

## THE CAMPAIGN OF HULUBĀN A NEW LIGHT ON THE EXPEDITION OF ABRAHA

The record of the expedition of Abraha against the Ma'add and especially against the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'ṣa'a deserves special mention. The record of this expedition found on an inscription on a rock in the vicinity of the well of al-Murayghān refers to a tribal division of Tamīm. It is the only case — as yet — in which a tribal division of Tamīm has been mentioned in an inscription.

This inscription « Ry 506 », found by the expedition of Professor G. Ryckmans, was published by him with a French translation and comments <sup>1</sup>. It was published with a German translation and valuable comments by W. Caskel <sup>2</sup>, rendered into English with notes and remarks by Sidney Smith <sup>3</sup> and by F. Beeston <sup>4</sup>, who gave a penetrating analysis of the text. Of importance are the remarks and studies of J. Ryckmans <sup>5</sup>. A comprehensive study of the inscription was given in Russian by A.G. Lundin <sup>6</sup>. The inscription was partly translated into Arabic and furnished with notes by Jawād 'Alī <sup>7</sup>. The text given by Sidney Smith was translated into Arabic by Iḥsān 'Abbās <sup>8</sup>.

The rendering of F. Beeston of the inscription is here given in full :

« By the power of the Merciful One and His Messiah, the king Abraha (etc.) wrote this inscription when he had raided Ma'add in the spring razzia in the month *ḏūbata* (and) when all the Banū 'Āmir had revolted. Now the king sent 'BĠBR with the Kindites and 'Alites and BŠR son of ḤṢN with the Sa'dites and these two commanders of the army did battle and fought, (namely) the Kindite column against the Banī 'Āmir and the Murādite and Sa'dite column against... in the valley on the TRBN route and they slew and made captive (the enemy) and took

<sup>1</sup> *Le Muséon*, 66 (1953), pp. 275-284.

<sup>2</sup> W. CASSEL, *Entdeckungen in Arabien*, pp. 27-31.

<sup>3</sup> Sidney SMITH, *Events in Arabia in the 6th century A.D.*, BSOAS, 1954, pp. 435-37.

<sup>4</sup> A.F.L. BEESTON, *Notes on the Muraighān inscription*, BSOAS, 1954, pp. 389-92.

<sup>5</sup> *Le Muséon*, 66 (1953), pp. 339-42; B.O. XIV, p. 94.

<sup>6</sup> A.G. LUNDIN, *Yujnaya Arabia w VI weke (Palestynski Sbornik)*, 1961, pp. 73-84).

<sup>7</sup> JAWĀD 'ALĪ, *Ta'riḫh al-'Arab qabla 'l-Islām*, IV, 396-98.

<sup>8</sup> IḤSĀN 'ABBĀS, *Sharḥ Diwān Labīd b. Rabi'a*, Introduction, p. 8 (al-Kuwayt, 1962).

satisfactory booty. The king, on the other hand, did battle at Ḥalibān and the (troops?) of Ma'add were defeated and forced to give hostages. After all this 'Amr son of al-Mundhir negotiated with Abraha<sup>9</sup> and agreed to give hostages to Abraha from al-Mundhir, for al-Mundhir had invested him ('Amr) with the governorship over Ma'add. So Abraha returned from Ḥalibān by the power of 'the Merciful One (etc.).»

Beeston's comment<sup>10</sup> shows clearly that the description deals with two campaigns: the campaign of the king, Abraha, at Ḥalibān<sup>11</sup> and the campaign of Kinda and Sa'd - Murād at TRBN<sup>12</sup>. It is evident that we are concerned here with an enormous encounter in which many tribal forces participated.

Caskel remarks that the expedition might be considered a sa « Vorübung » for the expedition of Abraha towards the North of the Arabian peninsula, which stopped near Mecca<sup>13</sup>. J. Ryckmans states: « Cette expédition aurait partiellement servi de base à la tradition d'une campagne de Abraha contre la Mecque »<sup>14</sup>. Altheim and Stiehl state that the expedition of Abraha recorded in the inscription « Ry 506 »

<sup>9</sup> The phrase: « wb'dnhw/ws'hmw/'mrm/bn/mdrm/wrhnmw/bnhw/wsḥtlfw/'aly/m'dm » is obscure. « ws' » may probably denote — as pointed out by Caskel, *op. cit.*, p. 29, ad « Z » 7 — « aus einer drückenden Lage befreien ». A verse of Zabbān b. Sayyār may be consulted: « Wasi'nā, wasi'nā fi umūrin tamahhalat : 'alā 'l-ṭālibi 'l-mautūri ayya tamahhuli » (al Zubayr b. Bakkār, *Nasab Quraysh*, ed. ШАКІВ, p. 15). Perhaps the translation may be: Afterwards 'Amr b. al-Mundhir gave them sufficient succour; his son ('Amr — see CASKEL, *op. cit.*, p. 29, ad « L » 7) gave hostages for them and he (i.e. Abraha) made him governor over Ma'add.

<sup>10</sup> BSOAS, 1954, p. 391.

<sup>11</sup> So vowelled in al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, s.v. Ḥilbān. Yāqūt vowels: Ḥalabān (*Buldān*, s.v. Ḥilbān). Al-Bakrī states that it is « a city in al-Yaman, in the lowland of al Ḥaḍūr ». Yāqūt states that it was « a place in al-Yaman in the vicinity of Najrān ». He also quotes another opinion, that it was a water-place of the Banū Qushayr. Thilo locates the place according to Yāqūt and states that it is a wādī starting in the mountain-chain of 'Arwā and flowing into the Rikā' Sirra. It is located in the vicinity of Yadhbul — see THILO, *Ortsnamen*, s.v. Ḥalabān.

<sup>12</sup> See BEESTON, *op. cit.*, p. 391; LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77 (n. 66-67). See esp. al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, s.v. Turaba: « It is a place in the territory of the Banū 'Āmir »; see 'Arrām b. al-Asbagh, *Asmā' jibāl Tihāma (Nawādir al-makḥṭūāt)*, ed. HÄRŪN, VIII, 146).

<sup>13</sup> CASKEL, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>14</sup> J. RYCKMANS, *Inscriptions historiques Sabéennes, Le Muséon*, 1953, p. 342; LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

is in fact the « Expedition of the Elephant » mentioned in the Qur'ān <sup>15</sup>. Lundin devotes a comprehensive discussion to the proposition of Altheim - Stiehl and refutes their assumption stating that the « Expedition of the Elephant » is not connected with the events of 547 A.D., recorded in the inscription « Ry 506 » <sup>16</sup>. He assumes that the « Expedition of the Elephant » took place about 563 A.D. <sup>17</sup>.

Some remarks concerning this controversy may be made here.

The tradition of Ibn al-Kalbī stating that the Prophet was born 23 years after the « Expedition of the Elephant » is not « an isolated one » (« Danniye Muh. b. al-Kalbī stoyat osobnyakom ») - as Lundin claims. There are many traditions stating that the Prophet was not born on the « Day of the Elephant » or in the year of « the Elephant »; these can, however, not be discussed here. One of these traditions, an important one, may be quoted here.

Haddathanā al-Zubayru qāla : wa-ḥaddathanī 'Umaru bnu Abī Bakrin al-Mu'ammilī 'an Zakariyā 'bni Abī 'Īsā 'an 'bni Shihābin anna Qurayshan kānat ta'uddu qabla 'adadi rasūli 'llāhi (ṣ) min zamani 'l-fili. Kānū ya'uddūna bayna 'l-fili wa-bayna 'l-fijāri arba'ina sanatan. Wa-kānū ya'uddūna bayna 'l-fijāri wa-bayna wafāti Hishāmi 'bni l-Mughīrati sitta sinīna. Wa-kānū ya'uddūna bayna wafāti Hishāmin wa-bayna bunyāni l-ka'bati tis'a sinīna. Wa-kānū ya'uddūna bayna bunyāni l-ka'bati wa-bayna an kharaja rasūlu 'llāhi ilā l-madīnati khamsa 'ashrata sanatan. Minhā khamsu sinīna qabla an yunzala 'alayhi. Thumma kāna l-'adadu yu'addu.

... « Ibn Shihāb (i.e. al-Zuhrī - K) : Quraysh counted, before the chronology of the Prophet, from the time of the 'Elephant'. Between the Elephant and the (battle of the) Fijār they counted 40 years. Between the Fijār and the death of Hishām b. al-Mughīra they counted 6 years. Between the death of Hishām and the building of the Ka'ba they counted 9 years. Between the building of the Ka'ba and the departure of the Prophet for al-Madīna (i.e. the Hijra - K) they counted 15 years; he stayed 5 years (of these 15) not receiving the revelation. Then the counting (of the usual chronology) was as follows. »

This tradition of al-Zuhrī is recorded by al-Zubayr b. Bakkār in

<sup>15</sup> F. ALTHEIM - R. STIEHL, *Araber und Sassaniden (Edwin Redslob zum 70 Geburtstag, Berlin 1954, pp. 200-207 : Mohammeds Geburtsjahr)*; F. ALTHEIM - R. STIEHL, *Finanzgeschichte der Spätantike*, pp. 145-148 and 353-355.

<sup>16</sup> LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

<sup>17</sup> LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.

his « Nasab Quraysh »<sup>18</sup> and is quoted in Ibn 'Asākir's « Ta'riḫ Dimashq »<sup>19</sup>. This tradition is not connected directly with the date of the birth of the Prophet and seems to be trustworthy. It fixes the date of the « Expedition of the Elephant » at 552 A.D. It is exactly the date fixed for the inscription « Ry 506 » by Beeston<sup>20</sup>. The proposition of Altheim-Stiehl seems to be correct : the inscription « Ry 506 » is apparently a record of the « Expedition of the Elephant ». The problem of the date of the birth of the Prophet deserves to be dealt with in a separate study.

Some additional details about the « Expedition of the Elephant », hitherto unknown, may here be quoted as well. Al-Balādhurī records a tradition on the authority of Ibn Da'b : Jābir b. Sufyān, the father of Ta'abbāṭa Sharran (Ibn al-Kalbī says : Jābir b. Sufyān b. 'Adiyy. Others say : Sufyān b. 'Amaythil b. 'Adiyy) said about the « Day of the Elephant » :

Atānā rākibun fa-na'ā Unāsan  
wa-'Abbāsan wa-nāsan ākharinā  
Aqamnā bi-l-Muḡhammasi niṣfa shahrin  
wa ...<sup>21</sup> hum bihā mutajāwirinā<sup>22</sup>

A horseman came to us and announced the death of Unās<sup>23</sup>  
and the death of 'Abbās and other people  
We stayed at al-Muḡhammas half a month  
and ... them in it, staying close together.

There is no intimation as to who the persons, mentioned in the verses, were. They were evidently from the tribe of Jābir b. Sufyān, from the Fahm. From the verses we gather that the father of Ta'abbāṭa Sharran witnessed the battle. They clearly point to the fact that Fahm took part in the battle against Abraha.

It may be of some interest to mention, that the family of Ta'abbāṭa Sharran had some relations with Mecca. Umayya<sup>24</sup>, the daughter

<sup>18</sup> Ms. BODLEY, f. 129b.

<sup>19</sup> I, 28 (ed. AL-MUNAJJID); comp. a tradition recounted by Mūsā b. 'Uqba on the authority of Zuhri : Al-Dhahabi, *Ta'riḫ al-Islām*, I, 22; and see Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidāya*, II, 260-62.

<sup>20</sup> BSOAS, 1954, p. 391, n. 2.

<sup>21</sup> I could not decipher the word. It is written *ويجروهم*.

<sup>22</sup> al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. f. 1125a.

<sup>23</sup> Perhaps Iyās (instead of Unās).

<sup>24</sup> In the « Iṣāba » : Āmina; al-Istī'āb : Āmina bint Naufal b. Jābir.

of Jābir b. Sufyān, the sister of Ta'abbāṭa Sharran, married Naufal b. Asad<sup>25</sup>. Her son 'Adiyy b. Naufal b. Asad, the brother of Warāqa b. Naufal, was appointed by 'Umar or 'Uthmān as governor of Ḥadramaut.

Lundin discussing whether the inscription of « Ry 506 » can be connected with the « Expedition of the Elephant » argues, that the inscription does not contain the names of the men mentioned in the North-Arabian tradition : Nufayl b. Ḥabīb, the guide of Abraha, Muḥammad b. Khuzā'i, claimed to have been appointed over Ma'add<sup>26</sup>, the Khath'am etc. One may remark, that the tradition of Ṭabarī explicitly says that Muḥ. b. Khuzā'i was killed by the Kināna. Abraha advancing against Kināna intended to avenge the murder of Muḥ. b. Khuzā'i<sup>27</sup>. A contradictory tradition, recorded by Muḥ. b. Ḥabīb, states that Muḥ. b. Khuzā'i was with the army of Abraha with the Elephant<sup>28</sup>. In both cases (whether Muḥ. b. Khuzā'i was alive or dead) there was no reason to mention his name on an inscription recording the events of a battle between the forces of Abraha and of revolting tribes. That seems to have been the reason that the name of the guide of Abraha was not mentioned either.

It is a fact that in a relatively short time the decisive events fell into oblivion, poems composed on the occasion of the battles were lost. Only dim memories of the campaigns were preserved in a few verses.

A peculiar passage in al Balādhuri's « Ansāb »<sup>29</sup> may shed new light on the relations between Abraha and Mecca, emphasizing the economic aspect :

... Minhumu 'l-Ḥārithu bnu 'Alqamata 'bni Kaladata 'bni 'Abdi Manāfi 'bni 'Abdi l-Dāri, rahīnatu Qurayshin 'inda Abī Yaksūma l-Ḥabashiyyi,

<sup>25</sup> See al-Muṣ'ab, *Nasab Quraysh*, p. 209; al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, *Jamharat Nasab Quraysh*, I, 421, 423 (ed. SHĀKIR); Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, n° 5484; Ibn'Abd al-Barr, *al-Isti'āb*, p. 502.

<sup>26</sup> In the tradition of al-Ṭabarī (I, 551; ed. Cairo 1939) he was appointed over Muḍar, not over Ma'add.

<sup>27</sup> al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rikh*, *ib.*; al-Ṭabarsī in his *Majma' al-Bayān* XXX, 191 seq. tells that Abraha — when on his way against Mecca with his army — sent a man from Sulaym as a missionary to summon the people to make the pilgrimage to his church, which he had built. A man from the Kināna, from the Ḥums, met him and fought him. That increased the wrath of Abraha.

<sup>28</sup> al-Muḥabbar, p. 130.

<sup>29</sup> Ms. f. 811a.

hīna dakhala Makkata qaumun min tujjārihim fī ḥaṭmatin kānat, fa-wathaba aḥdāthun ‘alā ba’di mā kāna ma’ahum fa-’ntahabūhu fa-waqa’at baynahum munāfaratun, thumma ‘ṣṭalahū ba’da an maḍat ‘iddatun min wujūhi Qurayshin ilā Abī Yaksūma wa-sa’alūhu allā yaqṭa’a tujjāra ahli mamlakatihi ‘anhum. Fa-dufi’a l-Ḥārithu wa-ghayruhu rahīnatan. Fa-kāna yukrimuhum wa-yaṣiluhum wa-kānū yubḍi’ūna l-baḍā’i’a ilā Makkata li-anfusihim.

... « From them (i.e. the Banū ‘Abd al-Dār - K) was al-Ḥārith b. ‘Alqama b. Kalada b. ‘Abd Manāf b. ‘Abd al Dār, the hostage of Quraysh handed over to Abū Yaksūm, the Abyssinian. (It happened) when a group of their merchants entered Mecca in a barren year. Some young men attacked and robbed them of their merchandise. Then discord broke out among them. They were later reconciled, after a group of nobles of Quraysh went to Abū Yaksūm and requested him not to cut off the merchants of his kingdom from (coming to) them. Al-Ḥārith and others were handed over as hostages to him (i.e. to Abraha-K). He honoured them and showed them friendship and they sent merchandise for themselves to Mecca. »

Al-Ḥārith [b. ‘Alqama is also mentioned as hostage of Quraysh with Abū Yaksūm the Abyssinian in al-Zubayr b. Bakkār’s « Nasab Quraysh »<sup>30</sup>.

This passage of the « Ansāb » is quoted by M. Ḥamīdullah in his *Les rapports économique - diplomatiques de la Mecque (Mélanges L. Masignon, II, 302)* and in his *Le Prophète de l’Islam*, p. 195. Unfortunately Ḥamīdullah misinterpreted an expression of the report of al Balād-hurī. Ḥamīdullah renders the text as follows : « ... ils s’excusèrent donc auprès du Négus ... Le Négus Abū Yaksūm (c.à.d. le roi de la dynastie d’Axoum) traita ces otages avec bonté ... » (*Les rapports, ib.*). And in his *Le Prophète de l’Islam* : « Le ‘Abdarite al-Ḥārith b. ‘Alqamah fut l’otage quraichite entre les mains du roi d’Abyssinie Abū Yaksūm (= aksoumite) ... furent allés auprès de l’Aksoumite... »

But in the text quoted above there is no mention of the Negus at all. The expression « Abū Yaksūm al-Ḥabashī » refers to *A b r a h a*, whose « Kunya » was *A b ū Y a k s ū m*, because he had a son called Yaksūm, who ruled after his death. The merchants who were attacked at Mecca were not necessarily Abyssinians; they were evidently Yamanī merchants.

It is of interest to note that Ṭhaqīf also surrendered hostages to

<sup>30</sup> Ms. BODLEY, f. 69a; and see Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Iṣāba*, n° 8705 and n° 8714.

Abraha. Al-Balādhurī records that 'Utbān b. Mālik b. Ka'b b. 'Amr was « the hostage of Abū Yaksūm the Abyssinian »<sup>31</sup>. This tradition confirms the North-Ar. story about some contacts between Abraha and Ṭā'if.

The tradition here quoted point to the direction of the activity of Abraha : Ṭhaqīf (Ṭā'if), Fahm, Kināna and Hudhayl — all these tribes staying in the vicinity of Mecca. One is inclined to trust to some degree the North-Arabian tradition stating that the expedition was directed against Mecca and her allies.

It may be remarked here that there is a rather diverging tradition about the cause of the expedition of Abraha against Mecca : The grandson of Abraha (the son of his daughter), Aksūm b. al-Ṣabbāḥ al-Ḥimyarī went to Mecca to perform his pilgrimage. On his way back from Mecca he stayed in a church in Najrān. He was attacked by men from Mecca, who robbed him of his luggage and looted the church. Aksūm went to his grandfather, and complained about the behaviour of the men from Mecca. Abraha vowed to destroy the sanctuary of Mecca<sup>32</sup>.

The inscription mentions tribal troops of the army of Abraha despatched by the king : Kinda sent against the 'Āmīr, and Sa'd-Murād sent towards TRBN.

The troop of Sa'd, which we are interested in, was identified by Smith as a « sept of Quraysh »<sup>33</sup>. Caskel identified the Sa'd as Sa'd al-'Ashīra<sup>34</sup>. Caskel's assumption was accepted by Lundin<sup>35</sup>. It was Jawād 'Alī, who for the first time quoted two verses of al-Mukhabbal al-Sa'dī from the « Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam », in which the help of the Sa'd for Abraha was mentioned<sup>36</sup>. It is rather important to stress that *these Sa'd are in fact Sa'd of Tamīm*.

The passage of al-Bakrī<sup>37</sup> states that al-Mukhabbal al-Sa'dī boasted

<sup>31</sup> al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. f. 1139a.

<sup>32</sup> al-Iṣbahānī, *Dalā'il al-nubuwwa*, p. 100-101 (ed. 1950); al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-manthūr*, VI, 394 (quoted from the *Dalā'il*).

<sup>33</sup> SMITH, *op. cit.*, p. 436, n. 2.

<sup>34</sup> W. CASKEL, *op. cit.*, p. 29, n. 124.

<sup>35</sup> A.G. LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, p. 76, n. 63.

<sup>36</sup> JAWĀD 'ALĪ, *op. cit.*, IV, 397.

<sup>37</sup> al-Bakrī, *Mu'jam mā 'sta'jam*, s.v. Ḥulubān; the first verse is quoted in L. 'A. s.v. « ḥlb » and in Tāj al-'Arūs (s.v. ḥlb); for the expression « ṣaramū l-umūra » see al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb*, IV, 158 (ed. SCHLORSSINGER) : « wa-naḥnu ṣaramnā amra Bakrī 'bni

of their (i.e. of the Sa'd - K) help extended to Abraha b. al-Ṣabbāḥ, the king of al-Yaman; it was in fact Khindif who were his followers. He said :

Ḍarabū li-Abrahata 'l-umūra maḥalluhā  
Ḥulubānu, fa-'ntalaqū ma'a l-aqwāli  
Wa-Muḥarriqun wa-l-Ḥārithāni kilāhumā  
shurakā'unā fī l-ṣihri wa-l-amwāli

They decided for Abraha the actions (of war); the place of it was Ḥulubān, and they rushed with the « qayls » Muḥarriq and the two al Ḥārith both of them were our partners in kinship and possessions.

Al-Hamdānī quotes these very verses in his « Iklīl » remarking : ... « about Abraha the Qayl » says al-Mukhabbal mentioning their (i.e. of the Sa'd) loyalty (« mayl ») for him». Further al-Hamdānī says : « About him (i.e. about Abraha) he said boasting of their deeds in war with him (i.e. fighting on his side — K) :

Wa-yauma Abī Yaksūma wa-l-nāsu ḥuḍḍarun  
'alā Ḥulubānin idh tuqaḍḍā maḥāmiluh <sup>38</sup>  
Fataḥnā lahū bāba 'l-Ḥuḍayri wa-rabbuhu  
'azīzun yumashshī bi-l-suyūfi arājiluh <sup>39</sup>.

These two verses are found in a qaṣīda of al-Mukhabbal in the « Ikhtiyārayn » (al-Mufaḍḍal - al-Aṣma'ī) edited by S.H. Husain <sup>40</sup>.

The verses in the « Ikhtiyārayn » contain, however, some variants which deserve to be mentioned :

Verse 1. taqaḍḍā maḥāsiluh (instead maḥāmiluh)  
Verse 2. Ṭawaynā lahum bāba l-ḥuṣayni wa-dūnahu  
'azīzum yumashshi bi-l-ḥirābi maqāwiluh.

The two verses, for which the editor could nowhere find parallels, are rendered by him as follows :

And on the day of Abū Yaksūm when the people were present at Ḥalibān after its products were consumed

Wā'ilin »; and see the explanation of the expression in al-'Askarī's *Jamharat al-amthāl*, p. 62.

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps to be read « mahāfiluh ».

<sup>39</sup> al-Hamdānī, *al-Iklīl*, ms. Berlin, I/II f. 109b.

<sup>40</sup> P. 204 (*The University of Dacca, Bulletin*, XIX).



We closed against them the gate of the fortress in front of which was a prince whose chiefs went forth with the javelins <sup>41</sup>.

The commentary of the «Ikhtiyārayn» has «maḥāsīluhu» and explains «mā tajamma'a minhu», «what comes together, combines». «Abū Yaksūm» is explained: «a king»; «al ḥuṣayn» is explained «a fortress, a palace»; «bi-l-ḥirāb» is explained: «he meant to say: his horsemen and his infantry».

Al-Hamdānī's comments are of some importance: «Ḥulubān — says Hamdānī — is located in Ḥaḍūr. Those who transmitted «Khaḍīr» refer to some king (wa-man rawāhu al-Khaḍīr arāda malikan min al-mulūki); he who transmits it «al-Ḥuḍayr» refers to al-Ḥaḍr.

The commentaries do not help us to understand this crucial verse of al-Mukhabbal. The commentary of «al-Ikhtiyārayn» does not explain the situation and does not say anything about the fortress (al-ḥuṣayn) mentioned in the verse. The commentary of al-Hamdānī does not elucidate the situation.

What can be deduced is that the Banū Sa'd of Tamīm were the decisive factor at Ḥulubān, where the king Abraha decided about the movements of the troops (maḥāfil). They opened (or «folded up») for the king a gate of a fortress, belonging to a mighty king and defended by well armed guards. This fortress must have hindered the advance of the troops of Abraha.

Of importance is the remark of al-Bakrī, that Khindif <sup>42</sup> were the followers of Abraha. Tradition is silent about the Northern tribes that aided Abraha: only the Southern Khaulān and Ash'ar are mentioned as his followers. It is only the Northern Ḥumays b. Udd who are mentioned as having fought on the side of Abraha in his expedition against Mecca <sup>43</sup>.

Other verses quoted by al-Hamdānī are 2 well-known verses of

<sup>41</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 168 (English text).

<sup>42</sup> See CASKEL, *Die Bedeutung der Beduinen*, p. 15; and comp. Naqā'iq, index (Khindif); al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, I, 32-34; al-Muṣ'ab al-Zubayrī, *Nasab Quraysh*, p. 7-8; al 'Ajjāj, *Dīwān*, p. 60 (Ar. text; ed. AHLWARDT).

<sup>43</sup> See Ibn al-Kalbī, *Jamhara*, ms. f. 115b; «Ḥarb b. Ḥumays b. Udd, they were with Abraha b. al-Ashram and perished on the «Day of the Elephant»; 60 of them were saved», etc.

Labīd <sup>44</sup> and the often quoted verse of Qays b. al-Khaṭīm <sup>45</sup>. They do not help us to know more about the expedition of Abraha.

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Lundin remarks that none of the scholars who published the inscription tried to identify the persons of Abū Jabr and Bishr b. Ḥiṣn (or Bashīr, or Basshār; b. Ḥuṣayn or b. Ḥaṣṣān) <sup>46</sup>. Lundin stresses that in the case of Abū Jabr only his «Kunya» is known; his name is missing. He therefore attempted only to identify the person of Bishr b. Ḥiṣn.

The following lines can assist in identifying the person of Abū Jabr al Kindī :

In the «Maqṣūra» of Ibn Durayd <sup>47</sup> a remarkable verse refers to Abū l-Jabr :

Wa-khāmarat nafsa Abī l-Jabri l-jawā :  
ḥattā ḥawāhu l-ḥatfu fī man qad ḥawā

And passion pervaded the soul of Abū 'l-Jabr :  
till death took possession of him among those  
whom he (i.e. death) took possession of.

The commentary supplies important details about Abū l-Jabr. He was a Kindī, from the kings of Kinda (i.e. from the royal family of Kinda - K). His «kunya» Abū 'l-Jabr was his name. He went to Kisrā, asking for aid against his people. Kisrā gave him a force of his mounted troops (al Asāwira). When Abū 'l-Jabr with his troop reached Kāzima — the troop saw the wilderness of the Arab land and decided to return. They put poison into the food of Abū 'l-Jabr. When he was overwhelmed with pain they asked him to write a letter to Kisrā, stating that he gave them permission to return. He gave them the required letter. When they left he felt relief and journeyed

<sup>44</sup> *Diwān*, p. 108 (ed. IḤSĀN 'ABBĀS); see BEESTON, E.I. 2, art. «Abraha», bibliography. The verse of Labīd: «Wa-ghalabna Abrahamata 'lladhi alfaynahu» (*Diwān*, p. 275) is however explained by al-Hamdānī as referring to Abraha b. al-Ṣabbāḥ b. Shuraḥbīl b. Lahī'a. «Some people say — remarks al-Hamdānī — that he referred to Abī Abraha Dhū 'l-Manār».

<sup>45</sup> *Diwān*, p. 61 (ed. SAMARRĀ'I - MATLOUB); see BEESTON, E.I. 2, *op. cit.*, bibliography.

<sup>46</sup> LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>47</sup> Ibn Durayd, *al-Maqṣūra*, p. 82 (ed. al-JAWA'IB, 1300 A.H.).

to al-Ṭā'if, to the Arab physician al-Ḥārith b. Kalada al-Thaqafī<sup>48</sup>. He recovered from his illness due to the treatment of al-Ḥārith b. Kalada. He left for al-Yaman. But on his way back the illness returned and he died. He was mourned by his aunt (on his father's side), Kabsha, who composed the following dirge on his death.

Layta shi'rī wa-qad sha'artu abā l-Jab-  
ri bi-mā qad laqīta fī 'l-tarhāli  
A-tamaṭṭat bika l-rikābu, abayta l-  
la'na, ḥattā ḥalalta fī l-aqtāli  
A-shujā'u fa-anta ashja'u min lay-  
thin hamūsi 'l-surā, abī ashbāli  
A-jawādu fa-anta ajwadu min say-  
lin tadā'a min musbilin ḥaṭṭāli<sup>49</sup>  
A-karīmu fa-anta akramu man ḍam-  
mat ḥaṣānun wa-man mashā fī 'l-ni'āli  
Anta khayrun min 'Āmirin wa-'bni Waqqā-  
ṣin wa-man jamma'ū li-yaumi 'l-miḥāli  
Anta khayrun min alfi alfin min al-qau-  
mi idhā kunta fī wujūhi l-rījali

Ibn Durayd in his «Ishtiqa»<sup>50</sup> and Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi in his «Iqd»<sup>51</sup> mention that Kistrā gave Abū l-Jabr as gift Sumayya, a girl from Zardaward<sup>52</sup>. Abū 'l-Jabr cured by al-Ḥārith b. Kalada gratefully gave him Sumayya as a gift<sup>53</sup>.

The story of Abū 'l-Jabr as given in the commentary of the «Maq-ṣūra» is recorded by Ibn Khallikān<sup>54</sup>. Ibn Khallikān quotes the verse of Ibn Durayd and the narrative about Sumayya. The record of Ibn Khallikān contains, however, a detail of great importance : two versions of the name of Abū 'l-Jabr. According to version (1) his name was Yazīd b. Shuraḥīl al-Kindī; according to version (2) his name was Abū 'l-Jabr b. 'Amr.

<sup>48</sup> See about him Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-'Arab*, p. 256; Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Isāba*, n° 1472; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb*, ms. f. 116a; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, *al-Isti'āb*, pp. 109, 304.

<sup>49</sup> Added from the ed. Cairo, 1324 AH, p. 82.

<sup>50</sup> Ibn Durayd, *al-Ishiqāq*, pp. 305-306.

<sup>51</sup> Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi, *al-'Iqd al-jarīd*, V, 4.

<sup>52</sup> Comp. Yāqūt, *al-Buldān*, s.v. Zandaward : it was al-Nushjānī who was cured by al-Ḥārith b. Kalada and gave him as gift Sumayya, the mother of Ziyād b. Sufyān (or b. Abīhi, or b. 'Ubayd, or b. Abi Sufyān).

<sup>53</sup> But see contradictory traditions : al-Balādhurī's *Ansāb*, I, 489 and Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Isāba*, VIII, 119 (n° 611 - women).

<sup>54</sup> Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt*, II, 388 (ed. Būlāq, 1299 A.H.).

Examining these narratives in the light of the two versions about Kabsha as recorded in the MS. of al-Balādhuri<sup>55</sup>, one may assume that Abū Jabr of the inscription is identical with Abū 'l-Jabr (or Abū-Jabr)<sup>56</sup> of the traditions quoted above and that he was from the branch of Āl al-Jaun.

Nothing could be found about the commander of the troop of Sa'd, Bishr (or Bashīr, or Bashshār) b. Ḥiṣn (or Ḥuṣayn). The suggestion of Lundin that he might have been a prince of Kinda<sup>57</sup> can hardly be accepted. There is evidence that the reading « Ḥiṣn » in the text of Ibn Khaldūn is merely a clerical error (al-Balādhurī *Ansāb*, MS. f. 996b.) It may be supposed that as a commander of a Khindif troop — and Khindif were the supporters of Abraha at Ḥulubān — a chief from among them would have been nominated. Were the Sa'd of the inscription a southern tribe — as assumed by Lundin — the appointment of a Kinda chief would have been plausible. It may be pointed out that Bishr and Ḥuṣayn are names frequently occurring in North-Arabian genealogies. The silence about the leader of the Sa'd in the battle of Ḥulubān can be explained by the fact that nobody of the Sa'd was interested to recall the deeds of the ancestors, who had served the cause of Abraha and participated in the attack led against the 'Āmir b. Ṣa'ṣa'a and apparently intended against Mecca.

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<sup>55</sup> See al-Balādhuri, *Ansāb*, Ms. f. 985b, 996b.

<sup>56</sup> So mentioned once in the report of Ibn Khallikān and in the « risāla » of Abū Yaḥyā b. Mas'ada (*Nawādir al-makhṭūṭāt*, III, 267 - ed. A.S. HĀBŪN). The *Mukhtaṣar Jamḥarāt al-Ansāb* (Ms. Rāghib Pasha, n° 999, f. 233a, line 2) mentions Abū 'l-Jabr, poisoned by the forces of Misrā.

<sup>57</sup> LUNDIN, *op. cit.*, p. 76, n. 64-65.