



Research Article

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Kinship Ties in the *Sîrah* of ez-Zîr Sâlim

The Conflict between Paternal- and Maternal-Uncles and the Process of Culture Transformation of Egypt

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Abstract

This study examines some of the major patterns of interaction within kinship groups on the one hand and between affinal groups on the other. Such an investigation should clarify the affective functions of these kinship ties along with marital ties and their relevance to the worldviews of the social folk groups among whom the *sîrah* exists. Arab scholars--eager to prove that the *malhamah*/(epic) exists in Arab poetic expressions--seem to have overlooked the impact of such an un-Egyptian/Arabic expression on the national behavior and modeling (See Motif, J0060\$, "Imitative (social) learning--other aspects of learning from observation.") One of the models that ez-Zîr Sâlim instills division, tribalism, and a fragmented community/ (tasharzum) which is responsible for a succession of inner fighting, civil wars, and defeats in modern times. The process of culture transformation of Egyptian countryside may be linked to the emergence of imported heroic-but not epic-during the Mameluke rule (Sultanate). The emergence of the Arabic narrative of ez-Zîr Sâlim during the 1960s and 1970s in print and cassettes is briefly treated. This Study offers the first motif identification of this *sîrah*'s contents.

Keywords: *Sîrah*/epic; stanzaic poetry/ballad; national character; pharaonic; folk; literati/elite; maternal-unclehood vs. paternal-unclehood; brother; sister; mamluk sultanate; conflict; the desert vs. the sown.

Key to Emblems: \$ signifies a new motif or Tale-type generated by El-Shamy. Superscript "C"/("ç" or "C" in older files). For classificatory requirements, all motifs and tale-types are designated here in four digits (i.e., "J0060\$, Imitative (social) learning," while in the printed/ published form it appears as "J6;" and "Z0001.0.1\$, 'inshâ-style literary composition:" will appear as "Z1.0.1\$, 'inshâ-style literary composition:". The abbreviations are required by the p.ec./computer technology in the 1970s/80s when a file size had to be small to save space/volume. Please note: Due to the intricacy and confusing nature of the data presented, especially of motifs, has been applied to help readers. Under lined letters: Signify the Arabic D/dâd; Dh, Dhâl; H/Hâ; Kh/khâ; S/Sâd; T/Tâ; Z/Zâ.

Introduction

The *sîrah* as a Genre of Narrative Lore

The story ez Zîr Sâlim¹ belongs to the genre of Arabic folk narration known as *siyar* (sing.: *sîrah*, lit.: conduct, life-history). A *sîrah* portrays the life of a culture hero, or an historical figure, along with the history of the hero's kinship group and/or nation; the *siyar* of

Antar Ibn Shaddâd, *Abu Zaid el Hilâli*, *ez Zâhir Baibars*, *Hamzah al-Bahlawân*, and *al-Amîrah Dhât al Himmah*, are other examples of such narratives, all of which may be characterized as multi-volume books in print read mostly by the literati with no oral folk circulation. Distinct traits of form, style, contents, performance, and function (or narrator's/performer's intent) characterize the *siyar* [1].

They are narratives of extraordinary length; they describe persons, events, issues, and matters assumed by performers and listeners to have been “real” or “true” (i.e., historical, quasi historical or legendary). The actions are highly adventurous, heroic, turbulent, ‘bloody,’ and span the lives of more than the members of one generation. The stage is usually continental and international. The language is typically highly ornate, relying heavily on ‘commonplace’ phrases² and alternates between rhymed prose³ and poetry; the poems are typically in the ‘columnar’ format of the classical Arabic poem, (*qa-sīdah* ‘*amūdiyyah*, where all lines end in unison.) rather than the stanzaic formats of folksong⁴ and related poetic folk genres. The presentations (or narration) are ideally public performances by a professional minstrel “poet,”⁵ or by a specialist, to the tunes of the rebec⁶, and other traditional folk musical instruments. Frequently however, portions of a *sīrah* may be presented by a non-specialist, but mostly in the vernacular (prose) narrative manner of an ordinary folktale [2].

The intent of the performer of non-religious *siyar* is to entertain and--to a lesser extent--instruct, inform, and to provide a model for glorified national behavior⁷. Thus, a *sīrah* is also designated as: *qis-ṣah*, a label denoting a story which is to be taken seriously⁸. Formal religious institutions and students of classical Arabic language have condemned *siyar* as “lies;” a number of ulama (religious authorities) considered them sacrilegious. Some *siyar* such as “Abu Zaid”

(i.e., *al-Hilāliyya*), and *Antar* have acquired enormous popularity in various Arab countries and are performed publicly with considerable frequency; consequently, these *siyar* are available in numerous oral versions. Others, as is the case of *ez-Zīr Sālim*⁹, seem to be, at least at the present time, largely confined to printed or manuscript form without highly visible oral public performances or professional minstrel ‘poets,’ who consider themselves the specialists in these *siyar*. The popularity of an orally performed *sīrah* is always evident through the number of its public, often festive, performances, the large crowds which constitute its audiences, the sentiments the audience expresses, the number of minstrel ‘poets’ who specialize in that specific *sīrah*, and the frequency of references made in daily life to the *sīrah* and its persona along with the appearance of some of its episodes in broader tale telling situations without losing their identity as parts of the *sīrah* concerned¹⁰. Evaluating the popularity of a *sīrah* which seems not to be currently performed orally is a more elusive task. The narrative is usually read from a printed source, sometimes a person will read aloud to an audience of listeners. Knowledge of the number of printings and the copies sold of each may indicate the extent to which a work is in demand [3-6]. Such data is not easily obtainable. In the case of *ez Zīr Sālim*, at least three editions seem to have appeared in Egypt within the past century; however, information about the number of printings and the number of copies in each printing is not available.

¹ Anonymous, *Qissat ez Zīr Sālim*, Abū Lailah al Muhalahal al kabīr. (Cairo, Maktabt al Gumhūriyya, n.d.).

² Mot.: Z0001.0.1\$, ‘*inshā* style literary composition: constituted mainly from copied (memorized) famous quotations. ‘commonplace’ phrases.

³ Mot., Z0001.0.1.1\$, *sajī* (rhymed prose).

⁴ I.e., *mawwāl*: Or *mawwāl* *qasasi* narrative folksong/ballad; Stanzaic structure, the only exception is on p. 132.

⁵ “*shāCīr*,” i.e., bard or minstrel; pl., *shuCarā*; Mot., P0427.7.5, Bard. [Minstrel, (*shāCīr rabābah*): performer of *siyar* (heroic epics and romances)].

⁶ *rabābah*. This instrument is the characteristic trait of the minstrel bard, who performs heroic non religious narrative poems; typically labeled: “*shāCīr rabābah*” (‘a rebec’s poet’). By contrast, the performer of religious narrative poems who may be a male or a female is typically labelled *maddāh*, fem. *maddāhah*, (‘praiser’); the instrument characteristic of the ‘praiser’ is the *tār*, pl. *tārān* a flat tambourine like open drum, without the jingling metal pieces. See El Shamy (1976), “Ahmad El-Badawi ...,” Lane (1973), Edward William, pp. 359 91). Mot.: P0164.1\$, Wandering ‘praiser’: (*maddāh*, chanter of spirituals); P0427.7.5.2\$, *maddāhah* (‘praiser’, female religious balladeer, bard);

⁷ On “National, Character” see, Hultkranz (1960), A. *General ethnological Concepts* (1960). (pp.186-187).

⁸ On the “intent of the narrator,” see “Classification of Traditions”, in: El Shamy, Hasan, (1980): *Folktales of Egypt*, _(pp.xliv-xlvi).

⁹ Other *siyar* seem to be confined to print such as *sīrat al-‘amīrah* dhat al-himma studied by Nabila Ibrahim/Salem and described by Abdul Hakim, Sh. (1966) as “The longest (*Sīrah*) in History” (1996)), or the shortest *ez-Zīr Sālim* which is a mere 151 pages. The 1960s-70s period, under consideration here, proved to be a likely transcription of an oral folk rendition presented orally, Yet, only a small part is told orally like a folktale. As a collector, I (El-Shamy) asked a likely informant whether he knew the story of *Zīr*, he replied in the affirmative but asked me to wait until tomorrow. The following day he rendered a text, but his text proved to be from the printed one, which he seemed to have read the night before. Thus, it was clear that *ez-Zīr* story is not well-known among members of the Egyptian population. However, due to their eagerness to prove that Arabs owned the epic genre, participants in a symposium about the epic held in Cairo in November 1984 treated *ez-Zīr* and similar *siyar* as epics Lyons (1955, Malcolm Cameron), disregarding such views as Littmann’s (1950, p. 7). labeled *Zīr* as “epic”. Perhaps the first scholar to identify “*Aijyām al-‘Arab*” as “epic” is Caskel (1930). This characterization dominated the choice of students of this field. Yet, if the term “epic” is in the Homeric sense (between the 8th and 6th centuries BC), a narrative would be considered, an “epic” if: 1). The account fully a poem/verse; 2.) Of extraordinary length, 3). About the deeds of a god or Demigod, 4). Believed to be sacred truth in the community where it is told. None of these criteria—except for violence/heroism areas characteristic of the so called “epic” (termed *malhamah*/i.e., heap of flesh) in the Arab World during the 1960s and 1970s. The only poems that may be labelled epic, except for length—are the accounts of demigod-saints such as “Bes (El-Shamy, 1976, p. 5; 1995, texts no. VI C I. “Ahmad el-Badawi”; VI C II.1 no. 59, “Ibrāhīm Ed-Disūqī”; and VI D.1, “Mar Girgis (St. George): Mot., A0110.1\$, Modern demigod (saint, culture hero) is a retention from ancient deity. El-Badawī (Bes), El-Disūqī (Horus), (cf. Saint Patrick).

Also, see El-Shamy (2020) “Folklore of the Arab World,” In: *humanities*, “Section: 3.1.1”. It is to that trend that Wannous’ (2017), Sadallah, and similar calls for *creating* Arab epics belong. Then during the age of the cassette and motion pictures, there was a drive to find stories that would sell commercially. For example, a cassette by [Ms.] Younis, zaynab (1970s?), (TC-GSTP-80) titled, “*The Epi of Al Zīr Salim*, (Words & music by Mahmoud Ismail Gad. The Sound of Art [Co.]). For occurrences of the cassette phenomenon see, El-Shamy (1995, pp. 446-450). However, with the fading of the need for the cassette texts and cassette players, the commercial oral-telling of *ez-Zīr* vanished.

¹⁰ Episodes in broader tale telling situations: “Mot., “Thompson (1955-58); or Types (AaTh/AT1964) *The Types of the Folktale*; HeS (El-Shamy 2004); HeS (El-Shamy 2004).

There is evidence suggesting that Zîr's story must have enjoyed wider oral circulation in past periods. The style of the present printed text bears clear marks of an oral performance in that it contains stylized phrases that address "the listeners." The text also contains phrases addressing "the readers"; these, however, seem to be far fewer and to have been introduced by the "editor/printer/publisher,"¹¹ along with other additions given "for the benefit of the students [or, seekers of knowledge] and thrill (p. 2) for the "listeners", whom the reciter addressed frequently¹². A more significant indicator of the presumed previous popularity of ez Zîr's *sîrah* is its social and cultural impact. Gypsy groups in Egypt¹³ blame Zîr for their outcast position and the fact that they seemed doomed to riding asses/donkeys as one of the signs of their low status. They explain that when Zîr defeated his paternal cousin, / (*ibn 'amm*, father's brother's son, henceforth (FaBoSo) Gassâs, he imposed certain terms on Gassâs' camp as a price for sparing their lives; these include never to have the privilege of riding horses, in addition to other practices typically attributed (stereotyping) to Gypsies by other groups. Thus, Gypsies state: "Cursed is the father of ez Zîr [i.e., May ez Zîr be cursed], who condemned us to riding asses!"¹⁴. Gypsies refer to themselves as "Gassâs' Arabs." Neighboring peasants also attribute their harsh life as land tillers to terms imposed upon them by Gassâs; thus, it is stated, "May Gassâs be cursed for having condemned us to hoe labor!"¹⁵. The association between the story of Zîr and the various gypsy groups may account, at least in part, for its apparent infrequent appearance in oral circulation among other groups for whom gypsy things and mannerisms are to be avoided¹⁶. The *sîrah* of Zîr spans the lives of seven generations, of whom only the first three play significant roles [7-10]. Events involving the younger four generations (See VI.C J) are, for the most part, presented in a sketchy manner and echo the same patterns of interaction expressed concerning the older three (See VI.E F). Its events are supposed to have taken place during a period ending shortly before the appearance of Islam in the first half of the seventh century A.D. The stage, or more accurately the arena, for its violent actions encircles the Red Sea and extends north into what may now be labeled the Levant Coast area (or Esh Shâm countries) and western Iraq. (See sections: "I.E.1, I.F.6, III.A").

The text being examined here appears as a book published by a

bookshop in Cairo called `Maktabat al Gumhûriyya The current owner of the bookshop stated that he had inherited the plates and does not know exactly how his predecessors acquired them. The book's format, print, drawings, binding, and means of marketing are identical with other 'folk books' and sixteen-page pamphlets (equivalent of the EuroAmerican broadsides) published by the same bookshop. These include *Alf laylah wa laylah* (The Thousand Nights and One Night), *Antar, Taghrîbat BanîHilâl* (BaniHilâl's Westward Drive), epic-like saint stories such as Ahmad El-Badawi with Faatimah Bint Birr (El-Shamy (1976, 1995, Segment "VI C. Axes, Arch-saints (*al-'aqtâb*)). See data associated with n. 9, above), and other 16-pagers pamphlets of a variety of then recurrent topics. The book of *ezZîr* has 151 pages divided into nine chapters, each labeled part, (*guz'*, lit.: i.e., volume/portion) rather than

"chapter"/(*bâb*). The division, however, seems to have been introduced by the editor and/or printer rather than by the original composer(s) or performer(s). In numerous cases, a chapter ends, and another begins in the middle of a sentence, or a poem (as in the case with chapters 23, 34). Apart from misprints and similar spelling errors, the present edition appears to be identical with an earlier one composed of 128 pages. The text Von Kremer *Aegypten* (1863) used to present Zîr's *sîrah* to European students of oriental culture;¹⁷ a printing attributed to a publisher in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, is certainly a reproduction of the Egyptian text under consideration here. An abridged edition of Zîr's *sîrah* appears as a part of a series of publications meant to present old "Arab folk stories and novels" in the style of the *qasîdah 'amûdiyyah* closer to the "academic literary" ones [11].

The Present *sîrah*

Six distinct narrative phases (designated here by Roman numerals and outlined below, constitute the course of action. Two additional but peripheral phases may also be reckoned: one (I) serves as a "Preface" and accounts for the origin of "Arabs," and the other (VI.J) serves as an "Addendum," that accounts for the *fate* of Banî Hilâl, who par excellence are the representatives of the Arabs, especially through the *sîrah* of Bani Hilâl and the culture hero Abu Zaid the Hilalite.

¹¹ During an interview (around 1970), with the owner of (*maktabat* Al-Gomhuuriyyah; formerly: al-malakiyyah), he stated that he got the printing clichés/equipment) when he acquired the publishing house.

¹² "*ifâdah li al [mu]t tâliCîn wa nuzhah li s sâmiCîn*", (p. 2). Also, for the same purpose of benefiting the student, a list of the God's Names is provided as "God's Fine Praise names," Mot.: A0102.0.1\$, God's names (99 attributes). God's beautiful names). (p. 2, p. 68), along with addressing "the listeners" constantly.

¹³ Ghagar. Also see Taymûr, A-`Amthâl, nos. 937, and 1287.

¹⁴ "malCûn abu z Zîr, 'illi hakam Calaina be rkûb el himîr." Mot., A1611.2.1\$, Origin of Gypsies: Arab sub clan defeated in war by their paternal cousins; Z0084.1.6\$, "Insult concerning father.

¹⁵ "malCûn abu Gassâs, illi hakam Calaina b shughl el fâs;" see section "IV.H.1", of résumé above.

Mot.: P0411.0.1\$, Peasant's work (farming) is arduous and unprofitable.

¹⁶ Mot., W0199.9.3\$, Negative identification ("We do not do what they do!").

¹⁷ Especially the meticulous literary studies by Von Kramer (1883), Alfred, *Aegypten*, vol. II (1803) pp. 306-322 (Leibzig 1883); Oliverius (1985), Jaroslav. "Aufzeichnungen über den Basûs Krieg".

Oliverius (1975), Jaroslav, "The Epic and Genealogical Cyclization in Arabic Folk Book about Zîr Saalim" In; *Acta Univertatis Carolinae—Philologica* 5 (Prgue University: 1975). Oliverius (1971), Jaroslav, "Theme und Motiveim arabische Volkbuch von Zîr Sâlim." In: *Archiv orietalini* 31, 1971, pp. 129-145.

- a) Phase I is an introduction to the main action; it identifies the protagonists, their 'national' and kinship relationships, and describes in length the conquering of the Qaysi Arabs in the north by the Yemeni Arabs of the south Arabian Peninsula. Phase I ends with the triumph of the good and defeat of the evil. Also, Hassân, the Yemenite king who had everything, lost everything because of his greed for more.
- b) Phase II deals exclusively with the early development of friction between the two segments of the Qaysi Arabs, Bakr and Taghlib. The friction here is largely inbred and familial.
- c) Phase III describes how the rift that appeared in the previous phase widens into a total split, and the beginning of hostilities between Bakr and Taghlib, mainly but not exclusively due to events from Phase I.
- d) Phase IV describes the war, the battles, the tactics, the strategies, the new alliances and the elimination of numerous characters (persona) from both camps.
- e) Phase V deals with developments that move action in the direction of resolving the conflict. It ends with the unqualified triumph of the 'hero', Zîr, and his group.
- f) Phase VI represents a sequel that enumerates--mostly without elaboration--developments subsequent to the main events. It is concluded by pointing out that Zîr's people are, in fact, the new heroes of the Arab nation: the Hilâlîs. Thus, the *sîrah* establishes a continuum between its preface and conclusion by designating the beginning of the Arabs, and the fate of a renowned segment of the nation as well.

The language, societal imagery and background, beliefs and other cultural and social aspects presented in Zîr's *sîrah* strongly indicate that it was composed in Egypt during the latter Mamluk period (sultanate). This era, preceded by the Crusades and followed by the Ottoman conquest (in 1517A.D.) was characterized by radi-

cal transformations in Egyptian society and culture. The composer was almost certainly an adult male, literate, and possessed a fair amount of knowledge of (or access to) classical Arabic literature, and Egyptian and other Arabic traditional lore [12]. In its present form the *sîrah* represents a creative act of composition involving two types of sources. The first, and perhaps the most salient for the composer, is the literary narrative accounts of the war between Bakr and Taghlib, known as "The Basûs War,"¹⁸ and the role played by poet "CAdiyy,"¹⁹ also described as a "zi'r/ (womanizer, philanderer)"²⁰ The second source is the vast narrative repertoire circulating in oral traditions, referred to as "folktales." The *sîrah* incorporates narrative components pertaining to Märchen/ (fantasy tales), "novelle," "historical legends," "belief legends," and "humorous tales," many of which are still circulating in oral traditions in Egypt and other parts of the Arab culture area in multiple genres [13-15]. The composer(s) of the *sîrah* drew liberally from both sources in order to creatively weave this new work, without re-presenting the literary or the folkloric materials.

The Sîrah: A Résumé

Chapter 1 (PP. 2 17)

[Preface]

"For the benefit of the readers and the amusement of the listeners"²¹. Arabs are the children of Nizâr Ibn Ma'd Ibn 'Adnân; he had four sons: Muḍar, Anmâr, Iyâd and Rabîcah. From these four, all Arabs descended. Iyâd fathered all the Arabs of Yemen, while the other three fathered the Qaysite Arabs whose lands include Hejaz, and el-*Shâm*²², Iraq, and the inhabitants of wastelands [elsewhere]. Thus, "Arabs were divided into two camps: [northern] Qaysites, and [southern] Yeminites." Arabs grew and multiplied until Prince Rabîcah and his brother Murrah appeared on the stage at the outskirts of *EshShâm* countries. "'Rabîcah ... is the father of Zîr, the renowned 'horseman,' to whom this *sîrah* and its celebrated events belong"²³.

¹⁸ Mot., Z0183.0.1\$/cf., Meaning of a name; F1012.2.1.1\$, War lasts for forty years.

¹⁹ Historically "Ibn Rab'ah al-Hârith ... Ibn Taghlib" (c.566-c.640), nicknamed "*al-Muhalhil*, /*al-muhahal*" due to his shredded poetic style.

²⁰ "*Zîr an nisâ'*," i.e., Zi'r, popularly thought of as a 'jug' for women, i.e., a woman chaser. Significantly, this does not seem to a prominent attribute of Zîr in the present narrative. There is only a single reference to such a trait concerning him; it occurs on page 89. Mot., T0403\$, 'Womanizer', 'play boy' (*zîr nisâ'*): habitual seducer of women. Although Zîr was absorbed in drinking and listening to poetry (p. 31); and interested merely in *mughâzalah*, Mot., T0014.5\$, taghazzul (speaking love at someone). His situation is comparable to Mot., U0064.1\$, Virile man made/[rendered] continent by absorption in business (money) matters (in Zîr's situation: drinking, listening, etc.).

²¹ Mot., P0807.1.3\$, Listening to poetry as recreation (pastime); P0807.1.2\$, Listening to stories (tales) as hobby (for relaxation).

²² The "Levant Coast," refers to a region (Patai, 1969, Raphael, p. 66) designates as No. 13 of his culture areas system; It includes such countries as Syria Lebanon, Palestine, etc.

²³ *fâris*, may also signify: knight, chevalier, etc. Mot., Z0203\$, Heroes of siyar (Abu Zaid, CAntar, el Battâl, Sayf, ez Zâhir, ez Zîr, etc.).

[Phase I]**A. (pp. 2-3)**

“The reciter stated ...”²⁴: At the outskirts of *EshShâm* countries lived Rabîcah and his sons, Kulaib²⁵, [Zîr]Sâlim, ^cAdiy, Dar^ciyân and other ones²⁶. He also had a daughter named Asmâ’ nicknamed *Dibâ^c* / (Hyena)²⁷; she was strongwilled and used to wrestle with lions and beasts. Rabîcah was the head of the Taghlib branch of the Qaysite [northern] Arabs.

B. (P. 3)

Murrah, Rabîcah’s brother, had a number of sons: Hammâm, Sultân, Gassâs, [Shâlîsh]²⁸, and others. He also had a daughter named alGalîlah. She was beautiful, virtuous, and noble. Murrah was the head of the Bakr branch of the Qaysites. I.C. (P. 3) Murrah asked his brother Rabîcah for the hand of Asmâ’ in marriage to his son Hammâm; at the same time, he stated that when Rabîcah’s son, Kulaib, and his own daughter Galîlah grow up they should be married to each other “without consulting [further with anyone]”: Rabîcah gladly consented. The wedding between Hammâm and Asmâ’ was celebrated. (I.C.1) He enjoyed her beauty, and she fulfilled her aspirations because she it happened that she was very much in love with him [16].

C. (P. 4)

Meanwhile in Yemen King Hassân, a tyrant “nicknamed the Yemenite *tubba^c* / (of the *tabâbi^cah*)”²⁹ was foremost among the southern Yemenite Arabs, just as Rabîcah was the foremost among the Qaysi Arabs in the north [i.e., *EshShâm* region] [17-20]. Hassân was strongwilled, tall and broad, but he also could not tell right from wrong, loved to frolic with pretty women night and day to the extent that each evening he married a maiden from among the daughters of kings and notables.

D. (pp. 4-12)

One day King Hassân asked Nabhân, his wise and experienced minister, whether there was another king who had as many men or as much wealth as he himself possessed. The minister was reluctant to answer and asked that his safety be assured [21]. When done, he

informed Hassân that no one in the surrounding countries was his match; but “beyond the seas,” / (*kharig al-bihâr*) Bani Qays and their king Rabîcah were greater and mightier than he³⁰ (I.E.1). Hassân was offended and decided to conquer them in order to achieve hegemony and make the ruling of the world rest in one hand: his own. War drums were beaten, and the troops assembled. The conquest took place by land and sea, (I.E.1a) with the help of Ru^caini, the son of Hassân’s sister and king of the Land of Abyssinians. The conquest took place by land and sea; and the Blacks³¹ (I.E.2). The Qaysites were caught unprepared, and the invading army reached the outskirts of their capital, Damascus. (I.E.3) The king of the Qaysites, Rabîcah, and his brother Murrah, accompanied by notables of their nation(s) went to Hassân in order to surrender. Hassân indicated to his minister that he himself was in fact “the greatest.” (I.E.3a) He noticed Rabîcah, who looked like a lion, and wondered about his aweevoking appearance and the whiteness of his beard. (I.E.4) Rabîcah, however, refused to humble himself before the conqueror and was hanged. (I.E.5) Murrah pleaded with Hassân and succeeded in getting him to spare the lives of the others. Hassân dispersed the leader of the Qaysites throughout the land. (I.E.5a) Four brothers of the wife of Rabîcah were employed by Hassân; they awaited the opportunity for revenge³². (I.E.6) Hassân ruled for thirty years [22-25].

E. (pp. 13-27)

Hassân then learned that the most beautiful, virtuous and perfect Arab maiden was alGalîlah, daughter of Murrah, and that since childhood she has been engaged and was about to be married to her paternalcousin / (*ibn ^camm* (*FaBrSo*)³³. Kulaib, the son of Rabîcah, the king he had hanged. (I.F.1) He decided to take her as a wife and sent his minister with a letter to her father. Murrah was trapped, saw no way out, and consented. He, however, told Kulaib about the matter [26]. (I.F.2) Following the advice of a monk named Nu^cmân, Kulaib hid one hundred warriors (I.F.2a) who included his paternalcousin Gassâs IbnMurrah / (*ibn ^camm* (*FaBrDa*)³⁴ in secret compartments of trunks which carried Galîlah’s bridal belongings; the trunks accompanied the wedding procession into Hassân’s palace. Kulaib himself joined the procession disguised as Galîlah’s jester and buffoon³⁵ and camped outside Damascus raising “the banners [...]”.

²⁴ “*Qâla ar râwi*.” An opening formula characteristic of the performance of a *sîrah*. The word *râwi* may also signify narrator, informant, or source. Mot., P0427.7.5, Bard. [Minstrel, (*shâCir rabâbah*): performer of *siyar* (heroic epics and romances)].

²⁵ I.e., Kulaib (‘little dog’). Mot., Z0066.4.1\$, Endearment: to be referred to (or addressed) in the diminutive.

²⁶ The number of the sons is cited at an earlier stage; see section I.B.: they are: Hammâm, Sultân, Gassâs, and [Shâl-îsh.], (P. 3).

²⁷ See, Mot., Z0183.0.1\$, “Mening of a name”; Z0183.3.1\$, Females given animal names (e.g., Hyena, Cub, Lioness, etc.).

²⁸ Though not cited initially, Shâlîsh plays a significant role in ensuing events.

²⁹ Mot., P0012.2.1.3\$, “*tubba^c* Hassân as tyrant”; Mot., T0403\$, ‘Womanizer’, ‘playboy’ (*zîr nisâ*): habitual seducer of women.

³⁰ Mot., T0403\$, ‘Womanizer’, ‘playboy’ (*zîr nisâ*): habitual seducer of women H1311.1, King seeks one richer (more magnificent) than himself.; A517\$, Culture-hero as ruler of the entire world (cosmocrator)--(Alexander, Solomon, etc.).

³¹ ‘ayâ Nabhân ‘igmaC lî l Casâkir !.: fa ya’tû fawqa khaylin ka n nusûra. O, Nabhaan gather for me the soldiers .: so they would come to me riding horses like eagles. wa gahiz lî,yâ wazîrî, alf markib! .: wa ‘awsiqhun fî wast el buhûra

And ready for me a thousand ships, O vizier of mine .: and anchor them in the middle of the seas... etc.

Mot., P0553.4.1\$ Invasion by sea. P0550.1.0.5\$, Preparations (readiness) for war; P0552, Battle formations; P0550.1.1.1\$, Drums of war (beaten)

³² This revenge never materialized. (See p. 127).

³³ Mot., T0061.5.0.1\$, Betrothal of children; P0295.1.2\$, Marriage between ‘ibn Camm and his *ibn ^camm* (paternal cousin).

³⁴ Mot., K0754.1, Trojan horse. [Smuggling soldiers into city]; K0753.2\$, Capture by smuggling soldiers into city in two compartmented chest.

³⁵ Mot., K1818.3, Disguise as madman (fool). The abrupt ending of this segment suggests that the division of the book into chapters was superimposed on an original work that did not have these divisions.

Chapter 2 (pp. 18-34)

and the flags." (I.F.2b) *Hassân's* geomancer (*rammâ*)³⁶ told him of the trick but a search failed to produce the hidden men. (I.F.2c) An old womangeomancer named *Haglân* discovered the ruse, but she foresaw also that *Hassân* will be killed; consequently, she secretly sided with the *Qaysites*. Yet, she informed *Hassân*, and belittled the finding of the court geomancer her student; he was executed, and "his soul departed to the Red Valley."³⁷ In a poem she described *Galîlah* and her beauty in a manner that made *Hassân* lose his mind; he allowed the procession into his palace [27]. (I.F.3) *Galîlah* used her beauty and charm to cause *Hassân* to further abandon his caution and isolate himself from his courtiers and guards so as to enjoy the comic antics of *Galîlah's* buffoon. He ordered that a magic chain which protected his royal court be lowered³⁸. *Kulaib* revealed his true identity, placed *Hassân's* own sword on the Yemenite king's throat, (I.F.4) but agreed to give him a brief respite in order to recite an "epic poem"³⁹ in which he cited major past occurrences and foretold the major political, religious and family events, including *Kulaib's* murder at the hands of *Gassâs*, *Kulaib's* own paternalcousin (*ibn am* (FaBrSo))⁴⁰. (I.F.5) *Kulaib* refused *Hassân's* pleas for mercy and slew him, thus avenging the killing of his own father. The Yemenite army was routed and *Kulaib* was installed king [28-30].

F. (pp. 28-31)

The wedding between *Kulaib* and his loving paternalcousin/ (*ibn ammm* (FaBrDa))⁴¹ took place and they enjoyed each other. (I.F.6) The news of *Hassân's* death reached Yemen. *Hassân's* paternalcousin/ *ibn am* (FaBrSo)⁴² named *Imrân alQasîr* tried to avenge his killing. He prepared an army and headed to *EshShâm*. After some early successes, including a nonfatal duel with Prince *Murrah*, *Imrân* was slain by *Kulaib* in a duel and his army was dispersed. (I.G.1) Meanwhile, *Kulaib* had a wondrous palace built for *Galîlah*, with doors and windows of gold inlaid with gems and precious stones; it also had a garden which resembled paradise. *Galîlah* moved into the palace (I.G.2) with

her seven beautiful daughters to whom she had given birth during that period⁴³.

[Phase II]

A. (P. 31)

(II.A.1) *Murrah*, *Kulaib's* paternaluncle *am*/(FaBr) asked *Kulaib* to allow him to move away with all his people (i.e., *BaniBakr*; the *Bakrites*) along with their belongings (II.A.2) due to crowdedness and in order for their condition to improve⁴⁴. *Kulaib* gave his permission [31].

B. (P. 31)

(II.B.1) Since *Murrah* was growing old, he installed his son *Gassâs* as the head of *BaniBakr*. (II.B.1a) *Gassâs* ruled with justice and generosity, attained fame and was praised by poets. As for *Kulaib*, he had a number of gallant brothers; *Zîr* was one of them. (II.B.2) At that time *Zîr* was only ten years old, handsome, courageous, and eloquent. He spent all his time drinking, listening to music and chanting poetry. (II.B.2a) His older brother *Kulaib* loved him and advised him to change his way of life but did not try to force such a change [32].

C. (pp. 32-44)

Through geomancing by *ram*/sand cutting, *Murrah's* sons [i.e., *BaniBakr*] learned that it was inevitable that *Gassâs* will kill *Kulaib*⁴⁵ and that *Zîr* will rise to avenge the murder of his brother and kill "every notable and strong man among them." (II.C.1) At the suggestion of *Sultân*, they decided to seek the advice of their sister *Galîlah*. All fortythree brothers went to her, told her about the prophecy and that they had decided to kill *Zîr*. (II.C.2) She counseled them that it would be safer if she were to get her husband *Kulaib* to kill his own brother for honor. (II.C.2a) She tore up her clothes and accused *Zîr* of having tried to violate her⁴⁶.

³⁶ Mot., D1812.3.2, Fortune told by cutting sand. [*raml/rammâl*].

³⁷ *wa râhat rûhuh 'ilâ al wâdî al 'ahmar*; evidently, a euphemism for Hell. An atypical concept: the location is also unknown in contemporary worldview. Mot., A671, Hell. Lower world of torment.

³⁸ Mot., D1317, Magic object warns of danger; D1317.9.2\$, *TubbaC Hassân's* magic chain detects evil intentions.

³⁹ *al malhamah al kubrâl* (the Greater Epic) ..., pp. 23 26. The word uncommon usage in folk poetry.

⁴⁰ Mot., P0295.0.2.1\$, Paternal cousin murders his father's brother's son.

⁴¹ Mot., P0295.1.2\$, Marriage between *'ibn ammm* and his *ibn ammm* (paternal cousin).

⁴² Mot., P0525.3.1\$, Vendettist (avenger); P0295.0.1.2\$, Paternal cousin (*'ibn Camm*) avenges death of his paternal cousin.

⁴³ Mot., F0771, Extraordinary castle (house, palace); Mot, F0818, Extraordinary Garden; P0234.0.3.2\$, Seven daughters.

⁴⁴ Mot., P0721.0.1\$, Overpopulation (and its effects); P0730.1.2\$, Tribe breaks up due to overpopulation.

⁴⁵ Mot., M0341.7\$, Prophecy: death (killing) of certain number of persons. (Number is usually formulaic: seven, thirty nine, forty, ninety nine, or the like); Mot., M0341.2.19, Prophecy: death at hands of certain person; M0343.0.2.5\$, Prophecy: cousin's death at hands of his cousin (paternal or maternal).

⁴⁶ Mot., K2111, Potiphar's wife [and Joseph]. ...: AaTh, 0917\$, Innocent (*Chaste*) Man Slandered as Seducer (*Rapist*): Subsequently Vindicated. (*Batu/Baîfî and Anubu's wife, Joseph and Pharaoh's wife, etc.*), (in part).

Mot., K2111.7\$, Wife falsely accuses her husband's brother of seduction (rape, attempted rape). (Anubis's wife accuses Bata). 0917\$, Innocent (*Chaste*) Man Slandered as Seducer (*Rapist*): Subsequently Vindicated. (*Batu/Baîfî and Anubu's wife, Joseph and Pharaoh's wife, etc.*).

Chapter 3 (pp. 35-52)

But at first Kulaib could not bring himself to kill his youngest brother; he only slapped him and sent him to herd camels. (II.C.2b) Then she accused Zîr of having been sodomized⁴⁷ by shepherds and suggested killing him to avoid a scandal. Still Kulaib could not kill his brother. Galîlah proposed that Kulaib should take his brother to “Wâdî al-‘Abbâs” -- a remote area populated by tigers and lions-- and kill him there. She explained: Beasts would devour the corpse, and no one would know what really happened. Kulaib agreed and invited Zîr to accompany him on a hunting trip. There, a lion attacked them, Kulaib ran away but Zîr slew the lion with a dagger and ate its heart. Thus, Kulaib’s heart became free of malice toward the lad/(*ghulâm*) and expected him to grow and become “one of the wonders of time”. (II.C.2c) Due to his wife’s tenacity and fear of public disgrace, he tried to lose Zîr by abandoning him down a water well named “the Well of Lions’ Sandal[tree].”⁴⁸ There, Zîr was lowered into the well and abandoned; yet he managed to save the lives of his brother and his brother’s men; Galîlah’s plot failed only due to Zîr’s courage [33-36]. Kulaib’s love for his brother increased⁴⁹. Then, using her charm and Kulaib’s love for her, she had Kulaib send Zîr on a deadly quest, hoping he would never return. (II.C.2d) First he was to bring her lioness’ milk which she claimed would make her give birth to a baby boy; then (II.C.2e) get water from “the Lions’ Well”⁵⁰ as a cure for Kulaib who had agreed to feign illness. Each time Zîr returned victoriously, especially when he (II.C.2f) drove a lioness’ litter of cubs into the homestead as if they were dogs and (II.C.2g) when he forced a lion which had killed his ass to carry the water skins in its stead. Zîr realized that his brother’s wife sought his destruction and said, in a poem addressing Kulaib, (II.C.2h) “Hapless is he who listens to a woman.”⁵¹ (II.C.3) He retired to the area where lions lived and (II.C.3a) supposedly humorously waged a war to finish off all lions in revenge of his ass,⁵² (II.C.3b) and pledged to

stop it only when his ass has come back to life; he also went back to his earlier lifestyle [36].

[Phase III]

A. (p. 45)

As Hassân had prophesied, “Kulaib IbnWâ’il”⁵³ was killed. In Yemen Hassân’s sister, Su‘âd, sought to avenge his murder.⁵⁴ She was old, wily, and poetess⁵⁵ and a witch; one of her names was alBasûs.⁵⁶ (III.A.1) In her youth she had been a great beauty and wrestled with eunuchs. She married the only man who could defeat her in a duel;⁵⁷ he was her paternalcousin, the king of Sirw countries. (III.A.1a) Her brother sought her consent prior to agreeing to the/her marriage [37].

B. (pp. 46-53)

III.B.1 She traveled to *EshShâm* with her blind husband, daughters and two slaves. She sought Gassâs and presented herself as ‘poetess,’ who wanders among the tribes and praises the masters and notables appealing to their generosity and soliciting grants. She succeeded in becoming his protegee,⁵⁸ (III.B.2) and began to sow dissension among the various groups. (III.B.2a) Consequently, Kulaib told Zîr that heKulaibwas getting too old to manage the problems and asked him to assume the rule, but Zîr refused. (III.B.3a) Su‘âd tricked Gassâs into believing that her sickly shecamel/(*nâqah*) was a descendent of the sacred shecamel of Prophet Sâlih, and that its sweat and droppings were perfume and musk.⁵⁹ (III.B.3b) She also provoked Gassâs into realizing that his paternalcousin Kulaib had become king and owned gardens and prairies, while he, Gassâs, had far less power and wealth [38]. (III.B.3c) Gassâs gave her permission to pasture her shecamel in Kulaib’s private garden and chanted a poem, “with... [his] tears overflowing ...”

⁴⁷ Mot., K2114.5\$, Male slandered as being sodomized (‘gay’).

⁴⁸ Mot., P0788.2\$, Social control by shaming (publicly) into compliance (conformity).

⁴⁹ He stated, “I wouldn’t sell him for a thousand like you ...”, (p. 38)/poem. Mot., P0251.0.3\$, Brother sides with his brother against own wife in dispute.

⁵⁰ Mot., H1361, Quest for lion’s milk; H0931, Tasks assigned in order to get rid of hero; H1212 Quest assigned because of feigned illness; T0188.2\$, Drinking lioness’s milk ensures birth of sons.

T0591.5.1.1\$, ‘*sûfah*’: inseminating agent placed on ball of wool (cotton or the like) and ‘worn’ by woman (i.e., placed in vagina as love-philtre). Typically, it contains human semen, /pg.39/poem.

⁵¹ Mot., W0256.6.3.2.2\$, Wise (good) man pays no attention to women. [To be taken as a curse or as statement of fact].

⁵² Mot., J1866, Man avenges self on animal by wholesale slaughter [(mass killing)]. P0535.3\$/cf., Excessive (absurd) demands made by injured party as price of ‘forgiveness’ in order to preclude reconciliation; S0482\$, Wholesale killing (extermination) of animals; S0110.3.3\$/cf., Palace of victims’s skulls (bones): strong man’s (woman’s) trophy.

⁵³ I.e, Ibn Murrah, such inconsistencies may be due to dividing the text into various stages. Seems to be an error by the editor/printer.

⁵⁴ Mot., P0253.5, Sister avenges brother’s death.

⁵⁵ Mot., P0427.7.4/cf., Women poets. (shârîrât).

⁵⁶ Mot., Z0183.0.1\$, Meaning of a name. (al Basûs, /Dasûs).

⁵⁷ Mot., H0332.1.1.1\$ Maiden will marry only the man who can defeat her in combat (duel).

⁵⁸ Mot., P0320, Hospitality. Relation of host and guest; P0324.3, Guest’s life inviolable; P0333\$, Deceitful guest exploits host; K2025.1\$, Malicious exploitation of rules of hospitality so as to destroy host; K2131.0.1\$, Old woman as trouble maker (trickster). =*gârah/jârah*, lit.: neighbor, i.e., guest and, thus, his protegee.

⁵⁹ Mot., B0811.3.5.1\$, Sacred she camel (*nâqah*); K2131.5, Treasure animal introduced into family’s flock in order to stir up dissension and enmity.

Chapter 4 (pp. 53-69)

“And fire in [his] heart..., due to people [i.e., his FaBrSos] who are unjudicious.” (III.B.3d) Su^cād ordered her slaves to wreak havoc on the place and allow her animal to destroy its plants; they did. (II.B.3e) Kulaib ordered the camel slaughtered and thrown out.

C. (pp. 54-56)

Su^cād, in mourning, appealed to Gassâs as her host and thus her protector, to compensate her for the loss. (III.C.1) Gassâs wrote to Kulaib and Kulaib replied but in each case Su^cād altered the contents to threats and insults⁶⁰. Gassâs asked his people to go to war, but they refused. He tried to pacify the old woman but she (III.C.2) insisted that she would accept only one of three things as compensation: (III.C.2a) that Gassâs would fill the tails of her garment (held up to form a sack) with stars, (III.C.2b) or that he bring the dead shecamel back to life, or that (III.C.2c) he would bring her Kulaib's head⁶¹. He told her that he could do only the third [39].

D. (pp. 56-58)

(III.D.1) Su^cād promised her slave freedom when he would bring her a kerchief soaked in Kulaib's blood. (III.D.2) Gassâs found Kulaib alone in the wilderness, and under the pretense of playing a game speared him in the back,⁶² he regretted his act, asked Kulaib's forgiveness but left him alive where he fell. (III.D.3) Su^cād's slave, who had shamed Gassâs into carrying out his murderous scheme, finished the task of slaughtering Kulaib (III.D.3a) at Kulaib's own insistence [40].

E. (pp. 58-61)

Before his death Kulaib wrote a will with his blood⁶³ on a slab of stone instructing his brother Zîr to avenge his death, to take care of his

orphaned children, to spare neither an old man nor a young woman, and to never accept reconciliation.

F. (pp. 61-62)

Murrah saw the approaching disaster brought about by his son Gassâs and suggested that Gassâs be tied up and sent to Kulaib's brothers. (III.F.1) Murrah's sons overruled him and thought that Gassâs was the suitable successor to the 'kingship,' and that Zîr was an idiot.

G. (pp. 62-66)

The news was sent via a slave girl to Hammâm the eldest of Murrah's sons and the husband of Asmâ', the sister of the slain Kulaibas he kept Zîr, his paternalcousin / (FaBrS), company in his lonely retreat. (III.G.1) Zîr was suspicious and went for his sword. (III.G.2) Hammâm told him the bad news and offered that Zîr kill him in exchange for Kulaib, (III.G.3) but Zîr refused and swore to finish them [the Bakrites] all, and "violate their women and girls."⁶⁴ (III.G.4) Zîr promised to spare Hammâm provided he would never show his face [i.e., take part] in battle. (III.G.5) Hammâm left and asked his younger son Shaybân, who happened to be with them to also depart, (III.G.5a) but he replied that he will stay with his maternaluncle / (*khâl* (MoBr) [as is customary in local (native) practices in Egypt]⁶⁵. (III.G.5b) He, however, twitted Zîr about being no match for his father nor for his paternaluncles and was about to leave to join them. / (*a^c mâm* (FaBrS). (III.G.5c) (Zîr slew him, chopped off his head and placed it in the saddlebags of the boy's horse [41-43]. The horse went home. (III.G.5d) The boy's father complained to his wife about her brother's act; she mourned and went to her brother Zîr and reprimanded him and wondered: "Do you kill your sister's son in revenge for your brother!" (III.G.5e) He offered her no apology and only promised her to terminate all the tyrants. (III.G.5f) Upon hearing his reply, she was pacified and returned home, but re-

⁶⁰ Mot., K2131.0.1\$, Old woman as trouble maker (trickster); K2131.0.2\$, Friendly message treacherously altered into hostile one. Friendship between sender and recipient destroyed; K1084.2, Liar brings enmity between friends.

⁶¹ Mot., Q0211.6.1\$, Killing she-camel revenged; J1955, Demand that murderer restore life to victim; Mot., P0535.3\$, Excessive (absurd) demands made by injured party as price of 'forgiveness' in order to preclude reconciliation.

⁶² Mot., K0867/cf., Fatal duel: brother kills brother in pretended game. [Fratricide].

⁶³ Mot.P0527\$, Legal will (testament) made before death (legal preparations for death); F0883.1.2.1\$, Letter written in blood; F0883.7\$, Extraordinary writing (inscription) on stone.

⁶⁴ It is not clear whether "ahtiku" signifies rape or simply [violate the seclusion/modesty of] women (Mot., P0173.3.3\$, Captured females of defeated enemy humiliated publicly (by parading or otherwise violating their modesty).

⁶⁵ On the bond between a maternal-uncle and his sister's son, See El-Shamy (1999): "The strong affectionate bond between a man and his sister's son is inherently linked to that man's role as a brother to that sister." (Tale No. 50, pp. 355-58, 457-58).

Also see, "The brother-Sister Syndrome" El-Shamy (1981): "The child's positive relationship with the maternal-uncle is a product of the love a mother has for her brother, and the strong bonds of affection between a child and his or her mother (but not with the father).

This brother-sister bond harkens back to ancient Egyptian (Pharaonic) times. El-Shamy (2009, p. 83) reports:

"...a human being may—usually after reaching adulthood—develop an intimate and affectionate relationship with a jinni of the opposite sex; this type of bond is labeled as 'mikhawiyah' (bebrothering, supernatural foster-sibling A spirit referred to as 'Ukht (Sister) and another called 'Akhkh (Brother) are also found as independent entities and are believed to have a lifelong association with the involved human being".

For the role 'mikhawiyah' (bebrothering) on mental health and illness see, El-Shamy (2009, pp. 87-89),

mained anxious.

H. (pp. 66-68)

The wailing over Kulaib commenced. His seven daughters headed by the eldest, alYamamah, emerged unveiled out of women's quarters, with their hair uncovered and disheveled and barefoot⁶⁶, and went to Zîr, their paternal uncle. (III.H.1) Yamamah threw herself into his lap and fainted; he hugged her. (III.H.1a) She appealed to her paternal uncle Zîr to avenge the murder of her father [44]. The daughters and the rest of the family walked to where Kulaib had fallen and his daughters and the rest of the family walked to where Kulaib had fallen⁶⁷. Kulaib was buried, and a shrine was erected. (III.H.2) Zîr was installed as king. (III.H.2a) His first act was to evict Galîlah; she went to her father's home. (III.H.2b) She was with child, a baby boy.

[Phase IV]

A. (pp. 69-74)

War between BaniBakr (Gassâs' people) and BaniTaghlib (Zîr's people) commenced. Zîr spearheaded the troops "like a forest lion [i.e., a true lion]

Chapter 5 (PP. 70-86)

While flags and banners flew over his head ..." He inflicted heavy losses on the Bakrites, and they withdrew. (IV.A.1) Zîr then entered the palace of his slain brother and renewed his pledge to Yamamah, his niece (BrDa) not to make peace.

B. (pp. 74-79)

(IV.B.1) Nu^cmân, the monk, informed Zîr that he had had a dream which revealed that Zîr was going to have seven years of bad luck⁶⁸ and recommended that Zîr should stop the war for that duration. He did and went back to his original way of living. (IV.B.1a) Towards the end of that period Gassâs also had a dream (wolf in form of camel drinks spilled water)⁶⁹ which was interpreted as signaling the approach of disaster; (IV.b.2) the dream interpreter also revealed that Zîr's fortunes were linked to a 'deepblack' stallion ('*adham*)⁷⁰. (IV.B.2a) Gassâs rode

into Taghlib's homestead, went to Zîr's palace and took the horse. Yamamah informed her paternal uncle, Zîr, (IV.B.2b) who had been away on a hunt. (IV.B.3) Zîr had his brother ^cAdiyy disguise himself as a poor horsetrainer (claiming to hail from Upper Egypt) and get into Gassâs' service, then ride the horse back, as they waited in ambush for Gassâs and his men. The horse was regained. Gassâs suffered heavy losses and Zîr returned home triumphantly.

C. (pp. 79-80)

Zîr's mother asked him to stop the war against Murrah's people but he, respectfully, (IV.C.1) pledged never to reconcile with them until Kulaib was brought back to life. The war went on.

D. (pp. 80-82)

Gassâs and his people deliberated on how to stop the conflict, especially since Zîr would not accept bloodprice and insists on/(*qa-sâs*)⁷¹. It was agreed that a poor man be paid to hide in Kulaib's grave. When Zîr saw it was his custom would ask his slain brother whether he has had enough revenge, the impostor should reply, "Yes!"⁷² The trick was discovered, and the impostor was about to be slain. (IV.D.1) He, however, declared that he was under the protection of Kulaib, thus his life was spared, and he was also given a gift⁷³.

E. (pp. 82-88)

Consequently, Gassâs and his people decided to seek the aid of alRu^caini, the King of Ethiopia, who also was the son of Hassân's sister. (IV.E.1) Gassâs took along his sister Galîlah so that she might intercede on their behalf. Only one brother, Shâlîsh, who had been friends with Zîr, remained home. Ru^caini accused his guests of being treacherous and of having killed his maternal uncle Hassân; he ordered them seized and threatened to kill them.⁷⁴ Galîlah approached; he became interested in her (IV.E.2) Due to her plea and beauty, Ru^caini not only spared their lives but decided to join their camp as well [45]. An army was mobilized, and the two allies traveled north. (IV.E.3a) Zîr who had been informed of the plan by Gassâs' own brother, Shâlîsh⁷⁵ knew what to do. (IV.E.3b) He disguised himself as a wandering poet and presented himself to Ru^caini. (IV.E.3c) At his wife's behest, Ru^caini-

⁶⁶ On the image of Yamamah lamenting (p. 66) see, Mot., P0681.1.1.2.0.1\$, Mourning: disheveled appearance; P0681.1.1.2.1\$, Mourning: baring head (face) in public.

[The present writer owes the late Professor Louis Awad knowledge of his book on ez-Zîr and the comparing Yamamah's mourning to a Shakespearean counterpart. Regrettably, all his/my attempts to find a reference to that book failed. Awad's book proved irretrievable].

⁶⁷ Mot., P0525.3.1.1\$, Plea for vendettist to be. Relative(s) of murdered person wail(s) for vengeance. (Usually showing evidence of crime: corpse, bloody garment, or the like).

⁶⁸ Mot., Z0071.5.9\$, Seven lean years.

⁶⁹ Mot., V0515.2, Allegorical visions--political. [General]. (p. 75).

⁷⁰ Mot., E0760, Life index. Object or animal has mystic connection with person. Changes in one correspond to changes in the other; Mot., E0768.1\$, Person's wellbeing (fortunes) bound up with that of a horse; Z0143.4\$, Blackness as symbol of (physical) strength.

⁷¹ Mot., P0535.4\$, Refusal to accept blood price. Vendettist insists on "a life for a life" (*qasâs*).

⁷² Mot., K0451.6\$, Confederate hidden in grave answers for the deceased.

⁷³ Mot., P0305.1\$, The rights of neighbor; W0014.0.3\$, Protection given to fugitive who asks for it ('*istijârah*/'*ijârah*). (Protector imperils self); W0011.5, Generosity toward enemy; W0011.5.0.3\$, Forgiveness as personal virtue.

⁷⁴ Mot., K2294.2\$, Treacherous host: imprisons guest (keeps guest as captive); P0253.8, Clever sister saves life of brother; F0575.1.6.5.1\$, Beauty as intercessor; T0009.1\$, The power of sex: female's influence.

⁷⁵ Mot., P0251.5.3.9.2\$, Brother betrays brother's secret(s).

⁷⁶ Mot., W0166.2\$, Bragging: false self-aggrandizement (boasting). P0427, Druid (poet, learned man).

asked for a praise poem. Zîr chanted a poem in which he referred to himself as a 'man of letters' (*'adîb*).⁷⁶

Chapter 6 (pp. 87-102)

(IV.E.3d) After finishing, Zîr slew Ru^caini and caused the two allies to fight each other in the darkness of the night. Zîr and his people finished the task of defeating the allies. (IV.E.3e) Ru^caini's brother: Ghat-tâs,⁷⁷ the army general, was also killed.

F. (p. 88)

Zîr managed to coerce a neutral tribe into joining his camp by another bloody trick. He attacked a third party and smuggled the corpses of the slain into the campsite of the neutral tribe; it sought safety by joining Zîr.⁷⁸ Thus "no Arab tribe of that era remained not engulfed in war and humiliation."

G. (pp. 89-92)

In tears Gassâs begged Nu^zmân the monk to use his influence with Zîr to obtain a truce. Zîr agreed and (IV.G.1) went back to drinking, eating, listening to music, and "talking love at" women.⁷⁹ As Zîr was alone in the tent, and drunk (IV.G.2) Sultân and 3,000 of Gassâs' men took him by surprise, tied him up and struck him repeatedly with swords.⁸⁰ (IV.G.2a) They put him in a buffalohide and took him to his sister 'Asmâ' so that she might get even with the killer of her son, Shaybân. She pretended to be pleased and promised to burn him. They left. Zîr, on the verge of death, opened his eyes and asked his sister to put him in a trunk, cover it with tar and throw it into the sea.⁸¹ He told her that she was like a lioness, and he was like a lion. (IV.G.2b) She did as he asked.

H. (pp. 92-93)

When the news of Zîr's death reached "BaniQays" [i.e., BaniTaghlib] they realized that they could not win. They went to Prince Gassâs and asked him to grant them safety; he did. (IV.H.1) As for the few warriors who remained with Zîr's brothers, they were quickly defeated and robbed of their property; they lived under the conditions that they were not to light a fire nor were they to ride horseback. Thus, Gassâs became the uncontested ruler.

I. (pp. 93-102)

As for Zîr, the sea waves carried the trunk containing his body to the city of Beirut "then named alKhaybariyya" which was ruled by a Jewish king named Ḥakmûn. (IV.J.1) Eight fishermen found the trunk and thought it contained a treasure. Out of greed they killed one another; only one remained.⁸² King Ḥakmûn happened to be at the seashore and saved Zîr's body. (IV.J.2) Ḥakmûn's clever doctor healed him. When Zîr was asked who he was and what had caused his wounds, he first claimed that he was a horsetrainer in some king's stables and that the other three trainers tried to kill him due to jealousy. He later claimed that he was bitten by a horse. (IV.J.3) King Ḥakmûn was angered by the lies and ordered him killed but due to the interceding of the notables, Zîr was only put in prison. There he harassed the other prisoners and ate their food. He ended up, however, working as a horsetrainer in Ḥakmûn's stables. (IV.J.4) He selected a unique mare and took it to the seashore where a stallion from the sea impregnated it. It gave birth to a perfect 'deepblack' (*'adham*) colt (*mohr*); he called it alAkhrag.⁸³ The following year it gave birth to another which he called AbuḤiglân. (IV.J.5) It happened that King Bergîs the Crusader/ (as-Salîbî, lit.: "of the Cross"), waged war against Ḥakmûn the Jew for not paying the war tax.⁸⁴ Battles were fought while Jewish rabbis chanted/recited the *Tawrâh* and the *Talmûd* and the Christian clergy chanted/recited the Book of Psalms (*Zabûr*) and the "Bible" ('Injîl, 'Injîl, i.e., The New Testament).⁸⁵ The Christians won repeatedly. Zîr watched from his place in the stables as he rode the fence as if it were a horse, and yelled war cries encouraging the Jews not to be defeated. (IV.J.5a) Ḥakmûn's beautiful daughter, Estîr [Esther?], saw Zîr's action and informed her father. He persuaded Zîr to join the battle. Using Ḥakmûn's war gear, and thinking of his slain brother Kulaib, Zîr charged at the Christian army, slaying great many of their heroes. (IV.J.5b) The war ended quickly when Bergîs realized that his losses were too great and that he could not win; (IV.J.5c) Bergîs and Ḥakmûn each lost his own brother in that war. (IV.J.5d) The two sides reached an agreement in which Ḥakmûn continued to pay the war tax and Bergîs departed with his army.⁸⁶ (IV.J.6) Ḥakmûn told Zîr that he had become like a son to him, and asked him to name his own reward. Zîr asked for the sword, shield, and al-Akhrag (the supernatural *mohr*/stallion). He received all three. (IV.J.6a) Zîr left by sea for Ḥaifa and disembarked there but asked the ship's captain to keep the stallion on board and await his return to get it back. (IV.J.6b) He wandered incognito through the area and came across a prince from his own

⁷⁷ The name Ghattâs is typical Arab Christian, probably: Augustus.

⁷⁸ Mot., K2150, Innocent made to appear guilty; K2154\$/cf., Hero masks as his enemies and attacks neutral parties, thus drawing them into war on/[to] his side.

⁷⁹ Mot., P0807.1.4\$, Listening to music as recreation (pastime). (see Mot., T0014.5\$, taghazzul (speaking love at someone), above).

⁸⁰ Mot., R0004, Surprise capture; K2360\$, Surprise attack ('treacherous' invasion).

⁸¹ Mot., P0253.3.2\$, Sister favors her brother over her own son; E0125.2, Resuscitation by sister(s). Tale-type, AaTh, 0318B\$/cf., Murdered Person (Lover, Husband, Brother) Brought Back to Life through Repeated Reincarnations (Transformations).

AaTh, 0315, The Faithless Sister. [Treacherous sister conspires with paramour against her brother].

⁸² Mot., K1685\$/cf., The treasure finders who murder one another. =Tale-type/Aa-Th, 0763.

⁸³ B0184.1.3, Magic horse from water world; B0184.1.3.1\$, Magic horse from water world mates with ordinary mare: hybrid offspring with marvelous qualities; F0989.17, Marvelously swift horse. Imâm Ali's stallion "al-Maymûn"; see El-Shamy (1980), Egypt, p. 154.

⁸⁴ Mot., P0531.1.1.1\$, Tribute imposed by victor tribe (nation) on loser.

⁸⁵ Mot., V0052, Miraculous power of prayer; V0090.0.2\$, Miraculous power of uttering God's words (holy text).

⁸⁶ Mot., P0201.3\$, Accommodation ('detente') possible between warring non Arabs, but impossible between feuding Arab cousins (brothers). Also, J0811\$/cf., Wisdom of concessions to power.

vanquished and impoverished people/tribe. "When... [that prince] came closer...

Chapter 7, (pp. 102-118)

And Zîr [was able] to look at him ..., "the prince told Zîr about the sad state of their defeated tribe.

J. (pp. 103-117)

Zîr mobilized the Taghlibites for renewed war; (IV.K.1) he and a friend went to Gassâs and sat with other guests at his table. (IV.K.1a) A geomancer told Gassâs that inauspicious times were approaching; he was frightened and went into the harem, thus unwittingly saving his own life. Zîr left and went home. He entered the tent where Kulaib's daughters were and found them still in mourning. (IV.K.2) Zîr identified himself to Yamâmah; she and her sisters hugged and kissed their paternaluncle⁸⁷. He told them his story and that he had been gone for eight years. (IV.K.3) Meanwhile, Murrah, Gassâs' father, came upon the strange ship and noticed the stallion as he promenaded in the harbor. He coerced the captain into selling him the animal. When Zîr learned of this act, he was infuriated but did not harm the captain for the sake of his master (i.e., Ḥakmûn). He went back to King Ḥakmûn and asked for and was given the second supernatural stallion, AbuḤiglân. War was renewed. (IV.K.4) In a duel Zîr slew "Shâwîsh" [i.e., Shâlîsh],⁸⁸ Gassâs' brother. (IV.K.5) Sultân suggested that they take their sister Galîlah and some other wives of the tribe's (Bakr) notables and go plead with Zîr and make the offer that Zîr would be given whatever he may demand as Kulaib's bloodprice, be installed King of *EshShâm* countries, and receive wartax every year. (IV.K.5a) Zîr received the delegation of women which was headed by Prince Sultân and listened to their appeals and offer. He addressed Sultân, stating that if Yamâmah, "the daughter of your sister" [who was also Kulaib's and Galîlah's eldest daughter] forgave them, he [Zîr] would do the same. (IV.K.5b) Galîlah went to see her daughters and kissed them [but evidently, they did not kiss her]; she pleaded with Yamâmahher eldestto put an end to the bloodshed [46]. (IV.K.5c) Yamâmah rejected

her mother's plea, stating: "Galîlah [...], you and my maternaluncles [...] killed Kulaib, my father." She also declared that she would not accept reconciliation until her father came back to life. Galîlah and the rest of the delegation returned home emptyhanded. The war _is resumed. (IV.K.6) Sultân, "who was sly" devised a strategy to get rid of Zîr: dig deep pits and cover them with straw, and then lure Zîr in their direction; when Zîr falls they would fill the pits with stones, thus burying him. The plan almost worked, but due to the wonderhorse AbuḤiglân, Zîr was able to leap out a number of times.⁸⁹ Finally the horse was exhausted but (IV.K.6a) ḷAdiyy threw Murrah [Gassâs' father] down the pit shouting, "Zîr; take your paternaluncle." Zîr slew Murrah and once more the Bakrites lost. (IV.K.7) Another truce was agreed upon. (IV.K.7a) A man gave Zîr a noble colt which was deepblack (*'adham*); (IV.K.7b) that same day Zîr saw an `old man riding an animal `as black as night' accompanied by a strong, brisk but common foal. Zîr bought that common foal and had both young animals raised. Four years later when he tried to ride the common horse it refused to obey his commands; Zîr spurred it hard but the foal kicked him so hard that he broke wind. (IV.K.7b1) Zîr struck the animal with his sword and killed it; he then declared, "I have tried the one with lowly origin and have been generous to him [i.e., it] but my deeds [in his behalf] were lost on him." The noble animal performed wondrously well. Zîr declared, "Only an ass would possess an ass."⁹⁰

K. (pp. 117-125)

War resumed and the Bakrites were reduced to a weak few. One day, however, Prince Shaybûn, elder son of Hammâmwho had left to fight the Romans(*ar-Rûm*) during the period of Zîr's presumed death-returned accompanied by one thousand fighters. Gassâs informed Shaybûn that Zîr had slain most of their men and still refused to accept bloodprice or sacrifice. Shaybûn became angry, cursed his maternaluncle(*khâl*) Zîr, and wrote him a letter by way of "blame and threat," challenging him to a duel. Zîr read the letter and felt sorry for him and wrote back a poem stating:

⁸⁷ P0298.1\$, Brother's daughter (paternal niece). P0293.6.2\$, Kind ḷamm (father's brother, paternal-uncle).

⁸⁸ This error seems to be a misprint: the word "shâwîsh" denotes a `sergeant' and is also a current common proper last name; the name "Shâlîsh" may be a distorted related to "Shalash": a last name infrequently encountered in contemporary Egyptian culture.

⁸⁹ Mot., F0989.1.1, Horse's tremendous leap; K0735, Capture in pitfall.

⁹⁰ Mot., J1908.5.1\$, Parallelism. U1221.0.3\$/cf., Like father, like son. Mot., S0481, Cruelty to animals; K2105\$, Innocent accused of acting in accordance with benign habitual nature. J1352, Person calls another an ass; U0129.0.2.2\$, Common animal (colt) raised with thoroughbred retains lowly qualities; S0481.4\$, Animal cruelly killed (in a fit of anger).

Chapter 8 (pp. 119-135)

"Shaybûn, O young man, son of my sister Dîbâ^can ∴ O lad, you threaten me in your letter[!] [...]

Dismiss Satan, the accursed Eblis, ∴ O vigorous one, heed the words of your maternal uncle."⁹¹ Shaybûn persisted and the two met in the arena. (IV.L1) Zîr tried hard not to injure him "for the sake of his parents," but was ultimately forced to slay his nephew in order to save himself. (IV.L.1a) He then chanted, "Fool is he who would raise an ass."⁹² Non the less, Zîr was truly sorry. (IV.L.2) The following day the grieved Hammâm veiled his face and challenged Zîr to a duel. Zîr had to strike down the veiled warrior to save himself. (IV.L.2a) Upon discovering his identity, Zîr reminded the dying Hammâm that they had pledged not to fight each other. (IV.L.2b) Hammâm answered that it was a matter of fate and asked that he be considered Kulaib's blood-price. (IV.L.2c) Zîr, though feeling miserable, refused and pledged to continue the war until all men and young boys in BaniBakr were finished off. (IV.L.2d) Having lost her two sons and her husband, Asmâ', Zîr's sister, was devastated. She went to Zîr and called him the "most wicked" and "ungrateful." He, however, welcomed her, displayed airs of⁹³ sorrow and sadness, apologized for what he had done and ordered her to reside at his palace. (IV.L.2e) She "obeyed" his command and "lived" in her brother's house.⁹⁴ (IV.L.3) When Bakr's losses of men killed and [women] captured became unbearable, Gassâs resorted to a valiant warrior named alFand IbnSahl from the people of Yamâmah [in Yemen?]. (IV.L.3a) He devised a plot: Gassâs' men would shave their heads as a distinguishing mark; they would take their women along to the battlefield, bearing jars of cool water. When any warrior felt exhausted, he would seek their water and the women would then beat to death those with unshaven heads. The plot worked; (IV.L.3b) only one short and ugly man from BaniBakr who had begged to be exempt from shaving his head in order not to become uglier was killed by mistake. The Taghlibites were defeated and Zîr lost one of his best friends, "Imru' al-Qays Ibn Iyân."⁹⁵ The Bakrites returned home happy

and hopeful.

[Phase V]

A. (pp. 125-130)

(V.A.1) When Kulaib was killed, Zîr evicted Galîlah to "her father's home." (See: III.H.2b) She was pregnant; she lived at the home of "her brother Gassâs." (V.A.1a) She gave birth to a baby boy whom she named alHagras (i.e., "Hunter's dog");⁹⁶ others nicknamed him alGarw (*Jarw*, i.e., the whelp). He grew up among his maternal uncles; (*akhwâl* (MoBrS) (V.A.1b) he loved them, especially Gassâs and called him "father."⁹⁷ (V.A.1c) When he reached adolescence Gassâs observed how courageous he had become and became afraid of him. (V.A.1d) One day Hagras and 'Agîb, Gassâs' son, had a conflict as Hagras won in a mock combat. (V.A.2) 'Agîb reproached him as being an enemy [with a pun about his being a Kulaib's (i.e., a little dog's) son, [thus being a dog himself];⁹⁸ (V.A.2a) and stated that had it not been for his own paternal aunt / ('ammah (FaSi), [i.e. Hagras' mother] he would have cut off his head. Sulţân sided with his brother's son. (V.A.2b) Hagras wept and told his mother that they must leave. She was distraught but agreed; they departed secretly by night. On the road, Hagras met an elderly sheik and asked for his hospitality. The sheik granted it immediately. (V.A.3) He turned out to be Mungid IbnWâ'il, one of the four brothers of the wife of King Rabî'ah whom Hassân had hanged. (V.A.3a) Kulaib had loathed his maternal uncles and had killed three of them. Sheik Mungid had taken refuge from Kulaib at the outskirts of Arab lands. Galîlah realized that their host could potentially be her son's mortal enemy and asked him to use only his nickname, Garw (Nickname, *Garw*/whelp. Shortly, some Arab tribes raided Mungid's camp; Hagras saved the sheik's people from defeat. Mungid asked him publicly about his descent. (V.A.4) Hagras told him, "My name is The Orphan," and that his mother had told him that his father is Shâlîsh IbnMurrâh [i.e., her own brother]⁹⁹ whom Zîr had killed. (V.A.4a) Thus Mungid recognized Hagras as an ally and a kinsman, installed him as king and gave him his daughter, Badr Bâsim, for a wife.¹⁰⁰

⁹¹ ghlâm may also designate "Boy", in a belittling manner. *yâ fatâ yâ Shaybûn ya ibn 'ukhtî DîbâCan ∴ tuhaddidunî fî kitâbika yâ ghlâm* \itrud ash shaytân lbîs al laCîn, ∴ wa intasih min qawî khâlika yâ ghlâm.

⁹² Mot., P0796.6.1\$, Duel (with arms) to settle dispute; P0297.2.3.1\$, Maternal-uncle slays his sister's son for siding with own father (sister's husband) in feud. The implication is that the nephew is an "ass" and his parents are fools. Fool is he who would raise an ass, Mot., Z0002\$, Parallelism (as formula). Also see Mot., J1908.5.1\$, Common foal trained to behave (perform) like thoroughbred: failure...

⁹³ K2098.2\$, Pretended sorrow (regret, remorse). 'azhara, lit.: made visible, displayed, i.e., feigned.

⁹⁴ Mot., T0198\$, Return to parents' (father's) home after end of marital relations (divorce, or death of spouse). P0200.0.1.3\$, Eldest son succeeds father as family head; Asmâ' "obeyed" his command and "lived" in her brother's/Zîr's household.

⁹⁵ The author's/editor's knowledge of classical Arabic literature is displayed here: "he is other than Imri' al-Qays the well known poet." p. 125. The latter being one of the foremost Pre-Islamic Yemeni poets.

⁹⁶ In contemporary Egyptian folk culture, "Hagras" appears as a proper name; yet its association with the dog is unknown.

⁹⁷ Mot., P0297.2.2\$, 'A maternal uncle is a father [to his sister's child] (*el khâl wâlid*). Hagras called his maternal-uncle "father".

⁹⁸ Mot., Z0084.0.1.1.1\$, Insult: "Son/daughter of a dog (bitch)"; Z0095\$, Puns (homophony).

⁹⁹ Mot., P0297.2.2.1\$, Mother leads her orphaned son to believe that his deceased father was her brother.

¹⁰⁰ Mot., P0234.5\$, Father uses daughter(s) to form alliance(s).

B. (pp. 130-132)

As for Gassâs, he would think nostalgically of his departed sister. (V.B.1) One day a poet named Gâbir came asking for a gift in order to feed his own sister and her seven orphan children. (V.B.1a). At Sultân's suggestion, Gassâs asked the poet to locate Galîlah and her son; the poet did. Sultân rode out, met with them, apologized for his actions and begged them to return. Hagraş agreed and left with his wife and belongings. (V.B.2) [In accordance with Galîlah's claim that Shâlîsh was the father of her son], Gassâs told Hagraş that (V.B.2a) it was Zîr who had slain his father and that he should kill Zîr to avenge himself and clear away the shame.¹⁰¹ Hagraş smiled and told his maternaluncle not to worry.

C. (pp. 132-138)

(V.C.1) Meanwhile, Zîr saw his brother Kulaib in a dream in which Kulaib reproached him for not having killed Gassâs. [Evidently Zîr spoke aloud as he dreamed] and awakened his nieces who, in turn, woke him up. (V.C.1a) A geomancer interpreted the dream; he congratulated Zîr and assured him that Gassâs will be killed at the hands of a person from Zîr's own flesh and blood who will be turning up soon. Zîr was pleased and hopeful. (V.C.2) The following day the two camps went to war, but Hagraş did not join in. Gassâs asked Galîlah for the reason; she in turn asked her son. He told her that he needed his maternaluncle's stallion (alAkhrag) and promised to bring Zîr's head in return. Gassâs granted him the horse and promised to install him king if he killed that "devil." (V.C.3) The following morning the two camps faced each other once more. Zîr challenged his opponents to a duel and Hagraş emerged. (V.C.3a) Zîr's heart immediately felt for/ (sympathized toward) the young challenger, and he could not bring himself to hurt him. In the evening Zîr told Yamâmah, Hagraş' sister, about the resemblance between the lad and their slain father and asked Yamâmah whether her mother was pregnant when she was evicted. She informed him that her mother was indeed pregnant and that she did not know whether she begot a boy or a girl. (V.C.3b)

She also told him about a test her father, Kulaib, had taught her two months before his death because she would need it in case a child of his "turned up." The test was to throw three apples at the person concerned while he was fully armed and mounted on horseback; the first apple he should crush with his foot; the second, he should catch on the tip of his spear; the third, he should put in his pocket.¹⁰²

CHAPTER 9, (pp. 136-151)

(V.C.3c) The following day Yamâmah emerged for the duel with Hagraş. She threw the apples at Hagraş; he [intuitively] reacted exactly as Kulaib had predicted. (V.C.3d) She realized that he was her brother; she dismounted and threw herself at him. She told him that he was Kulaib's son but had been raised at the home of the "enemies" (*al-şidâ*). He replied that he was Shâlîsh's son; she repeated her explanation. Hagraş became convinced [that she was right] (V.C.3e) because "his heart did not feel [any affection] for Gassâs or anyone else in BaniMurrâh," and his heart went out to Yamâmah.¹⁰³ Secretly, he told her that he believed her and that he would join them later. (V.C.3f) Hagraş threatened his mother with death if she did not tell him the truth about himself. She did. (V.C.3g) During the night Hagraş visited Zîr's camp accompanied by a male slave sent to him by Zîr. The slave showed Hagraş his father's shrine and palace; Hagraş wept. He pledged to Zîr that he must slay Gassâs for having deprived him [i.e., Hagraş] of his father and for rendering him an orphan. (V.C.3h) Zîr declared his pleasure and asked Hagraş to sit on his father's fibret (i.e., throne) and look into the matters of his brethren.¹⁰⁴

D. (p. 138)

Zîr asked his "brother's son" what should be done. (V.D.1) Hagraş proposed that he would stage a mock raid against Zîr's homestead and ride away with their animals, give them to Gassâs and promise him Zîr's head the following day. (V.D.1aV.F.2) He instructed Zîr to place a waterskin filled with blood under his clothes; Hagraş would stab the skin and Zîr would pretend to be wounded.¹⁰⁵ Hagraş would call on Gassâs to finish Zîr off, and Zîr would slay Gassâs.

¹⁰¹ Mot., P0525.3.1.1\$, Plea for vendettist to be. Relative(s) of murdered person wail(s) for vengeance. (Usually showing evidence of crime: corpse, bloody garment, or the like). The word *şâr* signifies public "disgrace/dishonor".

¹⁰² Mot., H0486, Test of paternity; H0316, /cf. Suitor test: apple thrown to princess's choice.

¹⁰³ Mot., H0175, Recognition by force of nature. Unknown member of family immediately and magically [(mystically)] recognized; H0175.7\$/cf., Blood relative mystically recognized: 'Blood's yearning,' 'Blood's howling'. [i.e., Recognition by force of nature].

¹⁰⁴ Mot., P0017.0.2, Son succeeds father as king; P0200.0.1.3.1\$, Elder brother as head of family: younger siblings are in his charge. *ikhwât*, i.e., sisters, or brothers.

¹⁰⁵ Mot., K1876\$, Staged falling in combat (or murder): sham blood from hidden bag (waterskin); K1875, Deception by sham blood. [By stabbing bag of blood, trickster makes dupe think that he is bleeding]; K0911/cf., Feigning death to kill enemy.

E. (pp. 139-140)

Meanwhile, Gassâs saw in a dream that he had raised a wolf's whelp,¹⁰⁶ and that he loved that puppy. But when it grew up it befriended a lion; the lion raided their home and attacked their women and children aided by the wolf. (V.E.1) Gassâs was horrified but his brothers and the other notables assured him that the dream was only a meaningless bad dream.¹⁰⁷ (V.E.1a) He rode out for combat the following day. The plan devised Hagra and Zîr was executed, and Zîr dropped himself on the ground pretending to be wounded. (V.E.2) Hagra called on his maternaluncle to come and cut off the head of the enemy. As Gassâs tried to do so, Zîr grabbed him by the beard while Hagra poised his spear onto the middle of Gassâs' shoulders. Gassâs appealed for mercy and forgiveness and Hagra replied. (V.E.2a) Zîr intervened saying, "I see that you have gotten into a lengthy talk and reconciliatory reprimand."¹⁰⁸ (V.E.2b) Garw/Hagra then drove his spear into his maternaluncle and Zîr chopped off his head. (V.E.2c). Zîr sucked off Gassâs' blood while Hagra bit off chunks of his flesh until he quenched [the fire in] in his heart¹⁰⁹ BaniMurrah were defeated and most of their notables killed.

F. (p. 140)

(V.F.1) As for those who surrendered and sought Zîr's protection, he "forgave" them on the condition that they would become like slaves, carry no weapons, attend no wars, light no fires by day or night, have no markers on their graves, wander in the wilderness and spend their lives playing the drums and blowing the pipes [i.e., playing music], and if their women were to be gone all day long, they would not to ask them: "Where were you?" but rather "What did you bring back?" and to have no character to them except dancing and moral depravity.¹¹⁰ They consented to these terms.

G. (pp. 140-141)

Kulaib's daughters took off their black garments [thus signaling the end of their mourning]. (V.G.1) Meanwhile, Garw/Hagra had married three girls and begot two sons, Mâlik and Taghlib (V.G.1a)

whom he married to two fullsisters, daughters of Prince Hilâl, Governor of Hama. (V.G.1b) He also married his eldest sister, Yamâmah, to Prince Muflih, the son of Prince Hilâl [and brother of the wives of Mâlik and Taghlib]. (V.G.1c) Zîr refused to marry and spent all his time sitting in tents eating and drinking. Due to habit, he wore his combat gear even during his sleep. (V.G.1d) The war lasted for "forty years and a fragment," according to "that which is cited in history [sources]."¹¹¹

[SEQUEL]

A. (p. 141)

Garw/ Hagra married off four of his younger sisters to princes.

B. (p. 141)

His two sons Mâlik and Taghlib were childless. (VI.B.1) They wished to go and live with the father of their wives; Hagra gave them permission to do so, and they had a happy stay with them in-laws. (VI.B.1a) "But when...Mâlik and Taghlib [became] determined to return to their homestead, Prince Muflih [their brotherinlaw], along with his father died, (VI.B.1b) so they stayed to govern" (VI.B.1c) After the death of her husband, Muflih, Yamâmah returned to her family [i.e., to Hagra].

C. (pp. 141-42)

Mâlik and Taghlib prayed for offspring; Mâlik begot a daughter and named her Mayy; on the same day Taghlib begot a son whom he named: alAwce/(Aws); (VI.C.2) the two brothers pledged to marry the girl to the boy.

D. (pp. 142-43)

(VI.D.1) Taghlib died and Garw/Hagra instructed Mâlik to [still] marry his daughter Mayy to Awce. Mâlik raised his son and his brother's daughter with great care, "as instructed by 'his eminence,'¹¹² his father." (VI.D.2) Awce loved Mayy; they were "as if two souls in one body [error: i.e., one soul in two bodies]." News of their love traveled.

¹⁰⁶ Mot., V0515.2.1.1.1\$, Vision in which chieftain (king) sees wolf's whelp raised by him join a lion and both attack his people. The whelp is the son of the chieftain's sister, who allies himself with his paternal uncle.

¹⁰⁷ Mot., D1812.5.1.2, Bad dream as evil omen.; G0302.9.6, Demons fool men in their dreams. [(‘adghâthu ‘ahlâm)].

¹⁰⁸ Mot., P0795.0.1.1\$, Reconciliatory reprimand (ġitâb) among friends and lovers. (Complaining and seeking redress without offending).

¹⁰⁹ Mot., G0090\$, Ghoulish revenge: vendettist eats flesh (drinks blood) of slain enemy.

¹¹⁰ Mot., P0736.1\$/cf., Characteristic behavior of Gypsies; W0256.1.1\$, Ethnic (national) slur. khalâġah (lasciviousness, licentiousness).

¹¹¹ Mot., Z0071.12.1\$, War for forty years.

¹¹² Mot., Z0067.0.2\$, Aggrandizement: to be addressed indirectly via one's 'presence' (hadrah), 'highness' (rifġah), or the like. = ganâb: typically applied to a non native dignitary.

E. (pp. 143-149)

(VI.E.1) In Yemen, King AlSindîd IbnalAkwa^c, the paternaluncle/ (ibn ^cam (FaBrSo) of King Hassân, heard of Mayy and fell in love with her. (VI.E.1a) He sent his vizier to ask for her hand in marriage. Her father refused since she was engaged and about to be married. (VI.E.2) Sindîd disguised himself and traveled to Mâlik's camp. He kidnaped Mayy and took her to his country to marry her "legitimately." (VI.E.3) He claimed to his people that he had killed Mâlik and Awce. (VI.E.3a) Mayy declared that he was a liar and refused to give in to him. Sindîd hit her and was about to slay her, but the notables interfered and got him to change his mind. (VI.E.3b) Sindîd handed Mayy to his heartless and cruel jailer to hand over to his wife so that she would torture her. The jailer's wife, however, was compassionate and only pretended to be lashing her with a whip. (VI.E.4) Meanwhile, Awce set out alone to rescue Mayy. (VI.E.4a) On his way he was challenged to a duel by a warrior named Ghamrah IbnGamrah; he slew the challenger. (VI.E.4b) He also heard of [the heropoets] ^cAntar [IbnShaddâd] and ^cAmr Ibn Ma^cdikarib. (VI.E.4c) He met Sindîd's shepherds, and they told him about their master's pretty captive, Mayy. (VI.E.5a) It happened that Sa^cd, the son of the sister of Sindîd, arrived and learned of Awce's identity and purpose. He returned to his maternaluncle/ (*khâl*, (MoBr), and told him, (VI.E.5b) but his maternaluncle cursed him and ordered him to kill that "vagabond." (VI.E.5c) Awce, however, slew Sa^cd. (VI.E.6a) Sindîd, furious, went to confront Awce, but Awce wounded him in a duel. (VI.E.6b) He ran away and hid in the women's quarters. (VI.E.6c) His wife, Si^cdah¹¹³ reproached him and twitted him for being a coward. (VI.E.6d) He asked her to go out and give back Awce his paternal she cousin. / ((*ibn c*amm (FaBrDa). She asked Awce for forgiveness. (VI.E.7) He took Mayy and headed home to his paternaluncle /;amm (FaBr) Mâlik.

F. (p. 149)

(VI.F.1a) Awce and Mayy got married. (VI.F.1b) She gave birth to a boy whom he named Mâlik [Jr].

G. (pp. 149-150)

Mâlik [the elder; erroneously cited as Awce],¹¹⁴ became ill and died. Awce sent the news to his "[paternal] grandfather" ([i.e., Garw/

Hagras]. (VI.G.2) Yamâmah asked her brother Hagras to bring his grandson, Awce to live with them. The family was brought together again.

H. (pp. 150-151)

As for Zîr, he continued to eat, drink, and wear his combat gear until he became senile. "The daughters of his brother" looked after him. He told Hagras that he was getting lonesome and asked to be sent throughout the lands for a recreational travel. (VI.H.2a) In Upper Egypt, the two slaves who accompanied Zîr grew tired of him and decided to kill him; he sensed their intention and asked only that they convey his will to his people. The will consisted of one verseline. (VI.H.2b) When they repeated the verse to Hagras he found it meaningless.¹¹⁵ (VI.H.2c) He consulted his sister. She realized that the verse was actually two halves (hemstitches) of two verse lines; the missing halves specified that the slaves killed Zîr and that they should be executed. (VI.H.2d) The two slaves confessed and were executed.¹¹⁶ (VI.H.3) "Thus Zîr's life came to an end; he took his revenge during his lifetime and after he had died as well."¹¹⁷

[ADDENDUM]

I. (P. 151)

(VI.I.1) Awce's wife [Mayy] gave birth to a boy, ^cÂmir. (VI.I.2) He married a woman from among the '*ashrâf*' (descendants of the Prophet, Honorables, nobles).¹¹⁸ (VI.2a) She gave birth to a baby boy on the same night that Hagras died;¹¹⁹ [before his death] Hagras named the boy Hilâl (He is the grandfather of BaniHilâl). (VI.I.2b) He married a beautiful woman; she gave birth to a boy named alMundhir. (VI.I.2c) One day Hilâl visited Mecca during the time "The Chosen Prophet [i.e., Muhammad] has emerged [with the new Religion of Islam]." He and his men fought on the Prophet's side. (VI.I.3a) Fâtimah *azzahrâ'*,¹²⁰ [the Prophet's daughter], wandered once into a battle involving Hilâl and his men. She spurred her camel in order to leave the arena, but the camel went astray and roamed in the wilderness; she wished them [the Hilalites] a similar fate,¹²¹ but her father (The Prophet) asked her to pray for their victory. She did. Fâtimah's [two] prayers were answered "for the duration of time" [i.e., forever]: (VI.I.3b) [Thus] the Hilâlites were dispersed, and they became victorious as well.¹²²

¹¹³ This name may also be: Sa^cdah or Su^cdah.

¹¹⁴ Mâlik [the elder, erroneously cited as Awce]

¹¹⁵ Mot., M0250.1\$, Deathbed wish: dying person (father, mother, husband, wife, etc.) makes a wish...

¹¹⁶ Mot., K0978.1.3\$, Faulty poem: when read correctly carries instructions to execute bearer for murder. = Tale-type, HeS, 0960D\$, Enigmatic Message Reveals Crime.

¹¹⁷ Mot., K0920\$, Posthumous murder (killing): one person arranges for another's death after he himself has died. Usually for revenge ('revenge from the grave').

¹¹⁸ Mot., P0070\$/cf., *ashrâf* (descendants of the Prophet, Honorables, nobles); T0101.1.1.0.1\$, Bride quality: descent (ancestry, 'asl).

¹¹⁹ Mot., T0589.5.1\$, New born child divine compensation (*c*awad/*c*iwad) for recently deceased relative...

¹²⁰ Mot., V0250.0.2\$, Fâtimah al zahrâ' (the bright blooming, i.e., the virgin) (a praise name: lit.: blooming, i.e., radiant) Burton, (1894/1983), Richard., (Vol. 8, pp. 251 52 note 1).

¹²¹ Mot., M0463.1\$, Curse on tribe: perpetual wandering.

¹²² Mot., V0059, Prayers answered miscellaneous. M0510\$, Supplication: success (victory).

“(The *qissah* of *ez-Zîr AbuLaylâ alMuhalhîl/al-Muhalhal* has been completed with the help of the Exalted God.)”

Analysis of Ez-Zîr Sâlim Sîrah

From the perspective of the composer(s)/performer(s) of Zîr's *sîrah*, the entire constellation of its events orbit kinship ties and the ideal roles ascribed to the various members of a kinship group. For the most, these familial links are perceived as contemporaneous with one another as in the cases of fatherson, husbandwife, brothersister, brotherbrother, nephewmother's brother relationships; these links may also be steeped in a remote legendary past which accounts for the origin of the entire Arab nation as branching out of four brothers.¹²³ Following the “Preface,” the *sîrah* or more accurately, its compilerportrays two separate yet interdependent situations. The first (I.A, I.C) comprises the two halves (moieties) of the northern Arabs, Rabîzah and his four sons and one daughter (plus other unspecified children)¹²⁴ on the one hand, and Murrah, his four sons and one daughter (plus other unspecified children)¹²⁵ on the other. For these two northern Arab (Qaysi) brothers, representing the ‘tribes’ of Taghlib and Bakr respectively, life was tranquil and prosperous. They interacted with each other amiably and their ‘brotherly’ ties were further strengthened through the marriage and promise of marriage between a son and the daughter of each of the two brothers (I.C). The story moves rapidly to present an opposite situation in the other half of the Arab nation. In the south, King Hassân ruled over Yemen. He was unlike his counterparts and ‘distant’ paternalcousins in the north; he was unjust, physically strong, and a true *zîr* (a womanizer, womanchaser)¹²⁶. His hunger for political power and military hegemony motivated him to invade the north (I.F). The military and political supremacy which Hassân attainedthrough temporaryset the stage for his attempt to achieve another type of supremacyto acquire the most beautiful Arab maiden. This event transforms the motivations for action from those based on political, military, and economic considerationswith remote fraternal notions (Preface, I.E.5a), into action which is predominantly familial, with some underlying political, economic, and military implications (II.A.I, III.B.3b)

Parents and Children

Father and Son

The *sîrah* begins with the presentation of “fathers” in their relationship to their children (Preface, I.C). With the advance of time the role of the fathers is eclipsed to a considerable extent by the roles of their sons: Rabîzah was unjustly killed (I.E.4) and Murrah abdicated willingly in favor of his son Gassâs (II.B.1). In their turn the sons became fathers. There is some elaboration on the roles of the fathers,

especially when compared to the roles of the mothers, which is non-existent. Yet, the fathers’ roles were restricted to two spheres: that of marrying off their sons or daughters to the proper partner/spouse (I.C, V.A.4a, VI.C.2, VI.D.1a) a function also performed by elder brothers (III.A.1a, VI.A) and that of engaging in major political and economic issues which affect the entire tribe (I.E.3, II.A, II.B.1, III.F.1). Only Murrah continued to play a significant role after his abdication and until his death in battle (IV.K.6a). True manifestation of love and affection by fathers towards their children is scarce and appears mainly as abstract expressions when a son (III.G.5d) or a father was killed (III.D.E).

Mother and Son

The role of mothers in the *sîrah* is hardly present. A mother's interaction with her son (or daughter) appears only twice. The scarcity of the occurrence of this role/theme corresponds to the near total absence of an active role for a mother (i.e., a woman) in her relationship with the father of her son (i.e., her own husband). The mother of Kulaib, Zîr,¹²⁸ and their other full brothers and one sister was mentioned only in passim. Significantly, she was not introduced in her capacity as the mother of her children, nor as the wife to her husband, but as the sister to her four brothers whom Hassân employed. (I.E.5a). Similarly, no mention whatsoever is made of the mother of Hammâm, Gassâs and the rest of their full brothers and one sister.¹²⁹ The absence of an active motherfigure on both sides constitutes a balance between the two patriarchal families of Rabîzah and of Murrah. The only time Zîr's mother was assigned a role in the action was when she met with him after he had won a battle (IV.C.1) against his paternal-cousins/ (*awlâ d'amm*); she requested that he spare the lives of the remaining people of BaniMurrah (i.e., the Bakrites). It should be remembered that she is also the mother of the slain Kulaib whom her son Zîr is professing to be avenging. Their meeting may be described, at the very most, as formal, polite, restrained, and nonrewarding. Zîr refused to grant her request and referred the matter to. After a warm welcome\reception from the daughters of Kulaib the text went as follows: Then his mother entered and kissed him between his eyes, congratulated him for that victory, and asked him to lift his ‘chopping sword’ off BaniMurrah. But he received her with [due] ‘respectful exaltation’/[*waqâr*/solemnity/lordliness] and consideration/[*l'tibâr*] and said to her, ‘By God, mother, I do not reconcile with them until [the dead] Kulaib comes back to life.’ (IV.C.1)¹³⁰ Then Zîr proceeded to chant a poem in which he reiterated his cold, respectful rejection of his mother's request; by contrast he heaped praise upon his niece (his deceased brother's daughter), Yamâmah, and asked her to tread with her foot on the shawl [of his turban], (an act of contempt),¹³¹ if he were to ever neglect avenging her father.

¹²³ Arab nation as branching out of four brothers: See Tale-types, A-T 0655, *The Wise Brothers. The king [(judge)] is bastard, and 0655A, The Strayed Camel and the Clever Deductions*. These Tale-types usually appear as episodes within the same story. A historical account from the Humran tribe of Sudan- whose name could mean “the reds” cites events from this narrative to explain the origin of their name, see al-Tayyib, (1970, p. 3). Mot., Z0019.3\$, Etiological tales: ‘That-is-why’-tales. For details, see, El-Sham (1980) *Folktales of Egypt*, No. 16, p. 266.

¹²⁴ (For the Rabîzah's other unspecified children), see note “\ (PP. 2 and 17) [Preface]”, above.

¹²⁵ (For these Murrah's other unspecified children, see note “I.B”, above)

¹²⁶ I.e., *zîr nisâ*, *zîr*. See, Mot., T0403\$, ‘Womanizer’, ‘play boy’ (*zîr nisâ*): habitual seducer of women; T0469\$/cf., Satyriasis: a man's abnormal and insatiable desire (appetite) for sex.

¹²⁷ Mot., W0179.1.2\$, Devastating praise praise--(‘kiss of death’): praising someone to his powerful nemesis so as to bring his [(he praised)] destruction.

¹²⁸ No mention of the mother of Kulaib, /Zîr.

¹²⁹ No mention of the mother of Hammâm,, Gassâs or of the rest of his brthren.

¹³⁰ Mot., Z0066.6.1\$, Endearment: to be kissed between the eyes; P0535.3\$, Excessive (absurd) demands made by injured party as price of ‘forgiveness’ in order to preclude reconciliation (p. 79).

Mother and Daughter

The role of a woman as a mother to her daughter, when compared to that of mother to son, is equally almost totally lacking. Except for a brief encounter between Galilah and her daughter Yamamah, the mother and daughter relationship is absent from Zîr's *sîrah* (cf., III.B.1). At the behest of her desperate brothers, Galilah and other Bakrite women went to plead with Zîr to stop the war; he stated that if Yamamah forgave them he would do the same. Galilah met her seven daughters for the first time since her eviction from her husband's home several years before. Galilah kissed her daughters but, evidently, they did not kiss her back. She pleaded with them to put an end to the killing, but Yamamah proved to be cold and unforgiving. Moreover, Yamamah left no doubt that she considered her mother whom she addressed only as "Galilah"¹³² and her maternal uncles to be full partners in the killing of her father, Kulaib, and emphatically dismissed Galilah's plea (IV.K.5.bc). Thus, Galilah's mediation in her role as mother to her daughters was a total failure. By contrast, Galilah was highly successful in her tactics as a fiancée to Kulaib (I.F.3) and as a sister to her brothers (IV.E.12). She was also partly successful as a wife in getting her husband to move against his youngest 'kiddbrother,' Zîr (II.C.2ah).

Husband And Wife

Numerous husband and wife relationships are cited throughout the *sîrah*; yet only those between Kulaib and Galilah, and—to a lesser extent—those between Hammâm and Asmâ', and between old woman Su'âd and her husband (III.A.1) received attention. The elaboration of the roles of Galilah and Asmâ' as wives is due mainly to the requirements of their roles as the sister of Gassâs and the sister of Zîr respectively. This is also the case with Su'âd, sister of King Hassân the Yemenite. All three couples started their married life with "love" and affection (I.C; I.G; III.A). These positive relations seemed to continue for numerous years into their marriage, especially since each of the three husbands viewed his paternal-cousin wife¹³³ as being "... from his own flesh and blood."¹³⁴ This bond is believed to ideally exist between close blood relatives, particularly between a father's brother's son and a father's brother's daughter. Su'âd's husband became blind; she assumed the rule of his kingdom and he was immediately dropped out of active action. The other two marriages, however, suffered serious

setbacks due to the intense strain placed on Galilah and Asmâ'; each of the two women had to play the conflicting roles¹³⁵ of a wife to her husband, and of a sister to her brother(s), (in addition to other roles such as being a mother). In both cases of the two women, the interests of the brother(s) ran against the interests of the husband. Invariably the woman sided with her brother(s).¹³⁶ Thus, Galilah, despite her "noble" character as a maiden, readily played a villainous and immoral role in order to save her brothers from the prophesied ill fate at the hands of Zîr; she did nothing to warn her husband that his death was approaching (II.C, etc.). Similarly, Asmâ' betrayed the trust of her husband's family by sparing the life of their mortal enemy and murderer of her own son, her brother Zîr; meanwhile, Su'âd dragged along her aging and blind husband in order to avenge her brother's death.¹³⁷

Negative patterns are consistently presented concerning a husband vis-à-vis his wife. A husband who 'obeys' or listens to his wife is bound for disaster:¹³⁸ Kulaib, in his futile attempts to have his brother Zîr killed (which did not succeed only due to Zîr's courage and strength) was driven by a nagging wife who appealed falsely to his sense of honor (II.C.1, II.C.2.III.C.2h); by saving her brother Zîr, Asmâ' brought disaster upon her husband's people; at his wife's behest, King Ru'aini asked for a praise poem at his wife's behest and relaxed his caution and lost his life as a consequence (IV.E. pp. 82-88). Perhaps the most helpful act which a wife performed for her husband in the entire *sîrah* was undertaken by the Yemenite Su'âd/ [(not to be confused with Su'âd the poetess)] for Šindîd, her husband. Šindîd had kidnapped Mayy; Awce, Mayy's paternal cousin/*ibn 'am* (FaBrSo) and fiancé as well, chased Šindîd to his very home. Su'âd rebuked her husband for his cowardly deeds, but she did not advise him to act in any particular manner. He asked her to hand the abducted girl back to her paternal cousin. Su'âd acted on behalf of her husband and won Awce's forgiveness (VI.E.6c). For Šindîd, the entire episode was sheer humiliation. He also lost his bid to acquire an additional spouse/sexpartner/object; meanwhile, his wife was spared the presence of a new female competitor/rival. A most telling statement as how a once-loved wife came to be perceived by her husband at a later stage in the marriage is offered by Zîr as he quoted the will of Kulaib to Garw/Hagras, Kulaib's son, concerning Galilah Kulaib's wife and Garw/Hagras' mother. Zîr reported that Kulaib had written a will with his blood stating:

¹³¹ Mot., Z0069\$, Formulas signifying contempt; Z0179.1.1.2\$, Treading on an emblem with foot or shoe--contempt.

¹³² For a daughter to address her mother by her first name, especially in such a situation, is indicative of contempt.

Mot., Z0069\$, Formulas signifying contempt.

¹³³ Mot., P0295.1.2\$, Marriage between '*ibn Camm* and his (*ibn 'amm*) (paternal cousin).

¹³⁴ Mot., T0502.1.1\$/cf., Offspring from the same male (Casab/muscle, agnates); Z0130.0.1\$, 'One's own flesh and blood': close paternal relative.

¹³⁵ P0007.1\$, Role strain (role conflict): effects of difficult choices between conflicting obligations.

¹³⁶ P0211.0.1\$, Wife chooses her brother's side in feud.

¹³⁷ Mot., W0001.1\$, Consistency of an interpersonal response trait: it is indivisible; = patterning/consistency/ Tale-Type/AaTh, 0985, *Brother Chosen Rather than Husband or Son. [A woman (a sister) may save only one from death]*.

¹³⁸ Mot., W0256.6.3.2.2\$, Wise (good) man pays no attention to women; J1701.0.2\$/cf., Only the husband who disregards his wife's advice proves correct.

And evict elGalīlah from our homestead ∴ [for she is] an enemy, her joining us proved inauspicious.¹³⁹ Thus, perceived and presented, marriages no matter how long they may have lasted still proved to be transitory arrangements. After a marriage had run its course, wives reverted to their paternal home (typically after the death of the family's patriarch) to live with their brother(s): Asmā', having lost her two sons and husband, went back to live with her brother Zīr (IV.L.2e). Galīlah, after the death of her husband and her eviction by Zīr, went back to live with her brother Gassās (III.H.2a); evidently her seven daughters made no attempt to contact her; the eldest, Yamāmāh, did not even know whether her mother who was pregnant at the time of her eviction had given birth to a boy or a girl (V.C.3a).¹⁴⁰ Also, after her son had found his paternal home and was reunited with his eldest sister and paternal uncles, /(*a'mām*/(FaBrS). Galīlah seems to have stayed with Sultān, the only surviving brother of the original main four.¹⁴¹ Yamāmāh, after the death of her husband went back to live with Garw/Hagras, her brother (VI.B.1c). The same end is also true for the marginal characters in the *sīrah*: the sister of Gābir, the poet, also went to live with him along with her seven children after the death of her husband (V.B.1). A rare exception to this dominant pattern of reversion of a married sister back to her brother may only be inferred: it is the case of Zīr's mother, Gamīlah, who seems to have continued to live in her husband's household after his death. She, however, had no role to play.

Siblings

Brother and Brother

The most salient social group in the *sīrah* is the band of brothers. They are typically presented in a state of cooperation concerning political, economic, or family honor matters. This businesslike pattern of interaction seems also to be true of the paternal cousins /*'awlād* *cam* (FaBrSos) before the hostilities broke out between the two groups. The notable exception where two paternal cousins interacted in a purely personal activity occurred between Zīr and Hammām (III.G).

This personal relationship, however, ended in a most tragic manner. Invariably, the relationships within these fraternal groups are based on the 'ascendance' of one brother as the 'king' or 'head' of the state or tribe, while his junior brother(s) assists him in rank of 'descendance'.¹⁴² Such was the relationship between Kulaib and his brothers, Zīr and his brothers,¹⁴³ Gassās and his brothers, (and "old" father), King Ḥakmūn and his brother Ṣuhyūn (Zion) who was his army's general, King Bergīs and his brother Sam'ān his army's general (IV.J.5c), and King Ru'cāini and his brother Ghattāsh his army's general (IV.E.3e).

Brother and Sister

A brother seeks his sister's counsel and highly values her judgment: when faced with a crisis concerning their destiny, Galīlah's brothers consulted her and readily accepted her skill in astrology and the soundness of her views (II.C.1); Garw/Hagras instantly accepted Yamāmāh's radical claims concerning his lineage (V.C.3e), and implemented her counsel to bring back his grandson into their homestead (VI.G.2); he also sought her expertise in interpreting Zīr's last will (VI.H.2c). Even the tyrannical 'Yemeniking' /(*tubba'*)¹⁴⁴ Ḥassān, acted tenderly toward, and consulted with, his sister concerning her own marriage (III.A.1a; cf. I.C situation where a father gives his daughter away without consultations). A sister is ever ready to help her brother(s) without the slightest hesitation: Galīlah, in spite of her "noble" and "virtuous" character, in addition to her initial 'great love' for her husband¹⁴⁵ and 'sure affection' for her brothers did not hesitate to commit several acts generally viewed as dishonorable and treacherous, to help the against her husband's brother;¹⁴⁶ in fact, she did absolutely nothing to save her husband's life or forewarn him about his impending death at the hands of her own brother (II.C.2II.C.2h); Galīlah also used her beauty (or perhaps, seductive moves) and eloquence to save the lives of her brothers and to win the military support of Ru'cāini (IV.E.2); moreover, she went to plead with Zīr to spare the lives of her brothers (IV.K.5) (yet, a more effective advocate would have been Asmā', Zīr's sister).¹⁴⁷ Asmā' lied to her husband's family and saved the life of her own brother, Zīr (IV.G.2b).

¹³⁹ *wa fī damih katab bi l balātah. wasāyā: ḷashar 'abyāt wa 'akthar yūsīnī biqawliḥ: "lā tusāliḥ .: fa, Sālim, 'in sālaht Takhar wa trud el-Galīlah min Himānā: ḷaduwwah, kaḷbahā mā kān 'akhdar" p. 138. _lit.: 'her heel was not green'. Mot.s/cf.: N0134.1.2, Wife brings bad luck to husband's family); Z0145.2\$, Green: auspicious color. (See sections: III.E; and III.H.2b, above).*

¹⁴⁰ *fa 'Ommī hāmīlah min yawm rāhat .: wa haqq rabb el ḷālamīna walastu 'adri aish gābit' abint `am ghulām yā fatīn. (p. 135).*

¹⁴¹ Mot., T198\$, Return to parents' (father's, [brother's]) home after end of marital relations (divorce, or death of spouse).

¹⁴² Mot., P0740\$, Seniority: ascendance and descendance.

¹⁴³ Mot., P0017.0.2.0.1\$, Eldest son succeeds father as king; P0017, Succession to the throne.; P0250.1/cf., elder children [(siblings)] to protect younger.

¹⁴⁴ Mot., P0012.2.1.3\$, *tubba'* Ḥassān as tyrant.

¹⁴⁵ Mot., Mot., P0211.0.1\$, Wife chooses her brother's side in feud. Tale-type AaTh 0985, *Brother Chosen Rather than Husband or Son*. [A woman (a sister) may save only one from death].

¹⁴⁶ Mot., T0202.3\$, Affectionate couple.; T0201.1.1\$, Marriage fatigue: decreasing value of (affection for) a spouse with passage of time.

¹⁴⁷ It may be tempting to surmise that Zīr would have been obliged to respond positively to his sister, rather than to his mother, and thus ending the murderous fraternal strife. _

A sister readily forgives her brother, no matter how serious his offense against her may have been; thus *Asmâ'* forgave the killing of her two sons and husband by *Zîr* (III.G.5f, IV.L.2de) her brother. A sister also avenges her brother's death: *Su'âd* gave up her powerful position and luxurious life as the actual ruler of her husband's country in order to avenge the killing of her brother; not only was she successful in her quest, she also 'got away with murder' (III.AIII.D), as did her slave who did the actual slaughtering of *Kulaib*. An 'historical' account¹⁴⁸ of the conflict between *Taghlib* and *Bakr*--it should be remembered--reports that antagonism started when the tyrannical *Kulaib* asked his wife, or a woman friend, whether she knew of anyone on earth who was prouder and more reliable than himself (cf., I.F). Her answer, which came only upon his insistence was that, indeed, her brothers *Gassâs* and *Hammâm* were (or her brother *Gassâs* and his paternaluncle's son). The jealous *Kulaib* set out to undermine the honor of his wife's brothers, thus igniting the fire of the *Basûs* War.¹⁴⁹

Wife's Brother and Sister's Husband

Since each of the main male protagonists in the *sîrah* was also linked through the marriage of his sister to the opposing camp, the conflict among the paternalcousins / (*ʿabnâ'cam*/(*FaBros*'s) seems to involve an affective component generated by this affinal link. In their interaction with each other as brothersinlaws (*Kulaib* with *Gassâs*, and *Hammâm* with *Zîr*), they display a considerable measure of covert hostility. (In the lore of the area this hostility is frequently encountered in descriptions of interactions between a wife's brother and a sister's husband).¹⁵⁰ Thus, *Gassâs* readily opted to kill *Kulaib* (III.C.2c); he stabbed *Kulaib* even though *Kulaib* had promised to compensate his protegee for the loss of her shecamel (III.D.2). On his part, *Kulaib* seemed to welcome being murdered by *Gassâs*, sought no help to treat his wound, and in a compulsive manner, begged *Su'âd*'s slave

to slaughter rather than save him. In spite of the fact that *Kulaib* knew of *Su'âd*'s murderous role, his will/testament contained no reference to her nor her slave and was confined to instructing *Zîr* never to accept reconciliation (III.D.3a, III.E). (It is significant in this respect to note that the *sîrah* shows that Christians and Jews reached a state of accommodation¹⁵¹ with each other when their losses became too high; this practical arrangement was still possible in spite of the fact that each of the kings of both camps lost a notable brother in the war (IV.J.5bd). No such reconciliation was forthcoming between the two Arab fraternal camps!!

Mother, you want me to bid for reconciliation ∴ Do you know not what they have done to us[!?!]¹⁵² Similarly, although *Zîr* and *Hammâm* were reported to be very intimate friends, the text leaves no doubt that a great deal of suspicion and hostility existed between the two men.¹⁵³ Thus, when *Hammâm* received via a slave girl the news that *Kulaib* has been murdered, *Zîr* felt threatened enough to go for his sword. Also, despite *Zîr* having promised not to hurt *Hammâm* as long as *Hammâm* did not appear on the battleground, *Zîr*'s intentions were contrary to his pledge. Shortly after the departure of his sister's husband, *Hammâm*, and as he was about to slay his sister's young son, *Shaybân*, *Zîr* declared:

"And for you, sister's son, today ∴ you have inevitably become my breakfast.

As for your father, I will let my sword dine on him, ∴ and will give [your] heroes to [my] spear for its supper" (p. 65). Thus, the hostility towards the sister's husband (who is also the father of the sister's son) and the intention to kill him were present and felt 'from the beginning' of the bloody conflict. This hostility, it may be argued, was not expressed between *Kulaib* and *Hammâm* since each of the two had the sister of the other for a wife.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁸ For the 'historical' account of the conflict between *Taghlib* and *Bakr*, compare section (I.F), above.

¹⁴⁹ Mot., W0179.1.2\$, Devastating praise ('kiss of death'): praising someone to his powerful nemesis so as to bring about his destruction.; P0263.2\$, Bad relations between brother and his sister's husband (brother in law),

¹⁵⁰ See El-Shamy (1976), "Mahfouz's Trilogy". Tale-type, 0872\$, Brother and Sister: *Separation and Subsequent Reunion*.

Mot., P0253, Sister and brother; P0297.2.1\$/cf., Bond between mother's brother (khâl) and sister's son; P0297.2.3\$, Inherent rivalry (enmity) between maternal-uncle and sister's son; P0263.2\$, Bad relations between brother and his sister's husband (brother-in-law); J1352, Person calls another an ass/[ox]; Z0194.1.4.4\$, /cf., Donkey: pitifulness (distress, lowly rank)/[ox]. See El-Shamy, (1976) notes number 64 and 85

¹⁵¹ Mot., P0795\$, Accommodation: social interactional process (detente).

¹⁵² *yaqûl ez Zîr Abû Laylâh al muhalhil ∴ wa qalb ez Zîr qâsi ma yalîna ez Zîr Abû Laylâh al muhalhil says ∴ and ez Zîr's heart does not soften.*

wa 'in lân al hadîd mâ lân qalbî ∴ wa qalbî min hadîd al qâsiyîna

And if iron softened, my heart does not soften ∴ for my heart is of hardened steel.

trîdî yâ 'umayyah 'an 'usâlih ∴ wamâ tadrî mâ faCalûhu fina. (p. 79). You want me, O mother, to reconcile ∴ aren't you aware of what they have done to us[?]

¹⁵³ El-Shamy (2007), Hasan. In: "Siblings in Alf laylah wa-laylah". Ulrich Marzolph, (2007).

¹⁵⁴ Mot., P0263.0.1\$, *çadâyil: men whose wives are sisters* (brothers in law) (each of the two had the sister of the other for a wife).

Mother's Brother and Sister's Son

The *sīrah* contains a number of situations in which the relationship between a mother's brother and a sister's son are illustrated.¹⁵⁵ These include: Zīr with Shaybān (III.G.5III.G.5c) and with Shaybūn (IV.LIV.L.1a); Gassās with Hagra (VA.1 etc., V.C.3e, V.F.1V.F.2c), Mungid with Kulaib (VA.3a), Hassān with Ru'aini (I.E.1a, IV.E), and Sindīd with Sa'c'd (VI.E.5aVI.E.5c). Most of these instances depict relations which begin in a positive manner, but all lead to calamitous endings. Thus, Zīr seemed to welcome (or at least not to mind) Shaybān joining him after the news of Kulaib's death had reached him. However, when his young nephew expressed preference for his own father and paternaluncles, Zīr slew him in a manner that should be viewed as treacherous and comparable to that in which Gassās had killed Kulaib.¹⁵⁶ This killing was done in spite of the fact that Shaybān was only a 'lad; and that the two were not in combat; in addition, Zīr decapitated the corpse (III.G.5b5c), a most unchivalrous act. Shaybūn, Zīr's second, and presumably last nephew, also lost his life at the hands of Zīr, though under less unfair circumstances (IV.L1). Similarly, Ru'aini's decision to avenge the killing of his maternaluncle led to his own death at Zīr's hand (IV.E.3d); while Sindīd's insistence that his sister's son, Sa'c'd, face Awce alone in spite of Sa'c'd repeated pleadings with his maternaluncle / (*khāl* (MoBr) for help, resulted in the death of the young nephew. By contrast Sindīd whose name suggests valor in battle¹⁵⁷ ran away from facing Awce and, thus, saved his own life.

The case of Hagra exemplifies this pattern of transformation of sentiments from positive to negative between a young man and his mother's brother. Not only was Hagra born and raised at his maternaluncles, / (*akhwāl*/MoBr), but in addition he was told that his maternaluncle Shālīsh was his father¹⁵⁸ and moreover he viewed his maternaluncle Gassās as if he was his father. Yet as soon as he was informed that his father was Kulaib, the *sīrah* states that he instantly felt that "his heart did not like Gassās, nor anyone else from Ban-iMurrāh." Gassās was "benevolent and kindly" towards the lad until one day he realized that the growing boy could be a threat to him by joining his father's group and seeking revenge (VA.1c). Gassās' fears were further projected through a dream (V.E.1); in spite of his caution and firm belief in dream interpretation, he made the fatal mistake of not taking the dream seriously enough to act (V.E.1a). Another set of Maternal-uncles/ (*akhwāl* (MoBr) whose role visavis their sister's son seems to have undergone radical, instantaneous unaccounted for transformation is that of the four sons of Wā'il (VA.3a). As the broth-

ers of Gamīlah, Rabīzah's wife, they were the maternaluncles to Kulaib and his other full brothers. They were also the brothers-in-law / (*ashār*)¹⁵⁹ of Rabīzah. First the *sīrah* states that these four were angered by Hassān's killing of their brother-in-law¹⁶⁰ and that they awaited an opportunity to avenge his murder (I.E.5a); such an act should have doubtlessly pleased Kulaib and made them his allies. Yet, the *sīrah* abruptly states that Kulaib had hated his maternaluncles, had killed three of them, and that he particularly "had loathed" / (*kāna yabghidu*)¹⁶¹ the surviving one, Mungid IbnWā'il (VA.3a).

Father's Brother and Brother's Children

If the role of a mother's brother as presented in Zīr's *sīrah* is totally negative, the role of the father's brother is by contrast portrayed as extremely positive. The one exception to this patriarchal preference is the role of Murrāh in relation to the sons of his brother Rabīzah. Murrāh's role began as one of concern and affection for his brother's sons, especially Kulaib who was also his son-in-law (I.A.C, I.F.1, III.F). Murrāh, however, had to side with his own sons (III.F.1) and took an active part in the war until he was slain by Zīr in battle (IV.K.6a). As a father's brother, Zīr was totally loving and compassionate towards Yamāmah and her sisters (III.H.1a, IV.A.1, IV.K.2, IV.K.5a). He also had instinctive love for Hagra (V.C.3a, cf., V.C.1a), handed his father's throne over to him, and lived under his rule. On his part, Hagra loved his father's brother and looked after his needs in his old age; so, did the daughters of Kulaib (VI.H.1). As a paternal grand father, Hagra made sure that his surviving son, Mālik [Jr.] was not remiss in his own role as paternaluncle concerning marrying his son Awce to Mayy, the daughter of Taghlib, his deceased brother (VI.D.1a). Additional detail events reinforce the image of a paternaluncle as a supporter of the son of his brother. In a conflict over play/game involving Hagra and 'Agīb, son of Gassās, Sultān the brother of Hagra's mother and of 'Agīb's father sided with his brother's son (VA.2a). The affective core of Zīr's *sīrah* is the struggle between a young man's maternal and paternal kinsmen over his allegiance. In a society which ideally is patriarchal, patrilineal, and patrilocal, the allegiance of a boy must rest on his father's side (i.e., his consanguineal group). Yet the social realities associated with child rearing and the structure of sentiments in the traditional Arab family inevitably lead a child to an affectionate relationship with his mother's brother(s).¹⁶² Such a link represents a threat to the patriarchal group. Zīr's *sīrah* offers a graphic case of how a member of the patriarchal consanguineal group which had been misled was won back from his maternal abductors, so to speak.

¹⁵⁵ Mot., P0297.2\$, Sister's son (maternal nephew). [= *khāl*, maternal uncle, (MoBr)].

¹⁵⁶ Mot., P0677, Customs connected with dueling. *ghulām*: A boy, i.e., an adolescent.

¹⁵⁷ Sindīd whose name suggests valor in battle.

Mot., Z0183.0.1\$/cf., Meaning of a name.

¹⁵⁸ Mot., Z0084.0.1.0.1\$, Insult: "Begotten from own maternal uncle ('*ommoh gaybāh m el khāl*'); L0111.5.1\$, Child born of brother sister incest as hero: 'Son of own maternal uncle'.

¹⁵⁹ Mot., P0260, Relations by law.

T051.3\$, Affines and affinity. In-laws (*relationship by marriage*).

¹⁶¹ For a parallel situation of "despise," see: El-Shamy (1976), Hasan, "The Traditional Structure of Sentiments. in Mahouz trilogy." (p. 72).

¹⁶² Arab family inevitably leads a child to an affectionate relationship with his mother's brother(s)

Children, as exemplified by the situation of Garw/Hagras and his mother, are raised by their mothers and grow up within the context of her social circles; in traditionbound communities these circles are represented by the mother's family. Children identify with the mother and, in accordance with her feelings, identify with her brother(s) with whom she is intimate. Gafilah, for example, was very close to her brothers but was never presented in the context of interaction with her father, Murrah. Murrah's own dealings seemed to be confined to his sons and their concerns with power, strategy, and warfare. If the patriarchal kinship group is to maintain its grip on its members, it is necessary for that group to challenge the genuineness of the maternaluncle's feelings for his sister's son, and to cast doubts on the usefulness of the boy/maternaluncle relationship, especially for the young nephew. A situation in which both the appeal of the paternal and maternal sides converged on a disputed youth is represented in Hagras' last encounter with Gassâs, his maternaluncle: with the spear of his nephew poised onto his chest (without driving it in). Gassâs begged for mercy and Hagras seemed to listen. Taking no chances on a potentially reconciliatory course of action, Zîr prodded Hagras to stop "the talk and reconciliatory reprimand,"¹⁶³ thus aborting any chance for a softening on Hagras' heart towards his maternaluncle (V.F.2a).¹⁶⁴ The cannibalistic-ghoulish act that followed in which Zîr and Hagras drank the blood and chewed off the flesh of the slain Gassâs (V.E.2c) may be viewed as a symbolic representation of the total triumph of the patriarchate and the annihilation of the matriarchate along with its related sentiments.

In the *sîrah*, Zîr had no offspring of his own. Yet, he represents the ideal pattern of behavior in the patriarchal society: He loved his elder brother, Kulaib, who had assumed the role of the tribe's patriarch; Kulaib, the patriarch, also loved him (p. 31). He loved the female as well as the male blood descendants of his brother. He, for whatever reason, terminated his sister's links with her husband's family and brought her back to her (and his) own paternal home. By abdicating and installing his elder brother's young son as king, he proved to be an exemplary paternal-uncle, *am* (FaBr). whose attitude toward his nephew combined personal affection with pragmatic services. he was dedicated to the ideal of the transfer of power from father to son (hereditary government).¹⁶⁵ He irrevocably terminated his own role as a maternaluncle. *khâl* (MoBr). Considering the negative effect of a wife

on her husband and his family as portrayed by the *sîrah* Zîr did not commit the act of marrying. Thus, he brought into his people **no outsiders** who would weaken, \may have weakened the cohesion of the group or adulterate its patriarchal and patrilineal purity. (The *sîrah* or, more accurately, the compiler/author of the narrative seems to view Zîr as not needing an heir). Hagras, in turn, duplicated many of Zîr's roles: Although he had seven sisters, of whom five were married, there is no mention of any children for his sisters; thus, he did not have to play the role of maternaluncle even with reference to the offspring of his closest sister, Yamâmah. He married three unidentified girls, / "banât," i.e., girls/virgins);¹⁶⁶ thus no wife had a privileged position in his life.¹⁶⁷

He would not let Awce, his paternalgrandson, stay with the family of his wife; on Yamâmah's advice he brought his grandson home. In conclusion, Zîr's *sîrah* belongs to a cycle of folk narratives that reinforce the ideal culture values of a patriarchal, patrilineal society. It also serves as an agent for *resocializing*¹⁶⁸ children, and adults as well, away from maternalaffinal links, and towards the paternal-consanguineal ties. In the parlance of traditionary groups, a truism specifies the perceived differences between the two groups: "A mother's brother is belly, but a father's brother is muscle."¹⁶⁹ The implication is that a maternaluncle offers a sister's son affection and similar things associated with a belly (i.e., womb, mother), while a father's brother offers real power. However, the desire to add the prestige of having "epics", like Greeks and Indians, etc. do, proved stronger than historical and literary realities. (See *Sîrah*, below).

- a) During the beginning of the period of search for epics (malâhim) in Arabic literature during the mid-1950s, siyar were characterized as "epics". Though widely accepted, this depiction is inaccurate. Littmann 1950, p. 7) had offered his views on this issue introducing an Egyptian heroic saint's folk legend about "Ahmed il-Bedawi,"²³ which he labeled "Lied" (i.e., song).

Acknowledgement

None.

Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest.

¹⁶³ See above *itâb*. Mot., P0795.0.1.1\$, Reconciliatory-reprimand (Citâb) among friends and lovers. (Complaining and seeking redress without offending).

¹⁶⁴ See note no. above, Mot., G0090.5\$, Hate to be quenched by drinking blood of hated person.

¹⁶⁵ Mot., P0500.1\$, Government under inherited right to rule subjects--(authoritarian, rights of kings)

¹⁶⁶ Mot., T0145.0.1, Polygyny; T0145.1.0.1\$/cf., Marriage to four women".

¹⁶⁷ (It is worth noting here that it may be assumed that Hagras also ended up with three sisters remaining at home with him; thus, a symbolic link significance may exist between the wives and the sisters). See Mot., P0254.0.1\$, Household composed of only brother and sister(s). They live alone in palace (house, cave, etc.).

¹⁶⁸ Mot., P0008\$, Resocialization. Re-learning (re-teaching) how to live according to different social rules (norms) in the same culture (but within different social class; age, gender, professional, etc. group).

¹⁶⁹ *el khâl kirsh*, w el Cam Casab: Mot., P0293.9.1\$, A maternal uncle offers mother love ('belly', 'womb'), a paternal uncle offers patriarchal power ('muscle'). See also: El-Shamy (2013).

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