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BANŪ KINDA IN HADJAR IN THE SECOND HALF  
OF THE 6TH CENTURY

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**Abstract:** *This study deals with a particular aspect of the history of the Banū Kinda tribal confederation, namely, with its domination over Hadjar (North-Eastern Arabia). The Kindite rulers of Hadjar were descendants of Mu'āwiya al-Djawn ('the Black'), son of Ḥudjr, founder of the Kindite royal house and vassal of the kings of Himyar and Saba (Yemen). Mu'āwiya and his son al-Ḥārith ruled over Yamama, whereas al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Amr al-Harrāb ('the War-Wager'), the famous king and warrior, who belonged to a different branch of the Kindite royal family, moved to the north-east and became a vassal of the Sasanids. In the 520–530-es the Sasanids and their Lakhmid vassals persecuted al-Ḥārith Ibn 'Amr and his subjects, which made it necessary for al-Ḥārith Ibn Mu'āwiya to move from Yamama to the region of Mecca. Afterwards Mu'āwiya, son of al-Ḥārith Ibn Mu'āwiya, became a vassal of Abraha, the Ethiopian ruler of Yemen, resuming the old Kindite practice of serving rulers of Yemen. In 553–554 Abraha got possession of the Arabs from the Hadjar region and appointed Mu'āwiya his governor over it. Mu'āwiya built al-Mushakkar, the principal fortress of Hadjar. Lakhmid king 'Amr III (554–569) in the beginning of his reign drove the Kindites out of Hadjar, but after his death they recovered it. Mu'āwiya ruled over Hadjar in the time of al-Nu'mān III's reign in al-Ḥīra (579–601). Before the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century Banū Kinda left Hadjar, which may have been due to Mu'āwiya's death, and migrated to South Arabia.*

**Keywords:** pre-Islamic Arabia, Hadjar, Banū Kinda, Lakhmids, Sasanids.

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The history of the Banū Kinda tribal confederation is a subject which by all means is worth efforts to study. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century Banū Kinda, then vassals of the kings of the united state of Himyar and Saba, undertook a number of large-scale campaigns in Arabia. King Ḥudjr of Banū Kinda, nicknamed 'Eater of Bitter Plants' (*Ākil al-murār*), resided in al-Ghamr (placed by Muslim geographers on the way from Baghdad to Mecca, not far from the latter), which for a time became the Kindite capital. Ḥudjr's grandson al-Ḥārith the War-Wager (*al-Harrāb*) advanced further to the north, and Banū Kinda arrived at the frontiers of Byzantium and the Sasanid state. Banū Kinda failed in their attacks upon Byzantium but were more successful in the East. They dealt a strong blow to the Lakhmids, Arab rulers of al-Ḥīra, who governed Arab tribes on the Sasanids' behalf. In the early 510-es al-Ḥārith the War-Wager seized al-Ḥīra. Lakhmid king al-Mundhir III (512/13–554)<sup>1</sup> was compelled to flee. Some time later, evidently through the efforts of Sasanid king Kavad I (488–498/99, 501–531), a settlement was achieved. Al-Ḥārith became a vassal of Kavad, leaving his former masters, kings of Himyar and Saba, and went with those Banū Kinda who were subject to him to stay in the Sasanid possessions

<sup>1</sup> Dates of Lakhmid kings' reigns are examined in detail in my History of the Lakhmid state [Mishin, 2017, p. 27–42].

beyond Euphrates. Al-Mundhir, who did not cease to be a vassal of the Sasanids, returned to al-Hīra. Al-Hārith was expected to help the Sasanids extend their dominion over the tribes of Arabia, yet he did very little in that respect. The Sasanids must have been disappointed. In the late 520-es and the early 530-es the Lakhmids began, with the Sasanids' help, an offensive against al-Hārith. The latter fled to Byzantium and apparently died before long. Al-Hārith's elder sons, whom he had appointed his governors over Arab tribes, perished at about the same time. Imru'-l-Qays, a famous poet and grandson of al-Hārith, went to Byzantium to apply for help against Banū Asad Ibn Khuzayma who had killed his father Ḥudjr. Yet he, if the legends which have come to us are to be trusted, fell victim of courtly intrigues and died of a decease caused by a poison-soaked garment which the emperor sent him<sup>2</sup>.

Ḥudjr the Eater of Bitter Plants, al-Hārith the War-Wager and Imru'-l-Qays invariably enjoy the status of protagonists in Arabic stories and legends concerning Banū Kinda in pre-Islamic times. They overshadow all other Kindite rulers and statesmen, of whom only scattered references have reached us<sup>3</sup>. And yet, those references, although sometimes lacking precision or details, allow for re-constructing the history of another Kindite state formation which was a contemporary of al-Hārith's tribal state but lasted longer for several decades.

Ḥudjr the Eater of Bitter Plants left two heirs among whom his possessions were divided. 'Amr, father of al-Hārith the War-Wager, ruled over the territories in which his father had resided, i.e., first of all, the region of al-Ghamr. Mu'āwiya al-Djawn, the other son, received Yamama [Abū al-Faradj al-Iṣfahānī, 1905, 8, p. 61; Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 399; Muḥammad Ibn Ḥabīb, 1942, p. 369]. Of the latter, as well as of his rule, little is known. He was a brother of 'Amr by both father and mother and was nicknamed *al-Djawn* ('the Black') for the darkness of his skin [Abū al-Faradj al-Iṣfahānī, 1905, 10, p. 33; al-Kalbī, 1988, p. 168]. I supposed once, on the basis of historical context, that it is to Mu'āwiya al-Djawn that Ibn 'Abd Rabbih (860–940) actually refers stating that a certain al-Djawn Ibn Yazīd was the first to conclude an alliance between Banū Kinda and the tribal confederation of Banū Bakr Ibn Wā'il [Mishin, 2017, p. 121].

Following that, the story of Mu'āwiya the Black and his descendants cannot be followed for a while. They re-appear in the sources in quite different circumstances. The extant evidence on them is as follows.

The stories of the Banū 'Abs tribe which belonged to the Ghaṭafān tribal confederation tell that at a certain stage they went to the region of Hadjar. Their goal was to find new dwelling places according to some accounts or merely to buy food according to others. Upon their arrival they entered into treaties with local rulers. In most accounts the Banū 'Abs' counterpart is the tribe of Banū Sa'd Ibn Zayd Manāt of the Banū Tamīm confederation. Yet Ibn al-Athīr (1160–1233) states that the Banū 'Abs dealt with the ruler of Hadjar called Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith al-Kindī. However, the latter soon changed his mind and decided to attack them. This scenario occurs in other accounts as well, although in a slightly different form: it is said that Banū Sa'd addressed Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Djawn, the king of Hadjar (and, according to one story, of Banū Sa'd as well) and proposed to jointly destroy Banū Kinda and share the booty. The king agreed and set off with his troops, planning to suddenly attack early in the morning, which was then a usual element of Arabic military tactics. Yet Banū 'Abs had been warned of his approach and left their camp. Mu'āwiya and Banū Sa'd pursued them and in the morning reached them near the wadi<sup>4</sup> of al-Farūḳ, in half a day of march from the place where a largely known

<sup>2</sup> Here again I would suggest to address my History of the Lakhmid state [Mishin, 2017, p. 108–162].

<sup>3</sup> It is approximately the same in works by 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars. They usually do not examine the rule of the descendants of Mu'āwiya the Black in Hadjar and do not go beyond mentioning the latter as a brother of 'Amr, son of Ḥudjr, who ruled in Yamama ['Alī, 1993, 3, p. 327; Farrūkh, 1964, p. 87; al-Kindī, 2000, p. 81; Olinder, 1927, p. 47; al-Shaykh, 1993, p. 168].

<sup>4</sup> Al-Farūḳ is also said to have been a mountain situated beyond the borders of the region of Hadjar, towards Najd.

market was held. The Banū 'Abs stood there in readiness. According to most accounts Banū 'Abs won the battle, although the sources tell us that they did not stay at that place and retreated [ʿAntara, 1964, p. 223, 227; al-Bakrī, 1983, p. 1024; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 1965, p. 158; Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 460; al-Maydānī, 1955, p. 117; al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Salama, 1974, p. 229; Yāqūt, 1977, 4, p. 258; al-Yazīdī, 1998, p. 585].

Ibn al-Athīr then states that following a number of migrations and wars (which, according to him, spread over years) the Banū 'Abs became allies of the tribal confederation of Banū 'Amir and participated as such in the battle in a pass in the mountain of Djabala (*yawm shi'b Djabala*), hereinafter the battle of Djabala [Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 461], which Abū 'Ubayda Ma'mar Ibn al-Muthannā (d. 824/25 or 828/29), to whom we owe much information on Arabic warfare in pre-Islamic times, counts as one of the three major battles of the *Djāhiliyya* period [Ibn Rashīk, 1981, p. 203]. That battle was a part of a long-term struggle between the tribal confederations of Banū 'Āmir and Banū Tamīm. Either party arrived at the battlefield with its allies, among whom we see once again a ruler called al-Djawn. According to a narration by Abū 'Ubayda, which is known to us through Ibn 'Abd Rabbih and al-Nuwayrī (1279–1333), Lakīṭ Ibn Zurāra, the chieftain of Banū Tamīm, gathered a large coalition against Banū 'Āmir. He addressed, among others, al-Djawn al-Kindī who is described as king of Hadjar collecting tributes from Arabs who dwelt in that region. Al-Djawn agreed to help and sent his two sons, Mu'āwiya and 'Amr, to Lakīṭ's aid [al-Bakrī, 1983, p. 366; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 1965, p. 141; al-Nuwayrī, 2004, p. 269]. Ibn al-Athīr mentions 'Amr and Mu'āwiya too, calling each of them Ibn al-Djawn and probable referring to the same persons as mentioned above. In the version of the *Naḳā'id Djarīr wa al-Farazdaq* by al-Yazīdī (b. 843 or 845, d. 922) we see 'Amr and Mu'āwiya, yet they are described as sons of Sharāhīl Ibn 'Amr and grandsons of al-Djawn, that is to say, Mu'āwiya the Black [al-Yazīdī, 1998, p. 574].

In mediaeval accounts of the battle of Djabala some other Kindite chieftains appear as well. Hishām al-Kalbī (b. ca. 737, d. 819 or 819), who in the Middle Ages had the reputation of one best experts on pre-Islamic history, points out, while speaking of the descendants of al-Djawn, son of the Eater of Bitter Plants (i.e. of Mu'āwiya the Black), to two of them who participated in what he terms *yawm Djabala* (the day (i.e. battle) of Djabala), namely, Ḥassān Ibn 'Amr Ibn al-Djawn and Mu'āwiya Ibn Shurāḥbīl Ibn Akhḍar Ibn al-Djawn [al-Kalbī, 1988, p. 171]. Al-Mubarrad (b. 826 or in the early 820-es, d. 899 or 900) mentions Mu'āwiya and Ḥassān, calling both Ibn al-Djawn (son of al-Djawn), and we find the same in the treatise of al-Ḥillī (end of the 11<sup>th</sup> – first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century), a very important source of information on pre-Islamic Arabs [al-Ḥillī, 1984, p. 532; al-Mubarrad, 1998, p. 294]. Ibn Rashīk (999/1000–1064) mentions, on the authority of Abū 'Ubayda, Mu'āwiya and Ḥassān, both with the *nisbaal-Kindī*, but then remarks that, according to another version, it was 'Amr, brother of Mu'āwiya (and not Ḥassān) who participated in the battle [Ibn Rashīk, 1981, p. 203]. Abū-l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī (897/98–967) states that the Banū Kinda were led by Shurāḥbīl Ibn al-Akhḍar, grandson of Mu'āwiya the Black [Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, 1905, 10, p. 33], yet this is likely to be a scribal error for in all other accounts the chieftains' names vary between Mu'āwiya, 'Amr, and Ḥassān.

A more detailed piece of evidence is supplied by al-'Awtabī al-Ṣuḥārī<sup>5</sup>. In his words, the two Kindite chieftains were Ḥassān Ibn 'Amr and Mu'āwiya Ibn Shurāḥbīl Ibn Akhḍar, grandson and grandgrandson of Mu'āwiya the Black (who is referred in the text as son of Ḥudjr) respectively. One of them, apparently, Mu'āwiya Ibn Shurāḥbīl, is said to have married someone from the Banū Badr tribe (belonging to the Banū Fazāra confederation) and have become its king. He arrived at the battlefield leading a troop collected from that tribe. Ḥassān is described as king of Banū Tamīm and commander of their host. It is further stated that the descendants of al-Djawn

<sup>5</sup> The dates of his life are uncertain. It is believed that he must have lived between the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> and that of the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

commanded troops of Banū Fazāra, Banū Dhubyān, Banū al-Ḳayn and Ṭayyi' [al-ʿAwtabī al-Ṣuḥārī, 2006, p. 604, 606]. Ibn Khaldūn (1333–1378/1379) furnishes similar information stating that Ḥassān Ibn ʿAmr Ibn al-Djawn (erroneously written as *al-Djawr*) was the chief of the Banū Tamīm troops, yet he is obviously mistaken as to the second general whom he calls Muʿāwiya Ibn Shuraḥbīl Ibn Ḥiṣn and places at the head of the Banū ʿĀmir [Ibn Khaldūn, 2001, 2, p. 329].

Notwithstanding any divergences in details, mediaeval writers are unanimous in stating that the Banū ʿĀmir and Banū ʿAbs as their allies won a complete victory. Laḳīṭ was killed (according to one account, by famous poet ʿAntara), and his brother Ḥājīb, then very young, was taken prisoner. The Kindite chieftains met a bitter fate. According to Ḥishām al-Kalbī both Ḥassān and Muʿāwiya perished in the battle [al-Kalbī, 1988, p. 171]. Abū ʿUbayda mentions the death of Muʿāwiya [Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, 1965, p. 143; al-Nuwayrī, 2004, p. 270]. In Ibn al-Athīr's narration ʿAmr was killed, and Muʿāwiya taken prisoner [Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 464]. In the most detailed account of al-Yazīdī both ʿAmr and Muʿāwiya were taken prisoners, the former by Banū ʿĀmir, the latter by Banū ʿAbs. ʿAwf Ibn al-Aḥwas of Banū ʿĀmir, who captured ʿAmr, set him free. The Kindite prince set off home but was almost immediately killed by one of the Banū ʿAbs. According to Arabic customs of that time, a prisoner was considered to belong to, and be under protection of, the one who captured him. ʿAwf, to whom a damage was thus caused, accused the Banū ʿAbs of an inappropriate act. Talks were held, and finally Muʿāwiya was handed over to ʿAwf, for the latter to recover his due. ʿAwf put Muʿāwiya to death [al-Yazīdī, 1998, p. 574]. Al-Mubarrad, Ibn Rashīk, and al-Ḥillī tell similar stories, although with some divergences in details. With al-Ḥillī, Ḥassān appears in ʿAmr's stead, and the end is somehow different: it is stated that ʿAwf put Muʿāwiya to death according to some, but set him free according to others [al-Ḥillī, 532–533]. Al-Mubarrad states that Ḥassān was slain and Muʿāwiya was set free for a ransom [al-Mubarrad, 1998, p. 294]. In Ibn Rashīk's version, Muʿāwiya was taken prisoner by ʿAwf, then set free for a ransom and killed on his way home [Ibn Rashīk, 1981, p. 204].

Banū Kinda took part in the following stage of the struggle, which was the battle of Dhū Nadjab. It occurred, according to Ibn al-Athīr, one year after the battle of Djabala [Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 474]. In all accounts of the battle, Banū ʿĀmir, upon dealing the Banū Tamīm a hard blow in the *yawm shiʿb Djabala*, decided to destroy them completely. With that aim, they were active getting ready for war and looking for allies. An ʿĀmirite embassy went to the Kindite king. In Abū ʿUbayda's account, which seems to be the most detailed and trustworthy of all, the king is called Muʿāwiya Ibn al-Djawn. He accepted the alliance proposal and sent two his sons, ʿAmr and Ḥassān, together with their mother Kabsha and one more person belonging to the ruling family, to the ʿĀmirite camp. The king's election of ʿAmr and Ḥassān might well be explained by the words of Yāḳūt (1179–1229), who states that Kabsha was of ʿĀmirite origin. In all other accounts, including the one quoted by al-Yazīdī, the embassy went to Ḥassān Ibn Muʿāwiya, who is also called by his mother's name, Ḥassān Ibn Kabsha. Ibn al-Athīr and Yāḳūt identify Muʿāwiya, the father of Ḥassān, with Muʿāwiya the Black, which is obviously incorrect (the reference in question must be made to Muʿāwiya Ibn al-Ḥārith), but shows that the story must be about the ruler of Hadjar.

Again, the battle ended in a defeat of Banū Kinda and their allies. The Tamīmite tribe of Banū Ḥanzāla, against which the allies' first blow was directed, migrated to where it became protected by another tribe of the same confederation, the Banū Yarbūʿ. The latter fought against the Banū ʿĀmir and Banū Kinda and defeated them. ʿAmr (with al-Yazīdī) or Ḥassān (with Ibn Ḥishām (d. 828/829 or 833), Ibn al-Athīr and Yāḳūt) perished on the battlefield [Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 474; Ibn Ḥishām, 1995, 1, p. 257; Yāḳūt, 1977, 5, p. 261; al-Yazīdī, 1998, p. 474–475, 740–741, 1095].

The dating of those battles is of particular importance. It may be based upon the fact that in the accounts of Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, al-Ḥillī, and al-Nuwayrī a detachment sent by Lakhmid king

al-Nu'mān Ibn al-Mundhir, i. e., al-Nu'mān III (579–601) fought for Banū Tamīm in the battle of Djabala [al-Ḥillī, 1984, p. 227; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, 1965, p. 141; al-Nuwayrī, 2004, p. 245]. The veracity of this evidence may be questioned because Ibn al-Athīr, who provides a detailed account of the battle, does not refer to any involvement of Lakhmid troops [Mishin, 2017, p. 245]. Yet this cannot, of itself, be a reason to discard those references. Yākūt (1179–1229) states that Banū 'Āmir and Banū 'Abs went to passes of the Djabala mountain fearing king al-Nu'mān and Sasanid troops [Yākūt, 1977, 2, p. 387]. Then, more generally, the narration of any particular ancient writer heavily depends on the sources at his hand, and even the same author may omit something he sets forth elsewhere. For instance, Ibn Rashīk provides two accounts of the battle of Djabala. In one, Abū 'Ubayda is said to be the source of information. In the other one, the story is quoted after Abū 'Ubayda's account but as told by Muḥammad Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 860). The first account contains a reference to a detachment under the command of Ḥassān, al-Nu'mān's brother by mother, which participated in the battle, whereas in the second one there is no reference to Lakhmid troops [Ibn Rashīk, 1981, p. 203–204].

Concerning the battle of Djabala, it is worth observing that the Banū Tamīm were led by Laḳīṭ Ibn Zurāra. Arabic stories which I have examined in my History of the Lakhmid state show that Zurāra, Laḳīṭ's father, governed Banū Tamīm earlier, for at least the initial part of the rule of Lakhmid king 'Amr III (554–569) [Mishin, 2017, p. 202–203]. It was later that Laḳīṭ rose to power. This at least is not at variance with the observations made above as to the involvement of Lakhmid troops.

By the time of the events considered above the Banū Kinda who used to be ruled by al-Ḥārith the War-Wager had, as I hope to show elsewhere, migrated to Hadramawt. And yet, in later times we see quite a picture. At least one Kindite ruler who, like al-Ḥārith the War-Wager, belonged to the family of Ḥudjr, possessed Hadjar, was named a king and perceived tributes from Arabic tribes. Moreover, he had enough power to send to war two persons who were rulers of strong tribes. According to some references, Kindite rulers had clients (*ṣanā'ī*) who paid for protection by loyalty and service. Those clients are said to have participated in the battle of Dhū Nadjab [Ibn al-Athīr, 1987, p. 474; al-Yazīdī, 1998, p. 741]. The Banū Kinda of Hadjar, therefore, were not merely a tribe, but had a more advanced social structure.

This picture would be incomplete without understanding what was Hadjar. Ibn al-Faḳīh, a Muslim geographer of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, supplies, on the authority of Abū 'Ubayda, a brief description of the region of Baḥrayn which in the Middle Ages comprised lands from Basra to Oman. Hadjar is described as its capital. Then (perhaps, it is no longer taken from Abū 'Ubayda) Hadjar is said to have three fortresses, al-Ṣafā, al-Mushaḳḳar (with a cathedral mosque), and al-Shab'ān [Ibn al-Faḳīh, 89]. This description, one of the earliest extant, presents Hadjar as it was in Islamic times, but provides a good general overview; furthermore, at least al-Mushaḳḳar and al-Ṣafā are known to have existed already in the pre-Islamic period.

A history of Hadjar has recently been presented by 'A. 'A. al-Djanabī, whose book 'Hadjar, Its Three Fortresses (al-Mushaḳḳar – al-Ṣafā – al-Shab'ān), and Its River al-Muḥallim' was published in 2004. It undoubtedly goes to the author's credit that he successfully connected evidence from written sources and the results of his own field work. Since making an alternative study of such scale would not be possible for a Moscow scholar, I am going to rely upon Mr. al-Djanabī's observations. According to him, the town of Hadjar was situated at the foot of the al-Shab'ān mountain (present-day al-Kāra), on its north-western side. Al-Mushaḳḳar is identified with a hill which stands in the centre of the Qaryat al-Kāra borough and is called Djabal Ra's al-Kāra, and al-Ṣafā, with another hill located to the south-west of the Djabal al-Ḥaṣīṣ mountain [al-Djanabī, 2004, p. 238]<sup>6</sup>. Should we localize this place on a map of present-day

<sup>6</sup> This identification agrees in whole with Chr.-J. Robin's suggestion according to which Hadjar, identified with Gerra / Gerrha of Hellenistic and Roman writers, probably was located in present-day al-Hufuf oasis. [Robin, 2016,

Arabia, the best orienting point would be the same Qaryat al-Kāra situated in some kilometres to the north-east from al-Hufūf.

An interesting piece of information is found in the mediaeval geographical encyclopaedia of Abū 'Ubayd al-Bakrī (b. ca. 1010, d. after 1090/1091). He states that al-Mushakkar was built by a Kindite king called Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith Ibn Mu'āwiya. Formerly, the Banū Kinda's dwellings were in Ḍariyya. Al-Hārith, Mu'āwiya's father, migrated to al-Ghamr, whereas Mu'āwiya built al-Mushakkar [al-Bakrī, 1983, p. 1232].

To understand this reference, it is necessary to look at Ḍariyya. In mediaeval sources it is usually placed on the way from Basra to Mecca [Ibn Khuradādhbih, 1889, p. 146, 190; al-Muḥaddasī, 1906, p. 109]. According to Ibn Sa'd (ca. 784–845), Ḍariyya was situated at a distance of 'seven nights' (*sab' layālī*) of travel from Medina [Ibn Sa'd, 2001, 2, p. 74]. This is a good reason to correct the 1938 edition of al-Mas'ūdī's *Kitāb al-tanbīh wa al-ishrāf*, where the distance in question is specified as 7 miles (*sab' at amyāl*), and to revert to De Goeje's earlier reading *sab' at ayyām* (seven days) [al-Mas'ūdī, 1894, p. 251; al-Mas'ūdī, 1938, p. 218]. A settlement called Ḍariyya exists at present; it is situated between al-Riyadh and Mecca, at a distance of approximately 350 km from the latter. Dividing 350 km by 7, one has a little more than 47 km, a distance which may be covered in a day, or a night, of march. Given this, it may be assumed that al-Hārith Ibn Mu'āwiya brought his Banū Kinda to al-Ghamr from the region of present-day Ḍariyya.

So far, thus, it can be observed:

1. King Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith of Banū Kinda took and re-constructed al-Mushakkar, the main fortress of Hadjar (rather than building it, as al-Bakrī's text would suggest, because the fortress was already in existence). Banū 'Abs applied for help to Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith, the Kindite king of Hadjar. Later on, king Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Djawn sent a detachment which participated in the battle of Dhū Nadjab.

2. In the battle of Djabala the Kindite troops sent by the king of Hadjar were commanded by descendants of Mu'āwiya the Black, son of Hudjr the Eater of Bitter Plants.

3. Mu'āwiya the Black ruled over the Banū Kinda of Yamama. Al-Hārith Ibn Mu'āwiya migrated to al-Ghamr from Ḍariyya which can be said to be located in Yamama.

4. Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith who re-constructed al-Mushakkar was a grandson of Mu'āwiya who had ruled over the Banū Kinda of Yamama.

5. The rule of Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith in Hadjar can roughly be placed in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.

As combined with the historical context, the observations above allow to re-construct the course of events as follows. Mu'āwiya the Black, son of Hudjr the Eater of Bitter Plants, ruled in Yamama in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and, perhaps, later on. His residence, or one of his residences, was in Ḍariyya. He was succeeded as a ruler by his son al-Hārith. The latter migrated from Ḍariyya to the ancient Kindite dwellings at al-Ghamr, that is to say, to the south-west. The most plausible explanation of this would be that al-Hārith felt some danger from the opposite side, i. e., from the north-east. He probably feared that the offensive which the Sasanids and Lakhmids led against the Banū Kinda of al-Hārith the War-Wager might affect him as well. Should this be true, al-Hārith's migration to al-Ghamr must have occurred in the late 520-es or the early 530-es.

Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith was, while migrating to Hadjar, advancing in the opposite direction. He went to where the Lakhmids collected tributes for themselves and the Sasanids. He settled at a distance of approximately 125 km from al-Qaṭīf and could, by making some quick marches, put Punyat-Ardashir (al-Khatt), the Sasanids' main stronghold in the region of Baḥrayn, in

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p. 226–227]. Qaryat al-Kāra is situated near al-Hufūf, a little to the south-east of it. I hope to elaborate on this issue elsewhere.

danger. It must have been evident to him that such a migration would probably bring about war against the Lakhmids and Sasanids, as well as the tribes under their power. Nevertheless, something strong enough to set all risks aside encouraged him to advance. It appears likely that the migration of Mu'āwiya and his Banū Kinda is connected to the campaign in the north-east of Arabia which Abraha, the Ethiopian ruler of Yemen, made in approximately 553–554. That campaign is known after Abraha's inscription at Murayghān known as *Murayghān* 3<sup>7</sup>. I presented the results of my examination of the text of the inscription in my History of the Lakhmid state [Mishin, 2017, p. 197–199]; here it is important to state that Abraha, quoting the CSAI translation, took possession of all the Arabs of Hadjar (*Hgrm*) and al-Khatt (*Kht*). Regrettably, the inscription provides no information as to the course of the campaign, yet it appears plausible that the troops of Abraha or his Arabic vassals were able to advance as far as Hadjar. Among such vassals Kindite rulers are sometimes found. In Abraha's inscription at Mārib (*CIH* 541) one reads about Yazīd Ibn Kabsha (*Yzd Ibn Kbsht*) whom the Ethiopian ruler appointed his governor over Banū Kinda<sup>8</sup>. In the inscription *Ry 506 Murayghān I*, also belonging to Abraha, a reference is made to Abū al-Djabr (*'bgbr*) who commanded a Kindite detachment during the campaign in Central Arabia in 552. Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith might well be given, and play, a similar role. There is, it is true, no direct evidence of Mu'āwiya's involvement in any of Abraha's campaigns. Yet the above hypothesis has the advantage of explaining both Mu'āwiya's behaviour, which otherwise would seem difficult to understand, and the easiness with which Banū Kinda got hold of al-Mushakkār. It appears that Abraha attempted to create a stronghold in the north-east of Arabia as a constant threat to the Lakhmids and Sasanids, and with that aim used Banū Kinda's help and left them in Hadjar.

Banū Kinda disappear from Hadjar as dramatically as they arrive there. Their departure from Hadjar is known after two references supplied by al-Hamdānī, a 10<sup>th</sup> century geographer and historian. On one occasion he states that Banū Kinda who had left al-Ghamr after the death of Ibn al-Djawn in the battle of Djabala arrived to Hadramawt [al-Hamdānī, 166]. At a later stage he observes that following the death of Ibn al-Djawn Banū Kinda left Baḥrayn, al-Mushakkār and al-Ghamr and moved to Hadramawt. The number of those who thus migrated is estimated at over 30 thousand persons [al-Hamdānī, 1990, p. 171]. References to the battle of Djabala and Ibn al-Djawn's death show that al-Hamdānī speaks of those Banū Kinda who were under the power of Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith.

This evidence, however, might not be taken at face value. If the Banū Kinda left following the battle of Djabala, it is impossible to explain who were the Kindites who fought in the battle of Dhū Nadjab. Moreover, it is in the battle of Dhū Nadjab that one Kindite prince (and not two) was killed. It seems that al-Hamdānī actually refers to the battle of Dhū Nadjab which in many respects was a continuation of the battle of Djabala. In that case too, al-Hamdānī's statements are open to critics. If the death of two princes in the battle of Djabala did not cause Banū Kinda to leave, it is not easy to see why the death of one prince at Dhū Nadjab had such effect. It appears that other causes stand behind al-Hamdānī's words. Losing two considerable battles, Banū Kinda were likely to have suffered losses and might doubt their ability to keep intact their dominion over the tribes which were under their power. Al-Hamdānī, it is true, gives a high estimation of the migrants' numbers, which would imply that the Kindite king was still able to collect large armies. Yet Ibn Khaldūn appears to be correct in stating that the figures occurring in such stories are occasionally more than ten

<sup>7</sup> My observations as to South Arabian inscriptions are essentially based upon re-constructions of the texts and translations in the CSAI (*Corpus of South Arabian Inscriptions*) database at [www.dasi.humnet.unipi.it](http://www.dasi.humnet.unipi.it). This database presents a useful synthesis of long-time research work on those inscriptions. Unless otherwise stated, all references to South-Arabian inscriptions are to CSAI.

<sup>8</sup> Due to lack of evidence, there is no compelling reason to identify this Yazīd Ibn Kabsha with 'Amr and Ḥassān mentioned above.

times as big as they really were [Ibn Khaldūn, 2001, 1, p. 16]. So, the Banū Kinda who migrated to Hadramawt may have been much less numerous than al-Hamdānī states. Another possibility which, due to the lack of evidence, remains purely hypothetical, is that Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith, who appears to have ruled over decades, died. The settlement in al-Mushakkar was essentially his undertaking, so that his death would have deprived it of its motive power. One may imagine that Mu'āwiya's descendants were not attached to Hadjar as much as he was and felt free to leave it.

The exact date of Banū Kinda's departure from Hadjar is unknown. In the earliest surviving stories of poet Ṭarafa Ibn al-'Abd put to death at the order of 'Amr III, by al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Muḥammad al-Ḍabbī (d. in 780-es), Abū Zayd al-Ḳurashī (d. 786/787), and Ibn al-Sikkīt (b. ca. 802, d. 858), it is stated that the Lakhmid king had a governor over Hadjar and the region of Baḥrayn. Ibn al-Sikkīt narrates that Ṭarafa arrived in Hadjar to that governor and was put to death and buried there [ʿAbd al-Ḳādir al-Baghdādī, 1997, p. 421–423; Abū Zayd al-Ḳurashī, 1963, p. 74–75; al-Mufaḍḍal Ibn Muḥammad al-Ḍabbī, 1983, p. 176; Ṭarafa Ibn al-'Abd, 2000, p. 111–112; cf.: Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, 1905, 21, p. 125, 132]<sup>9</sup>. As the governor is not identified with the Kindite king, it may be inferred that by then Banū Kinda had already left.

This observation opens a bunch of problems. It would be natural to suppose that 'Amr III, who appears to have restored the Sasanids' power over the region of Baḥrayn [Mishin, 2017, p. 212], drove the ancient foes from Hadjar. But it cannot be taken for granted that in the times of 'Amr III the Banū Kinda of Hadjar were actually his foes. The relationship of Mu'āwiya Ibn al-Hārith with the Lakhmids and Sasanids remains extremely unclear. The only available evidence consists in two brief comments on a poem which poet al-Hārith Ibn Ḥilliza recited in the presence of 'Amr III. According to them, at a certain stage Banū Kinda seized some tribute collected for the king<sup>10</sup>. The latter sent troops against them. Then events are presented differently: in one version the king's warriors killed the Banū Kinda [al-Nahhās, 1973, p. 574; al-Tibrīzī, 1977, p. 394], whereas in another one the troops consisted of Arabs from the Banū Taghlib tribal confederation who were defeated and suffered heavy losses [Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, 190, 9, p. 172]. But even in this case the king's campaign was not necessarily aimed at the ruler of Hadjar and his subjects.

It appears certain that under 'Amr III Hadjar became under the Lakhmids' power, but al-Hamdānī does not necessarily refers to that. In his account, Banū Kinda's departure from al-Mushakkar and the region of Baḥrayn is not caused by any act of 'Amr III. Ṭarafa's story is problematic as well. Ṭarafa was put to death before he reached the age of 26 years<sup>11</sup>, and by then he had participated in the struggle for power, fighting against 'Amr III at the side of another Lakhmid prince of the same name [Abū Bakr al-Anbārī, 1993, p. 121; al-Baṭalyawṣī, 2008, p. 518]. That struggle probably took place in the beginning of 'Amr III's rule. By then Ṭarafa must have lived a considerable part of his short life. As a matter of fact, the less time we allow for the remainder of Ṭarafa's life following that power struggle, the more plausible is the re-construction of the events. Now, if it is supposed that Banū Kinda left Hadjar for good before the Lakhmid governor was established there and put Ṭarafa to death, the battles of Djabala and Dhū Nadjab must have occurred before that time too. It is to be recalled that in both battles

<sup>9</sup> Ibn al-Sikkīt's account is only known after quotations with later writers, 'Abd al-Ḳādir al-Baghdādī (1620/1621–1682) and, probably, al-A'lam al-Shantamarī (1019/1020–1083/1084). I examined stories of Ṭarafa's death in my 'History of the Lakhmid State' [Mishin, 2017, p. 205–209], where references to other sources are provided as well.

<sup>10</sup> Judging by the context, the king in question must be a Lakhmid ruler.

<sup>11</sup> The most trustworthy source as to the date of Ṭarafa's death appears to be a verse by Khirnik, his sister, in which she says, deploring her brother, that twenty-five full years of his life were counted [al-Khirnik, 1990, p. 32]. Other estimations of the duration of Ṭarafa's lifetime vary from incomplete twenty to twenty-six years, but Khirnik, as a close relative of the poet, must have known better.



Banū Tamīm were commanded by Laḳīṭ Ibn Zurāra. It has been observed above that during a certain time of ‘Amr III’s government the ruler of the Banū Tamīm was not Laḳīṭ but Zurāra, his father. Subsequent events spread over some time: Zurāra died, Laḳīṭ became ruler of the Banū Tamīm and gathered a coalition, and then one year passed between the two battles. It would be rather hazardous to claim that all those events could be placed within a short time-slot between ‘Amr III’s ascension to power and Ṭarafa’s death. But if both battles took place at any time after Ṭarafa was put to death, it is to be concluded that Banū Kinda lost Hadjar for a time, but then recovered it. This hypothesis has the advantage of agreeing with the accounts on the battle of Djabala in which it is placed in the time of Lakhmid king al-Nu‘mān III (579–601). If those accounts are to be trusted, it could be concluded that, in all likelihood, ‘Amr III, known as a strong and cruel man, held Hadjar till the end of his life, but under his weaker successors Ḳābūs (569–573) and al-Mundhir IV (574–578) Mu‘āwiya Ibn al-Ḥārith recovered the capital of Banū Kinda.

It may appear simpler and more suitable to believe that Banū Kinda only occupied Hadjar once, at some time after ‘Amr III’s death (569). Indeed, in this case it would be unnecessary to make a complicated picture of Banū Kinda’s wanderings to and from Hadjar. Yet it must then be explained why Banū Kinda made an expedition through much of Arabia, without help from Ethiopian rulers of Yemen and at a risk of facing Sasanid armies which would have fought to defend such an important strategic place. So long as no plausible answer to this question is suggested, the idea that Banū Kinda first arrived to Hadjar as vassals of Abraha and then recovered their capital would prevail.

The certain chronological landmark is the very beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when al-Mushaḳḳar was residence of a Sasanid governor. The latter, at a certain stage, invited Banū Tamīm to his fortress and then slaughtered most of them and took the rest prisoners. According to an account quoted by Abū al-Faradī al-Isfahānī, the slaughter took place before the famous battle of Dhū Ḳār [Abū al-Faradī al-Isfahānī, 1905, 20, p. 135]. I hope to publish soon an article presenting reasons in favour of the summer of 602 as the most plausible date. However, Banū Kinda must have left earlier, for Hadjar was re-built under Sasanid control before it became the governor’s residence, and the construction works certainly took some time. Besides, there is a poem composed, according to some historical commentary, by Ṭarafa shortly before his death. The poem expresses anticipation of death and contains a call upon the inhabitants of al-Mushaḳḳar and al-Ṣafā to begin war against al-Nu‘mān III [Ṭarafa Ibn al-‘Abd, 2000, p. 166, 168]. At least the fragment in question is clearly apocryphal, for Ṭarafa was put to death years before the beginning of al-Nu‘mān III’s rule. Yet it is noteworthy that the inhabitants of al-Mushaḳḳar and al-Ṣafā are called “sons of our paternal uncle”. Ṭarafa belonged to the tribal confederation of Banū Bakr Ibn Wā’il. The poet who actually spoke in his name obviously refers to the tribe of Banū ‘Abd al-Ḳays for the latter dwelt in the region of Baḥrayn and had an ancestor who was brother of an ancestor of Banū Bakr. So, for the author of the verse, whoever he was, in al-Nu‘mān III’s time Hadjar was populated by Banū ‘Abd al-Ḳays, not by Banū Kinda.

It is to be recognized that the picture of Banū Kinda’s stay in Hadjar is far from being complete. Information yielded by the sources is scanty and fragmentary, so that there is no option left except for conjectures. Yet we have ahead of us excavations in Hadjar and search for new written accounts. Hopefully, on the basis of that the history of Banū Kinda in al-Mushaḳḳar will be re-constructed better than it is done here.

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