

AFAM117

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*This book is dedicated with  
permission to His Majesty,  
the Sultan Qabus bin Sa'iyd  
Al Bu Sa'iydi*

## INTRODUCTION

Whilst this book records a system of tribal organisation that will doubtless seem to disappear to a large extent in the future, it is important to understand it. Tribalism as a social organisation is a basis of the Arab claims to be one nation despite political boundaries, and so an appreciation of the way the tribes are related to one another leads one to a better understanding of ideas such as Arab nationalism, which sometimes seem extravagant and even incomprehensible to modern Western ears. It is his tribalism which allows a Duruw' bedu from the Omani interior to say, when asked what he is, I am an Arab or I am a Duruw'iy. Rarely would he say that he is an Omani. The same way of putting the matter would be expressed by a member of the Muntafiyq of Iraq, a Khawlāniy from Yemen, or a Mutayriy from Saudi Arabia. Arab Nationalism is thus a far bigger thing in its scope than a regional idea, it is better expressed by the term Pan-Arabism.

This account of tribal organisation will enable the reader to comprehend the way in which lineages have been used by the Arabs to construct tribes, even when these lineages have to depart from strict historical truths in order to accomplish this object. As the needs of modern statehood lead to an erosion of this system it is to be noted that what often happens is a return to the primary lineage group concept. The Arabs will build anew on this fundamental family brick as they have always done. It is thus not a matter of regret that some of the old tribes will disappear. They will not; what will happen is that they will take on a new set of clothes.

The collection of the material in this book took place between 1966 and 1973. In a tribal society the tribal details are analogous to an order of battle, and represent a private thing that is not lightly divulged to strangers. My informants, who number several hundreds, often gave incorrect information because of this; not only did they not actually know the answers to one's questions, but wished to please by giving some answer. It was often something that would be refused outright too. All these matters made it necessary to double check again and again, but because of these factors the material is not presented as being correct at every point. It is emphasised that though the material has been checked against classical information and collated with this and

more modern sources, it is essentially a collection of oral tradition. The material represents what the Omani tribesmen themselves say about their origins and tribal structures.

It is always a problem to transliterate Arabic into Latin script in such a way that both the standards of scientific accuracy and the needs of the ordinary readers are observed. This situation is further confused by the frequent use of local dialect. For instance in the *dirah* of the Harasiys there is a place called al-Ajā'iz, and this is the way most orientalists would like it spelt. However, though it is spelt thus on all the maps it would not be the slightest use asking a Harsuwsiy the way there. He calls in al Aya'iz, and has never heard of the other place. In these pages, local pronunciation often takes precedence over hypothetical classical norms.

The author has therefore compromised and hopes that the specialists will forgive any strange spellings in the hope that thereby more people will be able to read the book. For this reason all common proper names are spelt in the most usual way; thus Al Bu Sa'iyd, Izki, Ibri, Doha and so on. Likewise many Arabic words that have currency in English are left in their commonest spellings, such as 'Ali, Bani, Bin, Sunni, etc. No allowance is made in this book for the set of velarised consonants which in Arabic operate as separate phonemes (*ṣ*, *ṭ*, *ḍ* and *ẓ*). Short vowels in general are transliterated as *a*, *i* and *u*; the long vowels are shown as *iy*, *uw* and *ā*, and the diphthongs as *ay* and *aw*. It is important to remember that the overwhelming bulk of the material which forms the basis of this work is drawn from oral sources. There are many local variations of dialect and accent, even cases where the Classical spelling is dubious. In view of the importance of this oral tradition where there has existed doubts regarding the spelling the present local pronunciation has been favoured over any Classical reconstruction.

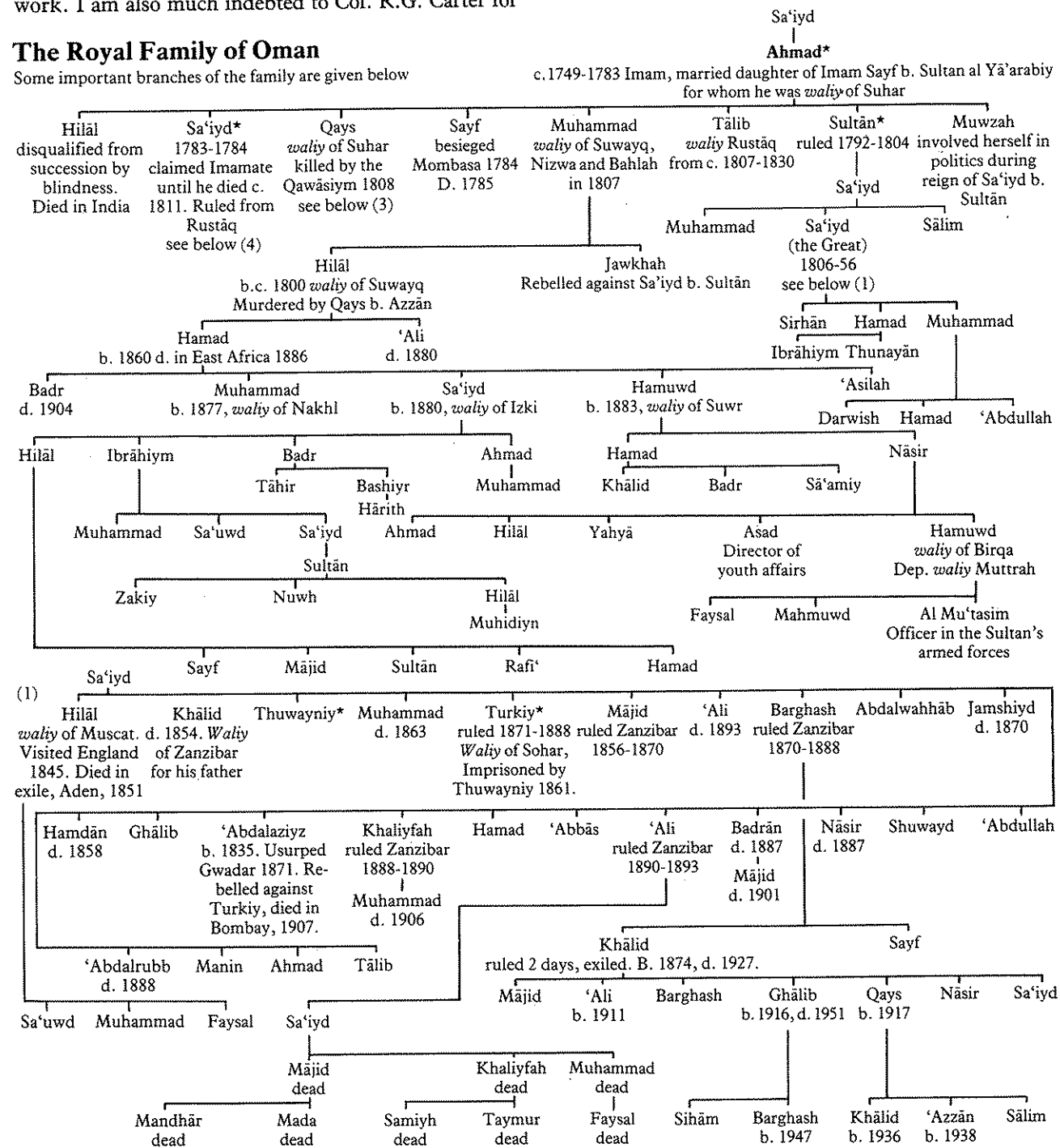
It is not possible to acknowledge all the tribesmen who supplied information for this book, and it is very possible that most of them would be shocked to be acknowledged publicly. However it is really their book and one is profoundly grateful for their trust and friendship, and I would ask them to accept the dedication of this book in the name of their Sultan instead of individual mention.

In addition I wish to express my thanks for help and encouragement to H.H. Sayid, 'Ali b. Faysal Al Bu Sa'iydiy Minister of Culture and National Heritage in Oman and Professor R.B. Serjeant, Cambridge, Professor T.M. Johnstone, SOAS; Dr P.M. Costa, Ministry of Culture, Muscat; Professor Bowen-Jones and the Durham Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Oman Research Project, Dr D.F. Eickelman of New York University and Professor Dr Walter Dostal of Vienna University as well as the following: H. Massey, H.B. King, D. Ledger, T.E. Snell, J. Ellis, J.P. Bannerman, Austen Hawkins, F. Hughes, J. Wilkinson, R. Daly and M. Butler. My special appreciation is reserved for Mrs. A. Sampson, who typed the manuscript, and Leonard Harrow and Colin Larkin for their editorial and design work. I am also much indebted to Col. R.G. Carter for

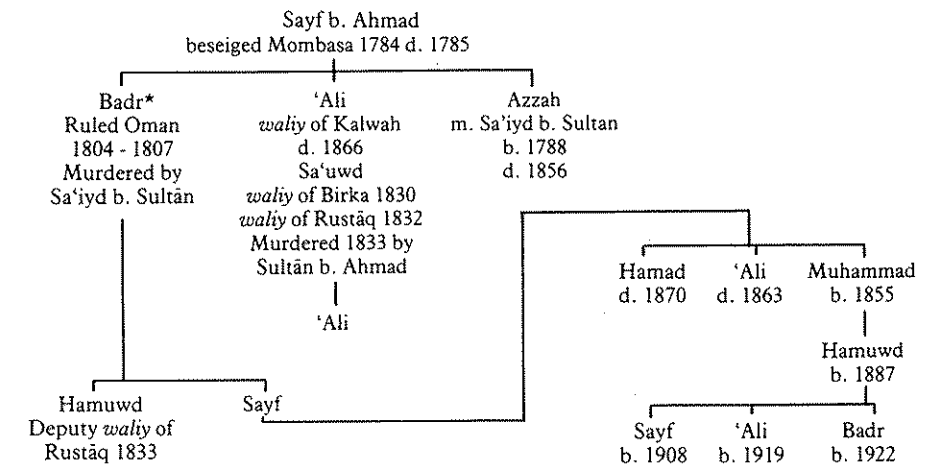
the black and white illustrations in the book. I am grateful for permission to reproduce material from a paper given to the Seminar for Arabian Studies in July 1976 and to the King 'Abdalaziz Research Centre in Riyadh for permission to reprint material previously published in the Journal, *Addarah*; I am also indebted to the India Office Library, and Dr. Jorg Jantzen of Bamberg University for the use of valuable additional information. Finally the interest and patience of the following made the collection of material in Oman possible by their continued good humour in the face of a stream of questions over the years: Sayf bin Hamad al Bitāshiy, Hamad Sayf al Waradiy, Sayf bin Hārib al Shu'ayliy, Nāsir bin Nasiyr al Waradiy and Nāsir bin 'Ali Musallim al Janaybiy.

### The Royal Family of Oman

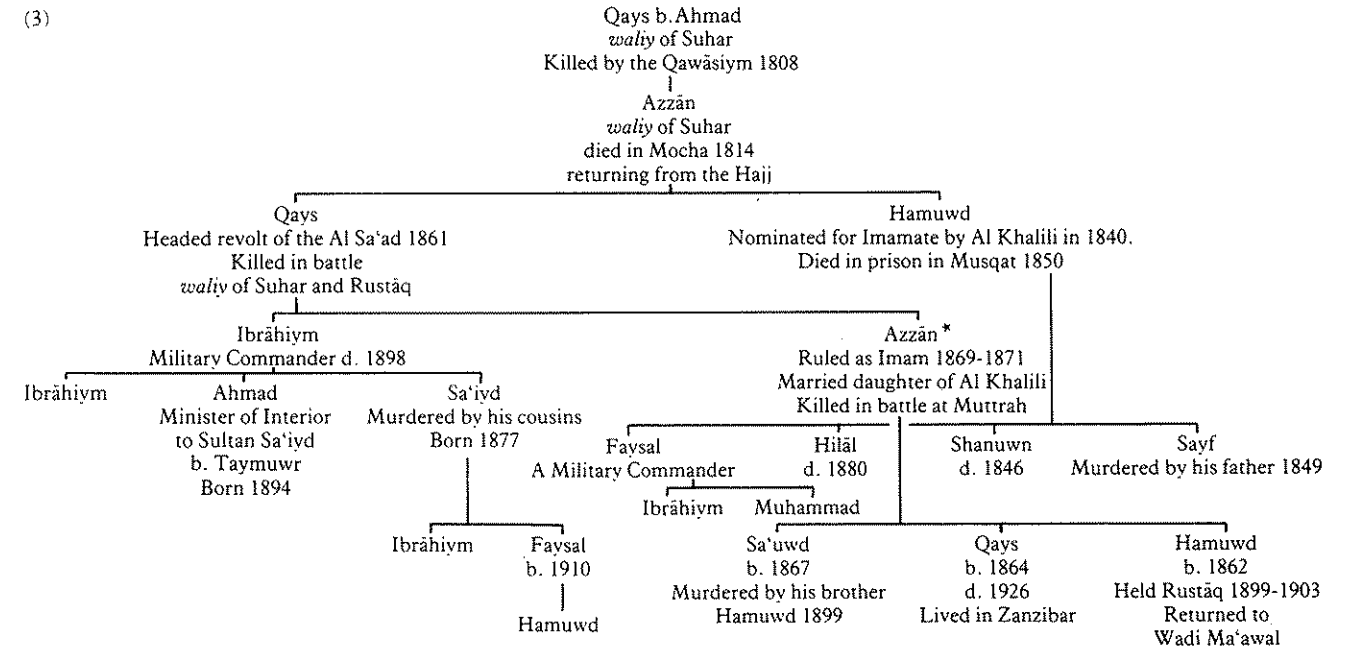
Some important branches of the family are given below



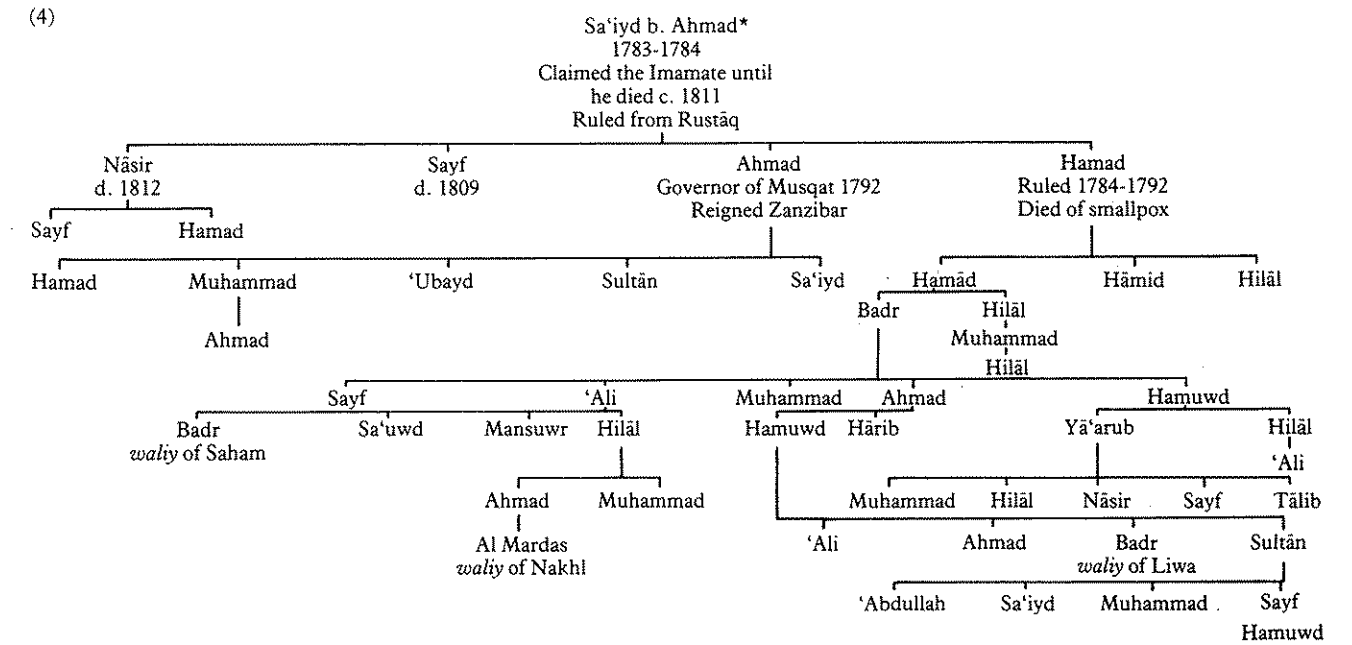
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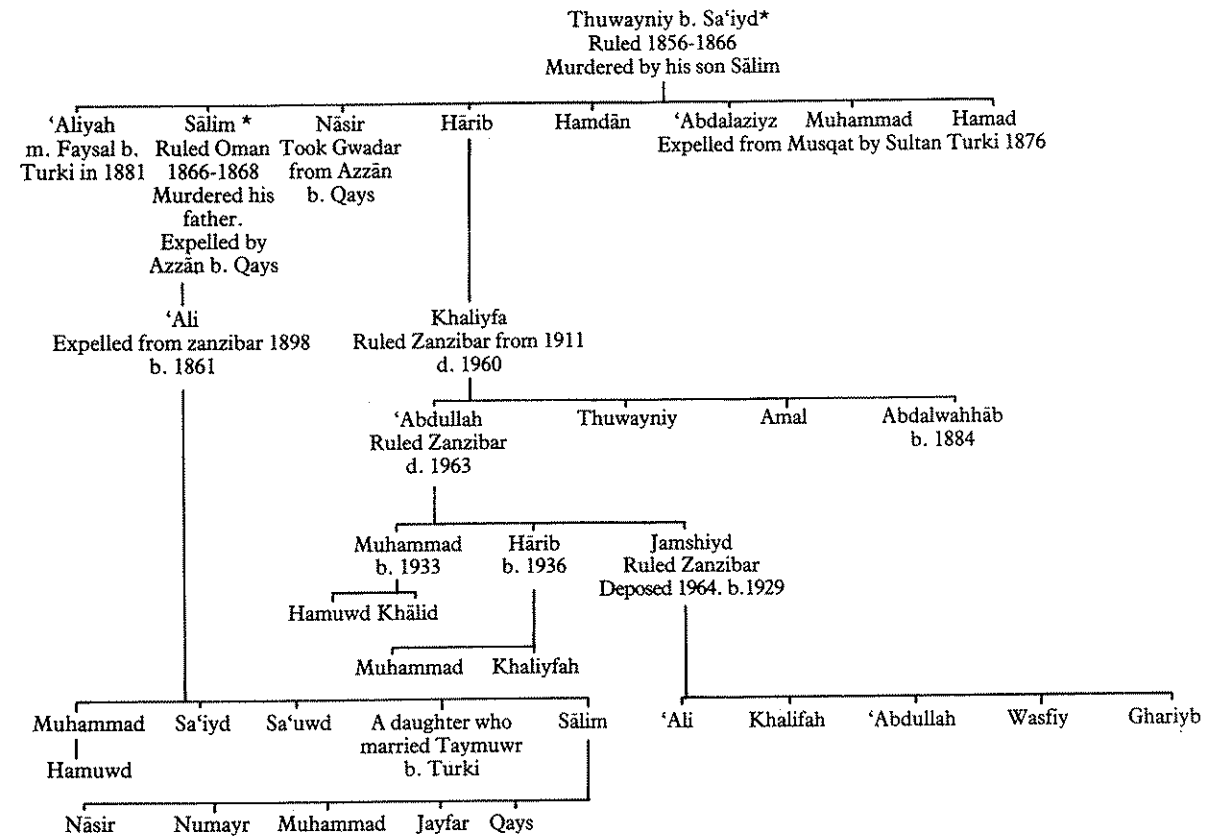
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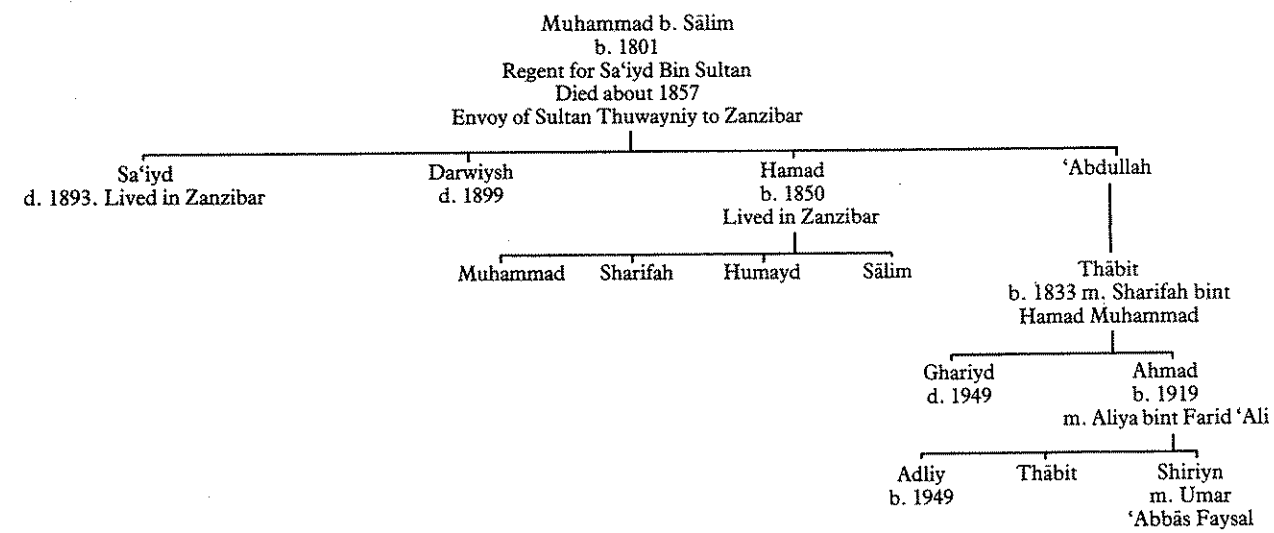
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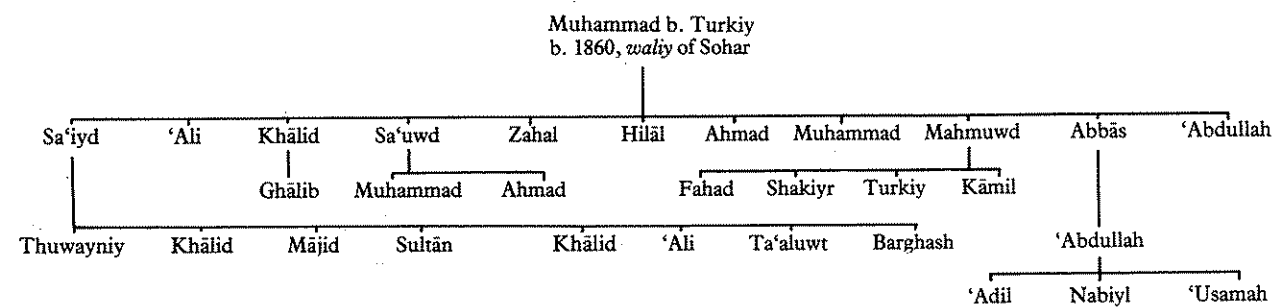
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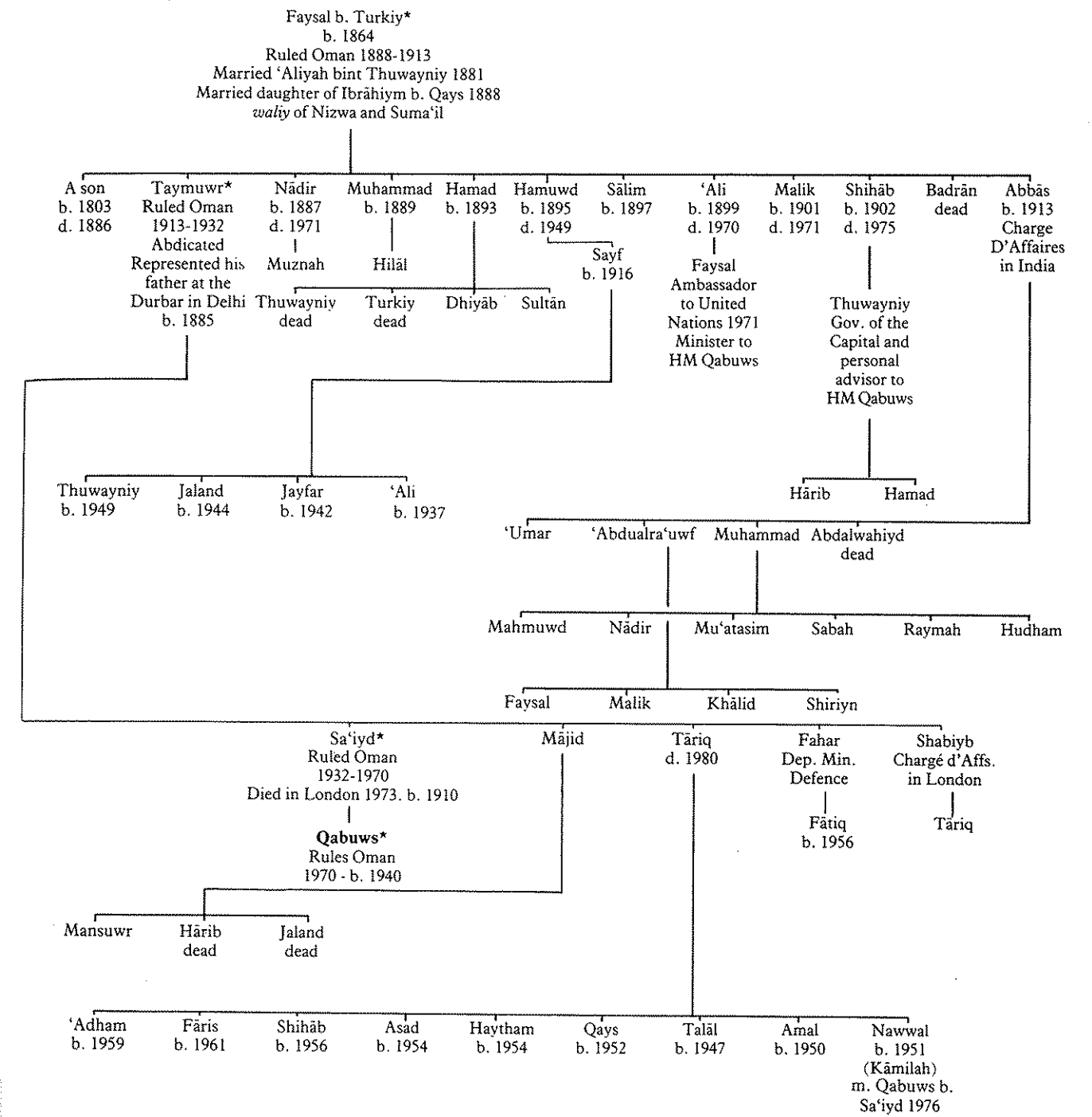
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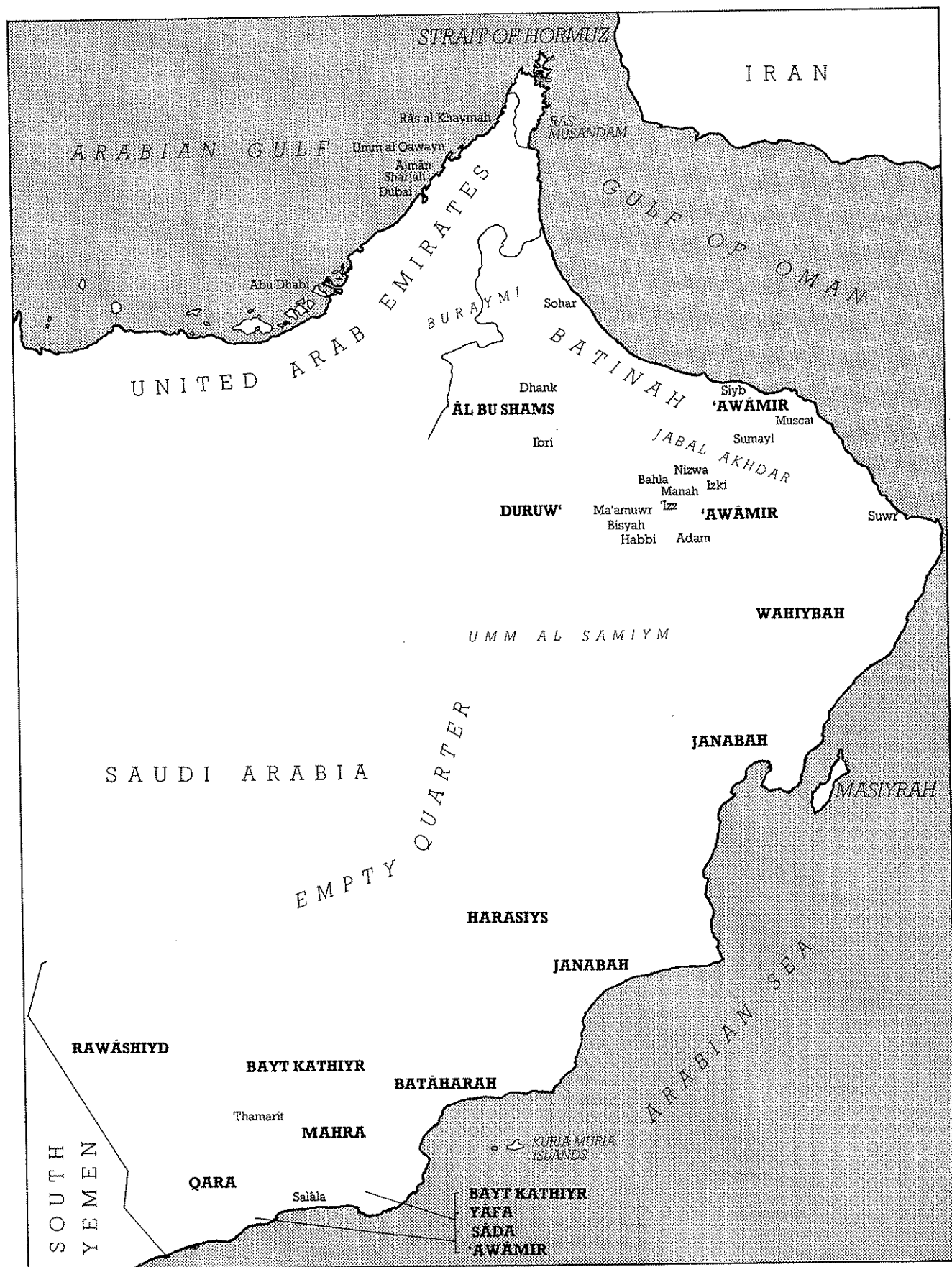


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THE TRIBES IN OMAN

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Chapter One  
WHAT IS OMAN AND WHAT IS A TRIBE?

The traveller leaving Doha in the Arabian Gulf state of Qatar and going south to Dubai will be told by his Arab friends that he is going to Oman. When he leaves Dubai for Abu Dhabi the same thing will be said. Departing from there for Nizwa he will be told the same again; when he crosses the mountains and arrives in Muscat he will be greeted with the statements that he has come from Oman. Where then is Oman?

Oman is a territorial designation very meaningful to Arabs but like the name Yemen, not so readily understood by Europeans who have too long looked at maps with neat lines on them, mostly put on by themselves. Our view of this very beautiful part of the Arabian Peninsula has been confused for us by British foreign policy in the last century, a policy motivated by the need to stamp out piracy and slaving—motives of the highest integrity but sad in their blindness to social geography and their ignorance of the countries of which they saw only the fringes. The result has been to divide rather than to unite. The territory comprising those states in the present Federation called the United Arab Emirates, which was once known as Trucial Oman, and the territory of the Sultanate of Oman should be considered as one ethnic area. Here one does not for this purpose consider the recently dependent province of Dhufar to be a part of geographical Oman as it is more a part of Hadramawt than anything else, though an integral part of the Sultanate of Oman politically, and in the past also subject to Ibādiyy hegemony, as indeed a large part of Hadramawt was too; it should perhaps be remembered that geographical areas in the Arab mind are named on a human and hegemony basis.

The key to this area is the great mountain range which runs down from the Musandam peninsula in the north and curling almost due east-west ends near Suwr on the southern edge of the Gulf of Oman. It is from these mountains that all authority has come throughout the history of the region. It is therefore a cause of a continuing ethnic tension that the multiplicity of small states on one side should have come into existence at all, and that the ruler of the other and larger side, should have his hands tied by the history of the interior where, like the Yemen, ruling has been a matter of playing off one tribe against another. The Sultan of Oman and his

government have a hard enough job replacing this tribalism and the essentially tribal government of the Imamate with a modern apparatus, without having to deal with the very real proclivities of many of his people to look elsewhere; indeed, they quite naturally will, especially when the disproportionate amount of oil royalties acts as a social magnet further to the north of him. The discovery of this oil in the interior of the territory has partially redressed the balance but also turned the country inside out from the point of view of political values. What was of no importance before is now crucial.

Within the locale described above, the territory of Oman stretches westwards from the mountains as gravel steppes until it reaches the Empty Quarter and south of this steppe continues through northern Dhufar to the South Yemeni border. From the mountains flow wadis which carry the scanty rainfall into the sands, three of them in the north ending in the famous Umm al Samiym; translated by some to mean mother of poisons, by others, the mother of mats. This latter version springs from a story that a Duruw' girl saved herself from the quicksands by spreading out a straw mat in front of herself. It is along the head-waters of the wadis in the mountains that most of the villages and towns are situated and out in the steppe the bedu roam with their flocks amongst the thorn. Both communities are mutually dependent on one another, and it is the purpose of this book to describe their tribal make-up. This is something which is disappearing due to the modifications imposed by recent history, though the author feels that its effects will probably last a lot longer than many think. It is clear that, as indicated above, it will have to break down to an extent in order for a modern state to be established. It is equally clear that this process could be both painful and difficult; but one is most grateful to have been able to see it before the breakdown occurs—a breakdown, which in the author's view, will be into the primary family lineage group, which is the basis of all forms of Arabian society.

It is now time to consider what a tribe really is. Nearly all tribes are headed by a *shaykh* who was originally simply the oldest member of the tribe; shaykh means old man. Under this person, whose office was not originally

hereditary, each section of the tribe is headed by a *rashīd*, especially amongst the bedu. However it must be remembered that the authority of a shaykh is governed by his reputation, descent and relationships within the tribe. It is not an authority imposed from outside the tribal social unit. Really he is *primus inter pares*.

Some Omani tribes are controlled by a senior shaykh called a *tamiyah*.<sup>\*</sup> His election, though in some respects the position is hereditary, bears some resemblances to the election of an Ibādi Imam. He is elected by tribal acclamation and agreement as to his fitness for office, and interestingly absence from the election meeting is taken as agreement upon the election of the man standing as the candidate. The village and town tribesmen have in addition a *waliy* who governs a particular area over the tribal shaykhs. His authority is imposed by the Islamic government. Nowadays this man is responsible to the Sultan. Each *waliy* is assisted by one or more *qādiys* or religious judges. This briefly is the organisation of authority but the question of the actual composition of a tribe is much more complicated.

It is generally supposed that an Arab tribe is composed of the descendants of one man but this is too simple a view. Our ideas are much coloured by the thought of the great desert tribes like those found in Saudi Arabia, where there has been both enough room and sufficient poverty, before the discovery of oil, to enable the descendants of a single eponymous ancestor to retain links with one another to such a large degree that the descent group has largely managed to stay together. In fact this situation is rather an exception. In the Yemen and Oman, as well as the other, large areas conquered by the Arabs, both geography and history have combined to complicate the original simple structure of a tribe.

It is therefore convenient to think of another term to describe groups of people and it is handy to discuss community-groups as well as carrying on the original idea of descent-groups. These latter more often than not become the ordinary family groups which comprise the community. In Arabian society it thus emerges that whilst both community and descent groups are found in both *bedu* (desert) and *hadr* (town) circumstances, the emphasis with the former tends to be the descent group and with the latter the community group.

However, the descent-group often retains the importance in political circumstances. For instance, in the area of the South Yemen Republic, when it was under British protection, the various states were ruled by a Sultan or Amīr who was usually the head of the ruling descent-group and he was elected to office by the family. This was a survival of the age-old tribal democracy so characteristic of the Arabs. This family was seen to be the remains of the original tribe whilst the majority of the people ruled were in a client relationship to it, and so did not usually have a right to participate in the election. In Oman a similar position obtains where members of one descent group live in various communities in only one of which will the descent-group have political power, called *hukm*. Thus the Mahariyq have the *hukm* in the town of Adam but when they live in Ibri they are subject to another descent-group, the Yāqiyb. It will be readily understood how this situation can give rise to enormous complications over loyalties to political factions and the

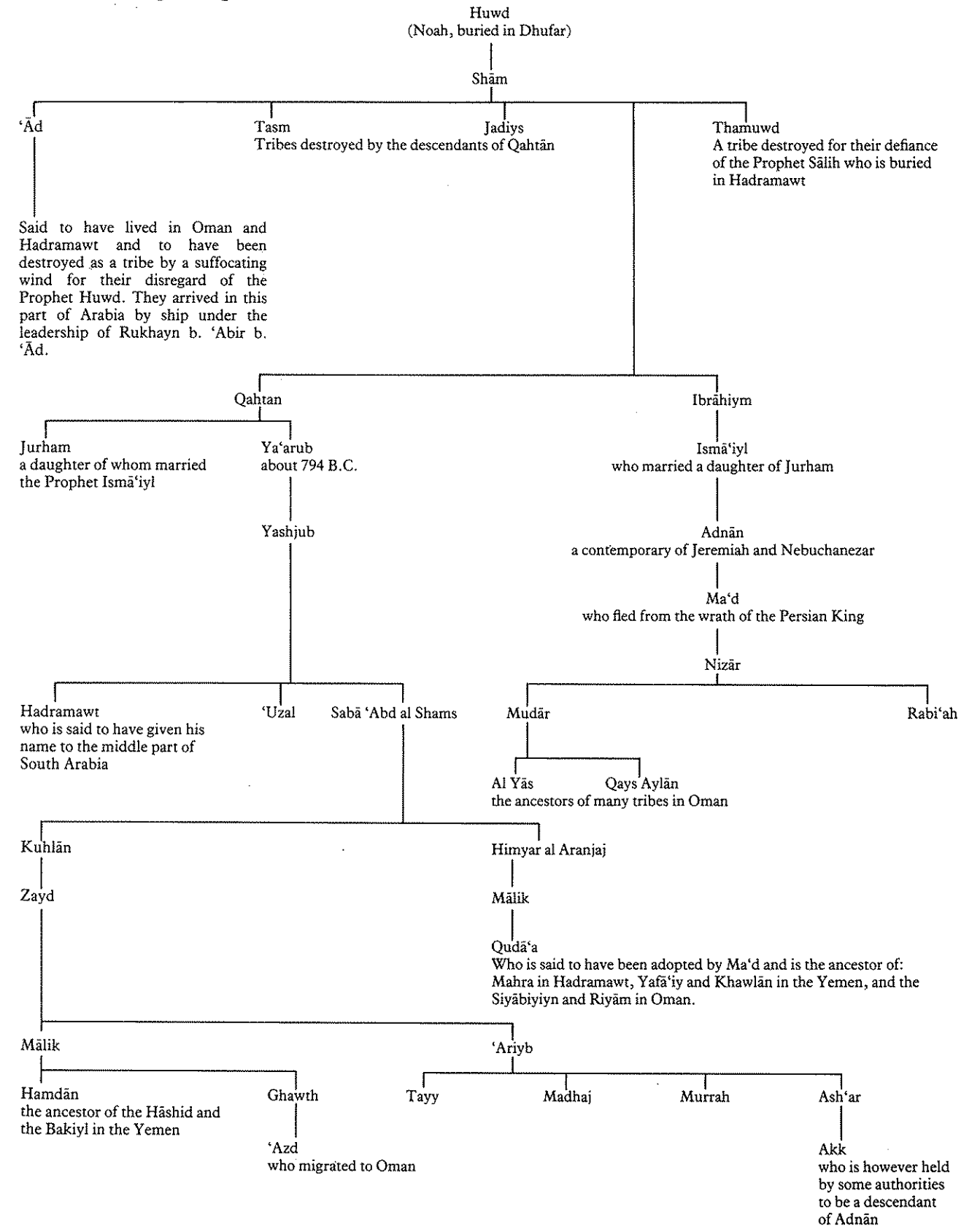
<sup>\*</sup> See the Harth below.

consequent actions by individuals in defending their own private interests. Will they fight in tribal wars for their own descent-group or will they defend a possibly conflicting rival community interest?

In Oman all these possibilities exist in great number. The people themselves divide the tribes into several antagonistic factions. The first is an expression of the old rivalry between the town or *hadr* tribes, and the desert or *bedu* tribes: a rivalry exemplified on the *bedu* side by the story about the townsman who when sleeping in the desert for the first time, died of fright when he saw the stars. He thought that they were the eyes of the devil. However, in Oman, the usual position is reversed and the *hadr* tribes are the aristocratic ones and the *bedu* occupy a place lower in the social scale. This is a reversal of the more traditional situation where it is the desert man who obstinately and proudly flaunts his great lineage above his rags whilst sneering at the better dressed but low born townsman. The second division which has afflicted Oman is one resulting from the history of the occupation of the country by the Arabs. The first wave of Arabs originated directly from the Yemen and are said to have been Azdite under the leadership of one Malik b. Fahm, a descendant of Qahtān, who left the Wadi Jawf in eastern Yemen as a result of the collapse of the Marib dam in the 2nd century AD and a quarrel with a neighbour over a dog. The greater part of Azd migrated to the north however and after settling for a while near Najrān again moved and having conquered the Bani Jurham in Mecca became known as the Khuzā'ah. They took Yathrib (Medina) which then became occupied by two Azdite sub-tribes, the 'Aws and the Khazraj, who were to be the first to embrace Islam. The remainder of the tribe travelled northwards to Syria where they founded the Ghassānid kingdom which lasted under Roman-Byzantine rule until the conquest of the area by the Muslims. In fact the Azdite invasion of Oman probably took place over a number of years, rather as the Mahra are today slowly moving across the north of the mountains of Dhufar, and the 'Afār are moving into the territory of Duruw'. This migration took place in the third and fourth centuries of the Christian era and was followed some time later by a further migration of Arabs from the north.

These were descendants of Nizār and in the first quarter of the eighteenth century supposed adherents of these two large descent groups polarised into the Hināwiyy and Ghāfariyy political factions, the former being centred around the Bani Hinā and the latter around the Bani Ghāfir. The Bani Hinā are of Yemenite descent and Qahtāniyy, whilst the Bani Ghāfir are of Nizāriyy descent. It goes without saying that not all the descendants of Nizār follow that faction, as the previously referred to community loyalties have often confused the basic picture and many change sides—sometimes repeatedly. The same is also true for the Hināwiyy faction. This situation is illustrated broadly but graphically by the two villages in Izki, one called Yaman and one called Nizār which are situated only a few hundred yards apart though separated by a huge fort, built almost as though to maintain the peace between them. However, it would be wrong to ascribe the polarisation between the two parties which took place in the early eighteenth century to a precise perpetuation of the above story. Rather they

### A simplified version of the most important descent groups in classical Arab genealogies



The reader will note the several links between the two main descent lines from Qahtān and Nizār.

kept the names for a new struggle between new tribal factions. Naturally this enmity is dying as Oman progresses, but it does on occasion have curious effects. The author once finished a strike when the Ghāfariy and bedu Duruw' heard that he was at that time living, not only with townsmen but near Hināwiys as well. Their leaders and their shaykh agreed instantly that the circumstances of his life were so awful that they should not add to his obvious difficulties by continuing the strike. Most of the tribes of Arabia congregate towards one faction or other and the table following shows the eponymous ancestors and original groupings of some Omani tribes involved in the historical Hināwiy—Ghāfariy dispute. It should be noted, however, that the Bani Riyām and the Janabah are nowadays Ghāfariy and the Harāsiys are Hināwiy.

Despite their lower social positions the bedu in Oman have always had affiliations with various of the greater *hadr* tribes who have employed them as mercenaries. In this way the Wahiybah have had a long and close tie with the Harth, the Janabah with the Bani Riyām and the Duruw' with the Bani Ghāfir; though this last connection has been less close than the other two. The Harāsiys have links with the Harth on similar lines as well as with the Āl Bu Sa'iydiy ruling family. This last relationship is also paralleled in a tenuous way with the Duruw'.

The tribal situation should not be thought to be in any way a static thing. It is constantly changing not only between tribe and tribe but within a tribe as well. The bedu of Oman provide many examples of this and for instance it has been possible to collect family trees which show how a tribe comes into existence. This can happen in two ways. Firstly either a section can split off from an existing tribe and take up its own existence as a discrete tribe in its own right. An example of this is the way in which during the present century the Āl Bu Shams have split off from the Na'im; naturally they remain a part of the same descent-group. Secondly a tribe can evolve out of a community-group that sinks the memories of differing descent-group origins and even goes so far as to invent false internal connections so that they can all say that they are from the same descent-group. In this way the people of the southern Omani steppe, comprising men from the Janabah, Bayt Kathiyr and Harāsiys, have all consolidated as the modern Harasiys. As far as desert life is concerned this really amounts to a continual process of re-adjustment by the human population to accommodate itself both to the supply of food and the maintenance of a numerical strength sufficient for defence purposes.

Once a tribe has received its identity and is recognised by the others, a quite informal and accidental matter, it will usually grow and perhaps give rise to daughter tribes. Alternatively the opposite may happen and the tribe will become weak. It will then perhaps become absorbed by a stronger neighbour, or enter into a client relationship with them. In this way most of the older existing descent-group tribes contain sections which are of entirely different origin to the rest of the tribe. Eventually a situation like that of the Bani Riyām may develop where the bulk of the tribe is in fact non-Riyāmiy.

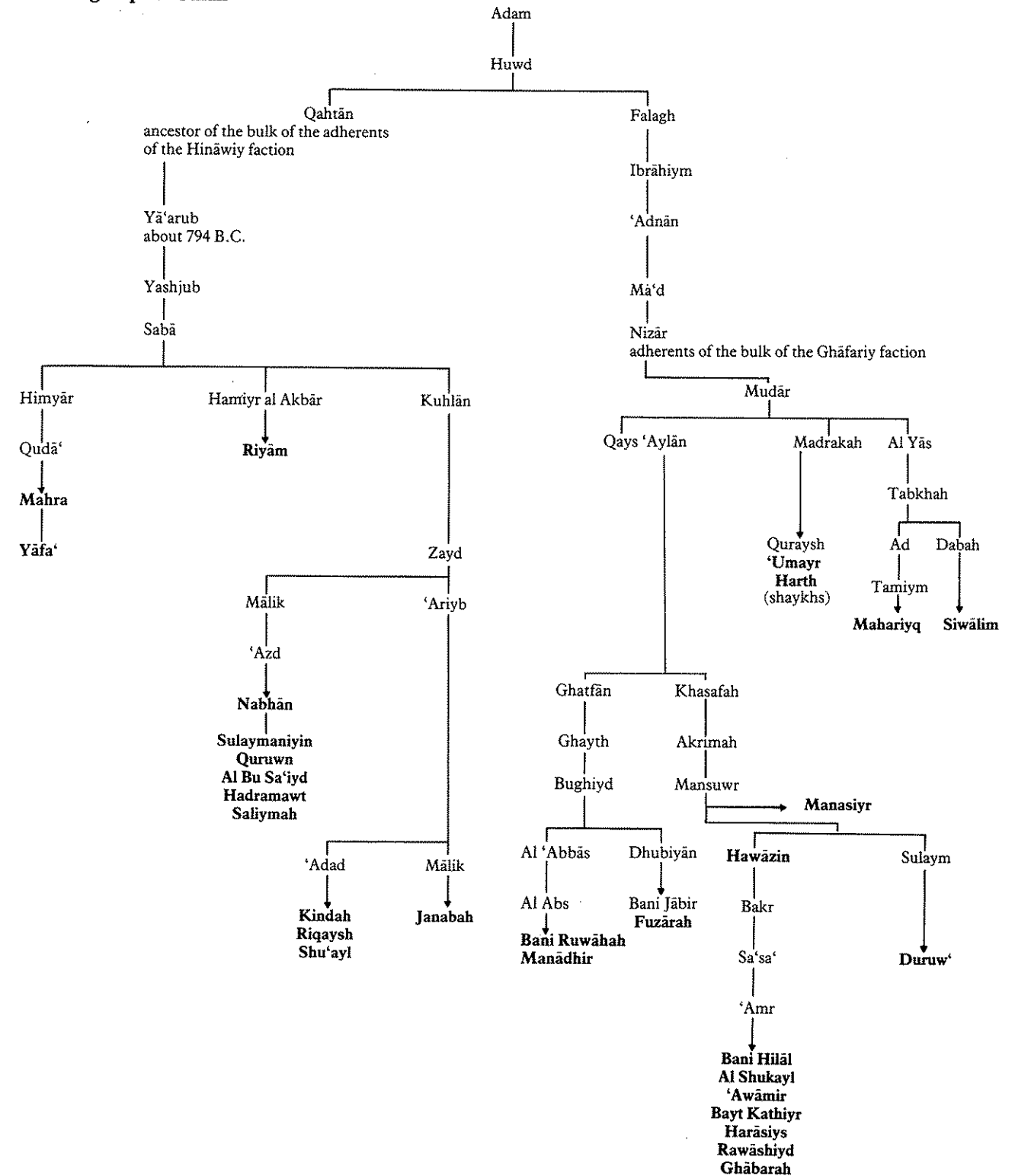
Oman has further lines of division along religious lines. In the central mountain chain was situated the stronghold of the Ibādiyy sect. This sect, originating from

the Khārijite movement and splitting off from the Sunni or orthodox political and religious concepts of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate in Iraq, was started by Abdullah b. Ibād al Tamiyiy. The Ibādiys and their associated Imamate ruled central Oman, on and off, for many hundreds of years. There are also many Sunni Muslims in the country and some tribes have espoused the beliefs of the strict Wahhābiyy discipline of Saudi Arabia. On the Bātinah coast in Muttrah there is also a small community of Shi'a, unorthodox Muslims, here called Hyderabadīys or Khojars. They include family names such as Sajwāniy, Najwāniy, Kajlāniy, Jusfāniy, Khojar and 'Iysāniy. Other Shi'a groups are the Āl Aghā Khāniy Ismā'iyliys of whom most left Oman in 1965 and 1966 returning to Pakistan. Those that remain are termed Khojar at times nowadays. Followers of the twelfth Imam form a considerable community on the coast also and include the Bahārinah, Jā'fariy, Makkiy, Jamāniy and Āl Shaykh who all have a tradition of migration from Bahrayn and Hasa in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Āl 'Ufūwr descent group are to be included with these. Other coastal groups of minority status but who are orthodox Sunnis are the Zedjaliy, who are Arab and said to be Bani Umayya who settled in Sind with Muhammad Qāsim al Thaqāfiy. Their name derives from the Baluch for foreigner which is Judagal. The Āl Miymāniy are similar and arrived from Sind also by way of trade. The large and widely distributed Baluch community is likewise Sunni and often represents a continued settlement stretching over many hundreds of years.

However, it is the Ibādiyy movement itself which has been the most important factor in the maintenance of the Omani tribal system. It is a system which can only be supported by a potential for tribal anarchy and which therefore carries with it the seeds of its own destruction. Because tribalism is really to do with identity, whether there was actually an Imām at its head or not, the potential for factional rivalry ensured the continuance of tribal differences and so the continuance of the tribal system itself. The other religious groups were not important in this respect, but possibly caused the reverse, a unity amongst the Ibādiys in the face of what amounted to outside and foreign attempts to dominate or conquer them. They are thus similar to the effects of any other outside invasion such as those of the Portuguese, Sunni Caliphs or the Persians, or the Qarmatians and the Wahhābiys of Saudi Arabia; all of which at one time or another served to bring unity of some kind to the tribes of the Omani interior.

In the description of selected tribes that follow it is hoped to illustrate the points raised in the introductory chapter, but first it is convenient to consider the descent structure of a typical (but mythical) tribe. The original ancestor will have had children who themselves give their names to the sub-sections and so on. Naturally this simple situation rarely if ever exists. Sections, it is true, take their names from descendants of the original ancestor but they are usually not his immediate offspring, but rather an outstanding descendant who has become remembered for some reason. The intervening genealogical links become forgotten, particularly amongst the bedu, and this fact provides the opportunity for the absorption of other descent-groups into the tribe. The names that are given to the tribal groups and their constituent parts are as follows:

The classical relationships of some descent groups in Oman



The tribal name, which is often that of the eponymous ancestor himself is preceded by the word 'Bani', 'Banu', 'Bin': all of which mean 'son' or 'son of'. Sometimes the name is preceded by 'Āl' or 'Ahl' which means 'the people of'; and the name that follows in this case is very often the name of a place rather than a person. Occasionally the word 'Bayt' is similarly used and this means 'house'; also the epithet 'Awlād' or 'Wilād' fulfills a similar function, meaning 'children of'.

The tribe, *qabiylah*, plural *qabā'il*, is frequently in Oman called *tā'ifah* with the plural *tawā'if*.

The divisions are called *bayt*, plural *buyuwat*, and the sub-sections *butn*, meaning 'stomach' with the plural *butuwn*. Often the divisions are also called *fakdh*, plural *fukuwdh*, which means a 'thigh'. However, there is no general system and what is called a *butn* in one tribe will be called a *fakdh* in another. The eponymous ancestor is referred to as the *jadd* or grandfather.

In effect the *bayt* is an extended family, the basic unit of society and this attached by a lineage to the *qabiylah* for the purpose of identification. It is irrelevant that this lineage is real, imaginary or plainly false. The important thing is to possess an identity so that one belongs to the system.

In most cases it is not possible to provide exact dating for the generations in the family trees but a rough estimate can be achieved if a period of twenty-five years is taken as a generation. Tribal strengths where they are given relate to an estimate of the number of adult males.

In the tribal accounts which follow the Arab terms for tribal divisions are not used. For the sake of simplicity the divisions are referred to as sections and sub-sections.

This general account would be incomplete if it were not pointed out that it refers to the tribes of those people who definitely consider themselves and each other as Arabs. In Oman there are well defined groups of people whose origins almost certainly go back to the time before the historical Arab conquests of the territory. These groups are often not regarded as being Arab by their neighbours, and whilst some ascribe their origins variously to descent from prisoners of war, unions between true Arabs and slaves, and immigrants from the Hadramawt, it may well be that we see the remnants of the ancient tribe of 'Ad, who were conquered by Qahtān and his sons. This would accord with their present somewhat lowly status and all the attributive descents above would not really contradict such a supposition. Today they are called Bayāsarah and Bayādir in Oman. The former have frequently become assimilated into the tribal structure of the Arabs and are designated by the word *Mawlā* in front of their tribal name; thus *Mawlā Mahariyq*. The Bayādir seem to descend from the villagers present in Oman at the time of the Persian occupation in Sasanid times and still retain, by virtue of their traditional jobs in the palm gardens, an indication of their ancient agricultural system. Their status varies between the Sunni and Ibādi parts of Oman. Amongst the former they are of near *Mawlā* status, with the latter they may bear arms and have almost full tribal status.

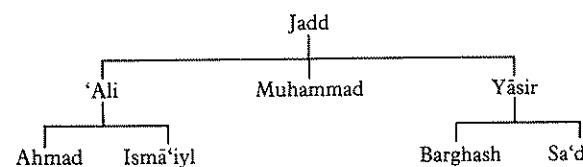
The Bayāsarah of Oman are comparable to the Da'iyf groups of Dhufar, and, because the sobriquet Bayāsarah is one of opprobrium, the following accounts will call

them the people of 'Ad to avoid giving offence. Both tribesmen who use the term as an insult and the Bayāsarah themselves are unaware that it is very possible that it is the Bayāsarah who have the more ancient, if unrecorded, lineage.

Finally it is necessary to consider how the present system may have grown up and the position of the classical genealogies which provide the base and framework for it. As elsewhere primordial Arabia was originally populated by ancestors who must have had a very simple social organisation. It is possible that even ideas like the individual possession of children did not exist. In these circumstances polyandry and its consequent development into matriarchal society may have occurred. The influence of this matriarchy is apparent in the large numbers of feminine names at the base of the classical genealogical trees and in the maintenance of feminine gender in many of the terms used to describe tribal matters today. Moreover, it is not infrequent, particularly amongst the bedu, to see men even now describing themselves as being the sons of their mothers rather than their fathers.

The inter-group raids and wars which characterised pre-Islamic Arabia may have led to marriage by capture as a very frequent occurrence. This itself could have led to the establishment of a patriarchal society because women tended to become a prize of battle rather than mothers of tribes, and this change-over created the need to establish patriarchal links which would define a particular individual's blood kindred. It was from this that the genealogies grew up and of course received extra impetus and importance at the time of the Islamic conquests when it became necessary not only to be able to differentiate one Arab from another but also Arabs in general from non-Arabs. The genealogies should not be regarded as records of absolute fact, rather as a reflection of social events. They have been patched and arranged to fit the varying exigencies of circumstance to such an extent that they require a great deal of specialist interpretation.

### Diagram of a Tribe



This tribe would be written as an organisation as follows:

#### The Jadd

has sections:  
'Ali

with sub-sections:  
Ahmad  
Ismā'iyil

Muhammad  
Yāsir

with sub-sections:  
Barghash  
Sa'd

## Chapter Two THE BEDU

The tribesmen spend most of their time living in the open under a thorn tree. The place inhabited by one family is called a *fariyq*, plural *firqān*, a word used by the northern bedu tribes to describe a small encampment of less than ten tents. If the site is reasonably permanent or one that they will return to with some frequency, the outer branches of the tree are loosely walled in with branches and odd pieces of timber to form a circular house.

There is no furniture and the tree branches serve as both cupboards and coat hooks. The dining room is simply a large plate placed on a mat spread on the ground; for a sitting-room a carpet is unrolled on the sand. Everything is in accord with the principle that if one cannot carry it on a camel or a donkey, one does not have it. Naturally this is becoming modified as the Landrover takes over from the animals, and numbers of bedu are beginning to build homes.

The following is a list of the more frequently met and traditional possessions found in a *fariyq*:

<i>zabiyl</i>	an oblong wicker basket for keeping all the necessary equipment for making coffee.
<i>mufann</i> or <i>masak</i> by other bedu and <i>rashah</i> (Kathiriy), <i>matakk</i> (Bathariy)	a pestle
<i>mayyaqah</i> or <i>minhāz</i> in Buraymiy <i>barād</i>	a mortar
<i>mihmās</i> or <i>mijlah</i>	a straw fan for cooling the roasted beans.
<i>mahwās</i> in Suwr <i>mahwath</i> or <i>majlab</i>	a large ladle perforated for roasting the beans. small ladle-like paddle for stirring.
<i>dallah</i> or <i>madlah</i> <i>zajiybah</i>	coffee-pot. a little leather bag or gazelle skin for storing the beans.
<i>finjān</i> , plural <i>fanajiyin</i>	coffee-cup.
<i>haban</i> or <i>qarabah</i> <i>zanzamiyah</i>	leather containers for rations. thermos flask. Increasingly used to serve the coffee, the

*karāmah*

*sāhah*

*simmah*, plural *samiym*

*dallah* being only used to cook it.

a basket made out of very fine wickerwork and leather. Used for milking camels.

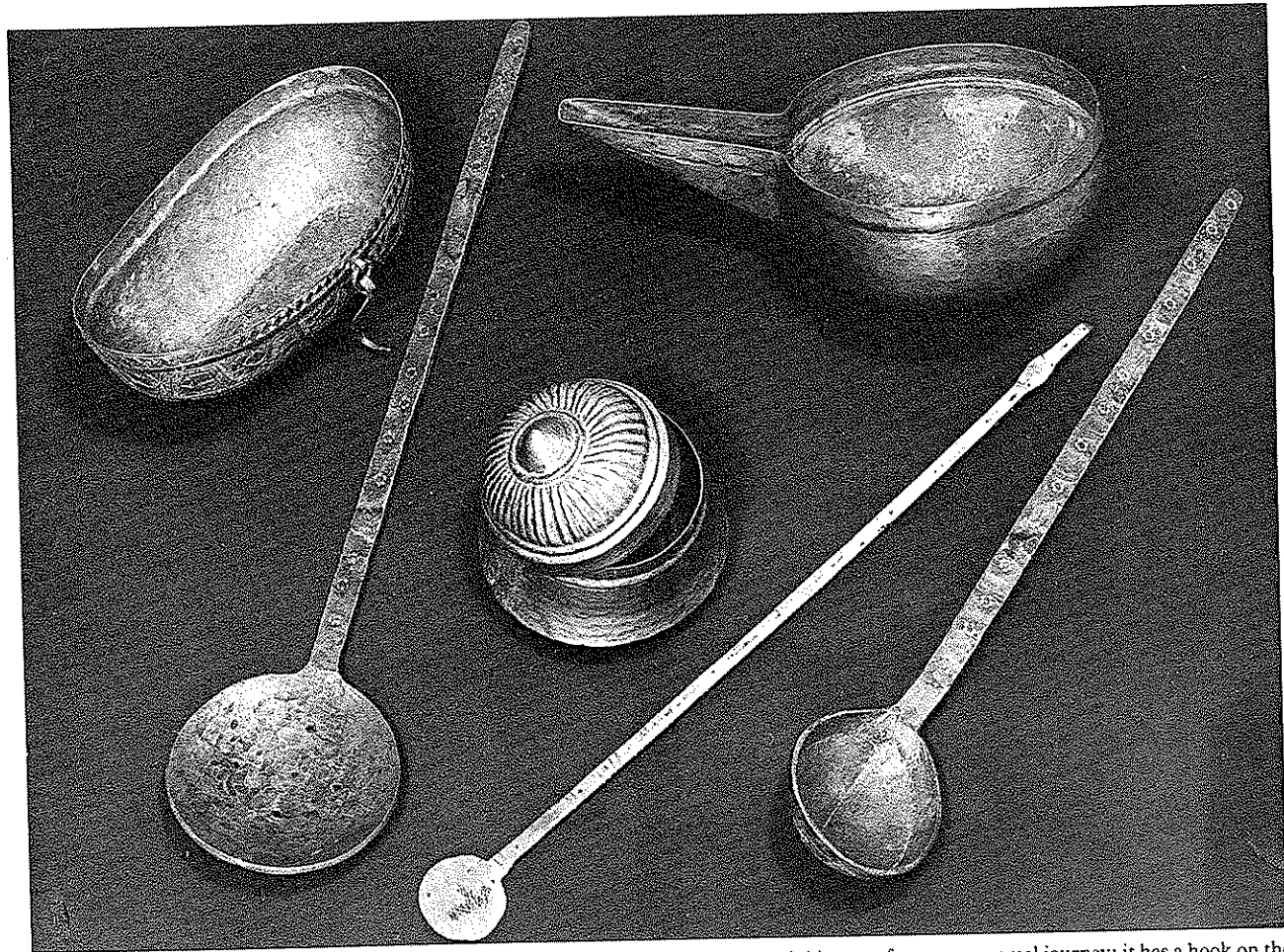
a plain woven carpet made out of goat's wool. Usually red and black with a white design in the border, sometimes yellow.

a large circular straw mat some five feet in diameter, used for collecting the buds of the *samarah* or thorn bush when these have been beaten off the bush with a stick, the buds being fed to goats and camels.

Apart from camel saddlery which is listed below under the *Duruw'*, this short list comprises most of the ordinary property of the bedu. They may also have a few metal trunks notable only for the nastiness of their design.

The clothes of the bedu are likewise few and simple. The principle article of male attire is a long nightshirt-like garment called a *dishdashah* (plural *dashadiysh*). Though more often that not plain white in colour, black, russet, brown and even red and blue ones are met with. Underneath the *dishdashah* a length of plain cotton is worn around the waist as an undergarment. This is frequently of local manufacture. On his head is a turban of Kashmir wool. This is usually plain white with a coloured border but the bedu often favour an orange one and other colours are also used, particularly amongst the children. However, they are all made in a size suitable for adults and so the children seem to have enormous hats reminiscent of the pictures of Syrian notables of yesteryear.

Around the waist is carried the glory of Omani costume, a dagger called a *khanjar*. No one is without it, and though its magnificence is tempered by the status and wealth of the wearer, it is invariably present. It is made to a high standard of workmanship and the craftsmen of Oman lavish their greatest skills in creating them. Nowadays they are made to a design which is basically



Omani copper-ware. This group shows modern Nizwa work and consists of a copper drinking cup for use on a camel journey; it has a hook on the side of it to attach it to the harness; a copper jug-bowl and a small box, a pierced coffee bean roaster, a brass paddle for stirring and a ladle.

the same as those manufactured further north in the Arabian Gulf. However, this was not always so and at one time a number of *khanjars* were made to a design called *Sa'iydiy* after the ruling dynasty. The story is that an early member of the royal family had a Persian wife who despaired at the austere designs favoured by the Ibādīs, and accordingly caused a brighter design to be manufactured. Both types are illustrated, and it can be seen that the Omani *khanjar* is intermediate in shape between the straight daggers of Syria or the slightly curved ones of Aden or the Hadramawt, and the fully curved daggers found in the Yemen.

The *khanjar* is carried on a belt that is often made of woven silver threads. The source of the silver for this and other ornaments is the Maria Therese dollar which was widely used in the Arabian Peninsula. Everything is made to order by the silversmith. The purchaser merely gives him so many dollars, some of which are used to make the ornament, the rest being taken as the smith's profit.

Amongst the Duruw' the head-rope is decorated with silver and instead of the usual word for head-rope, *aqal*, it is called a *miknās*. The silver decoration ends in two rings which are often used as a repository for keys and the head-rope itself is also used to keep a little silver case containing tweezers. This is called a *manqash*, and is used for the removal of thorns and beard-plucking. The *khanjar* and its belt are frequently embellished with a second little case shaped like a bullet. This is a *makhal*

and contains kohl. Kohl is powdered antimony and universally used as an eye-shadow. They believe that apart from its cosmetic effect it is very good for strengthening the eyesight. These kohl bottles of Oman are very characteristic and are very different from the ones found in the Yemen and Aden which are often heavily decorated with cowrie shells or lavishly decorated individual silver bottles, and the simpler bottles made in the Gulf area out of spent cartridge-cases. In Dhufar the Qara tribemen utilise the shoulder blade of a young camel to make the container for kohl, whilst northern Arabs have small boxes like snuff-boxes for the same purpose.

The bedu also use their headdresses to carry a pipe and tobacco, never seeming to use the water-pipe found on the Bātinah coast and in the towns of the interior. Instead they have small pipes made from a variety of materials; some are made from palm wood and others from gypsum or even, occasionally silver. Each pipe is only big enough for at the most four or five puffs, however the uncured sun-dried tobacco is so vicious that this is probably sufficient.

In the old days the bedu of the Omani interior obtained the gypsum for these pipes from the Wadi Zibarah in the *dirah* of the Duruw' and from the Jiddat al Harasiys. They call them either *midwakh* or *buwriy*. Matches are variously called *kibriyt* in the towns and *maghshah* or *shakhah* by the bedu. Flints which are no longer used are called *salbuwkh* or *madrabah*.



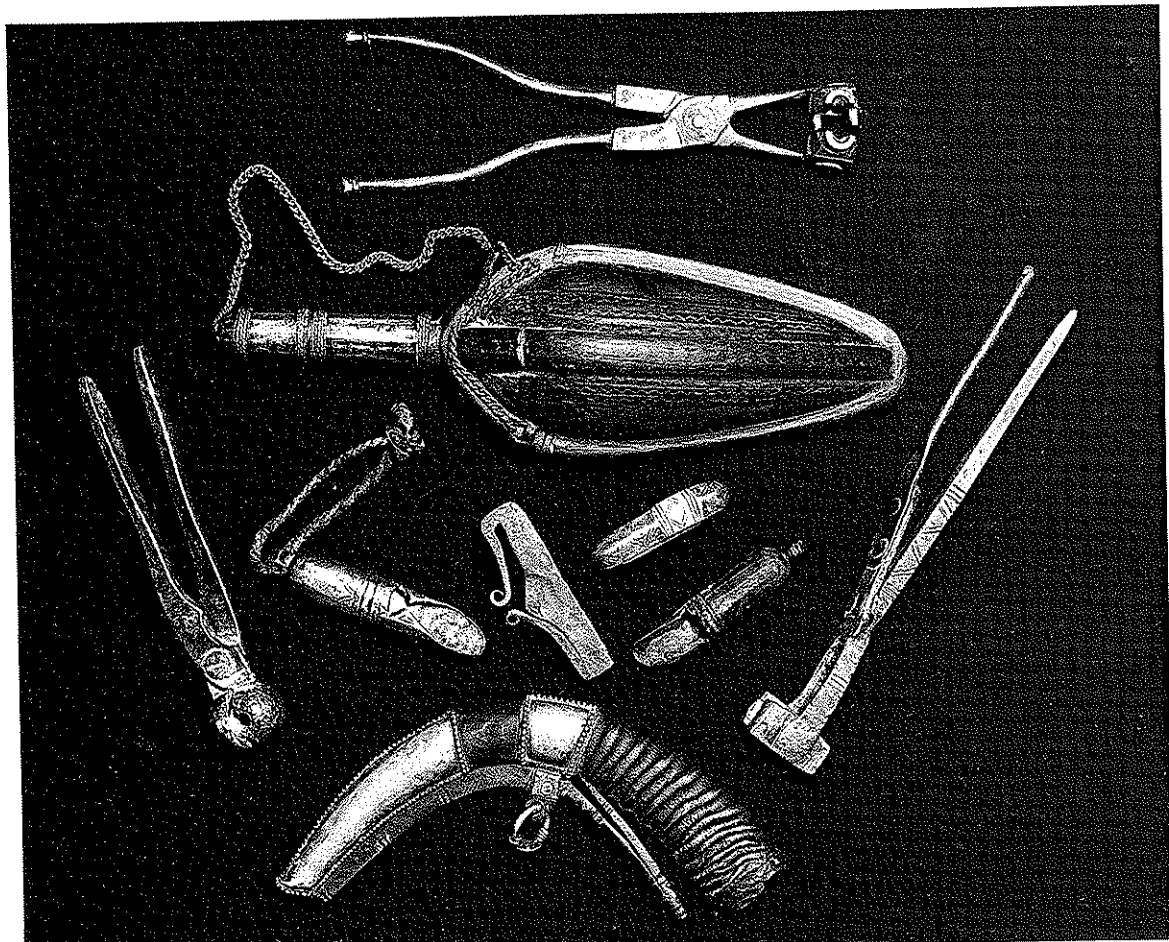
Omani pottery. In Oman the main centre for pottery is the town of Bahla where large storage pots are made. These pieces originate as follows. The jug, which is in reality a coffee-pot, the top being filled with palm-fibre to filter the grounds, was made in Izki and the two incense cups come from Fanjah. The other objects on the right are incense burners from Dhufar, the one on the far right being upside down. The group is standing on a goat's wool *bisht* made by the Duruw'.

In the winter the bedu wrap themselves in a woollen cloak called a *bisht*, this is usually home-made in the poorer households from the wool of their own goats and sheep, with a simple decoration embroidered around the collar. More prosperous people wear the better Arab cloak, called an '*abbā*', the gold embroidery of which extends down the front of the garment.

The women dress in a plain shift-like garment which is quite shapeless and made at home from garishly decorated imported cotton. This is covered with a black cloak, also called an '*abbā*' which effectively conceals most of the dress underneath. This cloak extends over their heads and their faces are covered by a rigid mask, usually dyed with indigo, called a *birqa*'. It would thus seem that she is at a serious disadvantage compared to her Western sister, but it is amazing how flirtatious she can be, and how few Spanish ladies with their fans could compete with the dark eyes of Arabia behind the masks. Indeed amongst the bedu the women are far from downtrodden; it is usually the grandmother who rules the family, and, perhaps because of the harshness of life, women are very free within the exigencies of desert etiquette. When a stranger or foreigner becomes known to them they will join in the conversation at the coffee fire and receive him on behalf of their menfolk if these are absent.

Unless he has work the bedu is usually occupied with gossiping at home or herding his camels. It is also his

prerogative to do the shopping in the local town itself. This is now changing but many bedu still believe that town air is poisonous and if their shopping is not finished they will camp outside the town until the following day. Meanwhile his wife stays at home in the *fariyq* looking after the children and making thread on a bobbin as she follows the goat flock. When her husband returns he will make the coffee but usually leaves the rest of the cooking to her. However, one has known hilarious evenings when the men did the cooking and their wives looked on and passed somewhat insulting comments and advice. The arrival of guests is always the occasion for a large meal and a goat is invariably slaughtered. Such is the generosity of these bedu that they will often kill their last animal to honour a guest, giving no thought to their own tomorrow. Indeed most of the poorer families only eat meat on this sort of occasion. The cuisine of the bedu is very simple and the goat is merely boiled and served on a mound of similarly cooked rice. It is a mark of honour that the host will refuse to eat with his guests, and at times this can lead to embarrassment when a European is ignorant of the way to deal with a whole boiled goat. However, there are usually Arab guests who know how to divide the meat and pour the gravy around the edge of the rice on the single huge plate. Before eating hands are washed and only the right is used to eat with. The meat is divided and placed atop the rice with the surplus being put onto a separate plate. Often, on less formal and



Equipment for use with the matchlock. This group is comprised of three bullet moulds, which are the plier-like tools. Two powder horns, one made from a coconut and the other from goat horn. In the centre, the group of small objects is made up of two powder scoops, an iron for striking a spark from a flint, and just above that a small brass band for holding the flint itself.

friendly occasions special tidbits are pushed over to the guest. When all are satisfied or the chief guest has finished fingers are wiped on the edge of the plate and all rise to rinse out their mouths and wash their hands once again.

The host not eating with his guest, and the arrangements whereby women do not eat with men, are customs which may have a most ancient and curious origin. It is very probable that they represent a survival of the days of totemism (see section on the Harāyis). People with differing totems would have different dietary taboos and wives and guests would be likely to be from different kindred to their host or husband. He could not therefore

#### Greeting

on meeting

*Al-salām 'alaykum* (Peace be with you)  
and the hand is stretched out with the remark 'mudd'  
meaning shake hands.

then

*Kayf hāl rabā' akum* (How is your family?)

*Kayf hāl 'arbānkum* (How are your companions?)

*Kayf hāl firqānkum* (How is your group?)

*Kayf hāl badūwkum* (How are your bedu?)

*Kayf hāl jamā' atkum* (How is your family group?)

*Kayf hāl alwānkum* (How is your health? - lit. 'colours')

*Kayf hāl ashābkum* (How are your friends?)

share in their meals without infringing his own taboos. It is possible that these prohibitions have nowadays become expressed in the laws of etiquette.

The greetings the bedu use are long and on formal occasions not unlike a lengthy litany. They are used both when meeting someone on the road and on arrival at a *fariyq*. The most common ones are laid out below and it is extraordinary how, should there be a group of people, the one starting the greetings never loses his place as he speaks to each one. This is particularly striking when it is realised that they are questioning and answering each person in the group almost simultaneously.

#### Reply

*Al hamdu lillah bi na'amah*  
(Praise be to God in good health)

All replies are the same as above or:

*Bi na samah ma had yashkiy bās* (Well, no one complains)

or

*Bil khayr al hamdu lillah* (Well, praise God)

or

*Allah hiyyiyk* (God be with you)

*Kayf hāl asdiqā'kum* (How are your close friends?)

*Kayf hāl rufaqa'kum* (How are your companions?)

*Kayf hāl jiyrānkum* (How are your neighbours?)

*Kayf hāl awlādikum* (How are your children?)

*Kayf hāl shuyuwkhkum* (How are your shaykhs?)

*Kayf hāl al shaybān* (How are your old men?)

*Kayf hāl al saghiyriyn* (How are the little ones?)

After these greetings, or rather a selection of appropriate ones, have been used this first part will close by the questioner asking after a few friends by name and the person greeted will then say 'Yā Marhabah' which means welcome.

It is at this stage that a friendly argument will develop as it is now the custom to ask for the news and it is the prerogative of the eldest or most senior man to do this. A wrangle will begin until he can eventually be made to accept the honour. However, it is thought to be the height of politeness to persuade someone else to do it.

#### Question

*Shay' 'aluwm* (Is there any news?)

lit. anything known.

*Shay' akhbār* (Is there any news?)

*Shay' min al hawādith* (Have there been any incidents?)

These questions are not invariable and often differ in form. In the desert they tend to be more fully used than in the towns and on really formal occasions most of them will be utilised. As the rush of progress has its impact on Oman they will become reduced even further.

#### Reply

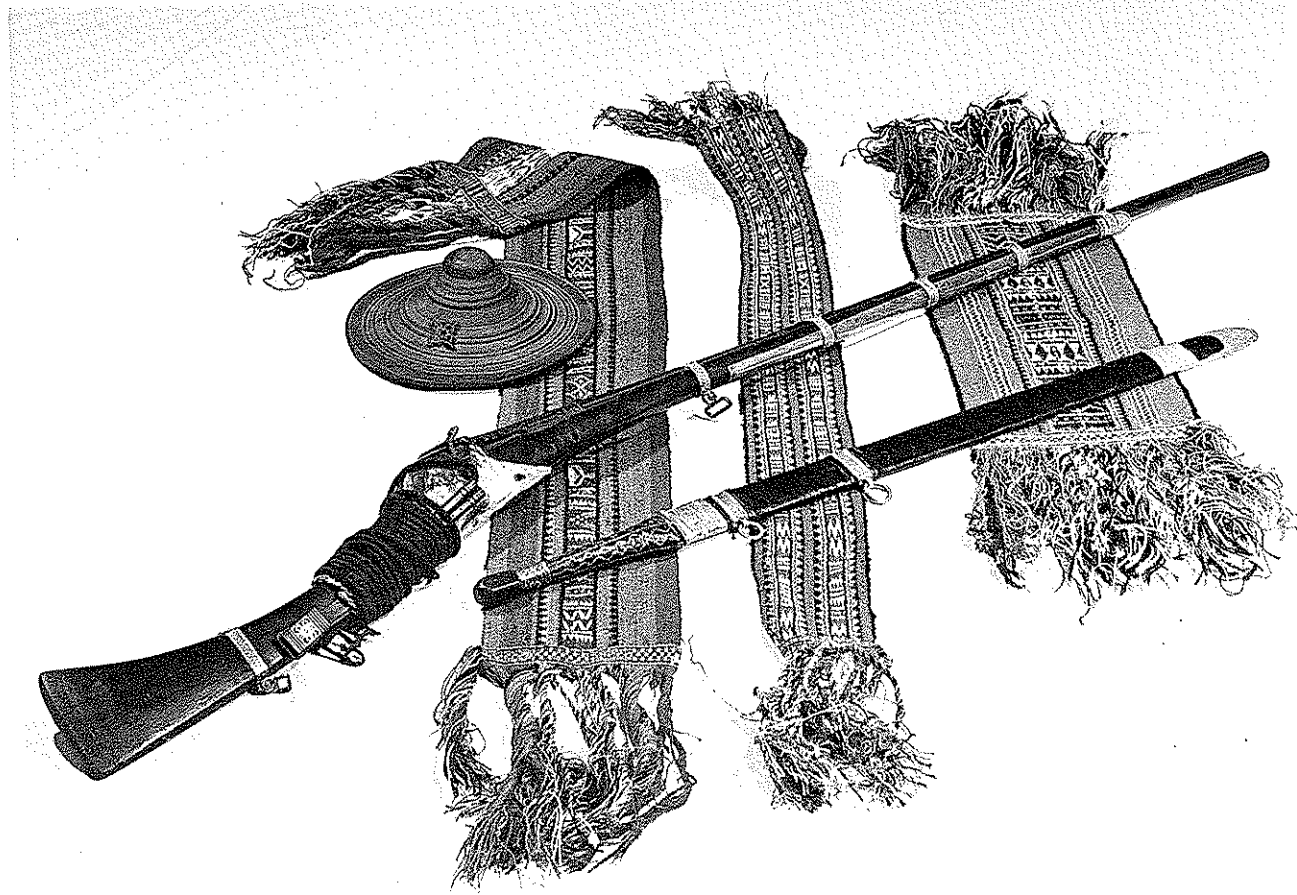
*Ma shay' 'aluwm* (There is no news).

*Ma shay' akhbār* (There is no news).

*Abādān* or *Barho al hamdu lillah harakāt sākinah* and nowadays (rarely) is added *mawjuwd al Sultān* (No, praise God everything is quiet and the Sultan is present)



Detail of the silver decoration on an Omani sword scabbard. This fine work was carried out in Nizwa and clearly shows the typical curled leaf pattern of this area. At the top of the picture there is an example of the rose pattern mixed with a simplified version of the curled leaf. This demonstrates how so many of the designs are shared by several communities, even though partiality for one or another makes one design more favoured in a particular area. The sword belonged to the Waradiy of Samad.



Traditional Omani arms. The weapons used in tribal warfare used to be the sword and the matchlock called *Abu Fatiyah*. The former was carried on a thong over the shoulder and the Omanis have developed a method of making the blade vibrate, which makes the sword act rather like a circular saw and so much more efficient as a cutting instrument. Today this action can be seen ceremonially at dances. Both sword and gun are often finely decorated with silver. The small shield is made of thick hide and this typical example is of a type imported from Zanzibar. The cloth strips show traditional patterns of weaving used to decorate the cushions attached to the wooden camel saddle tree.

On taking leave after a meal or merely after a meeting in the road the following exchange will take place.

#### Person Leaving

*Natarakhas* or *Nastarkhas* or  
*Nast'idhan minikum* (We ask your leave to go)  
*Ahsant jazākum Allah bil khayr*  
(It is done may God reward you with goodness)

It is only after the coffee which normally follows the asking for news that any actual news will be given. Even if a series of terrible disasters have overtaken a bedu he will deny that anything at all has happened at this stage of the conversation. However, if there is something urgent to impart it is not considered rude for a guest to take the person he wants to speak to on one side before the coffee is served.

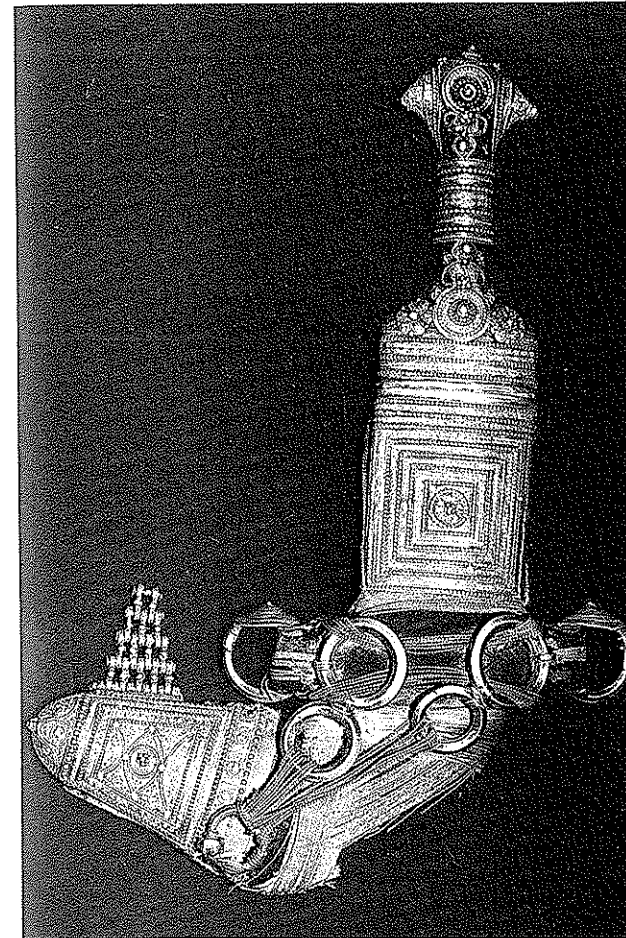
Within the closeness of a family group meetings begin with the rubbing of noses if the visiting relative has not seen his family for a week or so. Amongst the Mahra this is modified to a cheek kiss.

The drinking of coffee is itself an occasion for social formality. The following description is a reasonably full account and it should be understood that as with the

#### Reply

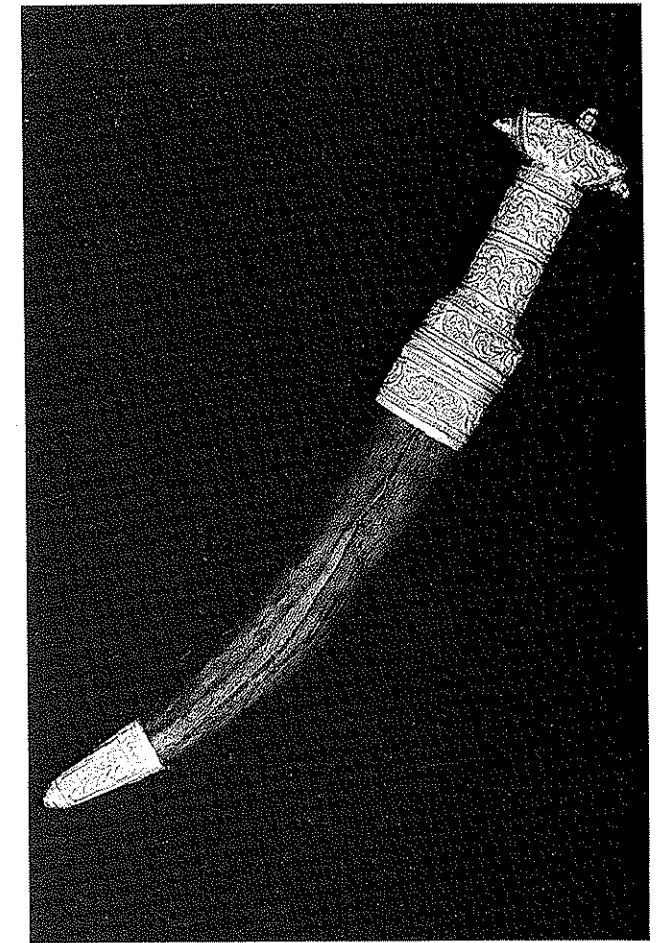
*Hājat amārah* or '*Awāmīr shay*'  
(Have you any orders?)

greetings it can be modified to suit the occasion. The coffee having been made, it is poured out, with the pot being held in the left hand, into a small coffee cup. At first the guest will quarrel with his host or a neighbour as to who should take it. Usually the person who has agreed to be asked the news will eventually accept. If the occasion is a formal one three cups will be accepted, the cup being returned and the hand holding it being shaken quite vigorously to show that the guest will have no more. The coffee is frequently flavoured with cardomon. The coffee drinking is preceded by the eating of dates followed by either more dates or *halwah* which is a glutinous sweetmeat. In its turn each offering of food is followed by the washing of hands in a small bowl of water. After *halwah*, tea is often drunk and amongst the



Omani *khanjar*. An example of the "Sa'iydiy" or Royal Style. The story goes that Sultān Sa'iyd b. Sultān had a Persian wife who became bored with her husband's *khanjar* hilt and designed him a brighter one. Persian influence also appears in the sophisticated design on the basal plate of the scabbard.

northern tribes this is invariably taken with milk and a lot of sugar. However, in the south of Oman and towards Dhufar, it is frequently drunk red or *ahmār*, without either. It seems to be a custom to drink tea this way in these areas after eating fish, milk being used after meat. The southern tribes also usually make their coffee from the husk of the coffee-bean in the Hadramiy or Saudi way, instead of from the bean itself which is used in northern Oman. Following the tea more dates will be offered and then a final round of coffee is drunk. When this is done it is normally time for the visitor to leave, but on occasions, before he does so, he will be offered perfume and incense to sweeten his beard and clothes. The perfume is passed round in its bottle and the incense in a burner on hot charcoal. Incense is the most famous product of Dhufar but today it is only collected in small quantities by the Mahra and Bayt Kathiy, the war having prevented the previous commercial trade in the precious gum. Three main categories or qualities are recognised and collected by tapping the curiously lumpy bushes in much the same way as rubber is obtained. These three kinds are called *Najdiy*, which comes from the northern slopes of the mountains, *Shazariy* coming from their southern and more western slopes, and *Shā'abiy* which originates from



Mahri dagger from Dhufar. The shape is quite distinct from both the *khanjar* of Oman and the *jambiyah* of the Yemen. This example is unusual in that the silverwork was added in Ibbri, and the rose typical of this place is missing from the design. The band at the bottom of the hilt shows very nicely the vertical tree version of the curled leaf pattern which, despite the origin of this particular piece of work, is often termed the Nizwa tree.

the coastal plain. The tree is called *mughār* (plural *mughārāt*) in Dhufar and the incense is called *laban* or milk, which is an obvious reference to its colour when it oozes out of the tree.

In Oman the gum is used in a variety of ways. When it is burnt on its own it is called '*awd*'; it is powdered and made into a liquid, often mixed with powdered sandal-wood and used as a cosmetic. Again it is melted down with sugar and sandal-wood (*sandal*) (*sahālah* is the name of the ground wood), when it is called *samagh* or *ghabuwr*, the resulting cake is burnt like '*awd*'.

The incense burners are called *mijmār* and most are made locally. Those manufactured from clay are made in Oman; in Dhufar they are made in a variety of shapes, some like little houses and decorated with red and dark green designs, likewise made from clay. The Omani ones are shaped like large egg-cups and usually rather crude. Trade with the Gulf States has led to importation of the larger wooden and metal ones which are decorated with mirrors and are not very attractive.

Relaxation in the desert is infrequent but in the evenings the ladies particularly amongst the Duruw' play flutes made out of oryx horns and coffee-drinking by the men is followed at any time by the playing of games. Sometimes the bedu have a jumping game, where each man holding



A collection of Omani kohl bottles (*makhal*). The group shaped like bullets are the ones worn by men in their belts. The one on the left was made in Ibri and shows the rose design typical of that place. The one at top centre comes from Nizwa and the one on the right from Rustāq. The rod in the centre is used for mixing the cosmetic in bulk. This is done in the little bowl immediately below. The three tub-shaped bottles are the type used by the women and all were made in Nizwa.

a large rock to give him self-impetus, jumps from a mark or off the top of an oil drum. The one who gets furthest wins. There are several quieter games played with counters. The counters are usually pebbles or pieces of camel dung. The following games were collected amongst the Mahra but are played in all parts of the Sultanate.

#### The Game of the Huwayliys

This game originates in the towns and is played with incredible speed. To begin a board is prepared by making holes in the sand, two rows of seven for each of the two contestants:



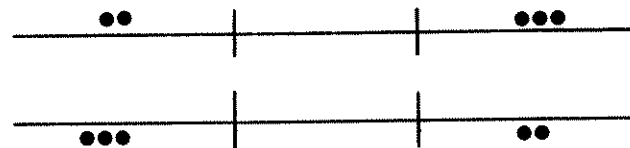
A camel dropping is then placed in each hole, and the game starts by the first player moving a dropping and stopping opposite one of his opponents holes. The first man then takes the opposing dropping. The pieces can be doubled up in a hole, as many as needed, and subsequent moves are arranged around this

accumulation as it determines how many holes can be covered in the following moves. If whilst moving one ends up opposite a hole without an opposing piece in it you can move no further.

#### The Game of Baswafāfiy

This game seems to be purely bedu, and is again played by two people.

A board is prepared making a flat space in the sand with a ridge running across each player's side. This ridge has a break or pass in the middle and the game is a war-game. The ridges are called *jabal* and the gap '*aqabah* meaning mountain and pass respectively. Each player takes six camel droppings and arranges five of them on top of his *jabal* either side of the pass:



These five represent the soldiers and the sixth is called the shaykh or the *dābit*, that is, the officer. He is used by the person starting the game to flick across the space in an attempt to hit an opposing soldier. Only one flick is

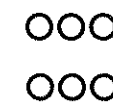


The Omani coffee pot. The characteristic Omani coffee pot (*dallah*) is illustrated by the pair on the left. Others found in the territory, like those on the left, are imported and called *kuwaytiyah*. The copper and brass Omani pot is no longer made, but is quite distinct in type, and is easily differentiated from similar ones made in the United Arab Emirates by the narrowness of its waist and the pattern which follows the Nizwa curled leaf type. The group rests on a woven wool camel bag made in Ibri to a traditional pattern.

allowed at a time and the game continues until one player has hit all of the opposing men. A score is then taken and the smaller number hit are put up again. The game goes on until one player has failed to hit any of his opponents men and all twelve are in the winner's hand.

#### The Game of Bāwinatun

Make six houses by digging holes in the sand. Put four men in each.



The players take it in turn to move the men from house to house one at a time. The object is to arrange things so that one's next move there will be a house with only one man in it, then you can capture him. When all the men from one house have been captured the house is destroyed and the game carries on until a player has all three of his houses destroyed.

The great festivals of Islam celebrating the end of the Fast of Ramadān and the Pilgrimage to Mecca, are celebrated with great enthusiasm. However, since the Muslim calendar is a lunar one there are often difficulties

in the desert as to the precise date and it is not unknown for bedu to have to make up the fast days having begun to celebrate too early. Much visiting takes place at these times and special food is prepared, this is usually a small kid pounded whole with the boiled rice and a plentiful quantity of fat. This dish is called '*arsiyah*. The sighting of the new moon is the signal for the start of the festival and in Oman the Ibādis pray in the ancient Muslim way, standing in long lines behind an *imām* on the outskirts of their town or encampment. The *imām* at this time is a local dignitary and is not to be confused with the man who used to rule the Omani interior at one time. The bedu frequently hang the feet of the kid killed for the feast in the thorn tree near their *fariyy*. When asked why they do this the reply is that it is for luck. This is possibly a pre-Islamic survival.

Amongst the bedu marriage follows a simple form. It is usual for a man to marry the daughter of his paternal uncle, his *bint 'amm*, though this is by no means an invariable rule. Divorce is a very easy matter, the husband merely saying *halaytak wa baraytak* and the girl returns to her family, when an interminable discussion takes place as to how much of the bride-price should be returned to the husband. This sum of money is initially paid by the husband and used to be about the equivalent of fifty or a hundred pounds but inflation has attacked here as elsewhere and now (1972) over five hundred pounds is being both asked and paid. However, this sum



Omani silver. The large charm-box necklaces are called *harz* and both come from Nizwa, the one on the right being modern. Above the disc in the centre, which is from a *sumt*, are two other charm boxes which are of a type worn on the *sumt* above the disc.

is still somewhat abated within the family and the higher price is asked for marriages outside the clan. The money is supposed to be devoted to buying jewellery and ornaments for the bride and household effects. Usually, however, a large part of it stays in the pocket of the girl's father. In Suwr the bride's mother fills one of the old Arab chests with clothes and gives it to her daughter as a wedding present. It is said that this custom is dying out as the brass-covered chests fetch a good price with the tourist and the daughters seem to prefer suitcases. It is also said that the girls of Suwr are not only very beautiful but are difficult wives because they require servants and refuse to do any work. It would be nice to think that these ladies remember traditions of ancient Arabia when the poets expressed the nobility of their patrons by describing how even captured wives did no menial tasks. There is no wedding ceremony as such. The father of the bride will tell a *qādiy* that he assents to the match. He does this three times and his reply is witnessed but not recorded. It is not necessary to do this and recourse to the *qādiy* only takes place if one is available. It is usual for a wedding feast to take place the same day, this being paid for by the bridegroom whose bride is escorted to his *fariyq* or house by her mother and sisters during the evening. In the desert the husband often fires a rifle every time he makes love successfully and this leads to a certain amount of boasting; however the Harāsiys are

only customarily supposed to make love once on their wedding night and amongst the Janabah the wedding night may be much delayed as they have the custom of the bride running away and having to be caught.

It will be seen that an Arab has to know his grandfather in order to be able to identify his future bride. It has been stated, though doubtfully, that the allowance of four wives possibly arose in response to the difficulties encountered in the days of feuding. Four women together would be able to survive should their husband be killed. However, since men and women are both in about equal numbers the acquisition of four wives by one man deprives three others of a chance of getting married. In fact very few people have four wives at once due as much as anything to the expense. In Oman there are other difficulties as, after the first wife, subsequent ones are not forced to live with the first one and can have their own house or *fariyq*, or even stay with their father. Amongst the bedu this can mean that a man's family is separated by many miles of desert. What usually happens is that a young man will first take to wife his cousin; they marry when he is about sixteen or seventeen, and then he will divorce her. It is not unusual for a young man of twenty to have been married four or five times. This may seem alarming to Western eyes but it really amounts to a system of trial marriage and everyone seems most content. A bedu told the author that what it meant was the lazy woman had a chance to marry around until she found a lazy man. It is also unusual to find a single woman in the desert, though some of them are strong minded and take up a career of prostitution, marrying from the advantage of personal wealth when it suits them. This is regarded with embarrassed amusement by the bedu and not taken nearly as seriously as it would be in the mountains. Indeed, some of the ladies concerned attract a great deal of admiration.

It is worthwhile, at this point, to explain the rationale behind the Arabian view of marriage. To Western eyes, seeing mostly the traditionally romantic view, which it is only fair to say is itself Arabian in origin, the position of the Arab wife seems harsh. However, it is not so when viewed within the social context of the tribal system. Firstly, the concept that a bride-price should be paid stems from the idea that a woman is part of a blood kindred in a patriarchal society. To take her away demands compensation in the same way as a blood-price is payable to the kindred if one of its members is killed. Secondly, a man's right to marry his *bint 'amm*, paternal cousin, derives from the concepts enshrined in Arab inheritance laws. The man would inherit property from his uncle and so has a right to his daughter as part of that property. This idea would seem to be a possible relic of the early days of the patriarchal system and a result of marriage by capture. It follows naturally from this too that a widow should marry her late husband's brother. The jewellery worn by the bedu is all manufactured in the local town. The various pieces have special names and are usually made out of silver.

*shaghab*  
*harz*

Earrings.  
Charm-box. This can either be a large item worn as a necklace on its own chain, or a small container fitted onto another necklace.



Omani rings. This group shows the wide range of designs used in the manufacture of this item of jewellery. In addition to the bedu names for the various rings given in chapter four, the following names are used in the towns. The thumb ring (*jabiyrah*) is a wide silver band called variously *batham*, *marāmiy* or *hā'is masbuwqah*, example fourth from left in top row. The first-finger ring (*shāhid*, pl. *shawāhid*) seems to have no other name and is the one that points, having a tall mount, examples are second and fifth in top row, and second from right in bottom row. Second-finger rings are nearly always rounded or rhomboid in shape and the *hadr* alternative name is *Abu Fawz* or *khātim Abu Fawz*, examples are first, fourth and sixth in the bottom row. Third-finger rings (*kanābir*) are always square and also called *khātim Abu Sath murabba'*, examples are first, sixth and eighth in the top row and second, fifth and last in the bottom row. The little-finger ring is the only one which occasionally has a stone in it, or may, alternatively, be made from a coin, examples are seventh in the top row and third in the bottom, this latter being made from an Indian rupee. The ring third-from the left in the top row is a toe-ring. All these rings are made of silver and some of them are embellished with a gold wash.

*hayyiy* or *hiyuwl*  
*'antal*

Bracelet  
Anklets, called *hajal* or *khalkhal* in the towns.

*diyq*

A necklace worn by the bedu with silver beads on a thick rope, the hanging part of which is a more or less rigid cross-piece.

*'altah*

Called a *sumt* in the towns, it is very similar to the above but ends with a large circular pendant disc. It is often treated with palm-juice to give an effect of niello enamel and interestingly the back of the disc is frequently decorated with three little silver strips at the top. These serve no particular purpose but the same thing is found on bronze-age pieces.

*khātim* (pl. *khātām*)

Finger-rings. These have

Further special names according to which finger they are worn on:  
Thumb: *jabiyrah*  
1st Finger: *shawāhid*  
2nd Finger: *mahar*  
3rd Finger: *kanābir* or *khātim*  
4th Finger: *khanāfir*

In Dhufar the names for the various things are different:  
*'athkuwr*  
*sils*  
*sanqad*  
*manaynah*  
*sukayliyt*  
*muriyyah*  
Hair-ornaments  
Triangular scarf weight  
The characteristic Dhufar chain worn like a bandolier  
Coral and silver bracelet  
Other bracelets  
The characteristic Dhufari necklace made out of gold filigree beads, and very reminiscent of Himyaritic work.

In Suwr the close trading relationships with India have led to the adoption of the nose-ring and associated chain. This ensemble is called *buwlāghah suwriyah* and it is therefore possible that this item of jewellery was introduced to this part of Oman through Suwr. The wearing of a nose-ring without a chain is common in other parts. The *buwlāghah* is divided into two parts; the ring itself is called 'aws and the chain *silsilah* which is the usual Arabic word for any kind of chain. An alternative name for the *buwlāghah* is *umm al-tawāriyf* or mother of twinkling. The hook at the end of the chain is called *kilāb*.

A nose-stud as opposed to the ring is called *badlah*, and in Suwr the *sumt*, disc necklace pendant, is called *hanhuwn*.

The system of law followed by the Bedu of the Omani steppes has only recently been that known as *hukm al hawz*. The Shariy'ah law of the villages and mountains, which has divine sanction, differs in actuality only slightly from this desert and tribal law, and whilst the *hukm al hawz* is greatly despised, as found in Oman it does not vary very much from the tribal law found elsewhere in Arabia. Where the writ of central Islamic authority did not run, order was maintained within the tribal context by the Shaykhs without a recourse to a *qādiy*. It is perhaps a reflection of this state of affairs that the settled townsman regards his bedu brother as savage because he was not subject to the Shariy'ah. I was told by a leading member of the Mahamiyd of the Duruw' that he regretted his diminished authority after the submission of his tribe to central authority in 1954. Up to that time wrongdoers were subject to him and hard cases were bound and left on top of a thorn tree in the sun until they promised to mend their ways!

The important aspect of tribal law is its accent on corporate rather than individual responsibility. Whilst this is also a feature of the Shariy'ah it is even more the case with *hukm al hawz*.

An important difference between the *hawz* of Oman and other parts of Arabia is found in the way which blood feuds are settled. Elsewhere and to the north it was commonly held that such a feud would continue for five generations unless satisfaction was obtained before this

time had elapsed. However, possibly due to the more sessile life of the Omani steppe bedu, it is here unthinkable that a death can go unrevenged for so long. It was, therefore, a part of a Shaykh's duty that he could seal such a feud. Naturally he would only do this as a reflection of tribal consensus and if some form of reparation was made to the injured party. Amongst the bedu of Oman the Duruw' Mahamiyd, the Majā'alah of the Janabah and the Ghufaylah of the Wahiybah were prominent as sealers of blood, though an individual clan will even now sometimes insist on blood even though their Shaykhs have sealed the matter. Thus in 1967 a Janaybiy tribesman accidentally killed a member of the Mahatiyt clan of Duruw'. Even though the leading members of the Shaykhly Mahamiyd agreed that there was no blame to be attached to the Janaybiy the Mahatiyt insisted on blood and demanded the man's life. This matter took many months to settle.

The Shariy'ah however, does not insist on blood and invariably commutes a death sentence to one of a monetary payment—the 'blood price'.

Mention has been made in the article about the Duruw' on the law of *rifqah* (the law of kindness), in addition to this in Oman there is a customary law of neighbourliness. This law does not seem to occur in northern Arabia and under it, where two tribes were fighting, members of both who live close to each other, but distant from the scene of fighting, may claim mutual protection; this is called *haqq al jawār*. It works in this way: when Muhammad of one tribe has a neighbour, 'Ali from tribe B, Muhammad can meet 'Ali and claim *haqq al jawār*. If the *qawm*, war party, from Muhammad's tribe, not knowing that 'Ali has claimed this *haqq*, steals 'Ali's camels, he can claim his animals back even if they have been divided up as spoils of battle. This concept of supra-tribal conscience in fact extends to many other matters and seems to represent a rudimentary beginning to the establishment of desert community groups. This is of great interest amongst the bedu who more usually adhere to the tribal descent group concept instead. This matter is of particular importance in the relations between the Duruw' and the Janabah and some Mahra and Kathiyriy families living with the Harāsiys.

A brief description of the basic concepts of Shariy'ah law is given in Chapter Four.

## Chapter Three

### BEDU TRIBES AND ORGANISATION

The tribesman's life is a simple one characterised by an outward relationship with his environment and an inward one with his tribal organisation. The former has been described in the foregoing chapter and it is now time to consider tribal organisation in detail.

It should be said too that no-one is a bedu by choice. It may be unromantic but in reality those who have become bedu have not done so from choice but from force of circumstance and so it is not surprising that bedu cease to live that, often to Western eyes, ideal life, as soon as an alternative presents itself. This is, of course, the main reason for the fugitive nature of the bedu lifestyle and the reason why their social organisation can and does disappear so quickly.

The bedu tribes in the interior of the Sultanate of Oman nearly all occupy a definite territory of their own, called *dirah* or *haram*. An exception are the 'Afār who have no area of their own, but who since time immemorial have been accepted by all and are thus able to move wherever they like and to take wives from any of the other tribes.

From the north of the area these tribes are as follows: south from Buraymi along the edge of the mountains lies the territory or *dirah* of the Āl Bu Shams, extending to the Wadi 'Ayn just north of Ibri. Below them is the largest *dirah* of them all, that of the Duruw', from Hammat Aswad and south of this to Jabal Salakh near the town of Adam. From this point southwards their border marches with that of the Janabah and, passing the disputed areas with the Wahiybah, it turns west along a line of dunes marking the northernmost boundary of the Harsuwsiy *dirah* when it ends in the Empty Quarter south of the Umm al Samiym. East of the Duruw' south of Izki along the line of the Wadi Halfayn lies the *dirah* of the Janabah in a long thin strip, until it meets their main areas along the southern coast of Oman where it stretches between Suwr in the north-east and almost to the borders

of Dhufar in the south-west. South-west of the Wadi Halfayn lies the main part of the Wahiybah *dirah* in the sands to which they have given their name, and west and north of the southern Janabah area lies the territory of the Harasiys. On the coast west of the Janabah lies the small areas left to the Batāharah and beyond them along the northern edge of the Dhufar mountains lies the area occupied by the Mahra. North of them and including the whole of the steppe between the mountains and the sands is the *dirah* of the Bayt Kathiyr b. Musinn section with the Rawāshiyd occupying a small part of the area west of Fasad with their Bayt Imāniy section. The remainder of this last tribe is presently situated in territory controlled by the South Yemeni Republic. The 'Awāmir also occupy small areas in the Dhufar mountains. The remainder of the Bayt Kathiyr also have *dirah* on these mountains and on the Salālah plain. The territories of all these Dhufar tribes are very fragmented in the mountains and they are interspersed by the Qara whose relationships are as yet obscure, though they may be a primordial Mahra tribe.\*

The bedu has had many epithets ascribed to him: he is feckless, obstinate, mean, treacherous; and at the same time, loyal, honourable and incredibly generous, he has a terrific sense of humour, is proud and most individualistic. All these are true. The nastier side of his character however never emerges, or only rarely, unless he is behaving in a non-individual way, that is to say, he will not betray a friend whereas he will cheerfully betray an organisation, whether this be a company or a government.

In Oman the bedu do not carry out large migrations but merely move about within their tribal areas, following the available grazing. The family unit lives simply without a tent, camping under the thorn trees which cover large parts of the steppe near the wadis. The Bayt

\* Though the origin of the Qara has not been elucidated, the following sections are said, in Dhufar, to be of Qahtānic descent.

Bayt Mā'ashaniy (see Sa'aduwn descent)  
Bayt Aka'ah  
Bayt Ayār  
Bayt Itiyowk  
Bayt Sa'iyd  
Bayt Hardān

A local source has it that they are Ayāl Qahātanah (Qahtān) and descend from Hajar b. Qahtān, having come from the Tihāmah coastal plain of the Hijāz.

It may be that a relationship with the Mahra is indicated by the name Bawkiy for one of the other Qara sections (see Mahra section and the Janabah descent on p. 43 for further information on this point). The Qara sections are listed overleaf as there is no special article for this tribe elsewhere.

Kathiyr and Rawāshiyd are the only ones that make and use tents, possibly because in northern Dhufar there is not the same cover from the thorn trees as there is further north. The place where they camp is called *fariyq* and there are usually several in one area.

Each tribe has its own camel brand which has been compared to their coat of arms. The basic tribal brand is then added to in order to denote sectional and individual ownership. It is usual also for each tribe to have a war-cry which is almost invariably the name of their eponymous ancestor. If a tribe does not have one this means either that they are almost certainly of recent origin and have not completed their indentivity, or that they are *khadām* or servants. In the former case this looks like cheating but it is in no way deliberate and is a process that can only happen amongst the bedu because they are illiterate. The *hadr* on the other hand can record their origins and invariably do so, so that it is impossible to form a tribe in this way amongst the settled communities.

This is one reason why small family and group animosities are both stronger and more frequent in the towns than in the desert.

Though their life is changing rapidly the bedu existence revolves around his camel, a beast of which he is inordinately fond and most of his life is spent finding water and fodder for it. At night a favourite animal will be brought to the camp-fire to be fed titbits of dates. Amongst some of the northern Dhufar tribes the camel has been the mainstay of their entire lives and some forty animals are required to feed the average family group of about ten people. To the north in Oman where access to dates, goats and fish have provided an alternative food supply to camel's milk, the bedu dependence on the camel has been less strong.

The bedu communities of northern Oman are closely integrated with those of the *hadr* and most own date gardens in villages on the western edge of the mountains which they visit every year for the harvest season, even though they dislike staying in a village or town overnight, holding to the belief that night air in such places is poisonous.

#### Sections of the Qara

##### Bayt 'Iysā

Bayt Hardān  
Bayt 'Aka'āk  
Bayt Shimās

##### Bayt Sa'iyd

Bayt 'Iysā b. Sa'iyd  
Bayt Mahalawb  
Bayt Aqzown  
Bayt Farayq  
Bayt Aythruwn  
Bayt Hadnuwn

##### Bayt Qatan

Bayt Umboruk  
Bayt Shlowriy  
Bayt Taman Karuwn  
Bayt 'Ali b. Mahād

##### Bayt Tabowk

Bayt Alswoz  
Bayt Salaymah  
Bayt Shakht  
Bayt 'Aziybuwn

##### Bayt Kashowb

Bayt Baqiyysh  
Bayt Muhammad b. Kashowb  
Bayt Itharuwn  
Bayt Batahariy  
Bayt Kithowth  
Bayt Minahowt  
Bayt Sirdah  
Bayt Athi'ow

##### Bayt al Ma'shaniy

Bayt al Juhowd  
Bayt 'Ali  
Bayt Fankhur  
Bayt Thiyy  
Bayt Ardahayl  
Bayt Akniyn

##### Bayt al 'Amriy


Bayt Farayq b. To'riy  
Bayt Hasan b. Dabaylān  
Bayt Ahmad b. 'Ar  
Bayt Ahmad b. Howr  
Bayt 'Ayzam  
Bayt Uwtuw  
Bayt Habquwt  
Bayt 'Ali b. 'Aqas  
Bayt Tamiyim  
Bayt Salāmah  
Bayt 'Amir b. Kashowb  
Bayt Mahadān  
Bayt Mahuwod  
Bayt Tumuwom  
Bayt Ziydiy b. 'Amir

### The Āl Bu Shams

An example of a tribal entity which has emerged recently by a splitting process rather than consolidation. As has been mentioned this tribe was originally a section of the Na'im which had sections as follows:

- 1 Āl Bu Khuraybān  
who live in Buraymi, Jabal Hafiyt, Sa'ara and also own about half of the town of Dhank.
- 2 Khawātīm  
Living at Jabal Hafiyt.
- 3 Āl Bu Shams

and a camel *wasm*: 

The *wasm* or camel brand of the Āl Bu Shams themselves is situated below the left ear of the animal. 

A Ghāfari and Sunni tribe with both settled *hadr* and bedu sections. Their shaykhs were much involved with Saudi Arabia at the time of the Buraymi dispute. Rāshid b. Hamid, his brother Muhammad, and his sons all went to Dammam. Whilst Rāshid b. Hamid only controls Hamāsah village, the bedu are under Muhammad b. Sālimiyn whose cousin Māni' b. 'Ali also went to Saudi Arabia in 1956 and 1957.

The *hadr* sections are:

Hamāsah village  
Dhank. Āl 'Aziyūz under Matar b. Sālim al 'Aziyziy.

These tend to regard themselves as an independent tribe, as do the two following: the *Hiyayiy* under Muhammad b. Hamad, *Al Wahshiy* under Hamad b. Sālim at Wahshiy.

The bedu sections are:

<i>Kalābinah</i>	at Hafiyt and Qābil
<i>Nuwayil</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>Aryān</i>	at Qābil and Harmunziy
<i>Qushayshtah</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>'Awābid</i>	at Qābil and Sunaynah
<i>Yara'wanah</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>Khanadillah</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>Ma'awidah</i>	at Sunaynah and Qābil
<i>Makhadah</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>Āl Bu Fāris</i>	at Sunaynah and Qābil
<i>Dharafah</i>	at Qābil
<i>Afajil</i>	at Qābil
<i>Hamarān</i>	at Qābil and Sunaynah
<i>Hammādah</i>	at Sunaynah
<i>Mahayrdah</i>	at Sunaynah

'Amar  
*Dakhākhanah*

at Sunaynah  
at Harmuzi, also called Bayt Huwaydān or Huwaydnah

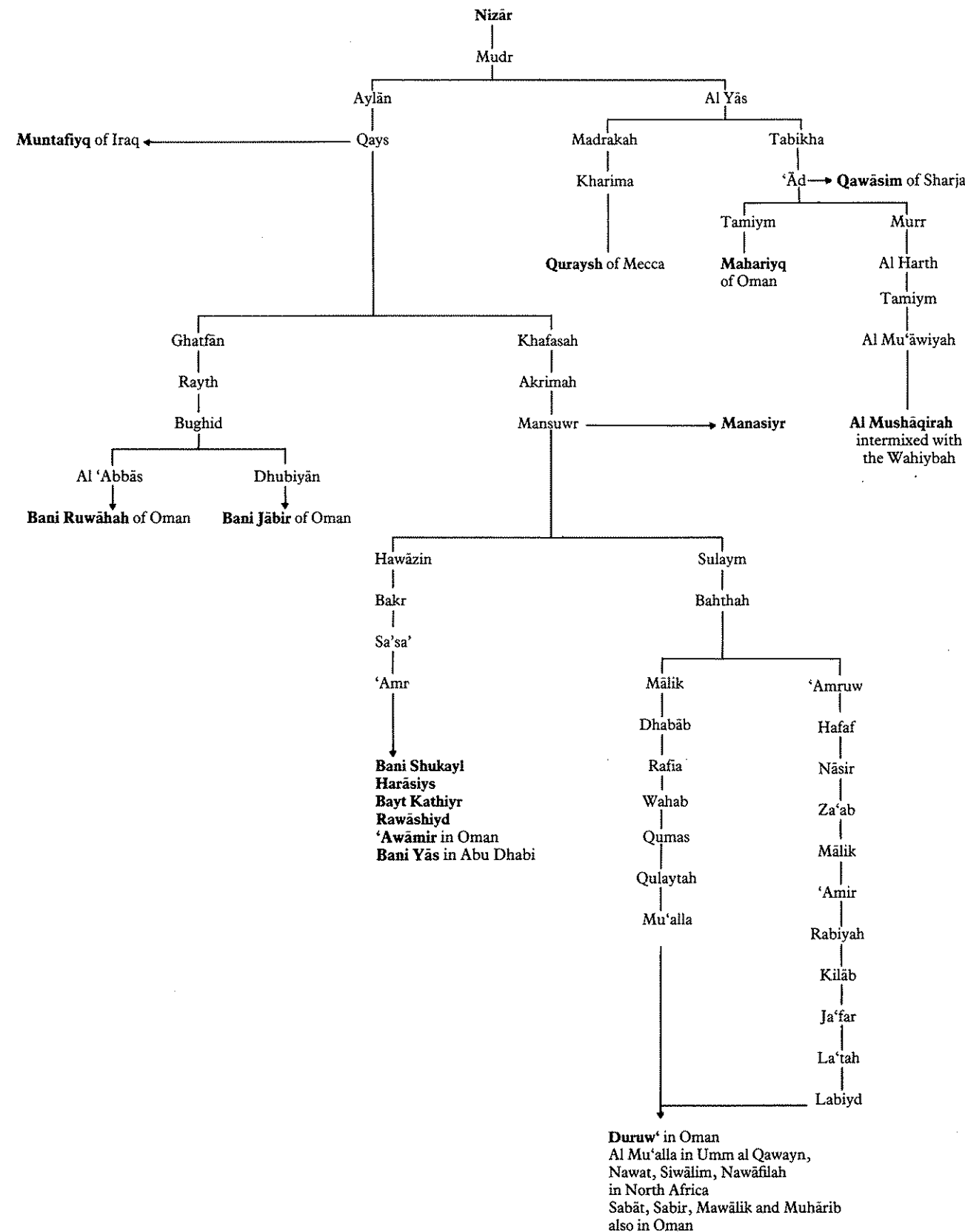
Other sections found at Sunaynah are: Hāruw Zarnah, Āl Bu Dhahr, Bayt Lasliy, Ma'awiyah, with lastly the Kawāmil at Qābil.

Otherwise a separate section of the Āl Bu Shams who always describe themselves in the plural as Shawāmis, live in the Wadi Jizzi where they are on bad terms with their neighbours from the Bani Ghayth and the Kunuwad. Their main villages are Wāsīt and Kitnah. Some sections live on the Trucial Coast in Sharja, at Hayrah and Hamriyah. Like the Na'im they are Wahhābiy, but not so single mindedly.

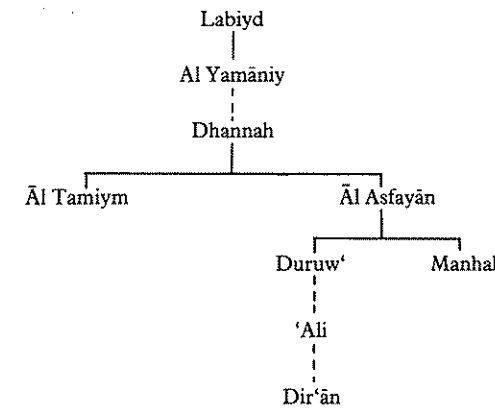
The Northern Shawāmis:

<i>Bani Kilayb</i>	at Wāsīt. This used to be the shaykhy section.
<i>Ayāl Dhawiy</i>	at Wāsīt mostly.
<i>Hadadnah</i>	at Rabi'
<i>Awlād Sālim</i>	at Kitnah
<i>Bani Habiyyb'</i>	at Kitnah
Southern Shawāmis: from the Wadi Atran area.	
<i>Awlād</i>	
<i>Dhawiy</i>	at Fayyadh
<i>Laghfalāh</i>	at Harim

**A version of the classical descent of the Duruw' and their consequent relationships to other tribes**



**A descent of the Duruw'**



This descent is to be compared with that of the Kathiyr.

**The Duruw'**

Their name means the people of the breastplate, and today, with most of the oil of Oman in their tribal *dirah* this is not an inapposite name. The tribe probably consolidated in its present form as recently as about 1650 when various bedu elements came together in the southern Dhāhirah of northern Oman. However, tribal traditions would indicate that the purely Duruw' descent-group is a lot more ancient than this, and there are grounds for thinking that the name Duruw' was used considerably earlier by what was or became the dominant descent-group (after additions from the Bani Zafiyt possibly) in the tribe we see today. They have several traditions as to their ancestry; there is a story that they descend from Duruw' the brother of Manhal, which latter was the ancestor of the Manhal tribe found today as far to the west as the Hadramawt. It is said that they quarrelled with their Manhaliy cousins over grazing rights and losing the subsequent battle they had to move. This they purport to have done in company with the Janabah under their leader Dir'an b. 'Ali. The Duruw' shaykhs have a tradition that they themselves, however, were originally members of the Manasiyr of Saudi Arabia to the north. Some Arab sources have also accorded them a classical descent from Mu'alla b. Qulaytah and Labiyd b. La'atah, for which see the above tables. It is also interesting to see the classical descent of the Bayt Kathiyr in this respect. To an extent these written sources and classical descents substantiate the tenuous claims expressed in the oral tradition. Whilst one hesitates to offer a definite origin for the Duruw' it would seem that the Hadramiy source is the right one. This would mean that the Duruw' descent-group retained its identity through the course of a long period of wandering and finally, following a successful period of conquest, consolidated themselves in their present home during the seventeenth century. Comparison with the present state of the 'Afar amply demonstrates how this was accomplished. They would have absorbed small groups coming from the north following bedu movements over the years. It is possible that an earlier consolidation represents a mixture of broadly Kathiyr elements with Mahra remnants at the time of Mahra regression at about the time of the end of

the first Ibādiyy Imamate period. The root from which the name Duruw' is derived is also used to describe a yellowish camel in the Hadramawt, as *dara'iyah*; and Omani camels in northern Arabia are often referred to as *dara'iyah* also.

The Duruw' *dirah* was previously occupied by the Āl Bu Haday who had a village at Awayfiy in the Wadi 'Amayriy which was destroyed by the Duruw'. These people were at one time the most important people in the Omani interior, but now they have regressed and their name appears as a sectional name amongst the 'Awāmir and elements of them are to be found amongst the Wahiybah and settled in Raddah and Firq near Nizwa. Others who have inhabited the area in years past are the 'Umayr, today found in Habbiy, who gave their name to the southernmost of the three great wadis of the Duruw' *dirah*, the Wadi 'Amayriy or 'Umayriy. The more northerly parts of the *dirah* were occupied by the Sawāfah who now live in 'Ibri and Sulayf.

The first mention of the Duruw' in recorded history describes them as thieves and vagabonds on the road to Nizwa and they certainly appear to have attracted more than their fair share of opprobrium, being always very unpopular with their neighbours. They are attached to the Ghāfariy faction in Omani politics and their feud with the 'Awāmir lasted until the early sixties; they also have a long history of quarrels with the Wahiybah with whom they share rights to the raw sulphur found in Qarn Kibriy. The salt at this place and that at Qarn al Milh is exclusively theirs, a right conferred on them by Sultan Turkiy. The bedu use sulphur in the cure of camel mange, and the salt is traded in the market at Nizwa.

The Duruw' also extract salt from Umm al Samiy and this is taken to 'Ibri for sale. Apart from the two meanings inherent in the name of these quicksands noted in Chapter One, it is apposite to mention here that the Duruw' relate that a silver hill, Qārat al Fiddah, in the sands, hides a fabulous treasure.

The relations between them and the Āl Bu Sa'iyd dynasty have usually been good and they have several times supplied bedu armies in their cause, though they only submitted formally to the Omani government in 1954. This was due to the need to provide a more settled atmosphere in which to start the exploration for oil.

All the oil found in Oman up to the year 1968 was discovered in the Duruw' *dirah* and in a tribal sense this has been a mixed blessing. In order to divide the tribe and so weaken it the previous Sultan, Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr, arranged that three shaykhs should take it in turn to supply labour for the oil company. This is what happened and the tribe was severely weakened as a result. The wages from the company, progress, and the lack of strong central leadership all combined in the early seventies to encourage some eight hundred Duruw' to leave the Dhāhirah for Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This is a very significant proportion from a tribe which possibly numbers about two thousand five hundred. The political consequences of this movement could be large indeed. Progress has already largely destroyed the trade in camels which was the 'bedu staple; the merchants and indeed the bedu themselves now use vehicles. The author has been told by an older tribesman with every expression of disgust, that the young men no longer even know how to ride a camel. In fact it is not only the economic effects of the disappearance of the camel that

are important. There are grave social ones as well. Everyone, including the old, was able to move about when camels were in use. Now that it has gone the old people, who cannot drive, are left without transport and cannot get to the markets to obtain food. Company wages do not compensate for this kind of thing because they buy attractive modern goods like Landrovers and radios; they contribute to the social and economic breakdown of the tribal society. The man who receives the wages has to leave his family for work to get them, and so there is at least one short to look after the goats and sheep, as well as the camels. This natural resource thus tends to be sold and lost to the community. In addition to this the bedu who works for the company becomes to an extent educated and is led to despise his traditional leader who usually stays at home.

The tribe is recorded as being called the Bin Dhirrah, a feminine name, in addition to their usual name. This is possibly an indication that the Duruw' contain elements from the southern tribes who still call themselves after their mothers instead of their fathers.

There is a tradition, despite the great animosity between them, that serious internal disputes with the Duruw' can be settled by mediation from the Wahiybah.

The Duruw' capital is the village of Tana'am a little to the west of Ibrī; outside the date season it is inhabited by *hadr*, the bedu only coming in during the summer for the date harvest. These *hadr* are of the servant class, called *khadām*, from the Bani Asās and the Shamalah who follow Shaykh Muhammad b. 'Abdullah al Yāquwbiy and Shaykh Hamad b. Sayf al Kalbāniy. There are also some *ahrār* (i.e. free) *hadr* from the Wilad Shā'il who are, according to one account, the *hadr* section of the Duruw' who have moved away somewhat and have created their own identity, though they still follow the Duruw' shaykhs, (but see below).

The main allies of the Duruw' have always been the Janabah and the Yāqiyb of Ibrī, whilst they have feuded with nearly everyone else, principally the 'Awāmir, Bani Hinā and Wahiybah. Their war-cry is 'Yā *Awlād 'Alī*'. The tribe owns date palms in Ibrī, nearly half, and in the town of Adam.

The Duruw' and the Wahiybah are the foremost bedu camel-breeders in Oman, and their animals are justly famous, having a tremendous reputation for speed and endurance. The Duruw' *wasm* or brand is a line, — on the left foreleg above the elbow. To this is added further marks to denote individual and sectional ownership. Some of these are given below:

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Sh. 'Alī b. Hilāl and his brother Sh. Humayd b. Hilāl | ⌋ | on the right side of the nose.            |
| Sh. Sayf b. Sālim                                     |   | on the right side of the nose.            |
|   |   | on the right side of the belly.           |
| Sh. Matar b. Muhammad                                 |   | on the right side of the nose.            |
|   | — | and on the right foreleg above the elbow. |
| Sh. Hamad b. Muhammad                                 | ⌋ | on the right of the nose.                 |
|   | — | and on the right foreleg above the elbow. |

- |                    |    |   |
|--------------------|----|---|
| Sh. Hārib b. Hamad |    | on the right of the nose.                 |
|                    | ⌋  | and on the right foreleg above the elbow. |
| Sālim b. Muhammad  | // | on the right side of the neck.            |

The two blood lines found in the Duruw' camels are called the Banāt Hamrah and the Banāt Lasayfarah. These names can be translated as the red and yellow daughters respectively and the pedigrees go through the female line which may be a survival of pre-Islamic custom when this applied to people as well. Both these lines are said to have been originally stolen from the Sa'ār tribe which lives at the western end of the Empty Quarter and a very considerable distance away from the Duruw'.

Shaykh 'Alī b. Hilāl's camels are all from the Banāt Hamrah and are called Dhubiyān b. Hamarah and Laghdān b. Sihammah, the latter being sired by a bull from the Hijriyin tribe of the Sharqiyah. Shaykh Humayd's camels are from the Banāt Akaylah dam of the Banāt Lasayfarah and the bulls he owned in 1967 and 1968 were called Majā'if b. Mash'uf b. Akalah and Firāhb. Akaylān. These two camel families are said to be descended from two animals owned by Muhammad b. Humayd of the Mujāridah section of the Labāt who lived at Sifār. The Banāt Hamrah are descended from Hamrah who was mated to the bull Lasayfar. The Banāt Lasayfarah are also descended from him through other matings. Another clan of this breed is called the Awlād Dhubiyān.

Though the points of a good camel are well defined they are not bred in the same way that such things would be achieved in the West and largely seem to be a matter of chance. Most of the bull calves are killed for food before they have a chance to exhibit any breeding form and so the line is always carried on through the female side.

Mating often takes place for a small fee at the so-called camel races which are relics of camel fairs where the animals are made to show their paces before sale. Today these occasions are used to honour a guest or provide an opportunity for a tribal meeting, and they only seem to take place amongst the Duruw'. Other camel races with other tribes are really only for fun and mark festivals of the Muslim calendar or weddings and other celebrations. The camel race is usually divided into two parts. The first is a direct competitive long race of several miles whereas the second is one in which the animals are run in pairs and it is not the purpose for anyone to win. The pair gallop over about two or three hundred yards and the object is that they should dead-heat.

The Duruw' do not own cattle and apart from their camels have goats and sheep. It is interesting to note that in the Dhāhirah and northern Oman the bedu goats are all black. Further south the Harāsiys have goats that are black and white and to the west of them the Mahra goats tend to be all white. The goats of the mountains in Oman are usually brown with much longer coats.

Some Duruw' words for various items of camel tack—these words are used throughout northern Oman—are as follows:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>khirriy</i>                                    | saddle-bag; the best are made by the Bani Hikmān.                          |
| <i>shidād khuwwayliy</i> or <i>shudād khafiyf</i> | wooden saddle (local name for the Fulāniy saddle of Oman and South Arabia) |
| <i>muhāwiy</i>                                    | cushion  |
| <i>gharādhah</i>                                  | girth  |
| <i>majdhād</i>                                    | bridle   |
| <i>khitāmiy hadiyd</i>                            | bridle for riding a camel  |
| <i>khizām</i>                                     | rein   |
| <i>faradah</i>                                    | silver ring in the animal's nose to which the <i>khizām</i> is fastened    |

The Duruw' demonstrate the practice of the law of *rifqah*, that is the law of kindness. Under this, firewood is conserved in areas around a settlement and only travellers are allowed to use it, hence the name. The tribe which owns the area uses the firewood in times of war when it would be dangerous to go far from protection. Areas behind 'Ibrī have long been a bone of contention between the Bani Hinā and the Duruw' in respect of this, both tribes claiming ownership. The Duruw' claim is possibly to be preferred as they conquered the area more than a hundred years ago and it has become part of their *rifqah*, the Bani Hinā never actually owning it and merely nowadays putting forward a claim on behalf of one of their allies.

The family tree of the Mahamiyd is interesting as it clearly demonstrates what happens in a clan after the passage of a few years. The families of Sa'ad and Bathān b. Mahmuwd no longer have separate names. It will not be long before the Ayāl Mubārak and the Ayāl Hāfidhah lose something of their identity in the face of the emergence of the sons of Sayd b. Hāmid and Hilāl b. Hāmid as the fathers of two new clans.

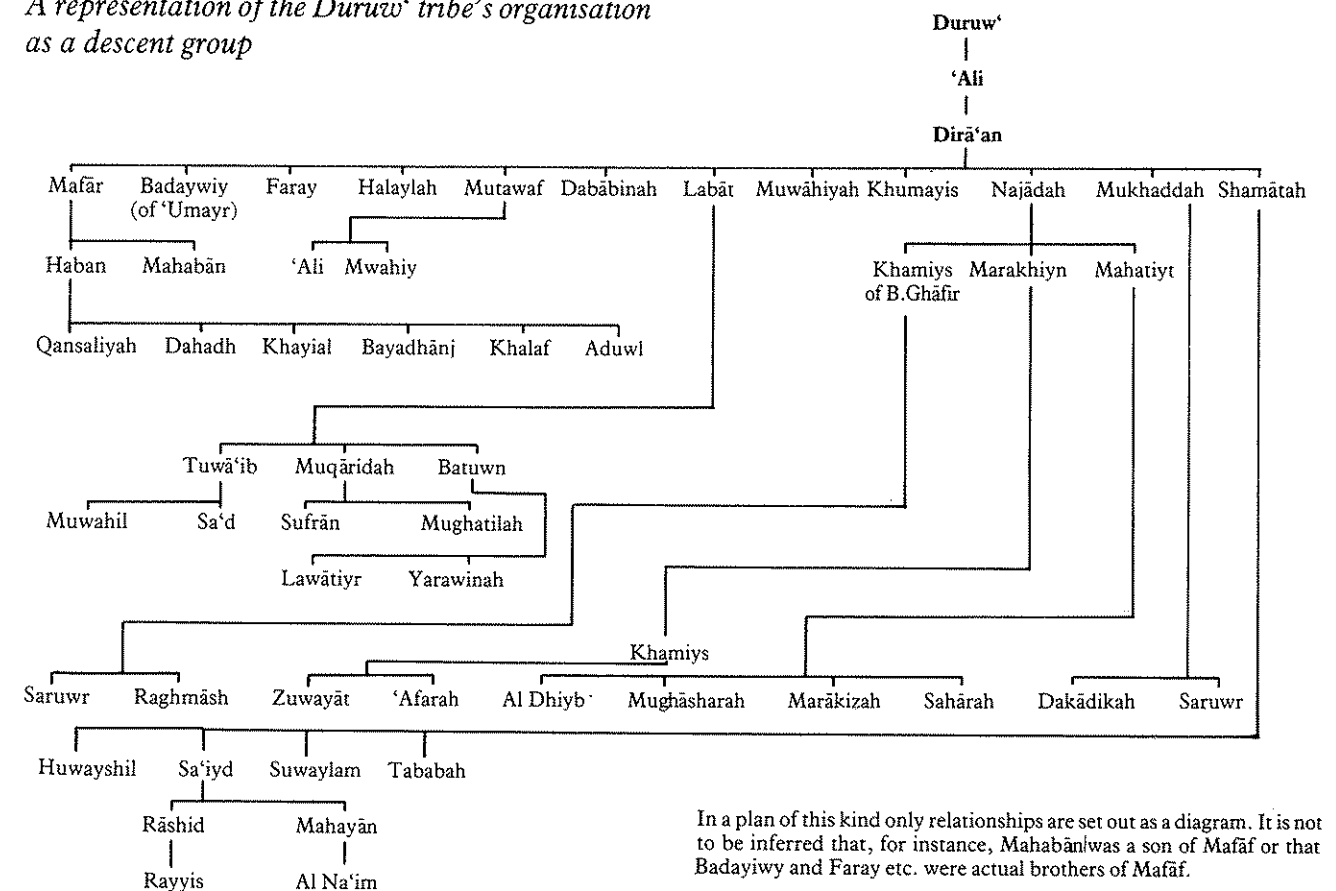
The family trees that follow the tribal structure are included to show how the sections are related to each

other and how the ancestry of each family links the families themselves into the section. The sections then form the bricks from which is built the tribal entity. However, it is at this point that the evidence becomes vague and assumptions have to be made. This is because, should the section in fact have a non-Duruw' descent there will be a tendency to conceal this in any case. Furthermore sectional ancestry can only really be remembered in bedu and therefore illiterate circles for about five generations with any certainty. After this time the links become more and more imprecise and in the case of the assimilation of another descent-group this has become so complete that membership of the total tribal organisation has become unquestioned. This is of course the purpose of the whole thing. In the case of the Duruw' their consolidation in their present form seems to have taken place just long enough ago for much of this concealment to have become effective. Some sectional origins can only be surmised therefore.

Only Shaykh Huwayshil b. 'Alī is Ibādiy as are his followers in Ma'amuwr, the remainder are Sunni in religion.

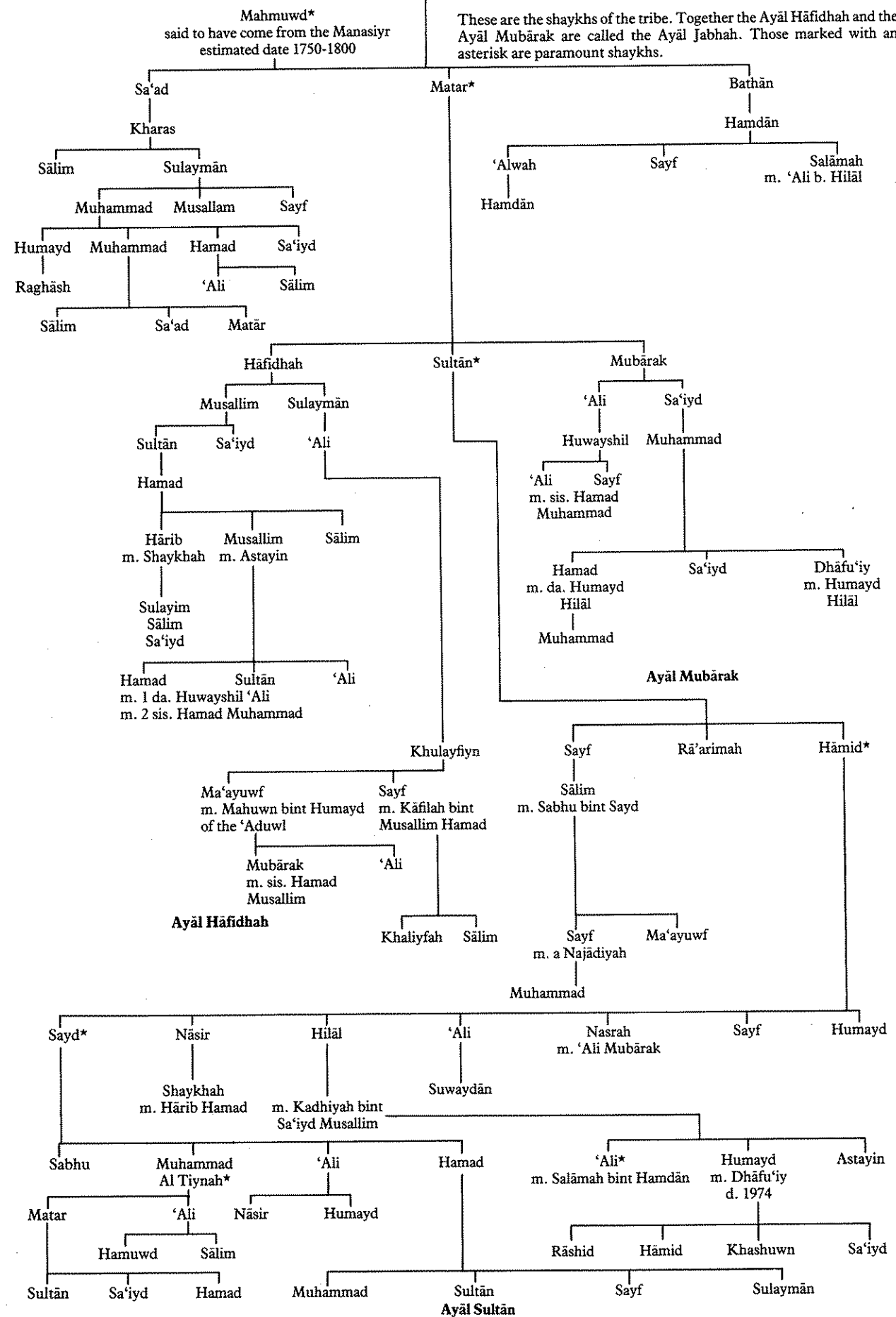
Other trees are included for interest and to record the relatives of other tribal notables.

#### A representation of the Duruw' tribe's organisation as a descent group



In a plan of this kind only relationships are set out as a diagram. It is not to be inferred that, for instance, Mahabāniwas a son of Mafār or that Badaywiyy and Faray etc. were actual brothers of Mafār.

**Sections of the Duruw'**



**The Mahamiyd (sing. Mahmuwdiy)**  
 These are the shaykhs of the tribe. Together the Ayāl Hāfidhah and the Ayāl Mubārak are called the Ayāl Jabhah. Those marked with an asterisk are paramount shaykhs.

The following seems to be the tribal structure of the sections (within the modern descent group as a whole). The Duruw' number between two and a half thousand and three thousand adult males.

**Mafāfiy**  
 sub-sections:  
 Habaniyn under the rashiyy 'Ali b. Nāsir of Jabal Qasaybah  
 Ayāl Qansaliyah  
 Awlād Dahdahah  
 Āl Khayl'alah  
 Āl Bayadhān  
 Wilād Khalaf  
 'Aduwl  
 Mahābinah

**Mutawafah** (also called the Mutawwah). They are under the rashiyy 'Ali b. Nāsir and used to follow the Ayāl Hāfidhah shaykhs.  
 sub-sections:  
 Bayt 'Ali  
 Mwāhiy

**Labāt** These follow the rashiyy 'Ali b. Humayd of Wadi Sifar and al Khuwayr, and Muhammad Stayuwn.  
 sub-sections:  
 Tuwā'ib The family of the rashiyy  
 Muwāhil  
 Bayt Sa'd  
 Muqāridah  
 Sufrān (follow Sh. Matar b. Muhammad)  
 Mughātilah  
 Batuwn  
 Lawātiyr  
 Yarawinah

**Ayāl Khumayis** who follow Sa'iyd b. Hārib in the Hamrat Duruw'.  
 Al Najādah said to number 840 and to be the largest section of the Duruw'. Their rashiyy is 'Ali b. Hamdān, who usually lives just north of Jabal Salakh.  
 sub-sections:  
 Wilād Khamiys\* (170 strong)  
 Awlād Saruwr  
 Raghāmishah  
 Marakhiyn  
 Zuwayāt

**Awlād 'Afarah** (the rashiyy's family)  
 Mahatiyt whose sub-rashiyy is Muhammad b. Huwaydān.  
 Ayāl Saharah  
 Marākizah under Muhammad Sa'iyd Bukhiyt.  
 Mughāsharah under 'Ali Saghayir Kanah.  
 Wilād al-Dhiyb under Sa'iyd b. Hamuwd.

**Mukhaddah** whose rashiyy is 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Mansuwr of Adam.  
 sub-sections:  
 Awlād Saruwr  
 Dakādikah

**Shamātah** whose rashiys are 'Ali b. Hamdān and Humayd b. 'Ali of Adam.  
 sub-sections:  
 Bayt Huwayshil  
 Bayt Sa'iyd  
 Bayt Rayyāsah  
 Awlād Nahayān (Bayt Hayyān)  
 Bayt Suwaylam  
 Wilād Tabābah

**Muwāhiyah**  
 who have no sections.

All the above follow the Ayāl Sultān shaykhs except those detailed below:

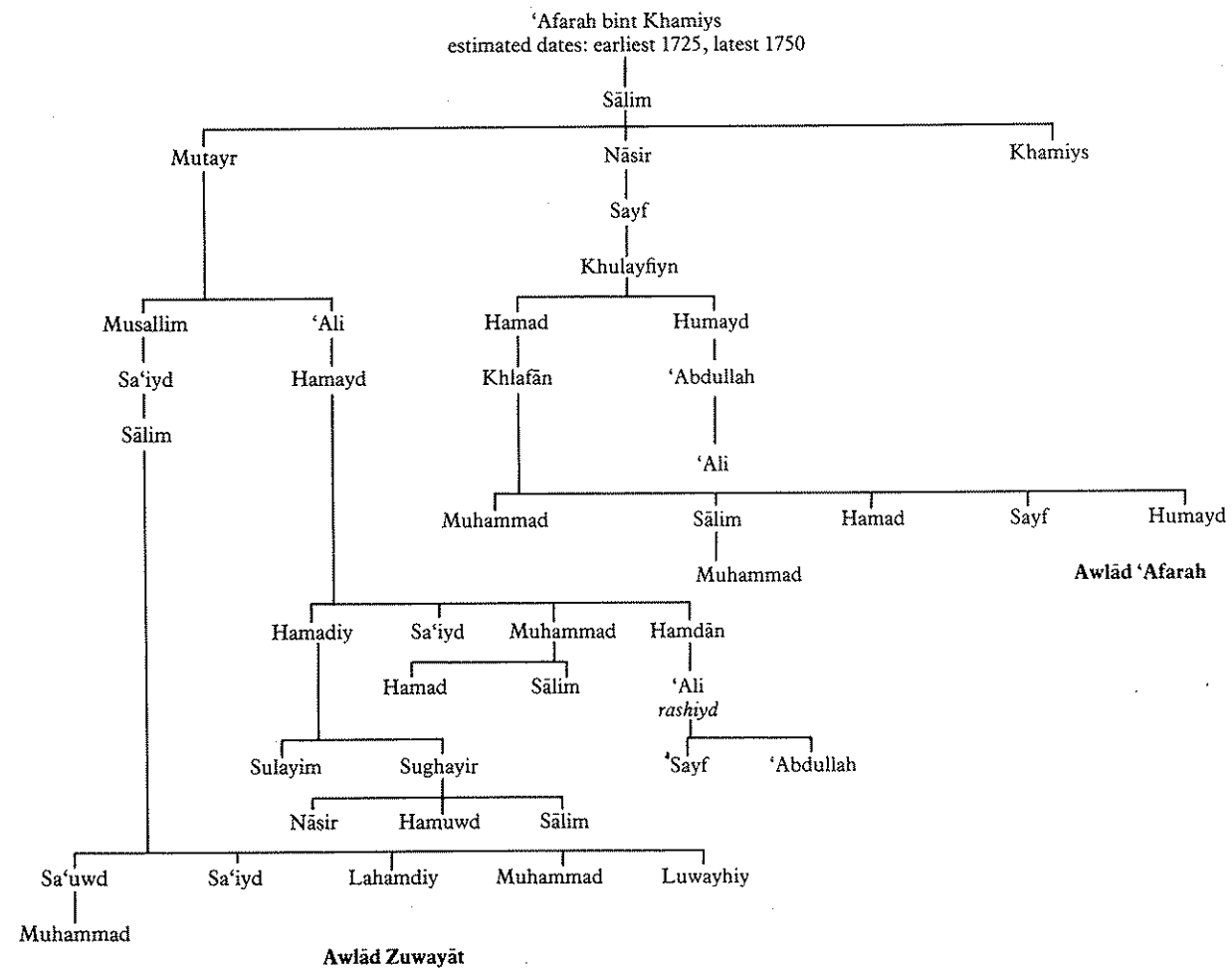
**Awlād Badaywiyy** called Labadaywiyy, originally the bedu section of the 'Umayr, from the Awlād Hamad b. Khamiys b. Fadl section.

**Awlād Faray**  
 These two sections follow the Ayāl Mubārak shaykhs. They are found at Falaj and Ma'amuwr and have no sections, but are in Mafāfiy Habaniyn.

These four following sections follow the Ayāl Hāfidhah shaykhs.  
 'Aduwl  
 Halaylah  
 Wilād Khalaf in Mafāfiy Habaniyn  
 Dabābinah

\* These are the bedu of the Bani Ghāfir in origin and now live with the Duruw' at Habbīy and Ma'amuwr. They followed 'Ali b. Hilāl personally, but are included in the Najādah section under the rashiyy 'Ali b. Hamdān. It is known now that the Badaywiyy and the Wilād Khamiys are of other than Duruw' descent. It would seem likely that in addition to these

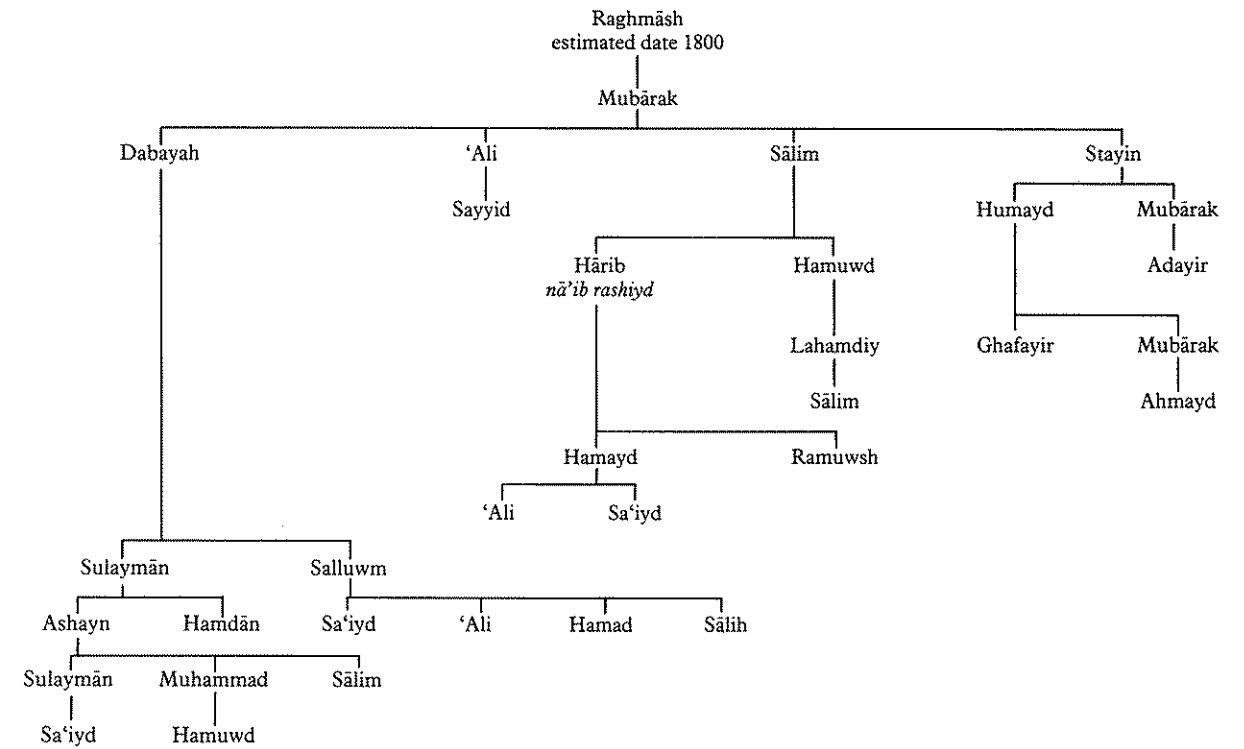
**Zuwayāt in Marakhiyn Najādah (showing the Awlād 'Afarah connection)**



All the Najādah are said to return to the origins of this family, which because of historical considerations could return to the time when the Duruw' consolidated as a tribe, and thus represent some of the original participants. It is interesting that the Awlād 'Afarah call themselves after their sub-sectional *jadd*, but that this refers to the children of Sayf

b. Nāsir only. The *jadd* of the Awlād Zuwayāt would seem to be an even earlier *jadd*, and whilst he has given his name to the whole section, it would seem that only recently has it become necessary for a new sub-sectional identity to be formed.

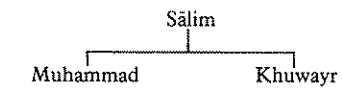
**Raghāmishah (sing. Raghmuwshiy) of Awlād Khamiys Najādah**



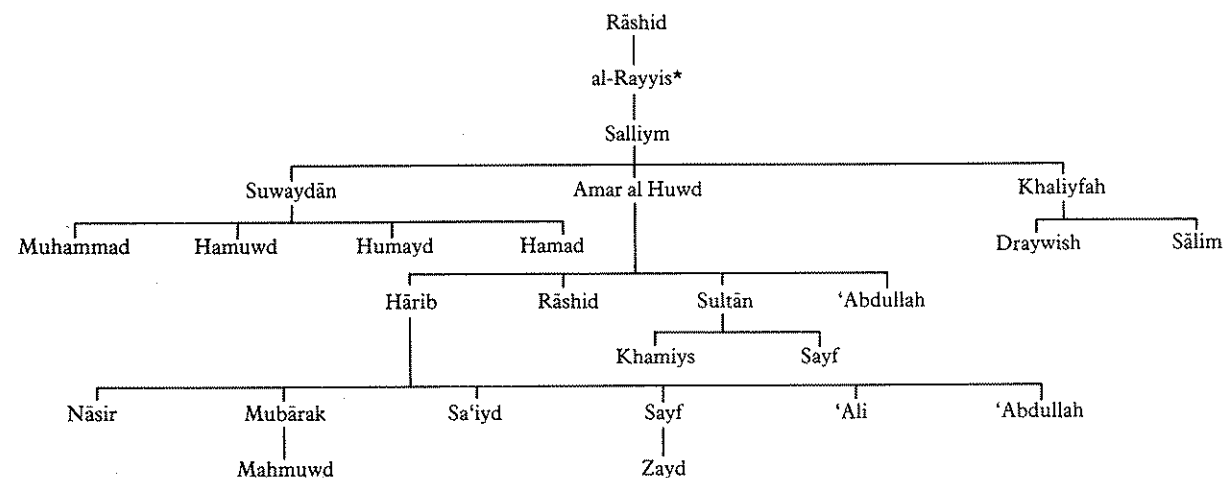
A family with clear descent to the sectional ancestor.

**A group called Hāl Asaylah**

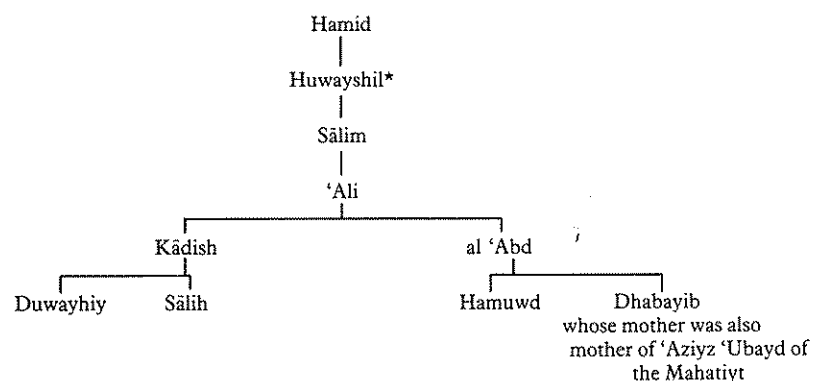
Said to be another name for Raghāmishah, though this may merely be a way in which they are merging with that section.



**The Bayt Rayyāsah of Bayt Sa'iyd in Shamātah**

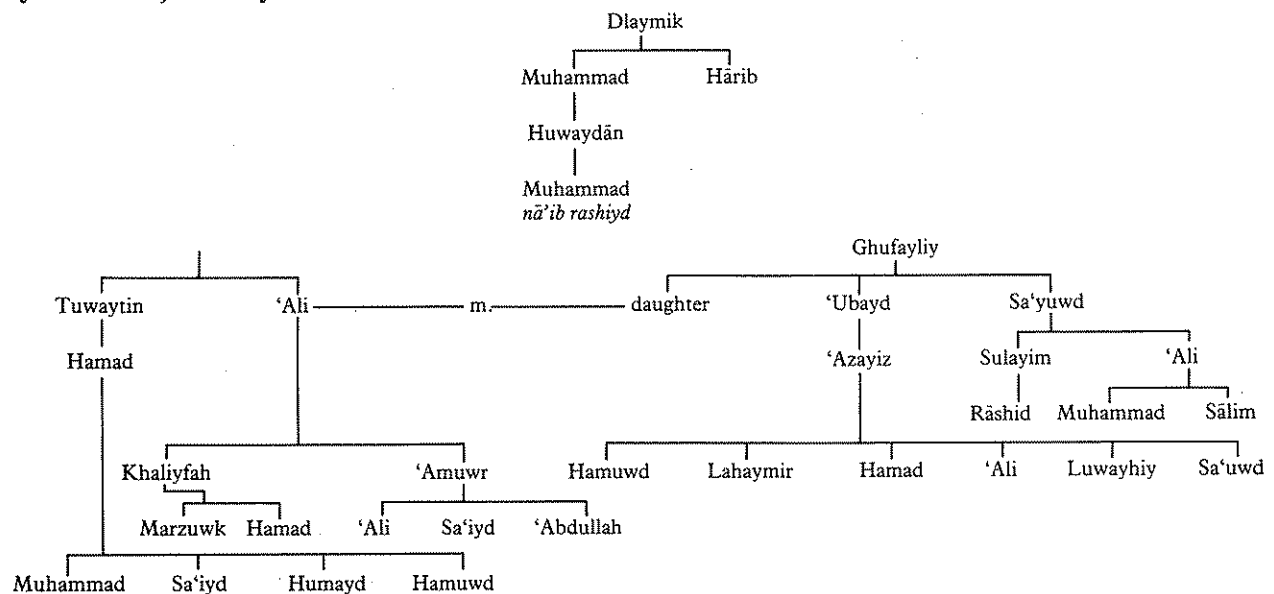


**Bayt Huwayshil Shamātah**



These two trees show a memory of the name of the sectional *jadd*, marked with an asterisk in the families above.

**Ayāl Sāharah, Mahatiyt**

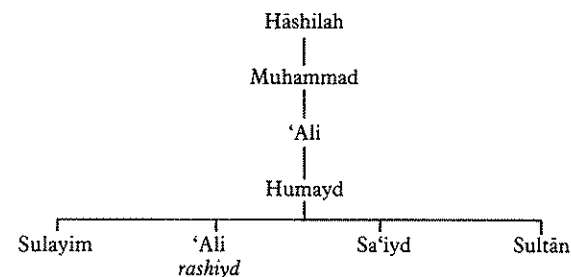


The fact that the Mahatiyt do not seem able to recount any branches of more than four generations is rather suspicious and, apart from points raised earlier, this leads one to think that they have recently slid into the Duruw' on the backs of the Najādah section—this in distinction to the Muwāhiyah and others who say they are proper sections of the tribe as a whole. It is very dangerous to assume anything from a similarity in

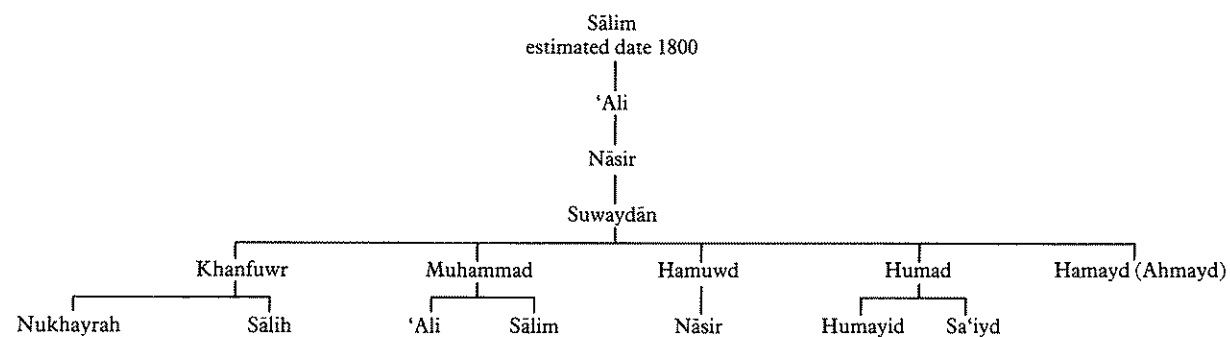
names, though some names do seem to be more common in some areas than others; but it is possible that Ghufayliy above was a Wahiybiy tribesman from the Āl Ghufallah. He may also represent the way in which the fatherless Tuwaytiyn and 'Ali gained tribal/sectional membership for their descendants.

**The family of the rashiyd 'Ali b. Humayd of the Labāt Tuwā'ib**

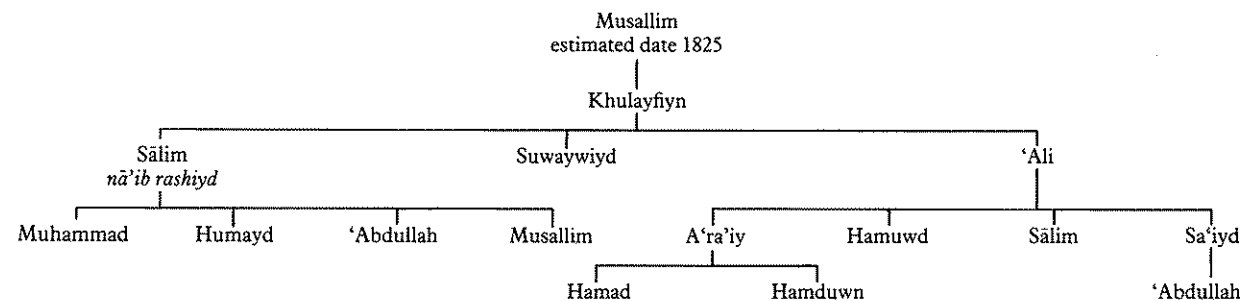
who lives in Tanā'am and is an important member of the tribal organisation of control.



**Some Awlād Saruwr of Mukhadah**



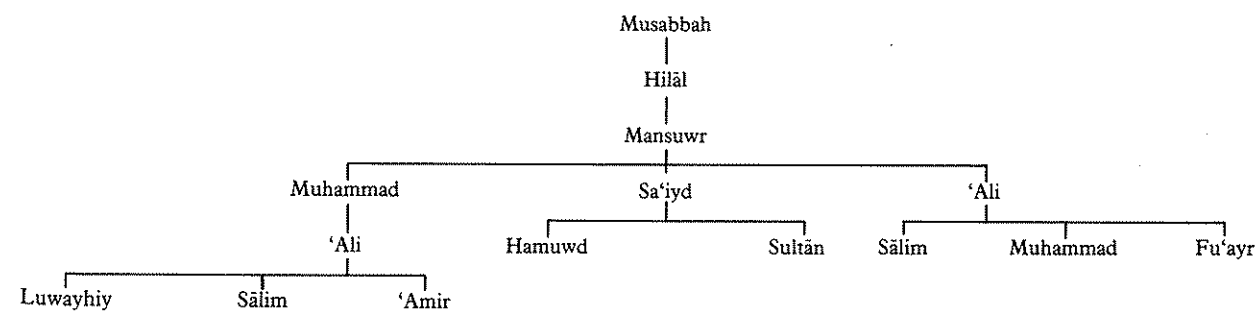
This family is closely related to the following:



It is thought that Musallim, the present *jadd*, may have been a son of Sālim, the *jadd* in the previous tree. Taking twenty-five years as a reasonable period for each generation, Musallim would have been alive 125 years ago and Sālim 150, so it would not be impossible. Apart from recording the family of the *nā'ib rashiyd*, Sālim b. Khulayfin, this situation demonstrates the ease with which parts of a bedu community

lose record of their genealogical connections, and therefore the ease with which other descent groups can interpose themselves in three or four generations. It also follows that this demonstrates how vague the rationale can be for estimating the field of influence held by a tribal leader.

**The Awlād Saruwr of Mukhadah**



The shortness of these three Mukhadah trees, compared with others, leads one to suppose that they represent groups which joined the Duruw' after their consolidation in the Dhāhirah.

## The Janabah

These are both a famous and widely distributed tribe who were at one time responsible for a deal of piracy around the southern Arabian coasts. Their city of Suwr was once a great entrepot for trade with India, the Gulf and Africa, and a centre for the importation of slaves into Arabia. Today they have regressed and outside Suwr they are purely bedu and fishermen. Their chief centres on the southern coast are the following places, called *banādir* (sing. *bandar*), the names are given from west to east: Rās Sharbithah and Rās Sawqarah which are shared with Batāharah; Qaysah, Rās Madrakah, Rās al-Dam, Rās Markaz, Rās al Am, Rās Mattah, Rās Duqm, Surayr, Rās Khanjar, Rās Ayjit, Rās Khabbah, the last three being shared with the Wahiybah; Rās Bintawt, Ghadaw, Khaluwf, and Filim and Mahawt which are in the Hikmān (a Wahiybah clan) said to belong to the *haram* of the Janabah, Rās al Mishyuw; then there is a gap in the Janabah holdings up to Rās al Jaffān which is Awlād Hamuwdah and Bani Bu 'Ali, as is al Ashkarah. After this the Janabah hold exclusively Rās Qumaytah, al Suwayh, Rās al Ruways, Rās Khubbah, Rās Daffah; which are all Hāl Sa'ad Janabah. Rās Watiyah and Rās Jumayr follow the Awlād Harrabiy and the last Janabah holdings are Rās al Hadd, Rās Burayiz and Rās Sharh. Apart from this long coastal strip, from which they extend into the interior for varying distances, the Janabah reach northwards up the Wadi Halfayn to 'Izz, the present seat of their shaykhs. This part of their territory is by no means wholly held by them, and there is much of it which is disputed with the Wahiybah and the Duruw'. They also hold Masiyrah island.

The Janabah may number as many as five thousand. As mentioned above their shaykhs have left Suwr and the ruling shaykh resides as a bedu at 'Izz. The other half of his family lives on Masiyrah Island. Power in Suwr today is wielded by the *rashiyds* of the four Janabah sections who chiefly live in the town. These are the Fu'aris, Mukhannah, Ghayaliyn and Arāmah. They do not cense their beards in Suwr, in distinction to the usual Omani practice.

Originally the Janabah shaykhs came from a now extinct section of the Fu'aris called the Marāwisah. It is related that a *sayyid* called Majā'al came from the Hadramawt and acted as advisor to the last Marāwisah shaykh and finally took over the position of *tamiymah* from him possibly in about 1600 or 1650. The last Majā'aliy

shaykh to officiate in Suwr itself is said to have been Sultān b. Muhammad b. al Murr.

At this time the family must have enjoyed considerable wealth as they were entitled to a quarter of the profit on dates exported from Suwr.

It has long been the custom that people immigrating into the *haram* or *dirah* of the Janabah are consciously adopted into the tribe; this is a difference to the normal rather sneaky practice whereby such people become slowly absorbed, taking several generations to lose the stigma of being foreigners. In this way large numbers of Baluch have joined the Mukhannah and the Arāmah. Many people of Harthiy origin and Āl Bu 'Ali origin have likewise become Janabah and the Mashāhamah of Fāris are really Manasiyr. The term for the process by which those who retain their own name is *wilf*. The term for those who come into *suff* or alliance is *half*, where they retain their own identity.

In Suwr there are remnants of *sayyid* (pl. *sāda*) families, apart from the Majā'alāh shaykhs who originate from the Bayt Abu Bakr *sāda*, there are Mushabbah, which means a 'fan', and Bā 'Alawiy Sayyids. At one time whilst these *sāda* were permitted to marry outside their families no outsider was allowed to take a wife from among them. This practice has now ceased.

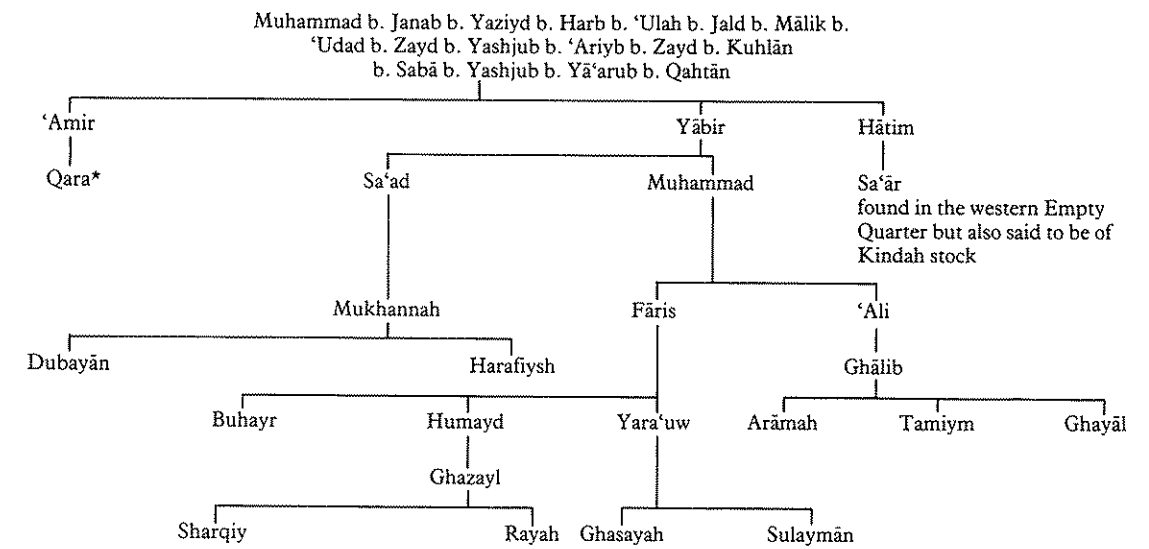
Other, more recent, extra-Janabah elements are the Fuzārah and the Burtuwman.

The Janabah are Ghāfariy in politics though not of Nizāriy descent. Their *azwah* is 'Yā Awlād Yābir'. The tribal camel *wasm* is (( above the right eye.

Amongst the Janabah is found a delightful wedding custom which will doubtless die out with the disappearance of the camel. Instead of the mother and sisters of the bride escorting her to the bridegroom's house, he has to find her. In fact she should traditionally run away on camelback and the groom has to give chase. There have been occasions when this hunt has lasted for a month or more and there are even stories of the groom giving up in disgust. This may be a very interesting relic of the pre-Islamic state of Arabian society when marriage by capture may have contributed to the establishment of the patriarchal system of the present tribal structure.

Some Janabah from the southern area around the Jāzir demonstrate another ancient characteristic, discussed in greater detail with the Harasiys, in that they recognise the turtle as their totem. This belief is not however common to the tribe as a whole.

## A possible descent of some early sectional ancestors of the Janabah

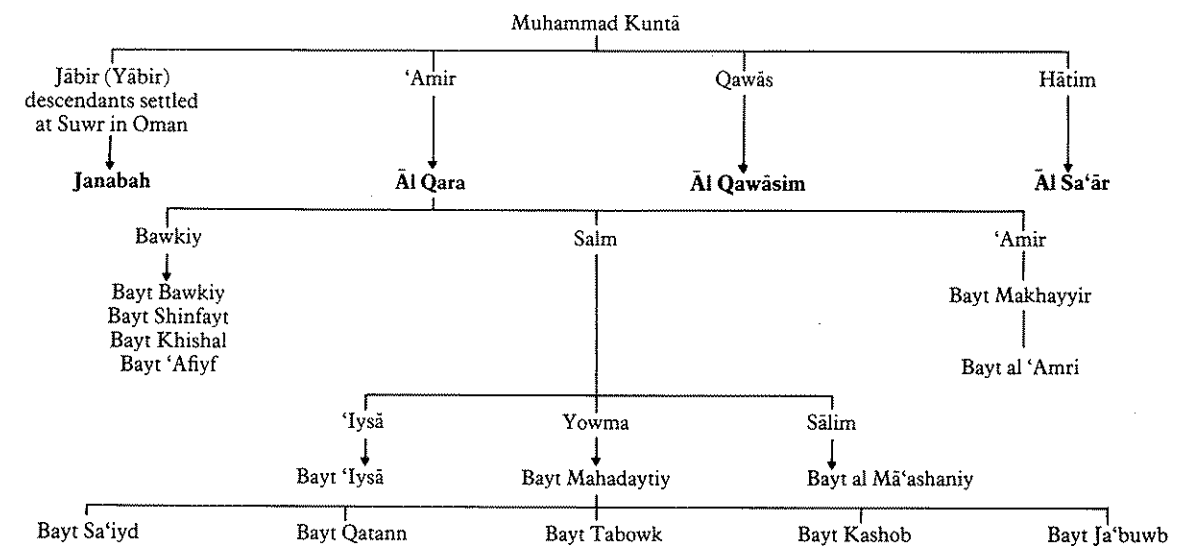


\* The relationship given here between the Janabah, Qara and Sa'ār has been obtained from oral tradition.

## A descent of the Qara derived from oral tradition

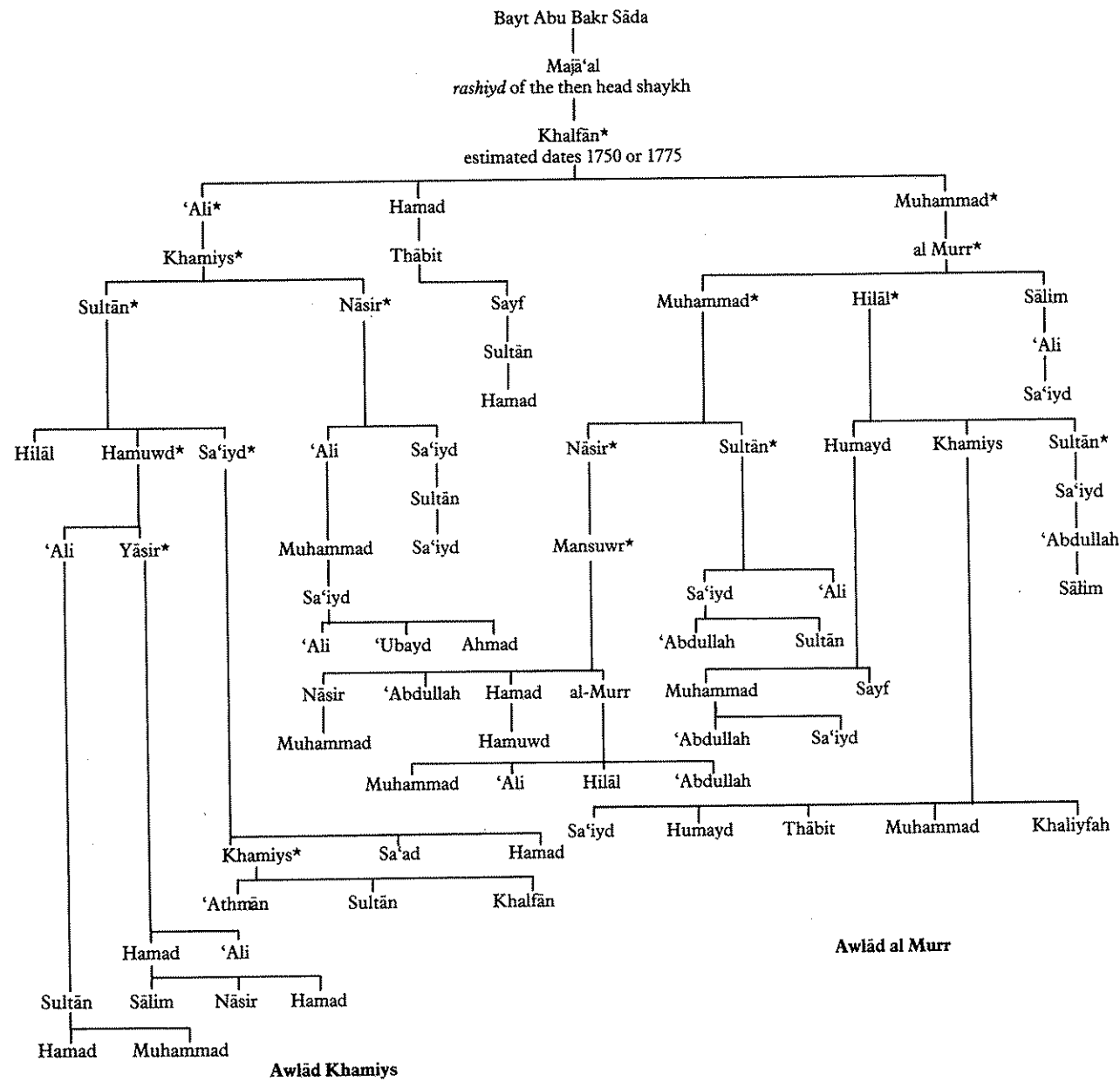
This tree was collected by Dr Jorg Jantzen of Bamberg University and is of great interest when compared with the Janabah descent above, collected by the author. In addition to suggesting a close relationship between the Janabah, Sa'ār and the Qara, this tree extends to the Qawāsīm and also suggests a possible relationship with the Mahra through the Bayt Bawkiy to which the reader is asked to refer.

However, as stated elsewhere, great caution must be exercised when dealing with similar names. Today the Bayt Bawkiy of the Qara are said to be very weak and may have taken on a Qara identity to enable themselves to be assimilated into their local society, rather than being actual descendants of the Mahra or being a link which would enable one to think that the Qara are proto-Mahra.



**Sections of the Janabah: the Majā'aliyyn**

*Wasm:* 11 between left eye and ear  
The family of the shaykhs



\*Persons holding the position of paramount shaykhs

The sections of the Janabah are numerous and complicated, indicating either the tribe's great age which is thought to be considerable, or that it contains many accretions, some of which may be Bayāsarah or 'Ad in origin. It is thought that should the tribal system continue, the Janabah are in a position to bud off one or more new tribes, and their sectional structure is as follows:

*Hāl Sa'ad* (*wasm* || between left eye and ear and | on the left knee, except the Harafiyysh who only have the between the left eye and ear) with a single sub-section: *Mukhannah* Also called the *Bayt Sa'adiyy*. The *Mukhannah* are prominent in Suwr under Hamad b. Khalfān and Muhammad Nāsir al-Hashār. Other *rashiyyds* are Salluwn b. Thābit of the Ma'ābikah, 'Ali b. Sālim of the Shawārib and Hamad b. Muhammad of the Hāl Suwaylim. The *Hawāfinah* follow Hamad b. Khalfān above.

sub-sub-sections:

- Bayt Dubayān*
- Ma'ābikah*
- Shawārib*
- Khabābishah* whose *Khadām* are the *Thawābit* under Ghadayir b. Saliym, and possibly of 'Ad origin.
- Suwaylim*
- Marāqitah*
- Al Hamad*
- Masāfarah*
- Hadadiyy*
- Harafiyysh* (sing. *Harafshiy*)
- Mushābihah*
- Bayt Hawwaq*
- Bayt Ghafalah*
- Bayt Khaliyf*
- Bayt 'Ufalah*
- Bayt Hilāl*
- Hawāfinah* (sing. *Hawfaniyy*)
- Hāl Suwaylim*
- Bayt Al Mubārak* (called *Mumbarakuw*)
- Madahiyysh*
- Bayt Ghadāfiyy*
- Bayt Mashabkiyy*

**Hāl Muhammad**

sub-section.

*Fu'āris* (sing. *Fāris*), *rashiyyd*: A'iyl b. Shāfiyy of Bayt Shalawtah. *Wasm*: 11 between left eye and ear.

sub-sub-sections:

- Hāl Abu Buhayr*
- Mashāhamah* (origin from Manasiyr) found in Oman, Suwr and Masiyrah. The Janabah asked them to be *halfiy* but they demanded and became *wilfiyy*.
- Āl Tabā'ah*
- Awlād Abu Nashiyyb*
- Āl Abu Humayd* found in Oman, Jiddat-al Harāsiyy and Dhufār.
- Āl Bu Ghazayl*
- Bayt Sharayqiyy*
- Hāl Rayjah*
- Bayt al-Rubbān* found in Oman and Jiddat al

Harāsiyy.

- Bayt Draybiyy*
- Bayt Shalawtah*
- Bayt Hamad Salbuwkh*
- Bayt Yara'uw* found in Khaluwf
- Bayt Ghasayah*
- Bayt Sulaymān*
- Bayt Dhubābah* found in Oman, Suwr and Masiyrah.
- Ayāl Sa'iyyd Nāsir*
- Hāl Abu 'Ayn* found in the Jiddat al Harāsiyy and the Jāzir.
- Bayt Abu 'Aliyyb*
- Ayāl Makawmah*
- Bayt Abu Jubbān*
- Bayt Fāris b. 'Ali* found in the Jiddat al Harāsiyy
- Salatiyyn*
- Marāwisah* now a dead clan. Used to provide the shaykhs of the Janabah.

**Hāl Abu Ghālib**

Also called the *Ayāl 'Ali*, they are said to descend from a Christian woman. Their *rashiyyd* is Sālih b. Hamdān who has four deputies. Their *wasm* is | between the left eye and ear — on the left knee, except the *Jawāmiyah* which have = on the left knee.

sub-sub-sections:

- Arāmah* (sing. *'Arāmiyy*) found mainly in Suwr and not subject to the *rashiyyd* above. They follow Muhammad b. Nāsir and 'Abdullāh b. Sālim.
- Jā'afarah*
- Hāl Tamīym* found in the Jāzir.
- Sinānir* (sing. *Sanuwriyy*)
- Āl Dhuhayah*
- Āl Mahalah*
- Hāl 'Ali*
- Hanayshah* (sing. *Hanānishah*)
- Awlād Ghaniym b. Saliym*
- Āl al Thawriyy*
- Mafatiym* (sing. *Maftuwhiyy*)
- Dubuwsh* (sing. *Dabashiyy*)
- Tibqal*
- Hāl Jariyah* found in Oman.
- Bayt al Quss* a very small group found in the Jāzir

Sections of the Hāl Muhammad which do not seem to be sub-sections of the Hāl Abu Ghālib but which may nevertheless have their origins there, having now achieved an enhanced status:

- Jawāmiyah* (sing. *Jāmiyy*)
- Qarānishah*
- Ghayāliyy* (sing. *Ghaylaniyy*) found mostly in Suwr and Muscat, also at Ruways with the Bani Bu 'Ali.
- Harayah*
- Wilād Qāsib*

**The breeds of camel found with the Janabah**

- Banāt Dhabayān*
- Banāt Samhah*
- Banāt Shiqaq*
- Banāt Hamrān*

Banāt Shuwik  
 Banāt Dhaghabuwrah  
 Banāt Lasayfarah (e.g. Duruw‘)

**Janabah followers and clients**  
 Bani Sinan Suwr; half *hadr* and half *bedu* also called

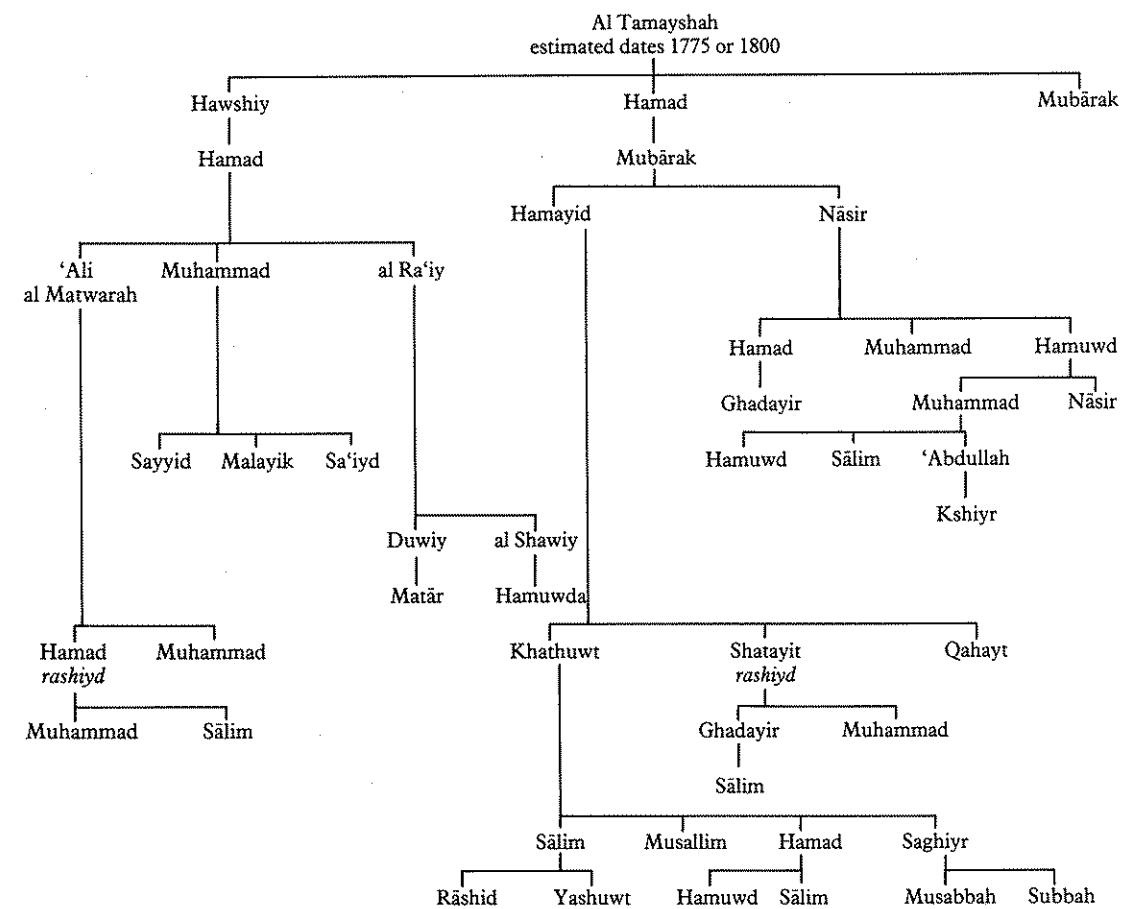
Fuzārah  
 Burtumān

*Sinaysilah*; follow the Janabah and have no *wasm* using the Janabah *azwah*, and have no *shaykhs* or *rashiyds*. found near Izki; see Bani Riyām. originate from the Siyābiyyin, found near Izki and ‘Izz.

**Bayt al Khayfiy**

A small group of people who are a separate tribe intimately connected with the Janabah. They number about twenty men and live in the Wadi Ghābah, Hawshiy, Turbān, Khaluwf and the Huquf. They would not seem to have a *haram* of their own. They have only one division which is called the Bayt Hawshiy. *Wasm*: = under left ear.

*Bayt Hawshiy of the Bayt al Khayfiy*

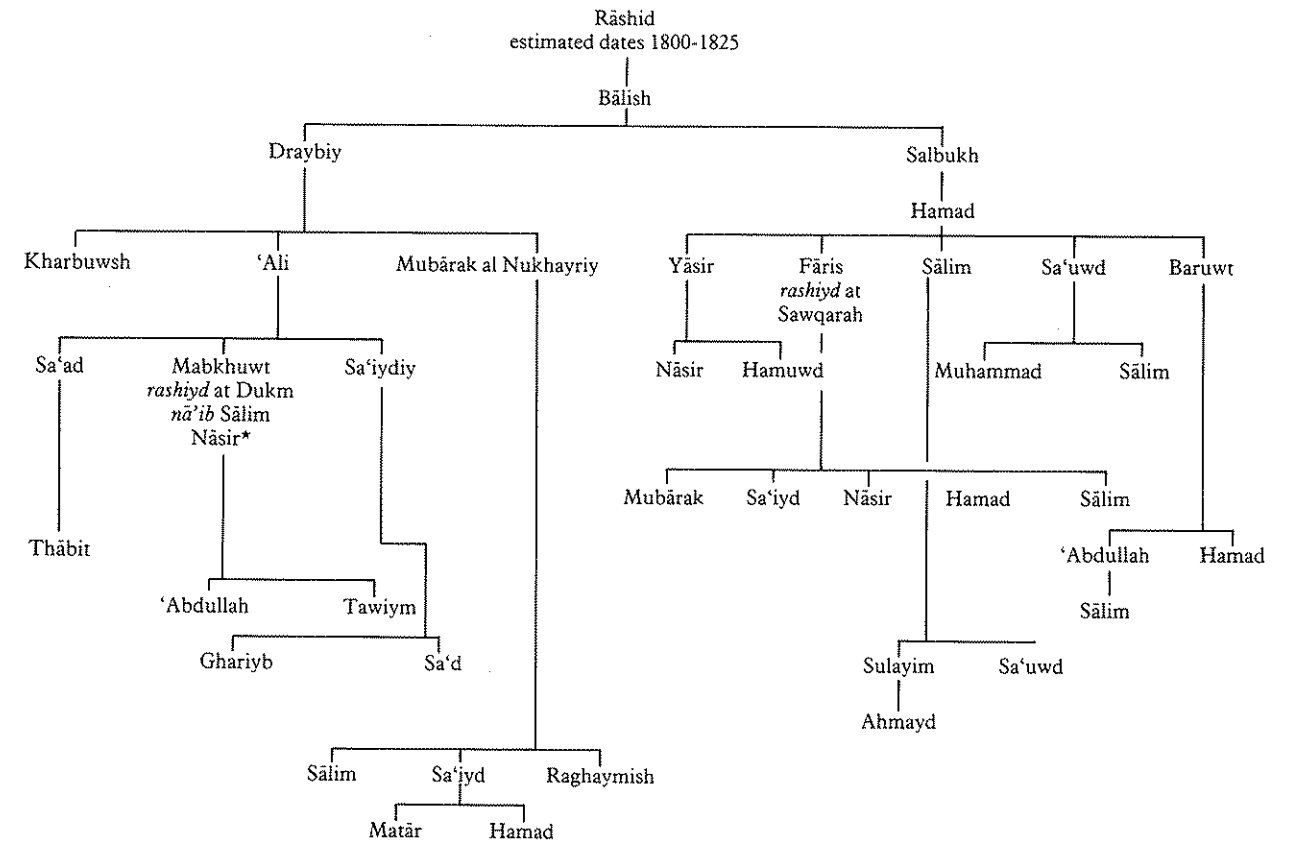


The Bayt al-Khayfiy are very interesting as it is possible that they are the remnants of probably pre-Islamic shrine guards similar to the Bayt Mashāyikh of Dhufar. It is said that they are descended from the *khadām* or servants who guarded the tomb of Yawhariy in the Hadramawt (this is another name for the tomb of Shaykh Bayt Bilhāf; see the Mahra entry for further details).

The following families illustrate further the ways the genealogy is used to create tribal identities where this is a desired objective, though it would be wrong to suppose that there is ever a conscious attempt to achieve this. This is just something that happens. Some family trees also serve both to record important tribal members and genealogical facts reinforcing the tribal sectional organisation.

**Bayt al Rubbān in Fāris of Hāl Muhammad**

who follow Sālim b. Nāsir, showing sectional relationships.



Bayt Draybiy of Dukm and al 'Ajā'iz

Bayt Hamad Bin Salbukh of Sawqarah and Khaluwf

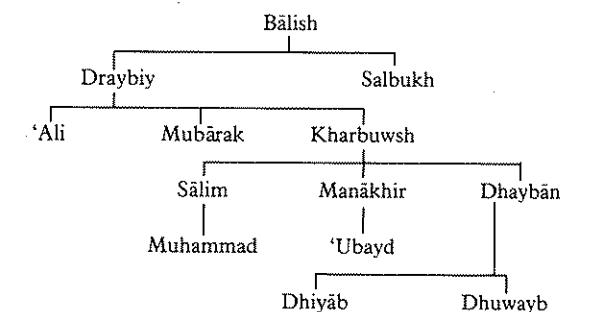
\* mother was sister of Hathāyith al Bathariy's father. *Nā'ib* means deputy.

It would seem that quite small numbers of people form tribal subsections, and the three sections above, who fortunately remember enough of their ancestry to be able to make the right connection, demonstrate in a concise way the build up of individual families into a sectional grouping.

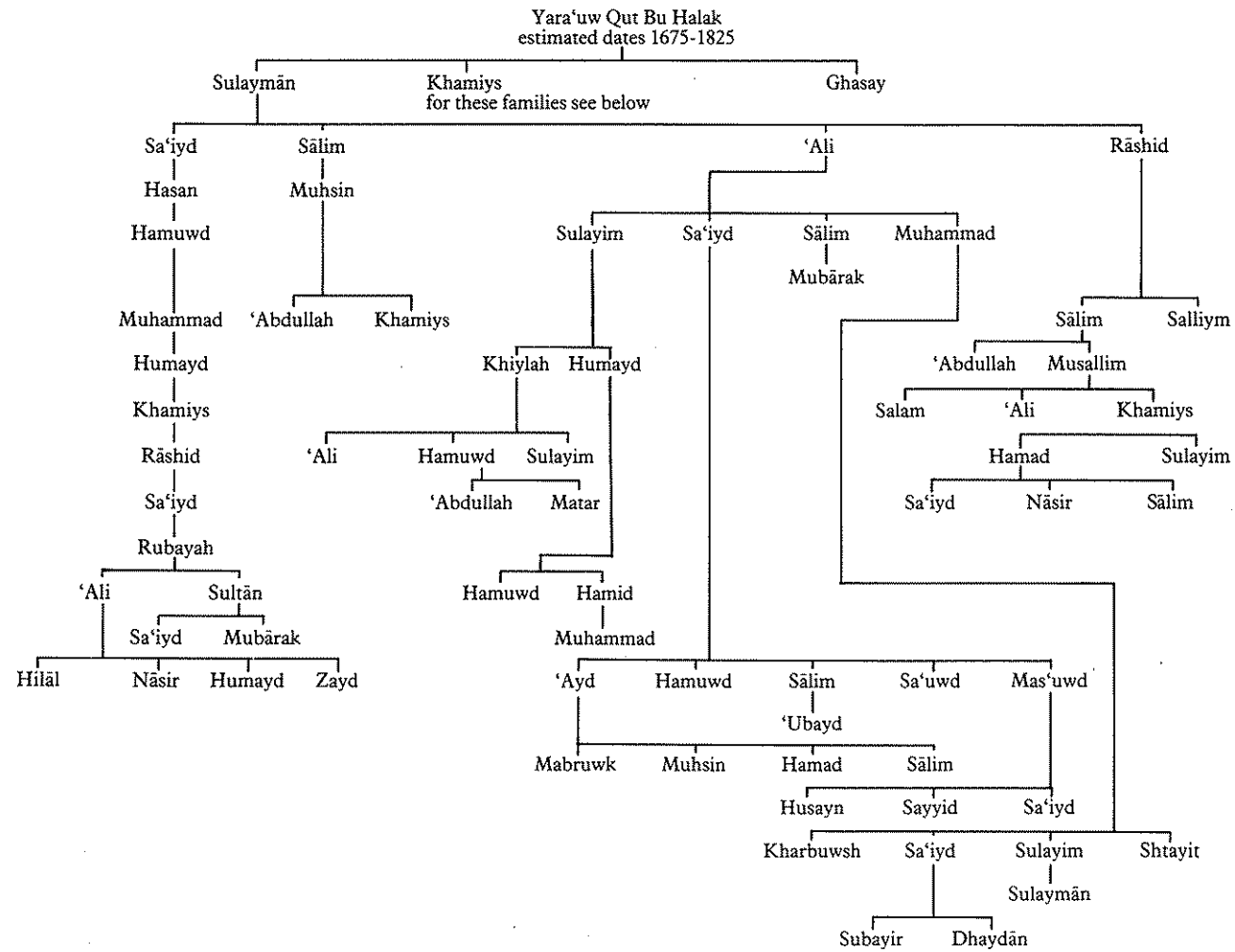
However, one wonders why Mubarak al Nukhayriy has not become a *jadd* and, with his brother 'Ali, retains his father's name as his sectional name. It is the haphazard nature of the way things happen that again shows how easy it is for non-tribal elements to gain an entrance into the tribal structure.

**The Bayt Shalawtah in Bayt Rubbān of Fāris in Hāl Muhammad.**

Live near 'Izz

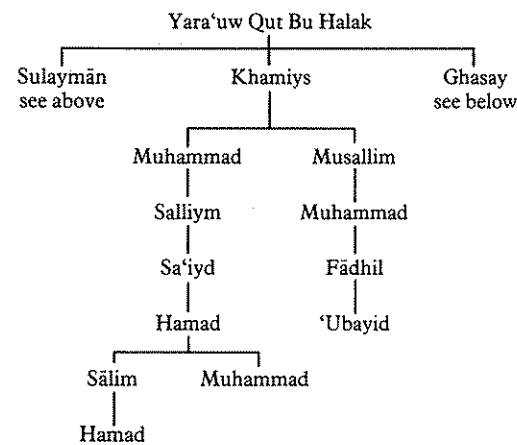


**The Bayt Yara'uw in Fāris, Hāl Muhammad**  
 Bayt Sulaymān section to which the Awlād Khamiys also belong

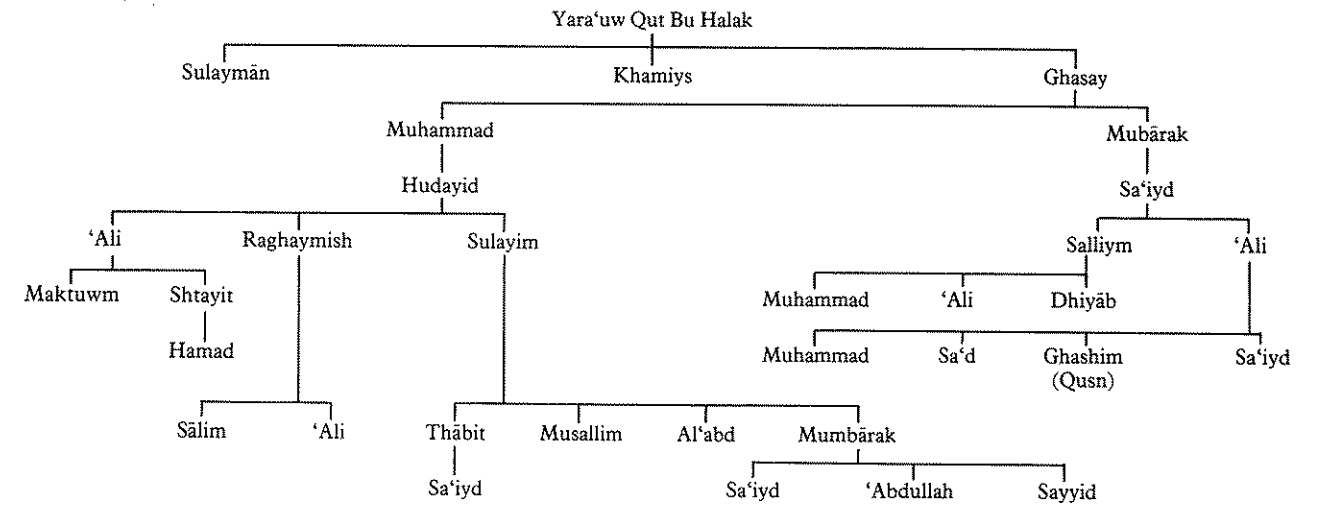


The estimation of dates in this tree is difficult because the twenty-five year generation system gives a variation of twelve, i.e. 300 years and six, i.e. 150 years. It is possible that this is due to the people on the right, with the smaller number of generations, either having forgotten some intermediate ancestors, or that they have been in the process of establishing their false identity as members of this clan. There is also, of course, the possibility that the source of information for the longer side was boasting.

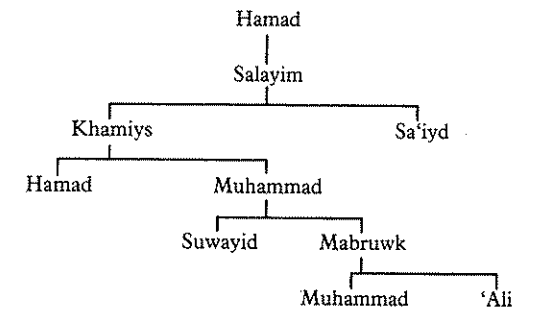
**Awlād Khamiys b. Yara'uw**  
 of Bayt Sulaymān in Fāris Hāl Muhammad



**Bayt Ghasayah**  
 in Bayt Sulaymān, Fāris Hāl Muhammad



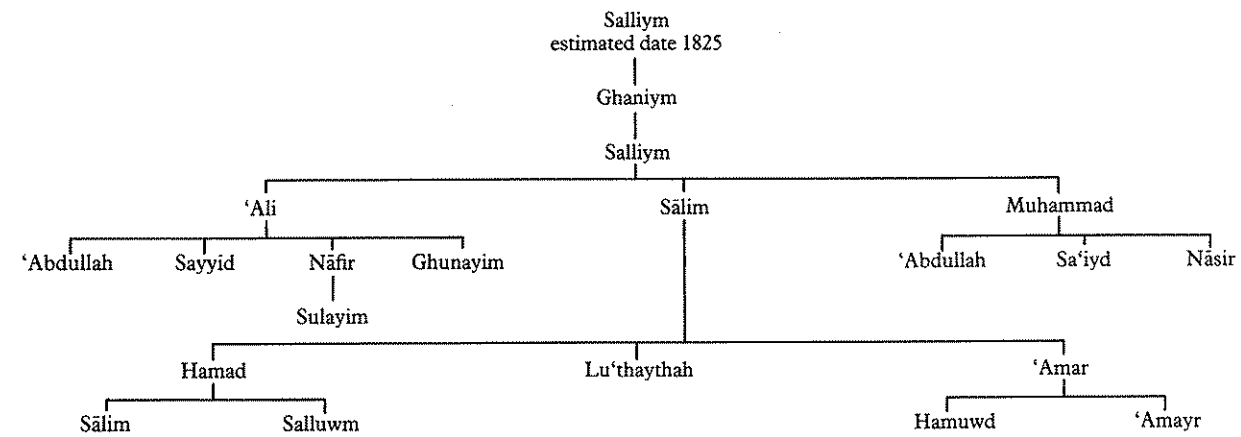
**Hāl Abu Ghālib—Bayt al Quss**



This small group of people, whose short family tree contains the names of all known members, is difficult to place exactly. It is possible that they are of non-Janabah origin and are working out their sectional and sub-sectional relationships, having attached themselves to one of the main Janabah groups as a sort of preliminary.

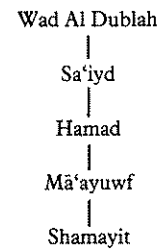


**Awlād Ghaniym b. Salliym of Hanānishah Mahalah  
Hāl Abu Ghālīb**



This, a complete tree of a small sub-sectional group, demonstrates again how small the units can be at this end of the tribal scale.

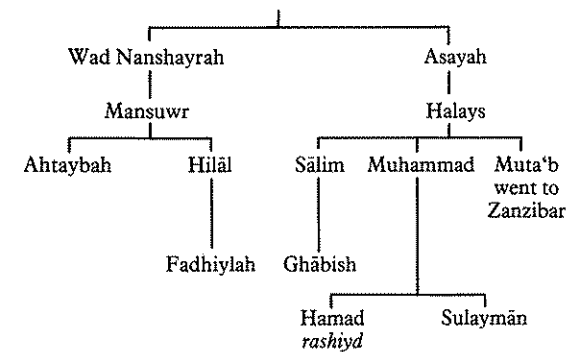
**Hāl Sa'd, some Harafiysh**



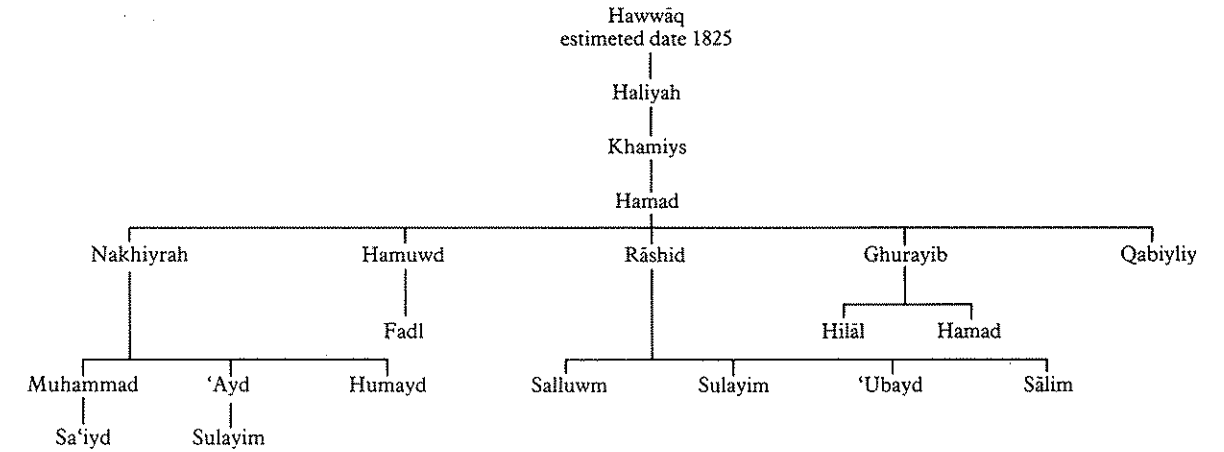
This tree shows first of all the bedu word for *jadd*, *wad*, and secondly the kind of reply that one is apt to get to one's question at times. Here, in combination with an arabized English word, the *jadd* is called the 'Double Grandfather', meaning the great ancestor. An amusing example of the way European words are picked up in the oil-fields and also of a wry bedu leg-pull.

**Hāl Suwaylim, Hāl Sa'd**

The family of the *rashiyd* Hamad b. Muhammad



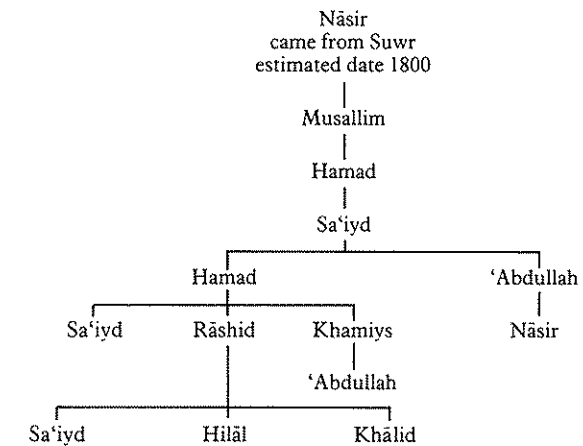
**Bayt Hawwāq in Harafiysh Hāl Sa'd**



Living at Sayy (called Shu'ay), Dukm and Adam. Another tree where there is a firm memory of the present members' connection to their *jadd*.

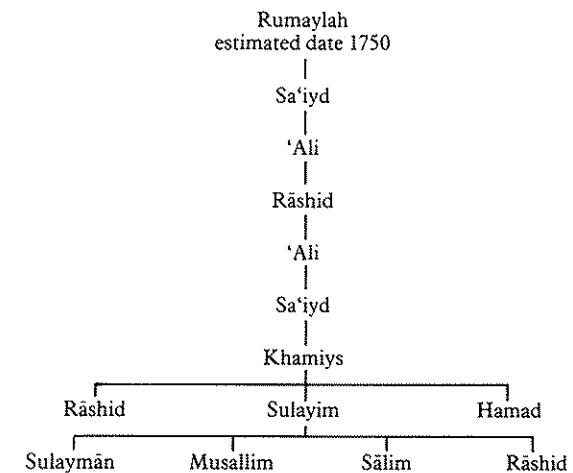
**Some Hawāfinah in Hāl Sa'd**

from 'Izz



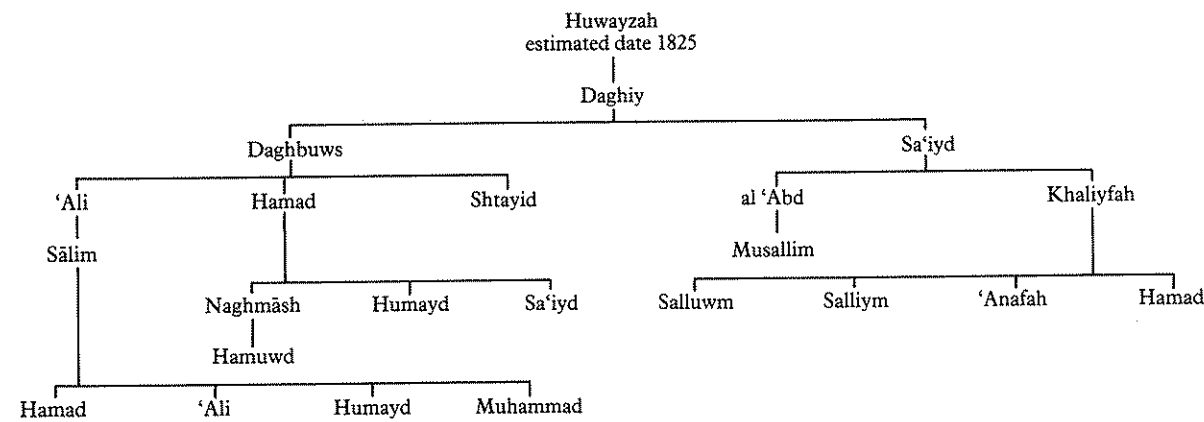
A family showing memory of an ancestor migrating from one place to another.

**Some Bayt Mubārak in Mukhannah Hāl Sa'd**



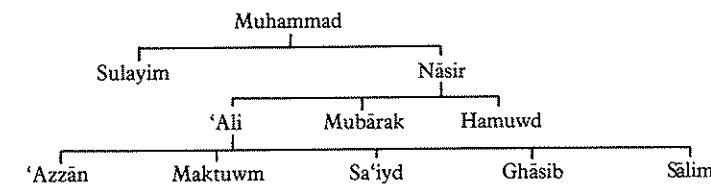
It is apparent that it is important to this group to maintain a memory of Rumaylah. However, the connection with a Mubārak has been lost, even though it would seem more reasonable for this group to call itself Bayt Rumaylah. The choice of name for a sectional ancestor is a little haphazard and perhaps Mubārak was a relative of Rumaylah, and the situation may be much as illustrated on p. 47.

**The Bayt Khaliyfah of Ghafalah in Harāfiysh Hāl Sa'd**  
An important family in the Jāzir



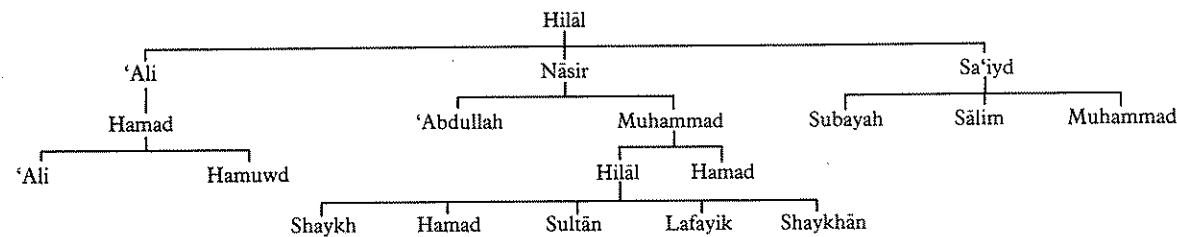
**The Hāl Suwaylim (sing. Suwaylamiy) of Harāfiysh Hāl Sa'd**

Living at al 'Ajā'iz, where they are clearly, in 1972, becoming very closely attached to the Harāsiys, and may one day become absorbed by them in pursuit of community loyalties rather than those conferred by descent.



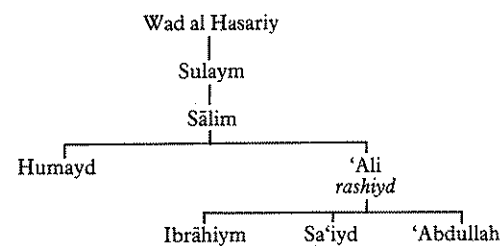
**The Bayt Hilāl of Bayt 'Ufalāh Harāfiysh Hāl Sa'd**

Living at Dhabar. A compact family grouping returning to their sectional ancestor.



**Shawārib (Dubayān) of 'Izz**

The family of the *rashiyd* 'Ali b. Sālim



**The Āl Wahiybah**

A very large bedouin tribe which has not had much contact with the Oil Company. Very famous as camel-breeders and greatly at feud with the Duruw' in the past, their shaykhs do not control the whole tribe, about half of the power being wielded by a family of *rashiyds*, the Jahahiyy. They have always been strongly attached to the Harth for the purpose of Omani politics, and are of

Nizāriyy descent. More than other bedu they are inclined to foot races and suddenly a group of them will run away without seeming reason in a mad dash. The raising of the eyebrows in a salacious manner, both by way of greeting and as a normal conversational practice is also more common with the Wahiybah than any other tribe in the Omani interior.

**Al Ghufaylah**

The shaykhy clan are descended, according to one account, from two brothers who were 'Ghufallah' from the Āl Bu Falah of Abu Dhabi. One brother found the Āl Ghufaylah proper and the other founded three clans called: Walad Ghathay, Mu'ayd, and Bayt Yahām.

The Wahiybah shaykhs originally came from the 'Askariyah, the last being Shu'ay b. Adam. The Ghufallah brothers came to this man and for reasons that are not clear Shu'ay handed over power to them. This may have taken place in about 1700 AD. There is little doubt that the name of Shu'ay's father is a joke and what the informant meant was that he did not know the real name.

*Wilād Marhuwnah*  
*Bayt al Zabuwān*  
*Bayt Luwtayriy*

**Shataruwiyy**

Who have no sections, may be Āl Bu Sa'iydi in origin, according to sources in the town of Adam.

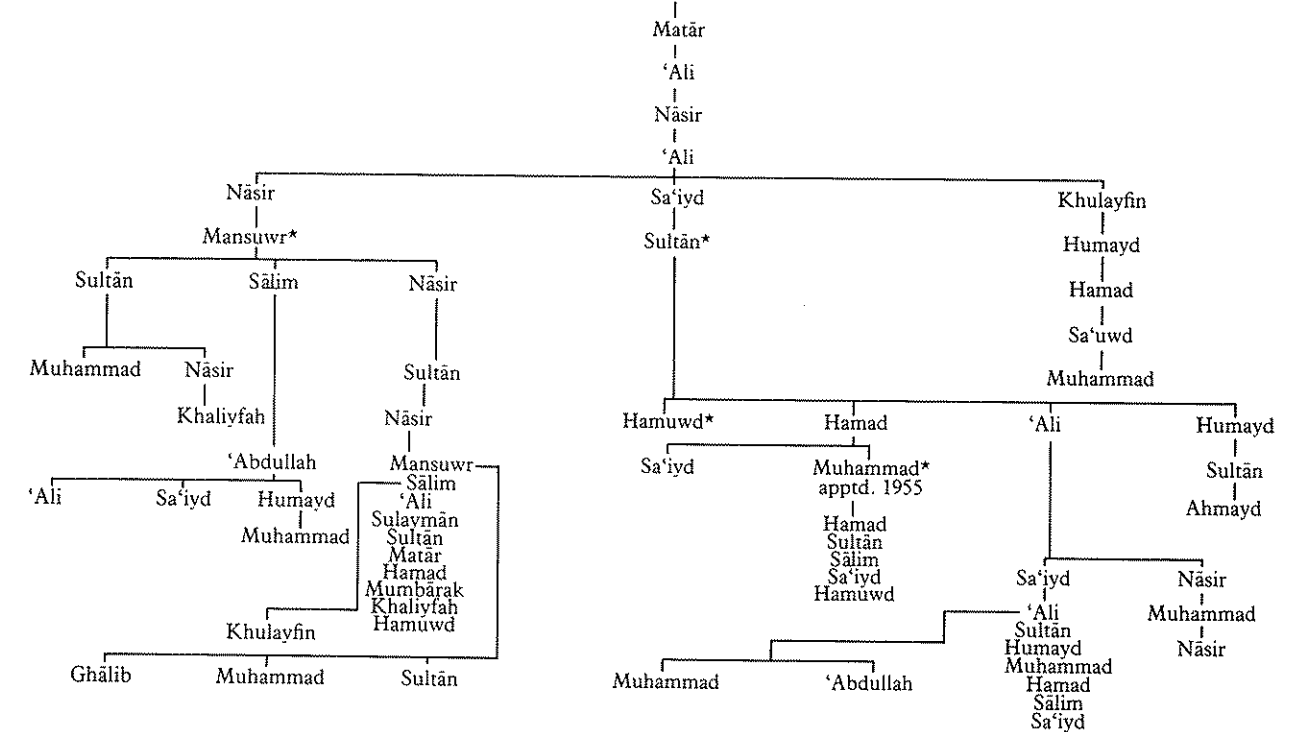
**Ghaythāniyy**

Who have no sections

**Hāl 'Amr**

*Hawāriyyt* and others. This section is confined largely to the sands.

Talhah  
estimated possible dates 1675-1725



Paramount shaykhs are indicated by an asterisk

The structure of the Wahiybah or Yāl Wahiybah as they are called where the following clans follow the Āl Ghufaylah:

**'Askariyah**

They are descended from Shu'ay b. Adam and his brother Bin Thamiynah who seems to have followed a common practice by being named after his mother.

Shu'ay gave rise to:

- Bayt Rubayah*
- Bayt Ruwayshiyd*
- Bayt Mudhāriyy*
- Bayt A'iydah*
- Madānsah*
- Mudhālah*

Bin Thamiynah gave rise to the *Bayt Bin Thamiynah* (also called *Muthāminah*) which has the following sub-sections:

- Wilād Rashuwadah*

**The Jahahiyy**

This Wahiybah clan is large and its chiefs wield as much, if not more, power than the Āl Ghufaylah shaykhs. There is a story that they are originally the bedu of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd but this does not accord with their recorded descent and the Āl Bu Sa'iyd of Adam deny it (but see the entry for the Shataruwiyy). They are comprised of the following sections:

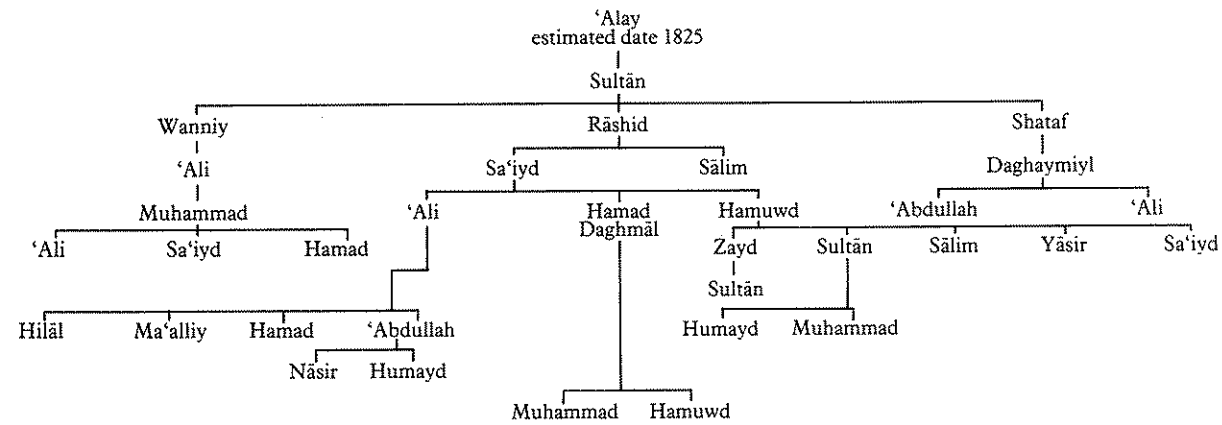
- Wilād Hamad*
- Wilās Sallawtah*
- Summān*
- Baduwr*
- Suw'ad*
- Asasiyy*
- Mughayrah*
- Tāmiyy*
- Shiwaliyy*
- Dhuhuwāb*

Jarāhinah  
Khabābiys  
Ramāmishah

Hanfariy  
Al Tabā'ah  
Hāl Hindiy  
Mudābilah  
Hāl Musallim  
Qa'duw

The family tree of the *rashiyd's* family is as follows.  
The position of the Jahahiys' semi-autonomy was agreed between Sultan Faysal b. Turkiy Al Bu Sa'iydiy and Rāshid b. Sultān b. 'Aylay.

Salalwah  
no sections



The following clans follow the Jahahiyl:

*Bin Hayir*

Who have sections and sub-sections:

*Yadayliy*

*Hanādilah*

*Bahārinah*

*Bayt Subayor*

*'Akmān*

*Humhayrib*

*Musālīfah*

*Marawbah*

*Ghafadhiyf*

*Maramihah*

*Mushājirah*

*Fazārah*

no sections, but see Bani Riyām.

*Baluwsh*

Other and not specifically committed sections are:

*Faraqiy*

*Hakmāniy* (possibly derived from the people of 'Ād)

*Hāl Ghuwaylib*

*Ghuwānam*

*Qarafiy*

*Wilād Humayid*

### Wahiybah Camel Breeds and Brands

Each family of camels is owned by a specific tribal group. Each group uses the basic Wahiybah brand with an addition denoting the group. The Wahiybah brand is a scar on either side of the nose and a vertical brand on the left cheek.

*Breed*

*Tribal Section*

*Brand*

Banāt Farhah  
Banāt Samhah  
Banāt Khamaysah  
Banāt Laskiyah  
Banā 'Arqah  
Banāt Khawārah  
Banāt Shahabah  
Banāt Bu'aydhah  
Banāt Qafadiy  
Banāt Masayhah  
Banāt 'Arāth'ah  
Banāt Haydiyah  
Banāt Nakātah  
Banāt Qadshah  
Banāt Mahādiyrah  
Banāt Dhubayah  
banāt Yihaylah  
Banāt Siham  
Banāt Samayhah

Mughayrah  
Muthāminah  
Hamhayrib  
Madābilah  
Yadayliy  
Āl Tamiys  
Laqālīfah  
Hamuwd Sa'iyd al Jahāfiy  
'Askariyah  
Muqāadhah  
Muthāminah  
Āl Bu Ghafaylah  
Muhammad Hamad al Ghufayliy  
'Asākirah  
"  
"  
"  
Mughayrah  
Jahahiyl  
Su'wād

— on left knee  
as above plus — on the thigh  
+ on left shoulder — in elbow  
≡ on right cheek  
≡ on cheek — on right arm  
— on neck and arm  
≡ on left cheek  
⤵ crescent on left thigh  
| on left arm  
| on left neck  
|| each side of the nose  
— top of left arm  
— top of left arm  
see above  
"  
"  
"  
— on right chin  
| on left thigh  
— on neck — on arm

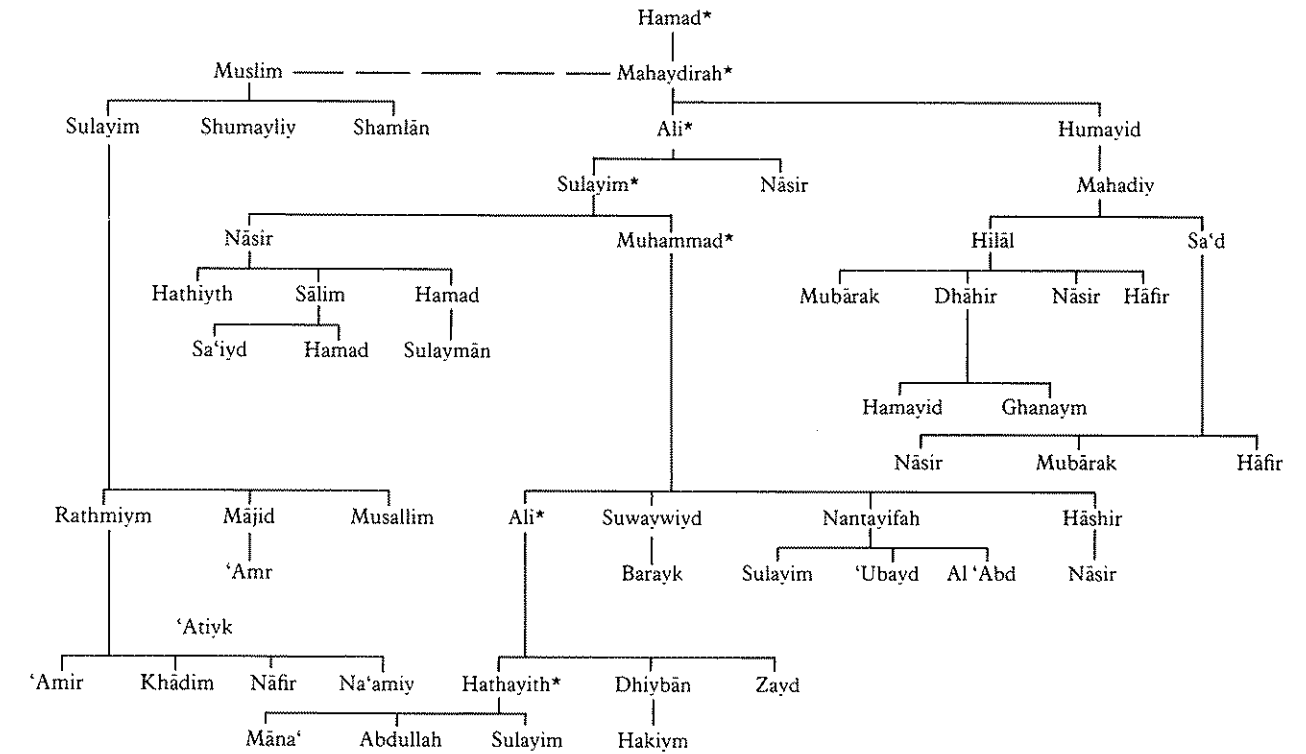
### Batāharah

Strength some 270. All living around Shu'aymiah and grazing in the Wadi 'Arah northwards to 'Arbah and down to Mazraq. Their main living is, however, derived from fishing, the dried products of which they sell in Dubai; though formerly Mukalla was also a market for them.

*Mahābishah* under Sh. Hathayith b. Ali al Bathariy who is the only leader, and possibly totals 60 males.

sub-sections:

*Mahādiyrah*, the shaykhly section



An asterisk denotes the senior shaykh

*Bayt Habaysh*

*Bayt Qatann*

*Bayt Nāsir*

*Matāriy*

*Mushārimah*, possibly 70 males.

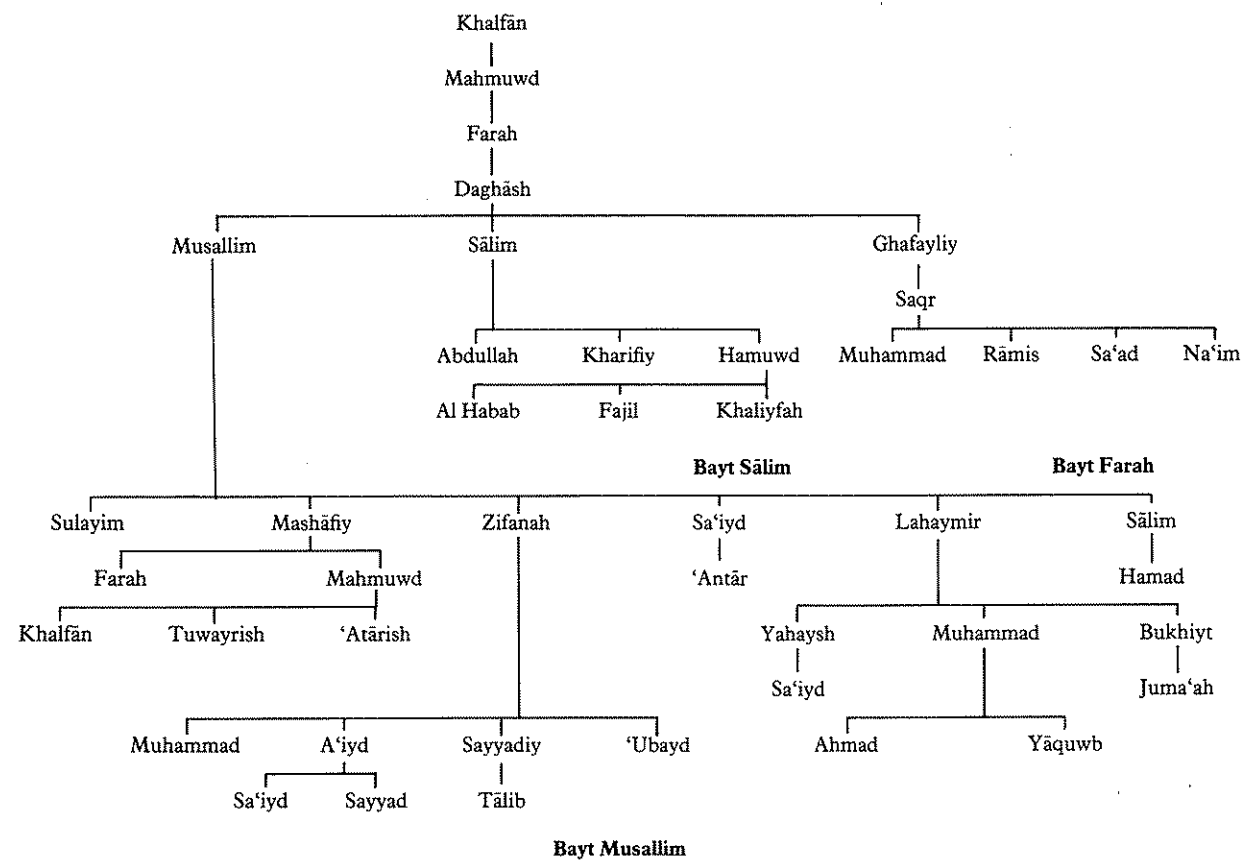
sub-sections:

*Bayt Sa'iyd*

*Bayt Sālim*

*Bayt Musallim*

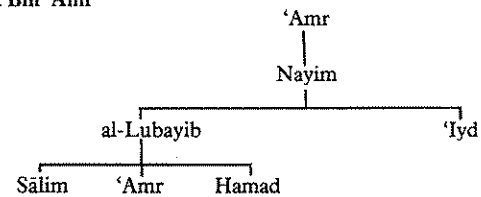
*Bayt Farah*



A tree showing the relationship between three of the sub-sections of the Mushārimah

It would seem that the greater number of progeny produced by Musallim and Sālim has, as it were, promoted them to sectional *jaads*. Doubtless they and their brother Ghafayliy were all Bayt Farah until this happened.

**Bayt Bin 'Amr**



**Mushalah**

The Mushalah possibly total 120 men.

sub-sections:

- Bayt Bahayh
- Bayt Hamdah
- Bayt Humayd
- Bayt 'Amr

**Mukādishah**

Said to number about 50.

sub-section:

- Bayt Bat'hawr (in the Dhufar mountains and Salālah plain).

Whilst there are very close connections by marriage with the Janabah, and recent Batāharah history has led this tribe to become almost a part of the Janabah there is at least one family of Janabah that has become absorbed in the Batāharah. These are the *Bayt Bin 'Amr*. They

originate from the Hāl Abu Ghālib of Janabah.

The Batāharah have an elusive origin and are almost certainly remnants of a previous population. If this is so they are very ancient, and indeed one source reports that they descend from Shadād b. 'Ād. They speak Arabic today and it is said that only a handful of men still know the special dialect of Mahra which was peculiar to this tribe. Their *dirah* was formerly very extensive and reached along the northern edge of the Dhufar mountains to the Wadi Quduwn; they have been pushed eastwards as a result of the Mahra migration.

**The Banādir of the Batāharah are as follows:**

- Shu 'aymiyah
- Āl Fādhiy
- Āl Ajjir
- Sharbithah
- Sawqarah, though this is shared half and half with the Janabah.

**The camels of the Batāharah:**

- Banāt Dhubayir
- Banāt Hamarah
- Banāt Farhah
- Banāt Sihāmah
- Banāt Laysiyrah
- Banāt Safayriy
- Banāt Halaywah
- Banāt Sihm
- Banāt Suwdah
- Banāt A'ways

**The Mahra**

This tribe, which is bedu in northern Dhufar where they live on the *najd* between the desert steppe and the mountains proper, is largely settled or *hadr* in the territory of the South Yemen Republic next door where they used to constitute a sultanate in their own right. It is large in number and there may be as many as five thousand in all. It is possible to regard them as a nation rather than a tribe because each section has its own war-cry, they have their own language and possessed a degree of autonomy. It is probable that they are the descendants of the Himyarites who had a number of kingdoms in South Arabia in pre-Islamic times that were economically dependent on the trade in incense for which the area is famous.

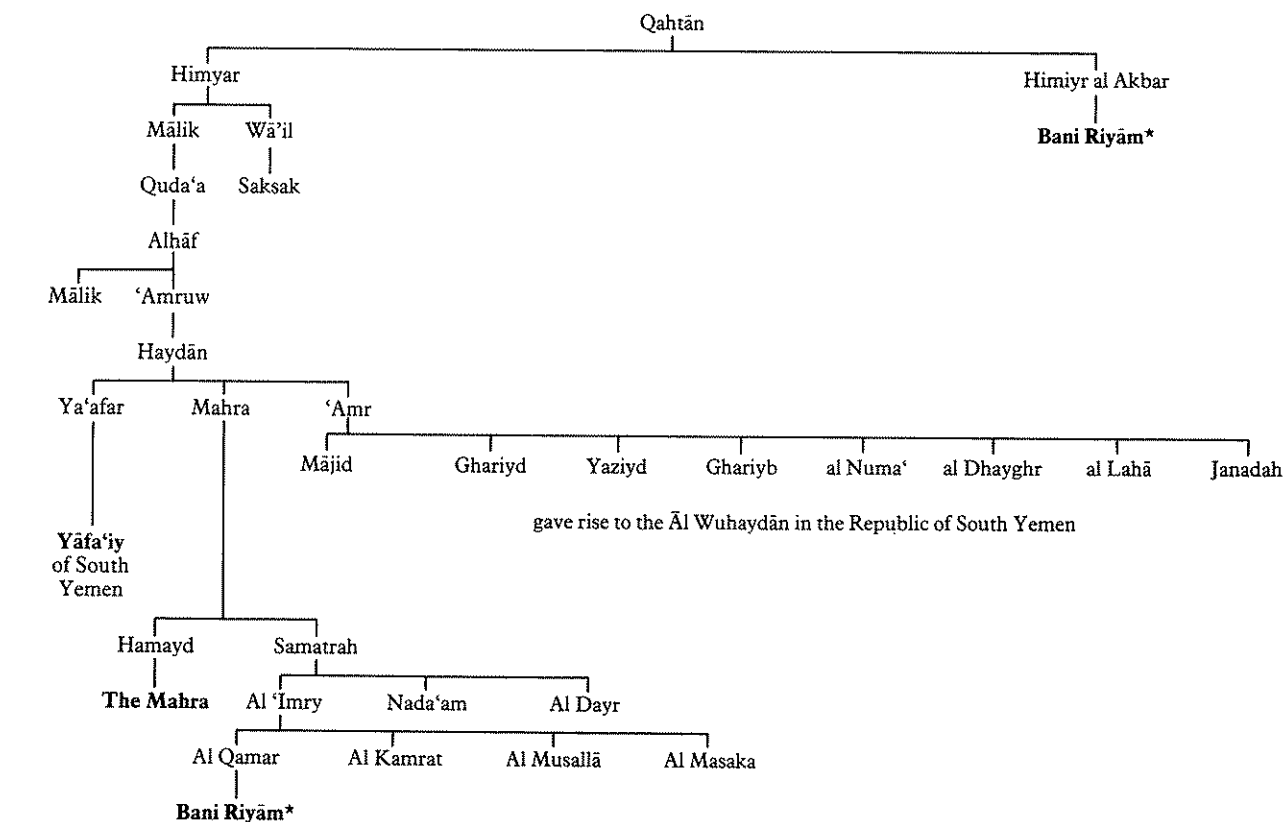
A part of the great interest in genealogies shown by the Arabs shortly after the rise of Islam can be ascribed to the need to define just who the Arabs were for tax purposes after the conquests, when Arabs received preferential treatment over those people who had been conquered. This led to a certain number of difficulties and consequent forgeries. It is certain that the classical descent of the Mahra was one of these as they were made to fit into a record of descent that very probably does not concern them at all. The one given below is a collation between these classical sources and their own tradition. The Mahra tribesmen of Dhufar eat the livers of slaughtered gazelle raw, a dietary habit which is viewed with horror by the bedu of Oman. The Mahra regard this northern opinion with an unholy glee. The Mahra also still eat the heart-bud of the doum palm. This they call *maniyn* and together with the leaves of the *ghāf* tree it was

their staple before rice became available to them. One is constrained to recall the diet of the witches of Oman and to wonder if this represents a memory of the times when the Mahra were in occupation of areas far to the north-east of their present location.

It is interesting that the Somalis are regarded by the Mahra as Bin 'Amm. Indeed, there is a Somali tribe which traces its descent to Hamar and they call themselves Hamariy. Mogadisco is also called Hamar. However, whilst they have a tradition that Hamar gathered the clans into a tribe, it may be a name referring to the red sand in the area.

Ibn Khaldun mentions that the country of al Shihr was also called Mahra after a tribe descended from Hadramuwt or Quda'a who conquered the 'Ād. This is a further example of the many versions of the classical genealogies. Ibn Khaldun goes on to say that the first Qahtānite to settle in the area was Mālik b. Himyar who revolted against his brother Wā'il. Mālik was succeeded by his son Quda'a who was finally restricted by his cousin, Saksak b. Wā'il, to the country of Mahra. Quda'ah was succeeded by his son al Hāf and al Hāf by his son Mālik who moved to Oman where he ruled until overthrown by his nephew Mahra b. Haydān b. 'Amruw b. al Hāf. Whilst it is dangerous to deduce anything from a similarity of names it is interesting to speculate that the present Bayt Bilhāf of the Mahra may have originated as servants of the al Hāf mentioned by Ibn Khaldun. This would possibly necessitate a belief that tribal chieftains were priestly in function or even deified. Alternatively they may have been conquered by al Hāf and so represent the remains of a pre-Qahtānite population reduced to servitude.

**The Descent of Mahra**

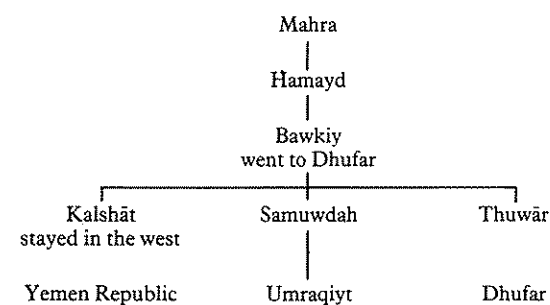


\* The two versions of the descent of the Bani Riyām

The presence of Mahra in Oman proper is attested by the continuance of the use of Mahriy place-names and Arabic sources record their possession of Jabrin at one time. It is also recorded that the Ibādiy Imam Muhannā b. Jāfar (840 AD) tried to evict them from this northern territory.

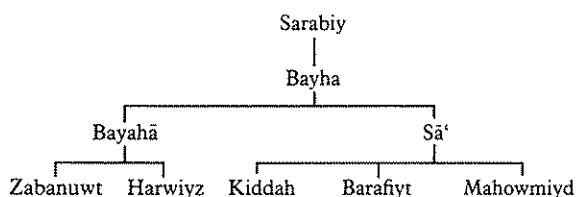
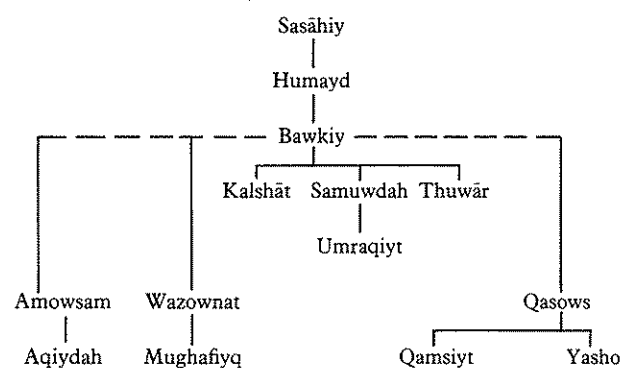
The Mahriy descent group also broadly contains the progenitors of the Bani Riyām as indicated above, as well as the Siyābiyyn presently situated in the Sumayl Gap in the Central Hajar mountains. There are also reasons to consider them as forming a part of the original Duruw' descent group, and having a relationship with the Manāhil.

#### A descent of the Mahra sections from Humayd b. Mahra or Mahar



It is only these three sections that say they descend from Humayd b. Mahra. The others may therefore either have forgotten, descend from collaterals or be accretions to the main Mahra stem. All the Mahra sections from Bawkiy (Browk or Barowk) call themselves Sa'sāhiy, but no source was found that could explain why. Those coming from Bayha (Bahr, the sea, see list of sections) call themselves Saraybiy. In Hadramawt they also divide into two federations, the Shiraw'ah and the Shahiyy, and unfortunately no reason could be found for this or an explanation as to why the division into two had occurred or why the names are different in Hadramawt and Dhufar. However, the explanation may be that the tribe as we see it today is bi-polar in origin, i.e. it is composed of true Mahra and those who became Mahra. Professor Dostal records stories which show how this may have occurred, the Qudā'ah (Himyar) descent deriving from the stationing of Mahra troops next to Qudā'ah's soldiers in the military camp at Fustat in Egypt in the years 719 to 721 AD. It is also related that the soldiers of Abu Bakr massacred the Mahra at the village of Dadadib and only three hundred virgins escaped.

The bi-polar nature of the Mahra is best summarised diagrammatically as follows:



It is readily seen that the basic bi-polarity of this descent group may contain a third element, i.e. the part of the first diagram connected to the main stem by broken lines. If this conjecture were true then the tribe would be composed of the two main elements coming from Sa'sāhiy and Saraybiy, with the former carrying with them a third group whose origin is as yet undetermined. The Bilhāf are difficult to attach.

The Mahra are Ghafāriy and in *suff* with the Yafā'iy of the Yemen, the Rawāshiyd and the Janabah. In the past their enemies included the Rawāshiyd, Wahiybah, Bayt Kathiyr, Harāsiys, Qara and the Murrah of Saudi Arabia. They are said to have raided up to Najrān and have been expanding westwards from the area west of the Hadramawt for at least three hundred years. This migration seems to have been subject to some fluctuation as at the beginning of the nineteenth century a Mahra family called Bin Ghalfān were owners of the Kuria Muria islands. There are no Mahra there now. However, recent events have given a fillip to Mahra expansion, and after the outbreak of rebel activity in the mountains of Dhufar, and the halt brought to desert feuds by the Sultan Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr, many of them and some Bayt Kathiyr moved to the safety of the Jiddat al Harāsiys where they were allowed to live in peace. At this point it is interesting to note that Harāsiys have been mentioned as being a Mahra group which settled amongst the Sa'ār in north-west Hadramawt.

Their *wasm* is — below the left eye, and their camel blood-lines are as follows:

- Banāt Samhah.
- Banāt Farhah stolen from the Wahiybah.

Banāt Farhah from a line developed by the Mahra themselves.

Banāt Muqaddah, Banāt Baniyt, Banāt Dukhaynah, Banāt Hamrān, Banāt 'Ashay, Banāt Sanowd, Banāt Qanshiyd, and the Banāt 'Adanah who are an offshoot from the Banāt Farhah.

A characteristic of Dhufar is the custom of swearing to innocence at the tomb of a saint. These are survivals of pre-Islamic practices and vary in their severity. A criminal will sometimes swear to his innocence on the tomb of an unimportant saint in the hopes of getting away with things. There is also a practice of ordeal by fire for similar reasons. These shrines are looked after by the Bayt Mashaykh, now few in number, who are possibly the relics of the pre-Islamic guardians of the holy places. The holy places recognised by the Mahra are, in order of importance:

- Bin Huwd situated under Jabal Samhan
- Bin 'Ali at Marbāt
- Shaykh Afiyf at Tāqah
- Al Hadad at Dahariyz
- Bin 'Ariybah at Raysuwt
- Shaykh Bayt Bilhāf also called Shaykh al Jawjariy and Umm al Tabākh.

The Mahra, when greeting each other, use a cheek kiss instead of the nose kiss affected by other bedu. They begin with the right cheek and then kiss the left, finally repeating the kiss on the right cheek.

#### The sections of the Mahra

*Bayt Thuwār* under Shaykh Muhammad b. 'Ali of the Quwārah. War cry: 'Yā Awlād Buwkiy bin Humayd'. *Wasm*: | on right cheek called a *luqt*.

- sub-sections:
- Bayt Qahor b. Thuwār* under Hamayd and Sa'ad b. Bukhiyt b. 'Amr which tree please refer to (see p. 63).
- Su'ayithuwt* under Muhammad Ahmad
- Qazai* under Muhammad 'Ali
- 'Amuwsh
- Quwārah*
- Shattanah*
- Haniyf*
- Amariyt*
- Naqsh*
- Bayt Sa'ad*
- Hafir*

#### *Bayt Samuwadah*

Their shaykhs are from the Bayt Nāqiy, and they are said to be 300 strong. They are a purely bedu section with a reputation for courageous, if at times treacherous, fighting. They range as far north as Sanau. War cry: 'Yā Awlād Buwkiy bin Humayd'. They are almost all in the Republic of South Yemen. The senior shaykh is Humayd b. Muhammad. Their *wasm* is □ on the right cheek called the *samadayyt*

- sub-section:
- Umraqiyt*
- Bayt Raghiyt*
- Bayt Hāsib*
- Bayt Sha'aquw*
- Bayt Baruwk*
- Bayt Sha'aqah*

- Bayt*
- 'Azib
- Bayt Finsowkh*
- Bayt Sa'iyd*
- Bayt Nāqiy*

#### *Bayt Kalshāt*

Under Sh. 'Ali b. Diywah and Sh. Muhammad b. 'Ali. Said to be 500 strong, their war-cry is: 'Yā Awlād Buwkiy bin Humayd'. Nearly all of them are in the Republic of South Yemen where they are settled at Ghaythah and the surrounding villages and their camel *wasm* is = on the right cheek called the *kulshayyt*.

Has one sub-section:

#### *Bayt Barkown*

The Kalshāt are the most powerful Mahra section of those living in the South Yemen.

#### *Bayt Mughafiyq*

Said to be 100 strong and living in the South Yemen Republic. Their war-cry is: 'Waynkum Bayt Wazownah', and their camel *wasm* is + on the right cheek.

#### *Bayt Aqiydah*

Said to be less than 300 strong living in the Yemen in the Qishn area. Their war-cry is 'Waynkum Bayt Amowsam'.

#### *Bayt Qamsiyt*

Said to be 150 strong and living in the Yemen, their camel *wasm* is O on the right side of the neck and called *qamsayyt*. Their war-cry is 'Yā Bayt Qasows', and they are all bedu.

#### *Bayt Yas'ho*

These have the war-cry 'Yā Bayt Qasows'.

#### *Bayt Zabānuwt*

Said to be 300 strong and living in the Republic of South Yemen, they are allies of the Harwiyz in internal disputes. Their camel *wasm* is O called the *hawqah* in Mahriy and *halqah* in Arabic, it is placed on the right of the neck. Their war-cry is 'Yā bin Bayahār' and in common with all the following sections they descend from Bayha. The Zabānuwt are mainly bedu and have claimed Habaruwt, where they do own palms, as theirs. The leaders or *muqaddams* are from the Bin Hazayr family and section. It should be noted that the Yemeni Mahra use the name *muqaddam* instead of shaykh to denote a tribal leader.

#### *Bayt Harwiyz*

Said to be 200 strong living in the Republic of South Yemen, where the settled part of them lives around Qishn. Their camel *wasm* is • on the right cheek; it is called a *dazzah*. Their war-cry is 'Yā bin Bayahār'. They are allies of the Bayt Zabānuwt and descend from Bayha. Some of this section have moved in recent years to Saudi Arabia.

#### *Bayt Barafiyt*

Said to be 250 strong living in the Republic of South Yemen, their camel *wasm* is )) on the right side of the neck, it is called the *mujawitah*. Their war-cry is 'Waynkum Bayt Sa''. They descend from Bayha.

**Bayt Kiddah**

Said to be 100 strong living in the Republic of South Yemen. Their war-cry is 'Waynkum Bayt Sa'. They descend from Bayha, and live in the Ghaydhah area of South Yemen. They are said to be much under the influence of the Bayt Kilshāt.

**Bayt Mahomiyd**

A part of this section lives in Dhufar. Their war-cry is 'Waynkum Bayt Sa'. They descend from Bayha.

**Bayt Bilhāf**

Said to be some 500 strong living in the Republic of South Yemen. In a similar way to the Bayt Mashāyikh, Bātāharah, and the Shāhārah they may represent the remains of the original inhabitants. They have a revealing war-cry which is 'Waynkum Khadāmūt al-Shaykh', meaning 'Where are you—servants of the

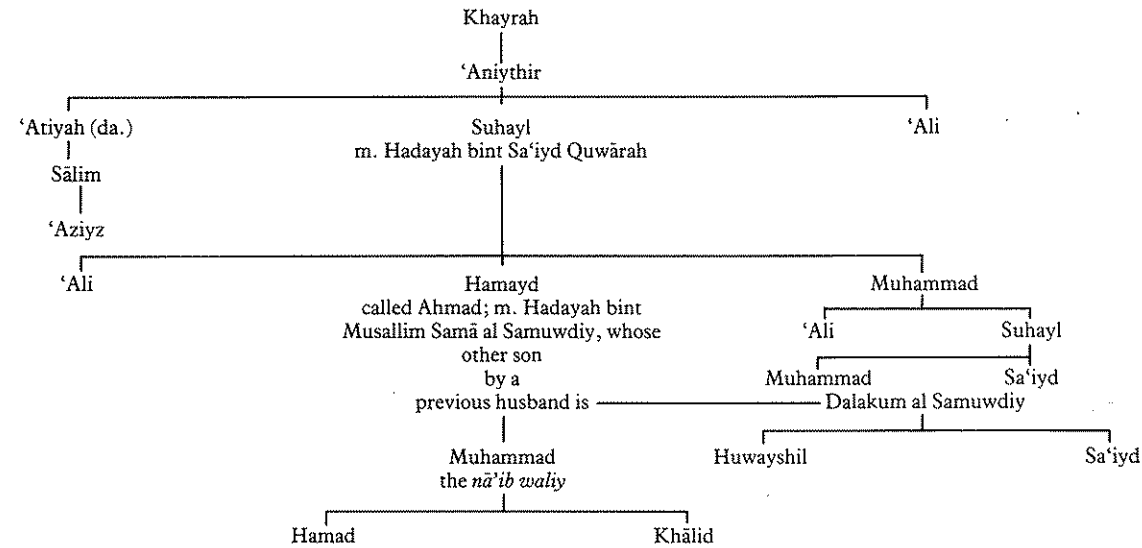
shaykh?'—the shaykh possibly being a shrine figure. Their camel *wasm* is — on the right side of the neck. They are mostly fishermen around Qamar Bay and their leader, called a *mansab*, lives usually at Faldamiy where they have a shrine. Their sub-sections are:

- Bayt Lafakuw
- Bayt Raqabuwt
- Bayt al Dabal
- Bayt Shimiluwt
- Bayt Thawbit
- Bayt Rammāsh
- Bayt Ja'arah.

In connection with the Bayt Bilhāf it should be noted that the word *Khādīm* or servant does not here carry the same class meaning that it does in more northern areas of Oman and the Gulf. Here it is an epithet with a most honourable meaning.

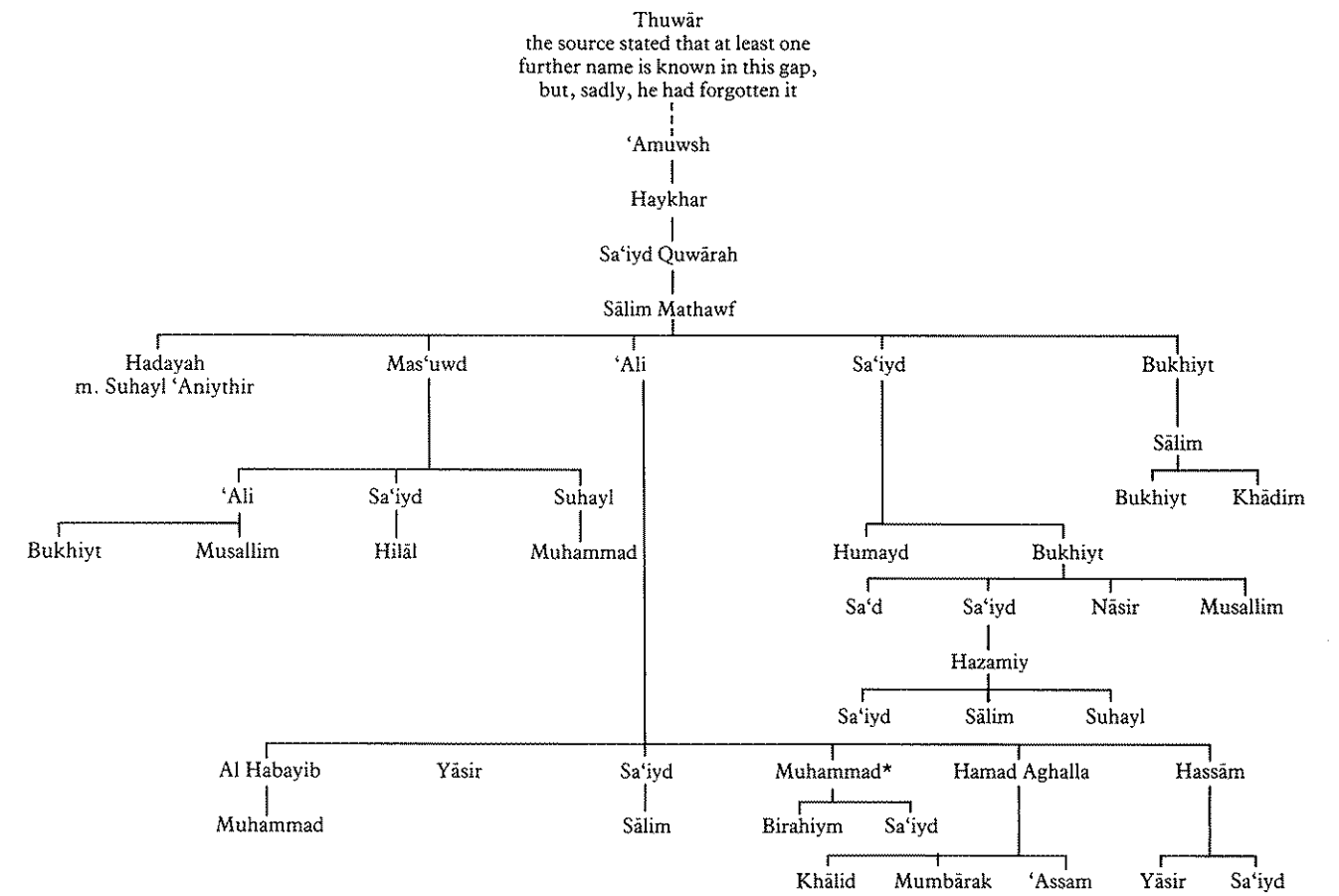
**The family of Sh. Muhammad Ahmad al Mahriy**

deputy *waliy* of north-east Dhufar



Hamayd b. Suhayl was killed at Muqshin al 'Ayn by the Murrah on their last raid into Dhufar. The Mahra were assisted by Janabah of the Bayt Sharqiy Hāl Bu Humayd section, of whom Hamudwah and Musallim b. Hamad were also killed. Their family tree is recorded with the Janabah.

**The family of Sh. Muhammad b. 'Ali of the Bayt Thuwār**



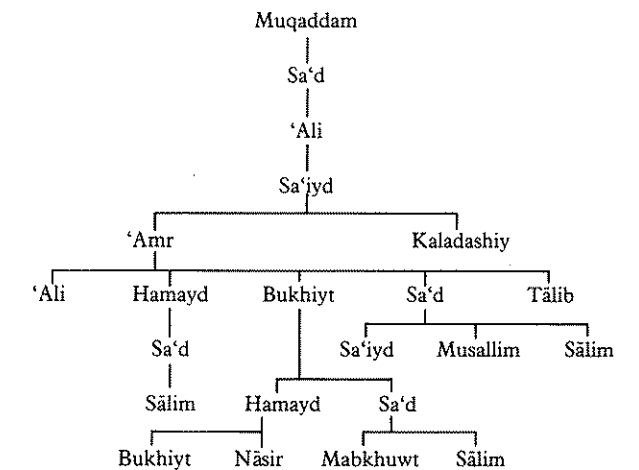
**The Bayt Qahor of the Bayt Thuwār**

sometimes called the Yaqahuwr

sub-sub-sections:

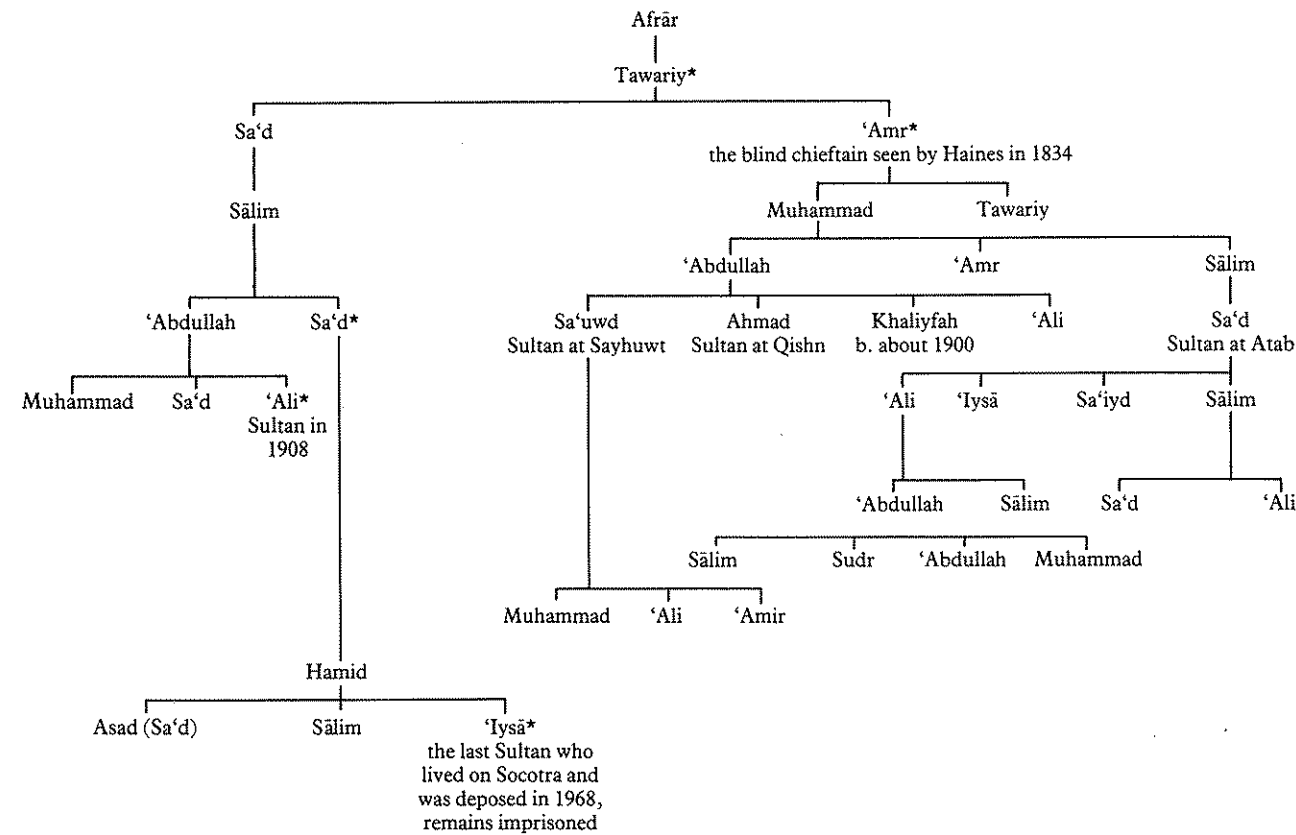
- Bayt Badariyah
- Bayt Rahowmatt
- Bayt Nasib (plural Ansiyb)
- Bayt Damiym
- Bayt Bilah
- Bayt Muqaddam (the shaykhly clan)

**The shaykhs of the Bayt Muqaddam**



It is interesting to note that as stated above the Yemeni Mahra use the word *muqaddam* instead of shaykh, which is the word used in Dhufar by the Mahra, in common with many other tribes of the area. This tree of a shaykhly family may therefore carry a memory in the name of their *jadd* of the time when they were domiciled further to the west, i.e. they retain the name of an office rather than that of an actual person.

**The family tree of the last independent Mahriy Sultan**



There is a story that the Bin Afrār family was massacred by order of Badr Bu Tuwayrik al Kathiyriy and that only a pregnant woman escaped. Her child proved to be a boy called Sa'iyd 'Abdullah (Abu Shawārib), who fled to the island of Socotra where he married into the clan of the ruling family. However, he refused to father a child of his own until the Kathiyriys had been thrown out of the town of Qishn. The asterisks indicate the holders of the office of Sultan.

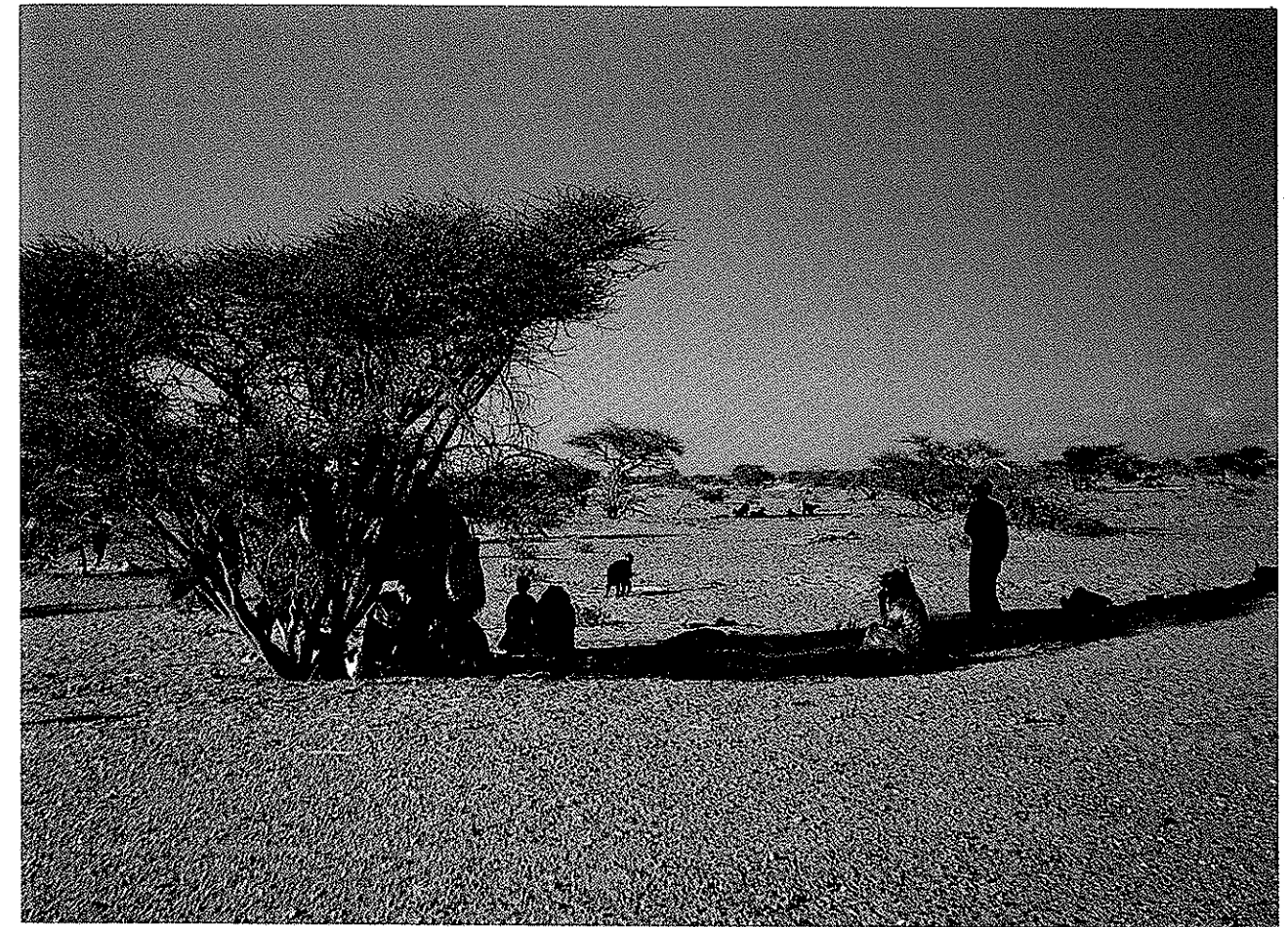
**The Bayt Mashāyikh**

These people are very difficult to evaluate from the point of view of placing them in an historical context. A descent from Quraysh is claimed for them from Mu'āwiyah the first Umayyad Caliph and at the same time they are said to be Qahtānite. It may be that they represent the descendants of original shrine guards who

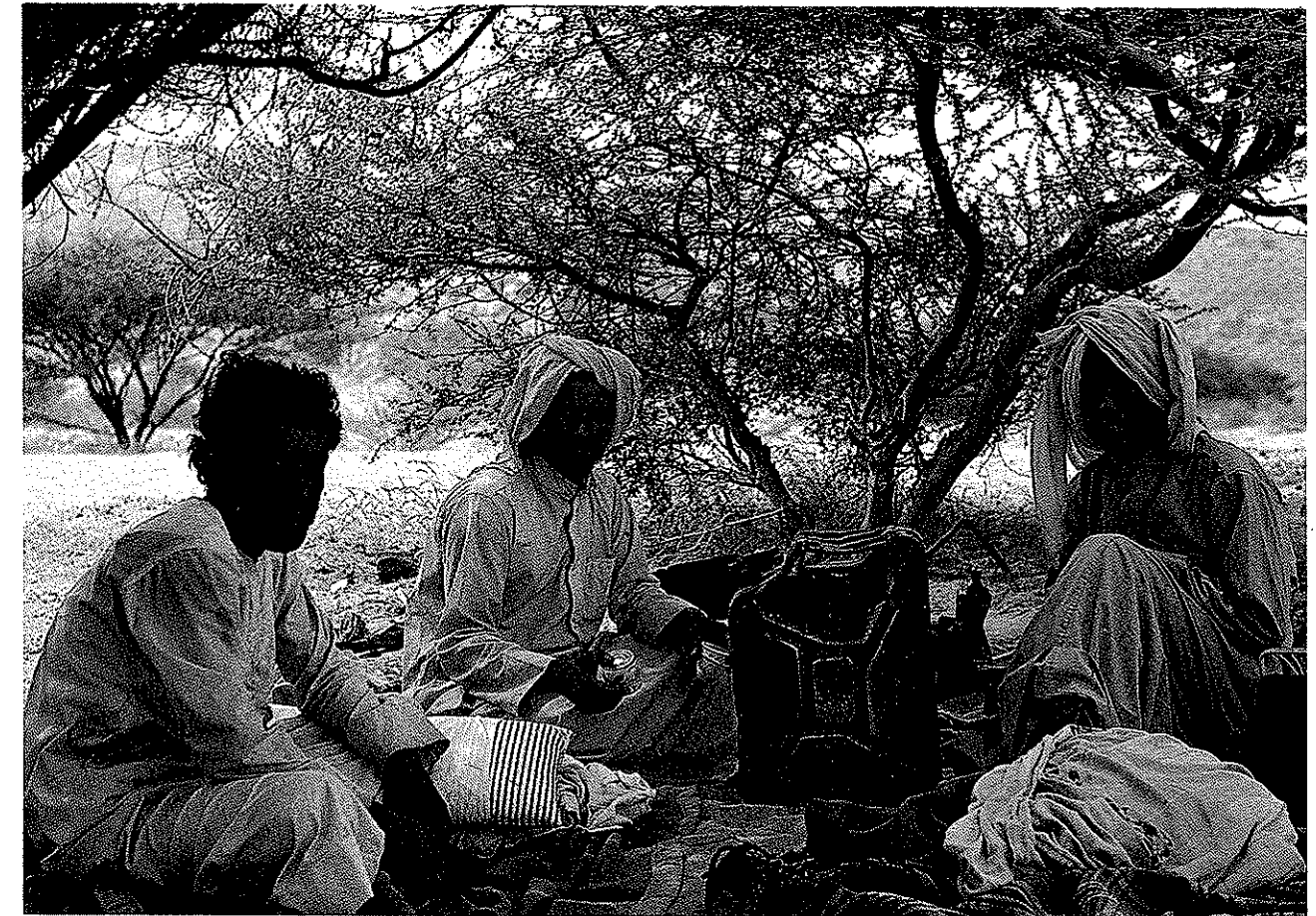
retained their posts at the time of conversion of the area to Islam and took on a descent in order to enhance their claim. Alternatively they may indeed be what they claim to be by descent and thus represent precursors of the Sayyids whose later arrival usurped their earlier function. The camel *wasm* is *q* on the right cheek. They have no *azwah*.

A descent of some of their houses is given below:

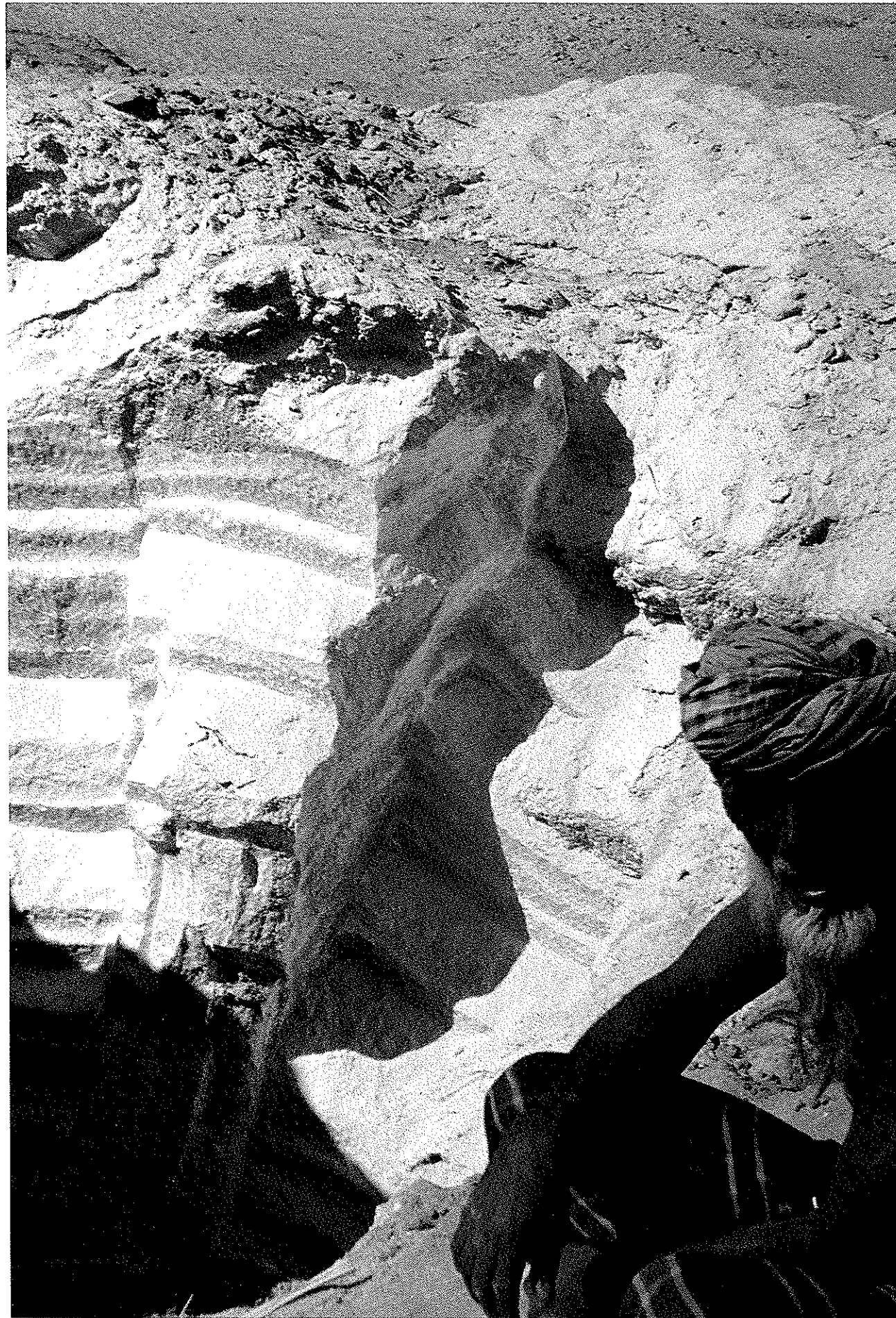
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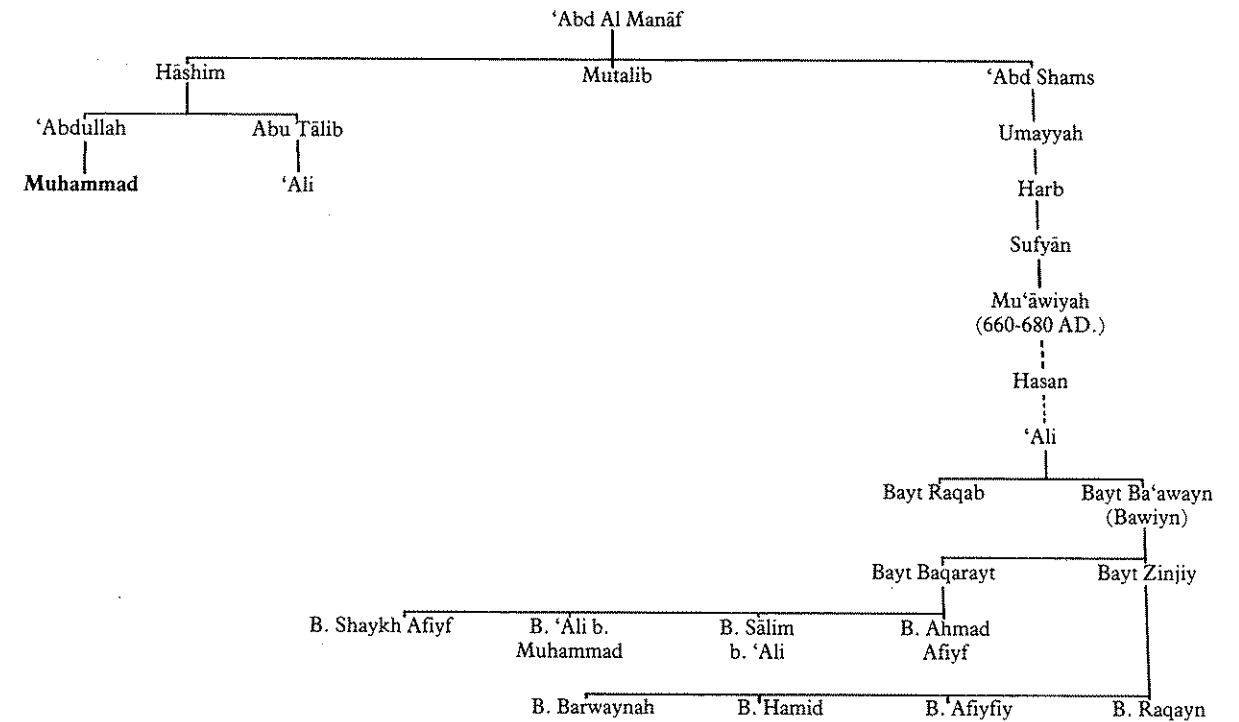
1 *Fariyq* of Sh. Sayf b. Sālim of the Duruw'



2 Bedu on the coast, drinking coffee.



21 Salt mining at Qārah al Milh.



It is tentatively suggested that the Dhufar tribes can be collected into three groups each representing a successive occupation. Such an idea is very much a suggestion but it does perhaps clarify the position which might be:

Group 1 The people of ‘Ad, represented today by the Batāharah, the Da‘iyf and the Shahārah.

Group 2 The people of Qahtān, represented by the Mahra and the Qara whose shrines were looked after by the Bayt Mashāyikh.

Group 3 The people of Nizār represented by the various Kathiyri groups when the Sāda took over the niche hitherto occupied by the Bayt Mashāyikh.

### The Kathiyri

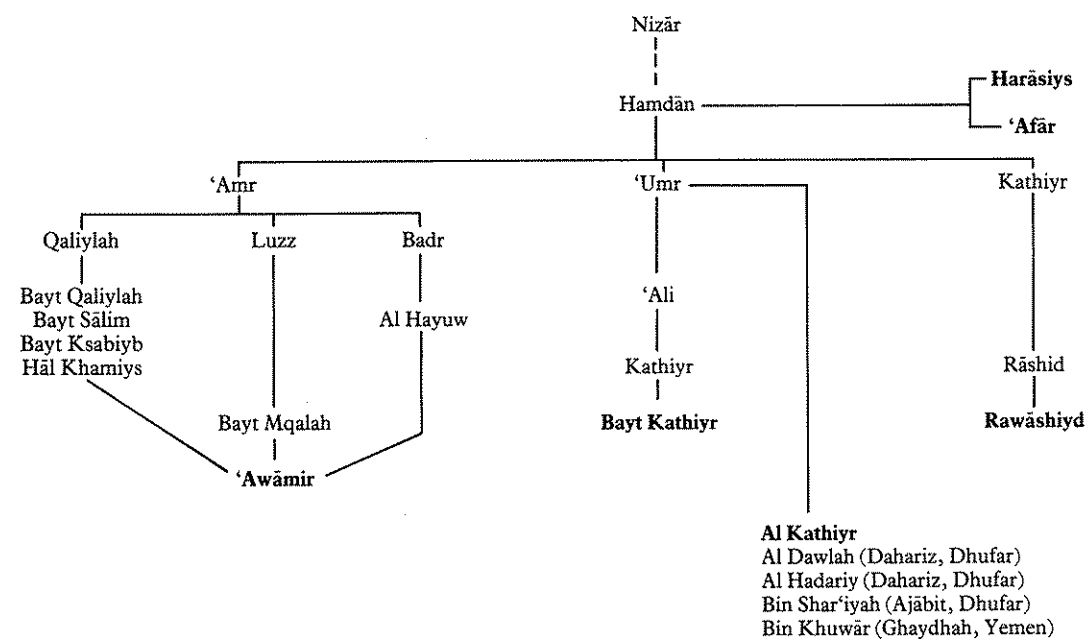
Like the Mahra one feels that it is possible to talk about the Kathiyri nation. Whilst with the Mahra this consideration depends on both the fact of recent political independence and the fact that each section possesses its own war-cry, the Kathiyri situation depends on the political independence of various other groups. Thus the idea of a greater Kathiyri can be considered, and indeed is

considered by the Arabs themselves. This includes the Bayt Kathiyri, and Āl Kathiyri, the Kathiyris of Dhufar and Hadramawt, the ‘Awāmir, the Rawāshiyd, the Shanāfirah, the ‘Afār and the Harāsiys. All these groups together are referred to as the Kathiyri al Ghathamah. They are all Hināwiyy, except the Kathiyriys of Hadramawt who are said to be Ghāfariyy.

The Bayt Kathiyri are mixed *hadr* and *bedu* living in Dhufar; the Kathiyri live in Hadramawt and possessed the Kathiyri Sultanate centred on Sayuwn though some of them also live in Dhufar. The Āl Kathiyriys are also scattered and seem to be the original holders of the name and perhaps should be considered the remains of the first descent group from which the Kathiyri and the Bayt Kathiyri budded off. The remaining people in the above list are now separate tribes and are treated as such here. However, this view rests on deductions from the tradition collected in Dhufar and the reader should also see the Hadramiy account below.

Other tribes from this descent group are said in Oman to be the Murrah of Saudi Arabia, and the Bani Hilāl from whom descend the Bani Yās and so the Āl Bu Falah of Abu Dhabi, and the Shukayl of Oman.

## The Kathiyr descent groups



However, Hadramiy sources give the Āl Kathiyr a different descent and it would seem that they are Qahtānic in origin, coming from 'Amir al Kathiyr of the Dhannah tribe. It may be, therefore, that there are really two tribes, who not only have the same name to all intents and purposes, but have also become very much co-mingled during the course of history. The Dhannah themselves derive from the Bani

Harām who are said to descend from 'Amr b. Saba'. The Shanāfir, the name of a confederation and of a tribe, whose name is also used by sections of both the 'Awāmir and the Āl Kathiyr, are said to emanate from the same source. This descent is detailed with the family tree of the Kathiyr Sultans.

In Hadramawt the Shanāfir confederation appears to be organised as follows:

### Āl Kathiyr

*Al 'Umr*, entirely settled in the Wadi Hadramawt, but come from Dhufar

*Āl Falhuwn*

*Āl Jā'afar b. Tālib*

*Āl Muray b. Tālib*

*Āl 'Amr*, partly bedu and semi-bedu on the plateau north of the Hadramawt, but originated in Dhufar.

*Al 'Abdah*

*Al 'Abdal'aziys*

*Al Kudah*

*Al 'Awm*

*Al Saghiyr*

*Al Munaybariy*

*Al Jā'afar b. Badr*

*Al Shanlān*

*Al Sa'iyd*

### Āl Bajariy

*Āl 'Ali*

*Āl Ahmad b. 'Ali*

### Āl Jābir

*Āl A'an*

*Āl Khubān*

*Āl 'Amr*

*Al Badr*

*Āl 'Awāmir*

*Āl Hatātibah*

*Āl Ksabiyy*

*Āl 'Abd al Baqiy*

*Āl Khamiys*

*Āl Jā'ajar*

*Āl Ibrāhiym*

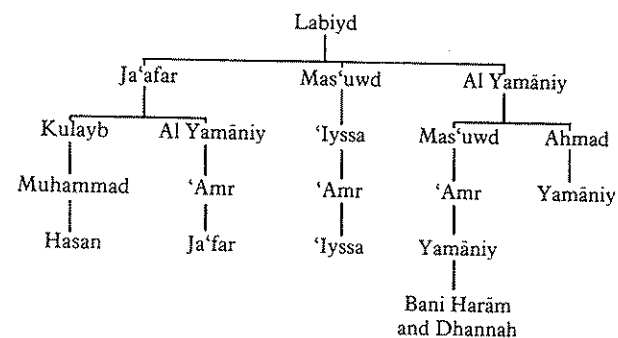
In addition to this, some tribal sections seem to have a particular relationship to the confederation which confers on them an independence from their straightforward tribal relationship. These are reported to be:

*Āl Qalaylah*, *Āl Tabia'*, *Āl Ksabiyy*, *Āl 'Abd al Baqiy*,

*Āl Hatātibah*, *Āl Wā'il*, *Āl Jā'afar*, *Āl Hadhiy*,

*Āl Bā Ibrāhiym*.

Perhaps in order to confuse the picture still further there is a third descent mentioned by Hadramiy sources. This repeats the assertion that the Āl Kathiyr emanate from the Dhannah and the Bani Harām but then goes on to say that the shaykhs of the Dhannah are descended as follows:



If this is correct the relationship with the Duruw' in Oman is clear and interesting, see the classical descent above on this tribe. It does accord with some Duruw' tradition.

The dual nature of the 'Kathiyr' seems to be confirmed by this and one sees also more of the idea of a steady drift of the bedu from Hadramawt up into Oman. The Hināwi and Ghāfariy origins of the tribes confusing the picture, but that groups of both are involved is clear.

## The Kathiyr in Dhufar

A small and retrogressive group difficult of access. It is possible they represent a primary group from which other parts of the Kathiyr al Ghathamah have budded off. If this were so then it follows that the Kathiyr originated in the Dhufar area, subsequently spread westwards to the Hadramawt and then migrated back east again following the conquests of Badr b. Tuwayrik in the sixteenth century. A view supported by the Dhannah descent as this tribe is said to have come from Dhufar.

The Kathiyr sections are probably as follows:

*Bayt Badr*

*Bayt Sultan b. Badr*

*Bayt Baqariy* (maybe of the Shanāfir)

*Bayt Rumān*

*Bayt Rasiym*

*Bayt Bil Maduwf*

*Āl Kathiyr in Dhufar*

*Bayt 'Ali b. Badr*, also reported to be called the

*Bayt 'Ali b. Mudr* and the *Bayt Muhammad b.*

*Ahmad*

These two sections live on the Dhufar mountain range and in the Wadi Jarsiys. They seem to be mountain bedu similar to the Shawāwi of Oman, and are often referred to as the Kathiyr al Jabal. The former includes the following sections: Bayt Qadr, Bayt 'Aylat, Bayt 'Alsh, Bayt Sha'nowt, Bayt Marqa, Bayt Shudur, Bayt Shakal, Bayt Da'kri. The Bayt Muhammad comprises the Bayt Riyays, Bayt Nahbayb, Bayt Asilm, Bayt 'Ar, and Bayt Dhayshalayl. The Bayt 'Umr b. Muhammad is the third main section of this group.

*Āl Marahiyn* (sing. *Marhuwniy*) living in their own quarter is Salālah and said to descend from Marahiyn b. Badr b. Tuwayrik.

with sub-sections:

*Bayt Sālim b. 'Umr*

*Bayt 'Ali b. 'Umr*

*Bayt Sarq*

*Āl Haduwr* (sing. *Hadariy*) living in Dahariz and descending from Hadr. b. Badr b. Tuwayrik.

With sub-sections:

*Bayt Shanāfir* (sing. *Shanfariy*). It is the Shanāfir who invited the Āl Bu Sa'iyd dynasty to Dhufar. Under their protection are the Bahārah *khadām* of Hafar near Salālah, of whom it is said that they come from the Hadramawt and are a part of the Da'iyf.

The sub-sub-sections of the Shanāfir are as follows:

*Bayt Mubārik b. Sālim*

*Bayt Muhammad b. Sālim*

*Bayt Aslim b. Muhammad*

*Bayt b. Afrah*

*Bayt 'Amir b. Sālim*, comprising

*Bayt 'Umr b. Sālim*

*Bayt 'Abdullah b. 'Ali*

*Bayt Tannāf*

*Bayt Juma'an*

*Bayt Muhammad b. Badr*

*Bayt 'Abdalkariym*

*Bayt al Jābriy*

*Bayt 'Umr b. 'Azzān*

*Bayt Mar'iy*

*Bayt Āl Sajlān*

*Bayt 'Awadh b. 'Amir*

*Bayt Qaddam* (*Bayt Salāmah*)

*Bayt Siqayl* who have moved to the mountains.

*Bayt al 'Awāmir*

which comprises the following sub-sub-sections:

*Bayt Khamiys*

*Bayt Akanahuwt*

*Bayt Khaytār*

*Bayt Gharuwt*

*Bayt Muray*

*Bayt Hamad b. Badr*

*Bayt al Dawlah*

*Bayt Sultān*

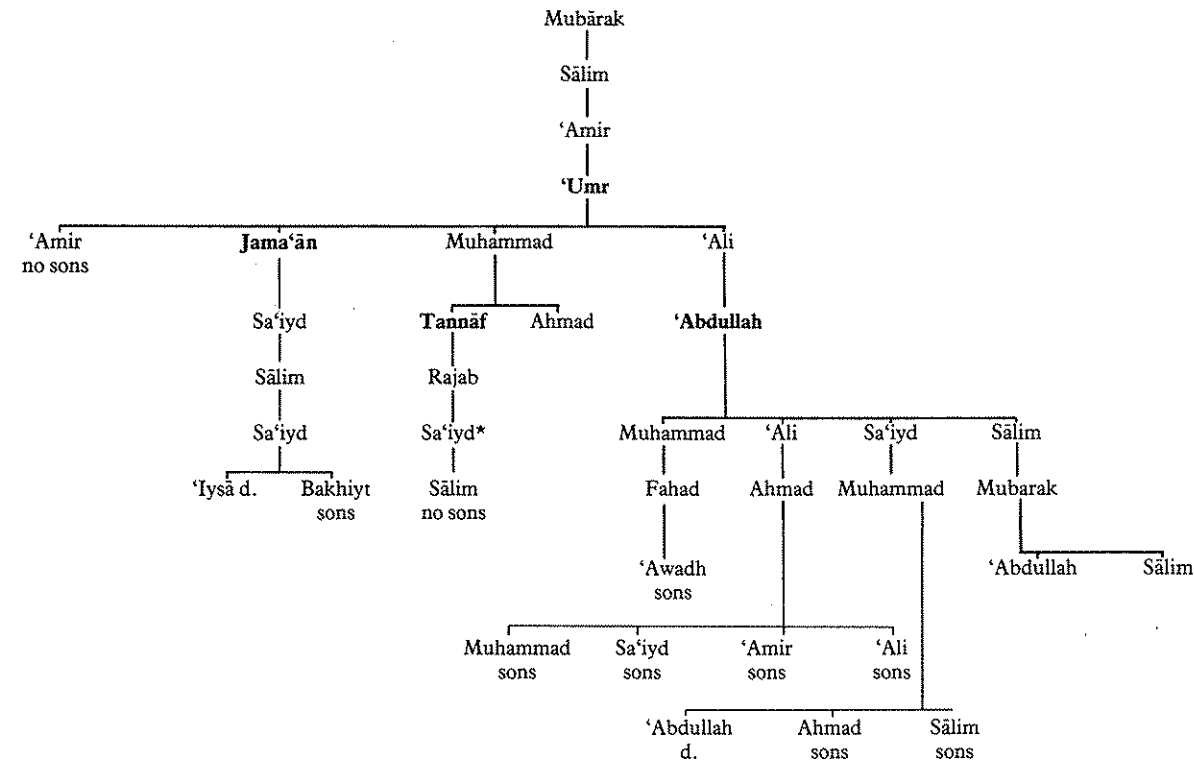
*Bayt Rasiym*

*Bayt Ruwās* living in Salālah and its environs.

The presence of groups called 'Awāmir and Shanāfir within the Huduwr is an indication of the close relationship between the Kathiyr and the 'Awāmir. There are other groups of people in Dhufar who are



Bayt 'Umr b. 'Amir  
 Bayt 'Abdullah b. 'Ali  
 Bayt Tannāf  
 Bayt Jama'an

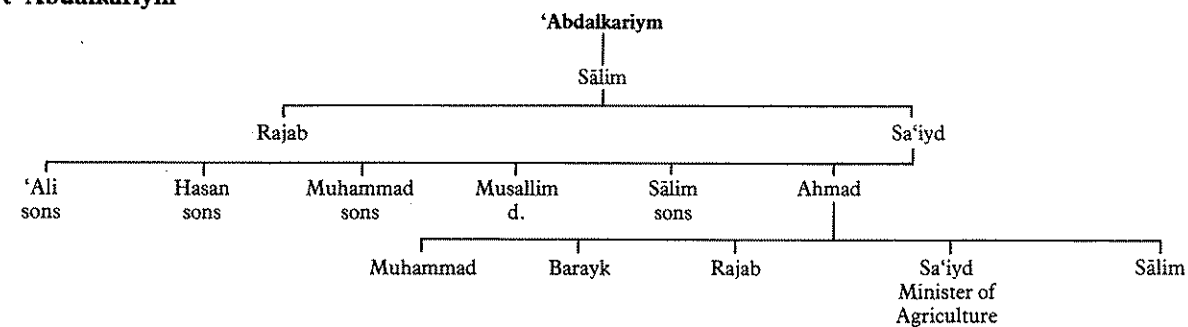


\*Shaykh of the Bayt 'Umr b. 'Amir.

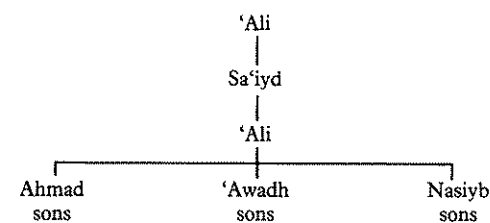
*Sections of the Shanāfir descending from a different ancestor to the foregoing*

Bayt 'Abdalkariym and Bayt al Jābriy. These two together are called the Bayt Muhammad b. Badr. (Compare with the account of the Hadramiy Shanāfir confederation, Āl Jābir.)

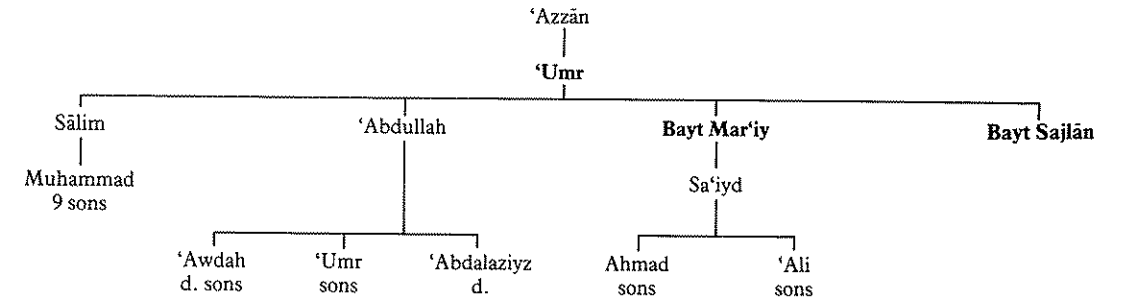
**Bayt 'Abdalkariym**



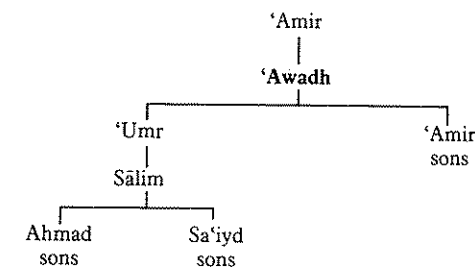
**Bayt al Jābriy**



Bayt 'Umr b. 'Azzān  
 Bayt Mar'iy  
 Bayt Sajlān



**Bayt 'Awadh b. 'Amir**



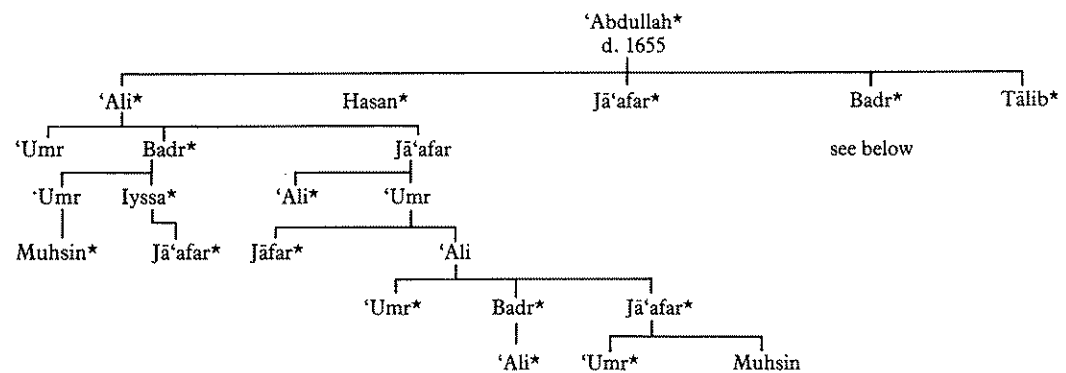
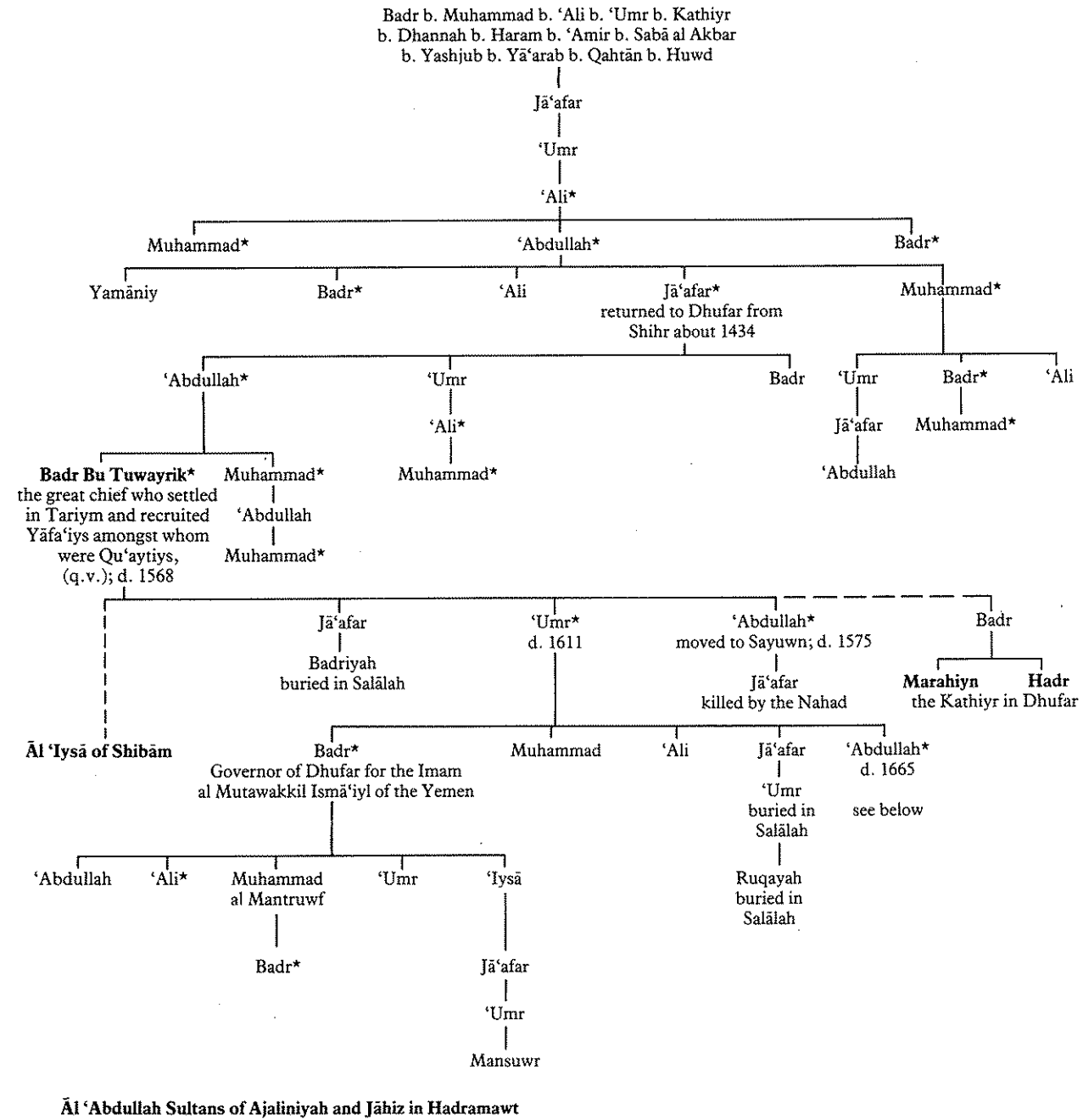
**Bayt Qaddām**

These descend from Ahmad b. 'Umr b. Salāmah and are therefore often called the Bayt Salāmah.

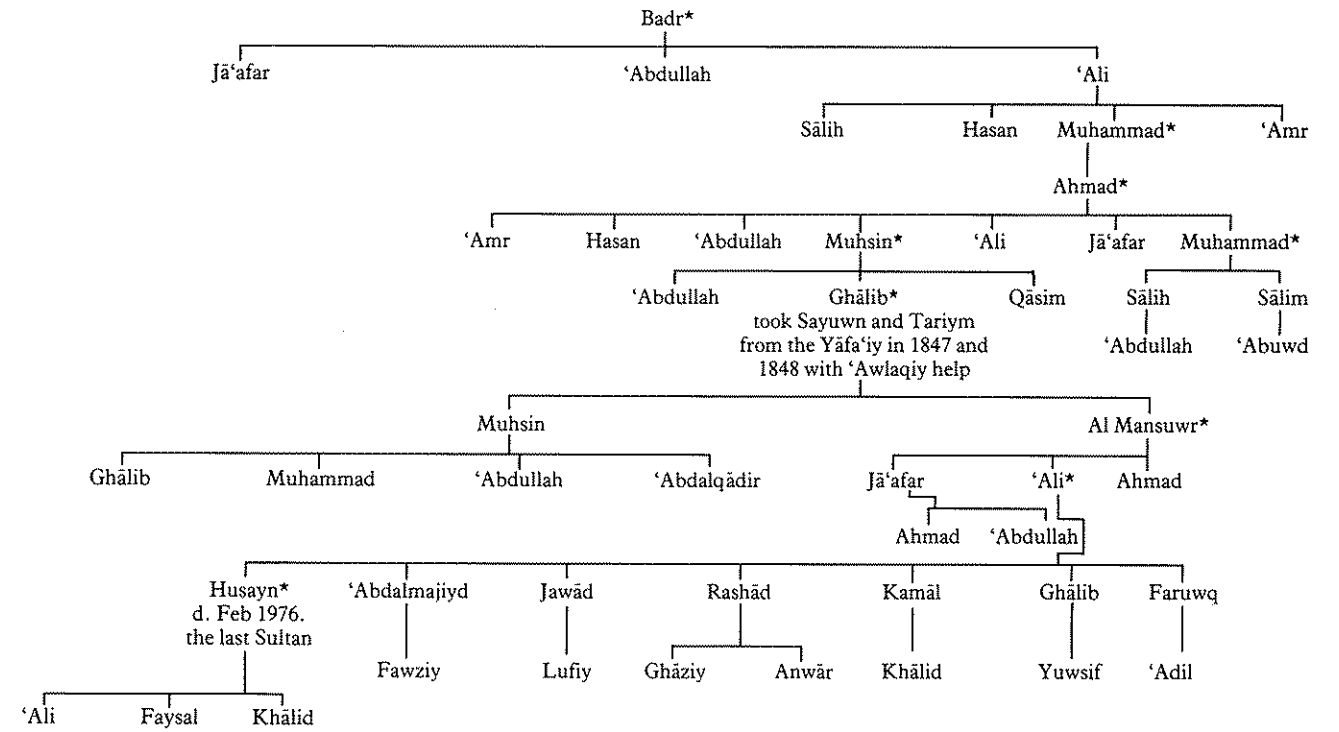
Of these sections of the Āl Kathiyr, the Marahiyn are said to be closest to the family of Badr Bu Tuwayrik who conquered Dhufar, having ruled Sayuwn in the Hadramawt. Badr built a fort in the desert at Shisr, the ruins of which still stand guard over this very important water-hole. In Salālāh al Gharbiyah are the graves of

some of Badr's descendants. They are to be found in the Hawsh Shaykh 'Abdullah al Qādim and the stones are very finely carved. It is from Badr Bu Tuwayrik that the Āl 'Abdullah of Sayuwn and Tariym, and the Āl 'Iysā of Shibām descend as follows:

**The Descent of the Kathiyriy Sultans**



**The children of Badr b. 'Abdullah; the Āl 'Abdullah of Sayuwn and Tariym**



The dramatic and sudden change in name style in the last generation demonstrates the consequence of a move into a new environment due to exile in Saudi Arabia.

**The Bayt Kathiyri in Dhufar**

They consist of both desert bedu, the Bin Musinn section occupying most of the northern Dhufar desert, and mountain *hadr*/bedu sections. As a tribe they were much fragmented during the reign of Sultan Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr who, having kept the tribal leaders in Salālah in the early part of the Dhufar rebellion, kept the tribesmen out. It is only recently that some of these shaykhs have been able to retrieve some of their authority. During this period the tribe built up strong ties with the Trucial Coast, which had already begun in the forties when the Bayt Kathiyri joined the Āl Bu Falah in the war with Dubai. Their war-cry is: *'Ibn Hamdān yudrub bi'l Sayf*, that is to say, 'Son of Hamdān hit with the sword.' Their camel brand or *wasm* is : one above the other on the right cheek and eyebrow.

**The Bayt Kathiyri Sections**

**Bin Musinn**

They are said to be about 1,500 strong and under Shaykh Sa'iyd b. Muhammad Mahaya al Kathiyriy, who is presently deputy *waliy* of north-western Dhufar. These seem to be the bedu section of the Bayt Kathiyri and their area within the Kathiyriy *dirah* extends over most of the northern desert. It is said that their boundaries run from 'Arbah to the Wadi Qitabit and then west to Mashayt and up to the headwaters of the Wadi Muqshin. To the north it includes the Ramlah Ghaniym and the Ramlah Muqshin. The Wadi Muqshin, said to contain sweet water about an

hour upstream from the old army post, is the headquarters of the Bin Musinn, and they follow the rains from there, returning in ever increasing numbers as the hot weather arrives. Their camels are very dark, the calves being quite black. They only appear to use the tribal *wasm*, two large dots on the right cheek; no family *wasm* is used. The Bin Musinn have nice woven tents, both black and brown. Their women wear the 'spectacle birqah' until they get married when they effect the more usual mask, and are tattooed on the chin.

- sub-sections:
- Bayt Mujanrimah*
- Bayt Haraydah* or *Hadariyah*
- Bayt Sharfan*
- Bayt Nab'harah*
- Bayt Muhammad Sa'iyd*
- Bayt Sa'iyd Musallin*
- Bayt Sālim Satākhah*
- Bayt Nakhrah*
- Bayt al Musā'adah*

**Bin Quwās**

Under Shaykh Sulayim b. Tamtaym al Kathiyriy and Shaykh Sulayim.

- sub-sections:
- Bayt Ithawbah*
- Bayt bin Hāmid*
- Bayt Salaym*
- Bayt Sulaymān*
- Bayt Al Hāmah*
- Bayt Balā'āt*
- Bayt al Ma'aghawmah*
- Bayt Shariyah*

Bayt Mahsin  
 Bayt Jabalah  
 Bayt Hadayt  
 Bayt Qaghayfah  
 Bayt Tarwayliy  
 Bayt al Dawlah  
 Bayt Talibah  
 Bayt al Kafir  
 Bayt Lubayr  
 Bayt Yahayshān  
 Bayt Sahaym  
 Bayt Musallim  
 Bayt Abshash  
 Bayt Sa'iyd  
 Bayt Suhayl  
 Bayt Arqaysh  
 Bayt Suluwamah  
 Bayt Sa'adannah  
 Bayt 'Ali Fālit  
 Bayt Sa'ad  
 Bayt Tamtaym  
 Bayt Sulayam  
 Bayt Flayyil  
 Bayt Ana'ma

Bin al Ahmār (Lahmār)

Under Shaykh Nāsir b. Musallim al Kathiyriy, called Bin Ghabayshah and Musallim b. Gharayib. Numbering c. 1500

sub-sections:

Bayt Tatawriy  
 Bayt Shaybah  
 Bayt Hamuwadah  
 Bayt Hamad Shukal  
 Bayt al Ayam  
 Bayt Gharayib  
 Bayt Mahādirah  
 Bayt Afrah  
 Bayt Baqayshah

Bin Qidād

Under Shaykh Salma'um b. Maqfiyf, Shaykh Mabuhwt Rab'in and Shaykh Musallim b. Suhayl.

has sub-sections and sub-sub-sections:

Bayt al Hatyif (48 men)  
 Bayt Musallim  
 Bayt Sultānah  
 Bayt Sulaymah  
 Bayt Badr (36 men)  
 Bayt Bahiyt  
 Bayt al Niyl  
 Bayt 'Amriy (40 men)  
 Bayt Nawayah  
 Bayt Nahayah  
 Bayt 'Arba'iyn  
 Bayt Barayik (12 men)  
 Bayt al Ghaybuwb  
 Bayt Sulawmah  
 Bayt Dahayl (10 men)  
 Bayt 'Ali Mahawriy  
 Bayt Qambuwwsh  
 Bayt al 'Awwar (30 men)  
 Bayt 'Ali  
 Bayt Muhayit

Bayt Qataylah  
 Bayt 'Abuwūd (35 men)  
 Bayt al Qawiy  
 Bayt al Shazhiy  
 Bayt Nisayhah (12 men)  
 Bayt Ra'af  
 Bayt Mas'uwūd  
 Bayt al Saghiyrah (15 men)  
 Bayt Yatabah  
 Bayt Daham  
 Bayt al Salayliy  
 Bayt Sa'iyd Musallim (10 men)  
 Bayt Bahiyt Sabah  
 Bayt Musallim Sabah  
 Bayt Tanayfah (5 men)

Bayt Musalahah (sing. Maslahiy)  
 Under Shaykh Bahiyt b. Ahmad b. Bahiyt with sub-sections:

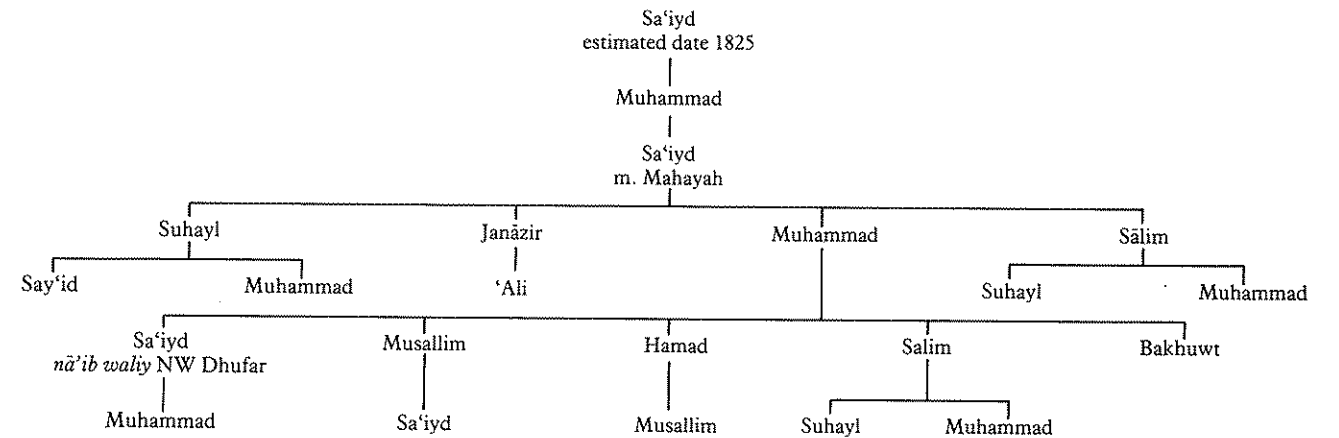
Bayt Attaysh  
 Bayt Muhammad Sa'iyd  
 Bayt Abdullah Biludayhay  
 Bayt 'Asharah  
 Bayt Duwiyl (Dwillawq)  
 Bayt 'Atallah  
 Bayt bin Sharayqiy  
 Bayt 'Idar  
 Bayt Barayik  
 Bayt Ghawwuyyah  
 Bayt Shraf  
 Bayt al Ya'aymiy  
 Bayt al Qaramah  
 Bayt al Hazar  
 Bayt Shamis  
 Bayt Hataylah  
 Bayt Milayh  
 Bayt Yarabat  
 Bayt Sa'iyd Samhan  
 Bayt Mahsin  
 Bayt 'Amriy  
 Bayt Qadah  
 Bayt al Husaymiy  
 Bayt Da'kan  
 Bayt Rab'at (Rabbath)

Bayt Sha'asha'a

Under Shaykh 'Ali b. Sa'iyd, formerly Sh. Sultān b. Hamad, with sub-sections:

Bayt al Hasmiy  
 Bayt Musallim  
 Bayt Bahiyt 'Ali  
 Bayt Sa'iyd Abdullah  
 Bayt Mubarik 'Ali  
 Bayt Mara'iy  
 Bayt Mahdi Sālim  
 Bayt Barayik  
 Bayt 'Isaramiyt  
 Bayt Hamad  
 Bayt al Qibiliy  
 Bayt Sālim Sa'iyd  
 Bayt Sālim Musallim  
 Bayt Badr  
 Bayt Zamdiyāt Tama  
 Bayt Makawshah

### The Family of Shaykh Sa'iyd b. Muhammad al Kathiyriy



### 'Awāmir (sing. 'Amriy)

A very large and widely distributed tribe, extending from northern Dhufar and Hadramawt to Qatar as bedu with large settled communities in Oman and on the Bātinah coast. Possibly numbering in all between 3,000 and 5,000. They have been on the move from the Wadi Hadramawt for some three hundred years and are a part of what might be termed the Kathiyriy nation, being descended from Hamdān b. Sa'sa'. The 'Afār are a sprout from this tree via the 'Awāmir.

They include the dying Āl Bu Haday whose tribal dirah once included most of the interior of Oman and the Dhāhirah. This tribe has also had elements absorbed by the Wahiybah and some have settled at Firq (see 'Awayfiy/Duruw').

The 'Awāmir are Hināwiy and at feud with the Duruw' and the Bani Ruwāhah.

Their wasm is a khatām, — across the nose, in Oman. In Dhufar and the sands it is ) on the right cheek.

Their azwah is 'Yā bin 'Amr' and 'Wilād Abs Sa'sa', and the desert tribes were at one time reported to have a speech incomprehensible to other Arab tribes.

They were in fact at war with the Duruw' in 1942, that is that bedu section of them which moves between Dhufar, Liwa and Buraymi. The leader of these bedu, Sālim b. Humuwūd b. Rakhadh of the Āl Bu Haday withdrew into Saudi Arabia in the fifties. On his return he found that the leadership of the tribe had been taken over by Sālim b. Musallim b. Hamm. They were thus divided: the Āl Badr section with Bin Rakhadh owing allegiance to the Saudis whilst the rest followed Bin Hamm and and Āl Bu Falah shaykhs of Abu Dhabi. Bin Rakhadh has since returned and submitted to the Āl Bu Falah agreeing to the new leadership in the tribe.

Due to their wide range tribal structure has become very loose and the following account can only be considered as an approximation. It would seem that the bedu are divided into two main sections and that if the hadr of Oman and various other bedu groups descend from them, this has been forgotten.

### 'Awāmir Bedu

Āl Badr  
 Tabā' Hadramawt  
 Bayt Qaliylah Dhufār

Bayt 'Abdullah  
 Bayt Farih  
 Bayt Jidām  
 Bayt Zamaliyāt  
 Bayt Huwās  
 Bayt Shanāfir

Āl Bu Haday (see above articles on the Duruw' and the Wahiybah)

Bayt Sālim Dhufār  
 Bayt Ksabiyy Dhufār and Hadramawt  
 Āl Ibrāhiym (Bā Brāhiym) Dhufār and Hadramawt

Āl Hayuw Dhufār, Abu Dhabi and Hadramawt

Bin Zamaliyāt  
 Āl Hamm the present shaykhly clan  
 Bayt Taraqah the previous shaykhly clan  
 Bayt Ba'awayn

Bayt Habaniy Hadramawt  
 Bayt Makadhah Hadramawt  
 Āl Jaffar Hadramawt  
 Āl Haddiy Hadramawt

Bayt Luzz  
 Khamiyr

Hadramawt, Abu Dhabi and in Oman at Siyb, Qala'at al Awāmir and Shafar.

Wa'il  
 Hatatabah  
 'Abd al Baqiy  
 Bayt Shakhaybah  
 Ambuwshah  
 Āl al Asiyd  
 Halā'atah

Hadramawt  
 Hadramawt  
 Hadramawt  
 Hadramawt  
 Hadramawt  
 Hadramawt and Abu Dhabi

Āl 'Amr

Hadramawt, Abu Dhabi and in Oman the Sharqiyah at Samad, Rawdah and in the Hawāsinah

Hāl Asiyt

Hadramawt, Abu Dhabi and Wadi Hawāsinah of Oman

Mixed Bedu and Hadr

These sections seem not to be attached to the Āl Badr or the Bayt Luzz.

Mqalat  
 Āl Ashariyf

Abu Dhabi, Hadramawt and Dhufar  
 Hadramawt and the Bātinah coast of Oman.

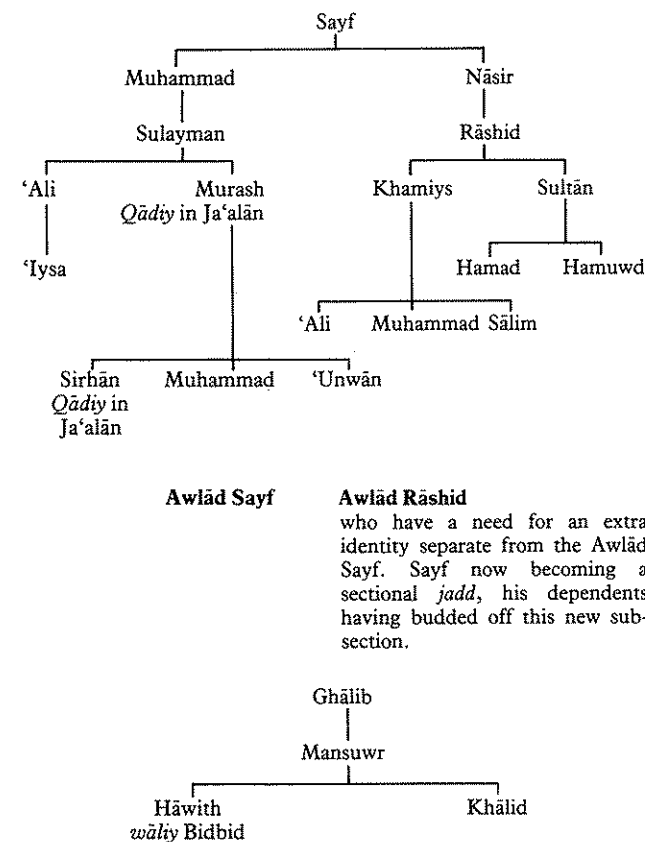
**Hadr in Oman\***

<i>Awlad Ahmad</i>	at Buldān Hamādhah and Buldān Hāl Halayuw
<i>Āl 'Ali bin Khalf</i>	at Buldān Hamādhah and Buldān Hāl Halayuw and 'Aqiyl
<i>Al 'Ali bin Hamad</i>	at Buldān Hamādhah and Buldān Hāl Halayuw
<i>Yāl 'Amiyr Qa'id</i>	at Khawdh and Hayl at Qala'at al 'Awāmiyr and the Bātinah
<i>Awlad Murr Khanājirah</i>	at Shinās at Balad al Khamah
<i>Yāl Muhammad</i>	at Aqiyl
<i>Yāl Muwsa</i>	at Shafar and Qala'at al 'Awāmiyr and with the Awlad Ahmad
<i>Rakhbah</i>	at Haylat al 'Awāmiyr Sib
<i>Rāshid</i>	at Qariyatayn
<i>Sayf</i>	at Aqiyl, Hamadhiyiyn and Suwayq
<i>Sanad</i>	at Mukharamah and Habl al 'Awāmiyr
<i>Sarahiyn</i>	at Aqiyl and Shafar
<i>Yāl Shirāz</i>	at Suwayq, Rustaq and the Bātinah
<i>Muhārah</i>	at Sulaymiyn

\* Other sections mentioned by Lorimer have either died out since that author wrote or in some cases seem to have been forgotten.

**Awlad Sayf, showing a possible relationship with the Awlad Rāshid**

Being the shaykhs of the 'Awāmiyr in settled Oman.



**Rawāshiyd**

Strength unknown but possibly only as few as 200. Sections are descended from three brothers, Mudāribah, Imāniy, (sometimes called Yamaniy) and Masayifah. They are Awlad Hamdān and are regarded as having been a part of Kathiyr at one time. "Now even the B. Imāniy are regarded as being autonomous from the rest of Al Rāshid" (Burton), but seem today to have gone back and recognized Muhammad b. Sālih of the Bayt Barakāt as their shaykh. The tribe ranges from north-eastern Hadramawt to north-western Dhufar.

- Mudāribah*  
sub-section surviving:  
*Bayt Kaluwt* (Shaykhs)  
sub-sub-sections:  
*Bayt Barakāt*  
*Bayt Sa'ad* – previous shaykhly house  
*Bayt Qubalah*  
*Bayt A'nāt*  
*Bayt Mayah*  
*Bayt Shughaylah*

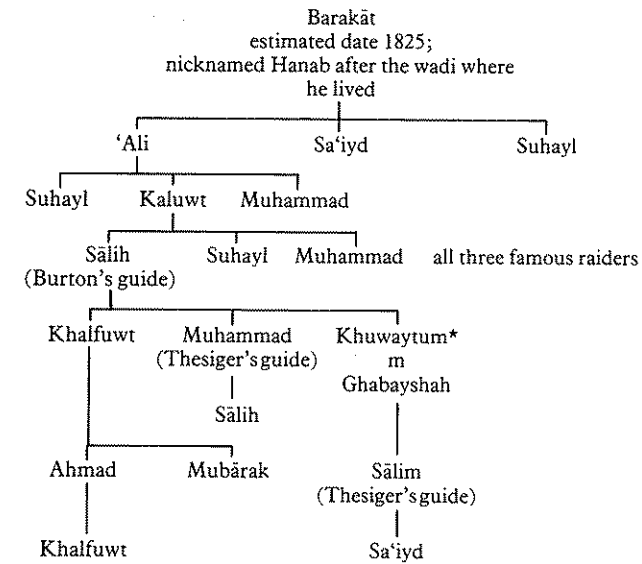
Here and in the following sections and sub-sections it is important to emphasise that each one is a minimal lineage and is in fact only one small family group. The Rawāshiyd are a very pure bedu tribe where sectional names carry only the vaguest memory of a *jadd* and they only remember sufficient of their genealogy to identify themselves to themselves. This is because their way of life has been so remote. As far as the outside world is concerned it is sufficient to be only a member of the large descent group—the Rawāshiyd themselves.

**Bayt Imāniy**

- sub-sections:  
*Bayt Limu'alliy*  
*Bayt Umbayruwk*  
*Bayt Suhayl*  
*Bayt Anuwf*  
*Bayt Khubayyān*  
*Bayt Yalla*  
*Bayt Asall*  
*Bayt Yamāniy*  
*Bayt Sharafayn*  
*Bayt Qatayf*  
*Bayt Khayrid*  
*Bayt Ghuwayliy*

- Bayt Masayifah*  
sub-sections surviving:  
*Bayt Hinnah* (shaykhs)  
sub-sub-sections:  
*Bayt Ayimah*  
*Bayt Dhabayit*  
*Bayt Sawmah*  
*Bayt Sukrān*

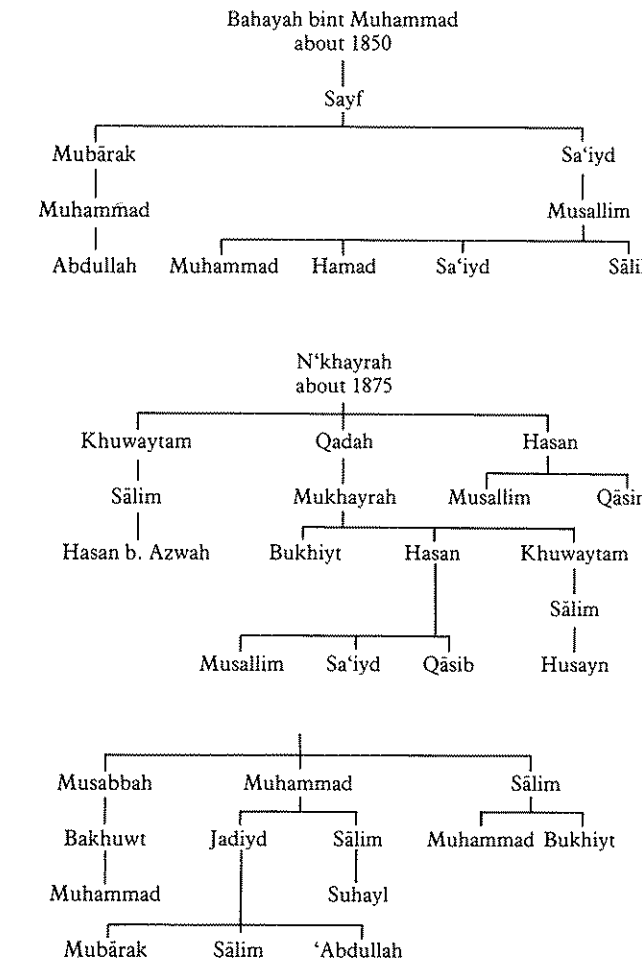
**Bayt Barakāt**



A small group having a clear descent from their *jadd*, Barakāt.

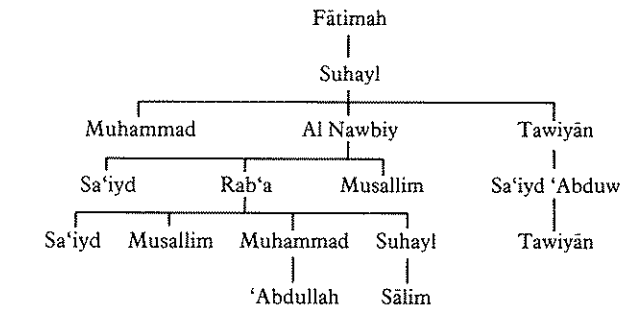
\* This attribution may be wrong. Sālim b. Ghabayshah may be from another Bayt, the Bayt Ghuwayliy of Bayt Imāniy.

**Some Rawāshiyd families of the Bayt Imāniy Bayt Ghuwayliy**



It will seem odd that there is no memory of the name of the father of Musabbah, Muhammad and Sālim. However, the source for this tree was Mubārak b. Jadyid and his knowledge was confined to the necessity of knowing the 'uncle relationship' so that he could identify a future wife. This is a not uncommon constraint and leads to a knowledge of the family in a lateral way rather than a vertical one. Mubārak knew the 'khamsah', that is his personal relationship to his own grandfather, and in addition great uncles.

**A Bayt Hinnah (possibly Bayt Sawmah) family living with the Harāsiys**



The following sections mentioned by Prof. Dostal are possibly found further west in Hadramawt. The Rawāshiyd of Northern Dhufar do not know of them.

- Al Mudāribah*  
*Bayt Uwmuliy, Ghataysh, 'Ammuwsh*  
*Hart, 'Ara, Milhiy.*  
*Bayt Imāniy*  
*Bā Khayayd, Mawduwn, Afyidah,*  
*Rawwas, 'Asandal, Su'aymiy, 'Aydiys.*  
*Masayifah*  
*Raho, Bakhbash, Jillyy.*

However, the 'Ammuwsh may be Mahra and the Rawwas Kathiyr.

**Harāsiys**

Their strength is about 400. They all live in the Jiddat al Harāsiys and westwards to Mughshin al 'Ayn where they share the wild dates with the Bayt Kathiyr, and Bir Khasfah where they have a watering agreement with the Mahra and the Batāharah. In the east they extend beyond the Jiddah into the southern part of the Wadi Halfayn. The tribal name is taken from the nickname of their ancestor, Harsuws, which means 'camel-rug'. Harsuws is said to have lived at Bandar Qadariy in the Hadramawt. The tribe is of Awlad Hamdān stock and speaks a dialect of the Mahra tongue due to their long association with this tribe in front of whom they have moved slowly eastwards during the course of history. It would seem that they consolidated their present form only about a hundred and fifty years ago. The Harāsiys appear to be the only tribe left in Arabia that still possesses a totem, in their case a fox. Because of this they are at times called the Bani Husayniy or the Bani 'Aws. Totemism was universal in very early pre-Islamic times and animal names are very common in the early genealogies in consequence. Some tribes even retain an animal name today, even though the name is now said to be that of a man – thus the Bani Kalb (dog) in Oman. This system of nomenclature is similar to the one where groups of people described themselves as the sons of a deity.

In common with orthodox Jews the Harāsiys are by custom only permitted to make love once on their wedding night which is peculiar when compared with the boastful pro-

ceedings of their neighbours. However, their mixed origins and their lack of a war-cry make one suspicious that they too may contain 'Ad elements.

The Jiddat al Harasiys was designated their *dār* or *dirah* in the thirties by order of Sultan Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr and 'Wazir Burton', very probably because some Harsuwsiy sections have accepted Saudi suzerainty. They are Hinawiy.

The Harāsiys are in *suff* with the 'Awāmir, Wahiybah and the Bayt Kathiyri; their enemies in the past were the Mahra and the Qara. This is curious in view of the origin of one of their sections from the Qara, and the dialect they speak; however, after the ending of feuding by the Sultan Sa'iyd, friendship developed and during the fifties, when trouble first broke out in Dhufar, many Mahra families found sanctuary among them as did Kathiyris. Their *wasm* is: — under the camel's left ear, and

| behind the right ear.

They have no *azwah* but during a raid when Tumayriy b. Humayd of the Āl Barho distinguished himself against the Manasiyr at Mugshin al 'Ayn the following song was composed and now serves the purpose.

*Thabariyn Lah Lah  
Tibshariyn bi'l 'Asha*

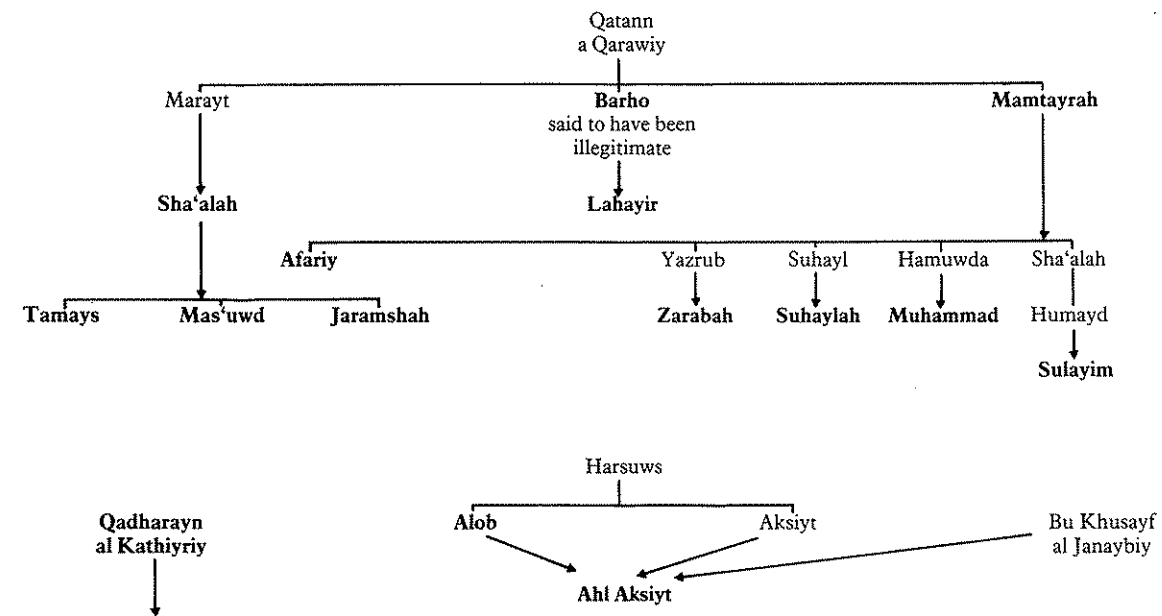
**The camel breeds found amongst the Harasiys**

- Banāt Suwayd
- Banāt Samhah
- Banāt Dhabiyan
- Banāt Kazzah (with Sālim b. Huwaylah)
- Banāt Shiqah
- Banāt Halwah
- Banāt Hamrān
- Banāt Hamarah

The tribe is composed of two main factions which seem to reflect the ancestral composition of each. Perhaps the real descendents of Harsuws are the Ahl Aksiyt under Sharqiy b. Akass with their Kathiyriy additions from the Qadharayn and Janaybiy additions from the Bu Khusayf. The Ahl Mumtayah descent group being mainly Qara in origin, and were followers of Sālim b. Huwaylah.

It should be noted that the Harāsiys, in common with other southern tribes, frequently take their second name from their mothers.

**A Descent of Early Sectional Ancestors**



The tribe is headed by Sharqiy b. Akass of the Ahl Aksiyt and under him Salim b. Huwaylah of the Ahl Mamtayrah controlled the bulk of the tribe with Hamad b. Sayyid, Sharqiy's nephew, in control of the remainder. Hamayd b. Dahabah was beginning to wield some influence during the early part of 1973 but he died from a *khanjar* wound in June of that year.

The best tribal representation would therefore seem to be as follows:

**Ahl Mamtayrah**

has direct sections:

- Hāl Sulayim
- Hāl Muhammad
- Hāl Suhaylah
- Hāl Zarabah

and divisions:

**Ahl Barho**

sections:

- Hāl Lahyir
- Hāl Nahayir

**Ahl Shā'alah**

sections:

- Hāl Tamays
- Hāl Masa'uwd
- Hāl Jaramshah

**Ahl 'Afariy**

sections:

- Bayt Haydin
- Hāl Ansiliyt
- Hāl Ashaymaynah

Whilst the Ahl Barho and the Ahl Shā'alah have clear and separate descent from the Mamtayrah proper they do not have the status, as yet, of *fakdhs*. This is probably because the whole of the Mamtayrah group is still regarded as slightly foreign by the real Harāsiys and this feeling has prevented their demarcation. It is interesting to note the enhanced status of the Ahl 'Afariy who should, it would seem, be a section of the Ahl Mamtayrah, as the Hāl Zarabah. Should the tribal system continue, there is no doubt that all these sections and divisions would eventually become *fakdhs* or indeed bud off tribes of their own.

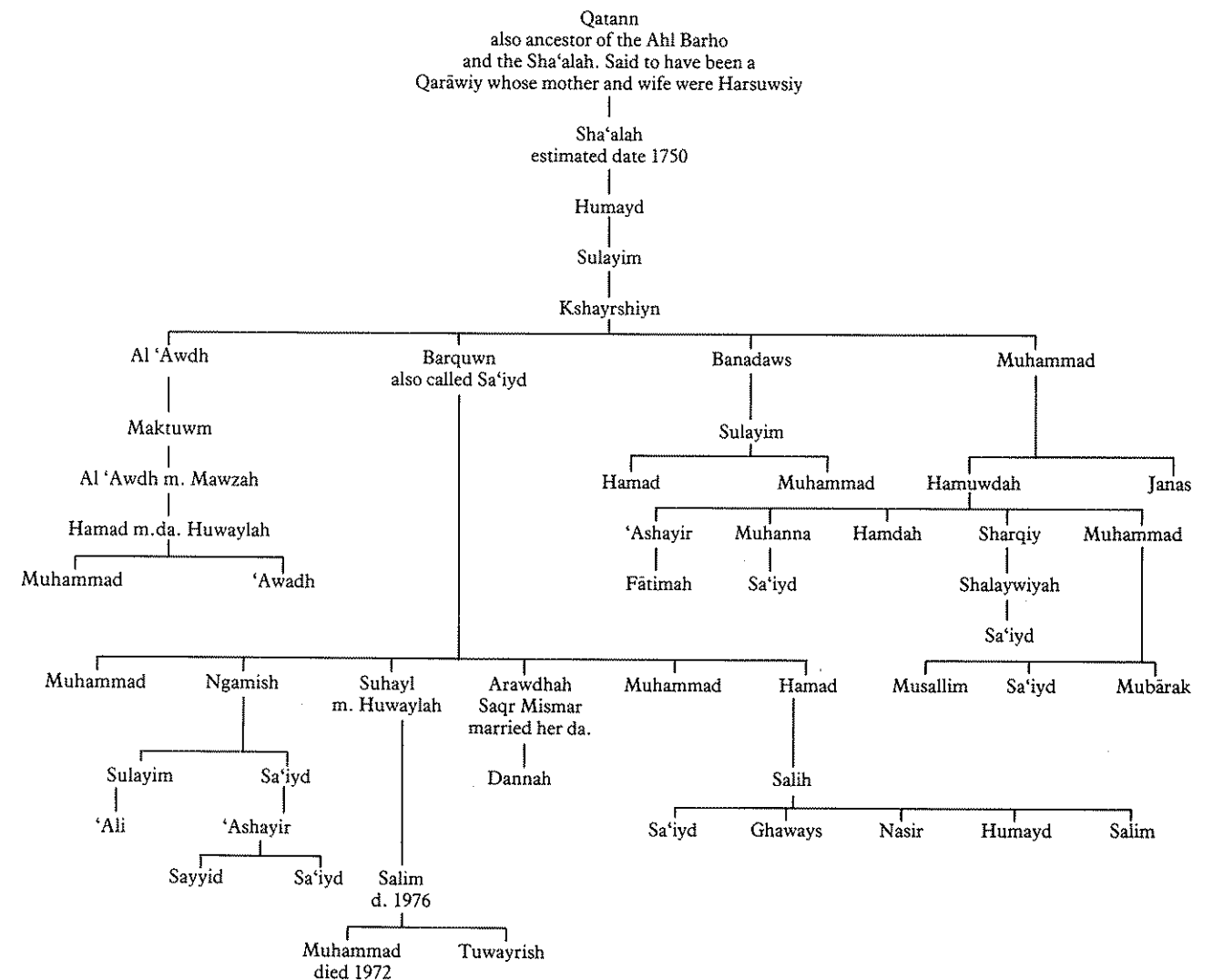
**Ahl Aksiyt**

sections:

- Hāl Sabhah also called Hāl Aksiyt
- Hāl Sulaymān also called Hāl Sultān
- Bayt Hadab

It is felt that the dual naming here is not only an indication of the way in which the tribal system moves with sections eventually becoming tribes and intermediary ancestral

**The Hāl Sulayim of Ahl Mamtayrah.  
The Qārūwi Descent**



names becoming forgotten, but one also feels that they are at the stage where they have not yet settled down to a real organisation.

*Bayt Qadharayn*

sections:

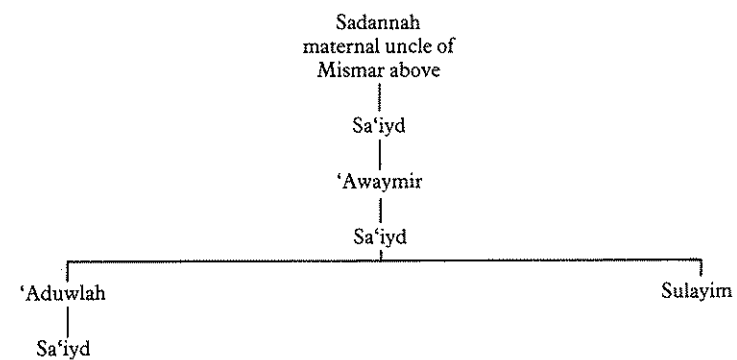
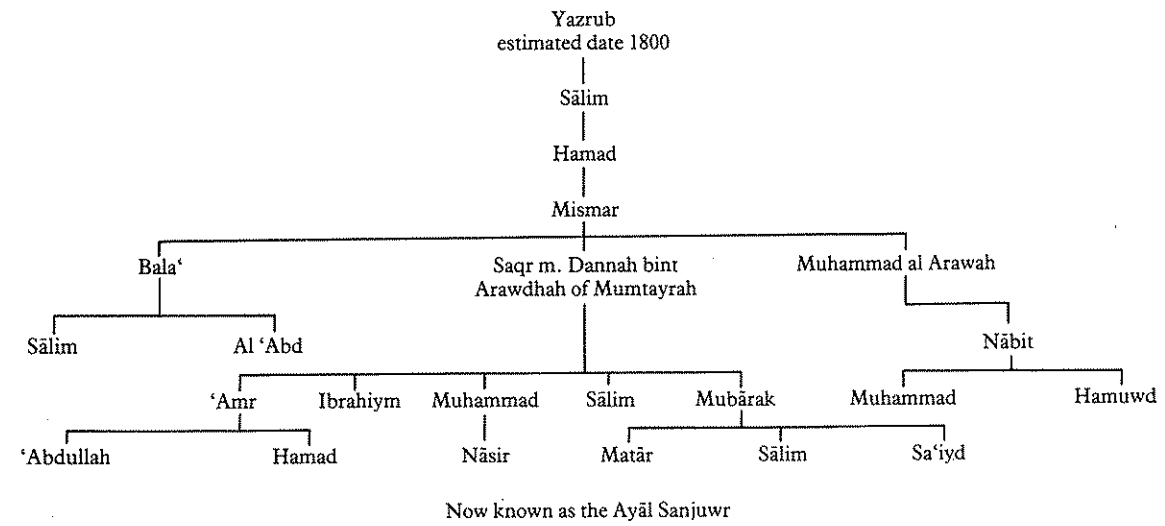
*Mashakahab* (sing. *Mamshakab*)

*Bin Haqiy*

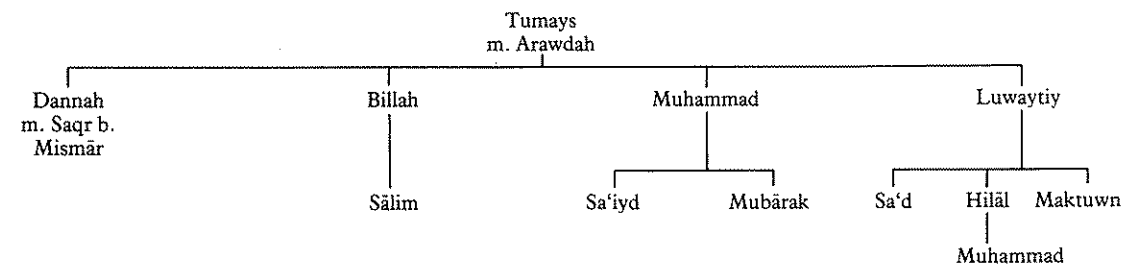
*Bin Qadharayn*

The Harāsiys have eschewed the recent connection with the Harth in the Sharqiyah following the fall from grace of Shaykh Ahmad b. Muhammad al Harthiy. They are not subject in any way to any *wāliyy* and seem to deal direct with the government in the person of the Sultan Qabuws and his Ministry of the Interior.

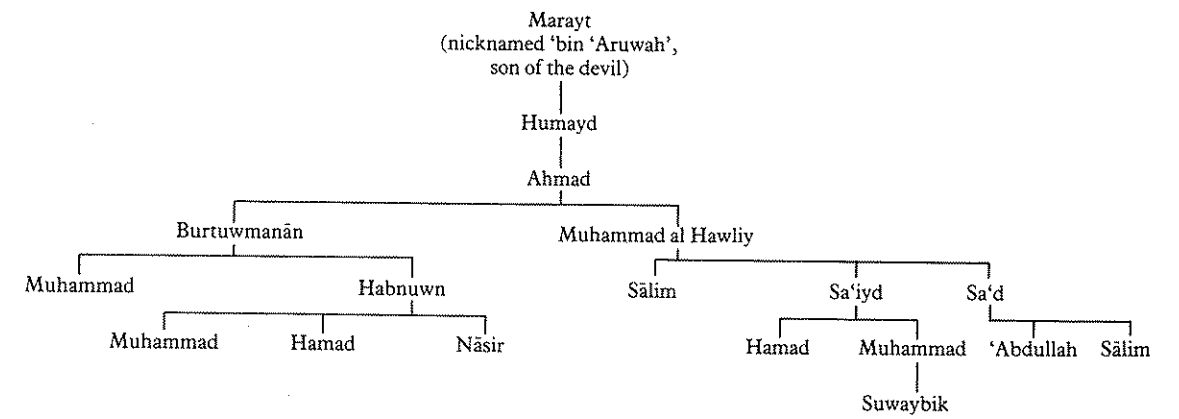
**Hāl Zarabah in Ahl Mumtayrah, an emerging section of some influence**



**The Family of Dannah bint Arawdah**

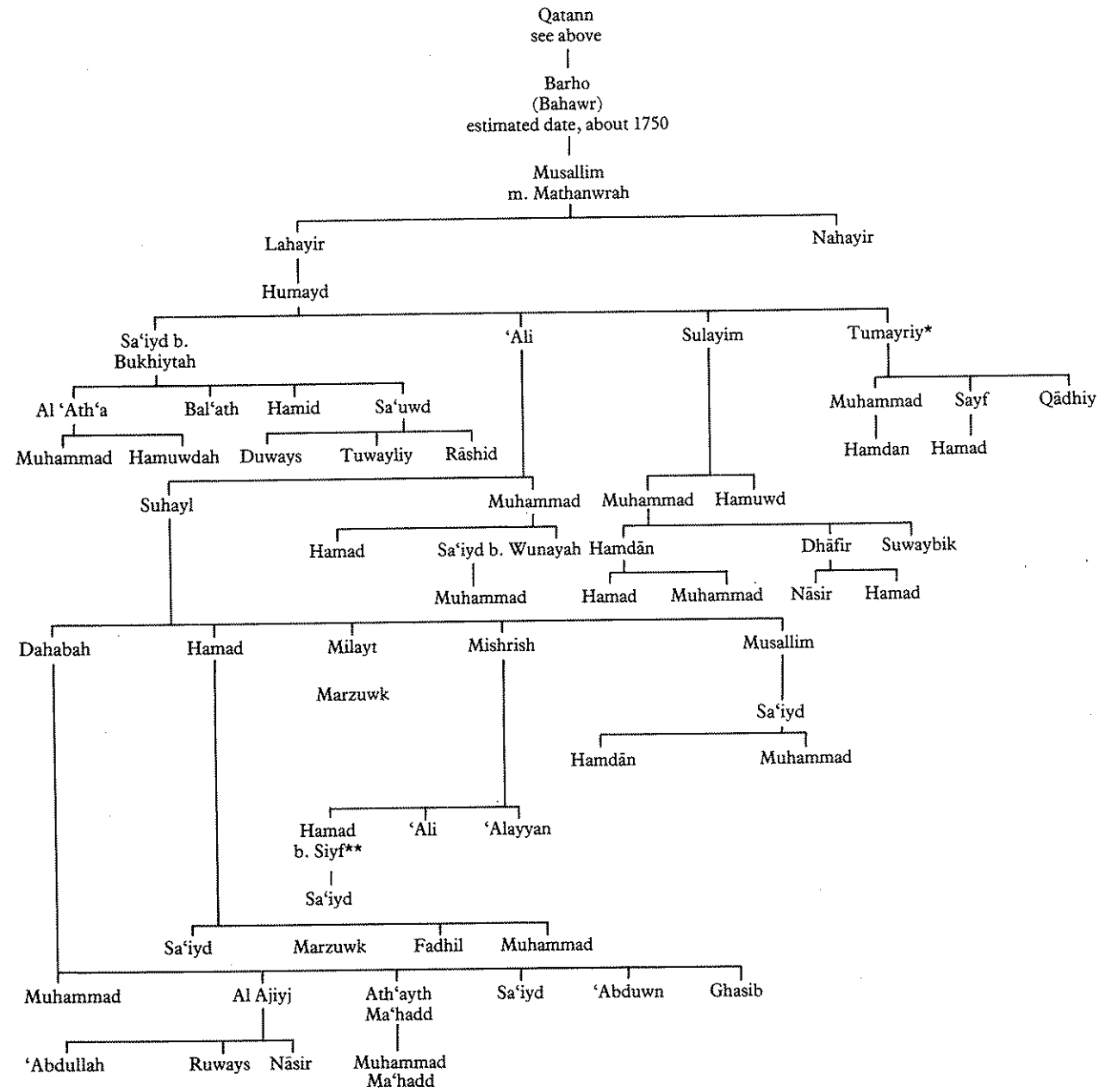


**Ahl Sha'alah**



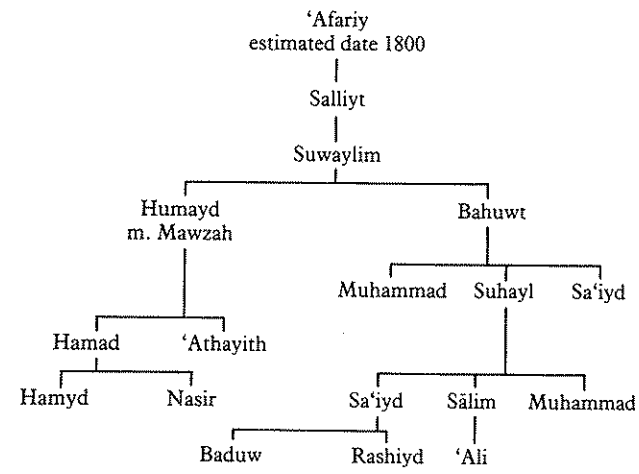
A family which is important today but which has forgotten its connection genealogically with the parent section.

**The Hāl Lahayir of Ahl Barho. A further branch of the Qarāwiy descent.**



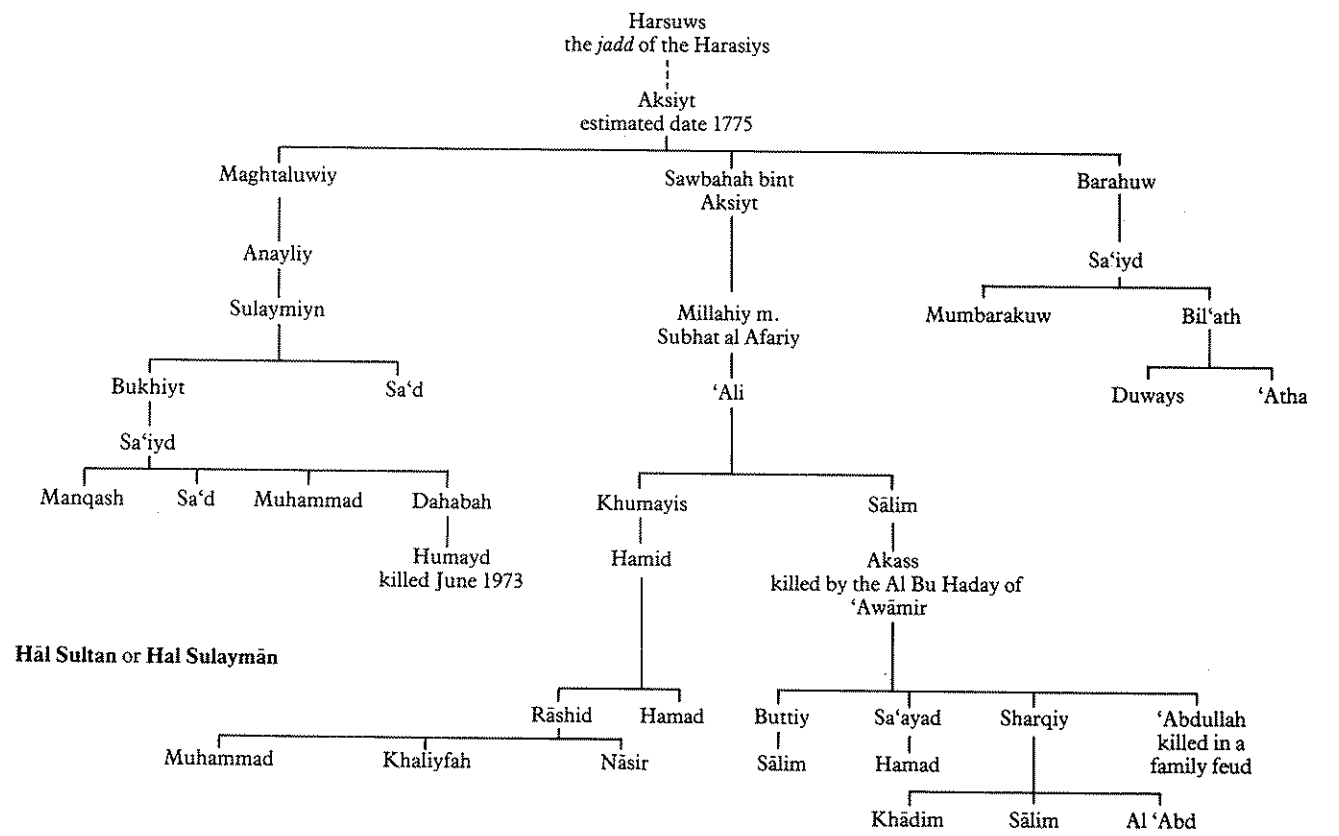
\* The hero of a counter attack at Mughshin against the Manāsiyr  
 \*\* Siyf means carpet!

**The Bayt or Hāl Ansilyt Ahl 'Afāriy Ahl Mumtayrah**



It is doubtful that Salliyt, the *jadd* of this group was in fact the son of 'Afāriy, but this tree shows how an attachment is made by a sub-section into its sectional place.

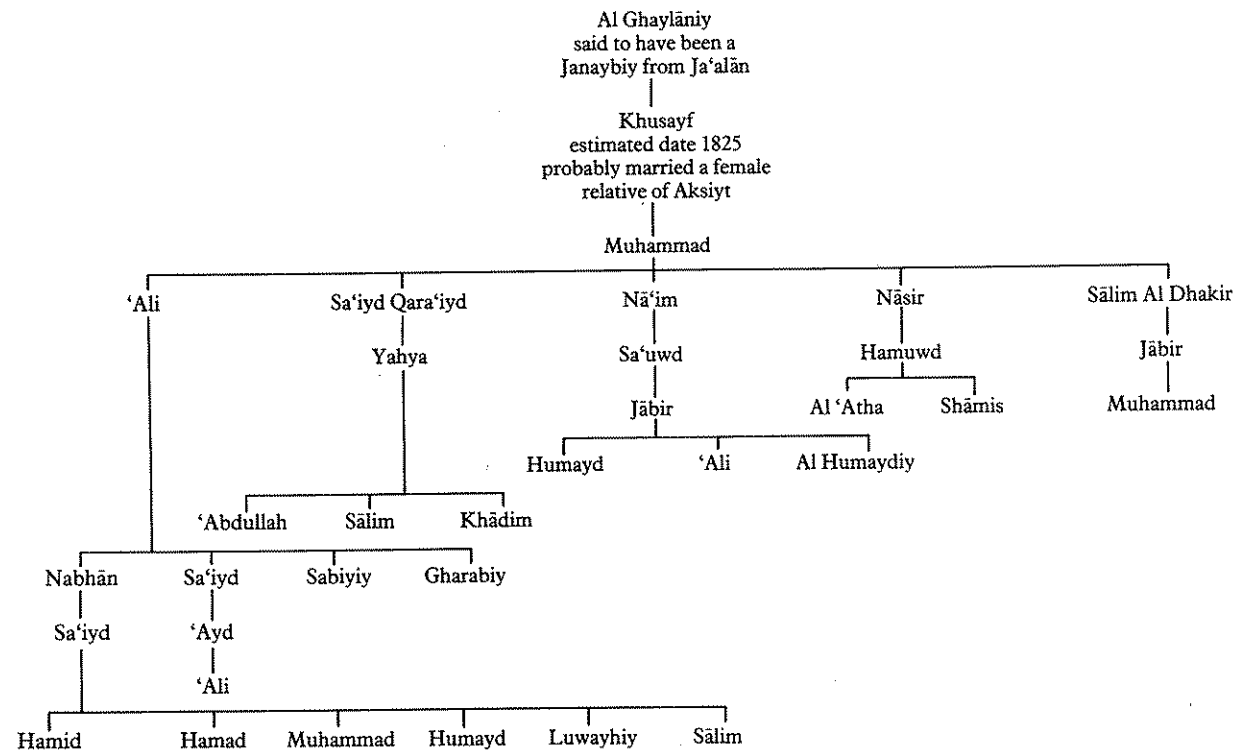
**The Hāl Sulaymān of the Ahl Aksiyt and their relationship to the Bayt Akass who are the proper 'shaykhs' of the Harasiys.**



**Hāl Sultan or Hāl Sulaymān**

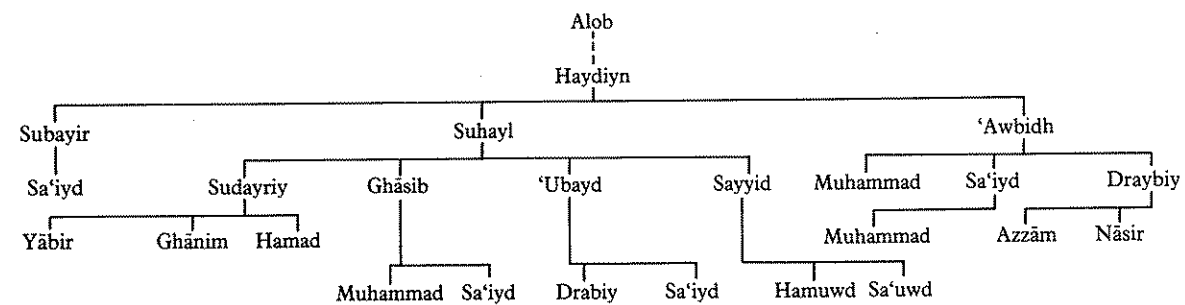
**Bayt Akass or Hāl Sabbah**

**Al Bu Khasayf of the Ahl Aksiyt**



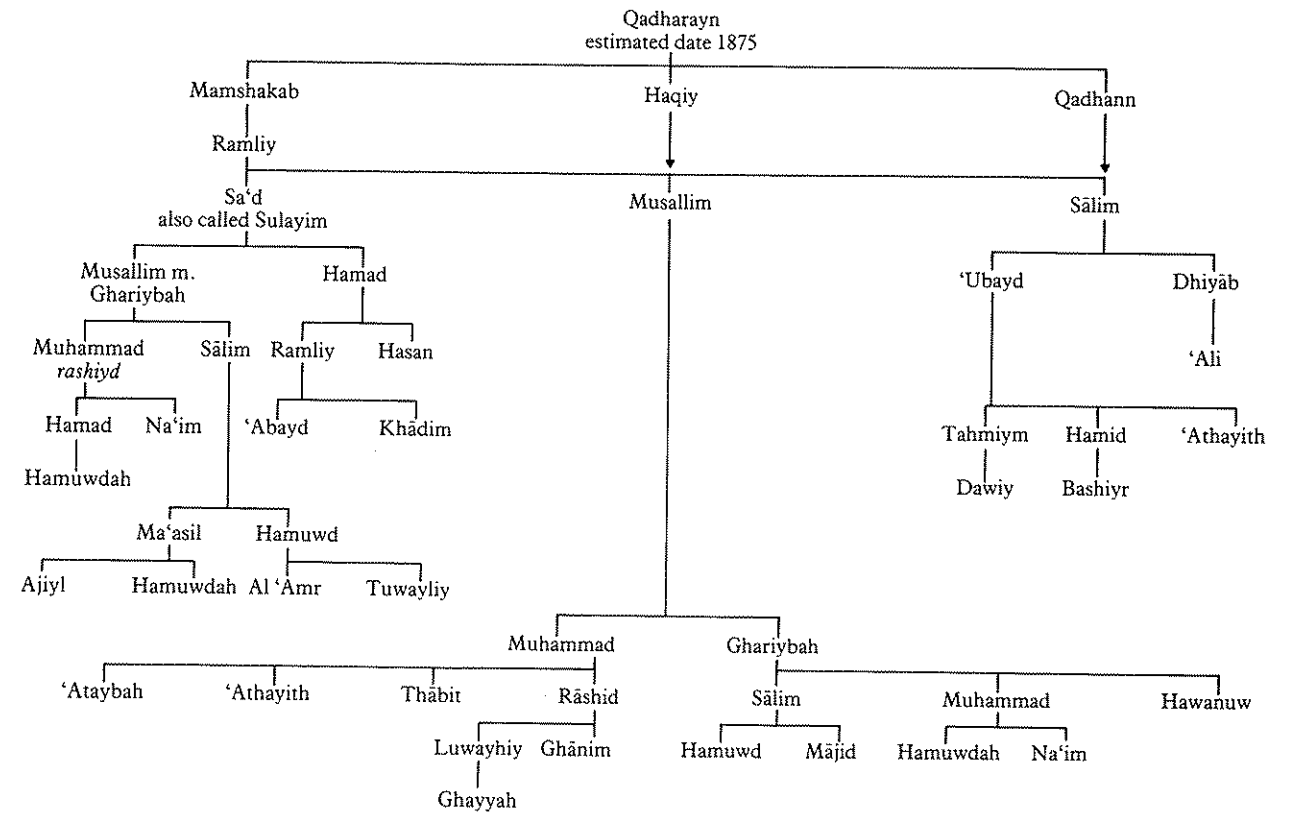
If Khusayf did marry into the Ahl Aksiyt this family tree demonstrates another easy, if obvious, way for a stranger to participate in a tribal descent-group. It also shows how mixed from a descent-point of view a tribe can become. Reference to the Janabah sectional tree of some Bayt Khaliyafah Harafiysh Hāl Sa'd will show an instance of the possibility of this happening again.

**Al Alob Bayt Alob**



A tree where memory of the ancestor exists but the connections to him have become lost.

**Bayt Mamshakab, Bin Haqiy and Bin Qadhann of Bayt Qadharayn**



Qadharayn is said to have some from the Qabqabbiy of J. Ghaylah who are a clan of Al Kathiyr from the Hadramawt and known still today. This tree is a further indication of the mixed nature of the Harasiys.

**The 'Afār**

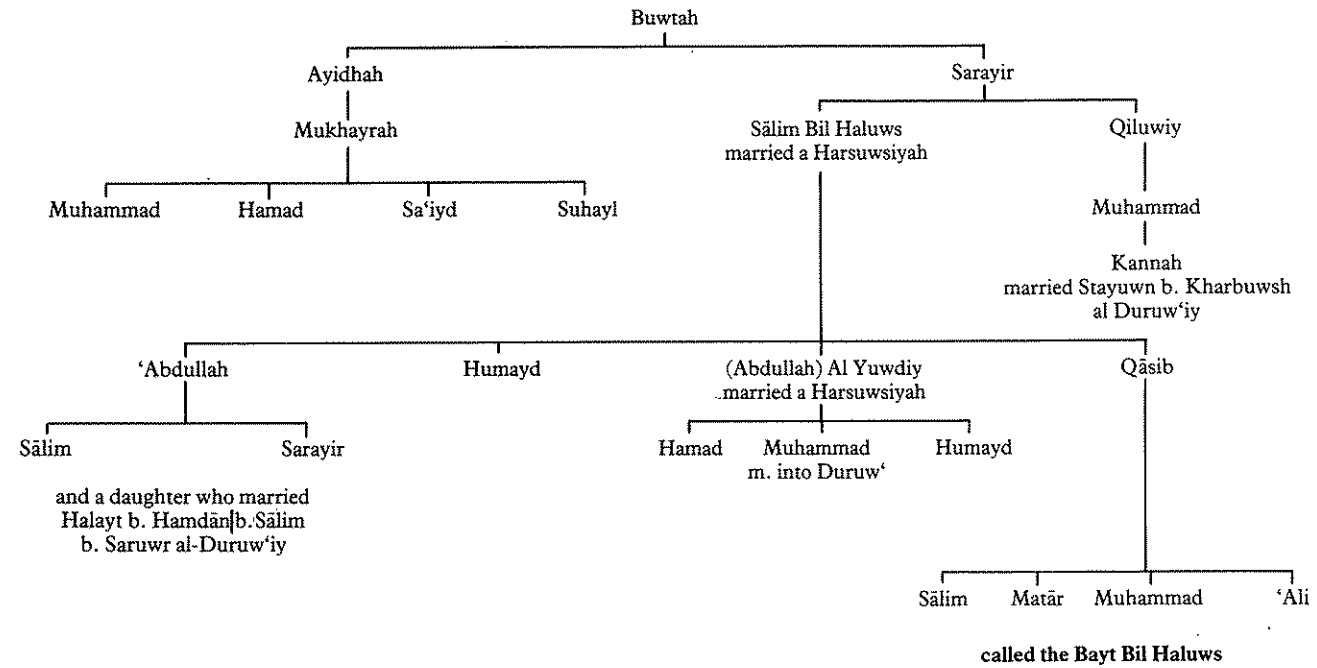
A small tribe numbering about seventy men, they have no tribal *dirah* of their own, but have always been accepted as *rābi'a* by everyone in the interior of Oman. This means a guide or companion and such a person was necessary for a traveller in the area during the time of tribal feuds, his very presence protecting the traveller from attack. It is for this reason that they were so successful as intermediaries in the days of the slave trade from Suwr in southern Oman, to Buraymiy.

Their origin is said by the Mahra and the Bayt Kathiyr to be Kathiyriy from the Bayt Aydān Kathiyr of Habaruwt; Lorimer whilst repeating the story that they eat corpses, which is not true nowadays, has them coming from the 'Awāmīr who also have a common origin with the Kathiyr. So they would seem to belong to the Hamdān b. Sa'sa' group of tribes. The 'Afār have a further story of their own which is delightful. Apparently a beautiful girl

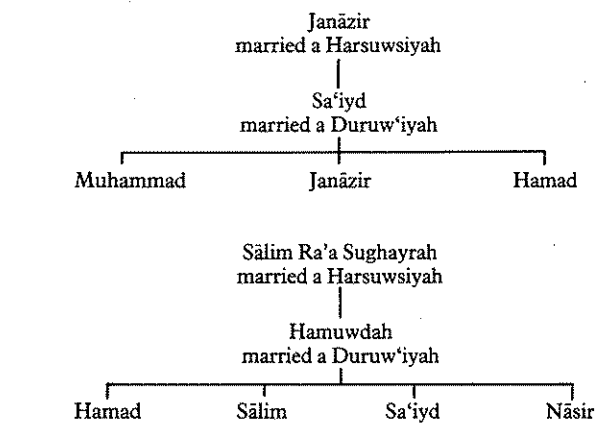
lived with her family on the edge of the Wadi Hadramawt. One day she was looking after her father's goats and a sand-devil swept around her on its way across the steppe. The swirling sand did the girl no harm, but some months later her father noticed that she was pregnant. Naturally he was very angry and sad too, because as he told her, her brother would kill her when he learnt of the disgrace she had brought on the family. However, the girl replied that she had not dishonoured them and told her father about the sand-devil. He was much relieved that her condition was due to some supernatural agency. Her child was called 'Afār as the name for a sand-devil in those parts is *'afuw*. From him descend all the tribe of 'Afār. They are very widely distributed and are found from Sanau in the South Yemen Republic to the Trucial Coast and have a reputation for great bravery and courage. Their migration northwards is amply demonstrated by the tribe of their wives in the family trees below.

The sections of the 'Afar with some family trees

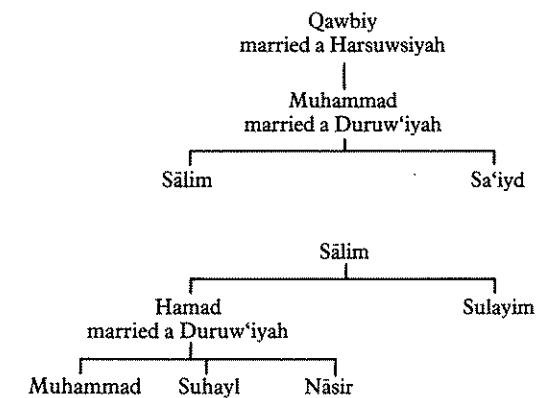
**Muzawanah**  
also called Bayt Subāh



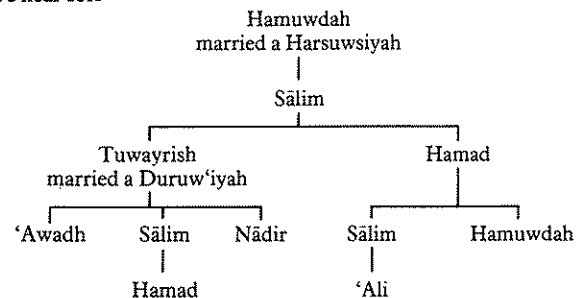
which whilst reflecting the name of a sectional ancestor, does this very quickly, really in one generation; and this speed may reflect their need to establish their identity fast due to their migration.



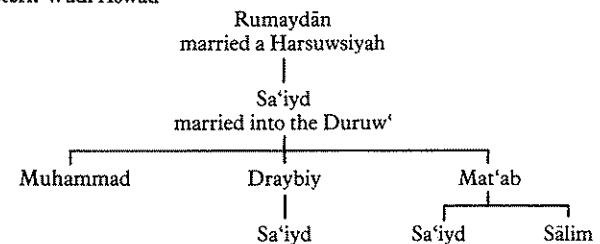
**Makaanah**  
live near Ibri and married into the Duruw'



**Bayt Hamuwdah**  
live near Ibri



**Bayt Rumaydān**  
western Wadi Aswad



Chapter Four  
**THE HADR**

The *hadr* life is basically very similar to that of the bedu except that it is static, the townsman being the agriculturist and craftsman. In the mountains he grows crops, and some groups, like the settled 'Awāmīr, have developed special skills. These are the specialists in building and repairing the *falaj* water channels. The *hadr* supply the school-teachers and religious leaders of the communities, the clerks, storekeepers and merchants, for trading is ever dear to their hearts.

The settled tribes present a very different picture to the one demonstrated by the bedu despite the interdependence of the two communities. These last, for all their complications, have a comparatively simple organisation, mainly because they usually have a definite tribal area to live in and unless history has mixed up the various groups, as with the Bayt Kathiyr, they have a reasonably uncomplicated tribal arrangement. Another reason for this is the near impossibility of cheating about one's ancestors where there is a degree of literacy, and consequently each group has to retain its own identity. Thus each group, being unable to merge with a more powerful one remains and so there is a more complicated situation in the towns. Mention has been made of the Arab necessity of knowing one's grandfather's name in order to be able to identify one's future wife. At this point and in relation to the foregoing it is interesting to note what this can mean in the event of a man being born the son of a wealthy family and whose father has four wives. To begin with it means that he will have a marriage relationship with ten immediate grandparents. If each of these also has four wives the marriage relationship will extend to a hundred great-grandparents. It is often difficult for Western concerns and modern governmental methods to come to terms with this enormous number of people who can all be related quite closely within the space of three generations.

Marriage in the towns follows the same pattern as it does in the desert except that the women are more confined and it is usual to have recourse to a *qādiy*. The *hadr* on the other hand have few large tribal areas, except where they hold the *hukm* of a town, and have been subject to the exigencies of history in no mean manner. In Oman they have mixed descent groups in the interests of community groups and the continued warfare over the centuries, both due to the election of Imams in the Ibādiy cause and to the confrontation with outside invaders, has led to a most complex picture.

Their life depends on what has hitherto been merely subsistence agriculture which is watered by channels called *aflāj* (sing. *falaj*). These channels were possibly introduced to the country by the Persians and the control of the water they give is in the hands of a *wakiyl* or agent. The water is primarily owned by the tribe which has the *hukm* and the inheritances of this are recorded by the *wakiyl* when people die. Some of the water in the *falaj* belongs to the *falaj* itself and this is sold at auctions. These sales of water are arranged on a weekly, monthly and annual basis, the proceeds going to help the repair of the *falaj* and to various charitable purposes.

The crops grown are lucerne for feeding stock, a few cattle and sheep, onions, limes, various other kinds of citrus, millet, some grain and a few spices and other fruits. The mainstay however is the date-palm. This is grown in large numbers and great variety. The *aflāj* are a means both of leading the water from the water-table or a well to a convenient area for agriculture and of lessening the slope of a wadi so that water can be taken along its higher banks to make use of the silt to be found there, and more than any other factor they have imposed the system of village life found in central Oman. It is the almost complete dependence on the *falaj* in the necessarily isolated villages that has made community loyalty a stronger matter than descent group loyalty in the history of the mountain regions.

The destruction of the communal village system, which like the destruction of the bedu tribal system alluded to in the previous chapter, will lead to great social and even political difficulties in the Sultanate if it is not carefully studied by modern planners, with a view, possibly, to incorporate rather than remove.

The villages and towns are all built out of mud brick and usually heavily fortified with walls and towers against attack from neighbours or marauding bedu.

However, the most important difference between town and desert is the presence of law in the town. In the desert, law only exists on a traditional basis and the widely diffused community of the steppe does not need a complex system of law which is there only to provide the smallest protection to society. It is not inappropriate therefore to consider some of the more salient features of the more civilised law used in the *hadr* communities. This is law sanctioned by religion rather than tribal tradition and is the law of Islam, the Shariy'ah.

The primary basis of all Islamic law is the Qur'an which may itself be regarded as modifying and extending pre-Islamic or tribal traditions. Supplementary to the Qur'an are the *Hadiyth* records of the actions and sayings of the Prophet, and the *sunna*, or the rules of law deduced from the Hadiyth. When neither the Qur'an nor the Hadiyth provide the answer to a particular legal question, jurists are permitted to make analogical deductions, *qiyās*, from them, or interpret them using their secular judgement and reason. A protection against arbitrary judgement is found in the saying of the Prophet that 'my people will not agree in error'. Hence a judgement is given validity if there is a consensus of opinion, *ijmā'*, among the learned. The body of Islamic law, *fiqh*, therefore consists of 'ilm, knowledge contained in the Qur'an and the Hadiyth, supplemented by human judgement, and it deals with matters that may be judged legal or illegal. On the other hand, the Shariy'ah is derived only from the Qur'an and the Hadiyth. It embraces all human actions and provides a complete guide for leading the virtuous life. In the Shariy'ah human activities are divided into five groups: those strictly enjoined, *fardh*; those strictly forbidden, *harām*; those advised, *manduwb*; those not advised, *makruwb*; and finally those things about which religion is indifferent, *jā'iz*.

In certain cases custom, 'urf or 'adah, where it is not contrary to the principles of the Shariy'ah, may be recognized as a subsidiary source of law. The most important examples are the three agricultural contracts: for planting, *mughārasah*, for watering, *musaqah*, and for sowing, *muzāra'ah*.

Although for all Islamic jurists the Qur'an has always remained the foundation on which the law codes are constructed, certain of the Hadiyth, the *ijmā'* and the *qiyās* have been questioned. This, coupled with the diversions within the body of Islam, has given rise to the different schools of law which prevail in different quarters of the Muslim world. Briefly, the Sunnis recognize four schools of law: Hanafite, Malikite, Shafi'ite and Hanbalite. The Shi'as embrace several law schools of which the most important ones to survive are the Imāmis, the Ismā'ilyis and the Zaydiyyis. The Ibādīs, who derive from the Khārijites, have a single law school which conforms, in general, to the Sunnite tradition.

In Oman the Ibādīs are the premier and ruling opinion and Oman is unique among Islamic countries in that the majority of its population are Ibādīte. Other Ibādīs are found in north-west Africa and in East Africa.

The right to inherit, under pre-Islamic law, was possessed by only a small number of adult male members of a family. The Qur'an increases the number of possible heirs to include a larger number of men, and also women and children. But there is almost no freedom for the owner to distribute property according to his personal wishes. The hierarchy of heirs is strictly defined, as is the proportion of the property due to each one. Only if no member of this hierarchy is living can the testator bequeath his whole estate to any other person, known as the 'universal legatee'. Failing the nomination of such a legatee the property reverts to the state as Bayt al Māl. Some heirs can be excluded from inheritance by others, but there are six classes of heirs, the so-called primary heirs, who are bound to receive a portion of the property. These classes are: son(s), daughter(s), father, mother, husband, wife (wives). The amount these heirs receive may be affected by their number; for instance, in the absence of a son, one daughter receives half the property but two or more daughters share two-thirds of the pro-

erty; or by the fact that one or more classes of the heirs has no representative, for instance the husband or wife's share is doubled where there are no children and no son's children. But where there is no living member of a class of heirs he/she may be substituted by a specified secondary heir, all of whom are close blood relatives, that is the maternal grandmother can substitute for the mother. Where there is no son, the fractions of the property divided among the primary and secondary heirs may total more or less than unity. If more, the fractions are adjusted proportionally until unity is reached, though this is not accepted by the Shi'a. If less, the remainder is shared amongst the normal sharers with the exception of the husband or wife.

According to the law the property is divided amongst the primary heirs in the following proportions, in the case where there are daughter(s) but no sons:

husband	one quarter
wife	one eighth, and two or more wives share this fraction
father	one sixth
mother	one sixth
daughter	one half, and two or more daughters share this fraction.

If there are sons as well as daughters, the husband/wife, father and mother, or the secondary heirs who represent them if they are dead, receive as above. But the sons and daughter(s) then divide the remainder so that each son receives an equal amount and each daughter receives half a son(s) share. If no other primary heirs, nor the secondary heirs who stand in for them, are living then the sons and daughters share the whole property in the above manner. But although under Islamic law the women normally receive half as much as the men, they enjoy exactly the same legal rights over their property.

In Oman a typical situation might be as follows. A man dies leaving two wives, three sons and three daughters but his mother and father are dead. In this case the estate, according to the law, is divided into the following fractions:

each wife	one sixteenth
each son	fourteen seventy-seconds
each daughter	seven seventy-seconds

Where there are no children or children's children, the husband or wife receives a half or a quarter instead of a quarter or an eighth respectively. Finally, where most of the property goes to secondary heirs because there are a few living primary heirs, the fractional division of the property can become even more complicated than the examples given above.

The above system is generally applicable to Sunnis and Ibādīs, but Shi'as follow some different practices.

Inheritance implies ownership, and the right of full ownership is accepted in Islamic law. Undisputed possession is accepted as evidence of title; anyone may acquire title to an ownerless thing that is capable of ownership by taking possession of it. On waste land, enclosure is not sufficient, the squatter must break up the land and cultivate it. Buildings upon and crops of trees on land are separate from it and may be held by a separate title. In marriage a woman enters into no disabilities in respect of her property.

Property may be sold or given away by the owner. Alternatively he may declare it to be a *waqf* which is a form of trust in which the property is considered to belong to God while its usufruct may be used to support either the family of the man who created the *waqf*—a man's principal and most laudable duty is to provide for his

family, no matter how wealthy it may be—or the maintenance of God's worship according to the tenets of Islam, or charities which support the poor, such as alms houses, or the rich and poor equally, such as schools and hospitals. Because the property is considered to belong to God the *waqf* can only be a permanent endowment and cannot be alienated. Any Muslim may create a *waqf* from a part of the whole of his uncontested property. He names the beneficiaries and if these are his family he normally names the ultimate object of the *waqf*, those who obtain the usufruct if and when the line of beneficiaries dies out, and he may name himself as the first *mutawliy*, or guardian, and obtain an appropriate remuneration. And he may, in some law schools, claim the right to withdraw the property from the *waqf* in exchange for another property of at least equal value.

Apart from the benefit from creating a *waqf* of gaining favour in the sight of God, the owner obtains religious protection of his land, he may also assure the permanence of his family from generation to generation and he may evade the strict letter of the law of inheritance and in particular escape from successive sub-divisions of the estate.

Full private ownership of agricultural land is recognized by the present Government. One right of ownership is to sell the land. Land sales are done before the *qādiy*. There must be a document of application to sell to someone for a stated number of *riyāls*: and once the *qādiy* is convinced that the seller has full authority to sell, a document of sale is drawn up. In future land sales will be supervised by the land registry office.

In addition to sale, the owner has the right to declare as *waqf* either his whole property or part of his land, or even a number of the date palms on his land. The *waqf* may be designated either as religious *waqf*, *waqf khayriy*, or as family *waqf*, *waqf ahliy*. In the former case the beneficiaries may either be a religious foundation such as a mosque or a group of needy people. The reasons given for creating family *waqf* include preventing children from squandering the property, fear of a dispute within the family, for example where the children of multiple or divorced wives have to be considered, and enabling a man to over-ride the normal laws of inheritance and thus, for example, give the whole usufruct of his land to one child, though this is not considered good practice. If, in the case of family *waqf* the line of inheritors dies out, the land may revert to the government.

Ultimately *waqf* is the responsibility of the Ministry of Awqāf and Islamic Affairs. But the Ministry does not yet have a complete register of *waqf* properties and preparing one will take a long time because there are at least 15,000 mosques to be considered. Locally, the Ministry of Awqāf appoints a *mushrif*, or inspector, of each *wilāyah*. Under him each mosque, or group of mosques if they share a *waqf* property, has a *mulāhiz*, or overseer, in charge of its *waqf* property. If the property is agricultural land the *mulāhiz* may cultivate it himself or he may pay someone a few *riyāls* a month as a part-time farmer, or employ a *biydār* who takes a proportion of the farm produce. A *waqf* is inalienable if another property of greater value is declared *waqf* in exchange. On the other hand, if a *waqf* land is not profitable it can be sold for money which is used to repair the mosque, or for other appropriate work. But if a *waqf* land is sold an attempt should be made to obtain a replacement.

In general none of the fixed assets should be removed from the land, neither trees nor buildings. A date palm can only be replaced if it is dead.

Inheritance, in a situation where a *waqf* is not created, is according to Islamic law and any disputes are judged by the *qādiy*. The *qādiy* may decide on the exact distribution of trees or arrange for the farm to be sold and divide the money between the inheritors. Alternatively the garden may be auctioned to the family, the highest bidder taking the land and the purchase price being shared amongst the remaining inheritors. In practice the gardens do not become infinitely sub-divided because several factors work in the opposite direction. The garden, for example, might be regarded as a family property, and only the produce divided. Or the inheritors may sell their shares to the one most interested in farming, especially if they leave the area.

Small children cannot inherit until they are fifteen years old. The Department of Aytām in the government holds the property as a safeguard against elder brothers, or other inheritors, taking all. An older brother may take his share, but must leave the rest. If the testator has no family his property reverts to the government as Bayt al-Māl.

Where land is not privately owned or *waqf* it may be considered to be either tribal land, under the control of the shaykh, or government land, though if the land is uncultivated it belongs to the government. In practice a distinction between government and non-government land is not always clear, but at least claimants including shaykhs now have to produce witnesses when trying to claim land as their own; and a shaykh can no longer ask for money if the government builds schools or other public buildings in his tribal area.

The regulation of land ownership is subject nowadays to the laws of the central government.

Some of the terms applied to the people who work the land in Oman seem either to be used loosely or to imply different rights and responsibilities in different regions. Hence, the local terms for tenant or share-cropper and for labourer are sometimes confused. The most common terms used on the Bātinah are 'amil *yawmiy*, 'amil *sanawiyy* and *biydār*; the first two of which, translated literally, mean daily labourer and yearly labourer. Alternatively the term 'amil can be used by itself. This latter term is equated with *biydār* which is described as meaning a labourer employed by the month or for a particular job. Few people who might be described as labourers talk in terms of receiving a monthly salary; they are normally paid at a daily rate in cash, often for a particular job. Such people may be referred to as 'amil *yawmiy* or 'amil, but they do not regard it as inaccurate to be called *biydār*. Other cash-paid labourers are specialists in a particular field and move from garden to garden performing their specialist tasks. The most important of these are the palm experts who can find work for most of the year, and the reader will remember previous reference to their place in tribal society. However, today it is not always easy to be precise with regard to the historicity of a particular job group, as the following examples illustrate. One man earning one and a half *riyāls* a day for trimming twenty palm trees, simply described himself as an 'amil *nakhliyy*, a date palm worker, but a man doing similar work in another garden described himself as a 'ajir, hired hand. In other gardens, where, for example, the owner was living abroad, the person left in charge of the garden was called a *biydār*. He received both a proportion of the produce, and could keep any vegetables he grew between the palms, and a small amount of cash. In another case where the term *biydār* was used a man said he had chosen to go abroad for work and education rather than become

a *biydār* in his father's garden.

In short, a daily labourer might best be distinguished by the term *'āmil yawmiy*, and a share-cropper by the term *'amar*. A *biydār* will have a greater status and permanency than an *'āmil yawmiy*. He may resemble a head labourer, and be paid in cash, or be a share-cropper, with a cash supplement to his income. Finally there are the specialist labourers who form a small cash-paid class of their own. The general principle behind this appears to be that the more permanency a man has, the less likely he is to receive an important part of his income as cash. But apart from the work done by paid labourers, a high proportion of the work in the gardens is done by unpaid family labour, usually by the owner himself or by his sons and brothers often in partnership with him. When women work in the gardens they are always members of the owner's family or of the *biydār* or *'amar's* family. They are usually seen cutting weeds and grass, or alfalfa, to feed the animals. Other unpaid labourers include neighbours, who not infrequently help each other out in rotation. It would therefore seem that there has been considerable erosion of the status and nature of the people fulfilling these functions but the underlying and general application remains pre-Islamic as far as the social history of the society is concerned. In greater detail conditions of work are of interest.

The date gardens are watered by *biydār* who typically receive one bunch of dates from each palm for their services. A *hayyās*, ploughman, ploughs between the trees with an ox-plough and sows summer crops as he ploughs, for a cash payment. Finally, the date palms are trimmed and pollinated either by an expert who has no other connection with the garden or else by a *biydār* or the *hāris* if they have the necessary expertise.

The only group of people who work fairly regular hours on the land are those receiving cash payment. They may start work at about 7.00 – 8.00 a.m., earlier in summer than in winter, and continue until about 1.30 p.m. when the midday prayer usually brings the work day to an end. The labourers are provided with food during the day, in addition to their normal payment. The food, prepared and brought by the women, may take the form of a light meal at 9.00 – 9.30 a.m. consisting of dates and coffee, or perhaps dates, thin bread, unsweetened vermicelli and coffee. Then, later in the morning, at about 11.00 a.m., some farmers provide a larger meal. Examples of this include thin bread, honey, *laban*, dates and coffee; thin bread, a vegetable stew, or *laban*, dates and coffee, or thin bread, curd cheese, dates and coffee. These meals are eaten on the land, but the main meal of the day, eaten in the early afternoon and principally consisting of fish and rice, is eaten at home and not provided by the employer. It has been noted above that some cash-paid labourers are date specialists. They normally work alone or in pairs without supervision, completing their daily quota of trees and then returning home.

Where most of the work is done by the owner or by a *biydār* he has greater flexibility about his work hours. Irrigation, for example, may start and finish at any time of day. Some of the owners have other paid employment in the morning and so may irrigate their own land very early in the morning or do the work later in the afternoon, depending on the rules to be followed by their local *falaj* requirements.

Most of the gardens are privately owned, *milk*; but there are exceptions to this rule, when in the case of *rahn*, or security, a whole garden may be pledged to the owner of the neighbouring garden.

It is against this much more regulated society, subject to the law and living in an organised community, where land holdings and such things as inheritance are considered in an orderly way, that the basic tribal organisation should be considered.

The accounts which come in the following chapter are related to specific communities which vary in size from considerable townships to quite small villages.

To describe a typical village it is convenient to take a specific example.

The village of Ibri consists of a large market area and a number of groups of houses. The largest of the house groups lies on one edge of the date gardens but most of the others are situated between date gardens and are linked by a network of winding narrow tracks which also lead out of the cultivated area into the dry uncultivable land beyond. From the air the gardens appear as a single, almost uniform block of date palms whose overall shape and size is determined by the slope of the land which permits gravity irrigation from the two *aflāj*. On most sides there is no possibility of expanding the area of cultivated land. Expansion is prevented by the *wadi* to the east, by higher land above the *aflāj* exits to the north, and by high land, the village and a ridge of hills to the west. Only to the south, where the land continues to slope away from the *aflāj* is the border of cultivation not clearly demarcated. Here, as will be discussed below, there is some evidence of a fairly recent increase in the area under *aflāj* irrigation, and there are also some new gardens irrigated from wells.

On the ground it is seen that the date gardens are divided into numerous smaller blocks by the winding tracks already mentioned. The smaller blocks are further subdivided into individual gardens whose shape, determined by the orientation of the tracks, is often very irregular. Typically one looks down into the gardens because they are sunk beneath the level of the tracks.

The gardens vary greatly in size but very few are larger than one hectare. The gardens are almost always divided from the tracks by low mudbrick walls which may have one or two layers of stone blocks at their base. Holes pierce the foot of the walls not only where a *falaj* enters and leaves the garden but also to allow rainwater to drain from the tracks into the gardens. The boundaries between gardens may also be formed by mudbrick walls though these are frequently not so well maintained. In other cases a garden boundary may be formed by a broken line of stones, a *falaj*, the *wa'b* of a *jilbah* or even a wire fence.

Many gardens contain a substantial mudbrick house built against one of the boundary walls. In most cases these remain unoccupied throughout the winter months. They are summer houses occupied only during the hot summer months when the date harvest is taking place. The owners may be people who have a second house in Ibri, or they may be *bedu* or they may even come from a second village. A few of the garden houses are, however, occupied during the winter by people who have no alternative home.

At least one branch of a *falaj* enters every garden where it divides so that water can be taken to each part of the garden in turn. The *aflāj*, including their sides, are 1 - 2 metres wide and lined either by earth or by locally made cement. The cement is normally restricted to the primary canals and to the points where the canals branch. The water is diverted by means of a length of

split date palm stretched between niches either side of the canal and made suprisingly watertight with cloth wadding. Where the canal branching points are of earth the palm lengths press against stones wedged into the canal sides.

In contrast with the Bātinah where almost all the date palms grow in individual *jayl*, the date palms of Ibri are set in large *jilbah* (of 200-500 square metres) which are flood-irrigated on an eight-day rotation. This means that the whole of each garden is flooded, leaving no dry land between the palms. In winter, therefore, the land is carpeted with weeds while in summer fodder crops may be planted for the livestock. The weeds, it is said, are not eaten by the animals which are very rarely seen in the gardens. A second effect of periodically flooding the gardens is to weaken the bond between the tree and the soil. In consequence high winds blow down the occasional tree and make others lean precariously. The latter are either propped up on a 'crutch' made of split palm trunks or their bases are surrounded with a bank of earth and stones. Such supports are more in common in Ibri than on the Bātinah.

The palms are planted close enough to afford fairly uniform shade—an important feature of the gardens in summer—but they are rarely planted in rows, the irregular shape of the gardens making this difficult in any case. The trees are a mixture of different heights and ages with a fairly high proportion of *sarmah* or very young trees. In some gardens the *sarmah* are neatly interplanted between the mature palms, in order to replace the mature trees as they age and die, but in other gardens there is no apparent order to the planting pattern. Sometimes palm stumps may be seen, the tree having been cut and split for use in building construction.

The palms generally seem much healthier and better maintained than on the Bātinah. Conversation with farmers readily turns to the number and types of palm varieties they have, the range of varieties being an important local criterion distinguishing 'good' from 'bad' gardens. An incomplete list of date palms, but including all the most frequently mentioned varieties and some of their distinctive characteristics, is given below.

Other tree crops also occur in the date gardens, but never in discrete areas but scattered between the palms. Firstly, limes are found in nearly all the gardens. Their leaves are a more uniform dark green than those in the Bātinah and they appear to be almost free of citrus blackfly or other pest. However, in March, at a time when the limes on the coast are producing a new crop of fruit, very few of the limes in Ibri are either fruiting or flowering. In addition to the limes, there are a small number of a range of other citrus trees whose local names include: *Lumiyharr/safarajal*, *shakhakh*, *nārinj*, *nad'an*, *burtuqāl*. The first is a sweet lime, though *safarajal* is classical Arabic for quince and the last a true orange. Apart from citrus trees, bananas are frequently found, though usually in small numbers, and guavas, many of them young, are more common than mangoes. Finally, a garden may have one or two pawpaw, figs, mulberries, *hambuw*, pomegranate, grapes and *bitham* trees, or roses, *yas*, *hinna*, and other shrubs, but many gardens contain none of these trees or shrubs. A few gardens at the edge of the date area retain a piece of

open land for alfalfa, but apart from this other field crops and vegetables are represented only by the occasional tomato and sweet potato plant in winter; tomatoes, however, do not mature in the shade of the date palms where *luwbiyah*, beans, sorghum and *musaybiluw*, a fodder crop, are grown in the *jilbah* beneath the palms in summer.

While most of the gardens are in full private ownership a small number are *waqf* whose produce is used to support mosques or other religious foundations or *aflāj*. In a garden near the *suwq* just three of the date palms were *waqf*.

At one extreme of private ownership one man may own several gardens but at the other, one garden may be divided between several owners, normally close blood relatives. A few owners also manage their gardens but most appoint a *hāris* who acts as guardian and sees that the various operations of trimming and pollinating the palms and ploughing the *jilbah* are performed. For this work he is given the fruit of a certain number of the palms, where possible a range of varieties so that he has fruit throughout the season, and perhaps a lime or two as well. To obtain cash he may also work as an *'āmil* whenever he can find employment.

*Biydār* water the gardens for which they receive one bunch of dates from each tree. Trimming and pollinating is often done by specialists who work for cash. A ploughman similarly is hired together with his ox and traditional plough. Not all the gardens are ploughed and some are ploughed only once a year. But a standard is to plough before and after the summer. The pre-summer ploughing, *hays al qayth*, is done in March. In one garden fifty-one *jilbah* were ploughed in one direction which broke up the thickish cover of weeds but neither cut up the weeds nor turned them in nor completely uprooted them. Then sorghum seed, bought in the *suwq*, was broadcast over the land and the *jilbah* then ploughed a second time in the opposite direction. The ploughman said that in the summer when the owners come to live in the gardens they bring their livestock to graze on the sorghum or other fodder crops. In consequence their hooves trample the soil which must then be ploughed a second time before winter, *hays al shūtā'*, to allow water and air to penetrate the soil.

As has been mentioned, one of the main pre-occupations of the townsman in his garden is the cultivation of dates. For many hundreds of years these have provided the main export and before, the discovery of oil, almost the only export from Oman. There is usually a good market in India because the Omani dates ripen before those from Iraq. There are many different kinds and the following list is by no means complete. The names of the various types of dates usually apply to the tree as well as the fruit.

<i>khisāb</i>	a large round date, late in the season.
<i>fard</i>	a long date.
<i>bātinīy</i>	a low quality date used mainly as fodder for animals. It comes from a palm called <i>umm sala</i> .
<i>khanayziy</i>	a small round sort of date. Red in colour and of good quality.
<i>maqluwk</i>	term used to denote dates that have been stoned and pressed.
<i>zabād</i>	soft and pale.
<i>qash</i> , pl. <i>qushuwsh</i>	a term for fresh dates.

*sih* a bedu word for pressed and dried dates.

*hilāliy, hilāliy Hāsa* a red date from Saudi Arabia.

*handal* a thick long and yellow date.

*naghal* long yellow hard dates that are used by children to make necklaces and fed to animals. The first dates of the season.

*khilās or halās* the very best dates. Said to be the first date to be cultivated.

*qawsarah* dates imported from Iraq.

*kharā'if* a mixture of all kinds.

*khaniyriy* a date from Qariyāt.

*hawāniy or hawwam* a date from Qariyāt.

*salāniy* a date from Qariyāt.

*manuwamah* a date from Bātinah.

*'ilk* an Ibri date maturing after the Naghal.

*quswayah* an Ibri date maturing after the Naghal.

*qadmiy* a date from the Bātinah.

*mabsaliy* a date from the Bātinah and Dhāhirah.

*maznāj* a date from the Bātinah.

*makhaldiyy* a date from the Bātinah.

*jibriy* a pale date of good quality.

The parameters of *hadr* life having been set by law and formal land ownership, it is apposite to consider other social activities taking place in the community. As a boy grows up to manhood there is an important operation he has to undergo to reach adulthood. This is circumcision and is carried out in both desert and town. The operation is performed when the boys are about eight or ten years old. However, there is no hard and fast rule as to the age and it is not uncommon for a father to wait until several of his sons are ready; then they will all be done at once. Apart from convenience this means that only one celebration has to be held, a factor which appeals to the meaner amongst the population. In the operation in Oman only the foreskin is removed.

In the Muslim world death is quickly followed by burial, a rite that must be carried out before sunset on the same day as death takes place. If a man has died it is usual for men to perform the rites in preparation for burial, if a woman, then women see to the corpse. However, a widow is permitted to prepare her husband. In this account an ideal case is described where there are no unusual factors.

The corpse is first taken to water and washed as for prayers and the stomach emptied. It is then arrayed in its usual clothes except that the headcloth is not folded and the feet remain bare. The body is then placed on a white sheet and spice and perfumes are mixed together. Cotton-wool is then soaked in this mixture and used to block lightly all the body orifices. Pieces are also placed between all the fingers and toes and over the heart. The preparation is then completed by sprinkling the whole body with perfume and wrapping it in the sheet starting with the left side first. Two strips of cloth are then cut and used to secure the sheet to the corpse, making sure that the knots are tied on the left side. The body is now

placed on a straw mat which is wrapped around it in the same way as the sheet, and then the bundle is lightly tied into a light bier made of wood. The body is now carried to a convenient clean place and the last prayers are said by anyone with a reputation for piety who may be chosen by the relatives of the deceased. At this ceremony, attended by men only, the body faces Mecca with the people present. When the prayers are finished the body is carried to the cemetery by four men, though these are constantly changing to enable all those who wish to help to have an opportunity of doing so. The grave itself is prepared before the arrival of the burial party and in Oman lies on a north-south axis. The body is taken from the bier and out of its mat covering, the two strips are loosened and the closest relatives place it in the grave with the head at the northern end and on its right side so that it faces Mecca. It is the universal practice for the grave to have been excavated with a niche in the bottom so that, when the body has been placed within it is first necessary to wall in the niche with mud and stones. The rest of the grave is finally filled in and the top shaped. It is usual amongst the Ibādīs and most Sunni Muslims for there to be no engraved head-stone. Instead two stones are placed on top of the grave, along the axis of the grave if the dead person was a man and horizontal to it if it was a woman.

This, as has been mentioned, is an ideal case where it has been possible to carry out the full ritual, but there is no wrong done if some items are impossible to fulfill in circumstances like sudden death.

After the funeral there is a marked reluctance to use the dead man's name. Indeed anyone who has died is considered to have gone completely and this applies to his name as well. Whilst collecting genealogical material it was frequent to meet reluctance to mention the name of forbears who had died. Sometimes a child born posthumously will be given the same name as his father. In the case where one sees or hears a name like 'Ali b. 'Ali this is often what has taken place.

The bedu follow the same burial practices except that they frequently bury food with the deceased.

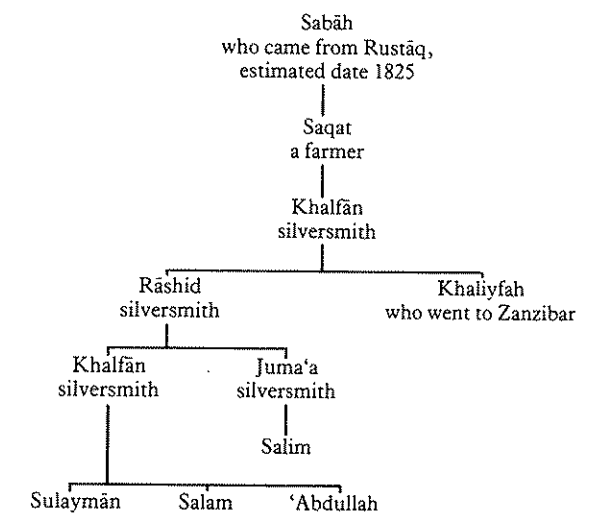
In the event of sudden death the minimum possible is carried out, and only prayers are said over the body before it is buried. If burial itself is impossible it is acceptable to place the body on the ground in the correct position and simply cover it with stones. In this case the body is considered to have been washed in its own blood. The same pattern is followed for a woman's funeral but the actual burial is performed by men, and if no-one of sufficient piety is present, the prayers can be said at a later date, in which case a dummy corpse made of cloth or wood is used.

The townsmen provide the craftsmen responsible for the very wide range of metalwork in copper, brass and silver, a craft which is of very high quality and for which Oman has become famous. The characteristic coffee-pot of Oman is made by one family in Nizwa today, and they confine themselves to silver ones for the European market at the present time. The family is now attached to the Bani Hinā but they were originally a part of the Bani Kharuws of Rustāq. They are said to be *bayāsarah*.

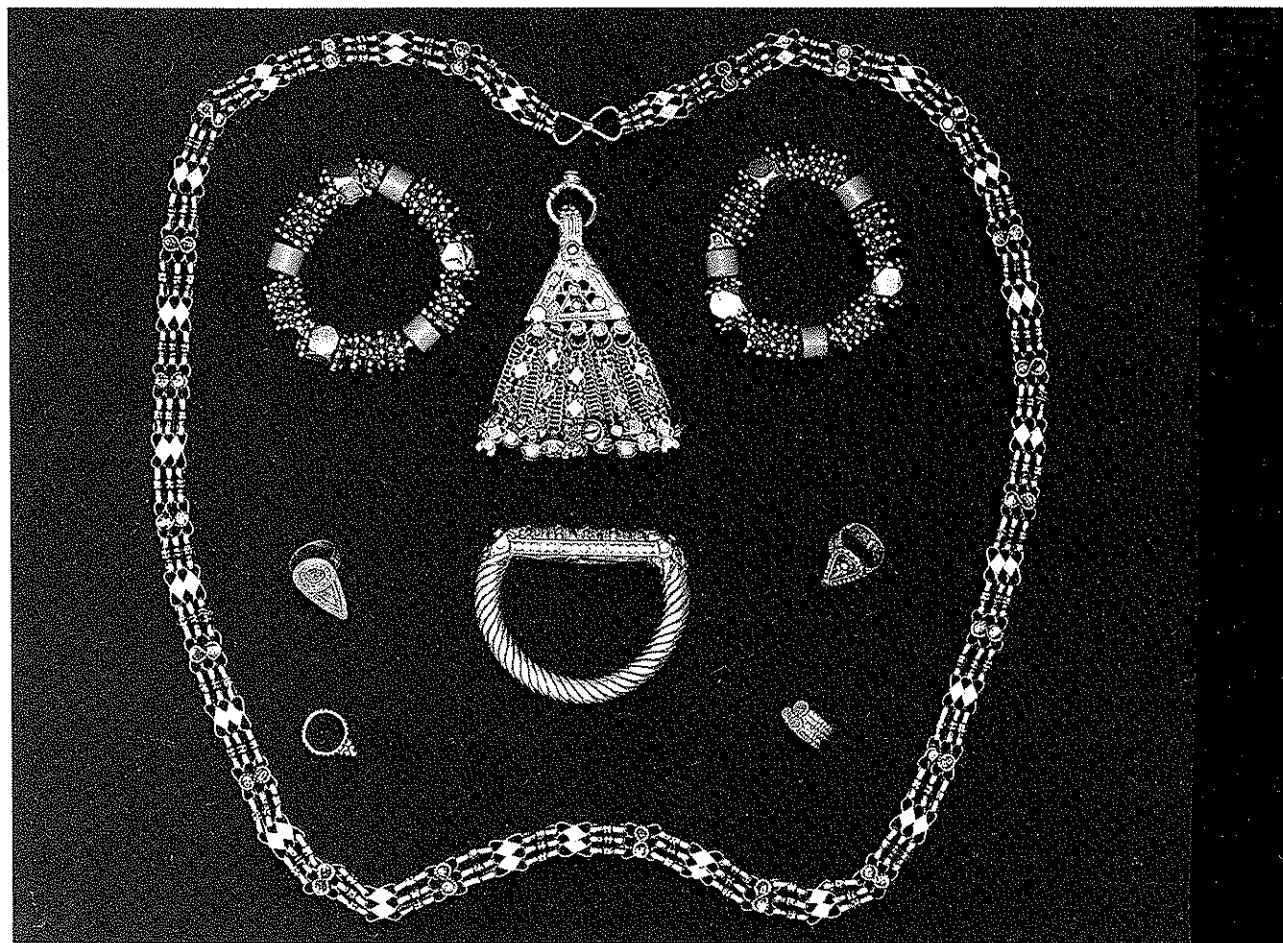


Arab Chest. This chest is from Bombay and the pine-apple carved pattern is much favoured in the region of the Hadramawt and Dhufar. This one was acquired in Salālah. The objects on the top of the chest are made of stone and come from Suwr. They are fireplaces for use with charcoal on board ships and the one on the right reflects in its shape the strong maritime traditions of that port.

*Awlād Sabāhiy silversmiths of Nizwa*



Other families of silversmiths in Ibri are listed in the tribal chapter under that town.



A collection of jewellery from Dhufar. It can be seen at once how this is distinct from similar objects from the northern part of the Sultanate. The chain (*sanaqad*), with its lozenge shaped plates connected by links, is very similar in design to work from the Yemen and Hadramawt. The 'D' shaped bracelet, (*sukaylat*), with its twisted rope design also shows strong affinities with the Hadramawt. Above this there is a *silsalah* or scarf weight showing once more the South Arabian lozenge motif. On either side of this is a pair of *manayniyn*, made of coral beads separated by thin flat beads of silver, each of which has a row of silver protrusions at the periphery. In addition to this there are three large block-like beads of silver in each bracelet. The finger rings demonstrate a delicacy in keeping with the rest of the group.

The Arab sense of humour is often taken up with teasing the object of a joke and some tribes have become the butt of all the others. The most famous one in Oman is the Mujarafiyy of the Bani Kalbān. They are said to be very stupid and there are endless stories to illustrate this. One describes how the Mujarafiyy built a fort in the middle of a wadi and divided themselves into two teams to test the strength of the fort. One team would defend and the other attack. At last when over half of the tribe had been killed a halt was called to attend to the wounded. At this moment it rained and the ensuing flood washed both fort and combatants into the desert. Again it is told that the

Mujarafiyy shaykh was ill and some of his followers decided to visit him. This they did, but as they left in the late evening they noticed the moon was following them. They thought that it must be the property of the shaykh and that he would be very angry if he found out that they had taken it with them. Because of this they returned to the shaykh and told him about it. He advised them to stay.

It is no surprise that tribes have insulting nicknames which when used are supposed to goad them to fury to the amusement of the others. Those collected are as follows:

tribe	nickname	
Manādhirah of the Bani Ruwāhah	<i>mudhbah</i>	fly-whisk
Al Bu Sa'iyd	<i>qutn</i>	cotton
Baluwsh	<i>jarabiy</i>	cotton-seed
Bani Riyām	<i>khamirah</i>	wine
Wahiybiy	<i>hurmakīyk</i>	womanish
Duruw'	<i>baruwdah</i>	coldness
Janabah	<i>'atanah</i>	smellyness
Kharuwsiy	<i>manjarah</i>	palm-leaf stem
Shu'ayliy	<i>qurs</i>	pancake
Shukayl	<i>shaklah</i>	young <i>sidr</i> tree

(because nine Shukaylis rode out with one Hinā'iy. One after the other the nine caught an eye in an overhanging branch, only the Hinā'iy having the sense to avoid it.)



Omani copper-ware. The group rests on a *sāhat*, the red and black rug so common in the villages of Oman. The acanthus pattern on the tray and the shape of the water-jug demonstrates a continued Persian influence. The two bowls, called *Shirāziyah*, also purport to have been made at Nizwa possibly the beginning of this century. The whole group emphasises the very high level of skill in metalwork that characterises the region.

Maharuwqiyy	<i>halw</i>	a sweetmeat
Hadramiy	<i>madr</i>	clay
Hawāshim of Adam	<i>sanuwrah</i>	cat
Hawāshim of Firq	<i>thawj</i>	donkey pannier
Habsiy	<i>sikhabah</i>	small grass
'Awfiy	<i>haban</i>	oleander
Hinā'iy	<i>sawqam</i>	<i>sawqam</i> tree
Kalbāniy	<i>mahsiyn</i>	camel basket

Apart from the settled *hadr* of the mountain towns and villages there are bedu living amongst them in the wadis where they devote themselves as one would expect to grazing their flocks and the carriage trade. Here they are called *shawāwīy* and not bedu. Mention has been made of the *khadām* and the *bayāsarah* elements of the population and it is apposite to mention here the Zutuwt. There are various theories as to their origin, some having it that they are Indian, certainly they have Zutuwtiyy groups in the sub-continent; others that they are like the *bayāsarah* and represent a pre-Arab part of the population. They are regarded as lower class and there is scope for much further investigation (refer to the Salluwbi of the Hadramiyyiyn of 'Izz). They occupy the position of tinkers in Oman, and there is a story that they are Arabs in origin and derive as the following anecdote

tells. The tribes were fighting over a well and eventually one tribe was reduced so that only an uncle, his daughter and his nephew were left. The uncle promised his nephew that he would be able to marry his daughter as soon as the fighting was over. Satisfied the youth returned to battle but the uncle's horse went lame. Wishing to help, the nephew cured the animal's injured hoof and they returned to the fray, and won. After this victory the nephew laid claim to the hand of his uncle's daughter. However, the uncle replied that as the boy had demeaned himself and done the work of a servant in curing the horse's that he could not agree now to the marriage, and he called the boy a *zuttiy* and from this time this word was used to describe a dishonoured man. Naturally angry at this the boy gathered a band of friends together and after a fight with his uncle he was able to

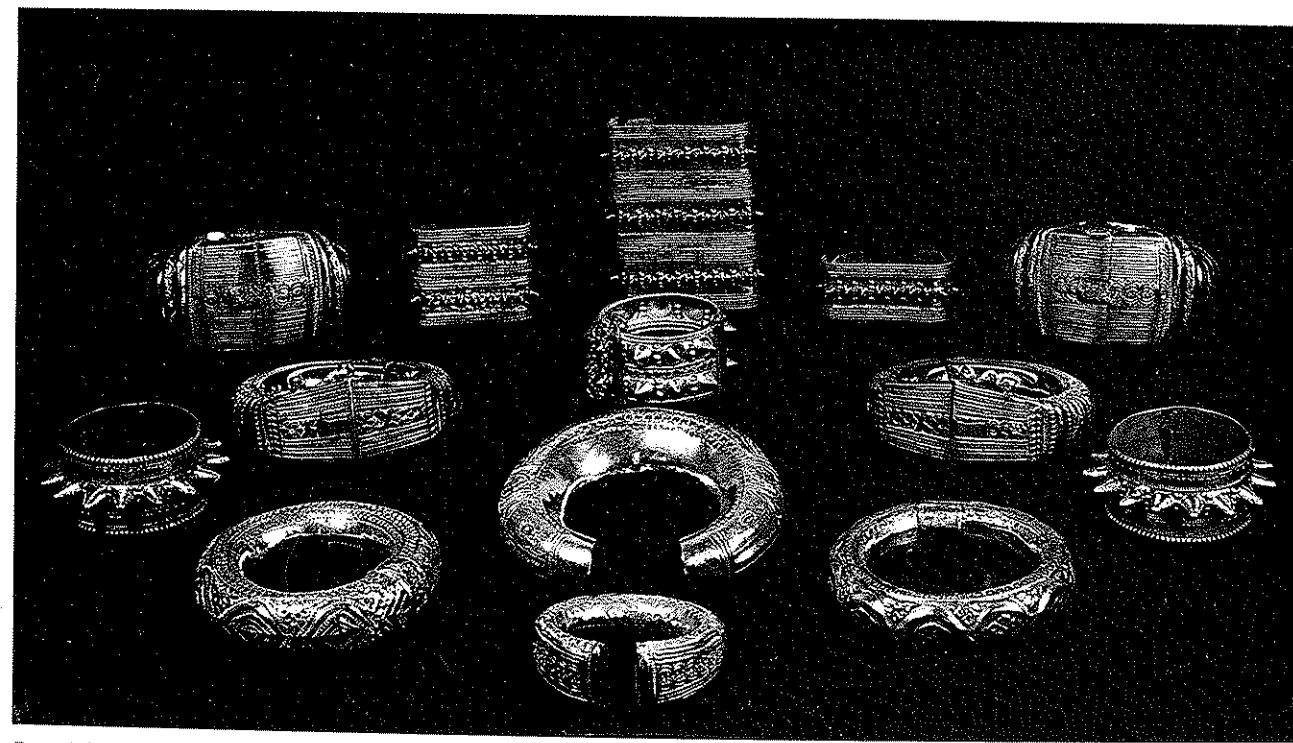


Arab chest. A very fine example from Zanzibar which demonstrates the trading and political interest that existed between the Gulf coasts of Arabia and East Africa. The objects on top of it are: a small copper plate decorated with the Nizwa tree which is marked on the reverse, 'Property of Firhân b. Sanjuwr, servant of the Bani Dirâs.' To the left of this there is a palm-wood camel saddle tree made in Iabri, in front of this there is a spoon from Muttrah and to the left of the spoon a copper floating-wick lamp. The pottery, from Hazm, consists of two goblets and two coffee cups which throughout Arabia invariably come as imports from India or China. Next to the pottery is a larger lamp of brass and at the right hand end of the chest there is another view of the Wahiybah milking bowl and a fine brass circular box.

carry the girl off and so founded the tribe of the Zutuwt. It is a charming story and as a tradition doubtless satisfies the social aspirations of the Zutuwt; but one can speculate that it represents a slightly twisted account of a subject race's alliance with the conqueror in view of their present lowly position in the social scale.

The medical traditions of the country are based on the idea of instant cures and this is one of the difficulties faced by modern medicine, which takes time to produce a cure. The favourite remedy is branding in one form or another. This is used to cure mental illness, fevers and sundry rheumatic pains. Broken bones are traditionally set by manipulation and, on limbs, by a cirlet of water melon. The setting of bones is a specialist art and there are people who have a considerable reputation in the field. The method was explained to the author with the engaging comment that it frequently corrected the mess made by the Western doctor and his plaster.

Sprains are healed with a mixture of herbs and flour and butter. The tails of lizards and snakes are wiped over diseased eyes and the spines of hedgehogs are burnt under the nose of those possessed of a devil. The body of a toad pressed to the site of a splinter will withdraw it. Colds are alleviated by drinking the egg of a white hen mixed with butter in a coffee cup. The bedu of the south coast occasionally pick up lumps of spermacetti on the beach, called 'ambar, this is kept tied in the corner of the headcloth and sniffing it prevents the onset of a cold. Many plants are used for medicinal and veterinary purposes. Knowledge of these is very widespread and learning about them a normal part of domestic education both amongst the *hadr* and the bedu. It has been possible to collect a small amount of information on this topic, and where a proper identification has been possible the author is deeply in the debt of Miss Dorothy Hillcoat of the British Museum of Natural History.



Omani silver. This group of bracelets and anklets illustrates the main types of this article. In the top row between the anklets previously illustrated are three bracelets from the Dhâhirah region. They are of a kind favoured by the bedu and as can be seen the larger ones are built up from the basic single unit at the left of the series. In fact three is the maximum number to be built up in this way. These bracelets illustrate the common design motif of lines of bosses with smaller protrusions between them. This motif is followed on the Suwri bracelet below and by the two bracelets to the left and right on the picture which come from the Sharqiyah region. Below and inside these are two bracelets from Rustâq which are very distinct. These are interesting as exactly similar bracelets are still made in Iran and the design extends to Baghdad as well. Immediately below the Suwri bracelet is a large anklet of unusual design which includes an 'evil-eye' motif. It is possible that the form of this example originates in Zanzibar.

name used by the Duruw'	botanical name	use
'Arad	<i>Salsola cyclophylla</i> (salt-bush)	Camel fodder when nothing else is available. Fever medicine. Fodder
Dhay'iy	(A species of grass)	Fodder
Samarah	<i>Acacia tartilis</i> (thorn bush)	Fodder
Ghaf	<i>Prosopis spicigera</i>	Fodder and said to have been eaten before rice was used by the bedu. a poison
Asbik	<i>Peropploea aphylla</i>	Encourages goats to give milk.
Salabannah	<i>Indigofera intricata</i>	Encourages goats to give milk.
Khashafah	<i>Fagonia (Indica?)</i>	Camel fodder.
Huwiy	<i>Ochradenus aucheri</i>	Makes a poultice to heal broken bones, poisonous to stock.
Qafash	(small thistle)	Dried and pounded makes a dressing for cuts and grazes.
Tajiy'ah	(tiny sessile plant)	Used as for <i>Tajiy'ah</i>
Karfashah	(small woody broomlike plant)	Camel fodder.
Naza'	(a small woody bush)	Fodder plant.
Kharaman	(lavender-like bush)	Eaten by goats and used to produce the red dye used in the manufacture of the Omani 'camel' rug.
Sahtadiy		

## HADR TRIBES AND ORGANISATION

## Wilayat Izki

Izki is the name given to a collection of villages at the western end of the Sumayl gap. One can conveniently divide it into what can be described as Izki proper and a balance of villages which go to complete the territory of the *wilayah* or governorate as a whole. Izki proper is dominated by the Bani Riyām, though even a cursory examination shows how small they are in relation to the complex group of descent-groups that have grown up and attached themselves to this community, which has, as a result, tentacles stretching throughout Oman. In this respect Izki is very typical of the tribal position within Oman, and the concomitant system of delicate political balance which this system enshrines, contains the seeds of its own resurrection. Historically this has produced a cyclic pattern. Having said this, one must emphasise that the system is nevertheless not a static one even though it does not immediately show the movement in the bedu tribal world.

It is locally related that Izki was occupied by the Arabs before Nizwa was settled—an interesting view when one remembers the somewhat cataclysmic story of Malik b. Fahm's conquest of Nizwa in a battle with the Persians only a few years after the arrival of his tribe of 'Azd from their journey through Hadramuwt from Wadi Jawf in the Yemen. The Izki tale bears a stronger resemblance to what one feels really happened, that is that there was no one invasion of Oman and that the Arab tribes, descent-groups, arrived gradually and as an immigrant part of the population slowly gained control of the country. A process that can be seen today in the recent movement of the Mahra towards the eastern part of Dhufar and the Jiddat al Harasiys, and the migration of the 'Afar into Harsuwsiy and Duruw'iy territory.

Before Islam Izki was called Jarnān after the name of an idol which local tradition says is still hidden in a cave underneath the village of Nizār.

The villages which make up Izki proper are listed separately. The remainder are as follows: Muttiy or Imtiy' Qaruwt al 'Alayah and Qaruwt al Sāfil.

Whilst the Bani Riyām are at the head of a complex system of descent-group relationships there are nevertheless some tribes living in the *wilayah* which follow the *wilayah* without following the Bani Riyām.

These are as follows:

The Darāmikah, of Yaman, who are Hināwiy (qv)  
The Al Nahwiy, who are Hināwiy from Mu'āwilah b. Shams

The Sarāhinah of the Āl Bu 'Ali, who are said to be indeterminate in allegiance

The Āl Qasabiy, who are Hināwiy but descend from Bani Ghāfir

The Bani Hāshim of Qāruwt who are Hināwiy

The Bani Harbiy of Qāruwt who are Hināwiy

These last two are Bani Abs in origin.

## Bani Riyām in Izki

Ghāfariy Ibādiys settled around the Jabal Akhdār where the main towns are Izki, Birkat al-Mawz, Tanuwf and Nizwa. Their *azwah* is 'Ya Awlād Hamyar'. They seem to have come to prominence after the decline of the 'Uzuwr but rebelled against the Sultan Faysal b. Turkiy at the beginning of the century, and again against Sultan Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr. After this last the Nabāhinah shaykhs were removed from power and the Bani Riyām severely punished, having their forts and some date-gardens destroyed. The Bani Riyām may represent a Mahriy remnant in this area of Oman.

The multiplicity of descent groups which have either joined the Bani Riyām or become their followers reflects the strong nature of the leadership they received from the Āl Nabāhinah shaykhs. This in its turn provided them with the power base which enabled them to wield such an influence on the Ghāfariy side of Omani politics. An understanding of how this large community has grown up can be gained from a consideration of the simpler community found in a settlement like Adam (qv).

There is only one actual section of the Bani Riyām, this is: *Awlād Rāshid*\* (sing. Rāshidiy) under Shaykh Muhanna Nāsir in Izki and Shaykh Salam 'Amar on the Jabal.

It is possible however that the *Awlad Maniyr*, the *Āl Dawāhinah* (sing. Dayhāniy), the *Mughtasiy* of Yaman and the *Bani Tawbah* are also of Riyāmiy descent. The

*Dawāhinah* are found today in Qaruwt and at Hawb near Sumayl.

The following descent-groups, however, now consider themselves part of the *Awlād Rāshid*. They have come into a closer relationship with them than that of mere followers.

*Awlād Thāniy* originally Āl Salāhamah of BaniHinā.  
*Āl Masariyr* originally thought to be Sulaymāniyiyn  
*Āl Bahlāniy*\* originally from the Wadi Bani Ruwahah and said to be Bani 'Abs and so Ruwāhiy

*Sarāhinah*\* (sing. *Sarahiyniy*) said to be part of the Ambu 'Ali and to descend from Ta'iy b. Ghawth.

*Al Fahuwd*\* (sing. *Fahdiy* or *Fahadiy*) found on the Jabal and at Birkat al Mawz, they may contain elements of proper Riyāmiy descent.

*Al Halāhilah*\* (sing. *Halhaliy*) found in the Wadi Hājir.

*Al Suquwr*\* (sing. *Saqriy*) living at Birkat al Mawz. Contain elements of Riyāmiy descent.

*Nabāhanah* (sing. *Nabhāniy*) Provided shaykhs of the Bani Riyām until 1959. See family tree below.

Whereas these descent-groups are followers of the Bani Riyām *Awlād Rāshid* within the *wilayah* of Izki and look to them when residing outside.

*Bani Hadarmiy*\* Mostly found at Nakhl today. Possibly *khadām* in origin, or 'Ād, they have the following sections: 'Abaydaniy, *Zakwāniy* and *Muharramiy*. These sections coming from the Hadarmiy may have led to the idea of an origin for these people from Hadramawt.

*Āl Kunuwud* (sing. *Kindiy*) Living in Nizwa al 'Alayah they followed the Riyām until the war in 1959. They are now separate.

*Bani Bahriy* Live mainly in the Wadi Bani Kharuws from which descent they may come. Their relationship with the Bani Riyām is tenuous today as they fell out with Sulaymān b. Himyar.

*Bani Saliymah*\* (sing. *Sulaymiy*) Descend from Saliymah b. Malik b. Fahm. Found in Muttiy and Mutrah. They followed the Nabāhinah directly when they were in power.

*Bani Kharuws* Living today in Nizwa al 'Alayah. Not really followers but have a tradition of friendliness towards the Riyām.

*Āl Ghābarah*\* Said to descend from the Bani Hilāl and are thus related to the Āl Bu Falah and Abu Dhabi, the 'Āwāmir, Bayt Kathiyr, Harāsiys, Bani Shukayl and Rawashiyyd.

*Āl Musalihah* (sing. *Musulhiy*) a Nizāriy tribe living in Nizwa and Bahla.

*Āl Suwālim* (sing. *Salmiy*) a Nizāriy tribe living in the Sharwiyah at Mintrub and Bidiyah and at Nizwa. Shaykh Muhammad 'Abdullah Humayd, the historian, is of this tribe.

*Al Wuruwd* (sing. *Wardiy*) of Yahmadiy descent living in Muttiy, Bahla, Samad, Nakhl and Manah.

*Āl Fuzārah* (sing. *Fuzariy*) They were once a large and powerful tribe, and live in Yaman Izki. They are variable in their allegiances and are mostly bedu. Some of them are now with the Janabah (qv) and some with the Wahiybah. They are Nizāriy and their Al Badr section is found on the Bātinah coast. It is possible that the Fuzārah descent group in the Sudan is of the same stock.

*Āl Ru'ājih* (sing. *Ru'ājihiy*) these people originate from the Sulaymāniyiyn and live in Nizwa, Nakhl and Bahla.

*Āl Sabābirah* (Sing. *Sabbariy*) living in Nizwa.  
*Āl Harth* (sing. *Harthiy*) a few live in Izki and so fall into this grouping. qv.

*Mahariyq*\* (Sing. *Maharuwqiyy*) a few live in Izki, qv.

There are other tribes which have neither been absorbed by the Bani Riyām *Awlād Rāshid* nor consider themselves followers of this section. They consider themselves to be sections of the Bani Riyām and have their own followers and allies.

*Awlād Riqaysh*\* Of Kindah stock they originally settled with the Bani Ruwāhah in the wadi of that name. They are a highly respected family and act in concert with the Bani Tawbah, but have no specific followers.

*Bani Tawbah*\* They have no single shaykh but tend to follow various families on a village to village basis. Their *azwah* is 'Ya Awlād Tawbah bin Hamyar'.

They have sections:

*Umuwr*\* Shawāwiy or mountain bedu who are Nizāriy from 'Abd al Qays.

*Daghashah* (sing. *Daghayshiy*) and followers:

*Awlād bil Lazak* (sing. *Lazkiy*) claim to be Zakwāniy of Hadarmiy. They live at Al Qusha'ah Jabal Akhdar and are now *ahrār*, that is free.

*Āl 'Amuwr* (sing. 'Amriy) Nizāriy, living in Qāruwt, Nizār Izki and on the Jabal.

*Āl 'Awf* live in Qāruwt al-Sifalah, Izki, Rustāq and Nakhl.

*Āl Ramah* (sing. *Ramhiy*) Living in Rustāq, Izki and Sanau.

*Bani Husayn* Are partly independent. A *fakdh* of the Bani Ruwāhah.

*Āl 'Uzuwr*\* (sing. 'Azriy) A Nizāriy tribe descending from Samā b. Lu'ay b. Ghālib, Quraysh. They were important in the 1st and 2nd centuries A.H. in the Izki area and their decline seems to date from the time of the massacre which occurred after the defeat of Muwsā b. Muwsā by the Imam Azzān b. Tamiym in the 3rd century A.H. They are the only tribe in Oman entitled to call themselves Āl Samiy.

They have followers:

*Āl Nā'abiy* Living in Nizār Izki, they descend from Qudā'ah and also live in Sumayl.

*Āl 'Adāwinah* (sing. 'Adawiy) One family only lives in Izki, the rest are in Rustāq.

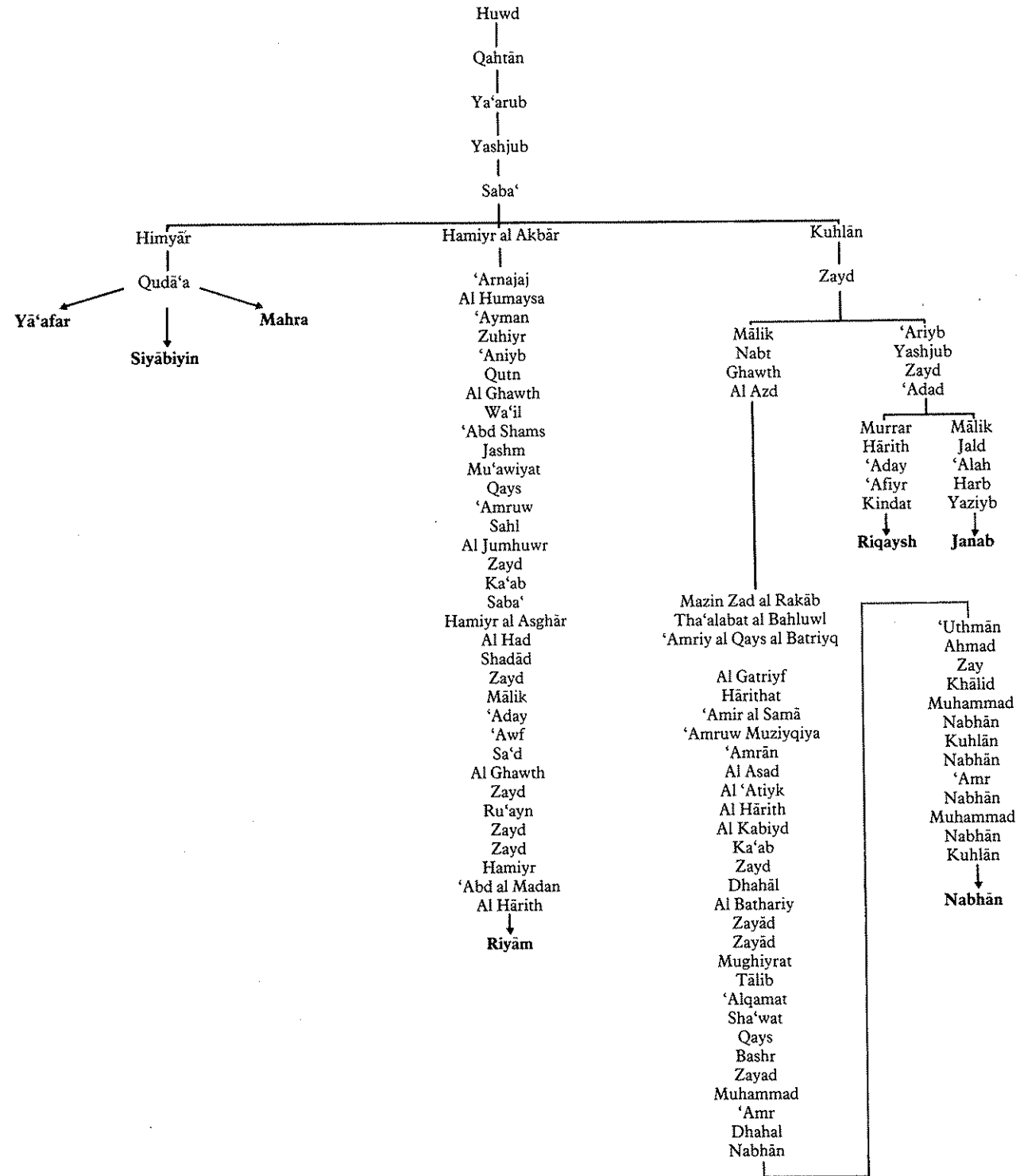
\*Tribes which followed the Nabāhinah shaykhs.

*Āl Barūmiyyīn* There is a story that they descend from an Algerian who settled in Izki.  
*Awlād 'Awaymir\*\** (sing. *'Amriy*) Mostly living on the Jabal Akhdar, they refuse to intermarry with other sections of the Bani Riyām. See note below.  
*Awlād Juwāmiyd\*\** (sing. *Jamūwdiy*) Mostly *shawāwiy* or mountain bedu, they are said to produce the best housewives. Found mainly around Tanuwf, Bahla and Nizwa.

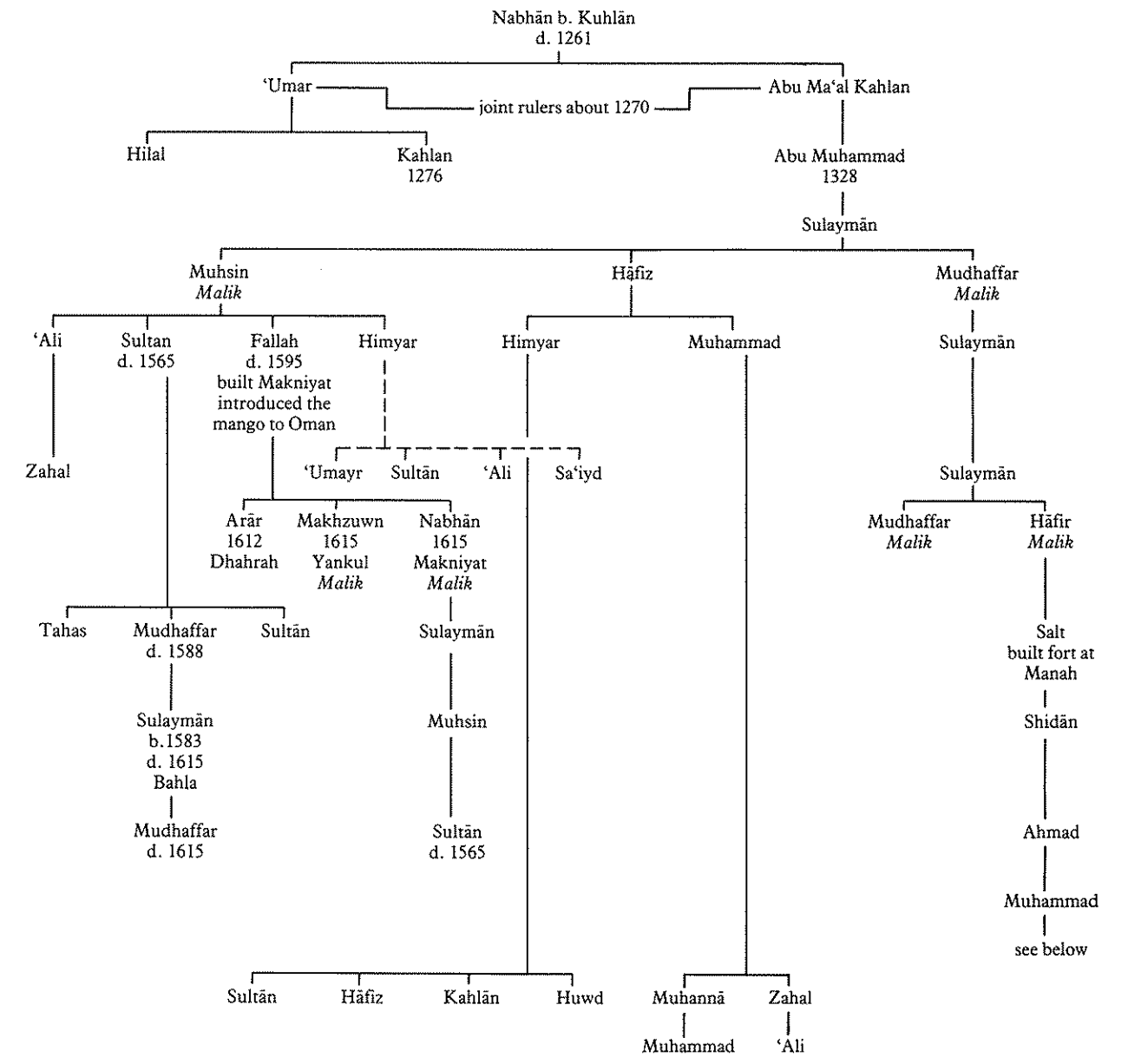
*Āl Sharayqiyyīn\** (sing. *Sharayqiyy*) Have a section: *Awlād Ghabaysh*

\*\* There is a tradition that the Awlād 'Awaymir were originally part of the Hawātiym of Saudi Arabia. Their tribal brothers are the Khuwaytiyr who settled with the 'Abriyyīn. With the Riyām the 'Awaymir settled on top of the Jabal Akhdar at Hayl al-Musiyybah where they live in caves. Their leader is Shaykh Nāsir b. 'Abdullah.

*The Classical Descent of the Bani Riyām, the Riqaysh and the Nabāhinah*

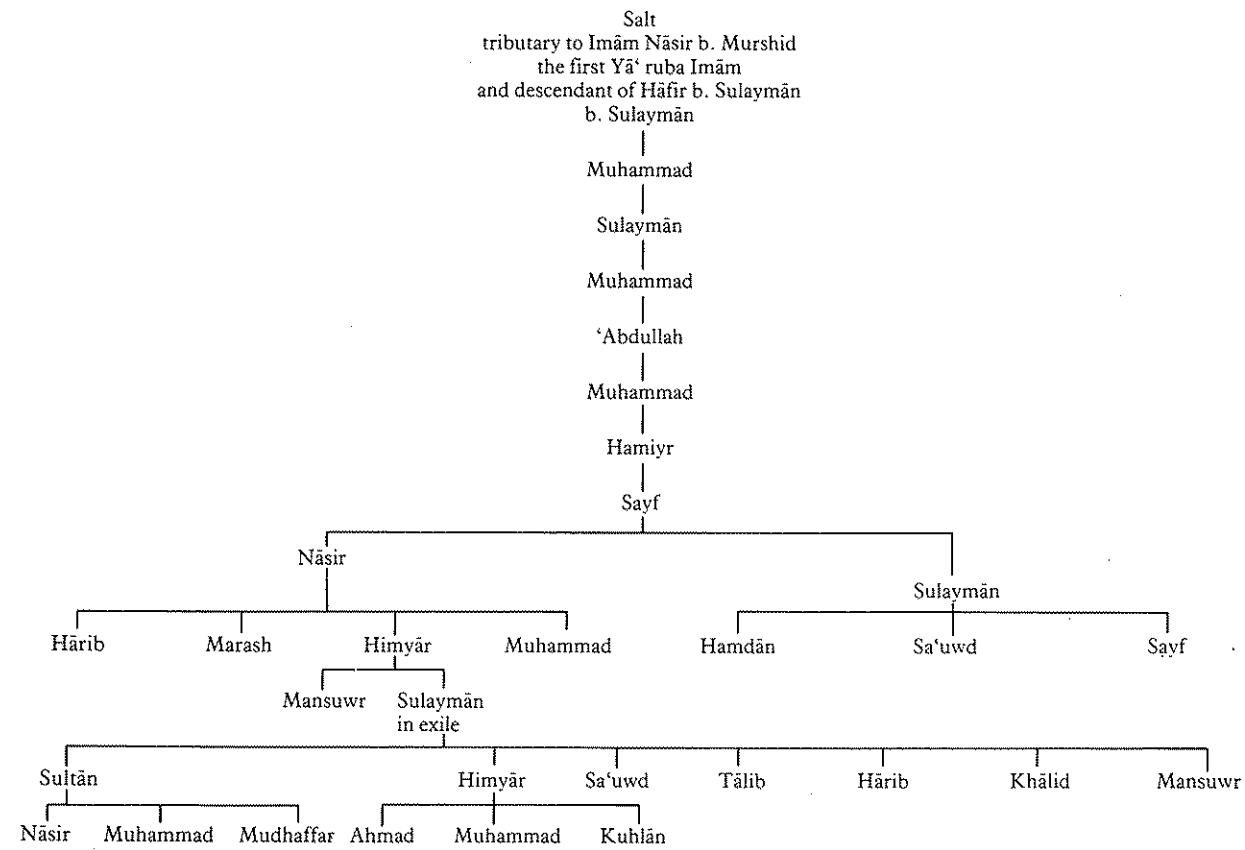


**Descent of the Nabāhinah Shaykhs of the Bani Riyām,** which follows on from the classical descent above, from the kings or *maliks*. Some names and links are conjectural.



Sulaymān b. Sulaymān, whose branch is continued below, married a daughter of the Ashraf of Mecca and overthrew the Imam 'Umār b. Khatab al Yahmadiy. He was then elected Imām and ruled for a short while himself.

**Some of the Nabāhinah in Omān during the Yā'rubā Imamate and their descendants today**



Even with its imperfections this is a splendid family tree in the best classical traditions.

**Non-Ahrār Groups**

*Ahrār*, meaning free, is the epithet given to all tribes of pure Arab descent. Other sections of the community, whilst nowadays also free, are designated by other names. In actual fact they are all very interbred and today the distinctions are vague in practical social effect. The main groups are as follows and whilst some emulate the Arab tribal organisation with sections and sub-sections, others do not. However, instead of a shaykh they follow either a tribe of Arabs or members of a family, and form a very considerable proportion of the population in any village settlement or town.

**Bayādiyr.**

Thought to be the remnants of the pre-Arab inhabitants reduced to servant status, albeit a superior one. They tend to be attached to land holdings. Often of *ahrār* status and assimilated.

**Khadām and Mawlā or 'Ād called Bayāsirah.**

They represent the next step down and would seem to originate from free men who have had to sell themselves into slavery in the past, or the results of concubinage in years gone by. It is possible that *khadām* were saleable whereas *mawlā*, being attached to a tribe, were not. Groups of the latter are designated by a tribal name in

addition to the sobriquet *Mawlā*; thus *Mawlā Bani Ruwāhah* or *Mawlā Mahariyq*. It is likely that they represent an ancient survival from pre-Islamic times.

**'Abiyd.**

Composed basically of people of African descent. They are excluded from tribal groups and it is people in this category who were subject to being bought and sold at one time. However, it was also common that the work performed by an individual was what was bought rather than the man himself.

Groups said by some to be *Khadām* in the Izki Wilayah.

Following the 'Uzuwr:

**Awlād Mufaddal**

**Awlād Jundub** (These are a clan of the Khalāsiy, another of which, the Awlād Zayd, follows the Manādhir in Saddiy).

Following the Bani Tawbah:

**Awlād Qanzariy** mixed 'Ād and *Khadām*. (Qanzā'il-Wilkinson) also Qanza'iy.

Following the Awlād Riqaysh, and constituting the *Mawlā al Riqaysh*.

**Awlād Muharram** (but see the Bani Hadarmiy entry and Muharram-Wilkinson)

**Awlād al Bitk**

Following the Awlād Rāshid

**Awlād al Ghawiy** Thought by some sources to be mixed and *Khadām*.

**Āl Shuquwr** (It is important to distinguish these from the Suquwr who are *ahrār*)

Some other putative 'Ād group names found all over Oman.

*Shanāwiy*

*Saddiy*

*Baraykiy* or *Awlād Barakiy* (some of whom have entered the Bani Kharuws as *ahrār*)

*Al Adhaliy*

*Hikmāniy*

(also a name of some bedu tributaries of the Wahiybah)

*Shanduwdiy*

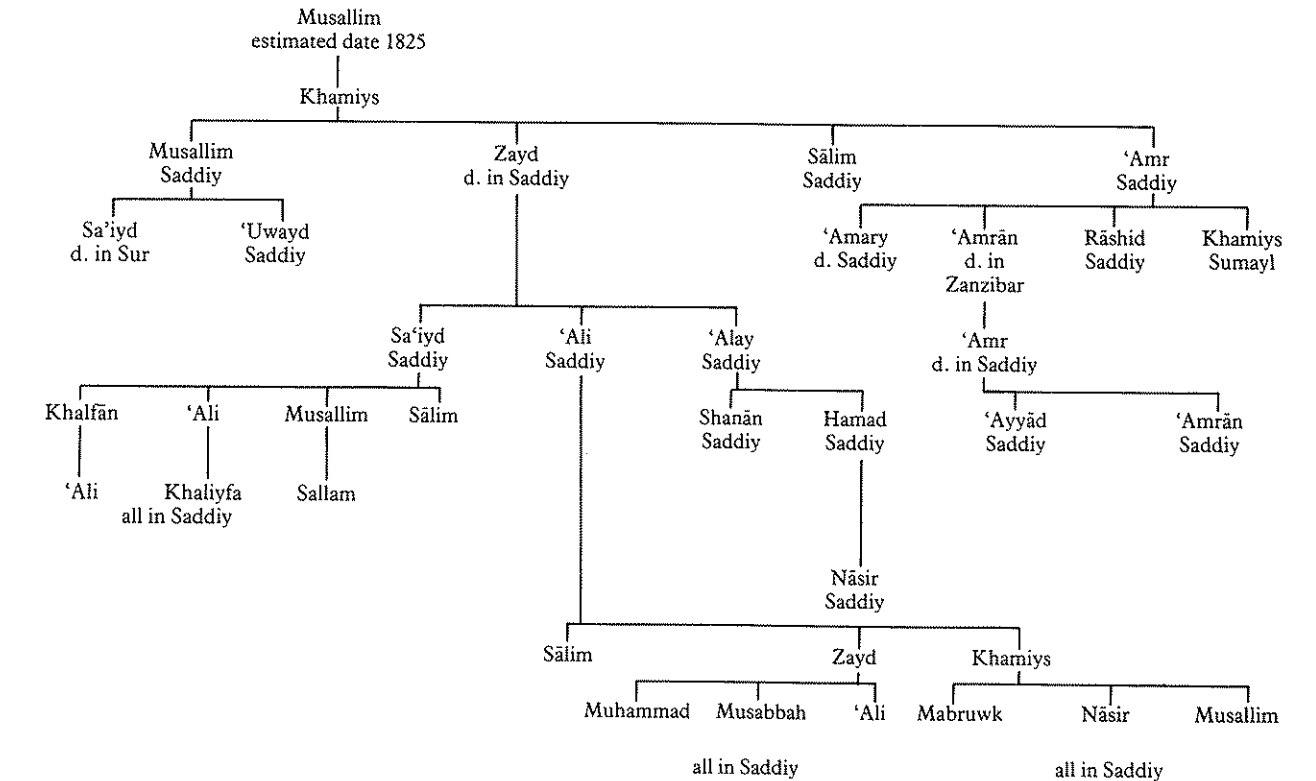
*Awlād 'Abduw*

*Awlād Subāh of Nizwa*

*Awlād Khasayb of Musqat*

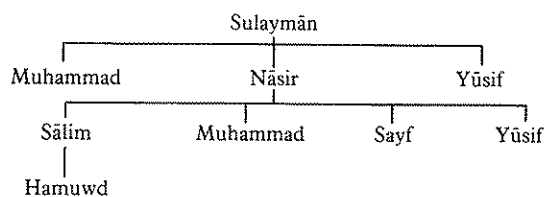
**The Khalāsiy of Saddiy**

Though their present status is that of *Mawlā Bani Ruwāhah* they are actually somewhat different from other *mawlā* tribal groups, being intermediate in status between *ahrār* (free) and *mawlā*. This would seem to be because they were originally *ahrār* of the Bani Saliymah living in Birkat al Mawz. Here their ancestor committed a murder and being unable to pay the blood-price he asked for help from his fellow tribesmen from the Bani Saliymah. This was refused, and the man, in fear of his own life, approached the Manādhir of the Bani Ruwāhah. They agreed to help him provided the man and his family became their servants in perpetuity. The family then changed their name to *Khalāsiy* and this is the reason they find themselves in their present position.

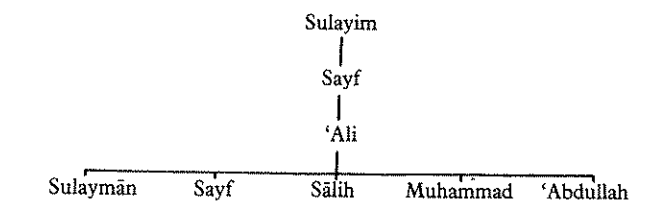


**The 'Uzuwr of Izki**

The families of their leading men  
Shaykhs in Nizār

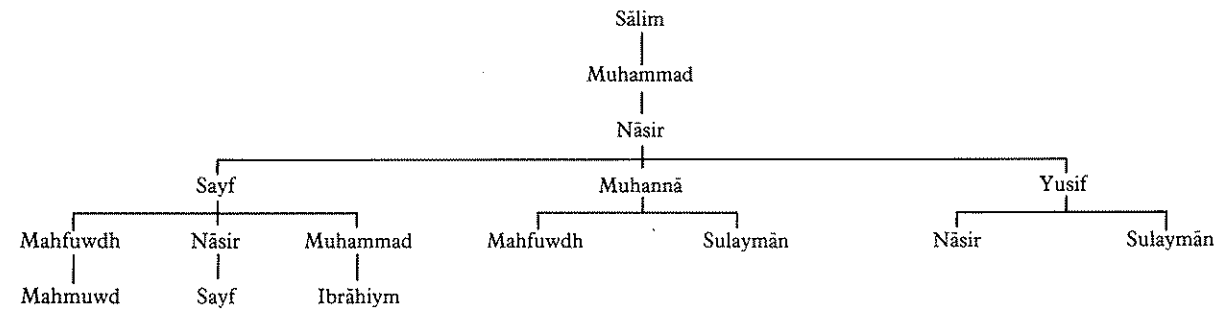


**Shaykhs in Hārat Bani Husayn**



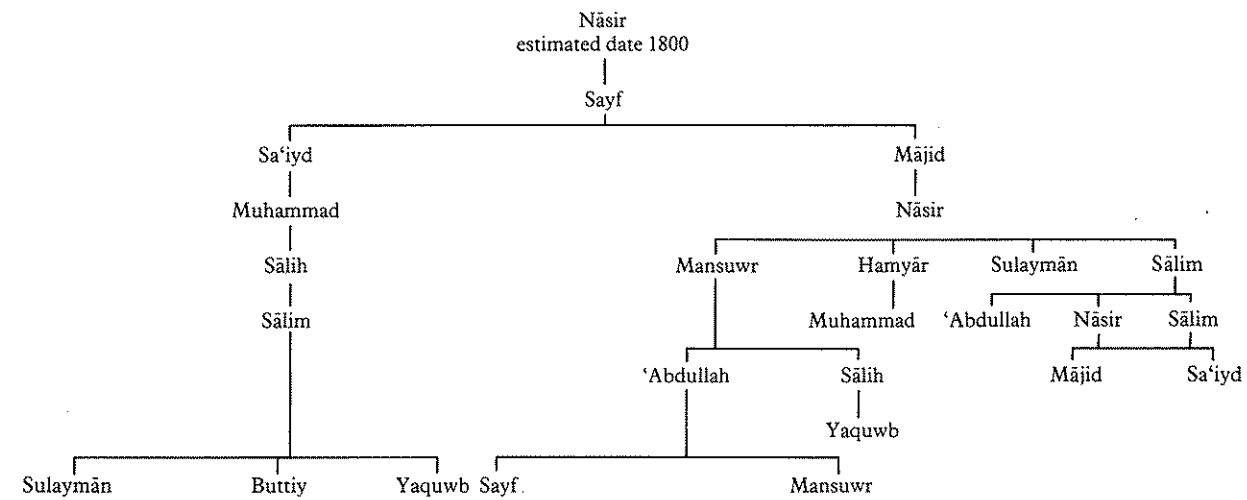
### The Awlād Rāshid of Bani Riyām

The family of Sh. Muhannā b. Nāsir.



### The Awlād Sayf b. Nāsir, Awlād Rāshid

A simple example of a clan descent with the descent group.



### Bani Saliymah (sing. Sulaymiy)

War-cry: 'Yā Awlād Mālik'

Sections:

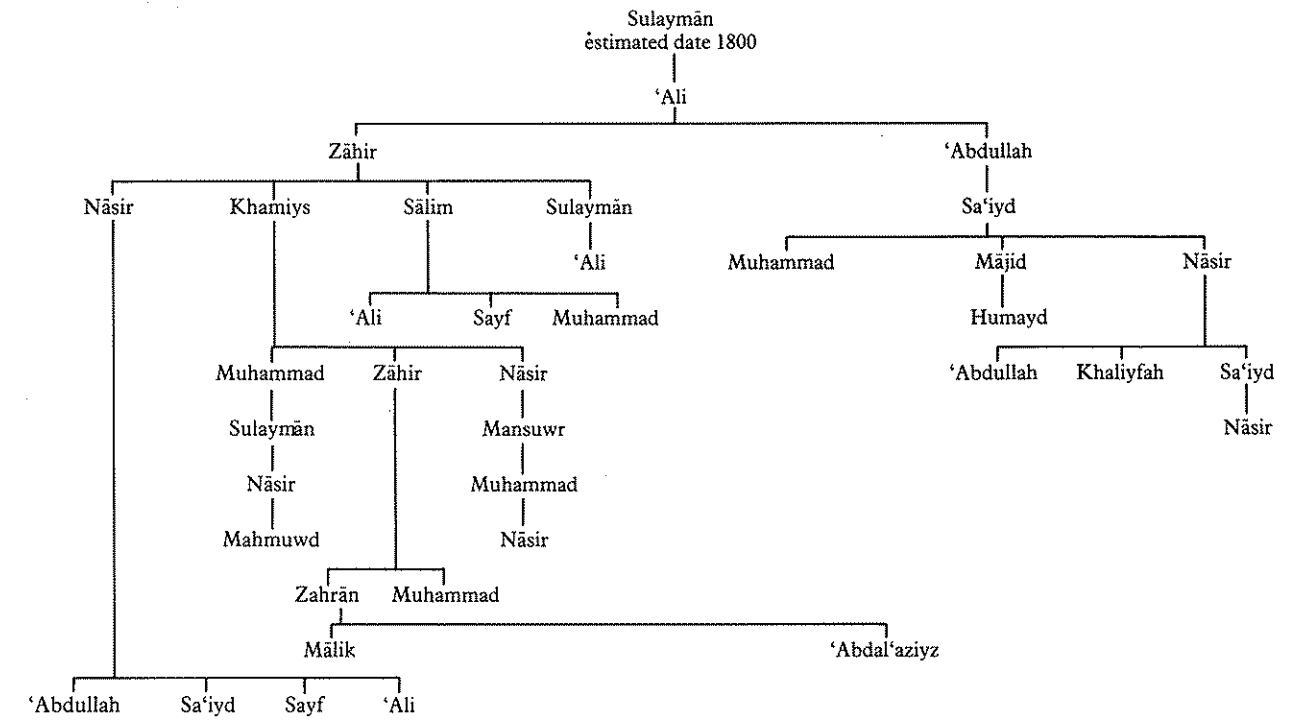
*Awlād 'Ali Sulaymān* (shaykhs)

*Awlād Sinān*

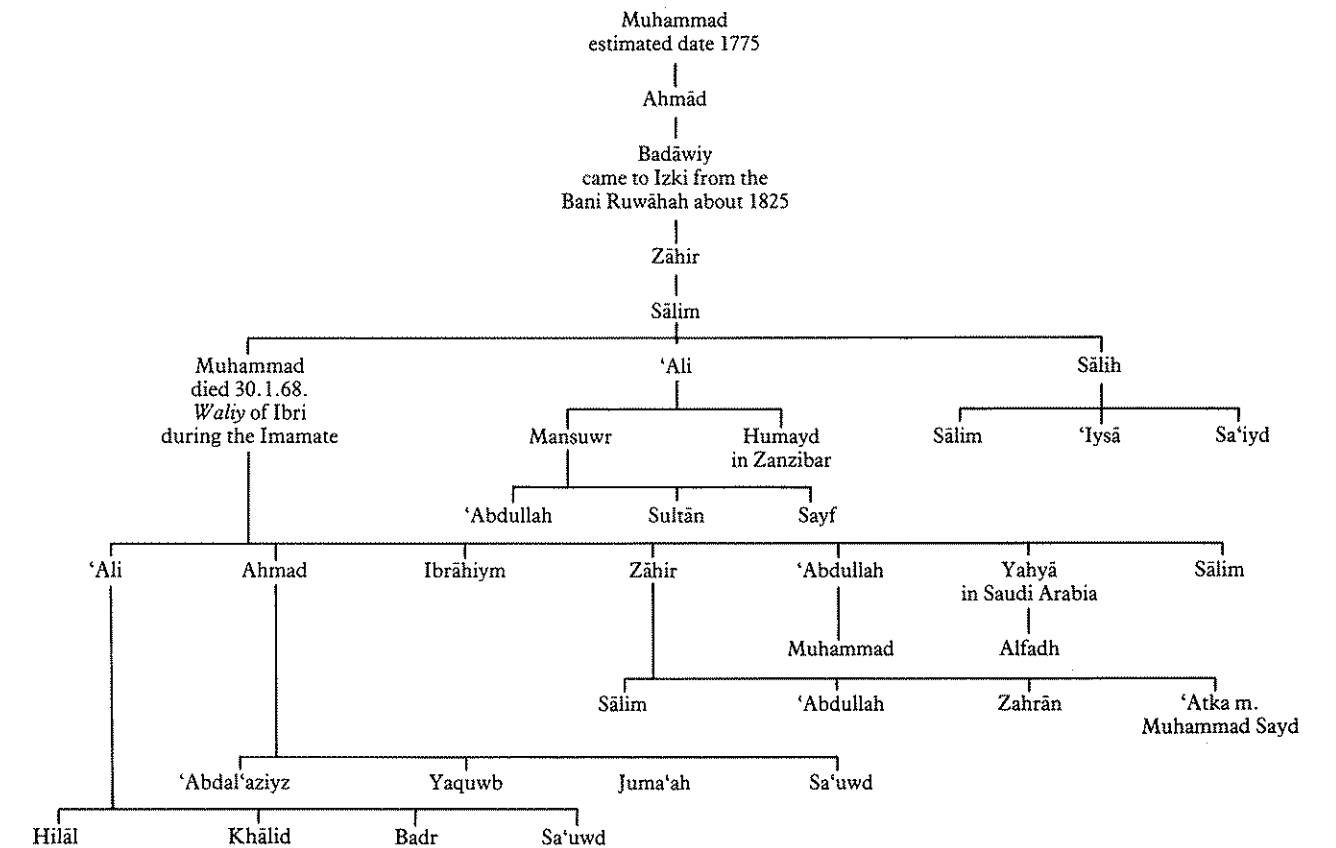
*Awlād Muhammad Sulaymān*

*Awlād Rāshid b. Hamad*

### Awlād 'Ali Sulaymān

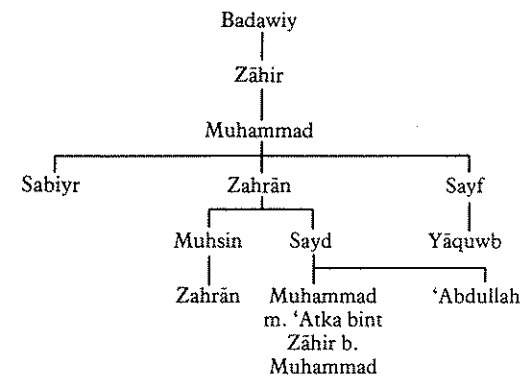


### Awlād al Riqaysh

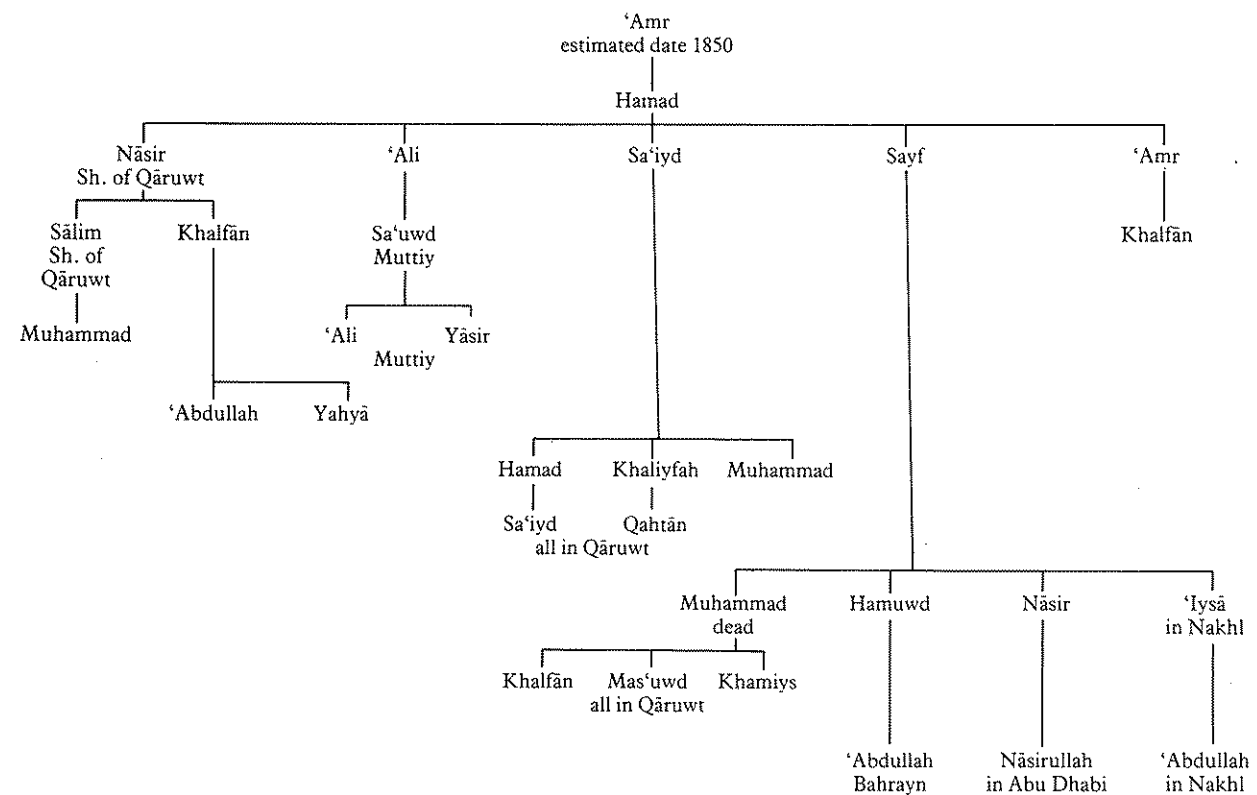


A much respected and prominent family who have made a change from one descent group to another in pursuance of a community loyalty which they took over when residence with the Bani Riyām was clearly incompatible with descent from the Bani Ruwāhah. An élite group, similar to the Nabāhanah and the Harth, qv.

**Awlād Rā'iy al Dā'iy of Riqaysh**



**Al Tawbiy from Muttiy al 'Ayn and Qaruwt**

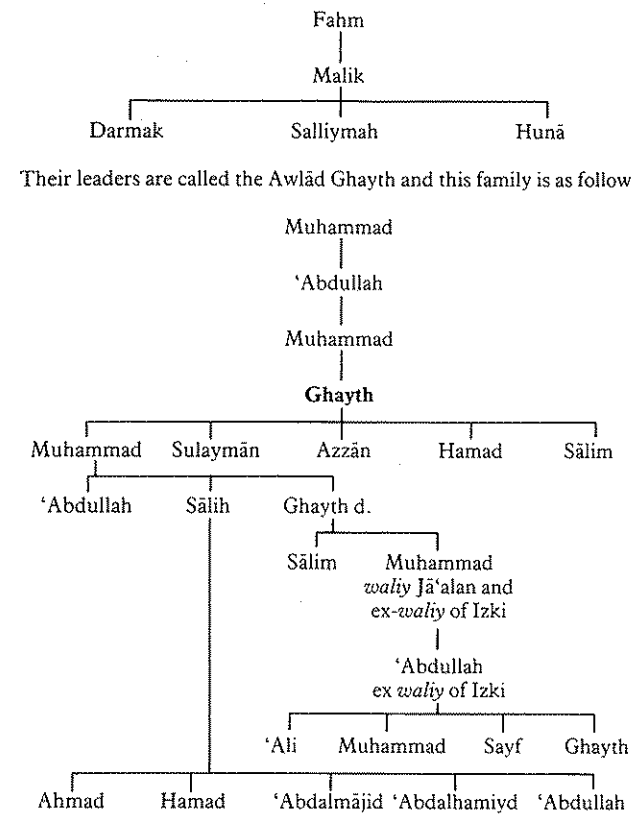


**Darāmikah (sing. Daramkiy)**

They live in al Yaman at Izki and at Siyb and Barqa on the Bātinah. They are also found in Qatar and Abu Dhabi and al Buraymiy. Their war-cry is: 'Yā Awlād 'Abs', and they have no *wasm* of their own being in the habit of obtaining any camels they need from the Wahiybah and using their *wasm*. They are Hināwi and Ibādiy. It is possible that they have come from Iraq and have been

called Barāmikah and that they were persecuted and changed their name to escape death. This is a reference to the famous Barmacide family of ministers who reached their apogee in the reign of the Caliph Haruwn al Rashidiy. They descend from Malik b. Fahm as follows:

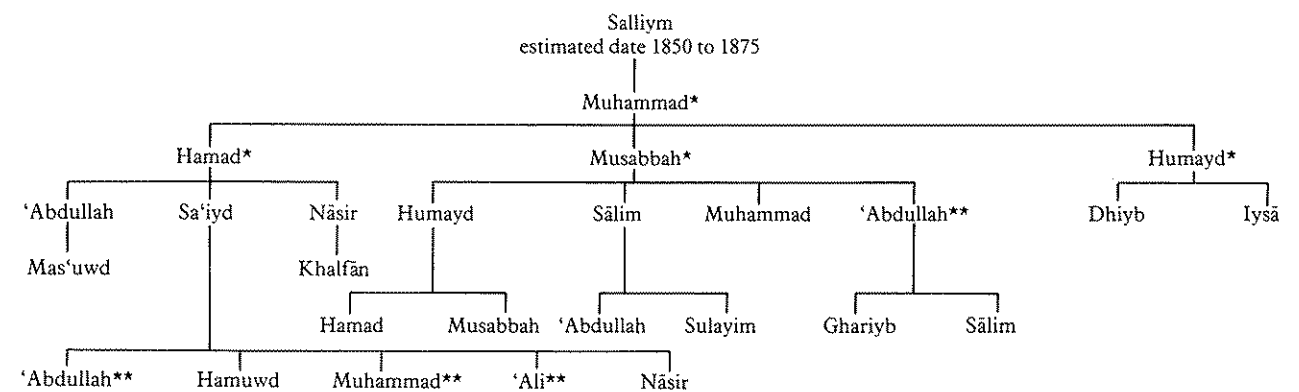
**Darāmikah in Abu Dhabi and al 'Ayn**



In Izki they do not follow the Bani Riyām but at times the Harth and mostly the Bani Ruwāhah.

**Al Awf**

In Ayn village near Mutiy in the Izki wilāyah. Their section is called Shamsiy after their ancestor who fled from Buraymiy after a family feud and settled in Rustāq. About seventy years ago (1900) the family moved once more to their present location though some left Izki thirty years ago (1945) and settled in Nakhl. Their recent moves seem to have been motivated by the need to find new grazing for their sheep. (See a further Bani Awf tree in Chapter 6.)

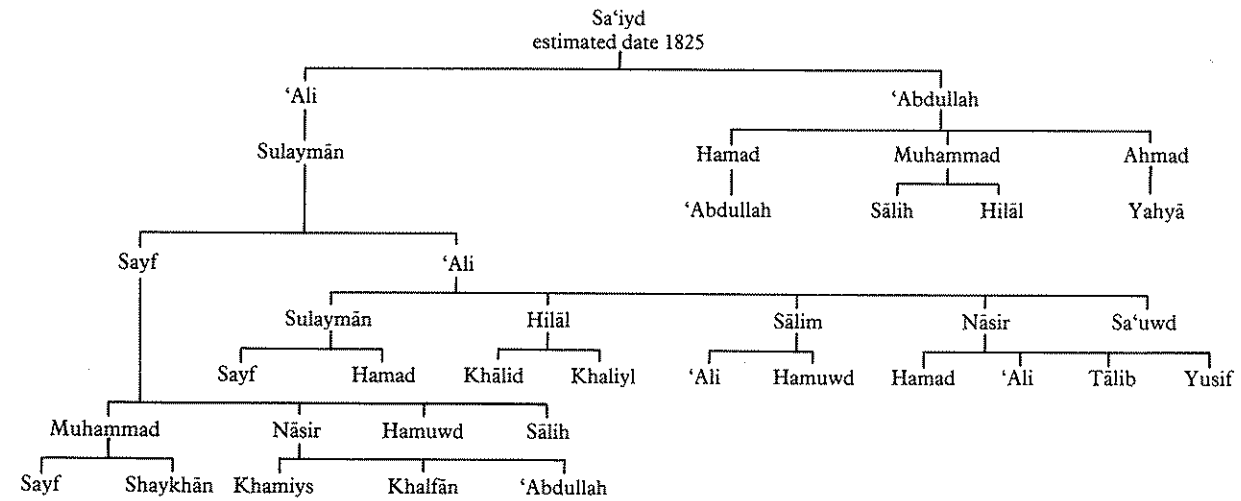


\* Moved from Rustaq  
\*\* Moved to Nakhl

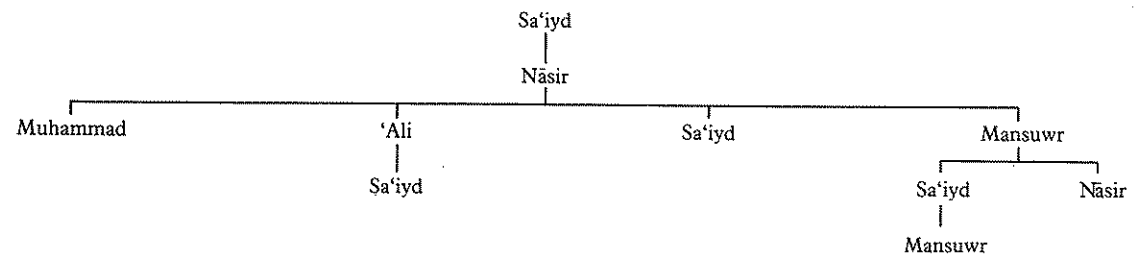
**Āl Qāruwn (sing. Qarniy)**

Hināwiy, a sept of the Bani Hinā. Live in Saddi, Izki and Mannah, Balad Sint near Ghāfāt and Bahla. They have no *wasm* and the *azwah* is said to be 'Awlād Zikariy' which is also said to be that of the Bani Hinā as a whole.

**The Qāruwn of Saddi**



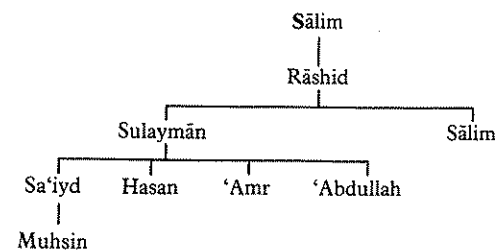
**The Qāruwn of Manah**



**The Manādhir (sing. Mandhariy)**

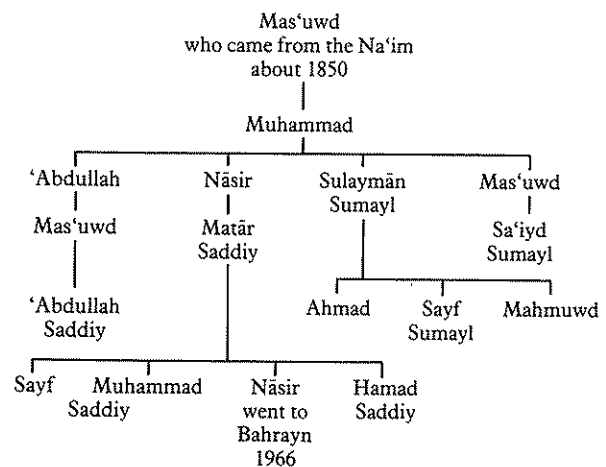
Of Saddiy, Ghāfariy, a sept of Ruwāhah. Formerly numerous they now number only about fifteen or twenty men in Saddiy. They have no *wasm* and the *azwah* is the same as that of the Bani Ruwāhah as one would expect, namely: 'Yā Awlād 'Abs'. Several have left in the past for Zanzibar. Rāshid b. Sulaymān was the last 'shaykh' but gave up saying that the government should take over this responsibility, his son feels the same way but *sharaf* still clings to the family. More numerous branches of them live in Adam, Sulayf, Manah, Sumayl and Rustāq.

**The Family of the Mandhariy shaykh**



**The 'Aziyziy of Saddiy**

A small family group that has no *wasm* or *azwah*. They originate from the Na'im Āl Bu Shams and apart from Saddiy live in Sumayl. See the Āl Bu Shams above for their original descent group section.

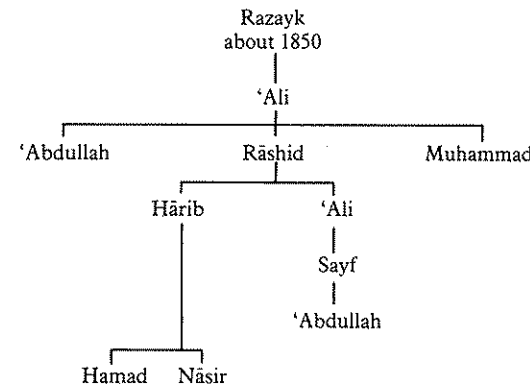


This family is an example of a descent group where the tribal lineage has been lost and new community group relationships have been formed which themselves split the family into two different sets of loyalties.

**Some Al Wuruwd of Izki and Manah**

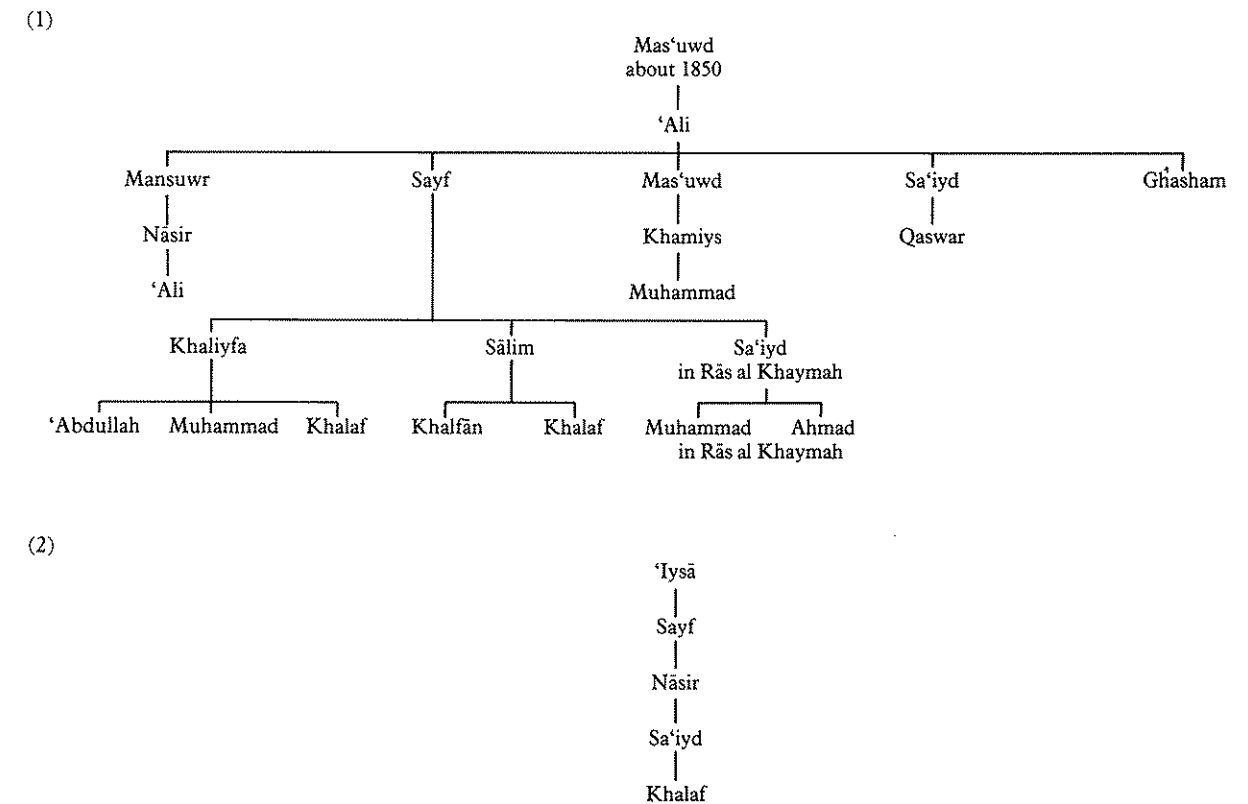
They have no *wasm* and their *azwah* is 'Yā Awlād Ward'. they also live in Bahla and Muttiy, Qāruwt, Samad and a group called the Harmaliy live at Tabaqah in the Wadi Bani Ghāfir but they are really Waradiy. The Wuruwd of Samad, the Waradiy capital, where they hold the *hukm*, have a different, and possibly the correct *azwah* which is 'Yā Awlād Zamma'.

**The Wuruwd of Manah**



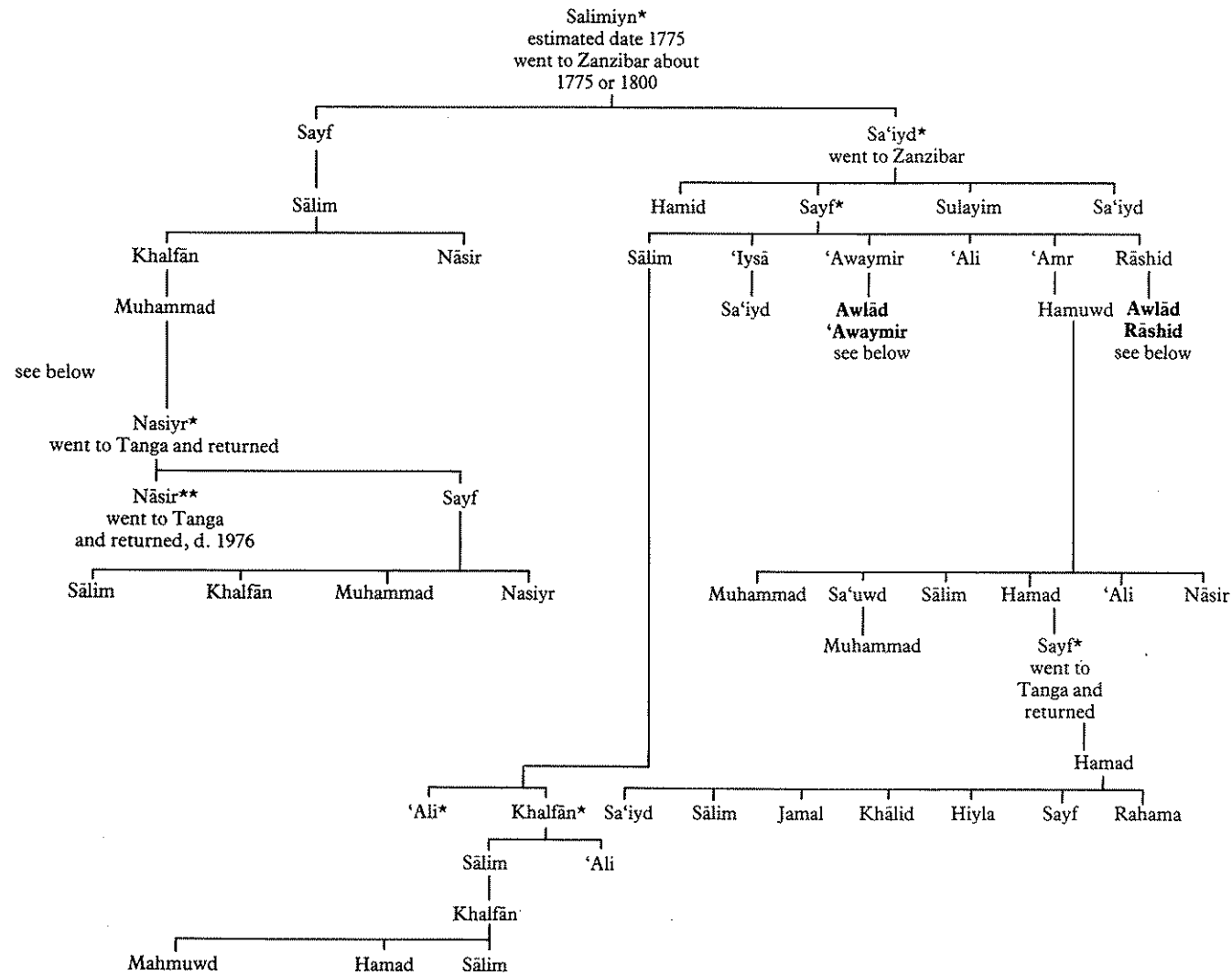
They are said to have the same descent as the Bani Kharuws, that is as follows: Kharuws b. Shāriy b. Yahmad b. 'Abdullah b. Mālik b. Nasr b. Al 'Azd b. Ghawth b. Nabat b. Mālik b. Zayd b. Kuhlān.

**The Wuruwd of Muttiy**



The only Waradiy in Izki proper is Khalf b. 'Amr al Waradiy.

**The Wurud of Samad**  
Awlād Salimiyn Shaykhs

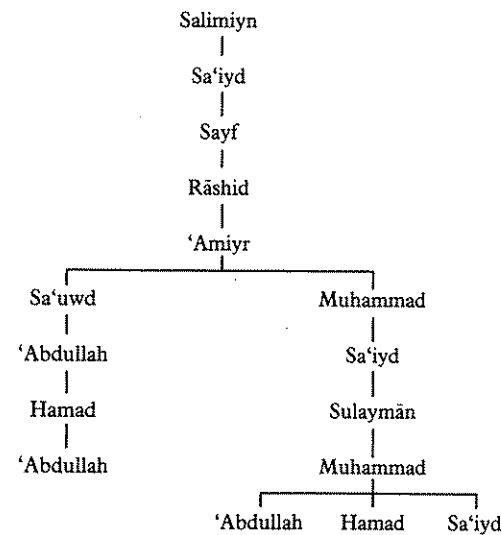


The other tribes of Samad are: Bani Ruwāhah Zakāwinah and Jahandam, Hamad Sayf and Nāsir Nāsiyr have the same mother.

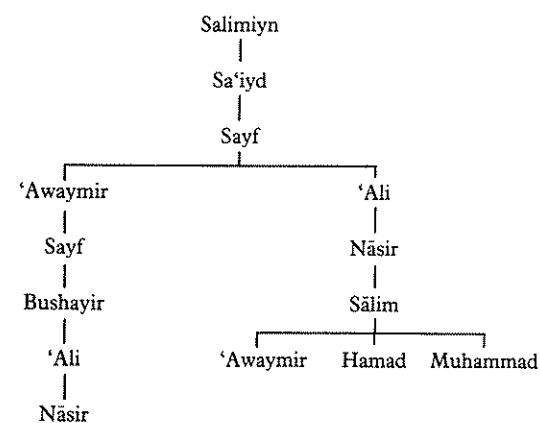
\* Denotes the shaykhs.

\*\* A driver for the author. The bravest of men who came home starving; terrified of bedu and hating coffee, he gave unstinting loyalty, and his subsequent death was a great loss to his country. A small person who was really bigger than most of us.

**Awlād Rāshid**



**Awlād 'Awaymir**



**The Harth**

Like the Nabāhinah, the Harth are one of the great tribes of Oman and have a place here for three reasons. Firstly their close connection with the Wahiybah, secondly their need to attain influence in the Izki area as a consequence of inter-tribal politics during the last half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, and lastly the fact that they are an example of an elite group which has been produced by the Omani tribal system and these groups have been a feature of tribal society for many centuries. The term has already been used to describe other groups such as the Riqaysh and the Nabāhanah.

In addition to these reasons the Harth were responsible for carrying the social system and politics of Oman to Zanzibar. The Omani position in that island was very similar to other migrations and colonisations and analogous to the movement of people from the European community to the Americas and Australia. The difficulties expressed by British officials at the troubled time of the accession disputes subsequent to the death of Sultan Sa'iyd b. Sultān were certainly due to a lack of comprehension of the structure and workings of Omani society.

The shaykhly family itself emanates from the Bani Ghāfir and rose to prominence during the first half of the eighteenth century when a drought in the Sharqiyah ended and they were able to take advantage of a renewed flow in the *aflāj* and found a capital at Qābil. Later recurrences of drought in the Sharqiyah led to more of the Harth migrating to Zanzibar than any other community and tribal group. In addition this factor led to the rise and fall of many settlements in the area. These matters themselves gave rise to both absentee landlordism and the creation of economic structures that were untypical of Oman as a whole.

It was from this base that the dominance of the shaykhly family grew. The comparatively recent date of this means that they are interesting in that they will almost certainly be the last group to succeed in this respect. The political progress achieved in the Sultanate since 1970 precludes the continuation of this process in the future as a purely tribal matter.

In connection with this last point it should be noted that the rise of élite groups within the traditional tribal system of Oman was initially achieved by the influence of descent. This led to the establishment of a strong community group which provided the power base for the élite group in question. The eventual decline or eclipse of the élite group always led to the disintegration of the community group into its constituent tribal parts. This process can be seen throughout the history of Oman.

However, from an evolutionary point of view it is interesting to note that despite the implicit disintegration of the tribe as a consequence of migration and climatic factors in Oman, they have maintained an identity in a tribal sense. They are an example of the use of descent group linkages maintaining a community group in a rather unusual way. Indeed the shaykhly family has been enhanced because of this.

By position a *tamiymah* is a paramount shaykh and his title shows that he has been confirmed in this office by his followers. In practice only large tribal groupings have a leader of this sort and he invariably comes from an élite group. When the reader considers the multiplicity of

descent groups which make up a community like that found in Izki, it becomes easier to see how the importance of such a family can arise. The main function of a *tamiymah* is the same as that of any other shaykh. They provide a central authority for the resolution of disputes and provide a unity for the leadership of a group where it is unable to reconcile conflicting descent group obligations and community group interests. It is interesting to note that the function of leadership in war is subordinate and has usually been carried out in the past by another person other than the shaykh or *tamiymah*, holders of which offices tending to be revered older men unsuited physically to the rigours of campaigning.

The Harth shaykhs demonstrate the important qualification of descent—there being no more important descent than that of the tribe of the Prophet himself. However, from an Omani point of view it is worthy of comment that they come from a descent to Quraysh that keeps them clear of involvement with any possible contentiousness, with the claims of Umayyads, 'Alids, Fātimids or 'Abbāsids. It is a descent which is clean from the standpoint of the Ibādīs (see Sāda descent p. 163). The knowledge and experience contained within the present family is a consequence of their great eminence and nobility and these qualities are naturally of enormous importance to the Sultanate. The positions held by family members today amply demonstrates this and they provide a very good example of the way that an importance and use to the tribal system of yesterday can be smoothly altered to serve the interests of modern government, and thus the country as a whole. Really a country is after all only a larger community group. This evolution of local shaykhly power and function into a national arena is a pleasing development. A *tamiymah*, by virtue of his position, has always tended to be involved with state matters rather than purely tribal ones but the history of the Harth reads like a preparation for their present activities.

The sections of the Harth.

The shaykhly family (qv) comprises two sections:

- Awlād Sālih b. 'Ali \**
- Awlād Hamayd \**

These represent the only part of the Harth originating from Dariyz and the Bani Ghāfir. The remaining sections are as follows and all emanate from 'Ibra.\*

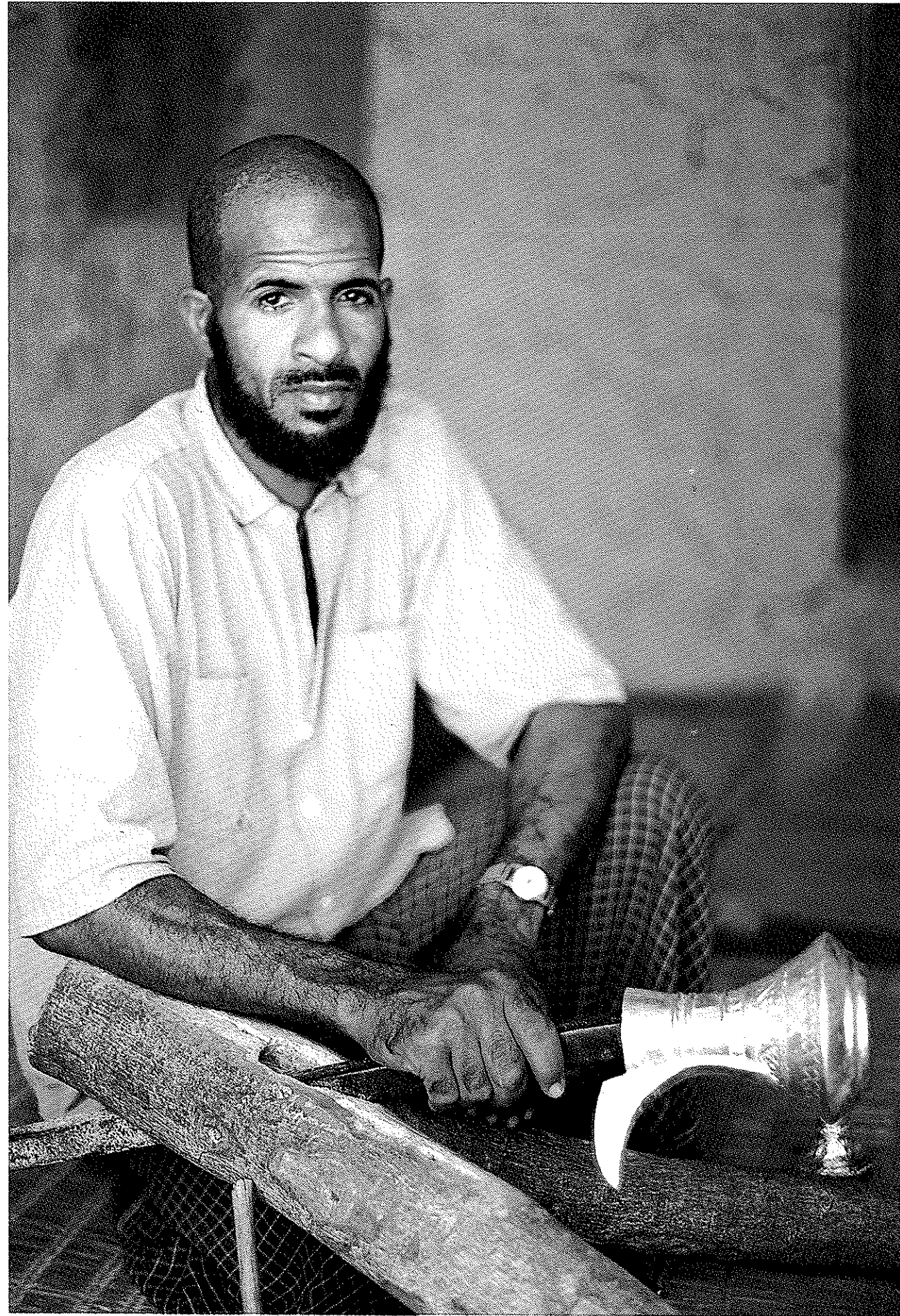
- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>Barāwanah</i>  | <i>Rishādiy</i>                                       |
| <i>Samarāt*</i>   | <i>Awlād Ahmad</i>                                    |
| <i>Khanājirah</i> | <i>Masruwriy</i>                                      |
| <i>Mahāramah</i>  | <i>Majabah</i>  |
| <i>Ahl Sanaw</i>  | <i>Marāhibah</i>                                      |
| <i>Ghuyuwth</i>   | <i>Matawqah</i>                                       |
| <i>Asirah</i>     | <i>Ma'amarah</i>                                      |
| <i>Al Suqariy</i> | <i>Daghayshiy</i> (who originate from the Bani Riyam. |

These *hadr* sections are augmented by the following bedu sections:

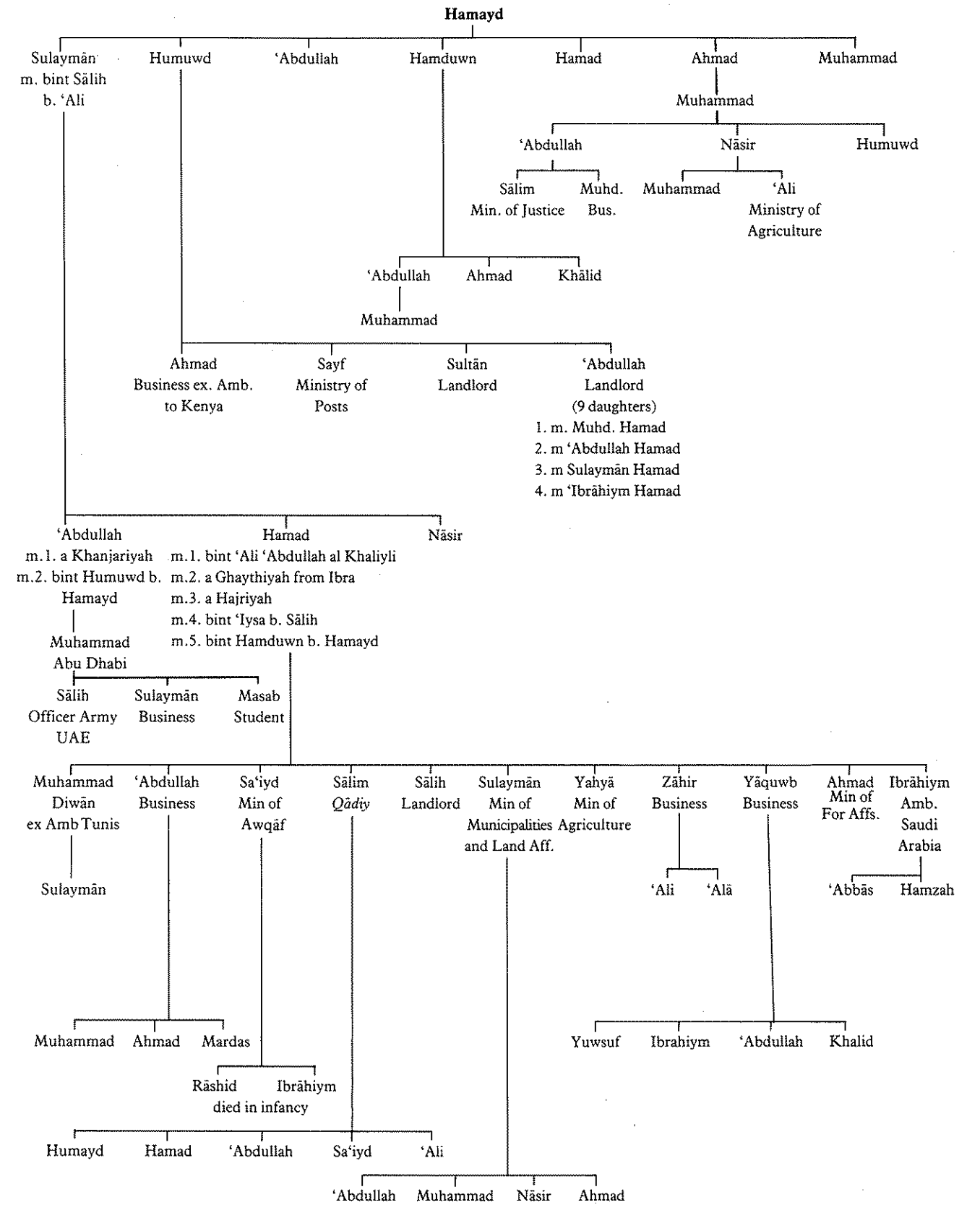
- Mawālik*
- Duwākah*
- Shubuwl*
- Maghārah*

These sections are distributed amongst the following settlements: Qābil, Al Mudhayrib, Dariyz and 'Izz al Harth, 'Ibra, Abu Rahlayn, Masruwl, al Falaj, Falaj





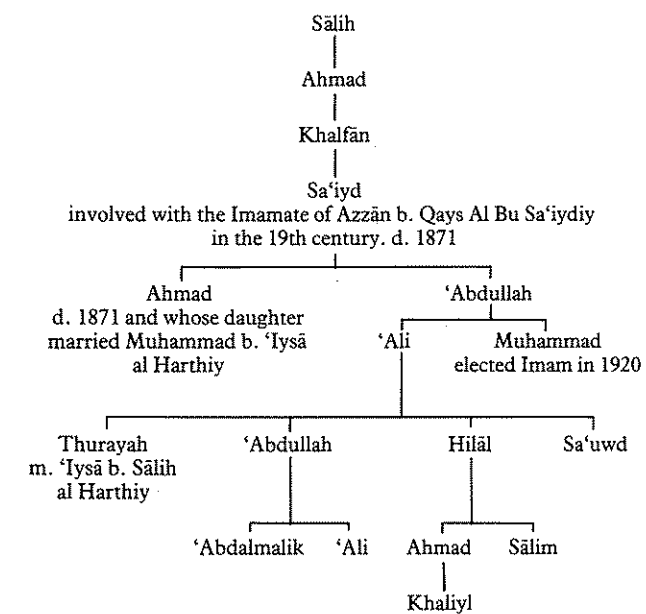
38 Khalfan b. Rāshid al Sabāhiy, master silver-smith of Nizwa.



### Al Khaliyiy

This material is included in order to provide an explanation of the historical context of the rise to power of the previous élite group, the Harth, and their connection with the renewal of the Ibādiyy Imamate at the beginning of the present century.

The Al Khaliyiy are of course an élite group in their own right and though from the Bani Kharuws provided the *tamiyāhs* of the Bani Ruwāhah. The family descend from the Imam al Salt b. Mālik who lived during the third century of the Muslim era.



### The tribes of Manah

#### Sulaymāniyyin

Descended from Sulaymān b. Abād b. 'Abd b. al Jalunda b. al Mustakbir b. Mas'uwd b. al Harar b. 'Abd 'Izz b. Mu'āwilah b. Shams b. 'Amruw b. Ghanam b. Ghālib b. 'Uthmān b. Nasr b. al 'Azd b. al Ghawth who connects with Qahtān.

The Sulaymāniyyin are found mainly in 'Izz, Nizwa and Manah. In common with most *hadr* tribes they have no camel *wasm*, but their *azwah* is: 'Yā Awlād Sulaymān. Manah is however their main centre and they share the town as follows:

Quarter of the town	Tribe
Hārat al-Balad and Hārat al-Husn	Masariyr, Bani 'Abduw, Qāruwn and Wuruwd. Awlād b. Hujjiy, a section of the Bani Riyām, Āl Ghābarah and Suquwr. There are also some 'Awāmir.
Āl Fi'āqayn	Āl Bu Sa'iydiy see under Adam for more detailed information.
Ma'amid	Sulaymāniyyin.
Āl Ma'arah	Bani Tawbah.

#### The sections of the Sulaymāniyyin

*Bayt Mas'uwd b. Sālih*, the shaykhly clan (see p. 147).

*Bani Ayān* or *al Ayyaynah*

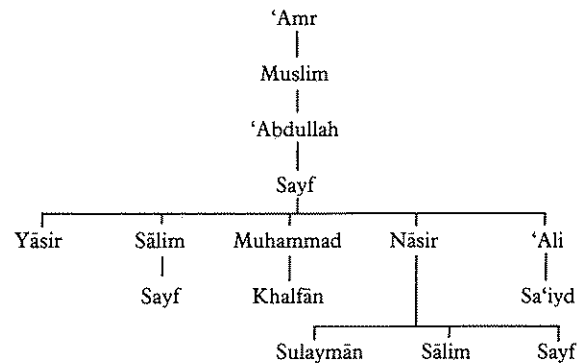
*Sumayin Rās*

*Ru'ājih*, some of whom also live in Izki (qv)

The Sulaymāniyyin are in *suff* with the Bani Ghāfir and seem to have a reasonably close relationship with the Bani Shukayl of whom one or two sources say they are a section. However, this is not thought to be so.

### Mahariyq of Izki

A descent group whose headquarters are in Adam (qv). Here they represent a family whose descent group loyalties will have largely become submerged in a new community group.



In concluding this record of the people of Izki *wilāyah* and some of their descent-group relationships it only remains to emphasize what huge potential there is for these to pull against the community group. It is a miracle that a community has survived at all. To a greater or lesser extent this is the situation in every settlement in Oman and the following collection of information is designed to both reiterate as well as explain this situation by reference to similar communities. It is the writer's belief that as indicated earlier the *falaj* system is the factor mostly responsible for maintaining community cohesion.

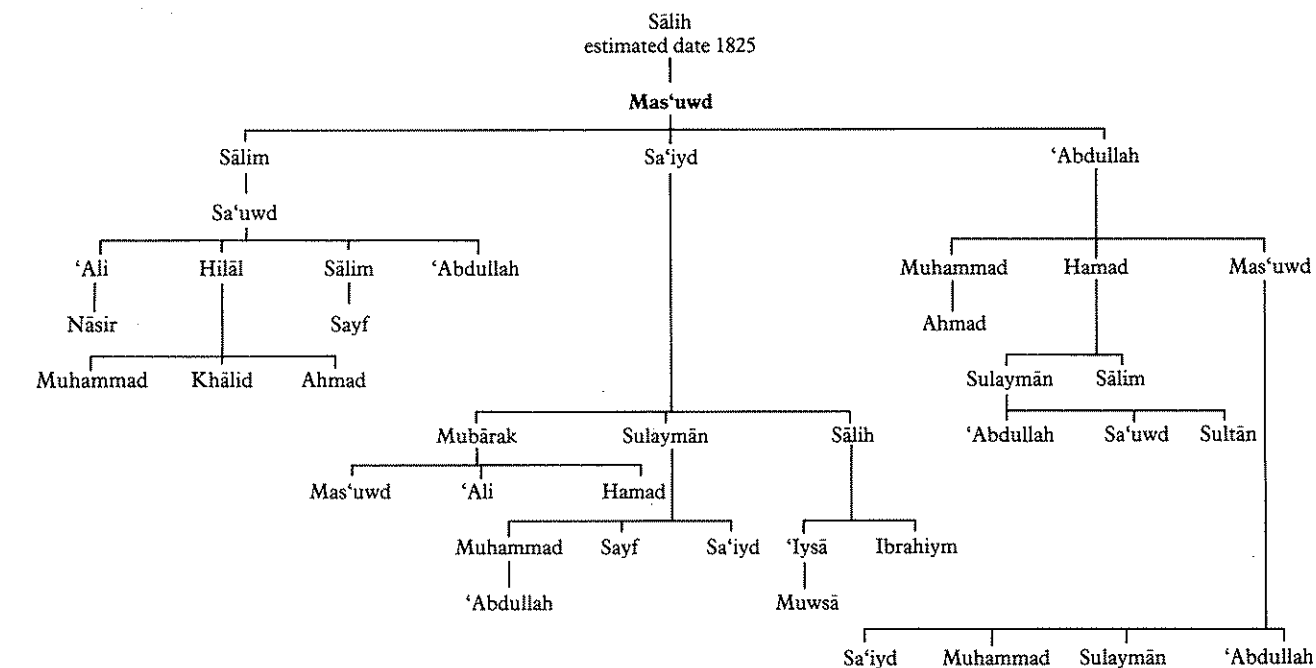
### Adam

The main tribes found in Adam are the Āl Bu Sa'iyd, Bani Hāshim and the Mahariyq under whose *hukm* the town lies. It is the most southerly and desertwards settlement in Oman with a large *falaj*, the Duruw' bedu have many dates in the gardens and come to settle during the summer in *barasti* huts made from palm fronds to the west and wadi side of the town, the Janabah doing likewise on the eastern side. Adam has long been a centre for trading in dried fish which used to be brought on camels by the bedu of the southern coast.

Tribal links are strong with Izki, 'Izz, Nizwa, Bahla, Manah and Ibri. It is said that once upon a time the Mahariyq lived in 'Izz and the Janabah at Adam. One night they each decided to raid the other and so captured each others towns because neither side left any men at home for defence. This was how they swapped towns. Today there is quite a close relationship between them which can be compared to that of the Duruw' with the Yāqiyb of Ibri or the Wahiybah with the Harth. The relationship between the Janabah and the Mahariyq is aptly if sarcastically described in a proverb; 'If a Janabah commits a murder, a Maharuwqiy will be the witness.'

The town of Adam is a beautiful example of the intermediary stage between the maintenance of territory by descent-groups and the establishment of a mixed community group. In Izki so many descent-groups contribute to the community that, whilst Izki may be said to represent a more advanced stage, Adam with only three descent-groups shows how community groups emerge from tribal descent-group elements. In Adam each descent-group still retains a clear territorial entity

### Bayt Mas'uwd b. Sālih of Ma'amid in Manah.



and each of them lives in its own fortified village within the town limits. These are called *hārah* as Hārat Bani Hāshim. The multiplicity of descent-groups in Izki obscures this, though it is still implicit, and the complexities that have arisen in the course of history show how the original descent groups there have become merged into a more recognizable community.

#### The Mahariyq of Adam (Sing. Maharuwqiy)

Also found in Bahla, Sanau, Birkat al Mawz and Izki.

Their sections are as follows:

*Bani Wa'il* (sing. *Wa'iliy*)

*Shaybānah*—*Mughādarah* and *Siwāwiya*

*Mukhāfah*

*Mamdara'ah*

*Muhāsanaḥ*

*Mutawa'ah*

*Sabābiyūw*

#### *Mamjābarah*

War cry: 'Bin Mālik (*bin Fahm*)

*Wasm*: called *Jara'*. Two lines above the right eye, but they do not have camels today.

*The Shaykhs of the Mahariyq*, mostly in Adam.

The family is divided into four named sections:

*Ayāl Hilāl b. Hamad*

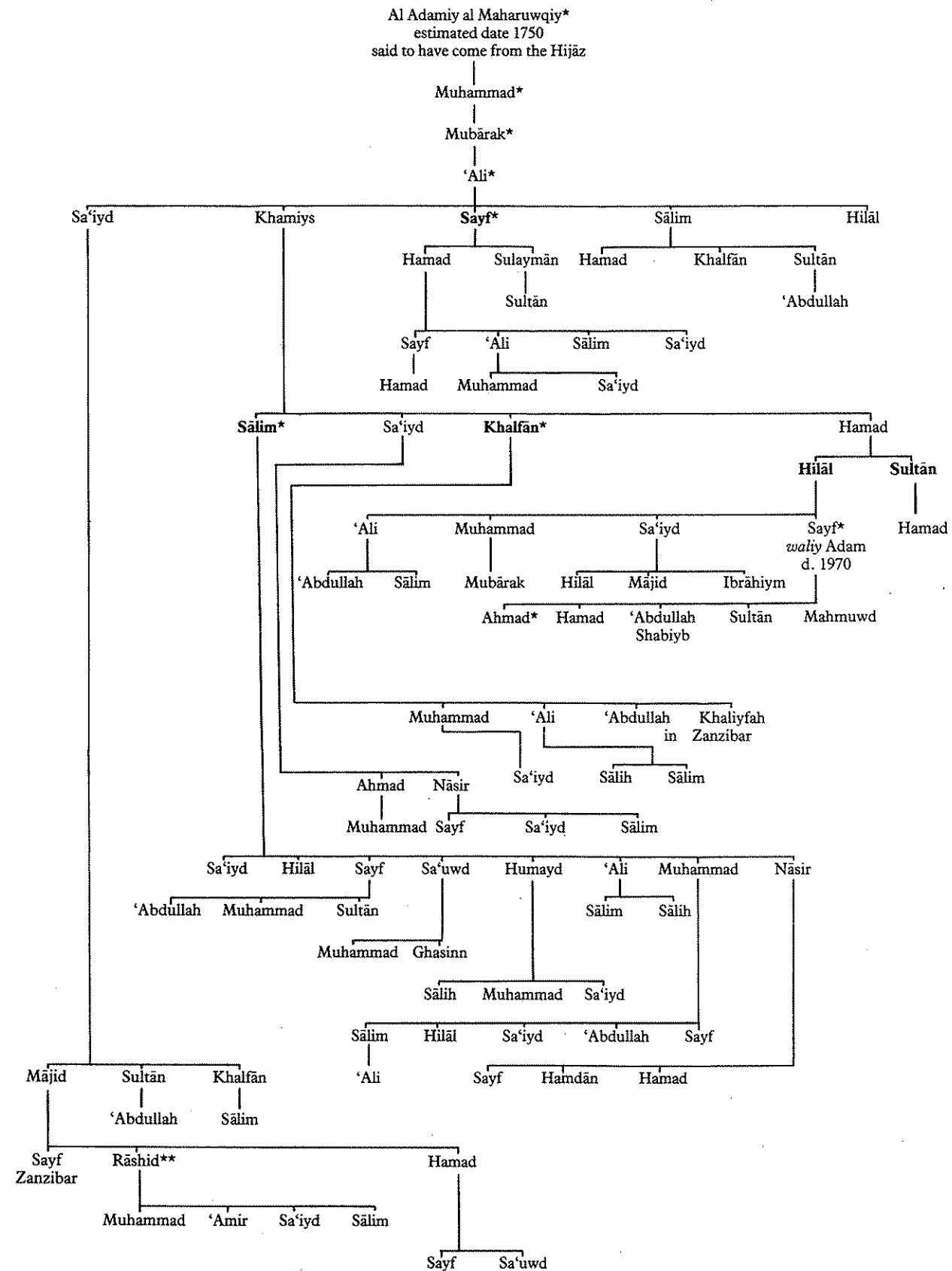
*Ayāl Sālim b. Khamiys*

*Ayāl Sayf b. 'Ali*

*Ayāl Khalfān b. Khamiys*

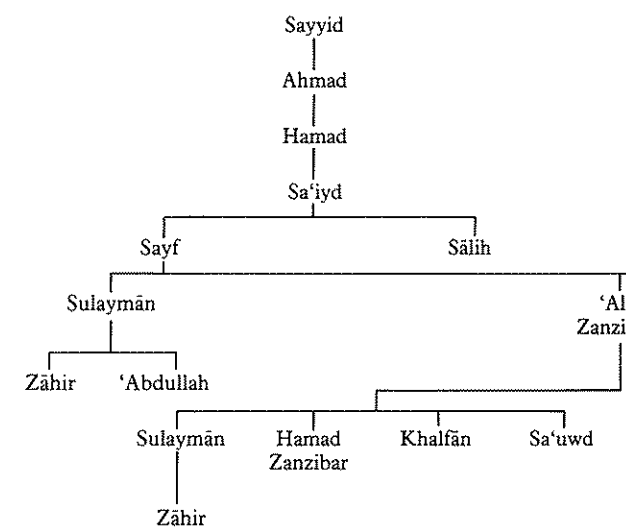
It is related that Sayf b. Hilāl ordained that members of his family should not pay inflated sums of money for their wives and, in fact, limited the bride-price to the equivalent of fifty pounds or so.

It is interesting to note that those members of the family below who are ancestors of the above clans are not always the holders of the shaykhly office which is denoted by an asterisk.



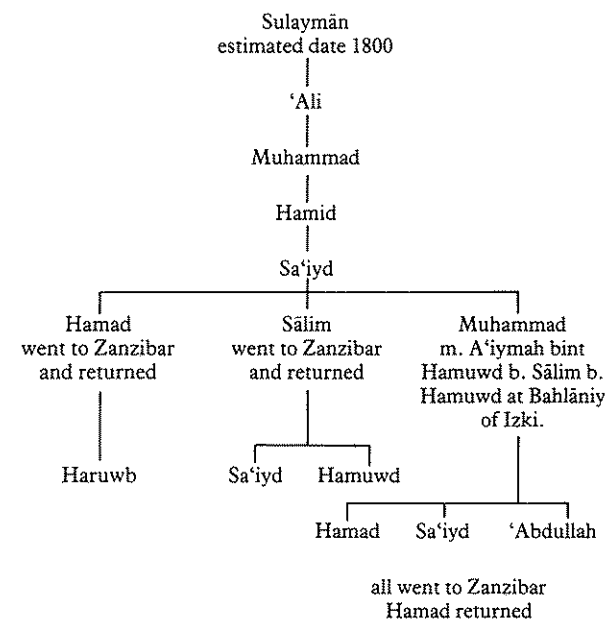
\* shaykhs  
\*\* has become a bedu and lives with the Duruw'

Some Sabābiyah (sing. Sabābiyuw) Mahariyq of Adam.



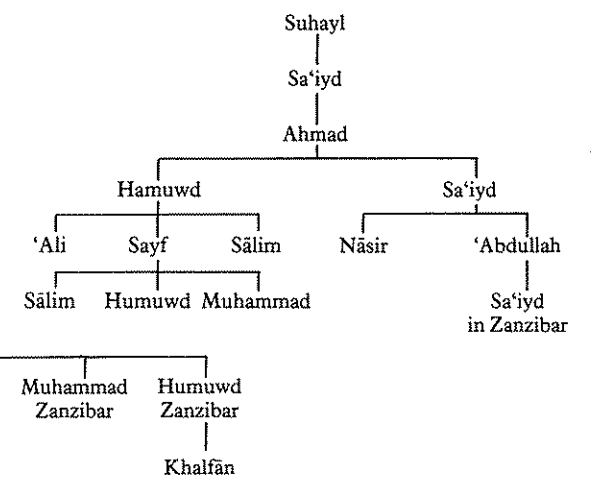
All the emigrants to Zanzibar in this family have returned to Adam.

Some Mumjābarah, Mahariyq of Adam



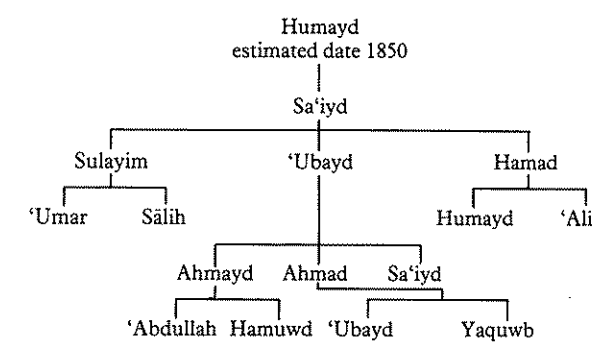
As far as can be discovered these two families are the only representatives of the section left. The Mawlā of the Mahariyq are nowadays mainly engaged in the weaving trade. Their "tribal name" is 'Awāsim, sing. Asmiy. Many have migrated in the past to Zanzibar and some have returned in recent years. The reader will notice how common this migration has been amongst the families of the *hadr* of Oman.

Some Muhāsanaḥ (sing. Muhsaniy) Mahariyq of Adam



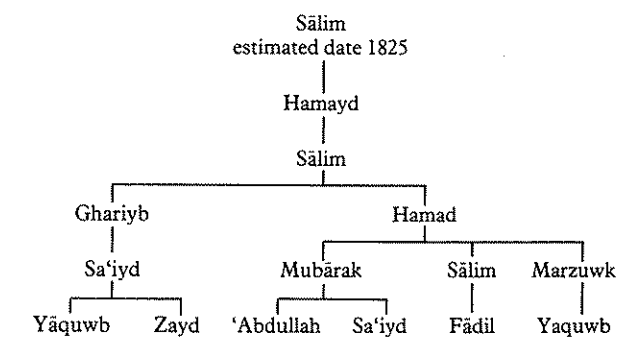
**Bani Hāshim of Adam**  
also at Sudayrah, Bahla, Rustaq.  
sections in Adam:  
*Hanādhilah*  
*Hafuwḥ*  
*Wilād 'Ali*

The Hanādhilah



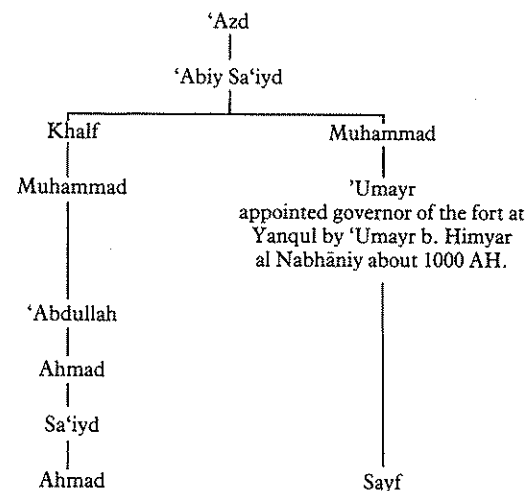
A famous member of the Bani Hāshim is Sa'iyd b. 'Amr al Hāshamiy of Sudayrah. He has a reputation as a water diviner and healer which extends throughout the interior of Oman to the north of the Dhufar mountains where the Bayt Kathiyr often seek lifts to go and see him. It is said that when the father of two brothers in Samad died the younger stole the money concealed in the chest and then, pretending not to know what had happened to it, helped his elder brother to look for it. The elder brother went to Sa'iyd with his brother and asked his assistance in finding the thief. At once Sa'iyd pointed at the younger brother and said, "There is the thief".

Some Khasabiy of Adam



**Āl Bu Sa'iyd of Adam**

They do not have a camel *wasm* but their *azwah* is 'Yā bin Sa'iyd'. This tribe gave rise to the present ruling house of Oman and it is related that the Imam Ahmad b. Sa'iyd was born in Adam from where he went on to become *waliy* in Sohar for the last Yā'rubah Imām before being himself elected to that office. His descent from 'Azd is thought to be as follows:



They are said to have been a prominent family of the al Akr district of Nizwa in the days of Nāsir b. Murshid the first Yā'arubiy Imām, and Ahmad b. Sa'iyd married a daughter of the last Yā'arubiy Imām.

The dynasty represents an élite group that arose due to the acquisition of the Imamate rather than the creation of a power base to attain it. This is probably the reason why they relinquished the office after two generations and maintained a purely secular influence like other élite groups before them. This has been much more in accord with Omani

tradition as can be seen in the history of the Nabāhanah, the Harth and other competing élite groups. However, the Āl Bu Sa'iyd dynasty is quite distinct from the Āl Bu Sa'iyd descent group as one would expect of them as an élite group. In addition the epithet Āl Sa'iyd is restricted to the descendents of Sa'iyd b. Sultān Āl Bu Sa'iydiy.

The Āl Bu Sa'iyd are widespread in Oman but are mainly to be found in Adam, Sanau in the Sharqiyah, 'Izz, Manah, Bisyah, Radda', Firq and Nizwa. They are Ghāfariy and their sections in Adam except for the shaykhs are as follows:

*Mu'adhiyah* (sing. *Mu'adhiy*) containing the *Āl Bu Rāshid*

*Āl Fulayj* (sing. *Fulayjiy*)

*Furu'a* (sing. *Fura'iy*)

*Marājibah* (sing. *Marjabiy*)

*Āl Fa'inah* (sing. *Fu'yuwniy*)

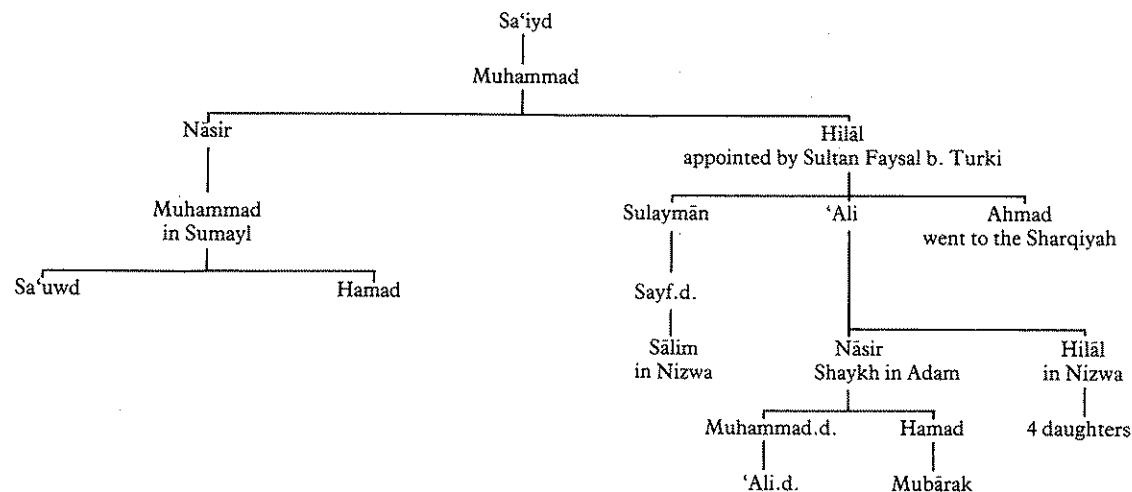
*Mandhariy* (here now count as Āl Bu Sa'iyd but originally Bani Ruwāhah.

In Adam the Āl Bu Sa'iyd follow the *hukm* of the Mahāriyq and their own leader is Nāsir 'Ali Hilāl. The Jahāhiyf of the Wahiybah are said to have originally been the bedu of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd, but this is denied in Adam, where they say it was the Shābuwriy of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd who became Wahiybah.

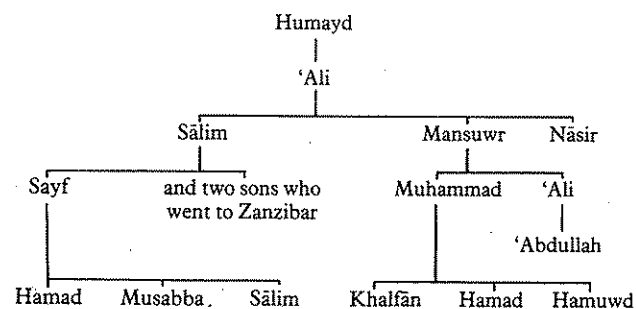
The fort in Adam is said to have been built by Imām Ahmad, it was repaired in 1869 by Sayyid Azzān.

The Āl Bu Sa'iyd shaykhs are from the Mahādifah clan who were appointed to hereditary office by the Sultan Faysal b. Turkiy.

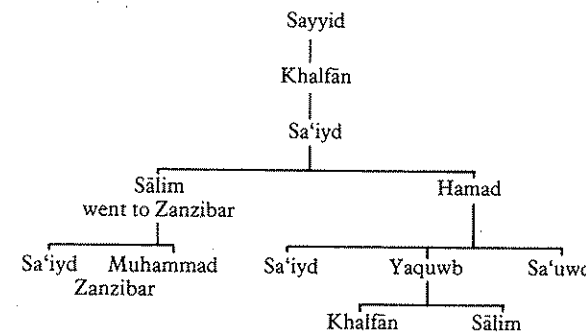
**The Mahādifah Shaykhs of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd in Adam**



**Some Āl Mu'adhiyah of Adam**

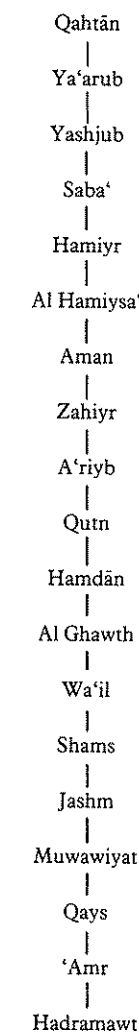


**Some Fulayjiy Āl Bu Sa'iyd of Adam**



The *mawla* or servants of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd in Adam are the *Awlād Bādiy* b. Ruwayd and the *Awlād Dhāhiy* b. Ruwayd. It should be noted that *mawla* could not in the past be sold like *khadām* or *'abiyd*. It is possible according to local sources that the Khasābiy were originally Khasām of the Āl Bu Sa'iyd also, however they are now *ahrār* and follow the Mahariyq.

**Descent of Bani Hadramawt**



**'Izz**

A small settlement with prosperous date gardens, it is the headquarters of the shaykhs of the Janabah bedu who settled here some two hundred years ago. The Harthiy leader, 'Iysā b. Sālih, also lived here during a time of drought in the Sharqiyah. There are a number of descent group elements to be found here but the most important one is the Bani Hadramuwt.

**Bani Hadramuwt**

A once powerful tribe, now small and widely scattered. It is related that the Imām al Wārith prayed to God that they be disunited and his prayer was answered. They are interesting in that they contain a section called the Salluwb. These people have become completely absorbed but in northern Arabia they are regarded as being of inferior class to tribal arabs.

The tribal sections are as follows:

*Salluwb* in Kirsha and Saymah

*Ayāl Mughbariyah* in Saymah

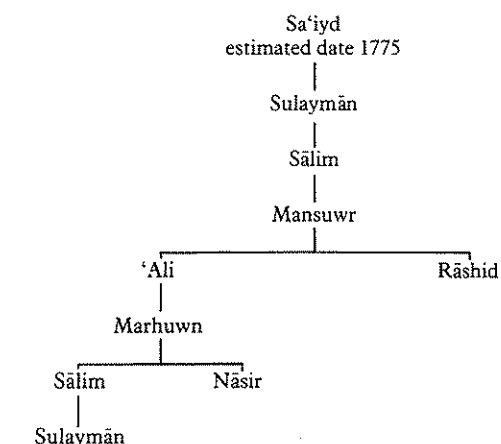
*Wilād Āl Murr* in Sumayl and Firq

*Wilād Dahmān*

Hadramiyiyn are now found also in Nakhl, Rustāq, Manah, Nizwa, Ibri, Raddah, Hiyl, Sayqah in Muttrah, Zukayt and Izki. They have no tribal camel *wasm* but their war-cry is: '*Awlād Abs*'. They are Ghāfariy and said to be related to the Nabāhinah of the Bani Riyām tribal complex around the Jabal Akhdar.

The tribe descends from Hadramuwt whose classical descent is as follows:

**Some Ayāl Mughbariyah**





## Bisyah and Ma'amuwr

### Shukayl

These descend from 'Amr Sā'sā' (p. 5), whose name they preserve in their *azwah*. They are Ghāfariy and in *suff* with the Banī Ghāfir, being at feud with the 'Abriyīn. They are closely related to the Āl Bu Falāh of Abu Dhabi, the Harāsiys, Bayt Kathiyr, Rawashiyyd and 'Awāmir. They hold the *hukm* of Bisyah in the *wilāyah* of Bahla and also live in Hajar and Sayfam.

Their camel *wasm* is: a line on the right side of the neck called *naqh* and a line on the right knee called *adhar*.

Their sections are:

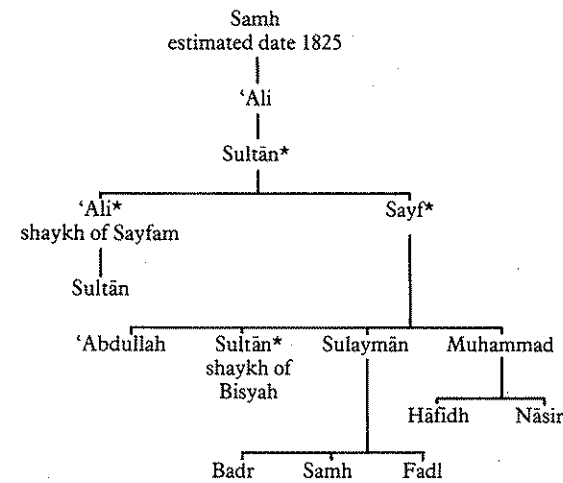
*Awlād Samh* the shaykhly section

*Ayāl Khamiys*

*Ayāl Khalaf* also called the *Awlād Mahmūd*

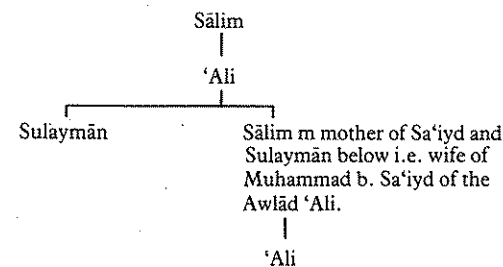
*Ayāl 'Ali*

### The Awlād Samh

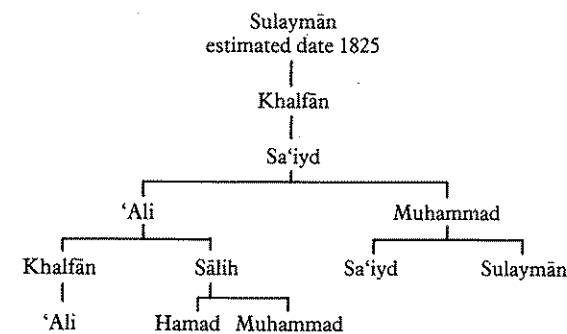


\*holders of the shaykhly office

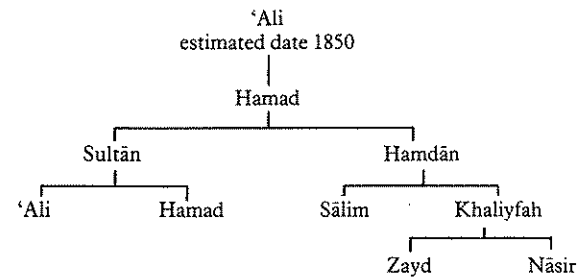
### Some Ayāl Khamiys



### Some Ayāl 'Ali



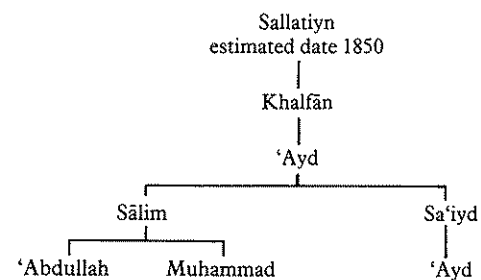
### Some Ayāl Khalaf of Bisyah



The Shukayl do not number many persons but maintain connections with members of the same descent group in closely neighbouring communities, and even intermarry with them to a greater extent than other descent groups, who still prefer to marry within the *khamsah* relationship of cousins.

### Mawlā Bani Shukayl

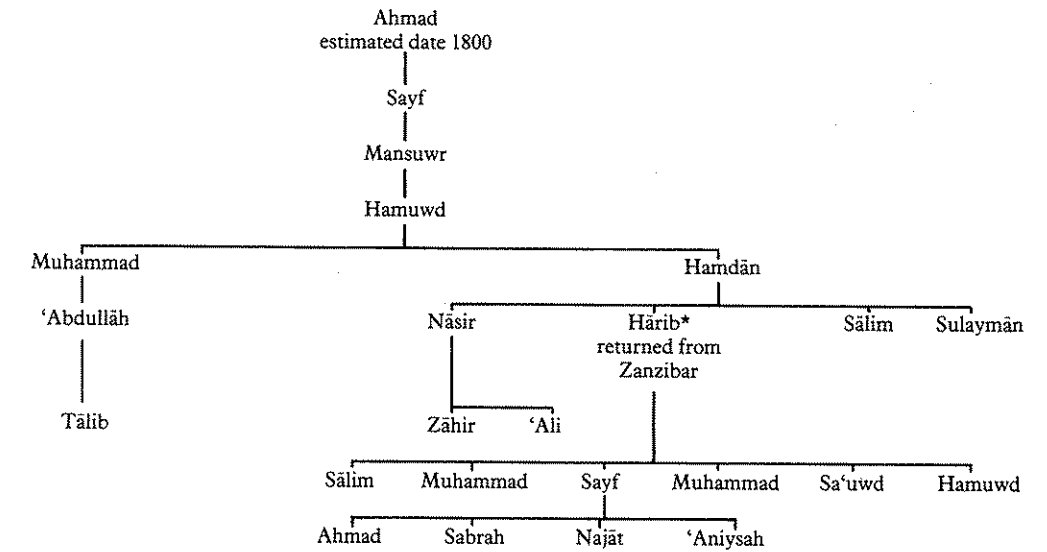
This family is said to be the only one.



## Āl Shā'il (sing. Shu'ayliy)

The Shā'il are found principally in Ma'amuwr, Bisyah, Habbi and Tana'am, where they follow the Mahamiyyd shaykhs of the Duruw' as a result of the Duruw' conquest of the town. They also look to Shaykh Sultān b. Sayf al Shukayliy in Bisyah. It is said by some that in reality they are the remains of the *hadr* of the Duruw' whose camel *wasm* they use. However, they do not share the *azwah* of the Duruw', that of the Shā'il being 'Yā *Awlād Masha'al*'. So the former story is not likely at all and should be disregarded. Other sources clearly state that the man perpetuated in their *azwah* is their ancestor. He was Masha'al b. Sālim, nicknamed Shu'ayl and the brother of the mother of Kindah b. Thawr. He had three

### Some Awlād 'Abdullāh of Bisyah



\* It is told that this family settled in Ma'amuwr on their return but were forced to move because their transistor radios were blamed for causing failure in the date crop.

sons; Rāshid, 'Abdullah and Khamiys. The Āl Shā'il, possibly more than other tribes in the immediate area, have a strong tradition of emigration to Zanzibar and they also have a wholesome reputation for piety. In the past they have mainly married amongst themselves but today they intermarry with the Shukayl and there are marital connections with the Kharuws and the Royal Family through their Zanzibary connections with the Banī Kharuws.

Their sections are three in number as follows:

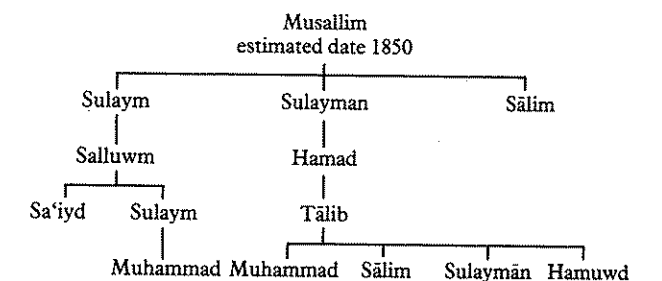
*Awlād Rāshid* including the *Awlād Humayd*

*Awlād 'Abdullāh*

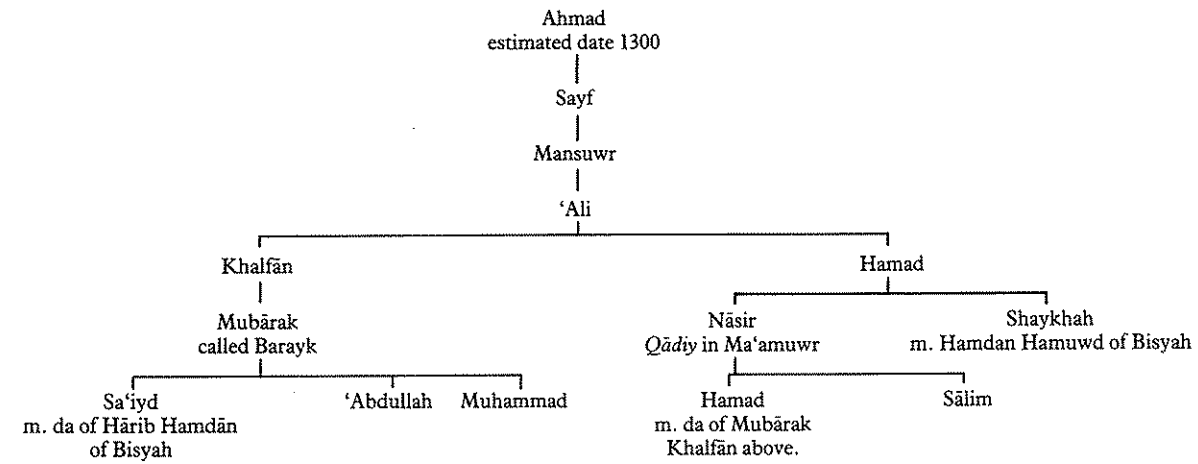
*Awlād Khamiys*

They also own property in Nizwa and Fiyl.

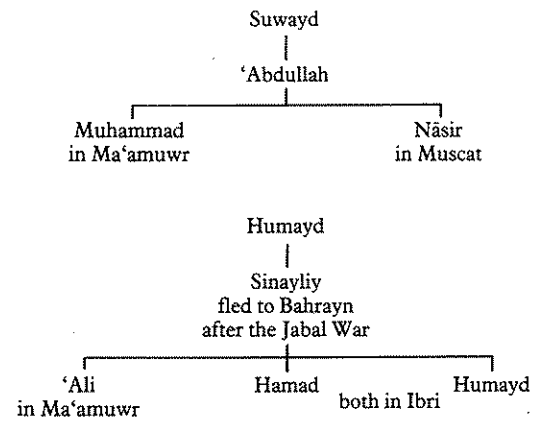
### Some Awlād 'Abdullah of Habbi



**Some Awlād 'Abdullah of Ma'amuwr**

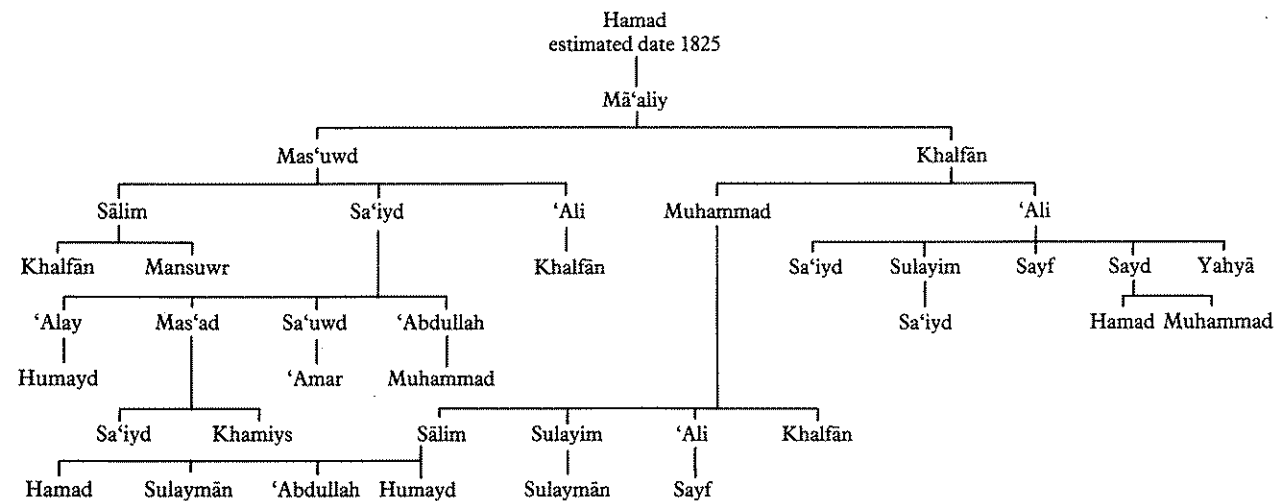


**Some Awlād Rāshid**

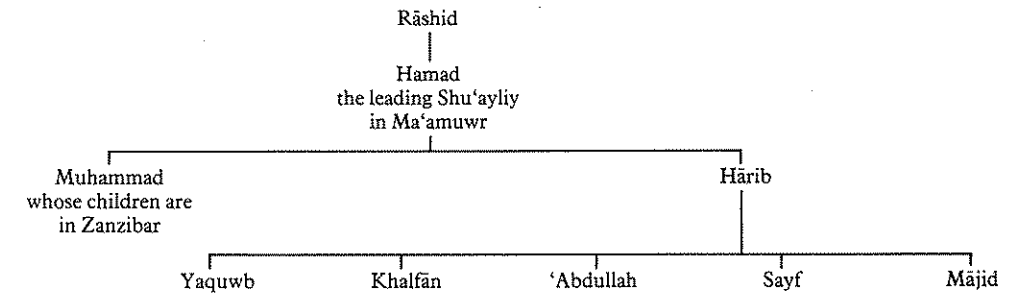


The two small trees vividly show how much a descent group can be spread through various community groups.

**Some Awlād Rāshid from Bisyah**



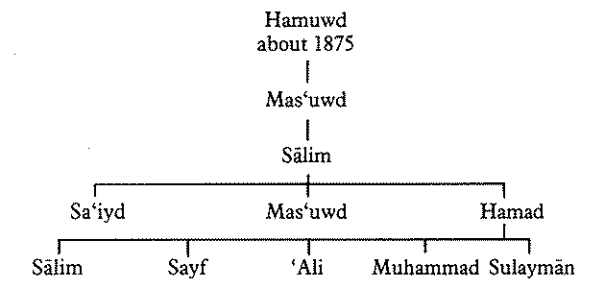
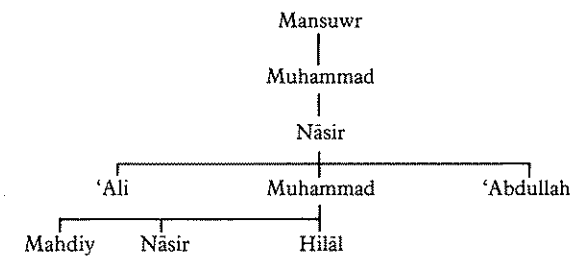
**Some Awlād Rāshid of Ma'amuwr**



**Some Bani 'Awf from Bisyah**

The Bani 'Awf are Awlād Wā'il and use this as their *azwah*, in common with the Jassās, Kulayb or Kalbān, Harrasiyyin, Bani Subh, Bani Salmān and Bani Bakr. Bani 'Awf are found mainly in Rustāq, Wadi Bani 'Awf, Fara', Bahla, Nakhl, Mutiy Bisyah and Izki (qv).

**Some Awlād Khamiys from Ma'amuwr**



In Bisyah the people who are said to be of possible Ād origin are called the Āi Rajayb (sing. Rajabiy). They are found in this name at Jabriyn and Bahla also, and are usually weavers by trade. In Ma'amuwr, Habbi and Mahyuwl they have the name of the Hakmiyyin (sing. Hakmiy) and the Awlād 'Umr.

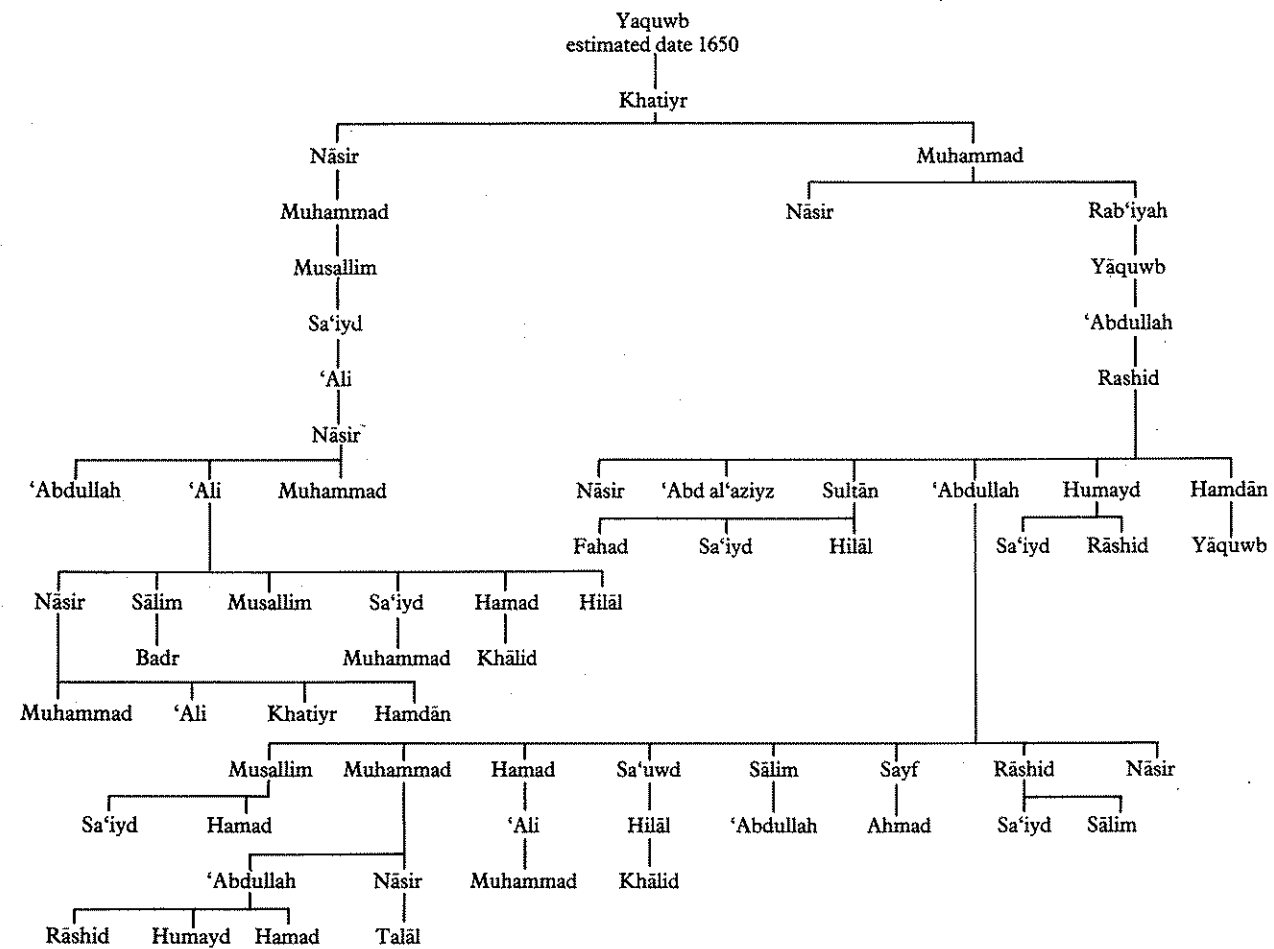
Another descent group which is widely dispersed throughout a large number of community groups.

**The Town of Ibri**

**Yaqiyb of Ibri**

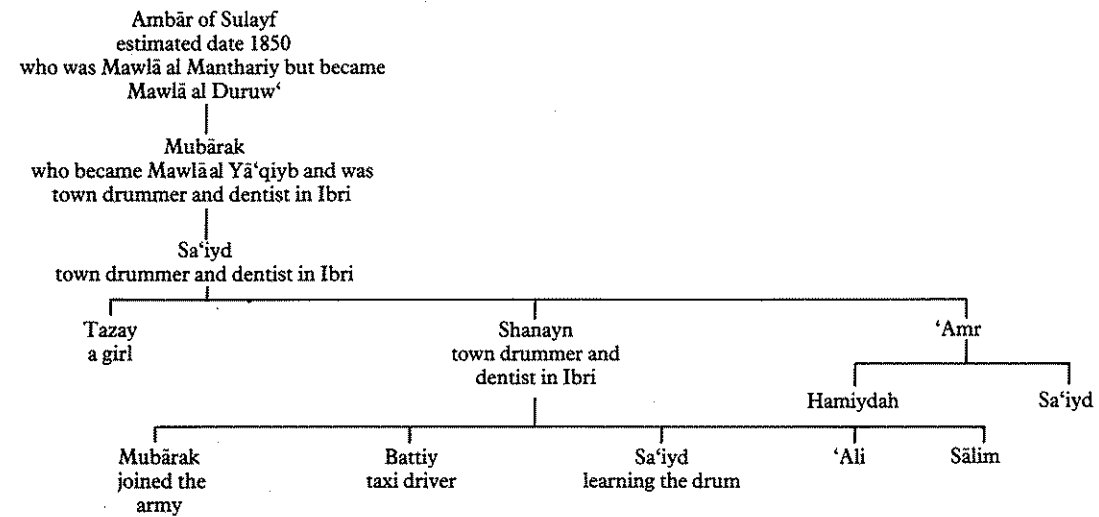
Descended from Yaqub of whom it is related that, fleeing from the Yemen because of a blood-feud, he arrived in Ibri at the time of the Portuguese occupation. He was told by the inhabitants of the town that if he could throw out their oppressors he could rule over them instead. However, they did not think he had much chance of success. Yaqub assured them that he would

try and accordingly presented himself at the castle gate and pretending to be a wandering barber he was admitted. Having shaved the commander, Yaqub cut the man's throat and opened the gates to the Arabs. This is a charming story but it is not recorded that the Portuguese ever occupied Ibri with a garrison.



The Yā'qiyb were at feud with the Bani Ghāfir but have long been friends and allies of the Duruw'. They are of Qahtāniy descent from Jadhān of the Halab according to written sources.

### Some Mawlā Yā'qiyb of Ibrī



This family is of great interest as it indicates a possible mobility of tribal associations for people of *mawlā* stock. It may be of course, that their present *mawlā* status is an enhancement of their social position and that 'Ambar and Mubārak were slaves and their apparent mobility was merely a matter of their being sold as 'abiyd. This would not be a matter which they would divulge!

The following tribes follow the Yā'qiyb of Ibrī:  
Shanadiyd (sing. *Shanduwdiy*) possibly of Ad origin  
*Qamāsha'h*

*Shayābinah* (sing. *Shaybaniy*) Mahāruwqiy in origin from Adam q.v but notice name change.  
*Sawwāwafah* (sing. *Sawāfiy*) used to live in Tana'am but destroyed by Muhammad b. Nāsir al Ghāfariy at the beginning of the eighteenth century and today very few in number.

*Bani Wā'al* (sing. *Wā'aliy*) Maharuwqiys from Adam in origin q.v.

*Āl Lazuw*

*Āl Ma'anah* of Hujar

*Bani Jassās*

*Maqābiyl*

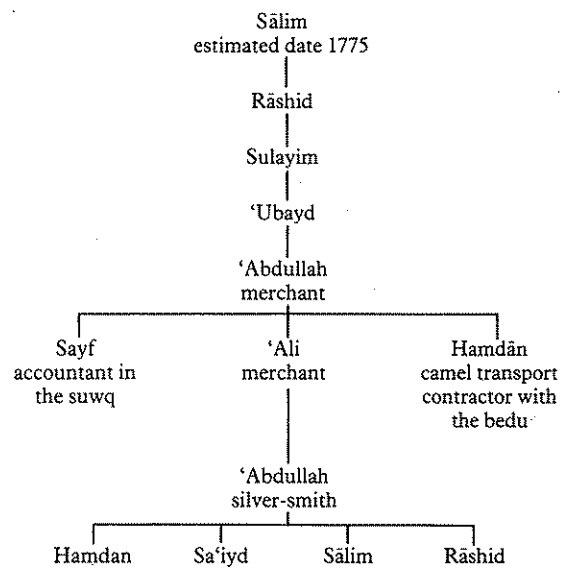
*Nazawwanah*

*Majaraf* from the Bani Kalbān in origin.

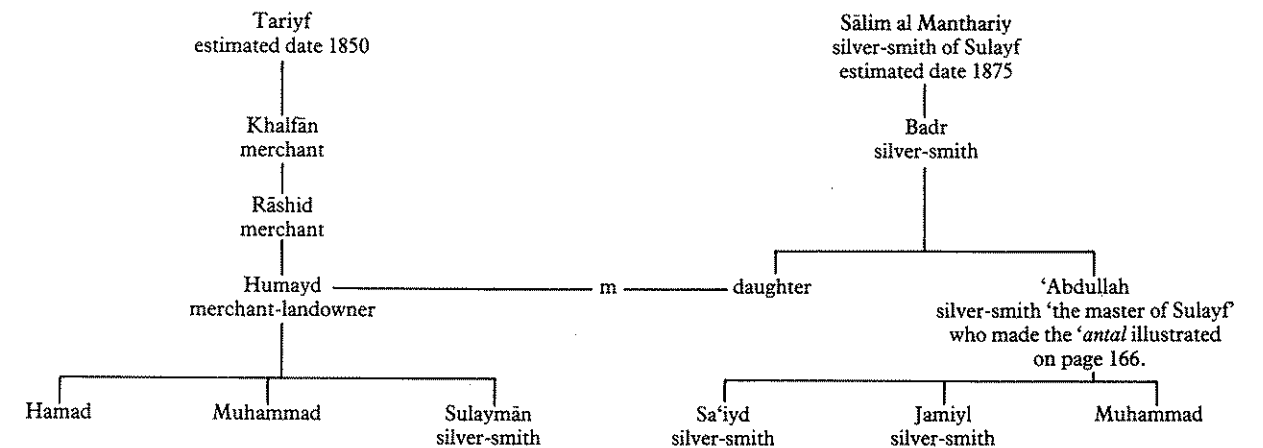
### Silver Merchants in Ibrī

*Saqaytiyyn*

Said to be the original inhabitants of Ibrī, about 50 strong in all.

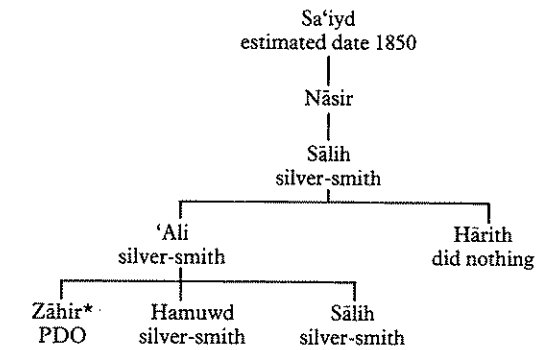


### Bani Wā'al Maharuwqiy of Ibrī



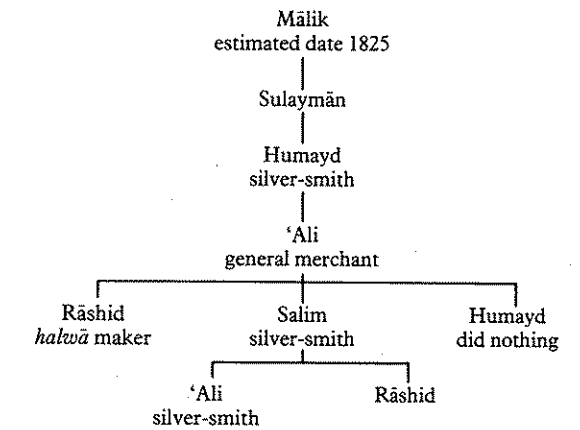
This illustrates a family marrying for community reasons and outside its descent group.

### Shariyanah of 'Abriyyn In Ibrī

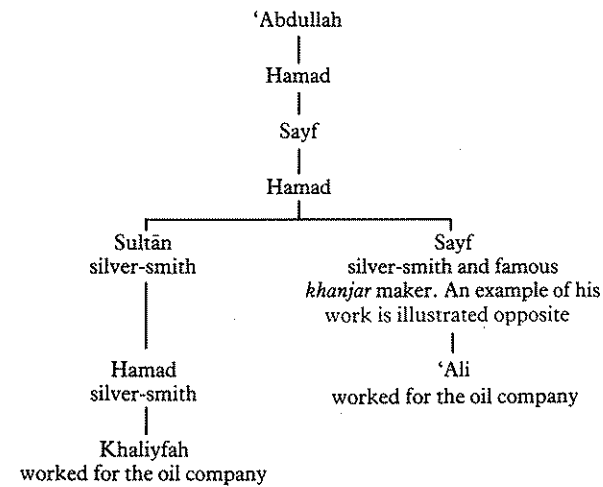


\* Maker of the silver decoration on the gun illustrated on p. 22.

### Maharuwqiy of Ibrī

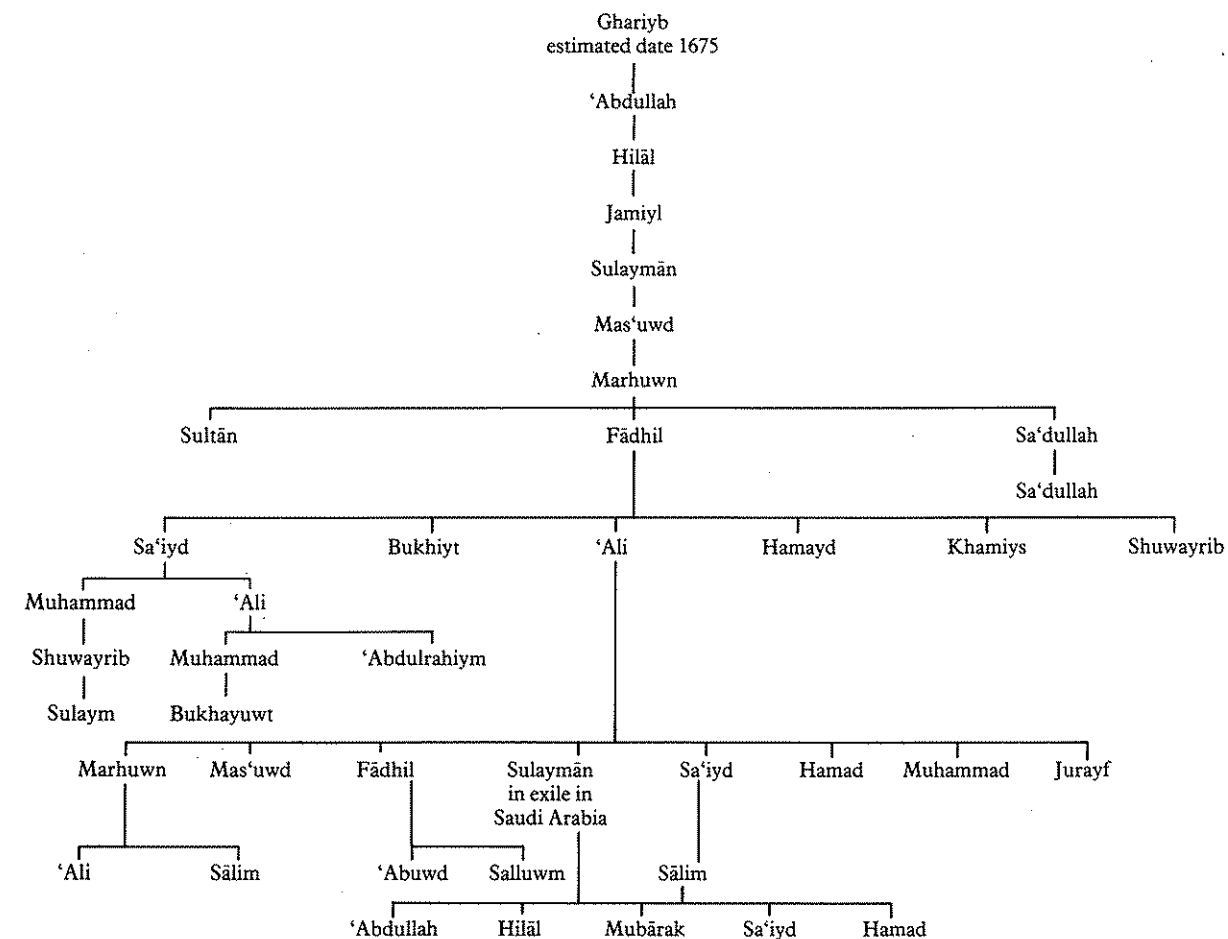


**Bani Shaybāniy, Maharuwqiyy of Ibri**



This tree demonstrates in a small way how the attraction of working for the oil company affects local trades.

**Awlād Ghariyb of Jurayf (sing. Mujarafiyy)**



**Bani Kalbān**

Hināwiy said to descend from Wā’il of ‘Azd, and at feud with the Bani Ghāfir. They are also said to be Nizāriyy of Awlād Hamdān stock.

Capital al-Buraydah

Has sections as follows:

- Bani Ghariyb*
- Bani Kulayb*
- Bani Wā’il*
- Minādhirah*
- Bani ‘Abs*
- Bani Sālim ‘Aziyy*
- Bani Abbāsiyy*
- Jurayf shaykhly section*
- Awlād Ghariyb*
- Awlād Sa‘ad*
- Awlād Fahduwl*
- Awlād Wā’il*



Omani *khanjar*. This example was made by Sayf b. Hamad al Shaybāniyy of Ibri and presented to the author by Shaykh Hamad b. Muhammad al Mahmuwdi al Duruw‘iyy. In form it is typical of the Dhāhirah region of Oman and shows strong affinities with the daggers produced in the area of the United Arab Emirates. Those more typical of Oman have handles made of ivory of giraffe horn and the scabbard is of woven silver thread.

Arabia. Further to the north they have provided ruling dynasties but after their arrival in Hadramawt they seem to have replaced the pre-Islamic tribal intermediaries who were probably the Mashāyikh. This they have done very successfully and have taken over the function of negotiation between quarrelling tribal factions as well as the guardianship of various shrines. At this point it is necessary to mention that the title Sayyid in Oman is really only applied to qualified members of the ruling family of the Al Bu Sa‘iyd who are not from this descent. It was the success of the Ibādiyy sect of Islam in the mountains of Oman that prevented the Sāda from penetrating very far into Omani territory. As has been mentioned they are only found with the Janabah of Suwr, and there is a tradition that the Majā‘aliyy shaykhs of that tribe are also of Sāda descent. The houses in these instances being the Āl Saqāf and the Abu Bakr. It is only in Dhufar that a significant number of Sāda have been able to settle and prosper. As a group they do not have shaykhs but appoint representatives to act for them with the Omani government.

The second tribe chosen is the Yāfa‘iyy. These represent a tradition of mercenary soldiering common in tribal Arabia. It is devoid of political commitment and the Yāfa‘iyy are more famous than others for this. They went to Hyderabad in India to form a bodyguard for the Nizams, and wealth following their endeavours enabled them to found colonies along the southern coast of Arabia and ruling houses too. Examples of this are the Qu‘aytiyy Sultanate of Mukallā and Shihr (see below) and their predecessors the Naqiybs of Mukallā. In Dhufar they are today quite well distributed over the Salālāh plain where they are the descendants of mercenaries recruited by the Āl Bu Sa‘iydiyy Sultan, Taymuwr b. Faysal.

**The Sāda**

*Bā Alawiy Al Bu ‘Amr* in Salālāh, Hawf and Marbat numbering 200.

*Bin Aqiyl*

*Bin Muhammad Hasan*

*Al Bu ‘Abuwd* in Salālāh, Hawf and Awqad, numbering 200.

*Al Ibrāhiym*

*Al Dhahab*

*Al Sabāh*

*Al Qāf* in Marbat

*Al Saqāf* in Salālāh and Hafar.

*Al Muqaybil* (al Muqbil)

**Sa‘aduwn**

*Bayt Mahāt b. Sa‘iyd* called Āl Howyit which means people of the snake. This is because a snake was seen wrapped round the arm of Mahāt when he was a baby.

*Bayt Ahmad b. Sa‘iyd*

*Bayt ‘Ali b. Sa‘iyd*

*Bayt Amr b. Sa‘iyd*

*Bayt Suhayl b. Sa‘iyd*

*Bayt Mu‘amr b. Amr b. Sa‘iyd*

**Some Hadr of Dhufar**

As was seen with the Dhufariyy bedu there are strong connections with the Hadramawt region and indeed a large part of the *hadr* of Dhufar are settled sections of bedu tribes. However, one can just as easily say that the bedu are bedu sections of *hadr* tribes; this is because in Dhufar the emphasis has changed and one is describing tribes which exhibit both types of person in their structure whereas in Oman there is more discretion between *hadr* and bedu, though even there the two ways of life are reflected in the same descent group.

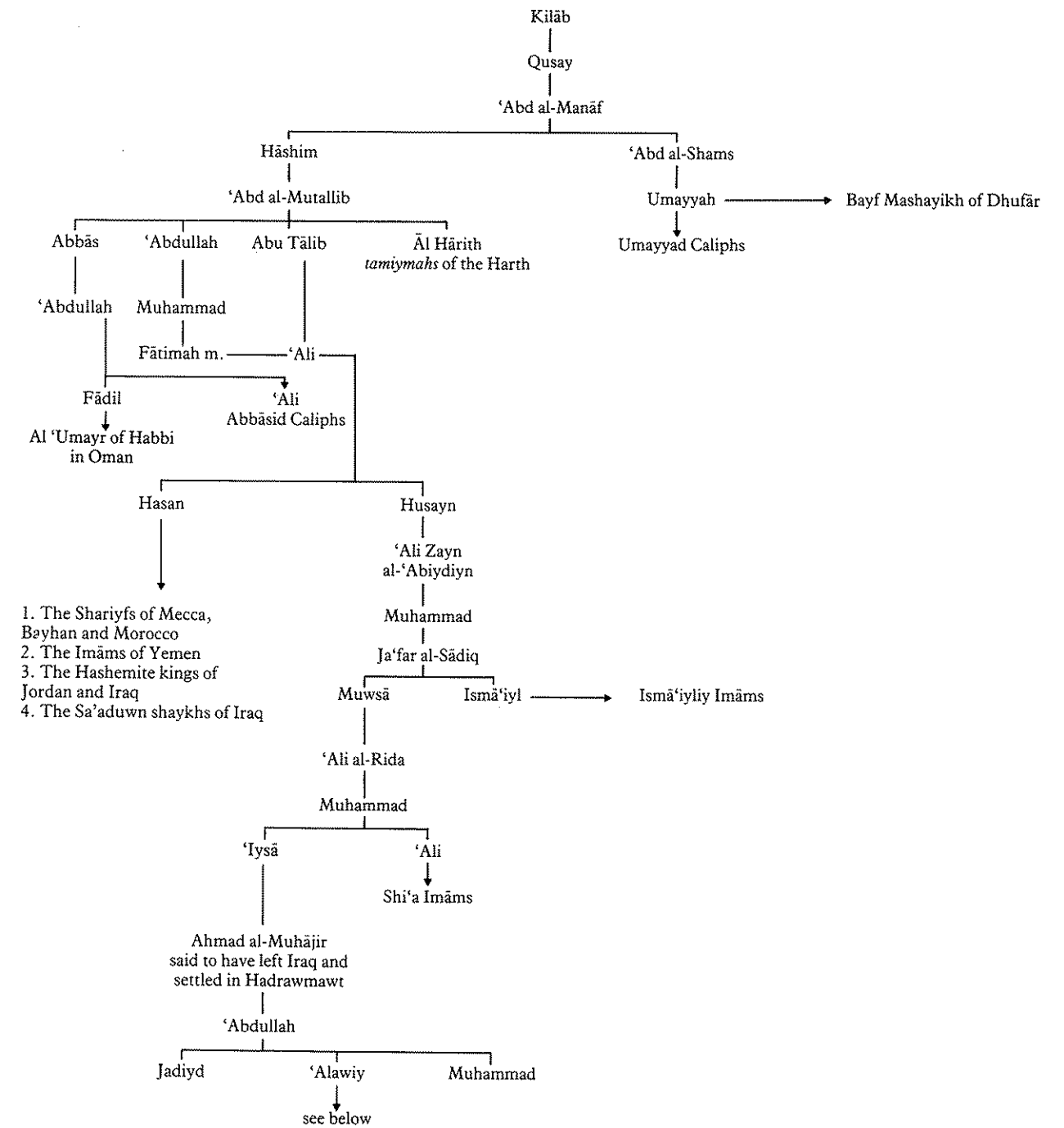
The purely *hadr* tribes in Dhufar are likewise strongly connected with Hadramawt, and two have been chosen because they represent features of tribal life other than the purely *hadr* one.

These are the Sāda (sing. Sayyid) descendants of the Prophet’s nephew and son-in-law ‘Ali b. Abi Tālib. These, as reference to the family tree amply shows, have had a very prominent part to play in the history of

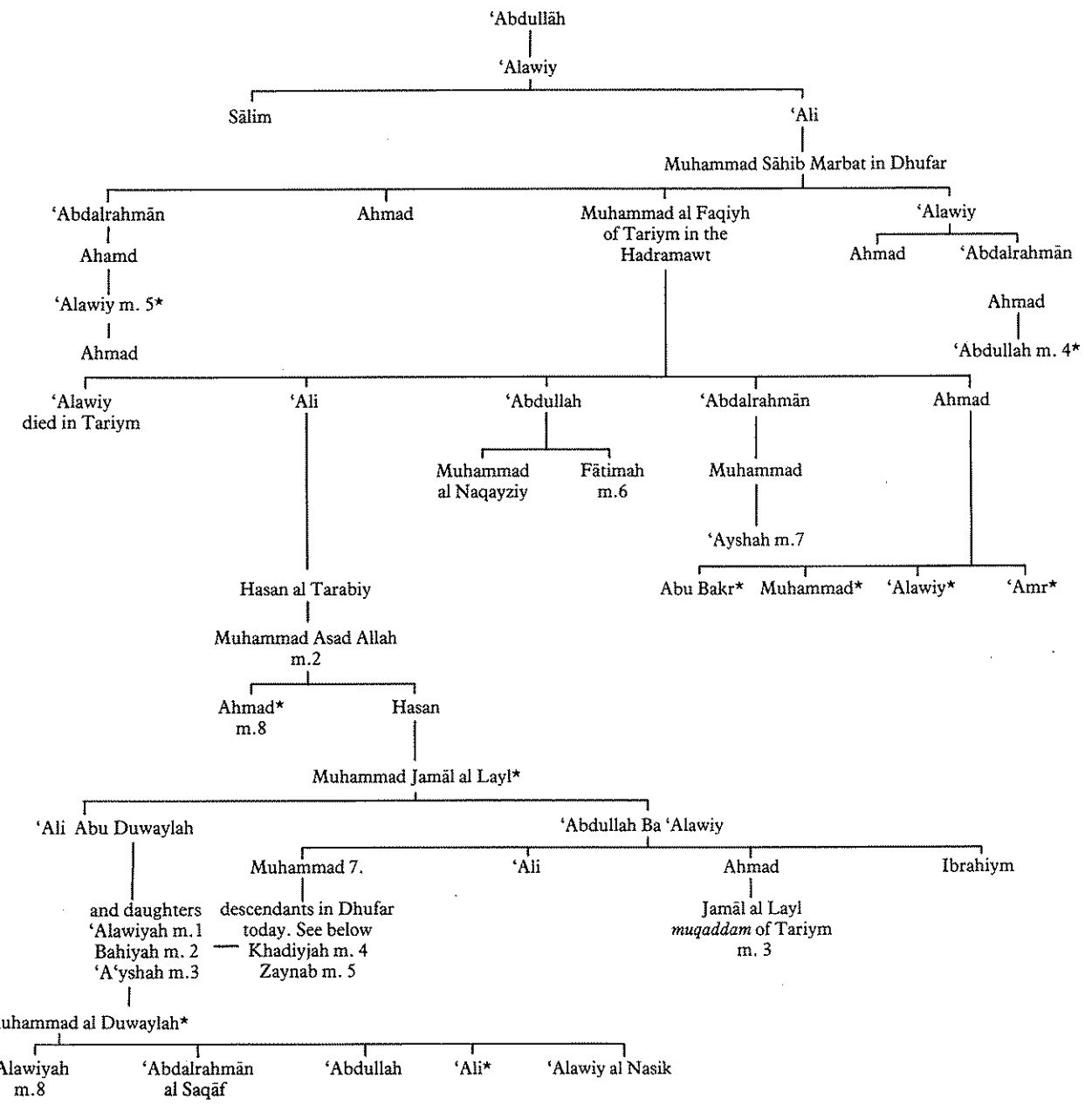


Omani domestic silver. The coffee-pot was made in Nizwa by Rāshid b. Khalfān al Sabāhiy and is a very fine example of the traditional Omani coffee-pot. The small spice-box next to it also comes from Nizwa. The tray and the three bowls were made in Muttrah and exhibit a strong Indian influence in their design. The bowl in the centre has a spout and is the same shape as more common ones made in copper which act as jugs. The silver incense burner on the right was also made in Muttrah and is interesting in that it is decorated in a typically Omani pattern, but as an object it is purely Indian in concept. The author was told that it was a copy of one made by Mappin and Webb for the late Sultan Sa'iyd b. Taymuwr. It thus represents a very interesting mixture of style and workmanship.

*A Descent of the Bani Hāshim Quraysh to show the relationships of the descent group today.*

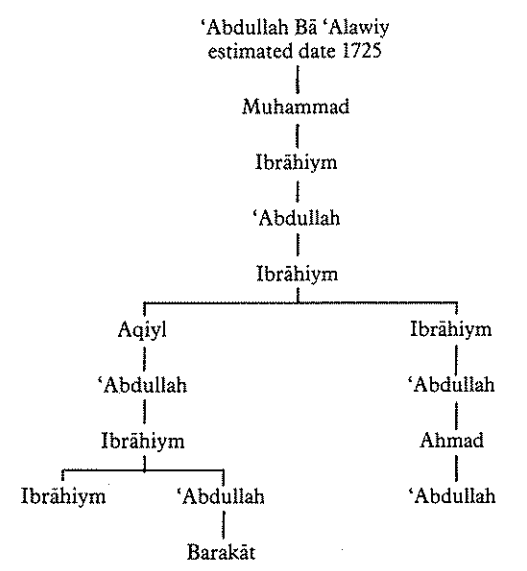


1. The Shariyfs of Mecca, Bayhan and Morocco
2. The Imāms of Yemen
3. The Hashemite kings of Jordan and Iraq
4. The Sa'aduwn shaykhs of Iraq



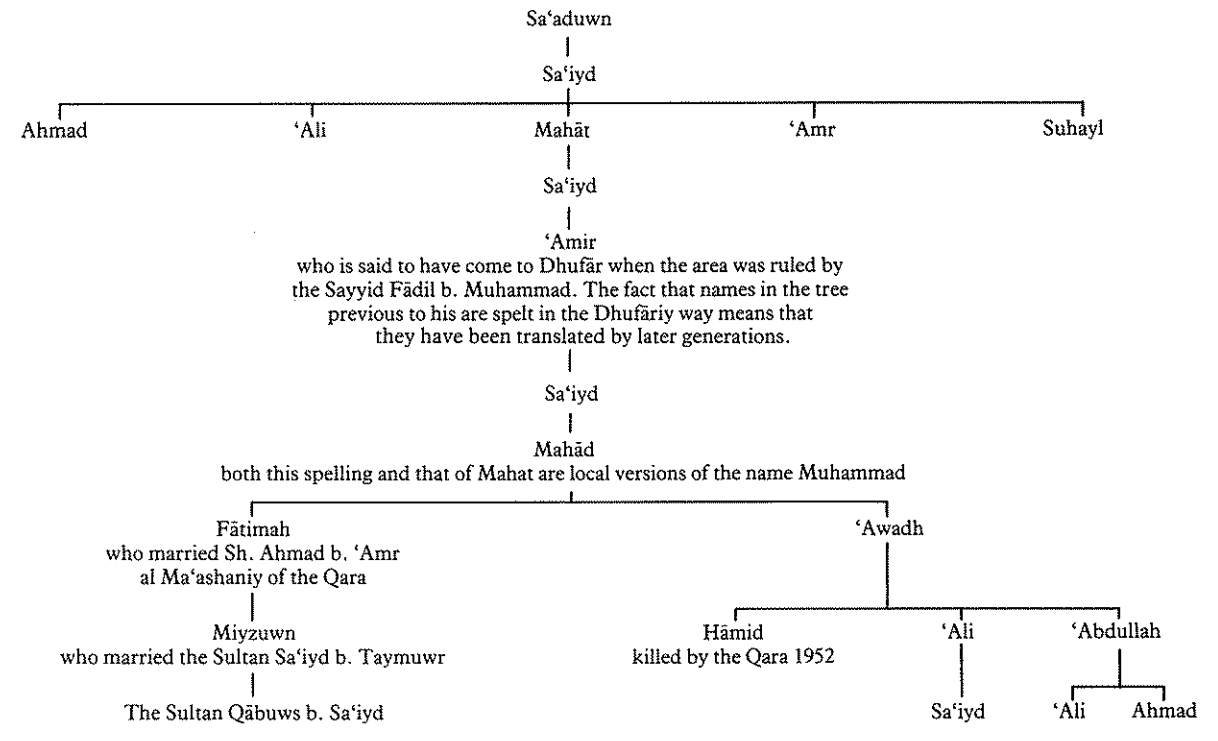
The persons with asterisks gave rise to Sayyidiy houses in South Arabia.

**Some Ba 'Alawiy Sāda of Dhufar**



**Descent of the Sa'aduwn Sāda in Dhufar**

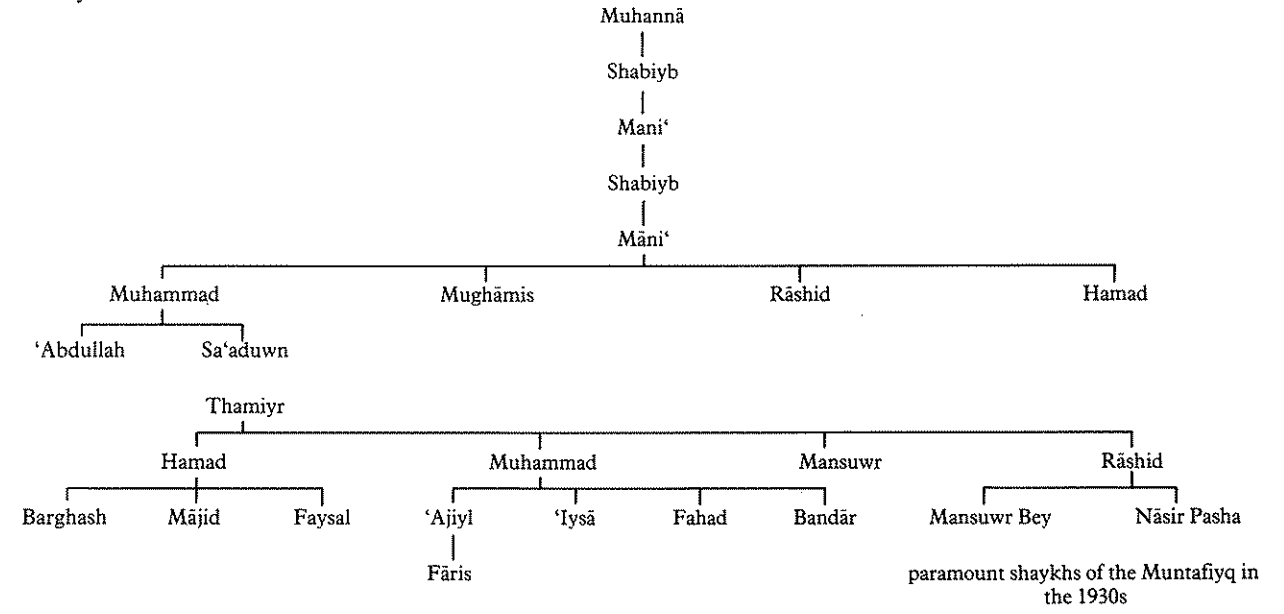
The attribution to an origin with the Sa'aduwn of Iraq depends solely on local tradition. The name Sa'aduwn being possessed by the eponymous ancestor of the Muntafiyq Shaykhs as shown in the following tree.

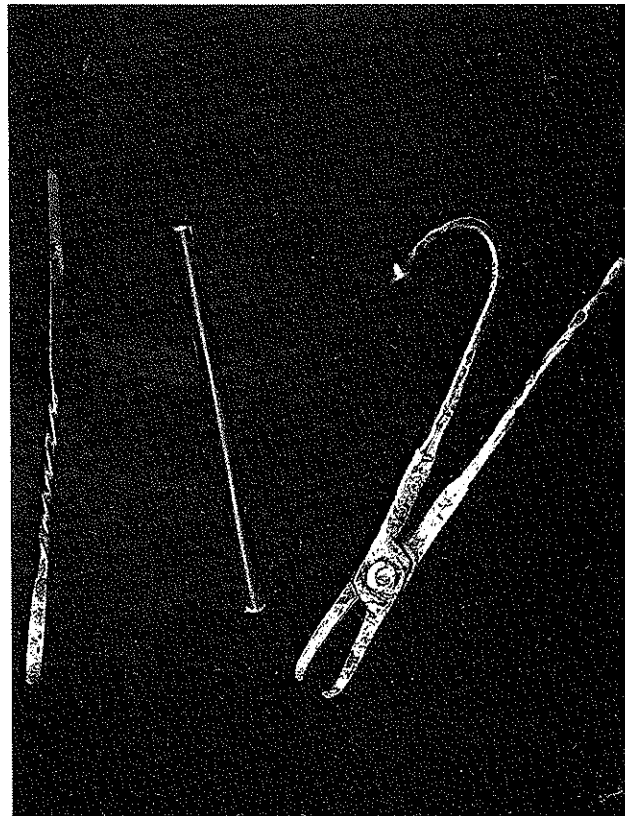


**A descent of the Sa'aduwn Shaykhs of the Muntafiyq of Iraq**

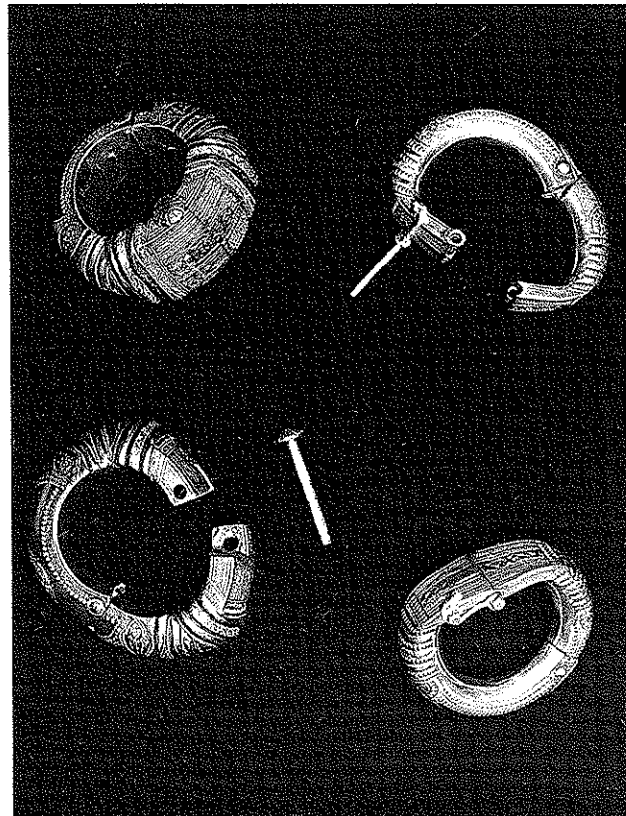
The Sa'aduwn of Iraq, called the Al Shabiyb, descend from one of the Ashraf of Mecca whose father settled with the Bani Malik. The son survived a war in the area of the southern Euphrates and his progeny founded the shaykhly house which ruled so powerfully over the Muntafiyq confederation.

**Al Shabiyb**





Dental equipment. Hand made ironwork from Ibbi. The purpose of the gouge and the pliers is obvious. The rod in the centre of the picture is used to hold down the tongue. The equipment belonged to Shanayn b. Sa'iyd in whose family it had been used for three generations.



Silver anklets. The upper pair are a magnificent example of the 'antal' of northern Oman. They were made by 'Abdullah b. Badr al Manthariy who is known as the Master of Sulayf and whose family tree is in the Ibbi section of chapter four. They are to be compared with the lower pair which come from Suwr. These are distinctively different and whilst of less sophisticated workmanship they retain the same distribution of design and use; on the flat face where they fasten is a simplified version of the rose and curled leaf pattern. They are also one of the few pieces which possess a 'mark'. This is -50% and NBRWT (or Th).

**The Yāfa'iy of Dhufar.**

*Al Jahariy\** a section of the Mawstah in Yāfa', to which section belong the Qā'itiy sultans of Mukalla; at Rakhyuwt, Marbāt, Tāqah, al Husn, Salalah, Dahariyz, Sidh and on the Dhufar mountains. They are said to be Hamyritic in origin and those sections with an asterisk have retained the names of their original sections in Yāfa'.

- Bayt al 'Alawiy*
- Bayt Sālim Nāsir*
- Bayt al Ashwal*
- Bayt al Shaybah*
- Bayt al Muharram*

*Bayt b. Saba'ah\**, so-called because an ancestor slew seven men.

*Al Yaziydiy\** a section of the Bani Qāsidi in Yāfa' to which

belong the Afyfiy Sultans of Lower Yāfa', at Tāqah, Marbāt and Sidh.

- Bayt Ahmad*
- Bayt Shaykhān*
- Bayt 'Ansiy*

*Al Kaladiy\** at Rakhyuwt and Salala  
*Al al-Fadaliy\** at Salala, Hafar and Awqad (a section of the Āl Dhabiyy in Yāfa'.)

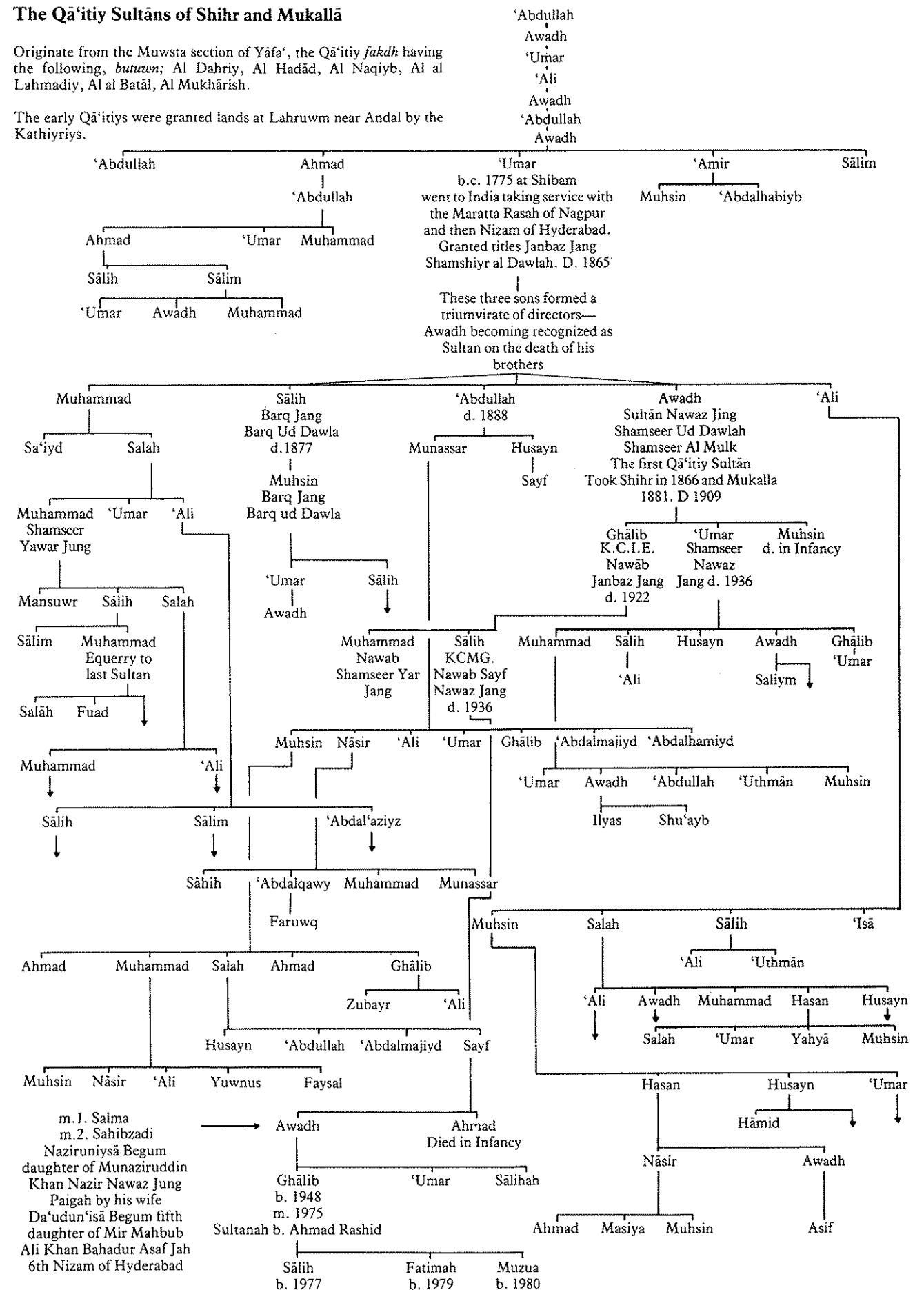
*Bayt al-Qalam* at Marbāt and Salala.

In the Hadramawt they live in Shibām, Qatn, al-Shihr, Mukalla, Hijriyn and Hawrah, where their sections are said to be the Āl Batātiy, Āl Bu 'As, Bani 'Arhd and Āl Dharā'ib. Their origins stem from the Yāfa'iy territories called the Upper and Lower Yāfa'iy Sultanates in the Western Aden Protectorate.

**The Qā'itiy Sultāns of Shihr and Mukallā**

Originate from the Muwsta section of Yāfa', the Qā'itiy *fakdh* having the following, *butuwn*; Al Dahriy, Al Hadād, Al Naqiyb, Al al Lahmadiy, Al al Batāl, Al Mukhārish.

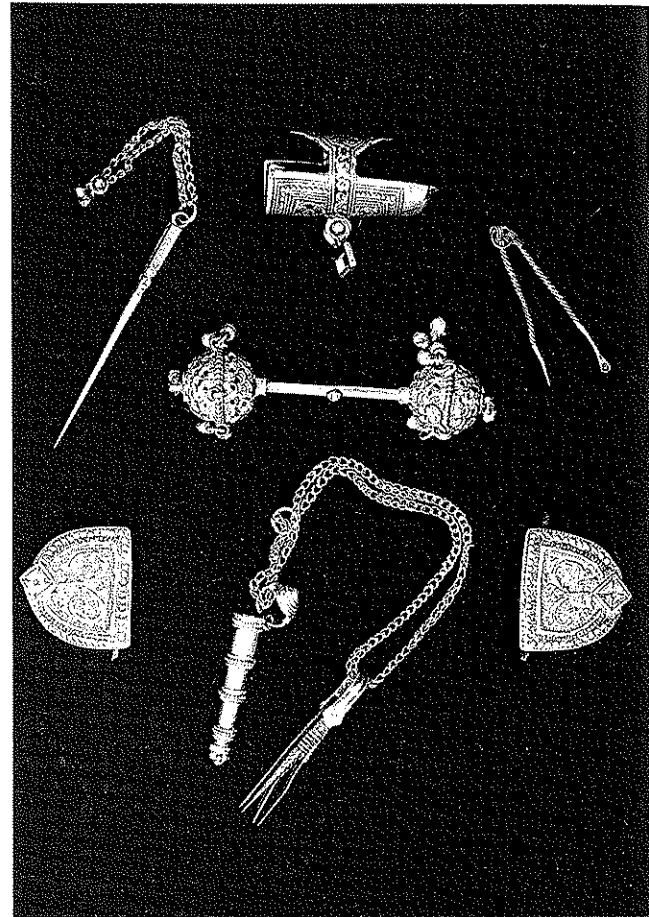
The early Qā'itiy were granted lands at Lahruwm near Andal by the Kathiyyriys.



## Chapter Six OMANI FOLKLORE



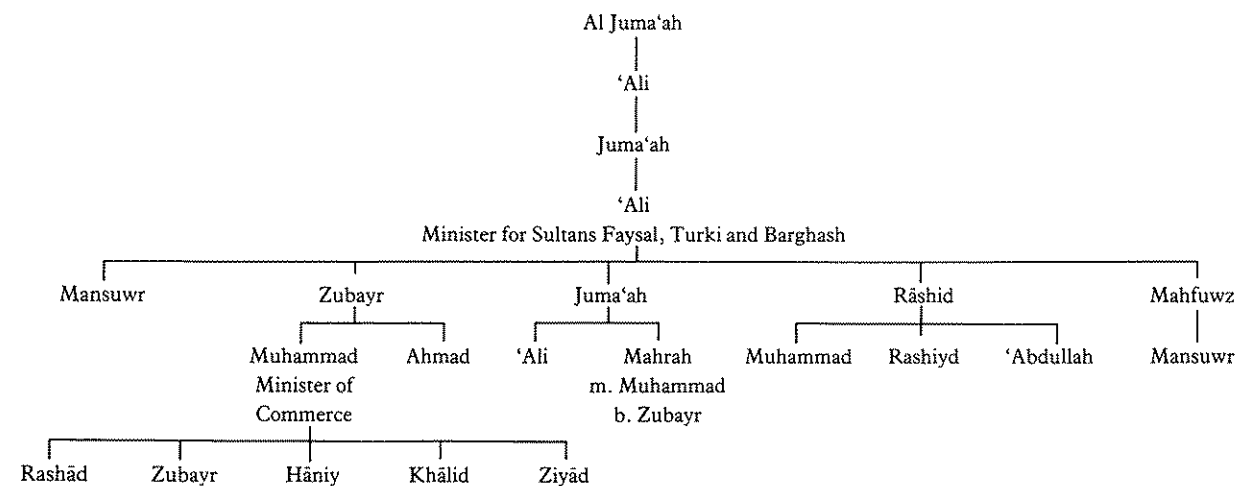
Omani silver. Apart from the twisted rope bracelet and the snaffle, the other objects in the picture are a silver belt buckle of a common type from Nizwa, and a 'hand of Fātimah' which has come from the top of a staff used for ceremonial purposes by the Hyderabadis of Muttrah. The silver pipe and tobacco pouch exhibit Omani wire-work and the object was made by an expatriate Omani living in Dubai.



Silver objects. Top right is a Nizwa-made rifle ornament and below it a baby's rattle which was probably imported from India. However, it is of a type not uncommon in Muscat. To the left of this group is a silver bodkin which is used to pierce the cloth used in making the characteristic Omani cap before the pattern is embroidered. To the right is a small instrument for cleaning the ears; an object much used in Renaissance Europe and possibly introduced by the Portuguese. Below this is a *manqash*, a set of tweezers connected to their case by a chain. On either side of this is a pair of silver belt ornaments made in Nizwa.

### A recently emerged prominent family

A family of Baluch origin illustrating both arabisation and absorption. The genealogy speaks for itself.



It was in about A.D. 630 that Islam replaced the old pagan religions in Oman, that is some four hundred years after the first Arab occupation of the territory, and there is much folklore that has both remained from these times and been built up since. Doubtless too, there has been much mixing of the two.

As has been mentioned earlier the inhabitants of Izki still remember the name of the pagan idol that was worshipped in their midst and for long the witches of Oman have been famous, not only in their own land, which is said by some to be the birthplace of Sinbad the Sailor, but throughout the whole Gulf region. It is in some sense amusing to note that so much of this sort has survived under the very nose of the Ibādiyy Imamate whose strict teaching naturally frowns on it.

The witches are of two kinds. One good and called an 'ālim or wise man, one called a *sāhir*; it would seem that usually both are male. Often the good ones have a kind of club called a *zār* from which benefits to health and wealth can be obtained. The bad witches are characterised by their possession of hyenas upon which they ride at night and which they can summon from great distances with a special call. The witches wear clothes made from cloth that has been eaten by the animal and withdrawn from its anus. These bad witches either live on human flesh or the heart buds of palm trees; in the former case the victim is seized at night having been scented out by the hyena and becomes invisible to his fellow men, though he can see them clearly enough. He will not die however until the time appointed by God. The witch consumes the flesh of his victims by hanging them up by the heels and shaking them until the meat falls from the bones, the victim then being fattened up for another meal later.

Throughout Oman there are places and shrines which vary from the quasi-Islamic mosque to outright non-Islamic sites. At this point it should be said that these matters must be taken with the utmost seriousness and respect. That they exist at all is a matter of near shame to serious Muslims and yet they should not be laughed at as being silly superstitions. The important thing is that some people do believe in them, not whether they are true or not. That there are so many stories and so many shrines points to a continued and universal series of beliefs which are an integral part of the culture of the population.

At Ghabbi, a very prosperous but now ruined town near 'Arāqi in the northern Dhāhirah there is a shrine called the Masjid Shabiyb. Here it is the practice at the full moon to make offerings of ceremonial meals for which the goats are slaughtered outside the *masjid*. Incense is spattered in the *mīhrāb*, the niche in the wall facing the Holy City of Mecca, and attached to the shrine is the belief in healing whereby a cure is affected if the clothes of the afflicted person are left in the *masjid*. This seems to be mainly done for children and the rites are carried out in the main by women.

The story of Shabiyb is as follows. He was an 'ālim of Ghabbi, and at the time of the great festival of the Pilgrimage he visited a woman whose son was away in the Holy City. She apologised that her hospitality was sparse explaining that as her son was away he was unable to help her. Shabiyb told her that this was unimportant but that it was sad for her that her son was unable to share the feast with her. He then said that he would take a part of her small meal to Mecca for her son. This he did and returned to Ghabbi the same day. When the inhabitants heard about this they were sure that Shabiyb was a witch and so they took him outside the town and killed him. However, when they came to lift his body to take it away for burial they found that they were unable to do so. Because of this they cut it in half and buried it where it lay. The following night the *masjid* that is there today came down out of the sky and covered the body of the good Shabiyb.

At the Masjid Qashah in 'Ibri, which is miraculously built without the use of wood, favours will be granted at the mere promise of a gift to the *masjid*. In this way cures are said to be instantly effected, but if the promise is not kept the illness will return redoubled in strength.

Nearby, the village of Sulayf provides interesting tales too. On the desert side of the town there is a large *ghāf* tree which stands by itself surrounded by a rim of stones. Today it is used as a meeting place, because the venerable tree is said to bring peace to those sitting under it. And on the far side of Sulayf from the tree there is a plain walled enclosure called the Masjid Khudr. Here, Khudr (Khidr), or the Green Man, is said to have come from the west but there are numerous stories about him all over the Arab world. The usual one seems to be



A group of objects showing the kind of thing that is often used as an offering. The incense burner at the top left of the picture has been deliberately broken, but the coffee cups remain whole. The small iron children's bracelets are locally made, as is the one made from strips of palm-leaf.

unknown in Sulayf but relates that Khudr (al Khādir) was either a messenger from God who guided the Prophet Muwsā towards patience with divine ways or a servant of the Prophet who accomplished the same object. Within the enclosure the *mihrah* has been built in the open about two thirds of the distance from the entrance to the back wall, and the whole structure is on a small eminence where it is said to replace a mosque that was swept away in a flood. Here it is the practice to offer incense and incense-burners, fish, coffee-cups, rice and coffee-beans. Originally the place was the property of the Marashiyd but today it is administered by the *wakiyl* of the *falaj*, some of the water of which is sold to provide funds for the restoration of the mosque. The office of *wakiyl* is hereditary and the present holder's family is as below, each man who has held office as *wakiyl* being denoted with an asterisk.

There is another Masjid Khidr at Bisyah and doubtless there are others. At Bisyah, too, there is the grave of the 'Alim Rakiyb al Husayn which is called the Qabr Muslim. Every Thursday and Friday light ascends from the Qabr to heaven so replacing the blessings poured down to earth. This shrine is mainly medicinal in its use. Nearby lie the remains of the ancient cities of Salluwat and Shuw'. Now eroded to small mounds they are guarded by a *jinn*, not necessarily a malignant spirit. It is said that should anything be removed from the site it will be mysteriously returned and should anyone be so bold as to take water from the *falaj* of Salluwat they will fall sick and die.

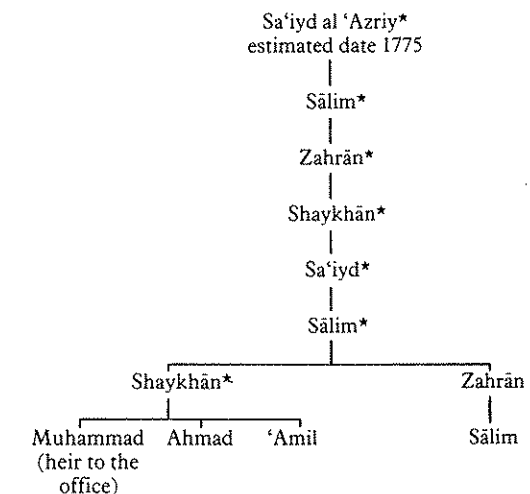
A story which strikes a chord of memory in the Western mind, as indeed several of these do, is the one about the Imam who shouted at the Jabal Khawr when passing nearby and having found that his companions were without water. The Imam informed the mountain of his plight and water appeared but, as the people rushed forward to drink, a voice warned them that they would have to drink it at once and that should they fill their water-skins and take any away they would die. On the coast near Muscat are two shrines which offer healing and blessings to their devotees. However they are comparatively recent and date to the last few hundred years. It is not possible to say whether they represent

new additions on old foundations or not. Near Qurum which is just north of Muttrah there is a tomb on the top of the beach. It is quite a small structure decorated with flags and surrounded by a palm-frond fence. This is the shrine of an 'ālim called 'Abād who was killed by the Duruw' bedu when they were raiding the coast. It would seem that the unfortunate man was cut in two. It is told that for some years after his death he was to be seen at night doing his ablutions with a silver jug before praying. Whilst he is not seen nowadays a visit here will cure sickness and bring children to women who are barren. The grave of a Chinaman called Dinajiy is marked by a cave on the coast between Muscat and Muttrah. Dinajiy himself was buried between the tide marks but the cave is frequently decorated with a red flag. Dinajiy was a sailor on a ship from China bringing pottery goods for trade, the intention being to return with a cargo of dried sea cucumbers. Sadly Dinajiy was drowned in Muttrah harbour and buried far from his homeland. However, it was discovered that a visit to his grave would have beneficial results.

The town of Bahla in the interior has a long reputation for being a stronghold of wizardry and there is a tree in the *suwq* there which it is fatal to sit under. Indeed the story goes that the people of Bahla strayed so far from the path of true religion that a mosque in the town was caused by God to fly away and land in Nizwa. Today it is called the Masjid Farfariy or the 'fluttering mosque'.

To the south near the town of 'Ibra at a place called Buwrahlayn the Prophet Muhammad's horse has left his hoof-print.

In the Sharqiyah the Wadi Bani Khālid is the source of many stories which all centre around a fissure in the side of Jabal Mughl. The people living nearby are said to know how to open this fissure and then one can enter the mountain to find a beautiful land inside where cool streams flow through exquisite gardens. The people simply say '*Sālim bin Sāliym Salam*', and the rock opens. It is related that on one particular day a man went inside in this way but became lost. During the course of his wanderings he met a fellow who, on hearing that he was lost, gave him a ring which would lead him out. He warned him however to leave the ring on the rock inside



the fissure. The man became greedy when he examined the ring and recognised its great value. When he reached the fissure he saw that his helper was no longer with him and so he decided to take the ring with him into the outside world. However, as he walked through the now re-opened fissure, the rock suddenly closed on him and held him fast. His helper then re-appeared and told him that if he returned the ring all would be well. The man thereupon gave up the ring and was able to pass safely out of the mountain.

Another story relates that once upon a time the place was inhabited by Jews who were called *kāfirs* and that after these people were conquered by the Arabs, two of them escaped and hid in the fissure in Jabal Mughl. For a long time no-one knew where they were, but eventually they were found and killed. Inside the fissure one of them is buried and those entering today should say '*Sālim bin Salliyim Sallām*, they should carry a light and a burning brand with which they scorch the tomb. After this they wash in the water to be found there. The tomb is called Qabr Kāfir.

The muddle between the Jews and the *kāfirs* is obvious but it would seem to be reasonably certain that the story dates to the conquest of Oman by the Arabs and seems to represent a memory, and perhaps some guilt, of the hunting down of conquered people.

The well called 'Ayn Sāruwj is nearby and the story goes that the water flowing in it comes from Iraq. The proof of this is that a Caliph of Baghdad dropped his camelstick into the Euphrates and it re-appeared here in the Wadi Bani Khālid.

The need to ask permission before using the water is underlined by the tale about the water pits in the Wadi Bani Khālid. These belong to some *jinn* and one day the daughter of a rich man was washing in them before her wedding. During her bath she dropped her comb into the water and sent her slaves to retrieve it. The wretched servants were all drowned because permission had not been sought from the *jinn* for the use of their water.

*Jinn* are not necessarily connected with places. They also wander about and can turn up where least expected. Hamdān b. Muhammad al Harsuwsiy was riding his camel one day and as evening approached his thoughts turned to supper and a place to stay the night. He then saw a fat *dhab* lizard\* and after catching it and tying it to his saddle he chose a convenient *ghāf* tree to camp under. As he was a careful man he first put the bound *dhab* on the ground and then saw to the unloading of his couched camel. When he turned round he noticed that the *dhab* was standing balanced on the tip of its tail. This was to say the least unusual and Hamdān thought with some regret that it might be a *jinn*. Accordingly he decided that if this were so it would be dangerous to eat it, and yet as it was a fine fat *dhab* it would be a pity to lose it altogether. So he planned to tie it to the *ghāf* and go on his way. Thus if it were a *jinn* it would be able to get away, if it were not it would still be there in a few days when he returned. Hamdān then carried on his journey leaving the *dhab* tied to the tree. However, some three or four days later he returned and found that the *dhab* had disappeared.

Some *jinn* adopt families and guard their interests if they are propitiated in the right ways. Failure to do this will lead to a run of bad luck or positive disasters for the

\* Most bedu will not kill a *dhab* after sunset as at that time it becomes a *rafiyq*, or companion. They have to keep the lizard until the next day before killing and eating it.

family concerned. The requisite gift is usually a goat which is slaughtered at the time of one of the great festivals in the year.

It is one of the duties of a man joining a group of witches that he should sacrifice a member of his own family to ensure his loyalty to his new friends. The much venerated Qādiy of Zanzibar, Shaykh Ghariyb b. 'Ali b. Ghariyb al 'Awfiy was concerned in such a case when a member of his family joined a band of witches. Luckily the shaykh saw the band who had carried off a girl from his family called Nasiyrah. He burst in among the witches and took the lifeless girl from them and after reading the Holy Qur'an over her, he brought her back to life. The shaykh was a very remarkable man and highly respected. It is told that he could be seen at home in his house at the same time that he was at prayers in the mosque. On one occasion his enemy, Muhammad b. 'Amr al Hinā'iy, hired some Africans to kill him. Accordingly they lay in wait near the *qādiy's* farm and sure enough they soon heard the sound of the *qādiy's* donkey on the road and prepared their weapons. However, when the noise of the hooves was nearest and they jumped out to kill the *qādiy*, they could see neither him nor the donkey, and only heard the sound of the hooves receding into the distance. Shaykh Ghariyb eventually died after a fall downstairs. At once he sent a message to his old friend the Sultan Khaliyfa b. Hārib, that he would die at three minutes past eight. He did.

In Suwr there live some 'Alawiy Sayyids and one of them Sayyid Sālih used to live in Zanzibar, where he died, though his descendants have now returned to Oman. Whilst the family were in Zanzibar the Sayyid would appear to his children at a place called Sa'atayn. A visitor could ask what the *Sayyid* thought of them for a small fee. It is charmingly told that one enquirer was told that he was dirty; indeed he was.

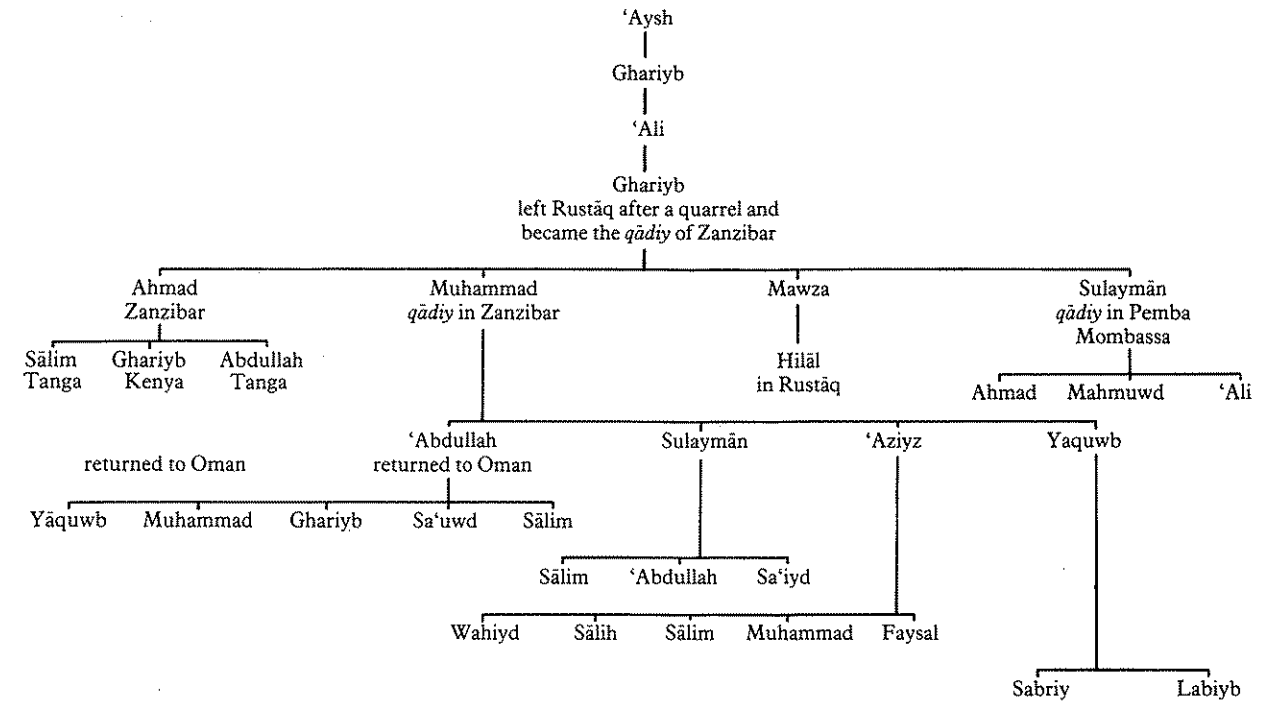
If one makes a journey from Suwr it is customary to visit the Masjid 'Aydruw or the Balad Ham. Prayers at these places will ensure blessings on the journey and a safe return.

A story from Masiyrah Island awakes an echo. Near the top of Jabal Qatarah there is a place where water is to be found. It is said that a visit to this spring will ensure male children and a cure for any sickness, but the visitor must not look back at the mountain when he leaves otherwise his requests will not be answered.

The Janabah shaykh, Shaykh Mansuwr b. Nāsir al-Maja'aliy, set out on pilgrimage aboard the *Al Hajjah*. Sadly he died on the return journey and was buried under a *qubbah* at Jaziyrāh near Aden, a place where no-one lives. At night a light is said to appear on the *qubbah* and this acts as a guide to ships at sea. The tomb used to be a place of pilgrimage but since the establishment of the Republic of South Yemen no-one has been able to visit it.

From Salalah comes a delightful and cautionary tale about the evils of dirty conversation. It is told that two old men repaired to a cemetery and settled down on a tomb in the sunshine. There they fell to gossiping and their conversation became more and more scurrilous. At last it became too much and the grave-stones leapt into the air and shattered into a thousand pieces.

The family of Shaykh Ghariyb al 'Awfiy is as follows:



Back in Oman, on the road to the interior from the coast through the Sumayl gap, there is a mountain before one reaches Fanjah, called Jabal Khuwniy. It is shaped like a ship stranded on top of the hills. This is because it is in fact a ship. The story goes that whilst a young shepherdess was grazing her flocks near the sea some sailors made a landfall nearby. As they had no provisions they went up to the girl and asked to have one of her sheep, saying that they would bring money from the ship on their return. However, to her dismay she saw that they intended to cheat her and were preparing to sail away without paying her. At once she ran to her shaykh who was called Khamiys b. Ja'ad and told him what had happened. Shaykh Khamiys was an 'ālim and exerted his influence to pull the ship back against the wind, not only to the shore but up to the top of the *jabal*. The sailors were allowed to go free but the ship remains to this day where everyone can see it as an example.

Another way in which witches obtain their victims is illustrated by the story of the girl from Nizwa. Under the influence of a witch's spell she fell ill and died. Her distraught parents buried her with much sadness and resigned themselves to the mercy of God. A few years later a friend of the family saw the girl guarding some bedu goats on the plain outside the town. Thinking that the girl must have been stolen from the grave by a witch, who revived her for his own ends, and that subsequently she had been able to escape, the friend asked the bedu where she had come from. His thoughts were somewhat confirmed when they told him that she had appeared from nowhere a little earlier saying that she could remember nothing but thought that her parents had died. The friend of the family then went to the Imam in Nizwa and told him the story. The Imam gathered a hundred men and a hundred women and concealed the girl's parents amongst them. The girl was able to identify her mother and father and they confirmed her identity from marks on her body that they alone knew. In this

way she was re-united with her family.

There is a story which to some extent reflects the delight that a bedu will take in getting the better of a townsman. It would seem that once upon a time there was a broker in Ma'amuwir who was always out to cheat the bedu, and one day two such came into the *suzuq* with a load of dried fish. The broker decided not only to cheat them of their fish but also to sell one of them as a slave. However, one of the bedu was also a witch and knew perfectly well what was going on in the broker's mind. He at once caused his brother to fall down in a faint and pretending that he had died told the broker that he would have to leave at once to bury him. Accordingly the witch tied his brother's body onto one side of the donkey and balanced it with a sack of dates on the other side. The broker suspected that this was a trick and already having a customer for one of the men he watched the proceedings with care from the window of his house. The witch then caused long goat's horns to sprout from the broker's head so that he was unable to withdraw his head from the window. The broker was only released from this predicament when he confessed to the people of Ma'amuwir what a wicked man he was. The bedu then went home without paying for the dates.

A tale which shows either what can happen to the housekeeping money (and offer a splendid explanation for its disappearance) or simply the dangers that can befall a traveller, is the one which concerns the shaykh of Saruwj. This is a village on the Bātinah coast between Muttrah and Adhaybah. The shaykh was returning along the old coast road on his camel having completed his shopping. He had reached a point on the hill overlooking Qurm when a man appeared in the road in front of him. The shaykh saluted him as politeness demanded and the man asked him to lunch, indicating an archway which had also appeared at the side of the road. The shaykh dismounted and followed the stranger through the archway into a courtyard. Here there were

lots of other people who ran out to unload the camel and they brought in the rice, onions and other provisions that the shaykh had bought in the *suwq*. The shaykh was by this time very frightened and his horror was increased when he saw people begin to prepare a meal and after his rice and onions were put into the pot they threw in the body of a child. The meal ready he was invited to eat. He managed to avoid consuming any of the horrid stew by making a hole in the pile of rice with his fist so that it looked as though he had eaten his fill. When the meal was over he was escorted by his mysterious hosts back to his camel at the side of the road. Hastily he mounted and made his way home as fast as he could. When he reached Saruwj his story was believed because the rice and onions he had bought were no longer on his camel.

It is related that Khalfan who was shaykh of Saruw near Sumayl was called upon to give judgement between two men as to the ownership of a palm-tree. It transpired that one of the men was a witch and Shaykh Khalfan found against him for the other man. Two days later the shaykh's wife saw her husband disappear.

Most of these stories tell about the power of witches and how it is impossible to beat them. However, there is one where the witch gets the worst of things. The shaykh of the state of Fujayrah was, at one time, much troubled with rheumatism when he visited a particular part of his

country. He made enquiries as this seemed a trifle odd. He was told that an enemy of his called al Baluwshiy had employed a witch from Nizwa to put a spell on him. The spell was not strong enough to reach the shaykh in all parts of his shaykhdom and so he was only affected when he went to one particular part which was in range. The shaykh decided to try and catch the witch who was responsible and so he wrote an innocent letter to him in Nizwa pretending that he was unaware of the witch's spell against him. He told the witch that he had some important business for him and that the reward would be very large; and, as the shaykh thought it was a rather confidential matter, he suggested that the witch should visit him in Fujayrah so that they could talk over the details. The witch, his cupidity aroused, accordingly made the journey to Fujayrah. On his arrival the shaykh had him killed at once and the body was hidden in a well. To end these folk stories and demonstrate how their creation is a continuous process it is apposite to recount one which dates from the late fifties and is charming in its complete inconsequence. It is said that during the rebellion of Sulaymān b. Himyar some British troops found two devils asleep under a bush in the Umm al-Samiym. They caught them up and after putting them in a box sent them to London in an aeroplane.

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