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TEXTS IN THE DIALECT OF THE RWALAH
OF NORTHERN ARABIA

The Rwalah Bedouin are possibly one of the most celebrated tribes of Northern Arabia whose manners and customs, history, present conditions and oral literature have been amply described definitely more so than any other Bedouin group. The earliest and still the most comprehensive work is MUSIL (1928) *The Manners and Customs of the Rwalah Bedouin*, while T. E. LAWRENCE in (1935) *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* also refers frequently to the Sha‘lān shaikhs with whom he came into contact. More recently LANCASTER (1981) in *The Rwalah Bedouin today* has referred to their present way of life and MEEKER (1979) in *Literature and Violence in Northern Arabia* has analyzed their oral literature. Their dialect has also been covered to a greater or lesser degree in CANTINEAU (1936-37), the aforementioned MUSIL (1928) and PROCHAZKA (1988). All of these are interesting in different ways. However this is possibly the first collection of recorded texts on this dialect of the same quality and extent as those available on related Najdi Bedouin dialects such as those recorded by MONTAGNE (1935) and SOWAYAN (1992) for the Shammar, myself INGHAM (1986) for the Āl Ḍhafīr, and KURPERSHOEK (1993) and (1994) for the ‘Utaibah and Duwāsīr.

Quite a number of studies recently have treated these Bedouin oral texts as literary forms and analyzed them from a literary or linguistic-stylistic point of view. Of these PALVA 1992, SOWAYAN 1992 and INGHAM 1993 pay particular attention to the linguistic structures characteristic of them.

These texts are also interesting from a purely linguistic point of view as examples of Najdi-Bedouin dialect. The Rwalah are said to have emerged from the Khaibar area last of all the ‘Anizah tribes in the early 1800’s (MUSIL 1928:57) and thus their dialect can be expected to be of a fairly pure Najdi type. CANTINEAU’s and PROCHAZKA’s description of them is confirmed by this material.

It is of the Central Najdi type of the other ‘Anizah sections and of the Muṭāir, Central Ḥarb, ‘Awāzīm, ‘Utaibah, and Dawāsīr¹, with however certain characteristics of the generally Northern block shared with the North Najdi type of the Shammar and the mixed North/Central type of the Ḍhafīr, namely the form *-ak* rather than *-ik* for the 2nd person m.s, the lack of the *b-* element in negative phrases such as *mā hu* rather than *mā hu-b* "it is not", preference for the forms *hāḍa* etc. rather than the forms *ḍa* etc. for

¹ For details of these other dialects see INGHAM 1982a 77-95 and texts 2-5.

the demonstrative pronoun and certain vocabulary items such as *hna* "there", *hīc* "thus", *baḥḥar* "look", *mār* rather than *mēr*, for "but", *hā-* for *hāḍa*, as in *hāssinah* "this year", *ṭabb* "to enter", *guḍab* "to grasp" (more usually *gubaḍ* in the centre and south), *abā'ir* for "camels" in general rather than just "male camels", the use of the word *lōn* usually meaning "colour" to mean "thing" in negatives and interrogatives of the type *mā 'indi lōn* "I have nothing", *mā ygūlūn lōn* "they were not saying anything", the absence of the preposition *fī* "in", which is replaced by *bi-* in all cases as in *alxēl baha wazzilm baha* "horses and men are there (lit.in it)" and the use of *bhāḍa* meaning "here" as in *min 'indih ḍilūlin yjībaha bhāḍa* "who has a riding camel to bring here".

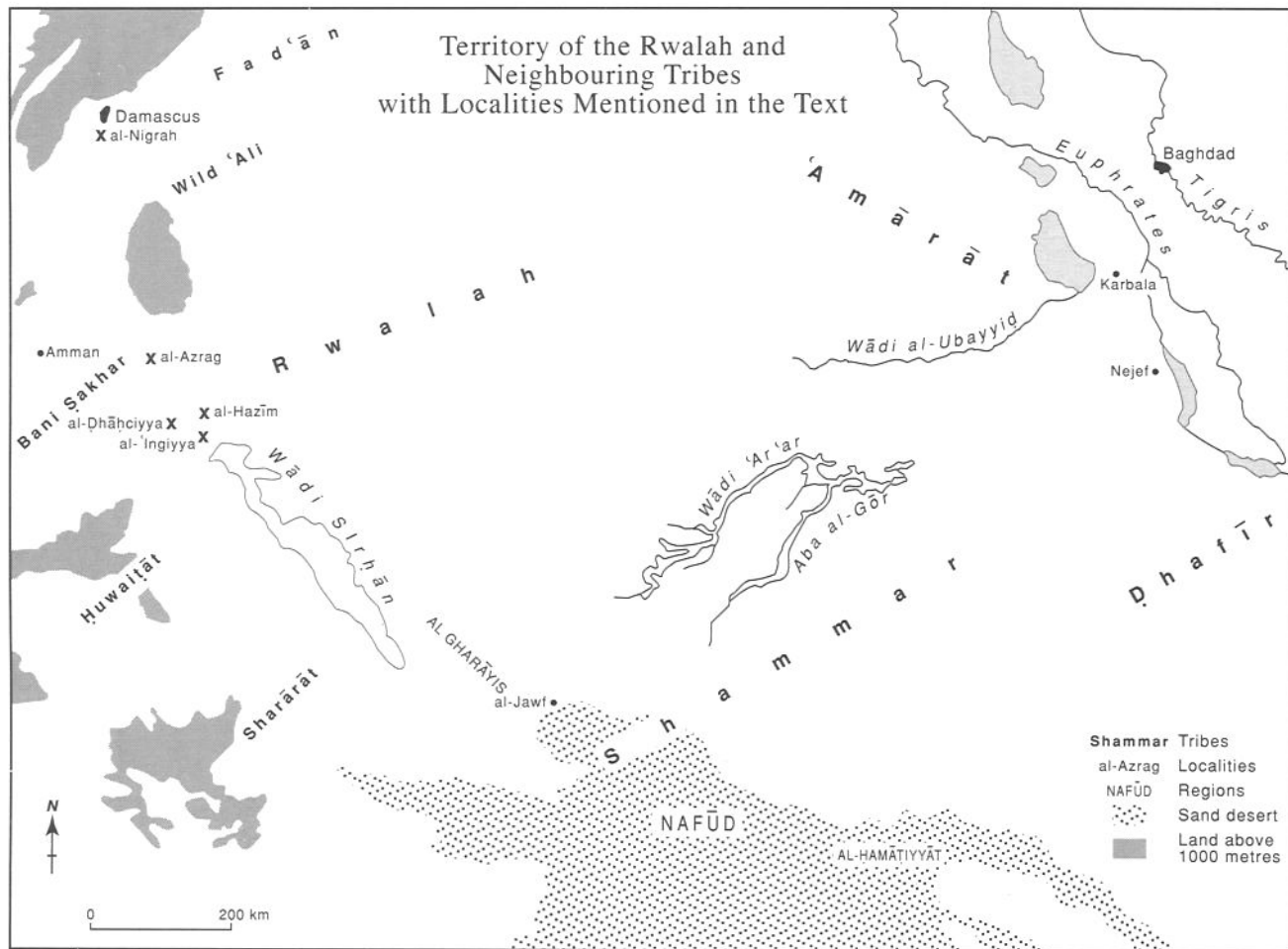
Interesting archaic items occurring in the text are *mār* "but" as in *mār cānak tabḡay tagḍubih* "but if you want to take it...", *kūd* "except" as in *mā ḍall minhum kūd arba'at ircāb* "there only remained of them four mounts", *fēd* "belonging to" as in *fēdin ibn ṣmēr* "those (people) belonging to Ibn Ṣumair", *aḡadi* "perchance, mayhap, perhaps" as in *yabḡēna aḡadēna naḡiḍb arrijim alli ḡiddām* "he wants us perchance to hold the hill in front", *ar'* deictic particle "look there!" as in *ar'ihin ṭalaṭ banāt bhalbēt haḍāk* "See those three girls in that tent" and *ḍuwān* "now".

Fast speech phenomena of an intriguing type were *-ah* occasionally for *-ha*, *-ham* or *-hu* occasionally for *-hum*, occasional dropping of *-l-* in *al-* as in *a(l)ḥwēṭāt*. "the Ḥuwaiṭāt". This I have noticed among other northern Bedouin where the initial consonant of the word is *-x-* or *-ḥ-* as in *a-xarjiyyah* < *al-xarjiyyah* "the stipend".

Also of interest is the wide range of vowel types associated with reflexes of Classical *-ay-* and *-i:-* and *-u:-* and *-aw-* and the tendency for variation even within the same word. An example occurring in the text is the two forms *tūb* and *ṭawb* for "dress, robe". The first occurs in the line *ṭlaṭ banāt yxiṭin-lihin tūb* "three girls sewing for themselves a dress" and the second in *miṭil ṭawbak hīc* "like your robe, thus". It seems that the open diphthongal variant is associated with strong stress position. In the text these vowels are presented as heard. Only a more extensive phonological investigation would allow one to determine the actual functional relationship of these variants. This I also noted for the Āl Ḍhafīr as shown in INGHAM (1982b: 252 ff 33)

The texts are exemplary in showing the wide range of verbs of movement used in Bedouin speech including *hajj* "to go away, flee", *nār* "to flee", *nikas*, "to go back", *lazz*, "to dash", *nuṭaḥ* "to meet head on", *naḥar* "to go towards", *zarag* "to dash quickly past", *ṭabbag* "to jump down", *yabra* "to go along beside, parallel to" (usually in the imperfective), *ṣalag* "to drive onward", *inḥaraf* "to go aside", *aḡbal* "to approach", *nahaj* "to go about", *jala* "to move camp and stay at a place", *ḡarrab* "to go towards the settled lands", *madd* "to set out, travel".

Territory of the Rwalah and
Neighbouring Tribes
with Localities Mentioned in the Text



Texts

The following texts were recorded from Furaiwān ibn Furaiḥ al-Mu‘abhil of the Sha‘lān clan, Shaikhs of the Rwalah². These were collected in Saudi Arabia at Nuthayyim in the province of al-Jawf by William LANCASTER who kindly gave them to me. Unfortunately however I have not been able to be personally in touch with speakers of this dialect, although I was able to consult speakers of related dialects³ and to use my own experience of other Najdi, Bedouin dialects, and written sources. Consequently there are some minor areas in the tape which I have not been able to understand completely, although in general the meaning is clear. Equally there are areas where although the words are clear the significance is not totally plain. This is especially true in the accounts of battle, where it is not always clear to me who is being referred to, the narrator's tribe or the enemy and where there are references to Bedouin customs, which were unfamiliar to me. Nevertheless, even with these deficiencies the tapes give an interesting and exciting picture of Bedouin warfare, where in some cases the narrator Furaiwān was personally involved, and the passages are of considerable interest in the light they throw both on the dialect and on the cultural background

I therefore present these texts in this light as being particularly suitable to a volume collected for Prof. Heikki PALVA and hope that later researchers may be able to clarify any inclarities in the texts.

The various tribes and tribal sections and personae mentioned in the texts are explained in footnotes and can also be placed in the context of the Rwalah tribal structure by looking at the family trees and lists of *fukhūd* "tribal sections" in LANCASTER (1981:163-171) and in the indexes in MUSIL (1927) and (1928). Where possible I have also tried to locate local place names mentioned in the texts. Some of these I have found in the works of MUSIL and elsewhere. However there are a small number which I was unable to locate.

The notation system used does not need much explanation and is generally the same as that used by the other writers on the Najdi dialects mentioned above. The only symbols which may need explanation are *-d-* which I use here for the voiced emphatic interdental fricative which corresponds in incidence to both the Classical *ḏād* and *ẓā'*, *-c-* which is a voiceless dento-alveolar affricate a fronted variant of *kāf* and *-ḡ-* which is a voiced dento-alveolar affricate a fronted variant of Classical *qāf*.

² Furaiwān is acknowledged by LANCASTER (1988:viii), in his notation system *Freiwan*, see index. A picture of him occurs on p. 19. The genealogy of the Mu‘abhil can be traced on p. 163.

³ In particular Dr. Maryam BAISHAK of al-‘Ain University, United Arab Emirates and Mr. Ahmad SA‘D of Saudi Arabia a postgraduate student of this school. I must also acknowledge the invaluable help given me by Saad al SOWAYAN. He was kind enough to read the first draft of this article and subsequently during a visit to London, we were able to sit for a few hours under the palm trees of the Regent Hotel, where he listened to the tape and during the all too brief meeting cleared up almost all the areas which were unclear in the tape, both in the actual words and the interpretation and allusions to Bedouin custom. My thanks also go to his visitor from al-Jawf, Khalaf al-‘AWAJI who helped considerably with local information and place names and recorded for me his own interpretation of the text. Information derived from him is marked (Kh.) in the footnotes.

Text 1

hāḍa ‘abdallah ‘ind ifheid yūm hu barḍ hā šša‘bah u ḡarrab min fheid u radd anniga ‘ala ljarba. hu šāḥbin hu wiyya fheid aljarbā. l‘ali ibin fhēd‘. yūm radd anniga ‘ala ljarba gāl “ya šammar yā šār ibn axīh radd anniga, hu ygāl ḥinna bignāh walla hu bāḡina?”. gāl “allah ysallmak hāḍa bāyḡin⁴ ibn axīh bass xiḍ arrajil” u hu yšūl ‘alēhum uytināwuxōn. fheid ‘indih alḥamāmīd w‘indih al‘limah u ‘indih annuwāširah wāl m‘abhil u hu wiyya ḡrēr hāḍa lāl šubīḥ lāl bnayyah. yōm innih tināwax hu wiyyāhum gāl “yarrwalah ḥinna (a)bā‘irna m‘aḡḡilīnaha talāt ayyām. bācir umma yiṭlug sibīlah yiṭilḡ(ah) aljarba walla ḥinna nuṭlug sibīlaha tar‘a willa yāxiḍha ljarbā. mār allī yiḍrab biḍharīh. wallah inni la-ajirrih⁵ lhāccilāb ma yiḍfan halli ma miḍrābih naṭḥ”. waššubḥ yamšūn ‘ala ba‘aḍhum wiy‘in allah arrwalah wayāxḍūn aljarba

whāḍa yōm yāxiḍ šammar axaḍhum axaḍlih rkaybin min šammar yijūn lihum ‘išrīn ḍilūl talātīn ḍilūl w gāl hāk aššammari “yā ṭuwīl al‘umur ana ‘yayyili anhaj adawwur alfuwayid lihum whālḥina mā ‘indahum allī yisḡi ba‘ārīnahum wana aṭlubk in‘ūli t‘aṭīnihin ‘an hārramḍa”. ja w hu mwarricin ‘ala šdād, gāl “allah yāxiḍk int wiyyā n‘ūlak xall gūt itwarrd alfaras ‘ala lma w-ana ‘ṭik ḍilūlak mi-hin⁶ in‘ūlak”. gāl “mā a‘arifha”. gāl “ar(h)in talāt banāt bhalbēt hādāk yxiṭillihin ṭūb. wilā gilt ‘gaww gūt’ ,whi tintibī-lak⁷”. yōm gāl miṭīl mā gāl, yxiṭillihin ṭōb. gāl “gaww gūt”, gālat “hala w marḥabah”. gāl “yā bint aba l-ūkal, fhayd ygūl ḥic wiygūl ḥic witwarrd alfaras wyi‘ṭini ḍilūli”. gālat “algōm lak u ḍilūlak. ana māni mwarrdtin alfaras ‘ašān ḍilūlak. cānih kill jēš xwiyaḡ yiddīh⁸ ya‘ṭīha halih, ana awar(ri)d alfaras u gāḍḍitin rāsi⁹”. yōm ja gāl “wiš gālatlak”. gāl “tigūl ‘cānih yiddi kill jēš ixwuyāk ana (a)war(ri)d alfaras u gāḍḍitin rāsi uḍilūlak māni jayyitil-lah”. gāl “xal-ha twurridha”. wilā rāsahā miṭīl warag ššahūmah yā nsifat alfaras yimīn uhu yansif yimīn wilyā nsifat yisār ibyadha tansif yisār. tigūl hallōn¹⁰ u mizzayyinah u gūt. yāxiḍ hassēf uyaḡ ‘id wiyyāha ‘a ḡḡilēb ilyāma šab‘aw assuwālif. hi nhajat lahalha u hu nahaj lahalih. yōm ja l‘ašir w jat arrjāl, gāl “yarrijāl min ‘indih ḍilūlin yjībaha bhāḍa u ynawwuxha”. gāl ya ṭuwīl al‘umur “hāḍōla gōm u l...mā bēni ubēnaham gwāmah mār anna nabḡa nda ‘fišhum unfaššilhum, willa mā bēna bēnaham niḡa”. wyajma‘ūn jēš yōm aššubḥ ymiddūn tigūl ṭurḡiyah. timattīl annās in fheid miṭīl aba zēd u gūt miṭīl ‘alya gālat gūt u gāl fhēd u gālat ‘alya waba zēd.

⁴ *bāyḡin* from *bāḡ* “to steal, deceive”.

⁵ *la-ajirih*. Note the use of the preverbal *la-* used with oaths as in the Classical Energetic Mood.

⁶ *mi-hin* “not they”, ie “let alone your sandals”.

⁷ KURPERSHOEK (1994: 341) notes also the verb *nabba* “to say ‘yes’ in answer to a call”.

⁸ See MUSIL (1928:603) *te’eddūn* “you return the herds”, *addejnahom* “we returned them” p. 650.

⁹ *gāḍḍitin rāsi* explained as *mfallitin ḡrūnah* “letting go her plaits” (Kh.).

¹⁰ *tigūl hallōn*. Here the verb *gāl* means not “to say” but “to be in an attitude”, ie “it (her hair) or she went like this”.

Text 2

hāda fhēd ibin m'abhil ibin š'alān nīzal 'a(l)ḥamāṭiyyāt. walkawācbah nzalaw balmanda wyirwūn w gāl "lā wiridtu warridu gūt mi'kum". wuywarrdūn gūt mi'hum. ba'ḍin minal wardāt ma wardat mi'hum. yōm ṣaddiraw whu yalḥaghūm. gāl "lēh ma warradtu gūt?". gālaw "yā tuwīl al'umur nwarridha bhalwardah almiḡiblah". gāl "la billah tansōn". u yaš'aṭ rāwiyah uyxallī rāwiya min irwiyyihum. hu gāl "ta'ādalū mšān mā tansōn txallūnaha". wiyta'adlūn uygūmūn wiyjībūnaha wiygūmūn ysōlifūn ibhalli ygāl-lih ṭ'ayyis fhayd ḡarb alḥamāṭiyyāt jbalīn hādēl allī bnajd, yōm innih bnajd, jbal ihna. uyōm innihum ṭāḥ almuṭar u sāḥaw,¹¹ willā hāk almarrārah xams ba'ārīn yaḍirbūn 'aššrēfi whu yša'ṭ'irwiyyihum. uhum y'allmūn fhēd. gāl "mā ḥinna bāyḡīnah ḥinna 'ād n'allmih. nīridd alnīga 'alēh uyindīfi 'wurāh". u ridd annīga 'alēh w irḥal w inzil 'aljarbā. yōm nīzal 'ala ljarbā u 'arab fhēd tarḥal u tiḡfi ḡād ufhēd yiḡīm. gāl aššrēfi laljarbā 'xallina nṣab(bi)ḥ āl fhēdin yōm agfat al'arab 'anīh". willā hāk almurah mir'aḍīyyah 'ind 'arab aššrēfi u tasri u t'allim ifhēd. tiḡūl "arrijāl bācīr yṣabhūnak". u yīrsil larrwalah u tiji jardah yammih ballēl waṣṣubḥ aljarbā yṣabhīh, hu wiyyā ššrēfi. wyarkibūn 'alēhum u yasirdūnihum u yaḍbah ifhēd ḥad ašrēfāt. u tanṭahīh marat almaḍbūḥ 'ād mā a'arīf alḡīṣidah u tagṣid baljarbā hāk alḡīṣidah u bhāk al'aṣa uhu yaḍribha tabḡa hi yfukk rajilha min fhēd gāl hāda rrajil awda' jaryih u jaryina wāḥid mā lina ḥīlitin nīfikkīh uhu yaḍribha bhāk al'aṣa yōm innih ḍbiḥīh fhēd ibin m'abhil ibin š'alān. ḍibah ḥad aššrēfāt ibhāk al kōn.

Text 3

uhāḍī marrah jala 'indihum ḍīdān, ḍīdān arrubu'. ḍīdān arrubu' mazyūn w ubūh ysayyir 'ala rrijāl u hu bass ma' abā'irih ygūd ifrusih. ba'aḍin mn almarrāt barrībī' sayyar 'ala rrijāl wilyā xu fhēd bētih mšatṭir ḡiddām w idrib 'alēh yā ḍīdān u hi tamīṣṭīh imritih wilyā yadha yōm irtaxat šāfat ḍīdān mazyūn u baḡḡirih. baḡḡar ya lwalad aḍḍīdān yamši u hu yṭaḡḡi'lih u lā radd. fāt ibwajh ymaḍḍi hākassinah 'indihum u hu yanḡar rab'ih. wāl m'abhil ilyā ḡazaw u fhēd muhu mi'hum mā liham naṣur. ummā yā ṣār ḥāḍir balfaz'ah walla balmḡaza. u hum ygīrūn 'ala rrubu' u 'ala hal'urbān allī yammih u hum yarkubūn 'alēhum u hum yakisrūnhum āl m'abhil u ḍīdān yanḡar allī ṭagga'lih u yaḍbiḥīh wilyā uxwin-lih ba'ad mistarmīnih šammar hādōlāk. u hu y'addilha ḍīdān 'alēhum u hu yircbih u hu yihirbih yamm ixwiyyāh. fakkih. yōm jaw m'abhil u fhēd gālaw aššāyib mfarršīnīn lih jā'id u mistandin 'ala šdād u fhēd ḡā'dīn hīc inn alḡawah. gālaw "wallah ḍīdān ḍibah flān u fakk iflān". fhēd mā ticallam. aššāyib gāl "ḍīdān in ḡilt dwumi idwumi win ḡilt ḡsini ḡsini. fuḍax 'ēn u xalla 'ēn". u yšīrūn attūmān walm'abhil ixwān, mā yāklūn lihum ḡalāl u hādōlāk mā yāklūn lihum ḡalāl min hāk alḡīn ilyā halḡīn 'ād willa hālḡīn 'ād wallah 'asa llah y'izz ibin s'ūd. salāmatk hāḍī lifhēd ibin š'alān ḥāssuwālīf.

¹¹ *sāḥaw* "they got wet", ie "it the world was moistened" like *aṣbahaw* "they became in the morning", *amsaw* "they became in the evening", *difaw* "they became warm", *biridna* "we became cold". Where in English we use an impersonal verb, in Najdi Arabic the patient of the verb is made the subject.

Text 4

lāya 'ōna a(l)ḥwēṭāt u hal aššimāl yōm nizalna al-hazīm wiḷyāhum 'alēna aljam 'ah ḍāhrin 'alēna min hina wḥinna nisḡi 'ala lma. uḥinna narkab 'alēhu(m). wallah winnawwux winsabbib tanhaj alxēl itwīḡ¹² 'alēhum hum šāfōham xayyālitin-lina za 'ajnalhum¹³ 'uyūn. u 'allimōna u fiza 'na u racbat alxēl 'ala ṭarhum. yōm axaḍna wilāhum jāybīn xēlina ḥāṭbīnah. hum arba 'miyyat xayyāl arba 'miyyah ḍilūl u miytēn xayyāl. uḥin(n)a narkab 'alēhu(m) wintanāwax ḥinna wiyyāham hum ḡarbiyyina u ḥinna šarḡiyyihum. nabḡa namši 'alēhum zilm¹⁴ u hum aḡtar minna. wiḷyā 'ala lmiḍyāḥ, yōm yaḍirbūnna ḥdūmina ḥāk alḥīn killihin biḍ miṭil mā tigūl ṭawbak ḥīc, 'ala ššams ybayyinin. uhum yankšūnna 'ala ljēš wana arkaḥ u yarkaḥ mi 'i ṭalātīn ḍilūl u ḥinna nlawwiḍ-lihum¹⁵ min ḡād. waṭṭalātīn killihin yankisin. mā yḍill minhīn ḡēr ṭalatta 'aš ḍilūl u 'abbās xayyāl 'abbās ibin dacnān. u yōm ḥaṭṭēnāhum bēnna u bēn xwiyyāna aljam 'ah uḥinna nnawwux uḥina nag 'id-lihum, wilā ljēš mlaḡḡi lina aljēš walxēl u ḥina niḡjir-bahum u yiṭīḥ xēl u yiṭīḥ jēš min hal aššimāl. u hum yarkaḥbūn u hum yḡirūn 'alēna ḥinna yā ṭalātṭa 'aš walla aljam 'ah warāhum min dūn al 'arab. yōm agbalaw 'alēna u hum yjannibūn, naḥēnāhum barrami. walxēl tarkab 'ala ṭarhum uḥinna narkab 'ala ṭar alxēl. walxēl tiṭāwal-lak irjūm aḍḍāḥciyyah. kill sirba ṭhawwil ibrijim. ḡilna "ād intum", yḡulūn al 'iyāl ilba 'aḍhum "taraw min 'āb 'āb jānbih"¹⁶. killin yamši 'ala rijim waljam 'ah mā jat ḥāymīnin 'alēha, aššibān wal 'āybīn walxāybīn. wnarga 'alēha, killin yarga 'ala rijim hu wil 'iyāl illi mi 'ih. u killin ygawwim alli birrijim uḥinna ḥaddirhum 'ala ljēš. yōm ḥaddarnāhum willa ḥāḍi alxēl lāḡḡah, xēlin lilli warāḥ. wyōm innaham tināša 'aw¹⁷ hum wiyyāhum, whum yaḡilbūn 'alēhum uhum yisiffūn xēlina. wa a 'agub 'alēhum ana w wlidin min fēḍīn ibin šmayr yigāl-liḥ fanṭūl. ḥinna nabi yamm alxēl winnawwux. uxwiyyāna mā ḍall minhum kūd arba 'ah rcāb uxayyāl. uynawwuxūn ḡībliyyina. walxēl xēlina, yūḡif minḥa šaḥan aliḍin walad xalaf u yūḡif minḥa muṭar ibin šubīḥ walbāḡyah tinūr. yōm nawwaxna ḥawwalaw 'indina u ḥinna niḡjir bhālxēl ilyāma xallēnāḥa tankis. uyōm axaḍna walxēl jāyyah u ḥinna narkab uynawwuxūnna wḥina narkab wiynawwuxūnna. u hum yirsilūn mušlif ḥāḍa alhnēdi 'alayya. ḡālaw "lā yarkaḥ ḥinna islimi taslimi"¹⁸ w iyjawwid aḍḍilūl winxallihum. ḡāl mušlif "abašrab-li ma". gilt "išrab". yōm širib wana arkaḥ uyarkaḥ mi 'i hu ḥamdān ibin šubīḥ ḥāḍa. u yōm jīna ajjiḍībah ḥāḍa lli naba nnawwux-bah wilā lxēl bah wazzilm bah. gilt "yā ḥamdān ḥāḍi xēl u zilm ḥāḍi". wallah mā ricib mi 'na illa u hu rā 'i ḍḍilūl. ḡāl "ḥāḍa in nikasna yaḍḍihūnna win jīnāhum ḍābḥinna, xalhum

¹² wāḡ, ywīḡ "to peer" like ḥāyag of the same meaning.

¹³ za 'aj. SOWAYAN (1992:273) gives this word the meanings: "spill, shed, pour out, dispatch quickly".

¹⁴ jard SOWAYAN (1992:128) gives this the meaning "host, army".

¹⁵ lawwaḍ. This is listed in SOWAYAN (1992:135).

¹⁶ min 'āb 'āb jānbih "If one is insulted, the one next to him is also insulted".

¹⁷ tināša 'aw "they pulled a thing in opposite directions", ie "struggled".

¹⁸ islimi taslimi. This is an idiom in the form of an imperative. The only similar one I know is *dizni baṭīḥ* "push me and I will fall over", said of a person who will put up a token resistance, then give in.

yadbiḥūnna w wajhina yammihum". ḥinna naṣliḡhīn 'alēhum w idribu¹⁹ ḡilūlih wilā hu ṭāyih u gīl "irkab irkab!". gāl "ana rajjālin aslam". wana anīr balyisra wlā talga min ixwiyyāna illi jāna. wilyā tari ḡilūl ḡamdān yōm tārāt wiḡfītat 'alēhum wana (a)ḡarifha 'alēh yōm agbalt 'alayy wilyā hum yaḡribūn ḡilūl ḡamdān wilyā ṭāyḡah wallah wanḡarif wanawwux wanṭaḡ ḡamdān yōm agbal 'alayy u hu yiṭīḡ walxēl tarkab u tinīr u fēdinna yijūn lazzilm. ma hna lli ricib lā ḡilūl u lā faras.

Text 5

ḡinna taḡārībin ma' alwādi harrubō-na lixwān min hāḡa. utāni kōn yijīna bal'ingiyyah. yaṣbbihūn ḡanam addimjān u 'abdillāh 'ala l'ingiyyah u yaḡbiḡu tis'ah min hal alḡanam u yāxḡūn xamsah u 'iṣrīn ḡiṭī' u yaḡḡūnna yal'arab arraḡil u ḡinna narkab 'alēhum. u nifikk ṣiliyyitēn u nifikk inn alḡanam alawwalah ṣiliyyah. bass ḡinna talāṭīn ḡilūl willa hāḡōm killih ankisat. wilyāma ṭabbēna nnigrah wḡinna miḡtimīnaha bal-fiṣiḡ min hal aṣṣimāl sinah ḡabḡat farḡān, yōm yḡazi 'ala hal aṣṣimāl hu rayyis/- farḡān ibin maṣḡūr hu rayyis arrwalah yawm alixwān. ḡibaḡ ibin zabn ibḡarāyis u jārmīnna biḡ inn arrwalah. walla ḡallalnāhum ilyāma ṭabbēna nnigrah

Text 6

u hāḡa kōn tināwaxna ḡinna wiyyā hāḡōla fayḡīn ibin haḡḡāl aṣṣiḡūr. yōm inna nizalna, nahajna ḡilīṭ al-jinab. u yōm axaḡna wiyyā hāḡōla hālxēl u ma' halih xayyāl u mi'ih jayṣ u mi'ih ba'ārīn ḡinna nlāyi'hum. yōm laḡaḡnāhum wilyā yaḡḡarūn 'ala iṭar hal'arab. ḡilna "hāḡōla ṣiḡūr mā hum ḡōm. afa! hāḡa allī bhalmicān mā yṣīr baha". u ḡinna nankis. yōm nikasna, wilyā hum mi'na. wallah u yijīhum yijī kiṭīrhum u akṭar. ḡinna bass talatṭa'aṣ ḡilūl ba'ad ḡāl almayjān ubu rikbah allah yarḡamah 'addih-li. ḡāl "ya frēwān yabn axi iḡiḡb arrijim hāk allī ḡiddām". yigūlih li. arrijim ḡiddām lā hu wura²⁰ law inna wura yijūz, bass ḡannēt innih mā hu hāḡīn²¹ bina xēr. yabḡēna aḡadēna²² naḡiḡb arrijim allī ḡiddām lēma yijūnna. gīl "wallah ana māni ḡāḡbiḡ, māṣ cānak tabḡay taḡḡubih, iḡiḡbih". ḡāl "yabn āxi, baḡḡir xwuyāna killin mjawwidin ḡēl ḡilūlih yabḡūn ḡuwān²³ arrijāl yāxḡūnahum". gīl ibḡalbi "hāḡa ll ana hāḡi. mā hu hāḡīn-bina xēr". gīl "yabḡay allah yafriḡha ya axu dablah. māṣ uguḡb arrijim cānak/- ". uhu yaḡiḡbiḡ. 'ād aṭṭayyib ma yṣaccic. almayjān ṭayyib allah yarḡamah, karm u fāris. yōm agbal 'ala rrijim wilyā/- wallah w ana ṣirt ibmicānih wilyā dūn min hāḡmasjid alxēl wa aymanhum xayyāl u rā'ī ḡilūl allī yṭabb u jāyina ṣāffīn killihīn. gīl "hāḡi illi hu hāḡi inna nūxaḡ gabul niḡīh". wana (a)ḡarifha u hi tabruk waḡīrb rā'ī ḡḡilūl lyā tarkab rāsiḡ waḡīrb alxayyāl wilyā miṭīlha. ingilat ilyāma hzimītiḡ ihnāk. yōm axaḡt wilyā hu nācsin²⁴ 'alēna ḡāl "afya bn axi yā cāṭrin balḡay miṭlak". yḡūlih. hāḡōlāk firīḡihum

¹⁹ *idribu*. This is the imperative of dramatic effect, signifying "they struck".

²⁰ Seems to be *wura*, not *wara*

²¹ *hāḡīn* from the verb *haga, yhaga* "to think".

²² *aḡadi- aḡadē* "mayhap, perchance". A common Najdi particle thought to be derived from *qad yakūn*.

²³ *ḡuwān* "now" (Kh.).

²⁴ From *nikas* "to turn back".

wāhid ygāl lih miǧibl assaḥāb, wibn ṣalbūx, jūbān ylizzūnahum wilyā haḥḥfōhum luhum šifa. nawwax hu w ḥinna ndawwir-lina darbil²⁵ ana wiyā ‘abdin libšētān. yōm jīna wilyā mnawwux gālaw “ya” ygūlūn ismih m‘ējān “xallinna ma’ itar ṭaršina. ṭrēšina hajj ḥinna. d‘āf aṭṭarš” gāl “ya rrabu’ ana abi niḡharham²⁶ ‘an ṭaršina lā yāxdūnih”. ṭawwarbahum lihum wāḥdin minna hum ‘ād caṭraw jā yijūn-lihum sab‘in dīlūl u ḥinna hda‘aš. ḥatta ba‘ad itnēn wallaw. uhum yarkubūn ‘alēna. u ḥinna ninīr uyōm ilḡaḡōna winnawwux u hum ynīrūn u yōm nāraw ḥin narkub u ninīr u hum yalḡaḡūna u ḥinna nnawwux u hum ynawwuxūn. waḡrib ḡāk aḡḡilūl uhi ṭulū‘at aṣṣiḡūr uhi bārcah wilyā minjad‘ah. u ḥinna narkab u ninīr. gilt li‘abdin libin bnayyah “tara inni nāyir lā tigūl anni mā gilt-lak, cān dīlūlak baha jari”. arrijāl gālaw bina ḡāh. frigaw ‘anna. ḡrubaw šamdān ilyā kāsrīn yidah aḡḡubē’. u xaḡaw ḡāk alfrēḡi. wallah wana anīr ana w al‘abd. fayṭīḡ bārūd al‘abd u nankis ‘alēha u nāxiḡha. wana anīr waxallīh. wixḡaw xūyana. wana walmayjān u mi‘na ṭlaṭ ircāb nirna. almayjān yilḡiḡih wāḡdin ygāl-lih libdān min ‘arabhum uṣḡa’u almayjān bidimāḡih wila imkaṣṣimīnih rāsīh. u ḥinna ninīr. ana w mi‘i liṭalāt ircāb. wyōm inḡadarna mnaššifa wilyā xwiyyin-lina yṣīḡ lina wilā jayy ylizzih rā‘i ḡāk aḡḡilūl. gilt “yā ḡḡēfān ‘aṭni bārūd ‘aṭna bārūdin afikk xawiyiyina. ana bārūdi ṣāyimitin ‘ala la laha ṭalag²⁷”. mā mi‘i ḡēr iṭlugēn, wāḡid aswad u wāḡid abyad. gāl “lā yā xayy ana xāyfin lā ṭuxaḡ mink, yā xayy dāxlin ‘ala allah ṭim ‘alēk”. uhu šarāri. wallah gilt “ana mā gālaw xiḡ ma‘k ḡḡēfān u hu rācib”. wana aḡawwil minh u hu yiji wizin minh. ja wazzān naṭḡna. wazzān mur‘aḡiyin mi‘na ibin wārīd. gilt “‘aṭni bārūd ya wazzān afikk xawiyiyina”. wāxiḡ iṭlugēn ‘aṭāniyyāḡin w aḡuṭṭihīn-bah. wilā rā‘i dīlūl miǧbil. gāl “ṭxasa mār itxasa”. gilt “alli yxasa lli mā yaḡbaḡk”. xawiyiyina ‘aggabni ‘ād. aṭiḡḡaha wāḡid ‘ayya yiṭūr. wāḡid ‘ayya yiṭūr wattāni u hu yṭabbiḡ wiyjawwid ḡēl dīlūlih wurāh. wana amidd ‘alēh wana aḡrib bih wilyā mēr aṭṭalag taḡat ḡwāymah. wallah walizzih ‘alēh šwayyin waxallīh. ana ḡāll xwiyyāḡ aljam‘ah ḡfāh wana mā ‘indi aḡad bass imḡēhirātin libin ṭḡēmīr ḡajjātin ma‘ aysarna. willa rrubū’ killiha wixḡat walmayjān ḡbiḡ²⁸. ḡḡinna niḡik²⁹ lahalna. allah yōm jīna halna, u nircib rā‘i ḡāk aḡḡilūl libin jandal infazzi‘ih. ana, ḡalbi tigūl ḡāṭṭin-bahā-nnār. gāl “ibin jandal”!- jā ballēl. gāl “ibin jandal bāḡin xallūna nanzal alli ḡibiḡ almayjān bih”. u ḥinna narḡal u nanzilih aṣṣubḡ. yōm rḡalaw u nizalnāḡ, wilā wallah aljam‘ yidḡar ‘alēna u ḥinna narkub ‘alēh, ḡinna wibin jandal. aljam‘ aḡṭar minna killina. ibin jandal mi‘ih yijī-lih xamsta‘aš bēt uḡinna yiji-lna ba‘ad xamsta‘aš bēt. uḡinna ḡaddirhum al-ubayyid. wintibāra ḡinna wiyyāhum. ḡaddirhum alubayyid. wilyā mēr rwēliyyin dwimi ‘indahum ygāl lih ‘aduww riḡlēḡ lā m‘aḡḡibna abā‘irih ma a‘arif gāl “arrwalah arrwalah yā rā’ ‘alyah tarāhum ḡililīn u ḡililīn, lā tiḡillūn minhum”. wallah yā flān uḡinna yabrōn-lina hum ma‘ ašša‘ib uma‘ atillā’ u ḡinna naṣliḡha u niṭlib ‘alēhum u ḡinna naṣliḡha ‘alēhum uḡinna ḡaddirhum ašša‘ib. u

²⁵ *darbilah* or *darbil* is the normal word for "binoculars" in the area. It is from the Persian *dūr-bīn* of the same meaning and has a verb *darbal* "to look through binoculars".

²⁶ *gahar* "to repel", also given in SOWAYAN (1992:292).

²⁷ *ṣāyimitin*, the gun is "fasting" and refuses to shoot.

²⁸ *ḡbiḡ*, the internal passive of *ḡibaḡ*.

²⁹ *niḡik*. The -k suffix here is the so called ethic dative. See PALVA (1992:54ff).

yōm inna ḥaddarnāhum ašša‘īb, wana mi‘i glayyimin ixwin lim‘ajūn ibin bnayya ḥinn awwal algōm. wāl murḍaf hādōla al-yisāriyyīn gāmaḥ yacisbūn mnaljēš. ḥinna šaraw bḥalgina al‘itbān walḥḍayri, yijūn-lihum arba‘īn ḍilūl xamsah warba‘īn ḍilūl. ana walglayyim bass halḍilūlēn, u hum ynawwuxūn-lina bilḥaḡat arrabu‘ u hum yṭawwirūn ḥadirhum ‘ala lbyūt. yōm agbalaw ‘ala lbyūt wagbalaw ‘ala lḥarīm, u hin yanṭaḥin-lihum hāllōn. ḥinna ‘ād hāḍa sālif ‘ind ḥarīmīna. ygilin³⁰ hīc, ykaššifin yabu nāyif hallōn nṭaḥannihum hum. hum yašifḡūnihin ‘alēna bfard šafgah “jluwiyyah jluwwiyya jluwiyyah jluwiyyah”. tigūl xēl. xwiyāy allī mi‘i nāraw yimīn. wana xābir yōm almanāx alawwal, yōm nawwaxaw, allī gufāna nāraw. u gilt “alawwalīn mā yfikkūna ḍuwān ynīrūn allī gufāna”. wanawwux bašša‘īb. wallah wanḥāhum ‘ala ḍḍaharah wilyā hāk arrajjāl mā bālih li nāsifni³¹ ‘alyimna u yarkuḍ. minhum, bārūdiḥ ‘uṣmalli wana arkub ‘alēh waji bēnih u bēn ixwiyyāh. wilyā mēr iḡlayyim uxu m‘ajūn, mnawwuxin battal‘ah. ṭari yabḡēh yōm iltifat, wilāni gufāh. gāl “wēn? abi rā‘i hāḍi ḍilūl u hāḍi gafwih”. u hu yagrab ‘alayy wana aṭigg rāsaha u tabruk u hu yag‘ad u yimid(d) ‘alayy. ana ‘ala ma ḥawwalt wana aḍirbih wilāhu ‘ala ḍaharah. aṭari a‘māh l‘ajāj, willā mā bih bala. uxtuf bārūdiḥ wiltifit ‘ala xūyāh. wilyā mār alḥḍeri walli mi‘ih mi‘īn jēš ba‘aḍhum mḥawwilīnin barrijim yabūn yaḍirbūn algawm allī min taḥat wana arḡi rrajjāl ‘alēhum wana aḥaddirhum wāxiḍhum bēn byūt al‘itbān u bēn alḥḍayri. alḥaḡhum miṭil mā gilt “yā!...”. anniyyah anni amna‘ham. wa lā ygūlūn lōn. gilt “yā ‘iyāl ‘ind ibin š‘alān” u hum yiṭubḡūn³² ‘alayy šayy bilman‘ u šayy muhu bilman‘ wlā xallōni āṣal aljēš, wu hu killin yjarrir irsānih jēšihum hum. allī yḥibb rikibti walli yḥibb yidi walli/- ḍāllīnin mn almawt. ḍābḥīn almayjān ams warrwalah: “almayjān yā tāyir almayjān yā tāyir”. “ya rjāl yā šēnīn law hi ḍilūl agḍubḥa”. gālaw “lā wallah law ḥayātak ‘alēha ma tagḍubḥa. ḥinna lā jannabi ‘anna ḍibiḥna”. wallah wafikkūhum wa ‘aḡḡibhum ajjirīra wakittihum bašša‘īb lyā mā salmaw u wāḥd u ṭalātīn bēt mnal‘arab allī ḥinna nāxiḍ bass ḥaḡg alḥillah. tšūf arrwalah tigūl mšaddiritin min aššām mā xallēna/- axaḍnāhum axḍ wallah u niḡi halna ‘ād u nintisif³³ nagṭa‘ alḥadd yamm ḥadd ibin s‘ūd. wibin jandal yafrug mḡarrib. whāḍi u salāmatk hāḍa lli mikant ana

³⁰ *ygilin* "they f. say" meaning "they f. do". The verb *gāl* "to say" is used to mean "to do" when referring to physical attitudes, postures or actions in the same way as the verb "to go" is used in colloquial English in such expressions as "he went like this" meaning "he performed an action of this sort".

³¹ *nisaf* is the act of throwing a sack or burden over one's shoulder onto one's back and hence means to leave behind.

³² *yiṭubḡūn* is from *aṭbag* "to rush", not to be confused with *ṭabbag* "to jump down".

³³ *nintisif*. *nisaf* is given by SOWAYAN (1992:299) as "throw, toss, push aside". I therefore take this as "to go aside, go away".

Translation

Text I Fuhaid ibn Mu‘abihil and Gūt bint al-Shuraiḫi

That was ‘Abdallah bin Fuhaid, when he was out in the territory of that valley. And he went towards the settled lands³⁴ and declared war on the Jarbā (the shaikhs of the Northern Shammar). He was a friend of Fuhaid al-Jarbā, ‘Ali ibn Fuhaid. When he went to the Shammar, he said "Oh Shammar if a man declares war against his cousin, is it said that we betrayed him or that he betrayed us?". They said "God preserve you, he has betrayed his cousin, but you may raid the man". And he attacked them and they fought together. Fuhaid had with him the Ḥamāmīd, and the ‘Alimah and the Nawāṣirah and the Āl Mu‘abihil and he was with the Ghurair of the Āl Subīḥ and the Āl Bunayyah³⁵. When they fought together, they said "Oh Rwalah we will tether our camels for three more days. Tomorrow either the Jarbā will let them go, or we will let them go and graze. By God if anyone is struck from behind (ie flees the battlefield), then I will throw him (his body) to the dogs unburied, he whose wound is not from in front". And in the morning they marched upon each other and God helped the Rwalah and they defeated the Jarbā.

And when they defeated the Shammar, they captured a small herd from the Shammar, about twenty riding camels and up came a Shamhari and said "Oh long of life, I am going about to look for something of use to my children, and now they have not got anyone to water their camels, and I ask you to give me back just my sandals³⁶ to protect me from the stony ground (so that I can go to them on foot)". He came to him while he was sitting on a camel saddle (on the ground). He said "God take you, you and your sandals. Tell Gūt³⁷ to water the horse (presumably Fuhaid's horse) and I will give you back your riding camel, let alone the sandals". He said "I do not know her". He said "Look at those three girls in that tent over there sewing a dress. If (you go and) say 'Greetings Gūt', she will answer you". So he went and said what he told him to say, they were sewing a dress, and he said "Greetings Gūt", she said "Welcome". He said "Oh daughter of Aba l-Awkal³⁸, Fuhaid says this and he says that and if you water the horse he will give me my riding camel". She said "The enemy take you and your riding camel. I will not water the horse for the sake of your (one) riding camel. But if he gives back the

³⁴ *ḡarrab* "go towards the settled lands". MUSIL (1928:237) says "Miz‘el and Tāreš said that they *ḡarrabow*, this being the Bedouin word to denote departure from the inner desert to the edge of the more populated region, no matter whether they go west or east, to Syria or Mesopotamia or Irak. *Sarraḡow* they say when bound for the inner desert and here again they ignore the direction, whether it be north or south or west". The Dhafir whose main movements are to and from the Euphrates say *taḡaddaraw* "they went down", ie northeast to the Euphrates and *sannidaw* "they went up", ie towards Najd, generally southwest.

³⁵ Mostly sections of the Mur‘aḡ branch of the Rwalah, except the Ḥamāmīd who are of the Ga‘āḡi‘ah. See LANCASTER (1981:169-171) who has them as Mur‘ath.

³⁶ Clothes and possessions could also be taken from the defeated party on a raid.

³⁷ Gūt bint al-Shuraiḫi of the Kuwācibah is mentioned by MUSIL (1928:55-56), Kūt bint aš-Šrejfi in his notation. She later married Fuhaid as mentioned on p. 56.

³⁸ ‘Argūb Aba l-Awkal a hero of the Kawācibah (Kh.).

camels of all your companions, and gives them to their owners, I will water the horse and also let my hair loose"³⁹. And when he went back Fuhaid said to him "What did she say to you?". He said "She says that if he gives back all the camels of your companions, I will still water the horse and also let my hair loose and your riding camel is no concern of mine". He said "Let her water the horse" and her hair was like the leaves of the *shaḥūmah* tree⁴⁰. If the horse went to the right, her hair was thrown to the right, and if its head went to the left she pushed with her hand to the left. Thus she did it. She was beautiful and she was of course Gūt. He took his sword⁴¹ and went and sat beside her at the well and they talked to their hearts content. Then he went back to his family and she went back to her family. When the evening came he said "Oh men whoever has a riding camel, come and leave it here (to give back to the Shammari)". He said "Oh long of life, these people are enemies but /...there is no (real) enmity between us, but I like to annoy them sometimes, but there is no war between us". And they collected a herd of riding camels and when they went off in the morning, you would say they were a people on the march (ie not people returning from a battle, because of their unhurried progress). And people began to relate the story saying Fuhaid was like Abū Zaid and Gūt like 'Alyah⁴² saying "Gūt said this and Fuhaid said that and so did 'Alyah and Abū Zaid"

Text 2 Fuhaid ibn Mu'abihl and Gūt bint al-Shuraiḥi

There was Fuhaid ibn Mu'abihl ibn Sha'lān. He camped at Ḥamāṭiyyāt⁴³ and the Kawācbah camped at the spring pastures⁴⁴ and they were watering their herds and he said "When you water your herds, bring Gūt with you". And they would bring Gūt with them. On one occasion she didn't come with them. When they were leaving the well he followed them and said "Why didn't you bring Gūt with you?". They said "Oh long of life we will bring her on the next watering". He said "No by God you will forget" and he slit open one of the water skins and left one of them. He said "Now put it evenly, so that you won't forget her"⁴⁵. And they evened them up and went off and brought Gūt with

³⁹ Fuhaid is in love with Gūt and getting her to water the horse is a strategy so that he can see her, if only from a distance. She replies that she is worth more than one riding camel and that if he gives back all the riding camels, she will also uncover her hair so that he can see it when she passes by.

⁴⁰ *warag aššahūmah*, the *shaḥūmah* is a tree which grows in the Ḥamād of the type known as *nuṣi* and has long flowing leaves *nā'im u mahalhal* (Kh.).

⁴¹ The mention of the sword is probably because of the custom of a man laying a sword between him and a girl to whom he is not married as a sign of respect to her.

⁴² The romantic hero and heroin of the Bani Hilāl stories originating in the emigration of the Bani Hilāl tribe from Arabia to North Africa in the 11th century AD.

⁴³ Ḥamāṭiyyāt. Not exactly located though many maps give a location Ḥamāṭiyyah in the Nafūd East of the Labba about N.28.50 by E.42.40. The mention of Ṭu'ais Fuhaid "Fuhaid's Sand-Dune" also makes it likely that this is in the Nafūd. The US Board of Geographical Names publication for *The Arabian Peninsula* also gives Ḥamāṭiyyāt at N.29.08 by E.47.24, which puts it in Kuwait territory. I have not seen this on any map of Kuwait. Could it be a mistake for E.42.24?

⁴⁴ "Spring pastures". I take this to be the meaning of *manda*. I have heard this as *manādi* among the Dhafir, the phrase being *yandōn balmanādi* "they camped on spring pastures". SOWAYAN (1992: 298) also gives *nadda* "to graze near water". The other possibility is that it could be a place name Manda or Mandal, but I did not locate one in MUSIL.

⁴⁵ Water was carried in two large skin containers one on either side of the camel. He split one so that

them and they sat and talked at the place which is now called Fuhaid's Sand Dune west of the Ḥamaṭiyyāt, those mountains in Najd, when they were living in Najd (before they all moved north). And then it rained and the land was watered, there were those people passing by with five herds of camels coming to stay with al-Shuraifi and he slit their water bags (to stop them travelling). They told Fuhaid, but he said "We will not attack them by treachery, we will let him know. We will declare our intention and let him retreat". So they declared their intention (to attack) and he (al-Shuraifi) rode off and took refuge with the Jarbā. When he took refuge with the Jarbā, Fuhaid's tribesmen mounted up and rode over there, while Fuhaid stayed where he was. The Shuraifi said to the Jarbā "Let's attack Fuhaid now that his tribesmen have left him". And there was a Mur'āḍi woman with the Shuraifi's tribesmen and she rode off at night and warned Fuhaid and said "Tomorrow the men will attack you at dawn" and he sent a messenger to the Rwalah and his band came to him at night. And in the morning the Jarbā attacked him, them and al-Shuraifi. And they mounted up and drove them off and Fuhaid killed one of the Shuraifāt and the wife of the dead man came to him (the Jarbā chief) and said a poem to the Jarbā, which I do not know properly, and with the stick, he struck her. She wanted him to free her husband from Fuhaid. He said "The man (Fuhaid) has made his strength (lit. running) the same as ours (ie he is our equal). We have no way to rescue him" and he struck her with the stick, when Fuhaid ibn Mu'abhil ibn Sha'lān killed one of the Shuraifāt in that battle.

Text 3 Ǧīdān al-Rubu'

And once Ǧīdān al-Rubu'⁴⁶ (of the Shammar) came and stayed with them. Ǧīdān al-Rubu' was very handsome and his father used to come and visit the men of the tribe, while he stayed with his camels, riding about. Once in the springtime he came in to visit the men and at that time Fuhaid's brother's tent was out in front of the rest and Ǧīdān rode past him. And at the time the man's wife was combing his hair. And when she dropped her hand, she saw that Ǧīdān was handsome and he looked at him. The lad (Fuhaid's brother) watched Ǧīdān passing by and said something insulting to him, but he did not answer and just passed by. He spent that year with them and headed towards his own tribesmen. Now the Āl Mu'abhil never had any luck in raiding if Fuhaid was not with them, only if he was with them in a battle or a raid. And they raided the Rubu' and the tribesmen who were with them. And the Rubu' mounted up and counterattacked and defeated them, the Āl Mu'abhil. And meanwhile Ǧīdān rode up to the man (Fuhaid's brother) who had insulted him and killed him. Meanwhile another brother of Fuhaid's was surrounded by the Shammar and Ǧīdān rode up to them and mounted the man behind him and took him back to his own men. He rescued him. When the Āl Mu'abhil and Fuhaid came home, they said, while the old man (Fuhaid's father perhaps) was sitting on

they would have to repair it and would remember what he asked. Rather like tying a knot in a handkerchief, but more drastic.

⁴⁶ Ǧīdān is mentioned in MONTAGNE (1935:80-81) as Ǧeidān Ettemyāt (more correctly Timyāt) of the Tūmān. His story III concerns a battle with Fheid Eben Sa'lān in which Ǧeidān kills Tārem the brother of Fheid. SOWAYAN (1992:309) lists the Rubu' (Ribi' in his notation) as a branch of the Tūmān of Sinjarāh.

a sheepskin saddle blanket, which they had spread for him and leaning on a camel saddle while Fuhaid was sitting about this distance from the coffee hearth. They reported that Dīdān had killed one man and rescued another. Fuhaid said nothing. The old man said "Dīdān can be considered either subject to vengeance⁴⁷ or one who has done us a favour. He put out one eye and preserved another". And the Tūmān (branch of Shammar) and the Āl Mu‘abihl became brothers. They did not raid their herds, and these did not raid the herds of the other from that day to this. Of course today God preserve Ibn Sa‘ūd (ie there is no more raiding). Your health these stories are about Fuhaid ibn Mu‘abihl.

Text 4 The war with the People of the North

The Ḥuwaiṭāt and the People of the North⁴⁸ were troubling us. When we stopped at al-Hazīm⁴⁹, there they were upon us. The multitude appeared from over there, while we were watering our herds. We rode against them and we dismounted and were sending scouts over to them. The horsemen moved about peering at them. They saw that they were of our horsemen and we sent out to them scouts and they told us and we rallied and the horsemen rode after them (the enemy). And in a while we saw them bringing our horsemen back in disarray (lit. dragged up like brushwood from the earth). They were four hundred horsemen/ four hundred camel riders and two hundred horsemen and we rode against them and we dismounted against each other, with them to the west and us to the east. We wanted to march against them on foot, but they were more than us. And behold in the twilight⁵⁰, when they approached us, our clothes were at that time white, like that robe you are wearing (the enemy had the sun behind them in the west). They showed up well in the sun and they made a forray against us on horseback. And I mounted up and there were with me thirty camel riders and we went round behind them at a distance. And most of the thirty went back, the only ones remaining being myself and thirteen camel riders and ‘Abbās on horseback, ‘Abbās ibn Dacnān⁵¹. And then we got them between ourselves and the bulk of our companions. And we dismounted and stayed in wait for them and the camel riders were coming in our direction and we were firing at them and horsemen and camel riders fell, of the People of the North. And they mounted up and charged against the thirteen of us, while the bulk of our men were behind them between them and our tribesmen (families perhaps). When they came towards us, they swerved off to one side. We drove them aside by gunfire and the horsemen rode off in pursuit of them, and we rode off after the horsemen and the horsemen reached the hills of Dhāḥciyyah⁵², each troupe of horsmen dismounted at a hill and we said "Well now" the

⁴⁷ *dwimi* < *dmuwi*, ie a man on whose hands there is blood. This is the normal form of the word.

⁴⁸ "People of the North" *hal al-Shimāl* signifies the Banī Ṣakhar according to MUSIL (1928:615). See also his index under Ahl aš-Šemāl. Khalaf says that the ‘Idwān, the Banī Khālid and the Sirḥān also count as Hal al-Shimāl.

⁴⁹ al-Hazīm. MUSIL (1928 index) gives this at about N.32 by E.37. It occurs on maps as the wells of Hazīm east of the northern end of the Wādi Sirḥān.

⁵⁰ *almidyāḥ* means *b‘aks aššams* "in the opposite direction to the sun" (Kh.).

⁵¹ Appearing as Datznan in LANCASTER 163-164.

⁵² Dhāḥciyyah. MUSIL (1927 index) gives two localities of this name as *Az-Zāḥciyye* approximately N.28.43 by E.37.49 near the Wādi Fajr and another *Az-Zāḥciyye*, *Fejzat* at the top of the Wādi Sirḥān south east of al-Azraq about N.31.30 by E.37.10. It seems likely that the second one is intended, being in the vicinity of a number of the other locations mentioned in the story. This is also

men were saying to each other "If one man is defeated (or surrenders) all will be defeated". The men did not come hovering around it, but only the old men and weak and infirm. And we climbed up the hills, each one climbing up a hill with the people who were with him and every one took the place of the ones who were on the hill and we sent them (the enemy) down towards the camel riders. When we sent them down, suddenly these horsemen appeared, the horsemen of those who were behind them and when they got entangled with them, they turned around to face them and they beat off our horsemen with ease⁵³ and I came up behind them, myself and a young lad of the followers of Ibn Şumair⁵⁴, called Fañţūl. We wanted to get to the horsemen. And we dismounted and of our companions there were left only four camels and a horseman and they dismounted to the south of us and of our horsemen only Şaḥan al-Idhin, the son of Khalaf⁵⁵, Muţar ibn Şubīḥ stood their ground and the rest fled. When we dismounted, they came up to us and we fired fiercely at those horsemen until we made them withdraw and in a while the horsemen were coming towards us and we rode on, but they forced us to dismount and then we mounted up again and they forced us to dismount again⁵⁶. And they (his companions) sent Muşlif al-Hunaidi⁵⁷ over to me to tell me not to remount saying "We are going to surrender" and he held on to my camel and we left them and Muşlif said "I am going to drink some water" and while he was drinking I mounted up (ie he, the speaker, tricked him and mounted up while the other was drinking water and was not watching) and Ḥamdān ibn Şubīḥ rode off with me, but when we got to the hill were we wanted to dismount, there were horses and men there (of the enemy). I said "Oh Ḥamdān these are horses and men". The only other people who had ridden with us were camel riders. He said if we turn back they will kill us and if we go towards them they will kill us so let them kill us while we are facing them. We drove them on towards them and they shot his camel and he fell down and I said "Mount up, mount up!" (ie. behind him), but he said "No I'm going to surrender". So I fled off to the left and you could not see any of our companions who came but there were eight camel riders and the camel of Ḥamdān when it jumped up and went into their ranks and I turned my camel down upon them and when I got to them they were shooting at Ḥamdān's camel until it fell down and I turned my camel round and dismounted and went up to Ḥamdān and when I got to him he fell down and the horsemen mounted up and fled and our people came to the men and there there was not there anything to ride, not a horse or a camel.

confirmed by Kh.

53 The verb used is *saff, ysiff* literally meaning "to suck up crushed powder from the hand" as in taking medicine. This implies they consumed them with no difficulty.

54 Ibn Şumair the ruling house of the Wild 'Alī. See MUSIL (1928 index) under Şmejr Eben.

55 Khalaf al-Idhin. A well known warrior of the Fad'ān branch of the 'Anizah also bears this name. See MUSIL's index under Ḥalaf āl Iḍen eben Zejd. This Khalaf however seems to be a Ruwaili.

56 It seems here that when camels were overtaken by faster cavalry or a group were overtaken by a superior force there tactics were to dismount so as to bring more accurate fire on the pursuing enemy and force them back and then mount up again. These tactics are mentioned in MUSIL, for instance on (1928:657) *nawwaḥowna* "they forced us to make our camels kneel".

57 Hneidi in LANCASTER (1981:163) of the Ghurair branch of the Sha'lān.

Text 5 The battle at 'Ingiyyah

We were off to the west in the Wādi. The Ikhwān⁵⁸ made us flee by this route. And the next battle came to us at 'Ingiyyah⁵⁹. They attacked the sheep herds of the Dimjān and the 'Abdillah⁶⁰ at 'Ingiyyah and killed nine of them and took twenty five flocks and the migrating tribe caught up with us and we rode off against them and we rescued two flocks of sheep and one flock from the first group. We were only thirty camel riders, but the rest had all retreated. And we arrived at al-Nigrah⁶¹ which we were defending by gun-fire from the People of the North in the year when Farḥān was killed, when he raided the People of the North. He was the leader /-, Farḥān ibn Mashhūr, was the leader of the Rwalah at the time when the Ikhwān killed ibn Zabn⁶² at Gharāyis⁶³ and they accused us of it, the Rwalah. Anyway we kept them at bay until we entered al-Nigrah.

Text 6 The war with ibn Hadhdhāl

And then there was another battle which we fought with the followers of Ibn Hadhdhāl, the Ṣugūr⁶⁴ when we went away to the approaches of the outpost camp and when he began/-with them were these horsemen and riding camels and pack camels and we were harrying them. When we caught up with them, they appeared on the track of the 'arabs. We said "They are Ṣugūr, they are not enemy. Fie, this cannot be at this place (ie they were on very poor pastures)". And we turned back. When we turned back, they followed us and they were joined by an equal number or even more, while we were only thirteen camel riders. Mayjān abu Rikbah, God have mercy on him, said, he was addressing⁶⁵ me, he said "Furaiwān, my nephew, take that hill over there in front". He said that to me. The hill was in front of us not behind us. If it was behind us, it might be possible, but I thought he did not think there was any use in us (ie he did not think there were enough of us to put up a fight). He wanted us to take the hill in front until they came to us. I said "By God, I will not hold it, but if you want to hold it, you take it". He said "Oh my nephew look at our companions. Each one is holding the tail of his camel⁶⁶, the men will capture them now ". I said in my heart "That is what I thought, he does not think there is any use in us". I said "God will make it possible Oh Brother of Dablah. But take that hill,

⁵⁸ The Ikhwān raiders from Saudi Arabia of the 1920's.

⁵⁹ 'Ingiyyah. MUSIL (1927 index) lists it as Al-'Enkijje about N.32 by E.36, east of the northern end of the Wādi Sirḥān.

⁶⁰ Dimjān and 'Abdillah. These are two sections of the Mḥalaf section of the Wild 'Ali of 'Anizah, which are closely related to each other.

⁶¹ al-Nigrah, MUSIL (1927 index) lists it as al-Nuḳra, a region south of Damascus.

⁶² Ibn Zabn. One of the shaikhs of the Bani Ṣakhar of the Āl Zabn clan. See Āl Zebeḥ in MUSIL (1928 index).

⁶³ Gharāyis. In MUSIL (1927 index) as Rarājes east of the Wadi Sirḥān about N.30.15 by E.39.15.

⁶⁴ The Ṣugūr are a branch of the 'Amārāt, the other major group of the Northern 'Anizah, living mainly in Iraq. The Hadhdhāl clan are the shaikhs of the 'Amārāt.

⁶⁵ 'add-ih li "consider it (the speech) to me". Here the meaning is "he was talking to me". The word *mēd* can be used in this way as in *mēdak int* "I mean you", but is in fact rarely heard.

⁶⁶ Each one holding the tail of his camel. This signifies the desperation of the situation. The rider dismounts so as to be able to fight more efficiently and grasps the tail of camel to make sure it does not run off, being his only line of escape (information from Saad SOWAYAN).

if /-". And he went and took the hill. Well a good man, does not hesitate. Mayjān was a good man, God have mercy on him, a generous and brave man. When he went towards the hill/- by God I took his place, and not as far away as this mosque (which you can see) were the horsemen and to the right of them was a horseman and a camel rider coming near and they were coming towards us in rows all of them and I said that is what he thought, that we would be taken before we got to it. And I turned my mounts head aside and she kneeled, and I shot at the camel rider until she fell on her head and I shot at the horseman until the horse stopped too. She raced off and fled away with him over there. After a while he came back towards me. He said "Your health, oh my cousin, would that there were many others like you among the living". In their camp was one called Miğbil al-Saḥḥāb and the son of Ṣalbūkh, Jūbān. They raced along after them until they chased them down an escarpment and they disappeared. He dismounted and we looked around with binoculars, myself and one of Bushaitān's slaves. When we came to him, he had dismounted. They said, one of them whose name was Mu'ajjān, "Let us go off after our herds. Our herds have moved off, and are not strong". He said "Oh my companions, I want to beat them off from our herds, so that they cannot capture them". One of us fired off some shots at them, but they had been joined by others. They were about seventy camel riders and we were only eleven. The other two had run away. And they rode down upon us and we fled and when they caught up with us we dismounted and they fled in turn. And when they fled we mounted up and fled and they followed us and we dismounted and then they dismounted. And I fired upon a camel coming towards us, one of the vanguard of the Ṣugūr, which was kneeling down and she fell over on one side and we mounted up and fled. And I said to one of Ibn Bunayyah's slaves "I'm going to flee, don't say afterwards that I didn't tell you, if your camel has still got any speed left in her". The men were this distance from us. They had gone off separately from us. They struck Shamdān and broke his arm, al-Ḍubai' (the man's name was Shamdān al-Ḍubai') and captured that man of the Firaigāt and I fled away with the slave and the slave dropped his rifle and we went back and picked it up and I fled and left him. My companions were captured. Myself and Mayjān and three camel riders fled. Mayjān was followed by a man called Libdān, one of their 'arabs. They hit Mayjān on the head and broke his skull and we rode away, myself and the three camel riders. When we came down the escarpment one of our companions called out, he was being chased by a man on a riding camel. I said "Oh Ḥudhaifān give me your rifle. Give me your rifle so as to rescue our companion. My rifle refuses to shoot". I had only two shots left, one black and one white⁶⁷. He said "No, Oh my brother I fear it will be taken from you. No my brother I take refuge with God then with you". He was a Sharāri⁶⁸. Well I said "Let them not say that Ḥudhaifān was captured (or perhaps looted of his rifle) while he was with you and mounted". And I dismounted and he came up beside him. Wazzān came up to meet us. Wazzān was a Mur'aḍi with us, Ibn Wārid. I said "Wazzān give me a rifle so that I can

⁶⁷ "Black" and "white" may refer to the type of gunpowder, "black" being the older type.

⁶⁸ Of the Sharārāt tribe of the Wādi Sirḥān area who were often allies of the Rwalah. It may be that the man speech as quoted, which is not very clear on the tape, is characteristic of the dialect of the Sharārāt.

rescue our companion". And I took the two cartridges which he gave me and loaded them. And there was a camel rider coming towards us. He said "You wretched ones". I said "The wretched one is the one who does not kill you". Our companion left me behind. I fired one shot, but it did not discharge. One did not discharge, and then the second and he jumped down and held on to the tail of his camel. And I took aim at him and fired and the shot went under the legs of the camel (ie it missed). So I charged my camel after him for a while and let him go. I was afraid. His companions, the main body were behind him and I had no one with me, only a few of the pack camels of Ibn Tuḥaimir moving away over to our left, but all my friends had been captured, and Mayjān had been killed, so we all went back to our families. Well when we got to our families, we sent of a camel rider to Ibn Jandal⁶⁹ calling him to our aid. As for me, it was as though there was a fire in my heart. He said "Ibn Jandal"/-he (the messenger) came at night. He said "Ibn Jandal wants/- (he says) let us make camp at the place where al-Mayjān was killed". We rode off and arrived there in the morning. When we rode of and arrived there, behold by God the body of the enemy was coming up towards us. And we mounted up to ride against them, us and Ibn Jandal. The enemy were more than all of us. Ibn Jandal had about fifteen families and we also had about fifteen families and we forced them down towards al-Ubayyid⁷⁰. And we were going along parallel to them and forced them down to al-Ubayyid and there was a Rwaii fugitive from vengeance with them called 'Adu Rijlēh⁷¹; behold he had brought his camels up behind us, without me knowing. He said "The Rwalah, the Rwalah Oh owner of 'Alyah⁷², they are few and cowardly, do not be afraid of them". Well Oh so and so⁷³, they went along parallel to us up the ravine and up the passes and we drove them (the camels) down towards them and pursued them, while we were driving them towards them, and we forced them down to the ravine. And when we forced them down to the ravine, while there was with me a young man from the people of the brother of Ma'jūn ibn Bunayyah. We were at the front of the company. And the Āl Mur'ad on the left flank began looting the camels. We had the 'Itbān⁷⁴ and the Ḥuḍayri right in front of us (lit. in our throats), there were about forty or forty five camel men. Myself and the young man were the only two camel riders, and they dismounted in front of us at the arrival of our tribesmen and began shooting downhill at the tents. When they approached the tents and approached the women folk, they (the women) came out to meet them like this. This was the custom of our women, they did this. They uncovered

⁶⁹ Ibn Jandal are the shaikhly house of the Suwālimah section of the Āl Miḥlaf, who are part of the Jlās division of 'Anizah. See Eben Ġandal in MUSIL (1928 index).

⁷⁰ Ubayyid. MUSIL (1927 index) gives Al-Obejjeḍ. A wādi in the Widyān territory in Iraq running east to Kerbela in the land of the 'Amārāt, north of the Wādi 'Ar'ar. Approximately N.32 by E.42.

⁷¹ 'Adu Rijlēh "the enemy of his legs" or "the running of his legs". This is a rather strange name, but so it seems to be. SOWAYAN also thought it must be a name.

⁷² *Yā rā'* 'Alyah "Oh owner of 'Alyah" is the *nakhwah* or rallying cry of the Rwalah. 'Alyah is the name of the prize camel herd of the Rwalah. See MUSIL (1928 index) under 'Alja.

⁷³ *yā flān* "Oh so and so". This is a common way of addressing someone when one has, in the heat of conversation, forgotten his name. It is not at all rude in Arabic, although it sounds so in English.

⁷⁴ 'Itbān and Ḥuḍayri are both sections of the Ṣuḡūr according to Kh. Therefore these are not the 'Utaibah of Central Arabia as might be imagined. MUSIL (1928 index) also mentions Al-Ḥzejri from the southern territory.

themselves (their heads and faces)⁷⁵ like this. They rushed out to confront them. They clapped at them in unison "Jiluwiyyah, Jiluwiyyah"⁷⁶. You would say they were horses. My companions who were with me fled off to the right. And I remembered that on the day of the first battle, when they dismounted to fight, those behind us fled. And I said "The ones in front will not rescue us, now those behind us will run away". So I dismounted in the ravine. And I sent them down onto the hard ground and there was a man over there who had not noticed me. He had left me behind on the right running. He was one of them and had an Ottoman (probably Mauser) rifle and I mounted up and came between him and his companions and behold over there was a young man, a brother of Ma'jūn who had dismounted in the pass. It seems he was waiting for him (the enemy). When he turned round there I was behind him. He said "Where are you going? I am waiting for that camel rider and he is behind him". And he went up closer to him and I tapped the camels head and she kneeled and he crouched down and took aim at me. As soon as I had dismounted and took a shot, he was on the back of the camel. It seems he had been blinded by the sand, but otherwise there was nothing wrong with him. And he picked up his rifle and turned back towards his companions. When he went, the Ḥuḍairi and those with him had given their camels to some among them (and dismounted to fight on foot) and dismounted at the hill intending to attack (or open fire on) those who were below. And I pulled the man up to them and I sent them down and took them between the tents of the 'Itbān and al-Ḥuḍairi. I caught up with them saying "Oh/...". My intention was to give them sanctuary and they were standing not saying anything. I said "Lads over here to Ibn Sha'lān" (ie offering himself as a protector to the surrounded enemy) and they rushed over to me, some whom I had offered protection to and some whom I had not⁷⁷ and they didn't let me get to the camels (to claim a prize), and they were all dragging their bridles, their camels (ie they were riderless and easy pickings). Some were kissing my knee, some kissing my hand and some/- (ie the enemy seeking protection) they were afraid of death as they had killed Mayjān the day before and the Rwalah [were calling out] "Vengeance for Mayjān. Vengeance for Mayjān". [I said]⁷⁸ "Oh wretched men, [let me get] one thing if only a riding camel that I can take" (ie to claim a prize). They said "No by God, even if it is worth your life, you mustn't go and get it. If you leave us we will be killed". So anyway I rescued them and got them away behind al-Jarīrah⁷⁹ and let them run off down the ravine until they were safe. And they were thirty one families, the 'arabs who we captured, that is only those of the encampment⁸⁰. If you saw the Rwalah

⁷⁵ This uncovering of the face and head by the women of the tribe has a complex function. On the one hand like the placing of an unveiled young girl at the head of the tribe in an important battle it has the function of spurring on the men of the tribe. On the other hand it shames the enemy in that they are seen to have encroached on the private territory of the women folk.

⁷⁶ I was unable to find out the significance of this call.

⁷⁷ Here again is a technicality of Bedouin warfare which is not quite clear. SOWAYAN suggested it might mean "both the ones he originally gave protection to and others who rushed over to claim it too".

⁷⁸ In dramatic passages it is possible, when there is an exchange of words, to leave out the verb "to say". For further examples of this see INGHAM (1993:24-25).

⁷⁹ al-Jarīrah, not yet identified.

⁸⁰ *hillah* "tents and provisions" contrasts with *ḥalāl* "flocks".

you would say they were coming home from Damascus (so heavy laden were they with spoils that it looked as though they had been to market). We did not leave/- we took them all. Well and then we came to our families and then went away and crossed the border to Ibn Sa'ūd. And Ibn Jandal went over to the west. And this is with your health. These are the events in which I was present⁸¹.

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⁸¹ The verb is *mikan* "to be able", also used like *lahag* meaning "to be present at an action".