have pursued independent

trading activities. Some of the historical traditions put the mythical "foundation of the city" in the period of Behrām Gōr (420–438) who grew up in Ḥīra and was well known to the Arabs.[10] Another tradition going back to Hishām al-Kalbī claims that Quṣaiy's activity coincided with the period of Fīrūz b. Yazdajird (459–484).[11] In both periods, namely, in the first and second half of the 5th century, Yemen had not only a firm hold over the incense-route but was also transacting trade itself. It is obviously impossible to speak about a city with independent trade in these periods. Nevertheless, Hishām al-Kalbī's dating to some degree takes historical reality also into consideration. According to his dating, ʿAbd Manāf's sons in the īlāf story were active after Yemen had lost its independence, which might indeed have meant in the objective sense the first, though only initial step towards the development of independent Meccan trade. A further—let us call it the third—tradition, implicitly assuming that Mecca had already acquired a certain commercial importance, associates Quṣaiy's victory and the beginnings of the Quraysh directly with Byzantine assistance, i.e., with direct interference by Byzantium. According to Ibn Qutayba's famous report: "Then Quṣaiy went to Mecca and fought against the Khuzāʿa together with those who followed him and the (Byzantine) emperor helped him against the Khuzāʿa (wa aʿāna-hū Qayṣar ʿalay-hā)."[12] This report has been accepted by several researchers[13] including Lammens who drew the conclusion that the report means not Byzantium but the Ghassānids. Accepting this view, Watt added that the assistance given to Quṣaiy and his victory can probably be attributed, at least partly, to the development of trade between Mecca and Syria. If this were the case, then Quṣaiy should be put at the earliest to the thirties of the 6th century, when the buffer-state of the Ghassānids had come into power in Syria (although, as we have shown earlier, the Ghassānids even then could not actively interfere with the affairs of West Arabia) and when, in its struggle for a trade independent of Iran, Byzantium really needed the incense-route. After the disintegration of the Kindite federation the struggle started between Abyssinian Yemen and the Lakhmids, and ended, as we know, with the victory of the latter. All this is not taken into consideration by the above mentioned researchers, and although they accept without criticism the information of Ibn Qutayba, they still follow the tradition when it comes to the dating of Quṣaiy,[14] that is, they have either been unaware of, or reluctant to recognize the consequences of their views.

In our opinion the inherent contradictions of the different versions about the time and conditions of the "foundation of the city" by Quṣaiy cannot be smoothed over. This problem too can only be studied together with the development of Meccan trade and only in this way can we expect to come to a result approximating the truth. The real problem is not the date of the "foundation of the city" by Quṣaiy in the way given by the sources, but the time when the permanent Meccan settlement could have come into existence given the particular economic–geographic conditions (i.e. when on a territory unsuited for farming and animal husbandry, a transit station on an important trade route, given the simultaneous presence of a number of conditions, in a given historical situation could have become independent and able to control and transact an important part of the transit trade). In other

words, since without trade we cannot speak about a permanent large settlement on the territory of Mecca, the history of Mecca as a city is essentially the history of how the Quraysh tribe gradually joined transit trade. Regarding "origin", this means that the half legendary, half historical "foundation of the city" by Quṣaiy can only be accepted as perhaps the first step in the transformation of Mecca into a city, and the real process of transformation started when the Quraysh joined trade. This first step was probably nothing more than the acquisition of control over the territory of Mecca by the Quraysh which in this period meant primarily control over the sanctuary (this is reflected in the tradition claiming that they drove away the Khuzaʿa tribe that lived around Mecca and guarded the sanctuary).[15] It is no accident that the sources attribute to Quṣaiy only the organization of pilgrimages. Unfortunately, we have no data on the way of life of the Quraysh when there were no pilgrimages. Probably animal husbandry extending over a rather large territory was still their main economic activity.[16] Activities connected with local pilgrimages and the accompanying markets probably only supplemented the basic economic activity of animal husbandry. The sources stress that the pigrimage and the market had been inseparable[17] (they use one word for the two concepts: *mawsim*). It is said in a passage of the Koran that it is not a sin to trade on a pilgrimage,[18] and a passage in Azraqī, which is important also from the point of view of the barter trade between the Bedouin tribes, establishes an unmistakable link between market and pilgrimage.[19]

However, it must be stressed that the three market places around Mecca (ʿUkāẓ, Majanna, and Dhūʾl-Majāz), together with the other market places on the Arabian peninsula[20] transacted primarily, if not exclusively, barter trade among the tribes. This "trade among neighbours which was spatially limited by the sphere of action of the isolated markets",[21] was of very small volume and—since exclusively, or almost exclusively only use-value was produced—it allowed for only very limited intermediate trade among the tribes. These markets were controlled primarily by tribes living on the given territories, or by the buffer-states under whose supremacy the tribes belonged and which skimmed any eventual profit. This is convincingly demonstrated in a passage of al-Marzūqī.[22] It is, however, an important fact that ʿUkāẓ was controlled by the Qays ʿAylān tribes (of them primarily by the Hawāzin tribes).[23] The latter were defeated by the Quraysh only during the Ḥarb al-Fijār sometime after 590 when Quraysh gained supremacy over ʿUkāẓ, among others. From all these facts the conclusion can be drawn that at the time of internal trade among the tribes, that is, of active trade between Yemen and the buffer-states, Mecca could not have been a superior site of pilgrimage and market,[24] and Quraysh did not control any of the surrounding market places. Prior to independent trade, the insignificance and nature of Mecca were no different from those of other market places, as it appears quite clearly from the sources. Up to the time of Hāshim, the great-grandfather of Muhammad, according to the sources, there were only local markets in Mecca and the activities of foreign merchants and the Quraysh were conducted at best on the level of barter trade.[25] A passage in ath-Thaʿālibī[26] shows clearly that Quraysh traded only with those who came to Mecca on the occasion of a

pilgrimage *(kānat lā tutājir illā ma* man warada ʿalay-hā Makkata fīʾl-mawāsim)*, that is, in this period Quraysh pursued no independent trading activity, its influence was limited to the site of worship *(lā tabrahu dāra-hā wa-lā tujāwizu ḥarama-hā)*. This primitive barter trade could have been—as already mentioned—only an ancillary economic activity and could not have lent a special importance to Quraysh, neither could it provide a sufficient basis for the development of the city of Mecca.

Analysis of the period before *īlāf* shows, therefore, that without trade as the predominant economic activity, Mecca was but a place of worship which attracted a great number of people during the yearly pilgrimages and markets, furthermore, it was a transit station of the transit trade conducted by foreign merchants, and in this period Mecca as a city did not exist. The traditions concerning Quṣaiy and the "foundation of the city" have been analyzed in this sense and we have suggested the rejection or reevaluation of the traditional "beginnings".

Organization of *hums* and *īlāf*

The first phase in the development of Meccan trade, the method of the organization of trade and parallel to it, the permanency and the growing authority of the settlement of Mecca can be followed best in the *hums* and *īlāf* stories of Meccan tradition. The very close link between *hums* and *īlāf* has been discovered only recently,[27] but many problems connected with them still await solution.

A famous passage in the Koran[28] contrasts the security *(ḥaram)* and inviolability *(amīn)* of the Meccan sanctuary with the insecurity and defenselessness *(wa-yutakhaṭṭafuʾn-nās min ḥawli-him)* of those living outside Mecca, and mentions all this as a fact with a tradition. Indeed, the security and inviolability of the sanctuary and its inhabitants, the Quraysh, was a fundamental condition both for the initial organization of trade and the development and security of the permanent settlement. The first decisive step of this process was, among others, the institution of *hums*[29] which is a bond, but at the same time it is a dividing line between the nomadic and the settled way of life, or more accurately, it expresses the first moment of settlement. The basic function of *hums* was the creation of religious unity of the Quraysh and the tribes important for it,[30] as well as the spreading and utilization of the exogamy of Quraysh in order to ensure its inviolability and that of Mecca not only for the period of the pilgrimage, but—and this is a new phenomenon to be emphasized—for the whole year.[31] *Hums* united tribes which controlled various sections of the Quraysh trade route,[32] in a religion of peculiar and common rites.[33] In a manner of speaking *hums* was the introduction to, the precondition and companion of *īlāf*. *Hums* was both the cause and consequence of the permanent settlement;[34] it was the cause because it meant protection and security for the permanent inhabitants of the territory, and it was the consequence because its organization into an institution serving commercial objectives probably proceeded parallel to the permanency of the settlement. That is to say, *hums* had no sense

unless the Quraysh had already started to organize independent trade which, in turn, was the basic condition of permanent settlement. It is extremely important for us to know when *hums* and *īlāf* came into being, because it would enable us, on the basis of Arabic sources, to grasp from the inside certain features of the beginnings of the process leading to the development of Meccan trade and to the development of Mecca into a city. Since *hums* and *īlāf* are complementary and interdependent means in the service of trade, data referring to one of them permit conclusions about the other. While Ibn Isḥāq is not sure whether *hums* came into being before or after the "War of the Elephant",[35] al-Azraqī, who had compiled the old Meccan traditions, puts the origin of *hums* literally after Abraha's expedition.[36] For a similar point of origin of *hums* and *īlāf* the close link between *Sūrat al fīl* and *Sūra Quraysh* can be interpreted as a noteworthy information. Tabarī mentions in his *Tafsīr* two traditions proving a practically causal relationship between the two *sūra*s,[37] and according to this, the victory over Abraha's army was, so to speak, the cause and condition of the commercial independence of Quraysh and of *īlāf*. An even more convincing argument in favour of the close relationship between the two *sūra*s is that in one of the most important versions of the Koran before its official redaction, in the codex of Ubaiy ibn Kaʿb the two *sūra*s belonged together.[38]

All these arguments, even if not conclusive, support the probability of the supposition that *hums,* as one of the first steps in the organization of Meccan trade, came into being around the middle of the 6th century. Let us next have a look at *īlāf*, the other means in the organization of trade.

Meccan tradition claims, as generally known, that the beginning of independent Meccan trade can be attributed to Hāshim and his brothers, the grandsons of Quṣaiy. The four brothers are supposed to have organized practically at the same time Mecca's trade with Byzantium, Iran, Abyssinia, and Yemen, and this in such a way that they concluded *īlāf* with the rulers or—as some better informed sources claim—with the chieftains of the tribes living along the trade route. Afterwards Quraysh was able to trade in all directions of the compass and thus the organization of trade had in fact not only started but was completed. With respect to the beginning of Meccan trade the majority of researchers have actually accepted this story in its traditional form.[39] Let us first have a look at the apparently most authentic *īlāf* tradition. Ibn Saʿd referring to ʿAbd Allāh b. Nawfal b. al-Hārith, reports: "Hāshim was a noble man who concluded an alliance *(al-hilf)* for Quraysh with Qayṣar so that they (i.e. the Quraysh) should travel in security. As far as those are concerned who were en route (i.e. the Bedouin tribes) he concluded an *ulfa* (friendly agreement) with them and in return the Quraysh would transport their goods and there would be no (transport) charge for the people (i.e. the tribes) by the route *(fa-allafa-hum ʿalā an taḥmila Quraysh badāʾiʿa-hum wa-lā kirāʾa ʿalā ahl aṭ-ṭarīq)*. And Qayṣar wrote him a letter and wrote to the Negus too that he should permit the Quraysh to enter his territory."[40] An extremely detailed and noteworthy passage of al-Qālī (died in 967) gives the essence of the *īlāf* story in a similar way. The concretization of the *īlāf* concluded with the tribes is of particular importance. According to the communication based on al-ʿUtbī and Muḥammad b. Sallām,

after he had obtained the safe-conduct *(kitāb amān)* from the emperor, "Hāshim started back with his safe-conduct and each time when he passed near a Bedouin tribe he bought an *īlāf* from the noblemen (of the tribes) and *īlāf* meant that they were in safety on the territory (of the tribes) without an alliance, that is, *(īlāf)* meant security on the route *(wa'l-īlāf an ya'manū 'inda-hum fī arḍi-him bi-ghayri ḥilf wa-innamā huwa amānat aṭ-ṭariq)*, in return the Quraysh brings them goods and ensures for them (namely, the nobles of the tribes) the transport of the merchandise and pays them their capital and profit (for their merchandise) *('alā anna Quraysh taḥmilu ilay-him baḍā'i'a fa-yakfūna-hum ḥumlāna-hā wa-yū'iddūna ilay-him ru'ūsa amwāli-him wa-ribḥa-hum)*."[41]

After Hāshim's *īlāf*, the sources mention the *īlāf*s of the other three brothers (al-Muṭṭalib went to Yemen, 'Abd Shams to Abyssinia, and Nawfal to Iraq).[42] It should be noted that the part of the *īlāf* tradition which probably follows closer *sūra* 106, assigns the leading role in the development of *īlāf* to Hāshim,[43] and this tradition is more in agreement with the two journeys mentioned in the Koran, that is, with the Syrian and Yemenite trade. It seems probable that these "two journeys" were the nuclei of the orthodox *īlāf* tradition to which another layer was later added linking the trade relations formed at various times to the same tradition-nucleus. The two layers can quite often be separated clearly from one another.[44]

Now, how much can we accept from the *īlāf* tradition and how can we interpret it in our analysis of the development of Meccan trade? The most important statements of the tradition can be summed up as follows:

1. Hāshim, that is, Hāshim and his brothers bring Meccan trade *ex nihilo* into being.

2. They conclude trade agreements, contracts[45] with rulers of the neighbouring countries (Byzantium, Yemen, Abyssinia, Iran) with the argument—according to al-Qālī's report—that the goods will be cheaper when the Meccans deliver them to the foreign customers.

3. They conclude *īlāf*s with the Bedouin tribes living along the trade route.

In the background of the three groups of problems we can trace the development of Meccan trade in time and space, as well as its organization and the mode of this organization.

Let us first consider the problem of the contracts signed with the kings. There is no need to prove that the contracts were not concluded with the kings. The real information conveyed by the report is obviously the fact that the Quraysh had gradually got hold of the trade transacted earlier by other middlemen, and as these middlemen dropped out, the markets formerly controlled by others had become open to the Quraysh. These markets did not extend beyond the limes of the two great powers, and the trade contracts were concluded at best—as already emphasized by Lammens[46]—with their local officials. Furthermore, they were concluded not concurrently, but parallel to the drop out of the competitors, stretching over a few decades.

The problem of date, of the chronological order of events—the first group of problems inherent in the *īlāf* tradition as set out above—has so far been the weakest

part of research. It is obvious from the aforesaid that the legendary activities of the brothers in this form is quite unacceptable, specifically, the myths surrounding them must be classified among the myths about the origin of the city. Out of respect for the fictive or real ancestor of the clan and for its greater glory or, on aetiological consideration (in this case concretization and "explanation" of *sūra* 106 which merely indicates the real process) these myths[47] ascribe a long-lasting process (in this case to Banū Hāshim, and Banū'l-Muttalib, on the one hand, and to Banū ʿAbd Shams and Banū Nawfal, on the other) to an individual(s) who is (are) supposed to have performed the deed by a single (simultaneous) effort. The *īlāf* tradition based on the simultaneous creative activity of Hāshim and his brothers, left the most important condition of the development of Meccan trade, namely, the external particular, out of consideration, that is, it did not account for the long-lasting process of the gradual dropout of the earlier middlemen caused by the hostilities between the two great powers. It appears further from Arabic sources outside the *īlāf* tradition that the conclusion of *īlāf* and the development of Meccan trade were the results of a prolonged process. These sources provide valuable additional information for the reconstruction of the true process of *īlāf*, proving that with the fall of Himyarite Yemen Quraysh could not automatically take over. Non-Arabic sources quite clearly and convincingly point out that the influence of Himyarite Yemen over North Arabia (and, last but not least, the inheritance of transit trade) was first of all claimed by the conquering Abyssinians and by the Lakhmids, and— as proved by the inscription Ry 506—in the forties of the century the Lakhmids won. Paragraph 5 of the 561 Persian–Byzantine peace treaty referring to the buffer- states, bears testimony to the flourishing trade of the Lakhmids which extended even to North Arabia. In the seventies of the century the influence of the Lakhmids in North Arabia gradually declined, creating a vacuum in the trade through North Arabia, which Mecca—after some primitive precedents—tried to fill by investing tremendous energy into the organization of peaceful trading.

How is this new chronology of the process of the beginning of Meccan trade supported by Arabic sources? In the period following the Abyssinian conquest, Yemenite traders were still active for a few decades. We have an extremely valuable piece of information, in all probability dated from the period before Abraha's expedition (thus from before 547), which unambiguously proves that a considerable part of the trade through Mecca was still transacted by Yemenite merchants.[48] al- Balādhurī[49] reports that when a group of traders of Abū Yaksūm (i.e. Abraha) went to Mecca in a year of drought *(fī hatmatin)*, they were attacked by young men who robbed them of part of their goods. "Later they made peace after some nobles of Quraysh went to Abū Yaksūm and *asked him not to estrange the traders of his country from them (wa saʾ alū-hū allā yaqtaʿa tujjāra ahli mamlakati-hī ʿan-hum)*. And they gave him al-Hārith and others as hostages."

Two things become clear from this really well-informed source, first, that at the time of Abraha Yemenite traders still played an important role in the trade on the incense-route[50] and, second, that in this period the main economic activity of the Quraysh was still animal husbandry which a year of drought *(hatma)* could

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completely upset. Thus at the time of Abraha no Yemenite *ilāf* could have existed yet. With growing Lakhmid influence, Yemenite (Abyssinian) participation in trade declined of course, but did not completely cease. The gradually diminishing activity of Yemenite traders and parallel to it, the development of Quraysh trade with Yemen (the *terminus a quo* of the birth of Yemenite *ilāf*) can be best traced in the origin of Hilf al-Fuḍul, whose true nature and conditions of coming into being are rather blurred and abstracted in later tradition.[51] According to one of the most probable traditions,[52] the antecedent of the federation was the cheating of a Yemenite trader in Mecca, which confirms the changed commercial role of the Quraysh and Mecca towards Yemen. This concrete episode is probably the summary of a number of similar events (thus forming the probable basis of the many different versions) and can be interpreted as the final act of a lengthy process. In the course of this process the Quraysh finally eliminated the Yemenite traders from the trade on the incense-route, and Meccan traders themselves organized caravans to Yemen where they bought the merchandise and took it to Syria. In other words, after the conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians, the events triggering Hilf-al-Fuḍul were the last act in the liquidation of the declining and after the Abyssinian conquest in the forties of the 6th century gradually weakening, but still existing Yemenite trade. Following this period, the sources speak only about the Yemenite trade of the Quraysh, monopolized more and more by Banū Makhzūm.[53] According to tradition, the federation came into being in the last decade of the 6th century, not long after Ḥarb al-Fijār,[54] which was an important milestone in the development of trade relations with Iraq. This date too shows that the Quraysh acquired even the trade with Yemen relatively late. Thus, the beginning of the Yemenite *ilāf* can be set between the fifties and nineties of the 6th century.

The problem of trade with Abyssinia, the *ilāf* of ʿAbd Shams can be solved more easily. We know both from Arabic and non-Arabic sources that the trade to and from Abyssinia was transacted mainly by Abyssinian and Byzantine merchants. When describing trade and other contracts with Abyssinia, the sources never mention Arab ships. The population of North Arabia had little access to the sea, sailing and maritime trade were developed only during the era of the Omayyads. (For example, the lack of sailing was one of the reasons for the direction taken by the conquests!) Although there are a number of references to sailing in the Koran and in the Sīra, these only mention the hazards of travelling by sea and do not indicate that sailing was practiced by the Quraysh.[55] This had direct natural causes, namely, sailing on the Red Sea was dangerous (rocky reefy coast line, surrounded by deserts, the danger of pirates, etc.), in addition, Arabia had no wood, no iron, neither did it have rivers and good harbours, therefore, sailing was monopolized by Byzantium and Abyssinia.[56] All this means that the Quraysh could not transact regular trade with Abyssinia, they could at best receive the goods arriving from Abyssinia, so we cannot speak about an Abyssinian *ilāf*.

With respect to the upper time limit of the organization of trade with Syria, a report, interesting in more than one way, is available on the reconstruction of the Kaʿba in 605. We know from several sources[57] that just at the time when the lack of

wood and craftsmen was considered in Mecca, a Byzantine ship sailing towards Yemen shipwrecked at ash-Shuʿayba. We can read in al-Azraqī that when the Quraysh learned about the shipwreck they bought the wood of the ship and allowed the passengers to enter Mecca and to sell the merchandise they were carrying without being levied with tithe. "They used to levy those Byzantine traders who entered (their country), just a Byzantium levied a tithe on those who among them entered their country" (wa-kānū yaʿshurūna man dakhala-hā min tujjār ar-Rūm kamā kānat ar-Rūm taʿshuru man dakhala min-hum bilāda-hā).

This important passage refers to the Syrian trade of the Quraysh as something which had been practiced for some time. An earlier phase in the development of the Syrian trade of Quraysh can be discovered in the still rather problematic episode of ʿUthmān b. al-Huwayrith.[58] While Ibn Isḥāq and al-Musʿab az-Zubayrī stress in the relations of Byzantium and ʿUthmān b. al-Huwayrith the religious aspect (ʿUthmān's conversion to Christianity and his promise to the emperor to convert the Quraysh), in al-Fāsī's source, that is, in the account of ʿUrwa b. az-Zubayr the trade interests are quite clearly outlined, and these interests are the more understandable as they refer to the period not much after the Persians had invaded pro-Byzantine Abyssinian Yemen and Byzantium needed a reliable ally on the incense-route.[59] ʿUthmān b. al-Huwayrith recognized the vital importance of friendly relations with Byzantium for the Quraysh's trade (wa-qad raʾā mawḍiʿa ḥājati-him min bilādi-hī), and characteristically enough this was also his main argument when he tried to persuade the Meccans to accept his plan (qad ʿalimtum amāna-kum bī-bilādi-hī wa-mā tusībūna min at-tijāra fī kanafi-hī) and threatened them in case of opposition with the emperor's refusal of a permission to enter Syria and to trade there, which would be the end of their source of income (wa-anā akhāfu in abaytum dhālika an yamnaʿa min-kum ash-Shām fa-lā tatjurū bi-hī wa-yanqaṭiʿu marfiqu-kum). A passage in ʿUrwa b. az-Zubayr's report—noteworthy with regard to our subject—refers to some Meccans trading in Syria, who on the order of Byzantium were imprisoned by the Ghassānid King ʿAmr b. Jafna since the above threat was of no avail (fa-kataba Qayṣar ilā ʿAmr b. Jafna yaʾmuru-hū an yaḥbisa li-ʿUthmān man arāda ḥabsa-hū min tujjāri Quraysh bī sh-Shām fa-faʿala dhālika ʿAmr).[60] We have no reason to doubt the unanimous reports of several sources. The question remains: How seriously was this enterprise taken by Byzantium and how far ʿUthmān b. al-Huwayrith's action can be considered as the enterprise of an individual disregarding prevailing conditions. The rapid fiasco of the experiment shows that Byzantium had—or more correctly could have—no serious plans with Mecca. At the same time, the influence of Byzantium is clearly indicated by a sentence of al-Musʿab az-Zubayrī's: "Quraysh was afraid of the emperor and was about to subject itself to him" (fa-hābat Quraysh Qayṣaran wa-hammū an yadīnū la-hū).[61] The episode, which we shall interpret later, took place in the last decade of the 6th century,[62] and though the power of the Ghassānids' buffer-state had ceased, Byzantium still maintained a certain commercial and ideological influence in West Arabia. The fiasco of the experiment showed, however, that Mecca was both commercially and ideologically sufficiently strong and its trade with Syria was fully

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developed. But this trade had no traditions as yet, it still had to fight for its stabilization and monopoly, and the Quraysh still had to fear the emperor's wrath, as he was still powerful enough to have a few Meccan traders imprisoned in Syria. Compared to 'Urwa's report, how very different is the tenor from that of al-Azraqī about the situation of not more than a single decade later!

What date can we accept as the earliest for the beginning of Mecca's trade with Syria? The "beginnings" are undoubtedly connected with the decline of the Ghassānids' power. We have seen that from the thirties of the 6th century the Ghassānids were the most powerful Arab buffer-state of Byzantium, they controlled the Provincia Arabia (the territory around Hawrān and Balqā') and ruled over the phylarchoi of the Provincia Phoenicia ad Libanum (with Damascus, Emesa, Palmyra, etc. as centres). The golden age of the Ghassānids lasted, however, for only a few decades. The famous Byzantine–Persian peace treaty of 561 shows them at the zenith of their military and commercial power. However, the paragraphs of the peace treaty, which refer to them also, reveal that Byzantium had begun to look askance at the excessive independence of its buffer-state and tried to put a brake on it. The famous fifth paragraph is a definite proof of the active trade of the Ghassānids. At the same time, after the 561 peace treaty, Byzantium became more and more suspicious, the frictions between them multiplied and soon led to the loss of the buffer-state's power. The decisive conflict between Byzantium and the Ghassānids broke out, as we have seen, under Tiberius (578 to 582), and first al-Mundhir, then his son, an-Nuʿmān was captured and banished. After the events of 581–583, the Byzantine and Syrian sources no longer mention the Ghassānids and the buffer-state as such ceased to exist. All this means for us that before 560 the Quraysh were probably not yet able to trade on the Syrian section of the incense-route, that is, there was probably no Syrian *īlāf* before 560. Quraysh' engagement in Syrian trade probably started with the decline of the Ghassānids, that is, in the sixties of the century. We believe that the *terminus a quo* of the Syrian *īlāf* is the sixties of the 6th century.

The chronology of the Iraqi *īlāf* can be determined even more reliably. We know that from the thirties to the end of the sixties of the century the control over a significant part of North Arabia was in the hands of the Lakhmids, and the cessation of their influence or at least of most of it has been demonstrated in Arabic sources concerning the Persian conquest of Yemen. Nevertheless, the Lakhmids, relying on the Qays ʿAylān tribes, participated in intermediary trade—though to a gradually diminishing extent—till the nineties. The Quraysh was able to eliminate finally the Lakhmids from the transit trade through Arabia only in the course of Harb al-Fijār by defeating the Hawāzin tribes which served and protected Lakhmid trade.[63] During the period when the Lakhmids fulfilled important political, military, ideological, and commercial functions, an Iraqi trade of the Quraysh was out of question. But even the defeat, in the course of Harb al-Fijār, of the weakened Lakhmids, who were also eliminated from transit trade, did not mean the conquest of the Iraqi markets—especially not of Hīra. There are some sources proving that only in the period after Harb al-Fijār could the Quraysh try to develop trade with

Iraq, which until then was primarily in the hands of the Lakhmids. A less well-known passage in *Kitāb al-aghānī*[64] suggests that the Quraysh tried to join the Iraqi trade only in Abū Suyān's era. According to this source: "Abū Sufyān b. Harb went out at the head of a group of Qurayshites and Thaqafites towards Iraq with merchandise. And after having gone (the distance of) three (stations) Abū Sufyān collected them and said to them: We are indeed in danger on our present journey till we reach a powerful king who did not give us permission to visit him and his country is no trading place for us" *(innā min maṣīri-nā la-ʿalā khaṭarin mā qudūmu-nā ʿalā malikin jabbārin lam yaʾdhan la-nā fīʾl-qudūmi ʿalay-hī wa-laysat bilādu-hū la-nā himatjarin)*.[65] Other sources also support this *expressis verbis* lesson of the report, namely, that before the turn of the 6th century Iraqi trade was out of the question for the Quraysh, in other words, we can speak about an Iraqi *īlāf* only in the period around the beginning of Islam.

When analyzing the true historical nuclei of the *īlāf*s of Hāshim and his brothers we believe to have succeeded in formulating a new relative chronological order of the beginning of Meccan trade. Our analysis of the real historical nucleus of the *īlāf* tradition was at the same time an attempt to trace the nature and historical value of the latter and to determine the relationship between tradition and historical reality. In the course of our analysis we aimed to prove that, in contrast to the *īlāf* tradition, Meccan trade came into being not *ex nihilo* at a certain given time, but was the result of a long-lasting process, which process started after insignificant beginnings (organization of local markets, guiding of caravans, utilization of the advantages offered by the stations of transit trade) in the fifties of the 6th century and lasted until the beginning of the 7th century.

PART TWO

Chapter 3

THE NATURE OF MECCAN TRADE

Internal organization of Meccan trade: Trade by
peaceful means

Analysis of the internal organization of Meccan trade reveals a peculiarity which might contribute important information on the type of trade evolved and operating in a nomadic environment to which it was not tied by its merchandise and its trade based on barter. In addition, Meccan trade lacked the advantages of a state structure. It is both surprising and atypical that the Quraysh had tried to organize and to ensure a peaceful trade at all costs.

In precapitalist societies (e.g. Carthage and Rome in antiquity, Venice and the Netherlands, etc. in the middle and modern ages), but particularly in nomadic societies,[1] trade and the operation of commercial funds were inseperable from war. In nomadic societies not only the objective laws of trade were constant causes of war, but the uninterrupted and unavoidable hostilities of the nomads, in our case of the Bedouins—specifically, the possibility of hostilities among themselves and against everybody— were immanent and permanent causes of war.[2]

The aim of trade in nomadic society, as of all trade, was to convert as much as possible of the products into merchandise, that is, to get hold of as much merchandise as possible either by transforming production based on use-value into production of exchangeable values, or, and this was more often the case, by acquiring products already converted into merchandise, and marketed as such, by plunder and looting or, if necessary, by war. The conversion of products into merchandise or the expropriation of merchandise have always been recurring causes of war.

On the other hand, trade transacted in a nomadic environment was constantly threatened by the nomadic tribes, which, in view of the objective necessity of subsistence economy, supplemented it by plunder, by forceful acquisition of alien means of production (pasture, well) or products.[3]

The basic fact of the development and functioning of Meccan trade is that it did not involve a simple exchange of goods between communities, thus it was not a trade supplementing the economies of local communities, nor a small scale trade transacted on isolated markets, but a long-distance transit trade in luxury goods, i.e., it was not based on Mecca's domestic production. In other words, in order to acquire, keep, and expand this trade, to obtain merchandise, Mecca had to fight

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external forces, that is, the fight for markets and merchandise was directed outwards. This fight is reflected in Mecca's pre-Islamic history, e.g., in the events around Ḥilf al-Fuḍūl (the fight against Yemenite trade) or in the Ḥarb al-Fijār (the fight against Lakhmid trade). This process became part of a number of real and fictive traditions. We have already shown that the reflection of the external struggle for trade acted on the expropriation and handing down of the final tradition of Abraha's expedition by Mecca.

At the same time, the constant warring of the Bedouin tribes, the danger of the inevitably recurring pillages were realities which threatened the foundations of Meccan trade and the Quraysh had to face this problem when they started to organize it. There were two ways to deal with the constant threat to trade posed by the hostility of the nomadic tribes. The typical solution was that the masters of trade, provided they were sufficiently powerful, chose the military subjugation of the tribes and established a certain dependent vassal relation with them. A solution of this type was the organization of the Kindite tribal federation in the interest of Yemenite trade and the same method was applied by the Lakhmids in the almost three decades of their influence in North Arabia since the thirties of the 6th century.[4] The other, the atypical method was very difficult to apply and always threatened with failure. Its aim was to win over the tribes living along the trade routes by peaceful means. This was essential for those that had little or no military strength, were not protected by powers engaged in consumption, but in nomadic societies it could never ensure the safe transaction of trade. In contrast with the first method, in the case of the second one, trade had always been at the mercy of accidental factors which influenced the momentary attitude of the Bedouin tribes. At the time of the organization of Meccan trade, the Quraysh were forced to choose this second method,[5] and accordingly, they worked out and applied the means of peaceful trade with which they tried to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Bedouin tribes. The *hums* and *īlāf* were the two primary means, but the institutions of *ashhur hurum* ("holy months") and *nasī'* (the intercalation of the leap-month) were also made use of. The variety of these means and the diplomatic flexibility[6] in applying them are proof of the ingenuity and cleverness of the Quraysh. The institution of *hums* was a specifically Arab amphictyony organized on religious basis which established bonds between the Quraysh and several tribes whose peaceful attitude was indispensable for trade. The religious centre of the *hums* amphictyony was the sanctuary of Mecca and originally the religious basis of the federation was probably the cult of some deity.[7] *Hums* was primarily intended to safeguard, through religion, the inviolability of the inhabitants of Mecca, that is, the Quraysh. *Īlāf*, the other important institution in the organization of peaceful trade, was not a traditional federation, which later might have compelled the Quraysh to face confederate obligations in the course of the constant tribal hostilities they tried to avoid, but was a peculiar bilateral agreement of a new type. *Īlāf* meant that the tribes living along the trade route ensured on their part free passage through their territories for the caravans of the Quraysh, in return, the Quraysh undertook, as a kind of payment, to transport the goods of the tribes and to hand over, on their way

back, the fortune invested in the merchandise and the profits received *(ru'ūs^a amwāli-him wa-ribha-hum)*. Thus *īlāf* tried to make the tribes, or directly the chiefs of the tribes, economically interested in the trade of the Quraysh.[8] Obviously this was the best way toward ensuring the peace of the tribes involved and the main means in safeguarding the *Pax Meccana*, until somebody made a better offer to the chiefs of the tribes.[9]

The means of peaceful trade included the "holy months" *(ashhur hurum)* and in connection with them the intercalation of the leap-month(s). Of these, the institution of the "holy months" is of particular importance, which, according to both the Arabic and non-Arabic sources, meant relative peace for the majority of Arab tribes, so that in this period not even the caravans needed armoured guards to protect them against Bedouin attacks.[10] This was closely related to the institution of *nasī*[11] which, through the Kināna, was under the control of the Quraysh and allowed the holy months to be arranged in a manner most favourable to trade.

The Quraysh put these means in the service of trade. Within the Quraysh, those making the greatest profit out of trade tried at all costs to ensure peace brought about and maintained by quite a lot of compromises and diplomatic ingenuity. It was exactly this development and strengthening of trade which, among others, paved the way for the objective conditions of the typical mode of safeguarding trade and laid the foundation for the new relationship between the Quraysh and the Bedouin tribes—with the genesis of Islam. It should be immediately added that with Islam the *sui generis* nature and historical role of Meccan trade ceased, demonstrating by this fact too the peculiar role commercial activity played in its genesis. In other words, Meccan trade started a process—the liquidation of traditional tribal structures—in such a way that the direction of the process was not determined by trade, and the full development of this process, no longer dependent on the Quraysh, at the same time put an end to the role of Mecca as a unique trading city. The relationship of the main profiteers of trade to Islam was perhaps primarily determined by Muhammad's activities threatening the foundations of *Pax Meccana*, i.e., of peaceful trade, and the Quraysh persisted in the status quo they had worked hard to achieve, but which, though rather unstable, had nevertheless worked. The victory of Islam meant at the same time the end of the decades of the peculiar peaceful trade of Mecca.

<div align="center">

External factors determining Meccan trade:
The possibilities of establishing a "port of trade" in Hijāz
around the turn of the 6th century[12]

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It has been mentioned several times in the foregoing that Meccan trade can be described as a long-distance trade in luxury goods operating on the foundations and within the framework of traditional tribal society as middleman between foreign producers and consumers in a way that within its own society its safe functioning was obviously not protected and warranted by an even primitive institutional state

structure. This peculiar situation explains the elaboration of the complicated and unstable peaceful trade described above, a trade which has been conspicuously different from the trade of the Mineans, Ḥimyarites, the Nabataeans (Petra) and Palmyra, or from that of the Ghassānids and Lakhmids—to bring examples only from the given territory. At the same time it appears that because of the dropping out of the buffer-states and the all-absorbing hostilities between the two neighbouring great powers, a certain political vacuum existed on the Arabian peninsula which for some decades helped the genesis of Mecca as a trading centre and its monopolization of the incense-route. Hence, the commercial function of Mecca was, on the one hand, inseparable from its own traditional tribal society, and on the other, its *raison d'être* was the transaction of long-distance trade in luxury goods as a middleman between foreign producers and consumers. Reliable neutrality was destined to ensure the unity between these two seemingly incompatible facts, or more precisely, their complicatedly interacting coordination. This neutrality, whose *sine qua non* was a political vacuum, was valid as regards particular tribal interests as well as concerning the great powers. We shall return to this question later when we shall try to give a probable interpretation of the case of 'Uthmān b. Ḥuwayrith. Meccan trade operating on the basis of particular tribalism obtained its historical significance by the role it played in the genesis of Islam. For an understanding of this role the analysis of the organization, size, radius of action, and forms of contact of Meccan long-distance trade is indispensable. The analysis of this problem, in addition to furnishing data on certain yet undisclosed fields of the economic history of late antiquity, can also provide a more realistic picture of the city in which Islam was born, of Mecca as a trading centre. This is all the more important as the picture presented by Lammens, using anachronistic concepts and based on the arbitrary interpretation of the sources, has in general been accepted despite some formal restrictions by the researchers, and up to now the problem has not been investigated in a way that, compared to earlier research, would lead to new conclusions. We have to point out here, in connection with this problem, three essential errors and deficiencies in the interpretation of Mecca by Lammens and his followers.

The first historical-philosophical and socio-historical error is the capitalist interpretation of Meccan trade. Taking into consideration the fundamentally important role of Meccan trade in the genesis of Islam, and that in Arab society, from the conquests up to the European intrusion, only commercial wealth and its twin, the usurer's wealth (necessarily concealed after Muḥammad's prohibition), these "antideluvial forms" of capital had existed, it becomes absolutely necessary to analyze these forms of capital. This, in our case fundamental, problem will be discussed later as the conclusion of our analysis.

The second error which brought about similarly grave economic-historical consequences, is that research made no distinction between Meccan long-distance trade and local trade, that is, between the trading city not meant for satisfying local requirements and the isolated local markets transacting local barter trade among the neighbours.[13] The lack of distinction between the two qualitatively different

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conditions is all the more surprising as the sources, when listing the isolated local markets, do not mention Mecca at all.[14] By raising this important question it will be easier to formulate more appropriately and to approach better some apparently essential problems. Some of them shall be indicated briefly. In my opinion, the "secret" of the *sui generis* character of Mecca as a trading city can be solved once this problem has been raised. Namely, the problem that Mecca existed on the foundations of a primitive tribal society, but its existence was ensured by intermediation between archaic societies with developed state structures (primarily between Iran and Byzantium). In terms of the philosophy of history, the situation was that a naturally given reality manifest in traditional tribality met an openly economically determined secondary social reality. The two false alternatives of the arising problem may be that Mecca's character is explained either by its presence in traditional tribalism or by the service of the state-directed foreign trade of a more highly developed society. The proper interpretation however—as we shall try to prove—is not a matter of an "either ... or" observation. Comparison of the structure of Mecca with that of the local markets operating on the Arabian peninsula is another important question in whose analysis new sides of the investigated problem can be studied. This might be the best way to grasp the specific differences with the help of which Meccan intermediary trade can be described satisfactorily and which are not inherent features of the traditional tribal society. On the other hand, in this way we can approach socio-economically and from the side of the institutions the substratum which was the organic foundation of the trading city and which mercilessly determined the possibilities of intermediary trade. In addition, analysis of the functioning of the local markets will help the further differentiation of the tribal substratum from a number of important, mainly ecological aspects. Analysis of the local markets makes it possible for us to learn more about the forms of contact of the Bedouins (who were in fact the dominant participants of these markets) with others. These contacts were, among others, also of an economic nature and the more so, the greater the differences and diversities in the state of development of the meeting communities. The various forms of contacts of the Bedouins appear sufficiently characteristic to be accepted as the basis of a typology of the local markets operating on the eve of Islam. This analysis, in addition to raising the problem of the manifold contacts and of symbiosis among the nomads with other nomadic people and with the settled population, also confirms that on the eve of Islam the tribes of the Arabian peninsula were bound to one another and to the neighbouring more developed societies.

The third problem, which might be called a deficiency or sketchy treatment, leads to the strictly speaking economic and organizational features of Meccan trade and of Mecca as a city. It is essential, and at the same time it determines the methodology of our analysis, that with the help of our results we can approach the specific differences in the above mentioned problems which qualitatively distinguish Mecca, the trading city engaged in transit trade, from the local markets. Due to the lack of coherent data Lammens and research following in his footsteps *a)* have depicted rather superficially the organized form of commercial contacts of the

Quraysh, on the one hand, and of the Byzantine and Iranian partners on the other, which is closely connected with the analysis of the places of contact to and from where the Quraysh led caravans and how they contacted their customers;[15] and *b)* assessed without sufficient proof the role and volume of Meccan trade. The explicit opinion of Lammens and other authors was that Mecca took over the mediation of trade between the Far East, mainly India, and the Mediterranean.[16] However, thorough analysis of the sources does not confirm this statement which fails to take into consideration that in the given period Iran (as suggested by the sources) played a predominant role on the sea-route from India to the Persian Gulf and, after the conquest of Yemen, to South Arabian ports. Furthermore, Byzantium's own maritime traffic, which had its centres in Aila, Clyzma, and Iotabé, is also omitted. The question poses no problems if we suppose, in accordance with Lammens's theory, constant elements and nothing more than a simple change in roles. A differentiated analysis of the ways in which Byzantium had satisfied its needs in far- and central-eastern goods is impossible by this method, which also excludes the possibility of a genetic-historical study of the origin and functions of intermediary Meccan trade—so very significant in its changes, development, possibilities, direct and indirect influences. More precisely, what we ought to record are not only changes and growth, occasionally transformed into an altered quality, which had taken place in no more than a few decades and which cannot be considered the constant parameters of a given fact, of a given situation. The phenomenon under investigation should be considered a process of development whose fulfillment can only be guessed, as it never came about. It has to be pointed out already here that surprisingly few data are available concerning the third group of problems which is closely linked to the second group, but these few data are sufficient for distinguishing what can and what cannot be stated with certainty. The exact determination of the latter may be of equal importance for further research.

Types of local markets on the Arabian
peninsula on the eve of Islam

Arab historians and geographers have listed a total of about two dozen markets operating on the territory of the Arabian peninsula on the eve of Islam.[17] We shall see later how very arbitrary these enumerations are which fail to indicate changes in the site and number of markets at a given time and their dependence upon various conditions. The data also omit information about the causal relations of these conditions with the local markets, namely, that the markets were not institutions existing since time immemorial, but were products of certain types of contacts. It is not within the scope of this book to present a (greatly missed) detailed ecological-economic description of the enumerated markets; our subject demands only, though it is obligatory, that we analyze the nature, structure, and given social functions of the listed markets, and thus try to unravel from the available data the basic types of their functioning and roles. So far a single attempt has been made to

distinguish and to classify the various types of markets whose formal nature based on eclectic, political–geographic criteria will become immediately clear. Saʿīd al-Afghānī speaks about three types of markets: *(1)* those under foreign supremacy (such as Hīra, Buṣrā, etc.); *(2)* those created by the Arabs where they traded with their own goods (such as ʿUkāẓ); *(3)* finally, markets which, because of their geographic locations, served as meeting places for foreign tradesmen (such as e.g. Ṣuhār or ʿAden), where "in proportion to the growing commercial character, the national character declined *(aṭ-ṭābiʿ al-qawmī)*".[18] This classification, using criteria of different qualities not exactly excluding one another, is logically false, since markets of the third type were also, as a rule, under foreign supremacy, and the geographic locations of markets of the first type were usually also advantageous as they were mostly established at the junctions of two or more commercial routes. The main reason for the uselessnes of the above classification is, however, that it does not indicate the functions of the markets and the circumstances of their participants, although this can be the only possible starting point for the understanding of the concrete socio-economic function of these markets.

If we take a look at the formally enumerated markets and add those which, as suggested by other correlations, have performed one or another of the basic functions, we can discover a single common element among the connections of various types and the different participants, namely, the presence of nomadic tribes. It is they who establish contact, if necessary by force, with the various types of settlers. Thus, the primary cause and constant driving force of this contact was the highly unstable economy of the nomads exposed to the adversity of natural conditions. For the nomads a not necessarily regular contact with the settlers was of vital importance, from which it follows that their operations involved generally and typically vital consumer goods. Contact with the settlers was not by free choice of the nomads, and neither can we speak about free choice—of course, for other reasons—on the part of the settlers. This form of contact can therefore justly be called *forced reciprocity*, representing a peculiar form of contact between primitive and archaic societies. The nomad–settler contact investigated by us, as a rule of the nature of pseudo-barter, cannot be called a generalized reciprocity based on mutual help and cooperation,[19] neither can it be called a "balanced reciprocity based on economic exchange".[20] Forced reciprocity turned into "negative reciprocity" and into the expropiation of goods by force only in case of trouble.[21] Thus, forced reciprocity meant for one of the partners, for the nomads, a natural need of the other partner, which on its part tried, as a rule, to profit from this need. This bond was undoubtedly of a dichotomous character, but in its typical forms did not turn into a mutually exclusive or annihilating contrast. On the contrary, the spectrum of contacts embraced all forms from primitive tribal barter through regular levy to the organized taxation of nomadic societies by the state. In the case of the Arabs, this can be expressed by the simplified but historically proper abstraction that a qualitatively new, but none-the-less essence-preserving prolongation of forced reciprocity, determined by the nomads in pre-Islamic traditional-particular tribal society, was the practice of the developed Arab imperium. This is nothing but the

essence-preserving form of the levy collection of imperial taxation grown out from conquests which, in turn, could be characterized as a forced contact between the state-organized higher tribalism as the conqueror and the conquered agricultural communities—albeit this had not existed in its pure form, except perhaps in the age of the Umayyads.

Let us take a close look at the contact characterized by forced reciprocity between the nomadic tribes and the settlers, starting from its simpler forms towards, at least organizationally, higher forms.

al-Bakrī (died in A.H. 487 [A.D. 1094]) and Yāqūt (died in A.H. 626 [A.D. 1229]) report a story on the origin of aṭ-Ṭāʾif which presents the development of reciprocity between the nomads and the settlers in *statu nascendi,* so to speak.[22] Let us first consider al-Bakrī's report in detail, following which we shall point out the differences in Yāqūt's version, as they indicate important changes in the unwritten law *(ʿurf)* regulating contact between nomads and settlers. It is advisable to quote Yāqūt about the precedences: "After ʿĀmir b. aẓ-Ẓarib[23] had died, his two daughters, Zaynab and ʿUmra, were his heirs *(warithat-hā ibnatā-hā)*. And Qaṣiy b. Munabbih turned to him as a suitor. (Then ʿĀmir) gave him his daughter, Zaynab, as wife, who bore him Jusham and ʿAwf. Then (Zaynab too) died after ʿĀmir's death. (Qaṣiy then) married (Zaynab's) sister (ʿUmra) who had been earlier the wife of Ṣaʿṣaʿa b. Muʿawīya b. Bakr b. Hawāzin and had born (to her former husband) ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa." Next we shall quote al-Bakrī: "'Āmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa, whose mother was ʿUmra bint ʿĀmir b. aẓ-Ẓarib, settled in the neighbourhood of the Banū ʿAdwān who were his relations (through his mother). They settled beside them and lived in this way for some time. (However) a quarrel broke out within the Banū ʿAdwān and their unity and unanimity were gone. (Now) in the Banū ʿĀmir greed arose against them and they removed them from aṭ-Ṭāʾif and chased them from there." In connection with this event, Hurthān Muḥarrith Dhūʾl-Aṣbāʿ al-ʿAdwānī says:

"One of them cast an eye upon the other and despised him
And they camped (i.e. the Banū ʿĀmir) in Thaqīf where earlier there was no
    humiliation and degradation."

"He said: the Banū ʿĀmir (after this) used to spend the summer season in aṭ-Ṭāʾif because of its pleasant (air) and fruits and they retired to their own land, the soil of Najd, for the winter season because of its openness and its ample pasture and green fodder, and they preferred the latter to aṭ-Ṭāʾif. The (Banū) Thaqīf, however, recognized the advantage of aṭ-Ṭāʾif and said to the Banū ʿĀmir: this territory here is for agriculture and horticulture. We noticed that you prefer to it the pastures and only cause damage in its cultivation and tillage. We understand this better than you. Well, don't you wish to make profit from pasturing and also from the cultivation of the land; give this land of yours to us and we shall till it by ploughing, we shall grow grapes, fruits and trees on it and surround it by wells connected by underground canals, and we shall dig here wells covered with stones. It will in this way be full of cultivated gardens as we shall lend ourselves to this task and do (only) this, while you do not care for this and have chosen something else. When the crop will be ripe

and the fruits ready to be picked we shall halve it with you, yours will be one half of it because of your right to the land, ours will be the (other) half by right of our work. In this way you will participate both in pasturing and in agriculture, a chance which has never been anybody's share. With this condition the Banū 'Āmir handed over aṭ-Ṭā'if to the Thaqīf. And the Thaqīf cultivated it with great skill. (After this) the Banū 'Āmir used to come at the time of the collection (of the harvest) and having weighed it took half of the fruits and the Thaqīf kept the other half. The Banū 'Āmir and the Thaqīf protected aṭ-Ṭā'if against all who had cast an eye on it. In this way they lived for some time till the Thaqīf became very numerous, they strengthened aṭ-Ṭā'if, raised a wall around it and fenced it in *(yuṭifū bi-hā)* from this it got its name: aṭ-Ṭā'if. As they became strong by virtue of their number and their fortresses, they were reluctant (to meet their obligations) to the Banū 'Āmir. Then the Banū 'Āmir started a war against them, but was unable to get close to them and could not gain the upper hand over them."

There are two important differences in Yāqūt's version. One is that the territory of the later "city" belonged, through matrilinear heritage (through Zaynab and 'Umra), equally to the Thaqīf and to the Banū 'Āmir tribes which were originally branches of the Hawāzin tribes *(fa-kānat aṭ-Ṭā'if bayna walad Thaqīf wa-walad 'Āmir b. Ṣa'ṣa'a)*. The other important difference is the indication of reciprocity between the settled and nomadic partners: "After the Thaqīf have strengthened and Wajj's (aṭ-Ṭā'if's earlier name) cultivation prospered, the Bedouins looked upon them with envy and those living around them coveted (their wealth). Then (the Thaqīf) asked for help from the Banū 'Āmir, but these gave them no help." It was then that the Thaqīf surrounded the settlement with a wall, and when the Banū 'Āmir, as customary, came for half of the harvest, the Thaqīf refused to hand it over. So far the story of origin. We have quoted this story at length because it shows not only one of the typically possible processes of the origin of the settler–nomad contact, but, in my opinion, it also characterizes the probably most original structure and functioning of the local markets investigated by us, namely, the peculiar form of forced reciprocity whose practice can be traced from the most ancient of times, so to speak, up to this very day. This forced reciprocity might be based on actual relationship (as in the above example), but in contrast to this "original" state of affairs, the forced "relationship" between the nomads who, economically at the mercy of the settlers, were usually the militarily stronger partners, and the reluctantly accepted protection by the settlers, is far more typical. From the beginning of the 6th century more and more examples can be found of this *ukhuwwa/khuwa/khawa* type of forced reciprocities which came into existence in this way and had reached their climax in the 19th century in a long-lasting and more and more vigourous process of Bedouinization, only gradually repressed in our century by the interference of an effective state structure.[24] In this unstable forced reciprocity "plundering attacks and trade were often alternative strategies".[25] The nature of the strategy and of the means used in the two forms of contacts have to be emphasized: the relationship of the partners might be described as one in which the nomads were, from the economic aspect, more or completely at the mercy of the

settlers, and until the settlers were strong enough, the form of contact was mainly determined by them according to their manifold—primarily military and commercial—demands but as soon as the settlers declined politically and militarily, the economic compulsion of the nomads became the factor deciding the form of contact. The relative predominance of the settlers is indicated by the early cuneiform inscriptions, as well as by the epigraphic and historic-geographic sources. In contrast, with the development of sailing in the Ptolomaid and Roman, and later in the Byzantine era, further, with the decline and cessation of South Arabian state structures and the loss of power of the Nabataeans and of Palmyra, and for some other reasons (mainly because of the military and commercial policy of the great powers) an increasing Bedouinization set in, which in the 6th century, when the state structures in South Arabia disappeared, affected the settlers more and more.[26] Conclusions about the nature of contact between the nomads and the settlers in this period can be drawn not only from South Arabian inscriptions, but in addition to Syrian and Greek sources first of all from North Arabian ones, which bear witness to a growing Bedouinization (primarily because of the change in the ecological structure of South Arabia) and also to the fact that the formerly subjected and exploited partner had turned into a determining element of the contact which tried to protect its unstable economy by its superior military strength. Historic-geographic data also provide convincing evidence about the instability of this economy whose maintenance was greatly in need of forced barter or forced reciprocity. Early research has already refuted the "geographic" foundations of Winckler's theory supplementing the supposition of an ancient Semite homeland by Sprenger and Schrader, according to which, the Semites swarmed out of the Arabian peninsula as it gradually desiccated and the last wave of this exodus was— so Caetani and later Becker suggested—the genesis of Islam and the Arab conquest.[27] Recent historic-geographic research has proved that from the end of the third millenary B.C. up to the present there has been no change in the average level of rainfall over the Arabian peninsula.[28] It is, however, essential that in a given period a change in the amount of the precipitate, when 40–50 per cent of the livestock might perish, can upset "the unstable ecological equilibrium" for a relatively short period, or even for years.[29] Within the period investigated by us, between 591 and 640, an unusually high number of droughts *(sana* or *sana mujdiba* or *qaht)* were recorded (for example, in 591, 593 or 594, 598, 605 or 606, 627, 630, 640).[30] In such periods, the necessary strategy of the nomads was, as a rule, military threat and the settlers, to avoid inevitable plunder *(ghazw)* almost always unilaterally supplied or replenished the necessary foodstuff. The borderline case of "unstable economic equilibrium" (plunder prevented by donation of "barter") can be accepted as typical of the contact between the nomads and the settlers. It will be shown later that one of the main functions of the sites of contacts, namely, of the local markets, was precisely the prevention of plunder. However, in connection with the borderline case, contact between the settlers and the nomads can be classified into two typologically quite different forms. With respect to its essential features the first basic type can best be characterized by the above described Ṭā'if-

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form of contact: this is the mode of contact between *the nomads and the inhabitants of the oases* in which "balanced reciprocity based on economic exchange" appears, though not as an exactly typical but still detectable feature. In the period under investigation this type of contact can be detected among almost all the nomads living in and around the oases, in other words, some "markets" of this type listed in the sources may be considered only as examples of a type whose true character is not indicated, nor does the term *sūq* distinguish them from the other types of markets. There is an exceptionally illuminating reference which supports the generalization of the market form functioning between the oases-dwellers and nomads and which is typologically primary in respect of its origin and interaction. This datum underlines the "naturwüchsig" (rooted in nature) character of this peculiar reciprocity, i.e., its embedment in a life rhythm determined by ecological conditions. al-Masʿudi preserved a valuable report about the name of the month of *ṣafar* which had its origin in the name of the markets called *aṣ-ṣafarīya* held long ago in Yemen: *"And ṣafar* (was named) after those Yemenite markets which were called *aṣ-ṣafarīya* (because) it was there that (the nomads) purchased their food *(wa-kānū yamtārūna min-hā)* and those who missed it died of starvation".[31] We know that the pre-Islamic sun-year started with the first of the month of *ṣafar* (called later *al-Muḥarram*) which coincided with the end of the summer season, i.e., with the beginning of autumn, and it was then that the effect of the long dry summer was felt the most.[32]

If now, being familiar with this fact, we scrutinize again the sources, we find that for the majority of cases direct or indirect conclusions can be drawn about the presence of one or another variety of the type of market. The nature of the variety was always determined by the actual conditions. Let us have a look at some examples.

According to al-Bakrī, the Jewish agricultural community of Wādī al-Qurā, one of the most important oases in North Arabia, and the Banū Hudhaym and its brother-clan, the Banū ʿUdhra, who lived their nomadic life in the surroundings of the oasis "concluded an alliance and agreement among themselves, according to which, food and nourishment was due to the latter from the Jews *(wa-kāna la-hum fī-hā ʿalaʾl-yahūd ṭuʿma wa-ukl fī kulli ʿām)* and (in return) they will protect them against the (other) nomadic tribes. And (indeed) protected them against the Balī . . . and the other tribes."[33]

When in the reports on the contacts between the oases-dwellers and the nomads the local markets *(sūq)* are mentioned, strictly economic references are found, referring primarily, though not only, to the nomadic partner. Let us see an example. The Taymāʾ oasis, very famous in antiquity, situated between Wādī al-Qurā and Dūmat al-Jandal on the route leading from Syria to Medina, and Iraq, was inhabited in the investigated period by Jewish settlers.[34] According to the sources, in the second third of the 6th century as-Samawʾal b. ʿĀdīya of legendary fame was the lord of the fortress al-Ablaq which controlled the oasis. One of our sources reports: "Sometimes the Bedouins came there to spend the night and they were his guests and they stocked up from the fortress and set up a market there *(wa-tumtāru*

min ḥiṣni-hī wa-tuqīm hunāka sūq^{an})."[35] Here *sūq* can quite unequivocally be interpreted as the apposition of *mīra* (annonae), and the most we can do is to suppose that the nomadic partner of reciprocity (in the given case one of the branches of the Ṭaiyiʾ tribe, the Banū Juwayn) could enter into an economic exchange *too* with the inhabitants of the oasis.

We have discussed in some detail the concrete examples, because it is exactly this kind of contact which in the period under investigation, on the eve of Islam, had been the typical form of local market exchange based not on the principle of bilateral agreement, but on what for this very reason we have called forced reciprocity and which, despite the lack of bilaterality, the partners tried to institutionalize. *Sūq*, which developed in the course of this process, could—depending upon the concrete balance of power—be based on an *ukhuwwa* relationship, i.e., a regular levy *(mīra = sūq)* in return for protection, or if the settlers represented a significant military force, they might have attempted to achieve a balanced reciprocity (this latter being a less and less typical form). On the other hand, this type of contact differed only formally from the other type of local "markets", i.e., from the non-commercial relations which developed between the great powers and the nomads on the limes of the neighbouring empires. Thus, in the period of our investigation, contact based on balanced reciprocity can be considered an exception which strengthens the rule. Among the local markets indiscriminately listed by the sources, the first type is represented by three such non-typical examples. These, however, are exceptions strengthening the rule which in their traceable trend approach more and more the typical, up to the time of Muhammad's conquest. The three oasis-*sūq*s were Dūmat al-Jandal, with significant antique pre-history in North Arabia, the market of Naṭāt in Khaybar, and al-Hajr in Yamāma. With the exception of Medina and Ṭāʾif these were, because of their size, the probable number of their inhabitants, and potential military force, the most important oasis-settlements. Dūmat al-Jandal, North Arabia's important oasis-complex, was, in the period under investigation, not only growing date-palms and cereals, but was also a flourishing centre of transit trade which, because of its favourable location in Wādī Sirḥān, was one of the junctions of the routes leading from Arabia Petraea to the Persian Gulf and Ḥīra.[36] The leading Ghassānid clan, in spite of Byzantine's direct political and ideological influence and economic interest, had been economically strongly tied to Ḥīra.[37] Musil estimates that at the beginning of the 7th century the inhabitants of the oases were able to arm at least five thousand men. However, because of its ecological-political structure based on loosely bound units, Dūmat al-Jandal became more and more subordinated to the most significant tribe of the area, the Banū Kalb, which controlled Bādīya as-Samāwa, as well as to other neighbouring tribes. The allies *(aḥzāb)* of the oasis are known from Sayf tradition preserved by Ṭabarī who reports the occupation of Dūmat al-Jandal in A.H. 12 (A.D. 633).[38] The enumerated, partly Christian Arab tribes (in addition to the Kalb, the Bahrāʾ, Ghassān, Tanūkh, aḍ-Dajāʿim) were mainly living along the trade routes leading from the oasis towards Buṣrā and Maʿān, that is, to Syria and Egypt, to which the Banū Kināna, living in Dūmat al-Jandal, paid in all probability

a yearly allowance. [39] The local market of Dūmat al-Jandal was an established form of forced reciprocity among these tribes, involving primarily the Banū Kalb. Distinct from transit trade, this market was limited to the local exchange of articles of vital importance—with forms of barter indicating the old preserved habit of dumb-trading preserved at other markets too.

If in the case of the contact between nomads and settlers in Dūmat al-Jandal there is every reason to believe that beyond forced barter in the interest of the oasis it served *also* the preventive–ally-seeking limes policy of Byzantium, the allied great power (namely, the transaction of the subsidies due to the allied tribes used as confederates of symmachoi). The simultaneous presence of these two functions can be best traced in the case of another market place, the al-Hajr in Yamāma. [40] The oasis complex was in the hands of the Banū Hanīfa, the settled branch of the Bakr b. Wāʾil tribe. The "people of the village" grew dates and cereals and in years of rich harvests even Mecca imported cereals from them. [41] The centre of the oasis complex, al-Hajr, was partly a station on the route of transit trade *(a)* from Yemen through Najrān to Iraq and *(b)* through Mecca and Medina towards the Persian Gulf, and partly a local market between the B. Hanīfa and the Bakr tribe which from the second half of the 5th century converted to nomadism, and the Tamīm tribe, more correctly a branch of it, the Zayd b. Yarbūʿ. This dual external endowment determined the relations between the inhabitants of the oasis and the nomads, which meant that as long as the former could count on a perforce given Iranian help, in addition to their own strength, this contact could take the form of "balanced reciprocity". The alliance between the Christian saiyid of the Banū Hanīfa, Hawdha b. ʿAlī (who died in the autumn of 629), and Iran has already been mentioned. The events connected to the person of Hawdha had shown the growing strength of the nomadic element, i.e., of the Banū Tamīm. [42] Not even the surprisingly large armed forces (whose number at the time of the clash of the Muslims with the followers of the "false prophet" Musaylima had amounted to ten thousand) of the Banū Hanīfa [43] could balance the gradual eclipse of Iranian help or alliance and its role as a "lightning conductor". Reciprocity had become more and more forced and determined by the nomadic partner at the beginning of the century, while the fact that the nomadic partner had participated on the side of the settlers in their fight against the Muslims, indicates that the nomads had been interested in their role of allies. [44]

The situation was similar in the case of Naṭāt Khaybar, the market of Khaybar, the great Jewish oasis in North Arabia. We know that Muhammad occupied the oasis in A.H. 7 (A.D. 629) and it was in the course of this conquest, when they no longer seized movable goods but occupied the land, that the need to organize ownership relations and the distribution of wealth in Muhammad's Islam arose. The understandably rich and coherent material reveals a surprising phenomenon, namely, that in determining ownership and organizing taxation Muhammad followed a practice which during the 6th century was to become the forced reciprocity between settlers and nomads, determined more and more by the latter. Muhammad, to supplement available food, perpetuated single or periodical bounty

mediated by real or imaginary kinship or eventual alliance, and started a process by which the bounty to be acquired became a regular tax based on the conquerors' common ownership of the land. As one of the features of the preserved original tribal character, only those who had taken part in the conquest counted when it came to the distribution of the land, in accordance with the military nature of their participation (the horseman received three, the infantryman one part of the product).[45] When transforming and preserving nomad–settler forced reciprocity, Muhammad followed a custom whose development and nature we have seen in the case of Ṭāʾif and which he received "ready for use", so to speak, when occupying Khaybar. Although, according to the sources, the number of armed men in Khaybar amounted to ten thousand,[46] they fought—and this indicates the state of affairs in Dūmat al-Jandal and Yamāma too—in agreement with the particular structure of tribal society, in their own oases, dispersed and without integrated directives. Defense against the nomads here too meant the practice of the *ukhuwwa* type of "alliance" with one or two nomadic tribes. In return for the supplementation of their food, the allies *(hulafāʾ)* protected the settlers against the other nomadic tribes. In this specific case the Ghaṭafān and the Asad tribes were the main allies.[47] When the Muslims attacked them, the Jews of Khaybar promised the Ghaṭafān tribe half of their yearly date harvest,[48] which was more than the allies could get in "time of peace" on the market of Khaybar. That halving was an accepted and more and more typical form of forced reciprocity of the *ukhuwwa*-type is indicated by the fact that after the conquest Muhammad received one half of the products as a regular levy. More accurately—and this is the novelty in Muhammad's Islam compared to the earlier settler–nomad relations—the settlers received one half of the products in return for their work and the other half was kept by the owners of the means of production, that is, by the Muslim conquerors, as opposed to the earlier situation when the militarily stronger nomadic partner as an ally received a more and more regular share from the settlers as owners.

Thus we have briefly reviewed the first basic type of local markets in pre-Islamic traditional tribal society. This type was characterized by a forced reciprocity between nomads and settlers (the inhabitants of the oases). In its pure form its essence was supplementation of the food needed by nomadic economy on the part of the settlers, in return for which the nomads offered "protection". The historical role of the basic type was brought to perfection by Muhammad's Islam which, though preserving the intrinsic nature of these local markets, institutionalized them and passed them into the Arab empire born in the course of Muslim conquest.

The overwhelming majority of "markets" listed by Arabic sources (including the Yemenite markets of the given period) was quite conspicuously situated on the limes of the two great powers. If we look at the participants of these markets, we again find the Bedouin tribes as the constant and determining elements of contact, and in most cases, instead of the settlers, the peculiar dual official institutions of the great powers. We have enough material at out disposal for drawing some important conclusions about this peculiar form of contact which existed in the markets on the Iranian limes. The structure and function of this type of market can be

demonstrated best with the help of a paradigmatic case. The episode when, after the conquest of Yemen by Iran, the caravan of Wahriz, the Iranian governor of Yemen, or in another version, of his successor, Bādhām, transporting valuable merchandise to Iran, was attacked and plundered by the Tamīm tribe (or more accurately, by a branch of the tribe, the Banū Ḥanẓala b. Yarbūʿ) has already been mentioned in another context.[49] In the version of Ibn al-Kalbī, Hawdha b. ʿAlī, the saiyid of the Banū Ḥanīfa was responsible for safeguarding the caravan from Bedouin attack on the route between Yemen and Iran. When the caravan was plundered, Hawdha too was captured and was released only after a ransom had been paid. When he presented himself at the court of the Iranian king, the latter asked Hawdha for advice. Hawdha answered: "Your armoured horsemen are no match for them on their territory, because it protects them. However, deprive them of the food subsidy (*mīra* = annonae). If you do so for a year, send your horsemen with me and then I will set up a market *(as-sūq)* for them and if they come there then your horsemen can raid them. Kisrā acted as told and withdrew the food subsidy the markets in a year of drought." Next, a market was set up "in the market place" of al-Mushaqqar, the garnison of Baḥrayn and with the help of Hawdha, the Iranians led by Āzād Fīrūz b. Gushaysh[50] carried out the ill-famed cruel slaughter of the majority of nomads who had come to the market. The version preserved by Ṭabarī and Ibn al-Athīr shows even more accurately the character of the market: "Hawdha and the (Iranian) delegate accompanying him started to visit al-Mukaʿbir (the Iranian military commander) when the time of gleaning *(aiyām al-luqāṭ)* was near. The Banū Tamīm used to go at this time to Hajar for the food subsidy and for gleaning *(liʾl-mīra waʾl-luqāṭ)*."[51] This extremely instructive story, on the one hand, shows clearly that in the given case the market *(sūq)* was a synonym for food subsidy *(mīra)* and gleaning *(luqāṭ)*, and on the other, it indicates the dual official organization which the nomads had to face. The basic function of markets of this type was that of a "lightning conductor", that is, quite obviously preventive defense against the nomadic tribes on the limes; but what is the concrete meaning of the dual official organization? As we can see from the above quoted story, it was Hawdha b. ʿAlī who "set up a market" *(yuqīm as-sūq)* and who was in direct contact with the nomads. Thus, he was one of the officials who was called the (Arab) *ṣāhib* or *ʿāshir* of the market and whose main, if not sole, function was to keep, through the "markets", in direct contact with the nomads. We can see that he did not possess (at least not sufficient) independent military force and in critical situations he had to turn to the other official of the dual organization, to the Iranian military commandant *(marzubān* or *ṣāhib Kisrā)* whose task was to defend the limes and, in addition, to ensure the undisturbed transaction of the state's foreign trade which was quite independent of the markets. It is quite clear that the defence of the limes used the institution of markets *(sūq)* ensuring the food subsidies of nomadic tribes as a simple means to achieve the basic aim, as the markets too were under the (indirect) control of the Iranian military commander. The structure of the second type of local markets fulfilling the role of "lightning conductors" and the dual official organization can be illustrated by the following diagram (presupposing the

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probable place of Meccan trade):

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                        Iranian military commander (marzubān)
                                        |
       ┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
       │                                                              │
  (through military-economic means)                                  │
  limes defense                                                       │
       │                                                              │
       ↓                                                              ↓
  Arabian sāhib                                                  foreign trade
       ↓                                                              ↑
nomadic tribe → market (sūq = mīra)                            Meccan trade
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The dual (military–economic) function of a military–economic limes-centre can be accurately traced in the case of al-Anbār where not only the weapons distributed in case of war, to the Lakhmids among others, were guarded and returned and stored once the squirmish was over, but as we know from several sources: "It was named so because in its granaries (anbār, pl.: anābīr) was hoarded the wheat, barley, lucerne, and straw, and it was from these that the Iranian kings subsidized their allies (wa-kānat al-akāsira tarzuqu ashāba-hā min-ha)."[52] From these granaries not only "the men and soldiers of (the Lakhmid king) an Nu'mān used to get their pay",[53] but also the allied nomadic tribes of the tribes neutralized by these subsidies. When at the time of Abū Bakr (632–634) al Khālid b. al-Walīd attacked al-Anbār, somebody led him to the old market place near the latter where Baghdad was to be situated later, "where the Kalb and the Bakr b. Wā'il tribes and some clans of Qudā'a used to congregate."[54]

Next, as additional information for future elaboration, I shall classify, in accordance with the above structural features, some "markets" established on the Iranian limes which might be considered to belong to the second type and which are also mentioned in the sources dealing with the markets. The geographical direction of the enumeration is Bahrayn–Umān–Hadramawt–Yemen. The indices of the table are: (1) the name of the "market"; (2) geographical location; (3) name of the Bedouin tribe(s) participating in forced reciprocity; (4) the dual official institution: (a) its Arab official, (b) the Iranian military commandant; (5) other (commercial, military) roles of the various markets. The data refer to the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century.

Name of market	al-Mushaqqar (Hajar)[55]	Suhār[56]	ash-Shihr[57]	ʿAden[58]	Sanʿāʾ[59]
Geographical location	Baḥrayn	ʿUmān	between ʿUmān and ʿAden	ʿAden	Yemen
Name of tribe(s)	ʿAbd Qays, Bakr b. Wāʾil Tamīm	Azd ʿUmān	B. Mahra		Murūd, Kinda
Arab ṣāḥib of the "market"	al-Mundhir b. Sāwa	al-Julunda b. al-Mustakbir, Jayfar b. al-Julunda	local chiefs with relative or complete independence		
Iranian military commandant	al-Mukaʿbir al-Fārisī, Sībokht			Wahriz Bādhām	Wahriz Bādhām Shahr b. Bādhām
Other non-commercial features of the markets	Wadāʾiʿ Kisrā (armoured Iranian cavalry)	seaport	seaport	seaport	administrative centre

The forced reciprocity type of "market" contacts of the Bedouins with the oasis-dwellers and with the great powers can be considered in the given period as two typical forms of contact, differing only in the modes of organization and transaction, between the settlers and the nomads of the Arabian peninsula.

Beside these two forms of contact we find yet another type of "market", with the Bedouins as the main participants determining the nature of bilateral contact. On these markets mainly nomads came into contact with nomads (this type has already been mentioned elsewhere in another context, see p. 55). It followed from the particular character of traditional tribal society that—in contrast to the assumptions of a great part of the pertaining literature and public belief—this type of market-contact was the last to develop. The functioning of these markets could not be guaranteed either by (a non-existent) internal or external state structure, but only by the *treuga dei* which grew out of the generally accepted and believed religious rites of several tribes. The common religious rites which united a significant part of the North Arabian tribes were the pilgrimages to the sanctuaries in and around Mecca. It was just in the period under investigation that the various cults has integrated and it was in the course of this process that the market functions of these sites (ʿUkāz, Majanna, Dhūʾl-Majāz) evolved. According to al-Bakrī's report, the market of ʿUkāz came into being only fifteen years after the "Year of the Elephant",[60] that is, on the eve of Islam. It is characteristic that ʿUkāz itself was originally only a cultic centre without any trace or the possibility of settled life,

which became deserted once the pilgrimage/market contact *(mawsim)* was over.[61] It was in these markets that traditional tribal society established its manifold contacts, the exchange of religious and cultural ideas, as well as the barter of products with only use-value. Furthermore, the various legal problems (armistice, debts, benefits, payment of blood-money, bailing out of prisoners, finding of clients, looking for disappeared persons, questions of heritage, etc.) of the participants were also settled there.[62] This exchange of ideas and goods, as well as the spreading of legal customs and cults common to several tribes, that is, regular social contact in general, played no negligible role in the extension of particular tribal consciousness. As revealed by the sources, barter trade played a necessarily subordinate role among the contacts of various types. It was obviously for reasons of prestige that the Lakhmid king an-Nu'mān sent caravans to the site of pilgrimage and market every year in the course of Harb al-Fijār, primarily in order to establish in the interest of peaceful trade a closer contact with the tribes of the same cult who participated in the *mawsim*. Some sources mention in addition to ʿUkāz, Majanna and Dhū'l-Majāz, another similar market site in Hubāsha, at six days journey from Mecca,[63] but, according to a typical report of al-Azraqī, it had ceased to be mentioned together with the above sites of pilgrimage and markets because it had no cultic ties with them.

We have given a brief sketch of the types of local markets that existed on the Arabian peninsula on the eve of Islam. We have tried to prove that the nomads were the constant partners who determined the form of contact and, depending on the other partner and the way by which this contact had been established, three types of local markets can be distinguished. The first two types, in which the nomads were in contact with the inhabitants of the oases and with the institutions of the great powers, can unequivocally be typified as forced reciprocities, since contact was determined by constraint of one of the partners, namely, of the nomads, and the fundamental role of contact was the supplementation of food of the unstable nomadic economy. The third type of market, the institutionalized contacts of the nomads, can be considered the latest development. The following are the most important features of these local markets:

1. In the given case we are dealing with an emergency institution determined by the need to supplement the unstable economy of the nomads.

2. These markets were not based on the principle of bilateral balanced contacts, but on forced reciprocity originating from nomadic needs.

3. Contacts on these markets were not a trade determined by demand and supply; the operations were not regulated by autonomous economic rules.

4. Consequently, there were no generally accepted exchange values, the form of contact was at best a kind of barter.

5. These markets did not form a coherent system, their operations were isolated and periodical, and the mode of their functioning was just as much determined by the caprice of nature as by the rise and fall in the political balance of forces and the degree of organization of political institutions.

6. The relation of the markets to trade was entirely incidental and fortuitous and,

in contrast to public belief, the settlers did not profit from the market with which in most cases they established contacts for other reasons (political, security), thus the Quraysh too gained control over ʿUkāz relatively late and then only in order to secure the *Pax Meccana*.

The nature of Meccan trade

In order to be able to determine the peculiar nature of Meccan trade and to distinguish it from the above described local market contacts, the following important questions must be answered: *(1)* What sort of goods did the Meccans trade? *(2)* With whom did they trade? *(3)* Was there food production and craftsmanship in Mecca? Furthermore, we have to deal with the size of Meccan trade.

1. According to the reports of the Talmud and the Midrash, contemporary Arabs traded only with camel hide and tar.[64] From the last third of the 6th century this situation underwent a fundamental change owing to Meccan trade. The "summer and winter" caravans of the Quraysh (Koran, 106/2) no longer carried goods the odour of which would offend Joseph of the Talmud (Genesis Rabba 84/17). Let us start with the precious metals so often mentioned in the sources, with gold and mainly silver. Of the great number of sources one should suffice, which mentions that on the occasion of the Muslim attack of Qarda (A.H. 3 Jumādā II/November–December, A.D. 624) after the Quraysh had lost the battle of Badr, the Meccan traders, afraid to travel on the usual incense-route to Syria, made a detour towards Iran "and led by Abū Sufyān b. Ḥarb, the (Meccan) traders started on their way, carrying a tremendous amount of silver—this was the lion's share of their trade (caravan) (*wa hiya ʿuẓm tijārati-him*)".[65] We know that in Ḥijāz, Yamāma, and Najd, but mainly on the territory of the Sulaym tribe, there were many areas where gold and silver were found, and even primitive exploitation brought an ample yield (it is enough to remember the widely known works of the goldsmiths of Fadak, Khaybar, and Medina).[66] We have a number of data on the manifold relations (marriage, trade, religion, alliance) of the Quraysh with the Banū Sulaym.[67] Besides the precious metals, incense and various perfumes were the most important merchandise. Incense *(lubān)* was grown in Ḥaḍramawt, Socotra, and Somalia,[68] and the Quraysh purchased incense and other perfumes from South Arabia during their winter caravan journeys *(riḥla ash-shitāʾ)*.[69] Mecca was engaged in the trade of tanned leather and various leather goods. According to the afore-mentioned famous report of al-Qālī (see p. 59), when organizing *īlāf*, Hāshim argued with the Byzantine emperor as follows: "Oh king, my people are the merchants of the Arabs, if you would give me a paper in which you secure the safety of their caravans/trade, they would bring you the best leather goods and clothings from Ḥijāz."[70] Leather is often mentioned by the sources in the enumeration of the merchandise carried by the Meccan caravans.[71] The leather transported by the Meccans was processed in Ṭāʾif which had a number of tanneries.[72] In addition to these goods, raisin exported by the Quraysh from their land in Ṭāʾif was also

important merchandise.[73] The sources also mention silk *(ḥarīr)* and silk fabrics *(washy)*, and slaves.[74]

Even this brief description shows that there was a qualitative difference in the merchandise carried by the Meccan caravans and the foodstuff supplementing products of the above mentioned isolated local markets. Clearly, these caravans carried luxury and prestige goods, converting the economic activities of the Quraysh into commercial operations which, in the given period, belonged, as a rule, within the sphere of administratively regulated, state monopolized, duty bound foreign trade of the great powers. This trade was carefully separated from the turnover of internal markets. We have now arrived to the second group of our problems, namely who did the Quraysh trade with?

2. The list of duty bound merchandise preserved in the *Digesta* (39, 4, 16, § 7) contains a surprising number of goods also transported by the Meccans. We know that compared to the 3rd century there was not much change in the state monopoly of goods imported from the East.[75] We also know that in addition to spice, perfumes, various leather goods and incense (which in the meantime had become very important), Byzantium tried to acquire the strict state monopoly for silk too, and from time to time regulated the mode and place of its purchase. The rescript issued in 364–392 prohibited the purchase of silk from the barbarians outside the *comes commerciorum*.[76] We have already mentioned the law made in 408–409 by Honorius and Theodosius and by Yazdajird I, which limited trade with the Persians to Nisibis, Callinicum, and Artaxata; we have also analyzed the fifth paragraph of the 561 peace treaty between Justinian and Khusraw Anōsharwān which limited trade between the two great powers to Nisibis and Dārā and threatened the Saracens and other barbarian tradesmen trying to evade duty with severe sanctions. These measures too indicate that trade in luxury and prestige goods was treated as a state monopoly and strictly separated from "domestic trade" limited to local markets. In the period under investigation this was true for both Iran[77] and Byzantium.[78] The differences between the two spheres of interests were, among others, the following: *(a)* money as a measure of value in the exchange of goods was used in foreign trade and was typically absent on local markets,[79] that is, foreign trade/money and local markets existed separately, or more accurately co-existed; *(b)* foreign trade was institutionalized and separated by a kind of "port of trade".[80]

It is evident from the sources that regular Meccan caravans travelled on the incense-route from Haḍramawt to Ghazza and Buṣrā, respectively.[81] Let us have a closer look at one of the latter. Buṣrā (Bostra),[82] the once important Nabatean centre, after the conquest of Cornelius Palma (A.D. 105–106) became the capital—after Petra—of Provincia Arabia, the former Nabataean state, and was from then on called Nova Traiana Bostra. Up to the beginning of the 7th century, that is, the Persian conquest in 613 or 614, the sources bear witness to the commercial and military, as well as to the administrative and religious importance of the city. Five stone-paved roads led through it from Damascus to the Red Sea and from the Mediterranean through the Syrian desert to the Persian Gulf (Buṣrā was connected with Aila already by Traian). The city had its own chronology starting with March

22 of the year A.D. 105 or 106, it possessed a mint, an indication of its importance, it was an episcopal see subject to the Patriarch of Antioche, and here the largest cathedral of the area was built in the 6th century. With the elimination of Petra the growing trade of Buṣrā was directly dependent upon Damascus. The city was the residence of the governor of the Provincia, who in addition to the titles of *hégemón* and *dux*, also wore the title of military scholasticus. According to the report of *Notitia dignitatum in partibus orientis* (V, 17, 7), in the 5th century the 3rd *Legio Cyreneica* was still stationed in Buṣrā.[83] It shows the importance of the city that in the 6th century, in the period of the existence of the Ghassānid buffer-state too, it was under direct Byzantine administration and, among others, it supplied the Ghassānids with arms, just as al-Anbār did the Lakhmids—of course, the arms were distributed only for the duration of war.[84] The *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* from the 4th century reports: "it is believed that very great trading is going on there" *(quae negotia maxima habere dicitur)* because it is located "near the Persians and the Saracens".[85] This Byzantine limes-centre strengthened by walls was one of the partners of Meccan trade, and in its case the earlier mentioned military–commercial–administrative–religious functions can be clearly traced in the Arab sources. Next to Ghazza, Buṣrā was the most often mentioned final goal of the Meccan caravans, and it is typical that, according to the mythical report in the Sīra, Muhammad too had visited Buṣrā with his uncle, Abū Ṭālib.[86] In the period investigated by us there were innumerable topos in connection with Buṣrā in the sources.[87] Its importance for Mecca is clearly expressed in the fact that Muhammad had sent his first missionary ambassador, Diḥya b. Khalīfa al-Kalbī, from Medina to Buṣrā in the summer of 627.[88] The Byzantine scholasticos/hégemón/dux is mentioned in the Arab sources as *malik, ṣāhib, ʿazīm* or *biṭrīq*[89] and his function and nature completely agrees in everything with that of the *malik*, of the *īlāf* story or with that of the Qayṣar of the story of ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥuwayrith. As the Meccan caravans did not travel further than Buṣrā and Ghazza, we can justly suppose that the "kings" of the two Meccan traditions have been a kind of high Byzantine officials, like the *malik* or *ʿazīm* of Buṣrā who represented the administratively transacted state foreign trade with Mecca. It is not only in the *īlāf* story but also in the story of ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥuwayrith that we can trace the unmistakable state foreign trade mechanism, namely, that the Quraysh joined an official sphere in which presumably the types of goods and the prices were carefully fixed. It appears from all versions[90] that the Quraysh were in contact with the official Byzantine state apparatus only (and only through interpreters) and were completely at its mercy: the enemies of ʿUthmān were imprisoned at his request by the Byzantine official. The story shows clearly that the Byzantines needed the intermediary trade of the Quraysh, but through the channel of state foreign trade it was able to exert the necessary pressure and needed no other means (even if it were given), if for no other reason than that otherwise Mecca would have been unable to transact contact in a satisfactory manner with the other partner, the Iranians, either. Mecca's free movement, free bilateral intermediation were ensured by its neutrality, and, at the worst, this would have collided with Byzantine interests had Mecca tried to sell

goods treated as state monopolies through other than state channels. The experiment of ʿUthmān suggests, however, that the statehood character of the Byzantine partner of Meccan long-distance trade, as compared to the *īlāf* story, had concretized and stabilized. This legalized practice built on neutrality had been observed in the report on bilateral customs in connection with the rebuilding of the Kaʿba in 605 (see p. 62).

The lessons offered by Buṣrā are confirmed by the non-Arabic and Arabic (Meccan) reports on Ghazza.[91] The city, four km from the seaport of Maiumas, was at first an important administrative centre of Provincia Syria Palestina and later of Palestina Prima, and as a junction of the trade routes connecting Palestine with Egypt and Syria, it played an important role since antiquity. This city too, flourishing on the eve of Islam,[92] was under direct Byzantine administration and the Byzantine garrison stationed in the city was under the command of a chief official mentioned as Biṭrīq Ghazza in the Arabic sources.[93] When the city was conquered by the Muslims, led by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, the garrison was slaughtered.[94] In the Arabic sources Ghazza is the *par excellence* unloading place of the Meccan caravans. Hāshim had regularly led the "summer caravans" to Ghazza, as known from the Syrian *īlāf*.[95] In connection with the famous caravan of Badr, one of our basic sources mentions as a self-evident fact that the Meccan caravans had gone no farther than Ghazza *(lā yaʿdūna-hā ilā ghayri-hā)*.[96]

Finally, we shall only indicate (not forgetting to note the scarcity of relevant sources) that the Quraysh could have joined or did join the institutionally organized long-distance trade with Yemen and Iraq. It may be assumed that, for example, in the course of their trade with Najrān, they were in touch with the *kabīr/as-saiyid* in charge of foreign trade and political affairs of the peculiar administrative organization *(kabīr/as-saiyid, al-ʿāqib, al-usquf)*.[97] and, on territories under Iranian administration, with the Iranian officials.

3. It was necessary to ensure in the above described manner the regular long-distance trade demanded, maintained, and guaranteed by the state structure of the neighbouring great powers, the more so, as we have already pointed out (see p. 54), that Mecca was situated in a valley in which no cereals could be grown *(bi-wādin ghayri dhī zarʿin)* and which was dependent upon food import. The most important place from which Mecca imported foodstuffs (mainly fruit) was aṭ-Ṭaʾif[98] at two or three days walking distance, where some clans of the Quraysh tribe (we do not know whether owing to kinship or by agreement) possessed significant landed property.[99] The important fact is that Mecca not only got various fruits (dates, olives, bananas, figs, peaches, grapes, and raisins which it exported)[100] from there, but also honey and tar which it also exported, and in addition, products of craftsmanship (sandals, saddles, writing material, ropes, and leather goods in general) partly for home consumption and partly for exportation.[101] Among the food imports of Mecca, cereals from al-Yamāma were also important. According to one of the stories of the Sīra, when as a result of Muḥammad's clever policy, the chief of one of the clans of Banū Ḥanīfa, Thumāma b. Uthāl, converted to Islam, after his return home cereal import was discontinued and the Quraysh were threatened with famine.[102] The lack

of data on any craftsmanship in Mecca itself as proof,[103] the data of the story on the rebuilding of the Kaʿba sanctuary in A.H. 605 (see p. 62), as well as the above listed merchandise carried by the caravans, all indicate that the finished goods (leatherware, perfumes, etc.) transported in addition to raw materials, were not produced by the Meccans. All this means that their non-producer character was expressed not only by their fundamental economic activity, namely, intermediary trade, that is, by their role of middleman between external producers and consumers, but also by the fact that they had to acquire even their own supplies from abroad.

4. There are some fairly accurate data on the size and value of Meccan caravans. The most detailed data—showing also the relative participation of the clans—can be found in the description of the famous caravan of Badr.[104] The caravan consisted of 1,000 loaded camels and its value was 50,000 mithqāl/dīnār. Though we know that on the eve of Islam the Byzantine denarius (danānīr rūmīya), Iranian drakhma (darāhim kisrawīya) and Himyarite drakhma were all in use on the Arabian peninsula, the main, if not sole, function of money was to establish the relative value of goods.[105] The Meccans distributed the capital (ruʾūs amwāl) of the caravan (laṭīma) of Badr, carrying perfume and incense, among the participants, and exchanged the entire profit (arbāḥ)[106] for pure gold (fa-bāʿū-hā wa-ṣārat dhahab^{an} ʿayn^{an}) to be devoted to the preparations for settling accounts with Muḥammad. Fifty thousand mithqāl/dīnār was roughly equal to twenty kg of gold. Muḥammad's share of the caravan carrying mainly silver—which was plundered, as mentioned above, on the occasion of Ghazwa al-Qarda—was one-fifth of the total value, i.e., 20,000 dirham.[107] The caravan mentioned in connection with the raid of Buwāt (A.H. 2 [A.D. 624]) consisted of 2,500 camels and was accompanied by one hundred Quraysh.[108] To be able to assess these figures, it should be remembered that according to the Koran (22/20), Joseph was sold by his brothers for a few dirham (1 dīnār = 10 or 12 dirham); in comparison, the loot from conquered Baḥrayn corresponded to the value of the caravan of Badr. On the basis of these few data, although we cannot share the exaggerated claims of Lammens and his followers, the value of Mecca's trade must have been quite significant, which at the given time represented, at least on the Arabian peninsula, the most important and most mobile economic force.

WHO EXCHANGED WHAT FOR WHAT IN MECCA ON THE EVE OF ISLAM?

(Economic anthropological analysis of the traditional exchange processes in Mecca)

Relation between Meccan trade and Muḥammadan Islam. Some notes concerning the history of research

European Arabists began to study the supposed relationship between Meccan trade and Islam only around the turn of the century. Although Weil, Sprenger, Muir, and mainly Nöldeke, based on solid analysis of the sources, had initiated the criticism of the traditional image of Islam, this kind of historicism in the last century was influenced by the developing myths of "ethnics" and "race" which were most effectively manifest in Renan's theory claiming that monotheism was inherent for the Semitic race.[1] The notion of Islam as "the religion of the desert" was disproved by Goldziher. This religious historical problem was treated by him in the manner of a fruitful "Kulturgeschichte" which in its direction led towards cultural anthropology.[2] His approach was as open for a possible social-historical analysis of the religious phenomenon as for an anthropological study merging into positivism.[3]

This process was further complicated by the dividing line between this type of research and theories determined by preconceived social democratic ideas and later by vulgar-Marxism, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it was deepened by epistemologically extremely eclectic ideo-historical, psychoanalytic, sociological, and structuralist influences.[4] In this context, it is enough to mention as an example Grimme's book, *Mohammed,* in which the author historicizes some commonplace ideas of contemporary social democratic movement (influenced by Bebel's similar attempt) and its ingenious refutal by Snouck-Hurgronje.[5] Perhaps the most significant example of the latter is the Islam concept of Grunebaum who, among others, in the spirit of Kroeber's cultural anthropology, considered Arab development a theologically determined structure whose cultural pattern responded with the same selectivity to the various phenomena, in other words, the selectivity of the system did not change. This kind of interpretation may offer a certain explanation of the mechanism of a system necessarily considered closed, but it fails in the genetic-historical explanation of the system, hence of Islam as well.[6]

The fact that in Goldziher's method and "Weltanschauung" comprising two alternatives, the positivist research rejecting totality and historicism had gained the upper hand, was considerably influenced by "Orientalism" confined to "Geistesgeschichte" and Marxism which produced, as if from the same root, some deterrent examples of unscientific bonds between economic and institutional systems and the

objectivized forms of social consciousness. The common basis of these two apparently distant modes of approach, which are not at all paradoxically closely related, is that both establish a direct link between separate phenomena and generally valid laws by assigning the individual phenomenon to the general conception. This peculiar allegorizing world view ("Weltanschauung") is at least as frequent in science as it is in theology. The way in which Torrey and Lammens have established a link between trade and Islam might serve as an example for the first case, while for the second, there are some examples of Marxist attempts published in the 1920s.

Torrey, in his dissertation published in 1892, tried to detect a "business atmosphere" in the Koran. His argument was as follows: "Long before the time of Mohammed the native god and religious rites must have been pretty thoroughly identified with trade. The Arabs have at all times deserved their reputation as a pre-eminently realistic, mathematical people, and this might have been especially true for the Kureish."[7] After a definition of the terms, Torrey determines the "commercial spirit" of the Koran and characterizes this "Weltanschauung" similarly to Sahlins' sarcastic formulation of the concept of religion in capitalism.[8] One of Torrey's general premises, the postulation of the "business atmosphere" of a capitalist character is supplemented by another: the denial of Muhammad's originality and abstract way of thinking.[9]

Lammens's study of Islam provides a convincing example of how an arbitrarily applied hypercritical philology can be put into the service of a preconceived theory (in this case the superiority of Christianity to Islam, and the moral condemnation of Muḥammad and his family).[10] In the case of Lammens, the Jesuit father who was far from hiding his fanaticism, the naïvely modernized emphasis on Meccan trade served as the basis and background of an *argumentatio ad hominem* for his religious and ethical-religious value-judgements; in this way he was able "to prove" the role of religion used as a tool by trade, the artificially mingled manipulative nature of Muḥammadan Islam, etc. Lammens's image of Mecca is a peculiar mixture of a theological vision, on the one hand, in which the Mecca of the tradesmen—using the words of St. John's Revelations—is "Babylon, a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast" which "shall be overcome by the Lamb", and an anachronistically and unscientifically historicized picture of capitalism, on the other. This cannot be stressed enough, as Lammens' fascinating, bold picture of Mecca had a tremendous influence on further research.

The Marxist attempts of the 1920s, which tried to establish a link between the genesis of Islam and trade, were put forward during the first round of debates on the "Asiatic mode of production", but they are independent of those. Reisner founded the theory of "Meccan mercantile capitalism" and argued in his work that Islam was the ideology of small tradesmen who suffered most from the insecurities of trade and the plundering attacks of the Bedouins.[11] Of his followers, Klimovich represented the view that Islam was the product of mercantile capital which caused the decline of tribal society.[12] According to Belyayev, a stratification had started within Mecca, and Islam was the movement of the small and middle trading

bourgeoisie against the plutocratic stratum.[13] Behind this Marxist assumption we can discover the elements of Engels' concept of history, schematized and vulgarized by social democratic theoreticians: The development of class society whose foundation is, here, the *par excellence* form of private property, namely, of money (capital), further, a definite form of class struggle arising out of exploitation. The principle which was supposed to create from these, in themselves meaningless schematic elements, a system, was based, under the inluence of Pokrovskiy, on the belief that "mercantile capitalism" is an organic part of the pre-history of the capitalist mode of production. It followed from this principle that it was enough to imagine around mercantile capital the scheme of a simpler capitalism. It should be noted that when in the footsteps of research analyzing the social prospects of the Chinese revolution the discussion of the Asiatic mode of production had started, the debate of the entire Marxist formation theory was put on the agenda. However, at this point the researchers were unable to tackle the problem of mercantile capital, and the interpretation of "mercantile capitalism" as a special social formation arose.[14] Later, in the Stalinist historical scheme, mercantile capitalism was no longer a problem, and merged only as a colourful element into the dichotomous class structures constructed on the basis of exploitation.

Research dealing with precapitalist economic and social history was, up to the turn of the century, backward even concerning the study of European history,[15] however, in the past fifty years significant research started, and, e.g., the analysis of feudalism—thanks primarily to the *Annales*-school—shows already large-scale attempts at synthesis. At the same time, in the study of Near Eastern economic and social history there was a regression compared to the initiatives of Wellhausen and Becker. One of the factors which played a role in this process was probably the necessary consequence of national liberation movements after World War I: The various economic, social and cultural problems too arose in an ideological form, while the social sciences trying to follow the model set by natural sciences were less and less able to shed their ideological wrappings and to realize a scientific feedback.[16] In the course of this process, a true caesura came into being between orientalistic research and social sciences investigating European development. Awareness of this fact is also the product of the last three decades, its true overcoming requires, before and beside a constant minute philological investigation, a new reconsideration of the problems of the theory of history, as it has been suggested by Cahen in the field of Arabic studies.[17]

Among the economic- and social-historical phenomena, the analysis of the concrete forms and the assessment of trade and monetary wealth as economic and social categories have raised special difficulties. The books on trade written in antiquity and the Middle Ages are, in most of the cases, full of naïve and contradictory statements about the concrete link between trade and a given economy, community, or state structure, provided the relation between the forms of trade and the institutions, and between the type of trade and conditions of the community, as well as the role of trade in the stratification of society, the division of labour, the conditions of proprietorship, and the spheres of ideology are mentioned

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at all. It appears that in this field Polányi's concepts of primitive and archaic societies, and his study of "substantive economic anthropology" have represented a new formulation of the problem and offered some promising methodological solutions.[18]

In the following we examine a few characteristic forms of barter in Mecca on the eve of Islam. These are usually considered by anachronistic way of research as commercial exchange or wage labour relation. However, from a thorough investigation of these processes it should become clear that these are not exchange forms describable in economic terms, and they are qualitatively different from long-distance Meccan luxury trade.

Exchange operations in Mecca on the eve of Islam
as depicted in some Koran passages

We shall discuss later (in Appendix 2) the supposition that wage labour appeared under Muḥammadan conditions of ownership and distribution at their early stage of institutionalization after the plunder of Khaybar. Here, we shall have a brief look at certain passages of the Koran referring to exchange processes. Rodinson, who tried to interpret the relationship between Islam and capitalism, that is, the possibility of the development of an endogenous capitalist production, says on the basis of the capitalist ("capitalistic") interpretation of monetary wealth about certain passages of the Koran: "il est très clair d'abord que le Coran n'a rien contre la propriété privée puisqu'il réglemente par example l'héritage... Ferait-il exception pour le propriété des moyen de production? Bien évidemment la pensée ne s'en est même jamais presentée à l'auteur du Coran. Le salariat est une institution naturelle contre laquelle rien n'est à objecter."[19] Ownership of the means of production in the case of Muḥammad will be analyzed later. Now, let us see what is behind the real *services* interpreted as *wage labour*. This has to be done because for the anthropologist and the ethnologist the three types of services to be analyzed appear as three different phenomena whose true social-historical identity is not given by their nature of non-existing free wage labour (as everyone might conclude from Rodinson's claims), but which are created by the non-economic exchange conditions of the reproduction of tribal society.

1. The famous passage 28/26–7 on the agreement between Moses/Jacob and Jethro/Laban is not a wage labour relationship, but a regular contract between two clans for a matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in which *ajr* (payment) is quite obviously the synonym of *mahr* (bridal money). To support this suggestion it suffices to indicate that in passage 4/24–5 (in connection with the *mut'a* marriage cancelled later), and also in verses 33/50 (referring to a group of Muḥammad's wives) instead of bridal money *(mahr) ajr* is written. It is clear from the parallel passages in Genesis (24, 15 sqq; 29, 10 sqq) which were the basis of the above mentioned Koran passages, and it is further supported by the similar function of the bride price in the case of Jews and Arabs (*mahr* in Arab, *mohar* in Hebrew), that this

money paid by the bridegroom was the same kind of institutionalized custom of the community as were blood money or expiatory offerings *(kaffāra* in Arab, *kófer* in Hebrew).[20] In other words, the bride price fulfilled a function in a community pertaining to a tribe or a clan, representing an alliance of a kind between the clans. The most external manifestation was the act of exchange between representatives of the clans, an act whose elements and process were not market-determined.

2. Let us now turn to the problem of wages due to the prophets. The realistic historical analysis of the two passages quoted by Rodinson (36/21 [similarly: 68/46] and 52/40) and the meaningful, stereotypically repeated many other similar passages (6/90; 12/104; 38/86–87; 26/109, 127, 145, 164, 180; 11/51; 10/72; 34/47; 42/23; 25/57; 68/46; 36/21) report entirely different phenomena under tribal communal conditions; to call these a wage labour relationship between capital and free labour is, to say the least, quite absurd. The proper interpretation of passage 52/40 (which is also the key to the understanding of passage 36/21) is given quite clearly in passage 52/29–30: "Therefore warn (men, o Muḥammad). By the grace of Allah thou are neither soothsayer nor madman. Or say they: (he is) a poet *(shā'ir)*, (one) for whom we may expect the accident of time." In both passages Muḥammad makes a sharp distinction between a *kāhin* and *shā'ir* possessed by a *jinn*, and the bearer of a function of a new type, the *mursal* (delegate, 36/20) and *mudhakkir* (the one who warns, 52/29), who asks for no fee in return (36/215: *lā yas'alu-kum ajr^{an} wa-hum muhtadūn;* 52/40: *am tas' alu-hum ajr^{an}?*) What is in this connection the aim of distinction? Since Goldziher's research we know that originally *shā'ir* can be related to the functions of *'arrāf* and *kāhin*, that is, literally "the one who knows", in the sense and function of a "soothsayer", "oracle", and as the *'arrāf* (Hebrew *yidd^{ec}ōnī*) inspired by his *jinn* possesses a supernatural, magical knowledge (in constrast to the *kāhin*'s knowledge of the future, his knowledge refers to the present and the past) by virtue of which he is considered a kind of oracle of his tribe.[21] The functions of the *shā'ir*, the *'arrāf*, and the *kāhin* are direct manifestations of the magic practice of the tribal community: soothsaying, fortune telling, arbitration, the magic effect on objects and persons, all express the nature of tribal society (even in the sense of Durkheim's concept of religion), just as the compensating "solutions" of insufficient technology (in the spirit of Malinowski's concept) does. What is important regarding our subject is that for the magical cultic services rendered in the interest of the reproduction of tribal community (services which can hardly be called wage labour), a certain not fixed, occasional remuneration was expected. With respect to this custom it is sufficient to refer to the two characteristic sources mentioned also by Goldziher. According to a saying of al Maydānī: "what the burglar has left was taken by the quack" *(mā baqīya min al-liss akhadna-hū l-'arrāf)*.[22] The well-known verse of 'Urwa b. al-Ḥizām al-'Udhrī accurately expresses this communal form of exchange conditions:

> "I recompense the *'arrāf* of Yamāma for his advice
> And the *'arrāf* of Najd if the two of them will cure me."
> *(Ja'altu li-'arrāfi' l-Yamāmati ḥukma-hū — wa 'arrāfi Najdin* [var.: *Ḥajrin*]
> *in humā shafayā-nī)*[23]

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We know from Ibn Khaldūn's vivid description that quackery, sorcery, fortune telling from sand, stars, pebbles, seeds, mirror, or water were common everyday practice in the cities, and quacks, sorcerers, and fortune tellers earned their living by performing their art on the streets or in booths *(yantahilūna'l-ma'ash min dhālika)*.[24] Ibn Khaldūn, of course, wastes no words on this peculiar act of exchange as one of the not natural ways of making one's living *(wujūh ghayr ṭabī'īya li'l-ma'āsh)* —provided we do not consider the degenerated descendants of the pre-Islamic *'arrāf*s as "technologists of treasure seeking".[25] If we draw conclusions from the above, it will be clear that the *sha'ir*, the *'arrāf*, the *kāhin*, etc. are incidental functionaries of tribal society who solve the conflicts and difficulties arising from "insufficient technologies" in a magical way and receive in return for their work presents, sacrifices, some kind of service; but this form of exchange relation is as far from being a wage as, for example, the votive present of the Lydian kings Alyattes and Croesus to the oracle of Delphi (see Herodotus, I.25 and I.50–52).[26] On the basis of the above said one can now fully understand Muḥammad's statement that, in contrast to the magic functions limited to small communities, his relations to the community were different: "Say: I ask of you no fee for it. Lo! it is naught but a remainder to (His) creatures" (6/90), etc. That is, on the base of the new type of function, in the course of preaching religion reaching beyond the tribal community, he wished to avert even the suspicion of a magic "exchange relation" within the community which had become too small for him. Thus, *ajr* as remuneration meant in this context nothing more than the Muḥammad as a prophet drew a sharp line of division between his activities and those practiced by magicians according to the rules of reciprocity within tribal communities.

3. Let us now have a look at passage 18/77 mentioned by Rodinson, one of the known episodes of Khiḍr and Moses. This classic passage is worth noting as it does not treat the possible returns for deeds performed within the community or the way of such returns, but refers to actions taking place on the borderline, on the periphery of the community, when apparently the work done must in fact be requited. This passage in the Koran says: "So they twain journed on till, when they came unto the folk of a certain township, they asked its folk for food, but they refused to make them guests. And they found therein a wall upon the point of falling into ruin, and he repaired it. (Moses) said: if thou hadst wished, thou couldst' have taken payment *(ajr)* for it." Leaving out of consideration that in verse 82 Khiḍr explains that he did not act of his own free will *('an amrī)*, the last episode of the story in which he had performed three acts (holed the ship, murdered the youth, and repaired the wall) could be described as two travelling strangers asking for the hospitality of a local community (the common meaning of *qarīya* in verse 77 and of *madīna* in verse 88 characteristic of the Koran expresses that the community in question has been a settled one). Having been refused hospitality, one of the strangers repaired a wall, a work for which a certain payment might have been due. In order to judge the nature of this labour relation, namely, who performed what, and for whom, in other words, who received what in exchange for what from whom, we must have a brief look at the nature of the craftsmanship traceable in Mecca and at the social

determination of the work appearing in it. In contrast to Rodinson, who claims that there was a relatively important artisanship (un artisanat relativement important),[27] one cannot speak of Meccan craftsmanship as such,[28] since only some scanty phenomena of this type can be unearthed from the sources, and on the basis of the lack of artisanship, instead of a trading city, Mecca can be more accurately described as a city of tradesmen. That is, instead of the dominance of trade presuming agriculture and/or craftsmanship (as, for example, in the trading cities of Phoenicia in antiquity, or in the Italian, Flandrian, and German trading cities of the middle and modern ages in general) there is a trade purely intermediary in character. (In other words, among the trading cities called "ports of trade" by Polányi, we might find analogies in e.g. Ouidah in Dahomey, or in Acalan which acted as intermediator between the Mexican and Maya empires.)[29]

What are these sporadic phenomena referred to already and of what type are they?

1. We have already mentioned earlier, in some other connection, the rebuilding of the Ka'ba in 605 (or 608?). The accounts about this event in the sources contain for us a very informative episode, whose interpretation in harmony with our method gives the key to the correct—yet unattempted—philological solution of the heterogeneous material. The background of the story, as it is known, is that in 605 a fire broke out in the roofless sanctuary surrounded by walls without binder, which nearly collapsed after a severe flood *(sayl 'azīm)*. The leaders of the Quraysh wondered how to extricate themselves from this predicament when chance came to their rescue. The various descriptions in the sources represent three, seemingly different, versions:

(a) According to Ibn Isḥāq's version: "The ship of a Byzantine merchant capsized at Judda where it broke into pieces. They got hold of its wood and prepared it for covering (the sanctuary). There was a Coptic carpenter in Mecca."[30]

(b) The next (in fact basic) version comes from al-Azraqī. The text goes: "On the ship there was a Byzantine carpenter and mason *(rūmī najjār bannā')* whose name was Bāqūm. Having arrived in Mecca with the wood they said: 'It would be a good thing to build the house of our Lord.' They agreed in this and everybody took his part in helping and they clubbed together the costs."[31]

(c) Around A.H. 920 (A.D. 1514) Qutb ad-Dīn wrote down a version which is in fact a supplemented contamination of the above two reports.[32] The contamination and supplementation both are highly informative. Let us start with the contamination. According to the first part of this version, Bāqūm is identical with the nameless Byzantine merchant *(tājir rūmī)* in Ibn Isḥāq's report, who was both a mason and a carpenter. In the second part of this version the elements of the reports of Ibn Isḥāq and of al-Azraqī are contaminated with shameless boldness: "Ibn Isḥāq said: And there was in Mecca a Copt who knew how to carpenter and to work with wood *(ya'rif najr al-khashab wa-taswīyata-hū)*, and he agreed (with the Quraysh) to build for them the ceiling of the Ka'ba, and Bāqūm will help him." The suspiciously well informed supplementations contain, in addition to unimportant or from some other aspect important details,[33] a significant information which,

even if not quite true, is in any case characteristic. According to this report, "this ship belonged to the Byzantine emperor and carried with Bāqūm marble, wood, and iron *(ḥadīd)* to the temple (of Ṣanʿāʾ) which the Persians have burnt in Abyssinian (Yemen)."[34]

If we try to get to the truth from the three seemingly dissimilar versions, we have to reject, first of all, the doubling of the one carpenter in the two original reports, namely, in that of Ibn Isḥāq and al-Azraqī. To decide about the truth of the following passages it is enough to recall the architectural structure of the newly built Kaʿba sanctuary. The new building had at least one noteworthy architectural and one cultic novelty. When Bāqūm questioned them *(hal tuḥibbūna an tajʿalū saqfa-hā mukabbasᵃⁿ aw musaṭṭaḥᵃⁿ)* the Quraysh, dropping the traditional vaulted structure, decided in favour of a flat roof for which—obviously for the first time in Mecca—an 18-yard *(dhirāʿ)* long colonnade *(sawārī, daʿāʾim)* of twice three columns had to be built. The walls of the quadrangular building consisted of 15 layers *(midmāk)* of wood alternating with 16 layers of stone. The most conspicuous cultic novelty was that the pictures of Abraham, the prophets, the angels, and of Christ and Maria were painted on the ceiling *(zawwaqū saqfa-hā wa-jidrāna-hā)*.[35] All this reflects the characteristics of the contemporary Abyssinian Christian architecture, so that it is not surprising that the name of the architect Bāqūm is the abridged form of ʿEnbāqōm, the Abyssinian variant for Habakkuk.[36]

Before discussing this event, which can be assessed and interpreted from more than one point of view in connection with our subject, namely, wage labour, we wish to point out another relationship which reveals some important points of our earlier analysis (about the concrete "world-historical" role of the genesis of Meccan trade, about the cultic stabilization of the amphictyonic character of *ḥums*, etc.). In connection with the famous building of the temple by Abraha, Hishām b. Muḥammad, that is, Ibn al-Kalbī, reports: "After Najāshī (i.e. the Abyssinian ruler) had taken Abraha into his good graces and had confirmed his governorship *(ʿamal)*, he built the temple of Ṣanʿāʾ *(kanīsa)*, this marvellous, hitherto unsurpassed building, decorated with gold and magnificent colours. And he wrote to the (Byzantine) emperor and let him know that he would like to build a temple in Ṣanʿāʾ whose fame will be lasting, and asked for help. And he (the Byzantine emperor) helped him with artisans *(ṣunnāʿ)* and mosaique *(fusayfisāʾ)* and marble *(rukhām)*. When the building was finished, Abraha wrote to the Najāshī: 'I want to divert the Arab pilgrims there to'."[37] The building, usually called Qullays (Qalīs, Qulays—Greek *ecclesia*) in the North Arabic sources, existed for more than 200 years[38] and is described in detail by al-Azraqī.[39] The domed temple built of green, red, white, yellow, and black stone, using also wood, marble, and copper, and decorated with gold and silver and ivory, naturally, made a great impression on the North Arabian tribes. Late tradition, elaborating the pre-history of Mecca, quite logically, establishes a connection between the Meccan sanctuary and the Qalīs in Ṣanʿāʾ, and claims that Abraha's expedition against the Lakhmids was directed against the rival Meccan sanctuary to avenge the desecration of his sanctuary.

In the light of these relationships, we can understand the supplementation in

Quṭb ad-Dīn's version: the Meccan sanctuary rebuilt at the beginning of the 7th century was a worthy rival of the Yemenite one, for—so he says—this too was built similarly from material received from the Byzantine emperor and with the help of a Byzantine architect. The *ex post facto* supplementation based on analogy indicates at the same time a real historical situation. We have tried earlier to prove by the analysis of *ḥums* and *īlāf* that the Quraysh have ousted their external and internal rivals by the turn of the 7th century and have come to rule transit trade through the Arabian peninsula. By this time the material and spiritual conditions for the establishment of a representative cultic centre had matured. Through this they could surpass the peculiarity of a carefully planned sacral building, the innate, immediate validity of the cultic object, which was very much limited by similar objects and was accidental. The idea behind such a building could have come both from Syrian and from Coptic basilica-type churches (Ruṣāfa, Buṣrā), as well as Qalīs of Ṣanʿāʾ, or from the function of the Abyssinian Christian churches. The rebuilding of the Kaʿba in this new form in the given case served the extension and strengthening of the amphictyonic institution of the *ḥums*. The rebuilding of the sanctuary represents the last moment of a religious process comprising three successive phases. The first phase was the *nuṣ/u/b* (Hebrew *maṣṣeba*) when the cultic object, the altar, was at the same time the seat of the deity; the second was the cult of the *wathan* and the *ṣanam,* i.e., the effigy of god, the "idol" which was of foreign origin and rare,[40] and the third phase was—unique on the Arabian peninsula—the appearance, with the sanctuary of Kaʿba as the centre of amphictyony, a new type of temporary pantheon representing an open multiplicity and undefined openness, and in its essence a non-commitment to something unique. Sociologically, the realization of this third phase may be described as a complex cooperation between the communities, also assuring an economic form, aimed at a rise in the prestige hierarchy among the tribes.

In connection with the concrete realization—and here we return to our starting point—we may draw the following conclusions:

(a) The building of the Kaʿba in a new way in Mecca required special skills and therefore the cooperation of foreign artisans. This is an important direct *argumentum ex silentio* to prove the lack of craftsmanship in Mecca.

(b) Individual and occasional agreement was concluded with the artisans. It was part of this agreement, as we have seen, that on this occasion Byzantine tradesmen were able to sell their shipload of goods tax free.

From this part of the remuneration conclusions can be drawn regarding the nature of the agreement, namely, that the various use-values were directly exchanged in accordance with the classical rules of barter.

(c) The foreign artisan produced no exchange value, but a use-value serving the prestige of the commissioning partner.

(d) The work of the Byzantine craftsman meant doing odd jobs (casual labour), his contact with the given community was superficial and random, that is, useful free labour was not always available which is one of the indispensable conditions of wage labour.

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(e) The "employer" was bound to both the "employee" and the job, that is, to the production of use-value, as a community. The community agreed with the "employee" and bore the expenses, and participated as such in the work.

It is clear from paragraphs *(d)* and *(e)* that this type of casual work took place on the periphery of the community, but even then it was the given organization of the community which determined its strictly economic aspects. Should the work become permanent, it could do so exclusively within the community, and its sphere of action and functions would be determined entirely by the given community. This can be traced with fair accuracy in the case of Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, one of the first followers of the prophet, who was a gunsmith *(qayn)* active within the community and about whom we have many seemingly trustworthy and accurate data.

2. The contempt in which the nomadic Arabs held craftsmanship is well-known, for the disdain of manual work, particularly of the artisan producing commodities for sale, had left its mark on the development of post-Islamic Arab society almost up to our days.[41] Consequently, in the majority of cases the various artisan-like activities were performed by slaves or by people not related by blood with the tribe, and in the course of this they had to fit into the structure of the given community either as patriarchal slaves or on the basis of the tribal alliance system as clients *(mawlā)* or as allies *(halīf)* or protégés *(jār)*. There are several sources indicating the existence of patriarchal slavery and the profitable trade of slaves.[42] Because of the communal character of social reproduction, the weight and differentiation of their economic activities was small and primitive. On the basis of the few available sources dealing with other questions, the number of slaves in Hijāz and in North Arabia can be estimated as rather low on the eve of Islam, and the economic utilization of slaves can be demonstrated with more or less certainty primarily in craftsmanship and perhaps also in husbandry.[43] Of course, the patriarchal slave may be considered as an organic extension of the tribe. The allies and clients, some of whom were former slaves, were adopted with different status into the tribe, and even though they were not natural *(naturwüchsig)* parts of the tribal structure, they were considered as such.

Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, the Meccan smith and one of the prophet's first followers, was the member of a small group called by the Muslim sources *mustad̄afūn* (the "weak ones"). Who were these "weak ones"? Modifying Watt's analytical summary of the fairly unanimous statements of the sources, the first Muslims can be divided into three groups:[44] *(1)* the members of fairly poor clans playing a secondary role in trading activities; *(2)* the neglected younger members of fairly rich clans; *(3)* the *mustad̄afūn,* the "weak ones".

From the point of view of our investigation the question arises: what was the relationship between the third group and the tribal community? It appears quite unequivocally from the sources that this group consisted of a few individuals most of whom—according to fairly ample information on the subject—were former patriarchal slaves who became clients *(mawlā)* or allies *(halīf)*. Because of having been captured or for some other reason, these people had lost contact with their own blood relations and probably had only a secondary social status within the

clans of the Quraysh, for even the coverage for an equality of rank within the alliance had to be ensured by a similar social prestige—guaranteed by the community—of the other partner, which in these cases was out of the question.[45]

The social estimation and, at the same time, the impossibility of economic assessment of craftsmanship practiced in the status of a client within the community is shown by the work performed by such a "weak one". According to the story related by Ibn Isḥāq, Khabbāb b. al-Aratt made swords for al-ʿĀṣ b. Wāʾil of the distinguished clan of Jumaḥ. When Khabbāb asked for payment, his customer said maliciously that he will pay his debt on the day of the Last Judgement.[46] In other words, this type of work was not considered wage labour, just as Khabbāb al-Aratt was not considered a free labourer.

Some theoretical conclusions

After the analysis of these examples, given in detail for the sake of evidence, we can define the character of the work performed within and on the periphery of tribal communities, the mode of contacts between the participants and of the qualification of work. The fundamental feature is that those performing the work sold not their labour in general, that is, their labour which produced an exchange value, but applied a craft producing a given use-value for which they received, as a rule, directly consumable "payment" or a remuneration. In the course of this, "labour relation" appeared in the following forms of dependence: *(1)* the person performing the work was a patriarchal slave (e.g. slave in Ṭāʾif, etc.); *(2)* the craftsman who was not a free person and was related to the tribe as a client or an ally (e.g. Khabbāb al-Aratt, etc.); *(3)* in some cases a foreigner doing odd labour, whose payment in kind might have been partly incidental (that is, "independent of the market", furthermore, to make labour relations permanent, the craftsman had to belong in some way to the given community *(mawlā, jār, ḥalīf)* (*cf.* the rebuilding of the Kaʿba.).

The employers were a given community or representatives of such a community, whose attitude to those performing the work, in cases *(1)* and *(2)*, was as if they formed an unorganic part of production, which in the given case meant that payment was essentially nothing more than the *provision* for ensuring, for example, the working ability of camels. In case *(3)*, at best, a relation like in barter trade could develop, that is, the exchange of a definite individual use-value for payment in kind in general, that is, for another definite use-value.

From all this the negative conclusion can be drawn that only by a double false argumentation can the appearance of trade and money in precapitalist social forms suggest the appearance of the category of wage labour in the same formations. This false and non-historical argument, as we have already mentioned, makes monetary wealth equal to capital, in other words, considers the latter a necessary extension of the first, while it identifies the indispensable correlate of capital—wage labour— with the performance of work in primitive (in our case in tribal) communities. As it

appeared clearly from the earlier mentioned cases, work in these societies had nothing to do with wage labour; to speak about wage labour in tribal communities is nonsensical. These performances of work were considered by the community as organic, but subordinate elements of its own reproduction, the operation of which was regulated by the community's system of standards. Naturally, not a single element of the practice of such work performance makes the strictly determined form of communal reproduction doubtful, for it operates entirely within it as a subordinate element. Thus, work performances operating within these communities cannot be brought into any structural relationship with trade and monetary wealth. The last two categories, on the one hand, really are what they appear to be, on the other, by their very nature, they cannot be subordinate elements of the given tribal community, an alien, external element opposed to it.

COMMENTS ON THE OWNERSHIP
CONDITIONS OF MUḤAMMADAN ISLAM*

Investigation of the ownership conditions of Muḥammadan Islam is perhaps the most neglected area of research in early Islam.[1] Research, as a rule, settles the problem with some platitudes or with passing remarks, and in most cases stresses and absolutizes at the cost of others one or another aspect of this phenomenon, so complex in its development as well as in the diachronic sense. The most often used generalizations are: *(a)* absolutization of tribalism, that is, of tribal distribution[2] and *(b)* the supposition that private ownership of the land developed in the course of the Muḥammadan territorial conquests.[3] Between these two views historically and economically greatly contradictory opinions can be detected.[4] Characteristically later research continues to use Hartmann's mainly negative studies of the passages of the Koran.[5] Even the most recent research has contributed nothing more than some valuable comment on a better approach to the problem.[6] There are two explanations for the backwardness of research, of non-concretized and sharply contradictory generalities: *(a)* the nature of the primarily used sources, the excessive generality of some of the pertaining passages of the Koran, the contradictions in these passages, which can be resolved only with the help of the whole historical development, and several possible interpretations of their terms *(ghanīma, fay', jizya),* and the use of misleading concepts in the legal sources used, which reflect only, or also, their own time; *(b)* on the other hand, the misunderstanding of the transitory—in between tribalism and state—nature of Muḥammadan Islam, that is, of the fact that even in the development of the conditions of ownership, the preserved tribal elements are mixed with the new features of the new community, existing and developing in the course of the process both as its subject and its object. This transitory nature and the contradictory dynamics are not revealed by the legal sources, but can be traced quite well in the neglected or the insufficiently used historical sources (Ibn Isḥāq, al-Wāqidī, al-Balādhuri, etc.), on the basis of which the heterogeneous material of the legal sources can be utilized more realistically and the reports of the Koran can be given a more accurate interpretation. However, when we proceed to draw in broad outlines the scheme of the conditions of ownership of Muḥammadan Islam, we are fully aware of the fact that all we can do is merely to indicate in the entire process the

problems to be investigated and to lay the historical foundations for a more realistic study.

In the case of the Muḥammadan conditions of ownership the transitory nature and the constant alterations and changes within the same process are just as valid as in the development of Muḥammadan *umma*. The basic trend can be put in the following way: the change of Muḥammadan raids with the aim of acquiring booty into conquests with the aim of occupying new territories represents *a process of transition from the single booty, ransom, or levy to constant taxation*. In other words, it means a transitory phase from the earlier moveable wealth (an attribute of animal husbandry, but also of trade) to the acquisition of land and an organized taxation in the form of land rent paid for the (common) property of the conquerors. Already at the time of Muḥammad, two factors, or at least their primitive appearance in the development of land rent, must be taken into consideration: *(1)* the fact of peaceful or violent conquests. This, however, in contrast with the reports of the legal sources, is in embryonic phase and serves only to explain differences and situations which came into being only later, and mostly should be mentioned together with the other aspect, namely, *(2)* with the system of customs of the concretely conquered territories and communities (see the agreements of different types from Khaybar to Maqnā, to Ayla or to Najrān).

The above defined basic trend appeared in agreement with the transitional nature of Muḥammadan *umma* also in that similarly transitory principle of distribution is realized in the possible share of concrete persons too, first in the booty and later in products. In the fully developed Caliphate this changed—logically—into impersonal share in accordance with the functions held by the person. This transition took place through certain further transitional phases: Abū Bakr and ʿAlī as Caliphs divided the tax considered as a booty on the basis of total equality, without any distinctions.[7] That is, they asserted the principle of tribalism within the Islamic community. As an element of the theoretical and practical elaboration of the collective property of the conquering community, ʿUmar emphasized in distribution the religious aspect of transition;[8] this process was completed during the rule of the Omayyades.

The transition from the distribution of the single booty among the participants of the raid to regular taxation can be traced in the difference between the booty—the *ghanīma*—which under the conditions of nomadic society was obviously moveable, and the land or its products acquired in the course of consolidating conquests. The fact that the latter practice was both theoretically and practically undeveloped and more or less merged with the first, specifically, it was beginning to become separated from the first, is expressed in the appearance of the concept of *fayʾ*—beside the basic concept of the tribal society, the *ghanīma*—which refers in the legal system of the fully developed Arabian Empire exclusively to the land owned by the conquering community. At this time the two concepts were not yet separated but appeared in a rather mixed form (and this ought to be studied by means of new methods), including the broader and more open meaning of the second. The intermingling was based *(a)* partly on the fact that the occupation of land was associated with the

acquisition of moveable wealth which was distributed, and *(b)* partly on the fact that for a certain time the land, that is, its product, was also considered a booty, obviously only as long as it was a simple plunder, or it was a ransom resulting from the unorganic attitude to the conquered lands. The process of organic attitude to the land and the transformation of the booty or ransom into regular taxation ensured by the organization of the state, i.e., the change of *ghanīma* into *fay'* in the latter sense, only started at the time of Muḥammad when he intended to extend and stabilize the occupation of the land acquired as a kind of booty. In the conditions of ownership and system of distribution, which developed in the course of this process, the tribal basis is still unequivocally detectable. However, in further development those new elements were more decisive which showed a trend towards development into a state, a state which, although did not completely adopt the Muḥammadan initiative, could not have existed without the start of Muḥammadan Islam, without the impetus it gave to this process. The economic structure of Muḥammadan Islam, the continuity and the discontinuity between this structure and the state-organized economic structure of the Arabian Empire, can with reasonable simplification be explained with the nature of the conquests. Marx characterized the link between the conquests and the mode of production as follows: "Bei allen Eroberungen ist dreierlei möglich. Das erobernde Volk unterwirft das Eroberte seiner eignen Produktionsweise (z. B. die Engländer in Irland in diesem Jahrhundert, zum Teil in Indien); oder es lässt die alte bestehn und begnügt mit Tribut (z. T. Türken und Römer); oder es tritt eine Wechselwirkung ein, wodurch ein Neues entsteht, eine Synthese (zum Teil in den germanischen Eroberungen). In allen Fällen ist die Produktionsweise, sei es des eroberten, sei es die aus der Verschmelzung beider hervorgehende, bestimmend für die neue Distribution, die eintritt."[9] It is clear that in the case of Muḥammad we are dealing with the second type, and with the third type in the case of the conditions of ownership and state structure which developed in several phases during the Caliphate. In the given case this meant an organic synthesis of the Arabian element, in itself a mere possibility only, of the Byzantine factor (represented by Egypt and Syria) transmitting the Hellenistic and antique elements, as well as of the Iranian factor representing a kind of ancient Oriental development.

The phases and the nature of the phases in the conditions of ownership and distribution of Muḥammadan Islam can be outlined as follows (but first it has to be emphasized that the aim of distinctions is often purely heuristic, for in most cases, just because of this transitory phase and its primitive differentiation, the concrete examples show features of both tribalism and state structure, such as communal distribution organized on tribal basis—private ownership organized on religious basis; plunder, tribute—tax, etc.):

1. *The first phase in the development: pure plunder, single booty, and tribute acquired by raid.* This phase took place mostly on the basis of tribalism, and its laws of distribution were determined by the concepts of ownership and distribution of the tribe, which meant at the same time the ancient form of ownership of the land as determined by nature. Marx's definition of the ancient original form of landowner-

ship of nomadic tribes is still valid for the above basically tribal distribution: "(Bei wandernden Hirtenstämme—und alle Hirtenvölker sind ursprünglich wandernd— erscheint die Erde gleich den andren Naturbedingungen in elementarischer Unbegrenzheit, z. B. in den asiatischen Steppen und der asiatischen Hochebene. Sie wird abgeweidet etc., konsumiert durch die Herden, an denen wieder die Herdenvölker existieren. Sie verhalten sich zu ihr als ihrem Eigentum, obgleich sie dies Eigentum nie fixieren. *Angeeignet* und *reproduziert* wird in der Tat hier nur die Herde, nicht die Erde; die aber stets temporär *gemeinschaftlich* benutzt wird and dem jedesmaligen Aufenthaltsplatz). Die einzige Schranke, die das Gemeinwesen finden kann in seinem Verhalten zu den natürlichen Produktionsbedingungen—der Erde—(wenn wir gleich zu den ansässigen Völkern überspringen) als den *seinen,* ist ein *andres Gemeinwesen,* das sich schon als seinen anorganischen Leib in Anspruch nimmt. Der *Krieg* ist daher eine der ursprünglichsten Arbeiten jedes dieser naturwüchsigen Gemeinwesen, sowohl zur Behauptung des Eigentums, als zum Neuerwerb desselben."[10] The new developing type of community, the Muham- madan *umma,* had no independent economic basis, therefore, to overcome the instability of its own situation it was forced to turn war into its main activity. War (plunder, raid) was directed at the acquisition of moveable property until they established, by necessity, a new kind of relationship with the land, whose distribution had to be determined basically by tribalism. We may say basically since new trends had already appeared during this period. Distribution first took place commonly, on a common basis among those who had participated in the raid.[11] From the point of view of later events, the participation of Muhammad as the Prophet, thus the chief with a strictly defined function in the community, and his authority in the distribution of the booty carried the germ of highly important changes and brought about their realization. After the battle of Badr, probably on the occasion of the attack against the Banū Qaynuqāʿ, Muhammad ordered *khums,*[12] that is, that one-fifth of the booty is to be his even if he did not take part in the raid.[13] In this institution too the legacy of tribalism is detectable, a modified version of the one-quarter of the booty due to the Bedouin chieftain. However, when the sources speak, in connection with this, about the functions of the Prophet, beside the traditional functions, his role as the embodiment of the community becomes far more important.[14] This role is new and important in two respects: *(a)* it enables Muhammad to influence more and more, and even to determine, the distribution of the booty, that is, the mode of ownership over the conquered territory. (This is clearly revealed by the pertaining verses of the Koran.)[15] In this way he is in a position to select the members of the community among whom the booty is to be distributed. (See, for example, the lesson of the distribution of the booty seized at Hunayn.)[16] On the other hand, this role could extend to the securing of the booty or the conquered territory for himself (see the cases of the moveable goods and lands of Banū n-Nadīr and of Fadak);[17] *(b)* this latter implicitly contains the principle that Muhammad's role as an owner was a transitory form between collective tribal ownership and state controlled collective property (it is known that the development of the latter took place during the rule of ʿUmar).[18]

This transition towards the second reality was confirmed by the famous question of heritage of Muhammad's *fay'*,[19] according to which, the request of the Prophet's daughter Fātima for her alleged inheritance was rejected already by the first Caliph Abū Bakr who referred to several *hadīth*s, which could be traced back to Muhammad and whose essence was that the Prophet, as the head of the community, was the owner on behalf of the community and after his death the Muslim community quite naturally retains ownership.

2. *The arising and early realization of the stabilization of conquests, the transformation of booty into tax, the change from the acquisition of single booties to the benefit of regular land rent.* Two modes of distribution have already existed at the time of Muhammad:

(a) Distribution of the products, sometimes still among the clans or already among individuals, taking into consideration their participation in the war as horsemen or as infantrymen. In this case the conquering Muslims had nothing to do with the land, the estimation of the products specified in the agreement with the conquered community, was carried out by a delegate appointed by Muhammad. This change started—not without antecedents,[20] of course—after the successful raid of Khaybar[21] in 629 when the Muslim community occupied the most fertile oasis-complex of North-West Arabia. Of course, the most detailed and most coherent information in the sources are about the measures concerning ownership and distribution introduced by Muhammad after the conquest of Khaybar. The Muslims conquered the Jews together with the land as its "organic appurtenances", or more accurately, Muhammad agreed with them that they can use the land in return for half of its products which was forty thousand camel-loads of dates and barley. (It is quite obvious that historically it is just as silly to mention those who tilled the land as its "organic appurtenances" as wage-labourers or as free landowners.)[22] It shows the status of the Jews, who did not have even the limited rights of owners, that they were unconditionally expelled during the rule of 'Umar. After the conquest the territory was divided into two main parts and the Prophet received one—al-Kutaiba. Again with a particular duality, Muhammad divided his share partly among the members of his clan and partly among persons of importance for the Islamic community. What he actually distributed was, of course, the product; the remunerations are given in the sources in weight.[23] There is nothing to prove better that these remunerations were for certain persons than the order issued by 'Umar when organizing the conditions of ownerwhip of the new empire, which declared that these remunerations cannot be inherited after the death of the person who had been entitled to it.[24] The products of the other main part of the territory—ash-Shiqq and an-Natāt—were distributed among those who had taken part in the expedition. The main part was divided into eighteen units and every unit into one hundred small parts. One horseman received three parts (there were at this time two hundred horses in the Muslim army), two parts for the horse and one for the rider, the infantryman received one part. Distribution was made in groups of one hundred, and the groups were, as a rule, organized according to clans, i.e., composed of its members. The one hundred parts were handed to the leader of the

group who distributed it among the members.[25] The organization of the groups of hundreds already shows a conspicuous similarity with strictly organized military units rather than with groups composed on the basis of clans or according to the actual number of their members. The sources stress that the Muslim owners had no direct contact with the land which remained a common and undivided property. According to a characteristic story, when they tried to pilfer the uncut crop, at the complaint of the Jewish tillers of the land the Prophet explained to the Muslims that they have a right only to the product and to the part of it which is due to them.[26] It was part of the ownership that the owned land could be sold, as indicated by several examples.[27] (Probably this fact misled certain authors who talk about Muslim landownership.)

The situation was similar after the conquest of the oases of Fadak, Wādī al-Qurā, etc., while in the cases of other oases the conqueror–conquered relationship was built on local traditions. This was the *jizya* used for the first time in Taymā' and probably meant just as much a stabilized ransom as general taxation. A similar term is used in the case of Ayla, Jarbā', and Adhruḥ, while in Maqnā and Najrān we find agreements of various types concretized in the products. In these cases the sources emphasize that the Prophet distributed only the moveable goods among the Muslims who had participated in the conquering expeditions. The obviously not very high income partly in money and partly in kind was probably used by the Prophet to gain new followers and to expand the Muslim community.

(b) There are several examples in the sources illustrating that Muhammad might have transferred the ownership of some land *(qatīʿa)* to certain individuals. The main goal of transferring the right to land might have been to enlist new followers or to reward Muslims of outstanding importance. This is the type of ownership about which our knowledge is the most scanty, and this is probably not accidental. First, the number indicated by the sources is very small, and even of some of these rewards it became clear that they were forged later.[29] Second, it would seem that these lands carved out from the common property had something in common with Greek *temenos*, and they could have been a type of "salary" for embryonal state functions.

We have thus briefly outlined the Muhammadan conditions of ownership and distribution. The economic experiments can be considered as steps from tribalism towards the state structure. It was an important achievement of Muhammadan Islam that with the help of starting trade activities it stepped out of tribal particularism and made the first move towards military patrimonialism. It began the conquests by conquering alien agricultural communities which later created the Arabian Empire. At the same time, Muhammadan Islam left the organizations of the conquered communities intact and did not mix with them. (It is, therefore, entirely false to assume that—as claimed by Altheim—when conquering the oases of the Arabian peninsula Muhammad adopted the taxation system of the Sassanids and of Byzantium and, by accepting it as a model, he created military feud as a basis of the new ownership conditions.)[30]

Without Muhammadan Islam the Arabian Empire and its state structure are inconceivable, though the latter cannot be derived from the first. It is far easier and

at the same time imperative to understand with the help of the Arabian Empire and its developed state structure, the transitory nature of Muḥammadan Islam as one of several possibilities. Muḥammadan Islam was separated by a distance from the developed state structure of the Caliphate, and Byzantium and Iran, that is, a number of elements of antiquity and ancient Oriental development were needed to close this distance. Besides these elements, Muḥammadan Islam represents the phase between tribalism and state structure, a form of possibility which, by surpassing itself, became something capable of achieving this end with the help of the above mentioned factors.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE INSTITUTION
OF *MU'ĀKHĀH:* BETWEEN TRIBALISM AND *UMMA**

In the past few decades, in Arab social-historical research, mainly in that investigating the foundations of the legal system and institutions, some interest has been expressed—partly under the influence of sociology—concerning the relationship between the evolution and nature of the Muslim community *(umma)* and the developing institutions and legal systems. These first exploratory attempts show, however, only too clearly that the thorough philological and historical-philosophical study of the no longer tribal, but not yet state-like nature of Muhammadan *umma* is still in a very elementary state.[1] Research concerning the Muhammadan *umma* is still focused, as a rule, on the highly formalistic analysis of the "Constitution of Medina",[2] and the peculiar Janus-faced character of Muhammadan *umma* as a historic process is analyzed only seldom. This may be put also as follows: what had Muhammad done to change the conditions of ownership, the forms of organization and consciousness, no longer within tribalism, but—and this is decisive—on the basis of tribalism, and towards the establishment of a sort of local community, that is, a state, the organizing principle and institution of the local community. This process has many organic and coherent parts (such as, for example, the Constitution of Medina, a phase of one or several stages of organization, which stresses the importance of other experiments; the "Abraham-religion", as the isolating and at the same time unifying religious–ideological world view ("Weltanschauung") of a community in the stage of being founded; the drafting of a new type of ownership in the occupied oases, in the former territories of Banū'n-Naḍīr and Banū Qurayẓa, Khaybar, Wādī al-Qurā, Fadak, Taymā', Tabūk, Dūmat al-Jandal) all of which have so far been treated in research as dissociative elements. The institution of *mu'ākhāh* (fraternization) is one such organic element, whose peculiar duality—namely, that Muhammad tried to surpass tribalism on the grounds of tribalism—and particularly the type of relationship there is or could be between the nature and outcome of this experiment and the *umma* concept of the Constitution of Medina have not been raised up to now. In this respect, the novelty of the experiment, as well as the reason for the temporary or final fiasco of this novelty should be described with particular precision. In this respect, the question might arise—for the time being only hypothetically—whether

the local community of the Constitution of Medina does not contain more tribal elements, at least as far as its possibilities are concerned, than the *mu'ākhāh* experiment which wanted to change the community built on the natural bonds of primary blood relation into one not based on bonds and not presupposed by religion, but which still remains a natural community.

So far, a single essay has been published on the institution of *mu'ākhāh*.[3] The most characteristic earlier views might be summed up as follows: *(a)* a number of authors failed to mention *mu'ākhāh* altogether or mentioned it only marginally in their studies of Muḥammad's career or of the development of early Islam and of the genesis and interpretation of the Qur'ān;[4] *(b)* there are authors who claim that the sense and function of the institution of *mu'ākhāh* are not clear to us and some refer to them as distortions of tradition,[5] while others, corresponding to the hypercritical interpretation of Muslim tradition, believe it to be a false tradition;[6] among those who interpret the concrete function of *mu'ākhāh* there are *(c)* some who emphasize the aspect of protection,[7] while others claim that the aim of *mu'ākhāh* has been to ensure peace and agreement among the Muslims and to prevent competition between *muhājirūn* and *anṣār;*[8] and finally *(d)* there are some who are of the view that the only aim of "fraternization" was a strategical one, specifically, the aligning of the various military units of the Muslims, their stronger cohesion at the time of hostile attacks.[9] It is also essential that these views failed to establish a relationship between *mu'ākhāh* and *umma,* while many accepted the Muslim claim and, accordingly, saw in *mu'ākhāh* nothing but a continuation, that is, purely a modification, of the institutions of *ḥilf* subject to and supplementing the organizations of pre-Islamic tribal society based on kinship.[10] A peculiar variant of this point of view is represented by Lichtenstädter who mentions the institution of *mu'ākhāh* only as a purely general phenomenon, as a new type of organizational form replacing kinship, but at the same time she accepts and builds her interpretation on the concept that *mu'ākhāh* is simply an application of *jiwār* and mainly of *ḥilf,* and the Muslim "brothers" are blood relations organized by *ḥilf* on the basis of kinship.[11] Thus, willy-nilly, she is unable to solve either concretely (historically-philologically) or theoretically (the controversial relationship between *mu'ākhāh* and tribalism, on the one hand, and *umma,* on the other) the true or supposed kinship is surpassed by means of organized kinship. Historically-philologically the failure of this interpretation is perhaps best reflected in the unbiased emphasis on the so-called Meccan *mu'ākhāh*[12] in some of the later sources (Ḥalabī, Diyārbakrī, Ibn Ḥajar, Ibn al-Athīr). Theoretically, in close connection with the above and with the interpretation of *ḥilf,* this failure appears in the concept that *mu'ākhāh* is an experiment still within tribalism.[13]

According to early sources, the institution of *mu'ākhāh* came into being in the first period after the Hijra[14] and the date of its end is quite unequivocally given as after the battle of Badr, that is, given by verse 33/6 revealed after it.[15] This is a transitory period of decisive importance: Muhammad, when leaving Mecca left not only the Quraysh, but was forced to face the problem of surpassing and refuting tribalism. It is a characteristic fact that in Medina Muḥammad never attempted to

organize the Muslims as tribes, nor did he try to place the Muslims, even temporarily, into the *hilf* or *jiwār* of one or of several clans which would have meant the continued acceptance of tribalism.[16] Thus, when Muhammad, on the one hand, no longer wanted to organize the community of Muslims on a tribal basis, he was, on the other hand, still unable to create a new form of community organized no longer on the basis of kinship, but on the territorial principle. The recognition of the new feature, the creation of the conditions for its realization, the drawing of conclusions in various fields (economy, politics, organization, and religion) were probably the products of a lengthy process. The pious wish of a relative coherence of the various aspects was also most likely the condition and consequence of a constant struggle. The first results of this process, traceable in a spectacular and rather emphasized form in the sources and in the pertaining literature, are the elaboration of the *umma* experiment in the Constitution of Medina in the field of organization, and the Abraham-religion *(millat Ibrāhīm)*[17] in the field of religion and ideology. We may add that the start of the regular plunders, as economic-political correlates of the above, was of a similar importance, and led directly to the concepts of *jihād* and conquest.[18] The *mu'ākhāh* experiment is less spectacular and far less explicit, but historically and theoretically almost as informative. The role of *mu'ākhāh* in the development of the Muslim congregation into a Muslim community can be assigned from the economic, organizational, and religious aspects, to a form between the withdrawal from tribalism manifest in reality and, symbolically, in the Hijra, and the territorially organized *umma*, a qualitatively new type of organizational form with its own religious and ideological basis (Abraham-religion) which was outlined for the first time in the Constitution of Medina. The following phenomena might be considered the correlates of *mu'ākhāh*, or rather its main features of the period: politically, a peculiar vacuum which can be characterized mostly by its negative features, thus by what it was not, for example, by the lashing of Muslims who had remained in Mecca and by keeping apart from them;[19] regarding religion, the possibility of cooperation with *ahl al-kitāb*;[20] economically, a total dependence upon and a complete subservience to the Muslims of Medina, to the *ansār*.[21] The *mu'ākhāh* experiment must be placed within this frame, whose no longer tribal, but not yet *umma* character is clearly outlined by the concrete historical situation, but it can also be pieced together more or less reliably from the succint reports of the sources. The introduction and short-lived functioning of the institution of *mu'ākhāh* tried to be a sort of *modus vivendi* for the Muslim community under the above outlined conditions. Its too abstract nature in some respects and its too reduced concretization to single phenomenon in other respects, reflect the actual situation. It had to solve concrete everyday problems: the maintenance of the Muslim community and within it primarily of the *Muhājirūn* uprooted from their old organizational and economic soil, and at the same time the preservation of the—for the time being only abstract—independence of Islam, by temporarily taking as its basis the estrangement from tribalism as the chosen actuality and by anticipating, through the negative features only, the openness to the sought novelty in the name of some abstract religiousness. Thus, the institution

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of *mu'ākhāh* has one easily grasped side: the keeping apart, namely, the fact that Muhammad had no intention to organize the Muslim community composed of varius elements as if it were a tribe. The condition of this attitude, however, was something (and this is the other side) which existed only as an abstract idea, namely, a Muslim community not yet organized socially, territorially, and as a state, which could be brought into being only by shorter or longer experimentation, thus the more and more concretized precondition became the final result of this process. One phase in the process of this experimentation was the Constitution of Medina in which the principle of territorial organization for political purposes dominated. The *umma,* however, still consisted of heterogeneous elements, some of which had not yet gotten rid of the tribalism accepted for the time being by Muhammad, but definitely subordinated to the above principle.[22] Between these two sides—the rejection of tribalism and abstract anticipation of *umma*—we find the concrete economic-political protective function of *mu'ākhāh* brought into being in the interest of the latter.

The inseparable unity of the two sides is expressed by the probably most important document on *mu'ākhāh,* the 72nd verse of *Sūrat al-anfāl* which cancels the predominance of the bonds of kinship. This turn is made a particularly pointed and radical one by the fact that it separated itself even from the Muslims who had remained in Mecca *(wa-'lladhīna āmanu' wa-lam yuhājirū mā la-kum min walāyati min sha'i*ⁿ*),*[23] and considers those the *awliyā* of one another who were not only *Mu'mjn*s, but who performed the Hijra and who fought themselves with their property and on the road of Allāh (the *Muhājirūn),* as well as those who gave shelter and support to the former (the *ansār) (inna-'lladhīna āmanū wa-hājarū wa-jāhadū bi-amwāli-him wa-anfusi-him fī sabīl Allāhi wa-'lladhīna āwau wa-nasarū ūlā'ika ba'du-hum awliyā'u ba'd*ⁿ*).*[24] The new principle of organizing the community was thus an emphatically religious–political principle which Muhammad could formulate only in general outlines, for he was still at the very beginning of the not yet concretized novelty and the general principle (some new type of territorial community) had or could have had a number of possible realizations. For this reason only the separation from the *kāfirūn* and the Muslims, who had stayed at home within tribalism and were not ready to participate in the fight, can be considered as unambiguous and explicit. The same explicit formulation characterizes verse 33/6 written after the battle of Badr already in the spirit of the Medina Constitution, which, in agreement with the concrete balance of forces, had restored—though in the interest of territorially organized *umma* and as a compromise—heredity based on kinship *(ulū'l-arhām ba'du-hum aulā bi-ba'din fī kitāb Allāh min al mu'minīn wa'l-muhājirīn).*[25] Factors, such as *īmān* (faith in Islam), *hijra* (the desertion of the tribal community), and *nusra* (assistance) given by the *Qur'ān,* which had not yet gained a peculiar character, indicate the general abstract nature of the new type of organizational form. These factors were important as the necessary moments and preconditions of future development, and they were the necessary but insufficient conditions for the institutions of *mu'ākhāh* and *muwālāh* as the initiators of a new organizational form. They were, however,

too exclusive and sufficient only for the creation of a very closed, small community, while on the other hand, they were too biased and determined by their cause and lacked a fixed purpose. This transition from no longer tribalism to a not yet territorial organization, or more concretely, the no longer natural community, not yet organized territorially but on purely religious grounds, is expressed by the cautious, hesitating formulations in the sources: according to Ibn Isḥāq: *ta'ākhaū fi'llāh* (they became brothers in Allah);[26] al-Bayḍāwī uses the term: *al-muwālāh fi'd-dīn* (alliance in faith);[27] and we find peculiar expressions also in other sources in which the interpreting apposition is also abstract: . . . *ākhā* (that is, Muhammad) *bayna'l-muhājirīn wa'l-anṣār, ākhā bayna-hum 'alā'l-ḥaqq wa'l-mu'āsāh* (a fraternal bond was formed between the *muhājirūn* and *anṣār,* a fraternal bond according to equity and mutual assistance).[28]

The economic protective functions destined to solve the urgent everyday tasks were only the concrete political elements of the new forms of possibilities, which did not necessarily exhaust the open abstractness of *mu'ākhāh* or *muwālāh fi'd-dīn*. This has to be stressed again because this peculiar transitional organization of the community must not be judged from the point of view of the mutual inheritance, protection, etc. of the *anṣār* or *muhājirūn* "brothers"; on the contrary, the latter have to be judged from the point of view of the *mu'ākhāh*. This has been made difficult by the fact that some concrete tools and elements should have been placed within the, on the whole, non-concrete generality. However, these concrete elements can also be enlarged, compared to the views of research done so far, whereby the generality of *mu'ākhāh* can be made somewhat more concrete. The two traditions quoted by al-Bukhārī prove convincingly that initially *mu'ākhāh* was not in the least reduced to mutual inheritance, but was conceived as a far broader sharing of wealth. According to the first tradition, which has a more general validity, the *anṣār* (brothers) offered to distribute their palm-groves which Muhammad did not accept but asked only for a share in the harvest as needed.[29] The same trend appears in the tradition told by al-Bukhārī in several versions, according to which, 'Abd ar-Raḥmān b. 'Awf was offered by his Medinese "brother", Saʿd b. ar-Rabīʿ, the wealthiest *anṣār,* half of his fortune and one of his two wives.[30]

Summing up, we believe it is no exaggeration to say that the *mu'ākhāh* experiment is an important early stage in the process of the development of *umma,* the transitory state from the no-longer-tribalism to the no-yet-*umma* in which, after having surpassed tribalism, Muhammad attempted to proceed—for the time being only in an abstract way—towards a new type of organizational form which may be defined as not yet territorially, only religiously organized, no longer a natural but a secondary community. This experiment was a necessary transitory phase in the creation of *umma:* it showed, on the one hand, the limits to which tribalism can be surpassed (its lessons appeared in the Medina Constitution), and, on the other hand, it started on the road towards the territorial principle with the experiment of the implicitly territory-defined union of *muhājirūn* and *anṣār.*

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Aghānī	Abū'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī. *Kitāb al-aghānī*
AO(H)	Acta Orientalia (Hungary)
BGA	Bibliotheca Geographicorum Arabicorum
BSOS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
EI¹	Enzyklopaedie des Islam. Geographisches, ethnographisches und biographisches Wörterbuch der muhammedanischen Völker. 4 vols. Leyden—Leipzig, 1913–1934
EI²	The Encyclopaedia of Islam. New edition. Leyden, 1954 sqq.
GPA	Th. Nöldeke. *Geschichte der Perser un Araber zur Zeit der Sāsāniden, aus der arabischen Chronik des Ṭabarī*
IH	Ibn Hishām. *As-Sīra an-nabawīya*
JA	Journal Asiatique
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
MEW	Marx–Engels Werke
MFO	Mélange de la Faculté Orientale
REA	Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe
REI	Revue des Études Islamique
RES	Répertoire d'épigraphie sémitique, publié par la Commission du Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum
WZKM	Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes
ZA	Zeitschrift für die Assyriologie
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft

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NOTES

Chapter 1

[1] The fact that memory of the great syntheses was very much alive at the beginning of Islam research is proved by a still unique experiment, which in its time was extremely influential: A. V. Kremer, *Kulturgeschichte des Orients unter den Chalifen* 1, 2 (Vienna, 1875–1877). The case of I. Goldziher, perhaps the greatest figure in the history of science of Islam-research, is in this respect very characteristic. In his first works (for example, in *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine geschichtliche Entwicklung. Untersuchungen zur Mythologie und Religionswissenschaft* [Leipzig, 1876]; *Muhammedanische Studien* [Halle, 1888–1890]) the demand for synthesis as exemplified by Kremer was still alive. In Goldziher's works written after the turn of the century the various elements became increasingly disconnected and independent, and so *sacra philologia* started its own life. See Gy. Németh, *"Goldzihers Jugend", AO(H)*, 1 (1950): 7–24; R. Simon, *Ignác Goldziher. His Work and Life as Reflected in his Correspondence* (Leyden–Budapest, 1986), 11–156.

[2] *Orientalism and History,* ed. D. Sinor (Cambridge, 1954), 16.

[3] C. Cahen, "L'histoire économique et sociale de l'orient musulman médiéval", *Studia Islamica* 3, (1955): 93–115. Typically, the first volume of essays whose sole subject was the history of Middle-Eastern economy was published in 1970: *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East from the Rise of Islam to the Present Day,* ed. M. A. Cook (London). However, despite the title, there is not a single article in the book on the economic and social history of early Islam.

[4] The three studies which have become classics are: Th. Nöldeke, *Die Ghassānischen Fürsten aus dem Hause Gafna's* (Berlin, 1877), G. Rothstein, *Die Dynastie der Lakhmiden* (Berlin, 1899), and G. Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda of the Family of Ākil al-Murār* (Lund–Leipzig, 1927). Although they represent the first fundamentally important step in this field, they leave, in more than one respect, undisclosed the nature of these artificially created powers, their manifold functions, and mainly their roles in North Arabian history. (See, for example, W. Caskel "Die einheimischen Quellen zur Geschichte Nord-Arabiens vor dem Islam", *Islamica* 3 (1927–1930): 336–341, with excellent notes on Olinder's work; F. Nau, "Les arabes chrétiens de Mésopotamie et de Syrie du VIIe au XVIIIe siècles", *Cahiers de la Société Asiatique* 1(1) (Paris, 1933); H. Charles, *Le Christianisme des Arabes nomades sur le Limes et dans le désert syro-mésopotamien aux alentours de l'Hégire* (Paris, 1936), R. Devreesse, "Arabes perses et arabes romains", *Vivre et Penser* (1942), and from the same author, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche depuis la paix de l'Église jusqu'à la conquête arabe* (Paris, 1945), dealing with some special features of the Arab buffer-states without analyzing the interrelation between North Arabia and these states.

With respect to the study of pre-Islamic history there are but few publications pointing out the road for the just about starting and future research of socio-economic history. Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien,* Part 1 (Halle, 1888) is still important and not sufficiently exploited. The wide horizon and the theoretical formulation of the questions were decisively influenced by the concept of Kremer's *Kulturgeschichte.* Wellhausen's *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten,* 6 vols. (Berlin, 1884–1899), are still important and in some respects still unsurpassed. Mainly because of the lack of earlier research, it is still worthwhile to read Lammens' *Le berceau d'Islam* (Rome, 1914), *La cité arabe de Tāif à la veille de l'Hégire* (Beyrouth, 1922), *La Mecque à la veille de l'Hégire* (Beyrouth, 1924), and *L'Arabie occidental avant l'Hégire* (Beyrouth, 1928). Between the two world wars no significant work was published on early Islam; a decline in standard characterized the period. Research studying socio-economic aspects (again and in greater depth) started in the 1950s. Interest in the conditions of pre-Islamic Arab society and in the origins of Islam increased and more and more essays were published on questions of contemporary "world history" affecting the Arabian peninsula, such as the military, political, mercantile, cultural, etc. problems of the two great powers, Byzantium and Iran, the role of Yemen and the buffer-states, the Ghassānids, the Lakhmids, and the Kinda. The last question was raised in a variety of ways by non-Arabists. See F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte der Spätantike* (Frankfurt am Main, 1957); F. Altheim, *Die grossen Reiche und ihre Nachbarn* (Hamburg, 1962); F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Die Araber in der alten Welt,* 5 vols. (Berlin, 1964–1968), who tried to incorporate the concrete problems into the history of the late antique period. Research concerning South Arabia profited a great deal from the expeditions of the Egyptian M. Tawfīq and A. Fakhrī, the Belgian G. Ryckmans and J. Ryckmans, and the American A. Jamme, as well as from the publication of the newly discovered inscriptions (see also A. Grohmann, *Arabien* (Munich, 1963), 103–106, and Bauer, *Yazyk yuzhnoaraviskoi pismennosti* (The Language of South-Arabian Records) 9 (Moscow, 1966): 118, which have led to a noteworthy social historical synthesis, to A. G. Lundin's "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke" (South Arabia in the 6th Century) 8 (Moscow, 1961). More and more studies have appeared on the role of the buffer-states (see the works of R. Devreesse, I. Kawar, I. Shahīd, R. Paret and M. J. Kister) which, from the chronological and philological point of view, supplement the monographs of Th. Nöldeke, G. Rothstein, and G. Olinder. The first important monograph on the historical role of the buffer-states, N. V. Pigulevskaya's *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana v IV–VI vv.* (Arabs on the Boundaries of Byzantium and Iran in the 4th to 6th Centuries) (Moscow–Leningrad, 1964) has the indisputable merit that it used very thoroughly and in a new way the Byzantine and Syrian sources. Unfortunately, with the exception of the disputable (but from many aspects worthy of discussion) experiments of Altheim and Stiehl, to the best of our knowledge, no work has been published in which North Arabian history "from the inside", based entirely on Arabic sources, has met with the study of the relevant moments of contemporary "world history", thus illustrating the guild-like separation of Arabic studies from the science of history as a whole. (See, for example, W. M. Watt's *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford, 1953), a pioneer work in many respects, in which the author deals with the early history of Mecca and the development of Meccan trade by relying exclusively on Arab tradition, thus repeating the earlier errors. Even in recent times, there have been examples of the indiscriminate adoption of Arab traditions and of the complete neglect of non-Arabic data even by such outstanding authors as M. J. Kister (see "Some Reports Concerning Mecca from Jahiliyya to Islam", *JESHO* 15 [1972]). The discrepancy between the two fields of research also appears in S. Smith's study, "Events in Arabia in the 6th century A.D.", *BSOS* 15 (1954): 425–468, in which the author summarized in a new way

the data referring to Yemen and to the buffer-states, while at the same time, he failed to draw the obvious conclusions concerning North Arabian history, and instead followed the traditional line. The rudimentary stage of the social-economic–ideological research of this period is indicated by J. Chelhold's *Introduction à la sociologie de l'Islam. De l'animisme à l'universalisme* (Paris, 1958) which too relies exclusively on Arabic sources and tries to balance the crudeness of research of the period with abstract sociological interpretations. On the other hand, research concerning the Bedouins has made good progress thanks to the archeological and folkloristic material and inscriptions, and to non-Arabic sources, such as *L'antica società beduina,* ed. F. Gabrieli (Rome, 1959).

[5] For the discussion of this topic see M. Rodinson, "Bilan des études mohammediennes", *Revue Historique* 229 (1963): 175; M. Rodinson, *Islam et capitalisme* (Paris, 1966), 73–83.

[6] MEW, 28 (Berlin, 1978): 245–247, 255–261.

[7] Op. cit., 250–254, 264–269.

[8] *Zur Geschichte des Urchristentums,* in MEW, 26 (Berlin, 1977): 450. G. H. Bousquet, an Arabist, published the article, "Marx et Engels se sont-ils intéressés aux questions islamiques". *Studia Islamica* 30 (1969): 119–130, in which there is a note on the comments of Marx and Engels concerning Islam. The author attributes the letters written by Engels to Marx: he claims that Marx was learning Persian (in fact, Engels to Marx, June 6, 1853, MEW 28: 253), and that Marx referred to Foster (sic! correctly: Forster) on whose work he based his comments about Arabian history (correctly: Engels to Marx, May 26, 1853. Op. cit., 232–233).

[9] MEW, 28: 247.

[10] Op. cit., 260.

[11] See also R. Simon, *Az Iszlám keletkezése* (The Origin of Islam) (Budapest, 1967), 95–97.

[12] See I. Goldziher, *Az iszlám* (Islam) (Budapest, 1881), 1–100; and *Muhammedanische Studien,* Part I (Halle, 1888): 1–100. Even A. Sprenger, L. Krehl, and E. Renan advocated the same views as Engels.

[13] MEW, 28: 251–252.

[14] MEW, 26: 450. See the German edition; *Marx–Engels Werke* 22 (Berlin, 1963): 450 note.

[15] M. Rodinson gives an excellent analysis of the problem in *Islam et capitalisme,* Chap. 1; see further R. Simon, "Marx, néhány marxista irányzat és az orientalisztika történelemfelfogása a Közel-Keletről" (Views on the Near East by Marx, certain Marxist trends and Orientalism), *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle* 5 (1980): 809–817.

[16] About the work of the various authors and the whole problem see N. A. Smirnov, *Ocherki istorii izuchenia islama v SSSR* (Historical outlines of Islamic studies in the USSR) (Moscow, 1954), 184–194.

[17] M. L. Tomar was among the first to do this. See Smirnov, op. cit., 194–196.

[18] Up to recently this was advocated also by L. I. Klimovich (see *Islam,* [Moscow, 1965], 39 in particular).

[19] S. P. Tolstov, "Ocherki pervonachalniovo islama" (Outlines of early Islam), *Sovietskaia etnografia* no. 2 (1932), and also Smirnov, op. cit., 196–199.

[20] This theory was represented up to recently by Y. A. Belyayev, *Araby, islam i arabskii khalifat v ranneie srednevekovie* (Arabs, Islam and the Arab Caliphate) (Moscow, 1965), particularly p. 94, and this concept was included in vol. 3 of Soviet *World History*. The authors of this chapter are Y. A. Belyayev and A. Y. Yakubovskiy.

[21] From the numerous examples we shall randomly choose a few typical ones. According to L. Caetani, Meccan trade had already existed at the time of the legendary Quṣaiy and this trade reached as far as Egypt. (*Annali dell'islam* 1 [Milan, 1905]: 73.) F. Gabrieli in his popular work, *Geschichte der Araber* (Stuttgart, 1963), 20, probably follows Caetani as regards this question. H. Lammens (*Mecque*, 52–148) claims that there had been a lively mercantile activity in Mecca already before the time of Quraysh who lived scattered on the peninsula and performed the services of caravan guides, etc. to the Khuzāʿa. A. J. Wensinck makes no distinction between the place of pilgrimage and the later trade centre, and places the genesis of both into undefined ancient times (*EI*[1] s.v. *Mekka*, 3:514). H. Birkeland, who has studied in detail the background of *sura* 106, drew the conclusion that Quraysh were already in power in West Arabia one century before the birth of Muhammad (*The Lord Guideth* [Oslo, 1956], 122). M. J. Kister, in his otherwise extremely original work containing ample factual material, extends this conclusion to East Arabia of the period. ("Mecca and Tamīn", *JESHO* 8 [1965]: 121). In his latest essay ("Some reports concerning Mecca", 61–93) he accepts without criticism the traditional Muslim point of view. W. M. Watt who did not only recognize but was probably the first to emphasize consistently (in at least some respects) the role of trade in the genesis of Islam, and supposed in theory that Meccan trade preceded the genesis of Islam by not more than a few decades, nevertheless, claimed that in practice Quraysh trade probably begun to flourish immediately after the occupation of Yemen (*Muhammad at Mecca*, 13). The value of these statements is ab ovo determined by the fact that the authors took into consideration the legendary and biased Arabic sources only and failed to analyze within the framework of "world history" the political and mercantile influence of the buffer-states on 6th-century North Arabia. It the few attempts which at least refer to the link between the development of Mecca and the neighbouring buffer-states, the non-Arabic and Arabic information are highly incoherent and, essentially, their conclusions do not deviate from the earlier ones. See, for example, E. R. Wolf ("The social organisation of Mecca and the origins of Islam", *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 7 [1951]: 329–356) who, relying on Lammens, sets the date of the foundation of the city around A.D. 400 and, having just touched upon the role of the buffer-states, Mecca's rise after the decline of Kinda. In "Events in Arabia" (425–468) S. Smith presents a new analysis of the data relating to the link between Yemen and the buffer-states, but with respect to North Arabian history he fails to make a proper use of them. Statements corresponding to Arabic historical traditions are particularly characteristic of current Arabist literature in which the majority of authors accept the traditional *īlāf* story and suppose that trade had appeared out of nowhere with the journey of Hāshim and his brothers at the beginning of the century. See for example: Aḥmad Shalabī, *at-Taʾrīkh al-islāmī waʾl-ḥaḍāra al-islāmīya* (The History of Islam and Islamic Civilisation) (Cairo, 1959[2]), 54; ʿAlī Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, *at-Taʾrīkh al-islāmī al-ʿāmm* (General History of Islam) (Cairo, 1963[3]), 101; Saʿīd al-Afghānī, *Aswāq al-ʿarab* (The Markets of the Arabs) (Damascus, 1960[2]), 147–161. The highly important question of whether Mecca as a city or at least as a stable settlement had existed before trade became the dominant economic activity, is closely related to the problem of the development of trade. Contradictions found in Arabic sources with respect to the genesis of Mecca as a city, i.e., to that of Meccan trade, pose almost insoluble difficulties for research based solely on Arabic sources. We know that when Muhammad, after the break with the Jews, worked out in Medina the so-called

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Abraham-religion, he attributed the genesis of Mecca to Abraham, that is, to his son Ismāʿīl, so that the origin of Mecca is lost in the obscurity of ancient times (Koran 3/96: Mecca, the world's first city, 3/125–127, 14/35–77: Ibrāhīm and Ismāʿīl found the city). The two basic traditions (the ancient origin of Mecca as a city and the development of trade at the beginning of the 6th century) are the causes of contradictory statements about the development of Meccan trade, for the fact must be faced that the genesis and existence of Mecca as a city cannot be conceived without the dominance of mercantile activities. Nonetheless, we often encounter the separation of the city from trade and datings in agreement with Arabic traditions. (See, for example, ʿAlī Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, op. cit., 90–93.) The contradictory and legendary information of the sources are eclectically mixed in M. Hamidullah's studies: "The city-state of Mecca", *Islamic Culture* 12 (1938) and *al-Īlāf ou les rapports économico-diplomatiques de la Mecque pré-islamique* (Damas, 1957).

[22] From the huge literature on the sources we shall mention only some of the more important ones. Useful critical summaries are found in F. Buhl's *Das Leben Muhammeds* (Leipzig, 1930), 366–377; and in W. M. Watt's *Mecca*, xi–xvi; I. Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien*, Part 2, 1–274 *(Über die Entwicklung des Hadith)*. A number of interesting notes can be found in H. Lammens's problematic article: "L'âge de Mahomet et la chronologie de la Sīra", *JA* 18 (1911): 205–250. In "Zur tendenziösen Gestaltung der Urgeschichte des Islams", *ZDMG* 52 (1898): 16–31, Th. Nöldeke defined and objectively analyzed the entire problem. W. Caskel's study, "Die einheimischen Quellen", 331–341, is of great importance when pre-Islamic traditions *(akhbār al-ʿarab)* are used as historical sources. N. Abbott in his "Qurʾānic commentary and tradition", in *Studies of Arabic Literary Papyri* 2:1–83) proved among others the very early use of writing and brought forth convincing arguments against the scepsis surrounding early traditions. He proved that the Umayyads too had paid great attention to *ʿulūm ad-dīn*, that is, to the science of religion and the keeping of historical traditions, etc.

[23] References in the Koran even to contemporary events are indirect, and rare, and vague. There is no difference whatsoever between the events of the near past (e.g. the War of the Elephant) and those of ancient (pre-historic) times (e.g. the destruction of ʿĀd and Thamūd) are shrouded in an atmosphere of timelessness.

The basic source of Sīra is the *aiyām al-ʿarab* and, besides Arabic poetry and the Maghāzī literature, the Koran. H. Lammens, who in his usual and exaggerated fashion categorically refuted the independence of Sīra, wrote about the essence of the latter: "Dans l'estime de ses rédacteurs, leur tâche principale consistait à paraphraser les allusions historiques conservées par le 'Livre d'Allah'. Ils ont tout d'abord utilisées pour fixer chronologiquement la date de naissance du Prophète, ensuite pour exalter les Hāshamites et transformer la Kaʿba en sanctuaire nationale de l'Arabie." (*Mecque*, 291) H. Lammens too emphasizes that the Sīra and the historical works using it as a source are problematic, particularly when applied to the study of the pre-Islamic history of Mecca (op. cit., 309–405).

Though Th. Nöldeke ("Die Tradition über das Leben Muhammeds", *Der Islam* 5 [1914]: 160–170) and Becker ("Prinzipielles zu Lammens Sirastudien," *Der Islam* [1913], 263–369) take a firm stand against the exaggerations of Lammens, mainly against the Sīra being an independent "literary form", but adopt the same view about the value of Sīra as a source, primarily with respect to the pre-Islamic period. Pre-Islamic poetry might have been an excellent source from the point of view of our subject matter, were not their actual value as source almost entirely negligible due to the stereotypic content and form of this poetry, as well as the timelessness of topic and meaning, not to mention problem of authenticity.

Concrete facts, which can be accurately pinpointed in time and space, are rather rare in this material. See also *A pogány arabok költészetének hagyományai* (The Traditions of the Poetry of Pagan Arabs) by I. Goldziher (Budapest, 1893) and "Die alte arabische Poesie" by J. Wellhausen (*Cosmopolis* 2 [1896]: 592–603) in which the value of these poems as historical sources is exaggerated). In *Altarabisches Bedouinleben nach den Quellen geschildert* (Berlin, 1897²) G. Jacob tried to reconstruct on the basis of pre-Islamic poems—though unconvincingly and much too early—the world of the Bedouins. See also G. v. Grünebaum, "Die Wirklichkeitweite der früharabischen Dichtung", *WZKM* no. 3 (Vienna, 1937, on the stereotypy of this poetry and its peculiar blurred atmosphere.

[24] Ṭabarī, *Annales* 1 (ed. M. de Goeje et al.) (Leyden, 1879–1901): 1250–1251.

[25] Ibid., 1:1254: "They do not date according to a known event (recognized system) which they might have used generally, but used for dating the time of a famine in some district or (the year of) draught which struck them or the governor ruling over them or some (famous) event whose fame spread among them. This is indicated by the different datings used by their poets."

[26] A. W. al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkata* 1 (Mecca, A.H. 1352 [A.D. 1933]): 96: "In their contracts and their (bills of) debt they dated starting from the year of the Elephant. This was (the year) when Allah's Prophet was born, Allah shall bless and keep him. The Quraysh and the Arabs of Mecca dated from the year of the Elephant. Next, they dated from the year of (Harb) al-Fijār. Next they dated from the year of the (re)construction of the Kaʿba. And they did not cease to date from there till Allah brought the Islam and the Muslims dated from the year of the hijra." See also Yaʿqūbī, 2:5; Ṭabarī, 1:1255.

For a detailed description of chronology in 6th-century Arabia see Masʿūdī. *Kitāb at-tanbīh waʾl ishrāf*, BGA 8 (Leyden, 1894): 202.

[27] *(Koran)* See 2/96, 22/47, 29/12, 32/5.

[28] See on this question H. Lammens: *L'âge de Mahomet*, 227.

[29] In his famous and still exemplary study on the Ghassānids, Nöldeke had already treated this problem and described the Arabic sources as follows: "Wir sehen die schönen Erzählungen der Araber nicht als zuverlässige Historie an und betrachten die Construktionen der muslimischen Gelehrten als das, was sie sind." (*Die Ghassanischen Fürsten*, 3). G. Olinder, the author of the work on Kinda, though upholding similar views on the subject, had not put them into practice and relied almost exclusively on Arabic sources. He wrote about the values of Arabic and non-Arabic sources as follows: "On the whole, most importance is attached to the non-Arabian evidences, and the Arabian tradition is placed last and has to prove its trustworthiness by a comparison with dates and facts previously known." (*The Kings of Kinda*, 10) A. Moberg in *The book of the Himyarites*, XLIII, expressed similar views and so did N. Pigulevskaya who collected with unique thoroughness the Byzantine and Syrian sources on the Ghassānids, Lakhmids, Kinda, and Yemen in her book, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 6–9.

[30] For an excellent brief summary of the Romans and Oriental trade see L. O'Leary, de, *Arabia before Muhammad* (London–New York, 1927), 74–81; Rostovtzeff, *Città caravaniere* (Bari, 1934), 1–33 (description of Mid-Eastern trade from the Sumers to the Romans, for the Roman era see pp. 27–33); G. F. Hourani, *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1954), 14–34; A. A. Vasiliev, *Justin the First* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), 366. Roman trade in luxury goods in the first century A.D. is

illustrated by Pliny the Elder's well-known estimation *(Naturalis Historia,* 12, 34): "minumaque computatione milliens centena milia sestertium annis adimunt". On the direct Roman control of the Syrian ports of trade (primarily Bostra and Palmyra) see H. Klengel's recent work: *Syria antiqua* (Leipzig, 1971).

[31] R. Ghirsman, *L'Iran des origines à l'Islam* (Paris, 1951), 268 (the author believes that the Khiyōns are identical with the Hephtalites). The question was lately discussed from the historical-philological point of view by K. Czeglédy. *A nomád népek vándorlása Napkeletről Napnyugtáig* (The Migration of Nomadic Peoples from the East to the West) (Budapest, 1969), 15, 67–74, 75–83; and D. Bivar, "Die Sassaniden und Türken in Zentralasien" in Fischer, *Weltgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main, 1968), 66–68.

[32] Ghirsman, op. cit., 270; Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte,* 22.

[33] Altheim devoted a special booklet to this question *(Entwicklungshilfe im Altertum)* in which he dealt in a new way with the various phases and results of the ideological struggle in the "third world" (Abyssinia, Yemen, etc.).

[34] Koran: 11/22; 11/43–44; 24/40; 31/32, etc. See on this question W. Bartold, "Der Koran und das Meer", *ZDMG* 83 (1929): 37–43; and T. A. Shumovskiy, *Araby i more* (The Arabs and the Sea) (Moscow, 1964), 94–97.

[35] For the navigability of the Red Sea see Procopius, *Opera Omnia* Book 1, Chap. 19 (1:101). See also Hourani, *Arab Seafaring,* 5; Smith, "Events in Arabia in the 6th century", 429; Ahmad Ibrāhīm ash-Sharīf, *ad-Dawla al-islāmīya al-ūlā* (The first Islamic state) (Cairo, 1965), in which the author claims that pre-Islamic Mecca had no harbour and Judda became the city's seaport only under ʿUthmān (from 644 to 656); Azraqī, 1:99 and 101. See also Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammads,* 106 n. 24; Lammens, *Mecque,* 284; The Baḥrayn sea expedition of al-ʿAlāʾ ibn al Ḥadramī is known to have taken place without the permission of ʿUmar and aroused the Caliph's anger. See about the expedition Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān,* ed. by ʿAbd Allāh Anīs at-Tabbāʿ-ʿUmar Anīs at-Tabbāʿ (Beyrouth, A.H. 1377 [A.D. 1957]), 544. For the development of navigation among the Arabs see Ḥasan Ibrāhīm Ḥasan and ʿAlī Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, *an-Nuẓum al-islāmīya* (Institutions of the Islamic Society), no. 3 (Cairo, 1962): 200–205. There are two sources indicating Quraysh trade with the Abyssinians: Ṭabarī, 1:1181 and *Aghānī,* 9:55. These presume a certain navigation, but it is not clear with whose ships. We believe that the ships were probably Abyssinian. O'Leary in *Arabia before Muhammad,* 120–121, expresses the same view, and points out on page 182 that it was natural for the Abyssinians—at least till the Persian conquest—to transport their own goods to Yemen from where they could proceed through Mecca to Syria. He claims that as far as Mecca, the Yemenites or Abyssinians probably transported their own merchandise. This, obviously was possible only till the time of Ḥilf al Fuḍūl, but this assumption is supported by an information about the Abyssinian *hijra* of the Muslims. an-Nuwayrī, referring to al-Wāqidī tells us in *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-ʿarab* (Cairo, 1955) 16:232: "They sneaked out in secret, on foot or riding on animals—fourteen men and four women—till they reached ash-Shuʿayba. And Allah in a fortunate moment led them to two ships (which belonged to) tradesmen who transported them to the land of the Abyssinians for half a dinar . . . and the Quraysh followed till they reached the sea (shore) but could not catch up with them." Based on the same source, this information can be found word for word in Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb aṭ-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr* (Leyden, 1904–1928), 1, 1:136; Ṭabarī, 1:1181–1182. Typically an-Nābigha 19:18 *(Dīwāns,* ed. Ahlwardt, 21) calls the ship *adawlī* (Adulite).

[36] See on this subject Hourani, *Arab Seafaring*, 42–43, and Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant au Moyen-âge* (Amsterdam, 1959), 9–11.

[37] See Heyd, op. cit., 9; Pigulevskaya, *Vizantia na putyah v Indiu* (Byzantium on the Road to India) (Moscow–Leningrad, 1951), 186; Lammens, *Mecque*, 11, 107; Vasiliev, *Justin the First*, 362.

[38] See Lundin, *Yuzhnaia Aravia v VI. veke*, 52–54.

[39] Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:108–109); Malalas, 357–459; Nonnosus, 479.

[40] Malalas, 453: "And they got hold of his (al-Mundhir's) tents and captured many men, women and children, and everything they found: dromedar camels and all sorts of goods." Regarding this question see also Nöldeke, *Die Ghassanischen Fürsten*, 11. For the Persian counter-attack, see Agapius, 430.

[41] A. H. ad-Dīnawarī, *al-Akhbār aṭ-ṭiwāl* (Cairo, 1960), 430.

[42] This was clearly recognized by Grünebaum in "The nature of Arab unity before Islam", *Arabica* 10 (1963): 5–6.

[43] According to Lundin, almost the whole of the Arabian Peninsula had belonged to the sphere of interest of the Lakhmids, Ghassānids, and the Kinda. After the disruption of the latter, the two buffer-states shared Kinda's former territory with the main part coming under the rule of the Lakhmids. See "Yuzhnaia Araviya v VI veke", 83, 80 n.

[44] We know that the *ʿāmil* of Baḥrayn was a subject of the Lakhmids. See Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-ma ʿārif* (Göttingen, 1850), 319.

[45] See Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, 7.

[46] For the market of Hīra see Afghānī, *Aswāq al-ʿarab*, 374–389.

[47] See, for example, IH, 1:184; Ibn Saʿd, Part 1, 1:80; Balādhuri, *Ansāb al-ashrāf* (Cairo, 1959), 100; and also Lammens, *Mecque*, 245–246.

[48] See for example, Alūsī, *Bulūgh al-arab fī maʿrifa ahwāl al-ʿarab* (Cairo, A.H. 1342 [A.D. 1923–1924]): 175. "The arable land, garden and trading centres belonged to it, as it was the port of the seafaring ships coming from India, China, and elsewhere." See also the debated paragraph in Masʿūdī, 1:126, and to the contrary Hourani, "Direct sailing between the Persian Gulf and China in pre-Islamic times", *JRAS* (1947), 158.

[49] See on the same subject Kister, "al-Hīra. Some notes on its relations with Arabia", *Arabica* 15 (1968) passim.

[50] Alūsī, op. cit., 176. The power of the Lakhmids appears also from the composition of their army, e.g.: "And it had five troups made up of hostages *(rahāʾin)* on horseback. And it had as-Ṣanāʾiʿ (i.e. members of the Banū Qays and Banū Taym al-Lāt tribes) and al-Wadaʾiʿ (i.e. one thousand Persian soldiers) and al-Ashāhib (i.e. the king's relations and noblemen) and the Dausar. As far as ar-Rahāʾin is concerned, it consisted of five hundred male hostages of the Arab tribes who stayed around the king's gate for a year... As far as Dausar is concerned, they were the hardest troup on horseback, strongest in bravery and in fight, there were among them men from all Arab tribes (but most of them were from the Rabiʿa tribe)." Alūsī, op. cit. For the army of the Lakhmids see Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 117–123, and Kister, *al-Hīra*, 165–167.

[51] The text of the peace treaty was preserved by Menander Protector. See *CSHB*, 359–363, and also I. Kawar's imaginative article, "The Arabs in the peace treaty of A.D. 561", *Arabica* 3 (1956): 181–213. The author discovered no link between this subject and Mecca and did not sharply differentiate the various Arabs of the period. The position of contemporary Meccan trade is not even mentioned.

[52] Op. cit., 360.

[53] Op. cit., 360–361.

[54] The two great powers—but mainly Byzantium— tried to introduce measures against the undesirable middlemen who had made themselves independent ever since the 408–409 treaty. Trade between the great powers could be transacted only in strictly defined places— Nisibis, Artaxata, Callinicum—called by Polányi "the ports of trade". Justinian laid this down as a law sanctioned by tradition in Codex IV 63/4: "Neither traders subject to our Empire nor those to the Persian King must trade in places other than agreed upon at the time of the treaty with the peoples in question, so that they shall not be able to spy out—which would not be proper—the secrets of a foreign state. In the future none of our subjects shall dare to travel further than Nisibis, Callinicum or Artaxata with the aim to buy or to sell and shall not think that he will be able to exchange merchandise with Persia elsewhere than the above mentioned cities."

[55] See the text in G. Ryckmans, "Inscriptions sud-arabes", *Le Muséon* 66 (1953): 278.

[56] al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl*, Part 1, 1 (Uppsala, 1954): 60. "From this we can see that Maʿdd was (lived) in Tihāma and as it approached the territory of Hakam b. Saʿd b. Madhhij, Saʿd al-ʿAshīra started to fight against him and drove him out to Hijāz." The poem of ʿĀmir b. Zarib al-ʿUdwānī refers to the same event:
> "And Saʿd (al-ʿAshīra) forced Maʿdd to leave (Tihāma)
> How can one live near a hidden disease?
> Do not drive out Maʿdd because theirs is
> Allah's friendship and the good (profitable) thing."

[57] See *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche* (Paris, 1899–1910), 4:347 (2:308) the first reference is to the Syrian text, the second to the French translation.

[58] Op. cit., 4:373–375 (2:394–351).

[59] See the "crowning" of Hawdha b. ʿAlī, tribal chief of Banū Hanīfa by Kisrā, witnessed by the contemporary writer al-Aʿshā (*Mukhtār ash-shiʿr al-jāhilī*, 2:134; *Aghānī*, 17:237, etc.; Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqāq*, 348).

[60] Dīnawarī, 64; Tabari, 1:984; Hamza, Ispahanensis, *Annalium libri H* (Leipzig, 1844), 59: al-Bekri, 546 (s.v. al-Mandab); starting from ash-Shihr.

[61] al-Aʿshā, 2:145; *Aghānī*, 17:237; Ibn Durayd: *Ishtiqāq*, 226; Ibn al-Athīr, *Taʾrīkh al-kāmil* (Cairo, n. d.), 1:190.

[62] Ibn al-Athīr, 1:190; *Aghānī*, 17:238.

[63] See the description of the battle: Tabari, 1:1031–1033; Ibn al-Athīr, 1:196–198; Nöldeke, *GPA* (Leyden, 1879), 604–610nn. At almost the same time, in 610, (accession of Heraclius to the throne) the Arab tribes invaded Syria. See *Michel le Syrien*, 4:403, (2:401).

[64] See Pigulevskaya, *Araby y granits Vizantii i Irana*, 50–56.

[65] Malalas, 398–400; Chronicon Edessenum, Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 1:407.

[66] See on this war Malalas, 445–447, 460–461; Agapius, 425–427; *Michel le Syrien*, 2:191.

[67] See on this war Procopius, Book 2, Chap. 1; Agapius, 430–433; Chronicon Edessenum, Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 416–417; "Eutychii patriarchae Alexandrini", Annales, In *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* (Beyrouth–Paris, 1906–1909):208. The war is reported in Tabarī, 1:958–960, and as Nöldeke notes about this unusually exact report (*GPA*, 238), Tabarī's communication is probably rooted in Pehlevi tradition.

[68] According to Tabarī, 1:960, up to the peace treaty of 561 the Byzantine Emperor ensured peace only by yearly taxes: "And he (i.e. Justinian) ensured ransom (tax) to him (i.e. to Anōsharwān) and took it to him every year so that he shall not attack his country."

[69] John of Ephesus, 176; Agapius 436 sqq; *Michel le Syrien*, 2:311 sqq; Abū' al-Faraj, 150–151.

[70] Agapius, 448 sqq; Tabarī, 1:1002 sqq; Eutychius, 1:215 sqq. See the famous passage in the Koran 30/1 ff.

[71] Pigulevskaya, *Vizantia na putyah v Indiu*, 186. Hiroshi Wada's study, "Prokops Rätselwort Serinda und die Verpflanzung des Seidenbaums von China nach dem oströmischen Reich" (1970) treats the problem of the land and sea-routes and the "western" (Ptolomaid–Roman–Byzantine) and Chinese trade relations far more thoroughly and tries to find an answer to several yet unanswered questions (the earliest date of "western" silk production, the Serinda problem, etc.). It has to be noted that after the downfall of the Han dynasty (A.D. 220) up to the middle of the 5th century the overland silk-route could not be used, and though the yearbooks of the Wei dynasty again mention the land-route, it seems certain that the meanwhile increased importance of the sea-route was not seriously affected by the "normalization" of relations between the Chinese and the "barbarians" (see also op. cit., 46–48). Furthermore, the difference in the duration of the journey on the routes was also of considerable importance. According to Pliny in *Naturalis Historia*, 6:101 sqq (Strabon 2.4.11.), it took forty days to reach from Alexandria the Malabar coast, while we know from Ptolemy that from the "Iron Tower" to the Sera metropolis it took seven to ten months. With respect to the direct possession of the silk-route, it is important to know that after 370, with the conquest of the Kidarite Khiyōns, Iran lost direct control over the first stage of the route, and that next the Hephthalites gained supremacy over a great part of the route by their conquests between 484 and 515. See Harmatta, "Yemen ókori történetéhez" (To the ancient history of Yemen), *Antik Tanulmányok* 19 (1927): 183–192.

[72] Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant*, 3.

[73] Pigulevskaya, op. cit., 187.

[74] See Tkač's detailed study in Pauly-Wissowa's *Realenzyklopaedia* (s.v. *Shabwa*); Afghānī, *Aswāq al-'arab*, 15–16. The other less important route connected 'Umān with Iraq. See Afghānī, loc. cit. The two routes correspond to the two directions of trade towards the two great powers which created in Yemen two conflicting spheres of interests whose clash was one of the central problems of Yemen at the beginning of the 6th century.

[75] Pigulevskaya, op. cit., 187.

[76] Menander Protector, *CSHB*, 295–300 (the embassy of the Turks), 380 ff. (Zemarchos's embassy). See also Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien*, 164–168. After A. Stein, H. Wada tried to prove with historico-economico-geographic argumentation that independent silkworm-breeding existed on Sogdian territories (Bukhara, Margiana,

Marakanda) since the 4th century A.D. (the Turks/Sogds offered their own products to Byzantium, op. cit., 75–81).

[77] Heyd, op. cit., 15–16.

[78] Pigulevskaya, op. cit., 393.

[79] This is presented in different ways by the sources. Procopius claims in *De bello gothico* (4:17) that several monks had got hold of the secret; Theophanes (6th century, *Ex historia Theophanis excerpta*, CSHB, 474) maintains that a Persian smuggler brought the silkworms in his stick to Byzantium. See also Wada, 63–70 (on pages 81 to 85 the author tries to prove that the place—i.e., Procopius' Serinda—from where the silkworms were smuggled into Byzantium was probably Hyrcania (today Gurgân) on the eastern coast of the Caspian sea. See also O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 195; Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison, 1952), 168 n. 107; Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien*, 159.

[80] Theophanes, loc. cit.

[81] Pigulevskaya, *Vizantia na putyah v Indiu*, 393 sqq.

[82] For the dating see Vasiliev, *Justin the First*, 365 n. 44.

[83] *Itinera Hierosolymitana*, ed. P. Geyer (Vienna, 1898): 116.

[84] Antonini Placentini, *Itinerarium. Itinera Hierosolymitana*, CSEL, 39: 185. On Aila: "Then a ship sailed into Aila from India with various perfumes". In the recensio altera (p. 214) several ships are mentioned. On Clysma, p. 187: "Here a city of medium size can be found (into which) ships sail from India." Here "India" means, of course, South Arabia and/or Abyssinia.

[85] See on this question Abel, "L'île de Jotabê", *Revue Biblique* 47 (1938): 510–538; Vasiliev, *Justin the First*, 335 sqq; idem, *Notes on some episodes*, 312; Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 51–53; Smith, *Events in Arabia in the 6th century*, 443–444.

[86] Procopius, Book I, Chap. 19.

[87] About the activities of Amorkêsos see Malchus Philadelphensis, *Excerpta de legationibus gentium Constantini Porphyrogeneti*, ed. c. de Boor, Part 2 (Berlin, 1903), 1:268–569.

[88] Theophanes, 1:141.

[89] Theophanes, loc. cit.

[90] Theophanes, loc. cit.

[91] Vasiliev, *Justin the First*, 285. About the relations of the nomadic Nobadai and Blemyes living in North Nubia to Rome, Egypt, and Abyssinia see Altheim, *Entwicklungshilfe*, 30–35 and 91–93.

[92] Malalas, 433. A similar report can be found in the letter of Shemʿôn dʾ Bêt-Arshâm, Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 1:360; *Michel le Syrien*, 4:273 (2:183); Theophanes, 1:223.

[93] This has already been discovered by Assemanus, op. cit., 1:360 n. 2. A similar description of the events can be found in *Michel le Syrien*, 4:273–274 (2:183–184). Theophanes, however, used not the Syrian sources but Malalas, 433–434, where we find almost word for word the famous report. On the events see also Procopius, Book I, Chap. 20 (1:106–107); Jean de Nikiou, 392. For the connections between the various names of the Abyssinian king (Adad, Aridas, Andas, Aidog) in the Syrian and Greek sources and the

reinstatement of the original name (Ar°ēd) see Gutschmid, "Bemerkungen zu Tabari's Sasaniden-Geschichte" *ZDMG* 34 (1880): 737–738; Harmatta, "To the ancient history of Yemen", 189, in which, with respect to the conflict between Damianus and Adad, the author raises a fertile, though problematic new idea, namely, that the "described war" would fit quite well into the conquest of Himyar by Sembruthes. The author rejects the possibility of the report presenting a true though distorted image of Dhū Nuwās's history (see p. 188). This interpretation contains no convincing addition to the Christianity of the Abyssinians and to the Judaism of the Himyarites at the supposed time of the event. To the best of my knowledge, there are no data confirming predominant Jewish influence in Yemen in the second half of the 5th century. On the other hand, it is well-known that in this period Iran pursued an anti-Jewish policy (see Altheim, *Entwicklungshilfe,* 58–59). Neither can it be proved that from the middle of the 5th century until 517–518 there was an Abyssinian rule in Yemen (see Tkač, *EI¹,* s.v. *Saba°,* 4:10a; s.v. *Zafar,* 4:128a). As far as the supposed interpretation of the two names is concerned, the Amida–Adad interpretation has already been rejected by Dillmann (*Axum,* 1880, 32) while the form, Damianus, can be still more acceptably explained with the Dunaas of the Acta Arethae as originating from Dhū Nuwās.—A careful comparison of the different (Syrian, Greek) versions of the event can be found in Dillmann, op. cit., 28–33, where several interpretations are suggested without the author expressing his opinion.

[94] Theophanes, 1:222–223.

[95] Vasiliev, *Justin, the First,* 284.

[96] The problem of the introduction, or more accurately, of the re-introduction of Christianity into Ethiopia has never been clarified. Tradition claims that Christianity was introduced in the 4th century. Not so long ago this has been advocated by a popularizing work: Moscati's *Die altsemitischen Kulturen* (Stuttgart, 1961), 212–213. This tradition might be based on Frumentius's mission mentioned for the first time in Rufinus's *Church History.* For the most recent thorough criticism of this communication, repeated also by later sources (Socrates, Sozomenos, Theodoretus), see Altheim and Stiehl, *Christentum am Roten Meer,* 1:402–406. The continuity of embraced Christianity has already been questioned by the epigraphic material discovered in the last century, see Dillmann, *Axum* (1880), 13–23. More recently, Altheim and Stiehl have made a complete break with the earlier views and put the conversion to Christianity in Ethiopia into the second half of the 5th century. They claim that around 440, under Sembruthes, when the Negus ruled over the Red Sea and part of Yemen, Abyssinia was still heathen. See Altheim, *Entwicklungshilfe,* 25–28. Conversion to Monophysite Christianity took place under °Ezana after 451, when due to the successful wars against the Huns and Blemyes, the East-Roman Empire strengthened during the reign of Marcianus. See op. cit., 35–37; also Altheim and Stiehl, *Die Araber,* 5:336–338; and by the same authors, *Christentum am Roten Meer,* 1:407–429. Most recently, I. Shahīd made a contribution to this problem on the basis of new material (primarily on the basis of Shem°ōn d° Bet Arsham's letter "G", published by him). By comparison of the basic sources (the letters "S" and "G" of Schem°on d° Bet Arsham, *The Book of the Himyarites* attributed to the same author, and the *Church History* of Ioannes Ephesos built on the latter, as well as Michel le Syrien, and Pseudo-Dionysius Tellmahrensis who continued the work of Ioannes Ephesos), Shahīd represents the differentiated view that the permanent conversion of the Ethiopian royal house took place later, which does not exclude the possibility of earlier temporary conversions. In other words, it is possible that they converted the Christianity already in the 4th century, and after a relapse in the 5th century, Christianity was finally

adopted at the beginning of the 6th century, perhaps in the period between the two Yemenite campaigns (which explains our earlier citation of Shemʿōn dᵉ Bēt Aršhām / Malalas / Theophanes, namely, that at the time of the first Yemenite campaign the king of Abyssinia was not of Christian faith). See Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān. New documents", *Subsidia Hagiographica* 49 (Brussels, 1971): 252–260.

[97] See the Ethiopian version of the Martyrium Arethae: Fell, *Die Christenverfolgung in Südarabien und die himjaritisch-äthiopischen Kriege nach abessinischer Überlieferung, ZDMG* 35 (1881): 67–68.

[98] See for the detailed listing of the ships Fell, op. cit., 69; Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien,* 244–245. This has been reported by Ṭabarī (1:926); see also Nöldeke, *GPA,* 188. See on the list of ships Nöldeke's note in the same work. On the intertwined Byzantine–Abyssinian interests and on Byzantine interests in the Yemenite campaign there is a very interesting Meccan tradition which so far has been left out of consideration. See al-Azraqī, 1:81, which in addition mentions that Daws b. Dhī Thaʿlabān escaped the blood bath of Najrān, "And he went to the (Byzantine) emperor and told him what had been done to him (by Dhū Nuwās) and asked for his help. And he said to him: 'Your country is far from us but I will write to the king of the Abyssinians as he is of the same faith as we and he will help you.' And he wrote for him to the Najāshī asking for his help."

[99] Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:108–109).

[100] For the embassy see, in addition to Procopius, mainly Nonnosus, 479–499.

[101] Malalas, 458. For the historical truth of this part of Malalas see Smith, *Events in Arabia in the 6th Century,* 450.

[102] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 477: "They said: and ʿUtba b. Ghazwān started a raid against Ubulla and occupied it by force. And he wrote (a letter) to ʿUmar, letting him know this and informing him that Ubulla is the seaport of Baḥrayn, ʿUmān, India, and China." We find a similar report in Ṭabarī, 1:2384: "And there were in Ubulla five hundred uswār (Persian: *sawār* = armoured horseman) defending it and (Ubulla was) the seaport of ships coming (from places) before (China)."

[103] See Masʿūdī, *Murūj ad-dhahab* (Paris, 1861), 1:216: "and the ships (coming from China and India used to arrive here reaching the kingdom of Ḥīra." The authenticity of this passage is contested by Hourani, "Direct sailing", 158, who claims—on the basis of some unknown source—that in the 6th century, because of the floods, the Euphrates was water-logged.

[104] See Ibn Rosteh, BGA, 7:94–95: "As far as the Tigris is concerned... it flows until it reaches al-Madāʾin and the sea ships going from India used to come (here)".

[105] Heyd, *Histoire du commerce du Levant,* 7, overemphasizes the role of the Indian ships. According to Hourani ("Direct sailing", 106), the analysis of Arab and certain Chinese sources excludes the possibility of the presence of Chinese ships, and trade between Iran and the Far East was transacted entirely by Persian ships and sailors.

[106] See the recognition of this in Abel, "L'ile de Jotabé", 532.

[107] See Seyrig, "Postes romains sur la route de Médine", *Syria* 22 (1941):218–223; also Vasiliev, *Justin the First,* 362–363; and Hartmann's contribution, *Der islamische Orient. Die Arabische Frage* (Leipzig, 1909²), 472 n. 1.

[108] Procopius, Book 1. Chap. 19 (1:102) "Then the chief of the Arabs of that locality, Abū Karib, made a gift of Phoinikhon (oasis) to the Emperor Justinian and the emperor appointed him the phylarkhos of the Palestinian Arabs." This appointment might have taken place around 527, at the same time as Ḥārith b. Jabala's appointment. See Smith, *Events in Arabia in the 6th Century, 443*. While Smith (op. cit., 428) says nothing more than that Phoinikhon (palm-grove) might have been among Tabūk, Taymāʾ, and Madāʾin Ṣāliḥ, Hartmann's *Die arabische Frage* (457 n. 3) identifies the Phoinikon with Dūmat al-Jandal. We know that at the time of Muḥammad a member of the Ghassānids, Ukaydir b. ʿAbd al-Malik, was the "king" of Dūmat al-Jandal and was probably in touch with Byzantium. See IH, 2:526; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 382; Wāqidī, 403.

[109] With respect to Byzantium's embassy to the Kindite tribal federation, Kawar's "Byzantium and Kinda" (*Byzantische Zeitschrift* 53 [1960]:57–73) provides much additional information to those contained in Olinder's monograph, *The Kings of Kinda*.

[110] Nonnosus, CSHB, 478; Theophanes, 1:144, stress the importance of this for Byzantium: "In that year (5995 = 502) Anastasius sends and embassy to Arethas, father of Badikharimos and Ogaros, son of Thalabané, and after this the whole of Palestine, Arabia, and Phoinikia enjoyed full calm and peace." The sons of al-Ḥarīth b. ʿAmr are known to have invaded Byzantine territories with fair success in 497 and 501. Theophanes, 141, 143.

[111] Nonnosus, CSHB, 479.

[112] Nonnosus, loc. cit.; Malalas, 457–459.

[113] Kawar, "Byzantium and Kinda", 67 n. 19.

[114] Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 115–117, identifies him on the basis of Yāqūt's Maʿjam (s.v. *Dayr Banī Marīna*) with Salama's son.

[115] See p. 31.

[116] Nöldeke, *Die Ghassanischen Fürsten*, 16 nn. 4 and 5.

[117] Lammens, *Mecque*, 244 (340).

[118] Paret, "Note sur un passage de Malalas concernant les phylarques arabes". *Arabica* 3 (1958):266.

[119] See n. 51.

[120] See later the lessons of inscription Ry 506.

[121] Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 141 sqq. Altheim, *Entwicklungshilfe*, 65–66.

[122] IH, 1:184; Yaʿqūbī, *Historiae* (Leyden, 1883) 2: 14; *Aghānī*, 19:75.

[123] See the poem of al-Aʿshā, (*Mukhtār ash-shiʿr al-jāhilī*, 2:143) who was in close relationship with Hawdha b. ʿAlī.

> "Whoever meets Hawdha prostrates himself before
> him without shame
> When he puts on his turban over the crown,
> or puts on (his diadem).
> He has diadems, that were decorated with
> precious stones (by the jewellers who made the diadems)
> You can see no flaw no rust;

> And (he has) all kinds of brocades which he
> puts on
> Abū Qudāma, having received them with it (the
> crown)."

See also Ibn Durayd, *Ishtiqāq*, 384: "And among them: Hawdha b. ʿAlī Dhūʾt-tāj ('the owner of the crown'). Kisrā had given him a mitre with precious stones which he used to put on and was called (therefore) Dhūʾt-tāj." According to *Aghānī*, 17:237, the Persian king gave him even armoured horsemen to escort him.

[124] al-Aʿshā, op. cit., 2:145; *Aghānī*, 17:237 sqq.; Ibn al-Athīr, 1:190. When Kisrā asks Hawdha how he could get the better of Tamīm (in Ibn al-Kalbī's version of Banū Saʿd), Hawdha gives his sincere opinion that not even the king's armoured horsemen are capable of achieving success, and suggests therefore to apply a ruse (*Aghānī*, 17:239).

[125] See ad-Dīnawarī, 78–80; Ṭabarī, 1:991–993; Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, 2:211–212; Agapius, 441–446; Eutychius, 1:213–214.

[126] ad-Dīnawarī, 85–100; Ṭabarī, 1:995–1001; Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, 2:215–223; Agapius, 441–446; Eutychius, 1:213.

[127] See Ghirsman, *L'Iran des origines à l'islam*, 275.

[128] See *Handbuch der altarabischen Altertumskunde* (Paris–Copenhagen–Leipzig, 1927), 41; Hartmann, *Die arabische Frage*, 17 and 22; Höfner, "Die Kultur des vorislamischen Südarabiens", *ZDMG* (1950), 15–16; Guidi, *Storia e cultura degli arabi*, 86–87, 98–99; and more recently, Harmatta, "To the ancient history of Yemen". This study analyzes the history of this area embedded in the "world history" of late antiquity, mainly from the aspect of trade. Shahīd in his survey on "Pre-Islamic Arabia" in *The Cambridge History of Islam* (1 [1970]:7–16) is right when he points out that Yemen's participation in trade as producer, deliverer, and middleman depended on three factors: *(a)* keeping the geographic discoveries on the Indian Ocean secret, and control of the straits of Hozmuz and ʿAden (Qanaʾ), *(b)* the "peaceful co-existence" of the city-states to ensure canalization and the highly efficient organization of the production of incense, and *(c)* control of the trade routes. All this was ensured by highly favourable geographic conditions ("a sea-girt and a sand-girt fortress"), op. cit., 10–11.

[129] See *EI*[1], s.v. *Maʾrib* and *Shabwa* (Grohmann); *Handbuch der altarabischen Altertumskunde*, 41; Hartmann, *Die arabische Frage*, 22; O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 103–106; Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe des origines à la fin du XVᵉ siècle de J.-C.* (Paris, 1952–1966), 6.

[130] Hartmann, *Die arabische Frage*, 22.

[131] We know that Euting has discovered twenty-five fairly large fragments of inscriptions and fifty graffiti in al-ʿUla. See *Handbuch der altarabischen Altertumskunde*, 41.

[132] See Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya", 17–19. The same control can be demonstrated for the beginning of the 6th century. A passage in Procopius (Book 1, Chap. 19, 1:102) reports: "In the neighbourhood of these people (i.e. the Abochorabos who presented Justinian with the Phoinikhon and obtained the phylarkhia of Palestine) other Saracens own the territory near the sea, they are called Maddénoi (Maʿdd) and are the subjects of the Homerites."

[133] *Le Muséon*, 66 (1953):307–308.

[134] For the interpretation of *qsdm* see Lundin, "Iz istorii Aravi v nachale VI. veka" (The history of Arabia at the beginning of the 6th century), *Palestinkiy Sbornik* 2 (1956):49–50.

[135] For the interpretation of the passage see Lundin, op. cit., 51–52.

[136] For the interpretation of the text see G. Ryckmans, "Inscriptions historiques sabéennes de l'Arabie centrale", *Le Muséon* 66 (1953):327–329; Lundin, op. cit., 46–52; Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana,* 73–75.

[137] Lundin, op. cit., 21, claims that the Ḥimyarites had to do everything in their power to gain control over North Arabia in order to ensure the incense-route and to prevent the invasion of South Arabia by the Bedouin tribes. Interpreting a passage in letter "G" of Shem'ōn dᵉ Bēt Arshām on the sphere of authority of Dhū Nuwās, Beeston in his "The realm of King Yusuf," *BSOAS* (1975): 124–126, lists a number of convincing arguments in favour of the supposition that this situation still prevailed at the time of Dhū Nuwās. The letter contains, among others, the ḤZBᵓ which Beeston explains as the royal title, "Arabs of Tihāma and Ṭawd". This expression taken from the Ethiopian *ḥezb* vas used by the Najrānians in a pejorative sense for the "Arabs of the King".

[138] al-Azraqī, 1:79.

[139] al-Azraqī, loc. cit.: "As far as the third Tubba' is concerned, who wanted to destroy the house (i.e. the Ka'ba), it was at the beginning of Quraysh's time."

[140] See IH, 1:20–22; *Hamza,* 131; and for 6th century sources referring to the Tubba'-s, see Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin–Leipzig, 1926), 102–103. Using von Kremer's pioneer work, *Über die südarabische Sage* (Leipzig, 1864), Hartmann analyzed in his *Die arabische Frage* (473–498) the mythical Muslim tradition about the Tubba'-s. See also Guidi, *Storia e cultura degli arabi,* 106–119, which, compared to Hartmann's hypercritical views, is a more realistic and more "historical" assessment.

[141] al-Azraqī, 79–80; IH, 1:20; *Hamza,* 131; Alūsī, 2:260.

[142] *Hamza,* 131. See also IH, 1:19–20; al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl,* I/1:61. Research (Hartmann, *Arabische Frage,* 497–8; Guidi, *Storia e cultura degli arabi,* 118) has identified the last Tubba' with Sharahbi'l Ya'fur about whom there is an inscription dated from 467 (see Glaser, *Zwei Inschriften über den Dammbruch zu Mārib* [Berlin, 1897], 26).

[143] Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh,* 203.

[144] Koran, 34:18–19. About the difficulties in the interpretation of this passage see Paret, *Der Koran. Kommentar und Konkordanz* (Stuttgart–Cologne–Mainz, 1971), 406; R. Simon, *A Korán világa* (The World of the Koran) (Budapest, 1987), 313.

[145] According to the *tafsīr*s (al-Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr,* Cairo, A.H. 1358 [A.D. 1939], 568; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr,* Cairo, n.d., 360), the stations were located at such distances, that one could be reached at noon and the next in the evening and thus they didn't have to carry food and water.

[146] According to the *tafsīr*s, op. cit., "make the route into a desert!" They asked this in order to make the life of the poor, who were in no position to acquire camels, food, and water, more difficult, i.e., the rich wanted to monopolize trade in this way.

[147] Koran, 27:23–44 (the story of Bilqīs); 34:15–17 (break of the dam at Ma'rib); 34:18–19; 44:37; 50:14 (these last two passages mention in passing *qawn Tubba'* as an example). It has repeatedly been supposed (see mainly Hartmann, *Arabische Frage* (476–479) that Muḥam-

mad consciously kept quiet about the living Hīran and Yemenite, etc. traditions underlining the glory of "pagan times" and turned instead to the politically inconsequential Jewish traditions. Guidi is right when he emphasizes in his *Storia e cultura degli arabi* (107–108) the popularity of the Yemenite saga on the entire peninsula, but fails to offer another explanation for the relative silence of the Koran. The reason for this might have been that Muhammad could use only some topics of the Yemenite saga. About the fictive nature of the destruction promised to *qawm Tubbaʿ*, see Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 103.

[148] Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, 24 and 116.

[149] We know that the first break of the Maʾrib dam happened in the middle of 450 and the dam was repaired by December 450 or January 451. The dam broke a second time in 542 and was repaired in 545. See Glaser, *Zwei Inschriften über den Dammbruch zu Marib*, 68.

[150] Nöldeke, *GPA*, 204 n. 2.

[151] See Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 37. More accurately: In Central and East Arabia where their centre was the important trading centre Hajar near Gerrha. See also Caskel, *Die einheimischen Quellen*, 338 and 340. In op. cit., 339, the author proves *(a)* that in contrast to the still widely advocated view in the pertaining literature, Kinda itself was not a tribe which immigrated from South to North Arabia, but a clan made into a dynasty (as e.g. Āl Saʿūd in Saud Arabia or Āl Ṣabāḥ in Kuwait); *(b)* that the Kindite tribal federation was not a "Bedouin realm" (Beduinenreich) but a "city-kingdom" (Stadtkönigtum).

[152] About the relationship of Kinda to Byzantium see Kawar, "Byzantium and Kinda", 57–73.

[153] See al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl*, I/1:60: "And some scholars said: ʿAmr b. Ḥassān, the last of the Tubbaʿ, put the son of his sister Ḥujr, Ākil al-Murār—according to people, ʿAmr al-Maqṣūr—at the head of the whole of Maʿdd." See also *Hamza*, 140; according to ad-Dīnawarī, 52, the successor of ʿAmr b. Ḥassān, Shuhbān, was the one who named al-Hārith b. ʿAmr at the head of the tribes. See further Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 38–39.

[154] See al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl*, I/1:60; Ṭabarī, 1:881. Hartmann (*Die arabische Frage*, 494) accepts the report about the marriage ties, while al-Hamdānī, in *al-Iklīl* (I/1:60), thinks that it is questionable. "There are Himyarites who claim that there were no marriage bonds between Āl Asʿd (the ruling Himyarite family) and Kinda." More recently, in his *Events in Arabia in the 6th Century*, (445) Smith has accepted the marriage bonds.

[155] Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 45.

[156] Olinder, op. cit., 42.

[157] Abūʾl-Fidāʾ, 130: "And he conquered from the Lakhmids that which was in their possession from the territory of Bakr b. Wāʾil and in this way Ḥujr Ākil al-Murār remained (in possession of this territory)." We know that Bakr lived north to the Hawāzin and Tamīm tribes which shows the noteworthy extent of Kinda's supremacy.

[158] See Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 50. According to al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:247, he died in the squirmish against the Ghassānid Ḥārith b. Abī Shamir.

[159] See Olinder, loc. cit.; Caskel, *Die einheimischen Quellen*, 336, calls the report to be found in Ibn al-Athīr, 1:382, and nowhere else, a "notorische Fälschung" (notorious falsification).

[160] Olinder, 70–71.

[161] *Aghānī*, 9:80–82.

[162] See also ad-Dīnawarī, 52; *Hamza*, 140; Ibn al-Athīr, 1:210; Abū'l-Fidā', 132. See the analysis of the often contradictory discrepancies in Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 71–72. On the historical authenticity of the obviously scholarly tradition see Caskel, *Die einheimischen Quellen*, 341.

[163] See Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 75; Imru'l-Qays reports somewhere (*Mukhtār ash-shi'r al-jāhili*, 1:109) that "the kingdom' of al-Hārīth b. 'Amr spread from Iran to 'Umān."

[164] Azraqī, 1:118: "And *an-nasa'a* (management of the intercalation of the months) was before (Mālik b. Kināna) in the hands of Kinda, for earlier they were the kings of the Arabs of Rabī'a and Mudar and the ('kings' of) Kinda were the deputies of the Qayls (the Himyarite kings)."

[165] Parallel to the boom of South Arabian research and following the not much appreciated work of Grimme and Margoliouth, there are signs of a renewed study of the effect of South Arabian culture, primarily of religion on Islam. See Moubarac, "L'épigraphie sud-sémitique et l'Islam", *REI* 25 (1957): 55–68 mainly. The author stresses the loan of the deity Rahmān which, according to him, was taken by Muhammad from the South Arabian religion. We know that in the second Meccan period, when after the rejection of the so-called "Satanic verses" (Koran, 53:19–20) Muhammad had begun to work out his consistent monotheism, he hesitated for a long time in the choice of an appropriate (name for the) god. For a long time he thought to call the god ar-Rahmān and this name occurs about fifty times in the Koran of this period. According to Nöldeke (*Sketches from Eastern History* [Beyrouth, 1963], 44), Muhammad borrowed this name from the Jews, as in the period of the Talmud the word was a favourite adjective used for the Jewish god. If Muhammad really borrowed this name from the South Arabian religion, then the memorable rule of Yemen, that is, of the Kindite tribal federation (see Olinder, op. cit., 32–33) of Yemenite origin in Hijāz and Tihāma would have played a role in it. For the widespread use of the name (in North and Central Arabia, Yamāma, South Arabia, Palmyra, and among the Jews) see Nöldeke and Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorāns*, 1:112 n. 1; G. Ryckmans, *Les religions arabes préislamiques*, 23 (in the Safa' graffiti) and 47–48 (in the South Sabaean monotheist, Jewish, and Christian inscriptions); also Toufic Fahd, *Le panthéon de l'Arabie centrale à la veille de la hégire* (Paris, 1968), 140–141 (with additional bibliography).

[166] See Nöldeke, *Die Ghassanischen Fürsten*, 11; Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 54.

[167] See Theophanes, 141; and also Olinder, op. cit., 51; Devreesse, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche*, 252 and 255.

[168] See Theophanes, 143; Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, loc. cit., Devreesse, loc. cit.

[169] Nonnosus, CSHB, 478; Theophanes, 144.

[170] See Nonnosus, CSHB, 478; Malalas, 434; Theophanes, 144. See also Nöldeke, *Die Ghassanischen Fürsten*, 11; Nöldeke, *GPA*, 171 n. 1; Paret, *Note sur un passage de Malalas*, 261. An important passage (434–435) in Malalas confirms the close link between Byzantium and Harīth b. 'Amr. According to this passage, when in 528 the Lakhmid king Mundhir attacked al-Hārīth b. 'Amr, the phylarkhos of Byzantium, and captured and killed him, Justinian, to avenge al-Hārīth's death, sent several Palestinian and Syrian phylarkhoi, i.e. military leaders, against al-Mundhir. The fact that al-Hārīth b. 'Amr was a phylarkhos, as well as the Palestinian and Syrian leaders in the above mentioned passage in Malalas, are

indications of Byzantium's cautious policy, which—in contrast to Persia and its buffer-state Ḥīra—beside the Ghassānids, used several other tribal federations and tribes to perform similar functions. See the problem in Paret, op. cit., 259-260.

[171] *The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite* (Cambridge, 1882), Chap. 57, 45–46. See also Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 52–53, 58–59; Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 69. It is characteristic of the role of the buffer-states that because of the damage suffered by his vassal, Kawād wanted to attack Edessa (see Joshua Stylite, Chap. 58, 46–47).

[172] See Malalas, 433; Jean de Nikiou, 392; Theophanes, 222; Assemanus, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 1:360; *Michel le Syrien*, 4:273 (2:183).

[173] G. Ryckmans, *Le Muséon* (1953), 307–310.

[174] See also Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 21 and 32.

[175] See n. 110.

[176] Anastasius had sent a bishop called Silvanus to the Himyarites. See Devreesse, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche*, 257. Also O. Blau, "Arabien im 6. Jahrhundert". *ZDMG* 23 (1869), 560. We know from the *Church History* of Philostorgius that a Byzantine embassy led by Theophilus Indus went to Yemen with the aim to convert the Yemenites already at the time of Constantine (337 to 361), and as a result of the mission a Christian church was built in the Himyarite capital Zafār (Tapharon). See Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien*, 72–74.

[177] See also Lundin, op. cit., 19, 36.

[178] See Olinder, op. cit. 61; Pigulevskaya, 141–142.

[179] We know that it was under Anastasius that Najrān became a Monophysite episcopal see. See Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe*, 52; Shahid, "The Martyrs of Najran", 271 n. 3.

[180] Nonnosus, CSHB, 478; Agapius, 425 (165).

[181] Nonnosus, CSHB, 479.

[182] Nonnosus, CSHB, 479; Malalas, 457–459.

[183] Nonnosus, CSHB, 479; Smith, in *Events in Arabia in the 6th Century* (p. 435), is wrong in the description of events related to Qays.

[184] About Imru'l-Qays' figure and the myth surrounding his circle see Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe*, 261–263. A dubious tradition claims that Imru'l-Qays had converted to Christianity.

[185] Ṭabarī, 1:900.

[186] Ṭabarī, 1:900.

[187] Lundin, op. cit., 24 n. 28.

[188] See Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 71 and n. 4 on the same page.

[189] Nöldeke, *GPA*, 171 n. 1, according to which the event had taken place between 505 and 516.

[190] In *Hamza*, 106–107, a link is established between the weakening of Iran and the Hephtalites, and the following is added: "And for this reason (i.e. because of the weakening

of Kawād) the kingdom of the Arabs (i.e. of the Lakhmids) weakened, for the strength of the kings of the Arabs was ensured by the kings of the Persians."

[191] Abū' l-Fidā', 130; see further *Aghānī*, 9:78; Ibnu'l-Athīr, 1:164. *Aghānī* (9:80) recounts a Yemenite tradition, according to which, it was not Kawād, but the last of the Tubba'-s who appointed al-Ḥārith king of Iraq. This tradition is related to the Iraqi conquests of Ḥassān, b. Tubbān As'ad Abī Karib. See IH, 1:28. Altheim in his *Entwicklungshilfe* (p. 71) emphasizes the role of al-Ḥārith's relation with the Mazdakite movement in his coming into power and his failure. We know that the Mazdakites were against Khusraw Anōsharwān inheriting the throne which was one of the direct reasons for Anōsharwān's campaign in 528 against the Mazdakites. See *Hamza*, 107; *Aghānī*, 9:79; Ibnu'l-Athīr, 1:164: Abu'l-Fidā', 90. Smith (*Events in Arabia*, 447) incorrectly puts Mundhir's return to power at 531–532. For correct dating see Nöldeke, *GPA*, 465.

[192] Ibnu'l-Athīr (1:166): "And he (i.e. al-Ḥārith) asked him (i.e. Kawād) for a part of Sawād and he gave him six *tassūj*s." In Iraq the smaller unit of area was not called *rustāk* as in Sassanid Iran, but *tasūk* (in Arab *tassūj*), its meaning was 1/24 parts. See also Nöldeke, *GPA*, 16 n. 2, 448.

[193] See on this problem Nöldeke, *GPA*, 170–171 n. 4; Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 70–71.

[194] Olinder (*The Kings of Kinda*, 65) thinks it probable that, depending on Iran, Kinda still commanded certain parts of Iraq even after the peace treaty of 506.

[195] See nn. 93 and 94.

[196] See nn. 97 and 98.

[197] It is characteristic of Yemen's changed position, of the total loss of its economic and political importance that the occupation of the country by the Persians around 570 was an insignificant event, in which neither Byzantium nor Abyssinia interfered, compared to the conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians in 525. It is interesting that Sayf Dhī Yazan turned for help first to Qayṣar and later to Kisrā (see IH, 1:62–63; Ṭabarī, 1:946–958). Anōsharwān's first words are particularly noteworthy (Ṭabarī, 1:947): "Your land is far from our land and it is a land of little profit, there are only goats and camels on it and these we do not need. And I do not wish to expose a Persian army to the dangers of the land of the Arabs, this I do not need!" This clearly shows that Yemen as a trade centre ceased to exist around 570 (as opposed to the explanation offered by Nöldeke in *GPA*, 223, n. 2).

[198] *Hamza*, 133. About Dhū Nuwās's stay in Medina and his conversion by the Jews of the city see also Mas'ūdī, *Tanbīh*, 202; Ibnu'l-Athīr, 1:167. Altheim (Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 155–156) accepted without reservation Hamza's report and considered Dhū Nuwās the ideological offspring of Medinese Jews. On this hypotheses he built another one, according to which, Dhū Nuwās aimed at a Jewish West Arabia and counted on the support of Medina, Khaybar, Taimā', Ḥijr, Fadak, Maqnā, Iotabe, etc. (*Finanzgeschichte*, 156, *Entwicklungshilfe*, 74, by the same author). The trouble is that not a single datum is available to support his supposition!

[199] See IH, 1:21–22. This report has been accepted by Smith (*Events in Arabia*, 462).

[200] Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 17 (1:90).

[201] See *Michel le Syrien*, 2:309–310, and the recent work of Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 200–202.

202 The hymn of Johannes Psaltes dated between 523 to 527, definitely emphasizes the Jewishness of Dhū Nuwās: "Masrūq (Dhū Nuwās), the king of the Arabs, was a Jew." For the text see Schröter, "Trostschreiben Jacob's vom Sarūg an die himjaritischen Christen", *ZDMG* 31 (1877): 402. Jacob of Sarūg (died in 521) stresses in a letter the glorious and hard struggle of the Christians of Najrān waged not against the pagans but against the Jews who tortured Jesus to death. (Text in Schröter, op. cit., 371–2). See also the part of the letter of Shemʿōn dᵉ Bēt Arshām, who visited Mundhir III in 524, testifying the Jewishness of Dhū Nuwās (Guidi, *La lettera di Simeone vescovo di Bēth-Arshām*, 482–486; Halévy, "Persécution des chrétiens de Nadjrān," *Revue des études juives* 18 [1889]: 27). The question was finally settled by the recently discovered letter "G" of Shemʿōn dᵉ Bēth Arshām (see Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najran" (Syrian text, II–XXXII; English translation, 43–64). al-Azraqī (1: 81), referring to Yemenite scholars, reports the simple fact of Dhū Nuwās's conversion to the Jewish faith. See also ad-Dīnawarī, 61.

203 See Devreesse, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche*, 256–257.

204 Vasiliev (*Justin the First*, 290–291) is correct when he stresses the international character of the South Arabian expedition.

205 Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Topographia Christian*, 2 (Cambridge, 1909): 101, who was staying in Adulis when they were preparing for the expedition, of which he gives the time as "at the beginning of Justinian's reign" *(en té arché tés basileias Iustinu)*. See also Moberg, ed., *The Book of the Himyarites* (Lund, 1924), 7b(CV) and from the pertaining literature mainly Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 32–45. For a long time in the majority of Byzantine, Syrian, and Arabic sources and in the literature based on them only one Abyssinian expedition was known to have taken place. The question was finally settled by the publication of the inscriptions of Dhū Nuwās and confirmed by *The Book of the Himyarites* (Moberg, 56b [142]). Ibn al-Athīr's version (1:174) indicated two Abyssinian campaigns, which have already been mentioned by Gutschmid, "Bemerkungen", 741–742; Abel, "L'ile de Jotabé", 528–529, and Devreesse, *Le patriarcat d'Antioche*, 257–258. According to Guidi's acceptable opinion (*La lettera di Simeone vescovo di Bēth-Arshām*, 479), in relation to the two Abyssinian attacks we can speak about two phases in Dhū Nuwās's persecution of the Christians, the first of which ended in the 519 Abyssinian attack. The reports of Cosmas Indicopleustes, Jacob of Sarūg (Yaʿqubh of Serūgh), and partly of Procopius (1:20) would refer to this first persecution and campaign. The second persecution of the Christians would have started in 523 and then followed by the second expedition. The letter of Shemʿōn dᵉ Bēth Arshām and the hymn of Johannes Psaltes would refer to the second persecution of the Christians. The bloodbath of Najrān was an episode—probably the most important one—of this second phase in the persecution. The date of this episode is given in Shemʿōn's letter from which we know that he left Hīra with Abramos, son of Euphrasios on Kanun II.20, 835 (i.e. January 524). Ten days later in Ramla they met Mundhir who had been visited about this time by an embassy from Dhū Nuwās reporting the events in Najrān (see Guidi, op. cit., 480–482). This confirms the date of 523. See further *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scriptores Syri*. T.3. *Chronica minora*, 2, ed. A. W. Brooks, interpreted by I.–B. Chabot (Louvain, 1955), 222 (Chabot, 169). For the events in the period between the failure of the first Abyssinian expedition and the events in Najrān, the inscriptions Ry 507 and 508 (from Himā and Kawkab) which the follower of Dhū Nuwās, SHRHʾL (Sharahʾil) YQBL qayl had had engraved, furnish important information (see G. Ryckmans, "Inscriptions sud-arabes" [1953], 284–303). For the interpretation of Ry 507 we have the translation and historico-philological analysis of Rodinson (*Conférences de M. R. Annuaire EPHE Section 4,*

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1965/1966, 131–140). See further, R. Simon, "L'inscription Ry 506 et la préhistoire de la Mecque", *AO(H)* 20 (1967): 325–337. The inscriptions show clearly what has already been indicated by Guidi (*La lettera di Simeone vescovo di Bêth-Arshām,* 476) and confirmed by *The Book of the Himyarites,* namely, that the events in Najrān were part of a large-scale anti-Christian campaign (see the campaigns against the Christians of al-ʾAshʿar, al-Mukhā and of the Farasān island). Rodinson (supposing as an approach to Caskel's thesis that the Himyarite Era began between 122 and 118 B.C.) claims that the two inscriptions were engraved, that is, the events described in them happened between 511 and 515 and sets the death of Dhū Nuwās and the second Abyssinian expedition between 518 and 522. This dating, on the one hand, assumes that Cosmas's report refers to the second Abyssinian expedition, and, on the other, does not take into consideration the testimonies of the contemporary Syrian sources (see above). For the analysis of the chronological problems see Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 235–242.

[206] In her series of essays on medieval cities, Pigulevskaya devotes a special study to Najrān: "Les rapports sociaux à Najrān au début du VIᵉ siècle de l'ère chrétienne", *JESHO* 3 (1960), 113–130 (see more recently in German: *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien,* 272–307) and believes, without sufficient proof, to have discovered the features of an antique city in Najrān (p. 113) in which classes had developed; the nobility (p. 112), the middle class consisting of merchants and craftsmen (pp. 122–123), and the class of agricultural labourers and slaves (pp. 124–126). The author attributes great importance to the third—in our opinion without sufficient foundation and proof—and believes that they played a significant role in the economic life of the city (pp. 120 and 124). The new letter ("G") of Shemʿōn dʾ Bêth Arshām allows the highly probable conclusion that there was an inter-familiar, patriarchal slavery, about the economic significance of which nothing is known (see Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 51: the slaves of Hārith b. Kaʿb; p. 54: slave girls; p. 58: Ruhayma's slaves).

[207] For the description of Najrān as a trading centre see Moberg, *EI¹,* 3:890 (s.v. *Najrān*). The importance of Najrān at the beginning of the 4th century is indicated by the Imruʾl-Qays' inscription of Nemāra from the year 328, *REA,* 1:1. See also Smith, *Events in Arabia,* 442.

[208] Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-maʿārif,* 311: "And the news reached him (i.e. Dhū Nuwās) about the people of Najrān that they had adopted Christianity from a man who had come to them from Āl Jafna, the king of the Ghassāns, and had taught them Christianity."

[209] See the story of Ibn Ishāq taken from Wahb b. Munnabih, IH, 1:31–34; *Tabarī,* 1:920–925. The missionary Faymīyūn (Phaemion) went from Syria to Najrān (1:32) and was a Monophysite *(wa-kāna yuʿazzimuʾl-aḥad).* Ibn al-Athīr, 1:171–172, says only that they adopted Christianity from Syrian Christians. We know that Jacob of Sarūgh, Shemʿōn dʾ Bêth Arshām, and Johannes Psaltes who reported the episodes in Najrān were contemporary Syrian clericals and Monophysites (see Schröter, op. cit., 367). From their description it is quite clear that the people of Najrān were Monophysites, Altheim claims in his *Entwicklungshilfe,* 75, that the Monophysitism of Najrān can be traced back to the Monophysites who had been expelled by Mundhir III.

[210] Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites,* 14b (CIX–CX); Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 64. (Srghys /Sergios presbiter and Hananya /Ananias archdeacon).

[211] Moberg, op. cit. 14b (CX); Shahīd, loc. cit. (Ywnn/Ionas deacon).

[212] Schröter, op. cit., 369.

[213] We know that Dhū Nuwās, having entered the city by ruse in the autumn of 521 (see Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites*, 10ab, 11a (CVII–CVIII) first takes a tremendous amount of silver and gold from the inhabitants, op. cit., 12b (CVIII–CIX); Guidi, *La lettera di Simeone vescovo di Bēth-Arshām*, 483.

[214] Women enjoyed a far greater economic and social independence, because of its very nature, in the commercial activity of Najrān than they did in nomadic economy. See for example Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites*, 26ab (CXVIII); 56b (CXXVII). Pigulevskaya too emphasizes this (op. cit., 116–7).

[215] Moberg, op. cit., 43b (CXXXIII); Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 60. When the city was occupied she had 40,000 denarii and this—as stressed in Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth Arshām's letter "G"—independently of her husband's fortune (Shahīd, 57).

[216] See Moberg's article on Najrān in *EI¹*, 3:890. Farazdaq (born after 640, died before 732) remembered Najrān as an independent city, not conquered by others, see al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl*, I/1:61.

[217] According to Lammens (*L'Arabie occidentale*, 16) the Kaʿba was covered with cloth from Najrān. For the role of craftsmanship in Najrān (leather goods, fabrics using silk too and armament manufacture) and trade see O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 143–144. It confirms the gradual acquisition of transit trade through the Arabian peninsula by Mecca and its ties with Najrān which had lost its earlier role, it also shows that Hishām b. al-Mughīra, the chief of the mighty Banū Makhzūm tribe which monopolized more and more of Yemen's trade, took a wife from Najrān (Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 209), and that after the occupation of Mecca some anti-Islamic Qurayshites (the well-known Qurayshite poet, Hassān b. az-Zibaʿrā, IH, 2:418; and Hubayra b. ʿAlī al-Makhzūmī, IH, 2:420) had fled to Najrān.

[218] See the letter of Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth Arshām in *Assemanus*, 1:365–372; and its later authentic publication and translation on the basis of the Syrian Codex of the Museo Borgiano and Add. 14, 650 of the British Museum in Guidi: *La lettera di Simeone vescovo di Bēth-Arshām* (Syrian text, pp. 501–515; Italian translation, pp. 480–495). On Guidi's publication and interpretation see Nöldeke's review (1882). See Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth Arshām's letter "G" in Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", III–XXXII. The evidence of the other two Syrian sources mentioned in note 202 is also very important. See also Moberg, *The Book of the Himyarites*, 8a-b (CVI–CVII); Theophanes, 1:169; *Michel le Syrien*, 2:184–187 (4:273–276). For the connection between the other (Syrian Armenian, Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopian) sources on the persecution of Christians in Najrān, in comparison to the original report in Shemʿōn de Bēth Arshām' letter, see Guidi, op. cit., 500. (For the relation of Yohannan of Ephesos to Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth-Arshām see Nöldeke's review from 1882, 199–201). It is worth noting that the famous verses on *Aṣḥāb al-Ukhdūd* (The people of the "pit") in the *Koran* (85/4–8) in all probability do not refer to Najrān. See the arguments of Horovitz in *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin–Leipzig, 1926), 12 and 92–93, and also Moberg, op. cit., XXIX and XLVI–XLVII. It is, in fact, known from Shemʿōn dʿ Bēth Arshām's letter (see Guidi, op. cit., 488; Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 46–47) and from *The Book of the Himyarites* that the Christians who refused to convert to the Jewish faith were burnt in a church. See Moberg, op. cit., 19a (CXII); Shahīd, op. cit., 46-47.

[219] See Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 43.

[220] For the second Abyssinian campaign see mainly Lundin, op. cit., 42–52.

[221] For the reign of Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ see inscription RES no. 3904: *Le Muséon*, 59: 165–172. The godfather of the new governor was the Abyssinian king, Ella-Aṣheḥa himself, see Moberg, op. cit., 54b (CXL). Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ's governorship was in all probability only nominal—as proved by the fact that the last source does not even mention it—and in fact the Abyssinian officers were in command. See Lundin, op. cit., 53. Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ, who was later killed by Abraha, is not mentioned in the Arabic sources. See Shahīd, "The Martyrs of Najrān", 152.

[222] Nonnosus, CSHB, 479; Procopius, 1:108–109.

[223] Lundin (op. cit., 59 and 86) sets the end of Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ's governorship and the beginning of Abraha's reign at 534 or 535. See also Smith, *Events in Arabia,* 432 and 451. It is, however, obvious that the actual power was earlier in the hands of Abraha. This is clearly indicated by Procopius in Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:107) when he reports that not much after Ella-Aṣbeḥa's return the dissatisfied Abyssinian soldiers, led by Abramos, imprisoned Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ.

[224] We know that the Negus had sent two armies against Abraha, the first of which (3,000 men) defected and the second was defeated. See Procopius, Book 2, Chap. 20 (1:107).

[225] It is known that it was then that the Hamdānide qayls destroyed the dam of Maʾrib. See the lesson of Gl 618 in Glaser, *Zwei Inschriften,* 31–37.

[226] See the consequence of Julian's embassy: *John of Ephesus,* 251–256; see further Silko's Kalabsha inscription, in which he calls himself the king of Nobadai and of all Ethiopians, *John of Ephesus,* 345–346. See also Smith, op. cit., 432.

[227] Abraha was originally the slave of a Byzantine tradesman working in Adulis. See Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:107). It was a decisive condition that Abraha was not a Monophysite but a Melkite which was the official Christian rite in Byzantium. See Smith, op. cit., 462.

[228] Lundin, op. cit., 86, supposes that Abraha's rule lasted from 535 to 558, which we have to accept since we know that his son, Yaksūm b. Abraha ruled, according to the Arabic sources (e.g. ad-Dīnawarī, 63), for 19 years and that Sayf b. Dhī Yazan's expedition must have taken place before the death of Anōsharwān in 579. See on this question Nöldeke, *GPA,* 205 n. 2.

[229] Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:109); this has been misunderstood completely by Altheim and Stiehl in their *Finanzgeschichte,* 144.

[230] Inscription Ry 506, lines 3, 7, and 8.

[231] *Aghānī,* 18:303: "And said Abū ʿAmr ash- Shaybānī: when Abraha went up to Najd, Zuhayr b. Janāb went to him. Abraha treated him with respect and preferred him to the other Arabs who came to see him. Then he named him the head of the two Wāʾil tribes, the Taghlib and the Bakr. And governed them until they were hit by drought. And what Zuhayr asked from them was a great load on their shoulders. And Zuhayr stayed with them during the drought and prevented them from looking for fodder (that is, from looking for new pasture) until they payed what has been (imposed) on them. Their animals almost perished." Next, Ibn Zayyāba, a member of the Banū Taym-Allāh b. Thaʿlaba tried to kill him. On the "appointment" of Zuhayr b. Janāb see also Abūʾl-Fidā, 136, where instead of Janāb, Ḥubāb is written, probably because of a miswriting of the diacritic points.

[232] *Aghānī,* 18:305.

[233] See Ṭabarī, 1:935. "Next Abraha crowned Muḥammad b. Khuzāʿī and set him at the head of the Muḍar."

[234] Ṭabarī, 1:935.

[235] This was obviously the main cause of Abraha's expedition and not the intention to serve the interests of Justinian. Pigulevskaya in her book, *Araby u granic Vizantii i Irana*, 104, takes Procopius's report too literally. For the correct interpretation see Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 79.

[236] Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 20 (1:110).

[237] For the first information see Rubin, *Procopius von Kaisarea* (Stuttgart, 1954), 34 and 354. Moravcsik in *Byzantinoturcica*, 1 (Budapest, 1942): 303, claims that it was written between 545 and 550 and published in 551.

[238] G. Ryckmans, *Le Muséon* (1953), 278. Regarding the inscription see J. Ryckmans, loc. cit., 339–342; Caskel, *Entdeckungen in Arabien*, 27–30 mainly; Beeston, op. cit., 389–392; Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 145–149 and 353–354; Lundin, op. cit., 73–74; Smith, op. cit. 435–437; Pigulevskaya, *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana v VI. veke*, 102–103; Kister, "The Campaign of Ḥulubān". A new light on the expedition of Abraha, *Le Muséon* 78 (1965):425–436; Rodinson, *Ann. EPHE*, Section 4 (1965/1966), 125–131. See also *Orientalia* 25 (1956): 292–302; *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, 14 (1957): 93–95; R. Simon, "L'inscription Ry 506 et la préhistoire de la Mecque", *AOH* (1967):325–337.

[239] Beeston in "Notes on the Murayghān inscription", *BSOS* 16 (1954):390, changes the *mnmw* of Ryckmans to *ghnmw*.

[240] G. Ryckmans, 378, translates it as "comme l'ombre" and takes it for North Arabic *ka-zill*. Metaphors, particularly such poetic metaphores are quite strange to South Arabic inscriptions. See: Beeston, 391. Later interpretations rejected Ryckmans' translation and Rodinson (1965/1966, 126) suggested another translation: "et il (i.e. le Roi) prononça une sentence en tant que protecteur de Maʿadd" and has some strong arguments in support of it (pp. 129–130), primarily some convincing Semitic parallels to back up the metaphoric meaning of *zl* as "protection" and "asylum". On the other hand, *dnw* seems more acceptable whether in the sense of "to approach" or "verdict" *(< dyn)* as suggested by G. Ryckmans, even if we have to suppose a *pluralis maiestatis*. Of course, the essence of it remains, namely, that Abraha tried one way or another to give an euphemistic formulation of a situation which for him was unfavourable. Rodinson is of the same opinion (p. 130); he gives a different interpretation of the verb *wshʿ* as the passive reflexive form of *twshʿ*, with the sense of "to subject oneself".

[241] It seems probable from the literal translation of the inscription that Abraha is the subject of the legend. On the fictive nature of this (in agreement with Rodinson's opinion) see below.

[242] The engraver left out the month from the inscription.

[243] J. Ryckmans, "Le début de l'ère himyarite a-t-il coincidé avec une éclipse du soleil?" *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 10 (1953): 207–208. For the dating 115 B.C. see already J. Halévy, "Études sabéennes", *JA* (1873), 519; E. Glaser, *Zwei Inschriften*, 64–68. Altheim and Stiehl, (*Finanzgeschichte*, 351–363) were of the same view as J. Ryckmans.

[244] Smith, 436 and 465.

245 Smith, 435 and 437.

246 Caskel, *Entdeckungen,* see the interpretation of line 8 on p. 28, its chronological–historical interpretation on p. 30. Caskel too assumes a second expedition of Abraha and considers the expedition on the inscription "als eine Vorübung für Abrahas grossen Feldzug nach Norden".

247 See Rodinson (1965/1966), 131.

248 Beeston, 391 n. 2. This has been accepted by Kister too in "The Campaign of Ḥulubān", 424.

249 az-Zubayr b. Bakkār, *Nasab Qurays,* Ms. Bodley, fol. 1296. See the Arab text in Kister, "The Campaign of Ḥulubān", 427.

250 See the differences of *Aghānī's* data, 22:66 and 79.

251 *Aghānī,* 22:79.

252 Baghawī, *Maʿālim at-tanzīl, ad locum.* Nöldeke has called attention to this place in *GPA,* 205 n. 2. It is worth noting that while rejecting Muqātil's report, the author considers that of al-Kalbī's acceptable in all respects.

253 See Beeston, "Problems of Sabaean chronology", *BSOS* 16 (1954): 37–56.

254 See Nöldeke, *Die Ghassanischen Fürsten,* 18.

255 See Lundin, op. cit., 81.

256 See Nöldeke, *GPA,* 208 n. 1.

257 Conti Rossini in "Expeditions et possessions des Habashāt en Arabie" *JA* 18 (1921):29–32, elaborates the well-known *Afilas-fīl* theory, that is, he doubts the "War of the Elephant" and claims that the legendary story is an amalgamation of Abraha's expedition in the 6th century and of the epynom, Afīl/Afilas, the Abyssinian king's Yemenite expedition in the 4th century. This theory has been adopted—without naming the sources—by Klimovich, *Islam* (Moscow, 1965²), 17.

258 Nöldeke, *GPA,* 208 n. 1, emphasizes the importance of the Hudhaylite tradition which was independent of the Meccan tradition. Two verses of Khuwaylid Abū Maʿqil in the contemporary Hudhaylite Dīwān have been published in Kosegarten, *Carmina Hudzalitarum* (London, 1854), no. 56:112–115, and no. 57: 115–116. Wellhausen too supposes a link between these two verses and Procopius's report (*ZA,* 26 [1912]:290–294).

259 See mainly IH, 1:43–61; Azraqī, 1:86–91; Tabarī, 1:934–945; Balādhurī, *Ansāb,* 67–68.

260 Already Nöldeke was of the view that it was a campaign of a religious nature (*GPA,* 204 n. 2).

261 In the interpretation of the "War of the Elephant", Lammens (*Mecque,* 292/388), for example, claimed that "La cité de Quraishites devint une simple dépendence de la viceroyauté abyssine du Yemen, comme précédemment elle paraît avoir relevé de l'État himiarite".

262 See for example Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen,* 96. Horovitz, who was acquainted with the passage in Procopius, rejected this interpretation of Meccan tradition. According to him, "Das eigentliche Ziel dieses auf Veranlassung des byzantinischen Kaisers unternommenen Zuges war aber nicht Mekka, sondern das persische Gebiet, das indessen

Abraha nicht erreichte, da er unterwegs umkehren musste." In other words, he already identified the expedition mentioned by Procopius with the "War of the Elephant", though he did not come to any conclusions regarding it.

[263] J. Ryckmans, who studied the published text from the historical aspect, did not identify the episode described in the inscription with the "War of the Elephant" ("Inscriptions historique sabéennes", 339), however, he did not exclude the possibility that "Cette expédition aurait partiellement servi de base à la tradition d'une campagne d'Abraha contre la Mecque" (op. cit., 342). His main argument is that Murayghān, where the inscription was found, is far from Mecca. All said and done, Ryckmans claims nothing more than that the expedition in the Murayghān inscription was not directed against Mecca, or, more accurately, was not an expedition in conformity with Arabic tradition, but could have served as a basis for a later Meccan tradition. Thus, as he implicitly speaks about a single expedition of Abraha, the indentity of the "War of the Elephant" and Abraha's expedition in 547 ought to be accepted on the basis that the Arabic tradition is a tendentious distortion of the actual event.

Smith, who gave a far too promising title to his study of the Arab events in the 6th century, using recently published South Arabian inscriptions, paid no attention to North Arabian development, and while his comments on the history of Yemen and of the Kinda in the 6th century are extremely important, surprisingly enough, he failed to apply the conclusions which can be drawn from it to North Arabian development. This has led, in his case, to the contradiction that while he analyzes the lessons of the Murayghān inscription in a novel way, from the Yemenite point of view, he represents the traditional opinion from the North Arabian point of view. In other words, he does not identify the "War of the Elephant" with Abraha's expedition in 547, and accepts without reservation Abraha's campaign against Mecca in 570 (loc. cit., 434, 465, 467), that is, he assumes two expeditions by Abraha. This has led to an entirely arbitrary dating contradicting Arabic tradition when it came to the reign of Abraha and his successors (loc. cit., 2345). In comparison, see the more acceptable chronology in Lundin's "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke" (84). Lundin too rejects the identification of the "War of the Elephant" with Abraha's expedition, primarily because Altheim's rather poor argumentation failed to convince him. Altheim argues by taking the Murayghān inscription, Procopius's passage, and Muhammad al-Kalbī's report in Baghawī's *Tafsīr*, and then stating: "Es kann demnach kein Zweifel daran bestehen, dass die Angabe Muhammad al-Kalbī's richtig und Abraha's Feldzug von 547 in der Tat das berühmte Unternehmen gegen Mekka ist." (*Finanzgeschichte*, 144–147). As it has been shown above, it is not so simple to prove the identity of the two events. Lundin, who has not been convinced by Altheim's arguments, is right when maintaining that Procopius's passage is not conclusive, since the Byzantine historian discusses events which had occurred before 550 (op. cit., 81). However, the argument that the North Arabian tribal names of Meccan tradition are not among the tribal names of the inscription cannot be accepted. In fact, the inscription uses the collective name Ma'dd for the Rabi'a and Mudar tribes, which (except for the rebellious Banū 'Amir b. Sa'sa'a living near Tā'if which was the direct cause of the expedition) includes all tribes in Arabic tradition. We know further that Halibān was situated on the road from Mecca to Riyād (G. Ryckmans, "Inscription sud-arabes", 283) where the Hudhayl tribe too lived, and Turabān was only 80 miles from Tā'if (see Smith, *Events in Arabia*, 436). Rodinson (1965/1966, 129) localized the two sites on the road of Mesopotamia towards Hīra. This suggested interpretation leaves out of consideration tribal settlements mentioned in the inscription, mainly that of Banū 'Āmir b. Sa'sa'a. Unquestionably, due to the tribes involved, Arabic tradition had preserved in greater detail the memory

of the expedition than the few lines of the lapidary inscription. Lundin (op. cit., 83–84) rejects the identification of the expedition mentioned by Procopius, the expedition of the Murayghān inscription, and the "War of the Elephant" of the North Arabic tradition. For Abraha's expedition he accepts, without proof, an extremely dubious passage of Ṭabarī which gives the date of the expedition as around 563. Ṭabarī (1:900) writes: "He said: in the 8th year and 8th month of the reign of ʿAmr b. Hind was born Allah's Prophet—may Allah bless and keep him—and this was at the time of Anōsharwān, in the Year of the Elephant when al-Ashram Abū Yaksūm marched against Mecca." This passage in Ṭabarī is only one of many obviously artificial attempts to establish a chronology which contradicts even the one constructed by Lundin, according to which, Abraha's reign lasted only until 558 (op. cit., 86).

[264] It appears quite clearly from the Hudhayhite Dīwān that Abraha did not die during the expedition, but returned to Yemen where he ruled for several years more. See Nöldeke, *GPA*, 218 n. 4. This too supports the date of 547.

[265] When the first two chapters of this book were discussed as part of my thesis for the Candidate's degree of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, my opponents, Professor István Hahn, historian of antiquity, and the Semitic philologist, Miklós Maróth disagreed in some respects of my dating and interpretation of the Murayghān inscription. Some of their arguments have been raised more than once after the publication of the inscription and since they concern important problems I should like to recapitulate—as a summary of the aforesaid—my answer to them. One of the debated problems was the dating of the inscription. As far as I am able to judge, Beeston's attempt to establish a chronology (see mainly *Problems of Sabaean chronology*, 16:37–40) offers an undoubtedly more imaginative interpretation of the famous Ḥiṣn al-Ghurāb inscription (C 621) used earlier for dating than Mlaker, or earlier Halévy or Glaser, but important inscriptions from the beginning of the 6th century (such as Ry 507 and 508 from Himā and Kawkab, respectively, or Ry 510 about the war of Maʿdikarib Yaʿfur and al-Mundhir III, etc.) suggest another chronology. The one put forward by Beeston raises far more difficulties, compared to the dates which can be discovered in the contemporary Greek and Syrian sources, than merely the year 115 B.C. for the beginning of the Himyarite era. I have claimed that the chronology in the various inscriptions fails to express an unambiguous date which, according to Maróth (quoting Albright), could be considered an "accepted scientific fact". Beeston himself in his article (*EI²*, s.v. *Abraha*) is careful enough to set the origin of the Maʾrib dam inscription (*Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*, 4:541, which reports the revolt of Yazīd b. Kabshat in the year 657 of the Sabaean era) at the period between 540 and 550 and avoids the dating of Ry 506. According to Maróth, at the "current stage of science" the date of this inscription can be nothing else but 553. But the not insignificant attempts published after 1956 continue to revert now and again to the *jāhilīya*. I wish to refer here again to Pigulevskaya's (1964) dating which had not changed from 547 (see *Araby u granits Vizantii i Irana*, 149), and to one of the most important attempts at interpretation, that of Rodinson (*EPHE, Ann.* 6 [1965]:130–131) which placed the event between 540 and 545 (he and Caskel suppose that the Himyarite era started between 122 and 118 B.C.) The validity of the historic argumentation offered is, of course, open to question, since this was the time of the revolt of the Hamdānid qayls and the burst of the Maʾrib dam, thus hardly the right moment for an expedition of this type. All these arguments are not sufficient to reject *ab ovo* the possibility of a beginning of the Himyarite era in 110 or 109 B.C., but in this case the various sources have to be compared

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again and the given dates subjected to a historic interpretation. The need for such a comparison is confirmed by the other objection which has been raised.

This objection claims two things: *(1)* According to the first, the expedition would have ended not with the "dubious victory" and the status quo, that is, with continued Lakhmid control over Ma'dd, as I have pointed out, but with Abraha's real victory. Smith is the only author who unambiguously represents this view (*Events in Arabia,* 435, 437), while, according to all the other authors, all in all, the expedition was a failure. Thus, for example, J. Ryckmans maintains that Abraha won the war against Ma'dd, but he admits that "en fait la main-mise du royaume de Hīra et donc des Perses, sur la tribu de Ma'dd" (*Le Muséon,* 66 [1953]:342), namely, that Abraha's "victory was dubious", and also the status quo, the control of the Lakhmids over the Ma'dd tribes was accepted by Abraha. According to Beeston, "... the expedition was the first move of a projected attack on the Persian dominions. However, it proved a failure, and only provoked the Persians to their invasion under Wahriz a few years later, which finally destroyed the ancient South Arabian kingdom." (*EI²*, s.v. *Abraha*). What has Rodinson to say on the subject? "Abraha considère les Ma'dd, soutenus par le royaume Lakhmide, comme des vassaux rebelles à qui il vient de donner une leçon et qui rentrent dans l'obéissance après une bataille sans doute incertaine, celà lui permet de masquer sa retraite et son compromis avec Hīra" (op. cit., 130), i.e., "le roi retourne vers le Sud après cet accord qui masque pompeusement le maintien du status quo." (p. 130) The same opinion is advocated also by Lundin, one of the best investigators of South Arabia of this period (see "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 73 and 80) and Pigulevskaya (op. cit., 149). As we have seen, Smith is the only one to consider the expedition a victory over Ma'dd, but the value of his opinion is rather reduced by the fact that he also accepts Abraha's expedition in 570 (p. 467). This consensus in research expresses the true historical situation when after 528 the Kindite al-Hārith loses control over Hira and the heritage of the Kindite tribal alliance is soon acquired by the Lakhmids. This is the significant process and, to produce an additional evidence, I should like to present here a source which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been utilized before and which, in addition of being an evidence supporting the rule of the Lakhmids, can be used for a more correct interpretation of the often misunderstood 8th line of the inscription. The following report can be read in the *Kitāb al-aghānī:* "*Qāla Ibn as-Sikkīt: Ḥaddatha-nī Khālid al-Kilābī: anna Imra' l-Qays Iammā aqbala min al-ḥarb 'alā farasi-hī ash-Shaqrā' laja' ilā ibn 'ammati-hī 'Amr b. al-Mundhir — wa-ummu-hū Hind Bint 'Amr b. Hujr Ākil al-Murār — wa-dhālika ba'd qatl abī-hī wa-a' māmi-hī wa-tafarraqa mulk ahl bayti-hī wa-kāna 'Amr yawma'ydhin khalīfa li-abī-hī al-Mundhir bi-Baqqa wa-hiya bayna l-Anbār wa-Hīt.*" *(*IX, p. 90) "Said Ibn as-Sikkīt: Khālid al-Kilābī told me that Imru'l-Qays after having left the war on his ash-Shaqrā' ("red") horse, sought refuge with the son of his aunt, 'Amr b. al-Mundhir—his mother was Hind Bint 'Amr b. Hujr Ākil al-Murār. This happened after the killing of his father and uncle when the kingdom of his family had been ruined. On the other hand, 'Amr was at that time the deputy governor of his father, al-Mundhir, in Baqqa which lies between al-Anbār and Hīt'. Hence, this ays quite clearly that arounds 530 'Amr b. al-Mundhir was the deputy *(khalīfa)* of his father, al-Mundhir the Third. This too might support the interpretation that not Abraha, but the father appointed his son to rule over Ma'dd. In my opinion, the linguistic explanation of this possible interpretation has been given by Beeston who, without being acquainted with the earlier mentioned source, considered the expression *stkhlafhw* to be in the plus quam perfect tense and according to him, "... the clause in fact constitutes a causal *ḥāl* stating the authority by which 'Amr was empowered to conduct negotiations with Abraha, namely, because al-Mundhir had invested him ('Amr) with governorship over Ma'dd" (BSOAS

[1953], 391). Summing up what has been said so far, analysis of both the sources and of the historical situation supports the view that Abraha could have at best achieved a phony victory and did not alter the rule of the Lakhmids.

(2) According to the second supposition of the objection, the word *rbʿtn*—if interpreted in another way—would mean not the "spring" expedition, but the "fourth" one, so that the given expedition for this reason alone, could be the same as the one mentioned by Procopius. We know that, in contrast to G. Ryckmans', Caskel's, and Beeston's reading and interpretation of the word as "spring", J. Ryckmans was the first to suggest in 1957—not for linguistic, but for quite unconvincing reasons of dating—the word "fourth", because, according to him, dhu-Thbtn, the months May and June, refers at the same time to the end of the expedition which consequently had to start before spring (*Bibliotheca Orientalis* 14 [1957]:94). Later Rodinson accepted this explanation without any comments. However, linguistically *rbʿtn* can mean "spring" as a feminine adjective just as well as the ordinal number fourth (with respect to the omission of the long *ī* see, for example, M. Höfner's *Altsüdarabische Grammatik* (1943), 10, and for the form of adjective, that is, for its likelihood, op. cit., 129). On the other hand, the South Arabic passages mentioned by G. Ryckmans and the Biblical parallel with II. Sam. XI. 1, make the attributive use of "spring" fairly self-evident. In the objections it was said that "If there had been only a single well-known expedition, it would not have been necessary to specify it with the word 'spring'." Well! For the participants of the expedition and for those who engraved the inscription, naturally, the expedition did not have the glory it later acquired, they could not have known that this will be the expedition about which so much will be written one day. However, beyond the linguistic interpretation, the interpretation of four expeditions raises apparently unsolvable problems, in other words, this interpretation does not bring us nearer to the solution, but makes it even more difficult. Procopius, who published in 551 the seven books of the *Bella,* knows but a single expedition whose description *(hapax de monon tēs poreias arxamenos, opisō authys apekhórēse)* fits fairly well into the situation depicted by the inscription (I should like to point out here that within the expedition two military operations are quite clearly mentioned: *(a)* Abraha fought in Halibān, on the road leading to Hīra and Ktēsiphón, and *(b)* two of his generals fought against Banū ʿĀmir b. Ṣaʿṣaʿa—this latter is probably the one reflected by the Hudhaylite Dīwān and also by Meccan tradition, while the inscription deals mainly with the manoeuvres of Abraha. The paradox in this opposition is that, although up to 550 Abraha repeatedly promised Justinian to attack the Lakhmids, he made up his mind to lead an expedition only once (and this expedition was, according to Procopius, a failure), but after 550 he was seized suddenly by such bellicosity that he decided to lead three more expeditions, of which the recorded fourth would have been the one ending with his victory. However, this is not supported either by the other sources or by the historical situation, so that my final conclusion is quite unambiguously that what can be proved is the influence of the Lakhmids in North Arabia in the forties and fifties of the century and it is almost certain that the expedition mentioned by Procopius, the expedition in the inscription Ry 506, and the War of the Elephant of North Arabic tradition are one and the same event.

[266] See R. Paret, "Note sur un passage de Malalas", 259–262.

[267] Nöldeke, *Die Ghassānischen Fürsten,* 12, emphasizes that the power of the Ghassānids after 529 was greater than that of the former similar political structures.

[268] See n. 108.

269 Malalas, 434–435. Cf. n. 150.

270 Cf. n. 183.

271 According John of Ephesus, 304–305, al-Mundhir b. al-Ḥārith b. Jabala received the crown from Tiberius (578–582): "Notwithstanding (i.e. Tiberius) gave him a royal crown which no Arab chief was permitted to wear, as they were allowed to wear only a simple diadem."

272 Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 17, 1:80. Nöldeke in *Die Ghassānischen Fürsten* (12–13 and 25) has a convincing argument for rejecting Procopius's report. Later Paret ("Note sur un passage de Malalas" 255–257) took the same view. Kawar ("Ghassān and Byzantium", 235–247) is not convincing when he accepts Procopius's report and puts the beginning of the rule of the Ghassānids at the earlier date of 502. According to J. Harmatta's personal communication, Ḥārith's Byzantine rank was that of a patrikios and a phylarkhos, but the Syrian sources call him *malkā* (king). The explanation of the contradiction could be that Justinian permitted Ḥārith to use the title of *malkā* instead of the Byzantine basileus. This explains Procopius's careful wording: *basileós axióma*. On the use of the various titles in case of barbarian tribes that came in contact with Byzantium or were its allies, see Harmatta, "La société des Huns à l'époque d'Attila" (1957). 211–219.

273 According to a passage in Malalas, p. 461, in the battle of Callinicum (April 19, 531) Belisarius led an army of 8,000 soldiers of whom 5,000 were the Arabs of al-Ḥārith.

274 For example, in 528 (Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 17, 1:82; Theophanes, 1:178; in 554 at Qinnesrīn (*Michel le Syrien*, 2:269, 4:323–324); in 570 (Nöldeke, *Die Ghassānischen Fürsten*, 23–24); around 580 (Ṭabarī, 1:1021).

275 Lammens, *Mecque*, 244/340.

276 Paret, "Note sur un passage de Malalas", 262. At the same time we know from Yaʿqūbī (1:135) that they controlled, for example, Dūmat al-Jandal which assumes on their part a certain sphere of influence on the incense-route.

277 *Michel le Syrien*, 2:308–309 (4:347). See also *Chronicon anonymum ad* A.D. *1234 pertinens*, 161–162.

278 John of Ephesus, 236–242; *Michel le Syrien* 2:349–350 (4:373–4); *Chronicon anonymum ad annum 1234 pertinens*. 166. On the fall of the Ghassānids see also Nöldeke, *Die Ghassānischen Fürsten*, 29–31; Devreesse, "Le patriarcat d'Antioche", 276–277.

279 *Michel le Syrien*, 2:305–306 (4:375).

280 Nöldeke, op. cit., 42.

281 For the legendary beginnings of the Lakhmids see Nöldeke, *GPA*, 25 n. 1; also O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 154–155.

282 See the Nemāra inscription from the year 327 (*RES*, I/1–2). From the rich literature on the inscription see mainly Dussaud, *La pénétration des Arabes* (Paris, 1955), 63–68 and 80–81.

283 With respect to this question see Olinder, *The Kings of Kinda*, 92 and 107; Lundin, "Yuzhnaya Aravya v VI. veke", 73. This is supported by the story of Imru'l-Qays, the son of Ḥujr. The latter was killed in the thirties and his son was forced to flee from al-Mundhir to one tribe after another, and was let down by tribes earlier controlled by the Kinda, but which were now afraid of the vengeance of the Lakhmids. See *Aghānī*, 9:90; Abū'l-Fidā', 132.

²⁸⁴ Ṭabarī, 1:958. See almost word for word Ibn al-Athīr, 1:176. In *GPA* (238 n. 4) Nöldeke questions the authenticy of Ṭabarī's report, so does Lammens (*Ṭaif*, 18 n. 1.) Altheim, referring to the information in inscription Ry 506, accepts the report as it is and extends it to the entire 6th century. See Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 143 and 149. It is more than probable that at the end of the thirties the rule of the Lakhmids did not extend to the territories mentioned by Ṭabarī. Probably all the territories which at various times had been under the supremacy of the Lakhmids are included in the report on a single period.

²⁸⁵ On the Ḥārith-Khālid version of names see Nöldeke, *GPA*, 238 n. 3.

²⁸⁶ Ibn Khurdādhib, *Kitāb al Masālik wa'l-mamālik*, BGA 6 (Leyden, 1889): 128.

²⁸⁷ Yāqūt, "Mu'jam", 7:425–426. See the reference concerning Ma'rib in 7:357.

²⁸⁸ Zāra is a place in Bahrayn. According to the sources, the *'āmil* of Bahrayn was a subject of the Lakhmids. See, for example, Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-ma'ārif*, 319: "And wrote (i.e. 'Amr b. Hind for Ṭarafa and al-Mutalammis a letter) to the *'āmil* of Bahrayn." Zāra was conquered by the Muslims in A.H. 12. It is characteristic that it was then defended by the famous *'āmil* of Bahrayn, al-Muka'bir himself (see al-Balādhurī, *Futūh*, 117).

²⁸⁹ L. Horovitz, "Judeo-Arabic relations in preislamic times", *Islamic Culture* 3 (1929):178.

²⁹⁰ See *Aghānī*, 12:7–8.

²⁹¹ *Aghānī*, 12:9.

²⁹² Muharriq ruled according to Nöldeke (*GPA*, 347 n. 1), for four years before Nu'mān. According to the chronology of Smith (op. cit., 430), Mundhir b. Mundhir (Muharriq) ruled between 580 and 583.

²⁹³ *Aghānī*, 12:10. The story in *Aghānī* (15:292–293) is also an evidence of the close and subordinate link between 'Āmir b. Sa'sa'a and the Lakhmids.

²⁹⁴ *Aghānī*, 11:38.

²⁹⁵ Who, in a characteristic way—proving the growing independence of the Arab tribes—was killed by 'Amr. b. Kulthūm, chieftain of Banū Jusham, a branch of the Taghlib tribe which was directly subordinated to Hīra. See *Aghānī*, 11:47–48; Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb ash-shi'r wa'sh-shu'arā*, (ed. de Goeje) (Leyden, 1904), 117–119.

²⁹⁶ IH, 1:62. See also Ṭabarī, 1:946.

²⁹⁷ See correctly in Kister, "Mecca and Tamīm", 113–115.

²⁹⁸ See Nöldeke, *GPA*, 332 n. 1.

²⁹⁹ See also *Aghānī*, 17:283; Ṭabarī, 1:2677; Alūsī, 2:175. See also Afghānī, *Aswāq al-'arab*, 374–382; Lammens, *Mecque*, 244–246.

³⁰⁰ Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 1. Vasiliev, *Justin, the First*, 274–275. The author is clearly aware of the fact that the war for the otherwise barren territories was obviously waged for commercial reasons.

[1] A number of passages in the *Koran* refer to Mecca. They describe the city as lying in a valley where no cereal can be grown (14/37) and food has to be imported (2/126; 14/37; 16/112: 28/57). This last statement is emphasized also by al-Ya'qūbī—referring to the entire Hijāz: "And not like Ḥijāz, where life is hard and incomes poor, where the food of the population comes from elsewhere." See al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Boldān*, BGA (Leyden, 1906), 236. See also al-Maqdisī (al-Mokkadasī), *Descriptio Imperii Moslemici* (Leyden, 1876), 95: "At the *ḥaram* (i.e. on the territory of Mecca) heat is excrutiating, the wind brings death and there are innumerable flies and there is but little fruit except in the Sarāts." About the mountain range of Sarāt see Lammens, *Ṭāif*, 18–19. We know that only Mu'āwīya planted cereals and palm-trees around Mecca, at a tremendous cost and only for a short time. (Lammens, *Mecque*, 91 [187] and *Études sur la règne du calife Omeiyade Mo'awia I-*, MFO 1–3 [1906–1908]: 135). For a description of Meccan conditions, a passage in the Sīra is extremely informative when it tells that on the occasion of one of their visits, the noble Meccans say to Muḥammad: "Certainly you too know it well that there is no other people whose territory is so needy, which has so little water and for whom food is so hard to get, as we are." (IH, 1:296. See also al-Wāḥidī, *Asbāb an-nuzūl* [Cairo, 1959], 169, for verse 17/90 of the Koran). It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 8th century the Negro poet, al-Ḥayqaṭān, wrote a description about Mecca in which we can discover traces of a developed topos:

> "Neither in the winter nor in the summer is it worth to live there,
> There are no waters like Ghuwāthā springing there
> The eye will search in vain for green meadows,
> Trading alone, which gives birth to disdain, is capable to survive"

See al-Jāḥiẓ, *Majmū'a rasā'il* (Cairo, 1906), 57.

[2] al-Bekri, *Mu'jam*, 58.

[3] an-Nuwayrī, *Nihāya al-arab fī funūn al-'arab*, 16 (Cairo, 1955):30–31: "There was a swampy bush *(ghayḍa)* around the sanctuary, because the flood used to overflow it and at that time the sanctuary had not yet been built *(wa-lam yurfa' al-bayt ḥīna'idhin)*. And when the pilgrims arrived they stamped (the soil around the sanctuary) to eradicate the bush, but when they were gone it grew (again) *(fa-idhā kharajū nabatat)*. He said: when finally the Quṣaiy arrived they cut out the bush and built a house around the sanctuary *(falmmā qadima Quṣaiy qata'a'l ghayḍa wa'btanā ḥawla' l-bayt dāran)*".

[4] On the basis of the Koran 3/96–97; 2/125–127; 14/35–37.

[5] See al-Bekri, 58; an-Nuwayrī, 16:30–31; and also al-Alūsī, *Bulūgh al-arab fī ma'rifa aḥwāl al-'arab*, 1:235. The increasingly symbolic activity of Quṣaiy became in Meccan tradition, the basis of the organization of the heterogeneous Qurayshite elements into a tribe and this regulating principle more and more meant just as much the fictive blood relation as the common occupation. M. Hartmann has already quite clearly recognized the fictive basis of blood relations of the Quraysh ("Mischung von Sippen") and the real basis of economic activity: "Der Stamm, den die Bevölkerung Mekkas darstellt, ist ein reiner Händlerstamm." (*Die arabische Frage*, 451). O'Leary too says: "Mecca was rather a collection of tribal camps than a city in the ordinary sense, but all joined together in a confederacy for the purpose of carrying on trade..." (*Arabia before Muhammad*, 183). The composition of Quraysh of heterogeneous elements is indicated by two phenomena, which up to now have not been properly interpreted. One is the existence of the Quraysh al-Biṭāḥ (Qurayshites with full

rights living in the inner area of Mecca) and of the Quraysh az-Zawāhir (living in the outskirts of Mecca and enjoying only limited rights (see e.g. Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 39–40; Ibn Saʿd, I/1:40; Ibn Rashīq, *ʿUmda*, 2 [Cairo, 1955]: 193. Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, 3:119–120). The truth is not what Lammens claims, namely, that the Quraysh az-Zawāhir represented a heterogeneous "proletariat" (sic! *Mecque*, 80/176) of the homogeneous Quraysh al-Bitāh, but that both groups were heterogeneous, perhaps with the difference that the Quraysh az-Zawāhir contained elements which joined the tribe later. The other is the often disputed problem of the name. Of the great number and extremely artificial interpretations let us mention a few: e.g. Azraqī, 1:61, reports a Bedouin satire attributed later to a Yemenite king, "The *quraish* (i.e. the sword-fish) is that which lives in the sea—it gave its name to the Quraysh—and like the *quraysh* in the sea, the tribe of the Quraysh on earth devours the land with the hissing of snakes." See the interpretation "sword-fish" also in Ṭabarī, 1:1104, and Baydāwi *Tafsīr*, 811. This completely unfounded totemistic explanation is already accepted by Lammens (*Mecque*, 146/238) and *Ṭāif*, 98/210, only in a figurative sense. One of the two most acceptable and interconnected traditions explains the origin of the name of Quraysh *(a)* with the congregation of people (coming from various places) (*taqarrush–tajammuʿ:* IH, 1:94; Ibn Saʿd, I/1/38; Ṭabarī, 1:1104), and *(b)* with trade (*taqarrush–tijāra:* IH, 1:93; al-Jāhiz, *Majmūʿa rasāʾil* (Cairo, A.H. 1324 [A.D. 1906]): 156; and so both traditions clearly refer to the heterogeneity of Quraysh as being a congregation of a common economic activity.

⁶ See Lammens, *Mecque*, 52/148. The same idea is expressed by J. Chelhod in his *Introduction à la sociologie de l'Islam*, 109. This promising work brought little that was new and repeated many old misconceptions. Fr. Buhl in his book, *Das Leben Muhammeds*, 106, also supposes a pre-Quraysh Mecca as a city, though a few pages before (p. 103) he refers to al-Bekri's passage and mentions the role of commerce in the developement of Mecca into a city.

⁷ Wellhausen in his work, *Reste arabischen Heidentums* (Berlin–Leipzig, 1927²), 93–94, already points out that Mecca was turned into a city by the Quraysh. See also Caetani, *Annali*, 1:73 and 103. Nöldeke in his review of Caetani's book also accepts the historic existence of Quṣaiy ("Annali dell' Islam", *WZKM*, 21 [1907] 302 n. 1). O'Leary (*Arabia before Muhammad*, 182–183 also emphasizes the role of commerce in the development of Mecca into a city, as a transit station of trade.

⁸ See e.g. Caetani, *Annali*, 1:73–74; Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 13, by accepting Ibn Qutayba's famous report on the link between Quṣay and the Byzantine emperor, that is, the Ghassānid's (*Kitāb al-maʿarif*, 313), says that "Quṣay's conquests of Mecca was probably bound up with the development of trade between Mecca and Syria."

⁹ Apart from the "foundation of the city", the sources report only about the organization of pilgrimages (IH, 1:124–130; Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb aṭ-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, I/1:41; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 52; Ṭabarī, 1:1099.

¹⁰ See Abū Hilāl al-Askarī, *Kitāb al-awāʾil*. Manuscript (Cairo, Dār al-Kutub, Taʾrīkh 2772), fol. 7; see also al-Alūsī, 1:247.

¹¹ Hamza al-Iṣfahānī, 145. The same passage places ʿAbd Manāf into the era of Qubād b. Fīrūz (488 to 531). Another Hamza passage (p. 133), however, makes Quṣaiy, Fīrūz b. Yazdajird, and Dhū Nuwās contemporaries. This is obviously impossible, since Dhū Nuwās started to rule in 517.

¹² Ibn Qutayba, *Kitāb al-maʿarif*, 313. See next al-Alūsī, 2:173.

[13] Lammens, *Mecque*, 296–297 (365–366); Hamidullah, "The city-state of Mecca", 256 and 261; Watt, *Mecca*, 13.

[14] Lammens, *Mecque*, 53/149 puts the date into the last quarter of the 5th century. Watt (*Mecca*, 5) accepts Ibn Isḥāq's report on Quṣaiy without a more accurate dating.

[15] IH, 1:123–124; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 49–50; Ibn Saʿd, I/1:38; Ṭabarī, 1:1104.

[16] The existence of animal husbandry, first as the principal, later, with the increase of trade, as a secondary economic activity, is indicated in Arabic tradition in the episode of ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib and Abraha. This episode, the details of which are legendary, but which as a whole is extremely informative, tells us that Muḥammad's grandfather—only 23 years before Muḥammad's birth—asked Abraha to return to him his two hundred camels. IH, 1:49–50, Ṭabarī, 1:938–939; al-Masʿūdi, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 3:260.

[17] This has already been noticed by earlier research. See e.g. Wellhausen, *Reste*, 87; Snouck-Hurgronje, *Islam. Œuvres choisies* (Leyden, 1957), 179 and 181.

[18] 2/198.

[19] al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkata*, 1:121–122: "And when the time of the pilgrimage came in the month called Dhū'l-Ḥijja, people went to their places of pilgrimage (markets). And they go on the morning of the first day of Dhū'l-Qaʿda to ʿUkāẓ and spend there twenty days. At that time their market is in ʿUkāẓ and people go to invitations (for feasting) and to their flags at their quarters (which) are kept by the nobles and chieftains of every tribe. And one visits the other to sell and to buy and they meet within the place of the market. And when the twenty days have passed they go to Majanna where they set up a market for ten days uninterrupted. And when they saw the new moon of Dhū'l-Ḥijja they went to Dhū'l-Majāz and organized a market there for eight days without interruption. Then on the day of *at-tarwīya* (that is, when leaving for ʿArafa and al-Muhdalifa where there is no water, they take enough water from Dhū'l-Majāz) they go from Dhū'l-Majāz to ʿArafa . . . and their last market was on the day of *at-tarwīya*. And at these places of pilgrimage/market in ʿUkāẓ, Majanna and Dhū'l-Majāz those tradesmen used to appear who wanted to trade and those who did not wish either to sell or to trade could leave their tribe whenever they liked."

[20] About the places of markets see al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:135; al-Azraqī, 1:124; al-Marzūqī, *Kitāb al-azmina wa l-amkina*, 2:161–170. For a detailed characterization of pre-Islamic market-places see Saʿīd al-Afghānī, *Aswāq*, 232–389.

[21] See Polányi's appropriate term in *Dahomey és a rabszolgakereskedelem. Egy archaikus gazdaság elemzése* (Dahomey and Slave Trade. An Analysis of an Archaic Economy) (Budapest, 1972), 48.

[22] al-Marzūqī, 2:116: "And the nobles of the Arabs, together with the tradesmen, used to visit these markets, for the kings used to give to the nobles—to all nobles—part of the profit. And the nobles of every region used to appear at the market of their own region, with the exception of ʿUkāẓ since this was visited from everywhere."

[23] See al-Azraqī, 1:124: "this is in fact the market of Quys ʿAylān and of Thaqīf" *(wa-hiya sūq li-Qays ʿAylān wa-Thaqīf); Aghānī*, 22:64: "there are the palm groves and possessions of Thaqīf" *(wa bi-hā nakhl wa-amwāl li-Thaqīf)*. This might be contradicted by al-Marzūqī, 2:167, who claims that *amr al-mawsim* (control over the place of the market/pilgrimage) and *qadā ʿUkāẓ* (the arbitration over ʿUkāẓ) had been in the hands of the Banū Tamīm. See also Ḥassān b. Thābit, 385 (where however the greatest glory: *ridāfatunā ʿinda'ḥtiḍār al-mawāsim*

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referred probably not to the past but—as also understood by al-Barqūqī, the editor of the *dīwān*—to the future, after the conversion to the Islam), Kister ("Mecca and Tamīm", 146) draws from some passages the conclusion that "Tamīm was invested with the *ifāda* in Mecca itself and with the control of the market of ʿUkāẓ". In our opinion, the role of Tamīm, as it appears from the sources, does not in the least mean control over ʿUkāẓ. The question is finally decided by the evidence of the Ḥarb al Fijār. Although this famous war meant, as a matter of fact, the elimination from trade of the Lakhmids as well as of the Hawāzin and Thaqif who acted as guides of their caravans, the Quraysh was capable of acquiring control over ʿUkāẓ just by defeating the Hawāzin tribes. On the war see IH, 1:184–187; Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:80–81; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 100–103; *Aghānī*, 22:63–4.

[24] Already Wellhausen (*Reste*, 84–85) opposes the views which attribute to pre-Islamic Mecca too great a role as a place of pilgrimage.

[25] See al-Qālī, *al-Amālī*, 3:199: "And strangers used to come to them (i.e. to the Quraysh) with goods and they buy them, then they barter among themselves and sell the goods to the Arabs living around them." Abū Hilāl al-Askarī (*Kitāb al-awāʾil*, fol. 8) quotes the data of the same authors (al-ʿUtbī and Muḥ. b. Sallām) who passed on the tradition.

[26] ath-Thaʿālibī, *Thimār al-qulūb*, 89. This passage is quoted by Aswāq, 149.

[27] See Kister ("Mecca and Tamīm", 132–133) who was the first to point out in his excellent and convincing analysis of *ḥums*, its close intertwining with trade (see the interpretation of the location of the tribes belonging to *ḥums* [p. 134] and also the link between religious "colouring" and its true role [p. 141]). Before Kister, research considered *ḥums* as a purely religious institution without in the least understanding its true importance. See e.g. Wellhausen, *Reste*, 85–86; Caetani: *Annali*, 1:148; van Arendonk, *EI¹*, s.v. *ḥums*, 2 (1927):355–356. More recently, not even Watt has gone beyond the traditional concept, therefore, he too describes *ḥums* as a purely religious institution (*EI²*, 3 (1967):577a–578b).

[28] 29/67.

[29] See on *ḥums* IH, 1:199–203, Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:41; al-Azraqī, 1:113–115; Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishtiqāq*, 250. Islam's rejecting attitude to *ḥums* appears in the Koran, 2/189; 199 7/31.

[30] The most detailed list can be found in al-Azraqī, 1:115: Quraysh, Kināna, Khuzāʿa, al-Aws, al-Khazraj, Jusham, Banū ʿĀmir b. Saʿsaʿa, Ghaṭafān, al-Ghawth, ʿAdwān, ʿIlāf, Quḍāʿa.

[31] Jawād ʿAlī stresses very correctly (*Taʾrīkh al-ʿarab qabl al-islām*, 5 (Baghdad, 1956): 228 that the members of the alliance were obliged to remain loyal to the *taḥammus* not only during the pilgrimage but throughout the year. When assessing the institution of *ḥums*, it is of fundamental importance that it offered the possibility of unlimited and unconditional exogamy for the Quraysh. We know that among the Bedouin tribes endogamy was either obligatory or voluntary, see W. Dostal, "The evolution of Bedouin life", in *L'antica società beduina*, 12–13. The institution of *ḥums* amphictyony made it possible to the Quraysh to strengthen the alliance by marriage. See al-Azraqī, 1:115; Yāqūt, *Kitāb Muʿjam al-buldān*, 8 (Cairo, 1906): 138; Alūsī, 1:243.

[32] See Kister, "Mecca and Tamīm", 134.

[33] For detailed description of the customs see Snouck-Hurgronje, 181 n. 1; Caetani, *Annali*, 1:148–149; van Arendonk *(EI¹)*; Watt *(EI²)*; Jawād ʿAlī, 5:227. Wellhausen is right when he attributes a nomadic origin to the cultic ceremony of *ḥums* (*Reste*, 86): "Es ist eine

Art nomadischer Sabbatsfeier, eine Enthaltung von den Arbeiten des Hirtenlebens, die schwerlich grade in Mekka ihren Ursprung hatte."

[34] The passage in Ibn Isḥāq (IH, 1:199) expresses the inseparable link between *hums* and permanent settlement: "We are the *hums*, and *hums* is the people of the sanctuary *(naḥnu'l-ḥums wa-l-ḥums ahl al-ḥaram)*.

[35] IH, 1:199.

[36] al-Azraqī, 1:113.

[37] Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān* 30 (Cairo, A.H. 1321 [A.D. 1903]); 170. One tradition refers to linguists from Baṣra, another to Ibn Zayd.

[38] See Jeffery, *Materials for the history of the text of the Qurʾan* (Leyden, 1937), 179. About Ubaiy who was Muḥammad's secretary in Medina (died in A.H. 29 or 34) see Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorans,* 2:28; Jeffery, op. cit., 114. On the indecision of research as to the relatedness of the two *sūras*, see Paret, *Der Koran. Kommentar und Konkordanz,* 523. My own more detailed point of view is to be found in R. Simon, *A Korán világa* (The World of the Koran), 410–411.

[39] Lammens, "La république marchande de la Mecque vers l'an 600 de notre ère", *Bulletin de l'institut égyptien,* 5th ser. 3/2:1909. On pages 26–27 the author fully accepts the tradition, but later in *La Mecque* (32–33/128–129) he restricts his statement by claiming the *īlāf*s were concluded not directly with the sovereigns, but with the *ʿaẓīm*s of Buṣrā or Baḥrayn. Lammens also doubts the existence of Hāshim and his brothers, but thinks that they were invented for the greater glory of certain clans (p. 24/120). The inconsistency of research is shown by Caetani's attitude who, although he links trade with the Quṣaiy (*Annali,* 1:73–74), he nevertheless tells the *īlāf* story of Hāshim and his brothers without reservation (p. 110), but adds that the *sūra* 106 might be the basis of this tradition (loc. cit.). M. Hamidullah's article, "al-Īlāf ou les rapports économico-diplomatiques de la Mecque pré-islamique", 292–311, is a particularly characteristic example of accepting tradition without criticism but with eclecticism. More recently, even Kister has accepted in his, from many aspects pioneer study, "Mecca and Tamīm", 116–118, the traditional *īlāf* story.

[40] Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:45.

[41] al-Qālī, 3:199–200.

[42] See e.g. Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:43; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb,* 59; Ṭabarī, 1:1089; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-Muḥabbar* (ed. E. Lichtenstätter) (Heyderadad, 1942), 162–164; al-Qālī, 3:200.

[43] See IH, 1:136 *(kāna Hāshim fī-mā yazʿumūna awwala man sanna ar-riḥlatayni li-Quraysh: riḥlatay ash-shitāʾwa'ṣ-ṣayf)*, Ibn Saʿd, loc. cit.; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb,* loc. cit.; Ṭabarī, loc. cit.; an-Nuwayrī, 16:36.

[44] As e.g. in Ṭabarī, $1:1089_{4-6}$ the first layer can be considered the kernel of tradition (introduced in a characteristic way with *dhukira*—as mentioned); 1089_{11-17}, the second layer (from the two al-Kalbī-s!). After this, the two layers appear together in most cases.

[45] Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:45: *ḥilf* (the same: an-Nuwayrī, loc. cit.: al-Balādhurī, loc. cit.: *ʿiṣma* and *ḥabl;* al-Qālī, loc. cit.: *ʿahd)*.

[46] Lammens, *Mecque,* 32 (128). On the character of the contacts on the Byzantine limes, see O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad,* 161–162.

[47] Nöldeke has already noted in the *Geschichte des Qorans* (Leipzig, 1909), (1:91. n. 3) when interpreting the *sūra* 106: "Dass diese beiden Karawanen erst von Hāshim eingerichtet seien, ist wie so manches zur Ehre Muhammeds Vorfahren Erzählte sicher unrichtig." See on this question also Lammens, *Mecque*, 24 (120); 35 (131); 227 (323).

[48] An evidence that the tradesmen were probably Yemenites and not Abyssinians can be found in Kister, "The campaign of Ḥulābān", 432.

[49] al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MS, fol. 811. The text is quoted by Kister in "The campaign of Ḥulābān", 429–30.

[50] al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, MS, fol. 1139. According to Kister ("The campaign of Ḥulābān", 429), the Thaqīf living in Ṭā'if too had to send hostages to Abraha.

[51] The abstract interpretation of the traditional representation, namely, the alliance against "injustice" has been accepted up to quite recently. See e.g. Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammeds*, 108; Sa'īd al-Afghānī, *Aswāq*, 181–190. Lately, Watt (*Mecca*, 6 and 15) has tried to give a new explication of the alliance, and interpreted Ḥilf al-Fuḍūl quite convincingly as an alliance of the poorer clans which were ousted from independent trade and were interested in the activities of Yemenite tradesmen.

[52] According to the most probable version of *Aghānī*, 17:210, a member of Banū Sahm caused the damage to the Yemenite tradesman: after having bought his goods, "he was reluctant to pay what he owed him and the (Yemenite) asked that his goods be given back, but he refused to do so." This version was also accepted by al-Alūsī, 1:275. For the other versions see *Aghānī*, 17:210–211; al-Ya'qūbī, *Tarīkh*, 2:16–17.

[53] See e.g. *Aghānī*, 15:18–19; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 61; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 209.

[54] According to one tradition, at the time of this event Muhammad was twenty years old (Ibn Sa'd, 1/1:82), according to another one, he was over twenty (al-Ya'qūbī, *Tarīkh*, (2:16) or was twenty-five (*Aghānī*, 17:212, 214–215).

[55] Koran, 10/22, 11/43, 24/40, 31/32, etc. They provide excellent proof, e.g., that the Arabic technical terms of navigation are mainly loan-words from the Ethiopian (see Fränkel, *Die aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen* [Hildesheim, 1962], 210–214). For the Bedouins' dread of the sea, see the funny and very characteristic poem in Nöldeke's *Delectus veterum carminum arabicorum* (Berlin, 1933), 62. See on this question W. Bartold, "Der Koran und das Meer", *ZDMG* 83 (1929): 37–43; T. A. Shumovskiy, *Araby i more* (Moscow, 1964), 94–96, and mainly W. Hoenerbach, *Araber und Mittelmeer. Anfänge und Probleme arabischer Seegeschichte*, 60. *Doğum yılı münasebetiyle Zeki Validi Togan'a Armağan* (Istanbul, 1950–1955), 381.

[56] See Chap. 1, n. 35, as well as Lammens, *L'Arabie occidentale avant l'Hégire*, 15. For the navigability of the Red Sea see Procopius, Book 1, Chap. 19 (1:101). An *argumentum ex silentio* for the lack of pre-Islamic Arab navigation is the report about the Abyssinian *hijra* of the Muslims (Ibn Sa'd, 1/1/136; Ṭabarī, 1:1182–3; an-Nuwayrī, 16:232).

[57] al-Azraqī, 1:101; Quṭb ad-Dīn, *al-I'lām bi-a'lām bayt Allāh: Die Chroniken der Stadt Mekka* (ed. F. Wüstenfeld), 3 (Leipzig, 1859): 50; Ṭabarī, 1:1135.

[58] al-Muṣ'ab az-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh* (Cairo, 1953), 209–210; al-Fāsī, *Die Chroniken der Stadt Mekka* (ed. F. Wüstenfeld), 3 (Leipzig, 1859), 143–144; IH, 1:224. See on this problem Lammens, *Mecque*, 270–279 (366–375); Watt, *Mecca*, 15–16.

[59] This is mentioned also by our source: al-Fāsī, 2:143. (Uthmān said to the emperor: "And he said: your reign will increase in wealth, just as Kisrā subjected to his reign Ṣanʿāʾ (i.e. Yemen)": *wa-qāla: takūnu ziyāda fī mulki-ka kamā malaka Kisrā Ṣanʿā*) See also Lammens, *Mecque*, 273–275 (369–371), and Watt, *Mecca*, 15.

[60] al-Fāsī, loc. cit.

[61] al-Muṣʿab az-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 210.

[62] *Aghānī*, 22:69, claims that ʿUthmān b. al-Huwayrith was still taking part in the Ḥarb al-Fijār.

[63] It appears from the sources describing the famous war that in the nineties caravans still arrived regularly from Ḥira to ʿUkāẓ: "Nuʿmān used to send every year (incense-transporting) caravans to ʿUkāẓ and none of Arabs used to attack them." (al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:14; see also IH, 1:181; Ibn Saʿd, 1/1:80; *Aghānī*, 22:64. The war—which was provoked by the Quraysh—was very violent and lasted four years. (*Aghānī*, 22:60) and though it was a war between the Quraysh and the Qays ʿAylān, it was in fact this war by which Mecca eliminated the last internal and external middlemen and obtained supremacy over the transit mediating trade the Arabian peninsula.

[64] *Aghānī*, 13:207.

[65] See *Aghānī*, 17:283, where we can observe the organization of Meccan trade closely in the process of being organized: the profit of the trade on the road to Ḥira was given by an-Nuʿmān b. al-Mundhir to the Ṭayyiʾ and al-Ḥakam b. al-ʿĀsī on his way to Ḥira asked them for protection. See also *Aghānī*, 6:323; al-Muṣʿab az-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, 136.

Chapter 3

[1] Only recently H. Ecsedy has proved in the case of a typically nomadic people—the Turks—that trade is inseparable from war. See Ecsedy, "Trade-and-war relations between the Turks and China in the second half of the 6th century", *AO(H)* 29 (1968): 131–180 (particularly 139–142 and 147–149).

[2] See Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (Berlin, 1951), 391. See also Hobbes's fine philosophical analysis, the *Leviathan* (New York, 1963) 143; further notes to this question by Sahlins in the chapter on tribes in Service, Sahlins, Wolf, *Vadászok, törzsek, parasztok* (Hunters, Tribes, Peasants). In Hungarian. (Budapest, 1973), 143–157.

[3] Using Lammens's anachronistic expressions: "La razzia était la vie, l'industrie nationale de la Sarracène." (*L'Arabie occidentale*, 190–191/241) and "voilà comment le brigandage de la razzia avait été élevé à la hauteur d'une institution nationale." (*Le berceau de l'Islam*, 159). Abū l Faraj al-Iṣfahānī has collected in a special work the 1,700 most famous squirmishes accompanying or following the plunders (see Alūsī, 2:68). The continuity of the cause of razzias (deterioration of natural conditions) led logically from plunders to exodus and migration and expansion. For broader relations of this problem see Dussaud, *La pénétration des Arabes*, and also *EI²*, s.v. *al-ʿArab:* "The expansion of the Arabs: General and the 'Fertile Crescent' " (Caskel).

[4] The Lakhmids took hostages from among the conquered Arab tribes and exchanged the hostages every year. The tribes were also compelled to send armed men to the "king of the

Arabs" *(malik al-ʿarab)*. These formed the famous *Dawsar* unit of the Lakhmid army. For the organization of the army of the Lakhmids, see Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 117–123, and also Kister, *al-Ḥīra*, 165–167.

⁵ We shall mention only briefly the problem of the military organization of the Quraysh. In 1916 Lammens came forth with a scientifically utterly unfounded theory about the "Negro mercenary army" of the Quraysh, the arbitrarily interpreted Aḥābīsh, "Les ʿAḥābīsh' et l'organisation militaire de la Mecque au siècle de l'Hégire", *JA* (1916), 425–482. This hypothesis has been accepted by several researchers, such as O'Leary (in *Arabia before Muhammad*, 184) and Guidi (in *Storia e cultura degli Arabi*, 155), but has been rejected by Watt (*Mecca*, 154–157) on the basis of the analysis of the sources (for the sources see also al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 52). Watt's main conclusions were: *(a)* there is nothing to prove that the Aḥābīsh were not Arabs; *(b)* they lived together in a looser tribal organization made up of various elements and could have been the allies of the Quraysh; *(c)* their role in the military organization of the Quraysh was not important. The Quraysh did not in fact represent an important military force (typically enough in the Meccan Abraha-tradition the Quraysh did not try to resist. It is also interesting that in the long-lasting war of Ḥarb al-Fijār against the Hawāzin tribes, a war which consisted of five *yawm*s (days) and was fought in accordance with the size and rules of tribal wars, was won by the Quraysh only with great difficulty). At the same time, the Quraysh could arm 950 men, as it did for the battle of Badr (see Ṭabarī, 1:1358; Ibn Saʿd, 2/1:9; Yaʿqūbī, 2:45; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 44, though it is characteristic of the tribal organization that two clans, the Banū Zuhra and later the Banū ʿAdī changed their minds on the way and returned home with about 250–350 men), on the other hand, by acquiring various allies, for instance in the course of the famous "war of Trench" during the siege of Medina (in 627), they were able to recruit in addition to 4,000 Meccans, 6,000 allies (IH, 2:219; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 191; Ṭabarī, 1:1470). The important fact, however, is the absence of tribal wars after Ḥarb al-Fijār (in the last decade of the 6th century) up to the clash with the Muslims. During this period the Meccans were ready to maintain peaceful trade at all costs. After Muhammad had built up his armoured cavalry (see Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 123–128) and created the economic basis for the organization of the army after the occupation of Khaybar and the other North Arabian oases, the particular tribal military organization (together with the possible tribal alliance system) could no longer be considered a serious opponent and the Meccans were quick to draw this conclusion; they were unable to ensure their necessarily peaceful trade by means of an efficient army.

⁶ This property is the famous *hilm* (see Lammens, *Mecque*, 81 (177); Watt, *Mecca*, 11) which in the given situation was indeed the forced, goal-determined attitude of the Quraysh to preserve the conditions for the maintenance of the labile peace.

⁷ See Wellhausen, *Reste*, 85.

⁸ The closely linked economic interests appear quite clearly from a passage of Jāḥiz, *Rasāʾil*, ed. H. ash-Shandūbī (Cairo, 1933), 70: "And he made the chieftains of the Bedouins partners in trade... and provided them with profits" *(wa-sharika fī tijārati-hī ruʾasāʾ al-ʿarab... wa-jaʿala la-hum ribhan)*.

⁹ When after the battle of Badr Muhammad succeeded in gaining the support of a number of tribes and raised almost unsurmountable obstacles in the way of the Quraysh trade towards Syria (al-Wāqidī characterized the effect of the situation on the Quraysh with reference to Usāma b. Zaid and to his family as follows: "The Quraysh took great care not to use the Syrian route as they feared Allah's prophet (may Allah bless and keep him!) and his

companions though (the Quraysh) were a trading people *(wa-kānū qawman tujjar^an)*. And said (then) Ṣafwān b. Umaiya: Muḥammad and his companions have made our trade impossible *(qad 'awwarū 'alay-nā matjara-nā)* and we do not know what to do with his companions who are not leaving the coast and Muḥammad has come to an agreement with those who live there and their majority is hand in glove with him. We, on the other hand, do not know where to travel, because if we stay on we shall eat up our (commercial) fortune *(wa-in aqamnā na'kulu ru'ūsa amwāli-nā)*. See al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzi* I (London, 1966): 197, and *Aghānī*, 17:243. Later they led a caravan through Najd which was, however, captured by Muḥammad's men led by Zayd b. Ḥāritha (see IH, 2:50; al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzi*, 1:197–198; Ṭabarī, 1:1374; *Aghānī*, 17:243). Muḥammad's action proved the impossibility and realized the breakdown of peaceful trade.

[10] See al-Marzūqī, 2:161, according to whom, markets held at any other time than the holy months could be approached and left only with armoured guards: "And these were the markets held during the holy months and at no other time. And there are markets held at other times but the holy months, but these are not reached by anybody only if they are accompanied by armoured guards and can return only with them *(lā yaṣilu ahad^un ilay-hā illā bi-khafīr^in wa-lā yarji'u illā bi-khafīr^in)*. Of course, the *treuga dei* obligatory during the holy months was a *desiderium pium* implemented only rarely. Some of the tribes either ignored it, or helped themselves just by means of the intercalation (see Sa'īd al-Afghāni, *Aswāq*, 80–81). An important passage in al-Qālī's *al-Amālī* (1:4) touches upon the truth: "(The Bedouin tribes) did not like to be burdened by three successive (holy) months (the months Dhū'l-Qa'da, Dhū'l-Ḥijja and al-Muḥarram) when plunder was forbidden since plunder was the basis of their livelihood *(li-anna ma'āsha-hum kāna min al-ighāra)*." According to Procopius's report (Book 2, Chap. 16 [2:224]), during the holy months—of which there are, according to him, in most cases two *(dyo malista mēnas)*—they do not invade foreign territories. Nonnosus claims (CSHB, 480) that at such times (as he put it: *meta therinas tropas* or after the summer solistice) there is complete peace during the feasts *(en tautais, fesi, tais panēgyresin pasan agusin eirēnēn)*. It is well known that the sources, following the 9/2, 36 verses of the Koran, talk about four holy months (in addition to the three already mentioned; the seventh month, Rajab was also considered a holy month). At the same time, other passages in the Koran (2/194, 217; 5/2, 97) mention only a single holy month. Watt (*Medina*, 8) suggests that the customs were different in the different territories, and the four holy months are referring to an overall situation.

[11] See also IH, 1:43–45; al-Azraqī, 1:118–120; Alūsī, 3:70–76. For the pre-Islamic use of Arabian months which still raises a number of problems, see Jawād 'Alī, *Ta'rīkh al-'arab qabl al-islām*, 5:236–242. The names of some of the months make it almost certain (see e.g. Alūsī, 3:78) that before Islam the solar year was the basis of calculations and only Islam introduced the moon-months (see Jawād 'Alī, 5:238 and 242). The extremely arbitrary determination of the durations of the months led to the institution of *nasī'*. The intercalation was usually announced at the end of the Meccan pilgrimage (that is, at the end of *Dhū'l-Ḥijja*). Its aim was the preservation of the number of holy months which for some reason had been missed. In this way the number of months in a year could sometimes reach even 14. For the ritual text of intercalation see Alūsī, 3:73. Muḥammad cancelled the institution of *nasī'* which functioned as a modus vivendi of tribal particularity (Koran, 9/37), consolidated the number of months and thus the calendar itself.

[12] The author expresses his gratitude to K. Polányi as he owes much to his work in studying the peculiarities of Meccan trade.

¹³ See, for example, Lammens, *Ṭāif* (95/207): "La plaine de ʿOkāz abritait le principal marché, le mieux fréquenté, après la Mecque, dans l'Arabie occidentale", and *L'Arabie occidentale*, 12: "Dans l'Arabie occidentale, la Mecque était devenue un des plus importants marchés d'esclaves." (The persistence of Lammens's claims can be discovered in Chelhod, *Le sacrifice chez les Arabes* [Paris, 1955], 145–146 and *Introduction*, 76). The effacement of this difference appears already in Wellhausen, *Reste*, 91, when he declares: "Zu den Märkten des Hagg kann man mit gewissem Rechte auch Mekka rechnen." It should be mentioned only briefly that the study of the commercial links between Byzantium and Sassanian Iran has brought some results only in the last few decades, though mainly with respect to Byzantium, and here too primarily as far as trading in silk and its state organization are concerned (see Wada, *Prokops Rätselwort*, 38–42, with ample bibliography, and Harmatta, "To the ancient history of Yemen", particularly p. 185). However, in the majority of works no distinction is made between the state's trade in luxury goods and the barter trade of isolated markets. See, for example Piguļevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien*, 61–69, or by the same author, *Les villes de l'état iranien* (Paris—The Hague, 1963), 175–181.

¹⁴ It is typical that in the draft-like collection of reports on markets by al-Afghānī *(Aswāq al-ʿarab)* the trade of the Quraysh is also mentioned (91–191). It appears quite clearly from the sources that Mecca is not a *sūq* and is therefore—at least formally—treated separately. It is characteristic of the author's blurred conception of markets that wherever the sources mention some product, he suspects the presence of a market. Although al-Afghānī's work lacks all criticism, and is philologically inaccurate and theoretically unfounded, it is often mentioned in the pertaining literature, probably only because no work of high standard which has summarized the subject is available. The summaries in the first edition of the *Enzyklopaedia des Islam* (s.v. *Mawsim*, 3 [1936]: 40: A. J. Wensinck; s.v. *Tiǧara*, 4 [1934]: 808–813: Heffening) cannot be used. Heffening himself is of the same opinion and his assessment of the fact is still valid, particularly with respect to the pre-Islamic and the early Islamic period: "Eine Handelsgeschichte der islamischen Länder zu schreiben, ist hier nicht der Ort, zumal die dazu erforderlichen Einzeluntersuchungen fast völlig fehlen." (p. 808)

¹⁵ From the philological aspect perhaps these parts of Lammens's work are the most worthless: Chapter 2: la Mecque: routes commerciales, 20–31 (116–126); Chapter 3: Accords diplomatiques et commerciaux, 31–49 (127–145); Chapter 15: Les Qoraishites, le Bas-Empire et l'Ethiopie, 267–295 (363–391).

¹⁶ See mainly the first two chapters of Lammens's *Mecque*, 7–30 (104–126). In describing Mecca, the author often draws a parallel between it and Palmyra (see Table analytique). Lammens's opinion was accepted among others also by Chelhod (*Introduction*, 55).

¹⁷ The most important sources are: Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-Muḥabbar*, 263–267; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:226–227; al-Marzūqī, 161–170; Qalqashandī, *Subḥ al-Aʿshā*, 1:410–411; al-Alūsī, 1:264–270; see also particularly al-Hamdānī, al-Bekri, and Yāqūt whose data on local history are fundamental for assessing the ecological conditions of actual contacts on the market places. In some of the enumerations the number of markets varies between eight and seventeen. The tables of *Aswāq* (217–224, 226–227) showing certain sources, the times and "masters" of the markets, are not without value, but the parameters which he considers important *(a)* are not enough to allow a differentiation and *(b)* are misleading as they suppose an interconnected system of markets which mutually supplement one another.

¹⁸ *Aswāq*, 212–213.

[19] See on this question Polányi, *Dahomey*, 115–125; idem, "Aristotle discovers the economy", in *Essays*, 96–97.

[20] See Sahlins, *Törzsek* (Tribes), 265.

[21] For the expression used by Alvin Gouldner see his study: "The Norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement", *American Sociological Review* 25 (1960): 161–178.

[22] al-Bekri, *Muʾjam*, 49–50; Yāqūt, *Muʾjam*, 6:13–14.

[23] ʿĀmir b. aẓ-Ẓarib al-ʿAdwānī was the chieftain and arbitrator of the Qays b. ʿAylān, more accurately of one of its branches, the Banū ʿAdwān: *saiyid Qays wa-ḥakamu-ha* (al-Bekri, 43). He was the one who took under his protection Qasiy b. Munabbih when he was on the run and became the cultic hero of Banū Thaqīf settled in Tāʾif where it practiced mainly horticulture and later became the eponym of Qasiy b. Munnabih (for the etimology of the attribute Thaqīf of the latter, see al-Bekri, 44).

[24] On the historical geographical changes in the contact between nomads and settlers see Planhol's fundamental work. *Les fondaments géographiques de l'histoire de l'Islam* (Paris, 1968), about the area investigated by us, see mainly 11–35, 71–88; about the *khuwa* up to recent times, see for example, M. von Oppenheim, *Die Beduinen* (Leipzig, 1939), 1:22–23; Dussaud, *Pénétration*, 15–16, 205; G. Baer, *Population and Society in the Arab East* (London, 1964), 121–122, 124, 128, 136.

[25] About the "commercial" link between the nomads and the settlers, see the classical presentation in the *Odysseia* 3:71–74; of the ethnographers see the comments of Sahlin, *Törzsek* (Tribes), 189–191 and of the orientalists, see also Lammens, *Berceau*, 85–86.

[26] About the problem of Bedouinization, see Caskel's probable hypothesis "Zur Beduinisierung Arabiens", *ZDMG* 103 (1953): 28*–34*; idem, *Die Bedeutung der Beduinen in der Geschichte der Araber*, primarily 7–8, 10, 24; further idem: *EI²*, 1:527$_a$–528$_b$, s.v. *al-ʿArab*. On the development of Bedouin (camel) nomadization, its nature and function see H. von Wissmann's summary, *EI²*, 1:880$_a$–887$_a$ (s.v. *Badw*).

[27] See mainly Lammens, *Berceau*, 113–182. About the critical review of the debate about this ill-famed theory see M. Guidi, *Storia e cultura degli Arabi*, 62–71.

[28] See K.W. Butzer, "Der Umweltfaktor in der grossen arabischen Expansion", *Saeculum* 8 (1957): 359–360 first of all.

[29] See the example of the Shammār tribe in 1925: X. de Planhol quotes the data of P. Teleki in *Les fondaments géographiques*, 19; see on the same question Butzer, op. cit., 364. We know that beside ar-Rubʿ al-Khālīʿ where there is no rain for decades, on a great part of the Arabian peninsula the yearly quantity of rain is only seldom more than 150 mm, so that the effect of seasonal drought makes itself immediately felt, see *EI²*, s.v. *Djazīrat al-ʿArab (III) Climate, drainage and water resources*, 1:537$_b$ (G. Rentz).

[30] Butzer, op. cit., 362. A century earlier "years" like this were 484 and between 512 and 517 (see Planhol, *Les foundements géographiques*, 23).

[31] al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, 2:188. This passage was already referred to by Wellhausen (*Reste*, 99) in another context, namely, the reconstruction of the pre-Islamic calendar—which, however, touches upon our trend of thought—that there is a coincidence of market day and festival day, as well as parallel between the Hebrew and Arabian autumn *ḥajj* festivals.

[32] See in Lane, *Arabic–English Lexicon*, s. v. the meaning of *safar* indicating this ("... so called because in it they used to procure their provisions of corn from the places in which it was collected, their granaries having then become empty"); see further al-Fīrūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muhīṭ*, (3:73); s.v. *safar = jū*.

[33] al-Bekri, *Mu'jam*, 30, with evidence of the contemporary an-Nābigha adh-Dhubyānī. This form of forced reciprocity did not in the least mean the weakness of the Saʿd Hudhaym tribe as supposed by Watt (*Medina*, 107) but—as it becomes clear from an-Nābigha's poem—proves the military superiority of the nomadic partner.

[34] About its references regarding antiquity, see O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 53–54, Dussaud, *Pénétration*, 175; about the caravan routes passing through it, see Musil, *Arabia deserta. A topographical Itinerary*, American Geographical Society, Oriental Explorations and Studies, no. 2 (New York, 1927), 516–520; about its ecological endowments, see al-Bekri, 208–209.

[35] *Aghānī*, 22:108; about as-Samawʾal see R. Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe*, 302.

[36] About its market see Ibn Habīb, 263–264; al-Marzūqī, *Kitāb al-azmina waʾl-amkına* (Hayderabad, A.H. 1332 [A.D. 1913–1914]), 2:161–162; al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:226; al-Qalqashandī 1:410–411; Alūsī, 1:264–265. On its antecedent history, ecological structure, and its conquest by the Muslims the basic work is Musil, *Arabia deserta*, 531–553: See further Dussaud, *Pénétration*, 24, 121, and 175.

[37] On the not Kindite but Ghassānid origin of Dūmat al-Jandal's *malik* or *saiyid*, Ukaydir b. ʿAbd al-Malik, a contemporary of Muhammad, see Musil, 539–540; about the complicated relations with Hīra, see Musil, 543. According az-Zuhrī's report a group of Ibād of Hīra too settled in the oasis (al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 85).

[38] Ṭabarī, 1:2060.

[39] See Musil, *Arabia deserta*, 531. About the Christianity of Bahrāʾ, Ghassān, and Tanūkh, see al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:214.

[40] The market of al-Hajr is mentioned only in some of the sources enumerating the markets (e.g. in Ibn al-Habīb, al-Marzūqī) and then without detailed description. But in relation to Hawdha b. ʿAlī, who was an ally of Iran, and to the "false prophet" Musaylima we can draw conclusions about the actual nature of the economic contact between the inhabitants of the oasis and the neighbouring nomads. With reference to Musaylima, see about the conditions of the oasis V.V. Bartold, "Museylima" (*Sochineniya* 6 [Moscow, 1956]: 349–547); Watt, *Medina*, 132–137; D.F. Eickelman, "Musaylima. An approach to the social anthropology of 7th century Arabia" (*JESHO*, 1967), 17–52. About the ecological conditions of the oasis, see W. Caskel, *EI²* 1 (1960) s.v. *Bakr. b. Wāʾil*.

[41] About their fruit cultivation, see Ṭabarī, 1: 1932–1934, 1936; about their grain cultivation, see Ṭabarī, 1:1919; about Meccan grain export, see IH 2:638–639; al-Wāhidī, 178. See the expression, "the people of the village" in Ṭabarī, 1:1946. On the basis of the plural of the feminine gendre of the nouns in one of Musaylima's *sajʿ* (revelation in short prose with rhymes, similar to the Meccan *sūra*s of Muhammad) (see Ṭabarī, 1:1934) Bartold has already drawn the conclusion (p. 566) that here agricultural work was done by women, for the men were needed to do "armed work" all the time, primarily against the nomads, as it appears quite clearly from the sources. The number of members of the tribe equals the number of men in it.

[42] In some versions of the famous episode (*Aghānī*, 17:229; al-Bekri, 732) Hawdha himself was captured and was released for a ransom of 300 camels.

[43] Tabarī, 1:1930. It is worth noting that Musaylima's religious doctrines contained one on the abstinence of the husband from his wife after the birth of the first child (Tabarī, 1:1916) and Watt is probably right (*Medina*, 136) when he suggests a relation between this doctrine and the situation which arose by the elimination of Yemenite–Persian trade.

[44] From the point of view of the settlers, forced reciprocity took the form of "supporting" the nomads, see Musaylima's characteristic *saj'* (Tabarī, 1:1933): "Indeed the Banū Tamim is a pure, noble people, they are not insulted and they do not have to pay a tax, as long as we live we will be their helpful neighbours *(nujāwiru-hum . . . bi-iḥsān)* and will protect them against everybody, when we die ar-Raḥmān shall look after them!" Another *saj'* indicates that the oasis had to be protected from the nomads (Tabarī, 1:1934). It was exactly the aim of the organization of forced reciprocity to prevent plundering.

[45] About the Muhammadan conditions of property see R. Simon, "Quelques remarques sur les conditions foncières dans la communauté muhammadienne", *AO(H)* 30, 3 (1974): 331–340 (in this book: Appendix 2).

[46] About their number see al-Wāqidī, 634, 637, 642; According to Vakidi/Wellhausen (285), the Muslim army consisted of 1,400, according to al-Balādhurī (*Futūḥ*, 40) of 1,580, according to IH (2:350) of 1,600 soldiers.

[47] See al-Wāqidī, 637 *(mā kānat Asad wa-Ghaṭafān yamtani'ūna min al-'arab qāṭibat^{an} illā bi-him)*, 639, 640, 642.

[48] al-Wāqidī, 642.

[49] In addition to n. 61 in Chapter 1, see also Tabarī, 1:984–987; al-Bekri, 732; Hamza, 143.

[50] *Aghānī*, 17:239–240.

[51] Tabarī, 1:985; Ibn al-Athīr, 1:190.

[52] Yāqūt, 1:341 and also al-Bekri, 107, al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 344.

[53] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 344.

[54] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 345, 349.

[55] The relationship between the two geographic concepts has led to a number of misunderstandings. See Wellhausen, "Prolegomena zur ältesten Geschichte des Islam" (in *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten* 6 [Berlin, 1899]), 20 n. 1. "Hagar bedeutet Hauptstadt . . . Die Citadella von Hagar, am anderen Ufer des Vadi, ist Muschaqqar." (About the Ethiopian origin of the word Hajar and its South Arabian use, see Beeston, *EI²*, s.v. *Hadhjar*). For the local "markets" of the second type and the typical structure of the dual official organization, see in the case of Hajar at the time of Muhammad al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 106: ". . . the territory of al-Bahrayn belonged to Iran. Many of the nomadic Arabs were there: members of the 'Abd al-Qays, of the Bakr b. Wā'il and of the Tamīm who lived in their steppes. At the time of Muhammad the head of these arabs appointed by the Persians was al-Mundhir b. Sāwa from the Banū 'Abd Allāh b. Zayd." In A.H. 8 (A.D. 629–630) the Prophet sent with the intention of conversion or subjection al-'Alā' b. 'Abd Allāh al-Haḍramī to al-Mundhir b. Sāwa and to Sībokht, the marzubān of Hajar" (op. cit., 107); "An armoured Iranian cavalry division *(wadā'i' Kisrā)* was stationed in Hajar" (op. cit., 111). The strong Iranian influence in Bahrayn is shown not only by the name Asbadhī of the 'Abd al-Qaysites (see Nöldeke, *GPA*,

260; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ,* 107; Wellhausen, *Prolegomena,* (20 n. 3), but also by the spreading of Mazdaism (see Bartold, "Islam", 6:85).

[56] For its situation and role see Yāqūt, 5:338–340; al-Marzūqī, 2:162, from where it appears quite clearly that the Banūʿl-Mustakbir (the Arab officials from the Azd tribe) were appointed by the Iranian kings. Their relative independence is indicated by the fact that they supplemented their income by maritime plunder; verse 18/79 in the Koran probably refers to them (see also Wellhausen, *Prolegomena,* 25). The Arab officials were, of course, supported by the urban elements. With the spreading of Islam the two sons of Julunda, Jayfar and ʿAmr converted to the Islam and helped the deputy of the Prophet, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ against the Bedouin elements (Ṭabarī, 1:1977; Wellhausen, loc. cit.). *Dabā* is mentioned as a "market" with similar participants in ʿUmān (see al-Marzūqī, 2:163; al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:226; al-Bekri, 338; Yāqūt, 4:30).

[57] The independence of the market place might be suggested by al-Marzūqī, (2:164), but we know from al-Bekri (p. 546) that Wahriz started from here on his journey to conquer Yemen. In addition, the goods listed by al-Marzūqī (incense, myrrh, aloe-wood, pearls) 1:164, belong obviously into the category of long-distance trade, that is, the "market" nature of the locality is less apparent. Banū Muḥārib from B. Mahra probably was entrusted with the protection of long-distance trade as mentioned also in *al-Muḥabbar* by Ibn Ḥabīb (p. 266).

[58] In the case of the market in ʿAden, the sources fail to mention any special tribes. At the same time, reference to the earlier Ḥimyarite and Abyssinian and the later direct Iranian supremacy is quite clear (al-Marzūqī, 2:164), as well as that the (exclusive) commodity in this place was incense about which it is said in so many words that it was part of the long-distance trade (al-Marzūqī, loc. cit.). Similarly to the previous locality, the second type of forced reciprocity cannot be traced from the sources in this case either, in contrast to the function the locality played in long-distance trade.

[59] On the basis of the sources this is the only locality which suggests a balanced reciprocity (al-Marzūqī, 2:164; al-Alūsī, 1:266). The rule of the conquering Persians and of their settled successors *(al-Abnaʾ)* appears quite clearly from the sources. Although by the beginning of the 7th century this area had deteriorated both commercially and politically (see Wellhausen, *Prolegomena,* 27), the fact that Yemen was the first true province of Islam where taxation and administration were excellently organized, suggests a certain conservation of the earlier conditions (see Wellhausen, *Prolegomena,* 29–30).

[60] al-Bekri, 660, and also al-Alūsī, 1:270.

[61] See the description of al-Bekri (loc. cit.): "A flat desert where there is no elevation and where at the time of Jāhilīya (that is, before Islam) there stood only large sacrificial stones like millstones *(anṣāb)* which were covered by the blood of the sacrificed animals."

[62] See the colourful and apt description in *Reste* by Wellhausen, 88–91 and also Chelhod, *Le sacrifice chez les Arabes,* 145–167. It was important that in accordance with the *treuga dei,* the wearing of arms was forbidden during the period of mawsim (see *Aghānī,* 22:64).

[63] al-Azraqī, 1:121–125; al-Bekri, 264 (Muḥammad too visits him); al-Alūsī, 1:267.

[64] See S. Krauss, "Talmudische Nachrichten über Arabien", *ZDMG* 70 (1916); 321–353 (mainly 335–336).

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65 Ṭabarī, 1:1375; also IH 2:50; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 100; about Meccan trade in noble metals, see Lammens, *Mecque*, 194–199 (290–295).

66 About the gold and silver mines in Yamāma and Najd, see al-Hamdānī, *Sifa Jazīrat al-ʿarab* 1 (Leyden, 1884–1891): 153–154; about the goldsmiths of Banū Sulaym, see al-Bekri, 20; about gold mining in Hijāz, see Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammads*, 51 n. 105. In Medina even bridal money was paid in gold, see Lammens, *Mecque*, 195, 197 (291, 293). We know that the father-in-law of the Lakhmid an-Nuʿmān was a goldsmith from Fadak, see Ṭabarī, 1:1017 and also Nöldeke, *GPA*, 314 n. 2.

67 Lammens, *Mecque*, 196 (292); Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 95–96.

68 See al-Hamdānī, *Sifa*, 1:200; O'Leary (*Arabia before Muhammad*, 99–101) quoting the most important antique sources in his description of Haḍramawt and its production of incense; see also I. Shahid, *Pre-Islamic Arabia*, 10.

69 About the Quraysh's trade in incense, see Lammens, *Mecque*, 200–201 (296–297). The Quraysh (mainly the Banū Makhzūm clan) purchased incense first of all from (Rābīya) in Haḍramawt (al-Marzūqī, 2:165: *"fa-kāna Quraysh tatakhaffar bi-Banī Ākil al-Murār min Kinda")*, also from ʿAden (al-Marzūqī, 2:164; Yaʿqūbī, 1:226; al-Qalqashandī, 1:411; al-Alūsī, 1:226) or perhaps from al-Mushaqqar (al-Marzūqī, 2:163) or from ash-Shihr (al-Marzūqī, 2:164). About the Meccan caravans of incense and perfumes, see e.g. *Aghānī*, 17:283 and Ibn Rosteh, 215. We know that the caravans of incense were called *laṭīma*.

70 al-Qālī, 3:199.

71 See e.g. IH, 1:602; 2:277; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 36; Ibn Saʿd, II/1:5; Ṭabarī, 1:1274, 1602. *Aghānī*, 19:75; and about the same, see Lammens, *Mecque*, 190–192 (286–288).

72 See al-Hamdānī, *Sifa*, 1:120; Yākūt, 6:11.

73 See IH, 1:602; Vakidi/Wellhausen, 36; Ibn-Saʿd, 1/1:5; Ṭabarī, 1:1274; Ibn Rosteh, 215.

74 On the afore-mentioned see e.g. *Aghānī*, 19:75; on the latter, see e.g. Ibn Rosteh, 215.

75 See Pigulevskaya; *Byzanz auf dem Weg nach Indien*, 78–79.

76 Codex Iustiniani, IV:40, 2. See about this Harmatta, "To the Ancient History of Yemen", 185.

77 See e.g. Ghirsman, 311–312. About the situation of the tradesmen and craftsmen in Iran, see Stein, "Ein Kapitel vom persischen und byzantinischen Staate", *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher* 1 (1920): 67–68.

78 See e.g. Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien* (about "domestic trade" see 61–69; about eastern foreign trade see 70–87), about state directed trading monopolies see further Andreades in *Byzantium* (Oxford. 1948) 62–63, 66, 74; Kashdan, *Byzanz und seine Kultur* (Berlin, 1973), 57–58.

79 About the distinction and correlation between trade, money, and market, see Polanyi, "Aristotle discovers the Economy" (1957), 105, 108 and "Semantics of Money-uses" (1957), 190–191.

80 The fundamental work regarding this question is Polanyi, "Ports of trade in early societies" (1963) in *Essays*, 238–260, and by the same author (editor): *Trade and Market in the Early Empires* (New York, 1957), and also *Dahomey*, mainly 159–184.

[81] The gaps in the sources are reflected in the superficiality of the pertaining literature: According to Watt (*Mecca*, 3), they travelled "... from Aden to Gaza or Damascus". There is not a single data to confirm this in the sources. Lammens, *Mecque*, 33–34 (129–130), 46–49 (142–145) fixes the Syrian and Palestinian terminals correctly, but when speaking about the Yemenite stations (see 199–203 [295–299]) he fails to note that he has no data on these. The essential fact is that not even these authors include in their analysis the problem of the nature of the commercial partner.

[82] See on this problem *EI*[1], 1 (1913), s.v. *Boṣrā* (F. Buhl); *EI*[2], 1 (1960), s.v. *Boṣrā* (A. Abel); O'Leary, *Arabia before Muhammad*, 187; Dussaud, *Pénétration*, 55, 155–156; Klengel, *Syria antiqua* (Leipzig, 1971) 113–117.

[83] On this problem and the limes policy of Byzantium in Syria, see Dussaud, *Pénétration*, 156–157.

[84] See John of Ephesus, 241, and on the problem Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 119. In pre-Islamic poetry, arms and arms manufacture in Buṣrā are mentioned as a topos, see, for example, *Dīwān al-Mufaḍḍalīyāt* (edited by Ch. J. Lyall [Oxford 1918–1921]) 1:109; 2:33 (the poem of al-Ḥusayn b. al-Humām: *safā'iḥ Buṣrā akhlaṣat-hā quyūnu-hā—wa-muṭṭaridan min nasji Dāwūda mubhamā)*; IH, 2:160. (In Ka'b b. Malik's poem the sword is *buṣriya*.)

[85] In *Geographi Graeci minores*, ed. C. Müller, (Paris, 1961), 521, § 38.

[86] See IH, 1:180; Ṭabarī, 1:1124. The subject of the legend is the meeting with the monk Baḥīra (which corresponds to the Nabatean name Pakhūrū on a Nabataean inscription). For the legendary nature of the report see Tor Andrae, *Mohammed, sein Leben und sein Glaube* (Göttingen, 1932), 31.

[87] Some of the randomly chosen topos are IH, 1:158, 160; Ṭabarī, 1:968, 973 *(quṣūr Buṣrā)*; IH, 2:59 *(wa-annā la-nā mā bayna Buṣrā wa-Mar'ib)*; Ibn Qutayba, *'Uyūn al-akhbār* (Cairo, 1964), 2:331, *(mā-bayna Buṣrā wa-'Aden)*; see also Koran, 15/85; al-Waḥidī, 159; al-Bayḍāwī, 350 *(sab' qawāfil wāfat min Buṣrā)*.

[88] See Buhl, 296–297; Watt, *Medina*, 113, 345.

[89] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 207 *(ṣāḥib Buṣrā)*; al-Wāqidī, 2:755; an-Nuwayrī, 17:277 *(malik Buṣrā)*; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 155 *(wa-ḥārabū bitrīqa-hā)*; Ibn Sa'd, 1/1:16; Ṭabarī, 1:1565 *('azīm Buṣrā)*.

[90] In addition to n. 58 of Chapter 2, see also al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. M. Schloessinger (Jerusalem, 1938), 126–127, where we read in Arwā bint al-Ḥārith's poem about the Byzantine official: *malik ash-Shām*.

[91] See *EI*[1], 2 (1927): 167–168 (Fr. Buhl); *EI*[2], 2 (1965): 1056–1057 (D. Sourdel).

[92] See also e.g. the testimony of Antoninus Martyr in Antoninus Placentinus (Buhl, 167b).

[93] See al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 151₁₀, ₁₂ (bis).

[94] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 188.

[95] al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 58–59; Ibn Sa'd, 1/1 43; Ṭabarī, 1:1089; al-Qālī, 3:199; he could have died here and his tomb too could be here: IH, 1:137–140; al-Balādhurī, 62—64.

[96] al-Wāqidī, 1:200.

[97] See the administrative organization of Najrān in connection with the delegation going to Muḥammad, in Yāqūt, 8:264; and about the organization, see Lammens, *Berceau*, 253–254, but mainly Pigulevskaya, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien*, 294–307. The encouraging words of Muḥammad to the tortured Khabbāb b. al-Aratt, which refer to the dangers of the journey from Ṣanʿāʾ to Ḥaḍwamawt and which can be interpreted as a topos: "Indeed, Allah will protect this cause (i.e. Islam), so that the traveller can go from Ṣanʿāʾ to Ḥaḍwamawt without fear of anybody but Allah and his goat has to fear only the wolf." Yaʿqūbī: *Taʾrīkh (Najaf*, A.H. 1358 [A.D. 1939]), 2:20; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 176.

[98] See concerning the distance, Yāqūt, 6:10–11; Lammens, *Ṭāif*, 20–22 (132–134).

[99] al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 75 (*li-ʿāmma Quraysh amwāl bi't-Ṭā'if ya'tūna-hā min Makka fa-yuṣliḥūna-hā*): al-Hamdānī, *Ṣifa*, 1:121; Yāqūt, 6:11; and also Lammens, *Ṭāif*, 25–26 (137–138), 47–51 (159–163); about the marriage bonds between the Quraysh and the Thaqīf see Lammens, *Ṭāif*, 12 (124), 34 (146), 37 (149), 108 (220), 120 (232), 130–132 (242–244). The close connection between the two settlements is also indicated by the expression *qariyatān* in the *Koran* (43/31).

[100] See Yāqūt, 6:12 for the expression *wa-fawākih ahl Makkata min-hā*.

[101] See Lammens, *Ṭāif*, 39–44 (151–156), 113–115 (225–227).

[102] See IH, 2:638 (the Quraysh wrote a letter to Muḥammad in which they said among others: "You have cut the bonds of blood relations with us: you killed the fathers with the sword and the sons with famine"); see al-Wāqidī, 179 (after the boycott of grain the Quraysh were forced to eat *'iḥliz* (a mixture of blood and camel skin, see al-Fīrūzābādī, 2:190).

[103] See the only passage which refers to the existence of a manufacture: *Aghānī*, 1:35 (concerning the poet ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa's weaving shop after Muḥammad's death). See on this subject Lammens, *Mecque*, 186 (282). Lammens's interpretation contains some errors.

[104] al-Wāqidī, 1:28; Ibn Saʿd, 2:1/25; and also IH, 1:606; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 288.

[105] Mainly al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 652. ("In the age of the Jāhilīya, the dīnārs of Herakleios and the drachmas of the Persians reached the people of Mecca, but they did not use these, they traded only by using raw metal with one another.") *(fa-kānū lā yatabāyaʿūna illa anna-hā tibr)*. See on this subject Grierson, "The monetary reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik", *JESHO* 3 (1960): 255–257.

[106] According to al-Wāqidī (1:200): "One dīnār usually brings another dīnār as profit in their trade". (See also Ibn Saʿd, 2/1:25).

[107] Ṭabarī, 1:1375.

[108] Ṭabarī, 1:1285. On the size of the caravans, see Lammens, *Mecque*, 185 (281).

Appendix 1

[1] See the first authoritative discussion of this subject in *Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques* (Paris, 1863): "... le désert est monothéiste... Voilà pourquoi l'Arabie a toujours été le boulevard de monothéisme le plus exalté" (p. 6). It was in fact as a refutation of this thesis that Goldziher wrote his still in many respects remarkable work on the comparative history of religion, *Der Mythos bei den Hebräern und seine geschichtliche Entwicklung* (Leipzig, 1876; in English: London, 1877).

[2] See the first two essays in Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien*, which in its less elaborate form had been published in Hungarian in 1881 (*Az iszlám* [The Islam] [Budapest, 1881], 1–100).

[3] See R. Simon, *Ignác Goldziher. His Work and Life as Reflected in his Correspondence* (Leyden–Budapest, 1986).

[4] See e.g. the excellent review of the European Islam research in M. Rodinson, *La fascination de l'Islam* (Paris, 1980).

[5] Grimme, *Mohammed I* (14–16 mainly); Snouck-Hurgronje, "Une nouvelle biographie de Mohammed", in *Œuvres choisies* (Leyden, 1957), 109–149 (mainly 132–134).

[6] On the method and epistemological foundations of Grunebaum see Abdallah Laroui, *La crise des intellectuels arabes. Traditionalisme ou historicisme?* (Paris, 1974), 59–102 (Les arabes et l'anthropologie culturelle. Remarques sur la méthode de G. de Grunebaum).

[7] Torrey, *The Commercial-Theological Terms in the Koran* (Leyden, 1892), 5.

[8] op. cit., 48. See Service, Sahlins and Wolf, *Vadászok, törzsek, parasztok* (Hunters, Tribesmen, Peasants). In Hungarian (Budapest, 1973), 284.

[9] Torrey, op. cit., 49. In his later work, *The Jewish Foundation of Islam* (New York, 1933), Torrey assigns Islam to Judaism and to prove his theory he accuses Muḥammad only with stupidity and ignorance. For Torrey's criticism see Fück, "Die Originalität des arabischen Propheten", *ZDMG* 90 (1936): 510–511.

[10] For Lammens's assessment see Becker, "Prinzipielles zu Lammens' Sīrastudien", *Der Islam* 4 (1931) 263–269; ("Grundsätzliches zur Leben-Muhammedforschung", in *Islamstudien*, 1:520–527); and Nöldeke, "Die Tradition über das Leben Muhammeds", *Der Islam* 5:160–170; Fück, *Die arabischen Studien*, 292–293; Rodinson, Bilan, 173–174.

[11] Reisner, *Ideologiya Korana* (Moscow, 1926) and *Ideologiya vostoka* (Moscow, 1927).

[12] Klimovich, *Soderzhanie Korana* (The content of the Koran) (Moscow, 1929²). The author, similarly to the majority of Soviet Arabists from the 1930s on, considered Islam the ideology of a feudal class society. See from the same author, *Islam* (Moscow, 1965), 39–40.

[13] Belyayev, "Roly mekkanskovo torgovovo kapitala v istorii proishozhdeniya islama" (The role of mercantile capital in the history of the genesis of Islam), *Ateist* 58 (1930).

[14] See, for example, Dubrovskiy, *K voprosy of sushtchnosti "aziatskovo" sposoba proizvodstva, feodalizma, krepostnichestva i torgovovo kapitala* (On the problem of the essence of the "Asiatic" mode of production, feudalism, serfdom and of mercantile capital) (Moscow, 1929).

[15] As an example we shall quote only Beloch who wrote: "Überhaupt ist die Erforschung der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung eine der dringendsten Aufgaben der Altertumswissenschaft... Freilich liegt gerade hier die Gefahr des Dilettantismus sehr nahe: den Nationalökonomen, die sich mit antiker Wirtschaftsgeschichte beschäftigen, fehlen häufig die nötigen historischen und philologischen Kenntnisse, den Philologen die nationalökonomischen, dazu kommt der Mangel ausreichender Vorarbeiten, der jeden erzwingt, sich selbst sein Material zusammenzutragen" ("Griechische Geschichte seit Alexander", in *Einleitung in die Altertumswissenschaft* 3 [Leipzig–Berlin, 1914²], 159).

[16] For the historical and ideological analysis of the latter, see Goldmann, *Sciences humaines et philosophie* (Paris, 1952, 1966²).

[17] See particularly Cahen, "L'histoire économique et sociale de l'Orient musulman médiéval", *Studia Islamica* 3 (1955); and "Au seuil de la troisième année: Réflexions sur l'usage du mot de 'féodalité' ", *JESHO* 3 (1960). In the first work the concise characterization of the dismal (though since then somewhat changed) conditions are still worth noting (p. 96).

[18] See *The Great Transformation* (Boston, 1944); *Trade and Market in the Early Empires,* eds. K. Polányi, C. M. Arensberg, and H. W. Pearson (1957); *Dahomey and the Slave Trade. An Analysis of an Archaic Economy* (Washington, 1966); *Primitive Archaic and Modern Economics, Essays of K. Polányi,* ed. by G. Dalton (1968). (I wish to note here too that in the second part of my work I tried partly to utilize and partly to follow the ideas of Polányi's research. The author.)

[19] Rodinson, *Islam et capitalisme,* 30–31. The later attempts of another author is a warning example of the dangers of incorrectly using economic and social categories which have lost their historical validity. Ule claims in his study, "Islam und Wirtschaft", *Der Islam* (1971), 47, that at the time of the appearance of the Prophet we have to speak about a free market trade (freie Marktwirtschaft) in Medina and Mecca. This he describes in accordance with the model of liberal capitalism as follows: "Dieses marktwirtschaftliches System, entstanden aus einer Heterogenie individueller Zielsetzungen unabhängiger und eigene Wirtschaftspläne aufstellender Einzelwirtschaften, die ihr Verhalten am Marktzusammenhang orientierten, kannte Privateigentum nicht nur an Grund und Boden, sondern an Produktionsmitteln sowie Konsumgüter als Grundlage der Wirtschaft." (p. 138) According to this author, this market economy is characterized by free industrial activity (Gewerbefreiheit), the division of labour, and the lack of central directives (p. 139). The application of these heterogeneous categories of various levels of industrial capitalism of free competitions to Mecca is a grotesque representation of the market-oriented way of thinking which was more sophisticatedly expressed by Rodinson.

[20] Translation (by M. Pickthall) of verse 28/26–27 of the Koran: "One of the two women said: Oh my Father! Hire him *(īsta'jir-hū)!* for the best (man) that thou canst hire is the strong, the trustworthy.—He said: Lo! I fain would marry thee to one of these two daughters of mine on condition that thou hirest thyself to me for the (the term of) eight pilgrimages. Then if thou completest ten it will be of thine own accord, for I would not make it hard for thee. Allah willing, thou wilt find me of the righteous."
This par excellence non-economic transaction between communities organized on the basis of kinship is a paradigmatic case of contact manifest in status mobility. See for this kind of interpretation of the Hebrew *mōhar,* Nötscher's *Biblische Altertumskunde* (Bonn, 1940), 78–79; *Bibel-Lexikon,* publ. H. Haag, Zurich–Cologne, 1956, s.v. *Ehe,* and for the interpretation of the *mahr* in the two passages of the *Koran* (4:24, 33:50), see Watt, *Muhammad at Medina,* 283, 293. Presumably, originally the virilocal form of the new family had to be "redeemed" by service to the wife's father. Nevertheless, this "act of exchange" in the service of the human reproduction of the family, clan, or tribe did not become in the course of the later (still lasting) process a "bought marriage" (Kaufehe). Baer's important observations on the after-life of *mahr* are valid with this restriction, see *Population and Society in the Arab East* (London, 1964), 40–41. Buhl too considers in his work, *Das Leben Muhammads,* 42, the wife living in a virilocal marriage the *property* of the husband.

[21] See Goldziher, *A pogány arabok költészetének hagyománya* (Tradition of the poetry of pagan Arabs) (Budapest, 1983), 11, and by the same author *Abhandlungen zur Arabischen Philologie,* 1 (Leyden, 1896), 17–18. About *kāhin* see Wellhausen, *Reste* (1927²), 134–137.

For the detailed summary of the pre-Islamic function of *'arrāf* and *kāhin*, see al-Alūsī, *Bulūgh al-arab* 3: 269–307, and for the interpretation of Hebrew *yidde'ōnī*, its Semitic parallels and occurrence in the Old Testament; Gesenius, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Wörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (Leipzig, 1915[16] s.v. *yd'*). With respect to its essence, the shaman of the Ural-Altaic peoples or the priest-magician (táltos) of the Hungarians are similar phenomena, see Diószegi, *A pogány magyarok hitvilága* (The Religious World of the Pagan Hungarians) (Budapest, 1973).

[22] al-Maydāni, *Majma' al-amthāl* (Cairo, A.H. 1283 [A.D. 1866]), 2:237.

[23] Mas'ūdī, *Murūj adh-dhahab* (Beyrouth, 1965–1966), 2:154; al-Alūsī, *Bulūgh al-arab*, 3:306; Nöldeke, *Delectus*, 8[14]. Nöldeke's interpretation also indicates the character of the "exchange": "Spopondi iis, quidquid sibi elegerint, si me ab amore perdente, liberarent."

[24] Ibn Khaldūn, *Prolégomènes*, publ. E. Quatremères (Paris, 1858), 2:77.

[25] Op. cit., 2:280–287.

[26] See Delcourt, *Les grands sanctuaires de la Grèce* (Paris, 1947), 280–287, for an instructive comparison with the donations *(offrandes)* offered to the Greek sanctuaries. Particularly in the case of rulers of the archaic empires, these essentially magic donations might take that completely natural form when they try to acquire a non-economic status, service, or relationship by means of the tools of economy and wealth: "les rois traitent les dieux comme un homme qu'ils voudraient corrompre" (p. 29).

[27] Rodinson, *La vie de Mahomet* (Paris, 1957), 63.

[28] This is expressed by Lammens in his elegant anachronistic way as follows: ". . . la Mecque était un entrepôt, une station de transit, non une ville industrielle. . .", see *Mecque* (1924), 186 (282). In note 1 on the same page the author admits that he has found a single source *(texte unique)* indicating the existence of a craftsman's workshop in Mecca. Lammens's dating of this passage after the *hijra* is confirmed by the fact that the text refers not to the father of the poet 'Umar b. Abī Rabī'a, but to the poet himself (24/644–103/721 or 93/711–712); see also Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe*, 3 (1966): 629–642, probably when already old, thus the unique text refers to the beginning of the 8th century. It might be added that the poet presumably retired to Ṭā'if in his old days (see Blachère, op. cit., 632), thus the seventy slaves (*sab'ūna 'abd[an]*) occupied with weaving *(hawk)* were not necessarily working in Mecca.

[29] See Polányi, *Dahomey* (in Hungarian, Budapest, 1972), 160 (Acalan), 161–189 (Ouidah).

[30] IH, 1:193, see literally Ṭabarī, 1:1135; and similarly Yāqūt, Mu'jam, 7:259.

[31] al-Azraqī, 1:101 (the first member of *isnād* was al-Azraqī's grandfather and the last, Abū Nuqayh). al-Azraqī reports two further variations: the end of *isnād:* Abū't-Ṭufayl): ". . . and they got hold of the wood of the ship and the Byzantine, a carpenter who was called Bāqūm" (p. 99) and ('Amr b. Dīnār heard from 'Ubayd b. 'Umar: "The name of the mason of the Ka'ba was Bāqūm. This Byzantine was on a ship which was ruined by the tempest . . . And the Quraysh went out (to the ship) in Judda, got hold of the ship and its wood and said: build us the sanctuary in a way as they build in Syria!") *(ibni-hī la-nā bunyan ash-Shām)* (p. 108).

[32] Quṭb ad-Dīn in *Die Chroniken der Stadt Mekka*, 3:49–50.

[33] An unimportant, but because of its psychological effect, not negligible report says that the group of Quraysh going to the seaport was led by al-Walīd b. al-Mughīra from the clan of Makhzūm who at that time was, according to the sources, the leading personality in Mecca (e.g. in IH, 1:270: *wa kāna dhā sinn fī-him;* see for his social status, Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca,* 134). A report important from another aspect tells us about Byzantium's shipping on the Red Sea: "There is no route between the Mediterranean *(Bahr ar-Rūm)* and Abyssinia which would touch Judda."

[34] The report of Saʿīd b. Yaḥyā Abū ʿUthmān al-Umawī (died in A.H. 249 [A.D. 1864]) was corrected by Quṭb ad-Dīn as translated in the above note, and he adds: "The Byzantine Emperor has however asked the ruler of Egypt *(malik Miṣr)* who equipped the ship for him from Suways (Suez) or Ṭūr or from some other seaport." About Ṭūr see al-Bekri, 458; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam,* 6:69. The reference to as-Suways is obviously an anachronistic reflection of the usage of the later Muslim period (see Yāqūt, *Muʿjam,* 5:180). The possibility of an Egyptian ship is excluded by the actual historical situation, as we know at the time of Phocas's rule (602 to 610) Egypt was actually not under the authority of the Byzantine government. See on this problem Rouillard, *L'administration civile de l'Égypte byzantine,* (Paris, 1928), 191–192.

[35] al-Azraqī, 1:104.

[36] See K. A. C. Cresvell, "Kaʿba in A.D. 608", *Archaeologia* 44 (1951): 97–102; *EI²,* s.v. *Architecture,* 609ₐ.

[37] Ṭabarī, 1:935; Nöldeke, *GPA,* 205.

[38] Abraha supposedly built the temple in the second half of the 530s. According to the report of al-Azraqī (1:83–84), it was destroyed at the time of the ʿAbbāside Abū Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr, that is, it stood for more than two hundred years.

[39] al-Azraqī, 1:84–85.

[40] See the excellent description of the first two phases by Wellhausen in *Reste,* 101–103. The uniqueness of this pantheon is expressed also by the epithet, "the House", see the expression: *al-bayt dhūʾs-saqf* (the cannopied house, i.e., the sanctuary of the Kaʿba) in the threnody of al-Hārith b. Hishām b. al-Mughīra, brother of Abū Jahl who was killed in the battle of Badr (A.H. 2 [A.D. 624]). See also IH, 2:10; Nöldeke, *Delectus,* 66.

[41] For the classical theoretical phrasing of this point of view, see Ibn Khaldūn, 2 (1858): 313–314 *(Faṣl fī annaʾl-ʿarab abʿad an-nās min aṣ-ṣanāʾiʿ).* It is characteristic that in "civilization" *(ʿumrān)* which is inseparable from the existence of the state and from urban life, the author makes a distinction between the necessary *(ḍarūrī)* craftsmanships and those which, due to the nature of the objects they handle, are noble *(sharīf biʾ-mawḍūʿ).* Agriculture *(filāha),* building *(bināʾ),* tailoring *(khiyāṭa),* carpentry *(nijāra),* and weaving *(hiyāka)* belonged to the first, midwifery *(tawlīd),* writing (clerical work) *(kitāba),* book binding *(wirāqa),* singing *(ghināʾ),* and healing *(ṭibb)* into the second category. The difference is obviously that while the latter "noble" arts produce *use-values* which appear as their own goal, in the products of the first their exchange value dominates (see op. cit., 2:316). Naturally, this attitude is an organic part of the "Weltanschauung" of a society in which the institutions, social status, and stratification are directly built on acquisition, distribution, and consumption in the strict sense of these words, and not on production, and where it might seem that the activities of the state and of its bearers (the bureaucratic apparatus, the army, and tradesmen) thus the mediation and distribution of the products are the true foundations of society. On the Arab assessment of craftsmanship, see Goldziher, "Die Handwerke bei

den Arabern", *Globus* 66 (1894): 203–205, and more recently Brunschwig, "Métiers vils en Islam", *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962) 41–60. For the tenacious after-life of the ancient Bedouin ideal in current mentality, see the excellent analysis of R. Patai in *The Arab Mind* (New York, 1976), 116–117. As a late-antique topos of the Arab nomadic mentality we can quote the description by Ammianus Marcellinus (about A.D. 330 to 400): "Nec quisquam stivum apprehendit vel arborem colit, sed errant semper per spatia."(They neither get hold of the plough-stock, nor do they tend an orchard, they only wander in open spaces.) *Rerum gest. libri,* XIV:3, 4.

[42] Capturing of prisoners as one of the incomes of the buffer-states: see in Joshua the Stylites (1882), 40–41: The Lakhmid an-Nuʿmān b. al-Aswad III captured 18,500 prisoners on the occasion of the raid of Harrān in the year 502; see also Malalas, 447: The Ghassānid al-Hārith b. al-Jabala captured in the war against the Samaritans 20,000 prisoners whom he sold on the Persian and "Indian" markets *(hustinas elabón aikhmalótus epolésen en tois persikois kai indikois meresin)*. The report of al-Azraqī (1:91) on the remnants of Abraha's army in Mecca *(wa-aqāma bi-Makkata filāl al-jaysh wa-ʿusafāʾ wa-baʿd man ḍamma-hū al-ʿaskar fa-kānū bi-Makkata yaʿtamilūna wa-yarʿawna li-ahl Makkata)* can be interpreted as the etiological reference to the Abyssinian or other slaves of Negro origin or to others in the status of alliance. About the attitude of society to craftsmanship in pre-Islamic times, see Nöldeke, *GPA*, 314 n. 2; Fränkel, *Fremdwörter*, 253–260 (see mainly 253: "Wir wissen . . ., dass die alten Araber nur sehr wenig Handwerke trieben. Man überliess die handwerkmässigen Betriebe den Sklaven und Frauen. Noch heute sind die Handwerke unter den Beduinen verachtet. Selbst auf die arabischen Städte erstreckt sich dieser Vorurteil." With the exception of *qayn* (blacksmith, and later, all artisans) the other expressions referring to craftsmen are loan-words from Aramaean influence (e.g. *ṣayqal* = gunsmith, *najjār* = mason, *bannāʾ* = foreman builder, etc., see op. cit., 254–258). Branding somebody with an artisan-origin is an often used topos in poetry. While in pre-Islamic poetry to be called a *qayn* was the greatest offense (in addition to the examples quoted from the pertaining literature, see Ḥassān b. Thābit; *Dīwān*, 62–63, where the Quraysh are called "blacksmith offsprings" *(jidhm qayn)*, in the first century of Islam in a characteristic way the expression *ḥāʾik b. ḥāʾik* (weaver son of weaver) was more common, see Goldziher, *Handwerke*, 203–204.

[43] An interesting information to the assessment of the number of slaves is mentioned in the report of the siege of Ṭāʾif (A.H. 8 [A.D. 630]). According to the report of al- Wāqidī (1966), 931: "The herald of the Prophet declared in a loud voice that 'any slave who leaves the fortress and will come to us will be free!' And men came out of the fortress, some ten-odd *(bidʿata ʿashra rajulᵘⁿ)*." See al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ* (1957), 74–75 *(wa-nazala ilā rasūl Allāh raqīq min raqīq ahl aṭ-Ṭāʾif)*. According to the sources, two of these slaves were artisans, Yuḥannas, the arrow-smith *(nabbāl)* (al-Wāqidī, 931) and Abū Nāfiʿ b. al-Azraq, the blacksmith *(ḥaddād)* (al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 75). Having gained their freedom they became the clients or allies of a Muslim. In two cases, after having been converted to Islam, their former owners became their patrons. Their employment in agriculture and horticulture was probably negligible, since it is not mentioned in the sources. Ibn Isḥāq reports that on the occasion of the raid of Khaybar (A.H. 7 [A.D. 628]) the Muslim troops attacking in the morning met "the labourers of Khaybar *(ʿummāl Khaybar)* who started in the morning (leaving the fortress) with hoes and their baskets *(bi-masāḥi-him wa-makātili-him)*" (IH, 2:329). Concluding from the agreement signed after the conquest, the expression *ʿummāl Khaybar* (see Appendix 2) would refer to the Jews themselves. Had the Jews not cultivated the land themselves they might have been expelled by Muhammad, and it would not have been

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necessary to wait until ʿUmar who, thanks to the forces gained by the conquests, could do without the Jews and, in fact, chased them out of the Arabian peninsula (see for example, al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 37: *falammā kāna ʿUmar wa-kathuraʾl-māl fī aydīʾl-muslimīn wa-qawū ʿalā ʿimārat al-arḍ ajlāʾl-yahūd ilāʾ sh-Shām* (i.e. "As ʿUmar /was ruling/ and wealth of the Muslims multiplied and they became able to cultivate the land, they then expelled the Jews to Syria.") The North Arabian oases were on the eve of Islam in the hands of Jewish farmers (see Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammeds*, 18; Lammens, *Berceau*, 154–155). We have already pointed out in Chapter 3, note 41 that the agricultural activities of the "village people" of Banū Ḥanīfa of Yamāma were probably done by women and this peculiar division of labour also indicates the nomadic attitude.

[44] Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 88–96. See R. Simon, *Az iszlám keletkezése* (The Genesis of Islam) (Budapest, 1967), 71–75. In Watt's case the second group described by him has no outline whatsoever ("Men, mostly young, from other families", p. 95), or more accurately, in his case this group fits the interpretation of "young Islam" which, according to him, "was essentially a movement of young men" (p. 96). With respect to the three groups, it may be sufficient to quote a single characteristic one of the many available sources. According to a fictive episode reported by Ṭabarī, the Byzantine emperor questioned the leading Meccan tradesman Abū Sufyān about the identity of the Muslims and Abū Sufyān described them as follows: "I said: there are the weak ones *(aḍ-ḍuʿafāʾ)*, the poor *(al-masākīn)*, and the young men and women *(al-ahdāth min al-ghilmān waʾn-nisāʾ)*. And as far as the powerful and the noble *(dhawūʾl-asnān waʾsh-sharaf)* of his (Muḥammad's) tribe are concerned, none of them followed him." (Ṭabarī, 1:1563–1564).

[45] al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* (Cairo, 1959), 156 and 197; and Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrikh* (Najaf, A.H. 1358 [A.D. 1939]):20 mention six "weak" ones within the Quraysh as follows: *(1)* ʿAmmār b. Yāsir (see al-Balādhurī, 156–175) was the ally of Abū Ḥudhayfa b. al-Mughīra, a member of the Makhzūm clan; *(2)* Khabbāb b. al-Arātt (al-Balādhurī, 175–180) was presumably of Tamīmite origin and having been captured became the slave of Umm Anmār of the Khuzāʿa tribe, an ally of the Zuhra clan. When he gained his freedom, Khabbāb b. al-Aratt too became, through his patron, an ally of the Banū Zuhra; *(3)* Ṣuhayb b. Sinān (al-Balādhurī, 180–184) came from the Banūʾn-Namir b. Qāsit which lived near Mawṣil and, according to the report of Hishām al-Kalbī, his father was the governor *(ʿāmil)* of Ubulla. Ṣuhayb b. Sinān was captured when still a child, by the Byzantines and, according to one of the versions, was bought in a second exchange by ʿAbd Allāh b. Judʿān from the Taym clan whose client he became after having gained his freedom. Another version claims that Ṣuhayb b. Sinān escaped from prison and became immediately the ally of Ibn Judʿān; *(4)* Bilāl b. Rabāḥ (al-Balādhurī, 184–193), the son of an Abyssinian slave by a slave girl and himself a slave of Umaiya b. Khalaf of the Jumaḥ clan, was later the client of Abū Bakr; *(5)* ʿĀmir Fukayha (al-Balādhurī, 193–194) was born a slave and was the client of Abū Bakr; *(6)* Abū Fukayha (al-Balādhurī, 194–195), a slave of Ṣafwān b. Umiya of the Jumaḥ clan, was later bought by Abū Bakr whose client he became. When al-Balādhurī (*Ansāb*, 156 and 197) and Ibn Saʿd (3/1:177) describe the "weak" ones as "people who have no clan and no protection" *(lā ʿashāʾira la-hum wa-lā manʿata)*, all they wish to say is that they were not bound to the community by blood relations. Under normal conditions, to be a client or an ally offered sufficient modus vivendi, but when the situation turned critical, their position within a given clan was weak. However, at such times the members of other clans could not mishandle them. See the correct interpretation of this relationship in Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 95; Paret, *Der Koran. Kommentar und Konkordanz*, 59: "schwach" = "unterdrückt" (sozial und wirtschaftlich abhängig).

[46] IH, 1:357 (see Ibn Saʿd, 3/1:116). His "freedom" did not extend even to an exposure to mistreatment by anybody in the initial—fairly mild— persecutions by Islam. Since he was a client he could be mistreated only by the members of the Zuhra clan (see al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, 178–179). On the nature of the persecutions as determined by the clans, see Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 118–119).

Appendix 2

* This study was first presented in an abridged form at the *23rd Orientalistic Congress* in Paris in 1973. The full text was published under the title, "Quelques remarques sur les conditions foncières dans la communauté muḥammadienne", *AO(H)* 30 (1976):331–340.

[1] It is characteristic that even in summarizing syntheses this problem is mentioned only marginally, see even the most important historical work by Wellhausen, *Das arabische Reich und sein Sturz*, (Berlin, 1960), 18–21, or not at all, see from the most recent publications, Cahen, *Der Islam I. Vom Ursprung bis zu den Anfängen des osmanischen Reiches*, Fischer Weltgeschichte, 14 (Frankfurt am Main, 1968); Shaban, *Islamic history* A.D. 600–750 (A.H. 132). *A new interpretation* (Cambridge, 1971). Watt, who in *Muhammad at Medina*, 250–260, treats the problem at some length, gives only a list of the data of different qualities without even formulating the problems.

[2] The founder and most important representative of this trend was Wellhausen (p. 18, "Die Grundlage für die Besteuerung der Untertanen und überhaupt die Regelung ihres Standes war das altarabische Beuterecht, in der etwas abgeänderten Gestalt, wie es Muhammad im Koran sanktionirt hatte"), but he was criticized already by Hartmann in Zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte des ältesten Islams. *Orientalische Literaturzeitung* 7 (1904):414 n. 1.

[3] See this opinion already in van Berchem, *La propriété territoriale et l'impôt foncier sous les premiers califes (Étude sur l'impôt du Kharāg)* (Geneva, 1886), 11 ("... les musulmans possédaient dès l'origine le droit de propriété foncière"; "... la concession foncière est une création de Mahomet") and 39. See the extremist representation of this in Lammens e.g. *Fāṭima et les filles de Mahomet* (Rome, 1912), 112 (according to him, the Prophet was the greatest landowner of Ḥijāz), and a typical appearance of it in de Planhol, *Le monde islamique. Essai de géographie religieuse* (Paris, 1957) 50, who claimed that Muhammad represented the historically more developed and, after the organization of the state of ʿUmar, institutionalized the more primitive form. ("Les origines de ce système territorial ne romontent pas à Mahomet qui au début de la conquête partageait les terres entres les combattants, mais à Omar qui revint au vieux principe de la propriété collective tribale, sous forme d'une étatisation par le pouvoir central.") The same view is essentially held by Løkkegaard in *Islamic Taxation in the Classic Period* (Copenhagen, 1958), 14–15.

[4] Grohmann *(EI¹*, s.v. *Khaibar)*, for example, considers the conquered Jews left on their land wage-labourers; Caetani, *Annali dell'islam*, I (Milan, 1905), anno VII. §§ 33, 41; anno X § 101, and Pröbster ("Privateigentum und Kollektivismus im Mohamedanischen Liegen-schaftsrecht insbesonders des Maghrib", *Islamica* 4 [1931]:393, 423) calls the conquered Jews private owners.

[5] The analyzed Koran verses are: 8/1, 8/41, 9/29, 59/6–10.

[6] See Hrbek, "Muhammads Nachlass und die Aliden", *Archiv Orientalni* 18 (1950): 143–149; Djizya in *EI²* (1963) (Cahen); idem, "Coran, IX-29: Ḥattā yuʿtūʾl-ǧizyata ʿan yadin wa-hum ṣāǧirūna", *Arabica* 9 (1962), 76–79; for comments on the lattter article see *Arabica* 10

(1963), 11 (1964), 13 (1966); Abel, "La djizya: tribut ou rançon", *Studia Islamica* 32 (1970):5–19.

[7] To Abū Bakr see e.g. Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-kharāj* (Cairo, 1962), 42; al-Yaʿqūbī, 2:113, 115; Ṭabarī, 1:1879; as-Suyūṭī, *Taʾrīkh al-khulafāʾ* (Cairo, 1969), 79; also Sachau, *Der erste Chalife Abū Bakr. Eine Charakterstudie* (Sitzungsbericht der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften) (Berlin, 1903), 33; to ʿAlī see, for example, al-Yaʿqūbī, 1:213; see also Vaglieri, *Sulla origine della denominazione "sunniti"* (Studi orientalistici in onore di G. Levi della Vida), 2 (Rome, 1956), 579 n. 4.

[8] See on this problem: al-Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām as-sulṭānīya* (Cairo, 1960), 200–201, Ibn Khaldūn, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:336; as-Suyūṭī, 143. For some other sources see Matti I. Moosa, "The Dīwān of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb", *Studies in Islam* 2(2) (1965): 68 n. 3.

[9] Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (Berlin, 1953), 18–19.

[10] Marx, op. cit., 390.

[11] See al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-maghāzī* (London, 1966), 683.

[12] 8/41 and Ṭabarī, 1:1362.

[13] al-Wāqidī, loc. cit.

[14] See, for example, al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 38.

[15] See mainly verses 8/1; 8/41; 59/6–10.

[16] IH 2:492; Ṭabarī, 1:1679 (about the dissatisfaction of the *anṣār* which were not included, see IH, 2:498–499; Ṭabarī, 1:1084–1085).

[17] On the former, see Koran 59/6–10; IH,2:192; al-Yaʿqūbī, II:37; Ibn Sallām, *Kitāb al-amwāl* (Cairo, 1934), 7; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 27–28, and on the latter see IH 2:337; al-Wāqidī, 707; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 41; Ṭabarī, 1:1583; Abū Yūsuf, 51.

[18] See note 8.

[19] See on this problem: al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, 519; *Futūḥ*, 42–44; al-Yaʿqūbī, 2:106; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 6:343–345. Hrbek, op. cit., 146, claims that the problem whether Muḥammad meant private ownership or "state owned land"(!) cannot be settled, while according to Hartmann (op. cit., 419 n. 1) it was a *fayʾ*, it was untransferable, personal property ("persönlich und unübertragbar").

[20] See the acquisition of the lands of Banū'n-Naḍīr and Banū Qurayẓa. In these cases, however, the sources do not reveal who was going to till the land. It appears from several passages of *Futūḥ* (al-Balādhurī, 35, 37) that the Prophet and his companions had no men to till the land and, of course, they themselves undertook no job of this kind. This was the argument of the Jews when they persuaded Muḥammad to allow them to stay in Khaibar where they will till the land.

[21] See mainly al-Wāqidī, 663–699; IH, 2:328–344; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 33–41; Ṭabarī, 1:1575–1583; an-Nuwayrī, 17:248–263.

[22] See Marx's relevant observation: "Wird der Mensch selbst als organisches Zubehör des Grund und Bodens mit ihm erobert, so wird er miterobert als eine der Produktionsbedingungen, und so entsteht Sklaverei und Leibeigenschaft, die die ursprünglichen Formen aller Gemeinwesen bald verfälscht und modifiziert, und selbst zu ihrer Basis wird." (*Grundrisse*, 391).

<superscript>23</superscript> al-Wāqidī, 693–695; al-Yaʿūbī, 2:42; an-Nuwayrī, 17:263–264.

<superscript>24</superscript> al-Wāqidī, 697–698 (in the name of tribalism ʿAlī objects to this too).

<superscript>25</superscript> al-Wāqidī, 689–690; an Nuwayrī, 17:263.

<superscript>26</superscript> On the non-distribution of the land see al-Wāqidī, 689 and also 692. On the last story see op. cit., 691.

<superscript>27</superscript> See al-Wāqidī, 688, 690, 694; an-Nuwayrī, 17:263.

<superscript>28</superscript> See e.g. at Khaybar az-Zubayr's *iqṭāʿ* (al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, 41), at Wādī al-Qurā Hamza b. an-Nuʿmān's *iqṭāʿ* (*Futūḥ, 48), also the examples of Abū* Yūsuf (60–62).

<superscript>29</superscript> See e.g. the problem of the land given to at-Tamīm ad-Dārī and the fictive document about it in Krenkow, "The grant of land by Muḥammad to Tamīm ad-Dārī, *Islamica* 1 (1924–1925): 529–532.

<superscript>30</superscript> Altheim and Stiehl, *Finanzgeschichte*, 117–140, 157–163 (mainly 162–163).

Appendix 3

* Appeared first in French in *AO(H)* 27 (1973): 333–343, then in Hungarian in *Keletkutatás* (1974), 41–50.

<superscript>1</superscript> After Wellhausen's pioneering and in many respects still paradigmatic work (mainly *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten* no. 4, Berlin, 1889), see the important historical philological comments about the definition of *umma* by L. Massignon in *L'Umma et ses synonymes: notion de "communauté sociale" en Islam: REI* (1941–1946), 151–157 (*Opera minora*, 1 [Paris, 1969]: 97–103). For the sake of future research the question might be raised whether Massignon has noticed synonyms or some essential differences based on equality, where the point under discussion concerns only certain aspects of *umma* (such as in the case of *milla* or *jamāʿa*). For the theoretical sociological formulation of the problems, see the study by J. H. Kramer, "La sociologie de l'Islam" (first published in 1951) *Analecta Orientalia* 2 (Leyden 1956): 184–193; "L'état musulman" (first published in 1951), op. cit., 194–201); "L'Islam et la démocratie" (first published in 1948), op. cit., 168–183. See also I. Lichtenstädter, "From particularism to unity: Race, nationality and minorities in the early Islamic empire", *Islamic Culture* 23 (1949): 251–280; W. M. Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, 238–244 and 264–267 in particular, and by the same author, *Islam and the Integration of Society* (London, 1961); C. A. O. v. Nieuwehuijze, "The *Umma*—an analytic approach", *Studia Islamica* no. 10 (1959): 5–22; G. E. von Grunebaum, "The nature of Arab unity before Islam", *Arabica* no. 10 (1963): 5–23. In the latter the author tries to apply the unhistorical archetypes of F. Meinecke (*Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*, Munich and Berlin, 1928<superscript>7</superscript>) to Arab development.

<superscript>2</superscript> See R. B. Serjeant's article: "The Constitution of Medina" (*The Islamic Quarterly* 8/1–2 (1964): 3–16, in which the author raises some insufficiently proved aspects and divides the constitution of Medina into eight parts on the basis of purely formal criteria.

<superscript>3</superscript> I. Lichtenstädter, "Fraternization *(Muʾākhāt)* in early Islamic society", *Islamic Culture* 16 (1942): 47–52.

<superscript>4</superscript> Because this phenomenon is difficult to interpret, some of the sources do not even mention it: e.g. al-Yaʿqūbī, considering whose pro-alide bias, it is surprising that he does not mention the *muʾākhāh* of ʿAlī and Muḥammad which figures in other sources (the assistance given by *anṣār* to *muhājirūn* after the Hijra is only indicated in general: *wa-qadimaʾl-*

muhājirūna fa-nazalū manāzila' l-anṣār fa-wāsū-hum bi'd-diyār wa'l-amwāl. See Ta'rīḫ al-Yaʿqūbī, *an-Najaf,* (A.H. 1358 [A.D. 1939]) 2:31. It is of particular importance that Ṭabarī does not mention the episode, nor does, among the researchers, Nöldeke in *Geschichte des Qorans,* Part 1, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1909), 189, when analyzing verse 76 of *Sūrat al-anfāl,* moreover, about verse 75, doubting its interpretation as *āya nāsikha,* he makes it clear that he misunderstood the phenomenon. It is also characteristic that when discussing verse 6 of *Sūrat al-aḥzāb* (Part 1, 207), he fails to mention this problem. Paret too mentions this problem only incidentally, without referring to the possibility of a link between it and *mu'ākhāh* in *Der Koran, Kommentar und Konkordanz* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne, Mainz 1971), 192–193 (to 8/72 and 75), 398 (to 33/6).

⁵ See, for example, L. Caetani, *Annali dell'Islam* I (Milan, 1905), 409, n. 2, §50; Buhl, *Das Leben Mohammeds* (Heidelberg, 1961), 208–209.

⁶ Lammens, "Le triumvirat Aboū Bakr, ʿOmar et Aboū ʿObaida", *Mélanges de la faculté orientale de Beyrouth,* 6 (1910), 133, n. 2.

⁷ Buhl, op. cit., 208; see also *EI¹,* s.v. *Muḥammad* (Buhl), 3:700.

⁸ See Caetani, op. cit. 408. At the same time the author observes in note 2 on page 409, that perhaps the *mu'ākhāh* can be interpreted as a political experiment of Muhammad which, however, did not bring the result expected by him. E. Sachau too has ventured this statement without going into the importance or nature of the experiment (see Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb aṭ-ṭabaqāt al-kabīr,* vol. 3, Introduction, 3 [Leyden, 1904]: xxxiv).

⁹ See Watt, *Muhammad at Medina,* 248–249. The author established no link between *mu'ākhāh* and *umma,* and definitely believes the first to be a continuation of pre-Islamic *ḥilf.* This peculiar interpretation is based on Wāqidī's two passages and, as an extension of this, he doubts the unambiguous report of the sources about the data of "abolition", though there are examples of several other types proving the preservation and continuity of *mu'ākhāh* even after the abolition of inheritance following the battle of Badr. Further, while it might be understandable that before the battle of Badr strategy might have been one of the important functions of *mu'ākhāh,* this necessity is in no way convincing when applied to 627 or 628 (A.H. 8 or 9). It is particularly unacceptable why it would have been necessary to take recourse to the tool of pre-Islamic *ḥilf* as Watt too simplifies, that is, misinterprets the function of *mu'ākhāh.*

¹⁰ About *ḥilf,* see *EI²,* 3 (1971): 388–389, s.v. *ḥilf* (E. Tyan); see also Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Hūfī, *al-Ḥayāt al-ʿarabīya min aš-šiʿr al-jāhilī* (Cairo, 1962), 285–293. In the earlier literature Goldziher's work, *Muhammedanische Studien,* Part 1 (1883), 63–69, is still of fundamental importance. In this excellent historical-philological analysis, the historical function of *ḥilf* appears quite clearly:
(a) ḥilf or *taḥāluf* was the inherent attribute of the primary (tribal) community bound together by kinship and its main function was to create a union of groups of various sizes, based first on fictive, later on true kinship. Goldziher is probably right when he states, without exaggerating the role of *ḥilf* in tribal society, that probably *taḥāluf* can be considered the original form of Arab tribalism (p. 64). In accordance with his *muruwwa-dīn* theory, he assigns *ḥilf* to the *muruwwa* category as one of the most highly esteemed values of the latter (p. 68 n. 7).
(b) ḥilf as the tool, form, and symbol of fundamental importance to the peculiarism of tribal society, is essentially alien to the union of secondary (Muslim) community not based on the bonds of kinship (p. 69). This is expressed in a dignified and concise way by the *ḥadīṯ*

(attributed to Muhammad): *lā ḥilf fi'l-islām*, whose true or fictive supplementation providing a transition and compromise *(lā ḥilf fi'l-islām walākin tamassakū bi-ḥilf al-jāhilīya)* refers back even more the institution of *ḥilf* to pre-Islamic tribalism. The types of *ḥilf*, that is, the various functions of *ḥilf* mentioned by E. Tyan (loc. cit.) reveal quite clearly that *ḥilf* has been an inter-tribal institution in the service of tribalism. The *ḥilf-walā* form, provided it was maintained within the Islam, particularly in the Omayyad period, was just as much subject to the territorially organized state, as the preserved remaining elements of tribalism were subject to *umma* organized on the basis of non-kinship. We know that Muslim tradition claims that *mu'ākhāh* is a special case of *ḥilf* (see *EI*[1], 3:584–585, s.v. *Mīrāth* [J. Schacht]). Current Arab research too reflects this view, see, for example Aḥmad Ibrāhīm aš-Šarīf, *ad-Dawla al-islāmīya al-ūlā* (Cairo, 1965), 68–69: *wa'l-mu'ākhāh tasmīya islāmīya li'n-niẓām al-'arabī al-qadīm wa-huwa niẓām al-ḥilf.*

[11] Lichtenstädter, *Fraternization*, 47; *From Particularism*, 258.

[12] *Fraternization*, 49–51. The single novelty in Lichtenstädter's article might be the emphasis on this Meccan *mu'ākhāh*. It is, however, historically impossible to find a place for the Meccan *mu'ākhāh* within the kinship-determined conditions of the Meccan period (neither the later sources nor Lichtenstädter tried to do this) for in the Meccan period of the development of Islam this institution of a new type would not have had a real function. In fact, in this period the *ḥilf* or *jiwār* between the clans *('ashira)* or within the clan of various units *(faṣīla, rahṭ)* and an outsider, could have represented the sole protective or other relationship. On the other hand, the majority of those mentioned by later sources as the "brothers" of the Meccan *mu'ākhāh* could be the least in need of such a relationship. We know from the Sīra an important exception, namely, of Abū Bakr who belonged to the relatively weak Banū Taym, but asked not for the *jiwār* of 'Umar of the Banū 'Adi—who, according to late sources, was the supposed Meccan "brother" of Abū Bakr—but of Ibn ad-Dughunna, a member of the Banū'l-Ḥārith b. 'Abd Manāt b. Kināna. See IH, 1:372–374. About the nature of persecutions and the role of the protection of the clans, see Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca*, 117–119. Even more than the obviously fictive pairs (for example pairs for whom the term itself is contradictory, such as Muhammad-'Alī or Hamza-Zayd b. Ḥāritha who belonged to the same clan) the supposition of "pairs" as, e.g., the pair formed by 'Ubayda b. al-Ḥārith belonging to the definitely poor and powerless Banū'-Muṭṭalib (see Watt, op. cit., 88–89) and Bilāl who was first the slave *(muwallad)* of a member of the Banū Jumaḥ and became, after his conversion in the Meccan period and before the Abyssinian emigration, the *mawlā* of Abū Bakr (see IH, 1:317–318), and then in the course of the Medinese *mu'ākhāh*, the "brother" of Abū Ruwayḥa 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abd ar-Raḥmān al-Khath'amī (see IH, 1:506–507). Besides theoretical historical considerations, the non-existence of a Meccan *mu'ākhāh* is proved primarily by the *argumentum ex silentio*, that is, the silence of the early sources (such as of the Qur'ān itself, of Ibn Isḥāq, Ibn Hishām, al-Wāqidī, Ibn Sa'd, al-Balādhurī) to quote only sources which mention the Medinese *mu'ākhāh*. It is also characteristic that in connection with the *mu'ākhāh*, Lichtenstädter uses, besides Ibn Isḥāq, Ibn Habib and (only incidentally) Ibn Sa'd, only late sources without even mentioning the pertaining passages of the Qur'ān or al-Balādhurī, Bukhārī or an-Nuwayrī.

[13] The extension of this false theoretical conception also characterizes Lichtenstädter's study, "From Particularism", published seven years later in *Islamic Culture* in 1949, in which, among the factors strengthening pre-Islamic and early Islamic unity, he attributes a fundamental role to the institutions of *ḥilf, jiwār*, and *walā'*. It is hardly necessary to prove that historically these institutions served definitely the particularism of tribal society, the

quantitative changes and functioning of single separate units, and that by their help no qualitatively new unit beyond the tribe, that is, beyond an ephemeral tribal alliance, could arise. It is a well-known fact that in the first century of the Islam, in the Arabian Empire the survival of these tribal elements represented the organizing principle, the frame, and base of the centrifugal forces against the unity of *umma*, and last but not least, the particularism materialized in them caused the collapse of the Omayyids and the qualitative reorganization of the army.

[14] Ibn Isḥāq fails to give the exact date, but he discusses the event before mentioning the death of Asʿad b. Zurāra, the chieftain of Banūʾn-Naǧǧār. He connects the two events as follows: *wa-halaka fī tilka'l-ashur...* (IH, 1:507). We know that the second event is certain to have taken place a few months after the Hijra, see Ṭabarī, 1:1260. In al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb* (270–271), only the location of the discussion reveals that the event must have occurred within not more than one year after the Hijra. Ibn Saʿd defines the event as *lammā qadima rasūl Allāh...ākhā...* (I/2:1), and an-Nuwayrī, as *Nihāya al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (p. 347). From the story told by Bukhārī several times with various *isnād*s (al-Bukhārī, *Sahih*, Cairo, A.H. 1378 [A.D. 1958], 3:68–69; 5:38–39 and 88) the conclusion can be drawn that it could have happened immediately after the Hijra (see Ibn Saʿd, 3/1:89).

[15] With reference to al-Wāqidī, see al-Balādhurī (p. 271: *wa-qāla'l-Wāqidī: wa'l-ʿulamāʾ yunkirūna'l-muʾākhāh baʿd Badr wa-yaqūlūna: qataʿat Badr al-mawārīth*. See Ibn Saʿd, 1/2:1; an-Nuwayrī, 16:348. For the interpretation of the problematic verse 8/75, it is important to know that an-Nuwayrī quotes this verse as the one revealed after Badr, and not verse 33/6 mentioned by several sources. It is a significant fact that the part referring to *muʾākhāh* agrees word for word. See also al-Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr*, 553 ad 33/6.

[16] Muhammad did not do this even when after the death of Asʿad b. Zurāra he became the *naqīb* of the Banūʾn-Najjār. See IH, 1:507–508 (Ṭabarī, 1:1260). At the same time, he could live in Mecca, even after the death of Abū Ṭālib in 619, only within tribalism, the framework of tribal society. When Abū Lahab became the chieftain, Muhammad lost the support of his clan and had to look for support, but still within the framework of tribalism. After the very typical failure of the Ṭāʾif intermezzo, he was forced to seek a protector *(mujīr)* before being able to enter Mecca. Muhammad asked first al-Akhnas b. Sarīq, whose answer was: *inna'l-halīf la yujīru ʿalāʾṣ-ṣarīḥ* (Ṭabarī, 1:1203). Next, he turned to Suhayl b. ʿAmr of the Banū ʿĀmir b. Luʾaiy who refused to grant his request, but finally Muṭʿim b. ʿAdī of the Banū Nawfal agreed to become his protector (al-Balādhurī, 237; Ṭabarī, 1:1203).

[17] The great Dutch orientalist, Snouck-Hurgronje, was the first to recognize the decisive role of the process of development of Abraham's religion in his doctor's thesis written in 1880. See now in French "Le pélerinage à la Mecque", in Snouck-Hurgronje, *Œuvres choisies*, 171–213. The recently suggested modification of Snouck-Hurgronje's concept (E. Beck, "Die Gestalt Abrahams am Wendepunkt der Entwicklung Muhammeds" *Le Muséon* 65, 1/2 (1952): 73–94; and Y. Moubarac, *Abraham dans le Coran. L'histoire d'Abraham dans le Coran et la naissance de l'Islam* [Paris, 1958]) does not alter the essential statement. The important feature in Abraham's religion is not whether Muhammad himself had created it from nothing, as claimed by Snouck-Hurgronje, or it can be detected already in the Meccan *sūra*s and there might be some pre-Islamic traces of the link between Abraham's religion and the Kaʾaba as proposed by Beck and later by Moubarac, but the qualitatively new function or functions of *millat Ibrāhīm* in the religious and ideological differentiation of Islam. And this could arise only after the Hijra with a consistency and importance leading to the evolution of a system.

[18] The *Muhājirūn* started their plundering attacks against the Meccan caravans in the second year according to Ibn Ishāq (1:590), and according to Waqidi (*Muhammad in Medina, das ist Vakidi's Kitāb al-Maghāzī, in verkürzter deutscher Wiedergabe* by J. Wellhausen [Berlin, 1882], 35–36; see Ṭabarī, 1:1266) already in the first year of Hijra. The sources claim that until Muhammad's death the Muslims raided the caravans at least seventy times and the importance of these raids is confirmed by Muhammad's presence in at least half of them (IH, 2:608–609, claims that Muhammad participated in twenty-seven of sixty-five raids according to Ibn Saʿd, Muhammad took part in twenty-seven out of seventy-five raids, 2/1:1; and Ṭabarī, in 1:1756–1757, knows of twenty-six out of sixty-one in which Muhammad was present. When assessing these raids it is of fundamental importance—and it is for this reason we have laid an emphasis on them—that the Meccan Muslims fought against the members of their own tribe and clan. This point has been recognized and stressed also in the Koran 22/39; 2/216; 2/224–225; 47/4–5. See the lesson of the raid of Nakhla A.H. (Rajab 2, that is, A.D. January 624) with respect to the violation of the holy month, an important institution of tribal society (see 2/217).

[19] See Koran 8/72, 4/89, 94.

[20] This is indicated by the *qibla* of Jerusalem in the first 17th to 18th month of the hijra (Ibn Saʿd, 1/2:2; Ṭabarī, 1:1280–1281), by the acceptance of *'asūrā'* (Ṭabarī, 1:1281), as well as by the midday religious service (see Koran 2/238).

[21] See the conditions of *ahl as-suffa* and specifically the story of Wāthila b. al-Asqaʿ (see al-Balādhurī, 272).

[22] S. O. Goitein in his work, "The four faces of Islam" (in *Studies in Islamic History* [Leyden, 1966], 35), when discussing the development of Muhammadan *umma* makes some observations which point out the link between the calculated programme and flexible strategy of Muhammad.

[23] See other parallels: 4/89–91, 95 to 100, and on the interpretation of these verses see Paret, op. cit., 100, 103, and 192–193 (he interprets *walāya* as "Freundschaft" and "Pflicht zur Hilfeleistung"). Muhammad's choice of the word is remarkable because, although it was borrowed from tribal society, yet possessed such general and multiple meaning that he could use it for his own purpose.

[24] In accordance with the narrower function of *mu'ākhāh* in the sources, and also because of 33/6 linked to the verse, the commentators supplement or restrict *ūlā'ika ba'du-hum awliyā'u ba'din* to *fī'l-mīrāt*. See, for example, al-Bayḍāwī, 246; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr*, 152.

[25] See the same verse 8/75.

[26] IH, 1:505.

[27] al-Bayḍāwi, 553 (ad 33/6). The other term is more explicit but more biased: *at-tawārut bi'l-hijra* (loc. cit.).

[28] Ibn Saʿd, 1/2:1 (with the same words: an-Nuwayrī, 16:347) and a similar expression in al-Balādhurī, 277.

[29] al-Bukhārī, 5:39 (the *isnād:* aṣ-Ṣalt b. Muhammad Abū Hammām–al-Mughīra b. ʿAbd ar-Rahmān–Abū'z-Zinād–al-Aʿraǧ–Abū Huraira.

[30] al-Bukhārī, 3:68–69; 5:38–39 and 88 *(fa-aqsimu mālī nisfayni wa-li'mra'tāni fa-'nzur a'jaba-huma ilay-ka fa-sammi-hā lī utalliq-hā)*.

CHRONOLOGY

ca. 210	The first king of Axum (Abyssinia) is mentioned.
226–241	Artakhshēr I (Ardashīr), founder of the Iranian Sassanid dynasty. The buffer-state of the Lakhmids probably came into being during his reign.
December 7, 328	Death of the first historically known Lakhmid, the famous Imru'l-Qays. The inscription (REA, I/1–2) of Nemāra, between Damascus and Bostra, is the first Arabic monument still using Nabataean characters. The power of the king was extended to Central Arabia, his expedition against Najrān was successful, and he had control over an important trade route, the Strata Diocletiana. The growing power of the Lakhmids was probably in close connection with the destruction of Palmyra in 272–273.
420–438	The reign of Varhrān V (Bahrām Gōr) in Iran. The favourite of later historical and poetical tradition, he grew up in the court of the Lakhmid King al-Mundhir b. an-Nuʿmān. According to a quite probable Arabic–Persian historical tradition, he composed verse(s) in Arabic which, according to our present knowledge, would be the first traceable beginnings of (North) Arabic poetry (see Altheim and Stiehl: *Finanzgeschichte*, 373–376).
431	The oecumenical Council of Ephesus. Condemnation of Nestorius' teachings.
before 450	Sembruthes, king of Axum. The Abyssinians occupied Yemen during his reign.
after 450	Reign of ʿEzana in Abyssinia. He converted to Monophysite Christianity after 452.
451	The Council of Chalcedon. Condemnation of the Nestorian and Monophysite doctrines. Part of the Nestorians emigrate to Iran, and part of the Monophysites to Abyssinia.
450(?)–ca. 475	The Kindite Hujr b. ʿAmr, Ākil al-Murār. His rule extended to a great part of Central Arabia.

459–484	The reign of Pērōz (Fīrūz) in Iran, characterized by declining economy (seven years of famine, wars) and unsuccessful wars against the Hephtalites (in the first collision he was captured and ransomed with Byzantine money, in the second collision he lost his life).
474–493	The Lakhmid al-Aswad b. al-Mundhir.
484–488	The reign of Balāsh (Valakhsh) in Iran, characterized by the growing strength of aristocracy.
488–531	The reign of Kawād (Qubādh I) in Iran, during which arose the Mazdakite movement. He initiated a tax reform (completed by his son), indicating the decline of the aristocracy and a strengthening of the royal power.
?–ca. 490	The Kindite ʿAmr al-Maqṣūr, during whose reign the power of Kinda regressed and the Rabīʿa tribe became independent.
ca. 490–528	The reign of the Kindite al-Hārith b. ʿAmr, which coincides with the golden age of the tribal alliance of Kinda.
491–518	The reign of Anastasius I in Byzantine.
494–500	The reign of the Lakhmid al-Mundhir II b. al-Mundhir.
500–503	The reign of the Lakhmid an-Nuʿmān II b. al-Aswad.
ca. 500	The reign of the Ghassānid Abū Shamir Jabala.
502–504	Persian–Byzantine war.
502	Byzantine embassy of Euphrasius, the grandfather of Nonnosus, to the Kindite al-Hārith b. ʿAmr. Peace treaty.
503	Kinda occupies Ḥīra for the first time.
503–505	The Lakhmid Abū Yaʿfur b. ʿAlqama.
ca. 505–554	The Lakhmid al-Mundhir III b. an Nuʿmān. Under his reign the buffer-state of the Lakhmids reached its greatest size and influence on the Arabian peninsula after 528.
after 505	Najrān converts to Monophysite Christianity.
516	The Lakhmid al-Mundhir attacks the Arabian peninsula and loses the battle against the Himyarite Maʿdikarib Yaʿfur (Ry 510).
517	The beginning of the reign of Dhū Nuwās (Yūsuf Asʿar Yathkhʾar) in Yemen. The first Abyssinian expedition (Ry 507–508: "The book of Himyarites" 7b:CV). Dhū Nuwās first lost, then, with the help of the Lakhmid al-Mundhir III, recaptured the capital, Zafār and the other territories occupied by the Abyssinians.
518–527	The reign of Justin I in Byzantium. From the very beginning of his reign, his nephew, Justinian, determined the activities of the empire and laid the foundations of a manifold (political, military,

	ideological, commercial) "eastern" policy which decisively influenced the life of the Arabian peninsula for 50 years.
518	Occupation of Najran. Persecution of Christians.
524	Embassy of Nonnosus's father, Abramos, to the Lakhmid al-Mundhir III to ransom the two Byzantine strategos, Timostratos and Ioannes.
525	The second Yemenite expedition: Conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians. Death of Dhū Nuwās (CIH 621).
525–535(?)	Governorship of Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ in Yemen (RES 3904).
525–528	The Kindite al-Hārith occupies Hīra for the second time. This event was probably connected with the Mazdakite movement (i.e. al-Hārith probably supported and al-Mundhir opposed it, inducing Khusraw Anōsharwān to help the latter regain his "throne" after having settled accounts with the Mazdakite movement).
527–532	Persian–Byzantine war.
527–565	The reign of Justinian I in Byzantium.
ca. 528	Abramos' embassy to the Kindite Qays to renew the peace treaty of 502.
528–529	Defeat of the Mazdakite movement. Return of the Lakhmid King al-Mundhir. Disintegration of the tribal alliance of Kinda.
529–569	The Ghassānid al-Hārith b. Jabala. After the less well-known beginnings (mentioned in the sources since 502), the buffer-state of the Ghassānids was founded. The period of the reign of al-Hārith is the golden age of the Ghassānids.
ca. 530	The embassy of Nonnosus to the Kindite Qays, to the Yemenite governor of the Abyssinians, Sumayfaʿ Ashwaʿ, and the Abyssinian Ella Aṣbeḥa in the matter of creating a broad anti-Persian Ethiopian, Arabian, Himyarite coalition,
April 19, 531	Battle of Callinicium. Of the 8,000 soldiers in Belisarius's army 5,000 were men of the Ghassānid al-Hārith b. Jabala. The Persians and the Lakhmids win. al-Mundhir sacrifices 400 prisoners.
531–578	The reign of Khusraw Anōsharwān in Iran, during which the central power gains in strength founded on the reforms of taxation and of the army. In this period Byzantium was unable to realize the organization of direct trade with the East, nor oriental trade through middlemen. This was the time when the Lakhmids extended their influence, in the service of Iran, to Central and North Arabia, and the time of the occupation of Yemen by the Persians.
ca. 530–531	Abramos' second embassy to Qays, whom he persuades to go with his men to Constantinople and receives *Palestina tertia*.

532	Persian–Byzantine peace treaty.
535–558	Abraha's Yemenite governorship (reign).
539	The Ghassānid al-Hārith b. Jabala attacks the Lakhmid al-Mundhir b. an-Nuʿmān. The *Strata Diocletiana* conflict.
540–545	Persian–Byzantine war, initiated characteristically by the conflict between the buffer-states.
541–542	Led by Yazīd b. Kabshat, the Yemenite *qayls* revolted against Abraha. Destruction and reconstruction of the dam of Maʾrib (Gl 618).
Autumn 542	According to inscription Gl 618, several embassies had visited Abraha (among others, Byzantine, Abyssinian, Ghassānid embassies). The famous expedition in 547 was, to a great part, a consequence of these embassies.
ca. 544	In the battle between the Lakhmids and the Ghassānids, one of al-Hārith b. Jabala's sons is captured by the Lakhmid al-Mundhir who sacrifices him to the goddess al-ʿUzzā.
545	Persian–Byzantine peace treaty.
547	Abraha's expedition against Central and North Arabia (Ry 506). This expedition is the same as the famous "War of the Elephant" of Meccan tradition (Koran: *sura* 105) which, according to this tradition, occurred in the year Muḥammad was supposed to have been born (in 570).
after 547	The Meccans organize *ḥums*, their institution of religious amphictyony.
551	Persian–Byzantine peace treaty.
554–569	The Lakhmid ʿAmr b. al-Mundhir.
557	Persian–Byzantine peace treaty.
557– before 561	The Persians and the Turcs put an end to the Hephtalite Empire.
558–572	Yaksūm b. Abraha's Yemenite governorship (reign).
ca. 560	End of Jewish rule in Medina, power is taken over by Aws and Khazraj. This event indicates the near end of the Lakhmid–Persian influence in North Arabia.
561	Persian–Byzantine peace treaty. The peace treaty preserved by Malalas contains the famous commercial paragraphs on the buffer-states. The first embassy of the Red Huns (Hephtalites) in Byzantium.
Autumn 565	The second embassy of the Red Huns in Byzantium.
565–578	The reign of Justin II in Byzantium.
570–580/582	The Ghassānid king al-Mundhir II. According to John of Ephesus, when visiting Constantinople, he received a crown from Tiberius "not one of the Arab chieftains have so far been

	permitted to wear". He was accused in 580 to be a friend of Persia and was exiled to Sicily.
572	Led by Wahriz, the Persians conquer Yemen.
572–591	Persian–Byzantine war.
ca. 572–576	Rule of Ma'dikarib Sayf Dhī Yazan in Yemen.
577–580	The Lakhmid Qabūs b. al-Mundhir.
578–582	The reign of Tiberius II in Byzantium.
578–590	The reign of Ohrmazd in Iran.
580–583	The Lakhmid al-Mundhir IV b. al-Mundhir.
581(?)–582	The Ghassānid an-Nu'mān. According to Nöldeke, it is not certain that he reigned under his own name. When Byzantium stopped the allowances (*annonae*), he revolted, but was captured and imprisoned. This practically meant the end of the Ghassānid buffer-state, although several Ghassānids were mentioned later (al-Hārith b. al-Hārith b. Jabala; his son; al-Hārith al-Aʿraj; Abū Hujr an-Nu'mān; 'Amr; Hujr b. an-Nu'mān) about whose role we know nothing. The Syrian attack on the Persians whipped them finally out in 614.
582–602	The reign of Mauritius in Byzantium.
ca. 582–602	The reign of the Lakhmid an-Nu'mān III.
590–628	The reign of Khusraw Parwēz in Iran.
593	The Lakhmid an-Nu'mān III is the first of the Lakhmids to convert to Nestorian Christianity.
ca. 594	The Harb al-Fijār. During the many years of war, with five famous battles (the five "days": Yawm Nakhla, Yawm Shamta', Yawm al-ʿAblā':, Yawm 'Ukāz) which the Quraysh fought against the Hawāzin tribe, interested as guides in the trade of the Lakhmids, they succeeded in disposing the Lakhmids from transit trade on the Arabian peninsula.
After 594–before 600	'Uthmān b. al-Huwayrith's attempt to establish Byzantine supremacy or control in Mecca.
ca. 595	The Hilf al-Fudūl. The real function of the "Alliance of the Truthful Ones" was formed after the Harb al-Fijār to unite the economically weaker Meccan clans (B. Hāshim, al-Muttalib, Asad, Zuhra, Taym) which could not organize independent caravans to Yemen, but profited from the activities of the Yemenite tradesmen who came to Mecca. They were probably formed when the economically powerful Meccans, B. Makhzūm and B. 'Abd Shams—completing a process—put an end to the activities of Yemenite tradesmen on the incense-route.
602–627	Persian–Byzantine war.

602–610	The reign of Phocas in Byzantium.
604–610	The battle of Dhū Qār. The victory of the Arabian Bakr tribe over a Persian army.
604–626	Persian governors in Hīra.
605	Rebuilding of the Ka'ba.
610–641	The reign of Heraclius in Byzantium.
610	Successful Bedouin–Arab raid in Syria. This raid showed the military–political vacuum which came about as a result of the disappearance of the Ghassānid buffer-state.
614	The Persians occupy Jerusalem.

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