The Arabs of North Arabia in later Pre-Islamic Times:

Qedar, Nebaioth, and Others

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Abstract

This study discusses the history of the Arabs of north Arabia in later pre-Islamic times. This study provides an in-depth discussion of Arab ethnicity, which contributes to the improvement of our knowledge regarding this controversial issue. This study argues that the Arab nation is, in fact, a very old one of great importance, but the Arabs themselves had no consciousness of their unity and did not leave inscriptions proclaiming their identity as Arabs or claim to be the rightful proprietors of specific territories.

An examination is made of the reasons behind the emergence of kingship in different communities through the course of history, in order to determine the general features of kingship. This study demonstrates that kingship in north Arabia had almost every feature of kingship as it appeared in other places.

Particular attention is paid in the study to delivering a full and coherent account of the history of Qedar. Although, some scholars have tried to write the history of Qedar, their works remain fragmentary or inconsistent. Basing the examination not merely on most of the previous works, we subject those works to a comparison with the Assyrian inscriptions. By so doing, it has proved possible to critique the previous works and clarify many ambiguous issues in Qedarite history.

Moreover, this study contributes to the improvement of our knowledge regarding Nebaioth and Na-ba-a-a-ti and their relationship with the Nabataeans. This study finds that the Nebaioth and Nabataeans were different, contemporary groups living during the sixth century BCE, even though the first direct and uncontested evidence of the Nabataeans of Petra comes from the late fourth century BCE, when the Nabataeans made their first clear appearance in Diodorus Siculus in connection with the expansion of the Seleucid Empire (312 BCE).

The main settlement centres in north Arabia are discussed in depth in Chapter Five. This study traces the history of Tayma, Adummatu and Dedan, establishing the importance of those oases and their relationship with Mesopotamia. The discussion of those oases produces useful results, which contribute to improving our knowledge and assist in our understanding of issues relating to the history of those sites.
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Finally and pre-eminently, before and after, I should say, al-ḥamdu li-Allah.
General Introduction

The history of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times has attracted the special attention of modern historians, who base their accounts on the many excavations carried out in the Arabian Peninsula. The present work is to some extent an attempt to improve our knowledge relating to the Arabs of north Arabia during pre-Islamic times. The Arab tribes of north Arabia, and especially Qedar, have attracted the attention of both western and Middle Eastern historians, but written reports have been brief and fragmentary, indicating the need for a more extensive study of this topic, both in breadth and depth. The aims of this work are therefore to examine the following questions and issues:

1. Do the Arabs belong to a distinct ethnic group at all?
2. What was the concept of the kingship which existed in Arab society in north Arabia in pre-Islamic time?
3. The relationship between Arabs and the different Near Eastern empires during pre-Islamic times, such as the Assyrian Empire, the Babylonian Empire and the Achaemenid Empire.
4. A coherent historical account of Qedar.
5. Nebaioth and Na-b-a-ti-a-a (and their relationship with the Nabataeans).
6. The issue of Sheba, or Saba, and the question of the queen of Sheba.
7. The three main Arab settlement centres in north Arabia, viz: Tayma, Adummatu, and Dedan.

To achieve the aims outlined above, this study is divided into six chapters. Chapter One discusses early historiography, the nature of the sources of information on the ancient Arabs, important studies and methodology. Chapter Two discusses ethnicity, ranging over discussions of nomadic people, sedentary people, the relationship between sedentary and nomadic peoples, kingship and representation. Chapter Three discusses the relationship between the Assyrian Empire and Arabs, the relationship between the Babylonian Empire and Arabs and the relationship
between the Achaemenid Empire and the Arabs. Chapter Four contains an analysis of the Qedarites’ tributes described in Assyrian inscriptions and attempts to provide a coherent history of Qedar. It also discusses the issue of the Nebaioth and their relationship with the Nabataeans. Massa’ is also discussed in this chapter, as well as the matter of Sheba and its queen. Chapter Five contains an in-depth study of three of the main Arab settlements in north Arabia, viz: Tayma, Adummatu, and Dedan. Chapter Six deals with social structure, religion, law and the arts. Finally, a general Conclusion sums up the contributions of this thesis.
Chapter One: Historiography

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I. Chapter One: Historiography

This chapter discusses early historiography in order to gain a general view of its development through time. In addition, the chapter discusses the nature of the sources generally used in ancient history writing and pays particular attention to the ancient sources which mention the Arabs. Finally, the chapter contains a discussion of important studies and also of methodology.

1.1 What is the Historian’s Mission?

What we refer to as ‘the present’ is, in effect, a construct of ‘the past’, just as a tree has being only as the outcome of development over a period that is now passed. Thus, the past, though elapsed, continues to play a role in the formation of the present and of the future (Marwick 2001: 23). For example, every town and city groups within its precincts the architectural constructions of former generations, which testify to past ways of living and may, in some cases, be obsolete in the present context. Similar remarks might also be made about the social and religious forces currently at play and sometimes in conflict in the modern world. The enmities and sometimes devastating wars between factions in such places as the Balkans, the Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, and Africa all have their roots in a remembered past, demonstrating the massive importance of bygone events in human relations.

Thus, ‘the past’, specifically the human past, is a much wider concept than mere ‘history’ in the rigorous sense of that word. There is no direct access to the past and it must be approached indirectly through its surviving relics, which may include myths and memories orally transmitted, archaeological remains, paintings, and written (manuscript and printed) sources, which last are the actual historical accounts (ibid. 24). The task of the modern historian is to collect and sift all these records, not with the aim of creating some new fiction, but with the purpose, pursued with as much objectivity as can be brought to the task, of producing an accurate record of the past lives of human beings. The past is, of course, an immense field,
both in terms of time and place, so that while a historian may have a fair, or even
good, grasp of human events in the diverse regions of the world from the earliest
times down to the present day, the rigour of the historical task demands close critical
attention to fairly narrow sections of the whole historical endeavour. This will
explain the focus of the present close study.

1.1.1 History writing

Human history remained for a long time without written record, until the
third millennium BCE when the invention of writing enabled the beginning of
history proper. Man invented writing for different purposes, such as religion or the
keeping of business records. In Egypt, for example, people understood that it was
important to produce an official record of the religious rituals performed in their
temples and palaces. In addition, they used writing to record the numbers of
livestock they owned and the crops they produced (Walker 1990: 17).

People of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia invented writing not just
for religious purposes, but particularly for the prescription of laws. Indeed, justice
was a core concern and Hammurabi’s Code may be cited as the major witness to this
development. However, the view has been expressed by modern historians that
cautions should be exercised in too readily granting credence to ancient texts as
historical witnesses since they were frequently written for propaganda purposes,
reflecting only the dominant themes of one particular outlook.

1.1.2 Early Egyptian Historiography

A primary consideration with regard to Egyptian Historiography is that there
was no ancient Egyptian word corresponding to the English word ‘history’ in its

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1 See, for example, Richardson, M. E. J. (2000), Hammurabi’s laws: text, translation and glossary
(Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press).
2 See in Chapter One the section dealing with the nature of ancient sources: Assyrian and Babylonian
inscriptions.
usual meaning (Bull 1955: 3). The Egyptians sense of the past inspired the writing of creation myths and accounts of the early activities of mankind, some of them intended for the moral instruction of later generations. Beyond the realm of myth and legend, however, the ancient Egyptians did record actual events that occurred in their own country. The first such records may go back to the mid-third millennium BCE in the fifth Dynasty; one example is a stone discovered at Memphis containing a list of kings of the pre-dynastic kingdoms. The Egyptian genealogical lists indicate that the Egyptians had knowledge of their own past extending back at least two millennia BCE. In addition to these lists, they also produced narratives of their kings’ external wars, recording the names of defeated enemies and the battles involved. The modern historian must, of course, be keenly aware of elements of political propaganda in these accounts and their imburement with religious and mythical notions (Bull 1955: 4-20).

It is also necessary to bear in mind that the Egyptian records demonstrate that the ancient Egyptians entertained both cyclic and linear views of time. While their spatial image of the world, in which Egypt occupied a specific location among other peoples, fostered a linear view of time, it was the annual inundation of the Nile that impressed upon them notions of recurring periodicity. For us, therefore, it is necessary to set aside their cyclic view of time, impressed on their civilization through their religion, from their linear view of time, which inspired them to compile information in great detail relating to contemporary events (Verner 1976: 41-44).

1.1.3 Israelite Historiography

By contrast, while ancient Israel, like ancient Egypt, was conscious of the divine role in history, the Israelites perceived their God Yahweh directing a salvation history towards its target over linear time (Bartlett 1990: 5). This view, in turn, was bequeathed to the two derivative monotheisms: Christianity and Islam (Burrows 1955: 113-114). Through defeat and punishment at the hands of the Assyrians and Babylonians, Israelite belief in God’s promise and fulfillment underwent a
transformation into that acute view of linear history found in apocalyptic literature, where the world-ruling empires that interacted with Israel–Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome–became downgraded to a mere succession of petty tyrannies that would, in the end, give place to the Kingdom of God.

This having been said, however, it would be wrong to suggest that the Israelites had adopted anything like the scientific approach to history that is the standard today. While historical evidence may be derived from the Biblical texts, those texts remain primarily a theological library.

1.1.4 Herodotus and Greek Historiography

Historiography in its earliest scientific form emerged principally as part of the Greek intellectual legacy, which expanded to cover many other areas of human interest, including philosophy, mathematics, medicine and astronomy. The architect of Greek historiography, who may be seen also as the founder of anthropology, was Herodotus of Halicarnassus in the fifth century BCE (Collingwood 1946: 10-11). From the Greek verb historeō, meaning ‘to inquire into a thing’, or ‘to learn about something by inquiry’, he derived the word historia, using it in the sense of ‘research’ or ‘investigation’, indicating his essentially scientific approach to the subject. In due course, this word would become the one adopted in English and other European languages to denote this science of inquiry into the facts and events of the past.

Herodotus seems to have been unique among Greek writers in his attempt to rid explanations of events from regular recourse to divine intervention by the Olympian gods. Even so, as some later critics (both in classical times and more recently) have objected, he has sometimes been criticized as a ‘story-teller’ (so Aristotle for example). Furthermore, his professed objective approach to the study of history did
not exempt him from the common prejudices he held against non-Greeks (Fornara: 1983: 77-78).

1.1.5 Classical Medieval Historiography

During medieval times the writing of history was subjected to certain changes as a result of two factors: first, the different perspectives of both Greeks and Romans regarding history and time; and, second, the rise of Christianity. With regard to the former factor, the Greeks had a cyclical view, while the Romans had a linear conception of time and history, a dissimilarity of outlook which affected historiography itself. With regard to the second factor, Christians viewed history as a unique series of events which cannot be repeated. This view initiated a new approach in the writing of history, which became the story of man’s conflict with sin and struggle to find the right path to God (Perry 1992: 31).

Christianity also affected European historiography in some other respects. First, the account of history became international rather than centralized around the Greco-Roman world. Thus, Christianity resisted any restriction of its message to a specific land or country and stood on the principles that all people are equal before God (Frend 1968: 20) and their purpose in this world is to seek and find the right way to God (Collingwood 1946: 48 f.). Second, whereas Greek philosophers believed that everything, even the metaphysical, could be challenged, Christian theologians believed that all created beings were finite in their power, the Creator alone abiding omnipotent, a belief that came to affect historians’ work. Third, the attitude of Christian theologians towards the events of history was that everything in the universe and every act had been written in advance, a belief that could be summed up in the words of Jesus: ‘even the hairs of your head are all numbered’ (Matt. 10: 30), or the words of the psalmist: ‘whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He in heaven and in earth’ (Psalms 135: 6). The birth of Christ was considered the middle point in the linear unfolding of history, so that everything prior to Christ’s birth was a preparation for his advent and everything thereafter could be considered as signs of the coming destruction of the world. Fourth, a new concept in historical writing was Christianity’s way of looking upon all figures in the pageant of history
as temporary agents who came into this world at a certain time to perform a specific task (Collingwood 1946: 48). Fifth, since the Christian view of time is one of linearity, the events of history are unique and unrepeatable. However, Brunner (1951: 2) commented that the events in history are not always unique, so it is possible to apply to history the notion of repetition and regularity.

However, in general, historians during the medieval period were less than objective in their historiography as they failed clearly to distinguish between religion and history proper.

1.1.6 The Enlightenment and Historiography

As defined by the *New Oxford Dictionary* (1998), the verb ‘to enlighten’ means ‘to give someone greater knowledge and understanding about a subject or situation’. During the eighteenth century German scholars used the word ‘enlightenment’ (*Aufklärung*) to refer to the ideas of the French *philosophes*, while the word was used in English to indicate the ideas of the eighteenth century (Burns, 2000: 30). Collingwood (1946: 76) described the philosophy of the Enlightenment as a self-assurance that ‘certain forms of mental activity are primitive forms, destined to perish when the mind arrives at maturity.’ Enlightenment philosophy during the eighteenth century would challenge traditional thinking and attempt to secularize every aspect of studies in the humanities (*ibid.*). The French philosophers’ works evinced a clearer trend towards secularism than any other philosophers. Burns (2000: 32) writes that ‘only by taking the French Enlightenment to be normative for Enlightenment in general could Peter Gay characterize it as “the rise of modern paganism”.’ Moreover, one of the Enlightenment’s characteristics was the wish to view all cultures as of equal importance and to consider them as joint contributors in the ‘universal civilization’ (Gay 1995: viii).

In fact, the Enlightenment affected not only the writing of history, but many other aspects of human life as well. The Enlightenment ideal suggested that while
God created the world, the task of humans was to complete it, in consequence of which history and theology became divided. Voltaire, for example, wrote, ‘Let us leave […] the divine part in the hands of those with whom it is deposited, and confine ourselves solely to that which is historical’ (quoted in Southgate 1996: 46), but even so the idea of secularism struggled to become widely accepted (Black and MacRaild 2000: 27). Moreover, the study of classical writers led Renaissance scholars to adopt a secular approach to many points which used to be regarded as religious. Finally, as a result of this approach, critical scholarship made its appearance (Marwick 1989: 27).

1.1.7 Modern Historiography

Between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries a Renaissance of learning took place as a result of an economic revolution in European countries. The Renaissance affected different aspects of life and the changes that came through it significantly affected the historical accounts then being written. One of the effects produced by this new era of learning was the changing attitude of historians towards the issue of man’s existence (Green 1964: 29). This new perspective turned the attention of European intellectuals to a fresh study of the classical past and they started to view that era as a pure root of knowledge. In fact, the innovation of the printing press in 1445 by Johannes Gutenberg (Neill 1998: 2), with the economic revolution, together contributed to increased reading about ancient Greek and Roman history. Thus, the new European scholars considered the classical works as the real sources for humanities studies while, by contrast, they considered the medieval works to be barren and useless (Green 1964: 33).

Moreover, as a result of this renewed interest in classical studies, the revival of learning in classical languages became necessary to gain access to the sources of that era. The benefit of revived learning in these languages was not just in their being a means to obtain knowledge about the history of classical civilizations, but they opened a new window onto the ancients’ philosophy, science, and arts (Laven
1966: 149). However, as a result of the revival of classical studies, the cyclical view of history became reactivated and came to permeate the views of modern historians (Herrera 2001: 59). Generally throughout Europe, the classical works written in Greek or Latin were considered foundation sources of knowledge (Black and MacRaild 2000: 30).

1.1.8 Positivism and Idealism in Nineteenth-Century Historiography

During the nineteenth century a new philosophical approach, known as positivism, appeared in Europe. The core idea of positivism was that the scientific method, recognizing only positive facts and observable phenomena, should be applied to the study of nature and society. This school of philosophy suggested that any society in the world functioned according to certain laws, which could be examined to predict its future. In other words, to obtain a scientific basis for historical studies, one should apply only natural science methods (Nash 1969: 3). The father of sociology, Auguste Comte (1798-1857), is considered the leading exponent of the positivist approach. In Comte’s opinion, the term ‘sociology’ meant the process or way of studying social phenomena (Black and MacRaild 2000: 43). In addition, Comte believed that history should be treated as an aspect of human knowledge, an argument which he supported by an appeal to progressive development over three phases. The first theoretical phase was the time when it was widely held that everything was controlled by God. The second phase was metaphysical, an era when mankind searched for a logical explanation for human life and natural phenomena, no longer finding a satisfactory ready solution in appeals to the divine power. In the third and ultimate phase of positivism, the scientific method alone is confidently applied (ibid.). Comte’s positivist school designed two methods which should be applied by historians. First, historians should seek for the laws which control social activities or historical events and these laws should be explained by statistical studies (Nash 1969: 4). Second, direct sources should be used as far as possible to draw a live picture of past events (ibid.: 4).

In his magnum opus, A system of logic, published in 1843, the British philosopher John Stuart Mill stated that the task of philosophy was to discover the
laws which governed history and that the way to discover these laws was for historians to study human nature, paying particular attention to the dimension of psychology (Nash 1969: 5). Mill therefore defined ‘ethnology’ as the scientific study of the dimensions of human personality which were produced from psychological laws (ibid.).

By the end of the nineteenth century the scientific approach to history had become widely accepted. In addition, the positive contributions of science during that century had improved the knowledge of humankind in different aspects. Germany and later Italy were centres of the scientific method and those countries were followed by English philosophers such as R.G. Collingwood (1889-1943) (Walsh 1967: 43). Collingwood himself (1946: 9) followed the idealist school, which was considered a branch of positivism, and viewed history as a social, rather than a natural, science. The difference between these two aspects of science was that the natural scientists dealt with tangible materials, while historians sought to study and understand historical events and their underlying causes (Nash 1969: 5-9).

1.1.9 Problems encountered by the historian in the course of collecting material

All research proceeds from established data to the formulation of new knowledge. Thus, as Dewey (1925: 154) commented, ‘What is already known… is of immense importance; inquiry could not proceed a step without it’ and William James (1907: 245) wrote of ‘previous truths of which every new enquiry takes account’. In some areas of research, however, one must set out with clear information to develop research in the right way.

Second, there is the need to verify the material being used, in order that it may genuinely bear valid testimony (Renier 1950: 89).
Third, the historian must be able to relate his or her interpretation of the historical evidence to the temporal and geographical context in which that evidence is situated. So, for example, Renier (ibid.) comments:

The historian who specializes in the story of social and class relations in the Dutch Republic will be well advised to acquaint himself with the story of similar relations in other commonwealths of merchants like the Venetian Republic and the bourgeois cities of Switzerland. It would be inadvisable to tell the story of the cloth industry at Leyden at the time of the Dutch Republic without knowledge of the story of that industry in the towns of medieval Flanders or Florence.

Fourth, if the historian is to present his or her findings in a persuasive manner, he or she must be well read in the field and capable of presenting the evidence clearly, displaying a strong sense of acumen and maintaining a sense of critical appraisal throughout his or her work (Halphen 1948:22).

A particular problem faced by the historian is that of identifying bias in the historical records. Bias may be particularly hard to identify in the earliest periods, from which the paucity of records makes it especially difficult to assess their veracity and even-handedness. There may be some attraction in anticipating being able to hold all the data within a small compass, but this fact alone should alert the researcher to the possibility that there is much missing from the jigsaw puzzle which must be carefully assembled to produce an accurate historical account. Distortions may arise from various sources: scribal proficiency in some places as against a negligent attitude to written records in other places; and the vicissitudes of fortune, so that abundant records may be preserved in some places over time, while in other areas records may be destroyed by accident or by human violence. Consequently, apparently rich sources must always be set against the possibility of disregarded or unknown points of view that have not survived to the modern era.
When evaluating records and chronicles written in ancient time, another consideration needs to be borne in mind, i.e. a possible failure of perspective on the part of the ancient writer on account of his nearness to the events being related. There has been insufficient time and opportunity to distance himself from events that appear significant or momentous in the political arena of the time, so that objective evidence may not have been collected and no sifting may have been made of inauthentic accretions. We cannot therefore accept at face value the usual narratives of Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions in which the rulers are forever going forth to conquer and overcoming opposition, without setback, in every direction. Some attempt must be made to balance such reports against external evidence and, when this is not available, to suggest alternative ways of interpreting the evidence offered.

1.1.10 Orientalism and its contribution

Orientalism (in the way the word was used before Edward Said) (Said 2003), that is the study of the history and culture of Asian countries by Western scholars, is, in fact, not a new phenomenon, since it may be traced back at least as far as Herodotus, the Greek historian of the fifth century BCE, the third book of whose Histories included important information about the Arabs of north Arabia.

However, in the case of Northern and Central Arabia, the territory remained remote from Western access until more recent times and only fifteen Europeans are known to have visited the area before the twentieth century (Winnett and Reed 1970: vii). The reports which they brought back were nevertheless rich in description both of the terrain and the inhabitants’ way of life and customs, and the interest of some of them—most notably Charles M. Doughty, Charles Huber, and Julius Euting—extended to observations of Arabian antiquities. Not only did they describe the ruins of ancient buildings, but they also transcribed hundreds of rock-carved inscriptions. Since, however, the majority of the latter proved to be fairly trivial graffiti, their evidence did little to enlighten the researcher regarding the history of
the times in which they were written, so that an outline history of Northern and Central Arabia in ancient times remained elusive (ibid: p. viii).

However, an expansion and deepening of Arabian research developed as the twentieth century evolved and increasing numbers of Europeans managed to penetrate the vast Arabian lands. The northern Hejaz and Najd became the focus of new research between 1908 and 1914 by the Czech scholar Alois Musil and his reports did much to increase wider knowledge of these territories.³ Musil had studied at the Dominican Biblical School in Jerusalem in 1897-8 and via three expeditions made in 1907, 1909, and 1910 two French Dominican scholars, J.A. Jaussen and R. Savignac, made an exhaustive examination in the area of the Tabuk, Madā‘īn Sālih, and al-‘Uлā oases, of all the monuments and inscriptions that could be found above-ground. In addition, they managed a brief visit to Tayma.⁴ The publication of these scholars’ discoveries led to further visits by many more researchers to the region, among the most notable being F.V. Winnett and W.L. Reed, whose Ancient records from North Arabia was published in 1970. Many other European scholars of modern times have concentrated their researches on Arabia, e.g. on the development of Nabataean history, most notably through publications relating to Nabataean inscriptions.

³See his The Northern Hegaz (New York, 1926), Arabia Deserta (New York, 1927), and Northern Negd (New York, 1928).
⁴Their findings were published in Mission archéologique en Arabie, 5 pt. (Paris, 1909-1922).
1.2 Methodology of study

The present study has been prefaced above by a review of the various stages in the development of historical writing over time. The nature of ancient sources is discussed below and special attention is paid to the relative paucity of sources for a reliable study of ancient history, a dearth of information which becomes even more severe in the case of data relating to the Arab people of north Arabia in ancient times, since they left almost no written sources on which to base an account of their history. Nevertheless, their activities in north Arabia do receive some mention by their neighbours, especially in the inscriptions left by the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires. It is, however, necessary to apply caution in dealing with these sources since the inscriptions of those ancient regional powers were generally written primarily to serve propaganda purposes. Biblical narratives additionally make occasional mention of the Arab groups inhabiting north Arabia, but again caution is required in interpreting these references, which have been subjected to varying critical views.

In more recent times many archaeological excavations have been undertaken in the Arabian Peninsula and texts have been discovered in the process, though, of course, the number of sites and the quantity of inscriptions is small compared with Mesopotamia and Syria-Palestine. However, we are now able to improve on many aspects of our previous knowledge about the Arabs in north Arabia. For example, a Saudi researcher at the Department of Antiquities in Riyadh, Khalid M. Al-Eskoubi, studied 309 new Taimanite inscriptions. This new study of the rock-face inscriptions in the Tayma region has contributed to enhancing our knowledge about the history of the north Arabian Peninsula (Livingstone 2005: 30).

The welcome contributions of archaeologists are discussed in the present study and it is found that their value must remain limited in view of the fact that many of the texts they have discovered are not easily dated or amount to little more than ‘doodles’. Nevertheless, despite these shortcomings, the north Arabian inscriptions still provide some important information relating to the personal names and lifestyle of the people

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5 See 1.3.
who left them in this part of the Arabian Peninsula. In addition, many of the monuments and potteries have been discovered which contributed to improve our knowledge with regard to the history of Arabian Peninsula.

The methodology adopted in this study in order to address the problems that relate to the sources of ancient history is based on the following steps. First of all, we analyse the Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions which contain mention of the Arabs, in order to gain an external view of Arab ethnicity, while the Biblical texts and Jewish sources are additionally taken into account. Second, this study uses classical, as well as modern, works in order to draw as full a picture as possible of the Arabs’ history in north Arabia. Third, archaeological discoveries have been used where they may help to improve our knowledge of Arab history in north Arabia. Finally, analogy is carefully applied in certain cases in order to fill some historical gaps in our information, especially in terms of the social structure, law and arts in society.

1.2.1 The Chronological Framework

This study extends from the mid eighth century BCE to roughly the mid fifth century CE, a period during which it is possible to examine the development of relations between different Arab groupings in North Arabia and those groups’ relations externally with the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.

Our aim will be to focus particularly on a number of case studies for in-depth treatment, including the Qedarites, the relationship between the Nebaioth and the Nabataeans, and the main settlement centres in North Arabia.

1.2.2 Geographic Limits

This study proposes to investigate the Arabs’ appearance in North Arabia and their relations with sedentary population groups from Syria and Palestine, as well as with the authorities who controlled that region. It should be noted that during the period under discussion some of the groups moved great distances from the southern...
edge of the Arabian Peninsula to the north. For these reasons, the geographic borders of our study encompass all areas connected with the appearance of the Arabs during the pre-Islamic period in North Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Sinai and Egypt.

1.3 Methodological problems in the ancient sources

It is clear that the ancient Arabs did not leave any written annals or documentary evidence that would enable us to learn many things about their history. However, they did leave some fragmentary inscriptions on rocks and tombs, but from this kind of evidence it is impossible to draw up a full and satisfying account of the ancient Arabs’ history. We should not forget, however, that the ancient Arabs do receive mention in their neighbours’ records, including texts of the Bible. It is essential, therefore, to make some preliminary comments about the nature of these sources in order that we may deal with them properly.

1.3.1 Inscriptions

Inscriptions are one of the essential primary sources for historical investigation, as they enable the researcher to gain a window on the spirit, culture, and languages of the past. So, for example, the Black Obelisk\(^6\) provides information about Jehu, king of Israel, who paid tribute to the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser III. This discovery lends support to the information contained in II Kings 9 (Pritchard 1969: 281; Elat 1975: 32). Though, it is seldom that we find such a close match between discovered inscriptions and Biblical texts.

Geoffrey Barraclough (1957: 2) defined history as ‘the attempt to recreate the significant features of the past on the basis of imperfect and fragmentary evidence.’ This definition may describe the situation when a historian attempts to relate an event basing his historical account on fragmentary inscriptions. It cannot be denied that utilizing an

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\(^6\) Discovered at Calah in 1846 by A.H. Layard. The name was given because of its material and shape (black alabaster) (Chavalas 2006: 290) (see figure no. 3).
inscription as a source in narrating a specific event mentioned in that inscription is a valid approach since it is probably a contemporary source, but historians occasionally have to deal with fragmentary inscriptions and they must be conscious of the limitations of their source evidence and avoid adding information not supported by the inscription itself (Marwick 1989: 231). Moreover, it is difficult to understand historical events from imperfect inscriptions and the historian’s problem may be increased by a lack of archaeological supporting material (Kuhrt 1995: 28).

Another point which needs to be taken into account is the credibility of the information derived from historical inscriptions, since many inscriptions may have been written to serve some propaganda purpose (ibid: 231). We can see this in the way in which the Assyrians’ inscriptions were written to present their civilization as powerful, with all the bombast of a conquering nation, raising doubts about the historical validity of Assyrian inscriptions in the modern historian’s mind, especially when it is rare to find other contemporary sources with which to make comparisons and balance the record (Luckenbill 1926: 8). For example we see that the course of events in the battle of Qadesh in 1274 BCE has been so presented in a Hittite inscription as to proclaim a Hittite victory over the Egyptian army, while Egyptian texts claim that the battle issued in a victory for the Egyptians with their allies’ armies over their enemies (Chavalas 2006: 244). In addition, we have to distinguish between historical and non-historical inscriptions, i.e. inscriptions which do not contribute directly to the historical narrative. Historical inscriptions may be exemplified by Assyrian inscriptions containing a narrative of events, while examples of non-historical inscriptions may be found among those discovered in Māda’in Sāliḥ (Healey 1993).

Marwick (1989: 216) wrote, ‘Written testimony is the deliberate or intentional message.’ Inscriptions may have been written by officials or by ordinary persons, both of whom may be the authors of differing and yet valuable information. The former, for example, might record information about official acts or about important events like wars; some also contain laws, such as Hammurabi’s law code (Kuhrt, 1995: 103). Again, official inscriptions were sometimes written to mark regal successions or for propaganda
purposes, like the Cyrus Cylinder, which reflects Cyrus’s accession to the kingship with attendant propaganda and leaves the real reasons behind the defeat of Babylonia and the problems of Nabonidus’s era in obscurity (ibid.:603).

Studying such inscriptions may still help to enhance our understanding of past events. For example, the Nemara inscription lends support to the suggestion that the Arabs started to be conscious of their unity at least from the fourth century AD (Hoyland 2001: 202). Further, some individual inscriptions may reflect the social situation, for instance the relationship between members of society (Marwick 1989: 217); they may mention wars, for example some texts in Jabal Ghunaym which mention war against the Nabayāt (Winnett & Reed 1970: 70); or sometimes they may present a group of people, as when Nabataeans refer to themselves as Nabataeans in their inscriptions in Mada'in Salih (Healey 1993: 13).

1.3.2 Annals

Since annals, which are usually composed well within the memory of the events related in them, open such a large window onto the past, they have to be acknowledged as one of the most important sources for ancient historiography. In fact, many ancient civilizations have left behind their own annals which provide insight into their history.

Beginning with Egypt, such annals are of differing kinds, including lists of kings, chronicles of events, and diaries of wars and military campaigns, written under the supervision and in the interest of kings (Grayson 2000: 1). Moreover, Hittite inscriptions deserve to be mentioned since they include innumerable historical texts and king lists, suggesting that the Hittite rulers may, in fact, have influenced Assyrian kings to write their annals (Grayson 2000: 2).

Assyrian and Babylonian annals are considered valuable sources for Mesopotamian history. Grayson divided sources of Mesopotamian history into six categories, classifying them as follows: ‘chronographic texts, pseudo-autobiographies,
prophecies, historical epics, royal inscriptions and miscellaneous history’. He also drew attention to several particular points in Mesopotamian sources. First, he highlighted the difference between royal inscriptions and historical epics. While both of these go back to Sumerian times and both were written for propaganda purposes, historical epics contain poetic narratives describing the deaths of some famous persons and illustrate the most important events that occurred during the reign of each king. Second, he observed that it is difficult to deal with Assyrian chronology because the Assyrian inscriptions were written in two different languages: Akkadian and Sumerian. Third, he noted an overlap between the king lists and the chronicles, which occurred because the king lists are interspersed with narratives of events in which the kings were involved. Consequently, he advises us to deal with them as ‘ancient literary patterns’ (Grayson 2000: 2ff.).

A quick look at Assyrian inscriptions reveals that they present some shortcomings for historical research. First, even though Assyrian annals were written directly after events recounted in them, they were written to serve propaganda purposes. All annals were written under the king’s supervision, which means that the scribe wrote what the kings wanted to be read. Second, the quantity of information recorded by different kings is very uneven, so that, for instance, while Tiglath-pileser III (744-727) has left a truly massive corpus of inscriptions (see Tadmor 1994), many other Assyrian kings, for example Shamshi-Adad III, Assur-nirari I, and Puzur-Ashur III, left only a sparse number of inscriptions (Grayson 1972: 32-36). The third problem is that Assyrian inscriptions were written from one side only, which means that they cannot be relied upon for a balanced account, since they generally neglect other contemporary civilizations, writing them off as defeated peoples, indulging in boasting and the dissemination of false information. Finally, we cannot trust every single piece of information coming from Assyrian inscriptions without corroborating it through external supporting information (Luckenbill 1926: I, 8ff.).
The fact is that writers of annals in ancient times were not concerned to find evidence to support what they wrote, but merely wrote in obedience to their rulers’ wishes. The sources of ancient annal-writers were either the words of kings, chiefs, or other powerful individuals. Nevertheless, they cannot be completely dismissed, since they are contemporary witnesses to historical events, albeit flawed witnesses. In addition, the royal claims might be roughly in line with reality, since otherwise they would be implausible.

In contrast, the annals written during the medieval period were slightly different, because their writers were concerned to find a variety of sources. Thus, for instance, al-Tabari wrote his book *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī: tārīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk* making a conscious effort to attribute what he wrote to its source. Nevertheless, the method of writing at that time still lacked a clear system. In addition, medieval annals were generally written later than the events narrated. By contrast, in modern days historians have ready access to multiple different sources, which enables them to inquire carefully after the truth. For example, when Winston Churchill published his account of *The Second World War* (1959), he wrote with all the insight he had gained from his leading position during that period and used sources which no one else had access to at that time. It is true that he wrote what he wanted people to know and he possibly hid some information, but the technology revolution has now allowed researchers to uncover the information they need and gain access to many important documents, so that they are able to lay all the facts before readers, who are now free either to agree with what Churchill wrote, or to disagree with it (see Lawlor 1994; Donnelly 1999).
1.3.3 Biblical sources

The narratives of the Bible are very important because they offer a viewpoint into many events, but the information to be derived from the Bible must be used with caution, since a primary question for historians to decide is the nature of the Biblical materials. On this matter Miller and Hayes (1986: 74-77) divide historians who deal with Biblical information into the following categories.

The first group are those who take the historical narratives as they stand, since there can be found in the Biblical text a considerable amount of information which cannot be found in other sources. This was the traditional approach of religious scholars of the past, both Jews and Christians, having been adopted, for example, by the Greek chronicler John Malalas (491-578 CE) who depended only on the Bible, having no other resource, such as the archaeological information which has become available in modern times. The strength of this approach was that there seemed to be, ready at hand in the Biblical narratives, information about humankind from the fifteenth century BCE which might be difficult to find in other places.

By contrast, more recent historians reject this approach and refuse to take the Biblical narratives at face value, since this simplistic approach would leave nothing for the historian to do but merely to repeat in writing the stories found in the Bible and try occasionally to suggest hypotheses to reconcile conflicting narratives or to support the Biblical stories by reference to selected external observations. Using Biblical information as it stands without analysis or explanation or interpretation would perhaps be better justified if the original autographs were universally accepted as accurate versions. In other words, if we had all the separate original texts now contained in the Bible and these were universally accepted for their authenticity from ancient times without addition or alteration, such texts would be more reliable and useable among scholars, but as things actually stand, scholars wishing to use this approach have to make informed judgments.

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7 While their book is entitled *A history of ancient Israel and Judah*, in their second chapter, “The question of origins”, they do make a careful inquiry into the nature of the Biblical materials as historical sources and the different approaches that have been taken in handling them.
regarding the reliability of the original texts and use these throughout their studies in the context of the critical judgments arrived at (ibid.: 74 ff.).

The second group consists of those who make a total rejection of the Biblical accounts and never use them because, in their view, these narratives have been repeatedly transcribed by different writers, so that the final texts derive from the pens of those who were not contemporaries of the events related in their works. However, Miller and Hayes (ibid.: 75) reason that even though this approach seems safer than the first, researchers into ancient history, and especially the ancient history of Israel, need to use Biblical materials at least from time to time if they are to find a reasonable explanation for some events mentioned in other works.

A third group consists of those scholars adopting a compromise position, in the conviction that it is important not to overlook any information either from the Bible or from the findings of archaeological research. This approach has a number of advantages. First of all, an effort is made to reconcile information derived from the Bible and that which is found in the extra-biblical inscriptions. In this way a search is made for logical explanations in interpreting Biblical texts. For example, the Assyrian inscriptions may help us to evaluate the information derived from the Bible, as in the case of the mentioned earlier of events relating to Jehu, king of Israel.

Secondly, this approach seeks to make links between Biblical and extra-Biblical studies, adjusting Biblical or Ancient Near East texts’ information by critically comparing between the two. By this means it may prove possible to find a suitable explanation for information derived either from the Bible or from archaeological discoveries.

A third advantage of this compromise position is that through the implementation of literary-critical techniques in Biblical studies, critics may be able to discern overlapping points in the different Biblical narratives and distinguish older from later narratives. A separation of older and later textual materials does not, however, offer an immediate solution to the scholar’s quest for literary authenticity, for, as Miller and Hayes observe, ‘The fact that an old narrative can be separated out from later editorial
material and sounds authentic does not necessarily mean it is historically reliable. The origin of the narrative still may have been far removed in time from the events that it reports’ (ibid.:77).

a. Inherent ambiguities of the Bible

Although the Biblical texts have undergone centuries of careful scholarly research and the texts have been commented on and interpreted to make them readily accessible to the reading public, people may still find difficulty in understanding some passages in the Bible (Dever 2001: 1). The fact is that there are some difficulties consistently faced by anybody dealing with the Bible. One of these is that the Old Testament is not a single book but rather a collection of books, parts of which may have separate authors and origins now unknown to us, extending from ancient times down to the second century BCE. Another issue is that the Biblical texts cover a wide range of subjects and literary genres such as legends, sagas, myths, history, songs and poetry, making them not a uniform whole like one complete historical narrative (ibid.:2). Another issue is that the culture reflected in the Bible is oriental and Semitic, far removed from western norms. The Biblical texts were written in eastern languages now dead, even though Hebrew has been revived in a modern form in the twentieth century, with the result that there are in the text many exotic words difficult to understand (ibid.). Another factor tending to render the Bible ambiguous is the unfortunate practice of some religious clerics who force an interpretation, deemed orthodox by them, upon individual passages, even when such interpretations are dismissed by scholars (ibid.).

b. Is the Bible history at all?

The criticisms oriented towards Biblical materials come from a minority of European and American scholars who are of the opinion that the Bible is totally revisionist, especially in historical matters. They assert that every generation, both Jewish and Christian, has added their own history to the Biblical narratives, making both Old and New Testaments revolve around themselves. As a result, the Old and New Testaments contain some historically misleading information. Fortunately, century after century our knowledge is improved, producing a revolution of knowledge which has
contributed to our discovery of the facts, especially with the contribution of archaeology and ancient texts, which enables historians to distinguish between fabricated information and truth (*ibid.*: 3 f.).

c. Difficulties in the text

Biblical criticism involves the attempt to resolve difficulties in the Biblical texts, especially where they seem to contain inconsistencies and ambiguous information. The conservative approach to Biblical interpretation may be divided into two kinds. The first is that of the strict scholars who believe that difficulties of interpretation are not restricted to the Biblical text but may be found in any text, while the second group claims that difficulties in the Biblical text are simply matters of harmonization and order. The linguistic and rhetorical experts believe that problems in the Biblical text cannot be observed in flat studies of the text (Barton 2007: 9).

On the other hand, from the critical scholars’ perspective, the Biblical texts contain discrepancies and the scholars’ crucial role is to solve all problems in the text and reconcile between conflicting passages. However, religious conservatives refuse this kind of study and accuse scholars of the post-Enlightenment era of going astray in imposing literary criticism on the Biblical text. But the fact is that this approach is old and is not simply an invention of the Enlightenment, or indeed of the Renaissance. Thus, John Rogerson points out in his *Beginning Old Testament Study* that Augustine, who was known to be strict and orthodox, living before the Renaissance era, wrote about problems in the Biblical text in his *City of God*, book 15 (*ibid.*:9-11).
1.4 Nature of archaeological sources

Bahn (1996: 2) says the word archaeology ‘comes from the Greek (arkhaiologia, ‘discourse about ancient things’), but today it has come to mean the study of the human past through the material traces of it that have survived’. Cook (1930: 1) has defined archaeology as ‘the science of the treatment of the material remains of the human past-of all, in fact, that belongs to unwritten history.’ The effort to find relics and try to collect ancient pieces which hold the spirit of the past has attracted people for a very long time, even before the idea of systematic study of ancient societies and excavation had become developed or elaborated (Dever 2001: 54).

Blundell commented that even though the sixteenth century is commonly considered as the real starting point of archaeology, the Greeks did nevertheless contribute to this field of learning. That is because Herodotus tried to study other societies in order to assist the political leaders in his country to understand other peoples. Notwithstanding the fact that the Greeks labelled other peoples as barbarians, they realized that in order properly to understand their own culture, it was necessary to study other cultures (Blundell 1986: 73-97). Indeed, a sense for archaeology was found among the Romans because they appreciated ancient architecture wherever they found it, whether among the Egyptians or the Greeks. For example, the Emperor Hadrian (117-138 CE) took an interest in collecting relics, restored some Greek buildings, and built a village which contained many Greek sculptures. This attitude was revived when real archaeological work started during the Renaissance (Greene 1995: 16).

1.4.1 Medieval attitudes to Antiquity

During the medieval era the attitude towards antiquity was very harsh because church authority weighed heavily upon the political and scientific spheres. At that time all new ideas and theories were considered as heresy and antiquarian studies were forced to follow slavishly everything which was mentioned in the Bible, even taking literally the
narratives of cosmic creation and the creation of mankind. Even pilgrims to the Holy Land, when they collected relics from there, tried to reconcile them with what is mentioned in the Bible without attempting to provide any interpretation (ibid.: 16 f.). To be fair, however, one contrary case should be taken into account, as during the medieval era the Bishop of Winchester Henry of Blois also known as Henry of Winchester (1098/9 – 1171) collected ancient Roman artefacts when he visited Italy and became closely acquainted with its civilization, reading books by Latin authors such as Pliny and Vitruvius (ibid.: 17).

1.4.2 Archaeology during the Renaissance era

The Renaissance attitude to archaeology was not far from the Roman attitude, since, during this time, there was an interest in studies of ancient nations and many relics were collected. Roman culture was brought under the spotlight and much research was made into understanding this great civilization (Weiss 1969: 131-144). One of the famous scholars at this time was Cyriac of Ancona (Ciriaco de’ Pizzecolli 1391-1452). Cyriac established a new method to study ancient civilization, by engaging in active physical examination of ancient remains through fieldwork. This method became recognized as an essential tool for archaeological research (Greene 1995: 17).

During the sixteenth century, historians became more conscious of the need to study inscriptions, and coins, which had been discovered during the foregoing century. Those objects changed the spirit of historical studies, making it a more recognizable science than a mere collection of narratives (Weiss 1969: 206). Even so, systematic excavations had not started yet at that time and all objects were found on the surface (Greene 1995: 17). Noteworthy during that time among European countries which took the initiative in archaeological work were Britain and Germany, followed later by other European countries. Archaeological field work started first in northern Europe, then in Greece, and after that in the Near East (ibid.: 18).
1.4.3 Archaeology and the Enlightenment

During the seventeenth century, the Enlightenment movement challenged the church’s authority and discussed many issues which had previously been prohibited, such as the origins of mankind and the beginning of the universe. Developments in economics and technology affected attitudes towards knowledge about prehistoric times (Evans 1982: 17; Trigger 1989: 57f.). This new conception expressed itself most clearly in Scottish and French philosophers’ works, many of which discussed the ancient state of humankind (Piggott 1989: 151).

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a great rush to uncover the archaeological sites of the Near East, many of which also offered written records of past civilizations among the archaeological finds made in them. As competing interests of scholars from rival European nations jockeyed for exclusive access to important sites, local opportunists seized what they could and sold artefacts for the best prices they could obtain all around the world, so that, for instance, during the 1880s some 35,000 to 40,000 cuneiform texts were sold by Baghdadi dealers to customers all around the world (Andrén 1998: 46).

1.4.4 The nineteenth century and the history of Biblical archaeology

Biblical archaeology goes back a long way, in its earliest form with relics brought back by pilgrims returning from the Holy Land. In more recent times, however, Edward Robinson is considered to be one of the important visitors to the Bible lands, since he was able to collect remarkable archaeological materials from there. In 1838, he published a paper identifying many Biblical sites, with a map which became an important guide for archaeologists. Following this there was an increase in archaeological work in Bible lands, a leading exponent being Kitchener, who published his work in 1878. Around the same time, C.W. Wilson undertook the first excavation campaign in Bible lands, especially in Palestine near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Dever 2001: 54). In 1840, considerable excavation work started in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and many
archaeological sites were discovered either by serendipity or by planning and careful archaeological study. The first organized excavation in Palestine took place in 1890 under Sir William Flinders Petrie’s supervision, especially in Tell el-Hesē in the Gaza area (ibid.).

The early twentieth century prior to World War I is considered the golden age of excavation and exploration, especially in Syro-Palestinian archaeology when many European countries contributed to extending knowledge of the area. With the end of the First World War and the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, Palestine came under a British mandate. At that time the Department of Antiquities was established and much excavation and fieldwork was accomplished. The American School of Oriental Research also played a significant role. One of the famous scholars from that institution was William Albright, who became known as ‘the father of Biblical archaeology’ on account of his extensive research work in the Bible lands during the periods 1920-29 and 1933-36 (ibid.: 56).

1.4.5 Digging in civilized areas

The problems attendant on archaeological excavation vary from one site to another, principally on account of the differing conditions. So, for example, an archaeologist working in a desert terrain on a site relating to one historical period has an easier task than an archaeologist digging in an urban area on a site covering several historical periods. Obviously, when the former finds relics in the course of his excavation, it is relatively easy for him to date them, while the latter will find it difficult to make a quick decision whether the relics he finds belong to one period or perhaps to

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9 See for example, Albright W.F. (1968), Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: a historical analysis of two contrasting faiths (London: Athlone P); Albright W.F. (1957), From the stone age to Christianity: monotheism and the historical process (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday).
another. As John Currid (1999: 37) notes, ‘Excavation in the Middle East rarely deals with one-period sites,’ because it is rich with the remains of many ancient civilizations. For example, Megiddo in the Jezreel Valley was inhabited for the first time about 5000 BCE in the Neolithic Age and different cultural materials found in excavations of the site have revealed that it must have been occupied several times throughout the subsequent course of its history (ibid.). Another such example of multiple occupations is the Shephelah region which has been occupied continuously from 3000 BCE. This area is consequently difficult to deal with archaeologically as archaeologists find it hard to identify cultural materials and even the site’s chronology (ibid.: 38). Ras Shamra/Ugarit is another similar example as it testifies to five levels of occupation in different periods (Pfeiffer 1968: 10; Grabbe 1994: 121).
1.5 Important written sources for this research

Ancient Arabian history has received the special attention of scholars over a long period, during which many works have been written about the Arab people and their lands. As we will frequently observe throughout this study, the Arabs were mentioned by their neighbours, such as the Assyrians and Babylonians, from the ninth century BCE. In addition, some texts of the Old Testament make mention of Arabs in the north of Arabia and shed some light on their lifestyle. Medieval scholars also wrote about Arab history, but most of their works were based on narrative sources which they did not take care to verify. Modern scholars continue to investigate Arabian history, and many western scholars have visited the Arabian Peninsula and written accounts of Arabian history which we will have recourse to throughout this study. The present section examines some important works which are related to the present study.

1.5.1 Cuneiform and Related Sources

From the Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions we gain a window onto a past world, contributing to the improvement of our knowledge regarding events in ancient Mesopotamia. The contributions of Assyrian and Babylonian records and the necessity for caution in interpreting them have been discussed elsewhere in this study. One of the major older resources for Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions is Luckenbill’s *Ancient records of Assyria and Babylonia*, published in two volumes in 1926-1927. The benefit of this publication is that it contains a complete English version of the Assyrian inscriptions. The first volume contains royal inscriptions of the rulers from Ititi to Shalmaneser V, while the second volume contains inscriptions of the rulers from Sargon to Assurbanipal, followed by those of Assurbanipal’s successors and finally the list of Assyrian kings. Both these volumes provide relevant information for the present study and are referred to in it with some frequency.

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10 See section 1.3 above.
James B. Pritchard’s *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* of 1959 and W. H. Hallo’s *The Context of Scripture* of 1997 contain important collections of original texts in translation. In general we have used the latter, but have where necessary had recourse to Pritchard or even the much earlier work of Luckenbill.

Aramaic inscriptions also provide important information, especially in regard to Qedarite history in Tell El-Maskhuta. In 1956 Rabinowitz published an article under the title ‘Inscriptions of the Fifth Century BCE from a North-Arabian Shrine in Egypt’ (1956: 1-9). This article is considered a fundamental work relating to the Qedarites and in it Rabinowitz describes nine ancient silver vessels (mentioned below), now kept at the Brooklyn Museum, and some of them bearing inscriptions in Aramaic. The article hints at the status of the Qedarites as a superpower in Northern Arabia during the Persian period.

Four of these bowls bore Aramaic inscriptions. One of them reads: ‘That which Qaynu bar Geshem, King of Qedar, brought in offering to Han-‘Ilat.’ According to Rabinowitz (1956: 2), the translation might with linguistic correctness be ‘Belonging to Han-‘Ilat’. Han-‘Ilat is known to be a divine name and is commonly seen in Arabian inscriptions. The name Qaynu is common among the ancient Arabs, being found in Nabataean, Safaitic and Thamudic inscriptions.

In fact, the discovery of the name of Qaynu in Egypt suggests that he could be supposed to have had as far reaching an influence as his father, who holds a place in William F. Albright's list of Dedan’s rulers (Albright 1953: 6). Geshem is a familiar north Arabian name. A Geshem is mentioned in the Old Testament as the opponent of Nehemiah11 (Rabinowitz 1956: 6). It seems reasonable to accept the Geshem of the Tell El-Maskhuta inscription as Nehemiah's adversary, because the dates of the vessels match with the Nehemiah period. It can therefore be established that Qaynu’s era is to be set at about 400 BCE and his father Geshem would have flourished at around 440 BCE, the commonly accepted date of Nehemiah (*Ibid*: 7).

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11 Geshem was involved in the local conspiracy against Nehemiah, recounted in the Biblical book of Nehemiah.
In 1971, William J. Dumbrell published an article on ‘The Tell El-Maskhuta Bowls and the Kingdom of Qedar in the Persian period’ (1971: 203: 33-44). This article also contends that the Qedarites were a power to be reckoned with between Sennacherib’s era and the Nabataean era. The Qedarites had expanded from the Syrian Desert to Northern Arabia and were known to be present during the Persian era to the south of Palestine and the Delta region. Dumbrell also cites the bowl which mentions the King of Qedar, Qaynu son of Geshem. This article refers closely to the findings of Rabinowitz.

### 1.5.2 Classical sources

As we have earlier noted, the Greek historian Herodotus, who lived in the fifth century BCE, has been called the father of history because he was the first historian known to collect his source materials, arrange them and test their accuracy. Herodotus divided his work into two main parts. The first tells of the origins of the quarrel between east and west, the rise of the Persian Empire and the historical context, with special reference to Athens and Sparta. The second and main part concentrates on the Persian wars.

Herodotus gives extensive information about Arabia, in which he described the spices of this land and also wrote about the Arabs’ terrain, folklore, trade, clothing, and weapons. In his third book he mentions the Arabs Ἀραβες as a force to be reckoned with in the north of the Arabian Peninsula just before Cambyses’ campaign against Egypt. He relates that when Cambyses sought to conquer Egypt he sent his ambassador to Arabia begging the Arabs’ help\(^\text{12}\), as a result of which he was offered camels, water, and guided passage for the Persian army through the Arabian Desert.

Among the other Greek and Latin authors who wrote about Arabia were Theophrastus,\(^\text{13}\) Strabo,\(^\text{14}\) Diodorus Siculus\(^\text{15}\) and Pliny the Elder.\(^\text{16}\)

\(^{13}\) A Greek philosopher and scientist, who was born in 370 BCE and died between 288 and 285 BCE. His birthplace was Eresus on the island of Lesbos, and he became a pupil of the philosopher Aristotle. When
In addition, the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus needs to be taken into account. Josephus wrote his first work, *The Jewish War*, in Rome while enjoying the benefits granted to him by his patrons. This was followed by *Jewish Antiquities*, written in twenty instalments (Shutt, 1961). In book 15 of this work Josephus mentions Arabs and their king, who was forced to pay tribute to Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt. This tribute was collected from the Arabs by Herod, the king of the Jews, but the king of the Arabs afterwards became slow in his payments and could hardly be brought to pay some parts of the tribute money, refusing to pay even then without further deductions. This information contributes a little to our knowledge of relations at that time between the Arabs, Jews and Egypt (Josephus, *Antiquities*: 15/5: 1).

1.5.3 Islamic sources

In the Qur'an, Ibrahim and Ismail are mentioned as prophets. Yet neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah of the Prophet mention the history of the Qedarite kingdom. Furthermore, Islamic historians do not generally describe the ancient history of Arabia except as prefaces to their historical treatment of the rise of Islam.

In his annals, the Muslim scholar and historian Muhammad al-Ṭabarī mentioned the twelve sons of Ismail by name. He also cited al-Kalbi’s narrative, in which it was stated that Qedar’s numbers had increased after Nebuchadnezzar occupied their lands in al-Anbâr and that they founded the Arab emirates in the north of Arabia (al-Ṭabarī: I, 671).

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Aristotle retired, shortly before his death in 322 BCE, Theophrastus succeeded him as head of his school, in spite of competition from Sudemus of Rhodes. See Grant, *Greek and Latin Authors*, p. 434.

14 A Greek of Pontus, who was born in about 64 BCE. His fame is based on his *Geography*.

15 A Greek historian who lived in the first century BCE, until at least 21 BCE. His birthplace was Agyrium (Agira) in Sicily, one of the oldest settlements of the interior. See Grant, *Greek and Latin Authors*, p. 131.

16 Gaius Plinius Secundus, a Roman official and Latin historian and scientist, who was born in 23 or 24 CE and died in 79 CE. His birthplace was Novum Comum. See Grant, *Greek and Latin Authors*, p. 344.
1.5.4 Modern Studies of Arabs in Antiquity

Between 1968 and 1973 the Iraqi scholar Jawād ʻAlī published *Muhādarāt fī tārīkh al-ʻArab*, in ten volumes, a work containing extensive information and analysis of records relating to Arab history. The first volume of this work contained information about the history of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times, including some important information about Qedar, Massa’, and Sheba.

In 1982 Israel Eph’al published an important and influential book entitled *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Borders of the Fertile Crescent, 9th-5th Centuries B.C.* In this work the author investigates and describes the relations between the Arabs of Northern Sinai, Northern Arabia and the Syro-Arabian Desert, and the population of Palestine and its environs, as well as those between these nomads and the great Near Eastern empires which ruled the western part of the Fertile Crescent in the 9th-5th centuries BCE. The study focuses mainly on the political and ethnographic aspects of these relations and deals, to a lesser extent, with social and economic matters. Eph’al’s work helps fill a major gap in our knowledge about the first millennium BCE and of the complex relationships between the nomadic groups and the great powers of Northern Arabia.

In 1985 Ernst Axel Knauf published *Ismael; Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordarabiens im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* Although the book mentions Ishmael and his sons when they dealt with the Jews, it does not provide us with a full account of the Qedarites.

In 1994 Kitchen published part 1 of a work entitled *Documentation for Ancient Arabia*. Based on extensive and detailed research, this volume contains a useful listing of Arab rulers, which places in the hands of researchers many lists of the names of Arab rulers in different periods.

In 2003 Jan Retsö published *The Arabs in Antiquity: their History from the Assyrians to the Umayyads*, a book which is one of the most important large works on the history of the Arabs. It covers a lengthy historical period, from references to Arabs
in cuneiform sources down to Umayyad times. Although this book has been written in a complicated way, it still provides us with valuable and significant information about Arabs.

John Healey has done much to improve our knowledge of Nabataean history through many publications, such as *The Nabataean tomb inscriptions of Mada‘in Salih* (1993). In *The religion of the Nabataeans: a conspectus* (2001), Healey discusses ‘the Nabataean god and goddess’ in depth and in his publication *Aramaic inscriptions and documents of the Roman period* (2009) he discusses the mingling of Eastern and Western civilizations in the ancient Near East during the Roman period and briefly sheds light on ethnicity studies.

The Saudi scholar Sulaymān ibn ‘Abd al-Rahmān al-Dhuyayb has also contributed to improving our knowledge about the history of the Arabs in north Arabia through many publications, such as *Nuqūsh Thamūdiyyah jadīdah min al-Jawf* (2003), *Nuqūsh Nabaṭiyah fī al-Jawf, al-‘Ulā, Taymā‘* (2005), *Nuqūsh Taymā‘ al-‘Àrāmīyah* (2007), *Mudawwanat al-nuqūsh al-Nabaṭiyah fī al-Mamlakah al-‘Àrābiyyah al-Saʿūdīyyah*, vol. II (2009), *al-Tārīkh al-siyāsī liʾl-Anbāṭ* (2011), and many others the contributions of this author add up to a very significant body of material which adds greatly to our resources for Arabian history.

Another Saudi scholar who deserves to be mentioned here is Said F. Al-Said, who in 2000 published an article entitled ‘Ḥamlat al-Malik al-Bābilī Nabonidus ‘alā shamāl gharb al-Jazīrāh al-‘Àrābiyyah’, in which he discussed the year in which Nabonidus departed from Babylon to take up residence in Tayma and the reasons behind his sojourn there. In 2002 Al-Said published another article, ‘Foreign wives of Minaeans in the light of new inscriptions’, in which he mentioned three Qedarite women who married Minaean men. He emphasized that those Qedarite women were wives and not slaves, as had previously been assumed before his new reading of some inscriptions (see below). In 2012 another article by Al-Said, ‘Dedan: treasures of a spectacular culture’. This article described the history of Dedan during the reigns of three Dedanite kings.

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17 See 5.3.4
More recent research on the Qedarites has been conducted by Hend Al-Turki, who obtained her doctoral degree in Ancient History from King Saud University in 2008 her thesis entitled *Kingdom of Qedar: a study of the political and cultural history during the first millennium*. In her introduction she focuses on the political situation in the north and the south of Arabia, and the Aramean kingdoms during the first millennium BCE, with particular reference to those kingdoms which briefly prospered during this time. She also mentions Adummatu, Tayma, and Dedan as important cities in the Qedar kingdom. Her first chapter makes reference to the Qedarites in historical sources such as those from Assyria, the Old Testament, classical sources, and Arabic sources. Her second chapter looks at the tribe of Qedar, the kingdom of Qedar, and the territorial spread of the Qedarites. Her third chapter is about the general conditions of Qedarite life, including the political situation and external relations, social life, commerce, and religion. Although her work is based on a small number of sources, she writes about the political situation in depth whilst offering a few insights into the arts and culture of the Qedarites, their societal structure, and their daily life.
Chapter two:
Ethnicity, Social structure and Representation

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2.1 Ethnicity

Introduction to Ethnicity

This section discusses the sociological topic of ethnicity, which is of importance here on account of its bearing on the topic of this thesis. In fact, Arab ethnicity remains a controversial issue which needs to be discussed in depth. We therefore discuss the definition of ethnicity, the boundaries of ethnic groups, Arab ethnicity, Ishmael and the Arabs in the Bible, and finally Ibn Khaldūn’s particular theory of Arab ethnicity.

2.1.1 Interpreting Ethnicity

We need first to consider the difference between ‘ethnic communities’ and ‘nations’. Smith commented (1986: 7) that ‘in the mid-twentieth century there was a widespread assumption… that the nation was something as “natural” as the family, speech or the human body itself,’ but that assumption underwent radical questioning in the latter part of the century as new factors were taken into account. It is now clear that many nations of the world today lack a universal homogeneity in one or more human characteristics, such as language, culture, economic status, and ethnic grouping within the population. Thus, while there may be inequalities within the make-up of a nation, the claim to nationhood is, nevertheless, at the external level, a claim to equality on the international stage, at least in theory (Smith 1986: 1). We must therefore penetrate beneath the various concepts of ‘nation’ to examine the more basic concept of ‘ethnicity’, before considering how that term relates to the Arab people, but for clarity we may state here that the Arabs of North Arabia have from pre-Islamic times accepted the term ‘Arab’ as a self designation and, from their perspective, there has been no need to authenticate this designation. Indeed, it is fair to speculate that those whose identities are rarely questioned and who have never known exile or subjugation of land and culture have little
need to trace their roots in order to establish a unique and recognizable identity (Smith 1986: 2).

According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, the first recorded use in the English language of the term ‘ethnicity’, with the specific meaning of ‘ethnic character or peculiarity’, was in 1953. As Brett (2002: 3) has noted, ethnic identity continues, despite comments from social theoreticians in the 1950s and 1960s, to occupy the minds of politicians worldwide to the present day. The old assumption that the politics of ethnicity would gradually fade away as post-colonial states embraced the ideals of Western modernity has not stood the test of time, principally because of continuing social inequalities conspiring against ideals of homogeneity. Inequalities, often exacerbated by injustices, have worked to create a world still riven by ‘us and them’ relations between separate groups of people, reinforced to think of their collective selves ranged against collective others (Edelman 2002: 25), so much so that it might almost be said that a resurgence of tribal consciousness has become, in some quarters, a *sine qua non* of social existence. Of course, the underlying substance of the perceived social identities varies from group to group and is determined by specific historical circumstances.

Edelman (2002: 26) adds that ‘once ethnicity emerges, however, as the basis of social classification and status relations, it seems on the experiential level to become an independent principle that determines social status, class membership, and social relations.’ Impacting thus as an independent force, ethnicity may henceforth develop under the impetus of influences that were absent at the time of its emergence and these may in turn independently affect the original social and political context. The problem this presents for the historian is that it becomes impossible to predict either what forces acting within a group may lead to an emerged ethnicity, or the specific manifestations or transmutations that ethnicity will produce in the course of time. Consequently, while admitting that a particular group’s ethnic identity may become reflected in certain of its cultural remains, certainty regarding the proper interpretation of cultural remains cannot easily be extracted from the remains themselves (ibid.).
2.1.2 Foundations of the Ethnic Community

As English had no word to describe ‘an ethnic group’, the word *ethnos* (a number of people living together, a company, or body of men) was borrowed from Greek. Herodotus (I. 101) had, for example used the word in the phrase *to Midikon ethnos* to indicate the Median people. The term was used to describe a group of people acting and living together, though not necessarily belonging to the same tribe or clan. In other words, as Anthony Smith (1986: 21) observed, ‘*ethnos* would appear to be more suited to cultural rather than biological or kinship differences’.

Smith may perhaps enumerate the dimensions of ethnicity as follows but we should mention here that those elements might not always appear together:

1. A collective name.
2. A common myth of descent, providing answers to such questions as: *Why are we alike?* And *why are we one community?* The usual answers contain assertions of having as a group come from the same place at some definite time and having descended from a common ancestor.
3. A shared history, since ethnicity has no meaning without shared memories.
4. An association with a specific territory.
5. A sense of solidarity.’

On the basis of the above, ethnic communities may be defined to a certain extent as denominated human populations with shared ancestral myths, histories, and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity. Smith (1986: 32) particularly notes how ethnicity is found since the Bronze Age in the Middle East, as the notion is clearly demonstrable from ancient records.

Cohen defines ethnicity as follows: ‘Ethnicity, then, is a set of descent-based cultural identifiers used to assign persons to groupings that expand and contract in inverse relation to the scale of inclusiveness and exclusiveness of the membership’.

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18 Schermerhorn (1970: 230) also underlines the close relation of the word to history and culture.
Ethnic groups consist of human groups entertaining a fixed belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs, or indeed of both, and/or because of memories of colonization and migration. It does not essentially matter whether or not an actual blood relationship exists. To state the case in general terms according to Barth, an ethnic group

1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating;
2. shares fundamental values;
3. makes up a field of communication and interaction; and
4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified, by others as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of similar order’ (Barth 1969: 10f.).

Zelinsky (2001: 44) asserts that ethnicity is, in fact, a modern social construct, undergoing constant change, having in view an imagined community, one that is too large for intimate contact between individual members, yet consisting of persons perceived by themselves and/or by others to share a unique set of cultural and historical commonalities. An ethnic grouping emerges on account of its relationships with other social entities, usually by experiencing some degree of friction with other groups adjacent to it in physical or social space. In short, modern sociologists and cultural anthropologists define an ethnic group as a collectivity of individual people who regard themselves as being united through common ancestry (actual or legendary) and who are so regarded by external communities. The term ‘ethnicity’ is, however, used with great flexibility, based on minimal assumptions and so capable of encompassing a range of socio-cultural groupings. ‘Important in the analysis of ancient Western Asian social systems, the term “ethnic group” allows for the existence of more than one type of social organization within the single bounded unit’ (Kamp and Yoffee 1980: 88).

While in earlier studies the view was commonly held that ethnicity was an irrelevant concept in ancient societies, later thinking has called this view into question as
it has been forced to recognize definite evidence of ethnic sentiments in the ancient sources, not least those relating to ancient peoples such as the Armenians and the Israelites, the latter being acutely conscious of their difference from other peoples in matters of language, religion, and (socially constructed) race. Healey (2009: 21), however, adds a note of caution against the wholesale abandonment of the former dogma, warning against the facile application of the term ‘nation’ to all ancient human collectivities and remarking that ‘Nabataea, Palmyra, Edessa, and Harta can only with considerable stretching of terminology be described in such terms.’

2.1.3 The Boundaries of Ethnicity Groups

Ethnic groups are not commensurate with groups occupying a defined territory, since their boundaries are defined essentially through social characteristics. Through their interaction with other groups, which may occupy neighbouring or indeed the same lands, they will express those cultural features which define their identity within a separate ethnic boundary, a boundary which continues through time to develop and take a particular shape (Barth 1969: 15). Furthermore, the boundary channels social behaviour within the group, as members signal to each other through it their mutual kinship. As all members contribute to this pooling of social norms, there will develop both expansion and diversification of social expression within the group. While a social bonding is worked out within the group’s boundary, externally a dichotomization occurs as those outside the group are held at bay as it is recognized that there are limitations to common understandings, a lack of agreement regarding criteria for evaluating standards and behaviour, and the need to stand apart from full participation in mutual goal-seeking with external groups (Barth 1969: 25). It is the perception within the ethnic group of these disparities in outlook that actually undergirds the group’s separate cultural persistence over time. Furthermore, the maintenance of ethnic boundaries requires recognized codes regulating interaction with other ethnic groups. These will both prescribe stable means of contact and interaction in particular areas of activity and proscribe social interaction in some other areas, thus enabling the ethnic group to maintain its existence within the boundary and to insulate itself from those groups deemed to be other (Barth 1969: 16).
We may consider particular cases where ethnicities intersect with each other. For example, if a person whose parents are British and who has grown up in a British city migrates to Canada, where he eventually becomes a Canadian citizen, his son born in Canada will grow up as a Canadian. In this case there is no necessary change in language or religion, but the migrant may continue to find himself tending towards British society more than towards Canadian society. Thus, as this example demonstrates, people who share the same territory may or may not share the same ethnicity. Or, to choose an example closer to the region involved in the present study, the Egyptian people live together in the same country, share the same lifestyle, speak the same language and engage in similar customs. In the eyes of the foreigner, no differences are discernible between the members of Egyptian society, yet the fact remains that Egyptian society is divided roughly into three categories of people: the Arabs of Upper Egypt, known as *Saʿidis; Misris*, who consider themselves descendants of the Pharaohs, and the Copts, who are Christians. Each of those three groups lives within the same territory, but they have another ethnicity than that of the encompassing designation ‘Egyptians’ and they describe themselves in both ways. In ancient history we find a similar situation with those people who described themselves both as Arabs and as Nabataeans (Healey 1993: 60).

### 2.1.4 Arab Ethnicity

The first question arising with regard to specific Arab ethnicity is why we find references in Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions to some groups of people as Arabs. Did those people occupy a definite territory? Also, did the people so designated accept their denomination as ‘Arabs’ and also use the term in reference to themselves? Further, did the “Arabs” all have the same range of personal names, use the same language, and partake in the same culture and religion? Did they have a shared history?

‘Alī (1968, I: 14) has suggested that the term ‘*arab* was used to refer to the characteristics and attributes of a certain nationality, but in pre-Islamic sources the term
was synonymous with ‘bedouin’, while in the Qur’an, Sunnah, and ancient poetry it could refer to both sedentary and nomadic people. The opinion of ‘Alī is that while the term ‘arab has been defined in different ways by Arab scholars, their failing is that they have based their definitions on oral traditions and overlooked the tangible evidence of inscriptions and written poetry.

The origin of the term ‘arab was the subject of some discussion in Arab folklore. Thus, some asserted that the first person to have spoken Arabic was a person named Ya’rub and the Arabic language was accordingly accredited to him. In another account it was asserted that Adam was the first person to have spoken Arabic and it was added that this language was the original speech of heaven. The latter notion could, of course, have been an attempt to replace the former assertion in view of the obvious fact that Adam predated Ya’rub. A third suggestion was that Ismā’il, the son of Ibrāhīm was the first person to have spoken Arabic and thus became the forefather of the Arab muta’arriba.  

In fact, at the beginning of the Islamic era the Qahtānī narrative asserted that since Ya’rub was the first person to have spoken Arabic, they could claim for themselves priority in the creation of the Arabic language. They claimed that Arabic is a descendant of Epigraphic South Arabian. They did not know, however, that the language of South Arabia is different from Arabic and, indeed, its script was different from that normally used for Arabic (‘Alī, 1968, I: 15). Moreover, it is recorded that ‘Alī Ibn Abī Tālib asserted: ‘Three tribes are affiliated to the Arabs, but they are older than the Arabs: Jurham is from ‘Ād, Thaqīf is from Thamūd, and Himyar is from Tubba’ (al-Sam‘ānī, 1962, I: 20). The point of this hadith is that the Arabs were to be viewed as a new nation, coming after ‘Ād and Thamūd, and that South Arabian was to be distinguished as a different language from classical Arabic.

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This hadith was discussed by Retsö (2003: 39), who, however, mistakenly translated the word aqdam (‘older’ or ‘oldest’) with the meaning ‘not from’, a mistake which emptied the hadith of its value in informing us that the Arabs were a new nation who came after ‘Ād and Thamūd.
The earliest mention we can find of the Arabs in ancient texts is in the Assyrian records of the reign of Shalmaneser III\(^{21}\) (Margoliouth 1924: 3). It would appear that the Arabs lived as nomadic or sedentary groups on the fringes of the Arabian Peninsula. The region they occupied was not territorially defined but expanded or shrank according to prevailing political circumstances (von Grunebaum 1963: 5). Records relating to Sargon’s reign mention sellers of iron to people called Arabs in Ḫuzaza in Babylon, causing Sargon to prohibit such trade for fear that the Arabs might use the resource to manufacture weapons for use against the Assyrian army (Retsö 2003: 152).

While we find reference to a nomadic people called Arabs in the Assyrian records, it is still not certain that they were then speaking a language identifiable as Arabic, since the term ‘Arab’ is employed in Assyrian inscriptions as a collective name for all nomadic groups living in North Arabia (Eph'al 1982: 82).

However, Livingstone noted evidence of the Arabic language in the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, where the word *nāqah*, ‘she-camel’, occurs with the Arabic definite article *al*-. Livingstone believed that the Assyrians had not seen camels before they were introduced by the Arabs. In fact, the word *nāqah* continued to be used in Assyrian inscriptions until the time of Sargon, when Babylonian word formation was applied to this word and it became *na-qa-ti* (Livingstone 1997: 260). Moreover, there is in fact, evidence that the Arabs did use the term ‘*arab* as a self designation, but this is of later date and written in the Nabataean script. The first such evidence was found in a temple at Wadi al-Shaqab in Yemeni Jawf (de Maigret 1998: 220) and has been dated approximately to the years between AD 89 and 126 (Fisher 2011: 137), although the precise date of the text remains a controversial issue. However, this does seem to serve as evidence that the epithet ‘*arab* was not merely used of these people by outsiders, but was an acceptable title to the Arabs themselves, otherwise it would have been an epithet rejected by them.

\(^{21}\)He ruled from 858 to 824 B.C (Kuhrt 1995: 479).
The identity of the Arabs was not clearly associated with a definite state or political structure prior to the Islamic period. Arabization probably developed *pari passu* with the cultural processes involved in the transformation of nomadic societies into sedentary ones in the northern and eastern borderlands of the Arabian Peninsula (von Grunebaum 1963: 5). This accords with the philosophical reasoning of Ibn Khaldūn (1858: 223) that the origins of any society are to be traced in a former nomadism. Furthermore, the earliest Arab states only became established in the context of pressure from external political forces, in which they became established socio-political identities on a wider international stage. So, for instance, Ghassān is frequently mentioned as a vassal of Rome and the kingdom of Kinda in Central Arabia was subject to Yemen and disappeared in the wake of its suzerain’s collapse (von Grunebaum 1963: 5).

In my opinion the equivalent of the term ‘*arab* in the Assyrian inscriptions does not indicate a type of bedouin only, but it does refer to a segment of Assyrian society. According to text no. 272 following the numbering of Luckenbill (1927, II, p. 134), Sennacherib distinguished the Arabs as a separate nation or community under his control, on a par with the Aramaeans and the Chaldeans.

In the might of Assur, my lord, 89 of the strong, walled cities of Chaldea, and 820 small cities (hamlets) of their environs, I besieged, I conquered, I carried off their spoil. The Arabs, Aramaeans and Chaldeans who were in Uruk, Nippur, Kish, Harsagkalamma, Kutha, together with the citizens (of these places), the rebels (sinners), I brought out, I counted as spoil.

It is clear that references to the Arabs in the Assyrian inscriptions indicate a people who lived in an urban, not a rural, environment. Furthermore, Livingstone states that ‘although of course Arabians formed a small minority in relation to other ethnic groups, they owned

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22Imperial Rome chose Ghassān as its ally to guard the southern border of the Empire. See IbnHabīb, pp. 370 f.; Ya‘qībī, pp. 233-5 (English trans. By Hoyland 2001, pp. 239 f.).
land, occupied at least one specifically Arabian city or settlement, conducted business and trade, maintained links with Arabian towns such as Tayma and participated generally in the Babylonian society’ (Livigstone 1989: 99).

2.1.5 Ishmael and the Arabs in the Bible

Biblical texts mention Ishmael, the son of Abraham, as grandparent of twelve nomadic tribes who settled in the desert lands between North Arabia and Egypt and Palestine. The list of Ishmael’s sons contains: Nebaioth, Qedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. Ishmaelite tribes are further mentioned in the account of Joseph being sold by his brothers. Furthermore, the Amalekites are described as Ishmaelites in Jud. 8: 24 and eventually we find Ishmaelites contemporary with David’s reign (1 Chron. 2: 17; 27: 30). Reviewing the Biblical evidence, Eph'al (1976: 226) concludes that ‘there is no biblical reference to the Ishmaelites (or to Ishmael, their pater eponymous) later than about the mid-tenth century BCE.’ The evidence further suggests that ‘Ishmaelites’ denoted a broad confederation of people encompassing sub-groups such as the Midianites and Amalekites, the latter of whom are mentioned as wandering within the region generally associated with the Ishmaelites (see e.g. Gen. 25: 17 f. and 1 Sam. 15: 7), i.e. to the south of Palestine. As noted above, subsequent to the mid-tenth century BCE, there is no mention of the Ishmaelites in the Biblical texts, and the Midianites, Amalekites, and Hagarites no longer appear as ethnic or political entities.

On the other hand, the Bible mentions ‘Arabs’ or ‘Arabians’ wandering in the north of Arabia or southern Palestine. Indeed, Biblical texts describe the Arabs as nomads living near to Palestine. In 2 Chronicles there are some references to people who lived in non-urban areas who are called Arabs or Arabians. Some verses associate Arabs with animal-breeding, as for example 2 Chron. 17: 11, which mentions the tribute of flocks, rams, and goats brought to Jehoshaphat by the Arabians.

25Gen. 37: 25, 27; 39: 1; and Gen. 37: 28, 36 (where the reference is to ‘Midianites’).
In Nehemiah 2:19 and 6:1 reference is made to Nehemiah’s enemy ‘Geshem the Arab’ (Gashmu in Neh. 6:6), who was evidently in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Noteworthy in this connection is the mention in the Tell El-Maskhuta bowl inscriptions of Qaynu son of Geshem and scholars are generally agreed that this Geshem, father of Qaynu, is to be identified with Nehemiah’s adversary Geshem (Dumbrell, 1971: 33f.). This fact supports the view that the Qedarites lived near Palestine and contributed to the regional politics of that time. As is stated in Genesis 25:13, Qedar was one of the descendants of Ishmael and the indication in Song 1:5 is that the Qedarites were bedouin living in black tents. Thus, we may conclude that ‘the Arab’ of the text of Nehemiah is one of the sons of Ishmael who lived in tents near Palestine.

2.1.6 Ibn Khaldūn’s perspective on the Ethnicity of the Arabs

Ibn Khaldūn is considered one of the leading and pioneering Arab scholars who lived in the western part of the Arab world in the eight century. Prior to him Arab scholars used to write history based on traditional narratives, but Ibn Khaldūn used a different method in seeking out truth by examining original materials. Thus, his famous book Kitāb al-‘ibar wa-dīwān al-mubtada‘ wa-al-khabar fī ayyām al-‘Arab wa-al-‘Ajam wa-al-Barbar wa-man ‘anāṣirihim min dhawī al-Sulṭān al-Akbar came to be considered a unique work among Arab scholarly compositions. In this work he traces the rise of the Arabs and provides also a definition of who the Arabs were. He states that the Arabs were a large nation divided into both nomadic and sedentary groups. The nomadic Arabs lived in tents and bred animals both for food and for sale, and they would move from place to place pasturing their flocks. The Arabs in general, he asserts, occupied all the territories from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to Yemen and to the Indian border in the east. He states that Yemen, Hejaz, Najd, and Tihama have all been urbanized by Arabs and that they reached Egypt and North Africa (Ibn Khaldūn, II, 14).
The Common Characteristics of the Arabs as perceived by Ibn Khaldūn are as follows:

1. Eloquence is one of the Arabs’ characteristics. Ibn Khaldūn considers this feature very important in being an Arab. He also claims that all Arabs spoke one language, even if they used different dialects. In this connection Arab scholars consider Ḥimyarite, Minaean, Sabean, Safaitic, Thamūdic, and Lihyanik as Arabic dialects\(^\text{27}\)\(^\text{(Ali, 1970: I, 33).}\)

2. Nomadism, states Ibn Khaldūn, is another Arab characteristic. He is of the opinion that Arabs tended to be nomads living in the desert. In other words, the Arabians were well acclimatized to their environment and were able to live in desert conditions.

3. The Arabs were breeders of camels, sheep, and goats.

4. The Arabs did not belong to one family. In fact, most of them could not trace their lineage, which went far back in time (Ibn Khaldūn, II, 15f.).

Ibn Khaldūn divided the Arabs into four groups from ancient history down to the Islamic era. The third group is interesting because it concerns the relationship between the Qahtani tribes in the south and the ‘Adnani tribes in the north of Arabia. The following is a summary of Ibn Khaldūn’s categorization of the different groups of Arabs.

1. ‘Arab al-‘Ariba, including ‘Ād, the Amalekites, Thamûd, Tasm, and Jadis.
2. ‘Arab Muta’arba, descended from non-Arabian families, such as Ḥimyar bin Sheba and Al-tababea’h. These were contemporaries of the Assyrians and Babylonians in Mesopotamia, and of the Israelites in Palestine.
3. Arabs who followed later the earlier Arabs. These he divides into three further groups: the tribes of Qudā’a, Qahtan, and ‘Adnan. In fact, he claims most Arabs are descended from those three tribes (Ibn Khaldūn, II, 16f.). This tribal group of Arabs spread widely in Yemen, Hejaz, Iraq and the Levant. Ibn Khaldūn narrates

\(^{27}\)Jawad ‘Ali states that all those languages are Arabic languages and adds that the Qur’anic language is one of the Arabic languages. What is more, he considers Nabataean to be one of the Arabic languages, even though it was influenced by Aramaic in the same way that Hebrew was also influenced by Aramaic and, though forgotten for a long time, was revived as a spoken language in modern times (Ali 1970: I, 33). In contrast, the standard view of Semitists on Nabataean is that it is a dialect of Aramaic (Healey 2009: 52).
that Nebuchadnezzar\textsuperscript{28} fought against some people from this group of Arabs in al-Hira; moreover, Nebuchadnezzar described the Arabs as bedouin living in houses without lockable doors (Ibn Khaldūn, II, 237). Ibn Khaldūn attributes two of the above tribes (‘Adnan and Qahtan) to Ishmaelite origins and refers to what the Prophet Muhammad said to the Yemenis: ‘Oh sons of Ishmael be good shooters because your father [i.e. Ishmael] was a good shooter.’\textsuperscript{29} Moreover, Ibn Khaldūn mentions Qedar as a son of Ishmael when he refers to Qahtan son of al-Humisa’ son of Qedar son of Ishmael (Ibn Khaldūn, II, 241). This seems to mean that Qahtan was descended from Ishmael, making most of the pre-Islamic Yemenis, Ishmaelites\textsuperscript{30}. Thus, this arrangement of the Arabs’ descent helps to explain why the people in Yemen like the other Ishmaelites spoke classical Arabic before Islam spread there. It also helps to solve the puzzle\textsuperscript{31} of the Qahtanis and ‘Adnanis as it attributes both of them to one grandfather, Ishmael. Indeed, we are left wondering in which direction the linguistic influence exerted itself, whether the south Arabians taught the northerners because the former were the ‘\textit{Arab al-‘Ariba}, or the north Arabians taught the southerners because the Qur’an came down with the north Arabic tongue. Von Grunebaum (1963: 9) commented, ‘We meet on occasion with a classification better adapted to the psychological constellation of the declining Gahiliyya which designates the Yemenites as muta’arriba and arrogates original Arabism for the Northerners.’

4. ‘\textit{Arab Muta’arriba}: people who learned Arabic as a second language or whose parents did not speak Arabic. They lived in the west of the Islamic world and had kinship there with such peoples as the Berbers of North Africa.

\textsuperscript{28}We find the same story in al-Tabari I, 671. See section 3.3.a.
\textsuperscript{29}See \textit{Fath al-bārī fi sharḥ Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī}, ch. 9, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{30}I am not the only one to draw this conclusion; see the chapter entitled ‘Bab al-tahrīd ‘ala al-ramī’ [the chapter on incitement to excellence in shooting] in \textit{Fath al-bārī fi sharḥ Sahīḥ al-Bukhārī} where the author used this Hadith as evidence that most of the inhabitants of Yemen were sons of Ishmael before the coming of Islam.
\textsuperscript{31}The common theory of Arab family division in history is that Qahtan dwelt in the south, while Adnan dwelt in the north of Arabia. This theory attributed the ‘Adnani tribes to Ishmael, thereby eliminating any relationship between ‘Adnan and Qahtan and making it difficult to explain how Yemen acquired the north Arabic tongue, which is the Qur’anic language. For more details, see Eph’al 1976: 225-235.
According to Ibn Khaldūn the word ‘Arab’ designates all the people who lived in the Arabian Peninsula, in the various regions of the Levant, or in different areas of Mesopotamia or Lower Egypt, who spoke Arabic whether they were originally ethnic Arabs speaking Arabic as their native language, or they learned Arabic. They may or may not have been Ishmaelites because it is difficult to distinguish between the people who lived in north Arabia since all of them lived a nomadic lifestyle and, as von Grunebaum (1963: 17) notes, ‘The rhythms of their life were basically the same.’

2.1.7 Conclusion

We find that most Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions and most texts in the Bible in which Arabs are made mention of used the term ‘Arab’ to refer to nomads living in north Arabia or south Palestine. We find also that most of the Arab tribes did not concern themselves with blood relationships and there is some uncertainty about the relationship between the Arabs in south Arabia and those in north Arabia.

We need to consider how it was that Arabic spread and became used among all the people living in the Arabian Peninsula prior to Islam and one important factor in this seems to have been the Arabs’ aswaq or markets in the pre-Islamic period (von Grunebaum, 1963: 17), which became annual cultural gatherings where Arab poets would display their abilities in the public declamation of verse. A famous anthology of such verses is found in the Mu’allaqāt, a unique collection of early Arabic poetry (Al-Ghlaini, 1990: 10). It has to be remembered that in the pre-Islamic era the Arabs did not use writing to store their poetic descriptions of remarkable moments in their cultural

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32 Retsö (2003: 591-594) discusses the issue of the language of the Arabs and notes that because the Arabs are not descended from the same predecessor and the Arabic language appeared in different places at the same time, the Arabs therefore had two differing languages used in different circumstances. One was used in poetic and religious speech, which is ‘named after the Arabs’, and the other was used in ‘normal everyday speech’.

33 We can assume that some pagan terminology, outlawed by Islam, and a number of archaisms indicate that the Mu’allaqat must be dated to pre-Islamic times.
heritage, but relied solely on the power of memorization. Consequently, they did not leave many inscriptions which describe their Arab ethnicity in the Arabian Peninsula.

It may be that because the Arab nation is very old with origins deep in the remote past, it is difficult for us to find among archaeological remains anything which specifically can be connected with their Arab ethnicity. However, it is difficult to rule out a history of a great nation such as the Arabs just because they did not leave inscriptions proclaiming their identity as Arabs and masters of specific territories. In fact, nations who have not experienced exclusion or shared their land with invaders do not need to assert their right to exist in their familiar territories. As von Grunebaum (1963: 10) remarks, ‘As always and everywhere the development of a self-conscious national or cultural identity is spurred by a sense of separateness from contiguous groups,’ but it seems that the ancient Arab peoples had no real consciousness of their unity as a nation.
2.2 Social Structure

2.2.1 Nomadic people

The simple view of the social phenomenon known as nomadism is exemplified by Ibn Khaldūn’s (I, 396) emphasis on the adaptive advantage gained by nomadism in arid lands, in comparison with which its economic function in a herder/culture symbiosis comes a poor second. Also, in modern times, ecologists (e.g. Coon 1967; E. Bacon 1954; Lattimor 1967) have argued that nomadism emerges and persists in uncultivable lands where the only viable subsistence strategy is a mobile, pastoral way of life. However, nomadism can only be understood in the wider context of interrelations between nomadic and sedentary members of a society. As Kroeber (1948: 278) has observed, nomadic peoples would have no complete and independent means of survival were it not for their being able to secure some of their vital requirements (including materials used for shelter, clothing, tools, and weapons) from traders and farmers in sedentary communities within their orbit. The nomadic culture is thus, in reality, no more than a half-culture, the other half depending on the products of settled communities.

Definition of Nomadism

The simplest definition of nomadism is that the term designates any mobile population (Taylor 1972; Lee & de Vore 1966; Oxenstierna 1967). Enlarging a little further, it has commonly been remarked that nomads consist of populations who are economically based on their herds and who move seasonally in search of pastures on which to graze them (e.g. Spooner 1973; Goldschmidt 1979; Khazanov 1984). There is, however, another type of nomads, who are less reliant on herding and mobility, since they live in richer lands where pasture is feasible (Gribb 1984; Murdock & Wilson 1972). The actual features which distinguish nomads from other population groups are variously perceived. Some, for instance, focus on matters of geography such as topographical features and the extent of the period of feasible seasonal herding cycles in specific locations (e.g. Bernard
& Lacroix 1906; Capot-Rey 1953; Johnson 1969). Other scholars focus more on the different natures of pasture lands (e.g. Goldschmidt 1979), while others again focus on the kinds of profitable pasture or the property-owning segment of the population involved in grazing (e.g. Barth 1962; Arbos 1923; Khazanov 1984). Yet others focus on the different herder types characterized by the stability of their residences (e.g. Bacon 1954: 45).

A few reject the whole idea of drawing a distinction between pastoralists and nomads (N. Dyson-Hudson 1972; R. Dyson-Hudson 1972). This in contrast to Barth (1973: 11), who distinguished between an ethnic group specializing in agriculture and the rearing of domestic animals and an ethnic group engaged in the herding of animals. The latter were designated pastoralists, while the former were designated agriculturalists. Sadr (1991: 2f.) commented, ‘Following Barth’s lead, true pastoral nomads can simply be defined as an ethnic group wherein everyone is directly or indirectly involved in pastoral production to the near exclusion of any other subsistence activity. Given the kinds of pastures available and the scale of pasture utilization, almost all such herding populations must engage in seasonal movement to feed their herds.’

Theories on the Origin of Nomadism

The old theory about ancient society cast nomads as the earlier community in contrast to the later hunting/gathering society (Gellner 1984) and this theory prevailed during the first half of the twentieth century. However, the findings of archaeological investigations have tended to support a different idea: that is, that the first society was one of hunter/gatherers and after men discovered the methods and benefits of cultivation, human societies transferred to herder/cultivator populations producing, rather than finding, their food (Reed 1959: 1630).
Ecologists have proposed many theories regarding the rise of nomadism. Some have suggested that the first populations inhabited marginal lands because this was their only option for survival. Later, however, some cultivation areas became neglected as populations moved towards pastoral production. Regarding the reasons why some populations moved from marginal lands, scholars have made different suggestions. Some have suggested that climatic change destroyed their marginal lands, forcing them into a nomadic existence (e.g. Baker 1981; Sherratt 1983; Geddes 1983), while others have proposed that either their lands were invaded or the swelling numbers of population drove them into nomadism in arid zones (Coon 1943; Lattimore 1967; Service 1975). However, against this last theory we must bear in mind that most modern nomads do still live in marginal lands (Sadr 1991: 7). Yet other ecologists have suggested that some environments actually encouraged populations to live as nomads since this was the most appropriate means of obtaining maximum benefits from the land in contrast to a sedentary existence. In some environments it is easier to breed herds than to engage in agriculture, so that pastoralists can obtain more benefit in a short time than they can from agriculture (Sauer 1952; Barth 1973: 11; Gilbert 1983: 105).

The cultural school, viewing the phenomenon from a different perspective, argues that nomadism is a feature of any society’s structure and plays an important role in the defence of states. Some scholars believe that nomads employed special tactics and strategy in warfare, which enabled them to defend themselves and defeat the force of superior armies. Their principal tactic was the launching of frequent attacks by small groups of people, which would prolong the period of warfare and weaken their enemies (Ekvall, 1961; Irons, 1966; Shahrani, 1979). Sadr (1991: 7) observes that some societies have even transferred to nomadism to take advantage of the defence tactics offered by this mode of living. Moreover, the cultural school further suggests that some societies became bedouin to gain increased benefit from regional cattle-markets (Braudel 1973; Lynch 1983; Galvin 1987). Generally, scholars of this school believe that population pressures have led both to displaced groups living as nomads and to outcrops of state societies whose regional markets provide opportunities for populations to adapt as
pastoral nomads. This theory divides the original mixed economic society into two separate groups: one of nomads and the other of agriculturalists (Sadr 1991: 7).

To conclude, the above discussion points to such factors as changing climate, increased benefits derived from cattle-breeding, guerrilla tactics, trade advantages, or occasionally shortage of water resources being involved in the transfer of some populations to the nomadic way of life. This having been established, however, it needs to be asked why some populations continue to follow a nomadic existence. The most satisfactory answer seems to be one phrased in terms of half-culture; that is to say, economic cooperation between agriculturalists and cattle-herders is an enduring system of mutual benefit. Thus, some scholars note that occasionally some nomads have no choice but to remain as bedouin in order to obtain the economic benefits of symbiosis (Barth, 1973; Khazanov 1984) and if it should be asked how the symbiotic structure is created, the answer must be that a widening economy offering variety in opportunities for trading interactions leads naturally to this situation (Sadr 1991: 9).

2.2.2 Sedentary people

Through time groups of people have settled in many places, some of which have grown into cities over the course of years. The creation of a city is a very complicated process, so that it is sometimes difficult to discover a city’s precise origins and across the world many locations have been claimed to be the oldest city on the planet, for example Ugarit, situated near to the Syrian coast just to the north of Latakia (Burns 2005: 1). In fact, many factors play a role in the course of human settlement in a specific locale, from the discovery of agriculture, the search for an environment suitable for agriculture and trade by exchange, until the development of a social structure in an increasingly sophisticated community.

It is an unfortunate fact that most of what has been written about the first stages of sedentarism in towns is probably no more than guesswork producing debatable hypotheses based on some minimum facts gained from archaeological research and a
certain amount of extrapolated reasoning. It should particularly be borne in mind that
simply because a society has become urbanized, this does not mean that it is more
civilized than other societies which do not live in towns. According to Wilson (1960:
124), Egyptian civilization did not have towns because its culture was not concerned to
build cities.

The beginnings of settled life

While human settlement reaches back into immemorial time, the oldest known
civilizations date back to around 3000 BCE. These settlements were concentrated in
specific regions of the world, being especially concentrated in Central Asia and then
stretching in a south-westerly direction until they reached North Africa. Societies in
those different places depended on agriculture, especially after methods of systematic
cultivation were discovered. In the first stage nomads settled in fertile regions along
riverine littorals and, as irrigation systems were developed, opportunities were created for
larger communities to settle.

Ancient cities would become established in strategic locations, for example where
they could gain access to trade roads or seaports (Herzfeld 1950: 10). The domestication
of animals enabled these new societies to transport and trade their different produce from
one place to another (Hawley 1981: 17, 23; Lesser 1961: 42). Cooley (1930: 75ff.)
commented on the way that transportation of goods enabled sedentary societies to
become wealthy through specialization in specific products. Thus, the city lifestyle
encouraged populations to develop their industries in directions that would render their
products saleable in distant places.

As a result of developments in agriculture, many communities merged to form
larger ones, each of these forming its own culture. Seasonal agriculture enabled farmers
to search for and discover a variety of new crops and variations in climate contributed to
variation in production methods. Braidwood (1962: 350) has particularly remarked how
differences of environment, leading to diversity in crop cultivation, nurtured many different societies in Mesoamerica. Competition also played a part in the discovery of many new agricultural methods and the creation of innovative agricultural equipment and storage facilities to protect settled communities against recurring famine (*ibid.*).

Another important factor involved in settlement is protection. One of the major aims of people in living together is the increased ability thereby obtained of protecting life and property. Sedentary societies have been concerned to safeguard their land in anticipation of any attack from nomads passing near to their towns. For that purpose many ancient towns had walls because they contained within them storehouses in which their material wealth was concentrated. So in addition military units were formed to defend the settled communities and a hierarchy of power became established in which certain families led their societies and became royal families (Hawley: 18f.).
2.2.3 The Relationship between Sedentaries and Nomads

This section discusses the relationship between nomads and sedentary groups. As has been stated elsewhere in this study, nomads are groups of people whose essential lifestyle is rooted in economic independence based on the practice of mobility, accompanied by pastoralism and/or a little agriculture (Khazanov 1994: 15). The common characteristic of nomads is their relationship with the environment in their movement from one place to another, whether they are gypsies or pastoralists (Barth 1973: 12).

However, the definition of nomads must be made in broad terms because it is for more than one reason that people keep moving on, so that, for example, both hunters and gatherers are classed as nomads (Lee & Devore 1968: 11 f.), and peoples who practise both pursuits, e.g. indigenous Australians, are also nomadic peoples (Khazanov 1994: 15). There are clear differences in the lifestyles of hunters, gatherers and pastoralists, but each of these groups engages in relocation as an essential element of their food production (ibid.). However, in general most scholars agree that nomads are characteristically pastoralists (see e.g. Forde 1963: 33 f.; Von Wissmann & Kussmaul 1959: 874; Krader 1966: 408 f.; Spooner 1973: 3).

The relationship between nomads and sedentary groups is explained by reference to different aspects of peoples’ activities: social, economic, environmental, and political. Through the study of these aspects, we can gain understanding of how pastoralists and sedentary groups utilize their relationship with each of these spheres of activity. However, to obtain an accurate understanding of these relationships we need to differentiate between these two different segments of society. Barth (1973: 12) distinguished between these two groups by stating that nomads live with their animals in a pastoral setting, whilst sedentary groups live as farmers. Khazanov (1994: 16 f.) also suggested some distinguishing characteristics of pastoralists. First, pastoralism is considered the prime activity in the pastoralist’s life. Second, the pastoralist constantly moves from place to place seeking good pasture on which to graze his livestock. Third, pastoralists usually conduct their activities in a specific area or between specific borders. Fourth, all of the pastoral society’s members should participate in pastoralism, but if the
pasture lies at some distance from the main group, then specialist pastoralists will do the pastoral work on behalf of all the members in the nomadic society. Fifth, the production of food in a pastoral society is only for subsistence and not for trade and the pastoralists usually practise a partial or incomplete form of food production.

To understand the relationship between nomads and sedentary groups we need to examine the motives underlying their interaction. Economic and goods exchange is considered one of the most significant motivations determining the relationship between these two groups since, as has just been noted, nomads engage in an incomplete form of food production and remain in need of the products of agricultural societies (Barth 1973: 12). Exchanges may also work in the opposite direction because pastoralists raise some animals to be sold (Marx 1990: 109). Another reason for economic exchange stems from the differences between the sedentary and pastoralist cultures, the consequence of which is that the products of each group are different, creating opportunities for mutual exchange of goods (Barth 1973: 13).

Another factor at play in the relationship between settled and nomadic peoples is the balance of power (ibid.). I.M. Lewis wrote, ‘Nomads... regularly make a defiant parade of all those attributes which they know are most calculated to annoy their sedentary neighbors’ (cited in Mohammed Abbas 1973: 97) and Rosenfeld (1965) stated that the military relationship between pastoralists and sedentary groups is inherently antagonistic. Certainly, throughout history we find many sedentary societies or states which controlled their pastoralists. One scholar gives as an example the Sassanids, who ruled over the Munadhirah in al-Hirah. When the Arabian nomads worked under the Persian Empire, they were considered as guards for the western border of the Empire, whose duty was to fend off other nomads’ attacks against the Persians (Asad 1973: 62). Khazanov (1994: 263) noted that during the medieval period sedentary societies had no organized armies, which allowed some powerful nomads to attack and loot urban areas.

Nowadays, however, this situation has become changed as sedentary societies have mastered or gained access to technology and advanced weapons systems. In
addition, means of transport, including trains and airplanes, have been developed replacing the old transport caravans. As a result of this revolution nomads have lost their superior position and have emigrated from their erstwhile territory to join the sedentary populations (ibid.: 9).

The domination of wealth sources is considered to be one of the motives that determine the relationship between nomadic and sedentary groups. This means that when nomads control the sources of wealth, sedentary people become dependent upon rural people. However, surely the opposite is true. Al-Hirah, for example, controlled one of the important roads that linked the north of the Arabian Peninsula with Mesopotamia. In that city, sedentary people controlled the wealth and the nomads were vassals to the sedentary population (Asad 1973: 71).

To conclude, the relationship between nomads and sedentary groups is very old, and has developed in different ways, demonstrating that and the course of their historical relationship has remained fluid and has altered over time. As has been mentioned above, this is because sedentary societies control nomads when the former hold the reigns of power, while on the other hand nomads tend to loot and attack sedentary populations when the latter become weak. They share the benefits of their environment as well as their knowledge and the sedentary society is usually the source of ideologies, which gives them a predominant superiority. However, at times they fight against each other, seeking to control the sources of wealth or authority.
2.2.4 Kingship

The institution of kingship was a principal element in the social structure of Arab groups living in north Arabia in antiquity and therefore calls for our special attention. We will notice how Assyrian inscriptions referred to the Arab rulers as ‘kings’ and we will see from a variety of ancient sources that kingship appeared in different societies in the Arabian Peninsula prior to Islamic times (Hoyland 2001: 119). Consequently we must examine the concept of kingship, paying particular attention to the development of the institution in ancient societies and how it transferred into the Arab world, especially in north Arabia.

To begin, however, we should try to define what was meant by the term ‘king’ in different societies. First, we note that the relevant term used in Sumerian inscriptions was *lugal*, which consists of the two syllables *lú* (‘man’) and *gal* (‘big’) (Magid 2006: 5). In Akkadian texts we find the term *milku*, meaning ‘prince, king’ or ‘intelligent man’ or ‘the man advised by the deity’, indicating that the king was felt to be empowered and authorized by the god; note also *malkatu*, ‘ruler (f.), queen’ (Black et al. 1999: 193). In Hebrew writings the term *melek* (เมลึก) signified the ruler or person who had authority from God to rule His people (Köhler 1995: 590). The equivalent term in Arabic, *malik* (ماليك), signifies a person who has authority, or one who rules a nation, tribe, or territory (al-*Munjid al-abjadī*, 1968: 1004). In addition, Assyrian inscriptions mention foreign leaders as the kings (*šarrū*) of their peoples, using the more usual term for ‘king’ in Akkadian. Here, following the remit of our study, our particular interest is in the examples of Arab leaders mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions. Inscription no. 551 (Luckenbill, II, 1926: 218) reads: ‘Hazael, king of Arabia—the splendor of my majesty’, representing in Harper (1888: 8) *[Hazâ’]†lu šar Aribi*. We should, in fact, note that all foreign kings are denoted by the term *šarrū* in the Assyrian inscriptions.

During medieval times the king was defined as the person who was required to maintain peace, justice, and happiness for his people and to protect his people from
external attacks (Henry 1971: 205). In effect, throughout history kings created a unique nature for themselves, higher than mere mortals, and their deaths were different from those of an ordinary human because they succeeded in surrounding themselves with an aura of sanctity. They lived in palaces, and spoke and acted in a different way just to show their superiority over others (Quigley 2005: 3).

The question which we need to ask here is, what was the reason, or reasons, for the presence of kingship? In ancient times the belief was that the gods created kings to protect the people. Manu, the progenitor of mankind in Hindu traditions, declared that the purpose of the presence of kings was to protect the world. In addition, kings in the Hindu tradition had extraordinary power since the belief was held that kings were fire, the sun, and the air (Olivelle 2004: 106). Ceylonese society, affected by Indian civilization, embraced the same idea, since the Ceylonese considered kings to be connected with gods (Ceylon.- Archaeological Survey 1904: 47, 52; Hocart 1927: 11). Similarly, the ancient Israelisites considered their kings to be holy men who defended their people and protected them from any internal corruption or external attack (Johnson 1955: 127). Kings in ancient Israeliite society were responsible for maintaining their people’s rights (ibid.: 6). In addition, they were supposed to be humble and worship God (ibid.: 96).

Another essential reason for the existence of the king is the dispensation of justice, since this is considered an important element in guaranteeing the prosperity of the people over whom he reigns, which must always depend on good government. Thus, we find that in the period following the death of Alexander the Great, the kings of Bactria assumed the epithet dikaios (‘just’) (Gardner 1886: 10-21), a notion which in times of Assyrian dominance was envisaged in Isaiah’s poetic language describing the peaceful cohabitation of wolf and lamb, leopard and kid, calf and young lion (Isa. 11: 3-6).

His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness
the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.

Another function of kings was to lead their armies in battle. Hundreds of inscriptions and images from ancient history illustrate kings leading their people in battles. So, for instance, in the Biblical narrative I Sam. 17 1-18 Saul and his sons fought battles against the Philistines to seize fertile territory rich in water resources, crossing the hills of Benjamin to find a strategic habitat (Comay 1976: 15). The concept of the king as commander of armies was not limited to the ancient Israelites but was widespread during ancient times and we may find other examples in Assyrian history since many Assyrian kings fought battles alongside their people against their enemies. For instance, Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BCE) led out the Assyrian army and waged war against Hittite territory, as a result of which he received tribute of ‘20 talents of silver’ from the Hittite king Sangara (Pritchard, 1969: 275).

The king’s legitimacy

Throughout history kings attempted to give themselves legitimacy to rule their people and one factor supporting that legitimacy was the belief held by many ancient societies in the divinity of kings. Consequently, kings were worshiped like gods, since there is historical evidence that ancient people used to perform religious rituals in front of kings, who were considered gods (von Soden 1984: 63). This concept is found in the earliest civilizations, such as that of Egypt, where the pharaoh held divine status from birth or even from before birth, and was described as a holy person. In addition, during religious ceremonies kings of Egypt took the highest of priestly ranks (Engnell 1967: 4-5; von Soden 1984: 67).

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34 See the discussion below of the different Egyptian and Mesopotamian conceptions of kingship.
The old Akkadian texts attest the deification of Akkadian kings from the time of Naram-Sin (2254-2218 BCE). In fact, Naram-Sin deified himself, since his inscriptions indicate a divine title prefixed to his name (Chavalas 2006: 20). The rulers of the Old Babylonian kingdom also deified themselves, so that, for example, after Hammurabi’s time the personal name Hammurabi-ili was in use and this indicates that people treated Hammurabi as a god (von Soden 1984: 68). Hittite kings also considered themselves to be sons of the gods (Gurney 1952: 67; Bryce 2002: 18 f.). Although the Assyrian kings did not deify themselves, they did consider themselves sacred, since they added some pious titles to their names as can be seen in phrases such as ‘the father of the king my lord was the image of Bel and the king my lord is the image of Bel’ (Saggs 1984: 148). Moreover, in the early records of Greece, the Homeric kings were called divinities and they considered themselves as being descended from the gods. At that time, moreover, kings were very close to priests (Hocart 1927: 8).

We also find in Israelite history some evidence of a relationship between kings and God. Hocart (1927: 8) asserted that Samson was regarded as the son of God and had special connection with God, just like David in later years. Similarly, Johnson (1955: 14) says one of the characteristics of Israel’s kings was that they were sacred beings and had to be treated as objects of worship or as persons who had a special relationship with God.

Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will
raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me (II Samuel 7:8-14).

In fact, the idea that kings were sons of the gods was widespread in the northwestern Semitic region, where kings were called sons of the gods (Engnell 1967: 80). For example, the people of Ugarit claimed that the high god, or the sun-god, was the father of their kings (Wyatt 2005: 193-194) and in Damascus we find among the names of the royal family Ben Hadad, i.e. ‘the son of [the god] Hadad’ (Engnell 1967: 80). The Aramaeans also held this concept since tangible evidence has been found in Tell Halâf of the kings’ divinization; for example, king Kapara of Palû called his father and his grandfather ilim (‘gods’) (ibid.: 81).

Throughout history kings have enjoyed a unique position in religious rituals. In many cultures individuals performed their rituals in front of kings because they believed that kings were objects of worship. In other words, in ancient civilizations kings were worshipped instead of gods. In the Amarna letters in Egypt, for example, people used to prostrate themselves seven times at the feet of the king and kings were dressed in special robes during religious ceremonies. Moreover, the king’s face was considered one of the cult symbols, so that to look at the face of the king was considered one of the highest acts of worship (Engnell 1967: 84).

Centralization around religion was one of the prominent features of kingship because religion could be skillfully used to lend kings the necessary legality to govern their people. Consequently, we find throughout history that kings were frequently pioneers or leaders in the religious ideology of their communities. For example, during the eighteenth century BCE the Amorites had this view of their kings because Amorite kings were expected to participate with their people in religious ceremonies and on such occasions kings were surrounded by many priests and acted as sacral officiants (Engnell
Moreover, we find that king Abdi-ḫepa from Jerusalem styled himself ‘shepherd’, which was a priestly title borrowed from the Egyptians (ibid.: 86). Additionally, during the seventh century BCE, the Arab queens played the roles of priestess in their communities by leading prayers and offering vows to their gods (ibid.: 87). For instance, the Arab queen Te’elkhunu was considered a religious ruler since she maintained all the Arabs’ deities at Adummatu.  

When kings lost their relationship with the gods, they made an alternative attempt to bolster their legitimacy by claiming that they were descended from royal families or Emperors. Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 BCE), for instance, claimed that he was descended from the royal family in order to gain legitimacy to rule the Assyrian Empire. In fact, the Assyrian king list shows Tiglath-Pileser to have been a son of Ashur-Nirari who usurped the Assyrian throne after a succession of three weak kings (Leick 2002: 164 f.). In another example, from Nabataea, Ḥāriṭhah IV (9 BCE-40 CE), who established a new dynasty of rulers over the Nabataeans, claimed that he was descended from the old royal family of Nabataea (Fāsi 2007: 45). Moreover, about 500 CE the Roman Empire had become divided into many small kingdoms, like those of the Angles and Saxons, in rivalry with each other to extend their domains to the detriment of other kingdoms. These new states were established by kings who came from different ethnic backgrounds (Wolfram 1971: 1). During that time kings claimed legitimacy by deriving their powers from the former Roman Emperors. For instance, Constantine the Great claimed that there was a special relationship between his father and the famous Emperor Flavian of the first century CE, in consequence of which the family of Constantine the Great was recognized as belonging to the family of Flavius (ibid. 2).

However, at various times in history in isolated societies kings were not required to be descended by royal lineage, but depended on the strength of their own persons to ascend the throne and rule their people. In other words, kings in warrior communities or

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35 See inscription no. 518 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207 f.); see section 3.2.4.a.
mobile societies did not need to be descended by royal lineage because the king of a mobile society was considered to be the founder of both the society and the royal family (De Vries 1957: 86). Moreover, some kings were able to seize power through rebellions and in these cases the new kings did not need to make any claim to have been related to the old regime. Their supporters might have sought a radical change in the political sphere away from the old regime. As a result, the new king could claim legitimacy to rule his people without making any false claim. In such cases, the new king was considered the founder of a new dynasty (von Soden 1984: 63).

The institution of kingship was found in most Near Eastern societies, but since kingship reflected growing urbanization, we find the institution in varying stages of development. While nomadic peoples generally had their own forms of leadership, reflecting the more primitive levels of social development characteristic of less civilized communities, the concept of kingship did exist in some tribal societies (Wolfram 1971: 6-8). Hatra, located in northern Iraq, 50 km west of Ashur, may be taken as an example. The inscriptions from Hatra illustrate that during the first century BCE the leaders there styled themselves mry’ (lord), a title which was changed during the first century CE to become mlk’ (‘king’) (Healey 2009: 16 f.). This change in the concept of tribal leadership may have been occasioned by conflict with neighbouring civilized societies.

Indeed, in the larger perspective, peace, justice, and security could not be achieved without a king, who acted as the principal link between all the institutions of society. If there had been no kings in Egypt or Mesopotamia, we would neither have seen pyramids in Egypt nor heard about the military victories of the Assyrians (Frankfort 1948: 3). In contrast, nomadic peoples had their own forms of kingship. Poebel (1942: 252), for example, cited the very old inscription found at Khorsabad containing a list of seventeen Assyrian kings. Those kings lived in tents as nomads, moving from one place to another with their people and livestock before they became urbanized societies36.

36 For this list of kings see Gelb 1954: 210-211; Pritchard 1969:564.
It should not be overlooked that there were differences between the concepts of kingship in the two oldest civilizations, those of Egypt and Mesopotamia, each of which varied in their understanding of the nature of the king. In Mesopotamia a king and his society worked together and when they achieved something, they would celebrate together. In other words, a king in Mesopotamia was still considered a member of society, not an idol, as in Egypt (ibid.: 6). Thus, the ideology of kingship in Mesopotamia was that kings were protected by gods, whereas in Egyptian civilization kings were considered as divinities who protected others. As evidence of these two different concepts of kingship, Frankfort (1948: 8-10) cited as example a depiction of Assurnasirpal in which the king is illustrated as one of the warriors bearing bow and arrows, against whom his enemies did not hesitate to point their weapons. In contrast, in an Egyptian depiction, the pharaoh dominates the whole scene, fighting with both hands and just as needless of help as the king of Assyria is in need. Similarly, in other illustrations embodying the difference between Mesopotamian and Egyptian notions of kingship, we see first Ashurbanipal fighting lions to show the strength of the king, while in Egypt the lion is subject to Pharaoh Ramses II, expressing the assured certainty that pharaoh dominates all things, even beasts.37

If we transfer our attention to south Arabia and in particular to Sabaean history, we may divide the history of the Sabaeans into four stages according to the development of the rulers’ title. During the first stage, from 800 to 650 BCE, their leaders were each called mukarrrib (‘unifier’), which is considered a priestly title (von Wissmann 1953: 7; ‘Ali 1968: 269). During this time the rulers were responsible for religious ceremonial and played the role of mediators between humans and the gods. During the second stage of Sabaean history, from 650 to 115 BCE, the rulers were called mlk ‘kings’ and they transferred their capital city from Sarwah to Mārib. The first ruler to style himself mlk instead of mukarrrib was Karīb-il-wātār38 (Mahran 2006: 239). During the third stage, from 115 BCE to 300 CE, the rulers were called ‘kings of Saba’ and dhū Raydān’,

37 See figs. 1 and 2.
38 See Ja 819 “Karib’il and Sum[hu…” (Jamme 1962: 259).
(mlk/sb’/wdrydn) (Jamme 1962: 344), a title testifying to the capture of Raydan (Mahran 2006: 240). During the fourth stage, from 300 to 525 CE, the Sabaean rulers were called ‘kings of Saba’ and dhū Raydān and Ḫadrāmawt and Yamanat and A’rābiha in al-murtafa’at and in al-tihāma’ and this stage terminated with Abyssinian and Persian invasions (Mahran 2006: 240).

In fact, the term mlk ‘king’ was in common use in all levels of Arab societies, small and large. In addition, the term ‘king’ was used in south Arabia to describe leaders of small, nomadic groups, even if those groups did not have their own defined territory (Beeston 1972: 260). For example, Kaminahu and Haram, which were small groups of people living in an area of less than a hundred square kilometers in Wadi Madhab in the north of Teman, called their leaders ‘kings’ (Beeston 1972: 260).

During the history of south Arabia, some small states occasionally attempted to extend their territories at the expense of their neighbours and established large kingdoms (see above) (Beeston 1972: 260). It is noteworthy that from the fourth century CE onward the kings had specific territories and assumed titles relating to the land rather than to the people as, for instance, in the case of Raydan mentioned above and again in the cases of the territories of Ḫadrāmawt and Yamanat. Thus, affiliation to the land started to appear at a later stage in different places in south Arabia (Korotayev 1993: 107). Again for example, when Abraha and, later, the Himyarites seized the Sabaeans’ territory, they called themselves kings of Saba because of the fame surrounding the Sabaeans’ territory during ancient times (ibid.: 107). Thus, throughout history kings attempted to compete with each other to dominate a territory’s wealth and provide themselves with the fundamental political and economic requirements necessary to change their leadership into a kingdom. In addition, kings tried to establish new relationships between themselves and their new people and new land; this process is called territorialization, which brings both new people and land into subjection to the king (Wolfram 1971: 7).
At an early stage in south Arabian history, kings had absolute authority in legislation, until later laws were made by a parliament (Beeston 1972: 262). In south Arabia the king was able to appoint his son as crown prince, as in the Minaean kingdom, contemporary with the Ptolemies, the king tended to appoint one of his sons as crown prince. Moreover, in Qataban the son of the king was acceptable as crown prince. In addition, occasionally the kings of the Sabaeans tended to appoint more than one of their sons as crown princes (Ryckmans 1951: 43).

We should not omit to mention here the leadership role exercised by women, since in some societies of the Near East it was women who were looked to as wielding authority over their communities. Most notable, no doubt, is the example of the queen of Sheba, famed for her visit to King Solomon. Though this story has borne the accretions of legend, it still testifies to ancient societies’ willingness to envisage the regimen of women (von Soden, 1984: 66 f.). In addition, the queen of Egypt, Hatshepsut from the Eighteenth Dynasty, ruled her people and achieved fame, and among the ancient judges of Israel the female leaders Deborah and Yael were never to be forgotten (Pritchard 1974: 40).

Moreover, as we will see through the course of this study, the Assyrian inscriptions mention a number of Arab queens who ruled their communities. For instance, queen Zabiba ruled over Arabs in north Arabia during the time of king Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 BCE). Von Soden (1984: 67) suggested that women who had strong characters were able to rule their societies and become famous queens. Additionally, women could rule their communities either because of their religious positions as priestesses or because of the strength of their position as the mothers of kings. The former case is exemplified in this study in those Arab queens we will meet who ruled their people as priestesses, for instance, Te'elkhunu, the Qedarite queen who ruled her people at Adummatu and held the highest priestly position (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207). Exemplifying the latter case, in Assyrian history, is Naqtya-Zaktu, the wife

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39 See section 4.6.2.
40 See section 3.2.a.
of Sennacherib, who exercised authority over her people and, because of her strong character, was able to influence political events during the early stages of the reign of her grandson Ashurbanipal (von Soden 1984: 67).

Kings in north Arabia behaved similarly to the kings of south Arabia since, as we will see, in Qedar and among other leaders even of small tribes the titles ‘king’ and ‘queen’ were commonly in use, even if those monarchs did not have specific territories or absolute rule. Additionally, kings led their people into battle, as we will see in the case of Hazael, who was defeated by Sennacherib (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 158). Queens in Qedar, for example Te’elkhunu, were considered as priestesses of their communities (ibid.: 207, inscription no. 518). The kings and queens of Qedar were rulers over their tribe and not over a specific territory, just as has been mentioned above. In fact, leaders even of small groups in north Arabia called themselves ‘kings’, as among the Qedarites. We may conclude that Qedarite leaders probably introduced themselves to their neighbours, like the Assyrians, under their titles ‘kings’ and ‘queens’. Consequently, the term ‘king’ as used in Qedar could derive from Arab communities’ usage and was probably not merely a representation of Arab leaders used among their neighbours.

To conclude, in this section we have examined meanings of terms used to denote ‘king’ in different societies and we have seen how the terms used were associated essentially with authority. In addition, we have discussed the reasons for the appearance of the institution of kingship and have considered the means adopted by rulers to legitimate their right to rule over their communities. We have focused on the presence of kingship in the Arabian Peninsula and have noted that kingship among Arab groups in north Arabia had almost every feature of kingship which existed in other societies.
Figure no. 1 Assurnasirpal Hunting Lions (British Museum)
Figure no. 2 Ramses II in His War Chariot (Abu Simbel)
2.3 Representation

The word ‘representation’ is used in a variety of senses, but its most general meaning is that of speaking or acting on behalf of some other or others. In actual fact there are very many ways in which one person may represent another. For example, an actor represents a particular character through his acting on stage. Similarly a painter employs his imagination in producing a visual representation, say of a landscape (Vieira and Runciman 2008: 3). Again, historians seek to produce a verbal representation of a society, possibly written in a very subjective manner, so that their historiography may well be inaccurate and fail to reflect a true picture of that society. So, for instance, Hartog (1988: xvi) commented that the way in which Herodotus represented others leads us to believe that what he wrote about them was primarily the product of his own imagination and not essentially a true account of the facts.

2.3.1 The Assyrians and their view of others

This heavily subjective approach to historiography is, in fact, typical of many works of the classical historians (Hartog 1988: 310). Furthermore, the historical accounts they produced reflect their commonly held attitude of differentiating sharply between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Thus, in their narratives the ‘others’ are represented as if they made no contribution to history at all. Ferris (2000: 3) refers this attitude to something he labels the ‘fear of the difference’. To be different means to be dislikeable.

The fact is that in the historical accounts of all ancient nations the authors themselves are regularly represented as superior peoples, while others are represented as peoples of a lower order (ibid.). Assyrian inscriptions mention others who were

41Different approaches have been taken in grouping and categorizing the widely ranging semantics of the word ‘representation’ (see Pitkin, 1972). Thus, Pettit (2007) categorized the different meanings in which the word is used in three groups: enactive, interpretive, and simulative. Alternatively, Skinner (2005: 155-184) divided the meanings of the word into theatrical, juridical, and pictorial. However, Vieira and Runciman (2008) added, ‘If there were no difference between them—if representative and presented were identical—then we would not be dealing with representation but presentation’ (2008: xi, 1).
considered as enemies in the Assyrians’ eyes, so that they are represented as humbled vassals who must pay to the Assyrians a heavy tribute. For example, Adad-nirari III (810-783 BCE) in narrating his campaign against Palestine represented the Israelites as payers of tribute as if they had no other role to play in life. In other words, the flaw in the narrative style of the Assyrian inscriptions is that they represent solely the conqueror’s point of view.\footnote{There are many such examples but I mention here only one as characteristic of of the rest. Adad-nirari III said, ‘I made them submit all to my feet, imposing upon them tribute’ (Pritchard 1969: 281).}

Assyrian discourse distinguished fundamentally between Assyrians and non-Assyrians. To be an Assyrian meant that your loyalty must be to Assur. Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 BCE) actually called the people who rebelled against him in Ḫalzi-luḫa, near the head of the River Tigris, non-Assyrians, because they were a rebel people, even if their true loyalty ought to have been to Assur. In fact, this part of his domains had been inhabited by an Assyrian population since the time of Shalmaneser I, who had settled Assyrians in the city of Ḫalzi-luḫa\footnote{ Luckenbill, I, 145.} several centuries before Ashurnasirpal II’s reign (Sparks 1998: 29).

In the Assyrians’ discourse about others we find this conception not just in their differentiation between Assyrians and non-Assyrians, but they further labelled people who lived in western Asia using the collective name ‘Hittites’\footnote{See Luckenbill, II, 105.} (ibid: 30). In fact, the Hittites\footnote{The term ‘Hittite’ needs to be examined closely because it has been used with different connotations in ancient history. Indeed, ‘Hittite’ has been used to describe four different ethnic groups. The first group was composed of an Indo-European people who lived in Asia Minor from about 2000 BCE. This group of people became absorbed into their conquerors’ cultures and societies (Hoffner 1973: 197). Those early Hittites left behind a collection of tablets, which give us some important information about their manner of life. This phase of Hittite history is known as the Old Kingdom. It was ruled by fourteen kings beginning with Hattuša (Chavalas 2008: 215), and during this era the Hittites performed religious ceremonies, which are described on clay tablets. The language they used at that time was Nesite (Hoffner 1973: 197). The second group called Hititites was also composed of Indo-European people living in Asia Minor about 1700 BCE and they used the term Neša, which was their capital city, to define themselves, from which they derived the name of their language, našili or nešummi. At this stage the term ‘Hittite’ meant the new Anatolian power and its subjects, and this power endured approximately from 1700 to 1190 BCE. The} interacted with the Assyrians and they borrowed the cuneiform writing system.
from Mesopotamia (von Soden 1994: 28). What concerns us here is that from the point of view of Sargon (721-705 BCE) the population in western Asia was regarded as different and of a lower order, since by this time the word ‘Hittites’, as used in inscriptions, was more or less equivalent in meaning to ‘vassals’ (Sparks 1998: 31). Sparks points out that this generalized usage may mislead the historian because Palestine at that time was inhabited by more than one ethnic group. Thus, for example, Judeans living there are referred to as Hittites (ibid.:32). The Assyrian Empire reached its zenith of power during the reigns of Tiglath Pileser III (744-727 BCE) and Sargon II (721-705 BCE), an achievement which led the Assyrians to regard themselves as superior to all other nations who had been subsumed under their control (ibid.; Oded 1979: 81f.).

In explaining why people who lived in the western regions of the Assyrian Empire were named Hittites, Sparks (1998: 34) suggests the usage might have developed, first, because of the Assyrians’ lack of sensitivity in distinguishing between different cultures and, second, because the peoples of western Asia shared some characteristics which were common among them. A third consideration is that the Assyrian inscriptions refer constantly to the Hittite and Amorite languages as being commonly in use at that time in western Asia, so that the word ‘Hittite’ was used stereotypically to refer to people living in that same place with a shared culture and language. What is more, the Assyrians, like other conquerors, did not take the trouble to understand the demography of the nations under their control within their empire, especially in western Asia where they called all the population Hittites (Sparks 1998: 31-34). Further, it seems reasonable to infer that because Assyria conquered Syria and ended Hittite rule there, the name ‘Hittite’ was kept to label people who lived there. Despite the story of Abraham’s buying

third group appeared in the first millennium BCE. Their state was weak and their centre was in the north of Syria. We obtain information about the Hittites of that time from their monuments and inscriptions, which were written in hieroglyphic script (ibid.: 199). Our knowledge about the fourth group of Hittites comes from the Biblical material. The term ‘Hittite’ at this stage was used to describe people who lived in south Palestine. The Assyrian inscriptions refer to them, especially those of Sargon, who used the collective name ‘Hittites’ to describe Assyrian enemies of all ethnic groups dwelling from the banks of the Euphrates to the borders of Egypt (ibid.).
a cave from a Hittite in Gen. 23, we must view the word ‘Hittite’ there with caution, since this narrative was composed in post-exilic times (Gurney 1952: 58f.), when the term was still probably in use as the common name for all people living in Palestine at that time.

As for the Arabs, they are represented in the Assyrian inscriptions as people who ride camels, raise camels, and pay their tribute with camels. Thus, the Assyrian inscriptions closely associated Arabs with camels a characteristic not applied to any other people. This representation may indeed be significant in reflecting the fact that Arabs were famous as pastoralists engaged in the special care of camels. This seems to indicate that, at least in the eyes of the Assyrians at that time, the Arabs were of a Bedouin character.

2.3.2 Representation in the Roman world

Like the Assyrians, the Romans wrote their history from a similar self-esteeming point of view, frequently boasting in their narratives of their conquests (Woolf 1992: 349), a fact which leads many scholars to believe that the driving force in history-writing was the desire to present a written record of one’s victories (Mattingly 1997: 19). Since, in general, the classical writers viewed the rest of the world from on high through imperialistic spectacles, their representations of other peoples in their writings need to be sifted and relied on only with caution. The classical historians generally adopt a bifocal division between ‘others’ and ‘us’, the former being represented in many historical works as worthless. This approach can be found in most cultures and is typically reflected in the use of such derogatory terms for foreigners as ‘barbarians’, used first by the Greeks since the seventh century BCE for those who did not speak the Greek language and perpetuated in use by imperial Rome (Ferris 2000: 3; Hall 1989: 57). In time the nuance of the word changed from being a simple designation of non-Greek-speaking peoples to denoting peoples deemed by the self-assured superior people to be uncultured. The Greeks may

have accepted that other people had their own cultures, but they distinguished radically between themselves and those others (Hart 1997: 146). The dissimilarity of human beings as perceived by Greek writers is exemplified by Plato, who thought that human beings were divided naturally into the different categories of the cultured Hellenes and the uncultured barbarians (*Republic*, 470 c).

It is true that any culture has a self-consciousness of its own identity and most cultures may make a careful distinction between ‘others’ and ‘us’, a distinction which may become problematic when theories of racial superiority become involved. It has been debated when, in fact, it was that Greek self-consciousness appeared and four theories have been proposed in answer to this question. The first theory asserts that the notion of Hellenes and barbarians goes back to very ancient ideology. The second finds the appearance of this social distinction between the eighth and sixth centuries. The third argues that the word ‘barbarian’ came into widespread use during the fifth century during the wars against the Persian Empire (Hall 1989: 4, 58). As a result of the chronic animosity between these two powers, the Persians were similarly named barbarians by the Romans (Hall 1989: 6). A fourth hypothesis suggests that this differentiation appeared as a result of two factors’ working together. Thus, the first factor was the Hellenes’ having already existed for a long time from the archaic period, a factor which was not activated until the second factor came into play. This second factor was the Persian Wars (500-479 BCE), which heightened consciousness of the first factor. A later consequence of this was that the Romans, as heirs of the Hellenistic Empire, came to consider themselves as superior and in a position to label others by the old term of derision: barbarians (Alston 1996: 116; Hall 1989: 1).47

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47 For more information about the Greco-Persian wars, see Green, 1996.
2.3.3 Western scholars and the representation of Orientals

As previously noted, Orientalists have played a significant role in representing Eastern civilizations. Many Western scholars have written about other peoples in the East and many of their works are outstanding and have enriched the academic library. Edward Said cited randomly some of the nineteenth-century intellectuals and artists who made it their interest to represent Oriental peoples and cultures, including, for example, Hugo, Goethe, Burton, Byron, Doughty and Scott, and, during the twentieth century, T.E. Lawrence and Forster (Said 2003: 99). The fact is that no one can ignore the western intellectuals’ contribution in rediscovering the defunct civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Turkey and Syria. However, as Said pointed out, all the huge achievements of Western scholars during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were accomplished under a military, colonial aegis when some European countries conquered parts of the Arab world (ibid.: 100). One of the important considerations which drew the attention of the colonists when they arrived in the Orient was the significant difference between what had previously been written about it and what they saw on the ground. That meant that the representation of the Orient was incorrect, since they encountered resistance rather than welcome from the local people, which led to end of colonialism (ibid.:99).

On the other hand, Eastern writers also sought to represent Western societies through their writings, producing what were sometimes lop-sided distortions based on no more than their own imagination and fancy. Thus, we find in some Eastern works exaggerations in descriptions of corruption, through which they sought to create a black image of Western societies. A modern example which might be cited in this respect is the famous (Saudi) Arab novelist ‘Abd al-Rahman Munif, who, in many outstanding novels depicted Westerners as no more than oil thieves.49

48 Most of the discussion in this section is based on Edward Said’s Orientalism (1978).
49 See in particular his novel Cities of salt (1984).
Chapter Three:
Historical Background

3.1 Assyrian Period

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3.4 The Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BCE)

3.4.1 Cambyses II’s dealings with the Arabs
3. Historical background

3.1 The Assyrian Period

It seems probable that Arabs had contact with Mesopotamian politics earlier than can be deduced from the actual tangible evidence. As the Arabs had a long history of living in the Arabian Peninsula, we need to go further back in the history of this area to find out how the Arabs arose and how they grew and spread in this region. This is difficult, however, owing to the shortage of sources.

The point of departure for this study is when the Arabs were first mentioned in the records of their neighbours, particularly those of the Assyrians and Babylonians. Arabs are mentioned in the records of the neo-Assyrian empire, encompassing the period from 934 to 612 BCE, when the Assyrians recaptured all the lands which had belonged to them during the middle Assyrian period and then rapidly widened the Assyrian state. By the seventh century Assyria controlled - directly or indirectly - the whole Fertile Crescent and, occasionally, Egypt. It dominated the caravan cities in the Syrian desert and the regimes of many oases were forcibly placed under Assyrian control (Kuhrt 1995:473).

The chronology of the Assyrian empire is commonly divided into two main periods. The first phase runs from 934 to 745 BCE, when the Assyrians recaptured the Upper Mesopotamian province and then organized their burgeoning empire. During this stage small states surrounding Assyria accepted the authority of the Assyrian state and dealt with it politically and commercially. Yet it was during the second stage of the Assyrian state, from 745 to 612 BCE, that the Assyrians’ reputation rose to its zenith (Kuhrt 1995:
During this phase the Assyrian Empire rapidly expanded until it stretched from the Arabian Gulf to Commagene in what is now modern Turkey.

The Development of Assyrian Strategy, 934-884 BCE

The earliest kings of Assyria campaigned in territories which had been governed by their predecessors during the Middle Assyrian period. From the point of view of the Assyrian kings, the justification for expanding and conquering many regions during the tenth and ninth centuries was to recover the Middle Assyrian kingdom territories. This can explain the difference between conquest during the earlier and the later periods. During the former period campaigns were not the great wars of the subsequent period and were embarked upon in order to reconfirm Assyrian authority over areas considered part of Assyria. During the first period, the new territories were given the right to local self-government. During the latter period, the new territories controlled by the Assyrian ruler and subject to paying tribute were ruled using the same strategy that had prevailed in the former period (Kuhrt 1995: 478f.).

3.1.1 The Great Kings of the Neo-Assyrian Empire

Scholars differ on the question of how and why the state of Assyria began to expand. Chavalas (2006: 280), for example, says that Assyria expanded because of the lack of security surrounding the state as a result of frequent campaigns by neighbouring nomads. Those events took place at the beginning of the second millennium, which is why Assyrian kings chose attack as a good means of defence. On the other hand, van de Mieroop (2004: 216f.) considers Assyria to have been a militaristic society. Thus, the

Commagene: was located on the north-western bank of the Euphrates. We can reconstruct its history from the Assyrian inscriptions dating from 870 to 605 BCE. In 708, this territory was conquered by the Assyrian army, whereupon it became an Assyrian province until 607 BCE. In the Seleucid period, Antiochus III conquered Commagene and the territory remained under Seleucid control until 162 BCE, when it became an independent kingdom following Ptolemaeus’s revolt against the Seleucids (see E. Honigmann, RE, Suppl. 4. 979-90; Hawkins, Reallexikon der Assyriologie 6, ‘Kummuḫ’; F.K. Dörner (ed.), Kommagene: Geschichte und Kultur einer antiken Landschaft. See (J. Smith 1975 in Hornblower and Spawforth: 373).
structure of Assyrian society was a military one during the mid eighth century and the
king was at the top of this hierarchy. According to Assyrian records, every year there was
a main campaign led by the king. Many inscriptions were written about their campaigns
and how they defeated their enemies. A king became great when he achieved many
victories against his enemies.\footnote{See e.g. Pritchard 1969: 282.}

However, in my opinion there was another reason for the Assyrian expansion, which
was that Assyrian society was highly materialistic. This is supported by the fact that
many Assyrian inscriptions mention the heavy tributes imposed upon the subdued
territories. Furthermore, Assyria extended trade routes, which gives us reason to believe
that the empire was looking for wealth everywhere.\footnote{See e.g. Grayson 1976: 141; Luckenbill, 1926: I, 276, 279, 287; 1927: II, 7, 26f., 30, 116.}

\subsection{Ashur-dan II}

Our knowledge about the reign of Ashur-dan II is insufficient to draw a full picture
about his era because of the shortage of sources. According to Kuhrt’s list of neo-
Assyrian kings, Ashur-dan II governed between 934 and 912 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 479).
During this period he led Assyria successfully and maintained all the provinces which he
inherited from his father (Chavalas 2006: 280). However, the most that can be said
regarding this period is that he launched the bulk of his extensive campaigns against the
northern border of Assyria (Kuhrt 1995: 479).

The following reasons have been offered for these northern campaigns. First, the
problem facing Assyrian kings at that time was taking control of the northern border.
Second, the Assyrian capital was close to that border, so it was important for the area to
be secure. Finally, there were several crucial roads that ran through this territory into
Anatolia, which it was important to keep secure (Kuhrt 1995: 480).


3.1.3  Adad-nirari II

Adad-nirari II ruled Assyria from 911 to 891 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 479). Adad-nirari II’s inscriptions illustrate his achievements in different aspects of life and he ruled his empire strongly (Grayson 1976: 82).

Assyrian authority expanded during Adad-nirari II’s reign towards Babylonia (Chavalas 2006: 280). In addition, the invention of redoubts and military strongholds in Assyria and the improving of supplies by means of moveable depots enabled Adad-nirari II to improve supplies to his military. It did not help the Assyrian army in the short term, but in the long term it helped supply the military with sufficient food and weapons (Chavalas 2006:281). Thus, Adad-nirari II was adept at utilizing army tactics that allowed the Assyrian kingdom to achieve many victories during his reign.

3.1.4  Tukulti-Ninurta II

Grayson (1976: 97) cites three partly destroyed inscriptions attributed to Tukulti-Ninurta II and Tiglath-Pileser I, found in south-eastern Turkey, which contributed to the understanding of these rulers’ era.

Tukulti-Ninurta II expanded his empire rapidly by conquering several territories. For instance, text no. 462 in Grayson (1976: 98) gives an account of his campaign into the lands of Urartu, also describing reconstruction and hunting in the region. Moreover, the king declares in text 468 in Grayson (1976: 100) that he is the first king of Assyria who ‘entered into Mount Urrubnu’, that he annexed the land of Ladanu, and that he captured 30 cities in that province belonging to A[rameans]53. However, some of his inscriptions describe campaigns in territories which were already under the authority of the middle Assyrian kingdom (Kuhrt 1995: 478).

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53 The word A[rameans] is restored.
3.1.5 Ashurnasirpal II

Ashurnasirpal II, who reigned from 883 to 859 BCE, ascended to the Assyrian throne following the death of his father, Tukulti-Ninurta II (Kuhrt 1995: 479). Fortunately, many royal inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal II have survived – much more than those of any of his forefathers (Grayson 1976: 113). The very many testimonies referring to this king are tangible evidence of his extremely dynamic reign (Grayson, 1995: 114). Ashurnasirpal II dealt with his enemies aggressively and ruled his empire with a strong hand (Grayson 1995: 121).

According to Assyrian inscriptions, Ashurnasirpal II led fourteen main campaigns before 866 BCE. The king led several campaigns against the north, while he launched most of them against the west – the direction in which he wished to extend his empire (Chavalas 2006: 285). These campaigns can surely be explained by his wish to gain control of the trade roads that ran through the Levant (Grayson 1995: 141, text no. 584).

Moreover, Ashurnasirpal II was also a great builder, equal in this area to his military successes. In 878 BCE, he moved to his new capital city, Calah (Nimrud), the city subsequently becoming prosperous during his reign. Many canals were dug and lands planted during this period. The city also provided one of the most important surviving Assyrian inscriptions (Chavalas, 2006: 286).

3.1.6 Shalmaneser III

Shalmaneser III became king after the death of his father Ashurnasirpal II. The son’s reign lasted from 858 to 824 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 479). Shalmaneser III left more inscriptions than any king in Assyria. Despite the fact that he inherited a powerful empire, he faced many rebellions across his kingdom. During his reign he led more than thirty-four campaigns, most of which were against his enemies in the west, where he started to fight a Syrian coalition under Bit-Adini’s leadership⁵⁴. After a long effort

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⁵⁴ This coalition was established to defend the commercial routes in North Syria (Cilicia and the eastern Taurus) from Assyrian exploitation. The coalition was between Carchemish, Sam’al, Pattina, Hilakku and Que (Kuhrt 1995: 486).
Shalmaneser subdued this unit and absorbed Bit-Adini into his empire (Chavalas 2006: 289).

a. The Battle of Qarqar

The battle of Qarqar (on which, see Luckenbill 1926: 223) is considered to be one of the most important battles in ancient history. In 853 BCE\textsuperscript{55}, the reigning king of Assyria, Shalmaneser III, fought against the coalition of the Levant under the leadership of the Damascene king Hadad-ezer\textsuperscript{56} (Pritchard 1969: 278). According to Assyrian records, the king of Damascus was supported by twelve other kings, one of whom was Gindibu’, the Arab king, who contributed a thousand camels to the battle (Kuhrt 1995: 488). The inscription referring to this battle is well known and quoted because it is considered the first source which mentions the Arabs and their king:

\begin{quote}
Qarqar\textsuperscript{57}, his (text: my) royal residence. He brought along to help him 1,200 chariots, 1,200 cavalrymen, 20,000 foot soldiers of Adad-’idri (i.e. Hadad-ezer), of Damascus (\textit{Imērišu}), 700 chariots, 700 cavalrymen, 10,000 foot soldiers of Irhulēni from Hamath, 2,000 chariots, 10,000 foot soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, (\textit{A-ḫa-ab-bu matSir-’i-la-a-a}), 500 soldiers from Que, 1,000 soldiers from Musri, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers from Irqanata, 200 soldiers of Matinu-ba’lu from Arvad, 200 soldiers from Usanata, 30 chariots, 1[0?]00 soldiers of Adunu-ba’lu from Shian, 1,000 camel-(rider)s of Gindibu’, from Arabia, […]00 soldiers of Ba’sa, son of Ruhubi, from Ammon-(all together) these were twelve kings. They rose against me [for a] decisive battle. I fought with them with (the support of) the mighty forces of Ashur, which Ashur, my lord, has given to me, and the strong weapons which Nergal, my leader, has presented to me (Pritchard 1969: 278-279).\textsuperscript{58}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{55}The date of this battle is a controversial issue. William H. Shea argues that the date must be changed from 854 to 853 BCE. His study is based on two different lists of eponyms, which give different dates for the start of Adad-nirari III’s reign. For further information, see Shea (1977: 240-242). On the other hand, Brinkman minimized the significance of Shea’s study. In his opinion, if we accept the suggestion of that study, we would need to change all Assyrian and Babylonian chronology. See Brinkman (1978: 173-175).
\textsuperscript{56}King of Damascus from 853 to 841 BCE. His fame came from his hostility to Assyria. He created an alliance against Shalmaneser III, which proved difficult to defeat for several years (Leick 1999: 64).
\textsuperscript{57}Qarqar a city or place near Damascus (Pritchard 1969: 278).
\textsuperscript{58}See also Luckenbill, I, 223, text no. 611.
The coalition attempted to maintain the *status quo* as they shared interests in maintaining the commercial benefits they gained from it. The Arab caravan trade wandered through Syrian territories while all sea access was provided from Phoenician ports. The roads of this trade were controlled by important kingdoms such as Damascus, Hamath and Israel, all of which traded with Egypt (Kuhrt 1995: 488).

According to Assyrian records, Shalmaneser III claimed that he subdued the Syrian confederacy (Hallo 1960: 40), and the king of Damascus and his allies suffered as a result of the Qarqar battle. Shalmaneser III had to face this confederacy three more times until he succeeded against them in 841 BCE (Hallo 1960: 40). Kuhrt (1995: 488) indicates that this Assyrian victory happened as a result of frequent Assyrian campaigns, or it could be a result of changes in the political situation in two important kingdoms in that territory: Israel and Damascus. Eventually, in 841 BCE, Shalmaneser III mentions in his records that he received tribute from Israel. The full account of this Assyrian victory can be found on the 'black obelisk' from Calah (Kuhrt 1995: 488).

Shalmaneser III also launched many campaigns against the northern border during his reign in order to fight the state of Urartu and reduce the danger of its being a competitor to Assyria. The relationship between Assyria and Babylonia was peaceful. Shalmaneser III aided the king of Babylonia, Marduk-zakir, to overcome his enemy when his brother attempted to seize the Babylonian throne. The relationship also worked in the opposite direction, for Babylonia helped Shamshi-Adad V, Shalmaneser’s successor. The end of Shalmaneser's reign saw massive revolts throughout the kingdom.

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59 From 876 to 869 Omri ruled Israel successfully and his reign is considered an important period in Israel’s history, especially in the political sphere which was stabilized in his era. Moreover, the repeated marriages between Israel and Judah involving Omri’s dynasty resulted in peaceful relations between the two countries. During this period Israel succeeded in leading a coalition which acted against Assyrian expansion towards the trade routes in the Levant. Noteworthy is that, in the middle of the ninth century, Omri was overthrown by one of his officers, Jehu, who killed the remainder of the Omri family and established a dynasty that ruled Israel for nearly one hundred years (Kuhrt 1995: 466). The disadvantage of this period is the repetitious fighting between Israel and Damascus for control of the trade routes which ran through Syria. This situation gave Shalmaneser the opportunity to defeat the conflicting forces in Syria and control the trade routes in that territory.

60 He ruled from 854 to 819 BCE and. He took advantage of the good relationship between his father and Assyria when his younger brother revolted and Marduk-zakir received aid from Assyria. Marduk-zakir was in a position to return the Assyrian favour when a widespread rebellion broke out in Assyria (Leick 1999: 102-103).
which Babylonia helped quell during the early years of Shamshi-Adad V’s reign (Kuhrt 1995: 489-490).

During the Shalmaneser era many buildings and temples were constructed at Calah. A large fortress was also built, named ‘Fort Shalmaneser’ by its discoverers (Chavalas 2006: 290).

3.2 The Period of Assyrian Expansion and Domination of the Near East, 745 to 610 BCE

During the middle of the eighth century, the kingdom of Assyria became a force to be reckoned with. The kingdom rapidly extended and dominated most of the Near East (Kuhrt 1995: 493). During that time Assyrian politics became more sophisticated and the army well organized, increasing the Assyrian’s ability to attack places far away. This fact was reflected through achievements in different aspects of Assyrian life. Fortunately, there is much significant information from this period, such as many inscriptions: chronicles, royal correspondence, legal texts, and also Biblical materials which allow us to write the full story of this period of the Assyrian Empire (Kuhrt, 1995: 496).

3.2.1 Tiglath-Pileser III

Tiglath-Pileser III ruled Assyria between 744 and 727 BCE. Ambiguous circumstances surrounded his ascent to the Assyrian throne. The Assyrian list of kings gives Tiglath-Pileser as the son of Ashur-Nirari V (Chavalas 2006: 331), while most scholars believe that he seized the Assyrian throne during a revolution against Ashur-Nirari (Tadmor 1994: 212). These different views could be integrated if we accept Tiglath-Pileser III as the son of Ashur-Nirari V, who then rebelled against his father, but unfortunately there is no evidence with which to uphold this hypothesis.
Many Assyrian territories were lost during the period prior to Tiglath-Pileser, when the kingdom had been ruled consecutively by three weak kings. The losses can be explained by the following reasons. First, during this period, Assyrian influence became weak within provinces such as north Syria. Second, Urartian authority was considerably extended in these areas. Moreover, Urartu controlled important routes such as the road between Babylonia and Ecbatana, which ran through the Zagros mountains. Finally, the Chaldaeans played a significant role in Babylonian politics with the aid of Elam, which made the political situation in Babylonia unstable. Thus, Babylonia was ruled autonomously and locally without Assyrian aid, which meant that the political relationship between the two countries, which had been established during the era of Adad-Nirari III, changed (Kuhrt 1995: 496).

The above factors guided the military action Tiglath-Pileser subsequently took. During the course of his reign, the map of the Assyrian Empire changed dramatically. He started to extend his empire with fighting at the southern borders of Assyria, against Babylonia, and along the Zagros and the Tigris. Tiglath-Pileser defeated the Urartian army and conquered Arpad in 743 BCE, following a siege of nearly thirty-six months. Subsequently, southern Urartu, which was named Ulluba, was joined to Assyria (Tadmor 1994: 9). Following this, the Assyrian army achieved victory after victory and the empire stretched to embrace Damascus, Israel, Judah, Gaza and Transjordan (Tadmor 1994: 4). The new shape of the Assyrian Empire extended from the border of Egypt to Kummuḫ and Sam'al in what is now southern Turkey (Kuhrt 1995: 496). Finally, the Assyrian army conquered Babylonia during one of the Chaldaean invasions and Tiglath-Pileser ruled Babylonia.

The new provinces were tightly governed and Tiglath-Pileser applied the policy of Ashurnasirpal II (Chavalas 2006: 331), which included changing the demographics of those territories. This strategy affected a considerable number of people by transferring them from one area to another. During Tiglath-Pileser’s reign, the main trade routes in the Near East were under Assyrian control.
a. Tiglath-Pileser III’s dealings with the Arabs

According to Tiglath-Pileser III’s stela, which was discovered in the palace at Calah,\(^{61}\) the king received tribute from the Arab queen Zabiba:\(^{62}\)

I received the tribute of Kuštašpi, Kummuḫite, Rezin, the Damascene, Menahem, the Samaritan, Hiram, the Tyrian, Sibitti-bi'li, the Byblian, Urikki, the Queen, Pisiris, the Carchemishite, Eni-il, the Hamathite, Panammuwa, the Sam'alite, Tarḫulara, the Gurgumite, Sulomal, the Melidite, Dadīlu, the Kaskean, Uassurme, the Tabalian, Ušḫitti, the (A)Tunean, Urmallā the Tuḫanean, Tuḫamme, the Ištundian, Uirime, the Hubišnean, Zabiba, queen of the land of Arabia: gold, silver, tin, iron, elephant hides, elephant tusks (ivory), multi-colored garments, linen garments, blue-purple wool, and red-purple wool, ebony, boxwood, all kinds of precious thing from the royal treasure, live sheep whose wool is dyed red-purple, flying birds of the sky whose wings are blue-purple, horses, mules, cattle, and sheep, camels, she-camels, together with their young (Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 285).

The inscription is considered to be one of the most important Assyrian inscriptions because it names an Israeliite king who is mentioned in the Old Testament.\(^{63}\) Moreover, this text is the second primary source that mentions Arabs (Retsö 2003: 131). From the above text and from other texts we can obtain a number of facts. First, the trade of the Near East was global and encompassed various goods. Second, Arabs played an important role in the process of commercial transport. Third, as a result of this transportation, Arabs had cultural contact with all those territories they dealt with. Fourth, the inscription cited indicates that Zabiba was an Arab queen. In fact, while female rule was rare in the ancient Near East,\(^{64}\) Arab priestesses played a significant role in the

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\(^{61}\)Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 285.

\(^{62}\)The location of her kingdom in Arabia is not identified. However, it might have been centred on the township of Dumat al-Jandal, an oasis in the north of the Arabian desert (Abbott 1941: 4).

\(^{63}\)2 Kings 15: 19-20 mentions Menahem the king of Israel and his tribute to Tiglath-Pileser.

\(^{64}\)Egypt had already experienced a most effective woman ruler in the person of Hatshepsut of the Eighteenth Dynasty; and Israel had had its charismatic female leader in the person of Deborah’ (Pritchard 1974: 40).
ancient Arab community and held political authority over their people (as we will see later in this study).

The inscription contained in Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscriptions stela\(^65\) mentions another Arab queen: Samsi. It refers to Samsi and her denunciation of the covenant with Assyria:

\[\text{[As for Samsi, queen of the land of] Arabia, at Mount Sa[qu]rr...][... her [net]ire camp [...] [...] Norwegian Institute of the Covenant with Assyria:}

It appears that Samsi,\(^68\) the Arabian queen, faced the wrath of Tiglath-Pileser III because she broke her treaty with the Assyrian Empire. As result, Tiglath-pileser III defeated Samsi, imposed on her a heavy tribute, and appointed an Assyrian officer over her. The context of this inscription informs us that the other groups mentioned in this text rushed

\(^{65}\) This text has been the subject of controversy since some scholars have treated it as annals (see e.g. Luckenbill, inscriptions nos. 778-779), while others have considered it a summary inscription. Tadmor suggests that this inscription contains a summary of events which took place during the reign of Tiglath-pileser (Lawson Younger 2000: 292).

\(^{66}\) Lawson Younger writes "this title was generally given to Assyrian officials of various rank who supervised the policy and administration in provinces and vassal states" (Context of Scripture II, 288).

\(^{67}\) The location of Sheba, or Saba, is discussed in section 4.6. However, Lawson Younger restored these words based on information from other inscriptions. The appearance of the words here could help towards a proper reconstruction of the historical events.

\(^{68}\) Abbott (1941: 4) drew the conclusion that Samsi was the Sabaeana queen because she is closely associated with the Sabaeans in the text. Furthermore, a number of Assyrian inscriptions which mention the Sabaeans envisage them as living alongside Arabs (i.e. Ishmaelites) in Northern Arabia (see e.g. Luckenbill 1926: I, 287).
to pay their tributes after they saw Samṣi’s fate. However, it is possible that Tīglath-Pileser III faced a new coalition, which contained Massa’, Sabaeans, Haiappeans, Hatteans, Idiba’ileans and other groups. Samṣi was an Arab queen, and she joined this confederacy and broke the treaty with Tīglath-Pileser III. This step on the part of Samṣi may be explained by the fact that she wanted to be free of the heavy tribute which was imposed upon her people by Assyria. The inscription indicates that Tīglath-Pileser III defeated this coalition and brought all its leaders to his city to kiss his feet. Overall, the text does not mention who was the main leader of this confederacy and what caused Samṣi to contact this group and rebel against Assyria. Also, in the light of this inscription, we can say that at this period the Sabaeans were settled in the north of Arabia earlier than has been commonly assumed.69

The Arab queen Samṣi and her tribute to Assyria are mentioned in another Assyrian inscription.70 The tribute was heavy and many Arab warriors were killed in the battle that the inscription refers to. Moreover, Tīglath-Pileser III appointed an officer as a political agent to supervise Samṣi and her people. This could be explained as a reaction by Tīglath-Pileser III in response to Samṣi’s rebellion. The text is as follows:

As for Samṣi, queen of the Arabs, at Mount Saqurri, I defeated 9,400 (of her people). I took away (from her) 1,000 people, 30,000 camels, 20,000 oxen, [...], 5,000 (pouches) of all types of aromatics, [...], thrones of her gods, [the military equipment (and) staffs of her goddess(es)], (and) her property. Moreover, she, in order to save her life, [... (and) set out] like a female onager [to the desert, a place (where one is always) thirsty, [I set the rest of her possessions] (and) her [ten]ts, her people’s safeguard within her camp, [on fire].[Samṣi] became startled [by] my mighty [weapon]s and she brought camels, she-camels, [with their young, to Assyria, befo]re me. I placed a representative (of

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69 It has commonly been assumed that the Sabaeans moved from south Arabia to the north after the destruction of the Marib dam in the late fourth century AD (see e.g. Hoyland, 2001: 88). However, evidence that the Sabaeans were in northern Arabia at this time comes from their being mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions, inscriptions which refer only to peoples who were actually dealt with by the Assyrians. Further, we know that the Assyrians did not reach the south of Arabia, where the Sabaeans would have remained beyond the cognizance of the Assyrian power. They must therefore have been encountered in the north of Arabia, as is again confirmed by the fact that some Assyrian inscriptions mention the Sabaeans among groups of Ishmaelites living in northern Arabia.

70 See also text no. 817 (Luckenbill, 1926: I, 293).
mine) over her and [...] 10,000 soldiers] (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Tiglath-pileser III 42).

Another Assyrian inscription contains a fragmentary account of Tiglath-Pileser III’s campaign against several cities on his western border, boasting that he killed many warriors and defeated his enemies, taking hundreds of people captive, whilst he entering fifteen cities:

 [...] [...] [...] I en[veloped] him [like] a (dense) fog [...] I ut[terly demolished ... of sixteen] districts of the land Bīt-Ḫūm[ria (Israel). I carried off (to Assyria) ... captives from the city ...]barâ, 625 captives from the city ...[,... ... (5´) ... captives from the city] Ḫınatuna, 650 captives from the city Ku[,..., ... captives from the city Ya]ṭbite, 656 captives from the city Sa[,...,..., with their belongings. I ...] the cities Arumâ (and) Marum [...].[Mitinti of the land] Ashkelon [neglected] the loyalty oat[he/sworn by] the great gods (... and) revolted against me. ...] He (Mitinti) saw [the defeat of Raḥiānu (Rezin) and during a lapse [of judgment ... (10´) Rūkibtu, the son of ...], ascended his throne. ... [...] He wandered around and beseeched me. [...] 500 [...] and I entered his city. [...] fifteen citi[es ... I]dibiʾlu, the Arab, [...] (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Tiglath-pileser III 22).

According to the last line in this text, Tiglath-Pileser III entered 15 cities, one of which might have belonged to Idibiʾli. In addition, text no. 800, which we shall consider shortly, explicitly mentions Idibiʾli as the name of a person. Here, however, the context (a listing of conquered cities) might suggest that Idibiʾli is a city or smaller place here since we note that the space in the inscription between the words ‘15 cities’ and ‘Idibiʾli’ is a small one. Also, we may note that in text no. 818 (Luckenbill, 1926: I, 299) Idibiʾli could be either a person or place, but, according to common usage in Arabic, it seems more likely that it is a person rather than a place that is here in view.
The stela of Tiglath-pileser III (Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 288)\(^1\) informs us that the Assyrian king ruled over some Arab groups, including Massa’, Temā, Sab’ai’ and others. This fragmentary text indicates the heavy tribute the Assyrian king imposed upon those groups and how he ordered them to bring this money to his city and commanded them to kiss his feet. The inscription is as follows:

The people of Massa’, \(^d\) Temā, Sab’ai’, \(^e\) [Ḥayapā], \(^f\) Badanu, Ḥatte, Idiba’iulu, […] who dwell] on the border of the countries of the setting sun (western lands) [of whom no one (of my ancestors) knew and whose place is far] away, the fame of my lordship [(and of) my heroic deeds they heard, and they made supplication to] my lordship. [They brought before me]: gold, silver, [camels, she-camels, all kinds of spices], their tribute, as one; [and they kissed] my feet. I appointed [Idibi’iulu as the prebend of the “Gatekeeper”] facing Egypt […of] Aššur I placed therein. […] I made and […] the yoke of Aššur, my lord, [I placed over them… in all the lands through which] I have marched.

Generally Syria is considered the ‘land of sunset’ for the Assyrian kingdom, which had been inhabited by Idibi’ili (Retsö 2003: 134). In relation to the next text we will deal with Idibi’ili in more detail. However, the above text also mentions Ḥayapā, who is assumed by genealogists to be the son of Medyan (Genesis 25: 1-4), son of Abraham and Qeturah. However, Sheba is found in the list of Qeturah’s sons in Genesis:

Abraham took another wife, whose name was Qeturah. She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midyan, Ishbak, and Shuaḥ. Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. The sons of Dedan were Assurim, Letushim, and Le’ummi. The sons of Midyan were ‘Ephah, ‘Epher, Hanokh, Abida, and Elda’ah. All these were the children of Qeturah (Genesis 25: 1-5).

The appearance of Sheba in the Tiglath-pileser III inscription is its first historical attestation. The name is written *Sab’ai’* and might be pronounced *Sheba*. Retsö (2003:

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\(^1\) See also (Tadmor 1994: 143; Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Tiglath-pileser III 44).
135) observes that the appearance of Sheba in the same period along with Midyan’s sons, who lived in north Arabia, suggests that Sheba at that time lived in north Arabia together with Dedan and not far from the oasis of al-Ula, located north of Medina.

In addition, there is no hint in Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscription that Sheba was in south Arabia or that it had any relationship with the Sabaeans in the south. In fact, Tiglath-Pileser III’s ‘Sabaeans are definitely in the Hejaz’ (Retsö 2003: 135). Retsö (2003: 135) claims that the appearance of Sabaeans in the north of Arabia indicates that the frankincense trade was beginning in about the eighth century BCE, or possibly before that time, but in my opinion there was possibly another reason for the appearance of southern Sabaeans in the north of Arabia: to extend their influence and protect their trade routes in north Arabia.

Eph'al (1982: 91) noted the tribe of Badanai, mentioned in Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscription as a group of people living in north Arabia side-by-side with other groups mentioned in that text. The name Badanai is known also from north Arabian inscriptions and the location of this group of people was in Sakāka, near Dūmah (Winnett 1970: 79). In addition, two Safaitic texts mention Badanai as being near Syria, perhaps referring to the same group of people (Winnett 1957: 20, 42).

Another tribe mentioned in this inscription is Mas’ai, which is also found in Genesis 25: 12-15 as one of Ishmael’s sons (Massa’). Massa’ is located between Dumah on the northern shore of the Nafud sand-desert and Tayma. The most likely location for them is thus around the western end of that desert” (Retsö 2003: 135). Tayma, as we have seen from the first mention of it, was recorded in one of Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscriptions as giving tribute to him (Pritchard 1969: 283).

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72 See above (Lawson Younger in Context of Scripture II, 288).
73 ‘Badan’ is found in Safaitic inscriptions, for example: ‘By Da’iyat b. Burd b. Wahab’el b. Sabah b. Sa’d b. Shahyat b. Dahir of the tribe of Badan. And he has taken possession of the enclosure (?). And he was on the lookout. And, O Allat, the evil eye be on him who effaces the inscription’. Cf. also reference to: Awf of the tribe of Badan. (See Winnett 1957: 20, 42).
74 For more details see section 4.5.
75 For more information see section 5.1.
As we have seen above, Idibiʿili is mentioned in three of Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscriptions, when the king of Assur appointed Idibiʿili as guardian of the Egyptian border. In addition, we read of the following in one of the summary inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III:

- The annexation of northern and central Syria (738)
- The annexation of Damascus (733-732)
- The Hanunu of Gaza episode (734)
- Israel partly episode (733)
- The tribute of the Arabian tribes (733-732)
- Idibiʿilu appointed as the “Gatekeeper facing Egypt” (734)

(Tadmor 1994: 137)

From this text we can obtain the following facts. First, at the time it was written the Assyrian Empire stretched to the border with Egypt. Second, in this inscription Arabs appeared as vassals of or aggressors against Assyria and the king of Assyria depended on Idibiʿili to protect Assyria’s western border. This meant that the Assyrian Empire occasionally enacted a flexible policy, giving to allies the responsibility for protecting its borders.

Our knowledge of Shalmaneser V, son and successor of Tiglath-Pileser III, is limited as the Assyrian records documenting his reign are damaged. Moreover, the Babylonian inscriptions do not mention his reign (Kuhrt 1995: 479). However, what concerns us here is that by 722 BCE the Assyrian king was able to rule Babylonia directly, as well as the important trade states such as Damascus, Israel and the Mediterranean coastal cities. As Kuhrt claims (1995: 497), ‘some of the Arab groups involved in trade with them were linked to Assyria by oaths of loyalty and obligations to

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76 Also see the Assyrian text no. 44 in Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Tiglath-pileser III 44; and texts nos. 800 and 819 Luckenbill, 1926: I, 287, 293f.
supply forces and pay tribute.’ Also, the Egyptian border was guarded on Assyria’s side by local Arab nomads.

3.2.2 Sargon II

Sargon II ruled Assyria from 721 to 705 BCE. How he ascended to the Assyrian throne is uncertain. He was the second son of Tiglath-Pileser III and it is not clear whether he murdered his half brother Shalmaneser V or he took advantage of the king’s death (Chavalas 2006: 333). Immediately on gaining the throne, Sargon II faced rebellion under the leadership of Yaubidi, ruler of Hamath, who had lost some of his territory as a result of Assyrian expansion. Yaubidi led a coalition to fight the new king, just at the period when Sargon II was seeking to legitimate his position as king. Yaubidi and his allies were defeated, the story of which can be found upon the walls of Sargon II’s palace (Kuhrt 1995: 497).

In the south Sargon II was defeated in 720 BCE by a coalition including the Elamite army under the leadership of the new king of Babylonia, Marduk-apla-iddina II, Biblical Merodach-baladan (721-710 and 704) (Isa. 39: 1). In addition, during that time Urartu regained its power and extended its authority into Mannaean territory and central Anatolia. Sargon II also faced the problem of military movement by Mita of Mushki in the area of what is now the centre of modern Turkey (Kuhrt 1995: 498). On account of these pressures Sargon II was forced to fight for almost the entirety of his reign. By doing so he was able to finish the conquests and expansion begun by Tiglath-Pileser III, an endeavour he managed with great success (Kuhrt 1995: 498).

In addition to his triumphs on the field of battle, Sargon II was also a great builder. He built a new capital named Dur-Sharruken (Fort Sargon, modern Khorsabad), which he moved to just a year prior to his death, which occurred, perhaps surprisingly, during battle in 705 BCE (Chavalas 2006: 334).

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77 Marduk-apla-iddina: the king of Babylonia from the Bit-Yakin tribe, who formed an alliance with Elam against the Assyrians. The Assyrian inscriptions during Sargon II’s reign described Marduk-apla-iddina as an arch enemy. His first appearance in Assyrian inscriptions was in 732 BCE, when he subdued Mukin-Zeri, chief of a southern tribe during Tiglath-Pileser III’s era (Leick 1999: 105).

78 Van Mieroop (2004: 216) dates Sargon’s transfer to the new capital to 717 BCE.


a. Sargon II’s dealings with the Arabs

Between 1843 and 1844 an important discovery was made in Khorsabad by P. E. Botta during his early excavations at the palace of Sargon II. Botta found fourteen large rooms containing a considerable number of Sargon’s inscriptions (Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 293). One of them tells us about Sargon II’s dealings with groups of Arabs, who are named in this inscription as follows:

The Tamudi, Ibadidi, Marsima[ni] and Hayappâ, who live in distant Arabia, in the desert, who know neither overseer nor commander, who never brought tribute to any king,-with the help of Aššur, my lord, I defeated them. I deported the rest of them. I settled them in Samaria/Samerina (Lawson, *Context of Scripture II*, 2000: 293).

What is important here is that of those who paid tribute to the Assyrian king, the Arab group is listed first. I assume that when one achieved victory over another one would be proud of it and would mention that victory at the beginning of one’s statement. So it could be that here is reflected the Arabs position at that time. In other words, Arabs could have been large in numbers at that time or they might have constituted a danger to Assyria. This inscription also informs us that Arabs entered into Samaritan territory during Sargon’s time. In addition, this text tells us that these groups of Arabs lived far from the Assyrian border and had never brought tribute to any of Sargon’s ancestors.

Text no. 18 (Luckenbill 1927: II, 7f.) offers significant information about how the Assyrian Empire became a force to be reckoned with during Sargon II’s reign:

From Pir'u, king of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, It'amra, the Sabean, the kings of the seacoast and desert, I received gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple (?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute. [I defeated] Mitâ, king of Muski, in his province. The cities of Harrua and Ushnanis, fortresses of the land of Kue, which he had held by force since distant days I restored to their (former) status (place).
In light of this inscription we can say that the Assyrian Empire became more powerful than Egypt and received from it tribute. The Arab queen Samsi appears in this text immediately after the king of Egypt and from this sequence we conclude that this text has been written to reflect either geographic realities or the importance of the Arabs, which would have been second only to that of Egypt. Moreover, It'amra appears in this text as king of the Sabaeans, which means that the text distinguishes between the Arabs under Samsi’s charge and the Sabaeans under the rule of It'amra. Finally, since It'amra governed the seacoast and desert and he is mentioned after Egypt and the Arabs, this sequence seems to suggest that the Sabaeans were neighbours of Egypt and the Arabs in the north of Arabia.

Egypt and Samsi, queen of Arabia, appear again during Sargon II’s reign when they render the Assyrian king tribute in his fifteenth year on the throne. In this year Sargon II also defeated the Elamite army and surrounded Samaria, subsequently deporting 27,290 inhabitants from their own land and appointing one of his officers as their overseer. The defeated peoples were also obliged to pay the king tribute. His victories extended to the defeat of Hanunu, king of Gaza, who joined the coalition against Sargon II.

From my accession year to my fifteenth regnal year, I decisively defeated Humbanigaš, the Elamite, in the district of Der. I besieged and conquered Samaria. I took as booty 27,290 people who lived there. I gathered 50 chariots from them. I taught the rest (of the deportees) their skills. I set my eunuch over them, and I imposed upon them the (same) tribute as the previous king (i.e. Shalmaneser V). Hanunu, the king of Gaza, along with Re’e, the commander-in-chief (turtānu) of Egypt, marched against me to do war and battle at Raphia. I inflicted a decisive defeat on them. Re’e became afraid at the noise of my weapons, and he fled, and his place was not found. I captured with my own hand Hanunu, the king of Gaza. I received the tribute of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, Samsi, the queen of Arabia, Ithamar, the Sabean: gold,
herbs of the mountain, horses and camels (Lawson, *Context of Scripture II*, 2000: 296). The land of the Arabs is mentioned in Sargon II’s inscription recording his campaign against the Medes, conducted in order to fortify his border. The reader is informed that the Arabs still pay tribute to Sargon II. We might speculate that at that time the Arabs were guarding the western Assyrian border.

With a view to subjugating the Medes, I strengthened the defences (guard) of the neighbourhood of Kār-Sharrukin. 34 districts of the Medes, I conquered and brought them within the border of Assyria. I imposed upon them a yearly tribute of horses. The city of Erishtana, together with the cities of its neighbourhood, which belonged to the district of Ba‘it-ili, I besieged, I conquered, I carried off their spoil. The lands of Arabia, who had with held their tribute, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 30).

We have evidence that Arabs had been settled in southern Babylonia since Sargon II’s time. A letter from Bēl-liqbi the governor of the city of Huzaza, to the king of Assyria is most informative in this respect, since it reports that ‘the LŪ ar-ba-a-a are settled on the other side of the Hadina river where they come and go’ (Retsō 2003: 152). In addition, it seems that the king is aware of the inhabitants of the town of Ḥuzaza selling iron to the LŪ ar-ba-a-a, something Bēl-liqbi insists he has no knowledge of, claiming that only copper is being sold to them. Nevertheless, the sales of iron materials are inhibited by Bēl-liqbi’s placing a toll collector at the city gate of Ḥuzaza, which subsequently scares away the LŪ ar-ba-a-a. This could be evidence of the Assyrians’ preventing the Arabs from acquiring and manufacturing weaponry. Controlling access to iron was a major concern of the Assyrians, who required it in order to arm their own troops (Retsō 2003: 152).

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79 This inscription was found at Sargon’s palace on the wall of rooms 4, 7, 8 and 10. It is considered to be a summary inscription (Lawson, *Context of Scripture II*, 2000: 296)

80 See Parpola, *Correspondence of Sargon II*, no. 179 (taken from Retsō 2003: 152).
After the above event the Arabs are not mentioned in Assyrian records during Sargon II’s reign, but do appear during that of Sennacherib.

3.2.3 Sennacherib

Sennacherib was the successor to Sargon II, who, as seen above, met his death in battle in 705 BCE, during his campaign in the north-west. Sennacherib was the legitimate successor and ascended to the Assyrian throne unchallenged. He ruled Assyria from 704 to 681 BCE (Kuhrt 195: 479). As was customary on the death of any Assyrian king, vassals rebelled in Babylonia, seeking their freedom, in rebellions which Sennacherib was able to overcome after nearly a year (Chavalas 2006: 342).

a. Sennacherib’s dealings with the Arabs

Sennacherib launched many campaigns in a host of different areas. However, he mentions Arabs only occasionally when they are involved in an event. For example, one of Sennacherib’s inscriptions tells us about the Merodach-baladan episode and how Sennacherib defeated him. In the course of this campaign Sennacherib conquered ‘the Elamite, Chaldean, and Aramean troops’ who are mentioned in the following inscription:

I raged up like a lion and became furious like the Deluge. With my merciless warriors, I set out for Kish against Marduk-apla-iddina (II) (Merodach-baladan). Moreover, he, (that) evildoer, saw the disturbance from afar and fear fell upon him. He abandoned all of his troops and fled to the land Guzummānu. I defeated Tannānu, together with the Elamite, Chaldean, and Aramean troops who had stood by him and had come to his aid, and I scattered his forces. I captured alive Adinu, a nephew of Marduk-apla-iddina (II) (Merodach-baladan), together with Basqānu, a brother of Iatiʾe, queen of the Arabs, along with their troops. I seized the chariots, wagons, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, (and) Bactrian camels that he had abandoned during the battle (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 213).
According to the above inscriptions, the king of Assyria fought with Merodach-baladan, the king of Babylon, and his Arab allies who were under the leadership of Baskânû. The inscription describes Baskânû as brother of the Arab queen Iati'81. However, this coalition was defeated and Sennacherib seized all the enemies’ weapons and horses which were left behind.

It is notable that the Arabs are mentioned in some detail in the above text, suggesting that they were an important partner for the king of Babylon at that time. Moreover, they contributed to changing the political situation by helping Babylon’s king against the Assyrian empire. In my opinion the Arabs did not lend their support randomly; rather, they understood the political aims of their neighbours and acted with the long view to saving themselves and their trade. Moreover, because Sennacherib’s inscriptions distinguish between Arabs and other groups, we may draw the following conclusions. First, Arabs spoke another language and had a different culture compared with other groups. Otherwise, the Assyrian inscriptions would have given all groups the same name. Second, the survival of the Arabic definite article al- in six loanwords in the Hebrew Bible82 indicates that a spoken proto-Arabic was being heard at least as early as the time of the formation of those Biblical texts. Livingstone (1997: 259-261) adduces as further evidence the word nāqah, meaning ‘female camel’, which has also been borrowed from Arabic, but in this case was used in Assyrian inscriptions, indicating how Arabic influenced the Assyrian language.

The inscription no. 312 (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 143) records the results of the campaign against Amkaruna, king of Hamah, and Hezekiah, the king of Jerusalem, neither of whom rendered tribute to Assyria. One significant impact of this battle was the defeat of Hezekiah and his subsequent loss of most of his territory. Arabs are mentioned in this inscription as being on the side of the Israelites, probably recognizing some economic and political advantage in this alignment.

81 This queen has been mentioned in another inscription see (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 130).
82 See A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Gesenius 1906: 38 f.)
I drew near to Amkaruna. The governors who had rebelled (committed sin) I slew with the sword. …, I brought out of Jerusalem and placed on the throne over them. My royal tribute I imposed upon him. As for Hezekiah, the Jew, who had not submitted to my yoke, 46 of his strong, walled cities and the cities of their environs, which were numberless, I bediged, I captured, I plundered, as booty I counted them. … that Hezekiah, the terrifying splendour of my royalty overcame him, and the Arabs and his picked troops whom he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal city, ran away (took leave) (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 143).  

A very fragmentary text mentions another Arab queen, one Te’elkhunu, and her brother Hazael the king of Arabs.

[... Teʾelḫu]nu, queen of the Arabs, in the middle of the desert [...] I took away [...] thousand camels from her. She [...] with Hazael. [Terror of doing battle with me o-ver-whelmed them. They abandoned their tents and fled for (their) lives [to the city ...] and the city Adummatu (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Sennacherib 035).

(As for) the cities Kapānu, [...] its secret place, (which is) in [...] (5´´) ... I carried] off [Teʾelḫunu, que]en of the Arabs, together with [her] god[s, ...] pappardilû-stones, pappar[mînu]-stone[s, ...] ḫaṣûru-wood, all types [of] aromatics, [...] and kings ... [... I destroyed, devastated, (and) burned with fire] those cities (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Sennacherib 035).

These two Arab leaders were defeated and forced to flee their tents in the face of Assyrian might. In addition, Sennacherib took with him Arab deities and Tabua who

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83 For the same story see Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Sennacherib 004, line 42, but the Arabs are not mentioned here.
84 See also Luckenbill, II, 1927: 158 text no. 358.
was a daughter of Te’elkhunu to Nineveh and applied heavy tribute upon Hazael and his sister Te’elkhunu. After this battle Te’elkhunu decided to leave her land and moved to the Assyrian lands. According to this text the location of Queen Te’elkhunu in this time has been determined as in the middle of the desert at Adummatu. The same text gives Adummatu as the location to which the Arabs fled, making it possible that this place was the central Arab power under the control of Te’elkhunu.

Assyrian records mention Hazael, the king of Arabia, who has already been noted above. According to K.A. Kitchen (1994: 237), Hazael was one of the rulers in north-west Arabia. He ruled Qedar from 690 to 676 BCE which means he was a contemporary of Sennacherib, but in his short reign he succeeded in having the statues of the Arab deities returned from Assyria. As we will see he sent valuable presents to Esarhaddon in order for the latter to agree to return the images of the Arab divinities to Arabia.

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85 Tabua is mentioned in Assyrian records in the following texts: Luckenbill, 1927: II, 518, 536, 940, 943. In addition, this study discusses the issue of the early stage of Tabua’s life. For more detail see section 4.3.1.

86 In Abbott’s article ‘Pre-Islamic Arab Queen’ Te'elkhunu was forced to inhabit Nineveh by Sennacherib after he conquered Babylon in 689 B.C. (Abbott 2006: 5).
b. Notes on Assyrian Inscriptions during the Sennacherib Period

One Assyrian policy which was of some significance and developed during this period was the deportation of the youths of Assyria’s enemies to Assyrian lands. When the Assyrians captured an area, they frequently took children from the royal family of that area and brought them up in the palace of the Assyrian king, in the hope that they would be loyal in the future. For example, Tabûa grew up in Assyria and was made queen of the Arabs (see inscription no. 518 - Luckenbill, 1927: II, 207; Chapter Four in this study). Another example which supports our idea is that of Bêl-ibni, son of a master-builder, who grew up in Sennacherib's palace and was made king of Akkad and Sumer (see inscription no. 263 - Luckenbill 1927: II, 132).

This group of people referred to as Arabs in the Assyrian inscriptions were not far from the global political sphere. They contributed to change in the political situation, demonstrating that they had reached a high enough level of civilization, enabling them to impose their will and have their say.

3.2.4 Esarhaddon

Esarhaddon managed to accomplish a great deal in his eleven-year reign (680-669 BCE). Peace was imposed upon most of the empire, Babylonia enjoyed peace and prosperity, and Egypt even became part of the Assyrian empire for a time. These accomplishments were accompanied, however, by more negative problems which posed a risk to the stability of the empire, including threats upon the king’s life. These were augmented through the king’s ill health, a possible reason for his fixation on omens and augurs. Sennacherib, Esarhaddon’s brother, posed a continual threat and the fact that the king had numerous sons increased the risk of future instability. Despite these problems, Esarhaddon ruled effectively and his effective succession policy meant the strife that blighted the end of his father’s reign was not repeated during his own (Chavalas 2006: 350).
a. Esarhaddon’s dealings with the Arabs

One of Esarhaddon’s inscriptions offers some information about the relationship between the Assyrian Empire and Arabs during Esarhaddon’s reign.

(As for) the city Adumutu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs, (iv 5) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city, with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him. (iv 10) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-qurumā, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him. (iv 15) I placed the lady Tabūa, who was raised in the palace of my father, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods. I added sixty-five camels (and) ten donkeys to the previous tribute and imposed (it) on him. Hazael died and I placed Iataʾ, his son, (iv 20) on his throne. I added ten minas of gold, one thousand choice stones, fifty camels, (and) one hundred bags of aromatics to the tribute of his father and imposed (it) on him. Later, Uabu, to exercise kingship, incited all of the Arabs to rebel against Iataʾ (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001).

This inscription begins by rehearsing the event 87 which happened in Sennacherib’s time when he conquered Adummatu and took Arab deities and the queen of the Arabs, Tabua, to his royal city Nineveh. Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh with his gifts and kissed Esarhaddon’s feet, begging him to return the Arab divinities. Esarhaddon acceded to this request, but not before inscribing his name and that of his Assyrian god upon them. Esarhaddon also took Tabūa, daughter of Teʾelkhunu, who grew up in Sennacherib’s palace as an Arab queen.

87 This event is also mentioned in another three inscriptions (see Luckenbill, 1927: II, 536, 551, 552).
From this context one can speculate that there was a king of the Arabs, Hazael, and there was a queen of the Arabs, Tabûa. Looking forward we can see that Iata’ was Hazael’s son and his successor, whereas Tabûa disappears from the Assyrian inscriptions, leaving us with no idea about her fate and who her successor was. We may imagine that as she grew up in Sennachrib’s palace and followed Assyrian rules, there was no longer any need to mention her in Assyrian inscriptions.

On the other hand, Esarhaddon imposed additional tribute upon Hazael and let him return to this land with the Arab deities. It is noteworthy that in the same inscription Iata’, son of Hazael, is mentioned as successor to his father. Iata’ received aid from the Assyrian king to quell an Arab revolution against him. The context suggests Iata’ had authority over all Arabs because he faced rebellion from them and the Assyrian army subdued ‘all of the Arabs’. It is not certain whether his authority was over the political or commercial domain.

The description of the Arab gifts as of value provides evidence that they had become rich through trade. Also, the Assyrians customarily imposed heavy tribute upon the Arabs, but what concerns us here are the reasons for the Arab revolt against Iata’. We can suggest three possibilities. First, as mentioned above, Arabs rebelled against Iata’ because they wanted to be free of his authority. Second, according to Assyrian inscriptions, Arabs were involved several times in rebellions against the Assyrian kingdom, and in this situation Iata’ represented the Assyrian regime. The Arabs did not look favourably upon the Assyrian regime, so they used any opportunity to change their governors. Third, because the Assyrians applied heavy tribute upon all their provinces, especially on the Arab territory, it is logical that Arabs would revolt against such an oppressive regime.

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88 Iata’ is mentioned in Luckenbill, II, text no.518, 536, 551, 552. Also, Uat’ is mentioned in Pritchard, 1969: 298. Yauta is mentioned in Kitchen’s Arab kings list; see Kitchen, 1994: 237.
89 Tabûa has been mention in the following Assyrian inscriptions (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 518, 436,940, and 943) but all of them rehearsing the same story.
A very fragmentary inscription from Esarhaddon’s period tells us that Arabs brought camels to the king of Assyria. These camels may have been used in battle between Assyria and Egypt. However, the import of this inscription seems to be that relations between Arabs and the king of Assyria were good, because they offered these camels to the king. In addition, Marduk is also called ‘the great lord’ in this inscription because he saved the Assyrian army. The result of the battle is not mentioned.

In accordance with the command of the god Aššur, my lord, it occurred to me and my heart [prompted me] (and thus) I collected camels from all of the Arab kings [and loaded them with [water skins (and) water containers]. I advanced twenty leagues distance, a journey of fifteen days, over [difficult] sand dunes, [where (one is always) thirsty]. I went four leagues distance (through terrain full of) alum, mušu-stones, (and) [...]. (rev. 5) I trampled over four leagues distance, a journey of two days, (through terrain full of) two-headed snakes ... [...] whose venom] is deadly and I crossed over four leagues distance, a journey of two [days] (through terrain full of) flying green [dragonflies. [...] four leagues distance, a journey of two d[ays ...] ... I advanced sixteen leagues distance, a journey of eight days [...] ... very much. The god Marduk, the great lord, came to my aid [...] (rev. 10) he revived my troops. Twenty days (and) seven [...] of the border of Egypt[pt], I stayed overnight. [...] from the city Mig[dol] to [Memphis ...] I advanced a distance of forty leagues [...] that terrain is like [gazelle]-tooth stone [...] (rev. 15) like the head of an arrow [...] blood and gore ... [...] a dangerous enemy, together with [...] to the city Ish[u][ri ...] [...] (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 034).

Another fragmentary inscription, dating from the reign of Esarhaddon, mentions Arabs and their queen. An unnamed Arabian queen may be paying tribute to the Assyrian king. Unfortunately, this inscription does not help us to discover more information about who this queen was and what her people did.

...by causing (them) to tread the ramp (bridge)... Their [heavy] tribute... the city of Kapânu and... the place of her treasure... [queen of Arabia, together with her gods]... UD-ASH-stones...
stones… all kinds of shrubs (herbs)… And kings… I carried off, those cities… in Nineveh… alabaster, limestone… beams of cypress… silver, copper, [bronze (?)… Booty… (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 222).

This is the last mention of Arabs in inscriptions from Esarhaddon’s reign.

### 3.2.5 Ashurbanipal

After Esarhaddon died, Ashurbanipal became king of Assyria. He is regarded as the last great king of the Assyrian Empire. He ruled for over thirty years, although the date of his death is uncertain. Few texts from the later part of his reign have survived and they do not mention the exact date of his death (Chavalas 2006: 360). According to Kuhrt (1995: 470), his reign lasted from 668 to 631 or 627 BCE. A few years into his reign, Ashurbanipal faced internal rebellion, which was led by his elder brother and this rebellion became a violent war. Even though Ashurbanipal was victorious, this event was one of the most important reasons for the downfall of Assyria. Moreover, Babylon was by this time flourishing and we have seen that Arabs tended to support the internal rebellions in the south against Assyria.

#### a. Ashurbanipal’s dealings with the Arabs

The inscriptions from Ashurbanipal’s reign are ambiguous with regard to his relations with the Arabs. Ashurbanipal dealt with the Arabs because they played a significant role in the south-east of Assyria as well as in north Arabia. But the problem here is that the sources mentioning the events between Arabs and Ashurbanipal are conflictual and difficult to follow, so that they must be used with great care (Retsö 2003: 161).

According to Ashurbanipal’s inscription no. 817 (Luckenbill 1927, II, 313f.), he led his army to fight the king of the Arabs, Uaite’, because Uaite’ had aided Shamash-

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90According to Kitchen, Uaite’ ruled the Arabs from 676-652 BCE.
shuma-ukin, the hostile brother of Ashurbanipal. Also, the king of the Arabs did not pay the tribute which had been imposed upon him by Ashurbanipal.

In my ninth campaign I mustered my armies; against Uaite', king of Arabia, I took the straight road. Violating (lit. sinning against) the oath (sworn) to me and not remembering (lit. guarding) the good I had done him, he cast off the yoke of my sovereignty, which Assur had laid upon him, (commanding) that he should bear my yoke. He kept his feet (from coming) to greet me and held up the payment of his heavy tribute. Like Elam, he listened to the rebellious word(s) of Akkad and did not keep (lit. guard) the oath (sworn) tome. Me, Assurbanipal, the king, the holy priest, the prayerful servant (of god), the creature (creation) of Assur’s hand, forsook and Abiate’ (and) Aimu, son(s) of Têri (v. Têri), he gave troops and sent (them) to the aid of Shamash-shum-ukîn, my hostile brother. He came to an agreement with him, roused the people of Arabia to revolt with him (i.e., Shamash-shum-ukîn) and plundered the peoples whom Assur, Ishtar and the greet gods had given me to rule over, and had intrusted to my hand.

That the Arabs stood with Shamash-shuma-ukin against Ashurbanipal suggests they might have received good treatment from Shamash-shuma-ukin, but they may also have sought to be free from the heavy tribute imposed upon them by Assyria. We can assume that the Arabs’ loyalty was with the Babylonian rulers. Moreover, another fact we can obtain from this inscription is that the Arabs here were nomads who lived in tents, so it is possible that the word ‘Arabs’ here actually indicates bedouin. But we have to bear in mind that these groups of people are assumed to be Qedarites, already known to be nomads and described in the Old Testament as bedouin who live in tents. However, Arabs revolted against Ashurbanipal and started to loot Assyrian territories and Ashurbanipal launched this campaign against them in response. This inscription does not record the result of that campaign, which can, however, be found in another text.

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91 He was Esarhaddon’s eldest son and the governor of Babylon during his father’s reign. He was waiting to be appointed as king after his father’s death, but Esarhaddon selected his younger son Ashurbanipal to be king. Ashurbanipal carried on dealing with his brother as vassal king while Shamash-shuma-ukin gathered allies to revolt against his brother (Leick 1999: 147f.).

92 ‘I am dark, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Qedar, as the curtains of Solomon. Look not upon me, because I am black’ (Song 1: 5)
In the following inscription (no. 818 - Luckenbill, 1927: II, 313), we find the result of Ashurbanipal’s campaign against the Arabs. It tells us about the campaign led by Ashurbanipal against them in Edom, near Iabrud (Retsö 2003: 166). Ashurbanipal defeated the Arabs and burned their tents, but the king of the Arabs, Uaite’, fled to the land of Nabaite.

At the command of Assur and Ishtar, my armies (I mustered). In the girâ of the cities of Arzailu (and) Hiratâ-kasai, in Udume’ (Edom), in the pass of Iabrud, in Bit-Ammani, in the district of Haurina, in Moab, in Sa'arri, in Hargê, in the district of Subiti, I slew many of his warriors, a decisive (lit. not measurable) defeat I inflicted upon him. All the people of Arabia who had gone forth with him I cut down with sword. But he made his escape before the mighty weapons of Assur and fled to distant (parts). The houses of the plain, the tents, their dwellings, I set on fire and burned them. Uaite’, --evil befell him and he fled alone to the land of Nabaite.

In one of Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions Abiate’ is said to have fought against Ashurbanipal in coalition with others including Natnu the king of Nabitu:

Trusting in Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bêl, Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, the queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Arbela, Urta, Nergal (and) Nusku. Natnu, king of the land of Nabitu, whose place is a far off, into whose presence Uaite’ had fled, heard of the power of Assur, who supported me, (and) although he never had sent his messenger to the kings, my fathers, and had not greeted their majesties, impelled by fear of the conquering arms of Assur, he greeted my majesty. As for Abiate’, son of Te’ri, whose thoughts were not good, who did not keep the oath of the great gods, he plotted rebellion against me and made common cause with Natnu, king of Nabitu. They mustered their armies for a hostile (lit., evil) attack against my border (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315, text no. 822).

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93 Iabrud, also Yabrud, is located 80 km. to the north of Damascus.
This inscription informs us that the Arab king Abiate' and Natnu the king of Nabitu created a coalition against Ashurbanipal. The important point for the present study is that the Arab king Abiate' attacked the Assyrian borderland with his army in company with Natnu the king of Nabitu, which implies that the Qedarites at that time started to threaten Assyria and it also reflects how the Assyrian Empire had become weak during the reign of Ashurbanipal, the last king of the Assyrian Empire, perhaps because during that time the Assyrian military was involved in a war against Elam (Eph'al 1982: 144).

In addition, inscription no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) mentions the quick response on the part of Ashurbanipal against the Arabs’ attack on his western border. According to this text, Ashurbanipal launched his forces along the short and dangerous route during the high inundation of the Tigris and Euphrates in order to pursue Abiate' and the Arab king Uaite'. This inscription further informs us that Ashurbanipal defeated a group of Ishmaelites, who worshipped Atarsamain and lived in the desert where there were no wild beasts. In addition, Ashurbanipal defeated the Nabaitai, who raised camels and had innumerable cattle, seizing their animals as booty before returning victorious to his capital city:

...from Nineveh, the beloved city of Ishtar, spouse of Enlil, they continued their pursuit of Uaite’, king of Arabia, and Abiate’ who had come on with the forces of Nabaitu. In Simanu, the month of Sin, the first and foremost son of Enlil, the twentieth day, (the day of) the procession of Bêlit of Babylon, the honoured among the great gods, I departed from the city of Hadattâ. In Laribda, a station (surrounded) with a wall of kumkku stones, I pitched my camp, beside the cisterns of water. My soldiers dug for water (to quench) their thirst, then marched on, going over a parched and thirsty stretch, to Hurarina. Between the cities of Iarki and Asalla, in the desert, a far off place, where there are no wild beasts (lit., beasts of the plain) and (where) birds of heaven build no nests, I defeated the Isamme', the tribe of the god Atarsamain, and the Nabaitai (Nabataeans[?]). People, asses, camels and sheep in countless numbers, I took from them as booty. For a stretch of 8

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94 This word could refer to the Nabataeans (see section 4.4).
berê ("double-hours") my armies marched victoriously. They returned in safety, and in Asalla they drank their fill of water (lit., to satiety) (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316, text no. 823).

Inscription no. 825 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317) confirms two facts: first, that Abiate' was definitely the king of Qedar; and second, that his father’s name was Te'ri:

In Abu, the month of the bow-star, of the valiant daughter of Sin, the third day, the rest day of the king of the gods, Marduk, I departed from Damascus. A stretch of 6 beru (double-hours) I advanced, (marching) all night long, and came to Huhluliti. On Mount Hukkurina, a steep mountain, I came up with the tribe of Abiate', son of Te'ri of Kidri (Qedar), and defeated and despoiled him.

While this inscription refers to Abiate' as king of Qedar, inscription no. 823 mentions Uaite' as king of the Arabs, while he is well known among scholars as king of Qedar (Eph'al 1982: 144; Kitchen 1994: 237).

Inscription no. 826 records the ultimate fate of Abiate' and his brother Aimu, both sons of Te'ri, when they were taken captive to Nineveh:

Abiate' (and) Aimu, sons of Te'ri, my hands captured alive. At command of Assur and Ishtar, in the midst of (the) battle, I bound them hand and foot with iron fetters, and, with the plunder of their land, carried them off to Assyria (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317).

During Ashurbanipal’s reign, another king of the Arabs appeared as successor of Uaite'; this was Ammu-ladi, but the king of Assyria imposed upon him a heavy penalty because, as the inscription states, he:

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95 According to Ashurbanipal’s inscription, this king was the king of Qedar. However, he does not appear among Kitchen’s list of the Qedarite kings (Kitchen 1994: 167).
Ammu-ladi, however, king of Qedar rose to fight the kings of the Westland whom Ashur, Ishtar and the (other) great gods, have given me as my property. Upon a trust (-inspiring) oracle (given by) Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bel, Nebo, the Ishtar of Nineveh the queen of Kidmuri—the Ishtar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal (and) Nusku, I inflicted a defeat upon him. They seized him alive and also Adia, the wife of Uaite' king of Arabia, and brought (them) to me (Pritchard, 1969: 298).

Various facts can be deduced from this text. First, the resurgence of internal disturbances within the Assyrian Empire during Ashurbanipal’s reign resulted in Assyria’s vassals trying to break free from Assyrian authority, as we now see Arabs fighting against Assyria in a bid for freedom. Second, even if Ammu-ladi was the king of the Arabs, there was also a queen named Adia who was the wife of Uaite’. This woman had authority over her people, as is demonstrated by a fragmentary Assyrian inscription which calls her ‘Adia queen of Arabs’. The text mentions the success of Ashurbanipal against his enemies; he took Adia captive and put her as guard of Nineveh’s gate like a dog. Finally, we can see in Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions some repetition of events which took place during his predecessors’ reigns with regard to the manner with which they dealt with Arabs. These do not need to be repeated.

Conclusion

Relations between Assyria and the Arabs commenced when the Assyrian Empire embarked on its expansionist policy. Scholars differ on the question of how the state of Assyria began to expand. Various opinions have been reviewed and it has been suggested that neither the lack of security that surrounded Assyria at the beginning of the second millennium, nor the militaristic structure of Assyrian society were the only reasons for Assyrian state expansion. Economic motivation can also be assumed to have been an important factor in Assyrian expansion.

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96 One of the Arab queens who is mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions but not in Kitchen’s list of Arab kings and queens (Ibid).
97 According to Pritchard, Adia was one of the prisoners who were taken to Nineveh. Also, in the same text, lines 26-30, Adia appears with the title ‘queen of Arabs’ (Pritchard, 1969: 298).
Tiglath-Pileser III also dealt with groups of Ishmaelites, as is mentioned in his stela (Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 288), such as Masa'ai, Temai, Sab'ai, Haiapai and Badanai. Because they were mentioned together, it is assumed that all of them were in north Arabia. This could be an indication that Sabaeans were in north Arabia at that time.

Sargon’s inscriptions mention Arabs and Sabaeans living side-by-side in the north of Arabia. Inscription no. 18 (Luckenbill, 1927: II, 7f.) tells us about Sargon receiving tribute from Egypt, Arabs and Sabaeans.

> From Pir'u, king of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, It'amra, the Sabaean, the kings of the seacoast and desert, I received gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple(?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute. [I defeated] Mitâ, king of Muski, in his province. The cities of Harrua and Ushnanis, fortresses of the land of Kue, which he had held by force since distant days I restored to their (former) status *(lit. place)*.

This means that at that time the Assyrian Empire controlled all the territories from Mesopotamia to the border of Egypt, which were occupied by Arabs and Sabaeans. The distinction between Arabs and Sabaeans could be explained either by the fact that they had different languages and cultures, or by suggesting that ‘Arabs’ here means ‘nomads’.

Also, from Sennacherib’s inscription no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) we find that he similarly distinguishes between Arabs and Nabaitai⁹⁸. We have attempted to provide some evidence that Arabic existed before that time, noting how some Arabic words have been borrowed into Hebrew and Assyrian. Ashurbanipal inscriptions describe Arabs as bedouin living in tents. This could help us to understand the meaning of the term ‘Arab’ as it was used at that time.

The political attitudes of the Arabs are recorded in Assyrian inscriptions as they were often objecting to the Assyrian regime. We have seen them in a coalition against Assyria in the Levant to maintain their trading position. Sometimes they rebelled against

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⁹⁸ In my opinion this word could refer to Nabataeans. However, for the discussion of this matter see section 4.4.
the Assyrian regime in order to gain freedom from heavy tribute which had been imposed upon them by the Assyrian kings. Occasionally, however, we see Arabs supporting the Assyrian Empire; for example, when Arabs guarded Assyria’s border with Egypt during Tiglath-Pileser III’s reign. Also, Arabs provided camels to Esarhaddon in his battle against Egypt.

The internal political situation in Arab society was unclear, as more than one king or queen was contemporary with another. For instance, Te’elkhunu, Hazael, Iata’, and Tabûa, but also Adia, were contemporary with Ammu-ladi. This could be explained by the existence of more than one Arab state, but it is noteworthy that Arab society reached high enough levels of civilization to appoint a woman to be their ruler. A community as advanced in thinking as this would have had a sophisticated kind of social structure, allowing women to occupy the highest position in society.
3.3 The Neo-Babylonian Period (626-539 BCE)

Architecture was an important aspect of the Neo-Babylonian state, as is clear from the amazing buildings it has left to posterity. Most Babylonian inscriptions come from monumental buildings and temples and they provide considerable information on the monarch’s ideology with regard to society and religion (Chavalas 2006: 382). But Babylonian inscriptions do not provide us with as much information about historical events concerning Arabs as do the Assyrian inscriptions.

3.3.1 Nebuchadnezzar II

Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BCE) (Chavalas 2006: 386) was the son and successor of Nabopolassar who ruled over Babylonia. The history of Nebuchadnezzar II’s lengthy reign is very rich in sources and he is regarded as one of the greatest monarchs of Mesopotamia (Chavalas 2006: 386). His era provides us with numerous building inscriptions, as well as economic and administrative texts.

The greatest success at that time was the Babylonian victory over Egypt at Carchemish in 605 BCE. This battle resulted in Syria and the Mediterranean coast, including Judah, being brought under Babylonian control (Retsö 2003: 176). However, the course of events changed when Necho II, the Pharaoh of Egypt, ascended to the Egyptian throne because of his success in defeating the king of Babylonia when the latter attempted to conquer Egypt in 601 BCE. As a consequence of this event, most of the Levantine states changed sides and acknowledged Egyptian supremacy (Retsö 2003: 176). After two years, Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Egypt and gained the upper hand over all the Levantine states (Leick 1999: 119). From 599 to 598 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar II started his military operations from Damascus against the Arabs. According to Retsö (2003: 177), Nebuchadnezzar II’s aim was the pacification of the desert, which included the Arabs (Retsö 2003: 177).
a. Nebuchadnezzar II’s dealings with the Arabs

In the Book of Jeremiah (49: 28-33)\(^99\) we read how Nebuchadnezzar conquered Qedar and caused the people to become vassals of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar dealt with Qedar harshly in the same way as he dealt with the Judaeans and all the inhabitants of the Near East.

Al-Ṭabarī (I, 617) mentions that Nebuchadnezzar transferred some groups of Arabs to an area called al-Anbār, north of present-day al-Falūja; this event is transmitted by Hishām ibn al-Kalbī. Al-Ṭabarī also mentions Nebuchadnezzar’s campaign against the Arabs in 599 BCE, when Nebuchadnezzar conquered their land and defeated them. According to Hisham ibn al-Kalbī, a certain Barakhyā ibn Hananyā said:

I was told by god: Go to Bukht Nussur (Nebuchadnezzar) and command him to raid the Arabs, whose houses have no locks, nor gates. Let him conquer their land with soldiers, slay their fighting men, and despoil their wealth. Tell him that they do not believe in me, that they have taken other deities, and that they deny my prophets and messengers (al-Ṭabarī: I, 671).

As in the Jeremiah passage, this text similarly describes the Arabs as living in houses without locks or gates. They could be Qedarites because this tribe was contemporary with

\(^{99}\) Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated. Thus says the Lord: Rise up, advance against Kedar! Destroy the people of the east! 29 Take their tents and their flocks, their curtains and all their goods; carry off their camels for yourselves, and a cry shall go up: Terror is all around!’ 30 Flee, wander far away, hide in deep places, O inhabitants of Hazor! Says the Lord. For king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has made a plan against you and formed a purpose against you. 31 Rise up, advance against a nation at ease, that lives secure, says the Lord, that has no gates or bars, that lives alone. 32 Their camels shall become booty, their herds of cattle a spoil. I will scatter to every wind those who have shaven temples, and I will bring calamity against them from every side, says the Lord. 33 Hazor shall become a lair of jackals, an everlasting waste; no one shall live there, nor shall anyone settle in it.
the Neo-Babylonians and they are also described in the Song of Songs as Bedouin, as we mentioned previously.

Overall, most of the information about this king concerns the relationship between Judah and Babylon, while as we have seen above the sources are limited in regards of the relationship between this king and the Arabs (Retsö 2003: 176-180). However, Nebuchadnezzar II is well known for his attack against Jerusalem and the exclusion of the Judaeans from Jerusalem (Chavalas 2006: 386).

3.3.2 Nabonidus

Nabonidus reigned as king over Babylonia from 555 to 539 BCE. His background is, not however, very clear (Chavalas 2006: 388). He had no direct relationship with the royal family in Babylonia. However, Kuhrt (1995: 597) suggested that the experience of Nabonidus as a soldier emboldened him to seize the throne. The fact is that the manner in which Nabonidus ascended the Babylonian throne and his ten-year residence in the Arabian oasis of Tayma both made him one of the most famous figures throughout the history of Mesopotamia (ibid.). But the end of this king came with his defeat at the hands of the Persian king, Cyrus (II) the Great (559-530 BCE) (Kuhrt 1995: 598).

a. Nabonidus in Tayma

The main sources for Nabonidus’s reign can be divided into three: the royal chronicle, the Nabonidus Chronicle, and the Harran inscriptions. The third of these were written during the last ten years of Nabonidus’s life, and there are copies of the royal inscriptions and the Nabonidus chronicle which have survived from the Seleucid period, but we will omit discussion of these two sources because they do not mention the Arabs. The inscriptions of Harran tell us that Nabonidus left Babylon and lived in the cities of Tayma, Dedan, Fadak, Khaybar, Yad’, and Yathrib, all cities in the Hejaz, over a period which lasted ten years (Retsö 2003: 182).
According to the inscriptions, Nabonidus spent ten years of his reign in Tayma (Kuhrt 1995: 600). Tayma is an important oasis in the north of the Arabian Peninsula.\textsuperscript{100} It was one of the ancient Arab caravan cities and was located on the trade route between the Hejaz and Syria (al-Hamawi 1956: II, 67). The sojourn of the last king of the Neo-Babylonian Emperor in the north of Arabia is a controversial issue because he remained there for more than half of his seventeen-year reign, away from his capital\textsuperscript{101}.

**The Date of Nabonidus’s Departure to Tayma**

Because of the lack of sources, scholars have disagreed about the specific date of Nabonidus’s arrival in Tayma, whether it was in his third regnal year or between years four and six of his reign. It is even difficult to determine the date of his return to his capital city.\textsuperscript{102}

Beaulieu argued that Nabonidus started all his campaigns and his journey to Tayma immediately after he ascended the throne. This seems especially likely when it is considered that Babylonia had not previously experienced such extraordinary rebellions, which had terrified Nabonidus (Beaulieu 1995: 974). But we will see below that Nabonidus left his capital to quell a revolt during the first year of his reign. Eph'al (1982: 187) tends to the view that Nabonidus started his journey to Tayma in his third year. Al-Said (2000: 2, n. 3) discusses issues relating to the time of Nabonidus’s departure from Babylon to Tayma and concludes that he arrived in Tayma in the third year of his reign.

\textsuperscript{100}Al-Hamdani (1974: 330) mentions another Tayma, located in western Iraq. He says it had very many palms and a mountain, but adds, ‘It is not the famous Tayma.’ For further details about Tayma see section 5.1.

\textsuperscript{101}For more details see section 5.1.

\textsuperscript{102}For further information, see Lambert 1972: 54; Smith 1975: 108f.; Beaulieu 1989: 149-160.
b. Nabonidus’s dealings with the Arabs

According to the Harran inscriptions, Nabonidus was involved with the Arabs, a relationship which can be divided into two phases. In the first phase he dealt with the Arabs peacefully, but in the second phase less so, when he conquered Tayma (Gadd 1958: 59).

Nabonidus established a good relationship with the Arabs at the beginning of his reign, especially with nomadic groups in the Syro-Arabian desert, where nomads controlled the trade route (Eph'al 1982: 181f.). A very fragmentary inscription mentions Nabonidus dealing with the Arabs in this period. In this text we see Arabs seeking peace, together with the kings of Egypt and Media. This is noteworthy as it could be written to describe the situation before the Arabs’ land had been conquered by the Babylonian army; all the Arabs, as well as Egypt and Media, sent messengers to ask the king of Babylonia for the peace, as the Harran text says:

1:38 in peace they brought before me. At the word (39) of Sin also I Ištar, lady of battle, without whom hostility and peace. (40) exist not in the land, and weapon. (41) is not forged, her hand(s) over them. (42) she crossed(?) and the king(s) of the land(?) of Egypt, the city of the Medes, (43) the land of the Arabs, and all the kings (who were) hostile, for (44) peace and good relations sent (messengers) (45) before me. People of the land of the Arabs, who weapons (46)… of the land of Akkad(47) and… for (48) plunder and capture of property they… (Gadd 1958: 59)

The inscription of Jabal Ghunaym informs us of a campaign against Dedan the war against Dedan, an event which took place in the sixth century BCE. This event can be identified with Nabonidus’s inscriptions which mention his actions in northwestern Arabia (Retsö 2003: 184).

103 F.V. Winnett and W.L. Reed visited north Arabia and copied a considerable number of inscriptions from the summit of Jabal Ghunaym northeast of Tayma, publishing their findings under the title Ancient records from North Arabia (1970).

104 Inscription no. 21; see also texts nos. 20, 22 (Winnett, 1970: 103).
Conclusion

It seems that Nabonidus ascended the Babylonian throne at a difficult time. First of all, his people saw him as a usurper of the Babylonian throne, which led to revolts breaking out in his country. Then, in addition, famine befell Babylonian cities. All these issues motivated Nabonidus to be active and mobile in quelling rebellions, fighting with his enemies, and finding additional economic resources to help his country.

As Nabonidus expanded his domains westward, he may have wanted to transfer his capital city to Tayma because of its commercially favourable location and because it offered a strategic base from which to conquer southern Arabia. This seems to be supported from the Harran inscriptions’ mention of Nabonidus’s wandering in the Hejaz area, reaching as far south as Yathrib (Gadd 1958: 80-84). We know that he conquered the Hejaz, but we have no idea why he did not extend his conquests into southern Arabia.

The reason for Nabonidus’s removal to Tayma remains one of the most complex and captivating questions in the history of the ancient Near East\(^\text{105}\) (Retsö 2003: 182) and it can only be hoped that further light will be shed on the matter as a result of future excavations.

\(^{105}\) For more details see 5.1
3.4 The Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BCE)

The Achaemenid Empire was the biggest and earliest Persian Empire, which came to an end in the confrontation with Alexander the Great’s eastern conquests in 334-323 BCE. This powerful Persian Empire gained its name, Achaemenid, from the royal family’s name and extended from Egypt to Central Asia. In fact, we do not have very much information about the relationship between the Achaemenids and the Arabs because of the shortage of sources. The only information we do have about this relationship comes from the reign of Cambyses II (Chavalas 2006: 407).

3.4.1 Cambyses II’s dealings with the Arabs

Cambyses II ascended the Persian throne after his father Cyrus II the Great died in battle in 530 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 648). Once he became king, he started military operations to fulfil his father’s wishes and in 525 BCE embarked upon conquering Egypt, a mission in which he succeeded through military victories. Libya and Cyrenaica acknowledged the supremacy of Cambyses II without the application of force, following the fall of the Egyptian capital (Kuhrt 1995: 662).

Cambyses established good relations with the Arabs (Hitti 2002: 39) because the Arabs in north Arabia had knowledge of how water could be stored and they could provide him with camels to cross the desert. According to Herodotus, Cambyses II sent his messenger to the king of the Arabians and asked him for help guiding his troops through the desert (Herodotus 3: 4).

Herodotus' text mentions that Cambyses II begged for the Arabs’ aid, which can be explained by his wish not to enter into conflict with them because they held an important position in north Arabia. Also, his primary concern at this time was conquering Egypt.

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106 The Egyptian pharaoh contemporary with Cambyses II was Psammetichus II from the twenty-sixth Dynasty. He had ascended the Egyptian throne only a few months before Cambyses II conquered Egypt in 525 BCE (Kuhrt 1995: 662; Leick 1999: 43).
Moreover, Arabs, especially Qedarites,\textsuperscript{107} played a significant role in Lower Egypt as guardians of the Egyptian frontier during the Persian period. This being so, Han-Ilat’s shrine at Tell El-Maskhuta would have been established in the late sixth or early fifth century BCE to serve the religious needs of the Qedarite garrison (Rabinowitz 1956: 9). The palaeography of the Aramaic inscriptions lends a late Persian date to the Tell El-Maskhuta pieces\textsuperscript{108} (Dumbrell 1971: 33f.).

This means that Qedar maintained a good relationship with the Persian Empire and also reflects the benefits Qedar received from engaging with the Persians.

\textsuperscript{107} For Qedar and their appearance in Tell El-Maskhuta, see section 4.3.5.
\textsuperscript{108} See figures no. 5.
Figure no. 3 Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III in the British Museum
Chapter Four:
The groups of nomads in north Arabia

4.1 The Arabs as seen through analysis of their tributes as described in Assyrian inscriptions

4.2 The sources for Qedarite history
   4.2.1 Qedarites in biblical texts
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4.3 Qedar
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   4.6.2 The Queen of Sheba and her visit to king Solomon
Chapter Four

The groups of nomads in north Arabia

Biblical texts and Assyrian inscriptions tell us that Arab groups inhabited the north Arabian Peninsula from the eighth century BCE. While Genesis 25: 1-3 contains a list of the sons of Keturah and Abraham, who lived in north Arabia,¹⁰⁹ I Chron. 1: 29-31 offers a list of Ishmael’s sons, viz: Nebaioth, Qedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. These are the names of known groups of people who lived in the north of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, similar names are found in Assyrian inscriptions referring to inhabitants of north Arabia, e.g. Mas’ai, Temai, Sab’ai, Haiapai, and Badanai (Lawson Younger in Context of Scripture II, 288)¹¹⁰.

In the present section we shall discuss some Arab groups who lived in the north Arabian Peninsula, paying particular attention to specific groups such as Qedarites, Nebaioth, Massa’ and Sheba.

4.2 The Arabs as seen through analysis of their tributes as described in Assyrian inscriptions

Throughout history the Arabian Peninsula has played a significant role as a bridge between centres of civilization in the West and East. On account of the unique location of the peninsula at the meeting-point of three continents, the people who lived there became engaged in commercial transportation and trade (Eph'al 1982: 83; Winnett and Reed 1970: 22; Musil 1926: 28). In fact, there were two main roads crossing the Arabian Peninsula (see figure no. 4), the first linking the southern border from Yemen with the

¹⁰⁹ See section 3.2.a.
¹¹⁰ See section 3.2.1.a
north in Palestine and the second extending from the Arabian Gulf and running into Mesopotamia before turning to Syria. The products from north-west Arabia and Palestine on the one hand and the goods from the Indian Ocean on the other hand were carried along these two roads (Hitti 2002: 14).

With this background, the purpose of this short introduction is to describe how trade played a significant role in the life of the people who lived in the Arabian Peninsula during pre-Islamic times and to emphasize that the bedouin of the Arabian Peninsula were involved in commercial transportation, as a result of which it naturally came about that each tribe or group of people living together became expert in leading caravans along specific roads. So, for example, the tribes who lived in Yathrib had knowledge by experience of leading caravans from south to north or in the opposite direction.

It seems reasonable to speculate that the different markets of the Arabs inhabiting places along the trade roads were full of goods being transported across their land, so that, for instance, markets of groups of people living on the road between Yemen and Palestine would be full of spices, frankincense and myrrh. Cooke (1936: 304) wrote: ‘These spices would be brought from south Arabia rather than from Damascus,’ which meant that the road which linked north Arabia with the south became famous as the spice road. We may speculate further that if a group of people were asked to pay tribute, they would pay it out of the wealth they had amassed or, in other words, from the products of their markets.
Figure no. 4 Major ancient routes and Caravan cities
In the following pages we will discuss the Arabs’ tribute offerings as they are found described in Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions in an attempt to distinguish between these Arab groups on the basis of their wealth and the kinds of goods they possessed. By so doing we may be able to determine whether or not these Arab groups inhabited the same places and we will learn whether all of the nomads in the north of Arabia occupied themselves in transporting the same kinds of goods or whether they dealt in different items, indicating that they lived near different trade routes. Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions do frequently mention tribute received from Arabs, as mentioned below. Although the Assyrian inscriptions do not unfortunately distinguish between the Arab groups who paid tribute, they do more fortunately mention the components of those tributary offerings.

A fact to be borne in mind is that the term ‘Arab’ is employed in Assyrian inscriptions as a collective name for all nomadic groups living in north Arabia (Eph'al 1982: 82), while ‘Qedar’ as a tribal name is used in Assyrian records on one occasion during Tiglath-Pileser III’s reign (744-727 BCE) (Levine 1972: 19; Lawson Younger in Context of Scripture II, 287). Thereafter, the name ‘Qedar’ disappears from Assyrian records until Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions111 (668-631 or 627 BCE) (Kuhrt 1995: 479). We will study the Arab tributes mentioned in Assyrian records in an attempt to discover any reference to Qedar, and to determine their dwelling place and their activities.

If we begin with Tiglath-Pileser III, according to one of his inscriptions (Lawson Younger in Context of Scripture II, 285; also see text no. 772 in Luckenbill, I, 1926: 276), Tiglath-Pileser received tribute from the Arab queen Zabiba. The components of her tribute seem most unusual from an Arab source because they included ‘gold, silver, lead, iron, elephant hides, ivory, coloured (woollen) garments, linen garments, blue and purple wool, maple, boxwood, all kinds of precious royal treasure, fat (?) lambs, whose wool was purple in colour… winged birds of heaven, whose wings were blue in colour…

horses, mules, cattle, sheep, camels, female camels’. It is a fact that most Arab tributes contained camels, as we will see in the course of this study. The notable feature of this record is that camels are mentioned at the end of this list of Zabiba’s valuable tribute, the possible implication being that Zabiba was rich and her tribute was more valuable than mere camels. We may with some probability speculate about the original sources of Zabiba’s tribute. The purple wool could have come from Phoenicia, which was famous for its textile dyes (Moscati 1959: 179), while the elephant hides might have come from Egypt. Moreover, herbs, frankincense, and myrrh are absent from this tribute, which suggests that the territory of this Arab queen was nearer to the Mediterranean, or on a road that ran from the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia rather than near other roads such as the road linking south and north Arabia.

However, Eph'al (1982: 82 f.) observed that during Zabiba’s era the term ‘Arab’ was used as a collective name and Zabiba’s group might not necessarily have been Qedarites. In contrast, Abbott (1941: 4) suggested that Zabiba’s land could have been in Adummatu, and we will indeed see that Qedar’s fortress was at Adummatu. In addition, a Neo-Assyrian stela discovered in Iran refers to Zabiba’s tribute and this inscription also mentions Qedar in the second line in the following words: ‘the kings of Ḫatti, the Arameans whom I supplanted, of the setting sun, Qedar, Aribi……Zabiba, queen of Arabia tribute and gifts, silver, gold, tin, iron, elephant hide, ivory, blue purple and red purple garments, trimmed linen garments, dromedaries, she-camels, I imposed upon them’. (Levine 1972: 19), which suggests that Qedar existed during Tiglath-Pileser III’s era and could have been controlled by Zabiba, queen of the Arabs. Moreover, the word KUR\textsuperscript{112}, which appears prior to the word Qedar in line 8 in this inscription, suggests that Qedar lent its name to a specific area, which means that Qedarites at that time were well known and famous among Arab groups in north Arabia (Retsö 2003: 131).

The tribute of the Arab queen Samsi was contrastingly different from Zabiba’s tribute. According to one of Tiglath-Pileser’s inscriptions (Lawson Younger, \textit{Context of

\textsuperscript{112} u—ri-ik KUR qu—a—a—[a] "Urik of Que" (Levine 1972: 19).
Scripture II, 292), when Samsi broke her treaty with Tiglath-Pileser, the king of Assyria sent his army and defeated Samsi, then forced her to pay tribute. Samsi’s tribute included camels and spices, indicating that she had not amassed as much wealth as Zabiba, especially when we compare the two tributes in terms of both quality and quantity. Moreover, according to Assyrian inscriptions, camels and spices were considered traditional Arab tribute. The reference to herbs in Tiglath-Pileser’s inscription (Lawson Younger, Context of Scripture II, 292)\textsuperscript{113} may indicate that Samsi’s territory was near to the road linking north and south Arabia, along which herbs, frankincense, and myrrh were transported in enormous quantities (Starcky, 1965: 8).

According to inscription no. 18 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 7 f.),\textsuperscript{114} Sargon II (721-705 BCE) received tribute from Pir'u, king of Egypt, from Samsi, who was still a reigning Arab queen, from It'amra, king of the Sabaeans, and from the seacoast and desert kings. The tribute, as recorded in this inscription, was composed of a variety of substances indicating provenance from different places. But we can still identify some typical Arab tribute components, such as camels, horses, gold, products of the mountains, precious stones, and herbs, whereas, ivory, maple, and seed could be sent from Pir'u, king of Egypt and from kings of the seacoast. In general, the components of the above tribute covered all the Near East’s products, which makes the text difficult to analyse for our purposes. In addition, another Sargon II’s inscription (Lawson, Context of Scripture II, 2000: 296)\textsuperscript{115} mentions camels and horses, gold, and mountain spices as tribute coming from the Arab queen Samsi and from It'amra, king of the Sabaeans.

To conclude, one might speculate from the appearance together of the Arab queen and the Sabaean king in these two inscriptions (which have been treated above) and the similarity of substances comprising their tributes that they were neighbours or perhaps commercial partners. In addition, one might speculate that they lived at Adummatu, or at least not far from the road that linked north and south Arabia.

\textsuperscript{113} See section 3.2.1.a.
\textsuperscript{114} For the full text of this inscription, see section 3.2.2.a.
\textsuperscript{115} For the full text of this inscription, see section 3.2.2.a.
The conclusion that Abbott (1941: 4) drew regarding these inscriptions cannot, however, be correct, since she considered Samsi to have been queen of the Sabaeans simply because she is mentioned close to the Sabaeans in the Tiglath-pileser III’s text (Lawson Younger, *Context of Scripture II*, 292). In fact, Abbott’s deduction is not to be accepted, especially if we take into account many Assyrian inscriptions which mention Samsi as queen of the Arabs.\textsuperscript{116} In addition, Eph’al (1982: 8) says it seems that the term ‘Arab’ in the Assyrian inscriptions was applied especially to Qedar and that consequently Samsi more likely was queen of Qedar.

We find in the Sennacherib’s inscription no. 213 (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 213) recounts the rebellion of Merodach-baladan against Sennacherib (704-681 BCE) and mentions tribute paid by the Arabs, which included camels and horses. This inscription fortunately mentions the location of this Arab group, which was southern Babylonia.\textsuperscript{117}

The fighting of Baskānu and his sister Iati’e, queen of the Arabs, against Sennacherib is mentioned in the same inscription (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 213)\textsuperscript{118} In addition, it records that after this incident Sennacherib received booty from the Arabs consisting of camels. Their location was definitely not far from Babylonia because this text mentions their aid for Merodach-baladan, the king of Babylonia.

However, it should be noted that Baskānu is referred to in Sennacherib’s inscription as Merodach-baladan’s nephew (Smith 1921: 48-55). The puzzle is how to understand the implication that Baskānu was related both to the king of Babylonia and at the same time to the Arab queen Iati’e, since it is difficult to accept the name Baskānu as an Arabian name. In an attempt to resolve this dilemma, Weissbach (1908: 280)

\textsuperscript{116} See inscriptions nos. 778 and 817 in Luckenbill, II, 1927: 18, 55.
\textsuperscript{117} The Arabs, Arameans, and Chaldeans, who were in Erech, Nippur, Kish, Haragkalamma, Kutha and Sippar. Together with the citizens, the rebels.’ See inscription no. 234 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 116).
\textsuperscript{118} For the full text see 3.2.3.a
proposed a new reading, *Ba-uq-qa-a-nu*, although in Eph'al’s (1982: 40) opinion this suggestion did not help to explain the terminology problem. Eph'al himself provided an important clue elsewhere in his discussion, suggesting that the title *A-ri-bi*, which appears in inscription the Sennacherib inscription no. 213 (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions), could refer to a member of the Baskānu group. In Eph’al’s view this would seem to imply that the title *A-ri-bi* does not refer to Arabs, since the term ‘Arab’ usually appears in Assyrian inscriptions in the form *Ar-ba-a-a*.

Thus, Eph'al (1982: 113) suggested that there was no relation between the Arabs and Aribi, who were a group of warriors. Consequently, if we follow Eph'al’s suggestion and also take into account the difficulty of accepting Baskānu as an Arab name, we could conclude that Baskānu and his group were not related to the Arabs in terms of ethnicity or at least they were a different group of people, not Iati’e’s group, and that they dwelt somewhere in southern Babylonia.

In contrast, Jawād ‘Alī (1968, I: 16) noted that the name ‘Arab’ appears in Assyrian inscriptions in different forms (e.g. *Aribi, Arubu, Aribu, Arabi,* and *Arab*) and suggested that this variation might simply have been produced by inscription-writers’ uncertainty about how the term used to designate Arabs should be written. ‘Alī added that the territory of the Arabs living in north Arabia became extended or reduced according to the current political situation. In addition, it is a very observable fact that the Arabs made their appearance in Babylonian records at least from the sixth and fifth centuries BCE (Livingstone 1987: 97). In S.W. Cole’s *Nippur IV: the early neo-Babylonian governor’s archive from Nippur* (1996: 429 ff.) we are provided with a list of personal names containing Liḥyanite, old North Arabic, Old South Arabic, Proto-Arabic, Sabaean, Safaitic, Thamudic, and other linguistic features, which leave us in no doubt that the Arabs were a recognized element of Babylonian social interaction.

Thus, Baskānu and his group were Arabs living separately in the region of southern Babylonia. If we accept ‘Alī’s suggestion and take also into account the fact that Assyrian inscriptions mention Baskānu as the brother of Iati’e, the conclusion to be
drawn is that the Baskānu group were Arabs who lived in southern Babylonia. In addition, we cannot omit to mention a fact derived from Assyrian inscriptions, which inform the reader that Baskānu was Merodach-baladan’s nephew (Smith 1921: 48-55).

Te’elkhunu and her brother Hazaël are mentioned in Sennacherib’s inscription no. 035 according to Neo-Assyrian Royal inscriptions (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Sennacherib 035). She was defeated by Sennacherib’s army and left behind 1,000 camels. Fortunately her city is mentioned in this inscription, which was Adummatu. Moreover, queen Tabūa and kings Hazaël and Iata’ son of Hazaël lived in Adummatu and paid tribute in camels.\textsuperscript{119}

To conclude, it seems that the Arab queen Zabiba had enormous wealth, which suggests that she might have been a great queen who controlled most of the Arab groups as well as the trade roads during her era and might also have occupied Adummatu. In addition, from an analysis of the substances comprising queen Zabiba’s tribute, the fact which is established here is that this queen probably controlled the trade road that linked Mesopotamia with Palestine. Moreover, this study shows that the Assyrian inscriptions made a clear distinction between Arabs and Sabaeans. Another fact established by this study is that the Baskānu group were Arabs who lived in southern Babylonia.

\textsuperscript{119}Ibid.
4.2 The sources for Qedarite history

4.2.1 Qedar in Biblical texts

Biblical texts mention the sons of Ishmael as twelve nomadic tribes who settled in the desert lands between north Arabia, Egypt and Palestine. The list of Ishmael’s sons enumerates: Nebaioth, Qedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah. One scholar speculates that this list of Ishmaelites may possibly reflect the political situation of north Arabia after the collapse of the Assyrian Empire and the manner in which these groups of Ishmaelites spread there (Retsö 2003: 221), while, as we have seen through this study, some of these groups were mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions, which means that they had commerce with the Assyrian Empire and were involved in wars against the Assyrian state.

However, the core group in this study is Qedar, who are mentioned in the Old Testament as nomads living in tents (Psalm 120: 5). Allen (1983: 146) stated that the Qedarites lived a nomadic existence in the Syro-Arabian desert. In addition, Song of Songs 1: 5 describes the Qedarites as dwellers in black tents: ‘I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Qedar, as the curtains of Solomon’. In Isaiah 60: 7 Qedar are described as sheep-breeders possessing numberless herds. In addition, Ezek. 27: 21 mentions Qedar as merchants who traded in sheep, rams and goats. Knauf (1985: 59) suggested that after the death of Abraham/Ibrahim, the Ishmaelites and the sons of Isaac lived separately in north Arabia and the Ishmaelites lived in tents in nomadic groups.

120 See Gen. 25: 13-16 and I Chron. 1: 29-31. For more details about Arabs and Ishmaelites in north Arabia, see the discussion in Chapter Three.
121 ‘Woe is me, that I am an alien in Meshach, that I must live among the tents of Qedar.’ Allen (1983: 146) found fault with the juxtaposition of Qedar and Meshach since, in the Assyrian inscriptions, the location of Meshach is in the north-east of Cilicia. Allen added that Herodotus mentioned the location of Meshach as being ‘south-east of the Black Sea’, while Qedar is mentioned in the Old Testament as a nomadic group living in north Arabia.
122 ‘All the flocks of Qedar shall be gathered to you, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister to you; they shall be acceptable on my altar, and I will glorify my glorious house’.
Qedar were considered one of the largest Ishmaelite tribes according to their prevalence both temporally and geographically, since their first appearance in the historical documents was in Tiglath-Pileser’s inscription of 738 BCE (Levine 1972: 19), while their geographical spread expanded towards the north into Syria, since some groups of Qedarites were found in Tadmor and Moab (Knauf 1985: 66). Qedarites spread also towards the west into Egypt, reaching the eastern Delta in Tell El-Maskhuta, as is evidenced by the bowls found in the shrine of Tell El-Maskhuta belonging to the king of Qedar, Qaynu son of Gashmu (see figs. 5 & 6), which suggests that they lived there (Dumbrell, 1971: 33). In addition, Qedar controlled the commercial road connecting south and north Arabia, which was well known as the frankincense and myrrh road (Knauf 1985: 66).

In Assyrian inscriptions the Qedarites are associated with Adummatu in north Arabia from the eighth century BCE. Musil added that Adummatu was under Qedar’s control and served as their place of refuge during time of war. Qedar also controlled and guided trade caravans which used to go through Adummatu (Musil 1926: 481). During the mid eighth century Isaiah mentions “the glory of Qedar” during that time and predicts its collapse. However, Jawād ‘Alī (1968, I: 439 f.) argued that the Qedarites were warriors, who did not know peace or settle.

The Biblical texts mention the relationship between Qedar and Israel, one which fluctuated so that sometimes they agreed a peace treaty while at other times they were hostile one towards the other. During Sennacherib’s reign (704-681 BCE), Iati’e joined

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123 As we have seen in our study of Arab tribute offerings, there is mention in the Assyrian inscriptions of Qedar’s tributes’ containing frankincense (lebōnā), myrrh, and incense (Retsö, 2003: 174).
124 See inscription no. 518 in Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207 f.
125 Isa. 21: 16: ‘For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of an hireling, all the glory of Qedar shall fail.’
126 Cf. Ps. 120: 5-7: ‘Woe is me, that I sojourn in Meshech, that I dwell among the tents of Qedar! My soul hath long had her dwelling with him that hateth peace. I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.’
hands with Hezekiah the king of Judah against the king of Assyria, but the coalition was defeated and many of the Judean kingdom’s territories were lost (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 143; cf. II Kings 18: 13). In addition, Jer. 49: 28-32 mentions Qedarites in the late seventh century or early sixth century, when Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Qedarites’ land, destroying their houses and taking away their cattle and camels, at the same time bringing to its end the nation of Israel.

On the other hand, the announcement of Qedar’s overthrow in Isa. 21: 16 indicates that Qedar was hostile towards Israel at that time. In fact, during the second part of the sixth century, Judaeans and Qedarites had an adversarial relationship. Neh. 6: 1-14 informs us that there was a conflict between the returning Israelites, under their leader Nehemiah, and Gashmu, the king of Qedar, since the latter refused to accept the intention of Nehemiah to reconstruct the walls of Jerusalem. As has been mentioned elsewhere in this study, the Tell-Maskhuta bowls give evidence that the period of Gashmu matches with the time of Nehemiah (Rabinowitz 1956: 6).

4.2.2 Qedar in Minaean inscriptions

In 1869 four Minaean inscriptions were discovered in the Rasafa temple in Ma’in, Yemen by Joseph Halévy. These inscriptions include some marriage documents of Minaean traders who married women from foreign countries, among them three women from the Kingdom of Qedar (Al-Said 2002: 61). The inscriptions have been studied several times by such scholars as Glaser and Mlaker, but unfortunately none of them succeeded in reading them satisfactorily. Mlaker’s interpretation considered that the Qedarite women mentioned in the inscriptions were merely offered to the Rasafa temple and other scholars followed Mlaker’s reading. The first scholar to publish a more satisfactory reading was Mahmud al-Ghoul, who realized that the previously accepted

127 See section 2.1.5.
128 See section 1.5.
reading could not be correct and undertook to provide a correct one. Al-Said, who agrees with al-Ghoul\textsuperscript{129}, concludes that there are three women from Qedar mentioned in these inscriptions, whose names are respectively ‘Aḥḥay, ‘Arabiyah, and Ghanī\textsuperscript{130}, which suggests there were relations between Qedar in north Arabia and the Minaeans in south Arabia and that these marriages might have formed part of a treaty between those two kingdoms to bolster their trading relations (Al-Said 2002: 53-55).

4.2.3 Qedar in classical works

We find the term ‘Arab’ mentioned in classical works. The term occurs for the first time in a Greek work by Aeschylus (525-456 BCE), when he reported that there was one Arab officer in Xerxes’s army.\textsuperscript{131} However, we cannot be sure whether this soldier was from Qedar or not.

Another Greek writer who mentions Arabs, and particularly Qedarites, is Herodotus (485-425 BCE). Herodotus visited the Arabs’ territory and wrote about them, making particular mention of their customs, weapons and flocks (Herodotus, 3: 4; p. 193). In addition, Herodotus mentions the episode of Cambyses when he received aid from the Arabs in crossing the desert of north Arabia in 525 BCE on his way to conquer Egypt (ibid.: 212 f.)\textsuperscript{132}. The Arabs involved in this episode were most likely Qedarites, since, as we have seen, the Qedarites are mentioned in different Biblical texts as a force to be reckoned with and active during this time\textsuperscript{133}.

In addition, Qedar is mentioned by the Roman historian Pliny (Natural history, 5: 65), who called them Cedrei and described them as an Arab tribe who lived near the Nabataeans:

\textsuperscript{129} See al-Ghoul 1980: 367-374.
\textsuperscript{130} In Al-Said (2002: 64) they are mentioned respectively as follows: (أخ، عربي، غني)
\textsuperscript{131}Hignett 1963: 474.
\textsuperscript{132}For more information about this event and the Egyptian Pharaoh contemporary with Cambyses, see section 3.4.1.
\textsuperscript{133}See above.
Beyond the Pelusiac mouth of the Nile is Arabia, extending to the Red Sea and to the Arabia known by the surname of Happy and famous for its perfumes and its wealth. This bears the names of the Cattabanes, Esbonitae and Scenitae tribes of Arabs; its soil is barren except where it adjoins the frontier of Syria, and its only remarkable feature is the El Kas mountain. The Arabian tribe of the Canchleini adjoin those mentioned on the east and that of the Cedrei on the south, and both of these in their turn adjoin the Nabataei.

4.2.4 **Qedar in Arabic sources**

Arab writers pay special attention to the period of the beginning of Islam and tend to pay more scant attention to the earlier pre-Islamic, or *Jāhilīyyah*, period, which provided merely introductory matter for their principal concern. Indeed, all who read Islamic history in Arabic sources never fail to be impressed by the great devotion with which the historians of this critical earlier Islamic era compiled their histories, taking pains to verify their sources before they used them. Unfortunately they did not take the same kind of care when they wrote about the pre-Islamic period, since they lacked written sources or they did not attempt to verify the information relating to this period before they used it. In fact, most of the classical Arab scholars’ works relating to the pre-Islamic period were based on oral traditions and contain misleading information, which makes their works incomplete and chaotic (Bayyūmī 2006: 3).

As has been previously mentioned elsewhere in this study, Arabic sources rarely in fact mention Qedar. Unfortunately, we do not find any reference to Qedar in the Qur’an or the Sunnah, but we do find some small notes relating to Qedar in some Arabic sources such as al-Ṭabarī, who mentions Qedar as a son of Ismail and the progenitor of all Arabs:

Nebaitoth son of Ismail, Qedar son of Ismail, Adbeel son of Ismail, Mibsam son of Ismail, Mishma son of Ismail, Dumah son of Ismail, Massa son of Ismail, Adād son of Ismail, Jetur son of Ismail, Naphish son of Ismail, Tama son of Ismail, and Kedemah

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134 See section 1.5.
son of Ismail...From Nebaioth and Qedar, the Arabs were spread (al-Ṭabarī I: 314).\(^\text{135}\)

In addition, al-Ṭabarī narrates the story of the person called Qedar bin Salif from Thamûd, who slaughtered the female camel of the prophet Salih.\(^\text{136}\) There does not, however, appear to be any connection between this event and the tribe of Qedar, since Qedar here seems to be a personal name. As noted earlier we find in al-Ṭabarī a story narrated by Hishām ibn al-Kalbī, which tells about a group of Arabs who moved from the north of Arabia to al-Anbār as directed by Nebuchadnezzar (al-Ṭabarī I: 617). Al-Ṭabarī also records Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of a group of Arabs who lived in north Arabia in houses without any locks\(^\text{137}\). We can speculate that this Arab group contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar was the Qedarites, since Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Arabs in 599 BCE and this date is identical with Qedar’s epoch as evidenced by the Tell El-Maskhuta bowl inscriptions.

\(^{135}\) Al-Ṭabarī derived his information from Biblical sources.

\(^{136}\) Al-Ṭabarī, I: 314; see also Ibn Khaldūn, II, 298; al-Zabīdī, Tāj al-ʿarūs, III: 483.

\(^{137}\) See 3.3.1.a
4.3 Qedar

Introduction

In this section we present a full overview of Qedar’s history, based primarily on the information contained in Chapters Two and Three of this study and the sources and discussions cited here. In addition, regarding Ashurbanipal’s period and his relations with the Arabs, we derive our information from Eph’al’s study and other works such as Musil (1927). Eph’al, however, has very helpfully classified Ashurbanipal’s sources into two groups: A and B (Eph’al 1982: 146) and compared the information of each group with that contained in the other. The underlying factor behind Eph’al’s classification is the incomplete and fragmentary nature of the sources from the time of Ashurbanipal (Retsö 2003: 161). In this section we describe the relations between Arabs and all the Assyrian kings, and we will point to the significant incidents in the course of Qedar’s history.

4.3.1 The History of Qedar

Assyrian inscriptions mention kings and queens of the Arabs, but the first queen who was described explicitly as queen of Qedar is Zabiba, who came to the fore.

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138In 1916 Streck published different copies of Ashurbanipal’s records, which he classified into six groups (A, B, C, D, E, and F), including mention of Ashurbanipal’s campaigns against the Arabs. Streck considered copy A to be the main source, against which he compared other copies. The result of his work was his division of the information from this period between two major wars fought between Ashurbanipal and Arabs, which he presented as an account of the relationship between Ashurbanipal and Arabs (Streck 1916: 34). In 1973 Weippert published a new translation of copy A, which he used as a main source and compared with other copies as Streck had done. Latterly Weippert offered a new interpretation of copy A and he also divided the events involving Ashurbanipal and Arabs into two major wars with a slightly different interpretation than that which had been made by Streck (Weippert 1973: 39-85). Eventually, Eph’al compared both Streck’s and Weippert’s studies and put them together with long discussions in his 1982 study: The Ancient Arabs: nomads on the borders of the Fertile Crescent, 9th-5th centuries B.C. In fact, however, those discussions make the previous works merely focus on the issue of the relations between Ashurbanipal and the kings of Qedar: Abiate’ and Uaite’ which makes their works lack of sequences (Eph’al 1982: 146). We have done our best to simplify the previous discussion to offer here an account which should be easy to follow and in full picture.

139Kitchen (1994: 237), considers Gindibu (fl. c. 859 BCE) to have been the first Arab ruler. Eph’al, however, asserted that Gindibu did not live in north Arabia, supporting his assertion through the following observations. First, the term ‘Arab’ is used neither in Shalmaneser III’s inscriptions (ranging from 858 to 824 BCE), notably in the inscription dealing with events in 841 BCE during his campaign against Damascus and the mountains of Hauran, nor is it used in Adad-nirari III’s inscription which mentions his campaign against the king of Damascus Ben-Hadad III in 796 BCE. In addition, Eph’al suggested that the
during the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 BCE). Kitchen (1994: 237) suggests that her era could have been around 738 BCE. Assyrian inscriptions describe Zabiba as a payer of tribute to the Assyrian Empire (e.g. see Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 285). Her homeland was in Adummatu (Abbott 1941: 4). Additionally, the components of her tribute reflect the fact that she was rich, which may in turn suggest that she possibly controlled most of the Arabs’ trading interests.

We are not sure who ascended the Qedarite throne immediately after Zabiba, but we find from the sequence of the events in Assyrian inscriptions mention of another Qedarite queen, Samsi. In addition, Assyrian inscriptions indicate that she was contemporary with two Assyrian kings: Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II. The first of these, Tiglath-Pileser III\(^{140}\) (744-727 BCE), had hostile relations with Samsi, since the latter broke her oath with the Assyrian king and joined in a hostile coalition\(^{141}\) with Sabaeans, Haiappeans, Hattians, Idiba'ileans, and other groups. Consequently, Tiglath-Pileser fought against the confederacy and defeated Samsi, forcing her to flee her homeland and take refuge in the desert. As a result of Tiglath-Pileser’s victory, all the leaders in the coalition were compelled to go to Tiglath-Pileser’s city and kiss his feet to obtain his forgiveness. After this episode, Tiglath-Pileser allowed Samsi to continue to

\(^{140}\) See section 3.2.1.a.

\(^{141}\) See *ibid.* and section 4.3.1.
lead her people, but she was forced to pay a heavy tribute in the form of a huge number of camels. In addition, Tigrath-Pileses appointed a new officer over Samsi, named Idibi'lu, who was commissioned to ensure that she conformed with the desires of the Assyrians.

Another Assyrian king contemporary with Samsi was Sargon II (721-705 BCE), which means that Samsi’s reign spanned approximately seventeen years (Abbott 1941: 5). Relations between Samsi and Sargon II were not peaceful. According to Assyrian inscriptions, Samsi was kept in a tributary relationship with Sargon since she might join hands with the king of Egypt against the Assyrian Empire. In fact, Samsi’s name is usually associated with the name of Egypt’s king in the Assyrian inscriptions and both the king of Egypt and queen Samsi appear together in Assyrian records as payers of tribute. So, for example, in the fourteenth year of the reign of Sargon II, he is reported to have defeated Samsi and the king of Egypt, on both of whom he imposed a heavy tribute (Lawson, Context of Scripture II, 2000: 296).

One may speculate that there was a good relationship between Egypt and Qedar at least from Samsi’s time onwards and that Qedarites may have wandered into Egypt with their trading caravans. Alternatively there may have been a coalition which included peoples of north Arabia, south Palestine and Egypt against Sargon II, a coalition which is reported in Assyrian inscriptions and is described as containing the king of Egypt, Samsi queen of Qedar, It'amra king of the Sabaeans and the kings of the seacoast and the desert, all of whom were defeated and compelled to pay tribute to the king of Assyria (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 7f., text no. 18). Unfortunately, Samsi disappears from Assyrian inscriptions after these two episodes, even though the Qedarites may have continued to pay tribute to Sargon under other leaders (Abbot, 1941: 5).

See section 3.2.1.a.
See section 3.2.1.a.
See section 3.2.2.a.
See section 3.2.2.a.
The following inscription mentions Arab tribute which continued to be paid during Sargon II’s reign, though we have no idea who the Arab leader was after Samsi’s time:

With a view to subjugating the Medes, I strengthened the defences (guard) of the neighbourhood of Kār-Sharrukin. 34 districts of the Medes, I conquered
During the time of Sennacherib (704-681 BCE), Qedar grew and spread to cover the territory extending between south Babylonia and south Palestine. Sennacherib’s inscriptions inform us that Qedar and Assur had a hostile relationship during his reign. During most of Sennacherib’s reign the queen of Qedar was Iati’e, who ruled Qedar between 710 and 695 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 237). According to Assyrian inscriptions, Iati’e and her brother Baskânû supported the king of Babylonia Merodach-baladan, who formed an alliance with Elam against Sennacherib (Leick 1999: 105). Consequently, Sennacherib defeated Merodach-baladan and his allies and seized Merodach-baladan's treasure, along with many camels, chariots, wagons, and horses all taken in booty (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 213). Qedar also supported another rebellion against Sennacherib but this time in Jerusalem, when Iati’e took the side of Hezekiah king of Judah against Sennacherib and they did not pay the tribute which had been imposed upon them by the Assyrians. The outcome of this rebellion, as it is recorded in inscription no. 312 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 143) and in (II Kings 18:13), was the defeat of the king of Jerusalem and his allies and the loss of most of their territory. The next Qedarite queen, also contemporary with Sennacherib, was Te'elkhunu, who ruled between 695 and 690 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 237). Te'elkhunu faced the wrath of

and brought them within the border of Assyria. I imposed upon them a yearly tribute of horses. The city of Erishtana, together with the cities of its neighbourhood, which belonged to the district of Ba’ît-ilî, I besieged, I conquered, I carried off their spoil. The lands of Arabia, who had withheld their tribute, I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 30, text no. 58).

147 See, for example, text no. 259 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 130), containing evidence that Arabs lived in south Babylonia. See also text no. 312 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 143), recording the fact that Qedar supported Hezekiah king of Jerusalem against Sennacherib. From these two inscriptions we may deduce that the Qedarites’ territory extended between those two regions.

148 See, for example, texts nos. 234, 259, and 312 (Luckenbill, II: 116, 130, 143).

149 See (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 213).

150 Regarding Baskânû and his relationship with Arabs, see the section entitled ‘The Arabs through analysis of their tributes as described in Assyrian inscriptions’ in this study.

151 On Merodach-baladan, see Chapter Three, footnote no. 70.

152 II Kings 18: 13:
Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.
Assur when the Assyrian army defeated her brother Hazael, then conquered her land, Adummatu. Additionally on this occasion, Sennacherib took away with him all the Arab gods to Nineveh. Consequently, Te’elkhunu decided to depart her land and live in Nineveh near to her deities and her daughter Tabûa’, who grew up in Sennacherib’s palace (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, inscription no. 518). When Te'elkhunu left her homeland, her brother Hazael ruled his people alone.

In fact, there is some controversy regarding the beginning of Hazael’s reign, since Kitchen (1994: 237) suggests that the reign of Hazael king of Qedar lasted from 690 to 676 BCE, on the understanding that Hazael did not govern until his sister left Adummatu. Against this assumption, however, we may observe, first, that throughout Qedarite history we find that a king and a queen could be contemporaries as, for instance, when Iata’ son of Hazael governed contemporarily with Tabûa the daughter of Te'elkhunu. Similarly, we have the instance of Iati’e and her brother Baskânu. Another point to be considered is that kings of Qedar might take the responsibility to lead the Qedarite army, to fight with enemies, and to deal with external issues, while queens might have responsibility for religious and internal issues. Indeed, Qedarite queens were known to have acted as priestesses, for example when Te'elkhunu associated her fate with that of her gods and departed from her land to Nineveh to remain close to her deities (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001).

It seems clear that the relationship between Assur and Qedar changed during Hazael’s reign and that of his son Iata’. Indeed, at the commencement of his reign, Hazael affirmed his friendship toward the Assyrian Empire by sending rich gifts to Esarhaddon and requesting the king of Assyria to return the Arabs’ gods to their homeland. Furthermore, Hazael went to Nineveh and kissed Esarhaddon’s feet in a plea for forgiveness. Esarhaddon accepted the offering of Hazael and repaired the latter’s broken idols, at the same time inscribing the king of Assyria’s name on the Arabs’

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153 See section 3.2.3.a.
154 For the text, see section 3.2.4.a.
155 For the text describing these events, see section 3.2.4.a (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001).
Moreover, Esarhaddon sent Tabûa to govern as queen of Qedar alongside Hazael, but Hazael died soon after and his son Iataʾ ascended the Qedarite throne.

Although Tabûa is not included in Kitchen’s list of Arab rulers (Kitchen, 1994: 237), she is mentioned in four Assyrian inscriptions as an Arab queen. In fact, all these inscriptions rehearse the same story commencing with Sennacherib’s defeat of Hazael and his capture of the Arabs’ gods. As a result of that event, Te’elkhunu decided to follow her gods to Nineveh in order to continue to live close to her deities. In addition, during Esarhaddon’s reign, Hazael visited Nineveh with valuable presents and kissed Esarhaddon’s feet, pleading with the Assyrian king to forgive him and return his Arab deities. Esarhaddon accepted Hazael’s offering and sent with him the Arab deities along with Tabûa daughter of Te’elkhunu to be queen of the Arabs:

I placed the lady Tabûa, who was raised in the palace of my father, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods. I added sixty-five camels (and) ten donkeys to the previous tribute and imposed (it) on him. Hazael died and I placed Iataʾ, his son, (iv 20) on his throne. I added ten minas of gold, one thousand choice stones, fifty camels, (and) one hundred bags of aromatics to the tribute of his father and imposed (it) on him. Later, Uabu, to exercise kingship, incited all of the Arabs to rebel against Iataʾ (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Esarhaddon 001).

Scholars differ in their opinion as to where Tabûa was born and who were her parents. The most widely accepted opinion is that Tabûa was the daughter of Te’elkhunu (Lewy 1945: 420), which finds ready support in the Assyrian inscriptions. Alternatively it has been suggested that Tabûa was born in Nineveh (Winckler 1905: 71) and that her parents could have been Te’elkhunu and Esarhaddon (Eph’al 1982: 123). However, Eph’al cites two difficulties in the way of accepting either that Tabûa was born in Nineveh, or that her father was Esarhaddon: first, according to Assyrian inscriptions, Esarhaddon ‘sent her [Tabûa] back to her land’ (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Esarhaddon 001), the implication being that Tabûa originated from Arab land; and, second, Tabûa was taken to

156 Ibid.
157 Texts nos. 518, 536, 940, and 943 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, 214, 365 f.).
158 Ibid.
Assyria in 689 BCE and returned to her land in 678 BCE, which means that she sojourned in Nineveh approximately ten years. It is difficult to accept that she was queen of the Arabs at this early stage in her life (Eph'al 1982:123). In addition, we have to bear in mind the new Assyrian foreign policy, details of which have been reviewed elsewhere in this study. In fact, Sennacherib took a new approach in Assyrian foreign policy to ensure the loyalty of subject territories. His policy was built on a system of taking captive the children of conquered enemies and raising them in the Assyrian king’s palace in order to guarantee their allegiance and to appoint them later as rulers of client states. This was most probably what actually happened with Tabûa.159

However, after the above event, Tabûa disappears from Assyrian inscriptions and we have no idea what happened to her or what was her fate. Another king, who ruled later than Tabûa, was Iataʾ son of Hazael, who ruled Qedar from 676 to 652 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 237). According to Assyrian inscriptions, Iataʾ son of Hazael was contemporary with the two Assyrian kings Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal.

Starting with events during Esarhaddon’s reign, the Assyrian inscriptions inform us that Hazael’s successor was his son Iataʾ, who was accepted by Esarhaddon although, according to an Assyrian text, Esarhaddon imposed upon Iataʾ a heavy tribute,161 as follows:

Hazael died and I placed Iataʾ, his son, (iv 20) on his throne. I added ten minas of gold, one thousand choice stones, fifty camels, (and) one hundred bags of aromatics to the tribute of his father and imposed (it) on him. Later, Uabu, to exercise kingship, incited all of the Arabs to rebel against Iataʾ (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Esarhaddon 001).162

159 For more details, see Chapter Three; section 3.2.3.b.
160 This personal name is written in Assyrian inscriptions with different spellings. We find Iataʾ son of Hazael king of Qedar in texts nos. 518, 536, 551, and 552 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, 214, 218, and 219), all from the time of Esarhaddon, while we find reference to Uaiteʾ son of Hazael king of Qedar in Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions (see Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313-320, texts nos. 817-821, 823, 824, 828, 829, 833, and 946).
162 See also texts nos. 518, 536 and 551 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 214, 218).
However, in general the relationship between Esarhaddon and Iata' was peaceful (Retsö 2003: 159). Eph'al (1982: 128) suggested that the significance of the above-mentioned tribute was that it served to guarantee Assyrian aid if any rebellion broke out in Arab lands. In fact, the political situation in Qedar remained unstable during Iata’’s reign and soon Uabu\textsuperscript{163} rebelled against him. In fact, it seems that Uabu instigated the Arabs’ rising against Iata’ in order that he might usurp the Qedarite throne in place of him, but Esarhaddon sent the Assyrian army to support Iata’ and quell the rebellion. As result of this Assyrian campaign, Uabu was defeated and taken captive with his soldiers to Nineveh (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001)\textsuperscript{164}.

Moreover, line 25 from Esarhaddon inscription no. 001 (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Esarhaddon 001) testifies to the strength of the relationship between Esarhaddon and Iata’, since Esarhaddon considered those who rebelled against Iata’ as enemies of the king of Assyria himself:

I, Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, king of the four quarters, who loves loyalty and abhors treachery, sent my battle troops to the aid of Iata’, and they trampled all of the Arabs, threw Uabu, together with the soldiers who were with him, into fetters, and brought (them) to me. I placed them in neck stocks and tied them to the side of my gate (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Esarhaddon 001).

Even though in the following episode the Arab king is not mentioned in the Assyrian records, it may be readily observed that the relationship between Assyria and the Arabs might have worked in an opposite direction. Thus, according to one of Esarhaddon’s inscriptions (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 034), all the Arab leaders

\textsuperscript{163}Eph'al observed that it is unknown whether Uabu was from Qedar or whether he was the leader of another Arab tribe who attempted to control Qedar. Eph'al dated Uabu’s rebellion against Iata’ at between 673 and 676 BCE (Eph'al, 1982: 129).

\textsuperscript{164}For the full text see Chapter Three; section 3.2.4.a. In addition we find the same story in text no. 536 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 214).
provided Esarhaddon with a huge number of camels in his campaign against the borderland of Egypt.  

To conclude, it seems that during Esarhaddon’s reign Qedar enjoyed reasonably peaceful relations with Assyria since, as we have seen, early in the reign of Esarhaddon, he restored to the Arabs their deities, which had been taken during his father’s reign, and he also accepted Iata’ as successor to Hazael. In addition, Esarhaddon defended Iata’, who was, at least in his opinion, the rightful king of Qedar, when Uabu attempted to depose Iata’ from the throne of Qedar. Consequently, the Qedarites were forced to accept payment of a heavy tribute to Esarhaddon, in contrast to their former favourable treatment at his hands.

4.3.2 Ashurbanipal’s first campaign against Qedar

The relationship between Assyria and Qedar changed during Ashurbanipal’s reign. In fact, Ashurbanipal blamed Uaite’ for reneging on the friendly relationship between Assyria and Qedar when Uaite' broke his oath with Assyria, forgetting the earlier favour of the Assyrian king when the Arabs had rebelled against him. According to text no. 817 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313), Uaite' refused to pay tribute to Ashurbanipal and joined hands with Akkad in the latter’s rebellion against Ashurbanipal, both taking the side of Shamash-shum-ukîn the king of Babylon, who was the hostile brother of

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165 For the full text, see section 3.2.4.a.
166 As mentioned previously, the name of Iata' son of Hazael appears in Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions with different spellings, such as Uaite’ son of Hazael (ʿAlī, II, 1968: 593). These occasions some difficulty in dealing with Ashurbanipal’s records, making use of this historical source somewhat complicated (Retsō 2003: 161). Moreover, Eph'al stated that Ia-.lu-u/u, Ia-ta'-, Ia-ta-a, Ia-u-ti/te', who was the king of the Arabs during Esarhaddon’s reign, is the same person who appears under the name Yaute' during Ashurbanipal’s reign. Eph'al further suggested that there was probably a mistake in the spelling of this name of the Arab king during Esarhaddon’s reign (Eph'al 1982: 129). Here, however, we will henceforth use the form Uaite’, rather than Iata', in conformity with the spelling found in Ashurbanipal’s inscriptions.
167 Musil commented that the safety valve in Mesopotamia was the relationship between Assyria and Babylonia. The implication of this was that if Babylon revolted against Assyria, the Arabs along with other nations who were under Assyria’s control would also revolt. Thus, in Musil’s opinion, the rebellion of Shamash-shum-ukîn king of Babylonia against Ashurbanipal was the key causal factor for problems between Qedar and Ashurbanipal (Musil 1927: 485).
Ashurbanipal. Moreover, Uaite' son of Hazael sent his military commander Abiate' to fight alongside Shamash-shum-ukîn against Ashurbanipal, in consequence of which Ashurbanipal attacked Uaite’’s territory in 652 BCE (Eph'al 1982: 147), although Uaite' made his escape after he received aid from Abiate’ and Aimu, sons of Te'ri.

In my ninth campaign I mustered my armies; against Uaite', king of Arabia, I took the straight road. Violating (lit., sinning against) the oath (sworn) to me and not remembering (lit., guarding) the good I had done him, he cast off the yoke of my sovereignty, which Assur had laid upon him, (commanding) that he should bear my yoke. He kept his feet (from coming) to greet me and held up the payment of his heavy tribute. Like Elam, he listened to the rebellious word(s) of Akkad and did not keep (lit., guard) the oath (sworn) to me. Me Assurbanipal, the king, the holy priest, the prayerful servant (of god), the creation of Assur's hand, he forsook and to Abiate' (and) Aimu, son(s) of Têri (v., Te'ri), he gave troops and sent (them) to the aid of Shamash-shum-ukîn, my hostile brother. He came to an agreement with him, roused the people of Arabia to revolt with him (i.e., Shamash-shum-ukîn) and plundered the people whom Assur, Ishtar and the great gods had given me to rule over, and had intrusted to my hand (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313 f., text no. 817).

Ashurbanipal reached the place where Uaite' was found and there he killed many warriors and burned the Qedarites’ tents, while Uaite' fled to Nabaite land:

All the people of Arabia who had gone forth with him I cut down with the sword. But he made his escape before the mighty weapons of Assur and fled to distant (parts). The houses of the plain, the tents, their dwellings, I set on fire and burned them. Uaite', evil befell him and fled alone to the land of Nabaite (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314, text no. 818).

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168 This personal name appears in Assyrian inscriptions as that of the king of the Arabs (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315 f., texts nos. 821 and 823).
After this episode, Uaite' son of Hazael disappears from Assyrian inscriptions until Natnu king of Nebaioth handed him over to Ashurbanipal to secure himself against Ashurbanipal’s wrath and gain legitimacy for himself as king of Nebaioth (Musil 1927:486). Thus, another person appointed himself as king of Qedar in place of Uaite' son of Hazael; this was Uaite’169 son of Bir-dadda, who was nephew of Uaite' son of Hazael.

According to an Assyrian inscription, after Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda assumed kingship over the Arabs, Ashurbanipal persuaded him to come to Nineveh to establish a new relationship between Qedar and Assyria (Eph’al 1982: 156).

The nephew of Uaite’, son of Bir-dadda, who set himself as king of Arabia,......Assur, king of the gods, the great mountain, changed his (Uaite’’s) mind, and he came into my presence. To make known (lit., reveal) the majesty (grandeur) of Assur and the great gods, my lords, I laid on him a heavy penalty. I put him into a kennel. With jackals (?) and dogs I tied him up and made him guard the gate, in Nineveh, called Nîrib masnakti adnâtì (“Entrance of the Thronging Nations”) (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314, text no. 819).

Unfortunately, when Uaite' arrived in the city of Assur, he found that Ashurbanipal had tricked him and now dealt with him aggressively, stationing him as a guard at the gate of Nineveh with a dog-chain around his neck for the amusement of the people gathered there. It seems safe to assume that, as a result of this action by Ashurbanipal, relations between Assyria and Qedar were adversely affected and, as we will see, the Qedarites started to attack the Assyrian borderlands to avenge their humiliation.

While Uaite' son of Bir-dadda king of Qedar was suffering his punishment in Nineveh, another king of Qedar, Ammu-ladi, assumed Uaite’’s vacant post and, together with Adiâ, wife of Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda, decided to attack the western border of the

169Eph’al (1982: 144) suggested that this Uaite' was probably Uaite' II son of Bir-dadda and nephew of Uaite' I. Uaite’ II ascended the Qedarite throne after his uncle Uaite’ I fell into Assyrian hands. Moreover, Uaite’ II is absent from the rulers of Qedar in Kitchen’s list (1994: 237). However, we may assume that Uaite’ II ascended the Qedarite throne after his uncle made his escape to the land of Nabaithe, as recorded in Assyrian inscriptions nos. 818 and 819 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314), and not, as Eph’al stated, after his uncle had been taken captive to Nineveh.
Assyrian Empire. One may assume that this Qedarite military campaign against Assyria was with a view to rescuing Uaite’, but it was unfortunately defeated by the king of Moab\textsuperscript{170}, Kamashalta’ (Musil 1927: 486), who captured both Qedarite leaders and sent them to Nineveh.

Then that Ammu-ladi, king of Kidri (Qedar), marched forth to attack the kings of Amurru whom Assur, Ishtar and the great gods had made subject to me. ( Trusting) in the help of Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bêl, Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Aebela, Urta, Nergal (and) Nusku, I defeated him. Himself, together with Adiâ, wife of Uaite’, king of Arabia, they captured alive and brought them into my presence. At the command of the great gods, my lords, I put a dog chain upon him and made him guard a kennel (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314 f., text no. 820).\textsuperscript{171}

After the above events, the Qedarite throne fell vacant. However, Assyrian inscriptions\textsuperscript{172} mention Abiate’ son of Te’ri as another king of Qedar, one who probably took advantage of the power vacuum in Qedar to ascend the Qedarite throne. We may speculate that Abiate’ enjoyed good relations with Uaite’ son of Hazael, since we know that Uaite’ son of Hazael sent Abiate’ to support Shamash-shum-ukîn in his rebellion against his brother Ashurbanipal\textsuperscript{173} (Eph'al 1982: 51).

According to text no. 821 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315), when Abiate’ and Aimu sons of Te’ri fought with Shamash-shum-ukîn against Ashurbanipal, they were defeated and the inscription relates that the allies of Shamash-shum-ukîn, who entered Babylon during that battle, suffered hunger and distress under Assyrian army siege.

At the command of Assur, Ishtar and the great gods, my lords, I overcame and defeated Abiate’ (and) Aimu, son(s) of Te’ri, who had come to the aid of Shamash-shum-ukîn, my hostile brother, (and had attempted) to enter Babylon. The others who had got into Babylon, (driven) by distress and hunger, ate each other’s

\textsuperscript{170} For more details about Moab kingdom see Bartlett 1989: 118-122.
\textsuperscript{171} See the same translation of this text in Pritchard 1969: 298.
\textsuperscript{172} See inscriptions nos. 821 and 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315 f.).
\textsuperscript{173} See also inscription no. 817 (Luckenbill, II 1927: 313), which indicates that Abiate’ was sent to Babylon by Uaite’ to assist the king of Babylon in his revolt against his hostile brother.
flesh. To save their lives they came forth from Babylon, and my forces, who had been stationed (there) against Shamash-shumu-ukin, defeated them a second time. That one fled alone, and in order to save his life, laid hold of my feet. I took pity upon him, made him swear an oath by the great gods, and in place of Uaite', son Hazael, set him up as king over Arabia. But he made common cause with the Nabaitai (Nabateans), did not respect (lit., fear) the oath by the great gods and plundered the border of my land (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315, text no. 821).

In addition, the above inscription mentions that this victory of Ashurbanipal against his enemies was considered the second victory of Ashurbanipal over his enemies, probably in 648 BCE (Musil 1927: 476). As a result, of this victory the southern border of the Assyrian Empire became secure and all the Assyrians’ neighbours sent their messengers to Ashurbanipal to pledge their loyalty (Ibid). Among those arriving to pay their homage was Abiate', who was appointed by Ashurbanipal to rule over Qedar.

Moreover, the inscription mentions how Abiate' seized the initiative after his defeat by setting out for Nineveh to make an agreement with Ashurbanipal. Having arrived there, Abiate' was received peaceably by Ashurbanipal, who nevertheless put him under heavy tribute, after which he appointed Abiate' as king of Qedar in place of Uaite' son of Hazael, who was the last legitimate king from the perspective of the Assyrian Empire since, as we have seen, in Ashurbanipal’s estimation, Uaite' son of Bir-dadda and Ammu-ladi were usurpers of the Qedarite throne.

In addition, it is possible that during the sojourn of Abiate’ in Nineveh he succeeded in making an agreement with Ashurbanipal, since we find among neo-Assyrian treaties and loyalty oaths the following fragmentary text reflecting how the relationship between the king of Qedar, Abiate’ son of Teri, and Ashurbanipal became peaceful:

[The treaty of Assurbanipal, king of the world, king of Assyria, son of Esarhaddon, likewise king of the world, king of Assyria, with Abiyate’ son of Te’ri, his sons, grandsons, brothers and nephews, with all Qedarites, young and old, and with...] son of Yauta’, in the presence of all the gods of Assyria and Qedar: [(Swear by) Aššur], Mullissu and Š[erua]: [Considering that] Yauta’ (your) malefactor handed all [Arabs] over to destruction [through] the iron sword, and put you to the sword, [and that...]}
Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, your lord, put oil on you and turned his friendly face towards you, you shall not strive for peace with Yauta’, you shall not [... with] your brothers, [your] uncle... you shall [......]; [you] shall keep [his feet] off [...], and shall not send [...] after him by the hand of anyone, (but), considering the terrible things which he did, you shall make every effort to kill him (Parpola 1988: 68 f.).

It is perhaps reasonable to speculate that this text describes the situation after Abiate’ visited Nineveh and there demonstrated his loyalty to Ashurbanipal. According to this treaty, Ashurbanipal asked Abiate’ to fight against Uaite’, who was an adversary of Ashurbanipal. One may speculate that Uaite’ may be identified with Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda since, as we have seen above. From the perspective of Ashurbanipal Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda was a usurper of the Qedarite throne. The text additionally contains a clear message from Ashurbanipal to Abiate’ to slay Uaite’ without mercy.

According to text no. 822 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315)\textsuperscript{174}, Natnu the king of Nabaitu was one of those kings who came to Nineveh to enter into an alliance with Ashurbanipal. Natnu had never sent tribute or messengers either to Ashurbanipal or to one of the latter’s forefathers because his land was situated far away from Assyrian territories. In addition, Musil (1927: 486) stated that when Natnu decided to join hands with Ashurbanipal, he handed over Uaite’ son of Hazael, who had taken refuge in Natnu’s land, to Ashurbanipal as proof of his good faith.

\textsuperscript{174} See Chapter Three; section 3.2.5.a.
4.3.3 The second campaign of Ashurbanipal against Qedar

Inscription no. 822 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315) records Abiate’’s failure to keep his pledge with Ashurbanipal when he attacked the Assyrian borderlands. It contains the additional information that Natnu king of Nebaitu also rebelled against Ashurbanipal and allied himself with Abiate' in the latter’s incursion against Assyria’s borders. One may speculate that this new coalition was formed against Ashurbanipal in order to rescue Uaite’.

Text no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) informs us that after Abiate' received aid from Nebaitu, he attacked Assyrian territories and succeeded in freeing Uaite' from imprisonment under Ashurbanipal. In addition, this inscription tells about a new Arab coalition established against Ashurbanipal. Moreover this coalition included Qedar,

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175 See Chapter Three’ section 3.2.5.a.
176 It is difficult to know which Uaite’’s rescue was the object of this Qedarite attack, since inscription no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) mentions Uaite' without his father’s name. Consequently, all scholars who have dealt with this matter have found it difficult to distinguish between the two Uaite's (Streck 1916: 34; Musil 1927: 486; Weippert 1973: 39-85; Eph'al 1982: 146-147). However, it seems reasonable to propose that the name Uaite' here refers to Uaite' son of Hazael as this may help to explain the sudden revolt by Natnu king of Nebaioth and Abiate’ son of Te'ri against Ashurbanipal. Behind this lies the fact that Uaite' son of Hazael had sojourned in Nebaioth’s land since the first attack by Ashurbanipal against the Qedarites, reflecting the good relationship he enjoyed with Natnu, but when Ashurbanipal overcame his enemies in 648 BCE (Musil 1927: 486) and the way between Nineveh and Nebaioth’s land then lay open, Natnu king of Nebaioth became a threat to Assyria’s power. Consequently, under stress Natnu sent Uaite' son of Hazael to Nineveh in order to prevent any attack by the Assyrian army. So when Abiate’ decided to attack the Assyrian borderlands, Natnu immediately broke his pledge with Ashurbanipal and lent his aid to Abiate' son of Te'ri in his mission to rescue Uaite' son of Hazael (Luckenbill, II, 1928: 316, text no. 823). Unfortunately, contrary to this suggestion, it could be argued from texts nos. 824 and 825 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317), where it is recorded that when Ashurbanipal launched a swift military response against Abiate’’s offensive. He attacked the territory of Abiate' son of Te'ri and that he continued to attack Uaite' son of Bir-dadda’s land, this seems possibly to hint that the name Uaite’ in text no. 823 could perhaps refer to Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda. But we still have no more support for this deduction than for the other supposition. To conclude, Eph'al stated that it is difficult to distinguish between the two Uaite's in this case. He further stated that the Assyrian inscriptions themselves were confused and failed to make a clear distinction between Uaite' son of Hazael and Uaite' son of Bir-dadda (Eph'al 1982: 51, 114). However, according to text 823, there was a coalition—which included Qedar, Su-mu-AN, and Nebaioth—formed against Ashurbanipal. In addition, Eph'al (1982: 157) assumed that the tribe of Su-mu-AN was under Uaite' son of Bir-dadda, which would imply that Uaite' here was Uaite' son of Bir-dadda. We will see that this group of people was controlled by Uaite' son of Bir-dadda.
177 See Chapter Three; section 3.2.5.a
178 This name might refer to the biblical name Nebaioth. See 4.4
179 Eph'al (1982: 157) states that the coalition consisted of the following tribes and leaders: first of all, Abiate’ son of Te'ri, king of Qedar; second, Uaite' son of Bir-dadda, king of Su-mu-AN; and third, Natnu,
Nebaioth (who led the attack against the Assyrian borderland), Isamme', and the Nabaitai, who were defeated by Ashurbanipal’s troops when Ashurbanipal attacked Arab territories in response to Abiate’s offensive.

According to inscription no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) Ashurbanipal took a short route in pursuit of Abiate' and Uaite' and defeated the Arab coalition and took countless camels and sheep as booty. Ashurbanipal pressed his avenging expedition as far as the territory of Uaite' son of Bir-dadda and seized Uaite’s family, all the people of Qedar and their livestock.

From Asalla to the city of Kurasiti, a 6 bêru (double-hours) stretch of parched and thirsty (desert), they continued their march. The tribe of Atarsamain, and the Kidrai (Kedarites) of Uaite', son of Bir-dadda, king of Arabia, I surrounded. His gods, his mother, his sister, his wife, his family, all the people of Kidri, asses, camels, and flocks, the feet of all that my hands captured with the aid of Assur and Ishtar, my lords, I turned into the Damascus road (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317, text no. 824).

Moreover, Ashurbanipal departed from Damascus and marched to the territory of Abiate' son of Te'ri, which he looted. And his words are as follows:

In Abu, the month of the bow-star, of the valiant daughter of Sin, the third day, the rest day of the king of gods, Marduk, I departed

king of Nebaioth. Musil (1927: 487) found a different structure for the same coalition, with Nabaitai and Qedar under Uaite’s control and the Isamme' tribe under Atarsamain. However, text no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) mentions Abiate' and Uaite', kings of the Arab or kings of Qedar, as leaders of this coalition, who subsequently received aid from Natnu, king of Nebaioth. In addition, Ashurbanipal defeated along his way ‘the Isamme’, the tribe of the god Atarsamain, and the Nabaitai (Nabataeans).’ Noteworthy is the fact that this text mentions both the tribes of Nebaioth and Nabataeans, implying that Nebaioth and Nabataeans were different groups of people. For more details see 4.4

180 Eph'al (1982: 166) states that this group of people was to be identified with the Sum'-AN, who appear in Te-e-me in Sennacherib’s inscriptions. Further, Delitzsch (1900: 183), followed by Thomson (1931: 98), both suggested that this word developed into the name Ishmael. In 1945 Lewy, who agreed with the former scholars, added that the names of the three leaders mentioned in this Arab attack against Ashurbanipal (see text no. 823) were Abiate' son of Te'ri, Uaite', and Natnu king of Nebaioth, each of whom bore the title šar, indicating that all of them belonged to one tribe or that they were related. Moreover, Lewy noted that the Assyrian inscriptions do not distinguish between Uaite' son of Hazael and Uaite' son of Bir-dadda, which suggests that they were one and the same person, or that the word ‘Arab’ or ‘Ishmael’ refers to the same group of people. Finally, Lewy observed that the name Ishmael became more popular in post-exilic times (Lewy 1945: 432).

181 This name might refer to Nabataeans. For more details see 4.4
from Damascus. A stretch of 6 bēru (double-hours) I advanced, (marching) all night long, and came to Ḥululiti. On Mount Hukkurina, a steep mountain, I came up with the tribe of Abiate', son of Te'ri of Kidri (Qedar), and defeated and despoiled him (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317, text no. 825).

We are informed by text no. 826 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317) that the army of Ashurbanipal captured alive Abiate' son of Te'ri and his brother Aimu and that he sent them to Nineveh. He says:

Abiate' (and) Aimu, sons of Te'ri, my hands captured alive. At the command of Assur and Ishtar, in the midst of (the) battle, I bound them hand and foot with iron fetters, and with the plunder of their land, carried them off to Assyria (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 317, text no. 826).

Assyrian inscriptions nos. 828 and 829 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 318 f.) mention a famine which afflicted the Qedarites' land.

Uaite', together with his armies, who had not kept the oath (sworn) to me, who had fled before the weapons of Assur, my lord, and had escaped before them,-the warriorIrra (the pest god) brought them low. Famine broke out among them. To (satisfy) their hunger they ate flesh of their children. Every curse, written down in the oath which they took, was instantly visited (lit., fated) upon them by Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bêl, Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, the queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Arbela, Urta, Nergal (and) Nusku. The young of camels, asses, cattle and sheep, sucked at seven udders (lit., suckling mothers) and could not satisfy their bellies with the milk. The people of Arabia asked questions, the one of the other, saying: “Why is it that such evil has befallen Arabia?” (And answered), saying: “Because we did not keep the solemn (lit., great) oath sworn to Assur; (because) we have sinned against the kindness (shown us by) Assurbanipal, the king beloved of Enlil's heart”. (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 318, text no. 828)

We may perhaps speculate that the cause of this famine was the siege by the Assyrian army laid against Qedarite territory. According to the above-mentioned texts, the Qedarites were so afflicted that they ate their children’s flesh until finally Uaite’’s
warriors mutinied against him. As previously noted, in consequence of this uprising against Uaite', he was taken captive to Nineveh, where Ashurbanipal put a dog-chain upon his neck and made him guard the gate of Nineveh. Inscription no. 829\textsuperscript{182} (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 318 f.) relates that eventually Ashurbanipal took pity upon Uaite' and forgave him, an event which probably occurred near the end of Ashurbanipal’s reign, although we cannot be absolutely certain of this since information about Qedar and the Arabs in general disappears from Assyrian inscriptions.

To conclude, Ashurbanipal had hostile relations with the Qedarites, which translated into actual conflict in several campaigns against them. The key factor in this bad relationship was the support which the Qedarites lent to the Babylonian king Shamash-shum-ukîn in his rebellion against his hostile brother Ashurbanipal. In addition, our study has shown that many kings of Qedar ascended the throne during the short period of Ashurbanipal’s reign, reflecting the political instability in the kingdom of Qedar.

The evidence reviewed in this study suggests that we may identify specifically who was the husband of Adiâ among the two Uaite's, even though the Assyrian inscriptions leave us with no clear indication of which of them was Adiâ’s husband. If we reconstruct the events as they are mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions, we see that when Uaite' son of Hazael made his escape to the Nebaioth land, his nephew Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda ascended the Qedarite throne. After that Ashurbanipal persuaded Uaite' son of

\textsuperscript{182} Luckenbill, II, 1927: 318, text no. 829:

...The armies of Uaite' heard of the onslaught of the weapons of Assur and Ishtar, the great gods, my lords, how they were coming to my aid in battle, and they revolted against him. That one became frightened and left the house into which he had fled....... my hands took him and I brought him to Assyria..... I passed a rope, put a dog chain upon him and made him occupy (lit., guard) a kennel of the east gate of the inner (wall) of Nineveh, which is named nîrib masnaqti adnâte ["entrance to the palace where the world is controlled"]. To extol the glory of Assur, Ishtar and the great gods, my lords, I took pity upon him, and spared his life.
Bir-dadda to come to Nineveh, where he took him captive and sent him to prison. As a result of this action by Ashurbanipal, Adiâ, who, as this study assumes, was the wife of Uaite' son of Bir-dadda, along with Ammu-ladi decided to help Uaite’. Therefore, Ammu-ladi and Adiâ both attacked the Assyrians’ eastern border, but they were defeated and sent to Nineveh. In support of this reconstruction of events is Eph'al’s assumption that after Ashurbanipal’s first campaign against Qedar, Uaite' son of Hazael escaped to Nebaioth land and then became forgotten, after which his nephew Uaite' became king of Qedar (Eph'al 1982: 144). The conclusion that may be drawn from this is that Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda was the person who was thrown into jail in Nineveh and that it was his wife Adiâ who tried to help him. Another point supporting this reconstruction is that when Natnu, king of Nebaioth, tried to establish friendly relations with Ashurbanipal, he sent Uaite' son of Hazael, who had made his escape to Nebaioth land (Musil 1927: 486).

4.3.4 Nebuchadnezzar and Qedar

Musil (1927: 490) states that during Nebuchadnezzar’s reign relations between Qedar and Babylon were hostile and that the Qedarites participated with all the people living in north Arabia in a revolt against Nebuchadnezzar (604-561 BCE). This fits with Jeremiah’s prophecy (Jer. 49: 28-33) that Qedar would be attacked, their tents burned and their cattle and camels seized by Nebuchadnezzar. Moreover, al-Ṭabarî (I: 617) tells about a group of Qedarites who moved from the north of Arabia to al-Anbâr as directed by Nebuchadnezzar. In addition, we find in al-Ṭabarî a description of the similar episode when Nebuchadnezzar conquered a group of Arabs who lived in north Arabia in houses without any locks.183

As stated previously, this Arab group contemporary with Nebuchadnezzar was the Qedarites, since Nebuchadnezzar conquered the Arabs in 599 BCE and this date is identical with the Qedar epoch as evidenced by the Tell El-Maskhuta bowl inscriptions. However, we cannot go deeper into the events of this period because of the shortage of relevant sources.

183 See 3.3.1.a
4.3.5 Gashmu king of Qedar and his son Qaynu

After the above events, Qedar disappears from Assyrian inscriptions. However, during the Persian period Qedar appears under a new king, Gashmu. In addition, Neh. 6:1-14, tells that there was conflict between the returning Israelites, led by Nehemiah, and Gashmu the Arabian. It seems that Gashmu, king of Qedar, Sanballat the Horonite, and others did not accept the intention of Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. The reign of Gashmu, king of Qedar, is probably to be dated between 450 and 430 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 237). Rabinowitz (1959: 6) was a little more precise in stating that the reign of Gashmu probably ended around 440 BCE. Moreover, during Gashmu’s time, the Qedarites became a force to be reckoned with and gave aid to Cambyses during his campaign against Egypt. In fact, Cambyses established good relations with the Arabs because the Arabs in north Arabia had knowledge of how water could be stored and they could provide him with camels to cross the desert (Hitti 2002: 39). According to Herodotus (3. iv: 213), Cambyses II sent his messenger to the king of the Arabians and asked him for help guiding his troops through the desert.

Herodotus’s account relates that Cambyses II asked the Arabs’ for aid, which can be explained by his wish not to enter into conflict with them because they held an important position in north Arabia. Also, his primary concern at this time was conquering Egypt. Moreover, Arabs, especially Qedarites, played a significant role in Lower Egypt as guardians of the Egyptian frontier during the Persian period. This being so, the shrine of Han-Ilat at Tell El-Maskhuta would have been established in the late sixth or early fifth century BCE to serve the religious needs of the Qedarite garrison (Rabinowitz 1956: 9). Moreover, the Qedarite king Qaynu son of Gashmu, who ruled between 430 and 410 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 237), offered some bowls in Han-Ilat’s shrine. The palaeography of the Aramaic inscriptions on these bowls lends a late Persian date to

184 Nehemiah 6: 1 f.: ‘Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had built the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; (though at that time I had not set up the doors upon the gates;) that Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.’ It should be noted that at this time all these minor rulers were under Persian suzerainty.
the Tell El-Maskhuta pieces (Dumbrell 1971: 33f.)\textsuperscript{185}. This means that Qedar maintained good relations with the Persian Empire and also reflects the benefits Qedar received from engaging with the Persians.

To conclude, Qedar played a significant role throughout Arab history in north Arabia. We have traced the history of Qedar taking into account all the information derived from the Biblical narratives and the Assyrian inscriptions while also seeking to benefit from all the discussions of the previous works. Thus, in this section we have tried to draw up a full account of Qedar’s history from the time of Tiglath-Pileser III down to the Persian period. We have discussed the relationship between Qedarite leaders and different powers who had connection with north Arabia. In addition, in this section we have also tried to solve many particular issues in Qedarite history.

\textsuperscript{185}See figure no. 5.
Figure no. 5: one of the bowls from Tell El-Maskhuta bearing an Aramaic inscription:

‘That which Qaynu bar Gesem, king of Qedar, brought in offering to Han-‘Ilat’
4.4 Nebaioth and Na-ba-a-a-ti and their relationship with the Nabataeans

We must take account of the fact that the tribal names Nebaioth and Nabataean are a matter of some controversy since they seem to have been used to designate two different groups of people living in north Arabia. In this section we must therefore examine how these two names are used in Assyrian inscriptions, the Old Testament, and the Tayma graffiti, in order to discover whether or not there was any relation between what appear to have been two distinct groups of people.

The name Nebaioth and the people of Qedar are sometimes associated in Old Testament texts (e.g. Isa. 60: 7; I Chron. 1: 29). A similar association between those two groups of people may be found in Assyrian inscriptions from the time of Ashurbanipal’s expeditions against the Arab land (see below). Nebaioth but not Qedar, also had a relationship with Edom in the Old Testament. The relationship between Nebaioth and Edom in the Old Testament (Gen. 28: 9, 36: 3), plus the appearance of the later Nabataeans in the homeland of the Edomites to the south-east of the Dead Sea, would together suggest that the Biblical name Nebaioth could indicate the later Nabataeans (Bartlett, 1989: 172).

The equation of Nebaioth with the Nabataeans could be persuasive in view of the following considerations. First, these two names seem relatively similar. Second, the historical sources present both of these groups as Arabs. During the seventh century BCE Nebaioth occupied the desert in north Arabia in eastern Edomite territory, while from the fourth century BCE the Nabataeans appeared in north Arabia as a nomadic group living on Edomite land (ibid.).

However, the suggestion that these names might refer to the same group of people has been challenged on linguistic grounds. First, it is observed that the suffix \( t \), found in Assyrian inscriptions (\( Na-ba-a-a-ti \)), in Biblical texts (Nebaioth), and in Jebel Ghunaym texts (\( nbyt \)) is distinct from the emphatic \( t \), which is found in Nabataean inscriptions (\( Nabatu \)) (ibid.: 173) as part of the root NBT. Second, the inflectional endings found in Assyrian texts (\( a-ti \)), Biblical texts (\( -ot \)), and Jebel Ghunaym texts (\( -t \)) seems to indicate the root \( nby \) rather than either the root \( nb\) or \( nbt \) (Eph’al, 1982: 221-223). Additionally,
Winnett and Reed (1970: 9) proposed that the name Nabayāt,\textsuperscript{186} which appeared during the sixth century BCE in north Arabia, might come from the root *nby* rather than *nbt*, the implication of which is that there is no connection between this name and the Nabataean population of Petra from the fourth century BCE onwards. Consequently, the name Nabataean would not be identified with the Assyrian *Na-ba-a-a-ti* and the Biblical name Nebaioth.

Nevertheless, Broom (1973: 1-16) suggested that the Assyrian name *Na-ba-a-a-ti* and the Biblical name Nebaioth might refer to the Nabataeans. Broom’s theory was based on his suggestion that spelling mistakes might have occurred in writing these forms, with resultant confusion. This theory, however, fails to overcome the linguistic objections because it systematically discards the phonetic value of *a-a-a = aya* in *Na-ba-a-a-ti*, *Na-ba-a-a-ta-a-a-a-, ‘which is customary in Assyrian sources’ (Eph’al, 1982: 223, n. 33). Broom’s theory has faced criticism from a series of scholars (Winnett, 1980; 137; Eph’al, 1982: 223; Abu Taleb, 1984: 3 ff.; Graf, 1990: 145). This would suggest that the *Na-ba-a-a-ti* and the Nabataeans are unrelated. This therefore does not support Broom’s theory.

However, that is also the question of whether the form *Na-ba-a-a-ti* in Assyrian inscriptions may be equated with the Biblical name Nebaioth. In an attempt to answer this question Broom (1973: 1) stated that the term *Na-ba-a-a-ti* and the territory *Nabati(ati)* disappeared from the Assyrian inscriptions by the end of the seventh century BCE. This means that this form could have been applied to an older group of people, with the possibility that this group might have become weak or disappeared from the historical scene soon after the sixth century BCE.

Moreover, we find Biblical support for an association between the Edomites and Nebaioth. Thus, Gen. 36: 3 indicates the close association of the Edomites and Nebaioth with its reference to ‘Bashemath, Ishma’el’s daughter, sister of Nebaioth’, while we find

\textsuperscript{186} See, for example, text no. 11 (Winnett and Reed 1970: 99): ‘Faḥak b. Ḫaggāg gave assistance to Ṣalm in the war against Nabayāt.’
in Gen. 28: 9\textsuperscript{187} a reference to another wife of Esau: Mahalath the sister of Nebaioth. Both texts suggest that there was a relationship between Nebaioth and the Edomites. As Winnett and Reed assert (1970: 100), the Edomites were pure nomads who came from central Najd, which comes close to our earlier observation that Nebaioth lived not far from north Najd. Finally, in the prophetic text of Isa. 60: 7\textsuperscript{188} the Qedarites and Nebaioth are associated together as payers of tribute to a future glorious Zion.

In addition, Tayma texts 11, 13, and 15\textsuperscript{189} may, in fact, help in locating the land of Nebaioth, since they suggest that Nebaioth had relations with north Arabia. Winnett and Reed (1970: 99) noted that the name NBYT is associated with Dedan in these three texts from the region of Tayma, the necessary implication being that they dwelt near that region and were in a significant position, just as the Assyrian inscriptions referred to people who lived in North Arabia as Nabaitu. Winnett and Reed further suggested that this group of people could be identified with the Biblical Nebaioth, adding, however, that none of the ancient sources specify the exact place in North Arabia inhabited by Nebaioth.

Winnett and Reed suggested that the land of the Nebaioth lay to the southeast across the Nafūd, a massive area where Uaite' son of Hazael, king of Qedar (see below) would have been safe from any Assyrian army attack (ibid.). This accords with Albright’s suggestion (1956: 12) that the most likely area to have been the homeland of Nebaioth was probably Hā'il, since the first oasis one comes to after crossing Nafūd is Hā'il\textsuperscript{190} (Winnett and Reed 1970: 100). Moreover, it is well known that the sons of Ishmael lived

\textsuperscript{187} 'Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael, and sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had.'

\textsuperscript{188} 'All the flocks of Qedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.'

\textsuperscript{189} See texts no. 11, 13 and 15 (Winnett and Reed 1970: 99 ff.) those texts were written in Aramaic. For more details see footnote 95.

\textsuperscript{190} In addition, the Bible mentions Nebaioth among the sons of Ishmael who lived in north in Gen 25: 13:

"these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nenaioth; and Qedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, 15 Hadad, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah".
in north Arabia and Nebaioth is considered the firstborn of Ishmael according to Genesis 25:13.

Our suggestion is that Assyrian texts from Ashurbanipal’s reign make mention of the Nebaioth known from Bible and from Tayma when recording how Uaite’s son of Hazael, king of Qedar refused to pay tribute to the king of Assyria, in consequence of which Ashurbanipal attacked Uaite’s territory and defeated him, so that Uaite escaped into the land of Nabaitu/Nebaioth (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313, text no. 818).

The houses of the plain, the tents, their dwellings, I set on fire and burned them. Uaite’, --evil befell him and he fled alone to the land of Nabaite.

Accordingly the land of Nabaitu must have been far enough away to provide good refuge for Uaite’ son of Hazael. Therefore, we need to find more information or clues from Assyrian inscriptions which might help us to know more about a land that was far enough away to shelter Uaite’ son of Hazael from the wrath of the Assyrian army.

Luckenbill text no. 822 seems to suggest that the land of Nabaitu was at a remote distance from Assyrian territories.\textsuperscript{191} In addition, this tribe had never paid tribute or sent messengers to the predecessors of Ashurbanipal, which reflects the fact that there were no relations between Assyria and Nabaitu prior to Ashurbanipal’s reign because they lived far away from Assyrian lands. Moreover, this text mentions one of Nabaitu’s kings, Natnu\textsuperscript{192}:

\begin{quote}
Trustning in Assur, Sin, Shamash, Adad, Bêl, Nabû, Ishtar of Nineveh, the queen of Kidmuri, Ishtar of Aebela, Urtu, Nergal (and) Nusku; Natnu, king of the land of Nabaitu, whose place is afar off, into whose presence Uaite’ had fled, heard of the power of Assur, who supported me, (and) although he never had sent his messenger to the kings, my fathers, and had not greeted their majesties, impelled by fear of the conquering arms of Assur, he greeted my majesty, impelled by fear of the conquering arms of Assur.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{191} Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314, text no. 818; Eph'al 1982: 221.

\textsuperscript{192} From the Ištar slab we also know that Natnu’s successor was his son Nuhuru. In addition, Eph'al states that Natnu ruled his people for a long time and led many campaigns against Assyrian borderlands, and that when Ashurbanipal attacked Arab territories in his second war against them, Natnu was approximately in the twenty-fourth year of his reign (Thompson 1933: 80; Eph'al 1982: 169).
Assur, he greeted my majesty. As for Abiate', son of Te'ri, whose thoughts were not good, who did not keep the oath of great gods,-he plotted rebellion against me and made common cause with Natnu, king of Nabaitu. They mustered their armies for a hostile attack against my border (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315 f., text no. 822).

We can deduce that the Assyrian inscriptions used the forms Nabiate\textsuperscript{193} and Nabaitu\textsuperscript{194} to refer to Nebaioth, while it remains uncertain whether the word Nabaitai in Assyrian inscriptions could refer to Nabataeans.\textsuperscript{195}

In fact, by reading the Assyrian inscriptions carefully we can find that the Assyrian inscriptions make clear association between Uaite' son of Hazael and Nabaitu/Nebaioth,\textsuperscript{196} who we have identified above, while, on the other hand, we find in Luckenbill text no. 821 association between Abiate' son of Te'ri and the Nabaitai, since this text tells how Abiate' joined hands with the Nabaitai in their rebellion against Ashurbanipal. One may speculate that the Nabaitai were already under Ashurbanipal’s control or at least not far from his military operations. This means that the Nabaitai were totally different from the Nabaitu/Nebaioth and their king Natnu, because the latter was far away from the Assyrian lands. Consequently, these two names Nabaitu and Nabaitai must be seen to apply to two distinct groups.

\textsuperscript{193} See text no. 818 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313).
\textsuperscript{194} See text no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316).
\textsuperscript{195} Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315, text no. 821:

At the command of Assur, Ishtar and the great gods, my lords, I overcame and defeated Abiate' (and) Aimu, son(s) of Te'ri, who had come to the aid of Shamash-shum-ukîn, my hostile brother, (and had attempted) to enter Babylon. The others who had got into Babylon, (driven) by distress and hunger, ate each other’s flesh. To save their lives they came forth from Babylon, and my forces, who had been stationed (there) against Shamash-shum-ukîn, defeated them a second time. That one fled alone, and in order to save his life, laid hold of my feet. I took pity upon him, made him swear an oath by the great gods, and in place of Uaite', son Hazael, set him up as king over Arabia. But he made common cause with the Nabaitai (Nabataeans), did not respect (lit., fear) the oath by the great gods and plundered the border of my land.

\textsuperscript{196} Uaite’ son of Hazael made his escape into Nebaioth’s land when Ashurbanipal attacked Qedarite territory. See Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313, text no. 818. Moreover, when Ashurbanipal defeated his enemies in 648 BCE and the troops of Ashurbanipal were able to attack as far as Nebaioth’s land, the king of Nebaioth, Natnu, become threatened with Assyrian attack and so decided to hand Uaite’ son of Hazael to Ashurbanipal as warranty of his loyalty (Musil 1927: 486).
Moreover, text no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316) makes another link between Abiate’ and the Nabaitai, since it relates the episode of Abiate’’s attack against the Assyrian borderland.

...from Nineveh, the beloved city of Ishtar, spouse of Enlil, they continued their pursuit of Uaite’, king of Arabia, and Abiate’ who had come on with the forces of Nabaitu. In Simanu, the month of Sin, the first and foremost son of Enlil, the twenty-fifth day, (the day of) the procession of Bêlit of Babylon, the honoured among the great gods, I departed from the city of Hadattâ. In Laribda, a station (surrounded) with a wall of kunikkû stones, I pitched my camp, beside the cisterns of water. My soldiers dug for water (to quench) their thirst, then marched on, going over a parched and thirsty stretch, to Hurarina. Between the cities of Iarki and Asalla, in the desert, a far off place, where there are no wild beasts (lit., beasts of the plain) and (where) birds of heaven build no nests, I defeated the Isamme’, the tribe of the god Atarsamain, and the Nabaitai .... People, asses, camels and sheep in countless numbers, I took from them as booty. For a stretch of 8 berê (“double-hours”) my armies marched victoriously. They returned in safety, and in Asalla they drank their fill of water (lit., to satiety) (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316, text no. 823).

The above text mentions the swift response of Ashurbanipal and how he followed Abiate’ son of Te’ri and Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda into their land and how further, during the course of Ashurbanipal’s campaign, he defeated the Nabaitai because of their alliance with Abiate’. This means that the land of Nabaitai was situated somewhere along the course of Ashurbanipal’s campaign. Moreover, the same text mentions the aid lent by Nabaitu/Nebaioth to Abiate’ in his attack against the Assyrian borderlands. Thus, the Assyrian inscriptions inform us that there were two different groups of people (Nabaitu and Nabaitai), whose distinct names do not merely reflect a spelling mistake.

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197 Broome (1973: 2) states that the first appearance of this word Na-ba-a-a-ti was during Ashurbanipal’s campaign against Arabia between 668 and 640 BCE when Shamash-shumu-ukin rebelled against his hostile brother Ashurbanipal. He asserts (1973: 7) that Nabatu was well known during Tiglath-Pileser’s reign, but disappeared from view after that time. However, as we have seen, the name Nabaitu is mentioned also during Ashurbanipal’s time.

198 Whom Luckenbill regards Nabaitai as Nabataean.

199 Natnu, king of Nebaioth, participated in the campaign of Abiate’ son of Te’ri against Assyrian territory (Eph'al 1982: 144).
To conclude, Assyrian inscriptions distinguish clearly between Nabaitu/ Nebaioth and the Nabaitai\textsuperscript{200}, mentioning the two groups separately in individual texts,\textsuperscript{201} such as text no. 823. Moreover, Assyrian inscription no. 822 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315) describes the land of Nabaitu/ Nebaioth as lying at a great distance away from Assyrian territories and also records that they never paid tribute to any of Ashurbanipal’s forefathers. In addition, when Uaite' son of Hazael sought a safe refuge secure from attacks by Assyrian troops, he escaped into the land of Nabaitu/ Nebaioth, again implying that this land was far beyond Assyria’s reach.

Further, one king of Nabaitu /Nebaioth is specifically mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions. i.e. Natnu, who is said to have lent aid to Abiate' king of Qedar in the latter’s offensive against Assyrian territory in the mid seventh century BCE.\textsuperscript{202} In addition, as we have seen, Assyrian records associate Nabaitu /Nebaioth with the Qedarites, suggesting that they were in coalition against the Assyrian Empire or at least formed a friendly alliance assisting each other in asserting their freedom from Assyrian authority.

The Tayma inscriptions also suggest that Nebaioth inhabited territory nearby, while Biblical texts associate Nebaioth with Qedar and also with the Edomites, who may have dwelt not far from Najd.

Ultimately, from all the above discussion, we can conclude that Nebaioth and the Nabaitai/Nabataeans were different groups of people living contemporarily with each other during the seventh century BCE. In addition, Nebaioth’s homeland was far away from Assyrian territory since Uaite' son Hazael sought refuge there from Ashurbanipal’s campaign into Arab lands during his second war against the Qedarites when he crossed Nabaitai/Nabataean territory before attacking Qedarite land. In fact, we may safely envisage the locations of Qedar, the Nabaitai/Nabataeans, and Nebaioth as being situated sequentially from north to south with first the Nabaitai/Nabataeans in Petra, then the Qedarites in Adummatu, and then Nebaioth in Hā’il. Finally, although, Nebaioth and the

\textsuperscript{200} Our suggestion is that this group might be identified as the later Nabataeans.
\textsuperscript{201} This text also confutes the theory of Broome (1973: 16) that Nebaioth were predecessors of the Nabataeans.
\textsuperscript{202} See text no. 823 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316); Musil 1927: 486.
Nabaitai/Nabataeans were contemporaries, the former group was declining while the latter group was increasing in importance from the end of the sixth century BCE.

4.5 Massa’

The Assyrian records mention an Ishmaelite tribe who lived in north Arabia, so that in Tiglath-pileser III’s stela (Lawson Younger in *Context of Scripture II*, 288) we find Massa’ mentioned among Temā, Sab’ai’, Badanu and other groups, all living together in the eastern borderland of Assyrian territory during Tiglath-Pileser III’s reign (744-727 BCE). This inscription additionally suggests that Massa’ may well have paid tribute to the Assyrian Empire. It declares, moreover,

The people of Massa’,  

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* a Temā, Sab’ai’,  
  b Hayapā,  
  c Badanu,  
  d Ḥatte, Idiba’īlu, [...] who dwell on the border of the countries of the setting sun (western lands) [of whom no one (of my ancestors) knew and whose place is far] away, the fame of my lordship [(and of) my heroic deeds they heard, and they made supplication to] my lordship. [They brought before me]: gold, silver, [camels, she-camels, all kinds of spices], their tribute, as one; [and they kissed] my feet. I appointed [Idibi’ilu as the prebend of the “Gatekeeper”] facing Egypt [...] of Aššur I placed therein. […] I made and […] the yoke of Aššur, my lord, [I placed over them… in all the lands through which] I have marched.
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Scholars agree that the tribal name Mas’ai mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions refers to the same tribe mentioned in the Bible as a son of Ishmael:

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham’s son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham: and these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam, and Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa; Hadar, and Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah (Gen. 25: 12-15).

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203 As Retsö (2003: 134) notes, ‘the sunset border’ of Assyrian land is the phrase commonly used to refer to Syria.

However, the location of this tribe is a controversial issue. Dhorme (1910: 196) pointed to the southern part of Arabia as the tribe’s homeland, but this theory has been rejected for two substantial reasons. First, as we have seen, Massa’ was one of Ishmael’s sons, who never lived in south Arabia (Alī, I, 1968: 580). Second, as is well known, the Assyrian Empire did not extend as far as south Arabia, although, as mentioned above, the Assyrians did come into contact with Massa’ and mentioned them in their inscriptions (Musil 1926: 287). For example, an Assyrian officer who sojourned in Niba’āti reported that when the king of Niba’āti departed from his land, Malik-Kamaru from the Massa’ tribe attacked and plundered numbers of Niba’āti people, but one member of the Niba’āti escaped and came to the city to tell his king (Musil 1926: 478). More details regarding this episode are to be found in the earlier publication of Rawlinson (1850: 54), where we learn that the Niba’āti territory was attacked from the north or the northwest by Massa’. Moreover, Musil (1926: 478) noted that according to Assyrian inscriptions the territory of the Niba’āti was in the southern part of Sirḥān, from which he concluded that the territory of Massa’ should be north of Wādī Sirḥān, somewhere near the southern border of Damascus. In contrast, Retsō (2003: 135) declares that Massa’ is located between ‘Dumah on the northern shore of the Nafud sand-desert and Tayma. The most likely location for them is thus around the western end of that desert.’

4.6 Sheba or Saba including the question of the queen of Sheba

Many excavations have been made in south Arabia, in the course of which enormous quantities of inscriptions have been discovered. This fieldwork has allowed scholars to reconstruct the history of that territory in the Arabian Peninsula (van Beek 1974: 41; Hoyland 2001: 8-10). Nevertheless, since the inscriptions are written without any date references, it is still unfortunately difficult to write a sequential narrative of the early history of south Arabia. It is, in fact, difficult to assign inscriptions to any specific era until the first century CE (Hoyland 2001: 36). The Sabaeans were one of many

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205Musil (1926: 478) believed that this tribal name was to be equated with the Biblical name Nebaioth.
groups of people who inhabited south Arabia and it is easy to identify their artefacts among others since they worshipped the god Almaqah *(ibid.*, 37). As archaeologists have demonstrated, the main city of the Sabaeans was Marib, but that does not mean that they limited themselves to this city. In fact, their military operations added many territories which surrounded Marib, until they commanded the whole region of Jawf. Moreover, the Sabaeans imposed upon these new lands the worship of their own god Almaqah *(ibid.)*.

The early reference to the Sabaeans in north Arabia is found in the Assyrian inscriptions of the mid-eighth century BCE, since we find mention of Saba in the Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727) inscriptions as a tribute-payer alongside some groups of people who inhabited north Arabia, such as Temai, Haiapai, and Badana:

Moreover, another of Tiglath-Pileser’s inscriptions emphasizes that the Sabaeans lived in north Arabia on the western border of the Assyrian Empire during the eighth century BCE;

The people of Massa’, d Temã, Sab’ai’, e [Hayapâ], f Badanu, Ḥatte, Idiba’ilu, […] who dwell] on the border of the countries of the setting sun (western lands) [of whom no one (of my ancestors) knew and whose place is far] away, the fame of my lordship [(and of) my heroic deeds they heard, and they made supplication to] my lordship. [They brought before me]: gold, silver, [camels, she-camels, all kinds of spices], their tribute, as one; [and they kissed] my feet (Lawson Younger in Context of Scripture II, 288).

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206 Van Beek (1974: 41 f.) believed that the isolation of Sheba in south Arabia allowed its culture to remain unique and unaffected by other cultures such as those of the Egyptians or Assyrians. In addition, the land of Sheba in south Arabia was not attacked until the fourth century CE.

207 See section 4.5; see also texts nos. 778, 779, and 818 (Luckenbill, I, 1926: 279; II, 1927: 287, 293).

208 In addition, Saba is mentioned with the Haiappeans and Idiba’ileans in text no. 778 (Luckenbill, I, 1926: 279):

…Samsi, queen of Arabia, who had violated the oath by Shamash… to the city of Ezasi… Arabia, in [Saba’]… [her people] in her camp… she was afraid… I imposed upon her… submitted at my feet… [Sabeans], [Haiappeans]……………… Hatteans], [Idiba’ileans]… of the border of the lands of the setting sun… [the glory] of my majesty… gold, silver, [camels]… all kinds of [herbs], as their tribute [they brought before me, as one]… ] they kissed my feet… a palace, befitting my royalty, I built… Idibi’lu I appointed as overseer over…
In addition, from the Assyrian inscriptions we find that Sargon II (721-705) received tribute from the king of Egypt, the Sabaeans, and the queen of Qedar, Samsi. Thus, either the Sabaeans lived in north Arabia or they had established a colony there. Eph'al (1982: 109) suggests that It'amara, who is mentioned in a Sargonic inscription, may have been a king or clan leader of Sheba who inhabited north Arabia, adding that it is difficult to imagine any connection with Sheba in south Arabia.

I received the tribute of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, Samsi, the queen of Arabia, Ithamar, the Sabean: gold, herbs of the mountain, horses and camels (Lawson, *Context of Scripture II*, 2000: 296).

Moreover, Sennacherib (704-681) mentions in his inscriptions that he received some sort of gift from the king of Saba, Karibi-ilu. 'Alī says that the king of Assyria took this money and built the Bit-Akitu temple, the purpose of which was not just for worship but also to celebrate the New Year’s Day and other festivals. 'Alī adds that the gift of Karibi-ilu, contained precious stones, incense (*rikke tabutu*), silver, and gold, products for which south Arabia was famous ('Alī, I, 1968:589). An Assyrian inscription describes this gift as following:

While laying the foundation of the akītu-house, the audience gift of Karib-il, king of the land Saba — pappardilû-stone, choice stones, (and) fine aromatics — [wa]s presented to me (50) and from that audience gift I laid stones (and) aromatics in its foundation. Like ..., I ... silver, gold, carnelian, lapis lazuli, ḫulālu-stone, muššaru-stone, pappardilû-stone, papparmīnu-stone, dāmātu-paste, (and) all of the finest aromatics in the foundation of that akītu-house. I sprinkled that foundation with perfumed oil (and) fine oil as (abundantly as) river water (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Sennacherib 168, ine 48).

In 'Alī’s opinion, Karibi-ilu, king of Saba, was chief or leader of a Sabaean colony inhabiting north Arabia ('Alī, I, 1968: 589).
4.6.1 Sabaeans in the Biblical texts:

The list of Keturah’s children reveals that Sheba was one of the several groups of people who lived in north Arabia (Musil 1926: 217; Eph'al 1982: 227). In addition, in Gen. 25:1-3 we find that Sheba and Dedan were sons of Jokshan, suggesting the probability of their living near to each other in north Arabia:

And Abraham took another wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah. And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.

Eph'al (1982: 88) states that archaeological studies reveal that Sheba definitely existed at least in the eighth century BCE, since Sheba is mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions. Also at that time, he states, Sheba may have inhabited north Arabia and north Sinai. In addition, he states that the determination Lū, which prefixes the name of Sheba in north Arabia, means that they were nomads.

Moreover, generally in the Bible we find Sheba associated with Dedan during the sixth century BCE, e.g. in Ezek. 38: 13. In fact, this verse in Ezekiel indicates that these two groups of people were merchants who may have traded in north Arabia, since Dedan was located in that region (Musil 1926: 217). In addition, Job 6:19 (‘The caravans of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them’) mentions how the Sabaean caravans crossed Tema (‘Alī, II,1968: 581) and also from this verse we can speculate that...

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209 Alī (II, 1968: 581) states that the Sabaeans mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions from the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III lived near Tayma or in Dedan and worked in trade and camel-breeding. He adds that the Sabaeans mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions are to be identified with the Sabaeans mentioned in the Biblical texts.

210 ‘Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company to take prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?’
Tema and Sheba were involved in trading the same kind of goods, such as gold and precious stones.

Psalm 72:10 mentions tributary gifts brought from Sheba to King Solomon (Pritchard 1974: 17). Retsö notes that the text of this Psalm does not mention frankincense, although in Retsö’s opinion Sheba at that time was in south Arabia. Retsö (2003: 175) suggests that Psalm 72 may have been written during the time when the Sabaeans were in south Arabia and that they were connected with Judea prior to the collapse of the kingdom of Judea in 587 BCE, i.e. before the trade in frankincense became established approximately at the end of the seventh century during Hezekiah’s reign. The absence of any mention of frankincense in Psalm 72 may support Retsö’s suggestion, since it is difficult to imagine that the writer of the Psalm forgot to mention the invaluable frankincense among the Sabaeans’ gift to Solomon. In addition, Retsö suggests that Psalm 72 might have been written during the time of kings Hezekiah or Josiah, a period when it was more likely for there to have been a connection between south Arabia and Palestine than in the time of Solomon. Consequently, a redactor of the Psalm may have substituted the name of Solomon for one or other of those kings, imagining that the connection between Solomon and the Sabaeans had been established at a time when the Sabaeans inhabited south Arabia (ibid.).

Taking into account the relationship between the Sabaeans and the Minaeans, it becomes reasonably clear that during the first millennium BCE these two groups enjoyed hegemony over the Arabian trade and that between them they controlled the trade routes in south Arabia. In addition, as Musil (1926: 243) observed, these two groups of people had ties of kinship and their trade was not limited to their territories in south Arabia but spread across all the great oases along the trade roads between southwest and northwest Arabia. Indeed, Musil argued, colonies of Sabaeans were established in all those oases,

211 Ezek. 27: 22 lists among the produce of Sheba spices, precious stones, and gold.
212 The story of the queen of Sheba’s visit to Solomon is narrated some thousand years after his era in short accounts contained in I Kings 10 and again in II Chron. 9.
213 Gen. 10: 28 and I Chron. 1: 22 state that Sheba was a son of Joktan, implying that they inhabited south Arabia (Eph’al 1982: 227).
where they governed and transacted business with the indigenous people as overseers. In support of this hypothesis, he observed, first, that the nomadic chiefs or leaders in Syria and north Arabia did not involve themselves in a political confederation but preferred to rule their groups separately; and, second, that the oases in north Arabia and south Syria were under merchants’ control. Thus, as we have seen, nearby military forces and political powers, such as the Assyrian Empire, negotiated with those merchants, originally from south Arabia, rather than with nomadic chiefs or leaders. Consequently, we find Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions referring to Sabaeans located\(^{214}\) to the south of the Dead Sea rather than mentioning the names of indigenous peoples in this region. Moreover, Musil added, during the second part of the eighth century BCE, an Assyrian military force penetrated into the south of Ma'ân when they mistakenly thought that they were entering the territories of the great traders, the Sabaeans (\textit{ibid.}).

In Musil’s opinion, Saba mentioned in Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscriptions is identical with Biblical Sheba, who were traders in Tema (Job 6: 19), and Musil felt that these traders must have inhabited territory not far from Tema on the trade road that leads from south Arabia to the north (Musil 1926: 288). Scholars also believe that the Sabaeans inhabited Dedan, known nowadays as the oasis of al-Ula’, and that one of their leaders is mentioned in a Sargonic inscription\(^{215}\) from 707 BCE, i.e. It'amara, who paid tribute to Sargon (Musil 1926: 288; Retsö 2003: 173).

In fact, reference to Sheba’s habitation in north Arabia may be found in Biblical texts, as we have seen above in the Keturah list (Retsö 2003: 173). In addition, the son-father relationship between Saba and Ra'amah in Gen 10:7 implies that Saba was involved in trade. Moreover, it seems that all the peoples named in this verse lived in north Arabia (Eph'al 1982: 227; Retsö 2003: 174). Moreover, Ezek. 27: 22 refers to Sheba’s and Ra'amah’s trading activities and describes their goods, which included gold, balsam and precious stones. Again, in Isaiah 60: 6, there is a prophecy that many of Sheba’s and Midian’s goods shall come to Zion, including gold and frankincense. Musil stated that it

\(^{214}\) See section 3.2.1.a (footnote no. 65).
was clear from this verse that the goods of Sheba came from south Arabia and passed through Midianite territory at that time. He added the comment that the caravans of Sheba passed through Tema or nearby at that time because it was difficult to pass through the Nefûd desert (Musil 1926: 289; al-Said 2000: 11 f.; Hausleiter 2010: 220).

During the fifth century BCE Job 1: 14 f. indicates that the Sabaeans lived in north Arabia and engaged in looting and plundering their neighbours. We may speculate that the Sabaeans lived a nomadic existence in north Arabia, dwelling from time to time in tents. We may also speculate that they raised animals and used some camels in warfare, while on the other hand their cattle might sometimes be looted by their neighbours, or they might pay their animals as tribute when defeated in warfare. The description of the lifestyle of the Sabaeans and their behaviour found in Job 1: 14 f. does seem to indicate that the writer had knowledge about Sabaean customs and placed Job near the oases inhabited by the Sabaeans to the south of the Dead Sea (Driver 1921: 34; Musil 1926: 289).

On the other hand, in Gen. 10: 7 Seba appears among the sons of Kûsh and brothers of Ra'mah, the father of Sheba, which implies that Sheba inhabited territory in south Arabia. Retsö (2003: 174) states that the mystery in the Biblical texts of Sheba’s location could be a result of disorder in the chronology of the Biblical texts, since the information in Psalm 72 cannot be substantiated prior to 700 BCE (Retsö 2003: 174).

Referring to Isa. 45:14, where mention is made of the contiguity between Kûsh and Sheba in the mid-sixth century BCE, Retsö (2003: 174) suggests that if Kûsh in this verse was the term used to designate Nubia, it would be more likely that Sheba at that

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216 Gen. 10:7: ‘And the sons of Cush; Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtecha: and the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.’
217 Eph'al (1982: 227) observes that even though most of Cush’s sons inhabited south Arabia, Gen 10: 7 mentions Sheba and Dedan as sons of Raamah, which suggests that these two groups of people lived in north Arabia.
218 Isaiah 45: 14 reads as follows: ‘Thus saith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabaeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be
time inhabited south Arabia. In fact, information about the habitation of Sheba in south Arabia may be found in later texts of the Old Testament, such as Jer. 6: 20:

To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? Your burnt offering are not acceptable.

Similarly, in Isa. 60: 6, \(^{219}\) which was written sometime at the end of the sixth century, we find reference to the frankincense trade. Retsö (2003: 174) notes that the term ‘frankincense’ (lebônâ) was well known in Judah from 600 BCE onward with reference to the south Arabian trade, which means that Sheba at that time lived in south Arabia.

As we have seen in the Old Testament texts cited above, there seem to be two Shebas: one of them in north Arabia near Dedan active since the mid eighth century or prior to this time, \(^{220}\) and the other in south Arabia, whose presence there is testified to in biblical texts from the beginning of the seventh century BCE (Retsö 2003: 174). In addition, if we take into account the Keturah list, we can speculate that the Israelites had links with Sheba in north Arabia and later with Sheba in south Arabia. Indeed, the gradual progress in identifying the political situation in the North West of the Arabian Peninsula may have caused some misunderstanding of Sheba’s roots. Thus, the version which mentions the sons of Keturah might be the oldest relevant text in the Old Testament which is dated back to the eighth century BCE, since it assumes that Sheba

\[\text{thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee…’}

\[\text{\textsuperscript{219}}\text{Isa. 60: 6:}\]

‘The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; they all shall come from Sheba: they shall bring gold and frankincense.’

\[\text{\textsuperscript{220}}\text{As we have seen, Tiglath-Pileser’s inscriptions of 744 and 727 BCE mention Saba, while Retsö says we have evidence that Saba existed in north Arabia during the tenth century (Retsö 2003: 174).}\]
was one of the groups of people who inhabited north Arabia (Retsö 2003: 174). In fact, Sabaeans in north Arabia are mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions containing Tiglath-Pileser III’s annals (748 BCE), while Sabaeans in south Arabia are mentioned in Sabaean inscriptions from the eighth century BCE when the Mukarrib 221 of the Sabaeans conquered Minaean territory and offered incense to the god Almaqah (Jumaylī 1976: 72). However, the relationship between these two groups of Sabaeans remains somewhat unclear (Eph'al 1982: 88; Retsö, 2003: 175).

To conclude, it seems we have two possibilities. The first possibility is that the Sabaeans originally inhabited south Arabia and may have established colonies in north Arabia (Eph'al 1982: 88). In other words, the Sabaeans who inhabited north Arabia were commercial agents of the south Sabaeans. The second possibility is that the Sabaeans originally lived in the tenth century in the north, but moved into south Arabia during the eighth century BCE. The present writer, however, tends toward the first suggestion, that the Sabaeans in the north were a commercial colony in Dedan from the south Sabaeans, as indeed happened later with the Minaeans (von Wissmann, I, 1964: 85 f.; Retsö 2003: 175).

4.6.2 The queen of Sheba and her visit to king Solomon

Saba/Sheba in south Arabia was a wealthy country with an economy based on trade in incense, precious stones, gold and spices. Historical sources testify to the fact that Sheba was famous in trade and transportation of goods from south Arabia to Palestine. This long distance of something over 1,400 km was under Sheba’s control and goods travelled along this great distance in safety, reflecting the fact that Sheba was a strong state (van Beek 1974: 40). In addition, the political culture in Sheba allowed women to rule as queens over their people, an egalitarian attitude which was paralleled in different Near Eastern societies at that time, for example in Egypt of the Eighteenth

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221 The Mukarrib was the religious leader of the people (Eph'al 1982: 229). In addition, historians divide Sabaean history in south Arabia into two periods: the first referred to as the Mukarrībs reign (800-650 BCE) and the second referred to as the kings reign (650-115 BCE) (Jumaylī, 1976: 73).
Dynasty where Hatshepsut ruled as pharaoh, and similarly in Israel, which had its charismatic female leader in the person of Deborah (Pritchard 1974: 40).

The list of Keturah suggests that relations between Sheba and the Israelites may have gone back to 850 BCE or earlier. Retsö states that this early Sheba may have inhabited a region in north Arabia because it is difficult to imagine how the Israelites could have had links with Sheba in south Arabia before they forged links with Sheba in the north, and so he assumes that the queen of Sheba could have dwelt in north Arabia (Retsö 2003: 175).

This is the way in which the narrative of I Kings 10: 1-10 refers to the queen of Sheba’s visit to King Solomon:

The queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s fame and came to test him with difficult questions. She arrived in Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels laden with spices and an immense quantity of gold and precious stones. Having reached Solomon, she discussed with him everything that she had in mind, and Solomon had an answer for all her questions; none of them was too obscure for the king to answer for her. When the queen of Sheba saw how very wise Solomon was, the palace which he had built, the food at his table…it left her breathless. And she said to the king: ‘The report I heard in my own country about your wisdom in handling your affairs was true then…Blessed be Yahweh your God who has shown you His favour by setting you on the throne of Israel’…And she presented the king with a hundred and twenty talents of gold and great quantities of spices and precious stones; no such wealth of spices ever came again as those which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.

The above text is generally rejected as a historical fabrication composed with the deliberate purpose of praising Solomon and his wisdom. Hoyland (2001: 38) states it is difficult to imagine that the queen of Sheba inhabited south Arabia at that time, since there is no evidence to prove that the Sabaeans existed as an entity in the tenth century in Arabic literature mentions the episode of the visit to Solomon of the queen of Sheba, who is generally referred to by the name Bilqis who lived in south Arabia (Ibn Khaldūn, II: 57).
south Arabia. In addition, many important excavations have recently been made at different sites in south Arabia (e.g. at Yala and Hajar ibn Humayd), where potsherds dated to the early first millennium have been found. Thus, these new discoveries suggest that the south Arabians traded outside their lands in the distant past and had contacts with north Arabia at least as early as the 800s BCE. Consequently, Hoyland states that even the above Biblical passage, intended to praise Solomon and his God, may reflect the fact that relations between south and north Arabia had been established by the tenth century, which implies that Sheba had colonies in north Arabia (Hoyland 2001: 38 f.).

On the other hand, evidence for the historical reality of the queen of Sheba is weakened on account of several observations (Retsö 2003: 175). In fact, there is no tangible evidence that endorses the presence of a queen of Sheba. We have the list of Sheba’s rulers from the eighth century BCE until the Ethiopian attack against south Arabia in the sixth century CE and none contains her name.223 Neither is her name mentioned in thousands of south Arabian inscriptions (Kitchen 1994: 190-222). There were some Arab queens during the period 738-650, but the assumption is that the queen of Sheba, if she existed, met Solomon in the tenth century BCE (Pritchard 1974: 17; van Beek 1974: 40; Retsö 2003: 175), which means that none of the Arab queens mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions may be identified with the queen of Sheba.224

In fact, because this story clearly belongs to religious literature (see below), we need to find strong evidence to support its historicity. Retsö notes that the Israelites seem to have had links with the Sabaeans in the north during the Israelite kings’ time, links which are reflected in the Keturah list. He concludes therefore that this story may have

223 Ibn Khaldun (II: 57) mentions among Yemeni rulers the queen Bilqis al-Yashruh, who killed Yasser al-Harith and ascended Saba’s throne in south Arabia during Solomon’s reign in the tenth century BCE.
224 Hitti (2002: 42) suggests that the queen of Sheba may have been a Qedarite queen, but this suggestion cannot be accepted for two reasons. First, no queen of Qedar is known before the eighth century, despite the fact that the queen of Sheba is reputed to have lived during the tenth century. Second, all the historical sources such as Assyrian inscriptions and Biblical texts clearly distinguish between Saba and Qedar, so it is unlikely for there to have been confusion between those two different groups.
been created and projected backwards to Solomon’s time because it is difficult to imagine that the narrator forgot to mention frankincense among Sheba’s gifts (Retsö 2003: 176).

However, in the present writer’s opinion, it is difficult totally to reject this story, especially if we take into account its widespread reappearance in different cultures and religions. While not all commonly received tales have a historical foundation, we need to pay serious regard to the fact that many cultures have embraced this story in general outline. We should further bear in mind that most of those cultures have accepted Arab women as queens in ancient history. This convention is also supported by Assyrian inscriptions which mention Arab women as rulers over their people.

Moreover, Retsö contradicts himself when he asserts that this story could have been created after Solomon’s time and projected backwards to Solomon’s reign. He suggests that this story could have arisen when links were formed with Saba in south Arabia during the reign of King Hezekiah. But Retsö himself says that frankincense entered Jerusalem in the seventh century BCE (Retsö 2003: 175 f.). If we are to place any weight on the absence of any reference to frankincense among the gifts brought to Solomon by the queen of Sheba, the indication is that this story was written prior to the time of frankincense entering Jerusalem; in other words, it is older than the seventh century. In other words, the absence of frankincense from the Biblical passage is evidence that it was written before the frankincense trade became established during the seventh century BCE, since otherwise frankincense must surely have been mentioned in the narrative. Additionally, it is important to take into account the appearance of the Arab queens in north Arabia mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions during the eighth century.

We find the story of the queen of Sheba and Solomon in Judaic tradition (Silberman 1974: 65 ff.), as well as in Islamic tradition. In fact, the Saba narrative in the Qur’an does not contain new information; its purpose rather is to teach the lesson that the Sabaeans incurred punishment because of their sins, a story which became widespread in Arabic literature thereafter. The Bible and the Qur’an each demonstrate a different depth of understanding of this story, which makes it difficult to accept that the source of this story in the Qur’an was the Biblical narrative. In fact, the Qur’anic version of the tale does not mention Solomon, but merely a rich king, whom it designates a prophet like Noah, Abraham, and others. The Qur’an adds that the queen of Sheba became a believer after her meeting with Solomon (Watt 1974: 89-94). The story of the queen of Sheba’s visit recurs in Ethiopian tradition (Ullendorff 1974: 104). Christian tradition also mentions the meeting between this king and queen (Watson 1974: 115).
since it suggests that Arab women might well have risen to positions of authority before the eighth century, in compatibility with what is mentioned in this story.

Finally, it remains possible that the queen of Sheba did live in south Arabia. Arabic literature mentions the queen of Saba in south Arabia and names her as Bilqis, who ascended the throne of Saba after she poisoned the king of Yemen, Yasser son of al-Harith. In addition, Ibn Khaldūn (II: 57) states that she was contemporary with King Solomon.
Chapter five:

The main settlement centres in the North of Arabia

5.1 The Oasis of Tayma
   5.1.1 Modern visitors to Tayma and Archaeological remains
   5.1.2 The Relationship between Tayma and Mesopotamia
   5.1.3 Tayma in Classical and Islamic works

5.2 The Oasis of Adummatu
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Chapter five

The main settlement centres in the North Arabia

Introduction

The caravan cities in north Arabia made their appearance far back in time and played a significant role along the frankincense road traversed by traders from south to north Arabia, before branching into three main routes, leading respectively to Egypt, to Palestine and to Mesopotamia (see fig. no. 4). Through exchange of goods and also of culture, the caravan cities came under the influence of the ancient civilizations of the Near East. Thus, we find them mentioned in the inscriptions of Assyria and Babylonia, as well as in Biblical texts. In addition, the peoples who lived in the north Arabian caravan cities had contacts with Egypt and some of them, such as the Qedarites and Minaeans, established colonies in the north of Egypt, which will be discussed below. It is important that these cities be discussed here, because they were considered the main fortresses of the groups of Arabs in north Arabia who had dealings with the major ancient civilizations. This study will therefore examine the history of the main commercial cities in north Arabia: Tayma, Adummatu and Dedan.

Tayma played an important role in the commercial activities of north Arabia and had a long relationship with the ruling powers in Mesopotamia. This is reflected in the city’s mention in Assyrian inscriptions dating from the second millennium BCE. Furthermore, many Assyrian campaigns were launched against Tayma to gain control of the city, because it held a unique position on the ancient trade road. Moreover, during the time of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon, Tayma was captured and Nabonidus himself sojourned in Tayma for ten years. Our study will probe the historical data relating to Tayma and establish the watershed events in its history. In addition, it is assumed that
during the time of the Persian Empire, Qedar controlled most of the commercial cities in north Arabia, among them Tayma.

Adummatu was also associated directly with the Qedarites in Assyrian inscriptions, as well as in Biblical texts. In fact, during the seventh century BCE, Adummatu was controlled by the Qedarites and was considered as an important Arab fortress in north Arabia. As we will see below, the relationship between the Mesopotamian powers and Adummatu fluctuated and remained generally unstable. For example, Adummatu was attacked by the Assyrian king Sennacherib, who destroyed it and took away all the Arabs’ deities to Nineveh. However, during the time of Esarhaddon, Adummatu was at peace with Assyria, so that Esarhaddon returned the deities to Adummatu and appointed Iata' son of Hazael as king of the Arabs in north Arabia. In this study we will examine the history of Adummatu and its relationship with the Arabs living in north Arabia. In so doing, we will take account of the chronological gap in Adummatu’s history reflected in Adummatu’s disappearance from the ancient sources during the time of the Babylonian and Persian Empires, not long after Sennacherib’s attack.

Dedan also was one of the commercial cities of north Arabia and it too was controlled by the Qedarites during the time of the Persian Empire. We will consider the evidence that Dedan was inhabited by Sabaeans and other Arab groups, such as Minaeans and Liḥyānites, who engaged in trade with the major ancient powers of the Near East. As we will see, the history of Dedan is reflected somewhat chaotically in ancient sources, which has produced some misunderstanding in terms of its chronology. It is therefore essential to examine carefully the historical evidence relating to Dedan to avoid erroneous judgments.
5.1 The Oasis of Tayma

Tayma is a large oasis located 200 km to the southeast of Tabuk in present-day Saudi Arabia (see figure no.6). It is considered one of the oldest oases in the north of the Arabian Peninsula, since it is mentioned in many ancient sources (Bawden et al. 1980: 69). The unique location of Tayma on the Frankincense Route linked it with the two oldest civilizations in the Near East—Egypt and Mesopotamia—and created opportunities in Tayma for both cultural and commercial exchange (Abu Duruk 1986: 2). In addition, ancient empires competed with each other to control Tayma as it was regularly visited by caravan traders, who found in it supplies of water and food. Archaeological studies confirm that the oasis of Tayma must have been an attractive place from antiquity and settlement in the Tayma region may be traced back to before the third millennium BCE (Hausleiter 2010: 214). By the end of the second millennium, livestock handling in Tayma played a significant role since by then Arabian camels had started to be domesticated, marking a revolutionary watershed in global trade. From early times the people of Tayma were aware of the importance of their homeland, so in order to fortify their province they created a political, commercial, and religious confederation to defend themselves against the frequent attacks by outside forces (Edens and Bawden 1989: 66; Liverani 1992: 113 f.; Hausleiter 2010: 220).
Figure no.6: The location of Tayma
5.1.1 Modern visitors to Tayma and Archaeological remains

Tayma was visited during the mid-nineteenth century by many European scholars, two of the earliest being G.A. Wallin (1848) and G. Guarmini (1864). These were followed by the British scholar Charles Doughty (1888), who published a map of Tayma indicating its location as well as describing its inscriptions and pottery artefacts. During the 1880s Tayma was again visited by Charles Huber and Julius Euting, who discovered the Tayma Stele, which was written in Aramaic and came to be regarded as one of the most important artefacts found in Tayma (see figure no. 7). It was removed to the Louvre Museum in Paris (Bawden et al., 1980: 73 f.; Hausleiter 2010: 222). In 1909 A. Jaussen and R. Savignac visited Tayma for a short period and took photographs of camels and palm trees seen along the course of their journey. In 1951 Philby described Tayma and its environment (Hausleiter 2010: 223). Finally in 1962 F. Winnett and W. Reed visited Tayma and studied the inscriptions of Jabal Ghunaym as well as describing Tayma’s pottery remains (Winnett and Reed 1970: 35).

The real scientific excavation of Tayma started during the 1970s when the Department of Antiquities and Museums of Saudi Arabia launched seasonal excavations in Tayma in cooperation with European scholars. At the beginning of the 1970s P.J. Parr, G.L. Harding, and J.E. Dayton discovered the Mintar Beni Atiya Tower to the northwest of Tayma which is considered as part of Tayma’s fortifications (Hausleiter 2010: 223). These scholars were followed by G. Bawden, C. Edens, and R. Miller, who worked in cooperation with the Saudi Department of Antiquities, carrying out many excavations in Tayma (Bawden et al., 1980: 69). Working with a Saudi team, Abu Duruk made excavations at locations including Qasr al-Hamra, Qasr al-Radm (located in the western area of Tayma), and the wall of Tayma. Later they discovered the archaeological

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228 Euting, J. (1896/1914), *Tagebuch einer Reise in Inner-Arabien* (Nachdruck der Ausgabe Leiden) (148, 157 f.)
229 Philby, H.S.J. (1957), *The Land of Midian* (Ernest Benn Ltd.: London) (72, 86 f.)
230 See footnote 95.
site known as Rujum Sa’sa’, to the southwest of Tayma, which has a considerable number of tombs and some inscriptions (Abu Duruk 1989, 1990, and 1996).

Since 2004 the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (German Archaeological Institute), working alongside the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, has contributed significantly to our knowledge of Tayma’s history by conducting regular excavations at the ancient site. In terms of our purpose in the present study, the German campaigns reveal that Tayma has been occupied continuously since the fourth millennium BCE. In addition, the German expeditions have found that Thamudic and Aramaic inscriptions started to appear at Tayma from the first millennium BCE. Moreover, many Nabataean inscriptions have been found in Tayma, indicating the diversity of the population in Tayma through the course of history.232

A new study of Rujum Sa’sa’ was made by M. al-Hajiri and his associates in the course of emergency excavations as the site was located in an area designated for new urban planning (al-Hajiri et al., 2002, 2005, and 2006). Al-Hajiri concluded that Rujum Sa’sa’ must be considered an important archaeological site since it comprises thousands of ancient mounds extending over 7 km to the southwest of Tayma. Fieldwork at this site has progressed step by step over succeeding seasons. In 2002, for example, workers at the site found many fragmentary human remains, some demolished walls, and many pottery fragments (al-Hajiri et al., 2002: 43-45). In addition, a new archaeological study reveals that artefacts found in Tayma might go back to the Early Bronze Age (5th-3rd mill. BCE) (Hausleiter 2010: 109).

232 See the preliminary report of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut’s excavations at Tayma on their website (http://www.dainst.org/en/project/tayma?ft=all).
Figure no. 7: Tayma Stele bearing an inscription in Aramaic dedicated to the god Ṣalm, dated to the fifth century BCE and discovered by Charles Huber in 1884 (located in the Louvre)
5.1.2 The Relationship between Tayma and Mesopotamia:

The relationship between Tayma and Mesopotamia is very old but is at present difficult to trace without further archaeological fieldwork. However, the juxtaposition of north Arabia to Mesopotamia suggests that the peoples inhabiting each region might well have travelled into the territory of their neighbours in order to exchange goods, with concurrent cultural exchange. This relationship is, in fact, confirmed as far back as the eighth century BCE by inscriptions from the country of Suḫu and Mari, in the area of the Euphrates.\(^{233}\) One of those texts tells us that during the eighth century BCE the governor of Suḫu and Mari Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur attacked a commercial caravan from Tayma and Saba because the caravan-drivers refused to pay tribute to him.\(^{234}\)

Moreover, this text informs us that 200 Arabian camels were seized by the governor of Suḫu and Mari (Cavigneaux and Ismail 1990: text 2, col. Iv, p. 351; Hausleiter 2010: 220). Liverani (1992: 111-115) suggests that the attack on the Arabian caravan in Mesopotamia points to the possibility that Mesopotamian trade with Arabia, and indeed contacts of other kinds, were long established, from before the eighth century BCE. In addition, Livingstone (2005: 35) suggests that the mention of Tayma traders in this text gives reason to believe that the Arabs appeared in Mesopotamia from an early time, probably even before the eighth century BCE. Livingstone notes that many individuals’ names from Dedan and Tayma are mentioned in the governor’s archive from Nippur, which is considered evidence of the Tayma traders’ activities in those places at least from the eighth century BCE (Livingstone 2005: 35 f.; Eichmann 2006: 163).

Moreover, it seems reasonable to speculate that the campaigns of the king of Assyria, Shalmaneser III (859-824 BCE), against cities in Syria and north Arabia might

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\(^{233}\) When the Iraqi government decided to construct al-Qadissiyya Dam in 1973, the archaeological site called Ḫindnu near the mid-Euphrates was reported and quick rescue operations were carried out in that area (Na’aman 2007: 107, 111).

\(^{234}\) For the full text see (Cavigneaux and Ismail 1990: text 2, col. Iv, p. 346):

I, Ninurta-kudurri-uṣur, (27), governor of the country of Suḫu and Mari-people from Tema and Šaba, (28) whose residence is distant, whose messengers had not come to me, (29) and who had not traveled to me, one of their caravans came to ... (30) of the well of Martu and the well of Ḫalatu, but went on, (31) and entered into the city of Ḫindanu.
have reached as far as Tayma. In addition, there is some evidence that Arabs from north Arabia were active in the battle of Qarqar\(^{235}\) (Pritchard 1969: 224), although it cannot be stated with certainty that people from Tayma were actually involved on this occasion (Bawden \textit{et al.}, 1980: 71). In addition, O’Leary (1973: 53) claimed that Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 BCE) received tribute from Tayma\(^{236}\) when he conquered it and seven other cities (Lawson Younger in \textit{Context of Scripture II}, 288).\(^{237}\)

Moreover, according to an inscription discovered near Nineveh, there were relations between Tayma and Mesopotamia during Sennacherib’s reign (705-681 BCE) (Hausleiter 2010: 220) since it is mentioned in this inscription that Sennacherib received gifts from Sumu’il and Tayma (‘the gifts of the Sumu’anite and the Têmite enter through it’ [this gate] [Luckenbill, 1927, II: 170 f.; text no. 397]). Furthermore, Ashurbanipal (699-627 BCE) sent many campaigns against north Arabia, which most likely reached Tayma. It seems that the Assyrians conducted these campaigns to weaken the power of the local bedouin because Assyrian kings wished to control the trade road in Tayma (Bawden \textit{et al.}, 1980: 71).

In the mid sixth century BCE Tayma is mentioned in Ezekiel 25:13\(^{238}\) as part of the Edomite kingdom. Bawden \textit{et al.} (1980: 72) state that there was a struggle by Tayma and Dedan on the one side against Edom on the other side during the mid sixth century BCE to annul Edomite control (Bartlett 1989: 170) and they suggest that a confederation was established between the Arab cities in north Arabia after the fall of the Assyrian Empire during the seventh century BCE, lasting until 552 BCE.

Interaction between Tayma and Mesopotamia continued during the neo-Babylonian period. In fact, the cuneiform letters and documents, cylinder seals and graffiti provide evidence that the Arabs played a significant part in the civilization of

\(^{235}\) See section 3.1.6.
\(^{236}\) Abu Duruk states that the two Arab queens Zabibi and Samsi inhabited Tayma, although there is as yet no epigraphic evidence to support this statement (Abu Duruk 1986: 4; but see Chapter Three of this study for a different opinion).
\(^{237}\) See section 3.2.1.a.
\(^{238}\) ‘Therefore thus says the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and cut off from it humans and animals, and I will make it desolate; from Tayma even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword’.
Babylonia and contributed considerably in the political sphere (Livingstone 1989: 100). Nabonidus, the last king of this period, sojourned in Tayma from the third year of his reign\(^{239}\) (Al-Said 2000: 2, n. 3) and for ten years (Gadd 1958: 35–92; Schaudig 2001: 497 f.). According to the Harran inscription (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. I, lines 22–26), Nabonidus sojourned in Tayma and abandoned his political and religious duties in Babylon because he desired to worship the Moon god rather than Marduk, the principal deity in Babylon. This stated motive could in fact be true, especially if we take into account the fact that Nabonidus’s mother Hadad-Huppe (or Adad-Guppi) was priestess of the god Sin in Harran.

However, scholarly opinion differs regarding the actual motives that led Nabonidus to depart to Tayma. Landsberger and Bauer (1926: 96 f.) suggested that Nabonidus removed to Tayma in order to create a confederation between himself and the Aramean tribes living in the region as a means of ensuring their loyalty. Lewy (1946: 436) and Bawden et al. (1980: 72), on the other hand, felt it was reasonable to accept the motive stated in the Harran inscription, that Nabonidus moved to Tayma on account of his religious devotion to the god Sin. Gadd (1958: 88 ff.) made the alternative suggestion that Nabonidus’s purpose was to seek refuge from the revolt instigated by the priests of Marduk against him as the king in Babylon, when he decided to worship another god. Another proposal, put forward by Knauf (1985: 75), was that Nabonidus removed his dwelling place to north Arabia to stop the frequent attacks by Arab tribes against his borderland.

The most persuasive reason suggested for Nabonidus’s move to Tayma is that it was primarily based on economic considerations, because Nabonidus was ambitious to control Tayma and other oases in northwest Arabia in order to dominate the trade roads linking south and north Arabia (al-Said 2000: 11 f.; Hausleiter 2010: 220). According to the Harran inscription, Nabonidus wandered away among the oases of northwest Arabia for ten years, visiting during this time ‘Tema’, Dadanu, Padakku[a], Hibra, Iadihu, and as far as Iatribu’ (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. I, lines 22-26). All of these places mentioned were

\(^{239}\) For more discussion see section 3.3.2.a.
caravan cities, which probably supports the view that Nabonidus’s intention was to control the trade road between south and north Arabia (al-Said 2000:16).

However, the Harran inscription does not explicitly mention whether Nabonidus inhabited Tayma during his ten years out of Babylon or whether he spent that time moving from one place to another. Nevertheless, we learn from an inscription of Cyrus that Nabonidus attacked Tayma and killed the king of Tayma, It-ta-a-ru, also killing many of Tayma’s livestock as well as much of the livestock in the region around Tayma. In addition, through an analysis of the context of this inscription, Smith (1975: 102 f.) suggested it was more likely that Nabonidus stayed at Tayma for ten years to supervise the construction of his palace.

We should ask the further question: why did Nabonidus choose Tayma to live in, rather than any other of the oases in north Arabia? In an attempt to answer this question, al-Said (2000: 21) notes that Tayma had achieved widespread fame as a trade oasis in north Arabia where products from the north and south were exchanged. In addition, Tayma had longstanding relations with the Mesopotamian empires, as is reflected by the Assyrian kings’ mention of Tayma in their inscriptions (Eph’al 1982: 190). In addition, there are two documents from Nebuchadnezzar II’s reign attesting to the relationship between Tayma and Babylonia. The first document records that on 30th Elul in the seventh year of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign, the king gave barley as support to Ri-Mut Te-ma-a-a, who was probably a trader from Tayma (Dougherty 1929: 117). Another document contains a list of 25 names of people eligible to receive barley from the authorities in the city of Babylon, among whom we find Ri-Mut Te-ma-a-a, who could well be the same person as the one just mentioned, but his quota of barley was not enough for trade, which suggests that he was originally from Tayma but probably now resident in Babylon (Eph’al 1982: 188).

Another consideration that might have prompted Nabonidus to choose Tayma as his new abode rather any other oasis was the fact that Tayma was not far from Babylon.
compared with the other oases mentioned in the Harran text\textsuperscript{240}. Thus, this unique location of Tayma allowed Nabonidus to control Arabian trade without having to penetrate too far into the Arabian Peninsula, where it would have been more difficult for him to obtain Babylonian military relief in case of any attack by the Arabs against him.

We may further ask: what did Nabonidus do during his residence in Tayma? We find a possible answer in the Harran inscription where it is stated that Nabonidus controlled Tayma, Dedan, Fadak, Khaybar, and as far as Yathrib (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. I, lines 22-26), which means that he dominated the trade roads in northwest Arabia. In addition, it is possible that Tayma was considered as a capital city of the Babylonian Empire during Nabonidus’s time, since there he would meet with messengers from all places to discuss political issues (Bawden \textit{et al.}, 1980: 72; al-Said 2000: 29). For example, according to the Harran text, Nabonidus met the king of Egypt, the king of Midian, and the king of the Arabs, in addition to messengers from hostile parties entering into peace agreements with him (Gadd 1958: H2 A/B, col. I, line 42). One can speculate that during Nabonidus’s time the official languages were Babylonian and Aramaic, while the indigenous people of Tayma may have continued to speak the dialect of north Arabic found in inscriptions (Winnett and Reed 1970: 92; al-Said 2000: 52). One may speculate that Tayma during Nabonidus’s time was enlarged and its population sharply increased since the king required skilled workers to implement his development plans, so that there would have been peoples of different cultures in Tayma at that time (\textit{ibid.}).

Some attention should be paid to the religious situation in Tayma during the time of Nabonidus’s sojourn there and in this context we find that the Tayma stele, written in Aramaic (Abu Duruk 1980: 4) and discovered in 1884 by Huber and Euting at Tayma\textsuperscript{241} (Littman 1904: 511; Bawden \textit{et al.}, 1980: 73; al-Theeb 1993: 36; Hausleiter 2010: 222),

\textsuperscript{240} In fact Adummatu was the nearest oasis to Babylon but as we will see that Adummatu might have been destroyed and became unsuitable for habitation after Sennacherib’s campaign. In addition, Adummatu has not mentioned in Harran text. For this suggestion see the section of Adummatu.

\textsuperscript{241} Dalley (1986: 85) states that the stele of Tayma was found in 1877 by Doughty at Tayma, while Littman (1904: 511) states that in 1880 Huber saw this stone on his first visit to Tayma (see also Gibson, II, 1971: 148). Littman adds that when Huber visited Tayma for the second time in company with Euting, Euting copied this inscription and took it to Germany, where it was published by Noeldeke in Berlin in 1884.
reflects the fact that a new deity named Śalm of Hagam was worshipped in Tayma. Abu Duruk (1980: 4) states on the basis of the inscription that the god Śalm of Hagam was introduced into Tayma by a priest called Salmshezēb (ŠLMŠZB in Aramaic, Šalmu-ušēzib in Akkadian), son of Petosiri (Littman 1904: 512; Dalley, 1986: 85), who was descended from an Egyptian family, while the god Śalm was originally worshipped in Babylon, which indicates some kind of religious syncretism between Babylon and Egypt in Tayma at that time. Dalley (1986: 86) observed that the term sālm in Aramaic has several meanings, including ‘statue’, ‘image’, and ‘representation’, adding that the word has been found in an Assyrian vow, where it may well designate a statue rather than the name of divinity. In the late Assyrian period the term sālm was used in Assyrian temples apparently in reference to royal statues. It therefore seemed reasonable to Dalley (ibid.: 90) to suggest that where this term is found used alone it perhaps refers to a statue, but it was perhaps also used as the title of a deity when it was associated with a specific cult image (see also for the same opinion, Livingstone 1999: 236). This suggestion may well find support in Winnett and Reed’s (1970: 90) observation that the people of Tayma had worshipped another Śalm, i.e. Śalm of Maḥram, at an earlier time prior to Śalm of Hagam’s introduction into Tayma. Thus, the suggestion that Nabonidus merged more than one religion in Tayma under the name of Śalm is without adequate support (Bawden et al., 1980: 72), especially if we bear in mind that Śalm could denote either a statue or image. Winnett and Reed (1970: 31) point out in addition that the people of Tayma worshipped another deity during the sixth century BCE, the mother-goddess Asherah, Ashira, or Anat (Ringgren 1969: 96).

Finally, according to the Harran inscription (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. III, lines 5-6), Nabonidus returned to his city Babylon around 543 BCE (al-Said 2000: 60). The reason for Nabonidus’s departure from Tayma is just as ambiguous as is his motive in moving to that place. According to the Harran inscription, the reason for Nabonidus’s return to Babylon was that he saw his god in a dream and was informed by him that it was time for him to return to his capital city (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. III, lines 3-5). Leaving this religious motive aside, al-Said (2000: 57) argues that the real motive for his speedy return was first that Arab resistance against Babylonia had increased in Tayma, as is suggested
by an inscription from Tayma in which it is recorded that an Arab tribe named ‘Alq rebelled against the Babylonian presence in Tayma and fought with Nabonidus. An additional factor was the emergence of the Achaemenid Empire as a new force and its direct threat to Babylon (Bawden et al., 1980: 72). In fact, a short time after Nabonidus arrived back in Babylon, Cyrus conquered Babylon and overthrew the Babylonian Empire in 539 BCE (al-Said 2000: 64).

Like the Assyrian and neo-Babylonian Empires, the Achaemenid Empire was similarly expansionary and, during the reigns of Cyrus (559-530 BCE) and Cambyses (530-522 BCE) (Kuhrt II, 1995: 648) launched many military campaigns beyond the Persian border, crossing into north Arabia and reaching as far as Egypt in order to control north Arabia (Bawden et al., 1980: 72). However, it is difficult to prove that north Arabia definitely fell under Achaemenid control because there is no archaeological evidence testifying to the presence of Persians in north Arabia (Knauf 1990: 202; Hausleiter 2010: 220). Although abundant information about the Achaemenid period during the time of Cyrus and Cambyses is to be found in the many surviving inscriptions, the only information we have regarding Tayma during the Achaemenid period, derives from excavations at Qasr al-Hamra, and indicates that during the late sixth century BCE and the early fifth century BCE the main deity in Tayma was Ṣalm (Hausleiter 2010: 221).

The Book of Genesis mentions Tayma as a son of Ishmael (‘Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah’ – Gen. 25: 14 f.), as again in I Chron. 1: 29 f. During the eighth century BCE Tayma is mentioned in Biblical texts as a

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242 For further information about the attitude of the Arab tribes against the presence of Babylonian at Tayma see (al-Said 2000: 57). See also al-Said Tayma text no. 1:

I am Murad a friend of Nabonidus the king of Babylon
I came with the commander of the army (in order to)
to enter, to hunt, to track members of ’Alq tribe (al-said 2000: 32-33).

243 Abu Duruk and Abd al-Jawad (1984: 56) note regarding Qasr al-Hamra, first, that the Arabs used the term *qasr* of any building constructed in stone, and, second, that they used the epithet *al-hamra* (‘red’) of this particular building because of the red earth characteristic of the neighbourhood in which it was built. They add that archeological excavations have demonstrated that it was a temple containing several rooms.
place where people could find water (‘bring water for the thirsty; you who live in Tema, bring food for the fugitives’ – Isa. 21: 14). In addition, during Babylonian times Jeremiah (sixth century BCE) mentions Tayma as a place near Dedan (‘Dedan, Tema, Buz and all who are in distant places’ – Jer. 25: 24). Tayma was also mentioned during the fifth century BCE as a place in north Arabia (‘The caravans of Tema look for water, the travelling merchants of Sheba look in hope’ - Job 6: 19). Thus, based on scholarly dating of this Biblical text, we know that Tayma was known as a place for supplying water to travellers through north Arabia from the eighth century BCE onwards.

5.1.3 Tayma in Classical and Islamic works:

During the time of Alexander of Macedon (356-323 BCE) Tayma disappears from written sources. Even so, Tayma may well have been under the control of the Hellenistic Empire, which dominated the trade road in north Arabia (Bawden et al., 1980: 72). Bawden et al. (loc. cit.) assert that Tayma is not mentioned in Nabataean inscriptions, even though it is well known that the Nabataeans controlled the area from Petra to Madain Saleh, implying that Tayma came within the sphere of their control. However, in 1983 archaeological study found some Nabataean inscriptions in Tayma indicating that the Nabataeans did indeed occupy Tayma (Livingstone 1983: 111). In addition, Healey (1993: 68,137) studied two Nabataean inscriptions mentioning Tayma or Taymanites at Mada’in Salih.  

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244 Healey (1993: 68) inscription no. 1:

This is the tomb and platform and enclosure which Hawshabu son of Nafiyu son of Alkuf, the Taymanite, made for himself and his children and Habbu, his mother, and Rufu and Aftiyu, his sister.

Healey (1993: 137) inscription no. 12:

This is the tomb which Wushuh daughter of Bagrat and Qaynu and Nashkuyah, her daughter, Taymanite, made for themselves.
During the first century CE, Pliny the Elder mentioned Timanei (i.e. Tayma) as a commercial city in the north Arabian Desert:

Adjoining the Nabataeai the old authorities put the Timanei... Suelleni, Araceni, Arreni (with a town which is a centre for all mercantile business), Hemnatae, Avalitae (with the towns of Domata and Haegra)... (Pliny 6: 157).

Pliny stated that at that time Tayma and other cities in north Arabia were under Nabataean control. Retsö (2003: 372) notes that Pliny described the Nabataeans as different from the Arabs because he derived his information from second-hand sources, e.g. Eratosthenes, without direct knowledge.

Moreover, during the period of conflict between Byzantium and Persia to control north Arabia, the Byzantines maintained control of the trade road in northwest Arabia and had agents living in Makkah to watch over their trading activities (Bawden et al., 1980: 73). Consequently, Tayma could have been under their control to supply caravans with water and food.

Tayma is, however, mentioned in pre-Islamic Arabic sources, since the poet Imru’ al-Qays (497-545 CE) mentions Tayma as the abode of al-Samawāl ibn ‘Ādīyā, a Jew who aided Imru’ al-Qays against his enemies (Dīwān Imrī’ al-Qays). In fact, Jews were present in Tayma as far back as the third century CE and they remained there until the time of the caliph ‘Umar, who asked them to leave (Hausleiter 2010: 221). Tayma is, in fact, mentioned in Islamic sources as an important place during the early Islamic period. Ibn Hūqal (1992: 41) notes that Tayma was a prosperous city during the tenth century CE and that it was an important destination for pilgrims as it offered both water and trading opportunities. In addition, Al-Muqaddasī (1906: 67) states that the distance between Tayma and Tabuk was four days’ journey, as was also the distance between Tayma and Dumat al-Jandal. He adds that during the tenth century CE Tayma had a large number of palms which produced good dates. Al-Bakrī (1030-1094 CE) (1951: 1, 245 Hemnatae is shown in the Barrington Atlas as a site now located in Saudi Arabia. See Talbert 2000: 120. 246 Winnett and Reed (1970: 28) state that Zallūm palace, located in Tayma, could be the famous palace Qasr al-Ablaq, which is traditionally associated with al-Samawāl ibn ‘Ādīyā’. 247 See (Hitti 2002: 107; Shuaib 2006: 140).
329-330), for his part, notes that some parts of Tayma’s walls were still standing in his own time during the eleventh century CE. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1179-1229 CE) (1960: I, 67) mentions that Tayma was an important oasis for pilgrims travelling from Syria (Hausleiter 2010: 222).

To conclude, Tayma is an important oasis in northwest Arabia and played a significant role during the ancient history of the Arabian Peninsula. There is good reason for believing that it was the principal fortress of Arab leaders such as the Qedarite kings and queens (Abu Duruk 1986: 4).
5.2 The Oasis of Adummatu

The city of Adummatu, the remains of which lie in the north of Saudi Arabia, is referred to in three different ways, viz: Adummatu in the Assyrian inscriptions, Dumah in Biblical texts, and Dumat al-Jandal in Arabic texts from the early Islamic sources down to present-day. Adummatu was situated on the old trade road in north Arabia which linked Gaza and Egypt on the west side, before traversing Adummatu and reaching as far east as the Arabian Gulf and thence northwards to Babylon (Musil 1926: 5). The region in which Adummatu is located is known as al-Jawf, at the southern end of the Wādī al-Sirhān (see figure no. 8) (Winnett & Reed 1970: 71). Adummatu was one of the important oases in north Arabia and had considerable fame as a caravan city, lying just 400 km east of Petra (Musil 1926: 311).

![Map of Adummatu and its surroundings](image)

Figure no.8: The location of Dumat al-Jandal

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248 The three different names are used throughout this study.
Before beginning to discuss the history of Adummatu, we need to remind ourselves how the ancient sources presented Adummatu. The Assyrian inscriptions link Adummatu with the kings and queens of the Qedarites (Winnett & Reed 1970: 71; Retsö 2003: 135) and they imply that Adummatu was the main fortress of the Arabs in the north of Arabia during the seventh century BCE. Adummatu is explicitly mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions for the first time when Sennacherib (704-681 BCE) conquered it during his campaign against north Arabia. At that time Adummatu was already famous, suggesting that it had been occupied for a long time prior to this event. Winnett and Reed (1970: 71; see also Musil 1927: 480) state that Queens Zabiba and Samsi cannot certainly be associated with Adummatu, while Queen Te’elkhunu and her daughter are specifically associated with Adummatu in Assyrian inscriptions. However, as we argue elsewhere in the present study, it is possible that all the Arab queens—Zabiba, Samsi, Te’elkhunu and Tabûa—lived in Adummatu.

As noted above, Adummatu is referred to in Biblical texts under the name Dumah (Musil 1926: 480; Winnett & Reed 1970: 71), the name of one of Ishmael’s sons living in north Arabia, since Biblical texts mention Dumah not just as a person but also as a place; see e.g. Genesis 25: 13-16 (Skinner 1910: 352-353).

These are the names of the sons of Ishmael, named in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, the firstborn of Ishmael; and Qedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael and these are their names, by their villages and by their encampments, twelve princes according to their tribes.

The text purports to relate the names of Ishmael’s sons and the places they inhabited, although the writer may perhaps have derived the names of Ishmael’s sons from the known cities of north Arabia (Skinner 1910: 352 f.). We must, however, pay particular attention to the possible reasons for this list of Ishmael’s sons being mentioned in Biblical

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249 See (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Sennacherib 035; 3.2.3.a).
250 See in Chapter Four the concluding section: ‘The Arabs through analysis of their tribute as described in Assyrian inscriptions’. There is no need to prove that Te’elkhunu, Tabûa, Hazael, and his son Itai’ lived in Adummatu, since an Assyrian inscription mentions this fact (see Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001; 3.2.4.a).
narratives and must bear in mind the gap that exists between the time of the establishment of those cities and the date of their appearance in the Old Testament text. For example, the city of Tayma may well have been established before the third millennium BCE, while the Old Testament narrative may only go back to the eighth century BCE. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that this list of names corresponds to some extent with what is also found in Tiglath-Pileser’s inscription no. 818 (Luckenbill, 1926: I, 294).

Moreover, in the eighth century BCE, Isaiah included Adummatu in the context of his prophecy about Se‘îr, leading Musil (1927: 531) to suggest that Dumah was probably a part of the Edomite kingdom. There is, however, no clear evidence that Adummatu was subdued by Edom. In addition, a dilemma attaches to the use of the name ‘Dumah’ in this text since there is no certainty whether the word it is used of a place or some other entity, so that it is pure speculation to base an assertion that Adummatu was subdued by the kingdom of Edom on this text alone (Buchanan 1912: 358-359).

5.2.1 The Relationship between Adummatu and Mesopotamia

The relationship between Adummatu and the Mesopotamian powers fluctuated and was not stable. Throughout history Adummatu was repeatedly attacked by the Assyrian army, while at some times Adummatu had a peaceful relationship with the Assyrian Empire (Winnett and Reed 1970: 71 f.). In fact, there is no clear evidence that Adummatu was attacked by all the Assyrian kings, though it seems safe to speculate that Adummatu was attacked by Assyrian armies at least occasionally, especially in view of the fact that the Assyrians’ purpose in attacking north Arabia was to subdue the economically important caravan cities in the oases, among which was Adummatu. In other words, even if Adummatu is not mentioned explicitly in each Assyrian campaign against north Arabia, it is reasonable to assume that Adummatu was one of the many places in north Arabia where the Assyrian army conducted operations.

251 See the section 5.1.
252 Isaiah 21: 11: ‘The oracle concerning Dumah. One is calling to me from Se‘îr, “Sentinel, what of the night? Sentinel, what of the night?”’
The Assyrian inscriptions do attest to hostile relations between Assyria and Adummatu. For example, according to the Assyrian king Sennacherib’s text (704-681 BC) he defeated the Qedarite king Hazael and his sister queen Te’elkhunu at Adummatu, destroying Adummatu and taking away with him to Nineveh all the Arabs’ gods, as well as Tabûa daughter of Te’elkhunu (Musil 1927: 480). This account is repeated in Esarhaddon’s inscriptions (texts nos. 518 and 536, in Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, 214; Pritchard 1969: 291). The question we need to ask is, what was it that led Sennacherib to destroy Adummatu? In fact, Adummatu was one of the caravan cities in north Arabia which it would have been better to preserve rather than to vandalize, so Sennacherib must have had a definite purpose in destroying it rather than sparing it. One might speculate that Adummatu at that time played a significant role in instigating rebellion in Babylon against Assyria, since Adummatu could have supplied Babylon with warriors ready to fight in her cause. This kind of logistical support by Adummatu for Babylon would have caused difficulty for the Assyrians in subduing Babylon, so that Sennacherib decided to fight the Arabs in their fortress to ensure that they would no longer be able to lend aid to Babylon. This suggestion gains support from the good relationship between Adummatu and Babylon, evidence for which will be noted below. In addition, the hostile relationship between Adummatu and Assyria may have been exacerbated if Adummatu was attacked during one of Assurbanipal’s campaigns against north Arabia, as Winnett and Reed have suggested (1970: 71).

On the other hand, there were times of peace between Adummatu and the Assyrian Empire. For example, the opening words of Esarhaddon’s inscription 518 (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207) refer to ‘Adummatu, the fortress of Arabia’, drawing attention to the importance of Adummatu in the eyes of Assyria’s ruler. Further evidence of peaceful relations with Adummatu during Esarhaddon’s era is to be found in Esarhaddon’s showing mercy towards Hazael and returning all the Arabs’ deities to

253 Musil noted (1927: 480) that the Assyrian inscriptions do not mention which road Sennacherib took to reach Adummatu. He suggested, however, that Sennacherib went to Adummatu directly after leaving Babylon.

254 There is no need to repeat either the story or the text which have dealt with in Chapters Three.

Adummatu. In addition, Esarhaddon helped assure the stability of Adummatu by quelling the rebellion of Uabu when he tried to ascend Adummatu’s throne in place of a member of Hazael’s family (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001).

Adummatu is also mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as an important religious centre in the north of the Arabian Peninsula. In fact, during the seventh century BCE, rulers in Adummatu occupied the highest religious positions among Arab tribes in north Arabia and it seems reasonable to suggest that Adummatu was a destination for religious pilgrims, since Assyrian inscriptions inform us that Adummatu had prominence in the worship of some important Arab gods. As mentioned above Sennacherib took with him to Nineveh from Adummatu all the Arab deities (Musil 1927: 480; Retsö 2003: 156). These deities are mentioned in Esarhaddon’s inscription as follows:

Hazail, the king of the Arabs, came with heavy gifts to Nineveh, the town (where I exercise) my rulership, and kissed my feet. He implored me to return the damages of the images of Atarsamain, Dai, Nuhai, Ruldaiu, Abirillu (and of) Atariqurma, the gods of the Arabs and I returned them to him after having written upon them an inscription (proclaiming) the (superior) might of Ashur, my lord, and my own name (Pritchard, 1969: 291).

Winnett and Reed (1970: 71 f.) represent these names as follows; Dai, Nuhai, Ruldaiu, Abirillu, and Atariqurma. However the mentioning of Atarsamain comes later in their work. In addition, Winnett and Reed state that each of them may have had a specific shrine in Adummatu where they were worshipped, or alternatively they were worshipped at ‘the temple complex of Atarsamain’. They further suggest that Ishtar was worshipped in Adummatu under the local name Atarsamain, which led to all Arab queens in Adummatu being high priestesses of this goddess. While our purpose here is to underline the important and active role that Adummatu played as a religious city in north Arabia, more detailed discussion of religion will be postponed until Chapter Six of this study.

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256 For further information, see section 6.1
The relationship between Adummatu and Babylon was similarly characterized by instability. In general, we know from Assyrian inscriptions that Arabs in north Arabia lent their support to Babylon in the latter’s struggle against Assyria (Musil 1927: 480) and we may speculate that the Arabs supported Babylon in order to resist the expansionist policy adopted by the Assyrian Empire. This support went back to Queen Iati’ē (710-695 BCE) (Kitchen 1994: 237) and her brother Baskânû, who lent their support to Merdoach-baladan king of Babylon against the hostile Sennacherib (704-681 BCE), when Iati’ē and Baskânû were defeated by the Assyrian army. In addition, Te’elkhunu and her brother Hazael in Adummatu faced the wrath of Sennacherib, as has been mentioned above. Musil (1927: 480) suggested that during Te’elkhunu’s era the people of Adummatu might have supported the Babylonian army when Sennacherib conquered Babylon. He added that Hazael could have used his unique location to keep the Assyrian army busy in Syria and so distract them from moving to support the military operation in Babylon. In other words, it seems possible that Queen Te’elkhunu ascended the Qedarite throne in Adummatu after the death of Iati’ē and that both of them were contemporary with Sennacherib and faced the same fate because they lent their aid to Babylon. Moreover, one may speculate that trade relations were very active between Babylon and Adummatu, since Adummatu was able to supply essential goods to Babylon, which was then the nearest centre of civilization to Adummatu (Musil 1927: 480).

On the other hand, there were two occasions when Adummatu and Babylon became hostile toward one another. Jeremiah relates that Nebuchadnezzar (604-562 BCE) (Chavalas 2006: 386) defeated the Qedarites and dominated their land, which probably meant that the people of Adummatu would have had to convey livestock to Babylon in tribute payments. The second occasion was when, as Winnett and Reed

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257 While there is no certain evidence that Iati’ē and her brother lived at Adummatu, scholars are generally agreed that Adummatu was the land of the Arab queens (see e.g. Musil 1927: 480; Abbott 1941: 4). For more details, see section 5.2.
258 See the full text in section 3.2.3.a
259 Concerning Qedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated. Thus says the Lord: Rise up, advance against Qedar! Destroy the people of the east. Take their tents and their flocks, their curtains and all their goods; carry off their camels for yourselves, and a cry shall go up: “Terror is all around!” (Jer. 49: 28 f.)
suggested (1970: 72), Nabonidus probably dominated Adummatu during his sojourn in Tayma. However, nothing can be said for certain regarding hostile relations between Adummatu and Babylon at this time, especially since there is no evidence explicitly testifying to the fact that Adummatu was dominated by Babylonia, or indeed even dealt with Babylonia after Sennacherib’s campaign. In addition, it seems possible that Adummatu was virtually destroyed during Sennacherib’s campaign, with the result that Adummatu is not mentioned among the oases where Nabonidus wandered in north Arabia. It is quite probable that Nabonidus would have taken up residence in Adummatu if it had not been destroyed prior to his moving from Babylon, because Adummatu was then the nearest city to Babylon, nearer even than Tayma.

In fact, as we will note in our discussion of the archaeological remains of Adummatu, there are no relics related to the history of Adummatu that may be traced back further than the Nabataean era. In addition, as we will see below, recent archaeological studies have failed to determine a specific date for the remains found at Adummatu. For example, although we know that Mārid castle was one of the oldest constructions at Adummatu, we cannot specify exactly when it was built. Even if one speculates that Mārid castle might have been built during the seventh or sixth century BCE, there is still no tangible evidence that Adummatu was continuously inhabited (Muaikel 1994: 99).

Moreover, there is a prolonged absence of mention of Adummatu during the Persian Empire period, although this has to be set against the fact that the Persians did not control or remain in the area of north Arabia for very long as Alpass has suggested (2011: 155). Ancient sources do not mention the stationing of any Persian garrison in north Arabia for continuous periods. In fact, during the time of Persian expansion and

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260...I hied myself afar from my city of Babylon, (on) the road to Tema’, Dadanu, Padakku[a], Hibra, Iadihu, and as far as Iatiribu’ (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. I, lines 23-25).
261 Alpass suggested that Tayam or the north Arabia might pay tribute to Achaemenid Empire (Alpass 2011: 155).
262 See Winnett & Reed (1970: 73), who note the possibility that Dedan could have been under Persian control, as reference is found to a Persian governor’s having resided in Dedan. This issue will be discussed in the following section.
especially during the eras of Cyrus (559-530 BCE) and Cambyses (530-522 BCE), north Arabia probably dealt directly with the Persian Empire (Kuhrt 1995, II: 648), as some Arab tribes, among them the people of Adummatu, might have entered into treaties directly with the Persian Empire. Glover (1924: 169) cited that Darius did not subject Arabian land since the Arabs were friends with Persians but the Arabs used to bring valuable gifts into the Persian Empire. Herodotus wrote as follows about the Arabs and their relations with the Persian Empire:

So much for the provinces and the tribute assessment. The only part of the empire that I have not mentioned as taxable is Persia itself, because any land occupied by Persians is exempt. There are also some peoples which were not required to pay any tribute, but tended to bring donations…. Then there are the Arabians, who contributed a thousand talents of frankincense every year. So in addition to tribute, these peoples used to provide the Persian king with these donations as well (Waterfield 1998: 210-211).

In this way Herodotus made it very clear that the Arabs were not made subject by the Persian Empire but enjoyed friendly and peaceful relations with the Persians possibly going back to Cyrus’s time, as is suggested by the fact, reflected in a clay barrel known as the Cyrus inscription, that Arabs used to send to him great gifts annually:

All the kings of the entire world from the Upper to the Lower Sea, those who are seated in throne rooms, (those who) live in other [types of buildings as well as] all the kings of the West land living in tents, brought their heavy tributes and kissed my feet in Babylon (Pritchard 1969: 316).

Although during the Babylonian and Persian periods Adummatu disappears from the ancient sources, this does not mean that it was removed from the map, but the assumption is that after Sennacherib’s campaign against Adummatu, it lost its importance and ceded to Tayma and Dedan its leading position of important commercial city in north Arabia (Al-Turki 2008: 48). In fact, Winnett and Reed (1970: 73, 116-119) are able to cite the appearance of Minaean inscriptions in Adummatu during the fourth century BCE as testifying to the continuing relationship between Minaean merchants and Adummatu.
We may conclude that Adummatu continued as a caravan city in north Arabia but lost its fame and position considerably after Sennacherib’s campaign.

5.2.2 Adummatu in Classical and Islamic works

During the first century CE, Pliny the Elder mentioned Domata (i.e. Adummatu) as a commercial city in the north Arabian Desert:

Adjoining the Nabataei the old authorities put the Tayma... Suelleni, Araceni, Arreni (with a town which is a centre for all mercantile business), Hemnatae, Avalitae (with the towns of Domata and Haegra)... (Pliny 6: 157).

It nevertheless remains uncertain whether or not Adummatu was active as a commercial city at the time when Pliny wrote. However, in Arabic sources Adummatu is described as a commercial city located midway along the road linking al-Kûfa, al-Medîna, and Damascus (Musil 1927: 532). During the eighth century CE, Ḥassān ibn Thābit stated that Dūmat al-Jandal was under Ghassānid control during the period prior to the emergence of Islam. During the ninth century CE, Al- Ya‘qûbi (1960: 313) also mentioned Dūmat al-Jandal among ten places which Arabs used to visit every year to purchase necessary goods in a peaceful environment. He added that during the sixth century CE Dumat al-Jandal was ruled by the Ghassānids, who were a strong tribe in north Arabia. In fact, the Ghassānids frequently fended off Persian attacks against Dūmat al-Jandal when the Persian Empire was ambitious to control north Arabia during Lakhmid times, but this eastern force weakened and faded away by the end of the sixth century CE (Musil 1927: 533).

The Ghassānids constituted a Christian Arab force to be reckoned with in north Arabia during the sixth century CE. In addition, the Emperor Anastasius (419-518 CE) observed that he would find loyalty among the people who lived in the Syrian Desert to protect the border in the south, which had frequently been attacked by Arabs. The Sassanians were clearly of the same opinion when they chose the Manadhira as their loyal allies in protecting their border. Consequently, when the Emperor Justinian ascended the throne of Byzantium in 527 CE, he appointed Harith ibn Jabala as leader of the tribal federation in the Syrian Desert and styled him phylarch (tribal leader), a term that was generally used in the later Roman Empire of leading princes of the Empire’s Arab allies in the East. For further details, see Tringham 1979: 178-180.
Al-Wâkedi (747-823 CE) stated that during the Prophet Muhammad’s time Dûmat al-Jandal was a prosperous commercial city frequently visited by trade caravans. He added that every year during the month of Rabi’, bedouin would visit Dumat al-Jandal because it had plenty of water and also for trade purposes.264 Al-Dînawarî (828-895 CE) (1888: 211) mentioned Dûmat al-Jandal as a place situated between Syria and Iraq, while Ibn Sa’d (ca.784-845 CE) (pt. 1, 1968: 44) stated that Dumat al-Jandal was the gate of Syria since it was just four days from Damascus and fifteen or sixteen days from al-Medîna265 (Musil 1927: 533).

Yâqût al-Ḥamawî (1179-1229 CE) (1955-7: 625) cited Abu Sa’d’s narration stating that Dumat al-Jandal contained a large number of wells and countless palm trees; also that its fort, called Mârid, was constructed using a great number of stones (jandal), which was why Adummatu was called Dûmat al-Jandal. Yâqût (1955-7: 913-916) cited the statement of Muhammad ibn Ḥabīb that the tribe of Kalb lived in Dûmat al-Jandal before Islam and worshipped Wadd. Hîshâm ibn al-Kalbi added that the bedouin used to send their camel milk to Dûmat al-Jandal in offering to their god Wadd, whose statue, he reported, was higher than a tall man and was clad over his lower body with a small cloth while his upper body was naked. From his neck there hung a sword and a bow, and he carried a spear in his hand. He stated further that the Prophet Muhammad sent Khâlid ibn al-Walîd to Dûmat al-Jandal to destroy the statue of Wadd (Musil 1927: 533).

265 With this we may compare al-Mas‘ûdî (1965: 243), who stated that Dûmat al-Jandal was five nights or six days from Damascus and that the journey between Dûmat al-Jandal and al-Medîna took fifteen nights.
5.2.3 Archaeological remains in Adummatu

Being an ancient city, Adummatu has left many archaeological remains which witness to the civilization that emerged there. While these traces demonstrate that Adummatu was inhabited during the Nabataean period, still no clear evidence of the city’s continuous habitation has been found. Al-Muai kel (1994: 49) states that during the sixth century BCE Adummatu was ruled by Qedarites, who controlled the trade road. He believed that during that time the Babylonians might have benefited from that road through their loyal allies the Qedarites and he cited the sojourn of Nabonidus at Tayma as evidence that Nabonidus might have controlled Adummatu. But this association between the sojourn of Nabonidus and Adummatu cannot be confirmed because the Harran inscription does not mention Adummatu among the oases between which Nabonidus wandered during his stay at Tayma.\(^{266}\)

The first archaeological relic at Adummatu which concerns us is Mārib castle, which, as we have noted above, is mentioned in the Arabic sources (see figure no. 10). Yaqūt al-Ḥamawi (1179?-1229 CE) wrote that Dūmā the son of Ismail lived at Dūmat al-Jandal and built its castle. There is, however, no inscriptional evidence that the son of Ismail built that castle and indeed no Arab scholar offers a description of the castle (Muai kel 1994: 97). However, some European scholars who visited Adummatu during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did attempt to describe Mārib castle. Wallin was the first scholar to visit Adummatu and to provide a brief description of it, reporting that Mārib castle resembled Damascus, although he did not specify which one of Damascus’s fortifications he had in mind (Muai kel 1994: 97). Palgrave also wrote a brief description of Mārib castle, stating that it had a square tower located at its centre and mentioning also the main tower located on the left of the main entrance, but he did not describe Mārib castle’s interior. The importance of his study is limited to its providing evidence that this castle had remained until the later nineteenth century (Palgrave 1865: 76 f.). During the nineteenth century another person to visit Mārib castle and write a brief description of it

\(^{266}\) ‘hied myself afar from my city of Babylon (on) the road to Tema’, Dadanu, Padakku[a], Hibra, Iadihu, and as far as Iatribu’ (Gadd 1958: A/B, col. I, lines 23-25).
was Guillaume Harlom, who wrote that the upper part of this castle was constructed of mud bricks, while the lower part was set in stones. In addition, he reported that the big tower in Mārib castle had been destroyed prior to the time of his visit (Guarmani 1938: 101 f.). Muaikel (1994: 98) suggested that this tower was destroyed in 1853 during the civil wars. During the twentieth century, Winnett and Reed visited Mārib castle and described it briefly (1970: 17).

In 1986, for the first time, Muaikel studied the interior of Mārib castle in some detail. His study demonstrated that Mārib castle had been inhabited during the first century BCE and again during the first century CE by Nabataeans. Although Muaikel failed to determine the exact date of the establishment of this castle, he nevertheless suggested that it was perhaps built at some time earlier than the Nabataean era. He added that it might have played a significant role during the seventh and sixth centuries BCE in protection of the trade road in north Arabia (Muaikel 1994: 99).

Muaikel studied another important archaeological relic at Dūmat al-Jandal, that is the ancient quarter of Dumat al-Jandal, a small market place dating back to the eighth century BCE. Muaikel stated that this market place was located in the ancient part of Dūmat al-Jandal and that it could have been active during the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. Additionally Muaikel’s study revealed new evidence for Nabataean settlement (Muaikel 1994: 117). These facts could support our theory that a chronological gap exists in Dūmat al-Jandal’s settlement, estimated approximately at three centuries or more. Since King Sennacherib (704-681 BCE) attacked Adummatu during the seventh century BCE, the city remained weak during the two following centuries. Furthermore, it disappeared from the ancient sources during the time of the Babylonian and Persian Empires, until the Nabataeans appeared in north Arabia during the first century BCE. In addition, al-Muaikel studied another important relic at Dūmat al-Jandal that is the ‘Umar Mosque. The local traditional says that caliph ‘Umar built it during his journey to Bayt Al Maqdis. But the earliest Islamic sources do not mention any thing with regard to this mosque (Muaikel 1994: 108-109).

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267 Muaikel found at Mārib castle many relics originating from Nabataean times. See Muaikel 1994: 99.
In 2012 new archaeological excavations were carried out in the old area near the western wall of Dūmat al-Jandal by an archaeological team consisting of Saudi, Italian, and French scholars, who discovered an old Nabataean settlement. This team also made another excavation near Mārib castle, where they found considerable quantities of pottery from Nabataean times. The French scholar Guillaume Harlom, who acted as the team’s chairman, reported that the archaeological team found a marvellous building at Dūmat al-Jandal dating back to Roman times and some coins from the fourth century BCE (Al-Mushiti 2012).
5.3 The Oasis of Dedan

Dedan is the old name of al-‘Ulā oasis, located in the northwest of the Arabian Peninsula on the trade road commonly known as the Frankincense Route, linking south Arabia with Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia (see figure no. 9). Winnett and Reed (1970: 37) note that al-‘Ulā oasis lies 14 km to the south of Madā’in Ṣāliḥ and that it was inhabited from ancient times on account of its variety of springs. New archaeological studies, conducted under the supervision of the King Saud University, reveal that Dedan’s history probably stretches back to the second millennium BCE. In addition, from epigraphic evidence we learn that Dedan was inhabited by different tribes (Al-Said 2012: 126). The present study will discuss those tribes and set forth as fully as possible the evidence for their habitation in Dedan.

Figure no. 9: The location of al-‘Ulā oasis
5.3.1. Modern visitors to al-‘Ulā oasis

The first scholar to visit Dedan in modern times (in 1876-7) was the English traveller and writer Charles M. Doughty (1936: 139-166), who was followed there in about 1880 by the French explorer Charles Huber (1884: 517-23). Huber visited Dedan for the second time in the company of the German orientalist Julius Euting268 in 1884. During the years 1907, 1909, and 1910, Antonin Jaussen and Raphaël Savignac carried out an extensive study of the inscriptions they found at Dedan and al-Khuraybah, located to the northeast of Dedan (Jaussen and Savignac, II, 1914: 29-77). More recently, F.V. Winnett and W.L. Reed visited north Arabia and copied a considerable number of inscriptions from the summit of Jabal Ghunaym, publishing their findings under the title Ancient records from North Arabia (1970).

S. al-Theeb visited Wādī Ramm269 southeast of Tayma and recopied a considerable number of Minaean270 graffiti (al-Theeb 1990). The most recent study relating to Dedan, made by the University of King Saud in 2004, reveals important information about different aspects of life in Dedan such as politics, social history, and religion (Al-Said 2012: 128). For example, the new archaeological studies in Dedan uncovered the temple of the principal deity of the kingdom of Liḥyān, Dhū Ghaba. In addition, this new study discovered a building at Dedan, which has been identified as a Minaean temple. This temple was rectangular in shape and it found many stone statues strewn randomly within the precinct of the temple (ibid., 129).

5.3.2 Introduction to Dedan

The history of Dedan is complicated by the fact that occurrences of the name Dedan in Biblical texts may have different referents. It will therefore be necessary to examine carefully each of the relevant texts and this will be our objective in the section immediately following.

268 Euting (1896/1914), Tagebuch, II, pp. 218-46.
269 It is located southwest of Tayma. See Said 2000:32.
270 According to Minaean inscriptions this group of people inhabited Dedan; for more details see below.
Furthermore, research into the ancient history of Dedan may be additionally complicated by misleading or incorrect information in the secondary sources. For example, Skinner (1912: 350 f.) stated that Dedan was mentioned in Tiglath-Pileser III’s inscriptions among six groups of Arabs who rebelled against Tiglath-Pileser, although the present writer has not been able to discover this information in the Assyrian inscriptions. In contrast with Skinner, Musil (1926: 294) stated that Dedan was not mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions, but this, he added, stood to reason, since when the Assyrian inscriptions mention the Sabaeans, they simply mean the Sabaean colony in Dedan, because we know that the Assyrians did not deal directly with the people who inhabited southern Arabia.

If we go back to Sumerian times, it is doubtful that Dedan could be mentioned in any Sumerian inscription. In this connection Poebel (1942: 257) cited an inscription from the fourth year of king Šu-sin from the third dynasty of Ur. The inscription may be read as follows:

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Year (called): Šu-sin, king of Ur, built (the fortress) Dûr-Amurrim-muriq-Tidnim [i.e., Dûr-Amurrim, which holds the Tidinu people] at a distance... iššakku procured marble blocks from ti-da-num-hûr-sag-mar-dû [i.e. Tidanum, a mountain district of Amurru].
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Thus, the text records that the king of Ur, Šu-sin, purchased marble from Tidinu to build a fortress. The suggestion of Poebel was that Tidinu in this text was to be identified with Dedan mentioned in some Biblical texts. If Poebel was correct, the implication would be that Dedan may have been known as a place from the second half of the third millennium (Al-Khathami 1999: 80). However, the verdict of Scagliairini (1995: 125) is to be preferred, who comments that this theory has not been proved sufficiently since it is based only on the superficial linguistic resemblance between Dedan and Tidinu.

Another problem facing research into the history of Dedan is the way in which its occupation by different groups of people originating from different places at different times causes confusion in the chronology. To clarify this issue we may note that Dedan
was periodically inhabited by four major tribes. The first and oldest group to have inhabited Dedan was the tribe of Dedan mentioned in some Biblical texts. The second group was those Sabaeans who are mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions as people living in north Arabia. The third group to have populated Dedan was Minaeans, who appear in Minaean inscriptions found in Dedan. The fourth group to have lived in Dedan was Liḥyān, who are mentioned in Liḥyānic inscriptions as inhabitants of Dedan. In addition, Qedar is mentioned in a Dedan inscription during the Persian period, but here Qedarites are presented as rulers of Dedan rather than the predominant population. In this connection, we should note that the Biblical texts occasionally associate Qedar with Dedan, as we will see further in the discussion immediately following.

It will be our aim in the present section to resolve the problems outlined above. Finally, we will examine how Dedan relates to Qedar, which is the principal Arab group whose history is being addressed through this study.

5.3.3 Dedan in Biblical sources

References to Dedan in Biblical sources require careful examination, since conflicting interpretations have been made of them. Thus, Musil (1926: 29) noted that Dedan mentioned in Gen. 10: 7 and Ezek. 38: 13 was associated with Saba. Albright too (1953: 9), noting that in Gen. 10: 7 Dedan was mentioned as the brother of Saba, both being sons of Ra’amah son of Kush, commented that in this case both these groups of people were to be associated with south Arabia. This was in contrast to the assertion of Skinner (1912: 204) that Dedan mentioned in Gen. 10: 7 was an Arab tribe (living near Khaibar in the ruins of Dedan, not far from al-‘Ulā oasis, and extending as far as Tayma), which controlled the trade road in north Arabia. He added that the name ‘Dedan’ was to be found in Minaean and Sabaeans inscriptions, but was not to be found in Greek or Roman sources, possibly indicating that Dedan had disappeared before the Greeks and

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271 For the history of Liḥyān see (Al-Khathami 1999; for an example of those Liḥyānic inscriptions see 5.3.4).

272 'The descendants of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah: and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.'
Romans came into north Arabia. In addition, Dedan in Israelite tradition was the brother of Sheba, both sons of Jokshan, descended from Abraham and his wife Keturah, while Arabic tradition described Dedan and Sheba as sons of Ra’amah, a descent which, according to Skinner (ibid.), was doubtful. Skinner (1912: 350 f.) further commented that the Dedan mentioned in Gen. 25: 1-4\textsuperscript{273} was an Arab tribe that was twice mentioned in Minaean inscriptions and associated with Egypt and Gaza.

Winnett and Reed (1970: 113) were of the opinion that Ra’amah and Sheba were different groups who came from different places. Ra’amah, they believed, came from an unknown place and lived in Dedan, while Sheba came from another place and founded their own kingdom in Dedan in similar manner. In their view, the association between Sabaeans and Dedanites was made because the culture and commercial activities of these two peoples were similar (ibid.).

The dating of the relevant Biblical texts is a controversial issue. For example, Albright (1953: 9) believed that Gen. 10: 7 could be dated to the early first millennium BCE, while Genesis 25: 3 probably went back to the eighth century BCE. In contrast, Winnett and Reed (1970: 114) believed that these two texts might go back to the sixth century BCE, both being derived from the sixth-century prophet Jeremiah. They suggested that the reason why references to Dedan were made repeatedly during that time in Biblical texts was probably because the Judaean community was at that time taking a greater interest in the Arabs.

During the eighth century BCE, fugitive ‘caravans of Dedanites’ were mentioned in Isa. 21: 13, where they were depicted as passing by Tayma where they pleaded for bread and water (see the comments of Musil, 1926: 294). Gray (1956: 360) suggested

\footnote{\textsuperscript{273} Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah. She born him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan.'}
that Dedan in this text was an Arab tribe inhabiting south Arabia, which had settlements in the centre and north of the Arabian Peninsula and engaged in commercial activity across the Peninsula.

During the sixth century BCE, Dedan is mentioned in Jer. 25: 23-25 as a place near Tayma rather than as a tribe. On this text Musil (1926: 294) commented that it was a prophecy foretelling the destruction of Dedan, Tayma and Bûz and advising the residents of those places to flee and take refuge in faraway places. The association between Tayma and Dedan in this verse indicates that during that time Dedan was known as a city located in the north of Arabia (Cooke 1936: 284). In addition, Jer. 49: 7 f. mentions a disaster which will affect Dedan, a calamity extending from Edom and across all the territory located near the trade road, reaching as far as Tayma and Dedan (see the comments of Musil 1926: 294).

Cooke (1936: 284) commented that Dedan mentioned in Ezek. 25: 13 was a place or territory belonging to the kingdom of Edom. He pointed to a difference between Dedan here and the Dedan mentioned in Isa. 21: 13, since the latter mentions Dedan as a tribe living in south Arabia and engaged in a trade extending from the south to the north of the Arabian Peninsula. Commenting on this text, Musil (1926: 294) believed it indicated a destruction that would prevail over the north of Arabia from Tayma to Dedan and he added that Edom at that time was in al-Hasa’, a small place between Tayma and Dedan.

In contrast, Ezek. 27: 20 f. associates Dedan closely with another Arab group, the Qedarites. Here Dedan is mentioned as a place of merchants rather than, as above, a place under Edom’s control. Cooke (1936: 304) believed that in this text the name Dedan

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274 ‘Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who have shaven temples; all the kings of Arabia and all the kings of mixed peoples that live in the desert; all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, and all the kings of Media.’
275 ‘Concerning Edom. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Is there no longer wisdom in Tema? Has counsel perished from the prudent? Flee, turn back, get down low, inhabitants of Dedan! For I will bring the calamity of Esau upon him, at the time when I punish him.’
276 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord God, I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and cut off from it humans and animals, and I will make it desolate; from Teman even to Dedan they shall fall by the sword.’
277 ‘Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. Arabia and all the princes of Qedar were your favoured dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you.’
could have been employed as the old name of al-‘Ulā oasis located near the Red Sea, a place which was famous for its trade in saddlecloths. He added that the term ‘Qedar’ in Jer. 25: 24 could have been used as a collective name for all the bedouin living in the north of the Arabian Peninsula during the fifth century BCE and that subsequently the term ‘bedouin’ became a collective name applied to all the tribes inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula who traded in gold, silver, and livestock (ibid.). Moreover, Musil (1926: 294) stated that Dedan mentioned in Ezek. 27: 20 were merchants who traded in saddles, adding that this kind of covering used to be manufactured in Dedan and other oases nearby such as al-‘Ulā and Ḥājir. Finally, in Ezek. 38: 13, Dedan and Sheba are mentioned as rich merchants whom the prophet envisaged as facing the danger of their goods and territory being seized.

To conclude, in general during the eighth century BCE Dedan was mentioned in the Old Testament as a tribe of people settled near al-‘Ulā oasis who engaged in trade across the whole of the Arabian Peninsula, so that later the term ‘Dedan’ became applied to their oasis. Sequentially, Dedanites lived in Dedan side-by-side with Sabaeans and Minaeans, and they continued to work in trading activities until Dedan as a tribal name disappeared from ancient sources as Minaeans and Liḥyānites took over the city of Dedan and led the Arab trade, as we will see in the subsequent discussion.

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278 For the text, see above.
279 ‘Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish and all its young warriors will say to you, Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your horde to carry off plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to seize a great amount of booty?’
5.3.4 Dedan through the inscriptions

An Assyrian inscription mentions the Sabaean king It’amra as a tribute-payer to Sargon II (721-705 BCE). Musil (1927: 243, 288) suggested that a clan of Sabaeans could have established their kingdom in Dedan at that time, but Winnett and Reed (1970: 113) argued against this thesis because there was no tangible evidence from Dedan showing that Dedan was seized by Sabaeans. They themselves suggested that Sabaeans and other Arab tribes might have lived side-by-side in Dedan and endeavoured to control the frankincense road. However, the Harran inscription, from the time of the neo-Babylonian Empire, mentions the existence of the city of Dedan in northern Arabia in the course of recording the Babylonian king Nabonidus’s sojourn at Tayma and his wandering among some cities in the northern Hejaz during the sixth century BCE.

Dedan is additionally mentioned in north Arabian inscriptions. The inscriptions found in north Arabia relating to Dedan may be divided into three categories: Dedanic, Liḥyānic, and Taymanic. The Dedanic inscriptions consist of those found near al-‘Ulā oasis, which may be linked historically with the Biblical Dedan and which chronologically came from the oldest period of the habitation of al-‘Ulā oasis (Jaussen and Savignac 1914: 2). Al-Said (2012: 130-131) states that new archaeological studies reveal that the Dedanic inscriptions go back to the seventh century BCE, pointing out that as these inscriptions manifest a developed style of writing, they were probably not made earlier than the seventh century BCE.

The second group, the Liḥyānic inscriptions, are to be distinguished from others because this group mentions the title of the king of Liḥyān (mlk lhyn) in each text, the individual names of whom indicate more precisely the date when they were produced (Al-Khathami 1999: 83). Even so, the chronology of Dedan and Liḥyān remains a controversial issue (Al-Ansary 1970: 53). In fact, there is no epigraphic evidence to

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260 ‘From Pir'u, king of Egypt, Samsi, queen of Arabia, It'amra, the Sabaean, the kings of the seacoast and desert, I received gold, products of the mountain, precious stones, ivory, seed of the maple (?), all kinds of herbs, horses, and camels, as their tribute. [I defeated] Mitâ, king of Muski, in his province. The cities of Harrua and Ushnanis, fortresses of the land of Kue, which he had held by force since distant days, I restored to their (former) status (place).’ (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 7 f., text no. 18).
demonstrate that a distinctly Dedanite people actually existed and Al-Khathami (1999: 84) states that the earliest group of people inhabiting Dedan was Liḥyān. However, as Scagliarini states (1995: 120), during the oldest period of the city of Dedan, the title of its rulers was simply ‘king of Dedan’, which meant the king of the place called Dedan, while later the royal title was adjusted to ‘king of Liḥyān’. In addition, distinctions which have been made between the inscriptions called Dedanic and Liḥyānic have not received enough support to be used as evidence that there were two separate groups living in Dedan, one of them called Dedanites and the other called Liḥyānites.

The third group of inscriptions, the so-called Taymanic inscriptions, were discovered by Winnett and Reed in the Tayma oasis and were dated by them to the sixth century BCE by comparing them with the Dedanic inscriptions (Winnett & Reed 1970: 114). These inscriptions mention Dedan and the war waged against Dedan by the people of Tayma (see below).

With regard to the Dedanic inscriptions, Jaussen and Savignac (1909 & 1914) were the first to publish a group of inscriptions which they collected from Dedan. The first scholar to distinguish Dedanic inscriptions from others was Grimme (1932: 753-8), when he observed that the text JS 138 (Jaussen & Savignac, 1914: 469) cited a specific name for the king of Dedan, while all the Liḥyānic inscriptions referred to the ruler under the general style ‘king of Liḥyān’. In this way a number of inscriptions were identified as Dedanic, for example the funerary text JS 138 Liḥ, which reads as follows:

\[ khf \text{kbr}’l \text{bn} \text{mt’l} \text{mlk ddn}, \text{“Krb’l son of Mt’l king of Dedan”} \]


This inscription is important because it explicitly names the king of Dedan as Kabīr’l son of Matīʿl. While we have no idea as to when this king reigned, Eph’al (ibid.) proposed dating this text between 600 and 450 BCE. The most important information here is that this inscription informs us that during that time Dedan had a king.
Another inscription mentioning Dedan is JS 349 Liḥ. This inscription contains very important information, which needs to be analysed carefully. The text reads as follows:

\[ N[r n\text{ }bn\text{ }ḥdwr}\text{ }t\text{ }(q)\text{ }ṭ\text{ }b'y\text{ }gšm\text{ }bn\text{ }šhr\text{ }w'bd\text{ }fht\text{ }ddn\text{ }br'[y]... \]

(Nīrān b. Ḥāḍru inscribed his name in the time of Gashm b. Shahr and ‘Abd the governor of Dedan, in the reig[n of]... )

(Winnett & Reed 1970: 115).

This text indicates that Dedan was the place of residence of a ruler, who might have been from Persia, since the term \( fht \) was used widely in western Asia during the time of the Achaemenid Empire (Winnett & Reed 1970: 115; Eph’al 1983: 204). As an additional clue, Winnett and Reed (\textit{ibid.}) noted that the name of the king in this inscription had been deliberately erased, perhaps suggesting again that this ruler was a foreigner. Moreover, scholars agree that the above inscription should be dated to the middle of the fifth century BCE (Albright 1953: 4; Winnett & Reed 1970: 115; Eph’al 1982: 212; Al-Khathami 1999: 85), as seems to be confirmed by the fact that the name of Gashm b. Shahr in the inscription corresponds with Geshem the king of Qedar\textsuperscript{281}, the adversary of Nehemiah\textsuperscript{282} when the latter attempted to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem in 444 BCE. In addition, Winnett and Reed believed that the name Gashm in this text was written in Liḥyānic script during the middle of the fifth century BCE. Correspondence is again found with the name Gashm mentioned in the silver bowls found at Tell El-Maskhuta\textsuperscript{283} and dated to the middle of the fifth century BCE (Winnett & Reed 1970: 116; Eph’al 1982: 212).

What may be established from this text is that, during the mid fifth century BCE, Dedan was ruled by Qedarites and the presence of Qedar in Dedan indicates that, during the time of the Achaemenid Empire, the Qedarites expanded their kingdom from Egypt until they were able to control the trade road in the north of Arabia (Eph’al 1982: 212). Winnett and Reed (1970: 117) stated that, after the Achaemenid era, the controlling presence of Qedar in Dedan grew weaker and was eventually replaced by Minaean and Liḥyānite rulers. In fact, Minaean and Liḥyānite chronology is another puzzling issue,

\textsuperscript{281} For more details see Chapter Three and Chapter Four.
\textsuperscript{282} Neh. 2: 19.
\textsuperscript{283} Rabinowitz 1965: 7.
since we cannot identify which of these two groups of people inhabited Dedan first. However, Winnett and Reed (1970: 116-119) concluded their long discussion by suggesting that Minaeans and Liḥyânites lived side-by-side in Dedan and that the Minaeans worshiped Wadd in their own temple while Liḥyânites built their own temple for their deity Dhū Ghaba. In addition, they concluded, the Minaeans were active traders between Egypt and north Arabia during the fourth century BCE. Further, Minaeans might have been present in Dedan prior to the fourth century BCE, back in the time of the Minaean kings Waqah’il Șadiq and his son Abkarib Yatha’a, whose names have been found in Dedan. The implication of this is that Minaeans were present in Dedan during the latter part of the fifth century BCE (Winnett and Reed 1970: 119).

This thesis finds support in the earlier work of Musil, who stated that the community of Dedan was composed of a mixture of different tribes, since the inscriptions found in north Arabia indicate that both Minaeans and Sabaeans inhabited Dedan for a long time before the Liḥyânites arrived to inhabit Dedan at a later date. He added that if an attempt was made to establish the chronology of Dedan’s population, it could not be denied that Minaeans and Sabaeans preceded Liḥyân, since the Assyrian inscriptions continuously mention Sabaeans in north Arabia while Liḥyânites are neither mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions nor in any Biblical text, both pieces of evidence suggesting that Liḥyân inhabited Dedan sometime after the Sabæan period. Furthermore, it seems that when the Liḥyânites dominated Dedan, they expanded their authority beyond the immediate precincts of the city, since there is mention of Liḥyân’s fame by classical writers, for example by Agatharchides (fl. second century BCE), who called the Gulf of Aqaba ‘the Liḥyânic Gulf’, reflecting the prevalence and domination of Liḥyân in north Arabia during the second century BCE. It is unfortunate, however, that Agatharchides did not mention anything about political and social aspects of Liḥyânic dominance (Musil 1926: 295).

284 The inscription containing these two names is cited below.
As previously noted, we occasionally find in the Dedanic inscriptions the names of kings who ruled there, for example in the previously cited text JS 138 Liḥ, where mention is made of Kabīr’il king of Dedan, whose regnal dates cannot be specified more certainly than sometime between 600 and 450 BCE (Eph’al 1982: 181), although Kitchen (1994: 237) has attempted to date the era of Kabīr’l son of Matī’il, king of Dedan to between 565 and 550 BCE.285 Musil (1926: 295) believed that the name of this king suggested that he might have originated from south Arabia. Recent archaeological discoveries include a new Dedanic inscription containing the name of another Dedanite king, ‘Aṣī, associated with the offering of a vow to the deity of Dedan, perhaps in the sixth century BCE. Another king of Dedan mentioned among Dedanic inscriptions is king Tilmi Han’aws, though no further information regarding him is available to us. Thus, to the present time, we have only three names of Dedanite kings (Al-Said 2012: 132 f.).

The inscriptions found by Jaussen and Savignac at Jabal Ghunaym, 14 km southeast of Tayma, and recopied by Winnett and Reed (1980: 88-108) were written in the same style of writing and have similar features. For example, those inscriptions regularly use ṣ, rather than bn, for ‘son’ (Winnett 1980: 133). These inscriptions, known as Taymanic inscriptions, also mention Dedan and have been dated to the sixth century BCE. Taymanic inscriptions record the contributions made by the people of Tayma in a war against Ddn, Msi’, Nbyt (Winnett & Reed 1970: 102, 103, 105; Eph’al 1982: 183). In addition, one of the Taymanic inscriptions mentions ‘Ṣa)lm in the war against Dedan’ (Winnett & Reed 1970: 103, text no. 22), as has been mentioned elsewhere in this study.286 Ṣalm was the deity of Tayma. We may perhaps speculate that the Taymanite people used to carry their deity, in the form of an idol, during their wars against their enemies, as many ancient people did. Winnett and Reed (1970: 90) suggested that this inscription went back to the time when the Babylonian king Nabonidus tried to control north Arabia, but Eph’al (1982: 184) was reluctant to accept this suggestion since, in

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285 In addition, the list of Kitchen indicates the date of the king of Dedan ‘Mati-il, king of Dedan between 580 and 565 BCE. See Kitchen 1994: 237.
286 See section 5.1.
view of the fact that the north Arabian communities fought battles against each other on more than one occasion to control the trade road in north Arabia, it was difficult to put a specific date on this text.

Turning our attention to sometime later in the history of Dedan, many Minaean inscriptions have been found at Wādī Ramm as well as in southern Tayma and at al-‘Uţā oasis. For instance, between 1882 and 1884 Eduard Glaser rediscovered a large number of Minaean inscriptions at al-‘Uţā oasis (Winnett 1939: 4). In addition, Julius Euting collected a considerable number of Minaean inscriptions from Dedan and those collected were published by Müller (1889). Also, many Minaean inscriptions were collected from Dedan and published by Jaussen and Savignac (1914). With all these assembled materials, the Minaeans’ graffiti have contributed considerably to our knowledge about the Minaean period in the history of Dedan.

Al-Theeb has republished a number of Minaean graffiti from al-‘Uţā oasis dating from the fifth century BCE, among them one which includes the Minaean name Whb’l “Gift of god”. Al-Theeb notes that the name Whb’l was very popular among the Minaean community in south Arabia and, since it has been found in north Arabia, we now have evidence that Minaeans inhabited north Arabia, or were at least connected with that part of the Arabian Peninsula (al-Theeb 1990: 21).

The Minaean inscriptions record the names of three kings of Dedan from the Minaean tribe, viz: (1) iiyafa’ Yashur (Jaussen & Savignac 1914: text 11); (2) Abikarib Yathi’ (ibid., texts 12 & 17)\(^{287}\); and (3) Waqah’il Nabaț (ibid., text 31). Winnett (1939: 6 f.) noted that, during the time of Abikarib Yathi’ and his son Waqah’il Nabaţ, the Minaeans established a colony in the north of Egypt, and that the time when those kings ruled was perhaps in the fifth century BCE.

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\(^{287}\) Kitchen refers to this king under a different spelling of his name, viz: Kabaril son of Mati-il, king of Dedan, who may have ruled from 580 to 565 BCE (Kitchen 1994: 168).
Askūbī (1999) studied a group of inscriptions collected from Wādī Ramm to the southwest of Tayma. Although Askūbī did not attempt to classify these inscriptions, there were six\(^{288}\) of them which mentioned Dedan as a city in the north of Arabia. For example, text number 20 records:

\[ I+m’lw \ ḥl. b+ddn ‘hr h+ḥūl \]

(for Ma’lw settled in Dedan at the end of this year) (Al-Khathami 1999: 87).

The south Arabian inscriptions also mention Dedan as a place exporting slaves for temple service (Musil 1926: 295). Most of the south Arabian inscriptions which mention Dedan have been found at Qarnaw, the Minaean capital city, or at Dedan (Al-Khathami 1999: 87). For example, texts JS 15 (Jaussen & Savignac 1914) and RÉS 3699 (Chabot 1935: 3053-3946) mention equality between women from Dedan and women from Ma‘īn, an equality also applicable to their descendants (Albright 1953: 2). In addition, some epigraphic south Arabian inscriptions found in front of the temple of Ma‘īn in south Arabia mention Dedanite women as wives of Sayhadite men (Scaglarini 1995: 127; Al-Khathami 1999: 88).

As Musil (1926: 295) noted, the beginning of the end for Dedan city arrived when the hajj road was diverted away from Dedan during the Islamic times. Thereafter, the city of Dedan disappeared from the historical, geographical, and literary sources, finally crumbling into the ruins now to be seen not far from al-‘Ulā oasis.

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\(^{288}\text{Texts no. 20, 55, 58, 104,109 and 272 (Askūbī 1999) some of texts are new, while the other already mentioned by Jaussen and Savignac.}\)
Chapter six: Society

6.1 Social Structure
   6.1.1 Families and Clans
   6.1.2 Men
   6.1.3 Women
   6.1.4 Children
   6.1.5 The System of Succession to the Qedarite Throne

6.2 Religion

6.3 Law

6.4 Arts
6.1 Social Structure

Introduction

Elsewhere in this study we have discussed the nature of the sources for ancient history and have drawn particular attention to the potential difficulties facing the researcher who intends to write about ancient history. There is no need to repeat here what has already been written, except to observe the general paucity of information available for the study of the social structure of nomadic peoples in north Arabia, since those nomadic societies did not leave behind any written documents which might shed light on their daily life or how they engaged in warfare. What we do have is some of their artefacts and, in addition, some written records from settled groups and from their neighbours which make mention of those nomadic peoples. A careful study of artefacts created by people of the nomadic societies may well provide us with some important information about their lifestyle, the tools which they regularly employed and their costume (al-Khathami 1999: 301). Moreover, since evidence suggests that ancient nomadic societies of the Arabian Peninsula led closely similar lives, it is reasonable to apply analogical considerations in drawing a full picture of those nomadic societies (von Soden 1994: 71). To avoid inaccurate assumptions, however, it is important to restrict the use of analogy. Fortunately, the records from ancient Assyria and Babylonia provide some useful information about nomadic societies in north Arabia. It has to be remembered, however, that while the Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions contain representations of the groups of nomads who lived in north Arabia, those texts were written for propaganda purposes from one side only, so that caution is required in their interpretation.

Another source for studying the social structure of the nomadic groups in north Arabia is the graffiti which have been found over the range inhabited by those nomadic groups. Again, great care is required when using these graffiti and not all information should be accepted at face value, since many were inscribed to present the writers’

289 See the section 2.3.
290 For further discussion about possible misrepresentation, see Chapter Two.
personal opinions, as has been mentioned elsewhere in this study. In addition, some graffiti have become damaged through erosion, so that for this and other reasons outlined above it remains extremely difficult to gain a clear picture of the social life of the groups of nomadic peoples who lived in north Arabia.

6.1.1 Families and Clans

Family, consisting of father, mother, children, and other relatives, is considered the first nucleus in the structure of any society (Moscati 1957: 37; von Soden 1994: 72). In the present context, however, the shortage of sources means that we cannot determine specifically the role entrusted to each member in a family. Nevertheless, extended families might come to constitute a clan, an important institution for nomadic people (Peters 1999: 21). Nomadic clans consist of groups of families claiming blood relationship or descent from the same forefather, and they live and move together from one place to another as a unit for the sake of security and solidarity, even though the relationship among tribes’ members might not necessarily have been one of blood or even vague descent from the same forefather. Moreover, infringement of customs by any member of a clan is considered an infringement of inter-clan relationships which determine how work is carried out together by clan members day by day (ʻAlī 1967: 127; al-Khathami 1999: 323). In addition, the members of a clan often engage in the same business and every member of the clan is expected to demonstrate his or her loyalty to relatives (Hoyland 2001: 114-115).

Most of the Arabian Peninsula’s communities were nomadic and in such societies the tribe was the fundamental social unit, since it functioned as an effective ‘strong fortress’ in a shifting environment (Hoyland 2001: 113). The tribe was in practice a judicial institution, enforcing a rule of law, intended to protect the dignity of the tribe’s members, ensuring their rights during times of stress. Bedouin societies regarded all kinsmen as supporters one of another, whose duty it was to respond to the call for mutual aid during difficult times (ibid.: 113). In addition, the members of the tribe were expected

291 See section 1.3.2.
to respect their leader and worship the same deity (*ibid.*: 115). Herodotus described these arrangements in the following words:

As much as any race in the world, the Arabians regard such pledges as sacred. The way they make such pledges is that a third person stands between the two parties who want to make a pledge and makes a cut on the palms of their hands, near their thumbs, with a sharp piece of stone. Then he takes a tuft of material from each of their cloaks and smears seven stones, which have been placed between the two parties, with their blood, while calling on Dionysus and Urania. Once this ritual is over, the one who is giving the pledge recommends the foreigner (or fellow countryman, as the case may be) to his friends, who consider it their duty regard the pledge as sacred themselves too (Waterfield 1998: 171-172; Herodotus 3: 8).

However, the relationship between family members in bedouin societies is hierarchical since, as is observable, a weaker member in a family who is in need of protection is subordinate to a stronger member and such relationships permeate the whole of that society. This societal arrangement is prevalent at the levels of both clan and tribe, and has been referred to as ‘the moral basis of hierarchy’ (Abu-Lughod 1999: 85). This is exemplified in bedouin societies when a weak tribe associates itself with a powerful tribe in an unequal confederation in order to avoid trouble with or to prevent being harassed by other tribes, in this way paralleling the relationship between father and son or between younger and elder brothers in the same family (Abu-Lughod 1999: 81-82).

6.1.2 Men

Men have the highest authority in nomadic societies and bear the responsibility to protect other members in their families (al-Khatham 1999: 314). Men’s protective responsibility may cause them to fight battles to defend their tribes and to perform

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292 Herodotus refers to these two deities as Dushara and Allāt (Healey 2001: 101). However, the association between the Greco-Roman deity Dionysus and the main deity of the Nabataeans, Dushara, is not certain. See Robertson Smith 1903: 305; Healey 2001: 10 f. and for further discussion of the deity name Dushara, see below.
difficult tasks in nomadic societies. In addition, a man could marry one or more than one wife, since polygamy was widespread in ancient societies, both as an extension of men’s protective responsibilities and as a reflection of their position of authority (von Soden 1994: 72). Nelson (1973: 48) was of the opinion that polygamy was widespread in nomadic societies as a result of the distribution of wealth between men and women in those communities. Since women were attracted by wealth, they would accept the institution of polygamy in order to associate with rich men. In contrast, men would seek marriage with women of other tribes in order to establish links with strong tribes to create a political federation and in the process would sometimes choose women with smaller dowries.

In nomadic communities man is considered the decision-maker, but in certain cases women do have a voice, especially in internal issues relating to family matters or the raising of children (Nelson 1973: 45).

Finally, a man could not belong to two different tribes at the same time, but he might leave his tribe to join another, either slipping away from his own tribe or in consequence of his being expelled from his tribe (Smith 1903: 59).

Abu-Lughod (1999: 118) observes that bedouin societies prefer male rather than female children since they believe that women, even mature women, cannot take responsibility in important matters, whereas even the youngest men may be charged with making important decisions on behalf of their families. This seems to be the natural arrangement for the conduct of the bedouin’s life and their economic system, which depends on the strength of the men and not on the women. Consequently, bedouin societies give a warm welcome to a baby boy, but not so in the case of a daughter’s birth. Abu-Lughod (1999: 121) writes,

To give birth to boys is better. Everyone present rejoices. They run to tell the father that he has a son. If it is a girl, everyone is upset: those who delivered her, those in attendance. They do not go to tell the men. No one eats dinner. Even the tent goes into mourning. When it is a boy, the tent is happy, the father is happy, the uncles are happy, and the mother—I cannot tell you how happy she is.
6.1.3 Women

Women were considered the weakest members of their families since, during warfare, they could easily be seized as captives for marriage and slavery purposes, while men preferred to be killed rather than to be taken captive. Thus, in ancient societies women were considered a cause for concern. Moreover, during the pre-Islamic time in most societies in the Arabian Peninsula, women were subordinate to men and lived without personal rights. Indeed, many nomadic societies neither accepted pledges from women nor money paid by women as blood money. Additionally women were not allowed to inherit (Nelson 1973: 46; Şaliḥ 1985: 8). In most nomadic communities the roles of women were limited to preparing food and milking livestock, or serving their families. Moreover, in nomadic societies tents would be under the responsibility of women and each woman was expected to remain close to her tent, working in it or nearby. In general, women’s role was to serve men and, for example, to bring them water and assist them generally in their duties, but men would not help women in their work (Nelson 1973: 44).

Nevertheless, despite the above generalizations, it should not be forgotten that during ancient times some societies in the Arabian Peninsula were exceptional in that in those communities women are known to have played a significant role. Nelson (1973: 47) remarked on how some women struggled to achieve power in masculine societies and certainly received aid from men to achieve positions of eminence. Indeed, throughout history it is observable that women who ruled their societies were daughters, sisters, wives, or mothers of wealthy men, or came from prominent families (ibid.). Examples of this may be found not only in Qedarite history but also in Egyptian (e.g. Hatshepsut of the Eighteenth Dynasty) and Israelite history (e.g. Deborah) (Pritchard 1974: 40).

As we have mentioned elsewhere in this study, Assyrian records indicate that some women in north Arabia occupied the highest positions in their societies, even

\[293\) See Chapter Three.
attaining the highest ruling power over their communities, such as the Qedarite queens Zabiba, Samasi and Te’elkhunu, and some others, not least among them the unforgettable queen of Palmyra, Zenobia (Stoneman 1992: 1 f.). Hammond (1973: 108) noted that women in Nabataean society also contributed to the government of their communities and on occasion acted as regents on behalf of under-age kings or unmarried sons. Al-Fassi (2007: 38) notes that some women in Nabataean society played a role in the political sphere after the first century BCE, as is witnessed by many coins from the first century ED which bear the names of Nabataean queens. However, the Arabic sources do not record the names of those female Arab regents (Ṣāliḥ 1985: 46).

Epigraphic studies contribute to our knowledge about the ancient societies in north Arabia and shed light on the status of women in those societies. For example, epigraphic discoveries reveal that women in north Arabia built and possessed temples. In addition, from archaeological remains we learn that women in north Arabian societies participated in religious rituals and offered vows to their deities (Winnett 1985: 15). In fact, as we have noted, the Assyrian inscriptions describe the Arab queens as priestesses among their communities. For example, the queen of Qedar, Te’elkhunu, occupied the highest rank of priestess at Adummatu and officiated on behalf of most of the Arabs’ deities (Musil 1927: 480). In addition, archaeological studies reveal numerous coins of the Nabataeans offering evidence that some Arab women were respected as queens, for example coins from the first century BCE bearing the name of Queen Ḥuld, whose name was associated with King Ḥāriṭah, who ruled over the Nabataeans in the early part of the first century (al-Fassi 2007: 41).

294 On women’s leadership, see section 2.3.4.
295 On the archeological contributions, see 1.4.
296 For example, ‘Wushuh daughter of Bagrat and Qaynu’ built a tomb for herself and her daughters (Healey 1993: 137; for the text also see section 5.1.3).
297 See, for example, texts nos. 518 and 536 in Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, 214; Pritchard 1969: 291; and section 5.2.
6.1.4 Children

The status of children differed from one society to another during pre-Islamic times, depending on the wealth and strength of a particular society. Thus, some ancient societies killed their children, whether male or female, on account of poverty, while other communities killed their female infants and kept the males alive because parents felt shame in having daughters and inability to protect them during times of warfare. In fact, infanticide was widespread among ancient Arabian societies. Nicholson (1977: 90) noted that in ancient societies both male and female children were killed because of the shortage of food and a terror of poverty. On the other hand, Robertson Smith (1903: 291-295) argued that in ancient Arabian societies females were under threat of murder more than male because those societies preferred males, believing they were more able to help their tribes than were women.

The Quran describes the widespread practice of infanticide that was prevalent among ancient Arabian societies as a disgraceful act, motivated by two principal factors: first, the fear of poverty and, second, a socially induced feeling of shame associated with female offspring. With regard to the first motive, the killing of children because of poverty, we read in the Quran:

\[
\text{وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمُ الْخَيْبَاتِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا:} \text{مَا يَزَالُ فِي ثَرِيٍّ وَمَا يَزَالُ فِي فَقِيرٍ.} \\
\text{أَنْ تَقُولُوا:} \text{إِنَّ فُتْهَانًا كانَ خَطَّأًا كَبِيرًا.} \\
\]

And kill not your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Surely, the killing of them is a great sin.

With regard to the second motive for infanticide, shame over female offspring, the Quran makes comment as follows:

\[\text{سُرَاتَ اَلْإِسْرَأ́} 31. \]
\[\text{سُرَاتَ الْنُّذُّل} 58 f.

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298 Sūrat al-Isra' 31.
299 Sūrat al-Nahl 58 f.
And when the news of (the birth of) a female (child) is brought to any of them, his face becomes dark, and he is filled with inward grief! (59) He hides himself from the people because of the evil of that whereof he has been informed. Shall he keep her with dishonour or bury her in the earth? Certainly, evil is their decision.

The background to these verses is the fact that parents in some ancient Arabian societies preferred male rather than female children, especially in vulnerable communities, since the possession of female children entailed increased vulnerability for that society. As previously noted, in nomadic societies women were considered a cause for concern and a weak point susceptible to attack, while males were preferred since, as they grew up, they would be able to assist their families in the daily work and to protect their tribes in time of war. Further, if a woman did not find a suitable husband within her own tribe, then she would most likely leave her tribe to marry into another tribe, or she might be taken captive in the course of warfare (al-Khatami 1999: 321). Children usually followed their fathers and lived with them in the same tribe, so that if a woman married into a foreign tribe, she would be forced to abandon her children, who would remain in their father’s tribe (R. Smith 1903: 59). In certain cases in bedouin societies a woman might seek to break away from her marriage by casting herself into the hands of a respected man in another tribe, who would negotiate with her husband on her behalf, but the success or failure of such negotiations depended altogether on the man to whom she went (Nelson 1973: 51).
6.1.5 The System of Succession to the Qedarite Throne

This study has already provided a long discussion of kingship, its history and development among Near Eastern societies, paying particular attention to north Arabian societies.\textsuperscript{300} Here our concern is specifically with kingship among the Qedarites and the system of inheritance to the Qedarite throne. In fact, the system of inheritance to the Qedarite throne remains unclear. Thus, in the course of this study, we have seen that a son might ascend the throne in succession to his father, as in the case of Hazael and his son Ia'ta.\textsuperscript{301} Similarly, during the Persian period Qedar was ruled by Gashmu, who was succeeded by his son Qaynu.\textsuperscript{302} By way of contrast, however, in two accessions brothers ruled Qedar side by side with their sisters. Thus, Hazael and his sister Te‘elkhunu ruled at the same time,\textsuperscript{303} as did Iati‘e and her brother Baskânû. As the Assyrian inscriptions record, the latter pair incurred the wrath of Sennacherib (704-681 BCE) because they aided the king of Babylon against him (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 130).\textsuperscript{304} In addition, we have noticed elsewhere in this study that Uaite‘ son of Bir-dadda was nephew to Uaite‘ son of Hazael and yet ascended the Qedarite throne after his uncle Uaite‘ had been taken captive to Nineveh (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314, text no. 819).\textsuperscript{305}

We have also noted in this study that Uaite‘ son of Hazael governed Qedar contemporarily with Tabûa\textsuperscript{306} the daughter of Te‘elkhunu, which could be an example of cousins’ joint participation in governance. In fact, we have suggested elsewhere in this

\textsuperscript{300} See section 2.3.4.
\textsuperscript{301} See section 3.2.3.a
\textsuperscript{302} See section 4.3.5.
\textsuperscript{303} See section 4.3.1.
\textsuperscript{304} In fact, the case of Baskânû and his sister Iati‘e may not be a very good example of a brother and sister ruling together, since the Assyrian inscriptions do not mention Baskânû as king, but rather as commander of the Qedarite army during his sister’s reign. This is in contrast to the Assyrian inscriptions’ specific mention of Hazael as king of Qedar at the same time that his sister Te‘elkhunu reigned over the tribe. See Chapter Fout the full account of Qedarite rulers, section 4.3.1.
\textsuperscript{305} We have discussed this matter in Chapter Four. In addition, Eph‘al (1982: 144) suggested that Uaite‘ son of Bir-dadda was Uaite‘ II and that he ascended the Qedarite throne after his uncle Uaite‘ son of Hazael, but nevertheless he did not include this king in the list of Qedarite rulers contained in his work (Eph‘al 1982: 227). However, an Assyrian inscription explicitly mentions that Uaite‘ son of Bir-dadda was the nephew of Uaite‘ son of Hazael (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 314, text no. 819; for the full text, see section 4.3.1).
\textsuperscript{306} Assyrian inscriptions mention Tabûa as queen of the Qedarites appointed by Esarhaddon (see Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207, 214, 365 f., texts nos. 518, 536, 940, and 943), although this queen is absent from the list of Arab rulers in Kitchen, 1994: 237. For a full account of Tabûa and the different opinions about the early stage of her life, see section 4.3.1.
study that kings and queens of Qedar shared the responsibility of rule over their people, with kings taking command of the Qedarite army and dealing with external matters while queens took responsibility for the religious cult and dealt with internal matters.\textsuperscript{307} So, for example, Hazael commanded the Qedarite army against Sennacherib and additionally took responsibility in diplomatic negotiations with Esarhaddon to persuade him to return the Arabs’ deities from Nineveh to Adummatu, while Te’elkhunu governed as queen over the Qedarite people and officiated as the tribe’s priestess.

In practice, commanders of the Qedarite army might in time become kings of Qedar, as in the case of Abiate’ son of Te’ri, who commanded the Qedarite army\textsuperscript{308} during the time of Uaite’ son of Hazael and was later made king over the tribe (Eph’al 1982: 147). We have mentioned elsewhere in this study\textsuperscript{309} that when Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda was taken captive to Nineveh, Abiate’ son of Te’ri took advantage of the vacancy on Qedar’s throne and seized authority. In addition, Abiate’ received legitimacy to rule as king of Qedar from Ashurbanipal, while Uaite’ son of Bir-dadda was considered as a usurper of Qedar’s throne from the perspective of Ashurbanipal.\textsuperscript{310} In general therefore, we can discern no clear system of succession to the Qedarite throne.

Assyrian inscriptions provide some brief information about the relationship between the rulers of Qedar and their people, since we find in them references to the queens of Qedar as priestesses who led their people in religious ceremonies.\textsuperscript{311} In addition, we learn from Assyrian inscriptions that the leaders of Qedar lived in tents and not in palaces,\textsuperscript{312} suggesting that the nomadic lifestyle was customary among the Qedarites. However, we cannot go further in this discussion on account of the present shortage of information and we can only hope that future archaeological fieldwork will add to our knowledge in this area.

\textsuperscript{307} See section 4.3.1.
\textsuperscript{308} For the text mentioning Abiate’ as leader of Qedar’s army, see Luckenbill, II, 1927: 313 f., text no. 817. See also Chapter Four for a full account of Qedar’s leaders.
\textsuperscript{309} See Chapter Four. In addition, for Assyrian inscriptions mentioning Abiate’ as king, see Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315 f., texts nos. 821 and 823.
\textsuperscript{310} See section 4.3.2 and Luckenbill, II, 1927: 315, text no. 821.
\textsuperscript{311} See section 3.2.4.a and Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207 f., text no. 518.
\textsuperscript{312} See section 3.2.3.a and Luckenbill, II, 1927: 158, text no. 358.
6.2 Religion

A variety of pagan cults were widespread among ancient Arab societies and the Arabs were influenced by their neighbours’ highly developed cultures. Thus the civilized population of Mesopotamia produced enormous amounts of religious literature, covering myths, legends, prayers, historical narratives, and hymns, the subjects of which they also portrayed in their statues (Caskel 1958: 99). It is natural for the Qedarites to have been affected by the popular ideologies and mythologies they encountered in the Fertile Crescent.

We find that in ancient Arabia the common deities were the Sun, Moon, and Venus, together with many lower-ranking divinities depicted in portraits or statues (Moscati 1957: 186). It is important to recognize that during Qedar’s history it played a significant role in religious matters among Arab tribes living in north Arabia. They were devotees of some important Arab gods and goddesses, and Qedarite queens were well-known as priestesses among the Arabs.

It was a common custom for pagans in ancient time to carry their gods into battle to guarantee victory and protection, and if a group of people won a battle, they would force their defeated enemies to worship the victor’s deities (ʿAlī 1968: 6, 10). In some cases, the victor could capture and take away the deities of a defeated people. In the case of Qedar we find that Te’elkhunu was enraged against her brother Hazael when he was defeated in battle and was forced to hand over to Sennacherib some of the important Arab gods, which had never before been taken (Musil 1927: 481), so much so that she decided to leave her city and live in Nineveh near to her captive deities. One of Esarhaddon’s inscriptions (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001) records that Hazael the king of Qedar came to Nineveh and asked the Assyrian king Esarhaddon to give him the Arabs’ deities:

313 Among the deities which were taken by Sennacherib from Qedar were Dai, Nuha, Ebirillu, and Atar- kurumai (see Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207 f.; text no. 518; Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001), while Musil suggested another spelling for those deities: Diblat, Daia, Nuhaia, Ebirllu, and AtarQurumaia (Musil 1927: 481).

314 See inscription no. 518 in Luckenbill, II, 1927: 207 f.; Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001.
[(As for) the city Adummatu, the fortress of the Arabs, which Sennacherib, king of Assyria, (my) father, who engendered me, conquered and whose goods, possessions, (and) gods, together with Apkallatu, the queen of the Arabs, (iv 5) he plundered and brought to Assyria — Hazael, the king of the Arabs, came to Nineveh, my capital city, with his heavy audience gift and kissed my feet. He implored me to give (back) his gods, and I had pity on him. (iv 10) I refurbished the gods Atar-samayin, Dāya, Nuḥāya, Ruldāwu, Abirīllu, (and) Atar-qurumā, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Aššur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him. (iv 15) I placed the lady Tabūa, who was raised in the palace of my father, as ruler over them and returned her to her land with her gods. I added sixty-five camels (and) ten donkeys to the previous tribute and imposed (it) on him. Hazael died and I placed Iataʾ, his son, (iv 20) on his throne (Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscription, Esarhaddon 001).

This text is the oldest one to mention Arab deities of the north Arabian Peninsula in general and of Adummatu in particular (Retsö 2001: 601). From it we may derive the following observations. The first is that the Qedarite Arabs at Adummatu worshipped a number of deities, six of whom are mentioned in the text. Second, the names of those deities were famous not only among the Arabs at Adummatu but also among neighbouring Arabs and indeed also with the Assyrians, whose inscriptions specifically mention those deities by name. Third, while the exact date of the appearance of those deities at Adummatu is not known, still the above text indicates that they existed at least from the eighth century BCE (Hoyland 2001: 68).

In fact, the Arab deities mentioned in this text continued to be worshipped in north Arabia over several centuries after the above event. Some fragmentary inscriptions from north Arabia dating from the sixth century BCE mention those deities (Knauf 1985: 82-84; Retsö 2001: 601). The north Arabian inscriptions from that time testify to three of them, viz: Ruḍā, Nuhai, and Atarsamain. We may cite as an example the following prayer: hrḍw wnḥy wʾtrsm sʾdnʾ l wddy ‘Ruḍā and Nuhai and Atarsamain, help me in the matter of my love’ (Winnett and Reed 1970: 80). Moreover, during the fourth century

Van den Branden (1966: 25) reasoned that the appearance of Adummatu’s deities in Thamudic inscriptions during the fourth century BCE indicated that the Thamud at Dedan were affected by Adummatu and worshipped their deities. Retsö (2001: 601) comments that the deities of Adummatu penetrated naturally into northern Arabia’s Jawf region via the caravan roads and he notes that the names of both the deities Nuhu and RDW are repeatedly mentioned in Thamudic inscriptions. In addition, the names of all the Adummatu divinities appear during the third century CE among Safaitic inscriptions from the Syria desert (Knauf 1985: 82-84; Retsö 2001: 601). The worship of RDW especially was quite widespread in Syria province and north Arabia during the fourth century CE (Retsö 2001: 601). Knauf (1985: 84) was of the opinion that the name of the deity Nuhu might have been associated with the sun, while Retsö (2001: 602) believes that this deity’s name could have been associated with the wisdom of Tayma, mentioned in Jeremiah 49: 7.315

Until now there has been insufficient information available bearing on the cults of these deities, why the Arabs worshipped them, and these deities’ special functions (Retsö, 2001: 601). However, a tentative suggestion has been made regarding Nuha, whose name suggests he might have been worshiped as a deity of emotion. Thus, Hoyland (2001, 207) cites in support of this hypothesis a text inscribing a vow from north Arabia which envisages Nuha as god full of passion: ‘By Nuha is the flying into a rage’, and ‘By Nuha is the jealousy of a lover’.

There are different hypotheses regarding the divine name Atarsamain. Retsö (2001: 601) suggests that this divine name belonged to a pure Arab deity, since the

315 “This is what the Lord Almighty says: is there no longer wisdom in Teman”
Sennacherib inscription\textsuperscript{316} grouped this divine name with other Arab deities. In addition, Hoyland (2001: 68; 134) notes that the name Atarsamain appears among those of the Arab deities who were taken to Nineveh. It is obvious that this deity was known to the Assyrians as one of the Arab deities at Adummatu. Consequently, Retsö (2001: 601) suggests that Atarsamain in this text should be rendered ‘Attar-shamayin’ (Morning Star of heaven) and associated with the Arabs at Adummatu and not with Ishtar of Nineveh. In addition, a link has been formed between this goddess’s name (Atarsamain) and the queen of heaven mentioned in the Old Testament (Knauf, 1985: 82-84; Retsö, 2001: 601 f.). Although Jeremiah (7:18; 44: 17-19) mentions the cult of the queen of heaven when paganism was widespread in Israel, he does not describe this goddess. Winnett and Reed (1970: 71 f.) suggested regarding the name of Atarsamain at Adummatu that this latter might be considered as a complex shrine where all the Arab deities were worshipped, with Ishtar among them.

Allāt was one of the most important deities during pre-Islamic times. There was considerable worship of this deity among Qedar\textsuperscript{317} and other groups of people in the Arabian Peninsula, so that some discussion of this name is essential in this place. Once again, opinions differ concerning the nature of Allāt. Some have suggested that Allāt was ‘a moon deity’ since the name of this deity is associated with a crescent shape at ‘Ayn al-Shallālah (Cooke 1903: 222; Winnett 1940: 124-127). In addition, in the Liḥyānîte inscriptions Allāt is associated with Wadd, the moon-god (JS, II: 506; Lih. no. 277), since the title ‘fkl l’t in Liḥyānîc inscriptions refers ‘the south Arabian moon-god’ (Healey 2001: 114). In contrast, others have suggested that Allāt was the planetary deity, Venus (Dussaud 1955: 142; Ryckmans I, 1934: 3), while another theory has it that Allāt was a sun-goddess (Buhl 1936: 18; Fahd 1968: 117-119). Last but not least, Healey (2001:

\textsuperscript{316} See above.
\textsuperscript{317} Tell al-Maskhuta bowls illustrate that Qedar worshiped Allāt at least during the fifth century BCE (Rabinowitz 1956: 3 f.).
suggests that the name of al-‘Uzzā might be interchangeable with the name Allāt, since both names are used of the same deity in Nabataean inscriptions.

In fact, Allāt enjoyed widespread fame across the ancient Near East, being mentioned in different societies. Thus Aramaic inscriptions in Tell El-Maskhuta provide evidence that the Qedarites worshiped ‘Ilat or Allāt during the fifth century BCE at a North Arabian shrine in Egypt. One of these inscriptions reads: ‘That which Qaynu bar Geshem, King of Qedar, brought in offering to Han-‘Ilat’ (Rabinowitz 1956: 2). In addition one notes that the forms Allāt in Hebrew, ’Ilat ha-Lāt in Liḥyānic and Thamudic inscriptions, Lāt in Nabataean, and al-Lat in the Quran (ibid.: 3) all occur.

However, Retsō (2001: 604) draws the conclusion that the Nabataeans did not continue to worship Allāt, since the name of this deity disappeared from their regions, while Allāt was worshiped continuously in neighbouring Nabataean territories like Wādī Ramm, Dedan and Hawrān (Healey 2001: 108). In addition, some Iram inscriptions from the temple of ‘Ayn al-Shallālah contain the name of al-‘Uzzā, even though that temple was dedicated to the worship of Allāt (Healey 2001: 116), seeming to indicate that Allāt and al-‘Uzzā were different deities. Moreover, if we bear in mind that the message of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was to prohibit the worshiping of pagan deities including Allāt and al-‘Uzzā, we must therefore take some account of relevant Qur’ānic texts as reflecting religious attitudes of that time. The fact is that the Qur’ān makes a clear distinction between the names Allāt and al-‘Uzzā, who appear as two different deities (see e.g. S. al-Najm: 19). Moreover, Ibn al-Kalbī stated that the Quraysh at Makkah were known to be worshippers of al-‘Uzzā, while the Thaqīf at Taif were similarly known to be worshipers of Allāt (Healey 2001: 108).

The Madā’in Śālih inscriptions also mention Allāt, apparently indicating that this deity was worshipped there (JS, II, 189 f.: no. 212; 190: no. 213). Additionally, Allāt

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318 Although al-‘Uzzā is outside the scope of our discussion since there is no evidence that Qedar worshiped al-‘Uzzā at Adummatu, it is nevertheless appropriate to remark on the character of this deity. In fact, most scholars believe that al-‘Uzzā was a representation of Venus or the morning star. See Winnett, 1940: 122; Caskel 1954: 45; Henninger 1954: 101-106; Krone 1992: 492-520; Healey 2001: 114.
was probably also worshipped at Ṣalkhad in Ḥawrān, since a minority of the population rebuilt this deity’s shrine in that place. In fact, Allāt is mentioned in some texts from Ṣalkhad (Healey 2001: 109), for example in one of the King Malichus inscriptions, tentatively dated to 56 CE: l’lt ‘liṯm dy bslḥd ‘For Allāt their goddess, who is in Ṣalkhad’ (ibid.: 108). There is also another Ṣalkhad inscription, dated to 95 CE, mentioning Allāt: ‘lt wwgrh ‘Allāt and her betyl [?]’ (ibid.: 109). Herodotus mentioned Allāt as one of the important deities of the Arabs which he encountered when he visited south Palestine and Egypt (Knauf 1985: 85; Retsö 2001: 602):

The only gods whose existence they acknowledge are Dionysus and Urania… Dionysus and Urania are, respectively, Orotalt and Allāt (Herodotus 3.8).

There is a theory that the name Orotalt might be a distortion of RḌWY since during the fifth century BCE Safaitic and Thamudic texts mention Orotalt and Allāt as the chief deities, while in later texts Allāt and Ruḍā appear as the chief deities (Knauf 1985: 85; Retsö 2001: 604).

Krone (1992: 82-86) raised certain objections against the theory that the name Atarsamain, found in Esarhaddon’s inscription, and the name Allāt refer to the same deity, first because Atarsamain does not appear on the Tell al-Maskhuta sacrificial bowls (Dumbrell 1971: 36) and mention of Allāt is not to be found in the earliest Thamudic texts. In addition, ‘TRSM and Allāt are mentioned together in some inscriptions. In contrast, Retsö (2001: 604, 616) believes that Atarsamain, mentioned in Esarhaddon’s inscription, should be identified with Allāt. He suggests that the Qedarites might have worshipped the same deity under different names, arguing that while they worshiped a deity at Adummatu under the name Atarsamain, that name became altered to Allāt at Tell al-Maskhuta. Even so, Retsö (2001: 604, 618) is still in partial agreement with Krone’s argument.

Healey (2001: 108) rejects the theory that the Greek goddess Aphrodite, found at Petra in the Temple of the winged lions, and Allāt were representations of the same deity. As Healey observes, Allāt was not worshipped at Petra and receives no mention in the
Petra inscriptions. Further, were we to allow that Allāt was identical with Aphrodite, that would entail Allāt’s being the wife of Dushara, but Wenning and Merklein (1997: 106) have suggested rather that the relationship between Allāt and Dushara was that of mother and son rather than wife and husband. There is, however, no purpose in pursuing this discussion since it is clear that Allāt was not worshiped at Petra (Healey 2001: 108). We ought, nevertheless, to pay brief attention to the deity Dushara. Although Dushara is outside the scope of this study since he was not one of the Qedarites’ deities, he achieved considerable fame during the Nabataean period and, according to Nabataean inscriptions, was then the principal deity at Petra (Healey 2001: 82; Hoyland 2001: 141). As Healey suggests (2001: 82), Dushara was probably a symbol of all deities and the name Dushara might not have been in origin a divine name but rather a divine title. Moreover, Hoyland (2001: 142) argues that this deity might have been worshipped in north Arabia by traders and travelers, but not by the indigenous people of north Arabia.319

Some lower-ranking deities were also worshipped in north Arabia during ancient times, for example, Aktab (or Kutba), a deity who, as the name seems to suggest, might have been associated with writing. Hoyland (2001: 141) suggests that this deity might have been worshipped in north Arabia during the time of the Babylonian King Nabonidus’s sojourn at Tayma.

Tayma was in addition one of the most important places where the Qedarites wandered because, as we have noted elsewhere in this study, Qedar seized the commercial road in north Arabia.320 Furthermore, we have also discussed the religious situation of Tayma during the sojourn there of Nabonidus.321 We have considered whether Nabonidus lived at Tayma to worship the god Sin or for other reasons suggested by different scholars. Finally, we have discussed the deity Šalm, who was worshipped at Tayma and we have concluded with Dalley (1986: 86) that the term salm in Aramaic has several meanings such as ‘image’ or ‘statue’. Further, there was more than one Šalm

319 For an intensive study of Dushara, see Healey, 2001.
320 See section 5.1.
321 See section 5.1.2. In this study we have suggested that the purpose motivating Nabonidus’s sojourn at Tayma was commercial rather than religious.
worshiped at Tayma, such as Ṣalm of Hagam and Ṣalm of Maḥram.\textsuperscript{322} Last but not least, we should mention the famous deities at Dedan, such as Dhū Ghaba, the principal deity of Liḥyān, and Wadd, the principal deity of the Minaeans\textsuperscript{323} (Hoyland 2001: 141).

In addition, through history we find that two or more tribes might become associated in worshipping common deities, producing a religious situation which could affect political attitudes with tribal liaisons being made, and a kind of federation could appear for the purpose of protecting their common deities and providing mutual aid in any other circumstances (al- Khathami 1999: 247; Hoyland 2001: 139). Such coalitions were formed between Qedar, Nebaito, and Isamme' when Abiate' king of Qedar received aid from Natnu the king of Nebaito to fight against Ashurbanipal.\textsuperscript{324} The purpose of this coalition was to revolt against Ashurbanipal, but these groups might also have wanted to defend their gods (Luckenbill, II, 1927: 316).

\textbf{6.3 Law}

The judiciary is one of the most important institutions of any society because it is considered the guarantor of peace and social justice. Through the law the person who is relatively weak can assert his right against the strong and the criminal will face punishment. Thus, human beings have realized from ancient time that the law is an indispensable means toward achieving peaceful living within society. From the ancient Iraqi city of Eshnunna there has come one of the oldest legal codes, possibly going back to Sumerian times. This code has sixty paragraphs, containing different regulations for society, families, house building, and tariffs on grain (von Soden 1994: 134). In addition, from ancient Babylonia we have the famous code of Hammurabi, consisting of general regulations for the community and stipulations for punishments to be imposed on criminals. Moreover, the Assyrians had some written laws imposed by local rulers for the regulation of commercial affairs (von Soden 1994: 134-137).

\textsuperscript{322} See section 5.1.2.
\textsuperscript{323} See section 5.3.4.
\textsuperscript{324} See section 4.3.4.
In contrast, ancient nomadic societies lacked legislative documents or institutions of judiciary, instead of which their members were obliged to respect and follow the established traditions and customs of their communities. In fact, tradition and custom were the principal legislative foundation of ancient Bedouin communities. In addition, it is possible that each group of nomadic societies had their own local laws and customs, which were applicable to their members and not obligatory for members of other groups (ʻAlī 1967: 162). Moreover, there was no executive authority to enforce the legislation or to apply sentences to criminals, neither was there any public right to criminal trial or institutions to reform criminals. In fact, in nomadic societies vengeance, or lex talionis, was the fundamental principle to be applied in criminal matters (ʻan eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’). In addition, it was customary for the right to revenge to be left to either the victims themselves if they survived or to their relatives (ʻAlī 1967: 162).

6.4 Arts

The artefacts and monuments left by ancient civilizations are commonly appealed to as evidence of political and religious events and thus are important elements in the study of ancient societies. Those produced by ancient Mesopotamia or Egypt help to create a picture of past events, illustrating the circumstances, places, and time they were made to commemorate (Moscati 1963: 11). While, therefore, the present study discusses the importance of inscriptions and annals, and pays close attention to the information that may be gleaned from archaeological studies, it is unfortunate that, with regard to the Qedarites’ arts, the archaeological information is minimal and distinctly limited. In fact, as the present study reaches completion, there is little to be said regarding the art of the Qedarites except the Tell El-Maskhuta bowls, so that we can only hope that future archaeological work may lead to the broadening of our knowledge in this area. Rabinowitz (1956: 1) published information regarding the group of bowls in the Brooklyn Museum which commemorate Quynu bar Gašmu’s offering of a vow to the

325 See section 1.4.
goddess Han-ʼIlat. Rabinowitz suggested for these bowls a date in the region of 500 BCE and they are thus important as evidence that during the fifth century BCE the kingdom of Qedar dominated north Egypt and worshipped Han-ʼIlat there. It is noteworthy that both the style of the bowls and the writing on these bowls indicate Persian influence on Qedarite art (see figure no. 5).

It is well known that Islamic civilization has left behind a cultural heritage that includes impressive architectural skills, but the situation is different with regard to the pre-Islamic period. In fact, at that time the architectural monuments were very simple and scarce, which may readily be explained as the natural result of the lifestyle of the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula during ancient times, when their lifestyle was of a nomadic bedouin character. Even so, the pre-Islamic Arabs did interact with neighbouring civilizations along the trade routes, so that arts and culture found opportunity to be transferred into the Arabian Peninsula (Hoyland 2001: 167). Indeed, the north Arabian Peninsula was influenced by many civilizations, including those of Mesopotamia, Iran, and Hellenistic empires, so that, for example, the impact of Hellenistic civilization is plain for all to see in the architecture of Petra (McKenzie 2007: 91) (see figure no. 10) and Madā’in Śalih (see figure no. 11). In addition, elsewhere in this study we have had occasion to mention Mārib castle, an edifice considered to exemplify sophisticated house-building on many floors, constructed from mud brick at Adummatu. This building might be cited in evidence of how the multi-storey building, seen among the Arabs’ developed neighbours, penetrated into the Arabian Peninsula in ancient times (see figure no. 12) (Hoyland 2001: 171). The architecture of south Arabia perfectly exemplifies the influence of neighbouring civilizations on their art. Excavation at Shabwa palace in Hadramawt has unearthed a beautiful multi-storey building constructed of stone for defence purposes. Another example is Ghumdan palace, which has achieved widespread reputation. This marvellous building had approximately twenty floors constructed of differently coloured materials in each storey, the highest being a room with many windows with timber frames set into marble surrounds expressing the height of luxury (Hoyland 2001: 178 f.).

\[326\] See section 5.2.3
Moreover, many statues have been found across the Arabian Peninsula. For instance, a new archaeological study has found at Dedan an old temple which may possibly be associated with the main deity of Liḥyān, Dhū Ghaba. This temple has a considerable number of stone statues (see figures no. 13, 14) (Al-Said 2012: 128 f.). In addition, in Tayma many stone statues have been found, one of them a free stone without human features, wearing a dagger and belt (see figure no. 15) (Hoyland 2001: 177).

Examples of rock art have also been found in many places throughout the Arabian Peninsula. According to a study from Dhumeila in eastern Jordan, some of the graffiti in that place may, in fact, date back to the seventh millennium BCE (Hoyland 2011: 192). Although relics of this kind have been found to be widespread on the summits of mountains and indeed everywhere in the Arabian Peninsula, for a number of reasons little information can be obtained from them. First, the graffiti-writers seem to have produced mere ‘doodles’ devoid of any purpose other than a mere pastime and, second, it is difficult to date these graffiti with any certainty, although in certain cases the script used by the artist could be used as a source of information, e.g. regarding the language used at the time of writing (Hoyland 2001: 193). Graffiti might also be important in reflecting the daily lifestyle of the people inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula during ancient times and what were their concerns, e.g. hunting. In addition, graffiti might provide some details about the wildlife of the Arabian Peninsula during ancient times and what kinds of animals used to live there (see figure no. 16). Moreover, the Arab artists depicted their natural environment, since some pictures illustrate simple images of objects seen from the desert-dweller’s point of view, such as the sun, moon, and trees (Hoyland 2001: 193). Again, many of the graffiti illustrate soldiers and battle scenes, while some paintings represent artistic life in the Arabian Peninsula during ancient times.
Figure no. 10: The Hellenistic-style "Treasury" at Petra
Figure no. 11: tomb facade no. A 6 at Madā’in Śālih
Figure no. 12: Mārib castle at Adummatu al-Jawf
Figure no. 13: Statue of a Lihyânite king from al-‘Ulā, in the Saudi National Museum, Riyadh

Figure no. 14: Anthropomorphic stele from al-‘Ulā, in the Saudi National Museum, Riyadh
Figure no. 15: Anthropomorphic stele from Tayma
Figure no. 16: Petroglyph from the Arabian Peninsula

This is one of the best known petroglyphs of Saudi Arabia, located beside the road west of Riyadh. This prominent panel shows a variety of animals and a battle scene.
General conclusion

This study was introduced by a discussion of the development of history writing in different societies, particular attention having been paid to the difficulties involved in the collecting of information that were sometimes faced by ancient historiographers. This led to a discussion of the nature of ancient sources and the problems they may present to researchers in placing reliance on them. In particular, we have drawn attention to the specific problems presented by Assyrian inscriptions, which were clearly often written to serve propaganda purposes. We have further discussed the Biblical material and the specific problems related to the use of Biblical texts as historical sources.

In discussing Arab ethnicity we found that most Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions, as well as most texts in the Bible in which Arabs are made mention of, used the term ‘Arab’ to refer to nomads living in north Arabia or south Palestine. We found also that most of the Arab tribes did not concern themselves with blood relationships, so that there is some uncertainty about the relationship between the Arabs in south Arabia and those in north Arabia.

It has been necessary to consider how it was that Arabic spread and became used among all the people living in the Arabian Peninsula prior to Islam and one important factor in this seems to have been the Arabs’ aswaq or markets in the pre-Islamic period (Von Grunebaum, 1963: 17), which became annual cultural gatherings where Arab poets would display their abilities in the public declamation of verse. A famous anthology of such verses is found in the Mu’allaqāt, a unique collection of early Arabic poetry. It has to be remembered that in the pre-Islamic era the Arabs did not use writing to store their poetic descriptions of remarkable moments in their cultural heritage, but relied solely on the power of memorization and oral recitation. Consequently, they did not leave many inscriptions which describe their Arab ethnicity in the Arabian Peninsula.

It may be because the Arab nation is very old, with origins deep in the remote past, that it is difficult to find among archaeological remains anything specifically indicative of Arab ethnicity. However, it would be too hasty a conclusion to rule out the

327 See section 2.1.
possibility of compiling a history of a great nation such as the Arabs just because they did not leave inscriptions proclaiming their identity as Arabs and their dominion over specific territories. In fact, nations who have not experienced exclusion or been forced to share their land with invaders do not need to assert their right to exist in their familial territories. As Von Grunebaum (1963: 10) remarked, ‘As always and everywhere the development of a self-conscious national or cultural identity is spurred by a sense of separateness from contiguous groups,’ but it seems that the ancient Arab peoples had no real consciousness of their unity as a nation.

Kingship has been discussed here in depth and we have illustrated the key factors underlying the existence of kingship in different societies through the course of history. We have found that the kingship which existed in north Arabia in pre-Islamic times had almost every feature characteristic of kingship in all other places where the institution has existed. In addition, we have suggested that the rulers of the Arab groups in north Arabia presented themselves as kings or queens to the Mesopotamian empires, rather than such titles having been applied to them from without. In other words, the scribes of the Mesopotamian empires did not apply the title ‘king’ (šarru) randomly to leaders of Arab groups.

In this study we have discussed the relationship between Arabs and the different Near Eastern empires of pre-Islamic times such as those of the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Achaemenids. The purpose of this was to sketch the historical background for the entire thesis. In the course of this discussion we have assembled and examined a considerable number of Assyrian inscriptions which relate to the history of Arabs in north Arabia.

Regarding the history of Qedar, in the present study we have noted that on some occasions historical details concerning Qedar need to be clarified before the full account of its history can be narrated. To do so, we have included an analysis of the Arabs’ tributes as described in Assyrian inscriptions and some observations have been made, as follows. First, from the analysis of Queen Zabiba’s tribute we find that she had enormous wealth, which suggests that she was a great queen who ruled most of the Arab groups, as well as controlling most of the Arabian trade roads. Second, our study has led
us to reject Abbott’s (1941: 4) conclusion that Samsi was a queen of the Sabaeans. In fact, we have been able to cite evidence from Assyrian inscriptions indicating rather that Samsi was a queen of Qedar. Third, we have discussed the different opinions regarding the relationship between, on the one hand, Baskānu\textsuperscript{328} and Merodach-baladan, the king of Babylonia and, on the other hand, the relationship between Baskānu and the Arabs. We concluded that although Baskānu was a nephew of Merodach-baladan, Baskānu and his group were Arabs who lived somewhere in southern Babylonia.

In this study we have attempted to benefit from all relevant previous studies and archaeological works in order to present a full and coherent historical account of Qedar. In fact, previous studies, such as those of Eph’al, Streck, and Weippert,\textsuperscript{329} consisted of long discussions of the relationship between Qedar and Ashurbanipal, but provided a very complicated account, at times difficult to follow, of the rest of Qedar’s history. Therefore, in the present discussion we have made every effort to present a full, sequential, and easy-to-follow account of the history of Qedar. In addition, our study has addressed many specific issues in the history of Qedar and has attempted to resolve certain ambiguous matters in order to provide the reader with a clear and coherent account of Qedar’s history.

With regard to Nebaioth and Na-b-ti-a-a (and their relationship with the Nabataeans), it is hoped that this study will contribute towards improving our knowledge regarding this controversial issue. First, we have fully discussed the different opinions on this matter. Second, we have adduced clear references to Nabaitu/Nebaioth and Nabaitai/Nabataeans in Assyrian inscriptions as two different groups. Third, we have suggested that Nebaioth and the Nabaitai/Nabataeans were different groups of people living contemporaneously with each other in north Arabia during the seventh century BCE. In addition, we have suggested that the former group was active and powerful until the end of the sixth century BCE, when it became weak and disappeared from historical sources, while the latter group grew in prominence to become more visible in historical sources from the end of the sixth century BCE.

\textsuperscript{328} According to Assyrian inscriptions, Baskānu was a brother of Iati’e, the queen of the Arabs. In addition, Assyrian inscriptions introduce Baskānu as Merodach-baladan’s nephew.
\textsuperscript{329} See section 4.3.
Regarding Sheba, or Saba, in the present study we have presented the different opinions regarding the original location of Sheba and have argued that the most reliable hypothesis is that the original location of Sheba was in south Arabia and that its colonies in north Arabia came later, but not later than the eighth century BCE. Eph'al (1982: 88) stated that archaeological studies had revealed that Sheba definitely existed in north Arabia at least in the eighth century BCE. In addition, Assyrian inscriptions mention Sabaeans in north Arabia from the time of Tiglath-Pileser III (744 and 727 BCE). Additionally, we find in some Biblical texts, e.g. Ezek. 38: 13, an association during the sixth century BCE between Dedan and Sheba as two groups of people living in north Arabia.

In the case of the queen of Saba and her visit to King Solomon, the present writer holds to the position that does not reject the historical basis of this story, because it has been narrated frequently in different cultures and religions. Two possibilities may be mentioned in addressing this matter. The first is that, as the Assyrian inscriptions mention Arab queens in north Arabia from the eighth century BCE, it might possibly have been the case that the north Arabian societies were more sophisticated than those in south Arabia. Consequently, women in the former societies occupied high positions and led their communities, and one of those queens was the queen of Saba. Thus, the queen of Saba probably lived in north Arabia. The second possibility is that the queen of Saba lived in south Arabia, in view of the fact that we have no archaeological evidence substantiating the existence of Sabaeans in north Arabia before the eighth century BCE. However, future archaeological fieldwork is needed to improve our knowledge in this area.

This study has discussed the main settlements in north Arabia and has presented a full account of the history of Tayma, Adummatu, and Dedan. We have traced the history of Tayma and the relationship between Tayma and Mesopotamia. In addition, we paid particular attention to the reasons for Nabonidus’s sojourn in Tayma and have discussed the religious situation in Tayma during the time of Nabonidus. Our study has led us to agreement with the hypothesis that the motive for Nabonidus’s sojourn in Tayma was a commercial one. We have further found that during the time of the Persian Empire,
Qedar controlled Tayma and all the north Arabian commercial roads, since it had become the force to be reckoned with at that time.

The history of Adummatu has also been discussed here because it was considered the important fortress for Qedar in north Arabia during the seventh century BCE. In addition, this study sheds light on the relationship between Adummatu and Mesopotamia, bringing evidence to show that Adummatu was destroyed after the campaign of Sennacherib (704-681 BCE) and lost its position as an important commercial city, giving way to Tayma and Dedan as leading cities in the Arabian trade in north Arabia.

The chronology of Dedan is a controversial issue, requiring careful discussion of the relevant data and so we have attempted to unravel all those mysteries affecting secondary sources for the history of Dedan. In addition, in this study we have discussed the history of the population of Dedan, since it is considered a special problem in Dedan’s history. In fact, this thesis finds support in the earlier work of Musil, who suggested that Dedan was inhabited by a mixture of different tribes. It is our belief that in the eighth century BCE the first group to inhabit Dedan were the Dedanites mentioned in the Biblical text. The second group were the Sabaeans mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions during the seventh century BCE. The third group were the Minaeans mentioned in Minaean inscriptions found in Dedan and dated to the same period of the Sabaean habitation. In fact, Minaeans dominated north Arabia and established their colony in the north of Egypt during the fifth century BCE. The fourth group were the Liḥyānites mentioned in Liḥyānic inscriptions found in Dedan. Indeed, the Liḥyānites might have expanded their authority over Dedan after the time of the Sabaeans and Minaeans, since Liḥyānites are not mentioned in Assyrian or Biblical texts, while they are mentioned in classical works as the principal group of people in north Arabia during the second century BCE. Finally, we have found that Qedar controlled Dedan and all the north Arabian trade roads during the Persian Empire.

This study has discussed the social structure in north Arabia during pre-Islamic times, an essential part of which was the preference in nomadic societies for males, rather than for females, because the commercial lifestyle in those societies was dependent on the inherent superior strength of men. This consideration is linked with our topic
because, as we have seen, the Assyrian inscriptions and the Biblical texts describe the Qedarites as nomads who lived in tents and raised livestock.

We have in addition discussed the system of ascendency to the Qedarite throne and found that there was, in fact, no clear system for succession to rulership, since evidence indicates that kings and queens might rule contemporaneously with each other, or a brother might govern alongside his sister, as in the case of Hazael and his sister Te’elkhunu. We have also seen that a son might ascend the throne in succession to his father, as in the case of Hazael and his son Iata. In addition, we find an uncle succeeded by his nephew in the case of Uaite' son of Bir-dadda, the nephew of Uaite’ son of Hazael. Sometimes also, commanders of the Qedarite army might in time become kings of Qedar, as in the case of Abiate' son of Te’ri.

Our study has also included a discussion of religious issues in the north Arabia during the pre-Islamic period. Although, pagan cults were widespread among ancient Arab societies, the Qedarites had their own deities. We have attempted to provide, as far as is possible, some definition and sufficient discussion of the Qedarite deities mentioned in Esarhaddon’s inscriptions. In addition, discussion is included of Allāt and the important deities during the period in question.

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